



## Mind Matters

*The Gryphon* covers a variety of issues for Mental Health Awareness Day



## Features

Sam Pepper and the perils of vlogging



## Science

The threat of Ebola – are we in danger?



# Students targeted in £3m phone fraud

Charlotte Mason  
News Editor

A student is believed to have been arrested for alleged involvement in a suspected smartphone fraud scheme which has scammed students out of thousands of pounds. The student, who has not been named for legal reasons, is said to have been implicated in a pyramid scheme which targeted university students across the country.

The news follows the launch of Operation Rosewood by the National Mobile Phone Crime Unit to investigate hundreds of cases of suspected fraud.

Under the scheme, students were approached and offered cash incentives to register for a smartphone contract. They would then be asked to send on the phone to an unnamed private company in exchange for a £50 reward and the promise of a monthly income. However, students involved were left responsible for phone bills and are now reported to be incurring 'significant' debts. Police also believe students who divulged bank details may be at

risk of identity fraud.

Students are said to have pitched the scheme to friends by sending a Facebook message which asked for bank details, describing 'a rare opportunity to make quite a lot of money for very little work'.

A number of students at Leeds have been victims of the scheme, with those affected urged to contact the Student Advice Centre. In a statement, the Union said, 'Leeds University Union is supporting West Yorkshire Police in their investigation but after already supporting many students who have been affected, stresses that the welfare of Leeds students is paramount'.

Police are speaking to one student who is now struggling with debts of over £10,000.

Around twenty people have now been arrested in connection with the scheme, though no charges have been made. The Gryphon understands around two-thirds of reported cases have yet to be investigated, with a suspected £3 million of students' money involved.

The National Mobile Phone Crime Unit has confirmed that thousands of pounds

have been made from the scheme.

Speaking to this newspaper, the University's Police Liaison Officer PC Matt Guy described the case as 'shocking'. He explained, 'Many students do not know they have been subject to a fraud until the bills come through their post box and debt agencies contact them, often for amounts in excess of £1,000'.

The National Mobile Phone Crime Unit has written to a number of UK universities, including Leeds, urging them to highlight the issue of identity fraud among students.

Operation leader, Detective Inspector Louise Shea, said, 'We understand this matter will be of considerable concern to the students and family members affected as they will be accruing significant debts. We are committed to ensuring that those engaged in fraudulent activity do not escape justice. We urge any students that have been affected to come forward to assist the investigation and prevent this happening to anyone else'.

The investigation continues.



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## Editor's Letter

'LAD culture' is a term that is rejoiced by some, and rebuked by others. The marmite of University vocabulary, it can be used to both term a carefree attitude, as well as an insult towards those who embrace in stereotypes. This week, it typified the actions of LSE's Male Rugby club. Circulating a Freshers' booklet that condemned 'poly scum', 'beast-like women' and 'homosexual debauchery', the leaflet sent the world of academia into a standstill as we wondered just exactly how they thought that they were that untouchable.

To some, the actions might have even been interpreted as a joke too far, but it seems that the society have a history of crossing the line. Nazi uniforms and Guantanamo Bay parodies have been made by the club, who have seen themselves as an untouchable alternative to the Bullingdon Club. This is not a matter of fun policing, but ensuring that every person that enters the university has a right to experience an environment that doesn't tolerate such a cavalier attitude towards discrimination. In a way, it doesn't even seem that the people involved are using the terms they have with vitriol; it is a response of automatons who fail to see the gravitas of their long-sedimented prejudice.

The LSESU should be commended for the swift nature of their actions, but it also needs to be noted that there needs to be a change in consciousness in order for the rugby team's students, and the student population as a whole, to progress from this situation. As those students received validation from their peers in the comfort of their microcosms, their prejudices entered an echo chamber, leading to an awry sense of narcissism and desensitisation. After all, the simplicity of thinking before speaking can get lost in the cavernous tropes of banter. It is comforting to know in the wake of such action, both sides of the 'LAD culture' party have teamed together to say that enough is enough.

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# Eduroam? Edu-won't

Abla Klau  
News Editor

Campus experienced an internet blackout on Tuesday, with Wi-Fi service Eduroam offline and access to the VLE disrupted.

The problem affected access to student timetables via the UniLeeds app as well as card payment machines in the Union.

Students expressed their anger at

the technical slip-up on Twitter, calling it an 'outrage'. A third-year Music student said: 'It's annoying because I haven't memorised my timetable yet. I wish I'd printed it because I don't know where I'm meant to be going!'

Engineers were called to investigate the issue around midday and reported that the problem had been fixed by 4pm.

# Alarm causes 'weekend of hell'

Charlotte Mason  
News Editor

Students who live on a Hyde Park street have suffered a 'weekend of hell' as their neighbour's burglar alarm sounded for 48 hours non-stop.

Residents on Ebberston Terrace reported the disturbance to the Council on Saturday, but were left to endure the 'incessant ringing' until assistance arrived two days later at 4pm on Monday afternoon.

Third-year English student Ruby Lott-Lavigna and her three housemates claim they were unable to study or sleep properly, describing the situation as 'ridiculous'.

Ms Lott-Lavigna told *The Gryphon*, 'It was very frustrating calling the council numerous times for them to just say they couldn't do anything or that they were giving it to their appropriate departments.'

I couldn't work at all and I had to fall

asleep to music to drown out the noise'.

The students also contacted the alarm company, who refused to act as the house was no longer on their records.

Council officials eventually contacted the residents of the offending house, who were away in London at the time.

A spokesperson for Leeds City Council said, 'Although this is not a property managed by us, members of our noise nuisance team contacted the agents who are responsible for managing the property at the earliest opportunity to make sure they were aware.'

However, Ms Lott-Lavigna said, 'They couldn't be bothered to contact anyone until Monday'.

She added, 'When the alarm started I couldn't have possibly believed it would have continued non-stop, day and night, for two days'.

# Matthew's marathon of marathons



Hugh Baillie-Laine

Leeds RAG member and Civil Engineering Postgraduate, Matthew Haythornthwaite, is to run marathons between October 2014 and October 2015.

Matthew, who will continue to study whilst completing the challenge, aims to raise £10,000 for St Gemma's Hospice and Brain Tumour Research and Support. He has taken on the challenge in memory of his father, who died of a brain tumour in October 2005.

Each marathon will represent a year since his dad's passing with the final one marking the ten year anniversary. He said,

'In order to mark the 10 years since my dad passed away of a brain tumour, I've set up a marathon challenge which is going to test both my physical and mental stamina'

The total distance that Matthew will cover over the course of his challenge is 262 miles, the equivalent of running from Leeds to Portsmouth.

Matthew is determined to complete the challenge, but is in no doubt about the difficulties he will face. He has also said he will be organising further fundraising events throughout the year to ensure his target is reached.

You can keep up to date with Matthew's progress on his Twitter feed '@10marathonschal' and on his Facebook page '10 Marathons Challenge'.

Matthew also aims to collect the equivalent of a mile of pennies, which is 80,000 in total. Donation boxes will be set up around University and in the RAG office.

To donate, visit 'justgiving.com/10marathonschallenge' or text: 'TMC66 £(amount) to 70070'.

# Campus Watch

## News from campuses around the country

### LSE Rugby Team disbanded

London School of Economics has disbanded its men's rugby club after a leaflet it distributed 'brought shame' on the University.

The Freshers' week leaflet referred to women who play sport as 'beast-like' and banned 'homosexual debauchery'.

The team has been withdrawn from all competitions this academic year, as their Students' Union feels their actions didn't suit their philosophy of tolerance.

Jake Hookem

### Huddersfield Uni Guilty of Tax Avoidance

The University of Huddersfield has been found guilty of 'abusive tax avoidance'.

A tax tribunal ruled that they unlawfully claimed back £612,000 in VAT, masked by a complex leasing scheme. The claim dates back to the construction of the University's School of Computing and Engineering in 1996.

The University does have the option of appealing against the ruling, and is currently considering its options.

Greg Whitaker

### Loughborough Security Staff use Carry Breathalysers

Security staff may soon carry breathalysers as standard in Loughborough.

5 nightclubs in the city are part of a pilot scheme under which security staff can breathalyse potential customers and refuse entry those they believe have consumed too much alcohol.

Loughborough University's Students' Union is included in this scheme, which may result in a clamp down on pre-drinking before nights out.

Danny Anderson

### Leeds Beckett and York St. John's Vice Chancellor's Set to Retire

The Vice-Chancellors of two Yorkshire based universities have both set a retirement date of next September.

Susan Price, who was appointed at the newly named Leeds Beckett in 2010, said it has been 'an honour and a privilege to lead the university through such an exciting chapter.'

Meanwhile, York St John's David Fleming admitted his decision was made due to recent ill health.

Greg Whitaker



# Halo may 'intimidate' students, warns Uni

Charlotte Mason  
News Editor

Popular nightclub Halo has been criticised for plans to expand the venue, with officials warning that students using the 24-hour library next door would be 'intimidated' by clubbers.

A planning application to extend opening hours from 3.30am to 6am, as well as adding two outdoor bars to the club, has been opposed by the University, Police and environmental health workers.

In an objection notice, the University's solicitors explained,

'We are concerned that students wishing to use the new library during the night may feel unsafe or intimidated by users of the club'.

The £27.5m Laidlaw Library, which is due to open in spring 2015, is situated next to Halo.

The University's statement also touched on the 'large number of crimes taking place in Halo'.



Leeds City Council reported 52 thefts, 14 assaults, seven drunk and disorderly arrests and three sexual assaults at the club in the past year.

West Yorkshire Police's licensing officer, Cat Sanderson said,

'The premises need to be able to control their venue and customers within their current hours of operating before applying for additional hours'.

She added,

'Currently, I have no confidence that

they are able to do this'.

The University's Police Liaison Officer PC Matt Guy told *The Gryphon*,

'People need to have higher personal standards of behaviour when on a night-out and venues like Halo need to work much harder to stop the behaviour of their customers impacting others'.

The University's Vice Chancellor has previously addressed concerns about the decision to open the Laidlaw Library next to Halo. Speaking to this paper, he explained,

'I'm told that the university sold the lease of that church and subsequently it became a nightclub. I've been asking estates people whether we can buy that back because I think it is a facility that could be used for other purposes'.

The club's planning application is to be reviewed by the Council later this month.

Halo were contacted by this newspaper for comment, but did not respond by the time of printing.

## Student suffers panic attack in 'overcrowded' Stylus

Jake Hookem  
News Editor

A student has complained of 'a complete disregard for safety and welfare' after they suffered an anxiety attack at an allegedly overcrowded union event.

The incident occurred at the 'Road to Leeds Arrival Party' in Leeds University Union's Stylus venue on 20th September.

The student, who wishes to remain anonymous, told *The Gryphon* that their anxiety disorder triggered a panic attack, brought on by the large amount of people in the venue.

When the student attempted to leave via a rear exit, accompanied by a friend, security blocked their path, with security reportedly asking them 'why had they even gone to a club if they had anxiety issues'.

An LUU source told this newspaper that the event may have been an 'issue with the event being over-crowded', and that 'monitoring of numbers coming in and out was not adequate'.

Lawrence Thompson, President of Mind Matters society, has expressed 'deep

concern' over this situation. In a statement he said,

'This represents an unacceptable response to mental health difficulties: a lack of compassion exacerbated by ignorance has meant an already difficult situation was made worse.'

'It is also inconsistent with the values of inclusivity and compassion which makes LUU one of the best Unions in the country.'

All staff at Leeds University Union have training in dealing with people who suffer from mental health issues, but sometimes external staff are brought in for larger events. These staff are not guaranteed to have such training.

Since the incident, Mind Matters have put forward a Better Union idea to ensure all security personnel are trained and aware of their duty of care to students with mental health difficulties. When asked for a comment, a Leeds University Union spokesperson said,

'Student welfare is an absolute priority for the Union, we take all complaints very seriously and we are currently investigating this incident.'

## Uni pledges £100m to attract top profs



Valeria Popa

The University has pledged to invest £100 million in its biggest ever recruitment drive.

The scheme will fund 250 fellowships for researchers to start a career in academics at Leeds.

Successful applicants will pursue a five-year training programme leading to a position as associate professor, pursuing research and contributing to the development of students' modules.

It is hoped the investment will allow research into 'major global challenges', including health, energy and sustainability.

The University's Vice-Chancellor, Sir Alan Langlands said: 'Leeds is making an unparalleled investment in new academic

staff who will be given the opportunity to build strong, independent research portfolios and deliver innovative research-led teaching. This will have a positive impact on the profile of research and student education at Leeds.'

Candidates must be an internationally-published researcher and hold a PhD in the relevant field.

Second-year Classics PhD candidate, Leonardo Costantini told *The Gryphon*: '£100m is undoubtedly a significant investment, but I think recruiting new academics is vital for a university in order to keep up with international research standards.'

The application deadline is 16th November, with the first hundred 'great minds' due to begin training at the start of the next academic year.



# Taxi firms called out for 'made up' fares

Jake Hookem  
News Editor

Students have complained about poor service from various taxi operators last weekend, with some alleging the meter was ignored and prices made up on the spot.

Services across Leeds were affected by drivers taking time off work to observe Eid al-Adha. The three-day celebration is one of the most important in the Muslim calendar, and forms one of two Eid feast festivals.

The reduced number of drivers saw delays of several hours for many students trying to get taxis, and a number of those people could not even get through to the call centre.

When students did manage to get in a taxi, it is alleged some drivers were setting their own prices and ignoring the meter.

A third-year English student told *The Gryphon*,

'My Amber Cars driver told me that students were being overcharged for taxi fares on Saturday, with some being charged £40

to get from the city centre to Headingley.'

Amber are one of the most popular taxi firms amongst Leeds University students, and benefit from a good relationship with the university's union. This has led to an agreement by which students can leave their student card with a car as a deposit for payment if they have no cash on them.

Explaining the situation, a spokesperson from Amber cars said,

'We had one of our busiest weekends ever over the Eid period. Approximately 60% of the drivers were celebrating at this time.

'We received over 38,000 calls across Saturday and Sunday, so it was impossible to answer everything coming in to the call centre.

'We are not aware of meters not being used and this is not company policy at all. All drivers must have their meters visible at all times and the meter must be on, with the fare on display so the customer can see it. It is imperative that complaints of this nature are forwarded direct to the company'.



Wikimedia Commons ©

# 'No girls allowed!': students face sexism at Varsity

Abla Klaa  
News Editor

Two female University of Leeds students were victims of sexist abuse at the Varsity grand final according to a complaint put forward to the University. The incident is said to have occurred during the Varsity showpiece event match last Wednesday evening.

Speaking to *The Gryphon*, the victims' friend who witnessed the assault identified the abusers to be 'rugby players' which were 'recognisable by their blue shirts and chinos'.

According to the witness, who wishes to remain anonymous, the women were looking for their seats in the stand when they passed the 'crowded stand of second year players'. It is alleged that the players had abused the victims by throwing beer cups at them, shouting "No Girls Allowed!".

The witness said, 'my two friends were hurt and covered in beer. It took them half an hour to clean them be-



Will Stanley Film and Photography ©

fore they could join us in our block.'

The victims informed the University's Vice Chancellor, Sir Alan Langlands, of the incident who was quick to respond, 'this is simply unacceptable and in direct contradiction of the University's values, in particular our commitment to equality and inclusion'.

The incident coincides with the project introduced by Equality and

Diversity Officer, Gemma Turner which aims to tackle discriminatory behaviour.

In a statement made to the newspaper, Gemma said:

'I'm really sorry to hear about this incident. At the Union, we do not tolerate any kind of sexual harassment whether it's verbal or physical, and that policy extends to our events.

I've made it one of my personal

objectives to roll out our zero tolerance to sexual harassment policy across the city as it's vital that students feel comfortable to report harassment and are confident that it will be taken seriously by staff in any venue. If any student has experienced any form of sexual harassment I urge them to get in touch with the Union's Student Advice Centre or contact me directly."



# Lecturers to consider strike action

Suhail Dhanji

Students have been urged to support lecturers in a vote which could lead to strike action over 'radical' changes to pensions.

The Universities and Colleges Union is asking members in 67 UK universities, including Leeds, to vote on the proposed walk-out in a ballot this month.

The news follows a campaign by the Universities and Colleges Union to resist proposed cuts which the union claims would see thousands of pounds wiped from lecturers' pensions.

A report by UCU warns that some staff would lose over £200,000 of savings, with staff who have worked in the sector longest and moved up the pay grades to be hardest hit by changes. In the event of a 'yes' vote, members could undertake industrial action, including a marking boycott and a refusal to set exams.

Critics argue the decision would cause further disruption to students following strike action over pay earlier this year.



UCU Secretary General, Sally Hunt explained, 'Staff see their pensions as deferred pay and are understandably angry at the impact these proposals would have'.

She added, 'We are making it very clear in this ballot that if members back industrial action, and there is no negotiated solution, we will be looking to quickly move to an assessment and exam boycott'.

The University's UCU representative for pensions, Dr Nigel Bubbs said, 'It would help

no end if all students in pre-1992 higher education institutions were to send a message to their Vice Chancellors in support of the lecturers'.

He told students, 'Support your lecturers as they defend their deferred pay, their pension'.

Other universities where UCU members have been asked to vote include Sheffield, Oxford and University College London. The ballot closes on Monday 20th October.

## Tributes paid to History grad



Sean Hayes

A recent History graduate passed away on

Sunday. Matthew Cragg was 21 and originally from Surrey.

A School representative said, 'Matthew was a keen rugby player and appeared a very fit young man. I found him a very personable young man and he was always pleasant'. A tutor described Matthew's 'friendliness, kindness and generosity'.

Leeds University Rugby Union also paid tribute via their official Twitter page, 'To mark the tragic passing of a true Gryphon and an unbelievable friend, teams will be wearing a black armband in remembrance of Matt Cragg'.

Tributes continue to pour in on social media since Matthew's tragic passing.

FULL TRIBUTE at [THEGRYPHON.CO.UK](http://THEGRYPHON.CO.UK)

## Breaking down the stories that matter.

## The Digest.



Carolyn Kaster, AP ©

### White House Security breach

The director of the US Secret Service, Julia Pierson, was forced to resign last week following a serious security breach at the White House. It was reported that Omar Gonzalez, 42, had scaled the fence to enter the building and was tackled by security officers inside the East room which is used for presidential functions. President Obama had left the building 10 minutes before. The incident occurred just three days after an armed contractor with convictions of assault had shared a lift with the President. Obama has responded in defence of the Service.

Hugh Baillie-Lane



BBC ©

### Funeral service for David Miller

The memorial service of Leeds engineering graduate David Miller, 24, took place last Friday at the Holy Trinity Church in Jersey. Mr Miller was found dead on the Thai island of Koh Tao alongside Hannah Witheridge, a 23-year-old from Great Yarmouth on the 15th September. Many of those in attendance of the service wore colourful clothing, respecting the wishes of the Miller family. David's brother Michael, described him as a 'trusted friend and unshakable ally'. Reports from Thai police suggest that the pair were murdered in the early hours of the morning. A full inquest will begin on the 6th January.

Danny Anderson



Reuters ©

### Service Held for Murdered UK Hostage

Last Sunday a "service of reflection" was held in Salford for Alan Henning, who was killed by Islamic State last week. On Friday, the militant group posted an online video, which appeared to show the beheading of the Salford-based taxi driver. Mr. Henning, 47, became the second British aid worker in less than a month to be executed by IS, after David Haines' execution last month. On Sunday, Mr. Henning's family spoke publicly for the first time after his death, saying: "He will be remembered for this and we as a family are extremely proud of him and what he achieved and the people he helped."

Greg Whitaker



Getty ©

### ICC refuse delay to Kenya Pres. trial

President Uhuru Kenyatta's appeal to postpone his hearing later this month has been rejected by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Mr Kenyatta's lawyers requested his hearing be either postponed or ran via video link. The ICC however pressed that the matters to be discussed are at a critical stage and directly involve the interests of the accused and the victims. Mr Kenyatta has been accused of organizing ethnic massacres following allegations of fraud after the 2007 elections.

Ellie Pugh



# 'The overall picture is pretty gloomy for UK universities and it makes the next election pretty dramatic'

*The Gryphon spoke to Times Higher Education editor, Phil Baty, on spending cuts, tuition fees and why British academia is facing an uncertain future*

Charlotte Mason  
News Editor

## What's going on in higher education at the moment?

A big issue at the moment is the rise of Asia, given the fairly dramatic spending increase on higher education in countries like China and South Korea. I think that's in stark contrast to what's happening in the UK. Fundamentally, it comes down to governments which are absolutely committed to their universities as drivers of economic growth, putting universities at the heart of their economic policies and funding universities very generously. There's quite a clear sense that governments willing to invest in their universities are seeing real success and governments that aren't are seeing problems.

"I think there is a serious risk to places like Leeds, where really good universities are really suffering"

## How can British universities be more competitive?

British universities are fantastic, resilient and innovative, so I'm sure they're not all doomed. We're attractive to top academics from around the world in terms of salaries and employment. However, it wouldn't take long for these advantages to be eroded by lack of funding and investment. We need to make sure funding is distributed in a way that allows for strong, regional universities to stay strong, so we're not just allowing only a tiny elite to thrive. I also think rhetoric around immigration is a real issue. We need to make sure universities still get to bring in global talent. International students pay a lot of money and help our universities to stay competitive in terms of funding. They also bring masses of skills and talent which we need to nurture.

## Do you think the introduction of £9,000 tuition fees has affected UK university rankings?

We've yet to see the full effect of the new tuition



fees. Ministers say the fees will give universities more money, but all they've really done is keep them running. Students pay three times more, but universities certainly don't suddenly see a major injection in funding. The fees have helped us to cling on but by no means have they let English universities stay competitive. It's tough on the students and it's tough on the universities, but £9,000 tuition fees allow universities to weather the worst of austerity cuts and to survive the worst of the public spending cuts that other publicly-funded bodies suffered. The overall picture is pretty gloomy for the UK and it really makes the next election pretty dramatic. There's a fairly serious issue now of how you put British universities on a sustainable footing when our competitors are putting a lot more money in.

"It's tough on the students and it's tough on the universities, but £9,000 tuition fees allow universities to survive"

## What does the future hold for UK universities?

I think for an elite few, things should be OK. The marketisation of the sector and increasing concentration of research funding on a smaller group means the overall funding for researchers is tight

— more and more of it is going to a smaller group. The London-Oxford-Cambridge 'golden triangle' will probably be relatively safe. I think there is a problem with a serious risk to places like Leeds and some of the great northern institutions, where really good universities are really suffering. There's an economic imbalance where London is the place where all the investment's going, which is a big risk for the strength of the country as a whole. The top five universities in the UK are all in this Oxford-Cambridge-London triangle.

– The UK has lost three universities from the world top 200 list this year

– Leeds University's world rank has fallen from 139th to 146th

– Leeds ranks 21st for UK universities, having failed to make the top 30 last year

– London has the greatest concentration of first-class universities in the world

– The UK is second only to the US in world university rankings

Full rankings at [www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings](http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings)



# Exploitation in the online age: Sam Pepper, social media and the vlogosphere

*YouTube star Sam Pepper has recently been condemned by the vlogging community for making sexually coercive videos, as well as the persistent exploitation of his fans. The Gryphon talks to one fan, who herself experienced coercive e-mails from the former Big Brother contestant.*

Brigitte Phillips  
Features Editor

There's something wicked in the state of YouTube. Those of you who have spent any time on the website over the past year or so will know the problem. Starting with Ed Blann (Eddplant) in Summer 2013, at least five prominent members of the British YouTube community have been outed as sexual and emotional abusers, with many using their position to pressurise fans and underage girls into performing sexual acts. With this many incidents of sexual abuse being revealed in the past 14 months, it is clear to see that it's a serious problem in the online video community.

One of the most recent outings has been Sam Pepper. His apparent disrespect for women has hardly been kept a secret. His past videos include *How To Get*

*A Girlfriend Easy*, in which Sam handcuffs himself to unsuspecting women and tells them that they are '[his] girlfriend now' (even forcing one woman to kiss him in order for him to remove the handcuffs), and *How to Pick Up Girls With a Lasso* which pretty much does what it says on the tin.

Despite the women involved in these videos looking clearly distressed, little was done about it in the YouTube community until one of Sam's more recent videos *Fake Hand Ass Pinch Prank* was uploaded. This 'prank' features Pepper wearing a fake arm to fool women he gropes with his real hand into thinking the sexual harassment is being perpetrated by innocent passersby. Many of the women confront him with one woman telling him, 'I don't like that,' but Sam laughs in response and continues to grope her.

Understandably, the YouTube and wider internet

community was in uproar when 'Fake Hand Ass Pinch Prank' was published, resulting in an open letter from prominent sex education YouTuber Laci Green. This open letter has now been cosigned by numerous heavyweights in the online video community, such as the vlogbrothers, Tyler Oakley, and Grace Helbig.

Following the open letter, Sam went on to upload a 'second part' of his video series, in which women grope men, and a final video explaining that the previous two had merely been 'social experiments' that had been staged and scripted to highlight domestic violence. However, several women featured in the first video have since come forward on twitter and revealed that prior consent wasn't obtained before filming.

While Sam Pepper's videos grabbed media attention, his response to Laci Green's open letter was kept under wraps.

Sam has since claimed that his emails had been hacked, but it appears that this isn't the first time

that he has sent inappropriate messages to women. *The Gryphon* speaks to Emily about her experience with Sam Pepper.

'I was a fan of Sam at the time, it was 2012 and he'd just started a business selling his own hats. He put a status on his facebook asking for girls to send pictures to his email address to be considered to model the hats on the website. The website already had photos of a girl wearing underwear and some of his hats. He put

“It made me feel pressured to send him dirty pictures, otherwise he wouldn't like me. Being a fan of his, I didn't want that.”

a status on his facebook asking for girls to send pictures to his email address to be considered to model the hats on the website. The website already had photos of a girl wearing underwear and some of his hats.

'I thought I'd email some photos, thinking nothing would come of it and, that there'd be dozens of professional models emailing him photos. He emailed back straight away, asking me to take photos in my underwear "like the girl on the website". I assumed that that would be the brief the model would be given, and that he was talking on a professional level. I was in two minds about it, half-thinking that it could be professional, but part of me didn't trust him. I told him that I didn't trust him with underwear photos, and told him that I thought that he might post them to his facebook and slut-shame me or something. He said "I won't" and then asked for my skype. The part of me that was a fan of him was quite keen on talking to him on skype, but it just seemed dodgy. I told him I didn't trust him with photos and he said "I won't trust me. I want them DIRTY."

'He then proceeded to keep asking me for dirty photos. I said "I'm not gonna do it, obviously" and he said "Fair enough. This could have been fun." Partly due to his fame, and partly due to the fact I was still



Laci Green's tweets expose the intimidating emails from Sam Pepper



“If something makes you uncomfortable, you should voice your opinion, because there will be other people who think the same way as you that have also been too scared to say anything.”

his fan, I didn't want the conversation to end there. So I asked him if he was doing any fan meet ups soon and if I could have a hug at one. He said "no hugs for you, you've not been nice."

'It made me feel pressured to send him dirty pictures, otherwise he wouldn't like me. Being a fan of his, I didn't want that. I think famous people have power over their fans, they idolise them. I think he was using that power to his own advantage and not thinking about anybody else's feelings, he got caught up in fame and his power.

'I posted the screenshots to Facebook because I found the whole situation a bit unbelievable and laughable. Then I had three of my friends saying that he'd done the same thing to them, one where he'd asked for photos, one where he'd told her she was cute (she was underage), and one where the girl messaged me to warn me off him, because she'd had personal experience of physical relations with him, and she said he "uses girls" and that he only spoke to her when he wanted sex.

'As of then, I've seen him in a different light to how I did before, I've been wary of him ever since. I watched his videos to observe his behaviour, not as entertainment. As soon as I saw the lasso videos, I felt uncomfortable and extremely sorry for the girls in the

situation. Imagine feeling a rope around you completely unexpected? You'd feel like you were being kidnapped. I thought it was inappropriate, but since it was labeled as a prank and most people seemed to find it funny, I thought I was just being sensitive and kept my feelings to myself.

'I think that that is part of the problem of the power famous people have. You feel as if you can't say bad things about them. You follow them completely blindly. I've read what some of his supporters are saying on twitter. Like "oh Sam, I'd let you assault me" and I think that they're so blinded by it all that they can't think straight. Celebrities shouldn't use their fame in this way, they shouldn't use it to get people to do whatever they say, they should use it to change the world. People listen to their every word, they could make such a difference. But instead, he seems to use it to make girls do what he wants. I think that he's lost sight of himself. He needs to look in the mirror and bring himself back to humanity, and think about other people's feelings. I think that goes for any celebrity, they have followers and should inspire them in a positive way, not use them and then throw them away once they're done with them.

'In my opinion, the way he's trying to cover up it all is him panicking, hoping he can make things right for

himself again. He knows he's done something wrong. But he's chose the wrong path and tried to get out of it by lying and acting like nothing has happened, pretending that he was in the right all along. I feel sorry for him, because he's got himself into a difficult situation, and saying sorry is so incredibly hard, but it was the right thing to do, and I don't think he was strong enough to come out with it. I don't think he quite knows what it's like to get hurt and used. I feel like I'd have so much more respect for him if he'd just said "Sorry." And I hope that he gets the strength to do that, rethink his life choices, and move on.

'I think that it's important for people to not keep quiet about any opinion they have. I think if something makes you uncomfortable, you should voice your opinion, because there will be other people who think the same way as you that have also been too scared to say anything. And you can make a difference to the way things are if you're strong enough to say what you feel. It's a domino effect and I think that's exactly what has happened with Sam. One person has had the strength to say he was being inappropriate, and other people have followed. And that's why everybody is coming out with stories about him now. Power in numbers. Not because they all want fame or are attention-seeking. Because they were too scared to do so beforehand.' ■



# The changing view of mental health

*Freya Govus, Leeds University Union's Welfare Officer, looks into the problems surrounding the way people understand and talk about mental health.*

Freya Govus

When faced with difficult emotional struggle at university, it's often hard to know where to turn. It can be a challenge for people suffering from mental health issues to know whether they need to seek help or not, let alone where to get it from. Even at a University like Leeds, which has such a well regarded range of services across the campus, Union and city, it can sometimes be a struggle for students to access those services.

It's not hard to see why the nation may be struggling to deal with its mental health problem. A national investigation has found that in April this year, there were 3,460 fewer nurses working in mental health than there were two years previously. A study this year carried out by the charity Mind found that out of 2,000 people surveyed, more than half had waited over three months for an assessment, and half of respondents said that they did not have enough sessions to help them recover. It is clear to see that the mental health services offered by our NHS are struggling, with headline after headline warning of the inevitable crisis facing our health service.

As if it wasn't difficult enough for people to access these services, it can be even harder for students. University, while being an amazing opportunity for so many students, can be an intense and sometimes triggering experience. Often, if a student arrives at University and registers to see someone about their mental health, by the time they get to the top of the waiting list, it is already Christmas – meaning they're at home (if they are not originally from Leeds). By the time they are the top of the list again it is Easter, and so it goes. But why is it so hard to access mental health services in particular? Why is mental health treated so differently to physical health?

It's arguably down to stigma. People do not understand what it is to have a

mental health problem. People generally do not seem to understand what it is to have 'mental health' at all. Mental health is not something that only affects those who suffer from problems, but in fact something we all have. Some of us are lucky, and never experience issues such as Depression or Anxiety, but some of us do experience mental ill health. However, mental health is not a binary. Mental

diagnose and clearly define can lead to it being 'othered', and seen as something dissimilar to physical health. And while it has its differences, it makes it no less serious or 'real' than physical health issues.

The subject of language plays into the way society interacts with mental health quite strongly. While many people may not be conscious of it, using words such as 'crazy' can contribute, albeit

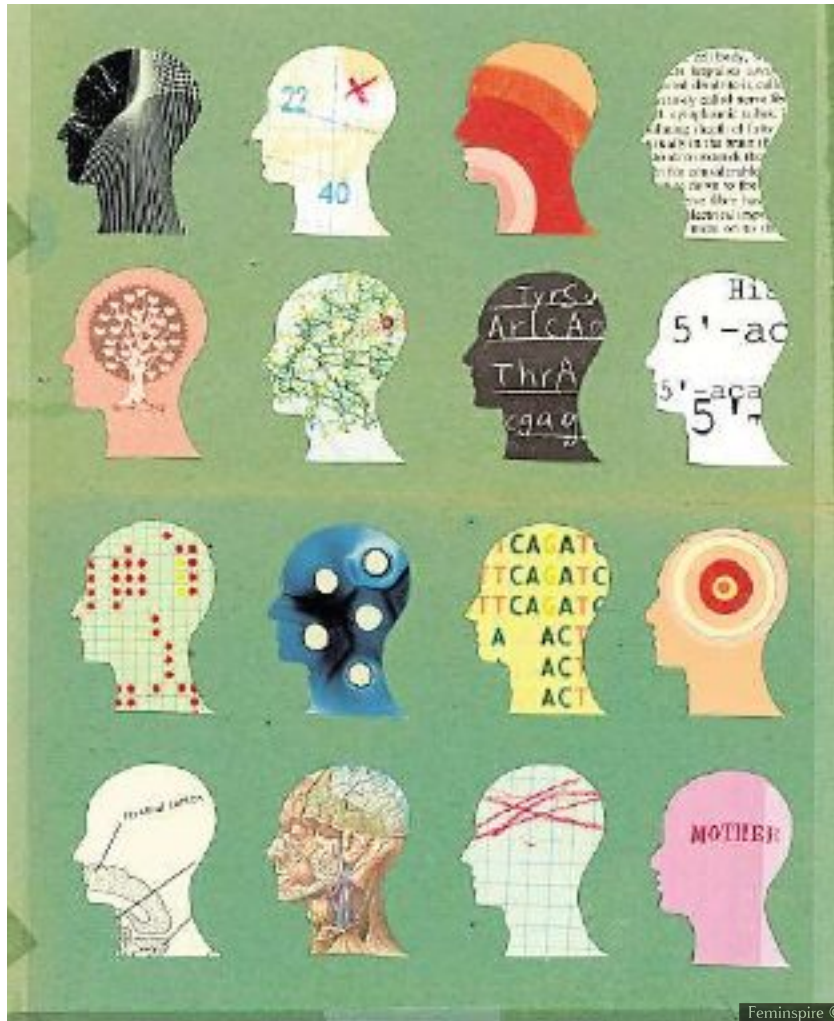
those who actually struggle with those problems.

Natalie, Wellbeing Manager for the Student Advice Centre, extrapolates on some of the issues that students at the University of Leeds have to deal with, and bring to the student advice office. She notes how the conventional problems and conceptions of mental health issue are changing and expanding. '[The Advice Centre] have traditionally collated data about these core areas of our work (money, academic, housing) but we are increasingly seeing students whose difficulties have until now been recorded as "Other Matters". This includes a range including mental health difficulties, personal & relationship problems and issues relating to disabilities.'

Mental health issues are just as serious as physical issues, and can in fact lead to serious physical health issues. One of the most problematic consequences of mental health issues is the inability to see that you might have a problem. Often, there are avenues you can pursue in order to gain a better insight into your own mental health: seek an appointment with your GP, self-refer for the university's Counselling service, or even call the Leeds Nightline. If you are worried about a friend, then remember that the Advice Centre in LUU can help you out.

Mental health is still perceived as a vague and intangible concept that we find hard to pin down because of the inability to tie the illness to a part of the body. Allowing flexibility in our understanding of what 'mental health' is gives room for change and improvement in a national health system. It's clear that conceptions of mental health, both from those

who struggle with issues and from those who deal with them, are becoming more flexible and inclusive. The idea that our society may be ready to accommodate that redefinition and free itself from the stigma, at this point in time, might not seem like such an impossible one. ■



health is much like a spectrum – some people may suffer from rather severe disorders, whereas the symptoms of other sufferers are seen as more mild. Anyone can fall ill, and in fact one in four people experience a mental health issue in any given year. Mental health difficulties are not easy to spot, and they are not easy to diagnose. The fact that it is harder to

unconsciously, to the demonisation of those with mental health issues. This has the potential to entirely marginalise those with mental health issues. But it isn't only words like 'crazy' that can create a misconception around mental health. People often flippantly refer to themselves as being depressed or as being an insomniac, which can often deligitimise



# Comment

## Mind Matters.

Lawrence Thompson, President of Mind Matters, talks about poor mental health treatment in the UK.

Emi Herbert discusses stigma surrounding mental health, and how help is always at hand

## Human Rights

Rachel Megan Barker on why human rights are more important than ever

## Hong Kong

Tim Van Gardingen looks at events in Hong Kong, and just why it is so important

# A repeat of the past in Hong Kong?

Tim van Gardingen  
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The events in Hong Kong are set to become a historic moment, as the people of the region do something which has proven deadly in the past – protest against the moves of the Chinese government. Some sources are already comparing recent events to the build-up of the tragic 1989 Tiananmen Square disaster – there is a lingering fear from some observers that the same may happen again in Hong Kong.

Pro-democracy protests are nothing new in Hong Kong. Ever since the former British colony was handed over to the mainland in 1997, there have been protests. Hong Kong has some political autonomy, but after Article 23, which essentially gives mainland China power to veto any laws considered subversive, the protests have become larger and larger. The yearly protest held in July boasted a record 500,000 participants (police reports claim 100,000) for 2014.

The current protests however are fuelled by anger at Beijing's control of the upcoming 2017 Hong Kong Chief-executive elections. The people of the region want, quite rightly, an open vote. Beijing has limited the election to only three people, all chosen by a Beijing approved board.

This will result in only the views of the mainland being represented – views which don't fit particularly well with Hong Kong, with its strong British influences. Such a small breadth of representation is simply bad democratic politics, and although the mainland may not embrace democracy yet, they should respect Hong Kong's autonomy and allow them the unbiased vote they deserve.



www.abc.net.au

The problem of accurate representation for the Hong Kong people leads to another interesting point. It would be wrong to claim that Hong Kong is more British in its mentality than Chinese, but a poll from South China Morning Post says more or less exactly that. 90% of those asked responded that, given the choice, they would prefer to return to

*“90% of those asked responded that, given the choice, they would prefer to return to being a British colony rather than being part of China”*

being a British colony rather than being part of China. Although we must bear in mind that this newspaper is printed in English, meaning readers are perhaps more British inclined than those who read in Cantonese or Mandarin Chinese, it does tell us that to only have Beijing-sympathetic policies represented in the election simply does not represent

everyone in Hong Kong.

As for the growing concerns that the protests may descend into a horror like Tiananmen, Hong Kong luckily has some defence. The region still has some of the older British rules which in short should reduce the usage of some of the brutal tactics the government has used in the past (and still uses in regions such as Tibet and Xinjiang). The fear rises mainly from the use of tear gas on protesters armed only with umbrellas.

The global support for the protesters, such as on campus this week, will also hopefully pressure China's leader Xi Jinping to avoid more excessively aggressive control methods. The trouble is that that pressure doesn't appear to have stopped the use of tear gas in the first place.

Hong Kong's protesters are completely justified in their stand. Although there is without a doubt a terrifying risk with their campaign, if they succeed, this historical moment may change Chinese politics as a whole.

## Tiananmen Square...

### The facts

The Tiananmen Square protest of 1989 was a student led, pro-democracy movement, demanding transparency in the Communist Chinese government. It culminated in a bloody massacre by the Chinese military in a desperate attempt to quash the sit-in protest, leaving an unknown death toll that ranges from a few hundred, to thousands. The movement galvanised support around the country, with around 400 cities in a state of unrest at one time, causing a declaration of martial law, and ultimately, military action.



# Your Mind does Matter

Lawrence Thompson  
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Imagine a type of illness affecting 1 in 4 people every year, where people in crisis were being made to travel up to 300 miles to get treatment. Imagine this health problem was the biggest killer of men aged 18-40. Imagine there being a 2.3% cut in that particular NHS budget, despite increasing need and a history of being underfunded. Imagine too, that this particular health problem often resulted in discrimination in the criminal justice system, in employment, and in housing. Imagine people were receiving sectioning orders to free beds in overcrowded wards.

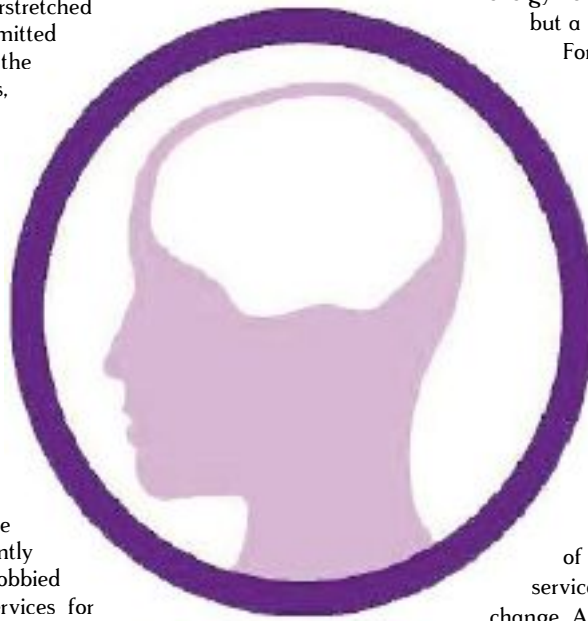
This is the story of mental health in the UK. It is often described as the Cinderella service of the NHS, as it is consistently ignored and neglected by NHS leadership. In 2011, public health leaders argued that something had to change with mental health funding, and, granted, something did change; the funding was cut further. Where is the criticism about our society's approach to mental health coming from? It comes from the corners of society that are exhausted by their outrage, growing cynical about the possibility of change. It comes from charities overstretched and under-supported. It will be one day admitted in shame that, as a country, we condemned the most severely mentally ill to overcrowded wards, overcrowded prisons or, with recent welfare changes, humiliating impoverishment.

On International Mental Health Day, it is worth reflecting as to where the "movement" is heading. Think tanks such as Reform are looking at how to evaluate policy impact in terms of well-being rather than simply in financial terms. Teachers are looking to incorporate mental health on the curriculum, and politicians such as Norman Lamb, Paul Burstow and Luciana Berger are working to improve the system from the inside. Change is coming; just at far too slow a pace.

Young people are also becoming more organised: Young Minds and Student Minds are national organisations that have only recently formed. Last year my society, Mind Matters, lobbied the University and the Union to improve services for students, improve attitudes and seek to support the mental health of their staff; the review process is drawing to a close and will soon report its findings.

Without prejudging its recommendations, it's clear we have a fine opportunity to become the golden standard for mental health support in UK Universities. Other campuses should look to Leeds where Nightline run a confidential listening service, where Mind Matters runs a peer-Support Group for mental health problems and a drop-in session for signposting and advice, where Student Minds run a peer-Support Group for eating disorders, where LGBT+ run a drop-in coffee hour where you can receive signposting or just have a chat. Many of these support avenues have only been available for the last two years, so of course, massive progress has been made.

In the end, rather than asking why it is that on days like these we are having conversations about mental health, the discussion really should be about why you're not speaking up to.



# You're not alone

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As I pulled in to the car park of my halls in first year, I was filled with an all-consuming, sickening dread. How could I begin the new challenge of uni life when I was still exhausted from the battles I'd faced since my GCSEs? Was I allowed a fresh start in my new environment? And ultimately, how long could I keep up the charade of being 'normal'?

Much to my surprise, I did manage to create a new persona in those tentative first few weeks. I made close friends, starting eating normally again and felt the weight of depression begin to be lifted by genuine contentment. However, this didn't last forever and when second year arrived, the pressure of academic expectations coupled with new health challenges meant my mental health problems came back with a vengeance. My weight plummeted, my anxiety grew and most terrifyingly, I began to have panic attacks so severe I felt unable to leave the house. I focused what energy remained on academia, resulting in good grades but a non-existent social life.

Fortunately, I was not left to fight through this on my own. With support from my department, disability services and mental health professionals I was able to persevere and take back the power that my fear had taken from me.

In many ways, my past has even been of benefit to me, providing a personal relevance to the science I study and enabling me to support friends through their own difficult times.

Statistics show that I am not alone in my experience at university. In a study conducted by the NUS, 20 per cent of students considered themselves to have experienced mental illness and over 1 in 10 students felt suicidal at some point during their studies. Most shockingly, 90 per cent of these students did not utilise university support services despite their feelings of distress. This needs to change. As well as the potential for great personal growth and enjoyment, university life comes with a whole host of pressures – from finance to academic work – which may be detrimental to one's wellbeing. Coupled with lack of sleep, poor diet and excessive alcohol consumption, it's little wonder that students are feeling the strain.

So what can we do about it? My advice to you is simple. If you can relate in any way to my story, don't be afraid to ask for help from your GP or personal tutor. Whether this involves cognitive behavioural therapy to modify unhelpful thinking patterns or a change in exam venue to reduce stress, the support is available if you ask for it. And if you are a friend of someone who's struggling, just being there to listen over a cup of tea will mean more to them than you realise.

Mental health problems are nothing to be ashamed of, and I hope you'll join me in helping to break down stigma, one conversation at a time.



# Human rights? Yes please!

Rachel Megan Barker

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Human rights aren't something most people get excited about, or even think about on a day to day basis. When human rights are guaranteed and protected it's easy to forget about them; when you live without the daily fear of torture, when the government does not prevent you from associating with who you want or expressing yourself the way you want, when you're guaranteed a fair trial if accused of a crime, it's easy to forget that these rights have not always been assured, that they still aren't in much of the world, and that they can be taken away.

David Cameron's plans to scrap the Human Rights Act and leave the European Court of Human Rights are incredibly dangerous, while his plans to bring in a 'British Bill of Human Rights' are unclear and unworkable. Under the proposals, UK citizens would not have the full protection of the convention in domestic courts, but instead would rely on a document written by the Government, which will make distinctions between 'serious' and 'trivial' cases (are any human rights abuse cases 'trivial'?) and also differentiating between those who are 'responsible' and those who are 'not responsible' for human rights violations. Wandering into such murky waters with human rights – which should be seen as absolute and infallible – is an alarming prospect.

If you have the time and money (which, in itself, is a really big 'if'), you may still be able to take cases to Strasbourg – however, the UK Government will have the power to ignore

their rulings. Nonetheless, Cameron has said that he wishes to remain a signatory of the European Convention on Human Rights, effectively making it a case of being involved in when it is convenient, but being exempt of the Human Rights Act so when it is not. Unsurprisingly, the international body that oversees the convention has said that pulling out of the Human Rights Act is inconsistent with remaining a signatory.

What David Cameron's plans will do is deny citizens and residents of the UK the right to redress when the Government breaches fundamental freedoms. The Human Rights Act is not a 'just in case' document to be used in a dystopian future where a corrupt government oversteps its boundaries; it is a

document which in recent history has proven incredibly effective and useful. For example, it has been used by the victims of the rapist John Warboys to hold the police to account for failing to investigate their case, as well as by the

**"If our Government starts picking and choosing which human rights it wants to uphold, other countries are going to start doing the same"**

patients of Mid-Staffordshire NHS trust to force the authorities to give them redress for their treatment.

Not only would this be domestically detrimental, there would also be international implications; the Convention is

meant to protect human rights across Europe, and if our Government wants to start picking and choosing which human rights it wants to uphold, other countries are going to start taking that as license to do the same; I'm sure Vladimir Putin will be delighted about the Tories' plans.

Domenic Grieve, the former Attorney General (who Cameron replaced with Chris Grayling, who has far less principled views on the issue of human rights) has criticised the move as a terrible way for us to act on the international stage. Bad for us nationally and bad for many others internationally, these plans threaten our human rights which we might sometimes take for granted, but we should never want to see taken away.



## Fast Facts

**1 in 5**

people are considering emigrating from Hong Kong

**1,700**

bed closures in mental health since 2011

**8**

human rights cases, out of 1,700, were upheld in the UK last year



# Does social media ruin relationships?

Social media has transformed dramatically over the past decade. This technology has the potential to reunite friends and allow family to keep in touch over long distances, but has come under criticism for ruining communication and stifling our social skills. *The Gryphon Debate* asks whether social media really harms our relationships as much as we think?



photo: wikimedia commons

## No

Rachael Dillon & Nina Harris

Love it or loathe it, social media is here to stay. Despite the barrage of criticism heaped at sites like Facebook, the fact remains that the majority of young people use social networking to build and maintain friendships.

While everyone hates the friend who sits checking Instagram and Twitter every five seconds, even more annoying is the one person who is constantly out of the loop. Freshers: how many new friends have you added in the past few weeks? Certainly in the run-up to uni, contacting new flatmates and people on your course took some of the stress away from what you were constantly reminded would be the 'biggest change of your life.' From looking at possible societies

While the 'Selfie Generation' is constantly accused of narcissism and shallowness, who doesn't enjoy snooping through holiday snaps of your primary school best friend?

Even grandparents are jumping on the social media bandwagon, using Facebook as a means to further embarrass their "precious darlings".

With people living increasingly jet-setting lifestyles, social networking offers a permanence to relationships which otherwise would have been lost. And though face-to-face conversation may be under threat, surely some form of contact is better than none? Although young people can sometimes be zoned into a 'virtual world,' when used in moderation

31,456,000  
Users on Facebook

26%  
of whom are between the 25-34 age bracket

to joining the subject 'induction' Facebook pages, if you weren't up to date with these groups you would arrive at uni already on the back foot

As a fresher, you really are a small fish in a big pond, so keeping in touch is vital after meeting someone in a seminar or on a night out. For people who find socialising difficult, social media can bridge friendships which otherwise may not have progressed. The awkwardness of asking for someone's number is solved with the words 'Friend Request'.

*1 in 3 social media users reported feeling more lonely and isolated after using Facebook, according to researchers at the German universities Humboldt and Darmstadt Technical.*

social media is a sophisticated platform that makes friendships easier. For this reason, it has become the most prominent networking tool in our society today. The overarching fact of the matter is that the majority of those who criticise this medium still have and use it. So while the relentless Farmville requests may at times tempt you to delete your account, hang on in there because overall it's worth it.

Marcus Rowe

## Yes

Earlier this year I was at the airport, when I saw a middle-aged woman appear at the Arrivals gate and rush towards her waiting mother. What surprised me was that the first thing she did was not greet her mother, but instead took a selfie of the two of them. Only after she had satisfied her lust for online attention did she engage in an actual, physical conversation. Call me old fashioned, but I'm more inclined to say 'hi' when I meet somebody who I haven't seen in a while.

I'm surprised that many people

*"I'm surprised that many people seem to think that their online audience is more important than the people they are actually with..."*

seem to think that their online audience is more important than the people they are actually with. This manifests itself in all sorts of ways: from placing your phone on the table in front of you when you're out for a coffee with a friend to relentlessly photographing everything you do rather than enjoying the moment. It seems strange to me that so many people want to become their own personal paparazzo.

Last year I was living in Vienna, a thousand miles from home on the other side of Europe and I found that Facebook was the most effective way of keeping everybody up to date with what I was doing. It worked pretty well and it meant that I didn't have to put too much effort into staying in touch with all my friends and family. But soon I

tired of their distinctively unimaginative responses to my dull posts and I ran out of news for them so I decided to take drastic action: I put pen to paper and for the first time in my life I wrote letters to some of my friends, posted them and didn't expect a reply for a while. It's almost unthinkable in this age of instant messaging and instant friendship: a response in a week rather than a minute. The replies I received were genuine and heartfelt and I urge you to give it a go: write a letter to someone you haven't seen in a while, tell them what you're doing, how you feel and what your plans are. You will almost certainly surprise them.

Sending a letter is a statement and a commitment. It can convey far more detail and emotion than any comment, status or tweet and it shows that you have made time in your busy schedule for somebody else. But, like me, once you've written your letter you'll probably need to ask your friend what their address is. And for that your first

55-64 Years...

*The fastest growing age bracket of Facebook users.*

port of call will almost certainly be some kind of social media. I'm not saying that everybody should suddenly stop using any kind of social media; it has its place and it has its uses. However, letting it become our only form of communication is all too easy and can leave our relationships feeling empty and unfulfilling.

The rise of UK film festivals in the past few years has been meteoric and LIFF is no exception. This Yorkshire institution, now in its 28th year, is renowned for championing new releases, cult classics, underground breakthroughs and spectacular documentaries. This year, the festival takes place from the 5th to the 20th of November with over two hundred and fifty screenings across the city.

In previous years, eventual Academy Award winning films like *Gravity*, *Argo* and *The Artist*, have been screened at the festival. With that in mind, don't hesitate to take a chance on a film you might not usually see. You never know, maybe you'll see the next big thing before it's cool and with tickets costing just £6 for students there's no excuse to not get involved. Be sure to check out [leedsfilm.com](http://leedsfilm.com) for the complete programme and information on tickets and venues.

## Our Picks of the Pack

### Testament of Youth / The Taking (Opening Gala)

A double bill of Yorkshire's latest cinematic offerings open the Festival this year, starting with the adaptation of Vera Brittain's classic World War One memoir, *Testament of Youth*. Starring rising talent Alicia Vikander, *Game of Thrones* resident moody bloke Kit Harington and *The Wire* alumni Dominic West, it's set to be an emotional affair. Showing straight after is *The Taking*, a taught thriller directed by Dominic Brunt, known to most as Paddy on Emmerdale. This is his second film, filmed completely on location in the Dales, and with the cast and crew in attendance, it's sure to be a great way to kick off proceedings.

### Concerning Violence

A Swedish documentary film about the struggles of Africa against colonial rule in the 1960s and 70s, *Concerning Violence* is an unflinching portrait of a country driven to the edge that is guaranteed to make you think. It was also the recipient of an award at the highly prestigious Berlin Film Festival earlier this year.

### Showpieces with Alan Moore

One of the most celebrated comic book artists of all time makes a rare public appearance to present his new work, Showpieces. A collection of short films, these are the first works Moore has written for the screen, and having the man himself in attendance will make the evening all the more special.

### The Kingdom of Dreams and Madness

This completely unique documentary offers an unprecedented peak into the iconic world of Studio Ghibli and legendary director Hayao Miyazaki, responsible for capturing the hearts and imaginations of countless children and adults alike through films such as *Spirited Away* and *Ponyo*.

### Birdman (Closing Gala)

One of the most hotly anticipated films of the year, Birdman is receiving its UK premiere at LIFF. Directed by the man behind *Babel* and *Beautiful*, this dark comedy is a superhero film with a different, and stars Michael Keaton, Edward Norton and Emma Stone. If the insane trailer is anything to go by, it's going to be unmissable.

## The Best of the Rest

### The Imitation Game

WWII spy drama starring *Sherlock* favourite Benedict Cumberbatch.

### Tusk

Body horror from *Dogma* director Kevin Smith.

### The Drop

Thriller starring LIFF favourite Tom Hardy and the late great James Gandolfini.

### Once in a Lifetime

A day of concert films including The Beastie Boys' *Awesome....I Shot That!*, The Who's *The Kids are Alright* and a brand new print of The Talking Heads' *Stop Making Sense*.

### Winter Sleep

Winner of this year's Palme D'or at Cannes.

### What We Do in the Shadows

Vampire comedy from the Flight of the Conchords team.



# The African Ebola plight – a Transatlantic cause for concern?



*Despite the protective clothing worn by medical staff, over 120 have died after contracting the Ebola virus*

**Sam McMaster**

Ebola has reached America. This does sound extremely disconcerting but it's important to look at the bigger issues surrounding the incident and get to the facts.

Although the case in the USA has been in the news recently it is important not to overlook the real issue, the outbreak in West Africa. It has been covered in the news extensively yet it seems that the response has been totally inadequate from the UN, and is almost being overshadowed by the case in America. This would be best addressed by first looking at what Ebola is, what causes it and the horrific effects it can have on those unlucky enough to contract it.

Ebola's proper name is Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever (EHF) or more often than not, just Ebola. It is a viral disease that affects humans and other primates and can be caused by four viruses, all classified under the genus (part of the naming classification of organisms) *Ebolavirus*.

The virus can be transmitted via blood or bodily fluids, therefore the disposal of dead bodies and the quarantine of the infected must be carried out with utmost care to ensure no further infection. Unfortunately, the lesser developed health systems of some African countries struggle to contain the spread of infection. Also, consuming bush meat such as bats, gorillas and chimpanzees increases the likelihood of transmission

to people.

Ebola was originally discovered in 1976, when the first identified case hit the small rural village of Yambuku in the northern Democratic Republic of Congo. The victim was village school master Mabalo Lokela, who had toured the area for ten days before being diagnosed with the new disease on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1976. He died almost 2 weeks later. Since then there have been multiple outbreaks in the other countries of Sub-Saharan Africa including Sudan, Gabon, Uganda and further outbreaks in the Congo.

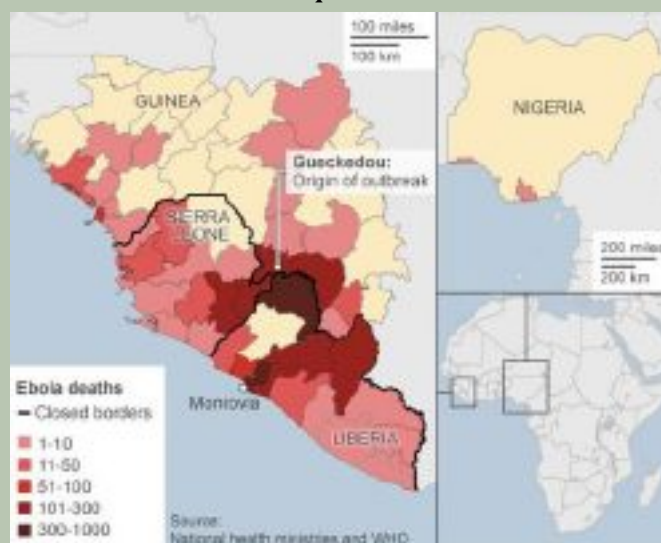
The signs and symptoms of Ebola can first appear flu-like, with fatigue, headaches, joint, muscle and abdominal pain. In addition to that some

sufferers also experience vomiting, diarrhoea and loss of appetite. Less common symptoms include hiccups, a sore throat, chest pain, shortness of breath and trouble swallowing. In about 50% of cases a skin rash is also present. These early symptoms can often appear to be like other tropical fevers such as malaria and dengue fever, but the worst is yet to come.

About a week after the appearance of the initial symptoms, the victim will begin to experience bleeding and a reduced blood clotting ability; this includes reddened eyes, alongside internal and mucous membrane bleeding, such as bleeding in the nose, gums, and genitalia. If that wasn't bad enough, some sufferers vomit blood



## Ebola Outbreak Map



The progression of current Ebola outbreak:

- 6<sup>th</sup> September 2014 – First case of Ebola, 2 year old boy who died in the village of Meliandou, Guinea
- 19<sup>th</sup> March – Guinean Health Ministry announces an unknown viral haemorrhagic fever has infected 35 people and killed 23
- 25<sup>th</sup> March – World Health Organisation reports an outbreak of Ebola in the Southeast of the country, Liberia and Sierra Leone are also being investigated. 86 cases and 59 deaths so far
- 31<sup>st</sup> March – America send a 5 person team to assist in Guinea. The virus has reached Liberia. By 30<sup>th</sup> April there are 221 suspected cases and 146 deaths, 25 of these are health workers and 16 of them have died
- June – Liberia's capital Monrovia has reported cases and the outbreak has spread to Sierra Leone
- 17<sup>th</sup> July – Number of suspected cases has risen to 442 and the first case is reported in Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital
- 25<sup>th</sup> July – First death in Nigeria and 353 people are being monitored in Lagos, 451 in Port Harcourt
- 29<sup>th</sup> August – first cases of Ebola reaches Senegal
- 30<sup>th</sup> September – Ebola reaches USA
- 7<sup>th</sup> October – Nurse in Spain is first case of Ebola contracted outside Africa

and also have blood in their stool. The heaviest bleeding is generally confined to the intestines and often indicates that death is on the doorstep. If there is no improvement within 7 to 16 days, the sufferer will most likely die from multiple organ failure.

Ebola, along with other viruses like the flu are spread virally, making them notoriously difficult to prevent and cure. Methods of prevention of spreading can be washing and sterilising surfaces, regular hand washing and avoiding contact with the infected. Any researchers or doctors working with the virus must wear sealed pressure suits to avoid infection. Quarantines are usually enforced around areas where infection is high. Any treatment administered is purely supportive, this includes management of pain and anxiety, and replacement of

lost fluids.

Reassuringly, we shouldn't be worried about an epidemic developing in America. The sole sufferer of Ebola in America was Thomas Eric Duncan, a Liberian national who travelled from Monrovia, Liberia on 19<sup>th</sup> September to Dallas, Texas. Prior to travelling to the USA, Mr. Duncan helped to transport his friend's daughter, Marthalene Williams, to hospital as she was suffering from Ebola. Unfortunately they were turned away as the hospital was full, indicative of how resources in Africa are being stretched to the limit. Tragically, along with almost 3500 other sufferers, Marthalene Williams died shortly afterwards.

Departing Liberia, Duncan covered up his exposure to Ebola. He arrived in Dallas on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September and stayed with his partner and five children.

He began experiencing symptoms on 24<sup>th</sup> September and travelled to Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital later the next day. He was reported to have a fever, headache, abdominal pain and was urinating infrequently. When asked by a nurse, he confirmed he had travelled from Liberia but had not been around anyone who was sick. The hospital issued multiple statements detailing whether Duncan's condition was relayed to the doctor, however this held no bearing once Duncan had begun treatment.

Due to the lack of information, he was diagnosed with a 'low-grade viral disease' and was sent home with antibiotics. On 28<sup>th</sup> September he began vomiting and was returned to hospital by ambulance; the Ebola diagnosis was confirmed by the Centre for Disease Control and prevention (CDC) on 30<sup>th</sup> September. The hospital is monitoring between 80 and 100 people who had contact with Duncan. Thomas Eric Duncan sadly passed away on Wednesday morning (8<sup>th</sup> October).

As of 3<sup>rd</sup> October, there have been around 8000 reported cases and roughly 3500 deaths due to Ebola in West Africa, and these numbers are only rising. Over 120 of those deaths were medical staff, making it difficult for the World Health Organisation to send sufficient numbers to the worst-affected areas. Over 1200 additional treatment beds are needed and experimental treatments are undergoing trials soon.

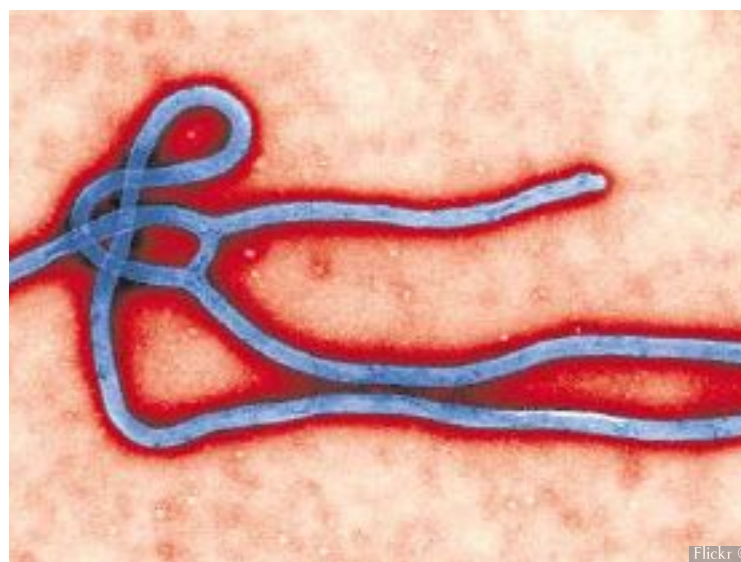
A new experimental drug exists for the treatment of Ebola, named ZMapp. The serum is one of up to 10 medications and three vaccines in development for Ebola but no cure or treatment has yet been confirmed. ZMapp was previously used on survivors in the US and

Liberia, but supplies have run dry and manufacturers have admitted it will take months to replenish the supply. A Norwegian woman infected with Ebola in Sierra Leone is to be given the last remaining dose of ZMapp in the world.

It all seems too little, too late. Hospitals in the UK are on the lookout for possible cases, whilst airports and Eurostar terminals have introduced Ebola screening to restrict the spread of the virus, but undoubtedly more needs to be done. Some healthcare professionals are hopeful that the spread of Ebola to the US will kickstart a strong effort to isolate the virus, but we can only hope. And sterilise. ■

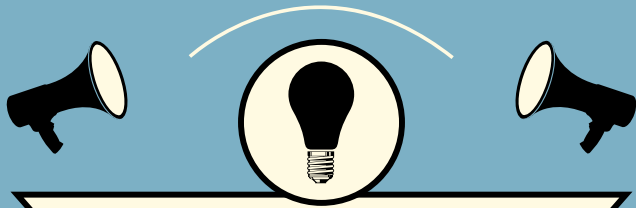
## Ebola Factfile

- The current outbreak is caused by the EBOV formerly called the Zaire Ebola Virus, originally responsible for the outbreak in 1976. This virus is also the most dangerous of all the known Ebola disease-causing viruses
- No cure or vaccine to date
- Fruit bats are thought to be the original reservoir for the virus
- The virus can be inactive anywhere from 2 to 21 days after infection
- Semen may carry the virus up to 7 weeks after infection
- Traditional burials contribute to the spread of the virus





## HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS



*So you have an idea for making the Union, University and city of Leeds better for students?*

*Submit them online anytime at [LUU.org.uk](http://LUU.org.uk)*

*After your idea is submitted, Reps gather student feedback. The idea is then debated at one of three forums*



**Better Union Forum**



**Better University Forum**



**Better Leeds Forum**

*Ideas are discussed and voted on by the panel of 16 random students*



**Above 75% Yes**

*Idea becomes Union policy*



**Below 75% Yes/No**

*Every student is asked to vote on the idea*



**Above 75% No**

*Idea fails*



**Majority Yes**

*Idea becomes Union policy*



**Majority No**

*Idea fails*

Tom Gemma GEORGE  
Bradley fi FREYA

**The Student Exec start working on the new idea**

## Rivals collide for final



**Rhys Stevens**  
**Rugby League**

After a scintillating 2014 Super League season, this year's Grand Final between League Leader's Shield winners St Helens and reigning champions Wigan Warriors is set to be a thrilling encounter at Old Trafford.

The prospect of a fantastically competitive finale this year is heightened by the intense rivalry that the Lancastrian neighbours maintain; there is far more at stake on Saturday than the opportunity to lift honours.

The favourites for the clash between the top two sides in this year's Super League will be the current holders Wigan, who many pundits and fans alike are backing to make it back-to-back title victories.

Wigan overcame a well-drilled Warrington Wolves side by a score of 16-12 in last Friday's semi-final to book a place at the Theatre of Dreams. 19-year-old winger Joe Burgess displayed a wise head on his young shoulders amongst high drama at the DW as he scored a try with two minutes left on the clock to set-up the final against their arch-rivals.

Burgess has caught the eye of the England set-up with his stunning performances this season. The teenager has notched up 17 tries in 20 outings this season and he could be a key player for the Warriors at the final, amongst custodians Josh Charnley, Matty Smith and the long-serving captain Sean O'Loughlin.

St Helens cannot be written off though. The team may have stumbled to success in the regular season, with injuries throughout the campaign halting their progress, but they have hit top gear in the play offs. The Saints strolled to success in their semi-final, defeating a strong and plucky Catalan Dragons side

30-12.

Having ended their six-year wait for silverware with the League Leader's Shield last month, the Saints will be hungry to add another trophy to their illustrious collection as they head into their first Grand Final for three years. Jordan Turner and Adam Swift could make the difference for St Helens on Saturday after both were instrumental in the win over the Dragons last week, whilst James Roby and Paul Wellens have the pedigree to inspire a young St Helens side to success.

With St Helens Head Coach Nathan Brown announcing he is leaving the club to head back to his native Australia regardless of the result at Old Trafford, he and his charges will even more determined to finish his tenure on the ultimate high. However, Saints will have to achieve their objectives without instrumental trio Jon Wilkin, Jonny Lomax and Luke Walsh. Brown told the club website his side are already winners and believes his charges have no pressure to win on Saturday:

'From a pressure point of view there isn't any on us as no-one is expecting us to win. A few weeks ago Wigan would've rubbed their hands to play us in the Grand Final.... Winning the League Leader's Shield and reaching the Grand Final, I think my boys are already winners.'

Aside from the bookies and pundit's predictions, one can be sure that Brown and the Saints will be competitive and try as hard as they can for the thousands of fans that will make the short trip east to Old Trafford.

Wigan and St Helens showdowns always produce exciting and passionate contests, including their last Grand Final meeting in 2010. The stage is set for another epic contest to end a great Super League season.



# Fantasy football future?

Peter White  
Football

New for the 2014/15 season, Real Fantasy Football provides a fresh twist on choosing your favourite Premier League squad and battling your friends to become the best Manager in town.

The brainchild of a group of friends including ex-University of Leeds student Gareth Curt, RealFF offers a fantasy football game with a more intense season-long rivalry and a more realistic opportunity to function as a real Premier League Boss.

Contrary to the traditional game, competitors have completely unique teams which are assembled using the snake-draft system similar to that used in the NFL. Budgetary constraints are completely disregarded and through 15 pulsating rounds, your 15-man squad is put together based on which players you prioritise and which players are still available.

Once your side is ready, you will face weekly head-to-head battles with your league counterparts. This means that the pressure on team selection is rife as you battle to gain the all-important bragging rights and finish top of the tree. You can make mid-week changes to your squad and even propose transfers with your rivals, so mind games and tactical awareness are both integral parts of this exhilarating game. Also, because points are only scored in the head-to-head games, you can start playing RealFF at any point in the Premier League season.

Despite being a relatively new project, Real Fantasy Football has already drawn a huge amount of attention. The company already has over 5,500 followers on twitter and interest is continually growing. To find out more information or get involved with this exciting new venture, visit [www.realff.co.uk](http://www.realff.co.uk), the Real Fantasy Football page on facebook, or follow @rffuk on twitter.

# England eye big win in Estonia

Nancy Gillen  
Football

So far for England, the road to Euro 2016 has been smooth. The Three Lions are currently sitting at the top of Group E after victories over Switzerland and San Marino, and success against international minnows Estonia on Sunday would cement this position further.

Thursday's victory against the joint-lowest ranked international side, San Marino, was expected. Similarly Estonia, ranked 81st according to Fifa, have no noteworthy players to speak of and so are not considered much of a threat, despite their recent 1-0 win over Slovenia.

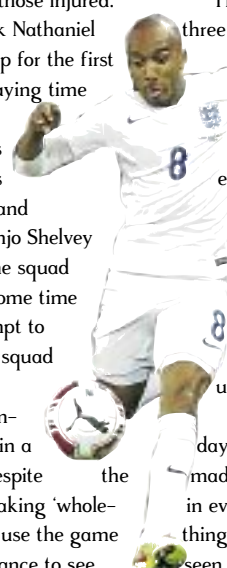
England may therefore use this match to test out some fresh faces, especially with several young players

in the squad to replace those injured. Southampton right-back Nathaniel Clyne has been called up for the first time and will expect playing time with Glen Johnson, Kyle Walker and John Stones all out injured. Arsenal's left-back Kieran Gibbs and Swansea's midfielder Jonjo Shelvey have been recalled to the squad and will also hope for some time on the pitch in an attempt to push their way into the squad permanently.

Indeed, England manager Roy Hodgson said in a press conference that despite the fact he would not be making 'whole-sale changes', he would use the game against Estonia 'as a chance to see somebody else play'.

The squad for Monday only includes three forwards as, once again, injuries have ruled out established first team players such as Daniel Sturridge. However, with Danny Welbeck in exemplary form for club and country, Wayne Rooney looking to add to his 41 international goals and Rickie Lambert perhaps hoping to force his way into the starting 11, there is no reason for the available strikers to underperform.

England should succeed on Sunday. Despite the injuries and changes made, the players still outclass Estonia in every position on the pitch. Anything less than a win in Tallinn will be seen as a major disappointment.



# Brilliant Bath set the bar high

Chris Chadburn  
Rugby Union

The Aviva Premiership is now five rounds in and the early matches have certainly thrown up plenty of exciting rugby and many shocks. The pre-season favourites have looked predictably strong, whilst the relegation candidates have put in some weak performances, but these have been overshadowed by the surprising results of the early pace-setters.

Undoubtedly the stars of the season so far have been Bath. Having had huge investment in the club over the last few years it looks like they have finally realised their potential. After leaving Welford Road in 2013 some of George Ford's performances so far will have broken the hearts of Leicester Tigers fans, especially when he orchestrated a 45-0 humiliation over his old team at the Rec, the Tigers' heaviest ever defeat.

Fortunes and performances by the two sides since that game could not be more

contrasting with Leicester losing three straight matches for the first time in five seasons and Bath finishing week five by beating Saracens to reach second spot in the table.

Saracens have been their typical consistent selves with four wins from five; their most resounding coming in the form of a battering of Harlequins on their own patch in week two. Also showing good form are Northampton Saints, who have won four and currently top the league.

Among the mid-table pack,

Gloucester and Harlequins have produced performances that have been both sublime and ridiculous.

Sale began with two defeats before two wins from three,

while London Wasps and London Irish have had decent starts with wins over big boys Northampton and Leicester respectively.

Wasps were the big newsmakers this week, announcing a controversial move to the Ricoh Arena in December (a ground over

80miles from their current home, Adams park).

As many people predicted, London Welsh have so far struggled. They have been especially weak defensively, having leaked almost 250 points so far. Newcastle have only fared slightly better, securing just one win.

Stuart Lancaster will be concerned with the form of scrum-halves Danny Care and Ben Youngs, as well as the injuries to some key players including Manu Tuilagi and Alex Corbisiero. On the other hand, Lancaster will be delighted with the form of all five English fly-halves. George Ford will probably lead the challenge on Owen Farrell's number 10 shirt in the Autumn internationals, but the form of Stephen Myler, Freddie Burns and Danny Cipriani has also caught the eye of the international rugby world.

Within the next few weeks we will see the emergence of European rugby once more and there will be tests for all of the English teams as they attempt to overcome the French and Irish domination of the event in the last few years. After that, all eyes will turn to the international stage as the Home Nations challenge the Southern Hemisphere giants for the last time before the 2015 World Cup.





# Debate: Should Alan Pardew be sacked?

## Yes

Greg Whitaker

A lot can happen in four years, just ask Alan Pardew. To go from winning Premier League Manager of the Year in 2011/12 to having your very own website called [www.sackpardew.com](http://www.sackpardew.com) is a fairly spectacular fall from grace. So, is Alan Pardew's tenure finally coming to an end? Toon fans certainly hope so, but is this reaction justified?

Well, let's have a look at the stats. Newcastle currently find themselves in 18th place in the Premier League, with just four points from seven games. This poor form has been carried over from last season, with Newcastle only having won one league game in the past 15. Messrs Allardyce and Houghton, both of whom were sacked as Newcastle boss, could boast better records.

However, as Newcastle fans will tell you, Pardew's record isn't the only reason the club should get rid. His character has also been heavily criticised.

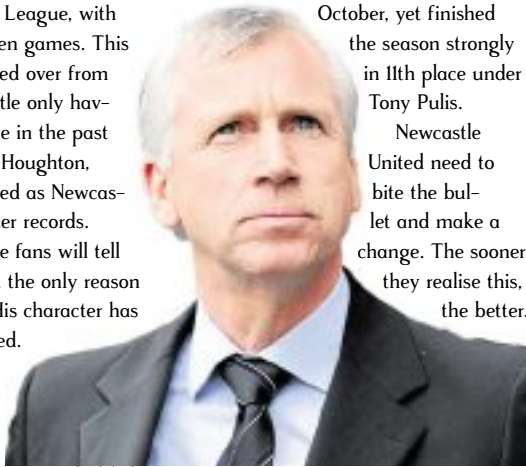
From verbally abusing Manuel Pellegrini, to headbutting Hull's David Meyler, Pardew

league's most likable manager to say the least.

It is well documented that sacking Pardew could cost the club up to £5 million as he is currently only two years into an eight year contract, and of course, a change would not necessarily guarantee an upturn in fortune. However, consider Crystal Palace last season — they were bottom of the league with three points when Ian Holloway stepped down in

October, yet finished the season strongly in 11th place under Tony Pulis.

Newcastle United need to bite the bullet and make a change. The sooner they realise this, the better.



## No

Freddie DeMelo

If you think Alan Pardew should be sacked, then you don't like football. Yes, his recent record at Newcastle has been somewhat sketchy, but who really cares about results? Football isn't about winning. Football isn't even about football.

Football is about personalities, questionable decisions, scandals, theatre, and a healthy dash of hubris to sweeten the taste. Pardew is the embodiment of pure football. He is the tragic hero of the Premier League, maligned by those blind to the truth. The humbled Edgar to Mike Ashley's Machiavellian Edmund.

What I especially love about Pardew is how seriously he appears to take his job. Whereas, say, Mourinho goes about his business with a wink and a nudge, Pardew is (hilariously) without humour. In a league containing the aforementioned Mourinho, Pardew is still the manager suffering the greatest delusion of grandeur.

He strikes me as a manager who, without irony, recites Kipling's 'If' before a Capital One Cup fourth round tie against Shrewsbury Town. The image of him

intoning into the perplexed face of Jack Colback warms my heart.

An article on Pardew's merits wouldn't be complete without a consideration of his misdemeanours. His 'Controversies' section on Wikipedia is 1/3 of the whole page. Does any self-respecting football fan look back on his headbutt on David Meyler with anything but fondness? Newcastle United is approaching utter entropy, and to Pardew's eternal credit he has led by example: pushing referees and abusing OAPs.

Has there been a more evocative sight this season than Pardew at Stoke, stoically staring, soaking in the lashing rain? That is what football is about. That is why it is Newcastle United's duty to retain his services. For the people's entertainment.

What I am trying to say about Pardew has already been said by Winston Churchill of Herbert Asquith (although I quote without irony): "[Pardew] remains sodden, supine, supreme." And long may his reign continue!

# Rosberg looking for revenge in Russia

Daniel Nixon  
Formula 1

Lewis Hamilton's win in Japan last weekend, where he pipped teammate Nico Rosberg to glory, was overshadowed by a serious head injury to Jules Bianchi. The terrible incident came after Bianchi collided with a recovery vehicle in very difficult conditions which forced the race to be red flagged. Shortly after the event Bianchi was lifted to hospital where he received emergency brain surgery.

In light of the incident, a lot of focus has been taken away from the forthcoming Russian Grand Prix. As teams and fans arrive in Sochi there will be a much more subdued atmosphere than would be normally expected with the

unpredictability of a new circuit.

The spectacular brand new track, built within this year's Winter Olympic site, is the cause of much excitement. Hermann Tilke, the German track designer, has said the circuit is to have a mixture of high speed sections as well as many slower technical areas, all of which will test the drivers to their maximum.

Heading into the final four races of the 2014 season, the championship still seems to be very much up for grabs for either Hamilton or Rosberg. Only 10 points separate the two drivers

and with a total of 125 still available there are going to be some serious twists and turns along the way. The middle of the pack battle will be as competitive as ever, however Alonso's recent hints of leaving Ferrari will have all but ended the teams hope for third position in the constructors table.

We can all agree that Hamilton certainly has the form going into Sunday's race, with three wins in three. The pressure on the Brit's shoulders

as he goes into these final stages of the season will be the most he's experienced during his career to date and it will be very interesting to see whether he thrives or falls. Rosberg will be hot on his tail either way, meaning the inaugural Russian Grand Prix will certainly be a memorable one.

In the meantime, *The Gryphon* wishes Jules Bianchi a full and hasty recovery.





# The day *The Gryphon* gave it a go...

**Adam LeRoux**  
**Handball**

After reporting on the first ever Varsity handball match earlier in the week to whet the appetite, it was my time to shine on court as I rubbed shoulders with those who pushed Beckett so close before.

As I walked into the Edge on Friday evening, whilst most people are preparing themselves for a wild one at Fruity, I was expecting a similarly crazy evening on court. I was not disappointed. The opening drills were manic – focusing on footwork, communication and agility –

skills I soon found out I wasn't entirely blessed with.

Next came the shooting practice: something that seems to come naturally to the first teamers. With a bit of practice I was getting the hang of it; the goalkeeper actually had to move when I threw it by the end. Not wanting to miss out, I even had a stint in goal. I'd played as hockey goalkeeper before so how hard could it be with a ball three times the size? The answer – incredibly hard – the ball was but a blur when Captain Ben Jackson stepped up to have a go, so back outfield I went.

Once the matches began you can see

why participation has risen so greatly in recent years; the action is end to end and everyone gets a chance to attack and defend.

It's a physical sport too, making defending all the more fun if you ask me. I may not have scored during the match, but it was definitely a great experience all the same.

The team



Kristin Smette Gulbrandsen ©

**Eveie Robinson**  
**Vertical Fitness**

As I entered The Edge for a post-library workout on Friday evening, I expected nothing more than the usual: a vain attempt to burn 300 calories and the sad realisation that my fourth year self can't handle a week of partying as comfortably as I did in 2011.

But this time, my gym session went a little differently. I used heavier weights, increased my treadmill speed and doubled my usual number of press-up

repetitions. I realised that my extra boost was all thanks to 'feeling the burn' three days previous, when I'd been suspended halfway up a pole.

On Tuesday night I attended a Vertical Fitness Give It A Go session. The club is one of LUU's newest societies, bringing the art of pole dancing to Mine on Tuesdays and Thursdays every week.

The session saw 50 students gather in the union's famous Fruity venue to give pole-dancing their best shot. While I was well aware that Vertical Fitness is about more than just the sultry stereo-

types that pole dancing brings to mind, I had no idea how strenuous it would be.

We began with a 30-minute strength and conditioning session on yoga mats before we took to the poles. Having watched the Vertical Fitness team glide gracefully around them, I was spellbound under the impression that I'd pick up the moves somewhat effortlessly.

But the irony behind Vertical Fitness is that it requires sheer strength, power, and not to mention practice, to create something that looks so beautiful, elegant and controlled on the outside. While

I wasn't suspended upside-down on my first attempt, the small selection of moves that I did complete left me feeling pretty accomplished – if not slightly worn out.

So I'd like to say thanks to Vertical Fitness for giving me a refreshing insight into something new. If anyone wants to get fit and meet new people in a relaxed environment, I'd recommend trying Vertical Fitness as the latest feel-good alternative to slogging it out in the gym.

**Peter White**  
**Karting**

With the promise of the longest indoor circuit in Yorkshire, karts that reach speeds in excess of 45mph and a half hour session to enjoy it all, it is fair to say I was eagerly anticipating my afternoon with the ever-expanding LUU Motorsport Society at Pole Position Indoor Karting.

The session proved to be extremely popular; I was one of approximately 60 excited students who assembled outside the Parkinson Building before I enjoyed meeting some equally keen people during the short taxi journey to the circuit.

After a quick safety briefing, we were split up into teams of four and were informed that the team with the quickest time overall would be the

winners. While those individuals who fancied themselves as the next Lewis Hamilton started to set their eyes on the trophy and a drive at the BUKC test day, I started to focus on how not to let my committee-filled team down.

Society President Tom Moore and the rest of the board worked hard all afternoon, introducing themselves and making sure everyone knew what they were doing. They gave everyone a chance to experience Motorsport hands-on; we were given responsibility for instructing drivers when to pit and what tactics to adopt.

Having enjoyed watching some of the immense battles on the track, it was finally time for my stint. After a rapid Le Mans style driver change, I was soon tearing up the track and getting to grips with the various twists and turns

alongside the raw speed that the karts possess. The track itself is impressive, with several challenging corners and a bridge that got my heart pumping everytime I drove under it.

Thankfully, I made it through my 30 minutes without any hiccups, although truth be told I wish I could have stayed on the track. The final stint wrapped up the session before the Society headed off to Bierkeller for a stein or four. Everyone who attended agreed that it

had been a great day – the session had given me a brilliant chance to experience motorsport here at the University of Leeds, while I also met some great people in the process. Keep your eyes peeled on the F1 in the next couple of years; a few more drives and you never know.

If anyone of any ability would like to get involved with the Motorsport Society, like the group on facebook (LUU Motorsport Society) or e-mail leedsunimotor-soc@gmail.com.



Lucie England-Duce ©



# Time for sportswomen to be taken seriously

Eveie Robinson  
Comment

Having played competitive netball for most of my adolescent life, I've never doubted my freedom to enjoy team sports, regardless of whether they're perceived to be 'masculine' or 'feminine'. But as Emma Watson reminded us in her opening #heforshe speech to the UN recently, some women often feel as though they shouldn't play particular sports as they fear it will make them muscly.

It's disheartening yet unsurprising that such archaic views exist when people in positions of responsibility continue to perpetuate them in the media.

Sports Minister Helen Grant suggested that the way to get more women into sports is through feminine activities like cheerleading and ballet, which make women look 'absolutely radiant'.

John Inverdale wrenched the spotlight away from Marion Bartoli in July 2013 when she won the Wimbledon Singles Final, commenting on *BBC Radio* that the inspirational tennis player, who had just reached the pinnacle of her career, was 'never going to be a looker'.

British Olympic medal-winning gymnast Beth Tweddle became the victim of online abuse in January when she participated in a twitter Q&A session as part of a scheme promoting women's sports, only to be met with derogatory insults such as 'Are all sportswomen lesbians?'

Why is it that women are repeatedly reminded that their sporting endeavours are inseparable from their appearance and their femininity?

Despite the fact that there are a multitude of female



sporting idols making ground-breaking achievements in women's sports, like England winning the Women's Rugby World Cup or the fact that women won three quarters of the UK medals at the Sochi Winter Olympics, old-fashioned views that competition and physical strength belong in a male arena continue to rear their ugly head.

Playing sport means different things to different people. Some relish the opportunity to make friends and invest in a team goal. Others take the opportunity to set themselves personal targets and see how far they can push their mental grit and physical strength. Most enjoy the powerful endorphin rush that's released during strenuous exercise, which brings them back to the netball court, football pitch or athletics track – even after the most bitter of defeats.

To the detractors of women's sport: stop robbing women of these worthwhile enjoyments and replacing them with your ideas about what it means to be a woman. The chances are, when sportswomen are at the peak of their game, sweating buckets, in the zone, determined to win – that's the moment they'll be feeling 'absolutely radiant'. ■

## Women's football expecting strong season

*The 2014/15 BUCS season gets underway next week, and The Gryphon's Adam LeRoux spoke to Club Captain of the women's football team Eve Griffiths about the season ahead, and her thoughts on women's participation in sport.*

With BUCS promoting women's involvement in football this week, Eve talked about how the Uni side has helped try to boost participation numbers. 'This year we have created a partnership with Social Sport to promote futsal. Members of the club run the open sessions and referee intramural futsal matches. In exchange, Social Sport and the Sports Development team have helped establish the first ever BUCS futsal team.'

Griffiths was also eager to point out the huge levels of participation by women at the University of Leeds, with over 120 girls signing up for football already this year. 'That is an incredible amount for the club. Female students are definitely taking advantage of the vast array of sports on offer here at Leeds. There were so many Freshers signing up to new sports at the Freshers' Fair and the intake of women to sports societies this year looks very promising.'

LUU offers so much for sports fans on campus, even if competitive sport is not for you. 'The University offers Intramural and Social Sport sessions to introduce women to new sports and provide them with confidence to pursue it further'. Griffiths added: 'At LUUWAF we recognise that not everyone wants to play competitively week after week, so if people want to join our club recreationally, that's not a problem. Come along to our sessions and see if you enjoy it.'

One issue Eve faced was not having a local team to play for before University – an issue that seems to be common throughout the UK – so was very keen to get the chance to start playing again. 'Being part of a sports club has been one of the defining highlights of my University experience and I would definitely encourage anyone to give joining a sports club a go! Not only do you get to do what you enjoy, you meet people with similar interests, which is great.'

Eve is quick to point out that anyone can join women's football. 'All abilities are welcome. With three competing BUCS teams and a BUCS futsal team, we have plenty to offer. Come along to our autumn Give It a Go session on Thursday 30th October from 17.00-18.30 at Weetwood Playing Fields. It is a great session with a big turnout, ranging from total beginners to those who want to pick up football again.'

With enough newcomers to start ten women's football teams this year, the new season looks promising. 'The Freshers are working well with the older girls and our level of play is continuing to improve session by session. Their quality and commitment is great to see'. The 1s season kicks off on 15th October against Liverpool John Moores University, where hopefully they can start the season with a win.





*This week marks BUCS Women's Football Week; a scheme which aims to increase female participation in football by 3000 at Universities across the UK by February 2015. To mark the occasion, The Gryphon spoke to female athletes who had their say on women in sport.*



## World Cup win inspires England's future

*The Gryphon's Adam LeRoux caught up with Emily Scarratt and Tamara Taylor of England women's Rugby World Cup-winning side during Varsity last week to speak about women's sport.*

Emily and Tamara showed off their silverware during half-time at Headingley, and when asked about their victory in Paris back in August, Taylor recounts the feeling of finally getting her hands on the trophy. 'We hadn't won the trophy in 20 years, and with it being my third World Cup there was a feeling of relief, as well as elation. Losing by just three points the time before was terrible, so actually winning this time around was a huge relief.' In fact, in the last three World Cups before this year the English side have finished runners up each time, so a win was long overdue.

The issue that blights sport in the modern day is that stars from the men's game like Owen Farrell and Chris Ashton are household names despite neither having tasted international success whereas someone like Rochelle Clark, who has nearly 100 England caps and a World Cup winners medal to her name, has not been given nearly as much exposure. Scarratt continued: 'Naturally we don't get as much coverage as the men's game, but it is shifting and we are starting to get more coverage in the newspapers and on TV. Things like the World Cup, which was shown on Sky, and the success England have had recently, will encourage more media

coverage in the future.'

Both women were also keen to stress how participation has improved greatly in recent times, with Taylor stating, 'Numbers can always be increased, but even so it is a lot better than it was before. London 2012 was the starting point in the UK for getting women in the media and therefore people were starting to see that you can be a female athlete and be successful. Women have started to realise you can do a whole myriad of different sports, it doesn't matter what it is.'

Scarratt then added, 'Hopefully our World Cup has done something similar, not on the same scale as the Olympics, but hopefully more people have learnt about the sport and realise there is another opportunity for them out there.'

Things seem promising for women's sport then, although the statistics don't seem to be backing that up. The House of Commons' recently released numbers state that twice the number of 18 year old women are not taking part in sport at least once a month compared to men. The same report showed 18-25 year old women among one of the only groups to show no increase in sport participation since 2005, an issue that is trying to be addressed.

Both Taylor and Scarratt come across as very modest women, with their feet planted firmly on the ground. They understand the issues with the women's game, and recognise it is not something that will be fixed overnight. Scarratt deals with the issue of investment into the women's game supremely well, 'Ultimately, investment and sponsorships will help, once it is in the media sponsors will invest, and it is difficult to break into the circle initially. It is a long process that also needs people like us to promote the success women have in sport so people can recognise our success as well.'

One major breakthrough in recent times is the 20 women's rugby players who have turned professional in the 7s game. Taylor added that the Olympics have played a big part in the upturn in fortunes, as the funding through the Olympic scheme helps a great deal. 'The 15s is a lot more difficult because of the lack of funding; right now we need to focus on building the domestic game for the 15s. That's the basis for everything.'

So victory on the field is just the start for these World Cup winners. The road may be long, but the future is definitely looking bright. ■



The Gryphon interviews the successful England women's rugby team



Who has what it takes to take Grand Final glory at Old Trafford?



How did The Gryphon cope at the Motorsport Give it a go?



Can England overcome Estonia in European qualifiers?



# BUCS is back with a bang

● First round of fixtures this Wednesday, including big football derby ● Waterpolo teams looking strong after Varsity

Alex Bowmer  
BUCS Preview

After the fever pitch atmosphere at Varsity, it is easy to forget that the new BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) season kicks off in earnest next week. Leeds came a commendable 15th in the overall standings last year, with notable successes in a number of sports. After many encouraging displays during last week's sporting feast, there are bound to be lots of teams making their mark in the 2014/2015 season.

BUCS is the biggest event of its kind in Europe. In its inaugural year in 1919, only nine universities came to compete. Since then, the competition has gone from strength to strength, and now comprises 162 universities and colleges from across

the country. Loughborough have enjoyed unmatched success at the event. Since the BUCS Overall Championship began in 2002, they have taken the crown all twelve times. Inter-city rivals Leeds Beckett have also fared well, notching up a host of top-ten finishes. Uni's consistency has placed them in the top 20 every year, with their golden season being 2002/2003, when they finished 11th.

Following their cruel defeat in the Varsity showpiece, the rugby union team will look to make amends when they host Loughborough at Weetwood.

The women's badminton 1s will hope that this result will provide the springboard for further success and face an away trip to Loughborough in their opener. The men's cricket 1s recorded possibly the most emphatic triumph of all last week, and will go up against Leeds Beckett on Sunday 23

November.

Both the men's 1st and 2nd football teams also came up trumps against Beckett at Varsity and will face each other when the season begins on Wednesday.

Volleyball will also look to the new season with optimism. Varsity saw both the men's and women's volleyball teams record 3-1 wins against their local rivals last week.

Waterpolo are likely to enter the new campaign with renewed vigour too, after both teams posted comfortable victories. The women won 25-18, and despite being one of the underdogs in the Premier North division, the result provides a much-needed confidence boost. However, this result was upstaged by the performance of the men's team, who put Beckett to the sword with a superb display. If they can replicate that form this year, silverware could follow.

## Teams to look out for

**Women's lacrosse** – Achieved promotion to the BUCS Premier League last year, and secured an easy win at Varsity

**Netball 1s** – They will face off against Leeds Beckett in the BUCS Northern Premiership

**Table tennis** – The team includes Kim Daybell, who was part of Great Britain's Paralympic squad for the London Olympics

**Hockey** – Both the men's 1s and women's 1s are BUCS Northern Premier teams this season. This is the first time this feat has been achieved