



THE GRYPHON

The official newspaper of Leeds University

Crime in Student Populated Areas Peaks During Easter Break



Photo: James Boshier

Malou Baumann

It is no secret that student populated areas are favoured targets for criminals. As reported by Whatuni, every third student in the UK is estimated to fall victim to crime, with research placing burglary on the top of the list.

This Easter, the crime rate in Hyde Park and adjacent areas has reached a peak. Break-ins, burglaries and people peeping through bedroom windows with torches have ripped students of their right to feel safe and secure in their own homes.

Countless incidents were reported on Leeds Student Group (LSG) on Facebook in an attempt to warn fellow students. Statements by victims, such as “I feel like, as students, we’re a bit helpless with this”, call for more efficient support from universities, landlords and the police. Those affected have expressed to feel shaken up, constantly on edge and scared in their own homes.

A third-year student at Leeds Conservatoire, whose house got broken into near the Co-op in Hyde Park around 2 AM on April 19, has told The Gryphon that due to stories from friends and posts on LSG, she has always been very aware of the crime threat in Hyde Park, making her more conscious to lock doors.

Yet, during the early hours of Tuesday morning, burglars forced their way into her locked house, leaving the door broken. They took an Amazon Alexa charger and the students’ car keys. Upon entering the victims’ room with torches and finding her awake in her room, the burglars fled the house, jumped into the students’ car and sped off. The victim has expressed to feel tense and hyper aware of loud noises ever since the incident occurred.

Another student living in Headingley has reported an attempted burglary around 3:50 AM on Easter Sunday.

The criminals smashed a window with a plant pot and entered the house through the utility room, cutting themselves on the splintered glass and leaving blood stains everywhere. They reportedly fled after a neighbour sighted them. The student was not aware of the incident until the next day.

Upon calling the police, fingerprints and blood samples were taken and a welfare check was conducted the following day. The student has told the Gryphon that the incident “has taken a serious toll on him” and that “not feeling safe in his own home is not the best thing to have in one’s head at night.”

A similar event has been described by a second-year Fashion Photography student in Woodhouse. Two guys smashed a window and tried to break in what they thought was an empty house around 4:30 AM on April 12. After the incident, one housemate is too afraid to open her blinds during the day.

With windows being smashed and door locks being picked, the students’ supposed carelessness can hardly serve as a scapegoat for facilitating crimes anymore.

The Gryphon has contacted the University of Leeds and the West Yorkshire Police for a comment. The University press team has referred to their website page on how to deal with crime. A West Yorkshire police spokesman commented: “A good precaution to take is to make sure you don’t have expensive items on view through your windows. If you feel the security on your rented home/flat is lacking, speak to your landlord initially.”

The spokesman added: “Officers covering Inner Northwest Leeds, as well as dedicated University Officers and Crime Prevention Officers continue to work with students to provide support and advice.”

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‘LEEDS 2023’ Continues

News editor Camila Ramos covers the second instalment of ‘LEEDS 2023: City of Culture’.

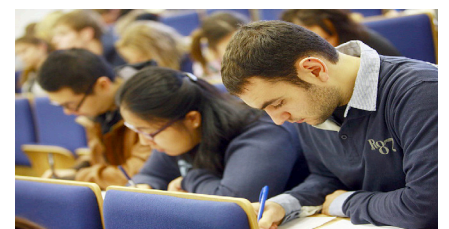
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Duty of Care for Students at University

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FLAME MAGAZINE

Music, Arts and

Culture, Lifestyle, Fashion (Midway)

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Editor's Letter



Dear students,

As I write this letter, you're probably occupying the same seat in Eddy B that you have had for weeks in a row. You're trying to finish your dissertation and prepare for those final exams that pile up just as soon as the clocks go forward, and the frosty Yorkshire wind is replaced by a warm breeze. Those days consisting of barbecues in our Hyde Park houses and little swims at Burley Stepping Stones now feel closer than ever; just a few more energy drinks chugged, and a couple hundred words typed, and you're there. I can only hope that somewhere in your beach bag, tucked between ice lollies, books and wine bottles, there's a copy of the final 2022/23 issue of The Gryphon waiting to be read.

Our previous print edition centred around LGBT+ history month brought to you a feature on demonstrations against the government's decision to block Scotland's Gender Recognition Reform Bill, a guide on how to best support LGBT+ scientists, and a vivid exploration of the queer techno scene in Leeds. Focusing on news that impacts our students first, we reported on the evacuation of students from Eldon Court and also delved deeper into the issue of security and safety in student accommodations.

Voicing the concerns of our students has been our priority for the past 123 years of The Gryphon's history. Considering the conversations around living conditions in student areas, this widely discussed topic in our newsroom occupied the front page of our October 2022 edition, where we talked about dodgy landlords and horror renting stories. Our News editor Malou Baumann revisits this subject in an article about the increased number of burglaries and break-ins in student housing during the Easter break.

However, The Gryphon is not a paper of doom and gloom. News editor Camila Ramos takes you through the preparations for the second instalment of 'LEEDS 2023: Year of Culture', the city's year-long celebration of creativity and imagination after its bid to be the European Capital of Culture was rejected in 2017 due to Brexit. Our Society Spotlight brings LUU Green Action to the forefront for anyone interested in proactively engaging with environmental, social and political issues.

Features presents a petition that calls for duty of care for students at UK universities, particularly to support young people with their mental health during their studies, as well as a case study on the gender-based gap in state-funded healthcare.

Alongside opinions on toxic masculinity and controversial U.S. laws, our Views team brings back another round of the much-loved 'Finding Common Ground' column, and this time, writers Jen Machin and Will Green engage in a constructive debate on whether we should separate the art from the artist.

Science discusses the possibility of male contraception and a vaccine for cancer, as well as the future of AI and mushrooms in the scientific realm. Last but certainly not least, Sport covers one of the most exciting annual events at Leeds (even if rugby and beers aren't your thing): the Varsity 2023 finale.

Wrapped in the middle, it's our treat for you: our FLAME magazine supplement. Music reviews boygenius's debut album and the performance of Leeds-based Mince at Brudenell Social Club.

Arts & Culture discuss the rise of the 'cultural night out' and Granta's list of 'Best of Young British Novelists'. Lifestyle recommends restaurants around Leeds where you can celebrate your graduation. And if you're frantically looking for something to wear on that trip you've booked to Greece, look no further; our Fashion writer Mia Stapleton brings all the wardrobe must-haves for the season.

Before I give my final goodbye, I want to thank every editor, writer and creative associate who has contributed to our print and online content throughout the year. None of this would have been possible without your dedication and hard work, for which I am immensely grateful.

I will leave you now with big congratulations to everyone graduating this year, and the best of luck to everyone else staying on. I hope you make Leeds as much of a home as I have.

Yours,

Alba Goskova x

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‘LEEDS 2023: Part Two’ Set to Start This Month



Photo: @LEEDS_2023 / Twitter

Camila Ramos

The second instalment of ‘LEEDS 2023: Year of Culture’ programme starts Monday 1st of May and will last throughout the end of August. Their website revealed the second installation is called ‘Playing’ and is meant to “encourage people to find wonder in the everyday and the unfamiliar”.

Kully Thiarai, the creative director and CEO of LEEDS 2023, stated: “We spent the first part of this year awakening the city, as much to itself as to the wider world. Now it’s time to play together in this brilliant city. Learn new skills, make new friends and test out new ideas. Playing together allows a whole new word to be opened up to us.”

Some of the events taking place will be free of charge. These include ‘Moon Palace Tour’, a mobile observatory created by artists Heather Peak and Ivan Morrisons.

This daytime drop-in exhibition takes inspiration from John Smeaton, the Leeds-born civil engineer, who built an observatory in East Leeds.

Another upcoming project that is also free to join will be ‘My LEEDS 2023’, starting this summer. For this one, 33 Hosts from every Leeds ward were recruited so they could work together with their communities in order to create events and activities in their own style. This will be their way of celebrating the ‘Year of Culture’ and giving spotlight to each ward in the city. You can find each host for the 33 wards in the LEEDS 2023 ‘Meet the team’ website.

Schools across the city will also be part of this under their ‘My LEEDS Schools’ project and can apply for a £300 grant to support their events. This is aimed so pupils can also participate in celebrating their community.

The first Women of the World (WOW) festival, starting on the 8th of May, will also be a highlight for the programme. This will be held at the Cinder Moor barn that was put up in 24 hours by 300 women and non-binary people. The festival will last for two weeks and will consist of different activities, from live music to talks and comedy. These activities are ‘Pay What You Decide’ events as a way of making it accessible to everyone.

However, it also includes a variety of workshops for £5 each. The WOW Barn festival is meant to celebrate the achievements of women, girls and non-binary people from across West Yorkshire and to encourage people to join the WOW movement for change.

Euan West, the Office Senior Partner at KPMG, who

is one of the sponsors for the programme, commented: “The true value of LEEDS 2023 can’t be measured in attendance figures, column inches or GVA. Instead, it will be a generation to come before we really feel the true force of these events. In the meantime, for all of us that live and work in the city region, we need to do all we can to make it the success it is set to be. We owe it to the city’s future”.

The Leeds Culture Trust and Leeds City Council launched ‘LEEDS 2023: Year of Culture’ in January to give the city an opportunity to transform and celebrate its cultural identity. An identity that creates a legacy of economic and social improvement following an unprecedented period of changes. It is also part of the council’s response towards the cancellation of the UK’s participation in the European Capital of Culture competition.

The opening event on the 7th of January was a line-up of live performances at the Headingley Stadium for the ‘Awakening’, the programmes’ first installation. The last and third part of ‘The Year of Culture’ is set to be announced in August, with September as the start date.

In the meantime, for all of us that live and work in the city region, we need to do all we can to make it the success it is set to be. We owe it to the city’s future.

We spent the first part of this year awakening the city, as much to itself as the wider world. Now it’s time to play. together in this

Society Spotlight: Green–Action Co–op



Photo: Green Action



Photo: Gabriel Kennedy

Gabriel Kennedy

Are you looking for a way to be more sustainable, or perhaps an activity that will get you out in the fresh air after being stuck in the library all week? Maybe you've wondered what goes on in the allotments on Woodhouse Moor? If that sounds like you, Green Action might be your society! Since it has recently been Earth Day, now is the perfect time to take action on the climate crisis and do your bit as part of a fun, friendly group, that focuses on working together and appreciating the little things in life.

You might have seen the Green Action's Co-op store on your way to the Student Union downstairs, where the group run one half of its work. As part of its dedication to sustainability, volunteers come and run the not-for-profit shop which sells affordable essentials in bulk, reducing plastic waste and helping you tackle the student budget. It's a cute little tucked-away space where you can get some work done or have a chat with other volunteers while providing for the student community. If you come by on a Friday, there's even a selection of completely vegan (and completely delicious) cakes and pastries, which are perfect for an end of the week treat!

As well as the shop, Green Action has a gorgeous allotment on Woodhouse Moor. Coming through the gate into the secluded plot from the bustle of Hyde Park felt like entering a secret garden, as the sounds of the street faded away, leaving only the rustle of leaves in the wind and the sound of birdsongs. Members of the Co-op get together in this oasis of calm to put the "green" into Green Action: getting their hands dirty planting, weeding, and harvesting crops as they grow.

It is intensely rewarding to see the results of your work as the plants grow, and even better to get to taste the literal fruits of your labour. The allotment grows apples, rhubarb, and potatoes, just to name a few of the wonderful things that you can pick right off the tree or out of the ground. Working alongside other members of the Co-op is a relaxed atmosphere where everyone is friendly and glad to help with whatever you need, and as the day wanes, people gather around a bonfire to chat, decompress, and sing a few campfire songs.

With a strong social conscience stemming from the Co-op's history with groups like Earth First and People and Planet – climate activism organisations from the eighties and nineties – Green Action is the perfect local group to get involved with. They are non-hierarchical, which means that everyone is equal and society members make all the decisions of running the Co-op together in a spirit of fairness. When thinking about the climate feels like a lot of doom and gloom, Green Action is a way to make a positive change as part of a great group of people while having fun!

So, when the stress of university gets too much and you need to breathe in some fresh air and talk to some like-minded people, drop by the Co-op and say hello or come along to the next allotment day. You're always welcome.

A fun, friendly group, that focuses on working together and appreciating the little things in life.



Photo: Green Action

Countrywide Calls for Duty of Care Supporting University Students' Mental Health Drive Petition to Parliament

Evert Lindquist

Higher education students and families of suicide victims push the government to establish a duty of care that supports those experiencing poor mental health during their studies, amid a successful petition that's garnered attention across the UK.

The petition calls for a statutory duty of care to prioritize students' mental health, safety, and wellbeing, and on 15 March reached the 100,000 signatures required for parliamentary debate. Earlier this month, vigils in London, Bristol, and Edinburgh honoured the hundreds of students who took their lives at university in recent years.

Behind the petition are Bob and Maggie Abrahart, who lost their 20-year-old daughter Natasha to suicide in 2018 while she studied at the University of Bristol. UoB became aware of Natasha's mental health issues several months before her death but successfully argued in court that it didn't have a duty of care to Natasha because the care of her at the university differed from that of a child in school or an adult in the workplace.

The Abraharts have encountered much confusion as to whether a duty of care exists for HE students. Dr. Abrahart cited a 2018 Student Minds report as evidence that academics often don't understand their role in supporting students' wellbeing. He said these student-staff relationships need clarification, especially as a duty of care already exists for students under 18.

"Teachers and other staff in schools have a common law duty when in charge of pupils to take the same care of them as they would as a parent," the Department of Education states.

As well, Dr. Abrahart previously explained that the HE sector has a duty of care to protect staff "to ensure that nobody on the payroll suffers stress-related illness as a result of their daily toil".

DfE responded to the petition on 20 January that HE providers already have a "general duty of care" to "protect the health, safety and welfare of their students."

"University is a really vulnerable time ... and you may need support, and I think it's not really obvious that there is this support,"

Summer Lytton Cobbold, a third-year film, photography and media student at the University of Leeds runs the petition-affiliated #ForThe100 campaign.

She started the campaign in December after learning her cousin struggled with mental health upon getting dismissed from university in Manchester. Lytton Cobbold, who felt supported in grade school during her own mental health struggles, can't comprehend why

the same duty of care doesn't exist for HE students. "You shouldn't need help to know where to find it," she said.

In a more recent statement, DfE said its first-ever student support champion is speaking with "bereaved parents" to determine where improvements should occur. "We expect all universities to take active steps to prevent suicides and to meet their legal duties in respect of the safety and welfare of their students," the statement said. "We are working closely with charities and the sector to promote and fund effective mental health support such as the free Student Space online service."

The Abraharts said a duty of care is about creating an environment where students can thrive and aren't harmed through a university's action or inaction. For example, emailing students about dismissals, especially late at night when no one is available to support them, can destroy their lifelong aspirations and leave them vulnerable.

"In the real world, you have face-to-face meetings," Dr. Abrahart said. "You take into account whether they've got some underlying mental health issue, rather than just treating them as numbers and using automated emailing systems."

They also suggested that universities should proactively obtain students' consent to contact others about their mental health challenges. "Natasha told a member of staff that she was suicidal, but that person thought the information was too sensitive to share," said Mrs. Abrahart, who's worked in NHS mental health care. "That person wasn't qualified in mental health and was making decisions about what was safe for our daughter."

As part of a small team, Lytton Cobbold helped design the #ForThe100 branding and social media campaign. By 10 March, the petition only had about 36,000 signatures, with just nine days left before closing.

"I was saying to my housemates, 'Guys, I don't think it's happening. I don't know what to do,' because I really feel like I've poured my heart and soul into this thing over the last two months."

Her team had avoided using Facebook, but a thousands-strong network of parents across the UK, partly concerned for their children in HE, quickly took to the platform to share the petition.

"It would mean a lot to me to know that the parents get this closure that they've been trying so hard to get," Lytton Cobbold said. "Even if it's just changing the law [so] that when a person at university says, 'I think I'm going to take my own life,' that's where the law comes in and you have to call their parents."

Data published by the Office for National Statistics

in May 2022 suggested that English and Welsh HE students aged 24 and younger experienced lower suicide rates between 2016 and 2020 compared to the general population in that age range. The data reported 319 student suicides between the 2016-17 and 2019-20 academic years.

Dr. Abrahart noted the petition doesn't mention suicide, which he said is "just the tip of the iceberg" of what a duty of care concerns. "It's about doing the right thing, not just about preventing suicide," Mrs. Abrahart added.

In a statement, UoL said it partners closely with the Leeds University Union, recommends such resources as Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service, and is embedding wellbeing in its curriculum to support students. "In line with all other higher education institutions, the University has a general duty of care for all of its students," the statement said. "We endeavour to provide an environment in which students can enjoy their time here and gain the experience, knowledge and skills for a successful future."

In 1969, the Family Law Reform Act lowered the age of majority from 21 to 18. Dr. Abrahart said this leaves HE students between 18 and 21 vulnerable, as they're considered adults yet not protected by employment law until 21. He said establishing a duty of care that targets this age group could become "the most fundamental change in student rights for 50 years".

A statement from the National Union of Students said universities and the government have a role in helping vulnerable students both preventatively and during crisis, "... to analyse the protective factors that can support students before they are in crisis, and thereby make our learning and living environments more supportive for young people".

Alex Simpson-Hayter, vice-president of Suicide Support and Awareness for Everyone at UoL and a third-year criminology student, said universities' small and understaffed mental health services can't fully support their student populations. More than 2 million students study in HE across the UK.

"A lot of people move to university from a new city, or even a new country, so they might not know about the support services outside of the university," Simpson-Hayter said. "I don't think the universities do enough to signpost or make students aware of what the services are."

She suggested increasing funding for student support services and pushing closer links between universities, the NHS, and other mental health organizations.

"Some people literally are in lectures all day and they go home and then they're studying up until they go to

bed,” she said. “They don’t then have that time to actually look after themselves.”

Lytton Cobbold attributed mental health challenges for students to social anxiety and the adjustment to independent study. She advised looking out for those who don’t attend class or interact with their instructors.

“When you have that closer relationship and you

really feel like you’re a part of the student community and the university, you’re probably more likely to reach out for help,” Simpson-Hayter added.

The LEARN Network, which the Abraharts are part of, hosts a briefing session in Parliament on 25 April that welcomes all House of Commons and House of Lords members. Dr. Abrahart noted getting the debate to Westminster Hall is just one way to spur discussion

on duty of care.

“The important thing at this point is to get it on the political agenda,” Mrs. Abrahart said. “It’s easy to tick a box to say you agree, but to actually be able to tell your MP why you agree carries a lot of extra weight.”

Dr. Abrahart said the petition has “debunked the myth that a duty of care exists” for HE students and “proven that there’s an interest in one”.

The Gender Health Gap: Erin’s Story

Olivia Endellion Mowl

‘For as long as I can remember, my brain has felt different,’ Erin says, whilst we both sip at peppermint teas in a local bar, surrounded by succulents. After 23 years of the UK’s healthcare system consistently failing her, Erin finally got the diagnosis that changed her life. This is her story.

In the early years of attending a top private school in Bristol, Erin flourished in subjects in which she was naturally gifted. But once GCSE pressure started to build, her grades started slipping. She excelled in subjects like Art and English, but in those where she had to really focus, she barely even passed. “None of my teachers helped me” Erin said. “As soon as I wasn’t getting straight As, they didn’t care. I was constantly told I was disruptive, I distracted other people and that they would probably fail because of me.”

Things became gradually worse during A levels. “When I had to work even harder, I started failing badly.” Erin watched her friends revise hard for exams and write essays, things she simply could not bring herself to concentrate on. “I just could not get the work done. I felt like a failure”.

During this time, Erin’s mental health was deteriorating. Seven years later, after what felt like an endless battle with the healthcare system, Erin was finally diagnosed with severe ADHD. The process of reaching this diagnosis was lengthy, and fraught with challenges.

Upon asking doctors for help, Erin was told she had depression and referred to mental health services. After telling a professional several times that she didn’t believe she was depressed and that there was nothing categorically wrong with her life, she was told she was experiencing trauma due to the absence of her biological father. As the decision to cut contact with him was one she had made herself, and having a ‘father-figure’ in her stepdad, Erin persisted that this wasn’t an issue. She was never believed, the nurse insisting this was to do with ‘paternal issues.’

After going back, unhappy with the first diagnosis, Erin relayed to a GP the highs and lows she often experienced and was swiftly diagnosed with bipolar. But again, this didn’t sit well. “I told them I didn’t have it. I had read up all the symptoms and was sure it was something else. ‘That’s not me’ I said”. The GP then suggested she was simply a hypochondriac, as she undoubtedly had bipolar, and was unable to accept to diagnosis. “I was never believed. It made me

wonder; if I was a man, would they have believed me the first time I said no?”

Erin was then diagnosed with anxiety, which again just didn’t add up to what she was experiencing. After this, the system gave up on her. She was told, plainly, that it was ‘just hormones’ that were making her overthink and focus on issues that simply weren’t there. They further suggested it could be down to her being unhappy at home, which was completely false, but they persisted. “They basically told me it was ‘in my head,’ and put me on the contraceptive pill to deal with my ‘hormonal issues’.”

Erin first realised she may have ADHD when a friend suggested it. “I dismissed it at first. I saw ADHD as a little white boy bouncing around a classroom. That’s not me.” ADHD in women presents itself very differently to men, as they learn to mask it from a young age due to social pressures. Many girls who display early symptoms are simply labelled disruptive and overlooked.

After doing some research, Erin decided to once again reach out to the healthcare system and asked for an assessment. “The waiting list is five years,” they told her.

So, after months of saving, she booked an appointment with a private clinic. “My whole life I’ve felt like I’ve had to fight my corner, argue with the GP to be believed. I was so overwhelmed before that assessment, so anxious that I would be disregarded once again.” Having memorised her argument, Erin went into the doctor’s office. Upon sitting down, the doctor told her he had seen her pre-assessment and was certain she would walk out with an ADHD diagnosis.

Erin started to cry, relief flooding over her. She was finally being taken seriously, finally being believed by a healthcare professional. In the DSM 5 assessment, she scored 9/9 in early signs of ADHD, and scored 8/9 for signs of ADHD in her adult life. Erin would have needed 4/5 for both, making her diagnosis a severe case of ADHD. “I stopped napping when I was six weeks old, a clear sign of the disorder, as most kids nap until they’re about one or two. If this was picked up, I could have been diagnosed in the first year of my life.”

When asked how she sees her life if she had been diagnosed earlier, Erin replied “If I had been diagnosed as a child or in my teens, my life would have been very different. I feel like every single bad thing that happened over the years can be linked to

my undiagnosed ADHD.” Erin had an eating disorder in her early teens, now believed to be due to her feeling out of control over small day-to-day things, so found this control in limiting what she ate.

Whilst spending a year in Costa Rica, Erin also had a series of damaging relationships. The first was a drug-dealer, who was regularly emotionally and, at times, physically, abusive. He finally ended up cheating on her. “I was addicted to it because it was stimulating” she said. The second, after several abusive situations, she eventually took out a restraining order against. Now in counselling, her therapist told her that these were due to her ADHD. “I felt like a domino, falling into toxic relationship after toxic relationship. I loved the thrill of abuse. I know I would not have made these choices now on medication. I was chasing the dopamine.”

Erin dwelled a lot on the ‘what ifs’ during early diagnosis. “I could have potentially got my A levels and gone to university. I felt that it wasn’t fair.” ADHD is usually recognised in males as early as six, whereas the average age of diagnosis for a woman is late thirties. “I’ve made so many life choices out of not feeling good enough. I’ve always felt stuck. My expectations of my abilities have always been so low, and I think this will take years to build back up. I always thought I simply wasn’t as able as everyone else.”

Erin’s story is just one of so many that highlights the injustice women face within the healthcare system. When asked if she believed in the gender health gap, Erin replied with ‘undoubtedly’. “They made me believe that everything was in my head. I thought I was just crazy or emotional, overreacting, or hysterical, when in fact it was a very real problem. I was denied help time and time again.”

Women every day are faced with the same treatment, with female pain and suffering being rarely believed. There is an overwhelming lack of trust in healthcare and in the belief that professionals are trying their hardest to help, because given the statistical evidence, they simply aren’t.

In a world where within the same year the U.S. can put eighty-two million dollars into researching erectile dysfunction as oppose to seven million for endometriosis, it is unsurprising that we feel enraged. With the UK government’s Women’s Health Strategy starting this year, will we notice a change in how women are treated in the healthcare system?

Only time will tell.

FLAME

Congratulations all graduates!



Yard Act Conquer Manchester Albert Hall

By Benjamin Forrest

Photo: Manc Wanderer

Leeds post-punk titans Yard Act have been unavoidable on both a local and national scale since they first started releasing music in September 2020. Their initial singles *Fixer Upper*, *The Trapper's Pelts*, *Peanuts* and *Dark Days* received critical acclaim from the likes of BBC 6Music – and the legions of 6Music dads who flocked to Brudenell Social Club like flies around an up-and-coming post-punk outfit. The release of their Mercury-nominated debut album, *The Overload*, propelled them to a number two spot in the album charts, extensive tours of the UK, Europe and the US (with a quick stop off to perform live on Jimmy Fallon), and even a collaboration with rock royalty Elton John. It has been over a year since the release of *The Overload*, and its twenty-five different vinyl variants, and the band are working hard on new material. In an interview conducted with The Gryphon last year, bassist Ryan Needham (previously of incredible Leeds-based psych outfit Menace Beach) and guitarist Sam Shipstone (who is also making music with Holodrum) affirmed their commitment to recording new music – also suggesting that these new tracks have more no-wave and disco influences, owing to the influence of a lot of ESG.

Before this new era of Yard Act begins, though, *The Overload* deserved a grand send off. After all the countless mosh pits, festivals, Brudenell appearances, fifty pence pieces collected from the audience, and with the infamous golden Rover in the garage; the final *Overload* gigs were announced. These were five dates in some of the most beautiful and well-regarded independent venues that the UK and Ireland have to offer, accompanied by a stellar line-up of support acts including old friends Baba Ali, rising groups Deadletter and Fat Dog, and Leeds contemporaries English Teacher and Thank. Kicking off at Vicar Street in Dublin on the 26th April, then to Glasgow's Barrowlands, the Albert Hall in Manchester and finishing with two dates at The Troxy in London. It was at Manchester Albert Hall that I caught the band. It was the eighth time I had seen the band and it was undoubtedly one of their finest performances to date.

Before Yard Act took to the stage, though, it was the turn of fellow Leeds band, Thank. Those who have been lucky enough to see Thank in action should already be aware that they represent one of the most interesting, innovative and exciting bands to have come out of Leeds in a very long time. Their experimental influences of Theo Gowans – who you may recognise from his experimental projects under the name Territorial Gobblings, or the 'Heinous Whining' experimental music nights he hosts at Wharf Chambers – are complimented by the dark yet often humorous lyrics of frontman Freddy Vinehill-Cliffe and the intense, violent performance of drummer Steve Myles, who often appears to be beating the drums into submission, to great effect. Although the group's unique brand of noise rock is perhaps more well-suited to the small, sweaty rooms of Wharf Chambers of Mabgate Bleach, seeing them shout "Tonight Matthew, I will shit in my own hands and clap" inside a stunning Grade II listed building, was certainly a sight to behold and it seemed to go down well with the sold-out crowd.

At nine o'clock, it was time for Yard Act to take to the stage. Flanked on either side of the room by huge stained-glass windows and an ornate baroque-inspired ceiling above them, the band entered onto the stage to rapturous applause and cheers before erupting into 'Rich'. It was immediately apparent that the four-piece was on top form and the audience at the sold-out Albert Hall seemed to be instantaneously enthralled in the performance. Though this was billed as an *Overload* show, the audience was further treated to some extra tracks, including the early single *Dark Days* as well as two brand new songs early on in the setlist. The new songs, *Petroleum* and *The Trenchcoat Museum* sounded immense, particularly the latter. *The Overload* will certainly be a difficult album to follow up, but these new tracks seem to confirm that Yard Act are more than up to the task. Frontman James Smith, by this point in the setlist, had the crowd in the palm of his hand and seemed to be controlling them effectively throughout the performance of *Tall Poppies* and into the latter half of the set. Although notable *Overload* tracks *The Incident* and *Quarantine*

the Sticks (which featured Billy Nomates) were absent from the setlist, the crowd was not really in a place to complain – the band rattled through a sterling setlist ending with an encore of *100% Endurance* (a version of which was recently released on Record Store Day as a 7", featuring Elton John) and their first single, *The Trapper's Pelts* to finish the night off.

The only remaining 2023 gigs for Yard Act, aside from a handful of festival appearances, comes in the form of their five-day residency as Brudenell Social Club – a venue close to the heart of the band. After all, one of their first ever shows took place at Brudenell, supporting fellow Leeds band Mush, the band played there the night before it was announced that their album had reached number two in the charts, and their golden Rover was parked there for months before being moved. Their residency starts on the 8th May and will feature incredible special guests such as Rose Matafeo, Nish Kumar, Lole Adefope, and Harry Hill. Tickets for these dates have long since sold out but, if their Albert Hall performance is anything to go by, they are certain to be unforgettable!



Live & Kicking

Mince Take Brudenell



George, Jamie, Owen, Matthew and Clem comprise the effort that is 'Mince', bearing influences from the likes of Fontaines D.C. to The Velvet Underground and IDLES to Elastica, and everything in between. The quintet was named after a strike of inspiration whilst lead singer George was making tea – no prizes for guessing what he was intending to eat that evening. The music is equal parts gritty and melodic, juvenile and mature. Combining a vocal style harkening back to Paul Weller's staccato tones and a thrashing and driven musical backing to match - wrapped up in a self-aware, referential and powerful package. Mince are evidently a hard act to pin down, and that is the very thing that makes them so compelling.

The group first appeared on my radar when they performed as a featuring act in 360 club's recent set at The Lending Room. I did not go in expecting to thinking that one of the acts would strike me so strongly as one to watch – but I found that Mince are a non-conformity in many ways. With their sharp sound and enigmatic stage presence, the effort captivated the audience of the packed upstairs venue at The Library – which, for a young star of a band, is quite a feat. When talking to guitarist, Jamie, I asked if the band had any plans to play the Brudenell any time soon – to which he replied, "We only play Brudenell if we're good." And here we are, a matter of weeks later.

Underneath the green-blue glow of the stage lights, and the fragmented reflection of the mirror ball hung from the ceiling, the five-piece take the stage. With an energy that cannot be contained by the confines on the designated stage space, George flits between antics including egging bassist Clem to take his trousers off and rhythmically hitting the exposed brick on the back of the Brudenell stage. Each member is greatly talented in their own right, their understanding of musical production combined with their palpable passion makes the band a joy to watch.

As the last band to present as support for Déjà Vega, the crowd for their set began as a sparse gathering of people in the immediate stage vicinity before gradually growing in size as Mince managed to get the whole crowd on board. I watched some in the crowd gawk at the spectacle of George emptying the contents of a water bottle onto his head or as he darted around the stage with a

dangling microphone cord draped around his neck and shoulders, before they decided to leave their seats and join the growing crowd. Throughout, small mosh pits and constant rhythmic head bops could be seen crowd-wide - the quintet have a way of managing to convince even the most apprehensive wall hangers at the back of the venue.

During a pre-performance conversation with the band, they earnestly told me that 'It's not a Mince gig unless something goes wrong'. In true emerging band fashion, the performance wasn't without its snags - whether it was accidental spilt pints on stage or a drum pedal malfunction. What differentiates Mince from most is their ability to recover from these incidents seemingly professionally unbothered. The gravity of playing at the Brudenell is not lost on the band, shown by Jamie's expression of gratitude during Matthew's adept fixing of the drum pedal: remarking that the band themselves have been visiting the Brudenell for a long while and detailing how surreal the experience felt for each of them. What makes the band so charming is their charisma and how down to earth they are. I asked guitarist Owen, prior to their performance, what the band wanted to achieve through their music, to which he remarked 'I just wanted something to put in the hobbies & interest section of my CV' – I think in that, he has definitely succeeded.

Charismatic, extremely talented and a truly exciting band, Mince are truly one to watch - their sound manages to personify and embody the energy that pulses through many young people in Leeds. With intentions of 'conquering' with their music - if you remain unconvinced, Mince will ensure that you don't remain in that mindset for long.

Their latest single *Misprint* is available on streaming platforms now.

By Erin Clark

Photo: Mince

boygenius

SETTING *the record* STRAIGHT: A BOYGENIUS ALBUM REVIEW

Ethereal, strong and vocals like silk: just a few ways to describe this trio and their newest project.

the record is the newest album from power-trio Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers and Lucy Dacus, also known as boygenius, and it's as good, if not better, than you are imagining.

Boygenius only formed in 2018 when the three soloists were fans of each other and happened to become friends. After chasing one another around the indie scene for a period of time, they decided to join ranks to the joy of all three's separate fan bases. They soon after released a self-titled EP which only took four days to record and Dacus herself even commented that the whole ordeal was "easy as can be", which is surprising for such a small timeframe.

Consequent collaborations with artists such as Hayley Williams of Paramore and recording on all of each other's individual projects, such as Bridgers' album *Punisher*, led to the day they recorded and eventually released their debut album: *the record*.

This album is one of the most brilliantly structured musical projects of the past few years, with every song being individually impeccable while linking cleanly into the next track, making for a major success. The celestial background sounds are reminiscent of Bridgers' *Kyoto* and when mixed together with heavier rock influences and guitar riffs makes for dynamic listening. The most incredible part of the album is the way their music encompasses sad feelings and harsh topics. Each song is either owned or led by one of the three women, and each one has a different storytelling style and individual sound despite addressing similar topics. However, they all make you feel like no matter how hard it gets and how awful life is going, it will be okay in the end.

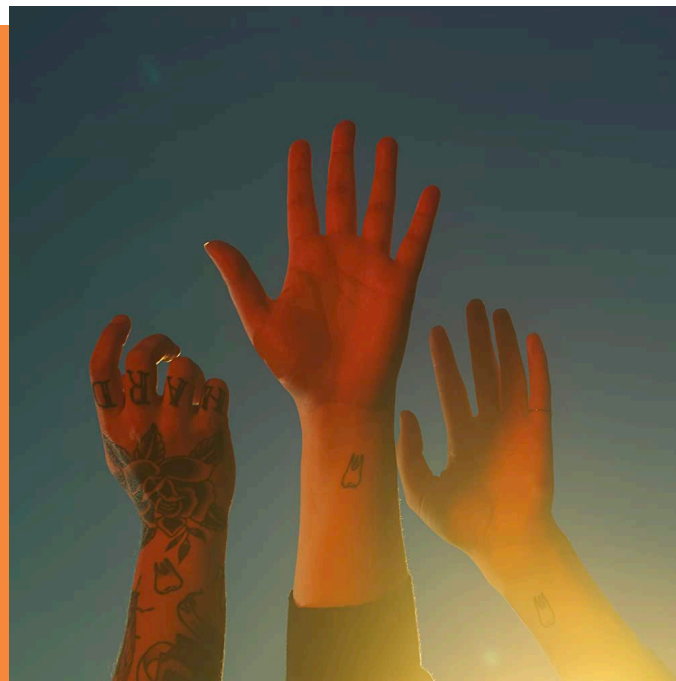
The album starts with *Without You Without Them*, setting the album off to a very strong start and making the beginning of the record feel very relaxed. It almost reminds me of a barbershop quartet, and whilst the vocals sound melancholy, the genre feels joyful. The transition from track one to track two is the most seamless I've heard on any album recently. Track two, *\$20*, shifts the record very suddenly into the indie rock genre. The guitars, bass and drums are all much heavier in this track, yet the vocal stay fresh and unique. The screaming that also appears in this song is a contrast from the

first track, but very fitting for this heavier song, as it shows passion and heart.

The next three tracks: *Emily I'm Sorry*, *True Blue* and *Cool About It* follow the same structure with each individual leading a different song (in the order Bridgers, Dacus, Baker) and they all evoke the same feeling. *Cool About It* is slightly more country-leaning but the vocals and the acoustics remain as high quality. Bridgers' verse in this song makes me laugh with the lines "Once, I took your medication to know what it's like,/ And now I have to act like I can't read your mind,/ I ask you how you're doing and I let you lie". The image is melancholic but the perspective it's told from is somewhat humorous, with Bridgers revealing the feeling of knowing what's true when being lied to.

The rest of the album continues to switch between this soft but gritty sound and heavier rock tracks. The taking-turns structure is disrupted at the halfway point in this album, I believe to make the listener sit up and be intrigued. Some of my other personal favourites include *Satanist*, *Not Strong Enough* and *Revolution 0*.

Overall, this album should be highly acclaimed as it ticks every box for a listener looking to find something new and unique. I can't recommend this project enough and I can't wait to see what the trio have installed for us next.



First Two Pages of Frankenstein

The National

by Esme McGowan



THE NATIONAL

FIRST TWO PAGES OF FRANKENSTEIN

Imbued with melancholic nostalgia and dissociative lyrics, *First Two Pages of Frankenstein* is The National's latest album, following *I Am Easy to Find* in 2019. Timeless yet immediate, and filled with a sense of uneasy disturbance, the album is packed with loss and longing, and includes features to satisfy any sad hour playlist: Sufjan Stevens, Phoebe Bridgers and Taylor Swift.

The phantasmal voice of Stevens lingers in the first track, creating a sense of gorgeous fluidity as the singers plead 'What was the worried thing you said to me?/ I thought we could make it through anything.' Confusion, desperation and heartbreak run through this first song and it is clear that what will follow is not going to satisfy any desire for closure. The album proceeds to offer insights into different phases of a couple's struggle, with track two, 'Eucalyptus', divvying out the belongings of a broken pair, with front man Matt Berninger, pleading 'You should take it, cause I'm not gonna take it', saying 'It wouldn't be fair/It'd be so alone/Without you there'. The difficulty of trying to split up a shared life offers a profoundly practical sadness and such gloomy disorientation continues throughout.

The album is packed with memory. Most tracks reflect on stories from times gone by and offer flashes of memories from before the dreaded ~now~. Track three *New Order T-Shirt*, provides a sense of sepia-toned longing and loss, with lyrics revealing 'I keep what I can of you/ Split-second glimpses and snapshots and sounds'. However, even these memories are tainted, as Berninger evokes a clandestine protection of times-gone-by, as he sings 'I flicker through/ I carry them with me like drugs in a pocket'. There is a sense of self-destruction and secrecy that is never really satisfied and we are left with a slow, moody atmosphere that only continues in the following songs.

True to style, The National offer a mix of subdued tracks among pattering percussions and guitar riffs. Across previous albums, the band have gradually become more and more delicate and this album is certainly the gentlest to be released so far. We witness a slow steadiness throughout the album with most tracks being much less rock inspired than previous works. Track five, *Tropic Morning News*, and track eight, *Grease In Your Hair*, are more reminiscent of earlier albums, with thumping drums and a more full bodied tone. However, generally, the album is understated in this regard.

Having released four singles in the lead up to the album, anticipation was certainly building, with the last single, *Your Mind Is Not Your Friend* featuring Phoebe Bridgers and teasing what was to come (Bridgers also adds vocals to track four *This Isn't Helping* and again offers a brilliant balanced and spine-tingling layer to the song). The track *Your Mind Is Not Your Friend* certainly has a Bridgerian tone, contemplating the trustworthiness of the brain and its ability for self-deception, with lyrics beginning 'Your imagination/ Is in an awful place/Don't believe in manifestation/ Your heart'll break'. Bridgers' haunting additional vocals are perfect for the track and have more prominent role than those shown by Sufjan Stevens. This song also reveals

the psychological element present throughout the album as Matt Berninger confronts fluctuating emotions and disturbed mental states. Lyrics across the record demonstrate such turbulence as we are told in track five 'I was so distracted then/ I didn't have it straight in my head/[...] I was suffering more than I let on', alongside lyrics such as 'Hurry up, we don't have time/ Avalanches in my mind/ I'm getting buried in this dream/ It's just as soapy as it seems' in track six, *Alien*.

Where features predominantly offer harmonising vocals and background support, Taylor Swift in *The Alcott* takes a more central position as this track is a true duet, acting as a conversation between a couple. The track echoes Swift's *Coney Island* (which featured The National) and also evokes a conversation between the two singers. We see a couple struggling, facing a storm of emotional turmoil as the pair sing 'You tell me your problems/ (Have I become one of your problems?)/ And I tell you the truth/ (Could it be easy this once?)/[...] It's the first thing I do/ (Did my love aid and abet you?)/I tell you that I think I'm fallin'/ Back in love with you'. Such confusion is given little relief but the album begins to pick up as it draws to an end.

The final song *Send For Me* provides a slightly more hopeful tone, as Berninger offers support to the listener if they ever find themselves in undesired places, whether that be an airport, a business meeting, a psychiatric ward. Throughout the album, we travel through the journey of an artist in crisis. Berninger's personal struggles and the battles faced within relationships are met with careful delicacy and in this final track we are left with a tone of ever so slight optimism, a forwards movement, a feeling of progress. Predominantly, the album is dark and gloomy, addressing the confusion found in our own brains, and clutching for clarity. It is this disorientation that makes for a compelling and moving album, and one that is worth multiple listens.

The National will be performing at the First Direct Arena in Leeds on 23rd September 2023.



DJs, Daiquiris and Degas:

The cultural night out is on the rise

A cultural night out seems to be the definition of an oxymoron at first glance, especially to young people in the UK. Yet, it seems to be the alternative answer for everyone who doesn't want to spend valuable free time jammed in between school classes, tourists and senior citizens just to look at some dusty old paintings: According to a survey by the Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), the main barriers for young people not to visit a museum are a lack of time in which culture is not considered a priority and the lack of an attractive and appealing cultural offer.

Museums are now looking to tear these barriers down: 2023 has seen a growing trend to incorporate evening entertainment into art establishments: Various museums across London and the rest of the country have transformed their strategies from offering only day time access towards extending their opening hours hence facilitating evening entertainment.

While it might sound absurd to have a renowned museum, such as the National Portrait Gallery, turn into a cocktail bar during after-hours, the intention behind this concept is to transition into a new area of art, opening up culture to younger generations; in a fun and modern way.

Saatchi Gallery in southwest London recently introduced Saatchi Lates, a series of after-hours events inviting visitors to partake in a variety of workshops and life drawing sessions, while enjoying a drink on the side. In the context of their current exhibition Beyond the Streets London, the next event is scheduled for Friday, the 28th of April, featuring a spoken word performance, a graffiti workshop and a DJ set.

Another famous spot for the contemporary arts, the Tate Modern, features the Queer and Now Festival on their What's on section. The free event which is set to celebrate the LGBTQIA+ art and culture in June offers a range of pop-talks, performances, workshops and, of course, DJs.



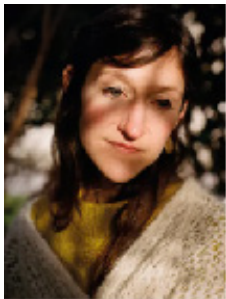
The after-hours opening spree does not, however, restrict itself to contemporary art galleries: The National Gallery offers a whole set of student takeovers, art and comedy nights and show previews as part of their Friday Lates experience. Catching onto the late-night trend, the National Portrait Gallery is set to reopen its doors again in June. After a big refurbishment and a 3-years closure, the gallery will introduce their visitors to Audrey Green, a café at daytime transitioning into a cocktail bar during the evening hours. Featuring a number of events ranging from theatre to dance, the bar is said to be accessible via a hidden entrance off Charing Cross Road.

Workshops, student takeovers, live music and cocktails: While some members of the traditional clientele might respond negatively to a transformation of such size, it is important to remember that the art itself is not being altered, just the environment in which it is perceived: An opportunity to breathe life into an otherwise arguably dusty museum.

The offer of after-hours experiences in museums and art galleries does therefore not reflect a competition to the intrinsic values of the arts per se but should be understood as an advocate for the very same, facilitating access to a more diverse audience. It gives young people or anyone who is interested the opportunity to transform a regular night out into a cultural night out.

Malou Baumann

Granta's *Best of Young British Novelists* List Crowns a New Generation of Writers



The 2023 Best of Young British Novelists list has just been announced, showcasing a fresh crop of literary talent deemed the best of their generation. Every ten years since 1983, literary magazine Granta has announced a list of 20 authors who have been named the best British novelists under 40. In the decades since it was launched, the Best of Young British Novelists list has come to be viewed as a barometer of Britain's literary environment, identifying the writers who will go on to be cornerstones of our culture. Previous iterations of the list have included literary titans such as Martin Amis, Kazuo Ishiguro, Ian McEwan, Salman Rushdie, Zadie Smith and Kamila Shamsie.

This year's list is largely dominated by female writers, with a total of 15 women making the cut, which is stark in comparison to the inaugural 1983 list that featured only six. This shifting demographic could be attributed to the fact that women are now publishing more books than men for the first time in history, according to a recent study by Joel Waldfogel for the National Bureau of Economic Research. The decline in prominence of male authors across the literary board has prompted the announcement that the so-called Literary Bloke of old is dead; long live the Millennial Women. The New Statesman says that Granta's 2023 list simply 'confirms what we already knew: the literary male has become terminally uncool.'

It's not only women who are dominating the list far more than in previous years though. For the first time, Granta has widened its criteria to not only include British citizens, but also international writers who call this country their home. Eleanor Catton, the youngest person to ever win the Booker prize and New Zealand native, qualified for the list this year as she currently lives in Cambridge. In our post-Brexit era, under an increasingly exclusionary Tory government, this list gives a glimmer of hope that at least creatively, Britain is opening up its borders. It has to be noted, though, that there are less people of colour featured this year than even in 1983.

The prevalence of white millennial women also serves to only further highlight the absence of arguably the most notable millennial women writer of our generation, Sally Rooney; as she is Irish. This omission of Irish writers in the Granta list seems increasingly more of an oversight every decade, as the resurgence of great Irish writing, along with its impact on the British literary landscape, only grows.

Despite this exclusion, the authors featured represent a vast array of locations that begin to defy the London-centric tradition of our literary environment. Graeme Armstrong, who was born and raised in Airdrie, Scotland, channelled this into his work and wrote his debut novel, *The Young Team*, entirely in the Scottish vernacular.

The list also includes K Patrick, who identifies as trans-masculine and is from the Isle of Lewis, who's debut novel has yet to be published. This reflects Granta's wish to not only represent those who are already established in their literary careers, but also to identify the literary stars of tomorrow. Whether these predictions will come true has yet to be seen, but achieving a place on this coveted list is certainly a step in the right direction.

The list in full:

Graeme Armstrong	Tom Crewe	Yara Rodrigues Fowler
Jennifer Atkins	Camilla Grudova	Saba Sams
Sara Baume	Isabella Hammad	Olivia Sudjic
Sarah Bernstein	Sophie Mackintosh	Eley Williams
Natasha Brown	Anna Metcalfe	
Eleanor Catton	Thomas Morris	
Lauren Aimee Curtis	Derek Owusu	
Eliza Clark	K Patrick	

By Mairead Zielinski

Graduations: Where to toast your success!

Attention all soon-to-be graduates! With graduation dates only recently released, it's time to start thinking about how you're going to celebrate the occasion. And let's be honest, after years of hard work and sacrifice, you deserve to go all out. So why not treat yourself and your loved ones to a memorable meal at one of the city's top restaurants? Not only will it be a great way to mark the end of this chapter in your life, but it'll also give you a chance to take advantage of your parents' wallets one last time before you head out into the real world and start paying for your own meals. Here are some restaurants to consider booking for your graduation celebration.

The Restaurant Bar and Grill

In the centre of Leeds and just a short walk from the station, the Restaurant Bar and Grill offers a fancy environment in which to celebrate your graduation. The menu boasts a selection of British classics with a modern twist, including grilled meats and seafood, as well as veggie options. For larger groups, the set menu option is also a great choice at around £30 per person for three courses, providing a more affordable way to dine in style.

Salvo's

Salvo's is a beloved Italian restaurant located on Otley Road, serving up delicious pizza and pasta dishes made with fresh, quality ingredients. This family-run restaurant has been a local favourite for over 40 years and has even been recognized as one of the best Italian restaurants in the UK! With its cosy atmosphere and friendly staff, Salvo's is the perfect place for a relaxed and enjoyable meal with your loved ones on your graduation day.

Home

Home is a Cantonese restaurant located right next to campus! With its minimalist decor and authentic cuisine, Home offers a unique dining experience that's hard to find elsewhere in Leeds. The menu features a variety of traditional dishes, including dim sum, crispy duck, and stir-fried noodles, as well as a selection of vegetarian options. Whether you're looking for a quick bite or a leisurely meal with your family and friends, Home is an excellent choice for celebrating your graduation with a delicious Cantonese meal.

Iberica

Iberica is a Spanish-inspired restaurant located in the heart of Leeds. Known for its tapas, the menu offers a variety of small plates perfect for sharing with friends and family. From chorizo and jamón croquetas to grilled octopus and paella, there's something for everyone to enjoy. And if you're a fan of cocktails, make sure to try one of their signature sangrias.

Bundobust

If you're looking for somewhere a bit more low-key, Bundobust is a vegetarian and vegan restaurant that combines Indian street food with craft beer. Located in the Northern Quarter (close to the station) this restaurant is perfect for those looking for a relaxed and casual atmosphere. Their menu includes sharing platters and dishes like chole bhature, vada pav and tarka dhal, as well as a variety of beers and cocktails.

Heaney & Mill

Located in Headingley, Heaney & Mill offers breakfast, lunch AND dinner. The lunch and dinnertime classics like risotto and steak are sure to go down a treat with your fussy grandparents. Their brunch options are also delicious and a good choice if you've got an early morning graduation.

by Olivia Tait



Photo: Lottie Passmore

Summer in Leeds

Tired of constant deadlines and exam season? Well, fear not! Summer is fast approaching and there is plenty to do right here in Leeds. Here's an inclusive list of fun things to look forward to this summer, all to get you through exam season!

Free Activities

If you're still on campus and want to get some fresh air, sitting by the pond next to the Roger Stevens Building is a great place to relax and watch the ducks! Campus is also inhabited by plenty of bunnies to brighten your day. Alongside this, picnics at Woodhouse Moor are the perfect summer activity, when the sun finally shines. Grab some friends, a speaker, and a blanket and relax. Add drinks, snacks, and games for more fun. Alternatively, grab a blanket and book and sit there peacefully alone! On a more miserable day, check out Leeds Art Gallery or Leeds Museum, both are completely free to enter. Leeds museum has some amazing exhibitions and even showcases a 3000-year-old mummy! The art gallery is stunning and contains plenty of different periods and types of art to cater for all tastes. Similarly, Kirkstall Abbey is an enjoyable excursion and is free for all Leeds Residents- but you do need to provide proof of address.

Drinking

I'm sure everyone is excited for sunny weather, but especially those who enjoy a beer garden, which there are plenty of across Leeds. But why not go all out and try one of the city's best rooftop bars at Belgrave or Headrow House? If you're wanting to avoid the busy Otley Run crowds, Summer is the perfect time to participate, particularly on a weekday and beer gardens mean more seating! With the approach of summer, keep an eye out for Society balls, which will be taking place across May and June! Plenty of societies are announcing tickets right now and provide tickets for non-members too. Lots of them include a three-course meal and drinks!

Across the City

2023 is Leeds Year of Culture, which is really taking off this summer, with comedy shows, theatre performances and club events every week. Alongside this, there are plenty of festivals to attend in Leeds this summer: from the popular Leeds Festival to Live at Leeds, and festivals to celebrate the 2023 year of culture! There are even opportunities to attend non-music festivals, such as food festivals! Kirkgate Market is Europe's largest covered market, with all sorts of products on sale and a great food hall. Summer is the perfect time to visit, so you can enjoy their indoor and outdoor stalls simultaneously! They regularly host special events, look out for the Vegan Market on the 27th May and a record fair is hosted on the first Saturday of every month. The Corn Exchange is, conveniently, adjacent to Kirkgate, filled with independent outlets within a really beautiful building. And finally, if you're looking for a good view of the city, try out Leeds Water Taxi for the bargain price of only £2 per person. An affordable and unique experience for a sunny day!

Hyde Park Picture House is finally set to reopen after some rather lengthy renovations. Keep an eye out in the next few months for indie and old films, perfect for a rainy day.

Sports

Leeds boasts a thriving sporting community across our many universities and stadiums in the area. Leeds Varsity takes place throughout May and will see Leeds University VS Leeds Beckett battle it out across the field, pitch, and court to be crowned Leeds' Sportiest Uni!

For cricket fans, there are regular summer events at Headingley Stadium, with a great atmosphere and opportunities to dress in costume! The Ashes is being held there in July, alongside lots of T20 cricket and The Hundred.

Whether it's your first or last summer in Leeds, there is something for everyone, whatever the weather. Check out <https://leeds2023.co.uk/> to discover more about Leeds Year of Culture, this 2023.

by Jennifer Machin

wardrobe MUST HAVES for your summer *'bon voyage'*

Shopping for a sunshine-filled holiday break can go one of two ways: it can be a wonderful success, or it can be a horrible stress! The most fundamental part of holiday fashion is ensuring that you feel truly in love with your pieces. As a result, you will be able to form a perfectly simple, almost 'capsule wardrobe' that later can be incorporated, quite sustainably, into your everyday wear, home and away! I mean, I know I am not the only one who ends up wearing my favourite holiday 'fits over and over again...

Comfort is key, and with a few staples in your closet, you can be sure to have a summer success.

Gladiator Sandals

A pair of comfortable sandals is an absolute must for the summer season. If you're not a fan of the flip-flop, a more shoe-like sandal may just be a perfect fit. A personal favourite for the 2023 season is the Dr Martens gladiator-esque sandals (styles: Blair, and Clarissa). They are a modern-day spin on the classic Grecian footwear. Gladiator sandals are constantly making a comeback and are a sure hit for the holidays. They are a great option that avoids those uncomfortable tight straps and blisters. By opting for a thicker soled shoe, they can easily be dressed up for a night out on the town, but are an equally good fit for a more casual, poolside, or 'explorer' vibe.

The Perfect Shorts

When searching for the perfect holiday outfit, people often over-stress the need for thin, flowy, and light-coloured fabrics. Don't be afraid to experiment and step into some thicker materials! Whilst temperatures may be humid, one of the all-time favourite holiday staples is a good pair of shorts. Whether your taste is denim, cotton, or linen, you cannot go wrong; a classic pair of shorts are just as well suited for a chic, minimalistic look as they are for a beach cover-up over your swimwear. Especially if you're packing light, they can act as almost an entire outfit.

Keeping Cool

The holiday standard is often seen as wearing as little as possible to keep cool. But when the sun is involved, this isn't always possible! Don't let a sunburn tarnish your summer break: consider investing in a cover-up. Cover-ups don't have to be boring or outdated, and do not have to break the bank. They can be fashionable, enhancing, and be a fresh addition to any outfit. A light cardigan, with a boyfriend type fit or in the form of a cropped knit, is a great option, but don't forget staples such as sarongs and longer, sheer skirts – breezy, stylish, and practical. Not only do cover-ups keep you safe from the sun, but they give your body that little bit of extra warmth on those cold, breezy evenings.

Oversized Shirt

Looking for something on the more casual side? Try an oversized, breezy shirt! As much as we love a classic, striped shirt, don't be afraid to step out of the box this summer. Whilst a simple white shirt is a true classic, feel free to experiment with patterns, colours, and different unique fits! Throw over a dress to create a casual yet classy evening ensemble or use throughout the day as a chic pullover. The opportunities are endless, and the oversized shirt is not something you want missing in your summer wardrobe!

Honourable Mentions:

- The beach bag (with zippers to ensure your belongings are safe.)
- Oversized sun hats (sun protection and a timeless piece? Yes please!)
- Flowy trousers / Skirts



Photo: Instagram @emmachamberlain

Overthinking COACHELLA 2023

If you're anything like me you grew up glued to the television during the dead hours of 4-6 pm, watching women say yes to the dress with drool dripping from your mouth: 40% from your newfound love for A-Line cut wedding dresses and 60% from the smell of your friend's dad's tilapia slightly burning in the kitchen. As inspired as I was, as a ten-year old watching women get scrutinized by their families on the TLC network, I believe that the primary culprit for my guilty pleasure in criticizing what others wear (I know that sounds awful, but soon it will all make sense) is Joan Rivers. I posit that it is in virtue of Rivers and her ruthless judgment (may she rest in peace) that our generation absorbs "fashion review" clickbait in the same way Gen Z needs a vape after their first drink on a night out. Either the rulings by The Fashion Police explain the sensationalized disappointment from the internet and its army of critics against the outfits at Coachella this year; or the outfits just weren't that great.

Don't get me wrong, Kendall Jenner looked enticing in her jeans and tank-top, along with Hailey Bieber, Kylie Jenner, Amelia Gray Hamlin, Suki Waterhouse, and Camila Marrone who also looked great in their jeans and tank-tops. Likewise, so did Alyah Chanelle Scott, Storm Reid, Kelsey Meritt, and Josephine Skriver – though they did us a number by spicing it up with jean-shorts. In their defense, the U.S west coast has seen an unusually high amount of rain in the past three months, and perhaps that is why Kim K chose to stay home instead of revisiting her unforgettable strappy kitten-heels from Coachella 2022; the ones that make other kitten heels look like roadkill... Despite the weather forecast (kudos to Jaden Smith for planning ahead with his striking transparent but colorful rain-jacket) I can in all seriousness understand the disappointment by fans. The verifiable truth is that Coachella is, redundantly, a music festival. However, just like strobe lights from the stage, in combination with lack of sleep and flat beer (and that tall guy who lets you sit on his shoulders) enhances your favorite song – I argue that so does your outfit. With that said, who are we to judge if that entails wearing a pair of jeans with a timeless tank top? It is undeniable that Harry Styles in his dazzling bodysuit performing at last year's Coachella will certainly make you smile, but the enjoyment of us as "consumers" does not triumph above theirs as "creators". Some of whom, which may be important to note, are not even at the festival to create. Is this tug of war a digitalized social media version of the chicken and the egg? Profilers are a representation of their brand and not our wishes, however, without the wishes of their audience, would their brand even exist?

I leave you with my anticlimactic and bipartisan conclusion: fans are entitled to their disappointment. My ten-year-old self relates to such anguish at the sight of a yes to the [obvious] wrong dress. On the contrary, as are celebrities when choosing what to wear at Coachella. As thrilling as it may be, I propose that we leave the era of judgment with Joan Rivers. Instead, I suggest aiming your attention toward Zendaya, who after performing on stage for the first time in eight years, left the crowd drooling: 100% performance, 0% burned tilapia... and a big thanks to her exceptional outfit.



Photo: Instagram @voguemagazine

The U.S. Endeavour for Eternal Sun-Time



Photo: Hannah Spruce

Views Writer Evie Yabsley discusses the U.S. legislation ending the so-called disruption of Daylight Savings.

Evie Yabsley

Time. A construct manipulated globally in the turn of the clocks, which for us Brits, saw a spring forward at the end of March, welcoming British Summer Time. An end to the January blues, the February fears and the March middle ground, the extra hours of sunlight boost moods by increasing serotonin intake. So why not cement these effects? Carve them into a stone mandate and inscribe them onto the political agenda.

This is the mindset of American politicians. Why not keep the clocks changed? A short year ago, the Sunshine Protection Act passed through the U.S. Senate with the aim of permanently setting clocks an hour ahead of standard time. Committing to summer timekeeping would result in an extra hour outside in the evening – forever. The West coast is unsurprisingly onboard with sunny states like California voting to keep Daylight Savings Time (DST) to squeeze those valuable last drops from their bright evenings. Across the country, the East is in agreement. Senators Patty Murray and Ed Markey are driving passage of the bill in their chamber where it remains held at the desk, awaiting committee approval before heading to the House of Representatives.

While senators crack out their golf clubs left, right and centre, Chris Stewart (House Rep) is ready to tee off and project the Daylight Savings ball through the legislative process. “Let’s steal that hour back” he tweets, eager. In January this year, he introduced his own bill with the same objectives in an attempt to get the theory off the desk and into the President’s practical palm. Here, it could see the final rubber stamp of approval, to make the bill law. To change time.

It’s safe to say the ball of eternal sunshine is well and truly rolling with Murray-Markey motion steering its path.

But, typical America is playing a capitalist hand here. More yogis meditating in a longer dusk is, of course, not the key influence for agenda-setting in the Senate. With 55% of its citizens preferring to barbeque in July, extending evenings will bring huge revenue to the already booming BBQ industry in the U.S.. Likewise, outdoor activities such as golfing and driving see a huge rise in profits in the summertime. While they can’t control the weather, more leisure time in the sun will draw people to these activities, dollar bills in hand.

The economic benefits are a clear incentive for enacting this law but what does this mean for your average Chad?

Seeing green may leave politicians blind to the impact this change could have on mental health. The DST train will race through the short night, dragging its drained passengers to an early start as “troubling trends” in sleep patterns take their toll, says the highly regarded Sleep Foundation. During the turn of the clocks, sleep deprivation soars. The culprit? Disrupted circadian rhythms.

This is our natural bodily cycle that orchestrates the tune of our energy levels, singing a soft tenor into the night before bursting into a soprano at the day’s wake. Changing the natural course of time will inevitably set these rhythms offbeat. Sleeping patterns will falter. Insomnia will persist. This can only be a detriment to American lives!

Overseas, our government feels citizen welfare is more important than a couple of extra quid. We don’t see the boost in outdoor industries to the same extent as the U.S.. For us, the only financial benefit is minor energy savings as indoor lighting usage drops. Therefore, Britain’s concerns about invoking similar policies don’t lie with the money-mo-

tivated head but with the home. The family home.

In 2019, European parliament devolved the timekeeping tug of war to national governments which the UK resisted. Conservative MEPs defied the notion of playing God, arguing that although pushing the clocks forward would cause brighter evenings, it also promises a later dawn. A later dawn that plunges the school run into darkness.

Ultimately in the UK, the financial benefits are unjustified compensation for the everyman effect: children across the nation would be forced to get to school in the dark if British Summer Time was made permanent. Pitch dark. Where criminals can roam behind the mask of the lingering night. The aching dawn would only stretch its lazy arms after a relative lie in, at 7am instead of 6 for example. Safety in suburbia is a uniquely American trait that us Brits don’t have. Yes crime still thrives across both nations in light and dark mornings but by design, picket fences protect. U.S. suburbs bubble wrap kids on their daily commute.

So, the issue of child safety feels truly British. We rely on the clocks falling back again to brighten their wander to school. Conscious of this, our government refuses to follow America forward in time. We’ll stay loyal to our change, ping-ponging an hour ahead as we did only a few weeks ago and regaining this hour in the autumn.

Without the fear of putting kids at risk, Senators leer over the economic gains cementing Daylight Savings will produce. But can money in Polly Politician’s pocket justify the cost to the individual American’s daily life? To their sleeping pattern? With the law predicted to come in this year, it seems November holds the answer.

Is Andrew Tate Fueling a Masculinity Crisis?



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Views Writer Izzy Tiffin discusses how Andrew Tate represents a lost demographic of young men.

Izzy Tiffin

Women are men's property, they should "bear some responsibility" for being raped, and men should "have the control" over women's minds.

These are the views of Andrew Tate, the British-American kickboxer turned infamous internet idol. If you haven't yet heard of him – count yourself lucky. He's a self-proclaimed misogynist who combines outdated, derogatory, and often violent messages about women with top tips on how men can get rich, get women – and frankly get whatever they want. Arrested in Bucharest on December 29 for rape and human trafficking, he's one of the most hated men on the internet.

Yet Tate has also built himself an immensely loyal fanbase among his 5.4 million Twitter followers. Many of them are young men who regularly defend him. It baffles me that some of my male peers have, at best, excused Tate's grotesque misogyny as "satire", and at worst, agreed with some of his messages.

So, why do young men like Andrew Tate? Aside from the shock factor of his comments gaining online views, I think Tate's appeal is the binary ticket to success that he offers young men. It's his no-nonsense messages around discipline, men changing themselves for the better, because "as a man, you get to build your character". His hypo-masculine and lavish lifestyle of private jets, fast cars and big muscles tells his followers that "if you watch my videos and follow my advice you can also be like me". It's easy to see how someone lacking confidence and purpose could be inspired by a man like Andrew Tate.

'Tateism' centres around male empowerment and emancipation, but in a way that fosters aggrieved male entitlement and insecurity. No longer are men, specifically white men, at the centre of society. The rise of identity politics, cancel culture and wokeism is gradually pushing young men a little further to the margins. Tate's online videos constantly take advantage of this.

Using chess as an analogy for gender roles, Tate explains: "The king moves one square at a time and the queen can just zip across the board." For Tate, men are burdened with having to meticulously shape their success by getting a "good job" and getting their "credit right", "stage by stage". Yet all women need are "lip fillers" and "boom. Zip. That's the difference between the king and the queen".

Analogies like this scream insecurity. Tate is threatened by the success and empowerment of modern women, so relies on the baseless logic that their appearance is a shortcut to success. At a time when young men are being told they need to check their privilege for reasons they don't understand, Tate's messages feed into the frustrations of an unaddressed demographic.

Of course, there is a place for some of Tate's messages. Young men should feel empowerment, optimism and strength – but not at the expense of women, or themselves. Tate even fails to address the number one issue that affects men in our generation: mental health. He preaches: "Depression isn't real. You feel sad, you move on."

Tate is feeding a crisis in masculinity. Men

shouldn't view the success and presence of women as encroaching on their place in society. The empowerment of men should not be accompanied by archaic sexism and gender roles. Instead of championing men, Tate fuels hatred for his own financial gain.

This isn't just about Andrew Tate. Even if Tate is jailed or is permanently de-platformed, the wider issue of male entitlement and misogyny remains. Through education and conversations with our peers, we can show that feminism is not "anti-men". We should be trying to understand these views, not attack them.

Finding Common Ground: Can You Separate Art from the Artist?

This month, Jen Machin and Will Green discussed whether you can separate the art from the artist.

The Gryphon Views Team

In hopes of 'Finding Common Ground', this month's debaters discussed cancel culture and the ever present question: can, and should, we separate art from the artist?

From Kanye's antisemitism to JK Rowling's transphobia, 2023 has witnessed a widespread reflection on celebrity accountability and cancel culture. Naturally, with a cuppa in hand, View's writers Jennifer Machin and Will Green were keen to dissect this topic. Jumping from Armie Hammer to Little Britain, Jen and Will discussed a wide range of problematic artists, debating issues of censorship, accountability, and celebrity influence, with the hopes of finding some common ground in their differing outlooks.

Will came to the debate with reservations concerning the boycotting of artists and questioning the black and white nature of cancel culture. He poses the question of "how involved is the person in the art?". Should we be punishing everyone involved in a film production just because of one actor? Should we be boycotting the Beatles just because of John Lennon's history of domestic abuse? These grey areas also extend to whether the artist has been convicted, whether they are alive or dead and what to do about art that was produced before the artist even committed a crime.

Understanding of the complexities in the act of boycotting, Jen was more concerned with the platform given to problematic celebrities. Consuming art produced by problematic celebrities can be interpreted as being accepting of their crimes. Not



only does this give the wrong idea to individuals vulnerable to celebrity influence, but it allows artists to continue spreading their problematic views.

Outraged at JK Rowling's transphobic and condescending comments, Jen has decided to boycott any new Harry Potter products, despite loving the stories. She suggests that "it's important to find more ethical ways of consuming art" such as buying second hand books or listening to cover songs.

However, concerned about the harmful consequences of cancel culture, Will instead proposes "taking personal responsibility for our own consumption". He refrains from consuming art and media in circumstances when they make him feel uncomfortable, citing the example of Weinstein productions. Despite being in agreement with following your feelings, Jen recognises the benefits of the public holding celebrities to account using social media. "We have power as individuals", she asserts, suggesting that when institutions don't condemn criminals due to their celebrity status, social media can be an effective tool.

As the debate drew to a close, the conversation moved towards the dangers of cancel culture. Both agreed that even figures in the public eye should be given the space to learn and change their opinions. Hate and abuse is widespread on social media, and a distinction must be made between cancelling and bullying. Both Will and Jen see the benefits of boycotting problematic artists but believe it's important to discuss the boundaries and complexities of doing so.



Jen's Post-Debate Reflections

What were you hoping to gain from the debate?

"I didn't fully know my opinion on this topic so I was keen to develop my arguments by just talking them through."

Strongest argument?

"Sometimes innocent people face the consequences of one person's actions and that's really not fair."

Has your opinion changed?

"I think my opinions are more concrete now. I do believe that we have a responsibility to hold artists to account, however it is important to weigh up the context and complexities of the controversy before we make a judgement."

Do you think the conversation was productive?

"Yeah definitely! I think it will be great for people to read about in The Gryphon because there's not really any consensus about this topic."

Was there something that you would have wanted to discuss that was not raised?

"I don't think so! I think we covered everything!"



Will's Post-Debate Reflections

What were you hoping to gain from the debate?

"I thought it would be a bit of a laugh to be honest! But also I know how useful it is to work through your opinions and be challenged on your beliefs."

Strongest argument?

"With more power comes more responsibility! Artists should be called out more readily than normal people."

Has your opinion changed?

"I don't think my views have drastically changed but they have tempered. I definitely hadn't thought much about the platforming of artists before the debate."

Do you think the conversation was productive?

"I think it was a really productive conversation and we were able to keep it chill."

Was there something that you would have wanted to discuss that was not raised?

"I got my Taylor Swift reference in so I'm happy!"

Gen Z, Social Media and Money: Avoid Falling Prey to Financial Misinformation



Photo: Flickr

Alicia Kaye

Picture this: you are scrolling through TikTok late at night. Two hours and many cute dog videos have passed, or you are consumed by an episode of *Modern Family* that is cut into 30 parts. Once you have passed the cute dogs and the sitcoms, a video appears giving you financial tips about your credit score. You may not consider it in the moment, because you will probably end up flicking past it like most other TikTok's, but subconsciously, it can stick with you.

A study from money.co.uk/credit-cards found that 36% of 16–24-year-olds (Gen Z) get their financial information from social media. This is a concerning trend for financial experts and advisors, as much of this information is displayed as hacks or shortcuts, therefore making them convenient, which will never not be appealing to Gen Z. It is important not to get sucked into these though, as the information given might not be right for you. This has also led to 35% of 16–24-year-olds lacking financial confidence (money.co.uk/credit-cards).

Finances can be scary as a young adult, with the pressures of starting careers, racking up student loans and saving as much as you can. Do not let this fear fool you into believing that shortcuts given on social media are a quick fix to relieve this stress.

Money.co.uk also explained some of the biggest myths regarding credit cards. For example, checking your credit score will have a negative impact on it. Having more than one credit card can negatively affect your credit score. Increasing the limit on a credit card will impact your score, etc.

When it comes to credit scores, the main thing to remember is submitting the repayments on time. If not, it could result in a negative consequence. The focus is on the time limit rather than the actual amount, which is why it is important not to fall victim to these myths and do research properly before applying for any credit, overdrafts, or loans.

There are many ways you can seek proper information regarding finances. Speak to your university, as it's likely they will have a financial department with people willing to offer advice. Go into your bank branch and speak with someone face-to-face, this can be helpful to properly understand finances, rather than assuming the information someone has given in a 30-second TikTok video is correct.

Martin Lewis' money saving expert is constantly updating their advice based on the economic climate, and provides advice for people of all ages.

The message here is to not fear finances,

as becoming overwhelmed by it would drive anyone to believe what they see on social media. Social media, though, is a chain of people relaying information, and can eventually result in a big game of Chinese whispers.

This is not to say social media is always wrong; it is important to stay up-to-date and aware of what is going on in the world, just be sure to do proper research and seek reliable information before making any big decisions.

Where is the Option for Male Contraception?

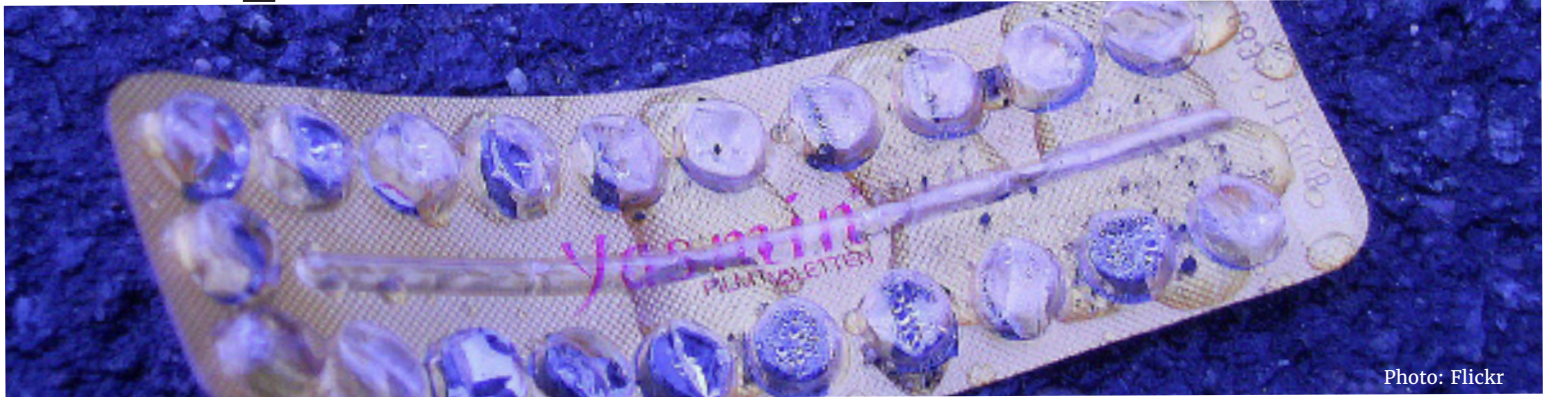


Photo: Flickr

Zara Orange

Almost all women above the age of 16 will be aware of or have experience with some form of contraception and the countless side effects that come with them. However, with male contraceptive research cropping up recently in the media, this begs the question – why is it still the case that 60+ years after the female pill was developed, there is no contraceptive drug available for men?

There are a variety of hormone combinations available to women, each with a range of mild to severe side effects, from weight gain and nausea to blood clots and strokes. The combined pill, named Enovid, was developed in the late 1950s and approved for usage by the FDA in 1960. This small dose of hormones has the ability to influence the female reproductive system to a large effect.

Since the pill was first introduced, the declaration of Helsinki brought forward participant protection and highlighted whether the benefits outweighed potential harm. As a result, a relatively safer combined contraceptive pill was introduced.

Currently, both the combined and mini pills are reported to be 99% effective when taken correctly, though it is typically only 91% effective.

As of now, the only male contraception available in the UK is condoms or a vasectomy. The lack of a male-contraceptive product is not due to limited research, but instead a failure of progression to approval due to reported side effects.

In 2016, a trial study was carried out to investigate the effect of injectable hormones contraception on male participants. 95.9% of users showed a suppressed sperm count, with only 1.57% of pregnancy occurring in only 1.57% of participants partners, and reversibility in 94.8% of participants.

Despite researchers reporting a “near complete and reversible suppression of spermatogenesis”, the trial was terminated early due to adverse effects. However, 99% of these side effects were noted as mild or moderate, and 38.8% were found to be unrelated to the drug. The most common adverse effects reported in this study were acne, pain at the injection site, increased libido, and mood disorders – all effects reported by users of female contraceptive products, as described by the NHS.

In developing male contraception, non-hormonal targets have generally been deemed more appropriate as hormonal options are deemed

unsafe. As of February 2023, scientists studying mice reported the inhibition of the soluble adenylyl cyclase pathway (a non-hormonal pathway) prevented sperm from being able to swim for about 3 hours.

This study found that the drug prevented 100% of pregnancy in mice who mated 30 minutes after drug administration, and that normal function returned within 24 hours. Despite these results showing promise for the future of women’s reproductive health, the reality is that it is only in animal testing stages.

Susan Walker, a professor in contraception and reproductive health at Anglia Ruskin University, told the BBC she once had hope for a male contraceptive pill but is “no longer optimistic”, as the standards of approval after human clinical trials are nothing less than perfection.

Regardless of this hurdle, there is still a cultural stigma around male contraceptive products amongst the male population. Due to this stigma, an approved contraceptive pill will not necessarily guarantee a solution. For now, despite the equal responsibility of pregnancy prevention on both partners, it still falls to women to bare the weight, and side effects, of birth control.

AI Screening for Brain Tumours

Rachel Murray

A new AI diagnostic screening system, called DeepGlioma, has shown to rapidly detect and identify diffuse gliomas in under 90 seconds. The technology was developed in an effort to revolutionise diagnostic testing and came about as a result of. Collaborative efforts between engineers and neuroscientists at Michigan Medicine and contributing investigations from other research teams helped in the development of the DeepGlioma rapid imaging system, which analyses tumour biopsies and diagnoses any genetic mutations which may result in gliomas.

Diffuse Gliomas remain the most common and deadly brain tumours, often advancing rapidly. They can be identified by defined molecular markers, however diagnosis, requires complex and lengthy molecular testing, which is unfavourable for diagnosis and can result in sub-optimal care and treatment. Development of a suitable treatment is also limited by the lack of accurate diagnoses.

DeepGlioma uses stimulated Raman histology (an optical imaging technique) combined with deep neural networks to provide real-time images of brain tumour tissue. The system identified defined

molecular markers within a study of 153 patients, differentiating between types of diffuse gliomas without the need for tissue processing.

This novel solution for rapid, accurate diagnosis presents the possibility of developing tailored treatments with more accurate patient prognosis in future. This also facilitates increased enrolment in clinical trials, as patient mutations can be more readily defined. This technology presents a novel application for AI within the medical field and could lead to increased clinical trials for diffuse gliomas.

The Magic of Mushrooms

Pearl McLean Jennings

Whilst mushrooms are considered a love-hate food for many, they have the potential to be a sustainable saviour for our planet. Mushrooms alone are considered a sustainable food source due to their ability to grow without pesticides, fertilisers, sunlight and with smaller amounts of water and space than other foods. They are also important carbon sinks storing carbon in their mycelium, so contribute to reducing the carbon entering our atmosphere.

The fruiting body of mushrooms are conventionally used for food, but they make up only a small part of the fungi. What goes on underneath the soil and the by-products of fungal growth is what is peaking scientific interest for the development of sustainable products.

Mykor produces sustainable construction materials such as 'MykoFoam' (an alternative to conventional insulations), out of waste materials, using mushroom strains as binding agents. Ecovative produces biomaterials using mycelium, like their 'MycoComposite', a substitute for polystyrene foam. Biomaterials can also be used to combat the fast fashion industry – French product designer Courtney Giovagnoli uses biodegradable 'Mycoplastics' (mushroom

textiles). Similarly, products are being produced for interior design. Danielle Trofe has grown her 'Mush-Lume' lighting collection using mycelium in custom moulds. These mushroom-based products reduce the need for traditional manufacturing materials and techniques and the majority are biodegradable, therefore their production limits carbon emissions and waste compared to conventional industry products.

Some innovations in progress, like Thomas Sault's 'myco-hex' mycelium and sawdust stuffed tiles, aim to use mycelium's ability to absorb carbon and other air pollutants from vehicles on the road to directly address emissions. Other companies aim to produce sustainable vegan produce out of fungal tissues, like Aqua Cultured Foods "sushi quality seafood" using mycelium and Innomy's fungi-based meat. These food alternatives eliminate issues with allergies which can be found in other traditional and plant-based meats and reduce the ingestion of microplastics, pesticides and antibiotics entering our bodies that can occur with traditional meat consumption. However, they fundamentally combat the stress placed on the oceans and agricultural

systems from high demand for produce.

The economic viability at a large scale is yet to be assessed for many of these products however, companies like Aqua Cultured Foods suggest that their sustainable products can cost less than traditional seafood when they scale production. The continuous development of sustainable alternatives may help mitigate against the climate crisis that stems from the overproduction, overconsumption, and throwaway culture that we live in. Could the future have mush-room for mushrooms?



Photo: Flickr

Cancer Vaccine Shows Potential

Alessia Stanistreet-Welsh

Vaccines have been used for decades to prevent and treat infectious diseases. Their successful application has inspired researchers to explore the possibility of developing vaccines against cancer. The goal of a cancer vaccine is to stimulate the body's immune system to attack and eliminate cancer cells.

However, developing effective cancer vaccines has proven to be challenging, due to the complexity of the disease (cancers often vary greatly between individuals and even within the same tumour). Despite these challenges, in recent years, there has been a renewed interest in cancer vaccine research, driven by breakthroughs in vaccine technology, such as the mRNA technology used in COVID-19 vaccines.

Recently, promising results have emerged from a phase 2 clinical trial which tested a personalised mRNA vaccine for melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. The vaccine targets unique mutations in a patient's cancer while sparing healthy cells in the body. The trial recruited 57 patients previously treated for melanoma, who were also at high risk of experiencing a recurrence

of their cancers. Whilst all patients received the immunotherapy drug Keytruda (the standard treatment for high-risk melanoma), 107 patients also received the personalised vaccine.

The results showed that only 22.4% of patients who received both the immunotherapy drug and the vaccine experienced a recurrence of their cancer during a two-year followed up period, compared to 40%

of patients who received only the immunotherapy drug. This represents a difference of 44% between the two groups.

Dr Antoni Rabas, a professor of medicine at the University of California described the potential of this personalised mRNA vaccine as significant, stating to NBC News, "It's the first time a cancer vaccine has been shown to have this level of benefit, close to 50% decrease in the risk of relapse."

The potential of this personalised mRNA vaccine is important, as it represents a novel approach to treatment which can be tailored to a patient's specific cancer.

The researchers anticipate that the upcoming phase 3 trial, scheduled to launch this summer, will yield similar promising results. Margaret Callahan, from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Immunotherapeutic Program made the following comment to NBC News: "This is an exciting advance in the field of cancer vaccines."



Photo: Flickr

Beckett Triumph at Varsity Finale

William Heaver

Last week, a dominant Leeds Beckett pack helped them to victory in front of a crowd of 10,000 at Headingley. Flanker Khalik Kareem was named Man of the Match, and alongside double try scorer Madison Hunting, was crucial to Beckett's victory.

The game started fairly even, with a lot of kicking and both teams easing their way into the game in front of a raucous crowd. Beckett took an early lead through a penalty from fly half Dan Reed after some early pressure. This pressure continued, and when Beckett won a penalty, they kicked to the corner. From the resulting line out, Hunting crashed over from an incredibly well drilled rolling maul.

Beckett, who had only landed back from a Rugby tour in San Diego the day before, were looking strong, but University of Leeds responded. After a half break from lively full back Greg Kitson, Beckett prop Emi Ilincuta was sent to the sin bin for a high tackle. Dylan Evans missed with the resulting penalty, but The Gryphons kept the pressure on and scored through number 8 Louis Vincent from a rolling maul of their own. Evans slotted the side line conversion and Beckett's lead was cut to one point. This was the closest Uni Of Leeds would go, as Beckett

responded immediately. After a surging charge by Hunting, Beckett won a penalty in Uni Of's 22.

Reed kicked to the corner and after a training ground move from the line out, flanker Josh Hadland crashed over. Beckett were being helped by The Gryphons' poor discipline, and this was really highlighted by Ben Whyman being sent to the sin bin for a tip tackle on Ben Bailey, 30 seconds before half time. From the penalty, Hunting scored his second try in identical fashion to his first, again from the Beckett rolling maul. That meant the score was 22-7 at half time.

Beckett wanted to force home their man advantage after half time, and did so through second row Aron Suggate who snuck over from a pick and went after a siege on the University of Leeds. With the score 29-7 Leeds needed to respond, and they did with replacement scrum half Ewan Laughton adding a new dimension to the Gryphons' attack. Beckett's defence, led by Kareem, was like a brick wall repelling the Uni Of attacks. This increased possession and pressure eventually led to Uni of Leeds' inside centre Finn Cook crashing over after a fine pass from fly half Daniel Troup. Leeds had

a chance, and with Suggate sent to the sin bin for taking out Greg Jones in the air, the crowd really started to get behind Uni Of with 15 minutes to go. But unfortunately Beckett repelled the Leeds attacks despite having the man disadvantage. Beckett confirmed their dominance through a try by winger Jody Devine from a grubber kick from Reed.

The game ended 36-14, with Beckett celebrating jubilantly in front of their fans in the West Stand. It is worth noting that 7 of the 8 Leeds Beckett forwards played the full 80 minutes, which is virtually unheard of – their physicality and fitness were the difference in the end.

Nonetheless, despite the rugby result, it is also worth noting that the University of Leeds were crowned Varsity champions for the second year running. Well done Gryphons!

Looking forward to the Ashes

Markus Conneely

No cricket series commands the respect and attention from the British public like the Ashes. Once every 4 years, for 2 months, cricket has its moment in the summer sun. Following one of its greatest editions in 2019 and the 'Bazball' explosion which has occurred within English cricket in the last 12 months, this time fans will approach an Ashes summer with expectation rather than hope.

Typically, when England are scheduled to come up against an Australian team ranked number one in the world overall feelings of anxiety, apprehension, and pessimism are rife. Traumatic recollections of times gone by are at the forefront of the minds of even the most devoted fan. You don't have to go back far to find psychological scarring either; just 18 months ago England were torn to pieces down under during a torturous winter of cricket.

But this isn't the same old England. The new wave of consequence free cricket propelled by total faith in the ability of each and every player has landed on English shores. The proof is in the pudding; a stunning summer of cricket saw England find their best form since 2004 and was followed up by a first clean sweep in Pakistan. So, the idea that England can dismantle Australia in the same manner doesn't feel like a pipe dream – it feels likely. And England players don't need to be quietly confident about their prospects

– they have earned the right to be arrogant.

Ollie Robinson, ever the provocateur, has stoked these fires in an unprecedented way with his comments that England could give Australia a "good hiding". It's almost never the English who do the talking, with Australia typically seeking the psychological advantage before either side has even set foot on the outfield. You only have to go back to 2013 when the Australian coach called on the public to abuse Stuart Broad, hoping he'd eventually "cry and go home". But this talk from Robinson, one of England's stars, should be embraced. It is an out of the ordinary battle cry, but it is perhaps the most complete example of the undiluted confidence every member of the current setup is feeling at the moment. Fans have been given every reason to expect a series win, and the players want a demolition job.

The very lens with which the looming series is viewed has been shifted. Formerly pivotal questions regarding England's ability to keep Australia's world beating pace attack at bay, or their plans to stop Steve Smith scoring runs no longer feel significant. It is Australia who now must find a way of nullifying England and the imperious intent they have shown in the last year.

Such unprecedented success has few drawbacks, but one is certainly the fact that it has becoming increasingly impossible to fit all performing players

into a team of just 11 men. Jonny Bairstow, who arguably started the revolution, has seen his number 5 spot comprehensively filled by Yorkshire team mate Harry Brook, creating the biggest selection crisis in over 50 years. A space will surely appear at the top of order, due to Zak Crawley's estranged relationship with scoring runs, but someone will be forced to bat vastly out of position in order to face the most ferocious new ball attack world cricket has to offer. That said, with the unrelenting faith that Stokes and McCullum are determined to enlist in all of their disciples, you'd bank on whoever is thrust to the top of the order to be an unmitigated success.

Few series this highly anticipated have also been as challenging to predict. There will, of course, always be room for optimism when England play at home; their record is fantastic and they haven't lost an Ashes series on home turf since 2001. But could this be something more? Australia are yet to be whitewashed during the 140-year-long Ashes story. There can be no better place to change that than the approaching summer.

The team have earned the faith that they can continue their mythical brand of cricket for 5 tests on the biggest stage the game has to offer. To suggest England could obliterate the old enemy doesn't feel ludicrous, it feels right.