



[Image: 20th Century Fox]

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[Image: Andy Whitton]

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[Image: Jack Roberts]

Property Developers Leave Students In The Lurch

Jessica Murray
News Editor

Property development company Pinnacle Alliance have faced criticism for failing to complete building work on time, leaving many students without accommodation or living in half finished developments.

Pinnacle began development of Asquith House and Austin Hall, two purpose built private halls of residence situated next to Leodis, in January 2015, and students who signed contracts were to move in September 2015.

However, according to the parent of a student tenant, a week before the start of term students were informed by Urban Student Life (USL), the letting agents for the property who were not responsible for the building work, that the accommodation wouldn't be ready for a few weeks and they would be provided with hotel accommodation in the meantime.

Students were unable to move in to their

accommodation until December 2015, and were informed that the halls would have a building certificate at this point.

According to the parent, who wishes to remain anonymous, the ground floor of the accommodation was still completely unfinished and open to the elements, with security guards patrolling the development at all times to prevent break ins.

The parent also stated that the building had a fire safety certificate for habitation on the floors above the ground floor, but a full building certificate had not been signed off.

Speaking to *The Gryphon* the parent said, "If USL and Pinnacle had been up front with parents in September 2015 or earlier, then alternative accommodation could have been found; we would have had a choice."

"But ever since September 2015, we have been let down by the developers, time and time again, and it has become an experience that is hugely regrettable."

He went on to state that a number of

parents were refusing to pay the fees for the first term of residence, or were only paying a percentage of the full rent owed.

A group of Leeds University students have also contacted *The Gryphon* after they were forced in to finding new accommodation in September due to their flat on 75 Hyde Park Road still being under development by Pinnacle.

The three students, who do not wish to be named, signed for the three-bedroom flat in March 2015, and they state that at the end of July they were informed that the property had been sold to Pinnacle, and some minor refurbishments including new furniture and painting was to be carried out by the developers.

The flat was not ready in time for the tenants' planned move in date on 1st September, and one tenant was forced in to sleeping on a friend's sofa until Pinnacle organised hotel accommodation for the girls.

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It's Time To Talk

I'm writing to you all on 4th February – Time to Talk day. On this day, we are encouraged to talk about our mental health, to have a conversation. Mental health shouldn't be a taboo, but the sad truth is that it still is. We still have a problem as a society though – not only talking about it, but dealing with it. For some people, talking about it is a way of dealing with it. But what else can we do but talk?

A crucial thing to remember is that you deserve help. You are entitled to help. We can be down for a long time, hoping we'll just snap out of it, or thinking that our problem isn't big enough. But really if you're feeling bad – that's a big enough reason to get help. Remember, there's loads of help out there for students – whether you're experiencing ill mental health directly, or supporting a friend. We have the Student Advice Centre in the Union, student-led support groups, the Counselling service, the mental health advisors, there's the Leeds Student Medical Practice (with a new team of mental health workers), and IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies). Accessing support can be hard, and if you're in a bad place it can be hard to think that you deserve

help. But you do.

Mental health is a spectrum though, and it's not either all fine or all terrible. We can have bad days, weeks, months, and good days, weeks, and months! So what can we do to make sure we have more of the good? Just over a year ago, I was having a bit of a shit time. Not the worst, but you know, it wasn't all sunshine and rainbows. So I started to think about how I treated myself. I realised I needed to do more things for myself. To be honest, I always thought of "wellbeing" as some kind of patronising, unhelpful clap-trap. But I gave things a go. Honestly, I'm not a beacon of health - I still don't exercise, I still eat too much pizza, I still smoke ten a day, but I'm better. I listen to myself more – if I want to be on my own, I'll cancel plans. If I get home from work at half seven after a rubbish day, I'll make sure I cook myself something nice for dinner. If I need some time to think, I draw in my notebook and put a record on. If I feel stressed or sad, I'll get my guitar out and play a song (even though I'm pretty bad at it). This might sound corny, or like some worn out words from a life advice column, and I'm sorry if it seems like this.

I just want you to remember – you deserve to be happy. You deserve to treat yourself well. And, as a shameless work plug, the Union are putting on their first wellbeing festival called 'Mind Yourself' on February 16th. There'll be cooking classes, workshops, free haircuts and massages. Whether you want to come check it out or not, just remember to do the things that make you happy.

Freya Govus
LUU Welfare Officer

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Here now.

Rape Advocate's Meet-up in Leeds Cancelled

Elli Pugh
News Editor

Plans for an international meet up day organised by "pick-up" artist Roosh V have been cancelled over safety fears.

The 'neomasculine' group Return of Kings had planned to gather in eight major UK cities on 6th February to mark their first 'International Meet Up Day', with meet ups organised in 42 countries. However, Roosh V has since called off the events, citing "the safety of privacy" of the men due to attend and that "While I can't stop men who want to continue meeting in private groups, there will be no official Return Of Kings meetups."

Organiser Roosh V, who founded the Return of Kings website in October last year, has been widely criticised for his sexist and homophobic views in the last decade.

He had already moved a number of the meet ups to secret locations, stating "This meet-up was never intended as a confrontation with unattractive women and their enablers, I'm moving to save as many of these meetups as I can before Saturday so that men can still meet in private away from a loud, obnoxious, dishonest, and potentially violent mob."

Protests had been organised at several of the organised meet up points, and over 40,000 people signed a petition, created by Katie Pruszyński, to lobby the police and Home Office to ban the events.

As a pro-rape self-styled 'pick up artist', Roosh V, full name Daryush Valizadeh, published his first book, 'Bang' in 2007, describing it as a 'textbook for picking up girls and getting laid'. He has since been slammed for his continued misogynistic and homophobic comments, including comments that a woman's value should be judged based on her 'fertility' and 'beauty', and that "male homosexuals have become a public health threat".

More recently, in a 2015 blog post, he wrote that rape of



[image:www.rooshv.com]

women should be legal if carried out on private property, saying "less women will be raped because they won't voluntarily drug themselves with booze and follow a strange man into a bedroom, and less men will be unfairly jailed for what was anything but a maniacal alley rape".

Emma Healey, Women's Liberation Coordinator for LUU, and a Politics student at the University of Leeds, wrote an article about the meet ups for *The Tab* and has had her details have been published in what has been described as 'Operation Bullhorn', Roosh V's first 'counter-operation against the enemy'.

Speaking to *The Gryphon*, Ms Healey stated "I think the whole thing is pathetic.

"They have awful views and I didn't even criticise them, I just stated facts and they have gone and leaked all my details; it's scary that they can find out that much, but it just makes me more determined to show how pathetic they are."

Students Affected By Building Work Delays

>>>>> Continued from page 1

On 10th September, the revised moving in date, the girls were informed that their three-bedroom flat was being converted in to a four-bedroom property, with the open plan living area being cut in half.

As a concession, Pinnacle offered to temporarily furnish the fourth bedroom as a living room and only charge rent for three tenants, but the property still wouldn't be ready until late September, leading the girls to decide to find accommodation elsewhere.

Speaking to *The Gryphon*, one of the tenants said of their experience "We have felt quite alone in all this, being students with no prior experience of this kind.

"We turned to Unipol, LUU Student Advice Centre and LCC Housing Options team, none of which we feel have pursued the issues to a final conclusion.

"However, we are grateful for the help we have received and hope our story might help other students facing similar problems."

A spokesperson from Pinnacle Student Developments (Leeds) Ltd said: "As developers, we would like to apologise for the disruption caused by the delays to the construction of Asquith House and Austin Hall. We fully understand the frustration and inconvenience caused by these unforeseeable and unavoidable setbacks in the construction phase.

"From the start, working with our partners, Urban Student Life, we have done everything possible to manage all issues as quickly and as smoothly as possible, while supporting students.

"We offered a range of alternative high quality accommodation to those affected including 3 and 4 star city centre hotels, apartments and refurbished student accommodation with allowances for meals, laundry and transport. We also accommodated individual requests wherever possible and have spent significant amounts of money to help rectify this difficult situation.

"Where requested we voided contracts and refunded associated rents paid in advance while throughout this period a USL team has been available to handle any issues.

"Students have now moved into Asquith House, but limited areas of the development are still under construction and so we have taken measures to ensure that the construction team remains separate from the students and access to and around the building is fully secure. Further, the USL team is now based in the building liaising with students every day.

"We have at all times been committed to supporting students and addressing their concerns and we will continue to do so until the situation is fully resolved."

Is Your Deposit Protected?

Olivia Adu

New research from the Centre of Economics on behalf of money.co.uk has shown that 1 in 7 landlords do not protect their tenant's deposits through a third party, despite government intervention to make it a legal requirement.

It is estimated that £514 million worth of deposits are not protected, earning landlords almost £8.5 million of interest per year - enough to pay off over 500 student's debt.

Landlord's use the term 'reservation fee/ deposit' when asking for deposit money from tenants, allowing them to keep the money unprotected until the tenancy starts.

Normally deposits must be protected 30 days after it is received by the landlord; by using this loophole landlords only have to protect the money until 30 days after the start of the tenancy.

This can equate to up to 7 months of interest if tenants sign a contract in January.

Unprotected deposits mean that, if a company were to go bankrupt, tenants would not get their money back.

Shadow Foreign Secretary and Leeds Central MP Hilary Benn has recently been made aware of this loop hole and is currently petitioning the issue to parliament.

If you feel your landlord has failed to protect your deposit in a government-backed scheme, or has taken longer than 30 days to do so, then the court can order your land-

lord to pay compensation of up to three times your original deposit. However, it is up to tenants, not the police, to prosecute their landlords, as there are currently no government measures in place to police the issue.

Hannah Maundrell, Editor-in-Chief at money.co.uk said: "Renters must take control and ask landlords which protection scheme their money will be stashed in before signing on the dotted line.

"Existing tenants must ask for proof their money is protected if their landlord hasn't given them the correct written documentation.

"It's not right that tenants are left responsible for taking their landlord to court if their deposit hasn't been protected.

"The government needs to step in and take decisive action. Introducing a compulsory register listing every landlord that rents out property in England and Wales would be a start.

"This works for Scotland and Northern Ireland and it seems crazy this hasn't been brought in across the UK.

"Add in tenants' ratings and reviews to this too and you have both the beginnings of a solution that helps renters make an informed choice about who they're handing over buckets of cash to; and the foundation for policing landlords that are currently going unchecked."

Campus Watch



1 *Oxford University*

Cecil Rhodes Statue to Remain Despite 'Rhodes Must Fall' Campaign

Oriel College, Oxford University have decided to keep the statue of the Cecil Rhodes despite the Oxford Union voting in favour of its removal. Oriel College have stated that they will take "substantive steps" to address the challenges highlighted by the campaigns regarding the representation of ethnic minorities at the university.

Cally Collier

2 *Cambridge University*

Cambridge Introduce Admissions Tests

The decision to introduce a written admissions test at Cambridge University has sparked outcry, with many fearing it will only further alienate state school pupils and students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The university claims the test is now necessary to gauge pupil's skills level, since AS levels have been abolished by the government.

Jessica Murray

3 *University of Tulsa*

Student Fitness Levels Tracked by University

Students at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa are being required to wear a Fitbit device that tracks their steps and heart rate at all times, data which will be used to determine 20% of their grade in a health and fitness class. The University commented that it enables students to "be in Africa for spring break and the system will still be recording data" and that will allow the university to see if there is a "correlation between exercise and academic success."

Jessica Murray

4 *Oxford University*

More Animals Tested on at Oxford than Any Other

Oxford has topped another league table; this time for the amount of animals tested on in their labs. Figures show they tested on 226,739 animals in 2014. These included mice, monkeys, guinea pigs and sheep. The data, gathered by Cruelty Free International, found that Edinburgh, University College London, King's College London and Cambridge followed close behind, each testing on over 150,000 animals in the same year.

Zoe Bancroft

The Digest



US Scientists: Zika Vaccine 'A Decade Away'

A vaccine for the Zika virus sweeping across the Americas could be over ten years away, according to scientists in Texas. This news is of great concern to the World Health Organisation (WHO), who have predicted over 3 to 4 million new cases of the virus in the next 12 months alone.

Passed on by the Aedes Mosquito, the pathogen has shown a clear connection with Microcephaly, a disease which results in the underdevelopment of babies' brains.

In 2014 the number of babies affected by Microcephaly in Brazil was approximately 150, but since October this figure has risen to almost 4,000. With the Rio Olympics only five months away, the WHO is also worried about a possible global pandemic.

Mike Johansson



Cruz Trumps Trump in Iowa Caucus

Donald Trump came second place in Iowa Republican caucuses, the first of votes that will determine the presidential candidacy for both parties. Trump's rival, Texas Senator Ted Cruz, won 28% of the vote, replacing Trump as the presidential frontrunner. The caucuses determine which candidates will stand for the two main parties in the November election. Hilary Clinton won the majority of votes in the Democrat vote, with 22 delegates in total, beating her rival Bernie Sanders in a 'virtual tie'. The closeness in the voting in Iowa is likely to be repeated across the country, with support for the leading candidates being too close currently to distinguish between.

Zoe Bancroft



Gene editing approved for first time in UK

In a world first, UK scientists have been granted approval by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) to genetically modify human embryos to provide a deeper understanding of the earliest stages of human life. Researchers will look to alter genes to investigate what roles they have, how they may guide our early development and what goes wrong in cases of infertility and miscarriage. The decision has attracted fierce debate and controversy as many feel that it is opening the door to the world of designer, or genetically modified, babies. The HFEA have stressed, however, that 'ethical implications have been carefully considered'.

Jonny Chard



UN rule Julian Assange "unlawfully detained".

A UN panel has ruled that the Wikileaks founder, Julian Assange, has been "unlawfully detained". Mr Assange claimed asylum in the Ecuadorian embassy in 2012 in order to avoid extradition to Sweden over alleged sexual assault. In 2014, Assange launched a complaint to the UN. He said that he could not leave the embassy without being arrested. Assange had stated that he would accept arrest if the UN panel ruled against him. He also said that if the UN panel voted in his favour, the warrant for his arrest should be dropped. London Metropolitan Police have said that Assange will still be held if he does leave the embassy.

Shamima Noor

The Big Picture: The UK's Future with the EU

Sam Robinson

David Cameron entered negotiations with demands in four key areas that he claimed would protect Britain's interests in the EU. The Prime Minister has said that if he felt the EU had done enough to meet his demands he would support a campaign to stay in the EU.

What Were Cameron's Demands?

Immigration: Cameron hoped for a four-year ban on access to in-work benefits or social housing for those coming to the UK from the EU, to deter further immigration. He further pushed for a ban on people being able to claim child benefits for families living in other EU states, and wanted more action against sham marriages.

Sovereignty: Eurosceptics have long worried about the autonomy of the UK in the context of the EU. Cameron aimed to allay this fear by requesting the UK be allowed to opt out from "ever closer union" – in other words, to ensure the UK is not dragged into further political integration. Other demands included greater powers for national parliaments to block EU legislation, a strengthening of the "principle of subsidiarity" – that EU decisions should only be taken at EU level where strictly necessary – and recognition that national security remains a matter for member states.

Economic Governance: Negotiations here centred on the place of countries outside of the eurozone (countries that do not use the Euro) within the EU. Cameron pressed for assurance that the UK will not have to contribute to eurozone bailouts; safeguards that prevent further financial union being imposed on non-eurozone countries without their consent; and an explicit recognition that the EU is a union with more than one currency.

Competitiveness: Cameron wanted the EU to take steps to cut red tape, reducing the "burden" of excessive regulation and making a stronger commitment to the free flow of goods, services and capital; in short, further consolidation of the single market.

What Has Tusk Offered?

Regarding immigration, Tusk's proposals water down Cameron's demands substantially. The UK will be able to request an "emergency brake" on in-work benefits for migrants for up to four years – however this would be subject to approval from other EU states on the basis on an "exceptional situation", where immigration is adversely affecting social service provision. Limitation of benefits would also be "graduated" to "take account of the growing connection of the worker with the labour market of the host member state", rather than completely banned for four years. It was not made clear how long the UK could implement the emergency brake.

On child benefit, the UK will not be able to ban child benefit being sent overseas, although the amount will be limited to levels appropriate to the country where the child resides.

On sovereignty, Tusk recognises "the United Kingdom... is not committed to further political integration into the European Union". Although "ever closer union" still lurks in Tusk's phraseology, it has been decoupled from political integration. Additionally, a "red card" mechanism has been proposed whereby a group of national parliaments making up more than 55% of votes on the council could block EU legislation. The principle of subsidiarity also gets an affirmation.

Changes in the eurozone (such as tighter financial integration) will be voluntary for non-eurozone countries, while the UK will not be liable to support eurozone

bailouts. What Cameron didn't get in terms of economic governance was an explicit recognition of multiple currencies.

Finally, Tusk sets out a long-term commitment to better regulation, reducing administration and enhancing competitiveness, more or less along the lines Cameron asked for.

Reaction to the deal

Cameron said, "If I could get these terms of British membership, I sure would opt in", arguing that all four pillars of his negotiation strategy had been addressed. In effect, the PM has all but given his backing to a campaign to stay in the EU.

However the deal has been lambasted by the press and Tory eurosceptics. Much of this has focused on the proposals regarding benefits and immigration. Indeed, the proposals fall well short of what Cameron went for; EU migrants will not face a total ban on benefits for four years and the UK will not have unilateral control on the "emergency brake", and it is undecided how long the UK could apply it for. That being said, other areas of the agreement have also been subject to intense criticism.

Almost as soon as the draft proposal was published, Vote Leave tweeted: "In his manifesto, PM said he'd insist on a four year ban. Now it's conditional and won't last four years. He's failed to deliver this key promise". Meanwhile the press have slammed the deal, with the Guardian saying that of the pledges made on the issue by Cameron since 2009, "only a handful" have been achieved. The Sun and The Express went further, describing the deal as "a dismal failure" and "a joke" respectively. The Mail concludes Cameron's "capacity for

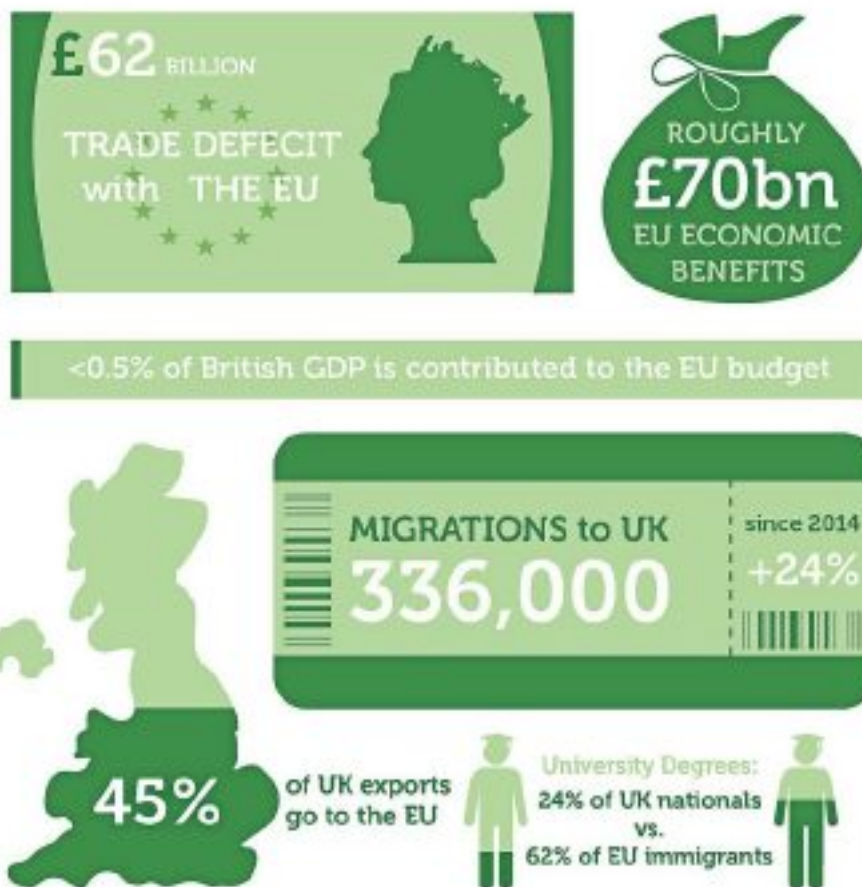
self-delusion is breathtaking".

Several prominent Tory MPs also attacked the deal in the Commons. Leading eurosceptic Jacob Rees-Mogg claimed the deal amounted to a "thin gruel" which left the PM two weeks to "salvage his reputation as a negotiator", as former defence secretary Liam Fox said the proposals had been "watered down in every area". Boris Johnson, seen as a potential leader of the Leave campaign, claimed the PM was "making the best of a bad job".

Most worryingly for Cameron, a snap poll by Sky News found that 69% of the public see the deal as "bad for Britain"; only 31% said it was a good deal. This, combined with the hostility of the press, indicates an uphill battle for Cameron over the next few months if he is to campaign to stay.

Cameron can take heart from the endorsement of Theresa May, who described the proposals as a "basis for a deal". May was considered most senior minister who might potentially oppose the plan. Amidst speculation that several of Cameron's cabinet could campaign to leave the EU, this is a welcome boost to his authority. Labour have also indicated they want to remain in the EU, as Chuka Umunna suggested the deal was one "the left can support". The Financial Times also got behind the deal, saying it was "reasonable" and made "tangible progress".

Despite this, things appear to be very much against Cameron, and it looks as though the PM lots more work to do to persuade other EU nations, his party and the public that this deal is worth endorsing. Cameron's first hurdle is the EU summit on February 18th, where he hopes other EU members will ratify the agreement.



“When you treat people like suspects they’ll become suspects.”

The Gryphon speaks to University Secretary, Roger Gair, to talk Prevent, freedom of speech, and what Leeds can be doing to widen participation.

Benjamin Cook

Could you tell us what the University’s official stance on the Prevent Strategy is?

I think the first thing I want to say is that actually the Prevent duties have applied to universities for about a decade now. What’s different, and has been different since September of last year, is that the Prevent duty has statutory force for the first time. This means that the whole area of Prevent has gone from being discretionary, to something we are obliged to do.

The most important point I want to make is that our whole approach is founded upon three judgments. These three judgments are, first of all, that in the UK people are more prone to being drawn into terrorism if they are alienated or marginalised from society and their local communities. The second judgement is that the greatest protection against students being drawn into terrorism is to ensure that as a community we celebrate diversity and difference, and that through our curriculum and our culture, we inculcate and celebrate the values of global citizenship and tolerance. The third judgement that we have made is that as a institution of learning, the most effective way of countering views which might drawn individuals towards terrorism is actually through open debate, dialogue and discussion.

What they mean in practise is that while we will be rigorous in doing what the law requires, we are not going to be heavy handed, we want to avoid alienation in particular groups of students. We want to avoid any sense of disenfranchising any individuals.

We will remain as committed as ever to freedom of expression and to promoting free debate. We have a freedom of expression protocol which says that we even encourage protest.

We won’t, as I have already indicated, be targeting particular groups of students. If we were to that would be counterproductive. We are not spying on students, and we are being open and consultative, we have been talking to staff groups, we have been talking to representatives of the Union, and having this interview is part of that commitment to debate.

You’re trying to get rid of the urban legend that you’ll be spying on students. An issue in particular that really worries students is that you’re obligated to monitor prayer rooms. Is this the case?

No. Unequivocally. As I have said we will not be spying on students and one of the urban myths relates to this notion of surveillance and actually the prevent duty to give it its due, and I do have problems with some of it’s language, but to give its due it says specifically that prevent programmes must not involve any covert activity.

Another concern for students is the relationship between students and tutors. Do you think it could undermine these relationships if students feel they need to be more watchful of what they say, especially as Prevent labels relevant mental health issues as cause for concerns. Could that stigmatise the mental health of students?



[Image: Tammi Nowell]

What we’re determined to do here is to guard against that risk by trying to look to foster promote develop the right kind of university culture. I think that’s a more productive way to try and prevent students being drawn into terrorism than any kind of surveillance. But yes, its a risk and as I’ve said we need to avoid being heavy handed.

Let me just say that we will not be treating students with mental health issues any different today than we would a year ago. We have built up what is becoming quite a sophisticated support service to help students with all kinds of vulnerabilities and it would be ill-advised for us to do anything to undermine this.

You said that you think that the right to protest and the right to freedom of expression should be protected. However, just a few weeks ago we had the media reporting on how the University of Leeds was ‘not complying to PREVENT’. How do you make sure that you’re not pressured into cracking down more than you would like too?

What I would say is that first of all we have to have the courage of our convictions and, as I have already indicated, we do have some deep rooted values in our University. Values that most university students and staff would have no problems with, and we have and we have got to be, as University officers, firm with our adherence to those values. We must have these values at the forefront of our mind at all times and be prepared to resist untoward pressure from government and the tabloid newspapers.

We were mentioned in a recent *Daily Mail* article because a particular speaker has spoken to the Islamic Society here at Leeds, and elsewhere. We had done a proper risk assessment, we worked very closely with the students union, but on this particular occasion, we made a risk assessment and concluded there was no reason for us to prevent that particular speaker for speaking, and actually we would have made the same decision if the event was held yesterday.

Universities seem to be being expected to shut down certain kinds of speakers and events, whilst being criticised for now allowing enough freedom of speech. What do you make of the media’s recent accusations of Leeds as an enemy to free speech?

Spiked did this so-called index of free speech, however, I can find no serious basis of fact underlying that report. Okay, so the student union has made a perfectly legitimate decision not to sell particular things in the union shop, however, that’s hardly banning free speech. Similarly, the University itself has been criticised for making it clear that we do not accept antisemitism. The law makes it clear that we shouldn’t permit racist propaganda and if i’m being criticised for being a member of that club then I take some pride in it just as I would do for not tolerating islamaphobia.

Last week the Prime Minister said universities are failing BME people, do you feel that he is right to lay the blame at the door of universities?

I dont think its appropriate to lay the blame at the door of the universities. It is appropriate for universities always to be asking themselves ‘Can we do more?’ then yes it is. I’m not up to date with all the stats but let me give you one to indicate the university’s genuine commitment to widening participation - the usual measure used in the sector is the participation rate of students from low socio-economic groups and we at Leeds have moved from just over 18% participation rate in 2011/12 to just under 23% last year. That’s quite a significant rise and it reflects the huge effort that we put into widening participation.

Can we do more? Can we be better ? Of course we can. Theres always room for improvement but the important thing is that we are both committed to widening participation and challenging ourselves all the time.

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Golden Balls: A Recipe for Success

The Gryphon speaks to the Golden Balls team – co-founders Francesca Taylor and Rebecca Peartree and their business director and housemate, Louise Barton, all final years at the University of Leeds – about the street food industry and balancing their business alongside their studies.



[Image: Francesca Taylor and Rebecca Peartree]

Molly Walker-Sharp

Living in France on their year abroad, Cesca and Becky would never have thought that their dinner party food would become their life. But a year on and their street food business, Golden Balls, has made quite the name for itself – winning an enterprise scholarship with Leeds University's SPARK initiative, securing gigs at the Belgrave feast and summer festivals. With street food becoming more and more popular, we sat down with the young foodie entrepreneurs to talk about their journey so far and what the future holds.

How did Golden Balls come about?

Cesca: Me and Becky know each other from first year, we lived in halls together, and then it so happened that we both had our year abroad in Montpellier. We are both quite strong vegies and we are both really into cooking, so we just started cooking loads together in our house – we had a really amazing kitchen – Becky: Like a cute little French kitchen.

C: It just made you want to cook there. So we started getting really inventive.

B: 'Cause you went on that trip to Italy and

I had recently had Arancini, so we were just talking about it and we ended up trialling it.

C: It was for a dinner party and we invited all our friends round and all of them liked it – it's so moreish and comforting and vegetarian.

B: And then we made it again – it was just so novel and something you don't really get that much in the UK, aside from maybe as a starter in a fancy restaurant, but in Italy it's more of a

“We really want to show people that you can have deep fried, comforting vegetarian food – it's not just healthy salads.”

street food.

C: So we started experimenting – the fillings can change from season to season, as it's basically just a shell and you can put whatever you want in it.

B: And we both knew we always wanted to work in the restaurant industry – we didn't really go to France with the intention of starting anything but really it just became a way of spending our spare time. It's weird thinking

how far it's come since then...it just sort of fell into our laps.

What's been the most exciting part so far?

C: The launch party in mid October.

B: Yeah because that's the moment when we knew this was going to work. We'd had all these ideas and then when we finished the launch party we just looked at each other and we were like, we could actually do this.

C: We served decent portions, no one was waiting, everyone was happy with it. These were our friends and family so we were asking for honest opinions, and they said they couldn't fault it.

B: And we'd done so many test kitchens. We didn't just make it one day, we'd tried all different flavours, different rice, different cheeses; everything to make sure it was a really good product and something that we could be proud of. That was so important to us. And so at the launch, that was the moment that we realised that this could be a really good thing.

C: The enterprise launch was really exciting too.

B: We got a big grant from uni.

Louise: £3000 and then £1000 in training and

development. SPARK is amazing.

B: Yeah, I'd encourage anyone reading this who has a business idea to go to Spark because they've helped so much and we've made so many contacts and met so many industry experts through them.

C: Yeah I met the guy that owns Taste Card – I was sat next to him at dinner. He's a multimillionaire but he got the spark grant from Leeds uni too.

What have been the most challenging aspects?

C: Probably money and keeping records – that's why Lou is helping us.

B: Yeah, the more challenging bit is definitely all the nitty gritty legal stuff. It's all very well having an idea and the drive and the passion but there are so many little things you wouldn't even think about – pat testing electrical equipment and food hygiene checks. It's been challenging but at the same time so rewarding, like today we put so much into our food hygiene review and then we got a 5*. Sometimes when you're scrubbing your cooker you wonder if it's even worth it but the moment you hear a good review and see that customer satisfaction it just makes everything so worth it.

L: It's all background stuff.

B: Everyone always thinks it's just making Arancini and frying it but they don't see everything that's gone on behind that.

C: Also, in a way what's most challenging is getting people to take you seriously and getting gigs.

That leads nicely on to my next question. Do you ever feel as though you aren't being taken seriously in the industry, as young students and females as well?

B: We've had such a welcoming network. The people that are in the street food industry in Leeds, other people that are doing the same thing as us, have been so supportive – one guy offered to lend us his generator for an event, people have been answering any questions we've had, they've helped us get gigs.

C: Women-wise, Becky works for Noisette Bakehouse and I was doing some work for Bánh mì, Booth and they're both run by amazing street food women, who have only wanted to help us, and the whole street food community in Leeds is amazing.

B: There are so many strong women who have been really inspirational – Dim Sum Sue, and then Sarah [Lemanski of Noisette Bakehouse] won the Young British Foodies award and Manjit [of Manjit's Kitchen] won the British Street Food award in 2012 – that's our inspiration. I think it is becoming a level playing

field.

C: And Katie and Kim [of Katie and Kim's Kitchen] won the British Street Food award in 2013 and they've just opened an amazing restaurant in Bristol – they started as just two best friends with a vision as well. We also name all our arancini as strong female characters, like 'The Green Goddess', 'The God Mamma', and 'The Angry Nanny'.

L: That's the great thing about street food – everyone helps each other out, it's not competitive at all.



[Image: Francesca Taylor and Rebecca Peartree]

How do you find balancing it alongside your uni life?

B: Ask me after I get my January exam results.

C: It's kind of been fine, we try to balance things. We all live on the same floor in the house so we have a to-do list in our hall to keep track of what we need to do. We try to space our events out and do them when we have less on – so February and March we are trying to do as many events as possible, and then in April and May we won't do as many.

L: With street food you can really do as much as you want to do at that time.

B: And everything kicks off in June, July, and August – that's when a lot of the events are. It is a challenge sometimes.

C: But it keeps us more organised with our work in a way because we have to be so strict with our time.

Where do you see yourselves taking Golden Balls in the future?

C: So many ideas. We want to be doing festivals and we're in talks with one for this year, which will be a really good foot in the door as that's often where the big money is. For example, the bar next to the Glastonbury Pyramid

stage is a million pounds for the pitch, so the money that they make is probably about ten times that. Further into the future, we've also been talking about little arancini bar franchises.

B: We want to do pop-ups in the future too. And we also want to keep building the product and testing the product and making different arancini and keep working on that because that's why we started – because we love food! We want to reach more people because we really want to show people that you can have deep fried, comforting vegetarian food – it's not just healthy salads.

L: I'm a meat-eater and I don't even notice the lack of meat.

C: In the short term, we also want to make a vegan option and we've got gluten-free options available too.

B: We want it to be accessible to as many people as possible, because as vegetarians we've often been faced with menus that aren't accessible to us.

Any advice for other student or young entrepreneurs?

B: It's cheesy but just go for it. There's not much to lose and we've met so many people through SPARK. Take as much help as you can, it's hard enough as it is.

L: See who can help you. People get scared about asking for help but others are always happy to do it – so make the most of places like uni, because Spark have been great.

C: Don't be afraid to get others on board, don't keep your idea for you and keep it a secret because there's no point in that. You need other people, firstly to tell you that the idea is good and worthwhile, but secondly because they might be able to help you, whether financially or creatively or business-wise, like Lou has with us.

B: Listening to people is key. The launch was such a big learning curve for us – originally we were going to do two arancini balls but people said they were happy with one as a portion. You do need to stay true to your vision, but other people see things from a different angle and perspective and that is so helpful.

C: Feedback from the launch and test kitchens has been so important. Believe in what people tell you – that you're good or that it needs to change.

If you want to try the Golden Balls themselves, you can catch the girls at Belgrave on February 13th. You can keep up-to-date with their future events here: <https://www.facebook.com/goldenballskitchen/>.

Veganism – Fad or Future?

The Gryphon explores the possible growth of veganism in 2016, the use of it as a fad diet as well as an environmental action.



Hannah Macaulay

For many, New Year's symbolises the turning over of a new leaf, the promise of new resolutions, and the belief in finally changing your life for the better. It can be everything, from getting in shape to being less stressed, and is often forgotten and neglected by the third week of January, with the excuse of not having time or simply not feeling motivated enough.

2016 is shaping up to be the year of going vegan – or at least a month of going vegan for some, by participating in 'Veganuary'. It is a way for people to start the New Year out on a healthy note, whilst also sparing the environment. Some claim to have found the solution to the healthiest possible diet, by excluding all animal products and focusing on plant-based foods. Movements such as 'raw veganism' are examples of diets that pursue optimising health through plant-based eating. These diets are used as fads by some, but for others they form a lifestyle change – a new way of living and thinking. By looking into the reasons for going vegan and the philosophy behind it, it seems to make increasingly less sense why more people are not convinced by its ethics; even if it is just for a month.

The UN has named 2016 'The International Year of Pulses' in order to raise awareness of agriculture's large carbon footprint on the planet. Furthermore, the movement underlines how plant-based protein is crucial to obtain a healthy diet, which debunks the common misconception that animal-based protein is essential to human beings. In addition to this, modern nutritional science is also slowly beginning to attack the dairy industry. At Harvard University, a recent study reveals how dairy may not be the best source of calcium for humans after all. It also shockingly reveals how an excessive amount of dairy can paradoxically

lead to weaker bones, as well as prostate cancer and even ovarian cancer. The study recommends not having more than one or two servings of dairy per day and advocates getting calcium through other sources such as leafy greens, broccoli, certain beans, and plant-based milk.

Many more studies have been conducted in the field of plant-based eating and health and they are attacking the agricultural sector. Last year, the WHO took the first shot by going after one of the most popular foods on the planet: bacon. They announced that not only bacon but all processed meat is linked to cancer as much as tobacco. Modern science and organisations are clearly becoming increasingly interested in investigating how animal products affect our bodies.

It is not only good for our health to go vegan, but also benefits the earth. First of all, the meat and dairy industry uses a third of all fresh water on the planet. It has been estimated that the water use of one hamburger

the water use of one hamburger is equivalent to two months of showers for the average person.

is equivalent to two months of showers for the average person. Additionally, 51% of global greenhouse gas emissions are a result of livestock and their by-products; stark contrast to the transport industry, which contributes only 13%. Also, according to the film *Cowspiracy*, animal agriculture is responsible for 91% of destruction of the Amazon rainforest. Surely, in a time

where we are facing climate change more imminently than ever before, 'Veganuary' may be a good start in trying to care for the planet; by being a conscious consumer and being careful with what we buy. Eating vegan can also be made extremely cheap and student friendly, with foods such as rice, beans, and potatoes, which are currently some of the cheapest products on the market. It is not only good for health, environment, and from an ethical perspective, but also for private economy.

Could veganism become the future of something more than just a New Year's resolution for the average person? Could 'Veganuary' perhaps become 'Veg-year' for some? Veganism has often been criticised for being damaging to mental health, by making people obsessive with the fear of eating animal products by mistake and the purity of their products. Moreover, it has been strongly accused of being restrictive and difficult, especially when wanting to travel and try local, traditional cuisine in new countries. Vegans often get stereotyped as very radical and angry as well, and are often blamed for being preachy and not respecting meat-eaters' choice to eat meat. While going vegan is of course most favourable for the movement, a slight change in consumer habits, while still not labelling yourself one or the other, may be enough to make a bit of an alteration. It may not be possible or necessary for everyone to go fully vegan, but a shift in mindset and awareness could contribute to a lot of positive change. Thinking about swapping chicken for veggies once in a while in your shopping basket or trying out vegan cakes in cafés could influence the market tremendously if enough people did it once in a while. Every little thought or action is a move in the right direction. And maybe a small move, made by many, is just exactly what the world needs.



[FOOD FOR THOUGHT]

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In The Spotlight: Belly Dance Society



This week, *The Gryphon* speak to Mel, the belly dance instructor for the society, who explains that despite people's misconceptions about the dance form, belly dancing is more than just shaking hips

LUU's Leeds Belly Dance society provides members with the opportunity to become masters of the traditionally North African and Middle Eastern dance form. On the 26th of January, the society held a Give It A Go session in the Treehouse, allowing curious students the chance to experience a new kind of sport.

Elsa Amri

If you've previously assumed that you couldn't be a belly dancer because you didn't have the right body type or because you were a guy, now you know that that is far from the case.

Why did you become interested in belly dancing?

I was studying Philosophy and I am Turkish myself, so when I saw that a Belly Dance society existed, I thought, "Wow, really?" I thought I would just go to the GIAG that they had back then and see what it was all about. The instructor was an older lady called Wendy, and she really inspired the beginners. I also found a friendly group of girls to learn with, which made getting involved with the society easier. It was just by chance. I didn't look it up. I didn't even see a stall at the Refreshers' Fair.

What is your role in the society?

I am an instructor. However, my first ever belly-dancing class was actually in this society. I continued taking classes here and in the city centre and then started teaching here for free, as a volunteer. However, over time, it became quite successful and paid for itself; so I'm still here a few years later!

What are some elements that you think people should keep in mind when practicing belly dancing?

When they come to class or even when they perform, they don't have to show their belly. This society does provide coin belts, and I do in my external classes as well. It's open to men and women, all shapes, sizes, ages and backgrounds. Belly dancing is just a Western name for an Eastern dance: it's an English name for what is essentially a Turkish-Egyptian-Lebanese dance. It's from

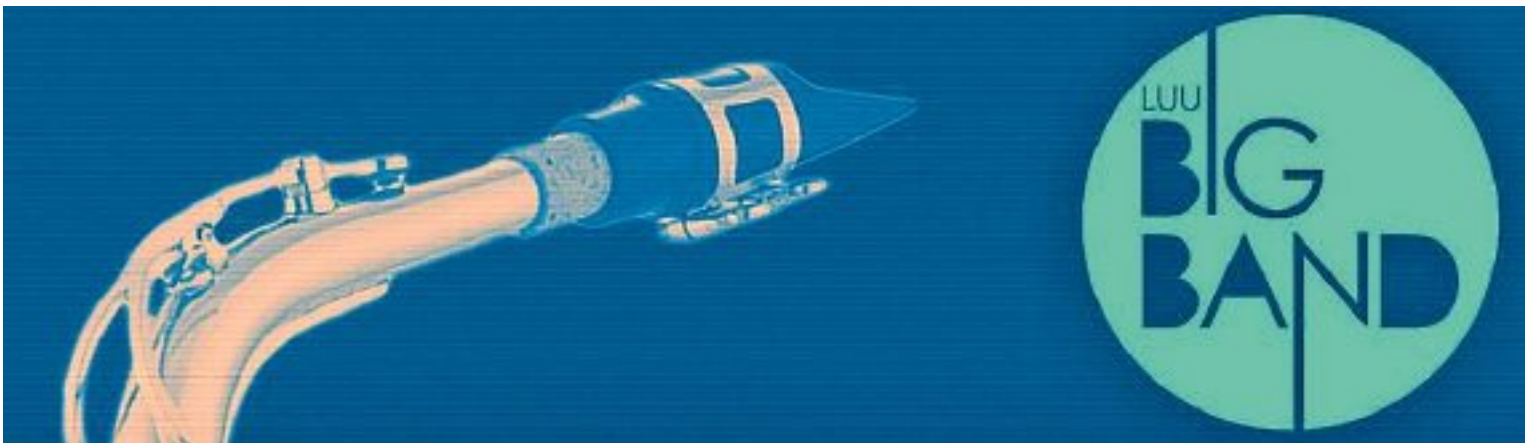
that part of the world, although other countries practice it as well, such as Greece, Tunisia and Morocco.

Sometimes people have the idea that belly dancing is sleazy or wrong. I'm very lucky to be in a country and go to a university that doesn't see it in that way. It's just really fun and people come here to make friends. I've met some of my best friends through belly dancing. It keeps you fit and builds up your core muscles. It's like ballet in that the more you do it, without realising, the more you build up strength and stamina.

Take that first step and attend a class. You may be surprised at what you learn. Classes start next week, and there are four levels: beginner, returning beginners, improvers and advanced.

Further details can be found on the society's LUU page and details on upcoming events, like the dance show in March, can be followed on their Facebook page.

Big Band End Exam Period With A Bang



Natalie Cherry

For top-quality, atmospheric, live music, look no further than LUU Big Band. On Sunday the 24th of January, Big Band held an end of exams party in Old Bar that was so lively it chased away all memories of exams. The society had the place packed, attracting a massive crowd who were all there to hear the authentic sound of a band that knew what they were doing.

The band, made up of twenty talented musicians, prides itself on its diverse range of music and pitch-perfect performances. They play gigs across Leeds, belting out anything from Frank Sinatra to Michael Jackson to Adele, and all within one set.

Becoming part of LUU Big Band is a competitive process - this year alone one hundred and twenty students tried out for the elusive twenty places. The instruments

and vocals involved are carefully chosen to create a balanced and full sound: five trumpets, four trombones, seven voices, one keys, one drums, one percussion and a bass all blending together to create an uplifting swing and jazz vibe.

Once the initial auditions, held every September during fresher's week, are over, the band gets to work straight away with rehearsals. However, as Musical Director Ciaran Diston says, being part of Big Band isn't only about rehearsals:

"We're a very sociable society, and while we rehearse once a week we also like to have a good time. It's important that we all get to know one another well too, as it makes the music better."

In addition to Sunday night sets at Old Bar in the Union, the band have many gigs at private functions, clubs (including HiFi and The Wardrobe) and bars all

over Leeds and the North. They also go on a weeklong tour to Bergerac in the south of France every year during the Easter holidays, representing Leeds at a range of venues and concerts.

President of LUU Big Band, James Gregg explained that:

"Tour is one of the highlights of the year for the band, as well as playing at Leeds Summer Ball and at the Rileys. To be honest though, all of our gigs are like socials because we all enjoy playing music together. It's a great society to be a part of. We're holding an informal jam session for our GIAG on the 20th February in Terrace. Anyone is welcome!"

For more information about Big Band and upcoming events, visit the society's Facebook page.

In The Middle

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Music • Clubs • Fashion • Arts • Lifestyle and Culture • Columns

Credits

Editor-in-Chief

Benjamin Cook

editor@

thegryphon.co.uk

In The Middle

Associate Editor

Beth Galey

inthemiddle@

thegryphon.co.uk

Music

Alex Fowler

Charlotte Bickley

Stasi Roe

Catherine Dowie

Clubs

Chris Caden

Flora Tiley

Fashion

Emma McCormack

Faye Buckland

Molly Shanahan

Rukaiyah Dadhiwala

Sarah Hamond

Arts

Cameron Tallant

Hannah Tomes

Mark McDougall

Paul Turner

**Lifestyle and
Culture**

Emma Bowden

Hannah Holmes

Zoe Delahunty-Light

Blogs

Amelia Chloe

Dunton

Hannah Lewis

**Head of
Photography**

Jack Roberts

Creatives

Megan Chown

Zara Peterson

Front Cover

Jodie Collins

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In The Middle with Mystery Jets

Before their gig at Headrow House, Blaine Harrison and Kapil Trivedi of Mystery Jets sat down with Stasi Roe and Jessica Heath to chat buttons, vinyl and DNA

Having been confined to my bedroom for weeks, frantically cramming in last minute revision, I'd begun to resemble a brain-dead and lifeless vampire. What better way is there though to emerge from a state of living death, than chatting to half of the Mystery Jets, Blaine Harrison and Kapil Trivedi, after the release of their fifth studio album, *Curve of the Earth*. Sat comfortably amongst the hustle and bustle of the stage crew setting up at Leeds' own Headrow House, our conversation began.

It's been four years since the Mystery Jets released their fourth album, *Radlands*. Blaine explains that the reason for the longer gap between the two albums was because, "we felt an element of disappearing was important for this one, to come back with a new sound." The longer time to work on the album allowed the band to "make sure" that they were completely happy with it before, Blaine lovingly adds, "we packaged it to the whole world."

In this time, it is undeniable that a lot has changed for the band. After the exit of founding band member, Kai Fish, in early 2012, the bright-haired Jack Flanagan took over as the band's bass player. "When Kai left it was quite difficult and dynamics definitely changed" Kapil remarks "but having Jack in the band has definitely changed our gang mentality. We've got our brotherhood back again, which is nice." Later on when the boys played their hour-long set at Headrow House, this new "brotherhood" that the band have created is echoed through their stage presence. Between songs, the band interact with their audience, making jokes and even quizzing them on David Bowie's top UK hits. When playing, the audience is respectful and still, completely at one with the sound of beautiful guitar riffs, Blaine's unique voice and some cracking bass and drums. The unity of the band members both musically and affectionately, is noted by the audience and they in turn become a part of the "brotherhood" that Kapil so fondly describes.

As well as a new band member, the Mystery Jets have also ventured on a new and exciting adventure between albums: opening their own studio. "It's some-

thing we tried to do in our previous album, which we recorded in Austin, Texas." Blaine reflects. "It's a very difficult thing producing a record, maintaining objectivity is almost impossible because you wrote the songs themselves and its inevitable that you're going to be very close to them at all times." The studio, which is located just opposite Blaine's house in a disused button factory in North London, allowed the band to store "all the gear (they'd) collected over the years" and create a perfect little hub to write and record music.

It was in this very studio, amongst all the buttons (and Kapil notes that the buttons definitely inspired a "cyclical" feel to the album), that the masterpiece, *Curve of the Earth*, was born. As with previous albums such as *Serotonin*, there is a scientific theme that resides throughout the album; Blaine explains, "I was rubbish at Science at school but in our songs there has been a sort of scientific illusion...with 'Telomere' the song came from a song that I'd wanted to write for quite a long time, exploring the idea of ancestry and if there's traces of the people who came before us, in us. Like asking the question of where you come from." It is only when Blaine found this word 'Telomere', a tiny structure found on the end of a chromosome, that he felt this idea of questioning human identity could really begin to come to life through music: "It felt like this idea and song was Telomere. It's about the idea that the veins carry not only blood, but the very essence of who we are as humans."

The clear thought and passion that has been put into the album is undeniable and echoing this, the boys talk to me about the renown vinyl revival and what effect the likes of Spotify and shuffle culture have on listening behavior within our society. As part of celebrating the release of the album, the Mystery Jets played free gigs up and down the country, but only offered tickets to those who bought a

physical CD or vinyl copy: "I think streaming and YouTube has facilitated that people can listen to the song that's their favourite. In that sense we weren't pressured with this record to do that." By encouraging people to buy a physical copy of the album, a real love is put back into the making and producing of music; it's as if you say to the band, I respect you and your music so I want to give something back to you. As Kapil explains, "anyone who's in a band they're most excited about the vinyl. That's the thing that attracts everyone." The prospect of a fan respecting you enough to buy a physical copy, as opposed to easily listening through streaming sights, is sadly, something that has been lost in the music culture today. Bands like the Mystery Jets by going on tours such as the one they have just completed, strengthen the relationship between band and fan, putting the soul back into the music that is lost through streaming: "people talk more and more about how music has become a track by track culture...that's why I really respect people who come to events like these, there's a sort of vested interest there and that's to be encouraged."

In the society we live in tracks are becoming defined by the people who sing them and how they appear within the public eye, and we risk forgetting what it means to make and enjoy music. Speaking to Blaine

"I think streaming and YouTube have facilitated that people can listen to the song that's their favourite. In that sense we weren't pressured with this record to do that."

and Kapil however, there is a hope that this love of music from an artistic perspective still lives on. *Curve of the Earth* is incredibly put together and the love and attention put into the album can be heard in every single track. I told Blaine that this album is perhaps their most 'mature' piece of work (which he didn't really like because it "makes me think I'm a granddad"). But perhaps a better word is complete. Mystery Jets are complete in their brotherhood,

complete in their newfound psychedelic sound and, most importantly, complete in their understanding of what it means to make music and be a bloody good band.

[Stasi Roe and Jessica Heath]

This is Acting by Sia

After saying she'd prefer to only write songs for other artists, and that her previous album '1000 Forms of Fear' was mostly a contractual obligation, Sia returns.

With this LP, virtually all the songs were originally written for other artists by Sia – such as Adele, Rihanna, Beyoncé – but were rejected, leading Sia to record them for herself. The album title would suggest that she is singing from the perspective of someone else, hence 'Acting'. An interesting concept, and I would presume that Sia was trying to minimise her own personality by having fun 'acting' in these songs, but it leaves them feeling disconnected from each other and the album feeling more like a compilation.

Some of the more enjoyable tracks are 'Sweet Design' – an insanely catchy 2000s R&B-esque track – 'Bird Set Free' and 'One Million Bullets' – power ballads with pleasant, well-layered backing vocal harmonies and good contrast between verses and choruses – and 'Reaper' – a bouyant track with a fun beat, show-tune

chord progression and some great production by Kanye. The closing track – 'Space Between' – is more stripped back and conclusive which successfully emphasizes the end of the LP. However, there are also tracks which resemble typical mainstream pop-fillers such as 'Alive' and 'Unstoppable'. Other tracks leave the listener bored and indifferent through their recycling melodies, beats and structures along with rather bland lyrical themes.

Whilst there are decent tracks on 'This is Acting' that are worth returning to, very little on this LP makes me feel differently about Sia's artistic expressiveness or general talent as a singer/songwriter. On future releases, hopefully we will see a return to her roots with more acoustic, less over-produced instrumentation, less reliance on electronics and more personal, authentic lyrics.

[Fred Savage]



HYMNS by Bloc Party

Let's get one thing out of the way: this isn't the same Bloc Party as years passed. Not only have two original members left the band – drummer Matt Tong and bassist Gordon Moakes – but musically there's a lack of anything similar to *Silent Alarm*. Infact, it's pretty apparent from the opening track that there's a distant lack of anything vaguely substantial, really. 'The Love Within' wants to be a dance track, but instead its lacklustre electronic staccatos flutter meekly over a tame 4/4 drum beat. Kele Okereke's pining of "Don't you want to get high?" could actually be very sharp satire, but sadly I don't think it's intended.

The complete absence of a weighty rhythm section is completely detrimental to Bloc Party's new direction. This is a band that used to have its foundation in intricate and articulated drum beats, and it's not present here. It's not like they've gone completely the other way and immersed themselves fully in electronica either, which

would be commendably self-assured. Instead, they've settled for neither and ended up with a scattered hotch-potch of an album where Kele channels his inner Seasick Steve on 'The Good News' as well as dabbling in some gospel vocals on 'Only He Can Heal Me'. That quasi-religious theme is the only real connector of the LP, and even that has to be blared out in capital letters in the album's title. 'Eden', at track 12, finally brings the beat that *HYMNS* has so desperately wanted and then desecrates it with hopeless lyrics. 'Stand with me naked by the tree / Feed me poison apples,' sings Kele with about as much subtlety as Donald Trump at a Texan gun rally. It's complete pseudo-house bollocks.

HYMNS doesn't exactly scream finesse or cohesion – they've never been Bloc Party's defining characteristics – but this time, it's an especially messy final product.

[Carl White]



Our Mothers by Fat White Family

A mere glance at the song titles on the album addresses the mood and tone for which Fat White Family thrive in. 'When Shipman Decides' and 'Goodbye Goebbels', the latter of which is sang from the perspective of a certain Adolf Hitler, are particularly provocative titles that encapsulate the five-piece's motivation for angst. *Songs for our Mothers* is the second album released by the south-London quintet, and Fat White Family's disdain for contemporary culture is prominent throughout the album.

The album opens with the single 'Whitest Boy on the Beach' and the band's distinct inconsistency and lack of coordination is apparent. Accompanied by a dreary, almost inaudible voice, the opener is without doubt the highlight of the album. The grimness of 'Satisfied' is particularly effective at harnessing dark and shrieking guitars whilst 'When Shipman Decides' has a hypnotic rhythm and enchanting vocals that instil an eerie presence. The distorted nature of Fat White Family is what helped them grow in popularity alongside their chaotic live performances and their condemnation of electronica,

which remains in their second album, particularly in 'Tinfoil Deathstar', which consults drug addiction via heavy distortion. Yet following the screeching opener it becomes difficult to differentiate one track from another. Instead you are taken on a sombre path with an eerily, carnivalesque atmosphere as the Fat White Family screech and grunt about their discontent with the apparent fascist culture we are stuck in.

The lo-fi style that Fat White Family represents provokes an unenthusiastic response to their disjointed, miserable world that is significant in their lyrics and sound. *Songs for our Mothers* blends distorted guitars, primitive drumming and bleak electronica to form an amalgamation of desolation and darkness. Despite lacking stand out tracks, the uninviting tone is infectious and dominant leading to an album seeping with disdain.

[Nathan Dale]



ANTI by Rihanna

Rihanna's last few albums have tended to follow a relatively similar format: a couple of bombastic, soaring singles destined straight for the top of the charts, a few slow, crooney ballads that will never quite match the raw power of 'Unfaithful', and some lame collaborations with whichever EDM giants her label can get their hands on. But in the three years following her last album, Rihanna seems to have thrown this format completely out of the window. Instead she gives us *ANTI*, effectively an anti-pop album which feels more like a woozy drug-fuelled mix-tape than it does the latest hit from one of the world's biggest pop stars. What's nice about this is, for the first time, it feels like we're meeting the real Rihanna, whose public image (weed-smoking, beef-instigating, bad-ass bitch) has often jarred with a lot of her pretty ordinary pop outputs. From the moment the creeping, tinny percussion of 'Consideration' hits, Rihanna pulls us into her world of drugs, darkness and heartbreak. The opener's as solid as it gets, pairing Rihanna's based out, Barbadian flow with SZA's airy vocals, whilst 'Kiss It Better' keeps the tempo but adds sweeping guitar solos and a more traditional pop chorus to the mix. 'Work' is the closest thing on *Anti* resembling a hit, which sees Rihanna literally slurring over a pseudo-dancehall beat – it's a stunning single, although Drake's lazy auto-tuned verse at the end drags it down a

little.

Unfortunately, *ANTI* is an album which takes off with incredible speed but slams into a brick wall about halfway through. 'Woo' tries to be atmospheric but ends up playing like a bad remix of FKA Twigs' 'Figure 8', whilst 'Needed Me' and 'Yeah I Said It' keep the moody production but don't really go anywhere exciting. Tame Impala cover 'Same Ol' Mistake' sounds great, Rihanna's vocals weaving in and out of the psychedelic production with grace and elegance, but it's so similar to the original that it's very difficult to attribute much artistic value to it. The experiments with throaty, Winehouse-esque vocals towards the end of the album with 'Love on the Brain' and 'Higher' are interesting but neither of the songs are well-written enough to really fly. It's intriguing to hear Rihanna being herself and not just a blank canvas for Roc Nation to decorate with whatever's sellable, but only as long as she has something interesting to say. It begs the question of what has more validity: an entirely manufactured yet brilliant pop album such as her seminal *Good Girl Gone Bad* or the interesting yet inconsistent collection of songs we have here?

[Max Roe]

Citizen at Brudenell 28/01/16

I found it surprising that one of the most anticipated gigs of the month was being held at the Brudenell Social Club. I felt like both bands could easily sell out a much larger venue in Leeds; however during the show, the intimacy paired well with the soundscapes that they strived to create. Citizen and Turnover have multiple times proven themselves to be a cut above many other bands in their genres, with their reputations being cemented in my eyes by this first date of their UK tour.

Fellow label mates and Virginia rock band, Turnover, take to the stage as the second support of the night after a set from local alternative rock band, Fade. Having recently gone through a dramatic change in style with their 2015 release *Peripheral Vision* - subduing their earlier pop punk tinged sound with elements of dream pop, indie rock and shoegaze - they command the stage with their novel take on the emo revival genre, primarily performing songs off *Peripheral Vision* as well as a couple new numbers.

Citizen take the stage not long after Turnover's departure. Although their set is relatively short, it is by far the most energetic of the night; opening with 'The Summer', vocalist Mat Kerekes delivers a raw and emotional performance that is mirrored in the crowd's enthusiasm. Songs being played from their most recent output, *Everybody Is Going To Heaven*, receive a more subdued response; however, the overall ambience of Citizen's set is never diminished, with the energy picking up for other songs the band play off their previous album, *Youth*. By the end of their set, I - and much of the crowd - are physically and emotionally drained. The band end with one of their most popular songs, 'The Night I Drove Alone', with the majority of the crowd shouting the lyrics back at Kerekes in a sentimental end to one of the best gigs of 2016 so far.

[Zygmund de Somogyi]

The Magic Gang at Headrow House 30/01/16

The Magic Gang bounced into Headrow House on Saturday night, bringing a generous portion of southern charm to a bitterly cold northern night. The bubbly Brighton quartet's concoction of light and fluffy indie rock lit up the stage and the room. It's certainly not a totally ground-breaking musical formula, but they do it well enough so that it's engaging, even enough to make several die-hard fans bob from one side of the room to the other, screaming every lyric loud and proud.

The band was supported by three others, all similarly soft and indie. The Orielles kicked off the evening, adding their brand of soothing guitar rock to the mix. Next was Natalie McCool, who was rather astounding in that she held the stage alone, yet managed to establish an undeniably powerful presence. With just her voice, a guitar and a Mac, McCool created a swirling atmosphere, suitably edgy to fit with her sharp black fringe and undercut. Then it was the turn of Trudy: a Libertines-esque trio with quivering vocals and a doo-wop beat.

The Magic Gang themselves filled the stage with a performance full of bounding puppy-like joy. Although they were missing their bassist, Angus, this merely increased their enthusiasm as a way to encourage replacement bassist Connor. Their enthusiasm was infectious throughout their set, passing from each band member and then through to the audience. They breezed their way through an eight-song set, ranging from old favourites like 'She Won't Ghost' to the lighter songs from the new EP, such as 'All That I Want Is You'.

To see a band with such universal appeal as the Magic Gang in such an intimate venue as Headrow House, you get the feeling that you're watching a band on the edge of something big. It's exciting, and makes you wish you had a crystal ball, just to be able to say you called it all first.

[Jemima Skala]



[Image: Georgia Rawson]



[Image: Sian Blewitt]



Death of an Artist

Heather Nash and Niall Ballinger discuss whether the death of an artist changes their public image

Yes When a prominent figure in the arts community dies, it is devastating. So many people seem to have a connection to people in the arts. If you grow up listening to an artist for years, or follow an actor's career through all their starring roles, you're obviously going to feel emotional when the sad news of their death is announced. January got off to a poor start for the British art scene. Both David Bowie and Alan Rickman died within a short space of each other, and we also suffered the loss of Motorhead's Lemmy and The Eagles' Glen Frey. It seemed like everywhere you looked (mostly on social media) there were special messages of mourning, people clamouring to tell each other just how sad they were.

Almost as soon as Bowie's death was reported his record company started reprinting his back catalogue, preparing for the inevitable spike in demand for all his classic albums. Bowie moved from an interesting current artist with an undeniable string of successful albums and iconic hits with a few dodgy moments in between, to a proclaimed out and out legend of music. Not that I'm arguing that I personally think he isn't, but in a flip of a switch, it was impossible to be ambivalent towards Bowie. If you didn't think he was the greatest artist ever, you were wrong.

That's what an artist's death does, of course. It elevates them to a point beyond criticism, and affords them all sorts of titles. 'Prince of Pop' for Michael Jackson, Elvis 'The King' Presley. These titles give the artist a myth like status, moving them from the living to the land of legend. Most of the time this collective worship isn't a bad thing; it's just an interesting look into our psyche and the cult of celebrity.

But often it obscures the reality of an artist. Least harmfully, bad albums are forgotten and flopped songs become a point of nostalgia, rather than just an

awkward moment in a career. On the other end of the scale, the combination of death and celebrity can help obscure the worst part of the person behind the art. Paul McCartney often talks about how John Lennon's death made him a 'martyr'. McCartney argued in an interview with *Esquire* last year that Lennon's death changed public perception of his former band mate. Whereas alive he was one quarter of the Beatles, with 'great' and 'not so great' solo stuff too, McCartney thinks that after his death he became the embodiment of the Beatles, the frontman that they never had before. McCartney talked about arguing over song-writing credit for songs like 'Yesterday' that McCartney wrote on his own, but was attributed to Lennon-McCartney instead, and how Lennon was more than fine with taking credit. Although McCartney's interview mostly just voices frustration with the 'revisionism' that occurred after his death, it also hints at the more sour side of Lennon's character. We remember him now as a peace-promoting musical genius, but it's a well-worn controversy that in reality Lennon was anything but. He openly admitted he had a tendency towards violence, and all but abandoned his son by his first marriage. Although by the time the Beatles were recording their last album relationships were already fractured, Lennon was a volatile person to be around, and made things unbearable. So it's true he was no saint, but with his place in music history firmly set, the word will probably continue to side step the more unpleasant truths behind his character. After all, we cannot speak ill of the dead.

Perhaps, however, this line of thought is wondering into another territory – can we separate the artist from the art? A different can of worms all-together. But it's certain that after his death Lennon's popularity rose, as fitting with the pattern we now know so well.

[Heather Nash]

No The recent passing of the great David Bowie prompted an outpouring of emotion from contemporaries and fans touched by his work. This isn't uncommon in the event of any person's death, but is our perception of an artist drastically altered through death? Perhaps causing us to forget all which was negatively spoken of said artist in the press.

In my opinion the answer is simple: no. Although artists may indulge in drug taking or have scrapes with the law which are subsequently plastered over the morning papers, their impact on their art form is what endears us to them and causes us to remember them so fondly. In Bowie's case we not only revere him for his obvious musical genius, but we too laud him for the work he did outside his of his field. Upon his death following a private battle with cancer, the German government paid tribute to the man who had moved to Berlin in the mid-1970s for helping bringing down the wall. *Heroes* released in 1978 draws heavily from inspiration of living in Berlin during the midst of the Cold War, alongside musician and close friend Iggy Pop.

It is certainly true that artists experience a surge in popularity in the aftermath of their death, in some cases surpassing their popularity when they were alive. Rather than this representing a 'free pass' from any wrongdoing they've committed in their life, it is a celebration of the legacy that they have left us with. If we focus our minds on the great musicians who have died early: Jimmi Hendrix, Kurt Cobain, Notorious B.I.G., among notable others, their lifestyle wouldn't be that of sound morality but their music touched us and that's what we're mourning. We appreciated their musical output while they were alive and will miss it greatly now they are gone.

This time last year A\$AP Yams of A\$AP MOB died via a suspected drug intoxication. This was a man who was influential in making A\$AP MOB a regular

fixture on the New York and worldwide Hip-Hop scene. The circumstances surrounding his death were not falsified or kept from public knowledge, and it serves as a strong message highlighting the dangers of drug abuse. His behaviour wasn't condoned which shows artists don't automatically assume martyr status when dead, even if the sound does take its own infamous status. Close friend and long term collaborator A\$AP Rocky revealed that he had always struggled with drugs, stating 'that was his thing'.

Furthermore, judgement over an artist is not reserved for beyond the grave. Recently American artist Future has been heavily criticised for promoting a drug addled lifestyle to those who perceive him as a role model. He has even gone as far as to say that he largely exaggerates his drug consumption on his records and it's not a true reflection of his lifestyle, leaving his adoring fans somewhat bemused.

Artists just like regular people are imperfect; the only difference is that their mistakes are scrutinised and debated whilst ours are enjoyed in complete privacy. Death doesn't absolve them of any wrongdoing, we just choose to focus on finer moments.

[Niall Ballinger]

Weekly Chart

After a long and arduous month of exams, essays and unhealthy spells in one of the University's 24 hour facilities, Deep Fever's final soiree last Friday served as a fantastic opportunity to end the month on a high in what will surely be remembered as one of the best parties of the year. With a consistency in high-class and original bookings the student favourite went out with a bang by bringing Tief's Hesseltime and everyone's favourite house music elder, David Moufang, aka Move D, to Mint for one last time under the Deep Fever banner. Hesseltime's delivery of fine disco edits and heavily sampled house groovers did much to get the packed out Mint in full swing during the early hours of Saturday before David Moufang found time – in between large glasses of Red – to display an impeccable ability to inject a feel-good atmosphere into a club. Here are *The Gryphon's* picks of the evening.



Suoco Edits - Mum Said Chocolate Isn't Good For Dogs (FIO Edit) (Superconscious Records)

Aussie producer Francis Inferno Orchestra has been quietly but fruitfully going about his business for the last six years. Lying somewhere in between pumping disco edit and acidic banger is this edit of his which seemed to perfectly capture the mood of Mint's dancefloor.



Borrowed Identity - You Can't Change A Man (Homework)

A highlight of both Move D's set on Friday and his afternoon disco set at Gottwood last summer. Surprisingly, its just as effective being played inside at the end of a cold January as it is when heard on one of the sunniest days of the year.



The Organ Grinder - Living In A Bottle (FINAWHITE) Nathan Fake -

Throughout the night, snippets of recognisable and familiar samples could be heard throbbing through Mint's Funktion One System, perhaps none so effectively as this delightful use of Gil Scott Heron's 'The Bottle.'



Jamie 3:26 & Cratebug - Hit It N Quit It (Lumberjack In Hell)

Marcel Vogel's Lumberjacks In Hell imprint recently celebrated five years of pressing outstanding music onto wax and releasing it for the enjoyment of its many fans. Its impressive back catalogue still has a stand-out anthem from all of its choice however. This Jamie 3:26 & Cratebug record provides a bassline which is enough to give any crowd a kick into action, all before the ever-effective vocal sample comes crashing in, demanding the attention of all on the dancefloor.



Kolja Gerstenberg - Sand (Move D Remix) (Smile For A While)

An understated deep house groove characteristic of the texture found in many of Moufang's sets. Released this month, it's not one to be missed.

[Chris Caden]



A Toast to Butterz: The Label Taking Grime Back to its Roots in Conversation with Butterz Co-Founder Elijah

The explosive re-emergence of the genre once hailed to be the UK's answer to hip hop has been astronomical and well documented. Most put this down to the work of a select few huge personalities, but for a scene to turn into a movement; to cause change and bring longevity, egos need to be cast aside, in favour of returning focus to the cultural shift that started it all. Last year was dominated by the usual suspects, the legends of the game, the mainstays in Florence from Bromley's 'Unay 2015' Spotify playlist. But if grime is to be taken seriously for years to come, the future belongs to a pair working tirelessly to reconcile UKG with the rave culture that spawned it. I sat down to discuss the future of grime with co-founder of Butterz and Jamz, Elijah.

Back in 2014 Meridian Dan, with his precursory single 'German Whip' said: "It's all the same scene; house and grime is all dance music." Say that now, and self-proclaimed UKG purists would queue up to disagree with you, but historically, emceeing was never a performance art. Harshly accented punchlines delivered at breakneck speeds were intended to bring even more hype to the, hardly lethargic, garage and rave crowds that populated the underground scene. Of course, people chose favourites and the MCs outgrew the DJs, outgrew the music and inevitably left to pursue careers in their own right. They blew up and burnt out quickly. This time around, the Butterz label are here to ensure that history doesn't repeat itself.

Elijah and Skilliam, names synonymous with the rise of Rinse FM, renowned for their travelling UKG and bassline carnival, Jamz, met at University and bonded over the similarities of their left-field record collections: This was after the initial fall of grime, around the time of Roll Deep Crew's dystopian anthem 'Good Times'. They started in music with a show on their student radio station, playing cuts that they spent time and effort ripping from DJ sets and bootlegging from demos. This extended past grime, for them as for Meridian Dan, it was all the same scene, the only thing important to them was the energy.

Towards the end of last year, the pair spent 6 weeks marauding round Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and London with instalments of their club night, Jamz, bringing with them the DJs and MCs who make up the Butterz crew, and select guests who make up the extended family. D Double E, Flava D, P Money, Royal T, Spooky and Swindle all featured at events that go off just like they used back in the day. No stage, no spotlight, just a serious sound system and an old school attitude, changing the game by taking it back.

"Towards the end of last year, the pair spent 6 weeks marauding round with no stage, no spotlight and just a serious sound system and an old school attitude, changing the game by taking it back."

"There were already grime nights, with an MC, Warm up MC and a DJ. That's it. "We bring more energy. They weren't orientated around a party. I felt we could bring that, and with people like Flava D and P Money, that's what we're doing."

The emphasis on party is key for Elijah and Skilliam. They are not characters or figureheads, they are Butterz. They are the drivers, the managers, the PR team, the label heads and the resident DJs. They are modest and they are honest, and you can always rely on them to turn Wire into a madness.

"The emphasis on party is key for Elijah and Skilliam. They are not characters or figureheads, they are Butterz."

"We keep it small, keep it local, and look after a handful of people we know are sick."

Skepta, Kano and JME never stopped working, and have been duly rewarded by Grime's return to favour. Stormzy, Novelist and Jammz are leading the line for the new boys under the spotlight, and now, embarrassingly, MCs who seemed to turn their back on that fiercely underground world in favour of mainstream success are crawling back, begging for some relevance and economic reward. Chipmunk left Alvin and the boys, shortened his name and started a slagging match with anyone who bothered to cast him a sideways glance. Tinie Tempah joined in, even with a huge pop single with Jess Glynne sitting at the top of the charts. Famously Greek Dappy used the N word, and it all smacked of desperation. Elijah and Skilliam don't care about all that; their ambition and vision encompasses the good of the scene, and they're under no illusions about what the spotlight on grime means for them.

"Skepta is doing well and smashing it in America and he should take the credit for that. But there's no scene over there. People get caught up in specific artists and view their success as a scene success. A Skepta win helps Skepta, and whoever he chooses to work with. It doesn't help Butterz."

Luckily for Butterz and luckily for followers of the scene, Elijah and Skilliam have a work ethic that is simply unparalleled, they're always looking for opportunities to throw a party and instead of waiting for the movement to spread, they're out there spreading it themselves. Even if Grime dies out, Butterz will be raving through and beyond 2016.

**Grime 2015 is out now on the Butterz Label.
Jamz 2016 001 kicks off at Wire on February 23rd.**

[Robbie Russell]

Leeds RAG Fashion Show: Talkin' bout a Revolution - The Preview

The annual RAG fashion show consistently supports a range of local charities, and the 2016 show is in aid of Leeds Mencap and the Refugee Council. For the feel of this photo shoot, we wanted to touch upon the different eras and their representations within the show, without giving away what is in store for the big night. With the help of clothes from Accent Clothing, Blue Rinse and Lambert's Yard we put together a diverse but representative selection of our looks. Having local designers on board the clothes highlight an eclectic and eccentric mix of styles and trends typical of revolutionary eras that will be revealed in the show. The mixture of high street vintage stores to high-end designers enables us to represent how ground-breaking moments in history are still influential within today's trends epitomized through personal style. A stereotypical men's suit conveys an androgynous and powerful look, used here to portray feminism.

The location for the shoot is that of a grungy, urban outdoor setting, symbolising the forward thinking theme of the show. The juxtaposition of the sleek clothes against the gritty background allows the clothes to stand out, while also signifying the community origins of the movements we're illustrating.

We aim to use the clothes as a way to subvert stereotypes about how clothes are typically worn as a way of promoting equality through fashion. Each look embodies a different movement ultimately reflecting the relationship between fashion and politics.

Tickets for the show are available online and from stand in the Union now. It is set to be a great evening and is the biggest RAG event and one of the most highly anticipated events on the Leeds University Union (LUU) social calendar.

[Ellie Pandya]

[Stylists: Emma McCormack & Faye Buckland]

[Photographer: Ryan Blackwell]

[Make-up: Harley Wild & Grace Ennis]

[Models: Zara Shasore, Amy Bevis, Otto Lyons & Baile Beyai]



Black Suit: J Lindberg
Bra: Topshop £10 (SALE)
Metallic Brogues: Zara £25



Green Tassel Cardigan: J Lindberg
Scarf: ASOS £6
Velvet Flares: Rat & Boa £36



Leather Fringed Jacket: Blue Rinse £35

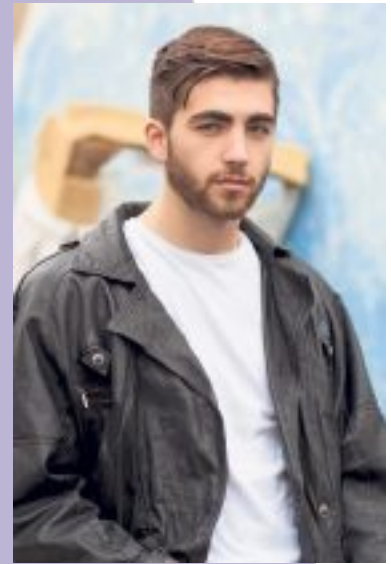




Aztec Shirt with Acid Collar:
Blue Rinse £18
Trousers: Model's Own



Multicoloured Jumper: Lyle & Scott £54.99
(worn inside out)
Trousers: Black Levi Jeans



White T-Shirt: Model's Own
Leather Jacket: Blue Rinse £35



Waistcoat: Remus Uomos Jeans £74.99 (worn
underneath)
Cardigan with zip detail: Gro a Live



[A big thank you to the RAG stylists for sourcing the clothes for the shoot, and a huge thanks to the brands for supporting the cause]

Leeds RAG Fashion Show: Meet the Stylists

The theme has been released and we can't wait to see Talkin' bout a Revolution in its full glory on Thursday the 11th of February. We met up with the Leeds RAG stylists to get the lowdown on the upcoming show.

What has been your favourite fashion revolution to date?

Christa: The roaring twenties; lace, feathers, swinger dresses. I just love this fashion revolution as it was a time for women to absolutely embrace the changes in society through the expression of their clothes.

Beth: I loved the androgyny of the 90s - it brought a whole new aesthetic to fashion combining grunge and minimalism, which liberated women in a way which hadn't been fully explored before.

Is there a particular era you favour in terms of fashion?

Ellie: I really like the 60s I think everyone looked great, particularly Jane Birkin's style and make up is just flattering. I also love what the Scandinavians do. Always look so effortlessly chic which I think is what everyone ultimately wants to achieve.

Naomi: I agree - the 60s was such an iconic period in fashion. But my favourite era is the contemporary minimalist fashions we see today which use the structure we begin to see in the 60s, but also the real androgynous angles that came about in the "power" era of the 80s.

What made you want to get involved with LRFS?

Ellie: My interests have always been in the creative industry. I love meeting and working with new people so it seemed like an unmissable chance to become a part of the LRFS family.

Naomi: I'd love to work in the fashion industry; LRFS is essentially a microcosm of the fashion world, so I've had the perfect chance to see every possible angle and career option because of it! I mean, who doesn't want to browse at clothes online and it being actually for a job not just library procrastination?

Christa: I have always had a love for fashion and would like to pursue a career in the industry after university, so this was a perfect opportunity. Also, I was a

member of RAG beforehand, and this was an amazing way to make loads of new friends.

What have you most enjoyed when preparing for the show?

Christa: The opportunity to meet so many amazing designers, hair stylists and makeup artists, build up so many great connections and contacts - we wouldn't have a show without them and they have all been great to work with.

Ellie: The stylist team, definitely. We bonded perfectly from the beginning and I couldn't have asked for better girls to work with.

What should we all look forward to on the day?

Christa: Hmm... the finale.

Naomi: The visuals - be prepared to be amazed.

Beth: The clothes, of course.



[Images: Ryan Blackwell]

Brand Focus

BOLONGARO TREVOR

Founded by British designers Kait Bolongaro and Start Trevor, Bolongaro Trevor juxtaposes contemporary streetwear, vintage military and British Victorian styles. The brand's individuality in its approach to fashion is incomparable. Both designers boast remarkable industry creativity and dedication; having worked as Head of Menswear at Reiss for seven years, Stuart Trevor founded All Saints in 1994, where Kait Bolongaro joined him two years later to develop their vision of a whole new kind of style.

Following on from All Saints, the duo looked to expand on the brand's effortless aesthetic. Working with a range of textures, fabrics and cuts, collections look to push the boundaries of modern fashion through incorporation of timeless, cutting edge detail to cater to their eternally cool customer.

The brand takes inspiration from existing growing collections and inspirations from prior decades, always looking to reworking pieces and creating new looks.

Inspired by revolutionary style movements such as Punk, Mods, New Wave, Teddy and Skins, Bolongaro Trevor encapsulate so many influences crucial to this years show. Customising, over-dyeing, creating original prints and adding buttons, pockets, zips and trims has made for an incredibly diverse collection.

Their store here in Leeds' Thortons Arcade is a place of inspiration, it oozes originality and cool from their quirky displays to immaculately dressed staff.

"When we started Bolongaro Trevor, we wanted to produce a totally different aesthetic to what we had created at All Saints. We were 28 years old when we started All Saints and it was all about what we wanted to wear then. This next venture gave us the opportunity to create a new, higher level, more beautiful and original product - what we want to wear now - clean, crisp and neat, yet worn-in and slightly more classic." - Stuart Trevor

JACKSON'S FASHION

After catching her incredible designs in last year's show, we were determined to get Liverpool-based designer Jackson's Fashion back on board again for LRFS 2016. Her amazing collections include an array of unique styles, which enhance and challenge fashion's conventions, driving colour and embroidery to its very limits.

The designer is inspired by her desire to be unique, living by the rule that life is too short to blend in and #fashion is for the brave and a channel for self-expression. From her rainbow hair to marvellous Instagram page, where she models her own garments, she has been so much fun and such an inspiration to work with.

Not only is she featuring in LRFS for the second year running, she has worked with the stylist team to create brand new designs to incorporate into the show. Jackson's pieces are absolute wrecking balls powering through the show sure to get you emotional, along with depicting one of the greatest female empowerment movements of all time and a finale piece that will definitely get heads turning.

[Beth Arthurs]





Creed: Comeback of the Year

We enter the fray in Juvie, where a troubled youth by the name of Adonis Johnson (Michael B. Jordan) is being held. He is picked up and taken in by Mary Anne Creed (Phylicia Rashad) who goes onto inform him of his true parenthood, something the title of the film hopefully makes clear to you. Jump to seventeen years later and Adonis has established quite the reputation as a professional boxer in Tijuana, Mexico with an excellent record of 15 to 0 and has a never-explained job, although all he really wants to do is fight. So he travels to Philadelphia and tracks down Rocky Balboa and talks him into training him.

The film has some fantastic direction from Ryan Coogler, who also collaborated with Aaron Covington for the excellent screenplay. It certainly provides an exciting story for those who aren't familiar with the Rocky films, but is an exceptional soft reboot of the franchise for the more initiated. It provides a subtle but effective balance between focusing the story on Creed and Rocky. It allows the story of Creed to flourish without being overshadowed by the star of the franchise.

But Stallone makes a heroic return as Rocky with an exceptional return performance, winning him the Golden Globe, and getting him nominated for an Academy Award for supporting actor. It's a heartfelt performance, and one that certainly brings the franchise full circle. Whether it'll be the last is yet to be seen, although if it was, it certainly would be finishing on a high. His chemistry with Jordan, and also his love interest, Tessa Thompson is clear to see on screen and really brings a sense of reality to the picture that really grounds it for the rest of the audience. Jordan, as Creed puts down a fine performance that really brings together both the story arc of the character and the emotional curve.

The cinematography of the fight sequences is fantastic, varying between fights depending on the significance. The first fight we see Creed take part in in Tijuana, the camera provides a low, slow, sweeping, single-take shot of the ring, giving us a real sense of being in the crowd. Later on it changes, and we get close-up shots

of the fighters and really get a personal feel that is missing from the earlier fights, and allows you to truly care about each hit given and taken and the blows traded between the fighters. Cinematographer Maryse Alberti really went above and beyond the call of duty to provide an excellent feel to the fight, which mirrors the excellent work of *Southpaw* last year.

All in all, this is an extremely faithful, yet entertaining reboot to this hugely popular franchise that really encapsulates what the Rocky films were about from the start: the underdog story. It is a fairly old fashioned idea, yet one that resonates with the audience, mirroring that of the first Rocky but with the benefit of the history of the old films. The superb performance from Stallone brings the film together, right up to an ending that will have you wanting to jump up and punch the air.

[Matt Bolland]

Exposed: A Collection of Shallow Archetypes

Declan Dale does not exist. Declan Dale is a pseudonym for the director who abandoned this film after Lionsgate Premiere edited what was meant to be a bilingual, surrealist drama (sounds promising so far) into a generic detective thriller (cue unenthused sigh). Keanu Reeves and Ana de Armas lead the action in this confused picture. The pair worked together last year on *Knock Knock*, an erotic horror. I imagine that the original director wanted to work with that supposed on-screen 'chemistry' in *Exposed*. Unfortunately though, we will never know because, in the final edit, the stars share only one scene and no dialogue.

The film simultaneously follows Detective Galban (Reeves) in the hunt for his partner's killer and the

pernatural events that Isabel (de Armas) continues to witness. Yes, the plot is as bewildering as it sounds. Characters come and go, with minimal development and almost no explanation as to their relationship with each other. It is so obvious that the on-screen action is not what the narrative was intended to be. For about half an hour in the middle of the film, things happen that don't seem to go anywhere or to have any relation to anything earlier in the story. Nonetheless, Lionsgate attempt to tie it up at the end, but for me this only raised more questions than it answered.

On top of this, the film reeks of worn out stereotypes. The white guys are the cops, the black guys are the suspects, and the Hispanics are, obviously, reli-

gious kooks. Perhaps it is a good thing Declan Dale doesn't exist because he would have a lot to answer for in using such clichéd characters in 2016. Come on Hollywood, we want to be challenged, not insulted. These shallow archetypes are as disheartening as all the #newyearnewme selfies at the gym.

Don't get me wrong, if it's a throw-away police drama you're looking for then this is the stuff. However, I couldn't see past the potential of what this film could have been if the original, surreal-thriller route had been pursued.

[Cameron Tallant]



[Images: Trinity Films]

Review: The Smuggler

Not many films can boast such an intriguing plotline as Angus Sampson's *The Smuggler* (named *The Mule* in Australia), in which the simple yet distressing notion of someone being unable to go to the toilet is transformed into a tense comic thriller that keeps both mind, and especially body, on edge throughout. This straightforward yet elaborate crime story centres around the unfortunate Ray (played by Sampson himself), whose attempts to smuggle twenty condoms of heroin from Bangkok to Melbourne via his stomach results in a gruelling stand-off between the police and Ray's delicate orifice. It's a film which truly encapsulates the darker undertones of toilet humour whilst creating graphic suspense out of a commonplace experience, and it does so in a way that is both grotesquely laughable at times whilst retaining its critical integrity through a neatly stylised plot.

Following Ray's end of season football team touring of Bangkok and his conviction to smuggle heroin back to Australia, the police quickly identify him as a mule following a luggage mix up and propose to detain him for several days until he excretes the drugs from his system. Unable to prosecute, however, without the drugs out of his stomach, Ray tenaciously decides to stick it out with the help of his erstwhile lawyer (Georgina Haig) to avoid going to jail, but to also avoid the retribution of the criminal gang who set him up for the job. Pitted against federal agents in the form of good cop Paris (Ewan Leslie), and bad cop Croft (Hugo Weaving), what ensues is a siege mentality where the slightest of movements in Ray's intestine is mirrored by the subtle developments in the plot as the pressure builds on Ray to defecate and release the suspense which pervades the film throughout.

In tracing Ray's development, this passive, unseemingly character who possesses the perfect attributes for a mule quickly becomes embroiled in a situation that is both beyond and equally within the boundaries of his control. His gullible and humble nature inhibits him yet equally allows him to bypass the manipulations of criminals and police alike, whilst his submissive character undergoes a telling development in the face of such extraordinary odds. With the American-Australian sailing competition working as a backdrop throughout, Ray's struggle epitomises the underdog story and encourages our sympathy for his uncompromising position caught between the brutal powers of the law and the criminal underworld.

Through the simplicity of the plot interweaved with elaborate and intricate developments throughout, Sampson provides a wickedly macabre comic thriller that is gut wrenchingly captivating from start to finish. The film creates suspense out of practically nothing in centring the plot around the simple yet equally unsettling concept of constipation, as we are led on an erratic journey in Ray's boots which is both light hearted and thrilling in its critical achievement. The anticipation surrounding Ray's hold out may keep you transfixed, yet this is a film which contains plenty of other plaudits for its stylistic values, and deserves recognition for its genuine ability to grab your attention in a way that proves incredibly entertaining throughout.

[Oscar Ponton]



[Image: Armando Aronizo]

The Oscars 2016: Not so Black and White

Here we are again; for the second year in a row there's outrage over the whitewashed Oscar nominations. The Academy has churned out another bleached list of nominees. Considering the backlash they received last year, you would expect a change. But 2016 is repeating history and writing out the achievements of people of colour in the film industry. The ongoing debates over the lack of diversity have highlighted how many complex facets there are to this necessary conversation. Perhaps this year we can try to grasp how this controversy isn't just about a lack of acknowledgment or internalised racism. Paradoxically, it's about the how the industry itself has caused this, and yet the Oscar nominations encourage their practices, creating a vicious cycle.

In response to the 2015 controversy, the Academy's president Cheryl Boone Issacs said that the organisation were 'committed to seeking out diversity' in all their nominees. Interesting, especially since all twenty of the acting nominees this year are white. Furthermore, films that have either actors or directors of colour, such as *Creed* and *Straight Outta Compton*, only received nominations for their white stars. It's almost taunting. Of course, there is the matter of meritocracy, the very principle the Oscars are established upon. It is possible that these white actors deserved the nominations more. During an interview with the BBC, actor Michael Caine said 'you can't vote for an actor because he's black.'

Firstly, as true as this is Michael, we cannot just talk about black actors. The media seems to have piggybacked onto this idea of it only being an issue with the lack of black nominees. If we are really talking about diversity, it is about all people of colour, the LGBTQ+ community and those with disabilities. Secondly, I find it difficult to believe that not

one actor in those communities deserved to be among those acting nominations for two years in a row. What about Idris Elba's critically acclaimed performance in *Beasts of No Nation*, or Ian McKellen's outstanding performance in *Mr. Holmes*? Unfortunately, Boone's claim becomes superficial and futile, a bid to calm the racial media storm.

But should we really be surprised by this lack of diversity when we consider who it is that votes? A study by the *LA Times* found that in 2012 nearly 94% of the Academy's 6,000 members were caucasian, 77% were male with a median age of 62: an overwhelming amount of white voters followed by an overwhelming amount of white nominees. This correlation doesn't indicate member's racism, but rather that these older, white men are less likely to identify with or experience a film in the same way the ethnic landscape of America and other countries does. These members are hardly representative of the their diversity.

Former president of the Academy, Frank Peirson, argued that there is no reason for these industry professionals to represent the entire population and average film viewer. By voicing this opinion he only highlighted the whitewashing within the industry itself. The Academy's responsibility for their choices is almost dispelled by the limited roles and jobs open to people of colour in the industry. If not cast as peripheral, secondary characters,

people of colour, as *Selma*'s David Oyelowo encapsulates, are 'celebrated more for when [they] are subservient', never 'being in the centre of [their] own narrative driving it forward.' Recent examples such as *12 Years a Slave* and *The Butler* only prove Oyelowo's point. Perhaps this lack of leading roles, or just roles in general, is the root cause of the Academy Awards' peroxide nominees.

However, The Oscars are undoubtedly the most prestigious and influential award ceremony. According to Box Office Mojo, the nod of approval from the Academy saw last year's nominee's box office revenue increase by more than 69%. Their endorsement leads to wider audiences, financial success and ultimately more popularity. Electing all white nominees conveys a dangerous message that diversity is expendable in the industry, perpetuating and confirming that white, straight actors are what achieve success for studios and their parent companies. This entirely shuts out a necessity or encouragement of diversity within the film industry. And yet, the majority of white roles within films are representative of a blank space that a person of diversity could have more than adequately filled.

Although appalling, this repeated episode has re-sparked a dialogue about the painful lack of diversity within the film industry. Boone Issacs responded to this year's controversy with the pledge that 'the Academy is taking dramatic steps to alter the makeup of [their] membership' to engender 'much-needed diversity'. Let's hope this year's promise of dramatic change isn't as empty as the last and that it has a positive knock-on effect for the industry as a whole.

[Rebecca Newson]

“If we are really talking about diversity, it is about all people of colour, the LGBTQ+ community and those with disabilities”

“Electing all white nominees conveys a dangerous message that diversity is expendable in the industry, perpetuating and confirming that white, straight actors are what achieve success for studios and their parent companies.”

Stage

Preview: Opera Soc's *The Magic Flute*

From 10th - 13th February 2016, performance society Opera Soc will be performing a brand new adaptation of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. However, this will be no ordinary re-telling of the classic opera as director and president, Freddie Brook, takes on the creative challenge of creating a new adaptation of a classic opera that promises to be full of variety - even including a '20 ft giant snake' (puppetry, thankfully).

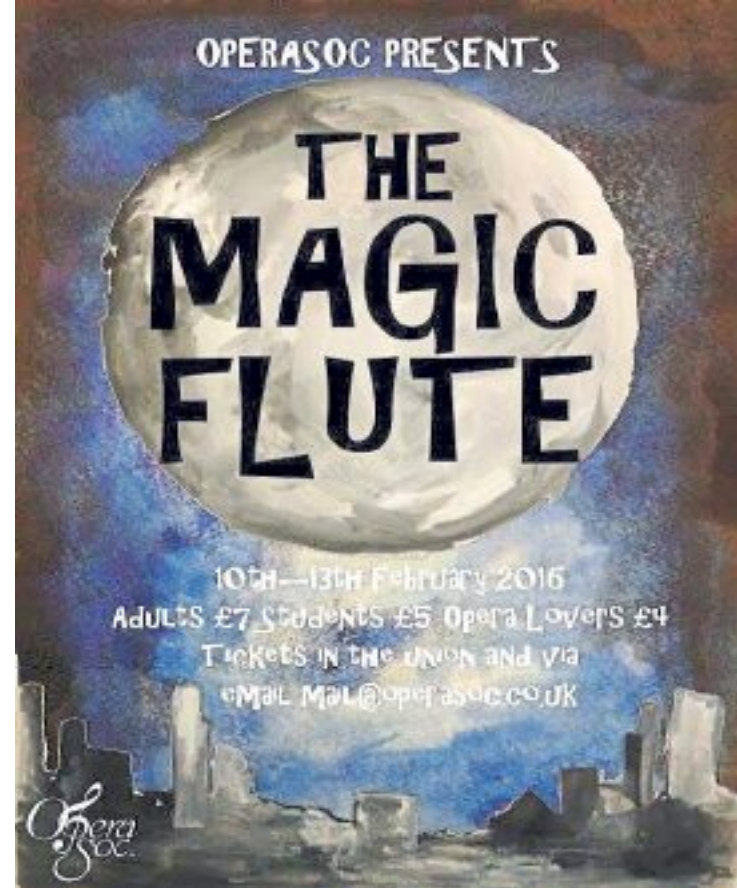
Working with a large cast of around 45 students, this version will see the story set in the 21st century, using an abundance of pop culture references. "It's kind of like a fairy tale that's flipped on its head", Freddie tells us, adding that the show itself will be broken up by dialogue unlike many other traditional operas.

The idea to put on such a show came about when musical director, Simon Pratt asked Freddie to collaborate with this new adaptation. After 5 months work, Opera Soc are ready to submerge the 21st century audience into a post-apocalyptic world with audience involvement and the occasional pantomime element.

Tickets for the event are priced from £4-£8 and will be performed at Stage@Leeds from 10th-13th February, starting at 19:30 each evening.

For an exclusive preview, visit Opera Soc's Youtube channel, LUU Opera Soc.

[Mark McDougall]



The Student's Theatre Guide

Will Reece - Arnold gives us his round up of the Theatre hotspots in Leeds

West Yorkshire Playhouse



Cruising swiftly towards its fiftieth birthday, the Playhouse is without doubt Yorkshire's finest arts centre. Spread out across several auditoria, the programme here is renowned for its size and diversity, featuring some of the country's biggest names alongside its own award-winning productions as well as fringe shows. The Playhouse recently announced a £6.6m renovation project which will see the theatre transformed into an even bigger space and allowing it to develop its role as one of the country's most important artistic centres.

Student value? Big names mean big prices, but their offer of students tickets combined with an excellent, cheaper fringe programme still makes The Playhouse great for students.

Best upcoming events? Phoenix Dance Theatre (17th-20th Feb) & The Damned United (4th Mar-2nd Apr)

Live Art Bistro

The fringe scene in Leeds is strong, regularly playing host to new writers and some of the finest talent Edinburgh has to offer. Leading the pack of dedicated fringe spaces is the Live Art Bistro, a voluntarily run performance venue that has been based on Regent Street since 2015. Push back the huge blacked-out doors of its warehouse frontage and you'll step into a unique creative space: all faded sofas and tricky lighting. Thanks to the experien-

ced team behind the theatre, its programme continues to challenge and boost Leeds's cultural scene as well as offering a memorable night for any forward-thinking student.

Student value? Prices are in keeping with the ethos of the space, offering an affordable theatre experience.

Best upcoming events? Daniel Oliver - Weir Séance & Long Table (5th Mar) & FAILUR Lab (20th-21st Feb)



The Carriageworks Theatre

The Carriageworks is perfectly placed for students, situated in the Electric Press on Millennium Square. Known for its diverse and particularly accessible programme, The Carriageworks is actually run in connection with Leeds City Council whose mark on the theatre is visible through their take-part initiatives and ticket prices. Plenty of up-and-coming theatre companies make their way here and, if you can shuffle through the extensive children's programme, there are several gems at The Carriageworks every season.

Student value? Given its link to the council, tickets are noticeably subsidised to appeal to all. Newcomers are obviously welcomed.

Best upcoming events? Owen Jones: The Politics of Hope (25th Feb) & Three Generations of Women (10th Mar)

Slung Low Theatre

Fresh on the fringe scene in Leeds, Slung Low aim to produce "unlikely, ambitious and original adventures for audiences". The company-come-venue took over the impressive Holbeck Underground Ballroom (The HUB) recently and with them brought theatre's great new idea: pay what you want tickets. This interesting technique of converting audience into critic epitomises Leeds's innovative artistic ethic and suits Slung Low's varied programme, which offers new writing, reworked classics and performance workshops.

Student value? The ideal student ticketing arrangement (although just paying 50p is slightly stingy).

Best upcoming events? Macbeth (21st Feb) & Alaska (6th Mar)



Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House

The Grand was opened in 1878 and in its acclaimed history has seen the likes of Julie Andrews, Sarah Bernhardt and even Laurence Olivier tread its boards. With this sort of heritage, it's no wonder that the theatre continues to host some of the city's biggest artistic events. Shows coming direct from the West End fuel The Grand's reputation for appealing to masses (expect Blood Brothers, Guys and Dolls...) but its strong connection with the esteemed Opera North and Northern Ballet ensure there's something for every student.

Student value? Massive touring shows fresh out of London are never cheap, but student discounted tickets are available for most shows.

Best upcoming events? Swan Lake (3rd-12th Mar) & Alan Bennett's Single Spies (12th-16th Apr)

[Will Reece-Arnold]

Kid Criminals: A New Approach

Questions surrounding the exemption of justice appear in a somewhat more exaggerated form in the US, where children are locked up at a rate seven times higher than in the UK. *Kid Criminals* is an explorative and informative documentary following a new, progressive approach to this problem, as it is trialled in Indiana.

The approach embraces psychological individualism – a method which looks set to revolutionise everything from cancer treatment, to tackling obesity. Our own Department of Justice has a similarly positive, ‘child-centred’ approach to juvenile rehabilitation, which encourages academic or vocational qualifications and teaches child offenders to engage productively with society, rather than be trapped in a cycle of punitive temporary exclusions from it. This means that the ideas and problems seen in the documentary are easily applicable closer to home.

Although I watched it on its own, this is the second episode in the two-part series. It seems substantially less contentious than the one on young sex offenders, but it still used the technique of delayed revelations to jolt viewers out of feeling too much empathy. In a girl’s correctional facility, Amanda Artyamsol stropped like an immature seventeen year old, protesting in a hurt tone, “people think I’m a bad person, but they just don’t know my story”, and Cyleina Briggs is endearingly childish in a phone conversation with her step-father. It transpires that Artyamsol was involved in a house fire which killed three children; Briggs was convicted of the armed robbery of a neighbour.

When the narrator informs us that they, along with the boy we witness pulverise another boy in a frenzy of blows, could be released from the juvenile facility within months as opposed to the years an adult or child in a different system would expect, the scheme seems dangerously ambitious. Unfortunately, the system’s novelty means that statistics which could help to evaluate the system are sparse.

Instead, the children themselves are our primary source of evaluation. The producers wisely decided to focus on a few individuals, giving us more of a window into their psychological state. This is needed for us to engage with the difficult balance which must be made for those who have committed serious crimes but whose development may still be constructively directed. Interviews with family members rounds out their profiles and helps us see the ‘students’, a moniker chosen to emphasise rehabilitation and is balanced by the voice-over’s depersonalising insistence on surnames, as human beings with potential.

As such, the staff - all realistic but hopeful - require little focus, but a BBC Panorama exposing abuse in teenage prisons highlights the importance, and difficulty, of finding people like those we see in Indiana, and is a worthwhile supplementary watch.

Kid Criminals is an engaging treatment of an issue we don’t often hear about. The cautious optimism it displays for a considered approach for young offenders, and the equally considered production, certainly deserves more than the lazy shock headlines which accompanied the first episode.

[Sarah Berry]



[Image: philraptor]

The Witness: A Lost World of Puzzles

Let’s face it we all need a source of inspiration, a beacon of hope in this dreary mid-winter. As the glowing faces of freshers grow aged and tired and final-year students push through their last ounce of childhood, one might question where this inspiration can be found or whether it will ever appear. To many, a 100-hour puzzle doesn’t sound like the answer, but look more closely - it just might be.

Now you may have sensed some form of irony from my opening and before actually taking the time to sit down and research Jonathan Blow’s *The Witness*, it was hard to find a genuine interest in the game. In a world of quick, meaningless games where the player is left sedated for a few days after an impulse purchase, someone like Blow, who at least offers genuine dedication, passion and skill to his work can often slip under the radar.

The Witness is a follow-up to Blow’s first game *Braid* which saw the protagonist have to climb and make its way through puzzle challenges whilst answering philosophical questions at the same time. In addition to winning the Independent Games Festival award in 2006 and being selected by GameSpot for their ‘Best Original Downloadable Console Game’ award, *Braid* was nominated for five Xbox Live Arcade 2008 awards. *The Witness* is Blow’s attempt to emulate this success and one has to wish someone showing originality in this seemingly repetitive industry the best of luck.

I myself am by no means a serious gamer, nor have I had any real passion for any quick-fire games such as *Call of Duty*, but surely people must get bored of the same stuff that comes out month after month. So if you’re bored of laying siege on a Nazi Village (or whatever happens in *CoD*) then why not give *The Witness* a chance? Who knows, it may even open your square eyes to a new gaming world.

“The Witness is an intricate exploration of a lost puzzle world and is so detailed and complex that even Blow himself has trouble explaining his own game.”

Given that the only people who are probably going to relate to this article are going to be gamers, I should maybe be a bit nicer to the gaming world and attempt to explain what the genuine attraction to the game is. Basically, the game is an intricate exploration of a lost puzzle world and is so detailed and complex that even Blow himself has trouble explaining his own game, which

only adds to the mystery. The intricacy of each puzzle is in-depth and depends on those ‘a-ha’ moments in which the gamer eventually works out the solution, which Blow ensures is a very rewarding moment, and I don’t doubt that.

This game has the potential to be genuinely very special; Blow has hired out real-world architects and the attention to detail throughout the game is astonishing. He has spent £5 million and multiple years creating the best possible gaming experience for you, so I think £40 sounds like a reasonable price - maybe.

[Luke Giles]



[Image: Getty]

The Mad and Terrifying World of Donald Trump

Channel 4 sent Matt Frei on the campaign trail of controversial billionaire tycoon-come-celebrity, Donald Trump, in the race for the Republican nomination and his bid for the White House. The title, *The Mad World of Donald Trump*, may sound like a cartoon about a duck, but this duck with a double comb-over is in the running to stand for the presidency of arguably the most powerful nation in the world.

Donald Trump is so outrageous in all he says and does he is easily dismissed as a comical caricature of an extremist politician. The programme opens with clips of him appearing larger than life, grappling at a wrestling match, and making fun of himself on Comedy Central. Does setting himself up to be so easily satirised actually work to his advantage? Can it be that encouraging sane, liberal people not to take him seriously ultimately gives him more leeway to win voters on the extreme right? Trump's candidacy started as a novelty but the more ridiculous he becomes, the higher his profile rises. So, could it be that this self-fuelling PR machine could ultimately propel himself all the way to the presidential election. His critics said it best, he's a "buffoon that has to be taken seriously".

Trump's USP is that he's a business prodigy. Well, not really, seeing as he inherited all his wealth and four of his businesses have gone bankrupt and working class Americans, his voters, were the ones who had to bail him out. I haven't watched *The Apprentice USA*, but surely these aren't the credentials Trump looks for in the boardroom. Frei speaks to the editor of

Forbes magazine who reveals they've been in a stalemate over Trump's true net-worth for over thirty years.

The breakdown of a Trump rally is as follows: 'Eye Of The Tiger' music, creepy nine year old child-pag-eant cheerleaders, and a routine bashing for the press - it's standard practice to have an enemy in the room, and Muslims aren't allowed. As Donald himself says 'isn't a Trump rally more fun?' It might be more fun but none of it amounts to a big idea for running America. Trump's agenda is so outlandish, it's easy to forget he really is running for President. The rallying cry for Obama was 'Hope and change, yes we can' but at Trump's rally Frei is drowned out by whoops of 'We're going to build a wall.' That's to keep Mexican people - and so we're told drugs, crime and rape - out of the US.

Trump's ability to offend is unrivalled. Most shockingly the Republican forerunner is calling for a ban on Muslims entering the US. Muslim activist Jibril Hough likened the hatred of the crowd when he was thrown out of the last Trump rally to being a black man in a Klan rally. Channel 4 has already secured access to members of active white supremacist groups in the South. Trump's policy panders to racist groups on the wider fringes of American politics and whips up red-neck racist sentiment, whether he runs as president or not.

The other group that Trump has no respect for is women. During the first presidential debate when Fox News presenter Megyn Kelly grilled him about his misogynistic rants, he sparked outrage by implying that

she was on her period. When faced with a rematch against 'lightweight' Kelly at Thursday's debate, he was a no-show. And let's not forget that he wants to sleep with his own daughter. The most sinister revelation was that in her sworn deposition his first wife Ivana accused him of rape. Despite this, he's seemingly and disturbingly untouchable in the face of such allegations.

The common Trump voter is white, male, not college educated, and feel that they are being marginalised. They make Frei's job easy as they don't need to be asked twice to speak their mind. Worryingly, Frei tells us that the last time he saw voters so enthusiastic was for Obama in 2008. Trump is vulnerable as a Republican candidate as he doesn't have any Christian values to speak of, but he's been endorsed by Sarah Palin who is loved by the evangelicals. However, there is an issue with poorer people not voting, if you're a Trump voter who doesn't drive I wonder whether Donald will spend some of his billions on cabs.

The Mad World of Donald Trump had substance and Matt Frei was more than qualified for the job, as the former Washington correspondent for the BBC. Donald Trump is undeniably a gift to TV critics but Frei showed us the soberingly dark side beneath the Trump caricature. I know that if his big orange hands are ever hanging over the nuclear football, I will be joining Alex Salmond in the last place radioactivity reaches - Antarctica.

[Hannah Holmes]

My Kind of Cop-Out: Brooklyn 99 Season 2

Although it's actually in the middle of airing its third season over in the US, the award-winning comedy series *Brooklyn 99* is back all-guns-blazing with season two available on Netflix for those of us still a year behind in the UK. For those of you unfamiliar with the show, *Brooklyn 99* follows an only mildly dysfunctional group of New York cops, and the various and hilarious hijinks they get up to at the 'Nine-Nine'. Very much in the vein of co-creator Michael Schur's other projects (*Parks and Recreation*; *The Office*), the show stars comedian Andy Samberg (*Saturday Night Live*; *The Lonely Island*) and cop-show veteran Andre Braugher (*Homicide: Life on the Street*), to name just a few of the talented and diverse cast.

I was a fan of season one right from the start, but the new season really opens up full-throttle on the relationships between the lead characters. The laughs keep coming, but more importantly, there's a real sense of progression and change in many of the characters. Stoic Captain Holt (Braugher) really begins to shed his impenetrable facade at crucial moments, leading to some truly enjoyable bonding with the rest of the cast. Accordingly, 'Payback' was by far one of the most enjoyable episodes of season two, finally seeing Detective Santiago (Melissa Fumero) get her chance to partner-up with Holt, with rather disastrous consequences. Notable shout-outs go to 'The Jimmy Jab Games', 'Halloween II', and 'Chopper', though every episode has some great moments.

These moments are, of course, what makes the show, combining witty dialogue with just the right amount of slapstick and absurdity. No character is ever solely the butt of a joke (except, perhaps, Hitchcock and Scully), making the banter seem very real. The main cast aren't clowns at their job, either—they're good cops, and the show reminds you of this more often than not. It manages to carve out its own unique style amid a sea of cop-show comedies, realistically balancing competence and incompetence in a way that we can all relate to.

That said, while *Brooklyn 99* might have its own distinctive tone and style, it's one that isn't immune to change. The first season established the tone far more effectively than the premier seasons of *Parks and Recreation* and *The Office*, but most importantly, season two offers something subtly new, rather than more of the same. Shows with small casts of characters are notoriously difficult to write for, since writers have to find a halfway point between writing the characters people know and love, and being innovative enough to keep people interested. *Brooklyn 99* certainly delivers on this, and like *Parks and Rec* before it, has a promising future ahead. So if you're already looking to procrastinate this semester, why not 'cop'-out with *Brooklyn 99*? It's okay, I'll show myself out after that pun.

[John Craigie]

Food

More Than Just Breakfast

[Image: LS6 Café]

As LS6 takes a new direction for 2016, we join them to celebrate a new era for the much-loved restaurant.

LS6 café has always been a student staple. You only need to venture to Hyde Park Corner on a weekend morning to see the place packed with bleary eyed students nursing a hangover. The restaurant-come-bar has experienced a number of changes over the past few years, as it adapts to the ever-evolving food and drink scene that makes Leeds the distinctive city that it is. With the ownership changing hands in March of last year, the new owner has a clear vision for 2016: to create a social space for students and societies alike, as an evening venue as well as somewhere to enjoy great food.

From the outside, it's clear to see LS6 is moving in a new direction. The bar has moved, becoming a focal point of the room upon entrance, and openly displaying the vast selection of beers, spirits and cocktails available – cocktails are 2-4-1 between the prime library leaving hours of 5-7pm. Priding themselves on sustainability, environmental awareness and ethical farming, the new bar is made of reclaimed wood, and LS6 remain a partner of the Real Junk Food Project. They're aiming to continue this ethos by growing and managing a herb garden on the roof terrace, and placing an emphasis on the importance of sourcing local produce and recycling, as new lunch special menus will be dependent on using the ingredients already in the kitchen. Those already familiar with LS6's breakfast menu should become more acquainted with their brunch and dinner options; the sandwiches and wraps offer delicious fillings until 4pm, and from 5pm burgers served in a Yorkshire muffin take centre stage.

LS6 is not just for breakfast, or even muffin burgers. The venue holds the title for the longest running Jazz night in Leeds, held every Wednesday, with the house-band performing from 9pm and a jam session boozing on from 10pm until midnight. LS6 has proudly created a hub of creativity in the community, orchestrating everything from exhibitions to open mic nights. The versatile use of the space has been made easier by their newly refurbished event space, which features three 'movable walls' which makes it an all-round function room for any event.

On re-launch night they had black and white films playing in this space, with candles in bottles dripping in wax and bowls of toffee popcorn on tables around the room. It's the perfect place to screen films, with stacks of pillows and throws to prop yourself up on - film society we're looking at you - but would be convenient for any small socials. If you're fed up of watching films on your small laptop screen, there's a documentary film night every Sunday evening between 7-10pm. LS6 has been given a new lease of life and downstairs has been lifted with shining new light fittings and features.

LS6 undeniably does a damn good slap-up breakfast but there is definitely more to this café than eggs benedict and hash browns.

[Emma Bowden & Hannah Holmes]

The Turk's Head: Victoriana Revisited

The one thing I have always thought that was missing from the Leeds nightlife scene is a place that looks like the set for a contemporary Dickens fashion shoot, probably the kind that would be featured in Vogue or Tatler with moody dark lighting and copious amounts of smoky eyeshadow. Found just behind Whitelocks, The Turk's Head takes its name from The Turk's Yard that sits on its doorstep. As if serving alcohol since 1715 isn't enough of a pedigree, upon walking in we were faced with bottles in glass cases that lined the bar and walls, sapphire blue, crystal clear and bottle green like cut gems, which were labelled as sodium, zinc oxide, deep ocean sediment or eucalyptus, like the kind you might have found in a perfumery in the 18th century, which drew me into fits of décor rhapsody (as I am sure you can tell). As we leant on the marble bar after having shouldered through the jostling crowd, my fellow editor deftly pointed out that the bartenders were using rose gold utensils to mix our cocktails, the ingredients of which were poured from heavy corked glass bottles devoid of any labels, instead embossed with leaves and fruit.

From the half-tiled walls to the deep blue velvet booths, The Turk's Head is a masterpiece in the potency of aesthetics and décor and the effect it can have on your night out. Presented with an embossed card for free drinks when we stepped through the door, we put it to liberal use and consulted the cocktail menu diligently. Priced from

six to eight pounds, there were some old favourites, among them Negroni and a classic gin and hop tonic served with thyme, alongside cocktails I had never come across before: The Five Points Spritz, consisting of Aperol, a bitter orange aperitif, and pale ale; The Seasonal Shrub (which we had some difficulty with, as we couldn't discern whether it was alcoholic or not); the Boulevardier, publicised as 'the Negroni's American cousin' with bourbon instead of gin and lastly at the more expensive end of the spectrum, The Turk's Head Old Fashioned, made from their own small batch bourbon.

Finding a seat was difficult as The Turk's Head is quite an intimate, small venue, but whilst I was there I quickly found myself fantasising about what a perfect place it would be to host a birthday bash. The inside proving too cramped for us, we moved outside to the heated seating area where to our excitement we managed to snaffle some canapés from the rapidly-emptying silver platters that were being passed around. The Turk's Head might not serve food, as it sits beside Whitelocks, but it sells itself not just as a bar but as a venue; this is the kind of place you go when you want to impress someone, or spend a very sophisticated night sipping cocktails.

[Zoe Delahunty-Light]

“The kind you might have found in a perfumery in the 18th century, which drew me into fits of décor rhapsody”

Books

A new direction for publishing?

Penguin Random House UK axes degree requirement from recruitment process

In an unprecedented move for the publishing industry, Penguin Random House has recently decided to scrap the need for a degree to enter their workforce. They say it will enable people from a wider range of backgrounds to enter the publishing industry and will help their company to maximise its creative potential. On the company's website, their HR director, Neil Morrison, stated that "to publish the best books that appeal to readers everywhere, we need to have people from different backgrounds (...) that truly reflect today's society". Morrison's statement echoes the need for the creative industries to welcome people from different social, cultural, and educational backgrounds in order to remain competitive in a global market.

Though revolutionary for the publishing industry, it is not an entirely unique decision since several major financial firms, including PwC and Ernst & Young, have already begun to reduce the emphasis placed on academic achievement. However, with a saturated job market and an increasing need to stand out from the crowd – perhaps with that elusive First class degree – Penguin Random House's decision will, undoubtedly, have left some soon-to-be graduates disheartened. At this point, it is important to look at the bigger picture: a degree is so much more than a piece of paper. It is about all of the experiences that you have outside of the lecture theatres: the societies you join, the roles of responsibility you take on, and the opportunities you take to develop those all-important soft skills that are so well-loved by employers.

This decision in no way demeans a good degree; all it means is that students must seek out opportunities to broaden their horizons in order to gain the skills which will demonstrate their suitability for a job at Penguin Random House. Many people often feel as though their years of academia do not translate into real life, so this decision may serve to underline what many already know to be true: that an individual's ability to write exceptional essays on abstract topics does not necessarily mean they will excel in the world of work. Morrison confirmed this, stating that "there is no simple correlation between having a degree and ongoing performance in work".

Penguin Random House's choice to remove degrees as a prerequisite for future job applications should not be seen as a deterrent to graduates; they are simply opening up the pool of potential applicants, in order to offer everyone an equal chance of achieving their potential. Those who have a degree will not be disadvantaged, for if they have accrued enough extra-curricular experiences whilst at university they should be able to clearly demonstrate the attributes which Penguin Random House are looking for.

Ultimately, this move will not deter those who truly wish to become a part of this thriving, dynamic industry; it will only dissuade those who remain sat on the fence, and who think that this change decimates their chances of success. All that remains to be seen is whether more publishing houses will follow suit.

[Rosemary Maher]



[Image: Quentin Blake]

Kitty in Boots: The Cat's Out of the Bag

Kitty in Boots, an unpublished Beatrix Potter tale, has been rediscovered in museum archives. Jo Hanks, a publisher at Penguin Random House Children's paved the way to this exciting new discovery. With 2016 marking the 150th anniversary of Potter's birth, *Kitty in Boots* is set to be an exciting new edition to the much-loved Potter collection. Hanks discovered references to *Kitty in Boots* in an out-of-production Potter autobiography early in 2015 which contained original letters written from Potter to her publisher referencing the tale. Further investigation revealed that the original manuscript was in storage at the Victoria and Albert Museum archives.

Born into a privileged Kensington family in 1866, it was Potter's childhood holidays to Scotland and The Lake District that influenced her stories, and later inspired her permanent move to Hill Top Farm in The Lake District. *The Tales of Peter Rabbit*, and *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck* are amongst her most well-loved stories. Potter's love for wildlife and passion for conservation is evident in her writing, and it's clear that The Lakes held a special place in her heart. To this day, Windermere boasts a Potter museum and tourist attraction, 'The World of Beatrix Potter Attraction,' which will be reopening to the public in early February.

Potter's original publishers Frederick Warne and Co have published a short extract of *Kitty in Boots* online. The tale follows the adventures of a 'well-behaved young black cat' leading a double life moonlighting as Miss Catherine St Quintin, otherwise known as Kitty in Boots. Naturally, her elderly lady owner is blissfully unaware of Kitty's nighttime antics, even remarking on 'how willingly Miss Kitty went to bed'. With 'double identities, colourful villains, and a number of favourite characters' Hanks hails *Kitty in Boots* as 'the best of Beatrix Potter'. It seems that *Kitty in Boots* has all the classic Potter trademarks; humour, wild imagination and mischievous characters. The release of this charming tale in September this year will be greatly anticipated by young and old alike. Hanks even hints that the infamous Peter Rabbit himself makes an appearance!

Another intriguing factor of this new discovery is the absence of illustrations. With the exception of one rough pencil drawing by Potter herself, this story has gone unillustrated, undiscovered and unpublished for over 100 years. It has been suggested that the outbreak of the First World War may have interrupted Potter's illustration process. Consequently, it has been decided that Quentin Blake illustrate this new book. Blake, famous for his work in in Roald Dahl's many children's books, is said to be 'fascinated' by the opportunity to illustrate *Kitty in Boots*. He reportedly 'liked the story immediately- it's full of incident and mischief and character' and he even believes that this unillustrated tale 'might have been waiting for [him]'.

Frederick Warne and Co are due to publish *Kitty in Boots* in September 2016 to mark the 150th anniversary of Potter's birth.

[Isobel Hughes]

Columns

The Dangers of Parents and Social Media



Text from 'Mother': "Why won't you accept me on Facebook? *sad, crying face*."

Here we go, after about a year of protest she just wouldn't let it go. I'm hit with a long list of her friends whose daughters have accepted them and how unfair I was being. Its not that I had anything to hide, I just didn't want her knowing where I was and what I was doing. I finally cracked when I went on my year abroad, "but you never call me! At least if something happens to you I can contact one of your friends!" Facebook, therefore became a new platform allowing my parents to stalk their children for 'safety reasons.' One positive thing I've noticed since finally accepting my mother's Facebook friend request is that I am always guaranteed a 'like' from her on every single post that I am tagged in. Don't get me wrong, I appreciate them on my profile pictures and not to mention my rare Facebook statuses that no one else seems to find quite as funny. The problem was, before I had been able to teach her 'Facebook etiquette,' almost immediately after me having 'accepted' her, she started this habit of going through my friend's photos and liking them from as long ago as 2010. I mean, seriously— this was six years down the line and none of us made very good choices at age 15.

It's been a year and luckily nothing tragic has happened. My facebook photos are pretty tame compared to my siblings'. I do still get the odd text from her with a classic "look at your brother's disgraceful piccies! He's wearing a leotard. Lol!xxxx" My own personal Facebook related trauma did however take place when I

finally arrived home for Christmas to my little Welsh town that none of my uni friends can spell. Mum has a habit of taking pictures of the seals in the bay— we counted 100 last weekend! We're so countryside. Anyway, there I am looking through her phone photos to see the latest from the 'bob' of seals (yeah, that's the word) and find at least twenty screen-shots from my Facebook. They were all from various nights out. "Oh, I love this one of you (photo of me in Canal Mills) its such a shame those people all have Zombie eyes in the background!" And that's not the end of it; those photos were all printed off and sent in frames to various relatives for Christmas presents!

I've complained to a number of friends about this blatant invasion of my privacy; liking a photo is one thing, but transferring it to iPhone then to *actual paper* is another. They responded with a series of anecdotes that, to be honest, showed me that Mum really isn't that bad. Of course, there was the classic "my Dad didn't realise a wall post wasn't a private message" but these following examples really do take the biscuit: it turns out that Family Facebook Faux pas are a problem that affect roughly 100% of young adults. Probably.

Firstly, some can actually be really adorable, as one friend said: "my boyfriend's Mum is so cute, she prints out pictures of us and sticks them on the fridge."

Another admitted that: "my Granddad always used the wrong emojis... he congratulated me on my A2 results with a series of angry faces."

Then this classic mix up: "my Mum's friend's cat died and trying to be sympathetic, my mum wrote "Sorry to hear about you cat, LOL" thinking it meant Lots of Love."

And onto my personal favourite: "My Dad used to think that everything on his Newsfeed was to him, so would comment on it all... One time, he saw that I had clicked attending to an Otley Run and commented; "but, you don't run?"

Family members can also be naughty too, "There was a picture of my sister sitting crossed legged with her arms in the air in a meditating position. My Auntie com-

mented, "It looks like you're giving a double wank!" Terrible.

It's not only Facebook that they need to be banned from, my mother's Instagram comprises of no profile picture but she follows a total of 12 people; myself, my friends and the all of the various National Geographic accounts. The problem being that, as she follows so few people, every time I like a post, it will inevitably end up on her homepage prompting a text ten days later telling me that she's seen it— as if I need to be informed!

A friend's Grandma didn't quite get the hang of Instagram either; "She has it to follow our family but kept saying all she was seeing was photos of football related things and a model. So I went on her account and she had accidentally started following a 'football gags' page that my brother and cousins follow. The 'model' turned out to be this girl from my cousin's school who posts loads of selfies!"

I can't complain, and no doubt I will irreversibly hurt my Mum's feelings with this article, and for that I can only apologise. To be fair to her, this is indeed a progression from those days when I had to explain what the difference is between 'green text' and 'blue text' not to mention when every iPhone update caused complete panic in the household. My mother's latest penchant for emojis is in fact to be admired! Whenever I send a needy 'I'm ill :(' text, she's there on hand with love hearts, flowers, stars, clouds, dogs, cats and whatever else she feels is an appropriate response.

Maybe I'm just a little spiteful about that whole 'plugged in generation' rhetoric. Those same people, who complained about young people living their lives through a screen, now have banal food blogs (usually just blurred pictures of their dinner) and have been able to get back in touch with old school friends. I mean, it was all so sensationalised and now parents are jumping on the bandwagon! A touch hypocritical methinks. Stanger danger is obviously a huge threat to Internet users, but 'Parental Controls' should work both ways.

[Amelia Dunton]

Mental Health A-Z: N is for Normal



Normal: conforming to a type or standard.

Initially, during our school days, all we want is to fit in. We want to blend in with the rest of the crowd; liking the right kind of music, writing with the right sort of pen and owning the right sort of pencil case. Being accepted into a group is of paramount importance in our small social circles, constantly altering our identities to fit the mould.

In its humble beginnings, normality is simply a case of following a series of trends. Wearing knee socks or wearing skin-coloured tights; growing hair long or cutting it short. Whatever the tendency, we are told - screamed at, even - to follow it blindly, as a moth to a

flickering light.

The unordinary are punished; left to struggle against the dominance of the popular, normal ones. Last week, that boy with chubby cheeks was punched behind the science block until he bled. This week the girl with freckles was teased then spent the afternoon hiding in the toilets.

Kids like these are thrashed at by words, bullied by fists and left silenced among bookshelves. Only the ordinary can prevail.

Yet, suddenly, we reach a stage when normality is no longer desired. This is where differentiation creeps in, as we discover our identities.

That quirky blue-haired kid from high school is suddenly able to come out of her shell, admired by the indie crowd. Creativity and funky outfits burst from the school gates, as difference is embraced and explored, new trends clashing and syncopating with and against one another.

Being normal, however, becomes synonymous with being bland, nerdy, and lacking interest. Here the teens without different or abnormal traits become the less popular ones.

But quickly the tables turn again. Upon reaching adulthood, the opposites reverse as we digress back to childhood, with the world telling us to become ordi-

nary once more.

Look to the Oxford English Dictionary, and you will find that a normal adult is simply 'physically and mentally sound, free from any disorder, healthy.'

Adulthood is obsessed with this idea of a healthy mind and body; the ideal of which is a person with no diagnosed issues or negative emotions. Which, considering the sad happenings within today's world, is fairly unrealistic and excluding.

In short: if we are mentally ill, we're strange. If we are quiet among others, we're antisocial. If we are wear different clothes, we're weird. And so on.

Throughout our lives we are thrown to and from this concept of normality. And yet we are never told what normality means. We're never shown a diagram or given a checklist, nor do we learn about it in classrooms. Instead, we are simply pointed towards what is abnormal.

By exaggerating traits deemed to be unusual and strange, 'normal' has emerged as a polar opposite, dragging generations of us towards this unspecified state.

Put bluntly; the concept of being 'normal' simply does not exist. Therefore, our yearning for normality should, likewise, become extinct.

[Charlie Collett]

It's Worth it to Take the Risk and Travel Solo



Last year, one of my New Year's resolutions was to go travelling by myself. I have always loved my own company, but the fear of being judged or appearing lonely has always deterred me from doing things on my own, from going for dinner, to the cinema, or on holiday.

I'm generally pretty rubbish at keeping New Year's resolutions, but this challenge is one I have stuck to and I am so glad I did. Travelling by yourself is one of the most empowering things you can do - and I would urge anyone who has not travelled solo to book yourself some flights as soon as possible.

The feeling of achievement that you get from navigating a new city in an unfamiliar language by yourself is unrivalled. You can go wherever you want, whenever you want. If no one wants to spend 4 hours going around the European Parliament in Brussels with you - that's fine. Only having to follow your agenda and satisfy your own wishes is liberating. No longer do you have to have long discussions in the Hostel planning your day - wake up, pack your bag, and go!

Last year I went to Brussels, Lisbon, and Alicante by myself and had the best year for holidays ever - because if I wanted to go, I went. Spending a day hiking around the castles and palace gardens in Sintra stands out as one of my best memories; I have never felt so content. Equally, chatting with a stranger about the beauty of London over a bowl of mussels, some chips and a beer is an experience I would not have had were I alone. You become so much more observant and absorb so much more of the city, culture, and experience.

Of course, when travelling by yourself, especially as a woman, you are more vulnerable - and it can be scary. Whilst travelling to Eindhoven airport on the train I had my phone stolen which meant I was uncontactable for the entire time I was in Murcia and Alicante. It was terrifying and I ended up on the train platform sobbing whilst being shouted at in Dutch. Fortunately, I plan everything to death. I am an anxious traveller but I find that when travelling, anxiety can be really helpful. I had

written down exactly what buses to take, what coach to get once I arrived, my booking references, and had a copy of my travel insurance policy to hand. I didn't get my phone back, but because I had prepared so much it didn't ruin my holiday.

The part of solo travelling that I find the most intimidating is the increase in the number of men who think they deserve your time and attention. In Lisbon I encountered far more creepy men when I was alone, than when I was with friends. Whilst in Leeds, I will, perhaps unwisely, walk anywhere by myself - except maybe through Woodhouse Moor at night - in Lisbon, I made sure to stick to well-lit streets, get public transport where possible, and was consciously aware of my surroundings.

So travel solo - you will learn more about yourself than you could ever imagine, and your confidence increases overnight. Why should your ability to see the world depend on other people?

If you want any advice on travelling by yourself, go to <https://www.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo> for some great travel advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, look up individual countries travel advice on the FCO website and follow and like @FCOtravel.

[Emma Healey]

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Would you like to participate in a new insert-publication whose aim is to creatively communicate art in its widest sense to those who may not generally choose to engage with the arts?

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Views

The question David Cameron can afford to ignore. *The Gryphon* asks: Should Britain End It's 'Special Relations' With Saudi Arabia?



(Image: Stefan Rousseau)

Yes

Saudi Arabia is a country that is known for, amongst many other sins, dreadful liberties and poor freedom of the press. This distaste for democracy that is adopted by Saudi Arabia leads me to question - why do we have ties with them in the first place? But it's not just their lack of freedom that alarms me - there is reams upon reams of evidence showing that Saudi Arabia has scores of policies and practices that would make the average despot shudder.

Indeed, Saudi Arabia is known to enact barbaric punishments for minor crimes, and more disturbingly things that aren't crimes at all - for instance, only a few months ago an elderly British man was sentenced to 350 lashes for owning homemade alcohol, a punishment so fierce that his family feared he would die as a result. As well as this, talking

openly about sex, being female and driving a car, insulting Islam, and even being gay can land an individual in jail in Saudi Arabia, hardly the hallmark of a nation that a liberal country should be doing business with. However, they are also known to enact the death sentence to such an extent that the Independent revealed they the third leading country for executing their own citizenry, and the number that are executed is rising steadily with each passing year - quite the accomplishment.

It's quite plain to see that Saudi Arabia maintains some objectionable practices - but has our history of relations with them given them the means to do more evil? It certainly has - through trade agreements, invasive spy equipment from Britain is currently being used by the Saudi government, giving Saudi officials

the ability to hack emails, wiretap calls and hack mobile devices. On top of this gross human rights violation, British-made weapons may also be currently used on civilians in Yemen, used by the Saudis. A U.N report found that a destructive Saudi bombing campaign was in direct violation of humanitarian law - and with a flowing arms trade being adopted between Saudi Arabia and the U.K (almost £6 billion worth of arms has been sold to Saudi Arabia by the U.K), it's hard not to fathom that weapons made here are being used on innocents in the Middle East by the Saudi government. Although Hilary Benn and Jeremy Corbyn have called upon David Cameron to urgently stop the arms trade, no action has yet been taken.

Whatever benefits we get from having ties with Saudi Arabia cannot outweigh

the moral shame of maintaining relations with a country that arrests those who think differently, that kills its own people, that deploys weapons on civilians and that enacts medieval punishments. Our relationship with them only gives this repressive regime more tools to commit atrocities, and our apathy in maintaining this relationship sends out a bleak message to the world that such atrocities are fine - provided the nation in question is trading with us.

If we are serious about tackling tyranny in the Middle East, then let's start by cutting ties with one of the most oppressive states there. The U.K, as a liberal democracy, should stop dealing with one of the most illiberal nations on the planet if we are to take our commitment to freedom and liberty seriously.

Rory Claydon

No

There is good reason for us to condemn the human rights violations of Saudi Arabia. Much, for example, has been made recently of the war in Yemen, unsurprising given that it is being waged with British weapons. It is all too easy for us to condemn the conduct of Saudi Arabia from our position of relative security. Saudi Arabia is on the front lines of the war against violent extremism. The last time we were in a comparable position, our government sanctioned the bombing of German cities. They were under no illusions as to the likely extent of civilian casualties. Indeed, the bombing of Dresden could be considered a war crime by modern standards. In war difficult decisions have to be made as human lives are traded for

the promise of a better tomorrow. That was true in 1945 and it is no less true now.

It is sadly naive to think that breaking our special relationship with Saudi Arabia would change anything. We are a tiny island nation with ever diminishing influence on the world stage. If we were to condemn the human rights violations of the Saudi government our complaints would fall on death ears. Saudi Arabia is a stable power and a dependable ally in a region slipping deeper into anarchy with each passing day. Do we really want to squander friendly diplomatic relations for precious little gain?

Let us be in no doubt as to the cost of breaking away from our special relationship with Saudi Arabia. The

British arms industry is one of a diminishing few to have held strong in an increasingly erratic global economic climate. It provides stable employment and solid tax revenues, both of which would leave a gaping hole in our economy. Arms manufacture is, loath as we are to admit it, a necessary part of our cultural heritage. The branch of the Royal Armouries located in this very city displays countless examples of weapons manufactured in Britain throughout the centuries. Just as the French are known for producing pastries, we are known for producing arms. If our small nation is to prosper in a global economy, we need to trade off that reputation. Unpalatable arms manufacture may be, but so is the prospect of an economic crash in Britain.

No rational person could possibly find a good reason to condone human rights abuses. None the less, if we want to bring about lasting change in the world it will not be through idealistic thinking. The kind of cultural shift which would bring Saudi Arabia's human rights record more in line with our own takes decades to come about, if not centuries. The Arab Spring serves as a painful reminder of what happens when well intentioned people try to change a nation's culture too quickly. To end the special relationship would be to sacrifice much in exchange for very little. Much more will be achieved if we use our good relations with Saudi Arabia to influence them towards a more enlightened future.

Michael Everitt

Adam Mohammed: An Open Letter to My Fellow Muslims

Adam Mohammed
BA Politics and Sociology

Any scepticism over ISIS's abilities were quickly quashed by the ruthless, unprecedented acts that a quiet November night in Paris fell victim to. This death cult was driven by the belief that 'any 'infidel' should be enslaved and executed and saw themselves as 'Islamic martyrs'. Understandably, this has created a sense of fear, anger and confusion amongst a significant amount of non-Muslims across Europe and the UK. But as a teenage British Muslim, I have a daily unique insight into how British Muslims really feel about the atrocious acts committed by ISIS. And I deem there is no other option but for my fellow Muslims to vocalise their opposition or face further isolation and prejudice.

"The 'silent majority' are not ready to publicly acknowledge that it is our religion of Islam that is being strategically utilised by ISIS. It is our holy book that is being referred to, our god that is being named and our spiritual beliefs that are being undermined."

Let me first state this, being a Muslim living in the Western world to me is a gift from god. I am able to enjoy the basic values and rights that nations such as Saudi Arabia would deprive me off. My mother is able to drive. And I don't have to listen to my guilty pleasure that is Duran Duran in secret. I am thankful. I think all of us are appreciative – including most British Muslims. But some non-Muslim Britons are becoming increasingly fearful of the Muslims who reside here in Britain.

Politicians and commentators often use the term 'silent majority' when referring to the average 'peaceful and law abiding' British Muslim. But that is the problem. The 'silent majority' is too good at remaining silent. For example, a Muslim father, in the realms of his home is able to shun the awful scenes he sees before him during the nightly news but is apprehensive to join solidarity marches. The hijab wearing school girl is intelligent enough to dispute the ideology advocated by ISIS in front of her Muslim friends but refrains from voicing her

opposition to her fellow classmates.

Why? It's simple. The 'silent majority' are not ready to publicly acknowledge that it is our religion of Islam that is being strategically utilised by ISIS. It is our holy book that is being referred to, our god that is being named and our spiritual beliefs that are being undermined. They believe if they accept that ISIS is referring to Islam



(Image: PA)

then they themselves are jihadists. Well I give back my 'silent majority' membership card. Yes, the perversion of Islam by ISIS is erroneous and my religion has been manipulated to fit their calculated rhetoric. But I am aware as a Muslim, as a Briton it is my duty to publicly denounce their interpretations and not only defend Islam but to condemn their actions as it is my religion that they refer to for their own disgusting and twisted objectives.

To my fellow Muslims, refusing to accept that it is Islam that ISIS are using to further their means is only going to lead to unfortunate consequences for yourselves, for your families and for your spiritual way of life. If you are unable to stand up and speak out then you are part of the problem, you are the fuel that is keeping ISIS afloat. The sick 'Jihadi Johns' of the world know that they have no obstruction, even from the followers of the religion they are abusing. If you refuse to admit

Islam is victim to ISIS then what hope do we have in preventing young people from being radicalised and

"Failing to recognise that ISIS is abusing Islam is failing to recognise the existence of ISIS. Until ISIS hears it loud and clear that Muslims, all 1.6 billion, are no longer willing for their religion to be used in this fashion, they will flourish."

flying to Syria, it is vital to distinguish between the two identities. Islam teaches you to vociferously condemn those that misinterpret your religion. Islam teaches that the death of innocent people should be condemned to the highest point and yet you cannot face reality. To my fellow Britons. It is vital for Muslims to accept it is their religion which is being abused. ISIS was not created naturally – it is an artificial organisation which has emboldened everything Islam opposes. Making sure Muslims denounce these acts whilst distinguishing ISLAM will quieten the whispers of right wing media, organisations and even the growing amounts of refugee sceptics that argue all Muslims from the Middle East are manic muggers. Moderate Muslims are the solution to this problem.

Failing to recognise that ISIS is abusing Islam is failing to recognise the existence of ISIS. Until ISIS hears it loud and clear that Muslims, all 1.6 billion, are no longer willing for their religion to be used in this fashion, they will flourish. The only way we can defeat the barbarism is by collectively working towards the destruction of ISIS. Since the tragic events in Paris 11 weeks ago, ISIS has murdered hundreds, enslaved thousands and displaced whole communities. If we don't do something now? Simple. More innocent people will be subject to slavery, rape and murder. All things that go against Islam.

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And We Would've Gotten Away With It Too, If It Weren't For You Meddling Lords

Liam Kerrigan
BA Philosophy

I was greatly moved recently when reading about the worries of a father who feared his children might never be able to afford their own homes and may struggle to live independently on their wages. I was moved not to tears, but to laughter, as the concerned parent in question was multimillionaire David Cameron. This is the same David Cameron whose government had its attack on tax credits defeated in the House of Lords last year (nothing demonstrates one's concern for children more than cutting child tax credits, surely?), and then last week had its proposal to scrap the measurement of child poverty defeated in the House of Lords.

The latter of these two defeats prevent the government from overturning measures put in place by the last Labour government. These measures are two-fold. They establish the measurement of child poverty as being that of any child who lives in a household the income of

which is 60% or more below the UK's average, and they establish a target to eradicate childhood poverty by the year 2020. Figures published in June 2015 showed that child poverty remained at around 2.3 million or 1 in 6 children – about the same as previous years. It is for this reason, many have suggested,

“Changing the way in which you measure poverty so that the focus is on lack of work does not better the lives and living conditions of the impoverished.”

that Iain Duncan Smith announced a government proposal in July 2015 to scrap the 2020 target and to alter the ways in which childhood poverty is measured so that the figures would decrease.

The proposals were to replace the current system of measuring poverty with a duty to report levels of unemployment, educational attainment and addiction. This might not, at first, seem completely

absurd. After all, unemployment, low educational attainment and addiction are highly linked to poverty, though it is arguably poverty that leads to these things and not these things that lead to poverty, so the government is actually ignoring the underlying problem and treating the symptoms instead. But there is a larger problem in that the Institute for Fiscal Studies last year reported that nearly two-thirds of children living in poverty come from working families, up from 54% in 2009-2010 to 63% by 2013-2014. When two-thirds of the number of children considered to be living in poverty under the current measurements come from working families, simply changing the way in which you measure poverty so that the focus is on lack of work does not better the lives and living conditions of the impoverished. This pernicious attempt to achieve some decent PR without making any actual changes demonstrates the level of contempt this government has for the vulnerable citizens of this country. It is yet another reprehensible attack on the poorest, with the sole aim

of cheating the public into thinking that they have improved lives whilst turning public opinion against those who suffer the most.

The fact that this government thought that they could decimate social housing, slash benefits, introduce the bedroom tax, introduce a National Living Wage that is actually below the real living wage and then proudly proclaim that they had significantly reduced child poverty at the end of this is extraordinary. We must not allow them to continue their campaign of persecuting the vulnerable whilst they give themselves and -in a week where getting Google to pay 3% tax was paraded as an astounding success- their friends a free pass.

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Science-Fiction Versus Science Fact



Image: 20th Century Fox

Steven Gibney

We live in the future. This isn't meant to be philosophical or grandiose; when you consider the incredible technological advances which have occurred over the last few decades the truth in that statement should be obvious. Some of the greatest science fiction stories have imagined technologies which were considered beyond the realm of possibility. Now scientists and innovators are either developing or have already developed many of these once imaginary inventions. The question is, how does science fiction compare to what we have in the modern era?

Would you like blonde hair or brown?

Brave New World, by Aldous Huxley, imagines a world where nearly identical human embryos are conditioned using artificial compounds to alter development in order to create different classes of society. The result is a society of segregated classes which praises uniformity, predictability, and consumption of disposable consumer goods. We may live in an age of consumerism but that is a discussion for another time. The most intriguing concept in Huxley's *Brave New World* is the control over physical and mental characteristics using a myriad of scientific approaches. Previously, the only medical advance which would be considered similar would be in vitro fertilisation (IVF). The process of IVF involves the fertilisation of an egg outside of the body. Currently, in the UK, IVF is strictly regulated and available only for those who fail to get pregnant after trying for over two years. However, the development of IVF has sparked the debate over designer or genetically modified babies. This is particularly relevant as last week UK scientists have been given permission, by the fertility regulator, to

genetically modify human embryos. This research aims to investigate the development cycle and understand the processes involved in miscarriages, infertility, and IVF success rates. While altering the genetics of an embryo could theoretically allow the selection of characteristics such as sex, hair colour, and eye colour, the steps required for that level of modifications are still a long way off. There are also regulations in place in preparation for this kind of development; for instance there is already a ban on selecting the sex when using IVF. So it is likely that if gene editing were to progress to the point where children could be genetically altered further regulations would be imposed. Hopefully, these regulations would help avoid the creation of a world which resembles Huxley's *Brave New World*.

Come with me if you want artificial intelligence...

"A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm." - The First Law of Robotics. The laws of robotics were conceived by science fiction writer Issac Asimov in his book *I, Robot*. Since then interest in robots and the development of artificial intelligence has increased to the point it is quickly becoming a part of everyday life. When people hear the word "robot" some picture a loveable machine like Disney's Wall-E, while others picture a Terminator style death machine, it depends on your perspective. Currently they still struggle to walk up the stairs confidently, nonetheless, automation is becoming a significant part of society. From vacuum cleaners to self-driving cars, we are finding ways to automate almost every aspect of our lives. However, some would argue that these are merely stepping stones on the way to designing true artificial intelligence. The aim is to build a machine capable of exhibiting behaviour

as skilfully and flexibly as a human can, as observed in last year's film *Ex Machina*. Currently, it is still something we are striving to achieve but with the inventions of Siri, Microsoft's Cortana and Google's AlphaGo, we are on our way to creating artificial intelligence. But I think we have a way to go before we reach the standard of *The Terminator* or *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Space, the final frontier...for now.

Human curiosity is an incredible thing. From the early days of man stepping out of a cave to man's first steps on the moon, the desire to know what is out there has driven us pretty far. The human race wants to explore space, this is only reinforced when you look at the history of science fiction, it's one of the key plot points in many sci-fi stories. The technologies we currently use to explore space aren't quiet as advanced as the faster than light or warp drives seen in *Star Trek*, yet some of the stuff we have achieved is just as incredible. It's said that our phones have more technology than the entire Apollo mission and we still managed to navigate to the moon and back. The Apollo Guidance system relied on astronauts entering commands using pairs of nouns and verbs, and that alone was used to navigate the 952,700 miles round trip. Given they achieved a moon landing with that technology, it's no surprise that with current technology our aspirations are significantly greater. NASA's current plan is to land humans on an asteroid by 2025 and Mars in 2030. Likewise, private companies are now investing in space travel with Virgin Galactic now offering trips into space and the MarsOne group looking to establish a human settlement on Mars. These achievements may not directly compare to those in *Interstellar* or *Galaxy Quest* but these are the first steps. Who knows where we could end up, the universe is our oyster.

Does Your Pet Love You?



[Image: Sarah Holst]

Amy Wardle

Over recent years, academics from around the world have been paying the question of non-human emotion the attention it is due. Many of us, (myself included) would happily testify; I love my dog and my dog loves me. But for science, this kind of thesis has been off-limits to even pursue for fear of simply anthropomorphising. For instance, recording that a dog can 'smile' would not be approved – attributing a human expression and emotion to a behaviour, rather than trying to objectively understand the behaviour and its related causes and consequences.

However, in 2013, neuroscientist Gregory Berns published a book based on the work of himself and his team at Emory University, titled *How Dogs Love Us*. Embarking on a remarkable journey with his own dog, Berns trained his canine companion to sit calmly during MRI scanning. The pair overcame many obstacles to reveal for the first time the intricacies of the canine brain, confirming how dogs empathise with human emotions and do consider us more than animated treat-givers and belly-scratchers. Advancements in neuroscience

and modern evolutionary data, coupled with more detailed analysis of animal behaviour in natural environments, are paving the way to new, objective and accepted studies of animal emotion.

MRI scanning, for instance, has contributed to how we understand ocean mammals. Orcas have an emotional range and depth that is, as yet, unfathomable. They have an extension of the emotional part of the brain, the paralimbic cleft, which we do not have. As quoted from the popular 2013 documentary *Blackfish*, their sense of self and social bonding is "much stronger, much more complex than in other mammals, including humans". Laurel Braitman has chronicled why and how animals suffer extreme emotions, anxiety, depression and madness, just as humans do.

In a TED talk in October 2015, Carl Safina overturned science's aversion to comparing humans and non-humans. He stated, "attributing human thoughts and emotions to other species is the best first guess about what they're doing and how they're feeling, because their brains are basically the same as ours. They have the same structures. The same hormones that create mood and motivation in us

are in those brains as well." For Safina, we should utilise the fact we are so similar to other species in order to understand them. As Dutch primatologist and ethologist Frans de Waal concludes, "To endow animals with human emotions has long been a scientific taboo. But if we do not, we risk missing something fundamental, about both animals and us." Safina uses the example of an elephant family. In particular the fascinating discovery that wild herds react differently to the pre-recorded voices of different groups of humans: behaving calmly around the sound of tourists and fleeing from the speech of poachers. They know us.

Seeing a two-way level of understanding brings humans down from our pedestal. Merely having sentience, the ability to empathise and interpret, is not what distinguishes us as human. It is becoming clear that it is the depth and range of these qualities which makes species distinct. In this way, scientific insight is questioning the ways we relate to animals, and more philosophically, how we consider ourselves in relation to our ethical – and unethical – treatment of other species.

Science In Focus



Fracking In The UK: The Dash For Gas

Olivia Adu

in supply associated with increased global production via fracking. Continued developments to the hydraulic fracturing technique have resulted in the successful recovery of higher quantities of gas; this has been particularly fruitful in the Gulf of Mexico. As such, the World Energy Outlook estimates that, "the US could be approaching gas self-sufficiency by 2035".

The process of fracking involves drilling a vertical hole into the ground, before drilling horizontally in-between layers of rock for many miles. The produced well is then pumped with a "fracking fluid", consisting of sand, water and chemicals (700 being carcinogenic), at a high enough pressure to fracture the surrounding rock, releasing the trapped gas. The gas then migrates to the surface where it is captured. The process of injecting high pressure fluid into rock has caused earthquakes (albeit small ones, equivalent to a large lorry going past your house), and in certain cases severe water contamination by the released methane.

Last year it became apparent that David Cameron had ambitions to allow for increases of onshore fracking, including controversial proposals to include national parks within the remit. As a result, his stated aim was to create 150,000 more British jobs whilst reducing gas prices. These claims caused great scepticism, with even the chairman of Caudrilla – the UK's leading shale gas company – stating that fracking was unlikely to cause a reduction in gas prices.

However, wholesale gas prices have dropped by 32% over the last year, a factor partially attributed to the glut of gas entering the market – the rises

in supply associated with increased global production via fracking. Continued developments to the hydraulic fracturing technique have resulted in the successful recovery of higher quantities of gas; this has been particularly fruitful in the Gulf of Mexico. As such, the World Energy Outlook estimates that, "the US could be approaching gas self-sufficiency by 2035".

As consumers, this is great for our bank balances; reductions in gas prices should mean we can finally afford to use our heating. Unfortunately, the reduction in wholesale prices could have much greater implications – things that seem too good to be true, tend to be. When the value of a commodity falls below the cost of its production, like with the current global price of oil, then additional financial support is required to keep it economically viable. While increased shale gas production could aid in the UK's security of supply, establishing an additional supply line into an already flooded market, may have further repercussions on global prices. This could ultimately impact upon the UK's plans to increase gas production.

Regardless of the price and increased extraction of gas, the UK's energy infrastructure is facing a supply crisis, due to the impending decommissioning of all coal power stations by 2023. The UK will therefore require alternative sources of energy generation, with the growing likelihood that the responsibility will fall on natural gas power stations. The UK is on the cusp of another 'Dash for Gas' however the outcomes and its costs are littered with uncertainties.

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January Transfers Hit Record Heights

James Felton and Nancy Gillen
Football

In a record-breaking season, the Premier League clubs have, combining the summer and the winter transfer windows, spent over £1 billion on recruiting new players in this increasingly financially dependent league.

The January transfer window, which was very much a story of the bottom-half clubs doing business, saw £175 million spent; some impressive signings, some a last desperate attempt to beat the drop. Just to put figures into some sort of European context, Stoke City's impressive signing of Giannelli Imbula at £18 million, is a higher amount than that spent by La Liga as a whole, where Augusto Fernandez's move from Champions League chasing Celta to second placed Atletico Madrid, at €6.5 million, was the highest fee paid by Spanish clubs. In short, Premier League clubs are now vastly ahead of their European counterparts in terms of finances.

Newcastle United were the big spenders, signing Swansea City's Jonjo Shelvey for £12 million, Andros Townsend for the same figure and Seydou Doumbia on loan. Fans will be hoping that Steve McClaren can get the best out of these players as, at the point of writing, Newcastle are still in the bottom three, despite all their financial investments.

The deal of the window, surely, has to be Southampton's £4 million capture of Charlie Austin, who will be aiming to get on the plane for Euro 2016, although he faces stiff competition from Harry Kane, Jamie Vardy, Wayne Rooney, Danny Welbeck, and, if fit, Daniel Sturridge.

It is not, however, just staying in the Premier League which has motivated clubs to spend big but those wishing to promote to the top flight, with Middlesbrough

as an obvious example. After many twists and turns, Aitor Karanka's side finally completed the £9 million signing of Jordan Rhodes from Blackburn Rovers. It is additionally true that many sides kept to loan deals in England's second tier, with players like Nick Powell going to Hull City and Aiden McGeady moving to Sheffield Wednesday



An honourable mention must go to China, where perhaps we have seen the surprise story of this window. Granted, players such as Paulinho and Demba Ba were already there, but household names such as Ramires, Jackson Martinez and Gervinho have left some of the top leagues in Europe to play in this ever-growing Asian market.

Now that the transfer window has gone, clubs can now concentrate on the remainder of the season and work with what they have got. With the league title, European places and avoiding the relegation zone still very much up for grabs, and with the huge TV deal

coming in in the summer for Premier League clubs, all twenty sides will be doing all they can to achieve their goals. If the opening 24 matches of the season have been anything to go by, we are in for an exciting, entertaining and perhaps surprising finish to what has been one of the most competitive seasons in recent memory.

It has also been an interesting transfer window for the FA Women's Super League, yet to close. As the league becomes more competitive, the transfer of high-quality players to rival teams has become more common.

Fara Williams's transfer to Arsenal has been one of the moves of the window. Williams is currently one of the best midfielders in the world, as seen in the 2015 Women's World Cup, and she will only strengthen an already excellent Arsenal side. Liverpool have acted well to fill the space left behind by Williams however, signing a range of players, including England internationals Alex Greenwood and Siobhan Chamberlain.

Another key signing is Karen Carney to Chelsea. The Blues won the title last year and this addition will help in their campaign to win it again.

An interesting aspect of this transfer window is the increase of international players coming into the FAWSL. This is a sign of the increasing competitiveness of the league and it is becoming an attractive place to play for footballers around the world.

The window shuts on Friday 18th March, and it will be intriguing to see if any more big signings are made.

Is Officiating Technology Football's Future?

NO

JAMES CANDLER

Since Raheem Sterling managed to execute a beautiful yet fortuitous cross in a recent League Cup semi-final match, the issue of goal-line technology has once again been in the spotlight. The apparent reaction to the decisive goal has been a swift and collective uproar which can essentially be summarised as eloquently as: goal-line technology is the future, human referees just make mistakes, we need to let go of the past'.

Of course, upon initial inspection, the implementation of more technology in the refereeing of football, would serve only to eliminate the possibility of human risk and therefore create a flawless game, where skill not decisions determine the outcome of matches. However, it must be noted that the same effect can be achieved without resorting to technology. As my fellow Gryphon writer quite helpfully points out in her argument, UEFA made the decision to add two additional assistant referees behind the goal-line, in 2009 and since then there has been nary an instance of goal-line based controversy

in the competition. Consequently, the same effect (in terms of effective match officiating) has been achieved.

So, if the two options produce the same outcome, then why necessarily are additional match officials better than the implantation of goal-line technology? Well, the introduction of technology is by its very nature, the removal of the human element and this is a slippery slope. One only has to look to rugby union to see a sport in which technology has taken over and ultimately slowed down the top matches to grinding halts. This a sport in which every decision is endlessly scrutinised and the euphoric celebration of tries is undercut by two minutes of watching it again on a large screen. Is this the future that football fans envision? One in which the beautiful game that is known not just for its frenetic pace, but also its ability to spark endless debates, is undercut by tedious and irrefutable computer generated decisions. Personally, I would rather sacrifice the occasional goal, than my pure enjoyment of a whole sport.

YES

KATIE WHYATT

Raheem Sterling's League Cup semi-final cross for Kevin De Bruyne's decisive Manchester City goal once more underlines the need for further development to the present officiating structure.

Knee jerk reactions are rarely the best reactions, but increasingly, it seems imperative that referees are given further support in order to minimise the possibility of error. The long overdue utilisation of goal-line technology in the Premier League has proven pivotal without disrupting the pace of the game, and football's leading sporting bodies have previously trialled methods that, if employed, would have stopped Sterling in his tracks last week.

Back in 2009, UEFA tested additional assistant referees – one behind each goal – to “ensure that the Laws of the Game were upheld and informing the referee of incidents of any kind that he may otherwise have missed.” The original emphasis was on ruling out so-called ghost-goals, but it is obvious now that goal-line technology is insufficient for all the

calls a referee must make. For total transparency, the system must be extrapolated, with the net cast wider. This is not a call to an over-sterilised game precipitated by a one-off event: IFAB, football's rulemaking board, gave the green light for fifth officials in 2012, and they were used at the final stages of the Euros that year. Why has this not been built upon? That these incidents are often rare or isolated is of scant consolation when human error irreversibly changes the outcome of a game as important as this one.

On Sky's Monday Night Football last season, Howard Webb revealed top-flight officials generally make the right call in 90% of cases. Even so, fans, players and managers are justified in their discontent in cases as blatant as this. Anything to reduce ambiguity and thus offer increased protection to referees is beneficial to all parties.

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Curtain Rises For Six Nations

James Candler
Women's Rugby

With all the recent hype surrounding Eddie Jones' England squad selection and the first Six Nations since the Rugby World Cup, one would perhaps be forgiven for forgetting that this year's Women's Six Nations is just as tantalising a prospect and will surely result in some equally (if not more) entertaining rugby. In regards to this, *The Gryphon* gives you an in-depth preview of what to expect from this year's competition, with a preview of the Men's Six Nations competition available on *The Gryphon* website.

The competition is kicked-off by the always entertaining rivalry of Scotland and England, as the two nations face-off against one another at Broadwood Stadium. England most certainly have a lot to prove, with the side finishing in a bitterly disappointing fourth place last year, having

only months earlier lifted the World Cup. However, captain Sarah Hunter insists that her side have learned from the mistakes of last year and have shifted from what she deemed a 'development period' and into the 'performance period'. Plus, with an impressive-looking Hannah Gallagher now a key player in the back-row, England look to have the talent and the hunger to succeed this time around.

Next up is the titanic clash of Ireland against Wales, which will take place at The Donnybrook in Ireland. The reigning champions are once again looking like a formidable force, as Niamh Briggs provides an assured platform both as captain and in the front row. However, the side will be missing Jen Murphy and Allison Miller as pivotal backs, for this first encounter. As a result, Wales will surely be looking to cause some damage to a depleted Irish side, in a match that is going to have as much psychologi-

cal as it is competitive significance.

The final match between France and Italy is an old rivalry, and one which is sure to be made even livelier by the sheer determination that will fuel this French side. The team finished second last year, losing to Ireland only by points difference, and Gaelle Mignot has made no secret of how much this has inspired the team. However, whilst this may sound intimidating to a Italian side that historically has not fared well in these competitions, it must be noted that this French side is a relatively inexperienced one – with many players in key roles, such as Romane Menager making their debut. Though Mignot has stated that the new players have integrated perfectly into the squad, Italy will surely be looking to exploit this inexperience at the very highest level.



Badminton 1sts (W) 2-6 Birmingham 1sts
Badminton 2nds (M) 8-0 Teesside 1sts
Badminton 2nds (W) 2-6 Beckett 1sts
Badminton 3rds (M) 2-6 York 2nds

Fencing 1sts (W) 111-94 Newcastle 2nds
Fencing 1sts (M) 113-126 Northumbria 1sts

Football 1sts (W) 8-0 Manchester 1sts
Football 1sts (M) 1-1 Manchester 1sts
Football 2nds (W) 6-1 Teesside 1sts
Football 2nds (M) 0-3 Durham 2nds
Football 3rds (M) 3-1 Beckett 5ths
Football 3rds (W) 5-2 Sunderland 2nds
Football 4ths (M) 0-0 Hull 3rds

Golf 1sts 2-4 Durham 2nds

Hockey 1sts (W) 0-9 Birmingham 1sts
Hockey 1sts (M) 0-1 Edinburgh 1sts
Hockey 2nds (M) 0-5 Northumbria 1sts
Hockey 3rds (M) 4-1 Beckett 2nds
Hockey 4ths (W) 1-4 Newcastle 4ths

Lacrosse 1sts (W) 23-8 Beckett 1sts
Lacrosse 1sts (M) 1-27 Sheffield Hallam 1sts

Netball 1sts (W) 48-32 Durham 1sts
Netball 4ths (W) 31-40 Durham 3rds
Netball 5ths (W) 32-35 Huddersfield 1sts
Netball 6ths (W) 48-53 York St John 2nds

Rugby League 1sts (M) 24-22 Newcastle 1sts

Rugby Union 1sts (M) 0-71 Durham 1sts
Rugby Union 3rds (M) 23-45 Northumbria 2nds

Squash 1sts (M) 5-0 Beckett 1sts
Squash 2nds (M) 3-0 Beckett 2nds

Table Tennis 1sts (M) 3-14 Lancaster 1sts
Table Tennis 2nds (M) 3-14 York 2nds

Tennis 1sts (M) 10-2 Durham 3rds
Tennis 1sts (W) 0-12 Durham 3rds
Tennis 2nds (M) 6-6 Northumbria 1sts
Tennis 2nds (W) 6-6 Newcastle 2nds
Tennis 3rds (M) 12-0 Sheffield Hallam 2nds
Tennis 3rds (W) 0-12 Beckett 3rds
Tennis 4ths (M) 6-6 Bradford 1sts

Ultimate Frisbee 1sts (M) 3-15 Durham 1sts

Volleyball 1sts (W) 3-0 Bradford 1sts

Water Polo 1sts (W) 15-12 Manchester 1sts
Water Polo 1sts (M) 3-24 Edinburgh 1sts

Should Van Gaal Go?

John Gibby
Football

When former league champions struggle to gain ten points from as many games, high profile petitions are launched against the manager and season ticket holders can be heard heckling the players during the games, you might not expect their chief to last much longer in the job, especially in an industry where managers are often dismissed as quickly as England in a penalty shootout.

Not so for Louis Van Gaal, however, who has gained notoriety for his direct way of dealing with the media as well as his style of possession football, which has been labelled 'shambolic' and 'rubbish' by members of the Old Trafford faithful. The 64 year old has promised both the fans and his wife that he will retire at the end of the next season, when his current contract with the Red Devils expires, but a recent poll found that 79% of Man Utd fans want to bring in a fresh face as soon as possible and it's easy to see why. 13 times the side has failed to score in the first half, only once have they found the net before the break in a home league game and even David Moyes' ill-fated period in charge was more fruitful in terms of league performance.



[Image: Matthew Peters]

With all this to consider, why is it then that Ed Woodward and the board have not lost patience with the former Bayern, Barcelona and Netherlands manager? Perhaps as a name with such an impressive list of credentials they want to see if his experience will eventually shine through, and undoubtedly United's satisfactory FA Cup form has been a help in a year when they've been relegated to the Europa League after failing to progress from their Champions League group - much like Sir Alex Ferguson during his times of turmoil with the Reds this could be giving Van Gaal time.

And what of the possible candidates to take over during such an important time in the club's history? The shortlist is generally said to have two names now Pep Guardiola is out of the picture; Ryan Giggs and Jose Mourinho. Former interim play-

er-manager Giggs is said to be Van Gaal's personal first choice for the role, but may lack the experience to take on such a high profile job in what would be his first permanent role in management. Mourinho on the other hand is said to be keen to take up the mantle in Manchester and regain his 'Special One' status in English Football, but perhaps the Man Utd board may be less enthusiastic about a manager largely associated with close rivals Chelsea taking up the role.

That all aside though, there will be no new manager down at the Theatre of Dreams until Van Gaal leaves, and with 18 months left on his contract and the club's executives reluctant to make any hasty decisions, perhaps United fans are stuck with the eccentric Dutchman for a little while longer.

Ice Hockey Skate to Stunning Success

Ciaran Lennon and Jason Tzouriadis
Ice Hockey

After a 6.00 am wake up and a two-hour journey, we were ready to take part in our first away fixture ever. We waited eagerly to get onto the ice at Whitley Bay, a rink that had seen the rise and fall of the Berlin Wall.

The first period didn't follow the same path as our other fixtures this year, taking a whole 6 minutes for the puck to pass into the opposition's net. The goal was scored by our captain and president Josh Irish, with the assist by Thomas Wilson.

The second goal of the period came from William Tate on his debut for the team. Will won the puck, swiftly counter-attacked alone, shot and scored against the enemy net-minder.

The opponent team was pressing, trying to get spaces to attack, but fifteen minutes in the game it was our captain that made the goal buzzer sound again. Five minutes later, he scored his third goal for the night, out-skating all of his opponents before executing a rapid shot into the enemy net.

It only took a minute of the second period for the captain to remind everyone why he is a force to be reckoned with. After a beautiful defensive play by Nina Brown and Daniel Rodriguez, Irish got the

puck and raised the score to 0-4. Soon, Samuel Stagg got the puck on the right wing, dodged his opponents and with cold blood and a smile on his face scored against the combined efforts of the enemy defenders and net-minder.

Two minutes before the second period ended, dur-



ing a swift attack, Stagg also assisted our captain with a smooth pass, and Irish increased our goals and his personal record.

The third period started in the same way that the sec-

ond had ended, with us cheering for our captain scoring a goal. Irish got a pass from Oliver George, and from close range he outwitted the enemy net-minder once more. After 48 minutes, a Kings player, Tim Thomas, beautifully dodged our defences and scored the first and only goal for the home team.

After 51 minutes of play, our captain got the puck while defending and took it all the way to the other end of the ice and scored his sixth and final goal. In the last five minutes of the game two enemy players were ejected with two-minute penalties. Our forwards rotated and took advantage of this, with Wilson, Stagg, Burnham and Irish bombarding the enemy net-minder with shots. It was eventually Stagg who, four minutes before the end, and after a great team defensive play, scored the last goal of the game.

The referee whistled and the game was over. We had won our first ever away game with a score of 1-9. Everyone had given all they had. On the coach back to Leeds all I could see were tired but happy faces. Everyone had played their part, and deserved to be proud. The day was ours, and we are undefeated, and a week later, we have to defend our streak.

British Tennis Success Down Under

Ryan Kirkman
Tennis

Andy Murray. Novak Djokovic. Melbourne. A familiar scene with an all too familiar ending for the Scot, now winless in five Australian Open finals and forced to watch his rival hoist his sixth Australian trophy to make it eleven career Grand Slams with a 61, 75, 76 straight sets victory.

Djokovic is now at a level where he simply has to be discussed as one of the greatest ever. His defensive play is masterful, his groundstrokes are so consistently deep that his opponents have no room to breathe, and physically he can outlast anyone over five sets. Murray needs to find something extra if he's going to regularly threaten Djokovic since Murray's triumph at Wimbledon in 2013 the rivalry has been ridiculously one-sided, with the Serbian winning 11 of the last 12 meetings.

Outside of the usual suspects Milos Raonic was the the most impressive performer. The powerful server has long been spoken about as the next guy to challenge at the top of the men's game, but at 25 he can't afford to wait for Murray and Djokovic to go away. With the title at the Brisbane International already under his belt in 2016, the Canadian has started the year well and must continue his development, and it is imperative he avoids injuries that have troubled his career so far.

Other young talents such as Grigor Dimitrov and Nick Kyrgios both fell in the third round, while Nadal continued his troubles in Gran Slams with a first round exit.

In the women's side Angelique Kerber triumphed over Serena Williams 64, 36, 64 to claim her first career Grand Slam.

Williams, as ever, was a heavy favourite but served poorly and hit 46 unforced errors to Kerber's 13. Kerber used her great defensive skills to prolong rallies and passed Williams regularly when the American came into the net and clearly deserves immense credit for her win.

Williams is one the best of all time and boasted a scarcely believable 214 Grand Slam finals record coming into this one, so beating her is a fantastic achievement. That said, this should be viewed as one that got away from Williams. Victory would have levelled her with Steffi Graf on 22 career Grand Slams, but she did not play as we have become so accustomed to seeing in major finals.

From a British perspective Johanna Konta's impressive march to the semifinals was a delight to watch. She is now ranked in the top 30 for the first time and showed that she has the potential to challenge for slams. Her combination of agility and intelligent shot selection means that she can always pose a threat when playing well. There was also a men's doubles victory for Jamie Murray and his partner Bruno Soares, and Scot Gordon Reid won in the men's wheelchair singles as well as reaching the final of the doubles. Reid delivered an exceptional tournament and has set his sights on Wimbledon and the Rio Olympics.



[Image: EPA]

L.U.R.L Beat Newcastle in Nail-biter

James Candler
Rugby League

University of Leeds 1sts 24 - 22 Newcastle 1sts

Leeds' Rugby League 1st team secured their place in the top division next season, after an excruciatingly close showdown with their nearest league rivals, Newcastle. The match was a game of constantly shifting momentum, which ensured a highly competitive contest throughout, in which victory was far from assured.

The match appeared to get off to a perfect start, with Leeds' attacking structures boding well and the home side making swift advances into the Newcastle 22-metre area. After just two minutes, scrum-half Josh Boardman danced his way through a disjointed Newcastle defensive line and scored the first try of the match, which he later converted to make the score 6 - 0. The Gryphons then proceeded to enjoy a period of sustained dominance over the visiting side, keeping them pinned back in their own half for most of the 15 minutes that followed. Newcastle were forced to defend punishing run after punishing run and at one point, another try was almost scored by full-back and club captain Harry Purnell, who was held up just short of the line following some excellent interplay between hooker Ollie Vickers and centre Dan Bent. However, it was shortly after this that Newcastle were able to equalise from an unexpected breakaway try, making the score 6-6. The try highlighted some of L.U.R.L.'s worrying defensive weak points, as their markers around the breakdown

were too often caught napping. Shortly after, a second try was scored by Newcastle, who were able to create an overlap to which Leeds were too slow to respond. Leeds were clearly struggling, as their handling and defensive errors began to mount, leaving the score at 6 - 10 when the first half came to a close.

The second half began with the Gryphons conceding yet another penalty at the breakdown and (though admittedly the home side were treated somewhat harshly by the referee all day) it looked as if Leeds' discipline would lose this game for them. However, L.U.R.L. soon hit back, by reclaiming possession and working their way up the field with a couple of hard penetrating runs from the likes of powerful first-year Brad Cook. Leeds had set themselves up beautifully for their fifth phase and executed an inside ball with immaculate precision, which allowed prop forward Ben Finder to go over for a try. Following this equaliser, replacement prop Jack Blaggs went over for a thundering try of his own and as a result, the game seemed to assuredly belong to the Gryphons.

However, soon after the re-start a Leeds penalty failed to make touch, which allowed Newcastle to make progress right through the middle of the field. Some intelligent interplay and a scintillating run from the Newcastle full-back meant that the game was once again equal at 18 - 18. When a Newcastle second row went over for a try of his own in the 76th minute, the intensity and excitement reached fever-pitch. The game became



[Image: Gryphon Sport]

visibly more visceral and frenetic. Every hit was loaded with ferocious aggression and every pass was perilously close to the defensive line, with Leeds risking everything to win-back this match. Suddenly, a break down the right-hand side from winger Matt Wright afforded his team some crucial territory. The team grabbed this opportunity with both hands and a well-executed inside ball from loose forward George Milton, allowed Blaggs to crash over the line for his second, pivotal try. The fate of the match rested on the shoulders of Josh Boardman, whose steely composure enabled him to kick the conversion. As the ball soared through the uprights, the final whistle blew and the Leeds Gryphons erupted into a flurry of exuberant, deserved celebration.

Women's Volleyball Vanquish West Yorkshire Rivals

John Gibby
Women's Volleyball
University of Leeds 3 - 0 Bradford

Leeds Women's Volleyball team continued their so-far perfect season with another 3-0 victory on Wednesday at The Gryphon Sports Centre, this time against a struggling Bradford side.

The error-prone local rivals to the Gryphons gave away all of the first five points in the game due to errors, as the home side cruised into an unassailable first-set lead. Impressive efforts from Lara Hudson and exquisite serving from Jenna Machin meant that Bradford, who remained in loud voice throughout the match, never got closer than within five points of the home side. They were lacking cohesive tactics and technical accuracy throughout the first set, whilst Leeds looked sharp and well-rehearsed.

The game became more competitive in the second set however, with the Bradford coach's words seeming to work wonders on her players, and they found themselves 9-1 up against a slightly complacent but also unlucky set of Leeds players. They regained form after a much-needed time-out however, and got the score back to 12 points all thanks to more sterling play from Machin.

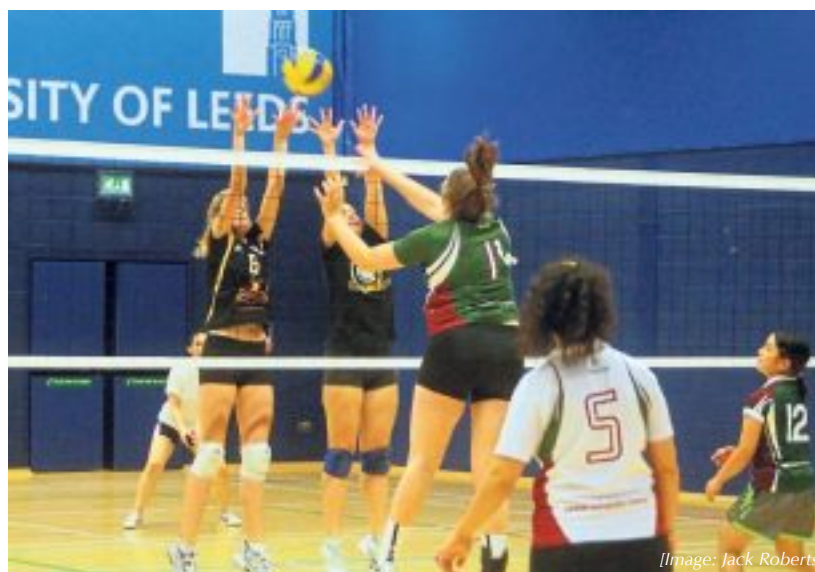
From that point on Leeds refused to let their local rivals take a grip on the set, emerging victorious from a couple of the game's longest rallies as Bradford's tactics seemed to fall apart once again, as in the first set.

They fell victim to quality serving from Manon Demoyen and skilful strikes from Yvonne Chiang, as Leeds closed out the set 25-21.

At the beginning of the third set it seemed like

Leeds might run away to win the match easily, especially after some top notch play during an acrobatic rally to make it 4-1. Both sides experienced spells of bad luck, with Hudson putting in much of the work as Bradford crept up to get back into the set at 8-11.

After the ensuing time-out there was some sloppy play from Bradford, who seemed to have left their often excellent spell in the second set behind them, as they threw away the lead to leave Leeds to lead 20-15. Despite their enthusiastic chanting their morale was clearly dented, and they only managed one more point as Leeds went on to close out the set, and the match with a 3-0 scoreline.



[Image: Jack Roberts]

Leeds deserved their victory from a game where they were mainly dominant, other than snatches of the second set. Bradford, in contrast, seemed by far the more disorganised side, and though the home side's concentration lapsed on occasion, the Gryphons found the holes in their opponents' game plan and exploited them to full effect for a well-earned win.



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Should the use of technology in football be extended? p.19



Straight-sets win over West Yorkshire rivals p.23



Should United look elsewhere? p.21



[Image: Lucia Viljoana]

Sunderland Sunk by Sensational Leeds

- Captain Jade Lord bags a brace
- First time in LUUW AFC's history that all three teams win on same day

Nancy Gillen
Women's Football
University of Leeds 3rds 5- 2 Sunderland 2nds

There was a lot of pressure on the Leeds University Women's Football 3rd team as they arrived in Sunderland to face off against the University's 2nd team. Despite a series of good performances earlier in the season, Leeds had failed to win a game this campaign. Sunderland were in the same position, and so the stakes were high as both teams looked to record their first win.

Upon arriving at Sunderland's playing fields it was immediately obvious that the challenge was going to be made harder by the state of the pitch. Bad weather had made the pitch extremely boggy, especially in the centre and around the goal mouth. During the warm-up it was noticed that the ball often bobbed or stopped unexpectedly.

Despite this, the Leeds team were still confident and in high spirits. As the game kicked off, Leeds were immediately on the front foot, with winger Courtney Jay Dee striking the crossbar within the first two minutes. However Sunderland countered and their striker scored an excellent goal, lobbing the keeper to put her team unexpectedly ahead.

The disappointment was obvious among the Leeds team but their response was excellent. Acting as if

the goal had never happened, they resumed their attacking play. This pressure eventually paid off, with the Sunderland 'keeper spilling a fierce Leeds shot, which Natalie Espelid placed into the back of the net on what was her Leeds debut. Relief spread throughout the Leeds team and spurred them on to get another goal.

This came in the form of an own goal, but credit must lie with defender Brydie Greenwood. After clearing up a Sunderland attack, she went on an excellent run, beating nearly all of Sunderland's midfield and defence. As she bore down on goal, the last Sunderland defender challenging her inadvertently kicked the ball into her own net, putting Leeds 2-1 up.

This was the score as the whistle blew for half-time, with the remainder of the first half consisting mainly of Leeds possession, with a few good saves from the Sunderland 'keeper. The game began to slow as both teams started to tire, with the muddy pitch taking its toll.

Leeds went into the second half motivated to extend their lead. Within five minutes of the kick-off they had achieved this, with Courtney Jay Dee scoring an excellent goal from outside the penalty box. This was well-deserved after her many chances in the first-half. Leeds were 3-1 up and playing confidently.

Their dominance was nearly shaken by a dubious Sunderland penalty given by the referee. Luckily the

Sunderland striker hit the crossbar and the Leeds defence cleared the ball away, retaining their two-goal lead.

The 60th minute mark saw the introduction of Leeds captain Jade Lord, who made an immediate impact. With her first touch she neatly took the ball around the final Sunderland defender and kept her calm in a one on one with the Sunderland keeper to make the score 4-1. A few minutes later and she had scored her second, securing Leeds's first win of the season.

With the energy of the players running out, the game again slowed in the final 20 minutes of the game. With ten minutes left, Sunderland scored a consolation goal. After this, Leeds sat back to ensure that they did not concede again, and the game finished in this defensive manner. As the final whistle blew, the elation on the Leeds players' faces was clear.

Leeds fully deserved their three points after an excellent and resilient performance, where they came from behind to win confidently. It was a brilliant day for Leeds University Women's Football in general, with all three teams winning on the same day for the first time in the club's history. The 1sts won against Manchester, having responded to slanderous remarks from earlier in the week to emerge 8-0 victors. The 2nds also recorded an excellent 6-1 win against Teesside 1sts. Overall the club scored 19 goals this week, showing that it's only on its way up.