



## Across the Atlantic

Student culture on either side of the pond

Muse 8-9

## Behind the scenes

A night out in Ziggy's seen from every angle

Muse 12-13



# Anti-Zionist talk on campus leads to religious flashpoint

By Nicky Woolf  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

YORK CAMPUS became a centre of religious tension last week as Jewish students from around the country arrived to protest at a lecture given by the controversial Rabbi Aharon Cohen (left) of the anti-Zionist sect Neturei Karta, who has been accused of holocaust denial.

Cohen's speech, entitled "Anti-Zionism is not Anti-Semitism," contended that, according to Orthodox Jewish law, "the Zionist state known as Israel is a regime that has no right to exist," and accused Zionists of constituting "the biggest threat to Jews and Judaism."

Cohen, who was invited to speak on campus by Islamic Society and Amnesty International as part of Palestinian Awareness Week, has been widely accused of holocaust denial because of his attendance at a "Review of the holocaust" conference in Tehran, Iran last December.

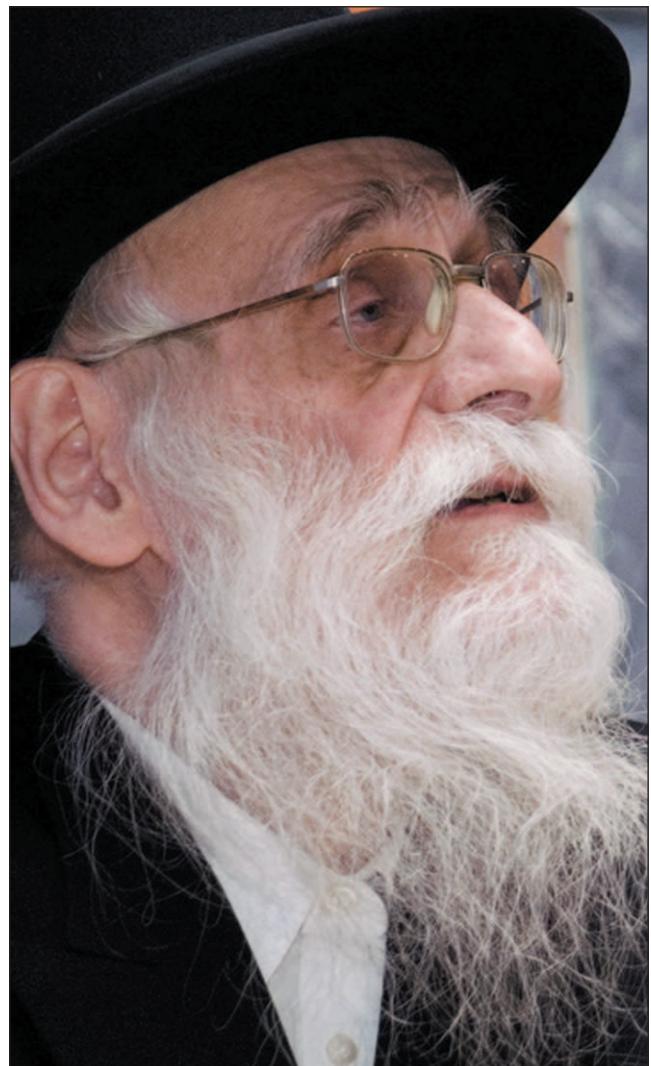
Rabbi Michael Treblow (right), the Jewish student's chaplain for Yorkshire and Humbershire who attended the talk, claimed the confer-

ence was "organised by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinajad to deny or to question the holocaust, inviting world-leading anti-Semites such as David Duke, the [former] head of the Ku Klux Klan, and others." Treblow claimed Cohen "has a track record of supporting those who have attacked his Jewish brethren." Cohen claims charges of holocaust denial are "entirely unfair."

York Unity and the Socialist Students societies, who were also involved in the organisation of Palestinian Awareness Week, withdrew their support from Cohen as a speaker when they were informed by York Jewish Society of the controversy surrounding his ideas.

Edward Zinkin, Secretary of York's Jewish Society, explained that their problem with Cohen is that he "attempts to pass himself off as a representative of normative and mainstream Judaism" while also supporting Hamas and Islamic Jihad. "He represents this very minority group, and seeing as he openly supports Hamas, and Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah, for this man

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## Members of UOTC come under fire

Members of the UOTC have faced criticism in recent days after it was revealed that they had held a 'German' social at which one officer had dressed as a concentration camp victim. They were also criticised for posting a video showing a mock execution on the internet.

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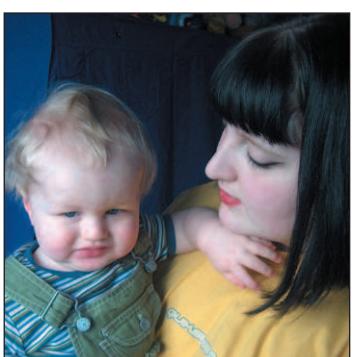
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## Twelve candidates prepare for elections

Campaigning for the YUSU elections is underway, with twelve candidates competing over six places on the team of paid sabbatical officers. Last year, a total of seventeen candidates ran for sabbatical positions. Elections will be held on Friday of week 9.

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## Student parents

We meet the students at York who are balancing childcare with their degrees and ask if the University could be doing anything more to make their lives easier

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## York clubs storm to BUSU cup success

The York Athletic Union has experienced a week of success with victories for the men's volleyball, women's basketball, men's hockey and men's football teams. Both the basketball and the football teams have reached the BUSA finals which will take place in weeks 9 and 10 respectively.

**SPORT >>** Pages 18 - 20

# Porters' lodges to reopen

By Raf Sanchez  
NEWS EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY has announced its intention to reopen closed porters lodges on campus, bringing portering back to the October 2006 service benchmark. The announcement comes in the wake of a number of campaigns by both students and academics, as well as an open letter circulated by Nouse bearing more than 1,400 signatures.

In a letter dated February 15 Keith Lilley, Director of Facilities Management, laid out his intention to "return to a 24-hour portering service in Wentworth, Vanbrugh and Derwent."

All three have had their lodges closed since January 21. The letter also confirms the intentions to shift Langwith from the 24-hour footing it has been on for the duration of the porters crisis back to being open "7am to 10pm Monday to Friday, and 8am to 10pm Saturday/Sunday."

Lilley's letter has been treated with cautious optimism by JCRC chairs.



**Student bedrooms across campus have displayed posters in an effort to bring back 24hr portering**

Jamie Tyler, Chair of Derwent JCRC, commented that "Lilley's intentions seem genuine but you can't believe it until it's actually happened."

He added that JCRCs would "keep fighting the cause to make sure 'the lodges reopen.' Langwith JCRC Chair, Won Youn,

was philosophical about the cut in hours at his college saying "It's a shame

that it's only going to be a day porter, but the University has to cut costs don't they? We'll continue to fight on but there's only so much we can do."

The announcement is a sign of success for the multi-pronged campaign from campus groups to force management to restore portering. The campaign included Nouse's open letter, wide-

spread graffiti on campus and a mass YUSU poster campaign. However, management has thus far refused to comment on the demand made by Nouse's open letter that an investigation be held into the causes of the crisis, and that those responsible be held accountable.

John Grogan, MP for Selby, Hugh Bayley, MP for the City of York, and Iain

Duncan-Smith, MP for Chingford and Woodford Green and former Conservative Party leader, have all made their concerns known to the University. All three received a prompt response, while the open letter carrying 14,000 signatures, including those of numerous senior University academics, remains unanswered.

## Nudes and no porters

A GROUP of male first year students ran naked around campus on the night of February 23 in a bid to draw attention to the lack of porters in colleges. Beginning in Alcuin, they streaked through every college, and ended up in Vanbrugh. One porter said the group were a 'nuisance' and claimed the stunt had prompted two complaints from female residents in James. Another said that the group responded "aggressively" to him when asked to stop. A student who was involved in the stunt, claimed that the group's aim was "to draw attention to the fact that if porters had been at every college, we would have not completed all 7 without being caught," but admitted that "the nakedness was a rather sketchy part of the night" as "much alcohol was consumed."

## University attacked in national newspapers

THE UNIVERSITY of York has been criticised recently in two letters to the national press. One letter, published in the *Guardian*, described York as "the graveyard of ambition." The other, which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, called tutor contact time "pitiful" and named finance as a central problem.

James Harrison, the sender of the latter letter, wrote, "It is not uncommon for undergrads to pass through an entire term without receiving any comment on written work whatsoever." He also expressed concerns over Heslington East, calling into question the likelihood that a 50% increase in students, as is projected, will be met by proportional lecturer increases.

## Women's Week in York

YORK WILL mark International Women's Day with a week-long celebration starting on Monday, March 3. In town, a range of activities at low cost will continue through the week, from dancing, music, volunteer and confidence building workshops to language and exercise classes, discussion groups and talks on women's issues. On campus, events including an open mic night on Wednesday and a performance of the Vagina Monologues next term.

**Reporting by Chris Colyer, Helen Citron and Anjli Raval**

# YUSU accused of bias over hustings

By Sam Thomas  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A CANDIDATE in the SU elections has expressed anger over what she felt was biased questioning from current sabbatical officers at an official hustings event.

At the 'Question Time' session held last Thursday in Derwent bar, YUSU President Rich Croker joined students in levelling



questions at the candidates. One candidate has

since claimed that some of his questions were directed at her, and represented an "unfair bias". YUSU has prevented Nouse from revealing the identity of the candidate on the grounds of 'electoral regulations'.

The candidate, who is also running for Labour Councillor in May, said "It was obvious to anyone watching that Croker asked at least one question

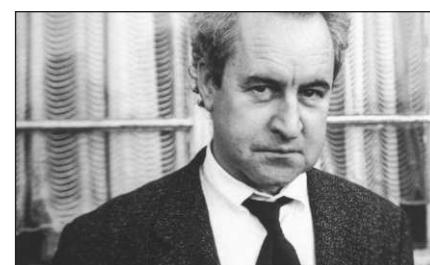
directed at me, about the fact that I'm running in the council elections. I don't know what effect it has on an election when the sabbos express their own preferences so openly." Procedure requires that all questions from the floor "must be directed to all candidates running for the position," and not to any specific individual.

When asked about the event, Croker said: "The

question I asked was 'do you have any potential commitments next year that could stop you doing your job properly?', which I think is a valid question." He claimed that his question could apply to candidates who wished to continue playing sport on Wednesday afternoons. A source close to the candidate echoed her allegations of bias, labelling the precedent "unhealthy."

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Sara Sayeed chats to Man Booker Prize winner John Banville about his alter-ego Benjamin Black, his resemblance to Bart Simpson and the embarrassment his books provoke. We also look at some other authors and their schizophrenic alter-egos.

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# OTC criticised for staging mock execution on exercise

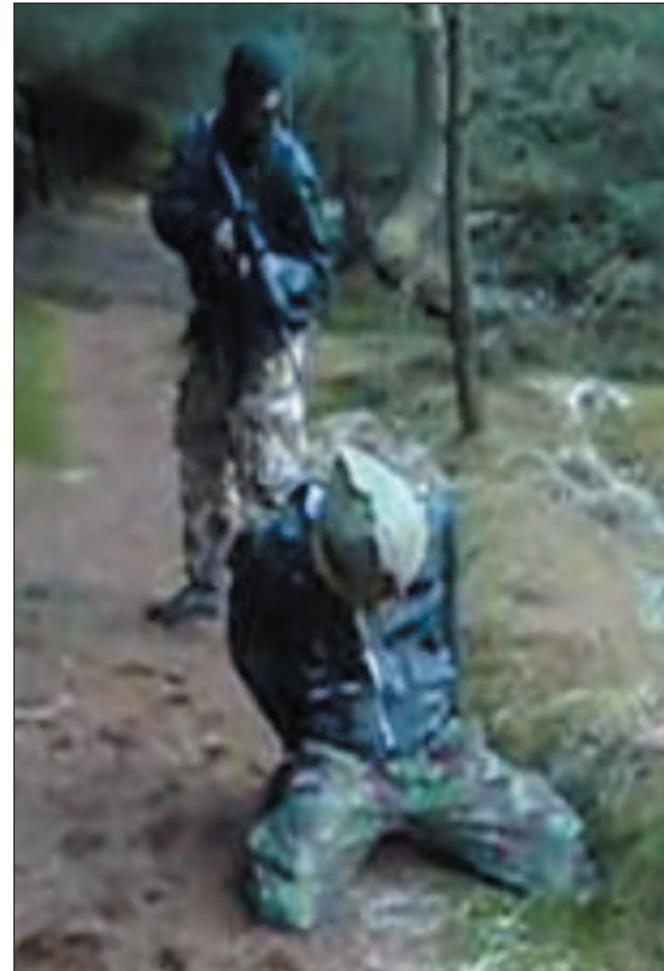
By Jamie Merrill  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE YORK detachment of the British Army's University Officer Training Corps (UOTC) has faced fierce criticism in recent days for behaviour that has been described as "disgusting and ignorant". The UOTC came under fire after it emerged that members had held a German-themed social at which one member dressed as a concentration camp prisoner. Members of the detachment have also faced censure over a video they posted on YouTube which shows the mock execution of a hooded victim.

Jewish students and representatives at the University have reacted with anger to news of the 'German' social - which took place at York barracks in week 10 of last term - at which one student Officer Cadet dressed in the black and white pyjamas worn by Nazi concentration camp prisoners during the Second World War. Several members also came dressed as German soldiers.

Rabbi Michael Treblow, the Jewish Students' Chaplain for Yorkshire and Humberside, condemned the social: "It's tasteless and very painful that they don't remember the cruelty and barbarism that civilised humanity can produce. Nazi Germany was the epitome of civilisation reaching its barbaric max".

Rabbi Treblow went on to urge that the individuals



The UOTC faced fierce criticism for posting a video showing a mock execution (left) on the YouTube website

involved should be "sent to old age homes to care for survivors of German cruelty" as punishment.

A member of the detachment defended the social, saying that "nobody took it as a Nazi social and the chap himself is actually Jewish, so before you say it was offensive to York's burgeoning Jewish population, remember he was Jewish".

He added that the choice of military uniform was made because "the Germans have always been a militaristic people", claiming that the actions of the Officer Cadet in question had been dealt with internally by other members, who gave him "a punishment drink".

Marthe Tholen, the chair of the Jewish Society



on campus, said the actions were "childish, very disgusting and ignorant" and that "if you do such a thing it is offensive to many people, whether you are a Jew or not".

The UOTC has also faced criticism for a video posted on YouTube which shows a number of mock killings set to music, including a mock execution carried

out on a hooded victim.

The video, which was removed from the internet within an hour of Nouse's initial enquiry, was filmed during an official UOTC exercise. Lieutenant Colonel Melotte said that "individuals playing the part of the enemy took it upon themselves to perform a mock execution without the knowledge of the military

staff". Melotte stressed that the video was "unauthorised", and that the event was not part of British military training.

The video has been condemned by YUSU President Rich Croker, who said "We cannot condone such behaviour if it infringes on students of other religions, races etc. I would hope all York students would be considerate in what they upload or produce for public viewing."

However Lieutenant Colonel Melotte, the Commanding Officer responsible for the York detachment, has defended the students as "a force for good" and a "credit to the University". He went on to say that "those concerned are now quite clear that their actions were inappropriate and ill-judged and at variance with the values of the UOTC and the British Army."

However, a member of the UOTC who was asked to comment on the video said "It just sounds like a bunch of guys messing around in the woods. Why is that inappropriate?"

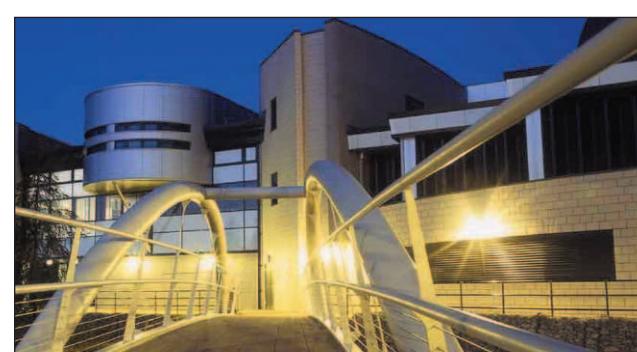
A Facebook group set up by members of the UOTC describes the organisation as "the mighty OTC", claiming to "sweep away the dross and stand proud for being the hardest training, hardest fighting and hardest drinking people in York" as well as stating, "The rugby club only exists so that gays can get together without joining LGBT and having to tell their dads."

## Ancient scrolls found at Borthwick

By Helen Citron  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

ARCHIVISTS AT the University of York's Borthwick Institute have sparked intense interest in academic circles with the discovery of a 600-year-old 'gild roll', which sheds new light on the York Mystery plays and life in Medieval York.

The gild roll, belonging to the influential York-based Pater Noster Gild, had been lost for 100 years before it



The lost scroll was found at York's Borthwick Institute

was found among a collection of historical documents donated to the University. It

is thought to be the only surviving roll of its kind. The 4ft-long parchment contains

records of the accounts of the gild for 1399 and 1400.

The details it supplies about the *Pater Noster Play*, believed to be the forerunner of the famous York Mystery Plays, fill a gap long puzzled-over by scholars. Dr. S. Rees Jones of the University's Centre for Medieval Studies explained that "Scholars have long known that the renowned York Mystery Plays were not the only religious plays staged in the city. The York performance of the *Pater Noster Play* - which taught the essentials of the

Christian faith on avoiding sin and living virtuously - was first mentioned by John Wyclif in 1378".

On behalf of the English and Related Literature Department, Prof. Linne R. Mooney explained that whilst mystery still shrouds the content of the plays, the information gleaned from the rolls is a huge step forward for literary scholars: 'Its rediscovery brings back this bit of York history to the city of its origin. For literary scholars its text is important because it

offers us insights - however limited - into the content of the plays.'

The roll gives information about dues collected from members and of rents paid and received. It also gives details of the annual gild feast at which 12 sucking pigs, 29 dozen doves, 800 eggs, 30 geese and 198 gallons of ale were consumed by the gild's members who, according to Jeremy Goldberg of York's History Department, 'probably rarely consumed meat, purchased spices or drank wine'.

# Campaigning underway on

## Elections sketch

By Heidi Blake  
EDITOR

IT'S SU ELECTION time again and, as usual, badly punctuated campaign posters have sprung up all over campus. Wherever one looks, one is visually bombarded by a spectrum of brightly coloured manifestos boasting a range of ambitious (if predictable) policies. Matt Burton's promise of a licensed SU venue in the city is perhaps the most outlandish, for all the appeal it might hold for fresh-faced first years. One suspects that those who have braved more than a year of student life in the cold North will be a little less credulous, though it's hard to be sure. Credulity seems to be rife where the promise of alcohol is concerned; after all, students threw themselves behind the depressingly ineffectual 'Save the Bars' campaign with all the gusto of voracious Trotskyites.

Despite the often monochrome nature of SU affairs at York, the run-up to elections this year has not been entirely without incident. Nominations were livened up somewhat by the application of one hopeful chap who declared his willingness to self-define as female for the position of Women's Officer. Ironically he was the sole applicant for the post, meaning that - had he managed to get his application in on time - a seamless path to victory would have been his. Unless of course he'd been the first candidate ever to be thwarted by the ever hopeful, though terminally unpopular, Ron.

Hustings were pitifully attended, mainly by SU insiders. It is a sad day when student politics has become so inward-looking as to generate interest only from its inner ranks. However, the success rate of the current sabbatical team in achieving their election goals, while by no means perfect, is certainly not to be sniffed at. Also, a brief look at the highs and lows of SU history shows that it can be a force to be reckoned with for the bad as well as the good. Dull as it may seem, YUSU's influence extends far further than most students realise. For this reason, it is worthwhile to sit up, take notice and cast your votes before election night. It might even be worth giving poor old Ron a chance at the polls.



Candidates listed clockwise from top left: Mickey Macefield, Matt Burton, Nick Hassey, Jo Carter, Joey Ellis, Kristian Dye, Grace Fletcher-Hall, Lucy Wickham, James Flinders, Anne-Marie Canning and James Hirst. Sam Bayley absent. Photo: Milda Sabunaite

### President

The President represents the student body both nationally and at the University, and is responsible for coordinating Union campaigns.

Anne-Marie Canning's 'all for one and one for all' campaign stresses the importance of a "proactive, forward-thinking union based on communication and student engagement". She encourages student input on the Heslington East project and aims to introduce a pharmacy to Market Square. She said, "I will

be a president who communicates, campaigns and cares."

Her rival for the Presidency, James Flinders, is running a campaign which focuses on academic issues, such as increased feedback on work and reduced seminar sizes. He plans to enhance communication between colleges to improve events and promote student involvement in SU decision-making. He believes that "the most important thing is that we have a union that listens to students and campaigns on what matters".

### Services and Finance

The roles of the Services and Finance Officer include acting as treasurer of the Union, managing YUSU-run campus services and organising a range of events from Freshers' Week to Union Elections.

Matt Burton's election manifesto promises an 'eco and ethics' budget, online management of all YUSU sports, society and JCRC accounts and YUSU info broadcasts on URY and YSTV. He aims to establish "a student-run venue in the city

and increased funding to give the SU independence and sustainability".

Mickey Macefield promotes an "accountable, ethical and environmentally friendly Union, which should be run as a non-profit organisation". He wants to increase the efficiency of Union businesses and aims to develop JCRC training and funding. Mickey has said, "I want to take YUSU forward and adapt to changes happening on campus at the moment".

## The highs and lows of SU history

**High: 1964** The Student Representative Committee is formed for the first time. A year later the Committee's first sabbatical officer is elected, mandated to represent students and coordinate the activities of the student body.

**High: 1970s** Despite the small size of the University, the Students' Union manages to attract a number of big-name bands to play on campus including The Who, The Kinks and Paul McCartney's newly-formed Wings.

**High: 2002** YUSU organise a protest against cuts in 24-hour portering and Heslington Hall is occupied by over 1,000 students. Though a senior member of staff expels students using fire extinguishers, the University is forced to review cuts.

**High: 2006** YUSU forces the University into a massive extension of kitchen facilities in Derwent, Goodricke, Langwith and Vanbrugh and negotiates £55,000 in compensation to residents for previous under-provision.

**Low: 1984** The entire Student Union Executive Committee faces a vote of no-confidence after refusing to support the miners' strike. The vote is carried by a margin of 2:1 and the entire team is removed from office.

**Low: 1999** YUSU budget fails to pass on three consecutive occasions due to inquorate UGMs, leaving societies without funding. Action by the Executive is hampered as the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee fail to make quoracy.

**Low: 2004** YUSU Treasurer Osvaldo 'Ozzy' Atton is arrested after bottling another student. President James Alexander gags student media from reporting on the arrest. Atton is sentenced to nine months imprisonment for grievous bodily harm.

**Low: 2006** YUSU misrepresent the views of legal experts to students to justify rushing through a new constitution. Exec. Committee decide to discount abstentions from the vote based on legal evidence later proved inconclusive by *Nouse*.

# Campus

## Academic and Welfare

The Academic and Welfare Officer aids students with welfare- and work-related issues, runs welfare campaigns and represents students on committees.

Kristian Dye wants to introduce drop-in surgeries, professionally trained college welfare reps and "continuous" Chlamydia testing. He promises to "take responsibility, offer solutions and make a difference".

Grace Fletcher-Hall aims to

fight "slipping academic standards", promote the YUSU minibus and help shape the Heslington East project. She aims to be "a strong representative voice on student welfare".

Lucy Wickham intends to improve communication between students and the University and take a "fresh approach" to sexual health, hygiene and security. Her motto is "devotion, dedication and determination".

## Societies and Communications

The Societies and Communications Officer is responsible for the coordination, support and training of student societies.

Sam Bayley's policies include better advertising of UGMs, the integration of Facebook within yusu.org, flexible, long-term budgeting and the relaunch of Yor:Mag. He has said, "I've worked with students for three years at college and YUSU level

and I feel I have the experience to really make improvements".

James Hirst calls for greater cooperation and sharing of resources between societies, simpler budgeting and better publicity for Freshers' Fair. He said, "I would be able to provide a fresh outlook to YUSU procedures and I would look towards achieving realistic targets - greater changes are made step by step".

## AU President

The AU President organises and coordinates University sport, from fixtures to facilities.

Jo Carter wishes to improve AU membership, ensuring that students get more for their money. She promotes the importance of the AU as a charitable organisation and wants to increase the profile of women's

sport on campus. She aims for "a greater unity within the AU".

Nick Hassey promotes the sale of sports equipment on campus, calls for first class sports facilities in Heslington East and encourages greater student participation through sports volunteer programmes. He said the three words to sum up his campaign are "dedication, experience and innovation".

## Student Development and Charities

The Student Development and Charities Officer facilitates volunteering and charitable endeavours on campus, supports organisations such as RAG and Student Action and is responsible for running Kid's Camp.

Joey Ellis looks to increase

accessibility and further communication between charitable organisations, increase the number of volunteering and charity fairs and create more fundraising events. She says she wants to "raise the profile on campus of all the good work that is done".

30% Overall decline in the number of candidates for sabbatical positions since last year

## How far have the current team kept to their election promises?



**Rich Croker**  
**SU President**

Croker's campaign pledged to promote students' needs over business interests and "ensure student services are maintained or improved." Since then, Croker has negotiated an extension of kitchen facilities in four colleges and £55,000 in compensation to residents for previous under-provision. However, he failed to prevent budget cuts, a portering crisis or the closure of Langwith bar.



**Amy Woods**  
**Services**

Woods ran on the slogan "Vote Amy Woods first and you will never come second". She placed strong emphasis on Freshers' Fortnight and has since delivered on promises of a "massive sponsored bar crawl" and a "Big Act Comedy Night." However, her plans to extend student facilities to include an SU take away in Market Square and a pharmacy collection service on campus have not been successful.



**Tom Moore**  
**AU President**

Moore's un-opposed campaign centred on improving York's standings in the world of University sport. He pledged to lead York to victory in both the Roses and Varsity as well as securing a position in the top 35 on the BUSA league tables. York defeated York St. Johns to win Varsity in February and currently stands 38th in the BUSA league. The Roses will take place in May.



**Ben Griffiths**  
**Student Development and Charities**

Griffiths ran his campaign on the message "I don't believe in apathetic students". Griffiths presided over the most successful RAG week to date, raising over £16,000. He also introduced a RAG & Student Action newsletter. A promise of varied RAG events including "parachuting, firewalking and a zipline over the lake" has not yet been delivered; nor have changes to the RAG website aimed at increasing participation.



**Amy Foxtton**  
**Academic and Welfare**

Foxtton placed "removing the stigma of mental health problems" at the heart of her manifesto. Packs containing information about dealing with stress were distributed during Freshers' week, and Foxtton has worked to extend campus counselling services. Her promise to organise scheduled welfare drop-in sessions has not yet been met. Foxtton has secured additional funding for the YUSU minibus, though the service is rarely used.



**Colin Hindson**  
**Societies and Communications**

Hindson, YUSU's first Societies and Communications Officer, promised better co-ordination of student groups. He delivered the University's largest Freshers' Fair to date and has increased training opportunities for societies, designed to increase professionalism. Attempts to 'reconnect' students with YUSU have had little success so far, as UGM motions still generally fail to reach quoracy and recent election hustings were ill-attended.

# Socialist Students protest against top-up tuition fees

By Jenny O'Mahony  
DEPUTY EDITOR

THE SOCIALIST Students launched their 'Campaign to Defeat Fees' last Wednesday with a rally and a guest speaker from the University of Sheffield, Dan Randall, attending.

The premise of the campaign is a push for the complete abolition of all fees and a reinstatement of the equivalent of £150 a week in grants for students, regardless of background or parental income. This event is designed to be a part of a much wider national campaign, and has the backing of the NUS through a message of support on their website in addition to their own 'Admission: Impossible'.

David Marjoribanks, a prominent member of the Socialist Students, claimed that the NUS, despite their pledge of solidarity, were "not doing enough" for students on the issue of fees but also on wider points of interest.

Marjoribanks made reference to the protest march which took place in London last October, which united Student Unions, student groups like NUS, teaching associations such as the ATL and NUT and Socialists, Anarchists and Anti-War protesters. "The NUS line is to keep the cap, whereas the majority of the student placards at the protest last



Members of the Socialist Students open their 'Defeat Top-Up Fees' campaign with a rally and a guest speaker

October were for the end of fees... the NUS is out of touch."

Dan Randall, a former member of the NUS National Executive Committee and currently in the first year of an undergraduate course, pressed this point further in his speech. He expressed his disappointment at the lack of NUS

presence on campuses, remarking that "it shouldn't be left to small groups of campus activists" to organise events. "The potential to build a mass campaign is there, but we are not achieving this due to the incongruent NUS" This was a reference to the message of support on the website which is viewed by the Socialists as

not being backed up by action.

Furthermore, the NUS campaign, 'Admission: Impossible', had not succeeded, in Randall's view, due to a lack of political will: "one demo a year and some shiny stickers just isn't enough." The lack of NUS action since the protest means that 'Admission: Impossible' is

seen by many as an unacceptable failure to represent the views of students.

The main thrust of the speech came in Randall's calls for a "real national fight", and a general change in attitudes towards privatisation, which is viewed by the Socialists as being the main cause of the government's decision to imple-

ment top-up fees. Randall said "we need a massive increase in taxation to defeat a system driven by profit. If we're serious... we need to take on the project behind it".

Also present were two of the candidates running for YUSU sabbatical posts this year, Anne-Marie Canning, a Presidential hopeful, and Grace Fletcher-Hall, standing for Academic & Welfare. Canning expressed her support for the campaign, saying that she wanted to "engage with political parties and harness colleges" if elected, and Grace Fletcher-Hall, a veteran campus activist, said "we need to repoliticise people."

This term, two Socialist Students are running for positions on the YUSU Campaigns Committee in order to galvanise support for the 'Campaign to Defeat Fees': Chris Swann and Adam Wollman. They hope to raise the profile of the project by bringing it to the specific attention of the Student Union and using the access to funding and extra publicity to their advantage.

The speaker who had previously been booked in to speak at the event, York Politics lecturer Dr. Simon Parker, was unable to attend due to illness.

The issue of fees is one on which there is a general consensus of dislike, but disagreement over how to change the situation.

# Religious tensions at University

>> Continued from front

to come and represent Judaism is unacceptable."

Treblow attended Cohen's lecture accompanied by Jewish students from York Jewish Society, as well as from universities in Leeds, London and Manchester. The students arrived with preparatory sheets describing Cohen as "a nothing and a nobody", which contained copies of his previous speeches, as well as sample questions to ask him and advice on how to react. As Cohen spoke, Jewish students audibly groaned and shook their heads.

In questions following the speech, the students

attacked Cohen's character and his right to describe himself as 'Rabbi', as well as his contentious views on Israel. One student from Leeds pointed to an American rabbinical edict which put Cohen "beyond the pale." Treblow also spoke out publicly, accusing Cohen of "falsifying the Jewish religion."

Following the lecture, Robert Gold, an orthodox Jewish student at the University of Leeds, approached Rabbi Cohen to ask him to speak to Rabbi Treblow in person.

He described the conversation between the rabbis as being "fierce in terms of Jewish terminology that per-



Rabbis came from surrounding cities to hear Cohen

haps not anyone else would have understood." However, the dialogue was cut short by an intervention by Terry Gallogly, a member of the national executive of the

Palestine Solidarity Committee. Gallogly led Cohen away under the pretext of "needing to catch a train".

He later explained this

move had been planned in advance "because on a previous occasion, at a meeting in Leeds University, there were threats of violence because Rabbi Cohen wasn't ushered out quickly."

He claimed that some of the Jewish attendees from Leeds were the same who had made threats of violence at a previous talk.

Nina Gora, co-chair of the Amnesty International Society and an organiser of Palestinian Awareness Week, described the conduct of Treblow and J-soc as "selfish" saying "the situation in Palestine is far bigger than our individual passions and is something we all need to get together and deal with,

rather than just defending our personal affiliations."

Gora said she was angered by the hijacking of the Palestinian debate by religious argument, and the fact that "they mobilised all the way from Leeds, just to provoke him." She said "What's the point? Where's the discussion if they're just going to shout and be rude?"

A complaint was placed by Rabbi Treblow with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of York, Felicity Riddy. David Garner, the University's Press Officer, said of this "The University was founded on the principle of free speech, and we do not ban any speakers as long as they remain within the law."

# B.O.B result in question



There was widespread controversy at the Battle of the Bands finale after Clip the Apex were declared winners, and the crowd were heard to boo. Photo: Georgi Mabee

By Alex Stevens  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE VOTING system at Battle of the Bands has been called into question after the winners, Clip the Apex, were booed offstage. Apply the Brakes, the favourites to win, and ska outfit Make it Better Later drew in second place, amidst calls for a more representative contest.

The result was

announced to shouts from disappointed students. According to Joe Clarke, a first year Management undergraduate, "it was clear that most people weren't happy with the result. It was a big shock. The organisers rushed out following the announcement and were clearly embarrassed. The compere even apologised".

Despite the embarrassment caused, Leigh Kroeger, Co-Chair of the Battle of the

Bands Committee and YUSU Ents Rep, stands by the decision making process: "It's the best we can get. We've used it now for many years, and Battle of the Bands is always controversial, that's why there's a final."

It has been suggested that the distribution of votes can be skewed too favourably towards an unelected group, as the popular vote contributes towards just one-third of the final result. The

remaining two-thirds are allocated to the panel of judges, who distribute according to a variety of factors including technical ability, originality, musicianship and stage presence.

Votes were counted by Kroeger and her Co-Chair Alex Mullings, Chair of BandSoc. Mullings remarked that "everyone to do with BoB this year loves metal, including [YUSU Services and Finances Officer] Amy

Woods, and we just couldn't bear not to have a heavy band win"

Though Kroeger declined to reveal the figures of the popular vote, this year's result was reported to have been close. Make It Better Later and Apply the Breaks came joint second, but it is rumoured they received just one point less than the winners.

Asked about the mood after the announcement,

Kroeger said "a lot of people were brought in by Apply the Breaks, so obviously they were disappointed".

Students have expressed doubts about the process. Third year student Chris Colyer was at the final and believes that student voting should be the only factor in the competition. "Obviously there's the danger of it becoming just a popularity contest but music is essentially subjective".

## 'Campus Ken' forced to leave

By Jamie Merrill  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

STUDENTS AND staff have expressed their sadness that hairdresser Ken Fairburn is to leave campus at the end of this academic year, following University management's refusal to allow him to renew his let on a room in Langwith College.

Fairburn has been told by management that he must vacate his current room, adjacent to Langwith B block, which he has occupied since 1990.

Sue Johnston, the head of Campus Services, has confirmed that original planning for Market Square requested



'Campus Ken' has operated from Langwith since 1990

that all commercial businesses were moved from their current locations to Market Square; where rents are £17,000 per year.

John Greenwood, head

of Commercial Services, has said that "Ken is part of the fixture and fittings at the University and I think he'd do well in Market Square". However, in a subsequent

statement Greenwood acknowledged that rents in Market Square are "too high to attract small businesses".

Paul Knapp, a customer of Fairburn's, said, "It's sad to see such a campus institution leave. It's quite obvious that when Market Square was built, the University were determined to bully him into either hiring a shop 3 or 4 times the size he would need or to get shot of him". Fairburn has said, "It would be impossible for me to move to Market Square on my own, as the rents are too high." He added, "I've been so happy here, and I want to thank all the staff and students who have supported me".

## Late arrival of Ents Tech disrupts Club D

By Milda Sabunaite  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE 'CLUB D' event of February 24 was disrupted after Ents Tech showed up over an hour late to set up the stage.

The 'Club D Funked' event was based around live music sets from visiting artists Joel Owen and Soul Cellars and campus band Make It Better Later, all of which were cut short.

Following the late arrival of Ents Tech the order of performances had to be swapped, and bands were given reduced time on stage. The DJ set, which was sched-

uled for the end of the night, was cut from 90 minutes to less than an hour.

The Derwent JCRC has asked the Ents Committee for a 50 percent refund of the money paid to Ents Tech that night, and have proposed an amendment to Union Code to ensure that a campus event organizer could deduct a certain amount of the fee, depending on how late the Ents Tech were to set up.

Jamie Tyler, Derwent JCRC Chair said, "If they can charge extra for late booking, then we should be able to get reduced costs for late arrival. By overrunning, they're reducing our event's time."

# Cleaners refuse work after pay incentives are cut back

**By Raf Sanchez**  
NEWS EDITOR

A NUMBER of cleaning staff at the University have refused to work at weekends or during the conference season due to disputes with University management over rates of pay and over-stretching of staff. In order to deal with the resulting shortfall, 'casual' cleaners have been recruited from the student body.

According to permanent cleaners, over-stretching of staff limits their ability to clean thoroughly and maintain acceptable standards of hygiene. Speaking about a Derwent College block, one cleaner, who wished to remain anonymous, claimed that staff levels have fallen from five to two since she started working at the University, and that it is "physically impossible for two people to clean this place."

Another cleaner claimed that the total number of cleaners across the college has fallen from twelve to seven, and that similar shortfalls had been experienced across campus. She claimed that the extension of kitchen facilities in a number of college blocks has exacerbated the problem. "The increased number of ovens and hobs

require more time to clean, but because there are so few staff we're not having the time to clean it out properly." Over-stretching has meant that 'non-working supervisors' have been forced to help with the cleaning, even though this is not part of their job description.

Staff claim the level of work is affecting their health and that many staff are simply too ill to come into work. The University has confirmed there have been "seasonally high levels of sickness in the last month."

Cleaners have also claimed that shortfalls in staff have led to the "standard of hygiene levels dropping" in residential blocks.

Amy Foxton, YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer said that "if cleaners are being overstretched then this obviously poses problems for students; both in terms of hygiene and the informal support that cleaners can offer students by being on the ground and becoming aware of problems, such as students who don't leave their rooms".

A University spokesman has said that "there is no reduction in the number of cleaners, simply larger areas to deal with, and we are addressing this issue" but would not comment on the claims that hygiene levels

were falling in colleges.

These problems come in the wake of news that a large number of University cleaners have refused to work in the run up to the Easter conference season as a result of disputes over pay.

Incentives such as double-pay for working on Sundays have been replaced with a single flat rate, a rate one cleaner considered: "wasn't worth getting out of bed for." The University has recruited 'casual staff', most of whom are overseas students, to replace those who have refused to work. Pay incentives for weekend work were cut in October 2006 and as a result, most cleaners are no longer willing to work at weekends.

One Derwent cleaner commented on the breakdown of staff-management relations, saying that "management really don't care at this level how they treat the staff at all." A Derwent student said of the situation "it's a disgrace. First the porters and now this. The University have no regard for their staff whatsoever".

A University spokesman said that "individuals are entitled to their opinion, but the University has demonstrated its commitment to improving the pay and conditions of cleaning and other support staff".



An overseas student cleans Derwent bar after an event. Photo: Milda Sabunaite

## Violent students at large

**By Raf Sanchez**  
NEWS EDITOR

AN INTERNAL investigation into a violent assault on a student in Derwent Bar has so far been unsuccessful in identifying the attackers.

First year Chris Wiggins was taken to hospital after being attacked by a group of other students during a screening of the Scotland-Wales Six Nations match on Saturday, February 11.

Security Operations Manager Rob Little has confirmed that the attackers, believed to be students, have not yet been identified and remain at large. However, he added that the Security Department believed it was "highly likely" that they would be found eventually. Little confirmed that



Derwent's CCTV failed

the investigation has been hampered by the fact that all the lights were turned off in the dining hall area during the match, seriously reducing the efficacy of the bar's CCTV equipment. Staff working at the bar have been able to "provide descriptions and these have been passed

on to provosts and academic registrars." It is hoped that the suspects will be identified swiftly using the details obtained.

Little also responded to claims made by both students and staff in the bar that the security response took "at least 15 minutes" to arrive at the scene of the incident. He disputed that the response took 15 minutes but said "staff have been advised of this allegation and will look to make sure this doesn't happen in the future." He said part of the reason for the late response was that the security foot patrol had been called to Alcuin shortly before hand. He conceded that the length of time before the response arrived was "unfortunate and unusual", but said that the incident would nonetheless not affect

the University's security procedures.

Wiggins, who suffered blows to the head and chest, claimed that the assailants were Welsh fans while he had been "cheering for Scotland", and that "on the way out they turned over the table. I said something and then they started to hit me."

The fighting in the dining hall was broken up but continued in the hallway between Derwent bar and JCR, where Wiggins claimed he was knocked to the floor and kicked repeatedly in the head until he was taken into the JCR for his own protection.

An ambulance was called to take Wiggins to York District Hospital where tests were carried out and he was released to return home that night.

## York carbon study breaks new ground

**By Sarah Foster**  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

DR. HAQ, a Research Associate at the Stockholm Environment Institute based in York, has published a report claiming that the age group of 50 to 64 leave the largest carbon footprint. It is the first analysis of the UK carbon footprint by age.

Research showed that people between 50 and 64 have, on average, a carbon footprint of 13.52 tonnes a year, almost two tonnes over the UK average. In addition to producing the most carbon, this age group are also the most concerned about climate change. Fears for their grandchildren's generation mean they want the government to take more action

in order to tackle the problem of global warming.

The report shows that even if individuals are aware of the effect their lifestyles may have on the environment around them, the government and businesses need to act to help provide an infrastructure and incentives to make a low-carbon lifestyle a positive, cheaper and easier option.

Researchers conducted a survey of over 700 people aged over 50 in North Yorkshire. Many of those questioned claimed that barriers linked to transport, waste and energy stopped them from living a carbon efficient lifestyle. The report is part of the project 'Climate Talk', which aims to raise awareness of climate change.

# Langwith bar to face closure and conversion into an 'artistic space'

**By Milda Sabunaite**  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

LANGWITH BAR looks set to close after the college Provost admitted a lack of custom has left it a "dead space".

John Issitt, Langwith College Provost, has published a new report that contains plans to replace the bar with a coffee shop as part of a proposal to change Langwith College into an "artistic and educational socialising place." Issitt said, "The reality is the bar is not working", and economic pressure has made the current setup as unsustainable".

The new project would provide space for various artistic activities such as music and drama events, as well as visual arts exhibitions. The space would also be available for conference use in the holidays.

Issitt said, "The difficulty is making the business plan and convincing all the powers-that-be to cooperate, negotiate and make it work." He admitted that the project will require a lot of financing, requiring an investment from the University, but said "the economic viability of it is built into it right from the beginning".

Zach Pepper, a Langwith Bar Rep, has expressed doubts about the financial success of the project. Pepper said, "It sounds like a good idea in principle but it's going to cost a lot of money, so whether it's realistic it needs to be seen." He also admitted that he was apprehensive about plans to replace the current bar with a smaller bottle bar that would only be accessible dur-

ing events, saying "I think it will decrease the viability of large events."

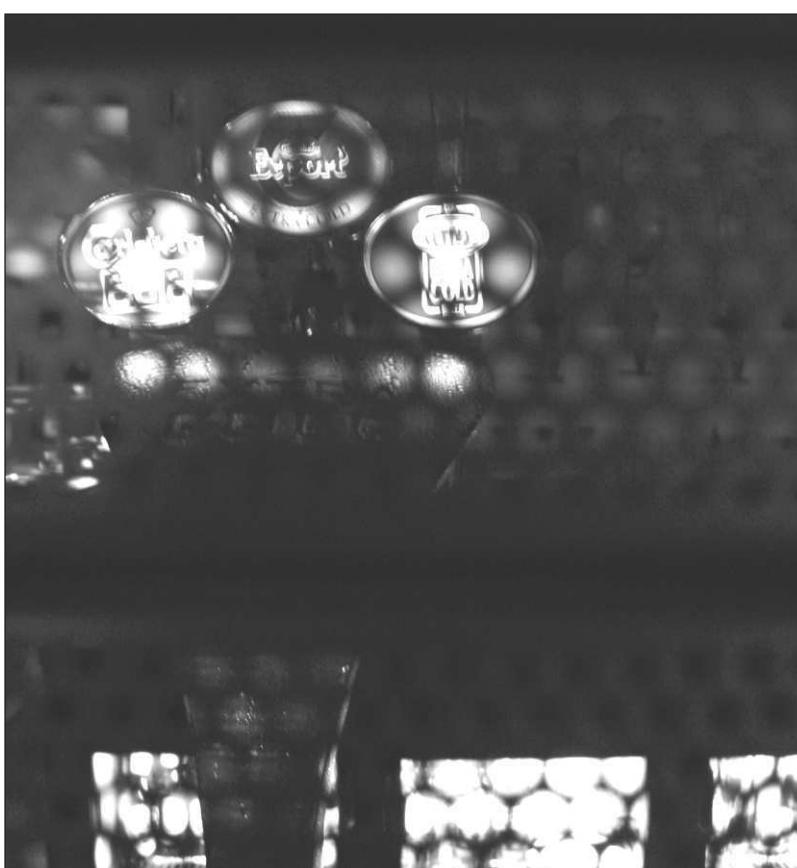
"I can't realistically say that we want the bar to continue as it has been because it has not proven popular. We're happy to recognise that Langwith works better as a venue than as a bar." He also blamed the bar's unpopularity on the fact that it is located between Derwent and Vanbrugh college bars, both of which are considerably larger.

Langwith College JCRC Chair Won Youn has reacted with concern over the plans to get rid of the bar. "It's the one thing that we really take pride in.

"It's a place where you go and meet your friends. It's a socialising area, and if that goes, it will affect us quite badly, but we'll have to deal with it," Youn said. "Hopefully something better will come."

However, he assured students that the JCRC will take further action to save the bar from being closed down. Youn said, "We're going to go all the way, even if we find ourselves losing it. We're not going to give up that easily".

The new Langwith venue project plans are currently on public display for staff and students in the Langwith JCR.



**Langwith bar is set to be closed in the near future.**  
**Photos:**  
**Milda Sabunaite**



Empty seats have become the norm in Langwith bar

## SU forum overrun with pornography

**By Alex Stevens**  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE YUSU forum website, designed to give prospective students an idea of life at the University of York, has been inundated with links to pornographic websites. The website is moderated by the six sabbatical officers of the YUSU Executive.

The spam posts, including links to such sites as 'Black Snake Moan (2007)™' and 'Come chat with me (naked Pics)', started to appear on February 4, with as many as fifteen being posted every day.

Noose alerted YUSU officers of the content of the website late last week, and the forums were restarted over the weekend. The forum

seeking advice from technical experts to try and secure the website against unwanted posters.

However, by Sunday evening all nine posts on the forum contained links unrelated to York students, mostly for pharmaceuticals and gambling websites.

Kate Douglas, a first year Social Policy and Social Work student in Derwent said, "I reckon it's pretty sad that YUSU can't even keep its websites in order. I know it's not the sabbs' [sabbatical officers] fault but it still makes the entire Student Union look pretty stupid. While I'm sure there are some people who will enjoy it, it can't look great for prospective students who want to find out about York."



**Calling all  
Gaelic  
Footballers  
at the University  
of York**

Hugh O'Neill's Gaelic football club in Leeds are looking for new players for the upcoming season.

Hugh O'Neill's was founded over 50 years ago and is the most successful GAA club in Yorkshire and one of the most successful in the north of Britain. They have won numerous Yorkshire Senior, Junior League and Championship titles as well as Pennine league titles and the All Britian title twice.

The club is built on playing good football and having a great team spirit with everyone involved in the clubs success. The season starts next month with 9-a side tournament with the full season starting in April and running until October. We can help with transport if anyone needs a lift or traveling expenses.

[hughoneills@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hughoneills@hotmail.co.uk)

07815612881



## Bolting the doors of Heslington Hall

It's sometimes a thankless task producing what we occasionally like to call – only half in jest – a campaigning student newspaper, particularly at a University where pulses wetly thud more often than they beat. It has rarely been more thankless, though, than this week past, as Nouse attempted to wring details of the University's review process, and its financial implications for campus services and academic departments alike, from the clenched fingers of an administration that grows ever more Soviet in its behaviour.

From pillar to post were we passed, from office to office, rarely taken seriously, frequently chided for meddling in matters that were, it was made abundantly clear, none of our damned business. The process, we were told, was complex. It was, more importantly, ongoing. To ask facile questions about 'cuts' or 'reductions in service' was to entirely misinterpret the meaning of the exercise. The meaning of the exercise itself, meanwhile, seemed ever more elusive to us.

So, in the absence of any information, stonewalled at every turn, we've drawn the only conclusion left to us over what's going on behind doors that will, it seems, remained closed to the public interest.

That inevitable conclusion is that this University does not wish for its students to ask difficult questions. More to the point, they don't have answers to those questions. We ask: How far will the cuts go? They say: How long is a piece of string. We plead: Are you serious about selling York by the pound? They smirk: Where lies the bottom of the deep blue yonder.

Let's make something absolutely clear. We are not the only section of the University community shut out in the cold. From the SU, to your lecturers, to the cheerful dear who sells you tea and sandwiches at lunchtime, nobody is being informed and nobody is being consulted. Decision-making is taking place in a vacuum, allowing for no comment, no scrutiny and no reply – not from us, not from you, and not from anyone else with a real stake in where this campus is headed.

Why do we care? We're in this for the duration, just like you are. We're irrationally but powerfully fond of this place, and want to see it thrive. And, most of all, we're fundamentally unwilling to be sold short. If nothing else, we refuse to be told that we have no right to know what's going on.

## Fire and brimstone

Is it fair to judge a man by the company he keeps? Rabbi Aharon Cohen attended a conference in Tehran that was also graced by the likes of David Irving, the "historian" and holocaust denier. Is he guilty by association?

This is not the place to debate the rights and wrongs of the two men's positions. Such a fundamental difference of opinion is not the starting place for a reasonable discussion, as evidenced by the general lack of even-temperedness at the talk.

Instead, our concern is the fact that it took a firefight, precipitated by a stage-managed, bussed-in confrontation, to generate any heat. Two people with fundamental disagreements can shout at each other almost indefinitely without achieving anything, save for boring the tears out of anyone unfortunate enough to be in earshot. This is what a lot of political debate is like. It's also why a lot of people hate politics. Can't we do a little better?

## In praise of Ziggy's

Who ever knew you could love the feel of a stranger's sweat-greased skin pressed against yours so well? The power ballad singalongs, the drunken fist-fights, the falling over, the getting up again, and oh! the falling over. Again. The giddy, nauseous claustrophobia of it all; the drunken embraces that last moments, the piercing hangovers that last... for ever. Admit it: the first time you stepped inside, you lost a little shred of your innocence that, try as you might, you'll never quite reclaim.

Sometimes the only way to cope with the truly horrific is to look it square in the eyes, jab a bony finger in its face, and ask it what it has on under that grubby old overcoat. Strike a Faustian pact, and walk without fear through the shadow of the valley of death without fear of physical harm, emotional scarring, or permanent hearing loss.

So it was that we sent our most intrepid reporter, along with our very bravest guerrilla photographer, on a perilous mission to the very depths of the student netherworld: halfway up Micklegate, nigh on midnight, on a Wednesday night in February. They were dispatched sober, curious, and with a solemn promise ringing in their ears: that if they didn't blow the gaff wide open, we'd never let them in our sights again.

After all, this is the service we provide to you. Never mind that you could trace the outline of the dancefloor with the tip of your pinprick stiletto. Never mind that you tread those rickety stairs sometimes in your very dreams. We've got old man Ziggy for you, right here. He's in his ancient piss-stained undies and his tangled string vest, and there's something he'd like to show you. No really, it's all right: you don't have to thank us. Have a peek. And don't worry if you think a little less of yourself afterwards. Ziggy will love you just the same.

# Comment & Analysis

## Battling with the deathly grip of ignorance and apathy

The elections are here again. Is anyone really going to notice?



**Stephanie Dyson**  
Deputy Comment  
Editor

In the words of the Walrus, "the time has come". No, not to talk of shoes and ships or sealing wax, but of YUSU and the upcoming elections. "What's this?" you cry, ignorant of the vibrant posters around campus, promoting the influx of fresh faces to the Students' Union.

Yet this publicity seems insufficient to whet the political appetite of students. Hustings last week had few attendees. These events are intended to provide a platform for candidates to promote their policies and visions for the coming year, whilst receiving a thorough grilling from the audience. The pressure of these questions penetrates the polished veneers of the candidates' perfected posters, and hands a clue to confused voters. Some candidates revelled in it, proving themselves worthier than their publicity suggested. Others did not.

However, the influence of these events was undermined by the fact that the audience numbered fewer than fifty people. The majority of these were either supporters of the candidates or current YUSU sabbatical members, plus three drunk blokes who seemed blissfully unaware of the drama of student democracy being played out beneath their own alcohol-suffused nostrils.

The disappointing turnout begs two questions: one of student apathy, and the

other of student ignorance. One wonders to what extent the poor show was a consequence of general unawareness of the events or, more importantly, lack of knowledge regarding the role of YUSU and how it affects the average student.

Upon questioning a number of my fellow first-year flat-mates I discovered, to my horror, that few knew the different offices and their roles; others were foxed by the YUSU acronym; and several had

'YUSU should protect its members' interests, not pussyfoot around the real issues'

no idea who SU President Rich Croker actually was. This led me to the conclusion that disinterest in the workings of the SU is very much based upon a lack of engagement between students and their Union.

No doubt you're aware of the extensive planning required for events such as Freshers' Fortnight and the Summer Ball, and thus recognise the masses of work undertaken by the YUSU team. The various welfare campaigns, including lobbying the University over reduced cooking facilities in colleges and the recent motion mandating YUSU to enforce a policy of non-smoking at campus events, also illustrate the significance of the Union in safeguarding our rights.

However, serious levels of apathy plague YUSU due to uncertainty about the effect that they can have on the work-

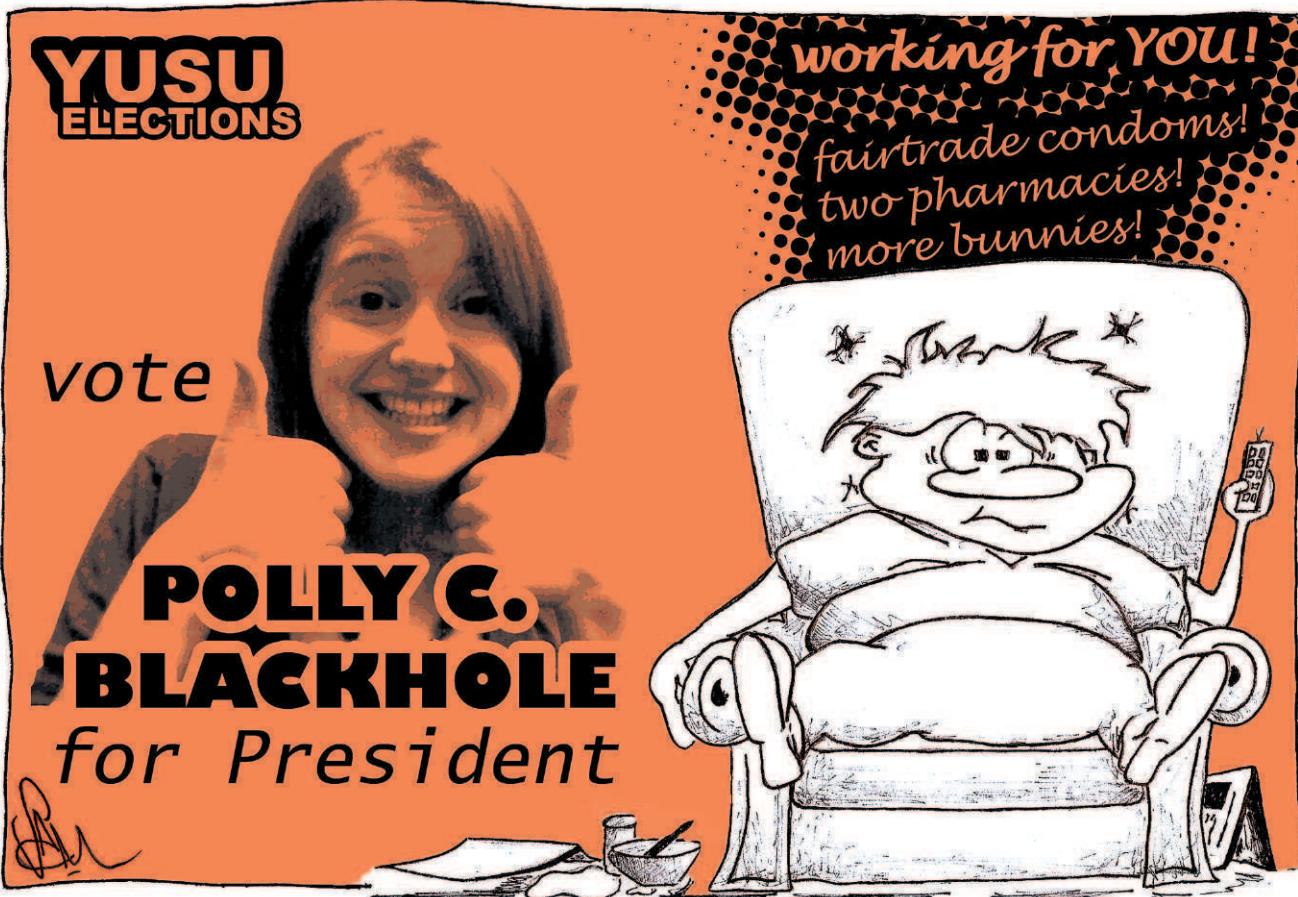
ings of the University, something hard to miss if you consider the results of previous elections. In the 2006 YUSU General Elections, turnout reached a dizzying 1,300 – around 2% of the 11,000-strong student population. In the 2005 National General Elections 61% of the population voted, causing disquiet amongst the political classes with fears of growing apathy, acting as poison through the veins of society. Surely our comparably paltry levels should have sounded alarm bells in the happy land of YUSU?

In light of this, it should be considered whether general student dissatisfaction with YUSU's sluggish response to the closure of Porters' lodges – and their other poor efforts on behalf of students – could result in even lower voting this time.

YUSU should remember that students see it, like any union, as protecting the interests of its members, rather than pussyfooting around the real issues and pandering to management whims.

Nonetheless, I remain optimistic. The principal way in which students can begin to appreciate and believe in their Union is through heightened involvement in the political process. The majority of candidates appear to grasp this, calling for more transparency in Union business and thus greater incentive to participate. YUSU also desperately needs fresh blood to guarantee against more scandals like the Sex Bingo fiasco, in order that it might regain the respect that it deserves. If the Union wishes to be honoured by us, the students, it must remember its representative purpose and seek to reunite the members of all colleges of this University, battling the deathly grip of ignorance and apathy.

However, serious levels of apathy plague YUSU due to uncertainty about the effect that they can have on the work-



Freddy, needless to say, wouldn't be helping to elect the lovely Polly, belle of all Alcuin College.  
Cartoon by Sam Waddington

## Recycle before you research

Academic navel-gazing isn't enough to turn this University green



**Edward Russell-Johnson**  
Contributing Writer

This isn't to say that the research is unnecessary. It will undoubtedly be useful in combating climate change, but the University should concentrate on campus recycling, in addition to tackling the bigger picture. Although the Stockholm Institute is self-funded, it still stands as a testament to the University's double standard on environmental issues.

their much-lauded green campus credentials. Yet it seems that our University is determined to tackle environmental issues only academically, rather than by addressing the realities closer to home. Campus recycling must be improved. These are little things, but they could make a big and immediate difference.

So, what is to be done? The

University could utilise those it currently employs for research to produce some solutions to the campus environmental situation. If there were genuine support and recognition for the college Eco Reps, they would become far more efficient. Perhaps the University could even use its recycling money to employ professionals to help with the job.

These small changes would undoubtedly bring major improvements. The Institute's latest report into the attitudes of the over-50s towards climate change earned the University both publicity and academic prestige: two things all universities desire. Surely a mundane issue like campus environmental facilities wouldn't bring similar accolades?

Wrong. Institutions such as the University of Hertfordshire have already gained significant attention through

Alongside teaching, the purpose of a university is research. During the last few years, many highly-publicised pieces of environmental research have emerged from York's hallowed departments. However, when one considers the pressing issue of campus environmental facilities, discrepancies become apparent.

The Stockholm Environment Institute, a global organisation with a major centre in York, is devoted to eco-research. It seems curious that the University should place such emphasis on this research and fail to match it with action on the ground. Some of York's finest minds are focusing on crucial ecological research but little thought is given to campus recycling, as YUSU's Policy and Campaigns Officer, Grace Fletcher-Hall has pointed out.

As a society we are increasingly plagued by consumerism, and it would seem that our approach to politics is becoming similarly tainted by attention to the material in life. The rise in issue-based voting means that politics is increasingly based around what politicians can offer us in order to make our lives easier, rather than representing our principles and governing accordingly. Supporting a particular party or cam-

## Putting the passion back in

Why are some students so reluctant to connect with politics?



**Emily Cousins**  
Contributing Writer

paign is akin to a trendy fashion statement; campus-based Tory and Labour societies are booming.

It would appear, however, that there is often neither ideological affinity nor genuine sincerity – only a desire to be indoctrinated into a vogue masquerading as commitment and compassion. How much do we really know about the causes we profess to support? Why do we sacrifice our integrity and social responsibility in order to buy into the politics which is being marketed towards us?

Marches and sit-ins were raw and sincere, and the black and white photos of Kumbaya sing-alongs have become iconic and legendary. 'Genuine concern for genuine issues,' the retrospective tag line could read. Sadly, the majority of contemporary students have lost this feistiness and with it, the willingness to protect issues formerly fought for with a passionate zeal.

I feel I must publicly shame and chastise myself for an inexcusable act of apathy I committed during the course of writing this article. Hurrying across campus, late for a lecture, I was stopped

by a human barrier petitioning for signatures to save the porters. I gave a knee-jerk answer, half-heartedly mumbled my tardiness, and scurried along. Consumed with guilt, I resolved to return and add my signature to the list, which I did. So, I would like to thank the Porter

Supporters' chain gang for reminding me of my duty and conscience. However, did I sign for the wrong reasons?

There seems to be a reluctance amongst some of us to get involved with any form of direct action, or to trouble ourselves with proactive, vocal gestures. Many a YUSU motion has failed because poor turnout at meetings has prevented motions from reaching quorum and being ratified. Worse still, contrived participation renders such crusades farcical.

A nameless individual, from an undisclosed College, attended a JCR open meeting last term in which 50 votes were needed to secure a new constitution.

Upon being 20 hands-in-the-air short of a democratic conclusion, individuals were sent to round up housemates in order to boost numbers – a political charade. Can elected committee officials really be chided for this though, if we are not prepared to engage with and support them as we should?

It is the student body who has the power to change this. Let's put the passion back into politics. We need to fully integrate ourselves into issues that are of personal interest. Lots of student-run political groups and individuals on campus do a fantastic job of highlighting plights that deserve our attention. We should support them and get involved. Let's be aware. Let's listen. Let's participate.

The meeting had its positives. It showed that students aren't as turned off by politics as some people think and that freedom of speech is alive and well at York. Let's take the obvious interest and the open forum and use it for real debate. A lot more work needs to be done before we can truly say that student politics is fit for purpose.

## A deafening silence



**Francis Boorman**  
Contributing Writer

Amidst accusations of student apathy, the recent visit of the controversial Rabbi Ahron Cohen seemed able to arouse political passions. The Rabbi's anti-Zionist stance, proclaimed by his talk's title, surely wouldn't go unopposed. Indeed it didn't, with a large turnout from York's Jewish community, deeply critical of his views. Did the ensuing debate inspire and provoke; did it showcase the freedom of speech we all enjoy?

Sadly not. It was commendable to see Ahron Cohen's detractors ready to argue their case and not fall back on any attempt at denying him a platform. But nobody seemed interested in an actual debate, least of all concerning the actual topic of the talk. Denying the speaker's credentials as a Rabbi hardly convinced me that the existence of Israel is justified, nor was I particularly won over by the case that peace is good so Israel and Palestine should stop fighting.

Constant shouts of "Question!" when audience members spoke underlined an inability to get to the point. No real exchanges were had, points were directed toward people and passion was overcome by ill tempers. Angry exchanges following the debate nearly descended into playground politics. This is not the way to fight your cause.

While arguing over who was actually representative of the Jewish community, there was no clash of ideas, no attempt at persuasion. Asserting authority achieves very little if you're not willing to back it up with some reasons. While I was pleased to see a large body of people argue for freedom of speech, it seemed a shame that they chose to exercise this right in such a way. Anger over Rabbi Cohen speaking at an Iranian conference about the holocaust was a moment which, worryingly, defined the talk. The Iranians didn't censor the Rabbi himself, so he had little reason to complain. It seemed futile to bemoan the morality of his overseas speech. Our commitment to freedom of speech is illustrated by countering arguments, not travel itineraries.

To move forward in our understanding of the world, we have to stop enjoying freedom and start using speech. We can't engage with ideas until reasoned argument and debate overtake symbolism and show. It's about time that student politics focused not on opposing, but proposing. Don't protest at debates; take part. Conflict isn't a cold war. The real battle of concepts can only be won by a willingness to engage with others in the first place.

The meeting had its positives. It showed that students aren't as turned off by politics as some people think and that freedom of speech is alive and well at York. Let's take the obvious interest and the open forum and use it for real debate. A lot more work needs to be done before we can truly say that student politics is fit for purpose.

>> JOHN BANVILLE M4-5

We chat to the Booker-winning author

>> THE REAL ZIGGY'S M12-13

The dirt on York's biggest student night

SPRING WEEK NINE

Tuesday March 6 2007

# MUSE

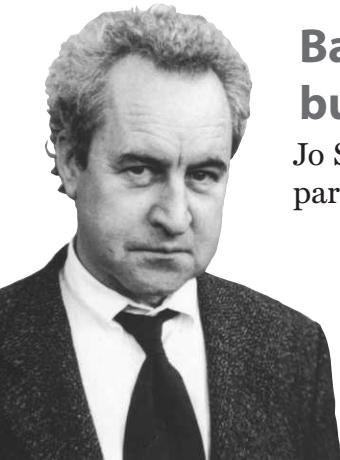


**Baby blues: the lives  
of student mothers M4-5**

# Muse 06.03.07

## Balancing babies, buggies and books >> M4

Jo Shelley meets some student parents and finds out how they cope



## Meeting John Banville >> M10

The Booker-winning novelist and his alter ego talk to Sara Sayeed

## Really a 'special' relationship? >> M8

An American and a Brit share their experiences of pond-hopping

## The price of beauty? >> M7

We chat to a London Fashion Week model about 'size zero'



## Sober at Ziggy's

Nicky Woolf >> M12

joins the team behind the scenes at York's most notorious student night

**Arts:** Fusion, Blame and African Snow >> M18

**Music:** The Young Knives and Regina Spektor >> M20

**Film:** The British Film industry revived >> M22

**B&R:** We take you through York's array of fudge >> M23

**Listings:** YUSU Elections and Hilary Benn >> M24

**Science:** Stem cells: giving hope for a cure? >> M9

## Ben Tattersall Smith

### To ditch or not to ditch my iPod?

**L**e'ts just get one thing clear: I love my iPod. I've had it well over a year now - longer than any romantic relationship I've ever been in and it's arguably given me as much pleasure - so I don't intend to part company with it in the foreseeable future. Late last year, however, saw the arrival of what could be the closest thing to a rival for the iPod: the Microsoft Zune.

While most of the online reviews for the Zune seem to be fairly negative, the online promotional campaign has been second to none. The boys at Microsoft have commissioned a number of animations and other pieces of art work based around the Zune's slogan, 'Welcome to the Social'.

For all my cynicism towards Microsoft, the videos have definitely been made by creatives with a passion for music and a slightly leftfield sense of humour. My personal favourite is 'two little birds', which involves one bird passing a song on to another telepathically and then the second bird going absolutely crazy and spontaneously combusting before, like the phoenix, being reborn anew from the ashes. For me, the video captures the excitement of hearing a life-changing song for the first time. Other promos feature Lily Allen and Regina Spektor and can be checked out at [www.zune-arts.net](http://www.zune-arts.net).

On a different note, few things are more annoying than walking around cam-

# Nan Flory



## Notorious B.I.G and I: like butter and toast

I miss believing that some people know everything. I've never been religious but I did, in my youth, have complete faith in certain people's unwavering correctness. My Dad, for example. Until at least the age of seven, if I had any questions about life, the universe and anything, I never doubted that not only would my Dad be able to answer them, but he'd do so correctly too. The meanings of words, maths problems, moral dilemmas - the answers all lay in wait.

Occasionally, if you asked him at the wrong time, my Dad would pretend not to know things, but I always knew he was just bluffing because he couldn't be bothered to listen to what I was asking. I still remember really specific stuff that I learnt from him. Like what 'in fact' means. He told me that. I was reading a Mr Men book and it came up. I think it was Mr. Tickle: 'In fact, Mr. Tickle's arms were so long, he could reach all the way to town' etc. Sweet, right?

I had similar faith in some of my primary school teachers. I had one called Miss Swan who I thought was infallible. I don't think she enjoyed it all too much. I once asked her what 'orgy' meant - to her credit she calmly replied, "lots of people having sexual intercourse all at once" - and once I inadvertently called her fat. I think my

thought process was something like: 'She knows everything, I can't touch her, what difference does it make to the human equivalent of the best computer ever if I think she's a bit large?' I was such a little shit, I now realise. I just sort of said "You're quite fat, aren't you, Miss?" And then I walked off.

Anyway, the reason I'm nostalgically longing for those childhood days when the answers to everything were just questions away is because at the moment I'm preoccupied with trying to justify my gangsta rap habit. It's really difficult. I especially love Notorious. All those guys who say Tupac was better are just silly. Tupac was lame and took himself far too seriously. Did he ever let little kids imitate him in his videos? No no no, he was all 'Look at me, look at meeee!' Loser. Anyway, Notorious. So, he's a dude right? Awesome at making things you'd never expect to rhyme go together, like 'how' and 'cow'. For example, 'birthday' and 'thirs-tay' - who knew!

I'm not dumb, it's not that I don't know that he raps really ridiculous things. I'm just overprivileged and so feel distanced enough to laugh instead of cry. It's terrible really. A symbol of bourgeois limp moral standing. I feel bad. Sort of. I try. But he says it so funky! I'm the worst kind of rich kid ever. I'm so smug that I think bitches and

hoes and machine gun funks are ironic.

It's like when my brother and I met Dizzee Rascal. We were at a festival in Norway and bumped into/stalked him at a bar. We thought we'd bond with the real Dizzee, discuss the self-reflexivity of his work and shit. No no no, it turns out. I said "So, we loved your show" - note the usage of 'show' here; show, not reality, I thought. Naïve little rich girl - "how do you like Norway?"

"I like the wimmin innit," he said. And then he looked down my top. I was so sad.

Now, if I had come across Notorious at age seven - before I'd become disillusioned by seeing Miss Swan parking her car in the disabled space and I'd realised that my Dad makes a lot of things up out of thin air and then pretends to have read them somewhere - I would not be in this sticky situation. I would have just asked either of them: "Guys, is it ok to be misogynistic, glamorise gun violence and drugs, promote materialism and gang culture?" They would both have said, "No. You can't have that CD and nor may you like it." I would have said "OK then," and that would have been that. No guilty pleasure at the sheer joy which 'Honeys play me close like butter plays toast' inspires. Back when I believed my elders blindly, I didn't have to think about this stuff. I hate thinking

upon by cynical businessmen, you are pretty much guaranteed that the designs are going to look good on your chest. In fact, I can tell you from personal experience that they certainly don't take any old tat. In a moment of rather gross self-delusion, I thought that I would enter a design of my own and easily walk away with the cash prize awarded to successful designs. While I did get a few words of positive feedback from other users, my design was resoundingly rejected by the community at large, scoring a poor 2.1 out of 5. That's democracy for you though, and having just a couple of nice comments from the unwashed online masses still made my day.

So if you want to stand out from the crowd then definitely check out Threadless and stock up on some trendy new t-shirts - whatever you do though, just don't buy the same one as me.





## The world's gone mad

Stories you might have missed

The All-England Hopping Competition was forced to wind up early after a brilliantly executed two-prong attack from the Scottish Sports Council and the Health and Safety Executive. First, the former held a press conference at the event, in which they protested that "not enough talent from north of the border has been recognised." Apparently the Scots have been practising hopping for years. "How do you think Alex Salmond got to the top?" asked the Council's John Blain at the conference. Just as reporters were contemplating this unexpected question, the organisers announced that the Competition would be abandoned because the HSE had identified 'major risks' in its 'preliminary assessment of the venue.' When pressed for more details, the HSE responded: "someone might fall over."

Poor old Rion Sakchu of Malawi was always being teased by his fellow workers at the Lilongwe Calculators factory about his looks. "We used to call him face ugly rubber skin," said Den Pagam, one of the bullies. It all became too much for Mr Sakchu, who decided to perform amateur corrective surgery on himself, using a buzzsaw. During the delicate operation, Mr Sakchu's cat (whose name was Noo Noo) fell off a shelf and landed on the saw, causing the would-be self-surgeon to slip and sever his left leg. He still works at Lilongwe Calculators but, says Mr Pagam, "we now call him Stumpy Sawlegs." Happily, Mr Sakchu told the workers' magazine that he was beginning to see the funny side. Which is more than can be said for Noo Noo, who was killed in the accident.

A contestant from Channel 4's never-interesting Countdown has taken an appeal to the High Court after he was allegedly denied victory for proposing the word 'gobshite' in the crucial final letters game. "When I said the word, the producers stopped the show and said we'd have to start the game again," said Ernest Tanning of Cromer. His opponent triumphed in the replay. Tanning has pointed out that the word is in the Oxford English Dictionary, but asserts that his grievance runs deeper than that. "What I object to is that the producers have made me out to be some sort of foulmouth," Mr Tanning said. "They're a bunch of wankers," he added, with an admirable lack of irony.

David Bryant of Osterley has decided to enlist pupils for his newly-founded College of Slapstick Comedy by running around throwing custard pies at people. Unfortunately, he targeted 76-year-old widow Norma Keedy, whose vision was momentarily blurred by the lactose contained in the pie. Momentarily, that is, but long enough for Mrs Keedy to fall down a workmen's hole. She suffered only minor cuts and bruises, but onlookers said she looked 'obviously distressed' when Mr Bryant reappeared with a plank of wood and proceeded to swivel round several times, repeatedly knocking Mrs Keedy from her feet.

## Airing my dirtiest laundry

**H**ow weird is too weird? Well, firstly, let me appeal to that great literary thinker James Joyce. He had this to say: "The smallest things give me a great cockstand - a whorish movement of your mouth, a little brown stain on the seat of your white drawers, a sudden dirty word spluttered out by your wet lips, a sudden immodest noise made by your behind and then a bad smell slowly curling up out of your backside."

You'd be surprised what happens between the sheets of closed books. Now, I don't want to put Joyce on a pedestal, but he does apply 'belles-lettres' to fart-sniffing. Well, perhaps Joyce voices the desires of more people than we'd care to think.

The point is that it becomes uncomfortable when it's all out in the open, upwind of the general public. A new reason for a 'Room of One's Own'

perhaps. Well, who am I to talk? I did spend an evening making up new verses to the diarrhoea song. The pinnacle of our success was:

When you're starting to feel moist,  
And you're thinking like James Joyce  
Diarrhoea! Diarrhoea!

Clearly, there is a compulsion to talk about the illicit in public; I am living testament. The smell of that evening still leaves a sour taste between my 'wet lips'. But that was okay because we distanced ourselves, making a joke of things that we were secretly delighted to voice.

Be true to yourself and your desire to air your dirty laundry. Weird is fine. Just don't commit it to paper because, as Joyce now knows, it will come back to bite you; sensuously, between the frills.

I resolved that he would be my older man and lured him to the bar after the shift for a few introductory drinks. Much to my dismay, I discovered that he was married with two irritatingly bright-eyed and bushy-tailed children. It occurred to me, however, that a married man might not make such an unsuitable lover. There would be none of the commitment, the insecurity, the inexperienced fumbling of the young and unattached man. Lo and behold, after a few glasses of finest red he was pouring out a catalogue of marital dysfunctions to me, or rather to my cleavage. And the rest is history.

After a few weeks of wining, dining and illicit

workplace liaisons, he announced it was his birthday. The big 4-0 no less. His wife was away, so he was all mine. We went for a stylish dinner and a few rounds of cocktails, before I ushered him back to my halls. It was in the cab that I realised I hadn't come up with the sort of extravagant gift he was probably accustomed to. His wife had got him a trip to Paris, so I thought the standard trip to tuna town I had planned might not cut the proverbial mustard. Something extra was needed. We got back to halls to find the cleaner working late, scrubbing away at a piece of old piping. It occurred to me, in a flash of lustful genius, that the perfect present for a long-fettered married man was a double parking space in tuna town.

Sheila's eagerness to tumble into bed, apron and all, testifies to the

shocking level of sexual deprivation at York. After an hour of torrid passion we lay three-abreast in a single bed with a post-coital cigarette, when my married man's wife rang.

Hearing him address her as 'sweetheart' and express his excitement about Paris, I felt a befuddling pang of guilt and envy. Had I made a grave mistake in encouraging him to deviate from 15 years of matrimonial monogamy? Despite my current promiscuity, even I have pretensions to nuptial bliss, and you can be damned sure I wouldn't tolerate some little tart and her cleaner meddling in my marriage. For the moment, however, I was too comfortably nestled between two post-coital frames to address the question. Perhaps that's one for the next column.



## Going down to Tuna Town

In my last column, I promised a foray into the world of older men and possibly women and, true to my word, I have much to report. After spending far too much of my student loan pursuing abortive relationships with ineffectual undergraduates, I decided to get a job working as a waitress (in a cocktail bar, of course).

On arriving at my first shift, I was titillated to discover I would be working under a gentleman who, though advanced of years, was of rather dashing appearance.

Single parents at university often find it a struggle to balance their babies with their books. **Jo Shelley** meets the women in York who are juggling two full-time jobs

# Here's looking at you, kid

**R**eading a *Guardian* headline last week – a smiling, chubby toddler next to the words ‘Why having one of these is the worst career move a woman can make’ – after getting past the un-PC overtones, I had to admit there seemed to be some degree of truth in it. Having a baby pretty much signals the end of things, right? We, the *Cosmopolitan* generation, believe that women can have it all. Yet we still assume that members of our female faction must follow the correct procedure to collect their due – and giving birth to a little one comes right at the end of the ladder that takes you from school, to university, to a job and then to marriage (if you choose to err on the side of traditional). Unless you’re Anna Wintour or Kate Winslet, the act of procreation in lieu of a ‘career move’ is today seen as an obstacle to progression towards the peak of modern womanhood.

But what about the ordinary people who don’t just finish up with a kid but get the work/homemaking trajectory the ‘wrong’ way around? And what about the women who have babies before even arriving at what is supposed to be one of the first steps to a career: university?

When asked about her life pre-motherhood, Rose Howd drifts back a few years and admits, somewhat sheepishly, that even at 18 she wasn’t looking to become a high achiever. “I didn’t really think about things before I had her,” she says, referring to her four-year-old daughter Charlotte. “It was just like, I have to go to school, A-levels are better than working, and I’ll just go to university because that’s what you do.” The option of continuing her studies beyond sixth form, however, was soon crossed off Rose’s checklist. In her final year of secondary school, she got pregnant and everybody – including herself – seemed to think that this effectively halted her academic journey. “My dad had always wanted me to go to university, but even he thought I’d give up on it now I had a child,” she says, shrugging. “And I thought my life had ended, to be honest. I didn’t want a child at all. I thought that I was just going to have to sit in my house on my own, forever.”

Today, perched on the edge of a seat in Langwith bar at the University where she is now a first-year Mathematics student, Rose can reflect on the initial terror she felt facing motherhood. It seems that she needed to take a significant mental leap to even reconsider the prospect of applying to university. Talking about how she had initially intended to support Charlotte, she says, “when I couldn’t get a decent job I just thought, I may as well start university – I don’t want to have a life where I’m scrimping and saving for everything. It’s terrible sit-

ting on benefits by yourself. And also I’d always been expected to go to university, so I thought I should go – for want of a better plan, really.”

Rose speaks about the process of applying to university with a certain emotional detachment, but it’s been a long struggle for her to get here. With only a ‘D’ grade in Maths from her A-levels, she enrolled at the Open University to take a further course in the subject. “I was working from home and Charlotte wasn’t in nursery. So I was exhausted, up until half five in the morning to get my assignments done.” The course, as well as Rose’s daily work routine, was a compromise of motherhood; once she had hoped to study Music, now the plan is to become a Maths teacher. “I always wanted to teach. I never wanted to do Maths, but I am now, so...” She trails off.

For Rose, unlike many of the 18 to 20-year-olds that arrived in York last September, university is her key to a new future; not one unlocking a world of independence and glorious hedonism, but one releasing her from the “terrible, horrible” area of Newcastle that she grew up in and offering her a means of fulfilling the all-important responsibility she now has for her daughter. “I just know that I appreciate everything that I have more than I would’ve done,” she responds when asked how her outlook on university is different from how it may have been at 18. “And everything revolves around her now, obviously. I don’t have anything for myself anymore.”

After the pains of childbirth and the trials of being a single, studying mother, coming to the University should’ve offered Rose a measure of relief. But for a young woman who admits that the straightforward route she was once taking is “all messed around now”, it’s not that simple. The reference to a shift in focus from ‘me, me, me’ to ‘her, her, her’ suggests parenthood has not only given Rose a different outlook on student life, but means that she experiences it in a strangely parallel universe. Five months into a three-year course, and Rose is working all the hours of a science degree; but instead of then pursuing an extra-curricular interest or socialising with friends, she’s going home to Charlotte. Orchestra practice is an evening activity (it’s been four years since she’s picked up her trumpet, anyway) and friendships, partly because the mother-daughter pair aren’t in halls, have never gone beyond coffee in a study break. In the suffocatingly close quarters of York, Rose feels “cut off” from the rest of the student populace.

I meet her after putting up a notice in the campus nursery asking to speak to any students who would be willing to share their experiences of

**For single parents, looking after a child is a full-time job**

**‘For Rose, trying to have it all – when ‘all’ includes a degree, baby and fledgling social life – is a delusional endeavour’**



parenting at university. It can’t have been an enticing prospect, and out of the 13 students who have children at the nursery, she is the only one to have replied. But despite the slight awkwardness when we’re chatting about what must be the tedious details of motherhood, she seems nervously eager, rather than reluctant, to talk.

“It takes me about an hour to get here in the morning and an hour to get back on buses. I don’t have any family here, I don’t know anyone, I don’t have a social life at all,” she laughs. “But I’m that tired it doesn’t matter, to be honest! It’s just a case of getting here, doing work, going home and sleeping, really – I’ve never been on a night out because I have no-one to watch Charlotte. But I do sit and have coffee with people. I would like to have the option to socialise a bit more... but then,” as she puts it bluntly, “you always want what you can’t have.”

In Rose’s mind, it seems, the snags in the old feminist mantra of ‘having it all’ have been torn wide open: struggling for ‘all’, when ‘all’ would include a

degree, a baby and a fledgling social life, is a somewhat, if not entirely, delusional endeavour.

The irony is that, in Rose’s case, hers needn’t be so difficult, or at least so lonely, an experience. Like other higher education institutions, York doesn’t make available records of the number of its students with dependents. Existing statistics, however, colour the area a very vague shade of grey, suggesting Rose is one of a sizeable group of parents who have come to the University. There may only be 13 students with children at the campus nursery, but the Student Financial Support Unit granted 26 Parents’ Awards in the last academic year – and as the Unit’s manager, Sharmila Gohil, said, “at best this can only indicate the minimum number of student parents.” The figures from the Accommodation Office are more enlightening: the University owns or has nomination rights on more than 50 family houses; all of these are taken and there are currently 35 students on the waiting list.

The difficulty for parents – especially those, like Rose, who are young and single – is that there is currently no easy way for them to get in contact with one another and no official support network that they can rely on. At one point, a student-run Student Families Association provided the vital means of connecting them but now, according to the Students’ Union Welfare Officer Amy Foxton, because



of financial and staffing issues, this has all but "faded into oblivion." This year, no freshers with children have been able to secure a place in the University's family accommodation and so they must rent property off campus – far from the intense social networking experience of their childless, college-bound counterparts. These parents don't have access to the details of other freshers who have found themselves in a similar position and no-one – either at the University or on YUSU – has representing the interests of the collective in their job description. As Foxton admits, "Provision for student parents has kind of slipped by the radar... and the problem is that obviously all student parents are going to be really busy because they've got children, so they're not able to give up as much time to 'fight their corner,' as it were. That's where we need to step in."

The proposal for the Student Family Network, marked out on a colourful Word document taken to YUSU President Rich Croker two



## "Provision for student parents has slipped by the radar, and obviously they don't have the time to fight their corner"

weeks ago, sketches out plans for a single parent support group, a school drop-off and pick-up scheme – which would enable parents to stay at lectures or society activities past the 6pm after-school club cut-off point – and a part-

**Student mothers mixing study with child's play.**  
Photos: Georgi Mabee

nership with RAG and Student Action to encourage families to get involved with child-friendly charity events. It's a student-led initiative and Sarah, with the backing of YUSU, believes it could make a real impact on the lives of parents. Besides, as she states "even if you're just improving one student's life, then it's worth it."

Nevertheless, there is definitely room for expansion. For bigger ideas, Sarah and YUSU need only to look 30 miles eastward to the University of Leeds, where the Union's Women's Officer has just opened an online forum for student parents and runs twice weekly 'Stay and Play' sessions to help parents meet each other. The problem for YUSU, according to Foxton, is that it is limited in what it can do. "The way things work at York," she explains, "is that generally the University seems happier to provide welfare assistance and perhaps doesn't give the Union the amount of financial backing we'd need to do as much [for student parents] as we'd like to." She cites Leeds as an example of where the reverse is true. "It's something that the University needs to look into."

The University might prefer to take care of students' welfare assistance, but its provision for student parents is, in general, restricted to that offered to all non-parenting students. Its main strength, to date, seems to be in providing financial assistance: on top of the loans that all students have access to, and the Parents' Learning Allowance (course-related costs) and Childcare Grant from their Local Education Authority, students with dependents at York are also offered an annual Parents' Award and prioritised for the University's Access to Learning Fund. However, unlike many other uni-

versities, there is no one whose job it is to deal with the welfare issues specific to those who have children.

At the University of Cambridge, there is not only a student-run Family Society, but a designated University Childcare Advisor who maintains an online guide for student parents and sends out weekly bulletins with child-related information. Of the people I spoke to in the Finance, Welfare and Accommodation offices, because of "data protection issues", nobody even seemed to have a clear idea of how many student parents they were dealing with.

And there are issues on which student parents do need representing; from campus nursery opening hours (it shuts fifteen minutes before the official University day is over) to the lack of accommodation. The Accommodation Office operates a waiting list policy, which, it says, is "the fairest way" of allocating family residences. However, because demand far outstrips supply, this means that freshers find themselves looking for a place to rent off campus and then move onto campus in their second or third year. As to whether there will be more family accommodation on Heslington East, the official line is that "the University will continue to review the position and to seek ways to add to our provision. At the moment, we have not put any numbers on this possibility."

The benefits of this and other areas of possible future development won't be felt by Sarah and Rose. For them, the benefits of having a university education must suffice. As Sarah says, despite the difficulties of the present, "I've got much more hope for the future now, knowing that I'm going to provide a good lifestyle for my son."

Offering YUSU a hand into the ring is Sarah Metcalfe, 27, a Sociology undergraduate and single parent to five-year-old Jack. She has recently approached the Union about setting up a new Student Family Network and establishing it as a society that works with the Union to develop a support network for student families and encourage their integration into campus life. This, she believes, would not only benefit current student parents, but also the University and community at large, by making it clear that "coming to university is possible regardless of a person's social or economic position."

Sarah's experience of university life is akin to that of Rose, but her assessment of York, a university that claims it is committed to widening participation, is more damning: "The

# Pass the chickpeas, please

How would the average student cope without bacon sandwiches, cheese toasties and Efe's pizza? **Jenny O'Mahony** embarks on a week as a tofu-munching vegan

**F**or the last week, I have lived as one of Britain's 800 000 vegans, eschewing meat, gelatin, dairy products, honey, fish and eggs. I envisaged a week of immense gastro-envy, growling at diners in the Charles, violently attacking people outside MilkShack and ultimately eating my own arm in a frenzy of meat withdrawal. Those staples of the student diet such as bacon sandwiches and almost the entire menu of Efe's would be out of bounds; I faced a formidable task.

I prepared for my first day by purchasing some Alpro Soya Milk, and working out what I could eat with ingredients I already had. My Shreddies tasted inexplicably sweet, which I later realised was due to the soya milk, and my first experience of soya in coffee was quickly established as my last. It fizzed and frothed on the surface and left a bitter aftertaste similar to vomit.

The rest of the first day was comparatively normal: a jacket potato with baked beans for lunch and a vegetable stirfry with brown rice for dinner. I wanted noodles, but realised they contained egg; however, this was only a minor annoyance. The first day left me smugly satisfied with the comparative ease with which I had altered my eating habits and, after the revelation that I could still eat peanut butter, I slept a contented slumber.

My saintly image was soon shattered. The next morning as I was eating toast with Flora Light, my flatmate pointed out Flora contains buttermilk. I replied, "What? But it's called Flora! Like vegetables!" I had truly believed that margarine contained no dairy.

That night I ate out in Orgasmic. Scanning the menu before we entered, I saw nothing for a vegan. Eventually, from a list of around 40 different items, I selected a tomato and mushroom risotto, which I was assured fell under the vegan category. That was the only possibility, however, bar the mixed leaf



**Jenny O'Mahony surveys her somewhat limited dietary options. Photo: Rachel Holloway**

ters of the menu are immediately unavailable to vegans and, given the Italian preference for meaty sauces and carbonara, the pasta is likely to be unacceptable as well.

By midweek, I realised my food supplies were running dangerously low and embarked on a journey to Alligator, the organic food store specialising in vegetarian and vegan foods on Fossgate. Strange roots were laid out in the window and an entire wall of rice and oatcakes beckoned to me. Not wanting to appear ignorant, I hid by a secluded lentil shelf and tried to make sense of the different types - dried to split, red to green, canned to bagged, and so on.

Eventually, after much deliberation and comparison with mung beans (I just liked the name), I selected a tin of green lentils in brine, grabbed some chickpeas and scurried over to the more familiar realm of dried fruit.

I would heartily recommend Alligator, simply because they have the kind of unique products you will not find anywhere else. The healthcare section, for example, includes organic toothpaste, washing-up liquid and even tampons. The dates and olives are the best in York. I also picked up tofu and my greatest find yet: vegan chocolate. Green & Blacks 70% Cocoa became a sugar lifeline during my time as a vegan and when yet another apple just wouldn't cut it, I reached for the 70%.

Good recipes were harder to find. Websites like [www.earth.li/~kake/cookery/recipes](http://www.earth.li/~kake/cookery/recipes) and [www.veganfamily.co.uk/kitchen](http://www.veganfamily.co.uk/kitchen) provided a massive selection to

try, whilst my usual port of call, the BBC Food website, proved disappointing, with very few vegan recipes at all and certainly nothing appealing. Following my Alligator trip, I concocted a lentil, potato, carrot and onion soup with a hint of curry. This was by far my best effort: tasty and incorporating lentils in a whole new way, despite its discouragingly chunky-brown slime appearance. Not to be defeated, I held my head high and gobbled it up, thinking at least I was doing my body a favour.

My next couple of efforts, a chickpea curry and a tofu and rice casserole, were mediocre at best, at worst almost inedible. I didn't cook the chickpeas enough so they cracked in my teeth, and the tofu I tried was abominable. My friend, a vegetarian of a few years, described the taste of tofu as, ironically enough, pork fat. It is flabby, flaccid and inexplicably fatty, never a winning combination, and managed to permeate the rest of the casserole, rendering the entire thing a mess. All in all, my culinary experiments could safely be described as failures, though I do have a new-found fondness for lentils.

One of the most irritating episodes of my week came on Shrove Tuesday. I hosted the annual Nouse Pancake and Punch Social, yet could not eat a single deliciously browned, smothered-in-chocolate pancake. I settled instead for the limp and pale results of my vegan mixture. Made of soya milk and flour, it was bland and refused to crisp properly in the pan, as the few others who tried it out of curiosity will testify. Forgetting

my resolution never to drink coffee with soya, the other disappointment of the week was provided by Starbucks, whose mocha with soya milk was caustic, hideously sweet, and, as per usual, cold.

My week as a vegan revealed how hard it is to live on such a diet. Cooking had to be re-learned, eating out was severely restricted and my shopping basket and the places where I filled it metamorphosed. I found myself drowning in lentil tins, packets of dried pulses and mountains of dried fruit. In terms of health, I felt slightly tired for the first couple of days but subsequently (quite literally) full of beans.

I have become very attached to lentils and dried fruit, the latter falling victim to an image problem (in my opinion). Just because dried peaches and prunes look like deformed animal droppings, this should be ignored in favour of the taste of this incomparably healthy snack. Finally, my bowels have never been more active, something I was glad to leave behind; even if my waistband did feel looser towards the end of the week. I have a certain admiration for full-time vegans, but personally I have little moral conscience on the topic of consuming meat.

The appeal of the vegan lifestyle for me is the choice of foods that all too often go untested, plus the health benefits of a diet with no cholesterol and very little saturated fat. I will continue to eat vegan dishes every so often, but the steak and cheese sandwich I wolfed down at 12:01am after my last night speaks for itself.

**'Dried peaches and prunes do look like deformed animal droppings - but they are an incomparably healthy snack'**

salad, the prospect of which sounded so sparse and anaemic it depressed me. When my food arrived topped with cheese, I sighed the long-suffering sigh of a food martyr and scraped it off. As my friends gorged on prawns and chicken, I picked at the accompanying bread and stared longingly at the pizza oven.

How difficult it must be for a vegan, even a vegetarian, to eat out. In the average Italian restaurant, for example, the main course is typically pizza, pasta, meat or fish. Three-quar-

# Facing the demands of beauty

As the size zero debate rages on, **Ellen Carpenter** speaks to one catwalk model about her experience during London Fashion Week and her perspective on the industry

The usual debates surrounding London Fashion Week – cinched belts or dropwaists? Puffball or trapeze skirts? – have this year been submerged beneath a weightier set of issues: does the fashion industry encourage the spread of eating disorders? Are the nation's teenagers being dangerously manipulated by media images of stick-thin models sashaying down London's catwalks? Moreover, are the models involved in the events themselves at risk?

The long-running debate as to the impact of media representations of beauty on young girls' self-perception

**'I'm actually among the bigger girls, but it doesn't make me want to be skinnier. I'm too thin already'**

was driven to a new level by the deaths from anorexia of two model sisters within a six month period. And so began the 'size zero' debate.

Should models with body measurements equivalent to a British size four be displaying the latest collections from top designers? Madrid Fashion Week's decision to ban models with a body mass index below 18 from its catwalks sparked speculation as to whether other events would follow suit.

The British Fashion Council, the body in charge of running London Fashion Week, defied Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell's calls for a similar ban. The BFC asked model agencies to use only healthy models, preferably over 16, but issued no explicit ban on underweight models.

Esme Addison, a 15-year-old who modeled for Biba, Giles Deacon and Marc Jacobs during London Fashion Week 2007, disagrees with the size zero ban. "Sometimes girls are just naturally skinny", she says. "It's not fair to ban them."

Nor does she see the modelling industry as encouraging the spread of eating disorders within its ranks: "There was always food available, there was ravioli at the agency during the castings and sandwiches everywhere at Claridges. When I was at a fitting for Giles Deacon he told me to tuck in.

"There's no pressure from the

agency at all. I'm one of the bigger girls there, I have 36" hips, but that doesn't make me want to be that skinny. I sometimes feel I'm too skinny now."

However, she admitted the model lifestyle isn't always conducive to healthy eating, saying, "Models may not have time for breakfast in the morning because their show calling time could be 7am so they have to eat a cereal bar on the go. Or they just have no free time between castings to fit in a proper meal. If it hadn't been for my mum buying me a sandwich every day before I got in the car I would only have snacked on biscuits and sweets."

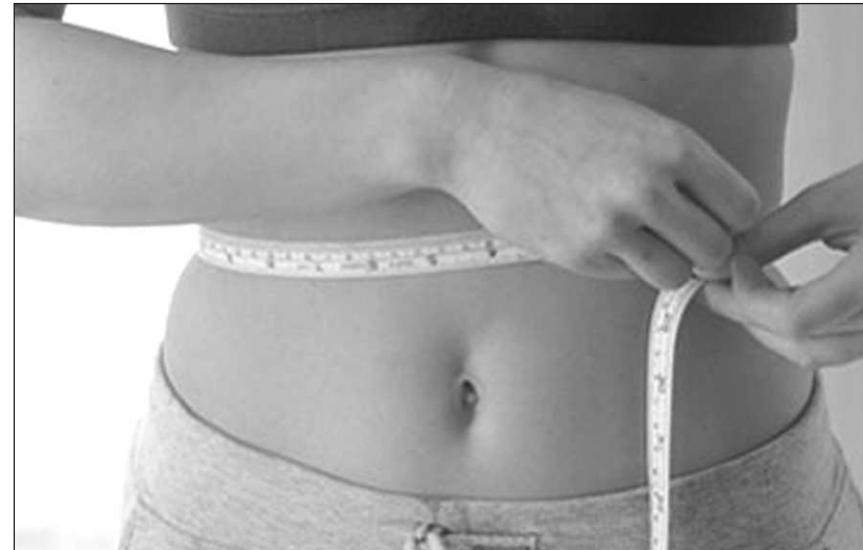
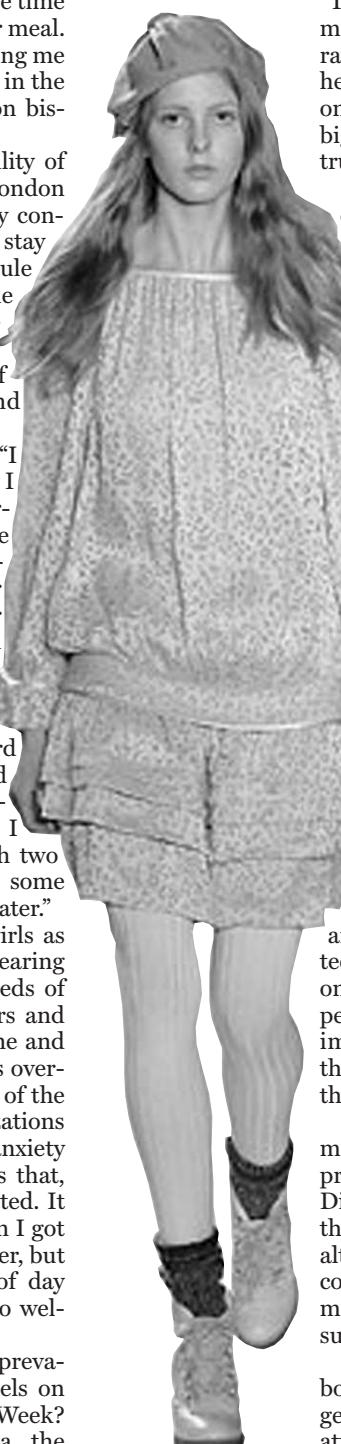
Even with the wide availability of food, the organizations behind London Fashion Week are not necessarily concerned with ensuring the models stay healthy during the grueling schedule the event entails. Evidently, the BFC's guidelines on the well-being and age of models are easily discarded in the whirlwind of fitting sessions, hairspray and designers' demands.

Despite assuring me that "I never came across anyone I thought was way too skinny" during London Fashion Week, Esme recounted a story that would suggest otherwise: "I was in a car with three other girls, and our driver stopped at a petrol station to get some lunch. One girl claimed that it wasn't healthy enough, one didn't even bother to get out of the car and the third one looked around the shop and walked out without buying anything. They must have thought I was weird when I came out with two packets of crisps, a massive roll, some cheese triangles and a bottle of water."

It is unsurprising that for girls as young as 14 the prospect of appearing before the critical eyes of hundreds of journalists, fashion commentators and celebrities is a nerve-wracking one and the pressure to meet expectations overwhelming. Is it the responsibility of the models themselves or the organizations employing them to temper this anxiety with a proper diet? Esme recalls that, "After a typical day, I was exhausted. It was a real pain to think that when I got in I still had to cook and eat dinner, but it was probably the only time of day when I could fully relax, so I also welcomed it."

So who is to blame for the prevalence of exaggeratedly thin models on the catwalks of London Fashion Week? The Fashion Council, the media, the designers, or the agencies? Esme

**Esme Addison modelled for Biba, Giles and Marc Jacobs during London Fashion Week**



believes the current cohort of Fashion Week models is largely self-selected: "The agency doesn't scout skinny girls; most models approach the agency, rather than the other way round." Esme herself was approached while shopping on Oxford Street and, being "one of the bigger girls", perhaps this theory holds true.

For the many young girls with hips considerably larger than 36" and without a modelling contract to confirm their beauty, however, the fact that the modelling agencies may not have consciously picked tiny models would hold little consolation. That it appears to be overwhelmingly thin girls with the confidence to approach model agencies attests to the spread of perceptions of the fashion industry's taste for size zero models.

Esme, however, believes the effect of thin models on young girls has been exaggerated: "I don't know a single person who uses models as role models. And if they are, it's most likely to be supermodels, who are on the whole a healthy weight."

Nonetheless, a fashion industry populated by underweight models is unlikely to be a positive force in the battle against rising rates of eating disorders among women and particularly young teenagers. Even if it is but one influence on society's standards of beauty, it is perhaps at the top of the chain, with images and ideas filtering down through popular culture to the levels that do influence young girls.

But is a ban on a particular size of model the solution to the self-esteem problems of the nation's teenage girls? Dictating the type of models allowed on the catwalk may not do anything to alter standards of beauty. If designers continue to create clothes to fit size zero models, agencies will surely continue to supply models of that size.

Moreover, is stigmatizing a skinny body shape any more sound than suggesting that larger-sized girls are not attractive? Surely the best way of reducing the prevalence of eating disorders

and raising the self-esteem of teenagers is not to privilege any one body-type over another, but to ensure that ideas of beauty encompass all?

This is not to suggest that models starving themselves on lettuce should be allowed on the catwalk, as much for their own well-being as for their effect on others. However, for those girls who are naturally skinny, being told that only women with large busts and hips are 'womanly' or 'sexy' is just as damaging to their self-perception. Esme also felt it would be entirely unfair if she were excluded from a show due to her size.

Perhaps the most pressing question, more than the diffuse and debated effect of catwalk models on teenage girls' self-perception, is the well-being of the models themselves. With models as young as 14 working over 12-hour days for a week at a time, the organisers of London Fashion Week should perhaps consider providing a more widespread system of care and support, rather than a straightforward ban. Madrid's policy of ascertaining its models' BMI and providing medical help to those considered severely underweight does perhaps constitute a step in the right direction. However, the combination of pressure and packed schedules that young models face may need more than a cursory medical check-up to ensure their health.

There is certainly no easy, much less quick, answer to this problem. It is a network of demands, expectations and standards weaving between designers, models, agencies, and the media, in which no one policy will produce a significant shift. It is particularly difficult considering there appears to be no conscious effort to promote thinness on the catwalks, with both agencies and designers encouraging models to eat as far as possible within the confines of their schedules.

Reversing the trend of declining BMIs and ages amongst the fashion industry's models is not something that can be achieved by a quick-fix ban. Creating a healthier environment in which these young girls work is, however, perhaps the paramount concern and will in turn provide something positive for young women to aspire to.

# Beer kegs vs Guinness: the

We hear so much about the 'special' relationship, but just how easy is it to pitch up on the other side of the pond? **Kelly Neukom** (California) and **David Horan** (York) investigate



**I**t was hard to imagine a more arduous journey. I was flying from Heathrow to Chicago two days after the increased airport security procedures, and when I finally got to my seat - three hours late - I had to wait another hour whilst my personal contact and credit card details were sent to the CIA (probably). I honestly wondered whether I'd get there at all. Yet, the trip went smoothly from there-on (there evidently being no terrorists aboard), and I eventually arrived in Chicago on a sunny Thursday evening.

I'm on an exchange at the University of Illinois. Found in the middle of the Illinois cornfields and containing over forty thousand students, it is one of the largest universi-

ties in the United States. On arrival it was already distinctly different from York; the campus resembled a small town and had a notable absence of ducks. The scale of the country belittles Britain by comparison. With streets twice as wide, it's not surprising that a car is a necessity. Fortunately though, the University has an excellent free bus service; the ftr has not yet crossed the pond.

Since I was going for the American college lifestyle, I opted for a double room in a bid to get the full 'roommate experience'. I wondered what I'd let myself in for when one evening I came back to my room to find my pithy suitcase overshadowed by an entire bedroom furniture suite, and a rather tall

**Kelly flies the flag for America abroad.**  
**Photo: Rachel Holloway**

**H**i, my name is Kelly. I'm from America. And no, I didn't vote for George Bush, and yes, I do know things about places outside of America.

It seems like a silly introduction, but I almost wish I could just make a sign and tape it onto my shirt every day. So many people think America is nothing but rednecks who stockpile guns and support the war with Iraq.

Whenever someone starts to bad-mouth America, my hackles go up. It's strange, because I've never been a very patriotic person. I am the first to go on a Bush-bashing spree, and the people who sing 'God Bless America' at the top of their lungs make me want to hurl. But when someone trashes everything about your home, you're bound to get a little defensive.

It's one of the many challenges I've found living in England. My circumstance is slightly unique, because when I was one year old, my father exchanged jobs with a high-school teacher in Gravesend. The experience made a huge impression on my parents and they've brought me back to England four times since then.

Because of this, I grew up knowing about some English traditions. My friends would stare at our Christmas crackers, wondering what to do with them. I knew about Guy Fawkes well before *V For Vendetta* hit theatres. When we're in San Francisco, we make a point to drop by an exotic foods store to feed my Lion Bar addiction.

When I got to England at the start of January, I thought I would be pretty well adjusted after a few weeks. Having vacationed here so much as a child, I

American. With bright green hair. And a tie-dyed shirt. Alarming, yes, but if I'm honest the first thing that went through my mind was this: thank God he's not a Republican.

The British would probably sum up America with the words: Christian radicals, George Bush and obesity, and there is some truth in this. On the way to the University we passed several 'megachurches', and there does seem to be a sizeable number of Republican students here. People also tend to live up to the stereotype of being either fat or fit, with little in between. However, there is much more to America than this. For instance, you probably think your house parties are cool. Well you are wrong. Why? It's because you don't have a keg. We Brits lack the complex keg-etiquette rules and statutory drinking games, such as keg-stand and beer-pong. The legal drinking age is 21 but to be honest it has absolutely no effect, and my fake 'European Driving Permit' works nicely.

The most surprising aspect of life

expected to know much more about the culture than my American counterparts. I knew I would experience some culture shock, but by the two-month mark, I would basically be assimilated.

Well, the two-month mark has come and gone and I am still reeling. The hard thing about England is that it is somewhat similar to America, but changed just enough that it makes you feel as though you are in a parallel universe. Here, I go into a situation with expectations that I have to throw out of the window by the end.

For example, when I first arrived, I met two of the people in my house in the kitchen. I introduced myself and said I was studying abroad from California. They went back to talking. This was so different from California, where people will be all smiles and go out of their way to make you feel comfortable. Here, everyone seemed too wrapped up in his or her own little world to make time for you.

Slowly, though, things started to change. After a few weeks of adjusting to my presence, the others in my house began opening up to me. The first time one of them talked to me for more than five minutes, I felt like crying from happiness. Now when I go down to the kitchen, they will be jovial and talkative. I feel like asking: why couldn't you have just been like this at the start? But I guess they're just English.

When they did start opening up, I noticed something I liked much more about England: English people will make time for you. Once you are talking to an English person, they will sit there for hours. In America, this hardly ever happens. Unless you schedule time to talk to your friends, you are constantly rushing around, trying to be productive. No one has time to sit and chew the fat - they must accomplish a certain number of things before they go to bed. English people have a slower, more relaxed pace, and I love that - they seem to care more about getting to know you than completing

here is the inability of the average American to understand me. Of course, I expected there to be some language difficulties but I honestly had no idea how many words and phrases we use that are redundant here. Even simple things like telling the time require a change of habit. For example, 'half-past four' is greeted with bemusement, requiring a swift 'four-thirty' to clear up the confusion. You're not 'working on Saturday'; such sentences are diminished to just 'working Saturday'. You have to circumvent the phrase 'as well' (e.g. 'I'll have a drink as well') in favour of 'also'.

The upside of this is the Midas touch I seem to have with girls. If you've seen *Love Actually* you may remember the effect that Colin has on girls in Milwaukee and probably assumed it was fanciful. Well it's all true (up to the point of a threesome), even if the conversation can get a bit repetitive ('Oh my God, are you British?', or even 'Are you Australian?'); and I don't mind controversially saying

# culture divide

Of course, 90% of the time, this talking involves alcohol. I have never seen people so obsessed with alcohol in my entire life. It amazes me that they don't all end up like Ernest Hemingway. In America, alcohol is considered the Holy Grail. We can't drink before 21, so going to weekend parties with alcohol is considered extra exciting. Once we hit 21, we still drink a lot, but the novelty has worn off a bit. Here everyone seems to love beer, especially Guinness, more than life itself. They drink four nights a week, compared to our paltry two. They drink in the afternoon. They drink before writing essays and the night before taking

**'It doesn't matter if you have the coarsest, most cockney accent around - if you go to America, you will get some'**

exams. Is there any time that it's not considered acceptable to drink?

I just don't know how girls here stay so thin with all this beer drinking and rich food. That's another thing that gets me here. The girls. I read that English girls are basically less-attractive versions of Sporty Spice. This is not true. They have the most impeccable style. The kind where they throw together pieces that almost clash but somehow blend together into an awe-inspiring outfit.

I myself could never create such outfits. With my casual California style and unstick-like figure, I've basically given up competing with the rest of them. It worries me because I'm scared that boys will be turned off purely by how I dress. I just wear simple, comfortable clothes, and I feel downright boyish sometimes. Being an exotic American only helps so much in this country - which sucks, because every boy here has an accent that turns me on like nothing else.

that guys, if you're wondering, the girls here really are better looking.

As a Politics student it seems fitting to comment on the most recent political trends here. Illinois is a fiercely Democratic state and producer of the party's new star, Barack Obama. The largely liberal student population is rather hyped up by this man, and many of my friends went to see him announce his candidacy for the presidency in Illinois's capital, Springfield. I would get excited too, if it weren't for the fact that I can't realistically see him winning, due to the prevalent attitudes of powerful rural America.

Before I came here, I thought that most people could be divided into two political camps, and for a large part this is true. But there is a plurality of views, and more importantly there's a lot of debate and discussion on the important matters affecting the country and the world. Most students I talk to are well aware of the implications of global warming and often have some constructive views on Iraq and the 'War

English people are obsessed with where everyone else was born and what that means in terms of class. I want to scream "It does not matter!" Seriously, I don't care if you are from Sheffield, Brighton or Oxford. You all have the same slang (to my ear), the same penchant for tea, and the same adorable little cars. It does not matter if you have the coarsest, most cockney accent around - if you go to America, you will get some. It has been my dream since I was 11 to kiss a boy with a British accent and this goal is shared by most American women. I'm even attracted to 70-year-old bus drivers and the crudest Liverpudlian accents (they sound like the Beatles!).

To me, it is fascinating to compare English people to what I've always known in America. Although I know I will never lose my enthusiasm and upbeat outlook on life, I feel as if their level-headedness and good sense would be worthy attributes to have rub off on me. I love the little traditions. I love the willingness to laugh at themselves and the attempts to imitate American accents (which always sounds like a demented John Wayne to me). I love how older people call me "love" and how (almost) everyone is polite down to a fault.

As my sister (studying abroad at Oxford) wrote to me after spending a weekend in Italy, "It's good I'm not studying in Florence. Italy is so easy to like - like saying you like The Beatles or pizza. But it is a shallow love. Loving England is different. Love for Italy is a middle-school crush on the quarterback - love for England is our-socks-get-mixed-up-in-the-dryer wedded bliss."

Oh, "middle school" is the time when you're 12-14 years old and a "quarterback" is a position in a football team. And when I say "football", I mean American football. Because we call football "soccer," which is a billion times better anyway. And when I say "billion," I mean your "thousand million." See how hard this is?



**Stateside, Dave finds himself surrounded by gorgeous, adoring girls**

on Terror'.

I asked some of my friends what stereotypes they thought the rest of the world had of America. Response: stupid, loud, ignorant, wasteful, fat, rude, etc. What's more, all of them said these were probably true. I, however, have a sneaky suspicion that there might be just a little bit more to our friends across the pond.

## The scientific briefing with Miranda Addey

### Stem cells: hope behind the controversy?



**S**tem cell research may conjure up images of replacement limbs grown on the backs of mice or thousands of embryos being killed for medical research. But what is the reality behind the stories? What is the future of this exciting development?

Stem cells do exactly what they say on the tin. They are the 'stem' of the process: the cells that form the base of every tissue in our bodies. They renew themselves through division and are the parent cells to specialised daughter cells which form everything in our body. There are three types of stem cells: adult stem cells, cord blood stem cells and embryonic stem cells. It is this last one which causes the majority of the controversy surrounding the therapy.

When their ability to renew themselves was discovered, the implications were immense. New tissue and therefore organs could be grown to repair damaged parts, and in theory any disease where tissue or organs are damaged, such as Parkinson's and diabetes, could be cured. Although so far this radical therapy has barely touched on its capabilities, great things are surely to come. In the last few years it has become increasingly connected with the most feared of modern killers: cancer.

Mounting evidence suggests rogue stem cells are at the heart of most, if not all, cancers. This radical research is even being conducted in our own backyards. Dr Anne Collins of the Yorkshire Cancer Research Unit in the University Biology Department achieved a first by isolating cancer stem cells from human prostate cancers and growing them in the laboratory. Pro-Cure Therapeutics, set up to commercialise the output of YCR, received a £2 million investment to continue this important research. If these newly found cells are indeed the root of the cancer, and therefore the reason for recurrent malignant tumours, in the words of Professor Norman Maitland, Professor of Molecular Biology and Director of the YCR Cancer Research Unit, there is a "prospect of designing anti-cancer stem cell therapies with a real chance of a cure".

However, it is embryonic stem cells which probably hold the key to the greatest breakthroughs. These are the only stem cells with the capability to become any other cells. To get them, the embryo must be created but then, in harvesting the cells, it is inevitably destroyed. For those believing that the embryo is the beginning of a human being, this is tantamount to murder. Researchers, however, use embryos created, but not used, in IVF treatment which were likely to be destroyed anyway, or at least stored indefinitely. In February the Human Fertility and Embryology Authority, the government regulator on such sensitive areas, ruled that women

could donate eggs for scientific research whether or not they were undergoing IVF treatment. Women can even be paid up to £250 for the difficult procedure. They do, however, have to prove their reasons for undergoing the dangerous operation.

Last year a group claimed to have developed a way to harvest embryonic stem cells without destroying an embryo. Bob Lanza and his colleagues at Advanced Cell Technology in Massachusetts showed it was possible to generate them from the single cell blastomeres. Blastomeres are routinely taken from IVF embryos without destroying it, to test for disease. A group in Kyoto had similar success with changing adult mouse skin cells back into embryonic cells by adding four biochemical messengers.

Even with the limitations on scientists, including a veto by Bush on an act to increase federal funding for stem cell research, amazing breakthroughs in the treatment of diseases are being seen. In the last six months, stem cell research has been proven to help damaged livers, increased our understanding of cancer and what causes it, reversed muscle dystrophy, created insulin for diabetics, may repair damaged retinas and combat childhood brain disease. And that is just what has been in the headlines.

Adult stem cell research has done much to further our understanding of the body and its methods of repairing itself, as well as helping cure diseases. Adult stem cells are found in many parts of the body. They are undifferentiated cells and repair damaged tissue. They are not true stem cells because they do not possess the ability for cellular differentiation; there are only a limited amount of cells they can become. One thing they definitely can do is form all types of blood. Catherine Verfaillie, of the University of Minnesota, demonstrated that adult stem cells used in the body to form marrow and muscle could also create all types of blood, but others have struggled to repeat the results. She recently teamed up with Irving Weissman of Stanford University, and they repeated the process successfully.

Cord blood stem cells are equally valuable. These are recovered from umbilical cords, are stored for transplantation, like regenerating bone marrow, and can be used to treat immune-system related diseases.

This is obviously a huge area of investigation with many fields of research encompassed and moral issues surrounding it. One thing is for sure, there are many areas getting tainted with the same brush as embryonic stem cell research that are fully worthy of being considered under their own merit. This is cutting-edge medical research and will probably hold the key to curing many diseases. But in our quest for immortality of the human body, how far is too far?

# Who bagged the Booker:

The 2005 Man Booker Prize winner John Banville talks to **Sara Saeed** about why his books are an embarrassment, his fans are disappointed when they meet him and he empathises with Springfield's naughty schoolboy - Bart "eat my shorts" Simpson

**W**ith characteristic pomp and flair, Oscar Wilde once indignantly huffed, "I'm not English; I'm Irish, which is quite another thing." Despite protestations that the legendary Beckett/Joyce faction simply "looms over one", John Banville seems set to be hauled into that prodigious "thing" that is Irish writing. Having read and been stunned by *The Sea*, I decided to wheedle my way into a PhD session with the professedly loathe victor of the 2005 Man Booker Prize. There, I became a little better acquainted with the man who "despises and is embarrassed" by his own work - but nonetheless is quick to concede that, regardless, they are indeed "better than everybody else's books".

From the sombre density of his novels, one could quite confidently presume that Banville will not be the chirpy sort. For me, however, his reputation as a daunting and austere figure was evoked by Google-folklore, and then reinforced by the somewhat anxious, bated silence that heralded his arrival. And indeed, Banville begins as anticipated - terse, hesitant to over-eccuse or enthuse and with a disconcerting shrewdness in the eye. Yet swiftly enough, and perhaps loosened up by the 'free drink' so gleefully identified by Hugh Houghton, the threat of ponderousness is swept up and away into a dynamic, often jocular discussion.

Admittedly, it is heavily weighted to one side as Banville so relishes and

revels in "writing-talk" that he completely quells our would-be brazen tongues, and impounds us in rapt attention. Well, I can only really speak for myself and, in hindsight, I hope I didn't physically drool as dotingly as I just did verbally.

Banville is indeed an imposing figure. Author of some sixteen novels, respected critic and frighteningly erudite, it's little wonder that he is often reverently regarded from a distance, to the extent that such appendages as 'Banville the Austere' and 'Banville the Grave Intellectual' probably wouldn't go far amiss. Interestingly, it is not only the critics who displace the author from person into noun; this detachment from identity is felt by Banville himself. When talking about his work he jettisons the expected pronouns; discarding 'my' for a 'John Banville book', or even a 'Benjamin Black book'. He utters such terms without flinching, as if multiple identities are quite natural. "Look," he elucidates, "the person you expected to meet is not me, I didn't write the books, that's some other person I left in my study."

For any fellow literature students out there unavoidably bound to that (shudder) Norton Anthology, this ethos is all too reminiscent of when Barthes decided to kill off the author circa 1967. However, gleaned from his own words, Banville's writing practice seems less the calculated erosion of authorial identity advocated by Barthes and more of a numinous process. "To make art you think down to some strange

netherworld, where you're not yourself. It's a kind of sleeping and a kind of dreaming". Banville asserts that this 'self' that presents itself - unwillingly - to the public, the one that "sits there wondering about his dinner", is usually met with a little disappointment. He amusingly notes that many readers who venture to meet him glance around for a man of stature, like his protagonists, only to be thwarted by his wry yelp, "Down here!"

After meeting the author, 'looking down' becomes something you start to

**"The person you expected to meet is not me. I didn't write the books - that was some other person I left in my study"**

associate with Banville. Not so much because of any vertical challenge - really he's comfortably average - but due to his constant, laconic self-deprecation. Granted, as critic Mark Gallagher laments, Banville "doesn't do cheery"; he is sardonically funny though, which dismantles the pedestal somewhat and renders him remarkably approachable. Really, how can you not warm to a man who ventures, "I'm like Bart Simpson." To clarify, just as Banville distinguishes between his many selves, this isn't the haranguing "Eat my shorts!" Bart, but the one in the opening credits dedicating to the blackboard "I must get it

right, I must get it right". This is what Banville constantly aspires to - simply getting it right. And when he finally does? "Well, then I'll stop writing".

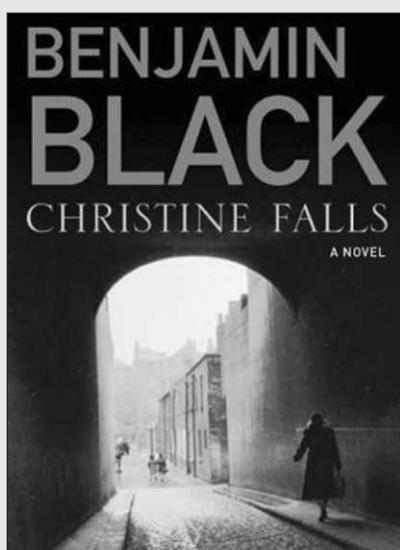
For Banville, writing seems to be an ever-enthralling escapade - despite all his sardonic compulsions, he expresses an unfailingly genuine relish for language, with its malleable capabilities and challenging ambiguities. Surprisingly, Banville declares, "Now I've got to a point, finally, when I'm just about beginning to learn how to write". This sudden revelation has been arrived at via a new-found feeling of freedom from what has become the shackle of his distinctive first person narrative. He bemoans, "You know, I wrote so many bloody books and they're all the same!" *Christine Falls* - authored by his alter-ego Benjamin Black - signified for Banville the first "real transition" and, he ventures, "was a way of breaking away from a rut that I was very deeply in. This was part of the process of change".

*The Sea* seems to be a continuation of this process, being a marked distraction from his previous intense and psychologically-fraught protagonists, moving instead towards a more nostalgic account of childhood. However, it is his forthcoming *'John Banville'* book, tentatively titled *First Light* - of which only 6000 words have been written and published - which will prove the real turn, as Banville breaks into the alien territory of third person narrative (although the ghostly 'I' still lurks fleetingly in the voice of God Mercury, mordantly remarked upon by his publisher as "another crowd pleaser, John...?")

Yet, the exuberance of this new-found liberation has not gone unmitigated: "I do feel freer than I have in a long time. I do feel less oppressed by my own need to keep speaking in a particular voice. But I don't know what will happen, if it will work." This hesitance and uncertainty is a consistent trait throughout the discussion. Although Banville speaks with articulate assurance, at times his comments contradict each other, and even he concedes, "I'm answering as if I know the answers to these questions, but I don't! I'm just making it up as I go along - as all of us, I don't know what I'm doing until I've done it". This, yet again, seems to hark back to that mystical experience of writing, where authorship becomes unconscious and instinctive instead of a deliberate act. Banville attributes this to the power of language and argues that "language will write itself, as language always does. I don't believe that we speak language, but that we are spoken by language". This comment is a near-perfect echo of con-

## Authors and their Alter-Egos

Banville is not alone in suffering from artistic schizophrenia. Here we introduce some more enigmatic figures from the literary world who join him in the author alter-ego asylum



> **Lewis Carroll:** The *Alice and Wonderland* series of books could perhaps be construed as a psychedelic form of escapism from his starkly more lacklustre real-life occupation as Charles Ludwig Dodgson, a mathematician and honouree of the Christ Church Mathematical Lectureship at Oxford.

> **Mark Twain:** Twain famously used a variety of pseudonyms for his writings, including Josh and, amusingly, Thomas Jefferson Snodgrass. His original birth name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens.

> **Joyce Carol Oates:** the critically acclaimed American author dabbles in the genre of mystery fiction under the name Rosamond Smith.

Due to historical misogyny and male egotism, many women were forced to write under masculine pseudonyms. Some examples of these include:

> **George Elliot:** the *Middlemarch* author was born Mary Anne Evans.  
 > **George Sand:** her real name is Amantine-Lucile-Auror-Dupin.

> **Ellis, Acton and Curer Bell:** respectively Emily, Anne and Charlotte Bronte.

Unfortunately, some alter-egos are purely the by-product of error:

> **Toni Morrison:** Originally Chloe Anthony Wofford. According to Morrison, when her debut novel *The Bluest Eye* was published, "they got the name wrong - Toni's a nickname". To put right her misnamed fame she insists, "It was Chloe, by the way, who went to Stockholm to get the Nobel Prize".

# Banville, Black or Bart?

temporary Irish poet and acquaintance Paul Muldoon's statement, "I don't speak poetry, it speaks me".

Banville's writing reminds me of Muldoon's poetry – both are pithy yet semantically adventurous, engaging in what I suppose could be termed 'disciplined linguistic gymnastics'. Muldoon and Banville both have an ability to seamlessly intertwine the dirge and the droll; even the gravest depictions contain minute fluctuations in the language that invoke a lightning glimmer of wit.

Unable to shrug off this uncanny parallel and having been thus far dutifully silent, I decided to recklessly ignore my editor's assurances to the PhD group that I would be "very well behaved and quiet", err on the side of brazenness, and ask a question of my own. Having noticed throughout a constant return to the notion of "transition", I wanted to know in which direction that movement was tending, and whether it was towards a more poetic medium. Unfortunately it seemed my query was more than a little overdue as it was something that Banville had been striving towards all along: "Auden said that the poem is the only art form that you have to either take or leave. You cannot read a poem and fantasise about sex. If your mind drifts from a poem, the poem doesn't work... I like to write novels like that, in which you have to concentrate. I want it to be as dense and demanding as poetry, and I also want it to give the kind of pleasure that poetry gives".

Banville distinguishes that "What you're getting in a John Banville book is concentration, and what you're getting in a Benjamin Black book is spontaneity". Such emphasis on concentration and focus threatens to confer a schoolboy tedium on reading Banville. In keeping with this schoolboy metaphor, according to Banville, writing his books - and, indeed, reading them - is more like sex. Granted Auden, you probably can't read poetry atten-



And the object blushes under this depth of concentration, this depth of attention. And that's when real art is made – when the object becomes self-conscious and blushes." Arguably, Banville's prose is something of a blushingly coquettish sprite - it flirts with the reader, always hinting at some concealed pleasure but never succumbing to candid realisation. It is a tantalising puzzle and thus it "gives the kind of pleasure that poetry gives." According to Banville's definition, his work is nearing the accolade of 'real art': "I think real works of art are always closed, they contain their own enigma and they hide their own enigma, and this is what makes them last because they don't give up their secret."

It would seem, then, that language not only "speaks itself" but controls what it decides to say and when – it is its own agent and not, as we would like to assume, merely a serf of the vessel it finds itself in. We have all felt that internal bubbling of words which we cannot channel and subsequently emit in a sort of frenzied babble. But remarkably, Banville rarely succumbs to verbiage. He is Emily Dickinson's

fearful "man of frugal speech... [who] weigheth - while the rest - expend their furthest pound". Banville's control and facility with language, only achieved he argues "after forty years of scraping away at the pages" certainly is, as Dickinson suggests in her poem, something of which to be 'wary'.

Banville's method now involves writing sentence by sentence: "I finish a sentence before I go onto the next one. So there's practically no revision". The result is deceptively spare prose that veils a seething, complex sub-texture of nuance and motif. You don't look twice when you read a 'Banvillian' sentence, you look thrice – and even then you might want to have another glance just to make sure. Certainly, this isn't a process for everyone. Banville admits that he meticulously crafts the opening paragraph of every novel so that he can "teach the reader how to read. Not your way, my way. Many readers don't like that and I sympathise with them. But I can do it no other way".

But it's not all 'my way or the highway'. Yes, the novels are linguistically thick, but not opaque. The prose is just

sufficiently perforated for the reader to engage and read-in their own perspective - that is to say, sometimes you can flirt back. As Banville says, "*The Sea* becomes a new book every time it is read. People are constantly telling me things about my books that I didn't even know!" For example, as ventured by the PhD group, the novels seem rather saturated with gin. Whereas Banville's interviews almost always seem to include some reference to a "glass of Sauvignon Blanc in hand", the characters in his novels often have a tumbler of gin conveniently nearby. Banville, unfortunately, has not registered this insight. In contrast, one of the students has even ascertained that the characters usually go for the Bombay Sapphire brand.

Banville's texts seem to almost invite these misreadings in their quest to be edifices of linguistic art – and language is one puckish slippery snake. That's how Banville's wife seems to see it, anyway – when the *Book of Evidence* was short-listed for the Booker, she exclaimed to her husband, "they must have misread it... but don't worry, you'll write another one!"

**'Banville's prose is something of a coquettish sprite - it flirts with the reader, hints at some concealed pleasure, but never succumbs to candid realisation'**

tively while in a wanton state of mind. Nevertheless, for Banville, the focus you need in order to write poetically "is almost sexual".

Before we arch our eyebrows in bemusement and wonder if that free wine was really a good idea after all, Banville clarifies: "Concentration on the writing object is like how the lover concentrates on the beloved. The lover knows that the beloved is a flawed creature like himself, but he insists that the loved creature is a Goddess. And that is how the artist treats the world – the world is constantly turning to the artist and saying, 'Look, I didn't expect to be noticed in this extraordinary way.'

# Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll: the real Ziggy's revealed

No one wants to be sober at Ziggy's. **Nicky Woolf** does the unthinkable and goes behind the scenes to expose the debauchery

I am a fly-on-the-wall observer in the downstairs bar of Ziggy's nightclub on Micklegate. Generally accepted to be the club night not to miss, Ziggy's on a Wednesday is a university institution; love it or hate it, you can't deny that your time at the University of York is not complete until you have done shots of sambuca with the rugby players in the champagne room, grinded with a randomer on the lower dance floor, strawpedo-ed with a stranger in bunny-ears at the lower bar where the hockey players hang out or play-fought with JR the bouncer.

My mission here - and the reason that, against the most sacred student doctrine of Ziggy's, I am almost entirely sober - is that I want to find out what makes this place tick. Why is it the institution that it is? Who is behind the ultimate venue for sports socials and debauchery? What can go right, and what can go wrong?

A Wednesday night at Ziggy's comes together from a thousand different beginnings. For S, a forward on the Rugby 2nds, his night begins almost as soon as his afternoon match is finished. S takes me through a typical Wednesday evening's pre-drinking. "First to the

You will stand out at Ziggy's if you're not dressed as a soldier, superhero, Playboy bunny or, controversially, wife beater'

Deramore, meet the opposing team, have some food and a pint, then home to get dressed according to that night's social, meet up again in 1331, followed by Judges; then some of us go to Priory, end up in the Acorn after having had..." S pauses for a brief moment's thought, "4 to 6 pints at 1331, 2 to 3 pints at Judges, maybe 3, 4 or 5 pints after that. Some people go for trebles in Nag's, some people go to the Maltings..." When asked if he thought this level of binge-drinking is worrying, however, his answer is a categorical No. "I'm sure we drink no more than the other socials, and after all, you only live once."

It's only some fun, and it's the student life!"

It isn't just the sports teams for whom Ziggy's is a permanent weekly fixture. Wednesday night is an integral part of the week for a large swathe of students. For girls, I am reliably informed, the process begins at around 6pm with the most important decision of the whole night - what to wear. Fancy dress is the norm -

**Just another Wednesday night: students pile into York's premiere nightspot.**  
Photos: Georgi Mabee



you will stand out at Ziggy's if you are not dressed as a soldier, superhero, Playboy bunny, woman or even, controversially, 'wife beater.' Often people make costumes with astonishing creativity; some of the best I have witnessed include a head-to-toe fur suit, a cardboard tank costume and a Cleopatra outfit fabricated entirely from a sheet of gold cloth (which on a previous social had served as a superhero's cape), pins and "a lot of tit-tape."

At 9:45pm JR, commonly known as to students 'Big John', arrives. He and fellow doorman Pete, James and Rob walk into the office together. They don walkie-talkies and headsets. JR and the team are not expecting much trouble tonight. He suspects that if anyone has to be ejected it will be for over-enthusiastic amorousness by the fire escape, rather than belligerence. Sitting by the fire in the front room that serves as the nerve centre of the club, I ask Steve about the funniest story he has to tell from working at Ziggy's. "I don't know, really," he says, then pauses for thought. "We catch a lot of 'em having sex. Couples who think there's no camera there, that we can't see them down the fire escapes."

Ziggy's! followed almost instantaneously by an optimistic "Do I get a prize?", the first of the night's many punters stride towards the bar. I watch as a second-year student pleads to be let in despite his obvious and extreme intoxication; the procedure is to ask him to walk a straight line down the hill towards the Artful Dodger and back again, a test that he fails miserably. "She'll jump up and..." He repeats the gesture even more dramatically. "Then they'll come out, and she'll be bright red, and everyone'll give 'em a round of applause. She'll be red as hell and hiding her face. He'll be coming out cheering!" He smiles mischievously. "We get quite a few of those."

On the dot of 10pm, Steve gives the nod to begin letting people in. With a triumphant "Yes! I'm the first into

pens. "Well, quite a lot," he answers with a grin, then addresses JR: "You caught one - that girl on t'fire escape, didn't you?" JR's only reply is a wide toothy grin.

I ask what the procedure is for this, and am greatly amused by the answer. "Well," Steve says, with the gleeful air of someone sharing an intimate joke, "if I see 'em on camera, I'll send them". He waves at the doorman, who are still checking their walkie-talkies, and continues: "I'll watch 'em, till they go that far that they can't stop, then I'll send a doorman round and say 'Wait there,' on the radio, and then I'll say 'Right! Go and tap him on the shoulder now!'" He pauses for effect, then goes on, "He'll jump up and..." Steve makes a whistling noise and an energetic gesture conveying mid-coital surprise. "She'll jump up and..." He repeats the gesture even more dramatically. "Then they'll come out, and she'll be bright red, and everyone'll give 'em a round of applause. She'll be red as hell and hiding her face. He'll be coming out cheering!" He smiles mischievously. "We get quite a few of those."

By 11pm, the club has reached full capacity and the night is progressing well. An example of what can go wrong presents itself at around midnight. A second-year has been punched on the dancefloor, and blood is streaming from a gash above his left eye. He describes his attacker and JR is dispatched to find him. While Steve dresses the wound, I ask what other dangers there are, apart from drunken violence.

Steve thinks for a while, then says "Had one girl, when we had glass tables in there." He points towards the champagne room, then looks at Andrew and grins, "she was... biggish. She sat on one of 'em. How stupid's that? She went through it. And I wasn't putting a plaster on her arse, so I made her mate do it. She went straight through the table!" "She was quite big," Andrew confirms, in a deadpan tone but with a twinkle in his eye.

Anecdotes aside, Steve becomes more serious. "It's all idiocy. No common sense. We've found that a lot with students - they're good at what they do, or they wouldn't be at uni - but when it comes to common sense, a lot of it's limited. And first-years, who've only just left home, they haven't a clue how to handle themselves - they're suddenly free."

At this point, JR enters with the aforementioned attacker. He is very drunk, and is unceremoniously ejected from the premises. As they do so, I ask Steve if they have any problems with drugs. "There's a drug problem everywhere," he says sagely. "Um, student-wise, not really, no, we don't get great problems. The odd smell of cannabis, which isn't that serious, considering

they're not idiots. I don't throw them out. It's not an aggressive drug, anyway. We just say 'Not in here, if you don't mind. Put it out' and leave it at that. If they're smoking it persistently, we'll ask them to leave." He shifts uncomfortably as I ask about more dangerous drugs, such as ecstasy. "Other drugs, they usually take before they come in. They'll take pills in the queue and there's very little we can do about that. We watch on the cameras and we'll say 'Yeah, he's been dancing all night - what's he been drinking? Just water?' He pauses. "You getting me?"

Between 1am and 2am, the club begins to empty. As the students begin to leave in dribs and drabs, I ask Steve and Andrew what the best times for them are working at Ziggy's. Steve, with characteristic sarcasm, answers first: "About two o'clock when we shut and go home..." After a brief chuckle, Andrew gives me an answer that sums up his management style, and his business aims. "The best times? When everything's gone nice, we've had a great night - hassle-free - and everybody's gone out saying they've had a great time, that they've had a bit of a laugh. And that happens," he concludes happily, "quite a lot."

# Where have all the radicals gone?

Students have always been notorious for extreme politics and bumptious protests. But, as **Daniel Whitehead** discovers, this stereotype is fast changing here at York

**S**tudents have always been a riotous bunch. In medieval times, scholars waged battles against the constabulary with bows and arrows, while during Soviet rule, a Hungarian student protested against the regime by setting fire to himself.

Throughout the '60s and '70s, young people unified in protest over global, national and local issues. Whether it was the war in Vietnam, British capitalism or the closure of a local pub, the University of York was always at the forefront of confrontation.

In 1967, three York students were arrested outside the US embassy in London after violent protests against the conflict in Vietnam. Similarly, in 1977, 450 York students staged a sit-in at Heslington Hall in protest at proposed fee increases. The event drew the attention of local and national media and lasted six days.

Fast forward 30 years: a group of no more than 15 students have chained themselves together in protest at portering cuts. They are stood in a line, half-blocking the Vanbrugh Walkway (but still allowing room for passersby to get through) quietly making their point, but causing little disturbance to anyone.

Students and academics alike wander by; some sign the petition whilst others turn back to find another route and avoid confrontation. The protest will not hold out for a resolution; a maximum 10-hour duration has already been announced by the organisers. All will be home in time for dinner, with or without a conclusion.

The protest might be seen as a failure. However, recent memory suggests this was perhaps one of the more successful cases of activism in the past 12 months and recent statistics suggest a worrying upward trend in student apathy. Only 48% of students voted in the 2005

general election, compared to 75% of older respondents.

So has a demographic renowned for challenging authority, questioning assumptions and orchestrating change become politically disengaged? Have students, a group once seen as irrationally and inexplicably revolutionary, become more apathetic than their parents? I ask the opinions of York students past and present, many of whom have been involved in politics during their time at university.

Politics professor Haleh Afshar studied at the University in the late sixties, at the height of student activism. She recalls being involved in the Cambridge Garden House 'riots' of 1970 when six students were arrested after protesting at a 'Greek night' held at the Garden House Hotel. "Students are no longer interested in either university or national politics," she said.

**'Has a demographic renowned for challenging authority, questioning assumptions and orchestrating change become politically disengaged?'**

"They share the British apathy towards politics, wherein they may get organised on single issues or might not."

Afshar is not the first British graduate to voice concerns over the new generation. Her claims have been backed by columnists Donald Hiscock and Polly Toynbee.

Hiscock described modern students as the "apathy

**York students protest against the portering cuts in 2007.**  
Photo: Georgi Mabee



generation", while Toynbee went a step further, calling young people who don't wish to be involved in politics "airheads" and "political know-nothings".

If our generation is indeed politically disengaged, then why is this? University of York Labour Party Chair Andy Dixon thinks there is a "feeling amongst students and young people that politics is a bad thing or a tainted thing. If you back away from politics, then you leave those with power to do what they want. I think the passion for politics is still there with students but perhaps something that keeps it down is that people don't feel they have the ability to make a difference. Part of the reason is the political system has become less ideological and you have politicians chasing a small number of votes."

Changing attitudes towards activism have been discussed heavily in political circles. York Socialists Secretary Michelle Wheeler agrees that a rapidly changing society is one reason. She suggests that in the '60s and '70s students felt there was more to fight for, with war, racial equality and capitalism all prominent issues. Andrew Lewin of the campus Liberal Democrats disagrees, saying, "I still think there are single issues which students get passionate about. Perhaps not over such a large range, but I do think there are still some things which hit home, such as tuition fees and Iraq."

So what can be done to encourage greater participation? What prevents the voices of York students being louder? Lewin suggests the problem is the distance between campus political groups and YUSU. Dixon added, "YUSU needs to engage with York students more and be tougher with the University. Currently, the University is making cuts which directly damage student welfare and it's not YUSU's business to be looking after the University. The point of the Union is to look

after its members."

YUSU Welfare Officer Amy Foxton defended the Union's attitude towards student issues: "The way in which students' unions operate, particularly in York, has changed. Today we can achieve more by winning the respect of University staff, sitting in meetings and discussing issues." She also said students can make more of an impact by voting in UGMs and supporting the Students' Union. "It would help if students let us know what they think and feel about issues, so we can communicate this to the University," she said.

Rich Croker, YUSU President, believes the Union makes as much progress as ever but does not receive credit. He said, "I think student politics can make a real difference and has done. Sometimes it is difficult because you can never show the effects of representation to all those you represent - especially when what you are dealing with is part of a long term plan or strategy. There is no doubt that input from a student perspective should ensure the outcome of our politics is more designed around the needs of students."

However, with a university that has seen cutbacks in facilities, a greater emphasis on the students of the future and higher course fees than ever, it seems questionable whether the student message is getting through to those that matter.

No one seems to agree on a solution to this rising apathy. Whether it is down to the emergence of different methods of protest through electronic media or a generation too content with our own lives to care about the bigger picture, time will only tell.

Some would argue that the world has become a more equitable, just place in the past 30 years, and that political extremism is no longer required of the modern undergraduate. Whether racial equality, women's rights and freedom of speech have been confined to history is another question. One thing is for sure, though: the days of burning bras and rioting for the sake of challenging authority are a distant memory.



# Psychosis unleashed on York

DramaSoc hits the York Theatre Royal this week with two plays exploring mental disorders. **Venetia Rainey** meets the cast and crew

**I**t would leave the audience mentally and emotionally exhausted; it would be dangerous." These are the words used by DramaSoc's chair to explain why two plays being put on at the York Theatre Royal were not allowed to be shown back-to-back in one night. Sophie Larsmon is, of course, referring to *The Madman and the Nun* and *4.48 Psychosis*, picked by herself and a panel of judges to be performed in the highly professional space this week.

She is proud, and rightly so, that a professional friendship has been established for the first time in both institutions' histories. This 'joint venture' is the fruit of 18 months' labour, and she is keen to emphasise that the YTR has as much to gain from the liaison as DramaSoc, saying of Damian Cruden, the Artistic Director of the YTR, "He was basically asking me, 'How do I get students into the theatre?'"

Cruden expresses similar sentiments: "My interest is that people use this building" and he sees it as a step towards making the theatre a "part of the community's artistic life." For a long time, the YTR has tried to solve the conundrum of students not attending the theatre and the obvious answer is now being realised: as one of the directors phrases it, they must "let them put something on, because it gets them involved".

This new liaison allows directors to think about balancing budgets, city-wide publicity and profit; aspects of drama generally able to be ignored in the Drama Barn. Profits will be split, with half going to the YTR and the rest to DramaSoc. Aside from money, the collaboration gives directors and cast a chance to perform to what Cruden calls "a different type of audience". Edward Duncan Smith, a cast member of *The Madman and the Nun*, said, "It is a weird feeling, anyone can walk in and watch it", although he also believes that such a platform for students is "a good stepping stone". Both Natasha Long, director of *The Madman and the Nun*, and Lisa Blair, director of *4.48 Psychosis*, seem to relish the pressure of

the project: Blair deemed the experience so far "nerve-wracking but exciting".

The whole venture is made more ambitious by the fact that both plays tackle incredibly tough material. Both are about mental disorders and, as Larsmon points out, are "very thematically linked". However, both the plays' directors emphasise their differences and Cruden is at pains to point out that whilst they do "compliment each other", they are also "very different plays".

*The Madman and the Nun* is essentially, Long explains, about the "role of the artist in society". Written by Stanislaw Witkiewicz, it explores the sanity of its main character, Walpurg, a poet who is treated as a madman. It questions contemporary society's treat-

**'4.48am is when many psychotics find themselves to be most lucid, but appear at their most deranged'**

ment of artists and different methods of psychiatry, arguing that, in the words of Long, "art is sanity; society is mad".

When asked to sum up her play in one sentence, Long - who has not directed at the Drama Barn before - responds thoughtfully: "In trying to escape the confines of society's strait-jacket, the madman-poet raises the question as to who should be institutionalised, the artist or the doctor?" Duncan Smith is enthusiastic about his involvement in the play. He tells me, sitting excitedly on the edge of his seat, that it is a "surrealist comedy about love and the fine line between art and sanity, with a fair bit of Freud-bashing and lots of surrealism". The Theatre Royal has, they agree, given them "space to experiment a bit more", and Long especially seems pleased about the creative choic-



es the opportunity grants her. Cruden admits that *The Madman and the Nun* is "difficult to sell in a way" because it does not have the same controversy surrounding it as *4.48 Psychosis* and is "a little-known play", but he is adamant that it will be able to hold its own against its more notorious counterpart.

*4.48 Psychosis* covers very different ground. It is described by Blair as "a play about bipolar disorder, told through a combination of interview, monologue and motif, wherein clarity and psychosis merge together destructively" and by Larsmon as a "biographical suicide note". However, Blair also believes that Sarah Kane - the play's controversial writer who committed suicide shortly after finishing it - meant for there to be a "lot of humour in it". It is an incredibly "dark play" which covers a very "sensitive subject". The title comes from the time 4.48am, when many psychotics (including Kane) find themselves most lucid, but appear to outsiders as at their most deranged. It lacks both a distinct plot and characters and is written in a deconstructed form of poetry, which Blair remarks "makes it considered quite a difficult play to put on". Despite all of this, she chose it for her directorial debut at the University; when I remark on this impressive feat, she laughs lightly, retorting, "impressive or stupid".

She gives most of the credit to the actors, calling them "a fabulous cast". They are equally passionate: "I love it", beams Alice Boagey, a member of the four-strong cast; "I've never been so prepared for a play so early on!" She cites the "words, the lyricism of it" as the best part of it. "It is very human." Boagey continues, "even though people might not be able to immediately relate



**Top:** the cast of *4.48 Psychosis*.  
**Photo:** Georgi Mabee; **bottom:** Ed Duncan Smith in *The Madman and the Nun*

to it, things like loneliness and feeling isolated are things I think everyone can relate to." At the same time, she admits the psychotic element messes with her head: "Sometimes I need to just put the script down and distance myself from it"; an indication of its raw power.

Whilst *4.48 Psychosis* is the better known play, due to Kane's reputation and her other controversial plays, *The Madman and the Nun* also tackles fascinating and disturbing subject matter, and is performed by an equally talented cast of students. This new venture by DramaSoc should, Larsmon hopes, "make it less insular" and dissipate the "town-gown divide" by opening up student drama to the public. The future of the scheme, however, is entirely dependent on ticket sales for the performances this week, as the YTR is ultimately a commercial theatre. "People have become imaginatively lazy", Cruden sighs, and both plays are excellent examples of what he calls "theatre that asks the audience to engage".

This week, fight your mental apathy and get down to the Theatre Royal; it's right by the Minster, and students only pay £5.

**4.48 Psychosis**  
March 6, 8 and 10.

**The Madman and the Nun**  
March 7, 9 and matinee on March 10.

Both at the York Theatre Royal, [www.yorktheatreroyal.co.uk](http://www.yorktheatreroyal.co.uk)



# UncleMatthew

## He would care, but he just doesn't want to...

'Speak to your tutor about how you feel. If a grand gesture is required, why not fall to your knees and confess your love in a seminar? I'm sure your seminar colleagues will appreciate your sharing attitude'

Dear Uncle Matthew,

I'm really worried about my boyfriend. As our relationship has progressed over the past year, he has become more and more obsessed with his religion. He is a Baptist Christian, and not only has he taken to attending regular church services and Bible study classes, he has also become entirely convinced that the second coming of Christ is imminent. I wouldn't mind all this, but my real concern is that at some point he will stop sleeping with me on account of his increased faith. What should I do?

Perturbed, Halifax

Dear Perturbed,

I suggest you try to accommodate and understand your boyfriend's new-found religious zeal. He will appreciate your emotional generosity. If you can engage with his faith, and by doing so explain how you feel, you may be surprised at some other benefits too. Explain your fears, and consider supplementing them with a few useful biblical quotations; Genesis 24:2 "Go forth and multiply" and 1 Corinthians 7:5 "So do not deprive each other of sexual relations." If these do not help, remind him how strongly you feel for him, and reference Timothy 2:22 "Run from anything which stimulates youthful lust." If it seems that you have no option but a hasty break-up, or immediate marriage, remember the words of St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:26 "I think it is best to remain just as you are."

Joyful, joyful,  
Uncle Matthew

Dear Uncle Matthew,

I have developed an all consuming crush on my English tutor. It wouldn't be so bad, but he really isn't the sort one might expect to fancy, so I'm too embarrassed to talk to my friends about it. He has a gold stud in one ear, a shaven head and he talks in a perfect monotone. Yet for some inexplicable reason, he really lights my fire. I felt the first flushes of passion when I went to his house for tea with the rest of my seminar group; watching him pour from a leaky teapot got me hot under the collar, and ever since I've been skulking around Langwith hoping to catch a glimpse of him. This crush is taking over my life. What should I do?

Flushed, James

Dear Flushed,

At times of emotional stress it is often a great help to confide in someone. Although your embarrassment over your attachment to this member of staff is understandable, you will feel much better once you get this story out in the open. You may also find that a more public display of affection may help him make his feelings more clear. Speak to your tutor about how you feel. Resolving these feelings may take time, and face-to-face contact may prove increasingly difficult to sustain. By noting his home address and telephone number you can ensure frequent contact. If a grand gesture is required, why not fall to your knees and confess your love in a seminar? I'm sure your seminar colleagues will appreciate your sharing attitude.

Yours, with a fluffy centre,  
Uncle Matthew

Dear Uncle Matthew,

I am a first year student and I'm still finding it really hard to adjust to university, even though it's nearly the end of the second term. Everyone seems to enjoy their course and to be living in a social whirl from which I am excluded. They've all got about 100 friends on Facebook, I've only got nine. Also, I believe my parents no longer love me, since they have only telephoned once, and then only to tell me that the dog had diarrhoea. Am I, as I suspect, a social leper? If so, how can I rectify the situation?

Tearful, Langwith

Dear Tearful,

It sounds to me like you might be in need of some time free of university life's "social whirl", and canine incontinence. Therefore may I suggest that you consider life after university, and begin to make some preparations for entering the world of work. Go and become a hermit. Not only would you be putting your feet squarely on the first rung of the ladder toward a successful self-employed career, you would also be selflessly protecting the rest of us from the risk that social leprosy may be contagious.

Always yours (and anyone else's),  
Uncle Matthew

# www.NOUSE.co.uk

## Check out the improved Nouse website, with:

**Podcasts** - subscribe to News and Muse podcasts with digests of the main stories, features and reviews

**Events listings** - find and submit listings of campus events and productions

**Comments** - read what people are saying about the latest articles

**Porters petition** - sign Nouse's open letter to save our porters

Plus all the stories and pictures from this and previous editions

Keep an eye out for more improvements in the near future

**Nouse meeting tonight:**

Come along to our meeting at 6.30pm tonight in W/307 to discuss this edition, meet the editorial team and get involved in the next edition of Nouse

# AndreasMasoura



# Pornography and weaponry: boys' toys for YUSU and OTC

## Our boys in York

Given the generally reserved and predominantly politically correct culture that pervades the University, I wasn't surprised at the sheer outrage that met the York University Officer Training Corps' decision to host a 'German' Social. Only weeks after Goodricke College's 'Stella Artois' sports social was pulled because a certain female found it distastefully offensive, the University Officers' Training Corps have done it again.

By dressing up as German soldiers and concentration camp victims and mock executing a prisoner in their barracks, the soldiers are merely amusing themselves distastefully, a crime that I, nor the majority of the student population, cannot honestly say I have never committed without an element of ignorant hypocrisy. I find soldiers who kill people offensive, but I'm not going to cry about it. Given the fact that the British Army's world-wide popularity is not particularly high at the moment, however, I'd suggest that they concentrate on how to avoid being ambushed by Iraqi militants, rather than showing off the British Army's highly efficient execution skills.

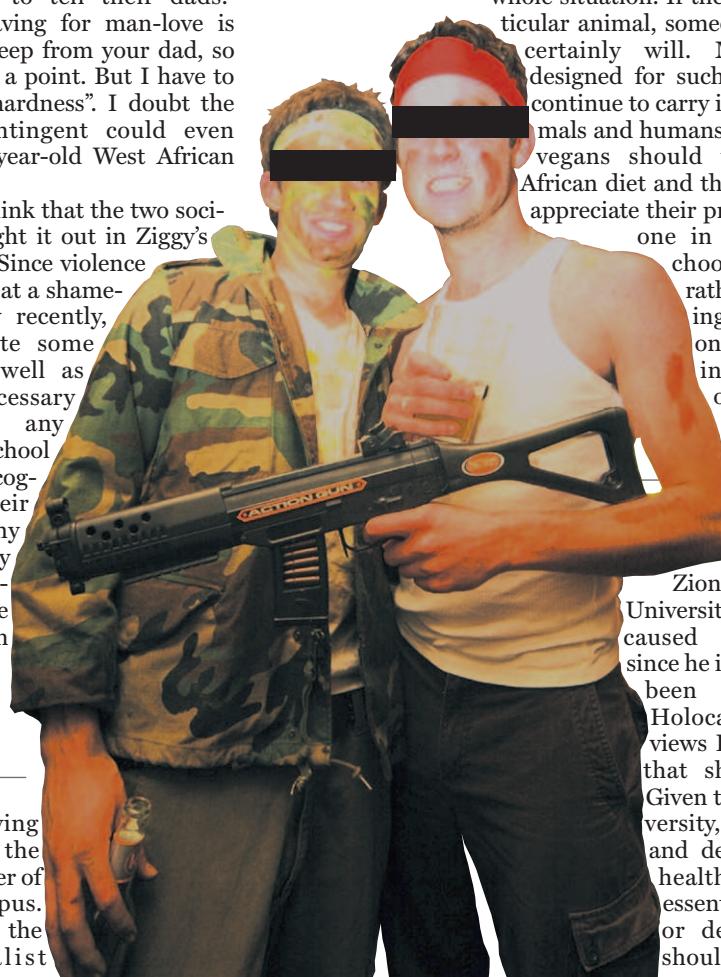
I suggest that the University of York reassess its admissions policy to ensure that fewer idiots with guns are let in. According to their Facebook group, the UOTC are the "hardest drinking and hardest fighting" people

in York and the Rugby team merely exists so that "gays can get together without having to tell their dads." Hiding your craving for man-love is always hard to keep from your dad, so maybe they have a point. But I have to question their "hardness". I doubt the entire York contingent could even match an eight-year-old West African child soldier.

Even so, I think that the two societies ought to fight it out in Ziggy's this Wednesday. Since violence in York has been at a shameful all-time low recently, this could create some excitement, as well as providing a necessary deterrent for any mouthy public school boys (usually recognisable by their extremely skinny public schoolboy legs) whose sheltered lives have rendered them fearless.

## Misplaced morals

I have a growing concern with the increasing number of vegans on campus. Very much like the environmentalist



who drives everywhere, the vegan should take a step back and reassess the whole situation. If they don't eat a particular animal, someone like me most certainly will. My teeth were designed for such activity and I'll continue to carry it out until all animals and humans run out. Perhaps vegans should try the Central African diet and then will be able to appreciate their privileged position, one in which they can choose what to eat rather than moralising to the rest of us on the basis of eating straw and organic peas.

## Rabbi-gate

The appearance of an anti-Zionist Rabbi at the University has, once again, caused much tension, since he is a figure who has been accused of Holocaust denial and views Israel as a regime that should not exist. Given that we are at university, free expression and debate is probably healthy, maybe even essential. Any attempt or desire to curb it should simply be

ignored.

YUSU's online forum is a prime example of free expression through the medium of pornography. The links vary in quality, but you'll probably find something for just about every taste. If in doubt, email President Croker for more details. Apparently, YUSU have already performed a live show in Ziggy's, featuring a guest appearance from the rugby team. Watch out for Part II later on this week.

## Back to the '50s

You may not be aware of this, but this week is Women's Week. It aims to raise awareness of important women's issues, particularly cooking and cleaning. Monday's international cookery course will be followed by Tuesday's 'Good Wife Guide'. Wednesday will feature lectures highlighting the importance of bra-wearing. Skin is surprisingly stretchy, or so I'm told. Think of it as a future investment, ladies.

## Pioneers of campus news

Congratulations must go to *Vision* this week. Their recent edition demonstrated some pioneering journalism. Not having found enough actual news to fill their four-page slot, *Vision* took it upon themselves to stage a radical protest. That their '24-hour protest' lasted about three? Well, bless 'em for trying.

## FILLING IN THE GAPS

Nicky Woolf

Winter is beginning to turn into spring. The crocuses are out, the days are getting longer and brooding geese are roaming the campus in packs, like small velociraptors, hissing at everything and picking off the weakest or most hungover to tear apart and eat underneath Vanbrugh bridge. The University is reopening some of the porters' lodges (hurrah!) like they should have been doing all along (uh, hurrah?), at some point (hurr..ah...), probably (hmm), and with the exception of Langwith (oh dear). Poor old Langwith. With nobody around to look after the drunken Langwith students any more, it's just as well that they're losing their bar too.

If the University puts as much gusto into finding new porters as they've been putting into finding the Welsh rugby fans who are merrily terrorising their way through Derwent, we should have normal portering services back some considerable while after the apocalypse, no matter how many naked circuits of campus Derwent exhibitionists and their chums do.

Meanwhile, as this year's crop of hope-

ful YUSU no-hoppers, whose responsibility it will soon be to hold the University administration to their word next year, as well as to represent almost ten thousand York students, announce their manifesto promises to all four of those students who could be bothered to turn up to hustings, the current YUSU team are keeping themselves busy seeking out and compiling a frankly excellent selection of hardcore pornography on their own website for maximum convenience and ease of use.

Welcome to the University of York! We are your Student Union sabbatical team, and it is our duty and our pleasure to make sure that your time here at York is as pleasant, as productive, and as fun as it could possibly be. It is our job to ensure that you are safe from harm, safe from prejudice and safe from anything which could cause you offence or mar your university experience. Here, check this website out. It's a woman having sex with a snake and a pony at the same time. Hardcore girl-on-girl action your thing? We are the LGBT reps, and if you'd like to click this link you'll find some lesbian

porn." At least Rich Croker's pornography collection is one university archive that's being put to good use..

Which is more than can be said for that of the library. Dramatic and wonderful new scrolls found! Well, yes, jolly well done. But only because you'd managed to lose them a few weeks ago. Ancient scrolls found in... the library archives? Um, duh? That's where we keep all the ancient scrolls, isn't it? I suppose it's not entirely the library's fault, though.

Recent budget cuts have meant they're lucky if they are able to afford lighting as well as heating and books, let alone groundbreaking new research. The Stockholm Institute's new research is just as obvious. "Fifty-somethings do the most damage to the environment." I could have told you that. Fifty-somethings do the most damage to the environment because that is the age-group Jeremy Clarkson falls into. Another shoe-string-budget theory, then. Clap clappity clap. Have a cookie.

Perhaps it is because, as Jamie Harrison went to such pains to run and tell big

mummy Telegraph, the University no longer has enough money to teach or do new research. (In fact, I suspect this must be why they are trying to retrain students as cleaning staff. At least that way they'll leave here with some marketable skills.) What did Harrison think he was achieving? Did he think the Telegraph, with its fifty-something environmentally pollutant readership, would care that his tutors didn't think he was worth very much of their time?

Talk of childishness brings me neatly on to the Officer Training Corps's recent shenanigans. Dressing up, putting on face-paint, wielding toy guns and running around in the woods in the dark shouting "Bang! Bang! You're dead!" at each other? Newsflash, boys. That's what ten-year-olds do. Except most ten-year-olds instinctively know that dressing up as concentration camp guards and victims constitutes naughtiness and that putting a video of you executing your friends on YouTube is likely to get your pocket money docked for a month. Get it together, kids. You might be in the army some day.

# Arts Reviews

BOOK: THE DEAD OF SUMMER

AUTHOR: CAMILLA WAY

PUBLISHER: HARPER COLLINS

PRICE: £6.99

REVIEW: KIRRAN SHAH



Written from the viewpoint of a neglected adolescent, Way's blunt use of description is striking. Think *Anita and Me* by Meera Syal, but much less hopeful. Anita's mother dies of a "well kept secret" and her reaction is vividly realistic; "they found me kneeling, screaming still, trying to shake her awake." Astoundingly upfront about the complex dejection and melancholy of each character, it is certainly not an idealistic story, set in the gloomy boatyards and scrap heaps of South London in 1986.

Way has an original voice, but is far too grim and vacant. Anita recounts a tragic childhood, full of murder and mystery among the abandoned chalk and sand mines of Greenwich. Way reports this via police interviews in the future, with constant flashbacks to keep the reader speculating.

Despite Anita's blatant despondency, the story is compelling. Way offers a new perspective on her protagonist, a quiet girl who avoids relationships at all costs until she meets the rebellious Kyle.

I am not convinced that this was 'a modern classic in the making'. Its linguistic simplicity belies the bleak nature of its content. Interesting, if not exactly uplifting.

## CLASSIC BOOK REVIEW

BOOK: A ROOM WITH A VIEW

AUTHOR: E.M. FORSTER

PUBLISHER: PENGUIN

PRICE: £7.99

REVIEW: SARAH STRETTON



*A Room with a View*, described by Forster as his happiest novel, is set around the vibrant and energetic city of Florence and so achieves this through its environment alone.

It charts the emancipation of Lucy Honeychurch, a repressed yet curious product of the 19th-century upper-middle class. The book depicts Lucy's struggles to grow from indecision to fulfillment. Through the visual landscape and culture of Italy, Forster attempts to remove the shackles of 'Englishness' and suggest the possibilities of individual exploration and experience.

Lucy's journey is encouraged by George Emerson, part of the social periphery, who represents freedom. Their relationship reflects the struggle between Victorian values and a new liberal outlook. George acts as a disarming influence on Lucy, encouraging her to break free from her enclosed world.

Yet Forster creates barriers to this in Lucy's elderly spinster cousin and her fiancé, a consistent source of irritation and frustration to the unexpressed love of George and Lucy. This novel incorporates many of the characteristics of modern popular novels in its themes of love, struggle and self-expression.

## Fusion: bright lights and lingerie

The biggest and most extravagant campus event of the year has come and gone. **Amy Scott** takes a look at the highs and lows

**F**usion, campus's self-proclaimed biggest event, got a little bigger this year, with the dance and fashion extravaganza spread over two nights for the first time.

Fusion, so-called because of the mix of societies involved, has always been an urban-themed event, but this year the organisers shook things up. Music Director Tom Rogers says, "this year's music is more versatile than last year's as it covers the development of urban music from tribal music through jazz, burlesque, funk and hip-hop."

Hosted by the hilarious (intentionally and otherwise) Mr Milk and visiting rapper Archie, the show got off to an impressive start with a tribal dance from the African and Caribbean Society, followed by an all-too-brief performance from Capoeira.

Next we moved to cabaret and jazz, featuring a slightly out-of-context set including Beyoncé and the Pussycat Dolls, with performances from the Burlesque Girls. Next came the first performance from the trapeze artists as well as lingerie modeling. The Burlesque was sexy without being sleazy, whilst the tap was refreshingly different and the trapeze stunning. The only downside to this section was the lingerie; after the talent of the dancers and gymnasts, the ability to walk in underwear was a bit of a let-down.

Next on to early hip-hop and funk with breakdance squad Gravity Control and the street dancers. The arrival of Gravity Control summed up the main problem I had with Fusion as a whole; the juxtaposition of impressively diverse talent with people walking around looking attractive. The societies are clearly full of incredibly able and skilful performers and it is these sections that deserve the bulk of performance time. The prevalence given to urban dance routines over Capoeira, tap dancers, salsa, break dancers and the trapeze artists suggests that Fusion's organisers are missing a trick.

After the interval, and some technical hitches involving Fusion's beneficiary charities Hope and Aid Direct and InterAct, we returned to the late '80s and early '90s.



**Fusion 2007 performers strut their stuff on stage. Photo: Tom Hole, Photo Soc**

In an event of this magnitude, it is hard to believe that one person could steal the show, but stolen it was by Jerome Edet with his turn as Michael Jackson. This section was simply stunning with Edet holding court as a parade of zombies lurched down the stairs of Central Hall.

So we found ourselves at the present day, with a Pharrell-esque star being mobbed by girls, then some modern fashion and a large DanceSoc sequence. This was followed by the arrival of Pole

Exercise, who had rather a lot of equipment to get on stage, but impressed all with their unique blend of strength and style. We also saw the return of the trapeze artists, who were magnificent, their seemingly death-defying stunts made all the more impressive by their grace and glamour. This is what Fusion does best - athleti-

cism combined with aesthetics.

At the two-hour stage it would be fair to say that the audience were becoming restless, which is a shame as the Oriental Centre's section featured some attractive fashions including parasols, fans and kimonos. This was promptly followed by some unexpected body-popping Phantom of the Operas dancing to Justin Timberlake. Next came an edgy fashion scene which concluded with models posed behind a wire fence - the most powerful image of the night. This was followed by a 'Stomp'-esque sequence which would have been more enjoyable earlier in the night, but still shone. Finally we moved to the future with a striking post-apocalyptic ballet featuring Edet alongside fellow choreographer Jo Gledhill and a closing Matrix-inspired sequence.

And so the night drew to a close. Overall, Fusion was a massively successful event and all involved must be congratulated for their hard work and the amount of money they raise for charity each year. For future performances, however, it would be nice to see a little more focus on the many and varied niche performers who were truly the stars of this year's show.

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Would you like to exhibit your art on campus? The Norman Rea Art Gallery in Langwith College is holding a month-long exhibition and we need you to submit your art work on the theme of MOVEMENT. The exhibition will commence on May 26 and submissions should be received by May 9. Pieces should be a maximum size of 30" by 30". If you would like to exhibit sculpture please contact us as soon as possible on hh510@york.ac.uk

## WHAT'S ON: DRAMA BARN

### Women Beware Women

Week 9: Thursday March 8 - Sunday March 11  
Directed by Matthew Lacey, produced by Helen Fletcher

### The Fire Raisers (rescheduled),

Week 10: Friday March 16 - Sunday March 18  
Directed by Mark McDaid, produced by Adam Formby

Tickets £3 on Thursday, £3.50 members/£4.50 non-members Friday to Sunday

# Theatre Reviews

## Sarah Jefferies talks to the writers of controversial new play *Blame*

**B**lame is a new play premiering at the York Theatre Royal, written by the critically-acclaimed duo of writer and broadcaster Beatrix Campbell and social worker and commentator Judith Jones. Following their first play, *And All the Children Cried* they have turned their attentions to the decline of the British working class; in particular, the crisis of child poverty in 'a biting exposé of Britain's new underclass'.

The play is a part of 'the renaissance of political theatre', and with a recent United Nations report putting Britain at the bottom of a list of 21 countries on child welfare, the time has come for people to take notice of these issues. When questioned on the role of the media as a protagonist in this crisis, Beatrix raised the undeniably common view that "the poor are a class to be maligned and mocked, they are a national joke. Whilst the media is by no means responsible, it compounds the existing sense that they are 'a class not worthy of our concerns'."

As described by Beatrix, they unfortunately fit into "an overarching

culture that sees that part of the population as to blame for everything". The production itself is not naturalistic, with an 'epic' and 'multilayered' nature with plays on devices of time and space; however, Judith is keen to reiterate its 'authenticity'. This is a play based on the writers' real experiences, and the voices and plights of the characters exist in reality. The plot surrounds the disappearance of an eight-year-old child and the resulting search, not just for her, but also for who is responsible.

Who is to blame, within the walls of the play and within the social world? As the writers say, "It will be for the audience to decide. We'll just let the characters speak." They also reiterate *Blame*'s relevance to students; they want to hear students' views on it and would "be very happy to talk". As a character in the play says: "Look behind it, look beyond what you can see." I think this could be a lesson we should all learn from the play. *Blame* is showing from March 3 to 17. Talk-backs following the performance will take place on March 7 and 14. Tickets cost £5 for students.

## Amy Scott previews a Riding Lights collaboration with the York Theatre Royal



**Y**ork Theatre Royal and local Riding Lights Theatre Company are collaborating for the first time this spring with a new play, *African Snow*, written by Ben Okafor. The play tells the true story of an 18th-century Nigerian, Olaudah Equiano, who, after being sold into slavery, managed to buy his own freedom and travel the world and that of

**African Snow**  
premieres at  
the York  
Theatre Royal  
on March 30

slave trader John Newton, later known for writing the hymn 'Amazing Grace'.

The production stars Israel Oyelumade as Equiano and features original music from writer Ben Okafor. The production is timed to coincide with the 220th anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act and hopes to add its voice to the worldwide call for the abolition of modern slavery. The play was commissioned by the Church Mission Society, founded in 1799 by representatives of the abolitionist movement including prominent campaigner William Wilberforce.

Dr. John Sentamu, Archbishop of York, believes the project to be important: "Here's a play that turns history into a pulsating human story. It could be yours. It could be mine. We begin to understand the past when we recognise that it is about real human beings like us. That way we better understand not only where we have come from but what we are doing now and where we are heading."

*African Snow* will run from Friday March 30 until April 2 at the Theatre Royal, followed by a national tour.



**PRODUCTION:** THE GLASS MENAGERIE  
**VENUE:** DRAMA BARN  
**REVIEW:** HOLLY WILLIAMS  
**DATE:** 09/02/07 - 11/02/07



**PRODUCTION:** STONE COLD DEAD SERIOUS  
**VENUE:** THE DRAMA BARN  
**REVIEW:** RINA NALUMOSO  
**DATE:** 15/02/07 - 18/02/07



**PRODUCTION:** PIRATES OF PENZANCE  
**VENUE:** CENTRAL HALL  
**REVIEW:** STACEY GO  
**DATE:** 15/02/07 - 17/02/07



Dysfunctionality, addiction, class, racism and religion are some of the 'issues' thrown up in this DramaSoc production of *Stone Cold Dead Serious*. Intertwined with the incredibly dark social situations which writer Adam Rapp raises is the story of 15-year-old Wynne Ledbetter (Ed Watson), who is desperate to win a Samurai competition. He perfects his hilarious mantras such as "when a snake drinks water it becomes poison", much to the bemusement of his incapacitated father and irritation of his overworked, underpaid mother.

The ensemble cast gave some terrific performances. The rollercoaster of hilarity provided by the first act was enough to smoothly allow us to tolerate the sudden drop in tempo of the second.

Directed by William Bowry, this production has just been chosen for this year's NSDF festival, and deservedly so.

to win the competition is the thread keeping the play together. The strong visual pictures ranged from tender scenes of Wynne and his girlfriend standing wrapped in a duvet to the riveting entrance of drug-addicted Shaylee (Niamh Walsh), unable to keep still for a minute as she rifles through her family home for money.

Emma Miles's production of Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie* was ideally suited to the Barn's intimacy; the play claustrophobically takes place in a house in which a mother and her two children are psychologically and financially trapped. During the first half-hour the pace was stilted and the dialogue clunky. However, the cast later found their feet, with a particularly notable portrayal of Amanda Wingfield by Steph Burton, capturing the tensions between Amanda's neurotic motherly concerns and attempts to put on a brave face. She found comedy in the role too, especially when her son brings home a 'gentleman caller' for his sis-

ter. Her nervous endeavours to entertain him had a lightness of touch rendered comic by underlying desperation. Anna Pinkstone was restrained as daughter Laura, slightly physically handicapped – and emotionally handicapped, too, by intense shyness.

One directorial decision hampered the production: the inclusion of the unnecessary and usually ignored projections. These clarified obvious symbolisms or highlighted important lines, in a way that was patronising and even accidentally comic. The fact that it looked like a PowerPoint presentation in Arial type didn't help and undermined Miles's subtler moments of direction.

I haven't laughed as hard at any production as *Pirates of Penzance*. We meet Frederick, a young man who – due to a misunderstanding – becomes apprentice to the Pirate King, leader of the 'Pirates of Penzance'. However, with his indentures over, he intends to escape the world of piracy and destroy his former comrades. Having met a beautiful maiden, Mabel, his plan backfires when he finds he was born on a leap year, so will only be freed from his apprenticeship when he is in his 80s.

Witty and irreverent, the production is brimming with humorous dialogue and hilarious songs. The characters possess unique traits,

such as the Major General who is knowledgeable about everything except the military and the pirates themselves who don't live up to their stereotypical swashbuckling and aggression. They release orphans, which of course results in everyone they capture claiming to be parentless.

From inept policemen to the giggling maidens Frederick encounters on shore, the cast worked continually to keep the audience laughing. Perhaps what has contributed to the lasting endurance of *Pirates of Penzance* is its endearing characters, even the pirates. I came out of Central Hall with a smile on my face and unable to stop singing.

# Music Previews

## SAM NOBLE

### Rock 'n' Roll Suicide



Pop music should come with a health warning: in extreme cases, leads to complete bald-headed, cocaine guzzling and pill-popping insanity. Britney Spears for example. There's nothing new about this Valhalla-style decadence in which each generation's pop royalty indulges with increasing ingenuity and innovation. Bizarre sexual practises, narcotic over-indulgence and hotel trashing - it's all been done before.

So who would have thought that the blonde-headed schoolgirl, gyrating in her uniform, would shave her head on a cocktail of drugs and booze and ink her nubile skin? Did she think the tattoos and lack of hair would reinvigorate her career the way JT's gangster tats and short-back-and-sides has? Stranger things have happened. Luckily, in Popland the right PR agent can usually coax a comeback camel through the smallest proverbial needle of credibility - cue the Greatest Hits. Fortunately for the divas (but maybe not us), the troughs in their lives lead to peaks in notoriety and record sales.

But when the girl-next-door indulges in such extreme bald-headed exuberance, we must examine the pop world they inhabit that can provoke such insanity. Pressures of childhood fame, money, regular hounding from the paparazzi and being adored are all obvious justifications for pearly-headed mentalism. In the sugar-coated child-marketed world of pop, self-expression and personality are on the backburner. But this is the price of fame: celebrity is more important than credibility. Britney is one of those rare cultural icons whose first name has become a household brand, synonymous with blonde hair (well, it was) and Barbie-like features. More often than an album release, we instead see the pop princess as a highly paid mouthpiece for Pepsi or Coca-Cola, or even supporting the Iraq war and that lame-duck incumbent Bush. It affirms for me that all the waffle that pop stars espouse as nice, girl-next-door types is nonsense.

The levels of notoriety scramble your brains something rotten - there are too many fame casualties to argue otherwise: Michael Jackson, Keith Moon, Judy Garland, Ozzy Osbourne, to name but a few. And I name these few because they all had, and for little Michael and Britney, may still have, oodles of talent. It affirms what Beyoncé said (again, too famous to warrant a surname): "it's hard to be taken seriously as a talented performer and be beautiful."

So is Britney clawing back some credibility, if she ever had it, via a lack of blonde, instantly identifiable Britney follicles? Or is she, like so many others, hooked and od'ing on the fame drug? Despite your explosive phoenix-in-flames self-destruction, we still love you Britney - perhaps even a tad more. We can't blame you and the other skinny blondes for taking to drugs, booze and breezy new haircuts as a refuge from the insanity of the pop world that you make your substantial living from. I can't confess to having an extensive knowledge of your music. But I'm sure they are glistening pop nuggets polished to such a sacchrine sheen that, even you, princess-on-a-pedestal Britney, could eventually get sick. Get well soon.

**SHOW: NEW FOLK SEASON**  
**VENUE: BLACK SWAN FOLK CLUB**  
**PREVIEW: STEPHEN MITCHELL**  
**DATE: ENDS 19/07/07**



Undeniably, folk music conjures up certain images: Arran sweaters, earlobe-finger interaction and troops of face-painted men wielding wooden sticks and waving cotton handkerchiefs. Unfortunate, but inescapable facts. Yet, be not hasty - when York's Black Swan Folk Club introduces its Spring/Summer programme, it would be plain daft to dismiss off-hand some of the most unique and enjoyable live experiences to be had in our fair town.

The programme will provide weekly events on Thursday evenings, both at the NCEM and in the impressive surroundings of the Black Swan Inn's tapestry-laden Wolfe Room, already home to assorted aural offerings on a near nightly basis. Acts vary from traditional to original, British to American, Folk to Country and all points in between. Amongst the musical patchwork purveyed include some of the younger bands and singers updating acoustic music for the twenty-first century: Spiers & Boden provide a fresh, energetic take on traditional songs at the NCEM on March 13 and the University of York's OK Brandy perform their own interpretations and compositions near the end of June.

Equally, if introspection is your obsession, there are many fine singer-songwriters that will visit the Swan's upper room over the next few months. Acts such as Kieran Halpin, John McCormick and Bob Fox pro-



Maximo's Paul Smith gets a little into it

vide more intimacy and passion in each song than can be found in a hundred James Blunt albums. Regular 'open mic' nights provide a suitably chorus-driven equivalent to drunken karaoke or the near-paralytic wails accompanying a typical Wednesday night on the town. All guest nights at the Black Swan are priced between £5 and £8. To clarify, the equivalent of the customary treble at Nags and an Oki's burger.

So, if you're interested in trying something a little different from Mr Brightside and the traditional Tuesday night trek to Toffs, take a short sojourn further down the Stonebow to the Black Swan. I assure you it will be an eye-opening experience.

**SHOW: MAXIMO PARK**  
**VENUE: LEEDS UNIVERSITY UNION**  
**PREVIEW: OLIVER ELLIOTT**  
**DATE: 24/04/07**



In an era and genre where many bands are consumed and thrown away within a matter of months, Maximo Park are one of the great indie survivors. Their first LP, *A Certain Trigger*, was hailed as one of the best releases in a year which also gave the masses Bloc Party, The Rakes and The Futureheads.

All of these bands have had to face the daunting challenge of following through with their initial success. We don't know whether Maximo Park will be able to live up to the weight of expectation with their sophomore album, *Our Earthly Pleasure*, released next month, but so far the signs have been good. First single, the solid if unadventurous, 'Our Velocity', has seen substantial radio airplay, and when tickets went on sale for this tour, they sold out in minutes.

Partly thanks to their rowdy performances, the Geordie quintet have earned a devoted following - in 2006 they even headlined at Reading Festival's NME stage. The lead singer, Paul Smith, apparently discovered by the band singing drunkenly in their local pub, is also known for his Morrissey-style dancing and his insistence on reading lyrics out of a little red book whilst on stage.

This combination of quintessential British eccentricity and post-punk music should make for a fun experience. And, of course, Leeds can always be relied upon for a good night out.

## ON THE UP: THE YOUNG KNIVES

Ben Rackstraw

As I speak to The Young Knives, the threesome behind last year's indie-punk smash *The Voices of Animals and Men*, they are preparing for their last gig on British soil before heading across the Atlantic for a series of dates in America. "In theory," says House of Lords, bassist and brother of lead singer Henry Dartnall, "but we're having a bit of trouble with our American visas."

If they manage to overcome this minor setback, the band should be set for success. Riding the wave that propelled them to the top of indie charts last August with hits like 'Bleak Days and Nights (Hot Summer)', they have been hard at work on their follow-up. "We've spent the last two months in a studio in my brother's house, and we've got the best part of an album," explains House and, suggesting how the band's sound might change: "some of the singles from the last album were songs that we thought were just jokes, but when we took them to producers they were like 'this is great!' We've enjoyed playing them, but they're not what we really envisaged."

It seems like the popularity or throwaway nature of singles like 'She's Attracted To' has allowed the band to enjoy the

creative freedom that success brings. House agrees and reveals that the new album will be "a lot less poppy than the last one. Although the sense of melody and the harmonies are still there, there are some minor keys and we have reignited in the silliness."

Not entirely though; as well as revealing that "we are idiots, when it comes down to it, and we can't write serious lyrics without putting in a stupid line," House comments on the clues for the location of buried treasure hidden in the b-side to last October's single 'The Decision'. "We went and checked it the other day and it's still there. I've got a feeling nobody will ever find it, the person who came up with the clues is well into their crosswords, Greek mythology and stars." On a more hopeful note he adds, "maybe someone will find the single in a charity shop in 10 years time and work it out. It's worth it!"

Back to the matter in hand, what's their plan for cracking America? "We're going to be horribly English, wander round in bowler hats and win them over with our English charm." Lets hope so, because they'll be bringing that charm and their collection of new songs back for a UK tour in late March.



# Music Reviews

## SINGLES REVIEWS

**BAND:** SIX NATION STATE  
**SINGLE:** WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

One of Jonathan Ross's favourite new bands. Does this say it all? Not really. Cuter and jollier than their wavy-haired celebrity fan, the single bounces around on a Space-Hopper beat through childhood memories of the British ska revival and its American counterpart. As it hits the cruel, cruel tarmac of the modern indie scene, new wave guitar makes sure it carries on nicely. Wherever Six Nation State are at the moment, it certainly sounds delightfully sunny.

**BAND:** BONDO DO ROLE  
**SINGLE:** SOLTA O FRANGO

Now that CSS have thrown open the door for sublime Brazilian party music, we are surely in for countless treats like this, the debut single from South Brazilian three-piece Bondo Do Role. Opening with a blippy electronic pulse not a million miles away from '21 Seconds' the track collapses beautifully into a cacophony of whooping, beats and Portuguese rapping. The Music team is split as to whether this sounds like the best party ever or the Tellytubbies on crack, and if the latter is, necessarily, a bad thing.

**BAND:** GISLI  
**SINGLE:** LONG WAY DOWN

First Brazil, now Iceland; Bjork and Sigur Ros have set the tone for quirky inventiveness and floaty atmospherics, which emerging artist Gisli is now displaying with a similar level of national talent in the field of indie-pop. Whimsical lyrics with a dash of politics means that this is a sound to rival the Shins' latest efforts, but inventive use of what sounds like Bertha the big green machine sets it apart.

**BAND:** DEFTONES  
**SINGLE:** MEIN

Dissonance? Brooding intensity? The emotive, experimental rock that is the Deftones' stock in trade is starting to sound a little dated. Despite repeated claims by critics that the band are superior to the sounds of the late-90s nu-metal explosion, the first band that this single brings to mind is Limp Bizkit, minus the fun (which was, let's face it, the only good bit). This is the sound of a band taking themselves far too seriously.

**BAND:** ARCHIE BRONSON OUTFIT  
**SINGLE:** DART FOR MY SWEETHEART

Don't let the borderline emo name throw you, this is rock 'n' roll in the vein of The Raconteurs or BRMC, with a na-nanana-nana chorus that sounds like the chant of a religious sect devoted to the blues, guitars and beards. Achieving the sort of brooding intensity that the Deftones single would sell its distortion pedal for, the third single from the band's second album 'Derdang Derdang' is fantastic.

Singles this week were reviewed by Ben Rackstraw, Sara Sayeed, Oliver Elliott, Kathryn Bromwich and Steve Mitchell

**BAND:** REGINA SPEKTOR  
**VENUE:** SHEFFIELD LEADMILL  
**REVIEW:** ROBIN SEATON  
**DATE:** 20/02/07



The 'ooh-isn't-she-quirky-let's-sing-along-like-we're-at-an-Oasis-gig' brigade was out in irritating force at the Leadmill. In contrast to Regina Spektor's last tour, the atmosphere was one of raucous adulation rather than hushed reverence, which detracted somewhat from Spektor's performance. Nonetheless, she remains an arresting and magnetic performer, albeit one with an adoring and easily satisfied audience. For the most part, the Leadmill audience would have been satisfied to watch her beat a chair with a stick, as she in fact did on occasion.

Endearingly, she was more than happy to put the show on hold to help look for the batteries from a camera which an audience member had just dropped over the barrier, especially since she had just asked everyone to stop using their flashes. In some sense, this

gig was an emphatic denial of what many had feared since the release of her new album, *Begin To Hope*, that Regina had become an obliging major label moppet, with a more smoothed-out, palatable sound. There were certainly enough old songs here, sung with all the old whoops, 'a-ooh-a's and pseudo-orgasmic 'Regin-AH!'s, to satisfy the old fans. However, there was also a more ominous suggestion of how things might look in the future. Half way through the gig, Regina was joined by a fairly superfluous (and bored-looking) band, who only served to squeeze some of the individuality out of her songs. Their technically proficient but uninspired playing added nothing but superfluous noise to the songs, and masked her usual vocal acrobatics.

Despite her three-man hindrance, Regina still held the audience in the palm of her hand, reprising 'Sailor Song' and others. After an encore comprising the expansive beauty of 'Us', in which Regina's true vocal range was allowed to ring out, she finished with 'Love, You're A Whore', weirdly sounding like an alt.folk Loretta Lynn; a combination that makes a lot more sense than might be expected.



**BAND:** THE SOUNDS  
**ALBUM:** DYING TO SAY THIS TO YOU  
**REVIEW:** BEN RACKSTRAW  
**OUT:** 21/03/07



Ooh, the 80s! Since 'opinion' decided that it was a good decade for music, we have been inundated by the posturing electronics that define whatever notion of late 80s nostalgia is currently cool (which, Brandon Flowers, is never Bruce Springsteen). However, this range seems insufficient for Sweden's The Sounds, who somehow manage to squeeze influences from three decades into *Dying to Say This to You*.

Opener 'Song with a Mission' takes 90s girl-bands Republica and Echobelly and devours them with a massive pop chorus seemingly designed to make you strut. Our own decade gets a nod on 'Tony the Beat' where Strokes-influenced guitar and drums twist and turn into a cacophony of blippy, synthy 80s pop sounds. Elsewhere, 'Painted By Numbers' merges all of these influences together and creates something both nostalgic and super-modern.

That said, the album does trail off towards the end, where the male vocals of 'Hurt You' seem weak in comparison to the pure energy of female lead singer Maja Ivarsson's efforts. The Sounds, then, would appear to be a singles band, but this is no insult when the potential singles from this album are so promising. Even, I would venture, a tad brilliant.

**BAND:** ARCADE FIRE  
**ALBUM:** NEON BIBLE  
**REVIEW:** SAM NOBLE  
**OUT:** 05/05/07



Canadian Francophiles just know how to write good music. A Silver Mt Zion, The Dears and Arcade Fire: seamless, skilful creators of epiphany-inducing noise. Maybe debut *Funeral* was a fluke, a one-trick pony that got even David Bowie salivating. But Ziggy needn't worry - *Neon Bible* is an outstanding album that'll easily keep us mortals enthralled after many listens.

The opening thudding piano beat and shimmering violins of 'Black Mirror' screams Arcade Fire. The production is airtight, whilst maintaining a warm rustic sensibility only achieved from recording on ole' decrepit analogues in converted gothic churches - naturally. Indeed, the album does betray a fervent preacher-esque dynamism.

'No Cars Go' and '(Antichrist Television Blues)' have a desperate oomph, rendering them instantly catchy and infinitely playable. 'Oceans Of Noise' shows a delicate side of the band, deviating from a mid-tempo waltz into a trumpet fanfare march: truly beautiful stuff. The only snag is its similarity to their debut; aggressively strummed guitars, snappy drums, accordions. But if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Arcade Fire are honing and perfecting their beautiful sound - urban yet pastoral, aggressive yet delicate. An album of bombastically biblical proportions.

**SHOW:** THE GOSSIP  
**VENUE:** LEEDS METROPOLITON  
**REVIEW:** ALICE GREGSON  
**DATE:** 26/02/07



After deep-throating her microphone, Beth Ditto has something to confirm; "Leeds, we're coming out!" And what better way to do it than exploding into camp anthem 'Lady Marmalade'. Hey sister, go sister indeed; despite not being your average-sized lead singer, Ditto struts about the stage with the confidence of an inflated Freddie Mercury and the sold-out crowd power her strides with applause.

Her need to apologise for her lost-suitcase inspired outfit is in vain - the audience'll appease The Gossip for as long as it takes to play 'Standing In the Way of Control' (victim to relentless play on C4's *Skins* adverts) which, let's face it, is the real reason why this gig is sold out tonight. Yet, the naive audience soon realises that other gems do exist: 'Listen Up' and 'Yr Mangled Heart' are both in a similar vein to 'SITWOC', whereas fellow band members Deep Purr and Hannah Billie provide the perfect canvas to Ditto's powerful voice. But it's a slower number, 'Coal to Diamonds' that showcases her bluesy, soulful croon to its full potential.

Sceptics may doubt the longevity of The Gossip, basing it solely on the success of 'SITWOC'. However, if they continue to produce songs such as those played tonight, they'll soon be at the top of everyone's cool list.

# Film Reviews

## EDITOR'S COMMENT

David Coates



The British film industry is in great shape. Aside from the highly visible detachment of British forces at the Oscars, the past year has confirmed the UK as a focal point of fresh ideas and new faces.

First-time feature directors Paul Greengrass and Stephen Frears have enjoyed phenomenal and well-deserved recognition for their work on *United 93* and *The Queen* respectively, whilst the strength and depth of the Best Actress department have been well-covered in the domestic press. To add to these achievements, Sacha Baron Cohen has enjoyed unbelievable critical success for *Borat*; Clive Owen and Michael Caine were masterful in *Children of Men*, a breathtaking British-based production; James McAvoy's stock continues to rise and even cultural exports like Ricky Gervais are attracting attention across the Atlantic.

It is a man behind the scenes, however, who is worthy of particular recognition. Neil Gaiman, best known for his genre-breaking graphic novel series *The Sandman*, will this month see the cinematic release of his print novel *Stardust*, starring, amongst others, Robert De Niro, Clare Danes and our own Sir Ian McKellen and Ricky Gervais. The plot summary is hokey as all hell: a young man, on a journey of discovery, must retrieve a fallen star for his beloved, along the way learning the true meaning of love. God. But as with all Gaiman's work – check out his collaborations with Terry Pratchett and his other movie to date, *Mirrormask* – the journey is by far the worthier part, and is certain to provide some singularly original twists. With the aforementioned cast in tow, it could be the sleeper hit of 2007.

*Stardust* will also be a day of reckoning for director and fellow Brit Matthew Vaughn, in his second feature here after the impressive but under-appreciated gangster flick *Layer Cake*, which suffered from association with Vaughn's *Lock, Stock...* collaborator Guy Ritchie.

While it may be a leap of faith to convert Gaiman's work into film, I believe that his talent as a writer is enough to bridge the genre gap, and is certainly worth seeking out. *Stardust* goes on general release on March 19.

Post Script: after the Oscars last week, I weighed in with one correct prediction out of four, the Best Actor gong for Forest Whitaker. Congrats to Martin Scorsese. It's about time.

**FILM: NOTES ON A SCANDAL**  
**DIRECTOR: RICHARD EYRE**  
**STARRING: DAME JUDI DENCH  
 CATE BLANCHETT**  
**REVIEW: PAUL BECKER**  
**RUNTIME: 92 MIN**



At the centre of Richard Eyre's film adaptation of Zoe Heller's novel *Notes on a Scandal* is Barbara Covett (Judi Dench), a crusty, aged history teacher at a nondescript London school. Her name is aptonymic and takes us back to our very first lesson in basic psychology under the tutelage of Hannibal Lecter: "And what do we Covett, Clarice? – We Covett what we see every day..." New to the staff is Sheba Hart (Cate Blanchett), who teaches art and spontaneously invites Barbara to lunch with her family one day. Their strange relationship will provide the focus throughout.

Sheba, as vulnerable as she is beautiful, doesn't resist for long when a 15-year-old pupil named Steven starts determinedly to woo her; Barbara finds out and sets out to use her new knowledge to deepen her friendship with Sheba, now able to base it on mutual secret-sharing.

She also provides a running

commentary on unfurling events by assiduously committing her thoughts to a notebook. And what thoughts they are: "She had nowhere to turn but to trusty old Bar," she says of Sheba, sounding very much like Humbert Humbert justifying his unlawful lust for Lolita; "by the time I had taken my seat in the Gods, the opera was in full progress" is her sardonic description of a calamitous fight taking place in the Hart household. Yet, for all her sharpness of observation she compulsively lies to herself, clinging to a very warped view of reality.

We the audience should thank her for that; we are never exposed to the full extent of anguish and loneliness which fuels Barbara's quest for a soulmate. Her cat dies, and there's a glimpse of real grief; but it switches to forboding in an instant when Barbara feels insufficiently comforted by Sheba. It is a marvellously controlled performance by Judi Dench: when she is told that the Harts never actually invited her to their summer house in France, she merely gives a crisp "Fine. I won't come then." She never lobbies for our sympathy, making her the most appealing sort of anti-heroine.

Cate Blanchett, meanwhile, superbly at ease in the cloak of Englishness, provides the right kind of exoticism to captivate the



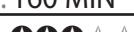
likes of Barbara and Steven and makes us understand a woman who feels trapped in "bourgeois bohemia"; mother to a disabled son, eager for a change.

Patrick Marber's script is adequately literary and cutting – a refreshing update on *The Bostonians*, Henry James' 19th-century study of repressed lesbianism – but in its capacity as a chamberpiece, it suffers from typical sto-

rytelling constraints. The characters are so well drawn and acted that when a sort of jolly-good-cup-of-tea ending is tacked on it feels like a slight to their trials and tribulations, a failure to take them seriously or at least an unwillingness to accompany them on their way.

The film is given momentum by a breezy Philip Glass score and support by a solid Bill Nighy as Sheba's husband.

**FILM: THE GOOD SHEPHERD**  
**DIRECTOR: ROBERT DE NIRO**  
**STARRING: MATT DAMON  
 ANGELINA JOLIE  
 ALEC BALDWIN  
 ROBERT DE NIRO**  
**REVIEW: STEPH CREWES**  
**RUNTIME: 160 MIN**



This debut feature from actor Robert De Niro is a passionate, poetic and highly intelligent film, but is just too long. De Niro delves into the heart of America's political history, exploring the early years of the Central Intelligence Agency through the eyes of Edward Wilson (a brilliantly stoic Matt Damon). In all of its ambitious 160 minutes, it manages to take on American history from the 1920s to the election of John F. Kennedy and the Bay of Pigs in 1962.

Edward Wilson is a morally conservative, intelligent young man who loves his country. After witnessing his father's suicide, he follows in his footsteps by joining the Skull and Bones secret society as a Yale undergraduate. His uptight character and shrewd awareness lead to recruitment by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS, the antecedent of the CIA). In the meantime he marries the sister of one of his fellow Skull and Bones members, Clover (Angelina Jolie), and raises a son, with whom he has a detached, awkward rela-



tionship after Wilson is posted in Berlin for the first 6 years of his life. As an important member of the CIA, he is driven to mistrust by the Red Scare, at the eventual cost of his family and his own ideals.

Jolie is dangerously miscast as the lovelorn, forgotten wife, living up to 50s values of home and family. Yet there is an interesting set of dualities between Edward's relationship with his father, his son, and various male mentors. These include acclaimed actors Alec Baldwin, Michael Gambon and an impressive Godfather-esque De Niro. *The Good Shepherd* is a film about the lasting relationships between fathers and sons. Though overly complex, this is surpassed by the rich textures and noir shadows which infiltrate each scene with a haunting poetry.

**CLASSIC FILM: CABARET**  
**DIRECTOR: BOB FOSSE**  
**STARRING: LIZA MINNELLI**  
**REVIEW: JOANNE NAYLOR**  
**RUNTIME: 124 MINS**



When a film is described as a 'musical', many will groan, while picturing cheesy scenes of men in tight trousers sliding over cars and women singing about the landscape. *Cabaret*, based on the 1966 Broadway musical by Kander and Webb, could not be further from this mould. It is a dark, seedy tale of 1930s Berlin, set in the midst of pre-World War II political unrest.

Brian Roberts (Michael York), an English academic, arrives in Berlin to study for a PhD. He meets Sally Bowles (Minnelli), an American cabaret singer at the Kit Kat Club. The two contrast sharply; Brian is reserved and Sally wild and "self-centred". The rise of the Nazi party and the persecution of Jews provides a brilliantly communicated and sinister undercurrent to the film, progressing from the periphery of the story to a direct influence on the main characters by the end.

Fosse cleverly sets the songs – all except one – on the Kit Kat Club stage, making the film more realistic as the characters don't suddenly burst into song and dance. The songs still apply to the story, however, often making cynical observations about the characters' motives



and behaviour.

Minnelli's performance is powerful and energetic, winning her the Oscar for Best Actress in the 1972 Academy Awards. Her performances onstage are the most striking of the film, and the song 'Maybe This Time', which she belts out to the empty club will blow you away. Michael York is the perfect Englishman; sexy and charming, superbly cast for this role. Joel Gray is involved with most of the musical numbers in this film, and his performance as the rather creepy Master of Ceremonies also won him an Oscar.

The true quality of the film, however, shines through in the cinematography; some of the shots are artistically beautiful, setting *Cabaret* apart from other classic musicals.

# Food&DrinkReviews



## WHICH FUDGE?

Luxurious, fudgy slices adorn the shelves of Jim Garrahy's Fudge Kitchen. So much fudgy loveliness in a wide range of fudge-tastic flavours begs the question, how to choose? To aid you in this complex decision, you could watch a new batch of scrumptious fudge being made by the comedic young man in a straw hat as he banters with a baiting crowd of sixteen-year-olds desperate for some free fudge. You may even be offered a taste of a particularly fudge-alicious flavour; or, you could read our guide to the luxurious fudge slices offered by the Fudge Kitchen. That's right, at *Nouse* we have taken it upon ourselves to sample four of the delectable, mouthwatering, yet calorific fudge slices just for you.

### FLAVOUR: BELGIAN CHOCOLATE SWIRL

One of the more popular fudge slices and it is clear why. The rich taste of belgian chocolate combined with Jim Garrahy's delectable fudge recipe is divine. You can literally see the luxurious chocolate swirling amongst the vanilla-based fudge. An absolute must for any chocoholics, but some on the tasting panel found this a little too sweet and sickly for their liking.

### FLAVOUR: BOOZY FRUIT AND NUT

Alcohol and fudge. What more could you possibly ask for? However, this strong tasting fudge slice was almost too overpowering. The chunks of walnuts and raisins were surprisingly large and extremely delicious but the strong taste of rum was certainly not as delightful as the other fudgy flavours available.

### FLAVOUR: TRADITIONAL TOFFEE

My personal favourite and also one of the Fudge Kitchen's best sellers. Creamy, smooth and truly a melt-in-your-mouth experience, Jim's traditional toffee will not disappoint. If you are looking for traditional flavour (perhaps this is your first venture into the realm of fudge) rather than a more exotic fudgy experience, then this is the one for you.

### FLAVOUR: LEMON MERINGUE

Do not be put off by the unusual flavour of this. An immediate instinct when buying fudge would be to go for the chocolatey, toffee flavours rather than the unconventional lemon meringue. We expected this to be much more tangy and lemon-flavoured than it actually was. Instead, the fudge was smooth and creamy, making this an unexpected favourite amongst the tasters.

### RESTAURANT: STRADA

ADDRESS: LOW PETERGATE  
AVE. FOOD PRICE: £9.00  
AVE. DRINK PRICE: £4.00  
REVIEW: LAUREN MENZIES



The opening of a new Italian restaurant in town usually involves my spending an extortionate amount of money sampling the delicacies they have to offer, frittering away my precious student loan on food with names I can't even pronounce. However, the opening of Strada was a completely different experience. For two hours on a cold Tuesday, this Italian eatery gave free samples of their food to anyone who cared to venture into the imposing red building on Petergate. I kept my expectations low, anticipating a few spoonfuls of some pasta coated in an overly garlic sauce, but I was over the moon to find a more extensive and extremely satisfying sample of their wide-ranging menu.

The tasty schiacciatella, homemade

bread coated with basil pesto and tomato, starts off your meal as it means to continue. For fans of seafood, the risotto all'aragosta e gamberoni is not to be missed. Lobster and tiger prawns with garlic, chilli, white wine, thyme, Italian tomatoes and broad beans make a fantastic combination. For secondi, the bistecca di manzo (rib-eye steak with rocket and parmesan) is delicious. At £13.50, it's one of the pricier options on the menu but well worth the cash if you are willing to splurge. For a choice slightly more appealing to the average student tastebuds and bank balance, the pizza section offers a wide variety of this classic Italian dish. The thin bases to the pizzas make a change from the last pizza I ate, which was in a post-Ziggys frenzy in Fat Boys. In terms of desserts, one thing needs to be said here and one thing only: make sure you leave room. The small sample of tiramisu I tried left me wanting more and left me wondering how amazing the fondente al cacao (warm melting chocolate pudding) would be.

I left Strada feeling overly full, knowing that I would return, although next time my purse may be leaving slightly lighter than it did on this occasion.



### RESTAURANT: DUSK

ADDRESS: NEW STREET  
AVE. FOOD PRICE: £5  
AVE. DRINK PRICE: £2  
REVIEW: WILL HEAVEN



Dusk is a lively place on a weekday evening. Popular with students and a slightly raffish middle-aged crowd, it will usually feature on a bar crawl - largely because of the two for £4.50 offer on cocktails.

But as a place to eat, it is overlooked. At lunchtime it was quiet, the wooden chairs not looking quite as appealing as they had done the night before. There wasn't any sign of the staff when we arrived, but when they did appear we were well looked after. Our food came quickly and there was even an apology for the lack of lemon slices in the coke.

The menu follows a simple formula: simple ingredients in easy combinations. You can't really go far wrong with a brie, rocket and chutney sandwich with a salad and chips, and they didn't. A good choice is the deli board: £2.50 for bread, olive oil and other niceties and an additional pound or so for things like Parma ham, salmon teriyaki and roasted aubergines.

There was some faint amusement due to the wording on the menu; the rocket was 'wild', the mushrooms 'field', and none of us knew what 'griddled' bacon was. Still, I wondered why Dusk was ignored by students as a place to eat during the day. Perhaps because it is called Dusk.

### RESTAURANT: ATE O'CLOCK

ADDRESS: HIGH OUSEGATE  
AVE. FOOD PRICE: £12  
AVE. DRINK PRICE: £3.20  
REVIEW: TOM SIMON-NORRIS



Blink and you'll miss it, but nestled on High Ousegate is a great little restaurant. Ate O'Clock is rusticly decorated with plenty of wood, terracotta pottery and a collection of old-fashioned clocks (all unmoving and set to... you guessed it). There's a comfortable waiting area - Ate O'Clock books up at weekends, but you should get a table for lunch.

The service was prompt and friendly, with unusual home-baked breads (we were offered coffee or apple flavour) to whet your appetite. In fact, the entire menu is full of innovation and outstanding quality. I went for sea bass with vanilla mash; definitely the best thing I've eaten all term. The pan-fried pork loin steak with hoi-sin and chorizo stir-fry was also fantastic, as was the confit of duck leg. Also worth a mention are the 'Ate O'Clock Chips', chips as chips should be: skin on, a little crunchy on the outside and fluffy within. No less than you'd expect at £2.20 a pop. Dessert was occupied with admiring the massive chocolate fondue, served with a spectacular platter of weird and exotic fruit (dragon fruit, anyone?) and marshmallows.

Given how posh the food is, Ate O'Clock is very reasonably priced. Go for lunch or for a special occasion; and in the evening take the parents to pick up the tab.

### RESTAURANT: EL PIANO

ADDRESS: GRAPE LANE  
AVE. FOOD PRICE: £12  
AVE. DRINK PRICE: £3.50  
REVIEW: SAM WHITTAKER



'I didn't want to buy a rug, but I ended up eating one,' were my thoughts as I left El Piano, a quirky little restaurant on the corner of Grape Lane near the Biltmore. I won't be too harsh, the decor was culturally attractive and I almost felt as if I'd made the trip over to Mexico, especially when the foreign waitress misunderstood me and tried to add an extra digit to my £14 bill.

The menu needed an Enigma machine, though with a friend's help I managed to arrive at the decision of ordering buckwheat noodles, quorn chilli con carne and deep fried spice balls. The next challenge was to decide upon the size of the dish. They are served in three sizes, starting at £2.95 up to £6.95 and however much you spent, you weren't getting your money's worth.

When the food eventually turned up, I was too hungry to care that it lacked any meat. The buckwheat noodles were, in hindsight, a regrettable choice, but at least the quorn chilli con carne was palatable. There was a ray of sunshine though: the deep fried spice balls, when consumed with the mango-chutney sauce, were most delightful.

Quite frankly, if you are not one for a vegetarian experience, switch 'Piano' for 'Gauch' and have an Argentinian steak.



Clockwise from top left: Simon Pegg shooting up Somerfields in *Hot Fuzz*; Laikeisha from *Blame*; *The Good German*, released Friday March 3 & Mando Diao, playing at the Cockpit, Leeds, Thursday March 8

*In Theaters Soon*

## Live Music

### Tuesday March 6 Fandangle, Fibbers

Coming to York in Week 9 are Fandangle. This punk/ska band have been described as a mix between Less Than Jake and Pennywise and have also supported the legendary Reel Big Fish. With over 500 shows and 11+ tours under their belt, they're not to be missed. Tickets £6 on the door, £5 in advance.

### Friday March 9 The Deftones, Leeds University Union

Supported by Mnemic, this is one of the bigger bands to be playing in the area. Tickets £17.50 online.

### Friday March 16 The Strange Death of Liberal England, Fibbers

If it's something heavier that you're after, then this will be it. Celebrate the end of term with some reputed 'apocalyptic post-rock', primal rhythm and chaotic melody. Tickets are only available on the door at £5.

### March 8 and 10 Mando Diao and The 5 O'Clock Heroes, The Cockpit, Leeds

For anyone prepared the travel that little bit further, the cockpit has these excellent and impressive bands lined up for the last two weeks of term.

## Campus Events

### Friday March 9 YUSU Election Night, Derwent

The obviously much-anticipated election night will be held in Derwent this Friday and will see the holders of many important posts being decided. Doors open at 9:30pm, results will hopefully be announced at 10:30pm and the bar's open to 1:30am. Your chance to have your say on your Union.

### Friday March 9 Guest Speaker: Hilary Benn

The Labour club presents Hilary Benn speaking on the subject of international development at 1pm, room TBC so check their website nearer the time.

### Friday March 9 Candy, Wentworth College

If student or international politics isn't your thing for a Friday night, then the cheap cocktails (amongst other offers) at The Edge should be a far more welcoming alternative. Starts at 9pm and goes on until 2am.

### Wednesday March 7 University of York Symphony Orchestra

John Stringer conducts our superb symphony orchestra playing the works of Blake, Strauss and Tchaikovsky in our penultimate week. 7:30 - 9:30pm Central Hall, tickets £3 from SJL Box office.

## Art and Performance

### March 14- 17 The UN Inspector, York Theatre Royal

A government that is out of touch with its people and spends all its money on the wrong things (sound familiar?) gets a visit from the dreaded UN Inspector. This is a hilarious tale of mistaken identity and corrupt politicians, performed by some of the most talented young people in the city.

### March 25 Slave Ship on the Eye of York, Castle Museum, New Exhibit

Marking the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade, 150 people will form the shape of a slave ship to remember the suffering of slaves.

### March 3- 17 Blame, York Theatre Royal

The story of Mandy, who's council flat receives all manner and sorts of visitors and Laikeisha, the 8 year old who sees and hears a lot more than she should at that age. When Laikeisha goes missing after Mandy's birthday party, the accusations start to flow.

### March 6 - 10 4.48 Psychosis, York Theatre Royal.

Our very own DramaSoc present a harrowing but beautiful insight into the darkest voids of bipolar disorder, described as "a complex and dark exploration of a place where clarity and intense psychosis merge together destructively."

## Cinema

### The Good German

Week 9 sees the release of Joseph Kanon's thriller, directed by Steven Soderbergh and telling the story of an American journalist (George Clooney) caught up in a murder investigation with his former mistress (Cate Blanchett) in post-war Germany.

### Hot Fuzz

After top London cop (Simon Pegg) is transferred to a sleepy West Country village because of jealous colleagues, he and his new, witless partner (Nick Frost) start to uncover strange 'accidents' in the town. Aiming to glorify the British police force, this comedy culminates in possibly the best 30 minutes of comedy/violence ever produced by British cinema.

### A Guide to Recognising Your Saints

Written and directed by Dito Montiel, this is a coming-of-age drama about a boy growing up in 1980s New York. As his friends end up dead, on drugs or in prison, he comes to believe he has escaped a similar demise and is saved by his so called 'saints'.

### School for Scoundrels

Jon Heder and Billy Bob Thornton star in this remake of the 1960s British film about a traffic warden who's low on general life skills. After enrolling in Dr. P's school, he becomes the star pupil and the two soon get competitive. After receiving mixed reviews, it has ended up doing fairly well in the box office and may be worth watching as a light comedy.



**Private Mosley takes his punishment shot**  
Cartoon by Chris Turner

## Robbing Peter to pay Paul

The University's squeeze on finances will cost us dearly

**Tom Simon-Norris**  
Contributing Writer

A university provides a public service. A university educates vast numbers of young people to a high level, and offers training in highly technical and specialised fields. A university undertakes vital research in all kinds of areas, from nuclear fusion to cognitive psychology to primary educational techniques to international macroeconomics. Both research and training is for the benefit of society as a whole.

Of course, all this has to be done on a budget. If cuts are necessary, they must be made with the University's primary aims in mind, and not to their detriment. So when department-wide cuts are announced, the initial reaction is always negative or rather, interrogative: "Why?" Budget cuts always require justification, since they will make it harder - much harder - for departments to provide the services that they were established for.

A five percent cut does not seem a huge amount, but when you consider that departmental budgets run into the millions then the true scale of the cuts is realised. Can this amount really be achieved by the suggested measures? Or will research and teaching have to be cut back too?

Some of the measures already in place in some departments seem rather odd. Freezing recruitment sounds like a good idea, but when tutors retire there can be no one to

replace them or the work they do. This, coupled with the scrapping of graduate tutors in some departments, will increase the workload of already overworked academics - and as a result teaching and research are bound to suffer. It's conceivable that departments might have to reduce contact hours too.

Asking the Library to save nearly half a million pounds is ridiculous. How on earth are they going to do this? Reducing opening hours? Cutting back the helpful and friendly staff? Decreasing acquisition of books, cancelling journal subscriptions? Increasing fines might seem like a good idea, but extortionate fines would only encourage students to get their books back on time, and this could never cover the required £450,000.

I'm not even going to mention the porters, or the bars, or the cleaners - vital services to the university - that have already been cut down. Enough has been said on these issues already - and the negative consensus seems to be University-wide.

At least YUSU's meagre budget hasn't been touched - although I wouldn't be at all surprised if provision for societies and student welfare and representation were too deemed superfluous and pegged back.

So, let us move back to the original question. Why is it that these cuts are necessary? The official line is that the cuts are being made to facilitate 'campus expansion'. It seems that, to allow Heslington East to become a reality, certain requirements have to be

met on the University's budget sheets, and this is what is driving the cuts.

'Hes East' has to be welcomed as progressive - increasing both the number and the scope of undergraduate, postgraduate and research opportunities available, as well as providing new facilities (a new sports centre, a performing arts venue... but strangely, no building designated specifically as a central student union - surely one of the most obvious deficiencies of the current campus). From the literature, the plans seem to be guided by the same ethos as the rest of the University; green, plenty of open space, departments and nucleated colleges nestled alongside each other.

The problem is that the University seems to be focusing solely on expansion to the detriment of the current campus. If the only way to get Hes East off the ground is to force departments into making the current cuts then the plans should be delayed until the circumstances are right. The University's aim is not to expand for expansion's sake; it is to improve the provision of education and research. There's no point in building for the future by impairing the present. The University will argue that, in the end, the new campus will make the cuts worthwhile, and this claim might have some truth - but only in the very distant future. Surely the immediate losses (in teaching and research) across every single department will outweigh the material gain from the new campus.

Additionally, the slide backwards will be much harder to

## Over the top, lads

**Sam Thomas**  
Comment Editor



wholesome associations, such as killing people in nasty ways. Some of the time they've been successful; other times, as evidenced by the very public revelations over abuse of prisoners at Camp Breadbasket and elsewhere, old habits have proved stub-

born. The University Officer Training Corps are supposed to help in this process of adaptation, lining up graduate recruits and generally raising the profile of the armed forces amongst students. In all seriousness, whilst it's very easy to rail against the very idea of a standing army, it is - like any other institution - capable of both good and bad, and we have a strong interest in it being as humane and

**Some of the UOTC are fresh from the Lynndie England school of military public relations**

decent as it can be.

So, what does all this say about our UOTC playing Rambo in the woods for the benefit of bored web junkies, or indeed staging their own Mel Brooksian interpretation of *Schindler's List*? Well, for a start it gives comfort to anyone inclined toward the simple-minded view that anyone connected to the armed forces is, by definition, a violent, intolerant thug.

Various representatives of the Army that Nouse spoke to (the proper Army, that is) were keen to stress the good example that the UOTC set, and to mark their occasional fits of bad taste as an exception to the rule. Fair enough. Maybe, then, our brave student soldiers ought to drop the gay-bashing, lose the schoolboy bravado, and generally stop giving their superiors such bad press. Because, and we hate to point this out, their superiors are the ones with the live ammunition.

reverse because of the loss in standards necessitated by the cutbacks. We have already seen York slide down the national league tables - the national (and international) reputation of the University can only follow.

A better approach would surely be to continue the current piece-meal approach to refurbishment and redevelopment. There are too many issues with the current campus to sort out (refurbishing accommodation, catering provision in colleges, portering, bar closures) before starting such an ambitious project as Heslington East. This more relaxed attitude would also allow the University more time to consolidate, review, and consult students, staff, departments and local residents, to ensure that when the time comes for growth, it is executed in the correct manner and not to the

detriment of teaching and research. Springing substantial cuts only breeds an atmosphere of distrust and dissent.

There are times when cuts are necessary in the public service sector. But cuts that are to the detriment of the University's primary aims - education and research - cannot be justified by a desire to 'push on' with Heslington East.

## Nicky Woolf Goes way back

Look outside. Isn't the weather lovely? No? Doesn't the lake look inviting? No? Couldn't you just dive straight in? No, because you are a sensible student, and don't want to end up stuck face-down in three feet of thirty-five year old tetanus-ridden goose excrement. But back in the seventies, when the university was new, the waters of the biggest duck-pond in Europe ran as clear as Evian. It was a common sight to see students engaging in a bracing dip before breakfast without needing instant medical detoxification! Such a body of clean water safe to swim in was a fantastic leisure resource for students.

In 1974, on March the 6th, Andy Mathieson of Goodricke College organised an inter-collegiate naval battle. Crews of boats, ranging from the floating Goodricke landing stage, set free from its mooring and crewed by "at least half the college," to "a one-man Derwent craft consisting of a zinc bath with an oil drum either side." The battle plans being "almost non-existent," the Wentworth boat, floating as it did "three inches beneath the water surface," was surrounded by Langwith vessels, and quickly overcome.

Meanwhile, over by the Goodricke-Vanbrugh bridge, Nouse reports that "the heavier Langwith vessel, the 'Good Ship Dinky-Doo,' was boarded by two unlikely-looking pirates who just had time to say 'Hello...' before being deposited in the lake."

The situation, predictably, soon descended into chaos, "with everyone bombing everyone else with flour, dirt and paint-bombs."

The battle seems to have been, at times, quite intense. A special heroic mention is made of one Chris Walker, resident of Langwith college, who single-handedly fought three Alcuin sailors to win possession of the Goodricke landing-stage craft.

The final quote in the newspaper is telling. It is from a mournful, shell-shocked student, who simply says: "It was hell out there. Hell, I tell you!" Health and safety would agree with him, and, I suspect, would veto any such plan today; but surely some baby of fun has been thrown out with the bathwater of danger.

Then again, the lake is pretty disgusting. If the same thing were to happen nowadays, everyone would get extremely ill afterwards, and someone would probably get impaled on a submerged bicycle frame. Cool idea, though.



## Vanbrugh Paradise Corner

This week: all eight College Administrators speak out over porters

**“** The College Administrators would like to share their vision with you:

A College where you are greeted at Reception by the smiling face of a porter you have come to know and trust - someone who knows who you are and can sort out your problems or give advice. Someone who can welcome visitors, give directions, answer questions, orientate strangers, and generally make you feel at home. Someone you can turn to in time of need and who makes you feel secure in your "home".

The College Porter plays a key role in the College Team - when s/he goes missing, we all suffer. Too many service groups, academic departments, students and visitors now find themselves at a loss on too many occasions.

To restore efficient service, we need to reinstate Porters on a local basis. The person who has built up knowledge of his/her College over the years needs to be allowed to

# Letters



## Star Letter

Dear Nouse,

All the posters on campus definitely brighten the place up but how much notice is being paid to them by those who make the decisions? I'm not sure, but I would imagine very little.

I think if the students are to win this one then we will need to hit them where it hurts. I propose cutting their budget like they so often cut ours by refusing to pay accommodation fees, tuition fees, boycotting the bars, the canteens, the snack machines, the little facilities we have and the shops that ply their trade in Market Square. If only 30% of the students were to take these actions I'm sure it would force Brian Cantor to take us students seriously.



**Rich Croker**  
YUSU President

The inspiration - if you can call it that - for this piece came from a number of conversations I've had with students this week. Each made a different complaint, from their own perspective, about YUSU's actions on a specific issue. After speaking to them, what became clear is that they agreed with what we have done: we just haven't communicated it to them, or the wider student body, adequately. It's a criticism I personally think is fair and something I have taken on board. The reality is that we now have a greater involvement in Heslington East than ever before - working on the colleges, swimming pools and selecting architects, amongst other things. On campus, we had huge successes on the kitchen situation with over £55k in compensation to students, and the biggest commitment to improvements to the CLASP buildings since the University began. The NUS National Demo on top-up fees saw more York students attend than any other Northern university. Societies were saved thousands of pounds by negotiations in

Nouse welcomes your letters. Please indicate if they are not intended for publication.  
Email [contact@nouse.co.uk](mailto:contact@nouse.co.uk) or write to:

Nouse, Grimston House, Vanbrugh College

## The real macaw

Dear Nouse,

Re: Muse, p. 13, under 'Meet the Bands'. You refer to Vudu Guru's "manic jungle trumpeting... sounding like a strangled maccaw."

Correction: It's manic jungle tromboning. Also, I think 'maccaw' is spelt with one 'c'.

**Matt Fuller**

"Parrot", Vudu Guru



**Battle of the Bands finalists Vudu Guru,**

## Gross intrusions

Dear Nouse,

Why am I receiving unsolicited political emails from a University society (Nouse) to which I do not belong? As a member of a political society on campus I am aware of dire consequences should we so misuse the university email system, apart from the fact that I find it a gross intrusion into my personal realm. I find this particularly annoying considering that I and a number of people I have spoken to support the portering cuts, as our experiences with the porter system has been less than satisfactory.

I assume in the interests of fairness, a similar email supporting our Vice-Chancellor's changes will be circulated?

**Thomas Crockett**

Honorary Vice-President of The University of York Conservative and Unionist Association

Captain of University of York Polo Club  
Council Candidate for Hull Road Ward in the City of York UA, May 2007

## Isn't it (meant to be) ironic? Don't you think?

Dear Nouse,

Does Heidi Blake have any idea what a bone marrow transplant is? Obviously not or she would not publish such rubbish as this:

"He told me he was contacted by a mother who asked him to find a healer for her young son who needed a bone-marrow transplant.

I saw with my own eyes the spirit working through healing, and his whole leg, which needed bone marrow or whatever, was healed without any operation. It was complete wonderment to my eyes - it was the greatest thing I'd ever seen."

**YOU DO NOT HAVE A BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT FOR A BAD LEG!!!!**

This is offensive for those of us who go through this with our children. Derek Acorah is made to look (even more of) an idiot for saying it.



Derek Richards, by email



**Derek Acorah: ill-informed spirit medium**

# Are Britain's children really the most deprived in Europe?

**Albi Furlan** assesses the findings of the report condemning the state of child welfare in Britain

**U**NICEF has released a report based on research between 1979 and 1999 to assess the quality of life for children in the top 21 developed countries in the world. The UK came 21st.

The report - named 'An Overview of Child Well-Being in Rich Countries' - was signed by professor Jonathan Bradshaw, head of University of York's Social Science Department.

The research divides rankings into six major categories: material well-being, health and safety, educational well-being, family and peer relationships, behaviours and risks and subjective well-being. Drawing an average from these categories, Britain comes last, beneath the US (20th), Hungary (19th) and Austria (18th).

At the top of the chart come the Scandinavian countries - Denmark in 3rd place, Sweden in 2nd and the Netherlands taking the gold medal. Since its publication, Children's groups have turned on the government, demanding action be taken immediately.

The government has claimed that the data is not up-to-date, with the most recent statistics taken eight years ago.

Whether or not the figures are valid now, the find-

ings suggest that British children are the worst behaved, most at risk, and have the worst family relationships in the developed world. Currently, sixteen percent of young people aged 11 to 15 are living in single parent families, and about 15% are in stepfamilies. 13% smoke a cigarette once a week, and 31% report being drunk more than twice. Drug consumption is also high: 35% of young people have smoked cannabis at least once in the past year.

The UK also has high rates of teenage obesity, and almost 40% of under 15s having had sexual intercourse at least once (70% with a condom). That Britain has the highest rate of teenage pregnancies is no new discovery. Most worryingly, children in the UK also came second-to-last in the 'subjective well-being category'; that is, how well-off, healthy and happy they felt themselves to be.

On the up side, the English youth have decent rates of vaccination, health care and a high percentage eat breakfast. The number of families without an employed parent is low, under 8%. The laziest young people, according to the report, were the French.

The claim of the Labour government that the

findings are out of date are based on the premise that, since data stops at 1999, it does not take into consideration eight years of welfare policies. "There are now 700,000 fewer children living in relative poverty than in 1998-99, and we have halved the number of children living in absolute poverty" according to a spokeswoman, who stressed that the problem of child poverty is a central concern for the government.

These claims have not stemmed criticism from academics and child support groups, who claim that eight years is not a significant enough period of time to turn around twenty years of what Professor Bradshaw terms "the relative neglect of children, mainly by the Thatcher government, which trebled poverty rates and grossly increased inequalities."

The government has also neglected to mention how many children have been left in poverty, even if 700,000 have been removed from it. Whatever the government claims about the validity of the findings, this report certainly provides food for thought. The concept the children of Britain, a country of abounding prosperity, could be the most deprived in the world is a sobering one indeed.



The UK comes second-to-last in the 'subjective well-being' category of children.

## Controversy over anti-immigration don

By Paul Bedford

**A**bitter row erupted at Oxford University last week, as student members from a refugee support group petitioned the Vice-Chancellor to dismiss Professor David Coleman for allegedly inciting hostile sentiments towards immigrants.

It emerged that Oxford Student Action for Refugees had urged the Vice-Chancellor to "consider the suitability of Coleman's continued tenure as a professor", because of his links to a think-tank urging stricter controls on



Coleman of Oxford has caused widespread debate

immigration and a charity devoted to the selective breeding of humans.

Fellow members of staff and the local MP, Evan Harris, have defended Coleman's right to express

his views without fear or retribution from his employer.

The furore has provoked a wider debate concerning the rights of academics' free speech. Prof. Coleman is the third aca-

demic in less than a year to find himself at the centre of a row over free speech. Dr. Frank Ellis at the University of Leeds was suspended after telling a student newspaper that there was a "persistent gap" in the IQ levels of various ethnic groups, supporting the bell-curve theory which asserts that ethnicity plays a role in determining the intelligence of offspring.

Similarly, the London School of Economics' evolutionary psychologist Satoshi Kanazawa was accused of reviving the policy of eugenics after publishing a paper contending that low IQs were Africa's curse, and that

African states were poor and suffered chronic ill health because their populations were - to use a polite euphemism - less cerebrally well-endowed than their counterparts in richer countries.

In this latest row, Coleman has hit back, telling Oxford student newspaper Cherwell: "It is a shameful attempt of the most intolerant and totalitarian kind to suppress the freedom of analysis and informed comment, which is the function of universities. I am ashamed that Oxford students should behave this way".

Whilst, naturally, academics must retain their

rights to intellectual free speech. However, this right can only be defended as long as their comments spark debate over difficult issues, rather than merely providing a means to hide thinly veiled racist barbs.

The University of Oxford has proffered the response: "Freedom of speech is a fundamental right respected by the university."

"Staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs and privileges."

# The campaign for choice

Women in the UK have had the right to abortion for decades and yet the debate still continues. **Anjli Raval** looks at why a greater provision of rights is needed and why some remain opposed

**F**orty years after the introduction of abortion rights in the UK, the debate, and controversy about the reproductive rights afforded to women continues.

Following the successful 'Feminist Fightback' conference in October last year - where issues such as women's rights movements, the situation for women in the Middle East, and low and unequal pay were discussed - activists congregated last Saturday in London for a national march for women's abortion rights. The march took place the weekend before International Women's Day on Thursday, and was supported by the YUSU Women's Officers.

Demonstrators campaigned on a number of issues, including the right to abortion on-demand (without the consent of two doctors - the current requirement), the provision of abortion on the NHS with better public funding to ensure free and equal access, and - according to campaign literature - 'clear, comprehensive and confidential' sex and relationship education for all children. This is set to be part of a drive to create a real 'right to choose', free from social and economic pressure.

The YUSU Women's Officers stated that abortion

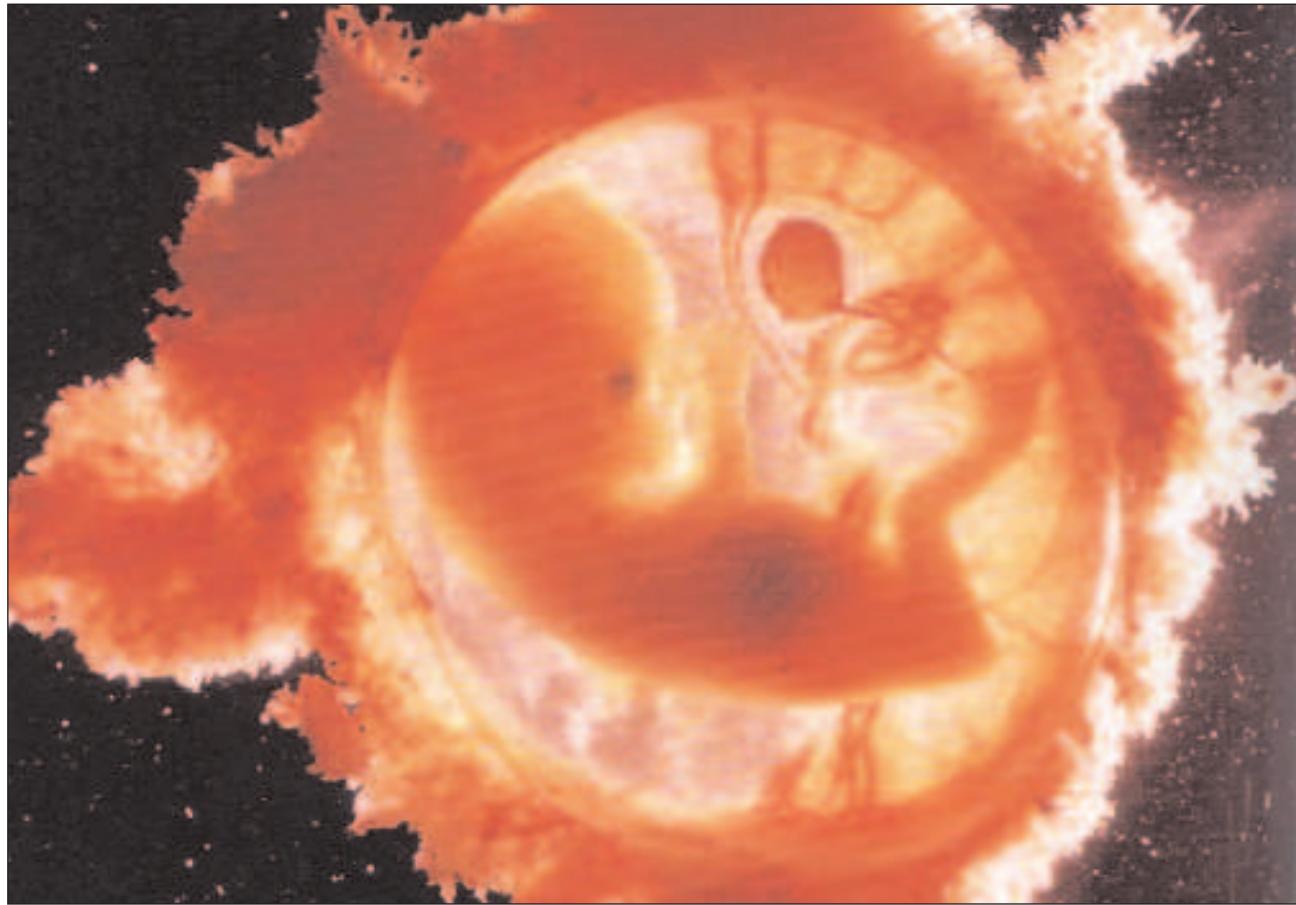
rights should be of direct concern to students. Statistics from 2004 show that abortions are highest for women in the 18-24 age group. They commented, "It is especially important that students have the support they need when it comes to choosing".

There is currently a 'Right To Choose' fund provided by YUSU which gives support to students who want an abortion, but cannot get one on the NHS and cannot afford to pay privately. The fund also finances antenatal- and childcare.

'Pro-choice' supporters at the march included a range of public figures from MPs and peers to doctors, nurses, sexual health organisations and trade unions, all calling for a law in line with public opinion. MORI, who have researched public attitudes regarding abortion, established that 63 percent of a representative sample of British adults agree "if a woman wants an abortion, she should not have to continue with her pregnancy", compared to only 18% who dissent.

Ann Furedi, Chief Executive of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, said: "No woman ever wants to need to have an abortion, but those who do not want it to be legal are the minority."

YUSU Policy & Campaigns Officer, Grace



A woman can choose to abort a foetus up to the age of 24 weeks, when all the vital organs are fully formed.

Fletcher-Hall, commented on US presidential candidate John McCain's view that abortion rights should be repealed, stating that "It is no-one's political right to make such decisions... you can't legislate over a woman's own body."

Currently, the gestation-

al limit for abortion is 24 weeks in England, Wales and Scotland. Abortion is permitted if the woman's life is in danger, and the law requires that it be certified by two medical practitioners. The 'pro-life' lobby maintain that surgical abortion is always wrong. Some

even regard abortion as murder and oppose it in all cases. Some make exceptions when the pregnancy was not caused by consensual sex; for example, in the case of rape.

The difficulty is that the subject provokes such strong reactions on both sides. Religious groups are strongly

against abortion, who see it as a question of life or death and, thus, a spiritual concern. From this point of view, life essentially begins at conception rather than at birth. Therefore, for them, any action that destroys an embryo is indeed taking a human life.

# Hunger strike forces the early release of convicted Eta murderer from jail term

By Claire Yeo

**T**he premature release of convicted Eta terrorist Iñaki de Juana Chaos last weekend has sparked a new debate over the future of the peace process in the Basque region.

The convicted murderer has been on hunger strike for 114 days since a second conviction was secured against him last year, which he believes was politically motivated. He had served his 18 year sentence for his role in the murder of 25 people in the 1980s when he was jailed for a second time, charged with making terrorist threats in an article he wrote from

prison.

The hunger strike led to his hospitalisation a month ago. The government, fearing for his life, has now permitted him to serve the rest of his sentence under house arrest.

De Juana is one of the key leaders in Eta's terrorist wing which has, over the last four decades, been responsible for the murder of 800 people. His release has sparked outrage among the Association of Terrorism Victims (ATV) and conservative opposition the People's Party, who deplore Prime Minister Zapatero for negotiating with Eta.

Yet it seems the govern-



The Eta terrorist will now be kept under house arrest

ment has been backed into a corner over the affair. If they did not take action to prevent his death, de Juana would have been martyred in the name of the Basque separatist cause.

This would surely have intensified its strength and conferred legitimacy on the cause, decreasing any likelihood of swift conflict resolution. A similar tactic was used by Bobby Sands and

IRA prisoners in Northern Ireland in the 1970s.

The golden question is, how best does a government deal with terrorists? In Northern Ireland, the British government and the Democratic Unionist Party's (DUP) outright refusal to negotiate with Sinn Fein up until the 1990s (and still today for the DUP) did not successfully work towards relieving sectarian tensions or facilitating the peace process. A policy of non-negotiation, while perhaps morally legitimate, has not proved successful.

Recent events demonstrate that the Zapatero government has made the right

decision. The death of de Juana would only have re-ignited the terrorist cause, blocking any prospect of a peace settlement for perhaps another generation. The People's Party and the ATV remain outraged by the decision, but it is unlikely that open hostilities will break out. The peace process halted by the December Madrid bombings can now recommence, but what happens when de Juana is released from house arrest is another question. A full resolution is unlikely in the near future, as the Basque people still demand secession - a right is not supported by the United Nations.



# Toby Green

## Drastic measures needed to curb fights

**I**t may come as no surprise to learn this, but as a Tottenham fan the Carling Cup ruckus has pushed its way up to the top of my table of most enjoyable moments of the season, which is more a damning indictment of Spurs' season than any particular fight-fetish on my part.

It had everything that a jealous onlooker ever needs to feel morally superior about their squad. The 'fight', and I am using the term in its loosest definition, included slaps, arm-waving and even a tussle between Lampard and Fabregas that looked as if they were fighting over who got to eat the last Turkey Twizzler. Wayne Bridge even preempted the critics blaming the Johnny Foreigners on the pitch for being jessies in a fight by doing his best impression of a London gang victim after being lightly tapped on the back of the head by Eboue. The physio's response to such a serious injury? Lightly dripping water on his forehead. Not that you can really blame the guy: ancient methods of torture seem to be the only way to stop footballers recreating the beach scene in Saving Private Ryan (you know, the one at the start where you sit there praying Tom Hanks dies so you don't have to spend the next two hours watching his misshapen head. As many have said before about the Normandy landings, what a waste...)

Moving on, the way in which every player on the pitch, and even the managers, felt compelled to pile into the melee as if their sole presence was going to have the calming effect required made me think how



**Would football players be so keen to fight if their masculinity was to be questioned by the FA?**

different it was when I was a sports-playing schoolboy. Although my career was hardly showered in glory, I did play for quite a few different teams, and competitive sport is competitive sport, even when you're struggling to beat St Jonathan's School for Quadruple Amputees at darts (don't worry about the safety implications, they were armless. Sorry.)

Yet at that point, the level of aggression was remarkably low. You could say that kids' matches have less conflict than professional ones because what's at stake is vastly less prestigious, yet social commentators constantly talk about the impressionable state of young

minds, which would suggest they are prone to copying their idols.

The moment of conflict-causing contact that remains most prominent in my mind was an incident in a football match, when we were at that age where you're starting to develop from a 'let's all run at the ball at once' mentality and learning about the subtler points of the game, such as passing and positions. I was concentrating on marking this one tall kid at a corner, who happened to be causing us a lot of problems in the air. He started to get annoyed as I stuck close to him, diligently following my manager's instructions, until he turned round to me and said "If you

keep standing so close to me it means you're gay."

Now it's a sad fact of life that at that age this was probably the worst insult you could say, yet there was no rally of teammates piling in, prepared to fight for my honour (although perhaps that reflects more my standing in the team than the self-discipline of an under-elevens football team). Imagine if this happened in a Premiership game. Henrik Larsson, frustrated at John Terry's close attention at a corner, turning round and saying "If you keep marking me it means you're a bummer" would initiate a hell of a riot, or at least a lot of grown men writhing around on the

floor holding their face.

Another reason that our Sunday league matches often passed without incident was that there was always one notorious kid playing for the opposition. You would hear rumours about this guy a week before the match: whispers about him being expelled from school for stabbing another kid or that his dad once beat up a linesman for flagging his son offside too many times. When it came to the game no one would dare tackle him, let alone start a fight within a two mile radius.

I think the FA could be onto a winner if they followed through with this one. Imagine Brian Barwick releasing special agents into dressing rooms across the country, spreading rumours such as Ivan Campo stealing the pocket money from a Girl Guides troop; or that Craig Bellamy likes to attack his team mates with a 9-iron (hang on...). Fabregas and Lampard would certainly think twice if they thought there was someone playing who could dish out horrifying violence behind the changing rooms as a punishment. This may be the only way unless we feel we can continue to put up with the insults to the word 'punch' that are currently being examined at FA hearings.

It's either that or they'll have to start dishing out homophobic insults after incidents such as the scenes we saw at the Millennium Stadium. Perhaps a renaming is in order for the offence itself: how many average half-wit footballers would wish to be done for 'inappropriate touching'

## Graham praises impressive performance as Goodricke stage late comeback over Halifax

### COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Goodricke Men's	3
Halifax Men's	1

By Robert Cantarero  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

A SUPERB SECOND half comeback from Goodricke saw them defeat Halifax in a match ruined by the appalling conditions of the pitch caused by the incessant rain.

Goodricke, outplayed in the first-half and trailing by one goal for most of the match, showed a resilience and combative spirit, which saw them cancel the single-goal deficit and take all three points.

The ball was bogged down in midfield for the majority of the first half, as the midfielders from

both teams failed to break their opponents' defences and allow their strikers to create any real threat. Halifax's Fahey and Hewitt's frequent runs down the wing put pressure on the Goodricke defence in the early stages of the game, and although both centre backs cleared the ball effectively for a large part of the first-half, they often struggled to cope with the Halifax wingers' pace. Halifax were rewarded after twenty minutes when the ball, crossed by Fahey on the right, failed to meet any of the Halifax strikers, but took a slight deflection on the left. Goodricke goalkeeper Taylor, misjudging the ball's trajectory and failing to hang on to it, allowed Halifax striker Richards to score.

Ten minutes later, Halifax's

Nightingale could have extended his team's lead but saw his shot go out off the post after poor goalkeeping from Taylor. Goodricke showed no sign of cancelling their deficit as they caused no real attacking threat at all, preferring to concentrate their play between the defence and midfield.

Their main chance of the first-half came from Whitlam whose right-footed shot was well dealt with by the Halifax goalkeeper. Having played poorly when using a 3-5-2 formation, Goodricke felt that a tactical change was needed, and they adopted a more attack-minded approach in the second half, aided by Graham's shifting to wingback.

Their best chance of an equaliser came in the 58th minute as Goodricke's Silson hit a powerful

long range shot which was well parried by Halifax's Lister.

A tremendous run from the right by Colin High saw the Halifax defence put the ball out for a corner; and having missed a close-range chance earlier on, Graham equalised for Goodricke from the set piece. Ten minutes later, the Halifax defenders failed to deal with High's run from the right; his shot saw the ball hit one of the Halifax defenders, who was then unfortunate to put the ball into his own net and hand Goodricke a fortunate victory.

Goodricke midfielder Owen Graham paid tribute to his team-mates for their ability in dealing with the tactical changes and for their fighting spirit in the second half.



**Photo: Georgi Mabee**

# Can York win the Roses?

By Daniel Whitehead  
SPORTS EDITOR

43 YEARS HAVE passed since Sir Charles Carter, the Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University, challenged his York counterpart, Lord James of Rusholme, to a boat race. Who would have known that such a seemingly meaningless event involving a single race would transform into the largest inter-university sporting competition in the UK?

On Friday May 4 2007, these two prestigious institutions will line up against each other for the 43rd time. Over three days they will battle in 100 events across 45 sports in a bid to be crowned the victors of The War of the Roses.

After a frustrating 2006, in which Lancaster were the champions of a closely fought contest, York now go into this year trailing by 20 victories to Lancaster's 21, with the emphasis on AU President Tom Moore to deliver on his promise of bringing the Roses back to York.

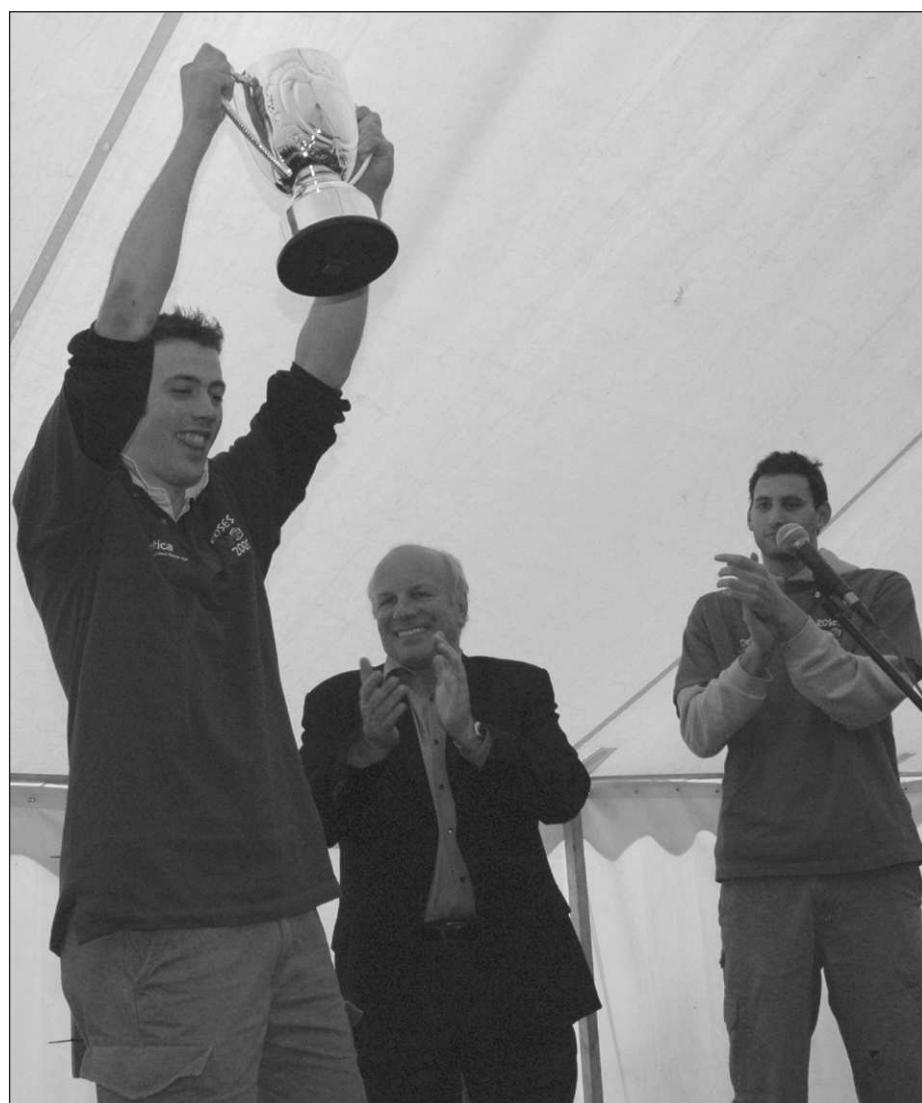
In a recent interview Moore said "I think we have a fantastic chance of taking back the Roses. I know the Lancaster AU President is taking it very seriously and fancies his chances but our performance in Varsity and BUSA have shown we have had a great year and there is no reason we can't win".

The successful per-

formances which Moore refers to include the football, hockey, volleyball and basketball teams, all of which have enjoyed recent victories in the cup competitions. However, many lesser-known sports such as indoor hockey and equestrian events can provide interest and many important points which may tip the balance of the weekend.

One of the minority competitors are the Ski Club who are competing for the first time in Sheffield on the same weekend as Roses. Although they receive little publicity, the club are proving successful, having taken 24th place in a recent National Indoor Championships held in Edinburgh. Russ Norton, a member of the club, spoke of his liking for the sport: "My motivation is definitely the lifestyle and atmosphere of the club. It's active, challenging and fun."

Elsewhere, members of the Hockey Club will compete in a relatively unknown sport called indoor hockey. The game is a one-off spectacle for York, due to the pitch being too expensive. Hockey Club President Andy Hook said "We have a number of training sessions before Roses to become re-acquainted with the game. Indoor hockey is always well supported and with strong performances in BUSA this year and the local leagues I would expect to win the majority of games at Roses



Ex-York AU President Stuart Leslie lifts the Carter-James trophy in May 2005

both indoor and outdoor."

Despite Roses' focus being on the sporting achievement, it also provides a great spectacle for students of York and Lancaster alike. This year will see three days of sport,

entertainment and nightlife with televised highlights provided on the AU website.

Moore concluded, "For the Universities of York and Lancaster, Roses is the sporting highlight of the

year. The BUSA season comes and goes, tournaments pass and Varsity is won, but throughout the year, in the back of everyone's minds, there is only one competition, Roses".

The build up to Roses has started. The biggest inter-university sporting competition in the country is just around the corner, with 45 sports clubs competing in 100 events.

Currently the programmes are being designed, the events are being finalised and our timetable is being polished, but all the months of organising and work is intended to aid one thing: bringing the Carter-James trophy back to the right side of the Pennines after an unfortunate defeat to Lancaster last year.

This time, 243 points will be fought over by more than 1000 competitors, each feeling the sense of responsibility not only to themselves but to the team mates that only Roses can bring to people.

Coverage of the event will be on our website throughout the weekend with live video coverage and scores.

Tickets for the Roses events will be on sale in Week 10 and you really don't want to miss out on them.

Great indications to the way York are performing this year are the latest successes in a multitude of disciplines.

There really are too many to mention, but, for various reasons, a big well done has to be given to the ladies' cricket team, sailing teams, pool and snooker club, mens football 1sts, mens futsal 1sts, mens volleyball 1sts, womens basketball 1sts, mens hockey 1sts and all the other teams that are still in the BUSA knockout rounds.

Lets just hope that our current performance means that Roses will be successful and invigorating.

The annual charity dodgeball competition hits the Sports Centre on Saturday. It costs £10 to enter a team and places are filling up fast so make an effort to pop into the AU Office and pick up an entry form. The winners will have the prestigious Patches O'Houlihan trophy bestowed upon them. There are also charity Karting and Mixed Martial Arts competitions taking place on Sunday, details available in the AU Office.

One final reminder is that the YUSU elections are soon and that voting is now underway. No matter what you may think, using your vote really does make a difference.

Nick Hassey and Jo Carter are the two contestants for the position of AU President, so please make an effort to go to [www.yusu.org](http://www.yusu.org) and vote anytime this week. The result will be announced on election night at the end of Week 9.



AU President

## Boat club begin new season with decent Nottingham performance

By Harriet Edmonds  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

YORK UNIVERSITY'S Boat Club made a solid start to the race season last weekend at BUSA Head of the River Rowing Championships.

The University's Men's and Women's Eights crews travelled to Nottingham to compete in the 5km Head race on the River Trent.

This contributed to the biggest turnout the Championship Head has ever had, with 365 crews from Great Britain and abroad taking part.

UYBC had high hopes for their Senior Women's Eight boat, racing in the

Championship Eight category. The Senior four crew had previously dominated their category and had out-rowed the Senior three Women's Eights in Doncaster during Week 5. They were labelled the fastest Women's Eight of the competition and the Heads of the river Don; a title that the York's Senior Men's Eight had won last year.

At BUSA, they featured in the afternoon's division, rowing the 5km course in 14 minutes 39 seconds. They came twelfth out of the 23 championship Eights, beating Warwick and Manchester, although narrowly missing Reading, who achieved 14 minutes 37

seconds. Captain Sarah Woods said "we were really pleased with the results, although slightly annoyed at being taken by Leeds, after we had beaten them at Doncaster two weeks before".



The York Women's Eight

The York Novice Women's Eight also rowed in this division. They came 22nd out of 33 Novice Women's Eights crews with a time of 16 minutes 15 seconds.

The morning witnessed the York Novice Men's A and B Eight boat races take place. The B crew suffered what Novice Men's Captain Lee Fisher called a "disaster". One of the seats in their boat came off the slide 4km into the race, leading to a failure to do well in the rankings. Fisher said, "everyone did really well to carry on" especially as the majority of the crew had little or no racing experience.

The Men's Novice A

boat came 18th out of 40 crews, narrowly missing the next two fastest crews, completing the 5km course in just 13 minutes 46 seconds. They beat Leeds, Birmingham and Warwick Men's Eights. It was Oxford Brookes's Novice boat that dominated the category, snatching an impressive win.

The Boat Club are now focusing on the Men's and Women's Head of the River Races at the end of term, both 7km races that mark the height of the season.

They will also face a tough challenge when they come up against Lancaster in several races at the Roses, to be held in Week 2 of the Summer Term.

# Late Westley penalty saves York's

**FIELD HOCKEY**

<b>York Men's 1sts</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Abertay Men's 1sts</b>	<b>4</b>

**By Criss Noice**
**SPORTS CORRESPONDENT**

AFTER A COMFORTABLE start, York had to fight hard at the end to win 5-4 in a dramatic match against Abertay University that sees York through to the third round of the BUSA knockout plate. York went 2-0 up in the first half after goals from Fergus Shields and James Hume and looked comfortable, but complacency from the home side saw that the game was taken into extra time after Abertay scored a late equaliser.

It looked all but over for York as the Scots took the lead in extra time after a short corner was converted by Abertay's Chris Gillis, but the score was levelled in controversial fashion after a penalty flick was awarded after repeated charging of the line on a York short corner.

York looked the stronger of the two sides at the end, breaking in the dying seconds and being rewarded for their efforts with yet another short corner. Captain Dan Westley converted with a searing shot to win the game.

The conditions were far from ideal in the build-up to the game as strong winds and rain threatened to dampen the spirits of the two sides. However, from

the very start York attacked with purpose, frequently finding space down the left channel through the no. 10, Ben Griffiths.

The home side were almost rewarded for their efforts eight minutes in when Fergus Shields hit the post after a counter attack that left the Scottish side questioning their strength at the back. This was not the case for York though, who had the Abertay attacking force under control to the extent that the away side frequently resorted to unsuccessful high flicks to progress up the pitch.

The first goal came after just 14 minutes, when patient build-up left Billy Walsh to pass into the path of Shields, whose shot gave the York team a well-deserved lead.

Further joy came for York when James Hume took advantage of the space York were creating down the left to score past the reserve keeper after the starting goalkeeper was taken off the pitch due to a leg injury. However, things started to fall apart for the home side in the second half as Abertay came back with a new-found desire for the game. Two goals from Gavin Tomlinson saw the Scots hold on as full time approached.

Going into extra time there were doubts from officials as to whether the game could continue, as the AU had not booked the pitch in case of a draw after full



**York were made to battle hard for their victory over Scottish team Abertay University Photo: Robert Duvall**

time. A number of footballers were left to sit in the sports centre as the game eventually continued.

The start was scrappy, with both sides scoring from almost identical short corners in the space of three minutes to take the score to 3-3. It was Abertay who were to break the deadlock

after the York defence took a prolonged battering, with Chris Gillis scoring from a short corner to give the away side a shaky lead.

With less than five minutes left, York intercepted a wayward Abertay pass and broke again down the left side that had given them so much joy in the first half.

The attack led to a short corner which was shrouded in controversy when the decision was taken by the referee to send off an Abertay player and award York a penalty flick after the Scots frequently charged the line in an attempt to run down the clock. The flick was converted and the game

was all square at 4-4.

With the Abertay keeper shaken after fainting from the penalty, the momentum was with York in the dying seconds. The game was buried when York captain Dan Westley blasted past a defeated Abertay side with the last shot of the game, finishing the scores at 5-4.

# Oxford crushed by dominant York 1sts

**VOLLEYBALL**

<b>York Men's 1sts</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Oxford Men's 1sts</b>	<b>4</b>

**By Joe Campbell**
**SPORTS CORRESPONDENT**

IN A TENSE encounter, York Men's Volleyball 1st team defeated BUSA giants Oxford 1sts in straight sets, 25-22, 25-20 and 25-16, progressing to the second round of the BUSA Knockout championship.

A nail-biting first set saw York leaping into a 2-0 lead, courtesy of two merciless spikes from Johnny Zhang. Mistakes made by Oxford and a powerful long shot from York captain Ben Brown allowed York to extend their lead to 5-2. However, Oxford soon raced back into a 7-5 lead, with a textbook spike by George Trichas. Likewise, Oxford

Captain Denis Zuev began to control the game with some masterful setting, thus Oxford extending their lead to 13-11.

Incredible digging, alongside a brutal spike from the York side, then threw the set wide open at 14-14, later becoming a 21-21 stalemate. Some outstanding offence and defence from Roman Ashauer enabled York to push in front, winning the crucial first set 25-22.

Zuev epitomised Oxford's anger at the first set loss, blasting the referee for an earlier line decision in York's favour. However, any signs of shellshock from Oxford were quickly erased, with George Trichas and Anders Karup putting their bodies on the line to match York 3-3.

York appeared to emerge as the superior of the

two teams, edging to an 8-6 lead, which then became 19-14.

Zuev's frustrations again appeared to get the better of him, this time due to a net call from the referee. This led to some brave defending and clinical spikes from Oxford, drawing the sides level at 20-20. Ben Brown's powers of captaincy were asserted at this crucial point, by his rousing encouragement and successive spikes, spurring York on to win the second set 25-21.

The break appeared to have the desired effect with a gentle dip from Oxford's George Trichas contributing to a 3-0 lead for Oxford at the start of the third set. Regardless, some truly inspired setting and defending from York's Sunny Kuok, and a crashing spike from York's Richard Valentine, enabled the score to stand

level at 6-6. Oxford missed a host of opportunities allowing York to gain a 13-11 lead.

Zuev's irritation with his side's performance appeared to electrify York, with a lethal spike from Richard Valentine sending them into a commanding 21-14 lead. As Oxford clawed back two points, York captain Ben Brown reacted furiously towards the distraction provided by the University Ju-Jitsu club, who were practising in the same sports hall as the Volleyball game.

Nevertheless, York maintained their composure, with Richard Valentine's block allowing the team to win the third set 25-16 and secure a place in the second round of the BUSA Knockout cup.

Following their defeat, Zuev admitted "The York guys played well, and fully

deserve their place in the finals".

Ben Brown reflected on the successes, saying "We were a second division team last year, now we're a first division team. We need to go that extra mile; it's just been

about getting that message across".

With a semi-final place at stake, York will face Sheffield Hallam University on March 9 in the second round of the BUSA Knockout Cup.

**VOLLEYBALL: YORK 3 - 0 OXFORD**

Player Line-up - York

Zhang	Brown	Ashauer
16	22	6
Kuok	Valentine	Kolovos
7	14	1
6	7	8
Trichas	Meiraganan	Jenkins
1	4	5
Zuev	Swift	Viehoff

Player Line-up - Oxford

**Man of the Match:**

**Sunny Kuok (York)**: Heroic in defence, ruthless in attack, Sunny put in an incredible performance inspiring York to victory.

# blushes after tense finale

## Analysis: Complacency almost costly

**By Jack Kennedy**  
**SPORTS CORRESPONDENT**

ON A GLOOMY and overcast York day, one part of campus seemed to be shining. On the JLD Astroturf, the men's hockey 1st team were 2-0 up inside 20 minutes of their second round BUSA playoff tie against Scottish University Abertay, and seemed to be cruising towards an easy victory that would ensure their progression in this prestigious competition.

Unfortunately for York, a combination of lacklustre

performance and an inspired half time team talk from the Abertay captain provided a tense finale.

From complete dominance of the game to near despair in under an hour, complacency was rife amongst many of the players. York would have been expected to rack up a resounding score line after their blistering start to the fixture but this failed to appear.

Instead, resting on their laurels was the order of the day for much of the team as only an inspiring fight in

extra time, led by captain Dan Westley and man of the match Ben Griffiths, stopped York from facing an embarrassing result.

The panic was obvious from the moment Abertay brought a goal back in the early stages of the second half. York's clever movement and quality possession, which proved so effective in the early stages of the match, seemed to be missing as midfield players Morgan and Walsh looked increasingly jaded and unable to dictate the tempo.

Admittedly, it was not only York's lack of composure that so nearly cost them but also the spirited reaction of Abertay, a team who showed in the second half that they had not travelled so far for no reason.

However, it must have been the manner of the extremely lacklustre second half, in which the ineffective long-balls that Abertay played up to the front men in the first half began to split the York defence, that will have worried most onlookers.

Westley was unsure of the reasons behind his team's collapse, stating "It might have been complacency," whilst also insisting that fitness and lack of stamina may have been other problems: "in the second half you can get tired and we didn't

expect them to come out straight away and put pressure on us as they did."

Club President Andy Hook was adamant that complacency was not a cause of his team's troubles, but did admit that "we did not take our chances. Our heads dropped after their first goal."

However, both did agree on the fact that they were very pleased with the win, proving that the result meant a lot more to them than the way they achieved it.

Yet, if this round proved such a struggle, then both men must question how much further York can get in this competition. With tougher opposition ahead, and the major possibility of tricky away fixtures, the hockey team will have to work hard to ensure that they do not let complacency get the better of them.

If they ever get such a good opportunity again to take a commanding lead early on, they must play to build on it, not to let it slip away so easily.

More importantly, for the near future, if York truly want to win back the Roses title then they must find the correct mental attitude and combine it with their obvious physical and technical talents so as to achieve their full potential.

## SPORT: IN BRIEF

Candidates look to Athletic Union future

NICK HASSEY and Jo Carter are the two candidates to have declared their nomination for AU Presidency.

Current Athletic Union Vice-President Hassey has marketed himself as the candidate with "dedication, experience and innovation", with his main policies including sports equipment being sold in Your:Shop and discussing with club presidents how the AU can be further improved.

Jo Carter, the current Hockey Club President and AU Press & Publicity Officer offers added benefits for AU members and plans to build upon the charity work that the Union currently partakes in.

Voting has opened, and students can vote at [www.yusu.org](http://www.yusu.org). Results will be announced at the end of Week 9 for next year's AU President.

## Charity events hope to capture imagination

CHARITY MIXED martial arts and Karting events being held at the end of the Spring term are hoping for the support of the student body.

A charity open match in mixed martial arts will see cage fight trainer Cliff Pollard, muay-thai world champion Richard Cadden and Garry Kelly, previous trainer of Prince Naseem, train with students who attend between 12:30-3:30pm Sunday March 11.

The Karting Club are also hosting a charity event on the same day at 2pm. The race, which is open to all students, will be held at the outdoor circuit in Tockworth. Teams will consist of five people, with prices being around £20 per head.

All proceeds from both events will go to Athetic Union charities Sports Relief and the NSPCC.

### HOCKEY: YORK 5 - 4 ABERTAY (BUSA Plate 2nd Round)

Wednesday February 28  
JLD - Astroturf

#### Key Moments:

14 min - York Goal, 1-0, Walsh  
40 min - Abertay Goal, (2-1), Tomlinson  
63 min - Abertay Goal, (2-2), Tomlinson  
87 min - Abertay Goal, (3-4), Gillis  
96 min - Abertay Sending Off, (3-4)  
98 min - Abertay Injury, (4-4), Hatch  
99 min - York Goal, (5-4), Westley

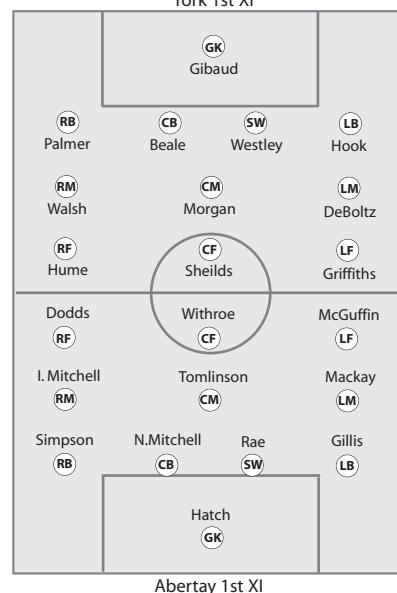
#### Player Ratings:

**York:** Gibaud(8), Westley(8), Palmer(7),  
Hook(7), Beale(8), DeBoltz(8), Morgan(8),  
Walsh(9), Griffiths(10), Hume(8), Shields(9)

**Abertay:** Hatch(6), Simpson(7),  
N.Mitchell(7), Rae(6), Gillis(7), McGuffin(8),  
I.Mitchell(8), Tomlinson(9), Mackay(7)

#### Player of the Match:

**Ben Griffiths** - Produced an outstanding performance on the left allowing York to counter-attack with pace. York's main threat throughout the match.



# Controversial refereeing decisions mar impressive basketball cup performance

## BASKETBALL

**York Women's 1sts** 54  
**Teesside Women's 1sts** 49

**By Chris Cattermole**  
**SPORTS CORRESPONDENT**

YORK PROGRESSED to the final of the BUSA shield on Wednesday after a hard fought 54-49 victory over Teesside. It was a well-deserved victory for York, who led for the majority of the game. They had to be on their toes, however, to see off a late comeback from Teesside who, after being 14 points down at one stage in the third quarter, managed to close the gap to just two points before York sealed the victory from the free throw

line. The Teesside manager had to be calmed down after the game as he strongly challenged the referee's decisions, which he felt cost his side the game.

York started out the brighter of the two teams, opening up a six point lead. However, they missed all six of their free throws in the first quarter and this inability to convert allowed Teesside to take the lead with a three pointer from Lisa Capewell. After being 15-14 down, York finished the first quarter in the ascendancy, leading 20-15.

The second quarter started just as brightly as Monika Bohm finished a dazzling team move to put York 28-17 ahead. A strong

end to the second quarter from Teesside narrowed the gap to 32-26.

The third quarter was an even affair, with York's clinical finishing enabling

them to stretch their lead 48-37 by the end of the quarter, with the top scorer, Captain Nicki Gasvill, aiding the team's cause with four points.



York Women's 1sts battled hard Photo: Georgi Mabee

Whilst York had dominated the first three quarters, nerves seemed to play a part in the fourth, as Teesside showed they were far from beaten, creating a tense finale which could have gone either way. York's 11-point lead at the beginning of the fourth period was soon whittled away to two points with York managing only to score three points to the visitors twelve.

When Teesside were awarded two free throws with the score on 52-49 to York, it looked as though a remarkable comeback could become a reality. However, Teesside's failure to convert either of these throws effectively extinguished their hopes of winning.

York were jubilant at the final whistle with Gasvill saying the victory was due to a team effort and everyone played well. Teesside were aggrieved at the level of officiating shown by the referees but gave York credit for their victory, with Louise King saying "the girls played well but the refs didn't". Teesside's manager had clearly been unhappy with the officiating from the first quarter and made his feelings clear at the final whistle before he was restrained by the referee. However, this was not to detract from what was a great victory for York, and they can take a lot of confidence from this performance going into the final.

# SPORT

York vs Lancaster:  
The War of the  
Roses - Preview  
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# York celebrates cup successes



Clockwise from left: The University of York's volleyball, basketball and hockey teams were all victorious on Wednesday in their cup competitions. Photos: Georgi Mabee

**By Daniel Whitehead**  
SPORTS EDITOR

A TERRIFIC WEEK for the York Athletic Union saw victories for the men's volleyball, women's basketball and men's hockey teams in their respective cup competitions.

The Volleyball 1st team, captained by Ben Brown, provided the most impressive win with a breath-taking display against a decent yet outplayed Oxford side, seeing them off in straight

sets: 25-20, 25-21, 25-16.

This achievement was matched by a hard-fought performance from the women's basketball 1sts who beat Teesside 1sts 54-49 in a tense and at times controversial game, in which the Teesside coach confronted the officials at the end of the match, accusing them of bias towards the home side.

A series of impressive displays sees them reach the final of the BUSA cup, where they will face Queen Mary's at the University of York Sports Centre on March 7.

Elsewhere, the men's football 1sts reached the final of the BUSA cup, in which they will face Bradford University in Week 10.

AU President Tom Moore expressed his delight at the recent successes, saying "The football team have an absolutely fantastic chance [of beating Bradford]. I don't see any reason why they cannot win.

"In the case of the women's basketball, it is a very tough game. Queen Mary's results have been fan-

tastic of late but they are travelling from London so you never know."

Hopes for the basketball team will have been lifted, however, by a highly-spirited and skilful display against Teesside 1sts, in which they dominated for large parts of the game. If it hadn't been for the poor conversion of free throws, the margin of victory would have been much higher.

Meanwhile, the hockey 1sts left it until the final seconds of extra time to secure victory against an inferior

Abertay University team. The game shouldn't have been in contention after a dominant first half display by York after which they were leading 2-0. However, a mix of complacency from York and a rousing second-half performance from Abertay took the game to extra-time tied 2-2. The final minutes produced a total of seven goals, a head injury and a sending off; ending the match 5-4 to York.

This victory means York will face Salford Men's 1sts in the quarter-finals of the

BUSA plate after they comfortably beat Manchester University 3rds last week.

York Hockey President Andy Hook, who has played a vital part in the club's recent good form was optimistic after the draw was announced, saying: "With seven wins in a row now and 31 goals in those games I think we have every chance of progressing to the semi-finals. With our attacking formation of 4-3-3 and confidence running high we are thoroughly prepared to face Salford in the next round."

## Goodricke fight-back to overcome Halifax

The Goodricke Men's Football team produced a superb comeback to overcome Halifax in a closely-fought battle on 22 acres. Halifax took an early lead but were pegged back in the second half by a resurgent Goodricke team.

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## Drastic measures needed to curb fights

Toby Green discusses the recent bout of slaps, arm-waving and tussles taking place in the football world and looks back at personal experiences from his youthful sporting career of aggression on the sports field.

>> TOBY GREEN Page 16



## Rowing club begins new season brightly

Both the men's and women's rowing teams started the season in good form in the BUSA Head of River Rowing Championships in Nottingham, with the men's novices coming 18th out of 40 in their 5km race.

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## AU Election hopes for Carter, Hassey

Nick Hassey and Jo Carter have announced their candidacies for the presidency of York's Athletic Union this week. Both promised a bright future with Heslington East expansion and discussion of increased student benefits.

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