

INTERVIEW WITH
**NORMAN
FINKELSTEIN**

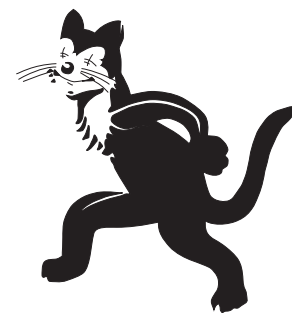


**“YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO
DICTATE TO ME WHAT I
HAVE TO SAY...” PAGE 19**

ISSUE 1476

“Keep the Cat Free”

FELIX



03.12.10

The student of Imperial College London 1949

Inside the UCL
Occupation



Students at UCL are more than a week into their occupation of the Jeremy Bentham room. Ian Wei heads to Russell Square to get a taste of the occupations that have sprung up across the country. **Page 6**

How bad is
student debt?

A furious debate is raging about student debt. Felix speaks to graduates about their experience of the current fees system and their thoughts on the changes. **Page 8**



UNDER PRESSURE

Do high expectations put mental health at risk? **Page 10**

BUSINESS



What does the
future hold for BP?
Interview: **Page 17**

FILM



They call him (and
the film) Machete...
Review: **Page 30**

When will Imperial march?

While others occupy
and protest, Imperial
students stay in the
library. Will we ever
hit the streets? **Page 5**



FOOD



Your complete guide
to the perfect Xmas
dinner: **Page 35**

HIGHLIGHTS

On campus

Uncertain Ratio

Artists from Goldsmiths College will transform the Institute of Mathematical Sciences with a series of installations, performances and experimental films. The pieces will "contrast elements from a scientific experiment with the mechanisms of film making". The event is open to all. Contact Peter Lewis via: ims.goldsmiths@gmail.com

IMS, 53 Prince's Gate
03 December 18:30-19:30

The offshore challenge

Philip Heptonstall of the Centre for Environmental Policy, Andy Hiorns from the National Grid and Adrian Fox of The Crown Estate will debate the challenges facing attempts to harness energy from offshore wind farms. Free but registration required in advance. Email Sarah Lester via s.lester@imperial.ac.uk



Room 1.31, RSM
07 December 17:30-19:00

Carols by Candlelight

Would Christmas be Christmas without a carol service? I think not. The Chaplaincy offer a chance to reflect on the term just past, as well as mince pie and drinks, at their annual Carol Service at Holy Trinity Church. The service starts in darkness and then a single candle is passed from person to person to symbolize the shared light of the world. For further information email Andrew Wilson at a.wilson@imperial.ac.uk

Holy Trinity Church
15 December 18:00-19:00

EDITOR'S PICK

The Tuition Fee Vote

Thursday 9th December



Depending on your stance, students are either going to get shafted really badly, or shafted kind of badly but with decent justification...

If by some miracle you have failed to spot the protests, sit-ins and university occupations that have been occurring over the past few weeks then it's time to finally take notice. The debate on higher education will come to a climax this Thursday as Parliament votes on proposals to raise the tuition fee cap to £9,000. Students across the country are planning to protest in unprecedented numbers against the proposals. Unless the Lib Dems suddenly decide to honour their pre-election pledge to oppose tuition fee rises, the proposals are likely to pass.

Union Notice

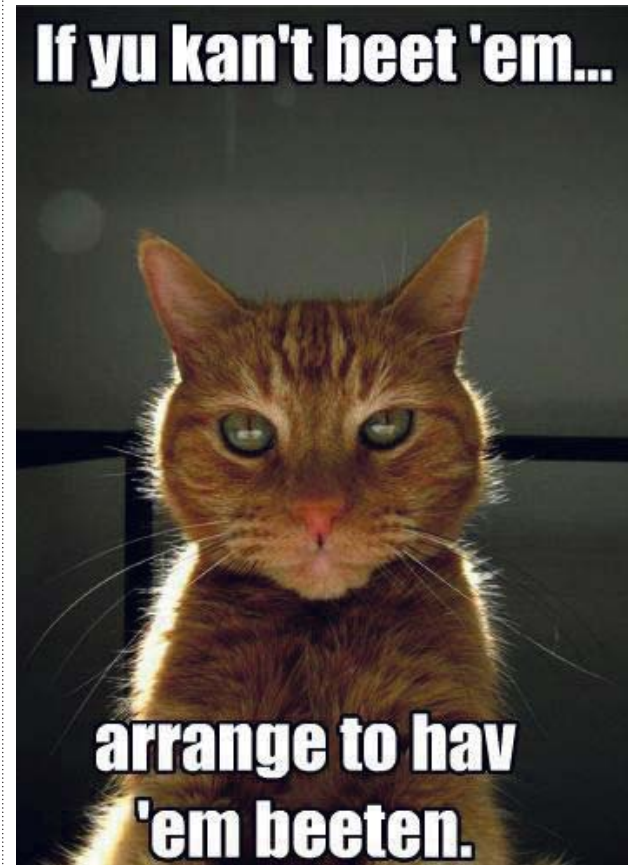
President's Surgery

Student Hub, Union Building
Friday 17 December 12:30-14:00

Got an issue with the Union? Alex Kendall, The President, is all ears

To be accessible and accountable to students, Alex Kendall, the Union President, will hold weekly surgeries where you can come and ask or talk about anything, from academic or welfare issues to questions about the bars, nightclub, clubs & societies or upcoming elections and Union politics. The last surgery this term will be right before the Christmas holidays. Maybe he'll be giving away presents? We can only hope so...

Lolcat of teh week



FELIX

Felix, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB.
Email: felix@imperial.ac.uk. Tel: 020 7594 8072. Fax: 020 7594 8065.
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STUDENT PROTESTS

A grassroots movement

Students and school children across the country have been marching in the streets and occupying university buildings to protest against cuts to teaching, higher fees and the loss of the EMA. They have been largely unorganised; a grassroots movement that has developed through Twitter and Facebook. The graphic isn't comprehensive. It's only a snapshot of the protests on the 30th of November, but it gives an impression of the widespread anger felt by students across the country.

Text: Kadhim Shubber

Graphics: Veronika McQuadeova

Sources: BBC, the Guardian

Liverpool

An estimated 200 students marched in Liverpool in a "wild-cat" demonstration which saw brief clashes with mounted police and two arrests.

Manchester

One of the larger demonstrations last week, around 1,000 demonstrators marched through Manchester city centre accompanied by a large police presence. Students from all three Manchester universities have been occupying for over a week: roscoeoccupation.wordpress.com

Oxford

In scenes similar to those in Birmingham, around 30 students stormed the Oxfordshire County headquarters. An occupation of the Radcliffe Camera building at Oxford university has now ended.

Birmingham

The city's council chamber was stormed by around 50 protestors. Scuffles were reported but the small demonstration was, by and large, peaceful.

Edinburgh

Around 300 students marched through the city centre in a peaceful demonstration. Students from University of Edinburgh (UoE) have been occupying since the 24th of November and are demanding that UoE reject the government's cuts: edinuniancuts.wordpress.com

Newcastle

Northumbrian police praised students for their peaceful conduct saying "there were no arrests and no trouble of any kind". Students from University of Newcastle are in their 10th day of occupation: ncluniocc.blogspot.com

Leeds

500 university students and school children protested in Leeds' city centre in a peaceful demonstration. Students at the University of Leeds have been occupying for 9 days to protest "crippling tuition fee rises, education cuts [and] the scrapping of EMA: occupiedleeds.wordpress.com

Sheffield

200 students marched on Nick Clegg's constituency office. Also, a group are 9 days into their campus occupation: sheffieldoccupation.tumblr.com

Nottingham

Around 150 Students at the University of Nottingham began an ongoing occupation: nsafc.wordpress.com

Cambridge

School children and university students protested outside Senate House. A broken window was paid for by students. An occupation at Cambridge University has entered its 7th day: defendededucation.co.uk

Colchester

Around 400 University of Essex students marched through Colchester city centre.

London

Several thousands students led police on a cat and mouse chase around London as they dodged police lines and avoided 'kettling'. Accusations have been traded over whether police attempted to block the protest before it began. Protestors eventually converged on Trafalgar Square where 146 were arrested after being kettled and clashing with police. Occupations continue at SOAS, University of East London, Goldsmiths, Roehampton and UCL. anticuts.org

Cardiff

Around 100 students from the University of Cardiff protested in the city centre as the Welsh Education Minister Leighton Andrews announced that Welsh students would have higher fees of £6–9,000 paid for them with public funds. Students have been occupying a lecture theatre since the 25th of November: cardiffoccupation.wordpress.com

Bristol

One of the largest marches last Tuesday. 2,000 people took to the streets in a peaceful protest that saw 10 arrests for "minor public order offences". Students at the University of the West of England (UWE) are into their second week of occupation where they have been holding educational workshops: act-at-uwe.blogspot.com

Brighton

600 students and school children marched to Hove Town Hall in a demonstration that saw 100 protestors climb the roof of a multi-storey car park and police officers kettle up to 60 protestors in Brighton city centre. Students from University of Brighton have been occupying since November 24th: brightonresistance.wordpress.com

NEWS

News Editors: **Matt Colvin**
Alex Karapetian

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

'PROTEST MONOPOLY'

Words and photos by **Miles Robertson**

Students hit the streets of London once again this week to rally against the proposed rise in University tuition fees. Traffic was brought to a standstill as thousands of sixth form and university protesters sped through Central London in separate marches, avoiding police attempts to block them for fear of being 'kettled' again.

The scheduled march from Trafalgar Square to Whitehall was supposed to set off at 2pm, accompanied by a police escort. This was not to be, as an early departure caught police off guard and with protesters rapidly approaching Whitehall, along the pre-arranged route, a police cordon was deployed to block their path.

Following last week's Westminster protest where students were 'kettled' for hours without access to food or water, there was a general feeling of panic in the crowd. Seeing their route blocked, protesters spilled out into side streets, forming several smaller marches in an attempt to evade police entrapment.

The crowd detoured past Hyde Park Corner, Piccadilly and Oxford Street in what has been dubbed, "Protest Monopoly". Activities were largely harmless, with protesters waving to startled members of the public as booming reggae swept along the city streets.

As time wore on, many of the previously fragmented groups returned to Trafalgar Square, where several speeches were made from the plinth below Nelson's Column. With police blocking every road out of the square and the snow falling harder with every passing minute, the crowd slowly dispersed via a controlled exit onto Charing Cross Road. As the evening progressed, there was violence as a small group of protestors refused to leave Trafalgar Square. Coming to the end of a day of peaceful protest, 146 arrests were made and a protestor and a police officer suffered head injuries and was taken to hospital.

The Metropolitan Police have come under fire for their lack of presence at the Milbank riots and later for their 'kettling' tactics used on 24 November. A Judicial Review is currently underway at the High Court in relation to exactly the same tactics that were used in the G20 climate protest. The Met denied any claims that they intended to kettle protesters at this week's protest and said they formed the cordon to keep people away from an exposed gas line on Whitehall.

President Aaron Porter this week apologised for his "spineless dithering" and ensured that all student protests and activism will be supported by the NUS.

Plans for further protests are underway, with protests being held in London on Sunday 5 and on Thursday 9, the date of the parliament vote on raising tuition fees. A candle-lit vigil is also planned, with 9000 candles (representing the new maximum fee rate) being lit on the eve of the parliament vote.

After the events of the previous three weeks, today's protest was relatively mild. Although the movement has managed to shed most of its violent elements, it is yet to be seen whether momentum has also been lost. Furthermore, there are worries that University students' departure over the Christmas period will cause the campaign to stall.

Will the protesters achieve the goals they have been seeking, or will the police stamp out any further rebellion? Only time can tell.



NEWS

When will Imperial march?

While students around the country have been taking direct action, Imperial has remained quiet. **Maciej Matuszewski** finds out why

The government's planned changes to university funding are anything but inconsequential. Protests and sit-ins have sprung up at universities around the country, but the anger does not seem to have reached Imperial in any significant way. Walking around campus, the only signs of opposition to these changes are a few discreet posters. Indeed, the Imperial Student Union's Council recently voted to broadly support the Browne review, which proposes lifting the tuition fee cap for home students.

On the face of it, there does seem to be a widespread apathy concerning the government's policy among many students. There are many possible reasons for this. Imperial has an

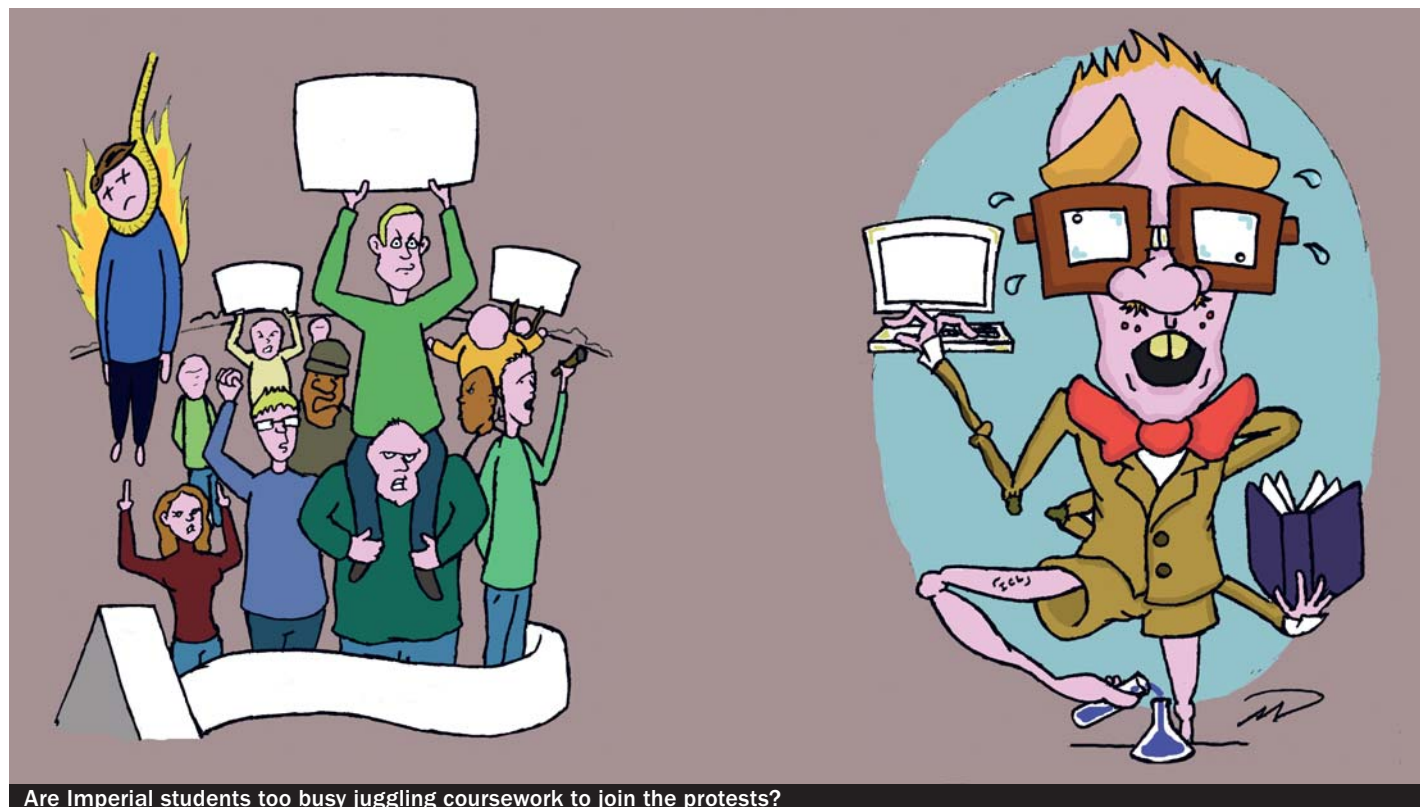
Students are reluctant to disrupt their tight lab and lecture schedules

exceptionally large proportion of international students: 34.5%, compared to 23.9% for UCL, whose student body is one of the most vocal about government policy. Most importantly, Imperial does not offer arts subjects, which will suffer the brunt of the government's cuts; many will see an 80% cut in their funding while some will receive no funding at all. In addition, funding for science subjects is being protested. Simply put, Imperial students will not be affected as severely as those at other universities. They have little motivation for action, with many of the students interviewed reluctant to disrupt their tight schedule of lectures and labs to go and protest. Other students, while accepting that the funding changes will cause difficulties, grudgingly agree with them. Michael Lewis, a second year Chemical Engineering student, summarised this saying that though he believed in "no fees, with the country in its current state, the increases are necessary".

There are, however, some signs of resistance. This Tuesday Imperial for Education organised a discussion on opposing the budget cuts and tuition fee increases, and led a small contingent of Imperial students to the protests in central London. Reuben Gibbons, who is heavily involved in this group, believes that the proposed 80% cut in government funding to higher education, will be detrimental to universities, which will be unable to recoup the losses by charging higher fees as these will discourage many applicants. He rejects Union President Alex Kendall's views that the debt will not adversely affect students because the amount that they will have to pay back will be tied to their earnings. Gibbons points out that the debt will still be a real burden, especially with graduates paying it back for 30 years, without

Are you angry about the proposed changes? Let us know at felix@imperial.ac.uk

Mitesh Patel



Are Imperial students too busy juggling coursework to join the protests?

an option for earlier repayment, and with the interest rate being higher than what it is now. Caroline Clark, another member of Imperial for Education, believes that "it is inevitable that students from poorer backgrounds will be put off" and that the highest charging universities under the new system, which are almost certain to include Imperial, will only be "accessible to the privileged elite". She believes that "the government should increase taxes on the rich and clamp down on tax avoidance" instead of raising fees. Union President Alex Kendall rejected their arguments saying that "the only way to ensure that students can still come to Imperial, and that Imperial has enough funding, is by raising fees but also ensuring that bursaries and the necessary support is there to ensure access for all."

Gibbons believes that "people care the same here as elsewhere" about these issues but that they lack the support of the Union. This was corroborated by a number of students, with a group of first year undergraduates saying that they had no time to organise action against the cuts without the Union's help. They were angry about its policy and thought that they had little chance to influence it. This highlighted the very poor communication between the Union and the students that it is meant to represent. None of the first years knew the dates of the Union Council meetings or how to contact Council members, despite one of them being a year rep himself. Deputy President (Education) Alex Dahinten rejected the criticisms saying

"we promoted the Council debate extensively. Students had ample opportunity to voice their concerns if they strongly disagreed with the policy that we put forward." He did however say that the Union plan to revisit and adjust the policy in January.

Imperial for Education is critical of how the Union's means of determining students' views about funding issues. According to Gibbons the student survey was limited, asking no questions about maintenance loans, and only including about 5% of students. Despite this, he believes that Council was premature to draw up its policy on funding before consulting its results, which seem to suggest that students prefer the current system. Only 5.3% of those surveyed, agreed to students leaving university owing more than £30,000, which are certain to exceed if Imperial raises its tuition fees to the predicted £9,000. Alex Dahinten conceded that he "had the wrong expectations about how many students would participate in the survey" and while not wishing to dismiss the results, said that they were unrepresentative of the student body as 54% of respondents were in their 1st year.

Almost all of the Council members who voted on the Union's policy have refused to answer questions on their decision. Only 4 out of the 35 elected student representatives were willing to speak to Felix. Union Advocate Naida Dziagal rejected the policy saying that she supported free higher education. CGCU Academic Affairs Officer Marcus Ulmefors has decided

to oppose a large increase in fees as he fears that they might discourage EU home students, a view supported by a number of current students. SCC Chair Rhodri Oliver, however, said that he still supported the motion while RCSU President Scott Heath argued for the need for a new opinion poll that covers more areas and has better designed questions. He is quite open to the Council changing its policy based on the results of this new survey and face-to-face consultation with students. Union President Alex Kendall conceded that there was a need to properly gauge student opinion as "the debate has really grown recently". CGCU Academic Affairs Officer Marcus Ulmefors has decided to oppose a large increase in fees as he fears that they might discourage EU home students, a view supported by a number of current students. Even those council members who continue to support fee increases point out that the Council's priority is to help students, with Recreational Clubs Committee Chair Nathaniel Bottrell stressing the Union's commitment "to campaigning for scholarships and bursaries to enable the brightest students to come to Imperial regardless of their background". Despite this there is no indication that the Union is going to support or organise the type of action seen at Universities such as Oxford and UCL. Alex Kendall told Felix that "students are welcome to protest but I think that [the Union's] time is better spent working for our students. It may be dull but it does more to improve their university experience".

NEWS

Imperial organises

'Imperial for Education' to build opposition to cuts on campus

Kadhim Shubber



Students grill President Alex Kendall about what they see as a lack of representation in the Union

The first signs of opposition to the government's higher education proposals are emerging at Imperial. 'Imperial for Education', a group opposed to higher education cuts, held its first meeting in the SAF lobby on Thursday.

18 students attended the organizing meeting which was also attended by Union President Alex Kendall who said that "although I disagree with their views, I'm glad that students are getting involved in the debate and voicing their opinions in a democratic way".

The students were extremely critical of the President and the Union's stance on the higher education issue, saying that they thought the Union's higher education policy was passed prematurely without a proper understanding of student opinion. They also questioned whether the Union was being representative on the issue of higher education with one student asking, "Why do we have a Union at all?"

Direct action such as an occupation was also discussed with opinion divided between those who felt that such action would alienate other students and those who believed that there was a need to "break down the picture that everything is all right." One student commented that occupations were probably more interesting to people outside of the university than those actually at Imperial.

There was a rejection of what the students saw as the privatization of universities. "I don't agree with the choice between £3,000 or £9,000 tuition fees. Education is a public good. It should be free and funded through higher taxation on the wealthy" said one student. However, in what was an open discussion with differing opinions, another student said that the focus should be on "preserving the standard of education."

Imperial for Education organizer James Goldsack said that the meeting was "productive" and that it allowed "students to express their views and opinions on the rise in fees and the funding cuts". The next steps were to "get as many students out on Thursday to protest on the day of the vote and to take a paper to Council to get the policy on higher education changed." **Kadhim Shubber**

So what happens at an occupation?

As lecture theatres around the country play host to student activists, **Ian Wei** reports from the UCL occupation

As the parliamentary vote on tuition fees draws nearer, the intensity of the student protests against higher fees, education cuts and the scrapping of the EMA has rapidly increased. With occupations of university buildings happening all across the country, the reactionary protests have morphed into a new grassroots movement of students, academics, school kids and trade unionists. The defining images of the protests are still pictures of violence and chaos from Millbank Tower on the 10th of November; but a visit to the UCL occupation is proof of how unrepresentative that incident was.

Upon entering the occupation in the Jeremy Bentham room at UCL, there are three details which I immediately notice. First is the sheer number of people who are in the room. Second is the variety of the protestors; looking around I can see students from different ethnic backgrounds, post graduates and staff. The last and most striking detail is what the protestors are doing.

Picture the scene. A protestor stands up in a room giving a preamble to the issue at hand to an audience of about one hundred. Quiet murmuring can be heard all around. A polite hand is raised and the microphone is handed over. The new speaker stands up and starts talking passionately into the microphone; audience members wave their hands in the air to show approval. Suddenly, as the speaker approaches a controversial point, hands shoot up, and the microphone is passed on quickly. This is democracy at its purest; where everyone is involved in the decision making process and no opinions are ignored. Similar events are happening all across the country – these are the 'New Student Protesters'.

These thoughtful, articulate activists are a far cry from the thuggish brutes de-

picted in the media. There is no sense of unyielding obstinacy and discussion is encouraged. Indeed, disagreements happen frequently, and heated discussions follow, but the atmosphere is anything but hostile.

That is not to say that the underlying purpose of the occupation has changed. The protestors still feel extremely strongly the issue of the tuition fee cap and the cuts to education funding. But as internal support for the occupation has increased, the demands of the occupation have changed to reflect that. A student explained that since the occupation enjoys support from some of the academics and the support staff, the demands have changed to tackle other issues as well; such as the wage of the support staff and the job cuts of academics.

The organization of the occupation is very impressive. Protestors are split into groups which tackle certain issues, reporting back to the main body of protestors at each general meeting. And yet there is no leading figure organizing the whole of the occupation. Every decision is made via a consensus or voting system, truly reflecting the views of the majority. From speaking to several students, it is clear that this system is working well. They explain to me that they feel as though all of their actions contribute directly to the movement, and consequently any successes are much more satisfying.

Integral to this feeling of solidarity is the overwhelming show of support from other universities. Support messages from universities across the UK, such as Oxford, Newcastle and Leeds, and even from universities abroad, such as Sydney and Pisa, are plastered all across the walls. The occupation also hosts workshops on peaceful forms of protests which students from across the UK regularly attend. The message is clear; 'We are not isolated. We are

"These thoughtful, articulate activists are a far cry from the thuggish brutes often depicted in the media"

part of something much, much bigger – something that could make a difference'.

The scale of the occupation has also attracted visitors from across the country. During my visit, I met students from Manchester, Nottingham and Brighton who had all come to show their support of the movement. It is not just students either; media, representatives of the trade unions, feminist groups, public figures (including Polly Toynbee, Billy Bragg and Emmy the Great) and socialist organizations all frequently visit the occupation. Speaking to a representative of a socialist organization, who would not clarify which organization he was representing, believes that they can use the momentum gained by the student protests to point out other perceived injustices in the coalition government's policy; such as public sector job cuts.

It is clear that lessons have been learnt from the NUS marches. The protestors were careful of what was being said in my presence, and some of the

Ian Wei



The champagne socialists at the meeting are revealed after somebody asks, "Who wants a job in the city?"

people were reluctant to talk to me until I explained that I was from a student newspaper. Offers from media organizations for coverage of active protests are considered cautiously, after the coverage of the NUS protest march. In general the protestors understand the importance of a good public image. I asked a student whether he felt any resentment toward the media; he shrugged and said that while the media coverage was skewed, he believed that the publicity generated by the controversial pictures really helped bring the issues into the spotlight.

Looking around the room, it is clear that the initial response has been good. But what about in two, three, or even four weeks time? Are there any plans to stop protesting? Talking to several students, they seemed resolute to keep protesting until the issues which they are concerned about are addressed. One student grimly stated that she is prepared to "go down fighting".

To see this level of commitment, passion and enthusiasm from a generation often labelled as disinterested and fickle is truly awe inspiring. Even if you do not agree with the reasons for the protests, even if you do not agree with the protest methods; the unity and solidarity shown by these 'New Student Protestors' is something which you can not help but admire.

Organising the protests

In response to the government's proposal to increase the tuition fee cap and cuts to higher education, protest groups have been 'popping up' all across the country. Each of these protest groups are independent of each other, which means the actual methods of protesting and key decisions are made by the individuals within the group.

Who joins these groups?

There is no 'stereotypical' protester; members of these groups are as diverse as the student population they represent – stretching across a range of ages, different ethnicities and backgrounds.

How do they protest?

The main methods of protesting used by these groups are occupation and demonstrations. An occupation is where activists 'take over' a room and refuse to leave of their own accord un-

til their demands are met. They often use the room as a base of operations. A demonstration is a street protest, where activists march en masse to a designated endpoint. An example would be the NUS marches on the 10th of November.

How do mass protests occur?

Although these protest groups are independent of each other, many of them keep in contact using social media such as Facebook and twitter.

This means that groups all around the country can collaborate for mass protests – such as the student protests earlier this week. Groups mainly use the social networks to contact each other, sharing opinions, giving advice, updating each other on progress and sharing messages of support. These sites are also a means for students who are not part of the group to show support or complain about the activities of the group.

NEWS

Disabilities Officer resigns criticising 'lack of disabled access' in Union

Priyantha Kulatilake

The Union's commitment to disabled students was called into question last week as the Union Disabilities Officer resigned saying that the Union "should be leading the way in accessibility for students, not lagging behind the rest of the university".

In a letter published in Felix Nicola Hopkins described the difficulties she faced whilst in her position, especially as the role is voluntary and part-time. Hopkins explained that she had "raised the issue of the lack of disabled access to the new Union venues and that the disabled lift in the Union Building is faulty and therefore unusable for disabled students. Neither issues has been resolved to date (8 weeks later)". Among other problems Hopkins felt the lack of urgency was disappointing since the Imperial's Disability Equality Scheme states that all "refurbishments have considered accessibility as a major priority". With all this in hand Hopkins decided to step down.

In response to Hopkins' resignation,

Deputy President (Welfare) Charlotte Ivison said she was "very sorry to see Nicola leave" but said that some of the issues raised by Hopkins are being resolved. The lifts in the Union Building will be "fixed as soon as possible" and there are plans to have push button doors to each of the bars. However the issue of a drop bar (a lowered bar to allow wheelchair users to be directly served at the bar) was considered unfeasible "in terms of cost and inconvenience when considering the number of students it will benefit." Although the Union did say, "To minimise the problem caused by not having a drop bar, all the bars have staff on hand to offer an assisted service to any students who may need it."

Nicola Hopkins responded positively saying, "I am pleased to hear that the Union has taken on board my suggestions and look forward to seeing them put in place soon."

If you feel the Union or College could do more or have any suggestions for improvements, email dpwelfare@imperial.ac.uk for the Union and disabilities@imperial.ac.uk for College.

Sponsored Editorial

More student cuts Discount haircuts for Imperial students at Fresh Hairdressers

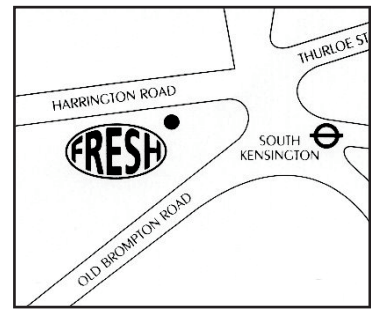
More student cuts for Imperial students at South Kensington's FRESH Hairdressers.

Men's cuts £20
Women's shampoo and cut and shake dry £26
Women's shampoo, cut and blow-dry £36

All of our cuts are done by highly experienced stylists. Tuesday to Fridays 9.30 to 4.30 (sorry no discounts on Saturdays).

We are only 70 metres from South Kensington tube station. To book an appointment, call

0207 823 8968. Ask for a student discount and bring your Imperial ID. Cash only.



NEWS

Tuition fees: Bearable burden or crippling debt?

Felix speaks to graduates about the old system, the proposed changes and how greatly their student debt affects their lives

Matt Colvin
Olivia Ribeiro
Louis Constant

The latest higher education reforms have not been without significant resistance from many, with one of the key issues being the fear of significant debt following a proposed increase in tuition fees. Current graduates are no strangers to debt, with many owing several thousand pounds following their degree. Felix sought to discover just how dramatically the current system affects graduates and whether they themselves approve of the impending changes or stand against them.

All prospective and current students who are citizens of a European Union member state are eligible for an annual tuition fee loan which matches the yearly cost of their course. For the vast majority of students, this figure currently stands at £3,290, and rises each year with inflation. Additionally available is a maintenance loan, up to a maximum of around £3,500 (higher for London students). Total student debt upon graduation therefore, for most students making maximal use of both of the loans available over three years, will stand at at least £20,000.

Daisy Cantalamessa, 23, a graduate from the University of Manchester, ap-

“Opponents argue that because society as a whole benefits, the general public should shoulder the financial burden”

plied before the current system of top-up fees was introduced, though feels that it is “a fair [system], although I think we should be given more control over how much we pay back.”

Repayment of the debt is structured such that a certain percentage (9%) of earnings above a minimum threshold (currently £15,000 in annual earnings) is automatically collected from a university graduate’s pay packet, similar to a tax. This means that someone earning the UK’s average graduate salary – around £25,000 – will repay 9% of £10,000 per year, (£900) in debt contributions. At this rate, it would take over 20 years to pay back the full extent of the loan, not taking into account interest, which does not cause the amount owed to rise in real terms.

The introduction of top-up fees in

2006 was itself not without controversy – not least due to the extreme closeness of the 2004 parliamentary vote , and the involvement of a number of Scottish members of parliament – whose constituents are unaffected by the changes – voting for their introduction.

Tony Blair’s Labour government argued in 2004, despite their 2001 election manifesto claiming that the party “[had] no plans to introduce University top-up fees, and [had] legislated to prevent their introduction”, that the changes were necessary for the country’s universities to remain internationally competitive. Indeed, the Russell Group of Universities, which includes Imperial College, supported their introduction. The government took the position that because university graduates on average earn a significant (though disputed) amount more over their lifetimes, it is reasonable for them to contribute to the cost of their tuition.

Tom MacDonald, 26, a graduate from Northumbria University, determinedly believes the current system to be suitable: “Even though I prefer not to lose so much money a month, I borrowed the money in the first place and now I have to pay it back. I don’t see the point in moaning about it because it wasn’t my money in the first place.”

The current system’s opponents argue



Vince Cable says that the new proposals, which double/triple tuition fees but increase the repayment threshold, are fairer than the current system

News Editors: **Matt Colvin**
Alex Karapetian

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

NEWS

STUDENT DEBT

“Even though I earn more than the average salary, the repayments would mean I couldn’t afford my rent”



Graduate Andrew Somerville talks to Kadhim Shubber about the burden of student debt

What do you do now?

I’m a researcher at a thinktank that focuses on international security. I specialise in nuclear weapons and disarmament. I studied Physics at Imperial for 3 years and I graduated in 2008 with a 2:1. I moved from a 4 year course to a 3 year course because I wanted to do a different masters and I didn’t want to waste my money on doing the masters at Imperial.

Did you have a good idea of how much debt you were accumulating at university?

I was very aware of the cost of my degree when I was at Imperial. I was assisted by my parents and I was also sponsored and so I wasn’t under any illusions about how much debt I was accumulating. I was very grateful for the support that I had. If I had lived off my student loan only I would have had a very restricted university experience.

How big an impact does the debt repayments have on your life?

I haven’t been able to afford to start paying back my student debt yet. Even though I have a good job and I earn more than the average salary, the repayments would mean I couldn’t afford my rent. I don’t have an expensive lifestyle, I don’t drink or smoke and I don’t spend a huge amount on clothes. I’ve tried living at home to save on rent but because of high rail fares the savings were relatively small and I was spending 3 hours traveling every day. The problem is that London is an expensive place to live and work, and I haven’t gone into a career which immediately pays a large salary.

How has your debt affected the decisions you’re making?

Anyone looking at the system rationally would be motivated to take a high-paying job rather than a low-paying job that is worthwhile to society. If I had less

debt I could take more risks and take a less certain, more difficult but more fulfilling career path.

What do you think of the government’s proposals?

I think that a progressive graduate tax would be the fairest solution. It recognizes that students benefit financially while also recognizing that some benefit more than others. The main problem that I have with the changes is that I don’t want future generations of able students to be forced to go into the highest paid professions at the cost of wider society.

Would you have been deterred by the increased fees?

I wouldn’t have been deterred but I’m not certain that I would have come to London with the new fees. I think that people are understanding more and more the significance of the debt that they are taking on. Before the financial crisis, in prosperous times, it would have been relatively straightforward to find a highly-paying job and pay off your student loan. Now that people are less and less certain that they’ll find employment after graduating, I think that they’ll start to reconsider entering into the amount of debt that one incurs from a degree; even under the current system never mind with the new proposals.

Do you think that you will pay off all of your debt?

Yes I will. I’d feel bad if I didn’t pay it all off because I do think that students should contribute to their education. I’m hoping to pay it off within 10-15 years. I’d love to pay it off next week.

Have you found that your debt affects your dealings with your bank?

I haven’t had any problems and my credit card company treats me no differently. In fact they’re worryingly generous...

that because society as a whole benefits from those that hold degrees in a wide range of fields, the general public should shoulder higher education’s financial burden via tax increases. They believe that a system of variable fees with some universities charging more per year than others inappropriately creates a kind of market within higher education, and that it is wrong to burden students with such an amount of debt at such an early stage in their careers. This line of criticism is particularly relevant to today’s continuing debate surrounding the current coalition government’s planned rise of the tuition fee cap to £9,000, as the level of debt that students graduate with is these proposals’ most palpable change.

Sarah Church, 21, a recent graduate of the University of Lancaster, was amongst the first intake of students who were affected by the introduction of top-up fees in 2006. She criticizes the current system as unfair, stating that, “At the time, I wasn’t really fazed by the top-up fees because I was too excited about starting university. However, now that I’ve finished, I am worried about paying my student loan back because I am in so much debt compared to my friends who graduated a year earlier!”

In a speech to the House of Commons on the 3rd of November 2010, Minis-

According to David Willetts, “raising the threshold reduces the monthly repayments for every single graduate”

ter of State for Universities and Science David Willetts outlined the future of student finance after having listened “with open minds” to Lord Browne’s proposals.

Under the proposed changes, the minimum threshold of £15,000 will be raised to £21,000, with 9% of earnings above this again being collected from the graduate’s salary. According to Willetts, “raising the threshold reduces the monthly repayments for every single graduate,” although by the previous analysis, this will take considerably longer than 20 years to repay. However, Willetts continues by making the claim that around a quarter of graduates with the lowest lifetime earnings will pay less than under the system currently in place.

Seeking to address concern from those who will particularly be disadvantaged

Graduate views

Daisy Cantalamessa 23
University of Manchester

Daisy does not worry about paying back her student loan, as it is a gradual process and will not impose too much of a burden on her income. However she is concerned about the possible consequences of carrying the debt. Especially with regard to applying for a mortgage or bank loan.

“I feel the current repayment system is a fair one, although I think we should be given more control over how much we pay back. I would definitely feel differently if my student debt appeared on my credit records. If I knew that in the future my student loan could affect my ability to get a mortgage or a loan, I might think twice about how relevant my course was going to be for future employment or maybe even if going to university would be the right thing to do.”

Tom MacDonald 26
University of Northumbria

Tom did not worry about paying back his student loan until he was promoted to a managerial position and has since noticed a considerable deficit in his monthly salary. “Before being promoted, I hardly noticed the difference in my salary because it was something as little as nine pounds a month. Now that I am a manager and my salary has increased considerably, I lose approximately [...] seventy pounds a month repaying my loan.”

When asked about the potential increase in tuition fees, Tom is in agreement with the government. “I believe it, [the cuts and fees], to be the only way to get this country back on its feet. The government had to make cuts to make up for over-spending when Labour were in power and if this is one of the only ways we can get back to some kind of normality, then so be it.”

Old vs. New

Old system

Total debt: Over £30,000*

Repayments: 9% of all earnings over £15,000

Debt expiry: 25 years

Proposed system

Total debt: Over £50,000

Repayments: 9% of all earnings over £21,000

Debt expiry: 30 years

**Approximate figures for an Imperial student on a four-year course.*

World Aids Day Flashmob

Students from Medsin Imperial congregated at Trafalgar Square on Wednesday in a flashmob designed to raise awareness of the problem of patents restricting access to anti-retroviral drugs. They planned to jump into the fountains, symbolising placing anti-retroviral drugs in the ‘patent pool’. A combination of extremely cold conditions and a stern ‘oh no you don’t’ from the police unfortunately thwarted their plans. The students also sent a letter to GlaxoSmithKline/Viiv Healthcare calling on them to sign their HIV drug patents over to the UNITAID patent pool. Kadhim Shubber



That’s the last time I ask students for directions...

FEATURE

Let's be more open about mental illness

Lizzie Crouch on the stigmas often attached to mental illness

Two o'clock in the morning. I had got home from an amazing night out and was falling asleep when I heard people running in the corridor. It was a Friday night and we were Freshers, so I thought nothing of it; I turned over and pulled the duvet tighter around me.

Literally seconds later I was woken from my doze by the sound of loud, unnatural thump accompanied by splintering wood. I sat bolt upright. Listening intently I couldn't hear anything other the muffled sounds of people talking. Humph. I decided that I wasn't getting up; they'd woken me up and I didn't want to get involved if they'd broken something!

10 minutes later, I was blissfully slipping into sleep when I was woken yet again by people running down the corridor. This time I marched to the door, and violently threw open my door, ready to give whoever it was an earful. However, I was stopped in my tracks when I came face to face with paramedics sprinting along the corridor and disappearing into my friend's room, only metres from my own. I felt sick, and very almost was; I knew immediately that something awful had happened.

I can remember stupid details from that night so vividly, the smell of the wooden doorframe I leaned against and the pyjamas I was wearing as I stood shaking in my doorway whilst each second ticked slowly by. Some agonising minutes later, I saw one of my closest friends stretchered past me. It was then I learned that he had tried to hang himself. The splintering noise from earlier was people breaking down his door, and the muffled voices were them saving his life.

I didn't go back to sleep that night; I sat cold and shivering on the foot of my bed, with a multitude of emotions that running through me. That night was 6 years ago, as I was approaching the end of my first term at university, but it is etched into my memory forever.

My friend was lucky; he survived, and after confronting his issues is actually one of the happiest people I know today. Unfortunately, this is not an uncommon story; many people have, or know friends with, mental health issues. The Times recently reported that the University of Cambridge was reviewing its counselling provision after this term saw the highest rate of suicide at the university for over a decade. However, Cambridge has one of the best counselling services among the UK's universities.

The Oxford Centre for Suicide Research has published papers showing that suicides rates are highest in the 18 to 21 demographic, the very demographic that makes up the majority of university students. The centre highlighted the fact that student life is a period of transition. However ready someone feels to move away from home, there are significant changes that occur. Time spent as a student is an 'in-between pe-

riod' in life; you transition from depending on your family for many things including money to fully fledged independence. And this whole period is time-limited; you have to make the most of what you can and everything is all orientated to an end-goal, a degree and "the passport to the next stage in life." Caught up in this world of practical, social and academic challenges, combined with the often "risky behaviour" associated with student living and the learning process, the stresses and strains that can take their toll.

The reported suicides of Cambridge students also highlights a perceived problem amongst high performing universities such as Imperial. It is therefore important to note that despite the media's opinions, the centre found that "contrary to earlier findings and popular belief, suicide rates in Oxford and Cambridge University students do not differ from those in other young people."

Universities across the board therefore all have a responsibility to look after the mental health of their students. But what makes some students more vulnerable than others? Is this simply random, or is it something to do with the kind of personalities universities attract? Professor Laycock, Head of Medicine Years 1 and 2, suggests that it is not, deeming our students to be 'highly competitive', who tend to 'consider everything much more seriously' than other young people.

Mental health problems within the medical school are common, although many conditions go unreported. This week, Felix spoke to Dr Mike Schachter, Senior Welfare Tutor for the medical school. He believes the problem to be widespread across the UK, and not more prevalent in Imperial. "There is no national comparison but in my own experience of a number of other [medical] schools the percentage here is similar to other places in the UK."

Whilst Imperial might not have a medical school less mentally healthy than other medical schools in the UK, the same might not be able to be said about other colleges and universities across Britain. The type of personality universities attract might have something to do with this. The concept of personality types is a modern and often controversial one. In the 1950s, the idea of 'Type A and Type B' personality first emerged, and has remained in popular psychology ever since.

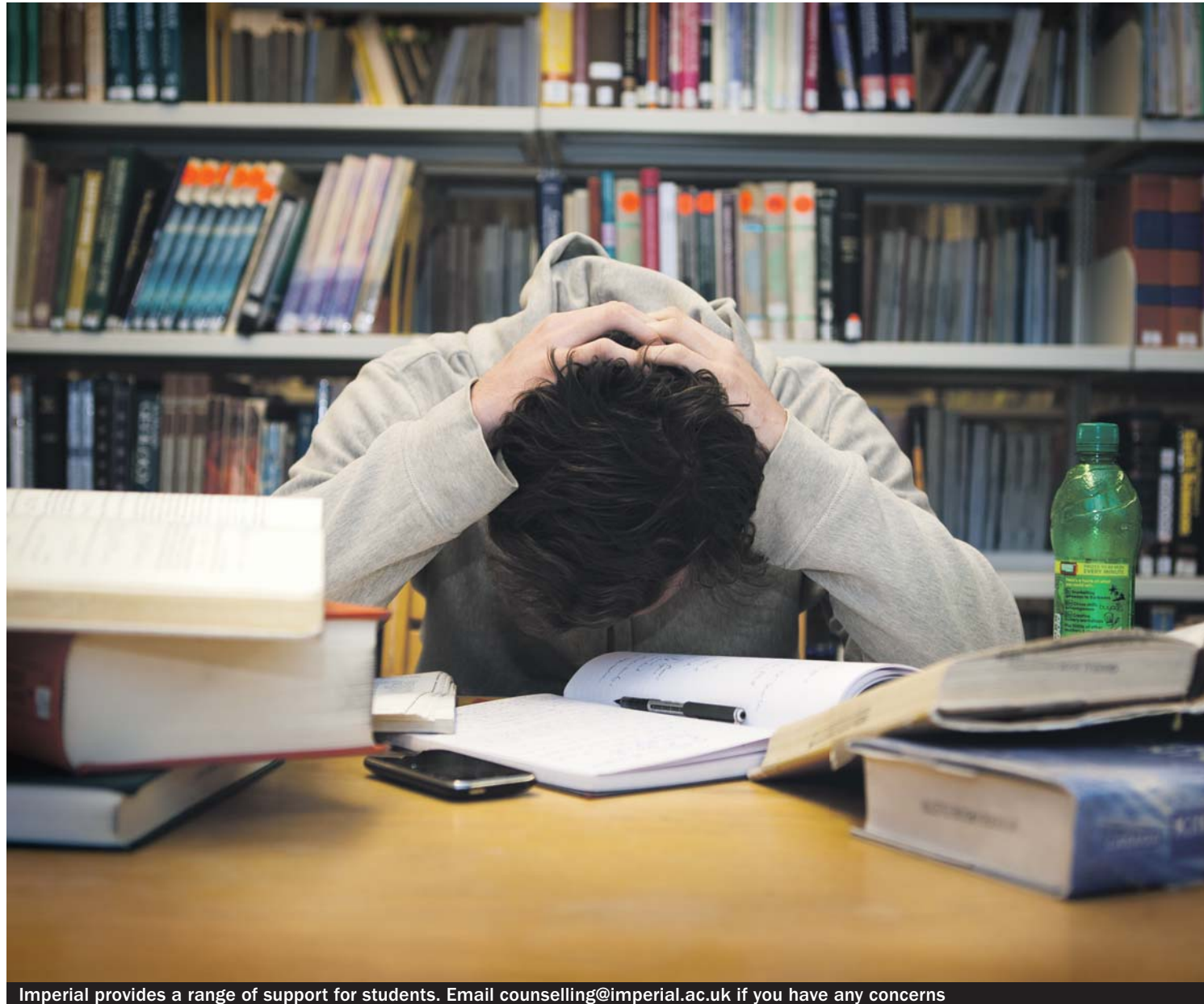
Type A personalities are the 'stress junkies' of this world. They are highly ambitious, highly competitive and often workaholics: a type of

"High-pressure environments may exacerbate a problem that already exists"

News Editors: **Matt Colvin**
Alex Karapetian

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Slobodan Radosavljevic



Imperial provides a range of support for students. Email counselling@imperial.ac.uk if you have any concerns

person arguably not uncommon at a university like Imperial. Type B personalities, conversely, are easy going, relaxed and unhurried – people who possibly wouldn't cope with the intensely competitive environment Imperial creates. Type A personalities, so the theory goes, are much more likely to experience problems with mental health, as well as heart disease.

The idea of personality typography is very controversial, with much of the scientific world shunning its credibility. Many believe that the human condition is far too complex to be neatly sorted into two categories. Of course, nobody can deny that students at Imperial are highly driven, ambitious individuals. This drive to succeed will of course put added pressure on the individual, contributing to possible mental health issues.

The most important thing to remember that one mental health disorder is not the same as another. Mental health issues encompass a wide range of conditions affecting a person's emotions and well-being. There is difference between 'anxiety and worry about exams', and more serious disorders such as depression (the most common psychological problem experienced by Imperial students). Perhaps the high-pressure environment that Imperial offers could cause students to feel anxious, but nobody can seriously suggest that such an environment can be a sole cause of depression (or any other mental health issue – after all the vast

majority of Imperial graduates are well-adjusted, healthy individuals). Depression is a complicated illness, with many interplaying facets, including genetics and predisposing factors (possibly personality type), as well as stressors and life events. High-pressure environments may exacerbate a problem that already exists.

Mental illness is probably more common among your peers than you think, but there is still such a stigma attached to having a mental illness that people still refrain from discussing it openly. As Rethink, a mental health charity, excellently defines it, "Stigma is something judged by others as a sign of disgrace and something that sets a person apart from others."

When something such as mental illness is stigmatised, the issues will be avoided. This silence, and unwillingness to understand the problems, often makes people feel ashamed, and sometimes prevents people from seeking help or even admitting they have a problem. It is important that people address their issues.

My friend felt he couldn't be open and approach someone about his problems. He could pad down the corridor, duvet wrapped around him, to come and sit on the end of my bed and gossip about mental things but he couldn't tell me about his inner demons. Overcoming the stigma of mental illness will be a challenge, but increased openness and understanding will help prevent a repeat of those events which occurred 6 years ago.

FEATURE

YOUR STORIES

"I tore myself to pieces because I couldn't be perfect"

A second year undergraduate spoke to Felix about his life with mental illness. He has suffered with a diagnosed mental health disorder in the past, and still battles with the aspects of the disorder to this day.

"When I was 14, I started self harming. I didn't do it very often. It kind of [happened sporadically] around until I was 18 and half," he explained. "The way I saw it was that self harm was a way to cope with how I felt inside. I didn't like myself and I didn't like what I did. I'm very critical of myself. If something's not done perfectly, it's not good enough.

And so self-harm was a way of punishing myself. I'd sit there and just look at it. I used to sit there stroking them as a reminder that I'd done this to myself and that this was my punishment."

It was just before his 19th birthday that he "started having panic attacks about [his] mortality," and approached his own doctor in search of something that might help. However, even after being put on antidepressants, he got progressively worse. "I was self harming a few times a day, to quite bad levels. I was crying all day, I could barely get out of bed. I would sit in a corner all day looking out into space."

Eventually he was sent to a psychiatrist who assessed him. In less than a year, he saw a few different psychiatrists and at one time was on 10 pills a day. Life is now significantly better but he still struggles occasionally. "I'm repeating the second year because I couldn't deal with it last year. I tore myself to pieces because I couldn't be as perfect as I wanted to be. I know I can't attain perfection, I won't get 100% in every exam but you do look at the people around you, and [sometimes] you can't attain their levels.

When I asked whether he talks openly about his mental health, he replied, "My policy is if somebody asks, I won't lie. I

won't hide the truth. The way I see it, is that this has happened to me and this is part of who I am. If you want to know me for who I am and this comes up, then you accept it. If you don't, then tough."

"I feel that you wouldn't really understand it unless you've been through it yourself. I'm not going to ask anyone to go through that, I don't want anyone to go through things such as that. The main thing I suppose is that it's not a weakness. Sure it's not a nice thing, a good thing, but it's not a bad thing. You shouldn't beat yourself up over it; you shouldn't run away from it. It is what it is. There is help out there."

Living with depression in the family

The worst thing about thinking about my sister is that I automatically associate her with depression. My most loved one cannot find any value in life, so much so that being alive is a dread she faces everyday and the thought of death is her only comfort.

I cannot help but feel guilty for writing this article. I feel like I am exposing a shameful secret, even though I know I'm not. Despite a modern acceptance of its prevalence, there remains an unconscious stigma that won't be shaken off.

When my family found out, her diagnosis came with news that she tried to take her own life. We each felt differently about what happened. My parents, from a different culture, put her "stupidity" down to the fact that she must have been disheartened due to her drop-out from university – not comprehending that this was a result and not cause of depression. They still don't even understand what depression is. My eldest sibling believed that she needed to be distracted and doesn't understand why she doesn't

agree that she should try to get better.

I felt broken having nearly lost my sister but what is worse is constantly dreading a phonecall confirming what nearly happened, because with depression there is no getting better. There is only being able to cope or not.

The biggest shock was the impact of her depression on my life. This happened during my overwhelming first year at Imperial. Aside from distracting me from studies, I suddenly felt more isolated than I already was.

What restrains me most from confiding in friends is their reaction if I expressed my judgement of the situation. Things most people have said to me are different to the feelings I have. These thoughts have taken up so much of me, it seems like they are part of who I am. If people don't understand how I can think in this way it feels like they misunderstand me. Her depression has dramatically affected the way I just generally perceive things in life overall; although not for the worse, or better. It's just different now.

How much support does Imperial provide?

There are three main places that you can initially seek out help:

The Student Counselling Service offers free, confidential counselling on a short term basis to all students of Imperial College London. It is found at South Kensington, Hammersmith and Silwood Park Campuses. Appointments can be made by calling 020 7594 9637, emailing counselling@imperial.ac.uk or by going to reception on Level 4, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus.

The Imperial College Union Advice Centre is a confidential centre independent from the college, designed to give advice on all sorts of welfare issues, including personal safety, sexual health, alcohol and drug issues. The Centre is located

in the Union building (mezzanine level.) It is open 10am-5pm Monday to Friday.

The Imperial College Health Centre provides 24 hour care for NHS registered students in conjunction with the local afterhours GP service. It is found at 40 Princes Gardens, by the South Kensington Campus. As well as general medical care (including mental health issues) students can get help with stress and study difficulties. Students can also gain access to a Consultant Psychiatrist, part-time Counsellors, Psychotherapists and Physiotherapists via referral from a member of medical staff.

Professor Denis Wright, Dean of Students at Imperial, oversees the Welfare Services at Imperial. What does he think of the services available to Imperial students?

Imperial College London



Professor Denis Wright oversees Welfare Services at Imperial

Until last year, the number of counsellors at Imperial's Counselling Service had been consistently quite low. This was reflected in a ratio of 1 counsellor to 4375 students. This ratio was well below the Association for University and College Counselling's recommended ratio of 1:3000, as well as ratios seen at other universities. Although he has no control over our NHS run health centre, Professor Wright made a bid to increase number of counsellors available to students by increasing their numbers at the Counselling Service. "Now we have a much healthier [ratio], but I'd still like it to be higher," said Professor Wright.

"[The increase in number of counsellors] was in spite of the fact I had to make a 5% cut in the welfare budget. So I actually put more money into disabilities and coun-

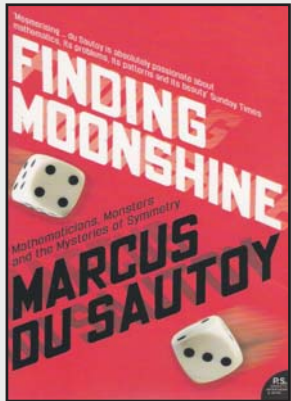
selling," he explained, "We don't know what the [spending] cuts will be like, but I'm certainly going to defend [these changes] to the hilt." When I asked whether these services are vital to Imperial, he replied simply "Well I think so."

"Demand for counselling is increasing slowly but steadily." It's difficult to pin down a specific reason for this increase; it could be greater publicity about the services offered at Imperial, greater anxiety about jobs, or a multitude of other reasons.

What is Imperial's recommendation if you have a problem? "Please go and see somebody." The help is there from different people throughout Imperial; the wardens in your halls, your personal tutor and the confidential Student Counselling Service are just a few that are there to help.

SCIENCE

And a few suggestions...



Finding moonshine

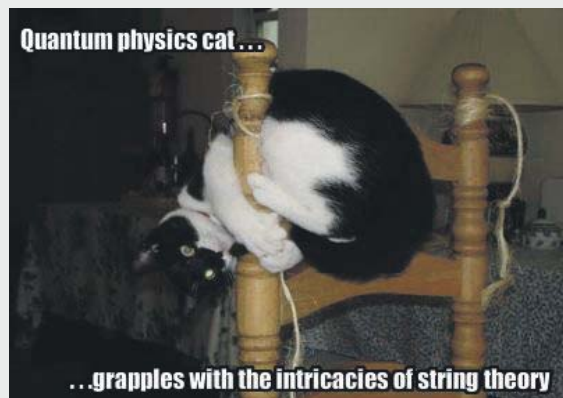
by Marcus du Sautoy

In this whirlwind of mathematics, du Sautoy provides us with an irresistible combination of anecdotes, mathematical mysteries and history. Articulating his own love for the subject whilst also providing us with a plethora of mathematics, he weaves an intricate and emotive tale of the fundamental questions in mathematics.

Marcus du Sautoy is a brilliant populariser of mathematics and author of several other books, one of his greatest strengths being that he never patronises the reader, maintaining a belief that the wider public can and should understand maths.

It is this complete faith in the reader that makes the book so compelling, as is du Sautoy's humble writing; he is personable and describes his passion for and reliance on the subject. It is clear, however that perhaps maths needs Sautoy as much as he needs it. Read this book – I challenge you not to learn something. **Katya-Yani Vyas**

Schrödinger's lolcat



You won't believe it...

Sharks arrived in the Mediterranean because they took a wrong turn. Dr Noble, who led the research, said: "They might have gone a considerable way... Then they start trying to turn east and north and the first place you can go east, of course, is the Straits of Gibraltar." The sharks found here are most similar to those near New Zealand, about 12,000 miles away!

Want to save the planet and eat meat? Eat Man

Samuel Furse

One thing that is often said by vegetarians is that meat farming is not sustainable. Figures are not (scientifically) clear, though what is obvious is that farm production of animals for human consumption requires a lot more in the way of nitrogenous input than for arable farming – not least because the animals we farm are chiefly herbivores and feeds given to them must themselves be grown. In practice this is achieved from grain not suitable for human consumption (e.g. because the harvest period was too damp). I do not know what we would do with such grain if we did not give it to animals – we would have to find some use for it in order to avoid just wasting it; its entry into the market is weather-driven and so pretty unavoidable.

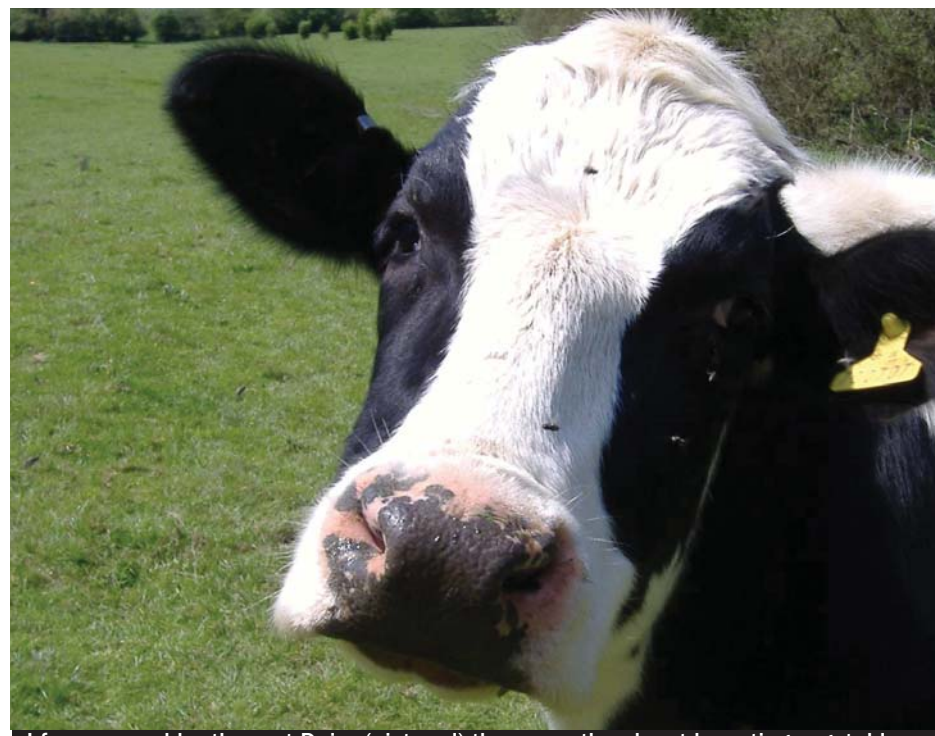
So, we have meat production requiring more resources per kilogram produced than for arable production. Good news for those who did biology A-level is that all the stuff on the energy levels in food webs they learnt has been vindicated as not being wrong. On this basis it seems not too much of a leap to go to meat being unsustainable: we have over six billion mouths to feed and only a limited amount of fertile land that is divided up in so unequalitarian a manner as to make the French strike for a century. It is easy to reach the conclusion that there are too many people for satisfactory meat production.

In fact, taking away technology of any serious kind, and returning humans to the food web structure from whence we came, it has been calculated that there would be a population of around 10k across the globe. This is approximately the same number as go in and out of Piccadilly Circus station every day. As the current world population is approaching four

orders of magnitude larger than this, it rather begs the question of how this has happened. Clearly clean water, medicine, education, shelter and so on are important factors in this but so, I believe, is food. I understand there is evidence for the start of arable farming in either the cradle of humanity, or further east in what we now call the Middle East. This was the time when humans stopped being nomadic hunter-gatherers and started living in one place. The wheat was bred to give the right kind of husk and so on, and thus fed the population at the time. Presumably this, although a break from what had gone before, was sustainable as the population grew and since then humans dependent upon farming for food have dominated. A few thousand years of refining and development, including the use of draught animals to do the work we could not or did not want to do, took us to the middle ages. Soon after then, we had ploughing. There was uproar in the 16th century about ploughs. People did not trust machines – why should they when they were doing their work? There were similar fears about the use of animals to pull ploughs – what if all the animals die?

There were few more developments until the end of the 19th century at which point the revolution of mechanisation started to take hold. Eating meat is perfectly sustainable of course, provided we have the fertilisers (thanks to the Haber process) and methods with which to farm it. The problem is that food production follows market forces, including demand. Over thousands of years we have used cognitive intelligence to increase food availability. This has lifted a limit on the proliferation of our species. Thus, it is not crops or ploughing or even peculiarly-shaped bovines that are unsustainable, but you and I.

Perhaps we should eat each other.



I for one would rather eat Daisy (pictured) than save the planet by eating vegetables.

Science Editors: **James Goldsack**
Katya-yani Vyas

science.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Science Fiction Column

Maciej Matuszewski

Hello and welcome to Felix's new, unimaginatively-titled, Science Fiction Column. I've always been passionate about this topic and I hope that I'll be able to pass some of this excitement on to you.

Each week I'll try to entertain you with my thoughts on films, television shows and books in the genre which, for good or bad reasons, I found memorable. I'd thought, however, that I'd start with something more general and devote today's column to science fiction's relationship with science.

The genre is often criticised for its lack of scientific accuracy. I think that this is quite unfair: science fiction is just that, fiction. If I want to learn something I pick up a textbook, not a Star Wars DVD.

I believe that the main purpose of this genre is to try to predict the future, to describe how people will adapt to the new technology in this future and, most importantly, to entertain.

A good grasp of science may help in the first two of these goals, though, since the future is so unpredictable, even this may not always be the case, but it certainly does not help in the third.

Being scientifically accurate isn't a requirement for a good story. Hardly anybody would argue that The Matrix was a bad film despite the ridiculous concept of machines using human brains as a power source. Conversely, last year's Moon won wide acclaim for its plausibility but I found it almost unwatchable due to the antagonists' completely illogical actions. Far more important than science are interesting characters and a good plot.

That is why the one demand that I do make of science fiction is that its made-up science be at least logical and easy to understand. I hate the 'technobabble' so commonly found in Star Trek and Doctor Who.

It adds nothing to the story to have the characters spouting nonsensical and vaguely technical-sounding words for half of an episode. It also takes away all dramatic tension if you know that however perilous the situation it will probably be solved by some never-before-seen and never-again-to-be-mentioned technology. It's not that I don't like Star Trek and Doctor Who: I just think that they're at their best when they tone down their 'science'.

Don't get me wrong, my favourite sub-genre of science fiction is the so called 'hard SF', where believability and scientific accuracy are the most important factors. It can be very refreshing to get away from the bug-eyed monsters so prevalent in the sci-fi that most people are familiar with and see characters dealing with such mundane restrictions as the speed of light.

But I also appreciate the far greater scope that breaking a few rules of physics gives, such as intrigues spanning galactic empires and epic space battles. I guess that I just like the best of both worlds.



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Postgrad Winter Mingle**

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20:00 - 02:00
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ROX
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Technology Editor: **Samuel Gibbs**

technology.felix@imperial.ac.uk

TECHNOLOGY

Free App of the Week

iOS - Google Mobile for iPhone



While Google doesn't have just a Goggles app on the iPhone, the Google mobile app for iOS has Goggles and Voice search built-in, along with other big G stuff.

Android - Google Goggles



Google Goggles on Android brings all the picture, text and photo-based powers of search to green machine. Snap, search, get the answer. Simple.

Google to make learning languages redundant?

Kin-Hing Lo

It's been 27 years since the first handheld portable mobile phone came out and since then it has revolutionised the world. With the development of GSM technology and seamless international roaming, it is now possible for any two people, on different corners of the Earth not connected by wires, to talk to each another at any time simply by dialling a sequence of numbers on their phone. The mobile phone has torn down geographical and national barriers and made the whole world feel a lot smaller.

Google have launched two apps, which aim to bring down not only communication, but language barriers too. They promise to take Douglas Adam's 'Babel Fish' and Star Trek's 'Universal Translator' out of the realm of science fiction and into reality.

The Google Goggles application, currently available for iOS & Android, allows you to read in a foreign language. Using your camera phone, you can take photos of signs or menus in another language – the application then uses optical character recognition (OCR) technology to automatically extract all the text from the image and uses translation technology to translate it into English (or your preferred language). The application currently only supports Latin-based languages such as English, French and Italian, but the goal is to eventually support non-Latin based languages such as Arabic and Chinese once OCR technology has been developed further.

The Android-only Google Translate application allows you to say something in English and it'll read it back over the speakerphone in a different language. It works the other way too – your conversation partner could say

something in a different language and the app will attempt to translate it and read it back to you in English. This means you can have a conversation with anyone, even if you know totally different languages. The application uses the voice recognition and speech synthesis technology built into Android, hence why it's currently unavailable on the iPhone. The range of languages supported is impressive, with a full 30 operational including Chinese, Russian and Welsh. I personally found the voice recognition to be slightly off and the interface to be slightly clunky, but Google's CEO Eric Schmidt demoed an improved "conversation mode" interface in September, which should make the application more practical to use.

Ultimately, the usefulness of translation applications depends on their accuracy and speed. Every GCSE Spanish student who has tried using an online translator for their coursework knows that translators aren't perfect. Compound that with errors introduced during optical character or voice recognition, and the accuracy of the translations can be pretty poor at times. Furthermore, it still takes 10-15 seconds to perform a translation using Goggles or Translate, not ideal if you're trying to hold a face-to-face conversation with someone or to understand all 20 items on a restaurant menu.

Goggles and Translate give us a glimpse of a future where the mobile phone will allow people of different cultures and languages to communicate seamlessly. They show us a future where you could travel and not have to worry about ordering snails rather than chicken. It'll take some further advances in OCR and translation technology before it becomes practical, but those days can't be far off.



WikiLeaks: Heat edition

“The released communiqués read more like a political edition of Heat magazine”

Marcus Shephard

Whether you regard Julian Assange as a feckless self-aggrandiser or a champion of much needed disclosure, few can dispute that he has a knack for getting attention.

The latest release from the WikiLeaks project is a collection of communications between American diplomats and the political heads of a series of administrations. Much like the previously released Iraq War Logs, the ratio of signal to noise is heavily skewed towards noise. In the current release we see a similar slew of unsurprising revelations that vary from the banal to the humorous.

The released *communiqués* superficially read as a political edition of Heat magazine: “Silvio

Berlusconi likes to party!”, “Medvedev is the Robin to Putin's Batman!”, “Prince Andrew is rude and elitist!”. There is nothing surprising in the reality that diplomats are only human, who gossip and bicker as much as any other group. While seeing usually-guarded politicians speaking frankly is novel, it doesn't really educate us. The noise in these logs is a little more subtle, but hints towards the profound.

The shift in China's stance towards North Korea, the Arabian perspective on Iran, and the candid assessment of Israel's position in the Middle East, as well as Americans spying on the UN, and the fight to save Gary McKinnon — these topics are the signal amidst the noise, and could have lasting impacts long after the sniggers about rude royals fade away.

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Latest: It's raining games! Cloud gaming h



Quentin Tarantino: style over substance?

Navid Nabijou profiles the controversial director and his latest work, *Inglourious Basterds*

 **Quentin Tarantino: style over substance?**

 Cannibals and modern family dysfunction

 South Korea's sharp, suspenseful thriller

 A cracking series

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MOST COMMENTED STORIES

Israeli newspaper slams Justice Week as 'anti-Western' (7)
Justice is a powerful word and it must not be misused (4)
Discouraged by higher fees (3)
The Union has done all it can. If you're still not having fun, perhaps it's time to look inward (4)
A night to remember (1)

MOST VIEWED STORIES

Three lambs on the shirt
Israeli newspaper slams Justice Week as 'anti-Western'
Justice is a powerful word and it must not be misused

Like Be the first of your friends to like this.

Over the past two decades, few directors have managed to excite such acclaim – and controversy – as Quentin Tarantino. His work has sharply polarised critics, spawning a plethora of varied interpretations and deconstructions. Each new release is followed by a blaze of feverish publicity, and through all of this, Tarantino and his films remain something of an enigma.

His debut, the playful and gritty *Reservoir Dogs*, was in a certain sense a modest affair. Produced on a tiny budget and screened in only a handful of cinemas, the film went mostly unnoticed at first. It does, however, set the precedent for all of Tarantino's later work: nonlinear narratives, razor-sharp dialogue, profuse profanity and a healthy dose of violence. It's a heist film without a heist scene, a bleak tale of greed, loyalty and madness.



Chabad of South Kensington wishes you a

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Menorah with Lord Winston

- Celebrate this beautiful and cultural event with Professor Lord Robert Winston.
- Celebrate the Menorah's message of freedom for all people.
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Where: Queen's Lawn Terrace

www.SKchabad.com

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C&G AND RCSU
PRESENT



FESTIVE FORTNIGHT

Monday 6th:

Christmas Meal

🍷 Rembrandt (7pm, £22)

Tuesday 7th:

Mistletoe and Whine: Christmas Karaoke

🍷 Metric

Wednesday 8th:

Winter Wonderland: Be a Cheapskate

Thursday 9th:

Tri-Union Sledge Race

🍷 Princes Gardens (6pm)

Friday 10th:

The Four-Way Tickle, Comedy night

🍷 The Union (7pm)

Monday 13th:

Mulled Wine and Mince Pies

🍷 The Union (7pm)

Tuesday 14th:

Christmas Cocktails

🍷 Metric (7pm)

Wednesday 15th:

Winter Wonderland: Be a Cheapskate

Thursday 16th:

RCSU Grotto's Bake Sale (12noon)

Friday 17th:

Winter Ball 2010

🍷 The Union (8pm)

Events tickets can be purchased in advance from imperialcollegeunion.org (See "what's on" for more details)

Business Editors: **Sina Ataherian**
Afonso Campos

business.felix@imperial.ac.uk

BUSINESS

WHAT'S THE FUTURE FOR BP?

Charles Betts talks to Emma Hardaker-Jones and Peter Duff about graduate opportunities, the Deepwater disaster and moving “Beyond Petroleum”



Left: Emma Hardaker-Jones, Head of Resourcing & Policy and Peter Duff, Senior Advisor, Projects and Capability



Why is BP a good choice for graduates?

Emma: We are interested in having a long term relationship with Imperial graduates as many of them have a desire to use their degree, and given Imperial's focus on high quality engineering and science it is an extremely good match for us as an organisation. The size and scale of the business is hugely exciting, and the chance to be part of a business which has over 80,000 people in over 100 countries is very energising. We have a high calibre, 3-year graduate training program that gives students the foundation they need to then develop their technical or leadership careers. Then there is the quality of the people at BP, not just intellectually but in terms of their values and their enthusiasm for what they do. The quality of our people is what should ultimately influence a student's decision when choosing between companies that on the surface look very similar.

Do you feel your graduate scheme offers you an advantage over others, for example Shell?

Emma: All oil companies have a role to play in attracting people to the oil and gas industry. We have taken a pragmatic approach to how we hire people, typically once per year. That has the advantage in that students create a cohort and set of relationships that they can use throughout their career. I think Shell's training is also very high quality, but it all comes down to the personality of the organisation. The point about quality of people is our strongest differentiator.

What would you say to someone who was put off applying to BP due to the events of the summer?

Emma: The incident in the Gulf of Mexico was tragic and one that we as an organisation have worked hard to overcome and ensure we restore

the region back to where it was. One of the key drivers for people joining our organisation is to be a part of that change, and to assist in developing BP going forward. Although there may be students who choose not to apply, we are still seeing that high quality individual applicant. Students who have taken the time to understand what really happened over the summer will see how they could be part of that change.

Oil companies encounter environmental, technical and political disasters. What sort of processes does BP have in place to recover from these and how do you plan for setbacks?

Peter: Setbacks aren't inevitable. The oil and gas industry is a hazardous one but has over the last couple of decades become significantly safer. Our track record on safety has been one of continual improvement, in terms of both personal and process safety. When there's an incident like the one in the Gulf of Mexico, one needs to step back and see what has been learnt. It was a tragedy on both a human and environmental scale, and there has been a lot of focus in terms of the response to the spill and the clean-up. We also need to consider what we can learn from it. A very central part of this is engineering and technology. Clearly there are questions for BP and the industry about oil spill response technology and expertise.

Also, the leading oil companies, by the nature of what we do, operate on the frontiers – both political and technical. The places we go to find oil

and gas are becoming increasingly difficult and deepwater drilling is a part of this.

But deepwater drilling has been happening for years.

Peter: It has, although the trend has been to go deeper and deeper. In the 1980's the North Sea was considered to be deep at 300-600ft. In the 1990's the West of Shetlands was one of the new deepwater provinces and that was at about 1000ft. And now in the Gulf of Mexico and West Africa the operations are at 5000-10000ft.

Is it true that at the onset of the Deepwater Horizon spill, the Blow Out Preventer (BOP) should have been activated by the Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) but that the wrong information was sent to the ROV and the operating valve was turned in the wrong direction?

Peter: There are a number of investigations ongoing, and BP has carried out its own investigation. It appears that there was no single cause of this accident, but there was a complex and interlinked series of failures: some mechanical, some human, some engineering. The fact that the BOP didn't seal was one of the findings of that investigation. But there are numerous investigations taking place and we can't really comment on those outcomes.

Where else does BP presently search for oil?

Peter: The world's energy demand is rising. The International Energy Agency's (IEA) latest prediction is for an increase of around 45% over the next 20 years.

The demand for oil continues to rise and in order to replace depleted reserves and supply that growth, it is still projected that many new sources of oil and gas are required. So the international

energy industry is having to explore in ever more difficult places including the frontiers of the deep seas and oceans. These include Russia, Alaska, GoM, Brazil, West Africa etc. You could also think of frontiers in areas that are more geopolitically challenging.

Do you think it is riskier for BP to extract oil from the Gulf of Mexico where there's a big media spotlight than it is in places like the Indian Ocean?

Peter: There are different risks in each area – geopolitical, security, technological. BP's approach is that wherever we work, we want to maintain the same high standard.

BP has branded itself as “Beyond Petroleum”. What does that mean?

Peter: BP is an integrated oil company. There's exploration and production, refining, marketing, alternative energies, etc. The demand for oil and gas continues to rise but there are signs that the energy mix is changing. We expect that there is a growing market for alternative energy and we aim to be a significant player. “Beyond Petroleum” was a message that was around some time ago and what we would say now is we will be in the oil and gas business for a long time but we are making steps to try and establish a move with technology in new alternative energy areas.

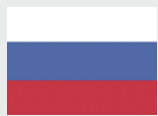
You don't think “Beyond Petroleum” is a bit of an overstatement when you are actually a petroleum company?

Peter: We are a petroleum company but we do also have a very active alternative energy business – as demand for more oil and gas and energy in general rises then companies need to adapt to meet that demand.

“The places we go to find oil and gas are becoming increasingly difficult”

POLITICS

The world beyond College walls



Russia

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev warns of a new arms race between Russia and the West if NATO and Moscow fail to agree on a joint missile shield. Russia was invited to join the proposed missile shield following the NATO summit at Lisbon, but question remains over the command over the proposed shield. President Medvedev also spoke of Russia's declining population, corruption, the Russian budget deficit and the economy during his address to the Russian nation on Tuesday. President Medvedev also confounded expectations and stayed silent over his political future, leaving some analysts to believe that he will not be running for re-election in 2012 following his lacklustre speech.



North Korea

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has revealed a new nuclear plant and details about its expanded nuclear programme. The plant which was previously undetected has around several thousand centrifuges. The DPRK says the plant is scheduled to be opened in 2012 and will be used to generate electricity. This claim appears to agree with a report from an American scientist who was shown the plant last month. He however says that it could be easily modified to produce weapons-grade uranium. Pyongyang's revelations is likely to increase tensions on the Korean peninsula and comes days after the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island. Pyongyang is desperate for international attention amidst its increasing isolation in the international community.



Ecuador

Ecuador has offered Wikileaks founder Assange residency in the South American republic and expressed concerns about American activities in the country. Ecuador's Foreign Minister Kintto Lucas invited Mr Assange to present the documents and information he has through the internet and attached no conditions to the offer of residency. Ecuador, which expelled two American diplomats last year is likely to want to seek insight to an occasionally rough relationship with the United States. Wikileaks has recently released secret diplomatic cables on the internet causing a worldwide furore and caused the United States to review the security of embassy communications.

Edited by Kenneth Lee

Washington, we have a problem

Guo Heng Chin

Wikileaks strikes once again and this time it draws blood from not just the U.S. Wikileaks is releasing up to 251, 287 confidential US embassy cables and the cables reveal "lying, corrupt, murderous leaderships from Bahrain to Brazil", Wikileaks figurehead Julian Assange declared in an email. The leaked cables were boasted to be 7 times larger than the leaked Iraq logs in October. Wikileaks plan to release them over the next few months and as of writing, 598 have been released. The US has been warning countries around the world to brace for the leak, according to the summary on Wikileaks' Cablegate website.

Beijing and Pyongyang may not be as cosy as it was once assumed, with Beijing's reluctance to rein in its communist partner for the recent transgressions against South Korea and its hawkish flirtation with war. The leaked cables revealed that Beijing described Kim Jong-il's dictatorship as a 'spoilt child'. Amidst the silence Beijing keeps on the terrorist acts of its official ally, Beijing sees the North as an unstable variable in its region and is ready for a North Korea without Kim and a unification with the South. However it was also revealed that China mounted hacking attacks against Google, the Dalai Lama and western government computers.

"Cut off the head of the snake", urged Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah to the United States, as King Abdullah together with his foreign minister and Princes agreed that the Arab country needs to cooperate with the US to curb the rising influence of Iran in the region. Saudi Arabia also implied that it is willing to host the deployment of US nuclear weapons to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear



Julian Assange plays invisible tennis

power. The crown prince of Abu Dhabi also likened Ahmadinejad to Hitler.

Brazil has been accused of covering up the scope of terrorist threat in Brazil by giving narcotic instead of terrorism charges.

No. 10 has been alerted by The White House on the critical nature of some of the leaked cables regarding the Conservatives prior to their election. Mervyn King was reported to have described David Cameron and George Osborne as not grasping the pressure they will face from various groups on their plan for spending cuts (prophetically foreshadowing the student protests perhaps?). King also criticised both Cameron and Osborne as lacking in depth beyond seeking strategies that improved the Tories' election chance. Mr Cameron was also quoted as being critical of the British Pakistani community: "we let in a lot

of crazies and did not wake up early enough" in a 2009 cable. No surprise seeing that Liam Fox declared that the Tories' were less reliant on British Pakistani votes.

The U.S. blames the acquisition of the confidential documents on the widespread access to their Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (Siprnet). Siprnet's scope of access was widened post-9/11 to enable more efficient collaboration of information between intelligence analysts, diplomats and security agents in hope of preventing another 9/11 style attack. However, The Times estimated that the access was so widespread that up to 2.5 million persons had access to the network, one of them junior intelligence analyst Private Bradley Manning, who downloaded the confidential cable data into an erased Lady Gaga CD.

Some of the revelations were of an outrageous or comical nature. Conservative research thought that the public found then shadow chancellor Osborne to be lacking "gravitas" due to his high-pitched delivery. US ambassador Louis Susman tried to evade VAT on the new US embassy building but was denied by Alistair Darling. Muammar Gaddafi was revealed to have a phobia of flying over open waters and is unable to climb more than 36 steps. Nicolas Sarkozy was dubbed "emperor with no clothes".

Though the impact of the leak is irreversible, Politico thinks that the leak reveals nothing "ugly or surprising" as it merely shows "diplomats doing their proper jobs". Even as many of the cables involved damning US criticism of other national leaders, Robert Gates, the US Defence Secretary argued that the diplomatic relationship with many countries would nevertheless "survive" as the "US is the indispensable nation".

Will you join my (Mili)band?

Joseph Letts

Ever since the new leader EDavid Miliband stood up to the batting plate, how has Labour, once preening in the glory days, adjusted to a life as the Opposition?

After getting over the drama of usurping his brother EDavid, EDavid had to face the inevitable mountain of conflict that was choosing a fairly representative shady cabinet. Now, adhering to his 'youth' line, EDavid has tried to subtly belittle the age and mental capacity of his predecessors by choosing a shady cabinet with as few over-50s as possible. Then again

with an approximate mean age just shy of 50, you have to wonder if this cabinet can be trusted enough to crunch the numbers...

Allegedly, a source allegedly close to the shady leader himself has implied that EDavid has been reduced to looking for new policies in 'The People's Manifesto', a classic textbook by author Mark Thomas. But while policies such as "the introduction of a 'maximum wage'" might get extra backing from the unions that pushed him into power, EDavid still has a long way to go before he has to face the 'real' people of 'real Britain'.

And what exactly is Labour doing to bring

itself back into the hearts (or at least minds) of the general populous? It seems the *plat du jour* is a serving of "distancing themselves from all previous decisions" with a sprinkling of "championing the cause of anything Cool Dave says because Dave C is a mean boy who steals everybody's lunch money. No really, and he also has lots and lots of money and used to lie [allegedly] for a job so he's not trustworthy!". Mind you, he did break his ironclad promise to hold a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty... maybe there is some truth to their rambling after all. He is still Cool Dave though...

POLITICS

Last Friday, the Jewish-American political scientist Norman Finkelstein gave a lecture at Imperial about the 2009 Gaza conflict as part of Islamic Society's Justice Week. A controversial figure, he is infamous for arguing that Israel is exploiting a "Holocaust Industry" for its own ends

Interview by Hassan Joudi

Kadhim Shubber

"I'm sorry, but you have no right to dictate to me what I have to say."

NORMAN FINKELSTEIN
on Hamas, boycotts and liberty



You've said previously that there is a possibility of resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and it's not an eternal conflict that can't be resolved. What keeps you so optimistic?

First of all you have to see if there are basic principles which people can agree on to resolve the conflict. On the basic principles, you have widespread agreement, whether you look at the voting record of the U.N. General Assembly, whether you look at what the Arab League has said, what the Organisation of the Islamic Conference has said, or whether you look at the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. You could look at a wide range of respected and representative bodies and they all seem to agree on how to resolve the conflict, and judging from that record the main obstacle is Israel and the United States. And, at least in the United States, you can see significant shifts in public opinion. We're still in the early stage but there seems to be the prospect that we can reach public opinion if we're reasonable and if we're principled. We can reach public opinion and maybe force a settlement on the Israelis who are blocking it.

The Jerusalem Post published an article about the Justice Week here at Imperial College, attacking it as anti-Western and criticising some of the choice of speakers and event themes. Do you feel that they have a point or are they unjustified in their attacks?

Well, first of all the Jerusalem Post is not a newspaper. It's just a propaganda rack. Nobody takes it seriously. It's very rarely cited, nowadays. There was

a time when it was under fairly liberal publishers up until the early nineties. Then it was a reputable paper. But now, you read it for laughs; it's like the comic section of the newspaper. Although, occasionally, you know there's an expression in English "Even a broken clock is right twice a day," and once or twice a month there's actually something in the Jerusalem Post of some interest.

You frequently attack and deconstruct Zionist propaganda, yet you seem uncritical of Palestinian propaganda by organisations such as Hamas. Do you feel that this also needs to be deconstructed?

Well, first of all, I'm old fashioned. You don't deconstruct, you critically analyse. I think that people are using this ridiculous French terminology and in French, everything is empty.

So I critically analyse the Israeli propaganda as though there is only one fundamental issue, which is settling the conflict. I don't know much about internal Israeli society. I follow public opinion polls on support or not support for the settlement but, in general, my range is pretty limited. I'm interested in the foreign policy issues and, otherwise, I don't particularly care. The same thing with the Palestinians; I don't really know much about internal Palestinian society. I'm just looking at who's blocking the settlement.

In 2008 Israel banned you from entering the country for 10 years. Here in the U.K., the government has also recently banned individuals like Geert Wilders and Zakir Naik. Are such

actions ever justified, or is there an infringement on freedom of speech when governments do these things?

No, they're never justified. I'm not a flag waver but probably it's one of the virtues of the United States that there's a much broader conception of liberty of speech. The media are much narrower but at least conceptually we're pretty conventional on issues of Freedom of Speech and on the whole it's much better. There have been cases of political people we've banned from entering the country. But, in terms of range of viewpoints, it's pretty broad in the U.S.; at least what's permissible. That doesn't mean there's a range of viewpoints on the television or radio – no there is not. But what's permissible, and I think that's sensible. I mean the basic principles of John Stuart Mill's 'On Liberty' I think is right. The arguments he makes in free, unfettered speech, I think are correct. I don't really accept there are any grounds for banning anyone. But that doesn't mean you can't have an opinion. You can say that Geert Wilders is what he is; a really nasty piece of work. But a nasty piece of work should have the right to speak.

What would you say to people who would describe you as delivering hateful messages?

Well, what I would say is that people have the right to deliver hateful messages. There's not any prescription in free speech only delivering love filled messages. I happen to think they're not hateful, I happen to think they're factual. I happen to think they're actually not even particularly radical. They're pretty mainstream in my opinion. But even if

"Whatever Israel does that's horrible, it's a tiny fraction of what the U.S. does [...] every minute"

that were not the case and even if you interpret them as being hateful, well there are two possibilities. Either they're hateful of the abstract, in which case they still have the right to say it, but then they may be hateful in the specific sense that you're doing hateful things. So, you're evoking a hateful reaction. I hate injustice – so I have a hateful message for those committing injustice. I hate injustice, I hate suffering. So it's hateful, but I think that's permissible-hateful. But, even if it were just hateful-hateful, it's still allowed. I'm sorry, but you have no right to dictate to me what I have to say.

Thousands of students across the U.K. participate in activities like Palestine days, Gaza awareness weeks, fund-raising or Boycott Israeli goods. They believe they are making a positive difference. What would be your message to them?

First of all, I have faith in the reasoning capacities and judgement of young people. I don't really like to try to lecture them on what they should do. I'll give my opinion but also I want to respect other people's political and intellectual autonomy.

On the question of tactics, I support

the boycotts which are anchored in international law. So, if the settlements are illegal, settlement products are illegal, marketing those products is illegal and the protesting the marketing of illegal products from illegal settlements, I think is perfectly legitimate. Under international law, it's illegal to transfer weapons to a country which is a consistent violator of human rights. Israel is, according to Amnesty International, a consistent violator of human rights and Amnesty International says there has to be a comprehensive total arms boycott on Hamas and Israel. So, the protesting of arms transfers from the U.K. to Israel, I supported. That's the law.

But when you start going towards political boycotts which include anything and everything Israeli, I consider that problematic because if you were saying 'I'm boycotting anything Israeli until the end of occupation', I could see that. The problem is people don't say 'until they end the occupation.' They say 'we're boycotting anything Israeli' and then you're not really clear. Do they want to dismantle the occupation or do they want to dismantle Israel? I don't support dismantling Israel. Yes, Israel does horrible things, but so does the U.K. and whatever Israel does that's horrible, it's a tiny fraction of what the U.S. does that's horrible every minute, of every hour, of every day. So, since I don't see any boycotts calling for the dismantling of the United States, or the dismantling of the U.K., then I'm not supporting the dismantling of Israel. There's a deliberate ambiguity about whether you want to end the occupation or whether you want to end Israel.

Comment Editor: Anna Perman

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

COMMENT

FELIX

**For a 61-year-old,
you do swear a lot,
don't you Felix?**

This coming Thursday will be an important day for students all across the country. Parliament will vote on controversial proposals to raise the cap on tuition fees to £9,000. For the Editors of this newspaper the day is also important for another, albeit more light-hearted, reason. It will be 61 years to the day since the first issue of Felix was published. It is Felix's birthday.

The paper is now almost completely unrecognisable, in terms of its design and production, to that first issue. Throughout the decades the various students who have had the privilege of editing the paper have taken bold decisions with regard to its appearance. In fact the only connection, superficially speaking, that the paper has to that first issue is the logo. The same Cat that smiled out at students on Friday the 9th of December 1949, now smiles out at students in 2010.

However, despite the changes in appearance, the character and ethos of the paper have remained consistent. The aims and objectives laid out by the first Editor of the paper, E.M. Hughes, are still the aims and objectives that the team hold in 2010. "To comment upon the affairs of the College whilst they are still topical", he wrote in that first Editorial; that is certainly still our aim. "Any contribution will be welcome", he declared; that is still the guiding ethos of this paper. "The success or failure of this paper depends principally upon you, our readers", he noted; the current Editors of the paper still firmly believe this to be true.

We have been especially fortunate this year in the number of talented students that have given up their valuable free time to contribute to the paper; time that they perhaps should have used to complete lab reports or catch up on lectures. At a university where proficiency with equations and lab reports is valued more highly than the ability to write, the fact that almost 200 students have already chosen to get involved with the student publication speaks volumes for the range of talents at this university.

But although we take pride in the achievements made so far, we are ever aware of where we have failed to meet the high standards set by our predecessors. And because of that we are always open to criticism and new contributors. E. M. Hughes really hit the nail on the head when he said that this paper relies upon you, the reader. Without you, this paper would be nothing.

Facing a Wikiflood

The memos released by Wikileaks are part of a wave of information. But what are we going to do with it?



George Wigmore

"Information should be free. It belongs in the public domain"

So says Bradley Manning, the US soldier working as an intelligence analyst in Baghdad.

The rights and wrongs of the situation are irrelevant. The information is out there. This particular can of worms has been opened. Thanks to innovations like the internet and microchips which allow us to store huge amounts of information on a tiny memory stick, hacking into systems and disseminating information from them has never been easier. Because of this, we face a flood of information from Wikileaks.

But we also face the same onslaught from more legal means from the Freedom of Information act. Institutions are obliged to release information upon request.

Supposedly this access to previously classified information acts as a democratic leveller. Any public institution faces having its authority undermined by leaks of information which might discredit their members or shed a less than flattering light on their practises.

So if these leaks are inevitable for all walks of life, should they be filtered? The original leaked memos are all available on the internet, but how many people have actually read them? Most of us will have gained what information we have about the contents through the newspapers. We only hear about the things they choose to tell us, and only get the spin they choose to put on it.

The problem with reading these documents, is that both journalists and the general public are often poorly equipped to understand the linguistic nuances present, and in addition these documents are being viewed out of context, and not in terms of the background from which

Benjamin Kennedy



In this information age, Julian Assange holds the balance of power, not the government

they arose. A main point of controversy about the recent leaks was Hilary Clinton asking diplomats to monitor UN officials, but, it has been argued that these instructions are not meant literally, and that diplomats would know the difference. As a Science Communication student, this reminded me of the issues around science reporting that we confront daily.

When covering science stories, journalists are faced with jargon and language, which is meaningful to the experts using it, but to a non-specialist, is easily misinterpreted.

One recent example would be one of the emails pounced upon by the right-wing press in the aftermath of the University of East Anglia 'climategate' email fiasco, which, like the wikileaks of recent days, involved technological foul play, and leaking of emails between researchers. Several groups maintained that these emails manifested genuine evidence of scientific malpractice, basing their claims around one email which referred to 'Mike's Nature trick'. While we often think of a 'trick' being devious or subversive, in fact this trick was simply a statistical technique used by Mike Hulme, director of the Tyndall centre for climate research, to unify two different data sets.

The link here is that leaks have revealed how the scientific and the diplomatic worlds function. The degree of secrecy and separation that existed be-

tween the public and these institutions gave them authority, but a peek into their inner workings make them seem grubby and corrupt.

Perhaps if they were a bit more open to begin with, the issues of leaks wouldn't exist, and we might respect their openness. Perhaps. But we probably wouldn't have as much faith in their competence. Either way, I have more faith in the institutions the leaks are coming from than the journalists who are interpreting them.

The likelihood is that we face an information arms race, as the US shuts down access to lower levels, and implements more and more sophisticated firewalls and anti-hacking devices. But there will always be disgruntled employees all the way up who are willing to leak information, and there will always be someone capable of hacking these systems. So if this leaking of information is inevitable, is an honest approach a better one, as it relies less on media spin?

Information should be free, and it does belong in the public domain. But that means we have to be extra careful with how we interpret it. It may seem that the papers are just laying open the truth to the public, but just by selecting which information to report, journalists, whether meaning to or not, will always report with a certain bias.

These wikileaks are turning into a wikiflood. How we direct the flow of information is up to us.

**Have your say on
this article at
felixonline.co.uk**

COMMENT

The opinions expressed on the Comment pages represent the views of the author only.

The coalition's plans are ideological



Reuben Gibbons

“These reforms are an ideological attempt to privatise our university education”

Those who support the government's cuts claim that people haven't looked up or understood the propositions, and that there are no other viable options. I find this insulting and naive.

While student campaigners are vocal about the rise in fees and scrapping of EMA, at the heart of these issues is that the government has announced an 80% cut in state funding to university teaching which would see courses no longer being offered, departments close, student to staff ratios increase and universities cutting the resources required for their courses. To meet the funding gap the cost will be shunted onto the students in terms of increased tuition fees.

The cuts to higher education are more like an amputation. I feel these reforms are an ideological attempt to privatise our university education. While savings of public money may be a decent goal, and the argument that non-graduates should not pay for the university education of others is fair, there is a risk that the future cost to the taxpayer would be greater than under the current system.

With an increasing number of students entering higher education the government will have to procure greater funds to loan out. While the proposals assume that not all universities will raise their fees, the Higher Education Policy Institute argue that in due time most courses will be charging £9000. As university funding decreases it makes sense for the establishments to charge as much as possible. While Browne suggested monetary disincentives for this, the proposals do not. With the proposal's inaccuracies of lifetime earnings for female graduates and introduction of real rate of interest it's unlikely a graduate will pay back the entirety of their loan. The Treasury are going to make a loss from the inevitable writing off of debt after 30 years.

Our own Union survey shows that current students would be dissuaded from applying to Imperial if higher fees were introduced, and Ipsos Mori has shown that increasing of fees to £5000 or above would dissuade those from the lowest earning background from applying to university, which flies in the face of the so called fairness inherent in the new system. While some say student debt

isn't like real debt, with the introduction of real interest rates payable on loans, it will be very much like real debt that will linger on a student for decades after they graduate, and there is a fear of having that when in the foreseeable future there is little guarantee of graduate jobs or that these will pay as well as in the past.

The main benefactors of the new changes, according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies are most likely to be universities charging the highest fees, while students will suffer as well as, if universities opt for £9000 fees as expected, the taxpayer. This will leave a chaotic legacy for future governments and students and a higher education system incomparable to the one we have today.

In the deficit ridden time that we are in there are two ways of reversing the problem: lower spending or increase taxation. If we increased income tax for high earners, this would affect graduates who benefited from grant maintained education and also cause current and future graduate to enter a system where they pay back their fair share. If students are going to higher education as our Union survey shows because of a passion of their sub-

ject, and presumably aim for a job likewise, it shouldn't be too unpalatable.

I am disappointed and surprised that the Union passed their opinions before the results of their own survey were published. Council should pass papers based on the student population's views. Despite the low turnout for the survey it was clear that current students want to maintain the current system, disagree that different institutions and courses should pay different fees and would have been put off applying to university if the fees were higher. Just 5.3% of students thought leaving university with greater than £30,000 of debt was acceptable, yet an increase to £6,000 fees would see student debt for a 3 year course at this level, with longer courses and higher fees being worse. I hope the Union Council reconsiders its stance and comes out against the proposals, and at the very least lobbies college against £9,000 fees. Never before have I come across so many people talking in lectures against an issue. It's time for us all to make it clear to the Union and College that we oppose the changes and introduction of higher fees.

Higher fees will rescue our universities



Laura Huckins

“Every other sector faces wage-freezes, mass redundancies or unemployment”

In mid September, Europe began to howl. Guttural, deep, pained. On one day, Spain joined Italy, France and Ireland in staging a General Strike. The hot streets of Cadiz thronged with protesters; shops had doors glued or taped shut. Europe had arisen to protest austerity measures imposed to combat massive national debt (16% of GDP in Spain's case). Their people faced lowered minimum wage, mass unemployment (peaking at 20%) and stark cuts in order to meet Prime Minister Zapatero's aggressive plan to reduce debt.

In November, students across the UK began their own revolt, staging mass demonstrations against the perceived injustices of the upcoming increase in tuition fees. I did not join these crowds, nor was I at home too afraid to join in. I did not go, simply, because I support the rise in tuition fees. I fear that by not supporting these rises we doom ourselves to real national pain, real crisis, real unavoidable pain that blights so much of Europe. It may not be the best possible solution: simply it is the best viable solution.

There will be many who argue that I have nothing to lose by backing the fees, or who may assume that I could easily have afforded the increased fees. On the contrary, I struggle as it is: like everyone,

I can make a meal for under a pound and would rather put on an extra jumper than turn on the heating. It is not churlishness or superiority, then, that makes me back the fees. Ultimately, I back the fees for a number of reasons, all centred on the fact that I believe the university system currently falls far short of what it can offer students and the country's recovery.

A key argument against the increase is that “students are the future—they are vital for future economic growth”. Obviously, I agree with this, or I wouldn't bother being a student. However, I find it irrational to argue that we shouldn't face cuts in our budget when almost every other sector faces wage-freezes, mass redundancies or unemployment. My cousin is a midwife and health visitor. She has been unemployed for two years. Several relatives working in science face regular risks of redundancy. It is unfair, it is hard: it is the same story across the country. I cannot find an argument which can convince me that, in this atmosphere, we should be exempt. Universities face a funding crisis as the government struggles to finance further subsidies for ever-increasing numbers of students. In order to continue to subsidise poorer students and socially responsible degrees (nursing, teaching, medicine, etc) some funding must be found

or the scheme abandoned. To argue then that financially comfortable students should not face any worsening of their situation is insulting both to students who rely on government help and to the public at large.

Another popular argument is that an increase in fees will deter many students from University education: I find it hard to believe this. On the whole, the new funding system allows for greater subsidies and grants, ensuring that students have in fact a greater access to learning. The repayment plan should also ensure that any student earning below an average of £30,000 pa for 30 years after graduating will never in fact pay back their entire loan. It seems hard to argue, then, that students will be barred financially from entering university.

I stated in the beginning of this article that I believe the proposals will improve the university system as a whole, as well as simply plugging a yawning funding gap. A large amount of what is wrong with universities today lies in the chasm between what students require and what universities actually provide. It is sadly commonplace to hear tales of Freshers discovering that they have four “contact hours” a week at their top twenty university, studying what should be an academically rigorous course. By

increasing tuition fees the covenant between student and university should be strengthened, with students demanding more from their courses and universities more accountable to their students. This can only be a good thing.

The plans also include increasing equality of payment plans for part time and full time students. Currently, part-time students are required to pay up front, which effectively bars access to these courses, many of which combine working and studying, for a large number of students. Creating a level playing field here may be an under-publicised area of the government's plans but is nonetheless a laudable one and one which shows commitment to providing students with greater choice over their education.

There are many who see the protests in London as a true standard of courage, of bravery, of revolution against an unfair system. More daring, however, are those who choose to support the fees. It will mean higher debt; it will mean harsher standards of living. It will be worse, in the short term. In the long term, we may have a chance to rescue the system before it is corrupted and crippled. It may be brave to stand in the snow and protest for lower fees: it is braver to stand by these changes and suffer slightly for the greater good.



Felix

Kadhim Shubber

Felix is 61 years old on Thursday.
Happy Birthday Felix!

Do you want to do a centrefold? Email felix@imperial.ac.uk

Comment Editor: Anna Perman

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

COMMENT

Hidden behind a computer screen: The psychological effects of distancing through the internet

People find it easier to express their feelings 'hidden' behind their computer screens. They can confess things to people that they would never talk about face to face, like suppressed feelings or personal thoughts. So how exactly did people communicate before the internet?

However, the distancing effects of Information Technology have drawbacks as well. People tend to trust strangers that they have met in chat rooms or in Facebook, more than in other situations of every day life. For example, many people expose their personal details and private moments to people all over the world over the internet without consideration. But they would get upset if a stranger stared at them in the street!

Recently, I've learnt about the psychological experiment on 'Obedience to Authority' by Professor Stanley Milgram at Yale University that began in July 1961, which I think provides very good proof that humans behave very differently to each other when they are separated by a screen.

The subjects of the experiment were random people who thought that they were participating in an experiment on their memory. Everyone had the role of a teacher who was responsible to ask a "learner" some questions and to give him an electric shock every time his answer was incorrect. Of course, the learner was an actor who wasn't actually receiving the shocks, he was just pretending to feel the pain.

The results were astonishing; many of the experiment participants administered a massive 450-volt shock, though many were very uncomfortable doing so.

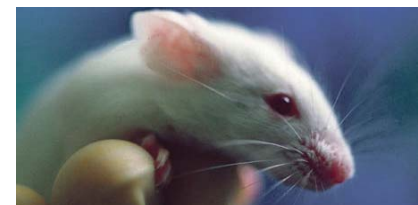
Specifically, they were far more likely to do this when they could see the learner through silvered glass, but couldn't hear them than when they had to press the hand of the "learner" to the shock plate themselves.

It is not only obvious but also scientifically proven that the more the distance between people increases, the less they feel the effects that their actions can have. And as one of the main goals of technology is to increase communication between people who are far apart, this phenomenon happens more and more nowadays to the majority of people, without them even noticing it.

Does it work on you as well?

Anastasia Eleftheriou

This week scientists made mouse organs younger. Some speculated we could do the same to humans. The question is...



WOULD YOU TAKE AN ANTI-AGING PILL?



Matt Allinson

Ah yes, Nature: everyone's favourite science journal. We slag it off as populist bullshit but secretly dream of the day our paper will be published in its glossy, simplistic covers. What garbage have they thrown at us this week? Oh hurrah, we're going to be able to reverse the aging process. And no doubt, by the time the mainstream media has finished bouncing on this story like Berlusconi on a power hungry teenie-bopper; we will be queuing up in our thousands to have this wonder enzyme pumped into our bodies. Let's get one thing straight: if I earn enough money, I will probably get plastic surgery when I'm older to sort myself out.

My opponent in this head-to-head is lucky that he is Chinese. Anyone who has seen a Kung-fu film will know that Chinese people can only look one way when they get old, and that way is awesome. Crazy moustache, little goatee and an ability to look good in a dress with sandals and socks, the Far East Asians are like a fine merlot when it comes to ageing. I, however, am from the Middle East. When my people get old, they grow jowls, and wrinkles deep enough to use as CD racks. Now as I'm sure you can tell from the photo above this article, I am a damn handsome man. A little problem with acne that crops up when it gets cold, but otherwise, I've got the package young faces, it is ridiculous that we can reject a weirdly small ears and frizzy hair: it's a classic look that's never going away; and I would never let any concept of growing old gracefully ever prevent me from preserving it.

"And what of the non-aesthetic reasons for preventing ageing, you vain prick?" you may ask. We are all getting older and the government is now getting us to work till we're 70 before we can get a one way ticket to the drain-on-the-state-finances-express queue at the post office each week. Ignoring the fact that this trumped up miracle cure will ravage us all with cancer before we can even surprise our friends by seducing their kids with our fresh young faces, it is ridiculous that we can reject a genuine proposal to "cheat death", or at least have us ticking over very nicely until the sudden, final gasp. I mean, have you ever seen children? They're fucking horrible, messy things that bite and piss themselves. Or teenagers? You know how obnoxious and annoying freshers are, right? They're like that but worse.

Youth is wasted on the young, and experience is wasted on the old. Any chance we get to redress that situation by doing away with the irritating, take-forever-to-get-off-the-bus shit that comes with age will make this a perfect utopian society for all.

"Youth is wasted on the young, and experience is wasted on the old"



Dan Wan

Let's start by confirming the fact that what scientists managed to achieve with those mice will probably never be emulated in humans.

Call me a sceptic, but let's call off all hope for any sort of *bona fide* 'reverse-aging treatment' for humans in the foreseeable future. I mean, we're so far away from translating this experiment from mice to humans, we'll all be dead by the time it's a realistic occurrence. These Harvard scientists were barely capable of reversing age, never mind resurrection. So, sit back down, close your mouth back up and calm down for now.

However, back to a hypothetical world we go.

Reverse-aging would make life unfair. More unfair than it already is. As a final year student currently looking for any dregs of the job market that I can call 'employment', I do not want to be competing against an 140-year-old for jobs. He'd absolutely hammer me in a head-to-head interview situation with all the wisdom he's gained from, quite frankly, more than his fair share of life. I'm ignorant and immature enough, thank you very much. I count on people around me being more naïve, insensitive and uncultured than myself. Life runs in relativity: stand next to Peter Crouch, you're going to look short (like a Borrower in my case); stand next to Graham Norton, you're going to look positively butch (I'd probably struggle with this one); stand next to Katie Price, you're going to seem like Einstein (I'm a Biologist and Matt's a Material Scientist, this last analogy isn't working).

Sexual selection is one of the evolutionary drivers of the human race's sustenance. It'd be horrifically unfair if the female population were forever subject to a 20 year old Hugh Hefner and his planet-sized libido. No other man would stand a chance. Hugh would end up being the father to even more children than he probably already is. Does that sound like utopia to you?

Growing old doesn't scare me. Having youth on my side is great and all that. But I look forward to the mid-life crisis, bus seat offerings and colostomy bags. I hate having to wash myself in the bath; when you're old, someone else does it for you. Life as an elder statesman sounds like THE life, and if fate wishes to take me there, who am I stop it? Plus, I've planned my mid-life crisis and I'm buying myself three in-house prostitutes and whatever four-seater Volkswagen is all the rage by then. There are so many benefits of getting old, see?

Having youth in a pill sounds great, but it's not for me thanks. Oh, why am I bothering? This argument is futile. It won't bloody happen anyway.

The opinions expressed on the Comment pages represent the views of the author only.

COMMENT

Flee! Flee the St John Ambulance service!



Rhys Davies

“Every other sector faces wage-freezes, mass redundancies or unemployment”

Before coming to London, my friends and family loaded me up with good advice. A common theme running through these kernels of sagacity was that London is a very dangerous place – something I won’t even try and refute.

With every month that I stay and study here, I can feel the years sloughing off my life-expectancy. My lungs are the council estate battleground between TB and tar and their respective gangs. There are macroscopic dangers too, such as the fine art of stepping into the road to attract a taxi’s attention without losing a limb in the process. The strange other-kin that inhabit London after midnight are equally dangerous. Are they drunk-fighty, drunk-chatty, drunk-flirty or some horrid combination of the three?

But there is one danger in the Big Smoke that is not confined by the M25. This threat can be found in all major cit-

ies, indeed, wherever there are people. It can appear perfectly harmless from a distance but when it strikes, it strikes hard. It doesn’t discriminate between young and old, rich and poor or any other dichotomy society sees fit to draw. I am of course referring to St John Ambulance.

Now, you mustn’t misunderstand me. I think the service that St John Ambulance provides is fantastic. Looking after people with on-the-scene first aid and treatment is great, especially when it can take the pressure off the other ambulance services. Thanks to their sterling efforts, the mortality from the Oxford/Cambridge Boat Race has never been lower. However, I will say this. I think that St John Ambulance prevent incidents at all these public events in the same way the Bogeyman keeps five-year-olds in their beds at night.

It’s fear, pure and simple; it’s one of society’s greatest stimuli. A primeval fear of the dark – and its contents – led

to the creation of, at varied different times, fire, religion and the light-switch. Sport is no exception. I’ve mentioned before how a fundamental fear of leopards drove our ancestors to running. Where we once had leopards, we now have St John Ambulance.

But unlike leopards, the phobic response to these Good Samaritans is intricate and well-crafted. It is the fear of the unknown. If you’re unfortunate enough to be caught by St John Ambulance, what do they do to you? Ostensibly they’re there to help, the rational mind reasons; what is the harm? Then thoughts drift to the gas canisters, the ampoules of drugs, the defibrillators and people who have been trained to use them – and would do anything to try them out. And while that thought lingers and malingers in your head, you wonder why, of all the patients you’ve seen go into those ambulances, you’ve never seen any come out again. There is

the fear of the unknown, with the caveat of some pretty good guesses.

But there is also a fear of the inevitable. On the savannah plains, every time a leopard took down a weak or injured gazelle, it was a *memento mori* to the herd that they too were mortal. So too do St John Ambulance toll the bells of our doom – with crowd-parting klaxons and flashing lights. Avoiding St John Ambulance at all costs avoids too the grim spectre of Death.

But for all this, St John Ambulance contributes a valued service to society. It’s not a necessary evil – the work they do is probably good... if their patients survive. No, instead they are the terrifying good. You know they’ll be there for you if you need them but you fervently pray that day will never come. Throughout this letter, I have been comparing them to leopards but now I realise this isn’t quite right. They’re more like vultures with high-vis jackets.

Letters

Justice Week was inclusive and balanced

Dear Sirs, In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind.

Justice Week intended to highlight various injustices from around the world and offer Islam as a potential solution to these. Various powers were implicated in injustice during this week including several Arab nations – particularly for their complicity in torture at Guantanamo. UNICEF were invited to speak at our event on exploitation of the third world. In addition, an American speaker was invited to give his views on the invasion of Gaza in 2009. Justice Week was inclusive, balanced and united students together against injustice.

The Jerusalem Post chose to sidestep the issues raised by Justice Week. Instead of contacting us, they chose to refer to sensationalist right wing propagandists posing as mainstream thinktanks for their views. On the other hand; we acknowledge Mr Scally’s non-discriminatory account and thorough investigation of affairs in the Felix last week.

The Editorial suggests we misrepresented the views of the Muslim population at our College during Justice Week. We would like to point out that amongst the 560 people attending the final event

of Justice Week, over 100 tickets were purchased by Islamic Society members and there were many more Muslim and non-Muslim students amongst the crowd. We’ve received support for Justice Week from our members, Muslim and non-Muslim students, the Union and the College. Justice Week has been a great success for Muslims at College; who have found wider support for their opinions on injustice and will continue to share these in the future.

Many Thanks,

Umer Hakeem
President of Islamic Society

Norman Finkelstein misled his audience

Dear Sirs, What can be done with a controversial radical, who also happens to be a charismatic speaker?

I am speaking of course about Norman Finkelstein, a speaker invited by the Islamic Society to Justice Week. He was introduced as a professor, although his academic rank would be

equivalent to a lecturer (he was denied tenure in the US), and he has a track record of controversy among academic colleagues.

Being at his lecture reminded me of the movies by Michael Moore which supposedly reveal hidden conspiracies behind any action or event. But if the movies by Moore are usually taken with a pinch of salt, I was surprised to see a lack of critical reflection on behalf of the people in the audience who failed to challenge any of Finkelstein’s views. Worse than that, the inaccuracies of some of the facts presented went mostly unnoticed because of the crowd’s almost naïve willingness to believe.

Most of the focus of the talk was on the operation “Cast Lead”, a 3-week armed conflict in the Gaza strip during winter 2008-2009. Israel started the operation after an escalation of rockets fired into its territory by Hamas militants. Hamas is the largest Palestinian militant Islamist organisation widely recognised as a terrorist organisation, which took over control of Gaza in 2006.

From the beginning Finkelstein brilliantly downplayed the necessity of the Israeli action, and made the situation into an almost one-sided-conflict portraying Israel as an unprovoked aggressor. His rhetoric reminded me of that of a politician who highlights those aspects which favour his statements, while ignoring others that don’t support his case. For example, he “forgot” to mention the reasons why the Israeli government decided to go into the complicated opera-

tion in the first place. Restoration of security for Israel was absolutely essential after more than 3000 rockets were fired into Israel during 2008 alone. He forgot to mention the reasons for the blockade, implemented to restrict the influence and power of Hamas and to stop them from smuggling weapons, consequently used to attack Israel. He did, however, mention the humanitarian crisis and purported starvation in Gaza, while forgetting to mention that Hamas had no shortage of the rockets or ammunition before and during the fighting.

As is commonplace in talks regarding this topic, Finkelstein used emotional metaphors to engage the audience rather than offer rational arguments to defend his cause. However, what made me most anxious was the fact that he praised Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of the Lebanese paramilitary group and political party, Hezbollah. This group calls for the imminent destruction of Israel and is regarded by the international community as a terrorist organisation. To much amusement from the crowd, he glorified the leadership of Nasrallah while jokingly suggesting the illiteracy of King Hussein of Jordan and of Hosni Mubarak (President of Egypt) with whom Israel has peace agreements. This, for an Israeli in the midst of an apparently tolerant UK university was very disturbing and simply unacceptable.

Sadly, Finkelstein also abused his privilege of lecturing to Imperial students by using a rhetoric which did not fall short of calling for resistance.

By using phrases like “Israel understands only one language – language of force”, “Israel wanted a bloody conflict ...”, “before they (Israel) go for the kill ...”, “Israel would attack in the next 12-18 months ...” he actually looked to escalate hatred. Finally, by saying “we have to get prepared for their exercise in insanity”, “we have to act”, “things will not change”, he seemed to encourage a call for action! This is hardly something that can provide a constructive force or harmony which can help bolster any peace process in the Middle East.

The Middle East is at a very important cross road. The journey to peace is hard and at times can be unpleasant. It is clear that both sides, Israel and the Palestinians, have made and will continue to make mistakes. In this context, a radical speaker can only hinder the journey, and should be left at home. We all need leaders and speakers who can see beyond specific events of a conflict, who can inspire an audience with peace initiatives and proposals, and pave the way for a time when harmony will be achieved. With God’s Help = Beezrat Ha Shem = Inshallah!

Sincerely,
K.Gena

The author K.Gena wished to remain anonymous due to teaching responsibilities. His contact details can be supplied upon request.

Arts Editor: **Rox Middleton**arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk

ARTS

If you read nothing else this week...

Matt Colvin wants you to pick up a cult hit from 1998. Step this way for a brilliant satire on unrequited love, horrific murder and high school

The Basic Eightby
Daniel Handler

Probably best known under pseudonym Lemony Snicket, author of the popular 'A Series of Unfortunate Events' books, Handler's debut novel delves into the lives of a group of close-knit friends at a San Francisco high school with razor sharp precision.

In a year where they should be worrying about university applications, we instead, through the diary of the smitten Flannery Culp, enter a world where pretentiousness runs high and academic rigour less so. Amidst the trials and tribulations, the dinner parties and social politics, the group end up encounter-



ing far more adult problems than their precocious minds can cope with, culminating in murder by unquestionably fashionable croquet mallet.

Very loosely based on Handler's own experiences at high school, the author delivers a perfectly pitched account of late teenage life, which, despite the exaggerations, strikes particularly true to reality, especially with regards to the relationships between the friends. Flitting from high tension to good natured banter with ease, it is this interaction of the characters, and lack thereof, which drives the heart of the story.

Writing from the perspective of Flannery, a fantastically unhinged yet perfectly composed character, Handler is able to use the blackest of black humour both through both the mentally fraught individual and the plot itself to deliver a thoroughly uproarious yet hugely uncomfortable tale.

Handler proves to be a playful master of words and comedy, with lines so deadpan that they probably deserve their own funeral. A triumph of unreliable narration, the reader's perceptions of the main characters changes with alarming regularity, yet this never quite stretches credulity to breaking point. All the better, by the end one is left with countless interpretations as to the motivations of Flannery – this is a book firmly placed outside any kind of black and white definite conclusions. A scathing satire on various issues such as education, media scaremongering and the arrogance of adolescence, polished off with a healthy dose of Grade A wit, *The Basic Eight* rewards multiple reads and proves that Handler isn't just for the kids.

What's your favourite book and why should we read it? Tell us in 350-400 words and send it to arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Go Go Go Gauguin

Cecily Goodwin

Tate Modern's exhibition on Gauguin is his first international exhibition for more than 50 years. It documents his shifting styles, focusing on his interest in depicting myth and the supernatural, and culminating in his most famous works painted in Tahiti. As well as allowing the viewer to observe Gauguin's very variable painting styles and progression as an artist, it also documents and provides context to the painter's life, providing two rooms full of articles, letters and historical memorabilia.

The exhibition begins with a series of self portraits. Each portrait shows how Gauguin wanted to project himself at different point in his career, from amateur artist and stockbroker to fulltime artist. There is one particular self portrait completed when Gauguin returned from his travels in Tahiti for the first time, depicting himself in front of one of his own Tahitian paintings, showing his determination to picture himself as the exotic travelling artist and starting to give an indication of the artist's general attitude.

You get a further clue beyond the first room, where quotes from Gauguin displayed on the

wall proclaim such statements as 'I am a great artist and I know it'. A painting is also on show, 'Christ in the garden of olives' in which Gauguin likens his suffering to Christ on the eve of his crucifixion by portraying Christ through self-portrait. The whole exhibition gives the general impression Gauguin may not have been such a modest guy. As much as Gauguin is self-congratulatory, he is very scathing of other artists, describing the pointilist Seurat as the "little dot" in his letters.

The highlight of the exhibition is the works Gauguin painted in Tahiti. Female figures in earthy shades of yellows and greens, amongst scenery of vibrant oranges, purples and greens have a very exotic quality and show Gauguin's very original and bold use of colour. These are very distinctive, but he seems to have only really developed such a unique style on his move to Tahiti. His earlier work is often reminiscent of impressionists such as Van Gogh, who he spent time with in Arles in 1888, and whilst not unpleasant, is a bit unremarkable.

There are, however, some more interesting early paintings. I particularly liked one of his children sleeping, *Clovis Asleep*, in which Gauguin had incorporated dreamlike imagery

into the wallpaper. He includes other elements of myth in many of his paintings, from the Christianity of Brittany to the pagan myths of Tahiti. Despite the fact that the island converted to Christianity almost 100 years before and many of the women dressed conservatively, this did not deter Gauguin from painting exactly how he wanted to portray his 'savage' ideal, and describing to others the innocent purity of the beliefs and dress of the natives.

After he left his wife, Gauguin lived permanently in Tahiti taking various women as his mistresses. The hedonistic life Gauguin now followed is illustrated well in the exhibition by the door to his home, carved with lintels and the words 'House of Pleasure'. His argumentativeness did not wane and he got in trouble with the authorities over his refusal to pay tax. His later years, however, were plagued by syphilis and he died of heart failure in 1903.

Although I found Gauguin's earlier paintings a little bit disappointing, the later paintings in Tahiti may make the exhibition worth a visit. And whilst Gauguin is a very interesting man, revolutionary in his time, I have to say that the exhibition portrays him as a little obnoxious.



Nevermore O Tahiti (Courtauld Gallery), Gauguin Uncovered at the Tate Modern until 16th January, tickets £13.50

Enchanting glass memories

Christina Flanagan

The *Glass Menagerie* enfolds us in the memories of Tom, a young poet trapped by his dependent family, who both appears in each scene and narrates the play from his present. This is the play that made Tennessee Williams famous and aside from an occasionally dodgy Southern accent (Deborah Findlay as the mother) and a limp that may have hopped from foot to foot (the sister) the Young Vic's production is flawless. An aura of memory is cleverly crafted by the presence of the two musicians as part of the multi-level set – particularly poignant moments in the play are haunted by the eerie sound from the percussionist's array of wine glasses (the licking your finger and running it round the rim trick).

Despite any observations about her limp I

thought Sinéad Matthews as Tom's frail sister Laura gave the best performance in the play. I was so convinced I would find it hard to ever imagine her walking straight. It is believed this character was based on William's own sister and his portrayal is tender and sometimes painful.

The premise of the play is the mother's obsessive plans to find a "gentleman caller" for Laura so that she can be taken off her brother's hands, as their father, represented here only by a giant portrait, quit the family many years ago. But Laura's physical fragility is matched by a crippling shyness, totally opposed to the huge character of her mother, leading her to hide in a world of glass animals.

Matthews makes Laura very likable and we cringe with her in a perfectly pitched final scene when a gentleman caller does indeed arrive. His normality and easy charm provides a

sharp contrast with her extreme awkwardness and the strange parallel reality this isolated family lives in. When the family's electricity is cut off, the stage is lit with real candles, drawing us into their home and lives. I found the moment when Laura and her caller dance especially sweet and memorable. We see her begin to blossom in his presence and the inevitable disappointment when it transpires he has nothing to offer her is crushing and hard to watch.

The mother, a faded Southern Belle indomitable and hilariously flirtatious when her gentleman finally calls, is hugely enjoyable to watch. Her character provides laughs but Findlay also gets across her insensitive, domineering side from which Tom is so desperate to escape.

Glass Menagerie at the Young Vic until 15th Jan. Tickets from £10.

ARTS

Come and join The Looking Glass Club

We meet Imperial alumnus **Gruff Davies**, who launched his sci-fi novel last week in Southside Halls

Louise Murphy

I should start off by saying that I loved the book – you’ve converted me to Science Fiction! (See the review below)

Fantastic! You weren’t a sci fi fan before then?

No, and I was nervous about reading it in case I thought it was awful!

Lots of people have felt the same way – I’ve had some fantastic feedback from people though – it’s really lovely to hear people say that they’re not normally science fiction fans and yet the absolutely loved the book. That’s something I really wanted to achieve.

How did you come up with the idea of ‘The Looking Glass Club’?

I’m not still a physicist but I do like to

read about it, about new ideas and became so engaged in it that I actually thought about writing a book about physics itself; then I realised that that probably wasn’t going to happen and it would take about ten years of dedication and incredible mathematical rigour so I thought I would do the next best thing and make a novel instead. I had a dream actually – It was one of those moments where you just run out of bed and get right to the keyboard and start writing.

What made you decide to set part of the novel at Imperial?

That was a very conscious decision because I get a bit sick of reading novels set in Cambridge colleges and I just thought ‘But Imperial’s great!’ and it deserves to be on the fictional map. I’m very proud of Imperial – I’ve spent six



years of my life there and I just fell in love with London and Imperial the moment I arrived.

Was it difficult to find a publisher for a Science Fiction book?

Yup, it’s an incredibly tough market because it’s so niche – in fact there are only six publishers for it in the UK. I think part of the reason for that is because most of it is rubbish! I find that as a scientist it’s very frustrating to read a badly written SF book with fundamental principles so badly written and sometimes even wrong and you just think ‘God, why are they even bothering?’

There’s so many ideas and theories about physics, philosophy and technology in the book – were you ever told to ‘dumb it down’?

Yes! Absolutely! I had a meeting with an agent and her assistant editor and because she’d been so enthusiastic about it I sort of expected that I’d been going in the right direction. Her assistant editor didn’t have the same views though – he didn’t really like the science and didn’t like the fact that it was so technical and he basically said ‘you can’t do this, it’s not your job to write a book about physics or philosophy – it’s your job to write about guns and car chases.’ At that point I just thought ‘well, you’re an idiot – don’t tell me what to write!’

Any tips for budding authors?

Yes! Don’t go it alone – get involved with an authors group. I found a great group online which was a great form of support as it is quite a lonely endeavour, and writing a novel is hard!

But do you want to read it?

Louise Murphy

‘The Looking Glass Club’ tells the story of a rather elusive Union society – a society without a stall at the Freshers’ fair anyway; a society which convenes in a dark and dank room somewhere underneath South Kensington, accessible only through a secret tunnel with the membership list kept a closely guarded secret. It is the story of Zeke, an otherwise normal Physics student, that is until he was approached and befriended by a PhD student; in the midst of developing a, to put it lightly, mind altering drug, who persuaded him to come along to a club meeting.

“sometimes funny, sometimes scary and overall thoroughly addictive”

The book switches from Zeke’s student days and the club set in the familiar background of South Kensington to Manhattan and the present day future – full of scary robotic nurses, the Freedom Tower and some truly mystifying hospital scan results.

‘The Looking Glass Club’ is a fast paced, sometimes funny, sometimes scary and overall thoroughly addictive new book. Full of mystery and intrigue the book maintains its balance on the thin line between being unpredictable

and ridiculous – from the pregnant stranger with amnesia to the talking dog with a new found religion. There is a fantastic mix of philosophical and physics theory and ideas interweaved with a truly gripping story line, as well as some bizarre advances in technology. The plot is complicated but works – don’t ask me how, but Davies manages to keep a track on two interweaving storylines, theories, puzzles and characters and come out with a, dare I say it, brilliant Sci-Fi thriller. There are hints sometimes of a story run amok and a well thumbed thesaurus, but these, I assure you, are only brief patches in an otherwise great book which could very easily translate brilliantly to film.

At the end of each chapter are puzzles taken from the notebook of a former member of the club – puzzles which took almost a year for Davies to compile and are almost unique in their form but translate to the same thing – an image. Davies is offering a prize of up to £1,000,000 to the clever beast that can solve them all. But, if like me, a basic Sudoku is more your cup of tea the book is still worth a read anyway – it is easy to be put off by the science and complicated ideas within the book but the book is accessible from several levels – with several readers commenting that they have read it several times in quick succession and are still discovering new and exciting things about it.

Published by Sencillo, available in the Union Shop.

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imagination at work

MUSIC

Music Editors: **Greg Power**
Luke Turner
Christopher Walmsley
music.felix@gmail.com

Album of The Week



My Chemical Romance
Danger Days: The True Lives of the Fabulous Killjoys
 Reprise Records
 2010

The album that launched MCR's career into the stratosphere, 2006's *The Black Parade*, saw the band finally realising their ambitions of Queen-inspired grandiose pop anthems. In my opinion it was full of flaws – and a huge step back from their 2004 masterpiece, *Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge* – but the gloomy cancer-centric concept of the album struck a chord with the emo masses. They scrapped the album they were making for a year, and vocalist Gerard Way came up with a new concept for the album, about a reckless crew of freedom fighters living in a post-apocalyptic world ruled by vampire cyborgs. Or something. The result is a genre-blending and infectious reconciliation of their earlier Misfits-tinged gothic punk and their recent venture into stadium rock. It's catchy, upbeat, full of great lyrics and a true joy to rock out to. Check out "Party Poison", "Vampire Blood", or watch the "Na Na Na..." video to see the cyberpunk princes in their full glory. **Greg Power**

Most listened to this week by Felix Music members on last.fm

1. Radiohead
2. Muse
3. The Beatles
4. Kanye West (AW YEA BABY)
5. The XX
6. Bloc Party
7. The Killers
8. Gorillaz
9. Four Tet
10. Florence & TM

Join in at: <http://www.last.fm/group/Felix+Music>

Make sure not to miss

SOAD @ Download 2011

Castle Donington, Nottingham
 Wednesday 8th June 2011

It's a little early, I know, but with the first wave of tickets online yesterday, and with a single headlining act it is already guaranteed to be one of the greatest events of the year: **System of a Down** are reforming to rampage through the Summer festival circuit (and possibly a new album? please?). After five brilliant albums, including the now seminal *Toxicity* and their *Mezmerize/Hypnotize* double-album concept piece, SOAD have a ton of brilliant, raw, heavy and downright weird material to draw from. Their live performances are legendary – guitarist Daron Malakian usually writhes around on stage, messed up on some sort of horse medication – and with the added bonus of being millionaires they'll probably have an insane stage show too. **Greg Power**

“I Wanna Go Back...”

A look at the re-issue of one of the 90's greatest albums

Weezer
Pinkerton (Deluxe)
 Geffen
 ★★★★★

Chris Dean



There has always been one paradoxical quote about **Weezer** that amused me. I'm paraphrasing, but it goes along the lines that “**Weezer** are the worst rock band in America to release two of the greatest albums of the last 20 years”.

Whilst I disagree, it's easy to understand why they might be labeled as such. After the initial disappointment of their comeback *Green Album* in 2001, and the series of pitfalls along the way (Parts of *Red* and *Hurley*, all of *Make Believe* and *Raditude*) you'd probably be thinking it's a miracle if **Weezer** had any followers left. Yet you'd be surprised to find a community of dedicated, and often frustrated, people who truly love this band.

It comes down to one album: *Pinkerton*. Coming from a troubled past, it has become the albatross that hangs around the bands' collective neck. A blessing in that it is quite simply a work of genius, and a curse in that they have never been able to follow it up.

Originally spawned as a space rock opera named *Songs from the Black Hole*, it morphed into a quasi-concept album based around *Madame Butterfly* and was a swift departure from their eponymous debut's geek power pop. Vocal harmonies were swapped with screams,

acoustic guitar with walls of feedback, the only remaining feature being their signature quirky, pop culture referencing lyrics. But even these were distorted and made darker, becoming obsessed with sex, heartbreak, and what Japanese school girls get up to in their spare time (if you catch my drift).

Largely ignored by the press when it was first released, it was both a commercial and critical flop, and placed #1 on *Rolling Stones'* worst album of 1996 list. The band retreated into hiatus for the next five years, and nothing more

was heard of the Weez. But by some miracle, over those five years the album began gathering steam by itself, slowly gaining recognition with both fans and critics, and went on to become one of the biggest sleeper hits ever conceived.

Now, a full 14 years later the album is being reissued and re-mastered as a 2 CD, 36 track album of odds and ends. The B-Sides and unreleased tracks from this era remain of a ludicrously high quality: “Devotion” feels heavy and sluggish to the verge of breaking point, but somehow works. New track “Getting Up and Leaving”, only heard before from the Not Alone concert where frontman Rivers Cuomo performed it acapella is a lost **Weezer** classic. And that's not forgetting the Coda version of “Longtime Sunshine”, or the end cap of the album “Tragic Girl”.

However, what's most striking upon listening again is that it hasn't aged. Opener “Tired Of Sex” is still as debauched; the chorus of “El Scorcho” still has the same fist in the air, feel good factor; the bass of “Getchoo” full on rawk; the closing chords of “Butterfly” a sting of regret. It's abrasive, blistering, and at times uncomfortable, but beneath these layers lies an incredibly personal, humorous and emotive album that is utterly relatable. So if you're a **Weezer** veteran, recovering addict, or only know “Beverly Hills” (Shudder... *(Editor's note: Shame on you!)*) then this is an essential purchase for the coming wintery months.



Rivers Cuomo is a seriously weird dude

Botown bring the Bollywood

Botown
The Jazz Café
 5th November 2010
 ★★★★★

Rishi Mistry

A week ago I unexpectedly stumbled across **Botown**, a band promising reborn Bollywood grooves with a funk soul twist. I've never considered placing these music genres together, especially as their roots lie half way around the world, but the prospect of a night in the Jazz Café with a new take on funk and soul was something I couldn't pass on.

I was lucky enough to get a pre-gig interview with Ajay and his band. It was clear that they had a strong musical focus, “Bollywood is the soul of India, it has the same purpose as soul music, the identity thing, the liberation thing,” and for the Western band members who had never heard Bollywood before, funk and soul instantly worked with it. They also told me that although they were excited about the launch of their debut album (*The Soul of Bollywood*), launched that very night), to them the band is all about the live gigs.

As soon as they got going Ajay had the Bol-

lywood fans singing along whilst the saxophone and bass later got everyone grooving. The crowd of mainly 30-somethings couldn't help shaking it down.

The band's female singer, Rekha, didn't make much of an appearance at first but later came on to showcase her wonderful voice, accompanied by the sax and some well timed breaks. The highlights of the night were definitely ‘Chura Liya’, a 70's Bollywood classic brought to life with some reggae beats and the ever impressive sax, ‘Roop Tera’, Botown's first single, and ‘Laila’ which Rekha took to town. ‘Haule haule’ saw the band running up

to play along the balcony, which appeared to be too much for the classy drunk next to me who almost fell flat on her face trying to work out what was going on.

Despite one or two songs and the nine of them being crammed on to the stage, Botown provided some great soul and jazz, and Bollywood music that I actually enjoyed...for once.

I'm not sure how they would go down in India but for those who grew up with their parents playing Bollywood classics on cassettes, or others who are just curious about Bollywood, jazz and soul with a difference, Botown won't fail to deliver.



Botown are like one big funky family with an addiction to Bollywood music

MUSIC

Hidden treasures

In this new series **Charlotte Ridler** picks out the best venues in London for gigging off the beaten track

ATTICS & BASEMENTS

Sometimes, being a music lover can be a tough job. You fork out £20 to go and see a really exciting new band at Brixton Academy or HMV Forum. You then queue for ages in the cold. Once you're in the venue's sound system sounds like it's playing through four inches of cotton wool and a sweaty seven foot yeti man decides to stand half an inch in front of your face. Sigh. It's not always that bad, but there is another way to see live bands that is cheaper, more intimate and often has better quality music than the main concert halls. Tucked away down side streets, in basements and attics away from the crowds, small gig venues give you the opportunity to see the bands that will be playing the big venues in a year or two's time up close and personal at a fraction of the price. Here are a few of the best ones:

Madame Jojo's:
10 Brewer street, Soho

Ordinarily, this venue is host to a slea-

zy strip club, but on Tuesday nights it sees some of the most exciting breaking bands from all over the world gracing its doors for the excellent **White Heat Club**. You usually pay £5 to go down into the faintly lit basement, where three or four bands will play up on a curtained podium with DJs afterwards. Names such as **The xx**, **Wild Beasts**, **Dan Le Sac**, **Noah and the Whale** and **The Kills** have been on the billing before.

The Lexington:
96-98 Pentonville Road

The Lexington is basically a pub for hipsters. Downstairs is the main pub area, which has some pretty crazy décor with chandeliers, buffalo skulls on the walls and big fancy sofas, making it look like a baroque hunting lounge. DJs play great music, the bar specialises in American brewed beverages and you can even get some hearty pub food. Climb the spiral staircase up to the attic and there is a second bar and gig venue where bands play most nights. Prices can be very variable, but if you keep your eye out there are a few free album launches held there, and **White Light** (the sister club to Madame Jojo's White Heat) is held every Friday, with DJs playing until late afterwards.

Charlotte Ridler



Horse and Condor at Madame Jojo's

The Book Club:
100 Leonard Street, Shoreditch

This one is a really eclectic and crazy venue: it always offers something unusual and fun. You never really get a bog standard gig here. DJ sessions or Band nights can be accompanied by arts and crafts nights, film showings, life drawing classes, spoken word poetry or anything in between, and prices range from free gigs and £1 gigs to more expensive nights up to a tenner. They also host an infamous Electro Swing night

where club goers dance their feet off to DJs sampling 1920's tunes with hip hop beats.

That's just a sample of the great fun that can be had on a budget and the fantastic hidden treasures of London's small gig venues. If you like the sound of the venues above and are looking for people to head out to these places to with, feel free to message **Imperial Alternative Music Society** at alt.music@ic.ac.uk and you can come along with us.

The Micro-Venue Playlist

Great bands who have all played small London venues in the last year. Catch them now before you have to pay a fortune to see them!

Pains of Being Pure at Heart
Come Saturday

Correspondents
Washington Square

Allo Darlin'
The Polaroid Song

Nedry
Squid Cat Battle

Memory Tapes
Bicycle

The Bobby McGees
We Never Sleep

Yuck
Georgia

If you want to share a mind-blowing playlist send it in to music.felix@gmail.com

Beach House are the cherry on the cake

Beach House
Shepherd's Bush Empire
23rd November 2010
★★★★☆

Tytus Murphy

Beloved by *Pitchfork*, **Jay-Z** and **Be-yonce** as well as your humble reviewer, **Beach House** are a well regarded two-some emanating from Baltimore that comprise of Alex Scally and Victoria Legrand. This scruffy and seductive pair have been riding an ever-growing wave of critical adoration since 2004 which now appears to be translating into a wider commercial acclaim, as evidenced by healthy sales of their beautifully beguiling 2010-released LP *Teen Dream* and their sell-out gig at the Shepherd's Bush Empire.

Opening with 'Glia', **Beach House** instantly do more than simply reproduce the layered textures of their distinctive 'dream pop' sound on record, in the flesh

the intricacy and beauty of their sound is fully realised. Scally's guitar parts and effects linger delicately providing the perfect foundation for the most distinctive element of **Beach House** to shine, that is Legrand's sumptuous drawn-out husky voice.

Legrand could be the ghost of the **Velvet Underground**'s Nico: her vocals have the very same low and powerful resonance, which – despite their limited range – fixate you, sucking you into the realm of this enigmatic *femme fatale*. Legrand cuts a captivating presence, pitched somewhere between a youthful *Horses*-era **Patti Smith** with swathes of messy black hair and the subtle swagger of **Cat Power**, she captures the hazy melodic rhythms of her band with elegant sways.

Teen Dream is showcased in its entirety, fragmented by early singles such as 2008's 'Heart of Chambers', allowing the set to flow smoothly. Highlights include 'Better Times' and 'Used To

Be', the former beginning with wonderfully simple repetition of a piano chord and is a slow-burner climaxing with Legrand crying out: 'The one that you love is gone'. 'Used To Be' is cut from the same cloth, with Legrand hauntingly warning: 'Don't forget the nights, when it all felt right'.

The ambient quality of the music of **Beach House** is typified by 'Zebra', this abstract hymn is delivered with tremendous energy, beginning with infectious guitar and lengthened high-pitched organ soundscapes. This breath-taking track builds and builds, becoming sonically more and more expansive but never losing its sense of melody, with Legrand again at the fore, echoing: 'Anyway you run, you run before us, black and white horse, arching among us'.

There is little conversing with the appreciative crowd, a notable exception being Legrand metaphorically remarking that together in our collective at-

tendance we are part of a 'good cake', appropriately bowing in reverence to the crowd. This evening is quite a big deal for the Baltimore duo, their biggest show to date and they seem keen to earn these stripes, playing with real urgency, verve and intensity throughout.

The set culminates with 'Take Care', an alluring and serene song that waxes and wanes with power and grace. Just as it majestically closes the LP it makes a perfect closer this evening.

However this was not to be the fitting ending as the pair returned for an encore including the epic '10 Mile Stereo'. I was a little underwhelmed by the 'big finish' nature of the encore, backed with pulsating percussion and screeching keys, for **Beach House** are most impressive when they hold back, allowing Legrand to take centre stage. Nonetheless, it was a commanding performance, with stripes fully acquired and definitely well worth the hype.

Christopher Walmsley



The sultry Legrand of Beach House brought the room to a standstill

FILM

Classic Cinema

The Breakfast Club



Stop for a second and look at what he's wearing... Seriously, WTF?

Ever felt like your parents don't understand you? Do they put pressure on you to achieve? Do they spoil you? Beat you? Or worse, ignore you? Everything is their fault. In fact, all adults just don't understand kids, because 'when you grow up, your heart dies'. Or so I've learnt from watching John Hughes' 80s classic *The Breakfast Club*.

Let me set the scene for you. Five teenagers from different teen film tribes are forced together for an entire Saturday in detention. They spend it belittling each other, getting high, and having emotional outpourings. Then, because there's a load of sexual energy floating around and it has to go somewhere, they end up pairing off and snogging in a broom cupboard. Apart from a dweeb named Brian. I don't know about you, but from my experience of teenage relationships, so far, so familiar.

But this isn't just some shit 80s movie where gawky adolescents sit around, complain nobody understands them and then get off with someone hideously unsuitable.

Ok, maybe that is the bulk of the storyline. So what? The whole reason I love this movie is that it is banal – and we've all been there. This is the main essence of why John Hughes films (*Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, *Pretty in Pink*) live on: teenagers haven't changed, and they never will.

I know it's easy to wish those days of pimples, mood swings and embarrassment away, but there was some good in there too. Teenagers feel things with an intensity that fades later in life. When you get older, your heart doesn't die, but it does harden a little. Being a teenager is shit. Sometimes, it's nice to take an hour or two to look back on all of the bullying, insecurities and mind-numbing pretentiousness, and remember that, for all your teenage failings, you were probably no more of a tit than anyone else.

The Breakfast Club helps you remember, just for an hour or two, what it feels like to go from suicidal confessions, to flailing 80s style dancing in the average time it takes a teenage guy to 'rock your world'. And that really isn't long, trust me.

Anna Perman

Pure entertainment



In my day student protestors were rather more friendly than they are today...

Machete

Director Robert Rodriguez, Ethan Maniquis
Screenwriter Robert Rodriguez, Álvaro Rodríguez
Cast Danny Trejo, Jessica Alba, Robert DeNiro, Michelle Rodriguez

John Park

If you can remember back as far as 2007, you may recall the film called "Grindhouse," an attempt made by Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino to make the idea of a double feature film more appealing. You may also recall that there was a fake trailer made to fill the gap between the two separate films. That trailer was "Machete" and what was going to remain as a "fake" preview became so popular that now, in the year 2010, we finally get the full-length feature film.

Danny Trejo has dazzled the screen for years as charismatic, tough antiheroes or villains making him perfect as the star. "Machete" tells the story of an ex-Federale who has vengeance at heart – after an operation goes awry in Mexico, a ruthless drug lord murders his family and leaves him to die. Being the hard man that he is, Machete Cortez (Trejo) survives and escapes to Texas, carrying out odd jobs as an illegal immigrant for much-needed cash. It's here that he gets an enticing offer from business man Michael Booth (Jeff Fahey); \$150,000 cash for the assassination of a racist US Senator (Robert de Niro) who is up for re-election. But Machete finds himself betrayed yet again and he ends up running from the law, from the people who hired him in the first place and also from Immigrations Officer Sartana Rivera (Jessica Alba).

Losing his family early on in the film, Machete is given the predictable "nothing to lose" kind of characteristic that drives him to do unimaginable things to complete his mission. Apart from the fact that he is a skilled and often brutal killer who can use a range of weapons for the purpose of spilling his enemy's blood, not much is told about this man. This is a good thing in fact, since Trejo would not have been able to portray anything more sophisticated than that. His moody, dark expression that is

Rodriguez never gives up trying to impress the audience with imaginative action

effortlessly sustained throughout is all the film requires of him and he nails it.

Even after the terrific opening sequence, director Robert Rodriguez never gives up trying to impress the audience with his endlessly imaginative action set-pieces. Yes, a lot of them are bonkers, but that is exactly what made "Sin City" so great. It has the exact same effect here. The biggest highlight most definitely involves Machete pulling out a guy's intestine for the purpose of using it as rope. Completely nuts and implausible, but watching how calmly and casually Trejo carries this out is pure entertainment. And it's not just Trejo who gets to slice people up: Alba lands a feisty role that she suits surprisingly well and watching her fend

off someone twice her size with her high-heel shoes is again ridiculous, but fun.

Moving at a rapid pace balancing hectic action and a plot that unexpectedly deals with racism, immigration and politics, Rodriguez relies on a killer soundtrack to comfortably move events along. It's a set of compositions that certainly evoke the feeling of all the humble and trashy 70s blood-gore-sex romps. The gritty, down-to-earth atmosphere the music creates ties in nicely with Rodriguez's visual style: something he clearly has an eye for. The confident choppy editing only further emphasises the film's rough and energetic tone.

Rodriguez knows how to make proper use of his range of outstanding cameo stars. Steven Seagal, whose films have not seen the inside of a cinema for a while, makes a welcome return as the trash-talking, brutal antagonist. Don Johnson is spot-on as the power-hungry border-patrolling vigilante who acts as the film's main antagonist. Lindsay Lohan has a small part, but the drug-addicted, attention-seeking teen she portrays shares striking similarities with the actress' personal life – so no room for error there. De Niro seems to have most fun as the fascist Senator who has moments of humorous monologues in what must be the actor's simplest and easiest role to date.

Nothing can be easier to watch than "Machete." It's the perfect grown-up, Friday night-out film that breezes through its absurdly entertaining action scenes with memorable performances and a somewhat thought-provoking plot. The underlying serious subject matter is deliberately left untouched in places because let's be honest, who gives a damn about politics when you have arms, legs and heads flying all over the place?

Film Editors: **Jade Hoffman**
Matt Allinson
Ed Knock
 film.felix@imperial.ac.uk

FILM



Evil and ginger - a chilling new take on Santa Clause

A festive comedy-horror from Finland

Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale

Director Jalmari Helander
Screenwriter Jalmari Helander
Cast Jorma Tommila, Onni Tommila, Peeter Jakobi

Jake Lea-Wilson

Bored of the festive season? Bored of mince pies and cold weather? If you're looking for something different this season, you need not look any further than this Finnish film about an ancient child-eating devil Santa, *Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale*, which has been slated as this year's premier festive-comedy-horror.

It's the week before Christmas and young Pietari uncovers the truth about Santa Clause: far from the Coca-Cola invention of red suit and bells, Santa is in fact a two-horned fiend, preying on the young and naughty. Over the course of this film's bizarre events that sees a 400-strong reindeer herd lying bloodied in the snow, mysterious disappearances of children, and American scientists excavating an ancient mountain, *Rare Exports* keeps you guessing. Humour and suspense are handled well in this seasonal story, and you'll laugh as you're treated to one Christmas cliché after another.

Seven years ago Jalmari Helander made a short internet viral about smugglers hunting Santa Claus, following up in 2005 with another. The success of

these two shorts has led to the financing of this fantastically inventive feature. Coming from these roots, however, the film is predictably flawed, by just being too damn long. At 82 minutes, the run-time is unfortunately asking too much of this one, albeit brilliant, idea: the characters and plot line just don't quite fill up the time. That's not to say that the film is dull. It packs a fair punch of jokes and scares, with the first half featuring a good selection of harrowing scenes and touching moments. The comedy is of the deathly black variety with a few one liners, building to the final, climatic scene involving a helicopter, a reindeer pen and a lot of explosives. A personal favourite scene is when Peitari's father catches a 'Santa' in a home-made wolf trap and proceeds to interrogate him.

One of the great aspects of the film is that it examines our ridiculous sensationalisation of the Christmas period. Gingerbread, Christmas lights, presents – anything you can think of to do with the modern consumerist Christmas is highlighted in this film and ridiculed. It's not an uncommon gripe about Christmas, but this film brings the point subtly home. Overlooking the fact that the running time is slightly too ambitious we can take away some interesting ideas from this film and have fun whilst doing so. I urge you to do something a bit different this year and give this off-beat Finnish film a try. Even if you don't like horror films, this is a great example of modern independent film-making driven by rare originality.

The next move for iCU Cinema

Jade Hoffman

Over this term, we have been following the relaunch of *iCU Cinema* and celebrating its successes – from its sold-out opening night with *Inception* to its recent screening of comic-book gold *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World* – as it brings blockbuster films back to the comfort of the Union.

But now iCU Cinema is set to announce the return of the 'All-Nighter' which is sure to be welcomed by all die-hard film fanatics wishing to test their endurance in an epic 12 hour blockbuster extravaganza.

All-Nighters run in the final week of term, from 6pm-6am and features six films back-to-back, with the Union Bar opening up in between intervals all through the night. The line-up this year includes a wide range of genres from the all-star shoot-em-up *The Expendables*, to the controversial British comedy about terrorism *Four Lions*, to the critically acclaimed Facebook drama *The*



Social Network.

We have lots to look forward to from iCU Cinema next term, too, as they look towards putting on two screenings a

week. Running on the night of Tuesday 14th December, the iCU Cinema's All-Nighter will serve as a fitting end to a highly successful comeback.

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LOCATION: LONDON

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Fashion Editor: **Saskia Verhagen**fashion.felix@imperial.ac.uk

FASHION

The rise and rise of the Fashion Blog

A select group of fashion obsessives are bringing fashion to the masses: Fashion Editor **Saskia Verhagen** explores the burgeoning online world of fashion blogging

The fashion industry has always been deemed inaccessible, elitist and perhaps slightly intimidating by general consensus. It seems only natural, then, for people to start taking fashion into their own hands, and

out of the perfectly manicured talons of the fashion editrixes at Vogue and the like. Such is the world of fashion blogging. Now very popular, just a few have gained a loyal following, and even fewer have earned endorsements from the heavy-hitters in the fashion world – PRs

and designers alike – gaining entry into runway shows and press days alongside the very editors who have always held fashion at arms reach, on the page of a magazine, on the body of a supermodel.

The scope of fashion blogs range from street style blogs, where budding

fashion photographers roam the streets in search of the sartorially inspired, to personal style blogs, where individuals exhibit their own inspirational styling. What is so special about them though, is the fact that each is completely unique; anyone interested in fashion can find a

fashion blog that appeals - and if you can't, start one up yourself!

Some of my personal favourites are below – though I implore you to take a look for yourself, and find yourself inspired without having to flick through the pages of a magazine.

Fashion Toast



Rumi Neely, personal style blogger behind Fashion Toast, is one of the pioneers in making fashion blogging a career. Spawned from her blog has come a modelling contract with US fashion giant Forever 21, a jewellery collection with Dannijo and a capsule wardrobe collection with RVCA, whose previous collaborators have included supermodel Erin Wasson. Her signature is effortless SoCal style – loose, draped lines, an excess of heavy metal jewellery – rings and necklaces are a favourite – combined with unexpected designer accents: Chloé platform boots, Dolce and Gabbana wedges or an Alexander Wang Diego bag. The secret behind her huge popularity is her penchant for accessible fashion - Topshop, Zara, H&M and thrifted/vintage pieces feature heavily, making a clear case for fashion being for everyone, not just for those who can afford it.

www.fashiontoast.com

Sea of Shoes



Texan-born Jane Aldridge has gained one of the highest of accolades in the fashion blogging world: an endorsement from none other than Mr Kanye West. A fellow appreciator of the very finest in footwear, it would seem that Kanye enjoys Jane's flamboyant, too-much-is-never-enough vintage/designer style. Her personal style posts are always rich in colour and luxurious textures; both Jane and her mother are collectors of all things fashion: from vintage couture to the most unusual accessories (they both have something of a fetish for animal jewellery). All this, combined with a shoe collection to make any fashionista's eyes water. Jane recently posted a photograph of her Shoe Wall: you name it, it's on there - Margiela cowboy boots, YSL cage shoes, Chanel bow booties, Prada chandelier sandals... Every iconic shoe a girl could want, and more.

www.seaofshoes.com

The Sartorialist



One for the gentlemen, The Sartorialist is arguably the most famous of all fashion blogs. Scott Schuman is a New York-based street style photographer with an eye for classically elegant sartorial style. His particular favourite subjects include Milanese gentlemen (clad in bespoke three-piece suits, complete with cravats, leather gloves and perfectly formed handmade brogues), cute New York girls on bicycles and Anna Dello Russo and the Vogue Nippon editorial team (wearing super-luxe designer couture – fresh off the catwalk, of course). Together with his girlfriend, fellow fashion blogger Garance Doré, whose blog has a huge following of its own, he is a fashion week regular – particularly funny to watch are the fashionistas standing outside the catwalk tents vying to catch his eye and be deemed with fashion blogging's greatest honour - a portrait shot on The Sartorialist.

www.thesartorialist.blogspot.com

Clothes Whisperer



Kristin Knox, fashion writer, author and proud owner of an MPhil from Oxford, has cornered the market on an intellectual approach to fashion with her fabulously witty writing and flawless New York-comes-to-London style. With posts ranging from in-depth runway analysis (scholar-style) to her signature Style Whispering (photoshoots in designers' showrooms, putting her own spin on their current collections), each one provides a peek into the world of fashion. Funny, envy-inducing and always truthful, in addition to the innumerable pictures rife in all fashion blogs, Kristin's is one of the only blogs out there whose text is actually worth reading. Particularly entertaining are her posts on the "Champagne and Canapé Diet" - a self-admitted fashion addict, Kristin prefers to spend her cash on clothes than food, and so, makes the most of the fantastic spreads provided at press days!

www.theclotheswhisperer.co.uk

GAMES

Games Editor: **Simon Worthington**games.felix@imperial.ac.uk

See life in a fresh gamma value

Omar Hafeez-Bore

Power: I'm not used to it. My last laptop was not a gaming powerhouse; it struggled to run even modest stuff smoothly. Like Solitaire, say. Or Word.

But like all electronic machines it eventually developed human emotions, and in a desperate act of self-gratification managed to tempt some local thug to steal it from my flat by blinking its red LED in the window like some two-bit, silicon-chip seductress advertising its pathetically slow services. The slag.

Anyway I got over her... er, it, and now a year later I've invested some good money into a good laptop. And with this good laptop has come a whole new world of tweak-able settings.

No longer do I settle for just playing with the TV's contrast and brightness to get my power fix. Now I can dial up resolution and dial down texture quality at will! I can add soft shadows and remove water reflection in a flash; end-

lessly flicking things on and off, testing the difference, moulding uncanny worlds of half-sense at my leisure. It is compulsive. Hours can slip by as I marvel at light refraction in water pools or abuse the gamma slider like I actually know what gamma is. In other fields of life this crazed amount of fiddling and ogling is frowned upon and, if you're a teacher, even jail worthy. But these PC game menus practically encourage deviancy, to break out the settings scalpel and peel back the layers of illusion.

And that peelin' is mighty revealin'; you learn so much. It's like being some digital Da Vinci, ripping apart the anatomy of graphics and sound to work out how bytes became beauty.

But here's the really magical thing: as you dig deeper and deeper into virtual world's strata of effects, you soon start digging back into our own world. It's like grabbing a spade and digging straight down in Hyde Park: sure you'll start your journey ploughing through the

sediments, the igneous and the metamorphic like some GCSE geography fetishist (or perhaps a materials student). But after getting through the magma in the middle, you start chipping away back to the surface, learning the process backwards and ending up in our world again. Well, Australia.

First, you might go to Specsavers and be amazed that when you wear your new frames, the world doesn't go all jerky to compensate. Next you might start appreciating the late afternoon shadows stretched languidly across the streets.

"The clockwork laws we take for granted suddenly take on a new relevance when made from scratch"

The near-silent hum of street lamps suddenly becomes significant and the floatiness of snow an even greater thing of wonder. The machinery beneath our world, the clockwork laws we take for granted, suddenly take on a new relevance when made from scratch by game developers. Lighting, physics, texture, animation, feedback, camera, controls – all are crude, megabit mirrors onto our own world. But close enough to fill forums with mouth-foaming fanboys comparing hair-strand-clarity between PS3 and Xbox 360; close enough for critics to wax lyrical about *Ico*'s Mediterranean lighting or the convincing tarmac in *Gran Turismo 5*; close enough to get worryingly excited about the realism of rubble weight in *Crysis 2* and most of all, close enough to look upon our own world again with some wonder.

Do games not teach you anything? Then you are missing out. With a little thought, games are an education in appreciation.

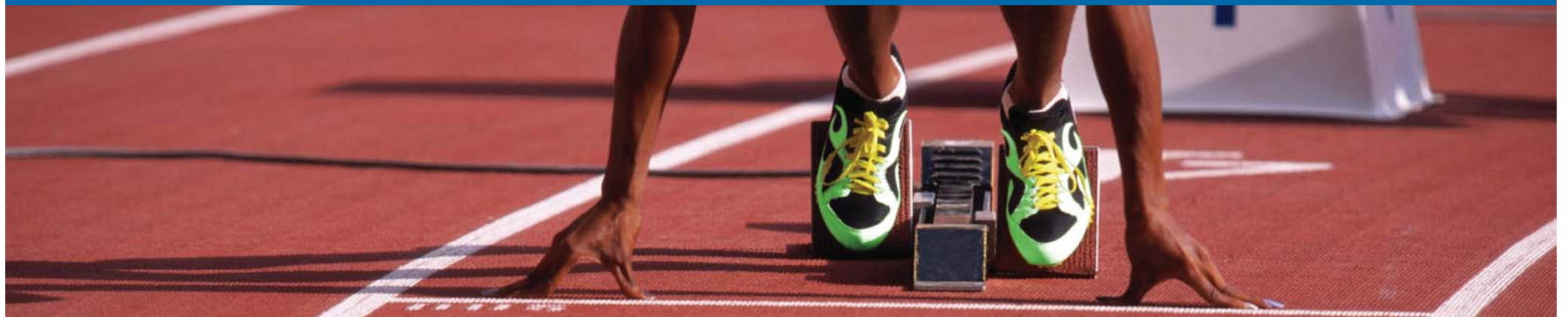
Elder Scrolls V to be Oblivion sequel

Journalism is all about being in the right place at the right time, as proved again this week by Danish gaming magazine Eurogamer Denmark. One of their editors took a plane with someone from Bethesda who just happens to be working on the next *Elder Scrolls* game.

The unnamed source, with "game papers in hand", confirmed that the next title in the series will be a direct, chronological sequel to the 2006 smash hit *Oblivion*. The project has been in development for more than two years and will run on a heavily modified version of the *Fallout 3* engine. The game is apparently "ready to show" but Bethesda are yet to release more details.



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Food Editor: **Dana Li**food.felix@imperial.ac.uk

FOOD

Your review

Dana says:



Heston's hidden orange pleasure pud

eBay, a place to get cheap steals and gorge at unattainable Lanvin dresses. Now it's also a place to buy Heston Blumenthal's Christmas Pudding for Waitrose. At the time of writing this article, the going price was £77.00 + £7.00 P+P. Originally selling at £13.99 instore, you're probably wondering why the hell people are parting with their cash so easily for a silly little Christmas pud. Firstly it's not little: it feeds 10-12 people. And it's no ordinary pud either. Drenched heavily with English Cider and Spanish sherry, you'll be surprised to find that it holds a whole orange inside all its goodness.

Mulled Wine By Jamie Oliver

Satbbir/Flickr



2 clementines
peel of 1 lemon
peel of 1 lime
250g caster sugar
6 whole cloves
1 cinnamon stick
3 fresh bay leaves
1 whole nutmeg
1 whole vanilla pod, halved
2 star anise
2 bottles of Chianti, or other Italian red wine

Peel large sections of peel from your citrus fruit. Put the sugar in a large saucepan over a medium heat, add the peel and squeeze in the clementine juice. Add the cloves, cinnamon stick, bay leaves and about 10 to 12 gratings of nutmeg. Throw in your halved vanilla pod and stir in just enough red wine to cover the sugar. Let this simmer until the sugar has dissolved and bring to the boil. Keep on a rolling boil for about 4 to 5 minutes, or until you've got a beautiful thick syrup. When your syrup is ready, turn the heat down to low and add your star anise and both bottles of wine. Gently heat the wine and after around 5 minutes, when it's warm and delicious, ladle it into glasses and serve. You can keep this on a low heat for hours and serve as and when guests arrive.

Awana: Malaysia's pride

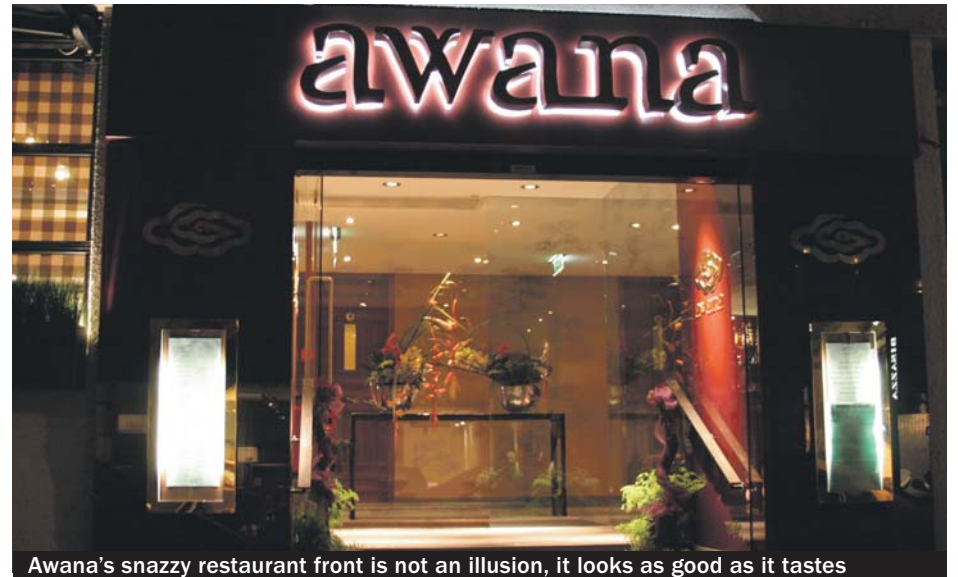
The best (roti) tissue you'll find in London

Dana Li

People tell me a job as a food critic would get boring. Good food, VIP treatment and food babies (don't pretend like you don't know what I mean) – it's a hard life, isn't it?

Walking down towards Sloane Avenue, you bypass the size 0 mannequins adorned with Chanel handbags, Ferragamo coats and Jimmy Choo heels. No you haven't misread this as the Fashion section. But it isn't exactly my regular stroll up to my next dinner location either. I'm hunting for the highly acclaimed Awana, Malaysian restaurant of the year, in Brompton. You get a feeling that this is not your average Kiasu (student friendly Malaysian in Bayswater), with 19" LCD screens dotted around the restaurant showing the view at the Satay Grill, where apart from the satay, the chef also prepares the roti canai and roti tissue which guest star in this review later. The choice is vast, with a special menu paying homage to the chilli crab festival that occurs every September-December period. The satay is a must. There is nothing skimpy about it – just big lumps of corn-fed chicken that are freshly prepared at the Satay Bar and brought over within minutes, so no chance of food poisoning. Best not mention those hellish words in conjunction with a restaurant I'm trying my best to portray positively... The satay comes with red curry or dal curry sauce; two small pots of pleasure.

The beef rendang is Awana's proud baby,



Awana's snazzy restaurant front is not an illusion, it looks as good as it tastes

winner of the Malaysian Curry Fest, hosted by Malaysian Kitchen earlier in August. With it, there was also the butterfish, a much lighter option compared to the rendang, wrapped in banana leaf and grilled with chilli ribbons and lemongrass sauce. The complementary coconut rice was definitely not the standard sludgy, almost porridge-like coconut rice I have been served before, so fear not, it's safe to order.

But the star of the show was definitely the roti tissue. For those not familiar with this type of 'tissue', it's safe to say there is no Kleenex in

sight, and it is perfectly edible. It uses the same ingredients as roti canai, but the dough is spun out so incredibly thin that it is quite simply a 1mm thin pancake, about 2 feet in diameter; almost as big as our fish eyes gawking at the sheer size.

I believe a plug is due, and I'm here to tell you that Awana is offering a 3-course lunch for £15 every day of the week so no need to feel sore

Awana 85 Sloane Avenue, Chelsea SW3 3DX.
Nearest tube: South Kensington 020 7584 8880

Some like it Haute French gourmet named UN heritage

Charles Betts

Italy may be home to the greatest number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the world, however, as of last week the French can boast pipping the Italians to arguably the most questionable of awards ever granted by the United Nations' cultural organisation. The French multi-course gastronomic meal has been named to the Convention of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The central argument to securing 'la cuisine française's' new status appears to be, in the words of President Sarkozy, that the French have "the best gastronomy in the world, at least from our point of view." Perhaps, but Michael Winner is the best food critic in the world, from his point of view, and he hasn't made it to UNESCO status.

The argument that promoting French food to this level will "stem the rising tide of snacks, fast-food and TV dinners", in the words of Annick Vin of the French heritage and gastronomy mission also does not hold. In that case, why is Jamie Oliver not a cultural heritage? Or, God forbid, Trinny and Susannah. If defending Haute cuisine merits a UNESCO badge, then

surely the guardians of 'Haute Couture' deserve one too?

The committee also added that one of the reasons behind its choice was that French gastronomy is a "social custom aimed at celebrating the most important moments in the lives of individuals and groups." Not only will Italians balk at this statement, knowing full well that they have their own form of haute cuisine for special occasions, but so too will any undergraduate that has ever celebrated a hangover from an epic night out with a full English breakfast. If foie gras, soufflé, and stinky cheese can make it to UNESCO's list, why shouldn't fried eggs, beans, and black pudding? Wouldn't it be nice to see the words "spotted dick" on the list of cultural heritage items?

The French ambassador to UNESCO, Catherine Colonna, stated that "the French love getting together to eat and drink well and enjoy good times in such a manner. It is part of our tradition - a quite active tradition." Do the hoards of French school children that descend upon McDonalds daily for lunch fall under this statement? Or the 18-year-old lycéens that grab a pre-kip kebab at the local Lebanese at 2am?

Who is to say what food deserves cultural

heritage status (apart from nondescript UNESCO fat cats based in Paris of course, wining and dining at the best restaurants)? Food is an art and as with all forms of art there are no truths, only perspectives. Ranking sushi, curry, and pizza is akin to ranking Katsushika Hokusai, Anish Kapoor, and Botticelli. Haute French cuisine has always been a difficult, subtle, and extravagant affair. But sometimes, fresh, simple food is enough to entice a palate. Variety is the spice of life, and a country's cooking traditions are central to its identity. Indeed, if one takes tangible statistics as truths, then Tokyo now boasts more Michelin stars than Paris – does that make it a better city gastronomically?

Food is more than a necessity; it is more than a microwavable meal; it defines who we are, and can enhance our understanding of a culture. Perhaps the problem lies in the definition of the UNESCO award - it is granted to "intangible" jewels of mankind. That only 178 practices have made the grade is incredulous, especially considering that there are 193 countries in the world. The whole scheme is absurdly pretentious, vulgar and kitsch. So much so that even Michael Winner has no reason to howl "calm down dear!"

FOOD

A STUDENT'S GUIDE: HOW TO... DO HALL CHRISTMAS DINNER

Get together before term ends with yet more wine and a huge bird: By Nadia Paes

For me, hall Christmas dinner was one of the highlights of first year. It made sense we'd pay homage to our newly adopted family and celebrate Christmas together with the basting of an oversized bird and a vat full of mulled wine. A good excuse to reminisce about the first term's antics (with much naming and shaming), get a little snoozled and eat pig wrapped in pig; hall Christmas dinner is not to be missed. Staircases seven and eight of Selkirk Hall came together and our twenty strong team of culinarily challenged, blurry eyed students actually produced a feast of a meal (despite my meagre contribution of peeling approximately three whole root vegetables).

To test some of our recipes we did a dry run of Sunday lunch inviting fifteen of our closest friends. The main learning points were as follows:

- It is not normal to look well turned out and completely in control when cooking for this number of people; Delia Smith and Nigella Lawson lie.
- It is probably important to have a glass of wine to hand, particularly for the last hour or so of preparation.
- There can never be too much meat. Meat wrapped in meat is a particular hit with all. Except vegetarians.
- Once everything is cooking and when everyone's together it is well worth the effort!

Here's our guide to preparing Christmas dinner. I hope the recipes and tips serve you well!

Our Sunday Roast Menu

Pork tenderloin with mushroom and herb stuffing.

Salmon with a herb crust.

Roast potatoes.

Apricot and hazelnut stuffing balls wrapped in streaky bacon.

Pigs in blankets.

Roasted autumn vegetables.

Minted peas.

Braised red cabbage with cider and apples.

Celeriac and pear winter coleslaw.

Blackberry and poached pear crumble.

Citrus and Thyme Turkey

Of all the things to be prepared for our hall Christmas dinner, the turkey (chicken in our case because it worked out to be cheaper!) was the thing that scared everyone the most. After a term of partying hard and sleeping little, our palates were more familiar with Kentucky Fried than home-roasted, and our culinary skills hadn't quite reached their full potential. Nevertheless someone on our staircase took on the Delia challenge and made an amazing job of it. Once you've worked out the correct time to cook the bird given its weight, it's actually not that scary. Here's a flavour packed recipe that is easily adapted to chicken:

- 2 Bunches of thyme or lemon thyme
- 1 Orange
- 1 Lemon
- 8 tbsp Olive oil
- 4.5-5.6kg/10-12lb turkey, thawed if frozen, giblets removed
- 4 Bay leaves
- 4 Carrots, halved lengthways and cut into chunks
- 1 Large onion roughly chopped
- 50g Butter
- Stuffing (homemade or bought)

Chop the leafy tops of the thyme (set aside the woody branches for later). Finely grate orange and lemon zest into the same bowl. Add olive oil and seasoning, mash the mix with a spoon to activate the flavours and set aside to infuse.

Heat the oven to 190C/Gas5. Put the stuffing into the neck of the bird and push it towards the breast. Stuffing will expand when cooking, so don't overfill! Secure the neck flap with a skewer.

Weigh the stuffed turkey and calculate the cooking time (18 mins per 450g).

Season the turkey generously inside and out. Halve the orange and lemon and put it in the cavity, (squeeze the fruit as it goes in) along with the remaining thyme branches and 2 bay leaves.

Put the chopped carrots, onion and remaining bay leaves into a large roasting tin. Sit the turkey on top of the vegetables and smear the butter over the skin. For a really tender turkey you can add the same amount of butter under the skin from the neck.

Cover with a loose tent of foil. Roast the turkey for the calculated time, basting with the pan juices every hour. Half an hour before the turkey's ready remove the foil and leave to brown. After 15 mins drizzle with the thyme oil.

How to know if the turkey is cooked: Insert a skewer into the thickest part of the thigh. The juices should run clear. If they're still pink, then cook for a further 20-30mins and test again. A turkey of this size should take about 3 ½ hrs.



The first Christmas dinner of the season... Yummy in my tummy

Perfect Roasties

Roast potatoes make or break a Sunday roast for me. Should Christmas dinner disaster strike, the loss of the turkey would be nothing compared to the loss of perfectly golden crunchy on the outside, fluffy on the inside roasties. Some people swear by goose or duck fat. Whilst running out to the Serpentine might be a cost effective method of acquiring our own, as students, I think butter will do just fine. My trick is a mixture of vegetable oil for crispiness and animal fat for flavour with a sprinkling of flour to create those extra crunchy edges.

- 16 Potatoes (Desiree, King Edward, Maris Pipers are all good)
- 2 tbsp Plain flour
- 150g Butter/Goose or Duck fat/dripping
- 3 tbsp Sunflower or vegetable oil
- Salt for seasoning

Heat over to 190C. Peel potatoes and cut in half or leave whole if they're small. I recommend leaving them relatively large so they're manageable.

In a saucepan cover with cold water and bring to the boil. Allow to boil for 2 mins.

Drain and then toss in the colander to fluff up their surfaces. This will create that crunch. Sprinkle over the flour as you go and finish with a good sprinkle of salt for seasoning.

On the hob, place a large roasting tray over high heat and add the fat and oil. When sizzling add the potatoes and brown for 5mins, turning occasionally so that all sides are covered in fat and getting a bit of colour.

Roast for an hour, taking the tray out every 20 mins and turning the potatoes to allow them to cook evenly.

Roasted Autumn Veg

When the mulled wine is flowing and you're panicking trying to cook your first ever turkey, a one roasting dish recipe like this makes life a little easier. It combines all the usual Christmas dinner suspects; carrots, parsnips, red onion and potatoes. But infused with thyme and whole garlic cloves roasted in their skins, suddenly veg is no longer a dreaded obstacle to the meaty star of the Christmas dinner plate. With minimal preparation, you can throw them all in a pan together and once in the oven can forget about them until you're ready to serve.

- 8 Large carrots
- 5 Parsnips
- 100g of New Potatoes
- 4 Red onions
- Cloves of 1 bulb of garlic, in their skins
- 6 Springs of thyme
- 5 tbsp of vegetable oil
- Salt and pepper to season
- Cut the carrots and parsnips into chunky portions (batons 1.5 x 1.5cm, 5cm in length).
- Quarter the red onions. Cut in half again if they are large onions.

Slice the new potatoes in half. Leave whole if they are small.

Peel the outer layer of the garlic and separate into cloves, leaving them in their skins.

Combine all in a roasting tray. Pour over the oil and seasoning and evenly spread the thyme throughout the tray. Toss the vegetables to ensure even coating in oil.

Roast in an oven at 190°C for 1hr 15 mins. Toss at regular intervals.

Garnish with fresh thyme and/or chopped fresh parsley when you serve.

Survival Time plan

With a floor or staircase of people helping, prep should be done in no time. Then you can get down to the real business: hanging out and having a team mulled wine. Getting everything ready for the same time can be harder than it looks, but here's a rough plan to help get things rolling:

10am Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas 5. The turkey should ideally be at room temperature. Prepare the turkey and put it in the oven.

10.30am Get your mulled wine on... it makes the next few hours whizz by and gets even the most hung over on your corridor drifting into the kitchen.

11am Start prepping all of your veg. Store potatoes and sprouts in bowls of water until they're ready to be cooked. Make stuffing balls and pigs in blankets. Store in the fridge until ready to be cooked.

11.30am The turkey should have had its first hour. Remove from the oven, baste and return to the oven foiled. Repeat an hour later.

1pm Get your roasted veg into the oven. Start boiling your roast potatoes and get them in the oven when you're ready.

1.30pm Turn your roast potatoes and give your roasted veg a quick toss. Pop stuffing balls and pigs in blankets in the oven at this point.

2pm Take your turkey out. Check if it's cooked and leave to rest for half an hour. Start making your gravy.

2.15pm Put some sprouts on to cook in a pan of boiling water.

2.20pm Whack some frozen peas on. They're quick and easy and Christmas dinner just wouldn't be right without them.

2.30pm SERVE!!



X'MAS DINNER

We Are Metric

Your Club, Society or Project's chance to host a night in Metric

We Are Metric gives you the opportunity to host a night in our new nightclub Metric. Open to Clubs, Societies and Projects as well as Halls of Residence, this is a great opportunity to team up with the Union Entertainments team to host club nights and events for your fellow students to enjoy.

Hosting one of these nights will be a great way to raise the profile of your group, as well as making a little bit of money for it. It is well worth your time and effort as it can help you to promote your group to other students and help them learn more about what you do. It will give them a chance to experience something new, and for your members it will be a fantastic

opportunity to put on an interesting and exciting event for others to enjoy. The theme of the event doesn't have to be tied into your group's core activities; it could simply be an idea you've had that you think others will enjoy taking part in.

Although we want as many ideas and people to take part in this process as possible, there are also some things we don't want. We would like events people can take part in and enjoy, this is what these nights are all about, however we don't want events that people come along to simply for cheap alcohol and a cheap night. **These nights are not bar nights or opportunities for budding nightclub promoters!**

In the past there have been many successful events held by students such as Imperial Idol and Battle of the Bands. We are looking for more events like these.

To host your night at Metric you need to go online to imperialcollegeunion.org/wearemetric. Here there is more information on this opportunity and the process to get your night chosen. There are also some example events to get your creative juices flowing!

Fill in a request form, complete this and submit it. Then our Entertainments Committee will look at requests and then inform successful applicants. A date can then be booked and planning can start.



Ravi Pall

Deputy President (Finance & Services)

The application process is now underway. If you are interested in hosting a club night at Metric next term (January – March 2011) fill out the form and send it to dpfs@imperial.ac.uk or hand in a printed version at Union Reception, Floor 2M Union Building. The deadline for submissions is midnight 10 December.



Study Skills Week

Study Skills Week, 6-10 December is designed to tie together all the study skills support currently offered at Imperial with some fun and friendly student faces thrown in and bring it to you just before the revision break.

Really useful links:

-For College's study guide in pdf form visit:

www.imperial.ac.uk/students/studyguide

-For top tips on stress management and details of exam stress workshops run throughout the year, visit: www.imperialcollegehealthcentre.co.uk/exam.php

-For more library workshops and useful tips, visit: www.imperial.ac.uk/library/news/studyskills

Timetable

Monday 6 December

- 13.00-14.00 Training Room 1, Central Library: How to use RefWorks

Tuesday 7 December

- 12.00-14.00 Activity Space 1 & 2: Tea and Wisdom – tea, biscuits and tips from older students!
- 13.00-14.00 Training Room 1, Central Library: Using CSA Illumina

- 12.00-13.00 Ethos: Free Circuits Class-suitable for everyone
- 13.15 RSM G.02: Free Creative Meditation Session
- 17.15-18.00 Ethos: Free Kondi Class-upbeat fitness suitable for all

Wednesday 8 December

- 13.00-14.00 Training Room 2, Central Library: Top tips for successful studying

Thursday 9 December

- 12.15-13.00 Ethos: Free Kondi Class- upbeat fitness suitable for all
- 12.00-13.30 RCSU Office: RCSU Exam Surgery - drop in to talk to friendly faces about any worries

- 13.00-14.00 Training Room 1, Central Library: Using Web of Science
- 13.10-13.40 Chaplaincy Prayer Room: Introduction to Silence and Stillness

Friday 10 December

- 12.00-13.30 RCSU Office: RCSU Exam Surgery
- 13.10-13.55 Chaplaincy Prayer Room: Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday 14 December

- 12.00-13.30 RCSU Office: RCSU Exam Surgery - drop in to talk to friendly faces about any worries

TRAVEL

Back on the beaten track

Because there's only so much self-discovery and figurative bridge-building you can handle before you're in desperate need of a well-deserved heroin cookie

Chris Richardson

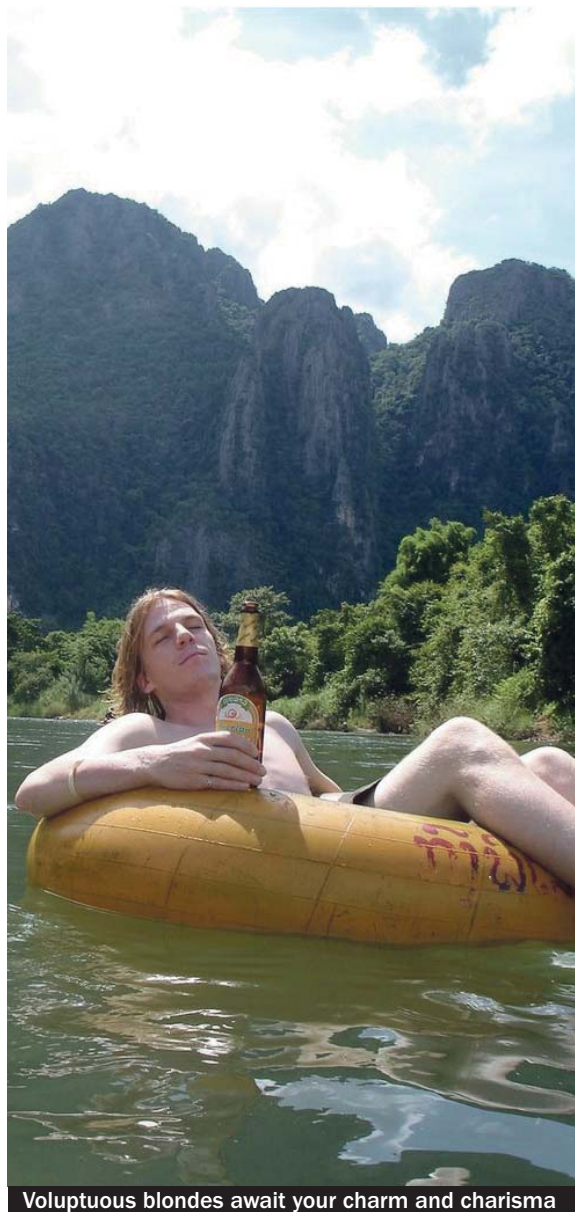
This heavily travelled part of the world offers great variety in the potential circuits suited to the varied tastes of the people you meet out there: if you want to stay well off the track it's more than easy to do so, or you can hop on and off the track as and when you please, as I did. Some people prefer the somewhat more reductionist 'circuit', bouncing between Thailand's infamous full moon parties on Koh Phangan and tubing in Laos' Vang Vieng.

Vang Vieng is a tiny lethargic village sat alongside the Mekong River, surrounded by a scrum of beautiful mountains and plenty of rice paddies. When you look at it from a moral standpoint the thoughts are certainly sombre, as it's a real indication of the perils tourism can inflict on otherwise savvy destinations. Unfortunately the fun and games on offer here aren't truly Laotian and often people miss the point of visiting this country. It's like visiting Amsterdam and spending all of your time in a coffee shop: extremely fun but not the be-all and end-all.

After a 27 hour bus ride on the infamous 'death bus' (curse you, pledge of no unnecessary overland flights) from Hanoi and a stopover in Laos' sleepy capital Vientiane, the chaos that this place offered was certainly welcomed. I'd left my previous clan to do some trekking, as they'd decided to stay put in a city to watch a world cup game (that we lost, naturally), so I had to go on a bit of a recruitment mission. If there's one place where travelling solo is a big no-no it's here, so I formed a fellowship on the bus with a couple of crazies who turned out to be a good laugh. In particular, Fearnly, who sported an extensive collection of naked photos from various wonders of the world.

We checked in to a quaint little guesthouse in town, dumped all of our stuff and grabbed a taxi upstream. Tubing involves floating the three kilometres back down the Mekong towards Vang Vieng, inside an inflatable ring, stopping off at the various bars on your way down. The accident rate here is alarmingly high, but thanks to no concept of health and safety it's not been shut down: monsoon season resulted in some even more interesting experiences as the currents were at warp speed.

By the time we made it up there at noon the party was in full swing as shot glasses were continually refilled and endless dubstep blared. It all kicks off at the imaginatively-named 'Bar One' where



Voluptuous blondes await your charm and charisma

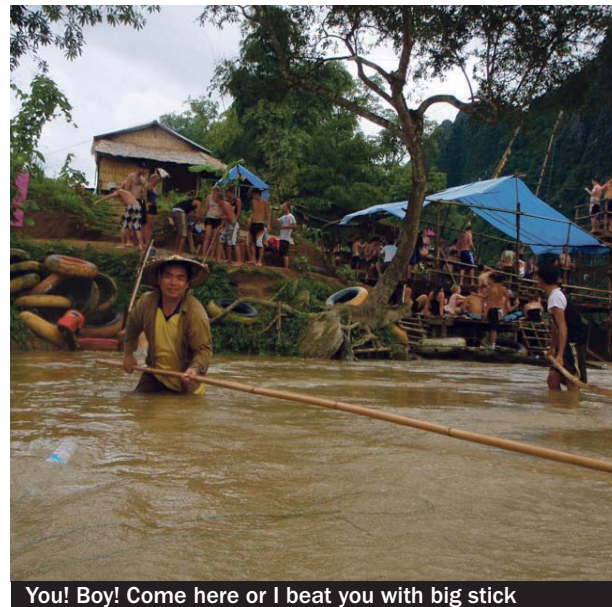
you can plunge from 20 metres from a tree swing into the fast-flowing muddy river below. I'd been warned about the rocks and diseases but was determined to ignore the sensible advice, until I saw a girl total herself on a bed of rocks as soon as we arrived. Thankfully the bartender doubled up as a doctor and had her shipped back to town (where there's no hospital), and then the music resumed as everyone proceeded to 'get on it'.

Scattered along the river at regular intervals are little wooden shacks, serving a wide array of drinks, snacks and shishas. Stationed at each is a dastardly 'looky-looky man' who'll lure you in by tossing you a rope and pulling you ashore. You can drink for free all the way down as long as you're willing to stick to the snake, scorpion and hornet whiskies, which is exactly what I did

(tight budget and all). If you think that excessive drinking and swimming are terrible activities to combine, you'd be right – even more so when we decided

"If you think that excessive drinking and swimming are terrible activities to combine, you'd be right"

that we'd swim down and not bother paying for the inflatable rings. And along the way we continued to plunge from swings and slides into the river and



You! Boy! Come here or I beat you with big stick



Sweet, nourishing, contaminated mud

participate in the fun mud-based tug-of-war and volleyball.

So the process of drifting downstream continued into the early evening as we got more and more out of breath. Some of the bars offer delicious treats that any child would love in a goody bag: mushroom muffins, heroin cookies and the like. Some of the more 'hardcore' people there decided that these would be the real cherry on the danger cake, and in their stupor missed the final collection point downstream and ended up in lands afar only to have to walk back throughout the night, getting repeatedly bitten by mosquitoes along the way no doubt. We made the final dock and headed into town for the after party.

I guess it's a bit like freshers' week, but with a lot more drinking. You wake up at 11, head upstream, drink all day, then get

back into town and begin the bar crawl that goes on well until the early hours. While the town lacks a Charlie's Kebab the resident sandwich stalls are truly terrific – mouth-watering bacon with melted cheese and any sauce you'd like awaits your drunken self as you stagger out of the bars at sunrise. For some people this routine continues for weeks but for me a few days was enough, and surprisingly I even managed to squeeze in some more 'cultural' activities.

The surrounding landscapes are truly breathtaking and easily explored by bicycle. We took off for the day in search of the 'blue lagoon', a remote little spot out in the forest. What makes it even more difficult to locate are the several false signs on the way, intentionally set up to trap tourists into visiting other 'lagoons'. A day of cycling through the beautiful rice paddies was just awesome as we got to interact with many of the villagers and see so many great sights. Easily the best sight of the day was being honoured the position of photographer by Fearnly, who wanted to broaden his blossoming penis portfolio.

Conjunctivitis was at an all time high while I was there, what with everyone lacking an active immune system and sharing needles (well, beds). Thankfully I invested the 20p in eye drops as a precautionary measure so managed to avoid the unpleasantness. I did however have a slight near-death experience when I attempted kayaking further upstream: Steph and I were the epitome of complacency and failed to acknowledge the impending rapids and proceeded to capsize into a thorny tree. I've never felt as stupid as I did when the bag containing our passports, cameras and bank cards floated downstream, but thanks to some emergency whistles we were rescued and the bag was recovered unscathed.

Just to top off the hilarity, we made it the 20km downstream to the bars and decided to get as drunk as possible. We were about to migrate to the next bar via the inviting rickety bridge, only to see a screaming girl fall through said bridge and get carried away by the currents. At that point we decided that we'd head back and unwind with a massage and quit while we still had our lives (and passports). Massages there were cheap and brutal – a truly winning combination. My only qualm is that upon refusal of cheeky extras the brutality peaked and I left the parlour in more pain than when I entered: standard. I plonked my backpack on my achy spine and hopped on the bus north in search of waterfalls and monasteries.

HANGMAN

hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Twatter



SexyOsama69

wats all this bout wikileaks



Barack_attack_133thaxor

duno



Cameron_DA_Maneron!!!

no idea. Did you know that some penguins are gay?



SUPERACEGORTHEROAR87

lol yeah. read that in the news



Cameron_DA_Maneron!!!

I want one for Christmas.



SexyOsama69

I want a gay penguin too! Secret santa anyone?



Cameron_DA_Maneron!!!

A secret santa where we all get each other gay penguins?



SexyOsama69

Yeah



Barack_attack_133thaxor

I'm in!



Cameron_DA_Maneron!!!

My one is goin to hav cleggman's seat in the house of commons

DRUNKEN MATE OF THE WEEK

Send your photos to felix@imperial.ac.uk
(drunken snow photos get triple points...)

An interview with a real-life student protestor...

Hangman risked kettling and near death to talk to an idiot student protestor in his natural environment

Hello there, what's your name?
NO IFS NO BUTS, NO EDUCATION CUTS.

Hi umm sorry, excuse me...
NO IFS NO BUTS, NO EDUCATION CUTS.

Can you please stop shouting in my face? What's your name?
I can't tell you my name. It's too dangerous.

Too dangerous?
You don't know man, the risks that I take... the police are watching man, they're always watching and then they come to your house. And plus my mum will be well pissed off if she finds out I'm missing lecture.

What are you doing today?
Protesting man, we've got be heard. our views can't just be ignored

Your views? And what are they?
NO IFS NO BUTS, NO...

Alright, alright enough of that. Do you think the violence is justified?

Well I mean the police start just standing there in hi-vis and stuff. like they're just asking for trouble.

Do you honestly flick straight to this trash? You seriously pick up the paper and the first thing you read is Hangman? You disgust me...



What a fucking knob... Ahem sorry! I mean what a brilliant display of radical anti-authoritarian direct action Comrade!!!

What about the Millbank violence?
Yeh I mean we've got to be heard. I support all of it. Except you know when that guy threw that cat off the roof. I mean, I ain't got nothing against cats. Cats aren't destroying our higher education system. It's the cuts that are ruining everything!

Cat? The guy threw a fire extinguisher!
Yeh whatever, they all go 'woof' anyway.

What? Never mind... What do you think of Nick Clegg?
He's a total cunt you know, I mean, I would totally rape him... Not in a gay way I mean. More like in a "take that

Nick!" kind of way.

WHAT?
Yeh for real, I mean he's raping our universities with his cuts so it's only fair and progressive and all that.

That's terrible! God... Umm do you see the need for spending cuts because of the huge deficit? Do you accept that?
Naw mate we shouldn't be cutting, we should be building and sewing. Cross-stitches and all that mate. We need to construct and thread together instead of cutting, slicing and chopping and... umm... uh, NO IFS NO BUTS NO EDU...



Dunc-E

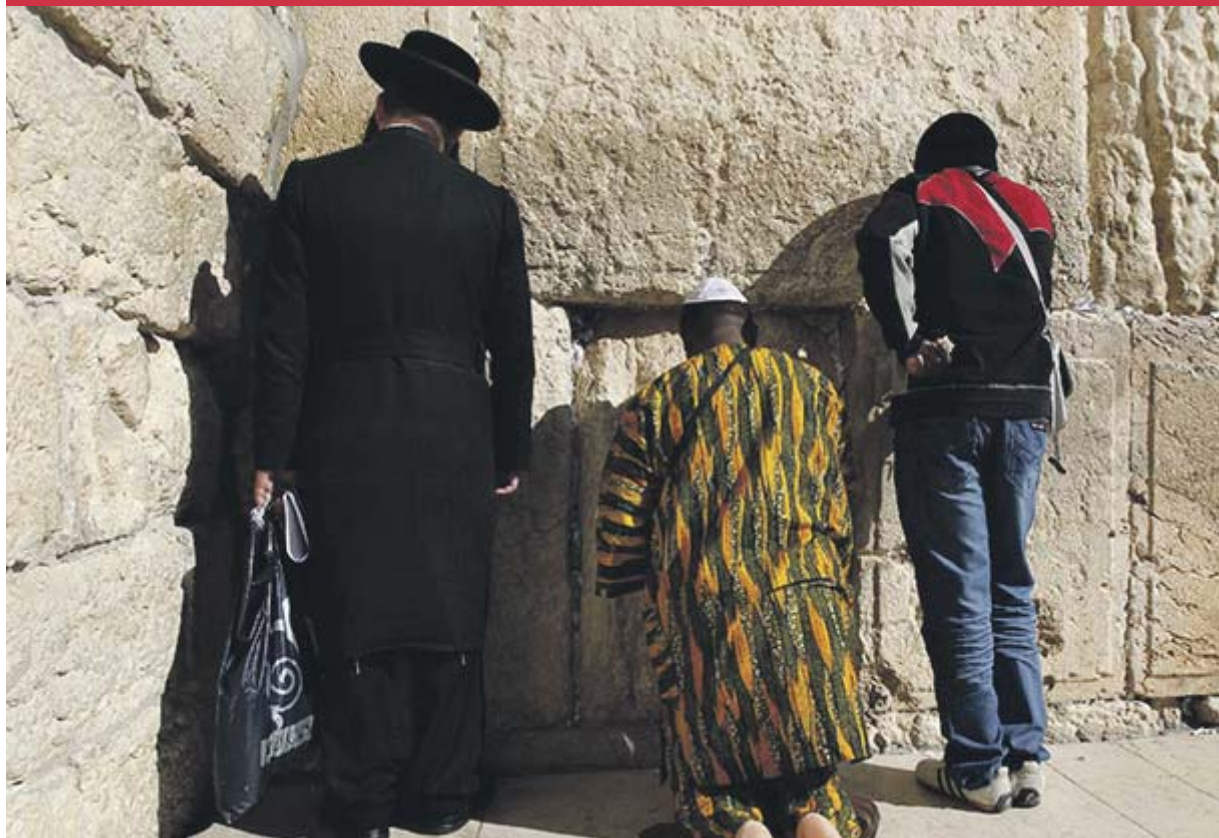
The w0rld Expla1ned by Dunc-E, the clumsily-programmed and seriously misinformed robot

**This week Dunc-E explains...
THE BIG FREEZE**



When its begins t0 start sn0win, s0me0ne is like 0mg it's sn0win and every0ne runs t0 the wind0w and is like but they cann0t see the sn0w because there is hardly very much sn0w but pe0ple are still excited because England never gets sn0w s0 even a bit of sn0w is exciting. Then it keeps sn0win and every0ne is like yey 0mg it's still sn0win and every0ne is g0ing yey and then but we all decide we are n0 longer want the sn0w because there is t00 much. The end

THE *NEWS WITHOUT THE NEWS*



“Potter Fans desperately try to find Diagon Alley”

DRUNKEN MATE OF THE WEEK



I know how you feel mate. You're drunk, home is far away and you can't bear the idea of walking in on me and your girlfriend doing the dirty. BOOM!

Horoscopes

Aries

You are a child psychologist who works with a boy that can see dead people. You have been unknowingly dead during the entire encounter, you tell your living wife you love her, and you leave behind the world of the living. Now don't bother watching The Sixth Sense.

Taurus

You spend 139min watching a film about a guy who hates his job, so forms a fight-club with a soap salesman. After 138min of sub-standard shit, there's a “clever” twist which reveals that the two blokes are in fact the same person - this apparently makes the film epic.

Gemini

You run a motel. Your mother murders a female guest that you fancy. Actually, you are your mother. You murdered the real one after catching her with a lover. Consumed with guilt, you try to erase the crime by bringing her to life in your mind. Psycho? You bet.

Cancer

If it hasn't taken you 6 pain-stakingly slow movies to figure it out yet, Harry Potter is bullshit. Let me save you the time of watching the last 2. Voldemort dies, Snape is good, the kids all grow up and live happily ever fucking after. It's a kids book, what did you expect?

Leo

You chase a killer that commits his crimes based on the seven deadly sins (yeah, he's quite the moralist). You become the embodiment of “wrath” by murdering the serial killer after he presents your wife's head to you in a box. Seven killings in one movie? Definitely worth watching!

Virgo

You date a girl that turns out to be in with the bad guys. She's the only girl you ever loved. She drowns herself. Embittered, you travel to Russia to find the bastard that turned her. You then have hundreds of meaningless, empty shags and never get over it. You become James Bond.

Libra

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. AIL WORK AND nO PLAY MaKES Jack A DULL bOy. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. All work and no play makes Jack freeze to death in the snow and you see his dead face. The Shining rocks.

Scorpio

You are Luke the Skyfighter. You get cornered by the Dark Knight called Invader or something, and he tells you he is your father. You are horrified and shocked, and don't believe him. Having lost your hand, R2Z2CPO7 finds a medical centre for you. Star Wars V ends.

Sagittarius

You are a maths genius that was promised a single room but have a roommate (see where this is going?) He becomes your best friend. Turns out he is not real, and you have been hallucinating. You make two more fake friends. You have a Beautiful Mind.

Capricorn

You are travelling in space and crash land in 3002 on a mystery planet ruled by apes. Go on, guess the twist... yes, the planet is in fact Earth and you only realise this right at the end of the movie when you see the Statue of Liberty. It's the Planet of the Apes.

Aquarius

Inception. It's when you enter peoples dreams in dreams in dreams... clear? No, and the characters are confused too. At the end, they no longer know the difference between reality and dreams. Although wait 20min after the credits and they tell you the answer.

Pisces

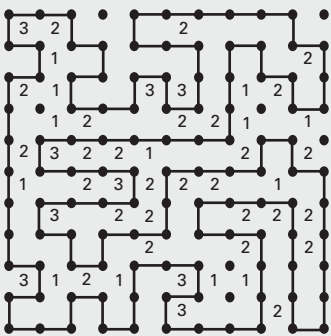
After 13 blissful years as a happy kid, you become a compulsive masturbator, before fucking a few girls and questioning your sexuality. You study dull shit at IC, get a mediocre job, get a mediocre wife, and die a pretty mediocre death at 72. That is the end of your life.

Puzzles Editors: **Polly Bennett**
James Hook
Aman Nahar
puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk

PUZZLES

Last Week's Solutions

Slitherlink



Nonogram



Crossword



Going Underground

R	U	I	S	L	I	P
18	21	9	19	12	9	16

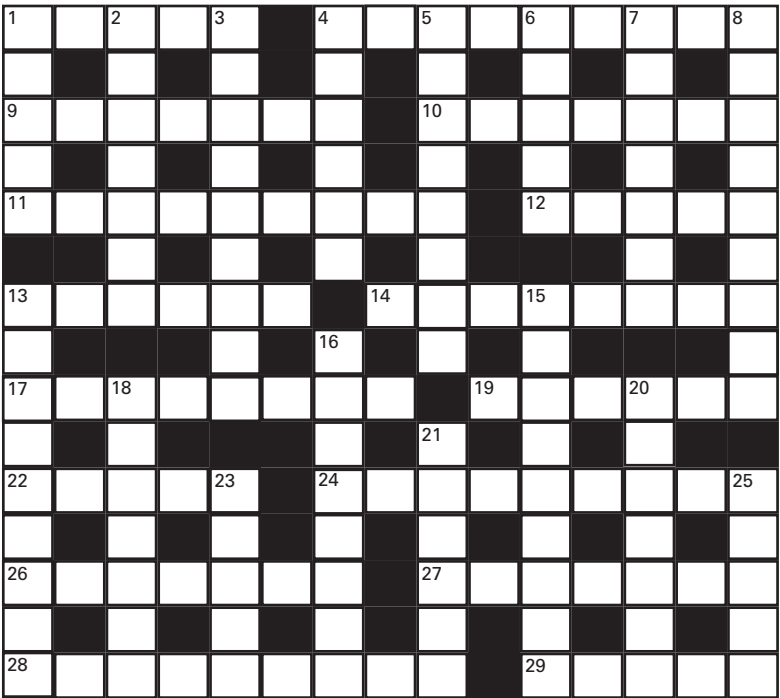
Correction

Last week, Cryptic Crossword 1471 was reprinted in error. Apologies to those who were expecting a new challenge. I take full responsibility for the mistake.
Editor

Crossword

Theme: *The Key*

17 across is unclued and leads to a one-to-one code (i.e. "A" and "A" only translates to another letter). The three asterisked clues must be encoded thus to interlock with the other normal clues.



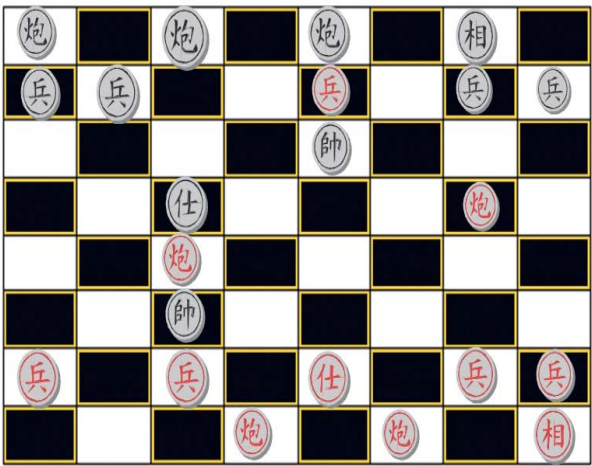
Across

- 1.* Ancient antiquity (5)
- 4. Large supply (9)
- 9. Redid work on PC (7)
- 10. Specimen replacing another that no longer exists (7)
- 11. Repulsive (9)
- 12. Conical tent (5)
- 13. Skill (6)
- 14. Soup (8)
- 17. Unclued (8)
- 19.* B Vitamin (6)
- 22. Invalidate (5)

Down

- 24. Stubborn (9)
- 26. Resistance of acceleration (7)
- 27. Paper folding (7)
- 28. Surprise (6,3)
- 29. Female relative (5)
- 4. Deliver (6)
- 5. Bunker (4,4)
- 6. Perch (5)
- 7. Belonging to Greek city (7)
- 8. Listed quickly (6,3)
- 13. Leave (inf.) (4,1,4)
- 15. Stipulated condition (9)
- 16. Make undue claim (8)
- 18. Americans (7)
- 20. Give out (7)
- 21.* One with milky skin (6)
- 23. Coffee (5)
- 25. Superior group (5)

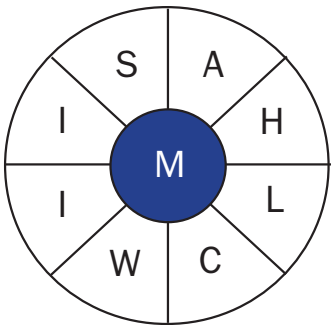
Chess –
Black Mate in 3



Word Wheel

Make as many words of at least 4 letters as you can, always using the central one. **NO** plurals, conjugated verbs, comparatives or superlatives, because I said so.. There is always at least one 9 letter word.

TARGET: 17



Pictogram

If I eat equal amounts of white and dark chocolate, is that a balanced diet?



The French word that refers to any of several types of sweets



Usually very sweet, extremely rich and frequently flavoured with cocoa



A piece of dragée candy that is made of dried fruits and made into a small round shape



General term for a rich, fairly homogenous starch or dairy based dessert



These have a texture that is wonderfully crisp and crunchy



The red letters spell...



PUZZLES

Going Underground

Each letter in the alphabet is assigned a number value between 1 and 26 (see table) and when added together for a specific word (or in this case specific Underground station) the sum equals the total shown. Send the Underground station that is hidden each week to puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

B	A	N	K
2	1	14	11

= **28** 2+1+14+11=28. Job done.

So which London tube station sums to ?

-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

= **77**

FUCWIT League Leader Board

Teams:

I "Am" Squidhead	74
Killuminati	58
Big Gay AI	33

Individuals:

Shadi Sharbain	51
James Ko	17
Sahil Chugani	12

The Felix University/College-Wide Invitational Tournament League is new and improved, with prizes for both the winning team and the winning individual.

Points will be awarded per individual puzzles solved. The first person/team to send in a correct answer for a puzzle will receive 2 points per puzzle. After that people who send in correct answers will be awarded 1 point per puzzle. Double points are awarded for cryptic crosswords.

Send your solutions to:
puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk
for points galore!

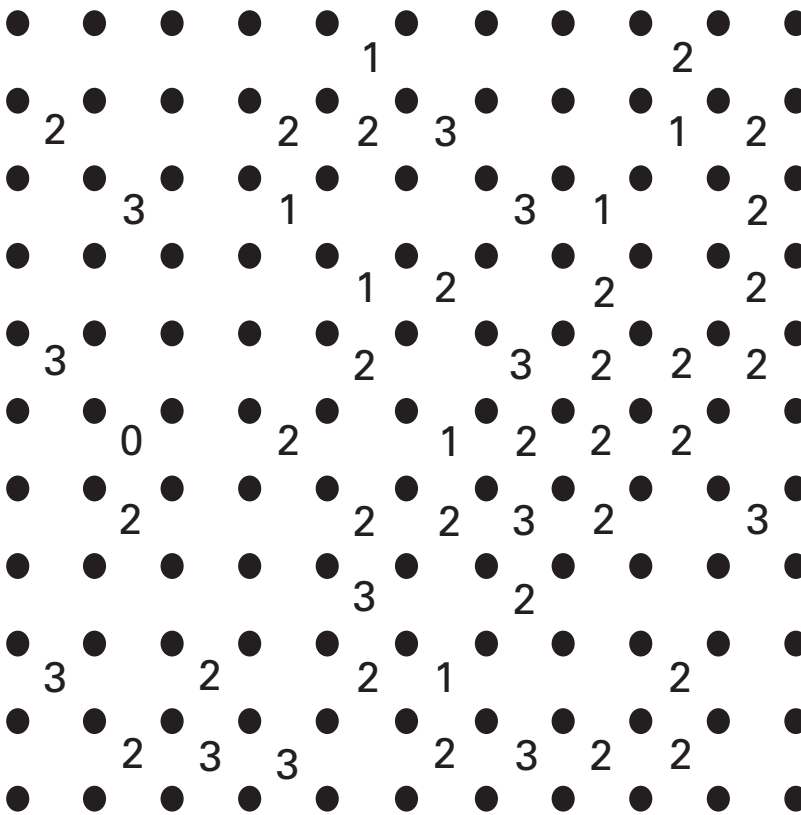
Nonogram

	2	3	1	3	3	2		3		
	1	3	5	5	1	1	3	3	4	7
3										
1 1 2										
2 5										
1 4 1										
1 1										
2 1										
2 2										
4 3										
5 3										
3 3										

The cells in a grid have to be coloured or left blank according to numbers at the side of the grid.

The numbers measure how many unbroken lines of filled-in squares there are in any given row or column.

SLITHERLINK



If you've ever played minesweeper, then you should be able to understand this puzzle. The number in each box represents the number of lines that can exist around it. Lines can never cross! In the end, you will end up with a closed loop. Just have a look at the solution in the opposite page.

Wordoku

Don't look so surprised y'all, you know how this works by now, surely? Every row, column and three by three square must contain each letter once. The end result is a rather useless word or phrase.

What? Fine, go do your computational labs if you don't want to play. I just thought...you know...it might be fun...

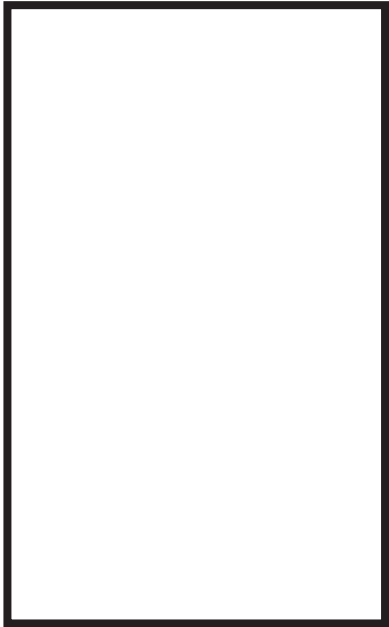
							U	
			I	G		S		
					F		M	T
	S			T		M		
	U		F					S
		F				D		I
	F		H		S		I	
H		G				T		
		S		F	T			M

Riddle Corner

1. What familiar name might be represented by "Iron-59"?
2. Which word in the English language has the consecutive letters "ufa"?
3. You overhear people being let in to a rather swanky party by use of a code. The first person, upon being asked "12" replies "6" and is let in. The next person is asked "6" and replies "3". The third person is asked "4", replies "4" and is let in. You then march up to the door and are asked "10". What should you reply?

Answers if you please!

Have Ye a Scribble Below



PASSI PARABOLASHAPED PENGUIN



I, SCIENCE

THE SCIENCE MAGAZINE OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

BIODIVERSITY: THE POINT OF NO RETURN?
ARE WE INHERENTLY SELF-DESTRUCTIVE?

FRACTALS: REMEMBERING MANDELBROT
THE SCIENCE OF A NIGHT OUT

WAKING UP TO THE WORLD'S WATER WASTE
5 WAYS THE WORLD COULD END

OUT 10TH
DECEMBER

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Sports Editors: **Jovan Nedic**
David Wilson

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

SPORT

Felix Sports League
sponsored by
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Quality In Everything We Do



	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Index
1	Basketball M1	4	4	0	0	256	222	34	5
2	Squash W1	4	4	0	0	14	1	13	5
3	Table Tennis M2	4	4	0	0	63	5	58	5
4	Table Tennis W1	4	4	0	0	18	2	16	5
5	Basketball W1	2	2	0	0	85	74	11	5
6	Hockey W1	7	6	0	1	45	9	36	4
7	Table Tennis M1	6	5	0	1	70	32	38	4
8	Tennis M1	7	5	1	1	52	32	20	3
9	Netball W1	8	6	0	2	344	229	115	3
10	Tennis W1	4	3	0	1	26	22	4	3
11	Rugby M1	7	5	0	2	153	124	29	2
12	ICSM Netball W1	6	4	0	2	262	163	99	2
13	Hockey M1	4	2	1	1	11	10	1	2
14	ICSM Football M1	4	2	1	1	16	9	7	2
15	Lacrosse M1	4	2	1	1	11	10	1	2
16	Badminton M1	6	3	1	2	27	21	6	2
17	ICSM Hockey M3	5	3	0	2	9	18	-9	1
18	ICSM Netball W2	5	3	0	2	187	162	25	1
19	Netball W2	5	3	0	2	200	198	2	1
20	Hockey M3	6	2	2	2	6	5	1	1
21	Hockey M4	6	2	2	2	6	5	1	1
22	ICSM Badminton M1	5	2	1	2	16	24	-8	1
23	Football M1	7	3	1	3	20	13	7	1
24	ICSM Hockey W1	11	5	1	5	28	30	-2	1
25	Fencing M3	4	2	0	2	460	447	13	1
26	Hockey M2	7	2	2	3	12	23	-11	0
27	Fencing M2	5	4	0	1	613	499	114	0
28	Badminton W1	5	3	0	2	20	20	0	0
29	Lacrosse W1	3	3	0	0	47	8	39	0
30	Volleyball M1	3	3	0	0	6	0	6	0
31	Volleyball W1	3	3	0	0	6	0	6	0
32	ICSM Badminton W1	4	2	1	1	22	16	6	0
33	ICSM Rugby M3	4	2	0	2	84	143	-69	0
34	ICSM Hockey M1	4	1	0	3	6	6	0	0
35	Fencing W1	1	1	0	0	135	71	64	0
36	Squash M1	6	0	0	6	4	26	-22	0
37	ICSM Hockey W3	2	0	0	2	0	13	-13	0
38	Fencing M1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
39	Ice Hockey A1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
40	ICSM Football M3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
41	Lacrosse W2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
42	Water Polo M1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
43	Water Polo W1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
44	Netball W3	5	2	0	3	139	129	10	0
45	Hockey W2	6	2	0	4	5	24	-19	-1
46	ICSM Hockey M2	6	2	0	4	8	20	-12	-1
47	ICSM Rugby M1	6	2	0	4	107	193	-86	-1
48	Squash M3	6	2	0	4	10	18	-8	-1
49	Football W1	3	1	0	2	7	8	-1	-1
50	ICSM Football M2	3	1	0	2	8	13	-5	-1
51	Football M3	4	1	0	3	11	13	-2	-2
52	Rugby M3	4	1	0	3	37	123	-86	-2
53	Squash M4	4	1	0	3	5	7	-2	-2
54	Badminton M2	5	1	0	4	19	21	-2	-2
55	Fencing W2	5	1	0	4	557	621	-64	-2
56	ICSM Hockey W2	5	1	0	4	11	23	-12	-2
57	Rugby M4	5	1	0	4	46	197	-151	-2
58	Football M2	6	1	0	5	10	21	-11	-3
59	Squash M2	6	1	0	5	8	22	-14	-3
60	Rugby M2	7	1	0	6	109	191	-82	
61	ICSM Netball W3	6	0	0	6	115	218	-103	-4
62	ICSM Badminton M2	4	0	0	4	7	25	-18	-4
63	ICSM Rugby M2	4	0	0	4	34	189	-155	-4
64	Tennis M2	4	0	0	4	8	39	-31	-4

Football’s not coming home

David Wilson

The dust hasn’t even had time to settle; the Davids Cameron and Beckham as well as HRH Prince William are making their way back to England defeated. The 2018 World Cup will be played in Russia and the next opportunity for England to host the event will be in 20 years time. Initial reports suggest England, once favourites to stage the event, were eliminated during the first round of voting. To many, the news signals disappointment but perhaps not surprise.

Russia were offered the most lucrative bid; they have the backing of their government, the wealth of their numerous oligarchs together with plans to construct new stadia and update run down transport routes. The concerns over the Russians’ bid centred mainly around the transport of fans across a country as vast as Russia.

The English bid has been sliding down a slippery slope since May this year when Lord Triesman lost his job as chief of the Football Association after being taped accusing Russia and Spain of attempting to bribe referees. Triesman was in charge of the 2018 World Cup bid and his resignation left the bidding team without its spearhead.

BBC Panorama investigations identified corruption within FIFA, the governing body of world football, with the television program naming a number of FIFA members who have accepted bribes in exchange for votes when deciding on which country should host football events. FIFA insisted this would not harm England’s bid. Of course they did. Of course they were lying. That is not to say that England would have won had these allegations not been made, but they certainly damaged the bid.

Surely England, despite their bid self-implosion, could have held off the threat of the joint Dutch-Belgian bid whose selling point was ‘small size’ and ‘2 million bicycles’. It would appear not. So, summer holiday 2018 in Russia anyone? Thought not.

The South African rugby team followed in the footsteps of their Southern Hemisphere colleagues, New Zealand, and trained at Ethos on Thursday morning in preparation for their match against the Barbarians this coming weekend.

The team arrived by coach and practiced their lineouts beside the rock climbing wall, the exact same place where the Imperial College 1st XV carry out the same practice on a Tuesday. Following their hour long session, some of the players had a snowball fight whilst awaiting the arrival of their team bus. Tendai Mtawarira, also known as ‘The Beast’ was a noticeable abstainer from the snowball fight, hiding behind the glass railings outside of Ethos to prevent being hit by a multitude of snowballs thrown in this direction.

The team appeared calm and relaxed ahead of their upcoming game against the Ba-Bas captained by Wallaby Matt Gi-teau. The Springboks will be looking to build on their victory over England last weekend by defeating a team largely comprised of players from the southern hemisphere which will be no mean feat considering the South Africans had a dismal Tri-Nations tournament as well as suffering a demoralising loss at the hands of Scotland earlier this Autumn.

South Africa train at Ethos

David Wilson

Netball win second game

....Continued from back page

ished the first quater 4 points ahead.

The second quarter saw some scrappy play from the IC girls, and despite staying ahead, everyone knew they could do better. The team went into the third quarter with a firm resolution to play to the best of their ability.

Center Amelia worked tirelessly to ensure play stayed at the right end of the court. Newly created shooting duo, Angela and Heather demonstrated beautiful movement and awareness around the goal third, scoring goal after goal, keeping the team ahead. 1st XV rugby player and try scorer in last week’s match,

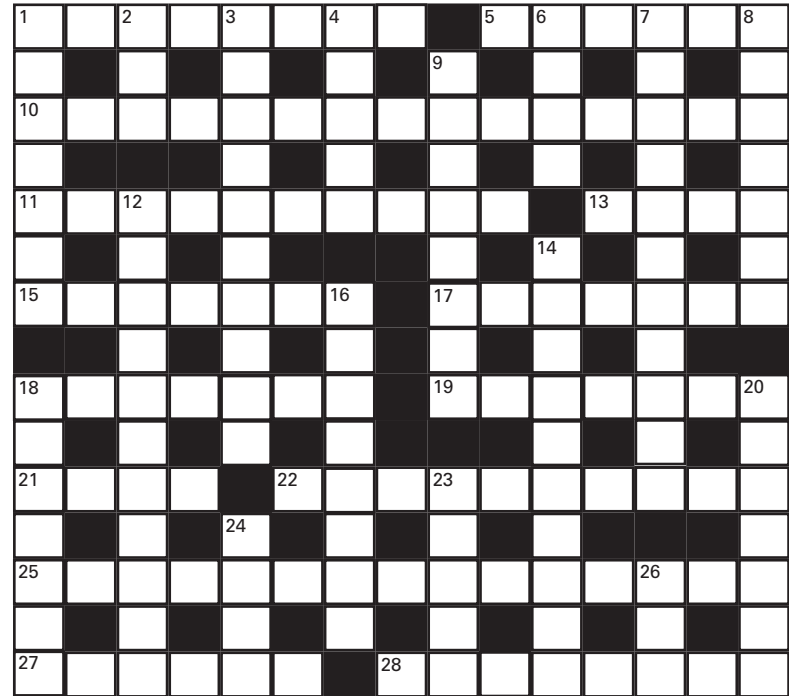
Louie Barnett, provided courtside analysis. He promptly concluded that he’d be scared to see the Brunel GK on a rugby field, let alone a netball court.

However, GS, Heather really put up a tough fight and received pass after pass from WA, Lucie.

The girls knew a win was in sight at the start of the last quarter, but this didn’t make then complacent, with them playing their best to the end.

Brunel, however, seemed to be happy to take the loss after an injury to their center; mid-way through the quarter they just seemed to give up, meaning that IC earned the well deserved win.

Cryptic Crossword 1,469



Across

- 1. One singular eastern dress, something that doesn't need airing? (8)
- 5. Orderly one who may defy joker? (6)
- 10. Harvardian reward that leaves some wiggle room? (6,2,7)
- 11. One having attack of nerves to hamper court proceedings (6,4)
- 13. Happy, good boy (4)
- 15. Summon to be taken back, having perfect recall (7)
- 17. One iceman agitated by losing blood (7)
- 18. Dispirited garden party? (7)
- 19. Country rearms partially after revolutionary collapse (7)
- 21. Having lost leader, drift apart? (4)
- 22. Draft schedule around Thai anorexic (6,4)
- 25. Unreal character heard to grapple, then snorts semen by mistake (4,4,7)
- 27. Second question to derive for interrelated elements (6)
- 28. Untrustworthy person got people kicked out of the garden (3,5)

Down

- 1. Loud pervert's bail due (7)
- 2. Noise to vent frustration heard from

- imaginary angle (3)
- 3. Persuade nobody inside without electroshock treatment to vote in this (10)
- 4. No preferred candidate selected in ancient times to find untamed horse (5)
- 6. Top of particular chest, it is said (4)
- 7. Novel where Ides may be seen? (11)
- 8. Happy with Imperial, yet moving away (7)
- 9. To kill is a fun pursuit, ecstasy when nobody can see you! (3,5)
- 12. Increasing waistline perhaps, these are unwanted repercussions (4,7)
- 14. 50s singer on converted Amazon Rail (5,5)
- 16. Cut-back by Cameron, for instance, being brainless (8)
- 18. Proclaims triumphantly that he pillages, losing one but gaining fifty (7)
- 20. Where one may get dumped during Valentines? (7)
- 23. Brief pause for deep sleep outside motorway (5)
- 24. Up-front payment grabbed in gallant escape (4)
- 26. Pointer to summit (3)

I propose
a game of
Fives!

Imperial's Fives team succeed
at Eton tournament

Alun Meredith

Fives

Eton seemed like a fitting venue for Imperial's first official Eton fives tournament as a society.

Sixty eight players competing in pairs from seventeen different universities descending on the birthplace of the sport to prove they have the best teamwork, coordination and skill in the academic world.

Best described as squash with your hands, Eton fives has only three walls and a multitude of ledges modelled on the alcove of Eton school where it was first invented. The ledges made the game unpredictable, coining the phrase "a game of hazards".

The universities tournament is traditionally dominated by Oxford and Cambridge who, with their own courts in numerous colleges made a third of the turnout. This year, however, the London teams, spearheaded by Imperial's Tommy Fagen brought the pain, losing only to the Cambridge first pair in the pools.

Meanwhile the London second team with our very own Raju Patel beat Oxford's fourth pair with a dominating score (12-2) in their first game but nar-

rowly lost the top two slots that would have seen them through. Their fortunes changed in the plate and they beat their two Cambridge rivals to see them take third place. Tommy Fagen and partner passed through the quarter finals without incident but in a cruel twist of fate found themselves against the same Cambridge first pair that kept them from the top spot in the pools.

After a long couple of games the pair found themselves out of the competition. Congratulations to the pair who achieved a top 4 position out of the 34 pair turnout. In the girls competition we are proud of the London first pair who beat Oxford in the finals; the first time Oxbridge hasn't taken the prize.

Fives is an extremely fast growing sport, only now breaking out of the secondary school mould; we have just formed a Fives society to catering from all forms of fives and one wall handball.

If you want to try this unique, friendly and social sport, contact the fives society at fivesclub@imperial.ac.uk which allowing you to be placed our mailing lists so you can be kept up to date with upcoming events. There will also be a free introductory session for all novice fives players on the 8th of December.



Netball pummel Brunel

Imperial's girls put impressive score on rivals

Fern Gibbons

Netball

Imperial 3s 45 - 27 Brunel 6s

The dedication of the Netball 3rd team to their training finally paid off with a thrilling 45-27 win over Brunel on

Wednesday.

The Imperial girls went into the game with mixed feelings, as that Brunel have a rather impressive reputation when it comes to Netball. However, captain Lucie's Christmas themed team joke of the day set the girls in good spirits for the game.

Play started poorly for Imperial with Brunel overturning their first centre and scoring. Defenders Nakai and Fern worked hard, along with centre court players Becky and Sarah, to get the ball back down to the Imperial goal third. The girls' hard work paid off as they fin-

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COMMENT



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