



Tinie Tempah: gig review & interview  
Plus, LS2 at London Fashion Week



Guardian Student Newspaper of the Year

# LEEDS STUDENT

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Friday 26th February 2010

## Union and Uni near resolution

### Strikes avoided after two weeks of talks

Guy Sewell

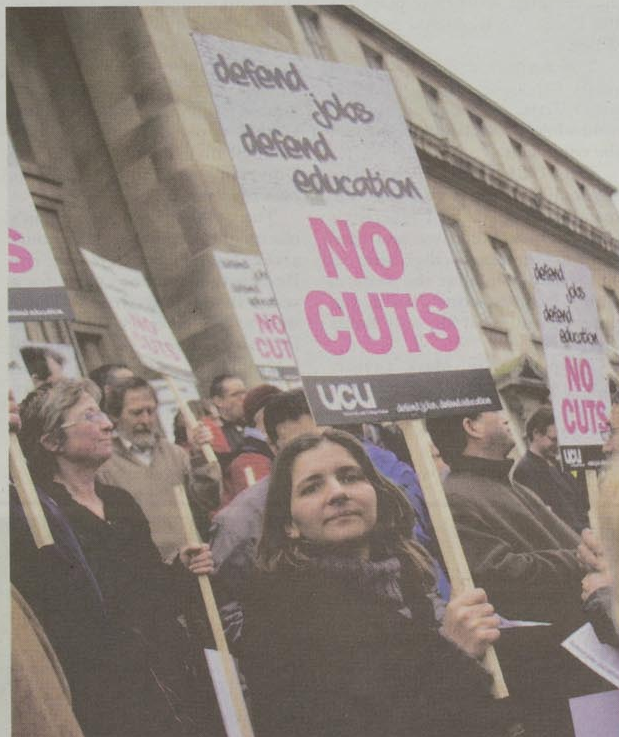
The University and College Union (UCU) called off its planned three days of industrial action on Wednesday after it reached an agreement with Leeds University over planned staff cuts in the Faculty of Biological Sciences (FBS).

At an emergency general meeting UCU members backed the Union's negotiators' recommendations that the three arranged one-day strikes should be suspended.

The University and the UCU reopened talks on Monday February 15 after an impasse had originally been declared due to claims of lack of consultation over proposed compulsory redundancies in FBS.

The meeting led to an agreement between the two sides that a review of the FBS will be extended to the end of January 2011, and that no compulsory redundancies can be proposed before the end of that process.

Dr Gavin Reid, a UCU University of Leeds representative, said: "We are really pleased with progress made today, and in the past few meetings. The threat of immediate compulsory redundancies has been removed in FBS and both sides will now work to avoid them in future. We have suspended our planned industrial action to allow further talks to take place with the aim of getting a



**PROTEST BUT NO STRIKE:** UCU staff members join student groups in protest at planned £35 million cuts. Industrial action by staff was averted on Wednesday.

Photo: Richard Smith

negotiated settlement."

The UCU could still revert to strike action if it feels the talks are not progressing in 'good faith.' The University has agreed that UCU's mandate for industrial action, which was due to expire on Tuesday 2 March, will be extended for another four weeks.

In an email to University staff,

Roger Gair, the University Secretary, said: "Very good progress has been made through the ACAS talks this week towards resolution of the dispute between the University and UCU."

Both sides have agreed to a new process of organisational change.

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## Palestinian society banned

Dafydd Pritchard

The Palestine Solidarity Group (PSG) have been banned from using facilities at Leeds University Union (LUU) as a result of their recent protest.

Ishmael Khaldi, deputy consul of the state of Israel, was invited by the LUU Jewish Society (JSOC) to speak, and his speech

was interrupted by the PSG protest.

Leeds Student reported on the demonstration (Issue 10, January 29), where protestors chanted and banged on the doors of the lecture theatre.

In light of this conduct, the LUU Activities Executive decided to ban PSG from booking rooms in the Union building from March 1 until the Easter vacation.

Yacoub Al-Ouri, joint president of PSG, was unhappy with the decision-making process.

"Basically I think the decision was made quite arbitrarily. PSG did not have a chance to defend itself in front of the committee," he said.

"They only asked us to write in an email, and they did not give us a chance to explain the situation properly.

Accusations of racist chanting from PSG members were supposedly reasons for the ban,

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## Leeds Student

Inside LS  
this week...

LS1 features  
tackles the  
controversial  
subject of  
'extremism'  
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LS reports  
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funding cuts  
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We chat to  
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McCalla  
about his  
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Image: Luke Farvokhi

Last Friday saw an official  
celebration of Leeds Student's 40th  
birthday party and media award  
win, hosted by the LUU, in the

## Refectory.

In typical *Sketch* style, the majority  
of the buffet ended up being  
relocated to the newspaper office to  
provide for the Stalinist expansion  
policy of the *Left Student*... sorry,  
*Sketch* means *Leeds Student*. We're not  
socialist extremists, no matter what  
you heard.

Following the revelry of the  
birthday party, *Sketch* went to Fruity.  
It's heartwarming to see the Union's  
flagship night is still attended by the  
kind of self-righteous pricks that have  
been the staple of the Fruity diet  
since time immemorial, *Sketch*  
included. *Sketch* found the only way  
to survive was by drinking until

*Sketch's* blood had the same alcohol  
content as your average alcopop and  
sitting at a table, face down, wishing  
for death.

In more news to drive you to  
drink, the winners of the Exec and  
Editor elections were announced on  
Wednesday in the Terrace. Shameless  
profiteering, or forward-thinking that  
the losers will want to drown the  
misery of failed dreams and public  
rejection? *Sketch* will let you decide.

It seems to be the case that once  
again, you, the electorate, have heard  
the person shouting the loudest and  
voted them into power. Here's a pro-  
tip: people that are actually decent  
don't want to ram their campaigns so

far down your throat they end up  
wearing you like a deep-throating  
hand puppet.

On the subject of careerist  
politicians that don't represent you,  
LUU's forum has been ablaze this  
week with arguments on upcoming  
referenda. It's going to be a good  
one, folks! That is, if you enjoy  
having your time wasted by people so  
absorbed in themselves there's a  
danger they'll collapse in on  
themselves, creating a black hole.  
*Sketch* is considering armed  
overthrow of the Exec and the  
establishment of a benevolent  
dictatorship to sort this self-serving  
autocracy out.

Mandelson steps in over  
Uni cutting plans

Lizzie Edmonds

The University of Leeds has  
been asked by Lord Mandelson to  
put its cost-cutting plans on  
hold due to a formal challenge  
that accuses the University of  
breaking key rules on how it is  
regulated.

Lord Mandelson, in his capacity  
as Lord President of the Council,  
is also the Visitor of the University  
and so is responsible for ensuring  
that the institution conducts its  
affairs in accordance with its  
Charter and Statutes.

A challenge was made in the  
form of a petition and was issued  
by the staff member representative  
of the University and College  
Union (UCU). It claims that the  
University has bypassed the

senate, or the body responsible for  
its academic prerogative, when it  
implemented restructure plans for  
the Faculty of Biological Sciences  
(FBS).

The petition called for action  
related to cost-cutting plans in  
other departments to be put on  
hold while Mandelson investigated  
the complaint.

The UCU argues that the  
academic prerogative is not the  
responsibility of the University's  
Council and executive and they  
were not empowered to alter it.  
They maintain that the senate,  
which was not consulted at the  
time, or indeed at all, only holds  
this power.

UCU spokesman, Mark Taylor-  
Batty, said: "Lord Mandelson's  
request that the University put all  
cuts processes on hold while his  
office investigates the potential  
breaches of statutes is of course

welcomed by the UCU.

"We believe it is appropriate to  
suspend procedures during an  
investigation. When there is a  
serious allegation against a  
member of staff, he or she is  
suspended from duties while the  
matter is investigated. The same  
should apply here as the Privy  
Council investigate whether the  
University acted in breach of its  
own regulations."

The news of Lord Mandelson's  
intervention comes just 24 hours  
after UCU members at the  
University announced plans for a  
series of one-day strikes. These  
were to take place on Thursday 25  
February, Tuesday 2 and Thursday  
4 March.

However, the Union  
emphasised on Friday that strike  
action was a last resort. UCU said  
it remained committed to  
resolving the dispute and a

structured process needs to be  
negotiated in order to avoid  
compulsory redundancies.

UCU general secretary, Sally  
Hunt, said: "We are pleased that  
the Visitor agrees with us that the  
current cost cutting plans at Leeds  
must be put on hold to allow this  
issue to be properly investigated.

"Our universities spend  
millions of pounds of taxpayers'  
money and scrutiny of how they  
spend that money is a must. UCU  
continues to believe a sensible way  
forward is possible at Leeds and  
we call on the university to join us  
in meaningful negotiations to  
avoid a damaging dispute."

**Page 6: Leeds Student  
interviews Professor John  
Illingworth, the member of  
staff that submitted the  
petition to Lord Mandelson**

A student takes hold of a  
megaphone during a  
protest against proposed  
£35 million cuts on  
Thursday.

Page 5: LS Interviews Pro-Vice  
Chancellor Professor Vivien Jones

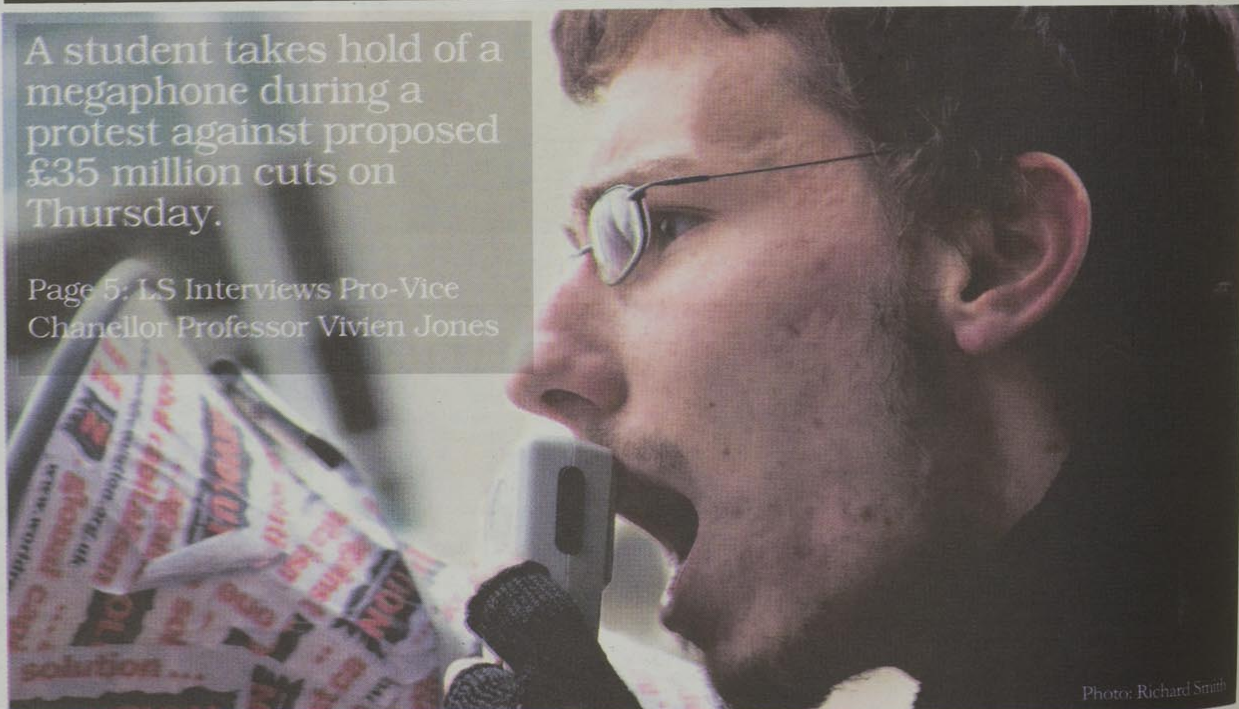


Photo: Richard Smith



# Station's FM radio stint



RIDING THE WAVES: The LSR team are gearing up for a month on FM broadcasts

Photo: Richard Smith

Constance Webber

Leeds Student Radio (LSR) is hoping to turn up its listener volumes this month by returning to the FM waves for the first time in four years.

It is hoped that the month-long stint on the frequency will widen knowledge of the station, which was crowned student radio station of the year for 2009.

LSR started broadcasting on 87.7FM on Monday after two months

of fundraising by its team of 330 members to pay for the four-week license.

The funds were raised through extra advertising revenue, both on the station's website and on air adverts, and show sponsorships.

The Cafe in the Campus currently sponsors the breakfast show whilst Dominos Pizza sponsors their 'Hometime' show. The team also earned money by doing DJ sets in Union bars, with all fees going towards the LSR fund.

The team is hoping that the FM status will increase listener figures and expand on its audience of those who

know its presenters.

The station will also increase their broadcasting hours for the FM frequency, going live from 8am to midnight. It will run an automated Jukebox feature after midnight which plays song requests sent through the station website.

The society is aiming to regain its station of the year crown with the new 'LSR for everyone' campaign, encouraging a diverse range of students to get involved on shows. Its popular 'Disability Today' show discusses issues regarding disability.

LSR attracted national media attention in November when it

launched 'The Big Tidy Up' scheme to keep the local area clean during the long-running bin strike.

James Travis, the LSR daytime programmer, said of the FM broadcasting: "I'm very excited, it's something I've never experienced or done before. There are lots of prizes to give away for people so definitely listen."

LSR is broadcast online at [www.lsrfm.com](http://www.lsrfm.com). The station team is made up solely of students. It will broadcast on 87.7FM over the next month.

# Team finally wins the battle to locate Bosworth

Laura Mackenzie

After more than 600 years of debate and mystery, a team of archaeologists believe they have finally unearthed the exact location of the most famous battlefield in British history: the site of Richard III's death in the 1485 Battle of Bosworth.

The location of the Battle of Bosworth, which has eluded historians for years, was discovered as part of a ground-breaking survey carried out by a team of archaeologists from the Institute for Medieval Studies.

Interestingly, the site uncovered by the team had never

previously been considered by historians as a viable location for the battle. As Dr Glenn Foard who led the group, explains:

"Using the new techniques of battlefield archaeology we have recovered evidence which proves exactly where the iconic English battle was fought.

"The site, never before suggested as the battlefield, straddles the Roman road known as the Fenn Lane, near Fenn lane farm. It is three kilometres south-west of Ambion Hill and a kilometre west of the site suggested by Peter Foss."

While the team only managed to recover a few items from the site, Dr Foard believes the objects found are of great significance. He said: There may

be relatively few finds from the battle, each of which has taken the team dozens of hours to locate, but several of the objects are amazing.

"The most important by far is the silver-gilt boar, which was Richard III's own badge, given in large numbers to his supporters. But this one is special, because it is silver-gilt. It was almost certainly worn by a knight in King Richard's own retinue who rode with the King to his death in his last desperate cavalry charge. It was found right next to the site of a small medieval marsh - and the King was killed when his horse became stuck in a mire."

This latest discovery marks a turning point for the

archaeological world. Professor Richard Morris of the University of Leeds said: "Until now, very few medieval battles have been exactly located. Historians often describe them as if they know where they took place, but the truth is that this is usually opinion or tradition. And as Bosworth shows, tradition can be wrong."

"The discovery of the real Bosworth is a vindication of the methodology developed by Glenn Foard, in partnership with the University of Leeds and English Heritage, whereby a historic battle can be pinpointed with certainty, and some of its events revealed."

## Election results

Leeds Student

Editor:

Laura Mackenzie



Activities Officer:

Tim Mortimer



Communications & Internal Affairs Officer:

Rachel Wenstone



Community Officer:

Paul Gold



Education Officer:

Elliot Jebreel



Equality & Diversity Officer:

Marcus Crawley



Welfare Officer:

Jack Cheyette





# Agreement halts February strike action

<< Continued from page 1

This will outline a clear role for Senate, the highest University academic decision-making body, in the establishment of a review process for any academic area.

This comes after the UCU supported a member of staff from the FBS who claimed the University broke its own rules by failing to consult the senate during the early stages of restructuring. The UCU called for an investigation into whether the restructuring plans were already too advanced by the time the Senate had the chance to see and influence them and therefore fulfil its regulatory duty.

A disciplined framework for meaningful consultation with trade unions has been implemented, which will remain throughout the review and restructuring process. In previous negotiations the UCU had accused the University of acting in 'bad faith' by bringing forward the 'job matching process' in FBS by over a week. This meant the process finished at 9am on the day of the first meeting with ACAS, the service employed as the go-between in the dispute concerning the University and UCU, so the University could continue to make decisions about compulsory redundancies without any agreement under ACAS.

In a joint statement by the UCU

and the University, it was declared that the negotiations represented "a ground-breaking package enshrining the principles of openness, fairness, transparency and good governance in detailed new policies and procedures to promote job security, avoid redundancy and manage change."

The two sides have agreed to a series of meetings over the next fortnight to review the position of staff that have already been through the matching process in FBS.

While preparing for the proposed strikes, the UCU made clear that they were not the result of their campaign against cuts. The Union said the strikes were due to the apparent breach of employment law by the University, regarding academic freedom and trade union law.

The University was accused of breaching its own regulations and failing to uphold numerous statutory duties, including the duty to mitigate against redundancies and duties regarding equality impact assessments.

The emergency general meeting comes at a time when the University is planning to cut £35 million from its budget. In a letter of complaint to the BBC, the University confirmed that this will lead to the loss of an estimated 400 jobs.

The negotiations between the

UCU and the University are a manifestation of a wider crisis within higher education. Michael Arthur, Vice Chancellor of the University, has admitted the national cuts could be up to £2.5 billion; one third of the amount the Government currently spends annually on higher education. Arthur himself has said that the cuts will have a 'devastating effect' on higher education that could 'take just six months to bring it to its knees.'

The cuts are being made in anticipation of the Government's reduction in funding, and come at time when Leeds University is spending £380 million on building projects, £50 million of which is coming from loans offset against future tuition fees.

A march took place at 12pm yesterday in protest of the cuts and proposed compulsory redundancies. Over 200 protesters marched from the Parkinson Steps to the Marjorie and Arnold Ziff Building, before returning to the Parkinson Court for a series of impromptu debates.

Malcolm Povey, Leeds UCU President, spoke with *Leeds Student* at the march, saying: "There are many more threats, but every job that's saved in every month is a job not lost, and therefore is worth it. By defending the jobs now you'll deflect the pressure onto the bankers bonuses, onto the waste of money on war and all the other crazy stuff that's going on. If we make ourselves willing victims of the cuts of course they'll cut us."



Leeds UCU president, Malcolm Povey, joined students and University staff outside of the Parkinson building to protest against cuts on Thursday

# PSG punished for protests



INTERRUPTED: Ishmael Khaldi's speech was hindered by protests.

<< Continued from page 1

but the Activities Executive committee decided against addressing "claims about racist comments or racial profiling, due to lack of evidence."

The committee also chose not to address the claim that security guards were physically abused, following the security team's recommendation that it was a "non-issue".

The ban coincides with Israel Apartheid Week, an event co-ordinated by PSG, which includes guest speakers and film showings, and begins on March 1.

Al-Ouri added: "Usually in western legal systems, you're innocent until proven guilty, but that was not the case in our situation."

"The decision was made without us being able to present

our case. The Union, and Geoff Banks and Kay Morrison in particular were helpful, but the [Activities Executive] committee was quite unfair."

Fliss Inkpen, a member of the LUU Activities Executive, said:

"The Activities Executive took this matter very seriously and examined points of view presented to us from all sides."

"We decided that there was not sufficient evidence to pursue claims of racist chants or physical violence."

She added: "The Activities Executive supports peaceful protest and student campaigns, but we felt that in this case the disruption caused was beyond what could be deemed reasonable. We exist to represent the interests of all societies fairly."

# Union charity status will not effect jobs

Georgina Harmsworth

**Leeds University Union (LUU) has moved to reassure staff that its change in status to a charity organisation will not have an effect on jobs.**

In a meeting on Wednesday employees were told that, despite being issued with new contracts, there will be no changes to their terms and conditions.

However, as part of the new status, LUU will have an increased commitment to the local community and will continue to run as a non-profit organisation, with all financial profits being reinvested in to the Union.

Jak Codd, LUU Communications and Internal Affairs Officer, said: "LUU becoming a charity will enable us to enhance our fundraising potential, through schemes like gift aid, allowing us to invest even more resources into clubs, societies, and facilities for our members."

LUU currently holds an unofficial charitable status, so the change to a company limited by guarantee, a non-

profit organisation without any shareholders or share capital, is concentrated on making the status an official, legal entity.

The Union has already trialled the coming amendment of status on behalf of the National Union of Students (NUS).

The conversion is compulsory under the 2006 Charity act and it is believed that the Union will be more efficient and transparent under the new status.

The 2006 Charity act stated that student unions must register as charities by 1 June 2010 and that they will be regulated by the Charity Commission. The act was followed by a lengthy examination of student unions by lawyers to examine the consequences of its implementation.

However, it seems the only real changes made by registering as charity are more independence from the University, new letterheads on letters and emails and a new charity number.

Most excitingly, there will be a new plaque on the entrance to the building. There will be no change in activities and no change to staff employment.

LUU will become an official charity organisation on 1 August 2010.



INTERRUPTED: Ishmael Khaldi's speech was hindered by protests.

Photo: Sarah Greene

# Zaman arrested

Jessica Elliott

**Providence Properties boss Tariq Zaman has been arrested and released on bail.**

The landlord, 41, has been stripped of his rental licence after being held on suspicion of fraud and money laundering.

A West Yorkshire Police spokesperson said: "A 41 year old Leeds man was arrested on February 2nd on suspicion of money laundering and fraud by false representation and is currently on police bail pending further enquiries."

Last year *Leeds Student* revealed links between Zaman's Providence Properties and the Student Property Shop, based in Hyde Park.

The Leeds University Union (LUU) Student Advice Centre is still dealing with substantial claims against Mr Tariq Zaman for unpaid deposits.



# Student Union's budget safe

University management has confirmed that LUU's grant will not be cut back in line with the rest of the university

**Leeds Student's Polly Goddard spoke to Professor Vivien Jones, Leeds University Pro-Vice Chancellor for Learning and Teaching, on Tuesday February 16.**

The planned days of strike action have now been cancelled after an agreement was made between the University and the University and College Union (UCU).

**If the strikes go ahead how do you think they will affect the students?**

Well if they strikes are just one-day strikes, as the three that have been announced, then clearly some members of staff will not be giving their lectures or classes on that day. Some of them may choose to rearrange, some won't – so some students will inevitably miss out on the teaching on those particular days. If we are talking about 'action short of a strike', that can take lots of different forms – we have no idea what UCU are planning on that front at the moment so we can't be very definite in saying how it will affect students.

What I can say is that the University, and me personally as the Pro Vice Teaching Chancellor, for students to get the best possible education is very close to my heart so the University will be making every effort to ensure that students miss out on as little as possible.

**Now that we have the budget, do you think the Union is going to be included in the cuts?**

The decision has been made that the grant the University makes to the union is going to be kept at its current level – in other words it won't be inflated. But actually what that means is that the Union is not going to suffer the 10 per cent economies that the rest of the University has been asked to find. So although it is affecting the union to some extent, we are again trying to protect the student experience.

**On a larger scale, if the cuts go ahead will we see the University system 'brought to its knees' as Michael Arthur says it will?**

That's a very big question, you're asking about the whole of the national university system! I think that Michael Arthur's concerns about the seriousness of the present public spending cuts and the impact it could have on the higher education system is very real. What we don't know of course is if the cuts that have already been announced – which are substantial, a total of about £1.5 billion – are the end of the matter, or whether the prediction that the Institute for Physical Studies has made, that we will need more cuts and that we're looking more at a total of something like £2.5 billion, whether they will actually be announced. Either way I think we are looking at a higher education landscape ultimately that is going to be different

from the one we have now. How different will depend on the way the cuts are targeted, both in terms of what areas of higher education spending they affect and in terms of the way they impact the different institutions.

The level of difference in that higher education landscape obviously will depend on the level of cuts that we ultimately experience. As you know, people like Michael Arthur and other leaders of higher education – Steve Smith who is the chair of UUK, which is the organisation of all universities – are lobbying extremely hard, both with the current government and with the opposition, to try and get them to say that the cuts that have already been announced is the end of the matter. But you read the papers as well as I do, you know that neither side are very susceptible to coming out and telling us exactly what they have in mind after an election, whoever gets in, so we're all speculating as far as that goes.

We have an excellent higher education system in this country. We know that international competitor countries – the States, France, Germany – are actually investing in higher education. Higher education is the future of the country; if we want a knowledge economy, then we have to train people who can actually have ideas, be creative, go out there and keep the economy going, and universities are the hub where that happens. If they are seriously cut then clearly they can't do that excellent job in the way that they are doing now.

**There's been concern that cuts may affect Arts degrees more than others, how do you respond to that?**

It's certainly the case that the government has announced that, even within the cuts, that there is some protection for the 'stem subjects' – the science and technology subjects. However it's also the case that Arts degrees, including English, are extremely popular with students and as far as we can tell will continue to be so. So I would hope that we can guarantee that student experience across the board and subject areas across the board are going to be taken forward with any funding involved. This university is very proud of the breadth of subjects it offers and remains committed to them.

**There's been talk of students joining the picket lines. How do you feel about that?**

If students want to join picket lines and make a protest against the fact that higher education is being cut I think that is absolutely up to them. I don't myself feel that striking, to be perfectly honest, or making Leeds the 'test bed' for higher education funding, as a national issue, is necessarily the best way of going about things. I would prefer that we all lobby together for our common cause, which is the future of higher education, and that we talk in a civilised way about the way forward.



But clearly, one of the great things about universities is that people have freedom of speech, and if they want to express it in those sort of ways that's up to them. I don't personally agree that's the most effective way of doing it.

**Is there any way back from the strikes now, even with ACAS talks still ongoing?**

Well I would hope so. The talks are ongoing – there were talks yesterday (Monday 15) and there are going to be talks later in the week, both formal and informal. It seems to me that it's not very helpful actually to go ahead with the strike at a time when actually, constructive talks are taking place.

**If you don't necessarily think strike action is the best way forward, do you at least see UCU's reasoning for taking strike action?**

I find some of their arguments, and the ways that they represent what's going on, slightly baffling I have to say. I understand absolutely UCU's concern to maximise their support for their members. I understand their concern that there is inevitably going to be reductions in the number of jobs in

institutions. However I do think that we have done our utmost to explain to all our staff and to students why we're doing the things we are in terms of the economies exercise. So, as I say, I think going to the length of strike action is actually disappointing in a situation where we are trying to have a constructive conversation.

**Will the executives be taking cuts as well?**

Well the executives have already had no pay rise, if you're talking about personal situation – we've had no pay rise this year. As far as the 10 per cent goes, the requirement that every area of the university thinks about their options for the way in which they make their 10 per cent economies then that affects absolutely every part of the university including the highest level.

**When will the University be responding to the letter from Lord Mandelson?**

The UCU have challenged the University, saying that we have not consulted appropriately with senate on the actions that have been taken in biological sciences, which of course is

separate from the economies exercise – we should always remember that. They have also claimed that we have not consulted with senate appropriately about the economies exercise. Now we believe very strongly that we have done both of those things absolutely according to our statutes. But in a situation where UCU wants to raise a legal claim, the visitor – Lord Mandelson in this context – is the person that they appeal to. And that's a legal, symbolic position.

**So you have six weeks to respond to the UCU's accusation?**

Yes, and we're responding as fast as possible. We're defending ourselves – we're very confident that we have actually acted absolutely according to our statutes. And not just according to our statutes, it's a matter of values: the whole way through these processes we have been concerned to be transparent and open about what we are doing. As I say, it's a matter of our values as well as legal position and we feel confident that we have done what we should in consulting the representative body which is Senate.



# Biological Sciences lecturer speaks out

Professor John Illingworth has been a Leeds University member of staff since 1974. His department, the Faculty of Biological Sciences (FBS), faces heavy cuts and has been the main topic on the agenda during the dispute between the University and the University and College Union (UCU).

He sent a petition to the visitor to the University, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, that claimed that the University bypassed the Senate, the body responsible for the academic regulations of the University, when it implemented a restructure plan for the Faculty of Biological Sciences (FBS).

Lord Mandelson stepped in on the debate and cost-cutting plans have now been put on hold.

**Lizzie Edmonds** interviewed Professor Illingworth this week.

**LS: What is your role in the UCU?**

**JI:** I am just an ordinary member. But I am due to retire so, I can afford to speak out; I don't need a reference or need to be as concerned with what my actions will do for my career. I have a bit more freedom in that respect.

**LS: And, what exactly did you state is this petition?**

**JI:** It was all about adhering to University statutes. I didn't challenge the actual decision, but rather that they didn't make the decision in the correct way. The senate should have been involved, or at least there should have been a lot more information. There

should have been more debates, but the university tried to get quick decisions and thus bypassed the statutes.

**LS: what decisions did they make? As your petition was specifically about the Faculty of Biological Sciences wasn't it?**

**JI:** Yes well, that's because the decisions made by the FBS were before the rest of the funding cuts were announced. So, in a sense it was a pre-run for the rest of the University.

**LS: So, briefly, what were those decisions?**

**JI:** Basically, the staff had to apply for their own jobs. There was a set of job descriptions and you could see, really who was going to be chosen for each job before it was decided. I think that is actually unlawful: you cannot make redundancies like that. You have to have a fair competition, as it were, and there wasn't. There was obvious unhappiness about that. There was also a question about whether the whole thing was necessary in the first place the faculty projected that there was some astronomical deficit in 5 years time. That's only a projection though! What they did was overestimate how much research would cost and they have appointed new staff on that premise that they cannot afford to pay.

If they had been more realistic about those estimations then they wouldn't have had to employ those extra staff. There is also an issue with

separating researching and teaching.

What we think is happening is that the researching areas are losing money and so the university is having to take money from its teaching budgets. Perversely, the better they become at getting grants for researching, the more debt they get into. They shouldn't be taking money away from student teaching and putting it into research: they should both be self sufficient.

Also, they are threatening to sack the teachers and replace them with research staff who don't want to teach in the first place which seems ridiculous. In fact we are unsure as to whether they are actually making a loss in the first place, it all seems like a bit of a shambles. There are examples, and these are only examples of where money isn't controlled: like the library, the press office, the heating, central costs. These areas should surely be looked into more thoroughly, I think, to cut back costs.

Redundancies is another problem really, as the pay-off for forced redundancies is then charged to the faculty, which increases the debt. The deficit has increased because of redundancies in fact, I am suspicious as to whether there was a deficit in the first place without any redundancies! It is just a shambles.

**LS: So there has been a lot of annoyances and a lot of indiscrepancies in the past few months, it is safe to say?**

**JI:** It has caused a lot of upset. I mean for me it is ok, I am not in a dire situation but there are teaching projects

and other changes that obviously people want to see through and see succeed: being made redundant half way through is hardly ideal. But being made redundant makes one feel, worthless. It just makes me cross and anxious when authorities say "we want to make hard decisions" decisions that have no consideration for anyone else.

**LS: What was the response to the petition?**

**JI:** Well they are going to act on it, which is a major decision and a huge positive. We weren't sure whether that was actually going to happen, but it has! They have told the university to at least delay until they can investigate it. That is normal procedure but the University is trying to wriggle out of it. It, effectively, has frozen things for a while.

**LS: But what do you think will actually come of this?**

**JI:** I don't know. It has been made clear that the University has not complied to its statutes. There is always going to be a problem, a fundamental problem, with big organisations in that the top people have no idea how the lower levels are running. So they blunder. It's the same problem all the way through, the leader cannot possibly know what is going on. Decisions are made at random.

One thing I teach to my students is how bacteria navigate, it's the opposite to this. A bacteria is too small to see the outside world, all it can do is swim. It can see if it has improved or not. If

things get better, it carries on. If they don't, it changes direction. That's the only navigation it can do and it is not much different for big organisations. They have no clue what will happen if they change policy.

**LS: What do you hope will come out of this?**

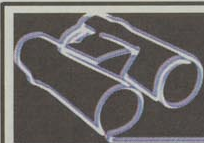
**JI:** Well I hope we get a better way of making decisions, a more sensible way of proceeding. There needs to be more openness, they need to publish their accounts, which doesn't happen at the moment. No body knows where the cash is flowing in the department and no one can make any sense of them. We don't know what work people are doing. For example, the number of student projects, or the number of claimed student projects in process is significantly larger than the number of students. It is the structure that is wrong; not the staff. It needs fundamentally changing and reworking. We are not sharing information, not being open, not working together and there is no sense of community.

**LS: do you think this may set things off across campus?**

**JI:** I hope so. I mean, there is a fundamental problem with how we are governed. Something needs to change, we have had a succession of major blunders with the way we are governed.

**LS: So an overhaul is needed is your overall message?**

**JI:** Absolutely, an overhaul and more openness



## Campus Watch

Jess Elliott

### Oxbridge

An anonymous Oxbridge student has started a new sex blog that is keeping curious readers guessing over her identity.

The 'attractive' female writes on the blog, which is beginning to gain notoriety, that she is a "highly intelligent Oxbridge student currently shagging my way through the half term hump."

She has already been compared to the original sex blogger Belle de Jour, later revealed to be Dr Brooke Magnati who funded her PhD studies by selling sex. The student says that she will never accept money for her one night stands.

The student says on her blog: "The pressure of the average

Oxbridge work week sees drunken students who are more than willing to drown their sorrows in a case of VK and in the arms of a stranger."

The mysterious female, who will not clarify whether she studies at Oxford or Cambridge, simply says: "I like having sex because it's fun and often comedy ensues."

Of the intrigue surrounding her she says: "I feel like a sexy Where's Wally?"

### Manchester

The deputy ambassador of Israel, Tayla Lador-Fresher, cancelled a talk arranged by the politics society at Manchester University after a campaign of resistance against the visit by another student society Action Palestine was launched.

Politics society chair Jonathan Ridge was said to have had his

email inbox bombarded with protests and the Israeli embassy were concerned that 300 protestors would storm the meeting, which was due to take place last Thursday, with banners.

The cancellation comes at a time when Israeli leaders have been cancelling visits to Britain for fear that they will be arrested on war crime charges.

The Israeli ambassador to Britain, Ron Prosor, was summoned to the Foreign Office in London last Thursday over the use of forged U.K. passports by the alleged assassins of the Hamas official Mahmoud al-Mabhouh in Dubai last month.

### Nottingham

A third-year student has racked up a near £8,000 bill in one month on his Orange mobile internet broadband.

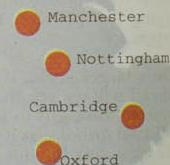
William Harrison started a sixth-month internship in Paris last September and wanted temporary internet access in his flat.

He and his father went to an Orange store to ask whether a dongle, a small piece of equipment that attaches to a laptop to provide wireless internet, was the easiest way to access the internet abroad which Orange confirmed.

Harrison went to France and used Skype, which he said was free in his own home, but was unaware as to the cost abroad. He got his first bill for £6,101 on October 17. "I immediately questioned it and asked if the dongle could be blocked," explained Harrison.

"But there was a further charge which covers the cost between the bill being sent and the dongle being blocked."

Harrison now faces a bill of £7,648.



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# Sex tests suffer club knock-backs

Anusha Mata

**A new sexual health promotional campaign that offers free Chlamydia tests in Leeds nightclubs has been refused entry by some popular venues.**

February has been designated health month by the NHS and S.T.I tests for diseases such as Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea are being offered across Leeds by C-swap (Chlamydia screening without a prescription).

But some companies have been less supportive of the campaign. The club-night Wax:On and student accommodation Liberty Park have both refused to accommodate the testing sessions.

C-swap has been promoting sexual health amongst people aged 18-24 by providing free Chlamydia tests in venues such as nightclubs. In return for a pee sample or swab, clubbers have been offered free glow-in-the-dark condoms and 'pulling pants.'

Despite Liberty Park emailing C-swap campaigners saying the issue did not affect their tenants when an offer to visit their halls was made, its management told *Leeds Student* they would be prepared to discuss the issue further.

Andy Waite, general manager

from Liberty Park, said: "The students here are already registered at two doctors' surgeries where they are given all the information about testing. I would certainly be willing to discuss the issue further with C-swap."

The campaign has had huge success at nightclubs such as Halo, where 60 samples were gathered in an hour on a Saturday night, and at Fruity where 137 samples were collected on February 12. The city centre venue Oceana has also taken on the scheme.

Highlighting the importance of the campaign, Elle Docx, a coordinator for the C-swap, said: "Leeds is a city with one of the highest rates of S.T.I.s in the UK and the stupidest thing is that it only takes a course of three pills to eradicate the infection and cure a person."

The test is a simple case of filling a urine port or taking a vaginal self-swab, followed by completing a short form so that people can be tested with their results.

"Clubs are where the 18-24 year olds are and we need to reach as many of them as possible," Docx said.

She continued: "We do not test after midnight, however, so we never deal with really, really drunk people. Oceana have been especially

supportive of us taking a responsible role to the massive problem of S.T.I.s amongst students and for that I thank them."

"I can understand why it seems unethical to perform tests in clubs when people are getting a bit tipsy,

but sometimes people need to let their guard down a bit in order to gain the courage to take the test because it can be a scary experience."

A further campaign C-swap have been running is "Take one for the

Team' which aims to encourage sports societies at both Leeds University and Leeds Met to take the test in the hopes of winning a £150 cash prize.

C-swap hopes that more venues will take on the scheme.



TESTED: Leeds revellers are being offered free S.T.I tests in some venues

Photo: Sarah Greene

# Killer crash student walks free

**Student keeps her freedom and university place despite lying to police, killing her boyfriend in a crash and driving without a licence.**

Matthew Cundall

**A Leeds University student has escaped jail despite causing a devastating car accident and lying to police.**

Anna Hibben, 18, who failed her driving test three times, crashed her boyfriend's Peugeot 106 into a tree on a country road in Essex. The accident occurred whilst she was still a sixth-former.

At Chelmsford Crown Court she admitted a string of offences, including death by careless driving and driving without insurance.

The student had been driving late at night without headlights. The car belonged to her boyfriend, 17-year-old Gary Pitchford, who was in the passenger's seat. He had to be cut free from the wreckage of the car, but died later from multiple injuries.

Hibben repeatedly denied to police that she had been at the wheel. The court heard that her statements were disproved when her sandal was found wedged beneath the car's brake pedal.

In court, the weeping Hibben said she couldn't remember the accident but later admitted that she had been driving.

The undergraduate was given a nine-month suspended jail sentence – a punishment which has surprised many for its leniency.

A national newspaper highlighted the discrepancy between Hibben's sentence and that of motorist Katie Hart earlier in the week. 19-year-old Hart, from Cambridgeshire, was jailed for 21 months for killing cyclist Gareth Rhys-Evans, after suffering "a momentary lapse of concentration."

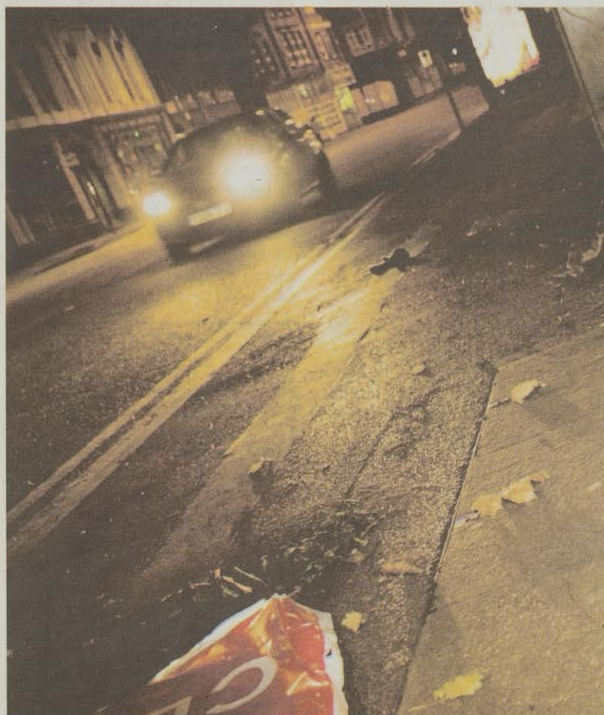
Pitchford's mother described her son's death as a "hugely regrettable accident."

On the night of the accident, Hibben forced an oncoming driver, who happened to attend the same school, to brake sharply and veer off the road. The two cars collided into each other with the Peugeot then hitting a tree.

Prosecuting, Kwame Inyundo said 17-year-old Pitchford's limited driving experience meant he should not have been supervising Hibben. They had been dating for just four weeks.

Inyundo said Hibben, who experts calculated to have been doing between 57mph and 63mph, lost control and spun the car as she took a bend.

Hibben later admitted to Pitchford's brother that she had been driving but could not remember what had happened. She told police she could only remember the night before the



CARELESS DRIVING: Anna Hibben walked free from court despite getting behind the wheel after failing her driving test three times

Photo: Leeds Student library

crash and then waking up in hospital.

Defending Hibben, Catherine Bradshaw said: "This is an extremely sad scenario for all of those concerned and clearly she is extremely remorseful in relation to this matter."

"She wishes she could put herself in Gary's place, that is something she wishes she could do – to go back in time."

Ms Bradshaw said the Essex-born student would live with the tragedy forever.

Judge Christopher Ball, QC, criticised the student for her naivety, and accused young people of not realising the dangers of motoring.

Judge Ball said: "They are full of self-confidence, but they do not have the experience that comes with maturity and time and again make the sort of mistake that you made that night."

"You were driving that car late at night, you were an inexperienced driver, not necessarily a good driver, still learning, perhaps thought you were better than you were."

Hibben will be electronically tagged and placed under house curfew for three months from 9pm to 6am.

Judge Ball also banned her from driving for three years and ordered her to take an extended test to regain her licence.

It remains unclear whether Leeds University will take any action, although it is understood she will be able to retain her place.



## -Society prohibited-

**F**or possibly the first time a LUU society has been prohibited from holding events indefinitely.

One of the most politically active groups on campus, the Palestinian Solidarity Group (PSG), organised probably the most effective protests the University has seen in a while. Unfortunately, however, some unknown students thought that it went too far.

Several members of the Leeds Student team attended the talk, outside which the parotest took place, and reported none of the racist chants that have now been said to have taken place.

The tit for tat arguments about who did or did not say or do certain things will be relentless, but whether they can or will be substantiated or not has not stopped sanctions being

put in place.

With no recording or real evidence it will be difficult to make a firm decision either way. And it seems clear that neither side will be backing down easily.

It has been suggested that the complaint emails were some how coordinated due to the time periods between them. This is yet to be proven, however.

With no guidelines for what an 'appropriate' protest should be, it is difficult both for societies to understand what is and is not permitted and in turn makes disciplining problematic.

It seems ironic that oversees political issues are rallying students to cause trouble more than those closer to home. Maybe some other organisations and causes could follow their lead and appreciate how to run an effective protest.

## -Strikes suspended-

**I**n a last minute move, members of the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU) postponed direct strike action.

In a joint statement, the University and the UCU declared that recent talks had made encouraging progress, and they will continue to search for an agreement.

Despite this progress, it is still unclear which side came out on top during the discussions, with both sides wanting to appear victorious in the ongoing tussle.

It must, however, be remembered that strike action has only been suspended, and that the mandate for strike action has been extended by four weeks.

There is still a very real threat of strike action occurring in the near future.

Meanwhile, the proposed £35 million cuts are still due to take place, as students conducted a sit-in in the Parkinson Building despite the strikes being suspended. It is against this backdrop that talks will continue, as students are rightly concerned what will become of our education system.

We are at a decisive point in the University of Leeds' history; we are also at a crossroads in the funding of higher education. For now however, disaster has been averted and all sides can breathe a small sigh of relief, but the hard work is still in front of all of us.

## - Winners and losers -

**T**he student Executive elections have swung in and out of town again, with students either heavily involved or bored by the whole event.

The appearance of thousands of posters in the Union alone - not to mention across campus - has led to students feeling engaged with their soon-to-be leaders, or isolated, if not annoyed, by the situation.

Footfall into the Union traditionally goes down during election time as students get quickly annoyed by the constant flying and requests to vote from increasingly desperate candidates. With the ongoing building work outside already causing a decrease in the number of students entering the Union, one can only wonder how many more were diverted.

Students are apathetic enough about elections, but this year - as

ever - the role of factions has played a significant part in the overall results. Although it echoes real life, students are apathetic enough without thinking that a faction on campus will easily wipe out their single vote.

Referenda and a cross-campus ballot are the most democratic way of seeking a result from the student body, but the Union must beware of alienating students away from what is their Union.

If this was not enough, students were forced to endure the results live on Wednesday night in Terrace. Originally planned to be a three hour event, students would surley have sought out other establishments for a drink and a quiet chat if the candidates had not been so strongly against such an idea. It was instead replaced by a ceremony of half the length that appeased everybody.

## Hats off to Opera Soc!

To place an excellent performance by extraordinarily talented group of students below a film regarding a princess' sexual liaisons with a frog is, frankly, atrocious.

Both those on and behind the stage, including the orchestra, presented an excellent and individual performance, producing a massively enjoyable night for all. A sceptical approach to the idea of sitting through an opera was rapidly quashed by a magnificently well put together and hilarious adaptation.

My expectations of a stuffy 'la-did-dah' operatic performance were soon bowled over as the true talent of the performers and

excellence of the chosen opera shone through. To remark that modern references "proved to be their downfall" is a slur on the imagination of those taking part.

Would Leeds Student prefer if all performances were taken as rote from someone else's script, portraying little thought and adaptation to make the performance a Leeds University performance?

I feel sorry for those taking part and organising a truly brilliant show as they have to read someone's negative comments and mediocre rating of three stars. Has Miss Newman ever got up on stage, opening night, and sung her lungs out to a packed crowd? Probably not. Our students deserve support and an accurate representation of the excellent work they do beside their studies.

I certainly would not have been upset if I had paid to see this performance at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, and believe all of those in OperaSoc could stand up next to the professionals therein. Amazing work OperaSoc, I personally thoroughly enjoyed the show, thank you!

Anthony, First year  
Biology student

(Left) The Marriage of  
Figaro review, LS arts page  
Issue 12



## Your comments from leedsstudent.org

### "Problems in a nut shell"

The pin number is in the Peanut Gallery, it is open for anyone who wants to become a member (which is free, and any member of the Peanut gallery will do this for you!).

This motion is the first I've heard of people feeling excluded from the Peanut, but they should have approached anyone from the Peanut, or left a note under the door or something if they felt that intimidated, expressing their concern so we could productively come up with a solution, instead of just attacking a space that does provide so much for so many

people.

Evanthia Georgiou, LL.M  
International and European  
Human Rights student

### "Report: Part-time student funding 'unfair'"

While this article is a good summary overall, you appear to have made a significant typo and omission that I am compelled to correct. You quote from page 13 of my report and you've missed a key part of that quote out.

You've stated that I claim: "No fair funding system can continue to ignore so many of the lower earning part-time students who are studying so close to 50% of the full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate course; neither can any fair funding system continue to give grants to those earning over £20,000pa whilst studying 49 of the FTE."

This should say that: "No fair funding system can continue to ignore so many of the lower earning part-time students who are studying so close to 50% of the full-time equivalent undergraduate course; neither can any fair funding system continue to give grants to those earning over £20,000pa whilst studying 50% of the FTE and yet refuse funding to those earning less than £15,499pa whilst studying 49% of the FTE."

Kathryn Rose, MA English  
student

### Corrections and clarifications

We would like to clarify that in "Bid to save school from demolition" in the latest issue of the Leeds Student we incorrectly attributed a quote to David Gonzalez. The quote was actually from David Santa Maria.

Letters may also be posted to  
PO BOX 157. Leeds Student  
reserves the right to edit  
letters.

## Change the drug policy

The article "Students in gun raid terror" (Vol. 40 Issue 12, 12th Feb) is somewhat of a mirror image of the events in Mexico that happened only five days prior, where a drug gang searching for a rival gang had the wrong address. Unfortunately in Mexico, the gang 'shot first, asked questions later'. The Juarez Party Massacre left 14 young men and women dead, and more in hospital.

Prohibition was supposed to remove the drug market from society. All that has happened in reality is that governments across the world have abdicated control of the illicit drug market, valued at \$520 billion, to criminal outfits. Drug gangs try to remove their competition to keep prices high. The more profit to be made, the more risks they are willing to take, thus the more dangerous they become. This only happens when the state is unable to get involved, prohibition has meant the control of drugs as been placed in the hands of criminals, rather than those who are elected to govern.

These latest victims of America's War on Drugs are further proof that prohibition of some drugs is a failure. The War on Drugs is supposed to be protecting young people from the harms of drugs. But it is a terrible fact that young people are harmed more by this policy approach than are helped, either by being forced into an illegal trade, the targets of dealers who do not care about the effects drugs can have on the young, or just being caught in the cross-fire.

The international prohibition of some drugs, part of the War on Drugs, has been in place for nearly 100 years, yet drug use is higher than ever, and the harms of drugs are greater even still. How long can we continue with a policy that is just not working? For many, the solution is simple; turn the illicit drug market into a government regulated market, such as with alcohol, tobacco, and pharmaceutical drugs.

Ashley R. Bullard, LUU SSDP  
Treasurer



(Above) "Students in gun raid terror",  
LS front page Issue 12



# End In Sight?

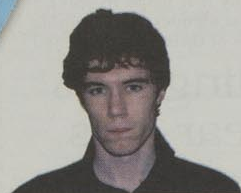
The launch of Operation Moshtarak in Afghanistan shows NATO leaders taking steps to involve the Afghan authorities with a view to a permanent handover of power. So this week, we ask:

Is there any chance of a resolution in Afghanistan?

the  
**big**  
debate:

Yes

Philip Dickinson



A revolutionary situation, according to Lenin (a fairly experienced exponent of the practice) may be defined thus: when the old order cannot go on in the old way and the people do not wish to go on in the old way. Only brutal repression from the Taliban prevented the sorts of uprisings we now see in Iran from occurring in Afghanistan. Western intervention does not, and will not, negate the hatred against previous Taliban rule.

First, let me list some facts concerning Operation Moshtarak: According to senior officials American forces are largely in control of the crucial town Marjah, formerly a Taliban stronghold; though some areas are faced with snipers and IEDs, they will simply not be a match for the brute force of Coalition troops and strategy. There are even suggestions that the Taliban is beginning to run out of ammunition, but is still determined to fight on in these areas, such is their importance. Unless you are a liberal masochist this is brilliant news.

What if the Taliban retreat? Well, Pakistan has essentially been coerced by the movement of Moshtarak into setting up even more posts along the Pakistan-Afghan border. At least 26 have been erected in the last week. The sensitive among you may have winced at 'coerced' but so what? It's high time that Pakistan aided us in the defeat of religious fascism. Some more truths, shall we? The RAF and equivalent forces made a thorough scan of the entire area before the surge: this is not simply jingoist generals throwing loads of troops at an area; Moshtarak is in fact extremely tactically astute.

NATO and Afghan officials are beginning to have regular meetings with tribal leaders, with the eventual plan of bringing in hundreds of police – as well as, potentially, the indigenous Afghan Army, one of the major successes – in order to secure government control. Tribal leaders apparently feel alienated from the central government: if anything this is an argument for federalism being implemented, and whatever concerns people may have about tribalism generally, they are certainly not reasons for our withdrawal. Rather, they necessitate our presence, and in greater numbers.

Moreover, the formerly oppressed ethno-religious tribes – the Hazara,

the Tajik and the Uzbek populations have grown in influence and in wealth, therefore they will resist any attempt by the Taliban to regain control over any areas. Moshtarak is an essential part of helping the self-affirmation of these tribes. Let me pre-empt a comparison my opponent may make – that of the 1979 Soviet invasion.

Firstly the Taliban, unlike the Mujahidin, had been in power and were hated by the Afghan people. Moreover the Soviet aggression was purely imperialist, ergo it was oppressor vs. oppressor, this is liberator vs. oppressor no matter what imbeciles like Michael Moore will tell you.

This has significance beyond the Afghan borders. Important circles in Pakistan have long wanted to have Afghanistan as a proxy state (essential to any conflict with India). Indeed, two officials of Pakistan's Intelligence Agency were killed in a strike on an Al-Qaeda camp (hint hint nudge nudge, they were there). Fortunately, Pakistan is no longer in a position to effectively support any Taliban struggle and Barack Obama has even stated that the option of moving into Pakistan is not off the table, a great relief considering the potential of a nuclear state controlled by the Taliban. Moshtarak not only weakens Pakistani influence over the region, it also increases the lack of resources with which the Taliban threaten Pakistan.

The Operation will quite clearly work and has to. This is a duty tripled by the fact that for too long Afghanistan was left to its own devices. Now there are shaky but diplomatic relations with the pro-west Hamid Karzai. The corruption of his government is less important than the breaking down of the ideological hegemony the Afghan people suffered under for too long. There are long-term considerations too. This is a part of the fight against Islamic terrorism and of stabilising the region. The Operation is evidently working on both fronts.

## Results from last week's poll:

Is Britain Broken?

Yes: 27%

No: 73%

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

Illustration: Becky Jones



Almost one decade ago, with minds full of anger and revenge, the US sent its military into Afghanistan, their task being to seek out and destroy the Taliban and in so doing, symbolically save the world from the threat of terrorism. Here we are, nine years later. Obama has ridiculously given the world an estimated date for US troop retrieval, July 2011, and everywhere we hear a murmur of 'peace talks'. Are we really naïve enough to believe that through an increased intensity of direct military action and the consequent pressure put upon the Taliban leaders to communicate with NATO that Afghanistan can find contentment? That 'peace' (as loaded a term as that is) will soon be achievable in a country that has been torn apart by civil war and international oppression? If so, it seems that we may be forgetting just one thing, that 'Afghanistan', although an individual and specific case in many respects, is also a microcosm, a representation of world politics.

This war cannot be resolved through intimidation, the 'my gun is bigger than yours' approach that the US has proposed is absurd. This war did not begin in 2001 and will not end in 2011. It's a war of opposing ideologies that will continuously re-emerge.

With the London Conference on Afghanistan held earlier this year came the development of Operation Moshtarak, whose essential aim is to bring together the Afghan government and international coalition forces in order to gain a favourable position over the Taliban and hence force them into a compromise. Maybe, just maybe, the Taliban will become so weak that it finds NATO has tied a rope around its neck and is cutting their air supply, meaning the only chance of survival is to succumb to the offerings of the enemy. But this does not mean, to any extent, that the extremist groups will cease believing in their

radical philosophies.

Have we not learnt from the British Empire that colonialism is no solution? One cannot simply inflict the American ideology in Afghanistan and make it stick without rebellion and revenge being sought. NATO will untie the rope and allow the Taliban to regain enough strength to re-attack. A never ending cycle has begun. The eye of the hurricane is all that can be achieved, a creation of calm before another event of destruction.

We must also ask, what will become of Afghanistan when NATO does retreat? For it is impossible to create a democratic state through war. Karzai's decision, this week, to take personal control of the electoral process exemplifies the government's susceptibility to corruption and their inability to achieve liberation for the Afghan people. It directly proves that the intentions of the 2001 invasion have failed and illuminate that now is the time to follow in the Dutch footsteps and pull out of this no-win situation whilst some innocent lives can be saved. For, as we are reminded every day in the headlines the true victims are the Afghan civilians and soldiers of the international occupation. How much blood can our politicians have on their hands before they realise that instant retreat is the only barely respectable option they have left?

No longer are we aware of the purpose of our presence in Afghanistan, other than the country having a rather convenient location for the building of relations between China, India, and Russia. Instead we attempt to justify our continued occupation with the hopeless chat of 'peace'. The people of the US and the UK, as two major players in the military operation, are demanding an end. In attempts to buy more time and salvage a good image we are being bought with promises of negotiations. To get the Taliban to come to a 'realisation' (through bribery!) will allow each participant in the war to come away with the false opinion that they have achieved something and consequently that their engagement in Afghanistan was not pointless after all. Image has become most important: the US is testing its 'superpower' status and cannot be seen to fail at the hands of an economically and politically weak country.

No peace can be achieved as long as a country is being occupied. As such, Operation Moshtarak will just add another to the string of failed attempts at the restoration of a long-forgotten peace in Afghanistan.

No

Ceri Eldin





# Cuts: perspective pragmatism

Higher Education cuts are deeply regrettable - but they do bring an opportunity for wholesale reassessment of the sector's policy goals



**Hugh Alderwick**  
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In the long term, investment in our higher education system will have the effect of strengthening our economy. Obama and Sarkozy know it, and so does anybody who really thinks about it. But it is important to have some perspective in the midst of economic turbulence; cuts are going to have to happen everywhere in the public sector, and there are great efficiency savings that can

be made in our universities which do not need to have the effect of bringing these valued institutions to their knees. Like it or not (and it's a definite not), our universities are going to have to face cuts. But most importantly, we need to think about what kind of investment is the right investment to make in higher education. University cuts give the chance for an overhaul in higher education policy.

There has to be some sort of compromise. The prevalent attitude that the government is purposefully attempting to severely damage the quality of our universities is just nonsensical - why would they? Today on campus I was even thrust a flyer calling for 'no cuts, no fees'. Well obviously, but we want no cuts; no fees; half of the young population in higher education; and no changes to the way we do things; all of this in an economic downturn. It's a very nice idea, but clearly not a viable one. If we continue with this attitude, then the only conceivable option for the future is a rise in tuition fees. The fact is that something has got to give.

Do we all really need three years to 'get to know' our subject? We shouldn't turn our noses up at the idea of condensed two year courses for some degrees when, in the current system, we have a great deal of time to spend on, quite frankly, doing not all that much. Two year degrees will not only reduce costs, but will increase space to match

growing demand for places. Change is not a bad thing, especially if it helps to solve a problem. Though academics may grumble about the disruption of their cushy lives, and

## Is sending 50% of 18 year olds to university the right investment?

the shortening of their absurdly long holidays, shorter courses do not have to equate to a decrease in teaching quality. Condensed courses would not only act as an antidote to the forever rising number of university applicants, but also offer a cheaper alternative to the immediate concerns of the taxpayer, and the long-term financial concerns of students.

But further than this, is a commitment to aim to send 50 percent of 18 to 30 year olds to university the right investment? Ideally yes, but with this current target, fees are going to have to get bigger so that universities can cope; more people means more buildings, more teachers; more

everything. Most importantly it means more money; this we definitely don't have. The current cap on tuition fees of £3,225 will be a long distant memory if we continue as we are, and some government think tanks are even calling for legislation to enable the best universities to be able to charge an even higher rate than others for their places. So instead of encouraging meritocracy and social mobility in higher education, there may soon be a situation where only the richest can go to the best universities. In the long term, wider participation can only be a good thing, but universities offering courses such as Football Business Management BA (which does exist), should in the short term be looking to concentrate their minimal budgets on other things. Previous articles in *Leeds Student* rightly highlight the value of higher education to our economy; yet the fact is that it does not strengthen our economy in any way to fund and turn out indebted students with increasingly meaningless degrees every year, which will not enable them to get a job.

We don't want to see cuts here at Leeds, or at any of our universities, but if we are expecting the cuts to be reversed then we are going to be bitterly disappointed. To save us from a real university crisis, we need to think about being pragmatic. I would happily do my course in two years, or even less, if it meant that I didn't have to pay even more for it.

## Cuts give an opportunity for an overhaul in Higher Education policy

# Amnesty under fire

Amnesty supports Moazzem Begg, human rights campaigner and known Taliban sympathiser, and they're right to do so



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Amnesty International has recently become involved in a war of words with their former employee Gita Sahgal. Having enjoyed decades of a spotless reputation, their integrity has come under fire, with even Salman Rushdie condemning what he calls their 'moral bankruptcy', despite receiving Amnesty's unwavering support when he was placed under a Fatwa by the Iranian regime for writing *The Satanic Verses*. Attacks on Amnesty have centred on the charity's continuing support of 'Britain's most famous supporter of the Taliban', British citizen Moazzam Begg and his organisation 'Cageprisoners'. Despite enduring three years of torture and detainment at Guantanamo, Begg has never been charged with any terrorist offence, and previous to his 'special rendition' spent his life doing charitable work in Taliban occupied Afghanistan. He recently embarked on an Amnesty endorsed European tour to encourage countries to provide a safe haven for released Guantanamo inmates.

Of course Sahgal is right when she asserts that 'being a victim of human rights violations does not automatically make you a defender of human

rights,' but doesn't Begg deserve a little more credit? To claim that Amnesty's support of Begg's campaign to shut down Guantanamo and rehabilitate its prisoners renders the world's largest human rights organisation Taliban supporters is ludicrous. As for 'Cageprisoners,' why shouldn't there be an organisation specifically designed to protect the rights of the detainees and raise awareness of their ongoing plight? Particularly as, despite repeated promises that the prison will be closed, there is yet to be any marked progress. As soon as you enter Begg's website, you are asked to write letters of support to the inmates, in order to

## Amnesty support Begg's humanitarian efforts, but are not aligned with his support for terror suspects

show that there is still someone outside fighting for them.

Amnesty have defended their links with Begg, claiming that they support his humanitarian efforts but are not necessarily aligned with his support of known terror suspects such as Anwar Al-Awlaki. This is a fair analysis. Why should Amnesty ignore this man's credentials as an ambassador for the abolition of an illegal regime? There has been massive media support for Sahgal, but I believe their emphasis needs to shift. There should be less focus on what crime the detainees may or may not have committed and more on actually shutting down the prison and reuniting these inmates with the correct legal processes. Even those who have done something wrong do not deserve to be ghost prisoners, lost in a limbo of legality and subjected to gross human rights abuses. Begg does support some questionable characters, but they continue to deserve his support, and ours, as long as they remain in this situation.

Ironically, Begg's lawyer Clive Stafford Smith is also facing condemnation for his defence of human rights. The US Department of Defense has pressed charges against him and his colleague Ahmad Ghappour, for their 'unprofessional conduct' in writing to Obama, detailing their client Binyam Mohamed's torture in Guantanamo and Morocco. They will stand trial on May 11, and could face six months in a US jail. Although unlikely to result in a custodial sentence, with Stafford Smith himself describing the charge as 'frivolous' (the letter in fact revealed no classified

information, only the title was left uncensored), this latest move represents the lengths the USA is willing to go to in the bid to cover up their violations.

## Instead of covering up mistakes, the US needs to put them right

It is unclear what possible motivation could be behind this. Where exactly does the White House think this is going? Not only have they repeatedly breached basic human rights through torture, and launched a systematic campaign to conceal it, they are now attempting to prosecute the men who dared point out the gaping moral flaws in this policy. This recent condemnation of the organisations and individuals who have tirelessly campaigned for the abolition of Guantanamo brings another dimension to the embarrassing truth of our human rights policy. Instead of trying to cover up mistakes the US needs to start putting them right. Obama is trying to shut down Guantanamo, and the UK should be supporting him by endorsing Begg's mission to persuade our allies to grant asylum to the remaining prisoners.



# Nothing like a newspaper

The future of print media is under threat from the all-encompassing influence of the internet, but we shouldn't give up on it just yet



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amount retained; when articles make the transition to the website as opposed to being published in print. Some money is made from the print edition's advertising revenue, yet realistically the University Union is paying out its share and seeing an inconsequential financial return. A move online would, then, seem the cheaper and easier option.

Neither the student newspaper nor the national quality should, however, be determined by its tenability as a successful 'product'. News, comment and opinion are not commodities, and should not be considered so. Unfortunately, we live in a world that does, and will continue to, revolve around money, exchange, and driving a profit. If there's no money to be had in print journalism, then its value to a society hampered by recession and globalising via internet technology becomes questionable. Why should the social, cultural and political force of the print newspaper be undermined by falling, yet still profitable, sales figures? The answer is by no means a simple one.

A prominent case in defence of the newspaper is its significance as a social phenomenon. Yet it clearly swims against the tide in today's electronic Age of the Short Attention Span. The people who will read the news via brand new iPads, sitting in Starbucks with nothing but a latte and their pretensions for company, will not be the same who congregate and discuss that news. They'll be the kind of people whose first response, if any, is to cast a disparaging judgement on Twitter. Political perspectives will cede to short bursts of personal indignation, as the culture of print media contorts itself into the solitary act of

internet browsing.

Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation has already expressed the desire to introduce fees to its online content, coming to the somewhat late realisation that giving something away for free doesn't equate to effective capitalism. You can almost guarantee that certain premium content won't appear in their print newspapers; they'll have to incentivise the initiative somehow. While the average consumer pays for newspapers today, or pays a licence fee that he or she may watch televised news, no available information is explicitly retained for the purposes of exclusion. Newspaper editions that report momentous events do not cost more than those in which nothing of any relative significance is reported. Murdoch is not the dystopian Big Brother just yet; but we must be wary of News Corp's vision all the same. The further that news becomes not just the subject but the object of business, the greater its propensity to be adapted to fit the needs of those who buy and sell it.

Print media is still a stalwart of our culture, yet its future in this coming decade is uncertain. The traditionalists (and I count myself among them) will argue that the palpable bond between writer and reader is something that is exclusive to the newspaper that you hold in your hands; it is in the ink that rubs off on your fingers. Others will say that the future of journalism, like so many other things, lies in the infinite bounds of the internet: immediate, global, and for the moment, free. Even if you're only reading 16 issues of *Leeds Student* next year, count yourself lucky that it isn't fewer, and keep the faith.

**LGBT Month at LUU: triumph, setback, defiance, and above all things, pride**



**Sophia James**  
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When did it become acceptable to refuse to employ an individual because of their sexuality? Anti-gay attacks from the Pope are becoming a regular occurrence these days but in the LGBT community we have come to expect that. What is surprising however, and more unsettling, is the casual yet daily abuse at street level which plagues the 'gay' community. The battle against homophobia is often seen as a battle won due to recent advances in legal rights but what is increasingly being brought to my attention is how far we have yet to go.

According to a 2008 Stonewall study, around 40 percent of lesbian, gay and bisexual people have admitted fear of being a victim of crime, compared to only 23 percent among ethnic minorities and 13 percent among the general public. Despite a widely held perception of unquestionable equality, the gritty reality is that this could not be further from the truth. The same study reports that one in eight LGBT people experience homophobic hate crimes, yet a mere quarter report it.

Student circles are often seen as more liberal strata of the general public and at the beginning of LGBT History Month at Leeds University Union we launched Purple Parkinson, anarchically hung rainbow flags around the Union building and proudly displayed an LGBT History Month banner but sadly, before the first full week was over, the banner had been viciously torn down and flags began to disappear. Unfortunately, this is not the worst incident to take place during the month and it is embarrassing to say that aggressive homophobia occurred within our own students Union at a club night this month. Homophobic abuse, like racism, misogyny and disablism comes to be expected by the people who experience it but it is how we deal with the issue that differentiates us. The LGBT will be in Fruity this evening having a 'gay in' to end History Month in determination and defiance of the attempt to intimidate members of the society back into the closet. There is a sense of extreme pride amongst the LGBT community at Leeds, something which I am confident will not be crushed by ignorance.

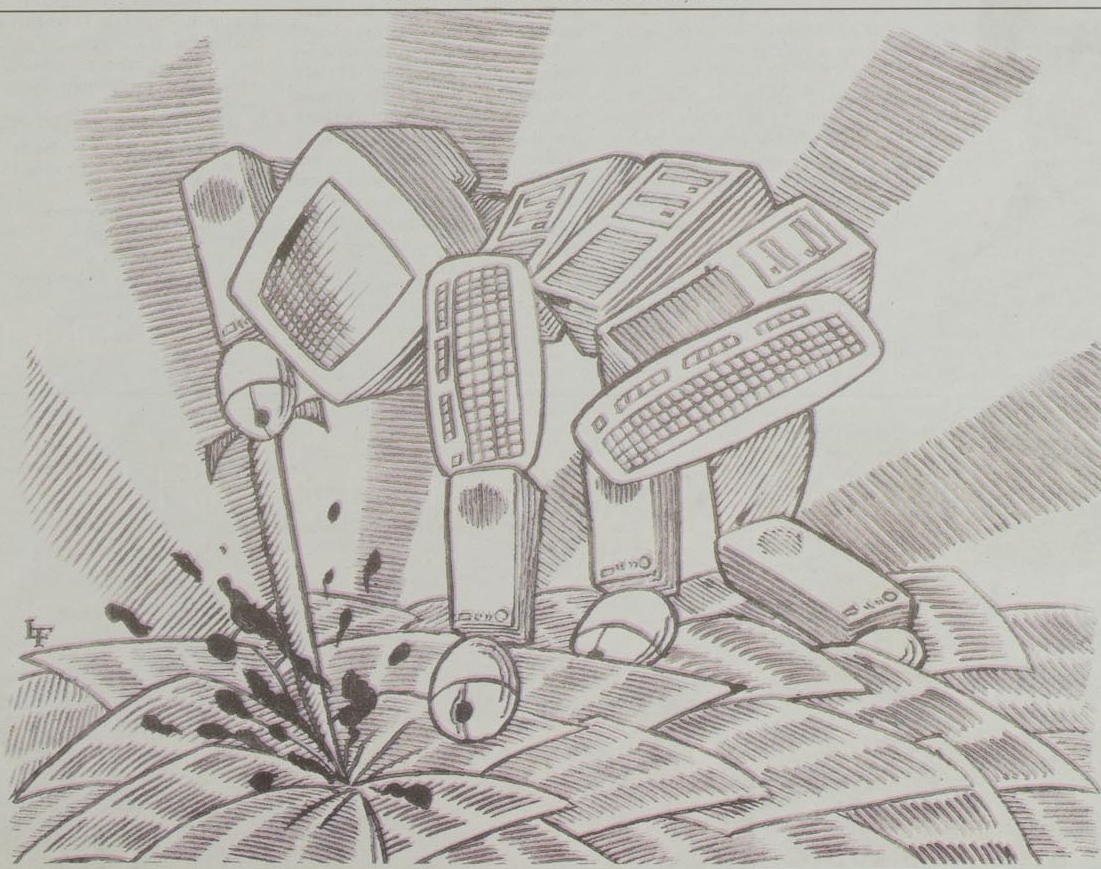
I have been an LGBT activist for the past three years and in that time I have led Pride marches, lobbied MPs and steered national campaigns. Over this period, I have been fortunate enough to meet some of the most talented and passionate campaigners across the UK. Their experiences, coupled with my own, have taught me that there is always more to fight for. Our definition of equality should not be restricted to legal terminology but a wider understanding among different people, supported by egalitarian society. My personal pledge to the you, the reader, is that you utilise every opportunity that arises to distance yourself from discrimination, whether at a bus stop, cinema or shopping queue, it is only through a string of these actions that we will progress towards a fairer society. Activism is, after all, more than just a megaphone on campus.

Go to LS2, pg24 for a review of the month

## Comment online

Oliver Duggan on politics at the Olympics  
Lucy Le Moine on EU diplomacy faux pas  
Usmaan Amin on class at University

[www.leedsstudent.org](http://www.leedsstudent.org)





# Crippling cuts hit physics

Cuts in funding are set to have a devastating effect on physics research, *Leeds Student* has learned.

A £40 million deficit in the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC) budget has hit physicists at Leeds University and across the UK, as funding for important projects is cut. Fears are rife that the UK will lose its standing as an international leader of science, as academic staff are forced to look for work abroad and PhD studentships are slashed in what the STFC is calling a 'managed withdrawal' from internationally significant research.

Funding will be withdrawn from over 24 UK projects, including astro, particle, and nuclear physics and space projects, marking a £115 million reduction over five years. At Leeds, high-energy astronomy and astroparticle physics have been hardest hit.

Dr Johannes Knapp, Head of High-Energy Astrophysics and astroparticle physics specialist, speaks of a dire situation:

"All astroparticle physics activities at Leeds lose STFC funding in the next two years. The number of PhD studentships has been reduced from 3 to 2 per year."

The cuts will result in a 25 per cent cut in studentships and fellowships and a ten per cent cut in grants from this year, triggering an angry

response from the physics community. Institute of Physics President, Prof. Dame Jocelyn Bell stated: "With all of the challenges we face, from climate change and energy security to a rapidly ageing population, we urgently need individuals well trained in physics...The amount needed to avoid this unfortunate cut is minor in comparison to the huge sums of money spent saving the financial sector, surely money can be found to avoid it."

Many in the scientific community fear that this is a unwise move that will result in the UK losing its influence and reputation as a world leader.

"It is short sighted to cut education and research in a country without much industry and natural resources, that relies largely on well trained people," says Dr. Knapp. "Who if not the scientists and engineers will overcome the problems we are facing in the next decades? Other European countries, the US and Japan recognise that, and pump huge sums of money into their universities and research institutes to support this base knowledge. It is likely that they will fare better than the UK in the future."

The cuts have left research students within the school worried

for their future careers. Heather Cook, PhD researcher into high-energy astrophysics, expressed her concern:

**It is wrong that the government decides what researchers should work on**

"I am only secure to the end of my PhD, after that I am going to find it very difficult to find a job within high energy astrophysics within the UK. In fact, it is going to be essentially impossible because there are no more [UK funded] high-energy projects."

"It is going to affect at least a dozen universities, who may lose several people, particularly post doctoral researchers."

"Myself and the two other PhD students may have to look abroad for work."

However, Dr Knapp believes that the actual outcome will be more moderate.

Meanwhile, in an open letter to *The Guardian*, Professor John Dainton, Sir James Chadwick Professor of Physics, said "For the sake of what amounts to a pittance in comparison with my, and my fellow taxpayers' stake holding in the cause of the recent recession – the financial services industry – we are throwing away much of the return on recent investment in science."

The STFC made its decision after prioritising other areas of science above astronomy and particle physics. For the Leeds astrophysicists, such a cut-and-dry approach to allocating funding overlooks the vast potential of their science, as Hazel Rogers, Astrophysics PhD student, explains:

"Sometimes, astrophysics does seem like knowledge for knowledge's sake, rather than benefiting the world in some way, but on the other hand you don't know what you're going to find out until you research into an area."

Dr Knapp agrees:

"Astrophysics has always been a discipline that attracted both laypersons and bright young students to science, more than any other field of research. It has facilitated international cooperation and driven technology in optics, electronics and computing and other areas to the limits. The technical developments have greatly benefited the wider society, from digital photography to satellite navigation and medical imaging."

To Dr Knapp, the intervention of a governing authority is an unwelcome intrusion:

"When it comes to fundamental research, it is wrong that the government (or funding agency) decides what researchers should work on. There is no evidence whatsoever that directed research can produce the unexpected fundamental findings that cause another scientific or technological revolution."

The recession has led to a squeeze on all public services, and science was unlikely to be made an exception. However, as Heather explains, there is a danger that in the pursuit for 'sexy' science, important and relevant research could be left in the dust:

"The funding councils are putting quite a lot of emphasis on projects which look glorious in the news, but which are not likely to give results in the next five or ten years."

The fear is that with the government prioritising what are regarded as 'newsworthy' science projects, above those that have been steadily collecting data over some time, years of hard work could go down the drain, along with the UK's international reputation. In contrast to the UK, many other countries have seen the recession as an incentive to invest in research, to ensure intellectual and technological development for years to come. The Pierre Auger telescope, the world's largest cosmic ray detector, is a prime example, and is close to the heart of research here at Leeds, currently one of only two UK universities in the international collaboration:

"The UK was one of the driving forces to get the Pierre Auger



Dr. Johannes Knapp, astroparticle physicist, calls the cuts "short sighted."

Photo courtesy of Dr. Knapp

Experiment going," explains Dr. Knapp. "After ten years of construction, we are now in our third year of full data taking... And now the UK is the only country to withdraw from it, while much poorer countries (Mexico, Slovenia and Croatia just to name a few) continue their participation and reap the benefits of our investments, and new countries apply to be members."

Outside of Leeds, even high profile experiments have been affected. The ALICE experiment at CERN has had all its UK funding withdrawn, meaning that Britain will lose all influence at the site of the largest experiments ever conducted. Such a decision has caused dismay amongst particle physicists.

The planned withdrawal is very disappointing," said David Evans, head of the ALICE research group at Birmingham University. "ALICE is actually very inexpensive...this is a crazy decision"

Here at Leeds, the future of high-energy astrophysics is uncertain, but the scientists affected retain some optimism for the future

"We are a good department" says Hazel. "We will keep going."

Felicity Inkpen



Heather Cook and Hazel Rogers: young researchers facing an uncertain future.

Photo: Richard Smith

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# LEEDSSTUDENTTWO



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Tinie Tempah

LGBT History Month

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## ...5 ways you'll have broken your Lent promise by now...

Pancake Day was fun wasn't it? But no good thing seems to come without a catch, and it's that time of year where we all try and be more like Jesus and give something up for 40 days and 40 nights. Willpower isn't a particular strongpoint for students and neither is concentration, so I'm betting that a week in, you've given in or given up.

# 1

### Chocolate

Giving up chocolate is the Lent equivalent of joining the gym as a new year's resolution (anyone still doing theirs?). Back in primary school, the thought of not being able to eat chocolate seemed like life ending, and 40 days seemed like an eternity. At this age, we have more important things to give up, and the loss of chocolate doesn't seem as upsetting. But then again, the childhood obsession never dies for some, and the Easter trend for Creme Eggs haunts us all. And to be honest, at this time of year, we all need a bit of a sugar kick every once in a while, especially when you look out the window and find it's snowed AGAIN.

# 2

### Alcohol

Maybe the over-18s version of chocolate, and potentially a very exciting social experiment – would we like each other if we were sober all the time? Perhaps the close living quarters student life brings means we need to get drunk in order to not kill each other. The mere facts that clubbing is rubbish sober, and (depressingly) there is an immense amount of peer pressure that revolves around drinking show that you'd have to have a will of steel to be able to last the rest of the term. Giving up alcohol effectively means giving up nights out, which would result in a lot of time in your house/halls, and potentially the deaths that would thus ensue, therefore it's obviously better for all our safety that you break that one.

# 3

### Coffee/tea

In my opinion, the hardest of these options. For a lot of people, coffee has become such a necessity in the mornings that its absence would mean an entire lifestyle change including going to bed early, doing everything you have to do without procrastinating so you can go to bed early, and not staying out late. Without tea, work breaks are empty and pointless, and the chance of bumping into a friend in the kitchen who is also making tea and having a half hour chat is eliminated. Essentially, your life becomes a lot more structured and routine filled. And that's just not fun, is it?

# 4

### Fast food

This would be fine if you were also giving up alcohol, avoiding the inevitability of drunken desire for a takeaway and the reduction of the inability to resist this temptation. Aside from this, fast food is cheap and doesn't have to be cooked by your own fair hands, and the evil chemicals make it so addictive that it's often hard to resist a cheeky McDonalds here and there. And it's halfway through the term, the novelty's wearing off, we're all facing up to the fact we have to do some work once in a while. It just gets to the point where motivation and judgement slightly go out the window and eating habits are always the first to go.

# 5

### Cigarettes

Let's be honest, shall we? It's just not going to happen.



If the student elections have proved to us anything, it's that if you can't come up with a pun, then you don't stand a chance.

As with any successful advertising campaign, a pun is an easy way to ram your name, message or brand into the subconscious mindset of an unsuspecting viewer. However, the trouble with puns is that it is often tricky to strike the balance between being bashfully amusing, or just plain pathetic. Of course, the sympathy vote has some value, but only if you want to gauge your popularity on the number of understanding looks you can prompt from those around you.

The best puns are those that are so dreadful that they lodge just on the border of the pub conversation and repressed memories sections of your brain; you will never be able to forget them, but at least you can talk about it. In that sense puns share a great deal with perverted sexual experience and this must explain why the porn industry is nothing short of a pun factory. Or a bum factory. Or a bum shagtory. Or whatever...

Regardless, porn producers are

Once again it is student election week, a time when a few good men and women come out of the University woodwork with a singular purpose. They seem like everyday people but inside they're different from the rest of us. Inside them is a passion that burns strong, a passion for their University Union. They care so much about this beleaguered institution that they are ready and willing to spend another year here in Leeds after they graduate with the sole purpose of reigniting the ebbing flame of our beloved establishment.

Or so they would have us believe if their flyers and posters are anything to go by. In reality they are probably at a loss for something to do after they graduate and this would look a bit sexy on their CV.

The problem is that there are just so many of them. So many of their posters have been plastered on the walls of the Union (to the extent that I can't remember what colour the walls were in the first place) that, rather than advertise the individual, they blur together to create a headache-inducing collage of annoyance. So many of their flyers can be seen trodden

responsible for generating puns of such calibre that if Hugh Hefner were to enter the student elections he would probably win hands down. Or face down. Or something about entering...? Anyway here are some of my favourites: *Shaving Ryan's Privates, In-Diana-Jones, 28 Lays Later, Good Will Humping, Glad-I-Ate-Her, The Bare Bitch Project, Inspect Her Gadget, Honey I Blew Everybody...*

...and of course, *Snatch*.

Will Coldwell



Toby



Will

## Going UP

### Take Me Out

It's like bare knuckled Blind Date: no likey, no lighty.

### Pancakes

It's a liberating feeling when you realise that actually nothing can stop you eating them any day you like.

**Lemon and honey**  
Making illness fun! (Unless you have a serious illness)

## Going DOWN

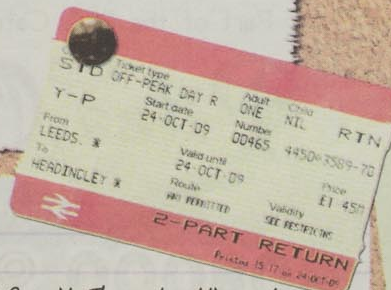
**Snow**  
Fuck off.

**Lent**  
Why did I give up something that makes life more fun when I'm not even religious? I'm sure it was to prove something... I can't remember, I'm getting withdrawal sweats...

**Results**  
To the guy who sits in my seminar and places his high first essay in the middle of the table for all to see: you sir, are a bellend.



Toby Ginsberg



### Overheards:

"Condoms... I haven't used condoms since I was 11!"

"I might as well start prostitution now because let's face it, I'm not getting a degree now am I?"

"Urgh, sport."

"They're the only ones who vote for it... eco-tweets!"



## tech



### Wagamama is the first UK restaurant chain to launch their own iPhone application

"There's an app for that!" We all know this phrase: iPhone applications now come in so many forms that there is an app for pretty much everything. Now there is one more.

For those of us who are always getting hungry for pan-Asian style noodles it is now too easy to get our fix. Wagamama is the first UK restaurant

Their selection is then transmitted straight through to the kitchen and the app also lets users choose a convenient pick-up time if they don't have an immediate need. Payment can be made securely with a debit or credit card.

Marking the launch of the iPhone app is the chance for customers to win the exclusive prize of a Wagamama chef preparing a three-course pan-Asian meal for them in their own home.

Wagamama is always keeping up with technology, instead of little note books their staff carry wireless hand-held devices to make sure your order goes straight to the kitchen.

This app coincides with the launch of wagamamatakeout.com which was been relaunched with a host of new features. Their new aim is to suit those on the go who still want quality food. Wagamama has been voted London's most popular restaurant by Zagat for the fifth year in a row.

### Is it 'app'ening too much?

Phones generally take over your life, if it breaks you feel lost and alone and just know that this is when you'll get all those important life changing texts and phone calls.

Realistically, we can survive, but the ease is there so we make the most of it, unfortunately, we enjoy it to the degree that our world collapses when we no longer have access to it. I think it's safe to say the same applies to Facebook or MySpace, whichever you prefer.

Now, iPhones provide everything: a phone, a laptop, an mp3 player and general diary and organiser. It is certainly space saving but if you lose that, will you be able to function?

We probably don't really need to talk face to face with anyone anymore, or even on the phone as everything can be done via email. I'm not saying this is always a bad thing, I will go to extraordinary lengths to avoid talking to car insurance people, but it does worry me that for the younger generation, who are so used to technology doing everything for them, that they will lose any element of social skills.

If you go on the iPhone website you can quite literally download apps for everything. Cooking ones, news ones, outsidy ones and music ones. Some of them are quite fun, the lightsabre one in particular makes me chuckle, but I feel we're losing a lot of the elements of being human. Surely getting lost, or

guessing how to cook something, or going out in a short skirt because it looks sunny and then it rains, are just things that happen, and happen to all of us. The day will come when you can't boil an egg without an app, or have to use GPS just to pop down to the shops.

Eventually there will have to be an app for common sense, because will we actually still have any?

Words: Evelyn Pryor-Jones



This week saw the beginning of Fairtrade's Big Swap fortnight. Coffee cups and food products were graced with "I'm a big swapper" stickers in an attempt to make those who bought the products aware of the contribution they were making to a fairer trade system.

It may not seem like swapping your cup of tea for the fairtrade equivalent could make much of a difference, however by choosing to buy your bags from Fairtrade you are helping over 15 million people in developing countries to support themselves, their families and their communities.

Living thousands of miles from the source of goods means that it is easy to feel removed from those individuals who do the work to provide such tasty treats.

To put it into perspective, simply swapping your oranges and lemons for Fairtrade has a direct impact on 21 individuals on Luthando Farms in South Africa. The 21 workers, who co-own Luthando, would otherwise struggle to earn a decent wage.

Many people are discouraged from donating to charities as they question whether or not the funds ever actually get to the individuals we see posted on campaign posters or shown living in dire poverty on our television screens.

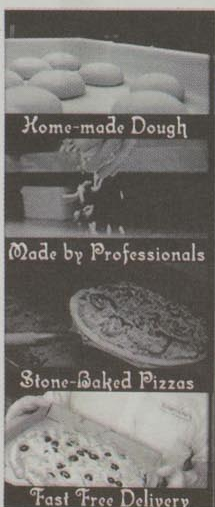
Fairtrade however isn't based on charity, it is based on a fair wage for a hard days work. Rather than rely on cheap labour to make a profit, they focus on ensuring that those doing the work get a fair and decent wage to provide them the same opportunities to improve their own lives.

So get swapping and register your swap online at thebigswap.org.uk

Words: Suisse Osbourne-James



chain to introduce an iPhone app. Users can use the app to locate their nearest branch of Wagamama and browse the menu to place their order.



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As part of STAR (Student Action for Refugees) action week, *LeedsStudent* have reviewed a number of restaurants in Leeds which are run by refugees. Positive media for refugees and asylum seekers is rare but these are three particular success stories of refugees having been able to fully and positively integrate themselves into society.

If you are tired of eating the same food all the time, or always going to the same places, these restaurants are definitely worth a visit.

#### Darvish; Traditional Persian Tea-House and Restaurant

**Type of food:** Iranian  
**Average meal cost:** £10  
**Paying:** Cash only  
**Takeaway:** For orders over £20

Darvish is a family run restaurant and café. Morteza, the manager, came to the UK from Iran eight years ago and opened Darvish four years ago.

The staff and atmosphere of the restaurant are very welcoming and we particularly liked the open kitchen, which gives the restaurant a homely feel and means that you can see your food being prepared.

Having never eaten Iranian food before, we weren't sure what to expect but overall the food was very enjoyable. Between the three of us we ordered two starters which were both delicious and came with freshly baked naan bread. Being one vegetarian and two meat eaters, we sampled a variety of the menu. There were five vegetarian options. The one we tried, vegetarian khorosht, was a lovely mix of vegetables in a Persian sauce.

The meat dishes; Kebab Chenjeh (lamb) and the Joohjeh Kebab (chicken) were beautifully cooked and wonderfully tender.

For desert they offer speciality home-made saffron ice cream (free if you order a starter and main course). We found this surprisingly good!

We made the mistake of ordering tea with the meal rather than at the end, as it comes with a selection of biscuits and dates. However we all enjoyed the Darvish Special tea and would recommend going just for that!

At an average of only £10 for a three course meal, it is very affordable.

Admittedly it is a little out of the way for most students but it is easy to catch a bus in that direction from town and we think it is well worth a visit.

**Address:** 283 Roundhay Road, Leeds, LS8 4HS

**Website:** [www.darvish.co.uk](http://www.darvish.co.uk)

**Telephone:** 0113 2495500



**Merkato International**

**Type of food:** Ethiopian  
**Average meal cost:** £7

**Paying:** Cash only  
**Takeaway:** Yes

Merkato is run by Samuel and Tady Bekalo who came to the UK from Ethiopia ten years ago and opened this café three years ago. It is a quiet place, particularly popular with local Ethiopians and Eritreans who drop in frequently for a chat and a drink. Don't be intimidated though as both the staff and regular customers are very friendly.

The menu is limited and full of unfamiliar words but most options have an English explanation. We tried the vegetarian mixed platter which is a variation of different lentil and vegetable based dishes. It is served with injera, traditional Ethiopian, bread which is somewhat of an acquired taste but definitely worth a try.

There is no desert except for a selection of Baklava (sweet pastries) which were very good.

This is definitely not the place for a relaxed



evening meal but if you are in town and looking for a quick and slightly different lunch it is ideal.

**Address:** 79 Merrion Superstore, Merrion Centre, Leeds

**Telephone:** 07961 883500  
**Opening Times:** Mon-Sat 10am-6pm  
**Café Create**

**Type of Food:** Breakfast, lunch and snacks  
**Average meal cost:** £5  
**Paying:** Cash Only  
**Takeaway:** No

Create is a not-for-profit organisation based in Leeds. Its services include catering and cleaning and Café Create is their latest enterprise. Unlike Darvish and Merkato this is not a family run business but instead is an ethical organisation committed to providing work and training to people (often refugees) who have faced difficulties in life.

Although the food is not exciting (mostly sandwiches, jacket potatoes and cakes) it is all excellently homemade using natural and local products. The drinks are also fairtrade (we particularly recommend the hot chocolate).

The café itself is welcoming. The mismatch, recycled furniture gives it a quirky feel and the brightly coloured walls make it light and airy. Despite not being open long, it is already very popular and the staff are often quite busy. This doesn't get in the way of excellent and friendly service though.

The prices are very student-friendly and this is definitely the place for a chilled out, relaxed lunch or mid-morning coffee and cake.

**Address:** Holy Trinity Church, Boar Lane, Leeds, LS1 6HW

**Website:** [www.createleeds.org](http://www.createleeds.org)

**Opening Times:** Mon-Sat 9am-3pm (stops serving hot food at 2pm)

To find out more about refugee issues or to get involved join either the STAR or Press Gang Facebook groups or visit <http://pressgangleeds.blogspot.com>.

**photo:** Davish Restuarant:  
**words:** Grace McNeill and Jane Salmon

## Tommy Pockets tells your future...

### Aries

You join the local battle recreation society, and this week it is the turn of the Battle of the Bulge. Showing your lack of knowledge, you turn up in a leotard expecting a gym work out. Picked to play an eponymous American soldier with a hilariously out of place cockney accent, you run around unaware of just how stupid you look but enjoy the picturesque Yorkshire Dales. Eventually you get bored, slack it off and a 'talent' scout for Eric Prydz spots you and gives you a place in his new video. Bonus.

### Taurus

You will take up Scientology this week, and after rising through the ranks extremely quickly you will find yourself taking phone calls from Tom Cruise himself. He reveals that he never really got over his role in Top Gun and still stages recreations in his back garden. He invites you to be Goose in the next production, you are on your way to LA to become a fully-paid up member of the Top Gun cast that Cruise keeps in his basement. At least the graduate job market won't be a problem now. Earning.

### Gemini

This week you find out that one of your housemate's favourite film is Mickey Blue Eyes. She makes the entire house sit through this abomination, and after hearing Hugh Grant's Italian accent, you stab yourself in the eye with a pencil. After sending a letter of complaint to Mr. Grant, you receive a free copy of his new film with Sarah Jessica Parker. Looks like you picked the wrong week to stop sniffing glue. Depression.

### Cancer

That Georgian dwarf you fought in Wilkinson's the other day is back to haunt you with his wit and cheeky sarcasm. There is a distinct possibility that the two of you will have to kiss and make up when you next meet in Beeston. With this situation resolved, work takes over. Oceana ask you to fill in for David Sneddon, whose absence at will cause mild outrage on Radio Aire. You will excel and a plaque will be unveiled in your honour, heralding you as West Yorkshire's finest nu-acid-folk act of the 21st century. Award.

### Leo

A black cat will cross your path this week, which many people would believe is lucky, but not for you. You realise that the animal is actually following you everywhere. You see it around campus, you see it at the window when you are trying to sleep and then one night you swear you hear it singing The Cure song 'Love Cats'. After a few days you turn and ask it politely to leave. To your astonishment it answers back "I only wanted to be your friend you heartless wanker". Cruel.

### Virgo

This week you end up drunk in Wire, in a full beekeepers suit as you thought it would be the next must have item, replacing check shirts. In the club you meet someone dressed in an equally ridiculous scuba diving costume, who seems to have had the same idea. You bond over the mutual hatred that everyone else in the club has for you. Eventually you are thrown out for asking the bouncer why he lets so many 16 year olds in. Costume.

### Libra

Put that malt loaf down - it's Friday, Sultanas will be a prominent feature of your week, particularly from a romantic perspective. The man or woman of your dreams will serenade you with a bath full of Morrison's own-brand sultana bran cereal. The mood will sour, however, when you decide to undress. Chaos will ensue. Fortunately, your essay on the representation of carpets in Wordsworth's 'The Prelude' is given a first-class mark. Fashion tip: accessorise your Gary McAllister Coventry City shirt with bangles.

### Scorpio

After despairing of the clientele that inhabit your local pub, you decide to picket the premises until they are banned from the place. Many others take up your noble cause, arguing that anybody wearing a hat indoors, or just generally swaggering around the place with an unearned sense of superiority, should be barred. However, you underestimate your enemy, which leads to a battle of biblical proportions. You conclude that mankind is doomed, and transfer to Lampeter. Travesty.

### Capricorn

In a fit of spontaneity you stand up in your lecture and declare your heartfelt belief that Finland is the greatest country in the world. You're not Finnish, but who doesn't root for the underdog? One person bursts into tears with joy. Others say that they always liked Finland, but just never saw the country 'that way' and thank you for opening their eyes. You leave the lecture with many new friends, but then run into a group of angry Swedes in the Old Bar. That will teach you for being spontaneous. Ouch.

### Sagittarius

An Otley run will get out of hand this week, when too much drink causes problems. While the event starts unspectacularly with everyone gathering dressed as Smurfs, with you as Papa Smurf. However, by the time you hit Hyde Park you start to believe, as the leader of the group, there should be a Smurf revolution. You target the Union, as Smurfs were so criminally underrepresented in the Exec elections. The night ends with you being forcibly removed from campus screaming about how unfair it is. Blue (Dab-a-dee Dab-a-dah).

### Aquarius

Your friend brings a drunken acquaintance round for an evening drinking session. You cannot stand the pretentious prick, especially after he spends two hours eulogizing about the Godfather movies, even though he has never seen them all the way through. What makes things worse is that secret accident from childhood involving a Godfather video and some marmite. The headache caused by episode leads you to take up watching Glee. Shocker.

### Pisces

Feeling you haven't done enough for charity recently you decide to jump on the bandwagon and organise a single for Haiti. Bono and Bob Geldof seem to feel this on the wind and rush to your side. But you soon realise that you cannot understand a single thing that either of them is saying, especially when they are talking to each other. Instead of hiring an interpreter, you and your harmonica-playing mate Steve do it on your own and end up being a Timmy Mallet song to number one. Winner.



## LS2 tries... Self-defence

"Go on, try it!" cried a voice from the newspaper office. Five days later I was running around the Conference Hall like an 11 year old at school.

I had signed myself up to a self-defence class, and having introduced myself to the group, we got to work on a quick warm up jog round one of the Union's larger rooms before getting onto the art of self-defence.

Run in collaboration between the Knowledge campaign and Ben Hockman, a former University of Leeds student, these free classes are there for students to learn some basic self-defence. But the hope is that you never have to use any of the techniques taught.

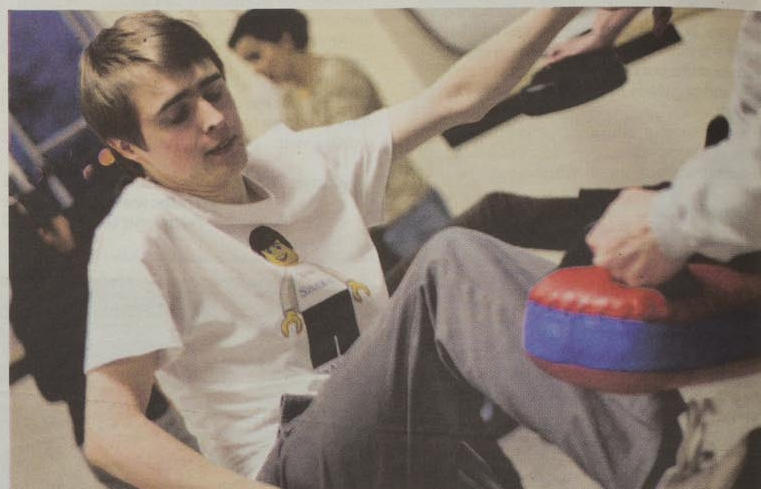
Having been well and truly warmed up, we set about learning how to hit to get away. The common conception of the punch is to ball up your fist and then hit the guy with as much force as you possess. This, apart from being ineffective, will leave you with a broken fist. The way to hit someone to get away is to open your palm and hit with your palm, whilst also using

were not the same amount of self-defence instructors as there are today, so that shows that it has grown into something that people actively do."

Back at the class, we were being taught how to kick someone. Again, it is all about using your body weight, not just your foot. Part of the problem of teaching someone self-defence, is the mental barrier. Most people aren't used to hitting anybody, so kicking or punching someone who has cornered you can be a problem.

At the start of the session, most of the group (including myself) were apprehensive about hitting the protective pads, which highlighted the problem. However, as the session progressed, we became more confident. My partner got so into it that at one point he hit the pad so hard it hit me in the face, which led rather to a bleeding lip. The irony wasn't lost on me!

The idea behind self-defence is that it will try to help you to buy yourself a few seconds in which to get away if you are in a



Self-defence is all about learning how to manoeuvre out of a tricky situation, but the one thing that was constantly relayed to us was that to use force as a last resort. Always try to use reason if at all possible. However, if you are attacked, do not be afraid to use the requisite force to get away.

Another technique we were taught was how to move someone if they are on top of you, such as in a rape scenario. If they are, just use your foot to force one of their legs down. The body is like a table you see, if one leg collapses, the structure falls too.

was this tremendous fun, but it also proved that people now had the confidence within them to hit the orange hard enough.

Warmed down, I found some time to speak to Ben after the session. I asked him whether people were more scared of being attacked in 2010. He responded by saying: "People probably are more scared of attack these days. They are certainly more aware of it happening."

He wondered whether it was the media which had made people more concerned about their personal safety: "There is definitely an increase in fear of crime, whether this relates more to media exposure or to an actual increase in crime, it's hard to tell. Certain violent assaults, such as knife crime, have certainly increased."

Self-defence is something that everyone should have a basic grasp of, and it is fairly simple to get a basic understanding. For just two hours of my time, I may have learned something that could be the difference between being seriously hurt and getting away safely.

Certain violent assaults, such as knife crime, have certainly increased

However, our final task of the session was highly enjoyable, as we tested our newly acquired techniques on the most passive of victims, an orange. Using our techniques, our oranges were squished, splatted and flattened by palms. Not only

words: Adam Richardson

### 5 basic self-defence tips

1. Know and consider your environment, your surroundings, time of day, who you're with, where you're travelling to or from if appropriate.
2. Use your environment to avoid conflict if at all possible: run, hide, put something between yourself and attacker, use weapons of opportunity as a last resort.
3. Know the basics of the law as it applies for self-defence: try to run, try to talk and then, if all else fails, use force as an absolute last resort.
4. Use the most absolute, definite, and if required, brutal, force, to get rid of the threat and remove yourself from the situation as quickly as possible.
5. Develop the physical/mental capability and the self-confidence to do push yourself to do whatever it takes to survive if given no other choice.

For more information, go to [www.knowledge-leeds.co.uk](http://www.knowledge-leeds.co.uk)

Self-defence classes are every Monday on campus



photos: Richard Smith

your body weight. This means that there is a bigger area to hit someone with, but also lessens the damage to yourself.

Self-defence is considered by many as an area that they don't want to go into based on the hope that 'it will never happen to them', so part of the session was devoted to explaining the role of the law in cases of self-defence. Many fear reprisals in the law courts if someone is injured whilst you defend yourself. However, the law is quite clear on matters of self-defence. The accused must show that he used reasonable force to defend himself, another person, or to protect property, in circumstances where it was necessary for him to do so. The question of 'reasonable force' will always be a tricky one to pin down, but courts take consideration of the circumstances.

The latest self-defence classes organised by Leeds University Union and the Metropolitan Union have been fully booked. I posed the question to Ben whether people were more scared than years ago. He replied: "There has been a definite increase in numbers attending self-defence classes. 15 years ago there

potentially dangerous situation. This can be by punching or kicking someone, as it is less risky and easier to deal with if you can use pre-emptive force.

However, if someone has a choke hold on you, just lift your arm that has been grabbed and turn at the same time. This puts pressure on the aggressors thumb, which makes it impossible to maintain a grip, thereby forcing the aggressors hands

People probably are more scared of attack these days. They are certainly more aware of it happening

away. One, or a combination, of the moves we were taught earlier could be used to stun an attacker to ensure enough time to get away.



## INTERVIEW

TABITHA VS. TINIE TEMPAH

## COLUMN

FUCK YOU.

## Tinie Tempah

## Academy

13/02/10

Saturday night, and the most eclectic crowd ever witnessed at the O2 Academy are kitted out in all their finery. Bored parents hold the fort at the back of the crowd, whilst ten-year-olds in pink tights and tutus grind - yes, grind - on each other at the front and Daisy Dares You chants her lyrics onstage in her weird accent.

The less said about that musical abomination the better. To their credit, the crowd are wildly enthusiastic, cheering on the support acts as much as they did headliner Chipmunk. Tinie Tempah takes a second to introduce himself to the crowd - half the lads were sporting those tacky Chipmunk cartoon t-shirts - but they seem to know who he is well enough. They sing along to his old hit 'Wifey' and know the words to the electro-trance chorus of new track 'Pass Out'.

Incidentally, why are electro-trance choruses obligatory for any current UK hip-hop song? Tinie Tempah made a decent enough showman, like most British 'urban' artists, but the overall atmosphere was that of a disco night at a Butlin's. Still though, at least the kids enjoyed themselves.

words: Tabitha Thorlu-Bangura

I used to listen to Dolly Parton,  
'cause my mum's a massive fan.

**So, great crowd for your set!**  
Yeah, they were fantastic.

**I read that you moved from Peckham to Plumstead, what was that like?**  
It was different. It's two completely different extremes. Peckham's a lot more multi-racial and multi-cultural, whereas Plumstead at the time was hardly like that at all. I was one of the only black kids in the class... I met different people from different walks of life, so I guess it was a good thing.

**In your interview for Dazed Digital you said that London was one of your biggest musical influences. What else are you influenced by?**  
Other musicians. Every other musician. I'm constantly listening to different genres. I used to listen to Dolly Parton, 'cause my mum's a massive fan. Wanting to be the best is a big inspiration as well.

**What about in terms of production - on 'Wifey' there's a definite old school garage sound, whereas on 'Pass Out' it's more of an electronic feel.**

Yeah, well obviously 'Wifey' was 2006, 'Pass Out' is 2010, so I'm constantly trying to switch up the sound. It's not really a conscious thing I just make what I enjoy making. I try to put a huge eclectic mix of music into one track.

**What kind of music do listen to at home?**  
I listen to everything... Daniel Merriweather, N-Dubz, Jason Mraz, Regina Spektor...

**What do you think of UK hip-hop/grime at the moment? It seems to have gone from being pretty organic, with people passing around mixtapes, to being really commercial.**  
I think stuff is still happening. But it's like the iceberg factor, all that stuff is still going on underneath but people are just seeing what's happening up top. It's a process. But I'm just happy that it's a process that has opened to the point where we can go into the mainstream and become part of popular culture.

**What can we expect on the new album?**  
Expect the unexpected! I'm just really trying to express myself. Obviously this is my debut album, so this is 21 years worth of experience. It's called *The Disc-covery*, so hopefully you'll discover something about this guy that's been hotly tipped on all these lists this year, and you'll discover something about yourself. It's definitely worth the wait. It's gonna be incredible.

**So are you looking forward to the tour with 50 Cent?**

Yeah, I am. The only other American artist I've toured with is the Cool Kids. That was pretty fantastic. They were cool, I learned a couple of things from them. So hopefully the same thing will happen with 50 Cent.

**What do you think of the UK hip-hop vs. US hip-hop debate?**

I don't really think of it like that - they're looking over here more for inspiration now, or for something new. And I'm more than happy to show them, 'cause I think what we're doing over here is great.

interview: Tabitha Thorlu Bangura



Recently, Owl City's number one single 'Fireflies', has been the centre of a huge brouhahahahahaha-ha-dee-fucking-ha for sounding more like The Postal Service than The Postal Service do. Is this really an issue though, or is the song a valiant kick in the prick of fanboys more sycophantic than the comment section below a Charlie Brooker article?

The Postal Service are a band famous for just one song that will inevitably dampen the mood at any indie night you care to mention, for inventing the kind of pathetic, castrated emotronica that makes one reconsider whether bullying really is a bad thing after all, and, most perversely of all, for including members of Death Cab For Cutie.

Yet bizarrely, whenever this band gets mentioned on a blog, Pitchforks around the world begin frantically frothing at the cock over a cum-stained keyboard, incapable as they are of comprehending anything electronic unless it's laden with weak James-Blunt-on-oestrogen vocals from any old Latitude-approved singer, couched in his infallible ivory tower. The respect they garner is ubiquitous and it is nigh on impossible to meet a self-professed indie kid who doesn't like them. And so it was decreed that anyone with their spine still intact would have to suffer the insufferable Postal Service. Until now that is. Like a heaven-sent gift, Owl City has unwittingly arrived for retribution so that all the wet-paper-bags can cry their eyes out over their fayvovite likkle band having their shtick stolen. Meanwhile the rest of us can gorge on sour grapes.

But what makes this identical newcomer any more tolerable than Gibbard and friend? Despite being an aural doppelganger, Owl City has the upper hand on The Postal Service in every respect. When pop music is naff, it's knowingly so, on account of the fact that it's willingly presented itself as pop. That Owl City has decided to do this isn't even questionable, as a music video featuring a room full of prancing children's toys is just about as dainty as you can get. The Postal Service on the other hand are a band taken way too seriously. So seriously, in fact, that people put on spectacles solely to prepare for a Postal Service conversation.

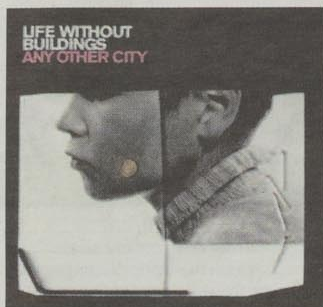
The optimum thing that art can do is piss people off. 'Fireflies' irritates people with their heads shoved so far up their own asses that it goes back up through their neck and around again like some cyclical, corporeal Möbius Strip. Thus, the song is a masterpiece of altruistic proportions and, if there was any justice in the world, it would be awarded the Turner prize this November (transcending the requirement for visuals). The only way Owl City could improve on this would be an eight-minute 'epic', featuring angels whinging atop a mind-numbingly predictable orchestral crescendo, pissing off the Sigur Rós fans in the process.

words: Luke Fear



## COLUMN

### ANY OTHER MEANING?



"No detail, but I'm gonna persuade you..."

Life Without Buildings' only studio album *Any Other City* is a decade old this year. That sentence may have no significance for most of you, but a cursory trip to last.fm will show you what you're missing. Long before the mid-decade post-punk revival, its roughly-produced collision of jagged guitars over a corset-tight rhythm section, all elastic bass and metronomic drums was riotously compelling enough before you consider LWB's most unique feature.

"My lips are sealed..."

Simply put, Sue Tompkins is one of the most individual vocalists (note: *not* singers) in recent memory; part rant, part rap, words Pollock out of her mouth in a tumbling, tourettic fit. Nothing quite meshes together, and there's rarely a coherent message - hell, sometimes it's code; witness the contortions of 'Let's Get Out' title into a mere "LGO!" When R.E.M. debuted with the aptly-named *Murmur*, it was no coincidence that, amongst Michael Stipe's ululations, its most easily-intelligible phrase was "conversation fear". *Any Other City* works like that too but rather than hiding away from expression, it uses masses of words to say not very much, twisting lines into all sorts of rhythmic variations, leaving you to do nothing but appreciate them for their own sake.

"Rhythm and knowledge regenerate there..."

*Any Other City* exposes one of the great rock 'n' roll fallacies: that you have to mean it, *man*. Sure, there's conviction in Tompkins' voice, but her heart is nowhere near her sleeve and any significance outside of the words themselves is nonexistent. Lyrics are often the first thing that attract me to a band, but it takes a lot for mere words to grab me, and that's what makes Life Without Buildings so singularly fantastic.

"If I lose you I'll lose you I'll lose you I'll lose you..."

There are moments when Tompkins can be hard to appreciate; try hearing 'New Town's' chorus as anything other than the running commentary to a proctological exam and you'll struggle. But 'The Leanover' will have you forgiving everything: Tompkins skips across the beat like an overexcited child in a playground, and it's hard for your body not to follow suit. No matter that its opening plea (above) descends into frantic doubledutch, or that it ends with an effervescently illogical chorus of "He's the shaker, baby!" - it just *sounds* fucking brilliant.

And when you think about it, for all the profundities that so-called rock 'n' roll poets try and accomplish, isn't sound what makes a record great to begin with?

words: Alex Wisgard

## LIVE

### Fionn Regan Brudenell Social Club

16/02/10



It would probably be pushing it to claim that Fionn Regan is the most exciting songwriter on the planet right now. That is a position reserved solely for Matt Berninger of the National. But Regan's certainly up there: he's the best young songwriter in Britain (though an Irishman by birth). Earlier this month he released his second album, *The Shadow of an Empire*, and in a marked change from his 2006 debut, he's gone electric. Yes, the unfavourable Dylan comparisons continue to follow Fionn Regan around like a bad smell, yet as the mannerisms and vocal tells of this performance demonstrate, such comparisons may not be entirely unwarranted or even unwanted.

An eclectic bunch gather together to observe how Regan's electrical experiments take shape -



an odd mix of dued-in students, a decrepid folk crowd who probably kept buying Pentangle albums after Renbourn and Jansch had left, and the sort of toughs who don't seem to exist beyond old-school 'real-man' pubs and places like the Brudenell. Of the 13 songs played, only four are from his debut, *The End of History*, and the contrast between these and the more recent material is pretty stark.

The Brudenell proves its worth as a venue during the more raucous numbers, the instruments retaining clarity and the vocals remaining impressively audible and intelligible

### GIG OF THE WEEK

throughout all but the most aggressive attacks from the band. This is worth bearing in mind given that, in as much as Fionn Regan is essentially a folk musician, things get pretty loud. The set is short, the songs are short and the stage banter is kept to a minimum. The band never miss a beat and Regan hits all the right notes. His genius lies in his lyrical dexterity, his ingenious wordplay and his wonderfully melodic guitar, yet for the majority of the set these traits give way to a drive and efficiency that was not present two or three years ago.

On the older numbers his brilliance shines through all the clearer for it. The band lend sparse accompaniment for the first three of these songs, but Regan emerges alone for the encore of 'Be Good or Be Gone', and it's hard to deny this is when he is at his best - just him, an acoustic guitar and an audience silent, wide-eyed, devotees. On the one occasion a listener does dare to open his mouth he is audibly hushed by a dozen people. This is time to listen. This near-master craftsman is about his work.

words: Jack Ready

### MORE GIGS



**Beach House**  
Brudenell Social Club  
12/02/10



"Deal or No Deal" state the supports, Lawrence Arabia, bewilderingly before one of their songs. Nondescript tunes and instrumentation are hoisted to pant-ripping heights by the rich and well-rounded Fleet Fox harmonies, but lame indie titles like 'I've Smoked Too Much' situate this band dangerously in the middle of the road.

Touring in support of their press-acclaimed latest, *Teen Dream*, Beach House are certainly Of The Moment, all dapper and sweating in all black against their somewhat extravagant white furry tree-scape stage decorations. Bar a few technical awkwardnesses, this is a consistent and record-faithful performance. Perhaps too consistent (read: samey).

This is far from sociable music. Drawing vocal lines are intense and chord progressions interesting, but whether the songs are suited to a live audience at all is questionable. Tracks open invariably with a simplistic slow-fi drum loop, making their drummer seem redundant, just about-noticeably beeping up the occasional song.

French-born front, Victoria "My Hair Is Literally Always In My Face" Legrand has an idiosyncratic vocal, even if it is created by compression/reverb/distortion/whatever, and it holds the simple melodies and harmonic stasis together like a haunting and spacious glue, even if her microphone technique is awful. Sadly, it becomes clear that the bulk of the atmosphere in Beach House's songs comes from the product - and such timbral delicacy is not recreated live.

These criticisms are overridden by the songwriting, set highlights being 'Gila' from the excellent *Devotion*, and 'Zebra' and 'Take Care' from *Teen Dream*, i.e. the best songs. Pretty good. So much better on record.

words: Michael Waters



**Hadouken!**  
Stylus  
17/02/10



Let's make one thing clear: Hadouken! aren't a good band. Coming out of Leeds in the midst of the 2006 glowstick-fest known as 'nu rave', their first album was a mix of trashy synth and mildly embarrassing rap, complete with the kind of lyrics that you might expect from a thirteen-year-old writing an episode of *Skins*. Released this year to the excitement of no-one, the ironically named 'For the Masses' saw the said 13 year old drop his pen in favour of discovering a Pendulum album and saying "these guys are ker-rayzees, let's rip them off!". Suffice to say, it was crap.

So why the relatively high-ish score? Leeds based bias? Day-glo fetish? Am I secretly a twelve year old? Well, not as such, but watching the band fire up and crash into 'Crank it Up', and seeing the subsequent excited reaction of hundreds of sweaty pre-pubescent, all throbbing and jumping around with the sort of energy that I haven't had for years, it's pretty hard not to be drawn into the adolescent mindset and actually rather enjoy the experience. The band have ditched the day-glo in favour of 'mature' all black attire and, backed by a rather OTT laser show, it all looks very exciting - some of the tracks even verge on being genuinely good dance-punk, and you almost forget you're watching a boyband.

The set length is pushing it; the crowd frequently heading off to top up on water and Red Bull (past their bedtimes?), while the final few songs get a bit silly, a rubbish white rapper making a guest appearance in the last song. The novelty of the sweaty mosh pit had long since worn off. Or maybe I'm just getting too old.

photo: Matthew Rutledge  
words: Dan Lester!



**Hot Chip Academy**  
16/02/10



"Oh my fucking god, he smiled at us!"

Just when did Hot Chip become cool to the masses?! Alright, so maybe the example of... let's call her "Stacey"... isn't an accurate representation of the audience, but tonight, the 1,800 odd capacity show is packed with sweaty teens, old men and Staceys, literally gagging for Hot Chip. Cue the men themselves; overshadowed by a statue of Julius Caesar, they stroll on stage armed with cheeky grins and oversized glasses.

Nothing's changed. Cast your minds back to the spring of 2008, which was probably pretty dull. Alexandra Burke won *X Factor* and apparently there was a Hench lunar eclipse. Oh, and electro innovators Hot Chip spat out their banging follow up to *The Warning*. Made in the Dark arrived on our shores like an overdose of Viagra to an impotent 2008. And here we are, two years and one record later, the pioneering gimps-with-synths are back.

Openers, 'Boy from School' and 'Hand Me Down Your Love' send a wave of excitement through the room. Another crowd favourite is the Chemical-Brothers-meets-Jungle-Book 'Bendable Poseable', and the first few notes of 'Over and Over' really excite the audience.

There are several screams from Stacey, and then "Do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, do it now!" - pints are spilled, Julius Caesar's face is glowing, and there's an influx of gooping maniacs as they launch into a glistening rendition of 'Ready for the Floor'.

They may look like they belong in a science lab, but even Steven Hawking wouldn't be able to break our legs and hearts the way Hot Chip did tonight.

words: Shannon Mahanty



## RECORDS

## Strange Boys

## Be Brave

Rough Trade



Strange Boys are peculiar lads. As a group of hip young men hailing from Austin, Texas, their sound is an almost predictable mixture of early sixties riffage and Brit-rock swagger of early Stones proportions. However recent interviews have seen the band indignantly decline comparisons with rock 'n' roll revolutionaries like Chuck Berry and the 13th Floor Elevators, even claiming that the vastly influential late 60s garage rock compilation *Nuggets* as "filled mostly with boring stuff and horrible lyrics."

What? Album opener 'I See' demonstrates an obvious influence from the *Nuggets* book of rock, as a dusty harmonica worthy of Cannon's Jug Stompers (yes, that's a real band) soulfully croaks atop a hazily bashed-out drumbeat. An artfully decrepit chord progression provides the platform for singer Ryan Sambol's Dylanesque



slurring vocalising to stumble in drunkenly, ostensibly after having one too many a sarsaparilla at Big John's Saloon. From this track alone it's quite clear that, despite their attempt to distance themselves from it, Strange Boys' invocation of the classic rock 'n' roll sound is as authentic-sounding as they come.

The raucous opener quickly fades into 'A Walk on the Bleach', opening with soporific surf

## ALBUM OF THE WEEK

lullaby, over which Sambol croaks bluesy lyrics invoking the old American trope of an escape to "the promised land": a loaded image which seems to signal the reintroduction of the full band's swinging rhythms which were seen so clearly earlier in the album. Lyrically, there seems to be hypocrisy in the band's slugging of *Nuggets*, as 'A Walk on the Bleach' seems to provide very little for a lyric-leaning listener to sink their teeth into - that is if they even manage to discern the words through Sambol's drawl. Instead, the listener's attention is directed towards the rolling guitars, pounding bass and cohesive drum efforts.

The title track is an intensely bluesy number, rife with a penchant for call and response. Every instrument or voice seems to have a reply to every dominant melody and, as a raspy saxophone delightfully squeals over the top of them, Sambol replies by croakily imitating the sax in his own vernacular. It's a triumph of modern rock 'n' roll that The White Stripes could only dream of. Whatever it is Strange Boys are trying to achieve in disavowing the past can be forgiven. Their album is bloody brilliant.

words: Simon Rowbotham

## MORE ALBUMS (FEAT. MAROON 5)



Ellie Goulding  
*Lights*  
Universal



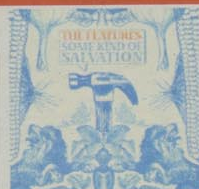
In the wake of La Roux and Little Boots, Ellie Goulding is the latest addition to the ever-so-slightly feeble synthpop soundscape which currently seems to be dominating the airwaves. After winning Critics' Choice award at the Brits and topping the BBC 'Sound of 2010' poll she has finally released her much-hyped debut. It's been described as "Kate Nash meets Hot Chip," and with good reason, mixing her own acoustic pop songs with producer Frankmusik's lush electropop. Like La Roux, she has an unusual, delicate voice which at first appears charming but eventually becomes tiresome and irritating.

*Lights* gets off to a buoyant start with the booming percussion of 'Guns and Horses' and 'This Love'. You have to have hidden under a manhole cover for the past two months not to have heard catchy single 'Starry Eyed'; however second single 'Under the Sheets', is an annoying power-pop mess with squeaky vocals, a generic melody and layered Human League synths.

The album's climax comes in the form of 'The Writer', a beautifully-crafted ballad which echoes Blue-era Joni Mitchell. The remainder of the album, however, gives the impression that Goulding has simply become bored with the notion of songwriting, as there's very few standout moments. 'Your Biggest Mistake' would be far more suited to Avril Lavigne, while 'I'll Hold My Breath' is frail and dull. Closer 'Salt Skin' is a breath of fresh air, with clever wordplay and Kraftwerk style effects.

What stands out most on the album is its glittering soundscape of glitches, bells and bass, poured into one electropop cauldron. There are even great moments of composition; however, they are spread sparsely in and amongst drivel.

words: Fred Pritchard



The Features  
*Some Kind of Salvation*  
Serpents & Snakes

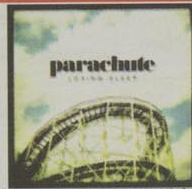


The Features were one of the most hotly tipped American bands of the early noughties but after losing their record deal with Universal they went off the radar for the best part of the decade. Originally released online two years ago, the Tennessee band's second album disappeared without a trace due to the lack of publicity surrounding it; now reissued on Kings of Leon's new label, they're trying again with the support of the most popular band of the last year.

The Features have been around in one form or another since 1994 and arguably have a lot to offer; their strength is in their array of influences from the last fifty years of music, travelling easily between them across the span of the album. *Some Kind of Salvation* was produced by Grammy winner Jacquire King, who previously worked Modest Mouse and Tom Waits; it's a partnership which clearly suits the band's style. Matthew Pelham is not a traditional soul singer, his eerie nasal voice occasionally sounding a bit like Adam Levine from Maroon 5, but it makes tracks like 'The Gates of Hell' sound like a Radiohead demo, with a brilliantly jarring ending as the vocals fade into cacophony.

Even filler songs are well-crafted and poignant which helps complement meatier material like the almost-electronic 'Concrete' and 'The Drawing Board', reminiscent of Eastern-European folk music. It may seem like there are too many ideas for one album, but the consistent quality of the music and lyrics make the album interesting listening: not an easy feat in anyone's books. The LP is aptly named; this, their best offering to date, provides them with a way of moving on from a turbulent past and getting a much-deserved second chance.

words: Rebecca Atkinson



Parachute  
*Losing Sleep*  
Mercury



Chances are you won't have heard of American quintet Parachute; although they have quite a following across the pond, it seems they're mostly known here for getting a song onto a Nivea ad campaign last year (anyone remember 'She Is Love'? ). Their debut is a polished, highly produced venture which is aimed straight and true for the mainstream. According to the press release, they are "unapologetic about aiming for popular appeal" and it shows - any flair or personality has been pretty effectively drowned out by the radio-friendly four-square guitars, everyday lyrics and just the right sprinkling of unexpected chords. In short, it's not really bad, just a bit average.

Maroon 5 are a clear influence on *Losing Sleep*, while its vocals and guitars are often reminiscent of Razorlight. Parachute tend to cram their arrangements, creating a wash of sound that's perfectly listenable but doesn't draw the ear; the exception is 'Back Again' where some welcome space is introduced. The lyrics don't exactly suffer from teenage angst, just narrow scope, and predictable rhyming. The tricks the band include to make the music interesting are undermined by the songs themselves, which tend not to have the attitude necessary to make the twists sound anything more than gimmicky. Soaring choruses seem to be a speciality throughout, and by the end of the album all the songs blended into one: a sort of Parachute magnum-opus of fast tempos, a wall of guitars, occasional piano chords for texture and lyrics that could be subtitled "Things I Should Have Told You When I Had the Chance".

"Won't you tell me it's OK?" frontman Will Anderson sings. Yes, Will, it is ok. Just not great.

words: Hazel Ensing

## SINGLES

Twin Atlantic  
'Lightspeed'  
Red Bull



Gritty emo bands have proven immune to bad press; indeed, Twin Atlantic forebode "they're never gonna get us all." If they do thrive on criticism, I'm not going to offer them any. 'Lightspeed' is a perfect anthem for disaffected youth, the band conjuring emotive images that make me want to buy hair straighteners. There's a positive review. Now go away.

words: Chris Dietz

Lucius  
'Enemy'  
Greater London



Fusing heavy guitar riffs and looping synths to create a melodic, if somewhat repetitive sound, 'Enemy' is listenable, if uninspiring, chart fodder. It's unlikely to set the world alight, but supposedly positive assertions that his sound is cringingly like "the Gallagher brothers writing for Maroon 5" are thankfully wide of the mark.

words: Jacob Mignano

Fan Death  
'A Coin for the Well'  
Pharmacy



What do you get if you cross the shit bits of ABBA with the recent Yeah Yeah Yeahs material? This EP, probably. Songs which actually come across pretty well live have been laminated into submission by stale production and overly-processed vocals. Still, the strings are a nice touch.

words: Jack Ready

Mumford and Sons  
'The Cave'  
Island



Typically inoffensive acoustic indie with a folky twang; banjos twiddle away on top of a multitude of drums and horns, whilst the lead vocals are as charming as ever.

But does it amount to something wonderfully uplifting or just a little bland?

Perhaps a bit of both.

words: Dan Lester

Uffie  
'MC's Can Kiss'  
Because



Featuring what may be the most bizarre saxophone solo in the history of music,

Uffie returns with some surprisingly infectious electro pop, albeit with all the subtleties of a twelve year old. Then again, she does have "nine million plays and twelve hundred friends," which sounds like an awful lot.

words: Ben Taylor



# CLUBS

260210

## Bitch - Popof Mission, 20/02/10

Since launching last year Bitch has regularly been delivering some of house and techno's most celebrated names. This week was no exception, with French electro legend Popof headlining Saturday night at Club Mission. Since 1996, Popof, aka Alexandre Paounov, has progressed from a founding member of rave party collective Heretik, organising events across Europe, to a world renowned producer of some of the most refined minimal techno tunes around. With such an impressive career behind him, Popof looked ready to deliver a set which would delight both those with an ear for technical precision and the patrons who were just looking for a party.

Since the infamous raids last year which threatened to destroy Mission's reputation, the new management have taken no chances with an uber-strict door policy operated by aggressive bouncers. On entrance, the network of faceless, concrete tunnels created a slightly surreal atmosphere which perfectly complemented the fidget house being pumped out by resident Matt Fear. Mission was awash with fake tan, hair extensions and men flashing their waxed chests in low cut sweaters. (Kanye West glasses were being handed out courtesy of the promoters by the Bitch 'Bitches', who strutted their stuff in nothing more than bikinis and mirror-ball belts.) A definite basement-club-in-Ibiza vibe was going down, something I found quite easy to roll with in the gentlemen's club style VIP room. However, sipping on a £4 alcopop whilst watching the second act of the evening, Alcatraz Harry, perform on a massive plasma screen elegantly mounted on a far wall, I couldn't help but think that this was all rather expensive. If students were around, they were certainly skint by Sunday morning.

Popof was due on at 1.30am, only he was nowhere to be seen. Alcatraz Harry held his

own, blasting out some tick-tock minimal and holding the crowd's disappointment at bay with rainbow strobes and some serious laser action. The Bitches took to the stage, gyrating in their smalls to a growing crowd of leering blokes below them, something which, as a female club-goer, I can only describe as off-putting. Being elbowed out of the way by a horndog with bleached highlights while I try to get my groove on isn't exactly what I'm down for, cheers.

Some 40 minutes later, Popof finally hit the decks. Starting with his signature stripped back sounds, balancing them together just so as to create the most finely polished of minimal techno. His bubbling basslines increased the tension; as the leering men dispersed, the space to party returned and we made the most of it, busting moves, pulling shapes and wiggling ourselves into musical daydreams. Despite his late arrival, I can't knock how addictive Popof's set was to dance to. Its rolling beats are at times easy on the ear, leading you to strut smoothly through his sly mixing style until a chunky bass creeps in and you find yourself thumping to a hiking up-beat wearing your ugliest bass-face. Next, Popof initiated a stage invasion of epic proportions, the crowd going wild as they clambered up to party directly in front of the decks. The stage remained fair game for the rest of the night, though by the time the dancefloor started to die down, it was a little odd to see more people on stage than off. Taking a twisted rework of Chemical Brothers' 'Hey Boy Hey Girl' as our cue to quit while we were ahead, we set off home still bopping to the phantom of Popof's masterful sound playing in our heads.

A night that was definitely different, but in no way disappointing, I can only recommend everyone hitting Popof if he returns to Leeds in the future. A dollop of student enthusiasm was exactly what this slightly pretentious crowd were crying out for.

words: Rachel Cunningham-Clark



photo: Ali Hung

Online @ [leedsstudent.org](http://leedsstudent.org):

Vagabondz' Third Birthday - Michael Steele

Bigger than Barry w/ B. Rich - Oliver Gibbons

Digital Society w/ Sander van Doorn - Rachel Cunningham-Clark

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## Disrupt: on Wire, 17/02/10

Leeds is nationally renowned for its large student base, which helps perpetuate the clubbing culture of the city year after year. However, the yearly influx and exodus of students means that, apart from a handful of mainstay promoters, club nights seem to come and go as regularly as the erratic snowfall, and one can never be sure if new promotions are worth the entry fee, when there is often a resemblance to other bigger, better, more established nights on the circuit.

Disruption is one such new night sprung from student enthusiasm and passion for music, yet unlike others that suffer the above ailments, this night seems to have taken a precarious, but welcome direction in showcasing something a bit different to the overabundance of student nights out there.

Borne out of the informative, eclectic music blog of the same name, Disruption bought the highly lauded producer James Blake to Leeds for its premier affair. Best known for his dulcet, distorted vocal contributions in dubstep trio Mount Kimbie, as a solo artist Blake has been making waves with his sublime, experimental approach to electronic music. LS2 went to investigate.

It was unsurprising to enter a half-full (half-empty?) Wire club last Wednesday for this inaugural night - whether due to lack of promotion or otherwise, launch nights can always suffer in attendance, but the excess space this provided seemed to be rightly welcomed by the eccentric dancing of the crowd, and there was still a great atmosphere in the air. Resident Wachs Lyrical provided a perfect ensemble of well-known dubstep anthems to kick-start the affair, like Chase and Status' 'Bits', Breakeage's sub heavy 'Higher', and a selection of his own trim productions. It was a perfect warm-up to get hips moving and ears melting under the pressure of

Wire's loud Funktion One rig.

James Blake's performance offered up something completely different however. Having seen him play a similar set the previous week at Fabric for Autonomic, the Leeds crowd seemed much more approving of the amalgamation of Southern US hip hop, experimental dubstep and R'n'B which he offered. Blake is first and foremost a producer, and his awry mixing style denotes this somewhat, with odd fades and uninspiring stops and starts. Nevertheless, this doesn't really matter when you are drawing for Outkast classics like 'Spread' and 'Ghetto Musick', which are pretty much sure to go off at any dance. Interspersing tracks like this with his own unconventional style of music and modern vocal productions was a great way to keep the crowd enthusiastic and attentive. Special mention has to go to his 'A Milli' rework, contorting Lil Wayne's renowned lyrics in an uncanny wish-wash of bleeps and blips, causing an applauding response from the audience. Look out for Blake's forthcoming EP on Leeds' own Hesse Audio imprint for more innovative soundscapes.

James Blake may not have been the most obvious headliner for a club night (especially a foundational endeavor), but the breadth of musical styles and 'party' sensibility that he presented made him an enjoyable choice no less. This can further be ascribed to Disruption who look set to diverge deeper into their own distinct and unusual niche as they bring the US west coast hip hop flair of Nosaj Thing and Tokimonsta to their next event along with Croydon dubstep patron Kutz. This fresh, diverse approach is reason enough to check it out.

Check out the Disrupt: on Inc. blog at <http://disruptioninc.blogspot.com/>

Next event: Disrupt: on 002 @ Wire  
17/03/2010 w/ Nosaj Thing,  
TOKIMONSTA, & Kutz

words: Ashby Field



DJ Sneak @ Twaddle  
photo: James Noble & Ali Wilson

## Twaddle Mint Club, 20/02/10

Last Friday marked the return to Leeds for one of House music's most influential and iconic figures. DJ Sneak, the self-labelled 'House Gangsta', was last booked to play in March 2009, in collaboration with Technique & System at Mint Club. Sneak, however, never showed, making the promise of an exclusive, extended 3 hour set for Twaddle all the more inviting.

Originally hailing from Puerto Rico, Sneak cut his teeth producing and DJing in Chicago in the early 1990's, founding and cementing, alongside Green Velvet and Derrick Carter, what was to become definitively known as the 'Chicago House' sound. From here Sneak became an international household name, his unique 'filter-house' style baring influence on some of electronic music's biggest and brightest acts, from Daft Punk and Armand Van Helden, right the way through to Basement Jaxx and Justice. Recently, his consistent and stubborn refusal to buy into modern musical fads and trends meant that, until not long ago, Sneak had somewhat dropped off the electronic radar. Back now with a hunger and desire to prove that there still exists a space for exhibiting music from five, ten or even twenty years ago, DJ Sneak tours intent on making up for lost time. Playing at the brilliant Stinky's Peephouse,

home to the infamous Back 2 Basics crew, Twaddle soon found themselves playing host to one of the most anticipated nights in recent times.

As to be expected, the club appeared at full capacity from the moment I entered. Managing to catch only the last five minutes of established Twaddle residents Brother Bull & Skipper, the buzz in the building soon reached fever pitch, signifying the taking to the decks of only one man. Cutting a large, dominating figure (think an electronic Fat Joe) against the club's hazy backdrop, DJ Sneak appears much as his music sounds; bold, tough and full of life. The initial combination of pounding 4/4 beats, neat, catchy hooks and growling basslines kept the energy on the dancefloor at a steady peak. As his set progressed, Sneak began introducing vocals into the mix, presented at first as mere, catchy snippets, soon transforming themselves into fully-fledged verses. For a man of his experience, I felt his mixing could have been tighter and too often I felt the energy in the room drop as a result of a misplaced and subsequently ill-received record. Closing his set with an array of classics, among them Paul Johnson's timeless hit 'Get Down', Sneak nevertheless proved that, in today's muddy and saturated electronic climate, he remains a longstanding and individual talent.

words: Carlos Hawthorn



photo: James Noble & Ali Wilson



# FEATURES

260210

## LGBT History Month

I love the Purple Parkinson. It is so iconic in Leeds, you can see it from anywhere. People might get interested after seeing it and wonder what is going on. It is not just for LGBT students, it is for all Leeds Students.

The LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual) society finished the month celebrating their history last Friday, you may have noticed the brightly coloured rainbow flag hanging from the LSR balcony or the purple lights coming from the Parkinson building.

Not only did the month draw attention to the successful history of the society but also to how successful the society continues to be.

The social events held by the society offer support to LGBT students and provide a lot of fun along the way. They play a very important role in raising awareness about issues affecting LGBT students and act as the voice representing concerns and beliefs of its members.

If you want to find out more about the LGBT society they have a Facebook page, a website [www.leedsigbtstudents.co.uk](http://www.leedsigbtstudents.co.uk), a page on the union website, or you can pop up to the office, next to the exec office in the union. The society has a coffee hour from 12pm til 2pm in their office where you can relax and chat about the many other events and socials the society holds.

Leeds Student spoke to Sophia James and Marcus about the main highlights from this month.

17th February  
Curious?

Mine hosted club night Curious? with The night was open to all students with good boogie to some party tunes, gay hipster indie. Equality and Diversity came the stage in an attempt to impress the potential voters by engaging in a dance the amusement of the crowd. It was a competition, but Marcus Crawley's sk obviously impressed the crowds

The old bar pub quite month, adapting Reviews of the commenting that it was informative; as it was vaginas! Lucky the tickets to club

### Highlights



The Information Point was a conf took over. It was a glamorous suc mascara and



## Marcus Crawley, LGBT Assembly Chair

4th February

Is civil partnership worth marriage?

The debate, held at the information point on Thursday 4th February, opened up the floor to attendees to voice their opinions on whether civil partnership was a true equivalent to marriage. Ann Blair, Professor at the Law School, was invited to give her perspective on the matter from a legal point of view as well as James Lewis, potential political candidate for the Elmet and Rothwell Labour party. Opinions were mixed which made for an exciting and thought-provoking debate.

"I was in the planning from the beginning, particularly with LGBT Religion Day and LGBT takeover, and the 'Good, bad and Ugly' Awards. All the events I've been to have been amazing."

"The civil partnership debate was my favourite – we had a political representative and a professor from the law school as well as others. It was really interesting to see a lot of different perspectives on how people view civil partnerships. One woman was really against it, claiming it just emulated marriage. It was a really interesting debate to do."

"There has been varying numbers of people at the events. From the ones I've been to there has been at least 20 to 30 people. Some were not as busy as they could have been, but having people there and potentially challenging perceptions makes it a success of sorts."

"Curious was very good. There were a lot of people for that. I enjoyed the launch party too: it made it feel like the event was really going. It was nice to have representatives from the national LGBT committee there."

"I love the Purple Parkinson. It is so iconic in Leeds, you can see it from anywhere. People might get interested after seeing it and wonder what is going on. It is not just for LGBT students, it is for all Leeds Students."

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ld bar pub quiz  
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questions to fit an LGBT theme.  
ght were positive, with many  
a good laugh. Not only that, it was  
out female kangaroos have two  
Winners of the quiz were awarded  
nt Curious the following week.

## 3rd February The Good the Bad and the Ugly



Local businesses and clubs were awarded with stars for how LGBT friendly they are. The registry office and the Terrance Higgins Trust came tops, whilst the Blood bank fell far short of the mark.



February  
G Drag



ing place to be as a Give it a Go drag event  
ess with plenty of men and women donning  
moustaches respectively.



## London Fashion Week 2010

It rained, it shone, it snowed, and all the well-heeled world descended upon London for the autumn/winter 2010 collections this week. The Strand was once again a venue for perplexed tourists and locals alike as fashionistas and fashionists in weird and wonderful ensembles hobbled (in mind-boggling platforms) chaotically to and from shows, with paps and PAs in tow.

Of the four fashion cities that host 'Fashion Month' for the international press and fashion buyers, London has always been seen as the crazy younger sibling in relation to the more sophisticated spirits of Paris and Milan, and relatively conservative New York. Art and innovation have long been the focus, with most collections being praised for their genius, but categorised as 'unwearable.' However, there was a change in spirit for the autumn/winter collections, with even some of the most outrageous labels toning it down for the new season. Like many industries, the global fashion business is in financial turmoil, so perhaps the current focus is on sales, encouraging designers to play it safe in order to create collections that will definitely sell.

Financial worries aside, there was another melancholic undertone to the week, as the fashion crowd still struggle to come to terms with the recent loss of one of the great geniuses of British fashion, Alexander Lee McQueen. A tribute wall of messages was erected in the BFC Show Space, and I noted several obvious inspirations or tributes taken to his final collection in a/w pieces, most notably by emerging talents Mary Katrantzou and Hermione de Paula, whose tight, bright and futuristic dresses more than echoed his s/s 2010 Under-the-Sea collection.

While I found the pervading muted colour palette that ran through many of the collections rather disappointing; graphic prints, luxe textures and interesting new shapes made up for what might otherwise have been a rather lacklustre season from London. Emerging trends suggest that the craze for all things

tight and short will continue into autumn, along with heavy metal details on jackets and dresses. This time, however, studs (which surely we're all sick to death of by now) were replaced by retro floral embroidery, as seen at Christopher Kane, where corn-flower blue wildflower motifs were set off beautifully against tight black leather and mesh dresses.

'Nomadic grunge' and 'dirty pretty chic' are terms which have already been bartered about in relation to an emerging trend from London. Unlike the grunge of the nineties, 'grunge plus' is all about mixing it up - adding some glitter or a neon-pink lace veil perhaps, as seen at Meadham Kirchhoff, one of my favourite collections of the season. Arabian Nights collided with Miss Havisham as models stalked an oriental-carpeted catwalk wearing long Bollywood-bright layered creations topped off with veils and crowns, and finished off with outrageously stacked oversized bangles. The Meadham Kirchhoff girl who took to the catwalk was at times a princess, at times a ghost and at other times a fantasy nightmare. This theme of haphazard styling continued at Ashish, where graphic printed sequinned tunics were paired with mannish blazers, army boots and beanie hats, a boho look for the 'tens one might say.

'Seventies luxe' was cited as a major inspiration by several designers, including Belgian duo Peter Pilotto who named fading 70s interiors as a major influence, and presented a beautiful collection of graphic print dresses in shades of burnt orange, deep red and taupe. Once having battled through the bag searches and metal detectors at the Royal Courts of Justice, guests at Vivienne Westwood's Red Label show were treated to a warm palette of retro mustards, maroons and blues. The checked shirts and coats at Jaeger London were undoubtedly 70s, and the final pieces of the collection in deep velvets with gold details suggested a feel of luxe loungewear. The PPQ collection was entirely black and gold and consisted mostly of party dresses and play suits, perfectly suited to the 'work hard, play

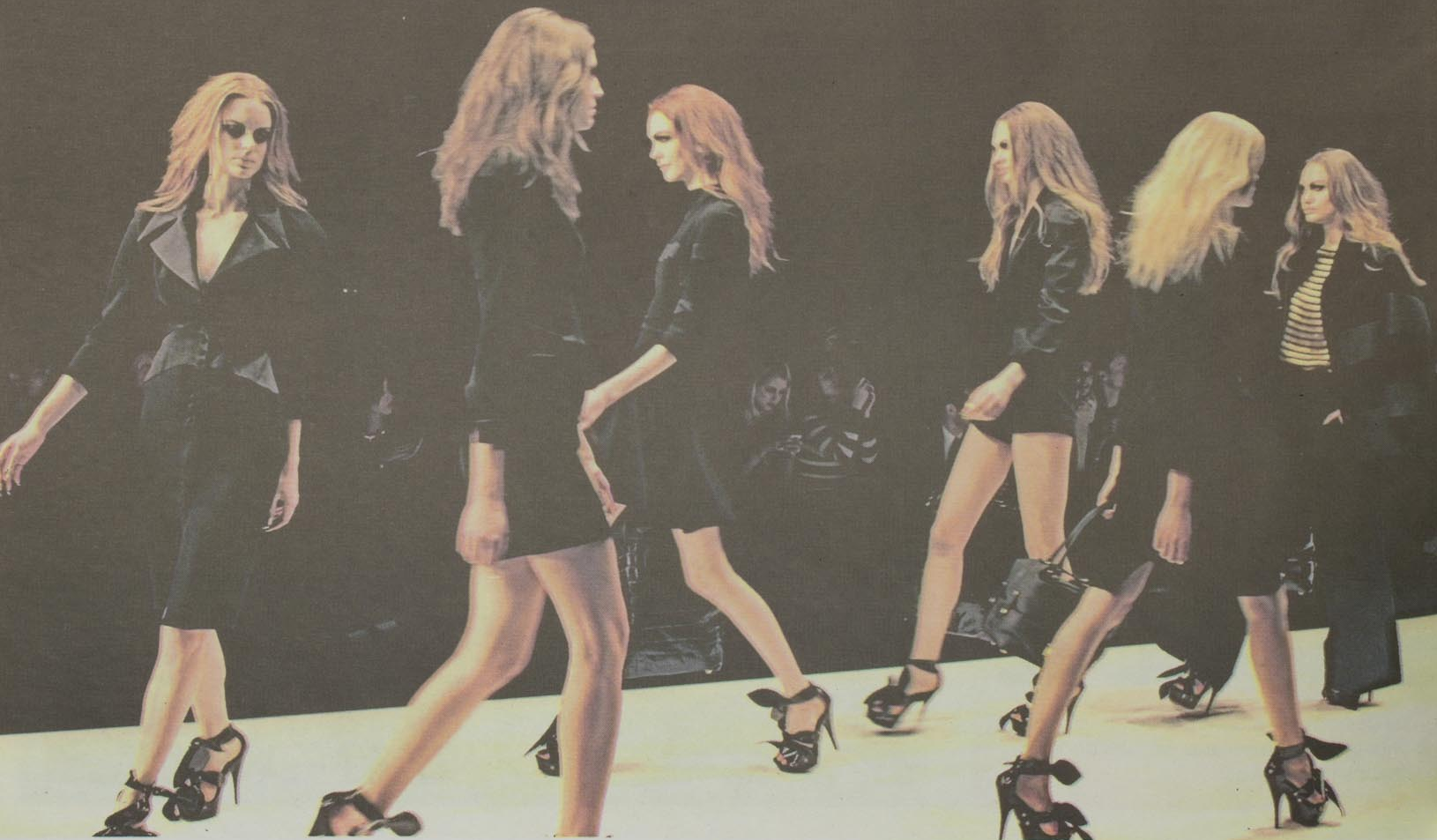
harder' ethic adopted by the brand, and clearly demonstrated at the lively PPQ aftershow party at brand new club Runway, where the free bar became a scrum and sweat dripped from the roof.

The common mood of London was essentially one of juxtaposition, with body-con being played off against loose chiffon volumes and skirts were either super-short or super-long. The full-length skirt is set to be big, and ahead-of-the-game fashionistas were already seen trailing hems over the cobbles of Somerset House. At Aquascutum, the models were no doubt overjoyed to find that the long fluid skirts were rounded off not with killer heels but with elegant dance flats. Flashes of chunky knitwear, PVC, leather and sheer fabrics were seen all over the catwalks, suggesting that these textures are set to remain staples for the next season.

The Burberry Prorsum show on Tuesday afternoon brought LFW to a star-studded close with a stellar guestlist, including Anna Wintour, Kate Hudson and Mary-Kate Olsen to name a few. Security was like Fort Knox, but the paps were accommodated enough to let me squeeze a space on the red carpet. While the world's fashion elite hit the pro plus for two more weeks of fashionizing on the continent, I slink home, up to my ears in magazines, free tote bags and lookbooks and with a bad case of Fashion Week Knee. Until next season.

words: Imogen Roy

photos: Imogen Roy, taken from the autumn/winter 2010 PPQ show







## A Single Man

With fashion deity Tom Ford at the directorial helm, *A Single Man* is predictably stylish. Although the narrative is not hugely engaging, this in no way hinders the film's impact. The short and simple story actually plays in favour of the overall experience. It would have been a struggle to follow anything complex without being distracted by Ford's sumptuous attention to visual detail. The audience's attention is often focused on a beautiful prop, suit or person rather than the plot. In this sense it's a similar cinematic experience to *Avatar* with the storyline being very much secondary to the visual experience.

Set in 1960's Los Angeles, *A Single Man* is the story of George, an ageing homosexual mourning the death of his younger partner. Despite his pent-up grief, George is effortlessly charming and humorous. Although defeated and uninterested in overcoming his suicidal state, he finds optimism in his friend Charley and his student Kenny. Colin Firth's performance is as immaculate as his character's tailored suit. Our affection towards George is in no small part down to Firth's superb delivery, as he subjects the audience to the heartbreaking introspection of a man suffering bereavement. Having already won the BAFTA for Best Leading Actor, let's hope that Firth can add an Oscar to his accolades. Nicholas Hoult, who plays Kenny, is striking

but irritating. His American accent is questionable and the way he frequently refers to George as 'Sir' during their romantic liaison becomes increasingly irritating. Obviously, this is a qualm with the script rather than Hoult, but perhaps a less annoying portrayal would have made 'Sir, Sir, Sir' more bearable. However, this may simply be nitpicking.

As you would expect, *A Single Man* is a very well dressed affair. The fashion on show is reminiscent of *Mad Men*, with the lead character falling somewhere between Don Draper and Michael Caine. The Tom Ford suit that Colin Firth wears for the majority of the film is a thing of beauty. The visual style of the film comprehensively recreates the glamour of 60s Los Angeles. The fashion design and artistic composition is so perfect that you could more or less pause the film at any point and have an image you could print off and frame. Black and white flashbacks and intense colour saturation make for some aesthetically mouth-watering cinema. A sublime scene that could potentially prove to be iconic involves the lead character leaning on the boot of his gorgeous Mercedes Benz sharing a cigarette with an annoyingly good-looking Hispanic James Dean lookalike watching a hazy orange LA sunset in front of a giant 1960 *Psycho* poster.

words: Tom Purdie

photo: [www.everymancinema.com](http://www.everymancinema.com)

## Burberry autumn/winter 2010 - LFW cont.

The special chosen few who managed to get hold of a golden Burberry ticket walked in from the cold, rainy London streets to view this fall's best selection of jackets. The question on everyone's lips after the show: which one to choose?!

The jackets came in all shapes and sizes - sheepskin-lined aviator jackets with double collars were cropped to the waist, setting a military theme throughout the collection. Fine details of gold buttons, multiple buckles and leather straps gave the Burberry woman a tough exterior, as if ready for combat. The military coats had a softer, feminine silhouette, teamed with thigh-high snakeskin stiletto boots. The heaviness of the jackets was cleverly juxtaposed with lace minidresses and silk bandage skirts, designed in the same warm, muted, autumnal colour palette and injected with flashes of raspberry and electric blue.

Bailey explained where all this originated. "I was thinking of uniforms and cadet girls - but it all started when I looked at an aviator jacket in the archive. Then, as I started designing into it, I realized it could be as versatile as the trench - strong and sexy, masculine and feminine."

Celebrities were out in force for their pick of next seasons must-have jacket, including the Queen of fashion Anna Wintour. Twiggy, Erin O'Connor, Kate Hudson, Kirsten Stewart, Mary Kate Olsen, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, Olivia Palermo and Mario Testino also led the impressive front row line-up.

The collection was designed for both fashionista acceptance and for the practical woman who wants a coat destined for a long life in the hall closet. The stormy soundtrack and rain simulation experienced throughout the show ensured that a Burberry jacket was on everyone's wish list.

words: Emma Kniveton

## American Apparel

If you haven't already heard, American Apparel is finally set to open a store in Leeds this April, but why is there so much hype about this long-awaited opening?

The last decade has seen American Apparel grow from the sweatshop-free wholesaler to one of the coolest and most popular clothing labels around through a simple mixture of basic clothing and provocative advertising.

All the clothing is extremely basic, with much of the range being unisex - nearly the whole men's range can be worn by women. American Apparel seamlessly transferred their basic wholesale items designed to be printed on by other companies into simple block colour goods for retail. You only have to look at the Flex fleece to see the success - just moving between lectures, the likelihood is that you will spot a handful of people sporting the white draw stringed hoodie.

The label would not be the success it is, however, without the controversial marketing strategy. The advertising, much of which is the creation of founder and CEO Dov Charney, is outrageously suggestive and oozing with sex (such as the advert below). It is not difficult to find a image of a topless woman wearing nothing but tights on the website - it can often be found on the homepage. Pornstars have been widely used in the advertising and the images have an amateur feel - as if someone has just taken a picture of a friend or girlfriend. Indeed some of the adverts are simply of the cuff shots taken by and of employees.

Of course with such outlandish advertising comes controversy. Despite receiving numerous awards such as the *Guardian* label of the year in 2008, the brand has been widely criticised for

such outlandish advertising. Just last year an advert published in *Vice* magazine was banned in the UK for over sexualising a model who appeared as if she could be underage (she was actually 23). Dov Charney personally attracts much controversy and publicity himself by appearing personally in adverts wearing nothing but underwear, uploading videos of him running around the factory in underwear and even reportedly masturbating in front of reporters. Around four employees have filed sexual harassment charges against the company or against Charney personally. However, none have been proven or led to prosecution. But then isn't the controversy all part or it? - Sex most defiantly sells.

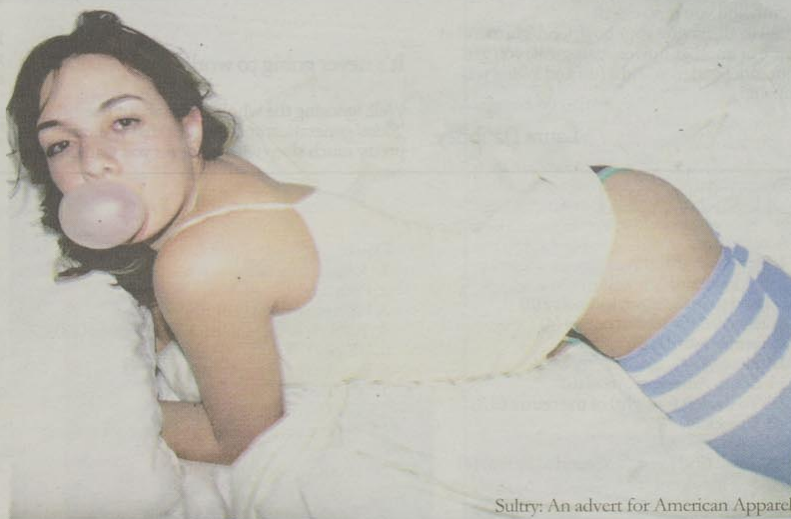
American Apparel publicises a 'Vertically Integrated Manufacturing' system with the company controlling every part of the process from design, manufacture and marketing to selling. Every shop is also owned directly by the company. Through this system they have been able to sell not just clothing but a lifestyle that everyone seems to want to be a part of. The company seems to have captured the feelings of a generation and it is exciting to have a part of that in Leeds.

Check out the American Apparel image gallery at: <http://www.americanapparel.net/gallery/>

The Leeds branch of American Apparel will open on Friday April 2.

words: Tomas Jivanda  
image: [americanapparel.net](http://americanapparel.net)

## Bubblelicious.



Sultry: An advert for American Apparel

One of Britain's most renowned designers was discovered dead after taking his own life on Friday February 12.

For more information on the life and times of Alexander McQueen read Louise Donovan's tribute at [www.leedsstudent.org](http://www.leedsstudent.org)



## Can you keep a boyfriend/girlfriend outside of uni?

Getting and keeping a boyfriend/girlfriend, even when you are in the same place can be tricky. So when you are separated by many miles, can it work?

### It's great!

Yes, yes, yes! Providing you are in a loving relationship with someone you trust and want to be with, then why can't your other half be at home or another university?

One of the first things I noticed when I arrived at uni and got chatting to people was how many people had boyfriends/girlfriends either at home or at another university. This was really surprising and pleasing as I saw I wasn't the only one by a long way!

Having a boyfriend/girlfriend away from Leeds means you can have your own independence at uni; you can make your own group of friends, choose when and where to go out and get all your studying done (yeah...right) You get all of this, plus a great relationship with the person you chose to be with long before university life.

Having someone away from Leeds also means you can experience another uni or keep links with home. My boyfriend is at another university about 90 miles away and the build-up of excitement when I'm going to visit or he's coming here is like going back to being a small child getting excited for Christmas, except this time it's your significant other and not some guy with a beard you can't wait to see!

Being at different universities we also get to meet more new people and experience another town/city, making life more interesting. You also have someone to ring up with the latest gossip, something you've done that they should be proud of you for, or to have a cry and a moan because it's the wrong time of the month and you're stressed!

All in all, having your boyfriend/girlfriend at home or another university is great; you get your independence and a fun and loving relationship.

Laura Daubney

### I think couples need space

I'm going to say those dreaded words: I'm in a 'long distance relationship'. And the terrible truth? It really is OK.

I am a first year and my boyfriend is at UCL, 168 miles away. I call him at the end of my day, we Skype once a week and after five months of this, I find that we have more to talk about and we just generally laugh more.

Don't get me wrong, I miss him and when I was left here waving my parents and boyfriend off on that late September afternoon I honestly thought that the sky might fall down any minute and that Hell was opening up in the car's wake.

But it really has been fine.

We see each other once or twice a term, working around his 'mooting' (yeah, I had no idea what that was either) and my writing for the paper; we lead separate lives, and it means that our conversations never run dry.

I think that all couples really need a little space in order to keep things fresh, and I love to hear about all the things going on around him in our capital city without the monetary drain of living there.

It's also great not having to pay for a hotel in order to see a show, and I get better presents at Christmas now.

On a serious note, if anyone is worried about the durability of their relationship long distance, don't be - it brings you closer and lets you spread your wings more in the long run.

Melissa Welliver

### It's never going to work

Well, ignoring the whole cliché about the 'Skins' generation and the idea that you can pretty much sleep with whoever you want any-

way, then the *raison d'être* for university is that it is a new start, a place where you can reinvent yourself and leave your previous life behind.

This means that if you are attached to anyone before you make it to university, you are put in a very difficult position.

People fall into two distinct groups the summer before their first year of uni, you are either the person who loved sixth-form so much that you are seriously scared about what September will bring, or you are the opposite, who can't wait for term to start. Either way, this does not leave much room for thoughts about a relationship.

Even if you make it past the minefield of Freshers' Week and the rest of first year then second and third year is where it starts to get tough. While you should be entering the comfort zone of a solid relationship, it doesn't take much for the lack of time with your loved one, or the many opportunities that present themselves, such as socials, that cause doubt or jealousy to creep in.

This is obviously going to seem cynical, as there are many relationships that can stand the strain of the long distance test, but it is best to leave something as concrete as a relationship behind you.

The person you are when you start uni is completely different to the one that finishes, give yourself the space to find that out.

Chris Stevenson

### It works for me!

I am currently in my first long distance relationship and personally I like it, it works for me.

You really look forward to seeing the other person, appreciate them and any time you spend with them. I'm the sort of person that

likes keeping relationships and friends separate, so having a long distance relationship lets me really enjoy the time with my partner and then when they're not there you get time for yourself and friends. When I get to see them it's like a treat, it keeps the relationship fresh and exciting when you're not seeing each other all the time.

I think the key things are communication, ring and text a lot, arrange to see each other in advance so you have a date to look forward to and trust as well.

It's important to also understand that you will both be doing things at different times e.g uni/work/going out so don't get annoyed if the other person can't speak to you at that precise moment, it doesn't mean that they don't want to, they're just busy!

Don't put too much pressure on your relationship, that's the killer... just because its long distance doesn't mean it has to be really serious (it can seem like that because of the effort to travel/ring etc) just enjoy seeing each other when you do and go with the flow of things, at the end of the day, there's no point in doing anything that doesn't make you happy.

Lara Foster

## Crossword

### Across:

1. First years (8)
5. E.g. Leeds (4)
7. Used to make a gun less noisy (8)
8. Travelled (by bike or horse) (4)
9. Tennis award (5,3)
10. Hero (4)
11. South American Shawl (6)
14. To the left (or right) of the centre (3,3)
16. Unlock (4)
17. Distressed (8)
19. Small land mass (surrounded by sea) (4)
20. Self indulgent (8)
21. Alter (4)
22. Helped (8)

### Down:

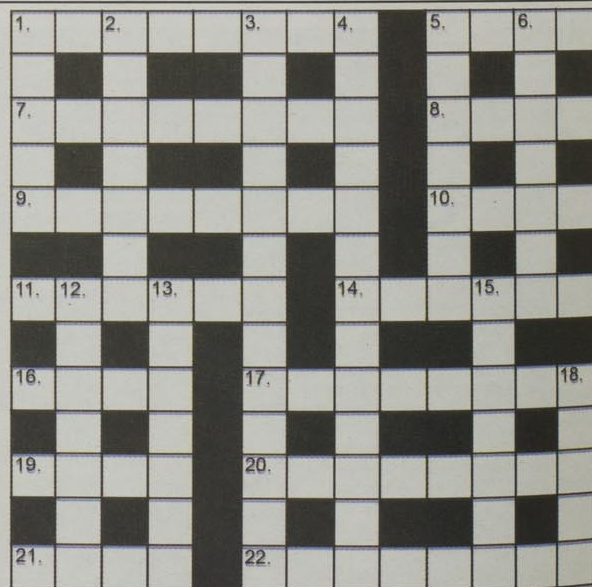
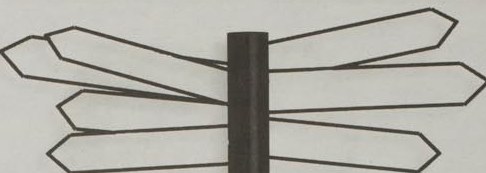
1. Joined (5)
2. Perk up (7)
3. Reference book (13)
4. Bacteria responsible for sore throats (13)
5. UK city (7)
6. Frog larva (7)
12. Against (7)
13. Gig (formal) (7)
15. Believe someone to have done something (7)
18. Went out with (5)

The answers to last issue's crossword:

**Across:** 1. Scorpio, 6. Pod, 8. Unanticipated, 10. Fickle, 11. Dehli, 12. Brainstorm, 16. Image, 18.

Acidic, 19. Inconsiderate, 21. Gay, 22. Neither.

**Down:** 2. Conifer, 3. Run, 4. Orchestration, 5. Cupid, 6. Patolli, 7. Dodging, 9. Token, 12. Boiling, 13. Anarchy, 14. Raise, 15. Necktie, 17. Ennui, 20. Rat.





260210

## INTERVIEW

## Marcel McCalla

Leeds Student sits down with the ex-Footballer's Wives star to talk about his new stage role as a calypso protégé.

From *Footballers Wives* to the beaches of Trinidad in a new production of Mustapha Matura's *Rum and Coca-Cola*, Marcel McCalla has tackled many diverse and often controversial roles, since he was 14 years old, without losing any of his down-to-earth charm.

The passion Marcel feels for *Rum and Coca-Cola*, the Talawa Theatre Company's and English Touring Theatre's production in which he takes a starring role, is obvious every time he speaks of it. Working alongside Don Warrington MBE – the Trinidadian born actor in his directorial debut – is the reason for much of this excitement, but the script's music and inter-generational relationships appealed to the young actor more than anything else. For two men "of a totally different generation and different era to still get on and still learn from each other" is exciting and something he feels, alongside the energy, would appeal to students in the audience of *Rum and Coca-Cola*. Music, McCalla says, drives this production and himself. It is primarily this reason that Marcel decided to take up the role of Slim, a young Trinidadian man learning the art of Calypso music. And Calypso is the part of the production McCalla enjoys the most; "this music is infectious". It is obvious that McCalla has been deeply inspired by the Trinidadian spirit of Calypso, which he struggles to describe – "Jamaica has reggae, Trinidad has Calypso."

McCalla is a keen musician, admiring of the Leeds music scene and itching to perform at Carpe Diem's near-legendary open mic night again. Performance in any sense, gigs or theatre, is his passion. Despite his TV work, McCalla describes with enthusiasm the raw excitement live performance evokes in him, something that will no doubt rise to the fore in this play of just two characters.

This was challenging for McCalla, but this raw energy is what "keeps him going." It is the-

atre, which gives him the biggest buzz, "as every moment is brand new." The uniqueness of the theatre gives it an edge over the often "exaggerated" nature of TV. "But the thing is, if I'm being really honest with you, there's more money in TV and it takes less time." Despite this, the buzz he gets from performing live is far more important.

And being true to himself is obviously something McCalla does not struggle to do. His choice to tackle surprising subjects, such as a gay footballer in *Footballer's Wives* and a gang-member in *Little Sweet Thing*, is not about politics or social issues. "I'm not going to say that in the future if something comes up it won't tug a few strings in my heart, but really it's about character."

This is the same for the black-led theatre company Talawa behind this new production, a company McCalla admires. For an actor who

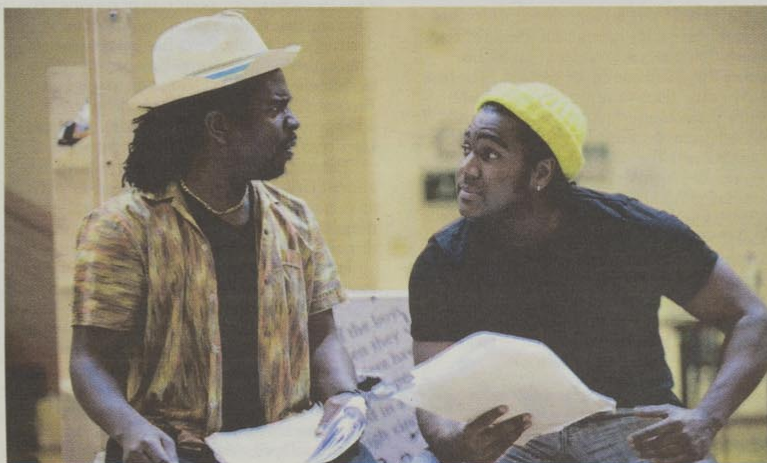
has been performing since the age of 14, in high profile theatre such as a Sam Mendes directed show of *Oliver!* and TV's *Grange Hill*, theatre has been an inherent part of his life, and the Talawa company's work in London is something he would like to be involved with later on.

In terms of future roles McCalla wants something where he can "be bad, really not giving a damn. That's what I want!" That said, he'll be happy to settle for playing Frodo Baggins, "because you can't top that role!"

But in the meantime all Leeds Student readers should go and see *Rum and Coca-Cola* – because, Marcel jokes, "I'm in it."

words: Vicki Mortimer

See Marcel in *Rum and Coca-Cola* at the West Yorkshire Playhouse from March 5 to April 3. Visit [www.wyplayhouse.com](http://www.wyplayhouse.com) for tickets.



## FILM

## Olsen

Hyde Park Picture House

08/02



Starting out as living room cinema amongst a small group of friends, experimental/avant-garde film night Olsen still retains its intimate, friendly and exciting atmosphere at the Hyde Park Picture House.

An assortment of films are shown over the course of three hours, with a break for some experimental music and tea and cake refills.

This month, a mixed bag. A comic and insightful piece of cinema, *Monolog*, with ten minutes of speech from an actor whose head you cannot see, is unconventionally entertaining and amusing. *Aboriginal Myths of South London* was another example of cinema forcing the audience to focus on the words, set alongside a repetitive sequence of London streets.

*1859 (flare)* with its flashing images, supposedly reminiscent of LSD trips, reminded me of a Microsoft Word Screensaver, and *Misty Suite* even concludes with the screensaver of an idle DVD player. Similarly, film #37 was 35 minutes of images of the x-rays of crystals – initially interesting but soon repetitive. Such a film would have been better suited to an art gallery than a cinema (as would *Sequences and Interruptions*, a sequence of repetitive images of artwork). Although an audience member who adored the beauty of *1859* suggested I get into the right frame of mind, to appreciate the beauty of the film, this proved hard to maintain for longer than a few minutes.

Yet here lies one of Olsen's many appeals. Each film is interestingly innovative and every member of the audience will have had different perceptions of each. The films are hated by some and adored by others, and that is the beauty of Olsen. "You never know what you're going to get," agreed the lady sitting next to me. Olsen brings together old-fashioned charm with innovative and modern cinema to create an enjoyable and thought provoking afternoon, encouraging responsive discussion between strangers and challenging perceptions of cinema along the way. Not at all bad for living room cinema on a Sunday afternoon.

words: Vicki Mortimer



photography: Nick Coupe

## THEATRE

## Phaedra's Love

stage@leeds 25/02 - 27/02



Ravenrock's new production of *Phaedra's Love* is not an easy watch, involving scenes of violence, rape and murder, but this is exactly how it should be. It revels in its crudity, and this confidence in danger makes the show work. Written by Sarah Kane, the play is a modern re-working of Seneca's tragedy, *Phaedra*. It focuses initially on the uncontrollable obsession of Phaedra towards her stepson Hippolytus, an obnoxious, petulant oaf of a man whose regard for sex is as lax as his regard for everything. Such is his indifference that suicide, rape accusations and imprisonment pass him by with ease, as he brashly exclaims that this is at least better than being labelled 'boring'.

Director and Leeds graduate Ashley Scott-Layton has the near-impossible job of recreating a play that was already controversial at its 1996 opening. The acting has an almost acidic, clinical conviction to it that collaborates perfectly with the crudeness of the show's content and the coldness of the initial emotional void. Rupert Lazarus as Hippolytus particularly stands out, remaining wide-eyed and complacent to the point that it becomes grating (surely exactly how the character should be played). Similarly, Rachel Helen Shaw and Kate Philips as mother and

daughter Phaedra and Strophe have an extremely strong and believable rapport, reflecting perfectly the play's only genuine relationship.

The casting as a whole has been extremely successful, with the conviction of the protagonists being enhanced by the strength of the ensemble. The addition of live music is also a brilliant touch, creating the ambiance needed for a show of this intensity. Everything is forced together on a dark stage and culminates in an explosive performance.

Scott-Layton's production is extremely ambitious and contains numerous surprises that aim to shock, and succeed in doing so. This unexpectedness, mixed with the feistiness of Kane's script and the explicit nature of the acting, make a compelling watch. Be warned, however, the show is definitely not for the fainthearted. It makes no apologies for its explicitness and shouldn't have to. A truly unforgettable show.

words: Hannah Astill



## INTERVIEW

### Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief

Leeds Student talks to Christopher Columbus and stars of the film about the unlikely alliance of ancient Greece and 21st century America in his latest offering.

Christopher Columbus is known for making some of the best loved children's films of recent times, including *Home Alone* and the first two *Harry Potter* films. Yet for Columbus it's important that he distinguishes *Percy Jackson* from his previous work. "I'm very happy with the film, and very happy to say it's nothing like *Harry Potter*. I just wanted to get that off my chest."

The director is no stranger to the world of fantasy, but Riordan's books offered Columbus something different. "I was just intrigued by the concept which I had never seen before – that is the concept of Greek mythology co-existing in modern American society. I just thought it was a great idea."

**I'm very happy with the film, and very happy to say it's nothing like *Harry Potter*.**

Columbus wasn't fazed by adapting another book, despite *Percy Jackson* rivalling *Harry Potter* in terms of popularity in America. However, in the film Columbus chose to increase the ages of Percy and his friends. "For me it was important that the characters felt a little older than they did in the book. I felt that this needed to be a little more edgy, a little grittier – as much as we could do in a PG film anyway." For many of the cast however, it wasn't the books but the opportunity of working with Columbus which attracted them to the film. Logan Lerman (*Percy Jackson*) admits "I

knew nothing about the books when I first got the script, but right below the title it said Chris' name and that's what really attracted me to it. His films have shaped my childhood."

*Percy Jackson* is littered with big names – Uma Thurman and Pierce Brosnan occupy small roles. Steve Coogan jokes that for him making the film was "a doddle. I just turned up, got to spend a week in Vancouver, got to kiss Rosario Dawson and when you've got these visual effects, half the job's done for you." For Brosnan, this relatively minor role achieved high praise from his children. "Show and tell was last week, and as we left the studio my eight year old son said 'Dad, that's the best movie you've ever made.'"

The film is visually magnificent and this is down to some truly spectacular special effects. Indeed Columbus is confident that in this picture they are some of the best yet. "The first *Harry Potter* films were actually a graduate course in visual effects for myself," he recalls. "I realised there was a certain method in just being obsessive with the visual effects to make sure they worked seamlessly with what the actors were doing. And I think we succeeded."

With four more books, expect to see a lot more from *Percy Jackson* and friends. "I'd love to make another film almost immediately with these guys." And despite rumours that he's set to become the next Spiderman, Lerman agrees. "I'm invested in the whole series and I'm crazy about the story and the character, so I'd love to do all the films."

words: Laura White

## FILM

### Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief



Based on the best-selling series of books by Rick Riordan, director Christopher Columbus' latest film traces the adventures of *Percy Jackson* who, on a trip to the museum, discovers that he's the son of Poseidon, and therefore a demigod.

As if this isn't enough to take in, his uncle Zeus (Sean Bean) suspects him of stealing his lightning bolt – the original weapon of mass destruction. Luckily, Percy has the guidance of Chiron the Centaur (Pierce Brosnan) as well as his friends. As the Gods threaten to wage war, Percy and his companions embark on an adventure of a lifetime which leads them from Las Vegas to the depths of the Underworld.

The merge of modern day America with ancient Greece that underpins the entire plot is an original idea and in a satirical dig, the film even hints that demigods walk amongst us, disguised as celebrities or politicians.

From the spectacular opening shot of a 40 foot Poseidon emerging from the sea, the film's CGI effects steal the show. However, characterisation and plot development pay the price for this. With its brisk pace, key elements of the story are rushed like the unconvincing romance plot. Moreover, the most poignant dimension of the film, the story of a father who cannot see his son, remains severely underdeveloped, sacrificed for the big effects.

Logan Lerman in the title role is one to watch. With Zac Efron-esque looks he's Hollywood's next teen heart-throb, and gives a competent performance as the troubled hero. For Coogan's portrayal of Hades simply picture Mick Jagger, as Columbus adopts the age old cliché of getting an ageing Brit to play the camp bad guy. However, it often feels that these big names aren't made full use of. Sean Bean, no novice in this genre, is barely memorable as Zeus.

Columbus is adamant that *Percy Jackson* is nothing like his *Harry Potter* films, and he's right. It's simply not as good (and this coming from a non-*Harry Potter* fan).

Nevertheless *Percy Jackson* does offer entertainment. The film is essentially pure silliness, but it is fun and enthralling. Despite its copious shortcomings, the storyline makes a nice change from the wizards and vampires we've grown accustomed to. If that isn't enough, the surreal sight of Pierce Brosnan with a horse's ass and hooves provides more than enough entertainment by itself.

## DANCE

### As Time Goes By

Leeds Grand Theatre



Undoubtedly the perfect date night out, five stars go to Northern Ballet Theatre's *As Time Goes By*, an evening of classical to contemporary ballet. The performance opening premiered former NBT dancer Daniel de Andrade's *Glass Cannon*, a rambunctious dance for ten dancers set to Eastern-inspired jazz by Scottish band Mo'Nique's Bagel. The dancers' relentless blasts of movement shot their bodies into the air or across the stage. Andrade briefly played with the bounds of contemporary ballet with men partnering men and women partnering women. Composer Phil Alexander warmly commended the dancer's interpretation to his music: "I thought it was great. I was thrilled to see it."

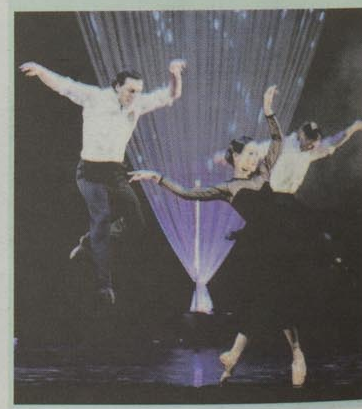
Isabella Gasparini and Hironao Takahashi delivered a satisfying Don Quixote Grand Pas de Deux duet. NBT's Artistic Director David Nixon showed off his dancers' athleticism in his work, *Powerhouse Rumba*. Nixon's cutting-edge choreography resembled William Forsythe's improvisational methodology, complete with blue and green Umiko dancewear.

The audience was stunned by Victoria Sibson's solo performance in *Ossein*, set by acclaimed choreographer-in-residence at the Royal Ballet, Wayne McGregor. With impeccable precision and control, Sibson portrayed one woman's struggle to find freedom from confines of rigidity. All that was visible in the spotlight was her chiseled body as it sliced the air, a striking contrast to the harmoniously complex piano music.

In his *Angels in the Architecture*, American choreographer Mark Godden used broom sticks and chairs to captivate the simplistic life of the Shakers. A 'well made Shaker broom would stand on its own' was Goddard's inspiration for the opening image of the piece, where six broomsticks stand alone. The women, and later the men, manipulated the brooms, and hung them on the backdrop like swinging pendulums as part of the set.

The title piece of the night, *As Time Goes On*, delivered an appealing mixture of classical ballet with Jazz and Swing. Decked out in black evening gowns and tuxes, couples graced the 1920's dance club set. Twenty-two year old Jazz sensation Peter Grant sang live in this finale of the evening, including 'Always' and 'Sophisticated Swing.' NBT have exceeded expectations once again.

words: Rebecca Krumel







## LOOKOUT POST

**Romeo & Juliet**  
Leeds Grand Theatre  
27/02 - 06/03

Set to be Northern Ballet Theatre's big hit this year, this adaptation of Shakespeare's most famous tragedy is a perfect blend of classical ballet, drama and live music. With voluptuous costumes of red, black and gold, crumbling marble sets and a live orchestra, this ballet will be an unforgettable experience.  
[www.northernballettheatre.co.uk](http://www.northernballettheatre.co.uk)

**New Stages Festival 2010**  
[stage@leeds](mailto:stage@leeds)  
All day 05/03 - 06/03

Top animation expert and *The Simpsons* script executive Paul Wells, headlines this packed two day festival of new and original performance. Elsewhere, *The Arranged Marriage* has 'something for everyone', from pithy political satire to brutal knob-gags. Full programme at [www.tinyurl.com/yhrbw9c](http://www.tinyurl.com/yhrbw9c). Two-day ticket £12.50; one-day ticket £7.50; single event £5. See next issue for our hot picks.

**The Basement presents...**  
*Brudenell Social Club*  
01/03, 7.30pm

To mark the occasion of its second volume, The Basement Zine is holding a night merging music, art and film. Expect music from The Roy Shukers, Peppermint Lounge, Aviators and The Voltaires, against a backdrop of animation and film to celebrate the pages of the hand-sewn zines on sale. Established by second year art students, the zine describes the night as 'a few drinks, good company, good music and art without all the pretention'.

**My Mother Said I Never Should**  
Studio 1, Workshop Theatre  
03/03 - 05/03, 7.30pm

Tracing four generations of women, the intimate cast of this TG production show how the changing role of women has altered the way women view themselves and their lives. An often disturbing and surreal exploration of womanhood. Tickets £4/£5 from the Terrace.

**Steve Williams plus guests**  
HiFi  
27/02, doors 7pm

HiFi's superlative Saturday Night Comedy Sessions continue with headliner Steve Williams. Having won recent praise from The Independent, Chortle and Time Out, and described as 'seriously recommended viewing', this Welsh comedian's reputation is set to rocket this year

words: Nali Sivathasan

## WHAT'S ONLINE

[leedsstudent.org](http://leedsstudent.org)

Benjamin Holmes takes a walk down *The Road*...

Jodie Sellers waves the tassels for *Burlesque Undressed*...

Nali Sivathasan goes for the Bollywood buffet with *My Name Is Khan*...

## COMMENT

# Get Your Geek On

Turner Prize? Yawn. *Tilly Michell* takes a moment to ask where the artistic greats of our era will really be found.

Geek art has long been something of a guilty pleasure of mine. It may seem odd to some that an ordinary 21-year-old with no history of partaking in medieval recreations, internet romances or Vaseline on toast should enjoy spending seven hours intricately hand painting an Urukhai Battle Fortress. But when having young relatives over for Christmas, one discovers strange things about oneself.

It was only recently, on reading that the Ivor Novello awards will this year host a brand new category that recognises the artistry behind video games, that I began to consider the position that geek art holds in our current cultural climate.

For many years the world has been somewhat dismissive of purportedly low-brow art mediums, such as comic book illustration, computer game design and elvish poetry, but all this may be about to change. As the public become increasingly disinterested in the shock tactic antics of the contemporary art world - (the Turner prize nominations, once headline grabbing, raised little more than a 'meh' amongst tabloid papers in 2009) - people are beginning to turn to the culty underbelly of mainstream

culture.

Are the artists that will stand the test of time living in basements in Shoreditch, designing digital worlds whose 3D intricacies hold a unique understated beauty? One only has to look at work such as Afro Samurai, a game adapted from Takashi Okazaki's original manga illustrations and narrated by Samuel L. Jackson, to know that this may well be the case.

Perhaps my favourite example of the underappreciated geek art genre comes from Mike Rea, an artist whose wooden sculptures of giant robots and sci-fi time machines evoke a powerful image of childhood fantasy and lost dreams. In the artist's own words, his work 'offers a sense of what could be and what could never be simultaneously'.

Based in fetishized mainstream pop culture and constantly updated by the latest technological advances, geek art has the ability to reflect contemporary society in a way that no other medium can, making it the perfect antidote to much of the gimmicky artwork that is currently chosen for the public by elite institutions. Geeky artworks, scoffed at now, may one day be lauded as the Rembrandts of the twenty first century.

## THEATRE

### Etchings

Mine



An artist and a boxer seem unlikely figures to place in a room together, but this is the premise of *Etchings* - a witty and highly original play written by Leeds student James Huntrods.

The story takes place in the basement studio of reclusive artist Arthur. Contacted by an old university friend, he is commissioned to paint the portrait of her husband, famed boxer Roy Hardson. The unexpected reconnection forces Arthur to delve back into his past, sharply reminding him of the failure to achieve his one goal - capturing life on canvas. While Roy sits for his portrait, the two characters reminisce. Memories of both the boxing and art world collide, and what becomes apparent in both cases is the transient and uncertain nature of success.

It was fascinating to see how Mine could be transformed several times as the characters move fluidly between past and present. The performances are flawless, showcasing the dark humour and more serious themes of the play perfectly, and giving the believable impression of close intimacy.

One interesting thing about *Etchings* is its presentation of artistic indulgence, the extremities that conceptual art can go to to shock or 'change the world'. The play skillfully depicts the art world as self-indulgent and cruel. Arthur realises that recognition can be gained easily in what he considers a base profession, boxing, causing him to question the worth of his own private intellectual journey, which no one cares to watch. Witty, poignant and surprising, *Etchings* is a joy to see.

words: Rachel Harvey

## OPERA

### La Bohème

Leeds Grand Theatre



'The bohemian', and all that it has come to be associated with, is one of those ways of life that exists almost solely in art rather than real life. Taking journalist Henry Murger's accounts of his own struggle with poverty, Giuseppe Giacoso's and Luigi Illica's pithy libretto, set against Giacomo Puccini's rich score, is such an example of abject poverty sitting comfortably alongside a love for life.

Juvenile and carefree, for *La Bohème*'s group of young innocents (a painter, a poet, a philosopher and a musician) getting by seems more like a game than the daily struggle it perhaps would be. The arrival of the beautiful Mimi is the beginning of the terrible decline of their way of life. Initial love soon gives way to untamable jealousy.

In this opera of artists - fantastically designed by Anthony Ward - the obligatory flowing of blood is replaced by washes of paint. When we meet the four boys in their crumbling flat, vast canvases of bold primary colours stand drying behind them both as brave flares of

optimism and omens of the tragic finale.

Yet Peter Relton's revival of Phyllida Lloyd's production spends much of its time in a masquerade of comedy, incorporating slapstick, dabbling in drag and romping through large chorus pieces. It's a brisk production that never outstays its welcome.

Mimi's eventual (but inevitable) death is the point at which the group must grow up. The cold depravity of adulthood has arrived and the jokes come to an intensely abrupt end.

Nothing will prepare you for such a high-octane belter better than a good glass of something nice and an introductory talk from a charismatic company member. Opera North's TONAL nights clear some of the Grand Theatre's best seats in the house for its student audiences, treating them to a free pre-lash at Lounge bar before the show. Whether you're an serial operaphile or a first-timer, at a meagre £10 per ticket there is no better way to see one of the nation's best opera companies.

Email [tonal@operanorth.co.uk](mailto:tonal@operanorth.co.uk) or call Stefanie Davis on 0113 223 3524 to get your tickets.

words: Matt Hutchinson





260210

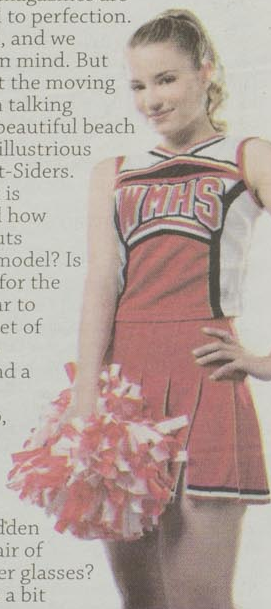
## COMMENT

## Act Your Age

Melissa Welliver asks if 30 year olds acting as teenagers encourages unrealistic ideals on how we should look

Everyday our generation is bombarded with the message that the skinny models in magazines are airbrushed to perfection.

It isn't real, and we keep that in mind. But what about the moving model? I'm talking about the beautiful beach babes and illustrious Upper-East-Siders. How much is acting, and how much is Nuts magazine model? Is it possible for the football star to have the feet of Christiano Ronaldo and a face like a Moon Map, or Seth Cohen to have beauty scarcely hidden behind a pair of Harry Potter glasses? It can be a bit



intimidating to see Quinn Fabray of *Glee* (yes, we all know that you watch it) looking so flawlessly skinned as a high-schooler. This said, a quick scan of her IMDB page told me that the cure for acne had been found – and in no other form than surpassing puberty. The actress Dianna Agron is celebrating her 24th birthday in April – well past the age of the girl she plays. She is not only pretty, but perfectly toned (a cheerleader) and effortlessly coiffed.

Granted, some of this comes from the fact that the girl (woman?) has a whole make-up team to touch up her face between every shot, but some of this is due to her age.

Michael J Fox complained at the age of 30 about having to play high school boys due to his creamy complexion.

A teenager does not look like this, and it is projecting an unrealistic image of what perfection really is. I'm sure males can sympathise – Teddy Montgomery of *90210* showing off a perfect six-pack in a pair of teeny-weeny Speedos. A teenage body simply isn't mature, and copious amounts of exercise still won't add up to washboard abs – they also haven't had literally

years to train, as an actor of Trevor Donovan (Teddy's ilk) has. Donovan is, you may be shocked to read, 32 at the end of this year. In fact, this age defying trend isn't just limited to our generation – Ryan Matthews, Teddy's English teacher in the series, is in fact played by 25 year old Ryan Eggold, six years Donovan's junior.

It seems we have entered a new age of perfection – or rather, a perfection of new ages. Most of the actors in these serials are in their 20s – despite the age of their character. It is being portrayed to us that the only age it is acceptable to look and be is between 19 and 30, and beautiful. I am being unfair here, as in recent years Hollywood has tried to break this mould with sitcoms such as 'Ugly Betty', in which America Ferrera is (shock horror) a size 12 and still attractive to the men of the show. However, Ferrera is made almost comically ugly with bushy hair and braces, and we can still see that underneath she has unblemished skin and milk white, straight teeth.

Therefore, the dangers of wanting to look like these actors, which in most cases is a literal impossibility, is

mitigated by the lack of attention drawn to their real ages. This in itself is not only deceitful, but dangerous to our body confidence. The television and film world is keeping actors feeling like they have to look younger and younger. It can be argued that the older and more experienced the actor, the better he or she will be able to portray the role, and despite the fact the actor has gone through puberty, they are still perfectly capable of portraying it on screen. This said, it is no less true that an actor of equal age to the character they play cannot give an equally commendable performance – such as Dakota Fanning depicting a six year old, alike to that of her own age at the time, in *I Am Sam*. In all, it is unnecessary to cast unrealistic actors in the roles of students. Casting directors need to start thinking about the image that they are conveying, and whether it is a healthy one – due to age, looks and varying weight. We need more Mercedes and Kurts in the world (don't pretend you don't know who I am talking about, *Glee* fans). Don't let them pull the wool over your eyes, readers – we aren't as naive as they think we are.

To find out about new TV drama 'Married, Single, Other' set in Leeds go to [leedsstudent.org](http://leedsstudent.org)

## Pick of the week

Film &amp; TV

Big Daddy

28/02/10 at 6.40pm Five

We all have a place in our heart for the loveable goofball Adam Sandler and his performance in *Big Daddy* is arguably one of his best. The film, from the director of *Happy Gilmore*, follows Sandler playing Sonny Koufax a hapless loafer, as he takes his flatmate's love child under his wing to try and impress his girlfriend. And in true Hollywood style, Sonny and the five year old boy develop a close relationship and both teach each other some very important lessons! But when he discovers that the 'ex' has a new boyfriend, rather than get rid of him he realises that he cares very much for the little boy and in fact has also found his Miss Perfect. Lovely! Sandler delivers a wonderful performance and really makes this film more than just your average comedy. So after a hard weekend partying, I can think of nothing better than to settle down on Sunday afternoon to watch this heart-warmer complete with a huge Sunday roast on my lap.

words: Sarah Grindall

Masterchef

4/03/10 at 7pm BBC1

"Cooking doesn't get tougher than this" has become a well-known catchphrase from *Masterchef* judge Greg Wallace and as the new series gets underway there is no sign of this changing. Cited as one of the most difficult competitions for amateur chefs, *Masterchef* puts contestants through their paces with challenges such as creating a delectable dish from a random selection of ingredients and working a shift in a busy London restaurant. From culinary successes to complete disasters, *Masterchef* provides the viewer with drama (mainly through the theatrical nature of the judges' decision making), comedy, cooking tips and most importantly, food! The average student may find boiling pasta a chore and the food created on *Masterchef* may appear to be far beyond their capabilities. However, there is an addictive quality to this show that I believe no food lover can resist. It acts to inspire those who have no motivation when it comes to cooking and broaden the horizons of those who love to experiment and create exciting new dishes. Not just another food programme, *Masterchef* introduces new talent into the cooking world and may even inspire you to begin to construct your own culinary repertoire to impress your family and friends.

words: Anna Pintus

# LS Tube



This week we have *High Renaissance Man*, a parody of a Bristol University History of Art student in denial. Between the quilted Barbour jacket and the statement "anyone who says they don't like Bristol university is either lying, or f\*\*\*\*g ugly", the portrayal is spot on. Watch online now at <http://bit.ly/b5cSkW>

Any favourites? Email us at [tv@leedsstudent.org](mailto:tv@leedsstudent.org)



## Reviews



### Lady Gaga: Just Dance

Helia Phoenix

Everyone's gone goo goo for Gaga apparently, except me.

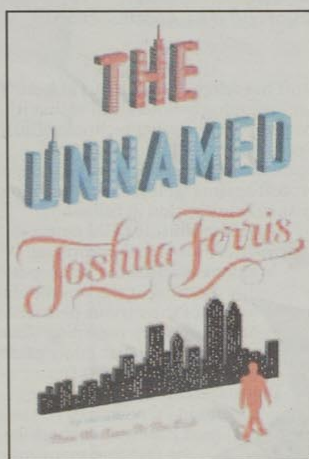
To say I was sceptical of Lady Gaga's biography is rather an understatement. I did wonder if I would discover a new admiration for the apparent fashion icon (who doesn't want to look like they've been dragged through Blue Peter's arts and crafts department?) and supposed talented songwriter (ga ga ooh la la is particularly groundbreaking). I didn't.

As interesting as it was to find out that Baby Gaga was 'forced' to play the piano and attend one of New York's finest Catholic schools (poor thing), it's difficult to comprehend why a 23 year old deserves a biography. Perhaps the author, music journalist Helia Phoenix, is simply cashing in on the Gaga phenomenon while it's so prominent.

Gaga claims that her school stifled her creativity and is modestly quoted as saying "there were times when I got a lot of attention for being the life and soul of the party". This continued arrogance and endless name dropping of A-list celebrities makes me feel like I have accidentally picked up a copy of Heat rather than the published biography of the extraordinarily unique Lady Gaga.

Despite this, the book is an easy read, would be a perfect gift for a Gaga fan and does have some nice pictures of Miss Stefani Germanotta wearing very little. Phoenix has some moderately interesting tales to tell about the creation of Gaga, who is portrayed to be almost an ideology rather than just another popstar.

words: Rebecca Carr



### The Unnamed

Joshua Ferris

Like many Great American novelists before him, Ferris has encapsulated the difficulties surrounding modern day life in suburban America, following Tim Farnsworth's descent into an unnamed illness, which leaves him physically and mentally walking away from his obligations to his family and his job as a partner in a successful law firm.

Ferris delves into the surreal to convey Tim's desperation, loss and loneliness in his suburban prison, in an extended metaphor where Tim finds himself in an almost apocalyptic land, becoming totally lost, abandoned and unable to escape his suburban prison.

Ferris' novel is often disorganised and subplots tend to be left without conclusion (for example the murder of Tim's client's wife) but while this makes for frustrating reading, Ferris manages to create a situation like Tim's in the reader's mind.

We, as readers, are unable to understand the destination of Tim's journey. We almost join him as he walks to escape his life, as if to subconsciously escape our own by reading a novel exploring the themes of suburban life, from Tim's overweight daughter to his marital problems.

Ferris creates a new generation of 'Great American novels', commenting subversively not only on the suburban lives of his characters but also of his readers, forcing them to re-evaluate their own lives and acknowledge their own forms of escapism. A thoroughly compelling and thought provoking read – *The Unnamed* is a captivating and exciting new novel for 2010.

words: Vicki Mortimer



### Children of the Sun

Max Schaefer

This remarkable debut novel by Schaefer follows two very different men whose lives gradually become twisted together through the wider narrative of Britain's Neo-Nazi movement.

In 1970, 14 year old Tony becomes seduced, immersed and devoted to this shockingly racial and violent movement. Yet in this backwards world, the biggest crime is to be gay and Tony has no choice but to hide his homosexuality.

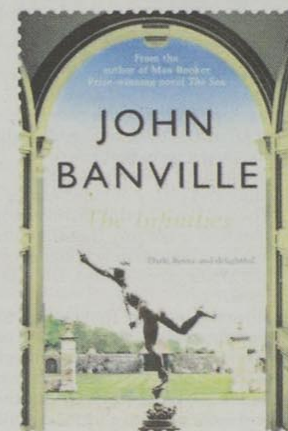
In 2003, James, who lives with his boyfriend in London, becomes interested in the brutally violent leader of the movement, Nicky Crane, who came out as gay before dying of AIDS in 1993. James becomes dangerously obsessed and, as he delves deeper, he forms risky contacts that soon endanger his world.

Schaefer seamlessly and skilfully switches between these two narratives so they mould together. In addition to this, newspaper and magazine clippings from Tony's era allow the reader to discover how the movement viewed itself, and how outsiders regarded it.

The protagonists are two of the most unlikeable characters I have ever read. Tony is a racist and vicious thug with irreconcilable morals, while James is self absorbed, thick skinned and unconsciously cruel. Yet despite this Schaefer manages to make both relatable; at times even Tony comes across as an extremely sad character with rare glimmers of decency.

This is one of the most unblinkingly honest books I have ever read. Full of repressed feeling and overwhelming emotion, the novel paints a picture of Britain that is both alien and astonishingly compelling.

words: Katy Dowden



### The Infinities

John Banville

It took Irish author John Banville 60 years and 18 novels to eventually win the Man Booker Prize in 2005, despite being tipped to win awards throughout his prolonged career. His prize winning novel *The Sea* was always going to be a tough act to follow, but Banville's latest work, *The Infinities*, doesn't disappoint.

The narrative, which materialises over the course of a single day in a large house in rural Ireland, revolves around the Godley family, whose patriarch, Adam, a renowned theoretical mathematician, is dying. The characters gathered around Adam's deathbed are wonderfully crafted, each with troublesome vices, woes and motives. They are not alone, however, as Banville, famed for his fondness of classical mythology, reveals the narrator of the novel to be the Olympian god Hermes, and a host of mischievous Greek gods are surveying the spectacle – that is, until they intrude into the action, in true classical style.

*The Infinities* is a wonderfully styled and rigorous survey of the human condition, characteristically dark and at times touched with playful humour. Perhaps the only criticism to be made of the novel is that it is too heavily saturated with complex themes and intricate allusions. Banville is not one to shy away from the thinly disguised metaphor or overly symbolic imagery, and on occasion it feels like he is compiling a playlist of literary allusions. However, *The Infinities* has never been advertised as a light read, and Banville amply rewards the persistent reader of this inspired novel.

words: Joe Miller



Click on [leedsstudent.org](http://leedsstudent.org) for more book reviews every week...

This week Hannah Glick reviews Marina Lewycka's *We Are All Made of Glue* and Nee Naw, the published blog of Suzi Brent, an ambulance control call taker. You can also read Hannah Astill's review of *The Daughter Game* by Kate Long and Dan Lester's opinion on Mark Kermode's book from last week's online issue.



260210

## COMMENT

## Ubisoft's DRM debacle

With the games industry always complaining of declining profits, *Trivun Luzaic* asks whether the latest technology goes a step too far...

Early last week, the video game industry was rocked by news of the latest DRM scheme to come from French game developer Ubisoft. DRM, or Digital Rights Management, is a term that refers to various methods of preventing illegal downloading and piracy of video games and other software. Usually, this involves some form of check to make sure that the game being played is a legitimately bought copy, rather than an illegal download. DRM is nothing new.

Ever since the internet first started to become popular, video games released on PC have been subject to illegal download and filesharing, leading to measures being put in place to prevent piracy. One of the earliest and most primitive forms of DRM requires the end user to activate an installed game before it can be played by inputting a code sold with the game itself. This was hardly foolproof, however, as it was easy for pirates to create false codes with copied games that were indistinguishable from the real thing. These codes would be recognised as genuine despite actually being fake, so pirates were able to completely bypass any DRM used by developers.

Ubisoft's scheme is somewhat different. It relies on having any game being played connected to the internet at all times. This doesn't seem too bad at first glance;

however, Ubisoft has also stated that the user must remain connected, and that if either the PC that is running the game or Ubisoft's own internet servers drop a connection, then the game will immediately stop. The company has justified this by claiming that most gamers will always be connected to the internet anyway when playing games. The company has come under fire from gamers and people within the gaming industry for implementing this approach.

A common argument against Ubisoft's planned restrictions is that the scheme will apply even to PC games that are single player, such as the recent *Assassin's Creed 2*. In addition, Ubisoft is notorious among developers for its constant server failures, resulting in extremely poor management of online gaming. There exists a very high chance that gamers under the new DRM will constantly find their games interrupted by poor internet connection through Ubisoft's own servers.

The approach towards piracy that

Ubisoft has adopted is dubious at best. The entire reasoning behind DRM is that it helps prevent piracy, yet technology such as this only serves to hinder legitimate customers. PC gamers have already begun to protest against Ubisoft's new technology, with an online petition in full swing.

Googling 'Ubisoft DRM petition'

yields some rather surprising opinions towards the developer.

Looking at the comments on one of the various petitions to have sprung up regarding Ubisoft, it would appear that many gamers are planning to boycott future Ubisoft releases, including the upcoming PC release of *Assassin's Creed 2*. But more shocking is the fact that many more,

it seems, plan to pirate future Ubisoft games in a bid to enjoy the product without any of the

hassle of DRM. This goes completely against the point of what Ubisoft is doing. Copy prevention technology is meant to prevent piracy, whereas in this case, it seems to be doing more to promote it.

Which raises the question, does DRM actually work? It has long been a staple of all forms of electronic media, but more so

in gaming than anywhere else. As each new DRM technology has come and gone, pirates have managed to find ways of cracking the system and getting past the protection. Piracy has always been rampant, so developers have been forced to come up with new and ever changing ways to outwit the pirates. But recently, DRM has been progressing to the point that most gamers find it more of a hindrance than a help.

Ubisoft's plans would appear to be the final nail in the coffin, with gamers threatening to pirate the developer's games anyway. Other developers have tried other approaches. For example, with last year's release of *Batman: Arkham Asylum*, gamers who illegally downloaded the game were 'rewarded' with a main character who was unable to use any of the special moves in the game, including ones that were vital to the game's completion. Only legitimate users, therefore, were able to play the game all the way through.

This is the sort of DRM that works. Pirates are the ones who should, in theory, be punished, while rewarding legitimate gamers. Instead, we are seeing a complete reversal. DRM has long been cited as necessary in the fight against piracy, but with schemes like this, is it really any wonder that so many gamers turn to illegal downloads in the first place?

"I don't normally do requests, unless I'm asked to."

Richard Whiteley

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2602 10

## Portal picture perfect

**Studying:** Philosophy & English  
**Enjoys:** Stepping on crunchy leaves and randomly laughing when remembering something funny.  
**Favourite Drink:** Tea



Georgie Harmsworth

## Be grateful we live in Leeds

**Studying:** International Relations  
**Loves:** Yorkshire Tea  
**Favourite Club:** Korfbal  
**Favourite Film:** *Scent of a Woman*



Rosie Driffill

## Happily ever easter

**Studying:** English Lit. and Lang  
**Favourite Film:** *Donnie Darko*  
**Loves:** Jaffa cakes  
**Favourite Place:** The middle of Epsom Downs



Ellie Brown

What links trees, concrete, Hyde Park Picture House, and RAG? Yep, you guessed it; they're what the radical people behind Leeds Portal chose to google-ify the login page. As much as I prefer these random photos from various obscure places round campus (the front of chemical engineering, anyone?) to the incessant advertising thrust in my face on the short walk in to Uni, I feel a bit let down by the latest batch to grace our screens. Close-ups of concrete stairs and flashlights might sound like a Tate-modern-esque idea on paper, but in (virtual) reality it's just... boring. Where have the picture-postcards of Leeds gone? Lame as it may sound, I loved the pictures of Woodhouse Moor and the picture house so much that I and at least three other similarly geeky friends saved them to the computer. One of them might be my desktop wallpaper. So this latest batch of modern art gone wrong is just a bit disappointing. One of the reasons I chose Leeds is because of the old buildings and trees around campus; instead of digging them up, why not put a few pictures of them online - a sort of Leeds-uni-at-home?

Then, why stop on campus? Armed only with a camera, the portal team could explore and post back to the whole student population the behind the scenes of Leeds life, making big brother Yorkshire-style, with hidden cameras in lecture theatres, union bars, under benches and over street lamps; they could go national, no, global! Maybe not. A friend and I went to see *Burlesque Undressed* at the cinema on Friday; I'm not suggesting nudity, but there's definitely room for more sparkle and surprise when checking emails. Then there are all the different societies at Leeds University; if you had a picture or two from all of them, that would probably last the year, and you get free publicity and about two seconds of fame while typing in your username.

Then again, maybe I'm (probably) wasting my time getting annoyed about what picture is on my portal login page. I've thought up a few alternatives, but it's not like I'm going to do anything about it; in fact, the whole idea of writing about a few photos that pop up next to where you type your password, on a page that you probably have open for all of two seconds, is a bit... procrastinated. And, as much as I like procrastinating, I think I should probably be working instead. So I'm going to finish off with some general good tips for working better: 1. Always check your emails but avoid giving too much thought to whatever you may see on the way to the email inbox. Otherwise you could end up, like me, boring everyone else about some boring pictures. 2. Well, I don't really have any more... I guess I'll have to think about it. Night.

Ok, so I'm in Manchester for the very first time, and having been told by local friends that I'd regret choosing Leeds over their red-bricked legend of a metropolis, I'm expecting to be impressed.

Indeed, ambling around Piccadilly Gardens as evening falls, ogling the bubbling springs and the towering buildings that flank the square, I'm beginning to feel that Manchester has an edge, a sort of effervescence, I suppose you could say, that Leeds doesn't quite match. The streets are busier, the bars are bigger and there's a sort of continental quirk that cloaks the whole atmosphere. I find myself weighing up these northern cities, wondering if the scales may well buckle under Manchester's spill-over of charming vitality.

Yet my sentiments are altered, sharpish, as I head for the shops that make up the square's periphery. Suddenly I'm aware that the Mancunians with whom I was walking with have hung back, and as I turn around, I see them stood side by side, stricken, yelling: "what the hell are you doing?" as though I have broken some local taboo on a par with saying the Stone Roses are shit. But before I'm able to fathom their perplexity, I'm diving for my life amid a blare of horns and the ominous growl of an unfamiliar engine. And it's only when I'm safe but on the brink of cardiac arrest, watching my house-high enemy snake its way into the distance, that I'm warned about the trams in Manchester.

So for those of you who, like me, have never experienced a tram-city before, let me advise constant caution. Their tracks, dark silver slits meandering their way across what you presume to be your walkway, do so unannounced by a fence or even so much as a lowering of the pavement. This allows for the ghost-like approach of said vehicle. And it seems their sinister criss-crossing of the city's skeleton isn't the only bone of contention. Ranting to various people on my return, I discovered that a lot of visitors to the city are terrified of the actual tram-lines, harbouring the idea that they can electrocute you if you step on them! Irrational, but no more so than the vehicles themselves, capable of conjuring innumerable levels of hysteria.

Now perhaps Leeds is a little less vibrant, a little less chic, but at least we can mooch at our leisure, wherever and at whatever pace we like, knowing we will be guided by known regularities, such as zebra crossings and the green man. We can tug at our scarves and pull down our hats and power walk against the bitter winds of th'north, without worrying that we might have to dodge some walkway hogging tram at any moment. Any thoughts about choosing the wrong city are dispelled. And I didn't even meet Bez from Happy Mondays.

You've signed the dotted line and banished away the love of your life. Why, well because it's the season of Lent. The time of year that's like Christmas in reverse. Instead of having the opportunity to double your body mass with excessive consumption of mince pies and chocolate, Lent is a time of withdrawal, self-discipline... and other happy words. However, before you vow to cut out every source of sugar from your diet, perhaps consider the consequences of Lenten promises. Forget the ongoing recession or the Wall Street crash; just imagine the new economic crisis that will emerge once local newsagents are deprived of customers surrendering to their midnight munchies. Or worse still, the health and safety risks that threaten those who are trying to resist caffeine. As energy levels are at a dangerous low, Leeds will witness a zombie apocalypse of exhausted students haunting the streets, dressed in pyjamas (as if some people need the excuse), incapable of navigating around traffic. Simple activities such as stapling papers should be banned from the university. What's more the Roger Stevens should be refitted with reclining chairs for those unable to remain awake without their Venti Caramel Mochiato with extra whipped cream and two shots of sugar free vanilla syrup.

Congratulations nonetheless to anyone who remains successful still in their Lenten missions. When monitoring whether Lenten promises have been followed, life can resemble the 3-month-later revisit on *You Are What You Eat* - the public eye bursting into your life to see if you have truly reformed your ways. They may put chocolates under pillows in posh hotels, but if you have enough Dairy Milk to stock Gatwick's duty-free, you might have to count your Lenten mission as deported.

If cravings are becoming too hard to handle, there still are some ways to survive Easter happily ever after. These may include the past suggestion made by the Bishop of Oxford, to try and reduce carbon footprints during Easter. This could this mean that instead of chipping in for a taxi at the end of a night, supplying piggy backs home for the weak could be an option. Alternatively by ordering internet shopping, technically your food is travelling to you, instead of you burning petrol on a bus travelling to and from Morrison's. Other ways to survive Lent include 'to give' rather than 'to give up' and commit time to good deeds. Perhaps the money so easily lost in the black-hole vacuum of pub game machines and late night takeaways could be instead be used for a better cause? At the end of the day, Lent promotes compassion for fellow mankind and subsequently may involve self-sacrifice. So if all else fails and biscuits come a'calling, do an act of good will instead. Cleaning up the kitchen might not necessarily earn you sainthood today, but it could be protecting humanity from an outbreak of the plague tomorrow.

## MINI OBSERVATIONS



"Why are there so many seagulls and magpies around Leeds? If one mated with a magpie, would you get a seapie, or a magul?"

Gemma Wilson



"Puppies outside the Union should be mandatory on essay due-dates. Also, pictures of kittens."

Benjamin Thomas Schonevald



"I have too much work, but not enough time, too many ambitions, but not enough drive, I want to live in the moment but am perpetually planning the next year for fear of missing out on what it may bring."

Jack Murphy

"Shame for people whose names don't rhyme with words like 'win' but who want to stand in student elections."

Anonymous



# DID YOU GIVE IT YOUR BEST SHOT?

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**Finalists for UNITE's Best Shot photography competition have just been announced – now it's over to you to help decide the winners!**

Earlier this month, student accommodation provider UNITE invited Leeds' students to share photographs of their favourite Leeds' landmarks. Over 150 entries were received from students across the city.

A 'landmark' could have been anything from a building to a person or even an object, as long as it told a story about the city.

Together with local art guru Pippa Hale - Director of the Northern Art Prize, and Fran Levy - PR and Events Co-ordinator from The Faversham, UNITE has selected a shortlist of 10 entries. Now it's over to you to help decide the winners!

The person whose image receives the most votes will be rewarded with £500 and four runners up will each receive £250. All five finalists will see their photographs exhibited in The Faversham in April.

Winners will be announced on UNITE's website on 22 March 2010. You have until 5pm on 19 March to cast your vote!

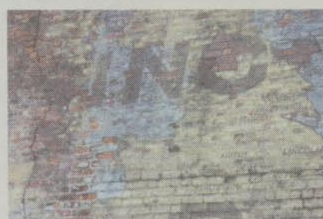
**Vote for your favourite photograph at:**  
**[www.unite-students.com/bestshot](http://www.unite-students.com/bestshot)**



Jay Maude



Aaron Hargreaves



Melissa Fairchild



Oliver Quinn



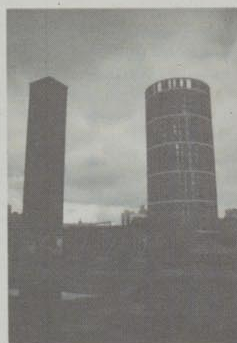
Jonathan Finch



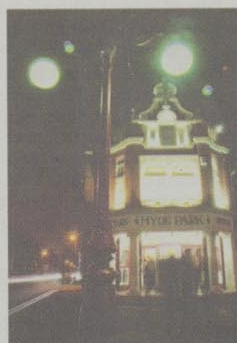
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# Critical Analysis



## Sense and sensibility

This week has been a triumph for sensible thinking. A cross-party parliamentary committee has finally decided that maybe throwing millions of pounds into unproven pseudo medicine is a bad idea, and have agreed that the NHS should stop funding homeopathy.

For the uninitiated, homeopathy is based on the idea that water has a memory, and hence dilute solutions of random stuff can make you feel better. Suffice to say, when subjected to stringent clinical trials, pills made from nothing more than sugar and water perform no better than placebo. Yet it is estimated that £4 million a year has been spent funding four homeopathic hospitals and numerous prescriptions. Money that would be better spent on physics research perhaps, given that funding for internationally important projects has been slashed by a government only interested in headline-making science.

In other news, experts have called for science GCSEs and A-levels to be made more demanding, or at least be raised above their current inadequate level; a move that is long overdue, given that science GCSEs in schools has been reduced to nothing more than basic comprehension and multiple-choice questions in recent years.

The importance of good science education at this level cannot be underestimated; GCSEs are the time when you either decide that science is incomprehensible and boring, or you have your eyes opened to the magic of it all. An inspiring teacher with an inspiring syllabus will foster passions for scientific discovery; a disillusioned teacher with no expertise in the subject and sub-par subject matter will turn generations away from the subject. And what a shame that would be.

Got a story for News Extra? Know someone who has done some outstanding research that deserves recognition? Email us your stories to: [newsfeatures@leedsstudent.org](mailto:newsfeatures@leedsstudent.org)

# Emotions get teenagers moving

Changing people's perceptions of exercise may be key to tackling the obesity epidemic, especially in young people, according to new research.

A Leeds University study into motivation found that teenagers were more likely to participate in physical activity if they were made aware of the emotional benefits of exercise, rather than the physical health benefits.

Reema Sirrieh, a research student from the Institute of Psychological sciences, led the investigation, which found that "There is evidence that people who believe that physical activity is enjoyable and fun are more likely to engage in sport and exercise."

Traditionally, campaigns to encourage physical fitness have primarily highlighted the health benefits. However, this research implies that a new emotional approach may be more successful.

The 128 participants in the study received a daily text message over a period of two weeks. One group received text messages that highlighted the emotional benefits of exercise, such as "Physical activity can make you feel cheerful..." whilst a second group received messages that highlighted the traditional health benefits, such as "Physical activity can keep your heart healthy..." and a third group received a combination of the two.

Participants then recorded their activity levels over the two week period. Data analysis found that the text message intervention increased the physical activity for everyone, but that the largest increase was seen for previously inactive teenagers who received the messages that highlighted the emotional benefits.

The research may call for a government rethink of healthy lifestyle campaigns. Earlier this year, a study warned that the fitness levels of British children was falling twice as fast as the international average, despite the government investing millions of pounds in such campaigns as 'Change4Life'.

With the University lifestyle often playing havoc with health and fitness, and leaving little time for sport, it can be difficult for students to find the motivation to participate. Exercise-phobic Leeds Student Associate Editor Rob Heath isn't one for getting involved with sport: "I don't have time for exercise. I like clubbing, and I walk fast to Uni, so I'm probably getting more exercise than most anyway, but you'll never find me in a gym sweating away with everyone else."

However, Athletics Captain and Activities Executive Sports Rep John Robinson believes that "exercise shouldn't have to be a chore, it should be enjoyable. I find that I do the best exercise when in a group, where motivation is higher and the influence of peers pushes you to your best... Having a work/life balance will keep you happy, more focussed, and will make the best out of your time at University."

Union Executive welfare Officer Madeleine Harris Smith believes it is important to highlight the emotional benefits of exercise: "There are countless studies all about the emotional benefits of exercising, but you only need to do 20 minutes of exercise to start feeling the positive vibes. It's a great way to de-stress, can turn a bad mood into a good one and



can improve your self esteem. It can also help get your sleeping patterns back on track, sweat off a hangover and, if you participate in team sport, meet some new people."

With a quarter of British adults now classified as obese, and obesity being linked to a "dramatic rise" in deaths in the UK, inactivity in the younger generation may prove to be a ticking time bomb for health services.

"Statistics from the British Heart Foundation show that from the age of 16, girls' levels of physical activity begin to decrease," noted Reema.

"Our study shows that for inactive teenagers, emphasising the emotional benefits of exercise may be a more effective way to encourage exercise than highlighting traditional health benefits."



Rob Heath: not one for exercise

Felicity Inkpen

Photo: Richard Smith

# Exec candidate highlights failings of Union policy-making structure

In the recent LUU Executive elections one of the candidates standing for the position of Communications and Internal Affairs officer highlighted that three of the motions passed in the 2008 and 2009 referenda have not yet been carried out: to look into the purchasing of testing kits for popular illegal recreational drugs, a campaign calling for First Buses to guarantee a maximum student price of £1 per journey within the Green Zone, and the establishment of a 'green' information point.

And the problem is not isolated to these three motions alone: in a policy review conducted by the Union's Campaigns and Democracy Support team in December of last year it was found that out of a total 89 current policies passed at both referenda and Union Council meetings, only 29 had been completed and worse still only 47 had even been begun.

With all motions having an expiry date of three years this means that by the time motions are actually carried out, if they are carried out at all, they are often only in effect for a short amount of time. What is more, with each year seeing a new intake of LUU officers, policy can quickly become forgotten if there is not effective communication between the outgoing and ingoing officers.

At present it seems that while the referenda process may be working very well in terms of providing a forum through which students can voice their concerns and desires, it is less effective at ensuring that the terms of a motion is delivered. This has led to a culture where success is seen as the passing of a motion rather than the delivery of a motion: the circle of democracy is incomplete.

Unfortunately, there is little the student population can do to hold the Executive to account when it comes to the delivery of motions. Unless the proposers of new policy specifically stipulate a deadline for action in their motion, it is left up to the Executive to interpret how and when policy should be carried out before the expiration date, and up to the proposers to pressure them to take action at Union Council meetings.

This ambiguity has been exemplified with the cheaper buses campaign motion, which is only now being initiated almost a year after it was first passed in the March 2009 referendum.

More often than not the proposers of motions do not maintain pressure on Executive officers, however, largely because of the emphasis placed on getting a motion passed rather than seeing it delivered.

Jak Codd, the current Communications and Internal Affairs officer, told LS: "We always try and communicate the outcomes of motions to the proposers and their campaigns team. We are developing a new area of the website, which will be constantly updated with the

Number of current policies (those passed at referenda and at Union Council meetings)	89
Number completed	18
Number begun	29
Number with no action taken	39

progress of motions and how they are being implemented."

In the instances of the motions to consider drug-testing kits and to establish a 'green' info point, however, the Executive say that they have done everything that is within their power to ensure these policies are delivered. Current Welfare

Officer Madeleine Harris-Smith, who was mandated to look into the purchasing of drug-testing kits, told LS that it was a misconception that the motion to look into the Union purchasing drug-testing kits had not been carried out.

She said: "The first part of the motion resolved to mandate the Welfare Officer to look into purchasing drug-testing kits. My predecessor completed a report on the feasibility of stocking pill testing kits which was presented to Union Council, the motion proposers and any students who asked. The report concluded that the stocking of pill testing kits would conflict with other key messages being delivered around campus, and that, by endorsing these kits, we would be endorsing something potentially fatal to our members."

Jak Codd, who was mandated to ensure the fulfillment of the green information point 'project' along with the Ethical and Environmental Assembly Chair, told LS that action had been stalled by University building works: "The Green Space in GameOn will be going ahead, as soon as the University completes essential building works on the exterior of the building, hopefully by this summer."

Laura Mackenzie



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## Carr Mills



# 'People will suffer these prejudices for the whole of their lives'

With the spotlight on university Muslim groups after the recent bomb plot by a former president of a student Islamic society, Virginia Newman spoke to Muslim students and members of the local community.

In reaction to the attempted Christmas Day plane bombing last December and with fears of potential new threats, Universities UK has set up a panel to discuss how to 'best protect academic freedom whilst taking appropriate action to prevent violent extremism' on University campuses.

The body of Vice Chancellors, chaired by Prof Malcolm Grant from University College London (UCL), is set to meet for its first meeting shortly.

The student voice is being represented in the discussions by Wes Streeter, President of the National Union of Students. The current LUU Equality and Diversity Officer Sophia James, explains Streeter's role.

"The panel will, amongst other things, be examining guidelines being developed by NUS on the boundaries between merely controversial and more radical, extremist, hate speakers on campuses and will tackle the

important balance between freedom of speech and freedom from harm", she said.

University campuses across the UK have been thrown in to the spotlight since it was revealed that the 'Christmas Day bomber', Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, had studied at UCL.

Abdulrahman Alhadithi, LUU Islamic Society President, explained the difficulties facing Muslim students in the current climate: "Muslims in Britain are facing a huge, and a continuously growing, wave of Islamophobia as a result of the negative image of Islam being portrayed by the media and several right-wing think tanks. The biggest challenge, which young Muslims have always faced, is breaking the barriers between them and the wider community. This challenge has become even more difficult because the barriers are being reinforced by the media's unjustifiable attempts to associate any acts of violence with Islam. The sad reality that we live in a time where the media is the

number one source of information has made the challenge of 'tackling misconceptions' an even more difficult one for young Muslims."

James praised the ISoc response: "I've been really pleased with the Islamic Society's reaction to the events over the Christmas holidays, the society has responded well to media attention and they have been incredibly pro-active in working with LUU to distance themselves from the extremism. They are one of our most impressive societies with a solid record of charitable and community-based events."

ISocs at other local universities aired similar views. Jebar Ahmed, chair of the University of Huddersfield ISoc, said: "There are certain pressures and the unclear monitoring procedures often lead one to be very sceptical about what they can actually 'think', view on the internet and converse about, particularly for international students. It is not the same case for those of other faiths. The Islamic Society works to unite the Muslims,

support people in their acts of worship, raise awareness of Islam and make a positive contribution to the campus."

## 'Bogus' Students

Alan Johnson, Home Secretary, announced on February 10 that international students will meet stricter entry criteria in the future. The aim is to prevent bogus students from entering the UK on student visas without an intention to study.

Razaq Raj, a teacher fellow and senior lecturer at Leeds Metropolitan University, welcomed the tightening and believes it will bring more genuine students to the country to study.

However, Qari Asim, Hyde Park mosque Imam, sees the new rules as nothing more than a reaction to show that we are doing something: "I think that what happens is that things carry on and it comes to the end of the road. We tend to do a lot of reactionary actions as we need to be seen to be reacting."

## 'Hubs of Extremism'?

So are universities, as the think tanks are saying, 'hubs of extremism'? Abdulrahman Alhadithi does not think so: "Universities are hubs for

dialogue and discussion. University is a place for young people to exchange views, share ideas and in turn widen their horizons."

Qari Asim works closely with students, however, and is concerned about the extent to which the university experience can determine students' life-long political beliefs and prejudices: "Universities are where people come to grow internally and externally and if these prejudices start at university then the people will suffer these prejudices for the whole of their lives."

While it is true that the Christmas day bomber was indeed a member of his university's ISoc as a student, it is clear that the media has played a part in exaggerating the significance of his time at university with its recent profiling of speakers at ISoc events, and public pressure being placed on students to have 'moderate' speakers.

Razaq Raj believes that the focus on the origins of radicalism in Islam should not be on universities. He said: "Any Muslim student can be a member of an ISoc, we need to instead look at where he went. He went to Yemen and that's where the story should be picked up. I think that it is important that we differentiate between two things. First of all, the Christmas bomber, he left Britain."



"We're the lads from Leeds here! Somebody stood in London, how can they represent us?"



# Universities: centres of

## Speaking out

The associations of extremism with student ISocs has not been helped by radical figures such as Anjum Chaudhary and Abu Hamzam regularly filling column inches and airtime. As a result there is a perceived lack of opposition from moderate leaders and communities. Regardless of their views, however, it is fair to say that at least they have been airing their thoughts.

Abdulrahman Alhadithi condemned Anjam Choudary: "He does not speak for the Islamic Society. In fact, the people whom he represents are a very small minority within the Muslim community."

"The priority for the Muslim community is not to tackle individuals, rather it is to tackle ideologies. Yes it is a slower process, but it definitely works better. Anjam's ideologies can be tackled and prevented from spreading by educating Muslims and members of other faiths on the core principles which Islam was built upon, as well as the teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet (peace be upon him)."

This issue was raised at the anti-fascist protest at last November's anti English Defence League (EDL) march in Leeds city centre. Many anti-EDL protestors were

disappointed that the Muslim community did not attend the demonstration after a text message was circulated by the West Yorkshire Police advising Muslims not to attend for their own welfare.

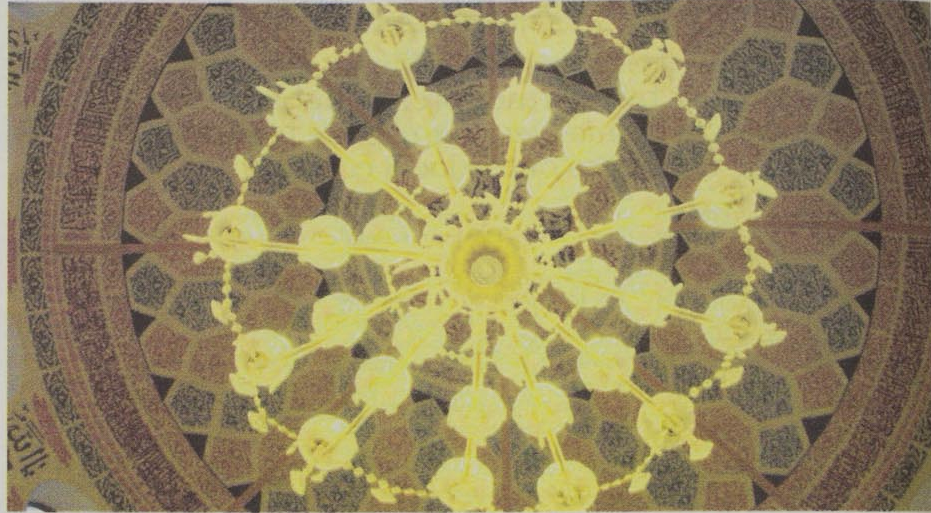
Muslims Parvez Hussain, a youth worker, explained: "I was actually employed on that day by the council to make people aware of it. I am an enforcement officer for the council as well as a youth worker to make all young people aware not to attend those events. People not turning up made the event unsuccessful. I was personally scared."

He was surprised to hear that there had been Asian people as part of the EDL protesting grouping.

## Addressing radicalisation

The question ultimately had to be asked what should be done to deal with radicalisation and whether those who may adopt an unusual reading of the Qur'an would be recognisable.

Razaq Raj became hostile when questioned about whether he was aware of any 'Muslim extremists'. He said: "We have never seen anybody. 99 per cent of these people won't go to Mosque or a Muslim organisation. They might go somewhere else. You should go



to them and ask them those questions because Muslim organisations are nothing to do with it."

Abid Hussain added to this and explained the role that mosque plays in his life: "Coming to the mosque makes me a better person, makes me better in the community. Of 30 years of coming to this mosque I have never come across someone who says they want to blow things up. Yes we all feel angry about what is happening in Afghanistan, in Palestine and

Iraq. We say this face to face with politicians. They are the ones that have jeopardised the lives of millions of people around the world.

"We have nothing to hide. We welcome every single person to come to the mosque. We are one country and we want to defend our country from people who want to destroy it."

## Media misrepresentation


With the majority of people who

have never entered a mosque relying on the media to inform them about the Muslim faith, it is understandable that many have certain preconceptions. A perceived misrepresentation by the media was blamed by everyone that LS interviewed. Leeds has often been the focal point on issues of 'extremism' and terrorism after it was discovered that some of the 7/7 bombers were from the area.


Abdulrahman Alhadithi commented: "News presenters

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# extremism or free speech?

and journalists would use the word 'Islamist' to describe small groups of extremists, who happen to be Muslim. Furthermore, phrases such as 'Muslim fundamentalists' being used to describe extremist groups results in the average British citizen associating extremism with the fundamental principles of Islam. However, what the media does not show is the fact that the fundamental principles of Islam revolve around charity and helping the needy, which totally contradicts the image being portrayed by the media."

Local Muslim organisations and communities have been scrutinised and asked to talk on the topic of extremism. Those that LS spoke to had great concerns and criticisms about the ways in which the media has covered the area (what area???). The group spoken to at the Islamic Centre in Leeds joked that they would talk as long as their comments wouldn't go on CNN, but there was genuine fear of misrepresentation.

Abid Hussain, Vice President of the Islamic Centre and local businessman, said: "A crime is a crime. Whether it is Muslims, Jews or Christians. If a Muslim commits a crime then he is a murderer, he's not a hero. If someone in this country commits a crime then they are labelled as a criminal, not an 'Islamic criminal'."

Is it that the UK media doesn't know where to go to find out the causes of extremism? We assume that because terrorists say they are Muslim, going to the mosque will explain the reasons behind their actions. Terrorists doing things 'in the name of Islam' also leads us there. But have we got our approach completely wrong?

Qari Asim believes that the media has got it wrong. "Terrorism is an action of a minority, but it has unfortunately been highlighted too much in the media – because it makes a good

**We are going to be standing together, shoulder to shoulder**

play. When we speak to the media and say that we want to put someone forward they are not interested in them, they are only interested in someone who will make a good debate. It just makes a good read for them, but we think that if they put a good statement in the papers then people will read that too and it will highlight the issue", he said.

## Fear on both sides

The media focus on the negative is clearly having a great influence. There is fear on both sides as there is a lack of understanding and education about cultural and religious differences. Qari Asim said: "Unless we work together and try to dismantle these barriers then it is going to get worse. If you are on a plane and there is someone next to you who fits the media profile then you will be fearful, even if they are the most genuine person."

"To have a blanket approach to universities is going to do more harm than good. It reinforces people feeling fear towards each other. If you stereotype a group of people at the beginning then throughout their lives those people will be seen in a very bad light. We already see the other political policies with their foreign policy

segregating and isolation certain communities and we as Muslims do want to know those people who commit harm to other human beings. Firstly it is against the religion and secondly it is tarnishing the name of the whole community."

## Community Cohesion

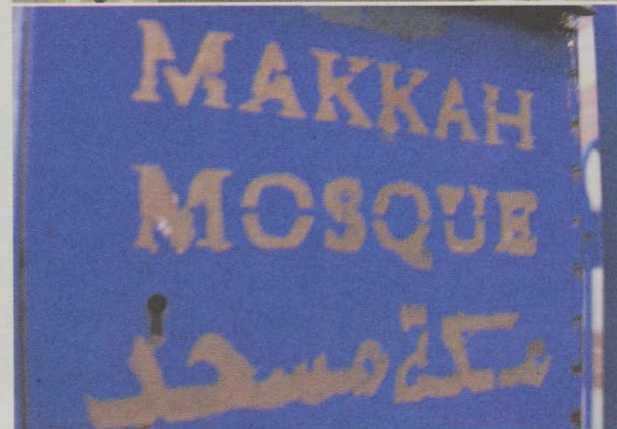
The ultimate cause of friction is the current British foreign policy. Professor Halstead asserts this: "Our foreign policy is damaging social cohesion, because it creates an atmosphere of mutual suspicion rather than the trust which is a prerequisite of living together harmoniously and co-operatively."

"But I wouldn't want to oversimplify the situation and ignore the many complicating factors: if our government had the opportunity and capacity to bring their policies more into line with the wishes of the majority of the electorate, surely they would do so, at least in an election year."

Abid Hussain, sums up the situation perfectly: "We are citizens of Britain. I have been brought up in this country. And if there is anything that is detrimental to our country or neighbourhood then we are going to be standing together, shoulder to shoulder to eradicate that problem, whatever it is."

Photography of Hyde Park mosque artwork by Joey Severn

Additional reporting by Irfan Khan



## What does 'extremism' mean to you?

**Sophia James, LUU Equality and Diversity Officer:**

"Personally, I think 'extremism' is the manifestation of a set of views or beliefs which attack a particular social group or endorse violence."

"In every strata of society extreme views will exist and we should work hard in our communities to combat this. Events such as International Cultural Festival, LGBT History Month and Disabilities Week are aimed at fighting this and it is purely because we

promote multicultural activities that we are one of the best student unions for dealing with diversity. We should be immensely proud of this."

**Imam, Hyde Park Mosque:**

"Firstly I think that extremism or terrorism is unfortunately present in all the major faiths including Islam. But, Islam forbids extremism in any shape or form, even in worship extreme actions are forbidden, the reason being is because they are just led by emotions."

"You might spend a week in

a place of worship and do nothing else and that is just not natural, that is an extreme action that won't last long. Islam encourages people to do those things in the middle ground."

"We have two key aspects of Islam which are rights of God, worshipping God and recognising God and the other is human beings and recognising other human beings, being honest and good to people. Extremism in all forms is condemned."

**Jebar Ahmed, Chair Islamic Society University of Huddersfield:**

"I am unsure of the term used here, 'extremist', this definition seems to change from time to time and context. There is no tangible 'evidence' that suggests that there is growing extremism on the University campus."

The evidence is based on mere speculation. Therefore, what are we to 'deal' with? However, there may be a need to warn people that there 'could' be a threat of such

activists that try to infiltrate the University, just as they could infiltrate a community group, church, temple, school, organisation etc."

**Mark Halstead, Professor of Education, Huddersfield University:**

"Ultimately it depends on what you mean by 'extremism'. If it means not supporting the use of British troops in Afghanistan or Iraq, then maybe there are many extremists, both Muslim and non-Muslim, in the universities."



# Confessions of a Hulkamaniac

'My name is Simon, and I'm a Hulkamaniac.' When he isn't writing for *Leeds Student*, Simon 'Valour' Sandison is a wrestler. Here, *LS Sport* delves into his alternative world of lycra and bodyslams.

It started when I was seven and my family got cable for the first time. Sure I'd heard about the colourful and flamboyant world of what was then WWF, but it didn't prepare me for the allure held by the bright lights and larger than life, near superhuman characters. I was hooked immediately.

Perhaps this isn't too unusual, there'll be many reading this for whom pro-wrestling provides fond childhood memories. There'll even be one or two whose dirty secret pervades into their adult life, still hooked on 'kids stuff'.

My own secret runs deeper than this. At the age of eighteen, never having 'grown out of it' as my parents wished I would, I joined the ranks of the superhuman. Gone was

Simon Sandison, in his place was Simon Valour, an individual able to overcome tremendous physical adversity, to fight in the face of crippling odds, to be driven head first into the ground and still stand and fight on. Simon Valour is an everyman, a good guy who keeps on fighting no matter what, and I love being him - Seven years later and I still find this pseudo-sport irresistible.

It seems bizarre. What pro-wrestling's leading figures see as glitzy and glamorous is cheesy and camp. The acting is universally poor, and storylines are repeatedly below the writing standard of the worst daytime soap opera. Perhaps this is itself the source of its appeal, but I think it's more serious than



just that.

I've often wondered, as I've stood on a host of touchlines reporting on the sporting prowess of this university's finest teams, what their members would think of my own athletic endeavours.

After all, pro-wrestling is derided for being fake. How can my own undertakings possibly compare to the real and pure nature of true sporting competition? Why am I, a grown man of supposed intelligence, studying towards a Masters degree, dressing up in lycra and pretending to fight in small towns and dying holiday resorts across the North of England?

Firstly, the criticism 'fake' must be moderated. The results, for the sake of the wider story, are determined. However, if there's a way to fake being powerbombed through a table bought in B&Q that very afternoon then I wish someone had shown me sooner.

been pushed to their limit, the dominance of a team or individual truly at their athletic pinnacle, the display of physical excellence. Pro-wrestling, if the audience are willing to suspend their disbelief, and its practitioners are willing to take it seriously as it deserves, can take these stories of physical and mental exceptionality and make them its own.

This is why I do what I do. Behind the campness, behind the improbable moves and wilfully incompetent referees is an ironic ability to magnify everything that we love about sport.

Even more than this, the dynamic between good and bad, whilst simplistic, allows the whole charade to be transformed into a morality play. The medium obviously only allows for the most simple storytelling, but if used effectively this can be the most powerful kind.

I could be accused of overthinking a performance that primarily appeals to the under-twelves. But if pro-wrestling ever expects to be taken seriously it first needs to take itself more seriously. It must realise its own potential.

Pro-wrestling might be fake, but this is the best thing about it. I have given a lot to pro-wrestling - including two years ago, my long hair which was cut by a rival during a show - but it has given it back. 'When I was ten my answer to the staple question "what do you want to be when you grew up?" was unhesitatingly "a wrestler", and the fulfilment of that ridiculous desire is one that still makes me smile.

My name is Simon and I'm proud to be a Hulkamaniac.

Simon Sandison

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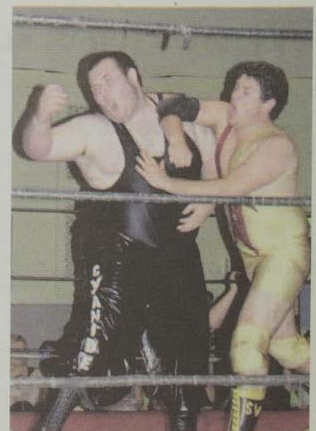
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Gone was Simon Sandison, in his place was Simon Valour, an individual able to overcome tremendous physical adversity

Wrestlers fight an uphill battle. Performing in front of a cynical audience is a difficult task. I have to convince the child in the front row that you could beat up his dad who's telling him how fake it all is. This is obviously impossible to do if he sees you pulling your punches six inches too soon, so we do make very real contact. An audience in a German nightclub, stood right against the ring, will notice if you get kicked in the shoulder but react as though you've been kicked in the face. So you get kicked in the face. This is not fake. The performative aspects are the tools necessary to tell our story.

It is the very falsity of pro-wrestling that leads me to believe in its beauty. Sport, in its true and pure sense of competition, provides us with some truly astonishing stories. The underdog who wins against all of the odds, the pushing of boundaries already thought to have



ROAR: *LS Sport*'s very own Simon "Valour" Sandison (right) exhibits his skill.

Photos: Tony Knox



# LS Sport

COMMENT

## THE WEEK IN NUMBERS

7

Points Portsmouth will have after they go into administration.

0

Number of competent full backs Fabio Capello has to pick from now Wayne Bridge has retired from international football.

## PUNDIT WATCH



"My God, that was boring."

Nick Easter after England's Six Nations win against Italy. He was so bored it seems that he has turned to stone.

## 'The tiny xenophobic man inside me'

Maradona's hand of god; Agüero's hand of god; The hand of Henry; Schalk Burger's eye gouging; Robert Pires's dive against Pompey; Chelsea; 1996 penalty shoot out; 1998 shoot out; Ronaldo 2006; Pedro Mendes' goal that never was; John Hopton's anal fingering; Kathy Cook and East German drug cheats; Holland 1974-8; Ashley Cole; Harold Schumacher; Jerry Flannery; The goal that was in 1966; Mauro Camoranesi being awarded the 14th "fastest soccer player" according to Mini mig 13 on youtube. As much as I'm enjoying writing this (and could do it for seemingly endless number of pulped trees) convoluted list of sporting injustices but bear with me as I unravel this seemingly pointless and self-indulgent paragraph. But this space is to a certain degree for self-indulgence and confessions.

There is no feeling quite as soul destroying as the hollow sensation in the gut of unfulfilled potential for victory, suffered when one loses to what is perceived as foul play or to an

inferior opponent. The only redeeming feature that can be retrieved from the pain of "injustice" is the conversely energizing feeling of bitterness. Bitterness is a fantastic emotion that I revel in. When England lost to Portugal in 2006 the image of Ronaldo's smile at the referee was

seared into my memory and I spent the rest of the day stewing in a xenophobic hatred for anything Portuguese. I had to restrain myself from doing embarrassing things as I passed a Portuguese restaurant later that day.

After the injustice that was Burger's

yellow card for gouging Luke Fitzgerald against the Lions last year my reaction was less extreme but the emotion remained unmistakably one of hatred. The corpulent South African man who I saw standing outside the pub in which I watched the game wearing brown suede loafers smoking the fattest cigar, however, far from endeared me to the Republic of South Africa. It is in these ugliest moments in life that we have the gapping spaces of hurt inside us filled by a tiny xenophobic man and for those hours quite depressingly we enjoy the feeling of hatred. This is the danger of sport, it is not that I am excusing racist football fans far from it many of them prejudice anyway it is rather that we are all susceptible to evil when we are left vulnerable to the emotions involved in injustice. An emotion I am especially intimate with this week.

Ifor Duncan



## Sick note

England's preparation for their game against Ireland on Saturday was thrown into disarray this week with the announcement that winger Mark Cueto has been unexpectedly struck, with a brutal stomach bug. This distressing and unexpected news of a rugby player struck down in his prime has caused many of rugby's greats to come out in the press to condemn the pressures that are on today's sportsmen, caused such a debilitating illness.

Well they would have done, had this been a serious injury but this is not a situation that should be happening to a sportsman in the peak of his physical fitness. But what has actually happened is a professional rugby player has been stopped in his tracks by a tummy ache. Neither is this an isolated incident with many other inhabitants of the sporting world having their big moments destroyed by a ridiculous injury or illness. Cueto is the fifth English rugby player this Six Nations tournament to come down with a stomach bug.

Illness apparently can strike all sports, with regular exercise not providing a block. Back in 2006 Tottenham Hotspurs push for Champions League football was horribly destroyed by apparent food

poisoning when half their team became ill before their game against West Ham. The role Arsene Wenger played and why Tottenham were staying in a hotel before a game in London aside these again are apparently supremely fit beings laid waste to by a little bit of bad food.

Injuries as well and illness can strike even these god like, near immortals. Bill Gramatica the goal kicker for the Arizona Cardinals back in 2001 at least sustained his stupid injury during a game, against the New York Giants, when he scored a field goal in the first half, which was all but meaningless. No one had told Bill this though as he ran off the field in celebration, jumped over the bench and tore his anterior cruciate ligament.

If these superior beings can fall victim to these basic, and sometimes stupid, illnesses and injuries than what hope do the rest of us have? In all honesty it makes me glad that I have forsaken my future in sport, it looks as if it may lead to more sickness than success.

James Green

## The advertising game

Given the current refusal of the local climate to drag itself from the depths of an unusually icy winter as well as the recent end to the recession, one might have expected the British public to be swamping travel agents in their clamor to escape overseas.

Apparently the above mentioned catalysts were insufficient in satisfying the business model at Thomas Cook, however. As a result Jamie Redknapp, alongside his wife Louise, has been appearing on our TV screens with alarming regularity, championing the benefits of a Thomas Cook holiday.

Sporting the kind of two-days-growth stubble more commonly associated with the red carpet, Jamie couples his impossibly good looks with a pseudo-suave voiceover which no doubt had marketing executives back-slapping and high-fiving left right and centre. Meanwhile the rest of us recoil further into our armchairs at the hideousness of the cliché ridden ads.

If you believe the commercial then Jamie and Louise 'fall in love on it' and 'lose weight for it' - sounds like no Thomas Cook holiday you've been on, right? A fair guess is that, for most, the last

vacation courtesy of Thomas Cook was a budget trip to Faliraki, or somewhere similar, which involved a couple of regrettable one-night stands and ashamedly baring a flabby physique so unaccustomed to sunlight that it blistered upon exposure to the foreign climate.

Redknapp isn't the only footballer who's latest performance in a commercial campaign seems a little inappropriate.

Featuring some impressive man boobs and a receding hairline, the 23 year old Wayne Rooney has a biological make-up not dissimilar to that of your dad. Fantastic footballer he may be but Rooney is not a natural sportsman. It seems odd then that Powerade chose to cast him shirtless for their most recent TV promotion.

Little doubt though that, as with Redknapp, the aura of celebrity will serve its purpose and mask the mediocrity of the advert in question. Nonetheless, I'd really much rather footballers stuck exclusively to the appropriate TV slot at 10.30 on a Saturday night.

Michael Glenister



**BUCS round-up:**

After winning the Northern Premier with a 2-1 victory against Loughborough in December, a 9-3 win away in Manchester this week continued the Gryphons Football 1sts' impressive season as they ensured a 12-point lead over their nearest rivals.

Elsewhere, the Rugby Union 1sts took another step closer to promotion.

It wasn't such a good week for Netball 1sts, who managed to avoid relegation despite slumping to their fifth straight defeat.

Despite winning promotion to the Northern Conference 1A the Uni Golf team were knocked out of the Conference Cup by Newcastle 2nds.

The basketball men's 1sts were beaten by Leeds Met 2nds 67-59 in the semi-finals of the Northern Conference Cup. The team had their ten game unbeaten run snapped by Teesside last week losing by just four points 63-59. Leeds Met sit just behind them in the league, and they will play them again on the last day of the season, a game which will probably decide who does win the league.

Meanwhile the Men's Rugby Union 2nds completed their tenth straight win in the league, whitewashing Teesside 1sts 23-0. The team have built a commanding twelve point cushion for themselves at the top of the Northern Conference 2B.

In other results the women's Netball 2nds were knocked out of the Northern Cup at the semi-final round by Hull 1sts. The Cup had been a welcome distraction from the Northern Conference 2B, where the Gryphons are chasing down Leeds Met 3rds in an attempt to win the league.

Leeds Uni Men's Tennis 2nds recorded their first win of the season, having lost their first seven games in the league this year. The 2nds beat Northumbria 7-3, but are still two points behind second bottom Northumbria.

**Wednesday 24th of February****Badminton**

Leeds University Men's 1sts 6-2  
Newcastle 1sts (Play off)  
Leeds University Women's 2-6  
Newcastle 1sts (Play off)

**Basketball**

Leeds University Men's 1sts 59-67 Leeds Met 2nds (Cup)

**Football**

Leeds Gryphons Men's 4ths 0-2  
Teesside 2nds

**Hockey**

Leeds Gryphons Men's 2nds 5-0  
York st John 1sts

**Netball**

Leeds Gryphons Women's 2nds  
34-50 Hull 1sts

**Rugby League**

Leeds Gryphons Men's 1sts 56-6  
Notts Trent 2nds

**Rugby Union**

Leeds Gryphons Men's 2nds 23-0  
Teesside 1sts

**Squash**

Leeds University Men's 1sts 4-1  
York 1sts (Cup)  
Leeds University Women's 1sts  
1-3 Bristol 1sts (Knock Outs)

**Tennis**

Leeds University Men's 2nds 7-3  
Northumbria 1sts

**Volleyball**

Leeds University Women's 1sts  
0-3 Imperial College 1sts

# Stirling success for cross-country runners

**Men's Cross-country**

Matty Sutton

Leeds runners competed in the BUCS championships last Saturday in Stirling. Uni entered three teams, two men's and one women's, all of which attained competitive times over different distances.

The distance to Stirling was a long one, although thankfully for Uni, the rain held off long enough not to affect the course, leaving it in fairly good condition. The races were run over part grassland and part rough tracks peppered with grueling hill sections and stretches of challenging boggy ground.

Leeds runners had been prepared for difficult conditions after competing in the Varsity last week under very difficult circumstances. The event was held between Uni and Leeds Met to choose the teams for the fixture in Sterling, and saw the men victorious by 122 points thanks to a superb performance by Jonathan Brownlee, finished the 6k course in 28.24. Owing to a lack of numbers Leeds women succumbed to Carnegie, allowing the Met to creep into first place.

Tom Bishop led the line for the men's first team, finished 29th out of 228 overall competitors in 36 minutes and 41 seconds over a distance of 11.1 kilometers.

Meanwhile women's captain Mary Ferrier was first back in 16th out of 238 in 24.03 over 6k. Over 7.9k

the men's second team fared less well, with Lauer Andrews recording the fastest time, good

enough for 68th out of 216.

Afterwards Dave Burtle, the men's captain heaped praise on Bishop, who had 'showed the form that has brought him so much success in the Triathlon.' He also singled out Alex Bellow for praise, having 'ran an outstanding race.'

Meanwhile captain Ferrier praised both Sarah Graham, who was running in her sixth and final BUCS race, and Jocelyn Payne, in her first year in the competition. According to her both runners did exceptionally well, and highlighted a 'great team spirit', which would provide a firm foundation to 'build on next year.' Max Sanders, the club captain, spoke in glowing terms of the team's commitment, commenting that their 'training and determination' had 'really paid off at BUCS.'



**LEADING THE PACK:** Leeds Uni put on an impressive display in Stirling

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# the big debate:

Captaincy more than just an armband  
Jamie Presland

With the back pages of every national paper adorned with the mug shot of the recently deposed England captain John Terry for the last two weeks, his replacement as national skipper has quietly been getting on with his football.

Rio Ferdinand may not have gotten the headlines as Rooney fired Manchester United to a famous win in the San Siro, but as a leader there are few better than the 31-year-old from Peckham.

Widely expected to succeed Terry after Steve McClaren's acrimonious reign of England, Ferdinand has finally reached the pinnacle of any footballer's career, as he prepares to lead out his team at Wembley for next month's friendly with Egypt.

Since his missed drugs test and subsequent eight-month ban in 2003, Ferdinand's conduct has been faultless, and there is no one better to wear the armband than the four-time Premier League winner.

Some may say that in the current climate of world sport, where every player should shoulder the responsibility of their team's success or failure, the age of captaincy is dead. Yet if the role of captain is to mean anything, it should signal a player with a desire to win and lead his team to glory.

A captain is the manager's on-field representative, relaying orders and rallying his troops, mentoring up-and-coming youngsters as well as keeping the older heads focused on the job.

In short, the captain is still the focal point of the team: the heart.

However, that is not to say the captain is always the best player. The captaincy of the England cricket team, for test matches and one day internationals, has changed no fewer than five times since Michael Vaughan relinquished the position in 2008, with Alistair Cook the latest incumbent whilst Andrew Strauss is rested.

Kevin Pietersen, undoubtedly England's talisman, suffered an ill-fated three-match reign during his time as skipper, with the less

# Captain fantastic?

With John Terry stripped of the England captaincy following damning allegations about his private life, *LS Sport* asks: **Should sports captains have more responsibility and commitment for their respective teams?**

flamboyant touch of Strauss bringing a degree of stability to the Ashes holders.

Just as captains enjoy the privilege of lifting the trophies during times of success, they must also assume the blame when things go wrong. Former Arsenal captain William Gallas's conduct in 2008, including a tantrum against Birmingham City and ill-chosen interview responses, resulted in him losing the armband to Cesc Fabregas last year.

As a player the rest of the team look up to, Gallas failed to bring the squad together, breeding discontent and unease, something a club captain cannot afford to let happen.

While it may be the case that the role of the captain has diminished somewhat in recent years, it is still an important role in every sport, and something wannabe youngsters can still aspire to.

Being a captain is more than just an armband or a handshake. It is a lifestyle, with many privileges, but just as many responsibilities, something I hope a certain Mr Ferdinand will bear in mind in the build up to South Africa.

Off pitch is off-limits  
Jonathon Brewer

The contrast between Andrew Strauss and John Terry in the public eye could not be greater, yet both have been subject to criticism in recent weeks for off field decisions.

Indeed, Terry could certainly learn much from Strauss' respectable manner away from the cricket pitch. However, despite these disparities, if our sports captains perform on the pitch should we not take a more understanding view of their decisions off it?

For the circus surrounding Terry's off-field shenanigans has exploded out of control. Whilst his actions were undoubtedly very foolish, Terry is a superb football captain and one who is fully committed to the cause.

And besides, how many footballers become national heroes with a 'boring' background? Rio Ferdinand, Wayne Rooney, Ashley Cole, all vital England players yet all of them have some misdemeanours in their past (Cole more than most).

Terry has only himself to blame for the fact he has been stripped of the England captaincy, but if he performs as he has been doing in an England shirt, should we allow off-field misdemeanours to impact upon sport itself?

Andrew Strauss' recent decision not to travel to Bangladesh is a very different issue; indeed the England cricket captaincy is a far more demanding job than that of its football

counterpart.

One of the most stressful positions in sport, for five days Strauss is in complete control of the national side. The decisions are solely those of the captain.

Coupled with the intense pressure the English media put on the team, and the opener is going to need a rest to continue to perform at the top of his game.

Strauss and his team have just emerged from a gruelling 12 months; including an Ashes-winning summer, and a very creditable drawn series in South Africa. For Strauss to play in this rather lowly series against Bangladesh and then through a somewhat hectic summer of cricket will surely damage English chances of success in Australia in ten months time.

For a jaded England captain leading his team out in the opening Ashes test in November can lead to poor decisions - Nasser Hussain's choice to field first in Brisbane in 2002 needs no explanation.

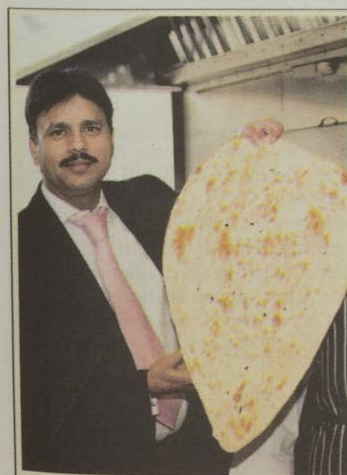
If the ECB regained some control over the packed fixture schedule then Strauss would never need such a rest (that means he will not feature for England again until the end of May). This summer sees six test matches, 14 ODI's and two Twenty20 matches. That is a significant amount of top-level international cricket in 4 months.

Similarly, it will give the England selectors an opportunity to see Michael Carberry in action as a deputy for Strauss. Shane Warne was quick to make the point that should Cook not make runs in the series, England would risk having to drop an England captain.

However, the captaincy may well have the same effect on Cook that it did on Strauss, for Strauss' best form for England has come as captain. How Cook could do with some big scores in his game.

If cricket is to continue its policy of maximum games in a minimum period to satisfy its ever increasing test match venues, then the 'traditionalists' will have to accept that rotation will become part of the game.

Surely Strauss' responsibility is to secure a win in Australia next winter. If he has to sacrifice responsibility over an irrelevant test match to do so, then good for him. For if Strauss should return with the Ashes in January 2011, who will be complaining?



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# Imperial rule over Leeds

## Women's Volleyball

Leeds University 1sts 0 - 3 Imperial College London

Josh Powling

For periods in the match Uni could only watch on, helpless as Imperial displayed the sort of consistency and controlled aggression that the Gryphons themselves sorely lacked.

An hour and a half into the contest it came as no surprise when they succumbed in straight sets 3-0.

Uni have had a decent if not spectacular season in the league, with rivals Leeds Met running off with the division crown, winning all ten of their matches, without dropping a set all year.

Thrashing Durham and Liverpool twice, they shared mid-table below Carnegie with Lancaster and Manchester.

The cup then, was a real opportunity. But it was clear that

Caroline Rendle at the net. The trio handled Imperial's attacking threats without undue problems in the first

It was evident right from the start that captain Fransceca Bottanelli constituted Leeds' main attacking threat, spiking the ball at every possible occasion.

## Imperial's offence was aided by some poor blocking

While the home side strung together a few well-worked points on occasion, some of their play was terrific to watch, more often than not a good passage of play was followed by an atrocious mistake.

Far too often their build-up was not patient enough, while on occasion they were prone to panic and to passing the ball back to the opposition.

Missed spikes started to creep into their game, and the effectiveness of Imperial's own offence was aided by some poor blocking, a theme running through the entire match.

Somehow Leeds stayed within touching distance for most of the first set before Imperial turned on the style, taking it 25-18.

Meanwhile the second could hardly have started worse as they lost the first six points as a result of some chaotic defending.

Maria Chiara Cavalieri was then introduced, setting the ball up for some excellent attacking moves over the next few points.

A Uni recovery led to an 8-7 second set lead, thanks in part to

great defensive work by Noemi Capellino, but once again concentration and belief wavered sufficiently to allow Imperial to stamp their authority on the set.

By this point Leeds had run out of ideas. The team looked confused on court as a real lack of coordination totally derailed them.

After another ten minutes of agony, the visitors took a commanding two set lead, taking it 25-19.

Bottanelli's stern words at the break seemed to galvanise Uni, and they played with an attitude and tempo that that been distinctly lacking in the first two sets.

Some great blocking and excellent spiking from the captain seemed to have given Uni some hope, but not for long as the home side threw a late third set lead away with some tired and sloppy play.

Imperial wrapped up the set and the match with little fuss 25-23, to play UCL in the next round.

For Leeds, the defeat brings a relatively positive season to an unsatisfactory close.

## Volleyball Players WANTED

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FIGHT: Bottanelli tries to get Leeds back in the game

Photo: Sarah Greene

Evident from the start was that Fransceca Bottanelli constituted Leeds' main attacking threat

half the team were not up for the encounter, going through the motions for most of the tie.

Leeds started the first set confidently enough with Tania Morin, Andra Gutoia and

## Gryphons Player of the Month: Danny Mills

Versatile utility defender Danny Mills has been in great form throughout the season for the Men's Hockey 1sts.

Consistent performances in the BUCS Premier North league this season were epitomised a fortnight ago in his dominant display against Edinburgh in the cup competition, where he scored

and was generally allowed to dominate the park.

Most noticeable has been his bullish demeanour in surging forward from defence, often taking on entire opposition midfields before laying off to his team mates.

The confident ball player is expected to play a central role in linking defence with attack in

the coming weeks as the team try to progress in the BUCS cup.

With his contribution, the team achieved 3rd place in the Premier North league, although sadly a loss against Bath in the BUCS cup ended their dreams of a trophy this season.



# Routledge pommels opposition as Uni claim bronze

## Gymnastics

Samuel Routledge

Leeds University sent both a men's and women's team to this year's annual BUCS Gymnastic Championships, a two-day event held at Rushmoor Gymnastics Centre in Aldershot.

The event was a spectacle for top-class gymnastics with the 2010 New Delhi Commonwealth Games approaching on the horizon.

For the third successive year the men's team, consisting of Michele Bruni, Sam Routledge, Devin Reilly, Tom Reid and Sam Haigh, took home a bronze medal.

They finished third of six men's teams, behind Loughborough and Leeds Met, who finished first and second respectively in both sexes' competitions.

All the team contributed solid performances, but it was Reilly's floor routine, Reid on the rings and Routledge's vault that stood out.

In the grade 2 competition Routledge gained 2nd place in the all-round individual competition taking the silver behind Richard Adams of Leeds Met and ahead of

Craig Woodhams of Loughborough.

The Uni gymnast also gained a gold medal for his pommel horse routine and put in a solid performance to gain bronze on the

Meanwhile Bruni took part in the Elite competition, where some of the nations best talent was on show

rings.

Meanwhile Bruni took part in the Elite competition, where some of the nation's best talent was on show, finishing in 9th place and producing some quality routines in the process.



BEAMING: Uni women put in a strong performance to finish 9th

Fourteen universities entered teams into the women's competition, with the standard higher than ever. Uni's women's team comprised of Amy Benville, Clare Hague, Laura MacDonald, Sylvia Claypole and Lucy Fortescue.

They began their challenge on the Beam with Claypole performing a clean routine apart from a minor fault on dismount.

Benville then looked comfortable on the Floor, winning over the spectators with an original and exhilarating music and choreography combined to produce a fantastic performance.

The third rotation took Leeds to the Vault where some tidy work added valuable points to the team's total.

Finally the women rounded off their performance on the

Asymmetric Bars, with Hague rounding off the competition with an excellent routine.

This left Uni a commendable 9th place, not a bad result considering the team's relative inexperience.

Overall the University gymnastics team produced some very solid performance, with several male gymnasts taking home medals.

The women's team lacked the necessary experience to compete with some of the top universities, but perhaps next year's championships will see better results.

## Competitor of the Contest

Sam Routledge

2nd place in the all round individual competition, including a gold medal on the pommel horse

# Gryphons sink their local rivals in oarsome competition

## Gryphons



## Rowing

Dez Anderson

The BUCS Championship and Beginners Head were held in Peterborough last weekend, with the Leeds University Boating Club represented in a number of categories.

Challenging weather conditions and stiff competition made for an exciting but difficult weekend in which Leeds enjoyed some key successes.

The Novice event offered the club's greatest results of the day, with both teams finishing in good times; the men coming 15th of 41 in the beginner VIIIs to see off main rivals Manchester and Newcastle in the opening event.

Not to be outdone, the Novice Women put forward an excellent display beating favourites Durham and Bristol, along with local rivals York and Manchester to finish 9th out of 25.

With the regatta season fast approaching, these results serve as an excellent implication for potential success in both teams.

By Sunday, conditions had worsened to the extent that early races took place in freezing and blizzard-like conditions.

This proved problematic for the Seniors competing in the Champ VIII, Quads and Coxed 4 events.

The Senior men earned the club a BUCS point with their 8th place finish and the Senior Women

These results serve as an excellent indication for potential success for both teams in the future

were delighted to finish 9th in the Champ VIIIs, seeing of Manchester and Nottingham amongst others.

Ultimately club captain Dez Anderson was pleased with the weekend's results and is confident of further success leading up to the Women's and Men's Head of the River Races in London later in March.

Captain Dez Anderson said after the game "LUUBC definitely made its presence known across the board over the BUCS Head weekend, putting in one of the biggest entries out of any club."

"University rowing as a sport is largely dominated by a select few universities who receive funding from the national development program.

"However, our novice squads displayed that money is not the be all and end all, beating a lot of crews from heavily funded institutions.

"Those of us now coming to

the end of our time at the Club have been very impressed by the energy and spirit our new novice rowers have been putting in thus far, and are looking forward to what they will do in the second half of the year.

"We like to think we develop the soft skills of rowing as well as the hard, and try to foster an atmosphere of meritocracy and healthy competition, whilst still valuing our sociability and cohesion."

## Class of the Match

Novice

Produced the best results of the tournament with the men coming 15th and the women 9th





## Unbeaten Leeds surge into final

Convincing performance is eleventh straight win in all competitions

### Men's Squash

Leeds Uni 1sts 4-1 York

Simon Sandison

Leeds Men's Squash 1sts continued an impressive season at the Gryphon Sports centre this Wednesday, beating York to secure a place in the BUCS Northern Cup Final later this semester.

The team continued their unbeaten run against a York team for whom capitulation in the early matches concealed a determination that later threatened to upset the Leeds team.

Leeds narrowly beat Wednesday's opponents in a league match earlier in the year. The score line on that occasion was 3-2 so a similarly balanced repeat was expected. But victory in the final against Northumbria would cap off a successful season that has already gone a long way towards atoning for last year's relegation.

### Route to the final

Men's Northern Conference cup

R1- Leeds Uni 3-0 Huddersfield 2nds

R2- Leeds Uni 3-0 Northumbria 2nds

QF- Leeds Uni 5-0 Sheffield 1sts

SF- Leeds Uni 4-1 York 1sts

By the time Karim Malik stepped onto court the tie was over and his match a dead rubber. His 3-1 victory was comfortable, but it may well have proven more critical, as a resurgent York were inspired by a hard-fought win in the third match.

Victory in the first two of the five matches in the tie inevitably led to suspicions of inequality and the promise of a whitewash. Former University of Leeds student Tom

Lee, however, fought hard to beat Dan Gray by three sets to two, keeping the tie alive and saving his new team too many blushes. Gray looked as though he would edge the final set, and appeared to have more control and consistent shot play. Understandably tired though, he was he lost four match points before succumbing to a strong finish from Lee.

## A resurgent York were inspired by a hard-fought win in the third match

Both Elliot Creek and his captain Ric Hollingberry won their matches without dropping a set, propelling Leeds to an early 2-0 lead. Creek in particular was well worth such a convincing victory. First on court, his control of the match was excellent, he dominated the Tee and rattled his opponent with several fine shots played along the court wall.

Hollingberry performed equally impressively, completing his responsibilities in little more than 15 minutes playing aggressively against albeit versus poor opposition.

First year Rory Brickell, perhaps having anticipated an easier time, lost his first set, and had to come from behind in all of the remaining three sets in order to seal victory for the home side. His play was largely

elegant and adventurous, but a reliance on using the back wall of the court to escape trouble, as well as a seeming blind spot in the bottom right corner of the court allowed York to maintain pressure.

Brickell, however, showed a fighting spirit to go alongside his good technique and his three victories of 12-10, 11-8, 12-10 reveal a remarkable ability to win under pressure.

Club captain Hollingberry was left a little disappointed however, as elsewhere the Women's 1st team lost their BUCS Cup quarter-final 3-1 match against a strong visiting team from the University of Bristol.

Sarah Bowles had appeared to set the tone with a display of some character, coming from 2-1 behind to win 3-2 despite a lack of regular match play.

Bristol ultimately proved too strong, and although Leeds' Women pushed all the way - there was no match in which they did not look like they could have won - they were ultimately unable to ever assert control over the tie.

An afternoon of mixed success, however, should not obscure what has been a highly successful campaign for both branches of the university's squash team. The Women's 1st team remains in the BUCS Premier league, and promotion is almost guaranteed for the Men, and a trophy may yet join this in the season's striking achievements.

### Player of the Match Elliot Creek

A comfortable and commanding performance.



SMASH: Imperial attempt to block a Uni shot

Photo: Sarah Greene

## Cup dream spiked

If the Imperial College London volleyball team felt that the long trip up the M1 was well worth it, some members of the Leeds team might have felt the five-minute walk to the Gryphons Sports Centre was rather a waste of time.

The best-of-five-sets encounter was a thoroughly frustrating one for the home side. It also marked a sad end to the season, with Leeds crashing out of the BUCS National Knockouts with barely a whimper.

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