

felix

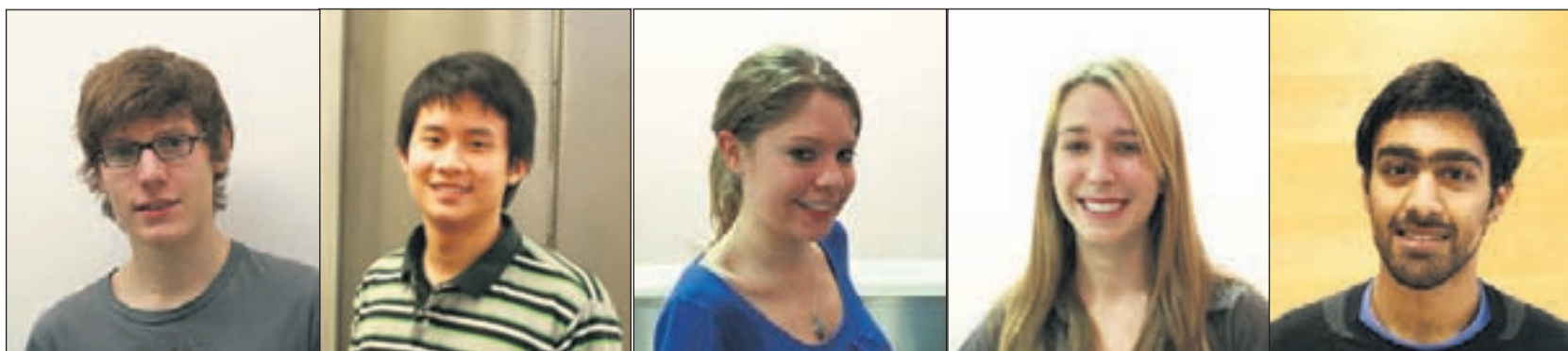
The student newspaper of
Imperial College London

Issue 1,390
Friday 7 December 2007
felixonline.co.uk



Satisfied?

Felix interviews first year students and the new Dean of Students, see pages 5, 6 & 7



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His Dark Materials hits the big screen



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Last issue of term!



News

News Editor – Andrew Somerville

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Creationism on Campus

Ahlul-Bayt society invited Dr. Babuna, representing Harun Yahya, to speak on the evils of Darwinism and Atheism

Matty Hoban

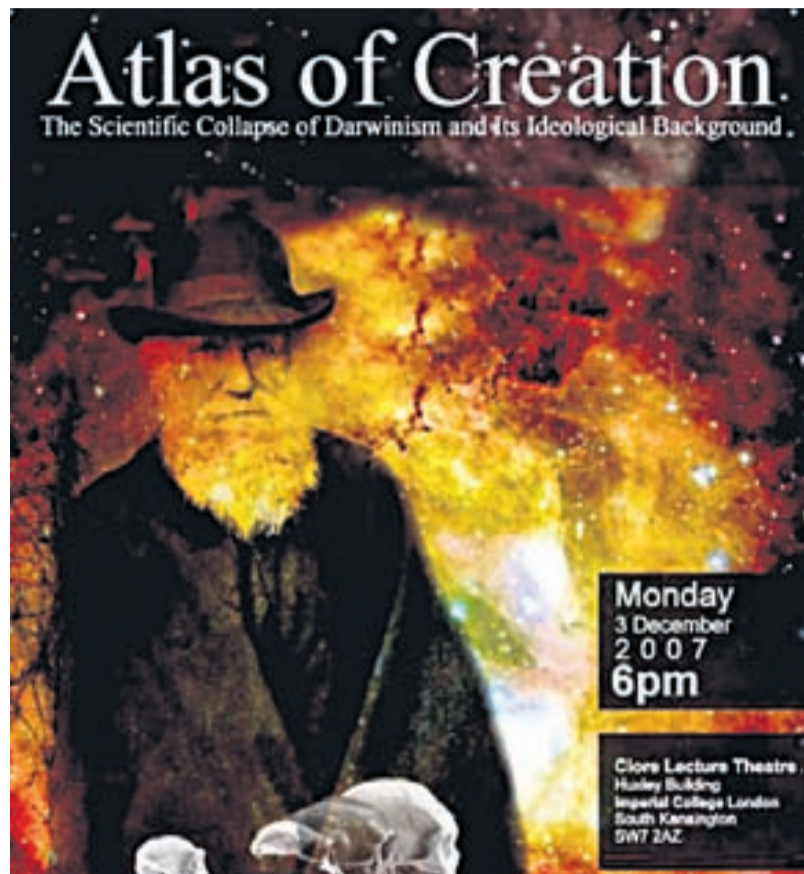
On Monday 3rd December at 6pm in the Clore Lecture Theatre, Huxley Building, the Imperial College Islamic Ahlul-Bayt society invited a speaker from the Harun Yahya organisation to talk about Darwinism. The event was organised with the aim of encouraging debate and discussion between those with differing points-of-view on the Evolution vs. Intelligent Design/Creationism debate.

The keynote speaker was a Dr Cevat Babuna, a Turkish neurosurgeon and devout Muslim. He spoke for over an hour on the supposed evils and errors of Darwinism before a questions and answers session with the speaker took place; this excited many into a fevered discussion. Even after the questions and answers session, many remained to discuss what had taken place.

The event was well attended by those of differing faiths and those with differing opinions on the matters of creation, which could be seen and heard in the various reactions to the lecture and debate afterwards.

Dr Babuna's lecture began by discussing the evils of Social Darwinism and linking Fascism, Nazism and Communism directly to the supposed 'law of the nature' that Darwin "preached". Many seemed outraged at these remarks, with the point made later that anti-Semitism and Atheism existed long before the publication of *On Natural Selection*. It was clear from the outset that Dr Babuna wanted to provoke a reaction, and he was successful.

After discussing the negative effects of Darwin's Theory of Evolution on the social sciences (which did exist, despite Darwin's protestation), more traditional grounds for opposing Darwinism were then explored, beginning with the argument of irreducible complexity; where in an organ such as the eye, if a piece is removed it apparently cannot function, claimed Dr Babuna. Since the Theory of Evolution describes more



The poster for the event hosted in the Huxley building by Ahlul-Bayt

complex organs evolving from simpler organs, irreducible complexity is an argument against Evolution; this was one of the many arguments utilised to oppose Darwinism.

What made the lecture more interesting is that it was a Muslim speaking as opposed to an Evangelical Christian who are traditionally associated with the Intelligent Design cause. Because of this, more debate was opened between differing creeds, whether they agreed with Dr Babuna or not and this produced a thought-provoking evening. Whilst many were worried at the fact that such views were expressed at a science university, any worries that

students (both religious and non-religious alike) shared were quashed in the aggressive questions asked in the session following the lecture.

After the questions and answers session, the air was cooled by the showing of a video depicting suffering children in Iraq; as the chair of Ahlul-Bayt offered that despite differing views, everyone is united behind humanitarian causes. Despite the nature of debate, we are all still human.

For opinion on the lecture and the topics discussed, head to pages 8 to 10 for in depth analyses from two people who also attended

Time's ticking for the Queen's Lawn marquee



The College's planning permission for the marquee on Queen's Lawn expires on 16th December. The marquee, which has been up for over half a year, will finally have to be taken down much to the joy of students. Rumours that a bog-monster will emerge from the muddy undergrowth are completely unfounded.

felix 1,390
Friday 7/12/07



Felix, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB. Tel: 020 7594 8072. Fax: 020 7594 8065. Printed by The Harmsworth Printing Ltd, 17 Brest Road, Derriford, Plymouth. Registered newspaper ISSN 1040-0711. Copyright © Felix 2007.

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Thanks to Prof Lloyd-Smith

LOICATS
LOICATS



OF THE WEEK

When we
can't tell you
what you'll be
doing **tomorrow**
because you've
not come up
with it yet.

We believe that what we are doing today will help us become the BP we want to be tomorrow. Our business is the exploration, production, refining, marketing, trading and distribution of energy; and we have nearly 100,000 people in 100 countries across six continents. In this age of growing consumer demand and environmental urgency, we are always looking to find new and better ways of delivering energy to the world – without compromising the planet.

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Huge NUS reforms; divided opinion

Felix attends the Extraordinary General Conference, and perhaps witnesses the birth of a new kind of NUS

Andrew Somerville
News Editor

One year and two weeks after Imperial College Union voted to affiliate to the National Union of Students (NUS), the national organisation has voted in favour of one of the most dramatic reforms that it has ever seen. The Extraordinary Conference held on Tuesday controversially decided to accept the motion to delete its constitution in its entirety, and totally replace the current structure.

The emergency conference was convened solely to debate this reform, backed by Student Unions across the country (including ICU) who have become frustrated and disenfranchised by the National union's perceived lack of relevance, disorganisation, bureaucracy, and nonsensical radicalism. It faced fierce opposition from those who feared the restructuring would: "corporatise" the NUS, prevent democracy, reduce diversity, and destroy its student focus.

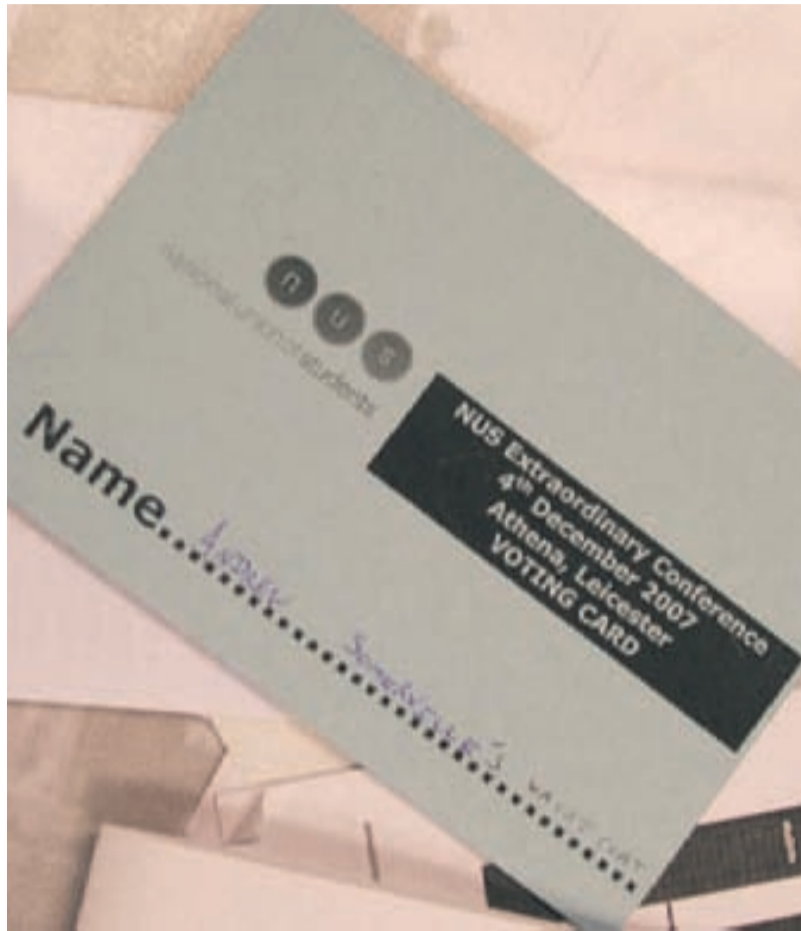
This radical reform is of particular relevance to IC students since last year's referendum decision to affiliate was closely fought and full of controversy, and ICU has been one of the strongest voices calling for change.

ICU has had a rocky relationship with the NUS since its formation. A Founding Member in 1922, it left the national union only a year after its birth, and since then has briefly rejoined then abruptly left at least twice.

Following the departure from the University of London Union (ULU), IC students last year voted 53% to 47% in favour of re-affiliating: an extremely slim majority. Felix's recent investigation into student opinion showed that the effects of joining have passed largely unnoticed, and that uptake of the NUS Extra Card has been extremely low amongst both freshers and students who were eligible to vote last year: only 5% of the total student body have purchased the £10 card.

Many students questioned the value for money of our £44,000 per annum affiliation costs last November, and have continued to do so since the referendum.

ICU therefore threatened yet another disaffiliation if radical changes to the NUS were not made, a threat also made by several other student unions such as King's College London Union (KCLU). Due to this widespread dissatisfaction in the NUS, a far-reaching "Governance Review" was ordered at 2007's annual NUS Conference. The review suggested that a complete over-



One of the all important voting cards which helped bring forward the NUS' latest radical reformation at Tuesday's Extraordinary Conference

haul of the entire NUS constitution was necessary, and recommended a new constitution, and a new governance structure almost identical to the model adopted by ICU and KCLU, with a board of trustees acting as a legal and financial overseer.

These new measures have outraged many of the more radical elements of the national union. Rob Owen, a member of the NUS' National Executive Committee (NEC), has stated that the proposals would mean the: "removing of the NUS' own democratic structures," which would: "receive far less independent scrutiny." Whilst the majority of the 27 NEC members were happy with the changes that had been drafted.

The president of Imperial College Union, Stephen Brown, spoke in general defence of the motion in a speech that was brutally honest, and provocative. "Isn't it ironic that the self-styled 'radicals' of the student movement are steadfast in their determination not to change anything, ever, with regards to NUS governance?" he began,

continuing to say that the image of the NUS "presented to the public is one of rebels without a clue, squabbling about whether the revolution should come on Thursday, or whether it would be better to wait until the next full moon." It was a call to arms for those whose patience with the current NUS had come to an end.

It took six hours of heated debate over amendments to the new constitution, including multiple attempts to tear up the proposal and start all over again, until the Extraordinary Conference tired of waiting and voted 383 to 181 in favour of an immediate vote on the whole document.

The vote for the change came quickly and was overwhelmingly in favour, but was taken twice to appease those who remained unhappy with the restructuring, and the meeting as a whole (a vote of no-confidence in the Chair was swiftly swept aside prior to the vote).

After years of attempting reform at all levels in order to remain relevant to the students that it represents, the NUS finally reached a consensus that

The Extraordinary Conference: Opinions of the News Editor

I had never attended any event even remotely tied to the NUS, but I had heard much argument over the national union's various strengths and weaknesses since last autumn. I thought that with that experience, and my open-minded but well informed approach to the Extraordinary Conference, would prepare me for a "non-stop governance debate fest," in the UK's foremost political organisation for students. How wrong I was.

Prior to the event, it was easy for me to add a pinch of salt to any opinions that I heard from members of our own Union, the most vocal of which have always been from those with significant political interests: various people with significantly right, or left-leaning views. I had always assumed that these peoples accusations of "ridiculous far-left factionism," political inadequacies, and "comedy sideshow"-ism were exaggerated by frustrations with political views that were not their own. Again, I found myself to be the naive party. I tried to leave my own political views at the door in order to report the proceedings totally without bias. I failed.

Before I had even left the minibus, I read clauses in the new constitution, a constitution that has been accused of being "undemocratic," and "a significant lurch to the right," that made me so angry that I was tempted to address the conference myself in one of the many "free" speeches on offer to anyone who raised their hand. A response was provoked that required me to physically sit on my hands and fume in incandescent rage, as I watched whilst the vast majority of the conference gave standing ovations to odious rhetoric that used strong emotions to overwhelm well-reasoned debate. The issue that I speak of is important, but as it involves the BNP, freedom of speech, and philosophical debate, I won't subject readers to more comment on these recently saturated subjects.

The incident, however, was symbolic for me. The rest of the day was filled with petty personal vendettas, childish squabbling, sly manipulation and brief, rare, but extremely welcome outbursts of genuine debate over the future of an organisation that should be important.

Even in its moment of reform and frustrated consensus, the NUS managed to be hamstrung for most of the proceedings by its own members (on both sides of the current debate), who believe they are saving the institution from evil, but are in fact delivering it further into the hands of irrelevance with each minute of ill-reasoned speech. The only reason that any progress was made in the end, was because the majority of delegates wanted to go home, and the leadership's determination and sly tactics galvanised the conference's need for more action and less talk.

To my eyes, the rumours are all true. The NUS is in severe trouble, with an alienated student body, and a general loss of confidence in the movement. If the new measures work, a new dawn is imminent. If they do not, the course of salvation is even harder to see. It really seems as simple as that.

allows it to radically change the way that it operates. It now can either ratify this constitution at the Congress in April, or reject it and begin the process again.

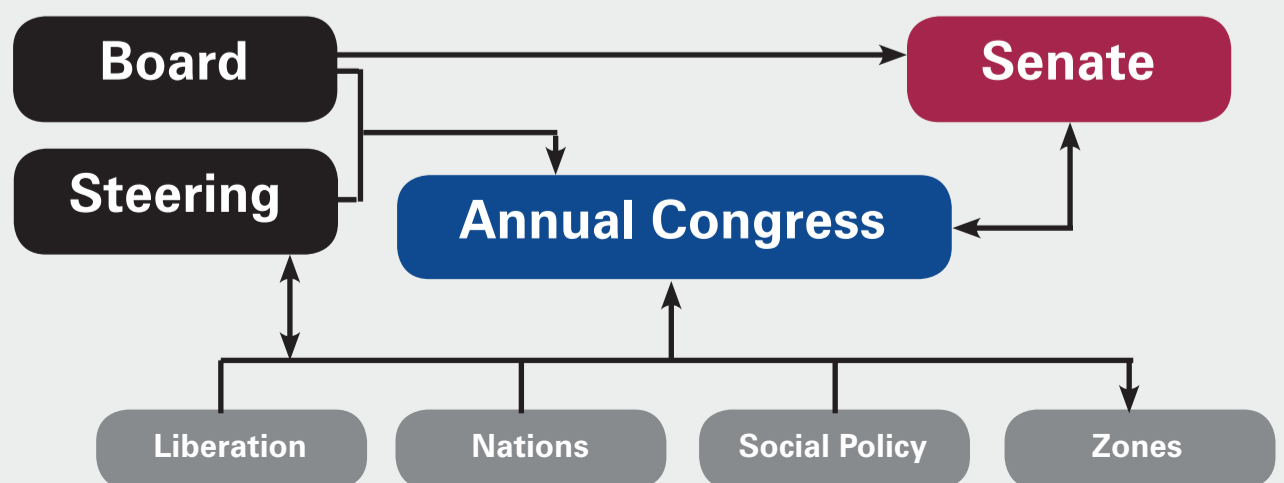
Observing whether the current reforms improve, damage, or fail to effectively alter the NUS will be a crucial point of interest for all students in the UK and Ireland over the next few years, during which they will face issues such as the student funding debate, devaluing degrees, increases in top-up fees, and the continuing influence of business over education in general.

The NUS will have to return to strength in order to effectively voice student opinion to the government, media and major organisations. These will be the acid tests for the NUS, deciding whether IC students decide to stay NUS-affiliated, and governing the fates of all UK and Irish students in general.

The next NUS Annual Congress will be held in Blackpool from 1-3 April 2008. If you wish to attend, elections to ICU's delegation will be held next term

Deciphering the NUS

- The NUS represents roughly 5 Million students in the UK and Ireland, and has around 600 independent student unions affiliated to it. This is approximately 98% of students over the age of 16.
- Most of the NUS decision-making happens at Annual Congress, during which it also elects its officers.
- The annual membership fee that ICU pays is £44,000.
- The NUS has an important history of fighting for student rights and democracy in general, and many politicians start out as members of the union.
- In recent years, the NUS is seen as having lost direction and failed its members. The complete restructuring (pictured) is designed to combat this decline.



IC can't get no satisfaction?

Felix interviews the Dean of Students and the students themselves to discuss university satisfaction

Tom Roberts
& Andrew Somerville

This week Felix conducted interviews with the student body and the newly appointed Dean of Students, Professor David Lloyd-Smith, to find out about what new students feel about their first term at Imperial College. Prompted by results from the National Student Survey (NSS) released in August 2007 in which Imperial was ranked 68th for student satisfaction, and the influence that this has on the Good University Guide, the investigation was designed to give the new students a way to voice their first opinions of College after only a few months of exposure.

Over 25 first year Imperial students were asked to fill out a survey which posed questions about how they have found their first term, including: workload, halls life, their experiences with the Union and the College, and how the Imperial compares with their friends' universities. Students were also told about the Good University Guide results in which Imperial would have ranked first had it not been for poor student satisfaction, instead finishing third overall, and asked about their reaction.

The students' responses are on the following pages. Due to space issues, not everyone surveyed made publication. It was decided to select people whose opinions reflected views that were popularly found, and whose answers were well reasoned. Similarly, there were more questions asked than could be published; those chosen to make the final article were picked to reflect the most important and most interesting issues covered by the survey.

Felix also interviewed Professor Lloyd-Smith to ask him about his new job, the newly created position: Dean of Students, how it relates to students, his aims and the issue of student satisfaction. The question and answer transcription follows below.

These student interviews are not comprehensive. They were conducted mainly on a Wednesday afternoon (a day when many students are not in College) around campus, in the Union and also in a hall of residence.

Judging from the people that Felix spoke to, there seems to be a common consensus that students have to work very hard at Imperial. Opinion over the social side of university is divided, however the students mostly remain pleased that they have come to Imperial with nearly everyone stating that they would choose Imperial again, with hindsight.

The results are surprisingly positive compared to what the National Student Survey suggests. One thing to note is that Felix only surveyed first year students this time around, whereas the NSS was based on responses from final year students. Are the results positive because we've only interviewed freshers who haven't experienced the entire year, including the stresses of exams, or has the College improved so vastly in the previous few months that students are more satisfied than before?

Felix is interested to see whether these opinions change over the course of their studies, so tune in this time next term when we'll be conducting more surveys to find out just how satisfied Imperial's student body is.

However, before we get to the students' views, the Question & Answer session with the new Dean of Students follows.



The recently appointed Dean of Students, Professor David Lloyd-Smith

Q&A with Professor Lloyd-Smith

What's does the new role of Dean of Students entail?

The position has been newly created over the summer. Effectively, the duty of the old Pro-Rector (Educational Quality) have been divided into two. It was felt that this Pro-Rector position needed to be reconfigured, so it was much better to separate it into two jobs.

The current Pro-Rector (Educational Quality) is responsible for strategic thinking and the quality of our education program whereas my role as Dean of Students is focussed towards welfare and pastoral care. I oversee the College tutors and hall wardens, help student councillors deal with problems when they arise, sort out issues to do with disabled students and I have a wider involvement with things that might affect students at Imperial, such as government policy changes.

Before the creation of the Dean of Students position all of these tasks were tackled by the Pro-Rector (Educational Quality). The division of duties has freed up the current Pro-Rector to focus on building up the strategic education that needs to be enhanced.

What's currently on your Agenda?

I think I'm very largely still trying to find out what Rees Rawlings [*the previous Pro-Rector (Educational Quality)*] did and what the job's all about.

What are your ambitions for the role?

I thought we had a very good system under Rees Rawlings and I think he put an enormous effort into ensuring that students enjoyed life at Imperial

College on all aspects from sporting activities to cultural ones, to ensuring the quality of courses here were high for students. I think he left a very good legacy but one cannot be complacent about the things – they need maintaining.

At the moment we are shifting our focus here and there depending on what's going on at the time. For instance, we are being driven by statutory instruments to comply with the governments changing disabilities acts.

Another serious problem presented to us at the moment is with under-18 students. We have more than ever before and they all be in halls or living at home. Wardens are under extra pressure when these students are residents in their halls and I'm here to offer extra help.

Is your appointment directly related to the creation of the new Student Hub?

I think that the Student Hun is a notion of centralising all of the key student support services – a one-stop shop. Although it's to do with Welfare as a place where there is a group of people who can be relied on to provide the majority of answers to students' questions, I wouldn't say my role is involved with it directly: it's more of a national trend that has occurred at universities.

What is the mechanism you use to monitor what students feel about their university experience? Do you use SOLE?

SOLE is primarily used for academic purposes and quality assurance. But it also has the facility to try to deal a bit more widely with the student experience, particularly with first year students who we would like to get a bit more evidence about.

If SOLE is not operating efficiently then we will consider how to modify it with better questions. It is a system that seems to be flexible to be amended as we see fit.

Other mechanisms include student

liaison officers who report back to us after finding out what is going on in the various courses and also the national questionnaire that students fill out from which we get information on the student experience from those who completed the survey [NSS].

Earlier you said that you believe under the current system you have been left a good legacy of making sure that students' welfare is in a good condition – how do you think this is reflected in the student satisfaction survey? The results have been quite poor for Imperial. For instance, in the Good University Guide Imperial would be top if it wasn't for the poor satisfaction of students – surely that is slightly worrying?

My experience is that the students I deal with seem to be focussed on their reason for being at Imperial College which is to study science, technology, medicine, to get a good degree and to get a good job as a result of that. Dissatisfaction with the quality of education received here doesn't seem to be high, in my view.

So the dissatisfaction you're turning your attention to may be to do with cultural life at the College, with extramural experiences and sports activities. I'm not sure though: when you look at sport here with the massive new sports centre and also the highest proportion of sporting activity in the UK, it's difficult for me to understand why students feel that the student experience at Imperial is that much less than at other universities.

Myself and Rees Rawlings are and have been constantly talking to students to find out how they're enjoying life at Imperial.

Certainly we are trying to find out why it's happening. It could be that at that time of year [*when students have to take SOLE*] they get fed up taking questionnaires. Perhaps taking two things like this is maybe causing some difficulty. I'm afraid I can't answer the question though to be honest with you

as I'm new to the job.

Do you think that the workload at Imperial is preventing students from doing activities outside of their studies?

It's a very interesting question and it depends what you want to compare it with. If you compare it with European institutions on the continent you would have to say the student workload in the UK is much less. For example, students in France spend 39 to 40 weeks, not 30 weeks, as we do, on their study activities. People who go there expect to get a good job and I think that people who come to Imperial also have to expect to work hard because the profit from doing so is immense. If you graduate with a degree from Imperial it has a high caché, it has good value and you can turn it to many things such as getting a good job or going on to another university such as by doing a PhD at Cambridge. Employers respect a degree from here.

In Germany students work for a minimum of five years to get their diploma and they work all year round.

Should we be comparing ourselves with European universities or ones from the UK?

We feel that we measure ourselves against the best continental universities and institutions across the world. We want to measure ourselves against those that are most highly rated and so the workloads in general have to be proportional with the quality of the degree, the quality of the whole experience and its value of turning it into a job or a position at another university. Students who come here, by and large, know what they are getting themselves into.

Turn over
for the students'
opinions'

Student opinion: Felix surveys

How have you found your first term at Imperial?

Fun! I've really settled in well and met tons of people. The work is tough but really interesting.

How have you found the workload?

It's steadily increased throughout the term, but it's not become unmanageable.

How have you found the Union?

I haven't ever used the main Union but the medics' Union is amazing! There are lots of great events etc. We don't get much information about the main university Union.

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

It's much better! However, there's a much bigger workload. All the friends that have visited me from

other universities are jealous of our location and the atmosphere.

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

I didn't know about this and yes, it does surprise me. Some people are never satisfied!



Emma Buckley
Medicine



Alexander Parry
Medicine

How have you found your first term at Imperial?

My first term has been great. It's less nerdy and more social than I expected it to be.

How have you found the workload?

Miniscule.

How have you found the Union?

ICSMU is great. The Reynolds Bar is an amazing place to get hammered. As for ICU: I've only been once.

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

The social life could be better. It would be good if there were more societies and less anoraks.

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

No, I didn't know about this and no, it doesn't surprise me. The non-academic side could be better and the lectures aren't world class.



How have you found your first term at Imperial?

It's been fun and very busy with lots of work and social events.

How have you found the workload?

The workload was quite light at first but as term progressed the workload has dramatically increased.

How have you found the Union?

I haven't used the Union much. We tend to go out for student nights at clubs in London such as The Ministry of Sound.

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

It seems a bit more expensive than my friends' universities probably because it is in central London.

It also seems like I do a lot more work than them.

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

I didn't know about this and it does surprise me because most people here are very friendly and helpful.



Rachel Gill
Medicine

Imperial London

Faculty of Medicine

How have you found your first term at Imperial?

It's been very exciting, interesting and a bit stressful because I just got here.

How have you found the workload?

It is getting bigger and bigger with time: Masteries, problem sheets... but once you manage your time and get involved then it's okay.

How have you found the Union?

The Union can be really good but can also be bad. The cheap beer is the main point to go there, as well as for the free bar nights as well.

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

Imperial is just the same but it's bigger and there are more people to meet!

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

I was expecting the course to be a bit better, and that we would have more help. Also, I expected that more and better events would take place but I know that some serious changes are ready to happen.



Loukia Sivena
Chemical Engineering

How have you found your first term at Imperial?

It's been difficult in terms of work, but I've found it enjoyable otherwise.

How have you found the workload?

The workload has been reasonable, considering the course that I'm doing

How have you found the Union?

The Union has been pretty good so far. It's better than I was expecting it to be.

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

I've only visited Manchester and Warwick universities so far, and from what I've seen Imperial appears better.

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

It's no surprise to me since I've experienced the poor quality of contact before coming here. Then again, that's expected from a research orientated university.



Niraj Patel
(EEE – ISE)



Faculty of

Freshers after their first term



Isaac Ho
Mathematics

How have you found your first term at Imperial?

Great!

How have you found the workload?

Busy. There's been a lot of work and it's much harder than A-level.

How have you found the Union?

The food there is nice and the prices are cheap.

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

Imperial is a lot better than their universities – no doubt.

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

After being here for a month I am feeling like I've joined the top university in the country (world).



How have you found your first term at Imperial?

It has been great and very challenging.

How have you found the workload?

Fine. It's been easier than I anticipated. Next term will probably kill me though...

How have you found the Union?

The Union is bustling with life.

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

Hmm... We are certainly a lot more hard working and the social events at Imperial are great. But I am biased though!

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

I knew that a university as good as Imperial had achieved 3rd place. However, it is surprising to find the reason for not taking first place was due to student satisfaction.



Gianfranco Zeppetelli
Chemistry

How have you found your first term at Imperial?

It's not been what I expected.

How have you found the workload?

The work has been intense so far.

How have you found the Union?

Crap – The Union is in need of

some serious investment and immediately. It closes too early as well, but the food's quite good. I also feel that it's not central enough to students' lives.

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

Other universities don't get marked in their first year! This means there's no time to settle in.

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

I'm not surprised. Imperial is really good for studying but not socially. I'm going to get a good degree out of it but it would have been nice to get the whole experience.

College



James Buckland
Physics

Faculty of Natural Sciences



Sing Kwah NG
Mechanical Engineering

How have you found your first term at Imperial?

It's been reasonably enjoyable, but there's been loads of work!

How have you found the workload?

There's been a lot more than I expected.

How have you found the Union?

Not bad. The food in Beit during lunch hour is reasonably priced but it could be better, ie: like King's College London Union

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

There's a lot more work than other universities. In general there's better facilities.

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

Yes, I found out about this from a friend. I found it somewhat surprising.



Omar Al-Fakir
Mechanical Engineering

How have you found your first term at Imperial?

Stressful! Okay, that's a bit of an exaggeration but still, there's always a lot of work to do. Although there is still enough time to have fun.

How have you found the workload?

There can be a lot at times especially in your department, with lab reports, drawing assignments and coursework

along with tutorial sheets. But, it's still quite (just) manageable.

How have you found the Union?

Cheap and it is good value. However, it can get packed at times – we need a bigger building.

How does Imperial compare to your friends' universities?

Amazingly, but the social life in their's seems so much better. At least we have free admission to our amazing gym (for now...)!

Imperial came 3rd in August's Good University Guide, however it would have come 1st if student satisfaction was higher: did you know about this? Does this surprise you?

I had no idea about this and it does quite surprise me. So far I haven't found anything that bad. Overall I think us students are treated well. It could be to do with the workload though!

Engineering

About 180m dead: Darwin accused

Pietro Aronica gives his opinion on Monday night's lecture that dared to dispute Darwin's salient theory

On Monday, I attended the Imperial College Ahlul Bayt (Islamic) Society's conference about Evolution, an event which aimed at exposing the theory as a lie, as a statistical impossibility and as a diversion from the real cause of all things – god.

The speaker was introduced with the claim that the society wanted to promote an exchange of ideas; he can't have been listening, because he then proceeded with what can only be described as single-minded, bigoted propaganda. It was rather difficult to follow the lecture, as I was either chuckling at the extreme illogicality of some of the facts that had been said, or cringing before such display of ignorance. Sometimes a chorus of dissent from the crowd would cover the speaker's voice, and sometimes the brutal irrationality of those words was simply

"It followed with well-known creationist tricks such as irreducible complexity."

too much to bear. But nonetheless, I was able to get the gist of the lecture as a whole, simply because I have heard it repeated over again by the same kind of people, under different religions.

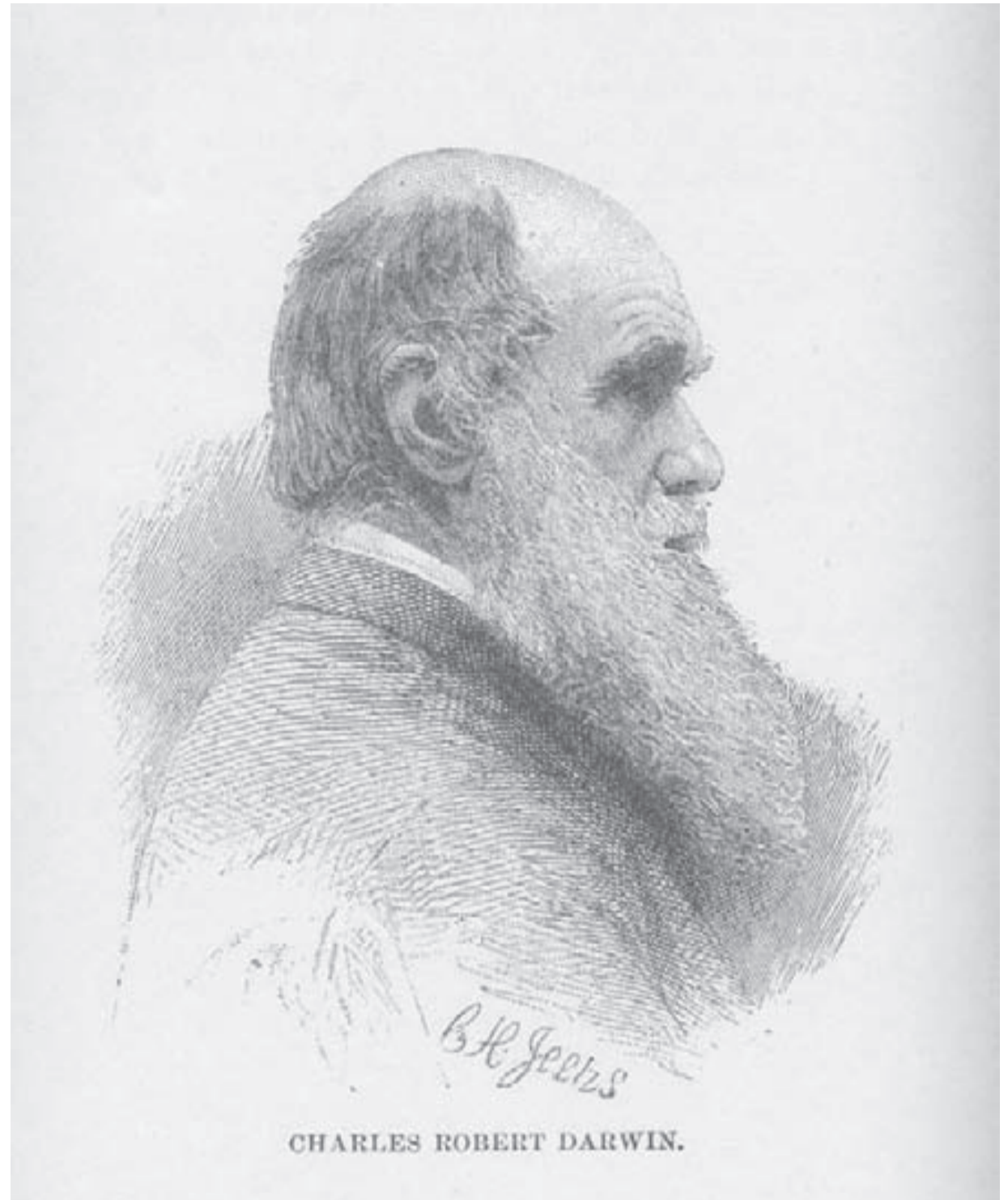
It started with a claim that Darwinism and the theory of evolution have been behind such great evils as anarchism, racism, communism, atheism, fascism and nazism. The "law of the jungle" had apparently killed somewhere in the region of 180 million. It followed with well-known creationist tricks, such as irreducible complexity and argument by ignorance, and a point by point refutation of the theory as a whole, by "proving" that mutations are only harmful, that intermediate species don't exist, and that science is always correcting itself and therefore wrong. Everything was served with a large dose of Qur'an, added here and there to give a credible option, and an equally large portion of quotations from works of prominent evolutionaries and atheists, who all seem to doubt the theory greatly, but still support it

out of what appears to be a psychological illness.

I've rarely heard such an immense number of absurd claims, spurious links between facts, such an obstinate refusal to open one's eyes to reality and such blatant disregard for some evidence while overestimating other proofs on a totally arbitrary basis. After five minutes, I had already lost count of the questionable facts that I would have asked him to prove, the inconsistencies that I wanted to point out and the evident idiocies that were just begging to be exposed. Apart from the social-evils-of-evolution bit, everything else was just a repeat on the same formula: say a really big number, claim it's impossible, and disprove the theory. The quantity of data given was overwhelming, but it had to be: it was just meaningless calculations, oversimplified to the point they had no connection to reality and made in a biased manner. Most of the logical connections were a result of blind loyalty to the cause of creation, as they completely ignored facts and jumped to an immediate conclusion without even thinking about it; some of them were simply wrong from a biological, not even rational, point of view, and could be easily identified by a youngster with nothing more than an A-Level in biology (such as myself) let alone by experts in the field.

The Q&A session vented the slithering unrest that had been going on during the lecture in the form of giggles and sighs, and the speaker found himself covered by questions that exposed the logical fallacies and inexact claims in his arguments; rather than trying to have a rational confrontation, he merely repeated the same old facts all over again, with minor changes. Hard pressed, he blatantly avoided the central area (where the newly-founded AASoc had positioned themselves and were springing with new questions every minute) to favour the sides and back, filled with middle-eastern looking people, all faith-abiding Muslims in his eyes. The plan backfired when even girls in hijab confronted him on the ridiculousness of his theories. As the event ended, many questions were still unanswered, and a general feeling was present that the speaker was just trying to weasel out of the debate.

One thing I did not appreciate, among the others, was the absolute lack of balance in the lecture: it was a one-way talk, with no opposition and no proof that undermined his theory. Everything that could have been used



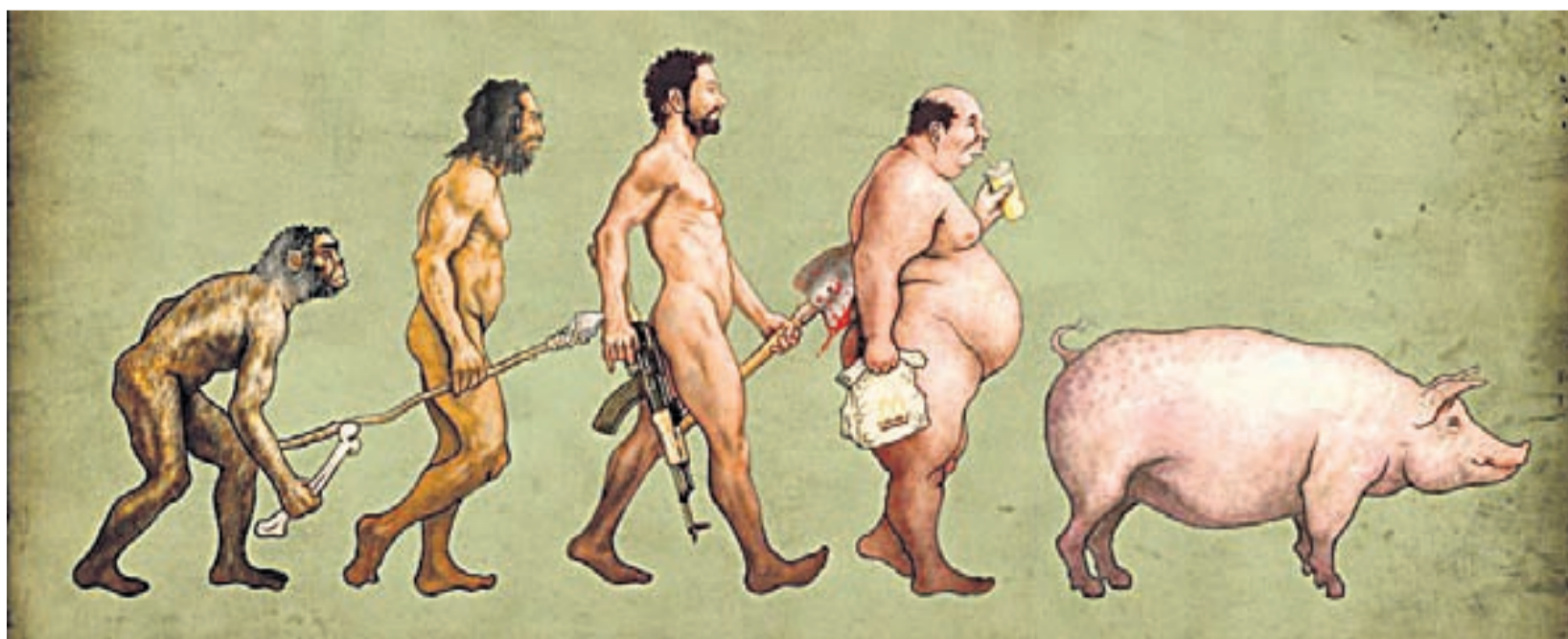
The man himself, Charles Darwin, was at the centre of some passionate debate. Posthumously, of course.

against him was carefully avoided, and he never raised a single shadow upon his questionable arguments. Also, everything was presented in a way a fortune teller would try to sell a potion: with lots of big Latin- and scientific-

sounding words to add non-existent credibility, a thing he then claimed his opponents were doing as well.

The argument for Darwinism being the root of all evil was just bad, with no other word required. Maybe you are

familiar with the *reductio ad Hitlerum*, an impressive sounding Latin phrase of the kind I mentioned before: basically, if Hitler liked X, X must be evil; other common variants are Nazis or Stalin instead of Hitler. Anybody can spot the fallacy in it, by putting as X something



This is Darwin's theory of evolution as envisioned by Dr Babuna. We decided to name the pig 'Napoleon' by the way

"Using Latin-sounding words to add non-existent credibility."

that is not considered unethical and still was supported by Hitler, like dogs, or paintings. But the lecturer went further, as he claimed that Darwinism was the cause of nazism, fascism, atheism, communism, racism and anarchism. It's a simple thing to forget, I guess, that anti-Semitism existed for millennia before Darwin was even born, that Hitler liked playing the blame game in a depression-ravaged hunger-stricken Germany, that Socrates had already questioned the existence of the gods, and that racism is old as humanity itself. And how can he say that com-

munism stems from evolution, when it advocates that all men are born equal and that the state should take care of them? Similar arguments can be made for anarchism, which is in fact a political theory and not a state of chaos, as he seems to have understood.

Other logical inaccuracies plagued the lecture, but it's difficult to remember them all. One that was hard to forget, though, is the idea that if an important scientist had doubts about the theory, it should be discarded altogether. That's just poppycock. I guess that religious people can't grasp the

"Science's fallibility and ability to constantly renew itself are not weaknesses."

concept that there are no "holy leaders" in science, and that no one's word is considered as law. One might be the greatest asshole on this planet, but if he makes a clever point, the point will be taken on its own merits. Further retractions count for nothing, if not supported by hard evidence. The opposite happens in religion, where contradicting statements made by the same authority are regarded as law, ignoring their own validity in favor of the institution's infallibility.

Speaking of which, I must emphasize that science's fallibility and ability to constantly disprove and renew itself are not weaknesses; rather, they are strengths, showing how new evidence

can and often will conflict with what we thought as true, a concept that religion is not familiar with. Clinging to the same old idea is not something science does, if there are evidence to move to somewhere else. I felt offended when we were told that evolution was mindless dogma, and we defended it a priori (same Latin-phrase sort of thing), taking it as truth and never departing from it. It felt even more insulting as it was said by someone who unquestionably believes in a seventh century book by an illiterate merchant which has never been changed in its existence, and which is mostly hearsay, oral tradition and copies from previous works (I'll probably earn a fatwa for this, but having been condemned to hell already by the catholic and anglican faiths, it can hardly do any worse).

Finally, the last points I want to tackle are irreducible complexity and argument by ignorance. The first states that there is a point where you get to a biological structure that can not be simplified further, because if you remove even a single part from it, it breaks apart (an example is the human eye). Therefore, such a structure must have been created, because evolution says that complex things come out of simpler ones. That's double poppycock. They are assuming that being able to see badly is worse than not being able to see at all: but malfunctioning eyes are still better than no eyes. If the lens is missing, for example, I won't immediately go blind: I'll see just badly (and maybe lose my sight but that's not certain). Will it be optimal? No. Will it be better than no eye at all? Yes. You can understand the inaccuracy behind the irreducible complexity argument even better if you examine other animals: squids, cats and even some crustaceans have better eyes than us. But



Can something so utterly adorable be the impetus for a scientific debate that has yet to be concluded?

JPMorgan 

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even with our sub-par organs, we can still see comfortably.

The second argument states that something is false until proven true (or vice versa), and corroborated by the big, impossible numbers of before. I would like to perform an experiment: take a pack of 52 cards, and shuffle it thoroughly. Look at the order the cards are now in. This is but one combination out of the 52! different ones that could have arisen. If every person on earth shuffled and dealt a pack of cards every second, you would be sure to get the same combination only in an insanely huge amount of years. And yet, you got that very specific order. Is that because god moved the cards for you? Because your superior intelligence compared to the dumb cards put them in a specific position? No. Simply, one of the combinations had to come out. Similarly, life on earth was one of the possibilities: one of the many combinations of atoms and molecules in the

“Creationism is declining; today’s audience was living proof. Keep it up”

primordial ooze that, in the end, gave existence to us. It could have been no life at all, it could have been completely different from what we know now. An example was that the chance of a specific 500-aminoacid protein to come into existence from a soup of all amino acids in equal proportions is so tiny it could never arise spontaneously. First of all, any biologist will tell you than not all of those 500 amino acids are fundamental: some make the important bit (functional group) and the rest is merely ballast, which can be any amino acid in any order, since it is irrelevant to the function of the protein itself. Second, what would be the big deal if the important amino acids were different? Okay, there is a big chance it wouldn't work, but also that it would work just as well, or better, or worse.



The ever-recurring face of Darwinism? Or is it merely simple fascism

Again, creationists seem to think that our very specific life requirements are the only ones possible. It is out of their grasp that there are intermediates between our life and no life at all, and even possibilities that could actually be better.

In conclusion, the lecture was bad, the arguments worse and the justification for them atrocious. I've tried to look at them here, but I have still skipped such spurious claims as “there are no intermediate fossils that show the evolution of a species” (just look at the horse's evolutionary history), “life only arises from life” (Miller's experiment then is just false, I presume), “Australopithecus was an ape” (first of all, the Australopithecus was a genus, not a species, and second of all, no), “it is not possible to recreate soft tis-

sue from bones” (forensic facial reconstruction. Look it up on Wikipedia) and others I can't remember, due to their sheer volume. It saddens me to see people who uphold arguments like these and judge the inevitably wrong consequences as true.

But, alas, not all is lost. If nothing else, it has proven to me that people who do seek the truth exist, and that they are vocal and passionate about this issue. Roars at irrationality, laughter at ridiculousness and coldness at nonsense greeted the speaker throughout the speech. The sensible, logical people outnumbered and outweighed their opponents, and showed how such idiocy is not appreciated here. Despite claims to the contrary, creationism is declining, and today's audience was the living proof. Let's keep it up.



Apparently Mao's groundwork for China had some base in Darwinism



Claim to fame: doesn't believe in God, so he wrote a book about that

Atlas of Creation: the true meaning

Azfarul Islam cuts a swathe through the meandering and experiences something quite astounding

Accusing Charles Darwin of being somehow intrinsically linked to multiple counts of fascism, communism, racism and genocide could only be, at the very least, an interesting way to commence the major tenor of the “Atlas of Creation”.

It was an hour filled with fervent censure of Darwin's famous (or infamous, depending upon your perspective) “theory” of evolution, unveiled mutterings against propaganda and uncomfortable finger-pointing all interspersed with quotes from the Holy Qur'an. That in itself was a cocktail for fostering controversy and discord. Anyone watching the audience can easily attest to this as applause broke out relevant to the points being argued. A clear schism was formed – dividing the audience into believers and non-believers - but this wasn't due to ignorance or the talk itself. The rather self-aware speaker Dr Babuna seemed to forget where he was delivering his speech; he was hardly converting anyone that day. Rather, his bombastic and often parochial statements would only widen the gap and reinforce past

prejudices and the ironclad faiths that materialise in such debates. Interestingly, despite quoting verses from the Holy Qur'an, the religious undertones were merely that. There seemed to be no ulterior motive other than his own obdurate opinion as it collided with the cool, agnostic logic of science.

As the seminar continued, one thing seemed to be evident: this man had a dream and he didn't want to share it. He wished to establish it as *de rigueur*. In tandem, his examples further relied upon the juxtaposition of arbitrarily “large” magnitudes to express the improbability of random chance. And eventually, the age-old argument was aroused anew. Does the human truly descend from the simian?

As a Muslim, I was taught otherwise and, as part of my faith, I maintain such knowledge as a personal truth. However, I was also raised to keep an open mind and after shaking my head constantly during the higher crescendos of his messages, I shifted gears into a neutral drive. And then, I saw it. There was clearly more to this man's inanities. There were certain strings amidst this admittedly messy presentation that would wind with each other

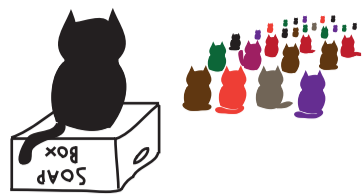
to coalesce into something far greater, something truly holistic.

It was during the finale that this hand was revealed. Hidden behind a brusquely arrogant personal agenda there was a delicate transmutation into a wholesome message of secularism and tolerance. This was clearly evident when people left the Clore lecture theatre at least two hours after the man's conclusion. During that time, the entire theatre had turned into a primordial soup of new, exciting and personal discussions. It's not difficult to imagine that each person's contribution to the several peer groups would foster further awareness and thought. To me that was what made the event special; almost transcendental, if you will. Despite being subject to what many would call bigoted foolishness, there was a seed planted. This was the kind of seed that rarely exists in our age of impuissant acceptance and schematised information; the kind that inspired scientists of old. It was the seed of thought, and of intelligent questioning.

The phrase “Atlas of Creation” seems to have been chosen with a lot more prescience than was initially apparent.



Atlas, tolerance incarnate, has a lesson or two to teach us all



Comment, Opinion & Letters

Let us know your views: comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

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Scorpio

Why teddy bears should be in the Koran

“So there was this teacher, right? She was in Sudan, and, well, allowed a teddy bear in her class to be named after a pupil, and now she’s locked up with a crowd outside baying for blood!”

“Whoa man, that’s unreal. Hey, do you wanna see some cool Danish drawings?”

I admit, I almost laughed when the story first broke. After checking the calendar for April Fool’s, and staying sober for 24 hours before rereading the story, it finally sunk in that yes, an English teacher faced 40 lashings and 90 days behind bars for allowing her class to call a teddy bear Muhammed. Charged with insulting Islam and the Prophet, Gillian Gibbons now faces a jail term in a concealed location for her own safety.

That such a tiny, minuscule thing can get blown up to such proportions beggars belief. Manic crowds demanded her execution by firing squad. Government officials wanted a personal apology from Gordon Brown. Many linked her ‘blasphemy’ with a Western plot to overthrow the countries of Islam, one fluffy bear at a time. Reminders of last year’s cartoon scandal circled the internet feeding frenzy, woven together with references to the Satanic Verses, Israeli secret services and a fuzzy picture of a one-armed man entering a London subway.

For although the insanity in Sudan may seem to be on a different planet, there are some uncomfortable home truths about Islam in Britain today. A survey back in 2005 showed that the majority of British Muslims were in favour of introducing Sharia law (the one where atheism is a capital offence). Let

us not forget that a court in Saudi Arabia recently sentenced a woman to be lashed. She had been beaten and raped by a gang of 7 men. Her crime? Sitting with a man, not related to her, in a car.

More alarming still are the 65% of Muslims who believe that the 7/7 bombings in London were faked, set up by MI5 and framing innocent, law-abiding students of Islam as the perpetrators. This dangerous myth is based on a grainy CCTV picture of one of the bombers with his left arm behind his rucksack. Of course, the fact that the picture appeared on the net several days after the event, during which time anybody could have edited certain features, barely dents the conspiracy theorists. Similarly, the argument that the most sophisticated cover-up in history was exposed by one missing limb on a grainy picture falls flat on its face, especially in the light of the security

services’ blunders with terrorist suspects and Iraq’s “15-minute WMD’s”.

Although it is easier to get carried away in such charged debates, there are fortunately those who stand up for Islam for the peaceful philosophy it is meant to be. The reaction of the Muslim Council of Britain over the teddy bear rage has been positive, backing Mrs Gibbons and campaigning for a pardon. Also, despite the protests around the country, many Sudanese are sympathetic and even supportive of a teacher who desired to help children in an economically ravaged country gain a footing in life. We ourselves cannot let the incident fuel the fires of Islamophobia, nor further provoke extremism. The Islamic students of Imperial should stand together with the whole college to promote tolerance and understanding, both on campus and in all countries of the world.



Omar Hashmi

Pakistan, forever without God

What failures we have become. What a shame to cast over our sullen faces. Pakistan has now the most insulting of honours. She is the first nation in modern history where a leader has performed not one, but two coups to stay in power. Astonishingly, the second one was against his own government, judicial courts and the very systems he helped set up for the last eight years. All just to grapple on to power. Suicide? President Pervez Musharraf was not saving Pakistan from suicide, he has been helping it along. He has schemed and overpowered his way to become America’s only Godchild in the region.

Suicide? Pakistan has been killing itself since its very inception. It used to be the case that we saw new faces, but the same old corruption. Now it is the same faces and the same corruption! The fascist BNP alliance (by that I mean Benezir Butto, Nawaz Sharif and Pervez Musharraf, my God, even Nick Griffin as President is a Godsend compared to that lot) have bled the country dry. All of us hate all of them. Any remnant of loyalty comes from the corrupt bank role or the backward ties of tribal nepotism.

Bhutto looks half as young as the Queen, but has estimated assets of 1.5 billion dollars of Pakistan’s money. That is the Muslim Ummah’s (nation) laundered money - double the Queen’s riches stolen. Corrupt Nawaz not only severely weakened the national military, but sold off large amounts of the nation’s assets to foreign companies. While the fat cats fattened, the poor could not even afford a staple diet, nor get access to clean water and energy. All of them have raised the amount of interest re-payments to the IMF and World Bank, yet in Islam Mohammed (pbuh) said that this was tantamount to war with Allah! Fitting, then, for all of the leaders have pledged to fight the War on Terror harder – it seems they all enjoy the needless spilling of Muslim blood in this American crusade to shove a foreign Western mind-set and government down the throats of Muslim countries. Ahem, sorry, I meant

Liberal Interventionism.

I do not blame these leaders. I blame the system. Democracy in Pakistan is the system that has allowed us to throw the Qur’an behind our backs and legislate according to whatever we feel. Our leaders hold no Islamic policies. They only wish to sell out to foreign investment, drown in forbidden interest, sell the country’s military and nuclear independence and stand by at the killing of fellow Muslim nations, all in the name of “modernism” and globalisation. Nay, this is not progressive, it is tantamount to treason.

It is time for change! It is time to bring God, the Qur’an and the masses back into the running of a once great part of the Nation. Yes, part. For Pakistan is not a nation, it is a Wilayat – a state within a Country. From Indonesia to Spain there was once a unified government, before the modern Western powers artificially divided it. The chant was not Freedom or Liberty, it was something far better and more accepted by the people – La illa ha Ill Allah Mohammedan Rasul Allah – There is nothing worthy of worship but Allah and Mohammed (pbuh) is his Final Messenger.

If there is a God, does it not seem strange that he would not tell us who he is and how to live our lives? He did! And the Khilafah system, Islamic Law, was how he told us to run a government and society. When implemented, this ruling system was the most just. It had a religiously obligatory independent judiciary of Islamic scholars. An obligation of Shura (consultation of the elected leaders of the people) and a Khaleef – a leader bound at the neck by the rules of Islam that he must follow. The poor had a fair distribution of resources, religious minorities were protected, and the safety of the people was paramount. Then this system decayed and we found injustices everywhere. Then it was broken.

Now we have Godless corruption, tyranny, dictators, thieves, murderers and hypocrites! No wonder Pakistani soldiers raped and killed Bangladeshi Muslims in the Bangladesh Liberation War. What dogs we have become! In Pakistan, a petty thief is brutally pun-



Bush and Musharraf: America’s only godchild in the region.



Islamic nation: Best way forward for Pakistan

/// Now we have Godless corruption, tyranny, dictators, thieves, murderers and hypocrites. What dogs we have become! ///

ished, but the greatest ones hold the country to ransom.

No more! I cannot stand by without shouting from the hilltops. The obligation is clear!

For a country that so proudly boasts of its Islam, now is the time to implement it! An Islamic government for Pakistan, a unified Islamic government for all the Muslim nations! This is the only way to secure the running of the country. In a land where nobody can even queue, it is the Adhan (Islamic call to prayer) that calls entire society to stand in rows.

Each and every Muslim, if he cares about his people, must raise the call for this goal. It is a religious obligation to believe in Allah, to obey him, and to rule by what he has revealed. Each and every Muslim at Imperial must rally to this call. It is a religious obligation! And if those in the West want to see how a country should really be run, then open your eyes, ears and hearts. Talk to us, allow us to show you, and we will gladly and warmly calm your unjustified fears and apprehensions. God willing, you will find how just and liberating a true Islamic system can be.



A. Geek

Actually, let's not talk about God

Tempting though it is to wade into the sloths-wrestling-in-excrement show that is the Felix Comment Page God debate, I'm going to rise above it this week and hope that the magic of the Christmas break will bring a time of goodwill and peace where Matty and Richard can come together and just shut the fuck up. I will point out, though, that if I had to choose sides I certainly wouldn't want to be shoulder-to-shoulder with the blithering arsehole that wrote in last week, barely audible from seventy feet up on his arithmetical high horse. Dick.

No, instead I want to talk about the tossers I spent the week running into. The ones that use words like 'head-hunt' and 'reputation' with entirely straight faces. You know who you are. If you're reading this and you're not one of these people, then I don't know how you got this copy of Felix, but if you're ever in London then feel free to drop into Imperial and say hello. If you're an

Imperial student, then please don't lie to yourself. You're a smug tosser who's lapped up recent events.

You see, I managed to avoid covering our THES promotion a few weeks back by screwing my eyes shut and traveling to my happy place in Smurfland. This was made considerably harder by my gimp of a lecturer stumbling into a morning talk with the kind of "fuck you" smugness I normally associate with Jeremy Kyle or the United Nations Security Council. The sarcastic joke that "we don't care about the ratings, of course" made it even more skin-crawling.

Because the truth is that it's all you care about, and it's something I've always found a little weird. When we thought Britney Spears was attractive and spent Friday evenings at house parties listening to Franz Ferdinand and pretending we were somewhere else, things like THES were moderately important because applying to a shit university would gain you very little. In theory. I've got some bad news

for you, though. See, it turns out that if you decide to stay as a childish layabout fuckwit whilst at university, you'll actually still be one when you graduate. You're at Imperial now, everyone. Time to wake up and smell the inadequacy.

Not long after the aforementioned senior tutor pantomime, a friend of mine related the story of a "Skills Workshop" she had attended that she promised me was a "head hunt". Why else would they stage it at Imperial. Of course. The "head hunting" day had been open to all years, mind you, and largely involved sitting through PowerPoint lectures, presumably the kind that makes you want to gnaw off various extremities.

I'm not sure what skills were leant, but I do know that there haven't been any job offers yet; I can only assume this is because the attendees were exactly the kind of idiots that think an activity day is an interview in disguise, leaving the organisers to fend off the shambling, overeager gits with free pens.

My point – if there's one still left after ten weeks of ridiculous courseworks, this bloody comment section and spats of high blood pressure – is this: Imperial is not a genius factory. Its ranking was obtained by a small minority working extremely hard, and another small minority manipulating statistics with twice as much effort. If you are coming to the close of your first term here having done nothing and not caring, then don't expect to graduate at the same level as everyone else. You didn't win the big number five rating – the buildings, faculties and facilities did.

The good news is that it means you have plenty of room to become genuinely good graduates. But if you think PowerPoint-giving suits are going to assume you're competent as-is, think again, because employers do look past the university section on a CV, and AAB at A-Level won't be enough to convince them you're a worthy addition to the human race.

Merry Christmas, everyone. Don't work too hard this holiday.



Batul Kaj

Don't call them CV monkeys!

Despite its crudeness, James Wang's article from a couple of weeks ago did flag up some truths. Yes, year rep elections are a popularity contest and yes, manifestos are often quite similar between candidates. But, if you ask me, neither is a bad thing, especially when it comes to year rep elections.

Firstly, how many of you actually know what a year rep's job is? James, do you? I'm guessing not, because if you did, you would have realised that in fact being 'approachable' and 'able to address concerns' are possibly the

two most important qualities a year rep candidate should possess. Sure, you could argue that if someone writes those things in a manifesto, it doesn't make them true... but then I guess the only way to get around that would be to know the person. Do you agree that popularity is a measure of how many people know you?

And yes, the manifestos all looked the same... but all of the candidates were standing for the same position, i.e. they were all trying to prove themselves ideal for the same role. Any one of them could have made promises about new vending machines and

Queen's Tower-related adventures, but they would have been totally irrelevant and would in fact have demonstrated a complete lack of understanding of what the job entails.

What I really must object to though, is the use of the phrase 'CV monkeys'. People are so quick to accuse candidates of 'only doing it for the CV' but that's like saying 'you're only doing Medicine at Imperial so that you can get a job'. It's daft. If someone wants to run for a position, let them – even if they're doing it for CV points, they still might be good at it, and as a voter, that should be the most important thing.

If you're worried about them getting ahead of you in the CV game, nobody's stopping you from standing yourself.

To really make these elections worthwhile, the ball is in the voters' court. If you want to make the right decision, make the effort to find out what it means to be a year rep and then make the effort to find out which candidates really can deliver what they say they will. (Or else, don't cry about spamming when they try to tell you about it themselves.)

And please, for God's sake, demonstrate how well we've evolved by avoiding the 'She pretty. Me vote' strategy.



Hadeed Khalid

Final word on the God debate. Maybe

This is in reply to Stefan Olsson Robbie's Let's talk about God, some more. Trying to explain the blatantly obvious 'cause and effect' resulting from regular rituals with your lab partner, girlfriend and friends etcetera is definitely not the way to justify the impact you have on your life, because firstly the commonplaceness of these rituals gives them zero weightage.

Secondly, unless you believe in self-worth as defined only by the ability to make juvenile yet caustic comments like "heard of Pythagoras?" or emulate a dead, albeit famous mathematician from a bygone era (and in either or both of these cases you are a lost cause and may not continue reading) your ability to send a rebuttal in a self-consciously victorious manner to Richard realizes the existence of an Entity outside the confines of time, space and all forms of human reasoning as well as spatial and temporal existence as we know them. This is because your ability to reason is not ultimately your doing. Time started for you only after you were miraculously fashioned from

the 'discharge' of your parents and later on became specialized enough to reason about everything. And that in itself should suffice to toss out any Darwin/Evolution hogwash that might have entered your thoughts.

God made you, and your mother and father were just a means. Nothing after time is self-triggered except God, who exists before time and is a part of the past, future and present at the same moment in 'time' as we see it. He controls everything that you can possibly imagine as well as things beyond your imagination. And this holistic 'cause and effect', unlike your simplistic examples, is the real 'cause and effect' that people like yourself don't understand. That is what is actually implied by "life is pointless without God". It's pointless in the holistic sense, and not in the immediate sense as you have considered it.

Also, an obvious implication of "big dude in the sky" or "He will appreciate that you like Him, tried to create!" is that you believe, however little, that there may be a certain entity out there. And that just means that at a certain level, even you are a believer.

Letter to Felix

8 months on and the 'temporary' marquee is still there

Dear Felix,

Last year there was a bit of a hoo-hah about College trying to build semi-permanent offices on a third of Queen's Lawn and trying to slip it through planning permission without us noticing. This was obviously stopped with the help of Felix, but then in April we were given a huge tent which covers 95% of the Lawn. In case anyone hasn't noticed, it is still there. Queen's Lawn should really be renamed seeing as the grass is by now slightly dead and will need to be completely turf if the tent ever leaves.

We expect to see giant marquees for a few weeks over the year for Summer Balls, Fresher's events, Careers fairs etc; but for 8 months solid and with no end in sight? I don't remember being given a referendum on this issue like on the NUS, and I certainly don't understand why College thinks it can get away with it, considering the backlash

over previous plans. They had originally planned on having one third of the Lawn taken up with offices, so where had they thought to put this marquee? If the plans hadn't included the tent before, why did they immediately after the planning rejection?

French students by now would probably have torched the Rector's house and joined with the transport unions to bring down the city in wildcat strikes, but we just sit on the benches under the Queen's Tower and comment on the lack of view towards the library.

Yours Faithfully,

Tom Culley

The Editor, Tom Roberts, responds:

In case you missed it somehow, you'll see that on page 2 there's a short picture story about this very topic. Thankfully the marquee will finally be coming down in the next few weeks.

Excuse me whilst I deviate from the topic slightly, but whilst I've got your attention it's time to say Happy Christmas from everyone at Felix and we'll see you in the New Year!



Ammar Waraich

Teddy bears and extremists

I am so tired of teddy bears, cartoons and a handful of extremists always having the ultimate say about the faith and identity of a third of the world's population.

Now, I don't want to get into another one of Felix's annual 'debates' on Islam or religion, nor do I want to prance around making arguments about freedom of speech or naming teddy bears. As we all know, a kind and friendly teacher who wanted only good things for Sudan and its people listened to some kids and named a teddy bear Muhammad... BIG DEAL!

It is pretty obvious that the Sudanese

are in the wrong in this farce and if you honestly think that they have the support of any more than 0.0001% of the Muslim population then you must genuinely think that we are insane (and even that support is probably from politically motivated, frustrated people who blame the West for everything – e.g. the small crowds who protested in Sudan). Additionally, it is evident that this whole incident seemed to Khartoum to be a once-in-a-blue-moon golden opportunity to get its own back for the criticism in Darfur, whilst also trying to get the sympathy of other Muslim countries across the Middle East against 'the West' by using their

religion as the rallying call. Sadly for Sudan though, they failed miserably on both accounts and hugely embarrassed themselves!

It saddens me no end to actually have to state that as a Muslim, I was not in the least bit offended by Mrs Gibbons. But to be honest, if by now you have not been able to see past the media's cherry-picked reporting then no matter what I say, it probably won't make any difference to you. However, I am frustrated by not having a positive voice for my beliefs on campus or in society. To this end, I have decided to actively make myself available to anyone who wants to talk to me to about

why I believe that there is only one unseen God, why I believe that Muhammad was the final messenger of God, and hence why I believe that Islam is the final divine revelation, the ultimate truth. Therefore, if you genuinely want to learn about Islam, get in touch with me (aaw204@ic.ac.uk) and depending on your enthusiasm, I may invite you to a free lunch where we can go through the noble Quran together, the final word of God. Otherwise, look out for the Islamic Awareness stall I will be starting next term where a few of us will be available to take any questions you may have; which will hopefully be a weekly endeavour.



Gilead Amit

Consistency in the use of a typewriter

Today, I am writing to you from a typewriter. An off-off-grey, heavy, noisy, A3-sized electrical typewriter with badly-labelled keys and an electrical safety sticker that is worryingly out of date. I found this plastic monstrosity out on the street the other day, and, sucker that I am for anything second-hand (practicality and condition are not factors that influence me in the slightest), brought it home. I was able to get it to work without too much effort, and, highly pleased with myself, promptly stuck it under my bed. Not wanting to admit to myself that the whole experience was a total waste of effort, I brought it out and decided to write something on it. And this seemed as good a thing as any.

It is a weird sensation, typing on a typewriter – one I've had often before, and, which I have to admit, I like enormously. It is hard though. Very hard. Not because of any purely mechanical difficulties, but rather due to considerable mental ones. We are all so used to the immense reformatting powers of Microsoft Word that it is almost impossible to write more than two consecutive coherent sentences without making some terrible mistake. Any sentence on a word processor is, for me, a terrifying linguistic adventure – I have no idea where the nearest verb will be, whether or not I will be able to work



A glorious typewriter moments before spewing out glorious literature

that polysyllabic adjective in before the comma, or if the sentence will run out of steam before I can get to the end. More importantly, of course, it doesn't matter. Should I make a mistake, it can be corrected in less time than it took to write the thing in the first place. Not the case with a typewriter.

Coherence of thought is essential if you want to produce a neat-looking document at the end (and let's face it, a roll of paper sticking out of a typewriter, much as is happening to me now, is cool. Or not, of course; as you

wish), and that is a skill that I seem to have lost. I now speak like I type on the computer. I launch myself into sentences having no earthly idea how they will finish, being used to the safety net a computer always affords.

It has taken me more time to write this than it would usually. As a matter of fact, it hasn't. I thought it would, as the time needed between sentences to map out those coming up is far, far longer. At the same time, though, the inability to go back spurs you onwards, much like Cortez's burning of his

ships forced his men deeper into unexplored territory. My thoughts have now become more coherent. Granted, they may well be less interesting; less eloquent; less amusing; less relevant; but they are more refreshing to write. I think everyone should be forced to write on a typewriter once in a while; if only to prove to them their dependence on the backspace key and a mouse, but more fundamentally, to give to their thought processes and their speech a consistency which is gradually being lost.



Boyang Xia

Dawkins' approach to Christmas

In a few weeks time the most sacred holiday of Western capitalism will take place: Christmas. For Christians and Muslims to whom this pagan festival is unknown: Christmas celebrates the birth of Baby Jesus (distinctly different from the crucified God Jesus in hair, eye and skin colour, race, gender and texture). Its origin is shrouded in clouds of mystery and tax-free donated televangelism.

Dawkins, using the same arguments as in his book *The God Delusion*, points out that Christmas is not religious as no holy books prescribe the celebration of this special day, in the same way as our morality is not derived from religions as our modern day ethical standards differs vastly from those in the Biblical/Koranic times.

In chapter 7, Dawkins points out, that "we do not – even the religious among us – ground our morality Christmas in

holy books." (What appears to be far-fetchedly confusing, makes a hell of a lot more sense after being brainwashed by the anteceding chapters).

Well, how can we then understand the origins of Christmas without the religious context which we are brought up by our evil indoctrinating parents to believe in?

I suppose we might be able to find the answer after careful studies of holidays in general. Holidays seem to be globally widespread and a common trait of human societies. Their main function is to make people rest and do nothing, an inactivity which social mammals spend a great share of their time on.

They prefer to do so in groups which enhances the unproductivity of this useless idleness far more than a single individual is able to. For this purpose they waste huge amounts of resources on building and decorating decadent

architecture, like churches, in which they celebrate holidays. Churches, by the way, are not religious institutions, as Dawkins powerfully demonstrated, because their modern form and function differs too much from the Biblical context.

So, what is the final conclusion from our reasoning? Christmas – the climax in a perpetual boring ritual of doing nothing? Well, that's its primary Nature-intended function. Therefore, if you are experiencing shopping stress now and preparing yourself mentally for the pain of meeting people and actually being nice to them because some theologians and parents told you to do so, think about Christmas' genuine meaning.

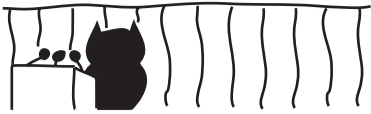
Take some time, sit down in a silent place, make yourself comfortable, day-dream and if you are pretentious, contemplate the meaninglessness of your life.

Sometime you'll die, heading into the darkest nothingness beyond the borders of the universe and leaving the world as a decomposing body; unless you donate it to science, in which case you end up as pickled slices in collections or as toys in the hands of medics (visualise that at dinner). But before that happens, you live. And have a happy life.

Merry Christmas.

The columnist is the last of the Mohists (pun intended). He believes in a personal God, in universal love and peace.

Prof. Richard Dawkins never gave his approval to the opinions expressed in this article, although he admitted privately (without authenticity) the logical fallacies I point out here. He also said he will deny this fiercely in public (again, without authenticity).



Li-Teck Lau
Politics Editor

There's a whole Jonswop spectrum of news filling these two pages this week, from domestic debates over freedom of speech at university unions to anonymous commentary on the history of the Taiwan straits issue, to, well, blasphemy in Africa.

The White House looked red faced as the government in Iran welcomed a new American Intelligence report concluding not only that there is no evidence the Middle Eastern nation has intentions of developing nuclear weapons, but that it would be able to do so until at least 2010. This runs contradictory to the President's line that Iran poses a very real and present danger to international security.

16 people have been killed in clashes in Kenya running up to December elections in Africa's largest economy. President Mwai Kibaki is seeking reelection but is neck and neck in the polls with rival Raila Odinga. Party rallies have been marred by violence.

Eight were shot dead in the American state of Nebraska in a busy shopping mall as the festive shopping season gets truly underway. The 19 year old gunman rampaged through the isles wounding five others before turning the gun on himself. This is the third high profile gun mass murder in the country this year.

President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation has an approval rating of 70% according to a new independent opinion poll. Putin, who is unable to run for a third term as president, will instead lead the United Russia Party by standing in the coming elections for the role of Prime Minister. 22% of those surveyed felt it would be a positive move should Mr Putin attempt to change the constitution.

Finally, Knut, the celebrity polar bear and most famous resident of Berlin Zoo, celebrated his first birthday this week. The little fur ball had received death threats from animal rights campaigners who claimed that he should not have survived when his mother was killed in natural circumstances.

However the old time dimension things works, where I am, it's really early in the morning, so good bye from Felix Politics and merry secular Christmas.



Knut the polar bear is 1 year old

Taiwan: not quite a country

An anonymous commentary on Taiwan's place in the international community



China threatens that any declaration of independence by the rogue province of Taiwan will lead to military intervention

With the comments and politics sections of this paper filled with discussions and debates about the USA, Iraq, Afghanistan, Middle East worries, religion and likes of such, I thought that this paper could use a new issue to debate about, and given the composition of the university population, I can see potential in bringing up an issue close to many people's heart. The Taiwan-China issue.

There I said it. The poignant point that some of us are careful to tread around, and also an issue that most are blatantly ignorant and unaware about. Consider the following issues: are you aware that on the other side of this planet, there is an informal war that has dragged on for more than 50 years, other than North and South Korea, and has been evaluated to be a potential trigger point for World War III?

Did you know that your countries' leaders (Bush, Brown, Sarkozy, Putin) don't recognize Taiwan as a country (as much as Palestine), despite the general public identifying the Taiwan as a 'country'?

Ever wondered why in the international events, like the Olympics and World Baseball Cup, there's a team named "Chinese Taipei"?

Why there is such a big fuss on Facebook with names like "Fuck! There is only one CHINA, Taiwan will be one part of CHINA forever"

These ridiculous facts come from an intriguing incident on what happened to China after the second world war, which has been overshadowed in the West by the Cold War. Ok let me set the scene here for you. It's 1945, the Republic of China, just crawled it's way out of the ravages which the Japanese brought on in Asia, the economy's in a disastrous state, the government can only console themselves with having stuck with the winning side of the War, in which Japan ceded/returned the island of Taiwan back to the Chinese. The government now has a prominent

permanent seat on the UN, which it founded.

However, there is change going on inside China, the government is losing touch with the peasant community, who are gradually looking toward Communism as a solution to their disastrous state (eight years of war, plus widening wealth gap and bad government). From there starts another war – the Chinese civil war, which results in the National government receding to the island of Taiwan with the lead of Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang Kai-shek relocates the government temporarily in Taipei, vowing to liberate the Mainland in the future. Meanwhile Mao Zedong establishes the People's Republic

of China, vowing to liberate Taiwan in the future. This is 1949.

Politically the deadlock has been there since, now Communist China states that Taiwan is a rebel province that it will reunify in the future by all means, hence the 800 or so missiles pointing at Taipei. And the constitution of the Republic of China (now on, and commonly referred as, Taiwan) still claims it's boundaries to include the Mainland, with Nanjing as it's capital. The independence camp on Taiwan would like that change to reflect the reality, but China states that would be seen as an act of the declaration of independence which will trigger war. So the saber-rattling goes on.



President Hu of the Peoples' Republic of China is committed to a one China

The Taiwanese population doesn't want war. But they don't want to be 'part of China' – communism or the governing style in China just doesn't appeal to the democracy indulged Taiwanese. Despite being ethnically Chinese, they feel a detachment to the China across the straits, with a different writing system, and culture revolution, and most prominently the hostile threats and bullying that China issues on a regularly basis. Last Olympics, the Chinese Taipei Team (naming forced upon the IOC by China) won their first gold medal, but they weren't allowed to play nor display their 'national' flag nor anthem. The 23 million people of Taiwan (greater than the population of Australia) aren't affiliated to the World Health Organization, so during the SARS influenza, were outside the WHO monitoring system. And of course they're not represented in the UN.

Since 1979, when Nixon normalised relations with China to 'help ease international tensions' (Big market? Iraq and oil is only a repetition of history), countries willing to recognise China, had to unrecognise the Republic of China on Taiwan, basically saying, "you can only be friends with me or him, not both - if you are not with us you're against us". Hence UK doesn't officially see Taiwan independent entity, where many of us would understand differently.

As the economic importance and military muscle of China grows, it would be interesting to see how this thorny issue is resolved. As the nationalism sentiment grows with the economy of China, most Chinese will fervently defend China's claim of Taiwan, as fiercely as they claim Tibet. Ask any Chinese person around you to get their view! Or a Taiwanese for that matter!

"Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory. The greatest threat to peace in the Taiwan Straits is from the separatist activities by the 'Taiwan independence' forces." Chinese President Hu Jintao, 2003.

The limits of freedom of speech

Two controversial speakers' at the Oxford Union spark protests, mud slinging and finger pointing

Abioye Oyetunji

If we believe the media, in the past few weeks Britain has been embroiled in a great debate on freedom of speech. The Oxford Union, holding a forum on just this issue decided to invite BNP leader Nick Griffin and Holocaust-denying historian David Irving to speak. According to proponents of this decision, allowing these men to speak despite protests was itself promotion of free speech. For its detractors it was legitimising the views of two dangerous men, capable of causing great damage in the minds of the public.

Both arguments are, of course, ludicrous. Worse, the actual question of freedom of speech was completely ignored. The Oxford Union was not championing freedom of speech or even trying to have an informed debate on it; it was purposefully courting controversy for publicity's sake. While both men have endured attempts by others to limit their freedom of expression, this does not make them experts on the topic any more than OJ Simpson is an expert on the American judicial system.

Furthermore, freedom of speech is distinct from provision of platform and so the very invitation itself was not really an ideological promotion of the cause at all. Just because we accept these men's right to say what they want does not mean we have to listen or hand them a megaphone. The protesters, on the other hand mistook an invitation to speak at a forum for an endorsement, reasoning that a sensible person, who previously found racism and anti-Semitism repugnant, would be converted to a St. George's flag-waving skinhead because the Oxford Union invited a couple of old bigots to an event where they were basically subjected to being called moronic by



David Irving, the historian who questions the facts of the Holocaust in Germany, was invited to speak at the Oxford Union

kids a fraction of their age. Rather, the most effective promotion for their views came on the night when a modern-day lynch mob of Oxford students called for the death – I kid you not, death – of the head of the Oxford Union. By comparison, Griffin and Irvin could not help but look like a pair of reasonable chaps.

This was all very entertaining but actual questions about an individual's freedom to let their views be known without fear of repercussion were neither asked nor answered. We live in a country where people can still be prosecuted for certain views and utterances, and as a libertarian I find this worthy, perhaps, of at least a little bit of

public discourse. Within Britain you are allowed to speak your mind provided you are not saying certain things; inciting certain types of hatred (some forms of "hatred" are more acceptable than others, you see), defamation and "encouragement of terrorism" are a few. Of course, some limitations will always be necessary to keep order, the

textbook example being not allowing a person to shout "fire" in a crowded theatre. However, these limitations should be constrained to speech that has less to do with expression of opinion and more to do with purposeful attempts to cause illegal events. This would do away with the absurd "hate speech" laws that have dogged Griffin and Irving and also limit the definition of "encouragement of terrorism" to direct instructions or requests for illegal acts rather than mere expression of support for terrorists (see: Samina Malik).

It all comes down to the definition of liberty of speech and why it is important. First it is not about freedom of speech per se, but rather the freedom to state one's opinion. To limit this, in any way, is not just unforgivably depriving a person of liberty but a dangerous slippery slope to a state of thought control where the government gets to decide which opinions are bad and which are good.

As countries go, however, the UK is no China. Most of Europe is much worse, with Holocaust-denying laws, limitations on criticism of government and treason laws being commonly found. The United States, guided by their constitution can often be a shining beacon of light on this topic; their ACLU defends everyone from neo-Nazis to paedophile-rights groups. However, one questions the fair application of the freedom principle when consideration is made of Joe McCarthy's anti-communist drive and recent talk of illegalising burning the Stars and Stripes. Indeed, my libertarian rant must be tempered in recognition of Britain's relative progress, but nonetheless I cannot help but wish for a more intelligent discussion than meaningless posturing over an even-more meaningless event at the Oxford Union.

Kadhimi on Gillian Gibbons and that teddy



Ms Gibbons was released from custody after a week long fiasco involving blasphemy, cuddly toys and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom



Kadhim Shubber

It seems that wherever I look, I cannot escape conflict between Westerners and persons of Muslim faith.

Again the world's beady eyes are on Sudan but instead of focusing on the dreadful humanitarian crisis that is still ongoing, I find that our gaze is being shifted from Darfur to Khartoum, where Liverpoolian Gillian Gibbons has been jailed for insulting the Muslim faith.

She allowed her primary school class to name a teddy bear Muhammad. This was interpreted as an insult against Is-

lam and the court recognizing the immaterial nature of this insult sentenced her to 15 days in prison followed by deportation. Soon after the conviction, there were angry demonstrations in the capital Khartoum calling for her execution.

Certainly the demonstrations were organized by extremists in a very successful attempt to whip up anti-Western sentiment. However the views of the mob are certainly not consistent with the general opinions of Sudanese people, the lenient sentencing (the maximum is 6 months in prison, 40 lashes and a fine) and the protection

given to Gillian Gibbons (she was held in a secret location until her term, was completed) serve as evidence of this.

There is no doubt that Gillian Gibbons did not intend to cause offence to anybody and she must be commended for her charitable work in Sudan, however she certainly should not have allowed her class to name the bear Muhammad. It displays a lack of foresight that is dangerous in the 21st century, as we've seen from these events. What is most interesting about this situation is the inability of Western nations to respect the sovereignty of African nations or the independence of their

judiciary. An independent judiciary is one of the pillars of democracy that Western nations attempt to spread around the world, yet we are so quick to trample upon this independence. The actions of Conservatives Sayeeda Warsi and Nazir Ahmed are hypocritical at best and at worst an attempt to use the misery of a British citizen for publicity.

By traveling to Sudan in an effort to circumvent the legal process there, these two peers have displayed an arrogant disregard for the laws of independent nations but also they have shown that scoring political points is

more important than bringing peace to Darfur. After writing this article, Gillian Gibbons was released.

She had spent 8 days in detention however she did not in fact spend any time inside a jail. Her experience was described as 'a shock' but she was well treated. Correspondents are describing the outcome as leaving President al-Bashir of Sudan red-faced and embarrassed.

I feel that it is we in the UK who should be embarrassed, at our seeming inability to treat the African continent with anything but Imperialistic arrogance.



$$-\frac{\hbar^2}{2m} \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial x^2} + \psi(x)V(x) = E \psi(x)$$

Science

Science Editor – Ed Henley

science.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Competition! Know your science?

We've extended the deadline to 13:00 next Thursday, 13th December, so have a go if you think you're good!

Edmund Henley
Science Editor

Whilst excavating the archives, we unearthed some gleaming nuggets from this term's Felix Science articles. We've smelted them down into some brain-teasers, which might test your mettle, but do have a go – we've got some great prizes, courtesy of New Scientist.

1st prize: 6 month subscription to New Scientist

2nd prize: 2 books of Q&A from New Scientist's 'Last Word' column & a USB stick

3rd prize: 1 'Last Word' Q&A book & a USB stick

1) Physicists at Imperial's Centre for Cold Matter study Bose-Einstein condensates, splitting the cloud of cold atoms up using a gold-plated what?

A: Scalpel

B: Silicon chip

C: Sandwich

2) What is the name of ESA's mission, intended to tell us more about how to deflect asteroids on threatening trajectories by actually colliding with one?

A: Impacta

B: Rosetta

C: Don Quijote

3) The Island Rule, invoked to explain the size of mammals on islands, claims larger animals shrink as they evolve and smaller ones grow. However, in a recent paper, this rule has been cast in doubt. What method did the authors employ to reach this conclusion?

A: They performed a meta-analysis of papers on island mammal sizes

B: They conducted extensive interviews with the cast of 'Lost'

C: They studied fossils of Homo Florensis, a species of mini-people nicknamed "Hobbits"

4) Scientists from the University of New Mexico recently looked for evidence of human oestrus, a visible state of female fertility. Whom did they use as ideal test-subjects?

A: Fashion students

B: Dinner ladies

C: Lap dancers

5) Researchers from the University of Bradford have studied Incan ritual sacrifices of children using:

A: Stable isotopes from samples of the victims' hair

B: DNA traces left on dried llama meat fed to the children on their pilgrimage

C: Peruvian re-enactors and Oujisitics

6) Norwegian scientists studying the interplay between herbal medicines and modern drug treatments have found low awareness of the potential interference caused by natural remedies. One example, St John's Wort, can reduce the effect of birth control pills for one. But what else does it affect?

A: Valerian

B: Viagra

C: Vicks

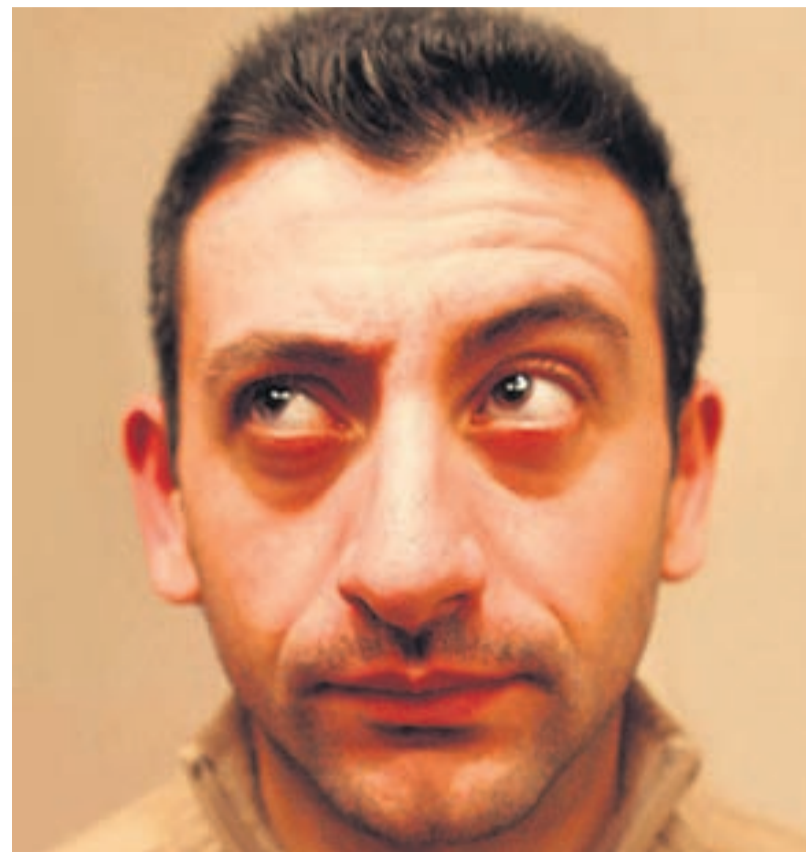
7) In August, (Dr.) Brian May was awarded a Ph.D. by Imperial for his study of zodiacal dust. But where did he take his measurements?

A: In a mountaintop hut in Tenerife


B: On the roof of Buckingham Palace

C: In the Mauna Kea observatory, Hawaii

The rules: The most correct submissions received by 13:00 on Thursday 13th December (next week!) to science.felix@imperial.ac.uk will be entered into the prize-draw. Submissions should be in the form question number - answer letter. E.g. 8 - C. Winners will be informed by email. Clue for those who've already had a go: check the wording & try again – you made a few mistakes!



Confused? It's tricky, but the prizes are worth some head-scratching...



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The Imperial College Hockey Club Calendar is back!



This year sees the return of the naked calendar with members of the Hockey Club bearing all for a great cause (our club!). Calendars are on sale now, either on the Hockey pages of the union website or email IC.Hockey@imperial.ac.uk to buy one. They cost £5 and will make a great Christmas presents, even for granny.

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Rosie Grayburn
Arts Editor

I think we all need a holiday. How convenient that we now have a Christmas break to enjoy. 'Tis definitely the season to be jolly; but also the season to eat your own weight in turkey, mince pies and other dried-fruit containing foodstuffs. This is the part of Christmas I like best. For at least 5 days, any diet should be put on hold or, favourably, thrown out of the window entirely. Diets are stupid. Eat what you bloody like.

Christians say we have something to celebrate at this time of year, and although I think the majority of modern society has forgotten the source of our festivities, we should keep in mind why we have this holiday in the first place.

I was listening to the IC Choir performing *Messiah* last Friday and it inspired me to think how much we have to owe to people's beliefs. So much amazing art and music was created because people believe so fervently in something unknown or unsure. This is demonstrated in the *Messiah* and also in the *Renaissance Siena* exhibition I went to see at the National Gallery, which is reviewed in these pages.

So, at Christmas when the carols and cards come out of the cupboard, we let so much wonderful art into our lives and homes without realising it (with the exception of the rendition of "On the 12th Day of Christmas, your mum got from me..." by my boyfriend's flatmate).

I am surprised this year to see the return of the 'traditional' Christmas in popular fashion. Shop windows, adverts and decorations seem to have erred away from the glitzy silvers and blues, and returned to the much-loved reds, greens and golds.

I have tried to stick to this theme throughout this Christmas bumper edition. Opposite is the *Stanzas for Students* - a real Christmas classic! It has everything a Christmas poem could wish for - candy sticks, fat Saint Nick and stockings. It has some wonderful rhythms and rhymes in it so please, please take the opportunity of reading it aloud! I'm sure your lecturer would love to hear a Christmas addition to his/her material when you decide to perform it mid-lecture.

There have been so many fabulous events going on around college recently. Mtsoc's fabulous *Winter Revue* is reviewed on the next page.

I attended the ICSO concert a couple of weeks back. The obvious highlight was the soloist, Lukas Medlam performing Barber's *Violin Concerto* - edge of your seat, look-how-fast-his-fingers-go stuff. The other pieces were very atmospheric and inspiring also. The concert was packed as usual and the quality of playing was superb. If you haven't seen our Symphony Orchestra's concerts, make the time to go along to their Spring term offering. You will not be disappointed.

We have been sending writers all across London this term to see new plays, exhibitions and etc. If you want to get your ore in, please get in touch!

What a load of pantaloons!

Rosie Grayburn interviews Panto Legend, David Phipps-Davis and his 48G bra

What could be more Christmassy than bringing one of the Great British, gender-swapping traditions, The Panto Dame, to the Arts pages! David Phipps-Davis is a talented singer, director, drag-artist and panto-dame. He has been putting on a corset and fabulously flamboyant outfits for years for our amusement in roles such as Widow Twankey and the Queen of Hearts. Here he is with some make-up tips for the boys and massive tits for the girls: Enjoy!

What pantomime are you in currently?

I am currently appearing in *Cinderella* at The Camberley Theatre in Surrey. I am one of the Ugly Sisters - Vicky Hardup. My sister, Antony Stuart-Hicks, is called Lauren Hardup (she after Catherine Tate, me after Little Britain). This is the second time Antony and I have been sisters, though we also appeared together as the Queen of Hearts and the Mad Hatter in *Alice in Wonderland*.

What is your favourite part of doing pantomime?

The audience involvement - as soon as we enter, the audience are booing and hissing. In our current show when we get Cinderella to rip up her ticket to the ball, they want our blood! There's nothing like it!

Who would your ideal Buttons be?

Buttons is a hard role because you have to be funny but also the audience have to believe that you really love Cinderella,

but not in a pervy way. When I was a kid I saw Rolf Harris do it twice and he was perfect.

Who do you model yourself on when you're playing an Ugly Sister?

I have seen at least one panto every year since I was three and I have seen a lot of Ugly Sisters and Wicked Queens to steal ideas from. I can't think of any-one particular I model my Ugly Sister on, but I know my ten years as a drag-artist have helped.

What is your favourite Panto of all time?

Although I love playing an Ugly Sister and working with Antony in *Cinderella*, I also love doing solo dame. Last year I appeared as Widow Twankey in *Aladdin* at the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone, and that was a lot of fun.

I suppose every dame's dream is playing Mother Goose. It's the lead role - the Hamlet of dames!

How long does it take you to get into costume?

About half an hour, though we have to keep getting in and out of costume. This year we have ten costume changes!

And finally: lace or silk panties?

Silk.

Bra size?

48G - more like a couple of buckets on a bit of string than a bra.

And any make-up tips for our readers?

Subtlety. Always subtlety. Seriously. Try as much stuff as you can and find what works for you. Antony uses water-based but that sweats off me so I use a combination of grease and powder - and have a very strict skin care regime or I'd end up looking like Tuntankhamen.

Above right, David with his Ugly Sister. David (pictured left) is directing the Mtsoc Spring show.



Student Art In Focus – Decent Art!?

This week: *Clandestine Beauty* by Axl Rose. I think we may have found a winner!



Entitled *Clandestine Beauty*, this piece of art photography is one of the few surviving works of my fellow band mate, Axl Rose, before his foray into the work of rock music.

Although we can only see her eyes, it is clear that the girl beneath the balaclava is gorgeous, but she hides this - her way of refuting the superficiality of physical beauty and emphasising the fact there is way more to life.

The turquoise of her make-up is designed to calm away the troubles of all whom behold her.

The red of the ribbon is love's triumph over hate and terror (brought to mind by the mask).

But perhaps the most important element is the door in the background suggesting an escape; the horrors of today's society are enough to make anyone take flight.

This week's artistic analysis was brought to you by Saul Hudson of Guns 'N Roses fame. Slash, as he is better known, is now lead guitarist of Velvet Revolver and has recently published his autobiography *Slash: The Autobiography*.

When he is not playing his guitar, he spends his time wishing he were a better drummer and remembering to close the fridge door. Congratulations to Slash who is now fifteen months clean! Don't do heroin. Or any other substances. Ok?

If you want to see some equally decent art, please send it in to the usual address (arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk) and we shall use our specially sculpted dodo-bone fine-tooth comb to pick it apart to tell you what it really means.

Stanzas for Students: Xmas Remix

'Twas the night before printing, and all through the Felix office you could here the Arts Editor cursing at the Stanzas page, fighting for some Christmas inspiration. This week: **'Twas the night before Christmas**



With a suitably seasonal theme, we end this term with a wonderful poem by American poet Clement Clarke Moore. He is best known for this poem, which really gets you in the mood for a good old session in front of a log fire with a pan of mulled wine and a thick, woolly jumper.

If you don't know how to create the nectar that is mulled wine, please follow the recipe below;

Pour one bottle of red wine into a large saucepan with 1 orange (halved), 60g sugar, 1 cinnamon stick, grated nutmeg and a dried bay leaf.

Heat until the sugar has dissolved. Add more sugar if you want it sweeter.

Take it off the heat and add 60 ml gin, but only if you really want to... this bit is optional!

Ladle into glasses/mugs/mouths and enjoy.

Open Felix at the Arts pages and read 'Twas the night before Christmas...

'Twas the night before Christmas,
when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not
even a mouse.

The stockings were hung by the
chimney with care,
In hopes that St Nicholas soon
would be there.

The children were nestled all
snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums
danced in their heads.

And mamma in her 'kerchief, and
I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a
long winter's nap.

When out on the lawn there arose
such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what
was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a
flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw
up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the
new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to ob-
jects below.

When, what to my wondering
eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight
tiny reindeer.

With a little old driver, so lively
and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St
Nick.

More rapid than eagles his cours-
ers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted,
and called them by name!

"Now Dasher! now, Dancer! now,
Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! on, on
Donner and Blitzen!

To the top of the porch! to the top
of the wall!
Now dash away! Dash away!
Dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild
hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obsta-
cle, mount to the sky.

So up to the house-top the cours-
ers they flew,

With the sleigh full of Toys, and St
Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard
on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each
little hoof.

As I drew in my head, and was
turning around,
Down the chimney St Nicholas
came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his
head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished
with ashes and soot.

A bundle of Toys he had flung on
his back,
And he looked like a peddler, just
opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! his
dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his
nose like a cherry!

His droll little mouth was drawn
up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as
white as the snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight
in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his

head like a wreath.

He had a broad face and a little
round belly,
That shook when he laughed,
like a bowlful of jelly!

He was chubby and plump, a
right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him,
in spite of myself!

A wink of his eye and a twist of
his head,
Soon gave me to know I had
nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went
straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then
turned with a jerk.

And laying his finger aside of
his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chim-
ney he rose!

He sprang to his sleigh, to his
team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the
down of a thistle.

But I heard him exclaim, 'ere he
drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to
all a good-night!"



London gets the leftovers again

Emily Wilson strikes again. This time, she tears apart the *Turner Prize: Retrospective* exhibition at the Tate Britain. The curating was rubbish, but the art wasn't too bad. (Those pictures are making me hungry)

The notorious Turner Prize is awarded annually to a young British conceptual artist by the Tate Gallery. Every year the shortlisted artists' work are shown in Tate Britain, the exception to the rule, of course, being this year. This year the Turner Prize has been shipped off to Tate Liverpool, since Liverpool is the so-called "European Capital of Culture" for 2008. So why is the 2007 Turner Prize in Liverpool and not the 2008 Turner Prize? God only knows. But to make up for the London absence of Turner Prize-osity, the good people at Tate offer us *Turner Prize: A Retrospective*. This is an exciting opportunity to see some of the works that have earned their artists the Turner Prize in previous years. Hurrah!

I will tell you right now that you need to have some background knowledge of the Turner Prize before you walk through the door, because Tate Britain isn't going to help you. Once you've forked out £6 to get into the exhibition, you're given an awkwardly-sized newspaper guide. This isn't much help, I'm afraid. There's no explanation of how the prize is judged and awarded. It wasn't until I was half-way round the exhibition that I grasped the Turner Prize is awarded to an artist and not their art specifically. I had expected a simple gallery of paintings and sculptures that won the prize, but actually it's just a messy selection of art by the artists that won, and some of the artists that didn't win. This confused me as well – there is little differentiation between who won and who didn't, unless you pay close attention to the labels and your bundled up fist of newspaper.

The layout of the exhibition doesn't help. The first room is the worst, causing you to start your visit in a state of total bafflement. It's arranged in chronological order, but only if you psychically know which way to walk around each room. The most infuriating thing to me was how there is one label per artist, not one label per piece of art. So if one artist has two pieces displayed, you have to trudge back and forth across the room to compare each piece to its description. "For those who have ears #2" is a lovely, looping, wooden structure in the first room that reminds me of Möbius strips, but you can't find out who made it or what it's called unless you realise it's paired with a less attractive steel structure 25m away, where the label is. Then once you've found this elusive label, you still have little idea whether the piece's artist won the prize or was just nominated. This constant game of matching the art to the artist to the year significantly ruined my enjoyment of the visit.

Turner Prize art is all controversial stuff. The little old ladies you walk past in the Millais exhibition downstairs are absent, presumably scared away by the sex and guts. In fact the main clientèle was the sixth-form art student, armed with sketchbook, whinging "can we go shopping now?". To ward off any old dears who wandered in by mistake, there's a monumentally massive Gilbert and George that smacks you in the face right at the beginning. The two tweed-clad fellows, who won in 1986, are flying about in garish colour with their leather-clad East London gay youth chums in "Drunk with God" (1983). There are some big sexy flowerers mixed in there, in case you didn't



© DAMIEN HIRST "MOTHER AND CHILD DIVIDED"

Would you like your steak with peppercorn sauce or formaldehyde, sir?

quite get the subtlety of all the rampant homoeroticism.

Anish Kapoor won in 1990, and his contribution to the exhibition was "Untitled 1990" – three deep-blue, hollow half-spheres that take up an entire room. Staring into them gives you a spectacular sense of infinity- before making your eyes go funny. Art gallery etiquette prevents you yelling at them, but I'm fairly sure they'd produce a very satisfying booming echo.

I'm less impressed by the adjacent contribution by Antony Gormley, who won in 1994. He did so by taking a cast of his body in a bent-over position, then sticking five copies about

the room in what seem like random places but is probably an exploration of shape, angle and space. My borderline-offensive newspaper guide informs me his main subject matter was the violent conflict in his native Northern Ireland, which I imagine is why they gave him the prize. The question I'm asking: did he manipulate the castings to make his penis bigger? If you're interested in the mysterious matter of how they recreate the spacing and angling of modern sculpture every time they move it, I refer you to "Sharp" by Grenville Davey. These four pieces of shaped, cream-coloured steel are reconfigured every time the sculpture appears in a

new gallery, to best suit the room it is placed in.

And now we get to the artist everybody came for: Damien Hirst. Yes, his formaldehyde half-cows are there. "Mother and Child Divided" (1993) is fascinating to look at, from an anatomical perspective. You can pick out all the different cuts of beef available, including a really juicy looking rump steak. I really don't find any of it disgusting – it's like being back in a school biology classroom, looking at the shelves of tapeworms and dissected rats in jars. But then I am a biologist. I'd like to point out to you that the cows exhibited today are only modern copies of the 1993 originals, just to disappoint you in advance. Also present is Hirst's "Arginosuccinic Acid" (1995). Hirst's sheets of coloured dots are a particular favourite of mine. But bear in mind that he didn't even colour in dots himself – he had slavey artistic assistants to do it for him, including Lauren Child, author and illustrator of "Charlie and Lola", and the "Clarice Bean" series.

I find it quite interesting that often a Turner artist can offer two very different pieces of art. Damien Hirst has his cross-section ruminants and his coloured dots. Rachel Whitbread offers "Untitled (floor)" (1994-5) which is an ugly block of nothing-in-particular on the floor, but also "House" (1993), which is a series of quite pleasing black and white photographs of a very impressive casting of an old terraced house.

I'm not into those little arty films they show in darkened cupboards, so I won't dwell on those. But I will mention "60 minute silence" (1996) by Gillian Wearing. This is a film of a group of policemen being made to sit in total silence for 60 minutes. Obviously I didn't stick around to witness the whole film, but apparently it all climaxes in a

sudden cry of relief at the end.

I did like the room full of photographs by Wolfgang Tillmans, who won in 2000. They include a man having a conversation with a deer, a window-box garden, people traveling on the tube, and a squirting nipple. In the next room, I found it quite difficult to make notes of Martin Creed's "Work no. 227: lights going on and off" because the lights kept going on and off.

There are a few mentionables in the final room. Keith Tyson's studio wall drawings are like a visualisation of a train of thought, scrawled and doodled and filled with colour. You get the impression that while he's a talented British artist, he's also just some guy messing about and enjoying himself. Grayson Perry's earthenware pots are beautiful – if they were sold in shops, I'd buy one. I'm somewhat disconcerted by the fact that one has my Dad's name written on it in red, but since there are many other names, including Alan Yentob, it probably isn't anything to get paranoid about.

To conclude, I think the Tate could have put a bit more effort into this one, particularly if they're charging students a whopping £6 to see it. The art ranges from the appalling crap, to the moderately pleasing, to the excellently delightful, but the organisation and labelling is dire. Give me a forklift truck, Wikipedia and a spare afternoon and I probably could have done a better job. In fact, if you do go, ignore the idiotic arrangement as well as all the blurb and just wander round looking at the art, which I don't think this exhibition has done justice.

I'm hungry. Anyone for steak? The exhibition ends on January 6th! Shoot! Get yourself down there ASAP.



© ANTONY GORMLEY

The writers at Felix decide to give Yoga a go... what they didn't realise was that they had come on the night of the 'Fans of Right Angles' class

Revue 2007: it's bean-flicking good

Sarah Broadhurst reviews the MTsoc Winter Revue: *The Rise and Fall of David Sullivan*. It was OK

I was told to go in to this year's Revue with low expectations – the direction was going to be lacklustre, some singing cringe worthy and the dancing poor. However, the programme promised me "Our most ambitious Revue yet". The fact that the auditorium was packed to the rafters was obviously a good sign so I decided to let go of any bias and sit down to enjoy the show.

MTsoc's Revue is an annual event which compromises of a slight plot and tonnes of popular musical numbers. This year's 'The Rise and Fall of David Sullivan' was a satire on the supposed rivalry between the techies and performers. The plot starts out with this theme in mind but quickly loses it in favour of lesbians and transsexuals.

Although Paul Dingwall's suspender wearing, chest-baring Scottish techie transsexual was hilarious, I felt his newly lesbian girlfriend, Sandra (Hannah Bundock) got a bit too much stage time. I thought she was brilliantly energetic but more time should have been spared for other more entertaining plotlines, like the one promised to us in the title of the show!

Lesbian Super-Slag, Maureen (Alicia

Blunt) was fantastic as Sandra's predator. Her rendition of *The Wild Party's* 'Old Fashioned [Lesbian] Love Story' was fantastic! Every 'bush' and 'bean' reference was announced with such relish we couldn't help but pee ourselves quietly in the back!

Head-techie, Dave Sullivan (Matt Woods) and the 'Starlet of the Show', Rhapsody (Emily May) really stole the show for me. Their story was FAR more interesting and funny than any of the others. Emily May was suitably diva but she showed a soft side to the classic 'Diva Bitch' we often see in theatre.

Matt Wood's hair got us all talking afterwards. I was going to dedicate half this review to his hairstyle - his glossy, wavy locks were always going to make it to the stage – but that wouldn't really give him credit for his talents on stage. Matt and Emily's joint numbers were by far the best in the whole show – 'We Both Reached For The Gun' (*Chicago*) and 'Anything You Can Do' (*Annie Get Your Gun*).

The chorus was brilliant though and I wish they had been utilised more. There were some brilliant numbers, such as 'I Hope I Get It' (*Chorus Line*) and the finale; 'We're All In This To-

gether' (*High School Musical*). These really showed the hard work that had gone into the show. On the other hand, 'La Vie Boheme' (*Rent*) was messy, unpolished and hard to follow. For some reason the choreographer had a large part in this [over] long number. I thought he could have stuck to his choreography duties and definitely moved aside for a different member of the chorus.

The whole Revue was much longer than last year's. I felt it dragged slightly

at the end where yet more lesbian-related numbers were squeezed in but there was a twist in the plot, which I enjoyed. They couldn't possibly have killed off the title character so they went back in time and everything turned out fine – finale was sung, cast applauded and distinctly average comments made.

In summary, I thought the cast did brilliantly. A few more cheesy grins might have been in order but they weren't to blame at all for the poor distribution of songs and plot. More

techie-performer rivalry and less muff would have made this Revue perfect!

***The Rise and Fall of David Sullivan* ran from the 2nd to 3rd December. Missed out? Tough poopy. Only joking! You can catch more MTsoc revelry in the Easter Term with their Spring show, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Maybe all you wannabe bankers should go along to that.**



We're flying without wings!

Is this really what theatre is like?

Lucy Harrold likes the Southbank. Lucy Harrold likes caffeine. Lucy Harrold doesn't like this exhibiton

I do like the Southbank - it's so eclectic! You've got the BFI Museum, the National Theatre and loads of bookstalls along the river. Plus there's all this amazing modern architecture like the OXO Tower and the London Eye, some fantastic older architecture like the Globe Theatre and then you've got the Tate Modern - a huge mass of power station blandness.

However, the interior of the Tate Modern is a bit of disappointment – it's just more concrete, minimalism and "cool" signage that's rather difficult to follow. The signs told me that the exhibition and tickets were on the fourth floor and so off I trooped, taking the stairs as the lifts at the Tate Modern are tiny, infrequent and full of buggies.

I reached the fourth floor to find that my ticket was actually on the first floor in some random information room at the back. The turbine hall also happened to be on the first floor, so I had a little peek at "The Crack". Yes it is just a big crack - you can even see the chicken wire where they reinforced it.

So, again, back up to the fourth floor, where I finally got to the exhibition. Giving my ticket to the woman, she says "How many more will they find?", I just thought "What the fuck?" at this random outburst until I found out this was actually part of the exhibition. Apparently, Tino Sehgal's contribution to the exhibition is getting random people to say random crap to other random people within the exhibition.

Remember to take the booklet they offer you. It tells you what the artists have actually done, and more importantly, gives a map of the exhibition. Although the pieces are numbered on the map, unfortunately there are no numbers by the actual pieces.

The point of *The World as a Stage*

is to show the relationship between visual art and theatre. It took me quite a while to figure out how some of the pieces connected to this theme! In fact, very little of the exhibition had anything to do with the theatre or the stage! Especially guilty of this were the two "performance art" videos. The first, "The Chittendens: The Resuscitation of Uplifting" by Catherine Sullivan was just a film of people in strange costumes making pointless gestures. Oh ha-ha, very funny - that's what theatre's always like! The other, "Luna", was by Cezary Bodzianowski which consisted of a video of himself with a roller-skate on one hand and one foot trying to get up within a rotating drum. Why?

Strangely I liked Bodzianowski's other piece, "Flying Helmet", in which he measured the dimensions of the Globe Theatre so he could compare them to the dimensions of the Earth. This was supposed to show the literal analysis of the relationship between the stage and the world that Shakespeare gives. It was kind of fun and kooky to see this rather chubby guy walking around the Globe Theatre with a measuring tape.

One piece I completely did not get was "The Redwood and The Raven" by Trisha Donnelly. For a start, it was hardly anything spectacular to look at; just a single small black and white photo of a woman dancing in front of a tree. The booklet informed me that each day this picture changes to build up a sequence of this old lady dancing to Edgar Allen Poe's poem *The Raven*. Sorry Mr Tate, I'm not paying the £5.50 student concession every day for a month just so I can see how the dancer moves in 31 separate photographs.

There were a few pieces that I did enjoy alot. Roman Ondák's, "I'm just acting in it", was clever. The premise was that he described himself to a group of

regular gallery-goers and got them to draw their perception of him walking around the empty gallery. The results were varied but all showed the artist a singular, lonely person looking rather glum which seemed universally relatable to.

Also receiving an honourable mention is Rita McBride's "Arena", just because it's so bloody huge! "Arena" is a huge seating structure made of fibreglass sections slotted together like a big jigsaw.

And so to the one piece that made the trip worthwhile, even though it had very little to do with the theme of linking visual art and theatre. I don't think any of us students are quite old enough to remember the Miner's Strike of 1984-5. There was a violent clash between police and the angry miners on strike in South Yorkshire, which is now notorious as the 'Battle of Orgreave'. In "The Battle of Orgreave Archive (an Injury

to One is an Injury to All)", Jeremy Deller (one of the few British artists in the exhibition) has documented his attempts to re-enact the battle, similar in style to those civil war re-enactments that always seem to be at county fairs, mainly consisting of fat, bearded men with muskets. Deller's piece comes in two parts. The first is a room of memorabilia and artefacts from the time and from general re-enactments, a timeline of the strike surrounds the wall to give the reader all the information they need for the second part - the film of the re-enactment itself. I could have stayed for the whole 62 minutes of film if it hadn't been for all the people that were there before me leaving - and then all the people that were there after me going too.

The documentary was enthralling; interspersing clips on the preparations for the battle were views on the history from both former miners and police-

men. Many of the people involved in the strike itself had returned to re-live it for art!

After all this arty-farty stuff and sensing cold and wet weather outside in the real world, I headed towards the Tate Café to take in some sort of caffeinated substance. Here's a tip: don't bother. Just nip down the road to Starbucks instead. The café itself had a massive queue outside and appeared to be geared more towards "contemporary" families having a late lunch than coffee deprived students. In conclusion, don't bother with this exhibition unless you're really into performance art or modern art in general and happen to be on the Southbank with nothing to do. And if you still insist on going, take a thermos!

O Come All Ye Art Lovers, It closes on New Years' Day So Hark your Herald skates on!



© THE ARTIST COURTESY GALERIE CATHERINE BASTIDE, BRUSSELS AND METRO PICTURES, NEW YORK

As demonstrated by this Health and Safety Official at the Tate Modern, some viewers may find some images at this exhibition shocking and disturbing. Be warned, enthusiastic art lover

Lee Miller: Queen of Surrealism

Caz Knight reviews Lee Miller at the V&A. You've seen all the posters in the tube – now go and see it!

Lee Miller – there never was, or has been since, anyone quite like her. Model-turned-artist-turned-journalist, it appears as though she lived multiple lives defined by the meanderings of her artistic life. Like most great artists, it was not until long after her death that she gained praise and recognition. It was upon the publication of the book, *The Lives of Lee Miller* (1985) written by her son Anthony Penrose, that she came to the attention of a certain Jane Livingston who was carrying out research for exhibitions on surrealism and war-time art.

This year is a perfect year for the V&A to house a collection of her works, commemorating both her 100th birthday and also the 30th anniversary of her death. Her works are presented in chronology of the distinct segments of her life which also structured her work; through this organisation we get to know Lee in an abstract way and see how her experiences coloured what she produced.

Born in Ploughkeepsie, New York, Miller was an only child and at the age of seven was raped and contracted gonorrhoea. There is no doubt that this tragic event had a great influence on who she was and her strength in later life, as well as, perhaps, helping to turn her into the surrealist that she became.

Already a professional when it came to being photographed (her father captured her in photos endlessly throughout her youth, often in the nude) she rose to being the most sought after model by 1926. The first set of photographs in the exhibition are those taken by other notable photographers of the time and what strikes one first is her beauty – an archetypal woman of the twenties and thirties – and most certainly on a par with Grace Kelly.

Her coming-of-age as a photographer was aided by Man Ray. He was considered one of the most influential artists of the 20th century; he was a Dada, Surrealist photographer and painter. She sought him out in Paris in 1929, becoming his apprentice, muse and lover. Surrealism's true meaning should be 'super-realism' – it has been mistranslated from the French, 'surréalisme'. So, with 'super-realism' and its plight to liberate the imagination and revolutionise human experience in its heyday, Miller was able to throw herself whole-heartedly into producing some of the highly interesting and original pieces seen on display.

Her subject is nearly always captured close up although subject matter, photographic finish, size and atmosphere created varies enormously. Due to her own experience as a model, portraiture was an ideal pursuit for her as she was unafraid to bring the camera close to her subjects. People, street life, nature, inanimate objects and animals are all captured beautifully. One gets a taste of surrealism in the form of a severed breast (from a radical mastectomy) on a plate. Salvador Dali and his infamous 'belle Gala' are on display, as is her own self-portrait where we are reminded of her beauty as well as being introduced to her obvious talent as a photographer and artist.

In the next stage of her life, Lee Miller sojourned to New York in 1932, where she kept up her modelling as well as continuing her photographic career. Here we see more emphasis on portraiture although none of her surrealist nature or variety of effects has evapo-



LEE MILLER, SELF-PORTRAIT IN HEADBAND, PUBLISHED 1933
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DEAD SS GUARD IN THE CANAL, DACHAU, GERMANY, 1945
© LEE MILLER ARCHIVES, ENGLAND 2007. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

rated. The grainy image of the blown up condom, resembling a glassmaker's orb, with a hand through it, demonstrates just this, as well as the bizarre portrait of artist Joseph Cornell. Her adopted technique of solarisation, whereby an image is wholly or partially reversed in tone, is put to use in many instances. The solarised model piano is a fine example, with the tone of the wood resembling something closer to that of mercury. Another beautiful example is the portrait of the English – born, German-famed actress Lillian Harvey, sporting a phenomenal dress. One thing Miller manages to achieve in all her portraits, is to flatter the subject tremendously.

One of the highlights in the exhibition is her time in Egypt, which reignited her passion for photography which had dwindled in New York due to the constraints she experienced in commercial photography. At this point, Miller was living the life of an Egyptian woman, now betrothed to Aziz Elou Bey. In these photos, one can see the departure from capturing people, and the arrival at portraying what she saw in Egypt in a beautiful and very original way. What Miller does goes against what was, and still is, the cliché way in which Egypt is perceived and captured on film; panoramic, expansive views of miles of desert, majestic pictures of the Pyramids with the occasional camel train. Nature, earth forms, architecture, light and shadows are important here. *The Procession* taken at the Red Sea is a tiny beauty which displays forms in the sand. *From the Top of the Great Pyramid* is the view directly under said structure, but with the pyramidal shadow perfectly portrayed.

The second delight is what Miller has been most famed for: her work for British Vogue during the war as a photo-essayist. Miller took many photographs in London and as well as in Germany,

where she visited both ends of the spectrum; from Hitler's apartment to the camps at Buchenwald and Dachau. Although several decades on from her foray in surrealist Paris with Man Ray, the surrealist lived on in Miller during these war days. The unexpected juxtapositions in her work reflects this. The photographs of the SS guard dead in a canal and the 'suicided' Bergermeister daughter are as much fashion shoot as they are horrific war time portrayals. One can clearly see that Miller came into her own during this period and really honed her style which, up until that point, had been a lot more haphazard and unpredictable.

As is often the case with war photographers who found themselves war – junkies by 1945, Lee Miller's interest in photography evaporated and was replaced by an obsession with cooking, alcohol and depression. Her previous works did not reach the fame they have now, due to her lack of self-promotion and refusal to exhibit.

No one captures the essence of her life better than her, describing it "like a water soaked jigsaw puzzle: drunken bits that don't match in shape or size." Perhaps this is the reason for being unable to attribute a genre to her work due to her whimsical and unpredictable way of choosing subject matter. Miller obviously revelled in this freedom and became a sort of pioneer, unafraid to take risks with what she captured. As was the case in the first pieces in this exhibition, the last is a portrait of her by another – Picasso.

He succeeds in personifying her; colourful, vibrant, abstract and ludicrously different to everything else in the gallery!

**Ding dong merrily on high,
Do go along before it closes!
Ding dong merrily the sky...
It's only £4.75 for a student ticket.**



LEE MILLER, WOMEN WITH FIRE MASKS, 1941
© LEE MILLER ARCHIVES, ENGLAND 2007. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No Sex, no Christmas and no fun

Rosie Grayburn reviews the *Renaissance Siena* exhibition at the National Gallery and is disappointed for the above reasons, if you hadn't already noticed that. However, if you like virgins, you'll like this



...aissance speech bubbles included). Religion played a massive part in the life of the Sieneese and the fact that their protector, the Pope, is pictured here as a giant figure shows his importance and power over the lives of the people who lived in the city, 500 years ago. The painting also shows the Virgin Mary's protection over Siena. This theme crops up again and again throughout exhibition.

Mary is always at hand to help in a crisis. In the first room alone she is seen protecting the city from an earthquake and saving a ship from a storm - the Renaissance equivalent of Superwoman.

The leaflet advertising the *Renaissance Siena* exhibition at the NG was very inviting. A rosy-cheeked saintly-type wore a very fetching gold halo and she smiled meekly down at me, making a nice, warm Christmassy feeling well up inside... much like mulled wine. So I decided to investigate.

Before I start ranting, I ought to enlighten you geographically-challenged people out there: Siena is in Tuscany, Italy. It is a very, beautiful city and extremely well-preserved from the Renaissance due to its status as a World Heritage Site - sounds lovely. Advertising over, let's return to the review.

This major exhibition, which has taken the place of the very popular (and FREE, might I add) *Monet to Picasso* exhibition, celebrates Renaissance art from Siena during the politically volatile last century of the Sieneese Republic, from 1450-1536. It was a pretty cool time in history, actually. Very wealthy families ruled whole cities in Italy and they weren't the nicest of people at all - scheming, power-hungry bastards... Just like your average politician.

Even the Popes of this era were the sons of these families - elected not because of their saintly characters but because Daddy would kill anyone who opposed you. Unsurprisingly, lots of people wanted them dead and many succeeded, so lots of gruesome murders occurred throughout this time.

Armed with this exciting knowledge, I threw myself with utmost optimism into the exhibition. On entering Room 1, you are given a free booklet with blurb on each individual painting. I failed to notice the size of this guide at first, and it was not until I left Room 1 with a "How much more can I take?!" kind-of attitude that I flicked to the back and counted 116 pieces. Siena must have been stripped bare of all its art to fuel this exhibition! I kept going for your sake, reader.

I couldn't have come at a worse time. When I tried to enter the exhibition, the passage was blocked for the largest tour group I have ever seen. And they were Italian - no doubt there to see a little bit of home whilst on their English tour. Being Italian, they were talking very loudly and posing in front of a statue of the Virgin Mary while cameras flashed all around. Thankfully they left soon after and I was left to contemplate the first painting in peace.

The first painting sums up the exhibition wonderfully. A giant Pope Calixtus III and a gargantuan Virgin Mary stand outside the gates of Siena and chat to each other in Latin (Ren-

At painting number five, I got stuck moving round the room with two very enthusiastic art experts. They seem to have waited all their lives for Renaissance Siena to come to town! It was quite sweet really. At each painting, they pressed their noses up to the glass and commented on things like lines and specks. Some old ladies weren't as admiring as me and whispered viciously behind us. I got scared and moved onto Room 2.

Even the most ignorant viewer could notice the change in style of painting between one room and the next. I preferred these paintings instantly, being much clearer and containing more gold. Not only this, but they were generally much more interesting paintings, containing lots of religious symbolism and more varied



© THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON

The first in the trilogy of *The Story of Griselda*. Are you struggling to woo the woman of your dreams? Why not publicly strip her and THEN propose. She won't be able to resist your Renaissance charms!

saints. Instead of just plain-old Virgin Mary, she now is accompanied by a rather dashing angel wearing very sexy armour and she has a band of cherubs playing Renaissance music around her head. This is shiny, new and improved Virgin Mary.

Perhaps I'm not really selling this to you, but I convinced myself this exhibition was just about worth sticking around for when I came across number 17 - a panel depicting Saint Agatha and Saint Lucy. At these points, your little booklet is invaluable as it enlightens you with little snippets about these particular saints: "The two women are early

Christian martyrs: Agatha had her breasts cut off during martyrdom; the devout Lucy, in a response to a suitor who admired her beautiful eyes, cut them out and sent them to him." Now that, ladies, is dedication.

I breathe a sigh of relief when I reach a room called 'Narrative'. Apparently, some time in the 1450's, Sieneese artists began to tire of the constant demand for Saints and Virgins and started to paint stories, some of which were based on Roman mythology. The style of these narratives was quite amusing to my simple self.

Not only are all the stories (from The Nativity to Antony and Cleopatra) set in a landscape not unlike Renaissance Italy, but all the landscapes contain such refined detail that I watch them and not the action in the foreground, in anticipation of a shepherd mooning or a monk streaking across the Tuscan Hills.

A couple of interesting pieces in this section included a page from a Renaissance "Compendium of the Natural World" which gave a much skewed view of nature; unicorns, dragons and Hercules.

Another was "Atlas", the Roman legend who was punished for his revolt against Jupiter by being condemned to holding up the heavens for eternity. Poor chap. Still, on the plus side you can see a slightly misshaped Britain labelled on the globe as 'Britania'. In Renaissance Italy, The British Isles were a large blob, the size of Africa. Fascinating.

A lot of the paintings were allegories, most of which went along the lines of "following the difficult path to virtue". I was captivated momentarily by a very neat sketch of a young man in a loin-cloth standing amongst some dramatic rock formations. How nice, I thought, naively. In fact, said my booklet, what the artist was trying to show was that this particular young man had chosen the difficult path to virtue instead of the easy path to Pleasureland. Lo and behold, in the background was a church that he was making his way to... and I thought he was there for a spot of rock-climbing.

The depiction of women in this exhibition is an interesting one. One artist states his favourite three kinds of women in one painting; Virgin, Wife and Widow, whilst another shows the tale of Huon of Bordeaux who wins the right to sleep with the daughter of King

Ivoryn, but only because she loses on purpose. She invented Girl Power.

Amongst the scores of different artists that contributed to this exhibition, one really stood out for me - the anonymous 'Master of the Story of Griselda'. The piece he is most famous for, hence his title, is a trio of large, brightly coloured paintings depicting the Marriage, Exile and Reunion of Griselda.

I stayed transfixed on these for ages. They really are fascinating! The story of Griselda and her twat of a husband is scattered all over the canvas. The 'chapters' are displayed around the scenes of preparation for the wedding which these pictures were commissioned for in the first place. You dodge servants as you make your way to the next scene in the drama.

I shall give you a very quick run-through of the plot for this brilliant little story; a rich man (a.k.a. twat) finds Griselda (a peasant girl) while out hunting and announces he will marry her, after gaining her father's consent he publicly strips her (!) and after their marriage he pretends to have their newborn children killed, stages a fake divorce and publicly strips her again. Griselda is exiled and becomes a servant in her 'ex'-husband's house; he tells Griselda to prepare the wedding for his 'new' bride which turns out to be her long-lost daughter; the twat says Griselda has proved herself worthy to be his wife and they make up. If only *Neighbours* was as gripping as this.

The anonymous artist also excels himself in the Room called 'Heroes and Heroines'. He shows Alexander the Great look extremely camp and tells us the story of Joseph (of Andrew Lloyd Webber fame).

After this highlight I did grow tired of the slightly repetitive nature of the exhibition. *Renaissance Siena* is definitely a history lesson and there are some real gems in this exhibition, but I still can't decide whether the trip is worth the money. I'd rather go to Siena and see them in their hometown with a slice of pizza in one hand and a glass of vino in the other.

"Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, This Exhibition's going away! You've got until mid January, But it's £4.50 you have to pay... Hey!" (repeat)
If you fancy reviewing new exhibitions next year, please get in touch: arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk



This is the most 'Christmas Cardy' painting I saw. It doesn't really have much depth apart from Mary is looking tired because Jesus has been up half the night wanting 'bitty' and Joseph is always out at the pub.

Felix's Festive Fundraiser: Oxfam Unwrapped

Haven't done your Christmas Shopping yet, or fancy a treat for yourself? Felix is here to help! Felix's Festive Fundraiser is a competition in which one lucky reader will win all of the prizes shown on this page and a few more besides, whilst supporting a very worthwhile campaign!

This year the competition is supporting the Oxfam Unwrapped Campaign, of which more information can be found on the right of the page.

The Felix staff will be around campus on Friday this week, and Monday and Tuesday next week, collecting donations. One ticket will cost £1, and multiple entries are allowed! If you want to enter, but cannot find any Felix staff, then you can also come to our office in Beit Quad at any time.

A great big "Thank You" to all the companies that have supported the competition with donations of prizes. They were all extremely generous and this year's prizes are worth over a whopping £250!!!



4 Luxury Hugo Boss Towels, a DKNY Bag and a Paul Smith Weekend Bag

Donated by PC World, High Street Kensington Branch



Champagne, Christmas Pud, 24 Mince Pies, Stollen Cake, Peanuts and Loo Roll!

Donated by Waitrose, High Street Kensington Branch

£10 Voucher and a Hot Water Bottle Bear



Donated by Marks and Spencer, High Street Kensington Branch



Oxfam Unwrapped is a campaign that has been running since 2004. It provides a selection of gifts which can be purchased by the public. This year, all the proceeds from our Festive Fundraiser will go to Oxfam and this campaign.

Gifts are carefully selected following feedback from communities on what is needed most to overcome poverty and suffering. The impact gifts have been monitored. Gifts, which range from £6 to £1,700 can be purchased at www.oxfamunwrapped.com, and in Oxfam shops.

Felix hopes to be able to buy a range of gifts with the money raised. Enter our competition and not only could you win the fab prizes but you'll be helping out many people as well. Here's a selection of gifts on offer:



Goat: £25

The goats only go where they will thrive and to owners who will really appreciate the extras that they provide - there's fertiliser to spread, milk to drink and sell, plus kids too. Goats, bought locally, also give nomadic communities a mobile source of income.

Build a Bog: £50

Oxfam provide the tools, training, the labour - everything people need to build their own disease-stopping convenience. Definitely worth spending a penny on!

Fertiliser: 125kg for £38

Amazing what you can do with a load of old manure. Add in worms and a bit of food waste, and you've got the perfect recipe for crop-boosting fertiliser - helping communities grow loads more fruit and veg to eat and sell.

A set of £15 Textbooks: £60

Textbooks are a great addition to a community school and help countless kids with their lessons. Its great for

Essential Medicines and Medical Equipment: £100

Most places Oxfam work in don't have a local chemist that people can pop into. That's why even the most basic medicines can make a big difference to everyday life. This gift covers first-aid kits sanitary kits and simple drugs that can help a community health worker to make someone's life a lot better.

Reading Classes: £49

Give an adult who's never been to school the chance to learn to read their children's homework, their prescriptions, a letter from a friend. This gift will also help promote the importance of learning to read to even more people.

teachers too! This could help start a school library.

Teach a Teacher: £24

Thousands of children around the world can't wait to start learning - all they need is a teacher. Their dreams can be reality by training more teachers and giving them the support they need to do an even better job and inspire more children.

Please give generously to Felix's Festive Fundraiser, so that we can help others whose Christmas might not be as fun as ours. Felix wishes all of our readers a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Oxfam GB is a registered Charity (no 202918). Oxfam works with others to find lasting solutions to poverty and suffering. Oxfam GB is a member of Oxfam International.

North Face Bag, worth £65
Donated by Blacks, High Street Kensington Branch



Goodie Bag from Rough Guides

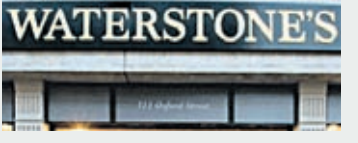


Imperial College Sweatshirt



Donated by the Union Shop

£10 Voucher
Donated by Waterstones, High Street Kensington Branch



Chocolates
Donated by Hotel Chocolat, High Street Kensington Branch



DVDs
Donated by WH Smiths, High Street Kensington Branch



Laptop Mouse, 1GB USB Stick & Game



Donated by PC World, High Street Kensington Branch

£50 voucher for Gourmet Burger Kitchen and Tomato Ketchup Holder



Photograph by Sally Longstaff



The Links Club doing their bit for charity on Thursday

Felix are not the only ones who have been doing their bit for charity, and especially for Oxfam. The Links Club from the City and Guilds College (C&G), have also been getting in the festive spirit and doing their bit for charity.

This Thursday, the club made their way to the Oxfam store on Gloucester

Road, picked up all the books they store had to offer and made their way back to college. They then split up into teams, decided on their selling techniques and began to sell, sell, sell.

Books were priced extremely moderately at 50p a pop, or £2 for 5, and all the proceeds went to Oxfam. By the end of the day The Links Club managed to raise £140, enough to buy 5.6

goats! So please, donate generously and enter your name for this magnificent give away that Felix has organised for you.

Talking about fantastic give-aways, The Links Club offers a £250 bursary to any members from C&G. For more information on the award and how to apply for it, go to the sports pages at the back.

at the union nov 30th - dec 7th

FRIDAY 7TH

subredo

Inner City Drum and Bass

Chase & Status
Clipz



WEDNESDAY 12TH

SIN CITY

The best value
Wednesday night in town!

Christmas Sin Ciy
With Bucking Reindeer

SIN CITY Drinks Offers!

Carlsberg TETLEY'S BLACKTHORN

only £1.30 a pint!
From 20:00



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TOO POSH TO WASH

TUBORG ONLY
£1.50 A PINT
TUBORG



EVERY TUESDAY

super QUIZ!

beer and cash prizes to be won!

ALSO ON

Fri 14th

Christmas Ball 2007

imperialcollegeunion.org/ents

Imperial College Union, Beit Quadrangle, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB
The Union encourages responsible drinking. R.O.A.R. Student I.D. Required.

imperial
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union

Christmas Ball 07

★ Friday 14th December, 20:00 - 04:00



Reggie Yates

BBC Radio 1 Chart Show & Doctor Who

BBC
RADIO

1

Playing the best selection of chart tunes to get you jumping!

End of Term Festive Celebrations at the Union!



Just Jack

DJ Set from the Chart Topping Act

TOO POSH
TO WASH

LIVE TOO POSH TO WASH BANDS ALL NIGHT.

- Free mince pie and mulled wine on entry. (while stocks last)
- Father Christmas with his sexy elf helpers!
- Laser Quest
- Great drinks offers all night to get you in the festive spirit. £2.75 Double Smirnoff, Gordons, Bacardi or Famous Grouse & Draught Mixer

PRICE GOES UP
MONDAY AT MIDNIGHT.
BUY ONLINE NOW!

GET YOUR EARLY BIRD TICKET NOW!
Tickets go up to £11 from December 10th

Buy online now!

Buy now to avoid disappointment, our end of term balls always sell out!

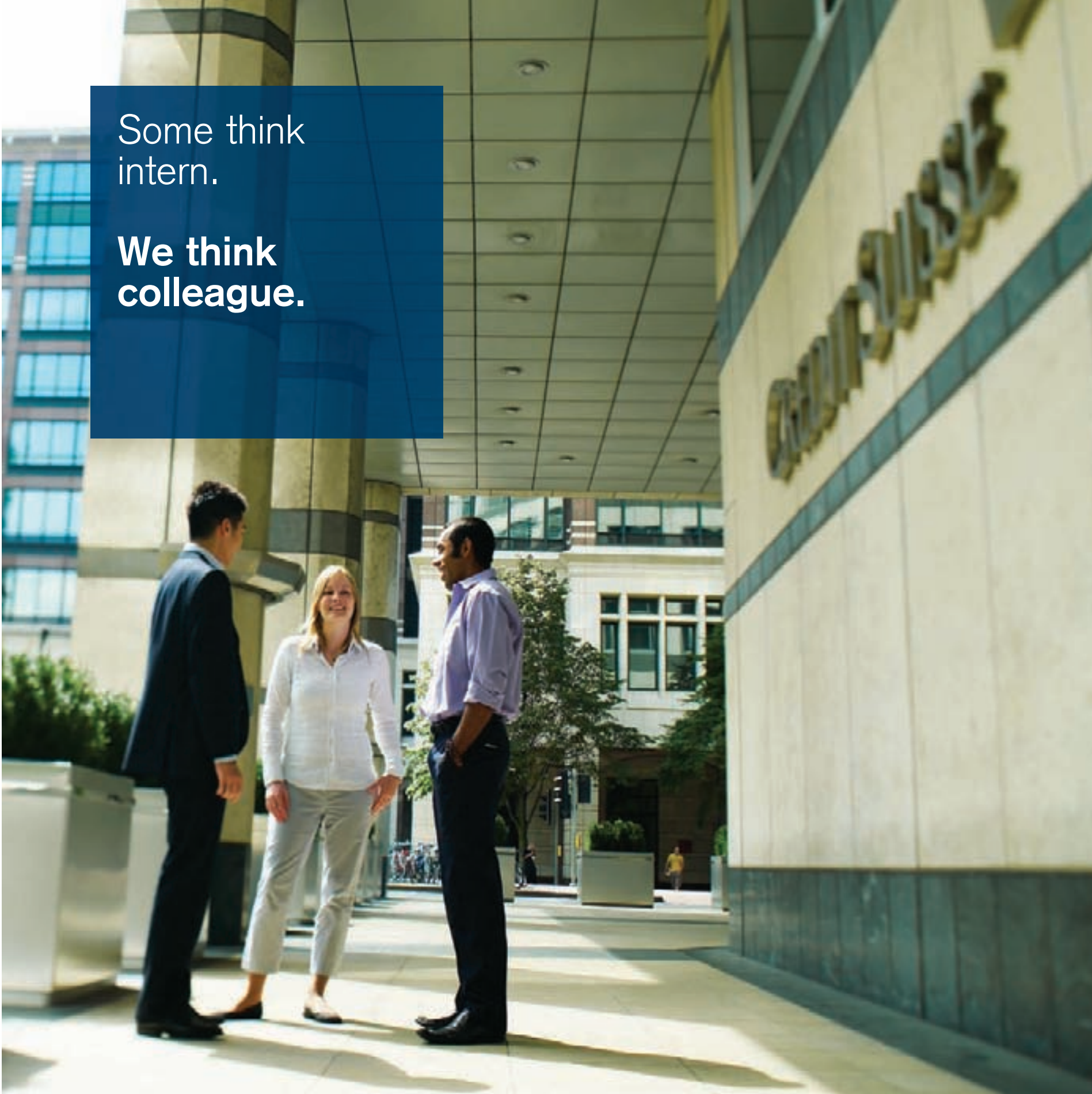
buy your tickets online now from
imperialcollegeunion.org/ents

Imperial College Union, Beit Quadrangle, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB
The Union encourages responsible drinking. R.O.A.R. Student I.D. Required.

£9

Until December 10th
Price then rises to £11

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intern.

**We think
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NUS Extraordinary Conference

With any luck this will be my last rant about the National Union of Students until the spring. After a long day and a cramped journey home in the Imperial College Union funbus on behalf of our nine delegates I am delighted to report that we got our own way at NUS Extraordinary Conference in Leicester on Tuesday. Conference overwhelmingly voted in favour of the proposed changes to the NUS constitution and Imperial's proposed amendment which means that student trustees will be democratically elected instead of just going through an appointment process.

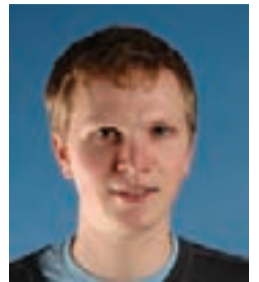
Our delegates left this event fully aware of why it is vital that the current structures are scrapped. On Tuesday

we spent a ridiculous amount of time debating procedure rather than the substance of the governance review and if the new constitution passes the NUS will move away from the arcane, overly formalised process of submitting and discussing motions to something a bit more accessible to ordinary students. As I have previously stated, the new arrangements whereby all financial responsibility rests with a small, highly skilled Board of Governors should prevent the waste and general silliness that came about from having a bunch of 27 highly politicised students on the National Executive Committee taking some very important decisions. I mentioned in my speech against the wrecking amendment submitted by

Manchester Students' Union titled "Save NUS Democracy" that it was fairly absurd that the organisation currently spends more money on the decision making process than it does on campaigning. Having lots of meetings is no doubt terribly fun for the sad old hacks like me who would end up attending them but probably isn't that great for the average student who just wants to see that NUS get on with doing stuff that is relevant to them.

To draw this matter to a close for now, speaking from the point of view of someone who thought it was a waste of our time, effort and money affiliating to what is currently a fairly ridiculous organisation it was humbling to hear

one of their Vice Presidents describe the NUS as a "bankrupt, shambolic farce" that "lacks influence." The NUS leadership have kindly written a disaffiliation campaign for Union's like Imperial who would be very unhappy should the reforms fail and I am happy to take that as evidence of their commitment to sort themselves out. If you have got this far (NUS governance is a bit drab... yawn...) have a very happy Christmas break and I look forward to seeing you in 2008.



Stephen Brown
President
president@imperial.ac.uk

Fairtrade Univeristy & SHAG Week

As the Centenary Year draws to a close Imperial College Union has finally completed its search for a compelling and profound New Years Resolution. After a long summer of compiling evidence to create an impressive document detailing Fairtrade Products, events and publicity on the Imperial College Campus the Fairtrade Foundation has announced last week that we were successful in our bid for Fairtrade University Status. Having got involved in the campaign for Fairtrade on our Campuses at Freshers' Fair in my first year I think this is the biggest achievement that I have made as an Imperial College Student and something the College and its students should be really proud of for making it happen.

Over the past eight years considerable pressure has been placed on the College from Student Campaigners to increase its Fairtrade offering. Recognised as ULU Student Campaign Group of the Year in 2006, the Fairtrade Campaign Group went on to form the Fairtrade Society in 2007. In the same year the Fairtrade Steering Group, a joint collaboration between Imperial College London and Imperial College Union, was formed and the Union and College both passed

new policies stating their intentions to promote and support Fairtrade on our Campus.

Fairtrade University Status is a mark of recognition for the efforts of the College and Students' Union to promote and support Fairtrade Products. By becoming a Fairtrade University we will be able to improve social and cultural awareness amongst staff and students and highlight the way in which our actions can affect the standard of living for a wide variety of people all over the world. Imperial College Graduates, as the World Leaders of tomorrow, have a wide social responsibility to support high standards of ethical and environmental influences in future global trading. The importance of such matters becoming more and more evident in the choices made by consumers, prospective students and businesses all over the world.

The demand for Ethical Products on campus is high, with over 1.6 million Fairtrade Hot Beverages being served in the past year. Imperial College Union's new range of Fairtrade Hoodies and T-shirts have been flying off the shelves, with the colours, designs and quality of the garments exceeding everyone's

expectations. Having achieved Fairtrade Status in such a short period of time, the Fairtrade Society and the Union are turning their efforts towards the Borough of Westminster and the City of London, to help in their campaigns for Fairtrade Status.

It is particularly fitting that Imperial College has received this long awaited recognition during its Centenary Year. With new environmental initiatives being implemented and these positive steps in social responsibility and awareness Imperial is finally closing the gap with its competitors and is no longer lagging behind on important global issues. It is a great cause for celebration and will send a positive message to our dynamic multi-cultural society, our prospective students, graduate employers and the government.

Positively Red SHAG Week

Last week saw one of the most energetic and vibrant campaigns to hit Imperial College Campus in recent memory. Collaboration between Imperial College Union, Medsin, Sexpression and Positively Red led to a huge array

of events and activities raising awareness about Sexual Health and fundraising for AIDs Charities: Children with AIDs (CWAC) and Positively Heath UK (POSH). Stalls on the Sheffield Walkway and in the Sir Alexander Flemming Building sold tshirts, ribbons and gave out free SHAG Bags with sexual health goodies and advice to nearly 1000 students. The flash mob on Upper Dalby Court and the events in the Union were also well attended with approximately 100 people turning out to watch professional Pole Dancers and party with Ann Summers last Friday night. Well done to everyone who stopped by to find out more about SHAG Week, wore their red ribbons with pride and took part in our events. You have helped raise hundreds of pounds for these vital charities. Special thanks go to Hannah Theodorou for keeping everything together and to Li-Fay, Victoria, Leoni, Sam and Jamie for all their hard work.



Kirsty Patterson
Deputy President
(Clubs & Societies)
dpew@imperial.ac.uk

Christmas Ball 07

Friday 14th December, 20:00 - 04:00

PRICE GOES UP MONDAY AT MIDNIGHT. GET YOUR EARLY BIRD TICKET NOW!
Tickets go up to £11 from December 11th
£9 UNTIL THEN! Buy online now!



Skinny jeans: tight, but yet so right

A badly needed style guide for those with a predilection for the more restrictive trouser by Daniel Wan

Elvis shocked audiences across America wearing them and The Ramones used them as part of their signature image.

Skinny jeans are in. There's no doubting it. Everyone's wearing them; girls, boys, men, women, pensioners, everyone. The problem is that skinny jeans are not for everyone. That's why you see people walking down the street looking like they've got two overstuffed Sainsbury's Basics sausages as legs.

Here at Imperial you don't see many people in skinny jeans for two reasons. Firstly, there's nothing more embarrassing than explaining to your tutor you're late because you fell down the stairs and blacked out struggling with your skinnys, and secondly, the number of girls walking about is approximately equal to none.

The way your jeans are going to look on you depend a lot on your leg length. Tall or short, it's all about getting the right cut of skinnys. Taller people can pull off skinnys to the way they were designed; no folding from waist to ankle.

Obviously, getting your exact leg length is preferable. However, I've found a lot of men's skinny jeans come in set leg lengths, and being a complete shortarse, they're always too

long. This probably doesn't matter if you have the right cut. Find the tightest (comfort permitting) cut of skinnys and length becomes irrelevant. A length 34 will look perfectly fine even if your real leg length is a 30. The jeans will just crumple around your ankles, but the leg opening will never drag on the ground and get caught under your shoes. So never ever trim or hem your skinnys, but fold them inwards if you have to. People also fold up their skinnys outwards as some sort of fashion statement, but honestly, it just reeks too much of being nine years old again when all you ever wore was your brother's oversized hand-me-downs.

Avoid the 'slouch' style of skinny jeans if you're of the shorter nature. The cut allows the arse-side to hang much lower than usual, and without longer legs to balance the slouch hang, people will start wondering what is wrong with your odd-shaped legs and most probably offer you their seat on the bus.

Whether you're one for the fads, nu-rave, emo, indie, space-age martian, I don't care, but coloured skinny jeans will not and never will work for you, or anyone for that matter. As soon as Topman started stocking bright red and blue skinny jeans, I thought the local scene-kids in my town were joining the circus (not that I thought

they didn't deserve to be a travelling freakshow anyway...). This is nothing to do with the fact the jeans are skinny, it's just a simple rule of thumb that all men should never break unless they're going for the annoying-tourist-asking-where-the-V&A-is-when-he's-right-in-front-of-it look. Jeans in colours other than the usual shades of demin, black or grey are a big no-no. People's attention is immediately diverted towards your legs and away from your top half (the slightly more important half in most respects), and plus, having another guy frowning at anything beyond your waistline is never going to end that well.

As a guy, if you're constantly grabbing your crotch every three seconds just to "rearrange" your jangly bits, firstly, you look like a pervert. Stop it. There are mothers screaming in abhorrent disgust as their kids watch you. It's because you're wearing girls jeans, or skinnys two sizes too small for you. Come on, man up! Do you want to be known as the town fiddler?

Some people can't help having love handles, but you'll be wearing skinny jeans at your own peril. Whether they make your thighs look slimmer or your calves shapelier, it's only because everything has been shifted upwards and skywards into a lovely looking overspill called your belly... and back

to the overstuffed sausage analogy we go.

Cigarette pants, drainpipes, peg leg pants, pencil pants, slimjims, skinny jeans; whatever you choose them,

they're in, and they're probably here to stay for quite a while. They're like Marmite, you either love them or hate them, but they're for your legs; not spreading on your toast.



Ouch. How the hell do you even get in trousers that tight?

You know that you grew up in the 90's if...

...you like totally committed these truly heinous crimes against fashion!

Slap bracelets

Slapping these on was strangely satisfying. Now banned because they're a safety hazard! Kids today don't bleed enough.

Adidas

Don't even try the two stripe knock-off track-suit. The only highly flammable shellsuit to wear was Adidas. Worn by you as a child, and made by children. Ironic.

Side ponytails

The anti-glasses, in that it does appear to lower your IQ.
Worn most stylishly by Deb in Napoleon Dynamite.

Jelly bracelets

Apparently each colour indicates what sexual acts you are willing to perform. Um...I was in primary school when this happened and not being groomed by a pedophile, so I have entirely innocent memories.

Ying yang necklaces

Or any necklace from the goldmine that is Claire's Accessories. Worn as a bunch of three for extra cool points.

Bumbags

The perfect example of a jarring abyss between form and function.

Nike trainers

The only trainers to have. My mother as a cruel and unusual punishment bought me Hi-Teks. Lame. So lame.

Scrunchies

Sadly now more often now seen used to hold a croyden facelift.

Demin jackets

So 90's that at some point they're inevitably going to come back. And you'll have to live through the depressing moment of having lived a trend the the first time round. You're old.



Buffalo Burgers and Champagne!

Sally Longstaff and Alex Casey get themselves a slice of the new menu at the real burger kings, GBK

Tuesday night saw the launch of the new partnership between Gourmet Burger Kitchen and Laverstoke Farm Park, which aims to create a new premier range on their menu. Purely in the name of research, Felix writers Alex Casey and Sally Longstaff went along to the launch party to find out more.

Amongst the more interesting names on the menu were the Laverstoke Buffalo Burger (£9.95) and the Laverstoke Organic Wild Boar Burger (£8.95), both of which were sweetly packaged in bitesize baps. Whilst the Buffalo was not unlike beef, but perhaps with a slightly stronger, more smokey flavour, complemented well by the onions and garlic, the Boar Burger, which is certified organic, tasted quite like a nice pork sausage. The zingy mayonnaise also added something to each, but equally appetizing was the spicy red-currant sauce on offer, teaming up well with the flavours.

Whilst both are slightly more expensive than most of the burgers on offer at GBK, generally falling in the range of about £6-£7, the quality and adventure are well worth the price in the opinion of these reporters, and certainly within the grasp of a student budget!

GBK started in the UK in 2001 and

have a well-deserved reputation for high quality food. Their philosophy about “produce, handled and prepared with care to produce exceptionally fresh and delicious food” is certainly carried through into the restaurants themselves, where each burger is made to order.

The new links with Laverstoke Farm, owned by 1979 Formula One Champion Jody Scheckter, are described as “very exciting” by Davis Sykes, Managing Director of GBK. He says “We are confident that the two new additions will prove popular with burger lovers, as it gives them the opportunity to be adventurous and try something very different”.

Laverstoke Farm Park’s approach to farming is a very different one to traditional farming, involving a Soil Lab in order to monitor the biology in the soil, a 5 acre compost site for fertiliser, and pastures for the animals containing 31 different herbs, clovers and grasses. It is little wonder then that the farm was awarded Best UK Food by the Taste of Britain awards, run by The Telegraph and Sainsbury’s. Jody Scheckter describes his aims for the farm as “[...] produce the best-tasting healthiest food, without compromise”. Having tasted the meat on offer last night, in this writer’s opinion, he has produced



The Fulham branch of GBK and a preview of what can be expected

some of the tastiest meat in the UK!

The event to mark this landmark partnership was held at the St Paul’s GBK. The service was excellent, especially the free champagne that flowed with alarming regularity. The burgers were fresh and hot, and included some other burgers from GBK’s extensive range.

The vegetarian “burgers”, were also very nice, although the neon green of the falafel burger was hard to get past initially. Also on offer were mounds of

fresh fruit, bread and cheese. It was a truly excellent evening culminating in speeches by both David Sykes and Jody Scheckter, with the raffle drawn by another former Formula One Champion, Damon Hill.

The restaurant itself, like many in the GBK range, took its decor as seriously as its menu, especially in comparison with the wealth of identical burger chains on the high street. It continues to provide a welcoming and high quality ambiance, in addition to its excellent

food, whilst not being stuffy, pretentious or over-priced. Well worth a visit!

The nearest Gourmet Burger Kitchens to the South Kensington Campus can be found on the Old Brompton Road and the Fulham Broadway. Prices start at £5.65, beer from £2.95, soft drinks from £1.85 and milkshakes from £3.25.

Here’s a treat to try before you haul ass home for some Christmas grub

Custard Tarts

It’s almost Christmas, and discounted mince pies have already taken over most supermarkets. Not that I dislike them, but occasionally I would like to have an alternative choice – preferably something from my hometown, Hong Kong – to warm up the cold afternoons.

Custard tart is a big thing in both Hong Kong and Macau (an ex-Portuguese colony just east of Hong Kong). It is in fact originally a British treat, so big up to the Land of Crumpets. The main differences between the two versions is that the former is served warm and has a weak gel texture, whereas the latter is served cold with a texture closer to scrambled egg.

Either way, the custard tart seems to be a forgotten treat in this country. The Hong Kong version is quite easy to make – the only annoying part is shaping the pastry bases, but you can always get help. You may struggle to find evaporated milk (note: not the same as condensed milk!) in the small supermarkets; the big ones will always have them in tins. If you really can’t find any, normal fresh milk is fine.

Being a British pastry originally, it is no surprise that this treat goes very well with English tea. For the record, you can also try evaporated milk with tea – it really does taste better than using ordinary milk. So here it is: a perfect afternoon tea in Hong Kong!



Tarts as far as the eye can see. Did someone say obesity? Bring it on!

Tools:

- Electric oven (190 °C)
- Fridge
- Scale
- Sieve
- Tart tray or metallic tart cups (I use a 3” [d] x1.25” [h] hole x12 tray)
- Egg beater/fork
- Tart paper cups (optional)

Ingredients (Serves 12)

- For the pastry:
- Salted Butter - 280g
 - Fine sugar - 105g
 - Egg yolk - x4
 - Evaporated milk - 60g
 - Flour - 470g

- Vanilla essence - 6 drops

For the filling:

- Warm water - 225g
- Eggs - x3
- Evaporated milk - 60g
- Fine sugar - 75g
- Vanilla essence - 3 drops

Instructions

1. Pastry: mix butter and sugar, and then mix in egg yolk. Beat until smooth
2. Add milk and vanilla essence, and then sift flour, work dough
3. Chill dough in fridge for 15

minutes

4. Split dough into 12 balls, and flatten each into tray (make it at least 4mm thick, and make the bottom inner edge fairly sharp so that there is more space for the filling, as well as not wasting any dough).
5. Pierce 3 holes at the bottom of each pastry base, and then chill them for 15 minutes

6. Preheat oven to 190 °C for later use

7. Filling: mix sugar into warm water until dissolved, and then let it cool to room tempera-

ture (CRUCIAL!)

8. Strain eggs through a sieve, and whisk into sugar solution
9. Stir in milk and vanilla
10. Strain final mixture through a sieve, and fill up the each pastry base with it
11. Bake for at least 25 minutes, or until the filling is set
12. Enjoy the warm custard tarts!

Richard Lai



Film

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Alex Casey
Film Editor

Now that we've got the Christmas blockbuster (*The Golden Compass*) out of the way for the year, we can officially herald the beginning of the festive season. In place of the much loved but sadly departed 'Holidays are Coming' Coca-Cola ads that used to mark the beginning of this happy time, we now get another CGI heavy fantasy yarn chucked to the salivating fanboys (and girls) that signals the rest of us can now legally occupy ourselves with endless rounds of *Fairytale of New York* and *Do They Know It's Christmas*, mountains of mince pies and lashings of mulled wine.

For film fans, this may mean another year of being made to sit in front of Jimmy Stewart classic *It's a Wonderful Life* so that the family can share in the joy of life. Let's not forget this a story about a man who wants to kill himself however, and so for those who don't fancy a side of suicide with their turkey, I'd personally recommend festive doses of German terrorism, house sitting and house swapping.

Firstly, I am of course referring to the wonderful charm of *Die Hard*. This is the same sort of medication as the Christmas Day double bill of *EastEnders* when you realise that your family squabbles aren't such an issue compared to having either the Mitchells or a gun-toting Alan Rickman around to share the stuffing. Hence, why not tune in for a fix of Bruce that will keep all the family wide awake until boxing Day?

Alternatively, there's the option of stepping back in time to an era in which Michael Jackson was still known for touching children's hearts and not their privates, and his mate Macaulay Caulkin wasn't some washed up has-been with more than adverts for Orange sparsely populating his CV. It is of course *Home Alone* time and whilst Christmas may be complete without it, it certainly needn't be. Kids film? Perhaps. But it certainly is a lot more appealing than most of the CGI guff that kids lap up now. Not in my day I tell you...

As a third option I've decided to be somewhat more controversial and suggest last years *The Holiday*. Admitting this feels like some sort of public self-flagellation, but a healthy one. After all, despite its failings at originality, it was handled with a sweetness that is hard to scoff at. At least at Christmas. With Kate Winslett leading the cast, and Jude Law close behind, it even manages to pull up the lowly Cameron Diaz and Jack Black who all come off as incredibly likeable. Strangely so, and so much so that by the end I was even supporting Diaz rather than wanting her to slip on the ice and smash her never-been-the-same-since-*The Mask* face in.

Okay, I probably haven't convinced you fully, but at least there's a bit of inspiration to reach for something other than poor Jimmy or *Love Actually*. Chances are the three above will impress more than the DVD your gran got you because she still thought you liked the Disney ones.

Compass tale still seems lost

No amount of literary guidance is enough to show *The Golden Compass* the way

The Golden Compass ★★☆☆

Director: Chris Weitz
Writer: Chris Weitz
Phillip Pullman
Cast: Nicole Kidman,
Daniel Craig,
Eva Green

Alex Casey

What is wrong with the name *Northern Lights* exactly? One possible suggestion is that, after making *The Golden Compass*, Chris Weitz decided the original title might require some explanation and perhaps plot, a feature that isn't particularly prevalent in this limp children's adventure. Whilst not having read the book, I was under the impression that the whole appeal, at least for an older audience, was that it worked on both adult and child levels. The film sadly sacrifices the first of these for the second and so lays itself wide open to criticism of dumbing down and general laziness.

But all of these complaints will be known to Phillip Pullman fans already. For those uninitiated in the world that Philip Pullman created in the *His Dark Materials* trilogy, this is the story of the orphan Lyra who lives in a world where everyone's soul walks alongside them in animal form, known as a daemon. When the mardy youngster tries to venture away from her home in an Oxford college however, she is given a golden compass capable of answering any question. This doesn't sit well with the Magisterium, the all-controlling organisation which is desperately trying to ensure scientific truth doesn't edge out the beliefs they feed to the world. Whilst the books frame this as an allegory for religion, the film decided to



Elegant it may be, but that top is going to itch like hell

move away from that angle to avoid the associated controversy but you don't have to be an Imperial student to draw parallels between them.

It's hard to set up a fantasy land in a manner that is both succinct enough to allow room for plot whilst still inviting wonder from an audience, and it is

under this heavy weight that *The Golden Compass* finds itself. The outset is good, and a quick tour of this magical world courtesy of Eva Green in the first couple of minutes, sets the stage well before you expect to get into the meat of the story. Sadly there's more meat to be found on Nicole Kidman than in the

story here and so we're left with pretty slim pickings for fans of plot.

Perhaps this sounds overly critical. The film, after all, is perfectly watchable but the time and emotion I was expected to invest in a drunken polar bear was poorly judged, even if it did speak in Ian McKellen's thespian tones. There is a child-kidnapping story that goes from something just dropped into conversation near the beginning of the film to the wobbly pivot on which the story turns, and I found myself in strangely foreign cinema territory when I realised I was impatiently awaiting the return of the normally irritating Nicole Kidman.

It is great to watch Kidman sinking her teeth into the role of the wicked Mrs Coulter and her scenes soar above the others in terms of enjoyability. The other star names seem pretty minimally used here but I assume that will be rectified in later episodes. Eva Green, especially, seems pretty unsure how to play her role, going for a horribly overdone smouldering that equipped her well in *Casino Royale* but seems slightly unnecessary here when she walks up to the ten-year old heroine and makes her guess who her former lover is.

Said ten year old, Lyra, is handled with more suitable conviction by newcomer Dakota Blue Richards which is just as well considering awkward children in lead roles have a tendency to make me queasy. Her haughty attitude does seem to rise and wane every second but I can imagine she will generally come out of the trilogy better than some other members of the cast.

When all is said and done however, this is still a film that people will flock to. The issues hinted at provide a talking point amongst adults I suppose, but even with such highly regarded books for guidance, *Compass* ends up lost.

Chabrol takes the ICA on a power trip with brains

A Comedy of Power ★★★★★

Director: Claude Chabrol
Writer: Odile Barsky
Cast: Isabelle Huppert
François Berléand

Sether

Inspired by the famous scandal of corruption and embezzlement in a French state-owned company, Elf Aquitaine, and by the ballsy female judge that discovered and investigated the case, Claude Chabrol has directed a movie in which he tries to examine the psychological state of the people involved in such an affair. The director's attempt is only achieved thanks to the opportune decision to entrust the lead role of the fiery judge (Jeanne Charnant-Killman) to Isabelle Huppert, a French actress with whom Chabrol has already collaborated with six times in the past.

It is due to this actress that the film doesn't simply stay a boring story about the procedures of prosecuting upper echelon crooks but turns into a captivating study of character. Not only does Jeanne Charnant-Killman fight against the debauched business-

men, but also with the surprisingly chauvinistic world of law and politics and even the general public.

As her investigation starts probing ever higher levels of the company and the government, Jeanne's exhilaration with power flourishes. Meanwhile, her marriage and personal life become the victims of the addictive race for more authority, a pursuance which she doesn't stop even when her life is threatened.

Isabelle Huppert is striking in her part. She has created a character that is impossible to 'crack open' while being perfectly transparent at the same time; we never know what Jeanne is thinking, but we always know what is driving her and exactly what she wants. This gives the movie a certain quality of inscrutability which effectively rubs out the sense of blandness evoked by the lack of action in the story.

The rather dark air of the film is seamlessly deepened by Eudardo Serra's cinematography. The high-ceilinged, spacious apartment of Jeanne and Monsieur Jeanne Charnant-Killman (the sarcastic name given to the judge's husband by his colleagues), is always shown in shades of blue and grey and is one of the more uninviting places I have seen. The scenes in this cold

apartment automatically reveal the true relationship between husband and wife, strongly reinforcing the feelings of solitude and distance conveyed by Isabelle Huppert and Robin Renucci. Simultaneously, the repetitive scenery of office, apartment and office again, correlates nicely with the vicious circle of interrogation and custody, which seems to lead nowhere.

Ultimately, Claude Chabrol clearly gives up on filming an engrossing po-

litical action thriller in favour of an arresting psychological drama and, with the cast at hand, it turns out to be a great call. Isabelle Huppert is too intriguing throughout the whole film to ever leave you wishing for more action. A nice note of realism, rarely found in Hollywood movies, is that all the characters are flawed and they stay imperfect until the very end, an end which, by resolving nothing, is the perfect conclusion.



A happy Huppert

Magorium: Why kids enjoy cinema

This Christmas, Mr Magorium inspires finding time to delve back into the treasure chest of your inner child

Mr Magorium's ★★★★★
Wonder Emporium

Director: Zach Helm
Writer: Zach Helm
Cast: Dustin Hoffman,
Natalie Portman

Sether

Hollywood is able to deliver the biggest blockbusters, the best shoot-outs, the most dangerous and mind-numbing action scenes, great humour, and, if they really try, Hollywood can even do ambitious and serious, for ten hours straight- of course. Very rarely do we actually get the chance to come across a movie whose sole purpose is to make you feel good. Well, now I've discovered that those films are played in the cinema before 12 o'clock and the mean age of the audience is 10. That is, if *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium* is anything to go by, although I am sadly disposed to believe that this may just be a special exception due to its fantastic cast.

Dustin Hoffman becomes the 243 year-old Mr. Magorium in this story of a magical toy store that rebels against being passed on to Molly Mahoney, the young manager played by Natalie Portman. Things only seem to get worse when Mr. Magorium hires a sceptical accountant called Henry (Jason Bate-

man) to determine the value of the 114 year-old 'emporium'. After Magorium's death, both Molly and Henry need the help of a young, friendless kid (Zach Mills) to find the source of magic inside themselves, and to bring the shop back to life.

The movie could not have had a more clichéd tale to tell. How many films have there been made about the power of belief or about never giving up the inner child in all of us? How many wonderfully eccentric, slightly childish characters have we been presented to? *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium* is, on the surface, no different. But where the other films just reek of rehashed ideas, this one actually manages to convey the magic effectively. Seeing the store come to life on the big screen and watching each toy start moving; bouncing, singing, dancing, whirling or flying according to its nature is more than enchanting, and every kid will desperately wish that Hamley's had such power. You start envying the little tykes for still being young and allowed to fully enjoy scenes like that. The cinematographer's vibrant use of colour ('colourful' doesn't do it justice) mirrors the all-embracing sense of optimism that permeates throughout the whole movie and is so typical of Zach Helm's scripts.

However, the most noteworthy feature is the cast. Dustin Hoffman commented on the fact that he was not

characterised to look old, that "if I can believe that [Magorium] believes [that he is 234 years old] then I have solved it". Natalie Portman and Jason Bateman also understood that the key to making the story plausible was not by acting in as realistic and 'down-to-earth' manner as possible, but by embracing the magic of the tale and focussing on conveying their character's belief in the reality of the events. At the same time though, serious themes like death, unfulfilled expectations and loneliness are dealt

with seriously (Magorium even refers to Shakespeare's *King Lear*). These themes are not made light of for the children's sake, neither for that matter, is the vocabulary and language made any simpler. Some of the words heard here had me reaching for a dictionary upon leaving the cinema.

In a period of cinema when children's movies like *Shrek* and *Ice Age* have been popular with all the demographics because of their fairly sophisticated humour and irony never before found

in films aimed at the young, it is a nice surprise to find a movie which, instead of teaching rudeness and sarcasm, tries to stir the imagination. The movie lacks an appropriately developed ending which is clearly rushed to fit the expected 90 minutes and the story is also relatively predictable with minimal emotional impact. I doubt these are causes for concern to the average ten year old though, and the magic that is there is unique enough. Especially at Christmas.



A wonderful man: Mr Magorium, no less

The Assassination of Jesse James plods along until its heavenly finale

The Assassination ★★★★★
of Jesse James by
the Coward Robert Ford

Director: Andrew Dominik
Writer: Andrew Dominik
Cast: Brad Pitt,
Casey Affleck

Alex Casey

The Western died out when Clint Eastwood decided he wanted to move behind the camera, and, whilst personal opinion would view this as one evil simply taking the form of another, I concede that the death of the Western is the better news of the two. The odd rebel out there still tries to put new spins on them however; so much so that these aren't in fact "Westerns" but just films set in the 'West', the Midwest being more accurate probably. *Jesse* is of this breed, as was the acclaimed *Brokeback Mountain*, yet both manage to maintain the central characteristic of their skewed genre – boredom.

As Jesse traipses around the wintry Midwest following the departure of his brother Frank from the James boys' gang, he meets the young Robert Ford, a 19 year old who, if this were now, would have big posters of Jesse on his wall while he played with the action figure, ate JJ candy and smoked JJ-brand cigarettes. The star-struck Ford sets about trying to impress, but while the trailer would have you believe this is the central thread to the story, it wavers so much that it's surprising it didn't get lost down some Missouri river. Beyond this,

if you know the title, you can see where it's going and the character development takes centre stage without any saloon set-pieces.

Brad Pitt has the same problem stepping into the shoes of Jesse as he has with every role post-*Fight Club*, in that his face is so recognisable (albeit slightly haggard in the age of Jolie) that he's hard to accept as a believable character. It's a particularly menopausal James that he evokes here, over the hill career-wise with a full set of mood swings and facial ticks that he's got down to a tee. Peculiar, however, is that he seems to have ignored the excessive blinking that the narrator endows him with in the opening and replaced it with a weird tongue point that looks suited to a particularly strange session of cunnilingus.

Casey Affleck, on the other hand, is perfect as Ford, conjuring up this childlike image of hero-worship that seems to border on a Brokeback-style yearning at various points; perhaps there's something in the water in them there hills. The nuance with which he acts puts bonehead brother Ben to shame, and the allegation of cowardice in both historical judgement and the film's title is twisted into the only thing that really lifts *Jesse* out of the doldrums.

The beauty of Affleck's performance is brightest in the film's denouement and never, in recent memory at least, has the end of a film provided such a fitting justification for particularly mediocre means. The film length is in proportion with its title, and feels all the longer for the seeming lack of direction it takes throughout, yet the



Great, I spend two and a half hours just waiting to get assassinated. Trade anyone?

final act succeeds to be enthralling in spite of the wavering lead up and the spoiler being right there in the title. Whilst two hours in to the film you may be shouting "Just bloody shoot him!", the last half hour finds firm standing away from the earlier cinematography that, whilst beautiful in places, frequently segues

(intentionally) into that blurred shot resembling the view through condensation covered glasses worn fresh out the shower.

The film is a gamble: if you think you can stick out the rough beginnings (and be glad it isn't in the original four hour edit), then it might pay off. What remains is certainly

not a piece of groundbreaking cinema, but a story of real character, one that goes beyond the legends of the title. The narrator at one point professes that no books or eulogies were ever written for Robert Ford, but in essence that is exactly what we have here. Tragically, its realism isn't too arresting.

Can you last for the whole night?

Alex Yong

To quote Peter Griffin, a philosopher for our time, "You know what really grinds my gears?" - Well, for me it is when telling people about the Cinema Winter All-Nighter (on the 11th of December) gets the following response:

"Oh, you're the guys that show films. How does that work - do you show DVD's?"

That really annoys me! What I tell these people as well as anybody else who happens to be walking within a 15m radius at the time (and if you're one of these people, I'm so sorry as I tend to black out and wake up not knowing what just happened) is that the Cinema isn't just some random Union club with a digital projector and a laptop. We have a Kinoton 35mm projector, a Dolby Digital EX surround sound system and a team of projectionists who spend their time making up and breaking down actual cinema film. We're not "like a cinema"; we are a cinema. Once you get this point clear you begin to realize how cool we actually are (which is partly why I wrote this article - to seem a lot cooler). That's when all the amazing facts like that we have the biggest screen in the area and are probably in the top ten screens in London seem all the more impressive.

Obviously you can come along, watch a film and be blown away by

our 33-foot screen but there is another side the Cinema experience, behind the scenes.

The Cinema is actually run as a club in the Union and is controlled by students, so when that movie starts up remember there's a rather bored student sitting behind the projector checking tensions, who spent most of that week making up the film and checking it for flaws. Then there's all the box office management, PR and a whole financial circus that goes on to actually get films on the screen. This lets regular students provide input into the way the cinema is run including which movies we show. We're always looking for new staff in all areas and no previous experience is necessary. It's a great way to learn about film.

After all that you should be completely convinced that the iCU Cinema is the best place to watch film. For those who aren't, it's also really cheap. At £3 for one movie and £5 for two I dare you to find a better deal. Really... try it!

So you're dying to come to the cinema now, I can see. But what will wet your appetite for film? What you need is a banquet of film. You need the iCU Cinema Winter All-Nighter. With six delicious courses of film you'd be mad not to come, well, unless you can't handle it. Can you handle it? Can you?!

The Winter All Nighter Line Up

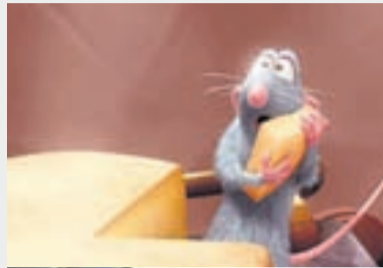
For those who wish, you can buy advanced tickets on the union website for £10, or on the night for:

£3 - 1 Film
£5 - 2 Films
£7 - 3 Films
£9 - 4 Films
£11 - 5+ Films

18:00 Ratatouille
20:20 Stardust
23:10 The Kingdom
01:30 Michael Clayton
04:00 Shoot Em Up
06:00 Eastern Promises

Hope to see you there!

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Music

Music Editors – Jenny Gibson and Matty Hoban

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Merry Hoban Music Elf

Christmas is meant to be a giving and caring time of year and it probably is. However, amongst all the loving, giving and caring, Christmas can be a lonely time for those who are not recipients of all the above. I dedicate my music page to those who for every Christmas, there are feelings of vulnerability, loneliness and fear.

I know what you are thinking now: "Isn't Matty starting his festive page with too much of a hint of depression?" Well, if you are not a realist then yes, I am being a bit heavy.

Everyone knows that Christmas is really an excuse for people to get a break from working so hard to be able to afford to buy presents for that day off. Such cyclical constructs plague our year but I wouldn't want Christmas taken away from me.

Christians rightly want to put the focus back on the day being about the birth of Jesus Christ. Credit when it is due, there would be no overdosing on turkey if they didn't take over a Pagan festival and make it about a baby. To those who are non-religious, how do you put meaning back into the day? Well, in my opinion I think Christmas is there for us to reflect on how really horrible we are as human beings and we can take one day out of the year and just generally 'relax' and not care if your brother slept with your girlfriend or your dog just ate your granddad's Cartier watch (that was a tough year). Also, in the spirit of reflection we then convince ourselves we will be better people next year. So in essence, the festive season is about self-loathing and hope; hope that we one day will not loathe ourselves. So when you are out Christmas shopping, have a little think about that and STOP GETTING IN MY FUCKING WAY!

Anyway, music, ain't it swell? I think swell is a great word and people should use it more often. So, I decided to jump on the bandwagon (have you ever seen a bandwagon?) and list my top 10 Christmas songs, but I avoided the obvious Slade and Cliff Richard aiming more for songs that have represent the emotional impact that Noel has; the songs represent being lonely on Christmas, desperation to resolve bad relationships for the sake of the joyous season, vulnerability and the pain of nostalgia. It is all very well screaming, "It's CHRISTMASSSSSSSSSS!" But at the end you are an unchanged human being. A great Christmas song should make you realise how fragile human relationships are and that we are really nothing and all we have is our time together. Well, that's what I think anyway.

If you do one thing this Christmas, make sure you tell someone who you feel about them; whether it is a hobo you trip over on Christmas Eve or your significant other, or perhaps even your parents, someone needs to know that you are nothing without them. Lastly, I wish you all a very merry Christmas.

It's (almost) CHRISTMAS!

I am ploughing the depths of my red sack to bring you 10 songs that make Christmas that more Christmassy, especially if played at Christmas. Y'know, Christmas

1

Darlene Love
Christmas (Baby, Please
Come Home)

This song is very much an American phenomenon and is probably not that well-known over here but it is my favourite Christmas song.

It considers of an insistent repetition of "Christmas" moving up through the chords whilst Darlene sings over the top with an urgent, desperate melancholy. The only thing that saves the song from collapsing in a hopeless mess is a saxophone solo which sprouts into existence around three quarters of the way in.

The one thing that makes this song so irresistible is the Phil Spector production (I know he is trigger happy but he can sure construct a wall of pure joyous sound). Liberal use of sleigh-bells may seem incredibly cliché, but since Spector used an immense amount of percussion on everything it only serves the song well.

You will be jumping up and down to the starkest and most mournful lyrics around.

2

Pogues
Fairytale of New York

More of an obvious choice, this. However, even if you are not a fan of traditional Irish folk being fused with punk, you can relate to this ballad. This song is basically the musical version of Requiem For A Dream but with a waltz-time backing; it starts with hope and the American Dream and the dream ends in a haze of addiction and self-destruction. How this became such a huge hit is probably due to its epic and swaying quality rather than its devotion to realism.

Somehow it is not properly Christmas without this song being piped out of every supermarket, pub and mobile phone. I'm sure those who are fans of irony will somehow enjoy (if people who rejoice in irony do enjoy anything) how one of the biggest Christmas anthems is about the destruction of all that is good and full of hope in the world. I think this song is very much how fragile and vulnerable everybody is and everyone can relate to that.

3

Band Aid
Do They Know It's
Christmas

"Well, tonight thank God it's them instead of youuuuuuu!" Bono memorably wailed whilst 30 bad haircuts stood around 'changing the world' the cynic

in you might say. Regardless of how you stand with regards to the hideous sight of 80s pop stars becoming philanthropists for a day, you can appreciate that in the Muslim majority of Africa, there will be no Christmas.

What I think this song really represents is the death of Christmas as belonging to the Victorian age of moralism. The 80s became about individualism, materialism and aesthetics and Band Aid were trying to delve back into the heart of man to come out and help those who need it; a worthy cause by any means. However, by making Christmas a world-wide event by applying it Africa, they destroyed the cosy image of the Victorian Christmas and showed that the only good spending money can do is if it helps others.



4

Elvis Presley
Blue Christmas

Before Eiffel 65 came along and claimed the colour blue in the name of Euro-pop, blue used to mean something. Aside from originally representing the hardships that the freed slaves endured in an economically unstable time, blue was something everybody could unite around: a feeling of melancholy whilst something out of your control was keeping you that way.

In the case of Mr. Presley, his lady friend's departure is what kept him down and stopped him from enjoying the season. Despite the warmth of the reds and greens of Christmas, that other primary colour, blue is all he can see. I particularly enjoy this simple imagery, because loss is a simple idea that so many of us can unite behind and reflect on our own blue holidays.

5

East 17
Stay Another Day

Whilst technically not a song about Christmas, it was still a Christmas number one and that is the only justification that I need. Whilst being a typically cheesy song from another boy band, I actually think the melody of the

verse is very poignant. Also, it shows that no matter how hard the exterior, we can all feel hurt and longing, especially in the Winter season. That and you can croon this whilst drunk.

6

Mud
Lonely This Christmas

What I find extraordinary about this song is the fact that it was put out about 20 years after the sound they exhibit was fashionable. Despite this being a Christmas song that Elvis should have performed, its cartoonish nature does not completely detract from the timeless issue of being lonely at Christmas. I think to put this song in any more of a modern setting would destroy the warmth of the song.

I know you are thinking that the spoken word bit is pure cheese, and to some extent, I agree, the years of listening to awful indie bands has hardened me. However, those 'bum bum bum's just thaw out any residing inner icicles.

7

Bing Crosby
White Christmas

Nostalgia is a pretty crippling thing, you grow tired of anything new because you feel alienated by these new movements that have no bearing on your way of life. When I listening to Bing, I hear not a yearning for snow, but an end to his isolation from modernism and a return to the Christmases he used to know.

I also personally feel a certain amount of nostalgia to the Christmases of my childhood where all my brothers would be there before they all went off and got married or involved.

To many this song is wishful thinking since it never snows, but it is more an appeal to our inner child.

8

Wham!
Last Christmas

Wham!'s sing-along classic is about deception and resentment whilst coming off as quite remote,

9

Various Artists
Santa Claus Is Coming
To Town

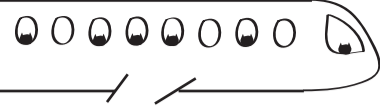
This song superficially deals with a myth in the form of Santa but really deals in fear and judgement. It also deals with coming of age and reaching beyond your black and white child-like vision of reality. This man, whether it is Santa or God is the ultimate judge and he knows whether you have been evil or good and will reward you accordingly. Once you realise that life is not that simple, this song becomes a joke or novelty.

10

Mariah Carey
All I Want For Christmas
Is You

Everyone tells me this is the best Christmas song, but I don't agree in any way. In terms of vocal performance. Mariah can sing and she likes to let you know about it, but is so professionally executed she just sounds like a shopping centre. I literally think of shopping centres when I hear this song. It is unavoidable for me to hear anything else and what is very melancholy about this song is how vacuous it is. Songs like this reduce Christmas to a nothing and that is depressing.





There and back again: A GAP Tale

Tom Culley takes us on a journey to the heart of Middle Earth itself, New Zealand, to tell us about his gap year experience there. If you didn't take a gap year, and regret it: this is what you missed out on. Unlucky!

The country is full of rolling hills, rugged coastlines, farmland, beaches and lots of small mining towns far from civilisation. English is the official language, but a significant number of people speak their own native tongue. The fields are full of sheep (44 million in fact) and the place names are mostly incomprehensible.

No, this is not Wales. It is in fact the furthest place from Wales without leaving Earth. We are, in fact, in New Zealand.

Two years before coming to Imperial I decided that I was tired of staying at home in a boring, lonely village in the far north of England and that I wanted to get as far away from it as possible. NZ is almost exactly opposite the UK, and yet I am still amazed at how similar the two countries are. It almost looks like someone stole all of the most interesting landscapes of Britain, stuck them together like a jigsaw, and added a few volcanoes just for a laugh. They even drive on the left and celebrate the Queen's Birthday (they take a four day holiday over it as well, more British than we are...).

One article simply is not enough to describe all that NZ has to offer, so I will have to do my best at picking out the most important parts.

I arrived just in time for Christmas, which I spent with some distant relations who lived in Auckland. Sunbathing and barbecues aren't the first things I would choose to do on Christmas Day, but what else would you do in the circumstances?

I took the Overlander train to the capital, Wellington, for the New Year celebrations, but I seriously underestimated the size of the country. Auckland-Wellington took 13 hours (and that's only the North Island), but once there, I loved the place. It's one of the smallest capital cities in the world, with a population of 180,000 in the city itself, but all the houses are just squashed into any space they could find. Many of the more expensive buildings are on cliff faces, and have cable cars that lead to the front door.

Next on my trip was Blenheim, on the

South Island, which is wine-producing country, and where all backpackers end up if they want a job. This I did, but after working for two weeks in the baking hot January sun picking grapes on barely £3/hour I thought it would be better to spend my hard-earned money there and work harder back in the UK for better wages.

The next few weeks involved bussing it down the West Coast, which is basically a road that stretches for 500km around the mountains without any option of turning off and with a population of around 1,000 spread out over the many small villages. I spent a while

“No, this is not Wales. It is, in fact, the furthest place from Wales without leaving Earth”

in the wonderfully named Punakaiki, which consists of the Pancake Rocks and miles of pristine beach, but this also coincided with an excruciating pain in my hand from a cut I had received a few days earlier. For several days I thought that some exotic insect had laid its eggs in my hand and that they were slowly hatching and devouring me because of the various substances that seemed to be oozing from under my skin, but when you are several hours from the nearest doctor and the buses only come a few times a week, you just have to wait for nature to take its course.

Eventually I arrived in Hokitika where a medical student decided to operate on my hand and removed large amounts of gunk from my hand. The anaesthetic hurt far more than the procedure itself, so let that be a lesson to you; don't trust medics.

I climbed the Fox Glacier (not named after the mints) with an experienced tour guide with a group of Japanese tourists, but that didn't stop us get-

ting lost and spending an hour cutting our way out of the ice. Luckily I didn't know at the time about the man who had died the day before from falling into a crevasse, otherwise I may have been a little more worried.

The Milford Track is the most popular walking track in NZ, and bookings for it are like gold dust, but I managed to get one by sheer luck. This track is a four-day hike through the mountains, starting with a boat ride across Lake Te Anau to the starting point, with basic huts in strategic places along the way. The first two days were pretty uneventful, until we arrived at the second hut and the skies opened. We were told not to leave the hut as the bridges had been washed away and the weather was too bad for the helicopters to rescue us. We spent two days in that hut and by the time the weather cleared we were quite happy to move on. Just as we arrived at the third hut, the rains came again and we were stranded for another day, but once we persuaded the rescue teams that we had no food left we were given a short ride over the floods in a little helicopter almost to the end of the track. Once at the end of the track we found out that two of our party had died on the track while we were there.

After that ordeal I wanted a few quiet nights in, but I went to Queenstown, the aptly-named Adventure Capital of

the World, and it certainly deserves the title. Some of the world's largest bungee jumps are around Queenstown, but I went one better and went on the Canyon Swing: a 119m freefall into a gorge, hoping that the rope attached to your waist will kick in and your life won't end on the rocks below. It was the single most frightening experience of my life, especially as I have a morbid fear of heights. Until I did it again, which was even scarier because they made me do it backwards. I will admit that I screamed. Very loud. And I'd do it again.

Back on the North Island, I ended up in a small village called National Park, from where I hoped to walk the Tongariro Crossing; a gruelling 10-hour hike over two active volcanoes. Unfortunately a huge blizzard started, which trapped me in the hostel for several more days. I eventually tackled the track, and it was most certainly gruelling, but definitely rewarding, with awesome views from the top of Mt Ngauruhoe, a.k.a. Mt Doom.

On a whim several days later I jumped out of a plane over Lake Taupo. I was attached to a man and a parachute, but that didn't make it any less worrying. From 12,000ft we were pushed out and freefell most of the way to the ground before releasing the canopy, but after the Canyon Swing it was surprisingly not as scary as I had expected. Still, for

£50 you could do worse for a day out.

Now, an article about NZ would not be complete without a mention of the single biggest boost to tourism the country has seen in recent years; the Lord of the Rings Trilogy. Many of the filming sites are easily accessible and you can even pay people a lot of money to take you on a guided tour of these places, where you can take photos to show your family and friends that you have in fact stood on the very spot from which Orlando Bloom fired his arrow at the Wargs. Even though he lives next door to Imperial College and you will probably meet him in the flesh in the SAF, but never mind about that. The town of Matamata has certainly taken the opportunity to make a few dollars, and provide tours to Hobbiton, which was built on a sheep-farm a few miles into the countryside. The owners thought that it may be slightly more profitable to let thousands of tourists pay them to walk on their fields than to actually farm sheep on it, and who am I to argue?

If you ever go to New Zealand; spend at least three months there. If you haven't already taken a gap year, then when you graduate and are unemployed you will have all the time in the world to find more interesting things to do with yourself. If you have taken a gap year; take another one. You won't regret it. Promise.



Anyone recognise this?



Majestic landscapes are a big draw to New Zealand, making it a popular travel destination

Bear with me for a moment, please

The Felix travel section gets a little bit political as Amin Elmubarak describes Sudan to us, which has recently been under the media spotlight due to the allegedly inappropriate naming of a teddy bear.

Amin Elmubarak

On Monday 3rd of December, Gillian Gibbons returned home after spending 8 days in the notorious Omdurman women's prison in Sudan. This is nothing in comparison to the 40 public lashes that were going to be her fate. This could be understood if she was caught selling drugs or even selling her body, but this lady was found guilty of naming a teddy bear the "M word"!!!

At face value, Sudan is a Muslim state that has exercised its laws on a British citizen for insulting its religion. This is ludicrous; the government of Sudan represents its people neither culturally nor religiously. It has succeeded since taking power via a coup in 1989 to mix religion and politics to form a concoction that serves its political views whilst hiding behind the impenetrable

"The food and drink is an assault on the senses."

shield of people's fear of religion. Politically since the world "discovered" the atrocities in Darfur (which by pure chance coincided with the destabilisation of one of the main areas of petroleum), the British government and the international community has been leaning on Sudan to review its human rights infringements. The government, having an Arab mentality, has used Mrs Gibbons as a political tool to send a message to the British government that they are not to be trifled with.

To understand Sudan, one needs to look at its history, it only achieved independence from the British Empire in 1956 and has since experienced a total of only nine years of democracy. The rest of the time Sudan has only known dictatorships, from Communist to Fundamental Islamic Sharia' and anything in between. Islam entered Sudan via trade as opposed to wars, and so Sufism is the prevailing practice among the country's Muslim population. Islam accounts for 80% of the country's faith,

Christianity accounts for 19% and 1% pagan. It's unique in that its people are a mix of Arabs from the Middle East and Africans that was instigated many centuries ago, so much so that they resemble neither Arabs nor Africans.

But to really understand this, the geographically largest country in Africa, is to immerse yourself amongst its people with this quote from a prominent Sufi man during the instigation of the Sharia' Law in September 1984: "Sudan is a country of giants ruled by dwarves". The people of Sudan may be poor and simple, but the majority are surprisingly well-educated and well-read, incredibly accommodating, and kind. Geographically it's very rich: it has the deep blue Nile and the shallow, crocodile-rich white Nile that meet in the centre of the capital city Khartoum. In the east coast, in a city called Port Sudan, there is the largest concentration of hammerhead sharks in the red sea – perfect for scuba diving. In the west there is Jabal Mara, a most peculiar mountain that has almost every different type of climate as you ascend it.

The food and drink is an assault on the senses, the markets are vibrant and the people are friendly and although it's a Muslim country they have a peculiar beer made from dates that, I have on good authority, is pretty amazing (just don't get caught!)

Shamefully the government has spent most of its money on itself and on its civil war against the south of Sudan from 1984-2005 to work on its tourism, but it's all there for the discovery if one chooses to go for it.

Upon returning, much to the surprise of many, including myself, Mrs Gibbons stated: "The Sudanese people I found to be extremely kind and generous and until this happened I only had a good experience ... I wouldn't like to put anyone off going to Sudan." Personally I was relieved that she was able to differentiate between the government and the people of Sudan. So go on, get your shots, change your money (the exchange rate is awesome!), buy your visa and go visit this poor country of gentle giants that is waiting to be discovered. Just don't talk to anyone with a uniform for longer than you have to.



Sudan's markets are bustling... usually

Travels without my aunt part 5: Ridgeway Park

Tom Culley

"Roll up, roll up – you sir – fancy a punt?"

"Not really, no"

"Oh come on sir, only two pennies a go – win a prize!"

"Actually how did you even get in here?"

"Flower for the lady?"

"Ok, I don't even know how you got into my office but you are going to have to leave, I'm going to call security."

This week we are revisiting Ridgeway Park. What's that I hear you cry? "We've already been there!" "Write about something new!" To you people I say no. The thing is, Ridgeway Park is so absolutely unbelievably strange. Firstly you need to gain access to the park, this in itself is quite a mission. The park's opening time is subject to

the whims of the park-keeper who himself is wildly influenced by such factors as the luminescence of the moon, the state of the England football team and whether his piles are playing up. If the park gates are open, you are not necessarily in luck. Next you must negotiate hordes of teenagers who chillax in the vicinity of most entrances. This can be achieved however through use of a "Trojan Horse" or the local Mr Whippy van as others refer to it. Simply bribe the nice ice cream flavoured man with cherry flavoured ASBOs and you are in; it is best to keep a low profile for a while when inside as the squirrels can be particularly savage when provoked by human contact or the gurgle of a small baby.

In the park you will find that there are a plethora of activities that await your eager quivering bodies. Firstly,

let's play Tennis. You will need a tennis racket, balls and industrial amounts of concrete with which to relay the court. Indeed, such is the state of the courts in Ridgeway Park that it is proposed that they could also double as a multi-purpose dirt-bike course between sets. In retrospect allowing the "Chingford and Generic Area 7b Annual Ploughing Championships" to take place on the tennis courts has now been deemed less than successful.

Once you are all shagged out from those topspin lobs, it's time to relax. Luckily Ridgeway Park boasts a quirky and unique feature – a model railway that you can ride on! Never before has so much fun been had as you wait expectantly at the track wondering when the little steam engine will arrive (it will arrive shortly, the track is a mere 5 metres long).

Once on, balance is key to your survival as our family learnt the hard way when my dad, thrill-seeking as ever, leant slightly too hard to the left as we rounded a corner causing whole carriages to derail off the track and innumerable little children to be flung onto grassy verges around us; the charges were later dropped.

As the sun hazily retreats behind the local waste disposal complex, it's time to head home son, gather up your baseball gloves and let's leave the park for home-made sausage, egg and chips. Unfortunately the park is now closed as the park-keeper has noticed that there is an unexpected repeat of "Dick and Dom in da Bungalo" on UKTV bitesize and so has locked up early. You forage in the bushes for dinner and unexpectedly find a Dairy Lee Duncable. Result.



Dick and Dom cause early closure



Games

Games Editors – Azfarul Islam and Sebastian Nordgren

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Azfarul "Az" Islam
Games Editor

Many apologies are in order this week for the rather incomplete and to be honest, unpolished, countenance of the Games section this week. I was pepping up for a nice big issue to finish the term with - only to find out that this is the last issue for the term. So, basically this meant that there was little to no time to arrange the better portions and so they were left out, sadly.

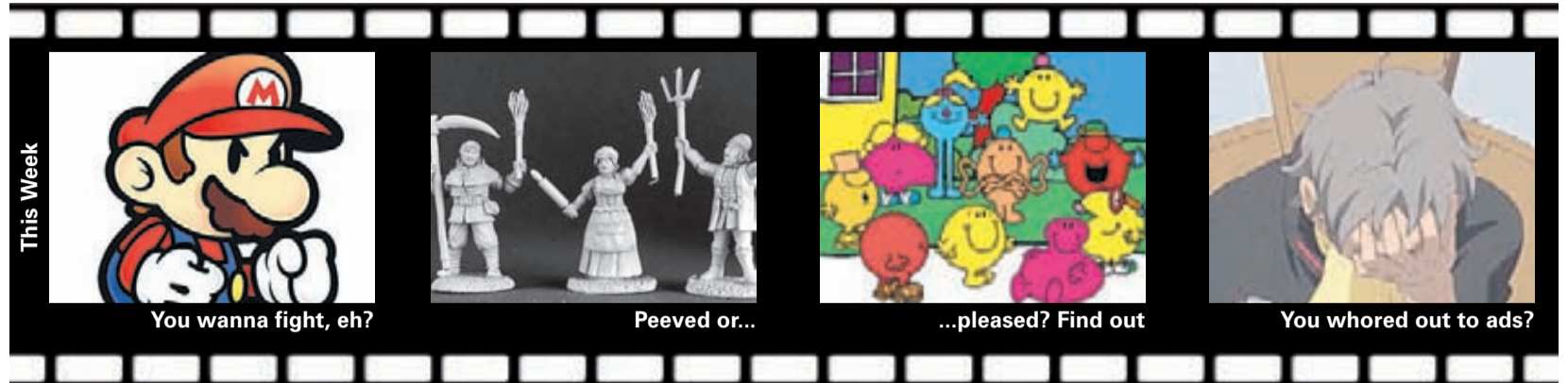
Ouch.

At any rate, this hopefully means that the New Year can start off with a bit of a bang. A few new sections are under construction (and under wraps) and we're sorting out a nice bumper issue to kickstart 2008's run. We've got quite a few games to cover, so feel free to drop us a line if you wish to write about any particular game that's relevant. So basically you can expect the Felix Games touch for Assassin's Creed, Ratchet & Clank Future: Tools of Destruction, Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare, Mass Effect and others that we will lovingly trudge through during the cold winter months. After that you can expect plenty of hype as we prepare ourselves for the likes of Super Smash Brothers Brawl, Devil May Cry 4, Alan Wake, Burnout Paradise, Killzone II and of course, the one and only (sorry, had to) Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots. These games will slowly trickle in throughout a year that will attempt to best 2007 which in itself was a most impressive show for the interactive medium.

Thus, myriad questions pop up. With pretty much the important releases completed, what can we expect from the Xbox 360? Perhaps the whisperings of its successor (yes, Microsoft can be quite daft at times)? Will the PlayStation 3 actually pick up steam or forever remain relegated as a brilliant media that also-plays-games-by-the-way? And what of the Wii? Surely we can expect its inexplicable levels of success to waver... naaah. Whatever it is, it's quite an interesting and maybe even turbulent time that lies in wait for the world of gamers. We at Felix Games hope to be at the forefront of this storm of eclecticism and offer our honest, personal opinions as always.

Oh, poop there's still many more lines left. I suppose I should talk about this week's issue in general. Our Mario bonanza last week has spurred the Angry Geek into a furore of bitter, bitter hatred towards the plump Italian plumber. Deep down inside, he's counting down the number of stars required to collect in order to fill the heavenly coffers of Galaxy. Also, witness my rusty attempts to draw mugshots of Mario to attach to his criminal records, the dirty scoundrel. To nicely round off the term's last issue, I asked the student body what they thought of Felix Games for this term. Some of the more senior students were avid readers of the previous iteration so it was nice to hear their opinions on the transition as well. We also present the Reader Riposte regarding the IC Gaming Club.

Well, that's all for now folks! Have an awesome holiday: Eid, Xmas, et al!



Flamebait: SMG, STFU

The Angry Geek discovers a leak and ends up calling the wrong plumber



I have had enough of you. All of you. Every single bastard one of you that had the audacity to dedicate four whole pages of Felix, along with every sodding internet messageboard and half of YouTube, to Super Mario Galaxy. You're all going to die at the hands of my gaming revolution, speared through the neck with copies of Europa Universalis 3. And then I'll probably get Warren Spector to urinate on you or something equally de.

It's not merely the fact that it's Nintendo fanboyism. Because on its own, that would just be mildly amusing and easy to ignore, like a bogey hanging out of Her Majesty's nose during her address to the nation. No, what's really biting at my knackers is the way it's being sold; in particular, the most sick-

ening, word-of-mouth, self-obsessed, pseudo orgy I've ever seen. VideoGaiden, which relaunched recently with a disappointing first episode, said this - 'Nintendo have come storming into the greatest year that gaming's ever had, and taken the gold right at the end'. GamePro said that SMG 'raises the bar in terms of what can be achieved on the Wii'. Play Magazine described it as 'transcendental'. And every other fucking media outlet made a reference to Mario64.

Let's assess these, shall we? First of all, it's been a relatively good year for gaming. PC had some good releases, as well as crippling disappointments. The PS3 and 360 continue to underperform, and for some reason no-one's bored of Wii Sports yet. I guess you can call that good. To say that Mario Galaxy 'takes

the gold', however, is both bizarre and entirely unfair. Let's actually assume that SMG is worth the abhorrent 97% average it's garnered on MetaCritic.com. To say that it's a better game than, say, Team Fortress 2 or Call of Duty 4 is like saying you prefer Red Leicester over an evening with Gordon Brown. There is no 'gold' in gaming.

Unless you're fucking Nintendo, apparently. Thanks, GamePro, for the encouraging news on the Wii. Raising the bar for what can be achieved with it wouldn't be particularly hard, though, would it? Seeing as the most innovative release so far has been along the lines of, "Swing the remote. Imagine you were swinging a sword, guys! Go on!" Fuck me. It's not so much of a bar as it is a steel line embedded into the ground. Mario Galaxy could have had a minigame where you just fist yourself with the nunchuk for an hour and it'd still have beaten the shit out of the Goblet of Fire game.

But that's before we get anywhere near the New Games Journalism shits. I mean, the guys I've described so far were just enthusiastic, but that's nothing compared to the likes of Play Magazine, and Edge who had the gall to use the word 'bravura' to describe it. 'Transcendental'? What the fuck does that even mean in the context of a game? You still look like a lobotomy outpatient swatting a fly when you play the game, and at the end of the day it's still the same git-faced Italian plumber. It's not a meditative experience, you morons, it's a videogame.

And here's the kicker - it's not exactly that great, is it? Really, I mean. I mean, forget for the minute that you feel honour-bound to be supportive every time Miyamoto so much as farts in public. Let's put that aside for a second. It's not really that great. Most of the reviews describe how pretty it is, and then begin to beat the shit out

of games that are far, far prettier and far, far more visually pleasing. Klonoa 2, which was mentioned last issue, bombed when it was released in this country. It's one of the most beautiful games I've ever played. Just because it didn't have a gurning Mediterranean midget on the front, doesn't mean it's not worth supporting.

He flies between worlds. Guys, we know. We saw the videos. It's just a glorified loading screen, though, isn't it? I don't want you to tell me that it's 'jaw-droppingly beautiful', because so is Assassin's Creed. Unfortunately, Assassin's Creed is a pile of shite and was rightly torn apart by the media. Oh look! Spherical worlds! Damn, they were impressive back on the PlayStation 2, weren't they? Impressive, and extremely frustrating. Oh look, collecting things! That... that's kind of good. And... yeah, Bowser, I guess that's good. Oh, Peach. She's... she's still alive, huh? Too bad.

The problem with SMG - we've seen the basic idea before. The icing on the cake is delicious, but the cake is boring and overdone. We want new base concepts - and no, the Wiimote does not count - we want new base concepts, and then you can start to say a game is good because of its "feel". Look at LittleBigPlanet. That's going to be huge - not just because it has a 'fun' and friendly feel to it. But because it's got a new, and solid, design backing it. Nintendo are complacent. They brought out the Wii. They dared to use the Wiimote properly with Galaxy. But they can't get away from their intellectual properties, they're ultimately too afraid to make the biggest leap and actually show a genuinely new concept. Zelda, Mario, Smash Brothers. Then that'll be it until the next console.

Which is fine by me. Because at least now I know I'm safe from the hyperbole for another few years.



Subject Name: Mario Mario
Social Security Number: M4R10
Date of Birth: XX/XX/1981

Charged with:
Possession of highly-hallucinogenic fungi, violent behavior towards non-human beings, inciting rampant fanboyism across more than twelve countries, possession of illegal metallic wrench, libidinous behaviour towards sentient mushrooms, rape

Reader Riposte: Level 1 Complete

“Now you’ve gone and said it!” exclaims **Azfarul Islam**. These are the comments that really matter: yours

felix



Felix Games

“It’s one of my regular haunts.”
- Jun, 1st Year, BioChem

“The subsections are good and have much variety. Overall, it’s very good.”
- David Fernandez, 3rd Year, EEEng

“After checking the games section weekly now for my time at Imperial its always been the only section I actually get the paper for. Its always accurate with the only con being that it makes me waste money on games when I should be budgeting.”
- James Finnerty, 2nd Year, CompSci

“It’s a different feel from last year. Apart from that, [I have] no complaints. I do like the new approaches.”
- Yew Chooi, 4th Year, EEEng

“The Mario spread was quite good.”
- Stephen, 1st Year, Mech Eng

“Hey! SM64 is not the best game ever! I don’t have a ‘best. game. ever!’ but out of them SM64 is not the best. Don’t get me wrong: it’s not bad but it’s hardly the best.”
- Andrew Lim, 2nd Year, CompSci

“The stuff [you] write is okay. But do write about newer games.”
- Chong, 4th Year, EEEng

“Definitely very informative. The reviews on niche games are pretty cool and I certainly appreciate the use of gaming slang!”
- Eric Park, 1st Year, Mech Eng

“Definitely better and different than last year’s. Clearly a lot more colourful, as well.”
- Nimalen, 4th Year, EEEng

“I must admit that I do not read it fully but I do look at it sometimes. From that, I notice that the layout is quite nice and there must be a lot of hard work put into it. I hope that [Felix Games] gets more writers.”
- Andreas Frenzel, 4th Year, Aero Eng

“Never ever review a game [Re: Portal] that’s part of a whole set without reviewing the entire set. That’s just bad practice!”
- Andrew Lim, 2nd Year, CompSci

“Felix Games represents the interests of many Imperial students. It is written by very articulate people and is an engaging read. It’s also very thoughtful and good fun too!”
- Benjamin Toomer, 1st Year, EEEng

“Most colourful page in Felix fo’ sho’. Though only at Imperial could we devote two pages weekly to the world of virtual reality.”
- Li-Teck Lau, Politics Editor

“Always a comic read. Pretty pictures. Needs more lensflare and f.p.s.”
- Andrew Somerville, News Editor

“I’m quite enjoying the games section of Felix this year, and not just because Azfar publishes my useless comments. While the articles are still far too long and don’t have enough pictures, it’s relevant to the games I play and what I want to see.”
- Samir Talwar, 2nd Year, CompSci

“I’m proud that no one’s properly whinged about us yet. Well, not to our faces. Come on out. If there’s a way Felix Games can kick further ass, then do offer your criticism. We promise we won’t pwn you. Too hard. Besides that, I also need to comment on the rubbish presentation for this week. Seriously, wtf? Felix Games needs to plan a bit further ahead so it can avoid these pitfalls. Granted this is sort of the first time, but I certainly hope it’ll be the last. At any rate, it’s time to say farewell for the time being as we enter the Christmas break or as the College really wants to put it as: extra revision time. Have fun catching up on the studies you missed because of gaming and the gaming you missed because of studies. Happy Holidays all!”

- Azfarul Islam
Games Editor

Imperial College Gaming Club (ICGC)

“They can make [the sessions] longer, have more machines and more screens.”
- Alex, 1st Year, Mech Eng

“No more movie sessions!”
- Michael, 1st Year, Chem

“If anyone has Unreal Tournament 2004, then get down here! I would rather die than play Halo 3!”
- Andy, 1st Year, CompSci

“Intense!”
- Jun, 1st Year, BioChem

“Needs more girls.”
- Boris, 1st Year, Chem

“If you’re interested they’re here, if you’re not, they’re not. Simple.”
- Andrew Lim, 2nd Year, CompSci

“We’ve had some very good response. The Fresher’s Fair was the turning point for us. About five hundred (500) people signed up for the mailing list and that resulted in close to one hundred (100) members. We had about eighty (80) of them show up to the first session and after that we’ve averaged about thirty (30). Last year, there were five (5) people in the sessions.”
- David Fernandez
Imperial College Gaming Club Co-Founder



Graduates in science/engineering can become lawyers!

FIND OUT MORE AT A LAW ‘TASTER’ WORKSHOP FOR NON-LAW STUDENTS INTERESTED IN A CAREER IN LAW

Tuesday 11 December 2007 • 6:45 pm – 9:00 pm
Imperial College, South Kensington Campus
Room 301, The Skempton Building

If you are interested in finding out more about the law then this stimulating workshop is for you! By way of a short quiz, a negotiation role-play and a law ‘taster’ session led by qualified solicitors/tutors from The College of Law this interactive workshop will give you the opportunity to:

- match your skills to those required by firms and chambers
- experience a real taster which replicates the learning experience on The College of Law’s conversion course (the GDL)
- find out about the next steps you need to take in order to pursue a career in law

You can also hear about the Graduate Diploma in Law – the law conversion course for non-law students – and find out about the unique features that make The College of Law’s course different from other providers. If you are seriously considering law then don’t miss out on this opportunity – you can add it to your CV thus demonstrating your commitment to law!

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED.

Please book your place by e-mailing the
Imperial College Law Society at lawsoc@imperial.ac.uk

The College of Law
of England and Wales



Wordoku 1,390

C	s		I			A	S	
		T						
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		s	R	M		C		A
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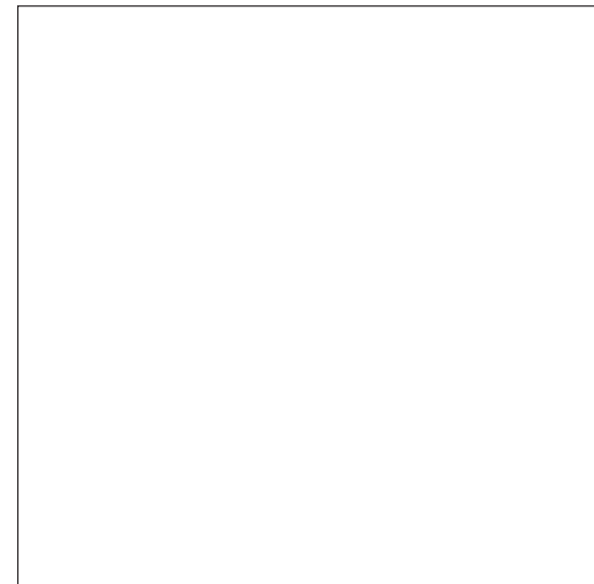
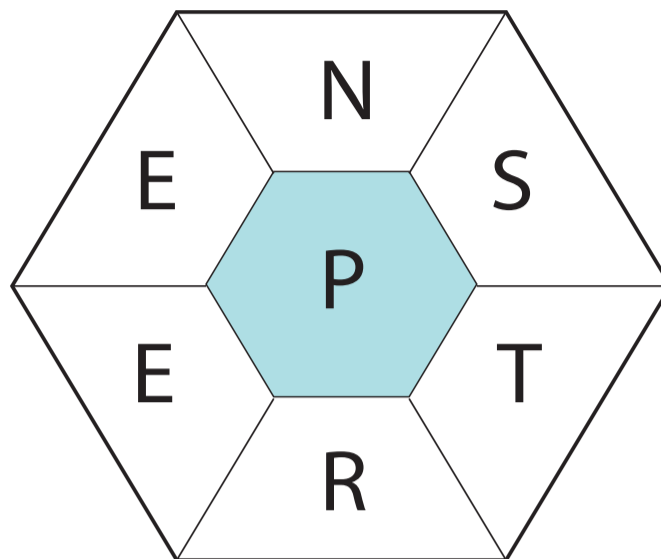
Solution to 1,389

W	R	I	D	T	O	S	N	F
F	O	D	S	N	I	T	R	W
T	S	N	R	F	W	D	I	O
O	D	S	N	R	F	W	T	I
N	W	F	T	I	D	O	S	R
I	T	R	O	W	S	F	D	N
D	F	T	I	O	N	R	W	S
R	I	W	F	S	T	N	O	D
S	N	O	W	D	R	I	F	T

Wordoku is identical to sudoku; we've just replaced the numbers with letters. Once you've completed the puzzle, there is a hidden word or phrase to find. Email in your answers to sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk.

The winner of the Wordoku 1,389 was Stephen Holland. The hidden phrase was "SNOWDRIFT".

The Polygon of Fun Festive Fantasies



How to rate yourself:

Under 9 words: The wheel may be spinning but your gerbil has died. Lets hope you get a brain for Christmas.

10 – 14 words: You are so dense that light bends around you.

15 – 20 words: You're not as stupid as you look, are you?

21 plus words: Well done, you linguistic leviathon! Merry Christmas!

Last week's solution:

The seven letter word was:

CONDOMS

Congratulations if you have condoms.

Other words included:

codon, codons, cods, condo, condom, condos, cons, cocs, docs, dons, doom, dooms, mods, mono, monos, mood, moods, moon, moons, moos, nods, snood, sodom, soon

How to play

Using the letters given, not more than once, make as many words as possible. They must be at least four or more letters long and each word you come up with must include the central letter. Capitalised words, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in "-ly", comparatives and superlatives are disallowed. A word you are not allowed in this case would be "Felix" as none of the letters can be found in the polygon. I think you know the rules by now.

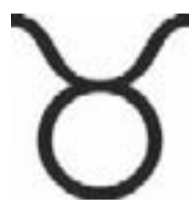
H to the o, r, o, sizzle copes – it's the Horoscopes



Aquarius

You undergo gene therapy and somehow your Y-Chromosome is replaced by an X-Chromosome. This leads to

a humongous blubbering vagina growing fast on the end of your penis. Matty thinks it looks like a tulip but Tom is likening the organic transformation to a lion eating a rotten cucumber. Sally thinks wahoo! doubleness.



Taurus

As you shave your girlfriend's foot hair, she tells you it's not really working out and she was only with you because

she likes the colour of your toenails. She says it reminds her of the hue of the crunchy peanutbutter she used to take to her dad while he was in prison for selling drugs to kids, while dressed as Jonathan Ross.



Leo

Your next week will be just like the rest of your mediocre life stuck in crappy working class hell-hole -- as uneventful

as a penis two days after circumcision surgery. You will spend Saturday feeding stones to your grandmother as she sleeps, because you like the noises she makes as she chokes on them. You like the smell after she coughs them out.



Scorpio

PMS takes over and your mood swings are more erratic than usual. A few hours after becoming a

vegetarian you start thinking cannibalism may be a fun option and decide to go ahead and get the t-shirt. You discover your brother actually does not taste like chicken and your disgusting hippie vegan ways take over once more.



Pisces

The air conditioning in your office stops working and you feel remarkably like a paedophile in a Big Bird suit. Your back

sweats profusely. You start enjoying the feeling little bit too much. A few days later you are arrested for indecent and lewd behaviour in Hyde Park. You take a liking to the police officer who takes you in and grope her hard.



Gemini

This week you run into a pine cone the size of the Statue of Liberty. This experience is a pleasurable one

and it gives you copious amounts of sensual feelings. You fall in love and soon after become Mrs. Pine Cone. Your kids are weird looking and they get bullied at school for rubbing against other students' legs and purring.



Virgo

You wake up Monday morning realising you have grown massive bingo wings. You take advantage of

this newfound talent by pleasing your partner physically and shaking them wildly during intercourse. This completely acceptable behaviour continues until he is knocked out. You are a bingowing tantric master now.



Sagittarius

You open all the Chrismukkah presents under the poorly decorated tree in your dingy living room. You

discover your father bought your sister a pitchfork which she has been instructed to ram through your granny's foot an average of 3 times a day. You are delighted at the thought and will sell pictures of the process online.



Aries

Sphincters. Sphincter is a perfectly normal English word that invokes different sensations and images in the

minds of the young and the ancient. Sphincter. Say it twice. Sphincter, sphincter. It sounds like an elementary particle. Whoever finds the Sphincter wins the next Nobel Prize.



Cancer

You feel a slight pain around your stomach and head to the local bombed out GP practice. Dr Patel breaks the

news to you that due to excessive drinking you now have a foie gras instead of a liver. In desperation you enjoy a terrine of your own tasty dandruff.



Libra

You enjoy the occasional expletion of gas from the rear end. You start analysing the frequency as well as quality

and loudness levels of these little bouquets of scented noise. You arrive at the conclusion they are lenghtier, louder and floppier than ever. You are actually a 56 year old man.



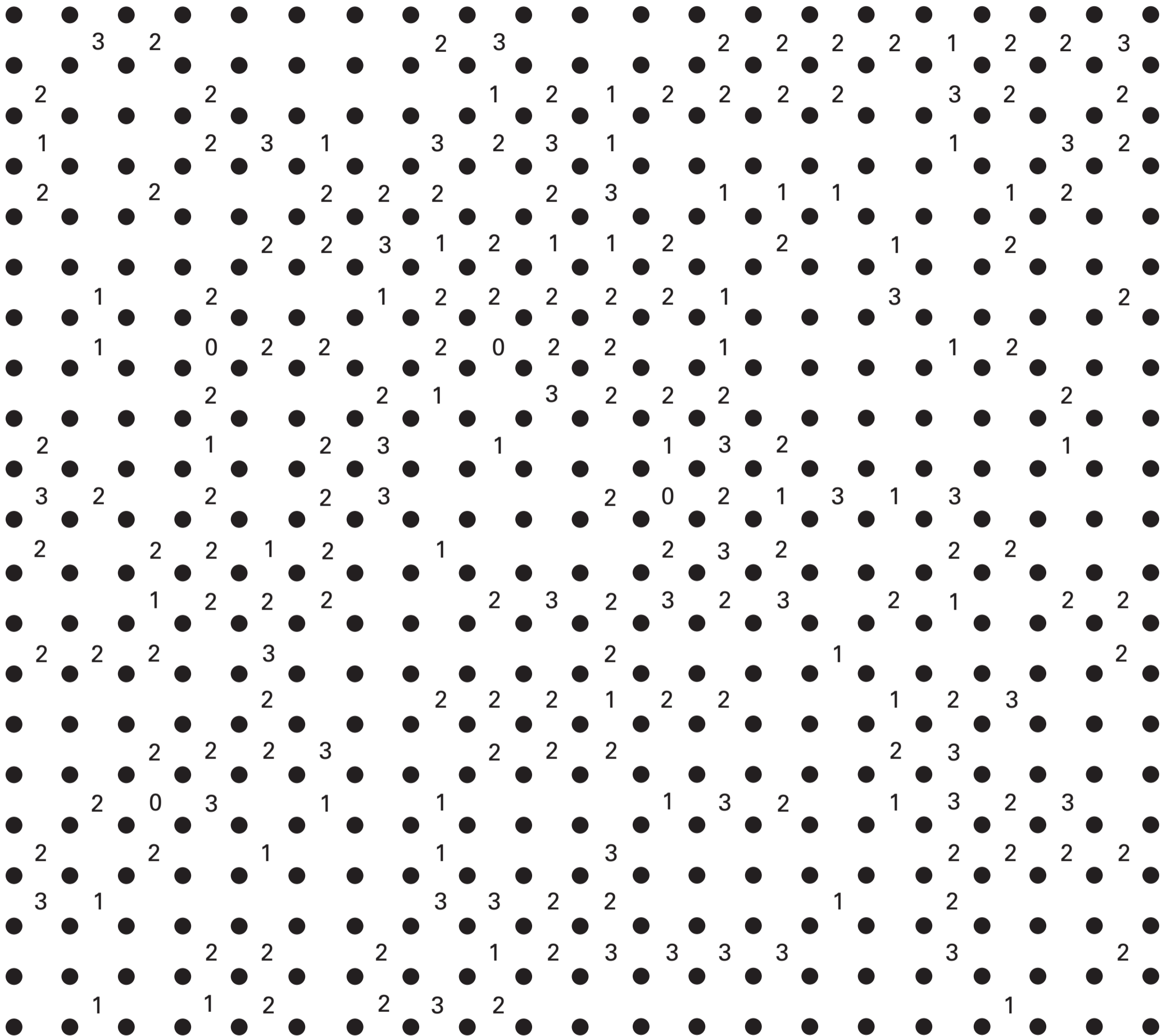
Capricorn

.... Knock knock knock... Who's there? ... Jonathan Feverish-Anaconda ... Jonathan Feverish-Anaconda

Who? ... Jonathan Feverish-Anaconda, I'm going to rip out your throat and eat your intestines for breakfast after sodomising your mother.

Slitherlink 1,390

Slitherlink 11 – Hard



How to play:

Crudely speaking, Slitherlink is similar to Minesweeper mixed with a dash of Sudoku.

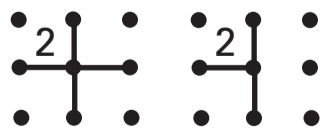
The object of the game is to draw lines between the dots to create one long, and most importantly, looping line. It should have no start or finish; just like an elastic band.

Each number indicates how many lines should be drawn around it, for example:



Cells which don't contain a number can be surrounded by any number of lines.

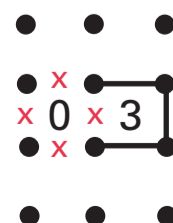
Remember, the line must form a loop, so the line cannot branch. The following situations are not allowed:



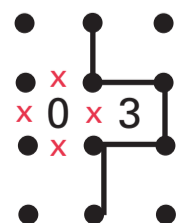
Squares are not allowed either. There are never cells containing the number 4 in Slitherlink.

So, where do you start? The most common place to start on a Slitherlink grid is by drawing crosses around any zeros. Drawing crosses is purely done to so that you know where there can't possibly be a line. So, take the pattern

below as an example. Begin by drawing crosses, then by filling in some lines:



Now the lines can only continue in the following directions:



Last week's answer had a bit of an error in it. We think it was actually impossible to do. Sorry about that. Fingers crossed this one works!

felix needs you!



Felix is written by students for students. We need your contributions so that we can report on news stories and keep everybody entertained during the most arduous of lectures.

Felix is actively recruiting again now the holidays are almost upon us. In preparation for next term we are specifically looking for:

- **Webmasters** to upload issues and articles to the website (union.ic.ac.uk/felix at the moment!)
- **News writers** to report on anything that affects students at Imperial
- **A Challenge the Sabbs organiser** to find foes stupid enough to battle against the Union Presidents and to write up the match reports
- **Comment columnists** to join in with the current crop of opinionated writers
- **Contributors for all the sections** or writers keen on joining in with more than one section
- **Copy editors** with an eagle-eye for grammer mistakes to form part of our crack team

If you want to take up one of these positions or get involved, send an email to the following address:
felix@imperial.ac.uk

Men's 1 win then shamelessly plug new calendar

Hockey

Imperial Men's 1st	6
Kingston Men's 1st	2

**Fiona Jameson
& Maria Parkes**

The opening minutes of the match didn't go in IC's favour with Plug letting one in through his feet within the first two minutes, and Sid and Krusty both missing an open goal. However Diana sorted this out by scoring only 5 minutes in to level the score. IC picked up their game, with Shipman skilfully defending one of the many aerals and D.R. defending well despite the funny running. IC were awarded a short corner in which an awesome goal was disallowed.

This was one of many short corners that IC failed to capitalise on. Kingston were trying their hardest with players randomly diving into the air just in case it would help. It didn't. IC lead the attack but Kingston swiftly reversed this, worrying Foetus and leading to shocking tackles for which Shipman got reprimanded but not tossed off. Mountie called for the team to calm down, but no one seemed to listen. Kingston managed to get another past Plug, but luckily this was disallowed, we have no idea why. IC got attacking again but this time Krusty got angry with the umpires luckily only getting a green card.

This didn't deter IC but clearly pissed off Kingston who took down Diana in the D leading to a penalty stroke being awarded. The tension was high but Diana was in control putting another past the keeper, this stroke was on par with Dominator's score a few weeks previously. IC were once again in the lead. Dyke piped up from the sideline that

all gingers were good at sport which was demonstrated by Paedo and Skull F*ck, who created another chance for Krusty leading to yet another IC goal.

Kingston got angry and not only started lobbing the ball into the IC spectators but got Shipman so angry that he fouled in the 25 to give away a short corner. He is a bit of a drama queen and stayed stuck to the floor, probably expecting a yellow card, but oddly the umpires just gave him another reprimand. Shipman redeemed himself by defending the corner.

IC then took the worst ever 16 yard hit out as Plug needed to dive to save Shipman from potentially scoring an own goal. The half time whistle blew and the half time comments weren't inspirational with D.R. saying "for f**ks sake" and Stumpy saying "I'm as bored as f**k". Clearly something wasn't right in the IC camp, so Paedo did his best at buttering up the umpire.

Krusty's half time talk must have been inspirational as IC came out fired up. There was great penetration down the left hand side with Krusty to Mountie to Diana to Sid to Stumpy before finding the target leading to another IC goal. Dominator continued to chant "run Stumpy run" at any given opportunity. Mountie decided diving was called for but actually missed the ball and D.R. got involved in a bit of argy-bargy and the small boy fell over.

Tensions continued to rise with Krusty and the Kingston number 3 being spoken to and the Kingston 7 getting a green card. Note at this point Nugget has his hands down his pants "just checking that they were still there". It wasn't that cold up at the Fortress...Stumpy once again claimed he was bored but the defence were working hard especially as they kept giving away short corners, and Kingston finally scored another. The Kingston 7 got a yellow card but did apologise for his



Is that some sort of naked hockey calendar that they're holding there?

bad tackle. How kind of him. Stumpy decided to do some running claiming "I'm going to touch it now" and after some dopey dopey do with Krusty they gained another short corner. Alex hasd his drag flick saved but they got another short, this time Diana took it and hit home, scoring a hat-trick; the first fresher hat-trick of the season.

This time working from the back

Foetus, Sid and Stumpy worked hard and fast to score another IC goal. Kingston tried to get back in the game once number 7 had been allowed back on. D.R. took a needless swing at Stumpy's tackle before doing a stylish dive to get the ball back. Shipman got beaten by a nifty little flick. However it made no difference when the final whistle blew. The post match comments were few

and far between with Mountie being too involved in PDAs and D.R. claiming "it was no Friedrichshafen". The umpires failed to comment.

The team rounded off the match with a team photo posing with the front cover of the ICHC 2008 Calendar. This is on sale now from Hockey Club members, just in case you were wondering.



Fixtures and Results

in association with *Sports Partnership*



Saturday 1st December

Football – ULU

ICU Men's 2nd	2
UCL Men's 2nd	0

ICU Men's 3rd	
Queen Mary Men's 2nd	

UCL Men's 6th	4
ICU Men's 4th	1

ICU Men's 5th	1
Royal Holloway Men's 4th	3

Royal Holloway Men's 6th	3
ICU Men's 6th	1

Imperial at Wye Men's 1st	7
ICU Men's 7th	1

Sunday 2nd December

Football – ULU

King's Medicals 1st	
ICU Women's 1st	

Volleyball

Weekend Tournament

ICU Men's 1st	2
ULU Men's 1st	0

ICU Men's 1st	2
Sussex Men's 1st	0

ICU Men's 1st	2
UCL Men's 1st	0

Monday 3rd December

Netball – ULU

ICU 1st	49
King's 2nd	21

ICU 2nd	17
King's Medicals 4th	23

Squash – ULU

King's Men's 1st	
ICU Men's 2nd	

ICU Men's 3rd	4
Imperial Medicals 1st	1

Wednesday 5th December

Badminton

Queen Mary Men's 1st	
ICU Men's 1st	

ICU Men's 2nd	7
Kingston Men's 1st	1

ICU Women's 1st	
University of Exeter Women's 1st	

Fencing

University of Kent Men's 1st	134
ICU Men's 1st	124

Football

ICU Men's 1st	1
St. Mary's Men's 1st	1

University of Essex Men's 3rd	Re-arranged
ICU Men's 2nd	Re-arranged

ICU Men's 3rd	2
Royal Holloway Men's 2nd	3

King's Men's 3rd (ULU)	CANCELLED
ICU Men's 4th (ULU)	CANCELLED

Portsmouth Women's 2nd	CANCELLED
ICU Women's 1st	CANCELLED

Hockey

University of Hertfordshire Men's 1st	1
ICU Men's 1st	4

University of Essex Men's 2nd	0
ICU Men's 2nd	9

ICU Men's 3rd	3
University of Reading Men's 4th	1

ICU Men's 4th	3
University of Portsmouth Men's 4th	2

ICU Women's 1st	2
Brunel Women's 2nd	1

University of Sussex Women's 2nd	Re-arranged
ICU Women's 2nd	Re-arranged

Lacrosse

UCL Women's 1st	4
ICU Women's 1st	8

Netball

University of Hertfordshire 2nd	30
ICU 1st	33

ICU 2nd	29
Queen Mary 2nd	18

Rugby Union

ICU Men's 1st	26
Brunel Men's 1st	10

ICU Men's 2nd	35
University of Portsmouth Men's 3rd	5

ICU Men's 3rd	31
University of Essex Men's 3rd	10

Thames Valley University SESSA XV	
ICU SESSA XV	

Squash

UCL Men's 2nd	0
ICU Men's 1st	5

ICU Men's 2nd	
Queen Mary Men's 1st	

University of Kent Men's 2nd	2
ICU Men's 3rd	1

Surrey Women's 1st	Walkover to
ICU Women's 1st	SURREY

Tennis

University of Portsmouth Men's 1st	7
ICU Men's 1st	3

ICU Women's 1st	Re-arranged
King's Women's 1st	Re-arranged

Saturday 8th December

Football – ULU

SOAS Men's 1st vs ICU Men's 1st	
UCL Men's 3rd vs ICU Men's 3rd	
ICU Men's 4th vs Queen Mary Men's 3rd	
King's Men's 3rd vs ICU Men's 5th	
ICU Men's 6th vs RSM Men's 1st	

Sunday 9th December

Football – ULU

ICU Women's 1st vs Royal Holloway 1st	
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Hockey – ULU

ICU Men's 3rd vs St. George's Hospital 2nd	
--	--

Lacrosse – ULU

ICU Mixed 1st vs UCL Mixed qst	
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Rugby – ULU

King's Women's 1st vs ICU Women's 1st	
---------------------------------------	--

Home or away, volleyball just keep on winning

Volleyball

Imperial Women's 1st	3
LSE Women's 1st	2

Volleyball

Imperial Women's 1st	3
Essex Women's 1st	1

Volleyball

Imperial Men's 1st	2
UCL Men's 1st	0

Volleyball

Imperial Men's 1st	2
Sussex Men's 1st	0

Volleyball

Imperial Men's 1st	2
ULU Men's 1st	0

Konrad Kieling

The Men's Volleyball team have made further progress in their BUSA first division title run. They are just back from a long day of volleyball in Reading, where the 2nd BUSA league event was set. IC defeated in straight sets current league champions ULU (who were UK champions 2 years ago) after dismissing our friends at UCL and Sussex with the same result. All in one day – that is how the BUSA S/E league is organised: matches are concentrated in 3 weekend events held in different venues.

It all started with the usual early rise. The team was amazingly spot on time at the minivan park (even the Greeks!!). After the ritual driver name calling the team overcame the first obstacle – the nefarious back-windscreen wiper was on (most of the time as someone carefully pointed out). With some resolve our safe pair of hands Bruno turned it off and swiftly drove into the Cromwell Rd/A4/ M4/Reading there we go. First on the spot and ready to warm-up for the first game scheduled for the day. In the meanwhile the coach's incredibly expensive sat-nav was going crazy and taking him into the wilderness (which is not too far from Reading Uni – where gulls and local basketball team cheerleaders coexist peacefully).

IC displayed a convincing first set

and dealt heavy blow to the UCL side. No mistakes in reception meant that our basic attack combinations proved extremely effective. Our red-devil libero player Christoph showed his usual confidence in leading the IC defence. The spiker Joao showed top form – surely due to his chaste demeanour the night before in the face of unprecedented Goodenough college debauchery (fil dental!). Setter Julio kept on feeding our outside, middle and opposite (a disciplined and lethal Nicos) attack options and soon the second set was over. 2-0 for IC and end of the undefeated spell for UCL (up to then 3 wins in a row).

The following long break somewhat dented the team's concentration ahead of the Sussex game. Or maybe it was the goats cheese, Italian salami and tomato sandwiches on black bread that proved too hard to digest for the substitute player in the starting 6. You could tell that the coach Donald was not pleased with an unconvincing though victorious first set against bottom-of-the-league Sussex. The team lacked the neatness and resolve to sweep the opposition away as it should have and put-purred towards a close win in the second set. This was useful score-wise though a clear warning bell for the team. Donald quickly summoned the team and got IC to refocus on their motivation, skills and teamwork. The

team charged up against the forthcoming challenge against ULU. Players kept on talking to each other discussing ways to improve the game. Some ventured into the Reading wilderness for a quick breath of fresh air – some went for the team's pastime of playing volleyball in a squash court (don't try this at home!)

And that's when it all happened. IC got on to a cool start against ULU. Our middle players Konrad and Seb kept on blocking and blocking the opposition's spikes. And hitting deadly fast spikes across court in the 3metres line. You could tell ULU were wondering what was going on (see photo: mens_celebration). Our captain Panos did not miss a single hit and his confidence was soon inspiring newcomer Erik too, who was denting the ULU defence. Throughout the game a bewildered audience could hear a madman from the IC bench shouting a mantra towards the players. Something like be humble, be hungry. This fortunately seemed to distract the opposition more than IC – possibly better accustomed to the club chairman's antics. The first set was over soon and IC closed it off comfortably. Needless to say, the team looked completely different from what seen in the previous match. The second set was a slightly closer race. As in the first set, halfway through IC took the lead and drove home a result which last

year would have been unthinkable: IC 2 - ULU 0.

After that, all that was missing was one volleyball (stuck on the ceiling of a squash court – retrieved, otherwise Nicos would not be alive as you read

this), one useless Venezuelan minivan navigator, one Reading council which dislikes the idea of putting London on signals.. and one more BUSA event where the final 4 league matches will take place.. see you in Bethnal Green.

Meanwhile the women were dominating

Bruno Basalisco

The Women's Volleyball team have had a great start to the season. The team was reignited by the new coach Barborá and by a healthy mix of old guard and fresh recruits. Training work is paying off by an undefeated strike in the BUSA second division league, where they compete against other South East Universities. As this is a double match report we will look at both the last home and away fixtures.

Two weeks ago IC played their home fixture against top-rated LSE. The enthusiasm was palpable as our full first women's team of 12 outnumbered the LSE fashionably-haired opposition. The competition was strong and Imperial took the first set authoritatively. A key moment in the initial set was

when IC showed LSE that in volleyball it does not matter how high you wear your hair but how high you jump. Alana proved the point by delivering the first of a few blocks in the match (see photo: womens_block) and the IC lead in the set extended to a crucial 17-14. That's why in the men's team those lucky (or silly) enough to have long hair are not allowed to wear it up (French guys excluded). Anyway, from then on it was downhill to the close of set (25-18).

The second set followed suit. High spirits and high jumps such as those displayed by Karin (see photo: womens_hitKarin) and Chichi both spiking and digging (see photo: womens_dig) made sure IC blasted the LSE court with tremendous hits which left the opposition in disarray. Everyone was thus expecting a straight sets win.

While IC was trying to clinch what would have been a final 3rd set, the concentration level slipped somewhat. It turned out that LSE weren't going to give up that easy and fought back to win the two next sets. Assistant coach Julio (aka "Coolia") took countermeasures by giving some players a rest and bringing in fresh forces – Liz's contribution was noticeable. This meant that the match was to be decided by a final fifth set – which is played up to 15 points only.

IC was determined to win and the girls' determination was shining as they proceeded to get to half-set and swap ends on a cool score of 8-3 up. Team spirit was prominent: substituted Chichi was exemplary off court as on court - standing on the bench shouting support throughout the deciding set. IC then finished the job by leaving LSE just one more point and took the final set 15-4, claiming their third victory of the season.

Last week saw the Imperial women travel to Essex University on a mind-numbing array of forms of transport. Everything but a Heathrow-Stansted direct flight (Richard Branson hasn't thought of that yet!) and waterways was tried. The team made it to Colchester in perfect time and was ready for action. Having already beaten Essex at home the team were feeling quite confident. This was shown from a confident first set, where the training work practising positions on court and rotations gave the team a clear 10 points lead. Second set was somehow mixed up as distraction and some interesting refereeing decisions from the other teams coach meant that the set was slipped into the hands of Essex! After



Fine block

that, captain Katerina marshalled the team through two victorious sets to conclude with a neat 3-1 for IC. Most notably the defence from Valentina and Nadia was strong. This allowed a smooth flow of receptions which were turned into some great sets from Ashly (see photo: womens_set) and hits from

Emily (see photo: womens_hitEmily) and Natalia.

These victories have enabled the Imperial Women's to be top of their league so far. If this record is maintained this will give them good chances to get a good path through to the Trophy finals.



A fine specimen of attack from the middle



That's what I call digging

Football ladies do it again with only 9 players

Football	LOREAL PARIS
Imperial Women's 1st	3
Sussex Women's 2nds	1

Chloe Joyeux

The IC women's football met at the union on a chilly Wednesday afternoon. With only five of them having showed up on time, the people present started feeling a little bit uncomfortable. Thankfully, a few more arrived, just in time to catch the bus to Harlington. The opposition team was Sussex 2nd and once again, the IC women were short of players. They came out onto the pitch, the thirteen opposition players pointing and grinning at the eight of them at the thought of an easy victory.

The above could be the start of any Wednesday match report, as the IC women have so far been playing the majority of their Wednesday BUSA games short of players. This, however, has not stopped them from winning three and drawing two games out of a total six played; and from being second of their BUSA group, tagging to the top team rather closely. But let us go back to the actual game. Although I should not really spoil the ending, I will say that having thirteen players did not bring much luck to the Sussex women!

Despite their win, the start of the game had not begun well for the IC

women. Eight players made it to Harlington on time, with a ninth, Gools, supposed to arrive as soon as possible. IC kicked-off but lost the ball very quickly. In fact, so quickly that a Sussex goal was scored within the first 10 to 11 seconds. The team was taken aback. Either the Sussex confidence was at maximum level or IC was clearly half asleep. Either way, the IC team quickly regained their senses and started doing what they do best, playing football! They still struggled to keep the ball in the Sussex half and a free kick, meters from the goal, was luckily saved by Emily. Twenty minutes after kick-off, however, the miracle happened and the girls saw Gools running towards them. She changed at lightning speed and appeared on the pitch. The super Gools had made it and was the inspiration the IC Ladies were waiting for. IC was able to push forward more confidently. Nothing spectacular happened for the rest of this half except for a ridiculous foul on Chloe, sending her flying 2 meters forward, and Pav the beast, fighting against 6 Sussex players at a time.

The second half is therefore where all happened. Emma decided to change the team formation from a 4:3:1 to a 3:4:1 and this made all the difference! While Steph, Chloe, and Pav had been struggling to keep the ball in the Sussex half during the first part of the game, it seemed unbelievably easy with the help of Kate on the left. Pav and Lily were therefore free to fire at the Sussex goal wildly. All IC players

had a go at shooting, even Emma from the half way line. Despite all her goals been on target, however, she was not able to secure the ball to the back of the net. The first goal originated with a pass from Steph from the right at the 55th minute. Pav jogged comfortably towards the box and her powerful kick did the rest. Not wanting to stop here, Pav secured the win another ten minutes later with a pass from Kate this time. The solid defence led by Emma, Gools, and Cheryl enabled the rest of the team to push forward comfort-

ably, still creating more chances and opening. The Sussex ladies continued running after the ball, trying to play aggressively but not having enough players to bend the IC team. Emily's only real threat during this second half seems to have been their number 14. Suddenly inspired, she broke from the half-way line and sprinted towards the goal. Luckily, Emily won this battle and 14 came back with her tail between her legs. Lilly pushed the Sussex girls around, getting a few warning from Richie P. (although denied by Lilly). IC

was able to win a few corners, although none ended up in the back of the net. The final goal and blow to Sussex came minutes from the end (43rd minute), with a pass from Pav to Lilly. Lilly put in a perfectly clean shot which passed the Sussex keeper, at uncontrollable speed, therefore sealing the IC victory.

This successful day ended with Steph having received no beef and with the Sussex coach praising the IC efforts and courage. The IC ladies are now officially the best team to win with missing players.



"Take it quickly, they're trying to have a match behind us!"

Imperial Wushu take gold at Tai Chi nationals

Eugene Chang

The inaugural Inter-University Tai Chi competition in the UK took place on Saturday 1st December 2007 in Manchester with Imperial College Wushu Society taking three gold medals. Shaopeng Li and Allan Martin, both members of the Wushu Society, gave very impressive performances, demonstrating Tai Chi 42 Step Hand Form, Straight Sword and Sabre forms and easily attaining the top podium positions for each respective category. Furthermore, both Shaopeng and Allan achieved the highest scores of the day, placing themselves far ahead of the other competitors from Bath, Cam-

bridge, Manchester and Leeds.

Shaopeng and Allan have been training as part of the Society's Demo Team, a group dedicated to performing and competing in Chinese Martial Arts. The Demo Team will be performing in the upcoming Chinese New Year celebrations at the Victoria and Albert Museum, ArtsFest '08 and East Meets West '08. On top of this, we are looking to host the first inter-university wushu competition in Ethos sometime next year where our members will be competing – watch this space!

Further details of the Society, its classes and its Demo Team can be found on the Society's website, www.union.ic.ac.uk/wushu.



The guy in the middle really isn't getting into the team spirit!



THE LINKS CLUB
1926

Links Award

The Links Club of the City and Guilds of London, would like to announce their award for any student within the City and Guilds College who is an active member within the Guilds or who has excelled on the sporting front.

The award is a bursary of £250 and will be presented to the eventual winner at The Links Club annual dinner in June 2008.

Candidates must submit an application no longer than 300 words, either by email to honsec@linksclub.org or hand it in to the CGCU office in a sealed envelope by 1st May 2008. Entrants must outline why they believe they deserve the award.

Medics winning ways return

Rugby

Oxford Brookes Men's 1st	21
Imperial Medicals 1st	27

Simon Bellringer

Last Wednesday, on a muddy pitch in Oxford, Imperial Medicals 1st XV got their BUSA campaign back on track with an impressive 27-21 win over Oxford Brookes.

Having been on the receiving end of a 33-5 beating in the first home game of the season against a well-drilled and clinical Brookes side, some may have thought that the away fixture would prove to be much the same. Starting the first half into the wind up the slope the Medicals began confidently and shocked a laid-back Brookes side by dominating early on, despite having to fight the conditions. However, it was Brookes who opened the scoring, rather against the run of play, when stand-in captain Simon Bellringer slipped as he attempted to clear to touch from his own twenty two, gifting the home side's fly-half the opening score and subsequent conversion.

Unperturbed by their misfortune, the Medicals bounced back straight from the kick-off. Following a turn over from the re-start, the visitors secured good field positions and forced the Brookes pack to concede a penalty in front of the posts. Dan Neville duly obliged with a well-struck kick to cut the Brookes' lead to just 4 points. The first half continued to be close, but Brookes, despite the wind, did not threaten the Medicals' hearty defence. It was the Medicals, indeed, who struck next when a superb turnover and swift distribution by Neville and Nightingale saw Harry Thompson (freshly returned from elective) free on the wing to expertly run in a try from the 10 metre line, which put the Medicals 8-7 up at half time.

After a rousing team talk from Coach Keith Green, the Medicals set about the task of building on their first half lead and put pressure on Brookes straight away. Astute kicking from Neville and a

solid platform from the forwards, both in the loose and at the set piece, put the Medicals in great attacking field positions, that saw the visitors come close to scoring on several occasions. The pressure began to tell, and when an almost certain try was stopped by a desperate Brookes prop, who was carded for his sins, the Medicals pack put the weary Brookes forwards to the sword with a superbly controlled push over try from a scrum, scored by James Saffin at No.8. Neville again obliged with the conversion.

The Medicals used their new-found confidence to bully the Brookes pack yet further, forcing them back onto their own line where, with quick feet, Neville snuck over the line to claim the third Medicals try of the game, which he then converted. Brookes, now with the full compliment of forwards, fought back and stole a try against the run of play through their fullback, who

went over under the posts to make for an easy conversion. The Medicals pack, clearly furious at the cheek of the Brookes side, executed a well-controlled line out and drive to push the Brookes pack back at a rate of knots! In their desperation and exhaustion the hosts left gaps at the fringes of the maul, which an ever alert Tom Maynard seized upon. Breaking from the back of the maul, scrum-half Maynard beautifully stepped the fullback and winger and outpaced the covering defenders to dive over in the corner for what proved to be the winning try.

The pugnacious Brookes team, aided by the sin binning of Medicals 2nd row Rob Anderson, again advanced and, despite some hearty defence from the visitors, forced their way over to make the score 27-21. However, with only 1 minute on the clock the try was immaterial and the Medicals had triumphed! The Great Escape starts here...



Temper temper Anderson, you don't want to get sin-binned. Oh wait!

IC Ladies lose gracefully

Hockey

Imperial Women's 2nd	0
Portsmouth Women's 2nd	7

Chris Baker-Brian

Ok, so the score-line wasn't great, but it has to be noted that the Portsmouth Ladies were pretty damn hot (apart from 27).

Unicycle did well by using her big hit to almost clean up a defender and Easy Jet almost looked mobile in goal. IC worked hard in defence with a good clearance by Thombelina. IC weathered the intense pressure from Portsmouth but eventually conceded the opening goal. And then another. However once again IC were working well, especially Thombelina to win a free hit on the left and then a short corner.

There was a great chance from Ghostbuster to create a chance which was narrowly missed on the left. IC started to have more possession and

got another free hit and was played well by Brownie. This was probably due to the great support from the side line, especially D.R. in his foil dress.

The Portsmouth short was bravely defended by Unicycle, which we used to gain a short but Portsmouth literally broke IC down with 3 Times a Lady being injured by Portsmouth number 10 "the Tank" which led to goal number 3. Thombelina showed some Scottish determination but no luck, they scored again through some good passing. The half time talk was once again taken over by the occasional team manager P. Fi and thanks to Dominator for providing the oranges.

D.R. and Mountie got too involved in rescuing the match ball from the depths of the back of the pitch to concentrate on the game. Dominator at this time denies Portsmouth a goal but gives away a short which they capitalise on. IC get angry and Portsmouth get hit by the Mystery Sniper. The crowd take time out to work out who was hot or not on the Portsmouth side. Hot were 4, 30 (but she was a bit skinny), 47 and

59. Not were 1 (the keeper should have kept her kit on), 10 (too much fake tan, looked like a pig and clearly on steroids), 13 and 27.

This reporter can't feel his feet at this point. Clearly it was very cold at Harlington. "Pigface" ruts on Ghostbuster in a tackle, IC are lacking penetration of the ring. IC finally win a short corner but this was saved by the keeper, then IC make stick tackle number 347; a new record. Easy Jet keeps her legs closed for the longest period since the beginning of term and despite it being -5°C the girls do very little running. The "Tank" was finally taken down as she was twatted by Jess but then they score again. The stick tackle count goes up to 511. The umpire decides that he has had enough and after not giving any cards but 7 yellows in the previous match its finally time for Dominator to be tossed off. She is clearly very unhappy. The final whistle blew shortly after to end a long game for the girls.

Hopefully the girls fortunes will turn next week and they can get back to winning ways.

Iliotibial Band Syndrome

Hannah Barr

The ITB emerges from the tensor fascia lata (TFL) which runs down the outside thigh just below the hip. The upper portion of the band ascends vertically to attach at the top of the hip (hence the name ilio), whilst the lower portion runs all the way down the side of the thigh before attaching to the outside of the tibia, just below the knee (hence the name tibial).

So in effect the TFL and ITB are very closely interlinked and therefore signs and symptoms, as well as treatment should focus on both rather than one or the other. However as the entire musculoskeletal structure is interwoven rehabilitation would need to take into account the effects on the surrounding muscles as well.

Symptoms of the ITBS frequently include tenderness, aching and/or pain just below the knee on the outer edge, but pain or irritation can also be present much further up in the TFL itself or in its tendinous connection with the hip. The pain may occur while running, while walking downstairs and sometimes during weight bearing activities.

Usually pain will not be identifiable until you are a few miles into a run. However once it starts it tends to be persistent if you keep running through it, and frequently gets worse during

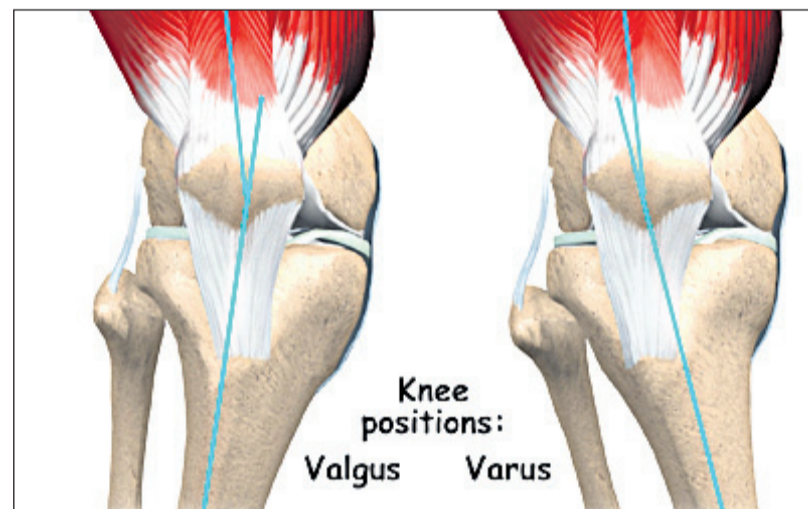
downhill running and while walking down steps. The discomfort can radiate up and down the leg, but will often almost disappear if you stop running and begin to walk slowly and shorten your stride.

The key source of ITB syndrome disorders is actually a lack of flexibility in the ITB, which impacts the biomechanics of the body. A tight ITB basically pulls other structures out of their true alignment causing muscular imbalance. This alteration can then create a pain response.

There are a number of reasons why this lack of flexibility occurs: Running on a track or on crowned roads can create a muscular imbalance as the outside leg takes in more force during running. A leg length discrepancy, as the shorter leg receives greater stress as it falls a greater distance before the foot makes actual impact with the ground.

Having bow legs, excessive leg muscle tightness, or very pronounced foot pronation can all increase the risk of ITBS. This syndrome also appears to be related to weak hip abductors, so the gluteal complex and the TFL may require strength training.

If you are concerned about this particular type of injury, feel free to come and speak to an Energia instructor who can advise on preventative measures, treatment and active rehabilitation.



Imperial Team of the Week



Hockey Men's 1st

This week, *Sports Partnership* along with *Felix Sport* have chosen the Hockey Men's 1st team as their 'Team of the Week'.

The team has had a promising start to the season, losing only one game so far and comfortably win-

ning the rest of them. This continued with the game on Wednesday against Hertfordshire, where the final score was 4 - 1 to Imperial.

Well done lads, let's hope you can keep this winning streak going into the next term.

The importance of water



Gil Saville
Energia Fitness Instructor

Water is crucial for us to remain healthy and alive, but all too often it is taken for granted as to why it is so important and to what extent it helps us perform better in exercise. Water is the second most important element to life, after oxygen. The body can survive for weeks without food but only days without water, and often for a lot less in warm temperatures and high altitudes. The body and all its organs are comprised mainly of water; making the average person about 60-75% water.

Water is essential to all bodily functions. It aids our digestive system with the absorption of nutrients, it's involved in the regulation of body temperature and blood circulation, it helps in the transport of nutrients and oxygen to cells and removes waste products from the body. Alongside these functions, water also helps to reduce wear on joints providing lubrication and cushioning, including the spinal cord. Without sufficient water supply (dehydration) we open up our bodies to all kinds of problems. Dehydration can lead to hypertension, asthma, allergies and migraines.

The main function of water is its role in regulating our temperature. We generate heat when we train and there are numerous mechanisms which the body calls upon to lose heat. Obviously

the surrounding environment plays a role, but sweating is a significant method of cooling. The evaporation of fluid from the skin is very effective. During prolonged exercise it is possible to lose as much as two litres of sweat per hour. This would be ideal in keeping us cool, but unfortunately not all sweat evaporates, as some drips off the skin and is wasted.

Fluid loss, even as little as 2% of body weight, can seriously impair the capacity to perform muscular work. In temperate climates, most athletes lose 1-5% of body weight in prolonged exercise, even when taking regular fluid throughout.

Water transports oxygen, nutrients, hormones and antibodies through the blood stream and lymphatic system (used to fight cancer, viruses, bacteria and infections). This is obviously important to us as we push our bodies hard in the gym and by doing so we greatly increase the amount of water that our body excretes. When we are dehydrated, our immune system is therefore open to invasion from outside entities and we are more susceptible to the attack. Good hydration helps to protect us from this.

Brain tissue is 85% water, and it uses a twentieth of the body's blood supply. When you are dehydrated you have less water in the blood. This can reduce brain functions, and cause fatigue, depression or stress. It can also lead to migraines, which may be indicators of poor body temperature regulation.

Muscle is 75% water, so it is important that a high water level is main-

tained in order to prevent muscular dehydration. When muscles become dehydrated they are open to possible loss of strength and cramps. Cramps are muscular spasms where a muscle contracts abnormally and locks into an awkward position. Although the direct cause of cramps remains unknown, it is known that muscles that are over-worked, injured or exposed to extreme temperatures are more likely to succumb to cramp. Water helps to regulate our body temperature and aids in the transport of nutrients to cells, so by increasing water intake we can reduce the risk of cramps.

Water is also a lubricant for the joints and the cartilage between the vertebrae and at the end of long bones at synovial joints there is also a significant amount of water. Cartilage needs to be well-hydrated as this prevents abrasive damage occurring when the opposing surfaces of the cartilage make contact with each other. Long term inadequately hydrated joints can lead to friction damage resulting in joint deterioration and pain.

Another reason why water is important is due to the fact that when we dehydrate, our body's solution loses viscosity, which in turn reduces the efficiency of the protein and enzyme functions of the body. So when we are trying to increase our protein absorption, water is vital, as acids and enzymes in the stomach will break food down into a more fluid state as part of the digestion process. Lack of fluid means you will not be able to break down the food as easily and efficiently.

Water is also fundamental with regards to strength. Being slightly dehydrated will reduce a muscle's lifting capability, and training when in this state will reduce the strength gains that you might normally get. If you can't lift as much as when you are adequately hydrated, then how can you expect to push harder and make gains?

Water can also be one of the most useful tools for losing weight. Water is calorie-free so when you are on a restricted diet, drinking water can help fill you up and alleviate some of the hunger.



Sports league

Since I was away last week, and I forgot to mention to anyone in the office to do the league table, we're a week behind. Sorry guys. And since I've struggled to get all the results, we're gonna be another week behind. Do not fear, however, as it is the last issue of term and so I'll have the whole winter holidays to get the table up to date.

Like I mentioned in my editorial, from next term I will include all the medical clubs out there so that we can get a clear picture as to which team is doing the best across the college. For this to work, it does mean that you guys are going to have to get those results in on time to the Sports Partnership people (a.ayling@imperial.ac.uk).

This week, I thought I'd show how the clubs have been doing as a whole.

As we can see the Imperial Rugby Club are top of the table with 67 points. At this point I want to point out that the scoring system is the same as it was before i.e. the ranking of the teams is based on the Felix Index (FI), which is calculated as follows: $FI = (W*5) + (D*2) - (L*4)$.

Rooted bottom of the table are the Medicasl Rugby, who have had a rather disappointing start, although it does seem as though their 'Great Escape' has begun.

Meanwhile, the top of the table is dominated by Imperial sports clubs, with the first medical entry being the netball club at 11th place.

This league table will appear again at the end of next term, so things can change.

Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	%	FI
1 IC Rugby	23	17	1	5	580	260	320	73.91	67
2 IC Squash	22	15	1	6	73	21	52	68.18	53
3 IC Tennis	17	10	2	5	100	70	30	58.82	34
4 IC Netball	12	9	0	3	521	316	205	75	33
5 IC Hockey	39	18	4	17	105	96	9	46.54	30
6 IC Fencing	13	8	0	5	1595	1426	169	61.67	20
7 IC Volleyball	3	3	0	0	9	3	6	100	15
8 IC Lacrosse	6	4	0	2	46	39	7	66.67	12
9 IC Basketball	2	2	0	0	151	96	55	100	10
10 IC Cricket	5	3	0	2	926	678	248	60	7
11 ICSM Netball	20	9	1	10	536	566	-30	45	7
12 ICSM Football	8	2	3	3	13	16	-3	25	4
13 IC Table Tennis	6	3	0	3	39	27	12	50	3
14 IC Golf	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 IC Equestrian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16 IC Waterpolo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
17 ICSM Hockey	41	16	3	22	117	129	-12	39.02	-2
18 ICSM Badminton	7	2	0	5	20	36	-16	28.57	-10
19 IC Football	23	4	7	12	23	47	-24	17.39	-14
20 IC Badminton	17	5	1	11	61	72	-11	29.41	-17
21 ICSM Rugby	20	7	0	13	392	510	-118	35	-17

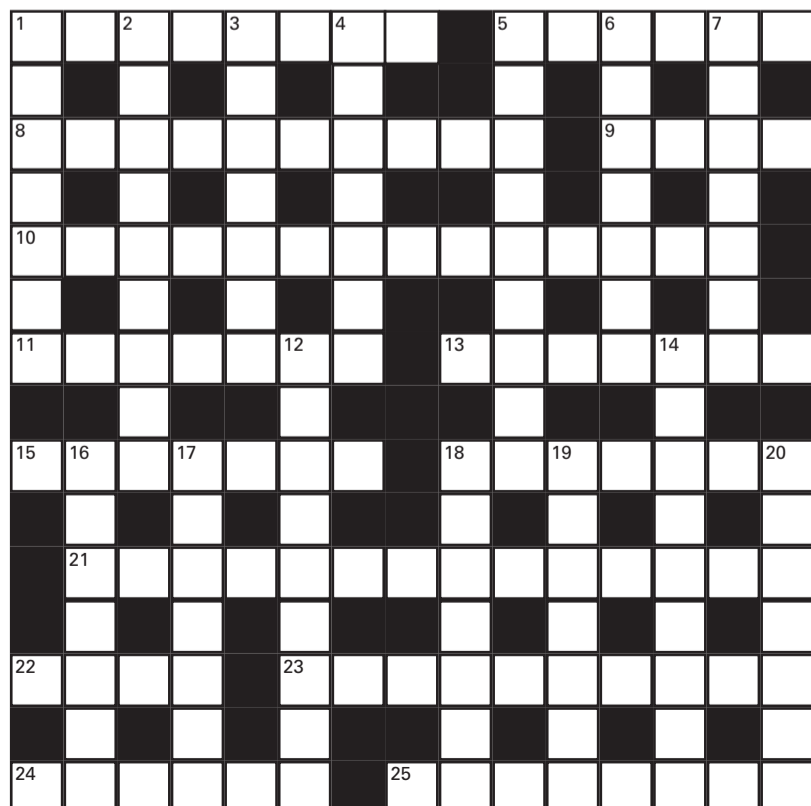
Meanwhile the battle for the top of the leader board continues with Netball, Squash and Tennis still undefeated and

are therefore on equal points. If this carries on, I'm going to have to think of a new way to choose the winner

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	%	FI
1 Netball 1st	5	5	0	0	287	125	162	100	25
2 Squash Men's 1st	5	5	0	0	25	0	25	100	25
3 Tennis Men's 2nd	5	5	0	0	41	9	32	100	25

Crossword No. 1,390

Answers to: sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk



ACROSS

- It's clear that the party's promises don't have nothing in them (8)
- Add the almighty to the selection in the bam (6)
- Unskilled member of the public gets a century, violently thrashing around in his sleep (10)
- Real cut up, going to cry (4)
- Initial stardom gives way to belief in past values (14)
- Penalties without an angry letter (7)
- Lisped Christmas doesn't start on the strip of land (7)
- Clergyman starts to explain with some panache (7)
- Is the tea for the Queen or us on the inverse strait (7)
- Is the calf red? Ten NY sons could fix that poet good! (14)
- Look. I wish we could hold All-Black (4)
- Idiots torn? It's a misrepresentation! A lie! (10)
- Strong at learning about Religion (6)
- A drug used to praise the ends of an out-of-place season (8)

DOWN

- Seacow doesn't come from source, in any way (7)
- Story told by aborigine about the origins of arrogance (9)
- The shopkeeper heard the floor is German (7)
- Multi-faceted, losing the better part of valour, falls to pieces and becomes impotent (7)
- Man-cutlery, as it seemed to the traitor (3,6)
- Well-organized colony, insignificant in our eyes (7)
- Listen to elderly relation about syntax (7)
- Modern coffee gives king some time (6,3)
- Era of adventure given leave to enter (9)
- Not an idealist; in reference to a compilation (7)
- Nothing in the broken filter is more superior (7)
- Unwilling to move sounds like swallowed by sultan (7)
- His false teeth somehow got him a guaranteed, paid position (7)
- Sounds like a spice and means the same (7)



Congratulations to **Emma Thompson and Emma O'Hare** who won last week's crossword. Two in a row!
Enoch

Solution to Crossword 1,389

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



Jovan Nedić
Sports Editor

So the last issue of term, finally made it, and I must say that I've been impressed with the number of clubs and societies out there that have got in contact with me.

Admittedly I have made mistakes, it's bound to happen; some have been minor that the editor hasn't noticed, some that only the people who wrote the article would notice, sorry again to those people whose names I've got wrong. Some mistakes have been more obvious; like putting in the wrong score or even getting them the wrong way round, which has definitely got people annoyed - especially if it's been an IC versus medics match.

After one such mistake I received a rather angry e-mail from a certain medic who virtually accused me of purposefully putting the results in the wrong way round, and also of not caring about the medical sports clubs. The fact of the matter is that until recently I have not received any articles from medics, so how can I purposefully leave out medic reports if I don't receive them. *Felix Sport* is here to cover all aspects of Imperial sports, so medics, don't complain that *Felix* is being biased towards IC when you don't write in (the rugby club is the exception as they actually have been submitting reports!).

From next term, I will increase the size of the league table to encompass the medics, so that we can truly see which teams are the best in college. So please, the medics and IC teams out there, make sure your results are in on time and if you truly feel that your team has done something amazing that week that you want everyone to know, send me your match report.



Smack!

Volleyball report on a very successful weekend, for both the men and the women, see page 44

Imperial's boat club win all across the country

Iain Palmer

Last weekend the boatclub saw its strongest performance since the start of term, with wins in three separate events around the country. Almost all of Imperial College's rowers raced over the course of two days, once again showing rowing to be arguably Imperial's most successful sport.

Saturday brought an historic win for IC sculler George Whittaker in the 'Sculler's Head' against over 400 other competitors, including many of Britain's top scullers. The Sculler's Head is raced on the Thames from Chiswick to Putney Bridge and is one of the premier events on the rowing calendar - a win in such a high quality event is a tremendous achievement. Strong performances were also recorded by several other IC scullers, with Sam Hutchinson and Piers Barnes in particular, placing highly. On the same day, a large number of the senior squad travelled to Nottingham to race in the BUSA Small Boats Head. Universities

from around the country competed, and IC stamped its mark on the event with a stronger performance than all other universities in attendance. Medals were obtained in almost all events entered, with gold being won in 5 of the 12 events; the double, lightweight double, lightweight single, women's lightweight pair and the coxless four.

Crucially, all-important (in the eyes of Sport Imperial) BUSA points were obtained. Prior to Saturday, Imperial College (as a whole) had obtained 5 points; the achievements of the boat club added 92 points to this total. This catapults IC from 36th in the BUSA Overall Points Table to deep within the top 10 overall, confirming the boat club as (one of) Imperial's top sports team(s).

Finally, on Sunday, the ICBC Novice squad braved the torrential rain to compete in the Allom Cup regatta against university boatclubs from across London. The women's novice squad raced courageously to reach the final of their event, to be narrowly beaten by a more

experienced opposition. The men's novices, however, managed a string of great wins to win their event very convincingly, underlining Imperial's repu-

tation for quickly taking its beginners to levels of high athletic performance within a matter of months.

Following this great set of results, the

boatclub is looking to maintain its momentum through the Christmas period and into the New Year with a squad of quality and depth in abundance.



Taken from the internet you say, what makes you think that!