



# THE GRYPHON

The official newspaper of Leeds University

## Estimated £20 Million in Salaries For 163 Staff

*The University of Leeds's 2018/19 Annual Report shows significant increase in income and funding with £38 million operating surplus.*

*It also shows increase in number of employees with salaries higher than £100,000, despite criticism from UCU members on strike in December.*

Ed Barnes  
Editor-In-Chief

With the release of the 2018-19 Annual Report, the University of Leeds has reported an operating surplus of £38 million pounds with the university's total income standing at over £792 million.

This represents an increase compared to the previous year, when the operating surplus for the University was just under £10 million and a total income of £715 million.

The University also reported an increase in income of 11%. The reasons for the increase were outlined in the report – increases of 15% and 31% in fee and international fee income. There was also a growth of 12% in research income from £175 million in 2017-18 to £196 million.

Expenditure has also significantly increased from just over £705 million in 2017-18 to £745 million in 2018-19. Some of this came from a £25 million increase of 6% in staff costs, before the inclusion of changes to the USS pensions scheme. The reasons given for the increase were wage inflation, to support growth in research as well as student education activity.

Consolidated staff costs totalled nearly £412 million excluding the changes to the USS pensions scheme that totalled just over £135 million. The consolidated figures for staff wages and salaries was near £325 million, increasing from £305.5 million in 2017-18. Despite this, there was little increase in the mean salary from £41,138 to £41,874.

However looking further into the statistics, there has been a significant increase in the number of employees with salaries that are higher than

£100,000, with an increase of 24. However, this growth appears to be less acute among those with salaries higher than £200,000, whose numbers have only increased from 4 to 5.

The biggest changes in the figures in this group are those whose salary ranges from £100,000 to £104,999 with a decrease of 21 and those between £105,000 to £109,000 whose numbers increased by 32.

An estimated £20 million was spent on the salaries of 163 people. This was an increase on the previous year by an estimated three million.

However the average salary amongst this group only slightly increased. Over a million was also spent on the salaries for five people.

The increase in salary for those at the top of the University comes after members of the union UCU went on strike in December over issues of pay.

A University spokesperson said: "More than 80% of employees earning more than £100,000 are professors and clinical academics – not senior managers. Leeds is one of the biggest universities in the UK, so we inevitably employ more staff of all levels of seniority across academic and managerial roles. As a world top 100 university, we also operate in a globally competitive market, so we need to attract and retain the very best people to provide students with an exceptional education. We are always mindful of the need to provide value for money and remain committed to being transparent about senior staff salaries."

Significant money was invested into the buildings on campus. £38 million went towards the construction of the Nexus building, opposite Central Village Halls of Residence and £53 million was spent redeveloping the

Generating Station complex with Leeds Teaching Hospitals.

The report also included expected expenditure over the next two years. This included £96 million to build the new Sir William Henry Bragg Building, £71 million each to expand Leeds University Business School and develop Leeds Engineering technology, and £32 million to refurbish the Faculty of Biological Sciences.

Another expected expenditure increase that wasn't included in the report however was an increase in the Vice-Chancellor's salary.

Sir Alan Langlands' salary of £281,000 did not increase for the third year in a row. However in September, Langlands announced that he intended to step down as Vice-Chancellor after seven years in the post and will continue to undertake his responsibilities and duties until a new Vice-Chancellor is appointed.

Sir Alan Langland's emoluments of £294,000 (salary and pension together) are considered to be extremely competitive within Higher Education institutions, particularly at a University the size of Leeds.

Last year it was reported that the average salary of Vice-Chancellors across the country was over £250,000 for the first time despite criticism. It was also reported that nearly half of all Vice Chancellor salaries were higher than £300,000 with six Vice-Chancellors' salaries were higher than £500,000.

With the University looking for a new Vice-Chancellor, it is likely that the salary for the next Vice-Chancellor will be higher than what the university is currently paying.

[www.thegryphon.co.uk](http://www.thegryphon.co.uk)

Twitter: @TheGryphonLeeds

Instagram: @thegryphon

Issue 6

31/01/20

### Interview with Keir Starmer

Leeds Student Television and The Gryphon sit down for an student media exclusive with the current front runner in the race to become Jeremy Corbyn's successor.

Page 6-7



### "I applied for counselling but they never replied"

Natasha Austin speaks to students at the University about their experiences with the mental health services and support offered by the University

Page 9

### Head in the Clouds

A new ground-breaking research project at the University of Leeds is attempting to make sense of something you won't think much of – clouds.

Page 20



### England Thrashes South Africa

Sport looks back on England's triumphant tour of South Africa – the four test series ended in a 3-1 win for Joe Root's men

Page 24





Editors of the Week  
**Ian White and Nina Whitley Jones**

It seemed like Ian had it in the bag with this one having transcribed 7000 words in total for our upcoming interview with MP Alex Sobel.

However in came Nina like a dark horse with her radical overhaul of In The Middle's design. It's going to be looking much more snazzy from now on.

Quote of the Week  
**"I thought Fyre Island was a film"**

Millie Warrilow thought that the Fyre Festival never happened and everyone in the Netflix Doc was just actors. Life is more crazy than it seems.

- Credits**
- Editor-In-Chief** ~ Ed Barnes
- Associate Editors** ~ Megan Ardis  
Ian White
- Social Media** ~ Caitlin Tilley
- Website** ~ Milly Martin
- Marketing** ~ Clare Redman
- Radio** ~ Freya Hillyer
- News** ~ Charly Loughlin, Amelia Cutting, Elliott Hodgkin, George Davis
- Society** ~ Tilly Judges, Jess Farmer
- Features** ~ Elena Sotelo, Michael Keating.
- Views** ~ Eloise Barry, Charlotte Abbott, Alfie Coulstock-Couceram, Michael Turnbull, Eleanor Noyce
- Science** ~ Michelle Heinrich, Anna Davison
- Business** ~Will Southall, Chloe Pryce
- Sport** ~ Millie Frain, Millie Warrilow, Owen Ellicott
- Treasurer** ~ Abby Drew
- Advertising** ~ Zainab Adedeji
- Secretary** ~ Emma Ferguson
- Equality and Diversity** ~ Santia Ahmed

# Editorial Letter:



Hey readers,  
Hope you're all good and congrats on having survived January exam season, especially if it was your first time. I always hated it when you'd leave the house super early in the morning before the sun came up and then you leave the library long after it has gone down. Glad I've graduated now and those day are (fingers crossed) far behind me.

The Christmas holidays have been lively to say the least from escalating tensions with Iran to Megxit. I spent most of it either reading or falling asleep by the fire. It was extremely stressful as you can tell. *The Gryphon*, or as it was formerly known *Leeds Student* didn't escape controversy either. In an article on Lisa Nandy's scandalous (it wasn't really) cartoon in Newcastle's *The Courier*, it was also revealed that former Labour Leadership candidate Jess Phillips was the author of a "Hot or Not" column in 2002. Offering her thoughts, Phillips (then-Trainor) celebrated the break-up of Steps, slated Red Bull, and praised Kylie Minogue's bottom. Top quality political analysis from the *Daily Mail* for sure on this one.

Now we're one week into semester 2 and we've got some fabulous new issues of *The Gryphon* and *In The Middle* - now with a new design. If you didn't get involved last semester, there's no stopping you from joining us this time around! New year, new society and all that jazz. You might think no one would want to read what you've written at this point but we all have to start from somewhere.

If you are an international student needing to develop your English writing skills, you think journalism could be cool or you need something to distract you from that essay, then *The Gryphon* would be a great place to do that. There's meetings for sections every week and content is posted online in all our Facebook groups! Also any illustrators, photographers, poets or cartoonists who want to get involved - just email me for more info!

Onto more juicy stuff and this year's house hunting season. Every year there's a race in Hyde Park and Headingley to snap up all the available houses, and letting agents don't help by making it seem that all the houses will be gone come Christmas. This is definitely not true as I signed a house for final year literally at the end of June.

You all hear the stories. Mould so bad that you have your own mushroom farm growing on your windowsill. Smashed windows that don't get fixed for months. A broken back door that isn't fixed for weeks. If there's one thing students love, it's housing horror stories and sadly too many of them are true.

My house in my final year was situated above a takeaway and as a result, we had a regular rota of rats. By the end of the year, I think we were onto Remy 4 or 5. We also had a continuous gust that would blow through the flat and when it was windy, the flat used to shake. This didn't exactly fill us with confidence about the structural integrity of the building.

We also had no idea who our landlord was - two different men would turn up at the property claiming to be the landlord. The agency was also unreachable at the weekends despite claiming to have a weekend telephone number. This was really helpful one time when water started coming through the ceiling of my housemate's room on a Saturday night.

They also forgot to do an inspection until after we had moved in. The first time they visited they realised that the lack of bannisters on the stairs was a massive health-and-safety risk.

The sad thing is letting agents know they can screw students around. Many students are first-time renters and therefore are unlikely to know their rights as tenants and fight back. Is this because they know students believe there's little they can do about it?

However it's not just doom and gloom. There's several things you can do. If something doesn't feel right, you can fight back and speaking to **the Union should be your first port of call before doing so**. I know it might not seem like they do much but they have a great **Advice team** to help with all this kind of stuff. You can also run your contract by them at the **Advice office**. They will be able to make sure there is nothing in there that shouldn't be there.

If something is not being done in the property and the problem is making the property unsafe - for instance a leaky pipe in the ceiling can lead to mould and other health issues - **go speak to an adviser at LUU**. If you realise your deposit is not protected or you're unsure it is, get advice as soon as possible. Shelter also have information on all the different deposit protection schemes.

If you feel the deposit for a property is too high too, you can negotiate it down if you haven't signed yet. At the end of the day, they want you to sign so the ball is your area of the court until then.

You can read up on the law. Know your rights and get in touch with charities like ACORN if you're not sure. Resources like Rate Your Landlord can also be helpful too.

We are also here. *The Gryphon* can publish anything it likes as long as the evidence you have is sound and the case you have is strong. So if you're having any issues with housing and want to apply some public pressure, do not hesitate to email me.

We have done reporting on these issues in the past. Our reporting on the issue way back in the 2007 was instrumental to the investigation of one notorious landlord.

To end on a more positive note, I'll finish off with the biggest tip I have. Take photos of your house as soon as you move in - before you've even moved any stuff in if you can. Any mark on the wall, anywhere that's not clean whether that's corners, cupboards or showers, anything that's chipped, missing, faulty or broken.

Also make sure there is a date for these photos. This is the proof you have if your landlord then tries to knock unnecessary things off your deposit. Also do the same when you leave as well. You can't claim the house was unclean when you moved in or you left it clean when you moved out unless you have proof. If possible, do an inventory too so you have evidence of what was and wasn't in the property when you moved in.

It might seem a pain but if you get your money back at the end of the year, it's worth the effort. Basically make sure you're well armed.

Ed Barnes  
Editor-in-Chief  
editor@thegryphon.co.uk

Contents:

4-7

8-11

12

13-17

18-19

20-21

22-24

- News
- Features
- Society
- Views
- Business
- Science
- Sport



# Exec Columns:



**Union Affairs Officer**  
**Lauren Huxley**

L.R.Huxley@leeds.ac.uk

Firstly, well done everyone for getting through your exams and assessments the last couple of weeks, hope you made the most of our free exam breakfasts! It's a busy time of year in LUU as we prepare for Lead LUU which is the election to choose your new student Exec team for 2020/21. This year it's extra exciting because we will be electing our first ever International Officer which was passed as policy through our forums last year. I've been meeting

with loads of brilliant students who are thinking of campaigning to hold one of the 7 Exec positions and I'm so excited for a new group of students to get this incredible opportunity. Nominations are open until 14th February so if you want to run, or know someone else you think would be fab, head to our website to find out more and nominate them! I'm more than happy to speak to anyone who isn't quite sure or wants to know more about what it's like to be on the LUU Exec, just

drop me an email. In other news, we have launched our Impact Report which we've been presenting to stakeholders at the University and across social media so check it out if you want to see what we've been working on for students over the last 12 months.



**Education Officer**  
**Abiha Khan**

A.Khani@leeds.ac.uk

Hey everyone, it's been a while. I hope you all had a lovely Christmas break and having some time away from University did you some good.

For those who had exams the last two weeks I hope they went well and you didn't spend all of it revising. It's easy to think that spending all your time in the library from 8 in the morning until late in the event is the best way to revise.

However it's also important to take plenty of time out for yourself to spend with friends and family.

Although I didn't have exams this year, it's been straight back into the thick of things for me. At the start of the month I attended the Student Education Panel where I was also part of the Student Led Panel. This was a great experience.

This week, I held a BAME Awarding Gaps workshop at the Liberty Building on Wednesday. The event used visual storytelling skills to make sure BAME students' voices are heard at the University.

It was a really great event and I can't wait for more to come!

Also with LeadLUU coming up, now is the time to put yourself forward for the position of Education Officer next year. It's been great to see so many people come forward. The deadline for nominations close on the 14th February so make sure to get those in. Don't worry, it is no way a commitment to run in the election!



**Community Officer**  
**Cat Fairbairn**

C.A.S.Fairbairn@leeds.ac.uk

Hi everyone! Welcome back after the break and I hope exam season wasn't too stressful. Already onto Semester 2 and away we go.

I've been busy preparing for the upcoming Working Class Awareness week from 10th to the 14th February. This is the first time that LUU has ever done an event like this. Working hard with the political engagement team, Changing Perspectives, and the Upreach

society, to organise this week, most events are now up online! Please do go check it out.

Two big events in particular will be a Give-And-Take on Wednesday 12th followed by a workshop with the Feminist Society on the 13th. Both of these events I'm really looking forward to so make sure to check them out.

The purpose of the week is both to educate non-working class students

about the issues that working class students face at University but it is also about creating spaces for working class people to come together and share their experiences.

It's also great to see Hyde Park Picture House move into Leeds University Union temporarily and the close links being forged between the local community and the Union.



**Activities Officer**  
**Lydia Evans**

L.Evans1@leeds.ac.uk

Welcome back! After a quiet few weeks over Christmas, it feels like everyone is back into the swing of things this week, with lots of committees getting in contact. We had the ReFreshers fair earlier this week, which was held both in the Riley Smith and in the Worsley building, and, as ever, it's Your Activities Exec have already met this term and we are looking forward to sifting through

the next round of Grant Applications soon.

Celebrate week planning has also got underway which is beyond exciting and I'm in the process of developing a series of workshops so that we can really understand how we can support different categories of our clubs and societies. For me, January has been about taking stock – we're 6 months

in now – and really distilling how I'm going to push my manifesto over the line in the second half of the year.

With LeadLUU just around the corner, I've had the chance to chat to potential future Activities officers, which has been a real pleasure; it's really inspiring to hear why people want to make change around here.



**Equality & Diversity Officer**  
**Chloé Elliott**

C.Elliott@leeds.ac.uk

Hello lovelies, I hope you're all doing well. It's great to see you all back on campus. I've spent a lot of time reflecting on last semester and I'm looking forward to getting stuck into this next semester. I have some exciting projects coming up that you'll hear all about soon too.

If you haven't joined a club or society

yet, now is a good time to meet new people and try something new. We also have a whole host of different events lined up for LGBTQ+ History Month. So, there's plenty of opportunities coming up to get together, learn, share and make new connections.

There are events all month long with the Chaplaincy and our first

event at LUU is LGBTQ+ & Healthcare: Best Practice – a panel exploring how healthcare professionals can better support LGBTQ+ patients on Wednesday 05 February 2020.

You can find more information about all the events taking place on the LUU website. I hope to see you there!



**Welfare Officer**  
**Amy Wells**

A.C.Wells@leeds.ac.uk

Happy refreshers! I really hope the exam season hasn't left you too exhausted (and I'll be talking to the Inclusion and Engagement Strategy Group soon about how inappropriate clumped assessments and deadlines can be for students, whether that's because of mental health or the fact so many of us need to work alongside studying to pay rent).

The start of Semester 2 is a good time to reflect on what made you happy last

semester and what didn't.

It's not too late to join a club or society if you found yourself with some free time and want to try something new or meet different people, and it's not too late to drop a commitment or two if you found yourself easily overwhelmed.

Also, remember that this is the season for landlords to tell you they have 0.3 houses left and 50 other people are lining up to sign for it as soon as you

leave the office – don't fall for it, come and speak to LUU Advice if you have any house-hunting worries (or any worries... about anything).

You deserve support and I promise there's no silly questions, we know students have to deal with a lot).

# Campus Watch



## 1 University of Liverpool A Cheesy Bookmark was left as a Surprise for a Fellow Student

A putrid cheese bookmark found in University of Liverpool library book

A confused staff member at the University of Liverpool found a “disconcertingly warm and liquid” slice of cheese in a returned library book last week. The incident has provided the library staff with a gouda laugh.

According to the university’s associate director, Alex Widdeson, the slice was discovered “somewhere between American history and geography”.

The university was forced to inform students that cheese is, in fact, not a suitable alternative for a bookmark.

Seeing the humorous side, the university shared a number of Tweets relating to the incident which has since been liked by over 215,900 Twitter users. The library jokingly said: “Me

talking to the pest control man – “No mate I’ve no idea why we have mice in the library” \*Picks up a book and actual cheese falls out of it\*”.

According to the university, this is not the first time strange items have been found in the library. The other most recent food related offence was the use of an empty sandwich container as a makeshift bookend.

**Charly Loughlin**  
News Editor

## 2 University of Southampton Hoax email sent to students informing them that exams have been cancelled

On the 19th January, a hacker claiming to be Sir Christopher Maxwell Snowden, ex-vice chancellor of the University of Southampton, sent an email to all students, stating that their exams had been cancelled.

The email stated that due to “budget constraints”, the university was closing and current students would, therefore, be enrolled at Solent University for the next semester. Students were informed that the former vice-chancellor had “just got off the phone with the prime minister” and due to economic constraints as a result of Brexit, Southampton and 5 other UK universities were to be shut.

The email went on to say, “As consolation I’ve decided to allow you all to forgo your January exams so get a massive sesh on!!”. The email is believed to have reached all 24,500 students currently enrolled at the university.

The university later stated that the email was, in fact, a hoax and that they are “treating the matter seriously”. They stated, “We want to reassure all of our students that this email is fake”.

**Charly Loughlin**  
News Editor

## 3 University of Oxford Oxford Professor Angers Trans Activists

Professor of Modern History at the University of Oxford, Selina Todd, has come under fire from members of the trans community regarding her views her views as a self-proclaimed “gender-critical” feminist.

Todd has been the subject of several online threats made against her by activists in the trans community and has subsequently told media outlets that she is now potentially “vulnerable” to physical attacks while at work.

During her lectures, the professor is reportedly being accompanied by two members of staff for her own security. Todd has rejected that her views are bigoted, stating that “democracy is under threat” around the world and that the backlash she has received undermines the democratic principle of all voices in society benefiting from freedom of speech.

Aaron Hughes, co-chair of Oxford SU LGBTQ+ Campaign condemned the professor saying Oxford University and affiliated institutions “have repeatedly failed to protect trans students, and in particular trans women and transfeminine people from violence, intimidation and derision”.

**Elliott Hodgkin**  
News Editor

## 4 University of Sunderland University Closes its History and Modern Language Faculties

The University of Sunderland has closed its history faculty after only receiving interest from 14 students who wanted to study the subject this year.

The University has also announced that its modern languages department will also close after nobody enrolled for any of its courses. The number of universities offering modern foreign languages has dropped by 40% in the past 15 years, though this decline has also been seen at A-Level too.

In addition, a combined history and politics degree will also no longer be an option after only 15 students signed up. Chairman of the university’s board of governors, John Mowbray, said “while recognising the value of the subjects the university is withdrawing from, the board of governors agreed that they do not fit with the curriculum principles of being career-focused and professions-facing.” It has been said that around 34 academic staff will reportedly be affected by the changes.

The University has said that “work is under way to develop courses ‘that provide clear routes into employment.’

**Eleanor Smith**

## 5 University of Ghent Students robbed while taking exam

The belongings of approximately eight students were stolen as bio-engineering students took an exam at the University of Ghent.

According to the university, the property stolen included jackets, backpacks and laptops. The room where the belongings were left during the exams is not covered by CCTV. Therefore, the university’s administration team has requested that all students report anyone trying to sell what is perhaps stolen equipment.

The university administration team have stated that students opted to not bring their belongings into the exam room themselves and were not told to do so. Students chose to leave their belongings outside to avoid being accused of cheating.

Students affected have been advised by the university to submit formal police complaints and contact their insurance companies. The university has also informed their insurance company of the situation. Other students at the university have been advised to not leave valuables in unsupervised locations in a hope to avoid this situation from occurring again in the future.

**Charly Loughlin**  
News Editor



# Number of International Students in the UK Rises



Image Credit: University of Leeds

**Yasmine Moro Virion**

According to a report by The Higher Education Statistics Agency, (HESA) the number of international students enrolling into universities is back on the rise after a Brexit dip.

HESA, a body made up of experts in UK higher education published its findings in which they charted the number and origin of international students enrolled in British Higher Education (HE). In the 2018/19 period, the number of students coming from abroad, including the EU, was over 458,000.

Germany, Italy and France were the European countries which provided the most students, approximately 13-14,000 from each.

The presence of Chinese students dwarfs the numbers coming in from Europe. The HESA report stated that the flow of students from China to the UK increased by 34% in the last five years.

Unsurprisingly, they are the biggest nationality of

foreign students.

Besides China, most overseas students are from India, United States, Hong Kong and Malaysia. 43% of non-EU students are studying a full-time postgraduate course, in comparison to the 10% who are completing their full-time undergraduate studies.

There is no doubt that the influx of Chinese students is a significant boost to higher education institutions' income with them contributing 10%. However, there are growing worries over potential influence on the freedom of expression within campus, after a report issued last year by MPs.

The rise in international students comes after a dip between 2015 and 2017 due to the outcome of the Brexit referendum in June 2016.

International students are worried about Brexit and how this will affect their settlement status. For example, in September the government launched a plan of a work visa for those graduating from summer 2021 onwards.

This visa would grant some students the opportunity to freely work in the UK for a period of up to two years. However, it has been met with wide discontent from those completing their studies before 2021.

In fact, Jessica Martins, a Brazilian citizen studying her Master's at University of Leeds, said to The Guardian that "the extension should also be available for people who are currently here."

Most recently, the Government declared that a new fast-track visa will be available from next month "to send a message that the UK is open to the most talented minds in the world", a message reiterated by Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

This visa will be used to attract the top scientists and researchers to come here, as EU researchers are a big part of the British scientific community.

However, it is also argued by members of this sector that the system is not inclusive, as it would focus on the 'most talented' without taking into account the individuals who are starting their career and may not

# 'Low Carbon' Property Badge Proposed to Lower Student CO<sub>2</sub> Footprint

**Ella Jones**

Zero Carbon Headingley, a scheme launched by Leeds Property Association, aims to introduce a 'Low Carbon' badge to properties with high energy efficiency ratings.

The label will enable students searching for a house to easily identify properties with a lower carbon footprint. The environmental campaign group aim to encourage practical actions to reduce individual carbon footprints.

The scheme aims to raise awareness of the amount of energy students consume whilst at university.

With the introduction of the scheme, it is hoped that students will start to consider energy efficiency as part of their house-hunting process.

Matthew Hill, a campaigner from Zero Carbon Headingley stated that "highlighting the low energy properties will increase the demand for them, acting as an incentive for property agents and landlords to bring more of their houses up to a higher standard."

Unipol, the charitable property agent that houses 3000 students in Leeds is taking on the 'Low Carbon' badge as part of its system - alongside their National Code and Accreditation Scheme.

The Unipol website currently displays Energy

Performance Certificates on property adverts, however not all letting agents include this within online adverts.

Some letting agents such as Sugarhouse Properties already promotes using green energy in their houses. Their properties currently run on 100% renewable electricity (primarily from wind farms) and at least 12% of gas from a green gas method called anaerobic digestion.

However, only a select number of their properties feature an energy efficiency rating above a 'C' ('A' being the most energy efficient and F being the least), it is yet to be decided if 'green energy' properties will receive a similar label on advertisements.

A 2016 DEFRA study which researched 'innovative approaches for achieving energy-efficient behaviours in universities' suggested that 2nd year students paying bills separately to rent may have a higher financial incentive than those in halls of residence to improve their energy-related behaviours, as they may save money.

The inclusive bills in halls of residence results in students lacking education on energy efficiency and eco-friendly behaviours when they move out to university.

The study proposed the use of 'eco-reps' in student

accommodation, to educate students and potentially lead to better environmental behaviour in 2nd year house renting.

However, Matthew Hill points out that "many landlords include gas and electricity bills in the rent, and we want to stop students thinking this means its OK to turn the heating up and leave the windows open."

All inclusive bills has become a requirement for some students when searching for a house to rent, as it saves the financial concern of paying bills on top of rent every month. This can result in students being unaware of their energy usage, and carbon emissions generated whilst renting.

In addition to the 'Low Carbon' badge scheme, Zero Carbon Headingley has proposed an accompanying guide and animated film to be produced for students, encouraging them to cut their carbon footprint. The guide, which will be made by students, aims to educate students on their potential energy waste - advocating actions such as turning off appliances, turning off light switches, turning down heaters and shutting the windows.

Once completed, Zero Carbon Headingley hopes to use the guide and video on social media to amplify their message to Leeds students.



# An Interview with Sir Keir Starmer



Image Credit: Amy Rapeer

**Sir Keir Starmer is currently the front-runner in the race to replace Jeremy Corbyn as leader of the Labour Party. An alumnus at the University of Leeds for a Bachelor of Law, *LSTV* and *The Gryphon* sat down with him to discuss his time here, why he's running for Labour leader and challenged him on what he'll do for students, dealing with the issue of institutional anti-semitism within the party and Labour's Brexit policy.**

**Starmer is the only man still running with four female candidates running against him at the time of this interview – Emily Thornberry, Lisa Nandy, Rebecca Long-Bailey and Jess Phillips. Phillips, also an alumnus at the University of Leeds, dropped out of the race last week.**

Ed Barnes  
Editor-In-Chief

**I'd like to welcome Sir Keir Starmer who's joining us for an interview today as a candidate in the current race for Labour leader. Thank you for sitting down with us**

Keir: Nice to see you and it's really great to be back at Leeds University. I had three really happy years here so I come back whenever I can.

**Of course. Some people might not know this but you're an alumnus and you studied a Bachelor of Law here. So I guess I'm to start off with an easy question which is what would you say is the most memorable thing you remember from your time in Leeds?**

Keir: Oh god there are so many memorable things from my time here. It was an incredible experience for me because I came from a very small town in Surrey to the city of Leeds. It was fantastic. In the second year of studying Law, I discovered international human rights law which then became the driving force in my career as a lawyer taking me across the world doing human rights cases.

**Was there a particular pub or night out that you remember fondly?**

Keir: We went to the Union most of the time. Back then, everyone used to drink snakebite. I don't know if that's the case now?

**No, I don't think so**

Keir: I don't know why that went on but then also very many other pubs in Leeds and they had the Thursday night disco. Is that still on? Is that gone?

**We now have Fruity on Fridays and there's a pub quiz in Old Bar on Thursdays though there is a new night on Thursdays now.**

**What would you say has been the biggest changes you've seen in Leeds since you graduated in 1985?**

Keir: I think the city has really developed. First, there's the building down on the waterways that's been going on for many many years but I'd say recently it's that sort of push on law and financial institutions and now of course, Channel 4. Leeds has become a real magnet for those professions in particular and I think that's fantastic.

**So what made you decide to run for office in 2015 and move from a career in law to one in politics?**

Keir: I actually joined the Labour Party when I was sixteen and became involved in many campaigns over the years. I then channelled my energies into human rights and eventually ended up running the Crown Prosecution Service, a public service. There I became acutely aware of the effect of cuts in the public sector and by 2015, I was become convinced that the cuts to our public services were so deep that we were at risk of tearing up everything that had been in place, essentially since the end of the Second World War. I became determined to do something about it and that's why I first stood for election five years ago. It seems like someone has shoved fifty years of change into those five years but it was only five years ago that I was first standing to become an MP.

**Given you have only been in office for five years, what makes you think that you have the experience to become Labour Leader? And then if you won the next election, potentially become Prime Minister?**

Keir: I think to answer that we need to know what the challenge is. The challenge is to rebuild our party not just after one electoral loss in December last year but actually the last four in a row. We need to unite our party – there's far too much division and far too much factionalism. We need to be a very effective opposition to Boris Johnson who I think is going to take this country in the wrong direction and forge a path so that we can win the next election. There's a huge amount that needs to be done. I think that I've got the ability to bring people together and the experience of running a large organisation and the

utter determination to take the Labour Party to a place it can win the next election. I'd also like to say that I think the other candidates are really good candidates and I think the fact that they've put themselves forward is really important. Every one of us is making a genuine case for our party, for our movement and for our country.

**You are currently the Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union. This makes you responsible for the party's policy in the last manifesto to legislate a final referendum on the Brexit deal. This policy is widely seen as one of the key reasons Labour lost at the last election, particularly in areas of the country that voted Leave. Would you accept responsibility for the Labour Party taking that position?**

Keir: I think we all have to take responsibility for what was a devastating loss. The actual policy position was decided by our conference. It wasn't my sole decision. We're a members-led organisation and the members had a say at our conference when we hammered out our final policy position but I'd just say a number of things about that. Firstly, before we got to any question of a further referendum, we had tried for years literally to win arguments on votes on a deal that would work with the EU but we lost those arguments and votes because we didn't have a majority in Parliament.

The second thing is that I went across forty-four constituencies in the election and actually there were a number of issues coming up that contributed to our loss. There was the question of the leadership of the labour party, rightly or wrong. There was Brexit and I actually think we didn't knock down the phrase "Get Brexit Done" hard enough. There were many people too who felt that the manifesto was overloaded, even if they felt there were good policies in it. I'm afraid too that anti-semitism played a part in certain parts of the country. I think it's very important that we identify and address all the reasons that we lost



because otherwise we won't get past them. We also need to remind ourselves that we lost four in a row.

**Students, as a group, tend to vote heavily either towards Labour or left-leaning parties. So how do you plan to win their support?**

Keir: I think the most important thing with young people is actually to start listening to them a bit more. I would try to get people involved in politics earlier and I think one way of doing that is to give votes to sixteen and seventeen year-olds. I know that doesn't apply to students here but I think actually listening to what students or young people have to say is really important. Frankly, if you're old enough to pay tax at sixteen and seventeen, then you're old enough to have a say on what the Government does with your tax.

**In the 2017 and 2019 Labour manifestos, there were pledges to abolish tuition fees for students. If you became Party Leader, would you argue for this to be put into the next manifesto?**

Keir: I would. I think it was a very important manifesto commitment to students and I also think we should ensure we do the same for other areas [of education] but not at the expense of taking money out of our earlier years. The difference you can make in a child's life is much more determined by the 0-5 in the primary school years than it ever is in the university years. So I'd keep the commitment but it would have to be matched by a commitment to younger years.

**And would that include abolishing any debt for students who had previously paid tuition fees?**

Keir: Well we were looking at that. We would have to look at that again in 2024. My nephew has got, like many students have, huge debt as a result of studying. I think that the idea that studying is only for the benefit of students and not society is completely wrong in my view.

**According to the National Union of Students, average University accommodation rents accounted for 73% of the maximum student loan last year compared to 58% in 2011-12. How do you plan to support students who are faced with increasingly unaffordable housing?**

Keir: Well that's a far too high a proportion and we need to bring that down. What I would do is to work with students' unions on ideas and ways of reducing that but that is far too high a percentage

**The University has recently committed to closing the gaps between all BAME students and White students from 12.7% in 2017/18 to 5.5% in 2024/25 when it comes to student success. We revealed earlier in the**

**year Black students are awarded First class degrees four times less than White students in particular.**

**There are higher non-continuation rates amongst BAME students as well as Mature, LGBT+, Disabled and non-A-level students. Do you think Higher Education institutions should do more to tackle inequalities amongst students?**

Keir: Yes, totally supportive of that and in the 21st century, the fact that where you're born, your race, your class and your gender still matter much more than they should in terms of your opportunities is plainly wrong so we need do more about it. I'm actually on the Advisory board here at Leeds University for the Law faculty so therefore I can be directly involved in it in that capacity.

**One serious issue that many students face during their time at University are mental health issues relating to course workloads. At Leeds, there are support services provided by the University Union and the University. Will you pledge to do more to support Universities in tackling the student mental health crisis?**

Keir: I think not just Universities, across the piece, much more needs to be done on mental health provision. There's not enough money, it's not joined up enough, and it need to be dramatically changed. I'd like to see mental health and physical health put much more on a par and joined, whether it's inside Universities or outside the Universities. The way we deal with mental health is a moral disgrace and we need to do much more about it

**Do you think there's any policies in particular that would be effective at tackling the student mental health crisis in particular?**

Keir: Well I think the support that goes in is hugely important and we have to look at what the causal factors are in the first place. I'm very glad that Leeds has the support that it has but it's been very slow in the coming at most Universities.

**Students who seek help are sometimes referred to local and NHS services. However many services in Leeds are under pressure. Leeds NHS IAPT have a 5-8 month wait for Step 3 CBT/Counselling. Market Place, a counselling service for young people has a three month wait for individual counselling. Four services in Leeds, Leeds Women's Counselling and Therapy Service, Leeds Mind, Journey - a Personality Disorder service programme, and Support after Rape and Sexual Violence are all currently closed for new referrals with some having wait times for over a year.**

**How do you plan to support local mental health services, and in particular specialist ones?**

Keir: They clearly need more money, more provision and more resources. Having to wait a year, is that what you said, for a referral beggars belief frankly. That is far far too long. It's just another example of how cuts to public services have decimated the support that's necessary to so many people.

**In March last year, a Jewish Labour student wrote an article detailing why they were leaving the party. In it she said:**

**"It feels like the Jewish community has pleaded for the Party to change but instead it keeps being rebuffed and humiliated. All of this points to a severe institutional problem. Labour should be, and once was, the natural home for Jewish people. In my opinion, it is no longer." How do you plan to make sure anti-semitism doesn't have a place in the Labour party?**

Keir: If you're anti-semitic, you shouldn't be a member of the Labour Party. If I was leader, I would lead on this from the top, I wouldn't put it somewhere else. I would lead on it from the top. We need rule changes and I've argued for various rule changes. We need to embrace and understand what the Equalities and Human Rights Commission say when they finally report and rebuild our trust with the Jewish community. This is not complicated. If you're anti-semitic, you shouldn't be in the Labour Party and that is the absolute position I would take as leader of the party. I don't want any of our activists or members to knock on a door again and be met with an answer that people aren't voting Labour because of anti-semitism and I want everyone who has left the Labour party because of antisemitism to feel comfortable coming back to our party.

**Why then did you decide to remain in the Shadow cabinet despite these concerns over Jeremy Corbyn's leadership?**

Keir: To argue about them and make my case. One thing you get if you're in the Shadow Cabinet is the opportunity to argue for change. That's why I did in the Shadow Cabinet, to argue for changes to the rules, to our approach to the commission, to have an open approach. But I didn't just do that in the Shadow Cabinet. I did it on the radio, on the television, on the Marr show, on Radio 4, making that argument and trying to change our Party for the better.

**Thank you for joining us today and best of luck with rest of the election.**







Image: Saeed Kan (AFP)

# Wildfires Are Catching Up With Scotty

**As a country burns, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison has faced fierce criticism from a public who see no leader in him. Dom Friel takes a close look at his actions and the reactions of those affected.**

**Dom Friel**

Australia's bushfires began early this year in November, two months before midsummer. World media has spread the images of devastation, as at least 18 million hectares of land and 6,000 buildings have turned to ash.

So far, the death toll is 33, and still rising. The smoke has intoxicated major eastern cities and spread further, across the Pacific, to New Zealand and as far as Argentina. The air pollutants have and will damage Australians' health, and the destruction of forests set in action a damaging climate feedback-loop. The number of animals killed is estimated to be over half a billion, meaning biodiversity may quickly become a thing of the past in the country. The reality in Australia has been worse than both science and fiction predicted, yet as large areas of the nation burned, Morrison was missing in action.

In December, the scandal surrounding Morrison reached fever pitch over his decision to holiday in Hawaii during the wildfires. The cover up by his administration, who first denied that Morrison was in Hawaii, served only as an insult to the Australian people. It took the deaths of two volunteer firefighters, Geoffrey Keaton and Andrew O'Dwyer, for the PM to return home. He seemed to expect to receive praise for his return rather than vilification for his absence, remarking, "I don't hold a hose... I don't sit in a control room."

Maybe there's some merit to that sentiment: what good would Morrison holding a hose do? But this argument ignores his position, his power and his record. Morrison has long been seen to be an ally of a powerful domestic coal lobby. In 2017 he brought

a lump of coal to Parliament, preaching: "Do not be afraid... Don't be scared of it," in an attempt to trivialise the environmental impacts of fossil fuel use. It cannot be ignored that coal has long propped up Australia's economy, and whilst the public support greater environmental protection, they paradoxically oppose disinvestment in extractive industry.

The nuance of the internal politics is complicated, but many see the agenda of Morrison's Liberal Party as clear. In 2013, Morrison was part of the administration who abolished an independent Climate Commission tasked with punctuating public debate with scientific facts. The decision seemed to be an attempt to silence debate, but chief commissioner Professor Flannery refused to be gagged, adding: "As global action on climate change deepens, propaganda aimed at misinforming the public about climate change, and so blunting any action, increases".

Morrison's return to Australia was far from ideal. Appearing at a number of devastated villages, locals felt he was disingenuous, flippant, and clearly could not grasp the enormity of the moment. In one village he visited, the Prime Minister was unaware that the fires there had taken the lives of locals. Rural communities have felt that his appearances in their towns are little more than photo ops and chances to be seen to be helping. It has even been hard for him to secure handshakes from locals, embarrassingly seen grabbing the withdrawn arms of unimpressed citizens. Between Christmas and New Year, he made just one public appearance and largely kept his silence, but still managed to find the time to rub shoulders with Australia's test cricketers.

It took weeks of pressure from the opposition to announce plans to compensate volunteer firefighters,

and there has been a general paucity of federal support given to state fire forces – forces which have had budgets cut by their government. A video shared by Morrison looked to praise an initiative to involve the nation's army in tackling blazes, but it was again received with contempt by the country. An up-beat soundtrack appeared distasteful, and a badly placed donation link in the post which gave funds to his own Liberal Party instead of towards the relief efforts was met with widespread outrage.

The wider public response to their Prime Minister's failure of leadership has been ridicule. As tourism minister in 2006, Morrison played a part in an advertising campaign bearing the tagline "Where the bloody hell are ya?" and that tagline has been in the minds of people all southern summer. He had previously embraced his nickname 'ScoMo' in public but his new alias 'Scotty from Marketing' – pushed by satirical news site The Betoota Advocate – had no intentions of flattery.

It's clear that Scotty from Marketing has become a national laughingstock, perhaps culminating in The Chats improvised song 'I Hope Scott's House Burns Down' which has received over a million views across media platforms.

Morrison has not enjoyed the criticism of him. "There has been a lot of blame being thrown around," he said. "Blame: it doesn't help anybody at this time, and over analysis of these things is not a productive exercise."

These comments seem particularly misjudged. People who lose their livelihoods will look to those whose job it is to lead them. When they see a leader who flees the scene of an ongoing disaster, they are unlikely to forgive.



Image Credit: Ed Barnes



# Is the University Doing Enough to Tackle Student Mental Health?

**Natasha Austen asks students about their experiences with the University's support network and counselling.**

**Natasha Austen**

With a growing awareness of mental health, we would like to assume that universities are adapting to this issue and ensuring that their students have the support they need. I reached out to students at the University of Leeds, asking about their experiences with mental health support from the Uni.

While this is not an exhaustive survey, it provides a snapshot of some students' experiences. The response was overwhelming. Clearly, comprehensive and compassionate care is far from the norm for students (who responded) who are struggling with their mental health at university.

Many students need support when they first come to University. This is completely understandable; the combination of a new city, no familiar face and probably the first time living away from home, is likely to cause at least some anxiety – it can take a while to settle in. Equally, many students come to University with pre-existing mental health issues requiring ongoing support. From the feedback that I've received, it appears that neither group is being catered for.

On the plus side, some students reported that their personal tutors and their parent schools were amazingly understanding and supportive, helping them apply for deadline extensions and simply being a non-judgemental voice for people going through a really difficult time. However, others said that they have minimal contact with personal tutors, and their schools' lack of understanding and simple compassion in terms of deadline extensions, mitigating circumstances and recording lectures was absolutely shocking to me.

Many students found that instead of getting the help that they needed from their schools and the wellbeing team, they were simply flooded with emails about lack of attendance. One person commented that, following an email from their Parent School about lack of attendance, "no one bothered to respond" to their email explaining their mental health issues and requesting support. Their plea was ignored, and they later only received further

emails about their attendance. This total disregard for individual circumstances of course only increases the anxiety of students already suffering.

Many people seemed to have similar experiences with the lack of help they received. One consistency was the lack of support given to students on years abroad, who felt that they had absolutely no one to turn to if they needed it, nor did anyone check in to make sure they were doing ok while hundreds of miles away from home.

One student stated: "It literally felt like I could've died out there and they wouldn't have known". Others commented that they "felt that the uni could not care less" about them, as they had no one checking how they were doing, at times they really needed support.

Back in Leeds, opinions about the drop-in wellbeing sessions in the union and additional counselling were mixed, with some saying the people there were "incredible" and gave "good advice", and others saying they definitely needed more support which was not followed through. People feel forgotten, one person adding that though they expressed their suicidal thoughts to the uni, they are yet to receive counselling, not knowing if they were "even added to a waiting list or just forgotten about."

Of course, it is great that the university is willing to provide counselling sessions for students. However, waiting lists appear very long and several students reported that applications are often ignored: "I applied for counselling [but] they never replied". The sessions themselves are also apparently lacking, students either finding them useless, even "uncomfortable", others saying they needed more sessions than they were granted. One student stated that their counselling experience was "awful" and put them off "counselling from other organisations" because they feared they would be the same.

I was appalled to find that multiple students had experienced being told that they "weren't depressed enough", as though waiting for students' mental health to decline further is in any way beneficial. One student confided that they were told they wouldn't be able to get counselling as they weren't "suicidal, self-harming or

drinking alcohol or doing drugs"; surely the focus should be on preventing students' mental health from declining, rather than only addressing the issues when it is too late.

This is also extremely invalidating for people who probably had to sum up a lot of courage to seek help in the first place.

Some students told me that they were in this situation even after expressing genuine fear that they may be a danger to themselves.

Given the enormous pressure and huge waiting lists currently being experienced by the NHS, which show no signs of improvement any time soon, surely it is down to a responsible university to step in and bridge the gap in mental health services?

Amy Wells, LUU's Welfare Officer, said in a statement:

*"LUU is committed to improving the provision of wellbeing support, on and off campus. We're about to launch a survey that will evaluate experiences with mental health services (including the Counselling service – I'm hoping to use the results to push for things like culturally competent counselling) so please do leave feedback there that we can show to the University. I'm also currently working with the University to overhaul personal tutoring as personally, I think the system is broken – it'll be more of an 'academic advisor' role while the Student Support Officer role is developed so every student has a named support officer who is much better trained on mental health and wellbeing."*

A University spokesperson said:

*"The University takes the mental health and wellbeing of students very seriously. Like every university, we know there is always more to do to improve the wellbeing of our students and we will continue to work in partnership – with other experts and service providers in the city, including the student medical practice, relevant charities and Leeds City Council – to give students the range of support they need."*

Clearly it is possible to provide the support many students desperately need as I received feedback from some students who had very positive experiences with their schools and personal tutors.

But, it's obvious that more needs to be done to make sure that this becomes universal rather than exceptional.



Image: Haydn Pat



# Tent City Project Rejected by Council

A project which aims to provide homeless people with resources and support in order to improve their situation was stopped by Leeds City Council last year. Alex Rimmer takes a look...

Alex Rimmer

David Hedley, who runs the 'Homeless Leeds Support' charity, has spoken out on Twitter and other social media platforms about his outrage that one of his projects has been blocked by Leeds City Council. Hedley ran a humanitarian aid camp in 2019 which was based in a disused car park, with the aim being to aid homeless people in Leeds find their way into temporary and permanent accommodation, whilst also providing immediate access to essential aid.

However, Leeds City Council has blocked this aid via an injunction which they put into action at the start of January. Despite the statistical success of the 'tent camp', the council has provided several reasons for their refusal for a repeated service and their steps towards legal action. The council claimed that by providing a location for services to rough sleepers, the disused car park then became a "serious public nuisance". The council reported that the food, warm clothing and shelter was accompanied by used drug paraphernalia and rubbish left on the site.

They also reported that the safety of those the charity aims to care for during this project is far from guaranteed, as previously violence erupted amongst both the residents of the camp itself and members of the public who attacked the site. The council also claimed that the charity did not follow correct health and safety procedures during food preparation and, due to the needles found at the site, they concluded that there was a serious risk of both infection and contamination.

However despite the drawbacks of 2019's tent city, Hedley believes that it was an overall success due to the fact that some were able to leave their lives on the streets and live in a form of accommodation. The charity's founder had also taken steps to ensure that the problems the council reported would not happen again.

Hedley has planned to employ six security guards who would work on a voluntary basis over the twelve days of the project's duration. He'd also planned for them to be equipped with radios and protect "the camp from drugs, alcohol and drug dealers". It seems that the council have not taken confidence from Hedley's preventative methods, and believe that there is still an overwhelming risk of anti-social behaviour and violence at the chosen site.

After losing the injunction set against the humanitarian aid camp, an online petition was set up to try and gain the public's support.

The brief on the website describes the injunction as a step which has prevented the homeless people from Leeds receiving the support that they desperately need. The site lists explicitly the forms of care that they claim rough sleepers have been denied such as medical provision, hot meals and guidance to find accommodation.

The description also claims the location which he planned to utilise for his project is now going to be sold by the council to build new properties. As such, there has been the suggestion that the council's motivation for denying this project was financially driven, and that the wellbeing of rough sleepers in the city is not the priority of the council.

Hedley describes the alleged financial factor in this injunction as an "absolute insult to the people who are on the streets needing a place to call home." It should be noted, though, that the site in question has been up for sale since March 2019.

Hedley hopes that by taking to social media to spread the message of the injunction and encourage others to sign his petition, the council will take further steps to give rough sleepers the aid they require through projects like his tent city.

Hedley also uses his Twitter platform to show both

the success of his projects and the need for aid to the homeless of Leeds, as he often posts images of places of refuge being overwhelmed. This demonstrates to those following his cause that there is a requirement for further action in Leeds. Images such as this may place pressure on Leeds City Council to replace tent city with other means of aid which can be conducted in a safe and controlled environment.

These events have led various spokespeople from the council to remind the public of their Street Support Team initiative. They claim that support is continuously available for rough sleepers, therefore potentially dangerous aid projects are not required.

They also said that individuals working outside of the council can act as a detrimental factor in the support of rough sleepers as they may "undermine progress" and "put peoples' ongoing rehabilitation at risk". This statement goes a long way in explaining the intense clash between Leeds City Council and homeless charity leader David Hedley, as Hedley has clearly stepped outside of the councils attempt to focus resources in a dynamic fashion.

When contacted for further comment, Debra Coupar, Leeds City Council's Executive Board Member for Communities, stated:

*"We welcome the undertaking given by Mr Hedley that he will not seek to organise an illegal encampment similar to that of what we saw last year. Mr Hedley has indicated previously that he feels he cannot work with partners across the city which provide meaningful support to anyone who may be rough sleeping in Leeds. We would more than welcome the chance to listen to his ongoing concerns, and outline the work being undertaken on homelessness and rough sleeping, whilst at the same time, exploring any opportunities where he might be able to support with this."*



# AMBER CARS

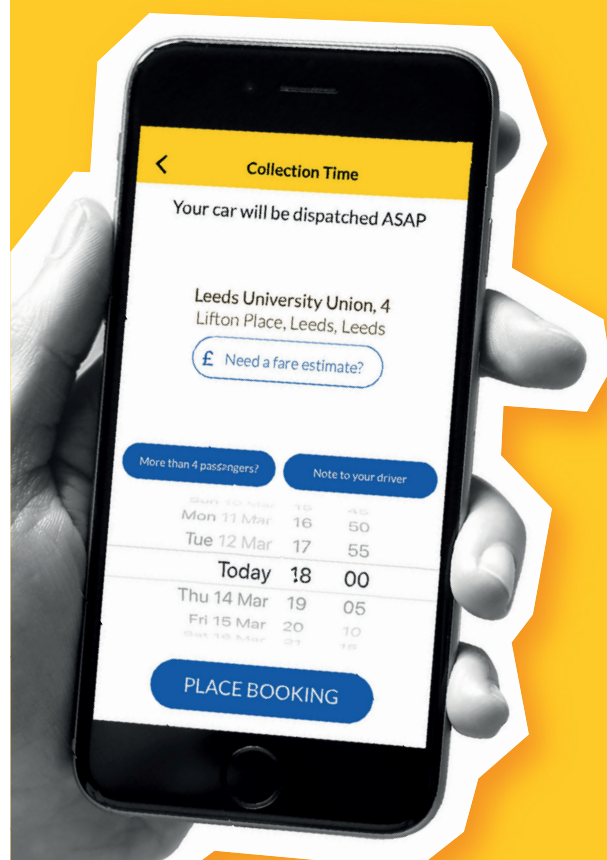
Pay by  
cash or  
card

Download our  
**3 tap app**

**1 choose**  
your pick up  
location

**2 book**  
for now  
or later

**3 done**  
we're on  
our way!



OR CALL AMBER CARS ON  
**0113 2311 366**

In partnership with:



a veezu company



# Shake Those Second Semester Blues – Join A Society!

Society Editors Tilly Judges and Jess Farmer discuss how to make the most of second semester, why to join a society and which societies to try.

Tilly Judges and Jess Farmer

The thought of joining a new society may have been a daunting and worrying prospect as you got used to a new city, new friends or moving back to Leeds after a long summer away.

A popular misconception is that now the academic year is underway, societies aren't open to new members. This couldn't be more untrue, as many societies have various refresher and Give-It-A-Go events to attract new members at the start of the new term.

First semester can be incredibly busy, especially finding your feet as a first year, and a lot of socialising at university can revolve around alcohol and clubbing. Societies allow you the opportunity to meet people in a sober environment and friends who share similar interests to you. You can combine friendships and fun nights out through socials and events.

After first semester, you may feel like the time to make new friends has ended. Feeling like this is normal, as university can be isolating. Societies can be a great way to combat this, through joining a society you can meet new groups of people who you know you will have things in common with. This can take some of the pressure off making friends and organising to meet people, as socials and events will be

organised by a society's committee.

Making friends isn't limited to fresher's week, your first semester or even your first year at university. Most societies are open all year round to new members but the start of a new term can be a less intimidating time to join as there'll be other new members looking to meet people.

Societies are not only a great place to meet new people and have fun, they can help you develop various skills you can use outside university. If you're in second year looking for a placement or you're thinking about skills for your CV after graduation, then joining a society is a great idea. Societies are a great place to make new friends and relax after lectures, but they can also help you to think about future careers or skills that you might want to develop further.

Joining a society is a great way help you to understand what genuinely interests you outside of the lecture theatre. There are a wide range of societies at the university that can help you to develop skills for future work or pleasure, giving you opportunities that you may not have access to otherwise.

It can be intimidating joining a society in second semester as people may already know each other. However, society committees are always looking to expand their memberships and are grateful for your interest in their society.

Societies are always welcoming and happy to get to know new people with new ideas.

If you're still feeling nervous about joining, take a friend with you or look the society up on the LUU website and Facebook.

You can always send societies any questions you have via email or Facebook messenger or join their Facebook group to keep updated on the society and its events.

Hopefully this article will have convinced you to take the plunge and join a society this semester. It is never too late to make new friends and develop new skills. Joining a society is a way to do this that won't be available to you after university. Make the most of your time at university and join one of the over 350 societies available to you.

Head to [luu.org.uk/clubs-and-societies/](http://luu.org.uk/clubs-and-societies/) to explore the wide range of societies available if your interested in sports, media or volunteering there's something for you.



## Quidditch Society



University is the time to do something that you've never done before and may never do again.

If you're looking for a sport that will shake away those winter cobwebs The Leeds Griffins Quidditch team is the society to join.

If you're a Harry Potter fanatic or just like trying new things, join one of the oldest Quidditch teams in the country by heading to Woodhouse Moor on **Saturday 1st February at 1pm**

## Leeds Uni Boob Team



If the new year has inspired you to give back, attend the Leeds Uni Boob Team Give-It-A-Go. They represent charity CoppaFeel! UK on campus and aim to help early detection of breast cancer.

Join this society to help encourage, educate and empower students to check for signs and act on symptoms.

Attend their Give-It-A-Go on **Monday 3rd February at 5:30pm in Business School Maurice Keyworth SR (1.03)** to learn all about the society and their impact on campus.

## Performing Arts Society



Performing Arts society are proud to be the only non-auditioning, all-inclusive performance society that work towards an annual showcase.

They are interested in dancing, singing and acting but more importantly doing these in a casual and fun environment.

Head to their Give-It-A-Go in **Michael Sadler LG.10 at 8pm Tuesday 4th February** to see that they're all about, all abilities and experience are welcome!

## The Gryphon

If you enjoy reading The Gryphon every fortnight, why not join the team and write for us? We are always looking for new writers and fresh ideas. If you're interested in politics, fashion, sport or music and want to write about it then this is the society for you.

You don't need any writing experience and there's no pressure to write every week if you're busy with university or have had a heavy weekend. Make friends whilst you improve your writing and learning about university life. Head to [www.thegryphon.co.uk/joinus/](http://www.thegryphon.co.uk/joinus/) for more information on different sections and their meeting schedule!





The Gryphon  
Arts Supplement of

# IN THE MIDDLE

PICTURE ♦ HYDE PARK ♦ HOUSE

Fashion - Blogs - Lifestyle -

ISSUE 6

Music - Clubs - Art - Culture



# CREDITS

## Editor-in-Chief

Ed Barnes  
editor@thegryphon.co.uk

## In the Middle Associate

Hannah Stokes



## Music & Clubs

music@thegryphon.co.uk

Safi Bugel  
Andrea Loftus  
Jessica McCarrick  
Neive McCarthy



## Fashion

fashiongryphon.leedsstudent@gmail.com

Sarah Mortimore  
Iona Tompkins  
Lydia Varney



## Arts and Culture

arts@thegryphon.co.uk

Stephanie Bennett  
Delphie Bond  
Alex Gibbon  
Tanika Lane  
Emily Parry  
Rory Yeates



## Blogs & Lifestyle

blogs@thegryphon.co.uk

Georgie Fuhri  
Lucie Phipps  
Louisa Polack  
Mary Yeh

## DESIGN

Nina Whitley-Jones

## Front Cover

Photography by Greg Headley  
@verticalgranite

## Back Cover

Illustrations by Samantha Harvey  
@harvtone\_design  
www.harvtone.co.uk



# CONTENTS

---

## Music & Clubs

**4** In the Middle with Nik Nak

**6** Sex 'Ezra'cation 2: The Second Coming

**8** Album and Gig Reviews

**9** 2020 So Far: Club Reviews

---

## Fashion

**10** Pink is Power: What the Key Figures are Wearing at the Harvey Weinstein Trial

**12** Hello 2020: Fashion Resolutions and Upcoming Events

**13** The Biggest Trend in Beauty This Year? Not Buying Any.

---

## Arts & Culture

**14** Hyde Park Picture House's 2020 Facelift for the 21st Century

**16** Languages of Love

**17** Need a Little More Literary Lovin'?

**18** Reviews: Little Women & 1917

**19** Emma: Trailer Preview

---

## Blogs & Lifestyle

**20** Veganism: The Mother Clucking Debate

**21** Is Valentine's Day Still About Love?

**22** Reasonable New Years Resolutions

**23** Winter Love Island: The Diversity Debate

---

## TWITTER

@ITM\_TheGryphon

---

## INSTAGRAM

@itm\_thegryphon



# IN THE MIDDLE WITH NIKNAK



Image: @pretendonline



**As a DJ, turntablist and radio host, NikNak has a strong presence in the city. As well as appearing on the line-up of a host of exciting events from Slut Drop to SubDub, NikNak also curates her own, from the dub-and reggae-focused Dub Sirens to Melanin— a night spotlighting local POC DJs. Armed with a fat stack of records, a flair for scratching and a passion for positivity, NikNak is a breath of fresh air for the scene. As 2020 begins, we chat about creating spaces for people of colour, clubbing in Leeds and what the rest of the year holds for NikNak.**

#### **When and why did you start DJing?**

Initially I started out as a producer and have been making beats since I was eleven or twelve. I guess I really started DJing when I was going into first year at DMU (De Montfort University) for my undergrad back in 2010. At the time, I wanted to be able to play my beats and other tunes out to people.... That's the easiest explanation I guess. From there, I managed to score my first set at a bar I used to work at in Leicester and also got involved with a local collective called Mud... one thing led to another and pretty soon, I was DJing a few times a month at some clubs and the gigs became more regular, and I even had a 2 hour radio show on Demon FM...Fast forward to moving to Leeds in 2016 for an MA and weeks after I moved here, I played at Unity Day! Again one thing led to another as I settled in Leeds and began making friends here and soon I'd connected with Slut Drop and Girls that Gig, as well as playing a few gigs at Headrow House... and the rest is history I guess... still amazes me how quickly things have progressed in new ways since moving here, Leeds is a magical place!

#### **Whilst it seems like anyone and everyone in Leeds can become a DJ, there is far less turntablists. How did you get into this and what inspires you?**

I learned some basics off the people I was in a DJ collective with back in Leicester called Bug Out, and also had a few lessons from Jon 1st. Turntablism is an art form, similar to DJing I guess, but there's more technicality in there too, and I guess that can be somewhat scary or confusing for people wanting to give it a go. I'll fully admit that I'm not the most technical turntablist out there but I'm simply using the techniques I've learned to create the music and sounds I want both in production and in my DJ sets as well. Everyone has a unique style when approaching something creative - no-one plays the guitar in exactly the same way, and the same can be said about DJ-ing and Turntablism/Scratching. Once you give it a go and find your own rhythm, you develop your own style which can and will set you apart from others. This is something that needs to be applied more in the DJ world I think too: Less judgements and more support in a DJ's uniqueness.

#### **Last year you organised 'Melanin' at Wharf Chambers with a line-up solely consisting of Black, Leeds-based DJs; why do you think having nights dedicated to POC is so important?**

The visibility is important as ever. For the longest

time, DJs have been for the most part Cis white men and that can often make those who don't identify as this feel like it's a full on boys club type of situation when that really isn't the case. I feel like it's super important to see more of these events be put on without any kind of corny gimmick: here are the DJs, come through and see what they can do. It's inspiring and empowering to see someone who looks like you doing something so freeing and expressive.

#### **Have you noticed a shift in more nights and spaces for/by minority groups over the last few years?**

Yes - more and more people are taking it upon themselves to put on the nights they want and it's incredibly vital to the vibrancy of the music scene irrespective of where you're based or the music you're into. It boosts moral and community spirit knowing that you can bring an idea into fruition in a supportive environment, learn from the experience and build on it as well.

#### **What about in Leeds specifically?**

Collectives/Organizations/Promoters like Natural Selection & Superfriendz, Come Play With Me & Music:Leeds, Love Muscle, Subdub & Beneath the Surface, Permahigh, Equaliser, SlutDrop, Stretchy Dance Supply, Not Exotic, Flesh in Tension...the list goes on but you can see what I'm saying. You give any of these names a quick search and you'll be able to see/hear for yourself just how varied and diverse the collectives are, how varied the events they organize are (from workshops to panel discussions to club nights), the acts they bring to the city, how they collaborate with each other, and also the people within the teams as well. Representation matters.

#### **What's your favourite thing about the Leeds music scene?**

TOUGH QUESTION, OH SHIT. Honestly?... Just how incredibly supportive and passionate everyone is about the music they love. I've felt in the past that in order to achieve some kind of success or acclaim, there's some pressure in having to conform to play/produce whatever it is mainstream audiences are liking at the moment. While there's some truth in that to an extent, it can feel somewhat stifling if it's not the style of music or crowd you're not really into. It can feel like working in a job you despise and are having to sacrifice yourself for the sake of pleasing others. Leeds is a bustling place with loads of events happening every night of the week, from DIY events to packed out arena events, and there's no sense of rivalry or tense-ness. Everyone inspires each other to put on more events and is supportive of that as

well, thus adding to the vibrancy of Leeds overall.

#### **Which Leeds-based DJs do you suggest keeping an eye out for?**

I'd say keep an eye out for the collectives I've mentioned above. The DJ culture in Leeds is so talented and intense that I really can't name people. I'd feel like I'm missing people out by listing specific names and I really don't want to do that. Honestly, the quickest google search about the DJ collectives/club nights in Leeds will gift you with some mad talented people to check out.

#### **What's in the pipeline for NikNak?**

Loads! 2020 is already looking busy which is amazing! Coming up, I'm going to be on a panel at the "Womxn+ In Music" event at Hyde Park Book Club on Jan 25th. From the 13th of Jan, I'll be hosting an hour long music show on BBC Radio Leeds called Monday Night Mixtape so tune into that!

I'll also be playing in the Belgrave House Band in Sheffield and York on Feb 13th and 14th covering Amy Winehouse's "Frank" album, and at the Belgrave Music Hall on Feb 28th where we're covering Outkast's "The Love Below" album. There's more things coming up in between these dates too so feel free to follow me on social media (not in real life, that's creepy lol) to find out what else I'll be getting up to as well.

**SAFI BUGEL**

### **NIKNAK'S PLAYLIST**

- 1. Herbie Hancock - Watermelonman**
- 2. Snoh Aalegra - Woah**
- 3. Lauryn Hill - Guarding the Gates**
- 4. The Isley Brothers - Fight the Power**
- 5. Basement Jaxx - Scars**

# SEX 'EZRA'CATION 2: THE SECOND COMING

The randy students of Moordale are back in business and busier than ever. But this season it's not only the students whose sex lives are far from uncomplicated. Our online editor Andrea Loftus has combed through this season's soundtrack to prove that there really is a song for everything.



After Season 1 ended with our 'sex wizard' Otis Milburn (Asa Butterfield) finally finding his um ... groove, the second season opens with the inspired choice of Scala & Kolcany's 'I Touch Myself'. As the camera pans over an ever so phallic cactus, the lyrics 'I love myself // I want you to love me' play over a compilation of Otis making up for lost time in the self love department.

But from what we learnt of the Milburn's family dynamic last season, when it comes to sex the highs can quickly change to one big low. As a bored Otis makes the most of his newfound skill, his car session ends abruptly as his iconic mother Jean (Gillian Anderson) catches him red handed and red faced. The sweet, lusty tones of Hot 8 Brass Band's 'Sexual Healing' distract us from the painfully cringey situation and foreshadow that young Otis still has some healing left to do of his own. As Ezra Furman's 'Love You So Bad', a focus feature of the Season 1 soundtrack, reintroduces us to the show's protagonists, we're all settled in and apprehensively anxious to see what's sexual stigmas the show will iron out for us this term.

Moordale High School is more or less the same - a hot mess and a hot bed of sexual discovery. However, the acappella choir seem to have a preventative solution to the chlamydia hysteria permeating the corridors, as they sample a bit of Jermaine Stewart's message that 'We Don't Have To Take Our Clothes Off' to have a good time. Otis' growing clinic workload following Maeve's departure leaves the school-tour duties up to Lily (Tanya Reynold), who shows Ola (Patricia Allison) the cliques to the sultry tones of Rod Stewart's 'Da Ya Think I'm Sexy', prefacing the tour's finale as the gorgeous French fancy Rahim (Sami Outalballi) steps onto the scene. Frankie Goes To Hollywood's 'Two Tribes' gets a new meaning as the choir girls divide into 'chlamydia' vs 'no-chlamydia' and send fists flying, but thank god Maeve's (Emma Mackey) back in time to dispel the chaos. As the sex clinic slaps on that neon open sign and we have the gang back together, and When In Rome assure us that this sets out 'The Promise' of a good season ahead.

Nevertheless, this season swaps the classroom for the staff room as Salt-N Pepa's 'Push It' is almost a ruse to make it more uncomfortable watching the guy from

Horrible Histories awkwardly bang the prim English teacher. With Air's 'Sexy Boy' not the theme tune I'd personally have given to the erratic science/SRE/music teacher, it proves that there's a different apple for everyone's eye. Salt-N Pepa get a double feature in Episode 2, as Jean awkwardly sings 'Let's Talk About Sex' at an unresponsive pubescent audience, a song that was about as explicit as Sex Ed classes in most British secondary schools got.

A heart-breaking but relevant plotline this season follows Aimee's (Aimee Gibbs) experience of sexual assault, the ironically named 'Happy Talk' by Captain Sensible alluding to the seemingly harmless man with a "kind face" who was far from harmless after all. After a taxing time at the police station leaves Aimee coming to terms with what happened to her, the emotive croons of Sorenius Bonk ft. Signe Mansdotter's 'Life' reminds us that assault in its many forms is still a daily occurrence for women all over the world.

Now I know what you're thinking, what's Sex Education without Ezra Furman, well the answer is a sadder sight indeed. Luckily, we've still got a heavy helping scattered through the 8 episodes including 'Queen of Hearts' for the one and only Maeve Wiley and a his cover of LCD Soundstystem's 'I Can Change' to pin point Adam's (Connor Swindells) story arc, battling with his sexuality and masculinity after years of his father's iron fist. The relationship between Adam and Eric (Ncuti Gatwa) was unexpected and charming in Season 1, but equally problematic as it's based on a foundation of bullying. However, Adam accepts his bisexuality this season and the track marks moments of growth, the first as he becomes a pebble armed Romeo at Eric's east facing balcony window for romantic nights of smashing ceramics and locking lips. The other is when pint-sized Ola tells him she loves him as a friend, something he admits he has never had before - \*hearts shattering\*. But Furman's 'Devil or Angel' still pins Groff Jr as the bad influence for Eric as he debates between his poetic French muse or his vase smashing Romeo - baguette or crumpet Eric, it's your move.

Season 1 set us up for a #Motis marathon, with promises of love between our pink tint princess and our pasty pale prince. But alas,

is it ever that simple? Barbara Mason is here to tell us that no it is not, as her ballad 'Oh How It Hurts' plays over poor Ola laying alone, zip done up and heart aching as Otis' mind wanders to you-know-who when they plan to sleep together for the first time. Though Tommy James & The Shondell's 'Hanky Panky' duets with elated screams that tease Otis finding luck in love elsewhere, a blue shell climax and a Nintendo switch later we're reminded just who we're dealing with. Luckily, jealous-and-unsatisfied-girlfriend Ola returns to cool-overall-clad Ola as she realises she's pansexual, and no she doesn't have a fetish for "kitchen stuff" Adam, it's personality that draws her in.

It's Episode 6 that brings out the big guns though, with an out-of-hand house party at the Milburn's creating the perfect setting for the needle to drop. Ah Otis, we all remember our first beer, but luckily we didn't 'Jump into the Fire' to Harry Nilsson as stylishly as you. After one too many drinks and maybe one too many moves to Isaac Hayes 'Good Love 6-9-9-6-9', Otis was 'deflowered' by mean girl Ruby (Mimi Keene). A party doesn't always have to end with a trashed house and a lost condom, as The Osmonds' 'Having A Party' showed Adam and Ola fixing their broken hearts by breaking everything the scrapyard had to offer. Queen Jean was none the wiser, getting boozy with Mrs. Groff to the sounds of Missing Persons' 'Destination Unknown', though the destination turned out to be a club which oozed a classier essence of Warehouse Wednesdays to Gala's infamous 'Freed From Desire'.

The cross pollination of eras and genres is what makes the show's soundtrack so bloody brilliant, as well as adding to the impossibility of putting a date on the show with an 80s wardrobe, quasi-American setting and a mix-match of old and new technology throughout. Nevertheless, it's also a reminder that emotive anthems of youth like Sharon Van Etten's 'Seventeen' can sound timeless in the right setting despite it only being released last year. As she croons notes of nostalgia and loss of innocence, the girls rally at the back of the bus in solidarity with Aimee, united in their shared experiences at the hands of entitled males. However, watching this diverse girl gang re-enact The Breakfast Club's iconic detention set up and them

smash shit to Cass Elliot's 'Make Your Own Kind Of Music' was an injection of female empowerment to rival "It's my Vagina".

Our emotions aren't spared this season, and neither are our earbuds as we're hit out of nowhere with Sufjan Steven's gut-wrenching 'Mystery Of Love' when fit dad Jakob and fitter mum Jean eradicate any hope of a happy ending for our silver foxes. Though The Moordale Quiz Heads did as The Sonics said and 'Shot Down' their opponents in the final, it wasn't enough to cheer us up from mum and dad's separation. Thankfully our very own space girl Lily was of course directing 'Romeo and Juliet: The Musical' which treated us to some special original boners tracks in the expectedly quirky and wildly inappropriate style we've come to know and love. Lily took the success of The Lion King's in-crowd performances at the West End and elevated it to students in silver latex with penis hands and vagina heads stroking unexpected parents. A visionary in our midst.

Though we've got no Maeve and Otis, no Otis and Ola and no Jean and Jakob, there was still 10 minutes left for the only couple we really had any energy left for. As lovestruck Adam ran towards that assembly hall's vaginal opening (are you really surprised?) it paralleled the infamous yet quite bad Julia Robert's film 'My Best Friend's Wedding' with Dusty Springfield's 'Wishin' and Hopin' assuring me I didn't just sit for 8 hours for no happy endings. With our unconventional lovers reunited (and it feels so good), Scout Niblet's 'Kiss' serenades us as we see Otis put on his big boy pants to apologise to his mum and go get the girl.

Cue neighbour Isaac, enamoured with Wiley and ballsy enough to delete a modern day love letter in the form of a voicemail where Otis declares his love for his clinic compatriot. With an audience left fuming at the audacity of this lad and our star-crossed lovers walking towards opposite sides of the same starry sky, Chip Taylor's husky croons in 'On The Radio' are all we're left with. His beautiful lyrics are isolated as the monochrome credits roll, there to remind us that love isn't easy kids, and sometimes the only cure for thousands of broken hearts is for Netflix to make a third Season before 2021...

**ANDREA LOFTUS**



MUSIC & CLUBS



Image Credit: Netflix



Image Credit: Netflix



Image Credit: Netflix

EPISODE-BY-EPISODE  
TRACKLIST

EPISODE 1

- I Touch Myself - Scala & Kolacny Brothers
- Sexual Healing - The Hot 8 Brass Band
- Love You So Bad - Ezra Furman
- We Don't Have to Take Our Clothes Off -  
Jermaine Stewart
- Da Ya Think I'm Sexy - Rod Stewart
- Do It Again A Little Bit Slower - Jon & Robin
- Bedside - Ezra Furman
- Two Tribes - Frankie Goes to Hollywood
- Everywhere - Fleetwood Mac

EPISODE 2

- Push It - Salt-N Pepa
- The Queen of Hearts - Ezra Furman
- Lets Talk About Sex - Salt-N Pepa
- Sexy Boy - Air
- Bashed Out - This is The Kit

EPISODE 3

- Cosmic Dancer - T.Rex
- Happy Talk - Captain Sensible
- Prove It - Lee Harvey
- What is Love - Haddaway
- Life - Sorenius Bonk feat. Signe Mansdotter
- Little World - Ezra Furman
- Pale Blue Eyes - The Velvet Underground

EPISODE 4

- Hanky Panky - Tommy James & The Shondells
- Oh How it Hurts - Barbara Mason
- I Can Change - Ezra Furman
- Devil or Angel - Ezra Furman

EPISODE 5

- Dancing Hall Days - Wang Chung
- Twenty Five Miles - Edwin Starr
- Simple Things - The Jive Aces
- Hold Me Now - Thompson Twins
- How Can You Mend A Broken Heart? - Al Green
- Love Is The Drug - Roxy Music
- Slip Away - Clarence Carter

EPISODE 6

- Itty Bitty Pretty One - Screamin' Jay Hawkins
- Amateur - Ezra Furman
- Dance Little Sister - Terence Trent D'Arby
- Betrayal Takes Two - Richard Hell & The Voidoids
- Destination Unknown - Missing Persons
- I Want More - Can
- Jump Into The Fire - Harry Nilsson
- Theme from S'express - S'express
- Freed from Desire - Gala
- Don't Go - Yazoo
- Good Love 6-9-9-6-9 - Isaac Hayes
- Having A Party - The Osmonds
- Thank You For The Offer - Chip Taylor
- A Leader Always Carries A Stick - Grizzly Bear

EPISODE 7

- Peaches - The Stranglers
- In the Sweet By and By - Alabama
- Mystery of Love - Sufjan Stevens
- Make Your Own Kind Of Music - Cass Elliot
- Seventeen - Sharon Van Etten

EPISODE 8

- Skinhead Moonstomp - Symarip
- Shot Down - The Sonics
- I Can Change - Ezra Furman
- Romeo & Juliet: The Musical - Moordale Secondary  
School (It's even on Shazam!!)
- Wishin' And Hopin' - Dusty Springfield
- Kiss - Scout Niblet
- Care - Ezra Furman
- On The Radio - Chip Taylor



Image:  
Jeff Kravitz

## HAYLEY WILLIAMS TRACK REVIEW: SIMMER

When punk princess Hayley Williams announced her long-awaited solo music debut earlier this month, fans went wild. The Paramore frontwoman has always been a strong songwriter and musician, however it was in her solo career that her worth as an individual would truly be measured. And while she delivered, it wasn't what anyone was expecting.

However, reflecting back after the release of lead single 'Simmer', what exactly did we expect? With Paramore having taken a step away from the rock scene on their latest album *Hard Times*, it signalled that Williams, who started on the scene at just 16, was growing up. Having dipped into different styles through various solo collaborations (such as 2010's 'Airplanes' with B.O.B. and 2013's 'Stay the Night' with Zedd), it seems that Williams has found her signature sound in wistful, dark indie-pop. With a backing track composed partially acapella (yes, that's her beatboxing) and catchy, moody lyrics, 'Simmer' is Williams at her best. Creating a song that is undeniably hers, from the instrumental to the lyrics (co-written with Paramore bandmates Taylor York and Joey Howard) proves that it is possible to separate yourself from the legacy of such an iconic band and make a new sound as an individual artist. Subtle, exposed, a stark contrast to the loud, outspoken Paramore days, this is the music we didn't even know we wanted from her.

In a statement, Williams said:

**I'm in a band with my favorite musicians, so I never really feel the need to step into a role as a player when it comes to Paramore records. This project, however, benefited from a little bit of musical naïveté and rawness and so I experimented quite a bit more. [...] Now that it's time to put it all out there, I can finally exhale. I'm excited to let people in to experience a different side of myself that I've only very recently become familiar with.**

Indeed 'Simmer' feels like Hayley Williams' first breath of fresh air in a long time. After taking time away from music following the release of 2017's *Hard Times*, she has well and truly asserted herself as a talented singer and songwriter on a track where she chooses to be quietly brilliant. The music video, directed by 'Get Lucky' director Warren Fu, follows a vulnerable Williams running through the forest, chased by an unknown creature that only as the video reaches its climax is revealed to be Williams herself. Far from being scared, fans are more excited than before for the release of upcoming album 'Petals for Armor' (taken from the lyrics of 'Simmer') on May 8th.

**LIZZIE WRIGHT**

## DAUGHTER OF SWORDS, 22/1/20, HYDE PARK BOOK CLUB

Tucked away in the basement of Hyde Park Book Club, Alexandra Sauser-Monnig took us through the quiet brilliance of her debut album *Dawnbreaker*. Support from Leeds duo Sunflower Thieves and upcoming indie-folk artist Vraell warmed up for our main act with an abundance of soothing vocals, before Monnig, brazenly entitled 'Daughter of Swords', picked up her guitar and climbed onstage. With a gentle presence to match her soft acoustic sound, the singer-songwriter - previously one third of folk-band 'Mountain Man' - is not only easy to watch but hard to look away from.

Her voice was proven to be just as captivating live as in her studio tracks as she opened the set acapella. Her angelic voice and ambling lyricism aren't far away from Big Thief's incredible Adrienne Lenker; it's easy to see how Monnig's solo writing will only grow from here.

A few songs in she eased into 'Shining Women', my personal favourite track off the new album and a highlight of the gig. 'Life's gone before you know it' she sings serenely, it 'passes you by if you don't seize it'. The lyricism of Alexandra's album is filled with tender moments like this, made all the better in such an intimate gig setting.

Ending on Jean Ritchie's 'Morning Come, Maria Gone', she elegantly gave a traditional folk track her own poignancy. With lilting melodies and a voice to captivate, Alexandra Sauser-Monnig is a hugely undiscovered gem within the American folk scene. The music of Daughter of Swords is beautifully simple, and her UK tour is proving it so.

**KATE WASELL**

Image:  
Josie Espinosa



# 2020 SO FAR...

To mark the new year, we have curated a list of January's most exciting club nights, from Peach's new residency at Wire to Brudenell Groove's new venture.

## PEACH, CCL, CLUB FITNESS AND KESSIE @ WIRE (24/01/2020)

During the first panel of her four date Wire residency Peach jokingly suggested that the UK has a 'dance privilege'. The sheer number of clubs, regular visits from big name touring DJs and the fact that you can hear dance music pretty much whenever you turn on the radio (all three of which North America lack) make the UK one of the best places to party (and indeed pursue a career as a DJ). And although she might have said this in jest, after seeing her first residency set it might be more accurate to say that whilst the UK has the privilege of the best clubs, the states certainly has the privilege of exporting some of America's best DJs. Peach's residency, entitled Circuit, takes place over four dates in 2020. Alongside club nights in which she will showcase some of her favourite North American artists, as well as local Leeds talent, she'll also be teaming up with the likes of Equaliser and Love Muscle to offer a series of panels, workshops and ambient listening sessions, in an attempt to integrate the North American dance scene with that of Leeds.

The residency kicked off at Outlaws Yacht Club with a panel

discussion on eurocentrism in music. Peach was joined by fellow North American DJs CCL and Club Fitness, all of whom have now made their home this side of the Atlantic. It was an enlightening and rather surprising discussion, given North America's huge stake in the creation of dance music (Chicago and Detroit are famed for the birth of house and techno respectively, whilst disco and US garage all came out of New York clubs) you would be forgiven for thinking that it would still be leading the way. Yet, although parties in the states are still going strong, several factors such as the lack of budget airlines, strict liquor laws, police crackdowns on warehouse raves, and a lack of money meaning venues can't pay touring DJs big bucks (among other factors) means that clubbers often wait months to see a DJ we might catch several times a year in the UK, and that North American DJs and producers do not get the exposure they deserve. Peach's, CCL's and Club Fitness's advice? Swap your yearly pilgrimage to Dekmantel for a trip to America and check out the local talent at some of their festivals (or you can just support them on Bandcamp instead!)

If you needed any further convincing that North America is home to some of the best DJs then Wire is the place to be; Flesh in Tension resident Kessie kicking things off with her chugging techno, it's easy to see why she's already earned support slots with the likes of Objekt. Club Fitness' following set is a workout of bass driven techno cuts that's way better than going to the gym, whilst CCL brings an eclectic mix of breakbeats, house and electro-funk. Finally, Peach treats the sold out crowd to her selection of house and techno deep-cuts, showcasing exactly why she has earned a reputation as a brilliant selector.

If this night is anything to go by, then North America is re-earning its place on the dance music map as a gold-mine for hidden, up-and-coming producers and DJs that you'd be foolish to overlook. If you don't fancy heading over there yourself then Peach will be back on the 21st of March.

**SHAUNA STAPLETON**

## REEL LONG OVERDUB: ZAKIA @ WHARF CHAMBERS (25/01/2020)

Brudenell Groove know how to throw a party. Organising small, community-focused nights since 2016, the Leeds-based collective have carved a very special space in the heart of those based in the city and those further afield.

To kickstart 2020, Brudenell Groove have introduced their new venture, Reel Long Overdub - an avenue to release music and experiment with bookings for the first time. As always, all profits go to their chosen charity, Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network. In order to launch the project and their accompanying compilation, Reel Long Overdub welcomed London-based selector and radio host Zakia to Wharf Chambers on the last Saturday of the month.

The step away from their usual residents-only parties was a risk for the no-profit collective, but the result was worthwhile. BG's very own Andrew K and Aletha opened with two hours of lovely, percussion-heavy tunes, from Brazilian to Bollywood bangers, before Zakia took over in the early hours, with a mix of floaty Latin and house records. Zakia had the room engaged from the get-go to the very end of her set; the plant-filled, red-tinted space at Wharf Chambers was complemented by a beaming and diverse crowd - something that is refreshing in a scene too often marked by pretension and saturated by a white student crowd.

The sold-out Reel Long Overdub debut was a truly special night, and their future looks certainly looks promising.

**SAFI BUGEL**



## DJ BORING @ WIRE (23/01/20)

Trading 6 hour stints in the library for a boogie in Wire will have felt phenomenal for any student who had to endure the exam period. For many, Thursday night was the first off from a gruelling schedule of revision; relentless Red Bull consumption could be replaced by relentless Red Stripe consumption - this sense of accomplishment had everyone in the finest of moods, and ready for the tech grooves of DJ Boring.

Hailing from Melbourne, a melting pot of 909 house palettes and thumping four-to-the-floor, (real name) Tristan Hallis moved to London in 2015, unaware of the ever-growing DJ movement in England. He first came to prominence after the release of 'Winona', a lo-fi house banger that his friend forced him to post on Soundcloud having never heard his music. 4 million Spotify streams later, and Boring sees himself at the forefront of a scene spear-headed by DJ Seinfeld and Palms Trax. Wire was completely sold out. Anyone trawling through the infamous 'Leeds Uni Tickets' facebook group will have been aware of the demand for this event: the tickets were like gold dust. DJ Boring's eloquent mix of afro-tech, disco and house hypnotised the audience from the minute the first record was played, right until he faded out the last.

Boris Dlugosch's 'Sing It Back' triggered 4 minutes of euphoria, with everyone passionately singing the contagious dance-pop chorus back to the selecta. DJ Boring's devotion to the dance floor is incredibly admirable. He two steps between the decs with more energy than the crowd at moments, whilst a consistent grin spans across his face. All those all-nighters in the library seemed worth it come Thursday, with Boring behind the decs and fans buzzing in the arches of Leeds' best underground venue.

**LIAM CATTERMOLLE**





Credit: Washington Post



Credit: Washington Post



Credit: Vanity Fair



# PINK IS POWER

## What the key figures are wearing to the Harvey Weinstein trial, and why it matters

Harvey Weinstein has historically not dressed to impress, most likely because he had no need to. It is a tangential injustice of our society that the outfits of Weinstein's accusers would be mercilessly deconstructed at the same event in which he dressed in an unabashedly irreverent manner. It is hard to imagine a more drastic change to the new Weinstein who shuffles into court. Suddenly weakened to the point of requiring a Zimmer frame, Harvey's suit is smart and the electronic monitor firmly in place. Considering the inevitable immediate judgements a jury will form of the accused, this sudden frailty seems all too convenient.

However, Weinstein's sartorial choices are pale in comparison to that of his lead defence attorney. Donna Rotunno chooses her clothes like she does her words: carefully. She has built not only a career, but her own firm from defending men accused of serious sexual crimes. Having lost only one of these cases, she is undoubtedly a force to be reckoned with, and her wardrobe reflects this fact.

She dresses with classic elegance: stilettos and trench coats, pencil skirts and fashionable skirts. In doing so, her aesthetic rams home a fierce and powerful femininity. Despite many elements of her wardrobe harking back to an era of seventies power dressing, the fuchsia pink and red colour choices make Rotunno appear cosmopolitan and in touch, rather than outdated. With the trial set in New York rather than Weinstein's preferred location of Chicago, it is even more important she presents well to the jury, creating the right tone before the any words have even left her mouth.

Whilst it might be easy to dismiss such choices as accidental, Rotunno herself has acknowledged the power clothing can hold.

She has previously told the New York Times that 'jurors appreciate people taking pride in how you dress' and that she empowers herself through her clothes. Whilst the clothes may send subliminal messages, a more explicit one swings around her neck. A delicate gold chain reads two simple words: *Not Guilty*. With Rotunno having only ever lost one sex crime case, these words risk being uncomfortably prophetic for some.

But the defence are not the only side exploiting the power of pink and red. The prosecution's lawyer Gloria Allred has been pictured in authoritative red suits, and women outside the court have followed suit. A legion of Weinstein's accusers have clustered around the court, wearing red coats to symbolise their allegiance to those who are still able to testify. Whilst there is no explicit suggestion they intended to resemble Margaret Atwood's handmaids, the film industry's ability to turn a blind eye is only matched by that of the republic of Gilead.

One accuser stood out from the crowd. Rose McGowan's blood red coat was beautifully complemented by her furry pale pink hat, unabashedly brazen in its whimsical femininity, perhaps a subtle nod to the pink pussy hats of the #MeToo movement. The prevalence of the colour across the trial led fashion critic Robin Givhan to declare that 'This is the era of power pink'. Whether the women surrounding Harvey Weinstein are defending or supporting him, they wear their femininity with pride rather than shame.

Red was the emblem of the 20th century socialist revolutions. But the future's female, and this century's revolutionary #MeToo movement wears pink with pride.

**IONA TOMPKINS**



# HELLO 2020

Ellie Shovelin collects trend insights from bloggers, students and fashion fanatics whilst Sarah Mortimore introduces Leeds' biggest date on the fashion calendar. 2020, we're ready for you...



Credit: UBC

New Year's resolutions don't need to be solely reserved for positive habit changes and upping your productivity. As you find yourselves slowly creeping towards dissertations, deadlines and even graduation, it's important to have a little fun with your goals where possible. This is why we asked you what your fashion resolutions were for 2020. Who says New Year's resolutions only involve going to the gym?

"I'm trying to be more thoughtful with my purchases so instead of buying things just because or in two colours because I like it I'm taking more time to choose and being stricter with myself!"

**LUCY, 38, BLOGGER**

"Keep adding in more colour and recycling. Try to repair my clothes where possible and recycle them when they can't be."

**VICTORIA, 21, BLOGGER**

"I want to figure out my style! Try to break away from band t-shirts (only occasionally!) and learn how to express myself."

**LEWIS, 22, HISTORY STUDENT**

"I'd like to learn how to dress a little more feminine for special events. I just find my jogger bottoms too comfortable though!"

**BETH, 20, ENGLISH STUDENT**

"I want to stop wearing trainers everywhere I go. Also probably invest more in depop but try to reduce how much I buy anyway!"

**JESSICA, 24, MEDIA STUDENT**

"I want to be more eco friendly in my approach to fashion this year, I already donate/eBay my old clothes but I want to avoid fast fashion and buy less clothes or at least buy more clothes more sensibly in 2020."

**MEGHAN, 26, BLOGGER**

"To only buy second hand or from local, sustainable brands. To only buy what I need, and to not over consume."

**ABBY ANN, 30, BLOGGER**

"I want to learn how to walk in heels no matter the height! I also want to make more of an effort everyday when I get ready and learn to love what's in my wardrobe!"

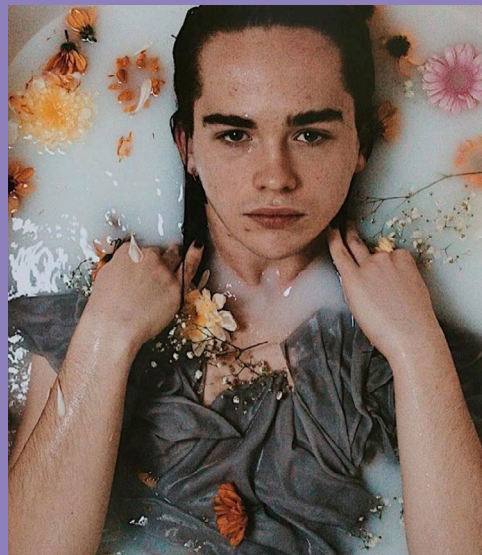
**ELLIE, 24, JOURNALISM STUDENT**

"I really want to reduce my clothes consumption! The industry is so bad for the environment so I want to try to be as sustainable as possible."

**SHELBY, 24, ENGLISH STUDENT**

"I really just want to learn how to tie a tie properly. I'm likely gonna need to wear suits when I graduate so it would be nice not to have to use a clip on for interviews!"

**SAM, 23, LAW STUDENT**



Credit: Julia Kaut and Emily Moore



Credit: Julia Kaut and Emily Moore



Credit: Julia Kaut and Emily Moore

**ELYSIAN IS COMING: 28TH - 29TH FEBRUARY**

**ELYSIAN (adjective) beautiful or creative; divinely inspired; peaceful and perfect.**

This year, LRFS is focused on sustainability, and the exciting creations from Leeds Students will be designed to reflect the beauty and power of mother nature. The show will be a celebration of our wonderful Earth, and profits will be donated to two environmental charities: Plastic Oceans UK and Hubbub. With a focus on the planet as well as the diversity of the humans inhabiting it, Elysian promises to be a beautiful showcase of the university's talents.

"Using Fashion as a tool, we begin a journey of empowerment and enlightenment and believe in the change that is to come."

Plastic Oceans UK are on a mission to reduce the 8 million tons of plastic waste entering our oceans each year. Their award-winning documentaries, business partnerships and education initiatives help raise awareness and work towards finding solutions to halt the staggeringly high levels of plastic polluting our oceans.

Hubbub help people make more sustainable lifestyle choices in their everyday lives. They offer realistic, practical solutions to help people reduce their environmental impact across their lifestyles from the workplace, to the home, to food and fashion choices. Only running for 5 years, Hubbub already hold some impressive accolades to their name, including collaborating with over 700 international and local businesses, and reaching 3.7 billion people with their campaigns.

While the scale of the climate crisis may be enormous, these charities are both dedicated to finding sustainable solutions at a local level and in our community. LRFS offers an opportunity to support our university's talent whilst also making a valuable contribution to the environment (and of course having a hell of a good night in the process). The RAG team couldn't have put it better themselves, with Elysian, "fashion has never been better for this planet".

Standard release fashion show and after-party tickets are now on sale. If the launch party is anything to go by, Leeds are in for some very good times. For one night only on Saturday 29th February, LRFS are teaming up with Lunar Underground to present the 'Big Bang' afterparty at Freedom Mills. Featuring one of the godfathers of UK Garage Zed Bias, as well as Lunar Underground, Hyde House, sub:stance recordings and Healthy Minds, the official afterparty is one you will not want to miss.

Standard release tickets for the Leeds RAG Fashion Show and afterparty are on sale now.





Image Christina Animashaun/Vox:

It is often said that you can never have too much makeup. Wearers round the world spend hundreds, even thousands of pounds in the quest to find their 'perfect shade', of face, lip and eye products (my personal preference of the latter is a gaudy green shade). With people of all genders beginning to experiment with beauty at an ever-decreasing age, sales have soared in the 21st century, with the global cosmetics industry being valued at \$532.43 billion in 2017.

But there is such thing as too much makeup. With the climate crisis an ever-growing issue, it's not just our meat and fuel consumption we need to worry about, it's how we look at our beauty products. Beauty culture nowadays is obsessed with the 'routine'- the multiple steps people follow with their skincare, from what used to just be the standard cleanse and moisturise now incorporating toners, acids, masks, serums and sprays. That's not to mention the packaging (often in plastic rather than glass bottles), and the air-miles with the rise of cult international classics such as Anastasia Beverly Hills or popular Korean lines. Shipped across the world, these brands are fuelling people's desires for a particular name on the packaging.

Let's look at my own collection for an example. I'm known amongst my friends and family for being 'beauty obsessed'. I love to see what's new, what the latest trends are, and to

have the lusted after products that everyone on Instagram is talking about. But even I was surprised to see that in my collection at the start of 2020 I had 111 makeup products and 54 skincare products. I don't have a beauty YouTube channel, or an Instagram, or any desire to make makeup more than a hobby. Yet I've amassed a collection that frankly resembles a shelf in a shop.

But how can we combat this? I own the products, and I've used most of them so there's no going back. However, anything unused can be donated- either to friends and family, or to Leeds Women's Aid, a local charity that helps women in need. Whilst not a realistic long-term goal, I decluttered 20 products at the start of the year, through a combination of giving them away and binning them. The rest I aim to use up in order to make it at least partially worth both the cost and the environmental impact.

However, I represent thousands of 'normal' makeup consumers across the world. What about those that receive free makeup constantly, and have built a career out of beauty? YouTubers Tati Westbrook and Samantha Ravndahl have both publicly taken steps to publicise the massive impact of the free products PR teams send them in the hopes that they'll promote their brands. Westbrook's consistent habit of calling out brands who send out oversized packaging for a small product has led to some cutting down the amount of materials they send

their products in. Ravndahl has gone even further, removing herself from PR lists entirely due to the vast number of products that she says have no value to her. Choosing to buy items that she knows will work for her skin type and tone, Ravndahl has continued to cut down whilst still managing to consistently create content for her almost-1 million subscribers, proving PR does not make or break a channel.

The idea of using what you have instead of buying more has recently grown more popular amongst the beauty community. With Instagram accounts dedicated to duping popular new releases with items that people may already have in their collection, fans are encouraged to 'shop their stash' instead of purchasing similar products. Reddit communities r/panporn and r/makeuprehab promote using up products that you already own and offer tips for starting and staying on a 'no buy' period. Changing the mindset towards makeup and skincare use, by celebrating finishing a product or even 'hitting pan' helps shift the focus away from over-consumption. Consider looking at what you already own when the new eyeshadow palette or lipstick launch catches your attention.

If you would like to donate items for refuge, please contact Leeds Women's Aid on 0113 244 2578 or email fundraising@leedswomensaid.org.uk

**LIZZIE WRIGHT**

# THE BIGGEST TREND IN BEAUTY PRODUCTS THIS YEAR? NOT BUYING ANY.



# HYDE PARK PICTURE HOUSE'S 2020 FACELIFT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



**The Picture House, a staple of Leeds culture for over 100 years is about to hit the road and set up shop across the city, including right here at Leeds University Union.**

**Used as the set for an upcoming film starring Dame Helen Mirren and Jim Broadbent just last week, the historic cinema will be undergoing extensive refurbishment over the course of a year starting at the end of February. Editor-In-Chief Ed Barnes takes us through the latest developments:**

Credit: Greg Headley

Hyde Park Picture House has long been one of the most famous cultural venues in the city. Having run for over 100 years since it opened in November 1914 shortly after the beginning of the First World War, it has a reputation of showcasing independent, arthouse and classic cinema that continue to differentiate it from the blockbuster cinemas of Vue and Odeon in Kirkstall and Leeds city centre.

However, due to issues with the building, from rotting window frames to crumbling brick and stone to a lack of accessibility, the decision was announced last year that the building was to undergo essential repair and restoration work as well as the creation of new facilities.

This new development was largely made possible through the securing of a snazzy £2.3million from a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant to deliver the project. There was significant backing from Leeds City Council, the Garfield Weston Foundation as well as funding support from Film Hub North, Leeds Inspired, the Pilgrim and Gwyneth Forrester trusts as well as the Co-op Community fund.

Wendy Cooke, the Head of Cinema, spoke at the event of the importance of ensuring independent cinemas continue to exist. Speaking to me afterwards, she said: "Hyde Park Picture House is the last remaining gas-lit cinema in the UK and only one of two independent cinemas left in Leeds when there was once over 100 so the importance of preserving it is incredibly vital"

At an event hosted at the Picture House on 14th January, investors and members of the local community were taken through the reasons why the project was being done, what the new plans would involve and how the heritage of the Grade-II listed building was to be preserved.

***Hyde Park Picture House is the last remaining gas-lit cinema in the UK and only one of two independent cinemas left in Leeds when there was once over 100***

It was also announced that filmmaker Francis Lee, director of the film *God's Own Country*, was to become the first patron of the Picture House. Lee is currently filming *Ammonite*, a film starring Saoirse Ronan and Kate Winslet. Discussing the importance of filmmakers supporting independent cinemas, Cook said "It's very much of a two-way street. We as cinemas need to also support filmmakers like Francis... On the flipside, it's really wonderful when filmmakers like Francis but also people like Bill Wheatley and Alice Lowe come out and tour cinemas."

Mark Johnson, who was the chief Architect at Page/Park for the project, took the audience on a grand tour of the new features. The steps outside of the building will be replaced with a sloped ramp up to the entrance. Once inside, the

foyer has been expanded to provide more room with a new accessible toilet. To the right of the current entrance, a new open space with glass windows will be created. This will sit in a new extension that will be built onto the north-west facing side of the building.

**Wendy Cook, Head of Cinema**

There are also plans for the creation of a second cinema that will sit below the current one, which will sit around 50 people. This new cinema will mean more films can be shown, meaning that if you're an indie film fan it certainly will be the more the merrier.

Speaking to Cooke about the role of the second cinema, she said it was "very much an organic extension of our current programme, dominated by fantastic new independent releases, low budget pictures, documentaries, foreign language titles, classics." She went on to say "that second space will allow us to do more of that and provide longer runs for some of the 333 films played annually at the Picture House that might only be shown once or twice", and insisted "blockbusters won't be upstairs."



# ARTS & CULTURE

A new lift will also be introduced as the current cinema is very inaccessible with the first floor out of bounds for anyone who uses a wheelchair. This lift will cover all three floors of the new building and two wheelchair spaces will also be created in the new cinema. The current counter in the foyer will also be made more accessible.

Johnston emphasises the mantra for the project was to “protect and improve” with many steps taken to ensure the transition from old to new was seamless. Paint samples were taken from every corner of the building with cross-sections of all the layers over the last 106 years. The iconic lamppost outside of the building will be preserved as well as the gas lamps. Other items such as the film schedule board and an old fire hose that currently sit in the foyer will also be kept.

Part of what is currently the outside wall will be left exposed inside the new extension also. Inside the cinema itself, new carpets and seating will be installed and the entire room will be given a fresh coat of paint.

The cinema will continue to show films there until the end of February. With graphic designs and illustrations bound to make anyone jealous, Ollie Jenkins, Marketing Manager, showcased some of the venues that the Picture House will be moving to as it goes “On the Road.”

This will begin on 16th February with an exact closure date still to be confirmed. Speaking to Jenkins, he said he hoped the Picture House will re-open by early February/early March next year to “catch the tail end of the awards season”. While he said he was unsure of the exact day of closure as there were issues that still needed to be sorted with contractors, he said it would be “12 months from that date.”

Principally, it will be taking up residence right here at Leeds University Union with *New Indies* on Sundays and Mondays, with a new membership being offered to students while it is based there. *Music on Film* will set up shop at Brudenell Social Club and *Creatures of the Night* screenings will be shown at The Brunswick.

Speaking on how to keep an audience while on the road, Ollie said they plan to “keep membership updated” and they have “purposely chosen venues that are within 10-15 minute walk to the Picture House and venues even more accessible than the current building”.

He did concede “there is a bit of a challenge convincing our regulars, particularly local residents, that the Union is a place for them and not just for students”. However, he remains excited for the future, in particular “coming to the venue and seeing it being genuinely accessible” as “a cinema can be for everyone in the city, not just for certain groups of people,” with Ollie hoping to see their “membership grow as a result.”

Cook also remained excited for the future of independent cinema. She pointed to a recent increase in community cinemas with “screenings that reflect the community” and a shift back to places like the Picture House.

The cinema is very famous within the film industry with filmmaker Wash Westmoreland, actor Chris Pine and film critic Mark Kermode counted amongst fans. Just last week, shooting for their new film *The Duke*, Jim Broadbent and Oscar-winning actress Helen Mirren visited the cinema, with Mirren praising the Picture House and its upcoming refurbishment on her Instagram.

Speaking to both Cook and Jenkins about their thoughts for this upcoming awards season, both were gunning for Bong Jun Ho’s foreign-language picture *Parasite* though had conflicted feelings given *Little Women* is also gunning for the top prize of “Best Picture”. Cook said “It’s a real test between two quite different films.”

For information about screenings for the remainder of the Picture House’s time at its historic venue, go to its website at <https://www.hydeparkpicturehouse.co.uk/>

ED BARNES



Illustrations: A look inside the new building plans with accessible slope entrance and an extension of the lobby to provide more space for visitors.



Credit: Greg Headley



All illustrations credited to Page Park



# LANGUAGES OF LOVE

At The Gryphon Arts & Culture, we have hand-picked the most romantic films from around the world for you to swoon over this Valentine's Day.



## QUEEN (2014) - HINDI

Though Bollywood may be known for its all-singing, all-dancing romantic spectacles, *Queen* breaks with convention in more ways than one. In just the first few minutes of the film, the fanfare of the wedding preparations gets brought up short by heroine Rani being dumped by her fiancé just a day before their wedding. But instead of wallowing in her sadness, Rani feels the need to escape, and decides to go on her honeymoon trip around Europe by herself. It's far from smooth sailing, however, as she runs into one disaster after another. Taken under the wing of the effortlessly sexy Vijaylaxmi in Paris, Rani learns to step, hop and jump out of her comfort zone, taking on a newfound independence rarely found in your standard Bollywood heroine. An ode to female friendship, empowerment and self-love, this film is perfect for your Galentine's night in!

ANANYA SRIRAM



## JONGENS (2014) - DUTCH

This story of a teenager who struggles to come to terms with his burgeoning love for a fellow member of the athletics club is perfect for those who are repulsed by the sickly saccharinity of February 14th. It's slow-paced, understated but never loses its emotional driving force. Although the relationship isn't always plain sailing, the raw tenderness of first love is masterfully captured and cuts right to the heart. By the end of the film, it's not plot twists or special effects that stun the viewer but the unfeigned ups-and-downs of a romance founded on an internal struggle.



## WHISPER OF THE HEART (1995) - JAPANESE

An outrageously underrated masterpiece from the renowned Studio Ghibli, *Whisper of the Heart* is an impeccably romantic and evocative piece to tug at a myriad of heartstrings. It follows the story of curious, hilariously impetuous high-school student Shizuku Tsukishima, who finds herself far less preoccupied with the looming responsibility to study with her finals on the horizon than with the mysterious figure who has the audacity to check out all her favourite stories from the library before her. The discovery of the identity of the elusive Seiji Amasawa initially provokes a relationship which is competitive and snarky, but in a very similar vein to Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy, this soon paves the way to a deep-rooted affection that leads to profound questions of not only what it truly means to love but what it means to be worthy. For anyone struggling to realise themselves and moreover how to properly channel their emotions, this film proves just the outlet for any sense of confusion and lacking in direction, the indescribable perfection of the animation and soundtrack creating what is an irreplaceable coming-of-age narrative for lovelorn existentialism.

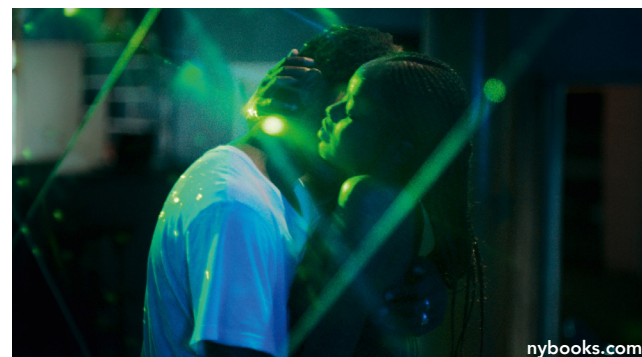
TANIKA LANE



## HASEE TOH PASEE (2014) - HINDI

*Hasee toh Phasee* does not initially present itself as the type of love story to be so relatable, but it is, in fact, one of the most wholesome, impassioned and impressively sensitive love stories Bollywood has put to the silver screen. The magnitude of the narrative is inspiringly understated, as the conglomeration of cheesy musical numbers act as a red herring for a story essentially concerning love amongst the concerns of drug abuse and mental health. Indeed, Meeta (Parineeti Chopra) may provoke laughter with her eccentric energy, ingenious intellectuality and penchant for making Nikhil's (Sidharth Malhotra), her brother-in-law to-be's, life strewn with disaster and difficulty, but it is their desires for understanding and individuality which actually craft a relationship with subtle warmth and emotivity. The hilarity and minimalism of the film only makes the journey Nikhil and Meeta take towards one another all the more rewarding, *Hasee toh Phwasee* being a unique twist on the classic will-they won't-they as the romantic leads strive for wholeness and a life outside familial expectations and the suffocating normativity favoured by society.

TANIKA LANE



## ATLANTICS (2019) - WOLOF

An ethereal blend of romance, longing, and the occult, Mati Diop's feature debut is not one to be missed. Set in Senegal's coastal capital, Dakar, this initially seems to be the story of two star-crossed lovers, but soon strays further from the many Romeo and Juliet rehashes we've seen countless times. Enchanted by the promise of a better life in Europe, young construction worker Souleiman takes to the sea in the dead of night, leaving behind his lover Ada, who must wrestle with his departure just days before her wedding to a wealthy man. Despite being grounded in Dakar's gritty reality of exploited workers, inequality and the refugee crisis, the romance in *Atlantics* soars above all the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Escapist though it may be, this film has all the heart, sweetness, and melancholy that you could want in a Valentine's film.

ANANYA SRIRAM



## AMÉLIE (2001) - FRENCH

Undoubtedly a modern classic in the canon of world cinema, this is a film that never fails to charm with its whimsy. Starring Audrey Tatou in the title role of a quirky doe-eyed waitress on a one-woman quest to spread happiness to those around her, *Amélie* will turn the staunchest of cynics into romantics and dreamers. Through Amélie's imagination, we see the gorgeous Montmartre streets through the lens of a warm, nostalgic glow. And what better place to spend Valentine's day? Paris: the city of light, the city of lovers.

ALEX GIBBON



# NEED A LITTLE MORE LITERARY LOVIN'?

From *Romeo and Juliet*, to *Elizabeth and Darcy*, to *Bella and Edward*, there are many literary couples we frankly hear too much about, especially during the lead up to Valentine's Day. Emma Rivers gives her list of five underrated romance novels to get your teeth into.

## 1 **Norwegian Wood** Harumi Murakami

From the Japanese writer Haruki Murakami, *Norwegian Wood* is the heartfelt coming-of-age story of Tori Watanabe and his first love at university. Written in 1987 and set in 1960s Japan, the narrative is structured around the nostalgic account of Tori who reflects on his past relationship with Naoko, and how their love, sparked by shared trauma, then changes and develops. I guarantee that Murakami's poignant story, exploring themes of mental health, isolation and mistrust, will stay with you long after you finish the final page. I urge you to add this to your reading list, you will not be disappointed.

## 4 **The Price of Salt** Patricia Highsmith

This novel, written and set in 1950s New York, follows Carol and Therese, two women that have a forbidden affair and fall in love. Carol has a family, Therese is pursuing her career, yet neither can resist an affair that will bring chaos into their lives. Exploring love, societal expectations and prejudice, this novel was the first to depict a lesbian relationship with a happy ending. Originally published under a pseudonym for fear of Highsmith being labelled as a lesbian writer, it wasn't until 1990 that it was republished (as *Carol*) under her true name and later adapted into an award-winning film.

## 2 **The English Patient** Michael Ondaatje

This beautiful, heart-breaking story follows the account of a mysteriously burned man and his nurse in WWII. The narrative focuses on the fragmentary memories of the patient as he recalls his past in conversation with his nurse, Hana. As we learn about his life, we witness the heavy emotional toll that the recollections take on Hana and those around her. Ondaatje's Booker Prize winning novel is a haunting, emotional story that explores ideas of nation and loyalty against a backdrop of love, war and death. I cannot recommend this highly enough, have some tissues ready, and enjoy!

## 3 **The Princess Bride** William Goldman

Okay, so you've probably seen the film a million times, but did you know it was a book? Written by William Goldman in 1973, this tongue-in-cheek fairy tale features romance, adventure, torture, fight scenes, poison, and more. The tale of Westley and Buttercup's romance, Inigo's obsessive revenge, and Prince Humperdinck's quest for a subservient wife will have you smiling for days. Fast-paced, exciting and delightfully humorous it is a truly wonderful reading experience. If you haven't read it, trust me, you'll enjoy every minute. It's fun, short and definitely worth your time.

## 5 **North and South** Elizabeth Gaskell

Consider yourself an Austen aficionado? Then this book is for you! Gaskell's *North and South* follows the story of the 'handsome' southerner Margaret Hale and the stoic mill-owner John Thornton, whose relationship, in classic Austenian style, grows from distrust and hate into understanding and love. Written in 1854 and set in the fictional Northern town of Milton, this novel challenges modernity and tradition through its depiction of social conflict and class identity. While any romance is enjoyable, *North and South* is as much a story of personal growth and empathy as it is one of traditional love. Read it!



# LITTLE WOMEN

Directed by  
Greta Gerwig

Starring  
Saoirse Ronan  
Timothée Chalamet

Released  
26 December



Image: Polygon

## 4 ANTICIPATION

**Saoirse Ronan and Meryl Streep would make anyone's Boxing Day better.**

## 5 ENJOYMENT

**A heartfelt and relevant musing on Louisa May Alcott's ideas and a triumph in modern female**

## 5 IN RETROSPECT

**It's time to agree that androgynous fits and puff sleeved blouses are well and truly back.**

*Little Women* is the charmingly intimate tale of the four March sisters, Jo (Saoirse Ronan), Meg (Emma Watson), Amy (Florence Pugh) and Beth (Eliza Scanlen). The intersecting timelines fragment their lives into pockets of golden tinted childhood memories and current-day economic woes tied to marital mayhem. Nevertheless, their mother Marmee (Laura Dern) is the glue that binds them, using the backdrop of the civil war to remind the girls they must sacrifice what they have for those who have less, like their father (Bob Odenkirk) who left them to serve his country.

The film is as aesthetic as it is emblematic, the attention to set and costume immerses you in the depths of Louisa May Alcott's imagination and sits you in the corner with the dutiful Meg as you watch Beth on the piano, Jo at her desk or Amy making a cast of her 'perfect feet' for Laurie. Theodore 'Laurie' Lawrence (Timothée Chalamet) is the grandson of Mr Lawrence (Chris Cooper) and the idyllically

mischievous boy next door very few of us ever got. Greta's directing and the relationships between the actors embedded Chalamet into the sister's fold in the most endearing way, sewn into the fabric of the March family like a square of patchwork, a comfort for Jo or Amy when their hearts needed it, or a layer for Meg and Beth to shield them from the harsh trials of patriarchal America.

The Parisian storyline was led by the iconic Meryl Streep as the spine shriveling Aunt March, a woman of money and manners who demands the same for the girls. But with Beth's charitable deeds leaving her sickly and Meg enthralled by the plainly perfect John Brooke (James Norton), there are only two girls left to mould. As Ronan artfully juggles the 'New-Yorker' Jo, the 'Teacher' Jo and the 'Carer' Jo, Pugh emerges as the archetypal American maiden, packed with beauty and the brains to bargain for marriage - ultimately to Jo's childhood beau.

Gerwig is the mistress of crafted conversational chaos, managing to script all the vocal volatility of sibling arguments with the demure guise of normality. The film is a nostalgic and homely glimpse into the glorious every day of sisterhood, of family and of fervent friendships as adulthood rips you from sweet innocence. Saoirse Ronan's performance is enduring, a true triumph for Alcott's alter ego and a role model for anyone who watches and needs to remember that it's better to be 'a spinster and paddle my own canoe' than love for the sake of evading loneliness. But it's her reading of George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* on a calm coastline that capsulizes the film's core sentiment; 'We could never have loved the earth so well if we had had no childhood in it'. For weren't we all once young and hopeful with the very same golden glow?

**ANDREA LOFTUS**

# 1917

Directed by  
Sam Mendes

Starring  
George McKay  
Colin Firth

Released  
10 January



Image: The Verge

## 4 ANTICIPATION

**Lofty expectations for this one given the awards buzz**

## 5 ENJOYMENT

**Not just an astonishing technical feat but also a masterclass in storytelling**

## 5 IN RETROSPECT

**Even now, I would still rate it as one of the best cinematic experiences in recent memory**

First World War epic *1917*, the latest offering from *American Beauty* and *Skyfall* director Sam Mendes, is not only a staggering technical achievement but also a uniquely immersive and often breath-taking cinematic experience. Mendes, with the help of award-winning cinematographer Roger Deakins, is the latest filmmaker to experiment with the single-shot approach. This technique has previously been used in Alfred Hitchcock's *Rope* as well as Alejandro González Iñárritu's 2015 Best Picture winner *Birdman*. One-shot films have not always worked in the past but tend to be most effective when they submerge the viewer in the world of the characters. *1917* does this with aplomb, pulling us into the trenches as we follow the perilous journey of two young British soldiers - Lance Corporals Blake (Dean Charles-Chapman) and Schofield (George MacKay) - as they venture across enemy lines to deliver a message that may save hundreds of lives.

An air of impending danger hangs over the film from start to finish, interspersed with

genuinely gasp-inducing moments. The action is expertly paced: Blake and Schofield move from one hellish set-piece to the next without ever having time to dwell on the horrors they've just experienced. They - and us - must keep moving forward in a race against time and impossible odds. These twin themes of fatalism and hope are at the film's very core, and both are perfectly encapsulated in MacKay's performance, which conveys a world-weariness beyond the soldier's years. Benedict Cumberbatch's Colonel MacKenzie perhaps sums up Mendes' interpretation of WW1 best with his solemn indictment that 'hope is a dangerous thing.' Cumberbatch is just one of a number of A-List British actors who appear briefly in the film to give our characters a new direction or piece of information. Colin Firth, Andrew Scott and Richard Madden all make cameos, each of them seemingly lining up to have their name associated with this award-garlanded picture.

For all its sense of realness, *1917* also features

a couple of dream-like sequences, such as a night-time scene in which Schofield must travel through the war-ravaged ruins of a French town illuminated in an eerie amber glow. Throughout these shots, Thomas Newman's unsettling score never lets us relax, with each note reminding us of the ever-present threat our heroes may be confronted with at any moment. Conversely, one of the film's most emotionally resonant scenes involves a group of soldiers sitting in a wood listening to a beautiful rendition of *The Wayfaring Stranger*. It's a rare break in the chaos that Mendes allows to linger for a second before giving way to another tidal wave of tension and anxiety.

Ultimately, *1917* is a story of ravaged innocence and a generation old before their time, for which Blake and Schofield are a microcosm. However, the authenticity of its depiction of the battlefield is unrivalled among war films.

**TOM VEGERIS**



# AUSTENTATIOUS: EMMA'S OUT TO JUDGE THE GENTRY!

Arts and Culture Editor  
Tanika Lane reviews the  
trailer for upcoming film  
*Emma*, following the antics  
of meddlesome busybody  
Emma Woodhouse.

It wouldn't be life as we know it if the British public weren't tempted with an annual period drama or two, and if it were not enough that 2019 treated us with the likes of *Vanity Fair* and *Downton Abbey*, the brand spanking new trailer for Focus Features' *Emma* promises not just the cake - but the cherry too. This latest adaption of Jane Austen's infamous comedy brilliantly breezes onto the screen like the opening seconds of the trailer sporting a valiant racing steed. Director Autumn de Wilde's movie debut clearly benefits from her career in photography as the sheer aesthetic detail alone is more than enough for the eyes and ears to feast upon. It plays on stereotypes fitting of the Georgian and Regency era but clearly has scope for modernist splendour - the potential for humour not being down to the original plot alone, but from what we can see from de Wilde playing with cast, pacing and satire by the droves.

De Wilde has arranged a brilliant spectrum of a cast to attract a range of cinema-goers whether you are a veteran of Austen or not. At the helm playing Emma Woodhouse stars Anya Taylor-Joy, whose filmography ranges from psychological horror *Split* to

the television adaptation of *The Miniaturist*, Taylor-Joy even snagging a spot for herself in the revered *Peaky Blinders*. The resume is proof enough of Taylor-Joy's burgeoning talent and appears to seep into this transformation of Emma, as the minute and a half we are allowed of screen time so far suggests a little more manipulateness than expected from the charmingly spoiled matchmaker of Highbury.

The supporting acts are additionally nothing to swot at, with notable fresh faces including Josh O'Conner, most renowned by now from his undeniably empathetic portrait of Prince Charles in the third season of Netflix's *The Crown*, Callum Turner, recognisable from his impeccable performance earlier this year in BBC's *The Capture*, and Johnny Flynn - laudable not only for his shot in ITV's *Vanity Fair*, but also for being signed to portray Musical Legend David Bowie in the upcoming biopic *Stardust* to boot. The talent radiating from these cinematic starlets alone is overwhelming, the motion picture only made so much more exciting given the additional credit of Miranda Hart and Bill Nighy - icons of comic timing. Other recognisable faces include Mia Goth, Rupert Graves (*Sherlock*)

and Gemma Whelan (*Game of Thrones*) - an extremely promising entourage whose announcement would have us flocking to the silver screen en masse based on that information alone.

What makes the concoction even more inviting is the execution of de Wilde's image. The stream of Homeric simile throughout this review after all is not without reason, as the pastel palette of the set is what you might imagine the ITV studio to be like during *Bake Off* season. A love child between the fluttering of Marie Antoinette and infamous waspishness of *The Favourite*, the sugary aesthetic acts as a backdrop for action far more stylised and sensual - the exaggerated daintiness and accentuated vocalisation adding to the original hilarity of Austen's creation.

ITV has dabbled in another Austen text earlier last year with their take on her last, unfinished novel *Sanditon* - this kicking up criticism from viewers who felt the heightened sexualisation transgressed away from 'classic' Austen fashion. It appears then that there may be a trend in 'sexing' up our whole range of costume dramas, and in light of the #MeToo

movement and actresses like Emilia Clarke opening up more about bodily exploitation in the name of fame and cinema, de Wilde's Emma does leave us wondering whether altering Austen in this way strengthens the independent, feminist potential in her literature, or proves an unfortunate example of taking advantage of the male gaze to rake in the dollar. Regardless of the socio-political debate, the trailer for *Emma* alone presents an ambitious project. Packed with so much to pick up on and revel over for days, February 21st promises a release of quite the cinematic work of art - so make sure to get yourselves along to a screening swiftly to, indeed, 'try the tart'.

**TANIKA JADE LANE**



Image: YouTube



# VEGANISM: THE MOTHER CLUCKING DEBATE

Leah discusses whether vegan products from mass meat producing companies are actually making efforts to prevent climate change or if corporations are profiting off of new trends.



**LEAH DUNDERDALE-SMITH**  
Blogs & Lifestyle Writer

Following the success of the Greggs vegan sausage roll, KFC have introduced a vegan 'Imposter Burger': a Quorn fillet coated in the signature KFC eleven herbs and spices. The vegan burger has been met with increasing enthusiasm and praise for KFC online. However, it cannot be helped but consider that a vegan KFC burger is a contradiction. KFC's primary business is the sale of chicken products, and it could be argued that the fundamental principles of veganism suggests vegans should not support such a brand in any capacity.

Whilst many argue that choosing a vegan product influences supply and demand by encouraging meat focused brands to invest in vegan products, it's debatable how much impact this will have on a company that bears the word 'Chicken' in its name. To KFC, veganism is no more than a trend and thus a viable market. When considering Greggs, after the success of their vegan sausage roll they brought out a vegan steak bake. Whilst this is great at giving more vegan choices, the brand will continue to sell these alongside their meat sausage rolls and meat steak bakes. Greggs have simply added vegan products to appeal to vegan consumers, with nothing suggesting that meat eaters are 'switching' to these alternatives. Greggs and KFC are just looking to increase their market, not to change their brand ethics and ideals.

It is dependable on your ethics as a vegan as to whether you choose to support brands that profit from the consumption of animal products, however shopping anywhere that is exclusively vegan and 100% cruelty free is unrealistic. Additionally, people turn vegan for reasons other than reducing the exploitation of animals, with other factors such as health and sustainability also influencing decision making. Giving vegan alternatives allows people to make informed choices, which is a positive step for the vegan movement.

It is important to make veganism accessible in order to reduce the myth that it is an impossible lifestyle. When turning vegan, people worry that it will impact on their social lives as it can be diet restrictive, so introducing vegan options into fast food shops like KFC is a great way to put these worries at bay. Whilst KFC does not exactly correlate with the ethics of veganism, the company is giving veganism a positive platform. The introduction of vegan alternatives in these prominent fast food chains normalises veganism by bringing it to the high street.

We must be optimistic that this positive publicity and promotion of veganism will continue past 'Veganuary'; hopefully, those who follow a 'flexitarian' diet and participate in meat free Mondays will choose from the ever growing selection of meat free alternatives.

# IS VALENTINE'S DAY STILL ABOUT LOVE?

Valentine's Day. You either love it or you hate it. Usually this is dependent on whether you have a significant other, or instead spend the day trying with all your might to avoid such sickening displays of affection. But has this typical day of romance and love become yet another spoke in the all-consuming wheel of consumerism?

The shops are flooded with rose bouquets, heart-shaped chocolate boxes and fuchsia pink cards which say things like "I love you more than anything else in the whole wide world". It's clear that businesses are making a very satisfying profit from our cliché proclamations of love. Everywhere is under pressure to sell the most romantic cards, the cutest gifts - and we're under pressure to buy them. Stereotypical portrayals of romance are heavily relied on by many, and the stores take full advantage of us. Is this a way of maximising profit? Or is it genuinely the way we want to show our loved ones how we feel?

It's understandable to feel like we should cut out Valentine's Day all-together. Surely, we shouldn't need a specific day to tell our significant other our feelings towards them. With the increasing influence of social media, Valentine's Day is becoming even more centred on outward appearances of love and the purchases we make that seemingly express

them. Every couple seems to be posting their lavish gifts and romantic activities. Each year there appears to be less of a focus on genuine feelings and an increasing pressure to buy the perfect gift and having everyone know that you're out having fun together. These companies hugely conform to stereotypes, putting pressure on couples to conform to certain roles which makes them easier to manipulate into categories.

However, making your loved one feel special is a big part of what Valentine's Day should really be about. Buying flowers for your partner, or chocolates for your fellow single pals, can really make them feel special and loved. Though you may well be falling under the spell of capitalism when buying that pink soppy card, perhaps it's the message written inside that's really worth the most to the receiver.

So, this February the 14th, when you're struggling to choose between the heart-shaped lollypop or the chocolate rose, think outside the box. Get creative and get personal. I believe we should stop the consumer-driven interpretations of romance and that this famous holiday should revert back to what it needed to be about all along - love.



**MEGAN JOHNSON**  
Blogs & Lifestyle Writer



# BLOGS & LIFESTYLE



Credit: Lisa Tegtmeier



BLOGS & LIFESTYLES



Credit: Lisa Tegtmeier



# REASONABLE NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS

It's New Years eve and we feel ourselves hurtling away from the cosy caress of December, and into a bleak January where the stale air of festivity still lingers, where the only day that is markedly different from the rest is 'Blue Monday' and to top it all off, summer feels like a decade away.

Ten seconds 'till midnight... momentum is building as 'Auld Lang Syne' is chanted to the clinking of loosely held glasses yielding various beverages - all of which are instantly beginning to feel less appetising - and with the echoing fireworks, we crash into a brand new chunk of life that feels like it harnesses the power to propel us into success or to break us entirely. It is, however, anti-climatic.

Now it's 2020, and it feels all at once exactly the same as it did ten seconds ago but simultaneously as though we immediately need to take grasp of the reins to a brand new self that is exponentially more productive, healthy and sociable. It would be unreasonable to assume that on the stroke of midnight, we can all instantly transform into a new elevated and gold gilded form of ourselves, much like what is often projected through social media feeds come January.

This is where resolutions based around the idea of self re-invention have the potential to take the shape of ten years worth of pressure, all compressed into the abstract notion of a new decade.

And so arise the questions gracing everyone's tongues: Why wait for the new year to embark on self improvement? Isn't that like writing your to-do lists for the next month, all on the 1st? Year on year, the question is thrown around: "What are your resolutions? To which empty chimes of 'weight loss', 'workout' and 'health' are chorused in harmony. At the same time, shops are stripped of their comforting layer of mince pies and mulled wine, and packed neatly with detox blend teas and yoga mats.

Abstinence is something I have never enjoyed - does anyone though? I can't think of anything worse than taking a pledge to remove my favourite 'bad' food from my diet, because let's face it, I am going to want that food. Instead, I'd prefer to prioritise eating more fruit every day in the interest of balance, which feels both more doable and more productive in the long run.

There is nothing wrong with starting the new year on a blank slate, shedding some of the baggage accumulated from past years, and looking to the next ten with hope. I think resolutions are useful when done right - the key is to be kind and reasonable with yourself.

Perhaps you have been sitting on a project that you just never got around to starting; you might want to take up a new hobby; make an uplifting playlist of fresh music; or re-connect with an old friend. Here, a defined list of priorities might be just necessary to get the ball rolling and you will inevitably feel more fulfilled - more so than those resolutions that are based upon self hate, and those that will undoubtedly fizzle out, only fulfilling a sole purpose of making January that bit more blue.

All in all, I think that it is important to give yourself some credit for getting this far, and instead of re-inventing yourself this new year (or decade), alter your routines and give yourself room to escape any ruts or dead ends you have found yourself in - in this way you can grow.

**NISHA CHANDAR-NAIR**

# WINTER LOVE ISLAND: THE DIVERSITY DEBATE

**Niamh discusses if in a world of inclusivity, Love Island should be held responsible for their consistent lack of representation and diversity.**

Statistics show that a contestant's chances of finding love on *Love Island* are just one in 35,000. This isn't to say that not everyone should have equal opportunities at achieving these minute odds.

Ethnic representation has consistently been talked about in relation to *Love Island*. In 2011 a census shows the decrease in the number of people in the UK who identify as White British from 94% to 86% in 2011. It's clear the UK is getting increasingly culturally diverse, so *Love Island* needs to represent this change also. In season one of *Love Island* just two of the contestants identified as BAME from the entire cast of the show. It was only in 2018 that *Love Island* featured Samira Mighty, the first Black woman to appear on the show. The question has to be raised, what took them so long? Why did Black women thus far not fit the criteria of a *Love Island* contestant? Although it can be noticed that more recent seasons of *Love Island* feature a more accurate ethnic representation, there remains issues with the representation that does occur on *Love Island*, as it has been noticed that often Black people have a harder time in the villa than others. Yewande from the 2019 series was not picked by any of the male contestants during the first episode's coupling, along with Marcel, Malin and Samira who were all picked last.

Samira Mighty has spoken out about her experience when she describes how producers are failing in their audition process to find contestants who desire women who are not "blonde with big boobs". In addition to this, Sherif

Lanre was kicked off the 2019 series and commented "I can't rule out that racism was a factor here. I think there may have been some unconscious racism.". This suggests that putting people that are BAME on *Love Island* is not enough to cure the issue of making the show accessible and representative if, when they are on the show, their experience is tainted.

Aside from the fact *Love Island* is not able to successfully represent multiple ethnicities, their lack of representation of different body types has also been slammed by the public. It can be noticed that pretty much everyone that appears on *Love Island* has what can be widely accepted as the 'ideal body'. This highlights one key area in which the show fails at representation as it displays unrealistic body types that may be either unattainable or unnatural to most people. This is heavily focused on among the female contestants: ex-islander Alexandra Cane tweeted "Where the curvy girls at?".

The issue is just as prevalent among men who all appear to be incredibly muscular and often tall. As seen in this year's winter *Love Island*, contestant Nas has been consistently rejected by girls who have commented on his height, along with the other islanders. This casual joking is shown on *Love Island* to be an accepted form of ridicule and is projected onto viewers, making shorter men potentially feel more insecure about their height after watching the show. The issue of lack of inclusivity of body types goes beyond representation as 1 in 4 people aged 18-24 claimed watching reality TV made

them feel worried about their bodies. *Love Island* is the most watched TV programme among this age group highlighting the detrimental effects the show is having on its viewers due to the lack of representation.

The question is, are the *Love Island* producers doing everything to make the show accessible and representative? Some would argue the inclusion of more BAME contestants and the inclusion of plus size contestant Anna Vakili in 2019 is evidence of the show trying to do more. Others may argue that this is just the bare minimum of what can be done.

The worst part about all of this has to be the response from ITV to the criticism. Creative director Richard Cowles gave a problematic response, replying that the show simply wants islanders "to be attracted to one another". The fact that the show has been criticised for a lack of representation of the BAME community and curvier, less muscular body types gives off the impression that the show deems these qualities unattractive, perpetuating an incredibly dangerous message to viewers.

Shows like *Love Island* have an enormous viewing from all types of people, including myself. That is not to say that we should boycott the show altogether, but it is important that as viewers we recognise the problems inherent in *Love Island* and call them out when they're noticed. As always, it's important to remember that there are many aspects of reality TV that aren't very real.







# *SELECT YOUR ROLE. THEN ENTER.*

*EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY OFFICER*

*COMMUNITY OFFICER*

*UNION AFFAIRS OFFICER*

*EDUCATION OFFICER*



*ACTIVITIES OFFICER*



*WELFARE OFFICER*

*INTERNATIONAL OFFICER*

**ENTER**



**Leeds  
University  
Union**

**Get paid £19.5k to do good with us.**

Represent your fellow students and make change on campus as one of our seven Exec officers for 2020/21. Put yourself forward at [bit.ly/LeadLUU](https://bit.ly/LeadLUU).





# Keir Starmer: Can He Really “Build Another Future”?

Georgina Allen

On Friday 17th of January, Labour Party leadership hopeful Keir Starmer visited Leeds as part of his campaign tour. A member of parliament since 2015, Starmer was previously a barrister and was knighted in 2014 for services to law and criminal justice. Many polls currently have him as favourite to win the leadership, with a recent YouGov survey predicting he will beat his closest rival, Rebecca Long Bailey, by 63% to 37% in the final round of voting. I went down to the church in Kirkgate, where he was meeting and talking to Leeds residents, to hear his pitch and see how enthusiastic about his campaign residents of Leeds are.

Compared to other Labour Party and campaigning events I've been to in the past in Leeds, the room is very noticeably old and also very white. Most people in the room are probably over 50, and there is an alarming proliferation of tweed clothing. There are a handful of young people in the room, and I go and speak to a few, but they seem there mostly out of curiosity rather than support – a couple stood at the back are Rebecca Long Bailey supporters, and another I speak to supports Lisa Nandy.

Starmer is introduced and is enthusiastically applauded. He's wearing a sharp navy suit but has his top button undone and no tie; I assume he has done this to give himself a more down to earth, 'man of the people' look, and it reminds me a bit of Rory Stewart's choice to take off his tie during a Conservative leadership debate. One of the compliments often levelled at Starmer is that he 'looks' and 'seems' prime ministerial, which in essence just means he's a middle aged man who speaks in received pronunciation and looks good in a suit.

He starts by talking briefly about his love of the city of Leeds. Like other former leadership hopeful Jess Philips, he attended the University

of Leeds, and he mentions how it is a city he enjoys returning to. He launches into his speech by talking about the great disappointment of the election results, a disappointment everyone in the room shares. From the outset he is extremely engaging and comes across as passionate, and it is not surprising considering his past career as a barrister that public speaking is one of his strong suits.

*Starmer talks about how we must “come together”, mentioning how we cannot fight the Tories if we are fighting each other*

Starmer talks about how we must “come together”, mentioning how we cannot fight the Tories if we are fighting each other. He wants to present himself as a unifying force within the party, someone who can unite both the right and left of Labour and heal the divide. This is an attractive proposal for many members who are fatigued by constant infighting; however, calls to end division and factionalism all feel a bit hypocritical coming from Starmer, who took part in an attempted coup against Jeremy Corbyn in 2016, and it is unclear how he would prevent factionalism causing conflict in the future.

Starmer also makes it clear that he doesn't believe that the Labour party should be criticising the Blair years. This comes after new MP Zarah Sultana demanded an end to '40 years of Thatcherism' in her first speech, slamming New Labour.

Starmer lists off achievements under Blair: Sure start centres, the minimum wage, investment in the NHS, the Good Friday Agreement. But of course, he makes sure to add, he was against the Iraq war. I'm unsure of his reasoning behind the insistence that Labour should not be critical of

Blair, a man who is hated by many and considered by some globally to be a war criminal. Is it simply a way of appeasing the right of the party?

It is also of note how little during his talk Starmer mentions Brexit. I assume this is because he wants to distance himself from his role as shadow Brexit Secretary and the disastrous second referendum policy; it is no secret that he supported remain. Is he really the smart choice to win back the majority Leave-voting seats lost in the last election? Members of the audience seem to think so, and after he finishes speaking he receives a standing ovation from a group of supporters at the front of the room.

Starmer then takes questions from the audience, and as people introduce themselves it becomes clear that many have travelled from quite far to see him speak in Leeds today, with some people having come from places such as York or further afield in Yorkshire.

One audience member introduces herself as a University of Leeds student and talks about the crisis of waiting times for mental health services at the university, with some people having to wait over a year to get referred for counselling. Keir gives a reassuring and predictable answer about the crisis in NHS funding, but without any actual examples of how he would change the policy, the answer feels vague and lacking in substance.

Perhaps the most interesting answer of the night comes after a woman questions Starmer on how as a white straight male he thinks he can relate to the majority of the people in the country, despite looking very much like the face of the establishment. It is a fair point; after all, if it wasn't for Keir in this election race, we would be guaranteed to have our first female Labour leader as all the other remaining candidates are women. His reply dodges the gravity of the question, and he starts listing off his working class credentials; how his mother was a nurse, how he worked at a factory before university etc. He then recounts an anecdote about visiting a mother in his constituency whose son had just been stabbed and how when he was comforting her it 'didn't matter that he was a white man'. It was a bizarre way to answer the question and Starmer came off as seeming quite rattled by it, which is odd considering I doubt it's the first time he has been asked something along those lines during the campaign.

During the meeting I was struck by how passionate some people clearly were about his campaign, especially those who had travelled such long distances to see Starmer. However, it felt very different from the passion that surrounded the Corbyn campaign, which was fuelled by radical optimism and a youth-powered grassroots movement. Starmer's supporters didn't seem optimistic, they seemed tired. Sick of the infighting in Labour and sick of losing election after election, they believe Starmer is the one to unite the party and win going forward. I can't say I'm convinced.



Image: Twitter (Keir Starmer)



# What Will it Take to Stop Suffering of the Rohingya?

James Welham

The International Court of Justice's (ICJ) ruling that Myanmar must begin to bring justice to the Rohingya people could be viewed with gleamy-eyed nostalgia; harking back to the days when the United Nations successfully instilled hegemony for multilateralism in international relations.

Displaced as far Bangladesh, Rohingya refugees cheered with relief in temporary camps as the ICJ delivered their ruling, whilst holding aloft placards displaying the gratitude 'thank you Gambia'. Through bringing the case to the Hague, the African nation illuminated the prolonged suffering of a persecuted people. The 700,000 souls cruelly forced to leave their homes in the Rakhine State of Myanmar may finally begin to return, protected by the infallible strength of international law.

Arsalan Suleman, a diplomat in President Obama's State Department, praised the mechanisms of the UN at work: "You have a country in Africa, not an extremely well-developed country, but a country that



Image: BBC

really cares about human rights and dignity, and it has made it a national concern to fight for the Rohingya."

*The genocide of the Rohingya will continue until there is coercive multilateral pressure against Myanmar*

Nevertheless, it is important not to overestimate the weight of the ICJ's ruling. The persecution and genocide of the Rohingya people is an abhorrent part of Myanmar's international identity.

Its origins can be traced back as far as 1982, when the Rohingya were stripped of their citizenship and were effectively left stateless by the ruling Military Junta Government. Arguably, Aung San Suu Kyi's rise to prominence has worsened the plight of the Rohingya. Once viewed as the darling of western-liberal democracies due to her dignified fight for the democratisation of Myanmar; the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Suu Kyi now instead represents something deeply rotten within the Myanmar psyche. The country's de-facto leader offered an immediate and deluded rebuke to the ICJ's ruling, stating that it was a defensive and 'internal armed conflict' against Rohingya militants.

The unfortunate truth is that without acknowledgement of the persecution of the Rohingya people by Myanmar's government, the ICJ have little chance of witnessing their ruling becoming truly fulfilled.

It invites scrutiny, but not the executive authority of the United Nations to prevent further atrocities. The ICJ cannot legally bring charges of Genocide against its perpetrators, as it holds no individual jurisdiction in Myanmar. Indeed, the judicial body twice ordered similar measures during the Bosnian War during the turn of the century. This genocide did not start to subside until the United Nations Security Council voted for a military intervention. Similarly, the genocide of the Rohingya will continue until there is coercive multilateral pressure against Myanmar. The role of Gambia has played is commendable, but until regional super-powers take action against the atrocity, it will continue. Given China's persecution of their own Muslim minority in Xinjiang, and the Trump administration's anti-interventionist rhetoric, this appears highly unlikely.

As ordered, Myanmar will report back to the ICJ every 6 months, detailing what is being done to protect the Rohingya. Yet this act will be purely superficial, and the Rohingya will still suffer at the hands of their government. The Myanmar state has inflicted this inhumane treatment to a minority of its own people due to a long-held fear of domestic instability. Yet the implications of the Rohingya genocide will only perpetuate domestic strife. It will continue to breed separatist movements across the country, and will consign Myanmar as a pariah amongst the global order. Despite the best efforts of The Gambia and the ICJ, only a truly multilateral response that combines multiple principle organs of the UN will stop the suffering of the Rohingya.

# Knife Crime at "Record High"

Delphie Bond

As the Tories sashay through the capital with their blue badges, new statistics expose the stark red blood under their fingernails. Statistics have been released depicting a startling 50% rise in knife crime in the last 8 years; with figures currently sitting 'at a record high'.

While this may be a game of numbers for Johnson and the Tory party, a juggling act to balance out the equation; the victims of these crimes, and the perpetrators, are the victims of a sick society, a society riddled with ravaging racism and austerity.

As the country hobbles into the second decade of a gruelling and decapitating Tory government, the fear is that this figure will increase; just as the number of youth clubs has been completely decimated by 69%, while the average amount of money spent on youth services to the local authorities has plummeted from £7.79 million in 2010, to £2.45 million.

These figures cannot be seen as a natural process. Every aspect of our society has been constructed to create the bleak picture before our eyes. Every penny of spending has been cruelly

calculated, and every penny taken away from youth centres, schools and social housing has caused the suffering of innocent children.

The incredulous nature of the Tories who seemingly cannot strike a distinction between cutting spending in the social sector and the rise of knife crime is frankly frightening. The BBC released statistics recently which surmised that the capital sees 169 knife crime incidents for every 100,000 people.

We live in an obscenely unequal society which wilfully leaves the youth services budget to shrivel. The Tories expect our society to be thriving economically; yet leave the impoverished youth to wilt away with social mobility vastly out of the question with savage university tuition fees, rocketing house prices and cuts to benefits. Without the stability of White privilege and public-school education, young people are left behind and drawn to the streets where cash and violence go hand in hand.

Poverty seems so inherently tied with the rising numbers of knife crime, and it is unnerving to see politicians dismiss the connection - we have seen it from Theresa May, David Cameron and Boris Johnson.

It's creating an unsafe environment; Dianne Abbot has recently claimed 'this government cannot ensure the safety of our citizens'. Even the controversial 'Stop & Search' is ultimately flawed, racially biased and unsafe.

With police numbers drastically depleted mixed with the culmination of institutional racism and poverty, knife crime will remain.

We need to provide safe places for young people. Schools should not be the only haven that young people can turn to. Working class children and young adults need a stimulus for positivity and we must be able to provide something more appealing than a knife.



Image: BBC



# Women's Football: The Beautiful Game

Louisa Polack

A video from last year's WAFF Women's Club Championship has gone viral, and for all the right reasons.

The football game was played in Jordan, between Arab Orthodox club and Shabab al Ordon club last October. In the clip, football truly earns its title as the beautiful game; an Arab Orthodox Club player's hijab fell from her head during the match as she tried to run past her opponents. In response, five of her opponents instantly formed a huddle around her to protect her modesty as she knelt down to fix her headscarf. For me, the most heart-warming part of this clip is how it seemed instinctual for her opponents to stop the play to protect the modesty of their fellow woman; neither the rivalry of the game, nor the fact that none of the opponents involved were wearing a hijab mattered.

It's rather disappointing that the emergence of this story of comradery circulates at a similar time to the story of the 16 year old athlete from Ohio, Noor Abukaram. After completing a 5km race for her school, achieving her personal best time, Noor was told that she had been disqualified, all because she did not have a waiver to show official approval of her religious headwear.

The two stories seem in such stark contrast; the beauty in football players protecting the modesty

of an opponent, ensuring her continued inclusion within the game, compared to the explicit exclusion of Noor from the race on the basis of her religious dress. Noor, herself, has said that she feels that this was discriminatory "against my religion." I find it so hard to fathom how a) this uniform rule, whereby religious headwear requires a waiver, was able to become established, and b) how anyone can justify excluding a participant from a race on the basis of their religious dress and, therefore, identity.

And the sad thing is, while the story of the football match in Jordan may be the first of its kind to circulate internationally, Noor's is not. Only last year, a 16 year old basketball player in Philadelphia was forced to remove herself from the game, as she needed a waiver to wear her hijab.

On the other side of the spectrum, the BBC reported that last month a female teenage swimmer in Alaska was disqualified after winning her race, as her swimsuit, which was issued by the school, was revealing too much of her bottom.

Not only do these stories reveal an issue of religious discrimination within sporting rules, but also that women are being singled out and excluded on the basis of their dress. I challenge you to find a story where a male athlete has been disqualified from a race, that he has already partaken in, on the grounds that his uniform was

unsuitable. This poses a big issue, as it highlights the sexualisation of women in sports; a topic that is slowly becoming a subject of inquiry in social research. In other words, an issue that needs to be resolved.

I hope that the story of the Jordan-based football match managed to restore your faith in humanity a little, however the other stories I've covered highlight how we need to stop measuring female athletes by the way that they dress, but by their athletic abilities. The ability of Noor Abukaram, the Philadelphian basketball player and the Alaskan swimmer all deserve to be recognised, and not cast aside because of how they are dressed.



Image: The Independent

## “Woke Bashing”: Silencing the Left

Rayan Striebel

Recently, the national conversation on Harry and Meghan saw the issue of racism raised on an episode of the BBC's Question Time. Actor panellist, Laurence Fox, accused a member of the audience of racism. He sighed loudly after she pointed out his White privilege and its influence on his previous comments of how Britain is “the most tolerant, lovely country in Europe”.

Laurence's comments and the attitudes behind them raise serious concerns relating to a dangerous rise in “woke bashing”, as well as to the broader conversation of race issues in the UK. This is also in conjunction with the rise in popularity and platform size of individuals such as Piers Morgan. These figures champion the idea of saying what “everyone else is thinking”. Should such controversial views be amplified by significant platforms?

Regarding “woke bashing”, attitudes and comments similar to Fox's can be found on the platforms of commentators such as Piers Morgan, who present themselves as “speaking the truth”. Originally describing an individual as conscious or aware of social issues, “woke” has undergone a transformation into a pejorative term describing pretentiousness, virtue signalling, or complaining.

This is worrying, as the popularity of Morgan

and others normalises a culture of dismissiveness and ridicule towards “woke” ideas and individuals. This can lead to the neglect of the social issues that they bring forward. Fox on Question Time can be seen as an example of this.

Fox's accusation of racism saw the discussion surrounding ‘reverse racism’ gain attention. This is harmful as it fuels conversations on the wrong issues in society. ‘Reverse racism’ is a myth, as generations of abuse by a White-benefitting and dominated system causes the groups affected by these prejudices to naturally become mistrusting and critical of White society. The act of addressing and criticising racism and White privilege in the UK is what only can be described as a learned and logical response of an oppressed group, not racism.

The issue is the dissimilarity in the sizes of each group's platforms. On the one hand, Morgan and his contemporaries have access to established and wide-reaching media outlets. Mainly via traditional media, they can present themselves and their views as common sense reflections of the population's thoughts.

On the other hand, the majority of “woke” groups and individuals have access to far smaller platforms, usually on social media and in newspaper columns. This allows large platform “woke bashers” to broadcast discussions of their

choosing and therefore control the agenda.

A large platform is therefore a valuable asset as it can be a legitimising factor for one's argument in the eyes of many people. Viewers are going to be swayed by the polished appearance of someone defending societal norms and saying, “everything's alright”. When confronted with “woke” and progressive ideas, many feel attacked or intimidated. This can be attributed partly to how the message and the messenger are presented.

These issues raise questions on if “woke bashers” should be denied such huge platforms. While no-platforming works in certain cases, it's difficult to apply here. This is due to the fact that if Morgan or Fox were to be stripped of their platforms it would vindicate their arguments of a culture where political correctness has “gone mad”. Instead, “woke” agendas and individuals should be given equally sized platforms in order to win the debate via actual discourse and argument.

“Woke” and progressive individuals should be granted significant platforms from which to defend themselves and spread their messages. This is to create discussion and debate, but to also prevent the neglect of real issues.

The playing field must be levelled if there is to be any chance of changing media attitudes on “woke” issues.





Careers Centre

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

# University of Leeds Business Plan Competition 2020

**Do you have a business idea?  
Have you already started your business  
and now want to take it to the next level?**

**Who can enter?**

Any University of Leeds undergraduate or graduate (up to seven years), who is thinking about starting a business or who has started a business in the last 24 months.

**Deadline for submissions**

Tuesday 18th February 2020 at 10.00

**Announcement of Finalists**

Friday 21st February 2020

**Finalists presentations**

Wednesday 26th February 2020  
and Thursday 27th February 2020

**Winners announcement**

Friday 28th February 2020

**Business Plan Lunch**

Thursday 19th March 2020

**First Prize: £2,000**

**Second Prize: £1,250**

**Third Prize: £750**

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

**For full details visit:**

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

**Contact:** Richard Doyle on  
0113 343 5028

**Email:** [spark@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:spark@leeds.ac.uk)

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







# Cryptocurrencies: A Year in Review and What The Future Has in Store

Emmanuel Young

The cryptocurrency industry has once again failed to stop generating headlines in 2019. From the meteoric price growth that defined the first two quarters of 2019, the announcement of the entry of social media giant Facebook into the industry, to the launch of the first ever cryptocurrency settled derivatives, the year has been packed full of developments. This is my take on the year in crypto.

## To the Moon?

For several years now, it has felt like the community rallying call “to the moon” had lost a certain ring as Bitcoin, and the wider cryptocurrency market, seemingly struggled to recover from the post-2017 price correction, leading a vast swathe of the community to disinterest (and perhaps dismay). However, although it is true that ‘Bitcoin \$20,000’ is still only a detail of the past, it is not correct to say that intra year performance has been poor.

In fact, between January 2019 and April 2019, Bitcoin had been oscillating between \$3,500 and \$4,200, but towards the end of June 2019, those figures had jumped to \$9100 and \$11,500 respectively, representing a 300% to 400% gain. Moreover, the all-time high in 2019 was recorded at just under \$14,000. Compare that to the year-to-date performance of traditional market indices: DOWJ (+24%), FTSE 100 (+11%), CAC40 (+29%) and Bitcoin still massively outperforms significantly.

## The Reasons Why

The US-China trade war has continued to scare traditional markets, Brexit and early year signs of recession (the ‘flipping’ of the infamous yield curve) prompted central banks around the world to lower interest rates, reducing the return in said markets, pushing investors to find returns elsewhere. With the launch of custodial services for cryptocurrencies at leading exchange Coinbase amongst others, as well as the launch by Bakkt of futures settled in cryptocurrency

and the creation of new cryptocurrency derivative products at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME), 2019 saw increased opportunity for institutional investors to get involved in crypto.

## To Like, or Not to Like?

Yet, 2019 saw the focus shift away from the price and more onto Satoshi’s original vision: Bitcoin as a medium of exchange. Enter: Facebook. In June 2019, Facebook announced that it was planning to launch its own digital currency (and I replace ‘crypto’ with ‘digital’ deliberately here), Libra. Facebook assessed that it could leverage its 2 billion person user base to create a WeChat-esque social media payment platform; seemingly having all the benefits of a cryptocurrency. Regulators unsurprisingly intervened.

The US Senate decided it needed to subpoena the ambitious Zuckerbot himself to face the notorious Senate Banking Committee, re-raising and admonishing Facebook about those very same privacy and data management concerns, essentially letting Facebook know that they would probably not be able to continue until the Committee had been satisfied that the American public could trust the giant.

## Regulation, Regulation, Regulation

This is against a backdrop of a number of regulatory creations relating to cryptocurrencies in 2019. The UK’s Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) proposed a nationwide ban of amateur crypto-derivatives trading, most western developed countries introduced laws tax gains made in the space as well as introducing a variety of ways to define cryptocurrencies, from assets, to commodities, to securities.

Despite the negative association of regulatory intervention in new industry, not all efforts have been concerning. The small landlocked nation of Liechtenstein introduced the world’s first comprehensive cryptocurrency legislation with the sole purpose of trying to attract crypto businesses to the country. Even the maverick former central banker

at the Bank of England called for a central bank backed ‘stablecoin’. In the latter half of 2019, China, which historically has had a rather acrimonious relationship with cryptocurrencies (think back to September 2017), announced its plans to do just that; launch a government-managed cryptocurrency in 2020. Usually, when the Chinese government say they want to do something, it gets done.

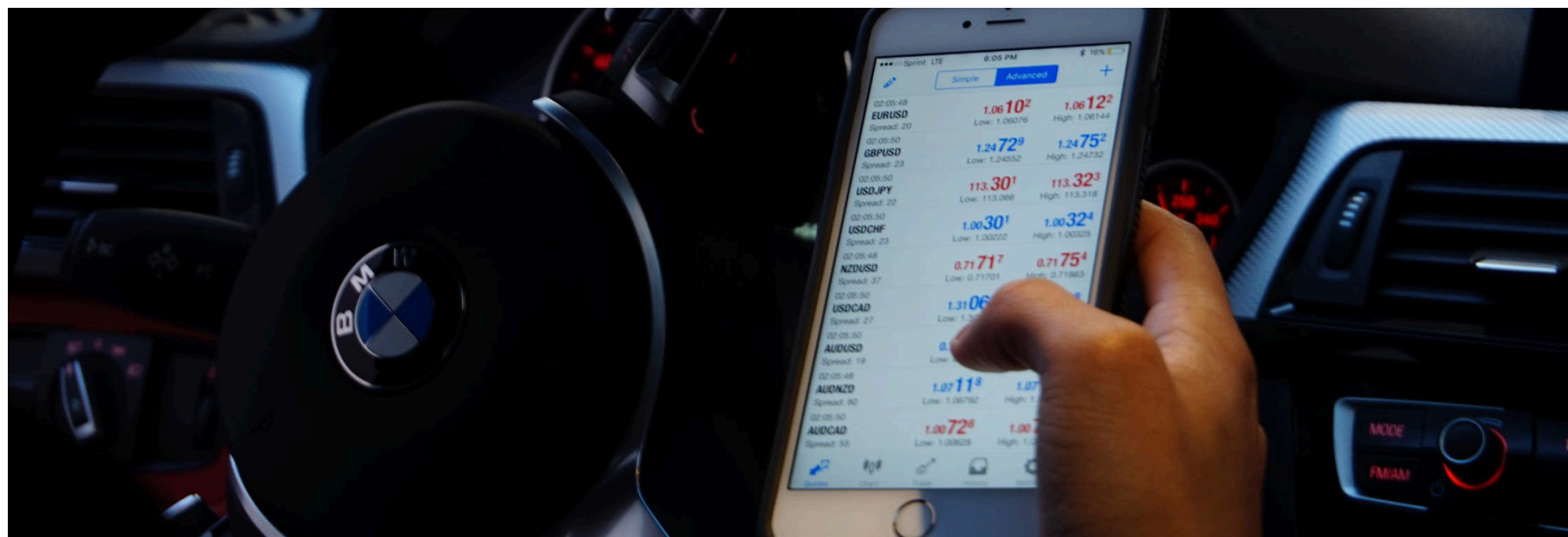
## The Next Decade

Will the price of Bitcoin attempt another journey to the moon? Will legislation hinder or help that journey? The old adage ‘only time will tell’ could be appropriate here. Some key things to note and to look out for:

1. We are less than a month into 2020 and cryptocurrencies have already outperformed the whole-year performance of those aforementioned traditional indices. Although this does not necessarily mean this trend will continue.
2. Another world-renowned exchange: NASDAQ has announced it is looking into developing its own crypto-related derivative products. Expect the launch of more such products to be announced and a subsequent increase in institutional interest.
3. Bitcoin, the most valuable (by marketcap) and famous of the cryptocurrencies is marking a huge milestone: it’s second reward halving. This will essentially cut the rate of supply of the cryptocurrency in half, which should have an effect on the price if economic theory holds.

And we will almost certainly see more interventions from the world’s largest companies and, what is now the traditional global regulatory response.

2019 has definitely been an exciting year, but so was 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2017, and no doubt the new decade will bring more.







WHO KNOWS  
WHAT YOU'RE  
GOING HOME TO



Prices so low you don't need to plan ahead

[nationalexpress.com/students](http://nationalexpress.com/students)

**national**express



# The Clouds Part for Climate Change Modelling



Image: Ed Barnes

**Morwenna Davies**

A new ground-breaking research project, co-led by scientists at the University of Leeds, is attempting to make sense of one of the biggest mysteries in our skies: clouds. The high-tech five week survey will analyse formation characteristics and changes of shallow trade-wind clouds in Barbados, which will be a highly beneficial aid in essential climate modelling initiatives.

Why are clouds important? The relationship between clouds and climate change is very much an unsolved mystery of science. Clouds are known as an important feedback mechanism influencing global climate, however it is not known whether they help or hinder increases in global temperature.

Water vapour is actually the most effective greenhouse gas, and therefore clouds play a vital role in trapping heat within the Earth's atmosphere and reflecting it back to the surface. However, clouds have a high albedo, which means they reflect incoming solar radiation from the Sun back out into space; preventing it from reaching and warming the Earth's surface. It is often believed that, with increasing global temperatures, more water will be evaporated from the oceans which will lead to the formation of more clouds. However according to NASA, a warmer climate means that more water vapour molecules are required to become saturated in order for them to condense into clouds. This might make clouds less likely to form, for example there are generally fewer clouds during the summer months than during

winter, despite greater humidity.

The complex behaviour and responses of clouds to climate change is very difficult to model due to their unpredictable nature and unknown mechanisms. Climate models therefore often omit or simplify the effect of clouds, which limits the overall accuracy of outputs. Many projections for future climate changes in response to global warming that we see on a regular basis use variations of models which do not entirely account for the impacts of clouds.

*Results from this novel study will be essential in the development of more robust climate models*

The National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS) has coordinated a five-week large-scale field study co-led by scientists at the University of Leeds and in partnership with the University of Manchester, British Antarctic Survey and University of East Anglia, involving scientists from the UK, USA, France and Germany. The project is known as EUREC4A (Elucidating the Role of Clouds-Circulation Coupling in Climate) and will utilise cutting edge field equipment including five aircraft, four research vessels, and high resolution ground and satellite remote sensing.

A component of the study will involve flying research aircraft into trade-wind cumulus clouds. These are isolated white clouds usually with a flat,

darker base and whose movement is predominantly influenced by permanent easterly prevailing winds, known as trade winds. Cumulus clouds that form over a hot surface, such as near the equator, may accrue to form larger, menacing cumulonimbus clouds which are responsible for heavy rain and thunderstorms.

The research will assess how these clouds form and develop over time in response to climate changes such as temperature, wind and humidity among other factors.

How will the study be beneficial? Results from this novel study will be essential in the development of more robust climate models able to more accurately predict future changes in climate. Dr Leif Denby from the School of Earth and Environment at the University of Leeds stated that “the concurrent and diverse observations from this campaign will give us the means to verify which models and theories are correct. We will be able to apply this new found understanding of what’s happening to the low-clouds in Barbados to the low-clouds in trade-wind regions over the whole tropics.”

The University of Leeds and NCAS are also working with the Met Office to develop a new model which will predict behaviour changes of convective clouds. This can help to accurately project how weather patterns may change under future climate change.

Overall, the project will be of the utmost importance in making sense of the complexities of global warming and will help with our understanding of how our climate may change in the future.



Image: SailDrone



# The Missing Link

11.62 million-year-old fossils discovered in the Allgäu region of Bavaria between 2015 and 2018 bear remarkable anatomic traits of both apes and early humans and may be evidence of the last common ancestor before the diversion of these species.

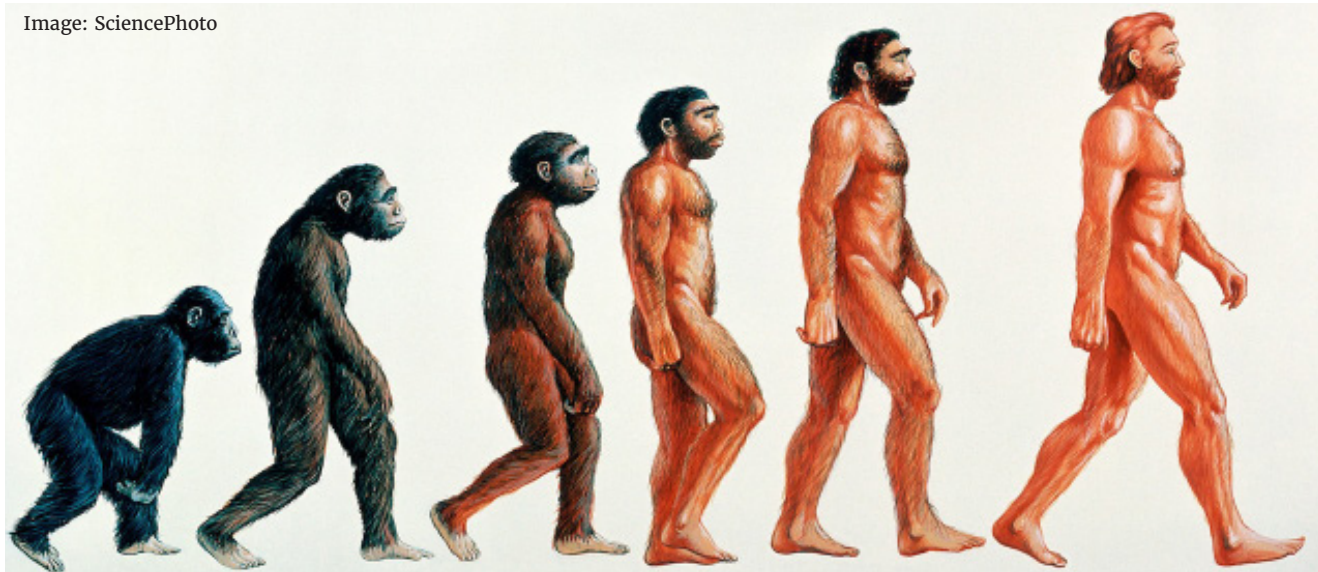
Hayley Austin

*Danuvius guggenmosi* is said to have been adept in both suspensory behaviour (the ability to hang or suspend from trees, like that of primates) and habitual bipedalism (the ability to walk on two legs like that of hominins, or early humans).

Researchers and scientists were able to reconstruct the bones of two males, one female and one juvenile in order to deduce how the species would have moved. They found that *D. guggenmosi* could hang from trees like modern great apes but, as its finger bones were not as robust as would be expected of knuckle-walkers, that it would have held its legs straight and walked upright whilst moving around in the tree canopy. This is due to its similar lower spine and shin bones to that of humans, and it would have walked on its soles, as shown by its grasping big toe. This unique and evolutionary transitional movement has been dubbed by scientists as “extended limb clambering”, a precursor to complete bipedalism or complete suspension.

This find is significant for a few reasons, one being that this species is potentially the common ancestral link between great apes and humans which scientists have been unable to find until now. Secondly, it may

Image: SciencePhoto



reveal that this common ancestor may in fact have lived in Europe, not Africa, as previously thought. And lastly, the find may have just pushed back the timeline for bipedalism.

There are many theories that exist to explain how humans became bipeds: some argue that it was to adapt to the changing environment of the Savannah due to a loss of forests, some argue that it was to adapt to being able to carry food or make tools, and others say it was in order to better disperse body heat in a changing climate. Nevertheless, the early human skeleton began to change overtime, the spine became vertical with two curves, the pelvis became more bowl shaped to adjust to locomotion changes and in females, bigger infant brain and head size at birth meant pelvises became wider.

In the late 1900s, scientists began to make new discoveries and started to form an evolutionary timeline. The first on this timeline were “Australopithecines,” including *Australopithecus afarensis* and *Australopithecus africanus*, who lived 4-3 million years ago and 3-2 million years ago respectively. Lucy is the best-known example of *A. afarensis*, as her skeleton showed what was then the first evidence of bipedalism. She had a skull akin to a chimpanzee, but below her neck, the anatomy of her

spine, pelvis, hips, thigh bones and feet, were typical of bipeds. “Robust Australopithecines” came next, with *A. robustus* and *A. bosie*, who both roamed Africa around 2-1 million years ago. Then, during a rapid period of change, *Homo habilis* emerged around 2 million years ago as the earliest evidence in the genus “Homo”. A couple hundred thousand years later and the official first human ancestor, *Homo erectus* walked the earth between 1.9 million and 140,000 years ago. They were the beginning of a migratory species and began to adapt to different weather conditions around the world. Then came Neanderthals and early *Homo sapiens*, genetically shown to have interbred, and finally modern *H. sapiens*.

Throughout the timeline, evolution can be primarily tracked through bipedalism, a reduction of the face, teeth and jaws, and an increase in cranial capacity. Understanding not only how we came to walk on two feet, but how we came to be as intelligent as we are as a species today, will hopefully help scientists to answer many of the big questions surrounding the evolution of our species.

More research into this new find, *D. guggenmosi* and how it fits on the evolutionary timeline, will help us to understand more of our own lineage and the lineage of our closest relatives.

## What is Coronavirus?

Eleanor King

On 1st January, wet markets in the city of Wuhan in central China were shuttered as the first outbreaks of the new strain of coronavirus were epidemiologically linked to customers of the animal and seafood market.

The coronavirus is a family of viruses, and the first forms that were known to affect humans were established in the 1960s. Identified as the strains 22E9 and OC43, they are the mainspring of the common cold that we all still suffer from today. These viruses were thought to have originated in bats and crossed to cattle leading on to humans and other animals such as dogs, chickens and pigs – all of which were for sale (dead and alive) at the Huanian market.

It was given the name ‘corona’ because of its viral spike proteins that protrude around the surface of each virus particle and create the appearance of a halo or crown. These proteins are the ones responsible for binding the virus to the host organism’s cells, and subsequently allowing entry of its genetic information into the cell for replication and spread. The virus stores its genetic material as RNA, rather than DNA, similarly to other viruses like ebola and rabies, and it has the largest genome of any RNA virus currently

known. Great genetic diversity of the virus has allowed its evolution into multiple strains. There are currently 7 strains that are known to infect humans, 2019-nCoV being the recent outbreak.

Infection leads to a reduction in white blood cell count which are vital for the body’s immune system response and this allows sequential infections to occur.

Generally there are fever like symptoms and in some cases the virus can cause a respiratory tract infection, however this can progress to cause pneumonia or bronchitis as well. Since the outbreak in December last year the virus has a 3% fatality rate. The average age of fatal cases reported was 75, and the majority of which were due to increased susceptibility to infection by old age or chronic diseases.

Whilst the World Health Organisation has declared that the 2019-nCoV outbreak is not a global health emergency, cases of infection have been found in a number of neighbouring countries in Asia, including Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Nepal and South Korea.

Few cases are also being treated in the US, Australia and in France. Currently there is no specific antiviral treatment for 2019-nCoV, but research is underway







# All Conquering Klopp Carries on

**Oliver Sanderson**  
Football

Liverpool's recent 2-1 victory away to Wolves, sealed by a Roberto Firmino strike, marks the 40th consecutive game in which the Reds have remained unbeaten in the league.

During this run, which began on the 12th January 2019, Jurgen Klopp's men have grown from a side full of potential into a genuinely domineering force in English football.

Such an air of invincibility is not typical of Liverpool as a Premier League outfit. The club has had to wait 30 years for a league title, during a period plagued by near-misses, false dawns and occasionally painful mediocrity.

Great managers and great players have represented the club during this time, achieving fleeting glimpses of silverware in Europe and the domestic cups. However, under Jurgen Klopp the Reds are producing more than just sporadic moments of success. Instead, they have delivered a sustained run of form that has brought them to the top of English and European football.

In the current Premier League season, Liverpool have defeated their nearest league rivals in style,

beating an in-form Leicester side 4-0 on Boxing Day and overcoming Manchester City with a convincing 3-1 victory in November.

These landmark moments of the season so far have been accompanied by often-comfortable victories over the remaining 17 teams in the Premier League.

Manchester United are the only team to prevent Liverpool from securing a domestic three-points, and even on that occasion, Klopp's men could not be beaten, with the match ending in a 1-1 draw. Such a formidable ability for consistency has been forged on defensive solidity, as record signings Alisson Becker and Virgil Van Dijk have ensured Liverpool are now a tight defensive unit that rarely affords the opposition scoring opportunities.

The individual performances of Van Dijk in particular have received special appreciation. In a Liverpool shirt the central defender has propelled himself to the status of one of the world's best footballers, having been voted second in the running for the 'Ballon d'Or' award in 2019, only behind the ever-magnificent Lionel Messi.

It's rare for a central defender to be recognised in this way - usually the Ballon d'Or is reserved for the game's leading attacking players. The last defender to make the top three was Fabio Cannavaro, when he

won the Ballon d'Or all the way back in 2006.

Further up the pitch more personal accolades have been won by Klopp's players. Senegalese forward Sadio Mane has won Africa's 'Footballer of the year' award for 2019, and Mohammad Salah holds several goalscoring records.

Along with the skilful Roberto Firmino, Liverpool's attacking trident are scoring important goals in decisive moments, which has driven the team to a comfortable points margin ahead of their closest rivals for silverware.

Individual awards are proof of Liverpool's growing dominance on the world stage of football.

However, such rewards are not the end goal for Klopp's men. Neither is the ever-nearing chance to break the record for consecutive unbeaten matches in the top-flight, currently held by the 'invincibles' of Arsenal in the 2002-2003 season, who went 49 games undefeated. As captain Jordan Henderson and the rest of his teammates reveal when interviewed, Liverpool's players are only focussed on their next match.

It is this strength of mentality that secured the team European and World Champion status in 2019, and one that is close to delivering the club its first ever Premier League title.

## Mac is Back - UFC's Notorious Star Returns



Image Credits: Forbes

**Calum Pinches**  
UFC

Conor McGregor's long anticipated return marked his first bout in over a year, with fans of both him and the sport as a whole eagerly waiting for Bruce Buffer to declare the famous words "It's Time!"

The McGregor of previous years was not to be found at least in his press conferences, the arrogant and provocative displays of insults and mockery substituted for a much more humble and accepting approach, with the star emphasising that he had made mistakes and sought a form of redemption.

Not only has McGregor been out of the ring for over a year, his last fight being a devastating and humiliating loss to Khabib Nurmagomedov, but during this period his various misdemeanours have

gained very public attention.

Alleged rumours of cheating coincided with an aggravated assault charge on an individual in a bar, leaving the once double lightweight and featherweight champion at his lowest stock in his professional career.

Many, including McGregor himself, were wary that a loss to Donald 'Cowboy' Cerrone would almost certainly spark the beginning of the end, but boy did he deliver.

The fight itself was vintage McGregor, immediately rushing in with flying knees and vicious body shots. Whilst in the clinch, his use of the shoulders to combat Cerrone's guard was intuitive and difficult to defend against.

The swinging arc of his headkick rendered his opponent nearly unconscious and after several

attempts of ground and pound, referee Herb Dean was left with no option but to stop the fight, just forty seconds in.

Draped in the amber, white and green of the Irish flag, first-round victory secured and the doubters silenced, McGregor mounted the Octagon with pride and undeniably a sense of relief.

This display of skill and intent certainly puts him back into serious contention for future title fights, the level that his talent and popularity in the sport arguably deserves.

The Irishman's status as the most lucrative fighter on the roster, with this match alone being bought by an estimated 2 million people on the pay per view platform, further strengthens his argument for future title fights.

At a time where MMA and boxing go head to head in a battle of the ratings, McGregor's ability to draw in the casual fan is evidently a huge asset to CEO Dana White, and his return no doubt will have financial gain for many involved in the UFC.

But for now the speculation continues. Rumours of a completion of the Diaz trilogy are circling, with Tony Ferguson and 'BMF' Jorge Masvidal also in the pipeline. The most demanded and probably the most marketable next step would be the Khabib re-match, but fears of ill-blood and a repeat of the descent into sheer chaos at the last match may prevent this from being agreed upon soon.

What can be agreed upon is the success of this victory both for McGregor personally and the sport as a whole. UFC's favourite son has returned, and we're happy to have him back.



# Super Bowl: The Best Vs The Best

**Kyle Goldsmith**  
American Football

In many ways, this Sunday's highly-anticipated Super Bowl is exactly what it should be. Not only the best versus the best, but also proof that the parity-orientated draft structure is working. The 2018 regular season finished with the San Francisco 49ers licking their wounds after a painful 4-12 season.

Meanwhile, the Kansas City Chiefs were coming off a 12-4 season in which they were only stopped from going to the Super Bowl by the eventual championship-winning New England Patriots.

A year later, and the two franchises are both rolling into Miami full of confidence with hope that this is their year.

The 49ers used the high picks they received after their poor 2018 season well, including turning the second overall pick into star defensive end Nick Bosa, who finished with nine sacks in the regular season before adding another three in the postseason. Along with impressive second-round receiver Deebo Samuel and fifth-round pick Dre Greenlaw, Bosa and the 49ers' 2019 draft class has been combined with smart free agent acquisitions such as running back Tevin Coleman and a midseason trade for Emmanuel Sanders to completely change the historic franchise's

fortunes.

Meanwhile, the Chiefs season has largely gone under the radar. Perhaps this is a good thing for electric third-year quarterback Patrick Mahomes, who despite missing two games through injury, has had an incredible season and heads into the Super Bowl after an extremely impressive postseason. He has undoubtedly been helped by having a vast array of weapons, with receivers Tyreek Hill and rookie Mecole Hardman combining with tight end Travis Kelce to give Mahomes opportunities for explosive plays downfield.

The Chiefs have started both of their postseason games very slowly, facing a huge 24 point deficit against the Houston Texans in the divisional round and a 10 point deficit against the Titans on championship weekend before storming back.

They can ill afford to have a slow start against the 49ers, who have pounded their two postseason opponents almost into submission. If they can capitalise on a slow start from the Chiefs then they may be able to utilise their highly impressive running game to shorten the game and keep Mahomes off the field. They have run the ball in these playoffs 89 times at around 5.3 per carry, so there is no doubt that the Chiefs defence will need to be stout and make Jimmy Garoppolo throw the ball.

This game is going to be very tight and could very likely come down to who gets the ball last and the turnover battle. Both teams will look to minimise mistakes and utilise their strengths.

The clash of styles between the Chief's dynamic passing attack and the 49ers' powerful running game is going to be very interesting, but don't forget about the defences.

They can very much have a big impact on this game. A great defensive play or a mistake from either of these two quarterbacks could very well decide who wins the Super Bowl.

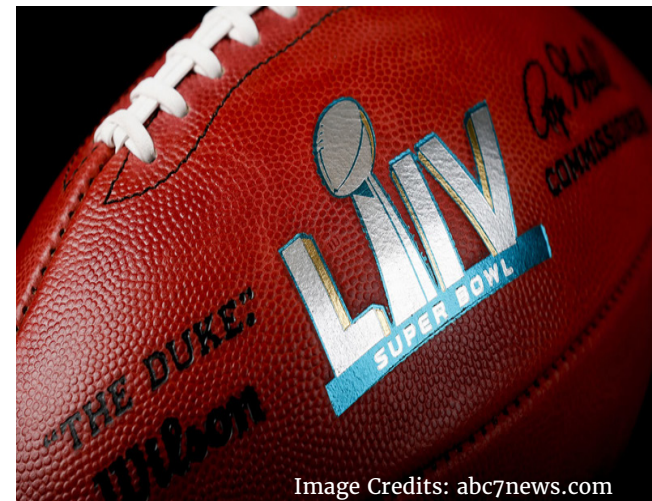


Image Credits: abc7news.com

# Saracens' Scandal Results in Relegation



Image Credits: The Guardian

**Harry Tong**  
Rugby Union

Over the past three months, rugby union has seen its greatest controversy unfold.

In November last year, London based club Saracens were docked 35 points. Their crime, a consistent, deliberate breach of the Premiership's salary cap regulations, implemented to create a level playing field for all twelve clubs. This prevents those with significant financial backing from dominating domestic rugby.

Initially, the club pleaded their innocence, insisting they had done nothing wrong. And now it has been announced that Saracens will be relegated from the top division down to the second tier of English rugby. Despite previous warnings and demands that they abide by the rules, the club have failed to do so, and face the subsequent punishment.

It should be stated that this is not a case of financial mismanagement, an accidental slip of the regulations

with no ill purpose. The club intentionally did not disclose their financial records and player wages to the governing bodies for the past 3 seasons, in full knowledge that doing so would reveal their negligence of the rules.

This has been systematic cheating on a gross scale, an exploitation that has had, and will continue to have drastic implications on the sport for a long while to come.

Saracens have been the dominant force in both the English domestic game and on the continent, winning four of the past five Premiership titles and three of the past four European Champions Cups. This is, on the surface, an outstanding record, but it is a record now marred and tainted with the knowledge that these titles were procured by illegal means. Numerous iconic moments, for both fans and players, are now hollow and empty.

There is little sympathy from other clubs in the division: Exeter Chiefs, who Saracens have beaten to three Premiership titles in recent years, are justifiably

aggrieved by their actions.

In their cheating, the club have simultaneously deprived other clubs of their own chance at glory, utilising money they should not have had, and players that they should not have played.

Indeed, the team is certainly star studded, strewn with international stars. Saracens provide the core of the England Rugby team, Mako and Billy Vunipola, hooker Jamie George, Mauro Itoje and Owen Farrell, just a few of the big names on the books.

This level of quality in the team has long drawn suspicion, and rightly so: no other team can lay claim to so many world class players, due to the salary cap that Saracens so blatantly breached.

The future for both the club and its players is now thrown into turmoil. Next year they will be confined to the second tier, playing the likes of Ealing, Doncaster and the Cornish Pirates. Many of their players will undoubtedly move on to different pastures, bailing from the sinking ship.

Saracens will undoubtedly bounce back from this crisis however, as many other teams have before them. Rangers have hauled themselves back up from the fourth tier to challenge Celtic at the top of Scottish Football again. Likewise, Italian team Juventus survived their own financial scandal to go on and win eight titles in a row.

What cannot be repaired though is damage done to both the club and the sport's reputation, especially damning coming off the back off a highly successful World Cup. Nor can the cups Saracens have won be given to those who should have fairly obtained them had they not been cheated out of them. The future implications still remain unclear.



# England Thrash South Africa in Fourth Test Match

South Africa are routed in Johannesburg as England win by 191 runs, finishing the series with an emphatic 3-1 win.



Image Credit: BBC

## Julian Bovil Cricket

England wrapped up a wonderful series win in South Africa with a resounding victory at The Wanderers, Johannesburg. With the series at 2-1 with one test to play, England only needed to draw the final test to be sure of a second consecutive series win in South Africa.

Only a mere month ago, the tour looked to be turning into something of a farce. A virus had struck down most of the squad while Ben Stokes' father had been admitted to hospital. England subsequently lost the first test, characterised by a batting collapse that we had come to expect from this England side.

However, they rallied. Winning the next three tests in convincing style, often thanks to heroics from Stokes, but also a group of young players that Chris Silverwood and Joe Root had blooded so well.

The likes of Dominic Sibley, Zak Crawley, Ollie Pope and Dom Bess have all come in and shone at some point, or at various points. That, in and amongst the result, should be what pleases England greatly.

With much of this current crop 25 or under, the likes of the aforementioned players plus Jofra Archer to come back in, test cricket in England is looking in much better hands than it did some mere three months ago.

Truth be told, South Africa are not a serious test team. Their most talented player, AB De Villiers, retired from test cricket to become a twenty20 'gun for hire', while their own board have come out strongly in favour of four day tests.

Who could blame them, looking at the attendance across the four days at The Wanderers. While the ECB continue to sell out test venues every summer, the

situation across the rest of the cricketing globe is very different. The game is in grave danger elsewhere and something has to be done.

If their side continue playing how they did in South Africa, however, the ECB will seemingly continue to be immune from such problems. From the first day of the fourth test England were on top. When it's not going for you in cricket, it can often seem a lonely place and it seems South Africa captain Faf Du Plessis is in that quandary at the moment. Losing his seventh toss in a row, and with questions hanging over England's frontline seam attack, Root sent his team into bat. Why would he choose otherwise? England had twisted the knife into this sorry South African team for the last two tests, why not twist it some more, Root asked of his team. Crawley and Sibley delivered.

Piling on England's first opening partnership century stand in a first innings of a test match since 2016. South Africa toiled on what has always been a very bowler-friendly wicket, but to no avail.

However, when the breakthrough did come, they did manage to claw their way through England's middle order. From 107-0 to 157-4. We have seen this film before. But of course it was actually the one where England's no. 4 and 6 rallied to avert the ship from the storm. Pietersen and Bell, is that you? Root and Pope put on a century stand before both of them and Curran fell in quick succession. At this point, South Africa were in a real chance of salvaging something from the series.

However, rather ironically on this tour that will surely be labelled that of the young guns, it was the old bodies that took England to that respectable 400 total. Chris Woakes, Mark Wood and Stuart Broad piled on 110 for the last two wickets, and England once again had the series win in their sights.

If it was not assured at the end of England's first innings, it certainly was after South Africa's. Some really dreadful footwork, shot-selection and just all round batting took them to a meagre total of 183. Wood, another huge plus point for England this winter, a man they should simply wrap in cotton wool and keep in the cryotherapy chamber until the Ashes down-under in 2021-22, picked up a wonderful 5fer. A welcome prize for all his hard-work over the summer and autumn months.

Unlike in Port Elizabeth, England did not choose to enforce the follow-on. And at points, this looked like something of an odd decision. With time to bat in the game, England seemingly reverted to the Trevor Bayliss style of test cricket; trying to pile on runs quickly. It saw to the quick loss of wickets, with only Root consistently playing a sensible array of shots.

So, with South Africa requiring some 466 runs – the highest ever fourth innings chase at The Wanderers: 320 – it was seemingly 3-1 to England, job done.

But South Africa, for the first time in almost three weeks, chose to make England work for their win. Their top order rallied, with van der Dussen batting superbly for his 98, two runs shy of a maiden test ton.

But in truth, this often happens when a team is set a monster target.

Think back to the Oval in 2009, Australia needed 450-odd, and they got to 200 pretty much all intact. England needed to be patient, and they were.

With the batting collapses that we have come to expect all too frequently from England over the past five years, this team should know better than anyone else that if you keep plugging away the wickets will tumble. Subsequently, they did – Joe Root has answered those nagging captaincy questions, at least until March.