

Students have a chance to make history next Wednesday

- **General Meeting on Sabbatical reform scheduled for Wednesday Week 9**
- **LUSU President challenges critics to come forward and propose alternatives**

John Swinton

THE STUDENTS UNION'S Sabbatical Team will be radically changed for the first time in 25 years, if LUSU members pass the Sabbatical Review next Wednesday.

The proposals are being put to a General Meeting of the Union, open to all Lancaster University students. It will be in George Fox Lecture Theatre 1, at 6pm on Wednesday Week 9.

At the meeting, students will have the opportunity to discuss the proposals and suggest changes to the new Sabbatical Officer roles and their respective job descriptions.

Writing in SCAN Comment, the LUSU President, Michael Payne, challenged opponents to the review, saying: "If we take a narrow approach that concentrates on single posts, titles, or a small handful of students – rather than the student population as a whole – then we lose the bigger picture, and with it, the impetus behind the change.

Mr Payne has also said of the Sabbatical Review: "This is our chance to make a real and lasting change to the way our Students Union works, a change that will benefit ordinary students.

"LUSU ought to strive to be relevant to every single one of our members, not just a select few. But for that to happen, we must grasp this nettle, we must take the tough decisions, and we must reform the Sabbatical Team into one that is fit for the 21st century."

If passed, the make-up of the

new Sabbatical Team will be written into the Union Constitution. The changes will come into force in July, when the next Sabbatical Team, whatever it looks like, takes office after being elected in Week 8, next term.

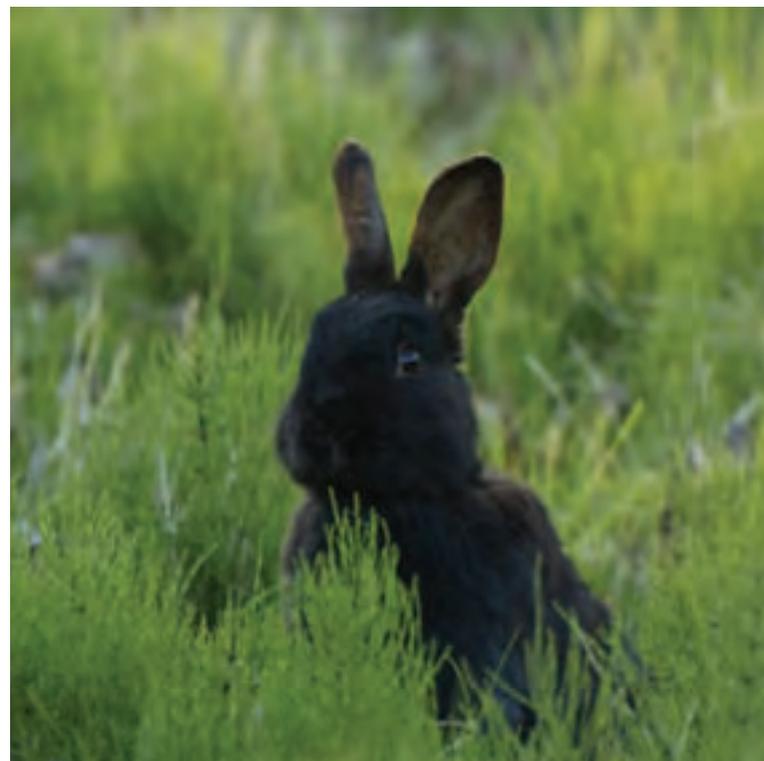
The last time the composition of the Sabbatical Team was changed was 1991, when the previously autonomous Athletic Union and the Student Representative Council (SRC) were merged to form one integral Students Union (of which the Athletic Union is now a part).

Prior to 1989, the SRC had a Chairman and Treasurer, with the AU maintaining a President and its own Treasurer. That year, the SRC swapped their Treasurer for a General Secretary. The AU did the same a year later, while the SRC simultaneously promoted its Chairman to the position of SRC President. The two structures were merged the following year into one Students Union.

That was when the existing set up, consisting of a LUSU President, General Secretary, Athletic Union President, Education & Welfare Officer, Women's Officer and SCAN Editor, was introduced.

Two years ago, in Michaelmas term 2006, the then President, Sooz Palmer, called a referendum on whether the positions of Education and Welfare Officer and Women's Officer should be changed to two Education & Welfare Officers; one for men, one for women. Two-thirds of voters agreed, but due to a low turnout, the referendum missed quorum and was therefore invalid.

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Bunnies butchered in campus-wide cull?

**Sahra Watkin
Lizzie Houghton**

HUNDREDS OF THE University's beloved rabbits were reportedly culled over the summer at the order of a high-ranking University official.

SCAN has learnt from sources inside Lancaster City Council that the University's Estates Department had been in contact with them regarding the rabbit situation. The Council's pest control services were called upon with the view of exterminating the rabbits but they believe a private contractor may

have been employed instead.

Although the University does have a pest control contract with the Council, it is thought that something more specific was required. Something that, according to our source, the Council's pest control services may have refused to do on environmental protection grounds.

Other University media has picked up on the issue of Lancaster's rabbits too. Subtext, the unofficial email newsletter, said this month: "It is understood that a cull was requested and took place some months ago and numbers [of rabbits] have yet to recover. The request to the local authority to have them removed allegedly came from the

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Students to vote on in JCR and Non-Sabb elections

Vicki Cole

ELECTIONS ARE BEING held this Thursday to choose the LUSU Non-Sabbatical Officers and Student Trustees for 2009.

Students will also be voting for their new JCR Exec alongside the Union elections.

Polls will be open between 10am and 6pm on Thursday November 27 in college Porters Lodges and postgraduates can vote in the Library. It is also possible to vote in the LUSU Building between 6pm and when polls finally close at 8pm.

Fulfilling a vital role in the Students Union, Non-Sabbatical officers are voluntary, part time positions, elected to represent students in a variety of areas, from academic affairs to welfare, and from liberation campaigns to student activities. The Non-Sabbatical team provide the crucial links between ordinary students, JCR Execs, societies, clubs and Sabbatical Officers.

LUSU General Secretary Janie Coleman said: "Students deserve representation on every level possible in order for them to get the best out of their university experience, and Non-Sabbatical Officers cater to specific areas of focus in order to facilitate this. These are individuals who are out there living the student experience, who will have a keen eye on what is going on internally and on a wider, local, if not national, level".

Non-Sabbatical Officers are essential for providing communication

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scan

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

Comment

Liam Richardson
scancomment@gmail.com
Meets in Bowland Bar,
Tuesdays, 5pm

Features

r@robm.me.uk
Meets in Furness Bar,
Fridays, 1pm

Arts

Lizzie O'Brien &
Richie Garton
scanarts@hotmail.com
Meets in County Diner,
Wednesdays, 1pm

Music

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

Sports

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

Adverts & Marketing

Martin Ennis
m.ennis@lancaster.ac.uk
01524 593422

Tutors told to 'spy' for UK Border Agency - all students to be monitored

Sam Newsham

CHANGES IN HOME Office rules over international students may soon affect all students studying at Lancaster University.

- **Non-EU students to be reported to Border Agency after missing 10 'expected contacts'**
- **Lancaster University to roll out attendance monitoring for all students**

The new regulations, to come into effect from March 2009, will require any university or college accepting students from outside the E.U. to obtain a special licence from the UK Border Agency (UKBA) in an attempt to cut down on illegal immigration.

Under the new rules, overseas students will need to be sponsored by a licensed institution before they are allowed into the country to study. They will have to prove that they have the money and qualifications for the course they have applied for, as well as provide fingerprints and be issued with an ID card.

The changes are being introduced in an attempt to stop the current misuse of the student visa system. In the past three years the

Government has uncovered almost three hundred bogus colleges which claim to offer courses but really provide a way for people to enter the country and work illegally.

"Those who come to Britain must play by the rules and benefit the country. This new route for students will ensure we know exactly who is coming here to study

and stamp out bogus colleges who facilitate the lawbreakers," said Immigration Minister Phil Woolas.

In addition to the licensing regulations, the Home Office is demanding that universities monitor attendance and report any student who misses more than ten lectures or seminars to the UKBA.

The new rules will mean some changes in the way that student data is collected here at Lancaster.

From March the passport details of all international students will have to be kept on file, along with their visas and up-to-date emergency contacts. The University will also be required to confirm periodically to the UKBA that the students for whom they have records are still indeed studying here.

To avoid discrimination the

University has decided that it will monitor closely all students' attendance, not just those from overseas. Even before the Home Office announced the changes in regulation, working parties were being set up to discuss new methods of doing this.

Currently the methods of monitoring attendance are fairly loose. Some feel it would be to the benefit of students if they were tightened up: students who attend all or most of their required contacts - lectures and seminars - generally perform much better than those who attend very few.

Whilst it is too early in the day to comment on the exact methods that will be used, it is hoped that an electronic system will be developed which will minimise the amount of work for everyone involved.

LUSU President, Michael Payne, is in favour of the University's careful planning. He told SCAN: "LUSU strongly believes equity of treatment for all students should be at the heart of any attendance monitoring proposals. The University has assured us that they intend to produce a supportive and student-focussed party rather than a draconian, complex and bureaucratic one."

He added: "However, a series of safeguards and principles must be met in order for any policy to be fair and justifiable."

The idea of attendance monitoring however has attracted criticism

from academics across the country. It is felt by many that such close surveillance is not the job of universities or lecturers and to force them to do it would risk damaging the student-teacher relationship.

Many believe that the new system, whilst having sound roots, has been designed and implemented too quickly and without sufficient consultation with the universities themselves. This has left some institutions unsure of their exact responsibilities and some academics have expressed dismay at being ordered to do what they see as 'spying' on their students.

Sally Hunt, general secretary of the University and College Union, said: "We have grave concerns that new rules on monitoring foreign students have been pulled together without any consultation with the people who would implement them. We do not believe it is appropriate or effective to task colleges and universities with the policing of immigration."

A further worry is that there are only six places in the country where the necessary biometric data can be collected, forcing students to undergo long journeys in order to provide it. As overseas students pay considerably higher fees than those inside the EU, institutions are wary of any regulations which may put people off applying to study in Britain.

Uni ordered gassing of campus rabbits

highest level, but this cannot be verified."

I > SCAN has been led to believe that a myxomatosis epidemic within the University's rabbit population was the reason behind the cull.

Myxomatosis is a viral infection of rabbits. A strand of the Poxvirus, it is most common within large warrens of rabbits, such as was experienced on campus. There is no effective treatment for myxomatosis. In the virus' most extreme form, it can wipe out up to 90% of

a rabbit population.

The importance of the rabbits to Lancaster University cannot be underestimated. For some students they fill the hole for the pets they left behind, while others can remember "trying to catch them one night, when we were very, very drunk". Pendle even used to have a 'Keeper of the Bunnies' position on their JCR.

James Dodd, the President of the Pendle JCR, said of the rumours: "It is my understanding that the university kills bunnies

with poison, as if they didn't we would be overrun with them. I hate this."

Although no University officer would confirm the cull, SCAN has been told that a number of rabbit-proof fences have been put up across campus.

The most extreme example of a rabbit-proof fence runs the length of Western Australia. Rabbits are considered Australia's most serious mammalian pest. Not only do they destroy millions of dollars worth of crops, but they have also pushed

many indigenous creatures to the brink of extinction.

Someone who will be familiar with the Aussie hatred of rabbits is the University's Vice Chancellor, Professor Paul Wellings. Wellings lived in Australia for over twenty years, during which time he was employed as both the Director of the Australian Nuclear science and Technology organisation and the Director for the Australian centre for International Agricultural research.

'Carnage' not so chaotic after all



Base Elements: Students in Carnage T-shirts in Elements nightclub. (Photo: Wes Cosgriff)

Chris Davis
News Editor

Over one thousand students participated in the controversial 'Carnage' bar crawl around Lancaster's city centre on Thursday 20th November. Billed as 'Lancaster's biggest original Student Fancy Dress Event', the bar crawl had generated a number of concerns, including overcrowding of venues, the possibility of excessive drinking and subsequent violence, and the 'dirty porn star' theme, accused of

- **Over 1,000 students take part in 'dirty porn star' themed bar crawl**
- **Only a single participant arrested for drunken behaviour**

encouraging promiscuous behaviour. However, the night proved to be largely without incident, with only a single arrest made for drunk and disorderly behaviour.

Nearby cities Blackpool and Preston had previously succeeded in preventing the event taking place. Both LUSU and the University of Cumbria Student Union completely disassociated themselves with the bar crawl, but Lancaster Council proved unable to stop it going ahead. Students visited Revolution, The Lounge, Hustle, Varsity, The Litten Tree and the nightclub 'Elements'. To get into each bar, students required a 'Carnage UK' T-shirt, the back

of which encouraged participants, amongst other things, to 'snog a steward', 'frolic with a Fresher', and 'do it like a dirty porn star'.

However, the venues involved seemed to have few concerns about the event. James Rafferty, general manager of 'Revolution', insisted that he 'expected no trouble', claiming everything had been 'really well organised'. He also had 'no problems' with the dirty porn star theme, stating that participants are 'not coming in naked'. The assistant manager of 'Varsity' also expected things to run smoothly, claiming the event is 'really quite

similar to the Big Night Out in Fresher's Week, just organised by different people'.

Indeed, the optimism of the bar managers proved to be justified. The considerable police presence appeared to work as a deterrent to any excessive behaviour. Chief Inspector Ralph Copley told SCAN that the police had several 'high visibility patrols' operating 'throughout the night', with 'extra resources' available if possible to ensure that no problems emerged.

Students involved were also largely positive in their view of the event. 'Its been a really great night so far, its really well organised and I've seen no trouble' one participant

stated, adding 'The atmosphere is incredible. Its great to see so many students out enjoying themselves'. Bethan Archer, a Lonsdale second year, stated that she expected 'levels of drunkenness similar to an average bar crawl', but did indicate that she was 'not entirely happy with the theme'. Another student, however, questioned 'Who cares about the theme, as long as everyone has a good time?'

Despite the lack of serious incident throughout the night itself, doubts still persist about the type of actions promoted by events such as Carnage. Dr Frank Atherton, Director of Public Health for NHS North Lancashire, stated;

'I believe that North Lancashire's landlords and licensees should make sure their establishments don't associate with cheap booze promotions and events. In North Lancashire we see around 448 deaths caused directly or indirectly by alcohol every year.'

Certainly, events held nationwide by Carnage have done little to improve the perception of students by the wider general public. The media controversy surrounding Carnage follows recent concerns about student 'initiation' ceremonies, sparked following footage obtained by the BBC showing University of Gloucester students being encouraged to drink by a figure in a 'Nazi like Uniform'.

Following the Lancaster event, Carnage moves on to the Scottish city of Dundee, promising a 'snog fest' and 'sexy on-stage games'. Three thousand students are set to attend.

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Email scan@lancaster.ac.uk or come along to any weekly section meeting. Meetings are open to anyone.

You can find the meeting times for each section in the left-hand column of page 2.

LUTube.tv helps SCAN move into television

Lizzie Houghton
News Editor

SCAN TV, SCAN's online broadcasted counterpart, was launched earlier this month on LUTube.tv.

The programme, which likes to think of itself as the BBC News of Lancaster University, goes out fortnightly to correspond with the release of SCAN.

The project is the latest cooperation between the SCAN office and LUTube.tv. The show's producers have been working closely with SCAN editors for the past month, gaining insight and information and ensuring that the reports produced maintain SCAN's high standard.

Luke Burns is the production manager for SCAN TV. He explained how the two mediums have been working together to produce SCAN TV.

"We go to the SCAN meetings," he explained: "I get information

personally from [SCAN Editor] Dan Hogan. Recently we had someone go to an Arts meeting with the view of doing a video representation of one of their reviews. Basically we're a video equivalent of the SCAN newspaper."

Like any TV programme, SCAN TV relies very heavily on the people behind, as well as in front of the camera. A 'typical report', according to Mr. Burns, involves "getting a small team together" of producers, camera people and of course the presenter.

"It can take up a lot of time," he added. "Sometimes it can take a day [to record an event] sometimes it can take an hour."

As well as using stories from the newspaper, SCAN TV also features a number of reports on other topics. One such example is the 'Society of the Week' slot, along with 'Ask the Student' sections, sports recaps, upcoming events and film and tv reviews.

"We like to try and keep quite authoritative," Mr. Burns said.

Eye on: Non-Sabb elections

Non-Sabb candidates gear up for Thursday Week 8 elections

Vicki Cole

between students and LUSU. Current LUSU Students with Disabilities Officer, Chris Sainter, said: "Without Non-Sabbatical Officers, the Union would find it very difficult to get feedback from all the different students. The week eight elections are important because the students that are elected are not just representing their students within LUSU, but officers are involved in meetings with the University on a regular basis to voice the concerns of students".

New to this year's elections, is

the addition of two Student Trustee positions to serve on the soon-to-be created LUSU Board of Trustees. In order to comply with new charity regulations and LUSU's new constitution, The Trustee Board has been set up to oversee the Union's activities and ensure that it is well run, financially sustainable and working towards the future. The board will also deal with issues of corporate social responsibility and diversity.

The new members will provide student representation in a board comprising of four independent External Trustees, the six Sabbatical Officers and the LUSU General Manager, and attend six Board meetings throughout the year. Although they will not get involved in the day-to-day running of the Union, the Trustees have ultimate liability for

LUSU and have the responsibility of directing and overseeing the work of the organisation.

Once elected, one Trustee will serve until June 2009, with the other remaining on the Board until next November. After this first election, the two Trustees shall be elected for a year on staggered cycles; with one serving June to June, and the second Trustee from November to November.

The Non-Sabbatical positions provide an extra level of support for the students of Lancaster University. Ms Coleman also told SCAN: "It is important for students to vote, because, as cheesy as it sounds, it's your Union and your voice. Positions such as the Non-Sabbaticals can help vocalise your opinions on every level".



Ahead of the elections this Thursday (week 8), SCAN spoke to a few of the candidates running for Non-Sabbatical positions...

University Council Rep

Presidents of County and Fylde colleges, Andy Johnston and Simon Rimington, are squaring off in the election for LUSU's University Council Rep, who sits alongside the LUSU President in meetings of the University's governing body. It is a very important and politically intriguing role.

For at least the last three years, the position has been held by the person who goes on to become the next LUSU President. The position is seen as a platform for LUSU high-flyers with ambitions of the Presidency.

Johnston, who was elected to sit on University Council last year, is running for re-election.

"I have held this post for almost 4 months now," he said. "The role re-

quires dedication, in-depth knowledge of the subjects covered in Council and, enthusiasm to orate and argue for the students' best interests.

Asked whether he considers himself a servant or a leader of students, he said: "The idea of 'leader of students' has been more relevant [in other roles], but with the position on University Council I feel the role of 'servant to the students' is more apt."

His main priority, if re-elected, is to focus on professionalism. He told SCAN: "The most important thing... would be the professional and dedicated manner in which I would approach University Council meetings."

Johnston's rival for the position, Simon Rimington intends to give

"current students have an effective voice at the University's top table," and to broaden awareness of the decisions made at University Council.

Before coming to Lancaster, Rimington was Vice President of York College Students Union, where he sat on equivalent bodies to Lancaster's University Council. "I think my previous experience qualifies me for the role but [it] can never make up for the experience of doing [it]."

He sees the role as being a servant to the student body: "You need to have direction... but essentially it is the people who vote in the ballot who put you there and it is your job to put their views across and represent them in an appropriate manner."

Chief Returning Officer

Running for the position of Chief Returning Officer are Patrick Allinson of Bowland and Kat Goulding of Cartmel College.

Mr Allinson sees the role as a servant of the students, and of candidates running in the elections he plans to be responsible for running.

Speaking to SCAN, he explained his main objective if elected: "[I want] a Sabbatical election that gets as many students involved in the process at all levels - candidates, voters, JCRs etc... they're all part of it, in my opinion."

"Students elect a representative to ensure fairness and adherence to the democratic process... I am a public servant, as ultimately in an election the students make the decision, the CRO merely facilitates it."

Both candidates for CRO are JCR Chairs in their respective colleges, with responsibility for managing meetings

and running college elections.

Kat Goulding was eager to explain her dedication to the role. She said: "I realise the importance of the CRO with the Union and can assure students I will give the role the time and dedication it needs throughout the whole term of office, drawing on my wealth of experience of elections and the union in general to fulfil the role to best of my abilities."

When asked by SCAN about her priorities, she was vague, speaking in general terms about the role of the Chief Returning Officer.

"I would strive to ensure democracy in LUSU was as effective as it could be. Ensuring elections are ran fairly and making all students across campus aware they can represent or be represented within their college, faculty or any other groups they are part of."

Green Officer

The position of Green Officer is contested by Gemma Evans and Michael Keegan. Keegan, currently on County JCR as Green Officer, explained his achievements to date: "In my year [in office] I improved recycling facilities in residences and got County Bar to recycle. I have been an active part of every committee I have sat on. I can take the experience from last year to make this year even more productive."

When asked to specify one thing he would seek to achieve as LUSU Green Officer, he instead recited manifesto commitments, which include "getting

carrier bag recycling on campus, recycling facilities in public areas, wider spread of battery recycling, improve organisation with Green Committee.

"Most of all I want to have all bars on campus recycling effectively."

Apparently, Mr Keegan sees himself as neither a public servant nor a leader of students, but as "an ambassador of the tree."

SCAN also talked to Keegan's rival in this election, Gemma Evans. She spoke of how she wants "to help make the student population care."

"I believe 'caring' at all is qualifica-

tion for this role. Anyone that even cares is a plus to me. Artificially, I am well versed in legal matters, political considerations and I am a member of GreenPeace. If my track record matters that much, feel free to look it up."

When asked how she viewed the role of a Non-Sabbatical, she replied: "I'm a slave to the cause, I'm a leader of the cause. Really, I'd see myself as the messenger. When it comes to green issues, being a servant and leading are interchangeable: the quintessential green cares about change, not semantics."

Faculty of Science & Technology Rep

Joss Hickson and Beau Martinez are campaigning for the position of Science & Technology Faculty Rep.

SCAN spoke to Mr Hickson to ask him about his priorities, which are to create a "Science and Technology Council" that would exist to "make it easier for students to voice their concerns and needs."

When asked about previous roles, he mentioned his position on Furness JCR and his position on Union Council,

which have given him "vital experience in organisation and campus politics."

Hickson sees himself as both a public servant and a leader. "I wouldn't presume to know what is best for all science and technology students, and therefore acting on my own opinions may only help myself or people on my course."

His rival in the election, Beau Martinez, was unable to speak to SCAN.

In addition to those mentioned above, the following candidates are also running in elections:

Vaun Shah and Hiba Malik for Management School Faculty Rep; Tatomin Anca for International Students Officer;

Sam Johnston for Non-Sabb Women's Officer; Danny Gray and Phil Miles for Student Trustee (short term) and Emily Riley for Student Trustee (full term); Pete Wharton for LGBT Officer; Ellie Fitton for Postgraduate (Research)

Rep and Narendra Prasad Mohandas for Postgraduate (Taught) Rep; Simon Bulmer for Arts & Social Sciences Faculty Rep; Danny Ovens for Academic Affairs Officer; Kate Fry for Race Relations Officer; Susan Wynes and

Caroline Sprott for Athletic Union Non-Sabb; Torri Crapper; Fraser Welsh; Si Rimington and Liam Kay for Officers Without Portfolio (Block of Six); Julia Thomson for Mature Students Officer; Edwin Burrows for Societies Council

Chair; and Pete Macmillan for Welfare Campaigns Officer. No candidates have been nominated for the positions of Part-Time Students Officer and Students With Disabilities Officer.

How long left for the 'happy hour'?

- MPs call for ban on loss-leading booze offers
- Minimum prices could be imposed on alcohol sales

Fiona Hutchinson

'HAPPY HOURS' IN bars should be banned and supermarkets stopped from selling alcohol at a loss, the House of Commons' Home Affairs Select Committee said in a recent report. MPs have suggested legislation to set a minimum price on alcohol, in an attempt to combat binge-drinking.

The report highlighted that drink-fuelled violence and crime, caused by excessive drinking of cheap alcohol, was one of the biggest strains on police resources. One police force reported that the need to have enough officers available to deal with weekend drunken behaviour totally dictated shift-patterns, at the expense of controlling other offences.

Keith Vaz, chairman of the committee, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme that "we cannot have, on one hand, a world of alcohol promotions for profit that fuels surges of crime and disorder and, on the other, the police diverting all their resources to cope with it."

British Crime Survey figures show there has been a 25% increase in serious violent crimes committed and 45% of victims of violence say their attacker was under the influence of alcohol.

An officer with the Cumbrian police force, who preferred to remain anonymous, commented that he would welcome the new laws but thinks the impact will be minimal, as binge-drinking is "too ingrained in British culture" and "the majority of people are just having a good time".

Large, national chains, such as Wetherspoons and Revolution, can often afford to offer cheap drink deals to encourage customers



through the doors - using their huge bargaining power with suppliers and economies of scale. Under the new proposals, smaller, independent bar owners may see a change in customer behaviour - with drinkers selecting a bar for its atmosphere, reputation or clientele, instead of how many cheap drinks they can offer.

Andy Shaw, licensee of Lonsdale College bar, told SCAN that he used to "make a fortune" from

cheap drinks offers but the bar "can't compete with the big clubs in (Lancaster) town". He is positive about the proposed restrictions and hopes more students will stay on campus, drinking in college bars as a result. He does however, have concerns that it may also have a negative effect on business, with students choosing not to go out so early, drinking cheap supermarket alcohol at home instead.

Analysis:

In the bigger picture, are happy hours and cheap drink promotions really such a bad thing? In these times of economic pressure, is it right for MPs to be denying the public an 'hour of happiness' or a cut-price drink? The move may appear hypocritical when even former government ministers have been guilty of having a few too many, and David Cameron, leader of the Conservative Party, has faced allegations of smoking cannabis, at a time when the drug was under consideration for re-classification. The effect of the proposals on businesses, the police force and students can clearly be seen - but will it lead us one step closer to a 'do as I say, not as I do' governance?

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Students head to Blackpool to disrupt British National Party gathering

Lizzie Houghton

News Editor

STUDENTS FROM LANCASTER University travelled to Blackpool last weekend to take part in a protest against the British National Party (BNP).

The protest was organised by the Unite Against Fascism (UAF) movement to coincide with the BNP's annual party conference, which took place over November 14th, 15th and 16th at the New Kimberley Hotel, Blackpool.

Hundreds turned out to voice their opposition to the far right party, taking part in a two and a half mile march from the Winter Gardens to the hotel.

Representing Lancaster University were members of the Lancaster University Labour Club and the Lancaster Student Assembly Against Racism. They were joined by representatives from the UAF Northwest branch, local trade unions, residents and local councillors, all of whom banded together to tell the BNP that they are not welcome in Blackpool or anywhere else in the North West.

Weyman Bennet is the national secretary of UAF. He told SCAN: "I think it's brilliant that people turned out. Also to turn out three times, three years on the trot and still have that feeling that something should be done is really, really good."

This year is the third year the BNP have held their annual conference in Blackpool. However, due to the BNP's reluctance to publicise



Unified: National Secretary of Unite Against Fascism, Weyman Bennet, addresses the protestors outside Blackpool's Winter Gardens. (Photo: Rob Miller)

the conference, most locals did not know that the right-wing party were in their home town.

One local resident told SCAN: "I don't agree with the BNP. Definitely don't. But I think they should just be ignored. If you ignore them they will go away."

The BNP's reputation as a fascist party is based not only on their ties with other hard-right parties across Europe, but also on their policies, which are widely criticised as racist and divisive.

In 2005, the party called for white British people to be given preference in the job and housing market, as well as in schools.

In the 1990s, The BNP's leader, Nick Griffin, wrote in the party's publication that: "Without the White race, nothing matters."

In 1998, Griffin was convicted of being a Holocaust denier, receiving a two-year suspended jail sentence for distributing material likely to incite racial hatred.

The anti-fascism movement's big fear is that the BNP will try and win a seat in the European Elections this coming June. Not only would this significantly increase their influence but it would also give them access to an extra £250,000 a year in funding.

"The danger now is that the BNP will exploit the situation with the recession," Fleetwood councillor, and Labour parliamentary candidate for Lancaster & Fleetwood Clive Grunshaw explained. "They will try and appeal to people who have concerns about the financial situation, who have concerns about

their job and they will offer an alternative and offer someone to blame."

Beau Bulman, a Lancaster University student who took part in the protest, agreed with this view. He said: "The problem now with the BNP is that they've tried to become respectable and give the illusion they're respectable, which we think they're not. It's up to us to get out here and fight them."

Speaking at the end of the protest Mr. Bennet added: "We have to mobilise effectively with other people. Get more people out there because we're going to face a struggle. Students are crucial to this. I think if large numbers of students do vote at the next election we can stop the BNP."

teaching is consistently assessed and encouraging improved access and widening participation. The role of Chief Executive is a powerful and influential one, although next years review of tuition fees and revelations about massive budgeting shortfalls look set to provide a number of future challenges.

Sir Alan Langlands is currently principal and Vice Chancellor at the University of Dundee, but is better known for his time as Chief Executive of the NHS between 1994 and 2000, a role that provided him with international acclaim and led to him receiving his knighthood in 1998.

Both the unofficial Lancaster University email newsletter, SubText, and national newspaper The Independent had both viewed Professor Wellings as the most

likely candidate for the Chief Executive post.

Wellings became the Vice Chancellor of Lancaster in 2002, and has since become a polarising figure across the University. While many have praised him for presiding over a period of increasing academic success for Lancaster, currently the top University in the North-West, Wellings has also generated criticism for his role in such controversies as the recent 'takeover' of the college bars, rising commercial rents across campus, and the police prosecution of the 'George Fox Six'. He is currently chair of HEFCE's Research & Innovation committee, a position that many saw as standing him in good stead for the Chief Executive job.

The Vice Chancellor could not be reached for comment.

Universities' lobby group rejects closer scrutiny for HEIs

Rachael Abrahams

UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE country have come under fire following their refusal to accept probing from external bodies into the standard of their teaching and research.

Universities UK – the higher education lobby group – published a report at the start of the month outlining how quality and standards are assessed within UK universities. This followed a spate of reports from external organisations questioning how effective the universities' self-regulation can really be.

Concerns have been raised in these reports over the classification of degrees, plagiarism, grade inflation, along with fear that tutors have been told to alter the grades of students to secure a higher place for their university in the National League Tables.

Universities UK however, have been quick to defend their position.

Their President, Professor Rick Trainor, argued that "universities believe strongly in the need to protect and maintain standards... The steps taken by universities to safeguard standards, deal with problems if they emerge, and learn from experience to improve quality are why we believe we have the best higher education system in the world."

Phil Willis, chair of the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills select committee, agreed with this sentiment, telling the BBC that the lack of certainty over the value of a university degree was "descending into farce".

This comes at a time when MPs have proposed an inquiry into the current standards of universities across the country. This despite MPs having been informed by the Quality Assurance Agency that, at present, no department in any university across the country has been deemed below the standards set by them. They have also been told that the QAA has never received a "cause for complaint" from either students or academics.

At a meeting in the House of Lords covering the issue, university chiefs were shown a separate report which concluded that university-led checks were still an effective way of assessing academic standards.

CEEC beckons after Wellings' hopes of HEFCE top-job dashed

Chris Davis

News Editor

VICE CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR Paul Wellings, will have to give up any hopes of assuming the role of Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), after Sir Alan Langlands was announced as the appointee for the position.

Wellings had been tipped as the favourite for the post, due to start after the current Chief Executive, David Eastwood's term expires.

HEFCE is a government body in charge of distributing public money to universities and colleges, ensuring the quality of research and

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The machine that could help uncover the secrets of the Universe

- **Lancaster University built detector to begin journey to Japan**
- **'Downstream Electromagnetic Calorimeter' to be part of experiment spanning 300km**

Rob Maidstone
Dan Hogan

A SIX-TON PARTICLE detector, built by the Physics Department here at Lancaster University, is to begin its journey to Tokai, Japan next week, in what is the final stage of an ambitious experiment which may reveal mysteries about the fate of the Universe.

The machine forms part of a wider scientific initiative, named the Tokai to Kamioka (or T2K), of which Lancaster, along with seven other UK Universities, is a part. Particle physicists hope the experiment will help explain what happened to all the antimatter in the Universe since the Big Bang.

The pioneering research could be vital in answering some of the fundamental questions regarding human existence.

Professor Peter Ratoff, head of Lancaster's physics department, explained why the neutrino, a small particle similar to an electron, is of such vital importance.

"If matter and antimatter were created equally at the time of the Big Bang, why is there so much more matter in the universe?" Dr. Ratoff asked, adding: "Certain subtle properties of the neutrinos could account for this."

Members of the University's Physics Department have five years planning, designing and constructing the £500k 'neutrino detector' which, it is hoped, will provide insight into the origins and early life of our universe, along with explaining the behaviour of an important elementary particle, the 'neutrino'.

The detector, which is currently situated in the Physics building, will be loaded onto a truck and transported to the Rutherford Appleton Lab in Oxfordshire. Such is the detector's size that a 10-ton forklift and a 10-ton crane are needed just to get it onto the lorry.

It will be rigorously tested at Oxford University, before being sent on to Geneva, where it will be used in the CERN facility, where earlier this year, scientists began testing the Large Hadron Collider that they hope will expose clues about the first moments after the Big Bang. There, the detector

will be used to collect data to enable scientists to make sense out of the shower patterns produced when neutrinos 'oscillate' into different kinds of particle. It will then make its way to Japan in spring next year.

The T2K experiment starts in Tokai, Ibaraki Province, at the Japan Proton Accelerator Research Complex (J-PARC) facility. It will end at the Super-Kamiokande 295km away in Kamioka on the other side of Japan.

The neutrinos are created at J-PARC by firing an intense beam of protons at a target. This will produce pions (another particle), which will subsequently decay, creating a new type of neutrino.

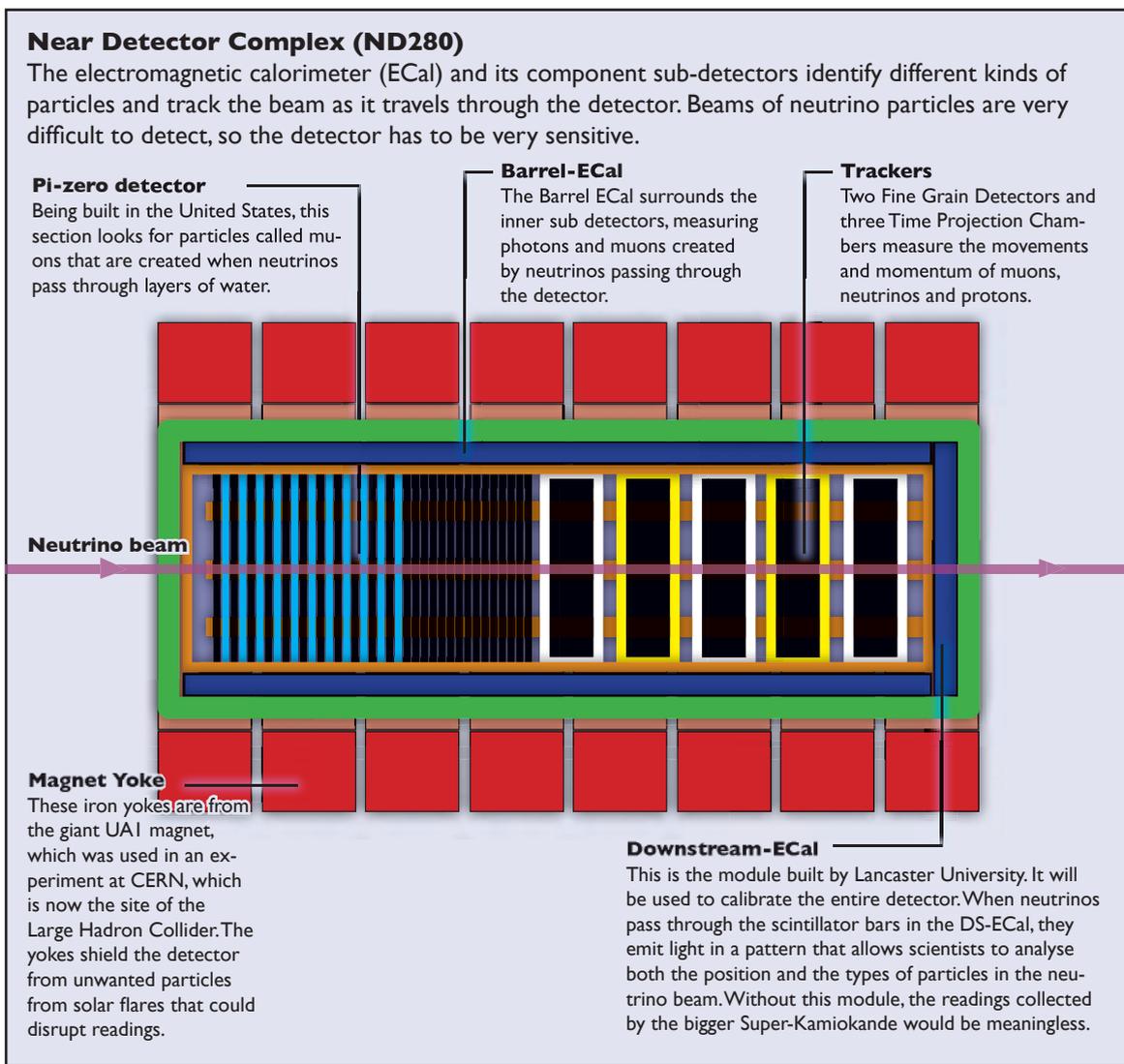
This will be "the most intense neutrino beam that has ever been produced" according to Dr Laura Kormos, who is in charge of the experiment's construction.

The neutrinos will be analysed using the 'Super-Kamiokande' which will create a cone of low-level light, invisible to the naked eye, as the neutrinos interact with the electrons 50,000 tons ultra-pure water. These will then be detected by photomultiplier tubes surrounding the detector which can detect individual protons (light particles) in at the ultra-violet and infrared ends of the electromagnetic spectrum, which are invisible to humans.

Although this may sound spectacular, scientists only expect a few such interactions every hour. It will take years for the experiment to produce enough data for detailed analysis.

The module from Lancaster, called the DS-ECal (or Downstream Electromagnetic Calorimeter) will be used, along with several other units, to monitor the neutrino beam at the start of its journey. This is crucial, as for any meaning to be extracted from the data produced at the Super-Kamiokande, experts working on the project need to be able to analyse the forms of neutrino in the original beam.

The DS-ECal is a 2x2 metre structure made of 34 layers of plastic 'scintillator bars', interspersed with layers of lead alloy. These bars produce light as the neutrinos interact with them, which is then dispersed in a 'shower structure' and detected by photo-sensors. This structure can be analysed to determine the type of neutrinos passing through the detector, so as to understand the interactions at the Super-Kamiokande.



"If matter and antimatter were created equally at the time of the Big Bang, why is there so much more matter in the universe?" Dr. Ratoff asked, adding: "Certain subtle properties of the neutrinos could account for this."

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Uni forced to reveal its £72,000 share in global arms trade

- Investments in companies known to deal with unethical regimes
- Calls for greater student consultation over where money is spent

Lisa Stallard

LANCASTER'S CLOSE LINKS with arms trading companies such as BAE Systems and Rolls Royce have been under renewed scrutiny, following an investigation by the Campaign Against The Arms Trade (CAAT) revealing the scope of investment by Universities into companies allegedly involved in arms trading.

Through use of the Freedom of Information act, Lancaster University were revealed to have shares in BAE Systems, GKN Aerospace, Rolls Royce

and defence technology company QinetiQ. The investigation has highlighted Lancaster's continuing involvement with firms whose ethical practice remains in serious doubt.

CAAT's investigation disclosed that universities nationwide had a total of £15m invested in companies linked to the global arms trade. Institutions are facing increasing pressure to disassociate themselves with companies suspected of unethical practice.

As of June this year, Lancaster University owned £8,133 worth of shares in GKN and £23,505 in Rolls Royce, which build engines for military aircraft, including the Harrier jump jet. In July 2007, GKN were uncovered to have been selling military helicopters to Burma, whose current political

regime is accused of systematic abuse of human rights. Rolls-Royce are responsible for supplying aircraft engines in Hawk Jets, which are then sold to nations such as Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Zimbabwe, all of which have been accused of violating basic human rights to varying degrees.

More recent figures also show around £27,000 invested in BAE Systems by the University, another firm repeatedly caught in controversy over its ethical and moral practice. At the end of October this year, BAE was investigated by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) for corruption amidst allegations of bribery in a £43bn arms deal.

LUSU Block of Six Officer Natalie Walker has been pushing the University for some time to consider adopting an ethical investment policy and has called for the creation of a forum of students and University staff and officers to be set up to approve the University's choice of investments. Speaking to SCAN, Ms Walker said: "The University shouldn't be investing its money, which comes



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from students, into arms companies without consultation from students. Those who make these decisions have no accountability to the student body."

The University has long refused to comment on its involvement with these companies, but University Director of Finance and Resources, Andrew Neal, was prepared to issue a statement. He told SCAN that "Lancaster has a very small investment, currently £1.2m, in shares. Shares are usually only held in order to invest endowment funds from specific benefactors, and not general University funds."

Mr. Neal also refuted the calls for a separate body to approve the University's investments. "The decision on

what shares to hold is made by a broker who... works within policies agreed by the University Finance Committee, a formal Committee of Council that includes student representation." His statement offered some hope for future change, promising that the "policy will be reviewed within the course of the year, and this review will include ethical aspects of investment."

From the figures given to SCAN by CAAT, it would appear the University has also been frantically selling off its shares portfolio, likely motivated by the current lack of confidence in the economy. In June, the University had a total portfolio worth £4.7m, that figure is now closer to £1.2m.

Analysis: BAE sales worldwide

38%
United States

12%
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

12%
Rest of the World

38%
United Kingdom

Source: BAE Systems Preliminary Results 2007

Delegates choose a more 'professional' NUS

Dan Hogan

Editor

DELEGATES AT A conference of the National Union of Students (NUS) have voted overwhelmingly in favour of a new constitution in the face of strong opposition from far-left political factions.

- **Extraordinary Conference votes for radical overhaul of the National Union**
- **Two LUSU delegates face threat of disciplinary action after breaking ranks**

The extraordinary conference, held on November 12th in Wolverhampton, was called to debate and vote upon proposals brought by the Union's National Executive Committee (NEC) and amendments submitted by delegations. The existing NUS constitution has remained largely unchanged since the last major review of governance in 1980, and many in NUS feel it is overdue for reform.

NUS National President, Wes Streeting, supporting the reforms, said after the result: "We have put in a lot of work so far, but we are not finished."

He also urged supporters of reform not to be complacent, saying: "We have come this far before, but have fallen at the last hurdle."

82% of delegates voted in favour of

the proposed new constitution, after a number of amendments were made to text. But in defiance of a mandate issued to them by LUSU's Union Council, two of Lancaster's delegates refused to support the reform package.

Kate Fry and Fraser Welsh now face the likelihood of sanctions from LUSU for not upholding their mandate. Union Council voted overwhelmingly in favour of disciplinary measures being used.

LUSU Non-Sabbatical Officer Chris

Saintier said: "When a mandate given to delegates is broken, it makes a mockery of this Council."

Mr Welsh maintains that he had reluctantly voted in favour of the motions, even though his voting card was not raised high enough for NUS tellers to count him as a yea vote. He told SCAN: "If my vote in favour of the new NUS constitution lacked enthusiasm it is because I could not, in good conscience, bring myself to vote wholeheartedly for reform which I knew, having listened to debate at Conference, to be flawed on a variety of levels."

A decision will now be made as to whether Mr Welsh and Ms Fry should be banned from representing LUSU at future conferences. Their expenses for their journey to Wolverhampton will

not be refunded.

Earlier this year at another conference held by NUS, a similar attempt to overhaul the constitution fell 25 votes short of the required two-thirds majority. Some members of LUSU's delegation were among those who voted against it, in breach of their mandate. They were forced to pay their own travel, food and accommodation expenses, which are normally refunded by LUSU.

Debate in the Wolverhampton Conference was fierce. Yemi Makinde, who sits on the NEC's 'Block of 12', officially moved the proposals, urging delegations to end the stranglehold that political factions currently have over the organisation: "[The NUS] cannot do its job if it is sidelined by small cliques. There will be more opportunity... for actual students to get involved across the Union."

She evoked thoughts of the students to whom NUS feels distant and irrelevant, adding: "This review is about... the millions of students who do not make it onto conference floor."

But opponents to the changes accused the NEC-led review of being out-of-touch, arguing that students should lead any changes to NUS' governance structure. The leader of the Student Respect faction, who is amongst the minority of NEC members who oppose the reforms, told the conference: "The vast majority of students unions still don't know what these changes mean."

Apparently overestimating the level of political activism among "ordinary students", Asad Baig, another flag-carrier for Student Respect, said: "These changes have not come from

ordinary students, they come from the management [of NUS] who have never been near a demonstration."

A delegate from the University of Swansea, supporting reform, told the conference: "I am not prepared to go back to my union and tell them that NUS has failed them again."

Some delegations tried to amend the text to ensure that liberation campaigns for black students, students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gender students and women would be given representation on the board of trustees, responsible for financial and legal oversight of the Union's activities. Mr Streeting argued that the board is not intended to be representative, and ensuring liberation campaign representation at that level would challenge the legitimacy of the National Executive Council, charged with the day-to-day political direction of the Union.

The reforms also change the way policy is made in NUS, creating five smaller 'zone conferences' that allow for uncontroversial proposals to be discussed outside of the highly politicised sphere of Annual Conference that happens in Blackpool each year. However, opponents of the plans claim that the zone conferences will undermine the supremacy of the Annual Conference, which is normally a hotbed of activity for political factions.

An attempt by the University of East Anglia Students Union to remove the 'No Platform' section from the constitution, which stops the British National Party and other racist and extremist groups from participating in NUS events, was defeated overwhelmingly.

Graduate recruitment still strong despite credit crunch

Toby Higgins

EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS FOR university graduates remain strong despite the ongoing 'credit crunch', new research has shown.

With Britain's economy having suffered its first period of negative growth for 16 years, adding to fears that a recession may be on the horizon, ukgraduatecareers.net claim that as yet, the graduate job market appears unaffected.

The news will come as a huge relief to the several thousands of final year students throughout the country who will be seeking to secure employment in the next twelve months, as employers turn to graduates as 'cheaper labour' to cut costs, while maintaining a strong workforce.

Martin Birchall, Managing Director of the High Flyers recruitment company, said a recent survey showed graduate employment has dropped by just 1%, and that most businesses are operating as usual, despite the bleak economic climate.

"For a lot of organisations, graduate recruitment is not about filling vacancies for next September, it's about hiring people who can start training next September and become useful when they finish in two or three years' time," Mr Birchall told graduate website, GET, before confirming most employers are continuing with "business as usual" in terms of recruitment.

Carl Gilleard, Chief Executive of the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR) also suggests graduate jobs are dodging the bullet, commenting that the results of his company's own survey were "surprisingly positive".

"The results of the 2008 survey present a mixed picture; they are surprisingly positive in relation to the number of vacancies available with a respectable increase across the sectors and good predicted growth for 2009".

Commenting on graduate pay, Mr Gilleard did however concede that "although employers are still hiring, this year's survey shows the smallest rise in graduate salaries in recent years and in most cases employers will offer no more than a cost of living rise next year"

Some employment areas are suffering slight drops in recruitment figures, however, with suggestions that marketing graduate schemes may suffer a freeze, with doubts over the strength of the IT jobs market too.

By contrast, with money becoming increasingly tight, demand for talented young accountants is on the rise as businesses look for better ways to increase profitability and make better use of resources.

scan:COMMENT

We have yet to see the real crunch

Franziska Bartels

We have all heard a lot about the credit crunch and the subsequent recession affecting the globe.

We have all received tips on how to save money. Some of us maybe scared about the future and some of us could not care less, whilst our parents, no doubt, are growing increasingly worried that we'll not be able to feed ourselves.

Wherever your stand on the so-called credit crunch though, there's not denying that, one way or the other, it will affect us all.

In a nutshell, the credit crunch is the product of what has happened now that loans and credit are harder to come by, and more expensive when they can be found.

However, in order to fully understand this credit crunch it is important to understand what has been going on in the U.S. housing market over the past few years.

The problems in America began with low investor confidence, which lead to a liquidity crisis. This

collapse within the housing market had to be dealt with through a substantial injection of capital by the Federal and European Central Bank.

A bigger shock was to follow though, with leading indicators giving the world's governments even more cause for concern. High oil prices, the fatal rise of food prices - which has been felt by Western consumers (just have a look on campus) as well as Third World consumers - and, inevitably, inflation are just some of the reasons why world leaders will be suffering from many sleepless nights.

At the same time the credit crunch led to a failure within the banking system which has seen many high profile casualties, the most famous of which being the Lehman Brothers fiasco.

With the banks in freefall and more than one company finding they have to tighten their belts, it's no surprise that 'Mr. Joe Ordinary' finds himself with less money, and even more worryingly, less work.

Now something is occurring which the influential economist William Phillips thought impossible: the occurrence of both

inflation and unemployment at the same time. This has led us nicely into stagflation. I don't need to explain what that means, as I am sure that you can guess the double effect of having high prices and being jobless.

Governments are not taking steps to try and avoid a full-blown recession. They've cut interest rates, which is going to decrease savings and increase investment, a crucial step towards recovery.

The Central Banks have also had to hand out various 'gifts' of money to private banks in turmoil. Germany is now having to hand out these rescue aids to industries too.

Critics argue that the interest-cut has come too late, since any changes to economic policies are likely to take time to actually come into effect. It can be compared to a ship that is trying to turn: you have to turn the wheel a long time before the ship actually starts to move.

Despite all these measures being taken the USA and UK have already said they've entered the dreaded recession. It has happened: we are in one. However, that doesn't mean we are going to be in it forever.

First of all, traditionally after a recession there is always a boom, so

by the time you graduate there will probably be plenty of jobs again.

Secondly, according to leading commentators (by 'leading', I mean the few who have been right all along), the US - with an unemployment level of 6% - is going through the worst right now, but are likely to be out of it by next summer.

The UK, France and Germany have yet to face the worst - with projected growth in their economies zero at the best - but are calculated to be out of it by Christmas 2009, or at the very latest spring 2010.

Yes, the next few months might hurt, but if the government decides to cut interest rate further and to stabilise markets, things shouldn't be too gloomy.

Moreover, the good thing about inflation is that it is now cheaper to borrow money, so good news for all the debts-burdened students.

So my advice is: Don't panic, leave your money in the bank. If everyone tries to play it safe and decides to take their money out the banks will crash. So don't. And do spend money: it can only help the economy. Use those low interest rates and go on a shopping spree. The economy will thank you.

Digital Rights Management is a step too far

Tom Hollingworth

Let me state my position: I hate the idea of piracy. I don't believe half the pathetic arguments about sticking it to the man and bringing down corrupt corporations. As far as I can see the vast majority of illegal downloads are just theft. It's morally bankrupt of someone to not just steal, but to steal something like a video game, where several years' worth of work has gone into it. But evidently, mine is a minority view among the young and tech-savvy. Piracy is pretty damned big.

So, naturally, the various media have stumped up their anti-piracy efforts. Highly publicised campaigns and legal battles between musicians and fans ensue, loud and obvious messages warning against film piracy are shown to us in cinemas and game developers and distributors turn to increasingly draconian methods in order to ensure their game is actually bought.

One such developer is EA, who recently released the hit game Spore. The hype surrounding Spore has been immense since it was announced a few years ago. As is always the case with games of this magnitude, the excitement over Spore meant EA wanted to try and minimise piracy as much as possible, utilising something called digital rights management, which meant that, not only do you have to input a serial number when installing the game, you also have to be connected to the internet so EA can verify your game is a legal copy.

Here is the ironic part. When I bought Spore a few weeks ago and tried to install it on my computer, ResNet wouldn't allow the game to connect to the EA servers, and so EA couldn't verify the game. I spent £35 on a game that I am not allowed to play.

Now I'm not blaming the University for this, the problem I have is this: I paid full price for the game, and yet cannot play it until I go home in December. Where does this leave anti-piracy? Am I justified in downloading the cracked copy, thus fuelling piracy?

Anti-piracy measures are justified and understandable. Draconian and senseless obstructions to innocent customers are not.

In attempting maturity, children are masking their true insecurity

Kath Embling

Walking past a hairdressers' in town last week I saw something that made me groan with despair. It's her again. Paris Hilton's face blown up to A3 size, airbrushed as ever, smiling stupidly at busy shoppers going about their business. This time however it's not music or a film, a perfume, or a less than satisfactory reality television show Ms Hilton is promoting, but 'The world's best hair extensions'. There she is, reaching out to young girls, bronze and gaunt - selling supposed beauty.

Christmas is approaching rapidly and every weekend the city centre appears more frantic and full of shoppers. Think back to when you were young: what did

you want for Christmas?

I couldn't possibly guess what an eight-year-old boy would want, but thinking back to when I was that age, I probably wanted a few dolls, perhaps a pair of Gladiator pyjamas and a new 'dressing up' top with sparkly and glittery bits.

Sadly, it seems today's youth are mesmerised by a vastly different world to the one I knew, a world, which appears way ahead of their time. Pole dancing classes are available in a number of venues across Britain targeting people as young as eleven. Pole dancing, which is traditionally a sexual form of exercise, somehow doesn't seem the best way to keep a young person fit and healthy. What ever happened to gymnastics or swimming?

Paris Hilton, Britney Spears and other supposed 'trend setting' celebrities, clearly not good examples for younger generations, are constantly in the media spotlight, selling products which make young

people think it's good to be sexy. If in any doubt, just type 'Children's fashion' into Google to access pages selling FCUK bikinis for ages as young as four years.

It is ironic that when our mothers and grandmothers, wish to halt the relentless march of the ageing process, our world, through media and peer pressure, is promoting premature adulthood in impressionable female youngsters.

Anti-wrinkle creams and teeth whitening cosmetics are just some of the products used by older people to appear younger so they can be perceived as 'stereotypically' attractive. Sure, there's nothing wrong with wanting to look your best, but a glance at statistics shows in 2007 there was a 31% increase in face lifts in the UK, meaning 4,468 facial procedures had been carried out amongst men and women between 2006 and 2007. Surely the need to 'look our best' has spiralled out of control, and adults are going

to extremes just to look that bit younger?

Arguably it's old fashioned and possibly narrow-minded to think children should be children and adults should be adults, but it has become apparent that the media has essentially forced our nation into believing perfection is achievable. There are television programmes showcasing young girls from the age of six competing in beauty pageants, made up to look like miniature dolls, performing for a panel of judges whilst wearing specially made high heels and swimming costumes.

Are we living in a totally brain-washed world? Where mothers allow, or worse, want their children to 'come of age' prematurely? It seems so. If this then, is how children dress up next to their anti-wrinkle cream obsessed mothers, then perhaps Paris Hilton's media onslaught has already been successful.

What can fame be worth if it can be won on so little merit?

Samantha Newsham

One of the most arresting statistics I have seen in the past twelve months is this: according to a survey carried out by Sky.com, the ultimate heroine of young people in the UK is Amy Winehouse.

And what is it about Winehouse that inspires such idolatry in the under-25s? Her undeniable talent? Her reputed £10m fortune? Her famous beehive? All of these factors contribute, I am sure, but the main reason seems to be that it is almost impossible to open a newspaper or magazine without seeing Winehouse stumble from one drug-induced crisis to another.

The adoration of Amy Winehouse represents the pinnacle of our national obsession with being famous. Winehouse, whatever faults she may have, and however unsuitable a role model she may be, is without doubt a supremely talented singer. She is in the minority, though; nowadays magazines and gossip columns are crowded with the exploits of those who have

made their names on reality TV.

Since the turn of the century the rise of reality TV has been phenomenal. Shows such as The X-Factor, Big Brother and The Apprentice have given a host of opportunities for ordinary people to become famous for no other reason than that they've made a fool of themselves in front of millions of viewers.

As if this wasn't enough, we're bombarded by yet more shows starring so-called 'celebrities' – though I defy you to find anyone who has appeared on Strictly Come Dancing or I'm A Celebrity, Get Me Out Of Here who really deserves the title 'celebrity'.

It's easy to see why TV executives like reality shows. They are cheap and easy to make and the viewers lap them up. The more shows they air the more people turn up to participate the next time round. It's easy to see why the public like them, too. What could be more entertaining than watching someone like you sing their way to a shot at fame and fortune on The X-Factor? Nothing, unless it's laughing as someone whose five minutes of fame are far behind them grubs through a pool of cockroaches on I'm A Celebrity.

So now, as The X-Factor and Strictly Come Dancing dominate our Saturday night viewing war and ITV begins yet another tedious series of I'm A Celebrity, we have to ask what there is to be gained by exposing ourselves to so much reality TV. It is fake, irritating and a showcase for the talentless. It reunites us with people we'd rather

It's easy to see why TV executives like reality shows. They are cheap and easy to make and the viewers lap them up. The more shows they air the more people turn up to participate the next time round.

forget, as in 2004 when Peter Andre's turn on I'm A Celebrity led to the resurrection of his singing career. It makes celebrities of people like Jade Goody, famous for being stupid, and superstars of those like Simon Cowell, famous for being rude. What does it say about our society that these are the values we admire above all others?

But who are the real winners of reality TV? Not those voted by the public, that's for sure. Out of the

scores of shows that have produced a winner over the past few years, barely a handful have gone on to enjoy any kind of lasting career. Perhaps the reason for this is that the output they subsequently produce is so instantly forgettable. Consider the current X-Factor finalists' single Hero, released recently in aid of the Help for Heroes campaign. The song will raise a lot of money for an excellent cause but that's the only thing to be said in its favour; it is so irritatingly insipid that I turn the radio off rather than listen to it.

The fact is that the only ones to profit from our obsession with reality TV are the television directors and Simon Cowell, the man who gave the world Five and A Teletubbies Christmas. The rest of us are subjected to ever-more mindless offerings filling up our TV schedules and a surfeit of information on the 'stars' they produce. It seems to me that the best thing to do about reality TV and its supposed celebrities – and, perhaps, about Amy Winehouse as well – is ignore them in the hope that they will go away.

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Debate & Analysis: Sabb Review

An all-male Sabb team would be a step backwards

Torri Crapper

LUSU Non-Sabbatical Women's Officer

I can imagine many of you reading this asking 'why is she going on about this again?' 'Why do we need a Women's Officer?' 'It's positive sexism!' 'What do they do that a guy couldn't?' 'There isn't a men's officer, how is that fair?' 'This is a sticky topic and yet again continues to be one of the main contentious issues with the ongoing LUSU sabbatical review.'

Again, this has brought up the arguments about the perceived equality of women and whether it is worthwhile representing women students at sabbatical level or whether a non-sabbatical officer could do the job. As the Non-Sabbatical Women's Officer, who has worked with two different Sabbatical Women's Officers, I can tell you that this is simply not a workable option.

On this campus, women make up roughly 54% of the student body and need representing within the Students' Union by a full time officer not just for white heterosexual women but for women from minority groups too. Though women are the majority, we are the minority in elections, in campaigning and in the workplace. Sara Dunn, LUSU Women's Officer expands on this fact; "Women's participation in sabbatical candidacy is very low. Apart from three women who ran for the Women's Officer last March, only 2 women ran against 26 men for the other positions. It is clear that the Union is already a male-dominated arena, and to suggest that guaranteed women's representation can be taken away, reflects no responsibility to the long-term possibilities that our decisions could create." We need guaranteed representation to ensure that women's issues, concerns and representation are not side-tracked within this politically harsh and overtly male terrain. Without

it we could end up with a full male Sabbatical Team and that is hardly representative of anyone other than (generalisation I'm aware) middle class white men, which most sabbatical teams across the country are made up of.

The Women's Officer campaigns for a range of different minority and liberation groups across campus including but not exclusive to Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Trans students, students with disabilities, international students, Black Minority Ethnic students, and mature, part-time and intercalating students. All these groups feature in liberation campaigns, and having a member of a liberation group mentoring all of them at a Sabbatical level is the best way for understanding what many face. The Women's Officers in this union believe that liberation groups deserve their autonomy, and whilst the Sabbatical Women's Officer represents these groups she helps to guide each committee in the direction that they wish to progress. In an ideal world we would have Sabbatical representatives from all minority groups, but that isn't possible with finite resources. However for many, self-defining as a minority is not a possible due to personal circumstance or fear.

Women's Officers play a vital role in challenging inequality and discrimination on campus because we suffer from discrimination too. They guarantee that women are represented in our Students Union and University decision-making structures and provide essential support for women and minority group students facing discrimination. In Unions across the country, these officers have succeeded in making a real difference for women students and liberation groups by improving safety on campus, securing stronger university action against harassment and bullying, campaigning for equal pay for women graduates and defending women's representation. Now is not the time to take two steps back but to keep moving forward!

I don't want to act like an equal, I am one

Janie Coleman

LUSU General Secretary

The title 'Women's Officer' is currently a discredit to the amount of work that one officer is supposed to be responsible for in our Students Union. The Women's Officer isn't solely a representative for our female students – she is additionally our Union's key representative for all liberation and diversity groups, upholding equality across our membership regardless of a person's gender, age, disability, race, religion, creed or sexual preference. A stride towards reform, and the creation of the position of Vice President Equality, Welfare and Diversity (EWD), would not only pay testament to the great deal of work this officer is responsible for, but will clarify what the position actually represents and stands for. Not only this, but it will also ensure that the position itself can be held by any student, no matter what their gender, age, disability, race, religion, creed or sexual preference is – after all that is how equality works.

To suggest that the proposed EWD Sabbatical should be exclusive to women undermines the idea of equality itself. If we are going to guarantee a women-only post, then should we not also argue that every group viewed as a minority should have a guaranteed Sabbatical position?

Don't get me wrong, I understand and respect the argument in favour of having a guaranteed female representative, considering women are viewed as one, if not the largest of the 'minority' groups. However, when taking into consideration all the other liberation and diversity groups it simply does not seem just or fair, nor does it live up to the word 'equality' itself – it simply contradicts it.

This is not the only reason why I believe it is unnecessary to have a guaranteed female repre-

sentative on the Sabbatical Team. To say that I genuinely believe that men and women are treated as equals in this day and age would not only be naive, but unrealistic. However, when I reflect upon the history of women in this country, I think it would be a discredit to those women who have fought so hard to level out the playing field we share with men to suggest that we aren't a damn sight better off than we were 100 years ago. In fact, as a 21st Century woman, I will go so far as to say that I believe things have changed so dramatically over the last century, that women should no longer be crying "we're offended because we are still not seen as good enough!" We should be shouting "we are good enough, and we are offended to be told that we're not!"

My attitude as a modern woman is one of confidence and optimism when it comes to gender equality and more specifically females being in positions of influence, or power, if you will. I'm offended at being told we're not equal, and that we need some form of special provision or treatment in order for a woman to hold a position on our Union's Sabbatical Team. I was the only woman running against four male candidates for the position of General Secretary and it wasn't a guaranteed female place on the team that got me where I am today. I fought off my four male competitors with sheer determination, honesty, drive and passion for our Union, with what I had to offer it and what I believed in. No one ever said you had to be male to have that within you, and to fight for something you truly believe in or aspire to be. Anyone can do it.

Our Union is currently driving forward so slowly, it might as well be parking. Let us stop holding back, and guarantee good representation for all students, no matter what their gender, and treat everyone with the same respect and attention they deserve!

It's about time we started acting like equals – wait, what am I saying? I don't want to 'act' like an equal. I am one.

The inertia of back-seat special interests must not prevent this vital reform



Michael Payne
LUSU President

The proposed review of LUSU's sabbatical officerships has inspired mixed feelings across campus. There have been sighs of relief that LUSU is finally giving its members the opportunity to decide on their representation; there have been some constructive – and some not-so-constructive – criticisms and amendments suggested. Whilst everyone seems to agree that LUSU should be a Union for all students, a select few seem to be wary or afraid of stepping over the threshold of change.

There have been comments from the sidelines and protests from afar. But when challenged with the opportunity to suggest changes, discuss ideas, offer an alternative or justify arguments, we have instead been faced with a silent cabal of backseat drivers.

It is vital that this Sabbatical review is seen holistically; it balances the work-

load of the Sabbs, provides clear and descriptive job titles; it offers representation for all students at the most senior level of our Union; it meets the challenges faced by a 21st century student union; and it offers the opportunity to provide a more relevant, inclusive and powerful voice for our students.

It would be dangerous for us to be come distracted by arguments comparing the roles of the current Sabbatical Team directly to the newly proposed structure. The remit of Women's Officer has not become that of Equalities Welfare & Diversity any more than it has become that of Student Activities. This is a new team, not an updating of the old one.

If we take a narrow approach that concentrates on single posts, titles, or a small handful of students – rather than the student population as a whole – then we lose the bigger picture, and

with it, the impetus behind the change. That being said, I am willing to meet the critics I have encountered on their terms of debate, which are regrettably based largely on direct comparisons between one Sabb Team and another.

Certainly, the proposal of a Vice-President for Equality, Welfare & Diversity has put the cat amongst the pigeons. Supporters of the status quo argue that since the Women's Officer already covers most of the responsibilities within the new Equality, Welfare and Diversity remit, the portfolio ought to be left as the guaranteed preserve of women. But two issues arise from this rhetoric. Firstly, it undermines the ability of women running for anything other than the women's only position, as well as adding to the misguided impression that a foot-up is needed for women to amount to anything in the world. Secondly, ensuring a woman on the Sabb Team does nothing to deal with other diversities that the team could demonstrate – it could arguably hinder progress in those other areas.

Criticisms have not been limited to the EWD portfolio though. Providing societies with proper representation as a Vice-President Student Activities has also caused controversy, specifically

amongst sections of the Athletic Union. Again, concerns are about workload and remit; but this ignores that societies are currently dealt with by the General Secretary, who also has elections, Extravs, finance, JCRs, Christmas balls, Grad Ball and Intro Week to deal with as well; the AU President, on the other hand, has only sports and sports clubs to handle – clearly a more manageable brief. Creating a Vice-President Student Activities to support, represent and champion both societies and the Athletic Union can only help students.

Similarly, a VP-Media and Communications that encompasses all types of media, will give the Union some focus when it comes to our own media organisations, and interacting with media in the outside world. It lends itself to a two-way flow of news, instead of the one-way flow we have currently and it will better enable the Union to engage with local media, to give us more clout in public debate in Lancaster, which too often overlooks the student view.

This is your chance to make LUSU a Union for all students. Don't allow this to be a change stopped by backseat drivers: step up to the plate and make your voice heard.



All Sabbs are elected equal, but some are more equal than others.

Ben Nye

**Vice President,
Bowland JCR**

The tag line for the Sabbatical review is very catchy: 'Equal rights and opportunities for all. Special privileges for none'. This puzzled me slightly as I was under the impression the six people who make up the Sabbatical positions were somehow leading their own tyrannical regime, or perhaps even ignored the democratic elections and set up a presidential palace in the LUSU building. Contrary to many beliefs, this hasn't happened yet.

By the sounds of this very dramatic tag line you'd have thought that the University were employing their own very Jim Crow laws. What we are looking at is an examination over the current way things are run. What this doesn't necessarily require is a revolution to make it seem more exciting. I don't see how combining the societies and AU clubs together might achieve the 'equal rights and opportunities for all'. So this brings me to question whether this statement is really true for this 'review'. I mean, why even mention the idea of 'special privileges'? Is this referring to the hotly contested 'Women's Officer'? Is this perhaps some kind of sly dig at an office that serves over half the student population and is of vital importance in the representation of minorities on campus?

Well I tell you what will achieve equal rights and opportunities for us all: having five other 'Vice-Presidents' underneath a LUSU President. I believe somewhere in the by-laws it mentions some kind of ceremonial garment and crown to match. As far as I'm aware the President is somewhat a first among equals with the other Sabbs. After all they all have expertise in different areas, and are focussing on many different issues. However, if you make it clear that everyone else is a 'Vice-President' and that there is only one President, it turns into a little bit of a totalitarian state. I can imagine the next level of the general student population being referred to as Peasants.

You shouldn't be fooled by what's happening here. They're making all this fuss about equality, freedom and diversity. I don't know if anyone else has noticed, but is there a chance to amend it? Oh wait, yes: that would be by Tuesday November 25th, 12pm. I imagine you could email that, better yet, get a load of you to write down all your amendments. I mean hundreds of you. The more the better. Even if it's just stuff like 'keep this' or 'leave this alone'. Print them up and pile them outside Michael Payne's door. Maybe then he can start listening to the students want, rather than telling us what we want.

Will the new VP for Student Activities be a hit with clubs and societies?



Liam Richardson

Comment Editor

Once the hullabaloo about female representation and the demise of the Women's Officer dies down, I believe other issues will come to the fore and occupy the long term concerns of many. I am referring, of course, to the newly created Vice President Student Activities, perhaps the most controversial and divisive proposal of the sabbatical review process.

If you haven't already heard, the role of the Athletic Union President is to be re-branded and handed the extra responsibility of co-ordinating societies as well as the clubs and teams they already have to deal with.

Now, from a logical perspective, I can understand why this decision has been taken. The staff in LUSU are already working with clubs and societies in tandem and it seems quite reasonable that the Sabbatical Officer

with whom they share an office and with whom they spend the most time—the AU President—should take up the societies workload as well for ease of communication.

Societies are currently under the remit of the General Secretary, but the workload of this position means that societies are quite often neglected and receive little of the attention they deserve. It is a fact that societies form a big part of University life, with half of all students joining one, so you would surmise that they were a cause worthy of increased representation and attention.

Whether this current conundrum will be resolved by the proposed changes, I am unsure. The AU President has to organise Roses every other year—the biggest event of its kind in Europe—so they probably have a big enough workload as it is. Is passing a

problem around really the answer?

Perhaps the most important implication from this move, however, will only become apparent at election time.

Every year, a former Societies Council Chair or another person of a similar background is, in a typical scenario, beaten to the position of General Secretary by a popular former JCR President. Okay, so it would be a closer fight between candidates from a sports background and a societies one. However, I envision the AU clubs and teams being particularly against someone controlling them who does not originate from their flock.

This new position has the possibility of becoming very problematic. If the clubs and societies fail to back it, and lack the belief that it can work, then it will surely be a failure.

Although it can be argued that the current AU President is effectively an administrator, who does not necessarily require a background in sports at Lancaster, such a background is particularly helpful when dealing with

the multitude of clubs who need to be on side. I do not think someone from a societies background will have the ability to bridge the gap and effectively represent clubs that they have no previous knowledge or experience of.

However, this scenario also operates the other way. If the new Student Activities Officer is someone from a sporting background, will they have the expertise and knowledge of how to deal with and liaise with the societies they are supposed to be able to represent?

Now, in an ideal world, the perfect candidate would be someone who has successfully combined both activities in their university career but in my opinion, typical students join a society or a club not both: not when time has to be dedicated to the usual pursuits of studying and socialising.

In summary, this new position has the possibility of becoming very problematic. A test of its feasibility lies mainly in co-operation from the groups it involves. If the clubs and societies fail to back it and lack the belief that it can work then it will surely be a failure. The question is, has the review catered for the needs of its students effectively? Time will tell, but the omens aren't promising.



ELECTIONS

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Letters to the Editor



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

At least the Sports Centre is close

I would like to offer a reply to some points made by Liam Richardson's in, "All part of the Masterplan" in Scan 11/11/08.

The Sports Centre may be dismal, abysmal and all things dirty but it is centrally located – unlike that proposed where I'll spend all my lunch time commuting instead of doing the exercise I want to; I personally hope it stays where it is until I finish my studies. A surprising nod to the credit crunch!

As a mature-age off-campus student I completed my degree as a member of a college that I visited only for mail collection. Other than being bitterly disappointed I

couldn't graduate with my degree-colleagues rather than people I didn't know, the hardest thing was finding a warm room with natural light, a decent table and chair next to a window, socket for the laptop, printer close by and the ability to keep my eye on it all while getting a coffee – a short walk from the next lecture. If the Learning Zone provides those facilities it will be well-used. Here's hoping the cafe offers an alternative to the ubiquitous mayonnaise sandwiches and baked potatoes.

Anon.

Bowland bar staff happily use tap water to make an orange squash, and if you ask for a pint of water as part of a round it's served without a fuss. However, stumble into the bar a little hungover and ask for a pint of water on its own and you're told to bugger off.

Every bar in town serves water without thinking twice, but on campus you're treated like a pervert for asking. Is this even

legal? Legal or not, the bars are supposed to be there as a service for students. Surely serving free water would give more benefits to students than the few pence more the bar might make by forcing you to buy a bottle. Then again, maybe the tight bugger that runs the bar does it for his own pleasure. He is Scottish after all.

Bothered Bowlander.

LUSU mollycoddle students beyond the point of reason. Carnage may encourage heavy drinking but so too does Furness 15 hour bar crawl, Fylde's Gallon Challenge or any other number of organised socials. It is student culture and the reputation of the university will remain intact whether students attend or not.

Despite LUSU's best efforts to control us it must be noted that we are all independent over 18s. If a student excessively drinks, throws up and wakes in the morning remembering little, then maybe they won't do it again. But is it really up to LUSU to decide if they do?

A student with free will

Ironic? No, predictable

There is nothing ironic about supporting McCain-Palin and big government at the same time (Caption: Nottingham win Debating Society's annual inter- varsity competition). Anyone who believes so has bought into the myth that Republicans stand for small government. US politics are ridiculous, at best (and yes, I include Obama under that rubric; I'm not of the faithful), more so than the nonsense that goes on in the Continent, but this has to be one of the most enduring myths surrounding it.

What should be seen as ironic is, for example, Bush's request that an upcoming meeting on the financial crisis should "violate no free market principle". Aside from the ones he's violated, that is? It is rhetoric, to cloak the naked emperor. McCain does not even adhere to it, if he adheres to any principles at all. The Young Republican, like his fellow party members, is in line with his party.

Anders Svensson,
Cartmel

I should like, in response to S. Carter's letter in your last edition, to clarify Furness College's position on noise complaints. Each complaint is treated with the seriousness and fairness that it deserves. The porter does not know when he or she receives a complaint how loud the noise is and so, reasonably, they attend in order to gauge for themselves. Sometimes the noise is excessive (even for half past nine in the evening) and a report is filed for the deanery. At other times students are often pleased to hear if they have inadvertently disturbed someone (who may, for example, be finishing an essay, have a long day of paid employment ahead of them, or be getting a good night's sleep before a modular examination) so that they can either keep the noise down or move to a location where others are at greater liberty to listen to it. In the case mentioned, therefore, the porter

did act entirely appropriately.

On a related but separate issue, I would like to point out that members of the college should feel free to discuss any matter of disciplinary policy with me. My office is on A floor of the main college building and people are welcome to catch me in there and are also welcome to approach me in the college bar or when around about elsewhere. In addition the college has a disciplinary committee (populated by equal numbers of junior and senior members) that discusses disciplinary policy. Two new junior members will be appointed to the committee in January and any Furness students who are interested or would like more information should feel free to contact me.

Faternally yours,
Dr. Chris Grocott,
Dean, Furness College

Should the Uni be using NUSSL deals?

What exactly is the role of the SU in the college bars? I am given to understand that the majority of college bar stock is purchased through NUSSL (NUS Services Ltd.) but that some of the profits from the college bars go to the university. The mission statement of NUSSL is to "Create, develop, and sustain competitive advantages for member Students' Unions - reducing costs and maximising commercial revenues." Nothing there about commercial advantages for universities. Can anyone explain what is happening?

Inquisitive Postgraduate

In response to the article in Week 4's issue on the changes made to higher education, I would have to say that I disagree with the views expressed by Tom Hollingworth. Yes, it is true that the academic route isn't right for everyone, but that is what vocational qualifications the training courses or apprenticeships that the article mentioned are for.

Vocational courses allow for a mixture of education with more practical work experience, so that young people can get into the job market and earn a wage, but can also improve their knowledge and skills in the vocational area in which they wish to enter.

Anon.

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Michael & Sarah

A woman with a passion for fashion and a young man with gangly limbs gently massage the relationship issues of Lancaster University.

Dear Michael and Sarah,

I'm in a rut; my Father and my Brother are both bona fide lotharios. Enticing the ladies to them comes almost as naturally as breathing. **I however have unfortunately not inherited the family skill with the fairer sex.** Is there any way I can turn around my family ill-fortune?

X

SARAH: Instead of comparing yourself to the magnetic charms of your relatives perhaps work on your own self confidence and build interaction with women into your daily life so that it no longer seems daunting. An everyday 'hello' to that woman in the corner shop could prepare you for chatting to females on the bus, in a seminar or in pubs. Once you have laid the foundations you should be able to develop an easy charm and rapport with women as it will seem natural not uncomfortable. A word of warning though, do not expect instant success, women are difficult creatures and a brutal rebuke could knock your confidence. Therefore continue to be friendly and approach girls, but err on the side of caution to avoid becoming an unmitigated sex pest.

MICHAEL: If your Father and Brother are such a hit with the ladies it is likely that you too have that je ne sais quoi, you've just got to find it. Ask your family if you can shadow them as they go about romancing. Use gaffer tape to affix yourself to your relatives midriff and peer over their shoulder to see exactly where it is you are going wrong, apply flour to your facial features so any prospective women that your brother/father talk to believe you to be simply a humble cold sore. Make sure that the women your chosen family member decides to talk to are manageably attractive as the potential midriff-friction and close proximity between your groin and your chosen relative's anal cavity could make for a very awkward silence at the breakfast table.

SARAH: Superheroes get along with this conflict manageably. Superman worked it out with Lois Lane so perhaps set yourself up with a secret life and continue in your repressed existence with your blissfully unaware partner. However, if your secret self begins to demand to perform bodily functions in public and spend more time in the pub rather than save the world, perhaps slowly introduce your true self to your partner and see how it is received. It is best to be honest with yourself here, as this seemingly deceptive relationship is bound to end in tears, similar to that of Batman in The Dark Knight to continue the superhero analogy. Furthermore, relationships stagnate incredibly quickly in our fast paced culture so you may find that your girlfriend really enjoys the new version of you!

MICHAEL: Relationships where people stifle themselves are the cornerstone of Western civilization. Where would we be without the loveless marriage of convenience or the Shotgun Wedding? Quite likely many of us wouldn't be alive today if our parents hadn't made the noble decision that they were unlikely to do any better than each other. I for one know I wouldn't. If your relationship is still relatively young there is still hope for you yet. Luckily after around the six month anniversary of any given relationship couples hilariously forget what life was ever like outside of one, and are unable to cope with any other living arrangement. Then you have reached a Golden Age my friend. You can use the toilet with the door open, pick your nose with her toothbrush and she will be biologically incapable of leaving you.

Dear Michael and Sarah

My interests are quite different to all of my male friends and I am feeling under pressure to conform. **I'm a straight man who enjoys knitting, musicals and Disney films, but my friends are all into football and drinking.** How can I share my interests with them without them thinking I'm gay or girlie?

X

SARAH: Diversity in a group of friends can lead to finding new interests and exciting days out. Make an effort to stay involved with your friends' activities but never feel under pressure to join their lager-infused football antics if you would rather be at home with 'On the Town'. Try to gradually involve your friends in your hobbies by

suggesting a film night or offering to teach them to knit. It could be a handy skill for making Christmas presents. Failing that, set up or join societies that share your love of Disney and knitting but keep your football loving friends in your life also. Just because you do not share the same interests does not mean your friendship is doomed.

MICHAEL: Remember the golden rule that 'it's not what you like, what you like is the person' and that if your friends begrudge your love of musicals to the extent that it interferes with friendships then perhaps you better reconsider your social circle. You should always remember of course that so called 'Girlie' pursuits can be

made macho in very manageable ways. For instance, whilst watching Disney films, try to objectify the princesses as much as possible ('I'd buck that Jasmine into an early grave.') or if you enjoy knitting try to incorporate an undercurrent of manliness by knitting your friends footie-scarves or cock-warmers.

If you have an issue you'd like to ask Michael & Sarah about, write to them at michael_unt_sarah@hotmail.co.uk.

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Art plus rock: Oxjam's recipe for success?

Daniel Ash

ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15th bands and artists came together in Preston's Roper Hall, to help raise awareness and funds for the musical Oxfam-offshoot, OxJam.

The festival, organised by the North West regional group of OxJam, was ARTROCK, and showcased their new ideas and new plans with an exhibition of donated art and performances from several local bands and singers.

OxJam itself is a very young branch of the world-renowned Oxfam charity. Having only been set up in 2006, the movement already has support from acts like Coldplay, Get Cape: Wear Cape, Fly, Fatboy Slim and many others.

The event over the weekend was designed to raise money to help in the funding of OxJam initiatives. By March 2009 the OxJam North West team hopes to have raised £15,000. The money raised by each of the 28 regional teams operating in the country will be added together to try and raise £400,000. All of this money will go towards the national and international work being done by Oxfam.

Located in the upstairs floor of a scream bar in Preston, the event hosted a number of stalls with attractive layouts of colourful, ethical and fun jewellery. Most of the wall space was covered by a collection of artistic paintings and photographs. The art covered a broad spectrum of abilities and styles, ranging from 'Lancaster Nation', which was a blank canvas on which had been added the thumb prints of Lancastrian locals and students, to the more intricate and stylised work of people such



Never miss a beat: Simon Rix and Nick Hodgson of the Kaiser Chiefs show off their support for OxJam.

as Daniel Orlick, Laura Stinger and Katie Eveson.

The art was intended to be sold at the event, but low attendance meant the OxJam organisers decided to retain the artwork and sell it through other means in an attempt to get as much revenue as possible into the charity's coffers.

The music of the night was an impressive showcase of North Western talent. Each band had put together an acoustic set to play for the event, and with an impressive sound system, considering the venue and size of the room, every band performed to a high standard, each being entertaining and refreshingly different.

Manchester based band King Kayak kicked off the music with enthusiasm and vigour. Then followed a stripped down set from Preston regulars, The Jackpot Golden Boys. Whilst usually sounding like 'heavy-metal Beach Boys', tonight the band revelled in playing very merry and charming, if whimsical, songs which sounded like the music of a slightly more eccentric Jack Johnson.

Next up was Chicago-born, one-man 'band-in-a-box' Daniel Orlick. Orlick played an eclectic

mix of his own brand of experimental music, including some conventional songs which were rapped/sung over easy-listening guitar playing, and flowed seamlessly between being funny, anthemic and political. Not only did Orlick play for the event but he also donated an impressive amount of artwork. He said he felt that this was one of the benefits of the way in which OxJam works, as he could open up artistically and could further his own creative desires, whilst simultaneously helping aid a worthwhile cause.

The final band of the night were The Uncomfortables, who brought the night to an impressive end.

Overall, the event was one of mixed achievements. A lot has to be commended: the bands were entertaining, the vibe was funky, the stalls were cool, the art was remarkable and abundant and the cause was good.

Unfortunately the night's obvious downside was its significant lack of support—unfortunate, as it is a very good cause and a new attempt to draw more young people into charity work while making it exciting, fun and fulfilling.

You say it best... (When you say nothing at all)

Michael Holt explores the horror of the 'Seminar Silence'... (To be read aloud)



Michael Holt

"THE MOST ELOQUENT silence; that of two mouths meeting in a kiss." Although the author of this quote is unknown, it is quite clear that whoever they were, they have never set foot in a university seminar before.

It takes you when you least suspect it, everyone is comfortable, listening intently, jotting down well meaning fragmented notes that they will never look at again. Everything is fine.

Then from nowhere, the seminar tutor poses an incredibly open-ended question and then it begins: Silence. Everyone becomes paralysed, and an excruciating game of silence-chicken envelopes the room. Eye-contact becomes impossible. The tutor ruffles his notes and takes a sip of the closest drink to hand, operating with a feigned nonchalance at the situation. All the while, you are trapped in your own mind as you scramble about for some semblance of an answer:

"Should I say something? But what if it's wrong? No-one else is saying anything... Well I can't speak first... The moment has gone now... Everyone is checking their notes, fools. We're in too deep... Oh! That girl is going to say something... Oh... No, wait. It was just a cough. Maybe I should say 'bless you', to ease the tension. But who says 'bless you' to a cough? Idiot. Even

if it had been a sneeze it would be too late now! Christ...

"What was the question again? I don't think anyone even knows anymore, if we ever knew in the first place! If only student finance knew that they've lavished thousands of pounds on this spectacle. Oh, the enthusiasm I showed on my UCAS personal statement, but look at me now: hemmed in by an oppressive wall of quiet. None of us know what we are talking about. University is just the process of finding increasingly complex ways of lying to each other. We've all been found out! Intellectually naked! I should've read more!

"Next week is the watershed. I'm turning my life around. I know I think this every week but this time I mean it. I'm going to read everything on the reading list! Even if it's in a foreign language, I am going to stare mercilessly at it until it makes sense. I will be the vibrant focal point of debate next week. I'm going to turn up wearing a cape that has the bibliography and references to my opinions stitched onto it...

"The seminar tutor will permit me to monologue before the full group, unbroken, erudite, an Adonis of Academia. They'll see. They think I ain't worth a dime. When they see me emerge from my cocoon I will make them forget this silence ever existed. Nay! I can change the past! This moment doesn't exist! I've already erased it from History! My fate cries out to me! I WILL SIT ATOP A GLIMMERING MOUNTAIN-TOP HOLDING A SCEPTRE CARVED FROM..."

A well meaning creature blunders in headfirst. "Could it be because they are biased?" they whisper ineffectually. The Seminar tutor thankfully grabs the reins and resumes talking without acknowledging the well-meaning suggestion in any way as if nothing had ever happened. The silence vanishes slowly into the distance, but it never truly goes away. It's there. Always waiting. Endlessly.



ARTS

Bless him...

W.

Director: Oliver Stone

Starring: Josh Brolin, Tandie

Newton, Elizabeth Banks

Johnathan Ilott

Ever since the invention of celluloid, Hollywood has been obsessed with the story of an everyman figure reaching the summits of political power.

Usually they are 'Mr. Smith' figures, decent men giving their all to defend the purity of the system. Oliver Stone, though, with *W.*, his biopic of George W. Bush, has delivered the ultimate example yet Bush is neither of these things.

The main problem with the film is simply that Stone fails to find a cohesive narrative around which to construct the film. Instead we flicker at random between time periods from *W.*'s college

days, to the lead up to the war, then back again. Thematically the scenes are mostly unrelated leaving what should be key themes, for example his conversion to evangelism, reduced to mere footnotes. In their place we are provided with simplistic pop-psychology, and sometimes "My daddy loved my brother more than me ... so I'm running for President" just doesn't wash.

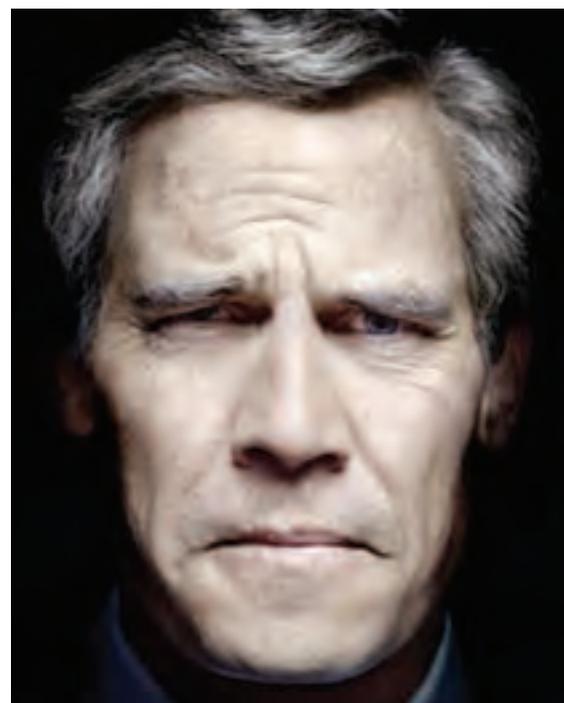
What Stone does get right, however, is the cast. Brolin is fantastic as Bush, presenting a three-dimensional person, he offers a character rather than a caricature. Richard Dreyfuss and Toby Jones (as Dick Cheney and Karl Rove respectively) also shine, both working wonders with what little screen time they have, as does the perennially overlooked Elizabeth Banks. The only weaknesses in the ensemble are Thandie Newton, who somewhat



"My daddy loved my brother more than me ... so I'm running for President"

unfairly reduces Condoleeza Rice to nothing more than a nervous tick and a sour face, and Ioan Grufford, who was obviously cast as Tony Blair on nothing more than his being British, thin and dark haired (it doesn't help that somewhat surprisingly Blair pops up once and even then only fleetingly).

It is the cast, along with some



"They underestimated me":

Brolin is superb as the outgoing US President.

great one liners, some ready made (the infamous: fool me once... gaff) and some new ('Who do you think you are? A Kennedy?') that raises *W.* above being a mere curiosity and into something genuinely watchable, even if inconsistent. This said, once you leave the cinema and compare the character

you have just seen and the one you have known from the past eight years, you cannot help but be left with an awful sinking feeling. Because when all is said and done, it all seems too soon to be able to comfortably sit down and laugh or enjoy a film outlining what has happened under the Bush Jnr. Regime.

More than just a Queen song

Classic Novel: *Brighton Rock*

Author: Graham Greene

Richie Garton

'Hale knew, before he had been in Brighton three hours, that they meant to murder him.'

This has to be one of the most gripping opening lines of a novel ever. I was completely engrossed seconds after picking up the book, and I stayed that way right up until I finished it.

This book, set in 1930, follows the exploits of Pinkie, a young gang leader whose vindictive, violent tendencies border on the psychotic. He always carries a bottle of sulphuric acid for 'protection', to give you some idea of his nature. He commits a murder early on in the story and is forced to marry a love-struck waitress named Rose in order to protect himself. This plan works at first, but a free-spirited, idealistic woman named Ida becomes suspicious and takes it upon herself to find out the truth about Pinkie's misdeeds due to the indifference of the police.

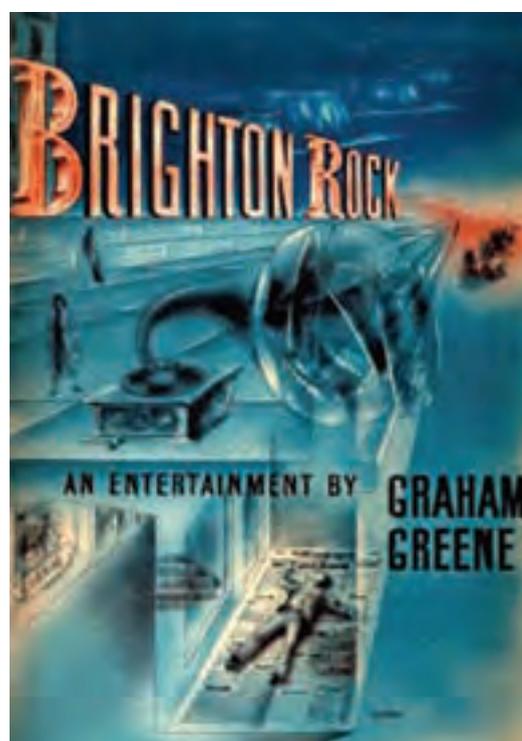
This book is splendidly written overall; it is fast-paced and the numerous twists constantly keep the reader on his or her toes. What impresses me most is the atmosphere the book creates; it somehow manages to make post-WWI Brighton seem both dreary and lively. The characters are also

brilliant, and the fact that the perspective switches from one to another between chapters means that the reader can get to grips with them all separately. Pinkie in particular is a fascinating character. The reader should absolute loathe him for his atrocities and the callous way he treats his wife, yet there is something oddly pure about his ideals and goals. This places him above the corrupt, petty criminals that surround him and makes him compelling, if not altogether likeable. Ida is also an interesting figure; she is about the only character in the novel with any moral concept of 'right and wrong', which is deliberate irony on Greene's part as she is not religious. Pinkie, in contrast, is a Catholic and is seen as the very embodiment of evil.

Greene's novel has dated quite a bit, but in a way this adds to the sense of quaint nostalgia it possesses, and makes the violent parts all the more shocking. It's an excellent read



and is intelligent without being too demanding, but it is not for the faint of heart. *Brighton Rock* is never boring, often moving and always thrilling; a great choice for any lover of fiction. If you like this you might also want to check out the 1947 film which stars a very young Richard 'Jurassic Park' Attenborough; it does the book perfect justice and even manages to improve on the ending.



The gears carry on turning

Hannah Fearon

Gears of War 2
Xbox360

This blockbuster of a sequel to the action-packed classic *Gears of War* reaches new levels in the world of gaming. With stunning graphics, plenty of new weapons and a fantastic multiplayer mode, *Gears of War 2* is well worth the wait.

The game starts off six months after where the first ended, with the Locust more powerful than ever before, sinking entire cities. As Marcus Fenix, you must protect Jacinto and take the fight to the enemy.

One of the key aspects of *Gears* is the cover system, which is interesting but at times it can get quite dull and doesn't always work as planned.

Anyone that has played the first game will be familiar with the system but those that haven't may find it a little confusing. Not much is explained and the controls are quite difficult to get a grasp of. With so many different actions, movements and weapons, everything becomes rather daunting when beginning the game.

When first playing *Gears of War 2*, it is almost as if you are watching an epic action film at the cinema rather than playing a game on a small television set. *Gears* has often been described as a cinematic

game and now this has finally been proven. The graphics in the game seem quite superior to anything else out there at the moment, enhancing its cinematic experience.

Fans will be pleased to see the return of the classic Lancer Assault Rifle with its wonderful Chainsaw Bayonet. Hardcore fans (or those with money to burn) may have been lucky enough to get hold of one of only several thousand Gold Lancer Assault Rifle replicas when *Gears of War 2* was released.

Whilst the game represents a significant advancement in the gaming world, it does have some negative points. There are so many controls that it is hard to remember them all, and when you have an army of Locust attacking, this can become extremely frustrating. The controls for vehicles in particular, are also particularly fiddly which creates further confusion.

Gears of War 2 has been highly anticipated this year and fans of the original will not be disappointed. However, if you have not played the previous game, or do not have much interest in this sort of high action war game, I wouldn't really recommend it. After having not played *Gears* before, I have most definitely not been converted.

“Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul: Chaos is come again.”

Preview: A sneaky peak behind the scenes at LU Theatre Group’s *Othello*

Lizzie O’Brien
Arts Editor

If you are a regular reader of Scan Arts, you may (or equally, may not) remember that we did a little article last month on what it was like to audition for the theatre group. Well, what would be the point of us telling you what the auditions were like, unless we backed it up with a sneaky peak at the rehearsal process as well?

The atmosphere in the rehearsal room for *Othello* was relaxed and easy-going, and for those who weren’t being drilled by director Ben Bibby, it was a chance to hang around with the rest of the cast, munch on their lunch and catch up with the latest gossip. It was rare that over four members of the

cast were needed to practice at any time, so the rest of the posse were sent outside for some classical theatre training, Shakespeare style.

I thought I may as well steal a couple of interviews with the central actors while I was there, and spoke to Eleanor Forrester (Desdemona), Jon Stanhope (Othello), and Paul Sellwood (Iago) about their roles in the Shakespearean tragedy. One of the main concerns with *Othello* was how they were going to portray the title character. Othello is typically cast in most present-day productions as of either African-American or Middle-Eastern decent. This production, however, sees the issue steered away from race and towards cultural factors. Bibby defends this decision: “It’s not about his race, it’s about the prejudices that are levelled towards him” he argues. Othello will have Maori

tribal tattoos on his face to show a visual cultural difference between himself and the other characters. Stanhope added that he was also interpreting the movements of wild animals such as eagles into his performance, in order to give Othello a distinctive presence on the stage. The move from racial to cultural discrimination is a bold one from the new director, and it will certainly be interesting to see if it pays off.

Eleanor Forrester, who has previously had one small role in *The Beggar’s Opera* last year, will be playing the part of leading lady Desdemona in *Othello*. Forrester is good, and I mean really good. She has a magnificent stage presence, a deep psychological understanding of her character, and a sensibility to the difficult nature of “updating Desdemona for the modern audience.” She brings a feisty, spirited edge to her character, something which will certainly be needed to keep the attention of a modern audience. When asked about a particular member of the cast that



O, beware, my lord, of jealousy: Jon Stanhope as *Othello*; with Eleanor Forrester as *Desdemona* (Photo: Rob Miller)

stood out, talk turned immediately to her, with Bibby stating that “her ability to keep a certain level of emotion on stage is exactly what we need”.

The Theatre Group production of *Othello* has made many daring decisions about both casting and direction. There are quite a few relatively new faces playing large parts, and the focalisation of culture over race has raised quite a few eyebrows already. It will certainly be interesting to see how those decisions play out on the night. It is difficult to know what to expect from seeing rehearsals so long before the performances begin, but I for one will be sitting in the audience to see how the gamble pays off.

Othello will be shown in the Nuffield Theatre on the weekend of Week 9. Other Theatre Group shows this term will include *1984* also the weekend of Week 9, and *The Black Comedy* on the weekend of Week 8. Both will be shown at the Dukes Youth Art Centre in town.

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North country boy

Ryan Adams and the Cardinals @ Manchester Academy

Andrew Almond

Ryan Adams walks onto the Academy stage looking every bit the moody teenager that he's often accused of assuming the characteristics of.

Attired in skinny suit, thick-rimmed glasses and with hair ruffled as if he's just emerged from a sleepless night on the tour bus.

As soon as he plays the first chords of 'Cobwebs' from new album *Cardinology* it is clear that Ryan Adams is more than a spoilt brat.

Tonight finds the Cardinals in imperious form; vocal harmonies

between Adams and guitarist Neal Casal fill the dank Academy air, soaring majestically from the speakers (especially on the breathtaking 'Goodnight Rose'), the pedal steel floats upwards like gentle campfire smoke, and guitar solos that would be more at home at a Thin Lizzy gig are traded impeccably. Adams gesticulates wildly at his guitar tech on numerous occasions as one can't help but feel that this volatile concoction of alt-country, more gentle heartbroken laments and extended jams is poised on a knife-edge. The strategic inclusion of 'Wonderwall' sends the crowd into raptures as Adams reduces the Britpop staple to a tantalizing whisper before letting loose with ferocity of a madman into a full



aggressive rock 'n' roll tour de force the Gallaghers would be proud of. Sometimes disappointing, always unpredictable Ryan Adams is under no circumstance boring, and tonight he's never sounded better.

The performance is split in two, with the first set taking more from the recently released *Cardinology*, and the second including earlier classics which delight the older fans such as the gorgeous 'Why Do They Leave?' and bittersweet 'Come Pick Me Up' both of which find Adams reacquainted with harmonica. Few words are uttered as the band, with barely time to catch breath between songs, launch headlong into the next.

Despite the declaration early in



the second set from Adams that 'we're the Cardinals and we play to curfew' the set was curtailed half an hour prematurely with no encore; people began to mumble the 'old Ryan' had resurfaced. They were missing the point. Following a raucous 'Shakedown 9th Street' and after two hours on stage the bar had been raised to an all new

high. Few could get away with coming on stage late, having an interval and then abruptly ceasing the set with no explanation, but, when the preceding moments are filled with magic of Ryan Adams and his marvellous band of Cardinals anything is possible. Petulant teenager? Whatever.

A whale of a time

Noah and the Whale

@ Manchester Academy

Andrew Almond

IF EVER A song has been ruined by overexposure then it's '5 Years Time', so tonight provides an interesting prospect as I wonder – is there more to Noah and the Whale than '5 Year's Time'?

Well, yes. Never has the stage at the Academy 3 been utilised to such a full extent, what with fiddle, ukulele, squeezebox, trombone and trumpet, plus the usual guitar, bass and drums all present... and seven people too.

'I think we're gonna get along just fine', Charlie Fink, lead singer and guitarist grins, four songs into their set, as '2 Atoms in a Molecule' is received in an identical manner to the previous three numbers; that is ecstatically.

The band effortlessly switches between instruments as we are treated to a 'super secret' new song which intersperses the more well known tracks off their acclaimed debut. 'Shape of My Heart' included copious audience participa-

tion via a synchronised clapping competition and early non-album single '2 Bodies 1 Heart' sorts the new fans from the old. Fink treats us to more anecdotes concerning his time in Manchester and, as if to prove is devotion to the city of eternal drizzle, launches into a unique country and western style rendition of the Smiths classic 'Girlfriend in a Coma' that brings the house down. Clearly Noah and the Whale are not only performing every night in front of sell out audiences consisting of already devoted fans, but thoroughly enjoying themselves too.

The live melodies and vocal harmonies are just as rich and vibrant and Fink's sultry baritone provides the lubrication that allows their songs to flow effortlessly into one another. The most rewarding thing here is that this is a band that despite, rather than because of the hype, are a great spectacle, both on the record and live. Personable and friendly throughout, Noah and the Whale must be left with prevailing feeling they've won this audience over and we the hope it's not 5 years time until they return.



"Your Dad will listen to Snow Patrol"

Sam Fresco

IRISH BASED ROCKERS Snow Patrol have become comfortable with their sound. Heavily layered mainstream indie pop rocker mingled with hushed, intimate ballads and love song lyrics.

To this extent, *A Hundred Million Suns* doesn't sound much different than Snow Patrol's last album *Eyes Open*. Or the album before that.

Yet there is a sense of achievement within the band, they are the only real contenders against Coldplay who seem to be dominating the radio waves. But, there is a creative flare that Snow Patrol have that gives them an edge to be just that little bit cooler than Coldplay.

With quite possibly the best surname in music, Gary Lightbody, lead vocals, claims that the band have "played out of their skin" and headed towards fresh directions with new album *A Hundred Million Suns*. Musically tracks such as "Crack the Shutters" aren't too

Snow Patrol *A Hundred Million Suns* (Fiction/Polydor)

far from the hit "Chasing Cars". Lyrically however, Lightbody argues that the latest album is far more optimistic and is "from the perspective of a working relationship, rather than an ending one". The bands to date have achieved five times platinum status and album sales that rack of to over 4.5 million copies. So someone out there likes them.

New single "Take Back the City" and album track "Please take these photos from my hands" crackle with energy and a brighter, fresher feel. There high paced and melodically addictive, beautiful on the ear and a calm yet powerful sound that at last renovate the expected dull sound. "Disaster button" is probably the heaviest track on the album and my favourite purely due to the brilliant lyrics "cool your beans my son, you look a fucking mess." Snow Patrol are back and they're 'bad ass'. A decent track though in seriousness, with a nice pulsating bass and a driving beat that greatly aids in the band's overall redemption.

Did you know? Snow Patrol were originally called Polar Bear.



album:

Ripped: Album reviews

Past the Watershed

Bloodbath *This Fathomless Mastery* (Peaceville)

Mark McGlashan

Music Editor

SWEDISH DEATH METALLERS Bloodbath have churned out one intense take on the old school.

Dangerously skirting the edges of the more brutal end of DM this is a record addled with blast beats, fat break downs and a truly great vocals thanks to Mikael Åkerfeldt (*Opeth, Katatonia*).

These guys are leading the pack. A true emphasis on bringing traditional death metal right up-to-date with what's coming out of the more stylised and polished sounding US tech-death scene. But don't be fooled, this isn't any of that death-core nonsense. *Bloodbath* churn out killer tune after killer tune.

Technically, the band are bang on. They can play death metal like it's supposed to be. Hard, heavy and fast. *Bloodbath* are a band you would gladly give up your one mother-given neck to headbanging



for.

The all-star band (Anders Nyström - *Katatonia*, Jonas Renkse - *Katatonia*, Martin Axenrot - *Witchery, Opeth* and Per Eriksson) are a virtual supergroup; all members of bands well respected in the genre and lauded musicians. So you know what you're getting here is only the highest grade, free range, triple filtered extreme metal, as well as your much needed top-up of 'let's-be-apocalyptic-and-bash-Christian-morality' lyrical themes. Fantastic.

I'd recommend *This Fathomless Mastery* to any metalhead worth their salt. Stand-out tracks have to be '*Slaughtering the Will to Live*', '*Devouring the Feeble*' which kicks off with THE most killer riff you'll ever hear, and the rather good '*Mock the Cross*'.

If you're into: *Carcass, Decapitated, Deicide, Morbid Angel, Nile, Obituary*.

Psykup *We Love You All* (Season of Mist)

Clay Garland

This is one for lovers of chaos. Psykup offer an eclectic mix of metal and hardcore at a frantic pace over six lengthy songs (there's a two disc version with a hell of a lot more, too) that are twisted and dark, but still entirely listenable, full of headbanging moments in the breakdowns. The guitars switch between grinding riffs and sinister sounding funk multiple times, while the two vocalists are as versed in haunting screams as they are in singing in psychotic harmonies with each other. It all sounds like some sort of creepy circus in



Silent Hill.

This is Psykup's first album outside of France, but their third overall, so they've had the time and experience to perfect their art and put together some really strong and varied material. Certainly not for everyone, as even for a metal band they're sitting on the questionable end of the boundaries of taste, but well worth checking out - if you can take the insanity it's worth it. I think this is going to be one of my favourites of the whole year.

For fans of: Mr Bungle, Strapping Young Lad, The Dillinger Escape Plan

Koncrete Jungle



Distance *Repercussions* (Planet μ)

Mark McGlashan

Music Editor

THIS, THE FOLLOW up to 2007's massive *My Demons*, is one beast of an album.

Greg Sanders' industrial take

on Dubstep is cornering him off a nice little niche in the scene. Driving bass, enveloping urban soundscapes and sub low, sternum crushing bass makes *Repercussions* one album to revere. Just Like *My Demons*, it's not one step short of immersive.

This is a fucking intense trip.

Drums are snappy and sparingly used, making the sound that much more immense. Combined with trancy synth lines throughout and low bit hooks forwarded in the mix, we have some perfect Dubstep.

It's not surprising that Sanders' love of metal will have had some impact on the music somewhere down the line. This is dark. This is deep. This is truly incredible.

Standout tracks have to be '*Koncrete*' (the most aggressive bassline in Distance's back-catalogue), as well as the Eastern feeling opus '*Out Of Mind*', and the woofer destroying tunes '*free me*' and '*Loosen My Grip*'.

If you like this: *Burial, Digital Mystikz, iTAL tEK, N-Type, Pinch*.

"My subculture can kick your subculture's arse anytime, 24/7!"



Last Step *1961* (Planet μ)

Mark McGlashan

Music Editor

WANT SOME ACID?

Aaron Funk (a.k.a. breakcore forerunner Venetian Snares) is a genius. *1961* is a crazy disco. A

mashed up party for crash test dummies; the punch is spiked and the keys are on the table.

Acid house infused with Funk's trademark electronic delinquency makes for a disturbing ride. A lot more funky than the majority of his Snares output, but there are bits of *1961* that could easily have appeared on *Cavalcade of Glee and Dadaist Happy Hardcore Pom Poms* or even his latest masterwork *Detrimentalist*.

But this album; the emphasis is on acid basslines and breaks. Unusual time signatures, shifting arrangements, sporadic changes in

soundsets and flawless, meticulous programming are what's on offer (as per). But acid is definitely a winner in 7/4!

In short, *1961* is a relentless mind fuck. Amazing.

Breakcore is an aural minefield. You're going to love some, you're going to hate some. But in the end, you have to remember - you're listening to breakcore! There are no victims, only survivors.

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Fill your ears with: *DJ Scud, Duran Duran Duran, FFF, Shitmat, Venetian Snares*.

Watch The Skies

Cynic *Traced In Air* (Season of Mist)

Clay Garland

Cynic have long been legends in the progressive metal scene, their sole album, *Focus*, being considered one of the single most important releases in widening extreme metal into new and fantastic territory, incorporating jazz fusion and truly insane levels of musicianship into the mix alongside the traditional screams and snarling guitars. So *Traced in Air*, their reunion album, has a hell of



a lot to live up to, which it achieves admirably.

The music here follows the footprints of the first album, with complex harmonies and song structures forming the backbone of

the songs and every note being meticulously planned. Brutality makes way most of the time for spacey ambience and the trademark death metal growled vocals are sparse, which results in it all being quite complex and demanding on some levels, though at times dreamily pleasant on others - the whole album is just as easy to listen to from a musician's perspective, appreciating the phenomenal skill and theory behind it, as it is to simply enjoy.

Traced in Air is nowhere near as genre-defining or defying as its predecessor, but the rest of the metal scene has had fifteen years to catch up and this is as fresh as any progressive metal today could hope to be. Anyone anticipating *Cynic's* comeback will not be disappointed.

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A new era dawns for the Lancaster Bombers

Tan Farrell

THIS YEAR THE Lancaster Bombers will be celebrating 21 years of American football in Lancaster and North Lancashire.

To cap off this achievement, the Bombers have taken an historically step in changing the Club's playing colours from the traditional Bombers (royal) Blue and White, to the University's Red and Black. The club logo now features the true AU colour of gun-metal grey too.

AU President, Gareth Coleman, joined some of the Bombers as they unveiled the new home kit for the 2008/2009 season. Coleman was even given the number 21 jersey to wear as a sign of the bombers 21st birthday year. He had this to say on the team joining the British Universities and College Sport (BUCS) club list for 2009/2010:

"Since BUCS is now the official body for university sport, it makes sense that the American football-

ers get the chance to earn points for their university. Unlike most universities across the country, we at Lancaster already regard our American football team as a BUCS club when it comes to status and funding. Hopefully American football and the BUAFL (British Collegiate American Football League) will settle into BUCS without any problems in 2009/2010."

Mr. Coleman added that the recent growth of American football, was a "refreshing culture change from the traditional 'field' sports played in the UK".

Lancaster Bombers Club President Tom White also commented on the new playing kit. He said: "The new kit looks fantastic. The team is really excited to finally get to play in them after this long wait. No one can wait to get them on this Sunday against Sheffield Hallam Warriors and show what we can do with an added intensity."

The Bombers are unique from most other AU Clubs at Lancaster in that they were founded as a senior/local team before becoming a University Team. They started as



Bombs away: The team show off their new kit with AU President, Gareth Coleman (Number 21)

a group of like-minded American football fans in 1987, playing their first game in 1988.

During the 1989 season it was decided that, due to a lack of players, recruitment should be open to Lancaster University

students. Several students made the starting team and contributed to a successful season. In 1991, the Bombers moved permanently to Lancaster University and began competing in BCAFL.

American football is one of

the fastest growing sports in the UK, with over 45 university clubs now playing it across the country. The Bombers had over 120 people sign up at Fresher's Fair, and are looking to hopefully reach the playoffs in their 21st year.

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Weds Nov. 26th
Liverpool vs. Marseille
7.45pm k.o.

Sun Nov. 30th
Manchester City vs. Manchester United
1.30pm k.o.
Chelsea vs. Arsenal
4.00pm k.o.

Mon Dec. 1st
Liverpool vs. West Ham United
8.00pm k.o.

Tues Dec. 2nd
Burnley vs. Arsenal
7.45pm k.o.

Weds Dec. 3rd
Watford vs. Tottenham Hotspur
7.45pm k.o.

"The new kit looks fantastic. The team is really excited to finally get to play in them after this long wait. No one can wait to get them on this Sunday against Sheffield Hallam Warriors and show what we can do with an added intensity."

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Week 8, Michaelmas Term, Tuesday November 25, 2008

Which college really is the 'home of sport'?

- Fylde, Grizedale, Lonsdale, County in Dodgeball semi-finals
- Grizedale to face Bowland, and Fylde will play Lonsdale in next round of Korfball

Charlotte Parker

AFTER TWO SUCCESSFUL taster sessions, the inter-college Carter Shield competition is finally underway with colleges battling it out for the 'home of sport' title.

With two more events to go this term, women's indoor football and volleyball, it competition is too early to call. Finals day on the 7th December in the sports centre will be a much better indicator as we will by then know who has won the first four events.

Furness will no doubt be disappointed with their start to the Carter Shield, as will Cartmel, but both teams have the ability

to bounce back. Fylde, Grizedale and Lonsdale will all be pleased to be through to at least semi finals but with two more events to go before the finals day of this term, and a whole variety of events next year, the Carter Shield could go to anyone.

The competition kicked off with dodgeball, an event that most people are probably familiar with due to the film of the same name. Carter Shield rules for the event are pretty similar, they are three balls, six people on each team and the aim of the game is to hurl the balls at your opponents as hard and as fast as you can.

Students interested in playing for their college for the Carter Shield contact their Sports Reps on their College JCR.



Energetic: Dodgeball is a very fast, quick paced sport. (Photo: Ben Robins)

Dodgeball - Week 6

Dodgeball is probably the event that most epitomises the spirit of the Carter Shield. Players really need no traditional sporting skills to be good at it.

All eight colleges put forward full teams. As according to the standard format for Carter Shield events, two groups were chosen at random, with four colleges in each group.

Grizedale stood out as the team to beat. A very physical team, their players showed no mercy as they hurled the ball across court and they easily went through as top of their group.

As runners up in the other

group, Fylde will face Grizedale in the semi-finals on December 7, and with Fylde desperate to finally bring the 'home of sport' title back to the traditional 'sporting' college, they will not be a pushover for Grizedale.

The other semi-final sees Lonsdale against County. With County finishing top of their group they could be the favourites of the match – but dodgeball is hard to call and could go either way.

The games ran swiftly and it was often close, most games going 2-1 either way rather than straight 3-0 victories.

Dodgeball is a remarkably quick

game, so is scored in three legs.

Bowland will be no doubt disappointed that their campaign to keep hold of the Carter Shield got off to a bad start as they failed to qualify for the semi finals. There was some controversy, as dodgeball is a fast paced game which proved difficult for the college sports reps to referee. There were incidences of players being unhappy with the referee's decisions; but such is the nature of dodgeball that it is hard for players to personally judge if they have crossed a line, hit another player etc. in the middle of the game.

Korfball - Week 7

Korfball is a slightly more obscure sport, often described as a cross between basketball and netball, but more complex. The rival teams take turns at attacking and defending and switch after every two goals.

The rule that attackers cannot shoot if a defender is in touching distance with their arm raised caused some frustration to those new to korfball and more used to basketball/netball.

When Bowland, County, Fylde and Furness were all drawn in the same group it was clear it was going to be an interesting day. Fylde were definitely the team to beat on the day, with their team made up wholly of University korfball players for the first two games;

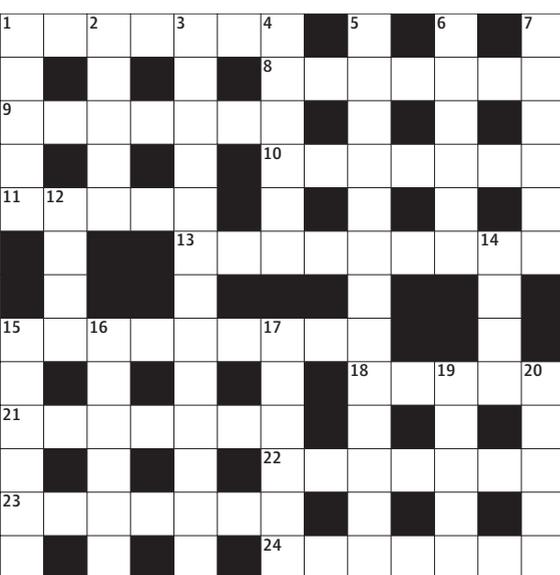
they went through top of their group winning all three games and scoring the most goals by far.

Fylde will face Lonsdale in the semi-final. But Fylde are clear favourites not only to get through to the semi-final but to win the korfball event overall.

Bowland will be glad that they too made it through the group to the semi-finals. Despite lacking Fylde's advantage of University players they played some good korfball and many people are already anticipating a Fylde vs. Bowland korfball final.

Grizedale will disagree, having beaten Pendle and Cartmel to finish top of the other group, and will be keen to get an early foothold in the race for the Carter Shield.

Quick crossword no. 11,833



Across

- 1 Of the heart (7)
- 8 Misfit – exception (7)
- 9 On a higher floor (7)
- 10 Baltic republic (7)
- 11 Forget one's lines – become unproductive (3,2)
- 13 Sympathetic vibration (9)
- 15 Original plan influencing subsequent decisions (9)
- 18 Number that figures in ice-skating? (5)
- 21 Square stone column that tapers (7)
- 22 Make merry (7)
- 23 Ghost (7)
- 24 Pester annoyingly (7)

Down

- 1 Was able to (5)
- 2 Hazardous (5)
- 3 Not fitting (13)
- 4 Affectionate stroke (6)
- 5 Predictor of one's future (7-6)
- 6 Large gun (6)
- 7 Whirl (6)

- 12 Move on wheels – individual portion of bread (4)
- 14 Bludgeon (4)
- 15 Read idly (6)
- 16 Not smooth (6)
- 17 Type of electronic printing (3,3)
- 19 Steer (5)
- 20 Secret meeting (as of lovers) (5)

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