

LS2 interviews Peter Jackson  
Festive Fashion pullout

Guardian Student Newspaper of the Year

# LEEDS STUDENT

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## Safe as houses?



### INVESTIGATION

With house hunting season on the horizon, *LS* investigates landlords and letting agents. Turn to page 4 for student stories and top tips.

Photo: Charlotte Sintrat

## Interview: VC defiant despite no confidence vote

Matthew Power

As Leeds University students and staff come to terms with a campus-wide 10 per cent financial cut, Michael Arthur continues his biannual routine of answering students' questions.

Faced by criticism from members of the Leeds University Against Cuts group, the Vice-Chancellor responded to concerns at Leeds University

Union (LUU) on Wednesday.

As winter nights continue to close in, those 'at the top' prepare the University for a dark journey of financial savings in Higher Education, which some believe will inevitably lead to voluntary and compulsory redundancies.

To add to this gloom, the Vice Chancellor admitted to Senate on October 21 that a £20million mistake was made in a University economic forecast spreadsheet last year. Although no cash was lost, the institution now has

millions of pounds less than it expected to have. As a result, one member of staff left his job after a 'mutual decision' was made between employer and employee.

Just two weeks ago the local branch of the University and College Union (UCU) voted that they had no confidence in Arthur's 'ability to run an institution of this size.'

Despite what could be seen to be the hardest time in Arthur's career, the Vice Chancellor remains positive about the direction in which he is taking

Leeds University. He emphasises that any proposals made during the Economics exercise will go through Senate and will be voted on.

Asked about whether the UCU vote of no confidence has effected him he replies: "Not at all. I have to be thoughtful about what I'm doing, I have to do what I think is the right thing for the University and I think one has to understand that it was a vote of no confidence at a Union meeting by those that were present, so it was a minority of

UCU members that could have voted – it was a show of hands I think.

"The key thing is that I remain confident about what I'm doing, I'm well advised so that confidence is built up through teamwork.

"I know that I have the confidence of senate of the University and the Council – these are the things that matter most to me."

Arthur, 55, also believes that the Economics exercise, which he hopes will be completed by

Continued on page 6>>>

# Leeds Student

Leeds Student is the voice of the students of the University of Leeds. But we always need writers, photographers and designers. We want you to join us.

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If you feel we have reported something inaccurately or unfairly, we want to hear from you to put things right. Contact us at [editor@leedsstudent.org](mailto:editor@leedsstudent.org)



Image: Luke Farnsworth

This week Sketch was particularly tired on experiencing what Sketch is now dubbing 'protest soc'

creating a scene once more. However, this time the cause was not their own.

It seems that now any protest must be attended by said certain individuals, even if they do not have a particular affinity to the main group or any respect for the leaders of the groups.

Differences of opinion were clear between the two on the night, with a dignified response to some members of the Leeds city centre population on one side, and a far more direct (and Sketch would say negative) approach

from the members of 'protest soc'.

In other news, the results of the referendum are in and despite assurance that abstentions would not count, it seems that Sketch can no longer be so sure of this.

This apparent lack of democratic accountability, Steering Committee Sketch is looking at you here, seems somewhat out of touch with the Exec's almost dogmatic approach to Union 'democracy'... uh hum. Sketch would like to pose a question to the student population: can you name all the

members of LUU Steering Committee? Answers on a post card to PO Box 157.

So back to the issue in hand (well, in their hands). The dispute of *to count or not to count* has, it seems, been settled. Sketch cannot officially state the outcome of the reported decision, but would urge an official statement to be made to inform us mere stakeholders in our union (yes, Sketch is a fully paying LUU member these days) of what decision was made.

## Calling out to all Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing and Healthcare students

"We are inviting Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing and Healthcare students to share their views on finance for students from the NHS Bursary.

"The Dept of Health is considering changes to the system and we need your views to suggest improvements and highlight current concerns.

"We have been collating ideas from students across the Medicine & Health Faculty and will be sending a combined LUU response to the DoH/NHS for them to consider.

"Students across the country have been contributing to this consultation and we want Leeds' opinions to be represented.

"If you want your ideas to be included please complete the survey here: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LF2G7CR>

"If you want to find out more about the DoH/NHS consultation visit the site: [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_105110](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_105110)

"You can also contribute to the consultation at the DoH website direct if you want to."

## Vodka research Kicked

Jessica Elliot

**VK Vodka Kick research has come back to bite a Biology student after raising national attention.**

Leeds University student Phillippa Toon has been scrutinised by academics after devising a formula 'for a perfect night out' for drinks company VK Vodka Kick.

Critics dismissed Toon's research and deemed the use of students in 'PR activity' ethically questionable.

The final year student won a competition for the 'once in a lifetime job' of VK's 'Vkendologist' this year, as reported by *Leeds Student* in October.

Toon came up with the winning scientific formula after surveying 2,000 students on nights out in numerous cities including Leeds and Sheffield.

Dr Petra Boynton, a lecturer in international healthcare research at University College London, said: "What may look like a fun opportunity may result in numerous problems for students and Universities."

Boynton explained that research

done for PR purposes by a student "runs the risk of any errors you make being picked up by the public."

The lecturer also questioned the ethics behind research that involves interviewing people drinking alcohol or already drunk on a night out and collating the results to produce a serious scientific thesis.

The research was carried out independent from the University of Leeds and so there was no requirement for ethical approval. Phillippa Toon has defended her research. She said: "It does stand up to scientific scrutiny. I wanted to prove that scientists were not all geeks. We can have a good time too."

This is not the first time PR companies have been criticised for asking students to devise scientific formulae to add 'clout' to their advertising campaigns. Previous instances include McVitie's campaign to find 'the perfect way to dunk a biscuit'.

VK Vodka Kick's campaign has seen wide spread comment in the blogs of maths and science academics across the country.

Most believe PR campaigns using scientific research will make the public distrustful of genuine researchers and will make recruitment a lot more difficult.

But Anne Glover, chief scientific adviser in Scotland says "most scientists would be pleased to see equations being used and giving prominence to science."

A spokesperson for VK Vodka Kick said the firm worked within licensing-authority guidelines and simply "wanted to apply some science into the art of having fun."

## Final Royal Park school eviction

James Legge

**The end to the Royal Park Primary School occupation was reached after the occupiers were forced by a court order to leave the premises.**

The order applied to the former caretaker's house, into which the squatters had been forced to move after a similar order was acquired for the main school building days earlier.

Leeds City Council attained the possession order the previous day in Leeds County Court and the squatters were told the verdict on Wednesday December 2.

The defendants, including independent parliamentary candidate for Leeds North West Ted Winter, have been levied with court costs of £2948.50.

The campaign group said that occupation was a reaction to a lack of action from the City Council over the school building, which was closed as a school in 2004 and has been empty since.

They had been using the building as a community space, organising events, including jumble sales, open mic nights and film showings.

The squatters have met with opposition from the council from the outset.

The campaign's website said: "This has been an unfortunate example of Leeds City Council and the powers that be keeping the people in their place by using a 'sledgehammer to crack a nut.'"

**PAYING YOUR BILLS A STRUGGLE?**

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t: 0113 380 1290  
[www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/helpandadvice/](http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/helpandadvice/)

Student Advice Centre.  
Part of Leeds University Union.

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# Hoping to cook off to Antarctica

Abigail Yardley

Four thrilled Leeds students have cooked their way into the final 10 of the npower Future Leaders Challenge competition.

The winning team will earn a place on the once in a lifetime '2041 Antarctica expedition' with adventurer Robert Swan OBE to witness effects of climate change on the ice continent at first hand.

To win, the Leeds Marmots (Rebecca Hurst, Tom McAllister,

Jenny Lines and Steve Hutton) will need to use a £500 grant from npower to turn their idea for a green sustainability project into a reality for the Leeds community.

The short film that got them this far outlined their project for promoting seasonal cooking to

children and students through a cookbook, 'Carbon Cutting Cooking', and its website, [www.carboncuttingcooking.com](http://www.carboncuttingcooking.com).

The idea for the project came about following street interviews based around seasonal produce. Rebecca Hurst explained that they "discovered that many students didn't have a clue."

The team have used the budget to print 3000 copies of their cookbook, which contains a calendar of easy-to-follow recipes using seasonal British produce alongside tips for energy-saving cooking.

Up to a third of carbon emissions come from food production and transport, so it is an important step towards raising awareness.

Hurst said: "It's time we started to consider the environmental cost of cooking."

The group will be handing out free potatoes to students outside the Union on Friday 4th December to promote local foods.

The project has been snapped up by local primary schools. As well as distributing the cookbook for free, the team are going into schools to educate pupils on seasonal produce and saving energy through cookery classes and assemblies.

The recipes include the children's choices of smoothies and sausages.

The team were also sent to the Lake District to prove their worth against the nine other teams in the competition. They were given a series of physical and mental challenges to test teamwork, strategy and physical strength - essential skills should the four make it to Antarctica.

"The fact that we have got through to the final 10 teams is exciting to say the least," the team says.

"We have a 1 in 10 chance to win a trip to Antarctica and the sheer excitement is giving us the drive behind making this project something special.

"We will never get an opportunity like this again. So it's all about proving ourselves to the judges through this project."

The Antarctic expedition will take place in March 2010. Along with Pro-Vice Chancellor Steve Scott, their sponsoring lecturer from the University, the group will attend the Final Presentation in London on December 18 to find out if they have won.

The project coincides with a series of collaborations between students and the University to raise green awareness in the community



ECO COOKS: Students make cookbook for climate change competition

Photo: Tom Knowles

## School advertises lap-dancing research job

Amy Nickell

Leeds University is advertising for a £31,000-a-year lap dancing researcher.

The position is being advertised by the school of sociology and social policy and asks that applicants have 'prior experience of conducting research in the female sex industry.'

The successful applicant will work on a research project being conducted by the school to examine the 'rise, tolerance and integration of sexual consumption and sexual labour displayed through the erotic dance industry.'

The post has sparked outrage with Susie Squire, political director at the TaxPayers' Alliance.

"This is the ultimate non-job and will both anger and bemuse taxpayers. It may be a dream job for some men, but it's just another nightmare of public sector waste for the ordinary people who pay for it," Squire said.

But Shipley Conservative MP Philip Davies insists the area of research was one worth undertaking.

He commented: "I do think better understanding of lap dancing clubs is a worthwhile research project," he said. "There is an issue of whether it's exploitative to women and I wouldn't decry it as a subject of research."

The Government funded post was

welcomed by Leeds anti-sleaze campaigners who say it will strip bare the impact of the sex industry on the city's economy.

The project will look into objectification of the female body and sexuality.

300 erotic dancers and other industry figures such as regulators and managers are to be interviewed.

The research hopes to investigate and determine where dancers are recruited from and what their working conditions are like. It will also examine how erotic dancing has become a mainstream form of entertainment available on most high streets around Britain and why the number of clubs has multiplied. There are currently seven lap-dancing clubs in Leeds alone.

The project also aims to uncover the competing interests between erotic dance businesses, law enforcement and licensing processes.

A spokesperson from the school of sociology and social policy said: "This research project will look at the rise, tolerance and integration of sexual consumption and sexual labour displayed through the exotic dance industry. It is academically rigorous, high quality research into an area of legitimate public interest and concern. The research is externally funded by the Economic and Social Research Council."

## Campus cafe charity pledge

James Strother

Cafe in the Campus is making that half an hour's cappuccino indulgence an even more rewarding prospect. It is pledging to donate 50 per cent of all coffee sales to charity.

From the first Tuesday of every month the cafe will donate to the local charity, Yorkshire Cancer Research (YCR).

Leanne Kay, Manager of Cafe in the Campus explained the reasons behind the initiative: "Everyone knows someone who has been affected by cancer or personally battled the disease."

"All the staff at Cafe in the Campus

hope to raise as much money as possible to donate to Yorkshire Cancer Research."

Student customers say they will be happy to help the charity campaign.

Two final year Biology students said: "The cafes on campus are usually full to the brim around lunchtime. I would happily wait an extra ten minutes at Cafe in the Campus, knowing that I am contributing to YCR".

Emma, second year Sociology student, added: "The fantastic range of coffee and sandwiches reflects the cafe's diverse clientele. Only here can people, irrespective of gender, race, age or degree title, come together to drink coffee and fight cancer as a result."

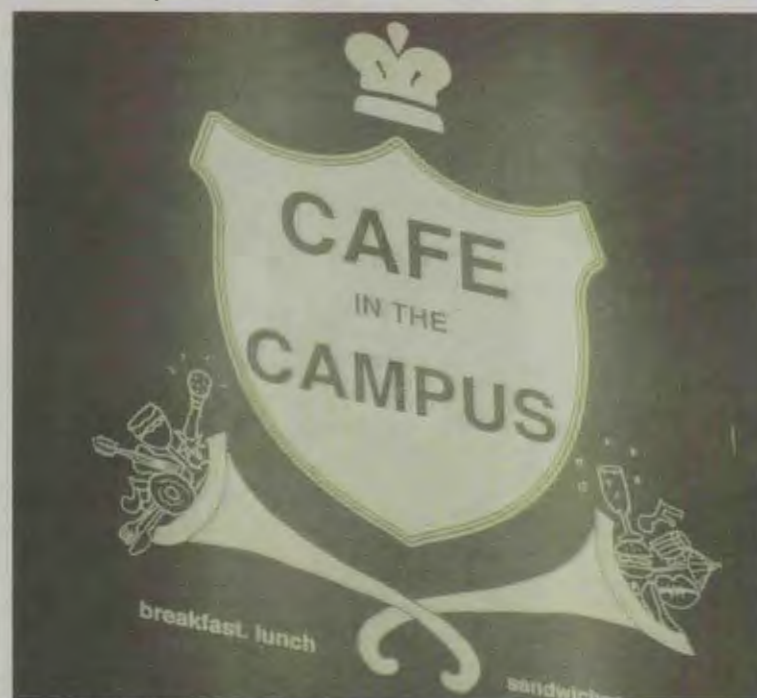
Yorkshire Cancer Research funds world class research at five universities and their associated teaching hospitals across Yorkshire, including Leeds, Sheffield and York.

The money raised by YCR supports essential research in the field of solid tumours and haematological cancers at the Leeds Institute of Molecular Medicine.

The charity has already promised £5.7 million worth of funding to the University of Leeds over the forthcoming five year period.

Initiatives similar to this have helped Yorkshire Cancer Research raise almost £6.5million this year, rebuffing the effects of the credit crunch that many non-voluntary organisations have suffered.

For ideas on what you can do to donate, visit [www.ycr.org.uk/ideas](http://www.ycr.org.uk/ideas).



CHARITY COFFEE: Cafe in the Campus will be giving coffee sales to charity

Photo: Joey Severn

## Housing issue 2009

# Condensation triggers tenant asthma flare-up

A war of words has erupted between a landlord and student over the deterioration of her health since returning to university in September.

Gemma Sutherland, a second year Classical Literature and English student, has complained of condensation in her flat.

"I've been to the doctor five times this semester. I've missed loads of uni because I've been so run down and on antibiotics for my

chest infections - I'm on the highest dose of medication I've ever been on in my life. I have to use the inhaler 15 times a day," Gemma told *Leeds Student*.

The situation was originally reported to the agent, Oasis Properties, on October 8.

A spokesperson from Oasis Properties told *Leeds Student*: "The tenants reported a problem with damp problem in her bedroom. Immediately we sent RSH Property

maintenance round to check the external areas of the property and there was no problem. The tenant further complained of the black spot mould in her bedroom, once again we immediately sent the contractor round who stated that this was a condensation problem. The contractor removed the black spot mould."

Gemma was told by her doctor to contact the environmental and health agency to determine whether

the condensation was the possible cause behind the deterioration of her condition. It is still to be confirmed whether this was the case. After Gemma's mother contacted the agent on Tuesday December 1 Oasis sent a representative from Envirovent, a ventilation product manufacturer, to inspect the property and look to install a ventilation system. A representative from Oasis Properties said that this phone call was the first notification that they had received of Gemma's medical condition.

A spokesperson from Oasis Properties explained: "It was pointed out that there is a company called Envirovent that has developed a whole house ventilation system to prevent condensation. It works by replacing the moisture laden air with clean air. It was pointed out that in this particular instance we would be happy to install one of these systems."

There are aspects of prevention of the condensation problem that Oasis Properties say are the responsibility of the tenants:

"I very strongly counter the claim that nothing has been done about the build up of condensation. Our maintenance team have attended as soon as this has been reported. However, I do believe that the tenants have strongly

contributed to the problem.

"The condensation problem will continue as long as the tenants do not manage their environment properly. As they have been made aware, they must vent their room regularly, something they are failing to do. They must not dry their clothes in their bedroom, something that they have been doing and they must ensure that the heating is turned on. All of these items are the responsibility of the tenants," a spokesperson from the company explained.

"Notwithstanding this we take our responsibilities very seriously. I believe that we have acted very responsibly and proactively on this issue," he added.

Gemma has had problems at University as a result of her experience.

She told *Leeds Student*: "I've had emails from the University about my poor attendance. I've missed seminars just because I've been so run down. It's so hard for me - for the 20 minute walk from Hyde Park to university, I have to sit down and take my inhaler straight away as soon as I get to uni. I've always been asthmatic, but I've never had it this bad. I've had to be put on harder inhalers, with steroids in them because my lungs are so weakened, the whole dose has been changed."



A MOULD ISSUE: Damp in Gemma's house has even affected her books and shoes with mould

Photo: Charlotte Sintrat

# Hannah's househunting myths

Hannah Greenslade, LUU Community Officer, explains some common housing myths

"Hi all. It's getting near to house hunting season so I thought I'd take the opportunity to highlight some of the issues to be aware of and common misconceptions about this time.

As landlords and agents clamour for your business and your mates seem to know exactly who they're living with, signing for a house suddenly seems like a priority.

Fear not, here are the most common myths around house hunting, dispelled for your pleasure.

Take note - you need this information."

**'You have to look for a house now'**

Waiting longer has its benefits. Landlords know that there are more houses than students, so the longer their house goes un-let the more nervous they become.

By waiting, you are more likely to be able to haggle prices down, get new furniture, and waive signing fees.

There are 4000 spare student bed spaces in Leeds for this academic year so there's no danger they'll run out.

Remember: We control the market.

**'All the best houses go first'**

Not true at all. Many landlords put their worst houses on the market early to make sure they shift them.

Unipol's list doesn't come out until the 16th January. This is when Code of Standards-accredited properties come onto the market, from landlords who have agreed to give their tenants a higher standard of housing.

So to make sure you actually do see the best that

Leeds has to offer, wait until after your exams (at least!).

**'Oh yeah, you can have a new sofa, we'll paint this, give you new mattresses...'**

Get it in writing or they can back out (and they will).

**'It's ok, if I find something better I can just cancel my contract'**

Housing contracts are almost impossible to get out of. Contrary to popular belief, you don't get a 'cooling off' period.

When you've signed you have agreed to pay the rent for the fixed term (usually 12 months). This can cost £3000-4000 so be sure!

Also, if a group of you sign the same contract for the whole house you'll probably be jointly liable for each others rent.

Translation: if one person drops out the others may have to cover their rent.

If you do need to leave your house, you will usually have to find a replacement, or continue to pay the rent.

**'You have to pay a signing fee'**

Nope! It's extra cash for

the agent - question how it benefits you and always negotiate. Some agents won't budge on this, but if you don't ask, you don't get!

**'No deposit - awesome!'**

Yeah, maybe not having to find £250 on top of the first month's rent and a fee sounds brilliant, but even if they don't charge a deposit, landlords will want to recoup damages to their property somehow. If there are charges at the end of the year they'll still have to be paid for.

If you are paying a deposit there's new legislation to make sure it's safe. Check it's getting put into a Tenancy Deposit Scheme - this is a Government-backed third party which protects your money. Within 14 days of paying you should get notification of where it is from your landlord.

If you live in private rented accommodation and you're reading this thinking your deposit isn't protected, visit the Student Advice Centre's website on [www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/helpandadvice](http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/helpandadvice) or search 'Tenancy Deposit Scheme' on [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) for more info on how to find out if it is protected.

If it's not, come to the Advice Centre or ring on 0113 3801 300.

**'Everyone's decided who they're living with and already started looking'**

Again, not true. Anyway, you'll do better to wait until later in the year to be sure who you want to live with. You may not have even met your best friends from uni yet!

**'I need to decide on the spot and sign my contract immediately'**

If you feel under this sort of pressure, walk away. If there was someone else ready to sign for the same house, why would they be pressuring you?

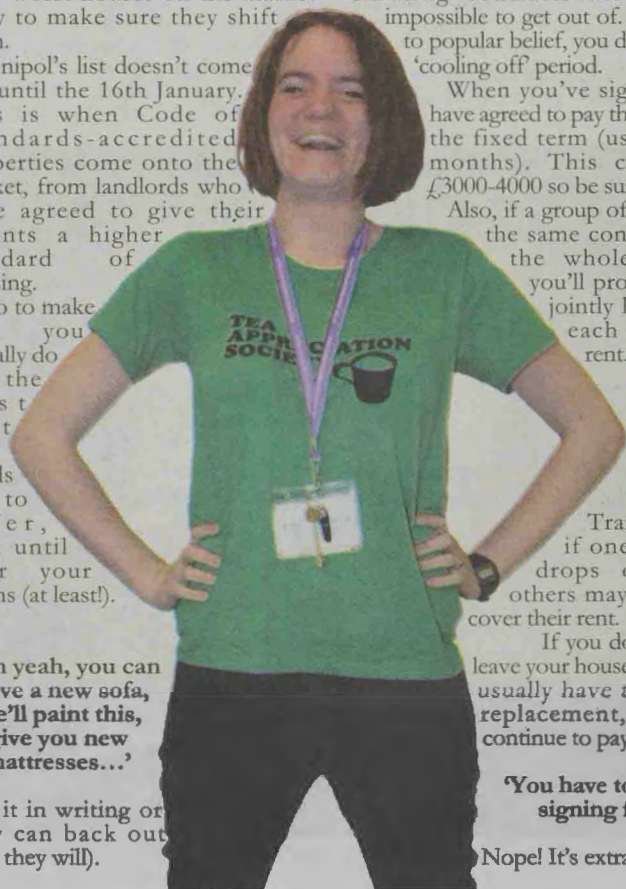
Take your contract away with you and ask the student advice centre to check it through. They know their stuff and will definitely pick out things which you miss.

Remember - agents will say anything to get you to sign. They assume you know nothing and can therefore be ripped off.

Be clever, be demanding and be ready to walk away if there's something a bit dodgy. It's your money so spend it wisely.

Don't forget to get your contract checked at the Student Advice Centre before you sign, you won't regret it.

Happy Househunting!  
Hannah Greenslade



## LUU Student Advice Centre's advice on how to get landlords to do repairs

- 1) Put it in writing.
- 2) Take pictures.
- 3) Contact the Student Advice Centre.
- 4) Involve the council, or UNIPOL.
- 5) Withholding rent doesn't always work.

### And Housing manager at LUU, Andrea Kerslake, gives you lowdown on getting back your deposit:

"County court action can be affective, but we are aware that it has limitations if a landlord is determined to ignore the court procedure and simply fail to turn up.

"We would always like to hear of any such cases as there are at times other pressures that can be brought

to bear from different agencies that we work with including Trading Standards.

"Despite the new Tenancy Deposit legislation where a landlord had to protect any deposit paid, we are still aware of landlords failing to protect deposits or making unreasonable deductions and trying to put the tenants off from pursuing a dispute. If a landlord has failed to protect a deposit tenants can take court action and claim up to three times the deposit they paid, a lot of money.

"Any students who have concerns over their deposits or with getting repairs carried out should contact the Student Advice Centre for help and advice either call into the office (first floor of the Union building) or contact advice@luu.leeds.ac.uk"

### The key for students is to be as informed as possible so Leeds Student has combined our knowledge in to these top tips.

1. The shinier the show room, the dodgier it usually is.
2. 'Get a free laptop when you sign up!' 'Enter into prize for widescreen TV when you rent for us!' 'Win a shit landlord!'
3. Any company that's replaces an 's'

with a 'z' in its name, or has its company's name is written in text language is probably bad.

4. Don't stick with one letting agent all day. They will start with their worst house and by the time you've reached the sixth offering, you'll think it's the best place this side of Leeds. It's not.

5. If the letting agency staff are changing by the week, it's probably not great news.

# Deposit repaying confusion

## Confusion surrounds an ongoing case between landlord M Fazal and former student Joe Lewis, over a non-repayment of deposits.

Joe, who was in final year at Leeds University at the time, said he and his other housemates were forced to go to Fazal's office on Brudenell Road on many occasions to ask why there was a delay in receiving the deposits.

Joe said: "He mentioned that one of the tenants hadn't paid one month's rent. He later remembered that he'd put the cheque in the washing machine with his trousers.

"He then sent us blatantly bogus copies of receipts, one of which was actually dated almost a year after we'd moved out of the house, the total of which amounted to almost exactly what he owed us."

But Fazal denies Joe's allegation. He sent Leeds Student a tenancy inspection report detailing costs which run to £2446.08. Fazal also commented: "I have never received any of the final bills to prove that they have been paid." He added: "As you will see, the costs that I have incurred far exceed the £2100 deposit."

After Fazal's non-payment of Joe and his flatmates' deposit, the tenants placed a small claim against him. Joe's father Chris Lewis told Leeds Student:

"We submitted a small claim and this was issued on 25th March 2009,

nearly two years after the deposits should have been returned.

"As usual he failed to respond in any way."

Joe added: "Mr Fazal didn't respond to any of the court's advances and didn't offer a defence. A County Court Judgement [CCJ] was therefore issued against his company on the 21st of April 2009."

Fazal denies any knowledge of the CCJ: "If I had been aware of the judgment I would have turned up to defend myself, and put in a counterclaim for the extra £400 that I believe they owe me."

Following the notification of Fazal's failure to repay the tenancy deposits and the subsequent CCJ against him, the Housing Regulation, which authorises HMO licenses, investigated Fazal's properties.

Mike Brook, Acting Service Manger said: "All Mr Fazal's properties were priority inspected and were found to comply fully with all HMO licence conditions and Housing Act requirements. In addition, the management of his properties were found to be satisfactory.

"In view of the above, legal advice indicated that it was not appropriate or proportionate to revoke his fit and proper status. I can however confirm that his property portfolio remains under review."

Fazal says he was not aware of this investigation. He told Leeds Student: "This is the first I have ever heard of this investigation."

When asked whether he found it worrying that his properties were investigated without his knowledge, Fazal said: "I am quite worried and I will be following it up."

According to Chris, Fazal is required to attend a hearing on December 14 to explain his financial situation. The landlord was again unaware of this meeting but when asked if he would attend he said: "If I receive any correspondence in regards to this matter I will act as appropriate."

There is further dispute between Joe and Fazal over whom the tenants signed with. Joe told Leeds Student: "We went through Leeds Prime Properties."

When questioned over this Fazal said: "Mr [Joe] Lewis signed for the property in February 2006. However, Prime Properties was not trading until about July the following year.

"As an independent landlord I was using several letting agents and advertising through shop windows.

"If anything, this experience has taught me the importance of always using a trustworthy and reputable letting agents, such as Prime Properties."

# Tenants win in property agent court dispute

## A letting agent in Hyde Park is considering appealing against a Leeds County Court ruling which awarded former tenants over a thousand pounds.

In June this year a judge ordered Diamond Properties, based on Brudenell Road, to pay £1,006.32 to the former tenants of 4 Newport Road after a judge ruled in their favour.

But Diamond believe that the judgement was wrong and that work done on the property, much of which was charged to the residents, was necessary because of damage caused during the tenancy.

The dispute arose following the end of the tenancy in July 2008. Diamond withheld the tenants' £900 deposit due to damage inflicted during the tenancy.

Diamond also claimed they should be paid an additional £604 in order to recoup the full sum owed for the damages caused to the property.

A spokesperson for Diamond said: "Due to the condition that the property was left in, the property was redecorated at a total cost of £1,200 plus VAT.

"Fair wear and tear was taken into account and the fact that the whole property was being redecorated and not just the areas that were damaged. Accordingly our client charged levy to the tenant with 50% of the total

re-decoration cost.

"Full invoices were supplied to the tenants of the work carried out."

Diamond's claim included £146.88 for the cleaning of the whole property, £82.25 for the removal of bagged rubbish and broken furniture from the garden, and £164.50 to have all the carpets steam cleaned.

But the tenants denied causing any damage to the property, asserting that it was left in no worse condition than at the end of the previous tenancy.

In the hearing District Judge Bedford ordered Diamond to return £730 of the deposit to the claimants, plus £56.32 in interest and £220 in costs such as petrol money. Diamond were allowed to retain £170 of the deposit.

After the long struggle to reclaim their deposit, the former tenants were pleased with the outcome.

One claimant, who asked not to be named, told Leeds Student: "I was delighted with the court's decision for judgment in our favour.

"All the time, cost and difficulties involved in getting the case heard in court was well worth it.

"I hope that successful outcomes such as this one can inspire other students to get the returns on their deposits that they are entitled to."

But Diamond have now revealed that they are considering appealing



DIAMOND DEALINGS: A court ruled that Diamond Properties unfairly charged a group of tenants for work on their house Photo: Molly Cowderoy

against the decision, as they still believe they are entitled to the funds.

Mandip Sehmi, Managing Director of Diamond Properties, said: "We at Diamond Properties are of the view the judgment in this case was wrong and I am currently in talks with my lawyers to appeal this decision.

"It is to be noted the Judge accepted in principle we were right to charge the tenants for most of our claim however he took a different view on the quantum of the amount the tenants were to contribute to the costs incurred following the tenants leaving the property."

Mr. Sehmi also told Leeds Student that he was unable to attend the original court date as a member of his family died the day before the hearing.

He subsequently asked for the date of the hearing to be changed, but the claimants denied this request.

A member of staff from Diamond, who had less knowledge of the case, was sent to represent Mr. Sehmi in court, and Sehmi believes this significantly contributed to the negative outcome for Diamond.

Reporting by: Tom Knowles, Joey Severn, Marcus Chippindale, Matthew Power, Virginia Newman and Tom Large.

# Setting the record straight

University boss tells Matthew Power that he is unsure if staff will take industrial action over cuts

Continued from front page

summer 2011, can go ahead without students seeing changes on campus for a 'long time to come.'

## Staff action

Last year, a letter was sent to all University staff stating that industrial action would lead to pay being withheld if it had an effect on students.

Arthur says he does not know whether to expect a strike from staff: "I think we're a long way from a strike," Arthur explains.

"We have got to go through further negotiations and Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) discussions to see whether we get a resolution.

"There would then need to be a ballot. Under the laws of the land the Union would have to win that ballot and the wording of the ballot would be important.

"There would be different types of industrial action that they could take short of a full strike so we don't know what they would do."

Arthur is a record setter. He was the first state school leaver to become a Russell Group University Vice Chancellor, first leader of that group to be from a northern institution and he is now striding to guide Leeds University in to the top 50 world institutions by 2015. He remains focused on that target despite the cuts the University has had to make.

"What we've said is that by 2015, through integrating our research, our scholarship and education, that if we get that right we will earn ourselves a place in the top 50 institutions in the world," he says.

"For me this has always been about the academic excellence of this institution and I think the relationship between research and teaching is absolutely key to that. Of course it would be much easier to get in to that position if the resources available to the University stayed at their current level.

"I don't think it [the Economies exercise] detracts us from what we're trying to do.

"It may take a bit longer than 2015 and that's understandable. But it does not really stop us from trying to improve the academic excellence of the institution."

Leeds University re-entered the top 100 world institution this year after previously falling to 104th in 2008.

## Politics

As Russell Group top dog, Arthur is in regular conversation with the current government and has been told to expect a reduction in higher education funding by Lord Peter Mandelson, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Arthur is keeping a keen eye on politics. However, ask him if he now sees himself as a politician or a Vice Chancellor and he says: "I see myself primarily as a leader of a university and an amateur politician I think.

"The Russell Group is a

representative organisation that is interested in providing a really high quality experience for students in a research led teaching methodology. Everyone in the Russell Group is signed up to that – that's what we do. We are interested in the international competitiveness of higher education. We are the lead players in that and the only players.

"It's not inconsistent with the role of Vice Chancellor and I am deeply honoured to be asked to be the Chair. It's the first time that the Chair is from the north of England and I think it puts us in a good position to know what's going on," he continues.

A cross party review of tuition fees is underway with fees looking even more likely to rise. The Vice Chancellor admitted that a possible change in government, with the Conservative party six points ahead in November's polls, is troubling him.

"They [the Conservative Party] have not been very clear as yet about what their policy would be for Higher Education," he says.

"I've met with other Russell Group Vice Chancellors with senior members of the Conservative Party on several occasions including one large meeting with seven or eight Vice Chancellors and five MPs including Michael Gove, David Willetts and John Hayes – so all of the shadow secretaries and ministers. What they were interestingly very concerned about was standards in British Universities and the quality of the student experience – that was what we led on in the discussion almost exclusively throughout the whole meeting.

"But them being clear about what they were going to do was not on the table. They would not tell us what their policy was going to be," he says. However, Arthur did remain positive about what the party may do. He adds: "I think they were pretty supportive with the notion of maintaining the country's excellent universities in and beyond the Russell Group."

## Bonuses

Rumours fly around campus, particularly in light of the University's announcement that will be making a £35million pound cut. Arthur had already responded to questions about his travel in the student question and answer session, with claims from members of the audience that he commutes by helicopter from his home in Southampton to Leeds. He had said at the meeting that his personal travel arrangements were just that – 'personal.'

In a time of recession, high earners' bonus packages are coming under scrutiny. Arthur emphasised that he does not receive bonuses from the University as part of his role as Vice Chancellor.

However, Arthur took his pro-Vice Chancellors and deans of faculties to a luxury Harrogate hotel in November for a meeting which some describe as a 'brainstorming session.' Critics question this decision, particularly as job cuts



STILL CONFIDENT: Michael Arthur regularly meets with MPs to discuss higher education.

Photo: Richard Smith

could be on the horizon.

"The strategy group of the University meets annually for an away day and we've done that ever since I've been here," he explains.

"We do tend to take people away because we don't want them to be distracted by work. We don't want them to be distracted by telephones and we want their brains on the job of the strategy of this University.

"It turns out that it was a booking that was made about this time last year before all of this broke in the sector. The booking couldn't be cancelled so we decided to go.

"It's really crucially important that at a time of difficulty you've got your brains on the job and not distracted. I'm not going to make an apology for it. It's an important issue to get right and we had a very good meeting as it turns out and a lot of good thinking came from it."

## Freedom of speech

This week a referendum motion was passed at LUU that could see individuals convicted of crimes related to religious or racial hatred disallowed from coming to the Union. It passed with 1052 votes to 888.

The Vice Chancellor revealed that there is a difference of opinion between leaders of the University on letting such speakers come on campus. Arthur says: "Personally I'm

slightly in the BBC camp. This is so close to call – I would rather air on the side of protecting freedom of speech. I think I would have some conditions if we were to have such a speaker on campus – I'd like the speaker to come on his own for example."

Arthur has now been in his position as leader of Leeds University for five and a half years, taking up the role in September 2004. He says that it is the 'breadth' of things he has achieved that pleases him most – not just in research.

"I think we've changed the culture of the University," he adds.

"I think we have made the place much more self confident and obviously we've come up against the buffers a bit with the economies exercise and that is a tricky issue but I think we can get through that and come out the far end with that confidence intact."

Arthur refuses to increase the funding to the Guardian student newspaper of the Year, *Leeds Student*, and describes the plea as a 'nice try.' He remains firmly on the fence saying: "I am absolutely delighted the newspaper won the prize. It shows what can be achieved in the face of fiscal difficulty. How is that for an answer? Maybe I am a politician."

To read the interview with the Vice Chancellor in full, visit [www.leedsstudent.org](http://www.leedsstudent.org)

## Unconscious woman found on Moor

Marcus Chippindale

Police were called to Woodhouse Moor Park after a woman was found unconscious.

A passing member of the public discovered the woman out cold on Friday night and immediately called the police, who arrived a few minutes later. The incident was initially treated as suspicious, but further investigation revealed that this was not the case.

A police spokesman said: "A scene was established after a woman was found unconscious on Woodhouse Moor at about 9.30pm on Friday (27/11). Further enquiries revealed there were no suspicious circumstances."

The woman was subsequently taken to hospital via ambulance.

A forensics tent was in place in the Park until 4pm on Saturday 28 whilst police carried out their investigation.

A 19 year old woman was later charged with the possession of a controlled drug.

Maideleine Harris Smith, Leeds University Union (LUU) Welfare Officer said: "There's obviously going to be a lot of merriment and celebrating for students around the festive period.

"I'd encourage students to be aware of their own safety at all times and to take notice of the advice that surrounds safe drug and alcohol use. Never ever do anything you're not entirely comfortable with, be aware of the risks that surround both legal and illegal substances and please make sure you're with people you can trust.

"Remember that you can have the LUU night bus take you from the union to your door at the end of the night for just 50p or, in other areas of the city, you can give an Amber Taxi your student card if you're out of cash and pay the next morning at the Union help desk."

## Laptop scheme

Hi-tech tracking software that will help police find stolen computers is being fitted to thousands of laptops in burglary 'hotspots' in North West Leeds.

The technology will enable officers to pinpoint the exact location of a laptop after it has been stolen.

The installation of the software has already led to one man being arrested and charged in connection with a robbery on November 21.

Detective Chief Inspector Andy Williams, Crime Manager at North West Leeds, said: "This tracking system is the latest addition to the armoury of technology we are using to combat burglary.

"As well as helping us to catch criminals, the use of this software also brings significant benefits for laptop owners in that it can lead to the swift recovery of their machine, complete with all their data, which in the case of students can often mean irreplaceable coursework and dissertations."

Councillor Les Carter, Chair of Safer Leeds, said: "Laptop theft has been an area of concern for us for some time and it has hit the student population particularly hard. We hope that having this software in place will significantly reduce the problem as well as helping us to catch the burglars and retrieve the stolen items."

## Referendum Results

**Motion 1: Should students with bad handwriting be allowed to word process exams?**

**FAILS** by 1,269 votes to 867

**Motion 2: Should LUU offer more Fairtrade & ethical products in its bars and shops?**

**PASSED** by 1,693 votes to 372

**Motion 3: Should LUU lobby the University for better provisions in the Worsley Building?**

**PASSED** by 1,945 votes to 253

**Motion 4: Should LUU disallow access of any groups or individuals who have been convicted by the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006, or Section 74 of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008?**

**PASSED** by 1,052 votes to 888

**Motion 5: Should LUU adopt the proposed strategic plan?**

**PASSED** by 1,707 votes to 125

**Motion 6: Should LUU mobilise students to vote in governmental election?**

**PASSED** by 1,704 votes to 341

# LS

## interviews



### Chief Executive of the Union, Aidan Grills

**Interview by Lizzie Edmonds**

**What does your job involve?**

It's my job to make sure that the Union's support, representation, events and activities mean that students love their time in Leeds. I lead the senior management team which oversees all the Union's services. I also work closely with the University and other external bodies like the Council to improve the Union and what we do for students. It's my job to make sure that the Union gets better and better in the future, which is really exciting.

**LUU was voted the best union in the country at last years NUS awards, why do you think this is?**

The award reflects several years of hard work developing and constantly improving the Union for students. It is down to our culture where students get involved in all areas of the Union. Students make the Union a really innovative and creative place. The student Exec Officers are probably the best in the country and our staff are always finding ways to make the Union even better. The

**This is an issue affecting the whole of higher education and all public services**

great feedback that we get from students is more important than awards.

**Do you think you and the team are capable of winning it again this year?**

I think we are, but I'm not sure we'll enter. I'd rather focus on the student activity categories in the NUS awards this year.

**Regardless of this award, you are still planning on updating the union. What areas do you believe to be the weakest?**

We know that our democratic

activity should be more relevant to more students, so we're doing a lot of work to make sure that we support all students at the University. The new union plan gives us a direction on how to represent students better. We're also going to provide students with more help with employability. Students will also see improvements in the quality of the Union building and we're constantly finding new ways of getting even better.

**What are you doing to change this?**

Well, following the referendum this week, it's now my job to deliver the new strategic plan. Students will see the benefits of the plan very soon – we will be making improvements to the Union building and our services over the next 12 months.

**With the job cuts happening across campus, how will they affect the union? Are any execs at risk?**

Exec roles are not at risk. This is because they are core to our decision making and representation. Student Unions are built on a model where students are elected to be the voice for

other students and we need to keep that at the heart of our work. Funding right across the University is now a risk and we are talking to the University about how we can help each other during this time.

**Do you think the university will be capable of maintaining its prestige if the job cuts are enforced in full?**

My short answer is yes, I think the reputation of the University has been built over many years. If this was just a Leeds problem then it might be different but this is an issue affecting the whole of higher education and all public services.

**What is your favourite shop in the union?**

Essentials, although my dinner suit is on loan to a mannequin outside Gear at the moment so I must be nice to them!

**Do you prefer The Terrace or the Old Bar? Why?**

I like eating in the Old Bar with Sky Sports on the big screen (I love the all day breakfast!). The atmosphere you get in the Terrace when you've got DJs or live acts is great too.

# Campus Watch



Lizzie Edmonds

### Edinburgh

The University of Edinburgh is broadcasting its graduation ceremony on virtual website Second Life this year.

It says that this will ensure that students on 'distance learning' programmes do not miss out on the ceremony.

Certain students, that are unable to travel to the city and so are part of the universities "E-learning" courses, will be part of a computerized graduation that will take place on the 'Second Life Community'.

All of the important elements of graduation will remain in tact:

robes are available to download and the students will gather in the bar once the ceremony has come to an end. Edinburgh is renowned for it's up to date grasp on technology, already having "Twitter Tutorials" for Masters students.

### Worcester

Footage of a Worcester University student who "lost it" last month and punched a police officer was shown to Worcester Crown Court this week.

Thomas Parson, who stopped from leaving the premises of a Halifax building society, swung at an officer when released from handcuffs.

The biology student, who was

given a fixed penalty notice last year for being drunk and disorderly, admitted two counts of assaulting a police officer and one charge of being drunk and disorderly. He was given 80 hours of unpaid work and ordered to pay £100 compensation to the officer he assaulted.

Passing sentence, deputy district judge David Stott, said: "It would seem you have a tendency to drink hard and far in excess of what you can cope with. This will lead you into more trouble than you are in at the moment.

"You won't be able to finish your course and you will end up with nothing.

"These officers suffered injury and they shouldn't have to put up with this sort of loutish behaviour."

### Bristol

Veterinary students at the University of Bristol are following the Leeds University Raise and Give Society (RAG) example by stripping for their own naked calendar.

The publication, which will cost five pounds, has been produced in order to raise over £10,000 for several different charities.

The theme is 'Movies' and each month sees the students take on a new starring role in well-known productions such as Alice in Wonderland, The Italian Job, and even The Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

Strategically placed objects spare posers' blushes. One of the models explained that the worst

thing about the photo shoot was the cold stating: "We were on the Mendips at 4am and on the seafront at Western in a howling gale."

### St Andrews

Hundreds of students lathered up last week as they took part in a traditional foam fight at St Andrews University.

It has been reported that the participants "threw themselves into the occasion" and "looked to be having the time of their lives."

The event, coined "Raisin Monday," is celebrated annually and is the final climax to festivities where students are 'adopted' by an academic parent.

## Leeds Student

## Letters to the Editor

**-Housing-**

Despite the government's deposit scheme now being in full effect, *Leeds Student* is still learning of disputes between landlords and tenants over unreturned deposits.

The real worry however, is not that these deposits are not being returned for this has always been a problem with student lets. It is the fact that the legal framework which tenants have to work through to get their money back, the County Court Judgments (CCJ), seems so flawed.

The case of Mr Fazal, in our housing special, simply serves to highlight this. Due to a non-repayment of rent, tenants gained a CCJ against Mr Fazal. But Mr Fazal was apparently completely unaware that this had even occurred.

Even when both parties are aware of the CCJ, there is very little in the way of enforcement when repayment is not made.

Students often do not have the time or inclination to fight through the courts to try and get their money back. With the generally low level of student knowledge concerning housing laws, how effective the scheme will be in terms of securing the deposits of students is still somewhat in doubt.

Will landlords play by the rules and put all the deposits in the scheme? If previous landlords are anything to go by it seems somewhat unlikely.

Whatever happens, *Leeds Student* will continue to report on your housing issues. Sometimes the law will come into conflict with what we want to write. Local landlord James Warner is currently taking legal action against *The Sun* over their allegations against him.

No matter how difficult it becomes for the press to shed light on corrupt landlords, *Leeds Student* will strive to defend student tenant voices.

**-Lap dancing-**

Leeds University's decision to advertise a Government-funded lapdancing research post has been met with somewhat predictable criticism.

The £31,000-a-year position may be laughed off as a "non-job" but its investigation of "the place of sexual labour and consumption in the night-time economy" is an important study. With the reductions to other university related government research funds, doubts have been raised as to why money is going towards a seemingly less serious cause.

Susie Squire of the TaxPayers' Alliance said: "This is the ultimate non-job and will both anger and beruse taxpayers."

Contrary to these expectations, the study will actually inspect the working conditions of lapdancers, as well as scrutinise why, and how, women find themselves working in the sex

industry.

Taxpayers' money will not necessarily be proved a "waste", but could provide valuable research that helps the proportion of "ordinary people" who actually work in the sex industry.

The sex industry is an element of society that is too often dismissed. The reality is that, while lapdancing clubs are legal and legitimate, the industry's darker side remains a serious problem.

Prostitution is a major dilemma that won't improve unless research programmes like these are backed properly.

As such, this position should not be dismissed as a gimmick, but instead considered as a worthwhile project that could improve many lives.

**-Bus strike-**

Just when we thought striking season was over, another one is about to kick off. Bus drivers are planning to strike this month, a move that will undoubtedly divide opinion.

On the one hand, the demands of First bus drivers seem perfectly reasonable considering the huge profits that the company made in the last year and the large bonuses that managers have already received.

A three per cent pay rise does not seem much to ask for, especially when drivers in other cities in the region have already been granted this.

But when the country is in the middle of a recession it seems

slightly ridiculous for unions to be demanding pay rises for their staff. People who work in public services deserve more money than they get, but in the current economic climate people need to be reasonable and consider the bigger picture.

There is also the widespread inconvenience that will be caused by the timing of the strike. Students are already being affected, as Leeds Student has learned that an exam scheduled for Monday 7 has had to be postponed, as some students will not be able to get to University.

But then that doesn't seem like something that will upset too many people.

Dear Editor,

I'm writing to express my disgust towards the attitude of some individuals at this University.

On Wednesday I went to the Vice Chancellor meeting in the Union as I wanted to hear for myself about the cuts because my lecturers keep talking about it.

There were some really good questions and the Vice Chancellor and his colleague did their best to answer these.

I thought it was great that people went along with the petition from students to show to the VC, but why is it that some groups of people - clearly very angry by the cuts - cannot articulate themselves properly without swearing.

Some of them had some good points but you could see from the VC's face that as soon as they started swearing and arguing amongst themselves that their arguments just went straight down the drain and he lost all respect for their cause.

You'd think that these people would be able to hold a conversation without swearing,

especially when talking to the most powerful person at this University (i.e. the person who can actually make the changes happen that they want).

I never did get the opportunity to ask my question directly to the VC because of the rants from people with huge chips on their shoulders.

Yours,  
A disgruntled Psychology student.

Dear Editor,

I am writing to highlight my dissatisfaction with the current Exec members and their inability to defend the interests of the members of LUU.

There seems to be little effort on their part to tell the students exactly what campaigns and initiatives they are implementing to help students.

While it says on the board outside their office that students should come in and talk to them about what they are doing, and I am all up for students taking an interest, there seems to be very

few taking up this offer.

It is a fact that the majority of students at this university seem to care little about how the Union is run.

This is not the students' fault, rather it is a lack of engagement from those at the top with those that they represent.

Because of this, it seems that the Exec can get away with pretty much anything they want without much interference from the student population at large.

I for one would just like to see more clarity about how the Exec spends their time, considering they represent us students. In fact just any sign of pro-active action, rather than meaningless motions put into a redundant referendum, would be nice!

Yours,  
Disillusioned LUU member

Get your opinion heard in *Leeds Student*. Send us your letters to: [editor@leedsstudent.org](mailto:editor@leedsstudent.org)

**Bus staff will strike**

Adam Collins

**First bus drivers in Leeds have voted to strike for increased pay in the run up to Christmas.**

Unite the union confirmed that the first strike day is to be on Monday December 7 and will be followed by two others on Saturday December 12 and Saturday December 19.

The announcement of the strikes comes after criticism of First from the West Yorkshire Transport authority for cancelling routes and making "excessive" profits.

Phil Brown, Unite regional officer said that Leeds bus drivers were striking against the imposition of a pay freeze this year, which contrasted with a three per cent pay rise for drivers in Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield and York as part of a multi-year deal which dates from when these groups were merged with Leeds.

Mr Brown said: "The drivers in Leeds earn the most in profit for the company but earn the least in hourly pay. All it will take to stop the action is a small increase this year."

Union leaders also pointed out that first made £120 million in profits last year and that managers had already received large bonuses.

Mr Brown said: "We feel it is only fair that the people who contribute to those profits get a share."

First managers argue that they cannot afford a pay increase during the recession and that strike action will not make them any more likely to

make concessions and will harm customers.

Dave Alexander, Managing Director of First in Leeds, said: "This is not the time to be asking for a pay rise. The ballot result has not changed our position: there remains no available money to fund a pay rise this year."

"The potential consequences of Unite calling for a strike are that everyone loses. People struggle to get to work, children cannot get to school and shops and retailers have fewer customers."

Mr Alexander went on to say that First would meet with trade union representatives in the next few weeks and that they would work to reach a

compromise.

One bus driver, who asked not to be named, said: "The bosses talk about us all having to share the pain, but I don't see them taking a pay cut. I've got kids to feed and Christmas is coming up!"

Reaction to news of the strike was mixed among students. Shelley Rose, a first-year student, said: "I have some sympathy for bus drivers as they work hard for little money. It must be a horrible job!"

"On the other hand, it seems as if by going out on strike they are taking out their grievances on the general public. They should be able to reach an agreement."



TEMPORARY STOP: Bus staff will strike in December Photo: Charlotte Sintrat



# the big debate:

## Better poor than drowned?

With most of our concerns on financial wellbeing, and environmental and business interests readying themselves to lock horns in Copenhagen, this week we ask:

Is the climate more important than the economy?

Yes

Jack Choppin



It may seem fair to expect the government's policy to be completely geared towards the economy. People expect jobs and security, and the government will be expected to make this happen, or get ready to step out of office. It is this expectation that will be catastrophic for the environment. Governments throughout the world will single-mindedly begin a campaign to return to pre-2008 levels of affluence, all believing that they have learnt enough to avoid the mistakes that led to the current recession, confident that the abyss can be avoided next time around. So is it sensible to put the environment on the back burner while the current economic creases are ironed out of the world market? It may seem fair, but the environment might not wait that long.

The environment debate has returned to the headlines recently, with the thinly veiled promise that China have made to reduce carbon emissions after Copenhagen. Of course China will easily sidestep any carbon emission caps through its cleverly worded promise, and it is the idea of developing countries like China that raise the worrying problems behind the neglect of environmental policy in favour of economic recovery and growth. The insignificance of a token British effort to become more environmentally friendly is really highlighted when you consider the population of China, a nudge over 1.3 billion. If a country this size favours economy at the expense of the environment, will the results be reversible? In the 19th century, when the current economic powers of the world were churning through natural resources to prop up their exponential growth, the world population was smaller than the population of China is today, so if a country of such ridiculous size is to become a leading economic power, what damage is going to be done in the process? Can environmental policy remain in the margins for much longer? When you take into account the population of India and Brazil as well, you are talking about a third of the world population looking to become economically developed in the next 50 years. The environment will struggle to survive such a bashing, and with the current leading nations of the world having their own portion of the problems, it's hard to see who will step up and tackle the problem.

Britain's leaders will be just as short sighted. What the leaders of Britain want is a happy voter, someone who has work and is subdued, someone who will vote Labour at the next election, and that's the problem of British policy - it will only see as far as the next election,

and set targets for 2010. The reforming minorities force through the odd token environmental policy, but there is no real room for the environment in the British conscience, no real platform on which to ensure the environment gets a say. The policies of Britain need to ensure that future generations have what they need. We need to become sustainable in our actions, rather than keeping this selfish attitude of getting people into work and getting the economy back on track at the expense of generations to come. It is hard to accept that economic recovery will be damaging to the environment, that encouraging consumer spending and investing in public projects will have a large carbon footprint, and it seems counter-intuitive to put the environment first, but it's important that we remain sustainable in our actions.

Government policy must also include a gradual weaning of the country off its dependency on oil. Future disaster could be avoided if this is done, and policy is the best way to do it. Token recycling and adverts telling us to turn our washing machine down to 40 are not going to achieve this. We need to have a committed policy that will end our oil addiction. As the American journalist David Owen put it 'We are borrowing against the world's dwindling store of inexpensive energy in the same way we borrowed against the illusory equity in our homes'. A very fitting analogy.

We must accept the fluctuating nature of the economy, a problem that is never really going to be solved, and focus on the issue of the future, the environment, before the dystopian predictions of writers like Cormac McCarthy become a reality. The environment may not seem as important as the economy at present, but when the true problems of environmental neglectful policies rear their head, the economy will be at the bottom of the pile.

### Results from last week's poll:

Is Union democracy any good?

Yes: 56%

No: 44%

Don't forget to log on and have your say at [leedsstudent.org](http://leedsstudent.org)



Illustration: Becky Jones

No

Emily Barran



Last week nine countries in the Amazon region met to work out a common position to take to the Copenhagen climate change summit. They discussed a 40% drop in carbon emissions by 2020, and Brazil announced that it is seeking an 80% reduction in the rate of Amazon deforestation by the same date. So far, so uncontroversial. But Brazil's President Lula wants this reduction to be paid for by rich nations: 'Let no gringo [foreigner] ask to let an Amazonian starve to death under a tree'. He has realised, like many growing economies that 'going green' has a real, painful human cost.

Environmental lobbies fear the influence of big oil corporations over governments. They say that the power of carbon-dirty dollars over our leaders is going to push our planet into fiery oblivion. Big corporations = bad. Green = good. In fact there is a moral case to be made for supporting the economic status quo or at the very least working towards a gradual resolution of these opposing lobbies. This is not to deny the abundant scientific evidence that the climate is changing and for the worse, or to try and argue that humanity is somehow blameless. Equally, there are many things that individuals can choose to do to lessen their own personal 'carbon footprint'. But on a governmental level the options are not so obvious.

To fully halt, and then reverse the effects of global warming, governments would have to change so radically that it would be to the irreversible detriment of their citizens. Population controls, enforced vegetarianism, vastly reduced overseas trade, and an almost complete halt in airborne tourism - all these are necessary, but the affected industries are only a fragment of the number that would be fatally damaged by 'going green'. This was brought home to us here in Leeds by the response of students from the Aviation Studies department to the recent protests by members of LUU to the Leeds-Bradford Airport expansion. Many of them hoped to find jobs and/or work experience there; they still can because the council decided to chose 2,000 jobs

over concerns about pollution. Who among us, among the green lobby, would voluntarily give up our hopes of getting the job we dream of because of the impact it would have on the environment?

It is easy to stereotype those who refuse to make changes to their lifestyle for the environment as selfish and morally corrupt; oftentimes that is a correct assessment perhaps. The '4x4 mum', Jeremy Clarkson, students too lazy to recycle; they have all been subject to the ire of the green lobby. But it cannot be forgotten how many jobs there are in the oil industry, the automotive industries, and the aviation industry: as we saw last year when the US government bailed out GM Motors because it was 'too big to fail'. There was no question of the environment then, and frankly nor should there have been. The futures of hundreds and thousands of families, as well as the economy of an entire city (Detroit) depended and continue to depend on an industry that is a huge polluter. It should not be supported blindly, and President Obama should try and use his leverage to encourage the development and production of electric and hybrid cars. But if all GM Motors ever produces are SUVs, the company should still be supported; for the humans that depend on it. Big corporations are the biggest private polluters, but they also employ millions of people worldwide.

Environmentalists argue that 'green collar' jobs will replace blue, but for current workforces, that is a fantasy. It is dangerously short-sighted to think that industries that have been a century in the making and a problem that has been centuries in the making can be resolved in a mere ten years. Economic concerns will continue to be a dominant mitigating factor in environmental negotiations and that is not a bad thing. If we have a moral duty to preserve this planet for future generations then we certainly have an equal moral duty to preserve the futures of current generations.

So I would argue that to make the battle against climate change a central part of government policy would constitute a failure to act in accordance with the duty of care which the government has to the people who depend upon economic stability.

# Hope in 'hagen?

Our 'last' and 'best' chance to 'save the planet' won't deliver the change we need - governments still don't care enough



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Within a couple of days, Denmark's capital will play host to world leaders congregating to discuss an ambitious successor to the Kyoto Protocol.

I say ambitious, partly because, this year, plans are meant to work towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent of 1990 levels before 2050. But 'ambitious' is probably a more appropriate term when it comes to America's involvement in the process.

Obama's stance is certainly a departure from his country's attitude towards Kyoto, yet a detectable notion of uncertainty waits beside this positive veneer, threatening to dent its careful finish with an abundance of carbon footprints.

Basically, if we are to even dream of cutting emissions so extensively, then every country, whether developed or developing, is going to have to commit whole-heartedly to the task. The problem here lies in the fact that less economically developed countries (LEDCs) need carbon-based energy as a way to develop their economies at a decent rate, and so in order to encourage them to instead

opt for more expensive energy sources, the West is going to have to set a massively decent example by revealing financial specifics and sticking to them. But is this likely? Not really.

So far, developed countries have managed to at least appear to be making cuts by shifting their carbon sources to developing states, such as India and China, thus ducking Kyoto constraints and skirting around the issue of an energy deficit.

If states can delay action for the sake of their economies, they probably will

But Copenhagen will demand cuts from all nations, in doing so disabling this sneaky outlet for more economically developed countries (MEDCs). So it's no wonder, really, that the US has not yet given us any concrete targets, or that China's emissions cuts are expected to fall short of the amount sufficient to make a difference, or even that the EU won't commit to a fixed sum that

they intend to give the LEDCs, in order that they are reimbursed for cutting carbon energy sources.

I would imagine that it's because Europe's leaders are thinking the same as their global counterparts: why commit to sound figures when we can feign diplomacy this year, then sweep it all under the rug? It's only our planet, after all.

The thing is, if we are to make any headway with the carbon issue, we need to act now, but this is something we've all heard before. Indeed, carbon jargon permeates everyday discourse, but in a 'background noise' sort of way rather than in an invasive manner. We are well aware of the dangers, and so are our governments, yet we seem to be holding back on account of some colossal disaster (think Day After Tomorrow) before we are truly cajoled into action. Droughts are too area-specific whilst rising seas are too slow to impact upon any global government policy. And if states can manage to delay any 'for the greater good' style action, for the sake of their own economies, I should imagine they probably will.

To be more specific, China and India are experiencing incredible economic growth right now, only to be told they are going to have to invest a glut of cash in carbon-free energy sources. And if the West continues to be so vague with figures, it is highly unlikely that any targets set in Copenhagen are going

World leaders will retreat behind rhetoric and wait for the next 'last, best hope' meeting

to be met by 2050. In fact I'd be surprised if the world leaders agreed on exact targets at all. Unfortunately, most of them will probably be counting down the days until they can fly home from Denmark (yes, fly, in a big fat polluting plane), so they can retreat back behind their shield of rhetoric and wait for the next do-gooder to suggest a 'last, best hope' meeting.

So what do we do now? I'm not sure there's a lot that can be done to make states truly want to put the planet first. If the West could commit to somehow compensating the poorer countries required to carbon-cut, or get much tougher on other factors like deforestation, that would be a start. But it might actually be a case of waiting for a West-bound tidal wave to sweep aside all this apathy.

# Get Cameron

Michael Caine's new film about a vigilante taking on broken Britain neatly fits Tory rhetoric. Much like Tory rhetoric, it's very misleading



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Michael Caine is not a name you would normally associate with political controversy.

Yet his latest film, in which he portrays the vigilante ex-serviceman *Harry Brown*, has generated substantial waves due to its perceived social and political message.

The eponymous Brown is an upstanding pensioner living on a rundown council estate in South London (filmed in and around Elephant and Castle, yards from where Caine grew up), who minds his own

business, and prefers to ignore the perpetual violence being carried out on the estate, consequently living a life of constant fear and intimidation.

It is only once his best friend Leonard is brutally murdered in an unprovoked attack by the local gang of 'hoodies' that Brown is spurred into action, and embarks on a bloody personal revenge mission, Dirty Harry style, to rid the estate of these violent thugs.

In case you were wondering whether audiences are just reading a political message where there isn't one, the director Daniel Barber, the writer Gary Young and indeed Michael Caine himself, have not shied away from pronouncing the film as an important piece of social commentary.

Caine, who was in a gang when he was a youngster, has called the film a 'wake-up call', a warning on the consequences of not dealing with the problems of our gang culture. He claims to have re-examined his attitudes towards these 'thugs', as a result of his research and interaction with gang members. The state has failed them, and they are in need of education, strong family units and methods of re-engaging with society. Caine has even recently called for the reintroduction of National Service as a possible means of combating the rapid disintegration of our society.

Unsurprisingly, the 'Daily Mail-esque' sentiment expressed in the film has been

leapt upon by those predisposed to appreciate this particular brand of hysteria.

Many are claiming the film's 'message' champions the Tories' 'broken Britain' campaign, and that Caine is echoing the concerns of a nation. Admittedly, they are aided by the fact that Caine himself is backing the Tories on this issue, justly claiming that a socialist government has

The film's image of Britain is a distortion of reality, and its solutions reprehensible

failed to adequately cater for our disillusioned youth.

Matthew D'Ancona, former editor of the Sunday Telegraph and the Spectator, was particularly keen to draw parallels between the film's content and the Conservatives' policies in a recent controversial article entitled 'Michael Caine and truth of

Cameron's 'Broken Society'.

Perhaps Caine et al are correct in condemning a Labour government for failing to bolster the most underprivileged strata of our society. The social and economic situation that precipitates gang culture is one we ignore at our peril.

Yet the image of Britain portrayed in *Harry Brown* that D'Ancona and others are so eager to buy into (and use as propaganda) is an irresponsible distortion of reality, and the solutions the film offers are non-existent at best; at worst they are reprehensible.

D'Ancona predicts that the "polenta-eating, Guardian-reading classes" will object to the film's dubious moral message of fighting violence with violence, and I am glad to prove him correct (although I plead not guilty to the polenta-eating charge).

The film portrays the gang members as vermin that can only be dealt with by elimination, rather than endorsing a positive approach to the problem.

If Caine really wanted to convey a potent political message, he should have chosen a vehicle that offered a coherent stance on this complex issue. Whilst any proactive engagement with such a crucial topic is to be applauded, *Harry Brown* is nothing more than an entertaining thriller, despite any attempts to market it otherwise by award-winning actors or political columnists.

Many are claiming that the film echoes the concerns of a nation

# In defence of secularism

The influence of religious institutions over the political process must be resisted for the good of our democracy



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This is not an attack on people with faith. The case I am outlining is that religious institutions, and their manifestation of faith, should have absolutely no influence on politics. Unfortunately there is no justification in banning people from using religion to influence politics, but it is not this I am most concerned with; it is rather the clear and present danger that religious institutions present.

Secularism may seem an obviously necessary principle but in light of some of the views propagated at a recent LUU debate, and the Minister for Community creating 'faith groups', it is perhaps not as obvious as I first thought.

Those, like John Denham, who seek to remove secularism, must deny some very basic contradictions that exist between religion and politics.

The first is that religious institutions, by their very nature, undermine liberal democracy. Indeed if they were included in the democratic process, it is fairly safe to say they would actively try to destroy it; as has been the case in all those countries that are plagued by a lack of secularism, such as Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The reason for this is very simple; religion is totalitarian and delivers policy from the top-down. Religious leaders are not elected and are not representative. They are not even representative of the so called followers of their church, as only seven percent of religious people actually attend services and therefore could ever have the chance to influence these unelected leaders.

So by removing secularism you are handing power to an unelected, unrepresentative group of people. Those who attempt to justify it do so by making apologist arguments for religion that appease to some skewed view of liberalism. It usually goes along the lines of: "Well... yeah... but most modern religions are just nice and caring so it doesn't matter because what they think is just good... 'cause it is".

Authoritarianism cannot be excused because it is subjectively good. In fact the principle itself is objectively bad as it completely flies in the face of our modern political system.

Democracy relies on the principle of everyone having a voice, not the principle that everyone has a voice but those who shout louder, and shout nicer things, will get more attention.

Surely some religious institutions would gain far more influence than others, and on what grounds do we apportion this influence given that they aren't elected? Who are we to say that Christians should have more influence than Buddhists, Jews more influence than Muslims? Such belittling of the faiths of others would be far more typical of religious institutions themselves.

There are also those who attempt to say religious institutions should be included because their ideologies are akin to political ideology. They claim there is no difference between the two so there is no justification for their separation. This argument may be compelling if you read it with complete disregard for, or total unawareness of anything to do with politics or religion.

Religion relies on faith. Faith is a belief without the need for evidence. It is this mentality that demonstrates the huge difference between

religion and political ideology. Political ideologists make observations on societal norms and customs and then try to create a coherent plan to address any failures they see.

Religious institutions, on the other hand, decide what societal norms and customs should be, and then accredit any failures to an evil force or to being part of a deity's plan, depending on their particular religious preference.

This is the big difference and this is why religion could be so corrupting to the political system, if it gained major influence. It could formulate and advertise policy with the only justification needed being the promise that God, or Allah, or any other deity told them it was the right thing to do.

It destroys any need for empiricism or legitimacy within the political system and encourages blind faith in your leaders, blind faith in your government. It would, to all intents and purposes, be the blind leading the blind.

More dangerously, religious institutions are likely to do a great deal of harm to society if they were granted any influence. One need only glance at the social codes of the prevailing monotheistic doctrines to know that they are thousands of years out of date, and unfortunately the institutions that interpret them are just as out of date in some of their own moral teachings.

Let us assume, for a moment, that secularism is removed and religions are granted influence in politics and policy formation. What policies will

Wahabi Islamists recommend on women's rights? What reforms might the Pope propose to abortion and gay rights legislation? Will the Archbishop of Canterbury, given his condemnation of the "offensive" Danish cartoons, uphold free speech?

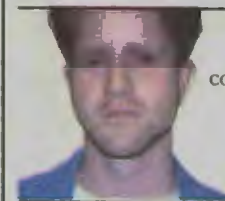
Perhaps those who argue against me will accuse me of fear mongering. As they might say, religious institutions are nice now; they are loving and inclusive.

Allow me then to take a more recent example from a country that does not exercise secularism. On November 18 in Somalia a 20-year-old woman was convicted of adultery by an al-Shabab judge and stoned to death under the principles of Islamic law. I am by no means saying that Islamic institutions in Britain are the same as those in Somalia; of course there are differences. But there will always remain the potential for extremists to manipulate Islam in whatever context.

It is this potential that makes its exclusion from politics so vital, along with all other institutionalised religion. We cannot entertain the possibility of including religion in politics until it fundamentally changes its doctrines and social policies, a requirement unlikely to be fulfilled.

To grant religious institutions any influence on politics would be to give power to the authoritarian, the illogical and the irrational. It would undermine all efforts to create social cohesion.

'A low, dishonest decade.' As the noughties end, what hope for the 2010s?



**Charlie Cooper**  
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This edition of the *Leeds Student* is a quietly auspicious one. It is the last of the decade. The noughties, as this decade seems destined to be known by posterity, have also been auspicious, but by no means quietly so. Every newspaper in the country will be running retrospectives of the decade, as it comes to its final close, so there is no need to go into much detail here with regard to the events and trends that have transformed our lives and our planet over the past ten years.

A decade which has been predominately documented through the dubious medium of the instant-media buzzword, can somewhat appropriately (though by no means satisfactorily) be brought into focus by the same means. 9/11, War on Terror, .com, carbon footprint, chav, credit crunch, Yes We Can, G20, Af-Pak.

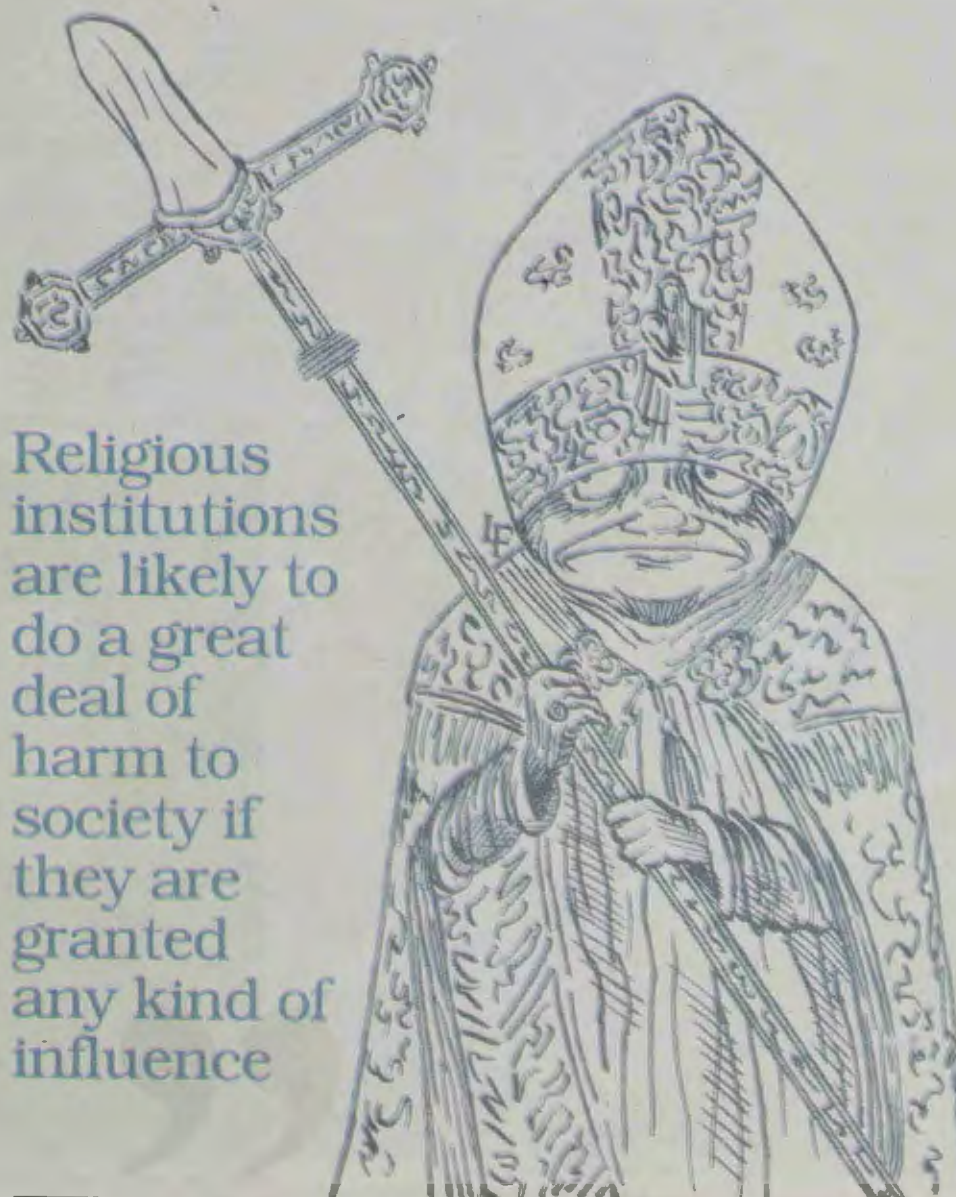
W.H. Auden, on the eve of war in 1939, described the 1930s as a 'low, dishonest decade'. Many of us will remember the 2000s similarly. If the 1990s were defined by complacency and hubris on the part of rulers, and complacency and gullibility on the part of the ruled, then the 2000s might be remembered for a stark redefining of how the people at large regard the powerful.

This decade was probably not the first in which a Prime Minister has misled his people, but it is the first in which such a low, dishonest deception has implicated the British people in the deaths, in Iraq, of thousands of people. Angered and saddened, the British now look on their government with a less trusting eye. Nor was it the first decade in which "people made money out of the misery of others", because "that is a function of capitalist markets". The quotation comes from George Osborne, the man likely to become Chancellor of the Exchequer in 2010. If this is still the way he thinks, he can expect a hard time from the British people - awakened by the credit crunch to the excess and recklessness of ruling financiers.

So at the end of the decade the voice of dissent, of the anger of the ruled directed at their rulers, is louder and more heartfelt than it was at the start. At this University that voice is making itself heard and it is heartening to see the political student alive and well as we embark on a new decade. The campaign against job cuts at Leeds is a part of this current, of the tendency of the young to question, resist and confront the powerful when they believe them to be acting wrongly.

But the campaign should redirect its anger, and place the University's much-maligned 'economies exercise' (another buzzword) in its wider context. The management of the University will come in for inevitable unpopularity, but ultimately they are not the instigators of this problem. Cast adrift by a government (and opposition) committed to ruthless cuts to public spending, they are merely the unfortunate ones charged with hard decisions for hard times. And when we widen our perspective, budget cuts at a University are among the least of our worries.

A new decade will begin in four weeks time, in a context of impending environmental disaster, escalating wars and recession at home. One can hope, however, that of the few positive developments of the low, dishonest noughties, one is the revival of popular, progressive movements - newly facilitated by internet networking. The influence of such movements, of power from below, might be the factor that helps the next decade end more brightly than it is doomed to begin.



Religious institutions are likely to do a great deal of harm to society if they are granted any kind of influence

# Students targeted by company of debt collection, bankruptcy,

Leeds Student has discovered that a number of students have come into debt problems after taking out short-term loans with high interest rates from a company not legally licensed to provide credit to consumers.

Last week LUU's Student Advice Centre (SAC) confirmed that it had seen debt clients who had experienced problems after taking out loans with Toothfairy Finance, an internet based company claiming to offer 'immediate short term cash flow solutions'.

Unfortunately, however, none of these students were willing to talk to LS about their experiences.

Toothfairy Finance, which is registered under the business name of Cim Technologies Limited, offers instant loans via the internet or text message, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Customers have the option of taking out a £100, £200 or £300 loan which is repayable in either 14 or 28 days with interest charged at nine per cent a week.

Despite the fact that its website states, "We check the information you provide in your application... with various credit agencies", it also boasts that loans are typically deposited 'direct to your account in as little as 60 seconds' - unless Toothfairy are capable of carrying out credit checks in under a minute this suggests that either they are not carrying out checks on applicants as claimed, or that the loans are not really as 'instant' as they would have you believe.

### Dodgy dealings

Although the company can be found on the Office of Fair Trading

(OFT)'s Public Register it only has a license for credit brokerage. In other words it can introduce customers to lenders but it can not actually offer them credit itself. When speaking to OFT LS was advised that if a company with only a license for credit brokerage was found to be providing loans it would be breaking the law and as

**"Don't touch payday loan companies with a barge pole."**

**Chris Trapp,  
Director of Credit Action**

such any agreements would not be enforceable

And the company's questionable business dealings do not end here. The Consumer Action Group's website forum features several stories from frightened Toothfairy customers, who, upon finding themselves unable to meet repayments, have received letters threatening debt collection from a company called Northern Debt Recovery Limited, as well as County Court Judgements and bankruptcy proceedings.

LS has found that not only is the third party debt collection agency cited in these letters actually registered under the name of Jonathan Weinstock, the same individual as Toothfairy, but that its credit license application is currently pending. In other words,

until its credit license is granted, it is not legally allowed to carry out debt collection.

What is more, one user, who contributed to the forum under the name 'm12345', claimed that they had actually intended to repay the loan within the agreed time but that they had not received an email with the company's bank account details as promised. Though the company's bank account details are now included in the website's FAQs section, another user on the forum, identified as 'devon1985', states that this is only a recent addition. The forum's users claim that these threatening letters come before any other attempt to contact them about their failure to meet repayments.

Despite repeated attempts to contact Toothfairy for a response, LS were unable to get through to a representative. This follows numerous stories on the Consumer Action Group forum of Toothfairy customers experiencing similar problems when trying to contact the company.

### Stay away

Toothfairy is just one of several companies offering short-term, high-interest loans. Although not all are guilty of tactics as dirty as Toothfairy's, Chris Trapp, director of debt charity Credit Action, advised students against taking out loans with any of them. He warned: "Don't touch these companies with a barge pole."

While Toothfairy's weekly nine per cent interest rate would equate to a massive 468 per cent Annual Percentage Rate of charge (APR), the common method for comparing loans and credit offers,

other companies are offering even more expensive loans with APRs as high as 9000 per cent.

Though Toothfairy's website suggests using APR to compare its short-term loans is 'misleading',

### What is OFT?

According to its website the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), is 'as independent professional organisation, (that) plays a leading role in promoting and protecting consumer interests throughout the UK, while ensuring that businesses are fair and competitive.'

OFT can offer advice on consumer rights as well as provide information about all companies listed on its Public Register.

To make a consumer complaint about a trader students can contact Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06

For more information on OFT visit: [www.oft.gov.uk/](http://www.oft.gov.uk/)

offered these so that if something were to go wrong, they could check their rights and seek to redress if necessary.

"At the very least, students should be checking what the APR of the loan is, and if the credit company is signed up to an umbrella organization which helps to maintain standards in the industry"

### Targeting students

Commonly known as 'payday' loans, this type of credit is designed for people in full-time jobs to tide them over, until the end of the month when the majority of the population gets paid. Until recently, it was not common practice to offer such loans to students who do not receive a regular monthly income but these companies are increasingly using marketing methods specifically targeting those at university.

LS has been informed that Toothfairy is using Facebook to attract student customers, advertising its loans on the networking site under the slogan, 'money all students are entitled to'. Such use of wording could lead students to believe the credit offered is similar to a Student Finance loan or university bursary.

### Three easy steps

The accessibility of Toothfairy's application process is also appealing to students: its website offers a simple, three-step guide to applying via text messages and, indeed, when LS attempted to apply for a loan this way, it received a reply immediately.

both the SAC and LUU's Welfare Officer, Madeleine Harris Smith, advise students to always check the APR before taking out any loan. Madeleine said: "We'd advise all students to avoid, as far as possible, borrowing from a company which did not provide a written contract or have a clear complaints procedure. Consumers should be

The screenshot shows the Toothfairy website interface. At the top, there are navigation links: "How it works", "Via SMS", "Via Internet", "Contact", "FAQ", "APR", and "Pay Now". Below this is a section titled "Microcredit - How it works" which explains that users can borrow small amounts of money quickly. To the right, there is a "Get a loan Now!" section with a form titled "Apply Online". The form includes fields for "Loan amount" (with options for £100, £200, £300), "Title" (Mr, Ms, Mrs, Miss), "First Name", "Surname", "Mobile Number", "Post Code", "House No.", "Street", and "Town". There is also a checkbox for "Check here, if you have not lived at the above address for 4 years", a "Date Of Birth" field (DD, MM, YYYY), "Post Code", "Bank Ac. No.", and "Email". A "find address" button is next to the post code field.

The screenshot shows a text message received on a mobile phone. The message is from "Toothfairy" and is dated "Nov 25, 2009 2:47:01 PM". The text of the message reads: "Thanks! Please reply LOAN to followed by your Full Name, Address, Postcode, Date of Birth, Account No., Sort Code, Loan Amount (£100, £200 or £300)". The phone's keyboard is visible at the bottom of the screen.

**LOANS FOR EVERYONE: Toothfairy's website offers 'loans to help you - whomever you are' from: [www.toothfairyfinance.com](http://www.toothfairyfinance.com)**

**EASY AS ONE, TWO, THREE:** After texting the word 'loan' to the number listed on Toothfairy's website, LS received the above text just seconds later. Photo: Joey Severn

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photograph: Charlotte Sintrat  
Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Leeds Academy 29/11/09  
turn to LS2 page 10 for the review

...that Santa can leave in the North Pole this year.

It's bad enough having to put up with the family for three whole days and watch all the awful Christmas specials whilst being force-fed mince pies, without having to endure the world's worst Christmas presents. Here are some of the things we think that we shouldn't have to pretend to be grateful for this Christmas...

# 1

## Knickers

Underwear for Christmas is never well received. The sexy variety from your boyfriend seems a great idea to him but when you rip open the packaging to find either size 16 lacy knickers, which closely resemble net curtains, or a size six thong, which would better fit a Barbie, one can only take offence. If, however, the knickers are from a different source, particularly an old male relative, a very disturbing Christmas will follow. It is advisable to avoid eye contact over Christmas dinner and inform a close relative of the situation to best ensure a refund.

# 2

## Christmas Themed Clothing

The vile knitwear created especially for you by a great grandparent should definitely be received with the necessary gratitude and eagerness to try on, but as soon as they leave be sure to store it so far towards the back of the cupboard (which you specifically reserve for such gifts) that it will never rear its ugly head again. The reindeer print didn't work for Bridget - there's no way you'll pull it off.

# 3

## Socks

Socks are clearly a necessity and, as a present from you to your father, they serve perfectly. But when it comes to your turn to receive them you realise it is not the most exciting of Christmas presents. Although they are stocking fillers, the joke falls on us in having to pretend to be thankful for something we could have picked up in Primark for under a pound. Why do our feet get so much attention? It is not that we are ungrateful, we were just hoping for something a bit more exciting (and expensive).

# 4

## Toiletries

We are not strangers to the difficulties of buying presents for people you are not that well acquainted with and it seems we always end up thinking that you can't go wrong with toiletries. However, after many Christmases and birthdays of receiving Boots and Superdrug premium gift sets we are left with no room for any more. Our storage is already filled with hundreds of glittery bath bombs that never dissolve and leave scum all over the bath, candles that smell more like Febreze than 'the scent of winter morning' and bottles of David Beckham's new cheap cologne.

# 5

## Household Items

Isn't the essence of Christmas receiving gifts that you don't necessarily need, but want nevertheless? So why is it that relatives feel that they can give us presents which would have been bought for us anyway? A kettle or a toaster, though useful, cannot be seen in the same light as a brand new iPod.

Some people are beginning to speculate that the benefits we can gain from technology have hit a glass ceiling. Or perhaps a one way energy saving Perspex ceiling with AI functions and a touch screen.

I think the reality is that there are still infinite improvements that can be found for medical research, environmental energy and generally improving the efficiency of wasteful industries. However, in the meantime, we are being kept occupied with meaningless and pointless little twiddles that apparently improve our quality of life to the point where we being to genuinely believe that we can't live without it.

The iPod has to be a prime candidate for this, and many an owner will shudder to imagine a world where they can't be in constant possession of 20,000 songs that they won't ever listen to. More recently there's that Samsung advert in which rather than use independent thought, a man in a bar employs that power of social networking in order to formulate a chat up line (which he then fucks up anyway). Duhhh. At least it kind of came out charming. He can add it to his favourite quotes, the absolute tosser. He should be removed from the gene pool.

Another piece of technology that baffles me is the electronic locking system for the sliding doors on trains. I don't know quite what was wrong

I too used to be a bit of a technophobe when it came to the ever burgeoning enhancement and fusion of various difference devices into one easy-to-use appliance, fearing that we would end up with some mechanical Frankenstein-esque, Wifi enabled-MP3-video-phone-refrigerating-dildo-blender.

I was wary even when the iPod first came out. It seemed too smooth, too efficient, too perfect (that is until you dropped it in a puddle) plus the people in the adverts scared me a little, they looked like they were being forced to dance, like circus monkeys.

I used to turn my nose up to the hordes of gloating Apple lovers. "It makes everything so much easier!" What if I don't want things to be easier? Just because The Hungry Caterpillar is an easier book to read than Ulysses, it doesn't mean it's better. I much preferred to come home after a hard day and fish out a dusty record that perfectly suited my mood than thumbing through my MP3 player's library for one that would make do.

This is all going to sound very hypocritical now however, as I have to admit that earlier this year I finally caved and bought an iPhone, but I don't

with traditional sliding locks, but apparently trains now need toilet doors from the Death Star; doors of the future. Today.

Anyway, waste of money aside, they befuddle many an incontinent passenger and often slowly and unstopably slide open to reveal someone frantically trying to look like they hadn't already started urinating. If that's the future, then it's already looking bleak.

One thing that has now become technology's equivalent to gold blocks is the LCD plasma screen. According to MTV at least, (so, like, according to everyone yeah?) the wealth of any given citizen can be gauged based on the number of screens they possess.

Remember when companies began putting radios in absolutely everything? It wasn't simply clock radios; there were watch radios, toaster radios, hat radios, cat radios. It was madness. Radios were in all the places you didn't need them to be. Now we have plasma screens everywhere we don't need them to be. Like in clubs, fridges and in the boot of your car. Pimpin'.

Will Coldwell

care because it fucking rules. Now I can play Sonic the Hedgehog in my lectures! I do try not to be one of those people who fishes it out at any given moment to brag about the latest App they have downloaded.

I've always thought that Mac equals Twat so you could say I'm in denial about my recent Apple acquisition. It does occur to me now however that the iPhone bears a remarkable similarity to the idea of the Frankenstein phone that I had found so abhorrent before now, but it's not quite so nightmarish as I'd imagined, in fact it's quite convenient.

What is a worry however is our ever growing dependency on technology. With each useful function we pack into these little gadgets, they grow in importance and the more reliant we become towards them. What happens if they break?

Shit, we might have to start talking to each other again...

Toby Ginsberg



## Going UP

### Advent Calendars

Not that I don't eat chocolate every day of the month anyway but now I have Jesus' approval!

### Tea

It's cold, tea's warm, 'nuff said.



### Last week of the Semester

Finish this semester as you began it; with thoughtless, shameless drunkenness!

## Going DOWN

### Tara Palmer Tomkinson

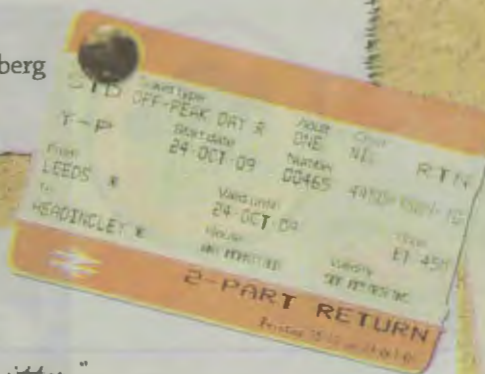
Seriously, who the fuck are you?

### Radios

Unless they've got a plasma screen in them.

### Cats

Come in my house and beg my cream. Cat's gonna get a slap. Get back in the rain foo'!



### Overheards:

Whispered from one girl to another: "I can't believe you've had five STIs! I'm so impressed!"

"Call to prayers in mosques? They should just use Twitter."

"I was excited by the kids!"

Some guy talking on his phone in Polish suddenly switches to English to clarify the situation: "No, I HAVE chlamydia!"

## Food

### Roast dinner

Christmas is just around the corner (in the student world, anyway) and what better way can you say goodbye to your friends other than enjoying a roast dinner together?

As turkeys are expensive and fairly huge, we've used chicken. If there are only a couple of you, it will probably be easier

to roast the same number of chicken breasts, which will take less time.

Although different parts of a roast are meant to be cooked at different temperatures, we're guessing it's unlikely you have a double oven; the best way we find is keeping everything at 190°C, blasting anything slightly lagging whilst the rest is being served! We've left the simple stuff out and concentrated on the harder elements of the meal.

### Roast chicken:

(1½ hours)  
Simple is often best when roasting a chicken. Most chickens come with cooking instructions so check the instructions, but here is a basic guide to a medium chicken (serves 4-6 people). To check it has cooked through, insert a skewer or knife – if the juices have run clear, it has cooked through:

- 1 whole chicken
  - 1 tbsp olive oil (sunflower will do)
  - 1 tsp mixed herbs
  - 1 tsp salt
  - 1 tsp pepper
- Preheat oven to 190°C; gas mark 5

Rub the olive oil over the chicken. Mix the herbs, salt and pepper together, and then rub into the oil. Place the chicken on baking foil, on a baking tray/dish that has raised sides (otherwise you'll get chicken juice all over your oven!) Put the chicken in the oven for roughly an hour and a half, starting with the top shelf and moving to the bottom when you put the potatoes in. When cooked through, take outside the oven and leave to rest for about 15 minutes before serving (cover with baking foil to retain heat).

### Roast potatoes

(10 minutes preparation, 50 minutes to cook)  
Easily the favourite part of a roast for most!

- 1 medium sized potato per person
- ½ tsp olive oil (sunflower will do)
- 1 tsp butter per person
- ½ tsp salt per person
- ½ onion per person

Peel and chop the potatoes into quarters. Peel and chop the onions into large chunks. Place the potatoes into a pan of boiling water, and parboil for ten minutes. Drain, and place into an ovenproof dish. Add the oil, butter and salt and mix them through. Give the potatoes a good shake and put them in the oven on the top shelf. Roast for 20 minutes, add the onions. Get the chicken, and pour some of the juices into the potatoes (not too much, otherwise they won't crisp!) Mix to ensure the juices cover all of the veg, and roast for a further 20 minutes. (Tip – if they're not browning, grill on a high heat whilst you serve the rest of the meal).

### Yorkshire puddings

(30 minutes to prepare, 15 minutes to cook)

It's absolutely fine to use a variety such as Aunt Bessie's – especially if it's your first attempt at a roast dinner! I also doubt that many students have a yorkshire pudding tray... However, they are fairly easy to make, and will impress you friends, if you get them right!

- Makes 12 puddings:
- 300ml (½ pint) milk
  - 110g (4 oz) plain Flour
  - 1 egg
  - Oil

Put about ½ teaspoon of oil into each cup in the yorkshire pudding tray. Put into the oven; the oil needs to be really hot for perfect yorkshires! Place the flour in a bowl, then make a well in the centre and break in the egg. Mix in half the milk using a wooden spoon, mix together until smooth, and add the remaining milk. Beat or whisk until fully combined and the surface is covered with tiny bubbles. Allow to rest for 15 to 30 minutes, whisk again before use.

Pour the mixture into the cups into the tray, cook on the top shelf for 15 minutes, until risen and golden. Spoon the yorkshires out of the tray.

### Gingerbread House

The gingerbread houses at the German Market too expensive? Here's a recipe to make your own for that instant Christmas feel, with a sweet and yummy result. Should only be attempted whilst listening to very cheesy Christmas songs... Just watch out for Hansel and Gretel (or more likely, hungry flatmates) trying to eat it before you do!

Dough:  
500g butter  
300 ml syrup  
600 ml sugar  
300 ml double cream  
About 2 l plain flour  
1 ½ tsp ground cloves  
1 ½ tsp ground pepper  
1 ½ tsp ground ginger  
5 tsp cinnamon  
3 tsp baking powder  
More sugar for assembly and more flour for rolling.

Icing:  
2-3 egg whites  
Icing sugar  
A few drops of lemon

Mix the syrup, sugar and butter in a pan, and heat until the sugar melts. Let it cool. Mix with double cream and flour and spices and mix well. Remember, the dough should be quite firm to keep its shape during cooking. Cover and leave until the next day, preferably in the



fridge.

Roll into a square, about 3 mm thick. Cut out shapes for the house, using paper templates. E.g., four wall with doors and windows, and two squares for a ceiling. Be creative, add chimneys, annexes etc, or recreate a famous landmark. Cook the shapes on baking paper at 180°C 8-10 minutes. Let cool. Melt sugar and use the resulting syrup to glue the pieces of the house together. Remember, melted sugar is very hot and difficult to handle, be careful! Leave the house to set before decorating.

Whisk the egg white until relatively firm, and add icing sugar. Mix all together until smooth and add lemon. Use to decorate the house. (As most of you probably don't have an implement to pipe the icing, grab a food bag, cut a small hole in the corner, and use to push through the icing. Perhaps practise on some baking paper first...)

Ideas:

Use plates of gelatine as windows. Glue the gelatine plates on the inside of the walls before the house is assembled using melted sugar. Decorate 'window sills' with icing to make a snow-like appearance.

Decorate the house using several different kinds of sweets. For example: jelly-babies make for good 'inhabitants' of the house, rectangle biscuits (i.e. bourbons) make nice stairs, chocolate buttons look like roof tiles, chocolate mini rolls for chimneys etc. The more sweets the better!

To make an outside area to you house arrange the house on a tray. Use cotton wool to imitate snow (or chimney smoke!), chocolate fingers as fences, and use leftover dough to make animals, people, etc. that can be arranged outside the house.

Leave until Christmas, or for as long as you can resist. Then... Smash! Eat!

words: Heather Bodle and Maren Mønnich

photograph: Flickr - Terren in Virginia

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7th-10th December  
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**SKETCHISM**

Backstage Society



# Have yourself a quirky little Christmas

It is that time again folks, Christmas is upon us. Though a Christian celebration, Christmas takes over the entirety of England and it is hard to find someone who doesn't get a warm, fuzzy feeling when they are eating mince pies and opening presents. Each to their own though, so here are some celebrations with a slightly unusual twist.

## The Nativity of drunken dreams

The nativity scene is a common enough sight to all of us. There is Jesus, obviously, in his manger, his parents, some shepherds, sheep, three kings, probably some camels, a cow and a very tired donkey.

We see this picture everywhere at this time of year, on Christmas cards to wooden displays in shopping centres and many of you may have your own version set up in your living room. Those little figures that you get out the box every year and lovingly dust off, perfectly arrange, only for your siblings to come along after you and re-arrange them all.

In my house we certainly have a nativity scene and are immensely proud of it. It may not, however, be exactly what anyone expects when we drag them over to look at it and stand beaming above it. Yes, eyebrows might raise but my sister Honor and I have been collecting our precious figurines since we were very young and refuse to believe any nativity is as wonderful as ours.

It begins with God, naturally, and the plastic roly-poly Sultan of Disney's Aladin, from a McDonald's happy meal, hangs, with his twinkling eyes and long white beard, from the clock on the mantelpiece so he can overlook the magical scene. Down on the ground of Bethlehem (or by

the fireplace) a wind-up angel panda is a proud Gabriel bringing a joyful message to the shepherds. The shepherds incidentally change every year as the salt dough models we made as children got eaten by mice, I believe currently one is a playmobile man with a home-made headband.

Our kings are by far the most beautiful characters, and most normal, seeing as they were bought by my sister from a market in Spain. They do however, come with a collection of about ten camels, gathered from various forgotten places, who graze with the donkey that always falls over.

Possibly the strangest addition to our little scene is Herod/happy meal Cruella De'ville. She stands upon a pot with a red-eyed camel who I, at one point, decided looked too evil to join the rest of the camels. Thankfully, the holy family are a group of finely painted plastic models that hopefully bring some class and dignity to the nativity.

I think at one point our parents wondered if encouraging our annual project was verging on blasphemy, but as weird as it is, it reminds us every year that Christmas is essentially a religious celebration. It brings my sister and I together every year and that is worth all the comical characters in the world.

Evelyn Pryor-Jones

## Doubly Special

I was a Christmas baby, a real Christmas baby. A real one in the sense that I was born on the very day.

This means that whenever somebody new finds this out, I find myself listening to the same reactions and answering the same questions; something along the lines of: 'Oh! That must be terrible! Doesn't that mean you only get one present?' But fear not, for the answer is 'No'. Since I was born, and until recently, my parents forced the whole army of grandparents, aunts and uncles to buy me two presents;

insisting that 'just because it's her birthday, doesn't mean she should miss out'. As a result, Christmas Day has always meant loads of presents. Well, maybe not loads...but double.

I start the day with my stocking. When I was little, there was a 7am restriction for entry into my parents' room. And although I still rip open these presents on my parent's bed, it's now my mum who eagerly waits for my brother and I to surface.

The second batch of presents comes after breakfast - the ones under the tree. Usually, before this annual routine can take place, a family member is nominated to 'dish them out'. Once this has been agreed upon, the tearing of wrapping paper can begin again.

Now, for many, this is where the excitement of bursting open presents ends. But not for me. For me, the end of Christmas dinner marks the end of Christmas Day, and the start of my Birthday. As everyone around me collapses onto the sofas as a result of their excessive annual binge of turkey and 'pigs in blankets', I leap to my feet and reach for my third helping of presents. Normally, I will sit on the floor, in front of everyone. Not only does this mean I become the centre of attention, but it also means that no one needs to hire a crane to manoeuvre themselves to another location.

The day draws to a close with the arrival of the 'Birthmas' cake. Since I can remember our family Christmas cake has also served as my Birthday cake. Every year my mum draws a line down the middle, sectioning off one half as the Christmas side (usually with Christmas trees and a skiing Santa - one year she attempted a ski slope, which ultimately ended up with someone having a colossal sugar rush in one bite), and the other, the Birthday side (with numerous candles and the words 'Happy Birthday Hannah').

So, this year I'll be spending Christmas Day how I've always spent it: turning another year older.



Hannah Crichton-Smith  
photography: Charlotte Sintrat



## Crossword

### Across:

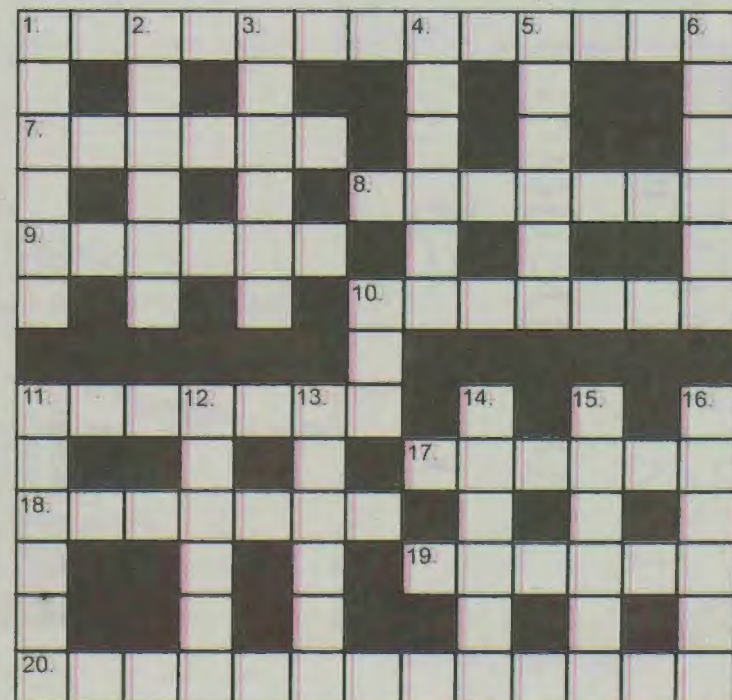
- Sausage in Yorkshire pudding (4,2,3,4)
- Replace with something new (6)
- Version (7)
- Castrated male (6)
- Join (metal) together with heat (7)
- Born out of marriage (7)
- Capital city in Europe (6)
- Sad (7)
- Not rude (6)
- Same felt (for unfortunate incident) (13)

### Down:

- Sparkly tree decoration (6)
- Lead up to Christmas (6)
- All there (6)
- Knob (6)
- Made warmer (6)
- Xmas drink (6)
- Tie the knot (3)
- Ornament for tree (6)
- Ordeal (6)
- Fix (6)
- Merry (6)
- Think highly of (6)
- Create-think up (6)

The answers to last week's crossword:

**Across:** 1. Ladybird, 5. Cafe, 7. Obtain, 8. Pester, 10. Hamlet, 11. Erotic, 12. Boat, 14. Axe, 15. Soup, 17. Armpit, 18. Cuckoo, 20. Dancer, 22. Amanda, 23. Real, 24. Deadline. **Down:** 1. L. Ron Hubbard, 2. Datum, 3. Boiled, 4. Deplete, 5. Customs, 6. Free, 9. Reciprocate, 13. Topical, 14. Altered, 16. Putrid, 19. Khaki, 21. Ace.

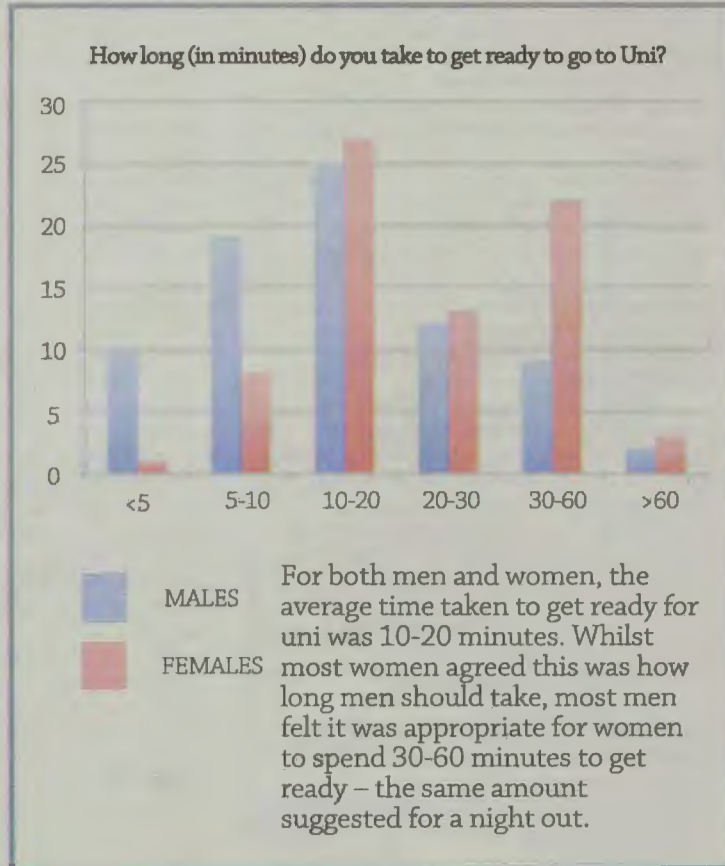
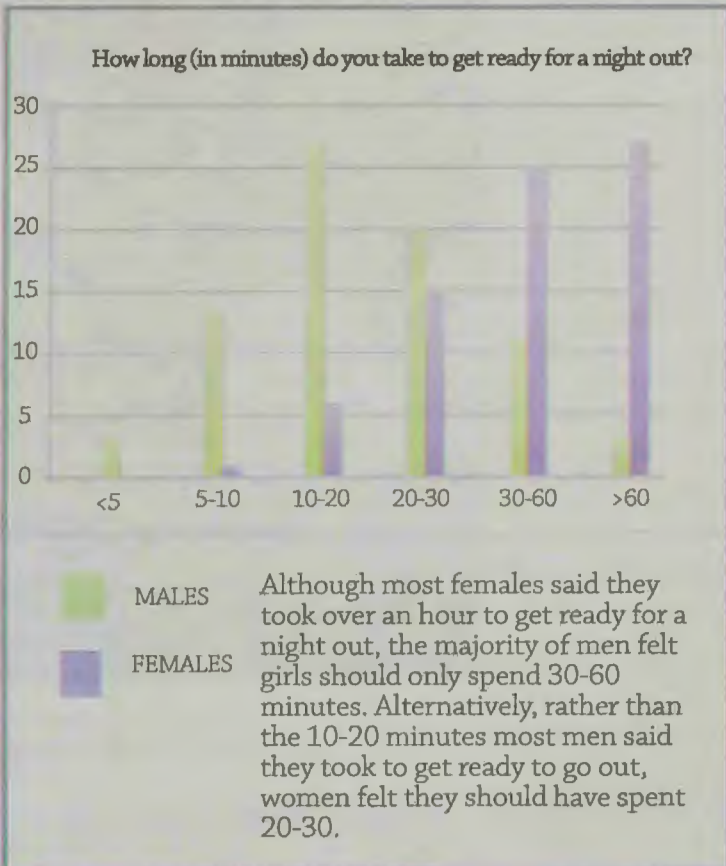


# FEATURES

041209

## The myth of the metrosexual male

It is evident that in the 21st century, concepts of masculinity and femininity are changing rapidly. When it comes to addressing the idea of a whole new gender - the metrosexual male - it must be realised that taking on such a label brings about more than just a lifestyle change, as the term carries a lot of connotations that some feel they should avoid being related with. The survey for this article asked 160 students, 90 boys and 70 girls, various questions about their behaviour when it came to their appearance and their thoughts on aspects associated with metrosexuality.



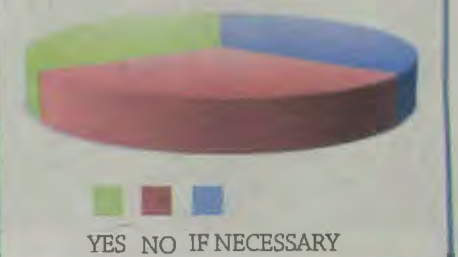
**What boys say: have you ever borrowed a girl's beauty products?**



**What girls say: has your boyfriend ever borrowed your beauty products?**



**Should men pluck their eyebrows?**



Leeds Student would like to clarify that any opinions expressed in these results are those of the respondents not the opinions of LS. If you would like to comment on what we have displayed please feel free to email us at [features@leedsstudent.org](mailto:features@leedsstudent.org).

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# The results are in...

When I think of Gordon Ramsay, I think of a hard-headed, sharp-tongued man who would not take callous comments about his appearance, or anything for that matter, to heart. Therefore, it came as a surprise to hear that he had undergone cosmetic surgery to fill his deep wrinkles, on the advice of Simon Cowell.

The idea that men aren't (and shouldn't be) as concerned with their physical appearance as women is fast becoming an old-fashioned one, with the number of men having cosmetic surgery leaping up 82 percent since the start of 2009 ([www.thegoodsurgeonguide.co.uk](http://www.thegoodsurgeonguide.co.uk)).

The concept of crossing the gender boundaries dates back to the early 19th century when women began to wear trousers for practicality, much to the

Men own, on average, 5 beauty products

disapproval of their fellow workers, in coal mines. Even then, they were expected to wear skirts over the top, which were rolled up to the waist whilst working. Eventually, thanks to the feminist movement and designers like André Courrèges breaking the boundaries, trousers became a standard part of any modern woman's wardrobe. However, if a man chooses to expand his wardrobe to include skirts, dresses and heels he becomes labelled as a transvestite. Why is it that women are allowed so much more freedom in what they wear? Some men in the media are

## Product suitability for men, from most to least

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. face wash     | 9. foundation   |
| 2. moisturiser   | 10. fake tan    |
| 3. conditioner   | 11. blusher     |
| 4. hair brush    | 11. eye shadow  |
| 5. hair dryer    | 11. lipstick    |
| 6. lip balm      | 11. nail polish |
| 7. straighteners | 12. eyeliner    |
| 8. hair spray    | 12. mascara     |

celebrated for their metrosexuality, such as Eddie Izzard and Russel Brand but to what extent does society still covertly raise its eyebrows?

It is hard to ignore the parallels between our past and the present in terms of the rules society imposes upon people based on their sex. It is perhaps the case that, in another hundred years, generations to come will look back on us 'small minded' people and be as appalled and bemused at the concept of men being judged for wearing make-up or high heels as most of us are about women being disallowed to wear a 'man's' garment.

If a girl wears loose fitting clothes and has a short hair-style she becomes 'butch', and if a man walks or talks in a certain way he becomes 'camp'. Why then, do we not call men that wear baggy clothes and short hair butch and women who walk or talk a certain way camp? We are raised from a young age to learn stereotypes and pigeon hole the people we meet into them, yet the 21st century is seeing a new revolution. Has the masculinist movement arrived?

The metrosexual male is a new concept, defined by [urbandictionary.com](http://urbandictionary.com) as "An urban male with a strong aesthetic sense, who spends a great deal of time and money on his appearance and lifestyle". Metrosexual is also described as being "homosexual in every way except in sexual orientation" which is loaded with stereotypes of a gay (and not lesbian) person's behavioural

traits and values. What then, does metrosexuality really mean and should it perhaps be rebranded "metrosensual" in order to combat the idea that the choices made in individual appearance determine sexual orientation. It is a huge generalisation to say that in order to be heterosexual you must fit the criteria of dressing a certain way and having a specific level of concern for your overall appearance and the same can be said for homosexuality. By selecting one lifestyle choice, why does society impose another alongside it as though they are two inseparable sides of the same coin? And to what extent do people agree?

With differing definitions, it proves hard to spot a truly metrosexual male.

In comparing males against one another, it may be easy to say that the metrosexual male is the one with fairly long hair that

requires styling and straightening as opposed to the male who just uses a bit of hair gel on a shorter cut. However, there are many men would get very upset if you dared to tweak their perfectly poised spikes and who probably spend more time styling their hair in the morning than say, a man with a number two cut.

Perhaps it is more about cosmetics and beauty products, although even here it is difficult to find the line. Is using conditioner over a 2-in-1 the criteria? Or perhaps having both a face and a body moisturiser? Or maybe even owning moisturiser at all? Lipbalm? Tinted lipbalm?

With so many questions, we wanted answers. We ran a survey of 160 people to see where you felt men were crossing the borders into metrosexuality. What is considered socially acceptable and what are society's expectations of male and female behaviour?

35% of men admitted to having worn make-up for undisclosed reasons.

57% of men felt that it was socially unacceptable for men to wear make-up with a reason, whilst 43% felt it was acceptable and that individuals should be free to choose.

Only 17% of girls said they would not be bothered if a male friend/boyfriend chose to wear eyeliner.

The study showed that men know more about what women want than they let on, correctly identifying clothes/style as the most prominent factor in assessing potential partners.

MOST

Clothes/style  
Teeth/smile  
Height  
Weight/build  
Hair  
Complexion

LEAST



words: Evelyn Pryor-Jones and Suisse Osborne-James  
photography: Ed Barton

## RECORDS

### SINGLES

Lou Rhodes  
'There for the Taking'  
Motion Audio



Norah Jones meets Bic Runga in Lou Rhodes' angelic, floating vocals. Accompanied only by a simple acoustic guitar riff and violins, simple tools create a richness that is distinctly sincere, not saccharine. The song is full of hauntingly seductive melancholy, united with a lyrical exploration of Carpe Diem.  
words: Amy Powell Yeates

Asobi Seksu  
'Layers'  
Polyvinyl



What the fuck is this? For a band responsible for some of the best shoegaze of the last few years, this effort is quite the drop in quality. Opening with some cringeworthy festive bells, over which the lead singer's vocals sound sickly sweet, it all brings to mind an embarrassing attempt at a Christmas cash-in.  
words: Dan Lester

Thyrd Eye  
'Say Something'  
Levaso indie



Remember back in 2008, when all those Welsh teenagers were killing themselves? Thyrd Eye are probably the only kids in the village that survived. Sounding like every shit vaguely gothic Kerrang!-reading teenage band you saw at your school's talent night, the best thing about Thyrd Eye is their name. And that's crap.  
words: Tom Bush

Kid Harpoon  
'Once'  
Young Turks



The ferociously quirky Kid Harpoon is gone, seemingly replaced by a man whose youth was drowned in Phil Collins' back catalogue. This unbearably bland, over-produced ballad is full of romantic clichés and possibly the most pointless piano solo in pop history. Putting this track on more than its self-defined once was impossible.  
words: Ed Dodson

New Rhodes  
'Quando Quando Quando'  
Salty Cat



Ah, the novelty single: always a big seller and (almost) always involving Peter Kay. Still, God only knows why pretentious indie types New Rhodes have decided to cover Engelbert Humperdinck's 'Quando Quando Quando'. Inane and downright stupid, you could get really mean about this single, if only it wasn't recorded for charity.  
words: Ben Taylor

## Baron

### Extremely Sorry OST

Volcom

Featuring a host of collaborative artists including Lemmy Kilmister from Motörhead and Slayer's Dave Lombardo, the soundtrack to Flip Skateboards' hugely anticipated third film *Extremely Sorry* offers fifteen original tracks. Each song matches one skater's part in the film, and encompasses a broad array of musical styles from drum & bass, techno and dance to hard rock and metal.

The soundtrack begins with FLIP owner, film director and pro-skater Geoff Rowley reciting the lyrics to a verse of Motörhead's 'Orgasmatron' with Lemmy, followed by a cover of Ben E. King's 'Stand by Me', featuring Lemmy and Lombardo. This immediately makes you think two things: 1) How is it that Lemmy is still alive and making music? and 2) Whoever's idea it was to have him sing 'Stand by Me' has clearly



never heard 'Ace of Spades'. Bizarrely, though, the song actually works; Lemmy's raw vocal style is belied by a tender fragility, superbly complimented by the drumming of Lombardo.

It's tracks like this that separate *Extremely Sorry* from the commercial fodder of your average soundtrack: it's unique and not afraid to try new things or break established boundaries. 'When Is Now' intertwines

### ALBUM OF THE WEEK

Spanish guitars with futuristic synths and dramatic drum beats to create an intimidating, post-apocalyptic sound whilst 'Love Shroom' could easily be a Beatles track, had they taken too much acid and inadvertently added synths and FX to 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds'. The rest of the tracks range from techno influenced floorfillers such as the Prodigy-esque 'Scream my Name', the Black Sabbath-in-the-21st-century industrial thrasher 'Process of Extinction' and the atmospheric acoustics and piercing guitar licks of 'Burn Out Like Fireflies'.

All the tracks provide such a vivid soundscape that it makes you want to dust off that deck and hit the skate park or, for those who can't stand on a skateboard for more than two seconds, at least listen to the soundtrack as you crack out the Tony Hawk on PS2 and attempt to launch off a fan belt, do a 720 grab-trick and set fire to a flock of seagulls before finally landing in a quarter pipe in Barcelona. Whilst riding a mechanical bull. I'll go grab my board...

words: Jacob Mignano

### MORE ALBUMS



Jon Gomm  
'Don't Panic'  
Self-released



In a post-Clapton, Vaughan and Hendrix dystopia, there seems to be a significant lack of virtuoso guitarists. Even fewer of these guitarists reside in Leeds, save just one: Jon Gomm. Gomm and contemporaries such as Erik Mongrain are on a mission to revolutionise guitar playing with elaborate techniques. Gomm uses his guitar as a bass, a drum and, obviously, a guitar to create a very convincing one man band.

Opening track 'Waterfall' sees Gomm frantically popping and slapping his guitar whilst somehow maintaining a steady beat and soaring chord progressions. It's hard to believe this is the work of one man and one guitar, and by some miracle, he also manages to sing atop all this brilliance. Unfortunately it isn't that brilliant, akin to a poor man's Seth Lakeman. However, it's forgivable from someone who plays the guitar with the dexterity of a rubber octopus.

Unfortunately where Gomm's guitar playing is highly original, the same cannot be said of his lyrics. Whilst songs such as 'Gloria' are sugar coated by Gomm's prowess, beneath the sugar lies the acrid taste of cheap lyricism. Lines like "I remember that kiss/It was a moment of pure bliss" wouldn't even make an Asda Smart Price anniversary card and statements such as "I don't need no food/Just give me Gloria" seem conceited and clichéd. What are you going to do, Jon? You going to eat her, are you?

If there was a song that encapsulated what *Don't Panic* was about it would be 'Wake Up!', a four-minute blast of richly impressive guitar manipulation that prides itself on its hammer-ons, pull-offs, fiddly trills, difficult rakes, precise glissando, harmonic tapping and, thankfully, no more than four lines of lyrics.  
words: Simon Rowbotham



Stereophonics  
'Keep Calm and Carry On'  
Mercury



Welsh rockers Stereophonics have been around for so long without having brought out anything of note since 2001's *Just Enough Education to Perform*, that you'd be forgiven for thinking them irrelevant. If not, their seventh studio album *Keep Calm and Carry On* - twelve tracks of uninspiring, mind-numbingly bland, middle-of-the-road wank - might just do the trick. Excruciatingly over-produced, the album contains nothing likely to win new fans and every chance of alienating the old ones.

Stereophonics have been described as "classic UK rock delivered with whiskey vocals," but here Kelly Jones sounds more Tesco's own brand than Jack Daniels. The wall of guitars notable in earlier classics like 'Dakota' and 'Vegas Two Times' are completely stripped back, revealing the weakness of Jones' vocals. As a result, the band's early sound is utterly lost.

But the real atrocities of the album are its horribly, horribly awful lyrics. Opener 'She's Alright' begins "Sandy was from out of Town/And I met her at the beach/She drove a wine Mondeo ride/Which I thought was kinda cheap," and gets worse from there. You'd expect better from a five year old. Meanwhile 'Trouble' harks back to a particularly nauseating and cheesy school disco tune [ed: *Nothing wrong with a bit of Shampoo...*], while 'I've Got Your Number' defiantly states "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8/You told me lies right to my face." Harsh stuff.

Ultimately, when you name your album after a World War II propaganda poster, it shows a real lack of creativity, the result showing a band that has completely run out of ideas. Only buy it to laugh at the hideously bad lyrics. Or as a cure for insomnia.  
words: Jacob Mignano



Dead Confederate  
'Wrecking Ball'  
Kartel



Over the last decade, Americana has become a far less specialist concern; from Drive-By Truckers' Southern rock operas to Fleet Foxes pastoral folk symphonies, Dixie chic has become all the rage. With that in mind, a band named Dead Confederate turning up at the decade's end should figure as some kind of generic masterclass, and *Wrecking Ball* certainly ticks boxes: Neil Young-indebted vocals, a sludgy feast of guitars and a torrent of whiskey-soaked lyrics.

Unfortunately, what *Wrecking Ball* lacks is a killer tune, plodding along with purpose, but little in the way of a hook. For every swaggering 'Goner', there's an affected screecher like the almost unbearable 'Heavy Petting'. Sometimes the sprawl works; the crying slide guitar of 'It Was a Rose' sounds like a stetson-dad Trail of Dead, while 'The News Underneath's' hypnotic riffage sits unsettlingly atop a compellingly moody desert soundscape. However, the Crazy Horse stylings of the twelve-minute 'Flesh Covered Canvas' sound like they need to be put to pasture; the expected guitarmageddon never arrives, leaving you frustrated when the tension never turns to release.

*Wrecking Ball* is a promising first album, but just seems like the songwriting isn't quite there yet; indeed, the bonus tracks which close the LP, presumably recorded after its original 2008 release, show great progress, especially the ferocious 'Shadow the Walls', a cavernous, distorted behemoth, which closes with a scorching solo from fantastically-named guitarist Walker Howle. If DC can keep honing their craft like this, it may not be long before they take up their longed-for place as one of the leading lights of New Bearded America  
words: Alex Wisgard



## GIG OF THE WEEK

## COLUMN

## YEAR OF THE DUB?

## DJ Scotch Egg

### Brudenell Social Club

28/11/09



Insane confrontational chiptune with a ponytail from Japan (via Brighton). The opening earsplitting feedback wail establishes the tone nicely for this well attended, well-danced-to set.

Attacking his Boss MetalZone pedal as if it has defiled his woman, screaming down his Poundland microphone until he looks like he's going to vomit Red Bull everywhere, and running around his in-front-of-stage table with impressive energy, Ishihara thrashes out a collision of convulsing Jap-gabba beats and mass-appealing drum & bass hooks. His crazy pointing and posing is perfect sync with the eccentric oscillator/beat-repeat fills that bring to mind Richard D. James at his most



sniffed up.

The people here are on drugs. The people here who aren't on drugs look like they are on drugs. The people who don't look like they are on drugs are going to take drugs soon. Anyhow, the people at the front are so close to DJ Scotch Egg that he can probably feel their breath, and a sizeable portion of them seem to know every radical rhythm of

every track inside out - and although their dilated pupils and dilated trilbies are more striking than their dance moves, there is far from a shortage of movement in the audience. This is only heightened when Ishihara jumps off his worryingly wobbly speaker stack or throws himself, back first, into the crowd and moshes with his ardent fans as erratically and aggressively as only a short-Japanese bitcore performer can.

Aside from his justified impatience when the power fails half way through the set - appropriately just after he's joined by a Mac-toting right-hand man, Scotch Egg displays pure stage presence tonight (without once setting foot on the stage), and this is capped off with the showering of the crowd in actual scotch eggs from Sainsbury's. As the final pounding Nintendo onslaught abruptly cuts off and the Brudenell floor empties, victims of imminent grinding gabba comedowns and the squashed remnants of scotch eggs strewn across it, all other genres seem really quite dull.

words: Michael Waters



## FIVE REASONS WHY 2009 WAS THE YEAR THAT MADE DUBSTEP

1. Skream's remix of La Roux's 'In For The Kill' was the genre's stealthy infiltration of the pop mainstream. Bringing the underground to the masses by turning the red-haired one's single into one of the best tracks of the year, this was the point when dubstep showed itself to be more than just another dance sub-culture but a truly important, widespread youth movement.

2. Snoop Dogg!! I mean Snoop Dogg for godssake! When 'Tha Doggfather puts his seal of approval on your style of music then you know you're doing something great.

3. And not just Snoop Dogg! Other West Coast hip-hop heavyweights such as Xzibit and Eve have got involved. It's the new British invasion, with producers such as Benga (above) and Chase & Status taking their trade across the pond. The sound of Croydon is reinvigorating and reinventing LA's rap scene.

4. The genre is really pushing boundaries and not restricting itself to its original definitions. Dubstep's influences are becoming more diverse, with producers searching for more unique sounds to create new forms for the music, such as Rusko's 'jump-up' style.

5. The world's media - even the New York Times - has caught on and given credibility to the fact that this underground artistic movement is producing the most refreshing music on the planet right now, as well as being the most alluring culture for dance-loving youth in the Western world.

## FIVE REASONS WHY 2009 WAS THE YEAR THAT KILLED DUBSTEP

1. Skream's remix of La Roux's 'In For The Kill' was the genre selling its soul to the pop mainstream, leaving the underground to chase the pound by clinging on to the back of one of the trendiest and most successful quirky female popstars of all of 2009's trendy and successful quirky female popstars. This is the point when dubstep showed itself to be just another commercialized dance sub-genre ready for total immersion in the pop mainstream.

2. Snoop Dogg!! I mean Snoop Dogg for godssake! This man does not have good taste anymore. *Soul Plane*, anyone?

3. And not just Snoop Dogg! Other washed-up and now-talentless former hip-hop heavyweights like Xzibit and Eve are also devaluing dubstep's quality and art, as are the narrow-minded UK producers who think that this is a good way for the genre to progress, i.e. by chasing the American rap dollar.

4. The genre has moved too far away from what it was originally all about. Plus, Rusko is an annoying shit.

5. The New York Times? The Daily Telegraph? Daytime Radio 1? The press has strangled the life and soul out of the genre.

words: Will Hutchins

## W.A.S.P.

Academy  
30/11/09

For a bunch of geezers that are getting on a bit, W.A.S.P. can still move and most certainly can still play. Kicking it off with crowd favourite 'On Your Knees' the band get straight into it, fit with two-inch wrist spikes and huge light shows.

There's no denying that these guys are professionals; each member knows how to get the most out of their instrument and are perfectly in tune with each other. As the night wears on, shapes are pulled, sweat drips, guitar necks are lit up with LEDs and make-up smudges as they bust out old classics such as 'Wild Child', 'L.O.V.E. Machine', 'Chainsaw Charlie' and 'I Wanna Be Somebody'. Cheeky glances between bandmates suggest that they still love what they do; and so they should, the crowd is in awe.

Well, most of the crowd is. They are amazing at what they do, but it's what they do that's the problem. The songs are pretty hard to distinguish between one another and after an impressive start, the novelty soon wears thin; there are only so many times you can get away with power-chords backing harmony-driven choruses. As a metal band, self-indulgent guitar solos are obligatory, and rightly so, but even hair metal has limits. Come on mate, even Mick Mars doesn't push it that far.

If you're after a decent '80s hair metal band, by all means go and see the wonder of W.A.S.P. live. If you're after something a bit more original and epic, then it's worth the extra tenner to go and see KISS or Motley Crue. All in all, a bit of a one trick pony. And given how impressive young guns The Glitterati were, one can almost hear the cries of 'out with the old, in with the new'.

words: Richard Blenkinsop  
photography: Richard Smith

## Gary Numan

Academy  
25/11/09

"Yeah, because when robots eventually do tek over, they're gonna see Gary Numan like the Beatles. You know 'ow we're all like 'Fooking 'ell, the Beatles!'... That's what the robots will be like about Gary." This is the theory put forward by one portly, middle-aged, drunken, Kraftwerk-ignoring, loveable Northerner in the Academy crowd.

Tonight, Numan works his way through his classic 1979 album *The Pleasure Principle*. On record these songs are great, but live they need a heavier oomph to shine. On record, 'Metal', 'M.E.' and 'Films' are close to industrial pop perfection, but tonight the synths emanate around the Academy without the impetus they deserve, whilst the guitarists mope about the stage with idle thumbs. Though it's sacrilegious to admit it, the energy only really kicks in when his more recent NIN-aping rawk is played. Freed from keyboards, Gary struts around, twirling his fingers in the air like a grandiloquent fairy. It's ultra-contrived, overly bombastic and exactly what a live performance should be.

Returning to older material whilst maintaining the vigour, he eventually knocks out a flawless 'Down in the Park' and closes with an inspired rendition of 'Are "Friends" Electric?'. The volume is brought down to a sombre piano and spoken-word bridge, before launching full blast into the ice-cream van chorus. The crowd goes ballistic, turning the melody that launched the career of The Artists Formerly Known as Sugababes into a laddish football anthem. A slow-starting gig, then, but if you were to name your six favourite Numan numbers, chances are he played them tonight. Not something he does regularly.

words: Luke Fear

## MORE GIGS

## Polar Bear

Howard Assembly Room  
27/11/09

Hailed for their innovative spanning of genres, Polar Bear are on the forefront of contemporary British jazz. Despite drummer and bandleader Seb Rochford's introverted stage presence, the band are incredibly slick, but with a professional playfulness not often seen in contemporary jazz.

Their inventiveness can sometimes be alienating; 'Tomlovesalichelovestom' breaks down halfway through into a five-minute duet of saxophone squeals and a slowly-deflated balloon. However, there's never a sense of pretension, and the band still favour melodic content over pure free improvisation. Their dualistic nature is key to the show, as they keep one foot in the past with classic song structures while also employing progressive elements.

Like any good rock band, they play favourites from their previous two albums, but about half the concert is given to new material. Thus, the lines between improvisation and strictly-written material become ever more blurred. Perhaps the most revolutionary thing is the way in which Polar Bear assimilate the experimental to the point of normalisation; there's never any sense of gimmickry. All-round technical wizard Leafcutter John never dominates the mix, instead acting as another instrumentalist alongside the more traditional lineup.

In fact, the only real criticism of the concert is the venue itself - playing in more 'traditional' concert hall atmosphere with a fully seated audience and the half-time interval does slightly dampen the energy of the music. It is a testament, however, to the genre-bending power of a band that they can play successfully in any environment.

words: Tom Bush

## COLUMN PAGE THREE

### ARE YOU INDIE ENOUGH?



Let us take a second now to consider the word 'indie', that ubiquitous and all encompassing buzzword that seems to buffet us the second we wake up in the morning.

*"Hey you woke up this morning? That's well indie mate!" "Bacon is so mainstream. It is toast that is indie!"*

The dictionary defines 'indie' as music "that is unaffiliated with a larger or more commercial organization", and in its purest sense 'indie' is a genre free from corporate ties. Increasingly, though, as we find flash-pan hip indie bands such as White Lies and the Pigeon Detectives becoming further lodged down our throats under the 'indie' moniker, people are becoming increasingly enamoured with or enraged by it. Everyone knows at least one sanctimonious bell end that is just that little bit too cool for school. As the old joke goes: "How many indie kids does it take to screw in a light bulb?" "You mean you don't know?"

Indie is becoming more and more things to more and more people. Indie is that band you haven't heard of. Indie is that band you have heard of. Indie is the Wombats. Indie is Crystal Stilts. Indie is a pair of skinny jeans from Topman. Indie is that trendy new haircut: "Shit! He's shaved the sides of his hair off. Mega!" Indie is that twat with the fringe. Indie is the laugh you hear when you tell your contemptuously trendy friends that you like Snow Patrol. Indie doesn't read the NME. Indie is the NME. Indie certainly isn't signed to Sony. Indie just signed to Sony. Indie is that trendy new C-side by My Roar Hindley released only as an office spreadsheet on a betamax cassette made of nougat. Indie is the queasy feeling you get in your stomach when you've seen the word 'indie' 25 times (and counting) in an article, and heck, if you've drunk enough Red Stripe, even your vomit will be indie.

Who even knows what indie is anymore? Is it music? Is it a hat? Is it a packet of crisps? Can I wear it? Can I eat it? That cat. Is that cat indie? He's the cat's meow. He's cool for cats. That cat is so last year. Ravens are the new cats but don't crow on about it or people will catch on. Indie is writing this intensely hypocritical article because you're too chuffing alternative to sit down, shut up and listen to Florence and the Machine like all the other good little girls and boys who place their hands around their ankles, cover themselves in treacle and roly-poly around Urban Outfitters looking for that 'indie' look.

Inevitably though we're all going to die and nobody is going to give a damn how 'indie' anybody is or was. Nobody is going to write on my tombstone: "Here lies Simon Rowbotham. He had heard of Butcher Boy." But hey, look on the bright side. Being dead is the new being alive. It worked for Ian Curtis. Although, at the time of publication, Steven Gately is not yet indie.

words: Simon Rowbotham - NO SELL OUT

### FEATURED EVENT

## Yeah Yeah Yeahs

### Academy

29/12/09



For a Sunday night, there is an impressive buzz in the air at the Academy. But it is for the Yeah Yeah Yeahs after all - a band that inspire a passionate dedication in the hearts of their followers.

Before we get to see the New York trio in real life, however, we must endure dance-punk band Duchess Says. If Yeah Yeah Yeahs were an entertaining (and ridiculously cool) magician, Duchess Says would be the female assistant who is meant to be attractive and mysterious but really just looks like a cheap...well, you get the idea. The clearly crazy lead singer inspires several people to say quite audibly, "She's just a wannabe Karen O!", which is true, though it's still fun to see her run into the audience and piss off the hangers. She screams "Open the fucking light!" several times because she wants to "see the people." Still, when she tells the crowd that we've "had enough" at the end of the set, it comes as a relief; amusing as having beer thrown on you by frightening French-Canadian women is, we had.

Finally the utterly delicious Karen O takes to the stage in a white and red cape, looking every inch the high priestess that she is - by the way Karen, if you really are a Scientologist, we forgive you. Touring with the band is guest guitarist David Pajo, as well as a gigantic eyeball, which floats in the air for the entire night, circled by glittering blue rings. The latest album *It's Blitz!* was slightly underwhelming on record, but the dramatic crescendo of set opener 'Runaway' proves that the album's electro vibe works well in concert with garage rock. The band have such impressive on-stage energy, however, that they could persuade you that anything they do is amazing. The combination of the floating eyeball, Karen O's charisma, and the energy on and offstage makes the whole affair seem like a glorious pagan ritual. Then we find ourselves chanting "Heads will roll!" and it starts looking like we will, indeed, dance till we're dead.

The band play a good balance of songs from each of their brilliant albums, and treat

us to 'Rich' as well as 'Gold Lion', before the giant eyeball rotates to become a giant moon, and blue confetti explodes from the sky in time for the opening strains of 'Cheated Hearts' begin. New tracks like 'Skeletons' and 'Soft Shock' showcase the band's ability to mix romance and energetic punk, helped no doubt by Karen O's wonderful vocals, but it's their classic love song 'Maps' that makes the wonder of the evening complete, and that comes before the band delight their fans with an encore of 'Y Control', 'Turn Into' and 'Date With the Night'.

During part of the set, Karen O hypnotically swings her mic cord, which appears to have some kind of religious-looking red fabric attached to it. Chances are we may have all been converted to Scientology...but after a gig like this, little things like free will fade into insignificance. A magic show, from beginning to end. (9)

words: Tabitha Thorlu-Bangura  
photography: Charlotte Sintrat



041209

## It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...

Across the holiday we can all look forward to extravagant spending, gluttonous feasting and cutting mad shapes to the musical genius of Wizzard. Seeing as there's more opportunity to dress up and shop at Christmas, the fashion team come bearing gifts: a seasonal 4-page pullout that we hope will get you in the spirit.

Deep down we all know Christmas parties will peak early and climax with embarrassing group huddles and communal singsong. Looking sharp can go some of the way to excusing such undignified behaviour, so our last shoot of the year samples glamorous outerwear and embellished accessorising to mark the start of the party season.

Buying gifts can be challenging at the best of times, so we've also included a selection of stylish gift ideas that will please even the most hardcore fashionistas. Merry Christmas from Fashion HQ, and see you in the January sales.

words: Tom Purdie



### \* Item of the Week

In this instance, all that glitters is definitely gold. Not only are sequins very current at the moment, the festive season also allows you to brandish as many show-stopping sparkles as possible. However, there is a fine line between successful razzle dazzle and Las Vegas showgirl OTT. Pair this clutch with a figure-hugging, black long-sleeved dress with this season's shoulder pads for a glamorous party look.

*Untold Sequin Bow Small Frame Clutch Bag* House of Fraser, £44

words: Anna Temby  
background image: Charlotte Sintrat



Sequin Embellished Animal Top, Miss Selfridge, £38



The Satorialist by Scott Schuman, [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk), £11.96



Gold Clock Pendant, Urban Outfitters, £28

## Fashionable gifts for the Festive Season



Astral Dress, Vicky Martin, £140



House of Harlow 14k Gold Plated Sunburst Cocktail Ring, Paper Scissor Stone, £51



Galaxy Dress, Vicky Martin, £155

article conception: Joanna Gyamera

## Pre-Christmas Sales Special

Only the high street could make the recession fashionable. Still struggling with the effects of the credit crunch, the high street is facing a difficult Christmas period. With customers less willing to part with their money, shops have to go the extra mile to drum up trade. Usually shops wait till just before Christmas, or of course just after, to put sales on but this year they've started earlier than ever.

Harrods kicked it all off with a 10% discount weekend back at the beginning of November and now the high street is following in its footsteps. It's not hard to miss all the sale signs in the windows, but luckily it's not all the ghastly, end-of-season junk you usually find in the sales! The following are the pick of the best. Possibly the most tantalizing offer on at the moment is the up to £40 off heels deal in Office; just in time for the start of the party season. From massive on-trend two-stone platforms to sexy leopard print heels and gladiator sandals, there is definitely a pair of shoes to suit everyone, with a range of discounts. This offer is also online at [www.office.co.uk](http://www.office.co.uk). Faith is also offering up to half price off boots, for those who can't quite back heels. In the run up to Christmas and New Year, it's important to keep warm (especially in student houses with dodgy central heating!). Why not snuggle up in New Look's £12 knitwear, with stripy cardigans and cowl-neck jumpers galore. And if anyone, like me, is still finding it hard to find a winter jacket, panic no longer. Topshop has selected coats for £40 and £50. Amongst the selection, there is a simple black one that will go with anything, or for those feeling a little more outrageous, a tartan duffle coat with a faux-fur lined hood. With all these savings, perhaps you'll even have some money left over to buy Mum a nice cardie in the Monsoon sale.

words: Sophia Goodall  
background image: Charlotte Sintrat

# SHOOT

041209

## All in the details



Indulge in embellishments this December as sequins, feathers, beading and lace resume their annual spot at the top of everyone's wishlist. But festive fashion needn't mean a glitter overdose. Louis Vuitton, Phillip Lim and Lanvin (among others) showed romantic, Parisian-inspired looks in their a/w collections, and the high street has followed suit. A striking dress paired with towering heels is always chic, so give the look a new-season spin by referencing velvet, which has made a triumphant return to the fashion forefront this winter. But don't feel limited to dresses when it comes to high-impact style – tuck a casual tee into a heavily embellished skirt or flirt with androgyny in tuxedo-inspired pieces. The final touches are a whimsical, sequin-studded, heart-shaped purse or an oversized clutch, with a vintage fur coat to protect from the cold

Words: Caitlin Leslie  
Models: Imogen Roy, Jane Woodvine and Olivia Cadom  
Photography: Charlotte Sintrat and Richard Smith  
Styling: Caitlin Leslie and Amy Peacock  
With many thanks to Mook for allowing us to shoot in their bar, where cocktails are 2-4-1 with a student card (excluding Fri and Sat nights)

Imogen (left) wears shimmer panel dress, £150, Whistles  
Olivia (centre) wears reformed tuxedo racer, £55, and high-waisted trousers, £48, both from Urban Outfitters  
Jane (right) wears YaYa Nom De Plume racerback, £50, Urban Outfitters and feather skirt, £65, ASOS





Above right: Jane (left) wears lace dress, £59, Mango and feather clutch, £25, ASOS

Imogen (right) wears cropped tuxedo jacket, £100, Kate Moss for Topshop, cotton tank, £20 and chain necklace, £38, both from Urban Outfitters, and organza skirt, £35, ASOS

Above left: Olivia (left) wears dress, £120, French Connection and heart-shaped bag, £32, Urban Outfitters

Jane (right) wears velvet appliqué dress, £69.90, Zara

Left: Imogen wears fur jacket, £50, Best Vintage. BDG silk top, £38, Urban Outfitters. Damask patterned clutch, £65, French Connection. Trousers, £35, Zara.



## Golden Charms

A magpie's dream. Delicate girly chains contrasted with chunky statement pieces, layered for maximum festive effect.

Main:  
Two identity tag necklaces, £45 each, No.15 Boutique  
Bolivia beaded necklace, £12, Accessorize  
Flower stem necklace, £14,  
Vintage compass necklace, £18,  
Silver jewelled multi-strand necklace, £38, all Urban Outfitters.

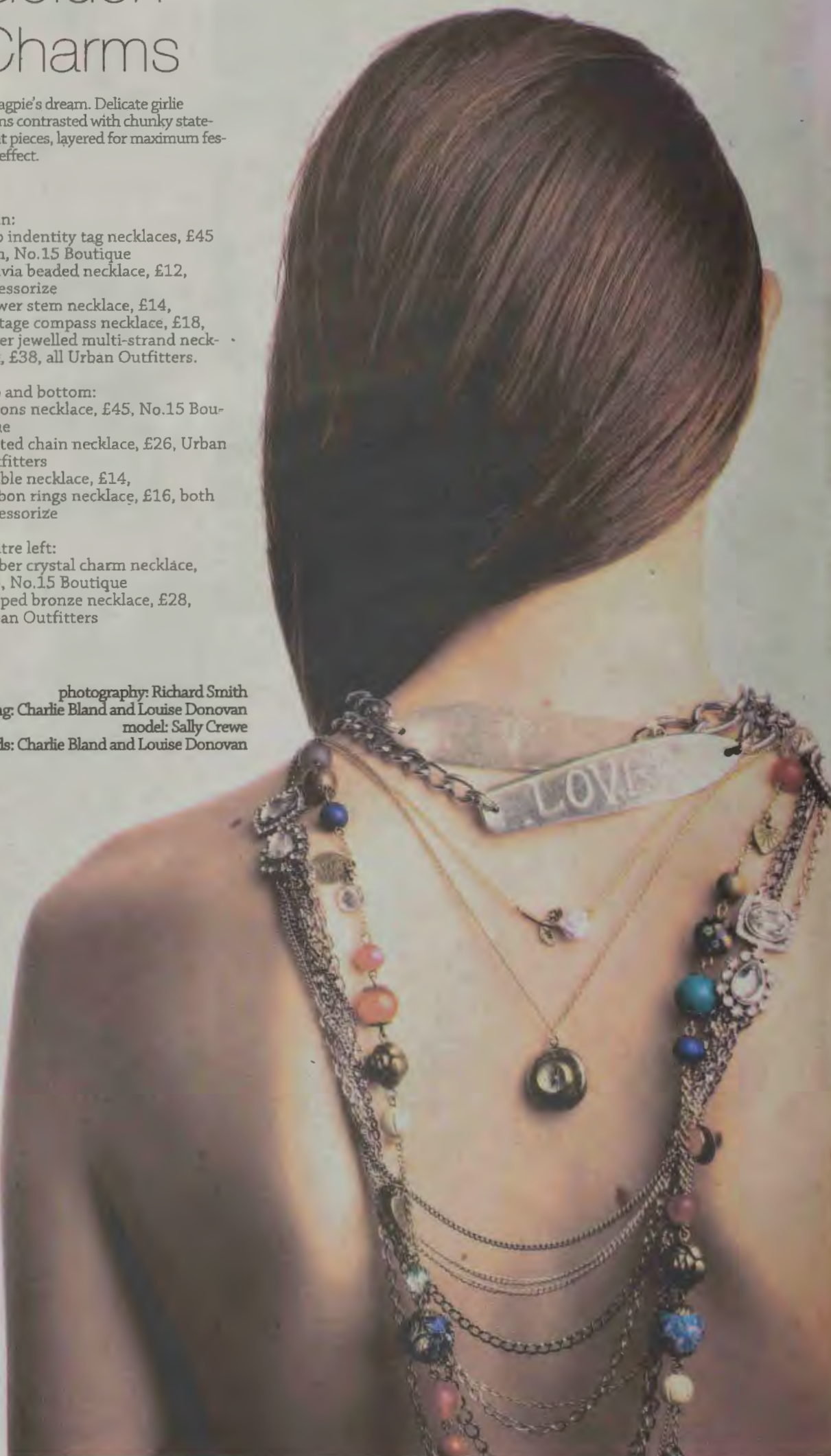


Top and bottom:  
Spoons necklace, £45, No.15 Boutique  
Plaited chain necklace, £26, Urban Outfitters  
Bauble necklace, £14,  
Ribbon rings necklace, £16, both Accessorize

Centre left:  
Amber crystal charm necklace, £35, No.15 Boutique  
Looped bronze necklace, £28, Urban Outfitters



photography: Richard Smith  
styling: Charlie Bland and Louise Donovan  
model: Sally Crewe  
words: Charlie Bland and Louise Donovan





## Wax:On Leeds Union, 28/11/09

If there has been one prevailing constant in my life as a Leeds university student, I would definitely say it has been Wax:On. Obviously not content with being in university in the day time, I took great pleasure in letting it be my night out too and I can credit Wax:On on for being somewhat my 'raving 101' guide; 'electronic music for dummies' as it were. With the rise of electro and fidget house alike (circa 2008/09), I had been blissfully wooed and grooved to by the bubbling, jump up, sporadic and 'tourettic' sounds of Simian, Switch and Fake Blood to name but a few. In short, second to me was Wax:On, with every last Saturday of every month clouded by my eager anticipation of getting drowned out and engulfed by the sound of bouncy bass and warbling electronic melodies. If anyone remembers Wax:On's last birthday, on which the Northern Machine turned the ripe old age of four, then they should recall scenes of absolute mayhem. I believe the show was a sell out and people couldn't move. Like seriously, I got stuck in the Terrace for about 2 hours and couldn't even get down the stairs to Stylus, kept against my will to basically hang out on a patio.

This year's birthday bash however was an entirely different scene and for me, and as much as it pains me to say it, Leeds announced the death of Wax:On. For a headstrong night's 5th birthday the number of attendees was blocking. Although grateful to at least be able to move around and wobble to my heart's content, I'm a gullibly self-professed Wax:On veteran

in my 3 years here) it was clear to see that any buzz surrounding the night was, well... non-existent. Sure there were people happy to be there, getting plastered and generally 'vibing', but in the words of Mr. Miyagi this was 'Wax:Off' my friends. The lack of numbers was no doubt due to the mother of all Leeds nights, 'Back to Basics', celebrating a whopping 18 years of business and to be honest I think it's wrong for me to say that the entire night lacked energy, but still, where was the craziness? The zest? The 'boom boom pow' for Christ's sake? I ended up spending the majority of my night in Mine which was, I do have to admit, live. Mine was hosted by Bigger Than Barry, who have been taking Leeds by storm this year, changing Tuesdays for good with their stonking line-ups and providing me with my new favourite night in Leeds. Thinking about this though makes me wonder how music genre popularity has changed in the past couple of years. In my opinion electro has taken a back seat this year, with dubstep and techno prevailing. Back to Wax:On though, one thing I really don't get is why The Count and Sinden and Jack Beats were put in the terrace. A personal favourite of mine for £1 coffees and a cheeky pre-seminar fag, yes, but to skank out to two of my favourite acts, no. I feel I need to say a big sorry to the Wax:On crew for my cruel, cruel words but I'm gonna be honest, you lot need to up your game. I had a sick night on Saturday but I was not blown away, something that used to happen every time I set foot in our halls and University Halls for a design team. Sorry.   
 words: Nicholas Park

has made the BBC since, leading to a formula of excellent dance music in an atmospheric setting. Back to Basics is a house night that is both cutting edge and nostalgic for the thrill of rave's early 90s heyday. Tonight was a homage to the Basics tradition with a line-up that celebrated the night's renowned resident DJs Ralph Lawson, Bushy and James McRoyd, playing alongside headliners/honorary resident Andrew Weatherall and Ivan Smaghe. Most likely a direct result of the Birthday affiliation with Mixmag, the night did list two questionable acts, DJ sets from indie-cindys Pigea Detectives and the Sunshine Underground. However, these two were tucked away in the tiny third room and barely mentioned all night whilst the rest of the club broke it down to some truly top-notch tuneage.

Andrew Weatherall is a personal favourite and fitting headliner for the Back to Basics 18th

## Major Lazer Mint, 29/11/09

Mint club was transformed into a staged carnival on Sunday as Major Lazer (in the form of Diplo minus Switch) performed an exuberant finale to a heaving weekend of music typical of Leeds. My arrival was strategically on cue for Major Lazer's set as I had no other purpose, let alone oomph, to be out on a Sunday night in consideration of the weekend which had just been.

Walking in on Cotti's 'Rise the temperature' put me in an agreeable mood reflective of my subdued mellow state. This was followed by 'Welcome to Jamrock' which was carried out by the MC chanting "Major Lazer stands alone" spurring on the stomping army that was this youthfully energised mass. Their dancehall album tracks went down a treat with vigour and delight surging through the crowd like a Mexican wave. Regrettably Diplo ended up compromising his gem Rasta rooted and patois induced album hits with mainstream Rusko jump-up junk and exhausted party pleasers such as Benga's Cold's 'Night' and Kid Cudi's 'Day 'n' Nite' which have deplorably infiltrated and revisited the poorest of club nights across the country. Diplo played out, to a mere than eager crowd, a mix of reggae subgenres in the likes of the 'Tropics' and Ace of Base 'All Star' which lead on to mixing bass grooves with the reggae delights of 'Cash Flow' by Jay-Z, bringing the tone to ruins. I had hoped this to be more of a more

birthday. Weatherall has also enjoyed nearly two decades of getting clubbers' juices flowing, and like Basics, this old-skool pioneer has managed to stay continuously progressive throughout his career thanks to a superior ear for dance music. His sets never fail to impress with their technical precision and varied genres, and tonight was no exception. Dressed for the evening's theme of a 'For Queen and Country' in a Victorian gentleman's moustache and striped navy wear, Weatherall set was more down tempo than previous ones I've seen, and allows me to use the somewhat pretentious term 'maximalist' in this review. Maximalism is music which 'allows for complex systems of juxtapositions and collisions, in which all outside influences are viewed as potential raw material, which sums up Weatherall's quirky genius rather perfectly. Playing a mixed bag of old skool house classics layered over fresh minimal techno, infamous tracks alongside lesser known

### Preview

System presents Jeff Mills  
Mills will perform a three hour set using three decks and a Roland TR 909 drum machine.  
Saturday 5th December, Mint Club

### Preview

Carousel  
Filthy Habit DJs and the Carousel boys move on from house parties to the Mint club.  
Friday 4th December, Mint Club

### Preview

Extra Flavour  
New night kicking off with a free end of term party. Expect garage, funk and disco.  
Friday 13th December, Distrikt Bar

sounds of lyrically Rastafarian ballads, but 'Mary Jane' and 'Lazer Theme' seemed to suffice.

The night was neither underground nor experimental and it was basically what I had expected; perhaps I shouldn't have chosen to review this night in order to give it its predetermined praise. I can assure you that any other attendee will give this night itself joyous acclamation so, in light of my slander, I will wrap up by establishing that the show itself was bustling with electric enthusiasm which saw euphoric eruption for 'Pon de floor'. The dance floor was lit up by Major Lazer's alluring branded comic strip for visuals, and further complemented by the multihued light bulbs set aglow on the ceiling. There were dancers balancing on the frame of the DJ booth flanking Diplo, who was dressed up smart and polished for the occasion in a suave suit, and undoubtedly blinded by the paparazzi-esque photo shots being taken of him... oh such fame and acclaim.

words: Coco Cunningham  
photography (above): Conor Maclay  
photography (below): Darya Antonovna Papko

## Back to Basics 18th Birthday MyHouse, 28/11/09

For all those in the know, Back to Basics' coming of age party was to be a legendary night before it had even begun. This Leeds institution, established by Dave Beer and Alistair Cook in 1991, wasn't even a year old when it received its first 'Mixmag Clubnight of the Year' award. With the philosophy 'two steps further than any other fucker', keeping at the forefront of dubbing culture seems to have come easy to the Basics crew, whose dedication to delivering superior sounds and innovative talent to Leeds on a weekly basis is the reason it has stayed relevant and is now officially the world's longest running dubnight. With an army of die-hard fans, the crowd at MyHouse this Saturday included faces from all walks of life coming together to revel in the glamour and excess that

remixes, Weatherall's two hours in black box was a pleasure to groove to. Downstairs, Ivan Smaghe kept up tempo with a more classic Basics sound that went down with equal enthusiasm on the much more crowded main floor. Even the evening's war had didn't foul my moods, with plenty of banter going on as the smokers huddled together under the club's awnings.

The Back to Basics 18th Birthday was a real unity all that has kept the night popular for such a lengthy lifespan, it also made very clear that Back to Basics is the best of the best, and is sure to last another 12 years or more to its quality dubbing pedigree and continues to push boundaries. As the Dawn of Minimal declared, "The King is dead, long live Back to Basics!"

words: Rachel Cunningham-Clark

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04/2009

INTERVIEW

## Peter Jackson

Peter Jackson and the cast of *The Lovely Bones* talk to LS2 about adapting the novel

Peter Jackson is known for making some of the most epic and visually stunning films ever seen, yet he calls his newest release, *The Lovely Bones*, his biggest challenge yet: "Adapting the book really was the hardest thing we've ever done and I don't think we thought it was going to be as difficult as it was when we started."

The director is no novice when it comes to adapting novels, as seen in his Oscar-winning *Lord Of The Rings* trilogy, but the difference with this project, as Jackson recognises, is that "the book itself is not structured like a film, so it became a real challenge to figure out how to re-organise the events in the book." This is true in the fact that the novel is largely about a girl – Susie Salmon, a 14-year-old who is raped and murdered – looking down on her family from heaven. Following Susie's thoughts, and with little dialogue, it is clear that Jackson's task to adapt the book into a family friendly film was no mean feat.

Adapting a novel which involves a graphic murder scene into a 12A rated film was ultimately an easier task for Jackson. "We didn't want the film to be disturbing. For us, the book wasn't about murder, it was about love, Susie's adventure, and how people relate to the fact she's dead and read-just their lives to that." Some fans of Sebald's novel may disagree with Jackson's choice to dodge around this, omitting a number of seemingly important subplots along the way, but "it was a case of deciding what the main momentum of the film was going to be and we didn't want it to be defined as a murder film."

Even without depicting the rape scene of Susie's murder remains very emotive and highly tense. Luckily for 15-year-old Saoirse Ronan (*Atonement*), who plays Susie, the atmosphere on set was kept "very professional and light". Ronan credits her "strong friendship" with Stanley Tucci (*The Devil Wears Prada*), who plays her murderer, with being able to get through that scene. "As Stanley is a family man, he took care of me between takes and made sure I was OK." That scene, and his part as murderer, clearly had a greater affect on Tucci. "He turned down the part at first and it was only once we discussed the physicality of the character that he accepted."

Jackson remembers. "I think it was important for him that once he put on the wig and glasses he wouldn't be able to recognise himself in the mirror."

Jackson, a master of directing visual effects and CGI, had great fun creating the "in-between" world below heaven and above earth in which Susie is stuck. However, this also proved

“Adapting the book really was the hardest thing we've ever done.”

a difficult task for the filmmaker: "it's tough to show the afterlife because partly it's a personal thing. We based the concept of it on subcon-

scious imagery, almost as if it were Susie's dream state of what influences her and the pop culture of the time

Jackson achieves this by showing Susie dancing on LPs and through fields dressed as a butterfly, the

world around her changing to her every desire.

"I wanted to try and make it as intangible as possible, which is obviously difficult because whatever you put in front of the camera has to be solid and real in order to film it." This seems odd coming from the man who made orcs and giants become a reality, but Jackson successfully creates a world of dreams and infinite adventures.

When the book was released Sebald was criticised for her depiction of heaven as "the in-between" without any reference to God or religion. Jackson has decided to continue along this line, attempting to "accommodate anybody's point of view."

In the climax you see the other victims take

Scene towards the golden light.

What's there is for the audience to decide."



interview and words: Fiona Lamont

FILM

## The Lovely Bones



Peter Jackson delivers his first directorial offering since 2005's *King Kong* with this adaptation of Alice Sebold's bestselling book *The Lovely Bones*. The film follows the story of 14 year old Susie Salmon, watching over her family from a sort of heaven after being brutally murdered by her neighbour.

As Jackson recognised, the book itself is not written to be made into a film. And unfortunately it shows. Adapted by Jackson and his *Lord of the Rings* writing partners, Fran Walsh and Philippa Boyens, the film drops almost all of the book's sub-plots and rushes through many others.

By attempting to obtain a 12A rating and market the film to a wider audience, the film suffers greatly. The novel's immediate and shocking depiction of the murder is hurried over in the film, with the rape being omitted altogether.

Saoirse Ronan stars as Susie, demonstrating beautifully the vulnerability and fragility of her character. During the pivotal murder scene Ronan is able to make every girl in the audience experience her terrifying fear. Recently nominated for the Best Supporting Actress Oscar, and now with this wonderful performance, Ronan continues to prove herself to be a star in the making.

Susan Sarandon plays Susie's drink-swilling pill-popping grandmother who is a vehicle for comic relief in this often depressing and emotive film. At first appearing to be a domestic tragedy, Sarandon's character ends up being the only character capable of holding this broken family together. However, as with many other characters, most notably Susie's mother (Rachel Weisz), her storyline within the book goes much deeper and it is a pity that such great actresses are denied the chance to really delve into their characters.

In true Jackson style, the film is beautifully shot with epic scenes of stunning landscapes as Susie explores the 'inbetween' of heaven and Earth. It is here that the Oscar-winning director comes into his element, effectively employing awesome CGI to depict the changing world in which Susie is stuck. Changing from dense, green forests to dazzling glaciers, the 'in-between' at first seems to be a place of dreams. However, as Susie watches her family crumble, so too does this world around her.

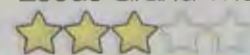
Fans of the novel may leave the cinema feeling short-changed by Jackson's omission of a number of key plot points, but with many tipping the film for award success those who have not read the book can enjoy the film for what it is: a story of life and death and how to cope with the inbetween.

words: Fiona Lamont

BALLET

## A Christmas Carol

Leeds Grand Theatre until 10/12



I often find myself becoming something of a Scrooge during the winter months, when Christmas begins earlier and earlier each year. However as soon as the calendar flips to the first of December I shrug off my apathetic layer and unplug my ears to welcome all festive cheer. A ballet may not spring immediately to mind as one for the to do list, and it's not for everyone, but this unpretentious and entertaining production of *A Christmas Carol* is an essential ingredient to Christmas in Leeds this year.

As the orchestra began to play, snow fell and mist swirled, and the Dickensian street became alive with barefooted children, ladies in heavy skirts and bonnets, and men in top hats and tail coats, all breaking into a happy jig-like dance. Enter Scrooge, with Bill Bailey hair and a witch's face, a misanthropic figure who came as a relief from the sometimes mindnumbing merriness of the other characters, especially his clerk Bob Cratchit.

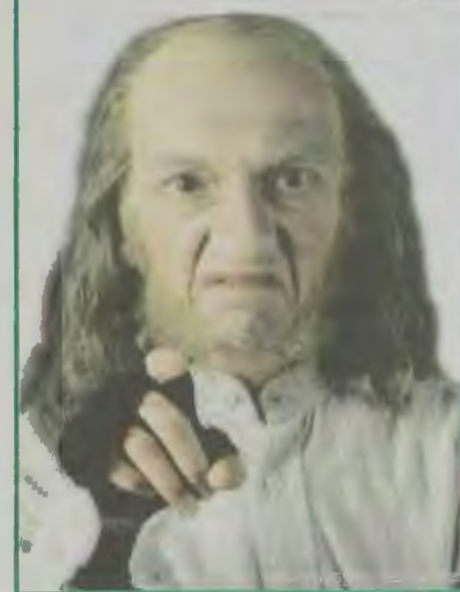
The ghosts of Christmas past, present and future become more and more elaborate in costume, with the last one appearing as a hybrid between a giant bird and a human which, although striking, seemed to limit his dancing capabilities to swirling his feathers. Stangely, all ghosts performed a Shakira-esque snake hip shake which was amusing, if a little incongruous to the typically Dickensian world.

Other comic moments provided antidotes to Scrooge's doom and gloom, such as when Scrooge and the ghost of Christmas past look back at him as a young man, and watch a dance led by a rather inebriated man and a large woman in a large bonnet, who spend more time on top of each other than dancing. The comedy was well-balanced with, for example, the next sequence depicting the breakup of the young Scrooge and his fiancé. Here, dance rather than words were more poignant in their portrayal of heartbreak.

Leaping from his bed and dancing for the first time, the transformative moment when Scrooge awakes from this nightmare as a generous man affected with Christmas cheer provides the ballet with its climactic highlight. Pirouetting across the stage, his sprightly dancing is a release of vitality, a shock for a man so apparently old.

Moments like this form the basis of *A Christmas Carol's* success in bringing Christmas cheer to its young and old audience. The happy-clappy ending struck me as perhaps just slightly over sentimental, but that could just be the Scrooge in me.

words: Evie Dunne



COMMENT

## Tits at the Tate

Last month my mother unwittingly shepherded my youngest sibling into one of the largest legal porn exhibitions in London. She had hoped that popping along to the Tate Modern on a half-term trip would make her something of a model parent, the kind who teaching staff admire for culturally indoctrinating their children. Unfortunately she returned to Wiltshire wondering what kind of a person she was, with a bruised ego and a formal warning from the gallery after Robs wouldn't stop taking photos of the exhibited flesh on his iPhone, "to show Ben!"

After I'd wiped the tears of laughter from my face, this story got me thinking about the place of censorship in the modern art world. Clearly the whole school art-project/porn debacle was mainly my mother's fault, given that she failed to check what the controversial Pop Life exhibition would involve. But at a time when artistic representations of religion, sex and war cause daily protests across the globe, it is timely and important to ask whether institutions should have the responsibility and power to clap a hand across the public's eyes, to protect us from the beast we called artistic expression.

In 1999, the New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani cut \$7 million of government funding from the Brooklyn Museum after they launched Sensation, an exhibition featuring Chris Ofili's painting, *The Holy Virgin Mary*. Giuliani claimed that Ofili's intricate depiction of a black Madonna rendered in elephant dung and surrounded by semi-pornographic images was a direct attack on

religion and therefore did not deserve the financial support of a Christian state. Although his censorial diktat was eventually overturned by a federal judge and the money restored to the museum, this incident speaks volumes about the often tenuous divide between secular and more intervening styles of government. The trouble with censorship is that as soon as a bureaucrat labels an artwork 'offensive', we as the public must ask "offensive to whom?"

In 1933 the government of the Third Reich branded all Semitic art 'offensive to Germans'. In the 1960s the government of China announced that all forms of art were bourgeois and 'offensive to communism'. The mass destruction of painting, sculpture and literature that followed these incidents provides a frightening example of what can be lost in the name of cultural censorship.

When one considers the devastating effect that institutional edicts on taste have had throughout history, it becomes glaringly obvious that we cannot trust individual officials to make decrees on artistic validity. Even in the free and cosmopolitan 'haven' of our own country it is astounding how much significant film, theatre, and art would have been abolished if certain bureaucrats had their way.

Censorship of art is always a crime. Where an artist's job is to hold up a mirror to society, then the public must be prepared to meet a sometimes ugly reflection. Pop Life may have been shocking, but with pomography (in its various forms) dominating so much of digital culture one cannot

THEATRE

## Inherit the Wind

The Old Vic, London until 20/12



What do you get if you cross a monkey with Kevin Spacey? Trevor Nunn's Old Vic production of Jerome Lawrence and Robert E Lee's *Inherit the Wind* calls both of these figures to the stage (there is a real monkey), arguing that the link between the two is inextricable through its wider exploration of the human condition.

The script – which is far from a secularist diatribe – bases its fictionalised characters, locations and events on the controversial Scopes Monkey Trial of 1925, in which a school teacher was taken to court for teaching Darwinism to his pupils. In the play, the prosecution of teacher Bertram Cates is represented by lawyer Mathew Harrison Brady, a devout Christian fundamentalist fervently opposed to evolution. Volunteering for the defence is Mr Henry Drummond, defender of the poor and renowned for his libertarian views. The second act focuses entirely on this heated trial while the first half establishes the operations, values and relationships of the tightly knit Hillsboro community.

Serious and impending though this message is, the play has an undeniably light-hearted feel. The chorus are consistently lively and Mark Dexter's performance of the journalist Hornbeck is wonderfully straight-laced and without emotion, his verbose metaphorical language laced in irritating but intensely comical alliterative anecdotes.

It seems impossible to imagine anyone more suited to the role of Henry Drummond than Spacey, who manages a great sense of dignity alongside an underlying sense of personal troubling. David Troughton is his

perfect opposition, sickeningly pompous and self-righteous, but still convincing in his own belief that there is an authenticity in his convictions.

Regardless of the official conclusions of the court, Drummond is undoubtedly the winner. Spacey's Drummond is clear and rational; Troughton's Brady is vague and stubborn. However, as Spacey places a copy of *The Holy Bible* in one hand and *The Origin of Species* in the other in the finally empty courtroom, this production makes it fiercely clear that this is not a battle between evolution and theology, but a reconciliation of diversity. Drummond's fight is for the right to human thought, the same thought that constructed the courtroom he pensively shuffles out of.

words: Amy Powell Yeates



claim that the exhibition does not provide a legitimate illustration of twenty-first century life.

My teenage brother was surprised to see such things in a museum, but he will certainly have been exposed to similar images through television, media and the internet. My mother wanted Robbie to become more aware of his cultural surroundings, and in this respect at least their visit to the Tate Modern was a complete success.

*Pop Life* is showing at Tate Modern, London, until 17 January 2010

words: Tilly Michell

FILM

## Olsen

Hyde Park Picture House 29/11



What better way to spend a Sunday afternoon than with tea, cakes and avant-garde cinema? First up is the 10 minute *Index* by Gregory Kurcewicz, consisting simply of a series of index cards with typewritten messages from the director, set to a seemingly random soundtrack. Kurcewicz's breaking of the fourth wall and his attempts to deconstruct the medium of film are bold, but ultimately come off as feeling futile and unsatisfying.

Beatrice Gibson's *A Necessary Music* sets about exploring the social history of Roosevelt Island in New York. The film is told by the residents of the island, and the fractured narrative is representative of the many different inhabitants' lives.

After a brief interval for tea and cakes (baked by the event organizers) comes Carl Brown's *Blue Monet*, a 56 minute homage to the impressionist painter. The film consists of rapid shots of flowers, water, swimmers and birds all chemically altered to produce a dazzling psychedelic effect. While definitely not suitable for epileptics, the effect is beautifully mesmerizing, and at no point does the the film become boring, emphasizing gradual textural change over time. Set to a selection of music by ambient music pioneer Brian Eno, the minimalist influences are clear; instead of ever reaching any climactic moment, the film exists as a cycle of images that never claims to be anything more than representational beauty.

words: Tom Bush

FILM

## Paranormal Activity



I have to admit to having a bit of a penchant for these handheld-camera type films. *Blair Witch Project* had my 12-year-old self terrified for weeks, whilst the excellent *[Rec]* had a similar effect on me last year. Hell, I even thought that JJ Abrams' poorly received monsterfest *Cloverfield* was pretty excellent, so I should love the ultra-low budget *Paranormal Activity*, right?

Playing off a fear of the unknown, *Paranormal Activity* focuses on a couple, Micah and Katie, after Micah buys a video camera to investigate the source of strange sounds they hear in the night.

The camera begins to pick up an unseen presence, which acts as a more subtle, clever source of fear than monsters or the undead. The home video style footage, often of nothing more than a static overnight view of a single room, causes the viewer to carefully scrutinize every shot for moving shadows or ruffling bed-sheets.

It is a testament to the film's success that the audience reacted with shrieks and jumps after something as minor as a door slamming. The scares are slow-building, though the final sequence provides a stunning climax of faces walking out of the screening, alight with bizarre expressions of joyous terror.

With dramatic hyperbole and descriptions such as 'one of the scariest films of all time', and Steven Spielberg claiming it to be terrifying, *Paranormal Activity* was never going to live up to the hype. The film ends just as things are really getting going, and whilst the acting from the lead pair is believable, the characters themselves are too irritating to feel empathy for.

Like *The Blair Witch Project* before it, *Paranormal Activity* is sure to divide audiences into two distinct camps of lovers and haters, and it would be easy to dismiss it as merely 'good for a low budget'. However, it is clearly more than this: one of the freshest and most intelligently crafted horror flicks of the year.

words: Dan Lester



## ART

## Northern Art Prize

Leeds Art Gallery until 21/02/2010

Punk rock, dead rats, a stopped clock and two old men in big hats: just a selection of the works on display at this year's Northern Arts Prize.

The prize, currently in its third year, showcases artists living and working in the North of England. Four finalists have been selected from a longlist of twenty-five, and the eventual winner will receive £16,500.

Pavel Büchler specialises in the kind of minimal work it is tempting to dismiss with a wave of the hand and a comment that one could do better oneself. Certainly this philistine reviewer failed to find the meaning in the display of a glass ashtray in a case, or a bottle of Jack Daniels balanced on top of an old tape recorder.

On the other hand, the centrepiece, a series of projectors set up at different heights and

distances to project an overlapping series of circles of light onto a blank wall, is subtly beautiful.

Nick Crowe and Ian Rawlinson provide several video installations, all of which use a combination of shifting images and ambient noise to strange, unsettling effect. *Four Horsemen* shows four bunches of flowers being destroyed by flickering flames, the images sped up and mirrored so they seem to turn from lush greenery to abstract, insectoid forms.

Matt Stokes' work focuses on musical subcultures and the near-religious fervour of their followers. One piece involves a vast, dark room and two large screens, one showing the audience at a gig and the other a band in rehearsal. The music is just noise, yet the films manage to come close to capturing the energy and atmosphere of a real gig.



## THEATRE PREVIEW

## Cinderella

West Yorkshire Playhouse

11/12/09- 23/01/10

Taking on such a well known and universally-loved story as *Cinderella* should perhaps have been a daunting prospect for director Gail McIntyre, yet she seems much more excited than daunted. "I try not to think about how other people have done it before. *Cinderella* is just a fantastic story and one that I wanted to tell."

After the success of previous collaborations such as *The Snow Queen* and *The Beauty and the Beast*, McIntyre has once again teamed up with award-winning writer Mike Kenny to bring another magical tale to the West Yorkshire Playhouse. "Mike is fascinated by fairytales and tells stories in an evocative way. I'm interested in stories that aren't just dependent on words but on images, stories that allow you to use your imagination and Mike's writing forces you to be imaginative."

Indeed, together Kenny and McIntyre have built up an enviable reputation for staging inventive and exciting productions for young audiences. However, McIntyre found herself getting into directing quite by accident. "I started as an actor and was in a play when the director was taken ill a week before rehearsals started. One of us was going to have to do it and – for whatever reason, I can't quite remember why – I said that I would quite like to. And I did, and I quite enjoyed it. So I guess I sort of fell into it."

Whether it is working in theatres or in schools, you can tell that McIntyre has a real passion for young people's theatre. "Young people, given the opportunity, will just have a very direct response. I love theatre that allows for that."

For McIntyre this production was all about remaining true to the story of *Cinderella*. "Mike

and I agreed that we wanted to go back to some of the original stories which had elements of darkness. I don't want to avoid that. If you're treated the way *Cinderella* is then it is going to be quite a dark place."

When asked how she would summarise the overall tone of the play McIntyre answers "excruciating, mesmerising and moving."

Sprinkling a little bit of fantasy over Leeds, *Cinderella* is the perfect alternative to panto this Christmas.

words: Laura White



photography: West Yorkshire Playhouse

Finally, Rachel Goodyear produces finely detailed, delicate drawings with disturbing subject matter. Dead animals, deformed humans and strange hybrids of the two dominate, all illustrated in an intricate, almost charming fashion that seems reminiscent of some nightmarish children's book. Of the four selected, her work was the standout in terms of originality, skill and depth.

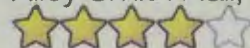
There is something here to please almost anyone with an interest in contemporary art, and admissions to the exhibition are free. Visitors can vote for their favourite at [northernartprize.org.uk](http://northernartprize.org.uk), though the judges will make the final decision.

words: Tim Boden  
photography: Darya A. Papko

## STAGE MUSICAL

## Grease

Riley Smith Hall, Until 06/12



Okay, so everybody feels like they've known the lyrics and the dance routines of *Grease* since birth, not least of all the infamous trademark 'Greased Lightning' arm action, but SMS's brilliant production brings us something as traditional as it is different. As well as all of the classics, there are songs that you won't immediately recognise but will leave you humming along by the end. The musical director and her band provided an incredible musical accompaniment throughout the show, from the scene changes to keeping up with the fast paced dancing, really contributing to the energetic atmosphere.

Evidently an immense amount of work has been put into the choreography and it shows. Amy Brown and Elan Isaac have created dances which are kaleidoscopes of hand jives, twists and kicks and have made the task of manoeuvring such a big cast on a spatially lacking stage appear effortless. The singing was spotless and in particular David Albury and Amy Toole, Leeds' very own Danny and Sandy, anchor the show with big voices and a genuine rapport. Similarly, all of the T-birds and Pink Ladies are well cast and are as funny as they are talented.

By the end of the show if your limbs aren't itching to move, then there really must be something wrong. Perfect for Christmas and for putting anybody in the highest of spirits, *Grease* is an absolute must-see. Yes, *Grease* is the word – so go tell everyone you know. A few words of warning: these contagious songs will be in your head for weeks to come.

words: Hannah Astill

LOOKOUT  
POST

**Sketchism: the Leeds Tealights**  
07/12-10/12, 7.30 pm  
Riley Smith Hall

Now in its fifth year, the Tealights present *Sketchism*, a brand new sketch comedy show – only, this time there are girls, and they've got the boys on a tight leash. This year is a multimedia extravaganza (they have a projector). With their trademark mixture of black comedy and silly whimsy, there's something for everyone. But who will win in the battle of the sketches..?

"The sketches are slick, brilliantly acted and original" – [Chortle.co.uk](http://Chortle.co.uk)  
"Thoroughly Enjoyable" – *The Sun*

**LUU PhotoSoc Exhibition 2009**  
Until 11/12  
Parkinson Court

PhotoSoc have been busy with their cameras. The results are stunning. Stop and take a look on your way to the Brotherton.

**Who Killed Romeo and Juliet?**  
07/12-12/12 7.30pm  
stage@leeds

This is a Far Eastern take on the classic fated lovers' story, told using puppetry, music and dance. What a collaboration of media! It is purely from a point of intrigue that I will be going (I'm trying to imagine the costumes). The romance implicit in this play comes just in time for Christmas and the dreamers among us.

**Sticks and Stones**  
08/12 7.30 pm  
Strawbs Bar

More poetic antics with Adam Z. Robinson and Andy Craven Griffiths. Sadly, it's the last *Sticks and Stones* of the year, but they've got their hands on current Glastonbury Slam Champion Holly McNish. And she's the most pregnant poet that has graced Strawbs. If that's not a reason to come along then maybe Adam Z. Robinson can entice you: "It's nearly Christmas so you might get a free mince pie! But you might not. But you might!"

**Christkindelmarkt**  
Until 20/12 10 am-8 pm  
Millennium Square

Brave the cold and get down to the German Market for some Glühwein to warm you up inside. The stalls are picturesque, each with its own distinctly German speciality, and the bands in the marquee are not to be missed! Ice-skating starts on 16 January, so be ready to glide (or slide) gracefully.

words: Eppie Windsor Clive

WHAT'S ONLINE  
[leedsstudent.org](http://leedsstudent.org)

- Bunnies, bulls, and Boosh; Benjamin Holmes on *Bunny and the Bull*

- plus read the extended Peter Jackson interview

041209

## COMMENT

## Can documentaries go too far?

From *Child of our Time* to the Octomom documentary, Melissa Welliver wonders if children are being exploited for our entertainment

The other day, a friend referred me to the BBC website to take a personality test. Whilst I will keep the results close to my chest, I noticed that it was for collecting information to use against the next social experiment preformed in BBC's *Child of our Time*. This is a programme I watch annually with Professor Robert Winston following up on several children's psychological development. Surely this must be educational - what with the original BBC Professor and lots of scientific studies and the like. But for the first time, whilst answering the intensely personal questions within the test, I started to wonder how the children felt. These are kids that were signed up for a programme to broadcast the intricacies of their minds from birth until the age of eighteen. I can only assume that the parents are being paid for this endeavour (at the very least I do see yearly the odd GMTV interview or REAL LIFE magazine article) and just hope that the money goes to the child. But who regulates this? What if they don't want to have their every little psychotic tendency to be broadcast to the nation anymore? I would of course hope that the BBC screened these parents before starting the show nearly ten years ago, but money can change a person.

Another example of a documentary-

come-reality TV show is the phenomenon of 'Octomom', the single mother from California who, despite already having six children, had IVF treatment and gave birth to the world's second set of living octuplets. The Channel 4 'documentary' that I saw a month or so ago painted her in a good light - she quite obviously was comfortable in front of the camera, seemed surprisingly stable and needed the money from the station to feed her family of fifteen. This said, during the programme I couldn't help but think that not only did some of the children not want to be filmed, but the money Nadia Suleman made from selling the rights to her brood was spent almost immediately. She stated in the show that nannies cost her \$10,000 per month alone. Her eldest son, Elijah, is seven and doesn't need a nanny, however he does have

learning difficulties, and often threw violent tantrums when the cameramen tried to film him. One couldn't help but think that whilst

the documentary was insightful and interesting, it became uncomfortable to watch the children feel neglected and so angry that we were watching them. Compulsive viewing to be sure, but is this the right kind of curiosity?

A one-off Channel 4 child-based documentary was on in the past week: Jess was thought to be Britain's youngest sleepwalker at just three and a half.

The documentary filmed her as she cried and wanted her Mum whilst hospitals probed and tested her, and at times, again, I felt

intrusive watching. Even her Mother sometimes seemed to resent the cameras, but after signing a contract there was little she could do - she was now a reality star for

an hour, as was her child. If I was Jess, when I grew up I know I would want to see the documentary and not least where that money had gone and why my parents had felt it necessary to broadcast my most intimate moments: when I slept; when I cried for my Mum. There is just a growing worry in my mind that these children will grow up to resent their parents.

*7 Up* is a clear example of this. The first documentary of its kind starting in 1964, this programme followed up on its infant participants every seven years to see how they were progressing. The children talked to their fascinated audience through their grown-up goals and dreams. Peter, for instance, expressed that he wanted to be a teacher, but by *28 Up* he had merely drifted through university, becoming depressed and disillusioned by the Thatcherite government and was an underpaid teacher. He was then ripped apart by the press for his anti-Conservative comments, stopped teaching and dropped out of the series. Peter cited his reasons for appearing in *28 Up* as monetary and nothing more. With such lingering feelings of regret and anger, is it fair to be putting children through this? Of course, it is up to the parents - but for the viewer, think: when does the educational become exploitative?



## Pick of the week

Film & TV

Ocean's Eleven

5/12/09 at 10.30pm ITV2

With Christmas just weeks away, the obligatory serving of re-run classics means films such as *Ocean's Eleven* are often overlooked in favour of the latest episode of *X Factor* or *I'm A Celebrity*. However, this film truly is a gem; from the A-list cast to the clichéd, yet warming, plot, this is a film that delivers what it promises. George Clooney is superb as Danny Ocean - the suave gentleman robber who makes crime look cool. Equally as impressive are Brad Pitt and Matt Damon who between them deliver witty lines that we have all seen before yet know and love. Director Soderbergh delivers a polished spectacle that captures the glitz and glamour of Vegas: something that is never really recaptured in the subsequent two sequels. This is a film that can easily be watched and provides respite from the days of confinement in the library enforced by those much loathed pre-Christmas deadlines.

words: Ben Heath

Victorian Farm Christmas

11/12/09 at 9pm BBC2

The BBC are back with fascinating re-enactments of how our ancestors celebrated the most important season on the Christian calendar for three Christmas episodes of the popular series *Victorian Farm*. Viewers asked for insight into how rural people would celebrate Christmas and what it meant for them. Christmas as we know it today has its roots in Victorian times when the holidays started to become more commercial and Christmas trees started to appear from Germany. At the start of Victoria's reign, few Christmas cards were sent and no one had any idea who Santa was, but by the end of her reign it had reached all sections of society. Along with the array of farming tasks that had to be done to provide for the animals over the holidays, the presenters show how to make the turkey dinner (an American innovation after Thanksgiving) and the stories behind the knickknacks such as crackers (first made in 1846) that are so inherent to Christmas today. The programme's website is full of videos showing how to make mulled wine and a proper Christmas pud as Victorians would have done, so it is testament to Queen Vic and her peeps that there are so many people wishing to sustain these traditions.

words: Jack Stringer

## [THE ARGUMENT]

### Christmas adverts

Love them!

Hate them!

I am a fan of Christmas adverts. I am known to wear a dopey grin, possibly mouthing 'Holidays are coming' when watching the Coca-Cola lorries driving across the television screen. It seems I am not alone in my love of Christmas adverts, as, after a brief retraction of the famous Coca Cola adverts, the company was inundated with complaints from consumers who felt that the adverts marked the beginning of Christmas. Admittedly these people are sad. Advertisements probably would be an essential indicator of season for those who rarely risk leaving the sofa. However, Christmas adverts have become a modern tradition, and rightly so. Given the prominence of technology in today's culture it is not surprising that it should develop its own forms of tradition. These adverts are innocuously cheerful, and add to the excitement of the Christmas countdown. And to those who say they are just a shameless opportunity for companies to exploit an annual holiday, then what is Christmas as we celebrate it, but a capitalist exploitation of a religious festival?



Source: Coca-Cola Company

words: Rachel Harvey

Paint me green and call me the Grinch, but I swear if I have to endure another 'heartwarming' christmas advert I'm going to shit in a series of brightly coloured boxes and dole them out to my family members on the 25th as a form of anti-commercial dirty protest. I'm no puritanical freak, and I'd be pretty disappointed if I got an orange with a candle in or something like that, but seriously. November is way too early for turkeys. While I accept that presents need to be bought and sold in the run-up to the big day, there's absolutely no need for my TV to be spewing out these lobotomised 'feelgood' images of families gathered round the table, all laughing heartily together. Take Sainsbury's, for example. I'm normally quite a fan of Jamie Oliver, but if that fat-tongued twat rolled up to my house doling out mince pies from a van blaring out saccharine saxophone arrangements of Jingle Bells, I might just gouge out my eyes with a yule log.

words: Tom Bush



041209

## Christmas Gift Guide

This week *LS* has embraced the festive spirit and reviewed this year's offerings of Christmas novelty books

Well, December is now upon us, which means that, sadly, the season for Christmas present shopping has well and truly begun. Around this time of year, pretty much every publishing company begins peddling a great number of novelty books, a large majority of which end up being written by Jeremy Clarkson. The reason for this is fairly simple: a comic, easy-to-read book is the ideal present for someone who you otherwise may have to spend a lot of time and effort to buy a present for. Examples of these include uncles, tenuous friends and fathers. They're also fairly easy to wrap, look nice piled up with other presents, and in hardcover editions can turn a decent profit for the publishers. *LS* has cringed, laughed and yawned whilst leafing through the Christmas gifts to choose when you're not sure what else to give.

words: Tom Bush



### The Now Show's Book of World Records

Punt, Dennis and Holmes  
Radio 4's *The Now Show* is the latest entertainment franchise to bring out the inevitable spin-off novelty book.

Apparently Radio 4's most popular comedy show (although that's not hard, considering some of the other unfunny garbage they commission), *The Now Show* is a satirical show written and performed by the likes of Steve Punt, Hugh "Mock the Week" Dennis, and Daily Mail enthusiast Marcus Brigstocke. This new spin-off book is pitched as a 'satirical alternative' to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, and by and large it's actually pretty funny.

Split into the sections of politics, art, modern life etc., the book mixes several one-off gags (Stupidest Thing Ever Written in a Newspaper: in today's Daily Mail) with a few topical essays and rants on the state of the modern world (Silliest Pop Star's Child's Name, Most Eyebrow-Raising Thing Blamed on the Credit Crunch).

While it may not be laugh-out-loud hilarious, it's perfect bathroom reading material, and the design of the book's layout does make it fairly appealing. However, with its £14.99 price tag, it is a rather expensive book seeing as your cynical cousin Toby will probably only read once.

words: Tom Bush

### Mock the Week: This Year's Book!

Dan Patterson

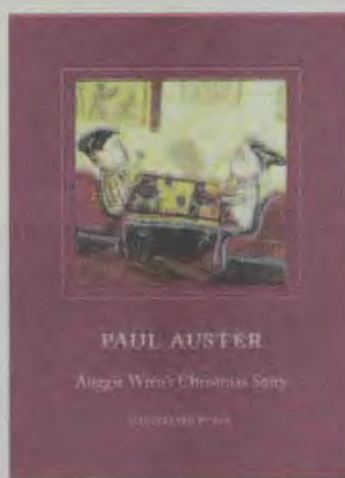
BBC2's *Mock The Week* was created as an attempt to emulate the success of similar, popular shows, such as *Whose Line Is It Anyway* and *Have I Got News for You*. It has rapidly become a viewer's favourite and it is not hard to see why; the panel seem to add more to the show merely by their presence than by their comic contributions. Together, they are a team that most would be happy to watch discussing anything, never mind the news.

Therefore, this year's *Mock the Week* annual seems, initially, rather tempting. It consists entirely of answers to the questions usually asked in the closing, stand-up rounds of the TV show, such as 'bad things to say at a wedding' and 'unlikely front page headlines'. This format is expanded upon in the book, with many imaginative and hilarious questions, such as 'weird things to have tattooed on your arse' ('Vote Lib Dem' being one of the answers).

Disappointingly though, the book lacks the 'punch' of the TV show. The creators and occasional writers of the show wrote the jokes for the annual and one can't help feeling that so many of the one-liners would be far funnier if the panelists were saying them. There are also not quite enough gags to fill a hardcover book, and consequently some are just plain silly ('Unlikely newspaper headline: Fuck off').

Nonetheless, the annual is a decent gift for any fan of the TV show and there are plenty laughs inside. There are also some moments of genuine brilliance, such as the answer 'Are you or have you ever been Cat Stevens?' to the cue 'Unlikely US immigration card questions'.

words: Joe Miller



### Auggie Wren's Christmas Story

Paul Auster

Originally appearing in the New York Times on 25th December 1990 and forming the inspiration for the later feature film *Smoke*, this is a beautifully told and unconventional Christmas fable that includes none of the traditional trappings of the festive season.

Those who are acquainted with Auster's quirky characters and thought-provoking writing won't be disappointed; here, we discover Auggie Wren - a cigar selling artist who takes a photograph from the same place, of the same scene, every single morning for years on end. The narrator, Auster himself, has been asked to write a short story to appear in the NYT on Christmas morning (the meta-fictional elements add an extra dimension to an otherwise straightforward tale) and his challenge is to create a truly 'unsentimental Christmas story'.

This simple yet affecting narrative is charmingly complemented with images from Isol, an Argentinean illustrator. Her delightfully surreal mélange of collage and drawings encourage the reader to look more closely, following Auggie's advice of 'If you don't take the time to look, you'll never manage to see anything'.

Auster gives us a refreshing reminder of what Christmas is really all about: the act of giving and making someone happy. This little gem of a book would make a great gift for someone you hold close.

words: Alice Dent

### Cringe

Sarah Brown

Rereading your old diaries is toe-curling activity, as I was reminded recently when flipping through one I kept at fourteen, where I gouged out my unrequited love in biro every night.

There's the strong temptation to disown your past by destroying all the evidence. Alternatively, you could go and get your old diaries published: *Cringe* is a collection of embarrassing diary entries from members of the public.

The book has journal extracts with present day explanations, where the contributors fondly reminisce over their teenage melodramatics and rue the day they were photographed sporting a perm. At just twenty, arguably I don't have enough perspective on being a teenager. Perhaps the wounds of adolescence are still smarting and in five years time this'll have me in stitches, but I found the book patronising and unfunny.

There's always license for autobiographical embellishments, but *Cringe* seems exaggerated into full-blown fiction. The contributors all seem to have suffered that adult amnesia about their teenage years and fall back on the hormone-hijacked, oversexed and cerebrally-challenged stereotype. Far from 'shining a light into the secret lives of youths everywhere', *Cringe* reheats the generic teenage experience of pop culture: zits, snogging behind the bike sheds and slammed doors. Furthermore, its excess of capital letters, exclamation marks and spelling mistakes seems ungenueine.

This is one of those books frazzled parents exchange as gag gifts at Christmas and chortle over in recognition. If its second hand embarrassment you're after, *Adrian Mole* does it better. I didn't laugh but I certainly *Cringed*.

words: Bee Taylor



### 150 Things Every Man Should Know

Gareth May

When Palahniuk saw the dearth of male role models for twentysomethings coming of age in a world of popstars and yoga, he wrote *Fight Club* - a destructive novel of bitchtits, mayhem and soap. All he really gave the world was modern cinema's coolest figment of any character's imagination - Tyler Durden.

Rather more constructively Gareth May, with his debut book *150 Things Every Man Should Know*, has ventured to fill the testosterone vacuum with a witty and informative guide for even the most perplexed and inept of our generation, with guides to changing a tyre, the perfect shave, how to cook a steak and even a no-nonsense guide to drugs. It will, in short, bring the inner Phil Mitchell from within even the most Frank Spencerian young man.

Written with clarity and a self-effacing honesty characteristic of *Peep Show*'s Mark Corrigan, this unashamedly useful book will make the perfect Christmas gift for anyone who lacks any of the virile touches required to get a foot on the next rung of the painful, embarrassing and ultimately thankless ladder we call manhood. Or, maybe it'll just raise a laugh and give a brief glimpse into what it's really like to be your dad.

This may do the book a slight disservice but, like many which populate the Christmas book market, it's the classic toilet read - a consciously funny book which allows the reader to dip in and out at leisure, but always has something worth reading and something which, as a man, you really should already know.

words: James Legge

041709

REVIEW

## Yo-Ho Kablammo

Canalside Studios

There should be more pirate-based games. No, really. All pirates do is spend their time sailing the seven seas and drink rum, collect gold and keep parrots. You'd think there's no way to go wrong with a game like Yo-Ho Kablammo but it is, unfortunately, lacking. It's by no means a terrible game but on the flip side it's not amazing.

In the game, your job is to sail around in your pirate ship fighting the other ships that have dared to take your precious ocean away from you. Boat death match, if you will. Graphically, the game looks great: little puffs of smoke from the ships as they're damaged, mines bobbing up and down on the surface and random pirate-based paraphernalia litter the menus.

To break up the game, there are many single player challenges. Some involve you ramming opposing ships into oblivion, while others involve priming more mines than the other players. They're a bit hit and miss though, with some being fun and others being downright boring.

The thing I think that lets the game down most is the clunky control system. Maybe I'm just too used to the modern dual-analogue system, but moving in one direction whilst shooting in another just seems natural after Geometry Wars and company. Here, you move with one analogue stick but you have to fire with



the two triggers. Each trigger shoots to one side, left trigger to port and right to starboard. No matter how much I play, I just can't get my bearings well enough to shoot in the right direction. It is possible to hold down the bumper buttons to show an arrow telling you the direction that cannon fires but it's awkward and not the best way of doing things. On top of this, the AI comes across as bizarre and silly.

Opponents seem to pick their favourite target at the start and relentlessly attack them. That's fine if you're not the target but if you are then you spend the majority of your time trying to keep alive rather than actually enjoying the game. On top of this, the single player levels are surprisingly difficult and should really be toned down.

This game seems like it could be fun to play online (unfortunately there was nobody on to test this when I tried) and the music is all piratey (just what you need for a pirate game) but a clunky interface and difficult levels mean that your money is perhaps better spent elsewhere.

words: Mat McLaren

Developer bio:



### Canalside Studios

Canalside Studios is a games company within the University of Huddersfield. The studio is permanently manned by a core team of 8 placement students. It was founded in 2006 to aid the professional development of computer games students, within the industry.

In 2007 Canalside Studios achieved second place in the Microsoft XNA Dream Build Play competition with Yo-Ho Kablammo.

The game was launched on September 2 2009 on Xbox Live Arcade. The game was developed by David Webb of Chase Terrace, David Horton of Leamington Spa and Mark Brotherton of Huddersfield.

The developers have recently graduated. David Webb lives in Birmingham and works as a software developer for Full Fat in Coventry, David Horton is back in Leamington Spa pursuing his own projects and Mark Brotherton is completing his PhD at the University of Huddersfield.

## Do quiz games have a place in society?

Christmas 2000. I had the innate pleasure of receiving 'Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?' for the PlayStation. Finally, all the tension and adrenaline-fuelled question answering of the popular TV show could be replicated in my living room! I eagerly began playing only to find myself in an eerily lonely and post-apocalyptic version of the actual show.

Due to the limited power of the original PlayStation, the virtual studio setting in the game lacked the presence of any people. You would hear Chris Tarrant's 'Cheery' voice, like some message from God, but all the time you would be looking at the empty chair where Chris was meant to be sitting. The lack of studio audience made the prospect of using my 'Ask the Audience' lifeline somewhat scary, as if the spirits were trying to communicate that B was the correct answer after all, and my supposed 'friends' who I could phone sounded as if they were being held at gunpoint to give me what would turn out to be the wrong answer. I soon after vowed never to play a quiz game again.

Nine years later, and like so many other vows of mine, I've given into the lure of trying it again. Surely things have got better? Cue the introduction of '1 x 100'. Xbox LIVE's new quiz that could arguably re-define online gaming. Based on a popular US TV show (that was also brought to the UK but never really took off) the game is unique in that you don't need to go out and buy it, or even wait ages for it to download, it's just... there. You turn on your Xbox, sign-in and simply select it. It's free to play (on a screen if you're a gold member but perhaps the most special thing about this game is that you don't play against it, or even, in people, you play against thousands). Launch the game and your avatar character is transported into the studio to play. Most of the time you'll be placed into a simple 'answer the questions' quiz set in a studio filled with thousands of people all stacked in a never-ending queue of contestants, resembling some sort of game-show themed workhouse, that or a call centre. Get the questions right to get points, try and beat your friends etc.

What makes the game worth playing is that you can make your little avatar dance by repeatedly mauling the Y button. Hell, play well enough and you'll even unlock more energetic dances for your character to undertake. The pleasure from playing comes more from making your avatar frolic around like a loon than answering the questions. Come Tuesday or Friday nights though, and the game actually starts to get rewarding. Literally. These 'live' shows are different in that selected players (called 'the one' and 'the mob' (the 100 people 'the one' must beat)) can actually win real prizes. (Say real, but our money finds that Microsoft points have little value in the real world and won't exactly clear your overdraft.) Our two hours of surprisingly addictive and tense gameplay. Even though you will almost definitely be consigned to 'the crowd' (we merely watch the main proceedings, but still answer the questions for score sake) watching 'the one' steadily rising up the prize ladder is as engaging as watching any episode of 'Deal or No Deal', arguably more so as you're actually playing along yourself. '1 x 100' undeniably has revolutionised quiz gameplay, if only for the fact you can make a computerised referee of yourself dance like a toad.

words: Thom Bury

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041209

Christmas – a bit shnally, but I love it

**Studying:** International Relations and Portuguese  
**Favourite Film:** *Mystery Men*  
**Favourite Place:** Paris  
**Loves:** Mornflake Chocolate Squares



Mark Burdon

Jingle it all away

**Studying:** Cultural Studies  
**Loves:** Ear muffs and Mittens  
**Favourite Place:** Trebarwith Strand (Cornwall)  
**Favourite TV Show:** Grand Designs



Ceri Eldin

The real secret santa

**Studying:** English Literature and Language  
**Celebrity Crush:** Ewan McGregor  
**Favourite Place:** Barcelona  
**Childhood toy:** Peggy Patch



Siobhan Brewood-Wyatt

For a while now, I've had at least one Christmas playlist on Spotify... I've been busting out the festive stuff since mid-November, I think. Admit it, you probably think Christmas music – and for the more cynical, Christmas itself – is a bit lame. I'm not sure if that's the latest 'cool' way of saying that, so I'm just going to go ahead and say shnally. Yes, that is a made-up word, so what?

Some aspects of the season are, indeed, shnally. Such as seeing your great-uncle Roger dancing with a sausage roll in his mouth, or being made to wear the same red jumper as all your siblings as a child. In fact, childhood Christmases were always a game of two halves: the smorgasbord of self-indulgence on the morning of present opening, contrasted with having to humour distant relatives who can't really remember your age, yet expect you to sing, dance or otherwise perform for them. But I guess, whoever pays

Christmas has two halves: the self-indulgence and the relatives who can't remember your age...

the piper calls the tunes. Even if payment is a bag of Sports Mixture and a big sloppy grandma kiss.

And yeah, some Christmas songs – the Spice Girls' 'Christmas Wrapping' cover, or the Darkness' Christmas song spring to mind – would, in any other context, run the risk of inflicting the wrath of innumerable alien species who, while intercepting our radio signals and hearing the aforementioned tunes, would turn from friendly neighbours into planet-destroying demons before the children's choir kicks in. As we're still alive, though, they must appreciate irony.

Plus, there are some good examples of Christmas music, as long as you can hack a bit of cheese. On the more tame side, you've got Christmas carols – 'Carol of the Bells', 'O Holy Night', 'O Come All Ye Faithful'. Anything arranged by John Rutter is a winner, too. Then you've got seasonal pop – from Bing Crosby's *White Christmas* to Band Aid, or if you can't bear to part with heavy distorted guitar, check out *Trans-Siberian Orchestra*.

But here's the bottom line: Christmas isn't about being cool. Far from it. Christmas is when you wear a paper crown, eat copious amounts of sweets and smile at random strangers. For some of us, it's about our religion, our family, or simply having a good meal. Worrying too much about coolness will result in being stuck clicking refresh on your web browser in a cold room on Christmas Eve, bitterly choking down your last packet of *Monster Munch*. That's right, I'm the ghost of Christmas Facebooked. Be afraid.

So embrace it. Listen to some cheesy tunes, hang out with your aunts and uncles, play board games, wear a Santa hat and generally be shnally (that's right, I'm going all the way with my invented word). You'll love it, at least until January 2nd. Simply, having, a wonderful Christmas time... indeed, Mr. McCartney. Indeed.

I hate to cast a pessimistic eye upon the joyous festivities but for me it has become impossible to see Christmas time as anything more than a greedy money making machine. Ever since 1931 the commercialization of Christmas has been evident through the influence of Coca Cola upon the representation of old St Nick, Santa Claus, or my personal preference, Father Christmas. (In case you weren't aware, his suit changed from green to the 'traditional' red!) However, the Americanization of the Western world has caused a spread of this Capitalist dream, increasingly so over the years. I'm not sure whether it is the end of semester financial blues which have forced my eyes open to see the bright flashing lights, but, attempting to resist the urge of just seeming bitter, I'm glad to have taken a step back to grasp the harsh reality of this shenanigan.

I cannot speak of Christmas in Leeds without mentioning the kitsch masterpiece that is: the German Market! With fond memories of two years previous, rocking up after my Friday shift and guzzling down a few mulled wines whilst listening to a murmur of festive cheer and questionable, yet fitting, music, I was so excited to return with a collection of new international friends, to show them another side to the city. But, after queueing for an hour to even get inside the main concert hall (or, the plastic hut) all that echoed through my ears was "£4.50!" In two years the price was almost double, talk about inflation! Not even one of us could bring ourselves to fork out for a measly totter of mulled wine so we swiftly vacated the vicinity in a cloud of disgust and disappointment.

However, if I had circled the price of this false 'authenticity' I would never have discovered the fun

Not even one of us could bring ourselves to fork out for a measly totter of mulled wine...

one can have with a broken umbrella. The sight of my French house mate singing whilst struggling home in the rain with nothing more than a deformed metal structure for protection made me laugh to the point of stomach pain, I'm convinced that not even the litre jug of beer could have brought me such joy. So, I guess what I'm saying here is that money isn't the cause of happiness or more specifically, festive cheer! I was no fan of my parents when they proposed the idea of not buying presents this year but I came around to the idea when my Granny promised she would knit me a snugly jumper, something money just cannot buy. Don't get me wrong, I love the tingly Christmas spirit and I've got a feeling that presenting my home-made books and chocolates to my family on Christmas morning will be much more rewarding than having popped into M&S and bought into a whole system that, although is presently inescapable, is definitely something which we should give as little support as possible.

It was last year's soap on a rope that did it. Up until that point I had been willing to embrace Secret Santa as just another Christmas tradition. Rather like annoying relatives or overdosing on cheese – Secret Santa was something that inevitably happened every year. That is, until last year's all time low and I decided enough was enough.

Of course I caved. It got to mid November and I found myself eagerly holding a hat with my

Nothing says fired faster than a cheap bottle of wine (half drunk)...

housemates' names in and setting the 'ground rules'. Yes, apparently this tradition needs 'ground rules'. Perhaps Secret Santa's founders feared one person would go out and buy a hundred pound diamond encrusted toaster and burst into tears when they received a copy of the Big Issue. Instead some clever folk have devised a solution – the fail safe 'money limit'. Basically this way everyone receives the same crap. Although this can also prove a tad problematic – set the bar too high and you'll be branded an arrogant money flasher. Too low and you just look cheap. However worst-case scenario; pulling out the name of your boss. Nothing says fired faster than a cheap bottle of wine (half drunk) because you forgot the day. Who said Secret Santa was easy?

With every Secret Santa group there will be certain similarities. Be it work-mates or house-mates there will inevitably be the 'one nobody wants'. This person may be perfectly likeable but there's just something about their cactus collection/spoon hoarding/death stares (delete as appropriate) that makes you question if they would actually appreciate a *Girls Aloud* calendar? Equally there is also the crafty one – not in a *Fantastic Mr Fox* kind of way but as in you will actually receive a homemade pen holder. This person will emerge covered in PVA, their room looking like a Blue Peter studio and hand out homemade gifts with a smug, "here's one I made earlier." And, as is required of every Secret Santa gift, you will smile and laugh and joke about the hilarity of it all while trying work out what it's actually meant to be.

Yet even in my cynicism I too am part of this tradition. I can't help myself, and heck, it's Christmas, season of goodwill and joy to all. So year after year, I get involved, despite there being the inevitable day before panic, tearing round Sainsbury's trying to find an appropriately funny yet thoughtful gift. Last time I checked the only thing on offer was a small fun sized pack of Dove deodorant and nothing loses friends faster than insinuating they smell. So why do we put ourselves through this? Because it's fun, irritating and traditional – basically Christmas in a nutshell. The half-hearted presents and embarrassing consequences are all part of the game. And Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without a homemade phallic shaped pen holder.



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# Graduate study at Maastricht University: Dreaming spires without spiraling debt

The Times recently described studying at Maastricht University as 'life amid the dreaming spires of Maastricht' and rightly made the link to the famous UK universities that share this characteristic. At Maastricht University students can expect to follow Masters programmes which are excellent in terms of research and education and rated accordingly in various international publications. Indeed the University could be called a Ratings high flier rising as it did 60 places in just one year in the Times Higher Education Supplement of the top two hundred universities. The university leaped from 172<sup>nd</sup> position in 2006 to 116<sup>th</sup> in 2009. This year our School of Business and Economics was rated by the Financial Times as the 29<sup>th</sup> best Business School in Europe for the management programmes offered.

The university is international in location and in terms of students and staff. It is situated in the heart of Europe and attracts students from all the surrounding countries and much further afield. Most of the Master courses are in English and take place in small groups following the innovative Problem Based Learning method of teaching which fosters teamwork and leadership skills. Employers value Maastricht students highly for their knowledge and ability to work together constructively in teams. Academic and Career prospects are excellent for our students.

There are still places available at the university for a range of Master courses. This is expected to be a stark contrast to the UK where the economic crisis is leading to dramatic increases in postgraduate applications.

In addition to the high standard of our education and research the fees charged by the University are only a fraction of those charged by UK universities. The Dutch government sets the fee levels that universities can charge. Many Master courses in the area of finance and management in the UK cost between 8-18,000 pounds per year whereas they cost 1620 Euros at Maastricht. Students can expect proven research and educational quality at the university without the debt mountain that they would have after studying in the UK.



## Natasja Reslow, PhD student

*"I graduated from the MA Modern European Languages and European Union Studies at Edinburgh University in June 2007. I wanted to go on to do a postgraduate MA, and I was keen to have an international experience as I had really enjoyed my Erasmus exchange. I also soon realised that continuing my studies in Britain was simply not an option due to the high tuition fees. Maastricht University appealed to me because it strives to be an international university, and it's located in the very heart of Europe, within easy reach of major cities such as Brussels, Amsterdam, Luxembourg and Cologne. Almost all of the Master's programmes are taught in English, and the city itself has a very international feel to it - you're just as likely to hear French, German and English as Dutch. The method of teaching at Maastricht University is unique, as it's based on Problem-Based Learning (PBL). The PBL-system encourages students to be active in their own learning - as a group you formulate learning goals, conduct research, and share your knowledge to come to an answer to key research questions. Tutorial groups never contain more than 15 students, so you have a lot of contact with the tutor and your fellow students. I know that a lot of universities in Britain are having to reduce contact hours for students, while at the same time continuing to increase tuition fees, and this was something that concerned me when making my choice for Maastricht University. In August 2008 I graduated from the MA European Studies at Maastricht. I definitely made the right choice in coming here - I really enjoyed the programme, and I know that I've developed skills which employers find attractive, for example a demonstrated ability to work as part of a team. The university is truly international and I've made friends from all over Europe. Maastricht is also an innovative and young university, and the facilities (such as the computers and the library) are modern and constantly being updated. I'm convinced that the education here is at least as good as the one I would have had if I had stayed in Britain."*



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# offering easy credit with a side and county court judgements

Another company named No Hassle Loans is promoting 'student loans' on its website specifically for 'purposes like tuition fees, books, computers and accommodation'.

In the website's FAQs section the company even goes so far as to say that it can help students 'to obtain funds for (their) entire education related expenses'.

Worryingly, this company offers payday loans up to the value of £1500, all of which must be repaid within 14 to 31 days.

Unlike Toothfairy, however, No Hassle Loans openly promote the fact that they do not carry out credit checks.

What is more, the website also states that students can apply for a loan even if they have 'insufficient credit, no credit and bad credit'.

Neither Toothfairy or No Hassle Loans are members of the Finance and Lending Association (FLA) or the Credit Services Association (CSA), two of the main umbrella organisations that help to maintain standards in the industry.

Trapp criticised companies for offering short-term loans to students: "It is completely

inappropriate for companies such as Toothfairy to market their loans at students.

"Students who take out such loans are effectively taking a spade and digging themselves a huge financial hole."

**"We'd advise all students to avoid, as far as possible, borrowing from a company that does not provide a written contract"**

Madeleine Harris Smith,  
LUU Welfare Officer

#### A growing trend

Though 'payday' loans are not a new phenomenon, they have

become increasingly popular with students in recent months. Trapp attributed this to several factors, notably the economic recession and, more recently, failures at Student Finance (reported by LS on October 16 in 'Freshers start uni penniless').

"It is certainly a bigger problem this year. The student loans cock-up, the recession and increasing tuition fees have all contributed to added financial pressure on students, and with parents facing job losses and their own increased financial problems students have been reluctant to turn to them for help."

However, Trapp suggested that the increase in students taking out short-term loans also reflected a change in expectations of the student lifestyle: "Students are under increasing peer pressure to go out and to live in nice flats and this is causing a change in their attitude towards money."

"Although they are not worse than any other group in society, students are certainly not exempt from the increasingly consumerist trend that can be seen throughout the British population as a whole."

**Too late for some**  
The Office of Fair Trading is now reviewing the payday loan industry but unfortunately, for those students at Leeds who have

already run into debt problems as a result of their experiences with Toothfairy, this action has not come soon enough.

Laura Mackenzie

## Are you experiencing financial difficulties?

If so, you don't need to resort to payday loans to pay the rent. Credit Action's Chris Trapp suggests three alternatives to help students get themselves back in the black:

- 1) Your family – "students are often reluctant to seek financial help from their parents because they don't want to worry them. In reality though, most parents would far rather you went to them with your problems rather than resort to taking out further loans"
- 2) The University – "find out if you are entitled to any hardship funding or grants. Most universities get to the end of the year with money left in the pot because students haven't come forward to claim money they are entitled to. What's more, if your problem is related to a late Student Finance payment most universities will be willing to help you bridge the gap"
- 3) Your bank – "speak to your bank and see if they will let you extend your interest-free overdraft. Obviously this isn't ideal but it's still preferable to taking out a short-term loan"

# Counter-consumer culture comes to Leeds

Whilst the masses descended upon Leeds city centre to buy Christmas gifts, one group were trying their hardest to stop them buying anything.

This was the return of the annual Buy Nothing Day, a world-wide protest which aims to raise awareness for the ethical and environmental consequences of consumerism.

Debuting in North America in 1992, Buy Nothing Day has since captured international imaginations and is now supported in over 65 countries.

The Green Action society took to Briggate on November 28, on one of the year's busiest shopping weekends to show that Leeds was in on the craze too. The word 'protest' is often used in association with this day, though Green Action's stall celebrated an anti-consumerist lifestyle rather than demonstrating against capitalism. Kitted out with scarves and woolly hats, the members of the society stood in Briggate from 11am till 4pm handing out leaflets and chatting to interested shoppers.

The stall boasted an array of home-made cakes, sandwiches donated from Pret A Manger, a

hanger of free clothes (and other miscellaneous items) to give away to the public, as well as free cups of tea for any frozen shoppers willing to have a chat about the event.

Nikolai Berkoff, one of the organisers said: "The purpose of Buy Nothing Day is get people to stop and think about what they're buying, instead of conforming to mindless consumerism."

Globally, the event has inspired many different means of demonstration, from organizing a used clothes fashion show in Tokyo, to cutting up credit cards in Alberta. The stunt 'Credit Card Cut up' was take place in a busy shopping mall, where demonstrators would be given a free granola bar to anyone who would cut up their card.

Closer to home, Bristol was set to host a rather spectacular contribution to the days activities with Mark Boyle's free economy festival. This free event advertised a free three course meal for over 250 people as well as a free shop, a number of talks, free holistic therapies, creative workshops and performing bands and musicians – with all the amps powered by bicycles! However, Galway wins hands down for the most exciting

event, where a gaggle of satirical zombies stagger through crowds of busy shoppers mocking their fellow undead.

Although the work of Leeds' Green Action society may seem humble in comparison, its methods of sparking change within a community are realistic and effective. They're not concerned with bringing the "capitalist consumption machine to a grinding – if only momentary – halt" unlike their Atlantic counterparts. Even if this was possible, it would achieve nothing in the long term.

As one of Green Action's leaflets explains, the point of Buy Nothing Day is not to go without milk for a day if you've run out.

Buy Nothing Day doesn't ask shoppers to change their lifestyle for a day, but instead asks them to forge a lasting relationship with their consumer conscience, to make you ask questions before buying something. These include ones such as where does the product come from, how did it get there, what sources were used to make it, and most importantly, do you really need it?

As Nikolai explains, "We inform people of the consequences of

shopping, we don't tell people what to do, we like them to make up their own minds."

With Christmas just round the corner, Buy Nothing Day urges people to buy fair-trade or locally produced goods as gifts this year, or even make friends and family hand-made gifts rather than spending a lot of money on something they don't really need.

When asked if he thought Buy Nothing Day was a success with the shoppers, Berkoff's response was very positive: "Definitely, we've

all day and lots of people have been showing support."

Berkoff finished by adding that the highlight of the day was meeting a shopper who called himself a "real Yorkshire man" because he hand-made all his own clothes. When asked what his family thought about it his response was, "I've taught them to make all their own clothes too." I guess there's hope for us all.

Sarah Hull



BUY NOTHING DAY: People at the stall

Photo: Darya A. Papko

## Critical Analysis



Science  
Commentary  
with Fliss Inkpen

### Santa Plausible?

On the 24th December you may be able to observe a relativistic phenomenon that occurs in the earth's atmosphere only once a year. Evidence of this phenomenon can be found in the jingling of bells and a mysterious disappearance of whisky and carrots from mantelpieces around the globe.

A conscious object, known as "Father Christmas" or "Santa Claus" is thought to travel a total distance of 75 million miles, visiting 90 million homes of good girls and boys to distribute gifts, all in a single night. Despite clear evidence for the existence of this body, it has been an area of dispute in the scientific community for many centuries. Some scientists have concluded, on the premise that this festive body is massive (i.e. is made of particles with mass) that if such an object were to attempt this journey, the air resistance it would experience would cause it to spontaneously combust, thus disproving his jolly existence.

The first postulate of this argument, that the object is made of ordinary, non relativistic matter, is clearly false. However, according to the theories of Einstein, photons, particles of light, travel at a speed that is the same for all observers. A consequence of this assumption is the concept of time dilation. Put simply, a high speed process (such as traversing the planet delivering presents) takes a longer time to occur when observed by someone outside the system than by someone moving with the system. So, Santa Claus, composed entirely of photons, can do a journey that from our reference point is huge without travelling any distance at all. In his own frame of reference, leaving the North Pole and getting back again are simultaneous events, and the distance traveled from his point of view is exactly nothing.

As for the interactions between him and massive objects, such as presents and mince pies, we can again turn to the equations of Einstein, specifically  $E=mc^2$ . This key formula shows us that mass and energy are the same thing, separated only by the speed of light squared. The conversion of matter to energy can be observed in the nuclear fusion reactions that power the sun, and with the energy contained in a single mince pie being the same as that released in an atomic bomb, Santa has enough energy to go pretty much anywhere with his reindeer, so long as you are good girls and boys and ensure he is well fed.

Merry Christmas from Critical Analysis!

# Internet: out of reach?

The internet is still out of reach for the majority of the 1.5 million people in the UK with intellectual difficulties (ID). This is according to a recent report from The Inclusive New Media Design (INMD) project, directed by Dr Helen Kennedy, a lecturer in New Media at the University of Leeds.

People with intellectual difficulties usually have low levels of literacy and numeracy and therefore struggle to process text on websites that aren't designed



Image courtesy of Inclusive New Media Design

with them in mind.

Although websites have been adapted to those with physical

disabilities, it is still out of reach to those with intellectual difficulties.

Dr Kennedy says: "We're talking about a group of people who are fairly invisible and marginal. Generally people don't know what ID is, so it can't be taken to the next stage of adapting sites to account for peoples accessibility needs. Making the internet accessible to people with ID is different to making it accessible to those with sensory or physical disabilities. Although the internet isn't completely accessible, it is a lot better than it was, but this group of people have been left out. Images communicate to them in a way that words just don't and on the whole, website designers don't consider ID users because they don't know about them, it might be costly or because their clients don't want them to".

This project came about while Dr Kennedy was working on a different project to create a virtual learning environment for another university. It was supposed to be

accessible to people with minor learning difficulties but she thought it wasn't as accessible as it could of been and wanted to research ID in order to find out what improvements could be made, "One project's findings turned into a research question for the next project."

The Knowledge Transfer fund at the University of Leeds then gave Dr Kennedy some funding to transfer the findings onto an online web resource. "Our website has had 250,000 hits over the past year, so clearly a small amount of money from Leeds had made a big difference in terms of the number of people we can reach. We're trying to get our message across with the help from the University of Leeds"

The report recommends that web designers engage with intellectually disabled users to understand their accessibility problems, "The diversity and complexity of ID can only really be grasped through contact with people with ID themselves. By

engaging with developers and designers, ID users can become co-producers in the website development process rather than just testers of an end product."

Dr Kennedy is now seeking funding for a new project called Flickr. She describes it as "a visual social networking application that uses the potential of social media to let people, who are quite profoundly disabled, build relationships with other people. It's all prepared as a project but we need to find the funding."

She is also hopeful that other websites, such as news sites, will find a way of displaying their text in a form accessible to ID users "There's a lot of potential. We need to look at how this content can be written for these audiences. It's possible but it's just at the idea stage at the moment. The internet could do a lot for these people as its so media rich"

Jen Archer

## Hot vents reveal strange deep water world

Deep under the sea, on the ocean floor where sunlight cannot reach, there can be found a community of animals which have drastically changed scientists' views on life. These animals, which include Giant vestimentiferan tubeworms, survive not on sunlight, but on hydrogen sulphide released by huge hydrothermal vents which erupt fluids of up to 370 degrees Celsius.

Due to being unaffected by the changes in solar energy that have affected other photosynthesis based ecosystems, these life forms may have an evolutionary history different to any other on the planet, making them extremely important from a scientific point of view.

However, in order to study this unusual evolutionary history, evidence is needed in the form of fossils, which are extremely scarce. This poses problems as to why only 25 fossilized examples have been found around hydrothermal vents despite 550 million years of evolution.

Questions have arisen as to why there are so many discrepancies in the fossil record, with modern animals such as crab and shrimp being completely absent. However, vents in similar conditions have different levels of fossil preservation.

In order to better understand this, Dr Crispin Little, a senior lecturer in the School of Earth and Environment at the University of Leeds, together with a team of colleagues, placed specially designed copies of experimental materials at 3 different types of hydrothermal vents, using a manned submersible called "Alvin".

Fossilisation cages, titanium mesh cages filled with a variety of control materials and biological substances such as mussel and clam shells, were deployed in May 2005 with the view to being recovered at yearly intervals to be taken back to the UK and examined. However, disaster struck later in the year when the entirety of the group's research equipment, including the cages themselves, were destroyed by an eruption of approximately 22 million cubic metres of lava.

Having to restart the entire project from scratch was a huge setback for the team, who had to redeploy cages and renegotiate ship times. However, as Dr. Little has said, he was aware that a similar eruption had occurred in the previous decade, and so was forewarned that it could happen again. And from disaster comes opportunity, as having to redeploy the cages meant that he was able to

take a deep-sea dive in Alvin, a rare opportunity.

Since restarting the project in November 2006, many questions about fossilization at hydrothermal vents have been answered. It is now clear that the location of remains in respect to the vents is important in determining fossilization, and that sulphide mineralisation only occurs in high temperature spots or areas where changes have occurred over time. An explanation has also been found as to why worm tubes and mollusc shells are more commonly

found fossilized, as they are able to resist chemical dissolution, as opposed to shrimp carapaces which disappeared in all of the cages.

Now that a greater understanding is held as to the process of preserving organisms around deep sea hydrothermal vents, the next stage is to study the early stages of this fossilization, meaning experiments with shorter durations and, hopefully, another trip for the researchers in Alvin.

Laura Bonifacii



Dr. Crispin in front of Alvin the submersible after his first dive.

Photo courtesy of Dr. Crispin Little

Do you have a passion for science and research? Would you like more science in *Leeds Student*? Email us with your science and research stories at [newsfeatures@leedsstudent.org](mailto:newsfeatures@leedsstudent.org)

# 'The two leading parties play games with drugs. They don't actually care about deaths'

Last weekend, Students for Sensible Drug Policy, a campaign group dedicated to scrutiny of national drug policy, held its annual conference at Leeds University Union. *Leeds Student's* Fliss Inkpen and Joey Severn spoke to two of the main speakers to see what they think of the current policies.

From intravenous heroin abuse in squats and alleyways to snorting cocaine in the highest apartments in London's financial district, there is no doubting the voracious appetite this country has for illegal drugs.

Every year, millions of Britons use ecstasy, cocaine, cannabis and everything in between, and for drug dealers, this means huge profit. This prompts the question of whether the policy of criminalisation, which so many in this country believe sacrosanct, is of any practical benefit.

In his talk at the Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) conference last week, Professor David Nutt, the former government drugs advisor who was sacked by Home Secretary Alan Johnson for speaking out against government policies, said: "Gordon Brown's view is formed in some other universe".

In giving an originally innocuous-seeming lecture about the tensions between politics and science in drug policy - which eventually brought to an end his tenure as chair of the Advisory Council of the Misuse of Drugs - Prof. Nutt not only attracted the chagrin of policymakers, but also forced the debate about the government's attitude towards drugs back into the arena of public debate.

Once the preserve of libertarian

philosophers and high minded stoners, arguments for the decriminalisation of drugs have been gaining favour in political circles for some time.

Steve Rolles, Director of Research at the Transform Drug Policy Foundation, thinks that this is down to the failure of the current approach taken by legislators:

"The war on drugs is not effective. It's not delivered upon its stated goals. It was started with the aim of creating a drug-free society and yet every year since it began drug production has risen, drugs have become more available, more people have used them and drug-related harms overall have increased. So it's consistently delivered the exact opposite of its stated goals.

"Worse than that, it's created a raft of secondary problems associated with the huge criminal market in dangerous drugs controlled by violent criminal entrepreneurs who are entirely profit-motivated. They have no concern for public health or the public good. Their only concern is profit."

And it's this criminal underworld, whose lifeblood is the money of drug users and which is the source of much wider social harms such as gun crime and robbery, which is one of the negative side-effects of prohibition.

Rolles added: "They're entirely unregulated and that effects far more than just drug users. Of course it affects drug users because their supply is intrinsically more dangerous and the products are more risky but it effects wider society in terms of crime on all scales.

"The bigger picture is war - I mean an actual war, not a rhetorical war - in countries like Afghanistan and Colombia, so it has catastrophic impacts across the world".

Prof. Nutt sees the problem as lying in the government's ignorance of actual scientific harms to do with drugs. He himself was chair of the body which released a harm ranking of drugs, both illegal and legal, which placed alcohol and tobacco above cannabis and ecstasy. But just how does one pin down an assessment of relative harm?

"Well that particular harm ranking was based on a scale I devised ten years ago," said Nutt.

"It disassociated the harms of drugs into nine separate parameters, some of which relate to the harm that the drug does to the person, and some of which relate to the harm which the drug does to

society, and then a third dimension which is the addictiveness of the drug. We got a whole body of experts to score each drug on those nine parameters and then we summed them up and we came up with this ranking."

But the Home Office didn't agree with this analysis, and were

## "Gordon Brown's view is formed in some other universe"

Prof. David Nutt

quick to disregard Nutt's findings and force him from his position. Alan Johnson, in a letter to Prof. Nutt, accused him of, "lobbying for a change in government policy".

The professor thinks this stems from a fundamental misunderstanding of the issue: "The level of the intellectual understanding of science by politicians is abysmal."

And the reluctance of politicians to engage in an open public debate about drugs policy can in no way help the development of the argument. Steve Rolles thinks this is just part of political careerism:

"Prohibition has very much been framed as a response to a threat, not just to our health but to our children, our borders, the very moral fabric of society and drugs are often cast as a kind of invading army. And once you've committed yourself to that it's a very absolutist, binary, good-versus-evil position and it's incredibly difficult to step away from because any move away from it is seen as retreat, surrender or weakness"

But an open forum of alternative approaches seems to be on the agenda in the near future, whether politicians like it or not.

A recent document from Transform, *After the War on Drugs: A Blueprint for Regulation*, considers options whereby currently illegal drugs could be sold in controlled ways, much like alcohol and tobacco are now, allowing the tax revenues that they generate - as well as the savings made in scaling back policing of the drug 'problem' - to help pay for, amongst other things, education about the harms of drugs and tackling the associated health issues.



QUESTIONS: Prof. Nutt speaks to students at the SSDP conference at LUU



"Drugs are here. They're not going away. Prohibition has not got rid of drugs. We have a choice - the market for drugs can either be controlled by gangsters or by governments and we're advocating the latter position".

Prof. Nutt is less forthcoming as to how he would like to see a post-prohibition Britain look, but he is in no doubt that the current system doesn't work:

"The first thing would be to wipe the slate clean and have a full systematic review of the drug laws so that we have a new Misuse of Drugs Act where there might be six or seven classes, who knows.

"I would have a deep review of the Dutch model and in particular the possibility of having cannabis available in some sort of regulated way with coffee shops."

Mr. Rolles knows the challenge that faces groups like his own isn't a small one, but seems confident that the tide will turn in favour of drug legalisation.

"I hope the new blueprint book will provide an opposition to the debate to move forward because one of the problems has been that when people talk about decriminalisation no one really knows what you're talking about and a lot of myths and misunderstandings fill that void so we hope that this book will provide a clear vision of what the alternatives are that people can get behind and debate around"

Of the current model of criminalisation, Rolles thinks: "No policy that's so transparently a failure can last forever, and so it will fall at some point and be replaced.

"The question is when that will happen, and we're just trying to bring that day nearer".

James Legge  
Photography: Joey Severn

For more info on the Transform Drug Policy Foundation, visit:  
<http://www.tdpf.org.uk/>



TRANSFORM: Steve Rolles talks about drug legalisation

# 'Whatever we wear, wherever we go.'



Reclaim the Night is now a worldwide movement. Since its inaugural march in 1977, it has given women a platform to stand up and raise their voices in unison. *Leeds Student's* Virginia Newman discovers how the movement has evolved and what it is asking for now.

Arm in arm, both young and old were united in chanting as the Reclaim the Night movement took to the streets to make their voices heard.

For the first time since 2006 hundreds of women joined together in an effort to highlight the current rape conviction rates, which organisers claim to be 'shockingly low'.

Rape Crisis England and Wales suggests that as few as 10 per cent of rape and sexual assaults are reported to the police; while in West Yorkshire, only around 8.3 per cent of cases result in a conviction. It is these figures that have prompted the re-birth of the movement in Leeds that has a history dating back over 25 years.

The strong turnout of over 300 people was testament to the current feelings of injustice and a genuine need for change. This year's event was timed to coincide with International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, on November 25.

Liv Bailey, NUS women's officer says that Reclaim the Night marches are more necessary than ever: "1 in 4 women will experience violence at some point in their lives, women are still afraid to walk the streets at night alone. The police and community still try to blame women if they are attacked and they have been drinking, or wearing a short skirt."

Sophia James echoed these sentiments: "Reclaim the Night will always be necessary whilst the emphasis is put on the victim for rape. Society will so often question why the individual was wearing a short skirt or low cut top or why they were stumbling around town drunk and alone, when what we really should be questioning is why

a man believes it is acceptable to force himself on woman. It is time that society realizes that it has a serious problem."

The carefully crafted route took in all the strip clubs in the town centre and covered several areas in which women have reported they feel vulnerable. The unity displayed on the night between the original and current generations of women was notable. The chants may have been updated, but there was a strong sense of a common purpose.

There was also an overwhelming atmosphere of support in the group between protesters of all genders, which was highlighted when the marchers faced down drunken cries of 'get your tits out for the lads' from a few bars. While the group *en masse* saw the cries as symptomatic of the still prevalent problems within society and merely drowned them out with chants, some peripheral male members took it upon themselves to answer to these claims in a more aggressive manner. In a march led by women, it was unfortunate to see some take their own lead.

Despite some confusion over whether organisers had correctly notified the police of the march, police were only a small presence and there was little more trouble. This was telling of the peaceful but powerful nature of the action.

In reaction to the event, Det Supt Ingrid Lee of West Yorkshire Police's Crime Division said: "Offences are often very difficult to prove as it is often one person's account against another. To deal with this, we have introduced a dedicated unit who are specially trained and highly skilled in investigating rape. They work

alongside dedicated lawyers from CPS and staff from STAR (Sexual Trauma After Rape) to ensure that the best possible victim care and evidence to prosecute is obtained."

The Reclaim the Night movement was originally formed at a time when the Yorkshire Ripper was still at large. At this time LUU passed an "anti-rape" motion placing a 'temporary curfew' on students in an attempt to protect students.

The attitude of putting the onus on women to stay off the streets was what sparked the Reclaim the Night movement. A look through issues of *Leeds Student* from the late 70s show a surprising lack of coverage of Reclaim the Night marches despite much coverage of other protests.

The attitudes of the time are visible in the news in brief section of November 3 1978 issue which read: "200 women, many of them students, marched through Leeds on Tuesday night in a reclaim the night march, to show that women walking at night have to stay in groups for safety." This article misrepresented the aims of the march.

There were also conflicts at this time between the attitudes of the University and the Union. The University introduced a night bus service, which is still going strong today, to ensure that female students got home safely. However, the capture of the Yorkshire Ripper nearly saw the service withdrawn.

Having previously funded the service, the University bursar proposed to cut this funding. In reaction, the Union passed a motion stating that the university should pay 90 per cent, and that just because Peter Sutcliffe (the

Yorkshire Ripper) had been caught, it didn't mean that it was safe for women to walk home alone.

The threats of sexual attacks and domestic abuse are still real for many women. A short but moving speech given by a woman who had lived on the streets and suffered sexual violence was given the longest applause. The most disappointing aspect of the event was that, unfortunately, neither the police or the unsympathetic politicians were present to hear it.

It was hoped that this would inspire sympathisers to spread the messages of the cause, and with such a good turnout for Reclaim the Night marches across the country over the past few weeks, the feminist movement appears to be regaining strength and purpose once more.

A new poll, conducted by Catherine Redfern for Reclaiming the F Word: The New Feminist Movement, has revealed that nearly half of feminists are under 25 years old, with almost three-quarters of the 1,300 surveyed saying they started to identify with being a feminist while still in their teens.

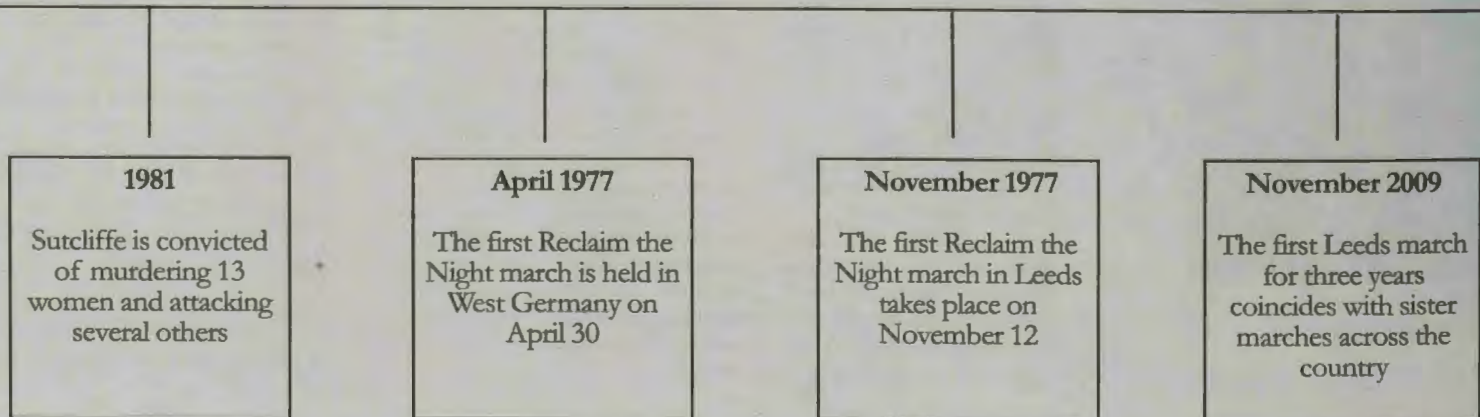
This contrasts to well known figures such as Margaret Atwood and Germaine Greer stating that they do not identify themselves as feminists.

There are hopes that the interest in these marches, along with the resurgence in the movement they signify, will strengthen campaigns by similar groups.

Liv Bailey commented: "The rape conviction rate is an absolute disgrace, and immediate and thorough action must be taken.

"Police attitudes towards

From top to bottom: Liv Bailey, NUS Womens' Officer; police talking to main organiser Leanie Sutheran; the small resistance; Sophia James, LUU Equality and Diversity Officer.





# Yes means yes and no means no.'

survivors of rape are one of the many things that must change. If enough women join the campaign, I have no doubt that we can raise the conviction rate."

These positive signs appear to be bearing fruit with West Yorkshire police reporting that during December 2008 whilst the awareness campaign was underway, there was a 26 per cent reduction in serious sexual offences in the county.

Chief Superintendent Barry South of Local Policing said: "I would urge everyone to drink responsibly and avoid making

themselves vulnerable through binge drinking.

"I hope that this campaign will make people sit up and take note of these simple measures, to keep themselves out of trouble."

Police have also made moves toward change with the '16 Days of Action Against Violence Against Women and Children' campaign which sees the launch of the city's new domestic violence strategy for 2008-2011.

Despite this admirable campaign another initiative launched for the coming festive period by police, telling women to

'Stay safe this Christmas', seems to show that things haven't changed at all.

The onus of responsibility is again on the women to 'know your limits', 'stay with your friends' and to get a licensed taxi home.

Good advice granted, but the poster also reads: 'too drunk alone' which can be only seen as placing the blame on the shoulders of the woman.

The question needs to be raised as to why men are not being advised to drink responsibly this festive period. The Reclaim the Night campaigners take issue with

such treatments of these issues and ask why it is too idealistic to look for the day when any taxi home is safe.

Despite this seemingly ill-worded campaign, plans have already begun for a Reclaim the Night march next year, which is hoped will continue to good work started by this new generation of activists inspired by their predecessors.

Photos: Richard Smith



THE MAIN TARGETS: The protesters made their point heard especially outside Leeds' lap dancing and strip clubs



Passionate protesters hold their signs high

# Uni win in York-over

## Women's Lacrosse

Leeds Uni 2nds 21-1 York 2nds  
Chris Stevenson

In a hugely one-sided encounter, a weak York side were crushed by a free-scoring Leeds side that are cantering towards the Northern Conference 2A title.

Having scored a massive 85 times in their previous four games, they continued their good form to dominate the game and keep York under constant pressure.

An explosive start clearly rattled the technically inferior opposition as Leeds racked up an 8-0 lead by the end of the first quarter. Liv Matthias and Charlotte Greene were at the centre of much of the play, with Greene finishing two good passing moves in the opening 10 minutes with some smart running to create space. Sue Edwardes also scored after some impressive build-play from Lucy Preston and Matthias.

York could not get over the halfway line for much of the quarter with poor passing and pick-ups letting them down. On the odd occasion when York did threaten, the Leeds defence were quick to close them down and force mistakes.

In the second quarter the domination continued with Leeds

setting up camp in the York half. Ant Dobson worked space to score after a sustained period of pressure involving goals from Edwards and Laura Chapman.

Matthias herself a goal after a smart turn away from her marker, and got another near the end of the quarter.

## The match was starting to look more like a practice game for the home side

While the score line was impressive Leeds' play began to get sloppier with passes starting to go astray and chances being missed, it didn't help that York were allowing the home team the time and space to make these errors with little hope of being punished for their complacency.

After a stern talking to at the break about not rushing to the net so often and trying to slow the pace of their play around the net, Leeds

again made a strong start in the third quarter with goals from Lucy Chapman and Greene.

While the whole attacking unit began to play with more fluidity, especially when coming from behind the net.

The match was starting to look more like a practice game for the home side, but a York goal lifted the spirits of the visitors and they began to exert some pressure of their own.

Nonetheless the away team could not stop conceding with good finishes from Danni Barber and Rosie Afia, the latter resulting from a great pass by Katy Franklin.

By the end of the third, the score was 14-1 and York were starting to look very tired. Leeds capitalised on this to crash in a further seven goals in the final period, to put a hefty gloss on the final score, with Chapman, Barber, Edwardes and Mathias all netting.

Having now scored 106 goals and only conceded 10 in five games, it seems that promotion is only a matter of when and not if.

## Player of the Match Charlotte Greene

Her smart runs, impressive passing and quality finishing, set the tone for the rest of the team.

# Wet wet win

## Cross Country

Leeds Relays  
Matty Sutton

Leeds teams ran well on home ground at the weekend against tough competition. The Women's A team were overall winners while Leeds' Men's A came in fourth.

The 3 km course was run on grass on the Bodington fields and included a brutal 100 metre hill on the final stretch.

Near constant rain prior to the race and a freezing fog on the day made for tough conditions and a boggy course that hindered the achievement of fast times.

The event, organized entirely by Leeds students and associates went smoothly, with a great turn out from Leeds runners as well as local teams and British universities.

The three-member Women's A team completed the three leg relay in a time of 38 minutes 57 seconds. Mary Ferrier, Leeds Women's Race Captain ran in as second fastest woman with a time of 12.25.

Mary commented that she was "very proud" of all the teams and said it had been a "great day all round". She gave special mention to "veteran runner" Sarah Graham and Katrine Suave, a foreign

student who is studying in Leeds for this semester.

The Women's E team beat the D team with help from Sarah Graham who ran the third leg for the E team immediately after racing for the A's.

The six-runner Men's teams ran well with the A team placing fourth out of 23 teams.

Dave Burtle, the Men's Race Captain, praised Alex Bellow for his rapid 10.55 lap and said he was "really impressed by the first year".

## The Women's A Team were overall winners, while Leeds' Men's A came in fourth.

He said the men's performance was excellent considering the "pretty horrible conditions."

Club Captain Max Sanders congratulated volunteers for the day's success which was a tribute to the hard work of the whole club.

ENDSLEIGH

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# LS Sport

COMMENT

## THE WEEK IN NUMBERS

33rd

The position Ireland won't occupy in the World Cup next year.

3 under par

discrections Tiger Woods has been accused of this week.

3

wood

Work it out for yourself.

## PUNDIT WATCH



"I hope the match will be an opportunity to meet Elton John!"

Carlo Ancelotti will be taking his autograph book to Vicarage Road come January, for Chelsea's FA Cup tie against Watford.

# Sports Personality?

It is that time of the year again, when the great and good of sport come together to bathe in the excellence of their achievements over the last year.

The name of this annual celebration is Sports Personality of the Year, and it is this award that all in sport strive to win.

But of late, the meaning of the word 'personality' seems to have been forgotten by the voting public, and instead it appears that 'sports person of the year' is awarded.

While not an abomination of an award, it does miss the point of the coveted camera-shaped trophy: to celebrate not only achievement but also a sports person who adds something to their sport, someone who is fun and exciting, someone who you wish to watch receiving an award.

Although Sir Chris Hoy and Joe Calzaghe, the previous two winners, are both phenomenal sportsmen and do have more of a personality than other recipients - Greg Rusedski, Lennox Lewis or

Zara Phillips perhaps - they still somewhat pale in comparison to 1982 champion Daley Thompson, Sports Personality of the Century Muhammad Ali or more recently International Sports Personality of the year 2008 Usain Bolt.

So is there anyone this year on the 13th of December in Sheffield that will at last deserve the award for both sporting excellence and actually being in possession of a personality?

Tom Daley, Ryan Giggs and Beth Tweddle have neither reached the pinnacle of their respective sports nor do they have the qualities that constitute a personality.

Mark Cavendish does, but being the best sprint cyclist Britain has ever had, yet not the best in the world right now, does not quite make him deserving of winning, and despite moving forwards in his career, Andy Murray is simply a corpse that can play tennis.

The only nominees who have both achievement and personality



are Jenson Button, Jessica Ennis and David Haye.

But they should not win because there is one who deserves it more; the one man to have reached the top of his sport and the only person on the list who has the personality to give any respectability back to the award is Phillips Idowu.

After finally winning a World Championship gold in the triple jump, he has at least delivered on the promise he has shown for so long, and he is also one of the most interesting and exciting people in sport.

Idowu truly has a personality; he is one of the few people that you would actually pay attention to at the end of an interview.

That is why he deserves to win, not only because of what he has achieved but because it would help to revive this award that is suffering a possibly terminal identity crisis.

James Green

## Watch out Fedders

There has been, and always will be, golden boys in sport. In the 70s it was Best, the 80s Borg, the 90s Gascoigne.

In this current generation, we are witness to the superfluous talents of Tiger Woods, Thierry Henry and Roger Federer; arguably three of the greatest sports stars of the decade, if not of all time.

• A certain male shaving products company has latched on to this - all three men are perfectly marketable for the idyllic, gentlemanly personalities that they undoubtedly possess.

They are the epitome of a sports star: kind-hearted, fair playing and intelligent, as well as being the best in the world at what they do.

Unfortunately, this image of the gentleman superstar has come under a blitzing firing squad over the last two weeks.

Henry's 'Le hand of God' incident has landed him in some serious *merde* of late, with the Irish population vociferously fuming at their exclusion from the World Cup through his cheating shenanigans, and the rest of the world looking on with disappointment that a man of such glorious stature did not have the testicles to own up to his crime there and then.

Woods has also been in the spotlight this week for the wrong reasons, with allegations of personal internal affairs rife in the international media.

Such speculation has led him to make a public apology to his family and friends about events leading up to him wrapping a Cadillac round a fire hydrant.

Roger must be getting scared. The curse of the golden Gillette boys has struck twice in quick succession.

To make things worse, he has just entered the tennis close season, where he is now left to his own devices for a month over the heavy drinking period that is the Christmas holidays.

Don't be surprised if pictures of old Roger posing nude on the drunken streets of Zurich, a Smirnoff in one hand and pretty little lady in the other, are splattered all over the Boxing Day tabloids.

The Golden Boys of the Noughties' era has almost ended. It's nearly time for Theo, Wayne and Andrew to step up and show how they will successfully manage to cock up in their most pivotal career moments.

Joe Short

## Face-off Blatter

Fifa president Sepp Blatter this week buffered proposals to introduce video technology into football.

Despite much clamouring from a footballing community outraged by the illegitimate presence of France in the forthcoming World Cup Finals draw, Blatter and his cronies at the Fifa executive committee argue that it is vital football maintains its 'human face'.

The bizarre and somewhat ambiguous comment is at best a strange one. It seems nothing short of preposterous to suggest that the use of video technology, only for key incidents, could in any way result in a lessening of the sport's human characteristics.

Perhaps Blatter ought to watch back the replay of Thierry Henry's now infamous goal against France. Even his chubby fingers could find the right button combination to pause the footage as Shay Given appeals desperately in vain to the referee.

Given's is a 'human face', right? It's a look of desperation, anguish and outright injustice - a face of human emotion in the extreme. Is this the kind of human face Blatter seeks to retain?

Ten years ago rugby union first introduced video technology at the World Cup and yet few seem to have accused the sport of becoming somehow less human.

Similarly tennis is not, to my

knowledge, often considered as having a 'mechanical face' as a consequence of its use of Hawk-Eye video technology.

Blatter points to the game's written rules to justify his stubbornness.

"The laws of the game clearly say that with foul play it is the opinion of the referee that counts", he tells us as if this was not an obvious fact.

Of course it is the opinion of the referee that counts, but, as Blatter himself acknowledges, three officials cannot spot everything.

Why then should the official not be able to make a perfectly rational choice to refer to the video monitor if he believes he may have missed, for example, a handball on the goal line?

Let us remember that the decision would not be taken by some kind of auto-bot, but simply by another official viewing the incident again with their own eyes.

It isn't as though every decision a referee makes is instantaneous anyway. The capacity to momentarily pause and consider an incident retrospectively rather than make a snap judgment is vital to any good official.

I'm not sure even Blatter himself quite knew precisely what he meant by arguing that video technology would detract from, the 'human face' of football.

Michael Glenister



Photo: Richard Smith

**BUCS round-up:** A mixed week for the fencing teams with the 1sts losing to Manchester while the 2nds beat Bradford.

There were some good results for the football teams with both the Men's and

Women's 1sts winning to consolidate their position at the top of their respective leagues. Women's hockey 1sts beat top of the table Newcastle to cap-off a pretty successful week for the club as the majority of the teams won.



**Badminton**

Leeds University Men's 1sts 2 - 6 Sheffield 1sts  
Leeds University Men's 2nds 0 - 8 Northumbria 1sts

**Basketball**

Leeds University Men's 1sts 95 - 65 Sheffield 1sts  
Leeds University Men's 2nds 53 - 56 York 1sts  
Leeds University Women's 47 - 65 MMU Cheshire

**Fencing**

Leeds University Men's 1sts 118 - 125 Manchester 1sts  
Leeds University Men's 2nds 119 - 117 Bradford 1sts

**Football**

Leeds Gryphons Men's 1sts 1 - 0 Birmingham 1sts  
Leeds Gryphons Men's 2nds 6 - 2 Newcastle 2nds  
Leeds Gryphons Men's 4ths 2 - 2 York St John 3rds  
Leeds University Women's 1sts 3 - 1 Sheffield 1sts  
Leeds University Women's 2nds 1 - 1 Sheffield Hallam 2nds

**Hockey**

Leeds Gryphons Men's 1sts 4 - 4 Nottingham Trent 1sts  
Leeds Gryphons Men's 2nds 2 - 2 Durham 3rds  
Leeds Gryphons Men's 3rds 1 - 3 Newcastle 2nds  
Leeds Gryphons Men's 5ths 6 - 3 Sheffield Hallam 3rds  
Leeds Gryphons Men's 6ths 1 - 4 Leeds Met 3rd  
Leeds Gryphons Women's 1sts 2 - 1 Newcastle 1sts  
Leeds University Women's 2nds 2 - 3 Leeds Met 2nds  
Leeds Gryphons Women's 3rds 4 - 2 Newcastle 3rds

Leeds Gryphons Women's 4ths 1 - 0 Northumbria  
Leeds Gryphons Women's 5ths 6 - 3 Sheffield 3rds

**Lacrosse**

Leeds University Men 5 - 27 Sheffield Hallam 1sts  
Leeds University Women's 1sts 7 - 14 Durham 2nds  
Leeds University Women's 2nds 21 - 1 York 2nds

**Netball**

Leeds Gryphons 1sts 27 - 62 Loughborough 1sts  
Leeds Gryphons 2nds 29 - 22 Sheffield Hallam 1sts  
Leeds Gryphons 3rds 22 - 23 Sheffield Hallam 2nds  
Leeds Gryphons 4ths 61 - 9 Sunderland 2nds

**Rugby League**

Leeds Gryphons 1sts 10 - 38 Liverpool John Moores 1sts

**Rugby Union**

Leeds Gryphons Men's 1sts 12 - 6 Manchester 1sts  
Leeds Gryphons Men's 2nds 34 - 5 Teeside 1sts  
Leeds University Women's 15 - 28 MMU Cheshire 1sts

**Squash**

Leeds University Men's 2nds 0 - 5 Northumbria 1sts  
Leeds University Men's 3rds 1 - 2 Huddersfield 1sts

**Tennis**

Leeds University Men's 1sts 1 - 9 Sheffield Hallam 1sts  
Leeds University Men's 2nds 0 - 10 York 1sts  
Leeds Gryphons Women's 1sts 2 - 8 Loughborough  
Leeds University Women's 2nds 6 - 4 Durham 3rds

**Volleyball**

Leeds University Men's 3 - 1 Leeds Met 2nds  
Leeds University Women's 3 - 1 Manchester 1sts

# On the Brink of success

## Gryphons



**Men's Football**

Leeds Gryphons 2nds 6 - 2 Newcastle 2nds  
*Jamie Prosser*

Leeds Gryphons 2nds maintained their 100 per cent record with a second half master class over Newcastle at Weetwood on Wednesday.

Gary Brinkhurst hit four goals to cement top place in the Northern Conference 3B and a nine point cushion with over half the season now played.

Newcastle applied the early pressure, pinning the Gryphons back in their own half for much of the opening twenty minutes.

Leeds attacks were restricted to long balls, but Mike Ward was holding the

ball up well to bring his team mates into the game.

The home side's first real chance came and Matt McCracken raced to keep the ball in, but Brinkhurst's snapshot was cleared off the line, having beaten the away keeper.

A Thomas Pawley foul gave the visitors a free kick in a dangerous area soon afterwards but was well saved by Matt Nyong in goal.

He didn't have to wait long however, to give the hosts the lead. Captain Drew Tyler drilled a ball into the box, which Ward dummied for Brinkhurst to turn and clip a beautiful finish into the bottom corner.

Ward himself could have made it two just before half time, as the Gryphons went in at the break with a narrow, but deserved lead.

Just five minutes into the second half Brinkhurst was played through again, forcing a smart save. Yet it was a miss the home side would regret, as Nyong spilled a shot into the path of an onrushing striker just three minutes later, who gleefully slid in the equaliser.

It came as a hammer blow to the hosts, who immediately stepped up their game, retaking the lead within five

minutes.

McCracken broke the offside trap and squared the ball for the impressive Ward to smartly finish into the centre of the goal.

And the win was secured soon after as Tyler's free kick crept into the bottom corner after Ward's dummy. The lead was soon three as poor control from the Newcastle keeper gave Brinkhurst the simplest of finishes.

Yet just as the hosts looked to relax and enjoy the win, Nyong's poor punch gifted Newcastle a lifeline, volleyed expertly into the unguarded goal to make it 4-2.

Brinkhurst grabbed two more before then end, ensuring his side remained the team to beat this season.

**Player of the Match**

Gary Brinkhurst

Scored four goals, and it could have been more. Made dangerous runs throughout and was deadly in front of goal.

## Gryphons Player of the Month: Natasha Khatib

Despite a disappointing month in which her struggling side were defeated narrowly by Newcastle and suffered heavy losses against both Loughborough and Leeds Met, Netball captain Natasha Khatib provided some shining performances.

With a squad of limited size, Khatib has often been forced to rotate the side and has shown her own versatility appearing at both centre and goal attack, where she has combined well with fellow attackers, Charlotte Elvidge, Carly Hobday and Charlotte South.

Leeds' next fixture will see them face Edinburgh in a relegation decider. If Khatib can continue her run of form it will provide Leeds with a huge boost.

**the big debate:**

# Pass-sport to success

With the England cricket team controversially about to field half a squad of foreign-born players for their tour of South Africa, *LS Sport* asks: **Should athletes be allowed to play for their adopted countries?**

It ruins sporting credibility

Josh Powling

**G**oeffrey Boycott's cries of "For crying out loud, he's English now," were voiced during England's drubbing by South Africa last week.

The precocious Yorkshireman was responding to the cacophony of boos that rang out around Newlands in Cape Town as South Africa's favourite pantomime villain Kevin Pietersen walked out to the middle to open his innings.

The second ODI was very much a case of 'our South African players are better than yours,' as England fielded a side that had only six players born in the country. Jonathan Trott, Pieterse, Matt Prior and Andrew Strauss were all born in South Africa, while Eoin Morgan hails from Dublin.

While this does not say much about England producing talented cricketers of its own, all the 'South Africans' have one English parent, and Prior and Strauss moved to England when they were both very young.

The mass of England fans are not likely to complain as long as success keeps coming their way, as Trott's popularity shows after his 118 against Australia at the Oval, but problems cannot be ignored.

The most glaring problem with the current system is the inclusion of Irish players in the England team: notably Ed Joyce and Eoin Morgan playing for England over the past few years.

While this is all fair under current ECB regulations, and both play for English counties, Roy Torrens, the Ireland coach complained of getting "the raw end of the stick the whole time".

England, are not the only ones guilty of 'poaching', as Dirk Nannes now plays for Australia, after representing the Netherlands in their victory over England in the ICC World Twenty20 just months before.

There are many examples from other sports, such as Kiwi-born Dylan Hartley finding a place in the English Rugby Union team.

Years later, some are still confused as to whether Zinedine Zidane is French or Algerian (born in France, he holds joint citizenship), while Trinidad and Tobago fielded Stafford-born midfielder Chris Birchall in their squad for the 2006 Fifa World Cup, as his mother was born in Port of Spain.

The Olympics is not amiss to such controversy either, with Abdullah Ahmad Hassan - former Kenyan track medallist - now plying his trade for Qatar in the Olympic set up.

There could be a case for all the major sporting governing bodies (FIFA, IRB, ICC etc.) to sit down and hammer out one set of rules across the board.

The problem is that many of the cases discussed are where someone holds dual-nationality because their parents are of different nationalities to where they were born.

While I might not be happy as an English cricket fan to see the next Kevin Pietersen playing for South Africa rather than England, the problem needs to be addressed for the sake of credibility in sport.

Who are we to judge?

Raynal Somiah

**W**ith the English cricket team currently taking on South Africa this winter, the issue of athletes choosing to play for their adopted countries has been brought to the fore once again.

Much has been said about the fact that four out of the starting XI players were born over there, so it's not unusual that questions are being asked over whether certain players should have even been allowed to represent England.

After all, representing a nation or team at international level is not like any other job; there's the question of national pride, loyalty and commitment.

While accepting the tricky nature of this problem, I personally believe that within reason athletes should be allowed to adopt different national allegiances.

Why? Mainly because the personal circumstances surrounding an athlete's decision to do so is often varied and much more complicated than initially thought.

The role and influence of modern day immigration patterns is one factor that should be taken into consideration.

With this in mind, both Kevin Pieterse and Jonathan Trott have as much claim to being English as Andrew Strauss and Matt Prior, with all four having half-English parentage.

Yes, many will argue that the former were raised for the majority of their lives outside England but who are we to determine their level of patriotism towards their chosen country without having any in-depth knowledge or understanding of their upbringings?

Furthermore, the contributions of these

two players have been critical towards the success of the national team recently, thus their commitment and desire to do well for England cannot really be brought into question.

Besides, the definition of what constitutes 'choosing' to play for another country can be quite blurred at times.

This can be seen in the case of the French and even the German national football teams. An overwhelming majority of the players have origins outside France, some of who were born outside the country too.

If that were to be taken into consideration alone then some might say that they have no direct heritage or claim to be playing for France.

But this viewpoint is redundant; given that the players concerned were raised in the country they proudly represent and had developed and honed their game there.

Surely this has to count for something, especially given that this proves that patriotism, pride and loyalty are things that can also be developed out of circumstance and choice too.

In athletics however, the issue has been even more contentious with the example of nations such as Qatar and Bahrain effectively buying the allegiance of athletes from outside the country.

Former Kenyan athletes Stephen Cherono and Albert Chepkurui are prime examples of this, and while there is a clear case to argue against it, I also feel that the actions of these sportsmen can be justified too.

It has previously been expressed that despite their successful achievements on the track, many Kenyan athletes struggle to earn and live off their talents, thus making the prospect of earning and living more securely elsewhere rather alluring.

Overall the debate surrounding the issue is one that is not likely to go away any time soon while the matter is simply not as clear-cut as one might anticipate.



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# Uni Burnt in Searing contest

## Boxing

Queenswood Social Club  
Thursday 26th November  
*By Jonathan*

Last Thursday Queenswood Social Club hosted the unofficial boxing Varsity. On a fourteen-bout card of amateur boxing Uni provided four fighters, with three squaring up against the Met.

Despite a spirited performance from the club as a whole Uni lost two of their three Varsity bouts.

Club captain and debutant Nathan Sears provided Uni with their only victory of the night. Sears beat Met's James Timmis by a unanimous decision 13-12, 11-9, 8-7, to become North Eastern 75kg Champion.

This was by no means an easy victory, the former Tae Kwon Do specialist having to overcome a series of difficulties. Sears suffered a shoulder injury in the weeks leading up to the fight, and had to survive a an eight count late on and an early onslaught from Timmis, whose busy style whipped up a frenzy among Met's strong contingent of supporters.

Despite Timmis's industry, Sears consistently picked up points through the round, capitalising on any openings afforded him. It was the accuracy of Sears's counter-punching and good footwork that highlighted the marked difference between the fighters.

Sears's patient approach contrasted with Timmis, who seemed at points intent on turning the bout into a brawl. Sears's right jab continually found its mark as he weaved around Timmis's flurries, ducking out of range and capitalising on an exposed guard to score with a succession of combos.

Despite a flailing miss-punch early on in the second, Sears controlled the two-minute round. The pair traded for much of the second minute, Timmis forcing Sears into the corner for a brief period but he failed to score heavily. Sears regained his composure landing a couple of clean lefts of his own to end the round.

In the third round a Sears victory looked in doubt for the first time when Timmis breached Sears's guard with a clean right hand to the left eye sending Sears to the canvas. Sears, nonetheless, survived the resulting eight count.

Asked after the fight whether he was at all worried whether the knock down could have effected the result, Sears said "I thought, how dare he! To be honest I saw it more as a challenge than a threat. I thought it might have affected my score on the card, I didn't realise I was actually up at that point. I had to come back stronger. I was more angry than upset or hurt, so I just tried to over power him."

And come back with power was exactly what Sears did. The Club captain left his opponent rocked with a left hand over the top that caught him square in the face. The bout ended with the fighters trading combos.

In the final round Sears became less reserved, but the knock down left him with little option other than to move on to the front foot for the first time despite a reluctance to throw too many punches with his injured shoulder.

In the 81 kg North Eastern Counties Final, former Club captain and club veteran James Oliver had perhaps the toughest bout of the night. His opponent two times BUCS champion James Burn proved too disciplined. Oliver threw a lot of punches and was busier throughout.

The volume of punches, however, did not translate into points, with the fight resulting in a unanimous decision 3-2, 4-3, 8-2. While Oliver was unable to score with any frequency his industry kept his opponents scoring opportunities to a minimum.

The first and second rounds were both tight with only a point between the fighters in each. As the second round progressed, Burn began to come on to the front foot as he tried to establish a lead over Oliver. A loose left jab, however, was countered well by Oliver with a strong right over the top.



**HITTING OUT:** Uni's James Oliver (above, left) and Nathan Sears (below, right)

Photos: Josh Landy

The third round cemented Burn's victory, scoring heavily. Burn's footwork proved too good for Oliver who said after the fight.

"He was so fast. In the second round I was trying to slog him and trying to get inside him. Half way through the final round I remember thinking I can't beat this guy. I don't know how to beat him.

"I planned to feint him and come on the inside. I thought that would work, it works on most people. I didn't expect his feet to be that fast, I didn't expect him to be that calibre."

In the 59 kg division Uni's Stephen Jones fought the taller Kieron Devonish of the Met. Like Sears, this was Jones's first bout compared to Devonish who has had ten bouts. The Uni fighter was certainly the busier of the two, but suffered from the height disadvantage, unable to get within the more experienced fighter's reach.

In the second Jones began to walk on to Devonish's punches throwing stray right hands of his own. Just as in the second, the third followed the same pattern, with Devonish punishing Jones with body shots. The scorecard reflected Jones's inability to get at Devonish losing 7-2, 9-3, 6-2 in what was another low scoring bout.

The final bout of the night

Sears's right jab continually found its mark, ducking out of range and capitalising on an exposed guard to score with a succession of combos.

between Dan Cleal and James Ritson of Northumbria University in the 71 kg weight class was a very close affair. Ritson was the more aggressive fighter scoring well.

In the second round the fighters traded well, Cleal pinning Ritson in the corner with a succession of good punches to the body but Ritson still managed to edge the round.

Cleal, however, showed his quickerfeet in the third when it was too late to retrieve the bout - losing by majority decision 13-9, 7-6, 7-8.

Oliver said of the club's ambitions for the future. "The Met have larger sports facilities than we do so they can actually box in their own campus. Where as for us the space in the sports centre is very limited.

"We all box out of the same place and I would consider the Met, maybe not this year but certainly last year, the best boxing university out there.

"We get better sparring, if we're sparring with the Met, we get more experience. I don't want to use the term we're coming up on their coat tails but it helps us."

Both Sears and Oliver agree that the future looks bright for boxing at the University with Gryphons status on the horizon, both can foresee the Uni becoming one of the best boxing universities in the next few years.



# Gryphons grind past Manchester to strengthen promotion charge

## Gryphons



### Men's Rugby Union

Leeds Gryphons 1sts 12 - 6  
Manchester 1sts

David Pritchard

Rugby union is supposedly a sport in crisis, and its ailing reputation will hardly have been enhanced by the Leeds Gryphons' laboured 12-6 win over Manchester.

Leeds will care little for aesthetics, however, as the result consolidates their place at the top of the league.

Two Gryphons tries were rare highlights that proved enough to earn the home side an eighth win from nine games this season.

Last month's uninspiring, low-scoring autumn internationals saw rugby union criticised by spectators and media, and such dreariness was reflected by a stuttering opening to this fixture.

A tendency from both teams to boot possession away was particularly symptomatic of the sport's current trend of monotonous kicking exchanges.

And when Leeds eventually decided to keep ball in hand, a litter of handling errors continued to puncture any potentially flowing phases of play.

The exasperation of a reasonably sized crowd was articulated by the coaching staff's sighs and lamentations of "poor execution."

A simple penalty gave Manchester the lead, and it was this first score that appeared to rouse the home side into action.

Having worked their way to the visitors' twenty-two metre line, Leeds began to play with purpose and rhythm, with Duncan Pollock the orchestrator at scrum-half.

As the attack moved out wide, outside-centre Matthew Milsom straightened the line of attack with an arrowing run, before passing to Hubert Brown who finished the move neatly. Tom Platt added the conversion to give the Gryphons a 7-3 lead.

Despite this brief flourish, however, the half was fittingly concluded with a knock-on.

After such a fragmented first period, it was a relief that the second half began brightly.

An incisive break from Milsom tore a gaping hole in the Manchester defence, which was exploited by Cokell, whose simple run-in extended the advantage to nine points.

The visitors hit back with a penalty to reduce the deficit to 12-6, and the match appeared to be in danger of becoming exciting.

The threat of entertainment was subdued, however, by a succession of one-dimensional Manchester attacks and yet more kicking from both sides.

Leeds were twice reduced to fourteen players, with Cokell and



FACE-OFF: Leeds (right) prepare for a scrum in their stop-start win over Manchester

Photo: Joey Severn

Milsom each spending ten minutes in the sin bin. Even with these periods of numerical superiority, though, Manchester were unable to seize the initiative.

A combination of their own predictability going forward and a resolute Leeds defence meant that the visitors' long stays in the

Gryphons' half were in vain.

It came as no surprise that Manchester's best chance came from a kick, but a surge to the line that came as a result of a high, cross-field punt was halted by some stout resistance on the home tryline.

Assistant coach Matty

Cartwright afforded himself a wry smile as he reflected on the narrow victory. "Today's performance was different, to say the least."

"We made it hard for ourselves. The pitch wasn't great so it was difficult underfoot, but we did well to hold them off and come away with a win."

# Classy Loughborough outwit Leeds

## Gryphons



### Women's Netball

Leeds Gryphons 1sts 27 - 62  
Loughborough 1sts

Sarah Green

The Gryphon's difficult return to the BUCS Premier North continued last Wednesday as they endured a comprehensive defeat at the hands of league leaders Loughborough.

The transition to the top division following promotion last season has been tough, and Leeds still have some way to go if they are to truly compete at this level.

More worrying than the evident gap in quality between the sides was the appearance from the outset that the Gryphons didn't believe an upset was possible.

Emma Heyes, playing at Centre in the first quarter, continually squandered her opening pass, failing to find a teammate on her first three centres.

Passing was consistently uncertain throughout the team, and although there were some glimmers of incisive play by Heyes and Carly Hobdam, the Gryphons were continually unable to move the ball into scoring positions.

Charlotte South, playing at Goal Shooter for the majority of the game, was undoubtedly the Gryphon's most reliable player.

Opportunities, however, were extremely limited, particularly in the first half of the match, and she spent periods in isolation.

Despite trailing 36-9 at the half time break, Leeds did appear willing to make



Photo: Sarah Greene

changes in order to avoid embarrassment.

Katie Williams was brought on as Wing Attack and her energy and hunger for the ball gave the Gryphons a spark that they had lacked before.

Her impact seemed instant. Only a minute into the third quarter she orchestrated a move that saw her make a short pass at the halfway line, before and sprinting diagonally across the court to the left of the scoring D.

In position for a return ball, her high pass sailed over the heads of the defence for South to score.

Leeds opened the fourth quarter with similar strength, and South displayed her class with three points in two minutes from increasingly difficult positions, the last of which was from the very edge of the shooting area.

Despite these moments of hope, Loughborough were unforgiving, and refused to let Leeds back into the game.

If Leeds are to improve, they need to be less reliant upon South for points.

She was resilient throughout, but as the match proceeded she was faced with two markers.

Frustratingly Heyes, moved to Goal Attack for the second half, persistently took on the almost impossible pass rather than shooting herself.

Relegation now looms, but a victory away to bottom of the table Edinburgh next week should be enough to avoid this eventuality.

The team will hope to improve if they are to make any impact on next year's championship round.

### Player of the Match Katie Williams

Although Charlotte South was impeccable as Goal Shooter, her supply was sorely lacking until the introduction of Williams' energy and drive.



## Marsh marches Leeds to victory

### Gryphons

### Women's Hockey

Leeds Gryphons 1sts 2 1 Newcastle 1sts

Leeds Gryphons delivered a gutsy display to outclass top of the table Newcastle 2-1. The victory came on the back of a loss against Liverpool last week that saw the uni side despondent even though they had dominated the game.

Wednesday's game saw the home side learn from their mistakes from the previous week, and it was Becky Marsh's brace that was the difference between the teams.

Solid defending limited Newcastle to a solitary goal, closing the gap between the two teams in the BUCS 1A Northern Conference to just three points.

### Women's Northern Conference 1A

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Newcastle	8	4	3	1	15
Durham	8	4	1	3	13
Leeds	7	4	0	3	12
Northumbria	7	3	2	2	11
Liverpool	8	3	2	3	11
John Moores	8	1	0	7	3

The visitors gave their opponents a very early scare, and only good communication from keeper Anna Gordon and Nic Pether prevented Newcastle getting off to a lightning fast start.

The early scare stiffened Uni's resolve, and soon they surged forward in numbers, making the visitors look decidedly ordinary.

Most of the attacking play pivoted around forwards Rachel Scotland and Anna Gamble in the early period, ably supported by Marsh and Sarah Gibbins.

Sustained pressure forced successive short corners, and on the second Charley Green set up Marsh, whose smart deflection opened the scoring for Uni.

From then on it was all one way;

the home side ruing the amount of scoring opportunities they failed to convert in the first half. Marsh had another shot saved after incisive work by Laura Sugar, while Gamble and Green both had their efforts saved by the Newcastle keeper.

In the dying seconds of the first half careless defensive work in Leeds' own third resulted in a Newcastle equaliser completely against the run of play.

The Gryphons had to do without one of their centre backs for the majority of the game, as Pether was forced from the field mid-way through the first period after taking a ball to the upper arm.

However, the re-organisation could not derail them, with Sugar and captain Kit Higgins rarely looking troubled in defence.

Newcastle's newfound parity did not last long, as three straight short corners resulted in another Becky Marsh goal, with Green turning provider again.

However, this lead came under threat immediately, with one of Newcastle's few attacks looking to have yielded a certain goal, until Gordon pulled off a wonder save in the Leeds goal.

Uni continued to do the majority of the pressing even though they led 2-1, with Newcastle forced to rely on the counter attack throughout the second half.

Gamble was visibly on form, holding the ball up superbly, often under pressure from two Newcastle defenders. She will undoubtedly be annoyed that she did not at least net one goal from the excess of chances she created for herself.

Charlie Cremin and Tash Kay turned in solid cameo performances late on, with the latter looking a completely transformed player from the previous week.

After a last minute scare, which saw Marsh deny Newcastle an equaliser off the line with Gordon stranded, the umpire finally blew the whistle on an exhilarating performance.

Leeds now stand third in the league with a game in hand over title rivals Durham and defeated opponents Newcastle.

### Player of the Match Becky Marsh

Outstanding performances from so many players, but Marsh got both of the Gryphons goals.



**HAIL TO THE KING:** Nathan Sears hails his supporters during his 75 kg victory

Photo: Josh Landy

## Uni take heart from Varsity defeat

The Leeds University Boxing Club stood toe-to-toe with an experienced Leeds Met team. Despite Uni winning only one of their four bouts, Nathan Sears's impressive display provided the Uni with

substantial consolation.

It was, however, Met's night, winning the inaugural Varsity Shield 2-1.

See page 22 for the boxing Varsity report.