



● In *The Middle* take a look at the career of Levon Vincent and his long anticipated debut LP. *ITM* p.9



● *Better Call Saul* is the *Breaking Bad* spin-off we've been waiting for. Hear our thoughts on start of the series. *ITM* p.18

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Samsung's new smart TV causes a stir



## Uni pumps cash into HSBC and BP

● HSBC, oil, military suppliers amongst controversial investments

**Charlotte Mason**  
News Editor

The University has purchased over £200,000 in shares in HSBC as part of a multi-million pound investment portfolio which includes several controversial businesses.

A Freedom of Information Request revealed that the University is a stakeholder in oil producers, a military equipment provider and companies at the centre of tax avoidance claims.

Figures obtained by The Gryphon from the end of July reveal the University's total £62.8 million investment in a plethora of international businesses, including £1.8 million in major banks.

The University has also invested £243,581 in Ultra Electronics, an electronics manufacturer which sells military equipment including weapon-ejection

systems for aircraft, rifle-mounted gunshot detectors and fire-control systems.

Other investments include the Daily Mail, Tesco and Vodafone, which came under fire for paying zero corporation tax in Britain in 2011.

The University also holds shares of £627,328 in BP, and has invested in the company since at least December 2000. The oil giant has been held responsible for several environmental disasters, and currently faces a maximum \$13.7 billion fine for gross negligence after an exploding oil refinery killed eleven people and millions of barrels of oil leaked into the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. The company has also been found guilty of committing fraud, environmental crimes and failing to correct safety hazards in a separate oil explosion in Texas in 2005.

A spokesperson for BP told this newspaper, 'Leeds used to be one of our

core universities until a couple of years ago. Leeds also received a share of the scholarship pot that all core universities of that era received'.

He added, 'I believe we're still funding a couple of masters degrees'.

Speaking to *The Gryphon*, a first-year Criminology student explained, 'Morally, I believe it's wrong that the University is investing money into a company that has caused such environmental damage in the past. A University should be promoting the importance of protecting the environment and something like this sends out the wrong message to students'.

A second-year Politics undergraduate said, 'As a student who pays to attend this university, I'm both shocked and disappointed that we've been involved with a number of highly immoral companies'.

This newspaper reported last year that BP donated over £700,000 to the University



20 02 15

## Weather

|          | HI     | LO   |
|----------|--------|------|
| Friday   | cloudy | 7 1  |
| Saturday | cloudy | 7 -1 |
| Sunday   | rainy  | 9 3  |

## Quote of the Week

My life is so much easier now that this issue is in the open. For me one brave step, one very small brave step can change completely the shape of your life.

-Ant Smith

The organiser of the first 'Small Penis Party' wants people to celebrate wee willies and tiny todgers.

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# Editor's Letter

## Free speech is at a cost

Most students at Leeds wouldn't expect to find an ally in Peter Osborne. The Telegraph's chief political correspondent, Osborne is a man who prides himself on staunch Conservative politics with a firm, traditionalist agenda. After this week's events, Osborne has transformed himself into one of the bravest journalists in the UK, leaving his treasured job at the national institution in order to bring The Telegraph's recent editorial decisions into public scrutiny.

Osborne's tract, published on Open Democracy on Tuesday, brought to light one effervescent point of contention: the freedom of the press. In the UK, we tend to associate press censorship with far and distant lands that violate a series of UN human rights codes. We hear names like Raif Badawi and Kenji Goto subject to barbaric brutality just because they dared to write about what they think. Although we are fortunately not direct to such a direct attack, the same spectre haunts the media: what is the real price of editorial freedom?

In the UK, Osborne's article notes that we are subject to a far more seething sickness, one in which the fiscal demands of advertising conflict with the editorial ethos of a publication. In The Telegraph's case, it allowed itself to be bullied by the mogul that is HSBC, and prevented ousting the company's schemes of corruption in favour of maintaining an advertising deal in order to keep printing. Soft article after soft article was published about the company, despite the other nationals opting to run the scandal as their leading story. 'The consequences of The Telegraph's recent soft coverage of HSBC may have been profound', Osborne writes. That sentiment is now set to remain as a wistful subjunctive, belonging more to a work of fiction than a national newspaper.

If national newspapers are subject to such hardship, it is worth turning your attention to what is happening with your own student publication. Where does the money come from to sustain us? What are the qualifications

for it to be obtained? What price does your own newspaper have to pay in order to remain in print? Sadly, like The Telegraph, these questions are met with fraught, disconcerting answers.

Jasmine Andersson  
Editor-in-chief

### Continued from pg.1

Charlotte Mason  
News Editor

between 2009 and 2012. It is not clear whether the donations have continued. A spokesperson for LUU Amnesty International explained, 'The University shouldn't be investing in multinationals, regardless of size or scope. It compromises any ethical or moral position that the University or the Union takes on national or international affairs. Companies and industries that cannot be seen to operate cleanly and without social damage should be reconsidered for investment'. Union Education Officer Tom Dixon said, 'It's a shame to see that students' money is going towards companies which are obviously ethically unsound. I think it's indicative of the sector that universities have to invest in unethical firms because the

as a priority'. A University statement read, 'The University and its advisers have a duty to our students, staff and stakeholders to maintain the financial health of the institution; one of the ways in which we do this is by investing through the Leeds University Endowment Fund. Our investments are informed by the University's Policy of Socially Responsible Investment, which is overseen by the University Council. The Policy states that the Fund expects its investment managers to take account of social, environmental and ethical considerations when selecting investments'. The Gryphon contacted HSBC and Ultra Electronics but they were unable to comment.  
Charlotte Mason

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## Leeds Beckett Isoc holds 'hijab for a day' campaign



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Emily Willson

Leeds Beckett Islamic Society has launched a campaign to challenge the stereotypes of Muslim women during their annual Discover Islam Week. The 'Hijabi for a Day' event aimed to counter the negative portrayal of the headscarf in the media with the intention of teaching the public that the hijab is a religious symbol of modesty and not of oppression.

The society held a stall in the Student Union to offer students the opportunity to experience wearing it. The stall reported a remarkable success with students of all cultural backgrounds trying the hijab for the first time. Some non-Muslim students chose to fully cover their hair for a full day.

One student said,

'I feel the event really helped me learn more about the Islamic culture. I'd tried on a hijab a few times at a friend's house, but it was the first time I've worn one all day.'

Zain Jawaid, a representative of Leeds Beckett Isoc explained,

'The society is pleased that this event has received such great responses. We only hope to positively change the opinions of people regarding the teachings of Islam by showing and explaining our way of life.'

The event comes after 'World Hijab Day' on February 1st, which encouraged women around the world to try wearing a Hijab to increase religious tolerance.

## Take a book at this



● This week's photo shows some of the 400,000 books across 15km of shelving at the Edward Boyle library. The Grade-II listed building will undergo a £16m refurbishment next year. Image: Will Stanley

## Number of graduate job opportunities at 10-year high

Michelle Ward

Students may worry about the tough jobs market, but the number of graduate opportunities is at a ten-year high according to new research.

Nearly forty-five percent of employers reported unfilled graduate vacancies last year, with over a thousand empty positions across the UK.

A survey by the Association of Graduate Recruiters found that 1,422 graduate vacancies were left over in 2014.

It is reported that the number of graduate vacancies is expected to rise by 12% this year.

Stephen Isherwood, Chief Executive of the AGR said, 'Graduate vacancies continue to grow year on year and graduates are still more likely to be employed than non-graduates. But tensions persist. Employers would have recruited more graduates, over 1,400 more, if they could have found enough candidates with the right mix of skills'.

The IT & Telecommunications sector was worst hit by the shortfall, with 12% of graduate roles left empty.

The shortfall has been put down to

a lack of skills, work experience and a higher than expected number of candidates turning job offers down.

An English Language and Literature graduate said, 'I gained access to a lot of internal vacancies in organisations where I had undertaken work placements. It should be compulsory for every student to visit the careers centre at least once a year because it's so supportive and helpful'.

A University spokesperson told *The Gryphon*, 'Even some of the bigger graduate recruiters have unfilled graduate vacancies at the end of their main recruitment period and more often than not, these are regional vacancies and not London-based. Once students have graduated, they can still use the Careers Centre to access vacancies, advice and guidance'.

Leeds scored 75% in the latest graduate prospects survey, counting students going into graduate jobs of further study within six months.

Sectors with the highest predicted growth in graduate vacancies this year are IT & Telecommunications, the public sector, construction and engineering.

Have your say... **“”**

We asked students how they felt about entering the graduate jobs market:

'I am optimistic about finding a job, but I am not so optimistic about finding one before I finish University. As long as you put in the effort, then you should be successful'

**Andrew, third-year Economics**

'All you hear in the media is how difficult it is for young people to find a job, which worries me'

**Jack, second-year History and Politics**

'There is no longer pressure to find a job immediately, which allows for greater freedom in the kind of work I would like to do. It's strangely empowering'

**Sam, MA, Cinema and Photography**



# Squatters protesting Uni land sell-off evicted after 6 days



Lucy Connolly

Protesters occupied a decommissioned Leeds University research site last week in an attempt to open up the space for the local community.

The organisation, known as Leeds

Community Project, legally occupied 6 Grosvenor Mount last Friday, finally being evicted late on the following Thursday. The site, which occupies one acre of land, contains seven glasshouses and is home to a range of established plants, some of which are rare.

6 Grosvenor Mount is currently owned

by the University but new plans will allow the land to be sold to a private investor with the intention of building new houses there.

Leeds Community Project opposes this sale and wishes to make efficient use of the land that will benefit the local community.

The protesters describe themselves as 'a group of people who came together to create a community of resistance by reclaiming a site of unused land in Leeds'.

When speaking to *The Gryphon*, the protesters said,

'We would like this to respond to the needs of the community and to be a safe place by being inclusive, self-aware, respectful and strongly rejecting any sort of discrimination'.

The protest was open to the public, with Leeds Community Project welcoming people to join them in reclaiming Grosvenor Mount.

A spokesperson for the University confirmed that it was seeking to regain possession of property and land at 6 Grosvenor Mount before they managed to do so.

# LUU lines blurred over song ban

Charlotte Mason  
News Editor

The Union has sparked controversy for playing *Blurred Lines*, despite claims that the song had been banned in 2013.

It was reported that the number-one hit was removed from playlists amid concerns that its lyrics promoted rape.

Speaking to *The Gryphon* at the time, former Union Affairs Officer Alice Smart said, 'I'm proud that we've taken the decision to stop playing *'Blurred Lines'* in our bars and clubs because the song undermines real and dangerous issues around consent'.

However, students have told this newspaper that they heard the song playing in *Essentials* and *Fruity* in two separate incidents within the past fortnight.

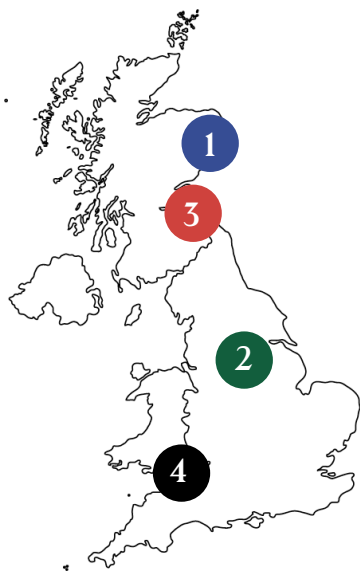
A fourth-year Computer Science student explained, 'I was taken aback to hear it in the Union building because I thought we had decided to ban it. The song makes many people feel uncomfortable and it's a shame that a commitment like this wasn't being upheld'.

A first-year Art and Design student said, 'I think it's a vile song which goes against the morals that a university union should stand for. To receive praise and recognition for being one of the universities to ban it, when in fact they haven't, is pretty shameful'.

However, Union Affairs Officer Bradley Escorcio told *The Gryphon*, '*Blurred Lines* was never banned from The Union. We took the decision to remove it from some of our daytime playlists; however students, radio stations and DJs are still permitted to play the song at their own at their own discretion. Any student wishing to implement policy for the Union not to play *Blurred Lines* can do so by submitting an idea to our Forums'.

Cassie Sivapalan, a member of LUU FemSoc, said, 'When *Blurred Lines* was initially requested to be removed from the playlist, it was done because it's a misogynistic song. If people want to play it now, that's fine, but it does show how embarrassingly out of the touch the Union is'.

## Campus Watch



### 1 Aberdeen

#### Robert Gordon University bans mental illness masks

Aberdeen based Robert Gordon University has banned the use of silicone masks to help train student nurses in the treatment of mental health patients. Patient support groups expressed outrage at the use of masks, which they claim contributed to the 'horror' stereotype of people with mental health issues. RGU has now confirmed they wouldn't be using the masks in future mental health training.

Emily Willson

### 3 St Andrews

#### Apology after accidental 'congratulations' email

St. Andrews University has been forced to apologise to 750 applicants after they were sent an email incorrectly informing them that they had been awarded a place. The University blamed a 'human error compounded by technology' for the blunder and told candidates that their applications are still being considered. Students have taken to Twitter to express their frustration.

Faye Lawrence

### 2 Sheffield

#### Union petition gets free degrees for asylum seekers

Sheffield University has agreed to fund degrees for two local asylum seekers every year after an online petition by the Students' Union attracted over 500 signatures. The University will award the undergraduate scholarships in a bid to promote 'equal access' to higher education. The campaign reported that asylum seekers are charged international fees to enter university but are refused access to student loans.

Greg Whitaker

### 4 Cardiff

#### Researchers develop 'smart' CCTV

Cardiff University researchers have developed CCTV cameras to 'detect' street fights before trouble occurs. The 'smart' cameras will notify police and guide them to the scene of a potential incident. One of the researchers, Professor Simon Moore said, 'Developing smart camera technology to pinpoint violence is a cost effective way of helping police do their jobs'.

Emily Willson





## Eternal flame? Valentine's day romance goes up in smoke on Queen's Road

Greg Whitaker  
Online News Editor

Fire fighters and police officers were called to the scene of house fire in Hyde Park on Saturday Night as a Valentine's Day date nearly ended in disaster.

The fire, which was reported at around 11.00pm, broke out in an upstairs bedroom at 62 Queens Road in Hyde Park.

One tenant at the scene of the fire told a photographer working for *The Gryphon*: "Two of us had just got home and decided to light a few candles in my room, we then went downstairs for cheesecake. After a while we heard my housemate who was upstairs yelling 'fire!'. The blaze happened really quickly by which point there was nothing we could do. We rang 999 and the fire service came."

It is believed that the blaze started

when an unattended candle set fire to a bunch of roses which had been brought home by the couple. Worryingly, despite the fire rapidly ripping through the small bedroom, at no point during the incident did the house's fire alarm sound.

A spokeswoman for the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service said: "Luckily, the fire itself was relatively small and confined to just one upstairs bedroom."

"It remained well under control and was extinguished quickly. The Police are always called out with us as a matter of precaution, luckily they were not needed at this incident as no one was trapped inside the house."

Despite the fire only badly damaging one bedroom, all housemates have had to move out of the property until the full extent of the fire damage has been properly assessed.



## Union forum rejects wage levelling

Elli Pugh

An idea which called for all Union staff to be paid the same minimum wage has been rejected at the Better Union Forum.

Leeds University student Andru Lawson proposed last month that members of staff who work in the Union shop, bars and venues should be paid the same minimum wage of £6.50. The legal minimum wage for anyone under 21 is £5.13.

In his proposal, Mr Lawson said

that he felt the Union 'should pay all staff who do equivalent jobs equally, regardless of their age'. Mr Lawson furthered his point by stressing that while paying a lower minimum wage is legal, 'it is not fair to those who get paid less, especially when many of the staff are students who already live on a tight budget.'

Ben Connolly, a Maths student, told *The Gryphon* that he supported Mr Lawson's proposal. "Surely this should be classed as age discrimination and would be rejected if it was in almost any other scenario, such as race or gender".

Fine Art student, Kristina Smirnoffa,

however said 'just because you're a student doesn't mean you should be treated differently from everyone else in the country. This would just encourage the intolerance to 'the student stereotype'.

Union Affairs Officer Bradley Escorcio said,

'Students on the panel deliberated arguments on both sides of the debate but there was consensus that this should not be a priority for the Union as the resources could be better spent to benefit a wider range of students.'



# Your mental health experiences



Attending university with a mental health condition has been an uphill struggle for me. I've battled clinical depression and anxiety for six years, and hoped when I got to university there would be more support and understanding than I had previously. This simply wasn't the case. During my time at Leeds, I've faced tutors who simply didn't care about my difficulties, having received emails threatening me with disciplinary hearings or expulsion for missed classes. I've had to wait two weeks to see someone about my mental health at times when the situation was urgent, and even some of the people I've lived with turned out to be incredibly ignorant and outright cruel when I plucked up the courage to explain my illness. Most incredibly, I've been told more times than I can count to 'pull myself together'. It feels like a constant battle to justify my very presence at university and to explain my diagnosis to everyone I come into contact with,

which is difficult since depression is still regarded with a huge social stigma. A few members of staff have helped me hugely but this has usually happened only after I've reached breaking point. I don't feel that the University does enough to support students with mental health conditions, and I think tutors and lecturers in particular should be required to undertake training to help them better understand the needs of students with these problems. Mental health problems are unseen but incredibly debilitating, even if you became as good at hiding them as I have. Every day is a battle against my own mind and the added pressure of having to face an interrogation every time I step into a classroom has made my time at university far more difficult than I ever could have imagined.

**Hannah Woodhead**

If you met me you'd probably think that I was a pretty average student. Fairly popular, I get decent grades; I've even got a girlfriend. What you wouldn't know though is that I was diagnosed with anxiety and depression seven years ago. In truth, this still makes me an average student.

Every day, my mind is a battlefield. One side is stuck on repeat, anxieties about issues great and small whirl around my brain, crashing into each other with each collision creating a tension and pressure that at times is unbearable. I can't get out and I'm trapped inside myself.

The other side is the 'me' most people know. Or at least think that they do. Since becoming aware of my illness I have become very good at acting; at a party, in a seminar, in the pub or just sitting with family or friends I can appear calm and relaxed, internally however, I have this bizarre sensation that I am both lethargic and manic. I must do something, but I can't do

anything. I'm in panic mode; I seek refuge from the cause – although the cause is biological). I desperately seek a 'safe-zone'. Usually, this is safe-zone is my bed.

I wanted to write this to share my story, share my experiences of what mental health means to me. It is different for every sufferer. Some live in a constant 'down'; some have periods of incredible lows followed by manic highs. Others a compulsive need to tidy, clean and seek order in every part of their life, and for some it can lead to self-abuse. To many the behaviour of sufferers can seem odd, rude and profoundly irrational. I hope this piece provides a small insight. I don't seek to preach, all I ask is that if you need help, you want somebody to talk to then there is help out there. Your GP can help, or like me, you can make use of the anonymous Student Counselling Centre on Campus.

**Anonymous**

## The Digest

### Islamic State conflict escalates further following Egyptian deaths



Egypt has bombed Islamic State militants in Libya after the release of a video showing the public beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians earlier this month.

Jets targeted training camps and weapons stores in the eastern city of Derna on Monday, with dozens killed according to the Libyan military. The attacks come as an international

coalition tackles the extremist group in Iraq and Syria.

Italy has since pledged to intervene in the conflict in a bid to de-arm and rebuild its former colony, amid fears of IS's growing presence in North Africa. Libya has seen internal factional fighting since Colonel Gaddafi was ousted in the uprising in 2011.

**Danny Anderson**

### Work for benefits, Tories propose

Young people who are not in work, education or training for six months should have to perform community service to receive benefits, the Conservative party have proposed. If re-elected, the Prime Minister said that he expected 50,000 18-21 year olds to commit to work once a week, alongside a obligatory 10 hours of job searching. Labour has pledged a compulsory jobs guarantee for the young and unemployed.

The Conservatives have sought to overhaul the benefits system since entering office in 2010 and last week revealed plans to reduce benefits for the obese and alcoholics.

**Hugh Baillie-Lane**

### Copenhagen marks terror deaths

Tens of thousands of Danes have held a vigil in memory of two men killed in a terrorist attack in Copenhagen last weekend.

A gunman was killed by police after twin shootings in which he opened fire during a free speech debate in a café and later in a synagogue. Five people were also injured in the attacks.

Twenty-two-year-old Omar El-Husseini was known to authorities for his involvement in radical Islam.

The Danish Prime Minister called for national unity, saying, 'We know that there are fanatics who hold others' right to live in contempt'.

Reports suggest the attacks were inspired by the Charlie Hebdo massacre in Paris early this year.

**Lucy Connolly**

### Lance Armstrong hit with massive damages bill

Lance Armstrong must pay a record \$10 million in damages to an insurance company after it was ruled he lied about using performance-enhancing drugs. The cyclist had received a \$7.5m award from SCA Promotions following his seven Tour de France victories in 2006, and denied allegations of cheating at the time.

The company sued Armstrong after he admitted doping in a television interview with Oprah Winfrey in 2013.

He had previously taken legal action against SCA Promotions after they refused to pay out a bonus.

The firm branded Armstrong's use of performance-enhancing drugs 'an unparalleled pageant of international perjury, fraud and conspiracy'. Armstrong has been accused of pursuing the 'most sophisticated, professionalised and successful doping programme' in sport history.

**Elli Pugh**





# Would you consider voting UKIP? Leeds Central candidate Luke Senior speaks to *The Gryphon*



**Jake of Hookem**  
News Editor

**Luke Senior is the UKIP parliamentary Candidate for Leeds Central, which covers the University and Hyde Park area. He is a former builder, and now a full-time mortgage broker. Luke joined the party when he grew disillusioned with the mainstream political parties after suffering redundancies during the global economic crisis.**

**What do you feel sets you apart from the other parties? What sets you apart from Hilary Benn?**

I think one of our stand-out qualities is that, especially locally, our candidates are ordinary working people. We all have full-time jobs and families, whereas you tend to find that a lot of incumbent MPs, Hilary Benn in particular, are part of a political dynasty. With regards to other parties like the Conservatives, they tend to have attended Oxford and Cambridge and be from privileged backgrounds, so it's almost a different world to where the likes of myself came from really.

**What do you and your party offer that specifically caters to students?**

One thing that would form part of our policy is that students studying core subjects like mathematics, sciences and such, would receive a state-funded scholarship. Under this, if the graduate remained in the country and paid tax for five years, the government would pay for their tuition.

**Do you think education should be state-provided or privately funded?**

I suppose a combination of both really. What I'd like to see is a state-provided core education service, but I think there is room for scholarships. When I left school and got my first job, my employer paid for my studies at Leeds College of

Building and then at Leeds Metropolitan University as well. That way, learning on the job while studying at university, I was getting skills and being paid. Having experienced it I think that it's a key element of a very successful education policy.

**What is your stance on university, do you think too many people go, or should everyone have the opportunity to get a degree?**

I'm all for university, but one thing I would like to see is the scrapping of the target. When I left school in 2002 the careers officers were asking everyone regularly "what do you want to do at university?", and this ranged from set one 'A' students, to people lower down. I think everyone should have the right to go to university if they want to, but I think what should be emphasised is the right pathway for each individual person. I think we should follow a German example, where apprenticeships are championed and I think you'd find that a lot of people who leave school and get an apprenticeship can be earning the same kind of money as a graduate would be by the time they reach their mid-20's.

**If there was to be an in-out referendum on the EU that failed, do you think UKIP would remain as popular as they are now?**

I think they would, yes. The party has moved on a lot, five or six years ago it would have been composed of people who saw leaving the EU as their primary focus for getting into politics. However, now I don't think leaving the EU is our main and only focus, as when we're talking to younger people or people who've not voted before, what they actually want is to be represented by someone they can relate to, and we offer that.

**Do you feel UKIP's immigration policy would help graduates find employment?**

I suppose there's a two part answer to that. In terms of a points-based system we would like to encourage fairness to all immigrants, including those from the EU. As part of my work as a mortgage broker I regularly see Indian clients, especially software engineers, who find it difficult to get into this country despite having skills that we need. Whereas, people from European countries are free to just move here as and when they wish. If there is less competition in the job market as a result of a reduction in immigration, then I'm sure that it would be easier for graduates to find employment, yes.

**What is your opinion on Amjad Bashir's defection to the Tories? Do you think he has gone in the wrong direction?**

I suppose you'd have to ask him that really. I can't comment on it too much now that it's a police matter, but as the statement that Nigel Farage released a few weeks ago said, there were some suspicions as to his activities, he'd been investigated and ultimately suspended. He then took the decision to move to the Conservatives, and all of this information has now been passed to the police.

**Did you watch the UKIP 100 days programme? What did you make of it? I didn't, no, I was working until late in the evening so I missed it but I have heard it was badly biased.**

**Do you personally feel that UKIP will make serious gains in May?**

I think that's a difficult question. In terms of the actual number of seats, there are some expectations that are wildly optimistic, saying that UKIP can win 128. That would obviously be a great result, but I think being more realistic, in the region of 10-20 would be considered very positive. I think what we will find, in a lot of the Labour-held seats where the main opposition used to be provided by the Conservatives and the Liberal

Democrats, we will take over as the main opposition. One thing that we've found here in Leeds Central is that, I've lived here my entire life and no one has ever really taken Labour on before, even when they've had some decent candidates. Ultimately the opposition have always come up far short, and that applies elsewhere in Leeds as well, and I feel we will change that.

**What would you say to people who call UKIP a racist party?**

Come to one of our branch meetings. That's the first thing I'd like to say. We've got three Polish members who come to meetings regularly, one of the candidates who's going to be standing in one of the city wards is from Tanzania, has been a member for about 6 months and he's keen. A lot of people mistake wanting controlled immigration policy with racism, and what I always say is look at Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, they've all got immigration policies and the only countries that don't have them are the ones in the European Union. It's not about discriminating against anybody or sending anybody back or anything like that, it's purely about being able to plan. If you don't know how many are coming in how can you be building the houses, making sure have enough school places or doctors or all that sort of thing?

**Is there anything you would like to say to convince people you are the man to represent them?**

One thing that I would like to point out is that I am a local candidate and I do know the area very well. I find that when I talk to people about their concerns, whether it's about employment, housing or school places, I've either been in that situation myself or I know people who have. I think that means I can actually comment on it from a genuine standpoint rather than reading it out of a party manual.



# The rise of Spain's final hope

After the recent election of Greece's anti-austerity party, Syriza, **Stephen Rainbird** reports from Spain on the left-wing party that promises "power to the people", Podemos.



Financial Times ©

**Stephen Rainbird**

Something is lurking in Spain. The situation in Europe's fifth largest economy has been bleak ever since its property bubble burst in 2008, causing a sharp contraction in Spain's markets and a financial crisis that is still dragging on seven years later. Unemployment sits at around a fifth, with youth unemployment riding at around half, the second-worst in Europe after Greece. Government debt is 85 per cent of GDP and its sovereign debt bonds are only two notches above junk. Even by the lowly standards of post-crisis Europe, Spain's future looks exceedingly disheartening.

It was not always this way. The country was an economic success story and a fiscal model. After joining the

European Union in 1986, it embarked on a period of strong economic growth, piggybacking on generous European investment. It became a byword for good times; in real terms, the economy grew strongly, year on year. Property prices doubled in two decades. Spain had held its first elections since 1936 in 1977, but by the beginning of this century it looked every bit the part of a functioning, stable democracy, alternating between left and right.

The hailed 'elasticity' of Spain's banks turned out to be an unmitigated weakness as bank after bank after bank went under and needed to be rescued, desperately exposed to and dependent on a property market that in places had lost 80 per cent of its value. The economy plunged into recession as the government more than doubled its debt

in four years holding up banks that had borrowed unsustainably themselves. As the economy worsened, tax receipts went

the PSOE socialists were dumped unceremoniously from office in late 2011 as the exceedingly unpopular José

“Political corruption became so rampant that it barely touched on people's registers”

into freefall, and the social security bill into a dizzying ascent. Debt skyrocketed. In 1986, household debt was 35 per cent. In 2005 it was 105 per cent. People began to drown in debt and Spain's social fabric seemed to be falling apart at the seams.

After three years of trying,

Zapatero was cheered from office. But no one seemed to cheer his eventual replacement, Mariano Rajoy. The charmless leader of the right-wing PP party, with its origins in Franco's dictatorship, won because of discontent with the socialists rather than because of an electorate enamoured with its





policies. Spain, for almost the first time, began to look at all of its politicians with a kind of universal disdain.

Indeed, he turned out to be much of the same, except with an incredible penchant for political corruption. The whole country became embroiled in scandal after scandal, implicating everyone from the PP's treasurer to the King's son-in-law (and, say some, the King himself). Political corruption became so rampant that it barely touched on people's registers. Everyone became the same suit, tainted in some way by one scandal or another, never admitting anything and spouting the same politics in the same way.

In the midst of this stood Pablo Iglesias, ponytailed and folksy, in functional roll-neck jumpers singing group songs on stage. The University professor and political scientist, 36, had almost single-handedly created a party that, in 2014, rose from almost nowhere to startling success in the European elections. His party, Podemos ("we can" in Spanish), were drastically different. They were neither the PSOE nor the PP. They espoused a radically different economic policy that sought to end the misery for ordinary Spaniards. The crisis, they said, had been caused by the elite and paid for by the masses. That, they said, was going to change.

When observing the workings of any party, the sheer functionality of Podemos is startling; almost nothing seems rehearsed. Speakers turn up on stage clutching scribbled notes, with the microphone already on, echoing the sound of being clunked onto a wooden lectern. All this might seem banal, but next to party appearances that seem polished to the point of alienation, this is exactly its appeal. Podemos is relatable

“The party was formed around meeting of ordinary people who congregated in some of Spain's Plazas, or local squares, debating issues that affected their everyday lives”

not just in what it is saying but in the manner that it is saying it.

After its startling success in the European elections, much was made of its policies, or, more precisely, its lack thereof. Podemos's vision for Spain was grand but ill-defined. "More democracy" and "power to the people" abounded, but short of commitment to anything concrete other than a promise that its elected representatives would not be corrupt. The party had taken 1.2 million votes – nearly 8 per cent – on a platform that barely seemed to exist.

Partly this lack of concrete policies



lay in the party's origins. Podemos was formed around a meeting of ordinary people who congregated in some of Spain's Plazas, or local squares, debating issues that affected their everyday lives. Podemos reflects down to its very core these hotchpotch, deeply working-class, extremely democratic origins. Its stylistic "o", drawn on a purple background (a colour chosen simply to mark a difference with existing parties), reflects the circles people used to stand in and debate. Everything about it is traceably grassroots and authentic.

This is one half of the dual draw of the party; a natural gravitation towards

similar. It is anti-elitism at its best. Their vote base, where the electorates swapped over, would be at least half the same. Nonetheless, they are selling different things. Farage is a little Englander, playing on people's insecurities rather than their hopes. UKIP tells people they have much to lose. It is "look how scared you should be" politics. Podemos tells people that they have nothing to lose. It takes a brutally honest look at the state of the country and tells them that they can only do better.

The other half of its draw is its policies. Some are deeply local and, arguably, common-sense. It intends to create a register of all payments for politicians to tackle a pervasive culture of corruption that runs from local town halls to the country's parliament. It wants to raise the minimum wage from the meagre €600 that is currently paid. Beyond that it gets far more radical. It wants a 35 hour week and people to retire at 60.

Bucking the existing consensus, it advocates a renegotiation of the country's "unrepayable" debt. It wants to let banks fail, and for shareholders to lose invested money. It wants a renegotiation of the core purpose and powers of the EU. Buoyed on by the recent success of Syriza in Greece, it underlines that ordinary Spaniards should not have to suffer any more. Analysts draw parallels between the parties, but they underestimate the differences in circumstance.

Podemos, similarly to Syriza, is a fascinating study in what can be achieved under direct democracy. It is also a cautionary tale of complacency amongst the political classes; "ignore us at your peril" is the party's key, if obviously unspoken message. It

is sending a message to the heart of Spain's broken political system in Madrid, just like Syriza in Athens. Soon, it will be sending, if polls are correct, the same message to Brussels.

The latest polls give the party 28 per cent of the vote and 32 per cent of the seats; a plurality, but short of a majority. That would put them in control of any future government. If it refused to meet its debt obligations, or wanted treaty changes, the EU would be in serious trouble; Spain is a major economic player and would hold considerable clout in negotiations in a way that Greece does not.

That should worry the European Union far more than it does. If Greece leaves the Euro, which, as negotiations hobble to a startlingly bleak conclusion, looks likely, the ceiling may well cave in. But the pillars would still be standing. The likelihood is that Europe could rebuild after a "Grexit". That would not be the same with Spain.

It should go without saying, but Spain is not Greece. If Podemos capitalise on their popularity, and, with their vote looking unlikely to slip significantly before the next elections, Greece could pale into insignificance. Spain's economy is massive and its role in Europe far more significant. Podemos' rise might be making the comment pages of *The Guardian* for now, but by the elections in December 2015, it will probably be making the front pages of every paper in Europe.

Podemos is aiming to change Spain. Yet it is Europe that should be extremely worried about the consequences of that change. Spain may still be laying low in Greece's shadow, but if we continue to ignore it, it will be our peril.

# “I took a burlesque pole to halls”

Although uncommon, pole dancing is on the rise in the UK, and it is spreading through the student population of Leeds. **Hannah Ryder** tells all about her preferred past-time; from the adversity of bringing a pole to halls, to debunking the controversy surrounding pole-dancing.

Hannah Ryder

When I unceremoniously erected a pole in my kitchen, word of the ‘stripper pole in Block J’ flew throughout my accommodation. That label is for the naive. It is not a ‘stripper pole’, not something I was using to entice men, or to strip with, but a genuine piece of sporting equipment for my own personal fitness. And yes, it was up in my kitchen.

My flatmates sniggered when I brought in the extensive set of equipment needed to set up my pole. They giggled about my audacity to practise in the kitchen, with no discomfort that anyone might see me. We amused ourselves having a few drunken spins, including a slightly tipsy lesson during pre-drinks.

Yet when I revealed I do it for sport they were sceptical of its validity; cracking unknowingly offensive, clichéd jokes about how flexible I must be, how I must be earning so much money. For someone confined to the ground, afflicted by problems with my legs, most sport was uncomfortably painful for

“Once you begin to respect yourself, it’s impossible for others not to respect you”

me. It wasn’t until the age of 17 that I stumbled across pole dancing. Suddenly, I wasn’t confined to the ground. I was practising a sport in which you positively look, and feel, like you are flying. It is stunningly beautiful and I fell in love.

This isn’t a common opinion. Pole dancing is always stigmatised, overly sexualised and degraded by those who do not practise it. My attempts to stop my friends referring to it as ‘stripping’ fell short, and although it was a harmless joke I felt devalued – my skill unappreciated.

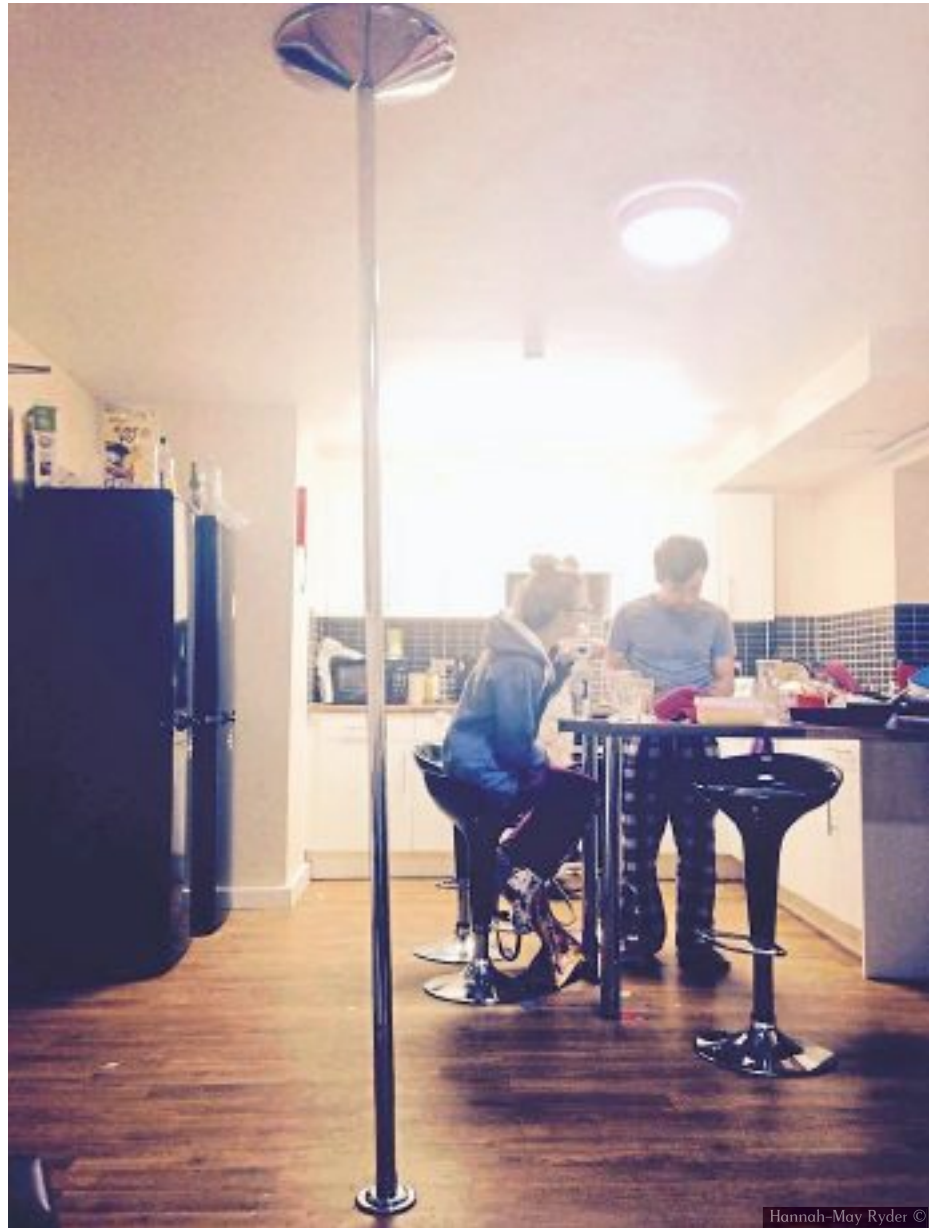
Shockingly, word of ‘the stripper pole in Block J’ spread; not through students, but through my accommodation’s management team. It had been up

during a kitchen inspection, and according to rumour, everyone had had a go on it including the site manager. I was neither informed nor asked, only hearing about it through a friend who overheard said staff loudly joking about it in the reception. They’d turned something important to me into a running joke.

Yet even more infuriating is that my sport is continually degraded. The move to accept over-sexualised sports is a move towards respecting and understanding female bodies. Pole dancing is sexually empowering, without resigning females to a role of temptress or ‘slut’. Personally I feel empowered in myself, gaining confidence in how I look and knowing that, despite learning to respect my sexuality, I am still a powerful woman in my own right.

With contemporary mass media churning out an ideal that women should be fit and active, whilst also penalising those who dare move towards the image of masculinity by gaining large muscles, it’s impossible to know which way to turn. Try pole dancing. Once you begin to respect yourself, it’s impossible for others not to respect you. By labelling me a slut, a stripper, a whore, you are simply caging yourself, restricting your freedom to feel empowered by something fun and completely harmless.

I understand why people disregard pole dancing. It is done at strip clubs.



Hannah-May Ryder ©

But you cannot describe a bit of ass shaking, to be crude, as pole dancing. It isn’t feasibly possible to strip when you’re hanging a good few feet in the air. The skill needed to perform some of these tricks should be applauded, and gradually are; as a dance form pole is coming up trumps, with championships spreading across the world. It’s a phenomenon in China, with a growing community in the UK.

Pole dancing doesn’t feel ‘whorish’

or ‘slutty’, it’s simply an intense workout. There is no correlation between ‘stripping’ and true pole dancing. I am learning to love, respect and trust my body. I’m getting fit without dreading practice. I have never had more fun and possessing such a rare skill is invigorating. It’s something I can be proud of, talk about without shame. For those who only see it as stripping, you’re missing out.





# Comment

50 Shades of Grey  
**Hannah Woodhead** discusses how the new film glorifies abusive relationships

Chapel Hill  
**Liam Kerrigan** looks at whether a lack of media coverage is a further example of bias

idebate  
**Claire Wilsher** examines the failings of British politics in including young people

Censorship at Leeds  
**Alex Smye**: Is Leeds Uni too readily prepared to ban?

## The cruel reality of 50 Shades of Grey

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There's something incredibly frightening about *Fifty Shades of Grey*, and it's nothing to do with the awful new cinematic adaptation. Whilst it seems that E. L. James' novel has been softened up for the big screen, it must not be forgiven that the source material remains a story about a vulnerable young woman being taken in by a sociopathic man who systematically abuses her. *Fifty Shades of Grey* is not a love story, it's a dangerous romanticisation of an abusive relationship. In reality there is no happily ever after for victims of abuse; at best there are years of counselling and trying to rebuild their lives. At worst, they lose their lives altogether.

The 'it's just a novel' defence is paraded in front of *Fifty Shades* repeatedly but the problem is that this simply isn't true anymore. With the recent film adaptation inescapably filling seats at cinemas, and every major newspaper and news outlet reporting on every tiny detail of the film's journey, it's an unavoidable presence. The idea of a rich, powerful, overbearing significant other has become synonymous with romance, with countless women fanaticising about the scenarios described in excruciating detail within James' novel. This normalisation of abuse has been turned into a box office smash, mass-marketed and widely available for anyone to consume.

The portrayal of BDSM within *Fifty Shades* has come under fire repeatedly from members of the BDSM community, who have criticised James' lack of insight into the reality of BDSM, particularly her understanding of dominance and submission. Christian Grey frequently abuses the trust Anastasia Steele places in him, and for all the importance placed on the contractual agreement the pair negotiate, they never actually enter into a formal agreement about the terms of their relationship. Trust and understanding are key to the practice of BDSM and without these it is nothing more than abuse. Furthermore,



James' novel perpetuates the dangerous stereotype that those who engage in BDSM activities do so because of some unresolved trauma from their childhood; Grey was abused as a child, which is the reason he gives for his behaviour as an adult. BDSM is not something he enjoys as a consensual activity in a healthy relationship, as is the case with responsible members of the BDSM community; it is simply a means for him to vent his frustrations, which he openly admits.

For matters to be taken into the hands of the often vocal minority is to say that these people are more enlightened and informed than the rest of us

Even with James' inaccurate and offensive portrayal of BDSM, it's not Christian's sexual preferences that make him an abusive figure; it's his relentless pursuit of Ana. Throughout the series he is seen stalking her (which is dismissed, joked about, as though it's a character

quirk rather than a worrying obsession), threatening her repeatedly, manipulating her into staying with him, belittling her and attempting to control her diet, spending, and even her friendships. Even in the relatively tame film which contains a mere twenty minutes of sex out of a two hour runtime, Grey spends the majority of his time tracking Ana down repeatedly and attempting to convince her to sign into a sexual contract with him. It's worth noting that she never actually does sign this contract, and within the novel, Grey admits to using alcohol in attempts to get her to bend to his will.

These are all hallmarks of an abusive relationship but are dismissed by virtue of Grey's wealth and charm. What cannot be ignored is that at his core Christian Grey is a sociopath, concerned only with his own wants and desires. Ana is merely a means to an end. Whilst the final novel, *'Fifty Shades Freed'* provides some sort of happy ending for Anastasia, this itself is dangerous, perpetuating the dangerous idea that abusers can somehow be 'fixed' by their

victims, which is often what keeps abuse victims in destructive relationships in the first place; their belief that they alone can change their partner, even despite the risk to their safety.

Finally, on the subject of the sex that *Fifty Shades* has been sold on: the female orgasm is the one thing that's conspicuously absent, further highlighting how women are reduced to playthings rather than equals. Undoubtedly women should be encouraged to explore their sexuality, but there is no liberation in *Fifty Shades of Grey*; only oppression, and the reinforcement of the dangerous belief that women want and deserve to be dominated and controlled. With the money you might spend on a ticket to see *Fifty Shades of Grey*, consider instead donating to a charity which helps victims of domestic abuse; a far more worthwhile cause than lining the pockets of E.L. James or the film studios who show no concern for the cruel reality of the fantasy they represent.



# Apathy reigns, so give us something to engage with

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It is estimated that 60 per cent of young people won't vote in the next election, so youth participation is the hot topic of the moment. The folks at Whitehall must have been rubbing their hands together in glee at the idea of the idebate getting the 'yoofs' away from the YouTube and all that tweetering to make them care about real grown up issues like voting, because otherwise all they would think about is Bebo and MSN. The shocking truth, perhaps to them at least, is that under their hoodies, and when they are not speaking only in text language or laughing at cats on YouTube (actually a very worthwhile pastime) young people do care about politics.

If anything, formal political participation is staggeringly low on a widespread scale. Only 65 per cent of people of voting age cast their vote in the 2010 election and rather surprisingly young people are not some strange other

species. They are just as disillusioned with Westminster politics as the rest of the public. In perpetuating the difference between 'young' and 'old' and drawing distinctions between different groups a disparity that will only make younger people feel more excluded is being enforced.

A narrow focus on voter turnout also seems to disregard other forms of political activity. Non-formal means of participation are up across the board and most particularly amongst young people.

“Young people are not some strange other species, they are just as disillusioned as everyone else”

Studies have shown that this generation of young people has taken part in more localised social action without regarding it as 'political'. The idea that the only politics that matters is that which occurs in Westminster dominates and disengages many people who don't see themselves as being represented there. All this does is reinforce the idea that 'young' politics is the politics of pressure

groups and campaigning whereas 'old' politics is that of suits, middle-aged men and voting. In seeing other forms of political participation as useless, the political elite further alienate people, young and old.

Other forms of political participation do not lessen peoples' interest in voting, they just expose the lack of possibility for change within our current political system. If people really believed things they could change things at the ballot box, then surely they would be more inclined to do so. Young people are famously more idealistic and left wing than older generations, and we have a system which disregards these perspectives. If politics is supposed to be about change, the negative rhetoric surrounding ideals completely undermines this. You can't tell people to vote and then tell them that tangible and significant change isn't possible. Persistent negativity in our political system is toxic to engagement.

To get young people to vote we don't need thinktanks and discussion groups, we need real, proactive policy intended to actually engage people of all ages.

The *i* Newspaper's recent debate that brought prominent politicians to Leeds and focussed on issues surrounding young people in politics could be seen as a step in the right direction.

“The idebate could be seen as a step in the right direction, but all it did was emphasise the gaping divide between how politicians see young people and the reality”

Unfortunately, however, all that was emphasised was the gaping divide between how politicians see young people and our reality. To engage with us a young people, politicians need to treat our views as equally important as those of older generations. There is no magic Facebook/Twitter potion that will get young people into booths come election day, but real, progressive policies that will help students and genuine alternatives that give us something to believe in might.

## Chapel Hill: A leap to faith?

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On Tuesday 10th February, three young Muslims were shot and killed in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. I read about this hateful crime in an online article the following day; the same day that Sabbiyah Pervez posted an article on *The Independent's* website entitled 'Chapel Hill shooting: Three young Muslims have been executed, but the media ignored it because of religion'. Many others expressed similar sentiments, and the hashtag #muslimlivesmatter began trending on numerous social media websites. Whilst I instinctively agreed with the article at first, I soon disagreed with it entirely.

When it emerged that all three victims were Muslims and that the killer, Craig Hicks, was an anti-theist (someone who is an atheist that believes all religions are inherently bad), many immediately jumped to the conclusion that this was a hate-crime. In fact, it seems the incident was sparked by a dispute over parking. There is no indication that the victims were targeted because of their faith, nor does it seem that there was any planning behind Hicks' horrific crime. Neighbours have said he was frequently involved in arguments over parking;

some labelled him a 'hothead' and stated that Hicks displayed 'equal opportunity anger' towards everyone. Hicks also had a substantial cache of loaded weapons and ammunition at his house, and he had been known to flaunt these on social media as well as carrying a firearm with him.

I think it's far more reasonable, then, to assume that Hicks is a sociopathic, angry, gun-nut who murdered three young Muslims over a parking dispute (which is what Hicks told the police and what the initial investigations by the police suggest), rather than an ideologically motivated killer.

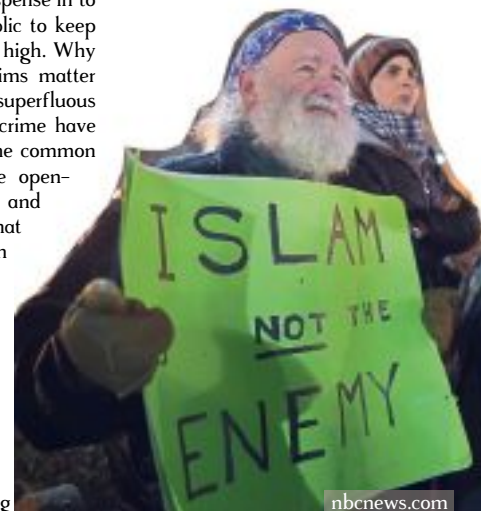
But, is the supposed lack of media coverage due to the faith of the victims? Well, the day after the murders there were multiple reports published on the websites of: *The Independent*, *The Mirror*, *The Daily Mail*, *BBC*, *ITV*, *Channel 4*, *CNN*, *NBC*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and *Fox News* (to name just a few), as well as numerous articles and reports in the days following. So it seems to me that the media coverage is not as barren as Pervez and others would have us believe. Though if we suppose, for the sake of argument, that this is still a low amount of coverage, is this because the victims were Muslim? I don't believe so.

According to statistics, during an average day in America 30 people are murdered with firearms. A further 162

people are wounded. Statistics from 2011 showed that 66 per cent of homicides with single victims, and 79 per cent of homicides with multiple victims, were carried out with a firearm. So gun-crime is not uncommon in America. On top of this fact, the story does not present much in terms of 'entertainment value' that news stations so desire nowadays. Hicks handed himself in overnight and confessed openly to his crimes. This meant that the story had finished before it had started; there was no urgent need for witnesses, no hunt for the suspect that could fuel rolling news coverage, no way of implanting fear or suspense in to the consciousness of the public to keep tensions and viewing-figures high. Why should the faith of the victims matter when it seems to be a superfluous detail once the facts of the crime have been properly considered? The common occurrence of shootings, the open-shut nature of the case and the fact that it is a story that would unlikely have been significant otherwise, seems to contribute much more to the supposed absence of coverage than the fact the victims were Muslims.

I am not at all suggesting that there is no bias against Muslims in the media- the prejudice is abundantly clear. Just consider the startling

disparity between the coverage of ISIS, and of Christian militias in the Central African Republic who have carried out an ethnic cleansing of Muslims in that region. However, I do not think that the Chapel Hill shooting is indicative of this problem. So, whilst my thoughts go out to the family and friends of Deah Shaddy Barakat, Yusor Mohammad and Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha, it remains important not to create uproar over the misrepresentation of this heinous crime.





# Freedom of expression? Not at Leeds

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Last week *Spiked* magazine published a Good University guide. Not your usual academic based ranking but a guide ranking universities on their level of freedom of expression and censorship. A worrying number of universities, including Leeds, made it into the 'Red' category. This indicates that, by their standards, Leeds University Union is "hostile to free speech and expression". This review also indicates that censorship amongst Universities in the UK is a growing problem and one that needs to be addressed.

This is something that I have experienced firsthand at this University. In my short time here I have witnessed the banning of offensive greetings

“...censorship amongst Universities in the UK is a growing problem and one that needs to be addressed”

cards, "Blurred lines", *The Sun* and BAE systems to name a few. Additionally, many union policies prevent certain speakers, products and events from setting foot on campus. In May of last year, a student was able to get an 'offensive' card removed from sale with a single tweet. Some may argue that these rules are to prevent students from feeling marginalised and unsafe- however, this can have the opposite effect. What if I wanted to read *The Sun* or to work for BAE Systems? I have now been made to feel like some kind of reprobate whose thoughts and actions are morally wrong.

The NUS itself is no stranger to censorship and trying to use its influence to its own end. An example of this is the vote to condemn UKIP as a political party which took place a couple

of months ago. Whilst I in no way agree with the party's policies or ideas, this is still a worrying move. For an organisation that is 'representative' of the student body to actively dissuade students from a certain political ideology is verging on draconian. Additionally, the NUS's 'No platform' policy, which prevents people deemed racist or fascist from speaking at many universities, including our own, has prevented the discussion of certain issues and sheltered the student population from views different to their own. Both Oxford and Cambridge hold debates independent of NUS or student union influence and as a result have had many controversial speakers including Nick Griffin and David Irving; something I cannot imagine taking place at Leeds University. These kind of debates allow people to better understand some of the, albeit often abhorrent, views of

these kind of people. Most importantly, the debates allow these speakers to be challenged, to be made to explain why they think in such a way. People leave better informed and often with a greater

“For matters to be taken into the hands of the often vocal minority is to say that these people are more enlightened and informed than the rest of us”

appreciation of their own viewpoint.

A University is supposed to support free thinking and learning. We all came here to expand our minds, and by censoring the things we don't agree with we are limiting this. Instead of banning a party, product, person or idea, we can learn a great deal through thoughtful discussion and debate. We can see

both sides of the story, and try to better understand the motivation behind the ideas we disagree with. To ban these things is insulting and condescending to us as students. For matters to be taken into the hands of the often vocal minority is to say that these people are more enlightened and informed than the rest of us. We are made out to be uneducated and impressionable, ready to believe anything that is presented to us without question. This is not the case; we are all adults, mature and capable of making our own decisions. Does this kind of censorship and banning culture really protect the student population or does it just unnecessarily mollycoddle them? The NUS and the union needs to think more seriously about censorship and the effect this has on the student population.



wikipedia.org

## A recent history of bans on campus

Bottled water banned from sale in LUU

BAE systems banned from campus

'Blurred Lines' banned from being played in LUU

*The Sun* newspaper banned from sale in LUU

Cards removed from LUU shelves following complaints



November 2008

March 2013

September 2013

November 2013

February 2014



# The Big Debate

## Was Mary Beard right to forgive her Twitter troll?

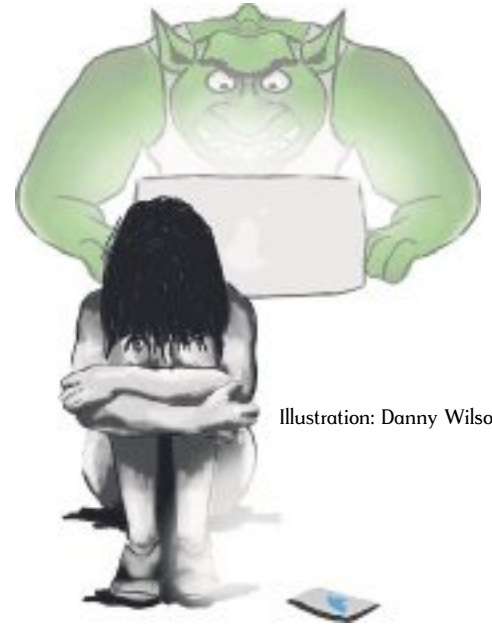


Illustration: Danny Wilson

“Although he was a very silly, injudicious, and at that moment not very pleasant young guy, I don’t actually think one tweet should ruin your job prospects.”  
**Mary Beard**

### YES

### Tim Van Gardingen

The internet is a deep dark place filled with all kinds of miserable people. So when a ray of light comes shining out of the wrong side of it, it’s rather refreshing. One such ray of light came in the form of Mary Beard when she tackled a horrific internet troll in a most impressive way: with forgiveness. The test to prove that this way was the right way, is that it worked.

Beard has a strong TV presence, and this seems to have sparked the trolls’ anger. She isn’t the only victim of this; it’s worryingly common for female public figures to be attacked by vulgar internet trolls. For some, the vulgar keyboard warriors have caused constant fear, forced them from their homes and even created bomb scares.

The comments in question were misogynistic to the highest degree, with entirely unacceptable, very graphic sexual taunts against her. They were exactly the kind of comments that should, in most people’s eyes, never be forgiven and yet Beard’s approach was just that, going as far as even writing a job reference for her internet attacker. Forgiveness is powerful, especially to those who don’t expect it. Beard’s attacker was clearly not only completely insecure in themselves, but also completely over-‘masculinised’ to the point of caricature. With a rise in so-called ‘lad culture’ such actions have been given false legitimacy and conflict appears to be the goal. Take away that conflict from the offenders and you’re

part of the way to solving the problem of trolls.

The problem, as a number of female public figures have found, is that sometimes politeness isn’t enough and for many the attacks have continued. The difference with Beard’s approach is that forgiveness is one step above politeness. Politeness is a near-passive approach. It’s waiting out those trolls to get bored.

Although for most people it’s hard to put ourselves in the boots of a misogynist citizen of the internet, given you were in that position, how on earth else can you react to the answer of ‘well, that was stupid, but let me write a job reference for you’ other than first with shock and then reflection on what a horrible human

being you’ve been?

I feel it’s essential to point out I don’t want to underplay what a serious issue misogyny is. It should however be forgiven. People change. Former gang lords have become priests. Forgiveness of the most deplorable actions is the most powerful, and as Mary Beard has shown, can result in the most dramatic changes in people.

As a comparison, countries which focus strongly on rehabilitation in prison usually have far lower re-offending rates. Rehabilitation in prison is a form of forgiveness. It’s exactly the same with internet trolls – forgive them, and they might just apologise and think about doing something good with their life.

### NO

### Rudi Abdallah

It’s one of the great ethical questions of our time that has troubled commentators, academics and philosophers: how do you tackle a raging cretin, or troll in common parlance, who’s wedded indissolubly to a bile encrusted laptop?

Do you fight venom with venom, call pest control, or blow on a dandelion and wish that they’ll disappear? TV historian Mary Beard’s quixotic and ultimately damaging approach to dealing with an aspiring troglodyte raises questions about how people, and unfortunately it is mostly women, should handle online abuse.

After student Oliver Rawlings sent an acidic tweet branding her a ‘filthy old slut’, Beard publicly named and shamed him by retweeting the message. Rawlings apologised by taking her to dinner; they remained in touch

afterwards, and Beard gave him a job reference. She argued compassionately that ‘one moment of idiocy’ shouldn’t stop somebody from having a career. Beard’s extraordinary act courts several problems, and yes, sniping at the forgiving is indicative of the brutally cynical society we live in that takes delight in the public destruction of the famous.

By giving Rawlings a reference, Beard substituted justifiable punishment for baffling reward, informing trolls everywhere that they could continue unleashing vitriolic barbs against female celebrities with impunity. The onus shouldn’t be on the blameless victim to rectify the situation, but that’s the message broadcasted by Beard’s actions. The sincerity of Rawlings’s contrition is difficult to gauge, but it’s clear he was granted a fortunate reprieve by someone

eager to champion the good in others. Obviously not every woman enjoys Beard’s level of influence; a mere mortal can’t stymie a torrential deluge of raw sewage with a promise to promote the troll the next time they spectacularly cock up another interview. Guardian columnist Hadley Freeman recalled how, when she covered last year’s World Cup, she was barracked by male trolls enraged at the concept of a woman infringing on sacred masculine territory. When she reported subsequent rape threats to the police, she had to explain to them what Twitter was. Astonishing ineptitude of law enforcers aside, Freeman’s terrible case highlights an uncomfortable reality: most trolls are male, despise women and either revel in the consequences of their wretched abuse, or are completely detached from the ramifications of their misogyny.

Reporting abuse is a sticking plaster that will not improve male attitudes towards women. Nevertheless, security on social media should be beefed up to allow unfettered use, free from the spectre of harassment. Long term, we look to education: why not incorporate cyber bullying into the curriculum? Why don’t academics study the link between trolls and poor mental health? In a recent study Canadian researchers found that trolls were ‘archetypal Machiavellian sadists’ with no regard for morality, which suggests that poor mental health is a critical factor behind online abuse that can’t be ignored. Trolls are the price we pay for the democratising effects of the internet, and they aren’t going away anytime soon. Mary Beard’s noble act of clemency should be viewed as the exception, rather than the rule, on how to deal with trolls.





# Your views heard

## Christian Union respond to our front cover

Dear Jasmine,

Thanks for all the hard work you put in to editing the gryphon, it's a very enjoyable read. However, an issue has been raised amongst a few of my friends as to the clumsiness of the front cover this week. An article was written about christian lecturer professor Read and his view on heaven/hell. This was placed directly under an lgbtq article and this positioning suggests that the professor was condemning their actions. The views expressed by professor Read are completely unrelated to lgbtq. I am president of the Christian union and this has sparked controversial conversation and accusation, as people did not read the article, only the headline. We'd really appreciate this to be put right, as Jesus' message is one of love to all people. Thank you and I hope to hear from you soon,

Leah Thompson

## Make our voices heard

Dear Editor,

I was just wondering - is there a letters page for the Gryphon? The old Leeds student used to have one - it seems a bit odd not to have a place for feedback on the paper at all - after all you highlighted the lack of free speech at Leeds Union in the current issue - how are readers of the Gryphon who are not writers for the Gryphon supposed to be able to have their views heard?

Christian Hogsbjerg

## Reading about religion

Dear Sir or Madam

I was surprised to hear of the controversy surrounding Professor Reads website. He taught me galois theory as an undergraduate. I have to say as a lecturer and just generally in person I've always found him to be kind and helpful. I do have to wonder what sort of society we are building where anyone who has strong religious or ideological beliefs and is willing to openly talk about them is automatically seen as some sort of radical bigot. Why shouldn't a professor talk openly about his religious convictions? Atheists such as Professor Dawkins have not been shy in talking about theirs.

No one is forced to visit this website. Some may think the university shouldn't provide its professors with personal websites but they do and one can hardly complain if you go to a personal website and find you don't like the views there.

regards

Peter Clark

## Your thoughts in 140 characters...

Enjoy an article? Hate an article? Let us know.

Email us: [editor@thegryphon.co.uk](mailto:editor@thegryphon.co.uk)

or

Tweet us: [@\\_TheGryphon](https://twitter.com/_TheGryphon)



Simon Walsh @sdwalsh

I've spent this weekend working alongside @\_TheGryphon to get the most out of their website.

Rosanna Pound-Woods @rosannapw

Even more excited for my trip to Budapest in March now, thanks to this brilliant travel piece from @\_TheGryphon

Nigel @nigel74

@\_TheGryphon - Mr Hutton may want to check some of his facts about G4S.

LRFS 2015 @LEEDSRAGFASHION

We're shooting with @\_TheGryphon today! Make sure you grab your copy to see what we've been up to!



# Fracking frack the frack off, you frackers

Holly Edwards

David Cameron has got a fight on his hands. It is no secret that he avidly supports fracking in the UK and has even said he will risk party politics to make sure fracking happens. The most recent push saw Cameron's government renege on agreements for environmental protections, enforced by Labour earlier this year, by allowing fracking to take place under several National Parks.

Fracking, or hydraulic fracturing, is a way of recovering shale gas, which was previously stranded underground. The usual process involves drilling vertically about a mile below ground before gradually drilling horizontally for several thousand feet more. The well is then pumped with a "fracking fluid" made up of a mix of sand, water and chemicals, at a high enough pressure to fracture the surrounding rock and release the gas, which moves to the surface.

A key argument for fracking is that it will drive gas prices down. However, the evidence to back up this claim is sketchy. Even the chairman of Cuadrilla, the UK's leading shale gas company, believes there will not be a reduction in prices. Cameron's assumptions stem from the experience in the US where prices have come down. But this is an isolated market, unlike the UK which is strongly linked to the European gas market. An increase in gas production in the UK is likely to make little difference to the overall European price.

Argument number two is that fracking will create jobs in Britain. Some studies have the number of jobs that could be created by fracking as high as 150,000, but in reality we just don't know and probably won't know for at least another decade. It is inevitable that a new fracking industry would create thousands of jobs and provide millions of pounds in revenues but whether

this will have a net benefit on the economy is uncertain.

The counter argument is that the economy would receive more of a boost if instead, investment went into the renewable energy market. After all, according to the think tank Cambridge Econometrics, the UK would be £20 billion a year better off by 2030 if we invested in offshore wind compared to gas-fired generation.

Now we come to a favourite topic among anti-fracking protesters - the local environmental impacts. Cameron has stated that "Nothing is going to happen in this country unless it is environmentally safe". But there is mixed evidence concerning the potential impacts of fracking.

The big issue that people like to talk about in relation to fracking is earthquakes. A report commissioned by Cuadrilla found that it is highly probable that fracking was the cause of tremors felt in Blackpool. But this is an insignificant concern when compared to other environmental issues with the magnitude of these quakes being likened to a lorry passing by.

A more pressing, lesser discussed concern is whether fracking causes water contamination. Several high profile cases of contaminated drinking water have been reported in the US after fracking took off there. The contaminant was methane which, although not toxic, is very flammable. The news was soon



showing pictures of people in the areas affected setting fire to their tap water.

However, a recent study published in The Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences has shown that these instances were not actually linked to the fracking itself but were due to the state of the wells themselves - something that can be controlled with regulation.

There's a similar story for concerns over the risk of surface leaks of toxic chemicals and radiation. There are strict guidelines that mean that these chemicals should be contained, and radiation has only been found in very low doses that are unlikely to cause problems to human health.

But why should we trust that regulation will protect us when Cameron is pushing fracking forward so quickly. Scotland has put a moratorium on fracking until the environmental issues are clearer. It is likely that it will be two years until we have enough geological information to really ensure that sufficient regulation is in place.

However, there are still two massive elephants in the room: climate change and energy security. The UK is facing an energy supply crunch with a third of coal power stations coming off-line in 2016 and most nuclear plants closing by 2023. However, it is thought that it will be ten years before any meaningful amount of shale gas is produced. On the other hand we will need a back-up supply of energy going into the future as renewables cannot be 100% relied on.

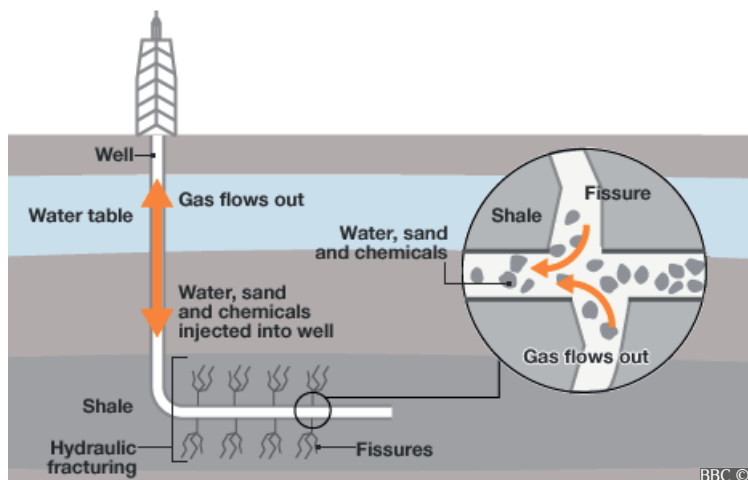
Gas is a cleaner solution than coal and creating our own resources is better than relying on Russia for supplies, but this resource will eventually run out as well. There are alternatives, such as nuclear power, which is free of carbon emissions. The worry is with all the attention fracking is receiving, low carbon alternatives are being left behind.

So why is David Cameron so intent on allowing fracking? Even his own government doesn't fully support him. More than 220 Tory and Lib Dem MPs face fracking in their constituencies - although conveniently for Cameron fracking will not be taking place in his constituency of Witney, Oxfordshire - and cross-party backbenchers are now calling for a two year moratorium on fracking in the UK. Labour MPs have accused Cameron of a cover-up relating to 63 redactions from the document Shale Gas: Rural Economy Impacts, before publication under the freedom of information act. He is also struggling to convince the public, with 56% of people against fracking according to a recent YouGov poll.

The answer should be more evident when the people behind Cameron's government are revealed. It is no secret that there are conflicts of interest between policy makers and financial linkers to fracking within the Tory party. Lord Browne, the chairman of Cuadrilla is also the Government Lead Non-Executive. Baroness Hogg sits on the board of BG group, which has significant shale gas assets in the US, and is also a senior director in HM Treasury and a crossbencher in the House of Lords. A former non-executive for the Transport department was also Chief of Centrica, which has recently brought a 25% stake in one of Cuadrilla's shale gas prospects - the list goes on and on.

There is too much risk associated with fracking to allow politics to override scientific reasoning, and so for now it's a polite frack off to David Cameron and his plans. This may not always be the case, but we have to be sure when such a decision will have lasting consequences for the UK's energy supply and potential negative impacts on its population.

## Shale gas extraction





# The Listening TV: The tables have turned

Clare O'Leary

Talking to a newly installed TV at home is a recent experience of mine. As a family, we were taking it in turns to 'get to know' the device through voice activation. After my several failed attempts using the command 'Turn On', I followed the instructions of my excited mother as she presented this TV to me like a new sibling. She told me to be kinder to the TV, use a softer voice and say, 'Hello Samsung', before 'Turn On' and hey presto the screen activated. This TV didn't just want my voice; it demanded my manners.

Smart technology is an industry growing at a momentous rate. You can now purchase a bed that knows your heart rate and movements, or a fridge that suggests recipes based on what's inside it. Lifting and closing a toilet lid too much for you? Fear not – a smart toilet lets you operate the lid via your smartphone.

New technologies are promising to make our lives easier and our bodies healthier, but the question of whether they are making us safer keeps hitting the headlines. There are concerns that with more information being stored about our daily activities, the floodgates will be open to a host of third parties to access this information. James Scott of Microsoft Research explains "with a

smart system, the whole point is that when you use it, it learns about you, that learning intrinsically involves some sort of logging".

Using a smart device to make life smoother comes with the price of stepping into a grey area where privacy is concerned. Where is the information about your sleeping patterns, eating habits and toilet trips going? And to whom? In terms of these devices, security may be of little concern to users. What's the worst that can happen? A technophile might hack your smartphone and open and close your toilet lid – scary.

But recently Samsung have lifted a different lid, on a potentially more sinister privacy issue. The company has warned customers about discussing personal information in front of their smart TV. When the TV is on the setting 'listen' so that it can respond to commands, the company has said that the device may 'hear' conversations and share these with third parties. Samsung's privacy policy states: "If your spoken words include personal information, that information will be among the data captured and transmitted to a third party." A stark reminder of the 'telescreens' in George Orwell's 1984 is uncomfortably clear.

For some, privacy concerns are trumped by the life changing benefits of smart technology. Of note, the Senior Lifestyle System is a smart technology



The Guardian ©

offering a lifeline to independence; it uses wireless sensor nodes throughout the home to log, track and share lifestyle information of senior citizens with other members of the family. Everything is automatically logged, from the amount the individual is eating to more gradual changes such as when the individual is beginning to move at a slower pace. All this information is recorded and logged on a handy little app for the senior's citizen's family to view. Think of it as a kind of Sims version of your nan. Despite this looking like a rather patronising and bizarre system in the eyes of some people, it has granted peace of mind for countless families and provided a golden opportunity for older people to

continue to live independently. That IS smart.

With smart technology development showing no signs of slowing, there will undoubtedly be an expanse of novel ways in which we can benefit from them, but will the compromise to our confidentiality also expand? While our homes are becoming smarter, we must become wiser to potential security risks or the 'privacy of our own homes' may become a thing of the past. It now seems that as a family, we weren't just getting to know our TV – it was getting to know us.

## The Week in Science

### 1600 hearts



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Doctors have stored information on 1600 hearts to create a digital heart database. Scientists are collecting genetic information and scanning 3D videos of the hearts of volunteers; the aim is to be able to compare common factors that cause illness between different hearts.

### Cannabis, again



media moon ©

Research has found that the risk of psychosis is 3 times greater for those who smoke potent cannabis compared to those who have never used. A study by King's College London found that 24% of new cases of psychosis are linked to smoking potent cannabis. The milder form of cannabis was not associated with an increased risk.

### Happy or angry?



media4news ©

Researchers have found that dogs can tell the difference between happy and angry facial expressions. 11 dogs were trained to discriminate between images of a person making either a happy or angry face. After training, the dogs were presented with images of half a stranger's face and were able to discriminate between happy and angry faces.

### Penguins can't taste fish



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Researchers studying the DNA of penguins have found that some genes for taste are missing. The data suggests that penguins have lost the ability to taste sweet, bitter and umami (meaty) flavours. This is surprising in a carnivorous animal. However, penguins swallow fish whole without chewing, so may not need to taste their food after all.

### GM apples don't brown



Okanagan Specialty Fruits ©

The US Government has approved the planting of 'non-browning arctic apples'. These are genetically modified apples that turn brown at a much slower rate. The company's president, Neal Carter, says GM apples would make "a fresh cut apple slice 30% cheaper" as they would not need to be treated with preservatives.



# World Club Challenge triple threat

Ste Topping  
Rugby League

With the new Super League season now in full swing, six of the world's finest sides are all set for an explosive round of fixtures this weekend as the inaugural World Club Series takes place.

New for 2015, the series replaces the annual World Club Challenge, and sees the top three sides of last year's Super League play-offs face opposition from Australia's NRL, and the English sides have a number of reasons to be optimistic about their chances.

Flying the flag for Super League are the all-Lancastrian trio of reigning champions St Helens, last year's runners-up Wigan Warriors and Warrington Wolves. All three sides benefit from playing their fixtures on home soil, while the sides are all unbeaten in their opening fixtures this year. The



NRL, by contrast, is yet to begin.

Warrington get the series underway tonight, as they take on St George Illawara Dragons. The visitors ended last season in lowly 11th place in NRL, missing out on the play-offs by two points, but the Wolves should be anything but complacent. St George won the old challenge as recently as 2011, and their squad is brimming with talent, including Halifax-born England international Gareth Widdop.

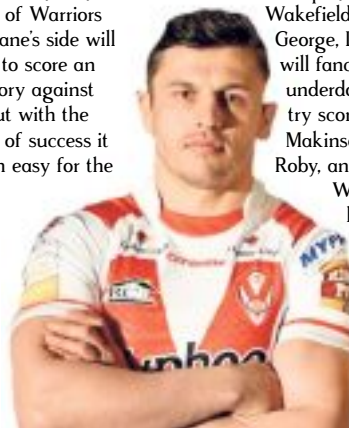
The hosts have made a solid start to the season, with a convincing win against Salford in the opening round, and a tight away victory at Hull last weekend. With a fully fit squad, if Warrington can combine the style of their first win with the grit of their second, then they could have enough to claim victory.

Tomorrow sees Wigan take on Brisbane Broncos at the DW Stadium, and the hosts will be determined to move away from their ill-disciplined performances

so far this season. The Warriors threw away a 16-0 lead against Widnes Vikings in round one to draw 22-22, while they have lost Sam Powell through suspension after his 'chicken wing' tackle on Earl Crabtree in last week's win at Huddersfield.

Brisbane finished last season in eighth place, and boast a talented outfit led by veterans Corey Parker and Justin Hodges. With memories of last year's crushing defeat to Sydney Roosters fresh in the memory of Warriors fans, Shaun Wane's side will be determined to score an impressive victory against the Broncos, but with the visitors' history of success it will be far from easy for the Cherries.

Sunday's finale at Langtree Park sees St Helens take on South Sydney Rabbitohs in a mouth watering clash



of the titans. Both sides were crowned champions in 2014, and the hosts are in sparkling form so far this season, piling on the points in recent victories over Catalans Dragons and Salford Red Devils; new head coach and club legend Keiron Cunningham couldn't have wished for a better start to his tenure.

South Sydney will pose stern competition for the Saints though. The side boasts some of the world's finest players right now, including the Wakefield-born Burgess brothers, George, Luke and Tom. St Helens will fancy their chances as perennial underdogs though, and with the try scoring capability of Tommy Makinson and intelligence of James Roby, anything is possible.

With the perceived gulf in class between Super League and NRL on grounds of wealth, the onus is on England's trio to prove any doubters wrong in this series. No matter the results, each fixture should prove to be intriguing and enthralling for fans of rugby league.

# Lucrative deal leaves football fans livid

Nancy Gillen  
Comment

Whether you are a football fan or not, everyone is aware of the vast amounts of money associated with 'The Beautiful Game', from player transfers to sponsorship deals.

Therefore, it was no surprise when

the new £5.136bn Premier League TV rights deal was recently announced. The deal, shared between TV giants Sky and BT Sport, will commence from the 2016/17 season for three seasons, with Sky paying £4.176bn to show 126 matches per season and BT paying £960m for 42 games.

Nonetheless, despite the expectation

that football TV rights would produce selling figures amounting to at least 8 noughts, many are shocked at the dramatic increase from the last deal agreed in 2012. Back then the deal was £3bn, meaning that in three years there has been a massive 70% increase. Looking at those figures, the new deal may seem obscene. Chief Executive of

the Premier League Richard Scudamore batted away this suggestion, "It is not. It is market forces. It is unscripted drama, the show the clubs put on."

The issue here, however, lies with whether the new deal will benefit the fan and reverse the trend of the spectator being exploited for their love of football. It is no secret that ticket prices have been rising for several years now and the BBC's Price of Football Survey has shown that the average price of the cheapest tickets has risen at twice the rate of the cost of living. It is easy to see why this has caused such outrage when football clubs are receiving more and more money from TV companies, and could be used to reduce ticket prices. It is hoped that this new TV deal will finally see this happen.

Another concern over the new deal is whether the money will be adequately invested in grassroots football in order to get as many as possible involved in football and improve existing young players. Enough investment in this area could have a positive impact on the state of English football, with young high-quality English players being scouted and developed.

The new deal can be seen as a ridiculous figure, a sign of the greedy corporate world that football has become. Radical action is necessary from both the Premier League and top-flight clubs for the effects to be felt by those that matter most, the fans.



© The Sun





# Diving rears its ugly head again

Nancy Gillen  
Football

What should have been viewed as an exciting and classic FA Cup match between a footballing giant and a small club from a lower league has been overshadowed by controversy.

Manchester United took the short trip to Deepdale to play Preston North End in the fifth round of the FA Cup, probably expecting an easy win. However, this is not what they got, with Preston going 1-0 up two minutes after play had resumed in the second half through a deflected Scott Laird strike. United managed to equalise and then go ahead in the 65th and 72nd respectively, but it wasn't until the 88th minute that controversy struck.

At first viewing, the Preston keeper appeared to trip Wayne Rooney in the penalty box, but replays showed the United captain jumped over the keeper's outstretched legs before falling to the ground in what seemed to be a dive. A penalty was awarded, which Rooney then converted, sealing the win.

After the game the pundits were split, with Kevin Kilbane claiming it was a dive and Phil Neville and Roy Hodgson arguing against this suggestion. Ex-footballers also took to twitter to air their view, with the majority certain that Rooney had dived.

Regardless of Rooney's intentions, diving has become a prevalent part of modern football which needs to be stamped out. It can be argued that United had all but won the cup tie which Rooney's penalty confirmed and the overall impact of the dive was insignificant. However the general attitude that diving is acceptable has

led to extremely significant and game-changing moments being created by this form of cheating, and without a change in attitude this will continue to happen.

The main problem with this is how to change this attitude. Diving is relatively easy to get away with if performed well, and even if caught, a

yellow card is the harshest punishment given out. The consequences of diving must outweigh the benefits of getting away with a dive, and so harsher punishments must be put in place. Without this it is hard to see how diving can be eradicated from football, and we may just have to accept it as part of the game.



Sky Sports ©

## The week in pictures: News in brief

Darren Clarke was appointed 2016 Ryder Cup captain for the golfing showdown in Minnesota.



Ronnie O'Sullivan's frustration at the Welsh open was epitomised by his early defeat to Matthew Stevens.



Racism in football was back in the spotlight as Chelsea fans refused to let a black man on the Metro.



© NY Post



# Sports clubs in Leeds: What's happening?

With three major sports clubs just a stone's throw away from Parkinson steps, professional sport is never far away in Leeds. The Gryphon takes a look at the fortunes of Leeds United, Leeds Rhinos and Yorkshire Carnegie in recent times and what the future holds.

## Leeds United

Peter White

Thus far, 2015 has certainly been a vast improvement on the roller coaster ride of 2014 for Leeds United. Following the drama of last season and the early stages of this campaign, it took until the New Year for any sort of stability to be implemented at the Elland Road club. Even at that stage, things looked pretty bleak with the side wallowing perilously close to the relegation zone, owner Massimo Cellino being barred from acting as a 'relevant person' until April, the club being hit with a transfer embargo after failing to meet Financial Fair

Play guidelines, and the departure of two high-profile players in Stephen Warnock and Jason Pearce.

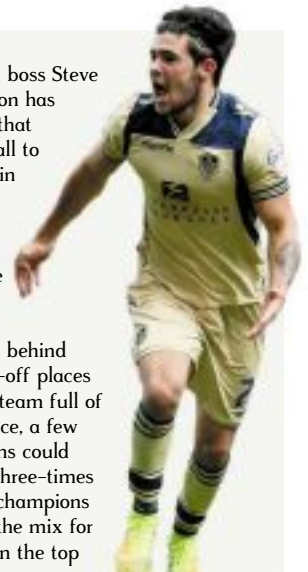
However, after his appointment as permanent head coach in November, Neil Redfearn has finally settled on his preferred XI and the club are certainly reaping the benefits. Ahead of Saturday's crunch clash against league leaders Middlesbrough, the Whites have won four out of their last five games and they have only lost one league game since the turn of the year. Andrew Umbers has come in as chairman in Cellino's temporary absence and he and chief operating officer Matt Child managed to work around the embargo

to bring in three new faces in January. Sol Bamba in particular has been a revelation and has even captained the side in two of his four appearances for the side.

In truth however, the change in fortunes can largely be attributed to the wealth of young talent that the Leeds team possesses. Redfearn trusts his youngsters having worked with them in his previous post in charge of the academy and Charlie Taylor, Sam Byram, Lewis Cook and Alex Mowatt are now all recognised as key first team players, while others such as Lewis Walters, Chris Dawson and Calvin Phillips are all knocking on the door.

Leeds currently sit in 13th place with 15 games to play. Whilst being careful to acknowledge that Leeds are not yet safe from the threat of relegation,

assistant boss Steve Thompson has insisted that there is all to play for in the rest of the season. With the Whites only 15 points behind the play-off places and the team full of confidence, a few more wins could see the three-times English champions right in the mix for a place in the top six.



## Leeds Rhinos

Daniel Nixon

Despite having won the Challenge Cup for the first time since 1999, Leeds Rhinos' performance in Super League last year left much to be desired. Having finished 6th and suffered an early exit from the play-offs, they will certainly be hoping for a better campaign in 2015.

The Rhinos are so far boasting a 100% record in the new league season. An opening day outing at Hull KR resulted in a tremendous first victory,

coming from behind to win 40-30 in what was an epic second half display. This was then followed up by a convincing 38-6 win over Widnes Vikings at Headingley. The squad could not have hoped for a better start and this will hopefully set the talented group of players in the right direction to improve on last year.

Adam Cuthbertson, the sole arrival from the close season, has added to a squad that was already composed of a strong blend of youth and experience

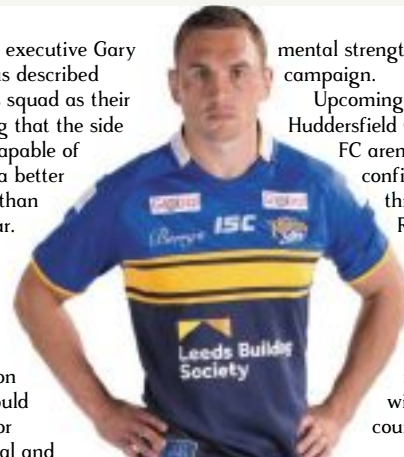
and Leeds chief executive Gary Hetherington has described the 2015 Rhinos squad as their best ever, stating that the side are absolutely capable of finishing off in a better league position than the previous year.

The club's early exit from the play-offs ultimately resulted in a longer pre-season which overall could pay dividends for the side's physical and

mental strength throughout the campaign.

Upcoming fixtures against Huddersfield Giants and Hull

FC aren't easy games, yet confidence will be flowing through the veins of the Rhinos who will look to capitalise on the average starts from their opposition. If the team can get a few more early wins in the bag, the team will certainly be on course for a good season.



## Yorkshire Carnegie

Alex Bowmer

Yorkshire Carnegie's season has been a story of ups and downs. Following the high of a third-place finish in 2013-2014, performance levels have dropped, and they are currently languishing in eighth. They changed their name from Leeds Carnegie one year ago in order to "broaden their appeal across the county", according to Sir Ian McGeechan.

The club has provided the ideal environment for Leeds students to ply their trade, with Alex Lozowski, an ex-Gryphon who graduated last summer, making several appearances for the team last campaign. He went on to sign for Wasps this summer, and has since put in some stellar performances.

Their league campaign has been largely disappointing and was compounded by an exit in the British & Irish Cup at the quarter-final stage

to Bristol Rugby. One of the standout players so far this campaign has been fly-half Harry Leonard, who has been very dependable with the boot. Full-back Christian Georgiou has also contributed a great deal, while flying winger Jonah Holmes is becoming increasingly instrumental as the season draws to a close. Despite being virtually assured of safety, the top four seems an unrealistic ambition

for Yorkshire Carnegie, given that Nottingham, who occupy the last promotion play-off place, are nine points ahead of them.

The next month should see them get some points on the board, as they face teams around them in the table, with home fixtures against Bedford Blues and Jersey, as well as away trips to Rotherham Titans and bottom side Plymouth Albion.

If they can finish the season strongly and hold onto their key players, they definitely have the opportunity to make a concerted push for the play-offs next year.





# Basketball battle goes to the buzzer

**Peter White**  
Men's Basketball  
Leeds Uni Is 77 - 74 Sheffield Is

The men's basketball Is succumbed to a heart-breaking defeat at the hands of a tough Sheffield side in a thrilling encounter at the Edge on Wednesday. Following their last-gasp victory against Leeds Beckett last week, confidence was high prior to kick-off as Uni looked to produce a similar performance that would ease the threat of relegation. However, with their opposition lying second in the table, Leeds knew that they were in for a tough game and the determination of both sides was evident from the off as the match started at a blistering pace which saw a plethora of chances created for both teams.

A time-out was called after six minutes of breath-taking action with Sheffield ahead 16-13. The away side had taken the lead and a large proportion of their points came as a result of free throws that were cheaply conceded by the home side. Leeds, on the contrary, were playing some great basketball and nine of their points came from three three-pointers including efforts from Aurimas Šeimys and Brayden Bernstein. The home side had enjoyed plenty of possession and knew that if they were more clinical in front of the hoop they had a great chance of winning the game.

Indeed, Killian Stanley added two points straight from the restart which sparked a period of end-to-end basketball with scores from both teams which kept the scores very close. However, Leeds were again guilty of conceding too many fouls and Sheffield were allowed to increase their lead from a series of free-throws which left Uni trailing 25-17 at the end of the first quarter.

Following the break, Leeds knew that they had to start making the most of their chances if they were going to avoid letting the game slip away. Yet, they continued to struggle to add to their score and the away side increased their advantage. Leeds weren't ready to lie down though and their first free throws of the day inspired a change in fortunes. Jordan Harwood was leading the side by example and a series of Leeds baskets matched anything that Sheffield could throw at them. The away side's lead was reduced to just two points by half-time following some great scores by Ben Araya, Stanley, Bernstein, and a brilliant three-pointer from Seimys, leaving the score 38-36 with 20 minutes left to play.

Following the interval, the intensity of the game ramped up even further with both sides eager for the vital victory. Points were exchanged by both teams but Leeds took the lead for the first time after Šeimys, Bernstein and Harwood all scored without reply

to make it 48-40. However, Sheffield came back fighting and despite another Harwood basket, left the court in the lead 51-50 at the end of the third quarter.

There was all to play for in the last 10 minutes and more end-to-end basketball left the score 60-60 halfway through the final period. A series of free throws for both sides later and Sheffield led 72-70 with just over a minute remaining. However, the home side conceded yet more fouls, allowing Sheffield to increase their lead which ultimately left Leeds with too much to do. Despite a couple of chances, the

game finished 77-74, leaving the home side left distraught as they gave a great account of themselves but just came up short against a team battling for promotion.

Despite the defeat, Leeds can take heart from a great performance in a game that they could have won on another day. Uni currently sit level with Leeds Beckett 2s and Sheffield Hallam 2s at the bottom of the league, however if they continue to play this way in their two remaining games, they will be hopeful of avoiding the drop. Certainly, next week's game away at Hallam is a must-win.



© Lucie England-Duce

## Try something new with Adam LeRoux

It had been a while since my last sporting adventure, with the Christmas break giving me time to rest the limbs that had been tested by quidditch, korfbal and krav maga last semester.

With mince pies being devoured on an hourly basis and eating close to my own weight in various varieties of cheese, it was fair to say I had recuperated ready for semester two, maybe overly so.

With that in mind the decision of where to start this year's excursions began. Hopefully something light and easy to start me off, Snooker and Pool society maybe? Darts anyone? I was even considering classing the Stitch and Bitch society as a sport at one point. Alas, the decision was made for me to really get the blood pumping, and burn off a bit of that stinking bishop at the same time, as taekwondo came calling.

Taekwondo, like many other martial arts, originates in Asia. The 'art of hand and foot' – as it translates – was pioneered by the Korean military in the 1950s, and has quickly gained popularity to be accepted into the Olympics in 2000.

The session was overseen by Master Andy Murray, a former British Champion and sixth degree black belt. A man with over 20 years of experience, what he doesn't know about taekwondo isn't worth knowing.

After a light warm up and stretch we were ready to go, and where better to start than with a few kicking drills? Finesse and technique are key to perfecting the kick, which makes practicing it all the more vital. First up was the roundhouse kick, possibly the most famous kick to most people, the classic pivot and swivel kick normally to the side of the body.

Although I may have been far from a natural, the guidance from the TKD team was great. With two years of taekwondo under his belt, my partner Kandish Karimi offered great assistance in helping me get to grips with the

skills.

Next came a moment nobody saw coming; as instructors Gina Koutsopoulou and Steve Derrig were demonstrating the next drill – to escape a headlock – I hear the dreaded words "Adam, come and show everyone how it's done".

Now, how is a man supposed to back out of such a command? Especially when 50 pairs of eyes turn to face you, and Gina Koutsopoulou, former World Champion Gina Koutsopoulou may I add, is waiting for you to join her? The answer, you can't.

So there I was, being put into a headlock by Steve – certainly something I didn't see coming at the start of the night – and showcasing my escapee ability to the masses. Put it this way, I'm no Harry Houdini when it comes to escape acts, but it made taekwondo one to remember that's for sure!

For anyone wanting to get involved in a martial art with excellent instructors and a wide variety of things to learn, give taekwondo a go. I promise they won't get you in a headlock, not on your first time anyway.



© Sam Broadley



# An away day with the Gryphons

**Adam LeRoux**  
Men's Volleyball  
Leeds Uni Is 2-3 Huddersfield Is

We don't get out much at *The Gryphon*, so when we got the chance to go on an away trip with one of the university's sports sides it was an offer we couldn't turn down.

The men's volleyball side were unbeaten going into their Northern Conference Cup quarter final match against Huddersfield on Wednesday, and with both teams unbeaten in their respective leagues the match was not to be missed.

Huddersfield went into the game on paper as underdogs, as they lead the league below Leeds, but The Gryphons weren't to be fooled. The hosts had finished just one place below Leeds last year but withdrew from the league before a ball had been spiked in this campaign and were demoted a league.

On the coach it was time to get to know the men behind the spikes, sets and digs on court. Nigel Sibanda, the team captain, seems tailor made for volleyball; standing at well over six foot and with a leap that a salmon would be jealous of. Tailor made for basketball as well it seems, which was the other sport Sibanda had to choose between when he was younger. Well, volleyball, basketball and chess that is, in which he has also represented his native Zimbabwe.

The side brings together a whole variety of cultures with Sibanda from Zimbabwe, Jen Hsien Hsu from Taiwan, and Mark Elgar coming all the way from Essex to name but a few, but together they are a force to be reckoned with.

The mood was relaxed on the bus, but once we arrived in Huddersfield the game faces were on, as the boys meant business. As we entered the newly refurbished sports hall in Huddersfield the tension could be cut with a knife. The hosts were ready and waiting, eying the Gryphons up like prey. As the visitors went to get changed the home side's warmup in the hall was one to behold, as it was carried out in complete silence, with the echoing pitter-patter of footsteps the only sound trickling

through the air. If Huddersfield were planning to be hostile, they had done it to perfection.

This was further added to as Leeds came back onto court, followed by close to 60 spectators, showing how much of a big tie this was destined to be. With warmups completed by both sides, and about 20 minutes behind schedule, the match duly got under way.

If Leeds had any sort of plan to begin with, it would have been to silence the raucous crowd who were very vocal with their support. If anything, they did the complete antithesis as they let their hosts race into a 6-0 lead.

It may have taken the boys some time to get to grips with their surroundings, but once they did they matched Huddersfield stride for stride in the first set. Strong blocking up front from Sibanda and Elgar, coupled with aggressive spiking from Savvas Anthis and Jen Hsien Hsu saw Leeds take the lead for the first time in the set as the set was coming to a close at 19-18.

With the crowd behind them Huddersfield always stood a chance, but Leeds gained momentum once more as they saved a match point to tie it at 25 apiece. Consequent spikes from both Jen Hsien Hsu and Elgar then settled the first in favour of the visitors. The jubilation was clear to see as the Gryphons tried to remain unfazed on court.

The neck and neck nature of the tie continued into the second set, with not more than two points between the two sides throughout. The game was mesmerising, albeit slightly marred by umpiring calls, with decisions going against both teams unfairly at times. Huddersfield were lucky not to be



Adam LeRoux ©

reprimanded after a player booted a ball against a wall in frustration after one such call, but regained their composure to take the second set 25-23.

In almost a carbon copy of the first set, Huddersfield took an early advantage, only to be pegged back once again by the outstanding Leeds play. Gabriel Leoni was setting perfectly and allowed the attack to blossom and keep Huddersfield on the back foot for the remainder of the set. Huddersfield were finally put to bed after a mammoth point towards the end of the third in which both teams had the ball multiple times. Their inability to find the killer blow gave Lucas Vigroux the chance to find the winner from close range which he converted. As the score ticked over to 25-20, another Leeds victory looked on the cards.

The Gryphons may have been accused of counting their chickens too early though, as once again Huddersfield came out with a point to prove and stormed into an early lead. The fans within the hall had even brought a megaphone with them for the occasion, making Huddersfield feel like the Allianz Arena in terms of atmosphere, which had a notable

impact on their players. The roar for every point won by the home side created a cacophony of echoing noise which grew with every point closer to winning the set.

In truth, Leeds were never quite in the fourth set, and let victory slip through their fingers as a crucial fifth began. Huddersfield's inclusion of their man-mountain at the net for a larger proportion of the last set definitely paid dividends. The venom he could create from an almost standing position proved devastating for Leeds time and time again, as well as his blocking of the incoming spikes from Elgar and Anthis.

From 8-8 in the last Leeds made one unforced error after another, which gifted Huddersfield the seven points needed to clinch victory and progression in the cup, much to the delight of their players and fans alike.

All good things must come to an end, but Leeds were disappointed by the defeat that ended their winning run in a match they knew they could have won.

All that was left now was the journey home, where the drink started flowing and the result was all but forgotten.

| Set 1 |         |              | Set 2 |         |              | Set 3 |         |              | Set 4 |         |              | Set 5 |         |              |
|-------|---------|--------------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|---------|--------------|
| Leeds |         | Huddersfield | Leeds |         | Huddersfield | Leeds |         | Huddersfield | Leeds |         | Huddersfield | Leeds |         | Huddersfield |
| 12    | Winners | 11           | 12    | Winners | 7            | 19    | Winners | 8            | 13    | Winners | 10           | 3     | Winners | 4            |
| 8     | Blocks  | 3            | 11    | Blocks  | 2            | 6     | Blocks  | 3            | 8     | Blocks  | 8            | 1     | Blocks  | 5            |
| 9     | Errors  | 10           | 9     | Errors  | 8            | 7     | Errors  | 10           | 7     | Errors  | 6            | 9     | Errors  | 5            |





# Leeds caught cold as Manchester Met progress



Carlotta Grimaldi ©

## Euan Cunningham Men's Football

Leeds Uni Is 0-1 Manchester Met 2s

The Leeds men's football Is were beaten 1-0 by Manchester Met 2s in the cup on a chilly afternoon at Weetwood.

Met immediately looked sharp and strong, imposing their fast and direct game on Uni. The full backs were having to work extremely hard to contain their wingers, and keeper Alex Gunn was called into action early, making a fine save. Uni took time to get their passing game going, and were relying more on the sterling efforts of Gunn and centre back Alex Day to keep the score at 0-0.

As the half progressed Uni slowly grew into the game, with Danny Cunningham constantly keeping the Met defenders on their toes. Mike Stockdale and Archie Christie were battling away in midfield, but overall the game was a scrappy affair until half time, with neither team creating anything much in the way of goalmouth action. The most excitement in fact was gained from the antics of the Met bench, and to some extent their players, who seemed to react to every single foul by a Uni player

as if the recipient was lucky to escape with his life. Needless to say, the referee tended not to take too much notice of this.

The first shot on target from a Uni player failed to arrive until shortly before the break. Cunningham at last finding a small amount of space in the area and turning, but failing to trouble the Met keeper. Met were themselves looking dangerous from corners, with several loose balls dropping to the edge of the Uni box before being blasted over.

Fortunately the game did improve in the second half, with both teams clearly having been told at the interval in no uncertain terms that performances needed to improve. Christie went close with a clever free kick, which he chose to drill under the wall, before Met had two golden chances to take the lead. First, Gunn had to make a flying stop to prevent a curling effort going in the top corner, before a set piece fell invitingly to a Met player no more than four yards out, but he could only smash it against the top of the bar and over.

Uni were also now creating chances - Stockdale slammed over, Cunningham rounded the keeper but just failed to

evade a sliding defender at the crucial moment, and Christie also blazed over. Eventually, one of the sides was bound to take one of these chances.

Unfortunately it was Met who did finally capitalise one of these moments, and it was an excellent strike. After a frenetic period of play, the ball was fed into the Met striker on the edge of the box in a fairly central position, and he swept it first time right into the bottom corner of the net, to finish with finesse.

Coming with only 10 minutes to go, this gave Uni little time to try and find way back into the game. Despite a late onslaught where virtually all the players were camped in the Met penalty area, they were unable to work the ball into an area where someone could have that definite shot, and Met dealt well with the aerial bombardment.

At the final whistle the Met players and staff exploded with joy, while the Leeds team looked inconsolable. Improvement is certainly necessary if they intend to avoid similar pain in the league between now and the end of the season.



**Badminton Is (W)** 6-2 Southampton Is (Cup)

**Basketball Is (M)** 74-77 Sheffield Is  
**Basketball (W)** 28-95 Worcester Is (Trophy)

**Fencing (M)** 135-90 Manchester 2s (Cup)  
**Fencing (W)** 132-72 Keele Is

**Football Is (M)** 0-1 Manchester Met Is (Cup)  
**Football 3s (M)** 5-2 Sheffield Hallam 3s  
**Football Is (W)** 1-2 St Andrews Is (Trophy)  
**Football 2s (W)** 4-4 Bradford Is

**Golf** 2.5-3.5 Sheffield Hallam Is (Cup)

**Hockey Is (M)** 2-4 Oxford Is (Champ)

**Hockey 5s (M)** 1-3 Huddersfield Is  
**Hockey 6s (M)** 1-1 Sheffield 4s  
**Hockey Is (W)** 1-1 Oxford Is (Champ) (1-2 pens)  
**Hockey 2s (W)** 3-3 Manchester 2s (Cup) (1-2 pens)  
**Hockey 4s (W)** 1-3 Sheffield 3s  
**Hockey 7s (W)** 1-2 Leeds Beckett 4s

**Lacrosse Is (M)** 10-5 Chester Is (Cup)  
**Lacrosse Is (W)** 4-24 Bristol Is (Champ)  
**Lacrosse 2s (W)** 10-4 Durham 4s (Cup)

**Netball Is** 22-28 Cardiff Is (Champ)  
**Netball 4s** 34-50 Sheffield Hallam 2s

**Rugby League Is** 22-12 Liverpool JM Is  
**Rugby League 2s** 10-52 Newcastle 2s

**Rugby Union 2s (M)** 10-24 Aberdeen Is (Trophy)  
**Rugby Union 3s (M)** 17-0 Sheffield 2s (Cup)  
**Rugby Union 4s (M)** 20-7 Sunderland 1st (Plate)  
**Rugby Union (W)** 7-14 Nottingham Is (Trophy)

**Squash Is (M)** 1-4 UWE (Champ)  
**Squash 3s (M)** 1-3 Manchester 2s (Cup)  
**Squash Is (W)** 3-1 Loughborough Is (Champ)  
**Squash 2s (W)** 2-2 Bangor Is (C) (Bangor on points)

**Tennis Is (M)** 6-6 Durham 2s (Trophy) (Tie-Break 2-1)  
**Tennis Is (W)** 8-4 York Is (Cup)

**Volleyball (M)** 2-3 Huddersfield Is (Cup)  
**Volleyball (W)** 3-0 York Is (Cup)

**Waterpolo (M)** 30-3 USW Is (Champ)





Sport in Leeds: We focus on clubs in Leeds and their current state of affairs p. 20



Men's volleyball taste defeat for the first time this season at Huddersfield p. 22



The newly-expanded World Club Series kicks off with a bang this weekend p. 18



Uni come so close to victory in agonising loss to Sheffield in basketball p. 21



Alice Greenfield ©

# Leeds make opponents Keele over

● Strong all-round team performance leads team to easy victory ● Gryphons look set to improve on last year's fifth place

**Alex Bowmer**  
Women's Fencing  
Leeds Uni Is 132-72 Keele Is

Leeds proved too strong for Keele in the women's fencing at The Edge on Wednesday. The Gryphons went into the match very confident of victory, having put the Staffordshire outfit to the sword in their own backyard a fortnight ago.

With four wins and four losses this season, the women have had a very up and down campaign, and were looking to finish their season strongly in their final two matches

The first weapon that was contested was the épée, which unlike the foil and sabre events, allows you to score on all parts of the body.

For this reason, points are scored at a much slower rate as the fighters tend to be more cautious. Vicki Varosky set the tone with a commanding opening display. Ava Martinez-Lambert initially found the going tough on the piste, and her adversary caught her with a couple of crafty shots despite often being on the back foot. Despite this, Leeds were still in the lead, and it was extended by captain Cotrin Smith and Forrest Edens. The home team encountered very few difficulties and, despite Keele putting up a very good fight, the favourites were firmly in the ascendancy.

It was in the foil where Leeds really shone. Smith got off the mark with a commanding display and the score snowballed from there, as Keele could

not prevent the onslaught coming their way.

Leeds were lunging and stabbing at will, and any doubt over the outcome was quickly dispelled, with Martinez-Lambert, Edens and Smith all excelling.

The final weapon was the sabre, which is known for the shortness of its points and the fact that you can slash with the blade as well as stab. Madeleine Ee delivered for the hosts, with her opponents unable to repel her constant attacks.

Keele had some joy, but once they did give themselves hope of a comeback, Leeds began to stretch their advantage again. Smith and Martinez-Lambert also showed their class and rarely seemed flustered, moving in clinically when they

had the chance.

Ee continued to stand out, and none of the Keele sabreurs had any answers to her sharp movement and devastating accuracy. Despite this, they never threw in the towel, and collected a flurry of points towards the end of the contest. However, Leeds were long out of sight by then, and Ee wrapped up the victory with customary aplomb to secure a 132-72 win.

First place may be out of reach for the Gryphons this year, but they will still be looking to finish with a flourish in their final match against Manchester in two weeks' time.