



Lenny Henry interviewed

Festive feast of gigs reviewed

Advent calendar of Christmas events

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Leeds Student

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Accident horror

Law Soc fined

Matthew Power

A Leeds University student is fighting for his life after being struck by a car last Friday night.

The 20-year-old, who has not been named, is in a critical condition in hospital. The accident took place outside the Eldon Pub on Woodhouse Lane shortly before midnight.

He was rushed to the Leeds General Infirmary where he was placed in intensive care. The victim's family has been keeping a bedside vigil and doctors have described his condition as "very poorly."

The student, who is originally from Manchester, was hit by a silver Vauxall Astra as he crossed the road at the junction of St. Mark's Street.

A Leeds University spokesperson said: "We can confirm that a Leeds student was involved as a pedestrian in a very serious traffic accident over the weekend. Because of the seriousness of the injuries and the danger that the student is still in, we would not wish to add anything further at this time."

Correction

In our article of 17 October 2008 in connection with RMP Properties we stated that RMP Properties is bankrupt. For the avoidance of doubt we wish to clarify that the article related to certain limited companies, including RMP Properties (Leeds) Limited and RMP Properties (Headingley) Limited which are in administration. It is not the case that either Mr or Mrs R. McEwan-Peters are personally bankrupt, nor that the partnership business trading as RMP Properties is insolvent. We trust that this clarifies the position.

The driver of the car, who is from Batley, is believed to have escaped injury after the accident as he drove from Headingley towards Leeds City centre.

Leeds Student has learned that residents close to the main road have expressed concern over the junction in the past.

Carl Vanderwerff, a first year economics student and Henry Price resident, said: "That road is so dangerous, I'm really not surprised there's been an accident there - it's just lucky he wasn't killed. The road is so confusing because everyone just comes out of the pubs and runs to the shops.

There needs to be more lights."

There were 3,397 casualties on Leeds' roads in 2007 according to City Council figures, 469 of whom were pedestrians. 24 per cent of those killed on roads in the district are between the ages of 16 and 29.

Targets produced in March 2000 stated Leeds City Council's aim to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the region's roads by 40 per cent by the year 2010.

Suzu Tobias, Leeds University Union (LUU) Welfare Officer said: "LUU are very concerned about the student involved, and

wish him all the best for a speedy recovery. We would like to warn all students to take care when drinking, especially when near busy roads. The icy weather makes the roads far more dangerous, so I urge all students to pay even more attention to traffic.

"Look out for your friends whilst drinking over the festive period, and be careful when leaving pubs and bars; don't do anything silly and just enjoy yourself as much as possible."

Anyone with any information about the collision is asked to call PC 47 John Carter at Horsforth Police Station on 0113 2395011.

Adam Richardson

The Leeds University Union (LUU) Law society is facing the prospect of legal action if they do not pay a fine handed out to them by image database Getty Images.

A fine of £968.00 was issued by Getty Images after an image on the Law Society website was found to be unlicensed.

The use of an image without consent is considered copyright infringement in violation of the Copyright Design and Patents Act of 1988.

The offending image appeared on the Law Society's website about three years ago. However, it was only in a letter dated October 31 that they notified the society of their copyright breach.

The original fine was totalled at £968.00. However, with quick payment, Getty Images offered a 10 per cent discount, which would have reduced the fine to £871.20.

LUU has been keen to help the society, and has offered legal advice. Upon contacting Getty Images, the fine has been reduced further to £630.

Law society president Andrew Bonsall said: "Getty Images is a very large corporation that would have very little problem in pursuing us for the money. Our only real defence is that the image was placed on our website three years ago when none of the current committee members were involved in any of the decision making as to what went onto the website."

However, Andrew does not believe that the society will get any more leeway, despite negotiating the fine down.



St Mark's Street junction: A "dangerous" place to cross the road according to local residents.

Photo: Melissa Black

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Sport

Interview with Tanni Grey-Thompson
Water skiing, Fencing and Badminton

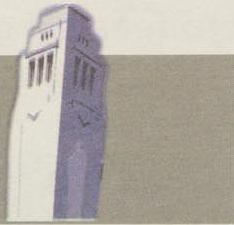
Comment & Debate

Barnados charity campaign
Last week's Milliband Q+A assessed

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Leeds Student



Union Boy

Is the referendum too obvious for me to talk about this week? Is there nothing up for mockery that wouldn't be so interesting? No, ok then.

Where on earth to begin? Let's start with the wall of comment, which turned into just a plain wall after the

winds of change wrenched it away. The wall had given students the chance to write their own opinion on the motions, but lasted just a few hours. At least we know that fees aren't being wasted on strong sellotape!

In keeping with stuff that sticks (or doesn't), posters of Albert Einstein, Nelson Mandela and Kelly Brooke (admittedly I haven't seen that one) to advertise a motion is surely a bit wide of the mark. And how much time was wasted with the pioneers of democracy battling over the display of posters, instead of advertising the opportunity to vote on their motion? Let the people decide. On this kind of thing, they don't need a poster to tell them what to think.

Let's have a proper vote. Who cares about the Referendum? How many people at this University have heard of it? Four thousand people voted. What kind of a percentage is that, compared

to the overall attendance figures? How many people know what the motions are? What does the EUMC definition of anti-Semitism actually contain? Does it actually say that Nelson Mandela is a racist? Does the Union really need the EUMC definition, or could it just make up its own, to suit the needs of the University and its populus, making sure that everyone gets a fair deal? Isn't this a headache? What the hell is this yellow carpet all about? Aren't we sick of answering questions? Where's the motion for cheaper sandwiches this time around?

The golden carpet of Democracy, by the way, has been dirtied by the feet of the non believers. Justice must keep scrubbing it clean, night after night. It will be preserved for the students of the future! Vote yes for clearing up this building site! If only the recycling bins were large enough for us to stuff all of this crap into!

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CONTACT

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Laurie Whitwell

A Leeds housing agency are "renting" a web address using the name of a rival property company.

Troubled letting agent Providence Properties, featured on the BBC's Watchdog programme last month and the subject of previous Leeds Student investigations, have acquired the new web address of pickardproperties.com.

Potential Pickard Properties tenants are re-directed to Providence Properties' homepage when entering '.com' instead of the correct '.co.uk' for Pickard.

The alleged sale of the domain to Providence may be regarded as "cybersquatting", the practice of registering an established company name as a web address with the intent to make a profit. Registrations made in 'bad faith' can end up in court.

Miles Pickard, owner of Pickard Properties, said: "We understand that students who are looking for accommodation through ourselves are getting misdirected to Providence Properties website amongst others if they type in www.pickardproperties.com, rather than our own correct website address."

While Pickard came top in the 2007 Rate Your Landlord Survey, Providence currently have 15 County Court Judgements outstanding and were subject to a Watchdog investigation aired two weeks ago.

A series of emails released to Leeds Student reveal how Mr Phil Ison, owner of the web address in question, aimed to gain £650 from Pickard by selling the name to them. He added pressure by detailing Providence Properties' interest in the sale.

In an opening declaration to Pickard, he said: "As you seem to

Providence "piggyback" rival's web success

be a big brand I guess the domain is quite important to you" before later, on December 1, revealing, "Appreciate things are quite difficult in the property market and this may be having an affect on yourselves. Providence Properties have shown a keen interest in the domain and are currently renting it on a weekly basis."

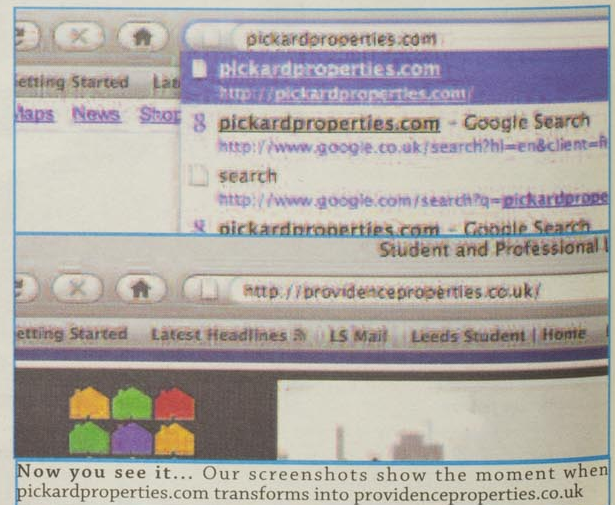
His latest correspondence on Tuesday read: "Serious offers, it's receiving a lot of traffic. Have you started advertising or something? Providence Properties want it for a new company or something so last chance."

Ison's actions have raised accusations of alleged "cybersquatting". When Leeds Student contacted Providence Properties to discuss the webname, their representative said: "No we've never heard of...never been involved with Pickard Properties. That must be some kind of server error; I don't know where that's gone wrong. Maybe you can ask your service provider what's going on".

Pickard was left fuming at the series of events: "We genuinely work hard to gain the trust of students and have over many years built up an excellent reputation in Leeds. We have invested a lot of time and effort in maintaining our high standard of service to our tenants and get upset when people try to piggyback on our good name. We do not want tenants to be misled in any way by thinking we are associated with any other Landlord or Letting agent."

Andrea Kerslake, housing specialist in the Student Advice Centre reinforced Pickard's reputation: "Our experience of Pickard Properties has always been very positive, they are a code of standards landlord and recommended by the Student Advice Centre. Any student should double check that this is who they are signing with."

Leeds Student attempted to visit Providence's new offices, at their business park location on Wellington Place. There were no members of staff at the property to answer our queries.



Now you see it... Our screenshots show the moment when pickardproperties.com transforms into providenceproperties.co.uk

Up the creek..with a paddle

Marcus Chippindale

Two Leeds students have been selected to take part in the 2009 British Universities Kayak Expedition.

Andy Jaunzems, a Geological Science student, and Luke Farrington, studying Civil Engineering, have been chosen to join a nine man team to go on the expedition next summer.

They are the first students from Leeds University to be selected for the biannual event, which has been running since 2005.

Although plans are not yet finalised, it is expected that the team will travel to the Yunnan province of Vietnam and China for six weeks in July 2009. During the expedition, they will explore uncharted rivers in search of the world's finest white water experiencing as much of the local culture as possible along the way.

The trip will be planned and organised entirely by the team, a process which is already in progress. With the possibility of exploring uncharted waters, planning a route has proved to be a difficult task.

"There has been no documentation of the conditions

so we don't have a clear idea what it is going to be like," said Andy. "I like the challenge of it. The idea that nine student kayakers can plan an expedition to the other side of the world is really exciting."

Luke, who is to act as trip leader, was also attracted to the expedition by the challenges it presents. He said:

"I really like the idea of pushing past what has been done before and having to get down the river to get out, even when you don't know what is round the next bend."

Whilst the expedition is open to any UK student, the intensive selection process adds to the students' achievements of being chosen for the team.

The first stage of the process, which reduces the field of applicants to just 20, is in written form. The 20 selected contenders are then invited to an activity weekend, which this year took place in Wales, where the final team of nine is eventually selected.

In the coming months the students will take part in several tough training weekends, designed to help build a good team dynamic, before heading out on their expedition next summer. Even though it is not compulsory to gain sponsorship for the trip, previous years have seen participants collaborating with Central News

and Nike ACG as the trip grows in stature.

Following on from their success, Andy and Luke are keen

to get as many people involved in the sport as possible. Andy said:

"It's a really good fun sport and the society is a platform for

you whatever level you're at."

Those interested in finding out more about the trip can log on to www.uniyaker.co.uk.



Photo: Courtesy of Andy Jaunzems

Soapstar students star

Billy Risbridger
Jane Salmon

Students from Leeds are set to sing their hearts out in an upcoming episode of *Emmerdale*.

The hour-long special episode of the ITV soap, due for broadcast on Thursday December 11, will

feature members of the University's Chamber Choir.

The ten LUUMS singers appear as part of the Robblesford Male Voice Choir. The choir compete against characters from the soap opera in the Yorkshire Choir Competition. The storyline revolves around an effort to prevent the closure of Emmerdale church.

James Lawrence, third year

music student and LUUMS Chamber Choir conductor, said:

"There were a few moments of extreme terror, but I would do it again given the opportunity. The highlight for me was when they asked us to perform both the pieces we had prepared for a room full of extras - we could forget about the cameras and just perform."

Catherine Gardiner, LUUMS Chamber Choir manager, was in charge of organising the event. She said:

"It was an interesting insight into the world of music in television. We don't know who wins the competition but the *Emmerdale* choir get a special achievement award at the end of the episode."

The male choir sing two pieces: *Joshua fit the battle of Jericho* and *Steal away*, both from *Songs of Yale*.

LUUMS has a website for anyone interested in the choir or any of the other musical groups on offer, including details on how to join. This is available at www.luums.co.uk.

The episode will be broadcast on ITV 1 at 7pm, December 11.

Hey, good cookin'

Virginia Newman

Exec members have been cooking up a storm with Mick the Miner, famous from TV chef Jamie Oliver's Ministry of Food.

Instead of the traditional beans on toast, students were taught how to cook a simple omelette by Mick. In keeping with the TV show's teaching

ethos, then they in turn taught other students.

Mick commented: "When I hear people say that they have never cracked an egg I know that these are the people that we need to reach."

Jamie Oliver's concept 'Pass it on' was emphasised to participants and the audience who gathered around the demonstrations.

Mick continued: "I found food at the age of 50 and that's why I'm so passionate about it."



Photo: Virginia Newman



Legal battle for Law Soc

continued from page 1

He continued: "However, with an organisation as large as Getty Images you can only assume that this type of fine is carried out as standard on a day-to-day basis, as a result I doubt that they provide any leeway based on individual circumstances."

The fine has led to dismay amongst members of the society, who had no idea that a previous committee had left them with such a burden.

Law society treasurer, James Bullock, commented: "I was reasonably surprised when we were hit with a claim just short of £1000. I find it quite irritating that we took the society on, as a committee, in good faith yet an incident from possibly 3 years ago has come back to affect us."

The fine has not yet been paid, and the deadline of 21st November for payment has now passed.

The president added: "Our decision to pay or not to pay this fine will be based solely on our belief as to whether we are liable for it. We have already taken some legal advice, we may well be taking more in due course."

LUU Activities officer Jess Parker commented: "I'm sure there was no intentional breach of copyright by the law society. For a sizeable company to fine a student society to that amount seems vindictive and unnecessary. I hope that the company will reconsider this measure as well as refrain from taking any further action."

The society are keen to advise to other societies to be aware of copyright breaches and the implications it may have. Bullock added: "We have learnt from this and urge other societies to be extremely cautious so they don't find themselves in a similar position in the future."

Our guide to avoiding a lawsuit

Copyright images are considered under the term 'Artistic works'. These include: photographs, charts, diagrams, maps, cartoons, decorative graphics and illustrations among others.

Copyright in artistic works lasts until 70 years after the death of the artist/photographer. However, there may be other legal protection preventing you from making use of the work

If you are searching for images on the internet, the web site may include a statement allowing its material to be freely re-used, or used for specific purposes and/or with specific conditions. Look for a statement or link on the home page of the site, often labelled 'Copyright'

or 'Conditions of use'. If in doubt, send an email to the site owner to ask for permission to use the image.

There are copyright-free images available from the internet.

If the photograph contains images of people (especially children) you must also check under privacy law that they are unidentifiable or that their permission was given for their image to be used.

In most cases, if a photo was taken by a known photographer who died before January 1, 70 years ago, or taken by an unknown photographer and published before January 1, 70 years ago, the copyright has expired. However, there are variations on this.

News In Brief

Olympics: decide now or pay later

The 2012 Olympic committee has been urged to avoid spiralling costs by making key decisions about the long-term use of the stadiums, by a Leeds University professor.

New research, conducted by Denise Bower, a Professor of Engineering Project Management at the University of Leeds, has found that there is a link between the way in which decisions are made about iconic buildings and the probability that these structures will be built on time and on budget.

Her research found that even when firm decisions are made there is often a failure for clients and contractors to communicate. She stated that this, at times, is due to the fact that the client will often have little previous knowledge of construction projects, often leading to further escalation of costs.

Professor Bower warned: "The challenge for the Olympic delivery team and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport is to marry the aspirations of all those involved in the project and complete the job within the estimated timescale and cost."

The study initially compared the processes and costs of the development of Arsenal's Emirates Stadium and the new Wembley site. The Emirates Stadium was completed on time and under budget, whereas the new Wembley Stadium exceeded the original costs and was months behind schedule.

The budget of the Olympic bid has risen from £2.4 billion to over £9 billion. Many believe that the original London Olympic budget was deliberately lower than the 'real' budget. This increase, along with the current economic downturn, lead to a response from Olympics Minister Tessa Jowell. She said:

"Had we known what we know now, would we have bid for the Olympics? Almost certainly not."

LUU fights gender violence

Leeds University Union (LUU) Women's Assembly commenced 16 Days of Action Against Gender Violence Campaign last Tuesday November 25.

The 16 Days of Action Against Gender Violence campaign is an international project that the Women's Assembly picks up on yearly. This year they are focusing on the violence that women experience around the world.

Madeleine Harris Smith, LUU Women's Assembly Chair, commented: "One in three women around the world have been raped, beaten or coerced and the Women's Assembly is raising awareness around campus that this is a human rights issue and must be addressed as such on a local, national and international level. We want to illustrate the solidarity of women around the world and organising to eliminate gender based violence."

On Monday December 8, at 7.15pm, there will be a film showing of 'Thelma and Louise' at the LUU Peanut Gallery Social Centre.

Tuesday December 9, at 5pm, sees Jacinta Kent giving a talk about Sexual Trafficking followed with a film screening of 'Lilja 4 Ever'.

And for more info on the 16 Days of Action Campaign, please visit <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/16days/home.html>



The University of Leeds Law School
Photo: Alex Pavlou

Bright prospects for group's graduates

Victoria Littler

Russell Group university graduates will earn considerably more in their careers, according to a new study.

The 'Russell Group', which was established in 1994, is an association of 20 major U.K. research-intensive universities, including the University of Leeds.

Research released last week has shown that almost a third of Russell Group graduates earn more than £40,000 within five years of graduating. This is compared to only 5 per cent of first-class graduates from other U.K. universities.

The report also stated that 31.7 per cent of scientists and technologists from research-intensive universities such as

Leeds are earning £30,000 to £50,000 within three years of graduating. This is compared with 16 per cent from other universities.

The government have outlined proposals to encourage 50% of all young people into university by 2010. The gradual re-classification of polytechnics to universities has helped to make a reality of the statistic, with more and more people benefiting from higher education.

20 U.K. research-intensive institutions make up the Russell Group. These include Leeds, Bristol Oxford and Cambridge – as well as another 18 universities in the 1994 Group. The "other" universities with which they are contrasted are the new universities – those that became universities after 1992 – and those in the non-

aligned group, which include Kee. During the twenty years leading up to 1996, the student population in the United Kingdom doubled and, despite a rise in tuition fees to over £3000, the 2008 intake figures have increased by 9.1 per cent according to UCAS.

While the outlook for students is bleak, a new report from Universities UK has shown that graduates earn approximately £160,000 over a lifetime more than those with two or more A-levels, with this figure increasing to as much as £240,000 over a lifetime for those taking a degree in engineering, proving that the right degree at the right university pays in the long term.

Danny Adilypour, Leeds University Union Education officer, said:

"Whilst this is great news for

those of us who are fortunate enough to study at Russell Group universities, it is of great concern that the earnings gap between graduates at traditional and newer universities is getting wider. This situation will only get worse if the cap on tuition fees is removed and the Russell Group universities are allowed to charge extortionate fees of over £10,000 a year."

He continued: "This is why we must continue to oppose the 'marketisation' of higher education, which will lead to the creation of a two tier higher education system with students from wealthier backgrounds benefiting from a top quality university education and the career prospects that follow, whilst other students are priced out and left behind."

VC: Motion four oversteps the mark

Virginia Newman

Referendum motions lobbying the Vice Chancellor for change will not necessarily be acted upon, students were told on Monday.

VC Michael Arthur announced to students himself that the results of the Referendum would only apply to LUU, and motions which mandated LUU Executive Officers to

lobby him for University-wide change would not necessarily be taken on.

He added that the highly controversial Motion Four which lobbies for LUU to adopt the EUMC's definition of Anti-Semitism, had overstepped the mark.

He said: "My personal position is that I think that the European Union oversteps the mark and I don't not think that it is anti-semitic to criticise Israel. So that means that I would vote no, if I was voting."

On the No Platform Motion, Arthur told students that certain speakers could not -certain figure to speak on campus.

He said: "As a principle it is important for us to protect the right to freedom of speech, but having said that there are some cases when the law supersedes this right.

"It is only when you are presented with the absolute specifics that a judgment came be made. And I would use the word 'judgment', it is

not a precise science. One university may make a judgment one way and one in another way. It is not an all or nothing thing as far as the university is concerned."

The Vice-Chancellor repeatedly coined the phrase 'case-by-case-basis' in reference to a change in the University's policy regarding this and other contentious issues.

The motion has received national attention and the Vice Chancellor admitted that he had

received tens of letters from concerned people. But he emphasised that there is a difference between LUU policies and University policies.

The Vice Chancellor also admitted that the University was oversubscribed for this academic year and that they had been unprepared for the influx. He said that around 100 students began this term in temporary accommodation as a result.

Leeds Student also asked the Vice Chancellor car park, which on the Leeds University website it was stated that this was the only question that the vice-chancellor would not answer. He assured the audience that this had been a joke and detailed the reasoning why a car park on campus for students was an unrealistic prospect.

He said: "The only way that we could create more car parking space would be to build a multi-storey. There is a vague plan to have one but even then we wouldn't have enough space for the staff let alone the students. I think that this is pretty typical of a city-centre campus University."

Arthur also informed students that talks are taking place to introduce a demand-control traffic system in Leeds city centre, similar to the congestion charge in London.

There will be another question and answer session with the Vice-Chancellor next semester.



Photo: Ana Santos

Report slammed Asylum 'not a crime'

Matthew Power

A new report calling for an end to the cap on student top up fees has been slammed by the NUS.

The report was produced by The Russel Group, which Leeds University is a part of.

It states that universities should be given the right to set their own charges for courses, allowing top institutions to increase fees by thousands of pounds. It aims to give greater independence to British universities tied down by government university initiatives.

The National Union of Students (NUS) have blasted the proposals, with President Wes Streeting labelling the idea 'extremely foolish.' He said: "Against the current economic backdrop, it would be extremely foolish to trust the provision of any major public service entirely to the market. These proposals would put the long-term security of thousands of vital courses serving our most deprived communities in jeopardy. They would confine the vast majority to a utilitarian education system based on weighing up financial risk."

The NUS and the University and College Union are claiming potential students will be deferred by a sharp increase in tuition fees.

Proposals include the suggestion that young people receive a one-off grant of £13,000 to spend on education at the age of 18. The decision over their method of study would be in the hands of students, with apprenticeships an alternative option to university studies. The proposed system would replace the current student grant initiative, which has been described as an "education maze" in the published report this week.

Mo Salih, a Leeds University first year Chemical Engineering student, was concerned by the suggestions. "I'm worried about the amount of debt I'm in at the moment, never mind if my tuition fees go up. I really do feel sorry for students starting university in the next few years" he said.

The Report, launched by the Conservative University spokesman David Willetts, states that countries charging the highest fees have the highest participation rates and claims that students having to fund tuition fees themselves would lead to "more rational decision-making."

A review of higher education is set to take place in 2009, with talk of standard tuition fees potentially rising from £10,000 to £12,000.

Director General of the Russell Group Wendy Platt said: "The most successful universities are those that are allowed to operate independently."

Leon Zadek

The 'No Borders University Group' staged a heated protest outside The Angel Group offices at Harehills Road in Leeds City Centre.

The Angel Group is one of the main government sponsored contractors responsible for the housing of asylum seekers in Britain. The 'Leeds No Borders Group' assembled to demonstrate last Friday November 28 over the alleged abuse that refugees have faced.

Charlotte Walker, a spokesperson for the 'Leeds No Borders University Group, commented: "One might question why The Angel Group is so unwilling to face up to their critics, should they have nothing to be ashamed of. Perhaps it is because they know that their motto: 'Providing homes and hope for the future' is a very far cry from the reality."

The Angel Group was one of the many companies to take up government contracts after the introduction of the National Asylum Support Service in 2000. This was following the decision to disperse asylum seekers from the

Southeast, across the country.

The protesters were concerned that whilst interviewing refugees,

they began to notice Angel Group employees taking pictures through the upstairs windows of them.

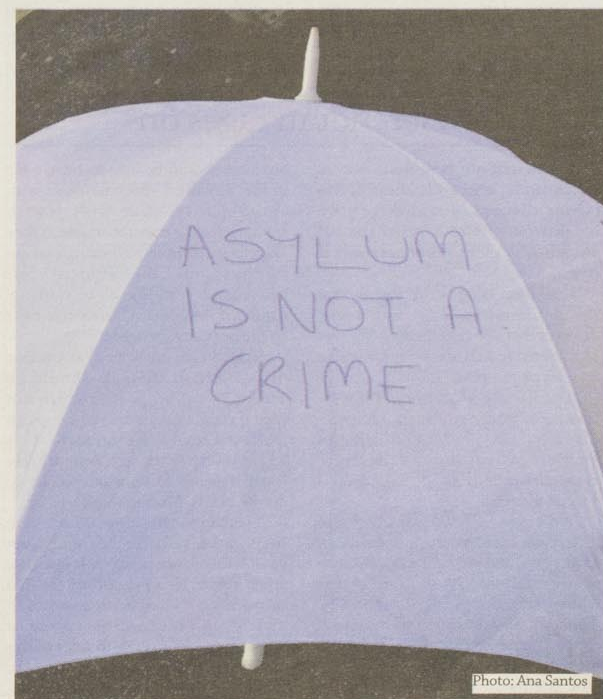


Photo: Ana Santos

Leeds Student

-Vice Chancellor-

Few university Vice Chancellors have regular one-on-one meetings with students. Professor Michael Arthur spoke for half an hour in the Peanut Gallery this week with I.D. cards, referendum motions and a potential student car park on the agenda.

Arthur answered every question proposed to him with at length, showing why he holds the top job with his in depth knowledge of both LUU and University issues. He even threw in a few anecdotes including how he shared a trans-Atlantic flight with rock legends 'the Rolling Stones' a few years ago.

Unsurprisingly, the referendum proved to be the most popular topic for the students in attendance on Monday night, with voting having opened only three days before. There's no doubt that the VC is fully aware of every motion within the referendum. However, he made it quite clear that he is not obliged to act or even acknowledge the results unless

they affect the reputation of Leeds University.

The infamous anti-Semitism motion was something the VC was keen to discuss, making his personal opinions clear to those in the Peanut Gallery. He admitted he had received e-mails from as far as China about the motion and stated that he believed the EUMC's definition of anti-Semitism is 'exaggerated.'

On the topic of the potential construction of a student car park, Arthur squashed any student body hope by announcing plans to scrap existing car parks instead of building any new ones. He also revealed that he has been notified of plans to introduce a congestion charge in Leeds, with the university at the epicentre of it. It seems that green issues are close to the heart of the VC. However, this does seem fair, as the environment really does seem to be more of an important issue than the comfort of Leeds students travelling in to University on freezing cold mornings on the bus.

-Road Safety-

The news of a Leeds student being hit by car has sent shockwaves through campus this week and is something LS doesn't like to report on in the final issue of Leeds Student before Christmas.

However, the section of Woodhouse Lane on which the accident took place is not a new talking point among local student residents. The Eldon is one of the final stops on the Otley Run and with students pouring out of late-night take-aways and pound-a-pint pub the Library, the main road is a hot spot for potential accidents, particularly with traffic coming from all directions.

At the heart of Leeds University's social community, the chances are that

any accident occurring in Woodhouse Lane area will involve a Leeds student.

Further details are yet to emerge about the situation surrounding the victim in last Friday night's incident. A family preparing for the festive period shouldn't have to set up a vigil next to a 20-year-old's hospital bedside while he fights for his life in intensive care.

There cannot be enough emphasis on road safety, particularly when one's guards are let down at the end of a Christmas night out. With many departmental and residential socials taking place over the coming week caution is a must in order to avoid similar reports of accidents appearing at the beginning of 2009.

-Referendum rages on-

The Referendum is making waves on campus, and so it should; the issues discussed will affect the workings of the Union for all students, whether they have voted or not.

Less promising is the reason that the Referendum is causing a stir; displays that are potentially offensive to students and clashes of views where religion plays a part.

This Referendum should not be about controversial tactics, although dismally, it is. If a Motion deserves support (or equally, if it deserves opposition) then it will get it independently.

However, if issues discussed in Referenda cause as much controversy as they do, and create the opportunity for exclusion of anyone at the University, then they shouldn't be placed in a Referendum as a Motion. They should be discussed, at length, with all interested parties in attendance, and mediated by neutral officials.

Students should be able to have a say in the way the University deals with anti-Semitism, but with Jewish students feeling uncomfortable as they exercise their ability to campaign on campus, and other students left bewildered as to the 'all or nothing' nature of the Motion, surely this can't be the best way forward.

Students are not voting on whether or not Jewish students should be accepted on campus; they are not voting on the nature of anti-Semitism itself; as David Miliband said on his recent visit to Leeds, anti-Semitism is a form of racism. It is not acceptable; we do not need a Motion to tell us that.

This Motion has attracted attention from students all over the country, but its publicity is not positive. It does not show Leeds as a beacon of student democracy; it illuminates a spectacle, which, with the sensible nature of reasonable adults on both sides of this debate, need not have come into existence.

Referendum battle

Dear Editor,

I struggle to understand how a democratic university, that battles against such motions as adopting a no platform policy due to freedom of speech, wants to take action to stop military recruitment on University grounds. Surely that denies us the freedom of free thought by not allowing people the choice of joining the army if they so wish? If someone has an interest in skiing, that person is given the right at our university to join a society for the sport. Yet if someone has an interest in the army and wishes to join the Officer Training Corps or Territorial Army, they will be denied that chance by a few ignorant people who have naively decided that the army preys on the University population. We wouldn't deny our students the possibility to further their sporting career so why prevent students from pursuing an army career?

In addition, Motion 2 resolves to "give no platform" to all forms of military speakers, which aim to "conduct or glorify war". Are we not in the process of voting for a no-platform policy in a separate motion? What if LUU members decide that we don't want to adopt a no-platform policy but vote for Motion 2, won't the military speakers still be subject to the no-platform policy? Would that not be against what we would have voted for? Is our union not therefore 'cunningly enticing' us to undermine our views? Perhaps instead of looking at the military recruitment in our university, we should look more closely at our union.

Emma Craig

Ridiculous referendum

Dear Editor,

I felt compelled to pass comment on this frankly ridiculous 'referendum' us students have been asked to participate in.

Who came up with half these 'motions'? The LUU is not some hallowed institution, it's where freshers go to buy sandwiches, people go for a cigarette on the terrace and promoters peddle their latest night. Does it matter whether the LUU condemns actions in Gaza?

The fact is this is not the seventies; the days of student activism at Universities are finished. The ONLY worthwhile motions are the ones concerning water fountains (I wasn't aware selling water bottles or having water fountains were mutually exclusive?), and scheduling for sport on Wednesdays.

People won't vote because hardly any of it is relevant to them. It's easy to blame that on general apathy. But equally, you could suggest that the student representatives are simply out of touch with what the average Leeds University student wants - the simple things done properly: sufficient library books, more contact hours, better

feedback etc.

One thing I really do take exception to is the motion for banning TA advertising in the paper. Do people forget Britain's armed forces forged the British Empire and have allowed us to become one of the safest and most prosperous countries in the world? Yet somehow showing support for this would be ideologically wrong. Please, it's worse than a joke, it's an insult to the people who have fought and died for this country, and still do.

Michael Corbin

War "not just a petty case of right or wrong"

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my sheer disappointment at the ongoing comments being made concerning military recruitment and publications on the Leeds campus.

Why does this bother me so? Last year my family and I lost a dear friend, Ben Reddy, who, whilst on service as a Royal Marine of K company, 42 Commando, was shot dead in the Helmand province of Afghanistan. Benny had the utmost determination and ambition to get into this career path. He gained so much fulfilment from his training and eventual service despite his tragic early demise. He has been an inspiration to me ever since I first slipped protein powder into my hot chocolate to be like him many years ago!

As the war poet Edward Thomas once wrote, "this is no case of petty right or wrong". The point is that the military is often obliged to follow the policies and orders of higher bodies within the British government and that most of their men are working class guys who are simply realizing their career ambition.

Personally, I am not afraid to say that I do not seek the military recruitment stalls at university-organised exhibitions because I am aware that this is not my cup of tea.

I would advise that 'Revolution' campaigners and other critics of the military do the same. They have no right to close off this avenue of careers from others and they have no right to spit on the memory of good people such as my friend Ben through making them seem ignorant of the risks and fears which they face every day with courage, conviction and determination.

If we are a university of equal rights and freedom of choice, then the student council should recognise that the military is an important link in the web of careers available to Leeds students.

Jamie Fisher
1st Year Arabic and Spanish

Once bitten, twice shy

Dear Editor,

I know you don't normally print things like this but I'd be forever grateful if you could print the article below. I let my shyness cripple me at Fruity on

Friday and I'll be really annoyed with myself if I don't do my best to find this guy, if he isn't interested, fair enough.

I really don't want to give my name as this is hard for me but if you do want to verify it's not a windup I'll reply to an email from you with my uni address. If you print this I'll be so grateful! So please do! I know space is at a premium in your paper and it's not a dating medium but please print this!

The guy in question did put his arm around me as I said what I did to him so it may not be a lost cause:

I saw you in Fruity on Friday 28th November. You were very tall and wore glasses and were with three male friends. I wore glasses too. I came up to you after you'd been to the bar, tapped on your arm and apologised for staring at you but told you I thought you were really attractive and that I wasn't drunk. I then kissed you on the cheek and disappeared. I was very shy. Who are you? I'd really like to know. You made an impression.

Contact somnia@hotmail.co.uk.

Motion Four campaign 'uncomfortable' for Jewish students

Dear Editor,

Due to the current campaigning strategy of the 'No' campaign, against Motion 4, today at University was exceptionally unpleasant for Jewish students. Members of the J-Soc voiced that not only were they uncomfortable to express their Jewish identity on campus today, but they felt intimidated and scared. I'm sure you can agree this is unacceptable.

Large, prominent placards with word choices such as 'Holocaust' on display in and around the Union and on campus grounds, are offensive and insensitive towards your Jewish students, as well as towards disabled, black and homosexual students. No person should feel the need to hide their religion, race or creed.

It was visibly uncomfortable to be Jewish on campus today. I'm sure you agree this is an unacceptable situation which needs to be resolved as a matter of urgency by addressing the 'no' campaign strategy, moving focus away from 'politics' and focus on the issue of welfare of Jewish students, as intended by the proposition of Motion 4.

Maxim Kikoler
President of Leeds Jewish Society

Rachel Wenstone
University Chairperson of Leeds Jewish Society

What's driving you crazy?

Are you sick of Leeds Student getting it wrong week after week?

Drop us a line at editor@leedsstudent.org and we'll print your letter in this space.

In the Union this week...

This week saw Referendum controversy surround the campaigning for Motion 4...

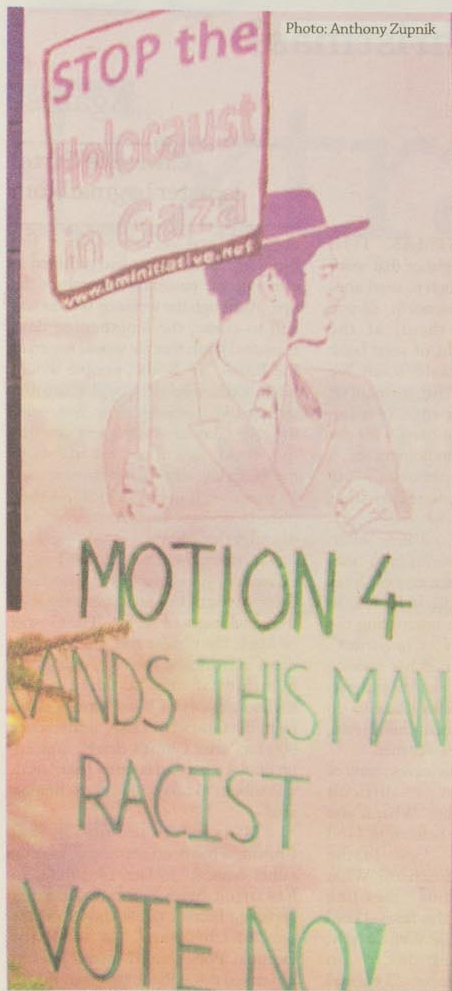


Photo: Anthony Zupnik

Tactics used by the 'Vote No' campaign for Motion 4 in the Referendum: 'Should LUU adopt the EUMC definition of anti-Semitism?' have sparked controversy this week.

Display boards placed around the Union building depicting orthodox Jewish figures and making reference to the Holocaust were taken down after complaints were received.

Jak Codd, the proposer of Motion 4, made a complaint against the boards on Monday. He said, "I made a complaint as I thought the boards were really offensive and very inflammatory. By them being there, the level of debate was not heightened, they were just present to provoke a reaction. It is irresponsible to stir up tension like that, especially when the political reaction is great anyway. Many members of the Jewish community here lost family members in the Holocaust, so it is not acceptable to make this a feature of the campaign. The whole idea was in very bad taste."

Laura McFarlane-Shopes, the Union's Communications and Internal Affairs Officer, said, "The complaints were heard at the daily campaign meeting and the issue was discussed at length. A mutual decision was made to remove the boards until the new photo and text is agreed by both campaign teams. It was great to have some dialogue and to reach a compromise that balanced the needs of both teams."

Following a reinvention, a new design of board was released to general display again on Thursday. Adam Collins, a Leeds graduate who finished his course this summer, is a supporter of the 'Vote No' campaign. He said, "Motion 4 is a dangerous and misleading motion. It is a heavy-handed and right-wing attack on people campaigning to defend the rights of Palestinians. The original design of the boards was not intended to offend. The intention was to represent the views of the many anti-Zionist Jews in the world. It was unfortunate that they had to be taken down but the new wording does make our intention more clear."

A spelling mistake, however, was apparently overlooked and the boards now read, "This photo was taken during a demonstrartion in London in March 2008."

4169 students voted

Be the first to see the Referendum results and analysis at www.leedsstudent.org.

The Referendum's vote count takes place on Friday 5th December at the Information Point at 2.00pm.



Photo: Anthony Zupnik

Campus Watch

What's making the headlines at universities around the country.

Claire Freston and Tom Knowles

-Oxford-

Three members of Oxford University have been revealed to be on the BNP membership list leaked two weeks ago.

A member of the University Maths Faculty, a member of the Environmental Change Institute and a member of St John's College have all been named on the list which includes anyone who has ever shown an interest in the party as well as its members.

A former tutor and member of St John's College said: "I was once a member, but am no longer a member and have not been so for a very long time. I have no interest in the party and am not involved with them at all. If you get involved with the BNP then they pressgang you, they're a lot of damned fools if this is how they react when they have some kind of argument."

But another did not know he was

on the list at all, "I have no idea why I am on there, I have never voted for the BNP and I am not a member" claimed a member of the Environmental Change Institute. He continued, "Four years ago I asked on the website for some information, that might be why."

Some students have expressed concern over the disclosure. One second year, who wished to remain anonymous, said, "This worries me a lot, I never know when I might have contact with these people. The idea that I might be coming into contact with members of the BNP, particularly when I am not from an English background, is really upsetting."

The University has not said whether they will take any action against the members, "We will not comment on individuals, provided it is legal, is a private matter," a spokesperson for the University said.

-Central Lancashire-

A Muslim student from the University of Central Lancashire was left shocked after receiving two racist 'jokes' from a text service operated by '118 118'.

Kameron Abbas, 21, used the new joke service run by the directory inquiries company after seeing it advertised on TV. He was horrified when he received the first racist message and then sent for another off his friend's phone and received a similar 'joke'.

Stunned, the pair responded to 118 118 with a question asking, "Do you send racist jokes?" The reply received read, "does not send jokes of this kind." Mr Abbas said:

"We couldn't believe the response. It was more Bernard Manning than Harry Hill. It was disgraceful and these people should be reported."

The student is now considering legal action against the firm, which admitted a 'breach of standards', but reportedly has reprimanded, not dismissed, the employee involved.

Instead, a spokesman said, "We are putting all operators through refresher training to stop this happening again. This is a breach of our standards. We don't do jokes like that. This is a disciplinary issue and we would like to apologise. He should not have received it."

-De Montfort-

A student at De Montfort University has won more than £1 million on the lottery.

19 year old Performing Arts student Hannah Muckell won a £1,017,166 share of the Lotto jackpot in last Wednesday's draw together with her boyfriend, Lee Hallsworth who is a trainee accountant at Sheffield Hallam University. A cheque presentation ceremony by the National Lottery operator, Camelot, took place on Tuesday 2nd December.

The couple used numbers inspired by birthdays and boyfriend Lee Hallsworth's love of motorsport and are now able to quit their part-time jobs at a call centre and supermarket to concentrate on their coursework.

A Camelot spokesman said, "The young lady said she wants to do the press conference today, collect her cheque and get straight back to her course." Miss Muckell said: "I couldn't believe it was happening. I thought Lee was joking before I looked at my TV and realised it was true. I was with my best friend and we just sat on my bed in silence."

The couple had bought one single ticket between them every week and had always chosen the same numbers. Among the winning numbers were 7 - the bike number of late motorsport legend Barry Sheene. In the future, the two now plan to marry and both hope to buy a new car with some of the money.

Deck the Halls

With the season of good tidings falling upon us once again, we are innundated with festive cheer. Family, Jesus, a winter festival, unbridled consumerism? This week's Big Debate asks:

Is Christianity at the heart of Christmas?

the big debate:

For

Jono Hall
jono@trustmail.org

THE BIRTH OF Jesus may not be what most of us in contemporary Britain feel we are celebrating come December 25th, but it is the reason that we have a holiday, come together with our family, our friends, and that we celebrate anything at all. We can ignore the Christian heritage at the very heart of our festivities but that does not remove its presence. The word 'Christmas' is used over and over every year. Perhaps we give it little thought; just another word, yet the connotations are there. Christ (as in Jesus Christ) is the stem the word is built upon, the heart of the word. So the heart of the word 'Christmas' is very much derived from Christianity.

We all do different things at Christmas: we dress up a tree, we give presents, we go to church, we eat together; in Sweden my relatives even dance around the tree (I feel I should admit that I join in too). These traditions have been kept alive through the commemoration of the birth of Christ. There is certainly a valid argument in saying that many of these Christmas traditions are actually not of a Christian origin. Some could or do pre-date Christianity. There is a debate as to whether the Christmas tree is of Lutheran Christian origin or if it is a pagan tradition that has been incorporated into the celebrations. The 25th does not even appear to be the appropriate date, as it is likely that Christmas replaced the celebration of the solstice in the Roman Empire. But despite the varying beginnings of our Christmas celebrations, the overriding Christian sentiments of giving and fellowship with each other are still present.

It is true that the holiday has become increasingly commercialised. Shops and businesses exploit the period surrounding Christmas for profit. Many of us run around worrying what to buy a loved one. It can be a stressful time of spending, but this commercialism is not restricted only to Christmas. We see the same thing at Easter and on Valentines Day. In Muslim countries Ramadan and Eid are similarly commercial. That does not, however, detract entirely from

the meaning of the celebrations. It can certainly be a distraction but when it comes to the day, the spirit remains. The spirit of giving at Christmas is based on the Christian belief that God gave unconditionally to mankind through his son Jesus. We give and we receive gifts, we spend time together, and we set foot in Church (one of the few times a year for many).

Indeed, Christmas is a time when, through gathering at Church and with our families, many people consider the nativity story and it's message. Children all around the world perform nativity plays, and sing Christmas carols and hymns. People attend midnight masses and give generously to those in need, who at other times of year may be neglected to a greater degree. Even for those who claim not to be religious,

Christian traditions such as these permeate the festive period. The Christian tradition of giving generously to others has also encouraged the giving of presents at Christmas that, although over commercialised at the moment, reflects a generosity and spirit, which is seen at Christmas more so than any other time of year.

This is a day and age where many of us in the United Kingdom and in the rest of Europe have dwindling belief in God, yet for the majority of the planet Christmas is seen as Christian, as Ramadan is seen as Muslim. We celebrate Christmas along with other Christians around the globe. Christianity is at the heart of Christmas, but many of us are happy to simply brush it aside.



Against

Lawrence Carter
lacarter1@gmail.com

thousands of years people of the Northern Hemisphere had gathered to celebrate the returning strength of the sun. Although the worst of Winter was still to come, the lengthening days reassured them that life would return to the Earth. In Rome, people would feast, exchange gifts, and roam the streets naked singing carols. Shrewdly, the early Christian movement saw that they could not convert the masses to their fledgling religion if they attempted to prohibit these revelries, so they placed Christmas on December 25, the day after the solstice.

In reality, the date of Jesus' birth is unknown, presumably because early Christians attached little importance to the initial stages of his life. The Gospel of Mark, the earliest and, arguably, the most historically reliable, makes no mention of the Nativity. The traditional story of Jesus' birth is taken from the Gospel of Luke, written over 90 years after Christ's death. Indeed, up until the late 3rd century Jesus' birth was subject to no organised celebration at all.

This leaves the notion that Christmas has been corrupted looking rather farcical. In fact, December 25 has often been the occasion for appalling human rights abuses on the part of Christians. In 1446, for example, Pope Paul II forced Jews to run naked through the streets of Rome. While in 1881, Christian leaders in Poland provoked anti-Semitic race riots in which 12 Jews were murdered.

While modern Christians would obviously condemn such behaviour, the argument that celebrations at this time of year are inextricable from their religious doctrine is mere propaganda. Indeed, the pagan origins of Christmas have outraged fundamentalist Christian groups. The Puritan government of Oliver Cromwell banned it all together, and the US did not recognise it as an official holiday until 1870.

Today it is the turn of capitalists to exploit the Winter Solstice. Like the Catholic Church before it, big business has sought to appropriate this pagan festival in order to further its own goals. What is needed is a return to the original values of the Winter Solstice. We already see this in the joy people take from holly, mistletoe and Christmas trees as well as the tradition of gathering to feast with family and friends. Perhaps the next step should be an expansion of these elements by placing a greater emphasis on our reverence for nature and the importance of giving to those who need it most.

Results from last week's poll:

For student politics: 54%

Against student politics: 46%

Don't forget to log on and vote on this week's debate at leedsstudent.org

CHRISTMAS. THE very sight of that word is enough to send ones testicles north (if you have them) at the thought of your bank balance plunging inexorably south. We are now entering the month of unbridled consumerism. You can almost feel the air moisten with the saliva of drooling shareholders and a subtle rise in temperature – an unexpected consequence of their gleeful rubbing of hands.

December is also a time when Christians, many of whom have been hibernating since Easter, emerge from the woodwork, Bible in hand, to chastise heathens for corrupting the 'true meaning of Christmas'. Apparently December 25 has nothing to do with feasting or exchanging gifts with loved ones and everything to do with the birthday of a man called Jesus, who you've probably never met.

This leaves many of us in a difficult position. What if you don't believe in God and loathe consumerism? What possible meaning could this festival hold for you? Well actually, celebrations on December 25 existed long before Christianity and capitalism and will (hopefully) continue long after as well.

The sheer hypocrisy of Christian bitterness over the appropriation of Christmas by big business is staggering. The commandeering of other people's festivals is what they do best. Both Christmas and Easter were originally pagan festivals. The very word 'Easter', for example, derives from the name of the Anglo Saxon lunar goddess Eostre, whose symbols, the hare (or rabbit) and the egg, endure in celebrations today.

The pagan festival that Christmas was intended to replace was the Winter Solstice. For

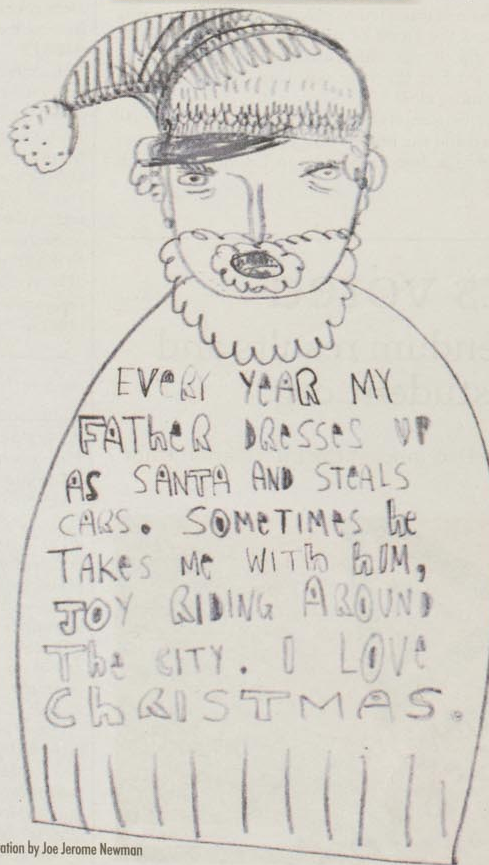
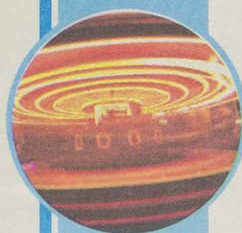


Illustration by Joe Jerome Newman

LS Extra



Christmas Photo Special

10

The Rise of the 'Chav'

Who are they? Where does the word come from? LS1 explores the etymology and connotations of the word 'chav'...

Since its massive popularisation in 2004, the word chav has become so widespread that it is now commonly heard in everyday conversation, and has given rise to hundreds of websites, books and newspaper articles dedicated to the subject. Yet attitudes about the term chav are often deeply polarised. While some people think it is a harmless word that simply describes a particular kind of person, others are worried that it is symbolic of a new wave of classism taking root in our country. As a slang term it tends to be used essentially in a humorous context, and the potentially amusing nature of the word has definitely contributed to its extensive appeal in popular culture. The adoption of the word by the mainstream media has also led it to become widely accepted, as it is not seen as particularly offensive in the way that other derogatory terms which focus on race or religion are. Yet there is concern that the casual use of the word is trivialising issues of inequality that persist in the U.K. Specifically, the common focus on appearance and clothing has led some to comment that the use of the word amounts to a form of prejudice, or at least some level of snobbery towards those perceived as the "lower classes."

The word "Chav" was officially incorporated into the English language in 2005 when it was included in the Oxford English Dictionary, where it was defined as meaning a "young lower-class person typified by brash and loutish behaviour and the wearing of [real or imitation] designer clothes". Other more explicit definitions are plentiful on the internet, for example those found on the Urban Dictionary website such as: "Chav: sub-species of human," or "emerging British sub-culture which is rapidly becoming an

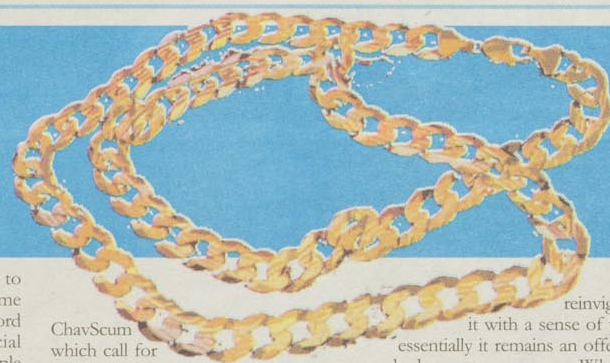
epidemic." Yet despite these varying definitions there seems to be a general consensus on whom the term refers to. The word typically conjures up an image of an ill-educated youth with a fondness for sportswear, bling and baseball caps, and who has a tendency towards violence and petty crime. A far more contentious issue is the origin of the word, of which there are several competing theories. One commonly held view is that the word arose in Kent, derived from the name of the town "Chatham." Another theory is that the word was coined by pupils at the Cheltenham Ladies College, used as an abbreviation of "Cheltenham Average" to describe the less wealthy male inhabitants of the town. Various alternative theories abound, such as the belief that the word is derived from a police acronym for a certain kind of offender, "Council housed and violent." However, the most widely accepted theory is that the expression is descended from the Romani word Chavi, which means boy or child (Romani being the language spoken by the Romani people, more commonly known in this country as gypsies).

Yet whatever its etymological origins the word "chav" was not the first expression used to describe this particular social sub-group. Other terms such as scally, townie or rudeboy have been in popular use within youth culture for many years prior to the mass popularisation of the word. In and around Newcastle the word "charver," which is also believed to have Romani roots, has been used to describe a certain sort of unsavoury young person since the early 1990s, in the aftermath of the Tyneside riots. In Scotland the word Ned, an acronym derived from the phrase "non-educated delinquent," is a commonly used equivalent to the word chav. This

huge variance in the words used to describe what is essentially the same thing suggests that the use of the word chav points to what is a real social phenomenon, a concept which people up and down the country can understand and relate to.

The vilification of the social group conveniently encompassed by the word "chav" is seen to be justified by a considerable proportion of society. Typical accusations levelled towards this segment of the working class are that they waste taxpayers money as they soak up benefits and have lots of children, that they are a major cause of petty crime and littering and that they harass and provoke passers, thereby creating a hostile atmosphere in many town centres. Sociologist Anoop Nayak from Newcastle University explains that there is a perceived difference between "chavs" and the working class in general, "they are seen as being a drain on the state - and they are seen as being very different to the respectable working class who want to be employed." However the casual use of the term has been widely condemned by the left wing media and liberal politicians, who argue that the word is tantamount to classism. Liberal Democrat MP Lembit Opik is an outspoken critic of the word: "I do feel strongly that people who think this is a genuine label are really only labelling themselves as snobs." Labour MP for Liverpool Louise Ellman was similarly critical of the use of the word, "I think it is all too easy to label other groups with ugly-sounding words. I think it is negative and not very helpful."

Amid this controversy it can be hard to decide whether the word is highly derogatory and should be avoided or whether it is simply a harmless bit of fun. Essentially, it is a matter of context. Websites such as



ChavScum

which call for the "eradication of the peasant underclass," are clearly hugely inappropriate, and even if meant in jest are grossly offensive to many people. Similarly, events such as the "Chav night" held at fruity seem to me to be quite distasteful. Beneath the fun and joy of dressing up as a chav lies the inescapable notion that this is simply a form of mocking those poorer and less fortunate than you. However the word chav does not always need to have negative connotations. Highly successful celebrities such as Wayne Rooney are often referred to as chavs in the tabloid media, yet this is not necessarily done with spiteful intentions. Similarly, the Sun ran a "proud to be a chav" campaign which received widespread popular support. Yet despite these reactions to the word which attempt to

reinvigorate it with a sense of pride, essentially it remains an offensive and derogatory term. What is particularly worrying are the connotations surrounding the widespread use of the term. The idea embodied by the word chav is that many members of the white working class are lazy and stupid, suggesting that poor people are poor through their own fault. This conveniently justifies the massive inequalities that are present in Britain, and implies that there is no need to try and address these issues. Ultimately, the presence of an increasingly disillusioned and detached underclass is not something that should be joked about, it is a pressing issue which should be the subject of serious debate.

Paul Haydon

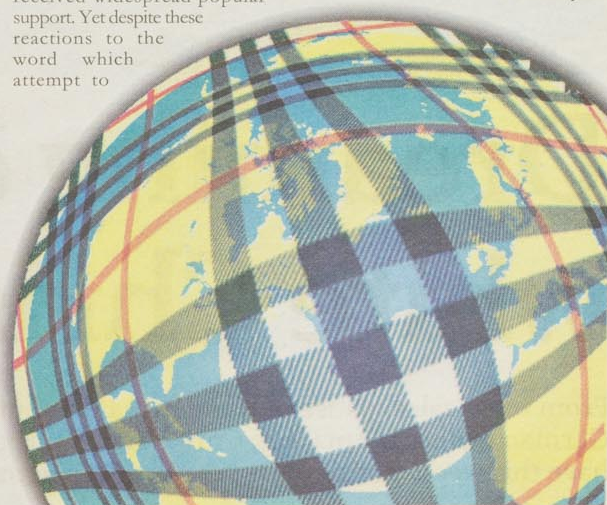




Photo: Melissa Black

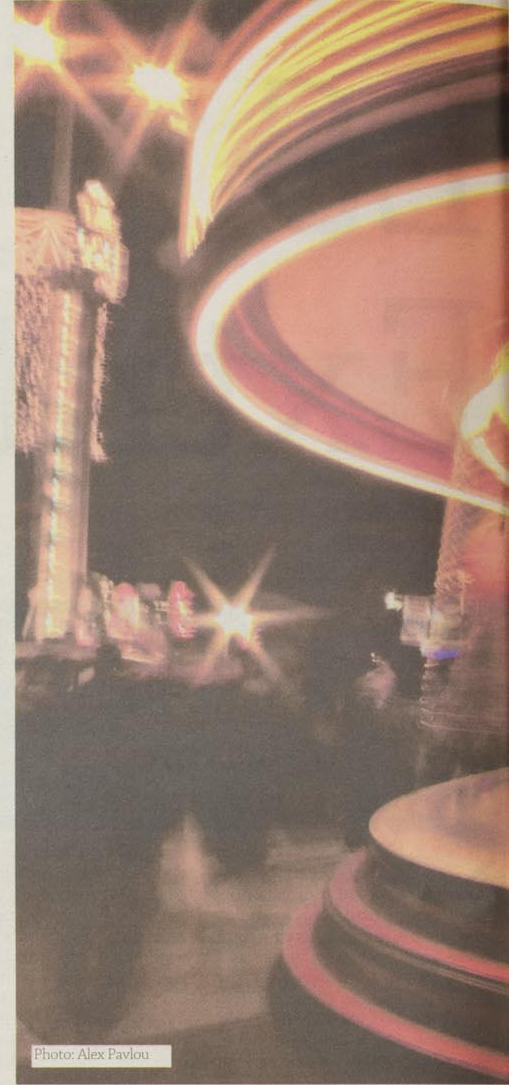


Photo: Alex Pavlou



Photo: Ali Hung

Dreaming of a white Christmas?

From the bleak expanse of Hyde Park buried under snow to the warming German Christmas market, Christkindelmarkt, *Leeds Student's* photographers have this week captured the essence of Christmas in Leeds.



Photo: Alex Pavlou

THE

INSIDE

fifth/december

/twothousandandeight

MUSIC
BOOKS
ARTS
LOW
CULTURE
FASHION
DOWN
TELEVISION
OBSERVATIONS

28 PAGES
OF...
BAUBLES?



LS 2

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The LOW DOWN

with Kazim and Alicia

and Lady Rebecca



Lowdown... Adulthood

Yes, the rumours are true: I am now officially an adult and yes, my month of celebrations has in fact finally ended. For me, November was a time of serious frivolity. Let us not forget how I indulged in a celebration consisting of a trip to Paris, a three-day rave and two surprise parties. Delegating a whole month to celebrate the day of one's birth worked quite nicely; not only did I celebrate for one whole lunar cycle, most people weren't actually sure when my birthday was, so they too delegated the whole of November as my birthday. Nice. However, there are more pressing matters to discuss: although the last month has been very eventful to say the least, it has also aged me. A recent conversation with an absent friend, whom I have not seen for well over a week, brought this sudden ageing to my attention. In the last week in which we haven't seen each other, not only have I aged a year, I have in fact reached adulthood officially, perhaps the most significant, Earth-shattering, historic moment of my life. All in a week.

I suddenly realised that I was no longer a child or even a teen; I had reached that age, that age which seems so unimaginable as a child.

Although this epic transition has happened and I will now soon be victim to social perils such as 'COUNCIL TAX!' or 'MORTGAGE REPAYMENT!' or even the dreaded 'ADULT DATING!' I cannot help but feel like turning 21 is probably the least of my worries. For one, turning 20 was far worse. Not only did it mark the end of my childhood, my teens, and my ability to get away with murder, it also marked the start of a new beginning... **ADULTHOOD!** I know I can trust you Alicia and



Overheard...

Keeping your ear to the ground can often prove weirdly entertaining (and result in some sideways glances).

"Why didn't you just get him to text you? Wait, are you allowed to text children?" - Girl debating the delicacies of communicating with an underage work experience slave, er, student. / "Don't you just hate feeling obliged to have sex with someone." - Apparently a few drunken texts amounts to a contract of intent for one unnamable female hornbag. / "My friends are saying I should take one for the team, he's got his cock pierced so I might do..." - Same hornbag later in the conversation. / "Logically, how can someone think about sex twice in a minute? Most of my sexual thoughts last longer than a minute. Do you have to think about other things in between for it to count? I don't have that much variation in my thoughts." - An editor in particularly reflective mood. / "One of them did look particularly Aryan." - A eugenically minded observer of people. / "Oh my God, he's married to his sister! No wait, he's married to his wife!" - A confused and bemused Comment editor. / "What kind of sick bastard gets married!?" - A different confused and bemused Comment editor. / A photo of Jeus Christ? I don't think it is!" - One male student doubts that the Canon 350D was around circa the year 0.

you too reader, so what is discussed in Lowdown stays in Lowdown, but I have confession to make. Turning 21 really was a walk in the park compared to turning 20; in fact, turning 21 felt like nothing much, whereas turning 20 felt like the aforementioned epic, momentous, historic transition. I suffered from some chronic anxiety about turning 20. I suddenly realised that I was no longer a child or even a teen; I had reached that age, that age which seems so unimaginable as a child. That age that as a child you ponder in infinite wonderment because it seems so inaccessible, almost a lifetime away. Well, not quite kids, take my word for it, you will be there in a jiffy. Here I am, a fucking ADULT, hardly prepared. No one gives you a handbook to prepare you for what the world has in store for you post University, although I wish they did. I will stop before I start sounding like a single mum with post-natal depression.

words/ kazim rashid

I don't believe that turning 20 or 21 makes that much difference. I am inclined to think that you can cling on to your childhood at least until the big three zero, any later than that and you'll begin to look like one of those kids who got breastfed until he was ten. It's so strange to think that when you were a child, you perceived age thirty to be pretty much dead, yet it doesn't seem so far away any more. Particularly as the youngest female member of my family I believe I still hold the power to delegate responsibility for all things mundane onto my parents, trivial matters such as application forms and arranging doctors appointments, I mean, I'm pretty sure parents love to do these things anyway. They're like secretaries: there to help alleviate any unwanted pressures which you could argue may affect your university grade. Small diversions like these can help you to delay the ageing process whereby general administration becomes one of the principal tasks in hand.

In regards to saying goodbye to the teen

years, thank fuck for that! Why are 13-year-olds so ugly? They're either really tall and gangly or just fat, normally with horrendous skin. I don't believe anybody felt comfortable during puberty. I even feel uncomfortable saying the word 'puberty.'

We're arguably on the rocky road to maturity and I hope it's true that things get better with age. But I think immaturity could be the key, the resolution to the problem, the elixir of youth.

They should never have attached a suffix to the word pube to describe a life stage. I'm not saying I'm embracing adulthood as of yet either; it's not really hit me as I'm still wallowing in the freedom of University. When these rights of freedom are revoked, and I have to return to parental accommodation, the only means of escape being the fruits of a regular income, I think then it will hit me. I can't actually imagine a humdrum existence governed by the beat of the nine to five. It's almost making me sick; I have a really sensitive gag reflex. Well, it's undeniable, we're arguably on the rocky road to maturity and I hope it's true that things get better with age. But I think immaturity could be the key, the resolution to the problem, the elixir of youth. As opposed to immaturity being social suicide during the teen years, I think now the reverse of this could be said to be true. So, avoid responsibility, stay in education for as long as possible, delegate mundane tasks, kick boys in the privates and in conclusion... stay fresh.

words/ alicia michael

Going up



Finding an amazing new track/band/group

I guess we all hear new songs all the time (adverts, the iPod of the guy sitting next to you), but it's a special thing to hear a song for the first time, and actually feel your mind being blown. FYI, Santogold. You'll find a Way. Switch and Sinden Remix. Oh my fucking Goodness.

Indulging in those little pleasures in life

It actually improves the quality of my whole day when I drink some juice out of the fridge straight from the carton. Or when I use the toilet without locking the door. Or when I steal a lollipop from a small child. Or general things of that nature. Never fear, these things vary from person to person, so don't be thinking your some sort of weirdo if you don't enjoy the same things.

Hearing snippets of passing peoples' conversations.

And I quote "...I woke up covered in vomit" and "I thought I'd had a shower but I hadn't washed my face and hair wasn't wet, so I guess I didn't..." There are some real intellectual and inspiring minds walking around this great institution that we lovingly call Uni.

Wearing extremely short shorts with tights and Ugg boots in an earnest effort to keep warm.

Now I'm not some sort of genius, but this combination of garments just doesn't equal 'snug' to me. If your shivering dear, perhaps a pair of trousers might do something to help.

Reebok Workouts/ Freestyles.

Now that they're officially 'trendy' everyone and their mums have 'em. I mean literally - I saw a lady wearing them who had to have had at least two kids judging by the 'I'm on the school run and am therefore stressed and didn't have enough time to brush my hair' look about her. And despite having had them for an age I find myself lumped in the 'Look! Another foot clone!' category. Uncool.

Going down





10

REASONS WHY YOU'RE ON SANTA'S NAUGHTY LIST

It's that time of year again when everyone starts to get nervous. Have I been naughty or nice? Will I get a lump of coal in my stocking, or something I didn't ask for? Re-playing the year in your head you notice a small creature with pointy ears in the background of every scene, watching, making notes, scuttling away to report your misdemeanours to the Red Man. Even if you've hand-made mince pies and poured an extra dash of sherry on the doorstep, it's too late for bribery now. Santa knows what you did (since) last Christmas...



2. Pulling a sickie at work

Everyone does it, they can cope without you, the football's on: these are the excuses you give yourself but deep down you know that it's wrong and you're nothing but a filthy liar. If you feign a really good husky voice on the phone you might convince the boss that your hangover is a serious illness, but Santa ain't stupid. Except for that time he got stuck up a chimney after all nobody's perfect.

1. Eating your housemate's food

It started out with a cheeky dash of milk and a scrape of butter, but it was a slippery slope and before long you were stealing, yes stealing, an entire slice of bread. You could go to prison for it if your housemates suddenly take it upon themselves to install CCTV in the kitchen, or catch you red handed with illegal crumbs on your face.

3. Ignoring your parents' phone calls

Parents seem to have a knack of phoning at the worst possible moments such as during dinner, or worse, sex. The wonders of caller-ID mean that the days of picking up the phone and introducing yourself as "Bridget Jones, wanton sex goddess with a very bad man between her thighs" to your Mum are well and truly over. As, indeed, could be the days of picking up the phone to your Mum at all. It's recommended that you answer at least once during the month of December because she's probably ringing to ask what you want for Christmas. I never get why she does this though because I've already sent my letter directly to the North Pole by this time...



photo/charlie bland

4. Unholy nights

You may have spent a fair amount of time on your knees this year, but not in prayer. He enjoys a quick roll in the snow as much as the next man (only with his good wife Mary Christmas I hasten to add), but Santa can't stress this enough: be careful, and put a sack on it.



6. Letting a door close on an old lady

You felt bad about it at the time, but you were in a rush and she was walking (as those with a walking stick tend to) really, really slow. Since then you've tried to make it up to the older community by volunteering at a home and donating money to Help the Aged, but somehow you just can't shake off that image of the alarmed and disappointed lady with the blue-rinse hair stuck helplessly behind the doors of Marks and Spencers.

5. Laughing at someone who's fallen over

Maybe you've been watching too much Mr Bean or something, but recently other people's misfortunes have been much to your amusement. There's nothing better to brighten up a walk to campus than the person in front of you accidentally tripping over an uneven piece of pavement, is there? And if they happen to fall all the way to the ground, it's not unnatural to laugh before offering to help them up, is it? No, of course it's not. Not if you're a horrible, horrible person.



7. Fantasising about your best friend's boyfriend/girlfriend

Inside your mind was the one place you thought Santa's judgement couldn't reach you, but alas, it seems you dangerously underestimated the extent of his jolly magic. Either that or he saw a tinselly glint in your eye and drew the logical conclusions. To avoid committing the cardinal sin of fancying your best mate's other half, next time you feel your thoughts straying in the wrong direction just picture Santa naked.

8. The sniff test

I often wonder whether laundry is like hair in that if you leave it long enough it'll start to wash itself- it seems unlikely. The sniff test is when you've built up such a pile of clothes on your bedroom floor that you have to smell an item before you put it on in order to check whether it's clean enough to wear. Obviously it's not a particularly classy way to start the day, especially when it comes to underwear, and so putting off doing your laundry for too long definitely warrants a tick in the naughty box.

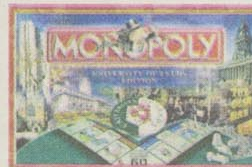
9. Cheating at monopoly

It was doomed from the start when you got lumbered with the boot. Sitting in jail for the fifth time with only Old Kent Road to your name it becomes apparent that you're never going to win this game without some form of underhanded swindle. So whilst your opponents are busy admiring their boulevard of hotels, you fake a rolled ten, land on the parking space and earn everyone's taxed cash. Following which you instantly buy four hotels and everyone admires your swoop to an underdog's victory. Everyone, that is, except Santa...



10. Hiding books in the library

There is a malicious streak in all of us, and for some this is never more evident than when they're studying in the library and suddenly have the urge to mix up all the books so that their coursemates are at a disadvantage. To counteract this instinct, you could put friendly post-it notes inside the books with encouraging messages written on them like, "not far to go now!" or "I found this page particularly useful!" Of course if you just treated the books normally you could be neither an evil genius nor an annoying nerd, which I think is preferable.



If you've committed more than five of these sins during the year I'd say there's practically no hope of you receiving any more than a piece of fruit in your stocking this Christmas. Unless of course Santa Claus doesn't exist and the unconditional love of your friends and family means you'll be lavished with presents whatever you've done. As someone who's been good all year I hardly think this is fair, but whatever, Merry Christmas I suppose.

PLATFORM BOOTS

This week we have serious shoe envy. The Yves Saint Laurent platform boots have long been on the wish list, but the suitably big price tag they come with has left them just to be gazed at in magazines and on the catwalk. But this season the highstreet have begun to create their own affordable versions that are just as delicious. At the top end of the high street Kurt Geiger have designed a suede pair with a platform not for the faint hearted and get yourself down to the ever reliable Topshop who have created a high ankle boot with a platform.

They will add edge to a little black dress and are perfect with this season's gothic look of lace and wet look leggings and if you're brave enough to embrace the leather trend this season then a pair of platform boots teamed with a little black mini or leather dress will be seriously cool.

words/ louise thorpe

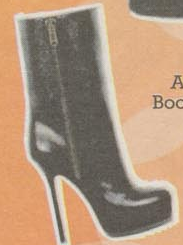


Boots:
 Carvella
 sister: (KG,
 £140)

YSL Double Zip
 boot £645.55



Allure High Ankle
 Boot (Topshop, £75)



Progress in the Leeds Shopping Scene

Innovative clothing store and art gallery Paper Scissor Stone open their doors

With Christmas fast approaching two shops have opened just in time to lure in Leeds shoppers. Providing the highest standard of clothing in a pleasant shopping environment, we advice considering these in your shopping plans...

The successful collaboration of Leeds label Electronic Poet, graphic designer Si Scott and art curator Jules Balchin has culminated in the form of newly opened shop Paper Scissor Stone. The shop will showcase designers such as Wood Wood, RittenHouse, Steven Alan, Atelier LaDurance, Sixpack, Tonite, Edwin Jeans, Something & Something Else, Paul & Joe Sister and of course the full collection from Electronic Poet.

Due to the collaborative forces of Jules Balchin and Si Scott, the project has become more than simply a shop, showcasing a selection of art work as well. The obscure layout which somewhat resembles a goldfish bowl is both airy and light, creating a beautiful gallery space. Featuring original art work and prints from Anthony Burrill, No Days Off, Revenge Is Sweet, Rose Stallard, Alex Trochut, Steven Wilson alongside the works of Si Scott, the trio have also chosen to include favorite furniture

designs from Naught One, Anglepoise and Propaganda. This provides the shop with a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere, giving customers the opportunity to appreciate the art pieces. With the added selling of camera's from Lomography and quirky items from Atypyk, an irresistible hub of creativity has emerged.

From furniture designs, fashion designs, to the work of like-minded artists listed, the store will also stock publications on photography, art & design, travel, music and fashion.

Linking up with local club nights and gigs, selling tickets, the shop offers the opportunity for customers to read the papers and browse the internet, and buy CD's from the PSSST top 10.

words/ hannah vasdekys



For more information contact steve@paper-scissor-stone.co.uk Register your interest at www.paper-scissor-stone.co.uk

electronic poet // paper scissor stone store 38 new york street leeds. LS2 7DY

Electronic Poet clothing



FASHION ON THE CITY LIMITS

That festive time of year is approaching fast, so we thought what better way to celebrate than championing a great Christmas party outfit as well as a shopping haven in Leeds that you can get it all from under a warm roof! The White Rose centre has recently updated its shops, trends and look to cater for us poor yet fashionable students. The above outfit was got for a meager 50 pounds! To find out more about how you can get the posh-punk look we've created, visit www.wearitforofashion.co.uk

words and photo/ alexandra haddow
model/ natalie cawley

Punk T-shirt:
Topshop, £18

Headbands:
Accessorize, £7 for 3,
Pearls: Models Own

Skirt: £10, Primark



Above: earrings: 10,
Miss Selfridge, Ring,
6, Topshop



Skinted or Minted

The Christmas cocktail dress

Winter has settled in and town is becoming ever busier with red nosed shoppers frantically dashing from shop to shop, limbs afluttering in every direction with a look of panic in their eyes- this can only mean one thing. In the words of the ever so slightly tedious Coca Cola adverts, holidays are coming. And we're not talking any holiday, oh no. This is the holiday to top all others, the holiday for love and joy, the season to be jolly, it is Christmas time and Christmas time means Christmas parties. In the mind of the fashion conscious individual Christmas parties aren't about mulled wine and idle chit chat, no, Christmas parties mean Christmas outfits. And so, the search begins for the perfect cocktail dress that will guarantee a kiss under the mistletoe. To avoid being lonely this Christmas, serious legwork is required to make sure you are looking your best. We need a dress that will hide those mince pie thighs and stand a head above the ill chosen dresses from Christmas past. Something sparkly or colourful is what we're looking for, do however avoid putting the two together, no one will fancy the girl dressed as a Christmas tree. Luckily for you, yours truly has spent a fair amount of time trawling the shops to find the perfect buys. This little red Bandeau dress is perfect if you're looking for something uber sexy, or if you really feel like splashing out this Christmas try this sequin vintage-look dress from Oasis, pair it with a cute headband and you'll have perfected true 20s chic.

words/ sophie herdman

Skinted
ASOS- £38



Minted
Oasis- £100

words/ anna temby



NAME: Roksanda Illincic

OCCUPATION: Fashion designer

BIO: After starting her own fashion label in 2003, Roksanda immediately became renowned for her demi-couture, beautifully crafted clothing. Recent recognition in the form of the Fashion Forward prize at London fashion week 2008, places her firmly on the fashion radar for up and coming designers. Thandie Newton, Cate Blanchett and Milla Jovovich and are already dotting fans. Her techniques of fabulous material twisting and manipulation cast beautiful, unusual shapes and silhouettes. The innovative 3D pleating, use of luxe materials and even furnishing and interior fabric has already made her renown, her individuality for elaborating is remarkable. Adding Harvey Nichols as her first London department store, allows her work to become much more accessible to the mere students amongst us. The perfect option for a fabulous cocktail dress or something extra special for the Christmas party season, certainly worth the price tag for a timeless classic. Bow detailing features frequently, adding the cute factor to even the simplest of garments. The Spring/Summer 09' preview looks just as exciting as her past collections, lots of light silks mixed with coarser netting add the unmissable edge that is becoming her signature style. Sheerness of the fabric and muted colours complement the exaggerated distortion of shapes. Illincic creates bold silhouettes through sharp, tailored shoulders and nipped in waists. Such distinct shapes still maintain a crucial air of romanticism and femininity. Her clothing is ever versatile, each piece can be worn a million ways, the fabric made to fall perfectly imperfectly, a deliciously raw and refreshing designer is upon us.

words/ kerry mckenna

CLOTHES SHOW PREVIEW

The largest fashion and beauty event in the world has finally returned! The Clothes Show Live officially opened its doors today at 10am, with fashion shows, makeup gurus and thousands of shopping stalls all under one roof. On top of showcasing the latest in fashion and beauty, top name celebrities from Erin O'Connor to Hilary Alexander are making appearances; and if you're looking to become the next Daisy Lowe or Alice Dellal, select model scouts are mingling with the crowds on the hunt to sign the next faces of fashion.

Split into five different coloured zones, the Clothes Show aims to cover the entire fashion spectrum with some added bonuses. The Purple Zone is playing host to the best in Urban Streetwear as well as the Gatecrasher Club DJ Bar, featuring the hottest tracks from some of Gatecrasher's finest DJs. Move onto the Blue Zone for your something old and something new with one off vintage pieces featuring along side everybody's favourite high street names. Fancy something a little more unusual? Head to the Red Zone and find the most edgy and

unique brands on offer in the UK. For fashionistas with a bit more cash to spend, the Black Label Zone should be the first port of call. Designers who featured at London Fashion Week and are at the cutting edge of fashion will have their collections here. However, fashion isn't the be all and end all. The Pink Zone ensures that the beauty market is well represented, with makeup artists and stylists on hand to give spray tans, manicures and hair restyles. The Superdrug Hair & Beauty Stage also features here, with experts giving top tips and live demonstrations.

The Clothes Show Live is held at the NEC, Birmingham from 5th-10th December. Tickets may still be available. Call 0844 579 3178 to book.

RECORDINGS/

singles

Ratatat
'Shempi'
(XL)



Throw out your Crystal Castles albums, the true Kings of the electro are back. 'Shempi' is not so much a song as the sonic recreation of an LSD trip. Sit back and lament that you will not hear another single this good for a while. (9)
words/ simon rowbotham

The Hours
'See the Light'
(Isgood)



West London septet The Hours kick off 'See the Light' with a derivative piano intro, pretty much the extent of what's on offer during this seven-minute epic of drudgery. It's difficult not to be underwhelmed by this artless aping of Coldplay. An orgy of the banal and unoriginal. (3)
words/ alister simpson

Appleeed
'Concrete Jungle'
EP
(self-released)



Fusing sparse London beats and basslines with a gritty northern lyrical style, A-side 'Mickey Dyson' paints a vivid picture of the desparation of living on the breadline. Appleeed's intelligent vocal delivery is reminiscent of Mike Skinner, and B-side 'Nancy' shows off his rhyming ability to the full. One to watch. (6)
words/ tom bush

Tanlines
'New Flowers'
(Young Turks)



Rapid disco rhythms, math rock guitars, chirpy synth lines and ethereal vocals in the background are all very well, but they don't change the fact that this is utterly unmemorable. Tanlines may not consider catchiness a priority but this remains a dispensable piece of wallpaper music. (5)
words/ luke fear

Portishead
'Magic Doors'
(Island)



Perhaps due to the downbeat nature of the vocals and chord progressions, or the bizarre analogue synth noisiness before the last chorus, this song is an unexpected third single from third album, *Third*. If one listens to the track 'as a single', however, there are elements - the rich full piano chords and a surprisingly catchy cowbell, for instance - that actually are more accessible. Strange single choice, incredible track. (8)
words/ michael waters

album of the week

Cat Power Dark End of the Street EP (Matador)

Cat Power has always been considered somewhat of a covers queen, interpreting such greats as James Brown, Johnny Cash and Bob Dylan on past records. *Dark End of the Street* is released in the wake of the particularly successful sessions for her last album *Jukebox*, for which more songs and covers than could be featured were recorded. The artists covered on *Jukebox* - names such as Brown, Dylan and Billie Holiday - are arguably of a higher calibre than those covered on *Dark End of the Street*, but this doesn't matter one single iota, as Chan Marshall works her metamorphic magic on all songs involved. Perhaps the most obscure song to be covered here is 'Fortunate Son' by, today,



seldom known 1970s rock n' roll band Creedence Clearwater Revival. The contrast between the original and the cover couldn't be starker. Marshall completely castrates the 70s swamp rock ballad, bringing the tempo down right down and replacing shrill guitar licks with cacophonous violin and decadent, soothing piano interjections. Her broody, mature vocal tones, again, are

an effective contrast with Creedence Clearwater Revival's nasal vocalities. The title track is perhaps the highlight. A beautifully written 1967 soul song, the track is practically unchanged from either Aretha Franklin's recent cover or the James Carr original, perhaps showing Marshall's respect for it. Her typically minimalist style suits the song perfectly, and the moody timbre fits perfectly within the context of late 60s soul. Cat Power's back catalogue features a truly eclectic mix of covers, and this EP is no exception. The Pogues, Otis Reading and Fairport Convention too are covered. It is a genuine pleasure to listen to her destroy and rebuild these old, esoteric songs. It may seem like this is just a release to tide the fans over whilst they wait for a new studio album, and it most probably is. But it doesn't seem to matter when the tide drags you out and sucks you under into Power's wonderfully tenebrous and brooding representations of songs past. (8)
words/ simon rowbotham

more albums



The Irrepressibles
From the
Circus to the
Sea
(Of Naked
Design)

This EP is more than it seems. Not merely seven songs by a band getting aroused by their own 'originality', it is also the soundtrack to a new short film by choreographer/physical performer/director Shelly Love entitled *The Forgotten Circus*, in which the story of a circus that performs to no audience is told through the medium of interpretative dance; a film with an unintelligible monologue, spoken by a macabre ringmaster and subtitled; a film which plays entirely (wait for it) in reverse. Love has spent two years as 'Artist in Residence' at the Place Robin Howard Theatre in London, and she is, without doubt, a hugely lateral thinker.

But this is the music page. The Irrepressibles' soundtrack is undeniably classical. The instrumentation is the biggest giveaway: harps, flutes, strings and organs fight for focus beneath Jamie McDermott's wavering falsetto, although, as is so often the case, the oboe is the real stroke of genius. The woodwind lends the texture a warmth that is deeply compatible with McDermott's earthy, rounded harmonic language. The composition is varied in quality; the record alternates between short instrumentals and longer, more complete songs.

The latter are what really give the listener pause for thought. The Irrepressibles have written two or three really solid pop tracks - better than anything on the new albums by the Killers or Keane - but, by refusing to orchestrate for pop, and by associating themselves with nutters, they're refusing the popularity their work so richly deserves. The Irrepressibles should by rights be a very successful band, but they're so intent on being zany that if they ever have a platinum album I'll eat my shoelaces. (6)
words/ george reece



Frank Turner
The First Three
Years
(Xtra Mile)

Frank Turner plays the role of an over excited Father Christmas, providing fans with an early present, in the shape of *The First Three Years*. This compilation attempts to capture the spirit of Turner's early solo career, during which time he has built up the kind of fervent support many solo artists only dream of. This release includes b-sides, album out-takes, early demos, live session tracks and previously unreleased niceties. The 23 tracks (24, including bonus track 'Longing For The Day') serve as an introduction to Turner's solo work for anyone wanting to become more familiar with the ex-Million Dead front-man. Equally, it would seem this CD is a much anticipated addition to any Frank Turner enthusiasts collection. Those who managed to catch one of Turner's recent sold-out shows know that live is where these songs really belong, with the crowd blaring out the lyrics at the top of their lungs. However, it is undeniable that even live favourites translate well onto record. Excitingly, Turner's previously unreleased, tentatively termed 'cover' of Million Dead single 'Smiling At Strangers On Trains' features here, along with, two other previously unreleased covers, of varying worth. This album's only downside is that it does feel a bit nostalgic (in a bad way), like Turner is retiring from thirty years of music not commemorating three. With a steady tour rota planned for this month and the beginning of next year, it would be well worth seeing these songs live, and then buying the record. That way, listening to the album reminds you of the spectacle that is a live FT show, and you will feel nostalgic, sort of. (8)
words/ helena goodwyn



Kennedy
Life Is an
Afterparty
(Cordless)

This rather unusual offering kicks off with 'Life is a Party', a simple dance backbeat with monotone piano melodies, which seems safe enough. Then Kennedy starts to rap, turning the song into a Primal Scream tribute band fronted by Westwood. He manages to redeem himself slightly in the chorus by adding a touch of classy brass but, in short, this song should not be the opener. Fortunately, 'I Hate Rock 'n' Roll' adds more flavour, with an infectious rhythm and clever lyrics ('I was playing twister/ with your little sister/ listening to Twisted Sister') making the tune slightly more than a wedding disco favourite. However, it does slip a little too easily from hating rock 'n' roll to sex with underage girls. The upbeat and colorful 'John and Yoko' lightens the mood with a satirical take on the Beatle-breaker ('You can break up my band when they drop the bomb').

Things go downhill when the Wideboys remix of 'Your Mama' turns one of Kennedy's classics into a depressingly bad dance track, largely because he is trying to sound like a 'bad-ass' gangster (Kid Rock, anybody?). Then comes the thuper duper 'Karate', which, while better than the previous track, is still terrible: one drum beat, one bass riff, minimalistic guitar and shabby vocals with excessive reverb. Enough to make you tap your foot, until you realise what you're doing and hang your head in shame.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about Kennedy's pop is that it has much more snap and crackle than most. His music certainly won't appeal to everyone but, by the same token, bits of it could even make the guy with two left feet want to dance in circles, and isn't that the purpose of pop music? (4)
words/ jack mcgregor



LIVE/ gig of the week

GUEST/ pascal ansell

An interview with Room 237

Room 237 are quality. Over the last three years, they've brought some chief international leftfield acts to Leeds - Squarepusher, Melvins, LFO, Melt Banana, A Silver Mt Zion, and Four Tet, to name a few. More importantly, acts like Battles, Foals, Flying Lotus, Rolo Tomassi and Jamie Liddell have been premiered prior to their becoming more well known.

To escape the tediously 'trendy' Oxford, the two friends Tom Hammond and Marcus Noblett moved to Leeds to study and soak up the comparably immense scene. 'Marcus had been putting on a few nights under a different name,' says Tom, 'and, in April 2005, he managed to get a Warp showcase night. After a summer which saw us go to Primavera and Glade, we came back to Leeds and, to stop ourselves being bored in our day jobs, we started a tiny night at Strawberry Fields [159, Woodhouse Lane] where we would play pretty much the stuff we ended up putting on now. After Marcus put on Squarepusher, I decided to get involved and headline Hella as my first show.'

What influenced you to start?

Over the years, All Tomorrow's Parties [ace London-based promoters] have been a major influence, bringing together leftfield bands and electronic artists that wouldn't typically make bigger bills. Even this xmas they have the Locust, Melvins and Squarepusher at the same festival! Other influences have been Warp Records, the Leeds DIY scene, Upset The Rhythm and Capsule. It's cool to have brought acts from all of these organizations to Leeds but it is also important to support local bands and acts as well. Our ethos has always been to provide people in Leeds with music that makes you think outside the box and lets you escape from everyday mundanity.

What are the genres you collectively concern yourself with?

Electronica, future hip hop, avant-rock, noise, experimental, dub-step, techno, and many many more hilarious sub genres.

You must have worked with some eccentric artists; any strange rider requests?

Well, Melvins recently wanted laughing gas, adult material (the more perverted the better), and a crash helmet.

What's the deal with profits or breaking even?

We deal with a lot of US artists and the budgets and riders we deal with mean that every event is a risk. We put any profit back into getting another amazing artist to Leeds - we have made profits and lost money over the years but we have consistently brought bigger artists and attracted a wider fanbase as time has worn on.

Thoughts about Oxford and Leeds scenes?

The real difference in the Oxford and Leeds scenes is simply two things; there are more people in Leeds and they dance more.

What kinds of people come to your nights?

There are so many different types of people that come to Room 237 gigs. I would say we have about 50-100 people who will usually come - these people want to be tested and have their mind expanded with the music they hear. It's great to see them go home exhilarated, exhausted and/or educated.

Upcoming gig: Current Valve - Wire, 12/12/08
www.rm237.co.uk

Duffy Academy 28/11/08

It's Friday night at the Academy and a large queue is waiting to see Duffy for the first leg of her UK tour. Once inside we're met by the enjoyably folkish support band Findlay Brown who warm up the crowd with powerful vocals and a range of styles, often seeming to switch musical genres between songs. A sixties vibe pervades throughout, making this support slot a perfect fit for tonight's headliner.

Finally just after 9pm, the band come on stage to a shrieking crowd and we get our first glimpse of the welsh-born star; strikingly dressed in a sixties style mini dress with large bouffant hair.

She launches straight into the slow and melancholy 'Rockferry'. The crowd fall into a stunned silence at the magnitude and intensity of Duffy's voice which glides effortlessly through song after song. She picks up the pace with

'Hanging On Too Long' and 'Rain On Your Parade' and shows a flirtatious side with very sultry dancing as she swings the microphone suggestively. The low, soft lighting coupled with her dominating on-stage presence gives a



intimate feel to the packed out Academy. Duffy moves seamlessly through her album; the band complimenting her voice perfectly and adding weight to songs like 'Pool For You'. Halfway through the set things slow down again with the powerful ballad 'Warwick Avenue'. It's a definite favourite with the audience, finishing to an almost deafening applause. This soulful, often

lamenting tone lingers for the next few songs, before Duffy swings back into full attitude mode with a new song 'Stop' which accentuates the richness and versatility of her voice. The last song is perhaps inevitably 'Mercy', Duffy's number one song that ensured her rise to fame. The fired-up audience cannot contain their cheering and whistling. The songstress exits on a high, leaving everyone waiting excitedly for her encore.

A few minutes go by before her return, at which point she introduces her impressive band and backing singers, who happen to be her younger twin cousins. She plays a final four songs including 'I'm Scared' and 'Please Stay' before re-exiting to tumultuous applause, whilst her band remain on for another few minutes as people leave.

The gig is a huge success with few criticisms to make; her astonishing voice is almost untouchable there are barely any weak songs. Seeing Duffy live totally surpasses all expectations, undoubtedly building up a strong fan base to come back for future gigs. (9)

words/ sophie milmes

more gigs

The Zutons Academy 21/11/08



9.15pm and the band walk on stage to tremendous applause. Local scouse band 'The Sixteen Tonnes' and Chicago based 'The Redwalls' do an amazing job of warming up the crowd, particularly the latter. The band launches into 'Zuton Fever'; first song, first album - good start.

Front-man Dave McCabe is at ease with the audience, and after stating that the next song is dedicated to a girl at the front, the guitar intro to the single 'Always Right Behind You' kicks in. It's hard to tell which songs receive the biggest reaction as they all get a huge cheer; it's clear that those here tonight aren't just sticking around for 'Valerie'.

Although only a few tracks off *Tired Of Hanging Around* feature tonight, the band play all but four tracks from the first album and most of the most recent *You Can Do Anything*. Highlights include 'Pressure Point', 'Hello Conscience', and 'You Will You Won't'. Joined by additional multi-instrumentalists taking duty on baritone sax, flute, guitar etc, the Zutons have a massive sound; not cluttered or messy, but tight, tidy and together. The closing section of finale 'Why Won't You Give Me Your Love?' lasts for around ten minutes and features some impromptu jamming.

The band walk off stage only to return five minutes later, with a birthday cake and a huge round of 'Happy Birthday' in celebration of saxophonist Abi's birthday. After the final bow has been taken, the band march off (while Abi throws the cake into the crowd). The Zutons seem pleased, the crowd looks pleased. And so they should be. (8)

words/ richard blenkinsop

Clinic Brudenell Social Club 22/11/08



Opens, Threatmantics, are unable to put on the visual show they had had planned, however their set holds its own. There are quirky organ and guitar tones, a childish approach to riffs and frequent repetition of the latter that brings to mind Sonic Youth. Effects used on the frontman's violin come across a little heavy-handed initially, but work very well. Infectious melodies often sound more like they are coming from a synthesiser than any stringed instrument, creating a full, distinctive sound. Admittedly the singer's technique resembles that of a boomy wedding DJ - a shame - given that a lot of the melodies are as catchy and fun as the t-shirts.

Now, Clinic, self-proclaimed 'mad Englishmen', step up in surgeon masks. With a sonic identity as distinctive as their image, much of Clinic's charisma is in the production on their recordings, thus character is lost live within the fog of distorted guitar and vintage sounding keyboards (the exception being Blackburn's pained, denched vocals that still sound magic on stage). Visuals in the form of intricate pencil spirals and marbles orbiting each other create a strange impression, somewhere in between Art Attack and an '80s GCSE Chemistry film. There is a fleeting suspicion that such conspicuous visuals are making up for a deficiency elsewhere, but it's particularly difficult to spot where, and after all - this multimedia approach is quite rightly the future of live music in many a scene. Clinic's set is more than competently executed, highlights including 'Walking With Thee' and encore opener 'Harvest'. Though a shame about Threatmantics visual non-happenings, this was still very much a satisfying and consistent show of off-kilter rock. (7)

words/ michael waters

Billy Bragg Academy 20/11/08



Fans of Billy Bragg are treated to the 'deluxe package' at Leeds Academy tonight. For £25 the sell out crowd are given a two hour solo performance featuring the best from Bragg's vast back catalogue ('Sexuality', 'Accident Waiting to Happen', 'There is Power in a Union') as well as some new material and snippets from Bragg's 1998 Woody Guthrie project with Wilco. There is of course, frequent interludes in which Bragg lets loose the leftist politics that fuelled his career, and have made him as much an activist as a musician.

Bragg's earlier hits are superb: at some point in the '80s he seems to have discovered how to write the perfect chorus, full of melodic hooks and life affirming lyrics. Bragg barely need sing a word and indeed chooses not to so the adoring crowd do it for him. So well known are these songs that, when not singing, Bragg interjects with his thoughts, or stops to try out a different, new approach. The show falls down, however, with the newer material (*Mr Love and Justice*) which doesn't have the melodic punch or political drive of old. Songs such as tonight's opener 'Farm Boy' and the dreary 'I Keep Faith' seem to demonstrate a familiar middle aged reliance on easy listening (Bragg drops his traditional nasal cockney drawl for a 'Springsteen-esque' accent). The rants soon become tiresome as they increase in length and decrease in worth. The comments are valid but by no means revolutionary, amounting more or less to 'Guantanamo Bay is bad', 'Thatcher was a bitch' etc. However, by the euphoric closer 'A New England' (the single greatest song ever written, ever) fists are thrust high. (7)

words/ andrew mcwhirter

GUEST/

PAGE THREE/

luke fear

On Double Albums

This month marked the 40th anniversary of The Beatles' eponymous double LP more commonly known as *The White Album*. The record still sparks interest today, not just as a classic but also as an opus that was largely imperfect. Yes, it contains some of the greatest songs by The Beatles, if not of all time, but, with hindsight, it is more a collection of solo-written tracks by a group of people who were starting to hate each other. With all four egos needing to be indulged, and therefore nothing being thrown out, what you really have is an album and a half's worth of great material and a remaining quarter that is pretty inessential. 'Sexy Sadie', '...Bungalow Bill' and 'Revolution 9' didn't really need to ever be written. And does 'Why Don't We Do It in the Road?' (a stupid title for a stupid song) really deserve to be on the same disc as 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps'? Although there are some who argue that the album's deformities are what make it timeless, the jury is still out on whether the material should have been condensed to a single vinyl's worth.

This all says less about the weaknesses of The Beatles and more about the double album format. The territory has a dodgy history of artists walking a fine line between grandiose masterpieces and needless self-indulgence. In fact, the results are almost always closer to the latter. This may be a sweeping statement but there has probably never been a perfect double album. Many people would beg to differ and reference a whole list of releases such as Prince, Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, Stevie Wonder etc. as proof to the contrary but, like *The White Album*, these often stellar works have excess fat that could and should have been trimmed were it not for the artist's pride. There are meticulous faults to be found in most of them. Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd released double albums almost because it seemed like the only logical step to take after the huge success of their previous efforts. Smashing Pumpkins' *Mellon Collie...* and Nine Inch Nails' *The Fragile* both feel slightly bloated compared to their preceding sophomore records. Outkast's critically lauded *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below* is simply two solo records sold in the same package, and Axl Rose's decision to release two albums separately on the same day and charge his fans for both was, like most of his decisions, nonsensical.

These may sound like the comments of someone with a vendetta but, actually, double albums should be treasured for the pompous, experimental blips in a career that they are, in the same way couples are supposed to love each other for their faults as well as their virtues. The fact is that there is probably a reason that single albums are such a popular medium. 45 minutes to an hour seems to be the most palatable length of time for a person to listen to music of the same style and by the same artist without the attention span waning. Doubling that time alienates the mainstream listener leaving the record to be championed by the more patient fanatics among us.

reviews, clockwise from top left/ simon roxborham/ luke raisin/ jack mcgregor/ george reece/ lizzie edmonds/ michael waters/ michael waters (again)/ ed dodson

LS2 apologises for the savage, artistically driven editing, and will 'reimburse' all writers involved

Those Dancing Days et Sky Larkin Cockpit/ 25/11/08

Leeds based indie rockers Sky Larkin come on stage to rapturous applause, perhaps mostly induced by euphoria that support act La Shark are not to be returning to the stage. Singer and guitarist Katie Harkin possesses an ardent vocal timbre and a combination of overdriven power chords and squeaky clean guitar voicing. Sky Larkin's sound is fresh yet familiar; highlight 'Fossil I' displays this unequivocally.

Swedish twee-pop sensation Those Dancing Days consists of five barely nubile girls. Linnea Jönsson's voice is simultaneously soulful and sweet. Guitarist Rebecka Rolfart opens up highlight of the night 'Home, Sweet Home' with twee, spacious chords that become a danceable, hectically strummed riff. Melodious synth, a steady bassline and punctual drum-work are added for good measure. **(8)**



Pete and the Pirates Cockpit/ 23/11/08

The concoction of performances at the Cockpit tonight bear no ostensible resemblance to each other. The opening act, Grace Emilys, assert, from the beginning, their Scottish heritage. In stark contrast comes Conor Moccassin, singing his high pitched melodies alternated with '70s style guitar solos. Pete and the Pirates' three guitars are so in sync that the repeating formula of songs (riff, riff a bit louder, verse, chorus with riff etc) is irrelevant. The band's humility is endearing, they play most of the first album, *Little Death*, but the newest songs are the most engaging tonight (particularly, 'Blood gets thin'). Nevertheless, the crowd responds best to the band's biggest single, 'Mr Understanding'. The Pirates create a raw energy tonight which transcends the album's limitations. **(8)**



Middleman Brudenell Social Club/ 28/11/08

Opens Kooya are a pleasant and technically impressive dance band, the kind you'd likely see on Sundays at HiFi. Three backing vocalists fill out uplifting grooves, complimented by smooth guitar, keyboards, and a general soulful cheeriness. Napoleon Illrd, every bit as engaging as in his full band performances, takes well developed pop songs into distinctive territory by an idiosyncratic guitar style, a tendency toward glitchy beats and the occasional strange displacement of rhythm.

Middleman are a strange experience - seldom do hip-hop bands in baseball caps have such optimistic lyrics as 'I love my friends'. Presenting ludicrously danceable riffs and a preaching lyrical persona, the band is supposedly 'rebirthing' after being 'done over' by a company, so don't be surprised if they get pretty big. **(7)**



My American Heart Cockpit/ 20/11/08

It can't be brilliant for a band's ego when barely anyone present is there to see them. Unfortunately for My American Heart, this is the case. Just Surrender battle through a generic set which only builds anticipation for the band everyone is here to see: the unstoppable We Are the Ocean.

Around a third of the crowd has already left when My American Heart enter. Not only is the sound quality poor and the music incessantly whiny, but the band look as if they formed mere minutes beforehand. As the set goes on, more and more people vacate.

It's ironic that a band dubbed 'emo' can't even induce the emotional compassion necessary to keep the audience here. As the final chords ring out, those left head for the door. Earlier, MAH say they 'travelled over a thousand miles for this gig'; perhaps they shouldn't have. **(3)**



Fists et al. Holy Trinity/ 29/11/08

Red Trees bring us the tried and tested loveliness of modest male-female harmonies and place it gently over acoustic plucking, resulting in a moving, almost childlike sound. A barely audible toy glockenspiel adds a soporific dimension to a melodious set of pop-folk. Next up, The Amber Sleep centre around Graham Jones's mature, affecting lyrical material and stem vocal tone. The band's size leads to tuning issues, but the rich instrumentation evokes an almost cinematic intensity.

The Declining Winter's slow drum beats and simple acoustic guitar parts can lack direction, but their overall texture has developed of late. Their appeal manifests itself in this stasis and in the subtlety of the build ups, but there remains a feeling that something is missing. Closing the line-up, Fists are incongruous but charming, quirkily blending twee indie synth lines that wouldn't be out of place in an Envelopes song with edgy, yelping vocals. This energetic set is a novel experience in a church, but a vastly enjoyable evening is had nonetheless. **(8)**



eight maids a-milking

Jon Gomm et al. Brudenell Social Club/ 24/11/08

Leeds native Gomm has worked with a vast array of artists on several continents, and his experience shows. He kicks off his set with the mesmerizing 'Waterfall', his playing as fascinating as it is humbling; his fingers fly over every part of the guitar, each digit knowing exactly where to hit and when. His version of Bob Marley classic 'Wait in Vain' goes down to huge applause.

Brendan Croker is not as technically brilliant as Gomm, but his voice, style and lyrics are heartwarming. The highlight of his performance has to be the requests, chiefly 'Smells Like Teen Spirit', which easily converts any non-believers.

Thomas Leeb doesn't sing (Gomm's wife joins him onstage for one song), but he really doesn't need to. Song after song, his one-man-band style amazes everyone. The show is an enormous success; and all three guitarists outdo themselves. **(9)**



Four Year Strong Cockpit/24/11/08

Four Year Strong are a mass of tattooed flesh and face hair from Massachusetts, currently touring the UK. They have a sound as thick as their necks; blaring out at full volume for the duration. This is not to say they're pointlessly loud - there are tangible pop hooks - but they are loud. The band belong to an American tradition of pop masquerading as 'alternative', exemplified by Blink-182, Green Day and (yes) Nirvana. The aforementioned face hair is a big part of the 'alt-appeal'. It's a cunning disguise to hide the boy band underneath.

Write All The Small Things and you can do what you want, but until then, the tattoos, spitting and stage diving won't help. So FYs, although not that bad, can only really be looked upon with pity or, more sensibly, disdain. **(4)**



Attack! Attack! Cockpit/ 27/11/08

Welsh four-piece Attack! Attack! tonight play to an army of studded belt/black eyeliner/Converse-clad teens; support comes in the form of The Humour, whose best song is a cover of 'You Spin Me Round'; any band that can transform that soul destroyer into something commendable should be praised.

None of Attack! Attack!'s material is badly executed, but it all sounds exactly the same. Virtually every riff is identical to that of the previous song. In fact, Attack! Attack! are very much like their Welsh rocker superiors, Lostprophets: an untrained ear wouldn't be able to tell the difference. They are most certainly not an 'attack': more a late night teenage Butlins disco, only with a few more men in eyeliner. **(3)**

Every week
it's a different
society under
LS2's radar

Chinese Society

This time...

My Japanese tutor complained about how Asia is always portrayed as some peculiar fusion of Modern and Ancient, as if that weren't true of any culture, anywhere. Nevertheless, the old cliché came to mind when I watched a Chinese Leeds student, Sadie, playing the erhu – a two-stringed bowed instrument with a mournful tone familiar from the soundtracks to a hundred wuxia martial arts films, conjuring up images of Michelle Yeoh gazing somberly at snow-covered Chinese landscapes – while around her, fellow society members snapped photos on their mobile phones. Phones made in China, of course.

China is changing, and the change is driven by the youth. 145,000 Chinese students travelled overseas for education in 2007; of that a whopping 60,000 came to British universities.

At Leeds, the Chinese Society boasts 400 active members out of an estimated total of 1,500 Chinese students at Leeds. In the Houldsworth Building café I met Mark Chaoyang, the charismatic president of the society, who apologised for having to nip away to check on an experiment. He was eager to inform me about the Society's recent work: a two-day trip to Cardiff and Bath; a

fundraiser which raised £10,000 for those struck by this year's devastating earthquake in Sichuan; and the recent Chinese Culture Festival.

Mark hails from Shenyang in north-east China. He came to Leeds to study for his Engineering PhD, of which he has two years left. "I think many British

people have only a superficial view of China," he told me. The society aims not just to introduce Chinese students to British culture, but to give non-members an understanding of modern China. However, due to the obvious language barrier, the society has only a handful of non-Chinese members – so events such as the Chinese Culture Festival, held earlier this month, are vital.

At the Festival I met Eunice Che, who expressed her initial dismay at the low turnout. "It might be because it's reading week," she suggested. Nevertheless, there were quite a few people touring the displays, which ranged from examples of the traditional Chinese qipao dress; a showcase of Chinese cinema; taiji (better known in the West as Tai Chi) demonstrations; exquisite fine-cut paper decorations; and a table of Chinese snacks – including mahua, deep-fried dough with a rather delicious consistency similar to Rice Krispies squares; feng li shu, tiny pineapple pastries; and Haw flakes,

curiously thin discs of dried purple hawthorn fruit with an interesting pear-like taste.

Elsewhere, hapless visitors struggled with the Chopsticks Game, which involves plucking marbles from a tub of water with chopsticks and depositing them in a bowl. It's not easy, but with a little effort I plucked out one of the bigger marbles and earned my fun-size bag of Maltesers. Oh yes.

On the eve of the Olympics, the Times wrote: "[China is] the place of millions of young people in the throes of changing a society more or less by accident, simply by getting on with the business of life and the business of business." Paradoxically, the future of China is being shaped right here in the UK.

words and photos/ matthew durrant



With a little effort I plucked out one of the bigger marbles and earned my fun-size bag of Maltesers



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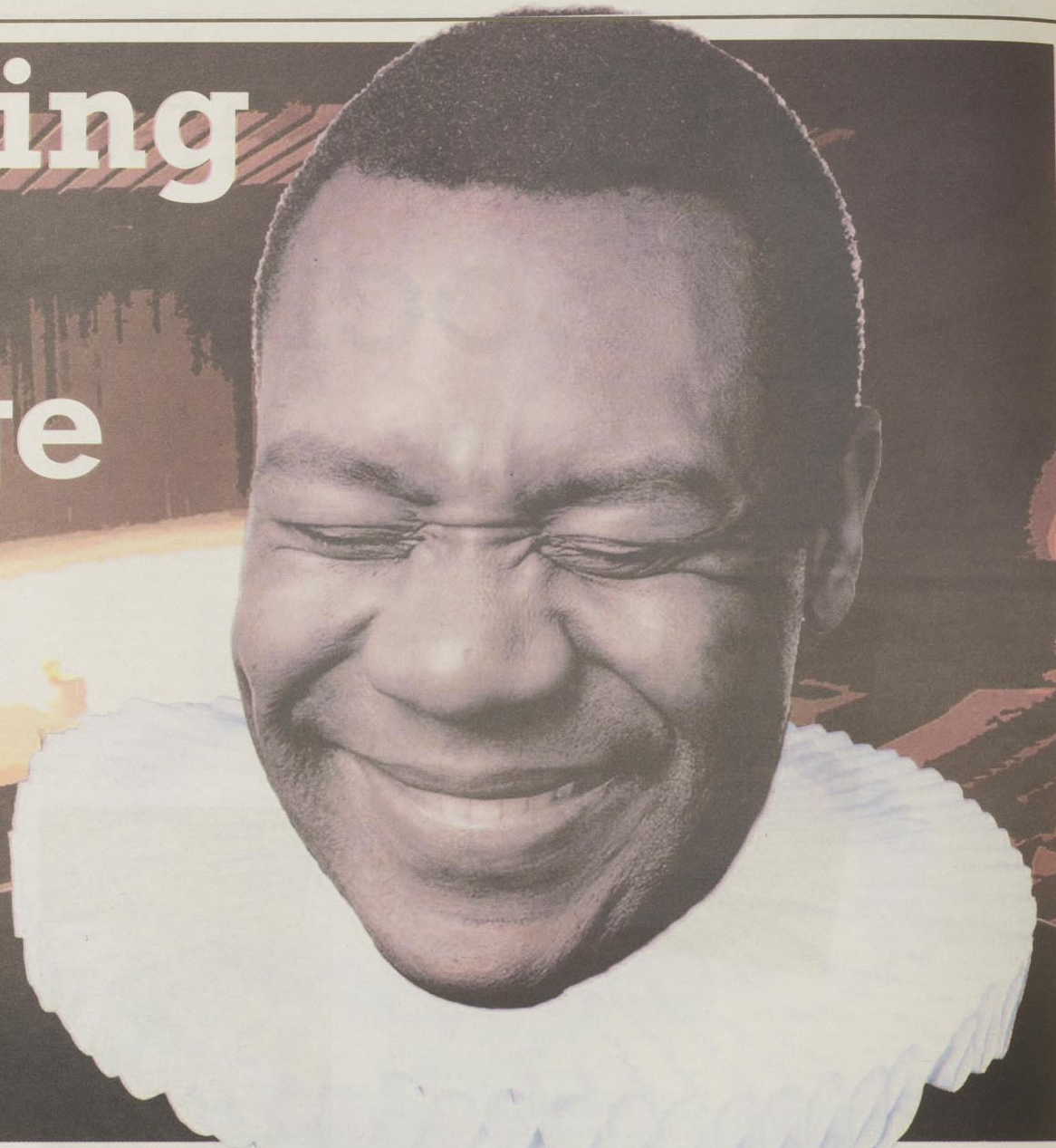
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Taking the stage

Lenny Henry speaks to LS2 about his role as Othello at the West Yorkshire playhouse; his current university studies; and why he won't be seeing Santa this Christmas...



He was cruising the comedy circuit before you could walk, perfecting impersonations before you could even pronounce your own name: since his television debut on the New Faces talent show in 1975, Lenny Henry has made himself a television icon and become one of Britain's favourite comedians. Best known for his close associations with Comic Relief and his marriage to comedienne Dawn French (who famously snogged celebrities as dreamy as Hugh Grant and still described Lenny as 'the King of Kiss'), it might affect a double-take to see him on the bill for the title role in West Yorkshire Playhouse's upcoming run of Shakespeare's tragedy Othello.

Rehearsals start in January for the play which opens on Valentines Day and despite plans to run for an entire month, advance tickets sold out in under two hours; testament to the hype and curiosity

surrounding Lenny's new role. Othello is famous as one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies; a story of racism, love, hatred and desire where the title role is usually played by a black actor, although the text of the play itself is ambiguous about his racial classification. Laurence Olivier was amongst one of the last white actors whose performance of Othello was critically acclaimed, although more recently Patrick Stewart took on the part as the only white man in a cast of black actors. As an entertainer of Jamaican parentage who has long had race at the forefront of his consciousness (a lot of his early comedy material revolved around black culture and in 2003 Henry spoke to the Guardian about the lack of black people in top media jobs), it is not so unusual that he would get involved in a play in which the issue of race is at the heart. He is not unfamiliar with acting either: "I've done drama before but mainly I'm a telly actor," he said, in explaining

why he chose to take on the role of Othello. "I've done a couple of dramas including a John Canter play for BBC1, but this is something I've studied," he continued. Henry has an interest in literature having completed a degree in English with the Open University in 2007. He explained

the direct connection between his recent studies and current project: "I studied Othello when I was doing the Shakespeare portion of my BA, so it was sort of a crossing. I also did a radio show called 'What's so great about Shakespeare?' where I met Barrie [Rutter, director of Othello]. In that show I rang him up and I said, 'will you talk to me about why Shakespeare is such a big



Some might be thinking 'Lenny Henry doing Shakespeare?!' and waiting for me to mess up

“ “

When I asked him whether he'll be getting anything special from Santa he seemed taken aback by the suggestion: "There'll be no Santa in the house, I'm 50!"

” ”

deal?" Evidently Rutter gave a convincing case as shortly after this he and Henry were planning to work together on a Northern BroadSides production of Othello. However Henry is not without scruples about the public's reaction to his new role: "Some might be thinking 'Lenny Henry doing Shakespeare?!' and waiting for me to mess up" he speculated, although the seriousness and enthusiasm with which he is taking to the task may suggest that such sceptics are soon to be proved very wrong.

The effects of pressure to prove his worth on the live stage are most apparent in Henry's worries about his preparation for the role. Seeking advice from the director Barrie Rutter as well as his friends in the acting business, he was originally thrown by their contradictory advice about whether to learn the script before

rehearsals, which Rutter advised against. "Everybody else is saying learn it and he's saying don't learn it!" Henry recalled. "He's in Cyprus at the moment working on a play, and I rang him to say are you sure about this? Because I was speaking to some actor the other night who said 'Darling, learn it, you must learn it.'"

He explained his doubts: "I'm just concerned that my instinct is saying you've got to get it under your belt before you go up there". Fortunately Rutter put his worries at rest. "He said you've got to follow your instincts and just go for it. He advised me to basically start learning from Act 3 onwards; I think that's pretty good advice really.

"Rehearsals properly start January 12th, and the feeling is if you start learning it all now it's too soon really because you have four weeks in Leeds and you'll be working early mornings, so what are you going to do every single evening?" Fruity Friday at the union sprung to mind but Henry quickly answered his own question with the suggestion, "Travel scrabble!?"

Henry is mainly associated with his comedic persona rather than his lesser-known dramatic acting experience, which may be part of why he is taking preparation for Othello so seriously: "I've started trying to get it under my belt," he told me. "It's bloody hard though. I think there's a reason why actors treat Shakespeare as the pinnacle: It's a tough thing to get under your belt. Once you've done it, you really feel like you've been through the wars".

Henry is currently attempting to enhance his wide-ranging media experience with formal skills. Having completed his degree in English Literature he is now studying for an MA in screenwriting for television and film at Royal Holloway, University of London. When asked whether he thinks that formal qualifications are integral to a career in the media, he replied, "Oh yeah!" before continuing, "This education, it's such a privilege. I wish I'd gone to university when I was 19 really". It's an odd image that springs to mind of a young Lenny Henry- not ascending to fame as co-host of the children's programme Tiswas-but cooped up somewhere like the Roger Stevens lecture theatre or studiously hitting the Edward Boyle library; I'm sure most of us are glad that he chose his original career path.

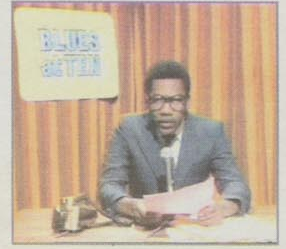
Besides learning the last three acts of Othello and studying the technical skills of scriptwriting, I asked Henry what he was doing over Christmas. "I've recently moved to Cornwall so Dawn and the family will be spending it there," he replied. When I asked him whether he'll be getting anything special from Santa, expecting an answer at least as exciting as more travel games, he seemed taken aback by the suggestion: "There'll be no Santa in the house, I'm 50!" he proclaimed. Oh well, more presents for us then.

words/clare pidsley

Northern BroadSides' Othello will run from 14th February- 14th March 2009 at the West Yorkshire Playhouse before embarking on a two-month UK tour ending in Halifax.

1978

Henry makes his first appearances on children's programme Tiswas which he would later co-host. A famous moment of the show comes when Henry is surprised during his parody of Trevor McDonald with an interruption by the real news presenter, who he consequently throws water over.



1988

Lenny Henry co-hosts the first Red Nose Day with Griff Rhys Jones and Jonathan Ross. In 2003 a funny and controversial sketch sees Lenny Henry and Rowan Atkinson spoofing Martin Bashir's interview with Michael Jackson



1993

Lenny stars in the BBC sitcom Chef! as the irritable chef and restaurant owner Gareth Blackstock. The show ran for three series.



1999

Lenny's first role in a BBC drama. Written by Lucy Gannon, Lenny played a Head Teacher Ian George in Hope and Glory.



2003

The Lenny Henry Show, first aired in 1984 is revived, and features hilarious music video spoofs such as Beyoncé's 'Crazy Right Now' in which Henry goofs around in hot pants and heels.

Lenny Henry Highlights

ADVENT/

11
THURSDAY

Yes we're sophisticated grown ups, that go on fancy dress Otley runs, but in every student there's a kid who loves a good old fashioned Christmas play. Today why not see The Snow Queen at the West Yorkshire playhouse.

10
WEDNESDAY

Attend a world premiere. For a new play 'Café Wha?' at 7.30pm in the Workshop Theatre. On Bob Dylan, James Joyce and September 11.

9
TUESDAY

Today think about nothing. Feed your intellectual side and attend 'The Void' physics lecture in the Rupert Beckett lecture theatre at 6.30pm and ask that important question; 'why is there something rather than nothing?'

8
MONDAY

What can be better than a reindeer sleigh ride? A simulated one apparently in Kirkgate market. It's not the nose but evil red eyes you've got to watch out for in robot Rudolph.

7
SUNDAY

Buy those tricky gifts for parents at the Leeds farmer's Kirkgate market.

6
SATURDAY

What can say Christmas more than a bit of carol singing by the Salvation Army in the Merrion centre?

5
FRIDAY

That Friday feeling can only mean one thing; a festive Fruity. Think cheesy tunes, slutty Santa's little helper outfits, fake snow and this year even free presents for all. Though I hope you've already bought your tickets as you'll have to have been a very good boy or girl get hold of one today.

12
FRIDAY

The last day of term is when you make the mad dash to the library to take out all those books you'll need over Christmas, only to realise someone's beaten you to it. Don't worry, there's always those helpful little elves google and wiki to guide your revision.

13
SATURDAY

The holy trinity church in Skipton hosts the Leeds University Choir Christmas concert for those with a discerning musical ear, or who get dragged there by the 'rents.

14
SUNDAY

The boy who never grew up, with a funny taste in clothes? Stop despairing about your boyfriend for the night, and go see Peter Pan at the West Yorkshire Playhouse.

15
MONDAY

Enjoy some Bratwurst and gluhwein, at Christkindelmarkt, in Millennium square. That's German sausage and mulled wine at the German market in case you were wondering.

16
TUESDAY

Jane Austen was born 233 years ago today; commemorate by sitting up straight or marrying someone you don't know

17
WEDNESDAY

Prance your way down to the Grand Theatre to attend the opening night of the Nutcracker

18
THURSDAY

Try not to accidentally sing the rude versions at the Lord Mayor's Carol Concert at the Town Hall 6.30pm-8.30pm

25
THURSDAY

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CHRISTMAS!

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Christmas, check out
crement at the Vue:
mas' starring Reece
on and Vince Vaughan

ue of excited kids
get their photo taken
in his Grotto on

e shortest day of the
t dawdle

ard enough Cliff
ariah Carey for one
go and listen to some
t Brudenell Social
fest!

nta Cruise' along the
Valley, boats leave
it Mills Museum.

Christmas Sunday

26
FRIDAY

Boxing Day is traditionally the day for giving gifts to less fortunate members of society, which translates in the modern age to taking all unwanted presents to a charity shop.

Get your personalised underwear at numberpants.com and let your voices be heard.



27
SATURDAY

Slyly avoid the boxing day crowds and snap up everyone else's sale rejects.

28
SUNDAY

Celebrate Childermass, which commemorates King Herod's massacre of male infants, by indulging infants with a day of fun-filled activities. December 28th is also widely regarded as the unluckiest of the year, so keep an eye on the little monsters just in case.

29
MONDAY

Recover from possibly the worst day of the year (a chilling combination of rowdy children and divine lucklessness) by throwing caution to the wind at a place where you can sidestep both – Napoleon's Casino.

30
TUESDAY

Not sure about who to kiss tomorrow? Log on to www.match.com for a hasty new-year's eve date and get ready to smooch the night away!

4
SUNDAY

The McDonald Islands are discovered by Captain William McDonald aboard the Samarang. Take advantage of this seemingly useless trivia and use it to override your new year's resolution – commemorating McDonald's day with a Chicken McSandwich and large fries.

3
SATURDAY

Celebrate J. R. R. Tolkien's birthday by reading all three Lord of The Rings and then attempting to write your own epic fantasy novel. Alternatively, watch the films and gorge yourself on bargain-bin mince pies.

2
FRIDAY

Hail the New Year and join the gym. Esporta offers free trials where you can attempt to transform your haggard, post-Christmas body into a glorious rippling temple in just one afternoon.

1
THURSDAY

Wake up with a thumping headache and an Elvis impersonator in your bed, curse the new year and go back to sleep. You would be getting a bit ahead of yourself to start acting on those New Year's resolutions already, so keep the waning festive spirits alive by spoiling yourself with some great food at Cafe Create.

Cafe
CREATE

at Trinity Church, Boar Lane
and Leeds Parish Church

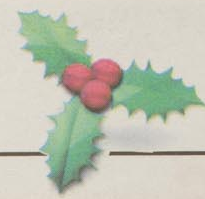
www.createleeds.org

Cafe Create offers you a great Christmas deal, fantastic food, great coffee and the buzz of knowing you really truly honestly made a difference this Christmas.

Free Latte with every large breakfast ordered

31
WEDNESDAY

Kick off the New Years Eve Celebrations at Briggate and the Headrow with fairground rides, a marching band on stilts and a firework finale at 5.30pm. Later, get yourself down to the 'Legends' event at Savile's Hall – where the likes of Freddie Mercury, John Lennon and Elvis Presley will warble you into 2009.



Food

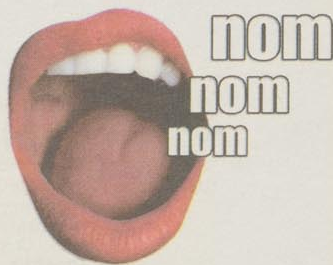
Where to go if you can't handle making your own roast lunch this Christmas...

It's official... the lights are on, the Christmas trees are up and the Christmas coke advert is gracing our televisions once more! With the Christmas holidays just round the corner and everyone rushing off to other ends of the country (or world for the lucky few) it's time to make a date for that ever so delicious Christmas roast! The more domesticated households may take on the almighty task of home cooking, but for those of us who simply want to soak up the merriment and gorge on delicious goodies, then here is a selection of restaurants in Leeds that will cater for all your Christmas needs without the hassle of washing up:

Gusto - Cookridge on Otley road offers a three-course lunch for £17.50 or dinner for £22.95. The menu has a sophisticated take on Christmas lunch with a turkey escalope wrapped in cured ham and sage; there is also a delicious sounding pumpkin risotto for vegetarians. For those of you who aren't such fans of Christmas pudding but do fancy a rich chocolate torte then this is the place for you!

The Olive Press, Canal Wharf, is another upmarket restaurant that offers a fantastic Christmas menu with all the traditional courses combined with plenty of choice for £25. The starters are all deliciously rich and heart warming and the main course includes duck or turkey as well as a fish and vegetable option. The restaurant is decorated predominantly in oak with large windows creating an atmosphere that is both fresh and warm.

Last but certainly not least is my personal favourite, The Cross Keys on Water Lane. For £29.50 you will be treated to a Christmas feast with all the



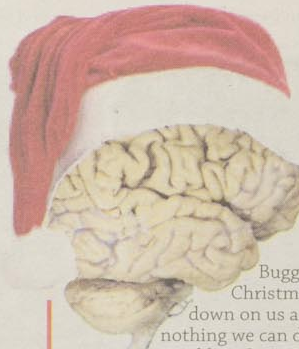
trimmings. However what really attracts me to this particular restaurant for Christmas is the flagstone floors and open fires that transport you straight into Christmas heaven.

For a perfect end to your pre-Christmas-Christmas indulge in a festive game of charades or snuggle down with a cup of cocoa to watch Love Actually on DVD.

words/ antonia lyne

Health

Imagining what might happen to your body if it really was Christmas every day...



Bugger me, Christmas is bearing down on us and there is nothing we can do about it. We are rabbits frozen in the full beam of Rudolph's red nose, about to be wiped out by five tonnes of grim, interminable merriment. Extended family pretending to get on (despite what our Maureen said about Tim to Barbara three years back), huge meals, dodgy jumpers and lying slightly drunk on the sofa all day watching the EastEnders lot have an only slightly more stressful time than you. What fun. So, just to sap your festive cheer and break your Christmas spirit, here's a breakdown of the damage that the 25th can do in a back-of-the-envelope sort of way.

According to a statistic I just made up, the average person drinks the equivalent of a bathtub of sherry at Christmas. There is no other time of the year it is socially acceptable to basically be drunk more or less permanently. By midday you have usually just about got over the low-level hangover from yesterday, just in time for a sherry as a lunchtime aperitif. Wine with your food (usually nice wine, as it's Christmas, so you'd better try both the red and white). Oh, a foul German dessert wine (in a tiny bottle, because if they were full size no-one would ever finish one). Brandy after lunch always sits quite nicely. Then a couple of lagers while watching the telly. Finally, someone usually gets given a bottle of whiskey, so it would just be rude not to have a glass. Oh god, I think it's time for bed.

1 glass of sherry, 18% = 1 unit, 80 calories.

3 large glasses of wine, 12% = 9 units, 550 calories.

1 small glass of dessert wine, 10% = 1 unit, 200 calories.

1 small glass of brandy, 40% = 1.5 units, 80 calories.

2 cans of lager, 5% = 4.5 units, 190 calories.

1 small glass of whiskey, 40% = 1.5 units, 80 calories.

That adds up to 18.5 units, which is really quite a lot (that noise you just heard was your liver slapping it's forehead) and you've already taken in 1180 calories before we've even looked at the food.

It wouldn't be Christmas unless you stuffed your face until your tongue bleeds. Grazing on chocolate and mince pies for twelve hours and then tucking in to a meal with more food than Victoria Beckham sees

in a decade is our way of thanking our lord and saviour Santa Claus for how nicely he's ensured the whole world has had enough to eat over the past year.

Who was it who had the brilliant idea of putting meat inside other meat anyway? This sausage isn't delicious and greasy enough actually, let's wrap it in bacon! Oh, and the turkey has a bit of empty space, let's cram some stuffing in there just to make sure we have a totally solid block of fat and protein. All lubricated with a pint of gravy just to make sure you can gobble it down in time for the James Bond film. You are so completely full you can't even walk; you have to crawl to the sofa like an overfed grub. Do we have a pudding this year?

Turkey 150g = 232 calories.

Stuffing 50g = 190 calories.

Sausages 100g = 130 calories.

Brussels sprouts 30g = 11 calories.

Bread sauce 70g = 120 calories.

Roast potatoes 100g = 150 calories.

Roast parsnips 50g = 75 calories.

Gravy 50g = 26 calories.

Mince pies 100g = 390 calories.

Chocolates 200g = 910 calories.

Christmas pudding 100g = 300 calories.

Christmas cake 100g = 360 calories.

The alcohol = 1180 calories

That adds up to an jowl-popping 4074 calories in one fairly lazy day; it's recommended men get 2500 and women get 2000 but your needs will be lower if you are just sitting around.

Actually, all this talk about Christmas has cheered me up a bit. To hell with it, it's only once a year, you might as well just go for it. Just make going to the gym your New Year's Resolution - it's not like you'll keep it anyway.

words/ oli ellis

Information from www.drinkaware.co.uk and www.nutrition.gov, as well as looking at packets of things and estimating serving sizes. It's all guesswork, more or less, but I seem to have come up with a figure similar to other people on the interweb. Hell, if you're so good, calculate it yourself and send it in. We won't read it though.

Retro Fair
St. Gemma's Hospice Conference Centre
329 Harrogate Road, Moortown (buses 2 & 3 from town, 91 from Headingley)
13th & 14th December, 10am - 4pm
Entry By Donation - An event raising vital funds for St. Gemma's Hospice.

Featuring a range of stalls selling vintage clothing and accessories as well as furniture, books and music - all to suit the student budget!

On Saturday, bring along your most treasured vintage or second-hand discovery to the portrait studio hosted by www.allourheartscontent.co.uk

Retro Disco (in aid of St. Gemma's Hospice)
Interplay Theatre, Armley Ridge Road
Saturday 13th December, 7.30pm - midnight
£7.50

Featuring Charity Shop DJ (www.charityshopdj.com) playing vintage tunes from the 60's, 70's and 80's. Retro cocktails, beers, wines and soft drinks will be served. Kick start your Christmas celebrations here!

For more details or to register for any of the events call 0113 218 5570 or visit www.st-gemma.co.uk
Registered Charity No. 1015/941
329 Harrogate Road, Moortown, Leeds, LS17 6GD

skint

LOWER VAT

Thank You Darling

We're passing on to members the new lower rate of vat (reduced from 17.5% to 15%) from Monday 1st December.

In union shops this means that things like chocolate, sweets, clothing and stationary will be a little bit cheaper. Things like sandwiches, newspapers and books with no vat stay the same.

In union bars this means that hot drinks and snacks will reduce slightly in price. Most prices in mine and juice bar will also be cheaper.

We're still working out the impact on alcohol and cigarettes. Duty has gone up, along with vat decreasing, so at the moment these prices stay the same.

**You'll pay less straight away - the reduced vat will automatically be taken off at the till...
so a nice surprise awaits you!**

unit 14
21
www.unit1421.co.uk

Leeds University Union.

skint

skint

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18 CLUBS/

five
december/
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PREVIEW - NY 2008/9

Leeds

Wax:On VS Metropolis, Bad Sneakers and Brighton Beach
31.12.08

I miss the good old days when the turning of the year would be marked by a Quality Street assortment of nutcases hollering about how the world was going to end. I loved seeing their little embarrassed faces on January 1st as they crawled sheepishly (can sheep crawl?) out of their bunkers into a world which still existed.

Remember the Millennium bug? It was supposed to cause a worldwide catastrophe, with planes dropping out of the sky, nuclear weapons firing of their own accord, and Jesus rising from the grave like a sort of Godzilla-King Kong-T Rex hybrid to wreak revenge on the world which spurned him.

In 2012 the crazies will have sufficiently got over their embarrassment to have another go at the whole 'the end of the world is nigh' thing. Some New Age guys (those bastions of good sense) have decided that 2012 will herald either a year of great spiritual transformation or, alternately, an apocalypse.

Now surely that's something you need to be quite sure about. You can't march around saying "Huzzah! A magical year of emotional transformation is upon us! In 2012 we shall transcend the physical limitations imposed on us by earthly attachments and become as one with the god-head! ... or ... we might all die." Like the small print on a cosmic personal loan advert.

If anything is going to provoke an apocalypse in 2009 it is the film 'Dead Man Running'. Starring Danny 'fackin' Dyer and 50 'the worst human ever' Cent and financed in part by Rio Ferdinand and Ashley Cole, Dyer's character has to get the Fiddster a hundred grand in 24 hours. The only chance it has is if it somehow flips over into that noble category 'so bad it's good'. It may be too early to tell, but I've got a feeling this film could be the one to perform the unprecedented 'it's so bad it's good, but actually, it's worse than that so it flips back into bad again'. The potential effects of this happening could be more catastrophic than if they had entrusted the safe running of the Large Hadron Collider to Lindsay Lohan.

A lot of people hate New Year's Eve. It's the whole 'mandatory fun' thing, the idea that everyone is here to have fun together and if you aren't having fun in this particular place on this particular night then there must be something incurably wrong with you. If that rings a bell with you and you don't want to get a reputation as a grumpy old git but you really can't be arsed with the whole "ooh look, the date just changed" thing, you should peer pressure your less discerning friends into going to one of these events, where only a token gesture will be made towards the demise of 2008.

First up is the shindig taking place in our beloved (to an appropriate extent)

other reprobates then promptly broadcast most of the ensuing silliness on Radio 1. There's no Radio 1 this year, but that's probably a good thing. Like inviting your Mum to the losing of your virginity, the presence of the BBC was a bit off-putting, looking over your shoulder, saying things like "Ooh, is that what you young people are into now? We didn't do it like that in my day" "Make sure you clean that up afterwards" and "Ah yes, your Dad and I used to like that one". You banish them to the corner of the room, but you still know they're there and you can never manage to fully lose yourself in the moment.

Anyways, Wax:On and Metropolis will each have a room in the union this NYE. Wax:On's performing seals will be Erol Alkan, the Plump DJs, Leeds boy Paul Woolford and more. Metropolis have got, among others, Marky, Hype and Shy FX. That's a pretty solid line up.

In the last year or two dubstep has risen from peculiar new sub-genre to heavyweight club filler. Both Wax:On and Metropolis have hopped eagerly onto this particular bandwagon and at New Year's there will be a dubstep room (the flyers call it an arena but I think this probably pushing it a bit, bearing in mind that it's probably going to be Mine). They've lined up the legendary (a nicer way of saying 'a bit old') Mary Anne Hobbs, Caspa, Hatcha, Youngsta and a few more DJs whose stage names all end with -a.

If you like your music direct from the source rather than relayed by a disinterested looking chap pressing play on a CD then you might want to consider welcoming in the year of natural fibres (I'm not kidding) at the Faversham where Bad Sneakers will be stepping up to offer forth their New Year's Balls. They've got Pulled Apart By Horses, Dinosaur Pile Up, Wintermute and These Monsters playing live.

I've never heard of any of these bands before, and I doubt I'm the only one. HOWEVER! Bad Sneakers have an

outstanding pedigree for picking out amazing acts just before they strike it big. In 2005 their New Year's gig featured a slot from the Sunshine Underground. They've also put on 'before they were massive' shows by Klaxons, Hot Chip, Arctic Monkeys and more. It seems they are entirely to be trusted.

In Ecuador on New Year's people wear yellow underwear and carry suitcases, in order to attract 'positive energy' and ensure that during the next year they will go on the journey of their dreams. In the Philippines they wear clothes with circular patterns to attract money and, peculiarly, they jump up and down to make them grow taller in the coming year. I suggest that you do all these things this December, and what better place to do them than in Leeds town hall?

Brighton Beach are having a party there with DJs playing Indie, Britpop, 60s Soul, Motown and R'n'B (but not the rubbish type with Usher). Also, in the basement of the building is a room which was a jail in olden times. This room will be lit with psychedelic oil wheels (I don't know what these are) and 60s slide projections (hopefully there will be no slides of my grandparents holiday to Bournemouth or everyone might just kill themselves with boredom). Sounds kinda kooky.

Tickets are available from ticket shops. Here's to an apocalypse-free 2009.

words/ jon horner



Student's Union. Last year Wax:On and Metropolis took over with the help of Annie Mac, Pendulum, Speakerjunk and a bunch of

Ruffage Wire 25.11.08

After Monday has seen the weekends activities well and truly monged out, Ruffage brings the midweek bass weight all dubstep heads yurn for. Nicely set in the dark underground confines of Wire, Ruffage never fail to bring sick line ups every month to grace its dance floor with bass pressure. This week saw the inclusion of local lad Mr. Jangle who kicked things off nicely with a great selection of chilled dubs that get the early bird gang moving. When the crowd filled out, up stepped the double team of Bass Junkies and the unannounced Exodus. Unfortunately, the styles of the two acts clashed outrageously, with the Bass Junkies dropping deep funky cuts, whilst Exodus went about playing his signature reggae influenced dance floor dubplates. Individually the sets would have worked well, but in this situation, the combination failed to warm up the enthusiastic crowd and left many confused as to where the set was going. With the warm up acts finished it was time for the head honcho of Berkane Sol, Geom to step up. Known in the scene as Nottingham's answer to Kode 9, with his eclectic selection and superior control, Ruffage was in for a treat. As soon as his hands touched the decks he set about taking the crowd through a dubstep master class, dropping tunes like Skream's *If You Know* and Kode 9's *Find My Way* to the delight of the masses. Geom's energetic, yet intense approach to mixing allowed him to jump from the groovy deep tunes, into the more jump up wobblers with relative ease and represents his skill and craftsmanship behind a pair of decks. With this storming headline set over, another Ruffage is brought to an abrupt close, and as the satisfied mid-week ravers walk out into the night they all know that, if you want good dubstep, you need Ruffage. Period.

Check out the next Ruffage in January featuring Martyn and Ben UFO. Big!

words/oli gibbons

with clubbing, for me it was totally inspiring.

The first thing I noticed about the place was the... (tries not to say vibe) garghhhh! The first thing I noticed about the place was the VIBE! Despite the fact that this was a squat party, I've never felt more comfortable being crammed into small room with hundreds of sweaty people. Everyone was there because they loved the music and not because they wanted to get wrecked or be seen or rob people. That is a thing that Dubstep has that I think other scenes lack.

Leeds seems to have contracted this falseness of appreciation and as with most club nights it does become a place to be seen, a place for the ketamine kids to show off their new trainers but for you it has a genuine crowd. Where do you think it all came from?

Ribs: Everything is about the music and maintaining the integrity of the scene, Dubstep music is really diverse it takes influences from hip-hop, DnB, garage, techno and reggae. The lines of what constitutes dubstep are really broad and that can only be a good thing. People say, "How can you dance to it? It's too slow." My reply would be, stick yourself in a dark room in front of a rig it all becomes obvious, when the bass drops you'll either shit yourself or jump around like a loon.

It sounds like my sort of night, I think I'm converted. The rest is up to you,

Ribs' Top 3:
Skream - Midnight Request Line.
Burial - Ghost Hardware
Loefah - Mud

Yours Truly, Jo Blogs & Ribs.

X

Nights like SubDub and Exodus are monumental and known throughout the land, so why don't I know anything about it? Who, why, how and where it has come from is all a mystery to me. To be completely honest, what I've seen makes me cringe, the (insert private school name of choice) class of 2008' in their oh so street darrhling attire, two-stepping to some deformed reggae has made me less than willing to give it a chance. But enough is enough; I had a little chat with a DJ friend and asked him to shed some light on my dubious life.

Ribs: I've always been into Hip Hop and Drum and Bass. Sadly though UK Hip Hop has taken a nose dive and gone somewhere that doesn't make me want to spin on my back anymore and I've no interest in going to what is essentially a sausage-fest on ketamine, so that rules out DnB. Besides, I wouldn't last 5 minutes in a rave as the tempo of the beats these days is actually faster than Superman when he had to fly around the world against the pull of gravity to reverse time and save Louis from a fatal car accident.

Now this I understand, and I sort of have to agree. Nothing seems to inspire me anymore, makes me want to get up and get down, but what was it that made you fall in love?

Ribs: I had actually been buying dubstep bits to play in my sets without realising it as the tempo is similar to Breakbeat, but because the rhythms are so different it made for an interesting change in sound. A few of my mates had been trying to get me along to a squat party going on in an underground office block. I decided that this should probably be a night I should go to and I don't regret it. I would even go as far as to say that to someone who has been around the block a few times and become disillusioned

PREVIEW - NY 2008/9 - Leeds The Best of the Rest

Subdub - West Indian Centre

I read on some forum somewhere that Rusko will be playing this. He's great. Even if he's not there this should still be great, and probably much cheaper than Wax:On.

Love Leeds - Vicky Works

Like participants in an awkward and soul chrushing orgy who are attempting to revive a decaying husks of marriages, Kissdafunk, Federation, Hed Kandi, Filth and BlackOut will be attempting to convince themselves they're having a good time and this is what they really want.

New Year's Balls - Faversham

If you like your music direct from the source rather than relayed by a disinterested looking chap pressing play on a CD this is probably the place for you. Bands include Pulled Apart By Horses, Dinosaur Pile Up and These Monsters

Plastik Ibiza - Space

This looks like it might be quite good. There is free champagne, which is nice and

all, but more interestingly the will be Stupid Fresh. Expect jacking house at it's finest.

Pet Sounds - Academy

Apparently this will be "the mother of all New Years Eve parties". I for one would not want to go to a club night organised by my Mum. Although she has booked Cassette Jam and Heads Up, so you never know...

The HiFi Club New Years Eve Party

Featuring the East Park Reggae Collective. So I imagine reggae music will be played at some point.

Rock and Roll Special - Wire

Who loves rock and roll? I do. Dime up the jukebox bitch.

Rock of Ages - Rio's

Let's play the stereotypes game! Everyone here will have enormous beards, many tattoos, leather/denim jackets with obscure metal band's logos on the back and

a difficult relationship with personal hygiene.

Garage v Slam Dunk - Cockpit

I went to Slam Dunk once. I saw some of the worst tattoos I've ever seen, a Glitter-pleasing number of underage kids and an awful lot of eyeliner. They also played the worst music in the whole world.

Goodgrief - Mission (New Year's Day)

For all you hard dance heads out there, Mission is inviting you to crawl out of your leper colony and pour your shunned selves into their club on New Year's Day. They have Zany, Alex Kidd, Kutsy, Rob Tissera (whoever they are) and more as bait.

New Year's Eve - Oceana

We're promised a chocolate fountain, jugglers, karaoke, topless male hosts and R'n'B. Is it wrong to hope someone does a jihad here?

words/jon horner



Jo...
blogs

Put some
Dub in
your step

INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK/

The Snow Queen

West Yorkshire Playhouse
5th December - 12th January

Leeds Student chats to the two actors who play the central characters of Gerda (Duncan Barton, pictured on the right) and Kai (Pamela Okoroafor, pictured on the far right in rehearsal) about their role in the WYP's take on Hans Christian Andersen's classic winter tale.

Tell us a little bit about yourself, and about your characters.

Duncan: Right, okay, well, I'm Duncan, I play Kai, and I play a number of other characters, I play a robber woman, a prince, and a princess, and I play a stupid crow... and a flower.

Pamela: I play one character, Gerda.
D: Yes, even when she isn't Gerda, she's part of the ensemble for when the Snow Queen's there. How are you portraying the tale - does it have a particularly creepy side?

D: We tried to make the characters like the robbers have some comedy scariness, but we've not tried to make them all nicely-nicely, the

robber has a dagger -
P: - it's quite funny! -
D: - I mean it is bendy, she has a dagger and goes 'egh!...' and I have a lot of fun when I play the robber woman scaring Gerda.
P: But it's fun scary.

Is it a modern day styling costume-wise?

D: Period costume, as in of a period, kind of old-fashioned, I've just taken my shoes off and they're brogues, all tied together

P: I have some dolly shoes, really cute with the strap across, they're going to be bright red, and a short little dress, with a bow, very very girly. Gerda's nine, and well I'm twenty two, so who! Quite a big gap. The costume really helps, both as an actor, and for an audience to get my age.

Is that something you've had to struggle with, how do you portray a child?

D: A lot of the words are quite young, so what I think that I've tried to do is not play it young. All the things you're doing, getting excited, talking about how exciting it is to be on the sledge, you don't need to put on a babyish voice. I think it just works without trying.

P: The [main] challenge for me was not to impose the woman qualities, the Pamela qualities, what I would feel, on that situation and I kept having to remind myself that she's a young girl, she's a young girl.

How are your rehearsals working?

D: You always make quick progress at the



beginning, you can get to 75 percent in the first week, and the 25 percent takes the rest of the time, to focus on everything and get it polished.

Tell us about the puppets!

D: There are puppets, that's the prince and the princess. We've had rehearsal time with it and times without it, to make it fit and be comfortable on me, really.

So is it on you then?

D: I wear a bed, which the prince and princess sit in. We worked originally with two people controlling the arms but then we took that away because it worked well without them. They're quite simple puppets, quite stylised, but they look great, people will really like them.

Any other special effects to look out for?

D: We're using a representational Snow Queen with silk, on, ah, rods, like you have on fishing nets.

P: She speaks through song, and different languages, she's worldwide.

D: There's a piece of silk on the end of this pole,



photos/ toby farrow

just suggesting the tips of her cloak, and she's ethereal anyway, there's a suggestion that she could be part of Kai's imagination possibly, this fantasy that he's after. We went to the theatre last week, our rehearsal rooms' ceilings aren't very high, so we had a go. It's great when you look up to see it, it kind of flies through the air. What do you think is going to be the most appealing part of *The Snow Queen*?

The kids will really like the robbers' song. It's got loads of energy, and there's a great little sequence when we're in a gold carriage. And the guy playing the grandmother's kid came along, and he remembered the song with the pig. Maybe kids like pigs...

P: I think the songs definitely, we're quite fortunate because it's not a musical theatre song, but it's a great play, with some good songs in it.

Good luck with it!

interview/ vicky ellis

PREVIEW/

Che

Director: Steven Soderbergh
Release Date: 1st January 2009

‘Long live Cuba!’ Part I of Steven Soderbergh's new Spanish language film *Che* gives real insight into the multi-faceted character, whose iconic picture adorned student bed-sit walls from California to Moscow in the late 60's. This unconventional biopic tells us the story of Che Guevara's life, first aligning himself with Fidel Castro in 1955, and setting off on an epic journey across Cuba. The storyline picks up pace as Che gathers recruits to fight for 'justice' in preparation to overthrow the dictator Fulgencio Batista. Soderbergh's film is a refreshing portrayal of the lives of these dynamic revolutionaries, which have been relatively overlooked by the film industry.

The intense camera close-ups of Che's latter day iconography, from cigar to military boots, immediately provides a familiar image but as the film progresses we see Che's relationship with his comrades, and his emphatic speeches tell us more about his motivations, character and insecurities. It is Benicio Del Toro who won Best Actor Award at Cannes Film Festival 2008 and his outstanding performance and characterization of Guevara which bring this political story to life.

The plot, unlike *The Motorcycle Diaries*, is essentially political in nature, but Peter Buchman as scenarist has creatively condensed the significant events, while still maintaining a storyline which is relatively easy to follow. The structure of this film is particularly effective using snippets of black and white footage which depict Che's visit to the UN 1964, and chronological phasing between America and Cuba. The use of retrospective accounts translated in English means the viewer does not get lost in the



complexity of events.

Soderbergh has been criticized for not including every detail from Che Guevara's life despite the 7 years of research which supports this film. The film is selective, but personally, I was pleased, that no love 'interest' was developed between Che and Tania in Part I. Indeed, one of the film's strengths is that it is not sensationalized. Instead it shows Che's leadership and ability to inspire both peasant villagers, in the mountains of the Sierra Maestra, and charm American interviewees alike, with his personal charisma and wit.

The revitalized interest in the life of Che Guevara has shown no signs of abating this year with the publication of Spain Rodriguez's graphic novel, also entitled *Che*. If you like *Che* (the film) and find yourself more intrigued by political events in South America during the 1950s and 1960s, then this depiction of Che Guevara's life in bold line comic style is well worth getting your hands on.

Che has received most of its publicity because of its renowned director, Steven Soderbergh - who has given us award-winning films like *Ocean's Eleven* - and because of the exceptional performance of Benicio Del Toro. This film is definitely for those out there who want to know more about the man behind the icon.

words/ lara owen

REVIEW/

Oklahoma!

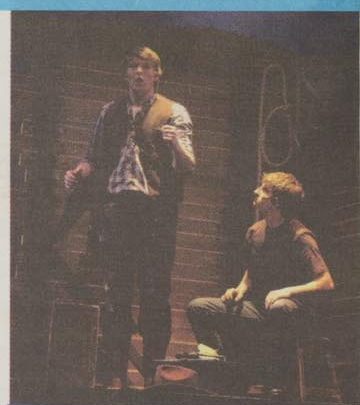
Riley Smith Hall
2nd-6th December

Oklahoma! is set in Oklahoma Territory outside the town of Claremore in 1906. It follows Curly, a young cowboy, who is infatuated with Laurey. Unfortunately, they are both too proud to admit they love each other. Just to spite Curly, Laurey accepts an invitation to the local dance from the evil ranch hand Jud Fry. Meanwhile, Will Parker has returned early from his trip to Kansas City. Unfortunately, his girlfriend, Ado Annie, just can't seem to say no to other men.

Oklahoma! is a classic Rodgers and Hammerstein musical. Young lovers, things go awry, but they always end up together in the end. The music is old fashioned, yet beautiful, as well as catchy. It's hard not to bop along to the toe-slapping tunes!

LUU's Stage Musical Society states that their aim is to put on two full-scale musicals per year and "to have as much fun as possible in doing so!" They were definitely successful in their aim as every single member of the cast was smiling happily as they constantly danced around the stage.

Curly's (Alex Hammond) was an outstanding performance. It's not easy to play a role that has been owned by many great performers, the likes of Gordon McCrae and Hugh Jackman. But Hammond's voice suited the role, and he made the character his own, handling the strong southern American accent with aplomb. Other notable performances came in the characters of Will Parker (Ian McGill) and Ado Annie (Zoe Fairlamb), the fun-loving dimwitted couple who both had fantastic comic timing. Ali Hakim (Andy O'Keefe) was a definite standout performance, his Persian accent was well done and he was definitely one of the funniest performances of the night. On the opposite end



photos/ sarah greene



of the scale, the character of Jud Fry (Owen Bradley) was very aptly performed. He succeeded in presenting the creepy ranch hand who stalks Laurey. Jud's song (which was cut from the movie version) is a hard song to perform as it takes a strange turn in an easy-going fun musical, but he handled it wonderfully and definitely scared the audience many times.

A classic, potentially 'comfy' musical, if you're in the mood for some laughs, sweet, good old-fashioned romance and some catchy tunes then don't miss out on 'Ohhh-klahoma where the wind comes sweeping down the plains!'

words/noni garraff

PREVIEW/ The Nutcracker

The Grand
17th-31st December

If Christmas is a time for indulgent escapism, then the magical world of Clara and her fantastical adventures with the nutcracker doll really do provide the perfect treat. Tchaikovsky's most famous and much-loved Christmas ballet is tinkling its way onto the stage for two weeks of performance this festive season at The Grand Theatre.

As the snow falls outside, Clara and her family are preparing for a Christmas Eve party when her uncle, Herr Drosselmeyer, arrives back from his exotic travels with stories to tell and gifts to bestow. Clara's imagination is captured as soon as she sees the unusual wooden nutcracker doll, shaped like a toy soldier, that lies beneath the tree. As the clock strikes midnight Clara finds herself in an unrecognisable dream world where the Nutcracker doll comes to life. Together they fight the Mouse King before travelling to a world where they are greeted by dancing snowflakes, fairies and queens.

Canadian born Artistic Director David Nixon, who has worked throughout Canada and Europe, has been with The

Northern Ballet Company for seven years. Following a vast repertoire that includes *Swan Lake*, *Madame Butterfly*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Peter Pan*, the company is excited about marking the beginning of their 40th anniversary year in January with the performance of such a timeless classic such as *The Nutcracker*. When asked just why this ballet is so special, Pippa Moore, one of the three dancers who plays Clara, said, "*The Nutcracker* has become a tradition in its own right – the captivating music bringing memories of childhood imagination, the nostalgia of Christmas, the importance of family – I believe it is this timeless charm that makes the ballet so popular."

So if at Christmas you like a good dollop of festive magic with your mince pies and christmas pudding, then this is the show for you. A treat for all the family, this ballet is a classic tale that cannot fail to spark the imagination of both adults and children alike. With spectacular costumes and Tchaikovsky's gorgeous original score this show should prove to be a delight. And if ballet is not your kind of thing, let a little bit of Christmas magic into your life and why not give it a go?

Leeds Student has a pair of tickets to the Nutcracker's opening night on Tuesday 17th December. Email your details to arts@leedsstudent.org for a chance to win!

words/ alexander brzezicka



CLOSE UP/ CTRL ALT SHIFT

Are you the next notable filmmaker? Would you be interested in having your film idea mentored by a successful director like Noel Clarke (*Adulthood*)? Would you enjoy the opportunity to commission an original soundtrack to your film from a critically acclaimed artist like Shy Child or Young Knives? Then Ctrl.Alt.Shift can help... They're the 'Vogue' of charity organisations, using multimedia, fashion, film, dance, pop music and 'cool' as the basis for most of their projects. Ctrl.Alt.Shift raise awareness, support and tackle vast world issues such as HIV, war and gender politics. Their latest project is a film proposal competition for 18-25 year olds, looking for a film idea that is emotive, varied and offering up stimulating action. The winners, as well as receiving priceless guidance from established directors and music written by award-winning bands, will be granted the funding to see their project carried through. For more information and to enter visit: www.ctrlaltshift.co.uk/film

words/ jack cullen

REVIEW/ Northern Art Prize

Leeds City Art Gallery
Until 1st February

Only in its second year, the Northern Art Prize celebrates and rewards artists of any age, working in any medium, based in the North East, North West and Yorkshire regions. For a moment lets put scepticism aside that the selection panel is based entirely in London, and appreciate the north as the hub of creativity that it is, with developments like The Liverpool Biennial, The Yorkshire Sculpture Park and The Henry Moore Institute as well as top artists David Hockney, Henry Moore, Damien Hirst and Barbara Hepworth. Liverpool based multimedia artist Imogen Stidworthy, winner of the 2008 Liverpool Art prize, is the first artist that you will come across when entering the gallery, but have faith; the pretentious and slightly disorientating multimedia installation "I hate" is not representative of the four nominations. Intended to "emotionally, visually and acoustically take hold of the architectural space", Stidworth's exhibition will at least work towards prize director Pippa Hale's intention of encouraging debate.

Next up is Leeds Met senior lecturer Clare Chamley: her pieces focus on the limitations and interesting intricacies of language. Chamley's "The Conversation of Things" is a series of paired narrative posters – each highlighting the different ways in which language can be interpreted through comparison with its pair. Her piece "What is Possible" (pictured) is perhaps the most interesting in the prize – an interactive screen allows you to select from a list of video anecdotes on the topic of misunderstanding. In a variety of languages, there are hundreds of short stories to choose from, ranging from a young woman recalling a foreign gentleman's confusion in Borders when he tried to 'pay' with



Photo/sarah greene

a library card, to an older gentleman recollecting a hilarious misunderstanding in his younger days owing to being unaware of the euphemism of "sleeping with" someone.

The most 'traditional' artist nominated for the prize is Richard Forster and his painstakingly detailed photo-realistic drawings of subjects he considers to be close to him, ranging from a high rise in Hackney to a dog sat on a patterned rug. I'm not sure about their intention of "questioning our understanding of what we are looking at", but at the very least the drawings are a remarkable achievement in craft, particularly the incredible perception of depth of field – giving the drawings, from a distance, a definite appearance of a black and white photograph to even the most trained eye.

My personal favourite was Paul Rooney's "La Decision Doypack", a 27 minute first-person narrative video considering the relationship between sound, popular music, memory and the everyday. In a kitsch and somewhat Mighty Boosh/Flight of the Conchords-esque manner, a very eloquent speaker reveals the comedy in the flawed nature of recalling the past in art. To be honest, the whole visit would have been worth it just for the "The Cling Film Song"... "cling film is great for sandwiches, cling film is great for sandwiches, cling film is great for sandwiches..."

words/ sarah greene

REVIEW/ Peter Pan

West Yorkshire Playhouse
22nd November-31st January



Photo/ catherine ashmore

From the opening scene of a beautifully constructed London townhouse to the final sequences of swashbuckling quick-footed debauchery in the face of a giant four-man crocodile, *Peter Pan* is truly the magical and theatrically entrancing show it promises to be. Pitch perfect and surprisingly complex in parts, George Stiles' musical score (directed by Stephen Riley) is entertaining and heart-warming. The Lost Boys' anthem 'Lost Boys Gang' is particularly catchy and charming as the troop of six mock-boys roll and pounce around a high-budget jungle set. James Gillan brings a refreshing edge to the title role, with an abundance of springy steps and facial charisma; his Scottish accent is bound to be a hit with the ladies, alas.

The jokes are naturally aimed at children, and any fighting scenes are diluted into rolly-poly Beano brawls. One or two lines are thrown in for adults though, not to mention a multi-layered circuit of puns revolving around Peter and Wendy's seemingly platonic relationship.

The pirates are adorned in sartorial splendour, as one would expect of a WYP seasonal production, although it is Smee (Martin Callaghan) who leads the pack with his broad Yorkshire dialect, performative brilliance, indirect stage whispers and general largesse. Captain Hook (David Birrell), although effortlessly terrifying by definition to the minors in the audience, failed to fulfil the potential of his notorious and imposing role. Vocally, Hook's part is one of the most challenging, so this was perhaps Kay Magston's chief concern as casting director. His boots are to-die-for though (perhaps knee-high gold-buckled nautical leather is the long searched-for successor of the tired and universally loathed Ugg).

The sets were little short of magnificent, with the audience entranced for two hours by revolving bedrooms, shifting constellations, adventurous jungle hide-outs and a large net-ridden pirate ship's stern in the Act II.

Possibly disappointing for some, Tinkerbell came in the form of laser pen. Although interesting for illusion enthusiasts, it may be a little deflating for those with expectations built upon a childhood love for glamorously tailored wings (later on developed by a taken-for-granted 90s devotion to Julia Roberts).

Choreographically, the production was well devised, with plenty of attention invested in the Lost Boys' stage movements, and everything that they did was physically orchestrated in some way. The Pirates treat the audience to one or two tongue-in-cheek dance routines too, with swords raised patriotically and feet popping campily behind.

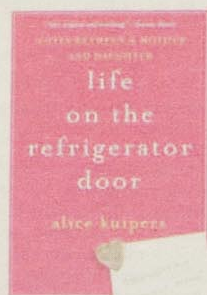
Bizarrely the true star of the show was the minor role of Tiger Lily, a tribal woman warrior in Mau Mau attire. Michelle Cornelius had strong stage presence, bringing genuine strength and vitality to the part, and is undoubtedly an actress to watch out for.

For university students *Peter Pan* is a fabulous end of term treat and on top of its surface level delight, some surprisingly interesting issues are addressed. It was fascinating to rediscover J M Barrie's story from within an academic frame, his gender viewpoints, Marxist opinions and even Queer Theory elements that are all touched upon. For the few quid it costs to self-indulge, *Peter Pan* is certainly worth every penny. Heart-warming, entertaining and visually enriching.

words/ jack cullen

Life on the Refrigerator Door

Alice Kuipers



Life on the Refrigerator Door is a story about a mother and a daughter who write notes to each other on the refrigerator (hence the title) about their lives. It's very poignant,

showing us how the modern family has no time to just be with each other any more. The story moves along as the mother discovers she has breast cancer and it continues to a sad, obvious conclusion.

It is quite a clever book. It manages to portray a relatively large amount of emotion for so few words – it only takes about half an hour to read. Because of this it is a little difficult to connect with, half an hour with a family who is only revealed from tiny pieces of information is not enough to really get to know them.

However, the lack of information does force you to use your imagination: what did Claire and her mum talk about that evening, what photos did they look at, who is Gina and what is her relationship with the family? Because of this you can't help but put yourself



It shows how the modern family has no time to be with each other

in their place and feel what you imagine they feel. And there were moments – once or twice – where I could so distinctly hear my mother's voice that I actually choked up. Once or twice.

Other times I scoffed in disbelief. Kuipers is too present in this novel when she should have disappeared completely. An author is unnecessary in this story: if you can see her then it takes the reality from it and this is how the book affects us the way it does. A sixteen year old would not write about watching 'the sun tumbling down' in a note to her mother which she stuck on the refrigerator door.

To conclude, this book is definitely worth a flick through – it won't take up much of your time and you may get a lot out of it. It is very clever and is sometimes successful at what it is trying to achieve. It's just a pleasant, easy book that's quite forgettable, but nice while it lasted.

words/ charlotte lepora

The Painter of Battles

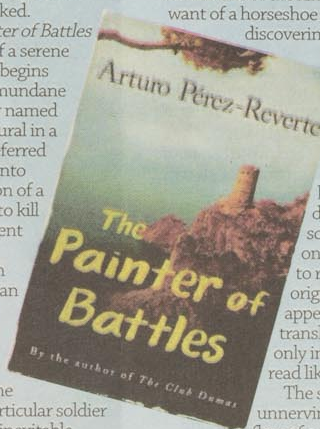
Arturo Perez-Reverte

As an exhaustive yet entertaining challenge in critical thinking and reflection, this book stands among the highest ranked.

The first scene in *The Painter of Battles* is set on the jagged cliff tops of a serene resort somewhere in Spain. It begins simply enough, detailing the mundane routines of a reclusive painter named Falques working on cryptic mural in a tower (if such details can be referred to as mundane) but veers off into absurdity with the introduction of a stranger, whose sole intent is to kill the painter to avenge an incident of the past.

The strange encounter with the man (who turns out to be an ex-Croatian prisoner of war), leads to the unravelling of the painter's story. We learn of Falques' past as a war photographer, and how the one photograph he took of this particular soldier ruined his life and led to their inevitable meeting at this place. The author worked as a war reporter for twenty one years, which explains the authenticity and feeling in his work when describing the effects of war.

In their discussions of art, war and



photography the two men, hunter and hunted, search for the philosophical truth behind the nature of mankind. The author intertwines several theories delicately into his work – from the butterfly effect of quantum physics, to the old folk tale of the kingdom that was lost for want of a horseshoe nail – all in the effort of discovering the pattern behind

what appears to be man's irrational existence.

Arturo Perez Reverte has what can only be described as a grand style of writing, unafraid to indulge in long elaborate descriptions of both scenery and emotions. The only shame is not being able to read the book in its original Spanish, because if it appears this well crafted translated into English one can only imagine what it would read like in its native form.

The story carries on with the unnering but strangely calm flow of a clever mix of drama and thriller. It comes to an unsurprisingly inconclusive end, leaving the reader guessing, but on the whole, very satisfied.

words/ peter kawuma

Texas Death Row

Bill Crawford



LAST WORDS. LAST MEALS. LAST RITES.

"Last Words. Last Meals. Last Rites." This is, unfortunately, a subtitle which accurately depicts the substance of this whole book.

Texas Death Row is a compendium of information about prisoners put to death in Texas since the death penalty was reinstated there in 1977. Each of the 391 prisoners have their own dedicated page which includes six core ingredients: their personal information, reason for sentence (which often reveals the interesting motivations behind their crimes), time on death row, last meal, time of death and their final statements. Their last meal can be interesting to a point but reading the convict had ordered X quarter pounders and Y portions of fried chicken can grow tiresome.

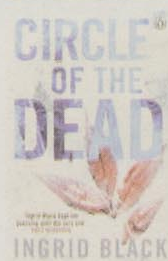
While reading their reasons for convictions can be quite shocking, their final statements are the most intriguing. It is surprising to discover how valuable most of these prisoners found their final words, and many can leave you feeling sombre. In addition to these profiles, there are some basic statistics, such as shortest, longest and average time on death row. While these can be of interest, it should be mentioned that the book consistently fails to mention more worthy and debatable facts such as the exonerated rate of death row inmates.

The main qualm with this book is the soulless profiling of these criminals' deaths, with it focusing more on the quantity of the deaths rather than the potential quality of the stories behind them. Look no further than this if you are interested in a shallow reference book merely depicting the simple facts and figures surrounding the death penalty, minus any controversial data.

words/ anthony zupnik

Circle of the Dead

Ingrid Black



Thrillers come in certain categories in terms of their ability to deliver a shocking twist. To paraphrase Donald Rumsfeld, there are some things we know that we don't know, and others that we don't know we don't know. Thrillers that contain the former category of twists are entertaining, but often fall under par.

This particular book delivers the latter kind of shock: the one you could never, ever, have seen coming, which is what makes it so fulfilling to read.

What the author does equally well is allow the reader an intimate look inside the heads of the victims of the grisly murders. One particularly engrossing scenario involves a man about to be run over by a train. Ingrid Black follows his thought process from when he believes there is a chance of escape, until the point he abandons hope, and finally to the point when he is hit by the train, all in agonizingly meticulous detail.

The orchestration of the plot in this book is nothing short of brilliant. During plot building many writers tend to get lost in the linking of ideas, and don't build enough on the characters themselves. Black evades that trap by taking time to develop the personality traits of her main characters, creating a story underneath the story; an entertaining subplot that acts as a welcome relief to the fast moving main story.

A good thriller would be nothing without dark humour to help build the atmosphere, and Black's creation provides this in plenty. Perhaps one of the main criticisms of this work is that although the ideas behind the murders are original enough, the murders themselves have been witnessed one too many times before. This leaves the reader wanting a bit more creativity, from what is otherwise a very well scripted text.

words/ peter kawuma

2008: the year in books

January

Catherine O'Flynn scoops the Costa First Novel award for *What Was Lost*, despite having been rejected 14 times before getting her novel published.

February

The Diagram Prize for Oddest Book Title shortlist is announced. Will it be *Cheese Problems Solved*, *I Was Tortured By the Pygmy Love Queen* or *If You Want Closure In Your Relationship, Start With Your Legs?*

March

JK Rowling takes a small American publisher to court over plans for a Harry Potter Lexicon. Rowling is increasingly vilified in the press for money grabbing.

April

Scandal hits Lonely Planet as regular writer Thomas Kohnstamm admitted to writing one book without even visiting the country. "They didn't pay me enough to go to Colombia," he said. "I got the information from a chick I was dating."

May

The Guardian Hay festival celebrates its 21st birthday. New names in the spotlight include Zhu Wen, Nikita Lalwani and Simon Lewis.

June

Celebrated British author Rose Tremain takes the Orange Prize for *The Road Home*.

July

Crime puts Harrogate in the news - the fifth annual Theakston's Old Peculier Crime Writing festival, that is.

August

Richard and Judy wave goodbye to Channel 4, and to their book club. Bad news for the nation's booksellers – the couple's recommendations are thought to be worth £1.58 million in sales.

September

The Diagram of Diagrams prize for the oddest book title of the past 30 years is awarded to *Greek Rural Postmen and their Cancellation Numbers*, seeing off stiff competition from *Sex Instructions for Irish Farmers* and *How to Avoid Huge Ships*.

October

Following heated debate, the Man Booker prize winner emerges as Indian novelist Aravind Adiga for debut novel *The White Tiger*.

November

The Bad Sex in Fiction award is given to Rachael Johnson (Boris's sister, incidentally) for, amongst other things, creative use of animal metaphors. Judges commend her 'effort'.

December

The hunt is on to find a new poet laureate as Andrew Motion's 10-year stint draws to a close. Watch this space.

words/ rebecca miles

More reviews at www.leedsstudent.org/ls2/books...

Ding Dong Merrily on Sky

Hatti Cawley considers the festive delights on this year's Christmas TV

Essay deadlines are looming, the Coca Cola advert is back on the TV and the best Fruity of the year is just around the corner, this can only mean one thing...it's Christmas! And what's the best thing about Christmas? Obviously apart from the presents and excessive food it's the excellent TV, the films, the Christmas specials, the Queen's speech (maybe not). Anyway our festive TV treats kick off this Sunday with Miracle on 34th Street, an amazing film to get you into the merriment, all you need is some mince pies and you won't even mind that your house is freezing and it's snowing outside. Next Thursday Channel 5 is showing Bad Santa, so the Christmas filming schedule takes a definite dip, but this got me thinking about the delights we still have to look forward to this month. To my mind the ultimate Christmas film is 'The Snowman', although when I mentioned this to my housemates recently I got the reply 'it's a bit creepy like'. However I think that the film's charm is only enhanced by the accompaniment of a strangely surreal soundtrack and a distinct lack of dialogue. Although the ending is really very sad, and after a few too many Advocats it can bring a tear to the eye, to me it just isn't Christmas until I hear Aled Jones' prepubescent voice singing 'We're Walking in

the Air'. Uniquely to this year, there is a new Wallace and Gromit film coming out for Christmas, which will be premiering on BBC1, it's called, 'A matter of Loaf and Death' and after the success of 'The Curse of the Were Rabbit', I think this will be a definite classic in years to come. Having already mentioned the Snowman, I don't think anyone's sadistic Christmas could be complete without the Eastenders Christmas Special. Apparently amongst the misery of Roxy's secret coming out (remember Jack could be the father of Amy and not Sean?), Dot has some good news as Jim comes home from hospital and ominously the notorious Nick Cotton returns. The Royle Family are also making a Christmas Special comeback, and after the somewhat distressing death of Nana in the last one the writers have confirmed that no one passes away this time. This latest episode is called, 'The New Sofa' and although I'm excited to see what the whole family are up to, sadly Ralf Little will not appear as Anthony. On the bright side, roly-poly comedian, Peter Kay is returning to our screens with some new material, following the success of his show earlier this year. The highlight for me will be,

Britain's Got an Extra Pop Factor and Then Some, which is a follow up to his earlier programme, Britain's Got the Pop Factor... and is a retrospective companion piece in the style of The Xtra Factor and It Takes Two. Presented by Ben Shepherd, this one-hour spoof programme features a countdown of the best performances from the series as voted by the 'viewers', and exclusive

I hope I've managed to give you a taster of what will be lighting up our screens over this festive period, although remember it's not all good TV, apparently there's a two part My Family Christmas special. Avoid like sprouts at Christmas dinner.

interviews with this year's winner Geraldine McQueen.



6

things you didn't know about...

The X Factor

375,000 people over the past five series have applied for The X Factor which is enough to fill Wembley stadium over a staggering four times

The biggest group to audition this year has 22 members

Series 3 finalists, The MacDonald Brothers went on to become a Scottish success story - securing a no 1 in their home country as the first Scottish act signed by a Scottish label

The X Factor has a glittering 10 awards to its name including two BAFTA's, three NTA's and a British Comedy Award

Over half a million people applied for tickets to watch the live shows last year - they'll need to be patient as there is a waiting list of over a year!

375,000 people over the past five series have applied for The X Factor, which is enough to fill Wembley stadium over a staggering four times

words/ evie prysor-jones and hatti cawley

The Argument

Which special is the most special?

The Office

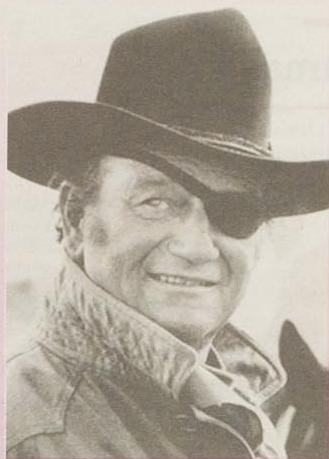
The Office Christmas specials are the icing on the most perfectly baked cake in television history. Under the guise of a follow up documentary, the two hour-long episodes start by showing David Brent desperately clinging onto the 'fame' he found at Wernam Hog, Gareth filling his shoes as boss, and Tim and Dawn frustratingly separated by the Atlantic Ocean. The usually mundane day-to-day life of the characters mean that slightly significant events become climatic avalanches, such as Brent's brief flash of sanity: "Chris, why don't you fuck off?" and Tim and Dawn's long awaited kiss, a moment which has cemented Yaz's 'Only You' as a song of romantic euphoria. No one can realistically imagine that Carol and David's relationship will last beyond a second date, but the spirit of Christmas grants suspended disbelief that there can be happy endings, even in the boring world of work.

words/ clare pidsley

The Vicar of Dibley

Do you love The Vicar of Dibley? No no, no no...yes. Apparently this programme is a marmite of a show but I cannot fathom why anyone would hate it. Dawn French is hilarious as Geraldine, the first female vicar in this little, bizarre and possibly inbred village. It is not just French's funny fat girl charm that pulls me in, but all the characters burrow their way into your heart. Haughty David Horton, huggable Hugo and absolutely insane Alice, to name but a few, come together to cause mayhem and confusion in, usually, a completely surreal but heart warming situation. It could be even better this year as in 2007 Geraldine, rather randomly, got married to the gorgeous Toby (Richard Armitage), will he reappear this year? God hopes so. I would equally love a repeat of the surprisingly deep puddle incident, fans of the show will know what I mean, choking-on-mulled wine-incident every time. Just the beautiful theme tune is enough for me to want to snuggle up with a mince pie with the knowledge that I'm going to be smiling for the next hour.

words/ evie prysor-jones

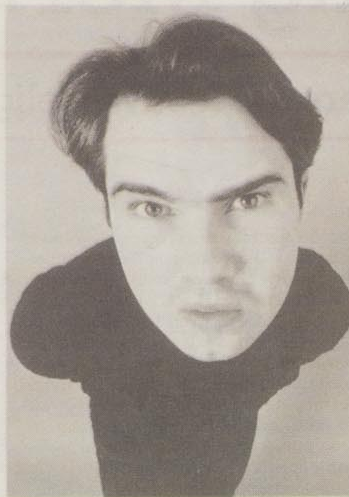


Friday 5th December

Jimmy Carr Live: Comedian
Channel 4 10.35pm

I used to find Jimmy Carr the most irritating person, the most arrogant comedian and not in the slightest amusing. Now however, I still think he is all those things but have turned to finding this sort of humour chuckle worthy. He is never going to be as amazing as Eddie Izzard in my eyes, or as well dressed, and Jimmy really needs to sort out his hair and buy a new suit but I am learning not to judge a comedian purely on these sense of style. Jimmy is a bit demon-headmaster-ish when he puts his hands together but that, I have decided, is the only irritating thing left...in conclusion, watch this, you might like him.

words/ evie prysor-jones



Saturday 6th December

The British Comedy Awards 2008
ITV 9.15pm

After the whole 'Sachsgate' debacle, Jonathan Ross was asked to step down from his role as host of this ceremony. Instead, some bright spark has decided the equally disgraced presenter Angus Deayton, should step in. Does anyone else see the irony? However, what we all really want to witness is Ross and Brand turning up (they are both nominated for awards). I really hope one of them wins just to see the support/disgust on the other comedians faces. However let's try our hardest not let this overshadow the other comic talents attending, as they include David Mitchell, Harry Hill and Ricky Gervais.

words/ hatti cawley

Film of the week

Rio Lobo

Sunday 6th December BBC2 4:50pm

Another classic John Wayne film, so familiar to old and young. 'This town ain't big enough for the both of us,' anyone? Relative unknowns Jorge Rivero and Chris Mitchum play the Confederate looters snatching Union gold, and Wayne is the colonel trying to find the traitor who's feeding information to the robbers. Meanwhile, wild-eyed Jack Elam looks askance at the whole business. It does have more to offer than your average guns, lassos and horses cowboy flick though - there's a real sense of Western occasion and Wayne adds a nice touch of sardonic humour to the proceedings, something which is all too often lacking from today's stunt-filled spectaculars. It's to see a good old-fashioned film for a change, instead of yet another franchise film that's barely out of the cinema, but whether nostalgia for the 1970s can match up to today's showier, special effects-filled, bank-breaking blockbusters, well, watch and see!

words/ lauren fordham

Sunday 7th December

Home Alone
Five 5.10pm

It just wouldn't be Christmas without a Home Alone movie, and luckily you can get your fix early this year and it's on terrestrial TV. Obviously Macaulay Culkin stars, and at ten years old he was already in his fifth picture...things have taken a turn for the worst for him of late but try to put that at the back of your mind whilst enjoying this festive comedy. He is living every child's (and teenagers) dream as his parents fly to Paris for the holidays, and he is left behind to watch videos and eat junk food. However, is this all that happens to this young happy chappy? I think we all know that some slapstick comedy and dimwitted thieves are about to entertain.

words/ hatti cawley

Monday 8th December

Have I Got News for You
BBC2 10.00pm

If you missed it on Friday, this looks like it's going to be an excellent episode of the topical quiz show, so it's worth catching the repeat today. David Mitchell, from Peep Show is the guest host this week, and after his witty performance on 'Would I Lie to You' I think he's going to be an ideal host. Paul Merton and Ian Hislop are still in their usual spots captaining the teams and are joined by comedians Andy Hamilton and Sarah Millican. Who doesn't love a bit of political orientated banter? Though I'm not sure if anyone can replace Angus Deaton, for me this programme continues to entertain while being educational.

words/ hatti cawley

Tuesday 9th December

Man Hunters: Our Turkish Toyboys
Channel 4 10.00pm

This documentary will apparently be following two middle-aged women in their desperate search, desperate being the operative word, for romance with unsuspecting young Turkish men. In typical Channel 4 style, I'm sure it will be presented as a sensitive look at the difficult issues these women and their boyfriends/victims face but I bet I won't be the only one tuning in for mere comic value. With the names Debbie and Terry, the two women already sound like they've walked out of a Peter Kay sketch so fingers crossed they'll deliver comedy gold.

words/ naomi wells



Wednesday 10th December

The Cheryl Cole Factor
Channel 5 10.00pm

This looks sure to be another high-quality Channel Five documentary with more groundbreaking revelations in what will obviously be an example of investigative journalism at its peak. Expect fascinating insights and exclusives from the likes of Keith Chegwin, Big Brother rejects and Cheryl's best friend's uncle's mate. The nation, including myself, may well have developed a soft spot for the Geordie lass after her X Factor triumph but does this really justify an hour-long documentary? Well, I guess Channel Five have to find something to fill up their schedules but even the title suggests a total lack of inspiration.

words/ naomi wells

Thursday 11th December

Little Dorrit
BBC1 8.00pm

I'll be honest. I never understood why people drool over Matthew Macfadyen. I've never watched Spooks and frankly if I want a Mr Darcy I'll have Colin Firth any day. How wrong I was... Having been addicted to Little Dorrit for the past month, I have since unashamedly fallen in love with him. He's so lovely! And attractive! Anyway, in tonight's final episode everything comes to a head. Arthur (Macfadyen) becomes incarcerated in the debtor's prison and Rigaud (the fabulous Andy Serkis a.k.a Gollum) comes back to bring his blackmail plan to fruition. It has truly been a fantastic series.

words/ emma black

Friday 5th December

Batman
E4 9.00pm

If you opt for staying in this Friday night then the original Batman, with Michael Keaton's portrayal of Bob Kane's comic hero, is definitely a film that's worth watching. The Dark Knight of Gotham City begins his war on crime with his first major enemy being the downishly homicidal Joker played by the iconic Jack Nicholson; whose interpretation of the joker would later be the inspiration for the marvelous portrayal by the late Heath Ledger. The highest grossing film of the year in which it was released, Michael Keaton's Batman is fresh and authentic as the masked crusader and this incredible original has been described as being the best in the entire series, something which I think would be very hard to dispute.

words/ kimberley sawyer

Saturday 6th December

The Fresh Prince of Bel Air
Virgin 1 5.00pm

It is so sweet watching this now Will Smith is all grown up, even if he does look exactly the same. It is pretty poorly acted, the story lines often don't make any sense and you're pretty sure there is someone holding up a board to the audience saying "ooooo", "laugh" and "awww." However, as soon as Alfonso Ribeiro as the ever geeky Carlton Banks starts dancing to Tom Jones (which seems to happen every episode) you ignore the bad and just enjoy the good. As with many American sitcoms, the comedy comes side by side with a moral message. In this episode Jazz's fiancé comes onto Will, what should he do?

words/ evie prysor-jones

Sunday 7th December

Don't Tell The Bride
BBC 3 8.00pm

This T.V shows involves a couple whose wedding is left completely up to the groom. Every detail from the reception to the bride's wedding dress is left up to the groom and the bride has no say at all. In this week Jason has to keep his cool as he chooses the wedding rings, the bridesmaid dresses and venue. Since a girl's wedding day is a day she looks forward to all her entire life I couldn't see the point of this show for the bride until I was told that BBC give them £12,000 towards their wedding; at least she knows it will be an expensive wedding even if it is a disaster!

words/ emma chetwode

Film of the week

The Hills Have Eyes

Saturday 6th December
Film 4 10.55pm

While normally I would be reluctant to recommend a film that concerns itself with the activities of blood-thirsty radioactive mutants and cheesy all-American families, I must admit that *The Hills Have Eyes*, and its deliciously terrifying mix of realism and absurdity, really does bring unprecedented respect to the genre. The lifelike performance of the terrorized family creates a sense of inescapable, mounting horror, culminating in a scene that could traumatise the most twisted viewer – indeed the vision of a rogue mutant guzzling the family parrot has haunted me for years. The sheer number of protagonists slaughtered makes the general process of identifying the horror film survivors rather difficult (unusually not the attractive couple who will inevitably unite at an inappropriate point in their ordeal). But the film cleverly maintains interest through the abduction of a cute baby – and audiences find themselves perched rigidly on sofas praying to god that the said baby will evade its fate as a mutant's lunch. But does it?

words/ caitlin vandertop



Monday 8th December

George Sampson Living the Dream
ITV2 8.00pm

George Sampson, the winner of Britain's Got Talent last year started his amazing career as a street dancer in Manchester. This documentary follows him after his winning of the talent show. It features interviews with Simon Cowell (a judge on the show) an exclusive preview of George's new music video and an access all areas into George's life. This show will definitely make good viewing for those who fell in love with the little boy whose life was switched around by the reality T.V industry.

words/ emma chetwode

Tuesday 9th December

Stephen Fry: Guilty Pleasures
BBC4 9.00pm

Though the title of this programme is highly liable to prompt dubious brow-raising as to its likely content amongst those sections of the population that use the exclamation 'Ooh-err', one need not be alarmed. National Treasure Fry (as is his full title) lists such inoffensive pursuits as darts and romantic novels among his 'Guilty Pleasures', setting the tone for a show that is more a quirky look into the actor/comedian/all-round-smashing fellow's mind than the rather uncomfortable exposé the title suggests.

words/ charlie cooper

Wednesday 10th December

The Medici: Makers of Modern Art
BBC4 9.00pm

In this documentary Andrew Graham-Dixon once again demonstrates his intimate knowledge of Florence, and shows us some of the most famed delights she has to offer. This week his exploration of the city's art and culture focuses on the central role of the Medici family in the rise of Renaissance art in Italy. Patrons to the likes of Michaelangelo, Donatello and the non-Teenage-Mutant-Ninja-Turtle-inspiring Boticelli; the Medici's cash and publicity brought to light artworks that might otherwise have been lost and set the tone for the big money, big status art world of today. A mixed legacy then, perhaps.

words/ charlie cooper

Thursday 11th December

Mean Girls
E4 10.30pm

Before she became a lesbian with Mark Ronson's sister, before she estranged herself from her mother and definitely before she was frenemies with Paris Hilton, Lindsay Lohan actually made a decent film. Written by the wonderful Tina Fey (she who has made an art form out of impersonating Sarah Palin on Saturday Night Live) *Mean Girls* tells the tale of home schooled Cady (Lohan) getting a bit of a shock when she braves high school. Witty, sharp and scarily accurate the film exposes how shallow and mean girls really are (see what I did there?). Highly amusing and definitely worth watching.

words/ emma black



When
Kazim
met...

ALICE RUSSELL

1999, the year that Eminem, Christina Aguilera, Westlife and Britney Spears all made their debuts. The year that Cliff Richard topped the charts for the fifth decade in a row, this time with 'Millennium Prayer'; also the year that B*Witched blamed it on the weatherman, the year that Ricky Martin inspired everyone to live a life as crazy as he obviously was. The year that Westlife flew without wings. The year that the general public agreed with Ronan Keating when he decided it was said best when nothing was said at all. A momentous year for music, and more specifically for British music I am sure you will agree. Whilst mainstream music was being infiltrated by such epic quality as the aforementioned, the underground scene, having recently just recovered from the epochal trip-hop revolution was very quietly bubbling over, and Brighton was gearing itself up to make musical history.

In 1999, Brighton gave birth to independent record label Tru Thoughts, run by Rob Luis and Paul Jonas. The label quickly joined an elite crew of labels that all boast an incredible pedigree of talent and

Alice Russell's voice is very distinctive and at time incredibly misleading. You would be forgiven for thinking she was a middle-aged black woman.

output, such as Warp, Grand Central, Domino and Ninja Tune. Like their contemporaries, Tru Thoughts have been at the forefront of the underground British music scene since their insemination with artists such as Bonobo, Quantic, Spanky

Wilson, Mr. Scruff, TM Juke and Alice Russell to name but a few. Russell began her career as part of the Quantic Soul Orchestra as the unforgettable voice behind tracks such as 'Mishaps Happening', 'Pushing On', and of course the mesmeric cover of Nina Simone's 'Feeling Good'.

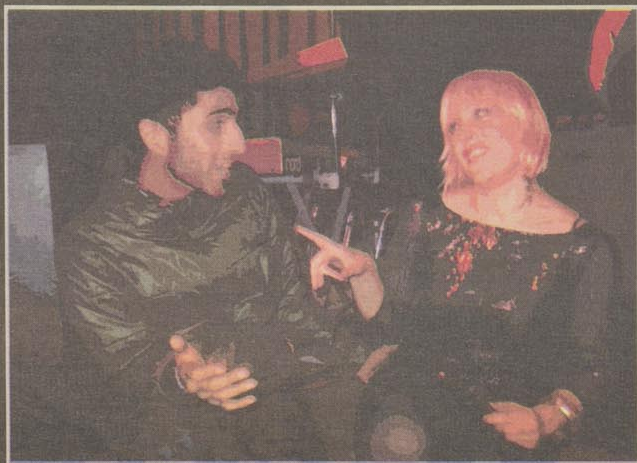
Russell arrived originally arrived in Brighton to study Music and Art and does confess she has not always wanted to sing. "Music was just a natural progression. I came to Uni to do art and music, as I could not decide which way I wanted to go. At Uni I met and gradually meeting the Tru Thoughts crew and working with them." Which is where Alice Russell of course got her big break singing with production genius Will Holland aka Quantic and more recently TM Juke. Both Juke and Will Quantic have been key producers at label Tru Thoughts since its birth, and as well as working on their own material have provided their expertise on their label-mate's records, as well as other artists lucky enough to have a man with such a Midas touch handle their records. Alice Russell has been lucky enough to work with both in great depth. The question is though, who is a better producer? "Ooo! I cannot answer that. But seriously, both, because their both really different to work with. I have not worked with Will for a while because he is of course in Columbia doing his music out there. That is amazing in itself because I get to go there now. But TM Juke and me have worked a lot together and are really free with each other." Tru Thoughts is coming up to its tenth birthday soon and in the last ten years has grown considerably. Alice's has been with the label for most of the last decade joining just after Quantic. With the addition of more artists, the label has grown to become quite a big family. "It just like a massive family, of course everyone knows each other and quite often people work with each other, feature on each others tracks or remix work".

Alice Russell's voice is very distinctive

and at the same time incredibly misleading. You would be forgiven for thinking she was a middle-aged black woman. Her voice, always soulful, can be painful, can be epic, can be tender. For anyone who has seen Russell live, it is easy to make comparisons to artists such as Jill Scott and even greats such as Aretha Franklin. Similarly, Russell's music has a certain timeless quality, perhaps due to the nature of her impeccable voice or perhaps due to the intelligent production behind her music. She is philosophical about her influences, "Everything affects what you produce. Whether it is conscious or subconscious everything you consume affects what you produce. You know, you might be watching a film and it might trigger a thought of a concept for a track. I'm too controlling though, I quite like to let my music do what it's got to do." Do you get the chance to watch many films then, or read books? "On the road, I end up watching a lot of films. I get so tired that all I want to do is put on a film a relax. I have just read A Thousand Splendid Suns though, which was epic to say the least. It was one of those books which you just end up reading in two days." Russell, whether with Quantic Soul Orchestra or with her own live band, is incessantly hard working. "Last year we spent about 70 per cent of the year on tour." It's no surprise then that live, the band is so well rehearsed. Impressive.

Finally, there must have been some real magic moment for a voice like Alice's. "I got to sing with Roy Ayer's on stage once that was pretty special. Sharing the stage with such a legend. I'm still to meet Prince though, I reckon if I met Prince I'd shit myself." It seems Alice shares my passion for Prince. Any Prince fan out there will understand the grandeur of my next question to Alice as I try to find out what her favourite Prince tune is. "That's a hard one, but probably 'Controversy' if I had to choose one." Alice is then interrupted by a phone call from her band mates ringing to find out shoe sizes of the other members; apparently, they have a TV appearance in Paris with Al Green and Amy Winehouse. The show is the French version of Jools Holland. Al Green? It's all right for some!

Alice Russell's new album 'Pot Of Gold' is out now.





Mr Tea

When the inevitable eventually happens, and we finally have one world language and no boundaries or countries to consider as threats, when we are all 'one' I suppose, how will we as a country be remembered? Will it be for our dry sense of humour and our witty repasts? Or perhaps for our ability to talk about the weather for at least ten minutes more than should be natural? Or maybe for the vast amount of adjectives we have for temperature; my personal favourite being lukewarm, seriously who comes up with this stuff? Take as many guesses as you want but they will never top the word on the tip of the rest of the worlds tongue when it comes to our little island. That's right...tea. Even looking at the word now makes me smile.

Now I'm not going to lie to you, I love tea. And not just in the way that you love your car, cat, or Converse. I mean real love, true love, the love that will last a lifetime. In fact, I love tea so much that it shouldn't be allowed, I should be put away. I love it so much that I feel that I'm not doing it justice without putting the word fucking before it. In fact I'm going to... I fucking love tea. But that's enough of my own personal, biased ramblings, let me tell you why I love tea so much and obviously why you should too.

Tea was given to us thanks to King Charles II's marriage to Catherine of Braganza of Portugal which through various methods she'd pinched from the Chinese. It's even mentioned in Samuel Pepys' infamous diary. Once hooked, we wanted to trade with China for it but unfortunately they didn't want anything we had, so like any self-respecting capitalist country, we got them hooked on opium, and suddenly they were very eager to trade. So, reason number one: tea has a long, winding history that involves drugs and betrayals. Above all these wonderful pieces of history though, is reason number two: tea is so essentially British and number three: manages to solve any problem you could come across.

How many times has the phrase 'I'll put the kettle on' been uttered after someone has announced bad news to the room? Better yet, how many of us have muttered 'I'll have a cup of tea first' at that ominous pile of revision or frightfully close deadline of an essay? If we didn't have tea, procrastination, the motif of any self-respecting student, would not exist. Without tea, we wouldn't have anything to comfort others with in times of need. Without tea, what would keep our proverbial British upper lips stiff? Without tea, what would happen to our lives? Anarchy or the inevitable rise of a pre-school army are my two best guesses. In fact, I think we need to forget about three lions and English roses and start thinking about a big beautiful brew on our jerseys instead. Without a decent cup of tea we wouldn't have controlled a third of the world, as a nation we wouldn't be able to handle the weather, let alone each other, and Boston would be famous for sweet fuck all. And we wouldn't want that now would we?

words/ matt allinson



The tragic tales of Hyde Park trails

The lovely walk to Uni through Hyde Park is undertaken by hundreds of students every day. I, being one of these students am part of this daily pilgrimage and have come to realise the need for some essential changes.

Most people criticise the lack of lighting in the park, particularly as nowadays the sun is working part-time. However, the greater issue that must be addressed is the appalling state of the pavements which seems to have suffered a mild earthquake! The path is full of pot-holes, dangerous obstacles, muddy sections and no well-needed bike lane.

During the day our eyes are fixed on the ground and our route is governed by the hole-ridden path. Worse still, walking through the darkness of the evening becomes a perilous venture, where you somehow become a pothole magnet.

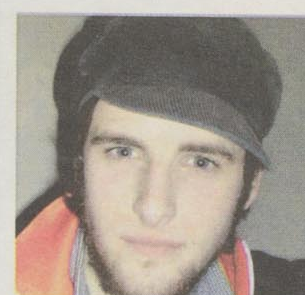
As a result of the ill maintained path a couple of life changing decisions must be made along the way. Those who walk via Brudnell Road will appreciate the first conundrum. Just after you pass the centre ring, where our lovable penguin statue used to live, we are confronted with three choices; firstly we can follow the pavement keeping to the left, the longest and safest route. At the centre lies a muddy path, which in turn, is a shorter route. Finally, to far right the gracious rain of Leeds forms a little puddle, and we must risk a leap to take advantage of this shortest route, failure of which will result in muddy trousers and soggy shoes. But if you succeed, you have saved yourself approximately four and a half seconds! This may not seem like much, but it's a decision that cumulatively, affects hundreds of students every day, and can be rightly addressed by renovating the path.

The second decision occurs shortly after passing the homeless gentleman by the Business School. A man-made path has been formed by the erosion of countless students trying to shave off a few more seconds from their walk. This unpaved path, although shorter, is muddy and often slippery. The alternative is to pay the Duke of Wellington a visit by following the main path. It may not be a vital necessity but cementing the mud-path would make the walk that bit more pleasant.

It's also not pleasant when the odd cyclist whizzes past you and has to slalom between the scattered students. This obviously poses safety concerns, particularly for all those plugged into their music players. Yes, mountain bikers may be able to avoid this by riding through the grass, but personally I have a speedy road bike. The pot-holes are a threat to thin wheels forcing me to cycle round the park. With so much path space, a bike lane would not only be safe, but a smooth surface would allow cyclists to glide to Uni faster.

It may be asking for much, but students will continue to use this path for years to come. Let's hope something gets done about it.

words/ maani yousofi



On CVs and the death of happiness

Since the dawn of time, there have been many texts and doctrines circulated which have had, whether the authors intended them to or not, dire consequences for the collective psychosis. Religious texts have prescribed unfounded morals and stoked murderous fires within theists for millennia; the writings of Nietzsche played a large part in the inspiration for the Holocaust; and one could draw a direct historical line from Rousseau's Social Contract to Lenin's totalitarian state. But a search for the mantra having the most degenerative effect on modern life need last no longer than a stroll through the union building, where can be seen any number of posters proudly displaying the six most diabolical words in the modern lexicon: "It'll look good on your CV."

When the practice of writing CVs was first introduced, the idea was that you wrote it retrospectively, as a statement of your case when applying for a job. Just good, honest self-promotion. It is obvious that employers, when sorting through candidates for a job, use past experience as a separating criterion. This makes perfect sense. It also makes perfect sense that they acquire this knowledge via a list of education and relevant experience, so it isn't CVs themselves which are the target of my displeasure.

But some time not so long ago a seismic shift occurred in the way people look at their own CV, and consequently their lives. A CV ceased to be something quite small which was a means to an end - just a way of telling people how great you are - and became the end in itself. My problem is with people who think an acceptable, even laudable, motive for doing something is to add it to this list for the approval of potential employers. Is this what life has become? Say good-bye to doing things for such old-fashioned reasons as because we like it, or because it will help us grow as individuals or because it helps others, but simply because it's another box ticked and another step ahead of the other mindless slaves sitting next to you in the interview waiting-room. This is more than just a personal foible of mine, the repercussions of such a view are massive.

If the best way to get someone to do something is by saying, "employers love this" or, "it'll enhance your CV" then effectively it's the employers who make the rules, and we become even more so the pawns of capitalist industry. If the only way to make any money in the future is to jump through these hoops set by bosses and executives then the freedom to choose what you enjoy and what kind of individual you are is relinquished. And so I implore you, do what you think will make you happy, and have the confidence that the person you will become will make their own way in the world, rather than numbly chasing the next bullet point on a piece of paper, and we'll all be a bit happier.

words/ james legge

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Headingley Mount x 4 £75.50-£80.50 bill inc.
Estcourt Avenue X 1 £78.50 bills inc. pp pw
Stanmore Road x 2 £74.00 bills inc. pp pw
Manor Terrace x 1 £80.00 bills inc. pp pw
Brudenell Road x 1 £76.50 bills inc. pp pw
Cardigan Road x 2 £75.00 bills inc. pp pw
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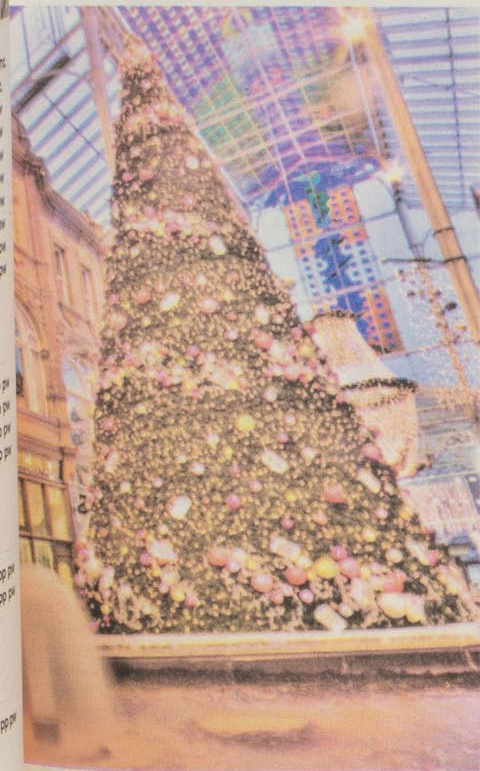
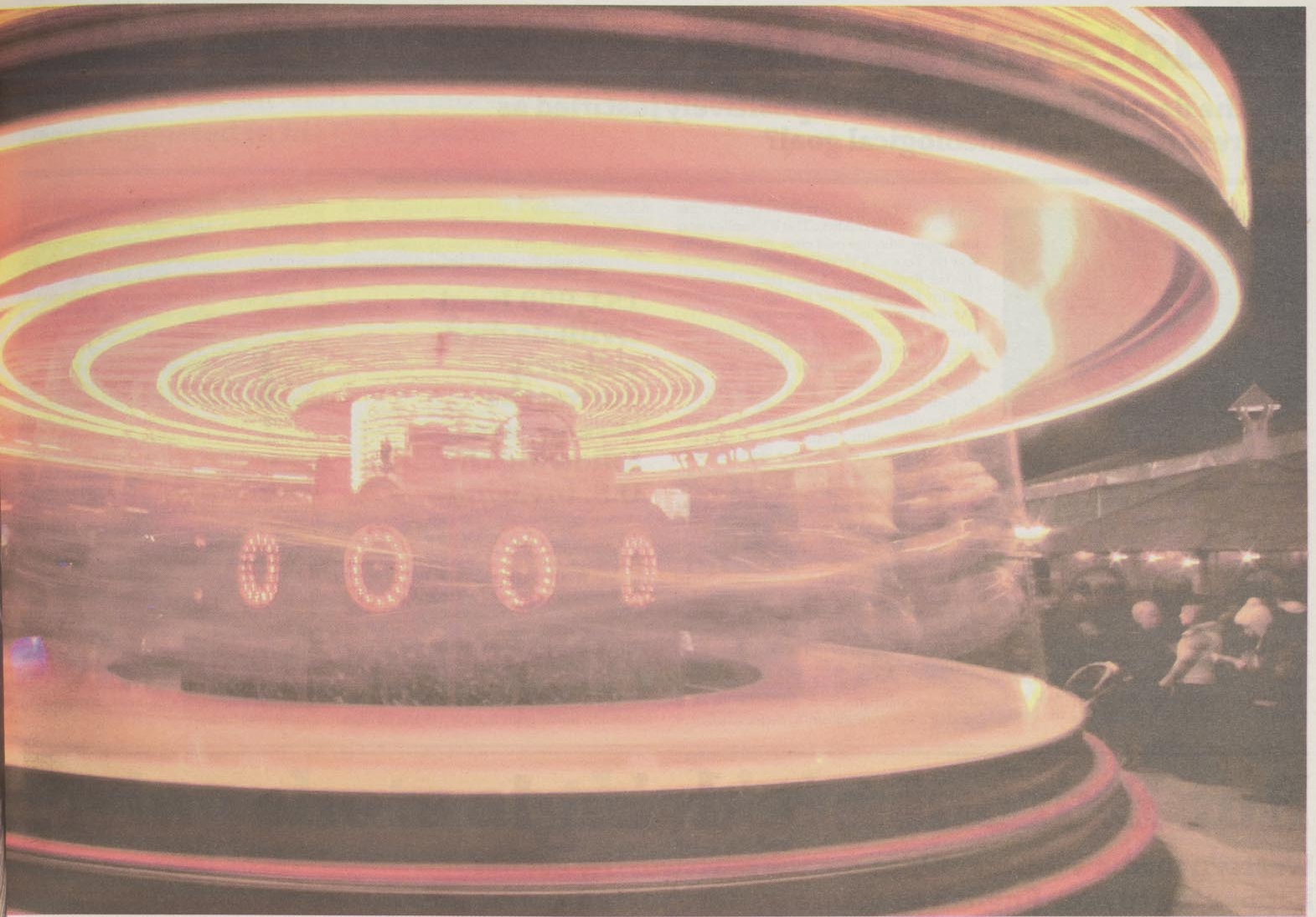


Photo: Charlotte Sintrat

Collateral damage

Can the deaths of civilians ever be positively justified as progress towards an ideological goal?



Lawrence Carter
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With the killing of British terror suspect Rashid Rauf the controversy surrounding the United States' military incursions into north-west Pakistan has intensified. While Rauf was widely believed to have strong links with al-Qaida, the same cannot be said for the rising number of civilians who have lost their lives since the US began its attacks in August.

In September, for instance, two unmanned US aircraft fired missiles at a religious school and houses in a village near Miranshah, the capital of North Waziristan, killing 17 people. While terrorist suspects were found among the dead,

doctors reported that the majority of the victims were women and children. This is a familiar story for anyone who has paid close attention to the War on Terror. A recent report conducted by Human Rights Watch found that at least 837 civilians had been killed in Afghanistan since 2006 as a direct result of the actions of NATO forces. Tragically, this lack of regard for human life is also manifested in the disgraceful actions of the Taliban. If the number of civilian deaths inflicted by both sides since 2006 are combined the figure is closer to 3000.

The situation in Iraq, meanwhile, is even more catastrophic, with the World Health Organisation concluding that approximately 151,000 Iraqi civilians died violently during the three years following the U.S. invasion. In 2007 alone, between 868 and 1,326 civilians were killed as a direct result of US-led coalition attacks, according to humanitarian watchdog Iraq Body Count.

The military refer to these deaths as 'collateral damage', a chillingly detached term coined to gloss over the vast number of civilian casualties inflicted throughout the Vietnam war. According to the U.S. Department of Defence, such deaths 'are not unlawful so long as [they are] not excessive in the light of the overall military advantage anticipated from the attack.' In other words it is left to the military to decide whether or

not a civilian's life is worth sacrificing for their cause.

This callous attitude towards the tragic deaths of humans and the pain of those who mourn

151,000 Iraqi civilians died violently during the three years following the U.S. invasion.

their loss is pervasive amongst U.S. officials. When questioned about civilian deaths following the Gulf War, for example, Colin Powell stated 'that is really not a matter I am terribly interested in.' Similarly, in 1996, Madeleine Albright, then U.S. ambassador to the UN, responded to accusations that sanctions on Iraq had cost the lives of over half a million children under five, by arguing that 'we think the price is worth it'.

The underlying premise here is that the inherently 'noble' goals that the US and its allies

pursue justify the destruction of innocent lives. Citizens of Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as British and American soldiers become political currency, to be exchanged in return for progression towards an ideological goal.

This approach perpetuates a devotion to utopian visions of the future that first emerged during the Enlightenment with the philosophy of Kant. This dream of inevitable progress towards an ideal society has been widely condemned as the driving force behind such atrocities as the Jewish Holocaust and the Soviet Gulag.

Through its War on Terror the Bush administration has followed a similar path, seeking to impose a set of ideological beliefs, divergence from which represents a threat to the U.S. vision of an 'ideal world'. This goal is regarded as worthy of sacrifice and consequently innocent civilians pay the price as 'collateral damage'.

Adherence to ideology in this way effaces the individual in favour of abstract ideals. When humans are placed upon scales in order to assess whether or not their deaths are outweighed by political gain, surely it is time to stop and reflect upon whether the end can ever justify the means? The dehumanising effect of treating people in this way brings us one step closer to such dystopian nightmares as those envisioned by Orwell and Huxley.

But Britons are dying!

Western media's inherent bias means newsworthy events happening to non-English speakers go unreported



Paul Haydon
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The British media's coverage of the Mumbai attacks has once again showed how we tend to distinguish between 'them and us' when reporting death tolls. I was shocked to read a report on an online news website in the aftermath of the attacks which began by stating that up to 30 foreigners has been killed in the violence. It was not until the third paragraph that, almost as an aside, it was mentioned that a further 140 Indians had also been killed. Whilst it is understandable that the British media will tend to focus on matters concerning Britons, it is inexcusable to present the facts in such a way that imply that non-Westerners are somehow inferior by focusing only on Western casualties. What is also worrying is

that coverage of the attacks was so prolonged and widespread in comparison to previous terrorist attacks on India. There have been a total of 11 other such attacks in the last two years, none of which received decent coverage from the Western media. A series of bomb explosions in the city of

It is inexcusable to present the facts in such a way that imply that non-Westerners are somehow inferior

Ahmedabad last July killed 45 and wounded 161, while even more recently on October 30th blasts in the North Eastern city of Guwahati killed 68 people and wounded 335. These attacks differ in that there were a

slightly smaller number of casualties involved, the cities attacked were not so well known and the perpetrators used the more conventional method of bombs rather than an all out armed attack. However there remains another crucial difference: there were no Westerners killed.

This attitude towards reporting can be seen across the board. It has been widely commented on that the U.S. carefully counts its own casualties in the Iraq war while neglecting to count the death toll of Iraqis. This selective analysis of events is present in the Western media as well in the Bush administration. Another example that has been prominent in the news recently is the blockading of Bangkok's airport by protesters in Thailand. Political unrest has been brewing there for many months, yet this was rarely saw media attention, and it was not until Western tourists became trapped in the airport that this was deemed worthy of a news story. Even now, the focus has tended to remain on how to get these trapped travellers out rather than looking at the political ramifications the crisis is having on Thailand. The photos used in the media to portray the current crisis show this bias; instead of the thousands of angry Thai protesters, we are shown images of poor white tourists sleeping in the airport. It seems that until Western interests are at stake, a story just isn't worth reporting. Some people might argue that the media

simply panders to people's interests, and most people just aren't interested in the troubled politics of countries around the world. While this is undoubtedly true, it should be the role of the media to report

The U.S. carefully counts its own casualties in the Iraq war while neglecting to count the death toll of Iraqis

events in a non-biased and truthful way, and by permanently distorting news through the lens of Western interests we risk misunderstanding some of the more crucial events of our time.

Talking without speaking

Milliband's recent visit says more about his political aspirations than suggested in his Q&A session



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Recently, as you may be aware, the Great Hall of Leeds University played host to a question and answer session. A ministerial Jag, complete with an escort of blacked out Land Rovers, rolled up to the doors and out stepped The Right Honourable David Miliband MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

One of the most powerful men in the country was paying us a visit, but it didn't feel like it. Technically he was brilliant, his answers were in-depth and delivered without notes. He smiled, his body language

was carefully choreographed, he made jokes. He behaved like a consummate modern politician but he also lacked something. He didn't have the gravitas I was expecting, the statesman-like quality you'd hope to find in a world leader. The session was more like a lesson with an enthusiastic trainee teacher than one with a headmaster who demands the respect of his pupils.

However, David Miliband is still young in political terms, part of the same generation as David Cameron and George Osborne who have faced similar criticisms about their lack of substance and so perhaps authority is something which develops with experience. It is impossible to deny the evidence which points towards him being an exceptionally able political operator. Tony Blair made him the Labour Party's Head of Policy in 1994 at the age of 29 and since then he has risen fast within the party, becoming an MP at 35 and a cabinet minister by 40. Someone doesn't go so far, so fast in Westminster unless they're something special.

He was, no doubt, expecting at least one question about his ambition to become Prime Minister, a subject he has been forced to deal with in public ever since his controversial article in The Guardian which

outlined his vision of the future for New Labour. Without mentioning Gordon Brown.

When the question came – "Where do you see yourself and the Labour Party in five years time?" his response was short, of the

Miliband was never going to give any other answer to a question about his future

sort I'm sure he's used to giving: "I see Labour in power and myself as the country's longest running foreign secretary." Miliband was never going to give any other answer to a question about his future. To do so would mean declaring a direct challenge to Gordon

Brown's authority. I feel the question was asked more out of a desire to see how he reacted than any genuine hope of him letting slip his personal agenda. Any hints we might hope to discover about Miliband's intentions are going to be far more subtle but that doesn't mean they aren't there.

Although commendable, is meeting local business leaders in a museum and visiting a school, a university and a mosque part of the Foreign Secretary's job description? Why take time out from directing our country's foreign policy to tour Leeds and Bradford? My answer is that he's trying to raise his public profile. He realises he hasn't got the base of popular support that he needs to challenge for the Labour leadership or win a general election and the post of Foreign Secretary isn't the place to gain it. The position requires his influence to be felt abroad rather than at home and so he can't affect the government policies that are closest to the hearts of voters.

The very first thing he said after taking the floor in the Great Hall was that there is a gap between voters and politicians which needs to be closed. I can't help but think what he really meant was that there's a gap between him and the electorate which he needs to close.

Firing shots at the right targets

Controversial advertisements depicting child cruelty are an effective method of instigating action



James Dockerill
Barnardo's Student Brand Manager
jhm5jbd@leeds.ac.uk

In light of the two new adverts currently in circulation on our TV screens courtesy of the charity Barnardo's, many students feel that the approach used is too controversial and that they are not tackling the most relevant issues in society. Not me.

Barnardo's is a children's charity that has not recently been basking in media limelight until now. When people are asked to think of children's charities they usually think of the NSPCC or Save the Children. Their new campaign should shatter this stereotype.

For those who have not yet seen the adverts, the first is called 'Hunting' and shows a group of men dressed in hunting gear discussing dealing with "vermin." They then

get into a vehicle armed with shotguns explaining that they will "shoot a few. And if that don't work, shoot a few more." They proceed to do just this. Not anything too shocking. Until the camera pans out and reveals what is being shot. A group of children. The advert stems from comments posted on message boards within UK newspaper

Children should certainly not be shot

websites. The second advert is known as 'Breaking the Cycle' depicts the day to day routine of a young girl, which includes being slapped, being branded "useless" and drug abuse.

Some of you may think that these adverts are inappropriate in the sense that they are too controversial for our TV screens. I have heard that the 'Hunting' advert could even be glamorising the problem by creating scenes representative of popular video game Grand Theft Auto. This would be quite ironic, considering that it is widely argued that violent video games are a major cause for aggressive behaviour amongst adolescents. I believe that these two adverts are not too controversial in

the slightest. In the 'Hunting' video it cannot be stressed enough that the general public are not correctly addressing a problem in society. These children need direction and support, not for a culture of hate against them to develop. Children should certainly not be shot (neither literally nor metaphorically) and people should not say that they should be shot. Shooting is certainly not glamorised in 'Hunting'; we see no blood and no shot actually hitting a child.

In 'Breaking the Cycle' the sound of the slap hitting the girl should be enough to effectively stick in peoples minds and think about the reality of child abuse. Most of us here at Uni are from very privileged backgrounds compared to a lot of children which Barnardo's work with and I feel that we need such impacting adverts to gain an insight into the lives of such children.

I believe that children are demonized and that there is a general intolerance towards young people in today's society. The media do not help in this demonization as they influence the public with TV focusing on troubled young people; programmes on Anti Social Behaviour Orders, programmes such as "Super Nanny" and even in fictional programmes like "Hollyoaks", where adolescents are constantly up to all sorts of no good. Furthermore, shock tactics are proven to be the most effective, I'm sure you'll all think twice now before driving off without buckling your seatbelts after the recent, eye-opening, rib-cracking, lung-puncturing TV ad campaign.

As a Student Brand Manager for Barnardo's I fully agree with their approach and to those who may be offended by these adverts, Barnardo's intention is not to offend anyone but to simply reflect the experiences of some young people that the charity works with, which is what all the adverts are based upon.

They get into a vehicle armed with shotguns explaining that they will "shoot a few"

Unfortunately, drug use and violence are all a part of this.

The adverts can be seen now on mainstream TV after the 9pm watershed and are also available to watch on YouTube.

Going on the piste

If you're planning on hitting the slopes this winter, make sure you know the conditions of your travel insurance...

Emma, a Psychology student studying at Leeds University, packed her gloves and woolly hat to head snowboarding in the mountains of Andorra last Easter with her excited friends. Before travelling she thought she was completely prepared: she had taken out full travel insurance and listening to her mother's sensible advice made sure that her European Health Insurance Card was carefully packed within her case. Spending the first couple of days taking in the

beautiful scenery and local talent, the holiday was going swimmingly until the afternoon she decided to brave her first ever skiing lesson...

Discussing her half term travels to the ski resort, Emma explained: "I'm a really a confident snowboarder but before the ski lesson I suddenly got really nervous as I had never skied before. Before our first class on the nursery slope just up from the resort, my friend Camille and I went to one of the restaurants for a quick lunch and a glass of wine to calm our nerves. However, one glass turned into two and before we knew it we had finished the bottle! We felt great, I had regained my confidence and off we went skipping to our lesson. I didn't realise how drunk I was at first because I hadn't appreciated just how much more alcohol can affect you at higher altitudes. I soon realised my legs were much more wobbly than usual and I kept taking out the clusters of toddlers surrounding our class! As I started going down the nursery slope practicing my snow plough

technique my skis began to cross and I didn't know what to do to stop them. The next thing I knew I was in the snow screaming in agony and the pain in my left leg was unbearable."

It turned out that Emma had broken her left leg. She thought that she would be covered in her

insurance policy for this, however the company refused to pay out because the injury had occurred whilst she was under the influence of alcohol. Emma then relied on her European Health Insurance Card to help reduce the cost but she hadn't realised that because Andorra isn't actually



a full member of the EU the card was not valid. Her trip home in an air ambulance and the treatment she individually had to pay for cost her over £10,000. This was definitely a holiday she would

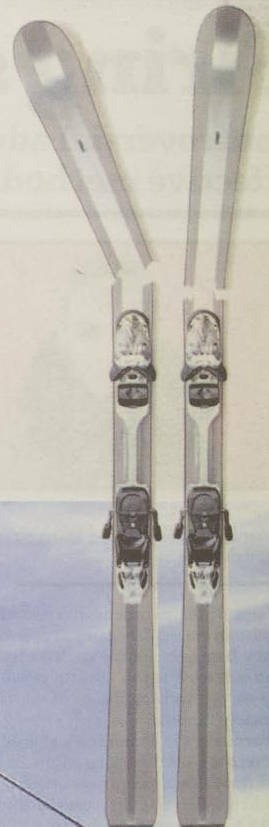
not forget in a hurry!

Remember it is essential to take out travel insurance before you go abroad and essential to make sure you are covered for any activities such as skiing or snowboarding. Your policy may become invalid if you have been drinking alcohol.

If you are planning on taking a winter sports break, check out www.fco.gov.uk/travel for more information.

Carrie-Ann Roberts

For further information on the Foreign & Commonwealth Office 'Know Before You Go' campaign please contact: Carrie-Ann Roberts psc5ear@leeds.ac.uk



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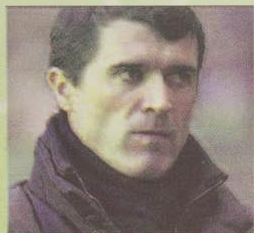
LS Sport

COMMENT

THE WEEK IN NUMBERS

p45

The form that Roy Keane collected following his resignation this week.



1

The amount of games that Paul Ince has got to save his job.

PUNDIT WATCH



"Well that was a half of three halves."

John Inverdale gets his fractions in a twist as Wales torment Australia.

Here come the girls

As the first semester draws to a close it's a time for a spot of sporting navel-gazing. So far, the BUCS season has been a fascinating competition right across the board. For the vast majority of our teams it seems like anybody can beat anybody. For instance, the Men's Football first team came away from Loughborough with a historic 4-1 victory, but suffered Loughborough's vengeance a few weeks later at Westwood with a 3-0 defeat.

However, the undeniable success stories of the BUCS season (standing out from the league tables and results pages like John Sergeant on a dance floor) are the Leeds University women. Sorry gents, but our ladies really are stealing the show this

season.

In the Women's Basketball Northern Conference 1A, Leeds are sitting pretty in second place, an impressive six points away from third placed Liverpool. Our women have won six games and only suffered two defeats, at the hands of the trail-blazing league leaders Manchester. The six victories have been captured in style, supreme examples of this being the double humiliation of Yorkshire rivals Sheffield, 99-16 and latterly 105-13 combined with chalking up two high scoring victories over Durham.

Meanwhile, the women's fencing team are leading their division, three points clear of Northumbria with a game in hand. Consistent

performances have ensured that in every contest Leeds have amassed one-hundred-and-thirty plus points.

Similarly, our Netball first team are asserting their dominance in the top flight which is made all the sweeter by Leeds Met's position in second.

Whilst the fourth team (dubbed by LS Sport last season the 'Green Galacticos') are in a promising position ahead of the new year, lying second in their league, behind the Met but with two games in hand.

Indeed the future looks bright for our women's teams, with silverware beckoning in the new year, right across the board.



Joe Hibbert

Premier League a better place without Keane

I didn't want to do this. I know I am a better person than this. I shouldn't be stooping to his level, but I can't help it.

Football fans across the globe received an early visit from Mr Claus Thursday morning with the news that that agent of Lucifer, that Jack the Ripper of the north, that Margaret Thatcher of football, had resigned as manager of Sunderland.

In case you hadn't guessed, I don't like Roy Keane very much. And anyone who does clearly hasn't read Mick McCarthy's book, or seen his various attacks on opposition players during his career, or his shocking facial hair.

Keane has been at Sunderland twenty-seven months, and in that time has guided them to a promotion from the Championship, and secured their status in the Premier League last season. In short, all has been pretty rosy for Keane since his appointment.

Well, the first twenty-six months were at least. Over the last one though, things haven't been going too well for this particular henchman of Adolf. Shock horror then that he should resign.

I hate to say I told you so, but I did. I don't get many predictions right (Derby would stay up, Lewis Hamilton would win the F1 title

last year) so allow me my moment in the sun.

I said that Keane wasn't up to it. He inherited a decent squad that shouldn't have been where they were in the Championship when he took over, and has been allowed to throw money at the team ever since. His team of assembled Spurs and United cast-offs did well for a while, but Keane's bubble has now burst.

And as soon as it did, he has jumped ship, like the spineless and talentless cretin he is. Don't buy this "I'd taken the team as far as I could" tripe; he isn't up to the job, he knows it and has known it for a long time. He has proved his credentials by abandoning Sunderland when they most need a leader, exactly the kind of man Keane is supposed to be.

The Premier League is a better place without Roy Keane. Sunderland fans had better now hope that Santa will bring Niall Quinn an extra special present too, or come next Christmas they could find themselves exactly where they were when Keane found them - languishing in the Championship.

Owen Bradley

The BBC gambles its lot on Humphrey and Hamilton

With chests swelling with self-congratulatory pride, the BBC have recently announced their broadcasting plans for their coverage of Formula 1 racing, which begins at the start of next season. Choosing Jake Humphrey as their anchor, however, is not the only reason for concern.

Humphrey's patronising approach during the Beijing Olympics suggested he'd forgotten that he was no longer presenting Sportsround, Newsround's wicked-cool spin-off. It seems we should be prepared for an introduction to 'Super Duper Silverstone' and warnings that we shouldn't try mimicking Lewis Hamilton in mummy's Nissan Micra.

With Hamilton the reigning world champion, the sport is arguably the most competitive and accessible it has ever been. The Stevenage-born driver's reasonably humble roots should not mask the fact that Formula 1 is a sport almost exclusively for those with a comfortable financial background. Instead of committing a huge proportion of its sports budget and coverage to Formula 1, the BBC should be acting as the responsible broadcaster it claims to be. Free-to-air television is meant to offer coverage of widely-participated sport, yet all live league football is the property of subscription channels.

Furthermore, opportunities to cover international football and

England rugby matches have been spurned. In the meantime, the England and Wales Cricket Board have mentioned how the BBC failed to make a competitive offer for Test match rights, leaving Sky Sports to continue their monopoly of international and domestic cricket.

The BBC may argue that it's unable to compete with Rupert Murdoch's financial strength, but its acquisition of the world's richest sport undermines such a claim.

With sporting attention turning to Formula 1, however, the BBC is certainly not being what Humphrey may call "fantastic" or "cool". Maybe just wicked.

Daf Pritchard



Is that 'anchor' with a silent 'w'?

"Leeds can be a big part of 2012"

Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson talks London 2012 and the state of disability sport with **LS Sport**

Interview
Dafydd Pritchard

With the Conference Auditorium simmering with the expectation of listening to a genuine sporting great, the only sound in the adjacent room is the sprightly chatting of said great, Tanni Grey-Thompson.

Born with spina bifida, Tanni tried swimming and basketball at school before committing to wheelchair athletics. Having amassed eleven Paralympic gold medals, six London Marathon titles and numerous world records, Tanni is disability sport's outstanding achiever.

Tanni is visiting the University to give a lecture on the Olympics and Paralympics, and Leeds is a city she holds in high regard. Tanni considered an offer to study at the University but chose Loughborough because of its

renowned sport department.

Familiar with Leeds' sporting tradition, she is impressed with plans for new facilities at the University and around the city. "Facilities are extremely important. It's not just about the games – the Olympics and Paralympics are about changes they make to areas before and after the competition. It will be a games of the UK. Leeds can be a big part of 2012."

The call for long-term improvements seems to have been heeded. It was announced in June that the UK Centre for Coaching Excellence in sport and disability sport will be based at Leeds Metropolitan, a key development as far as Tanni is concerned. "I couldn't do what I did without decent coaches. A few years ago that was an area that was neglected, so I think it's really important that we put money into coaching."

During the summer, disability sport enjoyed a rare period in the sporting limelight, with success for swimmers David Roberts and Ellie Simmonds attracting record viewing figures for the Paralympics.

As an athletics pundit and former competitor, Tanni is acutely aware of how important coverage is for disability sport. "It's certainly better around the Paralympics. We had six hours of coverage a day (in Beijing) between BBC2 and interactive services."

There is, however, room for improvement. Although the BBC offered the world's most comprehensive coverage of the Beijing Paralympics, Tanni concedes, "It could always be better, especially in between the games."

Whereas able-bodied athletes benefit from coverage of both indoor

and outdoor competitions on a regular basis, disability sport is notable by its absence on television and in newspapers' sports pages.

Despite the obvious need for consistent media coverage, Tanni notes the improvement. "There have been massive changes since I started competing. I think I was really lucky to be born in Wales. In my early years I got a lot of coverage because of the Welsh media. Now it seems the rest of the British media are devoting more time to disability sport."

Tanni has often been praised for the way in which she has helped change attitudes towards wheelchair users and, as well as generating on-field excitement, Tanni hopes both the Olympics and Paralympics can be beneficial on a wider social scale. "Whatever the sport, when Britain or the home countries do well, people go to work in a cheerful mood – there's a lot of positive feeling."

When I ask how the London games can be most successful, Tanni emphasises the importance of their being unique. "They have to be different. None of the five games I went to were vaguely similar. There wasn't much of an atmosphere away from the stadia in Beijing. Hopefully, London 2012 can bring a real party atmosphere."

As well as revelling in the sense that London 2012 can be a games for the entire UK, Tanni can reflect on them as a personal triumph of sorts too. She was part of the team responsible for London's successful bid to host, and currently works on the Board of Athletics as well as heading the Paralympic Programme. However busy her post-athletics career may be, though, Tanni retains the determined attitude that served her so well on the track. "Whatever I do, I can always do better."

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Merry Christmas
Leeds University Union.



BUCS Results 3rd December

Men's Badminton

Leeds Uni 1sts 1-7 Leeds Met 1sts
Leeds Uni 2nds 0-8 Northumbria 1sts

Women's Badminton

Leeds Uni 4-4 Durham 1sts

Men's Basketball

Leeds Uni 1sts 75-114 Sheffield Hallam 1sts

Women's Basketball

Leeds Uni 58-89 Manchester 1sts

Men's Fencing

Leeds Uni 1sts 135-94 Newcastle 1sts

Leeds Uni 2nds 110-108 Durham 2nds

Women's Fencing

Leeds Uni 135-46 Bradford

Men's Football

Leeds Uni 2nds 5-3 Sheffield 2nds

Netball

Leeds Uni 1sts 33-32 Liverpool 1sts

Leeds Uni 2nds 56-39 Sheffield 1sts

Leeds Uni 3rds 40-41 Newcastle 2nds

Leeds Uni 4ths 59-5 York St John 4ths

Men's Rugby Union

Leeds Uni 2nds 20-12 Hull 1sts

Men's Squash

Leeds Uni 1sts 2-3 Northumbria 1sts

Leeds Uni 2nds 0-5 Sheffield 1sts

Leeds Uni 3rds 0-5 Newcastle 1sts

Men's Table Tennis

Leeds Uni 16-1 Northumbria 2nds

Men's Tennis

Leeds Uni 1sts 7-3 Manchester 2nds

Women's Tennis

Leeds Uni 1sts 10-0 Newcastle 1sts

Leeds Uni 2nds 8-2 Sheffield 1sts

Men's Volleyball

Leeds Uni 3-0 Durham 1sts

Women's Volleyball

Leeds Uni 3-1 Manchester 1sts

the big debate:

Mince pie, Cristiano?

Matches in the festive period are, to many fans, an integral part of the football calendar. Some foreign players and managers, however, question their importance. As the December chill begins to bite, LS Sport asks; **Should football have a winter break?**

Give the players a break

Ben Miles

England is a land of stilted footballing traditions and fans desperate to cling onto 'the way it used to be' in a desperate attempt to remember a world that has gone. Footballers are no longer the 'everyman' who could play a game and then go for 15 pints with the lads.

These days, top class professionals train everyday of the week and play more matches than were ever played by those heroes of old. Matches are played throughout the week with the weight of games increased by larger leagues and more European games for the 'top teams'.

Fatigue is a major factor in the modern manager's thoughts as he picks his side. Clubs must have more players available as reserves for the first team, so they can field a competitive starting eleven at all times.

Teams have millions of pounds of talent sat on their bench week in week out, leading in the end to the sad trend of football clubs entering administration, or in the case of some non league teams, going out of business altogether.

Having a break would allow players to regain pre-season levels of fitness, and would save clubs a lot of money

Having a break would allow players to regain the same level of stamina and fitness that they had at the beginning of the season, and would save clubs a lot of money. With the current financial climate, teams need as much help as possible to reduce their operating budgets, and a smaller wage bill is the ideal way to do that.

Player burn out is a massive factor in major international tournaments. England struggle in these competitions because they are not in the same physical condition as players from countries that have a break. People complain

that England can't cut it at the top level. Give them a break mid-season and they may just be able to get to that level.

Fans are becoming circumspect in how and who they support - the rise of the 'glory hunter' has changed the footballing world. A large number of fans will only remain loyal to their team if they believe they are doing well and are getting value for money from the performances they see.

This means that clubs who cannot get their players to perform are haemorrhaging fans to the better teams. More time to get players into condition for the second half of the season would allow teams to regroup. This would lead to a more competitive spectacle for the fans to see.

With modern physiotherapy improving, injuries heal much quicker but, even so, a team will miss a player they are needlessly paying not to play while he recuperates. With a break the players would have time to recover from injuries and be able to take their place back in the team without missing matches.

Fewer injuries mean less need for extra players and a better standard of football, as clubs consistently play their better players. The world has no place for outdated football traditions on Boxing Day and New Year's Day. With England lagging behind the rest of the footballing world, let's give the players a break.

No to winter tinkering

Owen Bradley

The classic phrase of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" comes to mind whenever the possibility of a winter break in English football rears its head.

What reasoning can there be for a change in schedule when there isn't anything wrong with the current calendar?

Arguments for the introduction of a mid-season recess are flawed at best. Some say that it allows teams to re-group, players to recover from injury, and the league to be more competitive. This neglects the fact, of course, that the rules are already the same for everyone. Why should a team that is building well and making progress have their momentum halted by a break, and have the initiative handed to their less well-prepared rivals?

As for the gap in the calendar ultimately making for a better spectacle for the average fan, it would be the case that rather than returning to action fit and raring to go, players will need a few weeks to get back up to match-fitness. Instead of a break leading to a fast-paced, exciting return to the action, we will see a second pre-season as teams gel together again and find their footing once more.

Introducing a two-week suspension of the schedule also leads to obvious problems down the line. Those two, three or four winter fixtures have to be put somewhere, and with fixture congestion already a huge problem - especially for top teams who now go deep into European competition - the season would surely have to be lengthened.

Or of course, you start the season earlier, in the height of summer. Though that option will hardly be popular in the light of the resistance that comes to playing summer tournaments in the heat of the midday sun.

Speaking of summer tournaments, the introduction of a break will have serious implications for our national team. Either increased fixture congestion will lead

to exhaustion and the possibility of more injuries for our top players, or a longer season will lead to less summer time off, and reduced preparation time ahead of major competitions. From an England point of view, a break is the wrong move.

Throw in too the esteem in which winter fixtures are held by the supporters, and the argument for a break comes crumbling to the ground. Yes, traditions are there to be changed, but there is something truly magical about heading off with your football guardian - whether it be father, brother,

If the tradition of a Boxing Day game were abandoned, rates of domestic violence would rocket as families are deprived of the respite that football so crucially provides over the festive season.

uncle - wrapped up in Santa's latest gifts and watching your team on a frost-ridden pitch.

I would suggest that if the tradition of a Boxing Day game were abandoned, rates of domestic violence would rocket as families are deprived of the respite that football so crucially provides over the festive season.

Whether it has been successful elsewhere or not, a winter break isn't right for English football in its current form. For the sake of our game, and for the health of families everywhere, let us stick to the status quo.



This week, we asked:

"Does football need a winter break?"

"Boxing Day and New Year's Day matches are the highlight of my Christmas holidays. I'd be gutted if they were to go."

- Nicky Large, 20, Sports Science

"I've heard the likes of Rafa Benitez call for winter breaks but they should simply embrace the tradition of festive football."

- Phillys Dawson, 21, Computing

"England's failure at major tournaments will not be solved with a winter break."

- Peter O'Hanrahanrahan, 19, Politics

"A winter break wouldn't just create a void in the football calendar, it would spoil my Christmas."

- Andy Saville, 20, History

705,882

Number of Tesco Deep Filled Mince Pies Cristiano Ronaldo could buy with one week's wages.

Bellingham lights up the world stage

Leeds student finishes eighth in World Championships



Photo: Keshia Thompson

World University Water Ski Championships Keshia Thompson

Leeds University student, Chris Bellingham, made an exciting comeback to the world of competitive water skiing at The World University Water Ski Championships in Tianjin, China.

Chris, originally from Stoke, has been a prolific water-skier since the age of seven and would brave the

unpredictable weather of the British coast each weekend, along with his equally enthusiastic family.

He continued with this routine until he was talent spotted when on the water at Port Maddoc, Wales, and began to train with several of the top coaches within the sport at various locations throughout the UK. Chris's potential was quickly realised and by the age of twelve he had been selected as a member of the British Youth Team, and was to compete at several international events

throughout the summer season. After eleven years of squad skiing, during which Chris represented his country seven times and won a number of both Junior and Under-21 titles, including Under-21 British National Champion, he was unfortunately injured in a ski jumping accident. After a major knee operation, The University World Championships was Chris' first major international competition in nearly four years.

The Championships were held at Dongli Lake, International Water

Sports Park in Tianjin, two hours south of Beijing. In the preliminary rounds of the competition, Chris skied a little short of his potential in the slalom event with a score of 1 buoy on the eleven metre rope length, nevertheless he qualified in 5th position for the finals.

After bending the fin of his ski in the qualifying round, Chris took a gamble for a podium position in the final and ended up in 10th place in the slalom standings.

In the trick and jump events Chris

skied his best scores since his operation, which was enough to secure 11th place in the Individual Overall Standings. His contribution resulted in the British Team finishing 7th in the Overall.

Chris is currently in his fourth year at Leeds, studying a Masters in Civil Engineering, and is backed by TASS and Sport Leeds. He is looking forward to training in Tampa, Florida in the near future in preparation for the 2009 competitive season.

Leeds past and present unite to complete second place double in Scotland



Photo: Sarah Graham

Cross Country Braids Hill Race Sarah Graham

This November saw the annual LUUCCC/Doss AC contingency make the short trip up to Edinburgh for the Braids Hills Cross Country Race. The students took a team of twenty-two matched by half a dozen past Leeds University students, also known as 'Dossers'.

The group competed as Leeds University 'Past and Present', with the teams taking second in both the Men's and Women's races.

In the men's race, alumni Matt Lockyer recorded the fastest time in 34.59 taking 13th place. Captain and current student Pete Webster finished 17th in 35.29, closely followed in four

seconds later by Alumni Ian Nixon (35.33) and 3rd year Joe Anderson-Brown (35.47).

The women's race saw newcomer Sarah Peterson finish an impressive 5th in 19.08, with Emily Klec in 7th (19.15) and Sarah Graham in 18th (20.01) to make up the final two

counters.

The trip gave many new students the opportunity to compete for Leeds for the first time with some great performances, posing well for the Bucs cross country championships in Aberdeen in February.



Photo: Sarah Graham

Leeds fightback puts Durham to the sword



Photo: Alex Pavlou

Men's Fencing 2nds
Ben Miles
Leeds Uni 135 -94 Durham

Leeds gained their second victory of the season in a tense encounter with Durham that went down to the very last match before a winner could be decided.

Leeds had taken the early initiative in the sabre contests as they quickly stretched a twenty point lead over their northern counterparts, a lead that would not be broken throughout the initial discipline as Leeds looked to assert some dominance in what was their best discipline. The home fencers seemed to have greater speed and reaction at the start which was ideal for the rapid discipline of sabre fencing.

Alex Lincoln was particularly impressive in his three fights as he conceded only seven points to his opponents and backed up by good performances from Tom Davis and Dave Wrighton the home team went into the second discipline with a healthy lead. Whether that lead relaxed the Leeds fencers is unknown but the visitors were able to regroup and the start of the Foil competition would be much closer.

Durham duly took advantage of their better start and opened up the same sort of lead that Leeds had commanded in the Sabre's. They were able to increase their lead as Sam Williams and Dan Muand struggled to get into the fixture leaving them to finish the turnaround in the match

with a seventy points to sixty-five lead as the match headed into the final discipline.

With Durham looking to push home their momentum and Leeds hoping to come back into the game and needing to score at least six more than their opponents to win the match the final Epee discipline started out a tight affair, with both teams looking tense. This lead to some tentative match ups with neither side willing to take the initiative, this meant that up to the thirty point mark neither team was able to establish a lead of more than three points and the tie looked to be heading Durham's way.

As Leeds passed the thirty five point mark Sam Williams returned for his final fight looking to give Leeds a decisive lead. What followed was to set the tone for the rest of the match as Williams was decisive in dominating his opponent with a four point victory. This proved to be an inspiration for the team as the vocal Ed Wang extended the lead still further with a confident display of attacking dominance. The match headed into a tense final tie with Leeds relying on the consistent Oliver Westwood to finish off the comeback, against a determined opponent he was able to finish off the tie leaving Leeds to celebrate a victory snatched by two points at the last minute.

Leeds deserved their win in what was an enthralling encounter between two teams determined to improve indifferent starts to the season.

Leeds cricketers go marching on to Lords

Women's Cricket
Jill Waiton
Bucs Indoor Cricket Tournament

Leeds University Women's Cricket Club are on their way back to Lords, having won a place in the Bucs Indoor Finals next February.

After losing out to Loughborough in the final last year, the girls will be hoping to go one step further and take out the trophy in 2009.

Leeds started the day well with captain Cecilia Allen drawing Northumbria and Birmingham in

LUUWCC's pool. However, the games still had to be won and despite a long wait until 2pm to begin the first, the captain led from the front with 25 in the first innings against Northumbria, helping to set up a respectable total of 113-1 off their 12 overs. Megan Vokic and Emily Hunt also chipped in with 15 and 11 respectively.

Although 113 seemed a good score, Northumbria's batters didn't agree, and as their openers set about the Leeds bowling, hearts were in mouths as they rattled along, well past the run rate required.

However, Emily Hunt kept her nerve, and in her second over, took a brilliant one handed catch off her own bowling to send back the main Northumbria threat.

Megan Vokic came back well after some harsh treatment to have the Northumbrian captain caught, but the game continued to be a nail biter until Charley Green brought some calm to proceedings, only conceding 10 off her 3 overs, picking up 2 wickets in the process. A crafty stumping from Anna Gordon in her debut as wicket keeper, and a wicket for Laura

Burgess wrapped the game up, as Leeds won by 12 runs.

Needing to win their second game to qualify for Lord's outright, Allen won the toss this time and elected to field first. This proved an excellent decision, with two run outs coming in the first over, bowled tightly by Vokic. Emily Hunt went on to take two wickets aided by an athletic catch from 'keeper Gordon, and despite a battling 29 from the Birmingham number five, another sharp run out put an end to the Birmingham innings at 63.

With this match being the last played and Northumbria and their coach having stayed behind to witness the outcome, the pressure was very much on the Leeds batsmen as they went out to begin the run chase.

Burgess and Allen started brightly, Burgess playing some beautiful drives before being caught at backward point. Megan Vokic joined Allen and they carried on their fruitful partnership from the first game, hitting the winning runs with five overs to spare.

Brownlee endorses Leeds' first ever triathlon club

Women's Cricket
Jill Waiton
Bucs Indoor Cricket Tournament

The first ever Leeds University Triathlon Club is now established and looking for new members to join.

All varieties of abilities, ages and levels of experience are

welcome; it doesn't matter if you've never done a triathlon before or if you're a more experienced triathlete - it's a sport for everyone.

The reputation and popularity of the relatively young sport of Triathlon is continually rising, with events at all levels occurring all over the world.

Check out www.britishtriathlon.org if you would like to know more about this great sport.

Here at Leeds University we are privileged to have our very own Triathlon Olympian, Alistair Brownlee, who competed at the Beijing Olympics this year in the men's individual triathlon.

Alistair recently won the prestigious British Olympic Association Athlete of the Year award as well as the Male Elite Triathlete prize at the British Triathlon Annual Awards Ceremony. It is very exciting to have him here with us at Leeds and supporting the new club.

So, if you fancy having a go at

Triathlon, join our facebook group, 'Leeds University Triathlon Club'.

LS Sport

www.leedsstudent.org/sport



Nervy doubles finale sees Leeds held in absorbing clash Durham fight back to grind out first point of the season



Photo: Alex Pavlou

Women's Badminton
James Green
Leeds Uni 4-4 Durham

Leeds played host to a resilient Durham side, desperate for their first point of the season. A very competitive encounter saw the points shared, with Durham able to break their duck for the season, but Leeds were able to keep their place above them in the table.

Starting with two singles matches, Leeds drew first blood with Lucy Milne beating her opponent with relative ease, coasting to take the Uni side 1-0 up. Unfortunately captain Gemma Ritchie was not able to make it 2-0, succumbing in a tough match that was riddled with mistakes.

At 1-1 it was then the turn of the doubles pairings to see if they could take the lead for the Uni once again.

Lauren Birch and Jenny Brookfield did just that, seeing off their tough opponents with a mixture of great teamwork and excellent shot selection. With Leeds again in the lead, attention switched to the Uni pairing of Nancy Zhou and Amanda Hitch who knew that a win would heap more pressure on an increasingly desperate Durham side. The importance of the match showed as neither pair was able to take control of the match to begin with. However Durham won out, taking the match 21-13, 21-9.

The second round of matches started similarly to the first round with Leeds taking the early lead, this time through Ritchie. Winning both her games 21-12, she put in a captain's performance, returning the Uni's lead with some excellent footwork and forcing her opponent to cover every

A draw was perhaps the fairest result, but Leeds will take from this contest the knowledge that better things should be just around the corner

inch of court just to stay in the point.

This skill seemed to have rubbed off on the rest of the team with Milne taking her first game of her second match easily. She was not able to continue this domination however, losing the next game and the deciding game as well.

With the scores once again even the deciding round of doubles matches started with the same vigour as had been displayed by the singles. Zhou and Hitch tried their best to put Leeds back in the lead, but came up against tough opposition with the match staying tight all the way up to 18-18.

Durham then took a two-point lead and it looked like the Uni side would need both of the next sets to gain the overall lead once again. However, after some impressive shots to pin back Durham to the back of the court,

followed by some brilliant drop shots saw Leeds tie the game before eventually taking it 22-20. Now that the momentum was behind them Zhou and Hitch and no problem winning the next game and regaining the overall lead for Leeds.

This meant that it would be the final doubles match that would decide the entire contest, if Birch and Brookfield could win then that would mean a win for the Uni side, lose and the points would be shared. Despite a fantastic effort, they could not manage to secure the win for the Uni side and Durham gained their first point of the season.

A draw was perhaps the fairest result but Leeds will take from this contest the knowledge that if they can cut out their mistakes then bigger and better things should be just around the corner.