



Red brick

Have a sense of charity

The news that Carnival - a charity organisation, and a student one at that - could be sued speaks volumes about the blame culture we now live in.

Splashed all over the television are adverts for 'compensation' with no acknowledgement to *where* those thousands of pounds that Mr Grimes was awarded for tripping over his shoelace actually comes from. Somebody has to pay up - in that case it was probably some faceless multinational company. In this case, if the case ever goes to trial, it'll be a group of students raising money for charity.

The argument that they should have registered a trademark they've been using for so many years is valid, but does not justify an ex-student of this University having such a confrontational attitude.

His argument is that he's actually helping Carnegie to run, encouraging them by adding more publicity: fair enough. But does it make sense to run an identically-named event, in the same city, only a few weeks later - surely he's coasting on their publicity as much as they could ever take advantage of his?

Carnival approached us with details of the story incensed - and, frankly, amazed - that they were confronted at all. Honestly, I agree with them. Perhaps the moral to take from this is to cover your back at all costs by hiring a lawyer to shadow your every move. If it were a commercial, profit-making company under this sort of legal scrutiny the logical reaction would be that they brought it on themselves.

But I'm sure I'm not alone in thinking that Mr Bahia was not the sole inspirational force behind a name that's been used at the University he attended for several years before he began marketing his venture. It will be interesting to follow the course of events over the next few months: we'll keep you updated with all developments as they emerge.

A descent into farce

Two writers share an opinion this week - that the much-awaited Israel-Palestine debate conveyed less of a reasoned argument and more of a biased rant.

Having not attended the debate myself I can't comment on its content, but the responses we're getting here in the office are nothing new - campus is simply a microcosm of the international scene in that if people keep venting irrational outbursts and pointing the finger of blame, no-one's ever going to get anywhere. We'll be happy to print equally-weighted arguments in our Comment section to give this crucially important issue more publicity - but we're not prepared to be a podium for irrational bias.

If representatives from each side would be prepared to write something for us, we'll willingly print it.

Letters

A vote of no confidence

Dear Editor,

Thursday's debate, 'This house believes that the Palestinians want too much and give too little' nearly convinced me that Birmingham University is finally capable, after many attempts, of holding a sensible and informed debate on the Middle East conflict. Michael Rosen and Stephen Marks, both experts on the subject, presented well argued and sensitive speeches that focussed on the need for the Israeli government and the Palestinian authority to take responsibility for moving forward the peace process. Unfortunately, however, their sensitivity was undermined by the speakers that followed them and the way in which the debate was conducted.

Jonny Garsen, a second-year

Cambridge student, with no expertise on the subject, was rude in his dismissal of the reasoned opposition presented to him. He had obviously been given no prior warning about the tone of the event or his audience. In my opinion he had no place at the debate.

It is also difficult to understand how the fourth speaker, a supporter and perpetrator of terrorist activity, was given a platform at this type of event. His speech administered blame but did nothing to address the arguments of the proposition. Whilst his opinions and experiences might be considered interesting, an appropriate forum for hearing them might have been at a meeting or discussion group. He had no place speaking at a debate that purported to encourage rational

argument.

Perhaps the most fundamentally damaging speaker at the debate was the chairperson. I find it extraordinary that the president of the World Politics Society, Mohammed Khan, was incapable of remaining impartial for the duration of the debate. His conduct throughout the event was disgraceful. There was no attempt made to have a balanced view presented on Thursday night. The panel of speakers was weighted towards the opposition and the literature distributed at the beginning of the evening was biased. This letter is, therefore, a vote of no confidence in the World Politics Society.

Natalie Gardner
3rd year Law.

Don't dumb down Jazzy masterpieces

Dear all at Redbrick,

Hello there! Long time reader, first time writer.

May I first congratulate all those involved on an excellent publication which has entertained me over the last two years. In my mind third only to 'The Guardian' and the adult monthly must for war historians and survivalists 'Tanks of the Warsaw Pact'. My letter is an observation on a recent explosion in the media of Jaaaz music. As a Benny Goodman fanatic imagine my surprise this week when my favourite of his tunes appeared in three different places (imagine the usual parade of blank faces I receive).

You may know the song 'Sing, Sing, Sing' written by

Louis Prima (who was the voice of King Louis in the Jungle Book, by the way) - it was featured in the Gap adverts a few years ago. If you don't know what it sounds like go and see the new film 'Bright Young Things' by Stephen Fry (which was excellent by the way); it is featured right at the beginning.

This is where I first heard it this week. Then, while waiting for a video on Soviet Rocket Launchers to rewind, I noticed the same piece on CBeebies to advertise the Tweenies!

Today I noticed it being used again on BBC2's 'Time Flyers'.

Incidentally, it was used on Sky TV a few months ago to

promote Spanish football. There have been many more but I can't remember the sources.

I'm not one of those Jazz purists revelling in dank basement clubs about how refreshingly bohemian they are. Jazz should be encouraged but come on! Tweenies and Jazz?

I was just interested whether any other fans have noticed Jazz masterpieces being used to 'art' up an otherwise dull passage in a dull programme.

Yours,
Ed Barry
Drama/English III

Please forward us a copy of 'Tanks of the Warsaw Pact' - I'm intrigued.

Happy
Birthday
Liz
22

Ill-fuelled analysis

Dear Editor,

I'm a little disturbed by last week's restaurant review of San Carlo. Firstly, by the prior bias; secondly by the inherent contradictions in the writing, and thirdly by the ignorance.

I don't understand how a genuine restaurant critic can base a review on preconceptions; this is a fault, and entirely unfair on the restaurant. There are people in this world who rave after a Big Mac - never adhere to previous conceptions and rhetoric. In addition, I find the description of the Calamari as being "the best I've tasted" inconsistent with the view "don't bother" visting the

restaurant. Consistency is required in reviews, not just restaurants.

And finally, about the wine. Anyone who knows anything about eating out appreciates, not snarls, at the fact that restaurants mark up wine - it's how they survive. They don't make a living on selling a dish for ten quid, you fool. Get an economics book and get real.

It's a good restaurant, it's value for money and it doesn't deserve ill-fuelled mis-analysis.

Yours,
Sally Rourke
Economics and Politics III

Dear Editor,

It is a well established fact that partying and socialising is a part of University life but somehow I get the feeling that alcohol and going out to pubs and clubs plays too big a part in students' lives.

Having looked at some of the Freshers Magazines, I found many vouchers for alcohol at reduced prices and just think of the flyers that we are inundated with in the first couple of weeks.

However, I haven't so far seen any promotions for those important books that we have to read and possibly buy. I used to work in the Guild and met people who had blown their whole stu-

dent loan in the first term on alcohol and I find that very sad. Even though it is important to establish new relationships, University should be about studying and working hard to get a degree. Also, think about the impression that other people get of students going out every night and drinking until they 'literally' drop - is this the sort of idea that we want to convey to other people?

Yours,
Carina Kipp
Law IV

Perhaps we can have a letter next week from someone who's just here for the beer?

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(Happy 22nd B'day for Wednesday - hope you stayed conscious)

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(Get well soon)

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