



THE GRYPHON

The official newspaper of Leeds University



Edu-Groan: Technical Issues Torment Campus

Eduroam Connectivity Issues and Multiple Fire Alarms Disrupt Student Experience

Reece Parker
Editor-in-Chief

In an ongoing poll ran by The Gryphon, 88% of the 100 respondents thus far reported issues accessing Eduroam whilst on campus. Of these, 34 students complained that they did not suffer connectivity issues in previous years but do currently, whilst a further 24 claimed that although they have struggled accessing Eduroam in years previously, this year has proved to be worse.

Those surveyed revealed a myriad of different internet issues, suggesting the issue is complex and multifaceted. A large proportion of those

sampled complained of connectivity issues in the University Union as well as the Roger Stevens Building, but perhaps most frustratingly the Brotherton, Health Sciences, and Edward Boyle libraries also arose as sites of connectivity issues. This may explain why 68% of those polled claimed that these issues have impacted upon their ability to study.

Respondents claimed that accessing the internet on campus was a 'daily struggle', and that it 'doesn't matter where you are or when, it disappears in halls, in the libraries, everywhere, with no warning, for no reason'. Whilst success has been noted by various students when they have tak-

en their devices to IT services, this is a frustrating and time-consuming solution for an issue which is not their fault.

A University spokesperson said:

"We're sorry that some students have experienced difficulties with connectivity. We are continually enhancing our extensive wireless infrastructure across the campus which includes adding new high bandwidth wireless points in buildings, including the Union, and enabling better connectivity in outside areas, especially those where people congregate. We always welcome feedback and the Service Desk is always willing to help - itservicedesk@leeds.ac.uk."

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Issue 4

27/10/17

Conservative MP Scrutinised for Letter To Vice-Chancellors

It contained a 'sinister' request for the names of professors teaching Brexit related courses

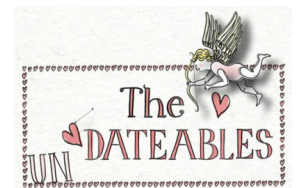
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We look at whether the popular TV show perpetuates or eradicates stereotypes

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We talk to the multifaceted scientist about her interests, her career so far and future projects

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Koeman Gets the Sack

Sport looks at Koeman's recent dismissal after his team entered the relegation zone

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Editors of the Week

Stephanie Uwalaka & Esther Marshall

Both of these Features Editors supplied another page of content at short notice, and then agreed to help host Gryph-on-Air this week!

Quote of the Week

You’ve been reading too much Elon Musk and watching too many Hollywood movies

Sophia Robot

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Editor’s Letter:



Dear Readers,

If I said to you ‘gracefully soaring through the air’, what would you picture? An eagle perhaps? Or, for the more technically invested of you, a hi-tech military jet? Or even, what is actually the only correct answer to this question, Angelo Ogbonna rising to header in a late winner against a top 6 side in a cup game. Having already proved a penchant for the feat, dumping out Jurgen Klopp’s Liverpool in the FA Cup last year, Ogbonna succeeded in repeating his heroics, dealing the killer blow to Tottenham after Andre Ayew scored two goals Weetwood’s finest poachers would be proud of.

Supporting West Ham isn’t like being a normal football fan. It’s as if a curse has been placed on you at birth so that 75% of your weekends will be ruined by 11 men in claret and blue, and no matter the amount of cans you bring onto the train for the long journey back to Leeds, you can’t erase the memory of what you’ve suffered through hours before. Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the curse is that its often placed on you by your own family, as if their sense of enjoyment could be solely resurrected through the sensation of schadenfreude. Whats worse, I’m already looking forward to the day when I can have my own son, so I too can ruin an innocent person’s weekends for the rest of eternity.

With this being said, there is something quite brilliant about supporting a team who are the perennial underdog, who are not charmed with finances, an illustrious history, or superstar players, and have to grind out results purely through endeavour and moments of magic. The victory against Tottenham was one of those moments, and I can guarantee to you that it feels a lot sweeter to win under those circumstances than it does when you are the favourites.

Many Tottenham fans mocked my fellow West Ham supporters in the way they have reacted to this win, and to be honest their may be a slight degree of over-zealousness on my part, but for a team who very much have their backs at the wall currently, to overturn a two goal deficit against one of the strongest teams in England, I’ll allow myself to gloat.

Long live the magic of the cup,

Reece Parker,
Editor-in-Chief
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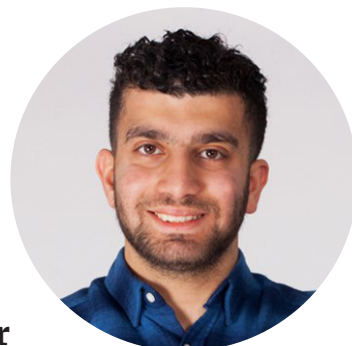
**Jack Palmer –
Union Affairs Officer**

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The training day for our Reps, 'Change Summit' went really well last week, hopefully we'll be doing something again next year! Since then, I took some annual leave and went to Berlin (it was lush) and recently I went with other members of the Exec to an NUS Conference in Sheffield, where we discussed national campaigns, the issues facing students nationally, and shared ideas with officers from Unions all over the country.

If you're already beginning to miss the brilliant events and campaigns we've had over this October, there's LOADS of exciting democratic stuff coming up soon...

This November, we're going to be asking you to participate in the biggest piece of student research ever. The 'Express Yourself' survey aims to get every student at Leeds University to tell us about what is important to them and what they want their Union to work on for the next four years. This will literally shape the future of LUU and the experience of future students at Leeds, so don't miss out on the chance to be a part of something huge and keep an eye out for the campaign this November!



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

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So it's been a busy two weeks! So busy in fact that I only just got my exec column in by the deadline (don't leave things as late as me!). Last week we had our Change Summit which was a fantastic opportunity for different Reps to network and share best practice and really learn from one another. All Exec had the opportunity to talk about our experiences, why we ran and why YOU should get involved and think about running yourself in February!

I also had the chance to present to the Deans and Pro-Deans last week about what LUU are looking to achieve this coming year. I spoke about our upcoming Strategic Review and how we're really looking to above and beyond in engaging students and making sure all voices are heard. As a Student Exec it's up to us to represent you so we're here to amplify your voice and ensure that it's represented at the very highest echelons of the university and my meeting with the Deputy Vice Chancellor earlier this week helped ensure that.

The first Education Assembly is tonight so there's lots to look forward to in getting the Reps together again and looking at how we can make grassroots and school level change. Watch this space!



**George Bissett –
Community Officer**

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I've been on leave this week, so I thought I'd take the opportunity to talk about some stuff I'm looking to do in the second half of this term. I've had a lot of students ask me about bins. You'll have probably noticed that there haven't been any recycling bins in LUU for a while. It's a rubbish situation and I have raised it with Facilities. It isn't all bad; our retail outlets are still recycling behind the scenes, and our waste contractor does their own bit of separating our waste at their facilities. In the meantime, there are separate recycling bins in the Refectory and on the precinct outside the building.

Jonny Foster, your Community Officer two years ago, worked with First Buses to secure the £1 student single, and I want to meet with First to talk about how to make transport better for students in Leeds. So, if you've got any ideas, let me know! Speaking of ideas, the first Better Leeds Forum is taking place in a few weeks, and the ideas deadline is 30 October. If you have an idea that would improve life in Leeds for students, make sure you submit it. Search "better leeds forum" on the LUU website, click on the first result and send us your idea!



**Jess Bassett –
Activities Officer**

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I can't believe how quickly term is going. Did you know it is only 8 weeks until Christmas? I even had my first gingerbread latte yesterday. I visited the LUU cafe Loft which is opposite Laidlaw library. I can honestly say it was unreal.

I have been working closely on a campaign which will be launched in November called Talking Tackles It. Our American Football and Rugby League clubs have teamed up to tackle mental health and show it's okay not to be okay. The teams have worked really hard to create some great events to raise money for two fantastic causes; the James Burke Foundation and CALM, in light of men's mental health awareness. Each team has designed their own cocktails that will be launched on the night, and continue to be on sale throughout the whole month of November in Terrace with £1 of each cocktail sold going to these charities. I urge you all to support them and get involved in their events this November. The first event will be a free clean shave on 1st November in LUU opposite Santander for anyone wanting to grow a mustache during the month to raise funds for the charities, but even if you're not taking part then come down and support everyone!



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

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As Black History Month draws to a close, it is important to reflect on the great activities that happened all over campus during October.

We held a variety of discussions ranging from Black masculinity and mental health to traditional African spiritual practices. The month was a huge success and feedback from students has been incredible. Our Women and BME Liberation Coordinators also hosted an amazing event 'Don't touch my hair' discussing the micro aggressions that many black students face because our hair cannot adhere to European beauty standards. There is an exhibition of photos depicting the diverse and beautiful nature of afro hair available until the end of the month in the outlet opposite Santander. This week it was also Asexual Awareness week and the LGBTQ* Liberation Coordinators have organised a special meet up so look out for that.

I am looking forward to November where we will celebrate Disability History month and I cannot wait to start working on more projects like the BME Leadership conference that I am planning!



**Chloë Sparks –
Welfare Officer**

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I've just got back from the NUS Zones conference where I was able to chat with Welfare Officers from all over the country as well as the national VP Welfare Officer Izzy Lenga. There were some great discussions on topics like reclaiming social media as a positive safe space, housing and mental health.

I also went to the Black History Month event 'Man Up!' which explored Black masculinity and mental health. It reminded me of how important it is to make our campaigns and services truly accessible and inclusive to our diverse student community. Not only do we need to massively improve on men's mental health awareness and support for BME students, but we also need to work on creating a system that understands the intersections of our students identities. LUU and the University need to be respectful and supportive of these when students are seeking support for their mental health.

At Leeds Uni the mental health crisis is more real than ever. As well as awareness campaigns, I'm fighting for the properly funded mental health services we deserve on campus and in the city.



Campus Watch

1 Cambridge University English faculty issues trigger warnings for Shakespeare lecture

Notes distributed to students at Cambridge University warned students that a lecture discussing the Shakespeare play *Titus Andronicus* would include “discussions of sexual violence.”

Some have praised the news, with many ongoing discussions about the creation of ‘safe spaces’ within universities.

However, some academics and theatre professionals were critical of the move. David Crilly, artistic director at the Cambridge Shakespeare festival, told the Telegraph: “If a student of English literature doesn’t know that *Titus Andronicus* contains scenes of violence,

they shouldn’t be on the course.”

A university spokesperson said that “it is not a policy of the English faculty to have such warnings.”

They also added: “Some lecturers indicate that some sensitive material will be covered in a lecture by informing the English faculty admin staff, who prepare the faculty’s notes on lectures which are distributed to English students.”

“This is entirely at the lecturer’s own discretion and is in no way indicative of a faculty-wide policy.”

Ian White

2 University of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University employs a resident snake charmer after student death

A university in North-West Nigeria has begun hiring snake charmers after a third year economics student died of a snake bite on campus.

The dean of student affairs, Dr Suleiman Kankara, said charmers had been hired shortly following the incident.

“We normally hire the snake charmers whenever we get a report of the presence of snakes on the campus. It is unfortunate that the lady died. We know we tried our best to prevent her death,” he told the Nigerian Daily Post.

Snake charming is a common form of street entertainment in Nigeria and many other countries in Africa and South Asia. Snake charmers typically play a flute at close range to the snake, which usually pacifies the snake and makes it safe to handle.

Deadly snake bites are a major problem in Nigeria, with more than 10,000 people bitten by snakes every year.

Ian White

3 Edge Hill University Former staff members found guilty of defrauding university

Former dean Robert Smedley and his secret partner Christopher Joynson have been found guilty of fraud against Edge Hill University.

Smedley was found guilty of five counts of fraud, through hiring Joynson and between them fraudulently claiming over £132,000 in consultancy fees.

UCU general secretary Sally Hunt said: “This case highlights serious questions that the senior management of Edge Hill University have to answer over governance – something UCU has raised concerns about in the past.

“Any attempt by the university to portray itself as the victim in this case would be wholly inappropriate. The real victims are taxpayers, students and staff, and the whole sorry episode brutally exposes how a lack of transparency in universities can leave them vulnerable to fraud.

Ian White

4 University of Sussex Student bottled in alleged racist attack

Yehsung Kim was on his way home from a South Korean society meeting on Sunday night when he was confronted by a group of three boys and two girls. They allegedly made monkey noises and racist gestures before one of them launched a bottle at him.

“The first thing one of them said to me after I asked ‘why did you throw that at me?’ was ‘because you are ***** Asian’ ”.

Yehsung, who is originally from South Korea, is studying International relations at the University. After visiting a doctor, he was informed that the maxilla bone between his top lip and nose may be broken apart from his teeth being smashed.

Chief Inspector Chris Veale said, “We are treating this as a hate crime as we believe the victim was targeted due to his ethnicity”. A crowdfunding page set up to raise money for his dental treatment has already raised more than £1,700.

Yehsung said: “I am really happy that people are supporting me.”

Sagar Kar

5 University of Oxford Student who stabbed her boyfriend might be allowed to resume her studies

Oxford University has stated that they will consider allowing medical student and aspiring heart surgeon Lavinia Woodward to resume her studies after she punched and stabbed her boyfriend whilst under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

The College has allowed the 24-year-old student to suspend her studies for 18 months, which delays any disciplinary hearings against her.

In usual circumstance, an offence such as this would carry a custodial sentence however, when issuing Ms Woodward with a 10-month suspended sentence in September, Judge Pringle stated: “You are a clearly highly intelligent individual, you had an immaturity about you which was not commensurate for someone of your age.”

At the time, the decision taken by the judge created outrage, as many speculated the student had been spared due to her privileged status, although the dean of Christ Church College denied this at the time.

The Judge’s findings are no doubt a factor influencing the universities considerations.

Ayasha Zaheer

Black History Month Events Come to a Close

Rabeeah Moeen
News Editor

Black History Month has been an ongoing presence on our campus throughout October, with a diverse array of events.

Many writers and activists and various creatives have been invited to speak on a number of panels, with topics ranging from mental health to spirituality.

The Union organised many events and talks which occurred throughout the month.

Last Friday, the 'Don't Touch My Hair' project was exhibited at the Union, featuring students who shared their personal stories in a photo exhibition and video, in addition to discussing the beauty of natural hair.

The well-publicised project, named after Solange Knowles' song, is the first from the new BME Liberation Coordinators at the Union. It has provided a seminal part of events this month, with students across the university getting involved in the photo campaign, in addition to a short film for LSTV.

Coordinator Fatimah Saleem said she felt the event was important to do because the month "is about a celebration of blackness, and hair is incredibly important to Afro-Caribbean communities." It therefore allowed a space for expression of identity, in addition to educating others.

The exhibition is still present in the Union's Unipol room, and will remain there for the next two weeks.

Another event that took place was organised by Dr Alfonso from the Faculty of Biological Science, entitled 'Racial Diversity in Science.' She highlighted the importance of this panel in discussing the applications to sciences at university by BME students vs the number accepted, adding that events like these show they are "interested in finding solutions."

PhD student Leon Willis spoke about the event, saying talks focused on "the socio-economic issues BME students encounter," the importance of widening participation to allow BME students into STEM subjects, and what the university can do to improve student experience.

Other events during this past week included a pop-up barbershop in the Union and a Self Care Day that was held on the Roof Garden.

In addition, students interviewed Deputy Vice-Chancellor Tom Ward on the topic 'Why Is My Curriculum Still White?' This was based on the popular campaign launched two years ago, discussing and trying to erase the Eurocentric nature of many university courses.

The month of events concluded with a live performance of 'Meet the Crafts,' based on their best-selling account of escape from slavery: *Running A Thousand Miles to Freedom*.



Free Speech Rules to Hold Universities to Account

Liv Noon

The Government has announced that Universities across England must uphold free speech and that action will be taken against universities who use "no platforming" and "safe spaces" to turn away controversial speakers.

Jo Johnson, the Universities Minister, said: "Free speech is one of the foundations on which our higher education tradition is built. It goes to the heart of our democratic values and is a principle I know universities hold dear."

The regulator for higher education in England, the Office for Students, is due to receive new legal powers in April 2018. Following this, they will be able to hold universities to account if they do not uphold the values of free speech. Universities censoring free speech could be fined or face potential de-registration.

The move comes after a number of controversial cases of censorship in British Universities. Cardiff University Union's woman's officer, Rachael Melhuish, ran a petition to ban Germaine Greer from the campus in 2015, on the grounds that she had expressed transphobic comments. Eventually, Greer was allowed to speak at the University with the addition of uniformed police officers present.

In defence of Greer, Johnson said: "She has every right, if invited, to give views on difficult and awkward subjects"

Sir Michael Barber, Chairman of the OFS said: "Ensuring freedom of speech and learning how to disagree with diverse opinions and differing views of the world is a fundamental aspect of learning at

university. The OfS will promote it vigorously."

Spiked's annual free speech university ranking saw the *University of Leeds* and the *Leeds University Union* awarded a red ranking for a third year. The University earned its ranking for its restrictions on offensive and racist speech, whilst the Union gained this position for its advertsign and no platform policies. A university spokesperson responded to this by saying "The University is confident that it has a robust and consistent policy in relation to freedom of expression. We find it hard to take seriously a survey in which we are castigated for saying that we would not tolerate anti-Semitism on our campus." They added:

"The University is committed to promoting and positively encouraging free debate, enquiry and protest within the requirements placed on it by the law. It tolerates a wide range of views even when they are unpopular, controversial or provocative. Indeed the University has never banned an event or speaker because of the subject matter and it hosts a broad range of debates and speeches on a wide range of subjects."

Leeds University Union's Union Affairs Officer, Jack Palmer, responded to their respective ranking with the following:

"LUU shares freedom of expression protocol with the University which enables students to have many open and respectful debates in their Union and on campus."

"Leeds students have repeatedly voted for policy which denies a platform to far-right and extremist groups who are not interested in debate."

"Jo Johnson needs to recognise the important difference between freedom of speech and the freedom to hate."

In regards to 'Spiked', if having a policy for dignity and mutual respect, or a stance against sexual harassment are reasons why Leeds University and Union have been given 'red' badges, I'll wear it with pride."



Image: Spiked

Conservative MP Scrutinised for “Sinister” Letter to Vice-Chancellors

Ian White
News Editor

A Conservative MP and government whip, Chris Heaton-Harris, has been sharply criticised for writing a letter to every Vice-Chancellor in the country asking for the names of professors who lecture in European affairs “with special reference to Brexit”. He also requested copies to the syllabuses and online lectures for any Brexit related courses.

This represents an embarrassment for the government, who quickly moved to disown the letter by stating that Mr Heaton-Harris was acting in a personal capacity without the knowledge of ministers.

The move by Heaton Harris, who campaigned for Britain to leave the European Union, has been described as “Leninism” and “McCarthyism”, a reference to the infamous witch-trials of suspected communists in 1950s America.

Professor David Green, Vice-Chancellor of Worcester University, felt a “chill down my spine” when he read the “sinister” request: “This letter just asking for information appears so innocent but is really so, so dangerous,” he says.

However supporters of Heaton-Harris such as Philip Davies, the MP for Shipley, have defended the letter.

He said: “The problem is that everybody knows that universities are not opening the minds of their students- they are just indoctrinating them with the left wing political propaganda of the professors and lecturers.

“They should be a bit more balanced in their teaching. I suspect what has got them irritated is that they have been rumbled. This false outrage doesn’t wash with me.”

In a recent radio interview, Jo Johnson, the Universities Minister, also defended Heaton-Harris. On the Radio 4 Today programme he described the letter as “more of an academic enquiry rather than an attempt to constrain the freedom that academics rightly have.”

However, after being repeatedly asked if he thought the letter should have been sent he admitted that “I think a letter that could have been misinterpreted should probably not have been sent in this way.”

The ongoing row shines a light on the continuing divisions in British society between leave and remain voters, the old and the young, and ongoing tensions between universities and members of the government who feel that pro-European professors are stifling debate on campus.



Image: BBC News

Oxbridge Under Fire for Admissions



Image: BBC News

Aysha Zaheer

Oxford and Cambridge University, often perceived as the most prestigious academic institutions in the country, are being accused of ‘social apartheid’ after failing to admit a single black student to a number of their colleges.

One in five of Cambridge Colleges and one in three Oxford Colleges failed to admit a single black A-Level student into their Colleges in 2015, according to data requested by David Lammy, a former Labour Education Minister.

“This is social apartheid and it is utterly unrepresentative of life in modern Britain,” Lammy said.

The data collected revealed the severe regional and socio-economic divide in their intake, with only 1.5% of all the offers made to UK A-level students belonging to black British applicants.

The Universities are England’s oldest and most respected higher education institutions. They are both made up of independent colleges which are in control of their own admissions. Oxbridge has educated many of Britain’s top politicians including 27 Prime Ministers.

MP David Lammy has been campaigning to gain access to information about offers made to A-Level students of Black and Caribbean descent, in order to highlight the admissions

bias in relation to these students. Cambridge supplied a breakdown of its offers and applicants but Oxford refused their initial request.

The data obtained did show an improvement from 2009, where 21 Oxford Colleges did not admit a single black student compared to the 16 in 2015, but the data does show that the elite colleges do struggle to recruit black students.

“This is social apartheid and it is utterly unrepresentative of life in modern Britain”

In response, a spokesperson for Oxford said rectifying the problem would be “a long journey that requires huge, joined-up effort across society – including from leading Universities like Oxford – to address serious inequalities”

A spokesperson for Cambridge said that its admissions decisions were made on academic considerations alone, while highlighting their £5m a year spend on access measures, including work with black and minority ethnic school pupils.

Eduroam Issues Flagged up by Students

Continued From Front Page

IT services have said that many of those who are struggling with Eduroam are using Apple products, and suggested that it may be an issue related to the configuration profile which is created on iOS and Mac products. They have a walkthrough detailing how to fix this issue on their website.

This network fault is the most recent technical event on campus, following the repeated triggering of fire alarms. The most serious instance of this was a network fault on the 12th October which resulted in numerous alarms being simultaneously triggered across multiple facilities, from the Parkinson Building to E.C. Stoner, which left many students unable to access lectures for over two hours. Elsewhere, the fire

alarm was triggered at two Fruity's, meaning many students left the event early.

A University spokesperson said:

"We'd like to thank everyone for their patience during a recent network fault that resulted in several alarms being activated. Separate to this, we have found that there can be a higher number of fire alarm activations at the start of term as people new to the university adjust to their spaces. Some of the common causes for this increased activity include the spraying of aerosols, and cooking fumes."

The Gryphon's Poll is still open at:
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BSMVW5V>

Some responses to The Gryphon's Survey include:

"Eduroam drives you to the edge of your sanity as you roam round campus wondering why it spontaneously disconnected"

"Some areas of campus are completely unreliable. Most of the time my wifi flickers on and off which is pretty inconvenient for getting anything done."

"Wifi often disconnects on both my phone and laptop throughout the day at my accommodation in Lupton."

"Eduroam connectivity is never constantly reliable. Entering my fourth year now and this year is the worst it's ever been."

"I haven't been able to log in to Eduroam on my phone or laptop since coming to University"



Image: Reece Parker

Students outside The University Union Building following just one of the four fire alarms that were set off in the Union on 26th October

Bongo's Bingo Affected by Alleged Security Issue

This article has been republished from Leeds Student Radio with their full permission.

Patrick Carter
 News Editor at LSR

Last week Leeds Student Radio were offered a table to review the Bongo's Bingo Oktoberfest Special at South Bank Depot, not far from the event's usual home at Canal Mills. We arrived to the raucous party you'd expect from the famously fun night, the only difference was that everything – the crowd, the drinks, the prizes – were twice the normal size.

However, the normality wasn't to last, and the debaucherous fun that we had anticipated slowly descended into chaos – and not the good kind.

After giving out prizes, including a giant inflatable pretzel; a cardboard cutout of Einstein; and, of course, "cash cash money", a steady stream of people began to get kicked out. Arguably, with large numbers of drunk people, this is to be expected, but as the night went on the trickle became a flood.

The bouncers began to remove more and more people for increasingly less apparent reasons. LSR saw them selecting people seemingly at random and escorting them out. By the time the final prize of £750 had been given out, the place was a mess. In the short walk from our table to the door we were surrounded by rugby tackles and chokeholds.

Outside, LSR witnessed a bouncer punch a man – who was defenceless on the floor and outnumbered four to one – in the face. Our reviewers called him out on this behaviour, and were subsequently kicked out. The bouncers, spoiling for a fight, desperately tried to get us to hit them. "You swing first" they pleaded, hoping to be able to use force against us. We informed a bouncer that we had been asked to review the event and his response was to immediately square up to us. He said that we had no right to request his ID number, what company he worked for or to check his security license and told us that we had to contact the police for any of this information.

This is not true. One of our group began to film the chaos, and his phone was instantly slapped out of his hands by a member of security very keen not to be caught on camera. The phone hit the concrete with enough force to remove the case and the bouncer refused to show us his ID number, actively hiding it from us.

We left soon after this with a stream of verbal abuse ringing in our ears. What had had the potential to be a great, super-sized night of Bongo's Bingo had left us with a bitter taste in our mouths – and we were the lucky ones.

We asked Bongo's Bingo for a response and they have told us they are looking into the security footage.



Welcome to 'Trash Isles': A Plastic Heap the Size of France

The Gryphon dives into the implications of ocean pollution, its impacts on the food chain, and the actions being taken to combat the problem

Image: ZME Science



Inaya Folarin

The name, 'The Trash Isles', has recently been circling around social media after entertainment company LADbible ran a feature referencing 'the world's first country made entirely of trash'. The company have begun a campaign to raise awareness of an area in the Pacific Ocean that consists of rubbish 'cumulatively the size of France'. The Gryphon explores the implications of ocean pollution.

LADbible claim that The Trash Isles fulfils most, if not all, of the UN's conditions to be recognised as a country and so have submitted a petition to the UN to acknowledge this. They believe that this will not only draw attention to the imminent problem of plastic waste in the ocean but also encourage other nations to take responsibility and assist in dealing with the issue. According to LADbible, the UN Environmental Charter states that: "All members shall co-operate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem". Therefore,

by recognising the area as a country, other nations should help to 'restore' it.

Plastic maybe inexpensive, strong, light and versatile, however, it is non-biodegradable. This, coupled with inappropriate wastage techniques, means that there is a significant and growing problem of plastic waste accumulating in the ocean. According to the Plastic Ocean Foundation, "we are now producing nearly 300 million tons of plastic every year, half of which is for single use. More than 8 million tons of plastic is dumped into our oceans every year." It's quite clearly a considerably important issue, but LADbible's campaign methods have not been immune to criticism.

Some argue that those who campaign on the idea of a 'plastic island' in the Pacific Ocean create an image of there being significant amounts of large plastic waste; an image which distracts attention away from the dangerous problem of microplastics in the area. Because plastic doesn't degrade, it instead breaks into smaller pieces that can often be consumed and consequently accumulated in the body of various organisms – including humans. Many fish and seafood species that are consumed by humans have been found to have large amounts of plastic fragments within them. Scientists at Ghent University in Belgium have estimated that people that eat shellfish are eating up to 11,000 plastic fragments each year. In addition, the University of Plymouth conducted a study which found plastic contained in a third of UK-caught fish.

Others have stated that the notion of the Plastic Island simply allows people to yet again view it as a distant problem that isn't immediately affecting them in the here and now. Dr Angelicque White, Associate Professor at Oregon State University, was quoted as

saying in the Telegraph that "there are no islands of trash; it is more akin to a diffuse soup of plastic floating in our oceans."

Nevertheless, the campaign by LADbible is focusing on an important issue, and it is utilising its social media and viral-based content reputation to shed light on the subject. The widening awareness of this issue has led to a number of law changes in the UK to tackle the problem – for example: the plastic bag charge. According to the government, since the law was introduced the use of plastic bags has reduced by up to eighty percent. Moreover, microbeads, the tiny beads found in many beauty products such as exfoliants, will be banned from sale by the end of 2017. Microbeads are an example of some of the tiny pieces of plastic that have been swallowed by ocean sea life.

"Microbeads, the tiny beads found in many beauty products such as exfoliants will be banned from sale by the end of 2017. Microbeads are an example of some of the tiny pieces of plastic that have been swallowed by ocean sea life"

Many environmentalist groups welcome the increased awareness and policies that have been enacted to confront the problem but they also stress that there is significantly more to be done. The Ocean society suggest that more should be done to encourage people to participate in beach and river clean ups which would prevent rubbish being transported into the ocean and causing further damage. Importantly, people should be encouraged to recycle or use biodegradable alternatives to prevent plastic accumulation. This suggestion is particularly important because most plastic thrown away is from single-usage. We should support and join organisations and groups that are not only increasing the awareness of these issues but are also taking steps to tackle them.

It is clear that plastic waste, particularly that which ends up in the ocean, is an important problem that needs more attention. As we become more aware of our health and our impact on the environment, there is an increasing awareness of the problems associated with them and the need to do more to reduce the harmful impacts. The United Nations Ocean Conference estimated that the oceans might contain more weight in plastics than fish by the year 2050, and so LADbible are highlighting an issue that needs addressing – even if they aren't the most nuanced source at time.

"People that eat shellfish are eating up to 11,000 plastic fragments each year. In addition, the University of Plymouth conducted a study which found plastic contained in a third of UK-caught fish"

“It’s not the first asshole that America has elected as president, but it’s definitely the biggest one”



In Conversation With – Caryl Phillips

Image: FSG

As part of our Black History Month series, Jodie Yates talks race in academia and black life in America with celebrated author and playwright Caryl Phillips

Jodie Yates
Features Editor

When I first met Caryl Phillips, it was at an event for the David Oluwale Memorial Association in February 2016, hosted by the School of English. The writer flew from America for the occasion, as he often has done since moving there in the nineties. America then was a seemingly different place, for one large, orange reason: Donald Trump was not yet the president-elect. Almost two years later, Phillips is back to read from his latest novel on the author Jean Rhys in his honorary university, as well as to discuss race and academia, student protest, and being Black and British in Trump’s America.

Born in St Kitts and growing up in the only black family on a council estate in Leeds, Caryl Phillips – or ‘Caz’, as he’s affectionately known – was told by his teacher that he could get into a Polytechnic university if he tried hard. A mix of fierce intelligence and stubbornness, Caz graduated from Queen’s College, Oxford University with a 2:1 in English Literature in 1979. Almost forty years later, the same university is being accused of “social apartheid” for its low intake of students from ethnic minorities. However what is evident is that this lack of diversity in the classroom and on the curriculum is on a nationwide level. Of his honorary university, Leeds, Phillips affirms that it is not a place “in which race, ethnicity, and discussions of what it means to be a minority are part of the programme.”

“It’s lonely to be the only black student, but it’s also lonely to be the only black professor”, and Caz has been both. At the University of Leeds, in 2016 only 11% of academic staff and 16.3% of students were of a BME background, blatant facts that support Phillips’ feelings that “you can put race on the syllabus but that doesn’t mean it matters to you other than as a gesture.” – This idea of a gesture alludes to the Britain’s sense of complacency of race in academia. The author, who is a lecturer at Yale, draws comparisons with the situation in the States. In Britain, there has never been the same “sort of equivalent upsurge where there’s been political pressure to form departments to study humanities through a racial lens.” Birmingham City University will be the first in the UK to accept students onto a Black Studies undergraduate course, the only of its kind, in 2018.

Within the severe lack of black people studying culture and society through a racial lens, we’re left to question whether academia is making discussion on race inaccessible. Phillips argues that not academia itself but the

language within it can exist to exclude people. Identifying fellow black academic Stuart Hall, Phillips claims Hall’s strengths lie in his lack of “diasporic mumbo jumbo”; straightforward ideas that become more complicated in the academy and “assume almost mythical proportions.”

“It’s lonely to be the only black student, but it’s also lonely to be the only black professor”

For those that do champion diversity in education, it would seem that they’re “ploughing an independent furrow, not an institutional furrow”. “No well-behaved black person ever did anything, sometimes you have to act out”, is Phillips response to the lack of student revolt in Britain. Underlining the fact that universities are in the business of education, the answer herein seems not to lie amongst the academics and their institutions, but within the students. With movements such as ‘Why is My Curriculum White’ flooding higher education, an academic revolution is only just beginning.

Over in America, Caz’s adoptive home, the election of President Barack Obama in 2008 has led some people to believe they inhabit a ‘post-racial society’, because having a black president suggests the work is done. Within eight years, the country has seemed to regress and elected “not the first asshole that America has [had] as president, but definitely the biggest one”; a state that has made the author feel that the US is ‘a dangerous country, it’s reckless’.

In a Q and A, Phillips addressed the sentiment that to be black and succeed you have to be exceptional. This Black History Month, many are contesting why we “still need” the celebration. Even in 2017, barriers are being put in front of ethnic minorities to progress and succeed.

Black History Month, black studies and black students and academics are more important than ever. The tertiary sector like many others in Britain may lack diversity, but one thing it doesn’t yet have is a president who “prefers white people over black people.”

The Undateables: Helpful or Harmful?



Image: The Sun

The Gryphon discusses popular TV show 'The Undateables', debating whether it causes more harm than good

Sadie Scheuer

BAFTA nominated TV programme 'The Undateables', which follows a different group of disabled singletons each week on their journey for love, has returned to Channel 4 for its seventh series. The popular reality show has been on our screens for five years now, yet still continues to evoke plenty of negative criticism and backlash surrounding its content and the way it is presented.

Critics say that whilst the show succeeds in raising awareness of the difficulties that people with mental and physical disabilities face in love, it does so in a way that is more concerned with entertainment than confronting societal prejudices. However, is this retaliation justified? Do the public view it as merely a form of entertainment, or is it altering people's views on a consistently marginalised group of people?

The name itself is the element which tends to bring about most controversy. Channel 4 bosses claim that by using the word "Undateables" they are referring to society's preconceptions of the disabled, which they then break down throughout each episode by proving that the people depicted can love just like the rest of us. A cleverly subtle hint to this is shown in the title sequence where Cupid's arrow knocks down the "Un" in "Undateables".

"Many of the problems boil down to low confidence, something that is not only universal but also possible to overcome, regardless of society's high standards."

Nevertheless, the continuous uproar suggests that this may be too subtle. By not making this challenge to society's views clear enough, it can be argued that

the programme advocates and reinforces the view that people with disabilities are not deserving of love and intimacy; that they are "undateable". This can only be supported by the fact that producers made the choice not to include something along the lines of inverted commas around this particular word, which would have given extra clarification. Not only does this make the show seem more controversial on the whole, which no doubt consistently pulls viewers in, but it also implies that entertainment purposes have a higher importance than their impact on society's already tainted view of disabled people.

Despite debates around the harmful nature of the name, each and every episode illustrates that careful thought is put into handling the show's sensitive subject. Each individual is given plenty of space to talk about themselves, their hopes for the future, and why they tend to find the world of dating so difficult to manoeuvre as people with disabilities. The dating agencies used throughout the seven series, such as Stars in the Sky, are run by passionate individuals who really care about the happiness of their applicants, often interviewing them personally to find the best matches possible.

The delicate yet very real nature of the show is what seems to grip audiences, as we follow each individual through highs and lows, making us go through a rollercoaster of emotions in just one episode. In this sense the programme gives a touching insight into the everyday trials and tribulations that come with having a disability, forcing us to break down initial preconceptions that these people are worlds apart from us.

However, when we delve further into people's views on the show, representatives of the British Medical Association describe the series as "exploitative" of the individuals involved. They question whether or not someone with a learning difficulty is able to give "truly informed consent" in the process of becoming a reality TV star. Dr Rachael Pickering also points

out that it brings out a "part of a society that might seek to view disabled people as a source of comedy." This is quite possible due to the use of the often patronising voice-over and music to highlight 'funny' or 'awkward' moments. Furthermore, we only need to scroll through our Facebook feeds after an episode has aired to provide ourselves with plenty of evidence of this in the way of memes and edited videos.

"Do the public view it as merely a form of entertainment, or is it altering people's views on a consistently marginalised group of people?"

All in all 'The Undateables' succeeds in demonstrating to its audience the way in which people with physical or mental disabilities are often struggling with the same issues as everyone else when it comes to love. It proves that many of the problems boil down to low confidence, something that is not only universal but also possible to overcome, regardless of society's high standards.

Nonetheless, it still seems the case that the programme depicts a conflict between name and content. This creates the worry that, despite how much each individual challenges society's preconceptions of disability, the label "undateable" will remain the very thing separating 'them' from 'us', thus suggesting the show may fail to have any real positive effect on this part of society after all.

- Feminist Slogan T-Shirts - A Disillusionment With Feminism?



Image: Amazon



Image: HBO

The Gryphon explores the world of feminist T-shirts and whether popular culture can help to further the cause

Jessica Slater

The eight-letter word - ‘feminist’ - is enough to make anyone produce some involuntary sound. A gasp; a sigh of relief; maybe an awkward cough? Despite decades of development, its definition remains up for debate. The Oxford English Dictionary offers some help; it simply labels a feminist as “an advocate or supporter of the rights and equality of women” - short and sweet. For many, this is not an offensive notion, but it doesn’t stop some from rejecting the word ‘feminist’. In the most part, dismissal is on the grounds of its being inaccessible, confusing or, perhaps, outdated. Therefore, has there come a time when the re-rooting of feminism’s ideals has become necessary?

From this question emerges the ‘Miranda Solidarity’ T-shirt campaign, with *Sex and the City*’s Miranda Hobbes. By using Miranda, the campaign moves feminism’s definition from the black and white page of a dictionary into the vivacious form of a person (albeit fictional). The strap-line ‘We Should All Be Mirandas’ reminds us that feminism is, for the most part, about simply being there for women.

The very source of this campaign can be traced back to 2012, when Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie gave her TED talk ‘We Should All Be Feminists’. Adichie spoke with warmth and clarity about feminism’s image, accepting it had

“The strap-line ‘We Should All Be Mirandas’ reminds us that feminism is, for the most part, about simply being there for women”

commandeered airs of man-hating and unhappiness. Adichie concluded that instead, a feminist should be classed as anyone who could admit ‘Yes, there’s a problem with gender as it is today and we must fix it, we must do better.’ She injected something human and approachable into feminism. A snippet of this TED talk can be heard in the bridge to Beyoncé’s song ‘***Flawless’.

Interest was further stirred when the speech was adopted by the world of fashion. In September 2016, Dior paraded their ‘We Should All Be Feminists’ T-shirts down its Paris fashion week runway. Unfortunately for Adichie, the venture muddled with the friendly, easy-access nature of her speech. This white, cotton garment was listed on Dior’s website with a £490 price-tag. Adding insult to injury, the tee was available only up to size large; defying the egalitarian phrase it had so proudly brandished on its front. The word ‘feminist’ had been dragged through even more mud. Under Dior’s endorsement, it related to fast-paced ‘trend’ culture, a vapid fad which might fade like a pair of forgotten ‘skinny jeans’ into the deep recesses of our brains.

Jumping a year ahead to September 2017, the phrase was reclaimed from Dior’s tainted grasp. This was actioned by Chelsea Fairless and Lauren Garroni of the

@everyoutfitonsatc Instagram page. They launched a new enterprise, ‘We Should All Be Mirandas’ T-shirts. As well as the change of slogan, these tops are available for \$32 (around £24) and up to size XXXL. Their Instagram handle makes obvious the choice of Miranda - they only had four *Sex and the City* leads to choose from - but she has proven to be aspirational.

Throughout the seminal TV series, Miranda deals with many issues faced by real-life women. She gets pregnant unexpectedly; considers terminating the pregnancy; is a successful woman in a male-dominated workplace; contemplates what confidence is in relation to casual sex; deliberates with the non-normative nature of her motherhood. Being inclusive of broader gender issues, she helps Steve with his feelings of emasculation after testicular cancer treatment.

“The battle over the word ‘feminist’ will rage on, and we might find solace identifying with Miranda’s characteristics”

Of course, she is also part of the friendship group the series rotates around: a support structure of people looking out for one another with Carrie, Charlotte and Samantha. Miranda is blunt, honest and unafraid of being flawed. She has the authenticity of a real person which is why she is a suitable embodiment of feminism today. Miranda’s real-life incarnation, Cynthia Nixon, also helps. As an LGBT+ activist, she promotes the fight against the reality of exclusion. This comes in welcome contrast to *Sex and the City*’s depiction of LGBT+ identity; we all remember Samantha’s lesbian ‘phase’ as well as the lack of people of colour included in the series.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie shone invaluable light on gender in the twenty-first century. She made feminism’s integral aims clear to anyone eager to listen and willing to believe, as well as highlighting the essential nature of viewing race, sexuality, and gender as intersectional elements, for these signifiers of oppression cannot be viewed in isolation.

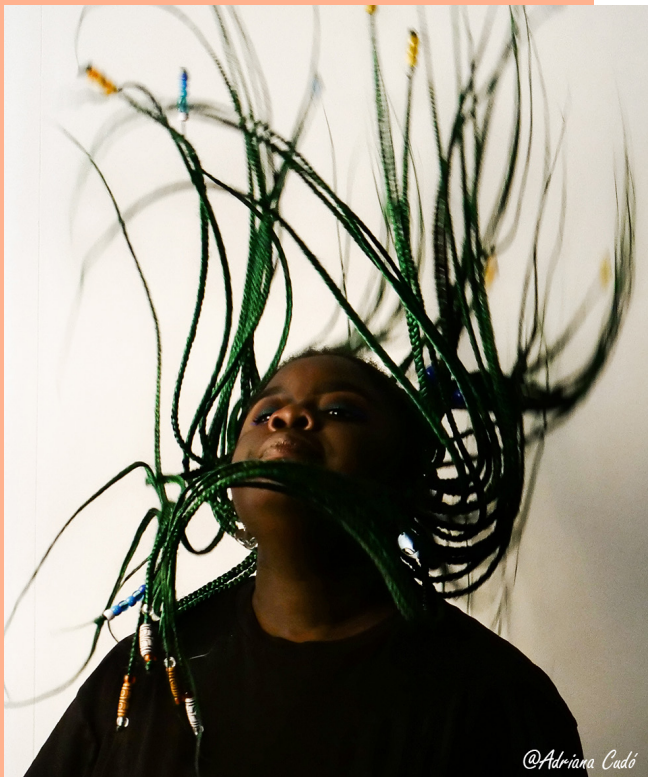
The battle over the word ‘feminist’ will rage on, and we might find solace identifying with Miranda’s characteristics. It never was going to be easy introducing a word starting with ‘fem’ into a patriarchal world. These T-shirts can help us remember what sort of person the word ‘feminist’ is synonymous with.

We should all be Mirandas— complex, flawed, but looking out for women.

Black History Month Showcase

In celebration of Black History Month, *The Gryphon's* Head of Photography performed a photoshoot with the university's BME Liberation Co-ordinators, aiming to capture their vibrancy, individuality, and unique characters.

Adriana de las Cuevas
Head of Photography



In The Middle

Issue 4
27.10.17



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

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How British Hip-Hop Found Its Voice

Forever labouring in the shadows behind neighbouring genres such as US hip-hop and Grime, UK hip-hop contains many gems which deserve unearthing. Editor-in-Chief, Reece Parker, introduces us to the populated scene, charting the struggles of artists to define their own distinctive sound.



Image: The Streets

From its very beginning, British hip-hop has existed in a permanently maligned state, seemingly always losing ground against the genres it rubs shoulders against. Whether being unfathomably overshadowed by its US counterpart, or rejected in favour of more frenetic grime, British hip-hop has always failed to become both culturally ingrained and critically successful. However, the scene has worked quietly in the niche forced upon it, forging over a number of years a distinctly British sound.

Initially making the jump across the pond in the 80's, British rappers at first struggled to reimagine the music in their own unique way. This can be perceived most obviously in the adoption of American accents by many early British rappers, such as Derek B, who were unable to extricate the mode of performance from its roots. It sounds, in retrospect, frankly ridiculous, especially as such a large part of hip-hop is the expression of your own localised culture. This was a narrative broken by 'London Posse', who expressed the culture of our capital city in their own voices, whilst Jehst's breakthrough album featured tracks such as 'City of Industry', giving a voice to post-Thatcherite Yorkshire, and Skinnyman's *Council Estate of Mind* expressed the struggle of survival of those in the welfare state.

“Such a large part of hip-hop is the expression of your own localised culture.”

Whilst these rappers did much in their early work to express a localised identity, their beats were all informed massively by American heavyweights such as J-Dilla and DJ Yella. Enter Mike Skinner, whose aim to create a 'British hip-hop 2.0' entwined the storytelling aspects of the American scene with the distinctly British sound of garage. Whilst he argued

that predecessors that rapped over garage tracks had lyrical content consisting purely of “going to the bar to have another tequila”, he wanted to rap about the real life of him and those around him, even if it was just “smoking weed and those little adventures you go on with your mates”.

What Skinner did to create a British voice for hip-hop, was not only to extricate the music from its American roots, but also to reinvent an image of Britishness itself. The opening track of *Original Pirate Material* takes the centuries old British image of the soldier, but resituates it away from sites of war to the Birmingham bullring. Here, it becomes the 'geezer', a character which Skinner sees as the new British male. Central to identification with this character is behaviour rather than background. This theme continues throughout the album, 'Has it Come to This' demanding the listener should “pull out your sack and sit back, whether you're white or black”. Skinner used hip-hop as a way to create and consolidate a view of what Britishness should be, a notion which many in the scene were also working towards, for example Roots Manuva's 'Witness the Fitness' compares his family background of Jamaica and his adoptive home of Britain, through lyrics which move from “jerk chicken, jerk fish” to “ten pints of bitter”.

Skinner himself claims he had “no impact on UK rap”, but this modest claim is shattered by Contact Play, who similarly destroyed everything else in their path when they burst onto the scene with *Champion Fraff* in 2011. Contact Play's hazy descriptions of powder-fuelled nights out are hugely indebted to the lager soaked vignettes which populate Skinner's most famous tracks, but C.P.'s self-defined 'tour-de-force of all that's raw' can also be read as a suburban British interpretation of American gangster rap. It works due to the group's tongue-in-cheek boasts about drug consumption interspersed with attacks on middle class sensibilities. There is something mocking in all of Contact Play's music, and where British imitation

of American rap was once a weakness of the scene, C.P. transformed it into a sarcastic strength.

“Contact Play's hazy descriptions of powder-fuelled nights out are hugely indebted to the lager soaked vignettes which populate Skinner's most famous tracks”

Hip-hop's refusal to exist in a vacuum, continuously referring to other works, has helped make British hip-hop the most innovative and collaborative movement in our nation's music scene. This can be subtle, such as Loyle Carner's argument that grime gave him the confidence to rap, or it can be overt, with rappers such as Benny Mails' often transitioning between grime and hip-hop within a track. There is a sense within British hip-hop that we are on the cusp of something new, whether it be born out of experimentation between genres, such as Mancunion group The Mouse Outfit dabbling in 160bpm tunes under the moniker Levelz, straightforward hybridisation pioneered by those such as Dave and AJ Tracey, or altogether new forms such as lo-hop quickly accelerating under artists such as Looms. One thing is for sure, with the amount of talent rising through the scene currently, British hip-hop won't be in the fringes for much longer.

Reece Parker

Gig Round-up

Dua Lipa @ O2 Academy, 08/10

Leeds' O2 Academy has seen plenty of sold-out nights, yet the queues outside have never seemed as endless as they were tonight. It's the kind of dedicated fanbase – and Dua the kind of artist – that warrants an arena show. It's likely to be the last of this kind; everyone knows it, and that knowledge only adds to the excitement.

Opening act Grace Carter gives a simple and elegant performance. There is no fanfare, no routine – just a woman, a small band, and a microphone. Not everyone could carry it off, but Grace's mesmerising vocals are rich enough that she can.

Then it was time. Dua Lipa opens with breakout single, 'Hotter Than Hell', immediately getting everyone in the room dancing. She's a star, through and through; one who knows how to work a crowd. When she performs her singles – particularly 'Blow Your Mind (Mwah)' – that's clear. But what's really apparent tonight is how genuinely stunning her voice is. In the middle of the set, the band leaves the stage and we get to hear Dua perform solo. She gets emotional singing 'New Love', a song she tells us was the hardest for her to write, and everyone in the room can feel it. We sing it back to her as loud as is possible without drowning her out, and it feels like a coming together.

The encore begins with 'Homesick', an underrated album track which – in this live setting – gives everyone goose bumps. Closing with song of the summer, 'New Rules', she gets everyone in the room to crouch down. When we jump up, the building shakes and everyone dances as if it's their last dance. There are no inhibitions – everyone is too lost in Dua Lipa's light to care.

Sophia Simon-Bashall

Laurel Halo @ Headrow House, 13/10

Laurel Halo, the Berlin-based experimentalist, is arguably one of the most enigmatic women in electronic music right now. Released in July of this year, her third album *Dust* is an all-encompassing piece of art, showcasing her individuality as well as alluding towards her Detroit-techno influences.

A purple glow ensues Halo, who appears unfazed by the crowd as she steadily focuses on preparing her set. The small but concentrated crowd watch entranced as Halo begins her performance, with the strong sense we're witnessing an art installation rather than a music set. And that's exactly what it is; a beautifully expressive show bordering between eerie ambient sounds and playful twinkling chimes.

The show begins with an extended version of 'Arshkriecher' off the new album, with the thrilling combination of ritualistic gongs and sci-fi sounds both strangely hypnotic and perhaps carrying the message of combining the present with the past. We are graced with Halo's voice on a particular melancholic track which is primarily raw vocals on an ambient surface, creating a particularly emotive atmosphere, whereas on the other tracks such as 'Who Won', the voice is distorted into a cyborg chant.

Halo never strays from her own sounds, which the crowd embraces. Each song flows into the next in a sequence of moody grooves and glowing synths. Her stage presence is particularly enchanting, connecting with the audience with everything but her eyes– the aura she has created with her hypnotic music being enough.

Esme Bennett

Abandoman @ The Wardrobe, 17/10

Despite having supported Ed Sheeran, winning the Hackney Empire New Act of the Year in 2010, and appearing on popular TV shows such as 8 out of 10 cats, Abandoman are a two-piece you have probably never heard of.

This is because their show is formed of improvised musical songs and sketches based on interaction with the audience. The performance therefore hinges on the audience's offerings and what rapper/comedian Rob Broderick can do with them. For example, the duo opened with 'what's in your pocket?' where audience members hold up the strangest object in their pocket and Broderick instantly makes up a rap using these objects. While I can imagine this can be a struggle if a crowd is uninventive, the audience sat in the Wardrobe were an interesting bunch including one woman who happened to have a knitted boob in her pocket, which gave a new meaning to soft-core.

The audience provided Abandoman with interesting material to work with: the mysteries of moon cups, the slippery slope that is OXO cube addiction and an interesting anecdote told by the man sitting to my right, where he confessed he once had a shit in a B&Q display toilet.

Yet I feel that that Broderick and musician/singer Sam Wilson would make even the most mundane things funny (and chatting to them after the show, this proved to be true.) The energy, uptempo beats and the fact that the show is improvised makes it impossible to get bored as you hang on to every word in anticipation of the punch line and wonder at the speed that Broderick's mind works.

Emma Dutton



Image: Meg Firth



Image: Zach Dillard



Image: St James Theatre

Album Round-up

The Saga Continues by Wu-Tang Clan

There was once a time when Wu-Tang Clan ruled, hailed by many as one of the most influential hip-hop groups of all time. Now, 25 years after their debut, Enter The Wu-Tang, their legacy is still being crafted. However, you can't help but feel that *The Saga Continues* is an unravelling of that legacy, rather than an addition to it.

In just 50 minutes you'll drift through 18 drizzly and meandering songs– and while your attention won't be grabbed for a single moment of it, you'll hardly have a second to breathe either. That's not to say that the album races at an aggressive speed. It's more of a slow, constant inhale, culminating in a heavy release of toxic vapour, as your body beats at a steady, militant pace.

While the mixtures of voices and styles as members of the Wu-Tang Clan sporadically dip in and out gives *The Saga Continues* a real diversity, the album's greatest strength comes in the form of its well-regimented production. It's a testament to DJ Mathematics, who takes over the production of the album instead of the legendary RZA (who charitably turns up for a mere two minutes of proceedings). Nevertheless, it's ever so slightly dull, and the contributors sound disconnected, as if they randomly turned up to the studio on whatever day they had free that month.

There isn't a particular moment of brilliance, a song that slaps the air out of your mouth. No. *The Saga Continues* is a mood, a feeling, an experience that relies on the whole, not the individual. But this lack of star quality means that, ultimately, there is very little reason to revisit the saga once you've come to its damp conclusion.

So, if this is the continuation of the saga, let's hope it has a much better end.

Robert Cairns

The Ooz by King Krule

After a four year wait since King Krule's first album, he finally blesses us with his follow up with the eclectic *The Ooz*. Combining elements of jazz and more contemporary production techniques, King Krule channels a plethora of influences, from jazz legends to James Blake.

Long-time fans of King Krule will appreciate the mixture of songs on this album, from the opening track 'Biscuit town', which epitomises King Krule's crooning, brooding jazz style, to the almost dastardly 'Vidual'. The few singles which were released prior to the album fit cohesively in the listening experience as 'Czech One' serves as a relaxed interlude, with its spoken word poetry over the gleamingly smooth chords floating in the background, leading into the drug induced 'A Slide In' where the horns in the second half of the song inject a certain amount of intensity to the track.

Nineteen tracks on a single album may be a lot to absorb for the newer listeners of King Krule but perseverance is an ally, as one continuous listen of the whole album allows you to appreciate all the layers to this project. From the funky bassline of 'Half Man Half Shark' to the lethargy of 'Slush Puppy', expectations of songs are subverted as the high pace funk turns into a melancholy reflection and lethargy builds to a powerful crescendo.

Melancholy is once again King Krule's preferred emotion to explore as the poetry in his lyrics reflect that. Arguably, the best written songs are ones which encapsulate and reflect true emotions rather than attempt to impose foreign emotions of the listener. Fortunately, King Krule manages to do just this.

Lyle Broom



Making Music Herstory: Sister Rosetta

Welcome to Making Music Herstory, where Jemima Skala will be highlighting and celebrating the incredible female musical talent, past and present. The first to grace our hall of fame, and tying in nicely with Black History Month, is Sister Rosetta Tharpe, the blues legend you've never heard of.

Sister Rosetta combined the magic of blues, gospel and rock to create the most evocative and heartfelt songs of the scene. She trod the line between sacred and secular, performing gospel music in nightclubs accompanied by big bands. This allowed gospel music to take the pop limelight for the first time, particularly with her 1939 hit 'This Train'. Although she was frowned upon by traditional gospel artists by bringing gospel to the mainstream, her music remained undeniably gospel, staying true to her spirituality.

Not only was her voice capable of navigating several octaves, but Sister Rosetta was a prophetic guitar player, incorporating her many skills into every one of her songs. She was playing and performing from the age of six in a travelling evangelical group, and had been dubbed as "a singing and guitar-playing miracle" from this tender age. Sister Rosetta didn't let go of this early promise, and her proficiency can be seen in songs like 'That's All' and 'Up Above My Head'. In spite of her undeniable talent and fervour, Sister Rosetta offended a great many people simply by being a woman and playing guitar in nightclubs,

places which were deemed immoral. Yet, her live performances were captivating and incredible; she retains composure and grace with sweat running down her in rivers, shredding her guitar and belting out unimaginable notes.

In 1946, Sister Rosetta saw Marie Knight performing in New York, and asked Knight to tour with her. For several years, they performed on the gospel circuit, during which talk spread that Knight and Tharpe were together romantically. Both artists claimed that this was mere gossip, but of course they would, in a world where simply being black was enough to endanger your life, let alone being a queer black woman.

Tracklist: 'This Train', 'That's All', 'Up Above My Head', 'Down By The Riverside'

Jemima Skala



In the Middle With Clay

Leeds natives. Clay, formed in 2014 and have been rising steadily on the music scene ever since. Currently on tour, after releasing a new single 'America', they just became the first unsigned act to headline Stylus. Music writer, Ella Durrant, asked Jack a few questions in the run up to the gig, and had a chat about touring, the pros and cons of being an unsigned band, and the importance of fame.

"Getting into a room and playing music was a way to escape the outside world and let off some steam", answered Jack Harvey, lead guitarist of Clay when asked where the decision to form the band stemmed from. In the simplest terms, "I guess we all mutually found a love for the same thing". From our opening exchanges it became clear the mantra which has left Clay staying unsigned: a to-the-point sense of honesty which doesn't waste time with the extraneous.

This continues when he's asked about the band's sound, stating "It's pop music, modern pop music. However you dress it up with fancy genres and strange phrases, it's proper pop music". This is so refreshing to hear when many balk at the idea of 'pop music', but Jack stands strong, continuing, "it's very good pop music, we love to hear it, we have always lived by making music that we love and would love to hear on today's radio".

Clay have been incredibly successful both commercially and critically despite their unsigned status, something which Jack is clearly still blown away by. He admits that being unsigned might put them at a disadvantage 'a bit', but then argues that "I don't think there's ever really any advantage to success. It's a guessing game and nobody really knows what they're doing". In terms of whether this may put a limit on their development, Jack admits that "financially it's incredibly difficult to grow when you're unsigned but also with that you have the freedom to do whatever you want". He summarises this with a remarkably mature notion that "sometimes you have to ask yourself what's worth sacrificing in order to grow and for more people to hear your music". Clearly, Jack and the rest of Clay are simply in love with the music world, shown through his reminiscing of when

"we found out our debut track was played on Zane Lowe's Radio One show. He picked us as his last ever Next Hype. Such a bucket list moment for us. Amazing."

For many musicians, touring is a divisive topic, magnifying the highs and lows of everyday life. "I think touring is a whirlwind" Jack agrees, "but turning up to a city where there are loads of people waiting for you is something that blows our minds. Such a humbling feeling, we love every second of it". Despite this, Jack admits that every tour involves eating "twelve stone of fast food", and that the whole band are, "suckers for it".

In the same vein, Jack stays firm on the 'gig vs festival' debate, claiming he prefers gigs "every day of the week". His explanation is that "festivals are stressful man, with your own show you can relax and know that all will be sick. Festivals are so quick and before you know it the show is over and you're back out in the van. We like to get to the venue, sound check and kick back. Sample the local tap water".

To close the interview, I return to the notion of what 'success' means in the musical world, with Jack claiming that the music industry makes it difficult for 'normal' people to succeed. "Gone are the days where it was a case of picking up a guitar, forming a band and getting signed". So does Jack want fame in order to push Clay to the next level? He's characteristically bullish, "We don't ever want fame, but it can be great to open up a whole new audience".

Ella Durrant

"It's pop music, modern pop music. However you dress it up with fancy genres and strange phrases, it's proper pop music"



In the Middle with Solardo

2017 has been a year of accolade after accolade, sold out show after sold out show, for UK producers Mark Richards (MRK1) and James Eliot, the men behind Solardo. A summer touring every reputable festival and club in the UK, Europe and beyond and a Best Breakthrough Act win at the DJ Awards may have come to an end but the winter season promises to be even more successful; headlining and curating the Boxing Day event at this year's Warehouse Project exemplifying the massive heights Solardo have soared to. From the well-established, indisputable, no-space-for-an-argument opinion that clubbing is bigger and better up North, to The Prodigy serving as the foremost of influences, *In the Middle* get the lowdown on Manchester's most exciting and deservedly hyped tech-house export.

Who were your biggest musical influences growing up and did this naturally progress into you both discovering tech/house?

Mark: I listened to a broad range of music growing up – from heavy metal, rock, happy hardcore, jungle, drum and bass, hip hop and everything in between. But I think my biggest musical influence as a producer was The Prodigy; they really opened my mind to dance music and what could be done with it. Their sound is timeless and still sounds relevant now. I used to listen to them all the time thinking to myself that their music is something that I wanted to be able to do.

You guys have your own night at WHP this year, Solardo Sessions on the 26th of December. How does it feel to be curating the night for such a well-respected event, especially being from Manchester and attending the event as punters in the past?

It's an amazing feeling really, we've come a long long way in a year and are really proud of our achievements so far. Coming from Manchester and growing up within the scene, it's a huge honour for us to have our night at WHP. It's definitely events like these that have shaped Manchester and helped put it on the clubbing map – so we are really buzzing to be a part of it.

Curating our own night has been really fun for us – it's a great chance for us to give a platform to the artists who have released on our label Sola, and who we feel will be going places. We wanted to curate a night that would have high energy and a big party vibe – it is Boxing Day after all!!

You've spent the last few years playing at basically every festival on the UK calendar and abroad, what has been your personal highlight? Is there a festival or club that you particularly love returning to?

“We headlined at Canal Mills earlier this year in May for the sold out Garden Party - and the crowd took the roof off! Never a dull moment up North!”

Well, as cliché as it might sound – Ibiza for us will always hold a special place in our hearts. This year was our first time playing there as Solardo and, for us, Hi totally dominated the island. We have just got back from playing at DJ Awards at Hi and won Best Breakthrough Act as well – which is a huge deal for us!! As well as that we are playing the first ever Hi closing – so like we say, the club has dominated our Ibiza experience and has been part of many amazing memories this summer!

Apart from that Elrow & Abode have been other highlights for us. We've played for them a few times this year already and both parties create exactly what we want out of a party – lots of fun and great energy!

Continuing from the last question, and with this being the Leeds University student newspaper, do you have a highlight in regards to playing in Leeds? I came to your show at The Faversham in January, and it was fantastic. Was playing at such a small venue a nice change for you guys after the last year of massive clubs like Sankey's Ibiza and Printworks London?

We absolutely love coming to Leeds, the crowd is always 110% up for it and stay until the end with huge smiles on their faces. It's great coming here because they have a very music-forward crowd and nights that cater to absolutely everyone. We headlined at Canal Mills earlier this year in May for the sold out Garden Party – and the crowd took the roof off! Never a dull moment up North!

After enjoying such a meteoric rise over the last few years, what advice would you give to any aspiring DJs or producers out there?

Persevere and don't give up – as basic as that sounds – that is the only honest advice we can give. We locked ourselves away for months and focused on our productions and by no means was it easy. However, we have come such a long way in the past 12 months from solid graft and believing in ourselves, staying positive and imagining the end goal and not stopping until we achieve it.

Finally, if you met someone who had never listened to house or techno and was looking to explore that type of music, which 3 DJs would you tell them to listen to?

Well obviously... Solardo! Haha. And apart from ourselves, we would recommend Green Velvet, Jamie Jones and Loco Dice.

Poppie Platt

Kontra give HAAi a Vibrant Leeds Debut



There often seems to be a very unique atmosphere in clubs during weeknights, and in many ways mid-week clubbing can feel more carefree than it might do at the week's end. Kontra's first night at Wire, which was HAAi's Leeds debut, exemplified this perfectly; a no frills, unpretentious and undeniably fun party.

Fuelled by a genuine and effective ethos that strives to create a fun, inclusive party that showcases up and coming, talented DJ's, Kontra is certainly a name worth remembering and will surely prove to be a valuable addition to Leeds' clubbing landscape.

Having started with intimate charity nights at the Hyde Park Book Club earlier this year, their brand and their reputation has followed a steady upwards trajectory. The booking of HAAi was a perfect match, between local up and coming promoters and one of London's most popular new faces. Maybe unsurprisingly, her set at Wire matched the hype that has built over the year she has been resident at Phonox, one of London's top clubs.

After a party-starting set by Kontra's residents, HAAi opened with several striking drum tracks that created enough energy for her to accelerate into the different corners of house and techno. It was refreshing to see a DJ having so much fun, and comforting to see them play with such confidence, something which showed in the ease with which she journeyed through a diverse song selection during the first half of her set. A hypnotic remix of Red Axes' 'Sun My Sweet Sun' was soon followed by hard, trance Daddy Cool remix of 'Epidemic' by Exit EEE as the song selection began to reflect her own broad musical influences.

As it got later and the crowd began to thin, HAAi ensured that the party didn't lose any momentum as she shifted from loopy house to more orthodox club tracks. Mall Grab's thumping 'Pool Party Music' and Artwork's recent 'Let Go Of My Acid' were both well received, but it was the uplifting bouncy 'Sunshowers' that proved to be the defining track of a night where DJ and promoter combined to give Leeds a lot to be excited about.

James Gwyther

Sprinkles Breaks The Mould



Image: Resident Advisor

Deep House DJs are often unfairly pigeonholed as warm up DJs, such is the misinterpretation of the mellow brand of House music that they offer. What is deemed acceptable house club music too often nowadays is all about pumping rhythms well above 122bpm, drenched in throwaway vocal samples and showy production flair. This being the case, it felt like a blessing to not only have relief from this, but for the relief to be administered by arguably one of the best DJ/producers in the genre.

Terre Thaemlitz, aka DJ Sprinkles, has stated in various interviews how he does not enjoy DJing. The reason she gives for this is that the music they play has become so far removed from the original context which birthed it, and in which Thaemlitz cut their teeth as a DJ, in transgender and gay sex clubs. Going to Butter Side Up last Friday was dosed with excitement for the night ahead.

Whether the experience was enjoyable for Thaemlitz was hard to tell, but nevertheless he went about their economically demanded task with finesse. The simplistically structured and tightly produced deep house Sprinkles is known for playing and producing under various monikers for her Comatonse Recodings label, were handled seamlessly, with tunes such as his Over-Dub Remix of Will Long's 'Under-Currents' playing out superbly on Wire's Funktion One system, the scattering percussion and weighty low end almost single-handedly proving the reputation of deep house as 'chill out music' inaccurate.

After a blissful two hours with Sprinkles behind the decks, still-criminally underrated techno and electro-weirdness DJ Gwenan took over for the final two hours. She had her work cut out for her following the headliner, but she easily left many on the dance floor wondering why they hadn't heard her name before with a seamless handover from Sprinkles and a series of unashamed bangers to finish the night off.

Sprinkles alternates gender pronouns, preferring this to conventional pronouns such as 'one' and 'they' because, to quote Sprinkles, "gender is never neutral under the patriarchy".

Oliver Staton



Outfit Of The Week

Name: Lydia

Coat and dress: Vintage

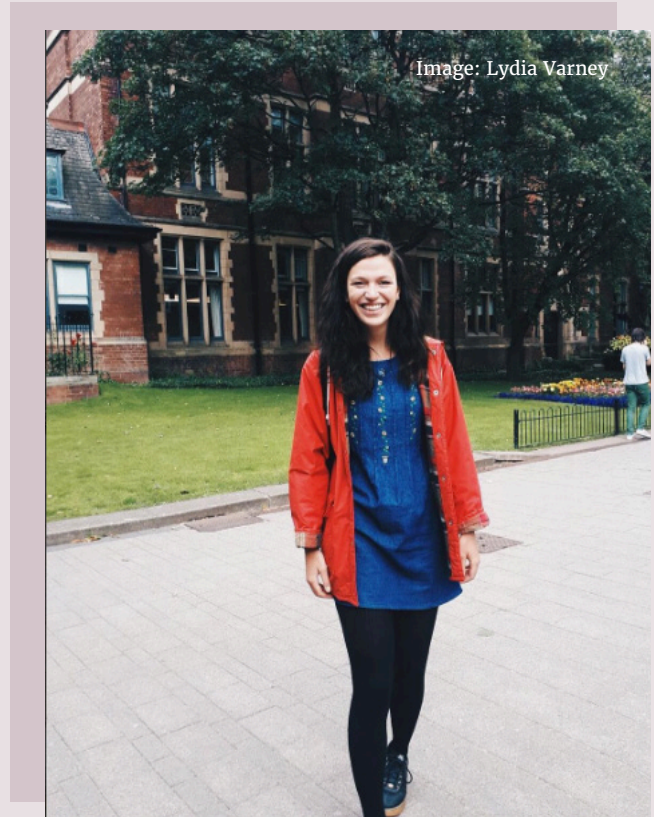
Tights: Calvin Klein

Shoes: Nike

This week's OOTW is just the inspiration we need for the rainy days to come! When the weather's dreary, make a statement with your mac – choose a bright colour in an oversized style for the perfect layering piece. Here, Lydia teams the coat with a vintage denim dress, contrasting blue with red. The yellow colour pop of the floral embroidery shows it's all in the little things; think tiny details this autumn with an ever-growing focus on embroidered garments. And, of course, it wouldn't be Leeds without the retro Nike trainers. Finish off your look with the same battered pair of shoes you wore all of last week, a no-brainer when the 9ams hit!

Want to be featured?

Email fashion@thegryphon.co.uk with your OOTW and details of where you sourced your clothes for a chance to star as our weekly top pick!



Fur Free, Finally.....

In recent years, fur has become more than a fashion statement; it's become an everyday essential, seen on coats, gilets, hats and more. Where previously real fur was a sign of a luxury garment, our generation is starting to favour a more ethical choice. Real fur is seen as outdated, and due to mass media we are learning more about where our clothes come from and if they are sustainably made. This is why so many young people are against fur – because there is just so much evidence to change our ideologies.

The People for the Ethical Treatment for Animals (PETA) have been trying to get multiple megabrands within the fashion industry to go fur free for many years. Brands such as Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, H&M, Zara and Calvin Klein are all now fur free. Finally, Gucci has decided to join the above, going fur free with their Spring Summer collection of 2018 as well as joining the Fur Free Alliance (an alliance promising to stop the harm of animals for fur, as the name suggests). Chief executive and president Marco Bizzarri says that "Creativity can jump in many different directions instead of using fur". And he's right! Due to Gucci being famous for their fur slippers and many other extravagant fur products, it leaves a gap in their business which they could use to their advantage by experimenting with other innovative fabrics.

Despite this progress, fur is still being used by many other luxury brands such as Versus Versace and Burberry, who were both targeted by fur protestors during London Fashion Week. Many brands still have yet to realise that the world is changing, and they must change with it.

Jemima Ward

Fashion in Protest

Often regarded as an industry that turns a blind eye to sustainability issues, in recent years the fashion world has begun to change. With an increasing demand for fast fashion, however, it's no wonder the industry that's responsible for over 50 million tonnes of polyester annually has a bad name. Is this well deserved though? Or is fashion, in fact, the key to change?

It's hard to define what platform fashion takes within society. Though often dismissed by novices as a superficial irrelevant subject, fashion plays a much more important role in our lives than we might think. In recent years, Chanel used its Spring/ Summer 2015 runway to stage a feminist protest with models proudly marching down the runway smiling and carrying huge adorned with powerful feminist slogans. Elsewhere, Maria Grazia Chiuri's collections for Dior have sparked revolution with the iconic "We should all be feminists" t-shirts being a favoured item by many celebrities including Rihanna and Jennifer Lawrence. More affordable versions of feminist tees have been made available on the high-street with slogans such as "The Future is Female", "GRL PWR" or simply "FEMINIST" and have proved increasingly popular.

As well as societal issues, fashion has begun to demand change both politically and environmentally, with the tireless Vivienne Westwood using her 2015 London Fashion Week Catwalk to demand an end to both austerity and climate change. With models, designs and billboards exclaiming powerful messages, the fashion industry appears to be leading the way to a more sustainable, ethical and equal life.

However, on closer inspection, how is the fashion industry directly making a difference? How far do brands take note of their own protests? Breaking fashion news, Gucci recently announced it was going fur-free as of 2018, as CEO Marco Bizzarri opened up discussions to younger Gucci interns and workers to find out what they felt Gucci's younger cliental wanted. It's clear that, as aware millennials, we can have an impact on the decisions of big fashion houses with Bizzari stating, "Young kids are more intelligent and aware than us". However the thought that most fashion houses are still using fur (such as Yves Saint Laurent, Valentino, Dior, Burberry and Fendi, to name just a few) and the concept of going fur-free is breaking news, seems outdated. With Dior creating great societal demands for change, wouldn't it be hugely effective if the brand could do this as well as focusing on changes within the brand itself following the path of Gucci?

Vivienne Westwood is a brand and character who has frequently displayed concerns for the environment, from her punk designs of the 70s and 80s right up to present day all calling for an end to fracking, climate change and austerity.

Off the catwalk, Westwood herself has attending many campaigning events, such as the Easter Sunday protest of 2008 for nuclear disarmament at the Atomic Weapons Establishment in Berkshire and even featured in a PETA video encouraging vegetarianism for *World Water Day*. On the surface, this all seems to be leading to an incredible positive outcome for us and the environment. But isn't Westwood, and many other brands, missing something? Something they could all change with no need for protest on the runway but a psychical, tangible and revolutionary change from the brands themselves? Perhaps they could end the usage of leather.

This is an argument often forgot about, neglected by the protesters who flock to fashion weeks across the globe in protest often against fur. The usage of leather dips under the radar when we think of sustainability in fashion. British designer, life-long vegetarian and advocate of sustainable fashion Stella McCartney, in a video for PETA, is urging designers and consumers to become more aware of the leather industry so that we can make "informed decisions" about purchasing the products ourselves. In the video, McCartney reveals not only the cruel horrors of the brutal leather industry whereby animals are quite literally skinned alive, but also the consequences of the leather industry on the environment. Toxic chemicals are sprayed onto animal skins leading to run off entering ecosystems and food chains, which can lead to harmful cancers in local people. Moreover, just as with cattle farming for food production, huge amounts of water are used to produce a single leather product.

Despite this, Westwood continues to display an array of leather goods such as handbags and shoes on her sustainability driven runways. McCartney has even held talks amongst fashion designers, which Westwood attended, encouraging the end to the use of leather and clearing up any misconceptions about faux leather with her audience. Moreover, McCartney undoubtedly proves that fashion without leather or fur is entirely possible and what's more entirely credible, for example her iconic Falabella bag which has become a go-to accessory for Sienna Miller, Kate Hudson and Kesha. With Westwood's constant and keen pursuit of sustainability and other designers such as Chanel, Gucci and Dior keen to bring about some iconic change, perhaps they could start at home and protest in tune with their own houses' example.

Isabella Minn

Total Transparency

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Totally Ridiculous?

When most stores claim to be completely transparent, you'd be forgiven for taking their word for it. However, when we consider what it really means to be a transparent business, it becomes evident that most of our beloved brands fall way below the mark. Transparency, in all it's glory, isn't just about opening up about where our products are coming from and who exactly manufactured them. It's so much more.

Take the company *Honest By*. Their claim to be the first 100% transparent company isn't wrong; in just a few clicks you can find out not only where they sourced their materials, but for how much and, most controversially, how much profit they're making. You'll leave the website feeling so much more informed on their company's markup system, and perhaps, dare I say, a little unsettled. There's something charming about grabbing a bargain, but when you're kindly informed that over two thirds of what you're paying for a product is just the mark-up, it's a bit harder to feel quite so well off. Totally transparent, yes. And I'm all for honesty too. But could this be a case of less is more?

Don't get me wrong; we, as consumers, should demand to know where our products come from, and where they were manufactured. I wouldn't settle for anything less. However I'm failing to see how discovering the cost of the materials is in any way aiding sustainable shopping. I like thinking that I'm buying garments that are good value, and the realisation that most of what I'm paying is just a mark-up isn't one I need to have. Frankly, I don't mind not knowing. In fact, I'd rather not.

Honest By have had a nice idea, and I'm sure there's a few people out there that really appreciate it. But I don't; it's a step too far. Shouldn't we be more concerned with ensuring that most chain stores reach necessary levels of transparency than going way beyond the call of duty? I hate to say it, but it's almost a gimmick. Consumers don't, in my opinion, need to know the breakdown cost of a single button. But we do, most definitely, need to be fighting for the likes of Topshop, New Look and Primark to be a bit more willing to open up as to where exactly their garments are coming from.

Lydia Varney

Fall Feels

As October draws to a close, the leaves are turning orange, the weathers getting gloomy and all of nature is just confirming that summer's over. British summer comes and goes as quickly as your first year did, but thankfully so does the prevailing styles of fashion. Despite Leeds' weather currently being Hurricane Ophelia-orientated, that's not stopping the students of the city from continuously slaying. Fortunately, with a change in weather & colour, comes a change in trends — making Leeds' streets a renewed catwalk once more.

Reds, oranges, nudes, greys and purples – fall's colour scheme of warm and cool tones never fails us. And yet this year's fall trend forecast includes a bit of a twist. According to the staple fashion mags and the influencers around us – one of this season's favorite trends is the theme of Americana vibes, that of a powerful red look. Whether it's a statement piece like a coat or pantsuit, or Topshop's latest desired thigh high boots, it's clear that the colour red is taking over and giving a new vibrancy to the meaning of autumn.

Another classic trend for this season is fur coats, specifically those of the vintage-inspired variety. Faux fur in shades of brown, beige and mustard is the way to go this fall., whether it is styled in a long or short coat, or even a simple scarf. And what better to match a sassy coat with than a pair of statement boots – especially the latest glitter boots. From Saint Laurent to Boohoo and Miss Selfridge, sequin-clad boots have spread across the Internet, making their way into our closets and shopping carts. Along with these latest runway picks, patterns are very prominent in fall. From plaid, to gingham and checkered – on pants and tops and bags, patterns dominate this season's scene.

With all these looks currently circulating the fashion world, it's difficult to go wrong when wondering what to wear this autumn. This week's style section of fashion is here to demonstrate the *how*.



Outfit 2 -

Dress: Zara
Coat: Uniqlo
Boots: Michael Kors

This second outfit is more dressed up than the first and features all three predicted Pantone colours; Autumn maple, Marina and Neutral Grey. I chose not to wear tights with this outfit to keep it simple with only 3 colours involved. Without the harsh black of tights a more day time look could be created however by pairing the dress with a long oversized coat the outfit could be transposed from day to night. The tanned boots complete the outfit and add some height and sophistication.



Outfit 1 -

Sweater: Zara
Jeans: J brand
Scarf: Zara

For the first outfit I have put together I wanted to create a comfy yet stylish outfit that could be worn into university or a day shopping around town. I thought it would be interesting to mix and match the dot patterned jeans with the paisley scarf and with cold and dismal days approaching my fluffy orange sweater adds a bright pop of colour to this autumnal outfit. The paisley scarf brings a bit of summer to outfit, with the orange accents complimenting the overall tone of the jumper.



Outfit 3 -

Sweater: Zara
Skirt: Zara
Boots: Topshop

My last outfit is also one that could be transposed from day to night. I love wearing high heeled boots with a skirt because of how elongated they make your legs look. The light knit sweater contrasts perfectly with the more heavily woven grey skirt.

Sara's Section — Who, What, Wear...

Sara AlHumiri, 19, Fashion Marketing.

For this fall shoot I decided to bring out the most autumnal outfits from my closet, mixing and matching what I would wear on a regular basis.

These looks tie in the easy, wearable items that you can throw on when going to the library; and the more 'out-there' pieces that aren't for every-day.



Outfit 1 —

**Jacket: Zara
Crop top: Topshop
Fishnets: Missguided
Pants: Topshop
Earrings: Zara
Shoes: Bagatt**

For my first outfit, I decided to pair my fishnets with flowy pants – keeping comfort in mind. Fishnets have come back into style for the last year, but make their best appearances towards the colder seasons. Giving us a good excuse to wear a skirt with a better version of tights, or to simply add a bit of edge to your outfit. I kept my crop top a simple beige sweater to compliment my more 'fun' pom pom ball earrings.

Outfit 3 —

**Shirt — Missguided
Fishnets — Missguided
Pants — Topshop**

For the third and final outfit, I kept within the fall colour-scheme theme, mixing burgundy and plum into both my shirt and my makeup. Not only is this sweater crop top a comfy combo, but it also adds a sultry-formal vibe to the rest of the outfit. This could be worn to whatever bar or fancier restaurant you're going to on a Friday night, and could even be re-worn with a skirt & fishnets to a club.



Outfit 2 —

**Sweater dress: Missguided
Fishnets: Missguided
Earrings: Zara**



My second outfit turns your casual Uni-wear into a 'day-to-night' scenario. Want to be more cozy but still stylish? Sweater dresses are the answers to all your questions. They're the perfect in-between of casual and formal, but still keeping you warm in terms of Leeds weather. The orange tone of the sweater dress also keeps up with the colour scheme of fall, as does the attached hoodie – keeping your hair dry for the dreary climate.

Harvey Weinstein and Hollywood's Sexual Assault Problem



With the multiple allegations currently surrounding Harvey Weinstein, Arts Writer Lucy Carr examines the culture of sexual assault within Hollywood

As more stories emerge every day, the world is left to watch in horror as the darker side of Hollywood unravels before our eyes. In light of the recent outpouring of allegations against producer Harvey Weinstein, a harsh spotlight has been placed on the industry and its relationship with sexual assault; one that has historically been shrouded in silence, swept under the carpet and overlooked by those in positions of privilege and power. This is a disturbing trend that has shockingly allowed men at the top of the hierarchy to easily fit back into their own reality, whether that be producing, directing, acting or other, despite having deeply affected the lives of others through their assaults. Thankfully, this climate of secrecy seems to be drawing to a close. With both women and men coming forward, open discussion has increased regarding why countless men in Hollywood have been able to avoid repercussions regarding allegations of sexual assault, either by receiving lesser sentences or avoiding punishment completely.

Weinstein does not stand alone, being just one in a long list of Hollywood powerhouses who have abused their status in the industry. In 1977, Roman Polanski, acclaimed director of films such as *The Pianist* and *Rosemary's Baby*, was arrested and charged for the drugging and rape of 13 year old girl Samantha Gailey, however through his probation, had time to flee America to France and still avoids staying in countries that will extradite him to the United States. It is rumoured that he is currently shooting a biopic of his own life in Poland. Woody Allen is yet another notable Hollywood legend who has been accused of multiple sexual assault charges and to add a few more to the list, celebrities like Casey Affleck, Nelly, Johnny Depp, Sean Penn, Charlie Sheen and Brad Pitt are just some of the names that have graced the headlines in recent years for similar charges. Yet, have all these men been expelled from the academy like Weinstein? No, in fact there seems to be little lasting repercussions for any of the allegations, uncovering how sexual assault in Hollywood is not something that has become an entrenched part of the system.

In a recent interview with BBC Newsnight, Emma Thompson referred to Hollywood as a 'ladder' and with people such as Weinstein at the top, advancing becomes much harder for those struggling to make it into the industry. Prejudice in all its many forms has always been present in Hollywood and it is disheartening to think that despite so many people in the community fighting for equality, there are men behind the scenes like Weinstein who are still such dominating forces, portraying sexual harassment as something which women have to endure to make it big. This toxic masculinity is something that can only be redressed with equality and that means rectifying the power imbalance by increasing representation and diversity in Hollywood.

Looking over all these allegations of sexual assault it is worrying to see how the punishment never seems to fit the crime. This sense of privilege that comes with being famous, it seems, extends to the justice system, no doubt encouraging the

harmful culture of victim blaming and silence which prevails at the moment. It is also important to state that these are not just issues confined to Hollywood alone and that it is not just women who face such assaults. This is something that happens to people everyday, all over the globe and it is important to provoke discussion about why this happens and stir action in response to such claims of assault. This will enable us to break free of this culture where the person assaulted gets more scrutiny than the assailant themselves.

While you can't deny the artistry and talent of a man like Woody Allen or the influence and contributions of a man like Harvey Weinstein, their dedication to the film industry should not negate their crimes. I'm sure many people outside the industry were surprised to see such an avalanche of allegations against Weinstein and even more surprising was how many members of the Hollywood community have since come forward saying they were aware of his predatory actions. What is particularly tragic is that Weinstein is not the only man in Hollywood to have committed such crimes, nor will he be the last. Wealth, power and creative standing should not be factors in judging a crime and to paraphrase Oprah, the bravery of Weinstein's victims in speaking out will hopefully act as a watershed moment that will signify a change within our culture.

"This sense of privilege that comes with being famous, it seems, extends to the justice system, no doubt encouraging the harmful culture of victim blaming and silence which prevails at the moment."

This show of solidarity represents one of the first steps in dismantling gender dysfunction and power imbalance in places of work, whether that be in the Hollywood community or everyday offices. We can't separate Weinstein's talent from his crimes, nor should we. No matter how much we admire celebrities or celebrate their contribution to popular culture, this should not and cannot give them special powers that allow them to avoid any sort of repercussions. Thankfully, the allegations against Weinstein seem to have opened the floodgates and we can only hope this will lead to a more positive future where no one turns a blind eye, power imbalances are redressed and people can feel safe in their place of work.

Lucy Carr

Jared Leto Cast as Hugh Hefner in Brett Ratner-directed Biopic

Elliot Gaynan takes a look at the latest controversy surrounding the divisive Hugh Hefner, and asks if Jared Leto really is the best choice to play the late Playboy founder. Will his brand of 'method acting' bring nuance to the already questionable role?

The world is a truly terrible place. But did we really do so much as to deserve this? Did we really go that far? These questions flew and ricocheted within the cranial casings of many film fans when a certain piece of information was beamed to their phones from the depths of Hollywood. Jared Leto is set to portray Hugh Hefner in a new Brett Ratner-directed biopic. As if a scientist somewhere had exclaimed 'Computer, give me the most sigh-inducing actor-director-subject combo possible', the headline was almost laughably predictable in its ruffling of feathers.

There are a few problematic red lights here to get people sharpening their pitchforks. References to his supposed 'sexual revolution' permeate Hefner's recent obituaries, prompting many to highlight the late Playboy founder as a sleaze who only respected women upon their submission to his narrow erotic gaze. Joining in the tributes was the director of this biopic, Brett Ratner, whose seeming adoration of Hefner and career-long absence of critical approval forebodes that this won't be the nuanced, challenging portrayal its existence warrants. And, of course, Jared Leto's brand of, well, 'Jared Leto-ness', is still particularly fresh in our minds following the media storm that was his *Suicide Squad* preparation.

And that's where another annoyance of this headline lies; the revelation feels like a perfectly positioned foothold for the industry to climb in its commercial diluting of 'method acting'.

The method acting approach, pioneered by Stanislavski and initially popularised by actors such as DeNiro and Brando, is generally defined by an actor's decision to 'become' rather than 'imitate'. That mysterious, almost mystically-viewed technique has absolutely given rise to some of cinema's best acting work. Daniel Day Lewis 'went method' for *My Left Foot* and *There Will Be Blood*; those performances went on to become synonymous with Oscar glory.



Yet, Jared Leto's casting as Hefner amplifies the contemporary cheapening of this acting form. He's a sugary, wham-bam rendition of the method actor; one of the most prominent showbiz stories of last summer concerned Leto apparently being a nightmare co-worker during the production of *Suicide Squad*. His quest to truly embody the maniacal 'Joker' role resulted in him isolating himself on set and sending seemingly-used condoms to fellow castmates, this act of brattish social suicide ultimately resulting in about 10 minutes of unremarkable screen-time. Since when did all that method commotion become so unrewarding in its output?

Leto's antics support the view that modern-day actors' use of the method approach can be perceived as bending it into a form of social and marketing capital. Given the availability of information to the public in these times of widely publicised production processes, method acting nowadays moves less toward serving the art and more toward serving the male actor's sense of masculinity. In taking on activities which impact their social life, their bodies, their psychological well being, method actors harness a kind of performative suffering which aligns their work with that of more traditionally masculine labour. And in terms of relating 'method' to commerciality, you'd be hard-pressed to find a practicing Oscar contender whose anguish-filled process wasn't placed at the core of their campaign.

There'll no doubt be a fresh media furore surrounding Leto's work as Hefner. He's said himself that he's keen to 'play him', to 'understand him', those words already filling my mind with cringe-inducing premonitions. I can see stories of Leto's wild in-character sex parties filling the tabloids even now. What this signifies, though, is that increasing delegitimization of a once sacred approach in the name of what? None other than typical Hollywood egotism and excess. It's almost charmingly fitting that a Hugh Hefner portrayal may stick the nail in method's coffin.

Elliot Gaynon



Black History Month: The People Changing the Face of Entertainment

To mark the end of Black History Month, Aneeka Hussain celebrates the most exciting BME figures in the entertainment industry.

Recently, there has been a lot of buzz surrounding the breakthroughs by black actors. Their work is no longer being viewed as separate but is being integrated within the mainstream. Although we are seeing improved representation onscreen, black creatives that tell stories through directing, producing and writing are still being massively overlooked.

The white, privileged male is allowed a comparatively luxurious journey to the top. We have become so used to the Etonian template in all aspects of society, that overlooking the talent of black individuals occurs without a second thought. This is where the creative industry proves particularly guilty. Black women are supported even less, having to work twice as hard as their white counterparts to achieve recognition. Misconceptions infiltrate our society and make it even more difficult to administer change. The main one being that movies with all-black casts are doomed to fail due to a lack of audience interest. These myths are now finally being put aside, as more people of colour are coming forward to shape the creative industry in new ways.

There are not enough words to show enough praise for Ava DuVernay. Being the first African-American woman to win the Best Director Prize at the Sundance Film Festival is just one of the many victories she has to her name. DuVernay has worked to rid film of toxic stereotypes surrounding black people. Her movie *Selma*, is one of many ground-breaking pieces, displaying a powerful take on History that effectively contributes to a wider social and political purpose.

Moonlight, is an enchanting movie that will go down in history for its fresh, new take on exploring one's identity. It is based on the play *Moonlight Black Boys Look Blue* by Tarell Alvin McCraney, who was awarded the Academy Award for Best Screenplay. Director Barry Jenkins is confidently steering the business in the correct direction as the movie deals with themes of emotional abuse and sexuality. Talented black writers are no longer being asked to take a backseat; the film stars an all-black cast and a gripping storyline showcasing the development of protagonist Chiron. McCraney's work encapsulates emotion like no other and is especially important for bringing a soulful narrative to the big screen.

If you haven't heard of Issa Rae then prepare for your life to change for the better. Her popularity grew through YouTube where she creates videos that focus mainly on all-black casts. More importantly, Rae created the *Awkward Black Girl* series, encouraging openness and bringing a complex portrayal of African-American women to the forefront. Her work in the industry has expanded to writing and producing the comedy series *Insecure* among several other projects. Rae has an authenticity about her making her that trustworthy, older sister figure that we all need a dose of in our lives.

Screenwriter Misan Sagay, who has been vocal about black women needing to step up to write their own stories. Claiming that, 'I am not writing for black people to be extraordinary, I am fighting for the right for black to people to be ordinary' makes her work even more appealing. It is very revealing of how minorities are always expected to be taking risks to make their voices heard. This systematic barring forces self-doubt and uncertainty about one's work when really, society is structured to prevent their progress. Sagay's film *Belle*, follows the life of Dido, the daughter of an enslaved African woman. This film is key for focusing on a fresh new perspective of the life of a mixed-race woman who lives as an aristocrat.

Kahlil Joseph's extensive work on music videos and short films that has completely altered the course of the Arts industry. He directed the iconic visuals for Beyonce's *Lemonade* album. Sixty minutes of breath-taking visuals with symbolism that leaves a lasting impression. It features the spellbinding words of Warsan Shire and powerful excerpts from speeches by Malcolm X and is a beautiful coming together of Art by pioneering black creatives. This one project created a united space for people of colour from all walks of life. As well as this, his short films have even been exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. His short film, accompanied by music from Kendrick Lamar's *good kid, m.A.A.d city album*, shows images of childhood innocence generating uneasiness alongside the frantic scenes of gunshot fire. Joseph's work cannot be categorised in simple terms; it has too much depth and emotion for that. Making you think in ways you never thought possible, and evoking profound feelings that leave you dazed for days, is an inevitable result of Joseph's talent.

These individuals clearly represent a new wave of incomparable talent. It is time to encourage more black people to come forward about their experiences so that they can pave a new way.

Aneeka Hussain



Image: Complex

Issa Rae



Image: New York Times

Barry Jenkins



Image: The Hollywood Reporter

Ava DuVernay

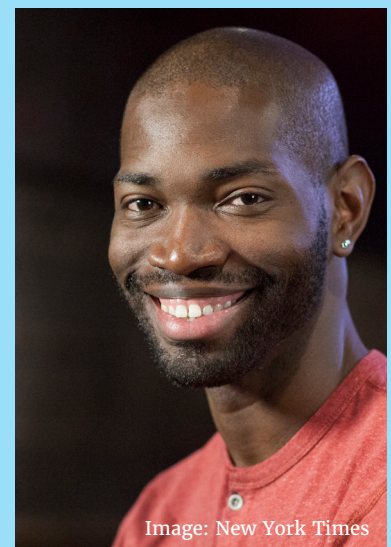


Image: New York Times

Tarell Alvin McCraney

Street Art: Public Nuisance or Counter-Cultural Force?

To a large proportion of the older generation, graffiti is nothing more than vandalism. However, much of the younger generation is waking up to the innate creativity involved in this art form. Editor-in-Chief, Reece Parker, investigates where the line should be drawn as to the merit of such work.

From the start of human civilisation, we have had a propensity to write on walls. Graffiti has been found everywhere in the ancient world, from the Catacombs of Rome to the destroyed city of Pompeii, and has been an ever-present feature on the walls of every society throughout world history. Despite being steeped in history and informing a large degree of modern contemporary art, be it street artists themselves such as Shepard Fairey or weaved into the canvases of the iconic Basquiat, street art has been widely deplored as being little more than vandalism. This article explores whether this label is warranted, or whether this is an unfair stance against the avant-garde form.

The discussion over whether street art is justifiable as a form is often hinged on two issues, whether it has artistic merit, and whether the artist has the right to produce their art in the public domain. The former debate is interesting in that normally, those who claim it lacks artistic merit do not apply this to every piece of work. Indeed, larger pieces such as the 'Athena Rising' mural, which is painted in Leeds City Centre and is the UK's tallest piece of street art, was met with widespread approval both critically and amongst the local population. Instead, critics target 'writers', those who express themselves through lettering, be that in 'tags' (the most basic graffiti form), through a 'throw ups' (a more elaborate, bubble-style of writing), or more complex and developed forms of these such as 'wildstyles' and 'blockbusters'. Critics of these forms argue that simply writing your name on a wall is not a form of artistic expression, no matter what techniques, colours or combinations you use to create the work.

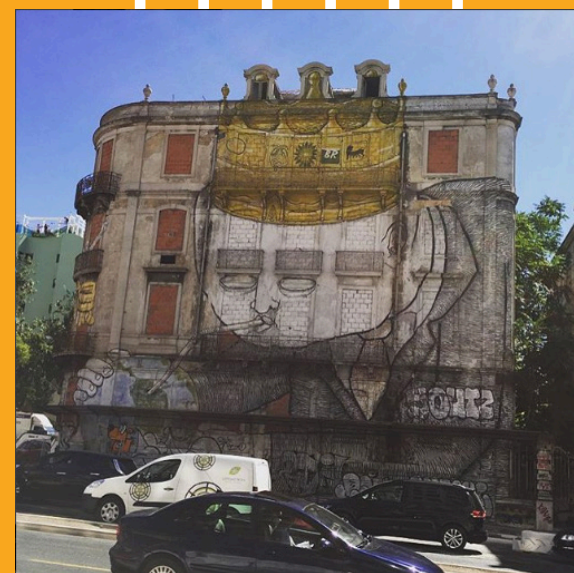
For writers who engage in these forms however, artistic merit is often the least of their priorities. Writers are fuelled by the desire to mark their own territory, claiming space as their own by putting their own writing in the most visible yet difficult to reach places. This battle for space brings me onto the second point of contention over the merit of street art, that which queries who owns the space in the public domain. Those who criticise the work of street artists

often argue that it is vandalism on the grounds that it is defacing buildings or other structures which are owned by individuals who do not consent to the work. It can be argued that those who have their property painted on can see their market worth drop, and also that, if it is a commercial property, this can lead to a loss of reputation and thus a loss of customers. At the other end of the spectrum, if the artist who painted the work becomes popular after it has painted, this can potentially lead to an unexpected windfall for the 'victim' of the crime, with a house in Bristol recently being priced at up to one million pounds as it has a partially obscured Banksy piece on its side.

Those who are pro-street art often take a much more ideological line on this debate, arguing that street art can be perceived as those who do not have a chance to control their surroundings through ownership of buildings instead doing so in the only way they can. If advertising agencies can populate a city's streets with their own slogans and ideals, why can't those who walk the streets everyday do the same? If not, we allow the rich and powerful to dominate the narratives of our communal areas. One recent example of this in practice was when it was revealed just before Notting Hill Carnival that *Boiler Room* had received a grant from the *Arts Council England* totalling almost £300,000 to go towards the event in 2018, whilst the *London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust* received only £100,000. Where the well-financed *Boiler Room* dominated the streets with their expensive sound systems and DJ bookings, locals voiced their protests with a large graffiti piece which read 'Fuck Racist Met Police and Fuck Boiler Room Too'. As a famous quote about street art goes, "if your back's against the wall, turn around and write on it".

The argument as to the merits of street art is both complex and multifaceted. I would argue that this is because street art itself is complex and multifaceted, and that you should not dismiss counter-cultural aggression as a throwaway gesture, as it often has both artistic and ideological worth.

Reece Parker



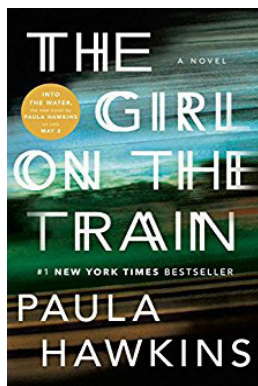
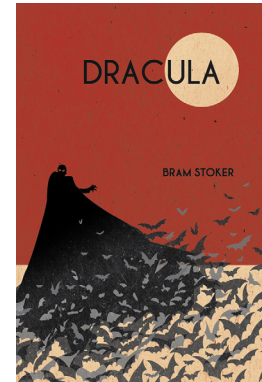


Terrifying Tales

With Halloween upon us, it is time to embrace all that is ghoulish and gothic. Here are the perfect books to get you into the Halloween spirit.

Dracula by Bram Stoker

This literary classic follows a vampire hunt as Jonathan Harker and his companions chase Count Dracula as he threatens the future of humanity. It plays up to Victorian fears of sexuality and disease, as well as the supernatural. It's the perfect classic to read on Halloween. I personally love this book: you won't find a more original or authentic vampire story than Dracula. Key in the development of the gothic genre, it is the touchstone from where the cultural image of the vampire originated. An interesting read as a historical document, as well as a good pastime.



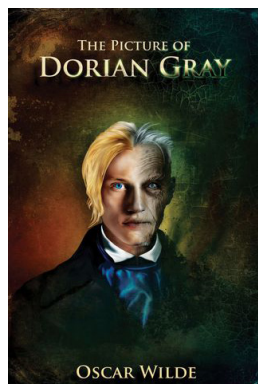
The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawkins

Rachel observes an innocuous couple repeatedly on her daily commute, but suddenly events take a turn for the worse. She finds herself in the middle of a crime investigation which becomes more personal than she originally thought. Rachel, an alcoholic, lacks a reliable ability to recollect events, making believing her story more difficult, which ultimately puts her in a more troublesome situation. Those who surround Rachel are revealed to be concealing huge secrets about their lives, and as they all collapse, Rachel is left in the debris of their lies, and in the centre of a murder mystery.

IT by Stephen King

IT torments the local kids. IT plays up to their biggest fears. IT kills.

The novel is split into two time periods, and as the children move on and grow up believing their tormented childhood to be a thing of the past, IT strikes again. If you watched the film, you will find the book even more compelling and tense. This is perfect to read around Halloween and maybe even couple it with a movie night!



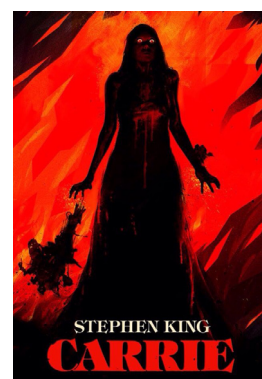
The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde

Written by a literary legend, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* centres around Grey, who begins to believe that life is about self-indulgence and vanity after meeting Lord Henry Wootton. He wishes that the painted version of himself would age and not himself. From here, he explores his newfound freedom, which tragically backfires when the painting changes. He accepts that his view of self-indulgence will form the rest of his life and locks away the painting, not realising the horrific damage he is causing.

Carrie by Stephen King

Carrie's home life is disastrous, with her strictly Christian mother controlling and frequently abusing her. Her school life is just as bad, with her classmates bullying her and teasing her. This is where Carrie's life changes and she discovers her telekinetic powers. An incident at prom causes Carrie to tip over the edge, and she soon leaves a path of destruction behind her.

The book is far superior to the film, and is definitely worth a read if you're compelled by the more gory side of literature.



Bloodless Pumpkin Carving

Carving pumpkins has been a tradition for centuries and originates from Irish folklore. However, for some it has become a challenge to design and create the perfect pumpkin. This can be a messy and complex task, so Emma Prentice explains why many people are shifting to decorating their pumpkins without carving them.

Pumpkins are almost synonymous with Halloween. In fact, the thought of buying a pumpkin at any other time of year seems strange.

Despite the fun of pumpkin carving, it can be rather messy and time consuming, requiring the right tools and the muscles to carry this boulder of a vegetable from the supermarket back home. This leads to the question: is it just too much hassle?

As students, it seems hard enough to juggle studying, a good social life and getting enough sleep, and so it is easy to abandon seasonal activities such as pumpkin carving. But don't despair! You will be glad to know that there is a solution to some of these problems! Let me introduce you to no-carve pumpkin decorating.

This latest trend is sweeping the world of halloween decoration, not to mention your Instagram and Pinterest feeds. It will not only save you from the inevitable mess and splashing out on carving tools, but will also provide you with more design freedom. Those creative ideas which were just too intricate to carve are now possible!

“It will not only save you from the inevitable mess and splashing out on carving tools, but will also provide you with more design freedom. Those creative ideas which were just too intricate to carve are now possible!”

Emma Prentice

So, you're probably wondering, what is no-carve pumpkin decorating? This trend is both easy and doable, no matter what artistic ability you possess. Simply grab a Sharpie or permanent marker and get drawing! Take your design in any direction you desire – whether you turn your pumpkin into Cinderella's carriage or draw something as traditional as a bat, witch or ghost.

And why stop with a marker? Go as crazy as you like – why not get some sequins or spray paint and jazz up your pumpkin? Additionally, there is now such a wide variety of pumpkins available; what about buying an alternative white pumpkin or a 'super freak' pumpkin with unusual and aptly spooky bulges growing on its skin? And if you really want to go outside the box, carve a pineapple (although these are known not to last as long) – there are no rules this Halloween!

The one downfall you might have spotted with the no-carve option is the lack of candlelight illuminating from within. If this is something you think you would miss, consider investing in some mini fairy lights and wrap them around your pumpkin – not only will this bring your pumpkin creation to life, but you can also reuse the lights when Christmas comes to town!

So, whether you decide to go old-school and carve your pumpkin or try the up and coming trend of no-carve pumpkin decorating, don't miss out on this long-established tradition. Make a trip to your local supermarket, pick up a pumpkin, and celebrate the season – and have a very Happy Halloween!

Pick Your Poison

Lifestyle and Culture Editors, Jade Verbick and Bella Davis, spent a lunchtime getting tipsy on Hotel Chocolat's new collection of Halloween cocktail chocolates with a shot of liquor. The Gryphon's Editor-in-Chief Reece Parker even got in on the act.

Black Cat Martini

I have to say the name was not as original as I thought it could be. However, the *Black Cat Martini* proved my doubts incorrect with its slightly bitter vodka and blackcurrant filling that had a sweet aftertaste coming from the liquorice and dark chocolate casing. –Bella **5 Stars**

Much to my dismay, the chocolate did not resemble a black cat in likeness or colour. It did however taste incredible with a slight hint of vodka mixed with the rich black currant filling. –Jade **4 Stars**

Reece Rating **5 Stars**

Green Fairy

The *Green Fairy* is exactly what the collection is called, a drop of 'poison.' I mean it wasn't all bad but absinthe would never be my first choice. It is quite hard to taste the chocolate with the strength of the overpowering absinthe but at the end of the day it's still chocolate! –Bella **3 Stars**

As someone who actually likes absinthe, this one was still disappointing. The green and yellow top of the chocolate is already unappetizing, and the actual filling does not mesh well with the chocolate. Definitely one to avoid. –Jade **4 Stars**

Reece Rating **5 Stars**

Corpse Reviver

I would have to say that the *Corpse Reviver* is my favourite name. Who doesn't want to be brought back to life! With gin as the alcoholic infusion this chocolate drop was always going to go down a treat. –Bella **5 Stars**

This piece of chocolate gave me life. With a name like *Corpse Reviver* I would expect no less. The mix of the white chocolate and the sweet blood orange fillings makes this by far the best chocolate of the bunch. –Jade **5 Stars**

Reece Rating **4 Stars**

Zombie

Passion fruit is my all time favourite fruit so I had high expectations for the milk chocolate coated tropical drop. It was delicious but surprisingly didn't beat the *Corpse Reviver* or the *Black Cat Martini*. –Bella **4 Stars**

After the disappointment of the *Green Fairy*, I could only hope that this one tasted anything like the delicious zombie cocktail. You could definitely taste the rum in this one, but it definitely was not as tropical as I hoped. –Jade **3 Stars**

Reece Rating **3 Stars**



Image: Hotel Chocolat

Louis Theroux: Dark States - Heroin Town

Louis gets us Theroux the week with another gripping documentary exploring a town that has been ravaged by a heroin epidemic...

“It’s kind of like a stick of dynamite that’s going to do absolutely nothing in the world except make you feel as good as you can possibly feel.” That is how Nick, a blue collar, a father of a twelve-year-old son, and a heroin addict, describes his drug of choice.

Louis Theroux is in Huntington, West Virginia, kicking off his new series of investigating documentaries. It is clear to see that the cause of this epidemic is not extreme deprivation, but rather a chain of recurring situations. Firstly, an accident or illness which is treated with prescriptions of strong opiates. Secondly, their medication is cut off by their doctors then, feeling dependent, they turn to easily obtainable heroin. The blame can be seen to land on the huge American pharmaceutical companies, money and safety.

In a similar style to Theroux’s previous documentaries, the complete lack of a rose-tinted shield, accompanied with the calm yet probing style of his questioning, allows for the subject’s stories to be hard hitting in their absolute state of realism. Each story has a similar background, and it is clear to see the bottom line: that addiction is an illness, a disease that can change your life in seconds. Statistics show that in Huntington, one in four adults are dependent on opiates, the rate of fatal overdoses is thirteen times the national average and one in ten babies are born dependent. All, see no distinction in class, age or race. Whilst others struggle to get honesty out of their interviewees, Louis Theroux treats every single subject with unbiased respect, showing that human life is drama enough without the need of a climax or dramatic music. When our television screens are mostly occupied with sunny, happy versions of American Life, this documentary shows the darker, unscripted side.

Hannah Simpson-Orlebar



Image: BBC Two

The Apprentice: Stupidity at its Finest

Lumbering on into its thirteenth series, you can’t help but wonder why Lord Sugar hasn’t packed it in and retired. Yet he still chooses to subject himself to stupidity, chaos and bad planning, all packaged up in the form of 18 loud-mouthed, egotistical contestants. The thought of it alone is enough to make the best of us recoil. but I am living for it.



Image: Radio Times

No-one likes to admit they still watch it. Yet there’s something about watching ridiculous, terrible people make ridiculous, terrible decisions that provides endless entertainment. This week saw the candidates designing luxury hotel rooms. A tight budget and only a couple of days to complete the task is always a recipe for disaster, and the show certainly did not disappoint. Whether it was Elizabeth’s bumbling about every inch of the room, brandishing her measuring tape like a weapon, or Jeff justifying his creativity (or lack thereof) with his ‘background in breakdancing’ at every phase, this episode was comedy gold.

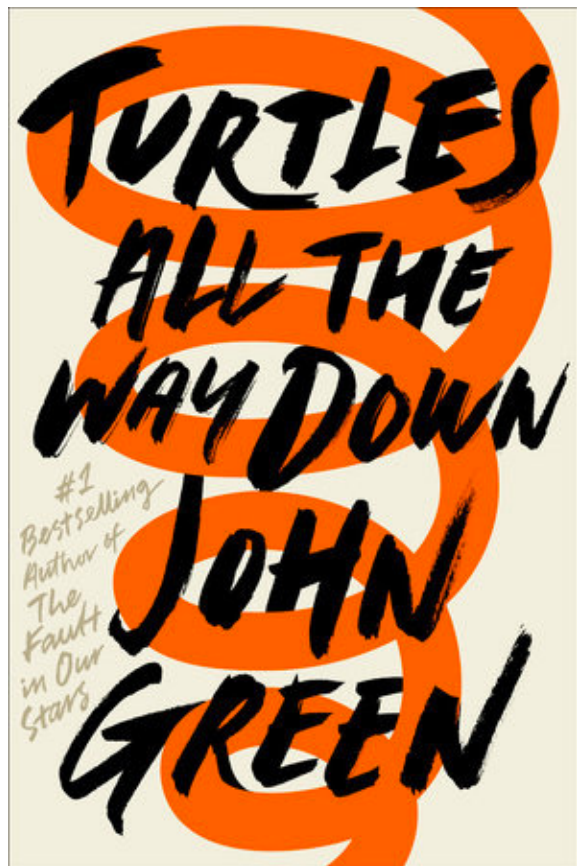
The results were disastrous as always. The girls’ choice of ‘golf’ as a theme left much to be desired, the ‘abstract’ golf ball wallpaper being a highlight. The boys, however, left the room looking like it had been designed by five-year-olds, with walls the colours of the Union Jack – red, blue and strangely, yellow? As if that wasn’t bad enough, they paid an actual designer to do a freehand sketch of the London skyline on one wall, and it was so bad that they may as well have just scribbled on the wall themselves. Lord Sugar’s final decision was more a case of which one he hated the least. The girls’ team managed to scrape a win, whereas Jeff got the boot from the boys’ team – a total crime. I was hoping to see him breakdancing his way to the final.

Ananya Sriram

Turtles All The Way Down by John Green

Everyone has heard of the number one bestselling novel, *The Fault in Our Stars*, written by John Green. Sophia gives us her review of Green's latest novel, *Turtles All The Way Down*, and asks whether Green has the potential to take young adult fiction by storm once again.

I had previously read two other John Green books, and had mixed feelings about both of them. So, when I read Green's new book, I was interested to see how I would respond to it. The story focuses on the life of 16-year-old Aza, her friends, her school life and her love interest, Davis. The blurb claims that the principal storyline concerns Aza and her best friend wishing to "pursue the mystery of fugitive billionaire Russell Pickett" for the "hundred-thousand-dollar reward". This supposed adventure ends before it even begins and is not central to the book at all. This means that the book has no real concrete beginning, middle or end. There is no climax or satisfying storyline to follow. I can imagine, especially for a younger teenage audience that this might make it, at times, frustrating and tedious to read.



Having said this, this actually makes Green's book a lot more complex than the blurb gives it credit for. The story isn't so much about the 'adventure' as it is about Aza's mental health. The linear structure and lack of direction, simply reflects the longevity and inescapability of Aza's crippling anxiety. I found this aspect of the book very interesting, but also troubling. Aza resorts to extreme measures to cope with her irrational yet chronic fear of contracting "C. diff", or *Clostridium difficile*, a bacterium affecting the bowel that can, very rarely, cause death. Green successfully portrays the perpetual torment Aza is subject to every day, creating a sympathetic and complex protagonist.

The success of this book lies in its offering more than a simple story, as it includes a wide range of subjects that aim to appeal to an audience with diverse interests. What I mean by this, is that throughout the book there are short passages referencing art, poetry, astronomy, philosophy and science. Green challenges his young readers by introducing subjects that are not typical teen interests and thus, encouraging them to think beyond established norms. Moreover, he manages to add balance to a potentially depressing book for young readers, as other themes surround death, neglect and mental instability.

It is at times hard to ignore the fact that you're reading a book written for young teens. The somewhat unrealistic relationship between Aza and Davis is difficult to take seriously. Their romantic relationship essentially seems to come out of nowhere, and the two characters express little awkwardness or shyness towards each other despite being only 16, and not having spoken to each other since they were children. Personally, I found their 'love' slightly idealistic, but perhaps Green did this in order to satisfy a young teen audience. As well as this, the language, especially the dialogue, sometimes felt like I was reading the script to a TV show for teenagers. It is cringeworthy and predictable. However, I don't think there is anything wrong with this, the book was written for young teens after all. Equally there are times when the language is moving and beautifully written, especially the passage at the end which, admittedly, almost made me tear up.

To sum up, I think this book is great for the audience intended. As much as the romantic story between Aza and Davis would appeal to young readers, I believe the principal theme of mental health dominates the book and will interest and resonate with people of all ages.

Sophia Hadjipateras

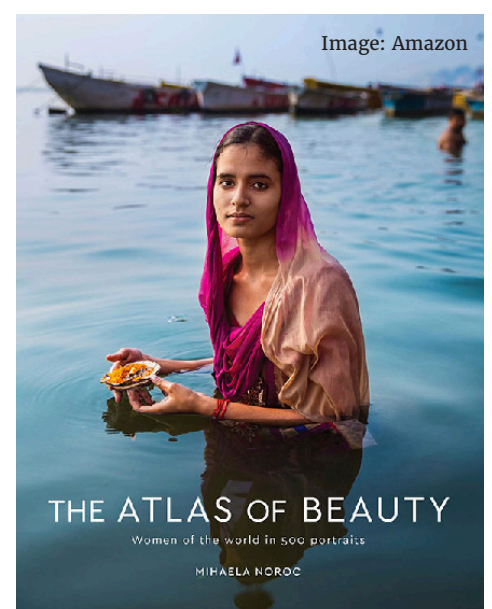
Treat Your Shelf

Treat yourself, treat your shelf and treat others the way you want to be treated. This week, *Lifestyle and Culture* are highlighting one woman who has devoted her life to showcasing the diversity of natural feminine beauty in all kinds of environments and cultures. *The Atlas of Beauty* should be the new addition to your shelf (or coffee table) not only because of the beautiful portraits, but the book shows that 'compassion and love can prevail - and beauty, in all its complexities, reigns supreme.'

Mihaela Noroc is a photographer who gave up her life in Romania to travel the world and photograph women in over 50 countries. *The Atlas of Beauty* is her first book compiled of 500 portraits. For four years now, Noroc has been capturing women and what she thinks beauty is about, 'being yourself, natural and authentic, about letting people see what is inside of you.' When I first heard about the project a year ago I followed it on social media, and it is here I realised the impact that Noroc was having on people. All of her images feel warm, intimate and her use of colour and light is extraordinary. Although you might not spend hours reading this book, I can safely say you will always return to with fondness, knowing its humble beginnings.

'Beauty, as I see it, can teach us tolerance, honesty, and kindness, and our world needs these values more than ever.' - Mihaela Noroc, 2017.

Bella Davis





Black History, White Writers

Can white writers truly know Black History? To what extent is it legitimate for them to write about Black History? As Black History Month comes to a close, these are the questions Rosie Plummer contemplates.

Every year when Black History Month comes around, as a white history student, I encounter the dilemma of how involved to be. I am, of course, a huge advocate of promoting Black History, especially as so much has been done over the years to whitewash our textbooks; but perhaps the tale of Black History is not mine to tell.

During my History GCSE, the only mention of black ethnic minorities consisted of two lessons on slavery and several episodes about roots. The English department were perhaps a little better, but reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* can only teach us so much about the past. In sixth-form, we touched briefly on Mary Seacole and race relations within the United States, but, shockingly, not one single aspect of my secondary education acknowledged Black History within the UK itself. It was almost as if Black British History did not exist, which would be a denial of Black-British identity.

Throughout secondary school, I had gone out of my way to explore aspects of history not covered by the limited curriculum, so when I reached University, I was excited to have the opportunity to learn about more diverse histories. However, as my first Black

History Month at University neared and I prepared to write an article for the History Student Times, I noticed that the vast majority of History students at Leeds are White. After this realisation, I began to ponder whether it is fair for me and other White people to write for Black History Month. Or is it time that Whites stopped dominating the historical narrative, and actually stood back and listened for once?

There are undeniable historical issues involving cultural imperialism. For centuries, White people have dominated accounts, partially by ensuring the systematic under-education of minority groups. This White domination of history led to a lack of sources written by POC, and subsequently to horrifically inaccurate and unfair depictions of ethnic minorities. The fact is that White people have often failed to properly convey Black History, because History is not objective. Every historian is massively influenced by their own personal experiences, beliefs and culture. It is for this reason that White historians, such as Ulrich Phillips, have made Eurocentric claims, like the assertion that slavery as an institution 'saved' African's from savagery. In order to avoid such

distortions, even racism, it is arguably better to allow Black communities to tell their own stories.

However, that said, I do not think it is wrong to be interested in cultures different from one's own. By reading Black History, perhaps white people can finally begin to understand their privilege. Not only is Black History important in helping us to understand the racial situation in the world today, but there is some fascinating Black History which has been concealed by year of imperialist whitewashing.

I thoroughly encourage everyone in Leeds to get involved in Black History Month and to learn something new about the past: start by googling John Edmonstone if you don't know where to begin! Black History is so much more than just American slavery and the Civil Rights Movement, and personally I feel that it is vital that people learn that from authors who fully understand the complexities of the struggles faced by BME communities.

Rosie Plummer



Mental Health: Emphasis on Invisible

Emily opens our eyes to the invisibility of mental illness and reminds us sometimes the worst afflictions are those we cannot see.

Throughout my teenage years, I have met people with varying forms of mental illness, at varying stages and degrees. There isn't one definable factor that connects them, and there is no checklist that applies. They are all just people who have suffered, often in a very private way. I have also met a lot of people over the years who think that mental health is something you can see; that to not fit into a preconceived box means that you aren't allowed to say that you suffer.

It is true that there are physical symptoms associated with various strands of illness. It is not unusual, for example, to come across extreme weight loss because of disordered eating. By no means however, is it how a person with an ED should look, or even what the majority of sufferers appear like. The reaction is often the same – if you are not unbelievably skinny, then you aren't struggling. This is a particularly common misconception during recovery; just because someone you encounter has returned to the way that they looked prior to illness, does not mean that the illness is in the

past, and it is damaging and ignorant to assume so. As someone in the healing process, it is extremely upsetting when I am told I don't "look" like I could suffer from mental illness. It makes me question my entitlement to help and recovery. It makes me question my progress. We need to redefine what mental health "looks like", and rid ourselves of that whole phrase altogether.

If you think that mental illness can look a particular way, you aren't thinking. Ironically, you aren't looking either. In case you didn't know, when what you say is that you can't see illness in me, what I hear is completely different. What I hear is, "I don't believe you."

Every time you tell someone that they don't match your short-sighted stereotype, a part of them questions whether they do in fact, suffer. By conceptualising what you think mental health should appear as, you are making people with real issues and difficulties feel embarrassed and fraudulent.

Ultimately, less likely to speak out. We aren't talking about a black eye or a broken leg, we are talking about the mind, something you will never be able to see. Despite what has been portrayed in the media, or discussed in whispered conversations, mental health is invisible. To punish someone who trusts you enough to open up about their mental struggles, by brushing it off and questioning its severity, is cruel.

This is a topic we should talk about. Ignorance breeds ignorance, and not talking about it is the exact reason why stigmas and stereotypes exist. Thoughtless comments have the power to shape the future of mental health and those that are victims to it. Because when someone talks about mental illness and you respond by telling them that they don't fit your stereotype, they may never talk about it again.

Emily Merrill



Why Hong Kong?



Caroline discusses year-abroad options and makes a compelling argument for choosing unconventional destinations.

In Leeds, I found that whenever someone asked me where I was spending my year abroad, they expected me to say Australia, Canada, America, or sometimes even New Zealand. I thoroughly enjoyed watching their expression after I said I was going to Hong Kong. It was nice to surprise them and challenge their perception of me. Perhaps if someone had asked me two years ago, my answer would have been Australia, or America, but during the application process I realized this year could be my only chance to truly experience a totally different culture on the other side of the world.

This incredible opportunity was the main reason why I chose Hong Kong, but it wasn't the only one. It appealed to me because in Hong Kong I could have both city and countryside in one. I could be in the centre of one of the biggest, most populated urbanisations in the world, yet able to escape to wild rural surroundings within an hour. This is possible because Hong Kong is made up of numerous islands, many of which are uninhabited and incredibly beautiful.

Another advantage of living on an island is that wherever you are, you are never too far from the beach. The weather in Hong Kong is great. Temperatures are around 30 degrees in the summer and 15 degrees in the winter. For a Leeds student that means shorts and t-shirts all year round. So, making trips to the beach is always worthwhile (well, maybe not during typhoon season).

Before applying, I also knew I wanted to travel a lot. Since that was a priority for me, I carefully considered exactly where in the

world I wanted to be situated. I had always dreamt of travelling around East and South East Asia, so I started looking at cities in the area that also had good connections to those places. Hong Kong kept popping up as a destination, but Singapore was also a possibility.

Next, I narrowed down my search to where I would feel the most comfortable culture-wise and language-wise. I knew that wherever I picked, there would be a language barrier, but I reckoned cities that were the most international (in other words, accustomed to dopey foreigners) would be the right way to go.

After researching the official languages, culture, living cost and universities in each city it became clear that Hong Kong was for me. It was a big city, it was beautiful, it was in East Asia and seemed to be the 'gateway' to the rest of the region, and it was international. It also had a great university (HKU), positioned in an ideal location on the Island.

Honestly, I think coming to Hong Kong was the best decision I ever made. The HKU campus is gorgeous, the city is a lot of fun, the food is great, and cheap – as is the university accommodation (£140 a month), which leaves me with plenty of money to travel. In fact, I have already visited South Korea and have booked flights to Japan for reading week in October. So really, the question is, why not Hong Kong?

Caroline Morris



Agony Aunt



"I've been struggling with homesickness since arriving at university. What is your advice for someone who misses being at home?"

Many people say you are going to miss home when you eventually leave 'the nest'. And it's true. I remember struggling the first few nights at university, and thinking, 'How can I suddenly start being independent and taking care of myself?'

No matter whether you are from Leeds, another part of the UK, or elsewhere in the world, you will definitely feel a shock when you move to university. The change can be quite daunting, and feeling homesick is normal. Even though you can't choose to stop missing home, there are some things you can do to alleviate the sadness.

1) Think about why you miss home and respond proactively.

You probably miss the warmth of your family and being known well by someone. In essence, you probably feel lonely. So, what can be done to eliminate this feeling? The easiest way is to open your door, get out of your room, and meet new people in the common room. All first years are in the same boat, and are more likely than not to be friendly and want to chat.

If you are not an outgoing person, then do something you love in a context where you can meet new people, for instance, in a society. I personally enjoy volunteering, so I chose to join a volunteering club, and there I have made some good friends. If the people around you have similar interests and goals to you, it's easier to mingle and deepen your friendships.

2) Explore your surroundings.

When you are missing home, find time to go out. We have the beautiful Hyde Park close to campus, so why not visit and enjoy a nice view? Alternatively, you can have a wander around the city and take in the historical architecture of many buildings in Leeds, which you may not have seen before. You can also attend open events, like the Leeds Christmas Market, and enjoy the local culture. With so many things to do, you'll find there is something for everyone. Hopefully, once you familiarise yourself with your new city, and maybe even fall in love with it, the place will truly become your second home.

3) Talk to your family.

It is inevitable that you will miss your family, even if you develop good relationships in Leeds. So, don't hesitate to call or Skype your family whenever you feel that you need them. Sometimes, just hearing familiar voices is enough to make you feel better. However, please don't hide your sadness and just tell them the happy bits, as this doesn't help at all. Your family will want to support you through tough times, so tell them how you feel and let them comfort you.

Feeling homesick is very difficult, but trust me, the feeling gradually fades as you make new friends and get to know your city better. I hope these tips can help you and that you have a happy few years here!

Man Ting Yu



I think a part of this is that we live in a time where we are relentlessly bombarded by stuff — information, all kinds of things. And in the modern world it's very easy to think that there's no room to breathe. And I don't know if this is a weird science-y way of putting it, but I don't know if we, as a species, have kind of got ahead of ourselves — not having the capacity to deal with the amount of stress we're very often put under in everyday modern life. So I also think it's very important to be able to take yourself out of that bear pit, that intense situation, and learn to switch off, have a breather and to take time for yourself.



#MeToo Campaign

An LGBT Perspective

Anonymous

#MeToo is a step in the right direction, but it is just that: a step. It's hard to admit that somebody has sexually harassed you, and harder still when that person is ALSO a woman, and has used the hashtag. It's hard to open up about an experience that your closeted self isn't ready to answer questions about, aware of the heteronormative form they will take. But ultimately, it's hard to explain all of this when you know that the #MeToo movement has had a powerful impact, providing catharsis for survivors and a slither of understanding for everybody else about the magnitude of harassment.

You just hope that the next movement will be one you feel able to join.

Connie Lawfull

In light of the Harvey Weinstein allegations, much of the attention of social media has turned to an issue that remains pervasive not only in Hollywood but in the lives of women all over the world – sexual assault and harassment. Whilst there has been plenty of online discussion, one particular campaign has garnered more attention than any other: the trending hashtag #MeToo.

“While all the women who were brave enough to share their stories have nothing but my full respect and admiration, my main problem with this campaign is that they should not have to.”

On October 15th, actress Alyssa Milano tweeted “If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote ‘me too’ as a status we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem”. She’s right. If we all did this, it might humanise the 1 in every 5 women statistic that gets thrown around so often.

So why, as the feeds of every social media platform became flooded by those two words, did I feel such a strong sense of despair and discomfort? Surely this

was an inspirational show of solidarity amongst survivors? Had I internalised the taboo that surrounds open conversation about sexual violence? Was it just that hearing so many stories from women I know was too hard to swallow? Perhaps this was all true. However, while the women who were brave enough to share their experiences have nothing but my full respect and admiration, my main problem with this campaign is that they should not have to.

It soon emerged that the #MeToo campaign long outdated the hashtag. Activist Tarana Burke founded the campaign 10 years ago as a grassroots movement and online platform to provide victims with help, healing, and a space to share their stories – mostly in underprivileged communities where women are less likely to have access to rape crisis centres or councillors. Herself a survivor of sexual violence, Burke is a firm believer in what she calls ‘empowerment through empathy’, explaining that the times she found the “most safe space was when people empathised with my experience”.

The sharing of stories goes a long way in tackling the ‘shame, isolation and powerlessness’ so often felt by women dealing with these experiences. However, Burke herself acknowledges that “Me Too” was never designed for social media. It was not “built to be a viral campaign or a hashtag that is here today and

Following the allegations surrounding Harvey Weinstein, the hashtag ‘MeToo’ has taken over Twitter feeds worldwide, with thousands of victims of sexual harassment and sexual assault coming forward to show how prevalent the issue really is. But who does the campaign inherently leave out? And has it only served to paper-over some long-standing cracks?



Image: eNCA

forgotten tomorrow.” She remains optimistic that this online attention can act as “a tool for healing across the spectrum of survivors around the world” and “the start of a larger conversation”, but I am apprehensive about the campaign’s shift to social media.

““Me Too” was never designed for social media. It was not built to be a viral campaign or a hashtag that is here today and forgotten tomorrow.”

In any campaign where success requires survivors to publicly open up about such personal experiences, there is an implication that the responsibility for addressing sex crime lies with the victims. It implies that this is a women’s issue and we should be at the forefront of the stand taken against it. The very phrasing ‘if all women’ suggests that if you care enough to want to change the toxic status quo we find ourselves in you owe the world your story, and that by not sharing you are somehow letting other women down.

Survivors owe their story to nobody. Whether they choose to tell their story or not, they are justified.

Misinterpretation, or Deliberately Condescending?

Zahra Iqbal



Katie Hopkins
@KTHopkins

Follow

Have I ever been sexually assaulted, no.
Have I - like many others - exchanged sex to
get what I want? Undoubtedly. #MeToo

7:33 am - 16 Oct 2017

Katie Hopkins has unsurprisingly used the medium of Twitter to voice her disrespectful opinions on social media’s #MeToo campaign. Hopkins demeans and taints the movement in which women and men are exposing their stories and demonstrating the unfortunate frequency of sexual assaults and harassment in light of the recent allegations in Hollywood against Harvey Weinstein.

However, Hopkins forgets the difference between consensual and non-consensual sex. By commenting that she has ‘utilised’ her body, she fails to recognise that there is a difference between victims being forced into sexual acts, and her choice to use her body in whatever way she sees fit.

Also, the insinuation that the actresses, authors, models and women of all professions that have used #MeToo have not worked for their positions is not only offensive but incredibly disrespectful.

Hopkins has yet again succeeded in belittling a serious issue.

Myanmar: Ethnic Cleansing or Genocide?

Lyle Broom

Once again, an event which humanity should have learnt from years ago rears its ugly head. Ethnic cleansing in Myanmar has impacted the lives of thousands of the Rohingya people purely because of their religion. While tensions rise in the West and debates continue over Islamic extremism and its impact on our society, the Myanmar government persecutes Muslims.

The past few months in Myanmar have been, at the very least, a discredit to humanity, as people are displaced, raped and murdered by their own government and military. There have been reports of the forced shaving of an Imam's beard and the rape of women and girls inside mosques as the military forces the Rohingya community out of their country. Between the burning down of villages, murdering of villagers, and general intimidation, there has been little solace for the victims of this crime against humanity.

The tension between religions in Myanmar has been brewing for decades and has finally reached the point of the systematic rape, murder and displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. At least 582,000 people have fled Myanmar in pursuit of liberty and peace away from the atrocities they have been subject to over recent months.

However, their road to safety has not been easy. A route to Bangladesh via the North-West of Myanmar was the chosen escape route for many, yet, in an interview with Reuters, one man alleges that the Buddhist community now not only refuse a passage through, but have threatened to kill those who attempt to pass. This report emerged back in mid-September; things have not changed much since then.

The UN has recently appealed to Bangladesh to allow the swift and safe passage of refugees into their country as any estimated 15,000 Rohingya people are stranded near the border between the two countries. The US has weighed in, with Secretary of State Rex

“Numerous charities and other organisations have made attempts at alleviating the suffering of refugees, but is that enough?”

Tillerson stating that the US hold the Myanmar military accountable, but failing to comment whether the US would take any action.

Furthermore, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein, has described the crisis as a “textbook example of ethnic cleansing”. Numerous charities and other organisations have made attempts at alleviating the suffering of refugees, but

is that enough? Should the international community step up and coerce the Myanmar government into cooperating?

The UN? The arbiters of diplomacy and peace? Well, they're still undecided as to whether or not the crime committed is a case of ethnic cleansing or genocide. Such trivial matters are hardly the work the international community should be deliberating over; leave that until the crisis has been resolved. Although the defining of this crisis is useful in determining whether Myanmar have broken the 1948 UN convention, and could potentially define the UN's next course of action, this is simply a wasted endeavour. By the time this ethnic cleansing is classified as a genocide, it could be too late.



Image: The Independent

Record. Share. Repeat.

Srika Nambiar



Image: Glamour

When I first watched the viral clip of a man verbally abusing a woman on the London Tube, I was surprised and amused to say the least. This is not because I particularly enjoy violent scenarios, but it is quite rare to see such incidents in real life, right? That's when I realised- I'm a part of the problem.

It's no lie that social media is so deeply embedded in our daily lives that using it for and during almost every situation (no matter how inappropriate it may be) has become second nature to us. The moment we see something that can bank countless views and likes, we instinctively pull out our smartphones and record away.

“It's no lie that social media is so deeply embedded in our daily lives that using it for and during almost every situation (no matter how inappropriate it may be) has become second nature to us”

The clip mentioned showed a rather angry and aggressive man firing expletives and curse words at a woman on a seemingly crowded train. I emphasise 'crowded' because, despite there being such a large amount of spectators, no one tried stepping in to diffuse the situation. However, everyone was quick to pull out their phones and contribute to the already dramatic and tense situation. It's a little saddening that the technology that was supposed to connect us is slowly turning us into a unaffected and insensitive individuals that thrive on being 'virtually famous'. But can social media be entirely blamed? Not entirely, and here's why.

First studied by psychologists Bibb Latane and John Darley, 'the bystander effect' is a phenomenon closely studied in social psychology, whereby individuals are not likely to offer help to a victim when other individuals are present. There are two reasons for this: Diffusion of responsibility (when individuals believe that someone else in the group will intervene) and social influence (where, based on the group's callous response, the individual believes that there is no use intervening).

Being social animals, humans generally prefer to not involve themselves in matters that don't concern them simply because they fear judgement. It's been found that the larger the number of bystanders, the less likely an individual is to come forward and help. This may be an explanation as to why no one rushed to the woman's defence in the crowded train.

Furthermore, there's no telling what will happen following the intervention. What if the situation escalates and turns unknowingly violent? What happens then? It's an important question but it doesn't take away from the fact that social media has avoidably dramatized situations, in some cases doing more harm than good.

For instance, when the video of the man being dragged off the United Airlines flight (April, 2017) was posted, it instantly went viral. The man was severely assaulted, physically and mentally, but no one stepped in to stand up for the man. However, they were more than willing to record the man being dragged across the plane.

All these events have me constantly asking - what's the point of all this 'connectivity' and 'socializing' online when we're just mere spectators in real life?

Period Poverty. Why is it a Thing?

Elicka Ghahramani

The topic of period poverty has been circulating the media for over a month now, and yet many are still startlingly unaware and uninformed on the seriousness of the issue. Global girls' rights charity *Plan International UK* recently published findings that a shocking one in ten young women between the ages of 14 and 21 struggle to afford basic sanitary products. With the media taking an interest in the story, and gathering first hand accounts, a long standing issue has finally come into the light.

The story which garnered the most attention was one of a young girl going to school with a sock in her underwear, in place of a pad or tampon, as the low-income of her household prevented her from feeling able to ask her parents to spend money on sanitary products. Many people may say that her solution sounds extreme, but we must consider that for families who struggle to afford basic necessities, there might be a decision between paying the extra six pounds for a couple of boxes of tampons a month and paying for a necessary amount of food.

What has the government done to help this increasingly worrying issue? Not much. In fact, if anything the government have been detrimental to the cause. Firstly, we all remember being thoroughly outraged by tampons being taxed as a "luxury item" with 5% VAT back in late 2015 (because sometimes we like to treat ourselves at the end of a long day by cracking open a box of tampons), while an item such as Jaffa Cakes got off lightly due to their 'cake' status.

From then on, government involvement has done nothing but worsen the efforts to fix period poverty. Due to EU regulations, and the ensuing uncertainty over Brexit negotiations, the VAT on tampons has not been allowed to drop below 5%, prompting leading supermarkets such as Tesco and Waitrose to bear the responsibility and pay the VAT on our behalf. While offering nothing but praise for the support that Tesco have shown, the issue remains problematic as the options of buying affordable sanitary products remain limited.

"We all remember being thoroughly outraged by tampons being taxed as a 'luxury item' with 5% VAT back in late 2015 (because sometimes we like to treat ourselves at the end of a long day by cracking open a box of tampons)"

Furthermore, whilst the government in Scotland are trying to enforce the provision of sanitary products in all schools, in England it has been stated that individual head teachers may decide whether they are willing to spare some of their budget on the problem. This is a painfully weak and quite despicable solution on behalf of the government in England. By allowing schools to independently decide on the worthiness of the issue, it provides no guarantee whatsoever that there will be a step towards improvement, and only serves to embarrass the girls even further.

A first-hand example I have of the inefficiency of this so-called solution occurred a couple of years

ago, as I was deciding between sixth forms. In an induction assembly, a female representative of a boys' school accepting girls into their sixth form made it apparent, almost like a warning, that girls joining should not expect sanitary products to be available to them on site if they should need it in an emergency. This was a school which claimed to accept girls into their care but simultaneously chose NOT to care.

Therefore, a solid solution must be put forward to tackle the issue and a unanimous front of caring should be shown. This should not be an issue for those with less disposable income to handle alone, but should be an issue for all women – and men – to sympathise with and be aware of, so that we can push for improvement.



Image: The Independent

A Ticket To Nowhere? Councils 'Help' The Homeless

Allegra Goodwin

The BBC's *Victoria Derbyshire Show* has reported that councils across the country are tackling homelessness by buying one-way train tickets for rough-sleepers in their cities. It is believed that some councils have spent up to £1000 of their budget a year to move homeless people off their streets. What is being labelled as a 'scheme' is apparently designed with the intention of helping the homeless 'reconnect' with estranged family and friends.

However, in reality, homeless people interviewed claimed that they had been offered train tickets to places that they had never even visited. One man, Gareth Glendall-Pickton, living in Bournemouth, was offered a one-way ticket to Manchester, a city almost 300 miles away, where he knew nobody at all. He said it made him feel sick.

The word 'scheme' is right. 'Scheme' implies something secretive, something that is done quietly, because you know it's wrong. This is something that was kept quiet, a dirty secret operating quietly in the background whilst anyone it affected lacked the means to speak up. Dressing this up as councils playing happy families and reuniting lost loved ones might make you feel better, but ultimately it's just a lie that is sweeter to swallow than the truth.

Offering vulnerable homeless people tickets to strange distant cities is wrong. It serves as a damning wake-up call about the value that we place on the lives of the homeless. Sending rough-sleepers away to other cities, washing our hands of them and passing the 'problem' over to the next council is cruel. It makes people into nothing more than commodities – free to be shifted around and disposed of at a moment's notice.

And what happens when the homeless person arrives in a new city? Do they magically have a roof over their head and a support system? Or do they go back to sleeping on the pavement, until the day a council official comes up to them and offers them a train ticket?

Some of the homeless people asked said they believed councils were offering to pay for their train tickets just to get them out of their cities. Nauseating as this is, it makes sense. We don't want to believe that people would pay to remove the homeless because it looks bad to have them sitting on the street, we'd rather sell ourselves the story of their being offered a 'fresh start' but we're kidding ourselves. The councils are focusing on the property-hunters, the tourists that visit their towns, and the effect that seeing rough-sleepers might have on them. These are the people they care about. It's all about money, and if you don't have any then that is your own problem.



Image: Metro US

If there were ever a story to show that some people are treated as more important than others then this is it. It is devastating that people are made to feel so acutely unwanted, uncared for – simply because they don't have a postcode. This is social cleansing, and it is no way to deal with anything. Councils should be aiming to help the homeless where they are, treating them as the people that they are, instead of the statistic they represent. The word 'homeless' itself is a problem. Just because someone doesn't have a house to live in, doesn't mean they don't have a place they call their home. The government claim to be investing £550 million in 2020 to address the issue of homelessness. I just wonder how much of that will be spent on one-way train tickets.



UK Holiday-Goers Loss is UK Tourism Industries Gain

Eleanor King & Chloe Sainsbury

When the 51.9% of the UK who voted to leave the EU celebrated their win back in June 2016, the last thing they were probably expecting was a headline a year later insinuating that more people than ever are entering the UK. Earlier this week, VisitBritain claimed that a record number of people are expected to have visited the UK from overseas during 2017. So, what does this have to do with the Brexit vote last year?

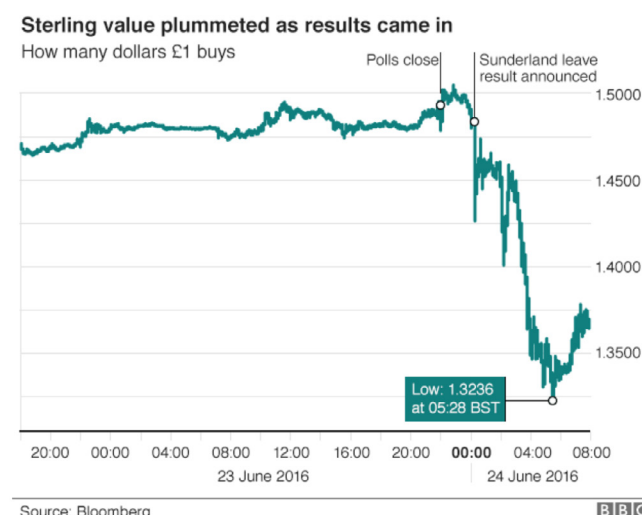
As the graph above shows, the pound weakened significantly when the referendum result was announced. Although the pound recovered somewhat soon after the initial drop, it is no longer as strong as it was pre-referendum. As a result, British travellers will be finding their holidays, inter-railing, and short-breaks away are now more expensive. However, there is an upside to the weaker pound: the UK tourism industry is currently going from strength to strength.

Tourist promotion agency, VisitBritain, announced this week that the first six months of 2017 saw visits from overseas nationals increase by 8% in comparison to 2016. This change can be partly attributed to the

lower value of the pound, since foreign tourists are now finding their own currency can buy more pounds. As a result, accommodation, tourist attractions and travel around Britain seems comparatively cheaper for overseas nationals.

However, incoming tourists are not the sole reason Britain is enjoying a tourism boom. The lower value of the pound has also contributed to more Britons favouring 'staycations' in locations such as Cornwall, Devon and other popular coastal resorts around the UK. The Telegraph claimed a substantial eight million Britons are estimated to have chosen to enjoy a staycation instead of opting for an increasingly costly holiday abroad.

Whilst there is no denying the increase in tourism has been largely caused by the depreciation of the British pound, it is worth noting that there are other factors involved. This is made apparent by the fact that the number of visitors to the UK was on the rise before the referendum result was even announced. Other events such as London 2012 has seen the UK add to its major tourist attractions and subsequently this



Amazon Set To Rival Partners UPS and FedEx With New Delivery Service

Catheryne Sturges-Fairbairn

It was recently revealed that the world leading e-commerce company, Amazon, have begun to test the possibility of providing a delivery service to customers. The business currently relies upon long-term partners UPS and FedEx, amongst others, to distribute millions of packages throughout the world. Many of these packages are ordered through Amazon's 'Prime' service, by customers who want the quickest delivery possible.

Amazon's new venture has been titled 'Seller Flex', and according to Bloomberg, the ultimate goal of its creation is to supply cheaper and faster deliveries, as well as to relieve overcrowding in warehouses. The announcement was made via two anonymous individuals who are working on Seller Flex, and its impact has inevitably been felt by the stock market. Shares have consequently dropped for both FedEx and UPS by 2.2% and 3.3%. This is in contrast to Amazon, who have unsurprisingly experienced an increase of 7.3%. The company will also save a significant amount of money if their attempts prove successful, as having the ability to take control of deliveries will increase their control over the supply chain and inevitably result in increased freedom to make more decisions without relying on external parties for support.

Despite aiming to establish Seller Flex on an international platform, the project has yet to reach the likes of the UK and United States of America. Having started up two years ago in India, Amazon are reportedly in the process of expanding these plans to merchants in the USA, beginning with the west coast. News of Seller Flex came only days after Amazon's plans to create a giant expansion in Seattle, and a month after they expressed need for a second headquarters on the North American continent. Following on from this, Amazon signed a lease for what will soon become the second tallest skyscraper in the Pacific Northwest, suggesting that they are making significant progress.

However, all hope is not lost for the future of business between Amazon and their current partners. Whilst the new service would reduce a need for their involvement, Amazon may still opt to make use of the likes of UPS and FedEx, instead only offering Seller Flex under specific circumstances, such as for prime customers. The future of this co-operation remains uncertain, and in the midst of an ever-increasing obsession with rapid consumerism and quick online delivery, the future of this bold project is one to follow.

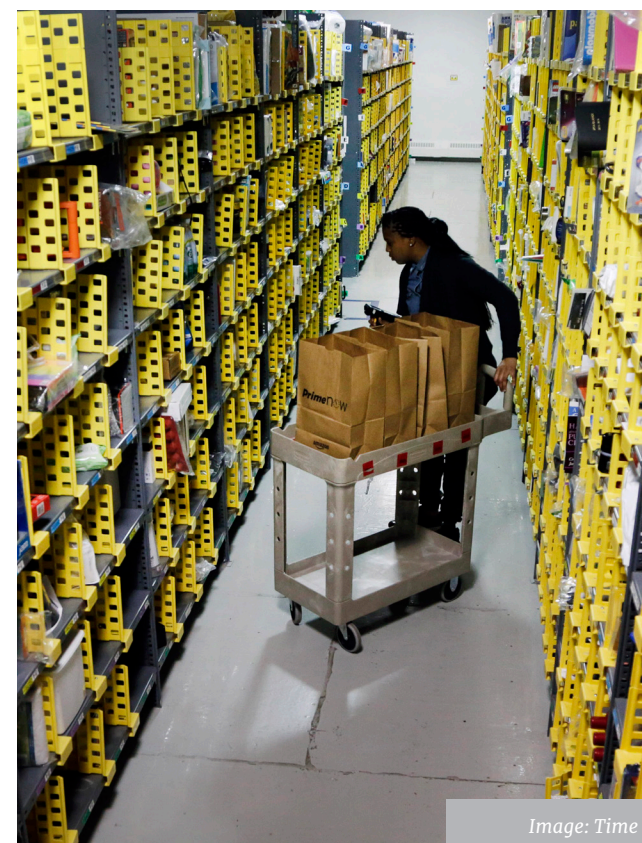


Image: Time

The Truth About Prescription Drugs

Rachael Dillon

Ask anyone about violence or death in the USA, and instinctively most people will begin to discuss gun crime. However, there is an even bigger problem sweeping the country which is receiving far less public attention – drugs overdosing. A massive 91 Americans are estimated to die every day from an opioid overdose. In 2016, 64,070 people were killed by drug overdoses, up by 23% from 52,898 in 2015. Compare this to the 36,252 who died from shootings in 2015, and we can start to gain some perspective on just how widespread and pressing this problem is. What is perhaps most surprising is that prescription drug overdoses hugely outnumber those involving illegal substances.



The escalation of the use of prescription opioid drugs can be charted. Up until the 1990s the use of opioids as a pain treatment was not common practise, reserved only for the most severe forms of pain; their addictive nature has been general knowledge for years. This approach has remained the case in the UK. However, in the 90s attitudes to opioid drugs in the States started to change when pharmaceutical company Purdue Pharma began to market powerful opioid drug OxyContin as non-addictive and suitable for treating most pain symptoms. This sparked a trend amongst large pharmaceutical companies that quickly spiralled out of control. The sale of opioid painkillers peaked in 2012 with doctors writing more than 282 million prescriptions – enough for nearly every American.

So if the problem has been growing since the 1990s, why has so little been done to solve it? The clear answer is undoubtedly one of money. The opioid industry is worth billions of dollars and pharmaceutical companies are not surprisingly unwilling to reduce sales. In 2010, Purdue Pharma made \$3.1 billion dollars from OxyContin sales alone. This was part of \$11 billion generated that year from opioid sales alone, across pharmaceutical companies. Working within a privatised healthcare system leaves these companies little incentive to stop selling the drugs. Instead, they have continued to aggressively promote their products in a bid to convince the consumer they are both safe and necessary.

While prescription drugs are causing massive problems in themselves, there also needs to be an acknowledgment of their role as ‘gateway’ drugs. For opioid addicts, heroin provides a far cheaper and therefore attractive alternative. On top of the obvious problems of addiction, getting into heroin brings the user into an incredibly dangerous world of criminality and often prostitution. Moreover, the highly addictive nature of heroin frequently results in users giving up their whole lives to the drug, at the cost of everything else. There are countless stories of Americans who have been prescribed opioid-based drugs following some minor ailment, and have ended up on the streets as heroin addicts. Conversely, recovered heroin addicts are highly likely to relapse if prescribed an opioid painkiller.

Although their motivations are clear, the reluctance of pharmaceutical companies to do anything at all to try and combat the problem is both remarkable and concerning. It certainly paints a stark picture of a free market wherein large companies are given almost completely free reign, while at the same time feeling no level of responsibility towards the consumer. This is particularly worrying when it comes to healthcare, which essentially boils down to a matter of life and death. As overdoses are showing no signs of abating in the States, it really calls into question how big businesses are run and what level of freedom they should be permitted.

Nudging: The Science Behind Consumer Decisions

Grace Ennis

To the average person, the study of economics may appear to be a bunch of abstract theoretical concepts exclusive to those studying in further education or working in the City. However, the results of this year’s Nobel Prize suggest otherwise, conveying the impact of human nature on our economies. Leading behavioural economist Richard Thaler was recently awarded the accolade for his ‘nudge’ theory; an idea which trivialises the concept of rational markets.

Popularised by his 2008 co-written book, the theory draws attention to human tendencies to behave irrationally. From overdue tax returns to unhealthy eating habits, Thaler examines the psychology of consumer decision-making to generate a comprehensive insight into spending behaviour. According to Thaler, this ultimately boils down to convenience: consumers are more likely to choose the option that is easiest for them in that moment rather than considering what may benefit them in the long-term.

The idea of ‘nudging’ can therefore help governments encourage consumers to exercise better self-control. Through introducing incremental

changes, the theory aims to make it more convenient for consumers to save money and live healthily. This could be something as minor as raising the position of fruit and vegetables to eye-level on supermarket shelves. Whether conscious of them or not, studies have shown that consumers respond well to these modifications, or ‘nudges’. What’s more, there seems to be something inherently benevolent in such an intervention, as Thaler outlined in his book that “by knowing how people think, we can make it easier for them to choose what is best for them, their families and society”.

Thaler’s combination of psychological and economic principles has proven to be fruitful for governments who have implemented them. Under Cameron’s government in 2010, a ‘nudge unit’ under the name of the ‘Behavioural Insights Team’ was launched to research new ways of changing public behaviour. Its biggest success is said to be the recruitment of more than 100,000 organ donors, achieved through small personalised changes to the language in messages sent to possible donors. Remarkably, the unit claims to have saved the government over £300 million since its inception, but has since been privatised to extend



its reach to a global market.

The strength of behavioural economic theory lies in its ability to be pre-emptive: where data-oriented theory relies on statistics and figures, behavioural economics anticipates the individualised practice of spending habits in our daily lives.

Despite this, upon receiving his hefty prize of 9 million Swedish krona (£850,000), Thaler remarked “I will try to spend it as irrationally as possible!”



Image: alice-roberts.co.uk

Alice Roberts: Significant Species & Sexism in Science

Alice Roberts is a renowned scientist, TV presenter and author, with special expertise in the fields of anatomy, osteoarchaeology, physical anthropology and palaeopathology. Science Editor, Leo Kindred, got the chance to meet her, and to traverse her many fields of interest.

Leo Kindred
Science Editor

Your new book, *Tamed: 10 Species that Changed Our World*, is a look at the species, both animal and plants, that humans have domesticated for our own use. Where did the inspiration come from for the book, do you have a favourite species?

I've been interested in human origins for ages, and I love how you can bring lots of separate strands of evidence in and weave them together. There are clues from fossils, from archaeology – the material culture of the past, from written history, and now from genetics as well. In fact, genetics is transforming our understanding of how humans evolved.

I started to get interested in tracing the origin of other species, too, and I'd read that apples originated from Ur-orchards in Kazakhstan. When I started to research that a bit more, I uncovered a wonderful story – of the origin of apples with large fruit on the flanks of the Tien Shan mountains, of the spread of apples along the early Silk Roads, of the invention of grafting and the arrival of apples in Britain with the Romans.

I started to cast the net wider and research lots of other species that seem really familiar to us today, which we've domesticated, to find out where they came from – and how we tamed them. I think my favourite amongst the species I've written about in the book is dogs – our very earliest allies. Genetic and archaeological evidence is now suggesting the first dogs were domesticated – from European grey wolves – more than 30,000 years ago.

For the TV program *Incredible Human Journey* you slept outside in the African bush. With dangerous predatory animals nearby, did you ever feel in danger of being attacked or eaten?

That was one of the most terrifying nights of my entire life! I don't think I was really in any danger – the rangers there often spend nights out near waterholes, to do a census of the animals that congregate there during the night. But it was frightening to hear leopards walking through the grass very near to me, and hyenas fighting down at the waterhole

Following a Radio 4 series with David Attenborough which made a case for the Aquatic Ape theory of human evolution, yourself and Mark Maslin offered a rebuttal of the idea. Why do you think the Aquatic Ape is flawed and why does it persist as an idea?

The so-called 'Aquatic Ape Hypothesis' was first proposed by Alistair Hardy, in *New Scientist*, back in 1960. It was an interesting suggestion, and he said it would be put to the test as new fossils and evidence of human evolution came to light – well, it has, and none of the evidence uncovered in the intervening 57 years has lent any support. That didn't stop Elaine Morgan from writing books about it and popularising

the hypothesis. It seems to hold some sort of romantic attraction, but it just doesn't hold water! And I think it just distracts from more serious discussion and debate about real questions in human evolution.

Evolution by natural selection is still the best explanation of how *Homo Sapiens* emerged, but the theory is still widely disbelieved in a way that the theory of gravity isn't. How can you best physically show someone evolution in progress?

I don't actually think that evolution itself is that widely disbelieved, although I do think there are a lot of myths and misconceptions around. Evolution is on the primary curriculum now, which is great, as it's such a fundamental theory in biology. Natural selection is a key process in evolution, creating change over time from the random variations thrown out by mutations, and it is possible for us to see it action in organisms that reproduce quickly. The emergence of drug-resistant bacteria is of course a pertinent, current example. In *Tamed*, I write about Belyaev's incredible experiment with silver foxes in Russia, which showed the effects of selective breeding graphically. And selective breeding is, after all, artificial selection – or as I prefer to call it, human-mediated natural selection.

It obviously doesn't help that the scientific use of the word 'theory' – as in, an explanation which is more than just an idea or a hypothesis, and which has been tested and provides a good fit for the evidence, and which hasn't been disproven – is different from the lay use of the word, where it implies something tentative.

That was one of the most terrifying nights of my entire life! It was frightening to hear leopards walking through the grass very near to me, and hyenas fighting.

Snow Leopards Racing Extinction

James Deed

We all remember how amazing Planet Earth 2 was just over six months ago, exhibiting some of the most spectacular displays of animal life ever recorded and broadcasted to the public. One particularly memorable scene was the filming of four snow leopards in the wild – something that had never been performed before! This was no easy task however, as there are as little as 3,500 snow leopards left in the wild and it took 16 weeks of filming to capture footage of just 4! Arguably, a feat like this may not ever be repeated again due to the species facing several risks of extinction in the form of poaching, a decrease in prey as well as habitat loss due to climate change. Snow leopards have been listed on the endangered list as far back as 1972 and were thought to have been on a steep decline ever since, facing imminent extinction over the coming decades.

But good news! As of September this year the species' risk of extinction has been downgraded from "endangered" to "vulnerable". This change in classification was deemed worthy by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) who determined that numbers weren't as low as initially thought. Thanks to recent improvements in documenting the snow leopard population over a three-year period, it was deemed that numbers in the wild may be as high as 10,000 and rate of decline may not be as steep as first thought. Such a reduced decline in populations can be attributed to an increased area protected by local communities against poaching and mitigation schemes to prevent farmers killing the leopards to protect their livestock herds. This new classification does not simply mean that snow leopards are in the clear – not for a while anyway, with numbers still declining and a constant threat from poaching.

Other animals have made a similar comeback against extinction, notably with China's dedication towards conservation of the giant panda population over the last 50 years – with current estimates at 2,060. Giant pandas are notoriously difficult

to increase in numbers due to their solitary lifestyle in isolated populations, with low birth rates of cubs (even with vets on standby in conservation areas). The giant panda now qualifies for a "vulnerable" status, instead of being in the red list of "endangered". Scientists predict now that if it wasn't for the Endangered Species Act (protecting species from poaching and setting up game reserves), at least 227 species would have died out by now.

Other species which are now off the endangered list:

- The Chatham Petrel (2015)
- The Louisiana Brown Bear (2015)
- The Delmarva Peninsula Fox-Squirrel (2015)
- The Steller Sea Lion (2013)
- The Arabian Oryx (2011)

As with most ecological topics nowadays, unfortunately climate change seems to be one of the largest, present and future, force driving species to the brink of extinction; food chain collapses and large proportions of important habitats are being predicted to be lost by the end of the century. This causes a question to arise: even if we prevent species from becoming extinct, is there a habitat for them to even return to in future? Currently, the IUCN "Red List" of threatened species sits at 82,954, with almost a third of listed species being classified as threatened with extinction. This has even led some scientists to believe that we are in the middle of another mass extinction event, the sixth of its kind, with the most well-known event being the wipe-out of the dinosaurs.

For anyone who is particularly interested in the success of the Endangered Species Act, or any documentaries relating to the topic, I would highly recommend watching 'Racing Extinction'. You can find more information on the subject here: www.racingextinction.com

Earlier this year it was announced that human remains had been discovered in Morocco which were dated at around 300,000 years old, around 100,000 older than we had thought humans had been around for. Given their location in the North of Africa and the much older timescale how does this impact on the East of Africa origin of humanity as a theory?

Those fossils from Jebel Irhoud! This is why I love evolutionary biology so much – there are always new surprises. I think a lot of palaeoanthropologists have been suspicious for quite a while now that the wealth of fossil finds from East Africa is an artefact of the geology there, with the Rift Valley providing easy access to ancient sediments, but also an artefact of focused exploration in that area. Jebel Irhoud seems to suggest that is that case, and we should be looking at a wider, pan-African origin of our species.

I once saw an interview where you talked about how the gender imbalance at the top of academia in science was due in part to it being historically a structure built by and for men, and that now we're trying to "crowbar" women into these roles. What would you say about the situation currently and what advice would you give female students wanting to study further in science today?

A science and tech committee report on 'women in science in academia' a couple of years ago contained a great quote: "the academic career system was developed when most faculty members were men (with stay-at-home wives)". Unfortunately that's still true – and true for other careers as well. We have technology which can support flexible working now

– why aren't we using that to its full advantage? Why isn't part-time working – for men and women – more embedded and widespread? It might be tricky for employers to accommodate these changes, but if we really value equality, we've got to grasp the nettle! We should all be pushing for these changes. But I'd still advise female students to go for it, to follow their passion.

As a famous female scientist how bad would you say sexism is a problem for women in science still?

Absolutely. Some of it's shockingly obvious – and perhaps, then, easier to deal with it. It's the more insidious manifestations – including unconscious bias against women when it comes to recruitment, promotion and progression in careers – that's more insidious and difficult to tackle. But it can be done, and training and mentoring can help a lot.

Last year you interviewed Richard Dawkins at the Royal Institution. Much like yourself I was fascinated by his writing in *The Selfish Gene* and his ability to communicate ideas in science. However, his name is as much likely to elicit scorn as admiration from many, do you think he is a much-maligned figure in the public eye?

I think he is by people who have quickly made up their minds about what they think he's trying to say, rather than reading his books, and perhaps listening to his criticisms of dogmatic thinking more carefully. But it is a tricky domain to negotiate – the clash between scientific thinking and religious belief – where the latter is dogmatic or literalistic. Somehow

we need to maintain respect and tolerance for each other's beliefs, while having these discussions about what is best for individuals and for society as a whole. I occasionally lose it with anti-vaxxers on Twitter, and then berate myself, because that polarises the argument even more.

Going back to aquatic matters, you made a wonderful programme for the BBC- *Wild Swimming with Alice Roberts*. Do you still enjoy a good dip in a nice lake? Are there any favourite spots you would recommend to those of us with a love of nature and a wet suit?

I love swimming outside! In the sea or in rivers. The Wye is still a firm favourite, and a dip at any beach is always welcome. My kids (7 and 4) love it too.

Given the huge scope of programmes and books you have done on archaeology, physical anthropology, evolution, health, swimming, lucid dreaming, and even Frankenstein – is there anything you can't do and what else are you interested in which you might go on to explore in future work?

I'm almost entirely unmusical. I love listening to music, but I don't play any instruments. But my husband makes up for that, and he's written some fantastic, ethereal guitar tracks for my current book tour!

Future work – I have a research project on a large group of archaeological skeletons I want to get off the ground next year, and I want to do more on popularising developments in evolutionary biology, too – in books and on TV.

Society Spotlight: Jazz & Blues Society

Jake Fowler

Fancy yourself the next Miles Davis or Dizzy Gillespie? The current Musical Director of LUU Jazz and Blues Society tells Society how you can get involved whilst at Leeds.

The Jazz and Blues Society fills a much needed space among the performance societies at Leeds University. People from all backgrounds and abilities come to university with a desire to get involved in the music scene, and we offer a platform for them to do just that. We have our own non-auditioned Big Band which plays



Image: Jake Fowler

a wide range of music, from classic tunes like 'In The Mood' and 'Fly Me To The Moon', to more modern hits like 'Valerie' and 'Play That Funky Music White Boy', and plans to venture into the realms of neo-soul and jazz fusion with the likes of 'Snarky Puppy' and 'Dave Weckl'. The band welcomes players of any ability, from seasoned giggers to people who just like to sing the odd jazz song to themselves in the shower and everything in-between.

As a musician, hanging around with fellow musicians is invaluable. Not only is it great fun, it means that you become part of the 'music scene', which makes it easier to form your own band! We get many gig offers as a society, some of which aren't suitable for big bands, so if you're in the society and have your own band we can help you!

For those who don't play an instrument but enjoy listening to jazz, blues, soul and funk, the Jazz and Blues Society offers a hub for like-minded people to get to know each other and make some new friends. As a society we have regular get-togethers in Old Bar after our Monday rehearsal, and we are always on the lookout for gigs in Leeds and beyond. Plans are underway to organise our first ever official Jazz and Blues trip, watch this space!

As a society, we also do regular socials. A favourite of ours is Hifi's 'Move On Up' every Wednesday, and we also frequent the 'Sunday Joints', which feature a live band and free entry! Highlights from last year's

social calendar include a 'Jazz Standard' themed Otley Run (great for jazzers but prizes for any of the general public who worked it out), an 80s themed night at Canal Mills and, of course, our infamous house crawl. A real treat for members at the end of the year, last year saw five houses host five different genres of music in a night to remember.

We also have many new and exciting events planned for the year ahead. Our chilled monthly jams at *Hyde Park Book Club* on the second Sunday of every month are now well established, and owing to a highly successful gig at the Night Market we now also have a more upbeat jam at Terrace every month! We enjoy a good relationship with many societies including SwingSoc and LUUMS – one of our standout events last year was an amazing 1930s night of live jazz and dancing with SwingSoc. There are many ideas for collaboration in the pipeline, including a huge mashup with the Medic big band, more details to follow!

Membership for the year is just £5, which allows you to play and gig in our big band, as well as giving you deals on socials – reduced entry and a free shot at Hifi means you have made your money back in just one social! So if you fancy a more relaxed approach to music at the university, with an opportunity to hang out with like-minded people at a mix of wild and casual socials and great gigs, look no further than the Jazz and Blues Society.

Want your Society featured? Contact Lara and Mary at luugryphonsociety@gmail.com

Society Spotlight: LUU Water Aid

Amy Rapeer

When it comes to speaking about the importance of access to clean, safe water, the issue seems so far away that it is often dismissed. Here in the UK, most of us take for granted our easy access to things like taps and toilets. But for many, just finding a glass of clean water is close to impossible. According to WHO/UNICEF's most recent report, one in ten people across the globe lack access to clean water, and one in three do not have a decent toilet.

Society spoke to Harry Quick, the president of LUU WaterAid, to learn a bit more about what they are doing around campus in their first year up and running.

What is it that your society aims to do?

Our society aims to be a local representative group of the international charity WaterAid. We want to raise awareness of WaterAid itself; the problems they deal with, the issues they fight for and the work they carry out. We also want to run fundraising events to assist WaterAid in their work around the world.

And what sort of events have you been involved in?

To date we have hosted two events. The first was our GIAG in September when we screened the documentary *Watermark* (2013). This film featured stories from around the world that documented the vitality of water to human life and demonstrated how water shapes us and how we shape water.

The other event we hosted was a bake sale fundraiser for Global Handwashing Day. We took over a stall in the union and sold homemade cakes throughout the day. It was our first fundraising event and we got members involved by manning the stall, selling cakes around campus and speaking to people about the issues surrounding sanitation. Although we are still awaiting a final confirmation of our total raised, we expect it to be well over £100. We are now planning our next event around World Toilet Day where we hope to bring in a WaterAid speaker to give a talk about the relationship between a lack of access to toilets and female insecurity.

Why do you think your WaterAid is so important today?

Access to clean, safe drinking water, a decent toilet and safe sanitation are fundamental human rights. Alleviating poverty begins with providing people with these basic human rights and the work WaterAid carries out therefore lays the foundations for lifting

people out of poverty. Moreover, the problems that stem from a lack of access to either of these rights are crippling. For example: 272 million schooldays are missed annually because of diarrhoea, stripping young people of an education and potentially a bright and prosperous future.

Why should people join this society?

We are an inclusive and friendly society. The issues we, and WaterAid itself, fight for are issues everyone can get behind. Additionally, as a new society we need all the help we can get to raise awareness and to bring on board bold, controversial and creative ideas for our awareness campaigns and fundraisers.

How does someone go about joining?

Joining our society is easy and free. People interested in joining can find us under the 'Political and Campaigning' section of the union's societies website. We would encourage people to also sign up to our mailing list. Alternatively, people can join our Facebook group by searching 'LUU WaterAid Society', where we post regular updates. We also welcome both members and non-members to our meetings, details of which are emailed to members or found on our Facebook group. In the future, we hope to collaborate with other societies within the union – please do contact us via Facebook or email!

The Gryphon Goes on a Golf Break



Image: Welcome to Yorkshire

South of Leeds, nestled amongst splendid wooded parkland, rests the grand, 18th century manor house of Oulton Hall. The estate stands proudly over its 300-acre grounds, which boast a 27-hole golf course. Sports Editor Elliot Van Barthold was invited to experience to see what the Hall had to offer and give the course a run for its money.

Elliot Van Barthold
Golf

Oulton Hall is the owner of a varied history, having spent time as a mental and military hospital, as well as surviving a fire. The hall carries a sense of importance, a grandeur that only stately homes hold. Rescued and restored in a £20 million project, the estate now features a 27-hole golf course. Golf is a fickle sport, absolutely anything can spoil a round: slow play, bad greens, the obnoxious guy in front wearing bright orange trousers. But the kicker is always the weather. For most golfers, your experience of a course can be entirely dependent on the weather that joins you for the four hours. On a Friday afternoon, mid-October, that was certainly the case for us. In scenes often not seen in many parts of England, we were bathed in a warm, golden, October sun from the moment we

stepped up to our 1pm tee off time and this glow never left us throughout the afternoon. It was perfect for golf and set the mood for the day to come.

The ground was slightly wet underfoot, making the 6,500-yard course play that much longer but it did little to dent our enjoyment. Dave Thomas, a famous Welsh golfer from the 50s, designed this course, bending it around the natural hills and troughs that the dales provide. The front nine holes had just one par-five, the seventh, but it was perhaps the most picturesque. The hole follows the boundary of the hotel's grounds, with everything sloping from right to left before sinking away to a quasi-hidden green, which is certainly reachable with a well hit second.

As course designs go, I am a huge advocate of the 18th green being in front of the clubhouse bar. It puts extra weight on that last hole, making it a grander finish, and Oulton Hall does this well. The terrace seating

for the bar is no more than 15 yards from the edge of the green and you can watch the approach shots coming in from 200 yards out. Incredibly enjoyable, until you're the one stood over the ball praying that you don't shank it wide right. (Note: I shanked mine wide right).

The course as a whole plays very well, challenging for beginners but also for single digit handicappers. The greens mimic the dales surrounding them, undulating and large, and the fairways are groomed to perfection. This is really golf at its finest and is highly recommended to any golfer keen to get away from the mundanity of repeatedly playing their local. Thank you QHotels and all that made our stay at Oulton Hall so enjoyable, The Gryphon will definitely be back!

Fifa Names the Best of the Best

Nancy Gillen
Football

The Best Fifa Football Awards were held in London on Monday evening, with the most talented footballers from across the world gathering under the roof of the Palladium to celebrate the best of the best. Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo was named the best male player, with Zinedine Zidane named the best manager and Gianluigi Buffon the best goalkeeper. The Puskas award for best goal went to Arsenal's Olivier Giroud for his scorpion kick against Crystal Palace.

In women's football, Lieke Martens of Barcelona and the Netherlands won best female player and the best female coach went to the Netherlands' Sarina Wiegman. However the women's category of best player stirred up some controversy, with a non-professional player reaching the shortlist for the award. The inclusion of this player led to American star Megan Rapinoe stating that FIFA 'doesn't care about women's football'. With many female footballers shining in professional leagues this year, it does seem that Fifa put little effort into overseeing the women's part of the awards.



Image: Youtube

Hamilton: A Champion in Waiting

Lewis Hamilton looks all but certain to clinch his fourth World Title after his recent victory in Austin

Thomas Lambton
Formula 1

Lewis Hamilton took another significant step towards securing his fourth world championship title after claiming a dominant victory in Austin, Texas.

Hamilton's victory means that regardless of a Sebastian Vettel win in Mexico, a track at which the Ferrari's are expected to perform well, the Briton only needs to finish in fifth position to ensure his place at the top of the drivers' standings at the end of the season.

The result was not a complete procession as Vettel benefited from an excellent start to take the lead into turn one, yet as a clear demonstration of Hamilton's current superiority over Vettel, the German rather tamely ceded the position on lap six. The ease at which Hamilton was able to reclaim the lead is ultimately indicative of Vettel's fading aspirations in the world title fight. Vettel can justifiably highlight certain reliability issues as cause for this, however there is no

doubting Hamilton's air of supremacy, particularly since the summer break in which he has claimed victory in five of the six races. It is undoubtedly a disappointing end to a world-title fight that for so long looked set to go right to the wire.

Courtesy of Hamilton's victory, Mercedes also clinched their fourth consecutive constructors title. In an era of constant technical advancement and change this represents a remarkable achievement.

Behind Hamilton an intriguing battle took place in the fight for the podium positions between the two Ferrari's, Valtteri Bottas and Max Verstappen. Ferrari deployed an effective tyre strategy to ensure that Vettel had fresh tyres at the end of race, thus allowing him to secure 2nd position. There was controversy as Verstappen was denied what would've been a richly deserved place on the podium from 16th on the grid. Verstappen was deemed to have gained an unfair advantage whilst passing Raikkonen on the final lap and was duly awarded a 5 second time penalty, thus returning the position to the Finn. The stewards'

verdict received widespread criticism throughout the paddock, particularly as it seemed to contradict what had been allowed earlier in the race. For Bottas, 5th position represents another disappointing return in what has been an alarming slump of form since he was awarded a new contract by Mercedes.

Both Daniel Riccardo and Fernando Alonso befall to reliability issues, which for the latter has become an all too regular an occurrence this season whilst Carlos Sainz produced an excellent performance on his Renault debut to finish seventh.

Formula One returns next weekend in Mexico City where Hamilton will almost surely be crowned as World Champion, thus cementing his status as one of the sports all-time greats.

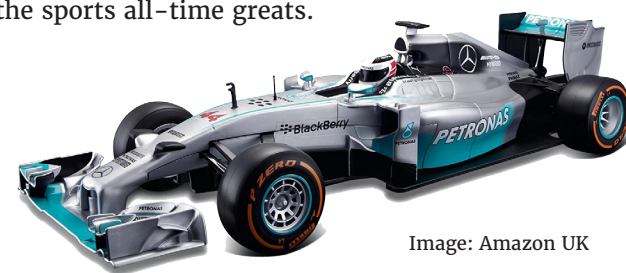


Image: Amazon UK

Rugby League World Cup: England's Turn to Win?

Nathan Olsen previews the upcoming World Cup and evaluates England's chances at finally winning the big one.

Nathan Olsen
Rugby League

Following on from an extremely competitive Super League season, in which the Challenge Cup, Grand Final and League Leaders' Shield were all won by different teams, the Rugby League World Cup promises to be an exciting event. The competition will certainly start with a bang as England, ranked 3rd in the world, face hosts and reigning champions Australia – who many see as the favourites to win the competition yet again. Rounding out England's group, Group A, are Lebanon and France. Unless there is a shock result in the group then England vs Australia is not only the first fixture but the most important for both sides; this is primarily because the group winner is likely to avoid the other heavyweight side in the competition, and the last tournament's runner-up, New Zealand.

The other home nations, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, also face challenges in their own respective groups. In Group B, Scotland will have to face a trio of formidable sides from the Southern Hemisphere, consisting of Samoa, Tonga and New Zealand. Group C sees Ireland and Wales facing off, alongside Papua New Guinea – a perennial underdog for whom Rugby League is the national sport. The final group, Group D, contains Fiji, Italy and the United States. It's a fair

conclusion, then, to suggest that the winner of the Rugby League World Cup 2017 will come from either Group A or Group B. These two groups do, after all, contain the top six national sides in the world.

It would be very easy to write off the result of this World Cup as a final between Australia and New Zealand – the last time another team was in the final was the 1995 World Cup! However, England possess depth in their team that has previously been lacking. England star, and current South Sydney Rabbitohs player, Sam Burgess has commented on a greater coherence within the squad. Added to this, England coach Wayne Bennett has had to make a series of difficult decisions on who is to start, showing just how competitive it is this year to get a place in the England squad. There is real hope for England to go far in this competition, having beaten New Zealand in the 2015 International Series and only missing out on the World Cup final in 2013 by a mere two points to the All Blacks. It would be ambitious to suggest that England might win the World Cup this year, but realistic enough to think that they'll make it to the final.

To see the England and Australia sides put on a Rugby League masterclass, tune in on 27th October. The final, which is sure to be a hard-fought match, takes place on 2nd December.



Sports and Entertainment Limited

Koeman Axed After Everton Drop into Relegation Zone

Ronald Koeman has been sacked after a 5-2 loss at home to Arsenal resulted in the Merseyside club dropping to 18th.



Image: SkySports.com

Julian Bovill
Football

Everton Football Club have parted company with Ronald Koeman after a disastrous start to the season, both domestically and in Europe. The Dutchman’s season is being cut short at fifty-nine days and trails only to Mike Walker’s tenure of thirty-one as the shortest time a manager has spent in one season at Goodison Park.

The final straw for Farhad Moshiri, Everton’s relatively new investor, and long-time board member Bill Kenwright, appeared to be the 5-2 humbling on Sunday at the hands of Arsenal. The North London side, it should be said, have not looked particularly convincing themselves nine games into the Premier League season. Moshiri and Kenwright had a dismayed look up in the Everton directors box on Sunday, watching over a side that has only won two of their nine league games this season.

Some will point towards a difficult start to their league campaign as the catalyst for this atrocious form, and with three of their four opening fixtures reading: Manchester City, champions in waiting (a), Chelsea, reigning champions (a) and Tottenham Hotspur (h), this view is not without credence. Despite this, it is simply made redundant by the fact that those fixtures quietened down, as Koeman and others knew they would, however they still only managed to take a paltry four points from a possible twelve against Bournemouth, Burnley, Brighton and Arsenal.

The quality of football has not even been a point of solace to the Gwladys Street Stand faithful. They have been forced to endure a team that has not only sat

deep, which was perhaps a positive, being a welcome contrast to the often gung-ho style of Koeman’s predecessor Roberto Martinez, but when they broke out of their deep mould, there has been no attacking impetus. They have looked so bereft of ideas going forward and so devoid of confidence defensively that I am reluctant to blame the players for this since Koeman simply gave them no layout as to how he wanted them to play.

These issues were particularly laid bare in the Brighton game, where they were fortunate to come away from the South Coast with one point. Koeman set the side up in an odd 4-4-2, with Gylfi Sigurdsson shoved out to the right to accommodate Wayne Rooney. Both were signed in the summer seemingly without any sort of tactical planning, as they spent the entirety of the 90 minutes sitting on top of each other, neither of them able to make any sort of influence due to the space on the pitch being entirely compressed due to both players wanting to occupy the ‘No. 10’ role.

Everton will likely pursue Sean Dyche from Burnley, who has seemingly done enough with the Lancashire club to earn a shot at what many would call a ‘top seven’ club. Irrespective of this, whomever they appoint will likely have to accept that the rest of the season is merely a write off, for they are not realistically going to go down, nor can they chase a top six spot, which the £142,000,000 spend in the summer suggested they were initially after. Kenwright, Moshiri and, more importantly, the Everton fans, however, will be hoping for something a whole lot more exciting and encouraging than the drab and depressing events of the past three months.



BUCS Fixtures 1st November

- Badminton Womens 1st vs York 1st (2pm, The Edge)
- Badminton Mens 1st vs York 1st (2pm, The Edge)
- Basketball Womens 1st vs Hull 1st (5.30pm, The Edge)
- Basketball Mens 2nd vs Hull 1st (7.30pm, The Edge)
- Fencing Womens 1st vs Liverpool 1st (2pm, Edge)
- Fencing Mens 1st vs Liverpool 1st (2pm, Edge)
- Football Mens 3rd vs Bradford 1st (1.45pm, Brownlee Centre)
- Football Womens 1st vs Beckett 2nd (2pm, Headingley Campus)
- Golf Leeds Uni Mixed 1st vs Leeds Beckett 1st
- Hockey Womens 2nd vs Liverpool 1st (2.30pm, Sports Park Weetwood)
- Hockey Womens 6th vs Beckett 5th (12pm, Headingley Campus)
- Hockey Mens 1st vs Loughborough 2nd (5.30pm, Sports Park Weetwood)
- Lacrosse Womens 2nd vs York 3rd (2pm, Sports Park Weetwood)
- Netball Womens 3rd vs York 1st (5.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre)
- Netball Womens 5th vs York 2nd (3.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre)
- Rugby Union Womens 1st vs Edge Hill 1st (2pm, Sports Park Weetwood)
- Rugby Union Mens 2nd vs Newcastle 3rd (2pm, Brownlee Centre)
- Squash Mens 2nd vs Sheffield 2nd (1pm, Gryphon Sports Centre)
- Tennis Womens 1st vs Beckett 2nd (4pm, Headingley Campus)
- Tennis Mens 2nd vs Newcastle 1st (12pm, David Lloyd Leeds)
- Ultimate Frisbee Mens 1st vs Shef Hallam 1st (1.30pm, Brownlee Centre)
- Volleyball Mens 1st vs Sunderland 1st (7.15pm, Gryphon Sports Centre)
- Waterpolo Womens 1st vs York 1st

Leeds University Sailing Club



Image: Nigel Vick

Capsizes, Concussions and Curry: The Leeds Halloween Howler 2017

Kane Emerson
Sailing

This weekend 20 teams from nine universities across England and Scotland travelled to Leeds to kick off the USC team racing season at the Leeds Halloween Howler 2017. Attending the top-quality weekend were teams from Birmingham, Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam, Warwick, Reading, York, Lancaster and Edinburgh, who made their debut in Leeds team racing, and two fresher teams from Leeds testing their new skills.

After the Friday night social at Warehouse, Day 1 racing got off to a good start despite the strong winds. As the event lived up to its name, the capsizing became more frequent and booms more damage inducing, including a possible concussion in the York team. A decision was then made to postpone the racing until the Sunday after 22 races and one redress when Storm Brian was making his full appearance.

Most teams had managed to get out for about half of their races, so the first set of results saw Warwick Red, Warwick Black and Edinburgh Blue leading the scores overnight.

After a much-needed nap later, the teams met again in their terrifying Halloween fancy dress outfits in Leeds' finest curry houses for the Saturday Social. After some different kinds of boat races and a boogie in Hifi, everyone woke again bright and early on Sunday morning for the second day of racing and core-strengthening exercise in the still-strong winds.

Continuing the round robin from Saturday, teams managed to get through all the remaining races in their flights. A new schedule was drawn up from the best-performing few teams to attempt to narrow it down to a set of finals, but the gusts once again picked up causing the first two boats to head out to capsize within minutes. The remaining races were therefore unfortunately cancelled, bringing an end to the weekend with a total of 55 races completed.

Results were calculated from the races that were completed before the storm took over, which saw Edinburgh Blue come out on top as the undisputed champions winning every single race. They were closely followed by Warwick Red in second and Warwick Black in third, who also won all of their races in their flights, being separated solely by points.

The success of the weekend was down to an army of helpers from Leeds Sailors and the volunteers of umpires and power boat drivers, all contributing to the smooth running of the event despite the challenging weather conditions. Alex Howe from the *University of Birmingham* 'felt the event was run excellently', and these opinions couldn't have been achieved without the commitment of Commodore Matt Lloyd who led the organisation of the Howler. A big thanks also go to Sheffield, Hallam and Lancaster who all loaned flights of fireflies, without which it would have been a swimming race.