

Xenu-phobia

Daniel Ash on
Scientology's
stranger stories

18

Suck

Just how bad is
Lesbian Vampire
Killers?

25

Hyperactive

How NME's
hype can be a
band's death
knell

26



scanews

STUDENT COMMENT AND NEWS

Read more at scan.lusu.co.uk

Week 1 Summer Term, Tuesday April 21, 2009

Uni: staff reductions 'desirable'

- University Council sets wheels in motion for potential redundancies
- Lecturers' union believes move undermines morale
- UCU may involve the Queen in dispute

Dan Hogan
Editor

A GROWING FEUD is emerging between academic staff and the university's top brass after University Council deemed a reduction in the institution's academic staff "desirable", overriding the wishes of the top academic decision body in the university.

The spat began early last term, when the body agreed to create a Standing Redundancy Committee, to expedite the process of redundancy, in anticipation that external funding for some academic staff may suddenly dry up. The normal process would be to set up the Redundancy Committee, only once the need for staff reductions was certain. This angered the local lecturers union, UCU, who said that such a move was illegal and would undermine staff morale.

In a spectacular and unusual defeat of university management, University Senate, the governing body of the academic side of the institution, passed a resolution condemning Council for its decision, and urged it to reconsider. The two bodies, Senate and Council, are expected to co-govern the university, with the Senate dealing with academic governance while Council deals with more operational matters.

But instead of seeking compromise with Senate, Council went ahead and ordered the creation of a Redundancy Committee, declaring "it is desirable that there should be a reduction in the academic staff: (a) of the university as a whole; or (b) of any school, department, or other similar area of the university, by way of redundancy."

In spite of the wording of their resolution, senior members of Council including Vice-Chancellor, Prof Paul Wellings, and Pro-Chancellor, Brian Gray, remained emphatic that they did not wish to make anyone redundant.

UCU were "outraged", with Lancaster UCU Secretary (and former SCAN Editor), Rory Daly, immediately responding with a statement: "Lancaster UCU is angered that this comes at a

"it is desirable that there should be a reduction in the academic staff"

time when, due to the effort of all staff at the university, it is the top ranked university in the North West and when 92% of the research at Lancaster is of international quality.

"It is astonishing that following a positive RAE result and with the university's finances in a strong position, the reward for staff is University Council telling them 'it is desirable there should be a reduction in academic staff.'"

The Vice-Chancellor, in a letter to members of Council, accused UCU of either ignorance, or "a deliberate attempt to misrepresent the work of Council."

Senate meets again tomorrow, when it will be invited to comment on the terms of reference and operating procedures that form the framework for how the Redundancy Committee will function. The discussion is expected to be dramatic and heated.

LUSU President, Michael Payne, was vocal in his opposition at Council.

2 >

Student rooms left damaged by Pendle fire



Inferno: A firefighter at the blaze by Pendle porters' lodge on Saturday. (Photo: Rob Miller)

Story on page 3 >

NUS votes for minimum booze prices

CUT PRICE ALCOHOL may soon be a thing of the past in student union bars and shops, after NUS vowed to examine the feasibility of minimum pricing at the National Union of Students' Annual Conference in Blackpool.

1,400 delegates attended the conference, held in the Winter Gardens during the Easter vacation, which also debated policy regarding Higher Education funding, initiation ceremonies and stopping the British National Party in the European elections on June 4.

The motion, titled 'Responsible Drinking is More than a Poster', attracted contentious debate, with many delegates arguing that minimum pricing structures penalise those who drink

responsibly, or that raising alcohol prices in union bars and shops may damage their finances.

But supporters of the proposal countered that minimum pricing should not be done unilaterally by students unions, but by lobbying the government to prevent supermarket loss-leaders as well. The policy ordered NUS' Vice President for Welfare to "start the conversation of minimum pricing in unions," and "engage with the government and with the alcohol industry on the irresponsible nature of supermarkets selling their alcohol so cheaply."

In a statement, NUS National President, Wes Streeting, called for students unions to do more to convey to their

members the dangers of excessive drinking. "All you can drink' and 'three for the price of one' offers encourage students to drink to dangerous levels, and should have no place in our students' union bars," he said. "NUS will now work with our commercial arm, NUS Services, and student officers so that we can recommend a minimum price on alcohol in students' unions."

Results of a government poll released last week revealed that four in 10 people did not know that a glass of wine has a similar calorie count to a slice of cake, or that a pint of lager has as many calories as a sausage roll.

Special report: 6-7 >

Lancaster University Students' Union
Slaidburn House
Lancaster University
Lancaster
LA1 4YA

Editor

Dan Hogan

scan@lancaster.ac.uk
01524 592613

Assistant Editor

Rob Miller

r@robm.me.uk

News

Chris Davis

Liz Houghton

Sam Newsham

scannews@hotmail.com
Meets in Furness Bar,
Tuesdays, 4pm

Comment

Liam Richardson

scancomment@gmail.com
Meets in Bowland Bar,
Wednesdays, 5pm

Features

Daniel Ash

Christie Anderson

scanfeatures@gmail.com
Meets in Furness Bar,
Fridays, 2pm

Arts

Richie Garton

Lizzie O'Brien

scanarts@hotmail.com
Meets in County Diner,
Wednesdays, 1pm

Music

Mark McGlashan

Simon Bulmer

scanmusic@hotmail.com
Meets in Pendle Bar,
Wednesdays, 1pm

Sports

Charlotte Parker

Oliver Holmes

scan_sport@hotmail.com
Meets in Fylde Bar,
Mondays, 6pm

Adverts & Marketing

Martin Ennis

m.ennis@lancaster.ac.uk
01524 593422

National lecturer strike averted

Chris Davis
News Editor

THREATS OF STRIKE action in universities across the country by lecturers and academic staff has been averted following an agreement between the main lecturers' union and university employers.

Talks between the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU) and the Universities and Colleges Employer's Association (UCEA) had been stalled since the beginning of the year, over disagreements about the ground rules for this year's round of higher education pay negotiations. The impasse prompted UCU to threaten to ballot its members for industrial action if no agreement was reached by mid-March. A nationwide strike over the busy examinations period could have severely destabilised the Higher Education sector.

NUS President, Wes Streeting, said "I am pleased that the unions responded to our calls, through the TUC, to resolve their differences with their employers through negotiation rather than industrial action, which would have been disastrous for students. NUS played a key role in putting pressure on all parties to avoid hitting students and

will continue to do so"

The threat of strike action emerged out of dissatisfaction with the current pay deal awarded to higher education staff, as well as fears of a sector wide pay freeze following the current funding difficulties experienced by universities across the country. Heads of universities had expressed the possibility of pay rises being set at 0% for the coming academic year, proposals condemned by the UCU as unrealistic and inflammatory.

UCU General Secretary, Sally Hunt, said in a statement: "we always believed that with goodwill on both sides we could reach an agreement without serious disruption in our universities." UCEA said that "significant progress" was now being made towards confirming a new pay deal, but maintained that "it is far too early to speculate on 2009 pay figures at a national level."

Secretary of Lancaster University's branch of the UCU, Rory Daly, said: "We are of course very glad that the threat of industrial action has been lifted. Industrial action is an outcome that nobody would want. UCU have always shown that they are fully open to negotiation, and we are encouraged by the prospect of future talks."

University Council authorises redundancy measures

"With an issue as serious as the possibility of redundancy, it is important that the proper procedures are followed; they exist for a reason," he said. "I don't believe they were followed in this instance, so I spoke and voted against the resolution in Council."

Sources in the Lancaster branch of UCU suggest that the union may ballot its members for local industrial action if it feels compelled to do so by the university's behaviour. They claim the university's actions are outside the bounds of Statute 20, which contains the redundancy procedures for academic staff which the university is legally bound to adhere to. The university and the campus unions have been locked in a stalemate for months over plans to replace Statute 20 with a newer set of regulations.

The effect upon students of industrial action could be significant if it were to happen during summer term. A national strike by predecessors to UCU; AUT and NATFHE in Summer Term of 2006 meant marking of exams was delayed. Contingency plans were devised to base students' end of course marks purely upon coursework, in the event that strike meant marking had to be abandoned.

Speaking to SCAN, Payne was uneasy about the potential for a full-blown industrial dispute. "If UCU feel they have to resort to industrial action it may well have a grave impact upon marking and assessment, and consequently students. It will place LUSU in an invidious position: do we support the UCU in their valid dispute with the university, or do we serve our students and seek the quickest possible end to industrial action?"

"We wish to avoid that dilemma if at all possible, so it is very concerning that procedures do not appear to have been followed when their neglect may result in such massive disruption for the university, staff and students alike."

Sources in UCU also suggest the possibility that UCU may seek to involve the Queen. In her role as Visitor (giving her right to intervene in the internal matters of the institution), she may order an inquiry into the university's practices. In 2000, the Queen used her authority as Visitor to order the Lord Chancellor to investigate claims that the University of Salford's disciplinary of a student anti-racist campaigner, defied 'natural justice'. The student's visitorial case against the university succeeded. UCU hope to have similar luck if they get the Queen involved.

bus passes
for the summer term
on sale now

from the lusu info desk

LANCASTER
From 17 April 2009
To 26 June 2009
3
UNIRIDER
08/09

Stagecoach in Lancaster

in this scan

News

- 4 Vice-Chancellors claim £7,000 fees will not put off students
- 5 Students slash energy usage to win carbon competition
- 6-7 NUS Conference special report
- 8 Interview with Andy Burnham MP
- 9 Students organise fashion show at London's Mayfair Hotel
- 11 LUSU considering initiation ceremony ban

Comment

- 12 Alex Harris: The thankless task of nursing
- 13 Liam Richardson: Gordon Brown's Jeckyll and Hyde
- 14 Sam Newsham: What brought us to Baby P?
- 15 Letters

Features

- 16 Michael & Sarah
- 18 St George, the Dragon, Gallipoli and the Jelly Beans
- 19 Where to get your festival fix
- 21 Mind reading comes one step closer to reality

Arts

- 22 Film: Watchmen
- 23 Theatre: Much Ado About Nothing and Twelfth Night
- 25 Film: Lesbian Vampire Killers

Music

- 26 The curse of NME over-hype
- 28 Reviews: Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Mastodon, Detroit Social Club

Sports

- 30 Gareth Coleman's round up of the BUCS leagues
- 31 Canoe Club win double at National Student Rodeo
- 32 Rugby Union lose out to Chester

Remaining six college bars come under control of Commercial Services Director

No sanctuary

Lizzie Houghton
News Editor

THE REMAINING COLLEGE bars came under university control over Easter, completing a move towards centralisation which began with County, Cartmel and Pendle bars last summer.

As of April 6 the university's

Commercial Services office took over the running of all nine college bars, ending the college-run tradition. The Facilities Division will now manage the commercial aspects of the bars, with licensees reporting to the Director of Commercial Services, David Peeks.

It had always been planned that all nine college bars would eventually come under central

control. The timing of the move however was left ambiguous. It now appears that a decision was taken at the end of Lent term to centralise the bars over the Easter break.

The timing of the takeover meant that it came as a surprise to many. JCR officers have claimed that they were kept in the dark about the changes until being informed by LUSU. Tom

Skarbek-Wazynski, Bowland JCR President, said the impression he was given by those in charge was that Bowland bar would be centralised once its refurbishment was complete. "The university has changed this plan without any notification to the JCR Executive and taken the bar under central control much earlier," he said.

"I think that it does restrict the power the colleges previously had over their social space."

Mr Skarbek-Wazynski fears that the lack of autonomy with the bars will make it harder for JCRs and other student groups to organise events in them "I think that it does restrict the power the colleges previously had over their social space. However only time will tell if the change will affect how the colleges and JCRs can use that space and whether the university will start to interfere in college events using the bar."

The takeover of County, Cartmel and Pendle bars over the summer angered a number of students. Many believed that the centralisation of the bars resulted in higher prices, less col-

lege space and a cut back on the amount of students employed in the facilities.

LUSU President, Michael Payne, said that he will be working to ensure the student voice is heard when decisions are being made. However, he drew the line at persuading the university to hand the bars back over into college control, saying such tactics would be "pointless".

"At the end of the day what we have to remember is in principle I think everyone on this campus, including me, believes that the bars should be college controlled. But the debate that is going on at the moment is how they are going to be run for the future. Our concerns as the student union are for our membership and how that system can best work for our students."

He added that at present the union's task was to examine where students fits into the relationship between the university, bars and student representatives. Mr Payne, in consultation with union and JCR officers, is currently drafting a document on how that relationship can best work for students. He plans to present its suggestions to the university with the possibility of putting them to a

referendum.

The university will hold its own sunset review after three years. There is also the Bars Advisory committee, which the union lobbied for, that advises on strategy.

"Now they're all in one central control it makes our life easier," he added. "It isn't three college bars and six in another system, that's rather like having to run a dual campaign. [The union] can now go forward and say 'okay they are where they are, here's our clear model for how they should work'."

Matt Windsor, joint-President of Lonsdale JCR, also saw a centralised system as being simpler. He said: "As long as I know Lonsdale bar stays as the place I've always known it to be, and as long as those in charge of the centralisation make a conscious effort to keep or improve the student experience in general, then it is irrelevant what I think of centralisation."

He added: "The success of the takeover will be judged by the rest of my college's students - but it would not be wise to rub them up the wrong way."

SCAN was unable to contact university officers for comment.



In the thick of it:
Pendle avenue was engulfed in thick black smoke. (Rob Miller)

Inset: A firefighter pushes a piece of broken glass from a fire-damaged room that was above the blaze. (Andrew Radcliffe)

Safety questions as campus sees second BBQ bin fire in 13 months

Michael Payne was at the scene

THE REALITY OF a fire on campus is not one that is seen many times in a year, however at 19:23 on Saturday evening I received a phone call alerting me to that very incident - a fire on campus at Pendle with lots of students taking an interest in what was going on.

A quick walk soon revealed a crowd of students that were milling around with fire engines and college porters arriving at the scene.

The fire had started in the bins adjacent to accommodation blocks on Pendle avenue and had soon taken a hold on all six plastic bins. Students were evacuated from accommodation

blocks and once the fire was extinguished, the full extent of the damage became visible: broken windows, scorched wooden panelling, a soot covered accommodation block and the remainders of six plastic bins. Luckily no students were hurt.

A source in the Fire Service revealed that the cause of the bin inferno was a "suspected barbecue," but they were still surveying the area and not ruling out any possibilities. The fire and rescue service explained that there was a need for a full and thorough investigation into this incident.

Many questions will be asked as a result of this incident; questions around the use of barbecues and their safe disposal will surely be among them, why the university allows the storage

of plastic bins next to accommodation another and whether siting bins next to a cleaners' store room where flammable chemicals must be kept is a wise idea will be another.

College porters were first at the scene, and were instrumental in maintaining a safe and student-free zone for the emergency services to operate in, underlining how vital the 24 hour watch that porters keep is to campus safety.

The students who were left without rooms by the blaze will be put up in guest rooms until further notice.

A similar fire took place just over a year ago, when a poorly-extinguished disposable barbecue led to the fiery destruction of a bin store in Cartmel college.



**WHO DO YOU THINK IS
THE MOST STUDENT
FRIENDLY BUSINESS?
NOMINATE NOW!**

**LOG ON TO:
WWW.STUDENTFRIENDLIES.CO.UK**

University Vice-Chancellors claim £7,000 fees will not put students off HE

Fees feud intensifies as HE review draws near

- UUK urges £7,000 cap
- BBC poll finds VCs want to charge £20,000 fees

Rob Miller
Assistant Editor

TUITION FEES SHOULD be raised to between £5,000 and £7,000 per year, a report by Universities UK has recommended. The group, that represents the heads of all the UK's universities, claims that the increases are necessary if higher education in the UK is to weather the tumultuous financial circumstances it faces, both in the short term and in years to come.

The surge in support for increased fees is largely a result of the global economic crisis. Universities across the country have been hit hard, with the value of their investment portfolios tumbling and their business links withering; donors are increasingly unwilling and unable to fund professorships and research. Ordinarily rich modes of funding have dried up, and government measures to assist ailing institutions have been used necessarily to plug holes rather than for any meaningful investment.

The move comes as the government has announced a freeze in the number of university places for undergraduates, capping the total number of places at an artificially low level. Combined with the increased number of university applications this year, around ten per cent of university applicants could be left without places—at a time when the job market is at its most bleak and competitive. The threat of fines for universities who over-recruit has exacerbated the issue, with crash-strapped institutions under-recruiting rather than risking potentially multi-million pound fines for taking on extra students. As a result, an estimated 180,000 students will this year miss out on university places, an increase of almost 50,000 compared to last year.

As public funding dries up, and the number of university applicants falls, the responsibility for making up the funding shortfall must, Universities UK stressed, fall upon individual students. "The only source of future funds, whatever the colour of government, is the individual in the long term," said Universities UK president-elect Professor Steve Smith, vice-chancellor of the University of Exeter. The report found that the median figure needed for universities to remain financially sustain-

able would be £6,500—over double the current cap.

Raising the cap to these levels would, the report admitted, likely see a reduction in the number of university applicants; demand would fall, particularly from low income households, as tuition fees rose above £5,000 per year. A survey by the BBC, however, revealed that two thirds of university vice-chancellors would like to see the cap raised even further, to between £4,000 and £20,000—almost seven times the current levels—despite the fact that Universities UK acknowledged that its proposals would disadvantage students from poor backgrounds.

"Debt averse students are less likely to enter higher education than those who are debt tolerant," the report admits, "and students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds have been found to be more debt averse than their wealthier counterparts." 59 per cent of students from poor urban areas, the study found, had been heavily influenced by the prospect of heavy debts when deciding whether to enter higher education.

Unsurprisingly, the decision to recoup this monetary shortfall by targeting students is one that has met with steadfast resistance from the National Union of Students. NUS National President Wes Streeting decried the move as "breathtaking arrogance", and promised a concerted, nationwide response from the organisation's membership.

"At a time when all the pundits are predicting record levels of unemployment," Streeting said, "it is scandalous that vice-chancellors assume they can pass more of the cost of higher education onto students and their families."

Last month, the NUS led a march on Westminster to protest any increase in tuition fees, and the organisation has tabled a parliamentary motion to discuss the proposals. It has also proposed an alternative to tuition fees, a system it regards as "unsustainable", in which the state, individuals and employers shared the burden of paying for higher education. This would avoid both the current situation, in which student debt is expected to reach £48 billion by 2013, and the proposed increase.

It was revealed last month that the average salary for a university vice-chancellor was £194,000—about the same as that of the Prime Minister. Including pensions, several earned as much as £300,000. "We have awarded ourselves enormous great pay rises out of student fees," David Sweeney, director of research at the Higher Education Funding Council for England said, "and we haven't spent the money on providing high quality student experience."



Easy now...: David Cameron refused to commit to any position on the future of the top-up fees cap. (Photo: Steve Brine)

Cameron will only 'wait and see' on future fees cap level

Sam Newsham
Deputy News Editor

TUITION FEES ARE necessary for "well-funded universities", according to Conservative party leader, David Cameron.

Speaking to SCAN at a Cameron Direct event held at Fleetwood's Marine Hall on 26th March, Mr Cameron said: "I'd love to be able to make a promise that we could get rid of [tuition fees] but we can't. Why can't we get rid of them? Because we've got to have well-funded universities, well-funded libraries, well-funded laboratories [and] well-paid lecturers."

When questioned about how he thought tuition fees affect university participation rates amongst those with low-income backgrounds, Mr Cameron responded that they wouldn't. He stated that countries with higher tuition fees than Britain got better participation rates, claiming that the Government needs to be "ambitious and aspirational" about encouraging participation.

"We need bursaries, we need ways of encouraging them, we need to get out to comprehensive schools that haven't sent enough children to university and say what a good option it is," he said.

Mr Cameron gave his support to the current review of the cap on tuition fees, warning that we will have to "wait and see" the outcome of the review for the future of the cap, but disagreed with removing it altogether.

According to a recent survey by the BBC, the majority of university vice-chancellors want to see the cap pushed considerably higher or completely discarded, allowing them to charge up to £20,000 a year in fees. Two-thirds of those questioned agreed with Mr Cameron that such an action is unlikely to affect the number of applicants from low-income backgrounds. The latest research suggests otherwise.

In support for the introduction of top-up fees, Mr Cameron said that the increase in students "making a fuss" about the standard of education they receive at university can only be a good thing.

"Because young people are paying a contribution, they're saying 'I want to make sure I'm getting a degree that's really worth something,' and I think that's good for us."

Due to boundary changes that will come into effect at the next general election, Lancaster and Fleetwood will be in the same parliamentary constituency. Labour's prospective parliamentary candidate for Lancaster and Fleet-

wood, Clive Grunshaw, disagrees with Cameron's defence of fees. Grunshaw instead would prefer to see a tax on graduate earnings, similar to that proposed by the NUS.

"There has to be a better answer to funding universities than top-up fees, which saddle students with tens of thousands of pounds of debt before they've even started their careers."

"Graduates benefit directly from their degrees throughout their working lives, and longer, so a fairer option would be to tax the biggest graduate incomes instead of the woeful system of loan repayments that we have now."

Whilst in Fleetwood Mr Cameron was questioned on a variety of issues, from reducing Britain's carbon footprint to his plans for getting the UK out of the recession. Many residents wanted his opinion on local issues, such as recent Post Office closures and the potential Fleetwood, as a coastal town, has for harnessing tidal power.

In addition he was criticised by members of the UK Independence Party for his supposed pro-European stance. Those party members who had been unable to get tickets for the event were protesting on the car park that Mr Cameron's loyalty to the EU had led to a betrayal of Britain's workers.

Lancaster Law students storm into competition final

Lisa Stallard

LAW STUDENTS FROM Lancaster made their way to down to London last week for the final of a nationwide law competition having spent five months completing a series of law based challenges.

The competition, organised by the law firm Allen & Overy, focused on many aspects of law from commercial features to the key skills assessed during the selection process for large law firms. Modules were marked by a panel of A&O judges. Although the competi-

tion took place online, the top 5 teams have now been invited to A&O's Bishops Square office in London on April 16 to take part in the final. Team leader Michelle McShane, said: "I found out about the competition through another university's law society page and thought it would be an excellent opportunity."

Ms McShane added: "We've gained an excellent insight into the sort of things we will definitely have to face as lawyers in the future. Law firms also do pro bono work to help communities both close to home and those further afield, so it was really good to have the opportunity to fit some charity work

into our studies and really make a difference."

To get to the final, the teams had to excel at five different modules, including a 500 word essay on the credit crunch and its effects on law firms. Other significantly interesting tasks included a pro bono community project where the teams could choose what they wanted to do to help the community. Team Lancaster chose Cancer-Care and raised £355.59 for the charity in just one night.

Steph Matthews, another team member, added: "We believe we've done something that very few people will be able to say they've done. Only

5 teams of up to 4 students reached the final in London, so we're going to really stand out from the crowd for future job opportunities."

Although the prize money for the competition stands at an impressive £1500, Ms McShane emphasised that the experience meant more than the money that could be won. "We genuinely feel that the taking part in itself has been much more valuable than this, and that winning first prize would just be an added bonus. And we'd love the glory of course, though even coming 5th would be a great privilege and we've just had a really good time together."

LUSU wins bronze in eco-impact awards

Lizzie Houghton
News Editor

LUSU TOOK A massive stride to reducing its carbon footprint earlier in the month with the union being awarded a Bronze Sound Impact Award for its environmental practice. The union walked away with its award after meeting the set criteria for a greener organisation.

The competition, which was won by Loughborough Students' Union, encourages unions to take a more environmentally friendly approach to their business. This is the first time Lancaster's student union has received an award. Tom Roberts, LUSU's Environmental Coordinator, said: "I am delighted. I have every confidence that if LUSU keeps on improving and makes some more changes to its operations that it has every chance of getting silver for the 2009/2010 entry."

The Awards Night was held in Liverpool, on April 7 with prizes presented by writer, comedian and broadcaster Hardeep Singh Kohli. The award is based on 192 different criteria, each promoting a different aspect of environmental care. A union must meet at least 22 of these criteria to receive a Bronze award. Overall, the average score was 396. LUSU's was 483. In the category for Student officers, staff and teams the Lancaster union bested the average score by almost 20 points. They also performed well in Baseline and monitoring, Recycling refuse, Transport and Policy and commitment.

The Sound Environmental Impact Awards are run by the NUS's commercial branch. They were the brainchild of Anna Heywood, a student who wanted to encourage a more environmentally friendly aspect to her students' union. Ms Heywood, who acted as a judge, said: "The Unions have really stepped up a significant level this year and have surpassed themselves. It has been so exciting to see how Unions have been doing everything they can to green all aspects of their operations and universities in a race to the top, and every point they have gained has been good news for the environment".

76 student unions entered the competition this year. 20 received Bronze awards.

Students slash energy usage to win carbon competition



Green living: From left, the winners of the Carbon Competition: Becky Stephenson, Abbie Johnson, Jack Griffiths and Jonathan Holland.

County's carbon crusaders

Sam Newsham
Deputy News Editor

STUDENTS HAVE WON £1,200 for reducing their carbon footprint.

The prizewinners of the Carbon Competition were announced at a ceremony held at the end of last term, on March 12. The competition, for students living in County and Grizedale's new eco-residences, was organised and run by GreenLancaster, a partnership between LUSU, university Estates and UPP. Each flat's carbon emissions were measured electronically and prizes were given to the six in each college whose emissions were lowest.

The winning flat in County was Primrose, which used 1,652.6 kg of carbon dioxide over the competition period. In Grizedale the winner was Brathay, with 1,735.9 kg of carbon used. The winners of the first prize in each college were awarded £600 to split between all members of the flat.

"It was mainly turning lights off and so on," said Becky Stephenson, from Primrose. Her flatmate, Abbie Johnson added: "It was quite hard at first but then it became a habit."

The ceremony, held in the Elizabeth Livingston Lecture Theatre, was opened by Prof Trevor McMillan, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research. The prizes and certificates were presented by eco-journalist Donnachadh McCarthy, who is an expert on living a low-carbon lifestyle and author of Saving the Planet Without Costing the Earth.

Speaking to SCAN after the ceremony, Mr McCarthy applauded the University's decision to run the competition, saying: "Measuring your carbon emission is really important. You've got to start measuring it to get it down. Individual use is important – the competition shows the role students have to play."

The winners were interviewed by BBC Radio Lancashire.

Tom Roberts, LUSU's Environmen-

tal Co-ordinator (who has since moved to another job) said: "[The aims were] to explore new ways for the University to measure and allocate the costs of utilities use within residences and to raise awareness amongst students of climate change through linking it to the reality of everyday activities."

"The project was a pilot scheme, and has thrown up issues that need to be worked on if it is to be repeated. How-

ever, it has raised greater awareness amongst students and hopefully made an educational point. As a first step in the right direction it's commendable."

In 2006/07 the cost of energy used in university halls of residence in Britain was over £100 million. Almost 30% of the energy used in higher education was in student accommodation. "There's no incentive to economise," Mr Roberts added.

Profile: Donnachadh McCarthy

Mr McCarthy began to make changes to his lifestyle in 1992 by buying organic food. He has now cut his fossil fuel usage so much that the gas bill for his Victorian cottage is just £12 a year. He exports the 20% more electricity than he consumes to the national

grid and uses only 28 litres of water a day compared to the national average of 150. With melting Arctic icecaps leading to a rise in global warming, Mr McCarthy believes that all of society needs to be carbon negative now and has altered his lifestyle

accordingly. In 2004, scientists predicted that the Arctic would be ice-free by 2070. In 2007, 22.4% of the ice disappeared. "It's one of the most terrifying statistics in human history and most of us don't know what it is," he said.

Grub's up

LANCASTER IS ONE of 27 universities across England taking part in 'Grub Club', the healthy mind, healthy body initiative run by the BBC's new Headroom campaign.

Sara Dunn, LUSU Women's Officer, is leading the campaign with the help of non-sabb Pete Macmillan and various JCR officers. She said: "It makes sense for the Welfare team at LUSU and JCR Colleges to make this campaign as visible as possible at a time when students may experience high levels of stress due to pending exams. One in four of us will experience a mental health issue so we're here to make clear how students can get help."

NUS Conference

‘Broke and broken’ funding system

- **NUS Conference re-affirms policy not to campaign for free education**
- **Graduate tax to be put on the table in HE review**
- **Union to help clamp down on initiation ceremonies**

Dan Hogan
Editor

THE COMING HIGHER Education review must replace top-up fees with a tax on graduates to fund universities, the National Union of Students (NUS) have declared.

At the NUS's Annual Conference in Blackpool's Winter Gardens earlier this month, delegates voted for a raft of policies to set out an alternative vision of higher education (HE) funding to the one espoused by many university Vice-Chancellors.

The approaching higher education

review, rumoured to commence later this year, but not report its findings until after the next general election, will likely be the only opportunity to make changes to the way universities are funded for several years. NUS will oppose any increase or removal of the cap on tuition fees, and will push for a different way of paying for HE.

"We believe that higher education should be free at the point of use for students and their families, with graduates making a contribution according to how much they benefit financially after graduation," said NUS National President, Wes Streeting, who was re-elected for a second term at the conference.

In his opening speech to the conference, which addressed the challenges faced by the student movement in the recession, Streeting outlined the need to set aside NUS's ideological commitment to free education. "NUS and the student movement need to be at the heart of the debate, not carping from the sidelines," he said.

"Should we hold out for our dream of fully funded free education for all, even though we know no government would ever give it to us... or should we try to make students' lives better

by having a real impact on the debate that lies ahead in the forthcoming fees review?"

But a minority of delegates, most notably from the alliance of far-left political factions under the banner 'Another Union is Possible', fought to commit NUS once again to leading an active campaign for free higher education. One delegate from Goldsmiths College, wearing a t-shirt demanding 'Bail out students not bankers', opposed joining the "Westminster consensus" around HE. "We have to reject the market entirely," he said. "If we compromise, we will be compromising on the cap as well."

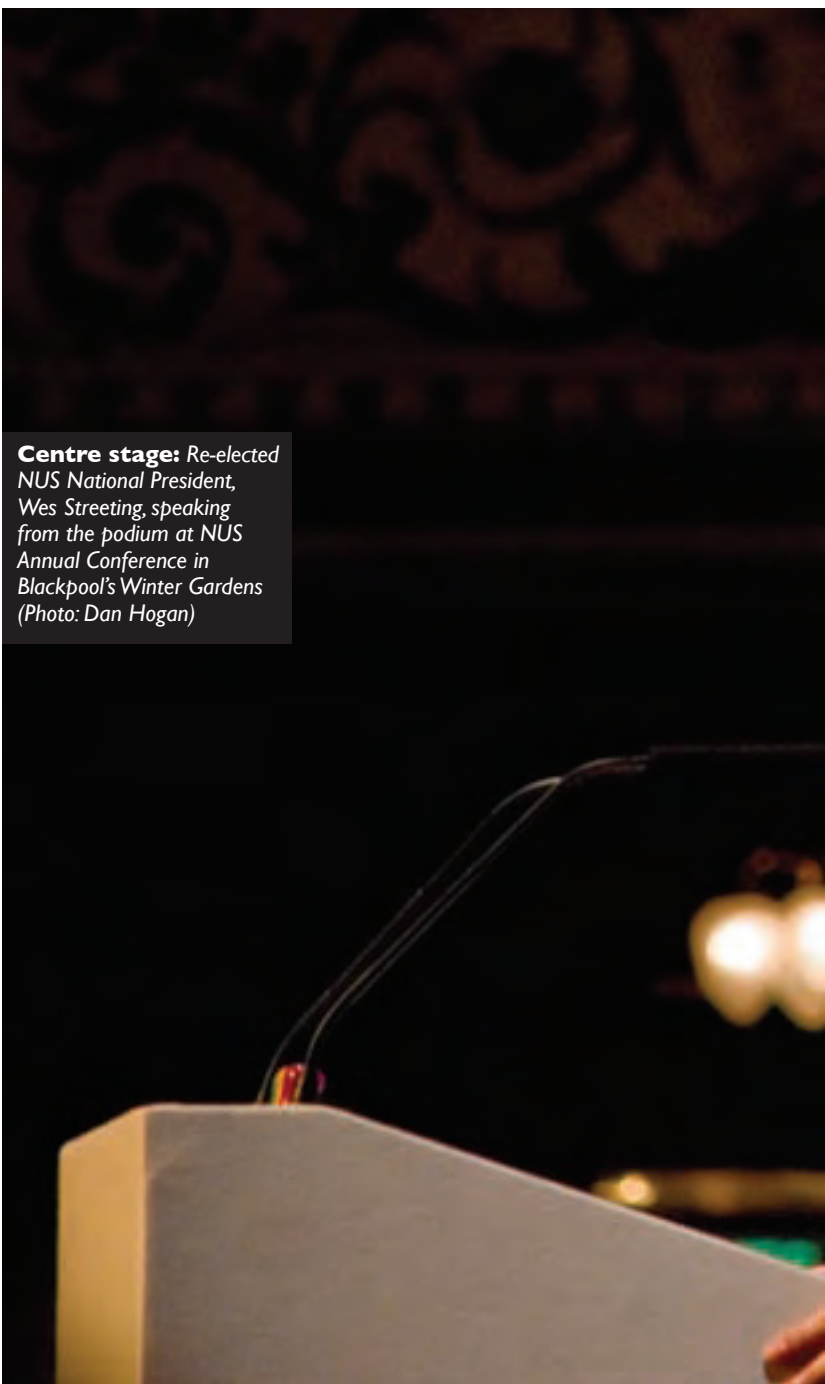
Rob Owen, ringleader of Another Union is Possible and rival candidate for the presidency against Streeting, set out the argument for a campaign for free education in a debate on the conference fringe: "NUS has played along... to try and get into the Westminster bubble, wearing their clothes and speaking their language," he said. "If you spend all your time hanging around Westminster you can come to believe that free education is utopian. But actually, if you speak to students on the ground, most people recognise the vast amount of wealth in the society we live in... and where that money goes is the argument we need to be putting forward."

The message of Another Union is Possible failed to resonate with most delegates. The policies on HE funding, including support for Streeting's strategy, passed overwhelmingly.

Among the other policies passed by the conference were mandates to provide and push for better support for students in the recession in the form of more university places, better careers support and the protection of student bursaries.

Policy to oppose the practice of initiation ceremonies in sports clubs and societies was also passed, which committed NUS to assist students unions in either banning or regulating the ceremonies. Some delegates opposed to the proposals argued that clamping down on initiation ceremonies would damage the rich sporting traditions in universities. But NUS' stance on initiations has been one of opposition for some time, and delegates again voted overwhelmingly in favour of the measures.

Resisting the growing threat of the



Centre stage: Re-elected NUS National President, Wes Streeting, speaking from the podium at NUS Annual Conference in Blackpool's Winter Gardens (Photo: Dan Hogan)

Other conference decisions at a glance

Education

- Campaign for homogenisation of grants provision
- Push government to increase HE funding by 0.2% of GDP
- Campaign to expand university places
- Lobby for improved safeguards for Individual Learner Records
- Call for full review of postgraduate fees and more transparent and uniform admissions processes
- Lobby government to protect Education Maintenance Allowance and Adult Learning Grant from potential cuts
- Campaign for faster turnaround on marking and assessment, and more verbal feedback
- Push for more universal standards of independent advice and guidance for prospective students
- Campaign against contact hour cuts
- Support ditching of 1, 2:1, 2:2, 3 system

Unions

- Help unions reduce carbon footprint
- More help for student activities
- Support volunteering projects run by unions
- Support and provide training for student media

Welfare

- Lobby Student Loans Company for equal support for final year students
- Lobby for increases to the NMW
- Push for more value student accommodation that is sustainable, unique and fosters community spirit

Society & Citizenship

- Work to increase student turnout in local and European elections on June 4
- Roll out new methods of encouraging green behaviour in students

British National Party was a recurring theme at the conference, in light of the very real chance that the British National Party may gain a seat in the European Parliament in the elections on June 4. NUS is to work closely with Searchlight's 'Hope Not Hate' campaign, to try to prevent the far-right

party winning a seat.

Should they gain a seat, the BNP would have access to as much as £250,000 a year in salary, communications allowances and office costs, which would allow them to consolidate their position and plough huge financial resources into other elections.

£1.00 OFF

A BIG OZZIE BURGER

MON-THURS @THE PLOUGH GALGATE WITH THIS VOUCHER. JUST FILL IN YOUR DETAILS TO REDEEM THIS OFFER!

NAME:.....

ADDRESS:.....

POSTCODE:.....

EMAIL:.....

DOB:.....

VALID ENDS MAY 09

THE GODFATHER TAKES ON THE BIG OZZY!

OUR PRIME SPECIALITY BURGERS, ONLY AT THE PLOUGH, GALGATE

The Plough

COUNTRY PUB & DINING ROOM

Main Rd, Galgate, Just off Jct 33 M6 Tel: 01524 751337 www.the-plough.co.uk

needs to change, says NUS



Competing visions

Rob Owen, of the far-left political faction 'Another Union Is Possible' who bore the slogan 'Bail out students not bankers' across their chests, stood against Wes Streeting, the incumbent NUS President and leader of the Labour Students NUS Group. They represent vastly different visions of the NUS' purpose. Owen wants to revive a radical and active campaigning culture in NUS and students unions, while Streeting sees NUS as being most effective at winning for students when it influences government and education providers through lobbying and media exposure, instead of noisy demonstrations. Streeting eventually won the election, with over 81% of the vote.

"Education is not supposed to be about paying your way through in the hope of better economic gains at the other end. [It's] supposed to be about developing and expanding the potential of everyone that takes part."

"If I could do one thing tomorrow to raise aspirations and widen participation... I would have a graduate contribution, and I'd build primary schools like palaces, because that is how you raise aspirations."

"We need a national campaign, a national struggle, that can link up every single local campaign against marketisation and cuts, and give people a sense of not just what we're against, but also what we're fighting for, to motivate and inspire activists; to actually go out there and engage with people and fight back."

"NUS has got something to say, it's worth listening to, and NUS is refocusing the debate [around HE funding]. I've seen the funding landscape move more in the last 12 months than I have seen since 2004, and that is because we have stepped up as credible and powerful campaigning organisation."



What happened to the fight for free education?

Five years on, the NUS is still gripped by battles over fees, writes conference delegate **Robbie Pickles**

THERE WAS ONE main issue which set the room aflame At the NUS Annual Conference this Easter: who should be paying for our education? This issue has been increasingly gaining attention across the country, stirred up by the approaching government review of Higher Education.

The conference was divided between those who want NUS to fight for Higher Education to be completely free, and those who believe it should push for a fairer way of contributing to our education than tuition fees, as a more

pragmatic alternative.

The NUS has traditionally been amongst the most vocal organisations strongly opposed to tuition fees, with little real effect. For this reason, the country's biggest union decided last year for a change in direction- to fight to keep the cap on fees and to prevent a further rise.

Their proposed system, involving a series of graduate contributions, sees education as free at the point of use (no loans required), with the costs being covered by later payments by graduates, linked to earnings. Although this system may not seem hugely different to the current one – we'll already pay out of our salaries as graduates for our loans – the system removes the flat rate of fees

for a scaled system. Effectively, those who benefit the most financially from their degree would pay more, and those whose post-university employment paid them less would pay less for their degree. That means those who don't manage to get a top job after graduation won't have blown huge piles of money for benefits they never receive.

The NUS also want to see a fairer bursary system, in light of the £19m they believe was withdrawn last year by HE institutions. They would put a national scheme in place to ensure that bursaries are given out fairly by all Universities, and are made available to all, not just to those doing certain courses.

At the Annual Conference

three weeks ago, the fight was most fierce between the candidates in the race for National President. Wes Streeting, the incumbent president who was re-elected for a second term, had set the original change in direction last year. To him, a serious NUS needs to take a sensible position on tuition fees if it wanted to be heard. His opponent, Rob Owen, of 'Another Education is Possible' (a political faction known for radicalism) stood firmly on his anti-fees stance.

It was evident that almost every delegate present believed in Rob's ideal too, but only as an ideal. However, the pragmatic and practical approach, to limit fees for now and attempt a better arrangement, seemed to many to

make much more sense, at least in the present economic climate. Many felt that a greater chance of victory was possible for students if, at least temporarily, NUS shifted the fight to one which they could win; as demonstrated by Streeting's landslide re-election, with 81% of the vote.

So where next for this debate? NUS will be putting forward their proposals at the Higher Education Review, whenever it happens, but where or when this debate will end is anybody's guess. A few things are certain: it won't end until after the next general election, sacrifices will need to be made and no-one will walk away with exactly what they want.

Charities raise £1300 in OWW

Ashutosh Kumar

STUDENT CHARITY EVENTS for Comic Relief or as part of One World Week held in week nine of last term have raised more than £1300 for various charities and projects worldwide.

Several organisations involved achieved notable success. The charity Kickstart Kenya, which supports residents of Ruiru, a poverty stricken town outside Nairobi, raised an impressive total of £607 from its events. The funds have so far gone towards providing Ruiru's homeless children with shelter, as well as helping to set up a football team for locals to take part in. Aban Hussain of Kickstart Kenya said: "students and staff of the university have been very generous – those who came to know about the project have donated as much as they can."

Another unexpected success was 'The Light Project', a student led initiative seeking to raise money for Tanzania. Project manager Helene Magdalena Fahre developed the scheme individually, after hearing about the

suffering experienced by the Tanzanian people, 90% of whom are said to have Malarial disease. Since then, the project has expanded as more people have got involved. It was able to raise over £500 through a stall in Alexandra Square, selling handmade items by the group 'Neema Crafts'.

There were however, some disappointments, such as the last minute cancellation of the planned Comic Relief Open Mic event in Alexandra Square, which was called off due to bad weather. However, alternative ways were found to raise money for the charity, including a collection in the Sugarhouse on Friday Evening.

The university's Hindu Society also managed to secure funds of over £170. The society held events throughout the week, including a stall selling Indian food on Monday and Tuesday, and a Table Tennis tournament, held in the sports centre on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. Both initiatives attracted high levels of participation from students. Half of the money raised will go to the homeless shelter in Lancaster, with the other half set to go to Sarawati Vidyalaya, a school in India.

Alongside smaller initiatives, larger national schemes such as 'Oxjam' also played their part in raising funds throughout the week. Organised by the charity Oxfam, with the aid of Lancaster students, the 'Oxjam' music gig, held on Saturday evening in Fylde bar, raised £150. Principal organiser of the event, Andrie Kordaki, praised the commitment and interest of the student population. He stated at the end of the evening that "It was very encouraging, how people endorsed this. Some people donated not just money but their time as well, by playing music or by helping with the general support of the event."

Separate from the charitable events, though providing an overarching theme, One World Week saw over 1000 students and staff take part, with a range of societies and organisations offering a variety of lectures, socials, and events linked to issues such as justice, diversity, and conflict.

Chairperson of the One World Week committee, Natalie Walker, said the week had been "very successful", singling out two events in particular. The launching of Christine Dawson's art

instillation, 'The Floating English Garden', signifying the impact of climate change in Bangladesh, was a particular highlight for Walker. "The launching of the raft was something completely new; nothing like it had really been done before" she said. "It combined the visual and the practical, as well as utilising the land around the university". Walker also "very much enjoyed" Tuesday's Ethical Investment protest, dubbed 'Make Some Noise', expressing satisfaction with how it combined a "clear political message" with a "carnival atmosphere" of celebration and fun.

Walker thanked "everyone who was involved" with organising projects throughout the week, and put the success of the event down to having "such a diverse group" of participants. "Its not only students who got involved, but people from the chaplaincy centre, members of staff, and community figures like the artist Christine Dawson" Walker said. "It was definitely one of the busiest One World Weeks that we have ever had".

Students reach finals in mobile games competition

Sam Newsham
Deputy News Editor

A GROUP OF Lancaster University students have made it through to the final of the Forum Nokia Mobile Games Competition 2009. The UK heat of the competition, GameJam@InfoLab21, was held at Lancaster on February 27-28. The 40 students who attended were given 24 hours to design a mobile game and present their idea to a jury.

The winning games were Garden of Karma, created by Carlos Garcia Wylie, Kate Lund and Mark Lochrie of InfoLab 21, and LiveIT, created by Lucy Read, Przemyslaw Kowalski and Costantinos Rougeris from the Management School.

The competition, supported by Nokia, InfoLab21 and North West Vision + Media, gave the students the chance to come up with their own ideas and discuss them with industry specialists before giving presentations to the jury on the Saturday morning.

"It was a great experience, it gave us a chance to speak with people and learn something new," said Mr Kowalski. "The organisers did their best to help participants, providing them with their knowledge – and refreshments, pizza and breakfast."

LiveIT is a virtual treasure hunt where users follow directions displayed on a map in their mobile and travel from place to place, downloading virtual objects as they go.

"For example, the producers of the Angels and Demons movie in order to promote their new release may want to take the fans of the book for a trip around Rome," Mr Kowalski explained. "Visiting places the main character was in and collecting virtual artefacts from the book."

Mobile gaming is one of the main areas of research in Lancaster's Department of Communication Systems. Dr Paul Coulton, one of the organisers of GameJam@InfoLab21, said: "We have been researching in mobile gaming since its inception only ten years ago and have done much to pioneer gaming experiences unique to the mobile phone. We allow the general public to download and experience our games for themselves – two of our mobile widget games have in excess of 1 million users between them."

The global final took place a week after the UK heat. Whilst the Lancaster students' games impressed the jury, they didn't win the grand prize, a trip to San Francisco. However, they felt that just taking part was worthwhile.

"I took part for the experience and the chance to learn more from experts in the mobile gaming field, winning was just an unexpected but exciting bonus," said Ms Read.

Costantinos Rougeris, added: "Efforts like the GameJam should be more projected and advertised to students and organised centrally, anyone could have participated."

Culture secretary launches free ticket scheme at Dukes Theatre

Dan Hogan
Editor

THE DUKES THEATRE was the venue for the launch of a new national scheme to provide a million free theatre tickets to young people. Andy Burnham MP, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, paid a visit to launch the government's new scheme that hopes to encourage more young people to make the most of their local theatres.

The £2.5m scheme, dubbed 'A Night Less Ordinary', is funded by the Arts Council England and aims to give one million young people (25 and under) the chance to experience live theatre completely free by March 2011. Approximately 95 venues across the country are participating in the scheme, including the Dukes Theatre on Moor Lane in Lancaster, and the Nuffield Theatre on campus. The two venues have a total of 60,000 tickets between them, which will be allocated to a range of theatre shows over the next two years.

SCAN spoke to Mr Burnham at the event.

He was quizzed as to whether this scheme would just end up helping those who go to the theatre regularly already. "Even with the young people who would have come anyway, this scheme means they can go more often, and develop that interest, and explore it further," he said. "We're very much drawing on the experience of free entry to national museums and galleries."

He was eager to link the scheme to his values as a Labour MP: "The very fact that this scheme exists is a very clear statement that the best things in life are there for everybody. It's a prin-



High culture: Andy Burnham MP (centre) and Labour candidate for Lancaster and Fleetwood, Clive Grunshaw, (left) speak to Dukes director, Joe Sumsion (right) about the scheme. (Photo: Dan Hogan)

ciple that, from a Labour point of view, I've always believed in very strongly."

"we want theatres to work hard to communicate with groups that might not otherwise come to the theatre."

Burnham believes that having access to cultural facilities like the theatre can provide life-changing experiences: "I would say it definitely can be life-changing. The thrill of live theatre is something everybody needs to experience. When young people are so used to looking at computer-generated im-

ages, coming and seeing a live performance is quite important."

Getting university students into theatres is as important as attracting the more disadvantaged, according to Burnham. "It doesn't have to be either or... basically, we want to send a message that it's there for both, for anybody. I think it's good that a university student might come and come back again, more than they would be able to if there was a charge. But crucially, we want theatres to work hard to communicate with groups that might not otherwise come to the theatre."

Burnham also had positive words to say about LUSU's Student Media Team, and projects like it, and his de-

partment is looking for ways to support similar ventures. "We need to open up young people to possibilities in this area. These are transferable skills that people will need across all industries in future, these are not just creative skills that are needed for the creative industries. This is about being equipped for the workplaces of the future."

The Dukes has a page on their website with more information about the scheme and what shows can be seen with it. It can be found at URL www.dukes-lancaster.org/dt3/young-peoples-free-tickets. Obtaining free tickets for the Nuffield's performances is best done through their box office, on x94151.

Big Band play to victory



Big Band brews up a Stormy Monday

Ashutosh Kumar

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY'S BIG Band played their way to victory last month at the Great Northern Big Band Festival, held at Sunderland University. The group fought off competition of other top universities, music colleges and professional troupes to walk away with the award for best ensemble performance for their rendition of 'Stormy Monday', which featured vocalist Beth Evans.

Also singled out for praise was drummer Josh Hustwick. The whole band were congratulated on their accuracy, solos and the energy their performance produced. The judges for the day were Paul Jones and Mick Donnelly, both top UK jazz musicians who have performed with famous artists such as Stevie Wonder, Sting and the BBC Big Band.

Phil Allcock, the band's conduc-

tor, said: "The difference between the other bands and ourselves was a lot less pronounced than we had expected - we definitely held our own - and the recognition of this by the judges was fantastic. The Big Band has worked extremely hard this year, and to have the judges show their appreciation of this is brilliant."

He added: "The competition was tough, with a number of professional bands taking part. We went to compare ourselves to other big bands and to find out what level of playing we should be aspiring to. For us, the festival was intended to be a learning experience rather than a competition."

Lancaster's Big Band is made up of musicians from many different departments across the campus, not just those that specialise in musical performance. They are set to perform at County College's 40th Anniversary on Saturday June 20. The group will also be performing the next day at the Music Society's proms.

Students burn up the catwalk with Mayfair fundraising fashion show



Catwalk: Lancaster student, Kamilla Huseynova (right), being interviewed by Fashion TV at the fashion show she and the rest of KPK Entertainment organised.

Chris Davis
News Editor

A FASHION SHOW organised by two Lancaster students, was staged in London's prestigious Mayfair hotel as part of the capital's fashion week earlier this year. 'Sunrise in Baku', a fashion show that displayed the works of a diverse range of young designers, raised over £2000 for the ABC Trust Foundation whilst bringing together entertainers, businesspeople, and politicians from a variety of international locations.

KPK Entertainment was founded by students Kamilla Huseynova, Katerina Gavrielidou, and Piyush Saraf in November 2007. The company began as a social enterprise, aiming to organise events that would raise money for charity and promote social change and international collaboration. "We wanted to see more glamour on campus" explained Huseynova, who had previous experience of events management in her home country of Azerbaijan, "so we came up with the idea of organising high profile fashion events for the support of different charity foundations". Despite been ran entirely from the student's own rooms on campus, the company held two fashion shows, one in Lonsdale bar and one in the Lancaster House Hotel, before the opportunity arose to stage a higher profile event during London's famous fashion week.

The show took place on February, 28, and was held in collaboration with a variety of international embassies, many of whom provided much of the initial funding and publicity for the

show. Part of the aim of the event was to provide a "first platform" for international designers who would otherwise struggle to receive exposure in London. Indeed, Ramina Huseynova of Azerbaijan and Yuliya Polishchuck of the Ukraine were two of the designers whose works proved especially popular with the audience. The event also received funding from a number of sponsors, including Capa Hair and Beauty, Virgo Be Beautiful, and the Greek Restaurant 'Divu', who provided prizes for a raffle held during the evening.

The event took Huseynova and Gavrielidou around seven months to prepare, and they frequently travelled to London to hold casting sessions and have meetings with their sponsors. "We were in London almost every week, staying with friends" explained Huseynova. "We even got a special deal with the train company, to make it cheaper for us. It was difficult, but we wanted a change from Lancaster, and in fashion, London is where you need to be for networking and contacts."

However, they also made frequent use of social networking websites such as Facebook, to arrange meetings and make approaches to sponsors, entertainers, and designers. "It took a lot of time" said Huseynova, "but we didn't want KPK to be the sort of company that did a small event every week. We wanted to do one big event, and make it perfect".

Their planning and hard work, however, almost came to nothing, and up until the last week there were still a number of unsold tickets for the show. "Our tickets were quite expen-

sive, about £150" explained Huseynova. "The difficult economic conditions didn't help. But in the last week we started giving out a lot more tickets to the international embassies involved, and in the end it was a real success."

The future for KPK looks to offer even greater possibilities. Although currently concentrating on exams, Huseynova and Gavrielidou saw their activities receive interest from both a number of companies and from prominent business and cultural figures. They are currently considering the possibility of a future event held in Dubai, a city known for its lavish spending.

When asked what advice they would give to other students looking at developing their own business or social enterprise, the duo's advice was simple. "I would say the key is to do something that you really love" said Gavrielidou. "Something like this takes a lot of effort, and it is easy to get tired of it if you are not enjoying yourself".

Huseynova agreed, adding that fashion and events management was "what she loved doing", and that despite being "very stressful", putting together Sunrise in Baku was "So exciting. Every day, I could not get to sleep; I could not wait for the new day to begin". Also vital, Gavrielidou added, was to "work with the right people. It is all about having people around you who you can communicate easily with, and who share your vision."

All the money raised by Sunrise in Baku was donated to Action for Brazil's Children Trust, a charity dedicated to helping the most vulnerable children and young Adults living in Brazil.



Grad Ball
two thousand & nine



22.06.09

LUSU considers banning AU clubs' 'initiation ceremonies'

by Lisa Stallard

INITIATION CEREMONIES IN student sports clubs and societies 'may compromise a person's dignity, welfare and safety,' according to LUSU's Union Council.

At a meeting in week 9 of last term, Council resolved to examine ways of preventing initiation ceremonies in the university's societies and clubs. The motion, proposed by the LUSU Women's Officer Sara Dunn, called for an 'open and frank debate' on what the union's stance on the ceremonies should be and the introduction of policy which would fall in line with this stance.

However, there were fears in some quarters that the policy may lead to an outright ban of the ceremonies. LUSU President, Michael Payne, said a complete ban on initiation ceremonies may do more harm than good, potentially driving the activities underground.

LUSU General Secretary, Janie Coleman, who seconded the motion, explained why she felt it was important for the Union to intervene in such matters. "As a Union we should be looking out for all of our students and trying to ensure they have fun but are safe at the same time," she said.

"Those primarily affected by these

types of ceremonies are Freshers. They want to make a good impression with any group they wish to join from the word go. They shouldn't be forced to play what could be potentially lethal drinking games to participate in an activity.

"Initiation ceremonies are something which generally you don't hear about unless you are part of a particular group. Just because there hasn't been any large controversial incident doesn't mean they don't happen here, they have and still do, having dealt with the consequences of these types of these incidents myself earlier this year."

Athletic Union President, Gareth Coleman, told SCAN: "There have been problems with initiations in the AU at Lancaster in the past. Hopefully we can find a way to discourage them without dampening the spirits of our teams."

Examples from other universities show the dangers these ceremonies can present. In 2003, Staffordshire University student Alex Doji choked on his own vomit and died as a result of a rugby club initiation ceremony. In 2006 Gavin Britton died after attending a golf club initiation ceremony at Exeter University. Both students were 18 years old. Exeter Students Guild has since banned the practice of initiation ceremonies.

LUSU Vice-President elect, Torri

Crapper - who will take on the Equality, Welfare and Diversity remit in July - expressed her concerns that the union was being heavy-handed. She feared they were bypassing the Athletic Union and discriminating against AU Clubs. Commenting later on her stance, Ms Crapper said: "We shouldn't be draconian about what we allow AU clubs and societies to participate in, but history shows us that every year we are putting our students at risk due to initiation ceremonies. Heavy drinking has a huge impact on the health and well-being of our students."

"Although we cannot stop students having a good time, I am wary about the dangers excessive drinking can cause. The initiation ceremonies can place our students in danger and I would ask clubs and societies to be conscientious about what they are doing, and ensure they are looking out for the safety of their participants."

The motion defined ceremonies as "events in which members of a club are expected to perform tasks as a means of gaining credibility, status or entry within that club/group/society". After drawing on the example of the Exeter student, the Union proposed that it was their "aim to prevent discriminatory behaviour and activities which jeopardise the physical and mental welfare of students".

Rileys falls victim to recession

Rob Maidstone

RILEYS, THE NATIONAL pool and snooker club chain, has become one of the latest victims of the credit crunch, prompting Lancaster students to call for someone to save the local branch.

Riley's went in to administration on the 25th of March this year and as a result was sold to the company Valiant Sports. Riley's had been in trouble since before Christmas, when the Icelandic bank that was its main lender itself went into administration, placing Riley's finances in jeopardy. 30 venues nationwide have been forced to close, and over 200 jobs have been lost. In an interview with Sky News, joint administrator Simon Allport said: "we have been able to secure a deal which means 129 sites will continue to trade, and the brand and 1,200 jobs will be preserved."

Lancaster's venue was one of the clubs that was closed to enable the rest of the company to carry on operating, causing widespread frustration amongst students. Lancaster student James Fraser decided to set up the Facebook group called 'Campaign to reopen Riley's Lancaster.'

"My original motivation for setting up the group was to try and arrange somewhere else for my friends and I to play pool, relatively inexpensively." Mr Fraser explained. "However, given

the number of members in the group, this has now changed to try and get it reopened." The group had just under 100 members in the first 24 hours and at the time of writing now has 347 members.

"By closing Rileys Lancaster, Valiant Sports Ltd is missing out on a huge amount of revenue from students. There are at least two universities who could have used Rileys Lancaster, and there are a huge amount of students who simply just don't know about it due to its location."

Mr Fraser aims now to petition both the Lancaster City Council and Valiant Sports to try get the club reopened. He is optimistic that he can provoke change, stating "I firmly believe that if we can show to Valiant Sports Ltd, that a large student customer base exists, then a small hope exists, and as long as that hope exists, I will continue with the campaign."

Indeed, Valiant has reportedly not ruled out the possible purchase of some of the currently shut clubs, saying that it is in talks with landlords and suppliers of the closed sites in the hope of securing a more competitive deal, which could allow it to buy more clubs from administrators.

Meanwhile, Riley's has stated that anyone with a current valid membership at a closed club is being offered a free one year extension to their membership for use at another club.

JOIN US EVERY FRIDAY. FIND OUT MORE AT WWW.CUBALANCASTER.CO.UK

cuba fridays

DRINKS FROM £1 ALL NIGHT
R&B IN THE SMALL ROOM FROM 9.30
PARTY ANTHEMS IN THE MAIN ROOM FROM 10.30 TIL 3
FREE BUSES FROM THE UNDERPASS
ENTRY JUST £3

scan:COMMENT



Alex Harris

The worth and dedication of our truest public servants goes unrecognised

NHS nurses perform a stressful and thankless task. Righting that wrong would not only help them, but every person they care for, too

My mother is one of the hardest workers I know. She's a district nurse, an occupation that's often thankless and sometimes dangerous. Yet her story is rarely told. I remember her once telling me that in a decade of public service she has had to run, fearing for her life, from a flat of Kosovan immigrants after being locked in a dark, windowless room attending to one of her patients. She has had to flee into the safe company of the police, whilst attending to an unwell old man in his house on the wrong side of the tracks. She has encountered all sorts of lecherous, dangerous swine; ungrateful for the help the NHS gives them and barely deserving of it. Still, she and her colleagues go to the worst places in town - albeit now in pairs - to care for the unfortunate and the unwell. Perhaps even more shocking is the story about a thuggish pervert whose double amputee wife my mother curiously attempts to. He's well-known for being foul-mouthed, often describing his and his wife's sexual exploits in grotesque detail. The social workers are certain he psychologically abuses his wife and refuses to give her water when the nurses aren't around. He frequently makes passes at the nurses that come to visit and has been in trouble with the police for stalking several of them.

Every time I hear these stories, I

sit in shock and disbelief - I can't help but fear for her safety. I always tell her never to go to any of these places alone or without her mobile phone and she nods, humouring me. I'm being paranoid, sure, but it's more of a reflex than anything else. But throughout her stories there's been one thing nagging me. Why does she do it?

Her answer is always straightforward: she loves the job. There are, of course, many good and wonderful people in her care. Pensioners now looked after by their children with hearts of gold, that give off that kind of warm, sentimental glow depicted in those god-awful old Werther's Original adverts. Children who have had the bad fortune to need care, but can still see her off with a smile. These, she says, are the overwhelming majority. The most common complaint she gets from them is that nurses don't get paid half as much as they deserve.

It's hard to disagree. The salary for a full-time district nurse is roughly £25,000, but full-time work is scarce, despite the large amounts of nurses who leave because they find the job stressful and thankless. Layoffs and redundancies are frequent; with an increasing reliance on temporary banking and HR staff leaving many nurses unsure as to whether they will even have a job next month. Many are struggling to make ends meet and are being forced to



take stressful night shift jobs with long hours, leading to an increased amount of mental unrest and insomnia. It's the last thing a single mother with two young children needs.

I suppose I'm biased on this issue. Both my parents and most of their respective social groups work in the medical profession and I'm treated to stories of the trials and tribulations, the ins and outs of working in the NHS, every day. Yet even with the notorious 'Doctors vs. Nurses' quasi-feud in mind, my father is still able to admit that the nurses he works with, my mother included, don't get the monetary or political recognition they so thoroughly deserve. To most of us, they are simply faceless helpers; government servants who are there to do their job and not complain about it. After all, the system will right itself in the end.

And yet I hear these stories, and I can't help feel that nurses are the some of the truest public servants among us. Nurses are given less recognition than they deserve for the noble, taxing and oftentimes dangerous job they do. Few go into the job with dreams of massive salaries or of a million-pound mansion; it's all about caring for people in need. It seems to me a shame that we don't accord them the compassion and respect that they accord others.



Michael Payne
LUSU President

In a democracy, the highest office is the office of citizen

Economic recession, credit-crunch, global crisis, these are all phrases that have become a popular phrase in the public and media lexicons over the past few months. Whilst no-one can deny that we are indeed facing tough times, we must cease criticising and following the scaremongering rally cries of the Daily Mail and other sensationalist media outlets and begin reclaiming our right to a say in the way our country is governed.

As citizens, we have the right to decide the leadership of our state and we must demonstrate our desire for a government and media sector that are concerned with the real issues; health care, education provision, social housing, welfare benefits, public transport and proper financial regulation rather than allowing ourselves to be portrayed as a populace preoccupied by e-mail slur campaigns, the price of a kitchen sink purchased by an MP and the custard throwing antics of an environmental activist.

It is all too easy to sit back in our armchairs and blame the political class for our misgivings (and I agree they deserve to take some responsibility and share some of the blame), however blame and criticism will only achieve so much. We must turn our backs on the mindless bickering that takes place in Prime Minister's Questions, we must tear up the ramblings of political gossip in glossy magazines and begin taking on board our own responsibilities to exert pressure on our elected representatives by writing to them, e-mailing them and questioning them, but most of all by using our votes.

I am not really interested in who got us where, who is most to blame for the collapse of the global economy and what specific words the Governor of the Bank of England muttered about the Prime Minister; as a student I would like to know who is offering what in terms of real policies and initiatives to make sure my prospects of a graduate job are secure when I leave Lancaster. I want to know whether the budget will

include tax reliefs for those who need it most and which party will seriously overhaul the Higher Education funding system to truly reflect access to education on ability not affordability. My Grandparents will surely want to know whether their pensions will be secure and indeed whether we will see an increase in the state pension (which is long overdue) and welfare provisions for those over 65; all of which could be funded by a redistribution of wealth - a significant hike in income tax for the ultra-wealthy (who have got wealthier under New Labour).

I am proud of some of the achievements of this government over the last ten years and bemoan the criticism of over-spending that the Conservatives frequently lay at their doorstep; it was Labour's only choice. Many in the scaremongering media sphere forget the state of the education sector, the NHS and public services at large after 18 years of the last Conservative government. However this does not excuse the wrong-doings of our current

government.

With government jargon being precipitated by vacuous buzz words like 'student experience', 'learner voice' and 'authentic student voice', a void where all the parties' visions for Higher Education ought to be, and silence in place of answers to the problems students face at university, we must demonstrate why we need to be taken seriously. The easiest way to do that is by voting in overwhelming numbers in the European elections on 4th June this year.

Although these European elections will have no direct and immediate impact on our national government, if we turn out in force now there will be a clear message that we are willing to do exactly the same in the general election. Our collective ability to significantly influence the outcome of an election is an opportunity not to be missed, otherwise we have allowed the government a carte blanche to do with our education system as they please and we are just as culpable as they are.

If we want to be taken seriously, we need to start exercising our democratic rights to their fullest



Liam Richardson
Comment Editor

The PM faces a daily battle between his Jeckyll and Hyde

Moral global leader one minute, ruthless political operator the next; Brown is fundamentally conflicted

Who exactly is the real Gordon Brown? Perhaps, the question should be does Gordon Brown himself have any idea? What is less uncertain is that the prime minister suffers from a Jeckyll and Hyde complex that he is either unaware of, or desperate to bury under the surface.

The public incarnation of Brown is the individual who grew up listening to his father's sermons in Kirkcaldy and whose worldview is subsequently defined by a deep sense of morality. This public Brown was on show at the G20 summit, achieving laudatory reviews in the media and garnering enormous praise from the coterie of gathered world leaders, which he had so carefully and painstakingly assembled. The G20 summit, whilst not historic, produced some good results in terms of the money pledged to the International Monetary Fund and any form of international co-operation on such a large scale is a rare feat which Brown should be and was rightly applauded for. Brown played the role of host and main powerbroker with aplomb, forcing decisions to be made and thus making the summit as successful as it could ever possibly be.

However, the toasts and accolades had barely ceased when Labour was caught up in yet another scandal. Damien McBride had been Brown's special advisor and chief spin doctor stemming back from his master's days in the treasury. McBride even had the dubious honour of being particularly reviled amongst members of the Labour party itself, evidenced by his affectionate nicknames, McPoison and Mad Dog. A ruthless and determined



political assassin, McBride was a devoted disciple of the dark arts of politics, ensuring that his boss came across as favourably as possible in the media and that any opposition to his leadership and authority should be snuffed out and quashed as effortlessly, efficiently and venomously as possible. McBride eventually succumbed earlier this month following a plot to use a Labour-supporting blog to spread malicious rumours about Conservative rivals. The fact that McBride was so close to Brown, and the fact that the intercepted e-mails outlining the plot originated from a Downing Street address only implicated Brown further.

Whilst Brown's claims that he played no part in the scandal are likely to be the truth, there can be no doubting that he gave McBride the license to devise such schemes. This is where the prime minister's split personality comes into play; where his dark side is revealed to the public instead of bub-

bling innocuously under the surface. It is impossible for any politician to scale such heights without the aid of some form of Machiavellian skulduggery, yet Brown's actions are more reprehensible because he entered Downing Street in 2007 proclaiming an end to the age of spin.

Brown is far from unique. His predecessor, Tony Blair, achieved infamy during his decade in power by replacing the sleaze of the Tory governments with New Labour spin, orchestrated by arguably its most famous exponent, Alistair Campbell. The devil, it is said, appears in many disguises, and the image of Tony Blair, put forward by the Conservatives in the 1997 general election, complete with horns was extremely prescient. Blair's recent conversion to Catholicism and position as a Middle East peace envoy sit rather uneasily with the perception of Blair gained from his actions whilst still in power.

It appears that Brown is not too dissimilar from the man he spent so long attempting to oust from office. He is playing a dangerous game and has allowed a previously silent and ineffectual Conservative party to strike back. Cameron and company had no answers and little to contribute whilst Brown was busy grandstanding in the political arena during the G20 summit. This good work has come undone due to McBride's indiscretions. Brown has had to appear apologetic and weak, with Cameron meanwhile revelling as the supposed bastion of morality in the wretched halls of Westminster.

A general election is now only a year away and with McBride gone, Brown should finally dispense of the dark side of his persona if he is to win re-election. The gaffes have got to stop and the champagne moments like the G20 summit have got to continue on a regular basis. Otherwise, the electorate will no doubt be very unforgiving.

My box is your box

Matt Saint
LGBT Officer, County JCR

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Pansexual, Asexual, Genderqueer, Questioning, just a fraction of the many different subgroups under the "sexual orientation and gender identity" heading. When the gay rights movement began that's just what it was, the gay rights movement. Over time this has extended to gay and lesbian, then LGB and eventually LGBT. But this stream of letters cannot feasibly or practically be added to indefinitely as further minorities are included.

Some people feel this creates a sort of hierarchy of orientations, with gay at the top. The acronym LGBT in some ways defeats its own purpose; it can put those that it stands to liberate into further boxes, often making people feel even more alienated. This is hardly unfounded considering the huge campaign run by Stonewall (a national LGB campaign group) a few years ago involving the slogan 'Some people are gay. Get over it!' Whilst aiming to be empowering, this group - who already ostracise Trans people - are also ignoring the bisexuals whom they claim to represent. This prompted many other groups to react with their own takes on the slogan in protest.

It is important that all these minorities stick together for mutual benefit in order to gain equality in the law and in society. So what is the way forward? In our current situation where the BNP threaten to gain seats in the upcoming European elections, it is more important than ever that the people they threaten stand united. As a result, a much more inclusive attitude needs to be adopted.

One option is to adopt the umbrella term 'queer'. Many people already use this word to describe themselves either if they don't feel part of LGBT or if they find it more inclusive. However, others find this word offensive due to its negative connotations of being something abnormal. The counter-argument to this is that it is a word that should be reclaimed.

Another option is redefining as the Minority Sexuality and Gender Identity campaign. This is a suggestion that has been tabled by the NUS LGBT campaign and will be discussed at National LGBT Conference in Nottingham at the end of this week. Conversely, there are those who feel this is just an attempt to make the campaign sound more acceptable to wider society and that it just distances those it should represent. In order to explore further options and to raise awareness, YOURlgbt (LUSU's LGBT Association) will be running a 'we don't fit in boxes' campaign in weeks three of this term.

However, our main objective at the moment has to be that the BNP do not gain more power than they already have. If they do, this could very well put our movement back forty years to square one - whatever we name it.

If you identify as LGBT or Questioning and want to have your say on these and other issues, please come to the General Meeting of YOURlgbt on Wednesday April 22 in Bowland North Seminar Room 7 at 5pm.

The Hillsborough disaster shaped football as we know it

Twenty years on and English football remembers its darkest day. On the 15th April 1989, Liverpool and Nottingham Forest contested an FA Cup semi-final at Hillsborough stadium in Sheffield. The match had to be abandoned after 96 Liverpool fans tragically lost their lives after being crushed to death. The legacy of Hillsborough lingers on with the way in which the sport is governed and marketed. Football irrevocably changed twenty years ago and many aspects of the modern game we take for granted can be attributed to the terrible events in Sheffield.

Football in the 1980s was being played out alongside the rise of hooliganism. The sport was hardly flourishing. Stadiums were all-standing and large crash barriers penned in supporters to avoid confrontation between sets of supporters. Football at the time largely appealed to a singu-

lar demographic: white, middle-aged, working class male. The Heysel stadium disaster at the 1985 European Cup final between Juventus and Liverpool was a stark warning that attitudes to football and the way the sport was run had to be changed. However, it took the greater tragedy at Hillsborough to spur the Conservative government and the Football Association into actually taking some action.

Lord Taylor conducted a report in the aftermath of the disaster with the results published in January 1990. Taylor concluded that stadiums were unsafe and called for the introduction of all-seater stadiums. Football clubs were even given government funding to get their stadiums up to scratch. He also called for greater police presence at games and made recommendation about fencing and crash barriers which had been a primary reason for the 96 deaths.

Looking back, once the Football

Association took on board Lord Taylor's findings it is unquestionable that it sparked the transitional period for English football. It mustn't be ignored that this period also saw Rupert Murdoch invest his billions into paying for exclusive television rights to further enhance his Sky television brand. The tears of Paul Gascoigne at the World Cup in 1990 also attracted substantial media attention; as the England national team reached the semi-finals in Italy, their best performance apart from winning the competition on home soil in 1966.

These factors all played a part in how football was rebranded in this country in the 1990s. Hooliganism dwindled and football became accessible to a wider demographic with families attending games. Stadiums were modernised and it was now possible to watch a game of football in comfort and actually see all of the action.

However, this revolution may have

spun beyond the point of preference in recent years. Many complain that the atmosphere in stadiums has suffered as a result of the move to seating. Ticket prices surged as football became a boom industry attracting the interest of foreign billionaire investors. The demographic attending football matches has shifted as working class people are priced out of the game. For many, the only opportunity to watch live football is on Murdoch's ubiquitous Sky television.

Football now is arguably more popular than it has ever been. The sport is a highly marketable brand, a far cry from before Hillsborough. Last week's anniversary though, should serve as a stark reminder of football's roots and where it had to go to emerge in the form it has today. The sport should never forget the deaths of 96 innocent football fans, nor in the present climate, the support base which it increasingly alienates.



Sam Newsham

In hindsight, the ignorance of Baby P's plight was inevitable

With our support services stretched to breaking point, children in poverty are too often overlooked

In July 2008, The Times journalist Camilla Cavendish wrote a series of articles calling for a reduction in secrecy in the family court. The series described the way thousands of children have been removed from their parents' care needlessly on the say of experts: doctors, psychiatrists and social workers. Once the children are gone, the parents – most of whom are entirely unfamiliar with the workings of the family court – are left helpless, unable to speak out against the rulings for fear it would harm 'the welfare of the child'. The majority never get their children back.

In November 2008, in a haze of publicity, a woman from Haringey, North London, and her boyfriend were found guilty of causing the death of her son, the child who became known as Baby P. Despite sixty visits from social workers and other professionals before his death, the only action taken for Baby P was to place him on the child protection register. A police report following an incident in which Baby P was admitted to hospital with non-accidental injuries criticised social workers for being "too parent focussed."

In March 2009, it was revealed that one in seven social work jobs is empty. Two out of three councils are struggling to recruit social workers and four out of ten, having recruited them, are struggling to retain them. With such wildly divergent – and glaringly public – situations to reconcile, is it any wonder?

Given that 93% of looked-after children leave foster care with fewer than five A*-C grades at GCSE, it is not hard



to see the argument in favour of leaving children at home and attempting to improve parenting.

But poor parenting is all too often the symptom of poverty. Though many people's standard of living improved in Tony Blair's years in power, the gap between Britain's very richest and very poorest has actually widened since Labour swept to power in 1997.

In 1999, Blair vowed to eradicate child poverty by 2020. Ten years on, and 600,000 children have been raised above the poverty line – 60% of the British median household income, about £19,600 a year – but of 30% children are still below that threshold, in families living on less than £400 a week.

So many studies have demonstrated the importance of parenting well: that effective parent-child communication

and strong parent-child bonds reduce the likelihood a child will take drugs, that parental involvement has a significant affect on a child's achievement at school, that strong home-school links lead to fewer pupil behavioural problems. Blair's government, recognising this, poured millions of pounds into local and national parenting programmes. For thousands of children, this has worked. For some, like Baby P, it didn't.

As part of his 'war on poverty', Blair launched Sure Start, a programme aimed at increasing the availability of childcare, improving children's health and emotional development and, most crucially, to support parents. Since its inception almost 3,000 Sure Start children's centres have been built in the most disadvantaged communities, offering early years education, health

visitor services and a wide range of parenting advice and support networks. But in many areas it is seen as more a childcare provider than a learning resource, and its critics have observed that it is not reaching out to those who most need it: fewer than a third of these centres are actively trying to engage with the most vulnerable families.

New Labour have acknowledged that merely offering a programme will not work; that it is necessary first to engage with those who need it and then to maintain progress once the programme has finished.

They have demonstrated that they can learn from their failures. After the death of Victoria Climbié – another resident of Haringey, who died after being abused by her aunt – and the subsequent finding that the inability of agencies to communicate effectively was at least partly responsible, the green paper Every Child Matters was published. This led to the passing of the Children's Act 2004, and the appointment of the first Children's Commissioner for England, whose emphasis on information sharing and inter-agency involvement.

But the fact that, despite all these initiatives, Baby P still died shows that it isn't enough. It is hard to see what more the government can do to break the cycle of deprivation. The real tragedy of Baby P is that, had he lived, he would have learned abuse from his mother and within fifteen years could have been treating his own children the same way.



Liam Kay

The rapid destabilisation of Pakistan puts our operations in Afghanistan in grave danger

Pakistan deserves our attention too

The world today is swollen with nations who, in one form or another, categorise a threat to both world peace and to the interests of America and its allies. Countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and North Korea have dominated the foreign policy of the US under the (now departed) Bush administration, signifying the interventionist policies that have dominated American political thought over the past decade.

However, it is Pakistan that poses the new Obama administration with its toughest, and arguably most dangerous, foreign policy mission today. These issues relate to a rise in the presence of Islamic fundamentalist groups within the nation, many who actively seek to undermine the current regime amongst the political instability of the past two years with the assassination of Benazir Bhutto and the fall of President Musharraf indicative of the failing of successive Pakistani administrations to successfully combat the threat posed by terrorist groups in the region. They have almost completely failed to pre-

vent recent atrocities within Pakistan such as the attacks on the Sri-Lankan cricket team and on the Lahore police academy. This should raise significant questions both inside Pakistan and across the globe on the safety, security and long-term prosperity of Pakistan.

These issues also bear a huge problem for Gordon Brown's government, with two important factors surely forcing him to aid the Pakistani administration in any way possible to combat fundamentalist groups in the region. Firstly, the north of the country borders Afghanistan, where 8,000 of our soldiers are stationed, soon to be joined by 1,000 more. The lack of control over Pakistan's border territories by its own government allows resistance groups within Afghanistan to target our troops and allows for the reinforcement of their numbers from within Pakistan. Surely if we want to succeed in fighting and defeating the Taliban, we have to look at aiding Pakistan in dealing with its internal problems.

The second factor in why we should look to aid Pakistan in dealing with its

internal issues is the most frightening: it is a nuclear power. The potential problems that the collapse of the Pakistani government and the possibility of nuclear arms finding their way into either a radical and terrorist friendly establishment within Pakistan or into the hands of global terrorist groups should be enough to convince us that we need to maintain any help we can give to Pakistan. The threats that are apparent if we refuse to do so are too catastrophic to even consider.

As a nation, if we are truly committed to both our current position in Afghanistan and also to the security of the people of both Pakistan and the Middle East in general, we cannot afford not to give help to the people of Pakistan. The instability in their nation has the potential to harm neighbours such as India and cause catastrophic problems ranging from the further rise of Islamic fundamentalism to the possibility of war and the loss of nuclear arms to terrorist groups. Surely the security of the world is a small price to pay?

scan

Tuesday, April 21, 2009

Redundant rhetoric

THIS RECESSION HAS everyone worried. Those not in work are worried about finding some, and those in employment are uneasy about their job security. So the establishment of a university committee whose sole function it is to identify opportunities for staff reductions, does nothing to boost academic staff morale. In this climate, the Vice-Chancellor's assertion that creating a redundancy committee did nothing to harm staff morale, borders on the absurd.

University chiefs have been at pains to point out that even though they are activating Statute 20, which requires University Council to agree 'that it is desirable that there should be a reduction in the academic staff,' they do not actually want to make any redundancies. While the Orwellian nature of those contradictory statements is striking, what is more concerning is that Prof. Paul Wellings and the Pro-Chancellor, Brian Gray, seem to have (deliberately or otherwise) overlooked this most simple of safeguards in the university's redundancy procedures.

The statutory need to agree that academic staff redundancies are 'desirable' before establishing the committee should have set enough alarm bells ringing to remind members of Council that such "machinery" (as the VC likes to call it) should not be used lightly. Apparently they needed it spelling out.

If you wanna be in my gang...

THE PROTESTATIONS OF advocates of 'sporting tradition', both in NUS and our own students union, who claim that initiation ceremonies are harmless fun and that to ban or regulate them would spoil the experience of inclusion in a team, seem to ignore the deaths of Gavin Britton and Alex Doji, both 18, who both choked on their own vomit after an initiation ceremony. These risks aren't just taken elsewhere. One case in recent memory at Lancaster saw a student hospitalised after an initiation. Had he not been found by other students after the sports team in question abandoned him once he became too drunk to stand, he too may well have suffered the same fate as Gavin and Alex.

How activities intended as a hurdle to inclusion in fact exclude a great deal of people, is also quickly ignored. All initiations are mandatory, by their very nature, but there is never any consideration for the tee-totaller or Muslim when planning a round of bar golf, or for the Jew or the vegetarian when ordering people to bobbing for apples in pig offal. Such activities aren't just a test of character or grit, but are simply off-limits for many.

Letters to the Editor



Send your letters to scan@lancaster.ac.uk together with you name and college (even if you would like your letter printed anonymously). Letters longer than 150 words (not including signature) will be shortened. SCAN reserves the right to edit your letters for publication.

Heir-apparent

I'll begin with the so-called controversy around the race for the position of VP Media & Comms/SCAN Editor (Editorial, Comment, March 10). To be blunt, if you want to be presented well in the media, you must present yourself well to the media. Those unhappy about how they came across should consider why that happened and not blame everyone else.

Liam Richardson was the heir-apparent to the Hogan throne, but that is politics. The only thing I had a problem with was trying to counter the wave of infamy Liam had accrued after the 'T-shirt Tyrants' article. Those who write editorials have such a significant voice that every word should be carefully considered. While this article did hold some truth for a minority of cases, what right does one individual have to take public shots at the people helping a new intake to settle in, right at the beginning of term? Lets hope that Liam behaves a bit more responsibly as Editor as controversy for its own sake is

just empty rhetoric.

The last issue of SCAN asked where all the voters had gone. I spoke to too many people who felt the elections did not have any relevance for them at all. The cliquey-ness of union politics that had always put me off was further confirmed to me by the way I was treated by some other candidates.

The Sabbatical Team elect is an extremely strong one, but I just wanted to offer my perspective, having now been both a frustrated voter and a candidate.

Charlotte Henry
Cartmel College

Racist personality

An article in SCAN Sports ('Why not make Muhammad Ali Sports Personality of the Year?' March 10) caught the attention of my flatmate and I. It is well documented that Muhammad Ali was involved in controversy before the 'Thrilla in Manila' vs. Joe Frazier,

yet too many choose to overlook the details. Primarily, Ali was associated with the racist, and quite frankly insulting, Ku Klux Klan. This is linked to his membership with the Nation of Islam who openly supported a separation of race. Ali himself can be seen on you tube ('Fisher of men') expressing his opinions. Moreover, Ali mocked Joe Frazier beyond the acceptable level; taunting him and calling him a Gorilla as well as labelling him a white man's puppet. Disturbingly, this was after Frazier's great support of Ali following his arrest. We are not criticizing his athletic ability, simply stating that if one were to pick a personality, it would not be him.

George Gardiner
Thomas Walker
Fylde College

Liberal disapproval

The Lancaster University Liberal Democrats would like to express our

displeasure at the appointment of Lord Taylor of Blackburn as a life member of the University Court. We feel that the allegations of corruption surrounding Lord Taylor make this appointment untenable, and we feel that the issue should be investigated further. We also would like to show our disapproval of the fact that Lancaster University has financial ties with the arms dealer, BAE Systems. This further throws into question the moral integrity of the university, and we would like to see the university explain its position on these matters. If you share our thoughts and concerns, the Lancaster University Liberal Democrat Society meets every Wednesday at 17:00, in Pendle Bar.

Andy Syddall,
LU Liberal Democrats

Fees hike

I am writing on behalf of number of international students regarding the tuition fee increase for academic year

2009/2010 for international students. As we understand, LUSU protects and represents interests of students in the University and on certain important issues.

For current year, the tuition fee has been £10,600 for international students in the management school. However, tuition fee has been increased by university to 11600 for next year! We are really worried and anxious by such steep increase. The last year's increase has been only £300. We don't understand such a steep increase of in tuition fees as we do not see big improvements in quality of education or teaching to justify increasing the tuition fee by that amount.

I understand tuition fee increases should be 5% or less. For next year the increase is almost 10%. I really hope that LUSU will raise this issue and solve it in appropriate way.

An international student

purplecard offer of the week

OFFER WK1 - MINT
GET 2 HOUSE COCKTAILS FOR £6 AND
FROZEN FLAVOURED VODKA SHOTS FOR £1

OFFER WK2 -
SULTAN EXPERIENCE
10% OFF DELIVERIES (CAMPUS)



T&Cs apply

check out www.lusu.co.uk/purple for all offers

Corrections

We said Bowland and Pendle made it into the Carter Shield Aeroball final (Sport, March 10, p32). It was in fact Bowland and Cartmel who reached the final.

We mentioned Lee McLelland as being a member of the university's darts team (Sports, March 10, p32). His name is in fact Lee McClelland.

We said Stephen Ashly had been elected as a student trustee in the week eight LUSU elections (News, March 10, p3). His name is in fact Stephen Ashby.

If you notice any factual mistakes in SCAN, please let us know by emailing scan@lancaster.ac.uk, including the issue's date, page number and story headline.



Michael & Sarah

A woman with whose favourite passtime is hugging and a young man who ‘never lets anyone close to him,’ settle some old scores with the relationship issues of Lancaster University.

(What have you done today to make you feel proud?)

Relationships in focus #1

Hand-holding

Michael Holt
Go-getting male dinosaur

THERE IS NOTHING more infuriating than seeing a couple hold-ing hands.

Don’t get me wrong; I am all for wanton displays of affection. Why, just the other week I saw a couple snogging the faces off each other in the usually behaviourally-reserved library. As I watched them share the computer chair and each other’s saliva, it took every-thing in my power not to raise my hand respectfully in the air towards them, in the manner of John Paul II, on account of their impassioned defiance of social norms. People excitedly slathering over each others faces I can understand; But hand holding? That’s a step too far!

The way hand-holding couples walk lingeringly as if they had nowhere in particular to go, with wistful twee ex-pressions on their faces as if all they needed were each other makes me yearn back to the caveman days of yore when our ancestors would drag our women-folk around by the hair when in-transit between caves; being sure to shout ‘ug’ every so often for good measure. The modern day equivalent has none of the brute charm.

Hand-holding is also a very inef-ficient way of travelling, studies show that you travel roughly 25% slower whilst gripping the hand of a loved one (the study excluded testimony of those running from natural disasters). It makes me sad that in our highly de-veloped target-driven capitalist society we allow such an outdated affection-ate gesture to sap the strength of our work-force in such a flagrant and care-free way. There’s nothing worse, being a go-getting single male like myself, than coming up behind a couple walk-ing two-abreast, hands clasped, and finding that I have to deviate slightly from my path to make my way around them without disturbing the cocoon of love, adding two whole seconds to my journey accommodate their contented lives. That’s two seconds less I can spend grooming myself for success.

I also wonder, especially in these summer months, how grappling each-others increasingly clammy hands is in any way romantic. Surely they must need to carry talcum powder around with each other in order to stave off their grip turning sweaty.

The best way to show affection in public whilst avoiding the unfortunate exchange of bodily fluids, be it sweat or saliva, is the simple slap on the arse. One well connected sharp snap on a taut anus says more than hand-holding ever could.

Call in the fumigators

MICHAEL: At university one of the key attractions is that you’ll get to meet new people; the problem with this is that you will also meet people who you’d never thought it possible that you could meet. Worst of all, you’ll find that you have to live with them for a prolonged period of time. Why do some people find it so hard to meet even the most basic of com-mon courtesies that you would’ve thought were incumbent upon be-ing a human-being? I put it to the student body that we should create a separate college where such socially undesirable people can be sent to live together (I propose the name Dachau College). If a person is blacklisted by more than one of their housemates they should

be spirited away in the middle of the night and be processed into the new minimum security college of choice. But I doubt the Vice-Chancellor of the university would have the balls to do something like that for fear it might be deemed ‘fascist’. This university has gone to the dogs and the immigrants if you ask me. In the case of your friend you and your housemates should all clean him gently with toothbrushes and Domestos while he sleeps. Done and done.

SARAH: I think you have two choices, you can either move out and let him win, or you can stage an intervention. Collect as many of his abandoned clothes as possible, raid his room for offending items

and lure him to an outside space on the promise of revolting scents that will rival his own. Once there, have prepared a huge bucket of soapy water and a hose pipe and attack him with cleaning materials until he sparkles. Get your friends to join in as you need to overpower the fiend, and if the smell is as bad as you say, you will need to take it in turns to approach. If he complains of ill treatment or bullying tell him it is no worse than you have been forced to live with for however long, and un-less he changes his ways you will incinerate his clothes and change the locks. Tough love and plenty of soap can refresh your living ar-rangements. Just be sure to invest in a good pair of rubber gloves.

Sex-Karma

MICHAEL: First of all please tell me that you do not value the advice given in this column so highly that you waited all of the month of Easter before deciding on the basis of our responses what to do, as your two friends could be seeing some quite devastating symptoms by this stage as a result of your discretion. I propose the best way to really cushion the impact of the twin friendship-ending events of infidelity and STI’s is to turn it into a private Facebook social between the three of you. The static environment of Facebook turns even the most devastating of information into a partly unreal theatrical gesture. Just imagine as they both gig-glingly say to each other “Oh! Did

you get invited to Gonorrhea-fest ‘og?’;”What! Me too!”; “lol”; What would’ve been a messy friendship ending experience in any other century is now a technologically-turned-on bonding experience for the new millennium. Just be careful who you ‘poke’ next time.

SARAH: Well, that is sex karma. It might be a bit late for your con-cerns about losing her as a friend as I think you probably binned the friendship when you hopped into bed with her bloke. However, it is your sexual responsibility to tell them both, as chances are he has by now passed the infection on to his girlfriend. Try an ice breaker about the sore throat she has been complaining about for

weeks, it might not be cold-related. Unfortunately events such as these usually tear friendships apart, so as a last courtesy to the girl you must tell her about the STI. Imagine if this situation were reversed, surely you would want to know that your sexual health was at risk? If your friendship is salvageable you will forever be under scrutiny, not just from her, but from other friends too, so it may be best to be honest and then give this girl some space to decide if she can forgive you. Be sure to seek medical attention for this issue and take precautions with new lovers, your sexual health is not something to be taken lightly. Nor is friendship for that matter.

Lippy love

MICHAEL: Not having had sex until you were 20 is nothing you should feel insecure about. But at the same time it is something hard not to feel insecure about. Human sexuality abounds with such paradoxes. No man can truly understand the vagina, it is a slowly unfurling and ever-expand-ing world of sensory mystery that makes the finite binary bluntness of male members seem a bit crude by comparison. What I will say is that your big lips are most likely not the issue; finesse is ultimately the key. I heartily recommend the book *She Comes First* by Ian Kerner PhD. It is surpris-ingly readable, light-hearted and informative and is peppered with a number of highbrow quotations

and factoids that defuse the guilty seediness that you would think attached to such a book (did you know that Napoleon would send a telegram from the front line when he was due to return home, telling Josephine ‘not to wash’, so much did he enjoy her feminine musk). Follow his advice and you’ll be lathered in fanny juice.

SARAH: I can’t imagine that it is a common problem, hours of girl talk and women’s magazines have certainly never broached the subject so I can only assume that your lady friend is a bit fussy. Moreover, how the devil are your lips getting in the way? Frankly the spatial element to your question has perplexed me.

I think you should talk about this and ask her precisely how your lips are affecting the progress of this intimate act. Presumably she doesn’t have the same complaints about kissing you so it may be a question of changing your tech-nique. Try flicking through one of her women’s magazines and read the tips provided by the sexper-ts, this may help you to alter your technique and gain confidence. Fi-nally, don’t be discouraged by her comments, allow her to instruct you and let her advice build your confidence. Sexual prowess comes from the confidence to listen and respond to your lover’s needs so don’t feel uncomfortable with her instructions, embrace them.

I just can’t take it anymore! A housemate of mine absolutely stinks. He doesn’t wash his clothes, he doesn’t clean his room, he doesn’t clean his body. The smell is overpowering and people are becoming uncomfortable about coming round my flat anymore all because of him; and the worst of it is I almost get the impression that he’s proud of his rut. Any advice?

A few weeks ago I had a one-night stand with a friend’s boyfriend, and following some tests I have discovered I have contracted gonorrhoea. I have no idea how to tell him as he is going to have to tell my friend and our cheating will be found out. How can I approach the subject without losing her as a friend?

I have always been a bit insecure about the fact I was 20 before I had my first sexual partner. So recently, when I got my first girlfriend, it knocked my confidence a bit when she said that my big lips got in the way while giving her oral sex. Is this a common problem and if so what can I do because I really don’t want to lose her. Help!

MAY DAY & SPRING BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY
UNIVERSITY SERVICES INFORMATION

Service 2A and X1 will operate a normal Sunday service to the University on May Day and Spring Bank Holiday Monday, however, we will be operating additional Service 3 journeys on these two days, as shown below.

Service Number	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3A	3A	3	3	3A		3	3	3	3A
South West Campus											1223			43	03	23	
University Underpass	0848	0903	0933	1003	1033	1103	1133			1203	1228			48	08	28	
George Street	0900	0915	0945	1015	1045	1115	1145			1215	1240		then	00	20	40	
Lancaster Bus Station	0903	0918	0948	1018	1048	1118	1148	1100	1200	1218	1243	1300	at	03	23	43	00
Torrisholme Square								1110	1210			1310	these				10
Morecambe Battery								1136	1236			1336	times				36
Higher Heysham Combermere Road								1148	1248			1348					48

Service Number		3A	3	3	3	3A	3	3	3	3A	3	3	3A	3A	3A	
South West Campus			1743	1803	1823			1843	1903	1923		1943	2003			
University Underpass			1748	1808	1828			1848	1908	1928		1948	2008			
George Street			1800	1820	1840			1900	1920	1940		2000	2020			
Lancaster Bus Station	until	1800	1803	1823	1843	1900	1903	1923	1943	2000	2003	2023	2100	2200	2300	
Torrisholme Square		1810				1909				2009			2109	2209	2309	
Morecambe Battery		1836				1929				2029			2129	2229	2329	
Higher Heysham Combermere Rd		1848														

Service Number	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3A	3	3	3A	3	3
			B&S													
Higher Heysham Combermere Road											1000			1100		
Morecambe Battery											1012			1112		
Torrisholme Square											1037			1137		

Lancaster Bus Station	0825	0830	0835	0840	0910	0940	0955	1010	1040	1048	1110	1140	1148	1203	1243	
Common Garden Street	0828	0833	0838	0843	0913	0943	0958	1013	1043		1113	1143		1206	1246	
Bowerham Hotel	▼	▼	0843	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼		▼	▼	
Hala Square	▼	▼	0846	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼		▼	▼	
University Underpass	0841	0846	0852	0856	0926	0956	1011	1026	1056		1126	1156		1219	1259	
South West Campus														1223	1303	

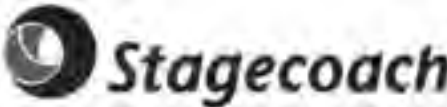
Service Number	3A		3	3	3	3A		3A	3	3	3	3A	3A	3A	3A	3A
													*	*	*	*
Higher Heysham Combermere Road	1200					00		1800				1900				
Morecambe Battery	1212					12		1812				1912	1930	2030	2130	2230
Torrisholme Square	1237	then				37		1837				1937	1948	2048	2148	2248
Lancaster Bus Station	1248	at	03	23	43	48	until	1848	1903	1923	1943	1948	1958	2058	2158	2258
Common Garden Street		these	06	26	46				1906	1926	1946					
University Underpass		times	19	39	59				1919	1939	1959					
South West Campus			23	43	03				1923	1943	2003					

* Operated on behalf of Lancashire county Council B&S Operates from Hala Square via Hala Road and Boot & Shoe



Xtra 3's

Extra Service 3 journeys will operate between Lancaster University and Lancaster City Centre on May Day and Spring Bank Holiday Monday



Lancaster University's Biggest Mid-week night

The Legendary

Carleton

Home of the Stiff'un!

The only official student Wednesday Night

Get your bus tickets from the LUSU Shop all week or Walkabout on Wednesday nights

Register on-line for photos & special birthday offers • Sponsored by WKD, Carlsberg, Red Square & Smirnoff Ice

www.footking.co.uk

St George, the Dragon, Gallipoli and the Jelly Beans

Daniel Ash finds out why this week is important to Saints, Aussies and Jelly Beans

THIS THURSDAY (APRIL 23) will be St George's Day, the celebration of the patron saint of England.

This day of festivities has been a regular practice in this country since the early 15th century, and was once on a par with Christmas as a day of festivities. Its historical relevance within England is exemplified by the fact that St George is also the patron saint for the Scout movement, and this day is also traditionally when the Queen announces new appointments to the Order of the Garter.

The legend of St George and the Dragon is known by school children throughout the coun-

try. The classic story has it that the saintly knight arrives in a town being ravaged by a Dragon. A Hermit tells him that the Dragon demands a maiden to be sacrificed to him every day and that now there was only one maiden left, the daughter of the King. St George subsequently charges valiantly into the valley where the dragon lives and kills him very dramatically, then in true fairy tale fashion he wins the King's daughter's hand in marriage.

This day of celebration has had a relatively chequered history of recent years, with some institutions marginalising it as nationalistic and outdated, whilst others support it as a symbol of

in true fairy tale fashion he wins the King's daughter's hand in marriage.

the spirit of the English nation. English Heritage, the Royal Society of Saint George and the recently founded St George's Day Events company have been leading the call for the day to have more relevance and significance within the English nation. Critics have suggested that St George be replaced as the patron saint of England, as he has been condemned as being an obscure and illogical choice. Various alternatives to St George have been suggested, such as St Edmund, St Cuthbert or St Alban.

This week New Zealand and Australia also commemorate an important day of national importance. On the 25th April is ANZAC Day. On this day in 1915 the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps fought their first major engagement of the First World War. Over 8,000 Australian and 2,700 New Zealand

troops died in Gallipoli as part of the British armies attempt to knock Turkey out of the war. In 1916 the day was officially marked as a day of remembrance, and remains one to this day. In recent years this day of national pride has also been the focus of controversial debates. In Australia and New Zealand some people believe that instead of seeing it as a commemoration of those who died bravely in a worthwhile cause, it should be seen as a day of mass death for a militaristic empire in a pointless war.

If you don't feel like getting on board with days of national fervour, then why not celebrate National Jelly Bean Day instead? On the 22nd April, we can all go on a sugar high in honour of the humble jelly bean, which helped to make all our childhood's just that bit more energetic.



Six things you probably don't know about St George

- Very little is known about the actual life of the man who became St George. It is believed that he was born in the year AD270 in what is now Eastern Turkey and grew up to become a Roman soldier. Saint George was canonised because of his bravery in pleading with the Roman Emperor Diocletian to stop his persecution of the Christians. The pagan Emperor then tried to make St George deny his faith by torturing him, but he refused to relent to the Emperor's demands. Diocletian had him beheaded on April 23, AD303 near what is now Lydda in Palestine.

- He didn't actually kill a dragon (sorry). In medieval literature the dragon was often used to symbolise the devil, the story is therefore a parable about good overcoming evil. If you're brave, noble, chivalrous and have a big sword, then you too can defeat evil. St George and his commemorative day have often been the focus of writers, from Gregory of Tours writing in the Dark Ages, to Bram Stoker in Dracula. Bram Stoker wrote in his famous Gothic novel, that from the stroke of midnight on the eve of St George's Day "all the evil things in the world will have full sway".

A truly Xenu-phobic religion

Daniel Ash
Features Editor

OVER THE PAST couple of years we've seen Tommy Davis yelling at the BBC's John Sweeney, or him defending Scientology on various news channels. Recently the notorious spokesman for the Church of Scientology admitted that the stories at the centre of the religion sound more like science fiction than religion. In an interview with KESQ News Channel 3 reporter Nathan Baca, Tommy Davis confirmed that allegations about some of the cult-like religion's fundamental secrets (which previously they had firmly denied) were all true.

The stories in question revolve around an Alien overlord called 'Xenu' and his questionable antics around

75 million years ago. According to the teachings of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, Xenu ruled over an intergalactic union of planets, which were all plagued by overpopulation. Xenu's answer to this problem was to summon vast numbers of aliens from each planet on the pretext that they were needed about income tax issues. Instead of dealing with taxation litigation he promptly rounded up all these aliens, dropped them into volcanoes on Earth and pulverised them with nuclear weaponry.

This may not seem like your run of the mill religious dogma, but Scientologists will pay hundreds of thousands of dollars to reach the necessary level (Operating Thetan Level III to be precise, or OT III) before learning of this story. This story forms part of their ex-

Instead of dealing with taxation litigation he promptly rounded up all these aliens, dropped them into volcanoes on Earth and pulverised them with nuclear weaponry.

planation for life on earth and also ties into other Scientology practises. These practises revolve around trying to rid the individual human soul of the spirits of these pulverised aliens. It is the existence of these alien spirits which leads to physical and mental defects in humans and which stops us from attaining the highest levels of spiritual enlightenment.

Alongside the documents by Hubbard detailing the story, there also

exists a leaked tape recording of L. Ron Hubbard himself giving a lecture on OT III. Hubbard apparently told his followers not to tell the story to anyone who hasn't been fully prepared by the Church of Scientology, as he believed that anyone who hears this story and tries to work it out for themselves risks losing the ability to sleep and subsequently dying of pneumonia.

The freakiness factor of this skyrockets considerably on listening to the tape and realising that Hubbard sounds eerily like Heath Ledger

Operating Thetan Level Seven:

Tom Cruise is Scientology's best-known follower.





Didn't know about St. George's Day

- It was in 1222 that the Council of Oxford declared that April 23 would now be St George's Day. The Saint's rise to prominence continued in the 14th century when he officially replaced Edward the Confessor as England's patron saint. In 1415 it was decided to make April 23 a national feast day in his honour.

- St George is the patron saint of a very long list of countries and places, including Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, Portugal, Georgia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Macedonia, Moscow, Genoa, Beirut and Ljubljana (in Slovenia).

Not all nations and places celebrate the saint on the same day or in the same way, although feasting and food seems to be a pretty common theme.

- St George is also patron saint of scouts, soldiers, archers, cavalry and chivalry, farmers and field workers, riders and saddlers, and he helps those suffering from leprosy, plague and syphilis. If you would like to try and curry favour with St George, be you a saddler or a leper, his relics can be found across the country. Collegiate Chapel Royal in Berkshire claims to house two of the saints

fingers.

- The Symbol on the English national flag that we call St George's cross actually originated in Genoa. In the 12th century any English ships entering the Mediterranean would fly the Genoese flag as a way of claiming security from Genoa's powerful navy. Throughout the medieval period the symbol was slowly adopted to become a defining image of England, most notoriously with the adoption of the cross by crusading soldiers.

Kill the dragon, get the girl:

Vittore Carpaccio's 16th century painting of George slaying the dragon. All around the scene lie the decapitated bodies of the maidens George didn't save. Behind him stands the King's daughter, who he ends up marrying.

playing The Joker from the last Batman movie. Those that reach OT III are instructed to have a safe in their house to store the necessary materials and that all of these delicate materials are to be transported in a locked briefcase. Unfortunately Hubbard worked out these security measures without prior knowledge of the internet, which has dispersed a large amount of the sensitive information to the uninitiated.

This may all sound strange to you, and apparently it even sounds strange to Scientologists. Scientology's poster-boy, Tom Cruise, has denied any knowledge of the story, and in an earlier interview Tommy even said that the Xenu story sounded "ridiculous" and "unrecognisable" to him. It was only when Baca read from a book written by L. Ron Hubbard that mentions the

Xenu story that he grudgingly admitted to the story's authenticity. Tommy quickly remarked that the story was confidential and that he found a non-Scientologist asking about Scientology's beliefs as an "offensive concept" and that Baca was merely "forwarding an agenda of hate."

The Church of Scientology has often been condemned for its heavy-handed way of dealing with critics. The church/cult reportedly has a 'Fair Game' policy, which means that any person who is identified as an enemy of the Church can be attacked by both legal and illegal means without facing repercussions from Scientologist authorities. The most infamous of these attacks was 'Operation Freakout', a campaign launched against Paulette Cooper after she released her novel *The Scandal of*

Scientology. In this campaign the New York journalist was framed for making bomb threats and the church reportedly tried to get her either committed to a mental institution or sent to prison.

As much as I enjoy a good viewing of Tom Cruise's flawless acting performance in Top Gun, I remain thoroughly sceptical of this cult of American science fiction. In fact the main benefit of Scientology may well have been the way they have brought one of their main detractors, 'Anonymous', to prominence, whose Fawkesian masks are just damn cool (see www.whyweprotest.net). But fear not gentle reader for in the course of writing this article I have neither lost sleep, died, or been a victim of religious repercussions; though I remain concerned that men in black suits will soon appear outside my door.

Alternative ways to get your annual festival fix

THE BIRDS ARE twittering and the smell of barbecues and cut grass is on the air, yes at long last the free and giddy days of summer are nearly upon us.

If you happen to be the sort of person to whom summer means lowering your standard of living for a while and going to a festival, you can never start planning early enough. If however you are unsure about where you want to go, if you are put off by high prices, or if you dislike the emerging line up, then I have found a selection of alternative events you may be inclined to try out instead.

Everyone has their preferences as to where they would like to go, be it the rock-heavy alternative music haven that is Leeds/Reading, the free spirited utopia of Glastonbury, or the metal madness of Download. If you've been trying to decide which one of these festival heavy weights to go to and have yet to reach a decision, then I'm afraid you've missed the boat as at the time of writing only Download had any tickets available outside of Ebay.

If you are yet to procure a ticket to one of these, and are planning to cheat, scrounge, steal or Ebay one, then here is a brief rundown of what can be expected at each festival. Reading and Leeds this year are hosting a veritable who's-who of Indie highlights and bandwagon jumpers, with headliners Arctic Monkeys, Kings of Leon and Radiohead. Glastonbury has once again got an eclectic mix of feel good bands and artists. The main names of this year's festival are Lily Allen, Blur, Bruce Springsteen and Franz Ferdinand among others, but they have truly excelled themselves with the addition of Rolf Harris to the line up. Download has rocked the metal music world by being the stimulus for the reformation of seminal punk/metal/thrash band Faith No More. The Download organisers have also graced classic rockers with Def Leppard, Whitesnake and ZZ Top taking the stage one after the other on the final night.

Taking their place alongside the big names of monster music events are festivals such as T in the Park, V Fest, The Wickerman, Radio 1's Big Weekend, and similar affairs of loud and muddy, music-based fun. Each of which offers the festival goer something slightly different. The Wickerman festival gives you the likes of The Human League and The Zutons alongside pyrotechnic druidry. Scotland's T in

the Park offers an eclectic mix of metal, pop, indie and rock, with the currently unavoidable Kings of Leon taking centre stage on day one. This year's V Fest line up seems uncannily similar to T in the Park's, with The Killers, Razorlight, Lily Allen, The Ting Tings and The Script appearing at both. Many congratulations if you managed to get tickets to Radio 1's Big weekend; I haven't and therefore refuse to spend any more time talking about it.

If none of the slightly less well known music festivals take your fancy, then you might want to try something a bit more alternative to whet your festival appetite. Instead of going to a music festival why not try comedy? The best known of all comedy festivals would be The Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Every year many hundreds of comedians invade the city, with practically every bar, café and theatre being utilised. Other comedy festivals across the country include The Leicester Comedy Festival, which runs from February 8th to the 17th and attracts around 800 acts, and many other major cities such as Liverpool, Bath and Manchester all run comedy festivals throughout the year.

If you're really looking for somewhere different to go to this year, and have got a cavalier attitude towards money and budgets then why not try an international festival. Notorious music festivals to check out would include SXSW (South By Southwest), in which Austin in Texan is inundated by thousands of bands and music industry types, tickets cost about £139 for students. If want to take part in a Germanic mosh-pit then Rock am Ring may be your best bet. If you like your boogying interspersed with tanning then International Benicàssim Festival in Valencia, Spain is a good place to start.

On the (much) more alternative side, but sticking to the money blowing theme, then why not head over to Mexico to celebrate El Día de los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead, one of the few times you can reasonably drink tequila whilst looking like Death. The Trung Thu festival takes place annually in Vietnam as a celebration of when the moon is at its brightest and most beautiful. If you want something truly remote, then the N'cwala festival in Zambia's Eastern Province is a good bet. Every February the Nogoni people put on their best outfits and have a dancing competition to celebrate the first harvest of the year.

BEAT THE CREDIT CRUNCH!

4 BED HOMES STILL AVAILABLE



**OUR INCLUSIVE
RENTS ARE AT
LEAST £500 p/a LESS
THAN MOST OTHER
LANDLORDS***

AVERAGE RENT: £69.50

INCLUDES UTILITIES, PHONE, BROADBAND & INSURANCE

NO DEPOSIT OR RETAINER

STUDENT FRIENDLY LOCATIONS



**For more info contact 01524 592170
or visit www.lusu.co.uk/housing**

Mind reading: Can science fiction become a reality?

Gowri Nair

THE ABILITY TO read minds is a phenomenon that has gripped the world for decades. Now, scientists have bordered upon groundbreaking research, which in the next ten years is thought to turn the phenomenon into a reality.

By using a brain scanner that highlights neural activity, researchers have been able to predict where exactly a person imagines themselves to be, for example in a maze or in a virtual room. Experiments were conducted by University College London on four young men. Their heads were placed in an MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) scanner while they used a computer keypad to navigate their way around a virtual reality room, having chosen to stand on one of four points. Each of the guinea pigs had to walk around the room several times, passing the same four points each time. While this was being done, each man's neural activity was measured. The study focused on the hippocampus, a small area of the brain, which is vital for imagining future events as well as memory and navigation.

Scientists noticed that the pattern of brain activity were different for each point, enabling them to predict where exactly in the room a person was by

simply looking at the scans. Certain nerve cells in the hippocampus known as 'place cells' became stimulated whenever a person imagined themselves to be at a particular point.

Professor Eleanor Maguire, a leader in the study, said: "Surprisingly, just by looking at the brain data, we could predict exactly where they were in the virtual reality environment. In other words, we could read their spatial memories."

"This brings us ever-closer to the tantalising prospect of discovering how a person's lifetime of experiences are coded by the neurons of the brain."

Prof Maguire's colleague, Doctor Demis Hassabis, said: "It's also a small step toward the idea of mind reading,

"It's also a small step toward the idea of mind reading, because just by looking at neural activity, we are able to say what someone is thinking,"

because just by looking at neural activity, we are able to see what someone is thinking." She believes it could one day be possible to do the same with other types of memories and thoughts.

Although the prospect of direct mind reading seems a little far-fetched, these studies are beginning to show that technology that can interpret peo-

ple's thoughts may be used to our own benefits within our lifetimes. Unraveling the mysterious functions of the human memory may enable scientists to conduct further research on diseases that affect our nation today. "Understanding how we as humans record our memories is critical to helping us learn how information is processed in the hippocampus and how our memories are eroded by diseases such as Alzheimer's," said Dr Hassabis.

However mind-boggling these ideas may be, the prospect of mind reading is still delving into the realms of science fiction. So far, the experiment has only worked on a small set of nerve cells specific to the hippocampus. Although the findings may open up the possibility of comprehending how other kinds of memories are encoded in the brain, we are still a long way off being able to see what lies inside a person's head.

"We can rest easy in terms of mind-reading," said Prof Maguire. "While technically in this study we were able to predict someone's spatial memory from their brain activity, there was nothing intrusive about what we did."

This keeps ethical implications to a minimum. "It's not that we can put somebody in a brain scanner and suddenly read their thoughts. It's quite an involved process that's at a very early stage." She confirmed.

Despite the fact that the technology is in its very early stages of develop-



ment, new discoveries are being uncovered every day. When it comes to science, you can never say never. Who

knows? In the next fifty years, the far-fetched fiction films that appear on our TV screens could become a reality.

THE ONLY WAY TO RUIN WEDNESDAY MORNINGS

**FUSION TUESDAYS
AT CUBA LANCASTER**

**JOIN US EVERY WEEK FOR THE
BIGGEST, MESSIEST
STUDENT NIGHT
LANCASTER HAS TO OFFER
BUY A BOTTLE GET A SHOT FREE!**



**PARTY GAMES
DRINKS OFFERS
EVERY WEEK
SEE YOU THERE
YES?!**



ARTS

Ironic, observant and dark



Local talent: Thomas Wogan raises wry smiles throughout

Comic Review: *Thomas Wogan is Dead* by Dave Hughes

Richie Garton
Arts Editor

THOMAS WOGAN IS Dead is a quirky comic-book, authored and drawn by Lancaster artist Dave Hughes. It's a short-ish book (I read it in about an hour) about the more-than-mundane life of Delia Smith-fixated, beans-on-toast-loving oddball Thomas Wogan. Thomas finds himself in death's waiting-room at the beginning of the story, and the rest of the comic flickers between snapshots from his everyday life and his conversations with the animals in the waiting-room (which include a grumpy cuckoo, a heroic bat and an irritating toad). Needless to say, it is a rather surreal read; it falls somewhere between humour and philosophy, with quite a nice balance of the two.

I wouldn't call the comic laugh-out-loud funny, but it manages to raise a lot of wry smiles throughout. The tone is often ironic, socially observant and occasionally dark. It contains just the right amount of profanity (not excessive, but well-placed enough to be funny), and a lot of the comedy comes from the embarrassing retold deaths of some of the animals. It is also thought-provoking, however; the everyday drudgery and dullness of life in England is captured, not only through the events of Tho-

mas's depressing life, but by the drawing style. The comic is drawn in black-and-white, which fulfils this purpose quite brilliantly (the sky in Morecambe is blotchy and grey), and gives it a lot of character. Something I liked about the drawing style was that the human characters are drawn in an exaggerated, cartoony, often grotesque fashion, while the animal characters are highly detailed and realistic. This made for a very nice contrast, making the comic appear both fresh and distinctive. The attention to detail throughout is also impressive; each panel contains oodles of intricate miscellanies, and clocks in the background show the reader the passage of time. It's actually surprising that Hughes both drew and scripted this comic; not a lot of people can draw so well and actually tell a decent story.

The originality of *Thomas Wogan* appears to be its main selling point. It's true that I've never heard or seen anything like it; fortunately it doesn't attempt any superhero stuff, and it manages to be amusing without succumbing to over-the-top silliness. Thomas ends up being quite a likeable hero too, despite being a very dull person. Strangely, his spontaneous day trip to Morecambe (the best day of his life) feels like a truly inspiring thing, and this is exactly how it should be. I found the ambiguous ending a bit frustrating, but it didn't spoil my enjoyment of the comic too much. It was genuinely interesting, and difficult to put down. Well worth a look for comics aficionados.

Thomas Wogan is Dead is available from First Age comics in Lancaster, as well as Travelling Man in the North of England.



'Who's watching the Watchmen?'

Film Review: *Watchmen* Malin Akerman, Jack Earle Haley, Patrick Wilson Dir: Zack Snyder

Hannah Fearon

IT'S THAT TIME of the year again, the season of the fantasy and sci-fi with films like *Wolverine*, *Star Trek* and *Dragonball Evolution* on the way.

Watchmen was both an unusual and interesting start from director Zack Snyder.

Watchmen is set in 1985 America, when Nixon was president. However, in this alternate reality, superheroes are the norm and referred to as the 'Watchmen' – only one of whom has powers. After a former superhero is murdered, Watchman Rorschach uncovers a plot to kill all former masked vigilantes. The public have turned against the Watchmen but they must unite together to once again fight crime and uncover the mystery of their colleague's death.

There has perhaps been no other graphic novel or comic book adaptation quite like *Watchmen*. The film follows the graphic novel almost frame by frame and whether this is a positive factor or not is questionable. The frames

in the novel could be almost identical to the film stills. This might make for a rather boring film for anyone who has read *Watchmen* before. However, I find that this is rather interesting, and results in the film stills looking very artistic and similar to comic book images. *Watchmen* is extremely dark, violent and at times incredibly graphic and gory. The use of exaggerated violence and gore in the film works rather well as it emphasises the comic book style. I particularly enjoyed the character of Rorschach, perhaps the most sinister part of the film. His narration was dark, but also political, as he spoke about the people of America.

Whilst I enjoyed *Watchmen* it wasn't quite what I expected. The film is a little political, but I thought that the portrayal of an alternate America



Subatomic:
The film stays faithful to the comic book stills, but at what cost?

might be used to make more of a point. The overly stylized slow motion action sequences were a little dull, just what I would expect from Zack Snyder, director of *300*. At three hours, the majority of the film consisted of flashbacks to the lives of the former superheroes which at times seemed tedious and unnecessary. This took focus away from the main action which was much more interesting.

I read the graphic novel of *Watchmen* after watching the film and realised how much effort and detail must have gone into recreating this for film. The cinematography was excellent and the film certainly appealed to the senses. Whilst slow motion fight sequences can get a little old and dull, they were executed beautifully. *Watchmen* is definitely a film that was made to watch in the cinema, and I would highly recommend it even if like me, you hadn't read the graphic novel.



LUTG's Shakespeare plays prove a big hit

Definitely an ado about something

Theatre Review: *Much Ado About Nothing* LU Theatre Group

Kathi Michaelis

WHENEVER I GO to see a Lancaster University Theatre Group performance, I'm always surprised at how many good actors they manage to unearth. And, after watching *Much Ado*, I was even more surprised that there were any left over for the other plays of the term – with a tight cast that was exceptional down to the very last role.

The play was rendered in a shortened version – no intermission, just less than one and a half hours – so it is understandable that the beginning was a little too abrupt. Often the snappy pace worked with the play rather than against it, but for members of the audience unfamiliar with *Much Ado*, joining in with the plot was not exactly made easy. Things did become clearer, however, after the first scene, and even though there were a lot of characters in the play, each actor managed to make their performance both distinctive and easy to follow.

The audience were not only kept on the edge of their seats by the quality of the performance, but possibly even more by the way the actors used us in the play. The audience involvement – being questioned by Dogberry, the inefficient and

bumbling officer of the law, someone's arm being used as a shield, Benedick (Olly Trumble) actually sat on someone's lap – made for some really good laughs. I have to say though, I was really relieved I wasn't sitting in the front two rows!

However, I did find that certain parts of the play might have been a bit too intense, too sudden, if only perhaps due to the severely shortened length. For example, Leonato (Jon C Stanhope, in an otherwise very convincing performance), nearly killing his daughter, Hero, (Charlie Hanson) in one second, and then turning back into a protective father in the space of about five minutes. In other scenes, it was exactly that intensity in the actors' renditions which made the performance so enticing – only to mention Peter Holmes as the evil Don John, or Leo Patel as the good, but fatally misled Don Pedro. Beatrice (Sammi Searle) and Benedick (Olly Trumble) absolutely shone in their high-intensity scenes together, particularly on one occasion when Beatrice furiously chews over the limitations of her position as a woman in society.

One of the highlights of the play was Rory Poole's rendition of both Dogberry and Verges, the two policemen in *Much Ado*. Only that, in this performance, there was one policeman and a hand puppet. I don't



'This looks not like a nuptial': Hero (Charlie Hanson) lies broken and humiliated at her own wedding as this otherwise light-hearted play suddenly becomes more intense. (Photo: Abi Williams)

know whether this feature resulted from lack of actors or a pure stroke of genius – anyway, it worked. The audience was in stitches. The only problem was that Dogberry was dressed more like a tramp than a policeman, and this resulted in some confusing moments at the beginning of his first scene, because we weren't immediately aware of who he was sup-

posed to be.

Aside from minor issues like this, *Much Ado* had a strong cast, and it has to be said that there was more than one comic moment in the play. In fact, the entire performance was utterly entertaining. I'd be very much surprised if it didn't turn into a success at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival as well.

Twelfth Night sells out after two

Theatre Review: *Twelfth Night* LU Theatre Group

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY THEATRE Group's hottest performance of the year? Certainly, judging by the queues outside the Dukes Youth Theatre – or by the sauna-like temperatures inside. The discomforts of sitting with your elbows tucked in (so that as many people as possible could watch the sold-out performance), however, were soon forgotten.

The high expectations I had of the LUTG after last term's plays were not disappointed. I've rarely seen so much energy on stage, and the fun that the entire cast seemed to have

whilst performing soon infected the audience, too. The play made very good use of the small spaces that the Dukes Youth has to offer, and the constant moving around of the actors on stage kept the audience on the edge of their seats throughout the entire play.

One of the most mentionable performers was definitely Holly Sharp as the Fool – amazingly energetic, a perfect fit for the role. The cheeky roguishness she brought to the part impressed me a lot – not at least helped along by the singing and dancing. The use of music

throughout the play (mostly supplied by a guitar player sitting among the audience) was refreshingly authentic as it was live, not played from a tape.

The other performer that deserves a special mention, in my opinion, is Paul Sellwood. As Malvolio, he switched very convincingly from perfectly arrogant to madly happy, in order to impress Lady Olivia. He rendered both of these aspects of the character in an outstandingly funny way – nevertheless managing to make the audience sympathise with Malvolio when he is finally declared mad and locked away. His crowning achievement of the night, however, was his ability to keep a straight face whilst donning a pair of bright yellow tights stuffed out with a sock or three.

The rest of the cast, however, were in no way inferior to those two. Michael Holt, Stacey Norris and Iain Black proved their comic talent as Sir Andrew, Maria and Sir Toby, scheming the downfall of arch-enemy Malvolio and entertaining the audience with mostly drunken (the characters, not the actors) follies. Ali Sheen (Viola/Cesario) and Hannah Mason (Olivia) also gave good, solid performances.

All in all, a well-rounded, very enjoyable play. Although admittedly, I was glad I'd read a synopsis of the plot beforehand – some of the speeches were delivered very quickly, and I could imagine that anyone who didn't know what the story was would have found it a tad hard to follow.



THE sugarhouse
www.thesugarhouse.co.uk

**GET SHAGG-ED
EVERY WEEK!**

Comedy career killer?

Film Review: *Lesbian Vampire Killers*

James Corden, Matthew Horne, Paul McGann
Dir: Phil Claydon

Hannah Fearon

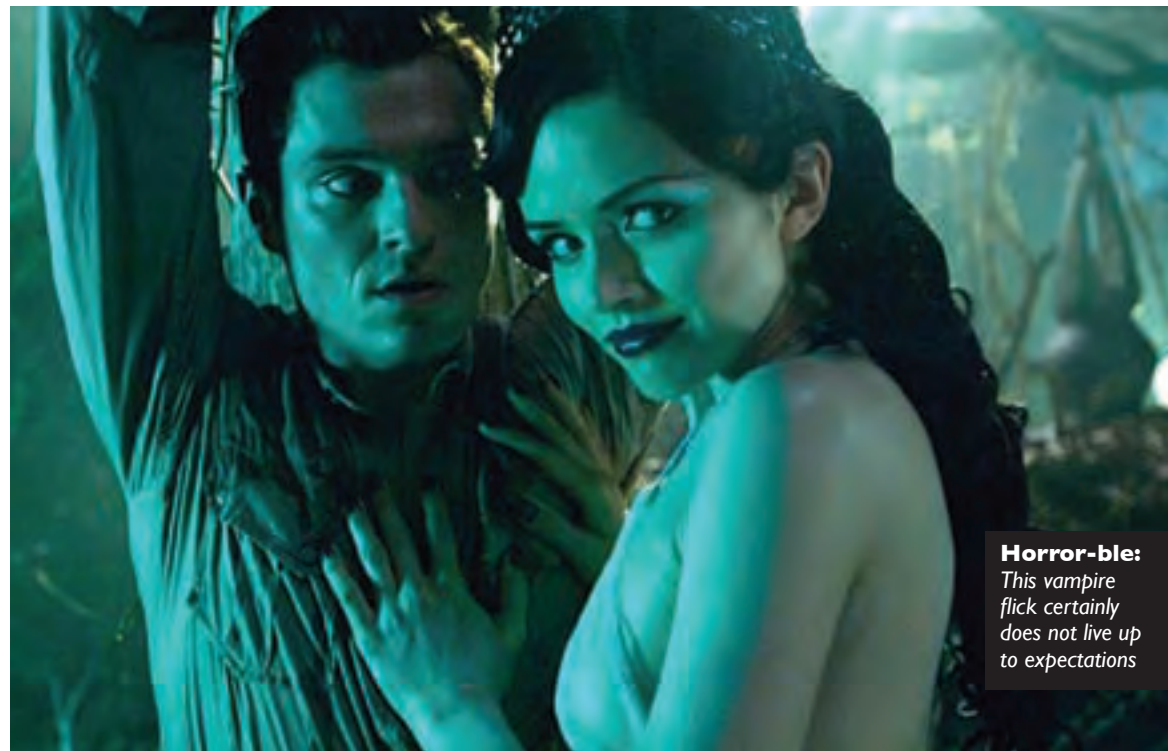
LESBIAN VAMPIRE KILLERS is a true horror. A horror in the sense that I had to waste a precious eighty-eight minutes of my life sitting through it.

Perhaps I was naïve to expect more of Phil Hupfield and Stewart Williams, the two writers responsible for many popular comedy shows such as *The Kevin Bishop Show* and *The Friday Night Project*. James Corden and

Matthew Horne certainly haven't done themselves any favours by starring in this abysmal attempt at a horror spoof.

Fletch (Corden) and Jimmy (Horne) are two best friends that embark on a hiking trip after Fletch loses his job and Jimmy loses his girlfriend. They arrive in the rural Welsh town, Cragwitch, which was cursed by Camilla the vampire queen. Upon the eve of her eighteenth birthday, any female inhabitant of the town will become a lesbian vampire. Fletch and Jimmy are sacrificed by the men of the town and are sent into the woods to a cottage full of female students. The eerie cottage then becomes under attack from the lesbian vampires.

The film seems on first glance to possess the many elements needed to create a successful film; two rising comedy stars, vampires, drinking, and the rather frequent lesbian kiss. Surely, with all this, *Lesbian Vampire Killers* should have been a huge hit. However, the script is poor, the acting barely adequate, and the whole plot of the film just plain awful. Horror comedies are notoriously difficult to pull off, with films like *Shaun of the Dead* setting the golden standard. Many films such as *Severance* and *The Cottage* have tried



Horror-ble:
This vampire flick certainly does not live up to expectations

and failed terribly with this hybrid genre. With that said, *Lesbian Vampire Killers* doesn't even seem to know what it is. Funny at times, the film doesn't pass as a comedy; neither does it reach a decent level of horror.

James Corden ultimately carries the film, but not quite well enough. An awkward Matthew Horne struggles with the lead role and it seems that Corden has put a little of himself and

his previous roles into his character. The majority of the rare funny moments have already been played over and over again on television trailers for the past month. When you finally see them in the film, all humour is lost.

Lesbian Vampire Killers disappointed me, but I never expected it to be widely popular. The many people who went to watch it, or who are interested in watching it, are more than likely fans

of Corden and Horne's previous work, and will be let down by this poor offering. Perhaps Corden and Horne should stick to writing their own scripts in the future as they have proved to be much more successful. Or perhaps Corden should just ditch Horne and take the journey to stardom alone.



'Next time we meet, I'm gonna break your arms!'

Game Review: *Street Fighter IV* (Xbox 360, PS3)

Richie Garton
Arts Editor



Classic:
Old characters, such as Dan and Guile, are updated for this brand new version of a childhood favourite

BEING A MASSIVE lover of the timeless *Street Fighter II* from the bygone age of 16-bit consoles, I was rather frustrated to find that the latest instalment of the series was just being released on the Xbox and PS3 (my only console is a rather battered but much-loved Wii). So, after playing a few nostalgic rounds of *Street Fighter II Turbo* on the Virtual Console, I headed over to my PS3-owning friend's house to shamelessly hijack his superior hardware and try out this new game.

I was not disappointed. What amazed me the most was how *SF IV* played just like its older brother, while updating the gameplay in all the right places. The general style is more or less unchanged; most of the classic moves are all performed in ex-

actly the same way, the fighting is still done on a 2D plane, and the tactical, timing-orientated nature of the game (as opposed to the frenzied button-mashing encouraged by *Tekken* and *Soulcalibur*) is maintained. However, as expected, the graphics have been dramatically improved, and the gameplay is a lot more fluid and precise. This is exactly what the game needed to be: the formula of *SF II* was nearly perfect to begin with, and with only moderate tweaks the new game is equally good, and still feels shiny and new.

All 12 beloved fighters from *SF II Turbo* are faithfully reproduced, from Chun-Li to M.Bison, and they play just like they should. The new characters all seem pretty good, but frankly I was too busy trying out all my old favourites against my friend

(and kicking arse, I might add) to notice. One thing that struck me while playing the game was that it seems to have been made with the aim of satisfying long-time *Street Fighter* fanboys, which might explain why I enjoyed it so much and found it so playable. I imagine newcomers to the series might find it a bit less welcoming, especially if used to more simple fighting games. Still, fan or no, it's hard to argue with the game's pure polished quality.

After having wasted several (rather glorious) hours of my friend's time, my thirst for senseless violence was quenched, and my faith in Capcom reaffirmed.



THE DOME MORECAMBE COMING SOON:

DOME SHOWS

Saturday 9th May
MERCURY QUEEN TRIBUTE
7.30pm £14

Friday 15th May
THE NUMBER ONE 50s & 60s SHOW
8pm £12.50

Saturday 16th May
FREDDIE STARR
7.30pm £18.50/£17

Saturday 23rd May
JOE LONGTHORNE
7.30pm £22.50

Friday 29th May
MICHAEL MCGOLDRICK & BIG BAND
7.30pm £14/£12

PLATFORM SHOWS

Friday 24th April
ALY BAIN & PHIL CUNNINGHAM
Scottish accordion and fiddle stars
8pm £13/£12

Saturday 2nd May
THE UK BEACH BOYS
The UK's finest Beach Boys tribute band
7.30pm £13/£12

Saturday 9th May
ALAN PRICE
Join Alan and his band for an evening of musical nostalgia
8pm £16

Saturday 23rd May
JALEO FLAMENCO
Andalusian song, music and dance
7.30pm £14/£12

Friday 5th June
TALON – THE BEST OF THE EAGLES
8pm £15

Saturday 6th June
THE MANFREDs – LET 'EM ROLL TOUR
7.30pm £15/£14

MUSIC, COMEDY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS ALL YEAR ROUND

Please call the Box Office on 01524 582803 for tickets and information or visit our website
www.lancaster.gov.uk/platformanddome

Central promenade, Morecambe

LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL
Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Image prison

For long-term success, bands must escape the curse of NME's hype



Hyperbole: Were The Vines really "The best band since Nirvana"?

It's the bands who refuse to be typecast who make the British music scene what it is, writes **Elliott Homer**

IN RECENT YEARS, NME, the nation's most popular music publication, has been the centre of controversy regarding the over-hyping of bands before even the first whiff of a single release, the most recent case being, in this writer's opinion, the rather damp squib that was the Jesus & Mary Chain rip-offs Glasvegas.

Whilst the formula of preceding period of extreme hype followed by a eventual disappointment is clear as part of the nations musical DNA, be it Suede kicking off Britpop in the 1991 with *The Drowners*, only to have disappeared by 1997 with the electronic-influenced *Head Music*.

The same could be said of the progenitors of the garage rock revival of the early-2000s, The Vines. They appeared on the cover of the NME in early 2001, celebrating the UK release of debut single, *Get Free* cited as the beginning of a new era for rock n' roll. However, come the release of sophomore effort *Winning Days*, the group's popularity had waned, and with other notables of the movement like The White Stripes and The Walkmen moving on to success (through immersion into artistic development and disappearing in a cloud of ubiquity respectively) they now find themselves in the world of rock limbo, trapped between irregular tour schedules and internet-only releases.

As with any formula though there are exceptions. Two groups in recent memory to have escaped the curse of NME hype are Arctic Monkeys and

disbanded. There have been many attempts to create a new look after the gross travesty that was Nu/New-Rave, be it the DIY-ethos of former MySpace phenomenon's like Does It Offend You, Yeah? or The Ting Tings' efforts in trying to blend indie chic credibility with unabashed pop tunes.

This brings us to the present with the surprise midnight release on March 16 of The Horrors' first sampling of their latest offering, *Sea Within A Sea*. An eight minute epic that borrows liberally from sources like producer Geoff Barrow's (of Portishead) own *The Rip*, sounds like Neu! with a healthy dollop of Joy Division in Coffin Joe's newly discovered metronomic drumming stylings. Whilst its guarantees little or no radio play, the band are moving down an intriguing path that leads down the dangerous roads of sonic luminaries such as John McGeoch, Kevin Shields and Robert Fripp.

Regardless of whether the music is original or not, the band has to be credited for straying from the camp Hammer Horror/Addam's Family references (note Joshua Von Grimm's change in nom-de-plume to Joshua Third) to more accurately represent their true passions, emulating Alan Vega's Suicide and The Sonics. Whether Faris Badwan's vocals will be up to this shift is yet to be seen; his current role as vocalist has been significantly supported by extra-curricular activities such as appearing on The Mighty Boosh satirising goth fashion and tight jeans or contributing artwork to The Charlatans.

The courage to combat your own popularity is not alien to British music, but with the patronage of the NME in a scene that they themselves helped create, one has to wonder if The Horrors' decision to eschew their identity to further their music will pay off or if there will be a backlash from their established fan base.

As far as this writer is concerned this track is the best thing that's been released all year, miles ahead of anything Franz Ferdinand, U2 or Lily Allen has had to offer. And all they had to do was be awkward about it; if they've learnt anything in their two years away, it's that there are public image lessons to be learned from Radiohead, Pavement and early-The Cure records regarding the so-called 'anti-image'.

So which is most successful the 'anti-image', or the image? Is it too pedantic to say both? Maybe. But the fact is the history of modern music is littered with groups formed with the intention to break away from the status quo, with polarising amounts of success, but credit must be given to the supposed anarchistic attempts to destroy popular trend. So while you read this humble publication instead of the hideous hype-machine that is the NME, spare a thought for the awkward buggers of the British music scene, they make it what it is, and definitely more fun.

'It's not about puking on your girlfriend'

Andrew Almond speaks to Official Secrets Act

IT'S NOT EASY being in Official Secrets Act. As if the pressure of being in one of 2009's most hotly tipped bands wasn't enough, the news that first your tour bus (affectionately named 'Denise') has been seized by the police under the Terrorism Act, and then that your drummer has been run over must have left Tom, Alex, Mike and Lawrence wondering what exactly they'd done to incur such wrath.

Make-shift drummer Mike Evans and bassist Lawrence Diamond met SCAN in the cupboard-like 'dressing room' of Nottingham's Bodega before their gig there in late March. All manner of topics were covered; from supporting the Rakes in Europe ("a fucking great band") and their aims for Official Secrets Act, "it's not about drinking beer in the guitar and puking on your girlfriend!"

Motivated by "a desire not to be boring" because as Diamond explains, "so many bands say they love the Beatles, the Kinks and Blondie," Official Secrets Act cite their influences as French Renaissance architecture and British military victories and defeats, suggesting not only a prevalent sense of cultural identity, but also a explicit awareness of their national heritage. One listen to the marvellously infectious, and poignantly titled, *Girl from the BBC* and it becomes clear that these unique reference points are backed up with some impeccably executed pop songs.

There are obvious influences from 1980s evident throughout

the dazzling debut album *Understanding Electricity*. One song is "about falling in love with a girl who's a bit older than you... maybe thirty or thirty-one, who then plays you some amazing a records from her youth." Tear for Fears are mentioned as an influence but Diamond states the impact that I.R.S period REM had on the band: "You say REM and loads of people say 'ah yeah Man on the Moon, Out of Time', but that was their ninth record, I.R.S is where it's at."

It comes as no surprise for a band with such influences that integrity is of paramount importance, "loads of bands that are taking their influences [from the 80s] see it as a trendy thing and angular... we look at them as beautiful things; they're soulful and we hope that's what are songs are, and our live shows," Diamond enthuses.

With *Understanding Electricity* currently filling column inches in the press up and down the country, having recently been released on the One Little Indian label, Evans summarises thus: "what matters to us that people come to the shows, people listen to the music and its music we believe is genuine, not just jumping on a bandwagon."

From tonight's showing it becomes clear that, as one perfectly crafted pop ditty fades into another, Official Secrets Act are anything but boring or jumping on a bandwagon. And here's hoping they get the luck that they so sorely deserve; luck that will see broken drummers replaced by acclaimed records and vans seized under the Terrorism Act overridden by the undeniable brilliance of the Official Secrets Act.



Tough gig: Official Secrets Act's drummer was hit by a car after their tour bus was seized under the Terrorism Act.

The Plough

COUNTRY PUB & DINING ROOM

10% OFF MEALS
ALL DAY, EVERYDAY
FOR ALL UNIVERSITY
STAFF & STUDENTS

20% FOR PURPLCARD HOLDERS
TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS

COME AND TRY OUR NEW SPRING-SUMMER MENU!

MUSIC

Fever to Synth



Yeah Yeah Yeahs *It's Blitz!* (Juno Records)

James Barker

NEW YORK'S FINEST trio, return with their third and arguably their best album to date, *It's Blitz!*

It's been three years since the critically acclaimed *Show Your Bones* and, lo and behold, as we've found with countless other indie bands, Yeah Yeah Yeahs have spent their break bent over a synth. Luckily guitarist come synth extraordinaire Nick Zinner has learnt it well and presents us with 41 minutes of knob twiddling Electro pop.

This is the sound of a band attempting an expansion from their roots. The feedback driven

Skeletons is a million miles away from *Date With The Night*, the album is certain to split fans. *It's Blitz!*, despite it's manic sounding title is a very well polished outing, songs like *Runaway* and *Hysteric* found at the back end of the album are tender romance songs with Karen O delivering some of the best lines she's ever written on top of the droning guitars and synths of Zinner. Not that drummer Brian Chase should be forgotten; he appears to be the lynch pin of the group keeping the mad rhythm we came to love Yeah Yeah Yeahs for on songs like *Dull Life*. Without him the band would surely slip into avant pop epics sounding like Patti Smith singing for The Killers.

The album holds some great dance floor fillers. Single, *Zero* is probably the best song the band have written but it is almost set to become as irritating as *Sex On Fire*. *Heads Will Roll* sees the band enter Goldfrapp territory with a chimney guitar riff and lyrics about glitter, you can't help but dance to it.

It's Blitz! has a great bal-

ance of dance floor fillers and relaxed moments. The album has been brilliantly put together and shows a musical depth we haven't seen in Yeah Yeah Yeahs before. The band has obviously gone out with the intention of creating their landmark album and to an extent they have. But where it falls down is in its warmth; it's a very cold, almost calculated record. Karen's whispering on *Hysteric* - nice as it is - is just not as touching as *Maps*. As an album *It's Blitz!* is musically outstanding, a real expansion to the group's sound and its dance floor fillers will ensure it sells by the shed load. But if you wanted an album full of garage guitar fuzz riffs, crazy drumming and resonating romanticism's this is not one for you. *It's Blitz!* will go down as a great album, but its coldness and lack of real grit mean that it will split the Yeah Yeah Yeahs fan base.



Metallic elements

Mastodon *Crack The Skye* (Reprise Records/ Warner)

Mark McGlashan

EASTER BROUGHT WITH it a new mammoth LP from the prog/sludge metallers Mastodon. The hugely anticipated follow-up to 2006's *Blood Mountain*, *Crack The Skye* bears us a Mastodon reborn. Everything Mastodon is here; the concept,

crushing riffs, incredible musicianship and equally incredible artwork, but it's all that much more refined; much more accessible. Singing takes president over Troy (Bass) and Brent's (Guitar) usual sneer and growl approach, which lends itself nicely to the album theme. After 2004's *Leviathan* (water) and *Blood Mountain* (Earth) *Crack The Skye* is the latest element in the Mastodon universe representing - naturally - air. But the concept is a bit freaky.

It goes something like this: a paralysed boy's soul leaves his body, but flies too close to the sun, severing the golden umbilical cord attaching him to his body. He goes through a wormhole back to a time where a pagan cult called Khlysty are having a divination; speaking to the dead. He gets involved and

gets put into Rasputin's body. Rasputin gets murdered and both their souls leave his body. Rasputin returns the boy's soul to his body, unparalysed. Cool, huh?

This incarnation is a lot more proggy than their previous releases. It might have you yearning for the days of Remission with no frills, balls-to-wall jams like *Mother Puncher* and *March of the Fire Ants* or it might kick you in the side of the head by different means. There's no question that the new tunes are far removed from their previous work, but this album shows a band that are doing it their way. No doubt about it. Here's looking forward to their next effort and another kick in the temple.



Conservative hardcore

Earth Crisis *To The Death* (Century Media/EMI)

Mark McGlashan

I REMEMBER EARTH Crisis (ExCx) more than fondly, their records *Destroy The Machines* and *Gomorrah's Season Ends* catapulted me into the world in a big way. I obsessed over everything they had to say, the lifestyle, the uncompromising attitude, EVERYTHING.

For those who don't know; here's a brief introduction to ExCx - arguably the most influ-

ential metallic hardcore band of all time, ExCx fly the flag for veganism, militant animal rights protest and the straight edge (sXe) way of life. Because of this, ExCx have become synonymous with the straight edge lifestyle promoting self awareness, sobriety, non-promiscuous sex and a strict no-drugs policy.

What's the point, you might think? Well, it's ultimately about making yourself stronger - mentally - as an individual. It's about rejecting the unnecessary toxins fed to us by society, it's about rejecting the easy way out, it's about crafting yourself as an individual by the means you were born with - your mind. ExCx made their mark in the sXe movement by promoting the sXe values as well as animal rights, pro-life and vegan attitudes and releasing crushing underground anthem after crushing underground anthem.

To The Death is their first release following their recent reformation. And, my word, you'll be glad to know they're as angry and relevant as ever. This ranks up their with their best; an incredible return to form. The music is still rooted in old-school ExCx but more modern, vocalist Karl Buechner's voice is more in-your-face than before, and is so much better (read: violent) yet their message is still clear and focussed: 'use your fucking mind.'

If you don't like your music mingled with your politics then ExCx really aren't for you. But if you want to dig a bit further check out: Strife, Integrity, Snapcase and Path of Resistance.



Sunshine singles

Detroit Social Club *Sunshine People* (Stranded Soldier)

Kate Davis

SUNSHINE PEOPLE, THE newest single from Detroit Social Club, is a deceptively delicious track that is both evocative and disassociated,

unfeeling and brilliant. It has many elements of what could be a rock anthem, beginning with a squealing guitar, crowd-oriented backing track, and off-beat changes in melodic structure to name but a few qualities conducive to epic songs.

The kicker with this track is that none of the token hard-rock elements come to the forefront to take hold of the listener and/or enact a swift aural kick in the arse: instead, each musical component is so muted, so drawn out and foggy, that the entire track seems to be in a perpetual haze. The down-tempo beat, heavily echoed drums, and audio distancing of the song from the listening ear makes the entire production seem raw and basic in a highly legitimate way, making you feel as though you're experiencing the

track just beyond your reach, giving it an uncomfortable edge that leaves you continually wanting just a little bit more. There's also a nice call-and-response thing happening between the group singers and lead, providing an agreeable dynamic between the faceless, unclear masses and the clear, powerful front man that heighten the prevalence of both elements.

Sunshine People may leave you feeling slightly less optimistic after listening, but somehow in the most positive, addictive sort of manner you could hope for.



Kid British *Sunny Days* (Mercury)

Kate Davis

KID BRITISH, A ska-rap band from Manchester, has crafted a charming little ditty with their upcoming single *Sunny Days*. The song has an upbeat vibe that is quite reminiscent of the general glee evoked by the changing of seasons; blue skies, warm rays of sunshine on an outdoor patio with pint in hand, conversing about all things unacademic and highly enter-

taining... sadly, I digress. The band has a very effective tactic in parallel structure within the song, intermixing a casual, conversational rap style with a damn catchy chorus crooned enthusiastically by the foursome. The beat and melody-an awesome quick paced piano tune-prove to be a tongue-and-cheek counterpoint to the mildly depressing yet witty lyrics about a sullen male, contemplating the sudden absence of his girlfriend over a plate of beans and toast. In all, this is just one of those fun songs that will tap your toes and perhaps even encourage an unintended chuckle, and is worth a listen if only for those small gems alone.



ELEVEN

Cafe • Bar • Lancaster

Function Room Open Day

Our Function room has recently been renovated to a modern a sleek space perfect for a business meeting where the objective is to impress.



- Able to Cater for parties of up to 70 People
- Room Hire starting from just £99
- Best inner city location in Lancaster
- Modern, Stylish, Affordable
- Open till late
- Buffet Menu Available
- Wide selection of Cocktails



Tuesday 28th April - Open All Day



60-62 Church Street - Lancaster - LA1 1LH - 01524 33354 www.bar-eleven.co.uk

LANCASTERS OFFICIAL
STUDENT NIGHT LUSU

FREE BUSES AVAILABLE FROM CAMPUS

MONDAY MADNESS

2 FLOORS 2 DIS

8PM TO 3AM

Management reserve all rights to refuse entry

FREE **Vodka**
SHOT
with this voucher

Bottle VK
£1
with this voucher

COCKTAILS
2-4-1
with this voucher

£1 OFF
ENTRY
with this voucher

Revolution
Penny Street - Lancaster

BUCS, sweat and tears

Gareth Coleman's review of Lancaster's fortunes in the BUCS season



Gareth Coleman
AU President

IT'S THE SUMMER Term, the sun is shining (hopefully) and Roses is just around the corner. However, there is a part of me which is slightly miffed, as the BUCS season (British Universities & Colleges Sport) has all but drawn to a close (unless you play Cricket).

'BUCS Wednesdays', as I like to call them, have been a massive part of my year. No doubt you'll have seen numerous university teams congregating in Alex Square prior to their departure

to other institutions. These guys have played week-in, week-out from week one or two of Michaelmas Term, and they have been brilliant; I can't praise them enough.

I've said it before, but our university teams have the honour of representing over 10,000 students, and they haven't disappointed. I've tried to watch and support as many teams as I can on Wednesdays all year, so I've witnessed the blood, sweat and tears which they put into each game, how much each win and each loss means to every player, every captain and every club.

You'll have seen the articles in SCAN about our sporting successes. This year, we are currently sitting in 43rd place in the BUCS Overall Championship (there are 153 universities registered with BUCS), ahead of other universities such as Cambridge and Liverpool (11 places ahead of York!).

However, whilst those in the tournaments have been grabbing headlines and hauling in the medals, the BUCS Conference Leagues are (almost) finished.

Overall, we've punched above our weight this year - given our facilities - and I want to say here a massive congratulations to all those who have competed in BUCS this year (and equally, good luck to those who are still to do so!). You've done Lancaster proud.



So near, so far: LUWHC 1sts came second in the Northern Conference Cup final, losing 5-0 to Durham. (Photo: Dan Hogan)

Badminton

This club has mixed fortunes this year, with the Men's 1sts comfortably topping their league (2A) and being promoted, whilst the Men's 2nds consolidated in mid-table 3A. However, the Women's 1sts have had a difficult year, propping up their league at the bottom. That said, the girls this year were playing in a higher league than both the Men's teams (1A), so the standard was a cut-above their male counterparts. Fingers crossed, the Men's 1sts will be able to stay up in 1A come this time next year.

Basketball

Basketball teams were solid this year, with the Men's team excelling themselves, but falling at the last hurdle on two accounts; they managed to top their 2A League, but lost out on promotion in a playoff against Durham (a massive sporting University), and came runners-up in the final of their Conference Cup against Leeds Carnegie (again, a big sporting university). The Women's were less successful, finishing mid-table in 2A - but this was achieved with an almost complete 're-build' of the team due to a lot of players graduating last year.

Fencing

The Men's Fencing team this year have excelled, with the 1sts not only finishing the season undefeated, but winning their

2A League and their Conference League Cup Final, beating Newcastle in a thrilling match (which at one point looked as though it was out of Lancaster's grasp). Regrettably, the success did not rub off on the Women's 1sts team in terms of a medal-haul, but similar to Women's Badminton, they were competing in a division higher than their male counterparts (1A), where they managed to finish fourth. Credit is due to the Women's Team; they have consolidated their place in a very difficult league.

Football

The university Football teams showed a role-reversal regarding the Men's/Women's teams so far, with the Men's 1sts finishing fourth in 2A after a having a difficult second half to their season, and the Men's 2nd XI having a torrid time in 4A, finishing sixth after a disappointing season. However, the Women's 1st XI had another successful year in inter-varsity competitions, with the league decider taking place between themselves and Manchester Met on the last game of the season - which regrettably, was won by

Manchester 3-1. The girls have been a benchmark over the last few years as an AU Club, so fingers crossed they'll go one better next year.

Hockey

The Hockey Club has six teams in total, so there was great potential for success and difficulty in equal measure. To start with, the Men's 1sts had a difficult season, finishing sixth in 2A against some very tough opposition. Men's 2nds fared better, ending up fourth in 4A, whilst Men's 3rds completed 5A in third place. Among the

Women's teams, the 1st team had a solid year in 2A after some impressive back-to-back wins in mid-season, finishing third, whilst also finishing as runners up in their Conference Cup final (being beaten by Durham). The Women's 2nds finished in second place in 5A, whilst the Women's 3rds also competed in 5A, finishing third behind our own 2nd team.

Lacrosse

Lacrosse had the daunting task of competing in a 1A division this year. Unfortunately, they were bettered throughout the season by their rivals, finishing fifth overall. This is the first year Lacrosse has been officially recognised by the governing body, so hopefully now that the lads have had a taste of weekly competition, they'll come out fighting next year.

Netball

Our Netball girls faced some strong competition on three accounts, finishing sixth, fifth and fourth in Leagues 2A, 5A and 6A respectively. Hopefully the girls will be able to build on their experience and make a charge up the tables next season.

Rugby League

These lads have had a hard time this year, through well organised opposition in the form of University of Cumbria and Manchester, and even in the form of the elements, with plenty of their games being post-

poned/re-arranged due to poor pitch conditions. These factors may have unsettled them. They finished fifth in the BUCS Lancashire Division. Next year, they will have higher aspirations.

Rugby Union

The Rugby Union teams performed better than their cross-code cousins. The Men's 1sts won six games back-to-back in their league (2A), leading them to a fantastic second place finish behind UCLan. Men's 2nds finished on the wrong-side of points difference this year, but still managed to finish fourth in 3A, ahead of Edge Hill, Liverpool UCum. The Men's 3rds also had a shaky start, suffering some confidence-sapping defeats, but they managed to climb back up the 4A division to come out mid-table. The Women's 1sts 2A division was incredibly competitive this year, and a late dip in form meant they finished sixth after some impressive early victories over Liverpool Hope and Manchester Met.

Squash

Away from the field, our Squash teams had mixed fortunes. The Men's team had a fantastic season in 2A, taking third place in a tough division, whilst our Women's team faced an even tougher challenge this year, competing in the top division for the whole North of England. Unfortunately, they failed to get a foothold in that division, finishing sixth.



Tough season: LUFC Men's 1sts (in red) lost the last game of the season to Liverpool. (Photo: Ben Robins)

Table Tennis

• Table Tennis have been a well run club over the past few years, so this year it was only fitting that they stormed to the top of their 2A League, and went the distance undefeated, being promoted in the process. The lads also had remarkable success at local level, with only a blip in the form of an agonising Cup loss to Liverpool, who finished second in the league, behind Lancaster.

Tennis

• Lancaster's Tennis teams had an overall successful year in BUCS, competing in 2A, 3A and 2A for the Men's 1sts, Men's 2nds and Women's 1sts, finishing third, fifth and third. Considering the current condition of the Tennis courts on which they train (which often double-up as a car park on open days!), to be actually competing within each respective league is tremendous, so well done.

Volleyball

• Winding down the round-up, our Volleyball Club produced some remarkable results this year. The Men's team finished third in their 2A division, which was incredible, considering that at the start of the year, there was the possibility that the Men's team would fold due to there being no players. The Women's team did not have such problems, and with some recruiting early in the year, they topped their 2A league undefeated (and by some margin). The Women's team also managed to cruise through to their Conference Cup final, only to find themselves against Leeds Carnegie who simply proved too good on the day – overall, a brilliant season for Volleyball.

Water Polo

• Finally, among the BUCS leagues, is Water Polo. Our Men's team faced the year in a 1A league, in which the other three teams were from the top six sporting universities in the UK! Despite putting up a good fight, they couldn't quite handle their rivals and finished fourth. The Women's team competed in 2C this year, and they pulled off a second place finish behind Liverpool, so again fingers crossed, they'll go one better next year.

American Football

• Though not strictly a BUCS league at the moment, a team who will be competing in BUCS next year is American Football. This year they've competed in the British Universities American Football League Northern Conference 2, finishing sixth overall after playing against sporting universities such as Sheffield, Leeds and Loughborough. Hopefully the full integration into BUCS will give the team added bite next year.

Double Rodeo wins for Canoe Club



Wet ride: Rob Beaumont (pictured) won the Men's Intermediate class at the National Student Rodeo in Nottingham. (Photo: Steph Earle)

THE CANOE CLUB has splashed to success in a competition against other universities over the Easter vacation.

The National Student Rodeo (NSR) in Nottingham saw wins for Lancaster in two classes. Rob Beaumont won in Men's Intermediate class, while Rob England came top in the Men's Novice class.

Lancaster's competition team cap-

tain, Samantha Barry, said: "I am very proud of what the club has achieved this year and I hope it keeps on growing. At NSR two years ago, Lancaster had only one entrant; this year we took 23 competitors and supporters. It's great to have people know who Lancaster University are!"

The same weekend, a the club sent a mixed team to a Canoe Polo com-

petition in Kendal. There, the team competed against five non-university teams, winning two of them and drawing a third.

The club has also been competing in a Canoe Polo inter-varsity league in Liverpool since November, with both an open and a Women's team in the competition. With the conclusion of the league in March, Lancaster took first

place in the open category, with the Women's team taking second place.

The Canoe Club will be competing in the BUCS Canoe Polo Championship in Doncaster this weekend. Samantha is eager to build upon earlier successes. "We hope to carry on the success of the year and improve upon last year's position in both the Women's and Open class."

Mind over marathon



Kitted out: Sue Wynes will run the 26.2 miles of the London Marathon on Sunday.

training is going, can find her fundraising website at www.justgiving.com/susanwynes. She welcomes any donations on this website or messages of support.

With only days left till the big

day, Sue is excited about taking part and raising money for such a worthy cause. "I'd like to thank everyone for all their support so far and fingers crossed I'll make it across the finish line in one piece!"

Steadfast Lancaster see off Chester's best efforts

- **Women's Hockey 1sts finish league on a high note**
- **Lancaster: 5**
- **Chester: 0**

Oliver Holmes
Sports Editor

GLORIOUS SUNSHINE ADORNED the astroturf for the final women's hockey game of the term against a Chester side rooted to the bottom of the league. Lancaster, in their brilliant white shirts wasted no time in taking the game to Chester who struggled to get out of their own half. Straight from the off, Lancaster dominated and created an early chance with some good trickery in the box, however the Chester 'keeper saved and the danger was cleared.

Chester then responded as they broke free from the halfway line with the attacker rounding the defence. However, a good interception from the covering fullbacker averted the pressure. Both teams made their first changes of the game as they tried to take the upper-hand in the contest.

Chester soon had a sustained period of pressure, but Lancaster were comfortable in charging down the opponents who did not take advantage of their possession. They were soon made

to pay for their failure to turn their possession into goals as Lancaster went on the attack and had three successive efforts on goal which the Chester goalie did well to keep out with the aid of a goal-line clearance.

Lancaster sensed that they were in the ascendancy and on 26 minutes took the lead with a clean strike at goal after good play through midfield. The Lancaster keeper remained a spectator for the rest of the half as Lancaster doubled their lead before the break with an effort from the wide right after good interchanging passes down the flank.

Chester regained their voices briefly after the interval but succumbed to more pressure from Lancaster, again resulting in a goal. A forceful effort was saved by the in-form Chester 'keeper, only to see the rebound fall to the on-rushing Lancaster player who took full advantage.

Nothing Chester could throw at Lancaster managed to unsettle them as they remained solid and kept their shape. A cross-field pass went through the legs of the Chester sweeper to the Lancaster inner who punished the error to make it 4-0 to Lancaster.

Lancaster looked hungry for more and a fifth goal from a penalty corner rounded off an impressive victory for Lancaster who played out the rest of the game with ease to achieve their fifth victory of the season. Lancaster finished third in the league, four points behind winners UCLan.

Lancaster fail to counter relentless Chester offence

- Disappointing season finale for LURFC 3rds
- Chester 28
- Lancaster 12

Robert Payling

ON A SUNLIT spring stage, Lancaster's men were left in the shade by their opponents as a match full of promise quickly became a constant struggle to keep Chester at bay.

A frantic first ten minutes saw Lancaster defending an early try after the ball escaped a scrum and was taken quickly by Chester's men. The ball was fed out wide for their winger to embark on a forty yard run before Ben Kimmerly managed to catch the man and prevent the try two yards from the line.

Lancaster had to fend off further attacks and perhaps would have been broken had it not been for the dependency of players such as Adam Free providing a much needed physical presence and crucial tackles to slow Chester down.

Hard work paid off for Lancaster and their efforts were rewarded after a well organised line out allowed Jerry Wilford to receive the resulting pass and run in for a try. The opportunity to increase the lead was taken as Robert



No way through: A Lancaster player tries to break through the solid Chester defence. (Photo: Duncan Monteith)

Terry kicked over with ease.

Such a lead was quickly diminished though when Lancaster were too slow to organise themselves after conceding a penalty close to their try line. The alert opposition fed the ball out to the right wing with a string of passes and it was grounded for a try before half the home team had realised play had started.

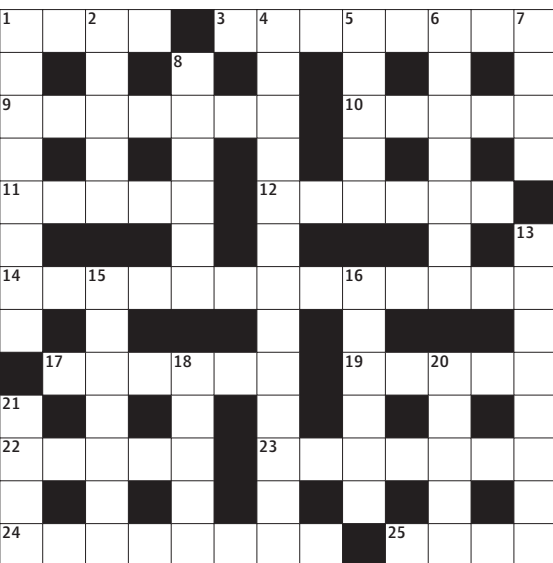
Chester kicked off the second half how they ended the first, adding a second try when their winger weaved between a slow reacting Lancaster back row. Their resulting conversion was once again converted for the extra two points.

The run of play remained with Chester for long periods of the second half and another attack down the left went unchallenged to inflict further damage to the score line.

The win looked beyond Lancaster's reach until they were gifted a lifeline when a Chester player delayed a kick up field too long. Robert Terry managed to block the ball and dive on to the deflection that landed just beyond the try line. This is where the luck ran out though as the resulting conversion floated wide of the sticks.

Chester continued to break down the deflated Lancaster defence and score a fourth and final try to confirm a disappointing end to the day and season for Lancaster. The 3rds had hoped for better in this final chance to impress Roses selectors for the summer tournament.

Quick crossword No 11,840



Across

- Strike with foot (4)
- Over the moon (8)
- Estimation (7)
- Animal with two feet (5)
- Acclaim (5)
- Large flatfish (6)
- University student yet to take degree (13)
- Mystery (6)
- Pier (5)
- Perfect (5)
- Document detailing costs – ready to sing (7;2,5)
- Ordinary manual writing (8)
- Bring down – hill (4)

Down

- Act of rendering unconscious (8)
- Young person (5)
- Dismay – cast-iron tenon (anag) (13)
- Fleshy underground stem (5)
- Starchy substance used in puddings (7)
- System of rules (4)

- Mouth (slang) (6)
- If you say so – in extremely good health (4,4)
- Dark place of confinement (7)
- Feeling that something has been experienced before (4,2)
- Narrow ravine (5)
- Group of common descent, culture etc (5)
- Clock face (4)

Solution No 11,839

B	A	C	K	P	A	C	K	A	B	U	T
A	H	I	N	E	H	S	A	A			
S	H	I	N	E	A	N	T	O	N	Y	M
H	N	T	R	A	J	P					
T	W	I	L	I	G	H	T	Z	O	N	E
G	A	A	E	U							R
E	G	G	C	U	P	T	S	E	T	S	E
O			R	O	S	U	D				
M	A	I	D	E	N	V	O	Y	A	G	E
E	R	A	E	M	B	B	H				
T	R	O	T	T	E	R	B	O	O	Z	E
R	N	E	D	O	A	R					
Y	O	Y	O	R	O	U	L	E	T	T	E

Marathon in Mind for VP Sports-elect

LUSU VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT for Sports, Sue Wynes, is taking on the ultimate test of endurance by running the London marathon.

She entered the marathon last October and is now in the last few days of training for the race this Sunday. She recently completed the Wilmslow half-marathon and now feels she has the confidence to complete the full marathon. "The half marathon was a good measure of how far I'd come and I managed it quite comfortably, so I'm confident for the full marathon," she said. Her predicted time for the race is 4 hours 30 minutes and she feels she will be able to achieve this.

The marathon is 26.2 miles long; a daunting prospect for anybody. Sue currently plays football for the university, but running is a new activity for her, having only started running in December. She claims to have noticed the difference in fitness from her training. "In the beginning running two miles was a struggle," she admits, "but now the miles are getting easier and easier."

Sue is very proud to be running the marathon to raise money for the mental health charity Mind. One in four people are affected by mental illness at some point in their lives and this charity helps those with difficulties. Those interested to read how her