



# THE GRYPHON

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The official newspaper of Leeds University



## University Secures Top Ten Spot

*The tenth placed finish is Leeds' highest ever ranking*

Jonny Chard  
News Editor

The University of Leeds has secured a place in the top 10 universities in the UK, in The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018.

The overall 2018 rankings are based on a range of metrics and, after being named University of the Year by the guide last year, Leeds has risen to its highest-ever position at number 10 in the United Kingdom.

The ranking is the latest in a positive few years for Leeds, having been recognised for its student experience and its strong research base.

In 2017, Leeds was voted in the top five universities in the Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey and it also secured joint first for overall

satisfaction and for teaching in the National Student Survey.

It has also achieved a Gold rating in the new Teaching Excellence Framework after an independent panel judged that Leeds consistently delivers "outstanding teaching, learning and outcomes for its students, of the highest quality found in the UK."

Sir Alan Langlands, Vice-Chancellor, stated that moving into the top 10 signified further progress in delivering outstanding research-led education for students.

"Our success is a testament to the commitment and creativity of the diverse community of staff and students at Leeds," said Langlands.

"These reflect our broad strengths and the range of opportunities we offer students.

"As a Russell Group university, we excel in research and innovation, but we have always put the needs and aspirations of students at the heart of everything we do," he added.

Elsewhere in Yorkshire, Leeds Trinity was ranked as the sixth best university in the country for teaching quality and the Universities of York, Sheffield and Huddersfield all saw improved rankings in the national table.

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Leeds to open its first 'cat cafe' this December

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We spoke to the Real Ale society, whose new pint 'two:one' is available in Old Bar now

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Business take a closer look at the ban on the taxi company

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We speak to the Rugby Union First Team Captain in the run up to Varsity

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Quote of the Week

*I'm a massive fan of the dictionary*

Gemma Collins

Editor of the Week

*Lara Groves*

Lara is currently performing the role of both online and print editor for Society. On top of this, she even found time to write an article for views. Good job.



**Reece Parker**  
**Editor-in-Chief**  
[editor@thegryphon.co.uk](mailto:editor@thegryphon.co.uk)

As we round off our second print week of the term, I'm massively regretting the decision to schedule in writing this Editor's Letter the day after our first Gryphon Editor's social. The social itself was great, but one meal at Akmal's became two pints at *The Library* which became a night out at *Wire*, which then culminated in me in *Crispys* at 4am scraping together change to buy curry sauce and chips. Needless to say, my head should be a little sore, but unfortunately I've reached an age where hangovers have changed from mild inconveniences to existential crises, and I'm struggling to read these words as I type them on the page.

Despite my fragile sense of self, I can appreciate that this has been a very good period for *The Gryphon*. There are only a few last copies of the freshers guide currently sitting on stacks across campus, meaning we successfully got around 5000 into the hands of students. Similarly our online profile has received a massive boost, a year long struggle to 5000 likes finally reaching culmination after I blackmailed the entire editorial team into inviting every last person on their friends list. Finally, we received 250 sign ups for potential contributors at freshers fair.

Those that did sign up have been invited to an introductory meeting on Friday 27th September. If you want to come along, even if you didn't sign up at the fair, you're more than welcome. I look forward to meeting you all.

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# Exec Columns

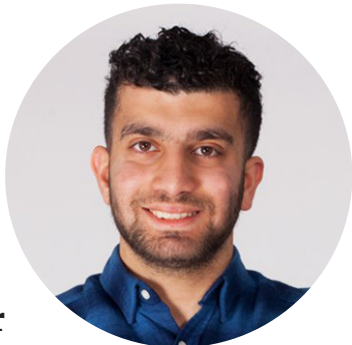


**Jack Palmer –  
Union Affairs Officer**

After a long Summer with an empty building, it's so good to have you lovely people back on campus and in the Union! This is my fifth (I know) and final Freshers. It went by in a haze of Fruity, Domino's pizza and welcome talks, but I wouldn't have had it any other way. The main work of the Union Upgrade is (thankfully) over, but we'll still be doing lots more ourselves to improve the building, so keep an eye out for exciting new developments like a new video gaming area and more.

I'm also excited to announce we've opened a new Coffee shop called Loft! It's based above Blackwells Bookshop opposite Laidlaw Library; it's student-led and all the profits go back into your Union, so go study there this week or book it for your society activities.

I've been working on a big training day for our Student Reps called 'Change Summit' which will focus on the students who represent your views at the 'Better Forums'. Forums are how we decide as a Union what to campaign on. You simply submit your idea of how to improve life in the Union, University or Leeds on our website and you could be shaping the Exec's work this year! Get in touch with me or look online for how you can lead LUU.



**Zaki Kaf  
Al-Ghazal –  
Education Officer**

Even though I've been involved in a fair few Freshers' Weeks this one was by far the best! I had a really unique insight looking at Freshers' in terms of preparation and getting ready and actively meeting students. From delivering induction talks on various programmes to visiting different Halls, speaking to Freshers about how Leeds University Union can hopefully be a huge part of students' time here reminded me why I got elected. My role is student facing so meeting so many new students was a brilliant opportunity. Also, we had the School Rep induction which gave me the chance to meet the new Reps and deliver training too. The cohort this year is particularly strong so I have high hopes!

I have a few pressing matters at the moment. So in early October I have the chance to present to the Pro Deans of Student Education across the university my aims and objectives and what I seek to achieve this coming year. My work on improving assessment methods is gathering pace and I will be included in various working groups. Chloe and I have been making progress in improving the personal tutor system and the university are on board in looking to change things. The first education assembly is coming up soon and with more School Rep training on the horizon there's lots to look forward to!



**George Bissett –  
Community Officer**

This was my fourth Freshers Week: my first as a staff member rather than a student. It differed this year in many ways. For one I was working 9 to 5 (usually later) every day. Quite a difference from sleeping through my induction talks. And this year I was delivering some of said talks rather than half-listening to them. I'm sure anyone fortunate enough to witness one of my welcome talks would agree they were seminal pieces of spoken prose. I also got the chance to chat with loads more society committees than in previous years.

My biggest priority at the moment is recruiting Community Reps who will help represent student interests at our Better Leeds Forums, as well as contribute their own ideas to how LUU can work to make sure every student loves their time living in Leeds. If you've read this far, you probably wouldn't mind working with me for the rest of the year. It's only take a few hours a week and is a great way to have a direct impact on what we do in the city for students. I'll even throw in an LUU lanyard (which gets you staff discount) to sweeten the deal. Contact me for the full info pack and application form. Applications close October 6 at noon, so make like Shia LaBeouf and do it.



**Jess Bassett –  
Activities Officer**

Wow. Freshers' was unreal. It was just so great to see the buzz around campus with so many students around. The highlight for me was of course, all of the clubs and societies fresher's fairs. It was amazing to see all of the hard working society committees encouraging students to take part and talking about their societies in such a passionate, friendly and welcoming way.

Did you know the Give it a Go programme is well and truly underway? In the past week I have learnt some sign language, rowed a boat and even been sorted into a house with the Harry Potter society. I have learnt so many new things and met so many great people in the past week and my plan is to continue to attend as many give it a go's as I can.

Following our fantastic success in the Varsity Rugby Finale last year, I am incredibly excited to see the University of Leeds go head-to-head once more with Leeds Beckett University. This year also sees the return of the Varsity parkrun and our netball Varsity opener, and the introduction of Leeds Varsity Festival, meaning more students than ever before will get involved. Last year seemed to be the closest we've been to taking the overall Varsity title, and I'm sure this year will be an equally exciting finish!



**Natasha  
Mutch-Vidal –  
Equality and  
Diversity Officer**

Freshers week was very hectic, giving welcome talks in lectures, running around to talk in halls, and still attending meetings and working on my priorities for the year! Despite the mayhem, it was great to welcome so many students to campus and to see everyone buzzing for the new academic year.

The next step after freshers for me is Black History Month. This year is the national 30th anniversary for Black history month and we have centred the month around self care and wellbeing but also healthy discussion and exploration. We continue to celebrate Black history month because we recognise that it is important to centre the voices of those whose narrative has structurally and systematically been silenced. I have worked hard to organise a programme of multiple events, from looking at the stigmatisation of traditional African spirituality to exploring black masculinity and getting some barbers to give free trims on campus!

I am also collecting data to support students from liberation backgrounds who undergo compulsory study abroad programmes. Another one of my priorities is working to see how the union and university can offer more support in general to students from low socio-economic backgrounds.



**Chloe Sparks –  
Welfare Officer**

Seeing different Welfare societies and campaigns was the absolute highlight of my Freshers' week. Other highlights included some Leeds classics; like buying a cactus and eating ton of free food. I'm excited to work with students, especially around mental health and wellbeing awareness.

Over summer I've been looking at how we can create a culture of consent here at Leeds, especially pushing the Ask Angela scheme. There's a lot more to be done to make sure campus has zero tolerance towards sexual harassment and violence, but I'm keen to keep working on this. I've also been discussing with the University how we can increase noting of sensitive reading and course content with students. This is needed so everyone can study confidently without anxiety or trauma.

The Advice Centre's big move to the Foyer has been going well, I hope to see even more students seeking the support they need through uni. This new space will continue to develop as we gather feedback throughout the term, but in the meantime I'm continuing to campaign for the welfare support we deserve here in Leeds and nagging the rest of Exec to make sure they have lunch and drink some water!

# Campus Watch

## 1 University of Stanford, California A visiting fellow at a California University, George Osborne takes his 7th job.

George Osborne has taken on a seventh professional role, and his third at a university, it has been announced.

Osborne, the editor of the London Evening Standard, among many other jobs, has been named a visiting fellow at Stanford University in California, the university said in a statement on Wednesday.

In addition to his newest role, Manchester University announced in June that Osborne had been made honorary professor of economics, an unpaid role in which he will deliver a handful of lectures each year.

Jonathan Levin, a dean at the university, defended the appointment. Osborne “brings deep policy and global experience to the GBS, and we look forward to the lively exchanges he will conduct in meetings and in the classroom throughout the coming academic year”

## 2 University of Lancaster Manchester United’s ‘Class of ‘92’ to open a university.

The new institution aims to teach students “how to understand finance, cope under pressure and maintain a healthy body and mind”.

University Academy 92, or UA92, the brainchild of former United right-back turned property developer, Gary Neville, and former teammates Ryan Giggs, Paul Scholes, Nicky Butt and Phil Neville, will open in Trafford in September 2019.

Unveiling the project, Neville, said in a statement: “Our aim is that UA92 graduates would leave with an academic qualification, of course, but also with a range of other skills such as how to deal with pressure, understand finance, leadership and presentational skills.

It is hoped that the new university, which is to be run in collaboration with the University of Lancaster, will attract 6,500 students every year by 2028.

## 3 University of Cardiff Students in Wales turn to payday loans to pay for luxury accommodation

Many students at Cardiff and Swansea university are paying £177.50 a week for studio flats due to the poor quality of private rented properties in the area.

A spokesman for NUS Cymru said many students could not afford decent accommodation and were being forced to live in properties with damp, and even rats, while studying.

“Not insubstantial amounts of students are taking out credit cards and payday loans and getting into financial trouble over all sorts of things including accommodation,” he said.

Both universities have seen substantial increases in student admissions, but the amount of student accommodation being built hasn’t kept pace with the number of new arrivals.






THE GRYPHON

INTRODUCTORY MEETING

Friday 29th 4:15-5pm



LUU Union Room 6

# Leeds Grad Seeks Employability Appportunity

Jonny Chard  
News Editor

A University of Leeds graduate has begun a digital venture which aims to bridge the gap between students nearing the end of their courses and employers.

George Biddle, aged 23, has created Signin, an app which gives students unique scores based on a variety of factors – such as grades, attendance record and work experience.

Employers are then able to use the scores to swiftly assess applicants for placements or graduate positions.

There are also opportunities for students to directly apply for jobs through the app, and Biddle hopes to introduce an integrated platform for video interviews in the near future.

He initially raised £30,000 to work on the service, with help from employers such as Bond Dickinson, and is looking for further investors with the hope of securing an extra £150,000 to be used for marketing and development.

Biddle came up with the idea whilst pondering the difficulties faced by graduates when

applying for graduate jobs and the difficulty faced by employers in their selection processes.

“There is a real need for students and employers to work closer together and match the right jobs to the right people,” he said.

“I am confident that Signin will help this matching process and revolutionise the way firms recruit.”

While studying at Leeds, Biddle was awarded a University of Leeds enterprise scholarship, supported by Harrogate business InTechnology, and a business start-up award.

“The place is buzzing with new talent and as the key digital centre outside of London, it really is the place to be,” he added.

Biddle is hoping that after positive talks, the app may be picked up by a number of accounting companies and several mid-size law firms.

# Leeds’ First Cat Café to Open This December

Rabeeah Moeen  
News Editor



The Kitty Cafe, a Nottingham-based cat cafe, now has a confirmed opening date in Leeds.

The location was announced last month as Kirkgate, and will open in Leeds on December 11.

This is the first cat cafe in West Yorkshire. The project was announced in April, however following several delays with building work, it is finally seeing an opening.

The menu will offer a variety of drinks and hot and cold dishes, with vegan and gluten-free options included.

Owner of the Kitty Cafe, Kate Charles-Richards, said Leeds was the first branch in their nationwide expansion.

She also said: “the majority of our cats are available for rehoming,” as the cafe doubles as a rescue centre.

# Maintenance Loans Leave Students Short

Rabeeah Moeen  
News Editor

The National Student Money Survey has revealed maintenance loans are leaving students short of £221 per month.

66% of students surveyed said that the maintenance loan was not enough money to live on, with 84% in total reporting that they suffered from financial hardship last year. The survey has estimated average university living costs are about £821 per month, therefore leaving students short on money.

This comes amid increased tuition fees and the scrapping of the maintenance grant, signalling an ever-rising concern for university costs.

The lack of money available from the maintenance loan is not a new result from the survey, which is run by student money website Save the Student, offering finance and budgeting advice. In previous years that the survey was run, they also found that maintenance loans were not enough for students.

The Save the Student website also explains how student finance works, with a recent 'Big Fat Guide to Student Finance 2017' published on their website. Now, they are calling for bigger loans that will cover the basic living costs.

Jake Butler, from Save the Student, said: "This shortfall is the most pressing issue with student loans, not the latest increases in fees and interest rate."

The shortfall in finances is expected to be filled by parents, with 71% of students surveyed answering that they rely on money from their parents to get by every month. This has increased since last year.

Undoubtedly, this makes it difficult for students who cannot turn to parents and family for extra finances, linking to the rise of students taking out payday loans and applying for bank overdrafts, which 67% of surveyed students did.

Emma, who just finished her second year, told Save the Student: "coming from a less fortunate background, money is a massive worry for me. I don't have the option to ask parents for money."

She also added that her loan does not cover her rent, wondering, "how am I supposed to live through university without enough money to cover rent?"

Half of all students in the survey said they have experienced mental health problems as a result of financial problems, with other saying diet, relationships and grades suffer because of it. The Student Money Survey is an annual survey, which this year polled over 2,000 students.



Image: Family Mint

# Council Calls for Uber–Strict Regulation

Jonny Chard  
News Editor

Leeds City Council has called for stricter regulations around taxi licensing, after Uber was refused a new license in the capital, by Transport for London.

The taxi company, used by over 3.5 million people and 40,000 drivers in London, was described as "not fit and proper" to operate, with London Mayor Sadiq Khan stressing that companies must "play by the rules".

With Uber set to appeal the ruling, developments are being monitored by authorities in Leeds, who are calling for stronger regulation.

Talking to the Gryphon, a Leeds Uber taxi driver who wished to remain anonymous, said that the current regulations still allow for drivers from other cities to operate in Leeds, which was concerning for accountability and security.

A spokesperson for the council stated that challenging policies and conditions had been implemented in Leeds to ensure public and taxi passenger safety.

"Passenger safety is our priority and Leeds City Council has raised its concern at the increase in numbers of 'out of district' private hire vehicles operating in Leeds, which includes Uber vehicles licensed by other councils.

"As such, we are lobbying for a stronger national licensing and enforcement approach to this issue."

At the time of writing, an online petition has been backed by over 500,000 signatories calling for TfL to reinstate Uber's license.



Image: Liberty Maher



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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



Somya Mehta  
Features Editor

# Life as a 'Third Culture Kid'

Does your accent change, depending on who you're talking to? Do you randomly slip foreign slang into your sentences? Have you spent absurd amounts of time on airplanes? If the answer to those questions is mostly a yes, you belong to the puzzling yet intriguing category of the Third Culture Kid (TCK). "But where are you really from?" comes as a dreaded question in the life of any TCK. Having spent a significant part of their lives outside of their parents' culture, TCKs are fighting a constant battle to define where 'home' is and where they belong. Is it where you were born, where you live now, where your parents are based, or where you've grown up? Surprisingly, the answers to all those questions don't have to be the same. 'Home', then, becomes more of a feeling than any particular place or country. The Gryphon explores what life as a Third Culture Kid means and the challenges it brings along.

"Each culture has shaped me in an indescribable way, making it impossible for me to define myself as one nationality"



Cato Habers

My parents are both from the Netherlands; I was born in Belgium but grew up in Thailand, Indonesia, Kenya, and am now studying in the UK. If someone were to ask me where I am from, without hesitation I would say I am from the Netherlands – but I could not call it my home. Even now, when I visit friends and family in the Netherlands, I feel like I am different.

Some days I sit down and think how I would have wanted stability growing up, but now I have come to realise that this instability has allowed me to grow. It has given me the ability to adapt to alien situations. Through the exposure of relocating to foreign countries, I have been able to discover countless unique cultures. Each culture has shaped me in an indescribable way, making it impossible for me to define myself as one nationality.

Each time my family left a country to relocate, I felt a mix of emotions; the sadness of missing how it used to be and knowing that it will never be the same again. Each time, it became a little more difficult to say goodbye. On the other hand, there was also this unexplainable excitement and curiosity of not knowing what was coming my way.

The beauty of being a Third Culture Kid is that in exchange of going through an emotional roller-coaster every now and then, you have an international community of people who are just like you. Seeing friends come and go is undoubtedly difficult, but they remain in your global network forever. Not having one home can be a beautiful thing. Growing up this way has made me realise that we are more connected than we think. The world isn't that big after all!

"Without having grown up in an international environment, I wouldn't be the person that I am today"



Salla Hyttinen

The hardest bit about being a Third Culture Kid is when you have to introduce yourself. I am physically very evidently Finnish. I have blonde hair, blue eyes, and very pale skin. So, when I say that I am from Hong Kong, the confusion on people's faces is only natural. I never really thought being from one country and growing up in another was strange, until I moved to the UK for university. I only really started to identify as a TCK, after I realised I didn't fit the normal 'international' student label. I don't look 'foreign', but on the inside, I am.

For many, 'foreign' sadly equates to 'non-western' (which is a debate for another time). People are often taken aback when I say that I am not from Europe. It is a strange situation to be in, to say the least, and it can even be quite lonely at times, because you don't fully identify to one culture or country. You're a mix of many. And because of that, you have a mix of ideals, traditions, expectations and so on. Even if I hang out with other Finns, I'm still an outsider because I am quite Hong Kongese in many aspects and vice versa.

To add to my complex internationality, I am the only person that I know of in Leeds that is Finnish and grew up in Hong Kong. Even back in Hong Kong, my family is the first and only (so far) fully Finnish family to have attended my high school. They even had to add an extra dot on the map of where students are from when I arrived!

But I would not change a thing. Without having grown up in an international environment, I wouldn't be the person that I am today. Growing up in Hong Kong meant that all my friends had different ethnicities, religions, traditions, languages etc., but none of that affected our friendships. We all automatically accepted our differences and tried to embrace each other's quirks as wholly as possible. Nothing was ever weird; simply different. As a result, I've learned to be open-minded. Not just at a surface level, but actually open to accepting people with vastly different lives and to really understand them, regardless of their appearance.





Image: Independent

“Home is not one place, but whichever place my family is at”



Bea Warleta

On an airplane window seat flying over Holland, or France, or somewhere in between, I look down at the dots of light forming splatters where the cities are, and sigh. It’s the start of a new academic year and I, like many others, am leaving home. But home is a little bit different for me.

I am what many call nowadays a Third Culture Kid. My dad moved across continents every four years and behind him, we followed: my mum, my sister, and I. We have proudly called six different countries home. My Spanish passport and my extended family living in Madrid have led me to nominate Spain as the main home, the real home, the OG. And yet, while I feel proud of my Spanish roots, I cannot help but feel out of place when I am there – perhaps even more so than I do when I am anywhere else. Maybe it’s because of the expectation for me to be ‘Spanish’, to be like everyone else there, and my inability to fulfil that expectation. But Spain only feels like home when I am not there. What a paradox.

When I first meet someone and they ask me where I’m from, that feeling emerges: uneasiness, doubt. When a friend talks about their own home, that feeling pops up again. Sometimes it appears out of nowhere, in those quiet moments at the library between reading and taking notes. I do not miss a specific place. When I think of home, I do not have nostalgia for concrete smells, a certain park I always went to, or even a certain group of friends from school.

I have nostalgia for plane rides with my sister and walking through the Amsterdam airport in the winter. I have nostalgia for the pack of Oreos we would buy after school in Beijing, for the Saturday lunches at the Thai place in Manila, for the endless Sunday nights watching movies, everywhere. Those are the moments that I miss; those are the moments I call home. The common denominator is always my family.

Home is not one place, but whichever place my family is at. It’s where the people I love are. And travelling and meeting new people every four years has ironically made that group of people smaller, not bigger. It has made me realise that the only ones who truly matter are the ones that will still text you after four years of living apart, the ones who will hop on planes to see you, the ones who will call you from a different continent when you need them to.

And the world can feel quite lonely when that handful of people are scattered all over it. I am and will forever be grateful for the privileges I’ve had, for the people I’ve met, for the places I’ve known. But I will always be a foreigner, wherever I am.

“Being a TCK has taught me how to open up to a variety of individuals. It’s like having a small United Nations community as your friends”



Camille Hanotte

I grew up in Kenya, whilst both my parents are Belgian nationals. My mother, who’s Italian, was born and bred in Belgium and is a third culture kid, just like me. And then there’s my dad, who could not get any more Belgian; waffles, beer, chocolate– you name it!

As far as I’m concerned, I feel obliged to identify as a Belgian, given my nationality. However, having just lived in Belgium for a year and a half, I don’t feel that’s completely accurate. And well, I wouldn’t identify as a Kenyan either. I was born and brought up there till the age of 10, but having left so early I could no longer identify to the place I once called home. And then there’s the UK. Despite having lived here for 8 years, the concept of North, South, Midlands banter is still an abstract concept. As a TCK I question my identity in all spheres, yet try to identify to another culture every time I’m given the opportunity.

Forgetting your words mid-sentence and having to say it in a foreign language is a concept well known to any TCK. Its fresher’s week; you meet new people, make new friends. After a hectic morning, the walk and small talk between classes is relaxing. Well, it seems so, until talking about halls, the bathroom and the shower. And then, the much-awaited question of “So, where is home?” comes up. I freeze, mid-sentence, looking at my new friends, the pressure increases, seconds pass, silence awaits and my brain feels numb. All that’s coming out of my mouth is an “ummmm...”, and I am only left with one choice: “La douche!”. After bursts of laughter, I’m red and have to explain my long-winded background... again.

I wouldn’t have it any other way. Being a TCK has taught me how to open up to a wide variety of individuals from all places. It’s like having a small United Nations community as your friends. As a TCK, you’re always willing to learn about different cultures and develop genuine respect towards diversity.

Interestingly, learning about someone else’s culture nurtures your own and makes you feel more grounded.

Being a TCK is all about a mishmash of cultural confusion and finding that comfortable safe space.



Alternative Freshers Experience

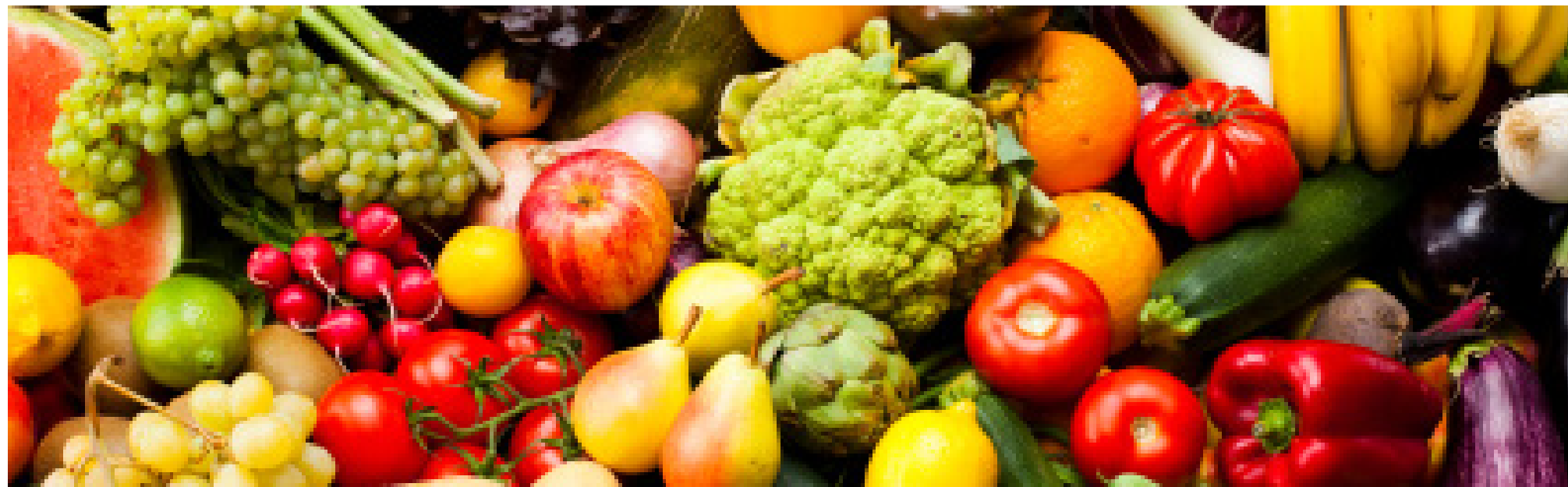
The After Glow

ROCK RAVE POP SUPERHERO LOVE ROCK RAVE POP SUPERHERO

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# Society Spotlight: Veg Soc



Vegetarianism and veganism are hot topics at the moment, and with recent reports suggesting that some students are spending in excess of £25 a week on their food shop, embracing non-meat (and therefore cheaper) eating habits could be a great step if you're feeling the squeeze. I posed some questions to Veg Soc president Ellie Carmichael to discover the benefits of going green at uni.

**Lara Groves**  
Society Editor

## Hi VegSoc! Could you tell us a bit about your society, and what the committee get up to?

Our society is designed to help support people who want to try being vegetarian or vegan by sharing recipes, tips and knowledge of veggie-friendly food or restaurants. It is also about meeting like-minded people who have the same ethical concerns. The committee get together on a regular basis to try and arrange events that we know our members would like. We also talk with local businesses to try and encourage them to include more vegetarian and vegan options on their menus. Veg Soc also have a very strong tie with local charities who help the homeless - we provide healthy and nutritious food, buy food for their dogs and source warm-clothes, tents and blankets for those who are unfortunately sleeping rough. We believe that it is important to be kind to everyone in our community and winter nights in Leeds get extremely cold very quickly!

## Why should our readers look into joining you?

Veg Soc is a supportive society with fantastic members and we aim to make sure all of our events are fun and enjoyable for everyone! We have loads of free food at our events, go for a lot of meals out, have cooking demonstrations with delicious food and go on city adventures together. I have met some of my closest friends through Veg Soc and really enjoy being part of such a strong community!

## Have you been introduced to new ways of cooking, or even new foods, thanks to Veg Soc?

In the past few years we have held a veggie sushi workshop, a pizza workshop, and made chocolate, cheese and nut-milk from scratch! Our events certainly have taught me a lot about how to make certain foods. And during our pot-luck meals, members often bring along food that I have never heard of or tried before, such as pulled-jackfruit, courgette scones and vegetarian haggis... I think it is fair to say that each event I learn something new or about a different way of cooking and using ingredients!

## Who can join? Are meat eaters welcome?

We try to be a very welcoming society and everyone is welcome to join including students, staff and those who don't come to Leeds Uni. We have a lot of people join our events who are curious about our society or want to give being veggie a go! It's a great way to learn some new healthy and affordable recipes.

## Can you tell us a bit about what events, socials etc you have planned?

On the 1st of October Veg Soc will be going to *Little Tokyo* - a restaurant with a great vegetarian and vegan menu - to celebrate World Vegetarian day, and will then be going for drinks afterwards at a nearby bar. Everyone is welcome, whether they are veggie or not! On the 8th of October we have our GIAG Autumn BBQ, where we will be trying loads of vegan burgers, sausages and kebabs. Other events that are coming up include a workshop at *LUSH* making a cruelty-free bath bomb, a movie night at the union, cooking demonstrations by local vegan chefs, a Halloween pot-luck dinner, handing out warm clothes to the homeless community, and plenty more!

## I think it would be fair to say that there has been a surge in people looking toward a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle in the past couple of years. What's your take on this? Why do you think such a change is happening?

I think with the increase in social media people are seeing the positive effects of a veggie lifestyle on the environment, their health and for animal welfare. There are now so many incredible vegan products available in shops from chocolate, Sunday roasts and haggis to Ben and Jerry's vegan ice-cream! It is so easy to eat vegan now and every year I think more people are curious about it. I know a lot of people who have tried to go vegan for a month, simply to challenge themselves, and now they have been vegan for years!

## What would you say to the people that think it's a fad or a trend to be veggie or vegan?

The majority of veggies are veggie or vegan for numerous reasons, including environmental concerns, health implications, religious beliefs, cost and concerns about animal welfare. But, like with anything, there are people who follow a veggie or vegan lifestyle because it's the latest trend.



There are so many important reasons why people don't consume animal products but whatever the reason they all have a positive effect on the environment and on animal welfare!

## Lastly, what is your favourite vegetarian or vegan dish?

I LOVE gnocchi! Half way between pasta and potato, it really is the best of both worlds and super quick to make. Any meal with gnocchi is going to be amazing but my favourite is with fried courgette, mushrooms and sun-dried tomatoes, with a pesto sauce. Delicious!



# Society Spotlight: Real Ale Soc



Image: The Duck &amp; Drake

A huge part of Freshers, and University in general, is the drinking culture. So it seems fitting to tell all you freshers and refreshers about the Real Ale Society, so that you won't be stuck having VKs and vodka mixers for the next three years. I reached out to committee member Dot and asked her some questions to find out all things beer and ale.

**Will Nelson**  
Real Ale Enthusiast

## What is your society? And what does it do?

We bring together lovers of real ales, craft beer and even cider to socialise and learn more about the creation of these drinks and their history. Our events include pub crawls in Leeds and elsewhere, brewery tours, tastings, pub quizzes and even a trip abroad to Prague.

## It's currently Oktoberfest – what do you recommend for students to take part in?

Visit Headrow House for 'Oktoberfest'. Until the 7th October there will be plenty of great German beer to be had alongside some Bavarian street food. We also have a Briggate pub crawl planned – check out our Facebook page: @LUU Real Ale Society

## What drinks do you recommend to freshers?

We try to gauge how much they know already and try to work out what styles they prefer from there. Beer preference is a very personal thing so we generally just recommend trying small amounts of as many beers as possible to better understand what you like best!

**“Beer preference is a very personal thing so we recommend trying small amounts of as many beers as possible to better understand what you like best!”**

## What classifies as a 'Real Ale'?

The definition given by CAMRA (The Campaign for Real Ale) is “Real Ale is a beer brewed from traditional ingredients (malted barley, hops, water and yeast), matured by secondary fermentation in the container from which it is dispensed, and served without the use of extraneous carbon dioxide”. The mention of how it is served means that traditionally 'Real Ales' are served from casks when you buy them in pubs. Although our name is the 'Real Ale Society' this does not mean we have to just drink these types of beers. In fact almost all of us enjoy or even prefer the mod-

ern craft beers that are often served from kegs not casks.

## What is the worst ale you've ever had (so probably avoid this one)?

Probably a cherry stout by Tyne Bank Brewery. It's rare that I have to pour a beer down the sink after opening it but this was one of those times! It almost put me off ale for life.

## And what's the best?

One that stands out in my mind is '8 Mansions' by Verdant (from Cornwall), a 9% double IPA. It had just the right balance between sweetness and bitterness and was so intense you had to wait a few minutes between sips! But obviously what is best and worst is completely subjective and dependent on whatever mood you're in.

**“Students should never feel pressured to drink – we believe it is a more positive thing if you are drinking a drink you actually enjoy!”**

## Should students feel the need to be 'sophisticated' drinkers?

Students should never feel the need to drink or be pressured into drinking. However, we believe it is a more positive thing if you are drinking a drink you actually enjoy, and not just so you get drunk. Whether it is sophisticated or not is for the individual to decide.

## Finally, why should people be a part of your society?

Membership is only £5 for the entire year and through event discounts, free food and drink at events, discounted accommodation for trips, and beer festival tokens you will make your money back in no time. Our society provides a way for students that aren't at all familiar with the city of Leeds and the surrounding areas a chance to discover some hidden gems. Finally, we're a very friendly bunch and probably the least intimidating society there is to join as our events are so informal – we are much less nerdy about beer than you probably perceive us to be!





# In The Middle

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

# Credits

**Editor-in-Chief**

Reece Parker  
editor@thegryphon.co.uk

**In The Middle  
Associate Editor**

Anastasia Roe  
inthemiddle@  
thegryphon.co.uk

**Music**

Meg Firth  
Hollie Griss  
Rhiannon Skye-Boden  
Clare Redman  
music@thegryphon.co.uk

**Clubs**

Dan King  
Milly Whyman  
clubs@thegryphon.co.uk

**Fashion**

Lydia Varney  
Ellie Tattam  
Stephanie Waring  
Sara Al-Humiri  
Darla Dryland  
fashion@thegyrphon.co.uk

**Arts**

Stephanie Bennett  
Mikhail Hanafi  
Rose Crees  
Natasha Lyons  
arts@thegryphon.co.uk

**Lifestyle and Culture**

Jade Verbick  
Bella Davies  
Charlie Green  
Olivia Raine  
lifestyle@thegryphon.co.uk

**Blogs**

Marianna Avelino  
Emily Merrill  
  
blogs@thegryphon.co.uk

**Design**

Alissa Lad  
Carys Norfor  
Jenny Thomas

**Front Cover**

Photograph by Robbie Cairns

**Back Cover**

Photograph by Izzy Kynoch



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# Erased Tapes is Ten



**London's Southbank Centre, the hub of the UK arts scene, showcased an array of artists from Erased Tapes Records, as part of the label's ten-year anniversary celebrations. Kieran Blyth fills us in on how the evening went.**

The short walk between Waterloo underground station and Southbank Centre is always jam-packed with enchanting excitement, but the anticipation ahead of Erased Tapes' ten-year celebrations felt even more special. Having championed an impressive diversity of musical styles over the last decade, including big names such as Ólafur Arnalds, Nils Frahm and Rival Consoles, the London-based record label brought almost every artist together for its honorary ten-year celebrations.

The two-day event kicked off with a concert in the Clore Ballroom from composer Michael Price. Building upon delicate and meditative piano chords, the luscious string melodies of Peter Gregson and the warming harmonies of Shards Voices provided unsuspecting visitors with some pleasant lunch hour tunes. As evening arrived, soulful singer/songwriter Douglas Dare took centre-stage with the minimal setup of just his own keyboard accompaniment with Fabian Prynne on drum kit. Despite being exposed, Dare delivered each note with flawless precision, whilst also creating a wonderfully intimate atmosphere. As he delved into his innermost thoughts during 'Caroline', he stood from his keyboard with grace to finish the song a cappella distancing the gap between himself and his audience.

Ukrainian pianist Lubomyr Melnyk provided instances of more philosophically-driven art: he began his concert with a five-minute speech about the issues of materialism and expressed the need to appreciate more of the beauty of our world, before sinking into his beloved piano. His rapid and continuous clusters of notes welded into a single stream of sound, resulting in a form of music that transcended the constraints of time and carried the listener out of the concert hall and into an empty space filled only with sound. Minimalist-jazz trio Dawn of Midi also produced a similar transcendental effect, as they exhibited their astounding rhythmic flexibility, effortless groove shifts and slowly-transforming piano timbres, mesmerizing the audience for an hour without pause.

Enough listening, it was time for moving. Within seconds of taking to the stage, Nordic electronica duo Kiasmos turned the audience of attentive listeners into liquid dancers, becoming perhaps the only act to have ever transformed the Royal Festival Hall into a rave. Yet this was not out of place; the classical influences of Ólafur Arnalds melted perfectly with the electronic craft of Janus Rasmussen, combining the best of both worlds, whilst simultaneously defying the twain's genre expectations.

An equally-as-captivating stage entrance came from Peter Broderick, but to opposite effect. Out of the tranquil silence of the hall, his unmiked a cappella voice remarkably filled what is the largest venue in which he has ever performed, before descending upon the piano for 'Below It'.

With a little help from friends David Allred and Greg Haines, Broderick offered staggering variety by hopping between piano, violin and guitar before landing on a stack of vocal and beatbox loops for 'I've Tried'. Once again, the Royal Festival Hall was transformed, but this time into a laboratory in which Broderick could fulfil the demands of his charismatic quirk.

The celebrations drew to a close with the charming Penguin Café. An array of colourful

dresses, flat caps and waistcoats, before the background of tall plants, provided a beautiful surface to the plethora of elegant pieces. Having frolicked through much of their recent album, *The Imperfect Sea*, the penguins marched off stage to allow composer and pianist Arthur Jeffes to unfurl heart-warming pieces from his late father and founder of the original Penguin Café Orchestra, Simon Jeffes. The result was a humbling mould of both father and son in spirit, working together on such beautiful and sprightly music that it left you jiving and whistling all the way home. A perfect end to a perfect weekend.

Over the course of the event, Erased Tapes have shown just how pioneering a label they are, making a huge statement at the epicentre of UK arts with a wide spectrum of talent on offer. No doubt, there will be many an eager ear to follow the label through the next ten years.

**Kieran Blyth**





# In The Middle with: Mount Kimbie

**Lucy Milburn sits down with London electronic duo Mount Kimbie to discuss their new album *Love What Survives*, working between LA and London, and upcoming collaborations with King Krule and James Blake.**

“We’ve actually been spending a lot of time back in the studio,” Dominic Maker reveals when I ask what Mount Kimbie have been up to in the week since their third album ‘*Love What Survives*’ was released. As a band with a strong work ethic, they’re “trying to keep the momentum going” following its much-anticipated release.

It’s taken four years for Mount Kimbie to produce a follow-up to 2013’s understated *Cold Springs Fault Less Youth*. Their talent for production was unquestionable but they seemed to struggle for direction. “We did a lot of banging our heads against the wall,” Dominic explains. “We were trying to work out what we actually found exciting.” Reflecting on the past few years, Dominic recalls his disillusionment and how a break has left Mount Kimbie feeling reenergised. “We took a year off and finally caught up on the years missed with our friends and family. We needed that break to feel excited about making music again. At the time, we were just down in the dumps and no longer interested in what we were doing. We feel rejuvenated now.” Mount Kimbie have certainly found their groove again and, imbued with a greater sense of creative freedom, they are raring to release more music in 2018. When I asked about his ambitions for the next year, both personal and professional, Dominic tells me that “in terms of a new album, we want to do something pretty quickly after *Love What Survives*. I want to spend more time with my friends and family but as far as the band goes, we just want to keep making music – we don’t want it to be another four years until our next release!”

*Love What Survives* is noticeably more upbeat and melodic than the band’s previous ventures. Dominic explains that this new sound happened organically. “It definitely came naturally. It’s the same with everything that we do – nothing is staged and

nothing is discussed.” The album features an eclectic blend of musical personalities so I was interested to hear about Dominic’s favourite track from the record. “T.A.M.E.D, for sure. I like it because everyone who was involved in creating the track also sings on it.” A whole host of collaborators lent their colourful vocals to the record including King Krule, James Blake and Micachu. “They’re all people that we know quite well and it felt very right to have each individual person on a certain track. We played what we had created at the time to everyone who was involved and they chose a track that they felt a connection with and it went from there!” It’s clear to me that the collaborations had an impact on the album’s direction.

Dominic has recently relocated to LA whilst bandmate Kai Campos remains in London, making *Love What Survives* an album of a truly transatlantic nature. However, it turns out that the distance didn’t have a noticeable effect on the album’s production. “It didn’t really affect what we wanted to do! We did a few successful sessions out there with James [Blake] but I’ve been spending most of my time in London.” On his new-found confidence, Dominic notes that “it’s been a long time since our last album and it’s great to finally have something out there. I’m really happy with the album!”

In the next couple of months, the band have a long string of tour dates in the UK and Europe: “They’re going to be live shows with live instrumentation. We’ve got a really nice band and we can’t wait to get out there and play some new songs. I’m really looking forward to touring.” With shows planned in all corners of the continent, Dominic is looking forward to Berlin the most. However, he assures me that “every date feels important to us. It’s amazing to be able to go out on the road and play songs with my best friends”.

Mount Kimbie’s career has been plagued by lazy stereotypes – ‘post-dubstep’ is often a buzzword in their interviews – but the band continue to produce music that is innovative, genre-bending and carefully crafted. I asked Dominic if he had any advice for the many Leeds students producing their own electronic music. “I’ve got a lot of friends who are producing their own music,” he replies. “I would say that not trying to copy anyone else is very important. No matter how odd your ideas are, if you pursue and believe in them enough, you’ll be fine.”

*Love What Survives* is out now on Warp records.

Lucy Milburn

**“We took a year off and finally caught up on the years missed with our friends and family. We needed that break to feel excited about making music again.”**





**Working as part of the After-Festival Recycling Crew at the UK’s largest festival, Sarah Martin debates whether or not the payment of a free ticket was worth all the bin juice and poo.**

Is it just me or are festival ticket prices getting a little extortionate? As a student fresh from the education machine, broken and penniless, the thought of spending £200 on anything is enough to make your knees wobble. Take Glastonbury, for example. To get your hands on one of the most sought-after festival tickets in Europe, you will need to empty your pockets of £243, including booking fee. That’s nearly £60 more than in 2010 and a whopping £156 more than in 2000. The tickets themselves are as elusive as Theresa May’s Brexit promises, and immeasurably more popular, so even if you do miraculously have £243 disposable income straight out of university, you’d be hard pressed to get your hands on one.

Alas, do not lose hope, because this summer I went out of my way to outsmart capitalism and tour some festivals completely free. I worked Glastonbury, Greenman and Deershed. Whilst bartending at Greenman and stall managing at Deershed were both great experiences, nothing can quite contend with the adventures Glastonbury gave me.

**The Beginning...**

It is 6:30am on Tuesday 20th June in a small Welsh village. The air is moist with dew, our eyes are moist with sleep and the coffee is luxuriously, upliftingly moist. The morning sun has turned the garden into a glittering wonderland worthy of the hashtag ‘oufitinspo’. It was time for my pals and I to set off on the road to Glastonbury.

We are all part of the After-Festival Recycling Crew. This means we get tickets to the festival for free, subject to paying a deposit, but spend four days after the festival picking up litter and being part of the overall clean up. We also arrive a day before the tidal wave of general ticket holders, which means skipping out on the 10-hour queues. I had never worked a festival before and so had no idea what to anticipate. I had no money at the time but could not face a summer of living at home and working at a pub again, working at festivals seemed like a good alternative. All I knew was: I was going to Glastonbury, and Radiohead were headlining. As we set off on the motorway, gasping feebly at pockets of air squashed between sleeping bags, tent bags, food bags and bags of wine, the Radio 1 DJ over-enthusiastically begins to play an eclectic selection of thumping EDM. We look at each other, laugh, and turn the volume up. It is a perfect start-as-we-mean-to-go-on moment.

**Fast-forward to exactly a week later...**

It is 6:30am on Tuesday 27th June. I am stood in a pool of bin juice, in a recycling warehouse that smells overwhelmingly of bin juice, surrounded by bags, full of rubbish producing copious amounts of bin juice. We are clad in protective white jumpsuits made of tissue paper, shuffling miserably through the puddles. Imagine that scene from E.T. remade into an ominous, post-apocalyptic film about the consequences of global warming.

Glastonbury is finished, and all that remains are hundreds of tents left abandoned on the hillside, their ghostly silhouettes a haunting reminder of the wastefulness of festival culture. The tin cans strewn like tattered trophies amongst the foliage are an all-too-palpable reminder of the immense hangover. We were the only human life that remained. In the warehouse, our job was to empty bags of rubbish onto conveyor belts, the contents of which were sorted into categories and thrown into bins. Everybody was in a team of nine or ten, which helped to boost morale and the overall ‘vibe’.

Initially, it was a shock. Walking straight from Glastonbury onto the set of a Greenpeace advert condemning the damaging environmental effects of hedonism was a lot to handle. The combination of mountains of bin bags, the sweet sickly smell of rot and just a tent to call home only added to the post-festival fragility. What’s more, it was impossible to predict what combination of half-decomposed detritus would be coming out of the bags. It wasn’t just normal rubbish either, there were prams, sleeping bags, tents, chairs, hats, coats, and an endless stream of unopened beverages. It looked as if people had quite literally left their lives behind in the fields.

My most memorable discovery, and probably most told festival story of all time, was unearthing an enormous pile of human turd. It came down the conveyor belt deftly concealed amongst some tissues and paper plates, hunched like a crouching tiger. Its contents unbeknownst to me, I lifted the tissues to chuck them towards “Compost” and in the process unveiled the big brown present. It fell to the conveyor with a resounding slap. I wanted to run away from the steaming pile of stranger’s faeces and never look back. But we had a duty; to the environment, to the people who put so much effort into making the festival happen and to ourselves. So, I fought the urge to run and carried on. The first Encounter of the Turd Kind is always the worst, and the first is never the last. I personally had three and my friend Kris even discovered a poop caked wine bottle. Maybe attempting to relieve oneself into obscure containers is the new FAD.

**Was it all worth it?**

Absolutely. Despite all this, Glastonbury was the time of my life and it was all free. I got to cry at Radiohead, leap ferociously to Fatboy Slim and make my parents jealous with Chic. The benefits were numerous; free meals, staff showers, free phone charging services to name a few. And if being on the Recycling Crew has taught me anything, it is that no festival is perfect. On the surface Glastonbury is a utopian, hippie wonderland, yet behind-the-scenes the sheer amount of filth produced during one weekend is mind-boggling. Not all hope is lost, though, because it is possible to make a difference. I felt a lot more satisfied earning my way into the festival and being part of the enormous communal effort that makes Glastonbury possible. To anyone who is strapped for cash but wanting to have a good summer, working and volunteering at festivals is a great opportunity.

Sarah Martin



# Album Roundup

## Concrete & Gold by Foo Fighters



Right from the intro track, you can tell this album is going to be a mess of poorly-executed radio-rock clichés. The first half of the record is actually alright, with the singles ‘Run’ and ‘Sky is a Neighbourhood’ revealing solid, if not a bit too safe, nods to the band’s past efforts.

Yet ‘Make It Right,’ is terrible, and ‘La Dee Da’ isn’t much better, managing to be political commentary without saying anything meaningful whatsoever. Elsewhere, ‘Dirty Water’ and ‘Arrows.’ Why? They both had such potential; potential which was utterly decimated by ill-suited vocals and bizarre lyrics.

The intro to ‘Sunday Rain’ contains the first good melodies you’ll hear on the record, despite the vocals being reminiscent of late 90’s boy-bands. The short solo halfway through is simply atrocious, followed by an awkward drum fill that doesn’t fit whatsoever.

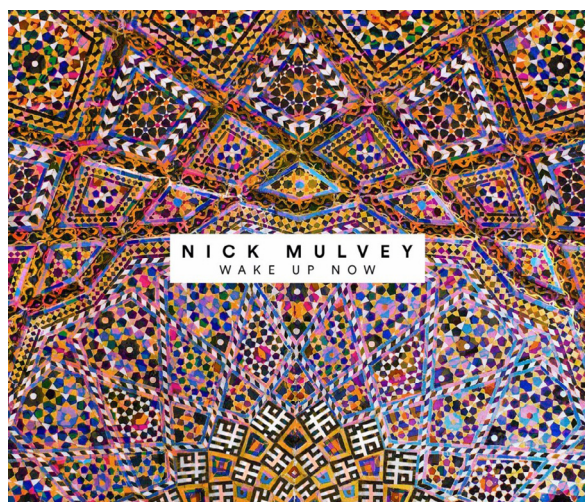
This album constantly sounds like it’s trying to be emotional without ever giving any reason as to why. It’s utterly meaningless. Generic riff after generic riff, always trying to sound moving, only to end up sounding whiny.

The reverberated guitar in the eponymous final track is promisingly intriguing. Too bad the rest of the song is so boring. Perhaps this album would sound better to those that were unaware of all of the clichés that this album is claiming for its own.

I have to give the Foo Fighters credit for trying to switch up their sound, but they fail completely on this record. Their attempt at reinvention is nothing more than imitation.

**Zack Moore**

## Wake Up Now by Nick Mulvey



Stepping beyond the enviable standards he set in his memorable debut, *First Mind*, Nick Mulvey saturates new album *Wake Up Now* with worldly elements in what feels like a natural and well-realised evolution. Covering the globe in 51 minutes, bassy syncopated drum beats, sitar-inspired guitar riffs, eerily harmonic vocal chants, and rupturing tribal horns leave you with the distinct feeling that you have shifted continent eleven times; that the foundations of your home are no longer so secure.

Above all of this breathtaking instrumentation, Mulvey’s distinctly raspy guitar sound throbs with an irrepressible heart. There’s a fragility too; a hushed serenity that lends itself to pure articulations rather than anything hyper-constructed or artificial. This delicacy allows Mulvey’s lyrics an authenticity that is hard to ignore, as he speaks eloquently on issues of environmental destruction, the pressures of fatherhood, and the ongoing impacts of the refugee

crisis– with the proceeds of his single ‘Myela’ going to Help Refugees UK. Alongside these words is the female vocalist that shadows Mulvey’s every move. Each song is like revisiting an old notebook you wrote a lifetime ago, reminding yourself of a time you somehow allowed yourself to forget. None so much as ‘In Your Hands’, a song which seems to sit you down in your own private cinema and play your life in reverse, dreamily carrying you through every first encounter, awkward kiss, win, loss, and sacrifice until you realise how every one of those moments has brought you to this exact point. And although each song tells its own story, they all seem connected, an endless stream of paths crossing at un-signposted intersections, to the extent that you can almost see your previous-self passing you by on roads you have already walked, are walking, and will continue to walk down.

**Robert Cairns**

## Music from Before the Storm by Daughter



Daughter’s latest release, *Music from Before the Storm*, is quite different to their 2016 album ‘Not to Disappear’. This is because this album was actually written as the soundtrack to the video game, *Life is strange: Before the storm*. This is an interesting move for the folk/indie band. Explaining the decision in a press statement lead singer, Elena Tonra said that the band was “honoured” to work on the soundtrack for a game that “centres around realistic female lead characters who are emotional, intelligent, sensitive and badass in equal measure”.

The album still features the melancholy, peaceful sound that the band have become so known and loved for, but the music is very much that of a soundtrack, rather than an independent album. The tracks follow a pattern of a simple melody, which is developed gradually into a complex soundscape. ‘Music from Before the Storm’ is incredibly atmospheric, with each track seeming to convey a different feeling or landscape.

‘Burn it down’ is probably the only track that could possibly be viewed as a song in its own right, with a recognisable tune and chorus. The other tracks are indisputably part of a larger soundtrack. My personal highlight from the album was ‘Flaws’. A very short track at only 2 minutes 53 seconds, it exemplifies the talent that Daughter clearly have for creating an atmosphere. Opening with a simple piano melody and building to a booming climax with Tonra’s hauntingly pure voice soaring overhead. It is a beautiful example of how music can create a powerful emotional landscape.

Overall the album is a stunning musical achievement for the band, different to anything they have produced before. It should be listened to as an entire album perhaps on a long train journey or before bed, but don’t expect to be singing along.

**Katie O’Kelly**





# Pretty Pretty Good Present: Palms Trax

Despite only laying on infrequent visits to *Wire*, *Pretty Pretty Good* have established a reputation for serving up brilliant, sweaty nights. This visit, headlined by the Berlin-based *Palms Trax*, was no different. Considering the night was hosted on a freezing Wednesday, the event was hotly anticipated. Long queues swamped *Wire*'s tiny staircase with those turned away at the doors so keen for entry they were offering far over face value for a ticket. It's clear that people were desperate to go and the event which followed proved why. Billed as a techno night, *Palms Trax* played mostly Detroit techno and house, but also threw in Italo house tunes and even a couple of bassline tracks that got a great response. There was some disco, acid house, Balearic, and funk as well, over the top of the obligatory woody, thumping kick drum. For those unaware, *Palms Trax* is a DJ and producer who rose to fame with his EP 'Equation', released in 2013. He's currently touring, having touched down for another PPG event in Sheffield the night prior. The next time to catch him in the north is at *Warehouse Project*'s upcoming *Dekmantel* event, an event already creating a huge degree of anticipation.

Despite the overall genre of music being techno, there were a myriad of other elements. Bubbling old school acid house 303 synthesisers mingled with staccato piano chords, and even a couple of tracks bucked the trend with the inclusion of vocals. This was all delivered from *Wire*'s supremely fantastic sound system. Usually you don't notice sound quality too much at events like these but *Wire*'s is a cut above the rest. The low ceiling and fairly narrow room meant that the sound hit you in the gut and kept going. This, coupled with the copious amount of dry ice and moving strip lights, meant *Palms Trax* ser was an intense and thrilling experience. Here's to hoping he returns to Leeds in the near future.

Will Ainsley

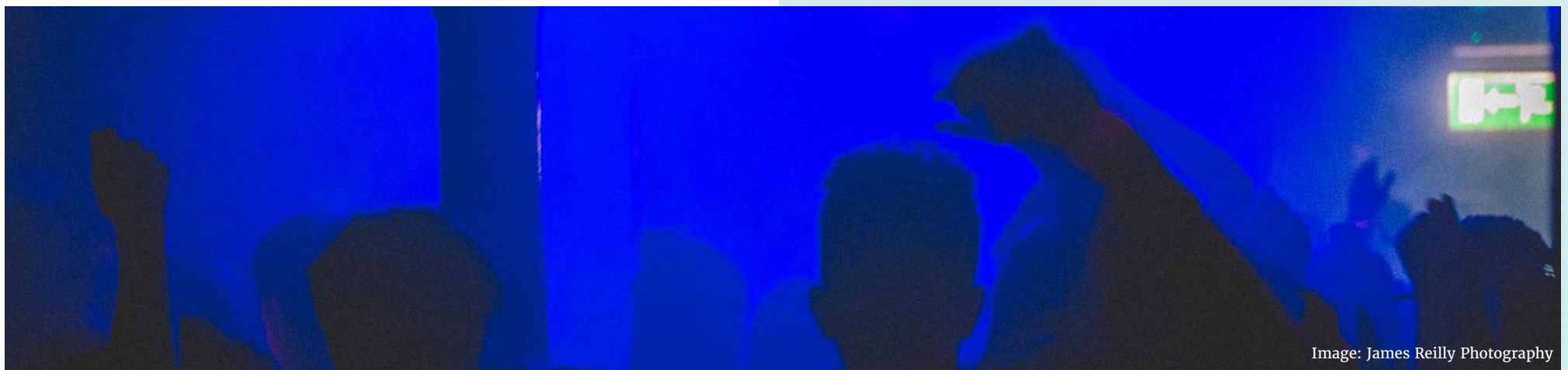


Image: James Reilly Photography

## Flux Opens Freshers

Already a well-established club night on the Beaverworks rota, *Flux* provides a haven of music variety. Despite its recognition for showcasing some of the biggest and best names in the house and techno music industries, *Flux* caters for all tastes, serving up no less than six rooms of music. For this year's Opening Party, it was the turn of *DJ Tennis* and *Voyeur* to entertain the crowds in the Main Room. Despite the pull of the big names, the best of *Flux* is experienced when hopping from one room to another, seeking niche sets and a variety of genres.

Up first was *Ranyue* who played a relatively easy-going set, serving as an ideal warm-up for the night in the Bar area. It's always encouraging to see female DJs playing at an established venue in such a male-dominated industry, particularly when they're creating a unique blend of Eastern and disco influences in their sets. As the night went on, the Basement soon filled up to see Leeds alumni *Dan Shake* step up to the decks, pleasing the crowd with his techno-heavy set.

For those looking for a reprieve from the house and techno stages, then head to the Warehouse for some disco belters. Reminiscent of *Hifi*, you can sing your heart out to the likes of *Kool & The Gang*, *Michael Jackson* and *The Human League*. In this case, *Reuben* was the star of the show, seamlessly blending 70's Disco belters with techno beats and mixes. A good place to wrap up the night is in the Basement again, where *Jeremy Underground* took us into the early hours of the morning with a unique merging of techno with elements of disco. Ten minutes into his set and queues were already forming outside the Basement to see him, cementing *Jeremy*'s place as a firm Leeds favourite. Next up for *Flux* in Leeds is their Halloween party on Tuesday 31st October. Tickets are already on third release, and you can visit Resident Advisor for more information on dates later this year and 2018.

Clare Redman



Image: Wisdom Makubile





# Songs To Make You Forget About The Rain

Admin – Ok Carlos

“Picture yourself on a sandy beach with a peach daquiri and give this a spin”. Rarely does a YouTube description sum up a song in such a simple and effective way. The low thud of the beat perfectly compliments the piano and the Santana drum sample, and the strummed guitar whisks you away to the white sand Rio de Janeiro. Forget your sodden shoes for a few minutes and try to recall those post exam days in the Hyde Park sun.

O’Flynn – Tru Dancing

Beat those September blues with a peak time festival hit from rising Irish star O’Flynn. Building up and down, the song transitions smoothly from tribal percussion into a disco number, and back again. Another track to cement his reputation as a gifted producer. Available for free download if you’re so inclined.

Voilaaa (feat. Sir Jean) – Spies Are Watching Me

A regular feature of the mighty Antal’s set early this summer, French producer Voilaaa takes inspiration from African and Caribbean music in the main single from his 2015 debut album. A song that is a joy to listen from start to finish, from the surly lyrics of Sir Jean to the sax solo and back again. Nothing can rain on this disco track.

Marcus Valle – Dia D

Brazilian master musician Marcus Valle will make you feel good again with his simply incredible keyboard playing. Tap your foot to the beat with a smile on your face as the soulful singing helps you remember than one day, hopefully, you’ll be able to leave the house without a jumper or coat and enjoy the great outdoors.

Joanne Ellis – Bye Baby

A music compilation of forgotten funk & soul tracks from the late 70’s and early 80’s is the perfect remedy for wet and windy nights spent alone in your room. A highlight is definitely this Joanne Ellis song, with her sassy and infectious voice glossing wonderfully over the funky bass. Just stick it on and enjoy.

Lawrence Cwerner

# Clubbing With A Conscience

**The Leeds nightlife scene caters for far more than just its attendees, with many events donating large quantities of money to charity. Editor-In-Chief Reece Parker gives us the run-down on such events.**

The morning after any enjoyable night out, you could be forgiven for thinking that clubbing never did anyone good. One movement currently sweeping Leeds aims to buck this trend, going against the grain of the hedonism driven parties that dominate our city. This movement is ethical clubbing, which aims to couple good quality music with the good will of charity.

The most prominent of these events is Brudenell Groove. Formed from a close knit group of DJ’s, each event they run donates all its profits to a group of charities. Organisations they have provided for range from those on an international scale, such as WaterAid, whilst arecent party at Wire was held in support of Student Minds Leeds and Carers Leeds. Recently, they’ve also focused on perhaps the most pressing issue in Leeds, tackling homelessness through organisations such as Simon on the Streets and St George’s Crypt. Other Leeds events with the same ethos include that of Kontra, who teamed up with other local DJ’s to run a fundraiser for Basis, a Leeds based charity which provides safety, information and support for female sex workers.

These events owe a massive debt to Rich Reason and his Food for Thought parties. Based in neighbouring Manchester, Rich permitted attendees at these events to pay with non-perishable food items rather than buying tickets. Such a scheme was adopted by the Leeds based The Good Vibes Collective, who delivered an event which raised £355 in cash and 347 food items for the Trussel Trust, who co-ordinate food banks nationwide. Ever a supporter of the movement, Rich Reason played the event for free alongside members of Manchester based collective Levelz.

With Leeds currently gripped by a rise in homelessness, food bank usage and unemployment, the importance of community led activism has become paramount. The city’s student population, often derided for their lack of real life effectiveness, are right at the forefront of this.

Reece Parker



# Atheleisure: Beneficial or Damaging to Society?



Image: Odyssey

**Ellie Tattam gives us an insight into the growing Athleisure trend and its increasing impact on society.**

Who could doubt the latest fashion fads positive impact on society? Athleisure strikes most as one of the best trends to infiltrate the fashion industry, encouraging a healthy, balanced lifestyle in aspiration to the trends. Eat clean, look lean, right? However, Athleisure undoubtedly is a questionable impression on today's society, particularly when considering the impossible images of fitness gurus and Instagram celebrities plastered all over social media. Thus again, fashion follows its reputation by introducing an impossible appearance society strives for, and possibly taking unhealthy measures to do so.

To first consider the initial positive aspects of the trend dominating society for the last few years, social media is becoming an accessible way for those aspiring for an improvement on their diets, their exercise routines and their appearance, whilst taking on these fabulous new lifestyle transformations, to find the resources they need without paying extortionate prices for a personal trainer or other exclusive guidance. Several stars taking over social media such as the likes as Steph Claire Smith (Adidas and Clinique ambassador) and 'Lauren Fitness' (Lauren Tickner, StrengthFeed), from one perspective, really are encouraging healthier lifestyles across society. Steph Claire Smith introducing her *Keep it Cleaner* programme and regularly posting encouraging content to inspires people to achieve a healthy, muscular physique in the right way, just as Lauren similarly encouraging followers to be body confident and embrace and enhance their strength, an issue sometimes particularly conflicting for women afraid of becoming 'too muscular'. Therefore, on the one hand, said ambassadors such as Steph and Lauren really strive to make a positive impact amongst society and demonstrate a healthier way to achieve body confidence and desirable physiques in the right way.

Saying this, there is also an array of negative attachments to this rising trend that stay hidden beneath the surface. Firstly, Athleisure has become something grossly over spread with even value retailers such as Primark. Although, of course, inspiration to collect your gear to start getting active is a positive aspect, the spread of those stocking and chiefly promoting Athleisure fashion is becoming very repetitive and, in a way, losing the purpose behind the fashion trend. Focus should remain on promoting better lifestyles through this whilst retailers also reap the benefits. However, this view point is taken from the idea that Athleisure is deeper than a standard fashion trend, although many would see it as solely just that.

Moreover, we need to consider the reverse side of the plastering of social media fitness gods and goddesses all over our screens to unhealthy measures. Despite what we see, what we read, all the advice we are given by these gurus of health knowledge, society is accustomed to one thing, appearance. As well as the reality of knowing to obtain such a sculpted and desirable physique, there comes a lot of hard work which is another aspect society tends to struggle with and instead tries to promote quick fix fitness. Thus, the athleisure trend leading to the opposite of what it is promoting and many people will develop eating disorders, unhealthy exercise patterns and obsessions with self-image, all to obtain that goal figure and flaunt the latest Athleisure gear.

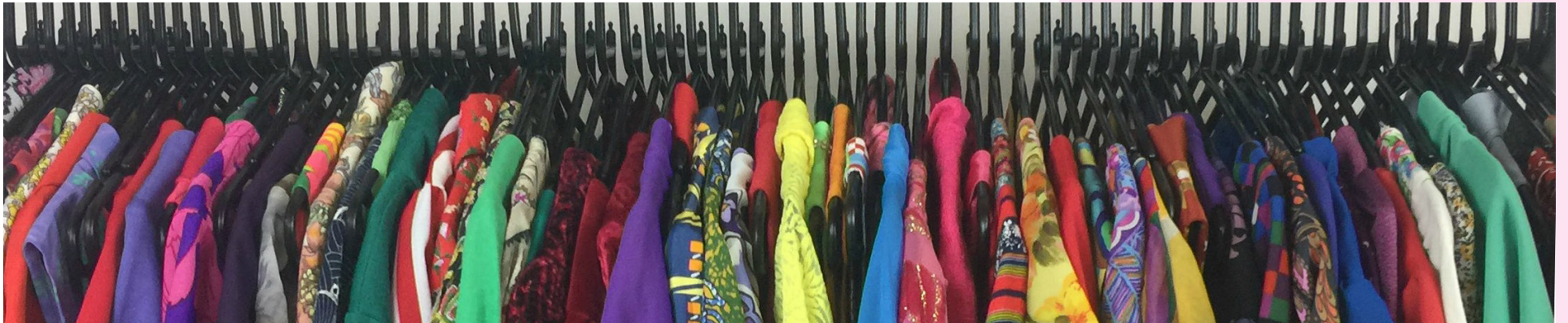
However, this trend can only come to more good than wrong. It's a promotion of a healthy lifestyle more than anything which is an incredible improvement from much of the previous trends we have seen. The days of gaunt models look to be moving to the history books and the beginning of active wear promotion hugging the curves and muscle definition we need to love and aspire to are here and hopefully to stay.

Ellie Tattam



# Thinking Vintage: Our Top Picks for Second Hand Clothing

**If you're new to campus and looking to find the best vintage hubs Leeds has to offer, don't worry, we're here to help!**



If you like quirky, retro garments, you've come to the right university. Leeds provides a hub of vintage clothing shops, ideal for those of us bored of the high street repeats, looking to shop more ethically or just trying to stretch that student loan. The real question is not whether we'll shop vintage – it's where we'll shop vintage...

## Leeds Student Union

What better way to pass that spare hour between lectures than to browse wavy garments in the University itself? Watch out for posters all year round advertising vintage fairs that are so convenient it'd be a crime not to pop by. But be quick – the best bargains are gone instantly, and you'd probably find better deals if you headed further afield.

## Vintage Weigh 'N' Pay

Coming in fourth place, Weigh 'N' Pay sales are frequented by most students. A rush of cheap vintage clothing, priced in terms of its weight (duh) may seem like heaven to many of us. But, despite the seemingly low prices, these car boot style sales are – dare I say it – kind of overrated. Yes, the clothing's cheap. But what they don't tell you is it's usually the same garments the vintage shops reject on a basis of ripped seams, unappealing stains and, to be frank, bad designs.

## Blue Rinse/ Pop Boutique

Located just minutes away from Kirkgate market, these two treasures are well worth a trip into town for. Expect to pay a little more than the Union or Weigh 'N' Pay, but expect to find much nicer garments. Think genuinely stylish shirts and clean smelling jumpers. Blue Rinse provides three storeys of on-trend vintage, carefully selected and upcycled in places. Pop Boutique lives 50m away and offers a 10% student discount, which is just the icing on the cake.

## Ryan Vintage

Just two minutes from Blue Rinse and Pop Boutique, Ryan Vintage is the longest running vintage shop in Leeds and a firm favourite amongst students. Whilst clearly less time is spent on a fancy shop floor, this hidden gem provides genuine vintage clothes at remarkably good prices. The shop has all the vibrancy of a market stall, run by a friendly old man who's more than happy to tell you exactly how vintage the vintage clothes that caught your eye are.

## Sue Ryder

Saving the best 'til last, Sue Ryder is an afternoon well spent. Stroll into Headingley, pop by Hattie's for a loaded milkshake, then head next door to the glorious charity shop that is ethical in every sense of the word. You'll be captivated by colour as the shop floor boasts arrays of bright shirts, dresses and jumpers to make your heart sing!

Lydia Varney

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# Too Little, Too Late

**Everyone's talking about the ban of underweight models taken by major French fashion companies, but is it really worth all the attention? New Fashion editor, Lydia Varney, gives us her take on the latest change to the runway.**

With the news emerging that as of October 1st, two major French fashion giants will be banning underweight models, it might seem like times are changing, and progress is being made. Finally, models will have to supply Doctor's certificates proving that they are fit to work, whilst psychologists will also be employed to work alongside them and provide them with emotional support. Yet something about it seems bittersweet. Yes, it's a step in the right direction. But is it a step too late?

Dior, Givenchy, Yves Saint Laurent and Gucci are amongst some of the fashion labels set to enforce this change. What's worrying however is that such well known brands have, up to this point, been using both underweight and underage models. In a supposedly liberated society, we have been, for many years, inundated with images of 'ideal' body types, many of which are actually extremely unhealthy.

It's a sobering thought, and what's worse is that the effects of this are only just beginning to come to light. Behind us lives a generation growing up surrounded by body ideals that are, to be frank, completely unobtainable, at least not healthily. A few months back I was struck by the way an eight-year-old girl stared, rapt, at a screen showcasing barely-there models strutting around in their underwear whilst her mother tried on a new bra in Victoria's Secrets. How has our society come so far in raising awareness in some issues, yet seems so behind in areas of the fashion industry?

It's no wonder the industry has a reputation as being a tough place to work. It's great that models will now have support from psychologists, but it's still concerning that their work environment creates such a need for psychological help. Maybe, as well as providing counsellors for models, big brands should try to provide stable work, without the threat of losing your job if you eat too many bags of Doritos. Maybe that's a bit too much to ask, but let's not lose hope for the industry that has the power to potentially change body image ideals for the better.

The more I think about this supposedly great new ban, the less 'great' it seems. Now, models can't be smaller than a size six. But for many, size six is wholly unobtainable. I think we can be forgiven for demanding a bit more of the fashion industry. In fact, I think we need to demand more than a ban that cuts out the unhealthy, but still allows fashion to promote the idea that skinny is best.

I, for one, don't want to see a generation brought up surrounded by the super-skinny. How about a runway filled with models of all shapes and sizes? Not just the 'plus-size' models with the perfect curves, but models with the diversity of the real world. Models with big hips, models with a little bit round the stomach, models with real muscle. Healthy, human models. Now, that would be something worth celebrating.

Lydia Varney

***'I think we can be forgiven for demanding a bit more of the fashion industry. In fact, I think we need to demand more than a ban that cuts out the unhealthy, but still allows fashion to promote the idea that skinny is best.'***



# Who to know: Fashion's Most Diverse Models

Fashion has always been known for its glamour, glitz, and most recently: its controversy. Behind the scenes of the beautiful designs and lifestyles of the designers, A-list celebrities and models of any fashion house, there's an underlying struggle. Social media critics have been sounding off on the diversity of the models representing our latest trends, questioning whether current levels of representation are suitably adequate. The more 'woke' consumers of fashion have seemingly had enough of the regular Bella's, Gigi's and Kendall's — and are ready for something revolutionary and new.



## Winnie Harlow

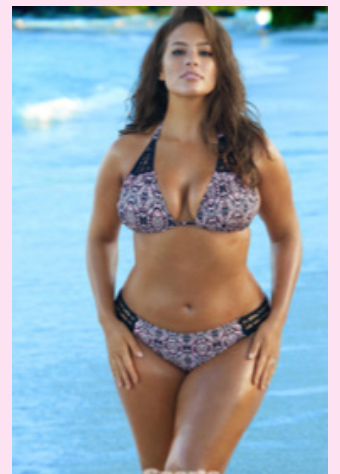
*Otherwise known as Chantelle Brown, Age 23 and diagnosed with vitiligo.*

'Mi real friend Winnie', as she's known, came into the fashion scene not long ago and took the America's Next Top Model World by storm. She's seen as having a 'classic' model body, but a uniquely pigmented face that stands in the way of stereotypical model conformity.

## Ashley Graham

*Ashley Graham, Age 29, fashion's plus size 'it-girl'.*

Appearing on the covers of Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Elle and being signed to Wilhelmina Models, Graham's success in the fashion industry has been rapidly growing. Her risqué outfits and unapologetic looks battle the subject of body shaming in the fashion industry, especially as she herself is a body activist.



## Halima Aden

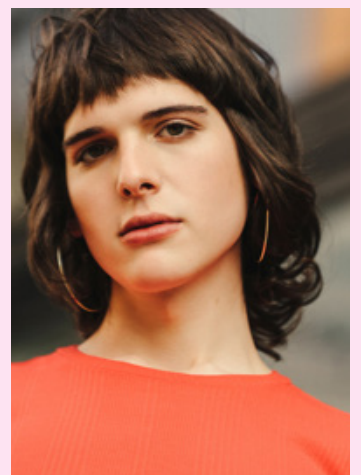
*Halima Aden, Age 19, Somali-American.*

Covering not only the topic of race and ethnicity but also religion, Halima's fashion career has soared and conquered, sending a message of diversity to all. She was the first hijab-wearing woman to be signed to IMG models and debuted her modeling career at Kanye West's AW'17 Yeezy show – pretty successful for a 19 year old to say the least.

## Hari Nef

*Hari Nef, Age 24, a transgender woman.*

An actress, a model and a writer, Hari Nef has been the face of transgender models since her debut in 2015. She was the first trans woman signed to IMG Worldwide and has proved gender boundaries and identity irrelevant in fashion since.



## Duckie Thot

*Duckie Thot, Age 24, Sudanese – Australian.*

Former Australia's Next Top Model runner-up, Duckie Thot is fresh to the fashion scene, only debuting her modeling career for the first time on the runway for Moschino earlier this month. However her role in Fenty Beauty's latest campaign proves that being the new girl on the block isn't always that bad.

Sara Al Humiri



**Despite the narrative that we are the most progressive era in history, debates about portrayals of race in the arts continue to rage on. The latest controversy is the casting of the white actor Billy Magnussen in Disney's live-action remake of Aladdin.**

For those who've been lucky enough to have been living under a rock, 2017 has marked the year that Donald Trump is President of the United States, the alt-right has become a significant force and white supremacy has seen a resurgence in the political sphere. It's no real surprise then, that issues around race have been rightfully getting more attention. In the arts, race and its handling has been debated, scrutinised and pored over; with such discussions dominating both social and mass-produced media.

To be fair to the writers of those pieces, there's a lot to deconstruct; in film, problematic racial stereotypes are everywhere, from the sexually unattractive Asian best friend, the tough black gangster and the white lead male. That's true both for the industry ten years ago and for the industry today.

Recently, the team behind Disney's live-action remake of *Aladdin* came under fire for casting Billy Magnussen in the film. Though the film has a diverse cast, with newcomer Mena Massoud playing Aladdin, Naomi Scott playing Princess Jasmine, Marwan Kenzari playing the villain Jafar and Will Smith playing Genie, the decision was strange for one main reason: Magnussen's role, Prince Anders, is a brand new original character not present in the 1992 animated classic.

What immediately comes to mind is how unnecessary the addition is; the original is a classic for a reason, and for once Hollywood managed, at least for a little while, to have a cast exclusively featuring actors of colour. After all, the film is set in a fictional Middle-Eastern location; there's no need to cast a white actor in it.

But if you look at the situation through a more cynical lens, this is sadly just another thing that Hollywood has been doing for years. Whenever there's a cast which is mainly comprised of POC, they throw in a token white guy; look at Tom Cruise in *The Last Samurai*, or Matt Damon in *The Great Wall*. Ultimately, Hollywood is an industry, but it escapes me that market forces dictate that each film requires at least one white character. Ridley Scott, responding to criticisms

about the mostly-white cast of his film *Exodus: Gods and Kings*, argued that "[he wouldn't get financed]" if the film had an all-POC cast.

At the very least, the film wasn't completely whitewashed. *Exodus*, which was set in the Middle-East, featured a mostly-white cast. Worse still, the few black actors cast were mainly cast as thieves and villains. The case was similar for the recent film *Gods of Egypt*, in which Gerard Butler played Set, the Egyptian god of darkness, and *The Prince of Persia*, where Jake Gyllenhaal was puzzlingly cast to play the titular Prince of Persia.

**“For once Hollywood managed at least for a little while, to have a cast exclusively featuring actors of colour. After all, the film is set in a fictional Middle-Eastern location: there's no need to cast a white actor in it.”**

Things on the whole do seem to be getting better. Slowly, acting roles are being given to a more diverse pool of actors, and more filmmakers of colour are being given the resources they need to make films. Recently, actor Ed Skrein quit the new *Hellboy* film after backlash to him being cast as Major Ben Daimio, a character who is portrayed as being of East Asian descent in the comics. Skrein stated that he “didn't realise” the character was meant to be Asian, and I'm happy to give him the benefit of the doubt.

Ultimately, POC need accurate representation in films — especially in societies which are majority white — yet so many films are painfully tone-deaf in their writing and casting decisions. Still, there's hope yet for the future; fan backlash worked in the case of the *Hellboy* casting, and maybe new, internet-fuelled pressure will nudge Hollywood in the right direction.

Mikhail Hanafi



# Kate O'Donnells 'You've Changed'

**Juliette Rowsell, The Gryphon's Digital Associate, gives herself a break from website headaches, reviewing Kate O'Donnell's bare-all performance in her play, 'You've Changed'.**

In 2003, Coronation Street featured its first gay kiss. It is also the year that Kate O'Donnell, tonight's host, decided to transition. At the core of her heart-warming and charm-filled performance, is the question of change. Whilst she's unabashed concerning her change, the real question is: how much as a society have we changed? *You've Changed* is brimming with charisma, and Kate is the wonderful host in our own journey of realisation.

Transgender issues are currently, as Kate tells us, 'a fad'. From attempting to tell her vegan lesbian cousin about her transition, to the operation itself, to the sexism she now faces as a woman, Kate takes us through the story of her transition without censorship. While the themes dealt with are nothing original in transgender theatre, it is the charm that Kate injects into the performance that captivates us from start to finish.

It is a performance that bares all: 'people are obsessed with your genitals if you're transgender'. Thus, as she stands behind a screen with two windows in it, she humorously deals with this obsession as she exposes her genitals on stage for everyone to see. While it is funny, it is also poignant. As an audience member is made to read out personal questions to

Kate's vagina, you can't help but feel Kate is reclaiming the trans narrative. She talks about how transgender roles in television and film are stereotyped as alcoholics, prostitutes, depressed or 'even all three!', and although the performance is rooted in struggle, it is told in a way that is empowering; while being transgender in 2017 is to be faced with institutionalised transphobia, not every story has to have an unhappy ending. It is these stories that need telling.

What makes the show is not the gimmicks or the dance or the visual transformation from Fred Astaire to Ginger Rodgers but Kate herself. Her charm and ability to engage with the audience carries the slightly cornier moments; indeed, she doesn't need to don the persona of all the fabulous women from times long gone, for it is she that we fall head over high heels for.

In Kate's own words, this is a story that soars from 'aqua aerobics to horse riding to penetrative sex', and it is a performance that leaves you feeling that little bit warmer than when you came in, a testament to the power of Kate's fiery and energetic performance skills.

**Juliette Rowsell**

**"Transgender issues are currently, as Kate tells us, 'a fad'. From attempting to tell her vegan lesbian cousin about her transition, to the opp. to the sexism she now faces as a woman, Kate takes us through the story of her transition without censorship."**







# Leeds Beckett and the Leeds 2023 Bid

**With Leeds in the midst of a bid to be named European Capital of Culture, Arts Editor Rose Crees examines how this impacts upon the rest of the city, and how Leeds Beckett are underpinning much of the plan.**

In early August, Leeds Beckett University announced its plans to build a £75 million arts building to house its Schools of Film, Performing Arts and Music, due to open in 2020. The building will be located close to Leeds Civic Hall, a centre of performance itself, and will act as a foundation planned Leeds Innovation District, a keystone in Leeds' future economic and cultural development.

**“Culture itself isn’t a physical or stationary thing and this building, described by the university itself as ‘student focussed’, is designed in making the creativities that dwell in students’ minds a reality.”**

Leeds Beckett has been equipped with high quality facilities including studios for the practice of performing arts, music, fashion; the dubbing, recording and production of music; a theatre; a black-box studio; a TV studio; three large film studios; a green screen studio; a stop motion studio; a Foley studio

and a 220 seat Dolby Atmos cinema. This is alongside specialist teaching spaces for the use of students to cultivate creative ideas between varying disciplines, which will also be home to the internationally renowned *Northern Film School* and the School of Art, Architecture and Design's fashion department. Although equipped for performance, this is not simply a space of practice and showcase but a hub of ingenuity and originality.

While this development will increase the network of Leeds Beckett buildings across the face of the city, it is also deeply woven into the cultural development and expression of Leeds. This news comes in the wake of February's announcement that Leeds would be bidding for European Capital of Culture in 2023 and supports Leeds City Council's condition that the 'bid must be for the benefit of the whole city, not just the city centre [...] ensuring that discussions, events, exhibitions and activities take place in every community, on every estate and throughout every street in Leeds' per the organisers' website. Leeds is home to the UK's fourth largest student population, amounting to almost 65,000 students from the University of Leeds, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds Trinity University and Leeds Arts University the city's four universities alone and not including students from Leeds College of Music and other further education institutions. Leeds Beckett's arts building is designed for one of Leeds' largest

and strongest communities and will prove integral in Leeds' hopes at winning their bid for European City of Culture.

**“While this development will increase the network of Leeds Beckett buildings across the face of the city, it is also deeply woven into the cultural development and expression of Leeds.”**

Culture itself isn't a physical or stationary thing and this building, described by the university itself as 'student focussed', is designed in making the creativities that dwell in students' minds a reality. The fluid student population of Leeds, a group that regularly travel in and out of the city as they visit home and friends around the country and world, take these thoughts and Leeds' culture with them, whether it's back to Hyde Park and Headingley or further afield, through debate, ideas, imagination and love of the city itself. This development is the perfect not only to celebrate Leeds' existing culture but to encourage its growth for years to come.

Rose Crees







# Putting The Sass In American Assassin

Released this month by Lionsgate Films, *American Assassin* is an action thriller based upon the 2010 novel of the same name by Vince Flynn. The cast boasts some well known names such as Michael Keaton and Taylor Kitsch, and I will readily admit that my interest in this film was primarily sparked by the involvement of Teen Wolf star Dylan O’Brien.

When *American Assassin* was first advertised I was understandably cautious. The name itself was reminiscent of American Sniper and the whole islamophobic mess that followed in its wake. However, the good reviews I’d heard from friends and family made me give it a chance and I’m glad that I did.

Action films often fall into those terrible traps of over-choreographed fight scenes with an invulnerable hero figure and nauseatingly predictable love interests. The damsel in distress is a trope of action movies that is particularly irritating. However, *American Assassin* provided fight scenes that kept me engaged with their open possibility for real harm to come to the protagonist. Dylan O’Brien’s character, Mitch Rapp, was believable in his humanity and his fallible personality. He wasn’t the Jason Bourne-esque super fighter, instead he’s a man made determined by enduring something truly horrific, and despite his vendetta towards terrorist cells there is a pointed lack of racism which was honestly a breath of fresh air.

**“He wasn’t the Jason Bourne-esque super fighter, instead he’s a man made determined by enduring something truly horrific, and despite his vendetta towards terrorist cells there is a pointed lack of racism which was honestly a breath of fresh air.”**

The main strength of this film was that it very keenly made its audience a part of the plot. In today’s political climate the threat of extremists is at the forefront of our minds. The opening scene of this movie is painfully familiar in that it is reminiscent of the 2015 mass-shooting at Port El Kantaoui in Tunisia. I watched the entire movie with wide open fascination and found myself physically reacting to certain scenes. I will make a slight warning for the level of gore involved in this film, the age rating of 18 is definitely warranted in that respect, however I found that the violence in it was expertly used in order to create a visceral response in the audience. Despite the ridiculous amount of times I physically flinched and hid behind my hands, I believe it furthered the plot line instead of it being pointless violence.

I would wholly recommend going to see this film. It’s a great quality action/adventure film with an engaging plot, interesting camera angles, and surprisingly humorous moment that provide the needed levity. There’s also the added benefit of gratuitous shirtless Dylan O’Brien.

Phillipa Lindsay



# Simon Armitage Joins School of English

Simon Armitage, one of the UK’s leading contemporary poets, has just joined the staffing team at the University of Leeds School of English. Some of his multi-award winning poetry collections include *Out of the Blue* and *Paper Aeroplanes*. Armitage has also been a big contributor to contemporary translation, some notable examples being Homer’s *Odyssey* and Sir Gawain and *The Green Knight*. Being Yorkshire-born, Armitage already has links to the area and was also awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters by the university in 2015.

*In The Middle* caught up with the School of English’s Deputy Head of Student Education, Dr. Richard De Ritter, who shared his thoughts about Armitage joining the staff team: “It’s a pleasure to be able to welcome one of the UK’s best contemporary poets to the university. He’s a very experienced poet and he’s worked in other universities before so he understands the university environment.”

**“It’s a pleasure to be able to welcome one of the UK’s best contemporary poets to the university. He’s a very experienced poet and he’s worked in other universities before so he understands the university environment.”**

De Ritter also commented that he thinks Armitage will be a good addition to the staff team because hand in hand with being good with words, he is also good at engaging with people: “I’ve seen him read here before and he’s a great person to hear perform his own poetry. When you see him read, you realize he’s a very engaging performer and a good communicator. He’s somebody who understands literature as well as works with it.” Moreover, the School of English are also looking to introduce a BA in English and Creative Writing. De Ritter added that, “It’s great for the school that he’s here and is definitely an important step in welcoming the improvement of the creative writing we offer to students here.”

Adding such a profound poet to the staff team is definitely an exciting prospect for both the School of English and the University as a whole. As a poet who likes to juxtapose the mysterious and the mundane, De Ritter noted this is particularly prominent in his poem, *The Christening*. Hopefully Armitage will offer a bit of mystery to a subject sometimes wrongly characterised as full of stuffy characters.

Anastasia Roe





# Meet the Editors of Lifestyle & Culture

Meet the people giving you the freshest takes on the best books, restaurants, and television series that are bound to improve your life.

## Olivia Raine



### White Teeth by Zadie Smith

As a final year English student, the idea of enjoying any form of literature has sadly passed. However, Smith's very comical and poignant writing on the generational changes in a cosmopolitan London can still provide mild pleasure where Shakespeare could not.

### My Thai

This. Place. Is. The. Balls. Not too far from campus and cheap as anything, it's the perfect place to go for lunch if you don't want to eat like a student but can still pay like one. It's also been crowned The Best Restaurant in Leeds at the National Awards so it's officially not bad.

### Planet Earth

If the sweet sultry tones of David Attenborough aren't enough to convince you then the cinematography and never-before-seen wildlife is also acceptable. But mostly it's David; beautiful David.

### Vicious by V.E. Schwab

I am such a big fan of all of V.E. Schwab's work, but this book! It almost has a comic book feel to it, with a dark edge that puts all of DC's attempts at gritty and realistic superhero movies to shame.

### White's Cafe

I am a sucker for a good avocado toast and this place delivers! It's gourmet on the (kind of) cheap, with excellent food and great drinks! It's the brunch spot from heaven.

### Parks and Recreation

While I watch a lot of television (and I mean A LOT), this show is always one I return to. With probably my all-time favourite cast and such a distinct brand of humour, if you haven't seen it yet, you're missing out.

## Bella Davis



### The Night Circus by Eric Morgenstern

If you have not read this book, you must! The prose is fantastic and the story is a feat of magic. This book is impossible to summarise so I will leave you with one word to describe the novel. Wondrous.

### Santorini

Located in Headingley this little gem is perfect for dinner. Although it doesn't break the bank it also won't save you money. My advice is get lots of different dishes and share the Greek and Turkish goodness between you. The smell in Santorini will have your mouth watering from the get go.

### Game of Thrones

Generic, I know. But I honestly don't think you can find anything better. I won't lie, the raunchy, violent and mystical intertwined stories alongside the stunning backdrops are what draws me closer each episode. If you want to procrastinate, I suggest watching this epic series.

### Revolutionary Suicide by Huey P Newton

The autobiography of one of the founders of the Black Panther party tells of his story from his childhood to the when the party was a national organisation. A look into his life and the reasoning for him forming the Black Panther party are fascinating. As a young person of colour exploring radical thought, the book spoke to me and kept me enthralled so much that I've read it more times than anything else.

### Greasy Pig

I have a love hate relationship with the Greasy pig. I love the Greasy pig, and i hate myself for loving it so much. The food has enough fat to clog your arteries and enough carbs to fuel a marathon. It has cured many a hangover and made me a very happy, and a bit too portly, person.

### Stranger Things

A modern classic that makes me happier than any show on television. I definitely more time watching this than I spent in university during my second year, and it only clocks in at 5 hours of viewing time. The cast and the story are phenomenal.

## Jade Verbick



## Charlie Green





# Survival of the Fittest: Freshers Edition

**Think of this article as your one stop shop for making it to the end of the year with minimal money in your bank, a bunch of friends and a grade you might have to work on next year. First is a time for experimentation, and the tips and advice below are from some older and, hopefully wiser veterans aimed at the new kids on the block.**

**1** Firstly, and I think most importantly the saying 'Freshers Week is the best week of your life' is a load of crap! Don't stress if Freshers Week wasn't the best week of your life. There are still approximately 51 weeks left of the year for madness and mayhem. Now, don't get me wrong, Freshers Week is loads of fun and you meet a bunch of new people but don't be surprised if you aren't still close with them by the end of the year. Think of your first year as a time to spread your wings where you can dip in and out of as many friendships as you like. Top Tip: You have all year to make best friends and if not 2 or 3 more years after that.

**2** University is just a couple of thousand people bigger than school so it really isn't necessary to tie yourself down to one group of people, after all there are plenty of fish in the sea. Make the most of societies and clubs even if it is the most random and peculiar one. Mingle with people outside your halls and course so that you have backup and a chance to get some rest and respite from that overly tidy housemate who nags you to do the dishes. Top Tip: Good things come to those who go searching.

**3** Keep your door open! The minute you open your door other people will follow suit. An open door is inviting and it means you can talk to people when they walk past. It is also an opportunity for you to see what's going on in other people's room or at least copy decoration ideas. For people who are shy this is an easy way to put in minimal effort when meeting people. You can stay in the comfort of your room while other people come to you. Top Tip: Doorstops are a must have room accessory.

**4** Stay stocked up on food! There is nothing worse than attempting to carry out a food shop hungover and if you are doing freshers right then hopefully that is most days. Let's be honest, walking down the corridor for food is much more manageable than leaving the building in your fragile state. Top Tip: Steal all the food from the cupboards and fridge at home.

**5** Take the bare minimum on nights out. It is inevitable when you have downed 20 VK's at Fruity or attempted and failed at an Otley run that you will lose something; whether it be your dignity, smashed phone or Adidas jumper. If you can't plan your essays ahead of time at least try and plan ahead on what belongings you take out. Remove all the unnecessary cards in your purse or wallet and don't take your favourite lipstick. Top Tip: Attaching your keys to your belt loop will ensure you can't lose your keys unless you plan on losing your trousers.

**6** Sign up to a society or club. Don't be that person that regrets never signing up to anything. You don't have to join loads but you can if you're as indecisive as I was. One is enough to get you up off your feet. It is so refreshing to do something that isn't your course and can be a welcome break. If you can't find a society that floats your boat then why not start your own. Top Tip: Attend Give it a Go's to try and test different societies before fully committing.

Bella Davis

**Enjoy your first year and bottoms up!**

# Food, Glorious Food (and Alcohol)

**It is no secret that Leeds has great bars and restaurants, but it has even better food festivals. Lifestyle and Culture Editor Charlie rounds up some of the best food festivals this year that are sure to tickle your tastebuds and quench your thirsts.**

**With an eclectic mix of festivals offering a wide variety of cuisines and alcohols, it's a great idea to attend a few and get a good idea of the city's vast culture. The prices at some of the festivals can be quite steep, but the experience alone is enough to enjoy without having to fork out for some artisanal almonds.**

## The Great Yorkshire Vegan Festival — 17th June 2018

The UK has seen a 1500% increase in veganism over the last 12 months, and this trend has been catered for by Yorkshire's largest vegan festival, which takes place each year at Town Hall. Over 100 stalls offering a variety of delicious vegan foods ranging from cakes and treats to takeaway foods. The festival offers free samples and great discounts, and also hosts numerous live talks, cookery demonstrations and debates. All proceeds go to animal welfare charities.

## Pizza and Prosecco Festival — Canal Mills — 17th November 2017

Twenty different types of prosecco to try, sparkling prosecco cocktails, soft blankets and heaters for when you get drowsy from all of that wine and cheese. Live music all day. A wide array of pizza pop ups. A bit pricey. A relatively classy event in one of the least classy venues in Leeds. Make sure you grab before it's too late in the day, they often sell out.

## North Leeds Food Festival — Roundhay Park

Over 85 stalls offering more than 20 different cuisines. Several local independent bars represent to offer their wares. All proceeds this year went to Leeds mental health charity Mind.

## Camp Hill Sausage and Beer Festival

If your tastes are a bit more on the dead animal side, the Camp Hill Sausage and Beer Festival is for you! Over 20 different local butchers are showcasing their delicacies, all offering samples. There are over 15 local ales on offer to help you wash all the sausage down. In terms of entertainment, the festival offers music and sausage making demonstrations.

## Yorkshire Post's Yorkshire Food and Drink Festival — Millenium Square — June

Over 100 exhibitors. Live cookery from local chefs, cocktail bars, ales, artisanal foods, local restaurants serving their dishes, street foods of the world. Free to the public in the heart of Leeds.

## Leeds Winterfest Vegan Festival — Town Hall — 26th November 2017

Over 150 indoor stalls offering products for Christmas and much much more. Something for everyone.

## Leeds Indie Food Festival

The country's biggest festival for indie food and drink culture. Establishments from all over the city participate, ranging from cafes to fine dining restaurants, offering tasters of their dishes.

Charlie Green





# Let's Master the Art of Staying Positive at Uni

**The new academic year is upon us, and the prospect of surviving another year in education can prove daunting for all students alike, whether entering their first or final year. Katie gives some insight on how to stay positive throughout the year.**

At *The University of Leeds* there's an abundance of exciting opportunities that go beyond mere academia. Naturally, some of us can find this overwhelming: with so many options, where do I start? Will I find my place? Our mind can play tricks on us, preventing us from going ahead and making the most of all aspects of our university lives. Paradoxically, our fear of both failure and success holds us back. Here's a handy survival guide to looking after number one at university, so that your mind will let you thrive during such a busy and exciting period of your life.

## Think positive: 'Thoughts become things'.

"Think positive? How obvious..." you may think. But it's just impossible, right? Wrong. To transform your thoughts from negative to positive during term-time, start by clearly establishing what your purpose for being at university is. Unquestionably, you must have one: probably to obtain a degree that will enhance your career prospects. Perhaps you're reading an English Literature degree in the hopes to eventually pursue a career in Journalism. You're aware of your purpose, yet you let your mind be flooded with negative thoughts which contradict your purpose... The thoughts of "I just can't do it". By thinking this, you will allow this to become your reality; with this thought dominating, you're not allowing any room for positive inspiration, and you are actively distracting yourself from your purpose. Tell yourself that you can do it, work hard, and inspiration will come to you. Trust the process. Fake it 'til you make it- your brain won't know the difference.

## Get banning your over-planning

As students, we're all guilty of over-planning to avoid actually doing anything, which can be very counterproductive, so keep your plans short, sweet and specific. Quickly familiarise yourself with your timetable at the start of each week. You'll know when you're definitely free and you can make a solid plan to get work done. So, no planning months in advance; you cannot predict your future. Solid plans lead to less procrastination, and less procrastination leads to better mental health in the long run.

## Studies and social lives can co-exist: work hard, play hard.

Whilst it's tempting to stay home wrapped up in your duvet rather than attend a lecture, I'm pretty sure Aristotle would say that this is only an 'apparent good'. A seemingly fantastic idea which in reality is oh-so-evil. Staying home to relax is kind of self-contradictory because when your assignment deadline looms, the last thing you're physically able to do is relax. Oh, and another great thinker who would look down upon your pig-in-blanket lifestyle? Socrates, who argued "It's better to be a fool dissatisfied than a pig satisfied." Therefore, in the interest of your sanity, simply attend university.

However if you want to succeed academically, simply attending lectures won't cut it. Having a balanced social life improves our mental health, and the greater our mental health, the better we can motivate ourselves to succeed. So, what are you waiting for? Join any of 320+ clubs and societies now.

## Lets get clear on the facts: it's good to relax.

Relaxation means something different to all of us: some unwind by reading a great book, some with a good pamper session and some by binge watching Netflix. There are certain stand-out relaxation techniques which may generally work better than others. For instance, yoga is renowned as a brilliant way to improve both physical and mental health through relaxation of the body and mind. Exercise truly works wonders in helping us to keep a positive mindset, so keeping active at university is crucial.

## There's many shoulders to lean on at The University of Leeds

Being human inevitably means that things will get on top of us from time to time. No matter how much we try to be our own best friend, sometimes we may need somebody else to turn to. The university ensures that this support is available.

'Nightline' is the university's very own confidential and anonymous listening service for students. It runs every evening of term time from 8pm until 8am. It provides us the comfort of speaking to an objective person who is there to listen to our problems without judgement.

'Mind Matters' society is also there to offer guaranteed help in some way or another to anybody who may be feeling under the weather, or anybody whose problems may run deeper than that. They hold regular student minds support groups which may help you remain positive, perhaps through teaming with others to discuss mental health issues. Maybe you'll discuss ways to combat the stigmatisation of mental illnesses, and this may serve somewhat as a reminder that we all face struggles, but we are never alone: there are people in your very midst who care.

Never forget that your personal tutor is there to help you. Whatever concerns you have during university life, they are there at your beck and call. Don't be afraid to contact them; they want to help make your university life run as smoothly as possible.

## It's all worth it

When you feel like university is just impossible, visualise the day that you'll graduate. You'll be so happy that all your efforts have paid off. Hold on to that thought so that you can make it to the finish line.

No matter which point you're at in your degree, I hope that you can take something from this article which will help you to stay positive so that you're prepared to reap all the benefits and more that our wonderful university has to offer.

Katie Mulvey

**“Fake it 'til you make it- your brain won't know the difference.”**



# 2 Brothers. 27 Days. 1800 Miles.

**Joey gives us a glimpse of his adventure cycling down the West Coast of the United States.**



When I was younger, my dad would paraphrase a Chinese saying: "Do one thing every day that scares you." Today, I'm a 4th year medical student and whilst I work hard and I'm good at jumping through hoops, there have been very few times in my life when I was really out of my comfort zone. This summer I set out to change that, and, with my brother in tow, I flew out to North America to complete a 1800 mile odyssey. The goal? Cycle down the west coast of the USA from Seattle to Los Angeles.

Twenty-seven days were spent cycling along motorways, over huge hills, through busy cities and backwater towns (and perhaps a few prohibited areas). There are too many stories and anecdotes to tell here, but I hope to give you a taste of my adventure in this small excerpt from my blog, which highlights both the best and worst bits of the journey.

**Day 19. Santa Cruz to Kirk Creek Campground. 108 miles.**

We may be crazy. The plan for today was supposed to be as follows: 1) get up at 7; 2) cycle out of Santa Cruz for about 95 miles to a campsite in a place called King City. However, as we set off, Big Sur lured us in with a plethora of road signs and we worked ourselves up into an 'if we don't go to Big Sur what's the point of the trip' kind of mindset.

For those who don't know, 'Big Sur' is a cliff range in Southern California known for its outstanding beauty, endless winding road and, unfortunately, huge landslides. This summer there had already been three landslides culminating in a broken bridge which left the route impassable for cars. We had heard

rumours, however, that there was a way hikers could get through and therefore maybe, just maybe, us with our 25kg bikes. With our hearts set on this possibility, we scrapped our original plan and turned towards the coastal highway.

After climbing many hills, we arrived in a town with a Starbucks, where we used the wifi to confirm news regarding Big Sur. We discovered that the first obstruction on our way was an ever so slightly broken bridge. Fortunately, there was a trail around it for hikers with a difficulty level rated 5/10 (add a few to that to get biker difficulty). On the Big Sur website, we also found that once through the trail we had to take a shuttle service, the last of which departed at 5pm. That meant we had to cover 40 miles in 3 hours...

Undeterred, we started peddling harder than we ever had before. By the time we arrived at the first closure, it was already 5:30 and, with sinking spirits, we completed the final half mile hike to the shuttle – a hike so steep we had to carry the bikes!

Convinced we wouldn't make the shuttle, we turned to scheming. For a while our thoughts were consumed with how we might sneak past any security to get to the campsite. When we got up to the shuttle, however, we found that a) they ran until 7 and b) we didn't even have to get it! So, happy that we could get through, but still annoyed that we had



30 miles left to the campsite, we stopped for dinner at the darn shuttle pick up location, exhausted from the mad sprint.

Despite the shorter distance of the last leg, it was no easier. We set off from the restaurant just before sunset and had a beautiful ride for a short while along a tranquil road where the only sounds were the waves.



Sadly, Big Sur's beautiful sunset was short-lived, as after dark the setting changed, and the ride became somewhat terrifying. It wasn't that easy to see the contours of the road, and we were at risk of falling into potholes.

When we were 6 miles or so from the campsite disaster struck and my brother got a flat. So, there we were, 11 at night, huddled on a run off by the road, torches in mouths listening to the sound of the waves and seals, all the while trying to fix the wheel. We finally completed repairs at about 11:30 and arrived at the campsite at midnight, just as it started to rain.

Next time you're in Eddy B working away or distracting yourself with the latest clickbait, I urge you to let your mind wonder and imagine what sort of adventure you could have. There's a time and a place for a lazy beach holiday, but for me, nothing compares to a journey like this one. Step out of your comfort zone. Learn about yourself. Push your limits. You will not regret it (well, you may, but here's hoping)!

**Joey Guppy**

To read Joey's entire blog, visit [www.guppybrothers.wordpress.com/](http://www.guppybrothers.wordpress.com/)



# Everyday Descartes

**Natasha, a third year Philosophy student, shares a message about self-awareness and open-mindedness with all first years.**



“I think therefore I am” is a saying by the philosopher Descartes in which he portrays himself as a ‘thinking substance’, not a physical thing, and thus ties his existence to his mental self rather than his physical self.

In another saying, Descartes expresses that whilst we dream we assume that what we see is real, yet when we wake we realise that our visions were false. His point is that the only thing we can be sure of is our thoughts – all that is around us physically can and should be questioned.

When I apply Descartes’ reasoning to contemporary life, I am led to think about how we perceive both each other and ourselves. We are constantly looking at one another and comparing what we see, but Descartes uses his theory to prove that he exists as a purely thinking being, and so, by his logic, how we physically are is of less importance.

If what we look like is not who we truly are, merely an extension of ourselves, we can so easily have the wrong impression of others. To fully understand one another and better connect as a society, we must concentrate on listening and speaking to people.

Essentially, what Descartes and I are trying to convey is the old cliché that you should never judge a book by its cover.

We parallel books in other ways, too. Much like a book, we are always beginning and ending chapters in our lives – university, high school, trips, jobs etc. Furthermore, one chapter can be completely different from the next, as people change from year to year.

As a first year student, you might feel nervous about starting the ‘university stage’ of your life. I remember that when I was in first year I worried about how others might see me, but in retrospect I recognise that was ridiculous because we should not concern ourselves with how others see us but how we see ourselves. Remember that you are the only one who knows your own thoughts and who you are. The same applies to those around us – they can be much more than they appear.

We see so many people during our lives but only really get to know a select few. Do not make this mistake. Do not let what is in front of you limit you or your relationships. Everyone is their own book, who knows what the chapters waiting to be written will hold?

**Natasha Zack**

# Agony Aunt

**“My boyfriend and I are going to different universities. We’ve been together for a year but it’s the first time we’ll be in a long-distance relationship. Everyone keeps telling me long-distance is really hard. Any advice for making it work?”**



Many people assume that long-distance relationships are incredibly difficult. The truth is that maintaining a happy long-distance relationship is much the same as maintaining a normal one – it just requires a bit more effort. Here are some things I’ve learnt that keeps a long-distance relationship running smoothly:

## 1) Make time for each other

When you live close to the person you are dating, spending time with them is effortless. In long-distance, you need to be more proactive about dedicating time to your significant other. So, whenever you have an opportunity, visit your boyfriend. Of course, time and money are rather significant restraints. If you have few contact hours and don’t live too far away, you could adopt a system that works well for two friends of mine. They see each other every second weekend and alternate who travels to minimise costs.

## 2) Communication

I cannot stress the importance of honest communication enough. If your boyfriend does something which upsets you or if something relevant to your relationship is troubling you,

tell him! Once he knows there is a problem, you can talk through the issue until you arrive at a solution. Don’t let things fester, and don’t try to ignore a problem. Trust me, it won’t go away.

## 3) Keep things exciting

Not only is it important to make your virtual time together a happy one, it’s important to keep it interesting. Send each other presents from time to time as a surprise. Even something small, like a hand-written letter, goes a long way. And when it comes to keeping things exciting, Snapchat and Skype are your friends, if you know what I mean...

I’ve shared with you what helped me during my long-distance relationship, but throughout yours you’ll discover what does and doesn’t work in your unique situation. Ultimately, there are no rules as long as you’re happy with the person you’re with.

**Mariana Avelino**



**“It was a bit awkward really. I was the last one to move in. So theres six rooms, and six people, and six cupboards and drawers. I was putting all my plates away and trying to find my cupboard. Like I was expecting there to be an empty cupboard for me.**

**But all of them were taken up and I was like “urhh I don’t want to cause any tension with anyone, what do I do, how do I break it to them”.**

**And then one girl came in and she was like ‘yeah yeah you can share with me!’ so you know like, I think everyone’s struggling to fit in, but we’ve made it work somehow... You cant expect everything to be perfect, you’ve got to compromise with people.**”





# Are Too Many People Going to University?



Image: ABC11 Eyewitness News

## YES – Elrica Degirmen

Possessing a university degree is no longer special. It seems that everyone and their dog has a degree. Thanks to Tony Blair's goal of insisting that 50% of school-leavers go to university, we have come to the point where being a graduate does not necessarily confer enhanced job prospects. It also means that the very nature of having a university degree is devalued.

**“There are also a lot of people who feel that university is a three-year taxpayer-funded party, and as a result, just waste the resources offered to them”**

I do feel that many people who go to university simply go because it is what everyone else is doing and it is what they are encouraged to do by their schools – even if it isn't the right pathway for them. In fact, our whole education system seems to be geared to getting the best results in order to get into the best university we can. We have to understand that not everyone is academically-minded; some are vocationally-orientated. They simply would have been better off developing their skills for three years and actually be more prepared for the working world.

There are also a lot of people who feel that university is a three-year party funded by taxpayers, and as a result, just waste the resources offered to them. Eventually, many of them end up on the unemployment scrap-heap after graduation. Whilst university isn't just about improving your job prospects, I cannot help but think that if you want to go to university just for the social experience then it should not be at the expense of the taxpayer or the government.

In addition, the more people that go to university, the less attention that each individual student gets from their lecturers and other university staff. Many universities are simply saturated with students, meaning that it can be very easy to get lost in the crowd, and not receive the proper guidance and support you may need throughout your time at university. Of course, one could argue that universities should hire more staff to cope with the increase in students, but reading in the news about how universities are laying off staff, I am not currently optimistic that this is a realistic option. This is not to mention that universities are often run as businesses these days and staff are essentially a cost, so it is not in their interest to hire more staff. It is however in their interest to enrol more students, as they receive more money per student registered.

**“Many universities are simply saturated with students, meaning that can be very easy to get lost in the crowd”**

I do not think that university should be seen as the only respectable pathway for school-leavers. I believe that the government should invest more into high-quality apprenticeships and other routes for people to learn a useful skill or trade. We should also promote the idea that one does not need to go to university straightaway at the age of eighteen. Instead of pushing people to go to university when they are not ready, they might benefit from being in the working world for a bit and then make a more informed decision on whether going to university is really for them.

## NO – Ella Gilani

Britain is a country that loves its myths, and one of our favourites is the myth of the Great British Meritocracy: the idea that those most deserving will be rewarded. This myth is evoked especially often when it comes to this interminable debate about university admissions. We all know the argument: the market is saturated with graduates, making a degree 'worth less' than it once was. Shouldn't university just be for the best and brightest? Why not just restrict university admissions and let the Great British Meritocracy do the rest?

Except that the myth of the Great British Meritocracy is just that: a myth. The ugly reality about the university admissions debate has nothing at all to do with merit, and everything to do with social class. There are not too many people going to university; there are just too many people who don't believe that higher education should be for everyone.

After all, if we really need to stop so many students coming to university, then who has to go? Is it students who can't quite hit the entry requirements? Or students who just can't handle the pressure once they arrive? It's here that the myth of meritocracy rears its ugly head, allowing people to claim that if students can't attain or can't cope, then surely university just isn't for them.

**“There are not too many people going to university; there are just too many people who don't believe that higher education should be for everyone”**

But the facts tell a different story. In 2014-15, an appalling 39% percent of GCSE students on free school meals achieved 5 A\*- C grades, compared to 66% of all other students. These are the students who slip through the cracks of the education system long before university.

Meanwhile, those who do make it into higher education leave with an average of £7000 more debt than their wealthier counterparts.

Often obliged to work alongside their studies and dealing with the constant pressure of financial worries, it's sad rather than surprising that 8% of working class students drop out during their first year.

**“Higher education was once about bettering the individual and society [...] the purpose of university was to create not just specialists but rather cultivated men and women”**

The grim truth is that when it comes to university, the odds are stacked against poorer students from the start. If there really were too many students at university, there's no doubt about who would be first in line for the chop. When people talk about restricting university admissions in terms of merit, they create a haze of respectability around what their words really imply: that higher education is for the upper and middle classes, and perhaps, maybe, for some very lucky working class people who happen to be exceptional.

Higher education was once about bettering the individual and society. In the 1966 Robbins report, which introduced maintenance grants, the purpose of university was to create 'not just specialists but rather cultivated men and women'. Today, this seems quaint in its idealism. Higher education is a business, and the focus of business is monetary worth. Yet the real worth of education has always been in its role as the very foundation of democracy. To say that a degree can be 'worth less' for being more accessible is a dangerous lie meant to shut out those who are already disadvantaged. Don't be taken in.



# In The Running?

Alex Passingham

Pundits, MPs and even his cabinet colleagues all seem to have reacted sharply to the Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson's recent Telegraph article setting out his vision for a 'bold thriving Britain' after Brexit. Following the furore surrounding the article, I felt somewhat underwhelmed by it. Nothing appeared particularly controversial or contradictory to current government policy. In fact, barring the occasional platitude about de-regulation, you wouldn't have known it had been written by a Conservative MP, let alone a cabinet minister. The scope of the reaction to it is however far more newsworthy than the piece itself, betraying the complex rivalries between cabinet ministers about who ought to succeed May as leader, as well as betraying Boris' perception of himself as destined for the role of party leader and Prime Minister.

**"Boris is a man who has never really stopped running for the leadership. The chance to be the leader that saves the country from a Corbyn premiership will appeal to many, not least someone with Boris' almost messianic self-belief."**

These ambitions began to be given serious thought in the press before the 2015 General Election, during which he announced he would attempt to re-enter parliament to coincide with the end

of his second term as London Mayor. His two terms, won as a Conservative candidate in a city which was and is an increasingly Labour inclined city, made him a superficially attractive candidate to Conservatives worried about defeat in 2015.

**"It is unlikely that there is a single figure walking in the wings to save the party from catastrophe, but one thing is for sure; that figure certainly isn't Boris Johnson"**

Cameron's shock win put his ambitions on hold, before the EU referendum gave him a platform to express himself on a national stage (he was at the time still the most popular politician in the country). His commitment to the cause he supported was questionable (remember the remain and leave articles he prepared), and the Brexit campaign's victory set him up for a shot at the leadership he coveted before being memorably shot down by former ally Michael Gove.

It is in this context that the article should be taken. Boris is a man who has never really stopped running for the leadership, and the chance to be the leader that saves the country from a Corbyn premiership will appeal to many, not least someone with Boris' almost messianic self-belief. It is hard not to be affected when columnists and MPs

talk about you in gushing terms as the party's saviour, as many once did about the Foreign Secretary. The anger his article provoked among his colleagues was captured most memorably for me by Amber Rudd, who explicitly stated that she wouldn't want Boris running the Brexit negotiations of his own accord. We might have become accustomed in recent months to this level of cabinet disunity, but we ought to remember such publicly aired disputes are far from normal.

The final question then is whether Boris Johnson is the future leader the Conservative Party needs to stave off defeat by a resurgent Jeremy Corbyn come the next election. Simply put, he is not. The bumbling charm which made him a popular London Mayor and panel show guest is not, nor should it be, what the public want in a leader.

**"The question then is whether Boris Johnson is the future leader the Conservative Party needs. Simply put, he is not"**

More substantially, the suspicion that his position on the EU referendum was designed for personal gain is far from the behaviour of a future PM. It is unlikely that there is a single figure waiting in the wings to rescue the party from catastrophe, but one thing is for sure; that figure certainly isn't Boris Johnson.



Image: Metro

# Diabulimia – The Invisible Illness That Needs To Be Addressed

Eleanor Noyce

Type one diabetes is not a widely understood condition. It's an enigma in the way it materialises, and it's an enigma to society, too. In many ways, type one diabetes is an invisible illness. It presents invisible problems, of which diabulimia is one. The effects are devastating and commonly felt within the type one community, and yet, much of society is oblivious to it.

A touch of science: type one diabetes is an irreversible autoimmune condition, meaning that the body attacks needed cells in the pancreas by mistake. Pancreatic cells produce insulin and thus regulate blood sugar level. The result of a diagnosis is a lifetime of insulin pump therapy or injection therapy and a multitude of injections each day.

**"[Diabulimia] is not currently recognised as a diagnosable disorder. This needs to change. Sixty percent of female type one diabetics will have experienced an eating disorder before the age of twenty-five."**

On the 25th September, Victoria Derbyshire ran a story on diabulimia, something that I was personally taken aback by. As a type one diabetic, I am acutely aware of diabulimia and I know of the severe dangers that it can pose. The surprise I felt at seeing such a news story broadcast speaks volumes. It is not a problem which is

even recognised by much of society, and this presents a great danger in itself.

Diabulimia is an eating disorder in which type one diabetics deliberately stop taking insulin with the goal of losing weight. It is not currently recognised as a diagnosable disorder. This needs to change. Sixty percent of female type one diabetics will have experienced an eating disorder before the age of twenty-five.

Without insulin therapy, a type one diabetic cannot survive. This is the key to understanding the danger of diabulimia. When the body is deprived of its ability to produce insulin, rapid weight loss occurs within an incredibly short space of time. To contextualise: in the period before my diagnosis, I dropped three dress sizes in two months. The appeal of this to those suffering from poor body confidence, as is often the case with women in contemporary society, immediately surfaces.

Upon writing this article, Microsoft Word presented a red, wavy line under the word "diabulimia" to indicate that it was either spelt wrong or that it was a word that did not exist. I can't think of a better metaphor for the perception – or perhaps, more accurately, the lack of perception – of diabulimia in wider society.

The illness shouldn't be a secret, available in hushed tones exclusively for those suffering from type one diabetes. People are dying, either through suicide or through fatal exposure to sky-high blood sugars (ketoacidosis).

**"Mental health problems and type one diabetes are intrinsically linked: they are mutually exclusive, and this is a sad reality"**

The time to act is now. Elevate the voices of those who are working to amplify this cause; donate to charities such as JDRF or DWED (Diabetics With Eating Disorders), and, most importantly, speak to type one diabetics. Mental health problems and type one diabetes are intrinsically linked: they are not mutually exclusive, and this is a sad reality. No one should suffer in silence. Diabulimia is the invisible illness which desperately, desperately needs to be addressed.

**For more support, please visit the following websites:**

[www.dwed.org.uk/about-us](http://www.dwed.org.uk/about-us)

[www.jdrf.org.uk](http://www.jdrf.org.uk)



# Public Sector Workers Deserve Better Than Real-Terms Pay Cut

Ella Gilani

If you have ever been ill, attended a school or had to call the emergency services, then congratulations– the overwhelming odds are that you have benefited from the labour of public sector workers. These are the people who keep the country running: they care for the sick, educate the young and protect all of us. And yet in the years since the public sector pay cap was introduced, NHS workers have seen their wages fall in real terms by around 15%, while police officers and teachers are taking home respectively £2 and £3 an hour less.

**“The pay increases announced so far are still below the rate of inflation, amounting to a real-terms pay cut. To call this insufficient is not strong enough. It is an insult”**

As headlines broadcast the lifting of the pay cap, the government’s offer so far is this: a 1% pay increase plus 1% bonus for police officers and a 1.7% pay increase for prison officers, with the promise of future ‘flexibility’ concerning other workers. Pay increases for police and prison officers will be paid for from existing budgets, putting yet more pressure on vital services that are already overstretched. The pay increases announced so far are still below the rate of inflation, amounting to a real-terms pay cut. To call this insufficient is not strong enough. It is an insult.

The fact that there are those attempting to justify this paltry offering with talk of national debt would be laughable– if the situation were even remotely funny. Under the Conservative austerity programme that ushered in the cap in the first place, national debt rose by £450 billion between 2010 and 2016. Household debt, meanwhile, has risen at such an alarming rate during the last year that economists are warning of a repeat of the 2008 financial crash. Austerity has failed. And yet nurses are still being forced to use food banks to ‘balance the books.’

**“The fact that there are those attempting to justify this paltry offering with talk of national debt would be laughable– if the situation were even remotely funny”**

Public sector workers are not just the backbone of society; they are individuals with lives, needs and often dependents. The last two governments’ sustained programme of cuts has made their jobs harder than ever, with 93% of respondents to a survey conducted by the Guardian of public and voluntary sector workers claimed that they are stressed at work some, most, or all of the time. This, combined with falling pay, has led to recruitment and retention problems across the sector, which the government’s offer will likely do little to assuage.

Theresa May has praised the ‘sacrifice’ that millions have had to make, but at this stage she needs to offer something more concrete than plaudits. Unions are threatening industrial action, with Unite even hinting at illegal strikes. While these are unlikely, it is an extreme response to what is becoming an extreme situation. If managing the economy requires sacrifice, that sacrifice should never be fair wages for some of the hardest workers in society.

**“If managing the economy requires sacrifice, that sacrifice should never be fair wages for some of the hardest workers in society”**

There are difficult times ahead for Britain, and it is time for the government to show where their priorities truly lie. For a successful, united country, workers must be treated with fairness and respect. If the government is not willing to do this, we will all feel the consequences.

# Goodbye Uber London – The Cost of Cheap Transport Too High to Bear?

Lara Groves

On the 22nd September, news broke that Transport for London (TfL) had stripped Uber of its private hire license that allows them to operate in London, coming into effect by the end of the month. Cue mass panic from the 3.5 million Londoners that use the service (and no doubt a portion of Uber’s 40,000 drivers in the city), and marked outrage: at the time of writing, a petition backing Uber in London has exceeded some 500,000 signatures.

It is very easy to align yourself with the ‘for Uber’ argument. Superficially, it is a great service – cheap, quick, and convenient, it is a perfect means for contending with a fast paced city. I could sympathise with my London friends’ qualms with the high prices of black cabs (having once paid £14 to travel from one end of Oxford St to the other) which, prior to Uber, might have been the only safe way home at 4am. Londoners, considering the vast scale of the city and its thriving night economy, perhaps benefit the most from Uber than other UK cities – so in that sense, the loss is a definite blow to its transport network.

Admittedly, in the past I have tended to disregard the swathes of negative press Uber has been subject to, considering some claims to be unfounded or simply finding myself resistant to change brought about by the gig economy. However, as time has passed, the cost of such consumer advantages has become evident. Sad but true, Uber is congruent with our current economic model: pile-’em-high style exploitation for capitalist gain. Driver wages have continued to drop to maintain the crazily cheap prices customers were enticed by.

Uber also, for a time, were not paying VAT in the UK. I’m never fully sure if drivers are content with Uber and their terms of employment – most I have spoken to insist that they are – but since they are rated on their performance, it may be naïve to conclude that this is the case for every driver.

The job losses for London drivers is undeniably a problem – they will suffer the most in light of this decision. Riders, meanwhile, can simply make use of other taxi apps and private car services, such as Addison Lee, that might help cushion the blow.

Yet, I think the license revoke could be a good thing for both drivers and consumer peace of mind. Crucially, it is not an out-and-out ban. TfL cited the reasons for their decision as resulting from Uber’s approach to reporting serious criminal offences, approach to how medical certificates and DBS forms are obtained, and from software that may have prevented officials taking regulatory or law enforcement duties. These issues are serious and must be addressed, but no one is to say at this point that if Uber were to undergo a serious upheaval, their license couldn’t be reinstated.

If it’s possible for the movements of a global, billion-dollar corporation to be reigned in and subject to reform from regulation outside the confines of the company, that must be a positive. Without, a frantic race to the bottom effect of the market may ensue, where the costs to the self-employed working body would surely be far greater.



Image: The Independent

# Uber Special: an insight to the most eye-catching headline of the week

Business Editor Chloe Pryce gives an inside view of the background of the controversial taxi company

Chloe Pryce  
Business Editor

So what has grabbed British attention the most this week? Is it ISIS? Refugees? Donald Trump? No. The potential loss of Uber from London's streets, is in fact what has sent shockwaves throughout the nation. Approaching 800,000 signatures, the 'Save your uber in London' petition has overtaken various petitions including 'Block Donald J. Trump from UK entry' and 'Accept more asylum seekers and increase support for refugee migrants in the UK'.

Translated as "over" or "above" in German with strong connotations of superiority and dictatorship, the word *über* has a history far beyond that of the multi-billion-dollar cab company we know today.



Image: Entrepreneur.com

Having been closely associated with Hitler's vision of world domination, the word was dropped from the German national anthem and has since lost its tie with Hitler. It has come to be known as meaning 'super' or 'ultra'. Now, the word Uberisation has been born.

As Uber faces various scandals because of their bullying corporate culture, the history of the word is relevant now more than ever; they dominate the taxi market across the globe and face conflict with regulators, customers, and even their own employees.

Founded in 2009 as UberCab by Garrett Camp and Travis Kalanick and officially launched in San Francisco in 2011, Uber is now the world's biggest start-up and by far the biggest company in the taxi market. Operating in over 732 cities and 84 countries, Uber reached a record 40 million riders in a single month in October 2016. 4 times the population of London.

At the beginning, Uber was a revelation, without doubt a superior company which appeared to exceed all other taxi services. With a click of a button, users could order a taxi door to door and know their driver's details, the license plate of their car, a photo of their

driver and how long the driver would be. It felt more efficient and safer and avoided having to wait on the street to hail a black cab. Although originally costing 1.5 times as much as a regular cab, as Uber expanded and UberX was founded, Quartz went as far as to claim that "commuting with Uber in New York is cheaper than taking the subway this summer". Exploding its services across the globe, the world has become uberised. UberPOOL, UberEATS, and UberCARGO were all born.

However, headlines soon changed tone, with ones such as "SICKENING Fury as Uber prices soar after London Bridge terror attack carnage..." and "Uber Sexism: After Allegations of Harassment, SVP Engineering resigns". Having faced months of scandals and allegations regarding driver's background checks, public safety and security as well as the employment rights of their drivers, Uber now has 21 days to appeal and turn itself around or else millions of drivers and hundreds of millions of passengers will find themselves back in black cabs, buses and all other modes that preceded Uberisation.

## India Daniel investigates the current controversy surrounding Uber in London

India Daniel

Last week, in news that shocked many, Transport for London ("TfL") decided that they would not be renewing Uber's licence to operate in the city. TfL acknowledged concerns raised by passengers about background checks carried out on drivers by Uber and about the processes to deal with criminal offences, and decided that Uber was "not fit and proper to hold a private hire operator licence".

Uber has caused controversy since arriving in the UK, with many people questioning how stringent the driver checks carried out by the company were. Traditional London cab drivers protested about TfL's original decision to grant Uber a license to operate saying that it undermined the additional knowledge tests which they had to undertake and Uber's competitive price cutting would put them out of business. In the last couple of years, the company has further been plagued with negative news stories surrounding tax avoidance, the status of its self-employed drivers and its toxic head-office culture.

In 2015 TfL referred Uber to HMRC for investigation over questions surrounding the legality of the way the company had structured its tax affairs by having no permanent establishment in the UK and therefore paying minimal tax. Last year the company came under fire for paying drivers below minimum wage, and in a landmark court ruling, lost the right to class its drivers as self-employed. By classing

drivers as self-employed Uber had avoided paying National Insurance, holiday pay and adhering to the minimum wage. In June, following accusations of a poisonous head office culture, Travis Kalanick, Uber's controversial CEO, stepped down following pressure from shareholders.

TfL is following in the footsteps of Bulgaria, Denmark and Italy, as well as some states of America, by banning the app. Uber has also faced backlash in Finland, France, Spain and the Netherlands and has received temporary suspensions in these countries; Spain's largest taxi company has taken its complaint that Uber's practices constitute unfair competition to the European Court and is currently awaiting judgement.

Many people view the ban on Uber as a positive step by TfL, which will allow it to protect revenues and citizens by controlling taxi licences and operating practices more closely, whilst London Cab drivers have hailed it as a historic victory for tradition.

Critics have argued that TfL's decision is a luddite move against the rise of technology in bringing convenience to our lives, commodities which were previously out of reach to the masses, and the ability to work flexibly in a rapidly developing gig economy. Women's charities have voiced concern that the decision will put more vulnerable women at risk by denying them a safe journey home, and some have

argued that more young people will be pushed into using unlicensed taxis.

The rapid rise of technology has led to conflicts between governments and companies who now operate on a global scale which is becoming harder to control. Uber has said it will be appealing the decision by TfL in court, a legal battle which will be watched closely across the world.



Image: TheBubble.com



# The Modern Space Race

Charlie Harrocks  
Business Editor

There seems to be a new space race on the horizon. However, unlike before, the race is not fuelled by the cold war rivalry between the USA and the USSR, it is fuelled by private corporations. Investment is flooding into the space industry. The global space economy was worth \$329 billion in 2016, and three-quarters of that sum came from private companies and commercial activity. Whilst NASA occupy themselves with developing the Space Launch System and the Orion spacecraft for missions to Mars, the billionaires of the world are pouring investment into sending people into low Earth orbit, and making rockets.

Richard Branson has already made several attempts to launch passengers into low orbit space with his company Virgin Galactic, although his SpaceShipTwo notoriously crashed on the first testing attempt, killing the co-pilot. Nonetheless, several tests have since been successful and he expects to have an operational passenger spacecraft service in the near future. Furthermore, Elon Musk, a former majority shareholder of PayPal, is currently undergoing tests

throughout 2018 in order to supply the International Space Station with his Falcon 9 rockets. Jeff Bezos, the tycoon behind Amazon, has a goal to allow “anybody to go to space”. His company Blue Origin is similar to that of Virgin Galactic, offering space travel to paying customers.

This increase in private investment comes as space ventures become cheaper. Right now, there are about 1,500 satellites orbiting the earth, with that number set to sky rocket with them becoming both smaller and cheaper. A number of private firms are even advertising cheaper access to space, in the form of business incubators which help space start-ups. Currently, the launch of a satellite costs around \$200 million, and in the USA last year there were just 22 launches. However, Peter Beck, founder of Rocket Lab from New Zealand, expects to go into space for as little as \$5 million as much as once a week, once his rocket is operational. Usually, small satellite makers will hitch a ride on larger launches that have excess capacity, but Rocket Lab aims to make the process far cheaper, to the point where you can “go online

and click a few buttons and you’ve bought a launch”.

Space travel may seem speculative and dangerous, but it may not be as farfetched as we may think. In our lifetime it looks like people will be paying to fly into space on the back of a billionaire’s rocket. And for the billionaires, the sky seems to be the limit as far as their profits are concerned.



# UK Housing: a quick fix?

Sam Bailey

With the UK’s population continuously growing and with major cities such as London becoming overpopulated, the UK’s housing market is in a sticky situation. It is clear something major needs to be done, but what? Well a few people believe they have the answer and some ideas do seem promising.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has begun to focus on ‘factory built homes’. These homes are constructed and can be shipped throughout the UK on the back of a truck making them extremely accessible. Sadiq Khan has recently secured a loan to build around 1,000 factory built homes by 2021. Whilst these homes are affordable and convenient they do have their drawbacks, the main one being that at 38 square feet the homes are about the size of Crispys, hardly ideal for a family setting. But recent trends have seen people downsizing in general just because large houses cost more to purchase and maintain.

Another potential solution is that we follow the American system and focus more on building properties solely to rent out, never to buy. This potential fix would reduce building costs and remove letting agency fees. However, many people are not keen on pursuing rental properties as they believe that renting property is the same as ‘chucking money down the drain’. People are also sceptical because they like the idea of being homeowners.

One idea which has been around for a while is the introduction of rent controls. Rent controls have been implemented in other cities around the world such as Berlin and the overall results have been very positive. However, the majority of economists oppose rental controls as they rightfully call them out for being inefficient. For example, if a price cap was put on London housing then there would be less and less incentive for landlords to rent out their properties and the amount of houses being supplied

to the market would fall dramatically. For this reason, among others, the conservatives have ruled out rental controls for now as they look to exhaust all other possible solutions.

Whilst the ideas currently being bounced around in the political sphere do seem fairly promising it is clear that these measures are just the beginning of a long process to get the UK housing market back on track. It’s still pretty certain that you’ll have to pay top dollar to live in central London for the foreseeable future, so you may as well stay in Leeds!



**“at 38 square feet the homes are about the size of Crispys, not really ideal for a family setting”**

# Evolutionary Challenge

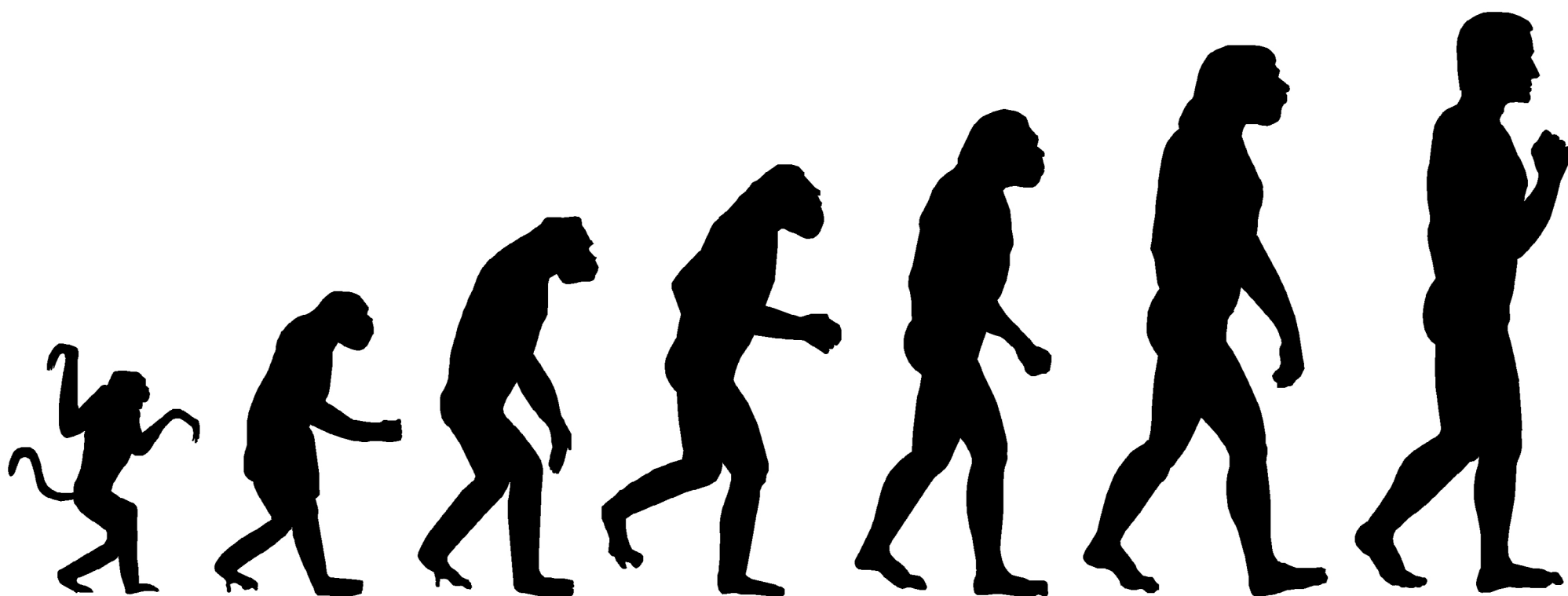


Image: dma.org.uk

**Leo Kindred**  
Science Editor

As another term begins and we dutifully file into lecture theatres, classrooms, or downstairs to the living room because it's raining out and there's lecture capture these days, we can remain confident our respective subjects haven't been tampered with by the government. In Turkey though it's another story, where following a crackdown President Erdogan's government has effectively written evolution out of the schools' science books, claiming it is "above student's level" of understanding.

Evolution has stood up to 200 years of scrutiny, testing and debate as the best way we have for explaining why life developed the way it has. Unlike gravity, evolutionary theory has faced challenges from groups and authorities. It is currently banned in Saudi Arabia and Sudan. Here are some of the memorable flash points for evolution down the years.

- **1860 Oxford Evolution Debate: Bulldog Vs. Soapy Sam**

Taking place seven months after Darwin published *On the Origin of Species*, with Darwin himself too unwell to attend, it is principally remembered for the caustic exchanges between Thomas Huxley ("Darwin's bulldog") and the bishop Samuel Wilberforce (AKA "Soapy Sam").

One of the highlights was reportedly when Wilberforce asked Huxley if he was related to an ape on his father or mother's side, to which Huxley responded that he would truly be ashamed of being related to someone who used their verbal skills to obscure the truth. Sick burn.

- **1925 The Scopes "Monkey" Trial**

The first of many trips to the USA, substitute teacher John Scopes fell afoul of the anti-evolution Tennessee Butler Act. The law was named after John Butler, the farmer who lobbied for it despite reportedly not knowing anything about the "immoral" theory. It became known as the "monkey trial" and Scopes was convicted and fined the equivalent of over £1000. The case became famous and kick-started the longstanding conflict between creationism and modern science education in the US.

Don't worry, we've got more on that...

- **1968 Epperson v. Arkansas**

Biology school teacher Susan Epperson was put at risk of dismissal because her school elected to include a book on the curriculum which included a chapter on Darwin, in violation of Arkansas's law. She challenged the state law banning teaching evolution successfully but the decision was reversed by the Arkansas supreme court. The case then went to Washington where the US Supreme Court found the law unconstitutional.

- **1987 Edwards v. Aguillard**

Having lost the right to prohibit evolution from being taught outright, American fundamentalists started lobbying for laws that made teaching of Christian creationism as a rival to evolution mandatory.

Teacher Don Aguillard took Louisiana to court for a law which said when teaching evolutionary science "creation science" must also be taught. 72 Nobel-prize scientists backed Aguillard and the court ruled in their favour, on the grounds that "creation science" wasn't a thing.

- **2005 "Dover Panda Trial"**

Extremely determined opponents of evolution began promoting "intelligent design", the idea there may be an intelligent force behind life on Earth, and a group of parents challenged their children's school for introducing intelligent design into science classes.

The name "Panda Trial" comes from one of the textbooks introduced, which had the, quite frankly, lovely title *Of Pandas and People*.

The Supreme Court was a lot less cuddly in its verdict, calling the school board inane and that "the religious nature of ID [intelligent design] would be readily apparent to an objective observer, adult or child". Ouch.

- **2005 Flying Spaghetti Monster Vs. Kansas State Board of Education**

Physics grad Bobby Henderson created the Flying Spaghetti Monster (FSM) and the resultant religion "Pastafarianism" as a criticism of the board's decision to include intelligent design. He wrote to the board that a theory of FSM being behind the creation of the world and its species was just as valid as intelligent design or "logical conjecture based on overwhelming observable evidence".

Pastafarianism is now legally recognised as a religion in the Netherlands and New Zealand.

- **2014 The Creation Museum, Nye Vs Ham**

Probably the weirdest but most entertaining flash point was this debate between science TV personality Bill Nye and young Earth creationist Ken Ham. Held at the Creation Museum, which teaches the Earth is only a few thousand years old, Nye and Ham's debate is testament to the logical extension of taking faith over evidence, but to an absurd degree. Ham's arguments get weirder and weirder to the point of outright lunacy including: science can't teach anything about the past, and that all animals in the past were vegetarian, sabre-toothed tigers not-withstanding. The museum now has a replica of Noah's ark.



# Ingenious Ig Nobel ceremony celebrates improbable research

Kira Knowles

The Nobel Prize ceremony that we all know celebrates achievements in medicine, literature, peace and many more. The science that is typically portrayed in a Nobel Prize ceremony is that of a breakthrough 'eureka' moment where the scientist or research group cross significant scientific boundaries. However, there is one Nobel Prize ceremony that upholds the more unusual aspects of science and celebrates problems that may be ridiculed elsewhere. These are the lesser known Ig Nobel awards.

This awards ceremony takes place in Harvard University every year and prizes are given in 10 different categories. The prizes are handed out by Nobel laureates and allows the prize winners to be recognised for their scientific creativity. The research projects are celebrated initially, then receive a knee jerk reaction of laughter, closely followed by making the audience think of the potential power of the research at hand.

The most recent ceremony of the Ig Nobel awards was held on the 14th of September and featured winners that investigated a plethora of research questions. A favourite included the Physics award, won by Marc-Antoine Fardin with the question 'Can a cat be both a solid and a liquid?', examining the fluid dynamics of a cat. After much research on the matter, and the use of advanced mathematical formulas, it was announced that older cats hold their physical shape for a shorter time than younger cats. This has raised interesting questions over what it means for a fluid to be a fluid, and how the flow of matter works.

The 2017 Economics award was given to Nancy Greer and Matthew Rockloff for their study on how holding a crocodile just before gambling can affect a gambler, yielding results about how adrenaline can affect how much money is lost. More adrenaline gained from holding the crocodile meant that participants of the study were more likely to continue their gambling, believing they were soon to be successful.

The winner of the Fluid Dynamics award examined how coffee is spilt when

we walk, prompting a real-world application into how oil tankers spill their oil into oceans. Jiwon Han won the Ig Nobel Prize after publishing a paper entitled 'A study on the coffee spilling phenomena in the low impulse regime'. If you are looking for a way to keep your coffee intact whilst walking, Han suggests walking backwards or holding the coffee cup from the top in a 'claw'. Scientifically, this disrupts the resonance of both the walking and the coffee inside the cup, allowing you to reach your destination without coffee burns. With oil tankers, the science is much the same. With both the ocean and the oil moving, resonance occurs easily, which may lead to a spill. However, if the oil is separated into smaller areas within the tanker, resonance is less likely to occur, and oceans remain free from oil.

These are all creative applications of science, but none of them come close to the 2009 winners of the Public Health award; Elena N. Bodnar, Raphael C. Lee, and Sandra Marijan. Together, they demonstrated an easy way for a bra to be turned into a face mask quickly and easily to avoid inhalation of harmful substances. This life-saving garment is now patented, and can also come with the added feature of a radiation detector inside.

Although these scientists may not come to quite the same fame that the Nobel Prize winners do, they are still worthy of celebration, as they prove that ideas that come out of even the weirdest thoughts can have real-world applications. The Ig Nobel ceremony celebrates all that is wacky and weird in science and brings a humorous element to innovation, something that is needed to bring attention to work that may otherwise have been overlooked. Without the Ig Nobel awards, how would we know that a cup of coffee can eventually stop oil spills or that a bra can save a life?

## The Mexican Earthquakes

Sam McMaster  
Science Editor

Earthquakes' recent ubiquity in news should do nothing to lessen their perceptions within the public's mind. These earth-shaking events can devastate entire cities, destroy millions of peoples' lives and can kill thousands, yet are sorely misunderstood by most people, and reported incorrectly by much of the media. Earthquakes are caused by the sudden movement of tectonic plates along a fault. Tectonic plates are sections of the Earth's lithosphere; the edges of these plates often get stuck while the rest of the plate moves, their sudden unsticking causing a quake.

The misrepresentations begin with the measurement of the size of an earthquake. Many outlets cling to the aging Richter scale, even though it hasn't been used by scientists since the 1970s. The Moment Magnitude scale was introduced to allow the sizes of larger quakes to be calculated by using more variables to measure the energy released. The Mercalli scale is also used to measure the effects of a quake from observers reports.

It's difficult to quantify the power of an earthquake as they occur at different depths and many frequencies of seismic waves are produced travelling in different modes and at different speeds. Longitudinal P-waves take the form of pressure waves, transverse S-waves propagate elastically through the earth and lastly there are surface waves.

Earthquakes are never single events, in around 40% of cases they are preceded by foreshocks, and always followed by aftershocks which can be as

devastating as the main shock. Much of the damage comes from the quake damaging buildings, causing landslides, avalanches, fires (by damaging gas and electrical lines), tsunamis and floods.

Making earthquake resistant structures is extremely difficult and many structures can't be upgraded due to their current construction materials.



Mexico has recently been hit by two devastating earthquakes; the first of which struck on 7th September at 23:49 in the Gulf of Tehuantepec off the southern coast of Mexico near Chiapas. The quake struck with a magnitude estimated to be 8.1 (Mercalli intensity IX). A tsunami, with waves of 1.75m above tide, was generated. Buildings were shaken in Mexico City prompting evacuations. The quake set the record for the second strongest in the country's history, after an 8.6 magnitude in 1787, and is the most intense recorded globally in 2017. 98 people have been confirmed dead and over 300 have been injured. The National Seismological Service (SSN) recorded 3831 aftershocks.

Following the Chiapas earthquake another large quake hit Central Mexico (55km south of the city of Puebla) on 19th September at 13:14, measuring a magnitude of 7.1 (Mercalli intensity VIII). The country's SASMEX earthquake warning system was only able to provide 20 seconds warning (sadly typical of earthquake predications). For 20 seconds, the earth shook causing the collapse of more than 40 buildings. 320 people have been confirmed dead and over 4600 injured. Thankfully, only 39 aftershocks have been recorded so far. This quake was unusual as it didn't occur along plate boundaries as most do, it was an intraplate slip at a depth of 51km.

If you are able to donate to help Mexico please do so; you can either donate directly to the Topos Rescue Brigade, the Mexican Red Cross or through Unicef at this link: <https://goo.gl/8yUCra>.

# NFL Kneel in Defiance of Trump

Ryan Wan  
American Football

NFL London began this Sunday with the Jacksonville Jaguars going up against the Baltimore Ravens in Wembley. The game ended up being a blowout with the Jags winning 44-7. However, the biggest headlines regarding the NFL this weekend was regarding the USA national anthem.

This weekend saw what could be described as a mass protest during the national anthem. Players, coaching staff and even owners could be seen either taking a knee, sitting down, linking arms, raising a fist or even staying in the locker room during the anthem. The reason for the protest is the police brutality directed towards African Americans, but has been spurred by President Trump's comments about the players who did not stand during the anthem.

Colin Kaepernick was the first NFL player protest during the national anthem by sitting in protest during a 2016 pre-season game. This later evolved into kneeling after talking to veterans, deciding this was a more respectful way to protest. By last pre-season game, he was joined by his team mate Eric Reid and Seattle Seahawks cornerback Jeremy Lane. In the following weeks more players protested in a similar way with comparisons being drawn to the

Black Power Salute seen at the 1968 Olympics. His actions drew huge controversy and is seen as a reason why he is still a free agent despite taking his team to Superbowl XLVII in 2013.

Donald Trump has previously tweeted claiming that kneeling during the national anthem was disrespectful of the flag, country and veterans who had served in the forces. However, it was his recent comments at a rally down in Alabama for Republican candidate Luther Strange that have been the most controversial, with Trump saying "Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, 'Get that son of a bitch off the field right now. Out! He's fired. He's fired!'"

The president may have thought that he would be supported by many of the owners of NFL teams, since many contributed funds towards his presidential campaign last year. However, there has been a show of solidarity in the NFL regarding players right to protest. Owners of the Dallas Cowboys and Jacksonville Jaguars, Jerry Jones and Shahid Khan linked arms with their players before their respective games in a display of unity. 30 out of the 32 teams in the NFL have released statements in support of their players right to protest, along with the commissioner of NFL, Roger Goodell, also supporting the players.



Image: The Independent

The reactions of fans have been mixed though, with some supporters booing the actions of players during the national anthem. On twitter people have used #BoycottNFL and #TakeAKnee to voice their opinions of the protests.

Regardless of opinion it certainly has brought attention to the issue on a national level. It will also be interesting to see if these protests continue in force for the rest of the season and especially if it happens during the Superbowl in February.

# Lukaku's Fine Start to the Season Risks Being Overshadowed by Racist Chant

Cian Fox  
Football

Romelu Lukaku was signed by Manchester United for the purpose of scoring goals, as United struggled to break teams down last season, leading to several disappointing draws at Old Trafford. However this season there is renewed optimism on Sir Matt Busby Way, with Lukaku's scintillating form - 7 goals in 7 appearances - highlighting the Belgian's importance to this United side which sit joint top of the table alongside Manchester City.

United are playing more attractive football under Jose Mourinho, and Lukaku's ability to stretch the defence and make space for his teammates has been particularly exciting to watch. Mkhitaryan, Rashford and Martial's recent performances have been excellent compared to last season, with the Belgian striker's willingness to run in behind offering more for the likes of Mkhitaryan than the, at times, frustrating Ibrahimovic last season.

It is therefore no surprise that fans have made a new chant for their in-form No.9. Unfortunately, some fans have settled on a song about the Belgian's penis size rather than his footballing ability, and the chant has been sung consistently both home and away since the Everton game last week.

The chant reinforces racial stereotypes, and whilst

many claim it's just 'banter' and the reaction is 'PC gone mad', it is clear that any form of racial stereotyping is racist. As Marina Hyde of The Guardian put forward, failing to acknowledge that an "assumption about someone made solely on the basis of that person's race is racist". Whilst progress has been made regarding racism in football, there are obviously still issues.

Lukaku himself has asked fans to stop singing the chant, calling for supporters to "#RespectEachOther" - and this should really put the issue to bed, as surely the fans must respect the wishes of the player they are singing about. But instead certain sections of the away support at St Mary's responded by singing "We're Man United, we'll sing what we want" - proceeding to sing the controversial chant again.

Anti-racism group Kick It Out have written to the club asking them to stop fans singing the chant - which they say is racist and discriminatory. United have responded to this increased pressure by threatening to ban fans singing the chant at games, planning to identify them via CCTV.

Lukaku will be at the heart of United's season and if the club go on to achieve any silverware as their early form suggests they might, you can be sure that Lukaku will be integral. As a result, it is time United fans ditch the controversial chant assigned to the

Belgian striker, and instead focus on his abilities as a footballer and individual.





# Uni Ready for Beckett in Varsity finale clash

With Varsity next week, *The Gryphon Sport* had the chance to speak with Jonny House, captain of the men's rugby union team, about the upcoming Varsity game.

Ryan Wan  
Rugby Union



University of Leeds

**It was a great result for you last year winning the Varsity finale. How have the pre-season preparations been going?**

Preparations have been going well. We got started early again, got all the boys together midway through August and we had a big turn out this year to pre-season. We're really trying to push not just winning the finale, but as many Varsity games as we can. The preparations have gone really well, we've had some good pre-season games and some tough pre-season games, but it's got us ready for the challenge ahead against Beckett.

**Fantastic defence alongside clinical finishing was at the heart of the victory last year, holding Beckett to only penalties. Is the game plan similar to last time since it worked so well?**

Yeah, we know our defence is going to have to be solid again. Obviously, Beckett are a great team, a super rugby team and we know we're going to have to defend well to keep them out. That game plan worked last year and the boys know it is going to be a tough challenge, but we're ready to defend our hearts out to try and keep them out again.

**It's probably fair to say that Beckett went into last year as the favourites, having won for the past two years, but do think that has changed now since you are the reigning champions?**

I don't know if the tables have turned that much! Obviously, it was great to get the win last year and it's boosted our confidence massively as a club and I feel the confidence around the university, but Beckett are still an absolute force. They've recruited quite well this year as well. They had an awful year last year and think that they are going to try and come back fighting, so I don't think one win is going to change our underdog status in the game to be honest.

**Do you prefer being the underdogs?**

Oh yeah definitely. We've got no pressure going into that game. On paper, we aren't the favourites; they're a league above us and they have a lot more funding. It takes a lot of pressure off the boys.

**There were over 15,000 people last year in attendance at Headingley. I imagine that it has quite a different feel compared to your normal fixtures. Is it daunting playing in front of a such a big crowd and how do you deal with that?**

Yeah. Obviously completely different to our regular fixtures and it's hyped up massively, but the boys take it on the chin and take it as a regular game. We view it as a pre-season game to get us ready for the league, that's what we really aim to do well in. It means everything to the boys representing the uni and we want to do well, but we take it as a pre-season game. You've got to ignore those 15,000 people screaming at you, yelling at you, throwing pints at you. You've just got to block it out and get on with the game because that's what you trained 8-10 weeks for.

**Winning the Varsity finale is obviously great, but do you see it more as the crowning achievement of the season or is winning the league more important?**

For me personally, the pinnacle of a season would be to have our teams to win every league we're in. Unfortunately, that can't happen this year because our 4ths and 5ths are in the same league, which will definitely be an interesting game. Whilst Varsity is a massive event and playing in front of that many people is going to be the pinnacle of most people's rugby careers, for me the best thing for us this season would be to do well in all the leagues with all the teams. I feel if we put so much emphasis on Varsity then our season's going to tail away, but we really need to focus on a bit of continuity for the whole season.



# Schauffele wins but Thomas comes out as champion

Justin Thomas claimed the FedEx Cup this weekend, golf's largest prize fund, netting a cool \$10 million.

Elliott van Barthold  
Golf



Getty Images: Kevin Cox

There were two prizes on offer this weekend down at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta, Georgia. First was the weekend's competition itself, the Tour Championship, where the winner would net \$1.5m in prize funds. However, what was also at stake – and with a slightly bigger pot of \$10m up for grabs – was the

season-long competition: the FedEx Cup. Based on performances over the season, the pros compete to earn points which are given out depending on their finishes in the tournaments across the season. Those that qualify then play in a knockout competition, where the number of players is cut down after each weekend across 4 weekends. The Tour Championship is the final event and the player with the most points after the last round takes home the proverbial pot of gold.

At the start of Thursday, there were five who held their destiny in their own hands: Leishman, Spieth, Dustin Johnson, Thomas and Rahm. They all knew that a victory would guarantee them the \$10m jackpot. However, coming into Sunday, it was England's Paul Casey that found himself in control. Beginning the day two shots ahead of Kevin Kisner and Xander Schauffele, the \$10m jackpot and Tour Championship trophy was his to lose. And lose it he did.

Casey spluttered to a 3-over par allowing rookie Xander Schauffele to "weasel his way in" as he put it in his post-round interview. However, anyone watching the action would have said that the 23 year old Californian more than merited the win as he put in a composed performance whilst most around him faltered. But despite winning the weekend, he was not the FedEx winner. That honour fell to the superb Justin Thomas.

Long regarded as a consistent but unspectacular player, Thomas has often stood in the shadow of childhood best friend and former world number one, Jordan Spieth. This year, however, has seen Thom-

as stride out of his school playing partner's shadow, winning five events, including the PGA Championship, and subsequently the FedEx Cup. An emotive player, there were moments when it looked like Thomas' concentration may have slipped. But each mistake, which included a few typically wild tee shots, drove him on. Birdies on 16 and 17 were enough to get him to 11 under and secure a second place finish and top place in the FedEx Cup standings. It will be a tough season to replicate but there is little doubt that the ambitious Thomas will be aiming for anything less.



# Sampson fired after scandal rocks FA

Sampson sacked as England Manager in damaging end to race scandal

Tom Davies  
Football



PA: Press Association

Mark Sampson was last week removed from his post as head coach of the England women's team, following an extended scandal over accusations of racism and inappropriate behaviour.

In an interview with the BBC following the sacking, FA chief executive Martin Glenn confirmed it was in no way related to allegations of racism and bullying made by England player Eniola Aluko. Sampson was

instead removed following a re-evaluation of his behaviour at Bristol Academy, which was deemed 'incompatible with the standards we'd expect at the FA'. However, Glenn also stated that Sampson was 'absolutely clear to work as a coach in football' and acknowledged that in 2015 the FA's safeguarding unit cleared Sampson of wrongdoing in relation to his conduct at Bristol. This contradiction has led many to conclude that the FA have used an old incident to get them out of jail over the recent allegations made by Aluko.

The saga only became public in August, when the Daily Mail revealed the complaints Aluko made against Sampson in 2016. Two investigations had cleared the coach and his staff of wrongdoing with regard to Aluko's allegations, but a number of shortcomings in the investigation process have since come to light, leading many to accuse the FA of a cover-up. The scandal has rapidly escalated into a major, multi-pronged problem for the FA, with senior executives set to face a parliamentary inquiry to answer to the exposed shortcomings.

The Sampson scandal has ignited debate across the press and in the wider football community. It appeared to have split the team itself; Drew Spence and Lianne Sanderson came out in support of Aluko, whilst other players rushed to back Sampson. In last week's 6-0 win over Russia, played the day before Sampson was sacked, the starting XI celebrated their first goal with the manager in a show of support for him. The Professional Footballers' Association has actively supported Aluko in her campaign against the England management, but her support in the football community has not been universal – former England goalkeeper David James recently suggested she was disgruntled at losing her place in the team.

Sampson, who led England to two major semi-finals, is yet to make a statement in the wake of his sacking, but is thought to be considering legal action. Whether he said what has been alleged may never be known, but it remains that the FA's inadequate investigation has caused a significant fallout which will likely prove damaging for the organisation in the weeks to come.



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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



# Varsity Anticipation Heats Up



## THE SCORE SO FAR



**Nancy Gillen**  
Newspaper Associate

Leeds Varsity 2017 is just around the corner. On Wednesday 4th October, the two main universities in Leeds will come together and battle it out in a series of sporting fixtures. The day culminates in the Men's Rugby Union grand finale, played at the Headingley Carnegie Stadium. After this, the points are tallied up and the winning university will get to claim the title of Varsity Champion.

Last year the University lost to Beckett by one single point, but triumphed in the men's rugby finale. This year, the score currently stands at 5-2 to Beckett, with our victories coming in Women's Cross Country and Inter-Mural sport.

The pinnacle of Varsity is considered by many to be the rugby finale, as it is often a fiercely contested and passionate match played in front of thousands of boisterous students. However due to construction work on the stadium, ticket availability this year was severely limited and many die-hard Varsity fans were left disappointed.

There is no denying that the finale is something of a sporting spectacle and those lucky enough to get tickets this year are in for a treat, but for those who

didn't there are still plenty of Varsity fixtures taking place where you can show your support or even join in.

This year hockey and netball will be opening the proceedings, with their top teams playing on Tuesday 3rd October. The hockey games will be taking place at Sports Park Weetwood, with the women's 1st team taking to the pitch at 6:45pm, followed by the men's 1st team at 8pm. If entertaining, high quality sport isn't enough to tempt you to Weetwood, there will be performances from LUU's Freestyle Dance and Leeds Beckett Dancers. Refreshments will be available from Dodsons Fresh Catch Fish & Chips and the View bar.

If hockey isn't your thing, the netball game between the 1sts will be taking place at 'The Arena' on Beckett's Headingley Campus. Last year over 300 people came to watch the University beat Beckett in a thrilling game. Tickets for this event are £6 and can be brought online. On the Wednesday itself, the University are hosting the inaugural Leeds Varsity Festival at Weetwood. Music, performances and a photobooth are promised, with food from iSpice and the Pancake man, and a bar for drinks. Varsity gear will also be on sale, giving you a chance to become a true supporter. The event runs from 12-5, when the majority of Varsity fixtures are being played,

giving you a chance to watch a wide range of sports. Women's football will be worth a watch after their surprise triumph over Beckett last year, with the 1s kicking off at 3pm, and the 2s and 3s beginning at 1pm. Both the female and male lacrosse teams will be playing at 12pm and 3pm respectively, and if you fancy something a bit different, the Korfball 3s will be playing at 2pm. A full list of fixtures with times can be found online.

The event is completely free to attend and easy to get to - it's just £1 with your student card on the number 1 or 6 bus from outside Parkinson steps.

Finally there is the chance to join in yourself by participating in the Varsity parkrun, a 5km circuit of Woodhouse Moor, on Saturday 30th September. Students, staff & alumni are all able to take part. Register online and turn up wearing green, the University colours. If you're unable to participate in the 5k run, you can still volunteer to be a part of the event. The University with the most participants (runners and volunteers) will gain a Varsity point.

It's clear to see that even if you didn't manage to get a ticket for the rugby, you'll still be able to watch high quality sport, support your university and enjoy Varsity. For more information, and for a full list of fixtures, visit [www.leedsvarsity.com](http://www.leedsvarsity.com)