



Students' Union hopeful on Student Support funds

CONNOR DALY
JAMES DOUGLAS

VP Welfare Adam McGibbon has said he is hopeful the Students' Union will receive the £300,000 owed to the Student Support Fund from the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP). Student representatives at the university have spoken out against the department as a result of the missing aid promised in 2009 with the scrapping of the rates relief scheme. A letter received by Queen's University Vice Chancellor Peter Gregson during the summer period

students since nursing students have become eligible to apply. As more students continue to apply for support, the maximum funds granted have on average reduced from half to as little as a third of the sum offered in previous years and in some cases these rewards have proved insufficient.

McGibbon reiterated that the Students' Union is not demanding extra funding from the DFP, but that it honour its arrangement with the DEL upon scrapping the rates relief scheme. In bad economic circumstances the most vulnerable students are suffering real difficulties but he maintains the Union will not let the issue disappear while so many at Queen's are struggling.

McGibbon has also been critical of Queen's University's senior figures, going as far as remarking, "the university doesn't seem to care." He said that almost all the lobbying to obtain the funds has to date been done on behalf of the Students' Union and not the University. There are of course plenty of staff within the Student Support sector of the Student Guidance Centre who have been important in this process but a similar attitude has not been evident from the institution's senior figures.

In what is a cross-party issue, the SU has been in close contact with various local politicians including Independent MLA Dawn Purvis, Sinn Féin's Jennifer McCann and Pat Ramsey of the SDLP. Letters have also been sent to the two departments concerned and questions have been asked at respective committees at Stormont. Representatives are adamant that the most vulnerable groups be protected but without the funds promised the University's Advice Centre's ability to help students remain in higher education has been greatly impeded.

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Queen's University Belfast

Darwin Deez
gig review

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Students confront politicians at SU 'Question Time'

SEAN ASHFORD

Students at Queen's were last week given the opportunity to voice their concerns over higher tuition fees to representatives of the five major political parties in Northern Ireland (DUP, UUP, Alliance, SDLP and Sinn Féin) at the Students' Union's own 'Question Time: Quiz the Politicians'. The panel also faced questions on the issue of cuts to university funding and graduate unemployment.

Whilst among the panel there was a general consensus on the opposition to Lord Browne's recommendations and on the need for higher education to be made available on merit and not the ability to pay, the politicians were divided over how to remedy the possible hole in Northern Ireland's finances

NUS-USI President, Ciarn-

an Helferty asked the panelists directly which way their party's MPs planned to vote on fees at Westminster. Conall McDevitt of the SDLP said his party would vote against while Alliance's Chris Lyttle said East Belfast MP Niaomi Long "would be likely to be voting against" the Browne review.

DUP's Peter Weir said his party would be likely to vote against the bill due to the scale of the proposed fees hike, while Sinn Féin's John O'Dowd insisted that this was a devolved matter. Danny Kennedy pointed out to the audience that his party, the UUP, currently has no Members to the Westminster parliament and thus will not have a vote on the bill. Though he agreed with O'Dowd that this is a matter for the Local Assembly, he did state that events elsewhere in the UK do matter.

Cuts to university budgets were also a talking point. Those in attendance discussed the need for economic growth to, firstly, make up the budget shortfall which faces the governmental departments, but also to increase the number of job opportunities open to graduates. All panellists seemed to take issue with the level of cuts and lack of proper planning for economic growth. Among alternative suggestions were a slight increase in fees, £20million in efficiency savings in the DEL and a programme of social partnership.

Whilst all parties appeared to share a degree of common ground over cuts and student fees debt, there appeared to be little attempt at forming one single united front to protect the region from cuts of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

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In a letter received by the SU on Monday 22 November, Minister for DEL Danny Kennedy sought to reassure the SU that the money will be transferred, and whilst happy that movement has been made on the matter, McGibbon was quick to point out that no time frame was given by the minister. Working alongside SU President Gareth McGreevy, VP McGibbin has requested the reasons for the delay of the monies saved by the abolition of rate relief. Representatives also await an "urgent written answer" from the Minister of Finance as to when the money will be released.

McGibbon has said it would be a significant victory for the Students' Union should it succeed in obtaining the support. Sammy Wilson MLA said no student would suffer under the new scheme but this is not the case. Students have been let down by the Assembly and the University, and the fact that the issue made prime time television news in recent weeks demonstrates its importance. During last Thursday's meeting of Student Council at the Students' Union, Councillors unanimously backed McGibbon's motion in making it SU policy to reclaim the missing funds.



Students confront politicians at last Wednesday's 'Question Time' at the Students' Union

Turnitin confusion at School of Politics

SEAN ASHFORD

The coursework submission process via the Turnitin anti-plagiarism system sparked much confusion among students of the School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy over the past fortnight. Many found themselves missing their submission deadlines due to a change in procedure.

The Turnitin system has been used by the School for a number of years, but oblivious to most students the procedure for correct submission had been altered at the beginning of this academic year. Students are now required to hand in their coursework accompanied by a receipt printed after having uploaded their work onto the Turnitin system.

Despite that no communications were sent to students to alert them of this change in procedure, the rule was strictly enforced and as a result many found their coursework essays were to be rejected until they were provided a printed receipt. By this stage some had already missed their pre-existing deadlines.

An email from the School was later sent to inform students

of the need to produce their Turnitin receipt when submitting assignments. Some however, failed to receive this email and the problem persisted until a meeting of the Education Committee on Thursday 18 November agreed that students this semester would no longer have to submit a receipt to accompany their work.

In response to the problems experienced, School Manager for the School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy, Conor O'Neill, stated "I can confirm that in view of the recent uncertainty concerning this matter, with some students not being aware of the obligation to use Turnitin, that the School has agreed not to enforce this requirement for submission of coursework during this semester. It has also been agreed that there will be no penalty imposed on students who have submitted assignments after the deadline due to not having a receipt."

When questioned on whether it was an error not to inform students earlier of this change, the School stated that sufficient information regarding the change had been included in the module guidelines which all students of the School had access to.

Vermin found at Queen's accommodation

JAMES DOUGLAS

Earlier this month an unspecified number of rats were discovered in the Ash 7 building of Elms Village. The building was subsequently investigated by Queen's accommodation staff due to difficulties in having pest control sent to the scene during the weekend.

Elms Village staff entered the building before searching and disinfecting the area, as well as industrially cleaning all crockery and kitchen utensils to avoid contamination. It has also been reported that students living in the building were provided with dinner and breakfast on the Sunday evening and Monday morning respectively, at the expense of the University.

One student currently residing in Ash 7 said, "I think it is a disgrace. I expected a higher standard as I am paying £360 per month to live in Elms Village. A friend of mine who lives in the same building had to get her room fumigated because there were so many insects in her room. It's disgusting."

Queen's Students' Union VP Welfare, Adam McGibbon believes the incident to be a rare occurrence in Queen's accom-

modation, and stated that this has been the only time during his tenure that he has been confronted by a problem of this nature.

On the response of Elms Village staff, McGibbon said that he was "satisfied that the situation had been dealt with fairly swiftly". He also suggested that students demonstrate prudence in maintaining shared cooking areas if similar problems are to be avoided in the future.

A Queen's University spokesperson said, "Appropriate action was taken, which included ensuring that the building was secure." He added that "Accommodation blocks in Elms Village have no access points where vermin could enter the building."

The university has asked students to remain vigilant by keeping all doors and windows closed, especially during the winter period. Further caution has been urged in students' treatment of kitchen common rooms and bins.

Have your say

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Student Council content with work of SU sabbatical officers

CONNOR DALY
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The second meeting of Student Council for this academic year witnessed a unanimous backing of the SU's sabbatical reviews, a byelection for the last remaining seat on the Campaigns and Communications committee and the approval of new clubs and societies at Queen's.

Council opened by welcoming USI President, Gary Redmond to inform Councillors of the history of NUS-USI, its objectives and how students can become involved in representing others across Ireland and the UK. Three Councillors, Matthew O'Connor, Derek Crosby and Sam Price, were proposed to run for the last available seat on the Campaigns and Communications committee. It was revealed the subsequent day that this committee seat went to Mr Crosby.

All sabbatical officers' respective reports easily passed Council, though due to the late submission of VP Education Nathan Anderson's report this was to be made available shortly

after. VP Clubs and Societies Niall Bole made a slight amendment to his own review in stating during the meeting that the renovations of SU clubrooms may take a short while longer than previously expected. SU President Gareth McGreevy noted the "extremely good turnout" at the inaugural meetings of committees over the previous week and congratulated all chairpersons on their respective appointments.

Notable was VP Campaign and Communications, Fiona Kidd's acknowledgement at the overwhelming support received from Councillors and their constituents in relation to the current fees campaign. In addition, Lorcan Mullen, Chair of the Campaigns and Communications Committee also called on Councillors to bring forward ideas.

Various new clubs and societies were passed by Councillors, among these the Weightlifting club, Oragami society, the Science and Technology Society and the Feminist society. After much debate, the proposed Palestinian Solidarity Society was

approved by Council but as a political society and not a general society as was initially intended by its proposer. As a political society it will not be entitled to funding from the Students' Union like non-political or general societies are.

VP Bole proposed a constitutional amendment which would permit a full discussion of potential clubs and societies at meetings of the Clubs, Societies and Student Development Committee before being put forward to Council. Bole backed the amendment, arguing it promoted a more robust procedure than that currently in place. Voting on the amendment has been postponed until the next Council meeting, scheduled for Tuesday 14 December. Bole told the Council that it is crucial that it should pass before the Christmas period.

Have your say

Have you any concerns with the issues raised? Let us know
www.thegown.org.uk

THE HOOD
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T'was the month before Christmas, and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. That's what they tell us up at Elms anyway.

Austerity is everywhere and so is Hood. It's interesting seeing secondary schoolers coming to Queen's for a look around them – wanting what they can't have, eh? They'll have some chance of living up here without their student support. That'll put manners on them. Hood is in overdraft though and needs some funds, can't pay the bills till wee Sammy sends on some monies for cheeky pints. Make it this side of Christmas, mind, I've some Continental market to catch up on.

Okay so I made a mistake last time out. The Cushley thing killed the Hood's confidence a bit. Cushley's a good lad. The word twice was a minor slip, let's forgive and forget. We're in the Christmas spirit aren't we? They're handing out cheese in the south but here Saint McGrizzle's got pizza for us. How cheesy is that? There was me thinking pizza with the president was to be the closest thing we'd get to a sit in round here. I had a hunch that others were planning one – but you know yourself, I've

been wrong before. I don't see the point in sit-ins anyway other than roguing someone else's heat. A bunch of students sitting about doing damn all ain't news to me. Bring back the '60s. The Tories can take our milk but we'll always have our fire extinguishers.

That's some book they're handing out around the Union, reads better in the fire. I thought it was SU Monthly for a second – it's not Christmas yet, kids. Hardly one for the folks. It'll do rightly for the Royals, they're really struggling this time of year, applying for heat grants and all that.

Watch out, Greggers (can I call you Greggers?), the Socialists have it in for you. I'd hardly risk freezing the bollax off me outside the VC's office to knock about with them clowns. I've better things to be at - enjoying turkey and ham with Greggers himself, and Danny Kennedy as well. Gentlemen only. We had a good chuckle looking out the windy, reciting our favourite quotes from Greggers' fees email. Wine tastes finer when it comes from the students' tab. Us three send more Christmas cards in spring time than them Socialist lads have members. That reminds me - get your money back from Ulster Bank?

Union taking "strategic approach" towards keeping the cap on fees

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SU President Gareth McGreevy has said the Students' Union aims to take a more "strategic approach" over the coming months in its battle to keep the cap on tuition fees. As the vote on the Browne review edges closer, students and non-students throughout the rest of the UK have over the past week engaged in campus sit ins, and the occupying or walking out of lecture theatres.

This new phase of the local campaign follows demonstrations outside Queen's University and at Stormont. Student representatives have also protested at Westminster alongside other UK universities against the Lord Browne recommendations on higher education funding. In solidarity with southern Irish students, a bus from Queen's SU travelled to Dublin to join in the protest against the proposition of increased registration fees.

McGreevy said the Union has raised students' concerns at every Senate and Academic Board meeting with the university to ensure that the university does not mask the concerns of students. At last week's Question Time at the SU, McGreevy pushed the Minister for Employment and Learning, Danny Kennedy on the issue of student dissatisfaction at Queen's, the university's drop-out rate and the "hidden costs" of education.

Working strategically in the campaign against higher fees, student representatives will meet with Northern Ireland's political parties who intend to vote on Browne's findings at Westminster. Alongside NUS-USI President, Ciranan Helferty and Adrian Kelly, Student President of the University of Ulster, QUBSU representatives intend to learn each party's exact position on the fees issue before they come to vote at Westminster. In the coming weeks representatives will also continue to work

alongside numerous MLAs and local researchers.

In the meantime small scale demonstrations will be likely to take place throughout campus. Although the option of a sit in was discussed, the SU executive decided against this action. It is understood that an exhibition was due to take place last Wednesday afternoon but this was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

Last week's question session has been commended by Minister for Employment and Learning, Danny Kennedy, who was a panellist on the night. Kennedy described the question and answer event as "mature and constructive" and a more positive use of communication than methods taken by other students throughout the rest of the UK over the past week or so: "Inflammatory language, violent protests and assaults on police officers can have no part in the debate on university funding."

Inclusive Neighbourhood workshop held in Mandela Hall

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A workshop was held last week in the SU's Mandela Hall aimed at bringing together the host and refugee communities of south Belfast. As part of the Inclusive Neighbourhood Project (INP), members of both communities, particularly those residing in the Holyland area, came together to discuss a variety of local issues, and each other's

cultures. Speaking at the event, VP Community Jay Downs said the main objective of the workshop was to work with the wider community in "breaking down the barriers" in the area. A refugee attending the event told how Belfast has become a new home for refugees and through the workshop all communities could "communicate with each other through the power of music".

McGreevy to launch 'Pizza with the President' scheme

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SU President Gareth McGreevy will next week launch a 'Pizza with the President' initiative to improve the SU's interaction with first year students. At least once a month McGreevy intends to visit Elms Village to discuss issues that matter to first year students at Queen's. The president's first visit to Queen's accommodation is expected to take place on Monday 6 December.

Speaking ahead of the new scheme, McGreevy said that while engagement between students and their representatives

has improved in recent years there is still room for improvement. He was keen to stress that his position as president is not just a committee role, saying student engagement is paramount to the Union: "If we don't have engagement with our membership then we have nothing."



Notice

The Gown wishes to issue a correction relating to the last fortnight's issue. The last 'Hood' column stated that Student

Councillor Ryan Cushley lost Council elections twice. It has since emerged that Mr Cushley withdrew his candidacy

for his constituency late and did neither contested or voted in the election. The insertion of the word "twice" was incorrect.



Darwin Deez plays at the Limelight

JANETTE LOUGHLIN

Belfast played host to one of New York's freshest indie pop acts of the past year, as Darwin Deez and his band took to the small stage of the Limelight with support from Lisburn's own up and coming act, Rams' Pocket Radio. Their catchy refrains and well coordinated sound greatly complemented Darwin Deez' style, and made for a great warm up to get the crowd going. Despite having released only one full album so far, Deez and his band have a unique way to make their shows longer and more entertaining than your regular 12-track set. With rap insights into homeostasis, cool lookin' moon rocks and how to speak 'Norn Iron', Darwin Deez wowed the audience with their hip to be square dance moves and happening tunes - making the intimate venue of the Limelight the perfect place for this quirky, yet heartfelt performance.

Running onto the stage with an energy that would remain throughout the performance,

the band teased the audience with a few humorous gangsta-esque dance moves and burst into a thumping rendition of 'Lights On'. Smoothly transitioning into the more upbeat 'Up In the Clouds', the guitarist, Z. Cole Smythe was owning the stage in his pink trucker hat and doo-wop-retro guitar playing style.

Then Darwin's announcement "Let's do this craic!", led his band into one of their infamous synchronised dance routines that sets them apart from many other acts in these musically competitive times. Following a stylistic dance rendition to the Spice Girls 'Wannabe', the band launched into one of their more slower songs, 'DNA' and followed by their current re-release of the single 'Constellations' from their self-titled album before entertaining the audience once more with another unique dance-a-thon.

This time, we were mystified by what looked like dance moves adapted from *The Lion King: The Musical* fused with

remixes of Enya and Rage Against The Machine.

The highlight of the show was 'Radar Detector'. Darwin told the crowd, "everyone be quiet! Let's spend this moment together," and a spotlight focused in on the stage, leaving the crowd in darkness as a beautiful build-up to the song echoed throughout the room.

Reminiscent of Example's 'Watch the Sun Come Up', with its summer sounds and stirring melody, the prelude effortlessly merged into the well-known beat of Darwin Deez's hit song and the crowd danced along with the band as the familiar chorus kicked in. Before playing 'Bad Day', the band approached the edge of the stage and each performed a signature dance move in tune to a synthesiser, trying to get the audience to follow along. If that



wasn't enough to get the hipsters going, the band's follow-up dance to Beyoncé's 'All the Single Ladies' and a colourful interpretation of 'Walk like an Egyptian' was enough to make even the most stoic character in the room giddy with amusement.

For the encore, the band performed 'Hey Mom', which was energetic, fast-paced, and when performed live, really showed off

their musical capabilities. Ending the night with a new, more relaxed and downbeat song that relies more on its lyrics than musical funk, the audience were taken aback a little by what seemed to be an anti-climatic performance. However, if listened to separately from the rest of the performance, no one would have been disappointed.

Reviews

Check out more reviews at www.thegownr.org.uk

Film
The Girl Who Kicked The Hornet's Nest

The *Girl Who Kicked The Hornet's Nest* is the final film in Stieg Larsson's Trilogy. Picking up immediately where the second

film ended, the uninitiated will struggle to figure out what's happening as Lisbeth Salander (Noomi Rapace) and Mikael Blomkvist (Michael Nyqvist) investigate why Salander was imprisoned and abused. On top of this, Salander is being tried for attempted murder and Blomkvist has to clear her name. Meanwhile, Salander's half-brother Niedermann (Micke Spreitz) rampages across Sweden.

Those not fond of the series won't be swayed, while fans get more of what they love. Otherwise, it's a diverting thriller, with a lot of convoluted plot. The big budget is clearly on display, effortlessly conveying a corrupt society, but its inability to sustain a dark and foreboding tone means it takes itself deadly seriously when you can't.

Ultimately, these films are guilty pleasures rather than great thrillers. *The Girl Who Kicked The Hornet's Nest* is good, but won't be remembered. For those waiting with bated breath for the Hollywood versions, why bother? . MMcK



Film
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows'

After the disappointment of *The Half Blood Prince*, part one of the *Deathly Hallows* makes up for some mistakes. There

was an almost apologetic introduction to characters the previous films omitted, Bill and Mundungus are notable examples. As always, the weakest link was Daniel Radcliffe, but he has made some improvements and shows over two emotions. His unnecessary dancing with Emma Watson was cringeworthy, as was their topless kiss. There's another strong turn from Rupert Grint, who has an impeccable sense of comic timing and Emma Watson, well she's beautiful. She's a capable actress, but more importantly she's beautiful, even when being tortured.

The real highlight was the telling of the story of the Deathly Hallows which could be used in any Tim Burton film. The animated sequence was simple, delicate and mesmerising. They did feel the need to add in a car chase which, although well done, was a bit strange in a scene which was a broom chase. It is set up well for the next film, which hopefully will be as strong as this one. EG



Album
Cee Lo Green
The Lady Killer

Cee Lo Green's *The Lady Killer* has a different sound to Gnarlz Barkley, but does not fall short of any inventive flair or talent.

An experience rather than a compilation of tracks, opener 'Bright Lights Bigger City' is a fun and uplifting track. 'Forget You' speaks for itself, its catchy Motown style marrying well with Cee Lo's potent voice.

'I Want You' flaunts a vintage theme, echoing John Legend. With a slower tempo than some of the other tracks, it has more of a romantic sound. 'Fool For You' is a major anthem. A slow paced croon, its funky bass line and expressive brass section reflects and lives up to some of Marvin Gaye's offerings to music. The evocative breaks and tempo changes in this song calls for an amen.

Cee Lo Green's attempt at recreating a motown sound to appeal to today's listeners is a successful endeavour giving those of us who were too young to experience Motown a snapshot of the era. Cee Lo's talent is certain on *The Ladykiller* and he has produced a great album and a compulsory listen. CC



Album
The Saturdays
Headlines

Ironically, calling *Headlines* a 'new' album could not be further from the truth. It features two songs from their last album, a remix and a cover, leaving just four new songs.

The lyrics are irritating and illogical, a shining example of failure to create emotion.

Saying that, there are a few tracks which are quite catchy such as 'Forever is Over' and 'Higher'. But this is irrelevant, most have already been released, therefore most fans already have them.

The Saturdays are not aiming for a moral lesson, just singing about heartbreak. But it does prove that there is still some hope for "girls making it on their own."

Musically, the songs hit their target perfectly and when verses are lacking the chorus tends to save it, and has you humming the remainder of the day.

Instead of creating this mini-album the girls could have created something fantastic, especially with groups like Girls Aloud and Sugababes taking creative breaks, leaving a large gap in the market. Sadly, with little new material they've missed their chance.. CW



Comedy
Tom Stade

Tom Stade is the perfect comedian, if you're intoxicated. As, indeed, he frequently appears to be, serving as a visual reminder of what this act is based on: cheap gags and an overbearing sense of arrogance.

Don't get me wrong, I love a controversial comedian, the ones who have you screaming with laughter, knowing your soul is getting blacker. However, Stade bases his act on being as controversial as possible but doesn't say anything original, relying too heavily on controversy itself.

He is definitely an act of the marmite variety. Overuse of swearing can be used beautifully by Billy Connolly but it merely sounds vulgar when it is only part of some unneeded rebellion. One funny aspect was Stade's decision to rename an audience member "Jim" and bring up their colourful 'history' together as soliders, drug addicts and lovers. But after this technique has been used on 20 occasions, it wears thin.

Should you wish to listen to the drunken ramblings of an angry Canadian then Tom Stade is perfect. If you want something slightly less irritating, search farther afield. SL





Celebrity required-talent not essential

CATRIONA BURNS

The term celebrity is used to conjure up images of achievement, glamour and talent, defining individuals such as Elvis Presley, Audrey Hepburn and even Florence Nightingale (who was among the first to be described as such). Now, this expression is indicative of a culture of tackiness and pretence with no requisite for talent.

The celebrity phenomenon has exploded due to the sheer mass of reality television shows. Now you don't have to be talented to gain widespread recognition. In fact, talent may be a disadvantage to one's potential fame.

One of the most prominent instances of talent being overrated is the extensive attention given to Robbie Williams over his more technically talented band mate Gary Barlow. This is repeated in Cheryl Cole's popularity in comparison to Nadine Coyle's blasé reception. Both are singers, first and foremost, Nadine being the more skilled of the two, so why hasn't she a status equalling Cheryl's?

Firstly, fame is sustained in today's society, through maga-

zine and tabloid sales. These tend to focus not on the individual's abilities but on their sex lives, marriages and latest drunken escapades. Nadine Coyle may possess the strongest voice in the girl band but her life does not excite media interest. Cole on the other hand has a backlog of history that makes for interesting reading; imprisoned family members, accusations of racial assault, high profile divorce and malaria

Fame has evidently evolved in recent times. No longer does it rely on pristine images and exemplary reputations. Now it relies on the individual's ability to be relatable and on their ability to engage with the public. Many could relate to Cole's marital problems or to Robbie Williams's issues with depression, and so they embrace these figures whom they perceive to be representative of themselves. Coyle and Barlow's more private way of living doesn't give the public much to relate to.

Theoretically, Coyle and Barlow should be the most popular in each of their individual bands - both the most musically talented and both highly attractive individuals with seemingly ideal

lives. Yet it is figures such as the often-out-of-tune, drug abusing Williams that attains our attention and acquires the monumental fame. It poses questions over the issue of perfection. We all strive for it, but maybe as cases like these show, perfection is not all that desirable and, ultimately, it is boring: something that neither Cole nor Williams are. It is due to the changing nature of the celebrity culture that Cole and Williams have enjoyed more popularity than their fellow band-mates.

Fame is no longer rooted in real achievement or responsibility but primarily in the allurements of the individual and their personal lives. Talent is preferred but not essential, as figures like Jedward and Jordan demonstrate. So, if you are talentless, don't necessarily give up on fame (but beauty, a scandalous lifestyle and fake boobs will help you on your way).



The Auld Man

Ars longa; vita brevis

This Latin aphorism summed up the Roman view of the arts - that they were more enduring than life itself. Is this still a safe assumption?

Of all the alarm that has followed the Browne proposals, the most strident has been from the Arts and Social Sciences faculties. Are they right to worry, and does the British public care?

The theory is that there will be a large scale switch of university funding from government subsidy, moderated by the carving up of the cake by academics themselves to allowing the market to determine which courses will enrol effectively under pressure of massively increased fees. Under these circumstances it is possible that students will look closely at the utility of various subjects before opting for the Arts. Will they be right to do so and will they be justified in deserting the arts subjects?

Arts faculty staff will also be aware that the big money coming in for research (apart from that coming from cash strapped government research councils) comes from industries such as



petrochemicals; computing; and cancer charities. While there are arts-oriented charitable foundations such as the Rowntree Trust - even Bill Gates and Warren Buffet are looking to spend their money in the health sciences.

Would the public miss the fact that fewer students will spend their time looking for new ways to analyse Shakespeare or trawling through the history of 'the Women's Movement'? The irony is that almost all the Cabinet took arts degrees.

Have your say

What do you think of The Auld Man's comments?

Contact us at
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Are we still raging?

MATTHEW MISKIMMIN

It may only be two years old, but the *X-Factor* winner-versus-the-world battle for Christmas number one has already become one of the festive season's biggest traditions. In 2008 Jeff Buckley narrowly lost out to Alexandra Burke, before Rage Against the Machine's 'Killing in the Name' famously pipped Joe McElderry to the post last year, propelled by a Facebook campaign which attracted nearly a million supporters. With this year's edition of Simon Cowell's cash cow in full swing there is no doubt that whoever wins will face more opposition than ever before, regardless of whether it is Cher Lloyd, One Direction or even Wagner.

But who have the keyboard warriors of 2010 nominated to carry their hopes and dreams? Who will emerge as this year's Jon and Tracy Morter, the husband-and-wife duo whose campaign turned 2009's charts upside down? Unfortunately those looking to derail Cowell's dominance could be the victims of their own success, as the sheer number of campaigns this year might just play into the high-trousered tycoon's hands.

Most notable is 'Cage against the Machine', aiming to get John Cage's '4'33' to the top of the charts. If you haven't heard this experimental piece from 1953 before, you quite literally haven't missed much. It

amounts to four minutes and thirty-three seconds of silence. The snappily-named Facebook campaign already has over 250,000 members, with well over a month to go, and is rated a 10/1 shot by Ladbrokes.

Meanwhile, half-a-million users have lent their support to The Trashmen's 1963 hit 'Surfin' Bird', apparently inspired by a 2008 episode of *Family Guy*, in which Peter Griffin becomes obsessed with the track. You can back it at 9/4, second only to *X-Factor* frontrunner Matt Cardle. Controversial *X-Factor* reject Ghamu Nhengu has also released a charity single, 'Where Will You Sleep This Christmas?' a pertinent question considering her ongoing visa concerns.

Elsewhere, Ellie Goulding has covered Elton John's 1970 single 'Your Song'. It features on this year's John Lewis Christmas advert and is a respectable outside bet. There are also hopes that John Lennon's 'Happy Xmas (War is Over)' could top the bill on the thirtieth anniversary of the singer's death. More fanciful are online campaigns in favour of Joy Division (3,000 members), Eminem (6,000), The Prodigy (1,000) and Limp Bizkit (30). Bizarrely, 140 individuals have joined a group backing "Killing in the Name" by Rage Against the Machine. Imagine that at number one. It could never happen!



In toppling the unfortunate Joe McElderry, 'Killing in the Name' shifted over half-a-million digital copies, a figure that none of this year's hopefuls look likely to match. Neither *Surfin' Bird* nor '4'33' appear capable of capturing the public mood quite so comprehensively. One contender which arguably could is Pulp's classic single 'Common People'. With the group having recently reformed for the 2011 festival season and the track having become an unofficial anthem for political 'developments' in the UK since May, William Hill's 66-1 odds might just be a smart bet. Otherwise it could be another excellent Christmas for the flat-haired music magnate.

Fancy a SHAG?

EMMA GALLEN

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Monday 29 November saw the start of Queen's Students' Union SHAG Week. The campaign kicked off with a traffic light party (to quote their advertisement "green means go, red means no") then went onto more serious issues of sexual health. On the Tuesday information was made available at advice stalls all day in the SU, and students can pick up some free condoms throughout the week.

World AIDS Day is marked by a performance from various music and drama societies performing the musical *RENT* with all proceeds going to the HIV support centre. There will be performances at the Brian Friel Theatre on Friday and Saturday as well.

What VP Welfare Adam

McGibbon hopes to be the biggest success is the GUM clinic on the top floor of the Union on Thursday. It will run from 9.30am to noon which is much more accessible times than those offered by the Belfast GUM clinic at the Royal Hospital, where it is expected that you arrive for 8.00am.

McGibbon sees the rise of the STI rate in Northern Ireland as something the Students' Union can help to address. He says: "In other Unions in the rest of the UK, SHAG Week is a big event on the calendar and I don't think it's really been done properly at Queen's Students' Union before, so it'd be great to see as many people getting involved as possible."



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Mixed results for QUB Soccer

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The past three weeks have brought mixed results for the Queen's firsts, a spread of 4 games returning 2 wins and 2 losses. The firsts have however moved up one place in the table after victories against Armagh City and Killymoon either side of a defeat to Tobermore. Tobermore currently sit atop the Ladbroke's.com IFA Championship Division 2.

Queen's were somewhat fortunate to emerge with a win against a spirited Killymoon side, with Tony Tumelty and Paddy Donnelly grabbing the goals, putting to the sword a Killymoon side that perhaps should have scored on more than one occasion.

Meanwhile, QUB's poor showing in this year's cup competitions continued with a 4-2 extra time defeat to Donegal Celtic Reserves on Wednesday 27 October. Goals from James Lavery and David Magee were not enough on the day to secure a win for Queen's, who conceded two goals in extra time after a closely contested 90 minutes.

Ryan Henderson grabbed a brace for Donegal, twice equalising in normal time, his late second effort taking the game into extra time.

Queen's faced a tough fixture a week later, taking on league leaders Tobermore United. Despite playing at home, Queen's were unable to procure a win, succumbing to a 2-0 defeat. The hosts saw James Lavery's penalty saved in the second half, a chance which could have changed the game in their favour. However, despite applying pressure in the second half, the league leaders showed the resilience that has characterised their rise to the top of the table and went home with the spoils.

Saturday 13 November saw QUB firsts' face off with Armagh City, with the contrast between the teams' recent fortunes a stark one. The last time these two sides played each other was in March of 1996, in the old Irish League B Division. Since then, Armagh City has dropped from the top tier of Irish football, whilst Queen's have earned a spot in the IFA Championship after seven years

playing in the NI Intermediate League. Queen's came out as the victors here with a convincing 5-1 win, goals courtesy of Paul Mc Donald, James Lavery (2), Tony Tumelty and Gavin Higgins.

Queen's will hope to build on the victory against Armagh City when they play tomorrow's game against Chimney Corner. Chimney Corner currently occupy bottom spot in the league, having only gathered two points from a potential 27 this season, and are still looking for their first win.

P	TEAM	PTS
5	Warrenpoint Town	15
6	Queen's University	14
7	Portstewart	12
8	PSNI	12

Queen's Boxing Club keen to recruit members

DAMIEN EDGAR
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Queen's Boxing club has been forced to pull out of this weekend's planned inter-varsity competition as a result of poor numbers. Despite having excellent facilities available for training and hosting bouts, the Boxing Club have so far failed to gain enough members to set about competing on an inter-varsity level.

The club is set to host Trinity and UCD this weekend for sparring sessions and hope to build upon small sparring sessions as these in order to attract new members and take part competitively. Members have encouraged students to become involved, even if it is only for the fitness aspect, but numbers are still up and down at the moment.

The Boxing Club will be hoping that its 'Brawl in the Hall' night, scheduled for early next

year in the Mandela Hall, will attract more membership. The night will feature a glitzy Las Vegas theme, with showgirls between rounds and visual effects in an attempt to replicate the atmosphere and staging of a Vegas fight night.

Brian John Spencer of the club was keen to dispel notions that the club might be losing numbers as a result of its location on Sandy Row, adding that "everyone is welcome".

The Boxing Club train three nights a week, Monday and Wednesday at 7.30pm and Friday at 5.30 pm.



Queen's to host Squash inter-varsities

PATRICK FLACK

After a four-year absence from the Ulster squash league, Queen's University have at last entered a new team into Division 4.

In previous years Queen's had a number of teams in the league, teams comprising students as well as staff. This was until interest dwindled and players moved on. However, since Ulster senior squash player Gareth Brown took over the the club has made a big push to entice new members and revive what was once a successful club.

The team has made a slow start to the season but with more experience their results should start to turn in their favour, provided the players remain committed.

Queen's will host the upcoming Intervarsity squash tournament in February. Against other universities from across Ireland, this should help to promote the sport at Queen's and will be a provide valuable experience to everyone involved.

Queen's PEC has also been selected to host the European Squash Club Championships in September 2011, which will

attract many of the top ranking squash players from around the world, and will provide an opportunity for current and prospective squash players on campus to observe some of the highest quality squash around.



Queen's Cricket gear up for inter-varsities next year

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Queen's Cricket club have finally kick-started their training sessions for the academic year, albeit after difficulties with their email system which prevented them from contacting club members.

After participating in the Intervarsity competitions in April of last year, Queen's Cricket has since expressed a keen interest in building up similar momentum this year. The committee hopes that QUB cricket

will be able to take part in both the indoor and outdoor sections in the inter varsities, supplementing these competitive events with exhibitions in order to ensure the club is not just based solely around training.

Traditional rivals of Queen's, such as DCU, UCD and UU all look set to compete in February following their participation in both last year's outdoor and indoor competitions. The indoor competitions look set to take place in February, whilst the outdoor event is provisionally scheduled for early June.

Although the club has made a slow start to the year, mainly due to problems with the email system, training has begun in earnest. Finally moving on from the Freshers' Bazaar, two training sessions a week will take place at Queen's, one on Thursday and Sunday respectively.

With the Ashes series commencing this week, it would seem that the Cricket Club have timed their sessions to perfection, timing which they hope will witness a peak in their attendance and continue throughout the academic year.

Ulster rugby star to retire due to injury

SEAN ASHFORD

After 18 months of persistent hip problems, former Queen's student David Pollock has decided to retire from playing rugby at the age of 23. He now intends to return to Queen's to continue to work towards his medical degree which he was two years into when offered a contract by Ulster.

After signing a development contract with Ulster in 2006, there were high hopes for the former Royal School Dungannon pupil, and over his 45 appearances for the province his performances lead Ulster's operations director David Humphreys to describe him as a potential Ulster captain.

Pollock also received five caps for the Ireland 'A' team as well as captaining both Ireland U-19s and U-21s in their World Championships in 2006, before leading Ireland U-20s to an unprecedented Six Nations Grand Slam success in 2007.

In a statement Pollock said "It is with great sadness that I announce my early retirement from rugby. Whilst it was always my intention to resume my studies at Queen's, I never intended it to be quite so soon. My hip injury, however, has not resolved and I have been advised I am no

longer able to achieve the level of fitness required to play professional rugby. I count myself very fortunate to have represented Ulster at every level from schoolboy to senior team and leading out Ulster in the Heineken Cup against Stade Francais in Paris was one of the proudest moments of my rugby career. Rugby with Ulster has afforded me the privilege to play with and against many great players; whilst doing so I have forged friendships and acquired memories that I will treasure for a long time to come."

David Humphreys also added: "David's injury problems in recent years has meant that we only saw glimpses of his talent in the Ulster shirt. His retirement is a huge loss for Ulster Rugby but fortunately for David, he has a long-term future mapped out in the medical profession and a new challenge awaits him away from rugby."

Get involved

Would you like to be a part of The Gown's Sport team?

Contact us
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Letters to the Editor



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Fees hike not just a devolved issue

Should the majority of Westminster MPs vote down the Browne recommendations on tuition fees this would strike an almighty blow to any notion of higher fees in Northern Ireland. Before any debate is to begin on the reworked Stuart review when it is finally released, this could become a non-issue. It will be interesting to see how Northern Ireland's MPs will vote at Westminster as this should give us a more clear indication of how their colleagues intend to vote locally on the issue. At last week's 'Question Time' in the Students' Union all politicians were quick to agree that a substantial increase to tuition fees would weaken social mobility, but some were more ambiguous when asked which way their respective party plans to vote in London.

Of the five panelists, only the SDLP's Conall McDevitt pledged that his party's three representatives would outright reject the Browne proposals at Westminster. The statement from Alliance's Chris Lytle that his party would be likely to vote against the Browne review needs clarification, while Peter Weir of the DUP was equally reluctant to set out exactly what rise to tuition fees would be acceptable. The DUP holds eight Westminster seats and are the biggest party in Northern Ireland, yet students are unsure how they plan to vote on such an important issue. Sinn Féin's five MPs do not take their seats while the UUP is currently without a representative to Westminster.

Student representatives have not looked on the threat of increased fees to be a mere local issue, but have joined together with students throughout the rest of the UK and Ireland to tackle any rise in charges whatsoever. Representatives have travelled long distances not to just protest against the Browne review, but the universal threat to higher education to young people, whatever the jurisdiction. This explains why they have travelled to both London and Dublin, to make the point that to raise tuition fees or registration fees is in no way progressive.

While some of the panel at the SU's question and answer session may maintain that this is a local issue, plenty of students may argue otherwise. While other governments in times of crisis have sought to invest in young people, the governments of the UK and Ireland have not. Solidarity has been key throughout the campaign to keep the cap on fees and will continue to be until the final votes.

Sir,

I would like to express my deep disappointment at our Vice-Chancellor's position on higher education funding as outlined in the all-student email this week.

It's amazing how the university refuses to listen to regular students who pay thousands of pounds to attend each year and to pay for living costs. It is even more unbelievable that it is almost as receptive of the thoughts and actions of our Students' Union. I firmly disagree with Mr Gregson's suggestion that the university is firmly committed to widening access, I have seen little or no evidence of this.

I wonder what will happen to the Social Science degrees offered by universities in Northern Ireland. With less and less funding it appears that the loss of the German language course was just the beginning and more will follow. The university says it wants to work constructively, but there is nothing constructive about cutting funds left, right and centre.

The letter mentions that "the current economic climate, and associated budgetary pressures, facing all government departments cannot be ignored."

I cannot bring myself to believe the coalition govern-

ment when they tell us we are all in this crisis together. Call me naive but there is surely money available for front-line services, and in my mind higher education is one of these. There is clearly money available if the British government is so willing to spend so many billions of pounds to bail out the Republic of Ireland. These are billions of pounds we didn't think we had until the IMF were called. For that matter, should we not sort out our own mess first?

Disappointed



Illustrator Brian John Spencer

Sir,

I was disappointed to read a letter in *The Gown* of November 1st that a person believed that poppies perpetuate segregation. Having lived in an international school with people from Israel/Palestine, South Africa and Sri Lanka amongst other places I have to disagree. Segregation in all of these cases, and I believe in Northern Ireland also, is caused mainly by ignorance and lack of understanding of the values of another community. I would like to refute the claims that the poppy is a symbol for one side of the community.

Although the figure is disputed, an average of 270,000 Irish men from all over the island enlisted in the Army during the First World War with one in ten losing their lives, although the Dept. Of Taoiseach

claims that the higher number of 35,000 men lost their lives. It is also worth noting that every Field Marshal (Highest Ranking) of WW2 was in fact Irish. The Poppy Appeal is coordinated by the Royal British Legion in order for us to remember those who died for the freedom of the British and Irish people.

If most people look back, from either community in Northern Ireland and also further afield on the island, they will find members of their family who laid down their lives in both world wars to support small states such as Belgium and Poland and also to stop the Nazi threat.

The poppy is not a symbol that can be likened to that of the sash. The poppy is a symbol of our shared past and one that we should be immensely proud of. People of unionist and national-

ist persuasions fought alongside each other in the First and Second World Wars and even today nationalists join the British Army as well as people from the South.

We should not be seeking for a neutral, respectful atmosphere. We should be seeking a shared, respectful atmosphere, one in which rather than highlighting our differences, we highlight our similarities. I believe that the Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Day should be a time of year when we rise above our differences and are big enough to remember our fallen heroes rather than being disrespectful to their memory by putting our political viewpoints first.

Concerned at politicisation of everything in this country

THIS MONTH... HARD DRINKERS IN CONTEST, December 1972

Twenty hard drinking students gathered in the Old Bar area of the Union on Friday afternoon to enter the Drinking Contest organised by the PTQ. Five-and-a-half barrels of beer (donated by Harp Larer) were consumed in 3 ½ hours. The winner has officially be named as Gerry Don-

nelly who sank, it is supposed, a total of 32 pints and justly receives an engraved tankard to commemorate his achievement.

Organiser John Reavey described the event as "a tremendous success". Having succeeded in the aim of gaining publicity for RAG by a ten minute

film report on UTV, the event is expected to bring in £100 of sponsorship for RAG charities.

Despite the optimism of the organisers, dissent was rife amongst the competitors, with the female participants accusing each other of cheating and a rematch being demanded. Many

competitors were annoyed that the competition only lasted 3 ½ hours, instead of the advertised six hours.

One legalistic competitor accused the organisers of a "fundamental breach of contract" and threatened not to ask his sponsors for their contributions.

When faced with these accusations, John Reavey said that there was "little cheating" and that the competitor concerned "will pay".

Most of the participants failed to wear anything in the true style of fancy dress, one of the conditions of entry.

QUEEN'S

STUDENTS' UNION ENTERTAINMENT



MELDA
May
FRI 10TH DEC
MANDELA HALL



MOGWAI
SUN 13TH FEB
MANDELA HALL



FRANCESQA
SAT 19TH FEB
SPEAKEASY
14+ SHOW



FUTURES
WED 23RD FEB
SPEAKEASY
14+ SHOW



THU 16TH DEC SPEAKEASY, 9PM
YOU ARE RADAR
COLENSO PARADE
SEVEN SUMMITS
FLORA THE FAUNA

SAT 18TH DEC SPEAKEASY, 7PM
YOU ARE RAGNARÖCK
DUTCH SCHULTZ
MENTAL DEFICIENCY
ALRIGHT THE CAPTAIN

SAT 18TH DEC MANDELA HALL, 8EPADPM
YOU ARE
A PLASTIC ROSE
AXIS OF
KEY OF ATLAS
COLLY STRINGS
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13TH
APRIL
MANDELA
HALL



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COMPERE: COLIN MURPHY

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TERM
BALL**



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SILENT DISCO
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& Bar Sub



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