



THE GRYPHON

The official newspaper of Leeds University

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Image: Polly Hatcher

Sanitary Products as Standard

The new, free vending machines are good news for students. Period.

Eleanor Smith
News Editor

Students celebrated the introduction of sanitary products from free vending machines throughout Leeds University Union toilets on Tuesday 29th January.

Students can now collect tampons and sanitary pads from hygienic vending machines in the female and gender-neutral toilets around the union, completely free of charge.

Previously, free sanitary products were available from baskets in the toilets. However, these provisions were often found to be abused; thrown in bins outside the Union particularly after nights out, such as Fruity. The Union will now provide these products, including Lil-Lets tampons and Always sanitary pads, in free vending machine style distributors.

They will be restocked throughout the

day to ensure they are always available to those in need.

This comes as a welcome addition to welfare support offered by the Union, considering that only a few years ago, students had to pay for sanitary products from vending machines of a similar style.

Matt Port, Welfare Officer at LUU, was thrilled with the development. "I'm so proud that free-vend machines for sanitary products have been installed! It should hopefully provide a more reliable and consistent mode of delivering in-the-moment support for students who menstruate."

"This is one of the main things I have campaigned for since starting my position at the Union, and I'm thrilled that so many people could work together to make it happen."

The machines are currently in eight of the toilets around the Union, including

the gender neutral and female toilets in the main foyer.

They can also be found in all other student-facing female toilets, with plans to put a machine in the male toilets in the foyer soon.

There are hopes that the planned success of this initiative will cause it to be extended to all university managed toilets.

The Union have also made free contraceptive products available to students and staff. Condoms and lubricant are obtainable from outside the exec office, with dental dams to be added soon.

Back in September 2018, Leeds City Council announced measures to tackle period poverty in schools head on, making it the first city council in England to commit to such a pledge.

Universities after a No-Deal Brexit

Elena Sotelo discusses what economic and structural impacts a No-Deal Brexit might have on universities.

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Image: AFP

Remembering Carilton Maina

Taking a closer look at the tragic death of the Leeds University student at the hands of Kenyan police

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Surviving R Kelly

Views discusses the recent docu-series which exposed the singer songwriter's actions and led to his demise.

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Image: Rolling Stone

Co-operating with LUU

The Gryphon awaits the arrival of LUU's new Co-op and asks what benefits it will have on students.

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Editor of the Week

Cian Fox

Cian spent all day in the office yesterday live-blogging the entirety of transfer deadline day. He was one of the first people in the world to hear about Peter Crouch’s eye-catching move to Burnley FC, a moment we’re sure he will never forget.

Quote of the Week

“What’s a Wagamama?”

Arts editor, Steph Bennett, expressing her lack of culture as the Wagamama pop-up stand brought the Worsley building to a standstill.

Credits

- Editor-In-Chief ~ Robbie Cairns
- Associate Editors ~ Polly Hatcher, Ian White
- Digital Associate ~ Bella Davis
- News ~ Megan Cummings, Zahra Iqbal, Eleanor Smith
- Society ~ Rose Crees
- Features ~ Inaya Folarin, Tara Lee, Somya Mehta
- Views ~ Ed Barnes, Hamzah Bharwani, Eleanor Noyce
- Science ~ Michelle Heinrich, Alec Sims
- Business ~ Shona Augustinus, Julia Constable
- Sport ~ James Felton, Cian Fox, Will Pickworth, Ryan Wan
- Design ~ Robbie Cairns, Polly Hatcher, Ian White
- Head of Photography ~ Giulia Bardelli

Editor’s Letter:



Dear readers,
Hello and welcome back to a wonderful new semester at Leeds. You’re now in what the established figures at the University like to call ‘Re-Freshers Week’ – but you’ll probably know it better as ‘where-the-fuck-has-my-student-loan-gone-already-week’.

Looking around us at the current state of this lonely island we so lovingly call home, it’s safe to say your bank account isn’t the only thing going through a tricky patch right now. No confidence votes, protests outside parliament and John Bercow’s stuffy little face are a daily reminder that darkness may/almost certainly lies ahead. As HMS Brexit McBrexitee-Face seems to be hurtling headfirst into an iceberg the size of the EU, the only thing which has kept me grounded over the past month has been frequent reconnaissances into the bizarre depths of my spam inbox.

‘Spam’: noun – “a tinned meat product made mainly from ham”, OR “irrelevant or unsolicited messages sent over the internet.” Whoever came up with these definitions clearly didn’t take as much joy as I have done scrolling through emails from sexy singles, dictators, and potential murderers. Some people have baths at the end of the day to destress. Some go for a run. And at the end of the day when all’s said and done, some people just like to organise their Gmail account by saving the very best spam emails in a neat little folder created just for them. As such, I’m going to share a few of the more colourful spam subjects I’ve received in the past month, in the hope that they may cheer you up from this winter cold too.

Knight of the realm attempts to glorify his achievements which belong to the Lord of the Rings. I mean, where to begin. Upon reading this email my imagination ran wild thinking about hobbits evacuating the Shire, giant eagles turning to cannibalism and Samwise Gamgee setting fire to Gondor all because Aragorn took the credit for fireman-lifting Frodo up Mount Doom. The possibilities of such an email subject were endless. Alas, in the end, the story was actually about some jeweller from Slough not paying his taxes properly – not quite the kind of story to send middle earth into a fourth age. Still sounds more exciting than the

Hobbit films though...
You are my victim (pay me 400 euro in bitcoin). Now, I was intrigued by the open ended manner of this email subject, which was sent on behalf of someone called ‘Barbie Girl One’. Barberos Girlos numero uno turned out to be the owner of a dark web company which sold “all kinds of services – basically, all but the homicide”, a startling career change for the ex-plastic model, proof that times are tough for everyone in this world. Apparently, some “unrequited love” or “competition at workplace” had ordered my attacker to “empty acid in your face. Standard order – fast, painfully, for life.” This was a frightful fate which I could avoid if I simply paid the emailer 0.13 bitcoins. The email concluded “one day to decide and pay.” It has now been 31 days.

Hey The, my name is Bethanie. This was a confusing email, considering that Bethanie signed herself off as ‘Karen’. But as my mother always said, there’s nothing sexier than a girl you know you can’t trust, and I was intrigued. Beth/Karen had apparently been checking through the neighbouring area and “seriously liked the things I saw regarding you and your interests.” I wasn’t quite sure what interests she was talking about, but I assumed she meant listening to an unbearable amount of Coldplay and playing FIFA on legendary mode (that’s right, Legendary Mode) – in which case me, Beth and Karen have just booked ourselves in for a ménage à trois in Central Village.

What would Princess Diana do today? In fairness, “would the people’s Princess wear her hair up or down?” is the first question I tend to ask myself whenever I roll out of bed. This email argued that we should all make decisions based on their humanitarian and moral consequences, just like Diana would have. It was a lovely sentiment, and one I might take up myself. My recent philosophy when making decisions of dubious morality has been to ask myself what would my predecessor, Reece Parker, do? But since the answer to this question is always to lie back and rap along to the Blackpool Grime scene while dripping a gallon of Huel down your ‘stain-proof’ joggers, I think a change might be in order.

In these dark days of doubt we’re left with many questions: Will Britain ever leave the EU? Will Leeds be covered in snow the next time I go to sleep? Will Liverpool, god forbid, actually win the league? Who knows. I sure as hell hope not. The only thing I know is that what I’ve just written definitely constitutes a GDPR breach, and that I’m now going to lay low with Beth and Karen for a while until this whole thing blows over.
Stay Classy,

Robbie Cairns
Editor-in-Chief
editor@thegryphon.co.uk

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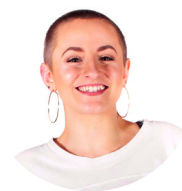
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Here at LUU, we've seen the start of some big changes, with Essentials (sadly for all of us loyalists, but also exciting) closing over the holidays to get ready for the new LUU-run Co-op, as well as the new bubble tea outlet which has been rammed all day making LUU even busier than usual.

Recently, we challenged the VC on how he thinks the upcoming tuition fees review and the Brexit outcome will

affect students, to work out how best we can support students or campaigns. Both Matt and I have done some press appearances discussing the importance of avoiding a No-deal Brexit to ensure students' interests are protected.

We're also trying to raise awareness of our Nightbus service, which is a £1 bus from LUU's front door to your front door to make sure you get home safe. Please let us know what we can do to

make it better!

We're about to get into the midst of Lead LUU, where you can choose the next Student Exec (also the next Robbie too), so watch out for all the campaigns coming up soon. Meeting all the potential candidates has me looking forward to being back as a student next year and seeing what they do! If you're thinking of running, then pop into the Rep Room to find out a bit more!

Hi friends! Since we last spoke, I've been in event planning mode. On 5th February the next generation of Why Is My Curriculum White? will be coming out. Monisha Jackson, Bothaina Tashani and Olivia Andrews have been working hard to put on an event about Decolonising Geographies. It will be in Rupert Beckett Lecture Theatre from 6-8pm and is open to everyone.

There's a great panel line-up and by the end of the evening we should all have a number of practical ways we can start making a difference here on campus, regardless of what we study.

Next week is also the second annual BAME "Inspire, Learn, Lead Conference". Started by Natasha (the E&D Officer from last year), the aim of the conference is to inspire BAME

students to pursue postgraduate education and careers in academia, occupy leadership positions and/or think about becoming entrepreneurs. It's on the 7th and we have a number of amazing speakers coming and activities (including the opportunity to get a professional LinkedIn photo taken). It's completely free, you can find out more about it on the LUU website.

Hi guys, by the looks of things, snow is on the horizon for all us students here at Leeds. But thankfully, I managed to get plenty of work done before the frost started kicking in.

One of my favourite events in this last month of January was the LUU Community Impact event. This is where myself and other members from the Union gathered with key stakeholders,

local councillors and partners to showcase all the great work we've been doing in the community to keep it clean, healthy and vibrant. This work was a part of the wider Leeds Community Project, from which we've so far diverted over 85 tonnes of unwanted items from landfill - and we aren't stopping any time soon.

Other than that, I was involved in a

few video shoots for Lead LUU, which all kicks off in the coming weeks. This year, I'm especially encouraging postgraduates to run for the Exec positions, as we often get left out when it comes to conversations about students on campus. Nominations close on the 9th Feb, so if you think you can be the person for the job, definitely apply!

Happy 2019 everyone! We have sooooo much exciting stuff happening in Activities this term and we're kicking it all off with the Refreshers Fair on Tuesday 5th Feb in the Riley Smith Theatre. It's the perfect place to start if you want to try something new this year, so if you feel like you missed out on any fun opportunities or activities last year, make sure you head down

and start making up for lost time!

We also have Student Volunteering Week coming up very soon on the 11th-15th Feb and we want to celebrate all of the brilliant volunteering our members are getting up to. So, if you've been doing something amazing let us know and email some pics and details to activities@leeds.ac.uk - we'll be sure to shout about all the great things you

guys are doing.

Student Volunteering Week is also a fantastic opportunity to do something good and give back to the local Leeds community so head to the LUU website and check out the information and taster sessions we're putting on as well as our brilliant Volunteering societies.

Welcome back everyone! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season, and that exams went well. Quite a lot has happened since last year, but I honestly can't remember half of it.

One thing that's really exciting is the fact we now have free sanitary products AND free condoms in the Union! It's so exciting that this has finally happened, and I'm so proud of Matt for getting things sorted in such a fabulous way.

Dental dams are hopefully going to be there too soon, so keep an eye out!

I'm very excited for LGBTQ* History Month, and we have so many fun things on the calendar. Keep an eye out for programmes around the Union, and if you want any please do come and ask me for a copy!

We've got a load of wonderful collaborations coming up with different organisations in Leeds, and there are

so many student led events that'll be absolutely amazing. I think that's all from me, so I hope you have a wonderful week and keep warm!

It's been a while since we last got the chance to update everyone on where we're at, but what an exciting couple of months it's been! You may have noticed sanitary product dispensers around most of the toilets in LUU, which should hopefully take a load off your mind when you're out and about on campus. A big win for students!

Also, the first phase of my project about enabling and encouraging

dialogue around safer drug use has kicked off (woohoo!) with a big old survey. We've had loads of responses already, but if you want to be in with a chance to win some fun prizes and also help change the way that the University engages with students on drug use then find the link on our website. It's completely confidential and there's no way that the Uni or the Union can trace it back to you, so please get involved.

In other news, I've been interviewing for a new Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator, presenting to the Leeds Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership, and we'll be meeting with the Vice-Chancellor on Tuesday. Busy busy. Oh, and if you're thinking of running in Lead LUU and taking my job, then please get in touch and I can tell you all about it!

Campus Watch



1 University of South Florida St. Petersburg, USA Over 400 acceptance letters emailed by mistake

The University of South Florida St. Petersburg says that it mistakenly sent 430 acceptance emails to applicants.

In mid-January, out of the 680 emails the university sent out, only 250 went to students that had actually been accepted, leaving 430 emails mistakenly congratulating students, telling them they had been accepted when they had not.

One applicant that received this acceptance letter by mistake was Alexandria Rizzotto. Her letter read "Once again congratulations on your admission to USFSP! We are excited to welcome you to the university and are very proud of all that you have accomplished so far!" The letter also proceeded to discuss the student's 'next steps', such as instructions for students to find their university IDs, pay their admission deposit, apply for housing,

and more.

In the case of Alexandria, she received the initial acceptance email in the middle of a Saturday, only to receive the second email nearly an hour later, saying "There was an error in the system. Please disregard the previous email."

Carrie O'Brion, the university's Director of Marketing and Communications, said that "the remaining 430 received the acceptance email by mistake, either because their application was still under review, was incomplete or they were not selected for admission at this time."

Sophie Denham

2 George Mason University, Virginia, USA Would you trust a robot to deliver your Bakery 164?

It's no secret that the USA seems to be going through an existential crisis at the moment, but just when we thought it couldn't get any weirder, the George Mason University of Virginia has decided to employ robots to deliver their takeaways. Developed by Starship Technologies, a 25 strong fleet of the new inventions are now in use across campus to cater to the culinary needs of the university's 35,000 students.

Cruising at the respectable speed of four miles per hour, they may not be able to give Usain Bolt a run for his money but, according to developers, food will be with hungry students in under 30 minutes (leaving Deliveroo and Just Eat with much explaining to do).

However, if the Gatwick-Dronegate mishap gives us any indication of how new technology and humans work together, it has to be questioned whether allowing robots to drive themselves around a busy campus really is the best idea.

Naturally, the mini robot army also has its very own social media accounts, so can you stay up to date with their food related missions across the university. You can follow them at @StarshipGMU on Twitter and Instagram.

Maddi Fearn

3 Marquette University, Wisconsin, USA Virtual sports becomes part of Marquette's sports programme

A University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, have announced that Esports will become a varsity sport at their university, as of next year.

The Wisconsin based University, known for its sports programme, aims to support its new Esports degrees through its famous athletic school, treating them like normal sports degrees. They aim to support a wide-range of Esport games on their programme, such as fighting, shooting and sport games. Audiences will have the option to be physically in an arena or observe virtually, from home. Marquette will launch its team in 2019, with the introduction of tryouts, coaches, and regular practices. The Marquette Wire indicated that MU will also build a state-of-the-art facility to host Esports.

MU's president Michael Lovell said "Being named after an explorer means it's in Marquette's DNA to define the opportunities of tomorrow and ensure we're anticipating what future students will expect."

Zahra Iqbal

4 Various Universities, USA Emergency contraception sold in vending machines across campuses

Multiple Universities in the USA, such as Colombia, Stanford, and Dartmouth, have added vending machines selling Plan B emergency contraception in and around their University campuses.

The first machine was installed at the University of California Davis, after a campaign by student activist Parteeek Singh. He campaigned for the machines after hearing from his friends that the local pharmacies had sold out of the emergency contraceptive pill. Singh's argument also highlighted the need for the vending machines after discovering student health centres close at 5:30pm on weekdays and are not open over the weekend, when most pills are needed.

The vending machines are called 'Wellness To Go', selling the pill for \$10, \$30 cheaper than most American drugstores. They also sell pregnancy tests, condoms, lube, tampons, and Advil. The vending machines have received positive feedback and are largely seen as an extension of existing services. On most campuses the machines look like small boxes attached to a wall, or dispensers resembling those for chocolate or coffee.

The machines have received some criticism, suggesting that they are promoting unsafe sex. However, this is exactly what they are trying to avoid.

Zahra Iqbal

5 University of Chester Student arrested in flaming wheelie bin attack

A Primary Education student at the University of Chester pushed a set of flaming wheelie bins against the front door of his ex-girlfriend's student house in Chester. In the early hours of the 25th of May last year, Miss Alton returned home to see the wheelie bin on fire, outside her house. The attack was perpetrated by Conor Egan, a 20 year old from Beverley, East Yorkshire. This was shortly after her house mate had already extinguished a fire set alight by Egan at the property. The police and fire brigade were forced to block the letter box to prevent anyone posting further flaming material into the property. Three days later, another incident occurred.

Witnesses claim they saw a man leaving the property matching Egan's description.

Chester Crown Court heard that the couple's relationship had broken down during their time at university and Egan wanted to rekindle their romance after being kicked off his course at the University of Chester.

Zahra Iqbal

What Would a No-Deal Brexit Mean For British Universities?

Elena Sotelo

A study by Universities UK has highlighted the danger British universities could face from a no-deal Brexit scenario, claiming the situation “seriously threatens” the country’s higher education institution’s stability.

Now that Theresa May’s deal has been defeated in Parliament, uncertainty has increased considerably. In a no-deal scenario, the chances of EU students’ fees changing over the next few years have increased. Current EU students are charged the same fees as UK students and they can take a government tuition fee loan out. However, leaving without a deal could lead to future EU students not receiving a tuition fee loan and paying up to £20,000 for their course.

Prospective EU students had been assured in April 2017 that their fee status wouldn’t be affected by the UK leaving the Union during their course. This guarantee has not stopped the number of EU students applying for the 2018/2019 year dropping 3%, according to the Russell Group. Without a Brexit deal, we can expect these numbers to continue to fall, as many EU students rely on the tuition fee loan in order to study abroad.

Every year, the EU allocates £730 million a year for research and development to the UK. According to the European Council, around 70% of this funding goes

to universities. Losing the European Union’s funding will have a negative impact on the country’s higher education.

The Erasmus+ Scheme is one of the issues that concerns students and researchers the most. Currently, UK organisations and students are eligible for this programme. Erasmus+ is a great cultural immersion opportunity for British students, as well as a major mechanism to fund university research. If the UK leaves the EU without a deal, the government’s underwrite guarantee ensures there will be funding available for those already successful in their applications. However, continuation in the Erasmus+ scheme after a no-deal Brexit is uncertain.



Source: FT Advisor

The Horizon 2020 scheme is in a similar position. Without a deal, the government will fund the successful Horizon 2020 research projects for their whole duration. Once this scheme is terminated, Horizon Europe will take over for the period between 2021 and 2027. If a hard, no-deal Brexit took place, the United Kingdom would be excluded from Horizon programmes.

The same would happen with other EU research grants limited to Member States. UK based scientists and organisations wouldn’t be able to apply for the European Research Council, some parts of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellowship programme, and the SME instrument. If the United Kingdom wants to apply for EU research funding after a no-deal Brexit, it would be limited to third-country schemes.

A No-deal Brexit would leave the higher education system in a very delicate position. The risk of losing important funding is concerning for students, researchers and university staff. University leaders across the country have written a joint letter to MPs, urging them to consider how negative a no-deal Brexit would be for British universities.

With the outcome of Brexit still uncertain, we can just hope the best decisions will be taken in order to guarantee our universities retain their world-class status.

More than 1 in 10 Students Use Their Bodies to Fund University Life

Zahra Iqbal
News Editor

A study conducted by the National Student Money Survey showed that 78% of students have monetary problems. It also showed that more than 1 in 10 of students use sugar dating, webcamming, and sex work to fund their studies and time at university.

Laura Watson, spokesperson for the English Collective of Prostitutes, said that they “have found that people are mostly working for everyday needs. But some people are definitely working to pay off the tuition fees.”

“[Students] are mostly working for everyday needs. But some are definitely working to pay off the tuition fees”

The Independent and Save The Student have accused countless UK Universities of “burying their heads in the sand” as they “are worried about the bad press” when it comes to many students turning to sex work in order to deal with the financial pressures of university and student life.

According to The Independent and The English

Collective of Prostitutes, universities have been expelling students that are found to be involved with sex work too.

Anonymous students told The Independent that they were forced to turn to “full service sex work” in order to pay rent and that it “became apparent that there was no other option.” Another student’s university even evicted her from halls and threatened to kick her off her course as she was bringing “moral disrepute” against the university.

The University of Brighton launched an investigation after its student union faced a lot of criticism for allowing a sex worker stall to promote sex work at their freshers’ fair. According to spectators, the stall advocated and encouraged students to turn to sex work.

Sex work appears to be an easy, flexible way for students to make money; an anonymous source told The Independent that he made more than £70 a week for simply recording videos and taking pictures of his feet. Many say that sex work is safe and flexible for students as there are less risks of face-to-face work with the rise of technology and because the work can fit around rigid university timetables.

NUS have tried to raise awareness and lower discrimination that sex workers face. Save the Student’s Jake Butler said that “universities need to

continue their efforts to provide support and create spaces in which students feel safe accessing advice, to ensure all students are aware of their rights and can practise their work safely.”

Sarah Lasoye, women’s officer for the NUS, said “Universities as a whole need to take a much less judgemental outlook on the types of work that students are doing.” She went on to say that “A motivating factor for students who are working in the

“Universities as a whole need to take a much less judgemental outlook on the types of work that students are doing”

sex industry not coming forward, or seeking help if they need it, is the fear of punishment.” She added: “Universities have a responsibility for the welfare of student sex workers – simply burying their heads in the sand is not a solution.”

A Universities UK spokesperson said: “Recognising that they are adults, all universities have a duty of care to their students. This means protecting their welfare in order to support them as learners, encouraging legal, safe and healthy behaviours but not dictating what these behaviours should be.”

Hyde Park Picture House to Get a Second Screen

Ian White
Newspaper Associate Editor

The iconic 104 year old cinema has secured £2.3 million of funding from the National Lottery and Leeds City Council for a landmark redevelopment project. The grant will pay for an extensive refurbishment of the Grade II listed building, which first opened in November 1914.

The work will cover everything from making the cinema more accessible by creating step-free access to most of the building, to repairing the original Edwardian plasterwork and gas lighting in the main auditorium. Money will also be invested in the cinema projector and sound system.

The basement is set to be converted into a second screen seating 40-60 people, so the Picture House can double the variety of its showings. With the new, smaller screen focussing on more specialised titles including documentaries, foreign language and independent films. An extension will also be constructed along the north side of the building which will house a cafe/bar.

“It’s about protecting and preserving our historic features, while at the same time making the building more sustainable, more comfortable and more accessible”

According to the Picture House’s website the project is “about protecting and preserving our historic features, while at the same time making the building more sustainable, more comfortable and more accessible, as we strive to be the best place to experience film in Leeds.”

A lottery spokesman said: “The cinema’s nine gas lights, originally installed as “modesty lighting” to deter any inappropriate behaviour in the back seats,

continue to be lit every day.

“Thanks to the project, they will now undergo essential refurbishment work to ensure they continue to flicker long into the future.”

Leeds City Council leader Judith Blake said: “The Picture House is a rare cultural gem in our city and Leeds City Council is delighted to play a vital part in securing its future.”

The works will begin in September 2019, with the cinema set to close from then until it reopens in September 2020. During the 12 month redevelopment, Hyde Park Picture House will continue to operate out of other venues around Leeds.

Turn over to page 14 for an interview with Ollie Jenkins, the Marketing and Communications Manager at Hyde Park Picture House.

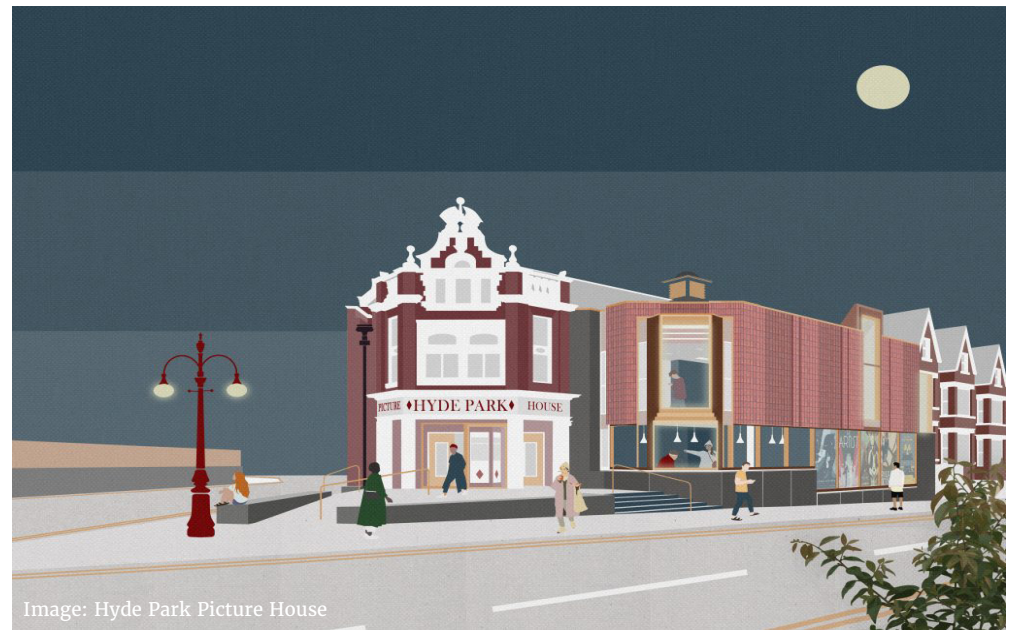


Image: Hyde Park Picture House

Stress the Positives. Study Finds a Better Way to Persuade People to Kick the Booze

George Davis

How do you think Kendrick Lamar thought up ‘Humble’ or Zac Efron developed a body reminiscent of the Greek gods? The answer is simple – they don’t drink alcohol.

According to a study by the University of Leeds, these are the kind of positive messages proven to be more effective at persuading people to reduce their alcohol intake compared to scaremongering campaigns which highlight the negative effects of booze.

The study, based on more than 2,500 social media users’ responses to promotions by the charity Alcohol Concern, cites the success of the ‘Dry January’ campaign, which this year attracted 5 million participants. The campaign focused on the benefits of not drinking alcohol for a month, advertising on its website how last year 58% of people who tried it lost weight and 71% slept better.

According to Dr Henry Yeomans the chief author of the report, “Dry January focuses on the positives to encourage people to become new, low alcohol versions of themselves.

“Participants generally feel that they are gaining something rather than losing something by abstaining for one month.” Such benefits include greater will power, self-confidence, and energy levels.”

The study will add further pressure on the

government to modify their campaigns which in the past have highlighted the negative impacts of drinking alcohol. The 2012 Change4life project warned people that two drinks a day could result in “stroke, breast cancer, or heart disease”. Furthermore, the 2008 campaign ‘Units. They all add up’ also emphasised the health problems created by excessive alcohol consumption.

According to the Leeds report, “the campaign materials used essentially negative tools in an attempt to prompt individuals to reduce their drinking by making them fearful of the long-term consequences of not doing so. Government agencies might consider

reshaping alcohol policies.”

The revelations of the study reflect a deeper conflict over how best to run campaigns to lower alcohol intake. In September 2018, Public Health England (PHE) teamed up with the alcohol industry sponsored charity Drinkaware for the ‘Drink Free Days’ campaign. This triggered a civil war within the alcohol leadership advisory board at PHE, as Professor Sir Ian Gilmore resigned, publishing a stinging review of the alliance.

He argued that Drinkaware have teamed up with the government as “it thinks the campaign will be ineffective or will divert attention from other more effective policies to reduce alcohol consumption that the industry fears more, such as minimum unit pricing.”

Gilmore also points to the risk that “through Drinkaware, the alcohol industry gains valuable engagement with PHE, establishes working relations with PHE staff, and may even secure a seat at the table when other alcohol harm initiatives are planned and executed.”

The controversy demonstrates the division in PHE over how to best create alcohol awareness campaigns. But the Leeds University study offers hope through promoting the use of a new, more effective campaign model to encourage people to decrease their alcohol consumption.



Source: Healthline

Remembering Carilton David Maina



Robbie Cairns
Editor-in-Chief

On the 21st December, Carilton David Maina, a student of the University of Leeds, was shot and killed by police in Line Saba, Kibera. According to friends and family, he was simply walking home after watching a football game, innocent of any crime. Alternatively, if you believe the police reports, Carilton had been harassing and mugging locals as part of an armed, four-man gang.

Despite the divergent stories, the facts are clear: Carilton was in his early twenties. He was a student of the University of Leeds. He was a gifted and talented individual with a promising future, visiting his family in Nairobi for Christmas. And the Kibera police service's attempts to cover up his death are an insult to his memory and the justice system. Some locals have suggested that Carilton was shot and cornered in an alleyway, where he was shot a further three times even after he had pleaded his innocence, although these reports are unconfirmed.

Nevertheless, regardless of the extent of the violence surrounding the tragedy, many voices from Kenya and around the globe have called on authorities to commit to a fair and thorough investigation into the circumstances which surrounded Carilton's death. None have been more vocal than Amnesty International Kenya (AIK), the Kenyan subsection of the Human Rights Group who have been campaigning for a reduction in police violence since they opened their offices in 2009. On Boxing Day, AIK released an official statement in a tweet urging the authorities and the local government to finally take a stand against the seemingly unchecked levels of extra judicial killings: "Carilton Maina's killings shatters again the myth that only violent criminals are being killed lawfully. This death has the Hallmark of unlawful and extra judicial killing and must be comprehensively probed."

The backlash, spearheaded by AIK, seems to have had an immediate impact. Within a day of AIK's statement, the Independent Policing and Oversight Authority (IOPA) announced that it had commenced a criminal investigation into Carilton's death. In a tweet published later that day, the National Police Service (NPS) Inspector General Joseph Boinnet responded positively, calling for a speedy and transparent investigation.

"We wish to inform the public that the Inspector General of Police has asked IPOA to expedite investigations into the shooting incident that occurred in Kibera within Nairobi County in which one Carilton Maina was shot and fatally injured", Boinnet announced. "We further wish to assure the public that the Service, just like in similar instances in the past, will enforce the outcome of the investigations that IPOA will recommend."

The assurance of a thorough investigation was a welcome sign to many. However, Boinnet's tweet failed to confirm whether the officer in question had been identified and suspended until the investigation reached its proper conclusion, Carilton's family continue to protest for the release of the officer's name and, over a month since the investigation started, the police are still yet to make any arrests. These are just further testaments to the notion that internal investigations of this ilk tend to take an extensive amount of time and often result in little to no change.

Reading up on Carilton's life, it's hard to think of him as anything other than a conscientious individual. Gifted both in terms of academia and sport, Carilton attended Maseno School – the oldest formal education school in Kenya – from 2010. There, he held the position of Student Leader, was a member of the football team and Innovate Kenya, and won an East African writing competition to add to his growing accolades. After securing a scholarship to Brookhouse School, Carilton

was admitted to the University of Nairobi to study Actuarial Science. Some may recognise Carilton from his Tedx talk on poverty and human compassion which he gave while studying at Brookhouse; others may know him from the corridors of Leeds University, where he studied Electronic and Electrical Engineering from 2016–17.

The initial police reports read rather differently to such a glowing reference, however. According to Kilimani's Officer in Charge of Police District (OCPD), Michael Muchiri, Carilton was part of a four-man gang based in Kibera, the largest urban slum in Africa, who had been harassing and robbing locals: "The police received a call from members of the public who said that they were being mugged by a group of youths. It is then that the police acted and shot one on the spot." Muchiri also stated that a homemade gun and a knife had been recovered by police at the scene of crime.

But the official police narrative and Carilton's history simply do not add up. Carilton's mother, Josephine Wangari, has vehemently denied that her son could in any way have been involved in such illegal activities, telling reporters in Kenya that "the killing of my son on grounds that he was a thief really hurts me. My son was an innocent boy." Carilton's grandmother, Hellen Njeri, was of a similar mind: "This boy was a very honest person. He knew where we'd keep money in the house yet he has never stolen from us."

The murky facts and controversies surrounding Carilton's death allow us to question the apparent immunities of police services in Kenya and around the globe. Statistics by the Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU) estimate that 822 Kenyans have died from police bullets between 2013 and 2018, while in October last year, IPOA said it was probing some 243 killings, including 86 assault cases, attributed to the police. Activist Moses Okiyi also claimed that 22 youths have lost their lives in the Nairobi slums in only the past few months at the hands of the police for no apparent reasons. Despite these high statistics, only about a dozen officers have been convicted of murder since the start of 2018.

It's clear that more constructive discussions need to take place in order to bring about a viable solution to the crisis of extra judicial killings. On the 2nd January, members from Shining Hope for Communities (SHOFCO), Soweto Silanga Welfare Group, Amani Kibera, Crime Si Poa, The International Commission of Jurists (Kenya section), IMLU and Amnesty International Kenya sat down with senior members of the police to discuss the issue in light of Carilton's death. Focusing on the epidemic of extra judicial killings in informal settlements, gender based violence and discrimination based on socio-economic class, some of the conclusions the group came to included a multiagency approach towards extra judicial killings, the provision of refresher courses and conducting follow-ups on policemen.

These are all achievable aims, but they require global awareness in order to come to fruition. The hashtag #justiceformaina has spread far and wide, and even Arsenal FC honoured Carilton in their match day programme before their game against Cardiff FC on Tuesday 29th January. Only if more attention is paid to the issue, more pressure is placed on the police service, more outcry erupts around the globe, then and only then can legitimate and constructive change take place in order to ensure preventative measures can begin to bring about an end to extra judicial killings.

A memorial service is set to be held for Carilton next week. There will be a number of speakers at the memorial, as well as chances for discussion and reflection. Keep an eye out on the LUU, Leeds East African Society and the Gryphon's Facebook pages for information on the confirmed date and time. All are welcome.



Image: Pippa Henderson

Living with Less Plastic: How to #LeedsByExample

The Gryphon discusses the work of Hubbub and Zero Waste Leeds in their efforts to *Leedsbyexample*.

Tara Lee
Features Editor

'Single use plastic', 'sustainable fashion' and 'zero waste' are buzz words that are frequently used in today's headlines, Twitter and pretty much every media outlet there. Undoubtedly, there is an environmental problem that we need to address and Leeds is becoming a pioneering example of a zero waste city.

Initiatives such as Hubbub, the environmental charity, are partnering with Leeds Zero Waste to deliver important messages concerning what can be recycled and where. Ultimately, they working to give the public simple answers to a problem where scientific jargon can often lead to a disinterested attitude.

Before Christmas, Hubbub hosted a living less with plastic workshop where bloggers and community representatives discussed the impacts of plastic on the environment and what Leeds can do to add to the ongoing efforts.

So what is going on in our city? The trending hashtag 'Leedsbyexample' is a successful campaign for recycling on the go. The brightly coloured and extremely friendly looking bins, which many of you may have seen, have been placed in shopping centres, in universities and on the streets. They have even introduced recycle reward machines which distribute a voucher or bubbles for every piece of recycled rubbish.

In addition, in the run up to Christmas, for each piece recycled, 10p was donated to a homeless charity.

These charities are trying to work with local

businesses and the public sector in Leeds to create a movement of knowledge, personal choice and conscious action. Recently, recycling levels have averaged out and it is up to Leeds to pick it up and make the most of the fantastic options available. Clothes swaps at LUU and the re-use shop in Kirkstall are just two examples of the choices anyone can make to easily have a positive impact.

As students, some of the sustainable options can easily be dismissed as too expensive, too much effort or not convenient.

However, that is not always the case as everyone can brush up on their knowledge of what should be going in their recycling bin and make simple swaps. It is as easy as switching to a reusable water bottle or non-silicone shampoos.

Let's be honest, the chance to exchange your old clothes for new ones and for free would save every student some much needed money and would help the environment in the process. It is not a compromise, it is improving your lifestyle.

Regarding the UK as a whole, we have a rapidly mounting waste problem. We used to ship all of our low grade plastic to China but as of last year, China put in legislation to block this from continuing. To put this in perspective, since 2012, we shipped 2.7m tonnes of plastic to China and Hong Kong. The amount of plastic we are using is clearly continuing yet now, we tackle an issue of another dimension: how to dispose of this huge amount of waste.

Plastic is a symbol of our disposable culture that we cannot afford to continue. It is estimated that we have produced 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic and the micro plastics literally do not disappear. They are in more than what we think: silicone in shampoo

runs right into our water system, teabags are made with plastic, wet wipes and face wipes, even the microfibres from our clothes go straight into water when washed.

New clothes shed more than older clothes – another reason to shop more sustainably. Plastic has successfully infiltrated every aspect of our lives, including our bodies, the full impact of which is yet unknown.

The recurring message of contaminating a recycling bin with something that isn't recyclable is one that everyone has heard before.

However, the issue has to be stressed again because it comes down to financial reasons and therefore it is something that can be changed. For example, Leeds doesn't recycle yoghurt pots (plastic 5) because there aren't enough of them to be cost efficient.

Therefore, it is equally as important to recognise that if too much of the wrong items are in recycling bags, then it won't be worth it for someone to sort through and recycle the small amount that can actually be recycled.

Over the past ten years, Leeds City Council has had its funding dramatically reduced, meaning that is isn't as simple as just allocating more money to these issues to try and combat them. However, it does represent, as does the whole issue of sustainability, a business opportunity to combat and solve these problem.

Furthermore, Leeds City Council is reviewing its waste strategy this year and it is up to the public community to create the movement and project their voices to be heard on different sustainable strategies – what can you do?

Zero Waste Lifestyle – Just Another Millennial Trend?



Image: nonagon.style

Somya Mehta
Features Editor

This week, we sat down with Charlene Marrie, an ex-Leeds University student and Zero Waste advocate.

What does ‘zero waste lifestyle’ mean to you?

To me personally, a “Zero waste lifestyle” means a lifestyle in which we completely avoid using single use products that will most likely end up in landfills and oceans. This includes items such as plastic bags, straws, cotton buds and even tissue paper. It’s a lifestyle where nothing gets thrown away and everything is fully consumed (food) or reused (metal cutlery). Zero waste is substituting all single use products that are a part of your everyday life with reusable ones; for instance a refillable metal water bottle instead of constantly buying single use plastic bottles.

Why should we go zero waste?

In today’s age, environmental issues are becoming a very central concern, especially in developed countries that are now passing new laws to ban single-use plastics. This concern stems from horrifying facts and images of man made waste. With new technologies and social media, information travels fast and so it is a powerful tool to influence people to make changes in their lifestyle. A great example that has encouraged people to adopt a plastic free lifestyle is the viral video of individuals trying to pull a straw out of a turtle’s nose.

The zero waste lifestyle has been implemented by so many people that it has given birth to new markets with emerging businesses selling eco-friendly, zero-waste and cruelty-free products.

Going fully zero waste is not easy but if one makes an effort to adopt such a lifestyle as much as they can, considering that a few million people would do so, it can truly have an impact. Less waste means less mess to clean up, more ecosystems and species are left undisturbed. This would avoid their extinction, both saving ourselves from the toxicity of our own mess and preserving the beauty of Mother Nature!

There is so much talk about plastic waste, but do you have any specific facts or statistics concerning sustainability that you have found particularly striking?

Here are a few shocking facts in relation to plastic waste that truly shocked me:

- 8 million tons plastic get dumped into our oceans every year (Le Guern, 2018)
- Only 9% of world plastic put in recycling bins get recycled yearly (Parker, 2018)

- A plastic bag is used for about 12 minutes, but it takes 1,000 years to decompose (O’Brien, 2017)

However, on a more positive and encouraging note, in 3 months, Australia’s nationwide plastic bag use has dropped by 15 billion after supermarket chains Woolworths and Coles stopped giving them out (Khalil and AAP, 2018).

What motivated you to try the zero waste lifestyle?

In all honestly it was the turtle video, the one with the people trying to pull out a straw from its nose, and on top of that slideshows of plastic-filled animals ranging from seagulls to whales to boars. I felt so guilty seeing these images, and I told myself that I didn’t want to play a part in the mistreatment of innocent animals. From then on, I started becoming more conscious about waste, with the urge to learn more by researching and watching documentaries, one of which was “A Plastic Ocean”, which I truly recommend, and finally, I adopted a zero waste lifestyle.

How do you wish to achieve and maintain an eco-friendly lifestyle with zero waste?

In order to achieve and maintain such a lifestyle, it is important to always be aware and alert. Choosing this lifestyle requires me to add an extra bit of effort in my everyday life, but I don’t find it to be a burden in any way. It actually gives me immense happiness. For instance, if I order a drink at a restaurant, I will always remember to say “no straw”. Furthermore, I will always fill my water bottle in the morning to avoid buying plastic water bottles later on throughout the day.

What’s been the most difficult lifestyle change so far?

The most difficult change has been finding plastic free options in supermarkets. Although this is the case, I try to buy the maximum of my needed products in bulk stores and markets. However, sometimes, plastic free is simply not an option, for instance with medicine. If you end up with plastic waste, the best next thing to do is recycling it, although, there is no real guarantee that it will actually be recycled.

What are your top tips for reducing the use of plastic in daily life?

There are so many substitutes for plastic products that can be considered. For example, I no longer use plastic packaged soaps and shampoos and I now only buy bar soaps and shampoos which I actually prefer! My top 5 go-to plastic alternatives are metal or bamboo reusable straws, reusable water bottles, small canvas shopping bags instead of plastic bags, storage boxes instead of takeaway boxes and beeswax instead

of clingfilm.

How can we go plastic-free at university?

On top of the 2020 goal of using Keep Cups and going single use plastic free at Leeds University, I would suggest that all plastic cutlery in the refectory and cafes be substituted by Vegware cutlery, which is eco-friendly and compostable.

Furthermore, it would be great if all plastic straws were substituted by pasta straws as they are compostable. I wouldn’t recommend paper straws as a lot of people complain about their soggy, but most importantly, the production of paper straws is extremely polluting and not sustainable.

On a final note, it would be great if the University started a partnership with a plastic recycling company ensuring that all plastic thrown in campus bins goes into recycling, since as previously mentioned, the majority of worldwide “recycled plastics” don’t get recycled when put in government installed bins.

Will this be treated as yet another millennial trend, like veganism often is, or does it have a real potential to bring about change?

In my opinion, it has already become a trend! It can truly bring about change as it encourages millennials to adopt a different lifestyle and also pressurises governments and organisations to respond to such issues. Change is already happening as governments put single use plastic bans into motion. Not only are they acting up, but also many businesses already have the initiative to adopt a zero waste policy.

Like veganism has led to trends such as #Veganuary, does this movement also have its own sub-trends that people can become a part of?

Zero waste sub-trends in the style of #veganuary or #movember, are starting to emerge. #TheLastStraw is the most relevant hashtag at the moment, which is a campaign to cease single use plastic usage globally.

How do you wish to spread the message of leading an #EcoFriendly lifestyle amongst the youth?

The best way to spread the message to young people is first at school through academia, then through social media and influencers who can use their platform to adopt a waste free lifestyle, and then even word of mouth and personal experiences with the help of peers and society can be a useful tool. Once the trend takes off, the youth will follow!

If you want to hear more from Charlene, follow her Instagram: @charlenemarrie/

Do You Believe in Life After LinkedIn?



Image: NPR

A 'Back to the 90s' event challenged students to live without social media for a week. Our Associate Editor, Polly Hatcher, took on the challenge and wrote about it.

Polly Hatcher
Newspaper Associate Editor

Towards the end of last semester, India McGlinchey from the Department of Arts and Humanities ran a 'Back to the 90s' experiment, challenging students to log out of all their social media accounts for a week.

Over the past few years, the media has been full of reports that link heavy social media use to poor mental health. The Happiness Research Institute in Denmark conducted a study that found people who quit Facebook for a week felt 55 per cent less stressed than those who continued to use it, so the experiment was striving to see if just one week offline could have any impact on the signed-up students' wellbeing.

Young people are the heaviest users of social media and according to Ofcom, 95 per cent of 16 to 24-year olds have an account on at least one platform. In 2017, a survey by the Royal Society for Public Health showed Britons between the ages of 14 and 24 believed that while on the one hand, social media outlets provided an opportunity for self-expression, on the other, using these platforms elevated feelings of anxiety and depression, heightened worries over body image, and provoked the ever-haunting FOMO (fear of missing out).

In a world that is ever-increasingly online, social media has a dominant effect in our day-to-day lives, yet rarely gives an accurate representation of what is actually going on. People are able to pick and choose what they post and deceive their followers into believing a (sometimes heavily) filtered version of their life. On top of this, our online presence now extends past just the realms of social life and into the world of work. Sadly, I have got to the stage where I seem to have more adds on LinkedIn than I do on Facebook. CVs are cringeworthy enough when they are directed at people that you want to give you a job, but when I received a notification that my ex-boyfriend from nearly eight years ago had looked at

my profile, I felt quite exposed to say the least.

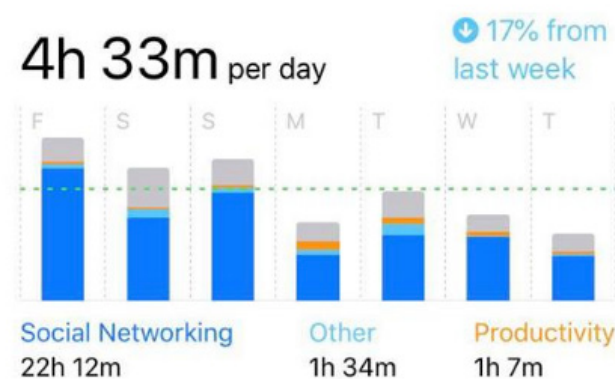
With all that in mind, when I received the email about the experiment, I was intrigued to try it out. My decision was partly based on the fact that I spend far too much time scrolling when instead I should be working.

On top of the hope to improve my productivity levels, I was also interested to see how no social media would impact my mobile phone usage. Ofcom found that almost two thirds of under 35-year-old adults are so attached to their phones, they look at it within five minutes of waking up. Excessive phone usage has been a hot topic of conversation as of late, as for many iPhone users, the recent iOS update has shocked them by showing how many hours per day they spend looking at their phone. Some people that I spoke to spend upwards of four hours per day on their mobiles, with the majority of that time spent on social networking.

The night before the experiment started, I was all tucked up in bed and started to flick through Instagram, only to realise it was after midnight and just twenty minutes into the challenge, I had already failed.

The first few days were surprisingly tricky – while in the library I repeatedly absent-mindedly googled Facebook, only to be met with the login page and reminded of my blunder. In a similar vein, again and again I unlocked my phone and tried to click where the Instagram app previously sat. This made me realise that social media had become something that I almost instantaneously resorted to as soon as boredom began to creep in.

Even with social media off-limits, the impulsion to scroll remained, and to remedy this I paid far more attention to my bank account app than usual. While this probably was more productive than looking at copious amounts of brunch photos, it wasn't quite the light-hearted library entertainment I was looking for. Unwillingly clicking onto social media seemed to be a



recurrent theme amongst other participants too, with one person stating it had become "involuntary muscle memory".

The overall results of the experiment were very revealing and showed that abstaining from social media, even for just one week, can make a noticeable difference. Out of 101 people who took the initial survey, 76 completed the week. Out of the latter group, 73.7 per cent were able to completely stay off social media for the whole week, and half said they struggled with this. The main worries of participants at the start of the week seemed to be linked to FOMO, but when asked at the end of the week if they had actually missed out on anything important, over two thirds said they had not.

61.8 per cent said they felt noticeably better after a full week away from social media, while 71.1 per cent of participants said they felt more present in the moment, half said their concentration levels had improved, and nearly a third were sleeping better.

With the vast majority of youths using social media, it has become an extremely useful platform on which groups and events are organised. However, the darker side can leave people feeling depressed, with a constant need for gratification in the form of likes. We really need to assess how we use these platforms, identify their negative implications, and look to see if we can do something to change this.

University of Leeds Business Plan Competition 2019

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Who can enter?

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Deadline for submissions:

Tuesday 19th February 2019 at 10.00

Announcement of finalists:

Friday 22nd Feb 2019

Finalists presentations:

Wednesday 27th Feb 2018 and Friday 01st March 2019

Winners announcement:

Monday 04th March 2019

Business plan lunch:

Thursday 07th March 2019

First Prize: £2,000

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Third Prize: £750

(There are three prizes available for each
of the pre-start and trading levels)

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<http://careerweb.leeds.ac.uk/spark>

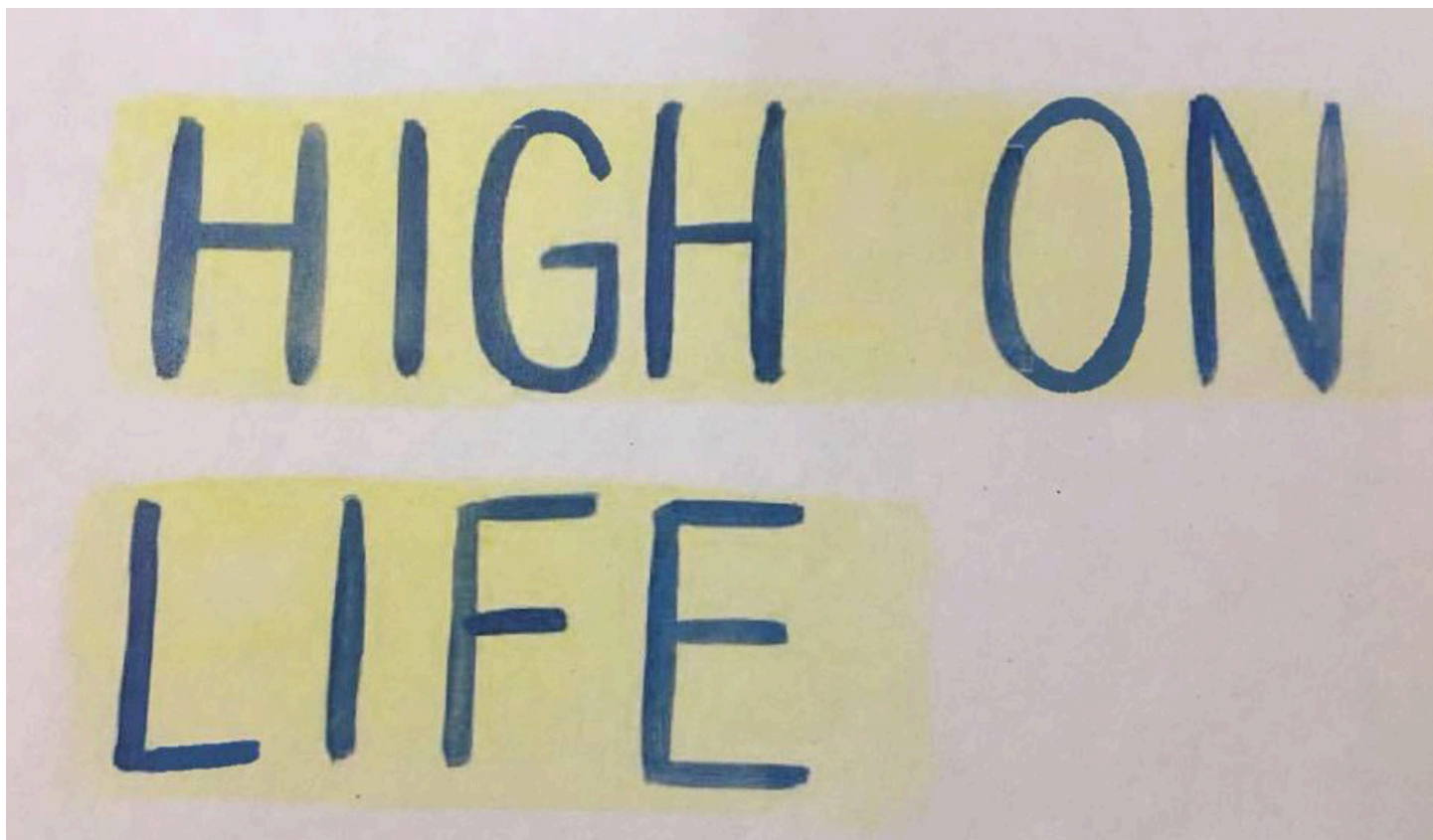
Contact: Richard Doyle on
0113 343 5028

Email: spark@leeds.ac.uk

**Want to win it?
Be in it!**



High on Life: Dry January Without a Dry Social Life



Have you made it to the end of Dry January but you're not over being sober? Or maybe you're looking for a new society to join this Refreshers? Read about LUU's new society who are serving up pints of fun with a shot of something different.

Alice Young

In the final year of university, Alice Young made the controversial decision to stop drinking alcohol. While this was initially prompted by medical reasons, it has proved to be an interesting personal experiment to see the effects on her mental health and wellbeing. There is often an enormous pressure at university for socialising to involve alcohol. However, a brand-new society has been established which provides non-alcohol socials. Alice sat down with the President of High on Life, Emily Coombs, to hear what they're offering students at Leeds.

What inspired you to start a non-drinking society?

I don't drink myself and I know that it would have helped me if there was a non-drinking society, especially during my first year at university. Freshers' week is already an incredibly stressful time but having to tell your new flatmates that you don't want to drink can be really intimidating, and can make Freshers' week isolating.

Obviously now I am confident in my choice not to drink, but if there was a university-backed group of people also doing the same thing, I would have found that confidence a lot more quickly.

I didn't realise Leeds was such a big night out before I arrived in first year, I now think of Leeds as having a massive drinking and drugs culture. It is often one of the first things people comment on when I say I study at Leeds, which shows the reputation it has and how hard it might be for someone who might not want to take part in it.

Do you think there is a problem associated with society initiation ceremonies and excessive drinking?

From my personal experiences there were certain societies, mainly sports ones, which I felt like I could never join because I wouldn't get involved in the alcohol-based socials. Of course, I understand that some people choose to drink and that will always play a part in society events, but I do think it is a problem if people feel they can't get involved without drinking excessively.

Do you think more could be done to have non-alcohol focused events at university?

I do think there has been progress in the last few years in introducing more alcohol-free events, but I still think we could do more. An NUS survey found that 20% of students don't drink alcohol and it doesn't seem like they are being represented in the events being held at university. There is such a stereotype about students enjoying drinking that it can put pressure on some people to drink, and I think that is a problem. It doesn't make sense to me that during a time when people are trying to make new friends they should be discouraged from being themselves even if it includes not drinking.

What interest have you had in the society?

This all started with printing off some posters, putting them up around uni and hoping for the best! LUU needs 25 students to want to join before they will consider any new societies, so that was my big goal; I was fully expecting to have to persuade my friends to sign up, but luckily it wasn't the case.

Now there are 160 members on the Facebook page and half of those have signed the official petition to start the society. I'm so grateful for such a positive response and it makes me more determined to make the society official.

What events do you plan to hold throughout the year?

Unlike some societies, High on Life doesn't necessarily lend itself to a specific activity since it is more about creating a community of likeminded people. We see ourselves having regular drop-in sessions where people can make connections, as well as one-off activity evenings promoting alcohol-free activities such as baking, yoga, board games and sign language. We would love to hold film nights, quizzes and maybe a rival to the classic pub crawl, with cake crawls, or café crawls! We have also talked about holding a "clubbing in the day" event where there is no alcohol, no late night but still the fun of going out with friends.

Where do you see the society going in future years?

My hopes for the society are that it grows in size and gains a reputation for great, alternative events. I think having a society like this, which does already exist in a lot of other universities, will send a message that there is a place for everyone at Leeds, even if you don't want to drink alcohol. Although the society is mainly for people that don't drink, I hope that as we grow in size, we can reach more people that just want the occasional break from drinking and encourage a discussion about the drinking culture at university across the board.

You can get involved with the society by joining their Facebook group named 'High on Life - Uni of Leeds'.

If you have concerns regarding alcohol then check out targetted advice on the LUU website, Drinkaware's Freshers' Guide, organisations like Forward Leeds, Addiction Dependency Solutions (ADS), and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), or call Drinkline on 0800 917 8282.

In the Middle



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

Issue 7

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courtesy of George Rex [Resident
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Back Cover

LSR's 'The Transmission', Brudenell
Social Club 7th February

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Glastonbury Gets to Grips With Gender



January inevitably means an influx of festival lineups dominating social media and often causing a stir, be it because they're relentlessly safe or simply because they're ignoring some incredible artists on the basis of their gender. Last year, a number of festivals came under fire for having shockingly few female acts on their bill, a revelation which was intensified by the circulation of edited posters which removed all male artists from their lineups. The result was jarring to say the least - Wireless festival had just three female acts across the entire weekend. Festivals of all different genres and sizes all had the same thing in common: they were (and likely still will be this year) unabashedly dominated by men.

However, in 2018, 45 UK festivals pledged to achieve a 50/50 gender balance by 2022, with the prestigious Glastonbury aiming to do this from 2019 onwards. Although narrowing the ratio of female to male artists should be happening regardless, this pledge is crucial in potentially changing the future of festivals for the better. Gender is a major issue in the music industry, not just among the artists themselves but also those behind the artists; men dominate recording studios just as much as they dominate record label boardrooms.

This lack of balance is perhaps more notable at music festivals because they are so widely promoted in the public eye. Glastonbury Festival is one of the biggest

events on the music calendar - everyone from your grandad to your teenage sister knows of it - and thus its influence is dramatically wide-spread. By using its status to combat and eradicate the gender imbalance of the music industry, Glastonbury can begin to pave the way for a multitude of festivals to adopt this approach and provide equal gender opportunities to artists.

In 2017, Glastonbury's 'The Park' already had a 50/50 gender split, but organiser Emily Eavis has stressed how this trend needs to be carried on throughout the festival, particularly on The Pyramid stage - the festival's iconic main stage. To have an equal representation of women on such a renowned platform is exactly the kind of progression needed, and with Janelle Monae and Kylie Minogue already having been announced, things are looking hopeful. Eavis has insisted that every decision has been made with addressing the issue of gender imbalance in mind and we can only hope that this translates into a line up that, at its core, is representative of all manner of talented artists, regardless of their gender.

Of course, there are still people who are fervently against the need to find this balance as they fail to see the poisonous levels of misogyny which underline the entirety of the music industry. Cries of how "it's the most popular acts on the line up" and "there's just no good female acts" haunt this particular fight for equality. It is so much more complicated than this, and so much more than a popularity contest. Fundamentally, women do not have the

opportunities within the music industry to gain popularity in the same way that men do. It is immensely easier for men to be recognised and supported for their talent and thus become well-known enough to make it onto these line ups.

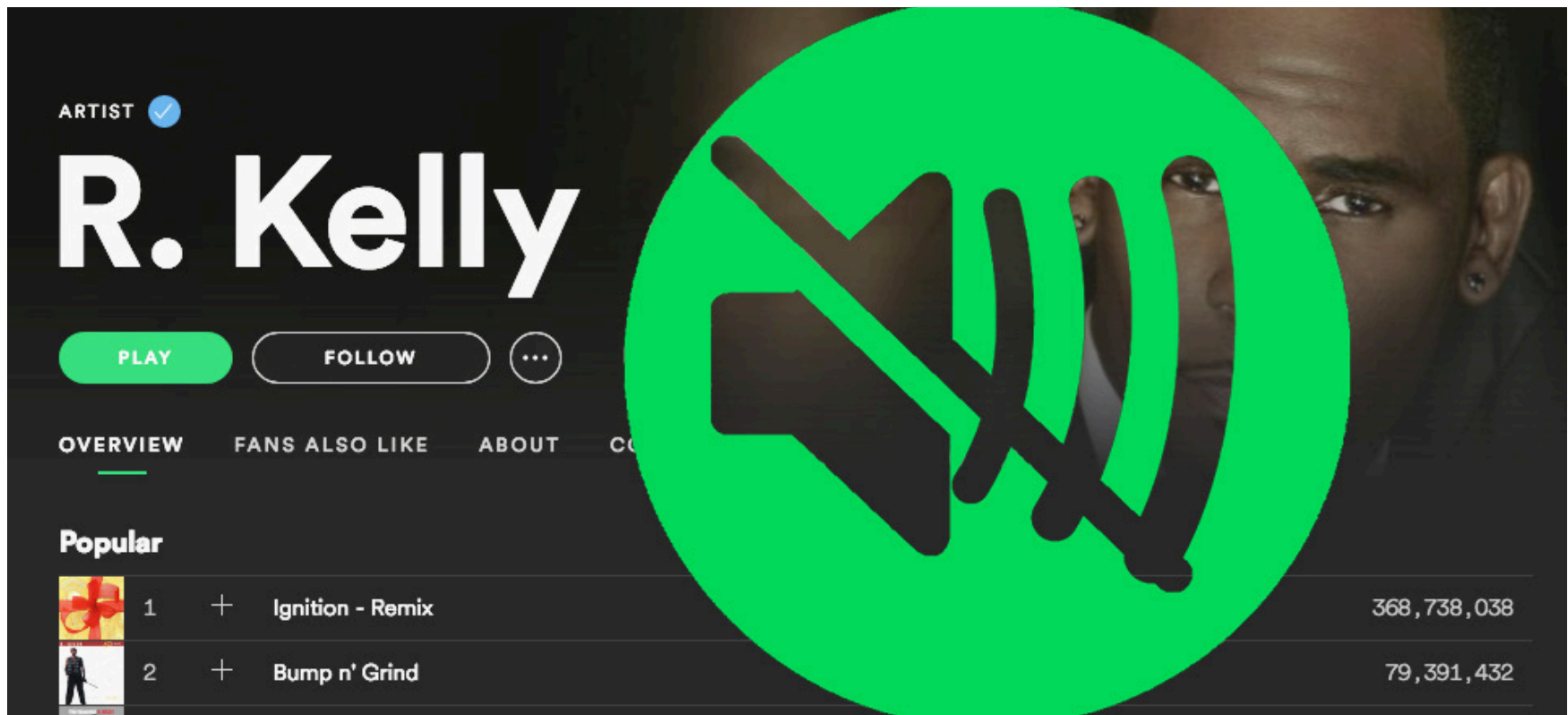
Nevertheless, even the women who do manage to transcend these barriers and achieve success often go ignored in favour of another male band. To suggest that there are "no good female acts" is ludicrous, and reeks of sexism. Refusing to expand your horizons to the abundance of innovative, exciting female artists who are lurking amongst the hundreds of male artists only causes yourself to lose out - these artists are impressive and just as deserving of a place on festival line-ups. To ignore them is intensely regressive.

It's difficult to comprehend how some music fans can belittle the talent of female artists when you look at the last year in music. Jorja Smith had one of the most well-received albums of the year; Dua Lipa received award after award for her debut album; Ariana Grande was the name on everybody's lips with the release of *Sweetener* and, shortly after, 'thank u, next'. Across several genres, there are some phenomenal artists going unappreciated and it is criminal - women have shown time and time again that they deserve to be on these festival stages as much as men and they undoubtedly should be getting their well-earned recognition. It's time the lineups started to reflect this.

Neive McCarthy

A Mute Gesture

Music editor Mikhail Hanafi discusses why the music industry still has a long way to go before the abusive actions of artists like R. Kelly can be silenced once and for all.



In late January 2019, Spotify began rolling out a new “mute” feature which allows users to essentially ‘block’ specific artists from appearing on their Spotify app. This means that users won’t see muted artists in any of Spotify’s curated playlists; to see them again in the app, users are required to actively unmute them in their settings. The feature is currently only available to a select number of users on the company’s iOS app.

Though many are applauding the company for the feature - Twitter is already bursting at the seams with jokes about muting unfavourable artists - most don’t realise that Spotify had already considered and rejected the idea before. In an online statement, Spotify had, “after serious consideration”, decided not to implement a blocking feature back in 2017.

The difference, almost a year and a half later, is the growing, #MeToo-fuelled public backlash against sexual predators. Spotify is essentially responding to user concerns about supporting problematic artists with the feature. Don’t like a particular artist? Mute them. It’s a step taken to address the pressures the company has faced in the current socio-political climate.

Most recently, the #MuteRKelly campaign led Spotify to remove the musician from its curated editorial playlists, though his music is still readily available on the service. *Surviving R. Kelly*, a recent six-part Lifetime documentary series borne from this campaign, detailed allegations of sexual assault and paedophilia against Kelly; it quickly became the network’s highest-rated programme in nearly two years.

These allegations, though shocking, aren’t exactly “revelatory”; Kelly’s actions have been widely known for

years. In 1994, at 27 years-old, Kelly illegally married then-15-year-old r&b singer Aaliyah. In the 2000s, Kelly faced a slew of child pornography charges, getting off on a technicality in one instance. Yet, despite these allegations, Kelly flourished, collaborating with the biggest names in music including Lady Gaga, who only recently pulled their collaboration ‘Do What U Want’ off online platforms.

His continued success even today, 24 years after he married a 15 year-old 12 years his junior, is symptomatic of an industry which continues to enable problematic and abusive artists. Despite countless allegations throughout his decades-spanning career, many of which ended through big, out-of-court settlements, other

“Individuals in every step of the process need to take responsibility for the continued relevance of certain artists [...] when no one takes responsibility, everyone is collectively at fault”

artists continued to work with him, his label continued to promote him, and people continued to listen to him. Despite a history of abhorrent behaviour, Kelly was enabled and celebrated by the industry.

Artists like Chris Brown and the late XXXTentacion still have massive fanbases today despite the detailed, substantiated allegations of assault made against them. It’s impossible to claim ignorance about Brown’s brutal 2009 assault of Rihanna; the infamous photo of her battered, bloody face was everywhere the few months after. There exist audio clips of XXXTentacion

purportedly confessing to physically abusing women. Still, Brown is featured on Spotify’s editorial playlists, and XXXTentacion continues to be splashed across the app’s home page with his posthumous releases.

Over the years, what has become clear is that individuals in every step of the process need to take responsibility for the continued relevance of certain artists. Record labels argue that it’s not their job to police behaviour. Distributors want to appear unbiased. Listeners try to separate the art from the artist. But when no one takes responsibility, everyone is collectively at fault.

Spotify’s response to problematic artists has been unsatisfactory, to say the least. Their dropping of Kelly from editorial playlists is a step forward, but it’s clear that this wasn’t a decision made on moral grounds; Brown and XXXTentacion are still on their playlists, despite Brown facing new rape allegations in January. Action was only taken against Kelly once the public backlash grew too big to ignore. The same thing happened with Kelly’s label, who only dropped him after the airing of the lifetime series.

In reality, the mute feature is Spotify’s way of side-stepping having to answer the difficult question of who does and who doesn’t deserve a platform on their service. It’s the equivalent of enacting environmental policy by shifting responsibility to the individual through banning plastic straws instead of implementing real, system-wide changes and taking corporations to task. In reality, everyone needs to do better. What message do we send when we continue to reward sexual predators and abusers with money and fame?

Mikhail Hanafi

Gig Round-Up

Mom Jeans

Brudenell Social Club,
19/01



Mom Jeans playing the Brudenell Social Club was, in many ways, a perfect microcosm of the ways that music creates communities and connections that transcend generational or geographic divides. Not only was there a Californian band with an adoring and dedicated fan base here in Leeds, but we learned that Brude had previously hosted lead vocalist Eric Butler’s dad’s favourite band.

Musically, Mom Jeans were very much par for the course of the emo rock genre. In many ways, though, that is almost the point. Bands like these, whose lyrics encapsulate the worldview and problems of their disaffected fans, do not usually sound as refined or polished as bands with a more conventionally appealing sound. The point is, though, the abandonment of these norms in exchange for a stronger sense of familiarity and camaraderie with fans is the modus operandi of Mom Jeans - and it works spectacularly for them.

The invitation of the singer from a previous band onto the stage, or the genuinity with which bassist Gabriel Paganin approached his mid-gig joke-telling interlude are the kinds of touches that make decent gigs far more memorable. The jokes were, of course, unpolished and slightly ad hoc whilst the addition of a last minute band member probably was not great for the sound quality. As with much of what Mom Jeans do, though, that is the point.

The most valuable element of this gig, then, is how it illustrated the inimitable value of small venues that foster these kinds of connections between musicians and audiences. Alongside support acts Just Friends and Don't Worry, every band that played felt like a group of friends playing to a room of other friends, and the night was immeasurably better for it.

Charley Weldrick

Preview

LSR Presents: The Transmission

Brudenell Social Club,
07/02



February 7th sees the return of Leeds Student Radio to Brudenell Social Club for their annual party, The Transmission. With an extensive line-up of bands and DJs from the Leeds music scene and beyond, the night is another exciting take on a long-standing tradition. And it is not just the music that makes the date one to note; it is always a fun evening, with plenty of dancing and good company.

In line with LSR’s heterogeneity, the evening’s line-up is eclectic, from the witchy arrangements of Solis to the pleasant, jazz-infused sound of Mondo Bizarre. There will also be sets from some familiar names of the Leeds circuit, including SaNTINO’s school-disco-in-a-parallel-universe vibes, weird and funky in equal measures, and N/\L/’s stormy electronics.

NikNak, a regular at Leeds’ DIY industrial night, Slut Drop, with opening slots for Grandmaster Flash and Princess Nokia under her belt, will also be DJing throughout the night.

As always, the Transmission is for a good cause, with all proceeds raised going to MAP, the Leeds-based charity who provide alternative schooling to at-risk kids in the area.

Doors at 7pm, DJs until 1am.
Tickets will be available online (via DICE) or from the LSR office, £5 advance.

Safi Bugel

New Releases

dodie - Human



The 23-year-old singer-songwriter Dorothy 'dodie' Clark began her music career from her bedroom in 2011. Her success is credit to her music's accessibility and her personal candour surrounding topics of mental health and sexuality. Her latest release, *Human*, follows her previous EPs, *Intertwined* (2016) and *You* (2018). In only 23 minutes, she creates a vocal tapestry woven with authenticity, love letters and raw vulnerability.

dodie uploaded a "secret scrapbook song" for her 1.7 million YouTube subscribers revealing the EP's first track, 'Arms Unfolding', hidden word-by-word in multiple videos. The singer previously dedicated it to her "two friends who are learning to fall in love with each other again." The sentiment of opening oneself back up to love's trials and traumas is reinforced in the more upbeat 'Monster'. The song is chaotic, a culmination of layered percussion alongside isolated beeps. The style foreshadows the song's video, a surreal and kooky take on the harrowing world of modern dating.

dodie continues the conflicting themes of insecurity and growth alongside male vocalists in 'Human' (Tom Walker) and 'Not What I Meant' (Lewis Watson). Whilst the collaborations provide beautifully melding harmonies, the addition of male vocals delivers the songs' narratives from the perspective of both genders, removing the heteronormative 'he-loves-me-he-loves-me-not' trope.

The tracks counter one another tactfully. 'Human' reflects on infatuation and dependency whilst 'Not What I Meant' is a sweet and soulful look at the link between conforming and success. dodie is repeatedly questioning the multiplicity of our self-portrayals, and in 'If I'm Being Honest', with its dramatic, orchestral feel, she asks "could you love this?", could you love her, as she is?

The acoustic sombreness of 'She' offers a modernised narrative of unrequited love with a girl who "means everything" to her. The opening question "am I allowed to look at her like that?" lays a mournful foundation sustained throughout the song. Openly bisexual, dodie relays the bittersweet reality that rejection is multifaceted, and differing sexualities can complicate seemingly platonic relationships. The subtleness of pizzicato strings is secondary to dodie's vocals, emphasising the transparency of her diary-like lyrics about the girl who "smells like lemongrass and sleep".

The EP concludes with 'Burned out', a hauntingly heartbreaking admittance of defeat. The echoing variety of pronouns emphasises dodie's detached sense of self, a girl raised online, performing to "thousands of eyes" yet only hearing "the sharp" words in response. Her lyrics are candid and empathetic - thus relatable. Nevertheless, her fans shouldn't "build hope on something broken", for she, like them, is "just" human.

Andrea Loftus

James Blake - Assume Form



The release of James Blake's new album, *Assume Form*, has spurred considerable excitement and it certainly lives up to all its expectations. With his no-nonsense attitude towards toxic masculinity, public refusal to be labelled a 'sad boy' and his unique use of texture, Blake has proved himself, time and again, to be the existentialist to watch.

His previous album, *The Colour In Anything*, is one of sadness and despair, so the clarity and control throughout *Assume Form* are almost like breathing a slow-motion sigh of relief. Opening with simple piano flourishes, the titular track epitomises this perfectly. Lyrics such as "Doesn't it get much clearer?" and "Doesn't it seem much warmer?" demonstrate Blake's clearer mindset and victory against a depressive period following his previous album - something he has been known to put largely down to his new partner, actor Jameela Jamil.

The essence of his adoration for Jamil can be felt throughout, whether it is in what is possibly his best ballad yet 'Into The Red', or the outstandingly soothing 'Lullaby For My Insomniac' - it is possibly one of the most beautiful collections of love songs to have been released for a while. Blake manages to create something completely contrasting to anything he has done before, whilst keeping his trademark, high-quality production style, honey-like vocals, and poetic outlook on trials and tribulations of life and love.

As the title of the album would suggest, it appears that he has finally come to a conclusion on who he is as a person, as well as a musician, and I could not be more here for it.

Charlotte Bresh

Maggie Rogers - Heard It In A Past Life



Maggie Rogers quickly rose to fame back in 2016 after a video of Pharrell Williams listening to her song, 'Alaska,' went viral. In the New York University masterclass session, Pharrell Williams was found teary-eyed and awestruck after listening to Rogers' electro-folk song.

Despite going viral over two years ago, Rogers took her time in forming herself as an artist and curating her debut album, *Heard It In A Past Life*. Whilst her folk roots are still present within the indie electro-pop album, Rogers stays true to her love of dance music and nature; synthesisers are set alongside the layering of samples of babbling brooks and frogs.

Heard It In A Past Life tells the story of Rogers' journey post-Pharrell encounter. She sings of love, heartbreak and finding herself in the whirlwind of her new-found reality. The catchy beat and lyrics of 'Overnight' help Rogers tell the bittersweet truth of getting older and how quickly life and people can change - overnight. Yet the emotional and intimate lyrics of 'The Knife' are also juxtaposed with infectious electro-pop beats which you cannot help but bob your head to. She slows things down in 'Past Life,' a song in which she echoes the sound of early Stevie Nicks. However, it is undoubtedly 'Fallingwater' that truly showcases Rogers' vocal abilities, as she admits "I didn't know that I could sing like this. Something woke-up."

'Back In My Body' is appropriately placed as the last song on the album, illustrating how far Rogers has come and that she has found her feet again. The wholesome lyrics, "I'm back in my body" and "this time I know I'm fighting" bring a perfect close to *Heard It In A Past Life* - Maggie Rogers is not going anywhere. She is here to stay.

Annabel Martin

An Ode to Donuts



It all began with mere rumours. On the walk to the final lecture, a friend whispered to me, “Donuts is closing down, did you hear?” Shocked. That was my first reaction. How could they possibly get rid of it? Then came denial, surely they would not be closing down the most popular funhouse for Leeds students? It can't be true.

This was during one of those times when everything is surprisingly quite mediocre in life; assessments were all submitted, Christmas was in touching distance and it didn't yet feel as bitter as the cold that haunts us now. But all was ruined when Donuts began their Facebook post: “We've got one of those announcements that you guys need to read” (they even used donuts emoji's to soften the blow), informing their devoted fans that they will be leaving their home for the past four years, The Faversham.

Melodramatics aside, even though Donuts has waved ‘Bon Voyage’ to their time at The Fav, their exit from the Leeds student club scene is thankfully not so severe; they are moving directly across campus to The Chapel, Church's younger and better-

looking brother. Donuts has promised us the start of a very exciting chapter, ready for monumental amounts of new memories filled with confetti, inflatables and, as always, donuts.

Beginning with a bang, their re-launch party last Thursday was a great success, with whispers that it might even be better than The Fav. But before this page turns to its new chapter, there is a last chance to reflect on what the last four years offered. It was one of the most loved student nights, ensuring you bumped into everyone you knew; from that guy who you fancy in your Modern Lit seminar, to the cool girl who once sat opposite you in Eddy B. From the cheap and cheerful double vodkas, to the car park smoking area vibe, to the Richard Madden look-a-like bouncer; The Fav guaranteed a wild night. You could even perfectly stumble back to your bed in Hyde Park after - something the new location has successfully secured too.

We all have high hopes for the future of Donuts, and they do always say “home isn't a place, it's a feeling.” The funhouse comradery won't ever disappear into the darkness but it will certainly grow even stronger with the cool space and wall-art The Chapel provides.

So what will happen to The Fav now? It is currently undergoing a new change of purpose with its already multipurpose repertoire, so who knows when you'll next step foot in the glorious establishment. At least we know it holds weddings, so stay close to your exasperating house couple, despite how much their PDA annoys you.

Caris Dollard



New: Re-Textured

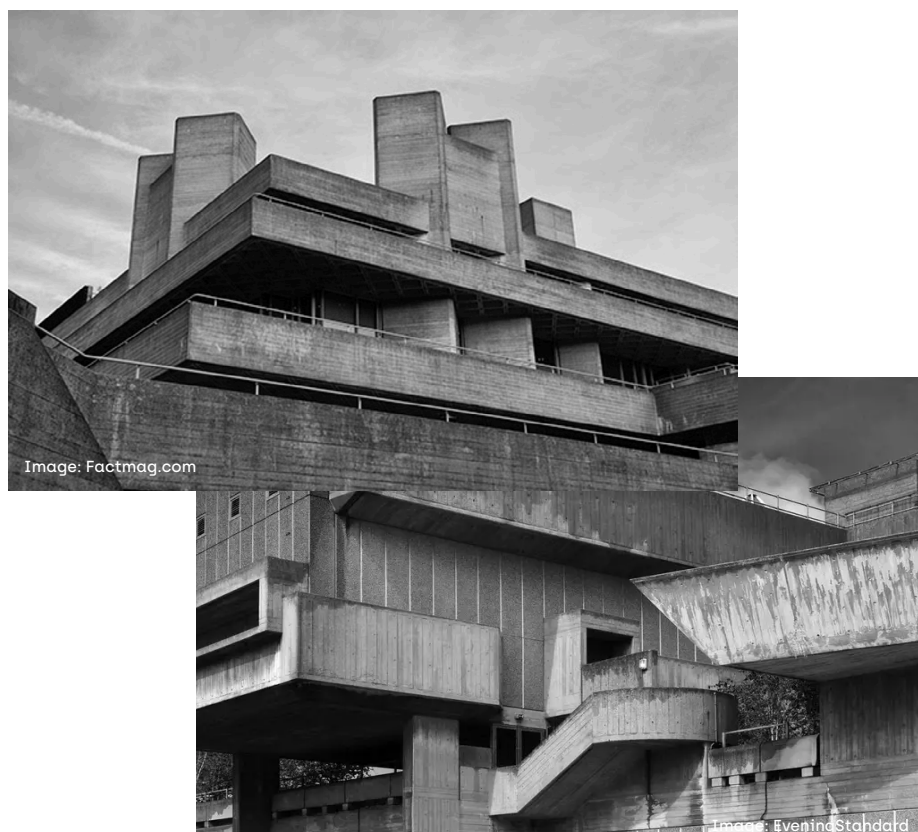
There has always been an intrinsic connection between techno and brutalism, and this is something Re-Textured Festival are looking to explore. The inaugural edition will take over London next month, hosting parties in iconic sites such as Walthamstow Assembly Hall, The Southbank Centre, The Silver building and 180 The Strand in a bid to explore the relationship between urban architecture and electronic music.

The festival is largely modelled on Berlin Atonal, which takes place in the German capital's industrial Kraftwerk building, also home to renowned techno club, Tresor. Like Atonal, Re-Textured will similarly incorporate visual installations and light art into its exploration of the brutalism-techno nexus, demonstrating how all three very much exist in the same space.

Organised by London promoters Krankbrother, the festival will be held at heavy-weight venues E1, which has become Krankbrother's spiritual home over the past few years, and Village Underground. Highlights from the stellar line-up include a highly anticipated live set from Bristol duo Giant Swan, who will take-over Village Underground on the Friday alongside Batu and Deena Abdelwahed. Re-Textured will also welcome a broad spectrum of experimental acts from Ambient to Drone. Other DJs playing the festival include Nina Kraviz, Objekt, Blawan and Phase Fatale.

Re-Textured runs from 28th to 31st March. Tickets are available now.

James Dewar



Semester One in Review

As the new year and a new semester begins, we thought it would be the perfect opportunity to look back at some of the finest nights last year offered us.

Young Marco



On Saturday 3rd November, the Ossia crew returned to the basement to let loose one of Amsterdam's finest selectors, Marco Sterk AKA Young Marco.

Following his stellar performance at Hifi earlier this year, the Dekmantel superstar's return was hotly anticipated, and Wire was fittingly chosen to host the Leeds leg of his Forever Young UK tour. A venue often described as a time vacuum, in which 'forever' feels like minutes, it was the perfect space to showcase Marco's retro-futuristic song selection.

Marco has risen to fame over the past few years thanks to sets that mirror his unique production and it was clear within the first hour that this was to be another blend of his universal style. As the club began to fill up, Marco spun tracks rooted in the Dutch electronic scene, laying the sonic foundations for snippets of his acclaimed 2012 *Biology* album. It was these wholly instrumental pieces, which transcend genre, era and

place, that allowed the set to descend seamlessly into minimal techno shortly after midnight, or tribal house tracks in the early hours of the morning.

Whilst the club only reached half-capacity, energy remained at a maximum. Reminiscent of his Dekmantel Selector's mix, Marco wasn't afraid to remind people that inspiration could be found in the most bait of sources. Anthemic vocal lines from Derrick May's 'Simply Just a Ventage', a controversially released rework of John Rocca's 'I Want it to be Real', revived a dwindling crowd and Marco brought the set to a climatic close with the final, epic three minutes of Andronicus' house classic, 'Make you Whole'. But the tunes that left a lasting impression were Marco's own reworks. In combination with the *Biology* album, tracks from the Dutch Connoisseur's 2018 *Dance Forever* album knitted together a diverse bag of influences, to create a set which throughout retained an unapologetically 'Young' stamp.

Natalie Layng

Sub Dub: Hessle Audio

On 25th November, Hessle Audio returned to Leeds for one night only. And what a night it was.

A night where all three of the Hessle Audio crew play together in Leeds is something of rarity these days. Each of the former Leeds Uni students have naturally moved onto pastures new since starting the label out of a Hyde Park bedroom all those years ago. Pearson Sound's all-vinyl night, Acetate, is now our only semi-regular fix. It is therefore quite hard to downplay the sense of anticipation felt by myself and many others approaching this event; an anticipation made exceptionally special by the fact that the trio were to play on the night's celebrated Iration Steppas sound system.

Of the three, It was Pangaea who kicked things off on the night. His set generally followed familiar lines, with the now ubiquitous 'Ramos' by Ploy and his own 'Bone Sucka', a quintessential Hessle Audio track, both getting dropped early on. Blawan's crunchy 2011 classic 'Getting Me Down' had never sounded so good.

Next up, Pearson Sound delivered what was the best set of the night, reverting back to a sound more commonly associated with his past alias, Ramadanman. This involved a mix of 90s hardcore and breaks, complete with rave stabs, and, as many predicted, some glorious UK Garage.

By 3AM, it was clear that Ben UFO had been left with the responsibility of facilitating the night's inevitable dark turn. He took to the task with aplomb, drawing for some much needed dubstep in true Sub Dub style. His set crossed genres effortlessly, reaching its eventual apex with a lethal edit of Objekt's 'Lost and Found'.

The venue, Freedom Mills, played an important role in the success of the night, as did the crowd, and was helped by a refined performance from Manchester MC, Chunky, who was faultless on hosting duties. This was an event that more than lived up to expectations. Here's hoping Hessle will soon return.

Sub Dub returns to the West Indian Centre on Feb 8th 2019.

James Dewar

Stretchy Dance Supply



Rounding off first semester, Stretchy Dance Supply graced us with their presence at the wonderful Wharf Chambers, demonstrating their knack for a great party.

You've probably heard the name by now, but Stretchy Dance Supply are a relatively new Leeds collective, having only been on the scene for close to a year. Facilitating a much-needed shift away from the events that Leeds students are becoming accustomed to, the Stretchy crew pride themselves on not taking it all so seriously. As part of a growing number of DIY parties appearing across the Leeds scene, Stretchy have been able to solidify their position by running their unique events alongside hosting regular shows on KMAH Radio and new venture, Social Radio Leeds.

Inspired by Japan's 'Radio Taiso' exercise workout, the visuals on the night – a key feature of the Stretchy parties – added an element of silliness and fun, complimenting the energetic breakbeats, jungle and UK bass which resonated with the exuberant crowd.

Sully performed for the majority of the night, alongside Stretchy's own Breaka and Sourpuss, with junglism running deep as the theme of the event. Benton's breaks track 'Going Down' was an undeniable standout, whilst waves of electro and garage also greeted the ever-anticipatory partygoers.

Upon setting foot in the venue, the atmosphere was fresh and energy was high. The pace of the night did not falter, as the stamina from the DJs kept the crowd dancing literally until the lights came on. The night can perhaps be summed up by an overheard quote: "No one wants to leave though."

Stretchy Dance Supply are definitely ones to watch in 2019 and will return to Wharf Chambers on 15th February to celebrate their 1st birthday.

Olivia Attey

In The Middle With Leeds RAG Fashion Show

The Gryphon Fashion sat down with Fashion Show directors Arabella Bowes and Tamika Hewitt ahead of the event on the 28th February, to discuss preparations for the show and the chosen charities that it will benefit.

How will the 2018 show differ to past RAG fashion shows?

AB: Many people in the LRFS community have felt that the chosen charities can fall to the wayside during the process of creating the show. Both Tam and I have tried to ensure that hasn't happened. We have organised talks from charity reps to both models and committees, have made speeches about the charities at our sold-out Pub Quiz and Launch Party and generally tried to educate the community about the charities: Pancreatic Cancer Fund and Behind Closed Doors. Furthermore, where last year's fashion was sexy and wearable, we have attempted something a little different. This is A NEW DECADE after all! With the exception of IMPRESSIONISM, the outfits on our runway will be works of art in the form of clothing. We are trying to create a lasting, visual impact.

What courses are you both studying?

TH: I (try to) study Economics and Geography at UoL. I don't particularly come from a fashion-related background but I think that has helped me immensely in my role as Director. Last year, I completed a 13-month placement at SAP (a huge software company) in their sales department, and that really helped me sharpen the skills needed for my role in LRFS - coming from a business mindset has allowed me to focus on the fundraising, sponsorship and marketing side of the show. It's in this way that Bella and I are able to work so well together because we have different strengths that complement each other.

AB: I study English Literature at UoL - a course I love because of its very minimal contact hours! Studying English Lit has allowed me to have time alongside my studies during which I am able to get involved with extracurricular things. Becoming the Director of LRFS felt like a very natural progression as I have always wanted to work in fashion. I spent the summer interning at British Vogue which was such a wonderful experience and gave me the confidence I needed to undertake this huge role.

How have you found juggling the role alongside your studies?

TH: I won't lie - it's been a struggle. However, it wouldn't have been possible without Bella. We've been best friends since school so already having such a strong relationship with each other was fundamental. If there is a time when one of us has a lot of work on, the other will step up and take on more responsibilities to relieve stress for the former. This system has worked really well so far, and I'm eternally grateful to Bella for the support she has provided so far!

You've picked two brilliant charities to support this year, how did you arrive at choosing them?

TH: As soon as Bella convinced me to apply alongside her, it was clear that this would be the charity we supported. Our best friend's mother, Lucy Knight, passed away from pancreatic cancer four years ago, and the charity helped their family through an immensely difficult time.

AB: Lucy Knight was an incredible, strong woman whose spirit is definitely reflected in our friend, Stephanie. Their whole family emits nothing but joy and we'd like to give back to a charity who gave so much to them.

TH: We then decided that our second charity should be a local Leeds one, that is also supported by the wider RAG society. Behind Closed Doors is a charity really passionate about supporting those affected by domestic violence in Leeds, helping men and women feel safer and more independent.

Has there been much involvement with local Leeds designers?

TH: Yes of course! We have agreed with our styling team to source garments from Leeds-based designers as much as possible. This is partly for lower postage expenses (allowing us to give more to our charities), but also because a lot of Leeds-based designers attended the

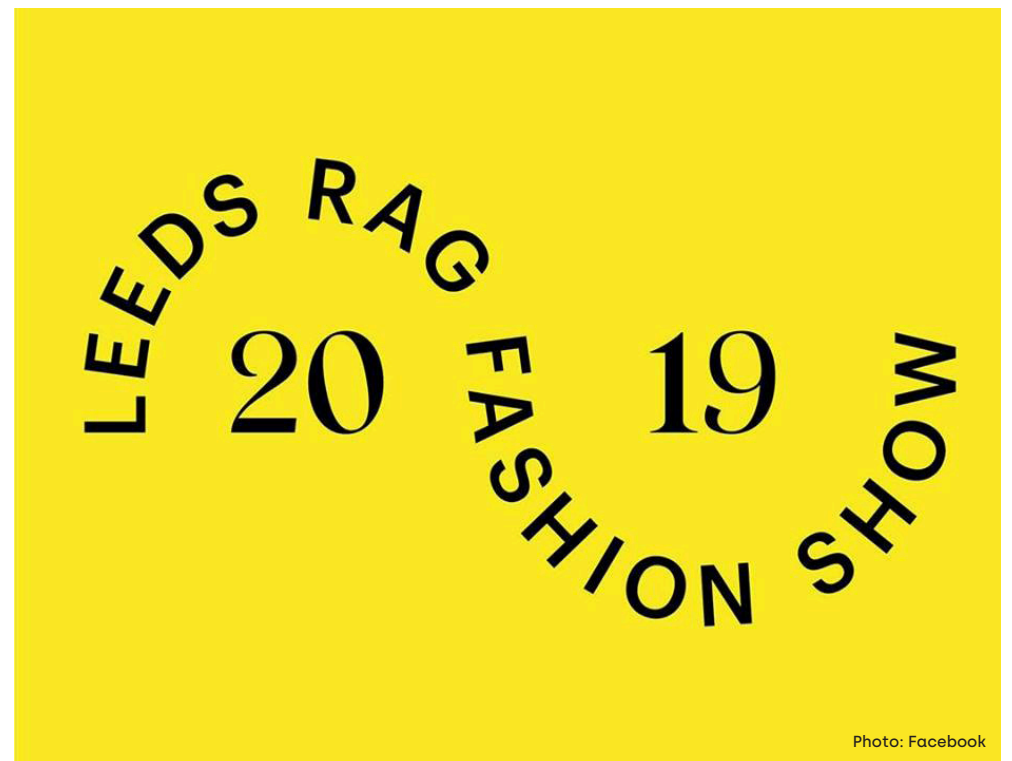


Photo: Facebook

same universities that we do. I think it's absolutely crucial to show our support for those who have been in the same position that we find ourselves in right now. LRFS is such a great platform to give exposure to designers, and opportunities for fashion outside of London can be limited, hence why we are so keen to help those in the city we love.

The show won the Diversity and Inclusivity award last year. How have you furthered upon these values this year, especially with regards to casting?

AB: 2018's show made huge strides with regards to diverse casting and we knew how important it was to continue Nick and John's great work. The show celebrates individuality and provides a platform for those who feel underrepresented on 'traditional' catwalks. We heard from last year's models and committee members how much being in the show had done for their confidence and self-esteem, so this year we have made sure everyone gets an equal opportunity and feels like one family.

In light of the university's pledge to be plastic free by 2023, are you doing anything to promote sustainability in fashion through the show?

AB: In a mission to reduce our impact to the environment we have decided to scrap paper tickets this year. A seemingly small thing, but it is the small things that make

big differences. As Tamika mentioned before, we are focussing on Leeds based designers to reduce our carbon footprint from postage and long drives to collect pieces.

Will there be any more events before the show?

TH: Yes! Our fundraising team have already put on two amazing events and we are keen to expand on that! They are planning at least two socials in February (a Bierkeller karaoke night on the 7th and a cheese and wine night!) and we will also be doing an abseil down the Michael Sadler building in February. If you would like to take part in the abseil to raise money for our charities, please email directorslrfs@gmail.com!

When can we buy tickets?

TH: Main release tickets have been available on FIXR since the 28th January, exactly a month before the date of our show!

Interview by Victoria Copeland

Fashions Fade, Style is Eternal

Isabella Kemp shares her thoughts on the most distinctive fashion silhouettes of the 20th Century.

Christian Dior's New Look (1947)



The 1940s was a time of the upmost class, and this is reflected in its silhouettes. A skirt below the knee kept things demure, not revealing too much. A cinched waist created the desirable hourglass figure, and long gloves topped off this classy ensemble. Gone were the days of worrying about touching a dirty bathroom handle...



Twiggy [1966]

The rise of the supermodel, with those skinny long legs and the flowing, A Line shift dress. We know this silhouette is designed to last: this iconic image of the 60s supermodel will never die out, but will never quite be mastered in the same way.

Joan Collins on Dynasty [1980s]



Dynasty was the chief promoter of the power-dressing silhouette of the 1980s, with brightly coloured outfits sported by its lead, the formidable Joan Collins. She created the image of the power dressing - the woman in the suit who can take you down, while looking fabulous.



Romy and Michelle (1997)

The cool girls at school, who must have been freezing! The 90s were a confusing time for all, fashion-wise, but the classic silhouette of kitten heels and statement short dresses was a win all round. Whether you went for a futuristic metallic style, or a feathered trim, you were always going to fit in in the 90s.

Isabella Kemp

How to Get Ahead in Fashion



Rise and grind: it's a new year, possibly a new you, and definitely the right time to consider the next steps you can take in expanding your LinkedIn skills set. The fashion industry is renowned for being hard to break into, but worry not, we've got you covered – here's a compilation of some of my best tips and tricks:

Know Your Shit Firstly, know which sector you want to go into. There are a multitude of different jobs available in the fashion industry and you can't tailor your CV appropriately unless you have an idea of which role you're after. Start with basics: would you rather be writing or taking photos? Designing or selling designs? Secondly, know the industry. Study it in much the same way you would for an exam – who are the key fashion houses and high fashion magazines? Who controls them? Make sure you have a wide fashion vocabulary; engage in fashion discussion with poignant specificity. Can you name different shapes of toe on a shoe? State the difference between a boat or bardot neckline? Tell an A-line or Square cut hemline apart? Finding all of this out shouldn't take too long; just learn a little bit on a regular basis, don't cram the day before an interview. Preparation is key, and there are many publications available online that can keep you in the know, with one favourite being TagWalk.

Your CV and cover letters are **CV Building** your main shot at winning over future employers, and if it's not up to scratch then don't expect them to bother

with an interview. Low-key commitments such as student fashion journalism gives you an edge, as well as showing your enduring passion and commitment to understanding the industry. Another great way to boost your CV is to take free online courses in fashion. While perhaps not considered as prestigious as a university qualification, they are a quicker and more accessible option, with sites like Coursera and FutureLearn being particularly useful, and only requiring around 20 hours over a 4-week period. You can also keep an eye out for influential industry professionals who have opened up online writing workshops through their personal websites or feeds, such as Farrah Storr, Editor-in-Chief of Cosmopolitan UK, offering workshops through her Instagram live platform. For finding internships, websites like FashionWorkie.com and UK.FashionJobs are useful, though the application process is still tough. Be prepared to commute, as big cities have more opportunities. Ensure you pick a time when this is feasible (e.g. during the lengthy summer break, instead of heading to Amsterdam with your pals).

Networking Attend every event available to you because, ultimately, your relationship with others in the industry plays a huge part in determining your success or failure. You could work your arse off and still not get anywhere if you don't foster a working relationship with others in your field who could help to give you a leg up. Websites like Fatsoma and Eventbrite allow you to see what events are on near you, so be sure to search 'fashion events' on a regular basis. These events can often be free and usually aren't expensive, and are a great way to expose yourself to the fashion world and potential future contacts.

Work Your Way Up You're not going to jump straight into the high-paying, action-packed, glamorous jobs, so take whatever you can get; be it fetching coffees or making photocopies, you've still got your foot in the door. You're making those essential industry contacts, whom you can come back to later on, having already proven your capabilities. Never think that you're above doing a certain job, it may help you later on.

Brand Yourself You are your own brand, and if you want people to buy into you, to invest in you, you need to know what you're about and what you're selling. Pick three words you would want people to describe you as, then cultivate an image of yourself that fits this. Get your social media up to date – it's the number one tool these days for self-branding, and you need to make sure your online image is as good as your real life one. Have an online presence – Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are the essentials. Starting a blog is also a really good way to gain traction, if you have the time.

Have a Range of Skills & a Backup Plan While focusing all your energy on one thing may seem like a good idea, don't put all your eggs in one basket. The fashion industry is constantly changing and highly competitive. Stand out from other candidates by developing skills that are transferable, such as a foreign languages, knowledge on digital marketing, e-commerce, how to build a website, etc. These things will be incredibly useful in the fashion industry, but also give you something to fall back on. Good luck!

Haughty Couture:

Why the elite opulence of Haute Couture makes Paris Couture Week the most revered of all the fashion weeks.



Haute Couture (French for High Fashion) is a patented trademark of the Parisian fashion scene. It is a binary opposite to Prêt-à-Porter (Ready-to-Wear) fashion, and instead rather abstractly focuses on the unwearable. Paris Haute Couture Week holds the monopoly over the entire fashion genre, and each year gives the audience a dose of lavish decadence they had almost forgotten they needed.

featuring statement dresses of sugary tulle with contrasting “meme” slogans emblazoned across the front. “I’m not shy I just don’t like you”, “I am my own muse” and just simply “NO” were a few of the wry phrases embellished onto the excessively girlish pieces, and unsurprisingly their outlandishness has captivated online media outlets across the board.

to exercise their role as artists, visionaries and revolutionaries and not just suppliers for the mass market.

Couture Week SS19 has me reminiscing about previous Couture weeks, most notably SS17. Again, we could rely on Viktor & Rolf to stun and amuse us in equal parts, as they replaced models’ faces with oversized dolls’ heads and again chose to contrast the girlish image with grunge inspired designs and simple Doc Marten boots. Designs from Dior in SS17 were also admirably excessive, with their “more, more, more!” take on the boilersuit: all over high-shine leather and plush white shearling wool largely detailing the collars and sleeves. In fact, the “more, more, more!” effect is something we are given every year, and

we can’t help but bask in its lavishness. An example of this is Alexandre Vauthier’s designs from SS19, a slightly overlooked contender for showstopper of the season. The pieces by Alexndre Vauthier could verywell have been inspired by aristocracy, featuring designs any duchess would be itching to wear – pearl embellishments, heavy velvet fabrics, gold embroidery; they spared no luxurious detail.

Couture Week will always captivate and consume us better than any of the traditional fashion weeks, and though it may not be accessible, or even wearable, fashion junkies will continue to rejoice in its extravagance just as the designers do.

Elicka Ghaharamani



For Couture Week SS19, designers propelled the theme of provocative decadence, brazenly commanding: “admire me, but by no means approach me”. It’s no secret by now that this stance was most outspokenly endorsed by Viktor & Rolf this season, with the design house injecting the week with some millennial attitude,

Viktor & Rolf’s creativity this season has reminded us all of why, in terms of creativity and originality, Couture week continues to annually outshine the staple Autumn/Winter and Spring/Summer fashion weeks. Couture week is continuously excessive and we love it for being so. It is the week where we allow fashion for fashion’s sake; designers are granted their well-deserved right

You Should Be Following...



Charlotte Elizabeth Jones is a 23 year old bag designer who founded her eponymous label Charlotte Elizabeth in 2016 with the help of The Prince’s Trust, for which she is now an ambassador.

After a heart operation at the age of 16 left her unable to complete her A Levels, Charlotte Elizabeth had the idea to create the perfect everyday handbag that her and her sisters were constantly searching for. Only two weeks after completing the Prince’s Trust 4-day Enterprise programme, where she learned how to set up her own business, Charlotte became paralysed, and later diagnosed with postural tachycardia syndrome. Though she lost the ability to use her hands and muscles, her idea stuck with her throughout her paralysis and, with the help of friends and family, her brand was born.

Charlotte’s trademark Bloomsbury bags are made from crafted British leather and range in colour from oxblood, to chestnut brown, and baby pink. Most famously, the Bloomsbury was worn by Meghan Markle in 2018 on her trip to Northern Ireland. Featuring shots of both her and her customers styling the bags with various different outfits, Charlotte’s Instagram is sure to make you add a Bloomsbury to your birthday wish list! Charlotte also recently wrote a piece for the feminist anthology, ‘Feminists Don’t Wear Pink, and Other Lies’, where she expressed how her experience in hospital, and how her position as a young girl meant her health concerns were simply dismissed as anxiety, awakened her feminism.

Izzie Ghaffari-Parker

104 years from opening night, and it's time for renovation at the Hyde Park Picture House



Image: www.thepicturehouseproject.com

Arts editor Katherine Corcoran talks to Ollie Jenkins, Marketing and Communications Manager at the cinema, about how the renovation will look toward both the future and the past.

So, tell me about the birth of the renovation project. Where did it all begin?

It's a really exciting time at the Picture House, this redevelopment has been a long time coming. It all kind of started in 2014: that was the year that we turned 100, and that was the point where we thought, we've made it to 100, that's great, now what? And we thought to try and come and up with a really long-term plan to try and get to 200.

That's quite ambitious. So we looked at the ways this cinema could be here for many more years to come. We started a feasibility study, which was supported by the Friends of Hyde Park, our membership base that includes a mixture of people who have been coming here for many years. Lots of students are members as well. That feasibility project was really important, as it's all about the community and the audience here who love and use the cinema. The study looked at what is possible here, what are the challenges of the building and what we could feasibly do to overcome them. The results were really positive; the study showed that there's loads of potential to do loads of great stuff. So that study was the basis of an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, and demonstrated to them that there's a project here. They agreed a couple of years ago and gave us two years of development funding, which we've just come to the end of, and in that time we fully realized a scheme here. Then they agreed to give us the full amount of £2.3 million to actually make it happen. We've also had funding support from Leeds City Council, and from a few foundations and trusts including Garfield Weston, which has been really key because there's been about £1 million of match funding which we've pretty much got to now. So it's all happening! The work will begin in the autumn. It will take about a year to do everything, and in that time we will be closed, but we'll be doing off-site work across the city. The cinema will re-open in Autumn 2020.

Were the plans for the renovation made by people already employed at the Picture House, or were external agents brought in?

It's been led by Wendy Cook, she's the general manager who's been working here for about fifteen years. She lives and breathes the cinema. Decisions have really been made by her, with oversight from our board.

In terms of the actual design of the new capital work – once we'd got funding we

brought in a design team that consisted of architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, various consultants working on activity, access consultants, people looking at acoustics and others. There's lots and lots of people involved in this scheme – if we're thinking individuals there's more than about twenty. A key one is really the lead architect from Page Park Architects, who are fantastic. They're a practise that are based in Glasgow but they've been doing quite a lot of projects in Leeds recently, including the Playhouse. They've got a really great track record of working with heritage arts venues, so we're please that they've involved. The engineers are BuroHappold, who have a real wealth of knowledge and expertise. It's quite complicated engineering here at the Picture House – there are lots of challenges with auditoriums in terms of things like acoustics and ventilation. Cinema spaces are quite complicated. So to answer your question, we have brought in a lot of independent designers but ultimately the decisions have been made by Picture House staff.

So for anyone who hasn't heard about the project already, what are the main plans? I know there's a second screen coming, which is really exciting.

The scheme's solving a lot of problems, it's going to make the cinema work better in so many ways; one of those being the second screen. It's really difficult to programme a single-screen cinema these days, every year in the UK over 800 films get released theatrically. So, where do we put this second screen?

That would have been my next question!

Exactly. The feasibility study that started the beginning of the renovation was based around the idea that we've got this really big basement under the cinema, and it's just not used for anything. We thought we could potentially put a screen down here, and that was really the starting point. But once we had established there was potential for a second screen, we had to think about how it would be accessed. There's not anywhere internally that you can safely get to the basement, so we would have to look at expanding. As you know, there's a paved area along the Brudenell Road side of the cinema, and we thought that if we introduced an extension on the side of the building, using this space to access the basement, then that would let us extend the foyer at the front of the cinema too. The foyer is a massive issue for us at the moment: when we've got sell-out shows it gets really crammed in there. We want to create a building

where people feel welcome to arrive early and spend more time in the space, or even just come and get a drink here during the daytime without watching a film, and the extension will allow us to do that.

The extension also allows us to solve a fundamental issue that we've got here: access. At the moment, the building is incredibly unfriendly to wheelchair users. That's just a part of its nature as a heritage building, and it's something we've had to deal with. But there's only so long that you can keep making excuses for it. The expansion that we're doing along the side is going to allow us to have disabled toilets, which we don't currently have, and there's some more work going on outside the cinema to allow us ramped access. At the moment, people in wheelchairs have to use the side entrance in the auditorium, which isn't really treating them with dignity. The extension is two storeys; it's going to provide us with a multifunctional space on the first floor. We're a hub for community groups, local residents and students, and that space will allow us to work more with schools and other local groups who need a space to use. When we're open for films, that area will also act as another place for people to sit and have a drink.

And then one thing that is really important is protecting what is here now. Some people may be a little bit nervous around the idea of creating something new on the side, and might ask why we need to change the old building. But what we're doing is essential for making the building both accessible and financially sustainable. Ultimately, if it's not working from a business perspective then that's threatening the whole existence of this place. So many cinemas like this have closed over the years – the Picture House does need to look after itself financially, which this project will help achieve. But the renovation will also protect what's here already and restore incredibly heritage features, like the gas lights. It's amazing that we've still managed to keep them going, but odd fixes aren't enough. We need to properly refurbish them, and create a long term plan for maintaining both the lights and the skills required to look after them.

I expect with a renovation project like this you will have the counter-case asking why does it need to be restored?

Yes, and that's why it is important to look back, romanticize a little bit, and really appreciate the heritage and history here. This is a heritage project, and the renovation is all about looking back on the history of this cinema – protecting and preserving what we have, from the gas lights, to the 35mm projector to the beautiful balcony. But it's also about having a plan to make sure it's here in the future, and the only way you do that is by investing, adapting and making the building work for everybody. I've seen disabled customers who've had to use the toilet, and they've had to crawl up the steps to get there. Seeing that, even if just the once, and straight away you know you have to do something. In an ideal world this little time capsule would just stay as is, but the only way it's survived is because it has adapted and moved with the times.

I like the idea of the 'time capsule', that's a good way to put it. A big part of the Picture House's appeal is that it's authentic and rough around the edges, how will you ensure that maintaining the old doesn't become gimmicky and fake?

That's a really good point. We've tried, if ever creating anything new, not to make it look fake. Some people said they thought the adaptation and extension should look like the existing building, and that's not really something we wanted to do as it would mean creating a faux-Edwardian extension. It would be disrespectful, insincere, and just false really. We want the new adaptations to feel contemporary, but also respectful and complimentary to the old building. So there won't be any pretending that new stuff is old.

But what is old, from the 1914 era, we will be preserving. In terms of the existing auditorium, it's very much a soft-touch refurbishment. There's peeling plaster, damp and chipped paintwork, and the project is just about renewing what's already there. The seats will probably be replaced. People always say 'don't replace the original seats', but these seats are from 2005! We'll replace them because they're getting tired, we can't repair them because the parts don't exist. The replacement will be a like-for-like and they'll probably red again ... they're not going to be leather couches. Throughout this whole building there's things people are assume are 100 years old, like the big arches round the screen. The proscenium arches were put in in the 50s or 60s; the chandeliers are from another cinema; the clock is from another cinema: throughout the building there has been layering

of history.

What kinds of film do you hope that the new screen will allow you to show?

To give a short answer, the second screen will allow us to do what we're already doing but do it even better.

It will mean that films that are really popular, but also fall into that category of independence, can be shown for longer. So at the moment *The Favourite* is doing incredibly well – it's fantastic to see that film do so well with audiences – and whilst we've kept it on as long as we can, there comes a point where we have to start bringing in other stuff. Having two screens will mean that we can show popular, independent titles for even longer. It makes sense for the audiences who want to see these films, and it makes sense for us: popular films allow us to subsidise elements of our program that are less profitable, letting us show more arthouse and world cinema that often does need some subsidy.

Will there be a way for students to get involved in the plans, the reopening, or the off-site events happening in the mean time?

So we have been consulting with lots of people, and that has included people from student unions. We've also showed the plans to students at freshers' fairs, and we've organised a few sessions with students as well. The student perspective, opinion and voice has definitely been heard and incorporated into our plans, and that will continue to happen.

The next stage of consultation is programming. We are starting to set up consultation groups with various audience demographics, to get their input on how we can grow those audiences. For example, we've got a group for 16-18 year olds, as that's an age range that's not really visiting the cinema that much, and we're working out what we could change about the program, the way we market and the way we talk to people in order to grow that audience. We will be looking to do something similar with a slightly older group, a university age group, and it would be great to work with the Gryphon and the student union to start that process happening. So if anyone is interested in being involved in shaping the future program for a student age bracket, we would be really interested to hear from you.

The second screen really is going to try a lot more new things; things like new ticket deals too. I'm quite keen to look at a massively reduced price for all young people, whether university students or not. I've had questions from people asking whether the ticket prices might rise after the reopening, and actually for young people – including students – I think the opposite is going to happen. I can't say for sure yet, but it should be the same price, or even cheaper, for you to come here.

I feel like I've committed now. It's going to be in print, like Nick Clegg's pledges.

The final question I have regards students starting at Leeds in September this year, whilst the Picture House is closed. Where do you recommend they go to see great film whilst the refurbishment takes place?

There's loads of other great cinema activity going on in the city, and a really rich array of community screenings. Scalarama is community of DIY cinemas, and they have a festival every September which you'd probably catch the back end of during freshers' week. That's a really great way to discover these non-traditional spaces that are doing screenings. There's the Reliance in town, Films at Heart in Headingley and Oakwood Cinema. There's so many cool things going on. In terms of more regular stuff, there's also the Cottage Road cinema, which is fantastic – that's an independent cinema that's slightly older than us. Their program is a bit more mainstream than ours, but that's great. If you want to watch *Star Wars*, you should consider going there as much as you would consider the multiplex. So that's the diplomatic answer. But the other thing I want to say is that we will still be doing screenings in our closure period. We're still deciding where, and how many, but within the next few months we'll have that confirmed. We'll be running an off-site program of screenings in other venues, which are potentially quite close to the students. I'm not going to say any more, but there's a little nugget of what's to come.

Katherine Corcoran

Image: www.thepicturehouseproject.com

**Explore an interactive model of plans for the Picture House at:
www.thepicturehouseproject.com**

A Firm Favourite



Yorgos Lanthimos' *The Favourite* is a period comedy-drama that's luxurious and ludicrous. Set in 18th century England, the movie follows the power struggle between Lady Marlborough (Rachel Weisz - vicious and tender in equal measure), newcomer Abigail (Emma Stone - a wolf dressed in lamb's clothing), and Queen Anne (Olivia Colman - the zany and frail matriarch).

With its delightful cast clad in decadent outfits amidst a backdrop of sumptuous sets befitting the ostentatious fashions of the 18th century, the plot of *The Favourite* is driven by constant subterfuge, backstabbing and manipulation. Arriving as an unassuming, doe-eyed girl who's been dealt a hard lot in life, Abigail works her way up from a kitchen maid - often the butt of harmful practical jokes at the hands of the other staff. She soon reigns as a cunning political player who threatens to usurp Lady Marlborough, the Queen's closest friend and most trusted advisor.

The film thrives on the accomplishment of its three principal actors. As the dangerously calculated Lady

Marlborough, Weisz radiates an unapologetic dominance of those around her, throwing an array of looks that hold more power than some actors achieve throughout their entire career. Stone successfully captures the precarious balance of Abigail's faux-innocence, damaged humanity and merciless cunning. The jewel in the crown, however, is Olivia Colman. Her embodiment of Queen Anne is one of the great accomplishments of the film; she demonstrates impressive control over the nuances of her character, carving a flawless portrayal of a dysfunctional queen trapped and isolated by her own neuroses, grief, self-pity and ailing body.

It's refreshing, also, that the film centres on three powerhouse historical women, given that we live in a society where women have been largely written out of history, and where women in film are often accessories to male protagonists. The court of Queen Anne subsists almost entirely on splendid, artificial displays of wealth and the back-and-forth struggle to maintain the upper hand in influencing one another. The palace is nothing short of a viper's den, and it's this unstable environment

that keeps *The Favourite* taut with tension as to whose shortcomings will trip them up first.

Lanthimos throws the absurdity of the nobility into stark relief. These upstanding members of society - politicians, government officials, owners of land and others' livelihood - spend their free time racing ducks and throwing rotten fruit at each other while naked. Perhaps there is something to say for the relevance even today of this depiction of the wealthy and the consequences of excess, mediated safely through the barrier of a distant past.

The overall impression *The Favourite* leaves with its viewer is a rather sombre one: between the pomp and glamour lies a startling and troubling portrayal of the motives of those with power and those who are vulnerable, as well as the inherent cruelty that can reside within people. Don't let the weight of some of these themes deter you from seeing it in cinemas, though - it may well prove to be one of the best films this year.

Georgie Wardall

2019: Films to Watch out For

One big issue Hollywood has been facing in recent years is a lack of originality; remakes, reboots and sequels plaster cinema programmes, and 2019's upcoming year of film seems all the same. Disney is spewing out not one, not two, but three dry and meaningless live-action remakes (*The Lion King*, *Aladdin* & *Dumbo*). Fortunately though, amidst a sea of the same-old money grabs, there can be found some very exciting and promising films to look forward to. And even more fortunately still, I've picked out for you the nine films which you definitely don't want to miss. Much uncertainty may lie ahead this year, but what is certain is that some great movies will be coming to a theatre near you.



Us

Image: IMDB

Following on from his spectacular debut *Get Out*, writer-director Jordan Peele returns with the incredibly chilling looking *Us*. The film follows a family visiting a beach house to spend time with friends, but the trip is quickly disturbed when unwelcome visitors arrive at the house. Peele seems to be taking an even darker turn here, delving deep into the horror genre and promising a film full of shocks and screams. I'd recommend going into this one without watching the trailer for a fully terrifying experience. In cinemas 15th March.



Avengers: Endgame

It's finally here. The Deathly Hallows of the Marvel universe, *Avengers: Endgame*, sees a culmination of twenty films over eleven years come together in one grand finale. It goes without saying that this is an unmissable film for any comic book fan, and this may also see the end of an era for many fans that have grown up with and subsequently outgrown the genre. With the Russo brothers once again taking on the directorial position, this is sure to be the biggest film of the summer. In cinemas 26th April.



The Torture Report

In recent time, America has seen a resurgence in the debate over the controversial interrogation methods used by the CIA, most notably within the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, and *The Torture Report* focuses on just this. From the writing power of Scott Z. Burns (*The Bourne Ultimatum*, *Contagion*), the film will follow Adam Scott and Jon Hamm as CIA agents partaking in various torture methods. It is sure to be a powerful and emotive drama piece. In cinemas summer 2019.



Joker

Image: Medium

After the critical failure of *Suicide Squad*, Jared Leto's portrayal of the Joker became infamous among fans of the DC films. Compared to Nolan's trilogy, Leto simply could not live up to the standard set by Heath Ledger in *The Dark Knight*. 2019, however, sees Joaquin Phoenix take on the challenge in *Joker*, which tells the origin story of the psychopathic criminal. The film seems to be approaching the character with a more reserved and dramatic tone than has been used previously, and hopes to bring a spark of excitement back into the beloved villain. In cinemas 4th October.



The Irishman

Image: Independent

Martin Scorsese is back, and he's doing what he does best: gang-crime thrillers. Joined with a star-studded cast (as always), including Robert De Niro, Al Pacino and Harvey Keitel, *The Irishman* follows Frank Sheeran, a gangster trying to maintain ties to the powerful Bufalino crime family. In what seems to be becoming a more normalised and mainstream approach, this film will be coming straight to Netflix, and we may see many other big names in directing begin to follow suit. On Netflix 2019.



Toy Story 4

Image: Hollywood Reporter

Alright, alright! I know I was complaining about sequels but, come on, when has a Toy Story film ever let you down? In this (probably) final adventure, Woody and the gang are joined by a new toy called Forky as they embark on a road trip across America. With the entire original cast back once more, this is sure to be one to get the tears flowing and the noses blowing. *Toy Story 4* will grant one of those rare and magical moments where the cinema will be filled with people of all ages, for what might be one of the last times. In cinemas 21st June.



Once Upon a Time in Hollywood

Image: IMDB

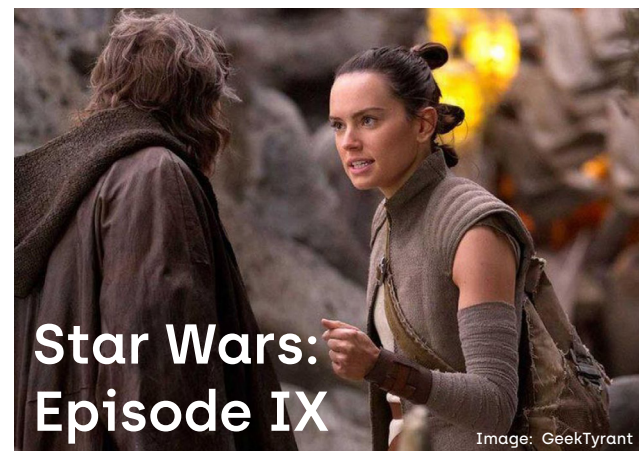
In what is set to be his penultimate film before retirement, Quentin Tarantino is once again blessing our screens, this time with *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*. The film follows a TV actor and his stunt double who embark on a mission to make a name in the film industry, set amongst the Charles Manson murders of the late 1960s. With an unbeatable cast including Leonardo DiCaprio, Margot Robbie, Brad Pitt and Kurt Russell, Tarantino is ready to deliver yet another lesson in filmmaking. In cinemas 26th July.



Rocketman

Image: Films Boutique

After the massive success of the Queen biopic *Bohemian Rhapsody*, the genre continues to shine as Elton John takes centre stage. Taron Egerton is taking on the bold challenge of portraying the charismatic pop star, and if he can do anywhere near as good a job as Rami Malek did as Freddie Mercury, then we are surely in for an Oscar-winning performance. This one could make or break whether there are more films of the type to come. In cinemas 24th May.



Star Wars: Episode IX

Image: GeekTyrant

Last but certainly not least, 2019 is set to finish with a bang, with the final instalment in the most recent Star Wars trilogy. J.J. Abrams will be returning to the directing spot, and whilst little so far is known about the film, we do know that it will finally reveal the many secrets and questions that have been puzzled over by fans of the series since Episode VII was first released. Lightsabers at the ready. In cinemas late 2019.

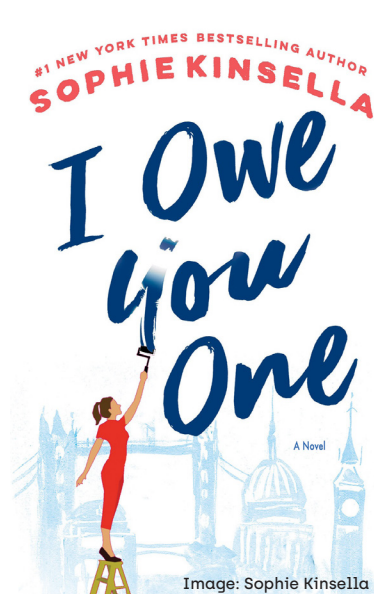
Rory Yeates Riddoch

Hot Off the Press

The New Year amongst book lovers provides the perfect excuse to delve into a tantalising selection of new releases in 2019.

With titles coming from authors old and new, revered and promising, there's bound to be a book waiting to become your new favourite.

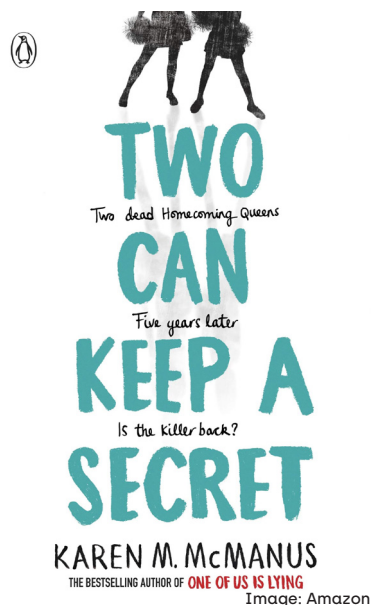
For romance lovers...



I Owe You One
Sophie Kinsella

Fixie Farr's life starts to change when, luck would have it, she receives an IOU from investment banker Sebastian after saving his laptop in a coffee shop. After Fixie cashes it in to get her childhood crush Ryan a job, Fixie and Sebastian only get more and more involved with each other until Fixie is left choosing between the life she feels a duty to maintain and the one she really wants. (February 5)

For the YA lovers...



Two Can Keep a Secret
Karen McManus

From the author of the hugely-popular *One of Us Is Lying* comes the high school thriller *Two Can Keep a Secret*. Ellery is forced to move to small town Echo Ridge to live with her grandmother, where her aunt went missing and a homecoming queen was murdered. When another girl goes missing Ellery must unravel the mystery surrounding the town before the body count goes up. (January 10)

For thriller lovers...



The Girl Before You
Nicola Rayner

For fans of *Gone Girl* and *The Girl on the Train* comes Nicola Rayner's *The Girl Before You*. Alice, wife of George Bell, MP, TV personality and notorious ladies' man, is obsessed with the women of her husband's past. When she sees one that looks like Ruth, the believed-missing ex-girlfriend of George, Alice becomes embroiled in the mystery of what really happened to Ruth, and how much George really knows about it. (July 11)

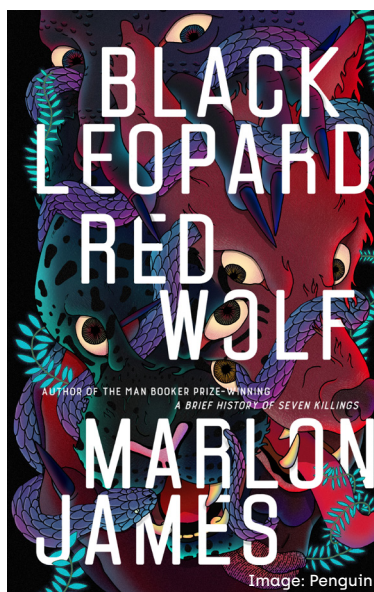
For sci-fi lovers...



Machines Like Me
Ian McEwan

When Charlie comes into money, he spends it on a synthetic human called Adam. After co-designing it with Miranda, a student Charlie is in love with and who harbours a dark secret of her own, a love-triangle forms, leaving the three to confront a fundamental moral dilemma. A sure-fire crowd-pleaser for fans of Channel 4's *Humans* and Netflix's *Black Mirror*, *Machines Like Me* promises demanding existential questions shrouded by suspenseful sci-fi. (April 18)

For fantasy lovers...



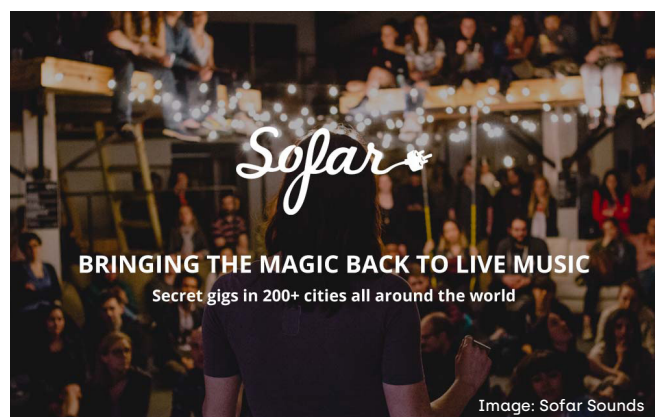
Black Leopard, Red Wolf
Marlon James

Black Leopard, Red Wolf takes place in a world where giants, witches, magic and shape-shifters all exist and where Tracker, a hunter, is tasked with finding a lost boy. In a simultaneously modern and ancient world, inspired by the history and mythology of Africa, Tracker is faced with relentless obstacles and unanswered questions. If James' artistic scope and vision aren't enough to entice you, his credentials certainly are: his *A Brief History of Seven Killings* won the prestigious Man Booker Prize in 2015. (February 28)

Daring Dates for Valentines Day

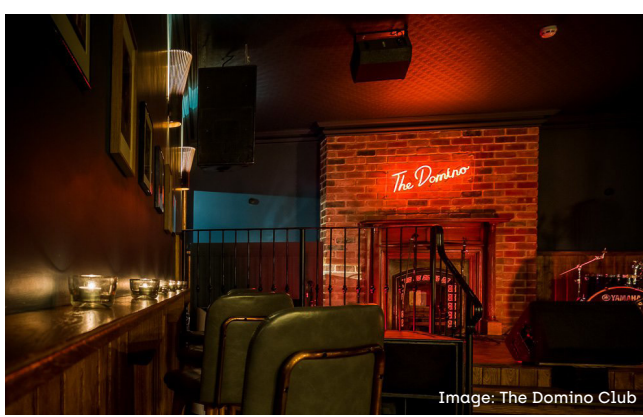
Valentines Day is less than a month away and that means it's time to up the game and pull out all the stops to create a beautifully romantic night for your special someone. Or does it?

What comes to mind when you think of Valentines Day? It's often all about flowers, chocolates, and romantic candlelit dinners. Now, we're students so most couples will probably cook a meal together at worst or go down to town for meal at best, but it'll likely be pretty standard stuff. So, what if this year you went for something different, something exciting? You can go for a meal any night, so why not make 2019 the year where you marked Valentines Day with something special, and not conventional. Couples of Leeds, here are five alternative Valentines date ideas for this year:



Sofar Sounds

These intimate gigs are a bit of a gamble as you have to sign up to a night (in a city of your choice) without knowing who will be playing or where it will be. This information is sent out just 24 hours before, but that's all part of the excitement. Each experience is different but it is often a magical experience. This is without a doubt a must for any couples who enjoy surprises and music!



Domino Jazz Bar

The Domino Jazz Bar in Leeds is a real hidden gem. It has performers each week who provide hours of entertainment in this underground speakeasy. It screams quirky from the minute you arrive, with the entrance at the back of a working barbers shop. It also has a romantic atmosphere with low lighting and candlelit tables, what more could you want for a special evening?



Escape Room

An escape room doesn't exactly scream romance, but it is a great way to spend some quality time together. Essentially, you have to work together to solve clues and break out of the escape room within an hour. It is such great fun and definitely an alternative way to spend Valentines Day.



Ilkley Moor

Being in the city is great, there's always a buzz and everything from shops to cinemas are right on your doorstep. But sometimes it's nice to get away, and there's no better place to go than Ilkley Moor. Taking less than an hour from Burley Station (in Headingley) to Ilkley Station, this gorgeous expanse of moorland is both breathtaking and invigorating. You'll feel as though you have been transported to a different planet! February isn't known for having the best weather, so if it's chilly, you'll have a great reason to cuddle up in the fabulous country pub nearby!



Hyde Park Picture House

It may seem an obvious choice, but that's because those of us lucky enough to live in Hyde Park would surely be mad not to go to Hyde Park Picture House for a date. This gorgeous cinema is a real treat and only £5 for students, so it shouldn't require dipping into your Daring Dates for Valentines Day overdraft. It is also just around the corner from East Village, which is a brilliant cocktail bar and perfect for a pre- or post-film drink.

So, whether it's a high-octane hour of putting your wits to the test in an escape room, or an active day out exploring Ilkley, there are plenty of alternative ways to treat your partner this Valentines.

Brooklyn Nine-Nine Survives!

How the Power of Fans Revived the Hit Police Sitcom



In the modern age, the success of a show is so much more than just the official ratings.

It's the engagement on social media that builds the popularity and discourse surrounding a show. 'Fandoms' have often been dismissed as teenage hysteria, when the focus should be on building a reliable fandom with passionate and dedicated viewers. As the use of social media grows, the platforms created for dedicated fans have increased. Twitter, Tumblr, and a multitude of fanfiction outlets have increased fandom culture. Take the Harry Potter fandom, which has an incredibly diverse and loyal fanbase that keeps the franchise relevant decades after the first book was published. Marketing has been geared towards fans instead of viewers and marketing strategies are increasingly incorporating social media platforms.

The importance of fan interaction can be seen in the instances when fan outcry has caused a show to be renewed after cancellation. It is arguable that no other show cancellation has caused as much controversy as *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, the American police sitcom created by Dan Goor and Michael Schur, the producers behind *Parks and Recreation* and *The Office* (US).

The series follows the police detectives of Brooklyn's 99th Precinct. Jake Peralta (Andy Samberg) is one of the best detectives in the precinct but his immature ways find him frequently in conflict with his commanding officer Captain Raymond Holt (Andre Braugher). The ensemble includes Rosa Diaz (Stephanie Beatriz), Terry Jeffords (Terry Crews), Amy Santiago (Melissa Fumero), Charles Boyle (Joe Lo Truglio), Gina Linetti (Chelsea Peretti), Michael Hitchcock (Dirk Blocker) and Norm Scully (Joel McKinnon).

"Besides the obvious point of bringing in views, fanbases offer a level of intricacy to the structure of television"

The show has received generally favourable reviews and has been praised for its diverse cast and for tackling serious topics such as homophobia and racism with humour and sensitivity. With a 97% rating on review-aggregation website Rotten Tomatoes, it was a shock to fans when Fox revealed that the comedy was not being picked up for another season. Fans immediately took to social media to start a campaign to save the show.

In less than 48 hours after being cancelled, the show was revived and picked up by NBC - who had originally sold the rights to the show to Fox before it aired in 2013. This quick turnaround left fans rejoicing and left many questioning Fox's decision: why would Fox choose to cancel *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* when the show was doing so well and had

such a loyal fan base? Fox have since explained their decision in a press conference stating that *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* has "a phenomenal cast" but "ultimately felt like we didn't have the exact right place to schedule it this year. It performed best in our Sunday night lineup. We wanted to give *Bob's Burgers* an opportunity to have a plum time period and really grow."

Whilst some have argued the cancellation and renewal of the show could have been an elaborate pre-planned stunt between Fox and NBC, due to its surprisingly fast resolve, it is undeniable that the fans of the show had a profound impact on the show's future. Through social media, *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* was trending, and the news of the cancellation sparked thousands of outraged tweets and gifs. The cast were overwhelmed by an influx of support from loyal viewers, which highlights just how important having a loyal fanbase is to a show.

Besides the obvious point of bringing in views, fanbases offer a level of intricacy to the structure of television. Creating Twitter tags like #SaveB99 and creating online petitions for other networks to pick up the TV show, brought a level of media attention that only increased traction for the show as fans eagerly await the sixth season.

Summarised by NBC's head of entertainment, Robert Greenblatt states, "...we're all thrilled that one of the smartest, funniest and best cast comedies in a long time will take its place in our comedy line-up. I think I speak for everyone when I say, here's to the Nine-Nine!"

Adina Rees

Star Trek: Discovery Season 2



Star Trek: Discovery seems to have gained its footing after a rocky first season that left many fans disappointed at the latest iteration of the Star Trek franchise. The show returns for its second season with new and familiar faces, and a level of confidence that was missing in the previous season.

Following the mission of the USS Discovery and Science Officer Michael Burnham (Sonequa Martin-Green) after the end of the Klingon War, this season takes place directly from the closing of the first, when the USS Discovery receives a distress signal from the USS Enterprise. This new development teased the return of characters

familiar to the Star Trek fanbase, and it delivered in the form of Captain Christopher Pike (Anson Mount) - who takes command of the Discovery to find out about the appearance of mysterious red beacons spread across the universe.

Along with Captain Pike, the appearance, or rather disappearance, of Spock (Ethan Peck) holds the key to this new mystery and his complicated relationship to foster sister Michael Burnham gives the audience a glimpse into his childhood on Vulcan. The presence of these two iconic figures helps cement this season in the tone and themes of past Star Trek shows, which the first season

struggled to do. Along with the addition of new characters, this season also explores the existing relationships on the Discovery with less of the awkwardness of the first season. Everyone seems to have settled into their characters and it shows in the confidence of their interactions and dialogue that feels more organic. The show now also possesses humour, which is a breath of fresh air after how seriously the show took itself in the first season.

Overall, the start of season 2 is incredibly promising, with a strong plot, good characterisation, and a self-awareness that gives me hope for the future of the Star Trek franchise.

Jade Verbick

You

The Controversial Psychological Thriller That Has Everyone Talking.

How far would you go for 'love'? Blurring the lines between love and obsession, *You* explores an unhealthy relationship that quickly spirals into something far more sinister. The series follows seemingly attentive and kind Joe Goldberg (Penn Badgley), a bookstore manager at Mooney's, who becomes increasingly obsessed with NYU graduate student and aspiring writer Guinevere Beck (Elizabeth Lail), after a chance meeting at his workplace. Based on the Caroline Kepnes novel of the same name, *You* is an addictive thriller that highlights the dangers of manipulative partners and how social media can pose a threat in our lives.



The show is narrated by Joe, so we get to experience first-hand just how disturbing his perspective is as he tries to justify and rationalise his possessive, manipulative nature. He is so warped in his delusions that he truly believes he is just protecting Beck and not being an intense stalker. Penn Badgley is a brilliant casting choice for Joe as he is enigmatic enough to portray Joe's horrifying characteristics but alluring enough to make us see why Beck has no reason to doubt his persona.

"'You' cleverly provides a window into the mind of a killer and highlights how dangerous male entitlement can be"

Some people, though, have really misinterpreted the point the series makes and have excused Joe's actions as romantic, or worse, labelled Beck as 'deserving' of her experiences. What makes the series so uncomfortable is

that Joe's character has this effect on people. *You* poses as a stark reminder that some of the most evil people are incredibly intelligent and high-functioning. Serial killers are often calculated and alluring; they are able to blend in among us due to their enigmatic personalities which is what causes them to be so powerful.

Never falling into its romanticism enough to lose sight of Joe's toxicity and narcissism, *You* cleverly provides a window into the mind of a killer and highlights how dangerous male entitlement can be. *You* manages to blend bizarre concepts, such as Joe having access to a conveniently placed sound-proof glass vault, whilst remaining realistic enough to leave you wondering who you can trust – and whether you should amend the privacy settings on your social media accounts.

Adina Rees

Time We All Woke Up

Charley explores the real reason that advertisers are using public debates in their marketing campaigns, and whether it's for anyone's gain but their owns.



The Gillette ad, much like the Iceland palm oil ad, is bad and deserves contempt.

Admittedly, perhaps not the sort of contempt it has received from the men who felt targeted by it, but this low level of largely performative awareness raising should not be heralded as a significant step forward. It's a cynical attempt to generate views, nothing more. This cynicism

isn't inherently bad, at least in the context of advertising, but it becomes something more sinister when it hides deeply problematic business practices.

Make no mistake here, the advert is nothing more than the recognition by Gillette that they can shave their advertising budget dramatically if they manage to produce the kind of advert guaranteed to be widely shared and discussed. This tactic was employed with devastating effectiveness by Iceland, when they released their palm oil advert on social media to much fanfare.

Reliance on free advertising is not the only thing that Iceland and Gillette have in common, though. Both are using woke advertising to disguise an almost impressive level of contempt for their customers.

Iceland's hypocrisy is perhaps the most egregious.

In a revelation that should come as a surprise to nobody, Iceland have failed to honour their pledge to stop selling own brand products that contain palm oil. As explained by the son of their founder, it no longer looks to be possible for them because it has become too expensive. In a number of cases in which Iceland has taken action, they

have simply dropped their name from the branding rather than actually taking steps to reduce the amount of palm oil based products that they sell.

As for Gillette, their own performative wokeness is pretty brazen, too. Not only is their overall message somewhat lacking in the power and clarity that any serious discussion of toxic masculinity needs, it's blatantly hypocritical. Gillette are one of many brands accused of levying a 'pink tax', charging women extra for almost identical 'female' versions of products.

This is the beating heart of performative wokeness. Misleading the public, and then relying on them not to notice as you get away with offensively cynical attempts to extract every last penny from them.

So, woke capitalism isn't necessarily bad. At least, it isn't necessarily any worse than plain old capitalism.

The problems begin to arise when businesses hide shady business practices and unethical techniques behind a thin veneer of social awareness. Adverts starting conversations can absolutely be a good thing, but not when there's such a big difference between reality and their pious rhetoric.

Charley Weldrick

Should I Stay Or Should I Go?

Following first semester, Georgie discusses feelings of belonging whilst at University.



Going home, wherever that may be.

For some, it is wonderful. A thing to be excited about: seeing loved ones, pets, old friends.

For others it can be a weird and confusing time. At university you learn to fend for yourself, become independent and form patterns and routines based around your new freedom. Eleven weeks later, going home, you regress back to being angsty and fifteen again.

The temporary state that is uni means that, when you add up the days, what feels like most of the year is in fact, only a few weeks longer than the time we get between semesters. University is supposed to be the best years of our lives, right? Mostly it is, or at least it has the potential to be, amidst deadlines, word counts and the constantly looming threat of exam seasons.

You make new friends, find a new city, fall in love, become broken-hearted; all the rites of passage in just three short years. And then you go home, wherever that may be, and everything changes.

Sure, it's nice to see your family, reunite with your dog, and walk down the streets which, once upon a time, were part of an everyday routine. Sometimes, you can even suffer the illusion of feeling like nothing has changed.

Granted, it is a welcome break sometimes, not having to do your own washing up or having to take down posters in case you have a room inspection. You're at a juxtaposition: a temporal state of comfort that was once so familiar, whilst experiencing life out of a suitcase.

Some people, due to occurrences out of their control, may not have a permanent base out of university,

cannot afford the flights back home, or may not have a welcoming environment to return to. They make uni their home, at least for the next three years.

For some, being away from home is the hardest thing they've ever had to do, and I'm sure it's safe to say that at one point or another we've all felt that longing for familiarity tug on our heart strings. Being at uni is great, a thoroughly enjoyable, albeit challenging, experience. But where home is can feel ambiguous and far away.

For some, it feels like they have two homes - one in Leeds and one where their height is still pencilled on the kitchen wall from the day they could first stand up. For some, myself included, it can feel like you have neither. You are too small-town for a big city, but now the streets you once wandered feel so tiny in comparison to how they used to.

University is hard, scary and somewhat foreboding, and sometimes it feels like too much too soon and all you long for is your mum's cooking and the warm familiarity of your old bed. However, I know that, if given the chance to remake my decision to come here, there would be nothing on this earth that could persuade me to make a different choice.

Playlists, Pints & Planning Ahead: Exam Reflection

Andri reflects on exam stress now that January is over, providing handy tips for May.



Whether you had a mountain of assignments due, heavily weighted exams or maybe were lucky enough to have both, January has been a stressful month for most of us. Particularly as we had to juggle this huge work-load with having a restful and sociable break over Christmas.

Now that the hell period is over (and you may have already celebrated with numerous pints and cheeky G&Ts), it's probably a good time to reflect on our stress-management to better prepare ourselves for what's to come in May...

Here are my tips for when exam season rolls around:

1. Organisation

There's nothing worse than realising you've run out of time, so it's no wonder that "organisation is the key to success" is such a commonly used phrase. Organisation is not my strong point so I've found that writing out as much as I can on my phone calendar really helps me manage work and personal responsibilities. In the run-up to exams/deadlines, I'd recommend writing out a timeline of when you plan to get tasks completed to keep you on track to reach your overall goals.

2. Finding what revision strategy works for you

This one is more personal and requires a bit of trial of error as everyone has different learning styles. But finding your ideal revision strategy can make all the difference when it comes to exams. You'll find that your revision will become more effective in terms of retaining information when you have a strategy which works for you, so you'll feel more motivated to keep working.

3. Discovering your ideal work environment

Finding your ideal work environment is crucial because it can have a huge effect on your mood, focus and quality of work. You might find that working amongst loads of other students in Laidlaw Library motivates you. If that's too daunting, a private booth or a quiet study area in your school building might suit you more. Whichever one it is, don't feel pressured to just follow your friends out of routine because you can always meet up with them for lunch or a coffee break.

4. Identify your stress reliever

This is probably the most important point, because even after following the above steps, all of us inevitably feel stressed at one point or another, so finding how to deal with all those emotions can impact your quality of work and, more importantly, your mental health. I personally find that working out in the morning and listening to a lo-fi beats playlist before bed helps me feel calmer with more mental clarity, so find what works for you and try your best to stick to it - you'll be reaping the benefits later.

Andri Neocleous

New Year Same Fads: Diet Culture



Tasha addresses diet culture, and why wrong intentions should be left in 2018.

We're (finally) at the end of January and as the New Year swung around the old tradition of making unrealistic and self-indulgent New Year's resolutions came with it.

While it is by no means a bad thing to wish to improve yourself or your life, breaking New Year's resolutions seems to be just as much a tradition and expectation as making them is, and they are therefore always linked to failure. By their very nature, we are telling ourselves that we are not good enough. This, coupled with the fact that it feels like we are expected to fail, is anything but constructive.

Feelings of failure and consequently low self esteem are not the mindset or condition in which to try and improve yourself - this is particularly important and even dangerous in relation to dieting and diet culture in January. If the aim of a New Year's Resolution is to improve yourself (and if we tell ourselves that the way we are going to do that this time is to finally get abs or to lose ten pounds), then we continue to tie our self-worth and successes to our appearance.

The very nature of a fad diet is that it will end, and when it does all we have done is failed. We know that it is impossible to find a space in a gym car park in January, but by December it's only filled with tumble weed. The mind set of "I'll start in January", or "I'll start on Monday" stops us from achieving what we want when we want.

It is important then to focus on the intention of our resolutions. For example, do you want to be healthier for yourself and to improve your life as you do at any other time of year, or do you perhaps feel that you don't fit into some ideal beauty standard and get swept up in the 'New Year, New Me' craze?

Getting fit or aiming to do something that will make you or others happier is great but by buying into the belief that what is finally going to push us into doing it is the beginning of a new month, is ultimately unhealthy.

Tasha Austen

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NiKNaK (DJ set)

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TICKETS £5 (adv)

Is the Latest Gillette Advert ‘Woke-Washing’ or Shaving Toxic Masculinity?

Woke-Washing

Alexander Gibbon

With the shutdown of US government at the hands of the most puerile and incompetent leader the free world has ever seen, and a different famous face being accused or charged with sexual assault against women on a weekly basis, it seems the well of principled male role models has dried up. But fear not, corporate giants ‘Gillette’ are here to set the world’s men back on track.

But how can the big businesses, so malevolent and money-grabbing, suddenly become the moral compass of our society?

Take last week’s contentious advert titled “The Best Men Can Be” for example. Causing much furore in the days after its release, the advert dissects the male identity and exposes the damaging expectations placed on young boys today. It tackles issues such as sexism in the media, workplace misogyny and the #MeToo movement. Overall it all seems pretty on the nose.

However, I can’t help but notice how Gillette’s sudden and bodacious display of moral integrity has coincided with its control of the razor market dropping from 70% to under 50% in the last decade.

“73% of millennials are likely to pay more for socially-conscious products, corporations have wised up to profits to be had simply by playing the hero. Clearly, it’s lucrative to be liberal”

Don’t get me wrong, I think the advert is sending out the right message; the problem of rigid gender expectations is suffocating young men and urgently needs to be addressed. But to me, this mawkish marketing ploy is a perfect example of “woke-washing”: when companies co-opt social justice movements for nothing more than a capitalist gambit. In a society where 73% of millennials are likely to pay more for socially-conscious products, corporations have wised up to profits to

be had simply by playing the hero. Clearly, it’s lucrative to be liberal.

Except, behind these false pretences of virtue is usually a vacuum where a company’s moral heart should be. Cosmetics brand CoverGirl was lauded for its #GirlsCan campaign featuring stars like Ellen DeGeneres encouraging young women to “just be yourself and you can”. Yet, this is a brand that has spent 50 years telling women that “your personality needs layers, your face doesn’t”. To be clear, a love for makeup and a passion for feminism are by no means mutually exclusive traits, but this dramatic switch from dictators of the female appearance to purveyors of shallow “girl power” is evidence of a business bandwagoning onto the feminism trend for nothing more than capital gain.

What’s more, this behaviour isn’t just confined to screens and billboards. Once a defiant and nonconformist social and political protest for gay rights, LGBTQ pride events have become tainted by the domineering presence of rainbow-drenched logos and advertising. In the 2015 Chicago Pride Parade, more than half of the 253 participants were big businesses and banks, according to Project Queer. In comparison, LGBTQ groups represented a mere less than 10% of the participants. Pink capitalism has stolen the rainbow, stripped away its meaning and consequently the identity of the community itself is being diluted.

All this aside, there are companies that do appear to have genuine, authentic consciences. Lush, the British cosmetic retailer has built an empire founded on an ethos of cruelty-free products, the sole use of eco-friendly ingredients and constant fundraising for charitable causes. With a staggering \$10,000,000 has been donated to over 850 grassroots charities in 42 countries, Lush really does put its money where its mouth is.

Evidently, being commercially successful and ethically driven are not diametrically opposed. So, I will be waiting with bated breath for Gillette to beard the lion and donate a portion of its profits to, for example, a men’s mental health charity after such a spectacular show of support for the dismantling of the patriarchy. Until then, I wonder if disingenuous exhibitions of solidarity with the latest social justice trends are really the best that brands can be.

Shaving Toxic Masculinity

Molly Butler-Crewe

After watching the Gillette advert, I was instantly impressed by how they managed to create such a positive image of men holding each other accountable for acts of damaging masculinity. I was struck by an optimistic feeling that men need to start working together to dispel the products of toxic masculinity; namely sexual harassment, talking down to women (or “mansplaining”) and excusing bullying and aggression with the saying ‘boys will be boys’. On the other hand, the advert also showed the best parts of masculinity, with men supporting each other and leading by example.

The video effectively tackles toxic masculinity in a #MeToo context, showing clips of news reporters talking about the movement, including a short section of Terry Crews testifying to Congress. In a society increasingly trying to fight outdated and damaging conventions, Gillette has decided to join in, attempting to do their part in promoting a culture that questions traditional destructive gender roles. This advert could not be more currently relevant, with more and more high-profile cases coming to light of sexual harassment, such as the allegations against R. Kelly and Chris Brown.

However, the advert was not just focused on behaviour related to women, but all the ramifications of toxic masculinity, interrogating the worst parts of masculinity by simultaneously promoting the best parts. They changed their famous slogan from “the best a man can get” to “the best men can be”, focusing on a global community of men, working together. It also comes soon after the *American Psychological Association* published new guidelines arguing that ‘traditional masculinity ideology’ is based on qualities like ‘adventure, risk, and violence’. They suggest this masculinity is based on displays of power, money, being a risk-taker or aggression, whilst any association with traditionally feminine attributes, like sensitivity is un-masculine and wrong.

Very soon after finishing the advert I scrolled down to some of the comments on Youtube arguing Gillette had gone a step too far in the name of political correctness or that the advert was feminist propaganda aiming to completely demolish all masculinity. There was an instant backlash of men vowing to boycott Gillette for the rest of their lives. And of course, Piers Morgan had to quickly weigh in, denouncing the company as he took their message to be: ‘men, ALL men, are bad,



Source: Wikipedia Commons

shameful people who need to be directed in how to be better people’. These people missed the point completely.

Unfortunately, the advert is an essential contribution to the current conversation. Men must hold one another accountable for their actions. By dispelling some of the myths of masculinity, Gillette is attempting to change the way it is traditionally seen. A lot of men saw it as a personal assault on their very identity and values, so it’s not a surprise the advert angered them. However, the fact that so many men instantly became so defensive about masculinity ironically emphasises how deeply ingrained gender roles are for some.

I understand some people’s reservations, that Gillette is simply trying to profit off of the back of a current popular movement. However, if a side-effect of this has the potential to better society in some way, I don’t have a problem with it. Particularly when this company could direct that message towards such a large male consumer base.

The advert is by no means an attack on all men. It is a call for men to have a look in the mirror (shown literally in the footage), to ensure they are doing all they can to contribute positively towards a constructive society. Now it is the rest of our turn, to follow through with holding one another accountable and ignoring old cliché excuses to create a productive society, purged of traditional gender expectations.



'Surviving R Kelly' Exposes Society's Racial Bias

Eloise Barry

From his illegal marriage to fifteen-year-old singer Aaliyah in 1994 to the child pornography trial of 2008 to the sadistic sex cult reported to Buzzfeed in 2017, R Kelly's well-known exploits have furthered his career rather than damaged it – until now. The gruelling docuseries, "Surviving R Kelly", has forcibly dug the heads of both the music industry and the public out of the sand regarding the allegations of sexual abuse against one of the most powerful forces of modern R&B.

Despite featuring a damning compilation of dozens of testimonies, the programme is not an actual "exposé" of Kelly's behaviour, because many of the severest allegations had already been documented by Jim DeRogatis and Abdon Pallasch in a Chicago Sun-Times Story in 2000. Unlike the result of the New York Time's 2017 piece on Harvey Weinstein, which uncovered crimes against white female celebrities, DeRogatis and Pallasch's exposé of Kelly's behaviour against young African-American women did not result in the end of the perpetrator's career. As "Surviving R Kelly" clearly explains, the victims' race and the associated stereotypes and discrimination is why popular culture felt it could ignore, explain, and permit Kelly's crimes for so long.

The R Kelly case has shown that Malcolm X's observation in 1962 that "the most disrespected, [unprotected and neglected] person in America is the black woman" remains true decades later. In the US, black women still face oppression from a myriad of areas, most commonly with regards to race, gender and economic status. These intersections come together to form huge amounts of bias and discrimination against women of colour.

A study from Brandeis University found that while US prosecutors pursue seventy-five per cent of sexual assault cases brought by white women, only thirty-four per cent brought by black women are investigated. According to African-American sociologist Patricia Hill-Collins, the stereotype of the "promiscuous black woman", used pre-Civil War as justification for white slave-masters raping slaves, still exists to this day. This helps to explain why sexual and physical assaults against black women are less likely to be believed, as the blame falls on the supposedly seductive victim. Given this societal and judicial bias, it is not surprising how many of Kelly's economically vulnerable victims and their families accepted payments and lawsuit settlements in exchange for their silence. R Kelly systematically abused and exploited black girls from working-class backgrounds as, holding less power than any other societal group, he knew it was unlikely that their stories would be believed.

The music industry, which allowed Kelly to abuse the vulnerable, is also trying



Source: Rolling Stone

to evade accountability. Affiliated artists Lady Gaga and Chance the Rapper have insured their reputations by removing collaborations with Kelly and releasing apologetic statements retrospectively as if they were oblivious to the well-known allegations before the docuseries. Despite pressure from the #MuteRKelly campaign, the petition for which raised over 75,000 signatures, RCA only dropped Kelly from its label following the huge popularity of "Surviving R Kelly". Even this is for show: Kelly is still profiting from past releases with the label and has experienced a sixteen per cent increase in streams since the series aired. These tepid responses in the music industry against Kelly are a far cry from the Hollywood actresses' fashion-inspired show of solidarity for the #TimesUp movement at the 2018 Golden Globes in the wake of the Weinstein exposé. It goes to show that despite having a voice on the docuseries, the survivors of Kelly are still deemed less important than Weinstein's white victims.

In order that #MeToo works for women and men of all races and economic status, it is imperative that the intersectional factors of race, gender and economic status and the effects this has on victims of sexual abuse are considered. While black women were finally given a voice and could see themselves represented in "Surviving R Kelly", the music industry must fully renounce Kelly to atone for the many years of complicity.

Berlusconi Comes Back for More

Michael Turnbull

Former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi announced that he is running for a seat in the European Parliament come May. At the ripe age of 82, Berlusconi's bid for a stint in the European Union's legislative body is seen by many as a way of regaining his central power in Italy – which, if he is able to achieve, would be his fourth term served as Prime Minister. Though, amidst all this conjecture, how does he continue to be a prominent force in Italian politics, particularly given his seemingly endless list of previous scandals?

Prior to entering the political sphere, Berlusconi made his fortune by becoming a media mogul. In 1974, he launched the television channel Telelilano and through this he was able to introduce Italy to many foreign TV shows in spite of heavy regulation by the government – and to the extremely controversial Veline; showgirls who were paid to dance and strip during game shows and even news programmes! Berlusconi continued to grow his media empire, gaining control of several private television networks, magazines and a publishing house.

He used his influence to set up his own centre-right political party Forza Italia in 1993, becoming Prime Minister within a year. Even after the fall of

his coalition government which made him leader, Berlusconi was a well-respected political figure as many believed his business acumen would aid Italy's fragile economy. Hence, the stage was set for him to return to office from 2001 to 2006, promising tax cuts and greater job prospects. In 2008, he somehow managed to charm his way into power for a third time, before resigning in 2011 after witnessing

"Whilst it is clear to many that Berlusconi is a horrendous, morally corrupt shell of a human, the worrying reality is that he does stand a chance of winning this seat."

Italy's debts boom during the Eurozone crisis.

His resignation in 2011 was undignified. Berlusconi was under trial for accusations of criminal behaviour during his time as PM, which ultimately led to charges of embezzlement, tax fraud and bribery.

As if those weren't bad enough, in 2010 he was sentenced to seven years for paying an underage woman for sex during one of his horrendous 'bunga bunga' parties, during which women were paid to dance and disrobe for Berlusconi and his friends' entertainment. Somewhat remarkably,

slimy Silvio never ended up spending a day in prison for his crimes, choosing instead to carry out his sentences doing community service; another example of how being disgustingly wealthy means you can get away with being a dreadful person.

So, to finally answer the original question after that lengthy biography, how is Berlusconi still influential in Italian politics? Well, for one thing, the European Parliament's President (Antonio Tajani) is a member of Berlusconi's Forza Italia, which will hardly do his campaign any harm.

Also, controlling most of Italian mass media means he is able to filter any content spread about him. Most Italian papers are inclined to not be overly critical of the politicians in power, given that much of their funding comes from the government. This means Berlusconi's scandals get significantly less press in Italy than they would abroad.

Whilst to many, it is clear that Berlusconi is a horrendous, morally corrupt shell of a human, the worrying reality is that he does stand a chance of winning this seat. All we can do now is hope he shoots himself in the foot with another monumental scandal, but given his track record, he'd probably weasel his way out anyway.

Why It's Time to Put the 'L' Back in LGBT

Adina Rees

As 'She' is the only lesbian-priority venue in London and the monthly 'Dyke Chambers' night at Wharf Chambers the only lesbian-focused night in Leeds, it often seems as though the 'L' in 'LGBT' is cast aside. There are several clubs in the UK specifically aimed towards gay men, yet lesbians are often left out of the equation, bringing about the question of how inclusive both the LGBT and non-LGBT communities are of lesbians.

In 2018, there was the sudden emergence of the lesbian flag on social media, which adorns different shades of purple and pink. Many lesbians took to social media to vent about the lack of acknowledgement of the lesbian-specific flag when the flags for transgender and asexual awareness are widely known. I, along with many other lesbians, had never even known of the lesbian flag. Despite its creation in 2010, in the same year as the asexuality flag, the lesbian flag was never popularised. Instead, lesbians were tied under the same flag as the iconic rainbow striped pride flag, which was originally used specifically for gay men but became widely recognised as a general LGBT flag. This lack of inclusion extends beyond the flag.

Despite being the first letter of the LGBT acronym, when examining the movie industry, it becomes apparent that lesbians are underrepresented in the media - especially lesbian women of colour. There have been a few high-profile LGBT releases in the last few years, but most popular LGBT films are about gay

men. When a film with a lesbian romance is released it usually does not receive the same media attention as gay romances, like *Hearts Beat Loud*. Even worse, lesbian romances either end in tragedy or are depicted as overtly sexual, take *Blue is the Warmest Colour* as an example, which is especially problematic when filmed under the male gaze. 'Lesbian' is reduced to nothing more than a porn category. Films with lesbian couples also face more



criticism than the heterosexual counterparts, most seem to involve cheating or age-gap couples, but so do plenty of heterosexual romcoms. People are critical of films like *Disobedience* for including cheating and yet still hail *Lolita* as a romance story.

Gay men are fetishised, especially within 'stan culture', whereas there's a level of disgust associated with lesbians that extends beyond homophobia. The stereotype that a lesbian is an unwanted cat lady may seem harmless, but it connotes the idea that being a lesbian is something women 'retire' to when they're unwanted by or unsuccessful with men. The idea that lesbians just need to "meet the right man" is commonly heard and yet nobody tells gay men that they will "meet the right woman". Compulsory heterosexuality exists even within the LGBT community, as the argument that "sexuality is fluid" is frequently being used against lesbians who claim they would never have a relationship with a man, despite that literally being what it means to identify as a lesbian. Sites like Tumblr are especially problematic in the discourse surrounding lesbians, cis lesbians are being labelled as transphobic and biphobic whereas gay men seem to face no widespread criticism of their treatment of bisexual and transgender men.

Even in my own personal experience, I felt uncomfortable with labelling myself as a lesbian when I first came out. I felt that 'lesbian' was "too harsh" because there was such shame associated with the word.

Misogyny is perhaps one of the biggest factors in the mistreatment of lesbians and bisexual women; people try to link everything a woman does to serving men, and the topic of sexuality is no different. Until the way women are seen in society improves, attitudes towards lesbians will never change.

NICE PEOPLE Magazine

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A Warm Welcome to Leeds University Union's Co-op

Robbie Cairns
Editor-in-Chief

When the news broke last semester that the Essentials we all know and love would be transforming into a Co-op, there were many mumblings and grumbings around campus. Where would I source my daily meal deal from? What about that own brand fake tan – the best on the market? And the fresh pastries and muffins in morning? In truth, there seemed to be more questions than answers.

For many, Essentials was a staple element of our university experience. But now, as February rolls around and the prospect of a Co-op within the union gets closer and closer, excitement is beginning to build as to what the new shop will offer. Self-service machines, sharper looking aisles and Co-op own brand products are just a few of the things students can expect when Leeds Union's Co-op opens its doors. Chris Morris, Union Affairs Officer at LUU, explains that this higher standard of quality was one of the main reasons why LUU chose to approach an external partner in the first place: "for a number of years now, students have been telling us that they think Essentials isn't quite right for them, it's not the quality that they expect."

But why choose a Co-op to continue Essentials's legacy? Why not a Tesco Express? A Sainsbury's Local, or, heaven forbid, a Waitrose? "We feel that Co-op and LUU are a great fit together in that they're both membership and democratic organisations", Chris answers, "we feel they can have a really positive impact on each other." Martin Rogers, Head of Channels at Co-op, echoes this sentiment. As a successful franchise, Co-op will inevitably generate plenty of value from this latest store, but Martin insists this extra money won't be fattening any pockets. "We're not going to extract that value", Martin begins. "We're not going to pay it into pension funds or venture capitalists or international shareholders. We're going to reinvest that in our proposition which allows us to develop a virtuous circle, allowing us to reinvest in the objectives we share."

"In this world of fake news, it's difficult to know what's real and what's not. But you do know that buying a Fair Trade chocolate bar from the Co-op does make a difference. That is a truth"

One of these shared objectives is efficiency, something which will be vastly increased by the introduction of self-service machines. "We know that students expect very efficient, fast services. If the service isn't there, we lose the sale, and if we lose the sale that means that we can't do all the good things with the money that we would have got." According to Martin, with improved transaction efficiency, staff at the Co-op will be free to complete more rewarding



tasks behind the scenes. This will come as welcome news to those who originally feared a loss of student jobs due to the arrival of self-service machines; "there won't be a reduction of student jobs here at LUU", Chris promises.

When it comes to businesses, terms like 'profitability' and 'efficiency' are often inextricably tied to exploitation; better value for money at one end of the consumer chain tends to indicate a lower value for money at the other end of the chain. However, it appears this trend doesn't apply to the Co-op, as their Sustainable Sourcing & Fairtrade Manager, Sarah Wakefield, explains. "We work alongside our buyers, our technical managers and our product developers to make sure that how we source Co-op products is absolutely right. We also have a great ethical trade and human rights programme and in terms of things like the ethical trade initiative benchmark, we always score, if not top, right at the top of those because of the comprehensive work that we do."

Martin again echoes this message, suggesting that Co-op's desire to reach out to a new, young market is because "we think that our values, our principles and our ethical sourcing credentials chime with this generation." Martin isn't wrong; students at Leeds are consistently campaigning for an increased awareness of environmental issues on campus. And, as Sarah reminds us, Co-op has an admirable track record when it comes to looking after the planet. "We've got a history. For instance, we've never used micro-beads in our own-brand products. We checked with our branded suppliers to make sure they weren't stocking them a couple of years ago, and this is all before Blue Planet 2 and the issue of plastics really reared its head.

"I know sometimes people can be frustrated with seeing plastic packaging on products. But, at the Co-op, if we package something there is a reason for it,

whether it's keeping something fresh, whether it's protecting it in transit to make sure that it's not wasted, or whether it's just getting it to you in a good state." With LUU pledging to be Single Use Plastic free by 2023, it seems the Co-op are well ahead of schedule in terms of eliminating plastics that can't be recycled from their supply chains. Furthermore, in terms of reducing food waste and helping to provide food to the 150,000 people in Leeds who live in poverty, Martin is very optimistic: "we're going to make sure that there will be a waste redistribution in place, we just need to confirm with the sources."

While many students may feel that the loss of Essentials represents a loss of something unique to Leeds uni, the reality of the situation is that, if you continue to push a business model which relies on nostalgia to sell its products, that model becomes less viable over time and puts everything at risk. Plus, Martin indicates that this new Co-op will strive to cultivate a Leeds-centric image: "From a Co-op perspective, this will be Leeds Union's Co-op. It will be operated to the standards of the Co-op, but it's absolutely your shop, and you will be able to choose the local causes that make a difference to the colleagues, customers, students and members in this location."

Sarah and Martin's poignant final thoughts were perhaps the strongest reminder that the heartbreaking upgrade to Essentials is, at the end of the day, good news for everyone. "How you spend your money is one of the biggest ways you can make a difference. In this world of fake news, it's difficult to know what's real and what's not. But you do know that buying a Fair Trade chocolate bar from the Co-op does make a difference. That is a truth."

Leeds Union's Co-op is expected to open on the 20th February.

Exploitation of the 'Pink Pound' for Profit

George Dunleavy

Nowadays, in a society which has grown increasingly accepting of different sexualities, Pride events are held across the country and attended by hundreds of thousands. In recent years, savvy businesses have devised ways to commodify and cash in on the 'pink pound' – the term used to describe the £6 billion or so that the LGBT+ community spends each year – whether that be by sponsoring a Pride event, or by producing wares to market to this niche audience. However, some have criticised big businesses for exploiting and cheapening a once-political protest and have raised questions about whether any of the profits actually go back into the LGBT+ community that they claim to support. Do businesses have anything to be proud of?

After years of tireless activism by visionaries such as Marsha P Johnson and Peter Tatchell, leaps and bounds have been made in trying to make society safer for queer bodies, which is why Pride has – for some – become a chance to celebrate how far we've come, and to enjoy a day where LGBT+ people shouldn't feel afraid for who they are. As such, companies have realised that by supporting Pride they can promote the idea of being a welcoming, modern and ethical business, while also profiting from the millions who want to buy a rainbow flag, drink a rainbow drink and see the latest headlining pop act.

Pride is profitable – more than 400,000 people descended on Brighton in 2018, and hundreds of thousands more attended similar events across the UK. One example of a company cashing in on the

event is the streetwear giant, Topshop, who in 2018 ran a Love Pride campaign, which – kudos to them – included LGBT+ models and boasted more rainbow-printed t-shirts than Judy Garland could be proud of. Teaming up with out and proud designer Jeffrey Charles, they collaborated on the LGBT+ collection Loverboy, in which 30% of profits were donated to the LGBT+ charity, Stonewall.

Superficially, this seems to be an ethical and effective campaign to raise money, but upon closer inspection, cracks show. Clothing that still boasted Pride emblems without being part of the collection only lined Philip Green's controversial pockets, which already boast billions. Furthermore, being queer isn't something that only affects your life for 1 month of



Image: Kyle Makwana

the year; being in the minority is something that lasts for life. Ironically, that same year trans artist Travis Alabanza was denied access to the female changing rooms in a Manchester Topshop and was instructed to use the male changing rooms instead. As Alabanza pointed out, this wouldn't be a safe solution. Profiting from queer culture only to shove it back into the closet for the other 11 months of the year is no progress.

Another company eager to take a bite of the pink pound was Coca-Cola, who created custom-made London Pride 2018 advertisements that aired at the Piccadilly Circus. However, the company featured among the largest sponsors of the FIFA World Cup held in Russia, one of the most homophobic countries in the world where over 100 gay men have been tortured and imprisoned in gay concentration camps in Chechnya. It's no surprise that the gears of capitalism allow no room for ethical consideration, which is why companies need to support, rather than simply exploit the LGBT+ community through a get-rich quick rainbow hashtag on a t-shirt or on the side of a coke can.

People are quick to label this new trend of 'ethical consumerism' as simple slacktivism, as though painting a rainbow on your logo makes you a good ally, but there are ways to combat the growing encroachment of multi-billionaire corporations in what was originally a political protest. Support local, grassroots-run LGBT+ stalls and events, such as the anti-corporation Queer Picnic in London or Leeds' Alternative Pride which features workshops, spoken word nights and drag balls – without the backing of corrupt billionaires.

Passengers Derailed by Rising Train Fares

Shona Augustinus
Business Editor

As students we inevitably have to use the railway system at some point. Whether it's the long commute back home for Christmas or just being too lazy to walk into town, but with yet another increase in fares, how can we afford to do so? Train fares have just increased by an average of 3.1%. To put this into perspective, examples of increases in annual season tickets include £148 for Brighton to London (from £4,696 to £4,844) and £100 for Manchester to Liverpool (from £3,152 to £3,252). As real pay has fallen over the last decade, British rail fares are now growing more than three times faster than our wages!

The "reason" for this increase is apparently to cover the day-to-day running costs of the railway. However, last year Virgin Trains managed to share £51.2 million of dividends with its shareholders. At the same time, passengers are struggling to find a seat with trains taking more than double their capacity. It's no surprise that the ordinary traveller is outraged at having to pay even more for a very poor service. To top this all off, punctuality of services is at an all-time low. In the past 12 months, one in seven trains were delayed by at least five minutes, meaning that delays are the worst they have been since 2005. It seems as if daily commuters are struggling to pay increased prices for inferior service, in order to line

the pockets of billionaires.

There is a little bit of hope at the end of the tunnel with the introduction of the new 26-30-year-old railcard, meaning that young people and recent graduates can continue to benefit from discounted prices after the age of 25. The transport secretary, Chris Grayling, claims this record investment in the rail network will help passengers get the "frequent, affordable and reliable journeys they deserve". But with the increase of prices being an annual occurrence, is this really enough?

In order to prevent escalating price increases, Labour has called for the railways to be returned to public ownership. The party also believes that prices should be frozen for the worst performing routes. This will certainly remove the grossly over-profiting aspect of how the system is currently managed. But at a time when the government can't even decide on how to leave EU, it seems issues like these are simply overshadowed. Considering that the industry is benefiting from a £10 billion a year passenger revenue stream, in addition to further government investment, the rail industry should have sufficient funding to provide an adequate service for travellers.

From a business perspective, this turning point provides the perfect opportunity to find innovative new solutions to improve services. However, instead of operating for the good of the many, rail companies prioritise the profits of the few: shareholders are

seemingly motivated by the greed and the welfare of commuters takes a back seat.

For the time being, we will likely see little change in how the system is run. Considering this, here are some top tips to avoid pricey train fares. If you miraculously know that you're travelling 12 weeks in advance, that's when fares are usually at their lowest. For longer trips you can try and split up your fares; apps like TrainSplit can help with coordinating train times and finding the best deals and sometimes two single tickets can be cheaper than a return. Unfortunately, it's up to us to try and find the best deals because the rail industry won't be helping us anytime soon.



Image: BT Group



Olivia Maskill
Science Writer

What will future discoverers find in the rotting ruins of our society? Classical art? Icons of architecture? Relentless machines of war? Actually, it'll most likely just be a lot chicken bones. Figures.

Geologists have announced a new epoch in the history of the Earth, the Anthropocene or the age of humanity. But we are not alone. We brought our animals with us throughout the birth and growth of our mighty civilisations. About 8000 years ago, our ancestors found a funny little bird wandering the jungle floor. *Gallus gallus*, or Red Jungle Fowl, were used as a form of entertainment and had important cultural significance. At least until someone got a little too peckish. Now there are about 21.4 billion of them; more than any other land vertebrate and at least ten times the amount of any other bird. The drastic

changes in the functioning of the world's agricultural systems have caused this huge increase. A movement from integrated livestock and crop systems with a few scattered chickens, to intensive systems with thousands of caged or housed hens together on farms dedicated solely to egg or meat production.

About 60 billion chickens are slaughtered for meat annually, over 30 times the total living population of any other bird, and as you're finishing off your bargain bucket you probably put very little thought into where those chicken bones end up. Imagine – tens of billions of carcasses accumulating in the oxygen-free mummifying mountain of landfill, there to stay, to solidify, and to sediment.

From Red Jungle Fowl to the McChicken, the common broiler, a chicken bred for meat, has displayed a huge change in its physiology over evolutionary time. The leg bone of a juvenile broiler is triple the width and double the length of a typical *Gallus gallus*. Over the

Jurassic Poultry: The Flightless Fossils

last 50 years especially, farmers have worked hard to selectively breed chickens that are bigger, with today's chickens growing four to five times heavier than birds in 1957. "We think they are a really important symbol and potential future fossil of this age, and man's impact on the planet," says Carys Bennett at the University of Leicester, UK.

As society becomes more and more conscious about the impact of pollution on the environment, its easy to focus on the next century in a very humancentric manner. But, the fact is, we are but one era in 4 billion years of Earth's long and tumultuous history. Bennett explains "The signal of our civilisation is already being recorded." What will future civilisations think of the plastic bags, the soda cans, and of course, the chicken bones?

What will they think of us as they dissect and analyse the fossilised remains of our society? And what will they think of how we lived?



Morwenna Davies
Science Writer

The exact cause of Alzheimer's disease has long been a disputed issue in the scientific community. However, new research in 2019 has offered some reassurance that a cure could be imminent by linking a key bacteria in gum disease to the onset of Alzheimer's.

Firstly, a bit of background on the disease. Alzheimer's is caused by a build-up of protein structures called plaques, which lead to loss and damage of nerve cells and brain tissue. Chemical signals in the brain are therefore disrupted, so some current treatments focus on boosting the functionality of these deteriorated chemical messengers. A person with Alzheimer's may become delusional, experience mood changes and disorientation, but the main

Encouraging Links Found in New Alzheimer's Research

symptom associated with the disease is memory loss. The life expectancy of someone with Alzheimer's is eight to ten years after the first signs of symptoms.

However, new research by Cortexyne – an international biotech company – may offer some relief to the 5.7 million people living with the disease. In a new paper published in *Science Advances* earlier this year, the scientists linked bacteria associated with gum disease with the onset of Alzheimer's. The 21-page article is free to read online and exhibits an abundance of encouraging statistical analysis.

The bacterium in question is called *Porphyromonas gingivalis* which is found in the mouth and is a key bacterium in causing gum disease. *P. gingivalis* produces the protein gingipain, which was found to be significantly more abundant in brains infected with Alzheimer's than non-infected brains.

In the novel study, which only began in 2018, experimental research was conducted using mice with genetically engineered Alzheimer's disease.

The investigation found that mice with gum disease expressed worsened symptoms of Alzheimer's due to greater production of amyloid beta; a main element of plaques that lead to cognitive deterioration. Infection of the brain by *P. gingivalis* leads to higher levels of amyloid beta and a resulting greater number of amyloid plaques.

The study suggested that small-molecule inhibition of the gingipain protein in infected brains could prevent or even reverse the onset of Alzheimer's disease, although there is as of yet no drug that can do this.

However, Cortexyne is currently undergoing clinical trials for an inhibiting drug called COR388. Phase 1 of this trial was successfully carried out in 2018 on a small group of volunteers with Alzheimer's disease, which yielded positive cognitive results in all those who took part. Later this year, a larger scale Phase 2 is due to be carried out, so it will be interesting to see if the advances continue.

Is Palm Oil Pure Evil?



Image: Nikkei Asian Review

Laura Krusin
Science Writer

You may have seen the *Iceland* Christmas advert plastered all over Facebook after it was banned from television. Judged too political, it featured an orangutan urging us to stop using palm oil in order to save his home. But is palm oil truly killing off orangutans? Should we completely reject it? Does it belong on the negative press naughty step along with plastic and red meat? It's a complicated issue.

Palm oil is essentially a fruit from certain types of palm trees. Its production is mainly limited to Asia, where the combined size of plantations amounts to

roughly the total land area of New Zealand. However, the number of plantations is set to increase by 2030, with plans to expand to countries within Africa. Currently, Indonesia and Malaysia are the largest producers, but these nations are also home to all three species of orangutans, the populations of which are already critically endangered. Despite the implications on their habitat, palm oil is a common ingredient in many packaged foods from bread to biscuits to the student-loved pot noodles. Not purely limited to food, it is also found in household cleaning products and make-up, giving it high economic value.

While palm oil is often chastised in the media, is it so objectively bad? In short, no. Palm oil is one

of the most efficient oils we yield. Palm oil is more productive per unit of land than any other oil including rapeseed, coconut, and soybean. This means if the consumption of oil was to switch to an alternative, more land would be deforested as a result. The palm oil tree also requires less pesticides and fertilisers to grow, making the whole process less chemically heavy. Therefore, it could be argued that it is actually better for the environment as fewer chemicals enter natural habitats. The reduction in run off would help prevent processes such as eutrophication, as well as protecting animals dramatically affected by high pesticide usage, such as bees.

But if palm oil has all these benefits, why does it get such bad press? This is due to the conversion of land within Malaysia and other countries producing the oil. Primarily, it is natural rainforest that is converted into palm oil plantations, and the demand for the oil is thought to be responsible for at least 8 per cent of the world's total deforestation. Due to the location of plantations, endangered wildlife including orangutans, rhinos, elephants, and tigers are affected – all of which are high up on the list of species we are meant to be saving. But, if plantations were converted to harvesting coconut oil for example, these effects would increase.

It is therefore not palm oil that is the problem, but the demand for it and the way in which we harvest it. One approach to reduce the impact is buying sustainably sourced palm oil bearing the Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) logo. The RSPO requires members to produce their palm oil in a sustainable way, ensuring reduced deforestation and the inclusion of natural rainforest within their plot. Whilst the scheme is not ideal as land has still been cleared for palm oil production, it does limit the damage. Additionally, if demand for sustainable palm oil increases, the scheme itself will have enough backing to tighten its guidelines.

While it is nearly impossible to avoid palm oil completely, those looking to reduce their environmental impact should look out for products with the RSPO label.

Sophisticated and Sexy City Slickers

The Gryphon examines the recent discovery that not all amphibians hold the same sex appeal

Anna Davison
Science Writer

A study has found that men in the city are more likely to find love than those in the countryside. Unfortunately for human Casanovas, the study was on the túngara frogs of Central America which showed that urban males' calls are sexier than their forest counterparts.

On a steamy night in the wet season, male frogs gather in pools of water to call for females. The sound consists of a long high-pitched call occasionally interspersed with 'chucks'. Making these chucks is dangerous for the male frogs as they can potentially attract predators, but they are very attractive to the females.

Adding more chucks into their call pays off for the urban frogs as the chance of attracting predators is reduced in the city and females are typically less

likely to respond to a call, so it needs to be especially alluring.

Urban frogs quickly change their calls to mimic forest frogs when moved to the forest, but forest frogs are unable to adapt their call to city environments. This suggests that only the most adaptable individuals can survive in the city. This is a prime example of how quickly the pressure of urban environments can cause a change in species' behaviour.

Other examples, such as increased boldness of birds and foxes in the city, seem obvious but constitute a major change required for a species to thrive. However, turning to the city is not always best – as demonstrated by comparing the lifespan of rural foxes (up to 8 years) to that of urban foxes (18 months). With natural habitats being degraded across the earth, more species are turning to cities for refuge but there is a limit to how much wildlife a city, and its occupants, will tolerate.



Image: si.edu



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Bielsa and Football's Big Spy Scandal

Bielsa has been at the centre of the 'Spygate' controversy, prompting discussion over whether spying in football is acceptable.

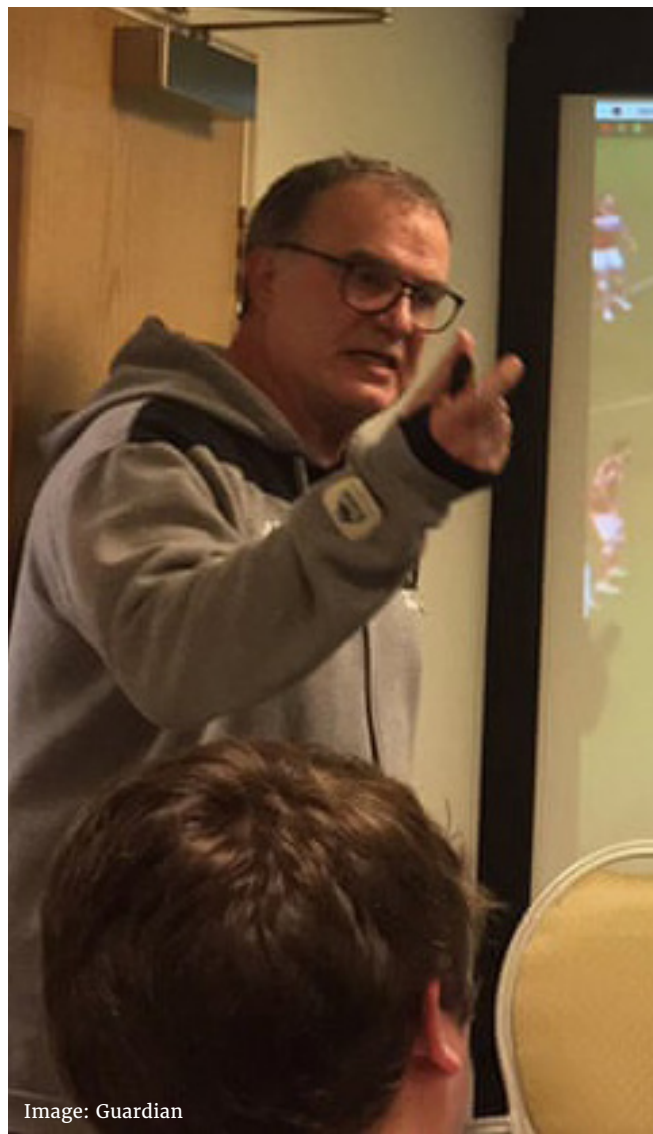


Image: Guardian

Cian Fox
Football

Marcelo Bielsa's Leeds United remain the Championship's biggest story in 2019. On the pitch, Leeds have been devastating at times, setting the pace at the top of the league despite a sizeable injury list.

However, it is off the pitch where Leeds have grabbed the headlines in recent weeks. By his standards, Bielsa had enjoyed a quiet start to life in England. Apart from his bizarre position on the sideline – atop a bucket, for a better angle to view the action – El Loco has been calm, especially compared to his previous jobs. This was the case until Leeds travelled to Derby County on Friday 11th January and a spying scandal erupted.

The scandal – quickly dubbed 'Spygate' – surrounded a Leeds staff member who was spotted spying on Derby County's training prior to their fixture the following evening. Bielsa admitted to it, taking full responsibility for the man's actions. It is worth noting that 'spying' is not strictly illegal or criminal; the man in question was watching training unfold from public land with binoculars.

The reaction was a predictable one. Outrage at Bielsa's affront to the perceived righteousness of English football was followed by counter-outrage in response to this initial outrage. Frank Lampard, the Rams manager, accused the Argentine of being unsporting, disrupting Derby's preparations and defiling the unimpeachable moral sanctity of the English game. Various commentators, like Martin Keown, and opposition fans, attacked Leeds. In

response, Bielsa's defenders labelled his critics as hypocrites. They argued that everyone in football have used Bielsa's supposedly 'deviant' surveillance methods – from journalists watching England training sessions to get the latest team news to top managers across the Premier League and the lower divisions.

Five days later, El Loco responded to the media. In a hastily arranged press conference amid rumours of his imminent resignation, Bielsa gave a 70-minute Powerpoint presentation on his tactical preparations.

It was extraordinary. Bielsa admitted to not only spying on Derby, but every team in the Championship. He then went on to show this extensive analysis by using Derby as an example in his presentation. He outlined how his team of 20 staff watched every Derby County game since December 2018, in which tactics, formations and personnel were all meticulously recorded to help predict what team Leeds were likely to come up against. This level of preparation is considered common practice across the top divisions and teams in world football. The extraordinary aspect, nonetheless, comes from Bielsa's startling honesty and challenge to his critics.

After the lecture, the tide of opinion shifted almost instantly in favour of Bielsa. The media loved the story, presentation and Bielsa's honesty. For Leeds United fans, the Argentine enhanced his legend – especially after it became clear he was not going to resign. Even for rivals, an undeniable respect is now afforded to Bielsa, who not only has Leeds playing fluently on the pitch, but seems to have everyone else squirming off it.

Injured Murray to Retire at Wimbledon

The tennis legend has announced his plan to retire this year after a persistent hip injury.

Georgie Wardell
Tennis

Andy Murray has announced his retirement from tennis. During an emotional press conference in Australia at the start of January, Murray expressed his frustration and upset that he was unable to play at his best due to a persistent hip injury.

Murray explained that he "can still play at a level, but not a level that [he] is happy playing at" and went on to elaborate "the pain is too much." In spite of a hip operation he had in 2017 to improve his condition, playing tennis has not stopped being painful, so he plans to make Wimbledon this July his swan song. The pain was so much during this month's Australian Open, however, that he might not make it to Wimbledon.

The 31-year-old has enjoyed a career studded with huge accomplishments. He spent 41 weeks ranked world number 1 in the Emirates ATP Ranking, making him the first British singles player to achieve the title. He has won three Grand Slams and been in eleven Grand Slam finals, won two gold medals at the Olympics, and led the British team to victory in the Davis Cup.

It seems Murray has been left at the wayside before his time. For all his achievements, Murray has earned



Image: Saeed Khan/AFP/Getty

his place as one of the best tennis players of our time, yet he has been reduced to retirement at a relatively young age compared to the other top tennis players he's been competing against like Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. Such is the damage tennis has inflicted on Murray's body: he says he has been playing tennis painfully for some years now, explaining in the press conference that "I needed to have an end point, because I was playing with no idea when the pain was going to stop."

It is the tough competition that Murray has been up against in his career that has pushed his body to breaking point, but this same competition has propelled Murray's game to new heights, making him one of the world's greatest tennis players.

A hugely accomplished player, being up against some of tennis' best players of all time has surely challenged Murray to better his best, forging a fantastic player into one so high-calibre that he will be remembered as one of tennis' greats.

Smiling Solskjaer Leads Red Devils' Renaissance

After Mourinho's sacking, Manchester United have turned their season around under the new caretaker boss.

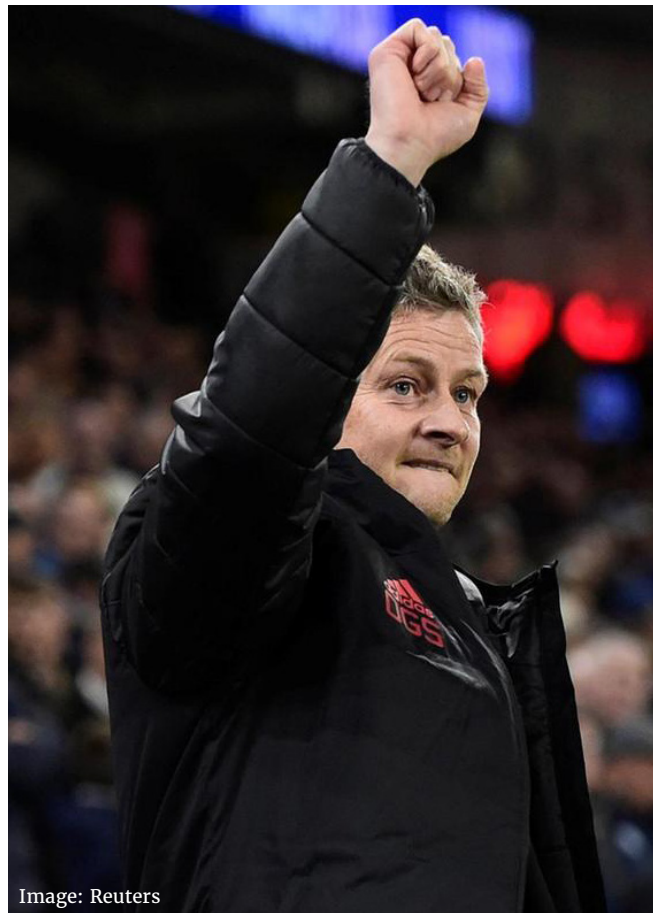


Image: Reuters

Millie Frain
Football

Following a shameful defeat at Anfield where United were out-classed by Jurgen Klopp's title chasers, the newly appointed caretaker manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has taken the Manchester United job in his stride, with many claiming that he is the reason for their recent renaissance.

It is no secret that the United squad had little motivation under recently sacked Jose Mourinho, with performances on the pitch being flat and discontent amongst some players off of it, and Paul Pogba, a World Cup winner, sat on the bench, unsure of his role in Mourinho's side. Yet, since Solskjaer has come in, Old Trafford almost seems to have been transported back in time to the Golden Age of Sir Alex Ferguson.

Perhaps the most noticeable improvement in the United squad is the rejuvenated Paul Pogba, arguably one of the best midfielders in the world. Following off field-clashes with Mourinho, which repeatedly left him on the bench, Solskjaer's faith in the Frenchman has paid off with six goals and four assists in just seven games, he is now one of the first names on the team sheet.

Not only does Solskjaer focus on the individual players, he has also adopted a far more attractive style

of football, that has largely silenced the press' claims that United's football is boring to watch in comparison to the attacking style of play of rivals Manchester City and Liverpool. Fans have been delighted to see players passing the ball forward, taking risks and being courageous in the hope of finding the back of the net.

One player that has massively benefited from this change is the young Marcus Rashford, who is arguably playing the best football of his career under Solskjaer, always on the hunt for more goals.

So, it seems that those in charge at Manchester United now have a difficult decision to make, whether to make Solskjaer's position permanent at Old Trafford or to bring someone in during the off season.

However, it is clear that Solskjaer's new positive approach, praising his players at press conferences versus Mourinho's tactic of attacking his own players and blaming individuals for certain defeats, is having a positive effect, with United remaining unbeaten under Solskjaer. The most impressive performance came last week where United knocked out old rivals Arsenal in an impressive 3-1 away win.

If this run of form continues, there is a good chance that United will pick up some silverware this season, even being real contenders for the Champions League, a competition that seemed so far out of reach before Christmas.

The Six Nations: What to Expect

The Gryphon looks ahead at what to expect in the Northern Hemisphere's premier tournament.

Millie Warrilow
Rugby Union

February is upon us, which means only one thing; it's Six Nations time. With this year also being a World Cup year, the tournament is the perfect opportunity to showcase the strength of the Northern Hemisphere teams.

France and Wales kick off the tournament playing on the 1st February in Paris and both will hope to get off to a good start. The first round of fixtures throws up the game that could potentially confirm the eventual champions of the 2019 tournament.

Ireland are the team to beat this year after comfortably winning their third Grand Slam at Twickenham in 2018. Last November saw a fantastic winning performance over New Zealand, proving their great form going into the tournament and definitely making them the team to beat this year.

England head into the tournament as the second shortest-priced team to win the title at 7/2. They will aim to improve on last year's fifth place performance after losing to Scotland, France and Ireland. Eddie Jones has a much stronger squad to pick from this year making them next favourites behind the reigning champions. Although captain Owen Farrell is carrying an injury, Jones is hoping he should be fit for their opening game on Saturday away at Ireland.

England's first few fixtures will prove challenging for them as they play last year's second place Wales at the Millennium Stadium in their third fixture. For the Welsh side, this will be a huge advantage as they play both England and Ireland at home, where they have historically been a strong side on home turf.

Losing Sam Warburton to retirement will be a big

loss for Wales alongside the loss of Taulupe Faletau meaning there are big boots left to fill for the Welsh side. However, if Wales manage to string some good performances together at home they could potentially be in for a chance of victory this year.

A resurgent Scotland will be confident of doing better than last year. Beating England to win the Calcutta Cup was a huge highlight for them last year and this year has also shown success with getting both their club sides into the quarter finals of the Champions Cup. Scotland are difficult to beat at Murrayfield and with 3 of their 5 games being at home, confidence will be high. Winning at Twickenham and France will be the biggest challenge of the competition for Scotland.

France enter this year's Six Nations competition in ninth place in the world rankings. After losing their last eight matches away from home the pressure is increasing in order to prove their status as a major rugby power. Who knows which France will turn up. Last year the best defensive team lost some of their flamboyant style, but if both sides of their game can co-operate, you can not rule them out. A good opening result in Paris on Friday night will be vital, but away games against both England and Ireland will make it a hard championship to win.

The perennial wooden spoon team Italy, will struggle to finish anywhere higher than sixth, but they will nonetheless try and sneak a victory from one of their three home games. Last year's tournament saw them finish with just one point but O'Shea insists that they are making progress. With Italy suffering 17 straight defeats, they enter the Six Nations this year at 1000/1.

My Prediction: If Ireland get off to a good start against England on Saturday, then they will go on to win the title. But watch out for a wounded England.



Image: Adrian Dennis/Getty Images

Winning at Home Nethermoor?

The Gryphon returned to watch Guiseley in action after the winter break, only to be treated to a nine goal thriller in a losing effort by the Lions.



Image: Will Pickworth

**Will Pickworth
Football**

Guiseley AFC’s winless run at home was extended on Saturday as they went down in a nine-goal thriller to Boston United. Despite a spirited display and a clinical Rowan Liburd hattrick, it was not enough for the Lions as they lost 5-4, meaning that they have not won a home league game since 13th October; a 2-1 victory over Brackley Town.

The Gryphon was back at Nethermoor Park after the festive and New Year period where Guiseley won 2, drew 4 and lost 3, seeing them slip down the table into a potential relegation battle.

The hosts lined up in a 3-5-2 formation and the contest started quietly, but it flew into life after 15 minutes as an Andi Thanoj shot was deflected onto the bar by Will Thornton, with Gavin Allot tapping home the rebound for the visitors.

However, just three minutes later, after some brilliant work from Liburd, holding off three Boston defenders, the ball was laid out wide to the ever-reliable Cliff Moyo, who floated an inch-perfect cross to the back post which Kayode Odejayi powered home to continue his fine scoring run, netting his fifth goal in his last seven games. Two minutes later and scorer turned provider as a delightful through ball from Odejayi found Liburd who calmly slipped the ball past George Willis to mark a dramatic turnaround.

Yet, the madness continued, as on 22 minutes, Andy Halls was caught on the wrong side of Rollins, who slotted home, before some more poor defending was on display five minutes later as Guiseley failed to clear, with Lewis Gibbens laying the ball off to Rollins to score a quick-fire double. Guiseley nearly equalised before half-time as Liburd’s shot was parried, with Alex Purver, stretching, agonisingly seeing his shot

hit the post. The hosts went in 3-2 down in a breath-taking first half.

The second half began in equally frantic fashion as the Lions levelled on 47 minutes. Niall Heaton’s long throw-in caused chaos in the Boston box and Purver’s scuffed effort fell to Liburd, who finished well. Guiseley then nearly took the lead when Thornton headed narrowly wide from a George Cantrill corner.

The hosts continued to push for a winner, but Boston looked a threat on the counter attack and Max Wright forced Marcus Dewhurst into a good save in the Guiseley net. The visitors took the lead on 71 minutes as, after a well-worked short corner, Brad Abbott finished emphatically. Just four minutes later, Boston extended their lead when a ball into the box wasn’t dealt with and Gibbens headed home.

Despite Guiseley throwing everything at Boston in what became biblical conditions in the torrential rain, Liburd’s goal in injury time, heading home at the back post, completing his first ever career hattrick in the process, was not enough as Boston held firm.

Poor defending cost the Lions who now lie 17th, just four points above the relegation zone, looking over their shoulder, rather than up the league table, as had been hoped after their memorable cup run!

Guiseley: Dewhurst; Thornton (Clayton 83), Halls, Heaton; Moyo, Purver, Smith (Morrison 78), Hatfield, Cantrill; Odejayi, Liburd

Boston: Willis; Davies, Gibbens, Qualter, Jackson; Wright (Walker 56), Abbott (Harris 86), Thanoj, Wafula; Allott (Wroe 69), Rollins

Attendance: 725
Gryphon Guiseley MOTM – Rowan Liburd

Bucs Schedule 6th February

Full Fixtures and Results at
bucs.org.uk

Badminton Women 2nd vs Durham 3rd
2pm, Gryphon Sports Centre
Badminton Men 1st vs Lancaster 1st
2pm, The Edge
Badminton Men 2nd vs Durham 2nd
2pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Basketball Men 2nd vs York 1st
5.15pm, The Edge

Fencing Women 1st vs Aberdeen 1st
2pm, The Edge

Football Women 2nd vs Leeds Trinity 1st
2.15pm, Bodington Playing Fields
Football Men 1st vs Northumbria 2nd
2pm, Sports Park Weetwood
Football Men 2nd vs Leeds 3rd
1.45pm, Bodington Playing Fields
Football Men 4th vs Bradford 1st
2pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Hockey Women 1st vs Newcastle 1st
TBC, TBC

Hockey Women 5th vs Beckett 4th
1.30pm, Hockey Pitch, Headingley Campus
Hockey Women 6th vs Beckett 5th
1.30pm, Hockey Pitch, Headingley Campus
Hockey Men 1st vs Manchester 1st
TBC, TBC

Netball Women 3rd vs Leeds 4th
1pm, Gryphon Sports Centre
Netball Women 6th vs Shef Hallam 3rd
3pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Rugby League Men 2nd vs Shef Hallam 1st
2.15pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Rugby Union Women 2nd vs Sheffield 2nd
2pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Tennis Women 2nd vs Beckett 3rd
12pm, David Lloyd Leeds
Tennis Men 3rd vs Teesside 1st
TBC, TBC

Volleyball Women 1st vs Glasgow Caled 1st
5.15pm, Gryphon Sports Centre
Volleyball Men 1st vs Newcastle 1st
7.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Waterpolo Women 1st vs Beckett 1st
3.30pm, The Edge

Powerlifting and Weightlifting Society: British and European Championship Success by Leeds Powerlifters



Image: Leeds Powerlifting and Weightlifting Society

Kieran Gray, Captain of Leeds' Powerlifting and Weightlifting Society, took another medal at the European Championships in Lithuania.

Belal Ahmed
Powerlifting

Despite the rapid turnaround from his last national competition a month earlier, Kieran was able to make a quick recovery, which was apparent on the platform.

He won the bronze medal for squatting 305kg at 120kg bodyweight, silver for bench pressing 212.5kg (after reporting how light his first two bench press attempts felt) and won the bronze medal for an overall total of 827.5kg.

Gray would also have finished in second for the overall lifts if his grip did not let him down on his last deadlift. Given that his opening deadlift did not feel the best, he consulted his coach on dropping the weight of his second attempt from 317.5kg to 310kg. Thereafter, Kieran was tempted to go for a higher deadlift to win the overall silver medal.

Attempting a massive 330kg deadlift for an additional gold medal, he almost managed to complete the lift until he felt the bar sliding out his right hand, which in turn made it increasingly difficult to lock out his right knee.

In the rules of powerlifting, a lift is only complete when the athlete is standing straight with his/her

shoulders behind the bar and with no bend in the knees or hips.

However, the day still ended with young Kieran standing third on the podium, having proudly represented the UK and Leeds Powerlifting and Weightlifting Society.

Regarding his performance, Kieran said that he is happy yet unsatisfied with his performance despite his excellent achievements. He hit a personal best on the bench press and plans to push his strength to a whopping 220kg bench press by February.

Although Gray was up against international competitors such as Sweden's Mehmet Kaya and Ukraine's Dmytro Vovk, both of whom beat Kieran in the 2018 World Championships, Kieran is confident that he will be back next year. His only goal from now on is to focus on the 2019 World Championships, eat his steak and do the required recovery work. He is sure that such efforts will position him strongly in June 2019.

Women's team captain, Chloe Dickinson, also had success in competition, placing second at the Women's Junior Classics, a national competition last autumn. Dickinson weighed in at a shy 47kg yet confidently squatted 85kg, bench pressed 47.5kg and deadlifted

105kg. Chloe now wishes to move up to the next weight class (52kg) as she competes as a senior lifter this year.

Another accomplishment comes in the form of Max Guo, a fairly new club member, who recently competed at the YNEPF Winter Open under the expertise of Chloe Dickinson. At only 18 years of age and under 74kg bodyweight, his personal bests are 200kg squat, 133.5kg bench press and a 225kg deadlift. Guo's performance qualified him for the next level of competition – British Juniors Championship.

Overall, the club is preparing teams for the upcoming British and Northern University competitions in 2019, in which training and programming will be supported by the club. The club has grown massively over the last few years, coming to the point where Leeds Powerlifting and Weightlifting Society can support future athletes wishing to compete and to even become powerlifting coaches themselves. This will only benefit the club and aid in the future development of all Leeds powerlifters.

For more information regarding the club, visit our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/LeedsLiftSoc/> or check out our Instagram @leedsliftsoc.