

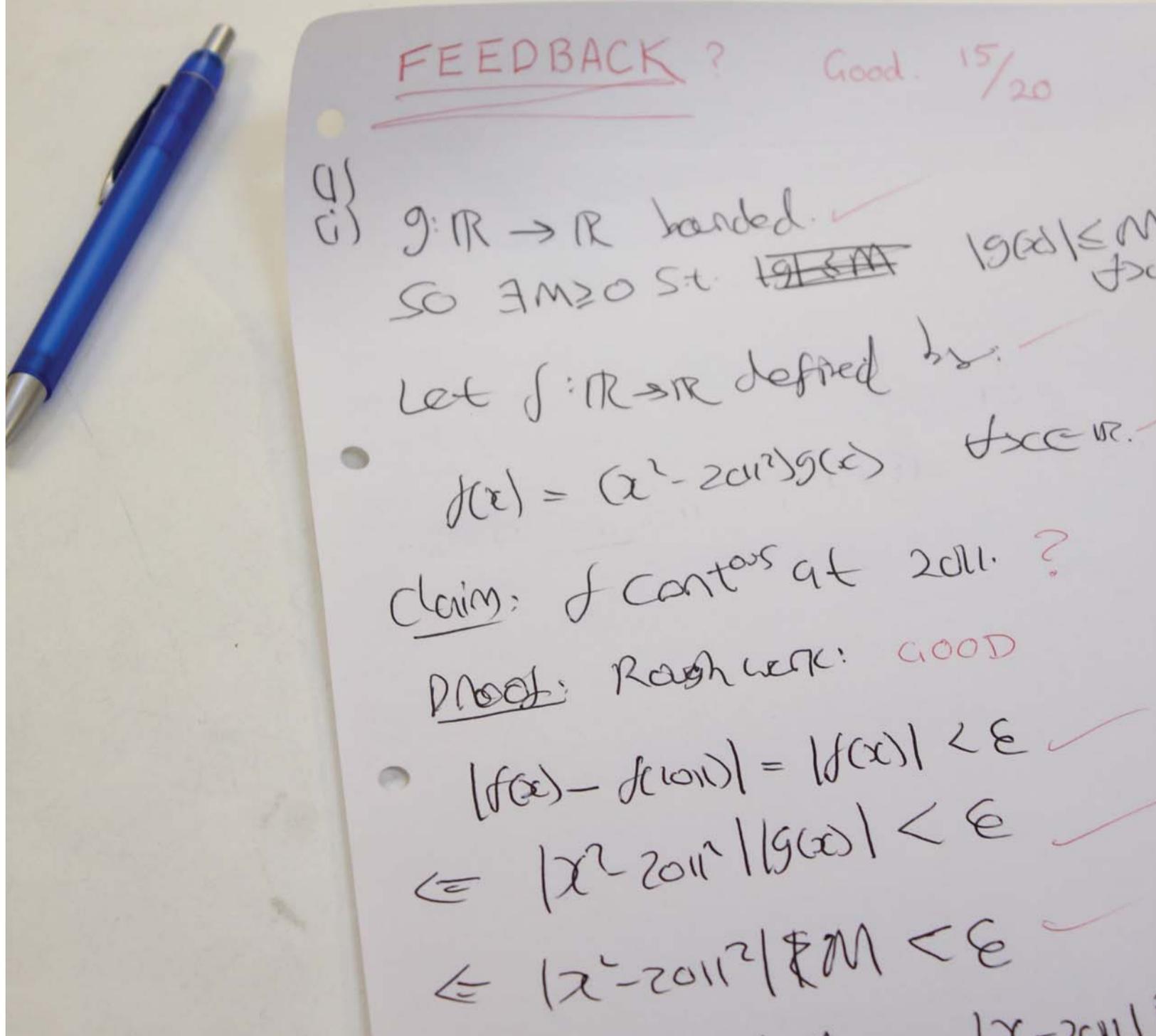


Steaming into an industrial career

The second in a series of monthly interviews with industry leaders: Page 7

TIME TO HIT THE MARK

Rector reinforces plans to tackle feedback: Page 4



SCIENCE



Seeing Bangalore and HIV in a new light
Page 8

ARTS



Marriage, love and sex at the Tabard
Page 18

GAMES



Opinions and their place in gaming
Page 28

HIGHLIGHTS

What's on

BioMed Soc Gothic Rave

Join BMS Society in our dark celebrations of all things Gothic and Pagan. Look forward to a grotesque night of fortune telling, sacrificial goat stabbing, and thrash metal musical chairs culminating in an almost possessed climax of dancing. Don't curse yourself by staying in on Saturn's Day and be hypnotised in preparation for the Winter Solstice!

Metric, Imperial Collge Union
Saturday 19 November
20:00-01:00

College of Law – GDL, LPC & BPTC Taster Session

Are you interested in Law? Do you want to find out more about the GDL (Conversion Course), the LPC (Solicitor Professional Qualification) or the BPTC (Barrister Professional Qualification)?

Nick Ross from the College of Law will be coming here to Imperial College to answer all your questions and give you a flavour of what it is like to study the GDL, the LPC and the BPTC.

Huxley, Lecture Theatre 145
Monday 14 November
18:00-20:30

Competition

You seem to like your WKD judging by the response to last week's competition. If you missed it, you can still check out last week's Cryptic Crossword if you're up for winning a bottle of champagne. If you didn't win this time, there'll be another chance to bag yourself a crate of WKD just in time for Christmas. Right, expect fewer alcohol related competitions next week.

Last week's **WKD Purple Winner** was *Yi Goh*. Congratulations!

PICK OF THE WEEK

The Music Section is gearing up for *KABLAAM*, are you?



Mikill Pane knows Ed Sheeran. Got your attention? No? Fine

In case you haven't quite heard about it yet, this year's first Felix Music Night – *KABLAAM* – is going ahead tomorrow (that's Saturday 12 November) at Metric. As ever, we've teamed up with Jazz & Rock and Music Tech to bring you a showcase of Imperial's finest bands and DJs, not to mention our incredible headliner Mikill Pane (above). It's only £3 (online or on the door, check our Facebook page). Head on over to this week's Music Section on Page 22 for even more information – and why not stick around for Page 23?

Editor

CLASSIFIEDS

Jakobs Café (20 Gloucester Road) are still looking for enthusiastic students with good English and presentation skills to serve their customers on a part time basis. Shifts: 12pm to 3pm or 6pm to 9pm (Monday to Sunday) Salary: £7/hour + food. To apply, send your CV to vidhulvinodh@gmail.com, or phone **07466632915**

Large room for rent. Located in Hammersmith/Fulham. 5 minute walk from Barons Court Tube Station. 2 minute walk from Charing Cross Hospital. 15 mins cycle to South Kensington campus. £82 a week. Contact details: nh1310@imperial.ac.uk; **07743 320 715**.

Just so we're clear, Felix accepts no responsibility for services bought or sold, capiche? Good.

Correction

Last week Felix reported in the news article 'Council talk Balls and bars' that a proposed amendment to the responsible retailing of alcohol policy concerning ID cards was rejected. This amendment was in fact passed. In addition, voting for Honorary Life Membership required a simple majority. Felix apologises for these errors.

Lolcat of teh week



FELIX

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 Printed by The Harmsworth Printing Ltd, Northcliffe House, Meadow Road, Derby. Registered newspaper ISSN 1040-0711.
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NEWS

Potential College Day revisions outlined

Working Party recommends extended teaching hours for humanities

Matthew Colvin
Maciej Matuszewski
Deepka Rana

The College Day Working Party has outlined its latest recommendations towards the structure of the day. Imperial College Union, while open to some of the recommended changes, has taken the opportunity to reinforce the importance of student input in the face of significant changes. On the other hand, the suggestions have seen strong concerns from the Department of Humanities.

Discussions by the College Day Working Group regarding the extension of the College day first came to light in January of this year, with students and staff providing a fervent response in face of the proposals, which included extending teaching hours from 8am to 7pm, reducing lunchtimes and scheduling exams for Saturdays.

The move came as a solution to timetabling congestion experienced by many departments, although no official request had been made. Department representatives did however indicate that they would make use of any timetable extensions, in spite of staff raising issues such as unfeasible commutes and childcare.

The cause for most concern was the impact the plans would have on Hu-

manities subjects and extra curricular activities. Humanities staff criticised the plans in a letter sent to Felix, suggesting that Humanities courses would be devalued and marginalised.

The Union also expressed concerns regarding students' ability to take part in clubs and societies, also suggesting that the longer hours will have a serious effect on the welfare of students, most of which already felt overworked.

Professor Dorothy Griffiths, chair of the Group, has always stated that the proposals were simply under consideration and that no final plans had been made.

The latest recommendations made by the College Day Working Party suggest that teaching hours should now run from 9am until 7pm. The last hour of this block would be reserved for the Humanities Programme and Wednesday afternoons would remain free.

Furthermore, Departments would have to set aside 5pm to 7pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays and noon to 2pm on either Monday or Friday for certain year groups for further Humanities teaching. The Working Party argues against setting aside this time for all students since 'the majority of Departments offer Humanities in particular years'.

Recommendations for the scheduling of exams have also been laid out.

While under these recommendations departments would be able to timetable three examinations each day, individual students should only have to sit at most two; except in exceptional circumstances and with the relevant Examination Board having been informed. Additionally, students should not be required "to sit an early morning examination after having taken a late afternoon examination the previous day".

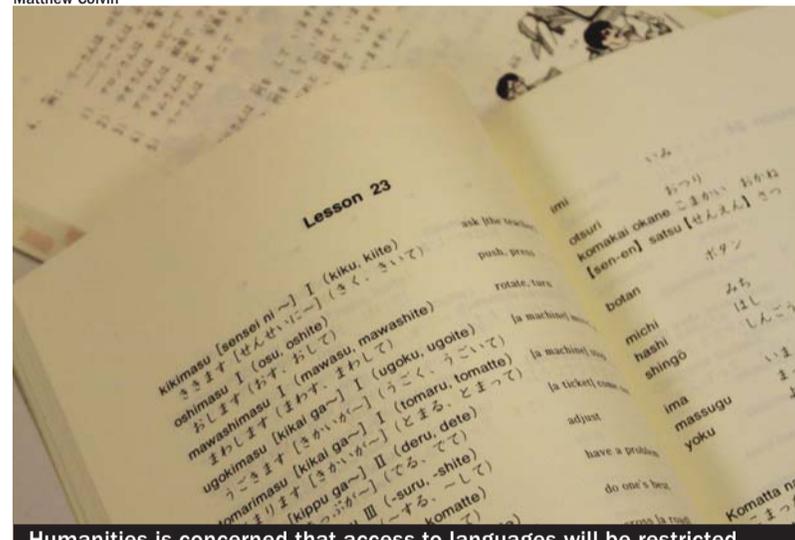
Both teaching and exams could be carried out from 8am to 7pm and on weekends and Bank Holidays in "exceptional circumstances", such as "travel disruption caused by volcanic ash".

The Department of Humanities have outlined its own concerns, citing in a response to the recommendations that 'If the recommendations of the College Day committee go ahead, many students will be prevented from taking a Humanities or Languages option of their choice,' proceeding to claim that, 'student choice and satisfaction will be seriously reduced for all'.

Imperial College Union President, Scott Heath, has taken the opportunity to re-emphasise the importance of student input on such issues relevant to the 'student experience'.

Referencing the Union's recent response to the National Student Survey, Heath discusses the fact that one key

Matthew Colvin



Humanities is concerned that access to languages will be restricted

recommendation regarded the Union's wish to have representation on the Strategic Education Committee (SEC), which has a key role in issues such as the College Day.

Citing the Union's seven-year exclusion from the committee, Heath claims, "it is clear that elements within College want to keep us off SEC to ensure they have this sure-fire route to passing unpopular policy. However, by doing so they are ignoring one of the other recommendations in the NSS Response, a les-

son learned from the Life Sciences Restructure last year – consult the student body when undertaking large changes."

"The Union and the Student Body are reasonable. We are open to some changes in our timetables if they result in more opportunities and a better experience."

Student representatives sat on the SEC until seven years ago. Jason Parmar, Deputy President (Education), has claimed that current committee members have highlighted the usefulness of having students on the committee.

Finals reveal Imperial University Challenge team

Alexander Karapetian

Internal contests for Imperial's University Challenge selection took place last week in the Blackett lab, with the initial tryouts on Thursday 3 November seeing attendance figures upwards of 130 students hoping to get onto the team. Sixty questions sent in by the show were asked in the space of an hour with those who fell within the top sixteen by scoring at least 24 out of 60 making it through to the next round.

The finals were held last Wednesday mimicking the University Challenge format, consisting of four 20-minute matches with winners and losers from the first two playing off against each other until a winning team was formed. Gilead Amit and Ciaran Healy, from the 2009 team, were present and read the questions while helping with the judg-

ing. The tournament exhausted the list of official University Challenge questions provided, with scores of 95-90 for the final along with close scores of 90-85 for the first match.

Elliot Bajema commented that after the questions were used up, they were "still not satisfied [they] had seen enough to make a good decision" and therefore 8 selected candidates were chosen for an additional round with a harder set of questions from a previous tournament. This match ended with score 110-65.

The lineup for the 2012 series will be: Pietro Aronica (Chemistry 1st Year MRes + PhD), Dominic Cottrell (Medicine 4th Year), Martin Evans (Pharmacology and Translational Medical Science 3rd Year) and Henry Guille (Materials Science 3rd Year) with Ashwin Braude (Physics 1st Year) in reserve.

Matt Allinson, a self-confessed "die-hard fan of the show" who competed in the finals, commented to Felix saying he was "amazed at how much easier it is at home on the sofa... as opposed to gathered around a table with 3 strangers, an opposing team, and an audience." Allinson extended congratulations to the main team, saying "I think with them on board we stand a damn good chance of doing well this year", noting that "the organisers did their best to take it seriously but keep it fun."

The team's first challenge will be to compete against teams from Oxford, Manchester, Sheffield and Oxford Brookes in the Academic Competition Federation (ACF) Quiz, held in Oxford on Saturday 5 November. Filming for the 2012 series of University Challenge will begin in February, with the show set to broadcast in July 2012.

Sponsored Editorial

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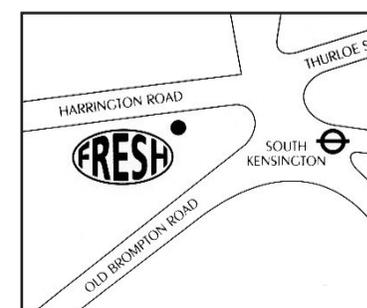
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In Brief**Death leads to safety review**

College departments are to conduct a review of all areas where liquid nitrogen is stored and used after a laboratory worker died following a suspected release of liquid nitrogen at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.

A College Health And Safety Essentials (CHASE) notice regarding the storage and use of liquid nitrogen was distributed following the incident. It prompted Heads of Department to undertake a full review of all areas under their control where the substance is stored and used, highlighting ventilation arrangements and access control for the ventilation plant, as well as indicating the importance that all those carrying out work involving the substance are competent to do so and fully aware of emergency procedures. The report came into action on November 3.

The evaporation of liquid nitrogen reduces the oxygen concentration in the air and can cause asphyxiation, particularly in confined spaces. Nitrogen, being odourless, colourless and tasteless, is capable of asphyxiating without any prior warning or sensation.

The laboratory worker who died has been confirmed as a member of Chelsea and Westminster NHS Trust staff. The Metropolitan Police and the Health and Safety Executive have launched a joint investigation into the incident. A departmental assessment into the relevance, storage and use of liquid nitrogen in line with College procedures is ongoing.

Alexander Karapetian

College to tackle feedback

Away Day yields recommendations for departments

Alex Nowbar

The issue of assessment and feedback at Imperial has been addressed at this year's Rector's Away Day.

The Rector's Away Day, which this year took place on October 21, is an annual meeting of senior Imperial staff. The focus of this year's event was the 'student experience' and how it can be improved. The outcomes from the meeting, notably plans for more detailed and timely feedback, were announced on November 8 with a report and video from Rector Sir Keith O'Nions.

The Rector's Away Day resulted in some key recommendations with respect to feedback. A statement from the Rector reveals that all Heads of Departments are to develop "action plans outlining measures already in place and measures that they will be introducing during the current academic year to improve the undergraduate student experience" by December.

Following on from a push for "strong and concerted action" on feedback by the Rector last year, departments are to consider various improvements to feedback, including providing students with early indications of "what constitutes feedback", submission deadlines and when feedback will be returned. Depart-

ments are also to consider offering students "details of common mistakes made on a particular assignment, so they can avoid them in the future". Also in the pipeline is potential implementation of a "system that could be used across departments to track the feedback given to students and monitor timeliness" by the College.

The outcome of the Away Day regarding accommodation was that the College intends to deliver the standards that students expect in terms of refurbishment of current accommodation. In addition, the College intends to look into the construction of new accommodation that fits students' requirements of price, quality and location.

The quality and timeliness of feedback has been in the spotlight recently, further to Imperial's disappointing performance in the National Student Survey (NSS). Imperial scored particularly poorly in the ranking for "assessment and feedback" (coming 163rd out of 168 nationally), not to mention shortfalls in areas such as teaching and "academic support".

Some departments have already reacted to the College's pledge to improve feedback. Professor Angus MacKinnon of the Department of Physics has sent a statement to staff, detailing its intention for markers to increase

the usage of the word 'feedback', whether verbally or in writing. In a message to staff, MacKinnon stated, "I have had enough conversations with students over the last couple of years ... to convince me that there is a real problem, which needs to be addressed."

Imperial College Union's recent response to the NSS highlighted that a long-term view towards feedback would be the production of a computer-based system to resolve a perceived "lack of clarity" in mark allocation, unfair marking and timeliness. The Union also suggested that 'cohort analysis' should be a possibility in order to spot trends with work.

Union President Scott Heath has suggested that PhD markers should receive "more assistance with marking" in the short term.

"I have already seen shocking examples of practice whereby a marker is given a list of six criteria which account for the entire mark allocation but no further guidance beyond that. If someone has a possible 10 marks to allocate for 'written style' and they are unsure how they should be given we have to question how the system will ever be fair unless that person marks everything for that year group."

Whether staff will act upon the recommendations on an individual level is a question that will be answered over the coming months.

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Shireen Quli Khan – Clinical Research Assistant

Andrea Goldstone – Clinical Research Nurse

Department of Allergy
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The research has been approved by the Brompton Harefield & NHLI Research Ethics Committee



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- lo. batt./algo ritmico 7:55-8:35
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- Operation Midnight Climax 9:45-10:25
- Mikill Pane 10:40-11:25
- Monk 11:30-12:10
- Niceberg 12:20-close



News Editors: **Sophia David**
Alex Nowbar

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NEWS

Students take to the streets

Just under a year on from the first major student demonstration against education cuts, Wednesday 9 November saw students from across the country arrive in central London to continue the protest against higher tuition fees. Departing from Malet Street, the protesters marched on a route that led through Trafalgar Square on their way to the City of London. Approximately 4000 officers were on duty, with the march being largely controlled. Though approximately 20 people were arrested, the protest was a largely peaceful event, in contrast with the events of November 10 2011, which saw protesters occupy Millbank Tower. **Photography by Tommy Allieri**

Did you go to the protest? Felix would love to hear from you.

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FEATURE

Interview: Adrian Shooter

Alice Yang talks to the Chairman of Chiltern Railways about careers in industry

Behind a large brown door in Marylebone station are the offices of Chiltern Railways, the UK's fastest growing train operating company over the past 15 years. A few minutes after being shown into a modest meeting room on the top floor of the building, Adrian Shooter, CBE and Chairman of Chiltern Railways, enters, apologising for the delay.

Mr Shooter's story is well known. Having effectively managed Chiltern Railways for over 20 years, during which he successfully completed a management buyout of the company, it now runs as one of the most punctual UK train operators.

Mr Shooter's interest in the rail industry was sparked by the debate surrounding the Beeching Report, released when Mr Shooter was still at school. The report called for the closure of a third of Britain's train stations and the reorganisation of existing tracks in order to fully reshape Britain's railways. This prompted much controversy and general public criticism, but young Adrian agreed with Lord Beeching's propositions comparing the scenario to a rose bush: "you have to prune off the dead branches and encourage the new shoots of growth."

After obtaining a degree in Mechanical Engineering from North Staffordshire Polytechnic, Mr Shooter joined British Rail in 1970 as an Engineering Management Trainee. During his 12 years in the role, Mr Shooter primarily worked on developing and improving the operations and efficiency of the company.

"It was a huge company with exciting changes taking place so there was real opportunity for young engineers to be involved. At the time, the IC 125, which was the fastest diesel train in the world at the time and still runs now, was being brought in meaning that we had to build new depots as well as recruit and retrain 300-odd people. Through the whole 12 years, my job was about bringing change and modernising the way we do things, which was really exciting."

Mr Shooter recalls his first direct contact with British Rail passengers in Harpenden following 2 years of constant disruptions to the railway system due to track and station upgrades: "The commuters were pretty cross as the whole journey had been thinned out and lots of replacement buses had been used. When I went to give a speech at their village hall, packed with over 300 people, they were baying for blood.

"To start off with, it was a big shouting match, but then some people in the audience turned on the people who were shouting and said 'Hey look, give the

bloke a chance.' We were just about to bring in new trains and a new service, so I told them that if it doesn't improve over the next couple of months, then they'd be entitled to be after my blood. In the

"We tend to recruit people for attitude and then train them for skills."

end, it was really good because a few of them then took me down the pub for a drink and we delivered what we said we would – improving our punctuality to the best in the country – meaning that these commuters were fully satisfied with the service.

"I really enjoyed that because it's really important that engineers realise they can make changes. To be interfacing directly with customers – the people who are going to put their hands in their pockets to pay for what you're doing – doesn't half concentrate your mind."

Following the legislation in 1993 to privatise railways, Mr Shooter was asked by the Chairman of British Rail to come to Chiltern Railways and make it into a separate company – a completely self-standing financial entity.

"This was more difficult than it sounds. There were contracts and agreements to be written out. Who was to be responsible for looking after the stations? What would happen if there were a conflict between running times of passenger and freight trains? It got much too complicated but, nevertheless, worked out in the end. The next step was to sell the company."

Having worked for so long with his management team on building up the company, Mr Shooter felt that they could run it as well as anyone else, and so decided to try and undertake a management buyout – a process that is very rarely successful.

"It's rather interesting as I was actually working for British Railways who were selling Chiltern Railways, so I had a conflict of interest. I had to do three things. Firstly, I had to continue running the railways in a proper, prompt and safe way. Secondly, on behalf of my employer, I had to sell the business – it was competitive and we had 13 companies bidding for it. I had to explain to prospective purchasers how the company worked, what they would need to do and the money they should pay for it. Thirdly, in my



Mr Shooter's Darjeeling Himalayan Steam Locomotive – in his own back garden



Adrian Shooter CBE

own time, I had to work out, with my team, how to buy it."

After formally winning the franchise in 1996, Mr Shooter and his team devised a long term plan for the company which is still on-going today.

"We've grown the business faster than any of the other companies. We've done that because railways, like many other businesses, survive on their customers. You've got to find out what customers want and, importantly, what they're prepared to pay for."

Mr Shooter rounds up his story by explaining "success in business is all about the people. It's about making sure you have the right people in the right teams with a very clear objective about what you're trying to achieve. If you look at

something that's gone wrong, one of the first questions you might want to ask is 'was there a clear objective?' Secondly 'did all the people who were involved in that understand the objective?' And thirdly, 'did they buy into it?'"

Regarding hiring people to make up such a team, Mr Shooter looks for "people who are enthusiastic and are committed to working as a team. We tend to recruit people for attitude and then train them for skills. I want people who are going to come here and look as if they are enthusiastic and interested and want to get on and do stuff, but tempered with whatever are the appropriate qualifications for whatever the job may be."

Added to this, Mr Shooter's passion for the rail industry is reflected in his ownership of a Darjeeling Himalayan Steam Locomotive, along with 600 yards of railway track in the back yard of his Bicester home. "I've always quite liked two-foot gauge railways and when I became aware that this would be for sale I knew it would be the only Darjeeling Himalayan Steam Locomotive ever likely to come out of India, so I brought it to the UK, had it overhauled and got some replica coaches that go with it."

However, neither being awarded a CBE nor owning a Darjeeling Himalayan Steam Locomotive in his back garden are classed by Mr Shooter as his greatest life achievements to date. "The thing I'm most proud of, is that over the years, we've managed to develop Chiltern Railways into something which is a

"The advice I would give is about honing your people skills."

much more valuable contribution to the community than it was."

Taking into account his great list of achievements and contributions to the rail and engineering industry, I ask Mr Shooter what advice he would give to current students, and what skills he feels are most important for success.

"They need two sorts of skills. If they're mechanical engineers, they've probably embarked upon that because they have some interest in machines and how machines work. The real advice I would give to them is about honing your people skills.

"Once at university, make sure you find yourself in one of the various extra curricular activities where you have the opportunity to get on the committee for it, and volunteer for some kind of role where you'll have to do things and organise people. Even if you don't feel comfortable doing it, get yourself as social sec or the like.

"Make sure you spend time in companies in your vacations. Write to companies or whatever connections you've got and see what it's actually like at work.

"On top of that, study hard and get the best possible degree you can."

In brief**Strawberries should be one of boozers' five-a-day**

Succulent strawberries are more than just a summertime treat. They also protect the lining of the stomach from the harmful effects of alcohol.

Maurizio Battino at the Marche Polytechnic University in Italy and colleagues gave ethanol to laboratory rats and measured ulceration in the stomach mucous membrane. Rats that had been eating a strawberry rich diet were found to have less ulceration.

In addition to antioxidant properties, strawberries also activate defensive enzymes in the body that protect the mucous membrane of the stomach. Battino warns that strawberries do not mitigate the effects of getting drunk but could be a potential source for developing new protective medicines for gastric pathologies. (Plos One, DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0025878)

Juan Casasbuenas

Scientists measure dream content for the first time

Whilst the anatomic location of brain activity during sleep has already been identified, up until now, scientists have been unable to analyse specific neuronal activity associated with dream content.

Researchers at the Max Planck Institute and the Charité hospital in Berlin enlisted the help of lucid dreamers, who are people able to become aware of their dreaming state and alter the content of their dreams.

Dreamers reported their 'lucid' state through eye movements and were asked to dream that they were repeatedly clenching their fists. Using EEGs and magnetic resonance imaging, researchers found that a region in the sensorimotor cortex of the brain, responsible for the planning and execution of real movements, was activated during the dream (Current Biology, DOI: 10.1016/j.cub.2011.09.029).

Joel Winston

Flu risk weighted towards obese

Flu vaccination might be less effective for overweight and obese people compared to normal weight individuals.

To prevent the infection and spread of the disease through populations, high levels of antibody should continue after vaccination. Efficient immune T cell responses are also vital.

Melinda Beck and colleagues at UNC Chapel Hill studied people vaccinated in late 2009 against winter influenza. They found that antibody levels fell, and T cell immune responses were impaired significantly in obese individuals, raising their chances of catching the flu. The researchers are concerned that as obesity rates rise, deaths from flu could also increase (International Journal of Obesity, DOI: 10.1038/ijo.2011.208).

Helen Wilkes

Sex, the city and HIV

Maya Kaushik discusses the Master's project that forced her to look at her hometown of Bangalore in a completely different way



Lal Bagh botanical gardens, amongst others, gives Bangalore its nice nickname, but it is also has a more sinister side...

Ever sat with a hanky in hand, wiping away tears as Edward climbs the fire escape with a rose in his teeth to profess his love to Vivienne, in the final scene of *Pretty Woman*? Or ever had a laugh at Belle and her hilarious antics in *Secret Diary of a Call Girl*?

Unfortunately, in reality, life for female sex workers is far from glamorous, romantic or funny.

I originate from Bangalore, a thriving city in the state of Karnataka in southern India, popularly known as the 'Garden City of India', due to its pretty old colonial parks, or the 'Silicon Valley of India', due to its booming IT industry. Growing up there, in my privileged home in central Bangalore, sex workers certainly never crossed my mind. So eleven years later, when asked to do my Master's project on HIV and sexually transmitted infections in female sex workers and their clients in various regions in southern India, including Bangalore, I had to look at my hometown from a slightly different angle.

The Avahan project is funded by well-known philanthropists Bill and Melinda Gates, and aims to prevent the spread of HIV around India. It turns out that HIV is highest in six states in India – Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra (home of course to Bombay and Bollywood), Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Nagaland and Manipur. Of these, the last two can attribute the spread of the virus mainly to injecting drug use, whilst the other four states to sexual transmission.

Anyone who has tried to conduct a survey into the lives of sex workers will know that pitfalls abound in this kind of research. In my project, I was making a model looking at HIV and genital herpes. I was essentially trying to

figure out whether having one virus made you biologically more susceptible to the other, or whether if you had one, you were just more likely to get the other, because you catch both in the same way: through having unprotected sex. Collecting data on sex workers and in particular HIV is never easy, due to the huge stigmas associated with them. Sex workers themselves are relatively easy to find, if you know where to look, where to find the brothels. Their clients – normal working men, often married ones – are perhaps less forthcoming.

Condom use is a really important parameter in most HIV and STI models, as of course the rate of condom use can really tell you how well condoms are preventing the spread of the virus, and how good the prevention services are at getting them to the relevant people. One interesting fact we found in our data was that whilst clients reported condom usage of between 54–83%, the sex workers reported usage of 76–99%. But hang on – aren't the sex workers and the clients having sex with each other? So, if they are telling the truth, shouldn't their reported figures be exactly the same?

The massive difference between the reported condom usage from sex workers and from their clients is likely to be a form of response bias. This is where someone answers a question in the way they think the questioner wants them to answer. So, imagine for a second that you're a sex worker in Bangalore. The Avahan project is doing everything it can to give you condoms and to encourage you to use them as much as possible. Then a researcher from the Avahan project turns up with a clipboard and asks you, expectant look on his face, how many times you have had unprotected sex with a client in the last week. You're pretty unlikely to say

"several times". In some districts sex workers had reported condom usage of 99%, which is highly unlikely to be true, as if this was the case there would be no HIV problem in the region at all.

So how does one create a model when you can't trust the data? Well, you just have to use your best guesstimate, which is often just the average of what the sex workers have reported and what the clients have reported. Other behavioural data, which may or may not be more reliable, include the length of time the sex worker has been active in that role and the number of sexual partnerships she has had in the last week.

The results from the models seem to show that HIV and genital herpes do have some biological interaction, and the fact that one increases with the other isn't just down to the sex workers' behaviour patterns. The whole study of HIV shows just how complex the spread of this virus is – down to behaviour, biological interactions with other STIs, and the problems that arise when trying to get information on these particular groups of people. The Avahan project has dramatically increased outreach to high-risk people in these Indian states; its work on condom distribution, peer-to-peer outreach, and STI testing and treatment is a great step towards combating the spread of HIV in India.

Want to write for Felix Science? Email us at science.felix@ic.ac.uk

The reality of migration

Katherine Portilla

It is difficult to deny the existence of climate change when one points out the obvious effects it has already made on humanity. Coastal flooding, reduced rainfall in dry lands and water scarcity are common headlines in today's news. Among the many effects that these phenomena may have, let us consider that of human migration.

In recent times human migration has not been given the best of reputations, with various nations enforcing policies designed to prevent it. However, experts have dared to suggest that migration in the face of environmental change may offer opportunities as well as challenges.

Many people across the globe already migrate for various reasons: to improve incomes, to escape persecution, to join family members, and to avoid environmental or other threats. Reports show that environmental factors are increasingly influencing migration. Moving to urban areas has become a common coping strategy in the face of flooding in countries such as Bangladesh. However, it may not come as a surprise that not everyone is able to migrate due to socio-political or economical factors. Conversely, it has also been found that people are as likely to migrate into places of environmental vulnerability as away from them. This decision is most often an ignorant one, where rapidly growing megacities that are considered areas of high flood risk, in coastal regions in Africa or Asia for example, continue to see



Environmental factors such as drought are influencing migration

new arrivals by the millions.

It is obvious that there are many interlinked factors involved in the movement of people across the globe. The point that academics are trying to stress is that migration may be the best plan of action for many people in the face of environmental change that threatens their livelihoods. To aid these attempts at survival it is necessary that countries acknowledge this fact and remove restrictions on movement as well as help build channels for it.

International policy makers should consider mechanisms for funding adaptation to climate change through migration. Particular focus should be made to populations in low-income countries that are moving to or are trapped in urban areas that are vulnerable to environmental change. These priorities

should be integrated in current plans for sustainable urbanisation, climate-smart development, conflict resolution and emergency preparedness. In addition, experts highlight a need for flood-control, water management, forecasting and warning capacities for growing urban populations. Other suggestions include the appointment of migrant communities to demographic deficits and labour shortages in potential host countries. A basic infrastructure is key to ease the relocation and settlement of these migrant populations in urban areas. As an increasing amount of attention is being paid to humanity's influence on the environment, we must take care to respond accordingly to the impact of environmental change on both migrant and non-migrant communities.

DOI:10.1038/456877a

Computer imitates human brain

Maciej Matuszewski

Despite computer processors being able to operate at speeds of up to ten thousand billion (10^{13}) bits per second they are outperformed in many tasks by the human brain, the neurons of which fire a mere thousand or so times a second. This is because modern machines are only capable of so-called 'serial bit-processing'; meaning that calculations only occur one at a time. Each neuron in the brain, on the other hand, can communicate with up to a thousand others each time it fires, allowing for a great degree of parallel calculation.

Last year, however, scientists from the Japanese National Institutes for Materials Science and ICT as well as Michigan Technological University brought us one step closer to creating a computer which replicates the functionality of the brain by laying down an array of three hundred 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyano-p-

"300 molecules continuously exchange information among themselves to generate the solution"

benzoquinone (DDQ) molecules on a gold substrate. Each molecule can exist in any one of four electrically conducting states, which are initially set by applying a voltage using the tip of scanning tunnelling microscope, and can connect with up to six neighbouring molecules. In a recently published article the team of scientists call this 'one-to-many interaction at a time' – similar to that found in neurons.

The system therefore forms a Cellular Automaton, a concept developed

by the famed mathematician John von Neumann. In this model each DDQ molecule is a 'cell' whose state changes with time depending on the states of neighbouring cells and based on a set of well-defined rules. This changing of states over time can be used to model mathematical problems. The team summarise the process by saying that the "300 molecules continuously exchange information among themselves to generate the solution" to a question.

The team has already been able to create an AND logic gate as well as model diffusion and the mutation of normal cells to cancer cells using their system. The teams says that they believe that a "generalization of [the Cellular Automaton principles] would change the existing concept of static circuit-based electronics and open up a new vista of emergent computing using an assembly of molecules".

DOI: arXiv:1110.5844v1

Tearing apart the vacuum of space

Alexander Karapetian

Physicists are proposing an experiment that will require the world's most powerful laser. The Extreme Light Infrastructure (ELI) Ultra-High Field Facility is touted to produce a laser so powerful that it would be able to pull together the fabric of space, vacuums.

A vacuum is generally believed to be a volume of space that contains no matter. The gaseous pressure of a vacuum is typically much less than atmospheric pressure, leaving it essentially empty of matter. A perfect vacuum with no particles in it at all, however, is virtually impossible to achieve in practice.

Vacuums are said to be permeated with extremely small particles of matter and antimatter known as ghost particles, which are shrouded with mystery and pop in and out of existence so fast that no-one has been able to prove that they exist. The experiment involves combining ten lasers to generate a super-laser which will then create an intense electrical field separating the ghost particles. This will prevent them from annihilating long enough to be detected.

Scientists believe this will also allow them to gain further insight into extra dimensions. Professor John Collier, director of the Central Laser Facility at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in Oxfordshire and a leader of the ELI project, said that "this laser will be 200 times more powerful than the most powerful lasers that currently exist. At this kind of intensity we start to get into unexplored territory as it is an area of physics that we have never been before."

The laser's intensity is equivalent to the power received by the Earth from the Sun focused onto a point smaller than the tip of a pin. At around 200 petawatts of power, it will boast more than 100,000 times the power of the world's combined electricity production for less than a trillionth of a second. The ELI Ultra-High Field laser is due to be completed at the end of the decade with a total cost of an estimated £1 billion. The United Kingdom is among several countries hoping to host the laser.

Plans to build three lasers to form part of the ELI project and serve as prototypes for the Ultra-High Field laser have been approved this year by the European Union. They will be based in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania. Each have a cost of approximately £200 million and are due to become operational in 2015, with the final ten beams each being twice as powerful as these prototypes.

The experiment, after pulling the annihilating particles apart long enough to be detected, may help explain the mystery of why the universe contains far more matter than antimatter. "We are taught to think of the vacuum as empty space, but it seems even a true vacuum is filled with pairs of molecules that come into our universe for an extremely short time", Professor Wolfgang Sandner, president of the German Physics Society commented.

Dr Thomas Heinzl, a professor of theoretical physics at Plymouth University, said that "ELI is going to take us into an uncharted regime of physics" and that "there could well be surprises along the way."



The laser target chamber in the National Ignition Facility in California, US. It's practically the inverse...

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POLITICS

More resignations in the Eurozone

The socialist Prime Minister of Greece, George Papandreou, finally made a deal with opposition conservatives for a unity government and acceptance of the European bailout deal, in exchange for him standing down. His previous decision to call a referendum on the deal, which caused rapid decline in markets and anger from other European leaders and opposition parties in Greece, was scrapped. So far, the parliament has failed to agree on a new prime minister and general elections are likely to be held in February. Reaction from papers throughout the European Union and Greece was generally positive, though cautious, but popular protest action shows no sign of waning in Greek cities.

Meanwhile, in Italy, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi promised to resign in the near future. He finally bowed to pressure from many of his former allies in the Italian media and by the head of his main coalition partner, Umberto Bossi. Many are still, however, sceptical of his sincerity. The markets, in particular, have not shown much faith, with Italian bond yields remaining at a damaging high of 7.5%. Like Greece, the Italian government is coming under pressure to form a unity coalition and accept a reform package from the European Union. Mr Berlusconi has so far refused a major bailout plan despite

Italian debt standing at 120% GDP. To make matters worse, with the majority of this debt being held by private institutions within Italy itself, the 50% debt 'haircut' Greece received from its creditors may not be helpful in Italy.

More land wars in Asia

A report to the UN by the International Atomic Energy Agency found that Iran is likely to not only be developing computer models, but also testing key components for a nuclear arsenal including warheads. The Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, issued a fatwa against such weapons in 2005 and President Ahmadinejad has said his country does not need the weapons. Despite this, rumours are circulating of a full scale war. Israel this week tested ballistic missiles with enough range to reach Iran, though Iran also possesses such weapons. *The Daily Mail* claimed that a plan drawn up by



David Cameron and Barack Obama, the leaders of Britain and the United States, involved an invasion on two fronts – from Iraq in the West and Afghanistan in the East. The President of France, Nicholas Sarkozy, denied

such plans existed, though both he and China condemned Iran's "obsession" with nuclear weapons. China, however, continues to sell non-atomic weapons to Iran, and Western diplomats have told *The Telegraph* that they expect China and Russia to veto any new sanctions proposed at the UN. Britain, the US, France, China and Russia make up the veto-holding permanent members of the UN's Security Council and all possess nuclear weapons. Israel may also have nuclear weapons, though refuses to admit it. Despite agreeing to a diplomatic ceasefire deal, the

President of Syria, Bassar Al-Assad, has continued the military campaign against militants, with particularly brutal attacks on the city of Homs, though he continues to deny this. The Arab League, who negotiated the deal, condemned his actions. The protests, which started in the spring, initially

involved unarmed protesters continuing to face military gunfire. With Western powers showing no zeal for a Libya-style intervention and Al-Assad refusing to negotiate, the rebellion is becoming increasingly militant. It is thought that Syria could be heading for a civil war. Al-Assad has continued to claim that the rebels are "terrorists" supplied with weapons by secretive foreign powers trying to destroy Syria.

More Presidential Gaffes

The Presidents of the United States and France were overheard insulting the Prime Minister of Israel. Discussing the French decision to support Palestine's membership to UNESCO, Sarkozy said "I cannot stand [Netanyahu]... he's a liar" to which Obama replied "You're fed up with him? I have to deal with him every day." Benjamin Netanyahu has been rumoured to be a particularly unpopular Israeli leader among Western leaders, refusing to negotiate on giving up East Jerusalem or stopping the building of illegal settlements.

The Republican frontrunner for the president of the United States, Herman Cain, claimed China does not have any nuclear weapons in an interview on PBS. Despite being a strong candidate on domestic issues, there are concerns that his understanding of foreign policy is rather limited.

Long live a Queen

Maintaining a misogynist monarchy

Rajat Jain

A couple of weeks ago, at the Commonwealth summit in Perth, the sixteen leaders of countries where Elizabeth II is head of state unanimously agreed to change the succession laws to give women equal priority as men. This means should the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge (aka Wills and Kate) have a daughter before any sons, she will be eligible for the throne before her younger brothers. It will also allow any monarch, or anyone else in the succession line, to marry a Catholic without losing their right to the throne. A retroactive clause has been added to prevent hundreds of pretenders to the throne from emerging.

Nick Clegg, the 'highly regarded' deputy Prime Minister, was in charge of negotiations with other states and described the previous system as

"old fashioned", saying we need to move with the times. David Cameron echoed this describing it as "outdated and wrong". He, however, made it clear that in their role as protector of the Church of England, they must be Anglican but can marry whoever they like. This move, though seemingly an obvious one in the modern world, is a terrible idea.

You see, the existence of the monarchy in Britain is rather difficult to understand. There are benefits to a House of Commons that is not proportional (for the sake of having your own MP representing you regardless of whether you share a party), as well as an unelected House of Lords (a non-populist house of the wise to improve legislation), but the Royal Family is bewildering. If we want to move with the times, shouldn't we do away with the monarchy and elect a president? Should we not also

flickr/Incurable_hippie



Not willing to say anything incriminatory – so here's a picture of the Queen

have full separation of Church and State? It is beyond belief that Nick Clegg could describe the House of Lords as outdated and push for it to be fully elected, yet see the changes in succession as somehow progressive and radical.

The problem is that these views are driven by ideology. While the concepts seem good and pure, they are

not practical. The oft cited reason for keeping the monarchy, alongside many other British quirks, is stability. Unlike most of our European neighbours, Britain has maintained a stable government for hundreds of years. This has largely been achieved on a simple principle: if it ain't broke, don't fix it. The British public demonstrated this basic belief when they voted against

the Alternative Vote. Given that the monarchy is operating without any problem, this is a dangerous move that threatens to destabilise Britannia. I am not being sexist or anti-Catholic, but this law will open the door for changes to be made to the fundamental structure of our government on populist whims. For the sake of Britain, it should be stopped.

BUSINESS

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In Numbers The Big Four

Total Market Capitalisation of Stock Market Clients (£m)

PwC	1,159,200
Deloitte	522,778
KPMG	521,758
Ernst & Young	385,223
BDO	21,885

Total Profit of Stock Market Clients (£m)

PwC	138,334
Deloitte	70,004
KPMG	59,372
Ernst & Young	29,200
BDO	556

Figures from *The Corporate Advisers Rankings Guide* by Hemscott

The End of the Big Four?

Let's hope not, argues **Rajvinder Virdee** in this debate

PwC, Deloitte, KPMG and Ernst and Young – better known collectively as the Big Four. The word ‘Big’ really doesn’t do them justice; enormous, gigantic and colossal are more appropriate adjectives. It’s hard to get a grasp of how big they are compared to other accountancy firms until you look at the raw figures.

They really are massive compared to the next best firm in each of the categories. They have the most employees, the most clients, the highest total market capitalisation of their clients and the highest total profit of their clients. They are the biggest, and they have the best clients. But it seems that people with power have noticed, and the Big Four are now fighting a battle on two fronts: on one side the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) have referred the Big Four to the Competition Commission; on the other side, the EU are having a go too. They both want the same thing – to either split the four firms up into smaller companies, or to set a limit on the number of clients they have.

The OFT doesn’t seem to like the fact the Big 4 firms are dominating the market. With 99 of the FTSE 100 companies being represented by the Big Four, and just 2.3% of firms that have been a part of the FTSE 100 in the period 2002–2010 have actually changed auditors. They claim there is a lack of competition, which is true, to a certain extent. But the FTSE 100 represents the 100 ‘best’ companies in the country, and they will want to be audited by the ‘best’ firms of accountants. Is that an unfair thing to want? Can it really be said that the four largest firms in an industry have an unfair majority of the market share? Perhaps if there was just one firm with these 99 clients this would be understandable, but when there are four firms being grouped together, the argument becomes

a bit flaky. It is like saying to Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Asda, Morrison’s and Waitrose: Too many people are spending their money in your supermarkets; we are going to split you up. The Competition Commission have the power though. They have already forced BAA’s hand, requiring them to sell some of their airports; who knows what they could do to the Big Four?

The EU seem to have less of an issue with the supposed lack of competition in audit services, and more of an issue with the services the Big Four can offer their clients. Reuters report that they have seen a draft of a law that could really shake up the Big Four. It proposes that the Big Four should be banned from offering or providing their consulting services – even worse, force their consulting branches to split from the rest of the accountancy part of the firms.

We will have to wait until November to see what the implications of these laws are, but the situation is looking bad for the Big Four. But to use the analogy of supermarkets again,

these laws would be like saying to a shopper that they are allowed to buy their food from a supermarket, but not any drinks, toiletries, clothes or electrical goods. If some sectors are allowed to offer numerous services ‘under one roof’, then why can’t others? Especially when the work – audit and assurance – that the various consulting departments do are so closely related.

It just seems everyone is being a bit hard on the Big Four. Maybe people are starting to get bored of picking on the banks and have moved on to the next type of financial institution? The arguments from the OFT and the EU seem flaky. Perhaps they would be understandable if there was one juggernaut of a firm dominating the market, but it is not one, it is four. Would it be such a bad thing to want to be serviced by the best in the business if you can afford it? There is a reason why these firms have become so big: because they are good. Why can we not accept that?



First there were eight, then there were five, and now only four professional service firms perform the majority of audits for both publicly and privately traded companies

Article Rebuttal

The author criticises the OFT and EU decisions as “flaky”, but he is unjust in the arguments he offers for saying this. First of all, he completely ignores the fact that the accountancy and consultancy markets need not be – and definitely are not – the same as the retail market. As the recent price war between Tesco et al. has shown, a few players in the retail market will not only not collude, but can actually engage in fierce competency from which the only beneficiary is the consumer. This is because retail products are consumed on an everyday basis and it is fairly easy for the consumer to change upon finding a better offer. However, the market in which the Big Four compete is not as flexible; their services are not used in a regular basis, and are often subject to strict contracts

from which it is difficult to escape. Besides, they deal with sensitive corporate information, so a trust relationship between customer and provider is necessary.

The OFT concern about the Big Four having established an oligopoly is therefore fair, and that is why they have recommended a yet-to-be-concluded investigation. It will be the exhaustive analysis of their actions, past and present, which will allow the OFT to determine whether such a thing is actually taking place. Needless to say, if it were to be concluded that the Four had colluded and were operating in a cartel, the main beneficiaries of its dissolution would be the rest of the world companies. It does not therefore seem fair to justify such an oligopoly – if it actually existed – by claiming that it is their success that led to it; tumours also are successful growers, but that does not mean they should not be extirpated if harmful.

As for the EU concerns, they do seem justified, especially if past events are taken into account. Indeed, if the same company who audits your accounts could provide you with consultancy services, then a conflict of interest could appear as the latter grew in size. In the times of the Big Five, Andersen Consulting faced such a conflict of interests with Enron, and when the latter went bankrupt, the former sank into scandal as it arose it had helped with the creative accounting of the former.

Both actions are just preliminary investigations, and no culprits have been found yet. But, as said, if someone was to benefit from them being found, it would be the rest of the world, and no matter how successful the Big Four are, we cannot risk them colluding against us or facing and failing to solve the same conflict of interests that led to the Enron scandal.

Beñat Gurrutxaga-Lerma

BUSINESS

The Business of British Biotechnology

The Imperial Entrepreneurs report on some of the opportunities and threats facing one of the UK's most promising industries

By  Imperial Entrepreneurs

Charles Motraghi

Alongside finance and high-tech computing, biotechnology can be thought of as one of the few sectors where Britain is still globally competitive. The British pharmaceutical industry, for example, receives 10% of global research and development funding, despite having only 3% of global sales. But this year has seen a variety of worrying developments: Pfizer, previously the country's fourth largest investor in pharmaceutical research, announced the closure of its R&D site in Kent, resulting in the loss of 2,400 jobs; AstraZeneca continues to shed jobs, citing patent losses, as well as GlaxoSmithKline and Novartis; and start-ups complain of continual difficulties in securing venture capital. So is the UK unique in its suffering, and what successes, if any, has the year seen?

Certainly, the UK is not the only country to see job losses in this sector. In the US, the global leader of the pharmaceutical industry, Johnson & Johnson is still going through the round of huge job cuts announced in 2009, and the Swiss giants Roche and Novartis find themselves in a similar situation. In fact, the latter is planning to cut 2,000 jobs whilst setting up operations in Taizhou (intriguingly dubbed "China's Medical City"), due to there being an emerging market and reduced labour costs. It

could be argued that any present malaise among the British is one afflicting the wider western biotechnology sector, and it is not out of step with the global economy.

But to some extent, biotechnology here faces its own problems. For instance, companies and start-ups in the UK have been complaining about the difficulty of securing risk capital for years. Nearly two-fifths of biotechnology companies here have been unable to obtain any finance over the past year, with many biotechnology specialists reluctant to invest. This highlights a longstanding gap in funding for those who are about to enter promising drugs into the costly early-stage testing in humans, where approximately £10 million is needed to support the company prior to generating results which will be of interest to larger investors or pharmaceutical companies.

"A malaise afflicts the wider biotech sector, and it is not out of step with the global economy ..."

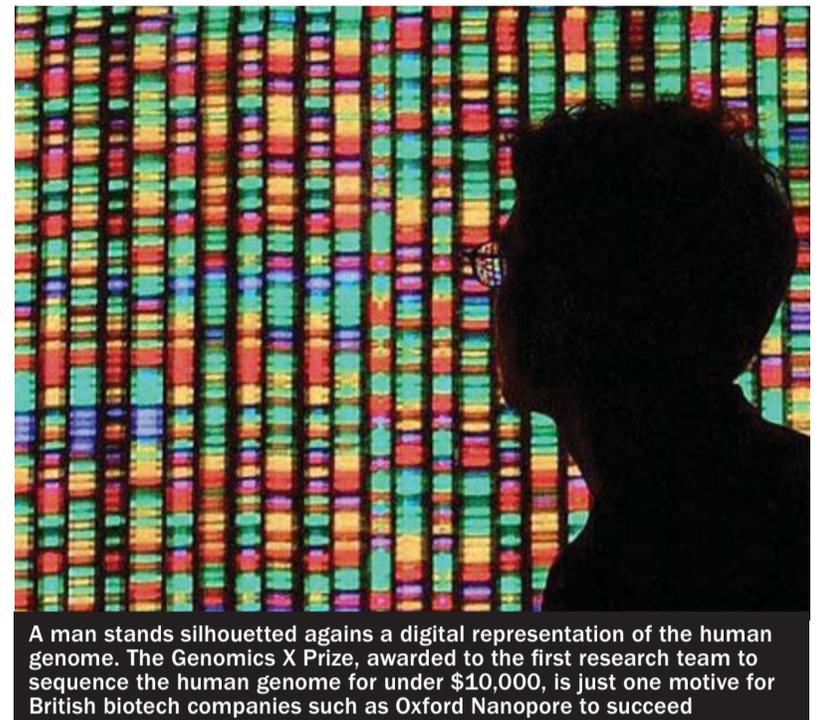
This has been assuaged somewhat recently by two developments: tax credits have been increased for research and development enterprises; and Richard Sykes, a former rector of Imperial College, is chairing a new venture fund aiming at new British biotech-

nology companies freshly spun out of academia. The Deepbridge Innovation Fund is planning to raise \$250m by next year to invest in companies predominantly based in the UK, and will specifically target those with a promising drug, but without proof of relevance.

"... but biotechnology here faces its own problems"

Brits might complain alongside most Europeans that the legislative and regulatory environment isn't conducive to research. Recently, the European Court of Justice ruled that no methods to derive embryonic stem cells could be patented, setting us apart from the US and Asia. Although this does not totally condemn companies here (they can still patent their inventions abroad), there is fear that this will stifle commercial investment, and research in the area is more likely to be exploited abroad. This reflects the feelings of many plant scientists and genetic engineers, who have had trouble commercialising their publicly-funded basic research due to European regulations.

The year hasn't been all bad, however. Some companies have seen great success in securing funding. Oxford Nanopore, for example, raised £25 million to develop its next-generation DNA sequencing technology, making it a contender to win the Genomics X Prize, awarded to the first team



A man stands silhouetted against a digital representation of the human genome. The Genomics X Prize, awarded to the first research team to sequence the human genome for under \$10,000, is just one motive for British biotech companies such as Oxford Nanopore to succeed

to sequence the human genome for under \$10,000. Such an achievement would be able to revolutionise personal healthcare. Assisted by Imperial Innovations, Circassia completed a £60 million round of funding in April, to develop allergy treatments and autoimmune therapies for the treatment of conditions such as arthritis and psoriasis. Towards the high end of the biotechnology sector, Shire Pharmaceuticals continues its trend of success from last year, posting strong profits and 24% growth this quarter due to its

focus on ADHD medicines for sale in America. Also, GlaxoSmithKline is investing in a research park in Stevenage, Kent, which is estimated to create 5,000 new jobs, and has proposed the creation of a new biopharmaceutical plant in the north of the country.

Should we be particularly worried about the state of biotechnology in the UK? Perhaps not. Beyond the success of the above companies, this is home to four out of ten of the world's top universities, and eight in the top thirty. Consequently, there is a wealth of scientific talent to draw upon across the country, which continues to be attractive to those looking to set up operations here. Also, the introduction of the patent box late last year – a lower rate of tax levied on patent-related incomes – has been credited with an increase in investment in the country's research and development base, according to GSK's chief executive Andrew Witty. Despite the global economic downturn, the British biotechnology sector appears to be in bullish health, with many interesting projects in the pipeline.

Remember! If you are interested in entrepreneurship, starting your own company, the technology sector, or just want to listen to some very inspiring speakers, come to the talks organized by Imperial Entrepreneurs! Sign up for the mailing list at:

www.imperialentrepreneurs.com

Overview Deepbridge Innovation Fund

Formed as a collaboration between the fund managers SL Investment Management Ltd and the advisory group Deepbridge Capital LLP, the Deepbridge Innovation Fund (DBIF) is an investment fund looking to develop disruptive technologies in the Life Sciences, Eco-Innovation and Software sectors. As traditional venture capital firms move towards safer, late-term investments in response to the economic slowdown, the DBIF secures itself a position in the marketplace by specifically targeting the funding gap that has opened up at the 'Proof of Concept' and 'Proof of Relevance' stages of a technology's development.

Within the Life Sciences sector, DBIF focusses on funding medical technology, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology. Its specific emphasis on pharmaceuticals and biopharmaceuticals reflects the expertise of Chairman Sir Richard Sykes, who has over 30 years experience in the industry and has served as a past chairman of GlaxoWellcome (1995-2000) and GlaxoSmithKline (2000-2002).



The Emerging Opportunity in Disruptive Technology Investment

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COMMENT

FELIX

When will we be satisfied with feedback?

This week saw the release of a summary of the annual Rector's Away Day, with Sir Keith O'Nions announcing a statement pledging to improve the 'undergraduate experience', with the improvement of assessment and feedback becoming a priority in this aim. The battle against feedback has been continuing for some time now, however, and it may ultimately fall to tackling the individual marker rather than the department when it comes to improving feedback across College.

The College seeks to improve the 'undergraduate experience' through the enforcement of such commitments as assessing the provision of undergraduate accommodation and improving the feedback that students receive for their assignments.

This specific mention towards feedback (especially considering the clear reference towards the results of the 2011 National Student Survey) may appear familiar to some of you. This would not be particularly surprising, particularly since October 2010 saw that year's National Student Survey reveal issues – again – with Imperial's student feedback. At the time, the Rector became personally involved in an attempt to improve assessment and feedback across all College departments.

Now, it appears that history is repeating itself. It is commendable that the College continues to recognise that feedback is a problem for students. However, the Away Day has resulted in recommendations such as 'Points for departments to consider', with one such point declaring that departments should aim to 'be clear with students as early in the course as possible about: what constitutes feedback, submission deadlines for assignments and when feedback will be returned.

Surely, points such as this must have been at least considered last year in the attempt to improve feedback at that time and hammered home inside departments.

Ultimately, the problem rests with the individual, and not the department. Faculties responded last year with the attempted implementation of a two-week turnover for feedback. While this may be achieved in a variety of cases, the quality of this feedback is truly what matters. It is simply unreasonable to expect all markers to provide uniform effort towards the marking of coursework or reports.

Until the College and departments are able to improve the willingness, or at least awareness, of the marker to provide decent feedback to students (and an increased use of the word 'feedback' itself is a potentially effective way of ensuring this), then for all its promises and pledges, feedback and assessment will remain contentious among students.

Doth the lady protest too much?



Luke Sheldon

It's that time of year again. The placards will be waved and students will rapidly get bored of chanting, "No ifs. No buts. No education cuts." Two student demonstrations are planned for November, with the first happening on the Wednesday just gone. However, this year, the fight is against the rapid increase in privatisation of universities discussed in the Government's higher education white paper. After a full blown attack on the proposal of rising fees last winter (that had little effect on a government unwilling to listen) questions are being posed, such as: Why do we protest? What does it aim to achieve?

Protest is not indulged in for personal gratification, as only the masochistic would take enjoyment from traipsing around in freezing weather, the possibility of 'kettling', and the chance to become a stress toy for police aggression. Protest is instead a result of democratic breakdown. Ideally, we would never have to; policy would be dictated by what the people want, and large masses of the population would never feel the need to take to the streets. However, when the majority of people are prevented a voice; protest, a method of last resort, becomes more common. Neat examples of this are strikes. There is rising industrial action in this country as the Government refuses to negotiate on public sector cuts and is happy to support companies who wish to ignore their workers, forcing employees to strike. In Germany, however, the economic slump has not been accompanied by union agitation as negotiations were made early on in discussions with the workers. This vague attempt at democracy is increasingly lacking in this country.

Strikes are another poignant example of how people regularly argue against protest; they lament that it does nothing for their cause, and try to get others to share this viewpoint. However, any form of true protest

Tommy Allieri



This banner only rhymes with certain accents. Also, your university name is a pronoun, where are the capital letters? Lazy sign work. Gets a 2:2, at most

will always generate enemies. If you try and raise your voice enough to be heard then it will be decided that your voice is too loud and you should shut up. As the anarchist saying goes, "If protest achieved anything, it would be made illegal." The legal boundaries of protest are decided on what will allow people to feel a stance is being made without ever letting anything be achieved.

Government will never allow anything to happen that truly challenges its power. This is why the idea of state condoned protest is a paradox. If it is allowed by the state, it is because they have nothing to worry about. This is why protest has to make a stance in both its words and its actions. The Occupy London protest, which, although without demands, can be seen as being against raging inequality and corporate greed at the expense of the vast majority, is camping in the City of London. This is not only the location of what they are against, but is also an area of almost solely private property with the public space controlled by a bizarrely partially privatised local authority. St. Paul's occupiers are not just requesting change; they are physically returning space to public use. It is this action that may cause its eviction by authorities. Protest is strongest when it enacts pre-figurative politics, that is, the action is the change you want to see. Hence, these coming student demonstrations and inevitable occupations of campuses will involve 'free universities' that attempt to create a new way of learning.

Although, as a possible 'winter of discontent' approaches we should remember that – when marches turn ugly as they go off a pre-described route, as students and lecturers strike

Got a deadline? Stressed? Need to take out your anger on someone on the internet? Then go to: felixonline.co.uk

on November 30 and lecture theatres are occupied – protest is a last resort due to a failing of democracy. Without acts that are possibly of some inconvenience and disturb the current law and order, nothing will be achieved. The suffragettes, a movement that few could disagree with, was not just people chanting in locations that were agreed by the police, it had many discomforting aspects. Windows were smashed, fires were started, bombs were thrown, and women died. Without these more militant actions, that raised the profile of the debate, women may still not have the vote. I personally don't condone violent direct action, but we cannot start groaning every time pointless rules are broken (such as march route changes and not being allowed to camp on a pavement), otherwise the voices of the powerless will be drowned out even more, to our own detriment. Because protest is rarely selfish, it is for the benefit of all of us.

Tim would like to say congratulations to his brother Moreed for getting his PhD thesis in!

Wait, what, a personal message in an advert space. That's just beyond deplorable. I want to write in to Comment to say how displeased I am (or just about anything). How do I do this?

Email: comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

It seems that Wikileaks haven't got round to telling you, so we'll have to. The views expressed are the opinions of the authors, not Felix.

COMMENT

Why I hate entrepreneurs



Keir Little

Don't get me wrong – I take my hat off to anyone who can fashion a new idea, start a business, and successfully market it. But, despite this admiration (they'd be quick to call it envy), entrepreneurs are the most insufferable people that have ever talked at (rather than to) me.

Whether they're Silicon Valley start-ups or working-from-home parents, today's sort of entrepreneur (who've come out in droves since the financial crisis) all share one thing in common: an unabashed, smug elitism, placing themselves above the salaried peons. Their derision of the employed has become formulaic and rote, and I guarantee that any interview or blog post you find with one will have one of the following clichés.

The first one appears most frequently among those whose work involves spreading their own opinions: authors, bloggers, webcomic artists, journalists and the rest. They parrot the message of hard work (after all, they wouldn't have got where they are today without it) as the only key to success. I can see you frowning and thinking, "but they're right – hard work is necessary!" Of course it is, but what these braggart entrepreneurs fail to realise is that there's another component just as important in success: luck.

The successful may have worked very hard for it, but how many who worked just as hard are left behind? After all, you don't really think you're here because of how good your A-level grades are, do you? Every musician bumped up to fame, each

blogger who talks about the amount of hours they've hustled, the countless developers of one-hit-wonder smartphone apps: they all love to assure us that anyone could do what they did with enough hard work.

In reality? The numbers suggest otherwise: studies show that 8 out of 10 start-up businesses fail in the first three years. It's hard to get an accurate figure for how many manuscripts become published books, but an optimistic estimate would be around 1 in 1000. This, of course, is not considering the people who have great ideas but due to money, family or other hardships, can't even find the time to work on them. So, entrepreneurs, I'm happy that you've reached the top. But how many bodies did you climb over on your way there?

Next, there's the childhood story. The entrepreneur probably didn't do well in school – not because they're unintelligent, you understand, but because the system just isn't for them. They got by through cheating, stealing or plain blagging and, even worse, are willing to boast about this. After all, in a society geared to create mindless drone workers, these are skills that entrepreneurs need. Why bother learning maths when you can hire someone to do it all for you?

In their spare time, they were already practising their sales pitches. Everyone has a story. "When I was a kid, I'd paint snails' shells and sell them to the other kids at school. When I noticed the red ones were more popular, I painted all of them red. Would you believe it? I already understood fashion at the age of 7!" or "when I was an adorable 5 year old with curly blonde



"I'm the spoonful of sugar that makes your medicine go down, baby" is Lord Sugar's favourite, and most successful, chat-up line

locks, I'd go from door to door in my neighbourhood selling hand-made cards. Everyone bought one. Even then, I knew the value of making high-quality goods." It's sickening. Can you imagine a singer saying, "as a baby, I'd grab a pen and pretend it was a microphone. I must have just been destined to sing my entire life!"? When I was a child, I'd eat wax crayons. Clearly, my interest in long-chained hydrocarbons at such a tender age was what led me to study chemistry, right?

Finally, there's the call to arms. "You too can cast off the shackles of your desk job, put your fingers up at the 40-hour week and chase your dreams!" Entrepreneurs seem to think that being employed is little better than being a slave. Granted, many people do feel this way, but there are a fair few who (would you believe it?) actually enjoy their jobs. There's even more who do vital work, which can only be performed as part of a company. With a childlike un-

derstanding of businesses and economics, entrepreneurs sweep all of this under the rug. Unemployed, overworked or underpaid? Start a business! I'm sure all the other unemployed people would just love to take advantage of your new freelance decorating firm!

Some go further, and call for entrepreneurial skills to be taught in school, instead of useless subjects like maths and science. While I can't deny that learning more real-world skills would be useful, I can only imagine in horror a future where 8 out of 10, if not more, young adults have just seen their beloved business idea, which they have cultivated their entire school lives, fail, leaving them jobless and with no real employable skills.

So, entrepreneurs, I'm happy for you. I wish you the best of luck, so long as I never have to hear about your success. Sartre said that hell is other people, but I'd agree only if those people are self-employed.

Entrepreneurs seem to think that being employed is little better than being a slave.

The death of Bad Science



Samuel Furse

Bad Science is dead. It has fallen off its bench. It has gone to meet its supervisor. It is an ex-science. Sadly, I am not talking about a humane rounding-up of charlatans, quacks, homeopaths, and people who like to compete as to who has the best imaginary friend. I am talking about Ben Goldacre's column in The Guardian.

Is this the end of actively exposing dodgy practice that would otherwise be passed off as science? Fortunately, not quite. Prof David Colquhoun (the pipe-smoking, tweed-wearing, chair in Pharmacology at UCL) is still going strong, so all is not lost. We may even get Dr Goldacre back; he has stopped for now at least to finish a book. Nevertheless, it seems likely that he needs a rest from having a well-thought-out go at people who can, and do, dupe morons out of their cash. And of course there are only so many times one can say that homeopathy is bollocks before it is just repetition. I

hope that this sort of analysis will continue though, and for two reasons.

First, it is a bit of a confidence-giver to the rest of us. Despite being as incensed as the next man, at the rubbish that is presented to us as good or healthy when it is not, I still cannot quite bring myself to say so some times. A few weeks ago I got chatting to a girlfriend of a friend of a friend. She is an astrologer. Needless to say, part of me wanted to run from the room. A part about the same size wanted to tear her to pieces. And if she had not been an astrologer, another part of me... well, let's not go there. She disassociated herself quite early on from newspaper astrologers – "because they are talking rubbish, obviously". "Obviously" I agreed, with just a hint of ironic tone. I let her chunter on about the position of planets and moons and stars, throwing in questions as she went on. I got more irritated, so the questions built up in a kind of viva-ing way. Despite my mounting annoyance that there are actually people who

spend their lives messing around with this dross, the most damning I could be was to ask why the position of Saturn on the day of a person's birth was more important to a child's life than the difference between a parent who was loving, absent or a violent mentalist. She did not give a coherent answer. The upside to what I did is that I do not think I offended her, but the downside is that I do not think she knows what she is doing is drivel any more than she did before. So was my behaviour weak and disingenuous, or gentle and unflinching? Certainly I am not afraid of asking difficult questions, and having people, like Goldacre and Colquhoun, who are prepared to say publicly that a spade is a spade, does make it easier for me.

Second, I think that public analysis of this sort of thing will keep science in check. I am not going to talk about science as a pure entity that must be protected against all odds. This is because it is better than that; it is useful and effective. Also, I would

be hypocritical if I did call science a pure thing, the rough translation of homeopathy is 'retaining purity', based on the translations we use of homeostasis and pathogenesis. Worse still, I think that an attitude of reverence would be in serious danger of making science into a sort of pseudo-religion. Can you imagine anything worse? Professors would become like Bishops, Colleges and Universities like cathedrals and anyone with a PhD would be automatically trusted in the way that anyone with a dog collar is now.

And that is the nub of it. The point of science and the way it is different from religion and charlatanism is that nothing is automatic. Of course, 'career' scientists have to build a reputation and produce solid work, but if they are worth their salt they should never mind being asked questions. Difficult questions. The question now is, will science retain this sobriety, or will it be superseded in the way that organised religion has?

The end of actively exposing dodgy practice ... fortunately, not quite.

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COMMENT

Protest is sacred, hypocrisy is really not



George Howard

I'd like to begin by expressing my gratitude for the time and effort put in by a good few people a couple of weeks ago in response to my first foray into the world of Felix. I was very happy to see that many had read the article and gone to huge lengths to attempt some form of critique. As always, I aim to please, so here we go again.

I must admit that I wasn't expecting to have to bother writing about the so-called 'Occupy' movement. These demonstrations come and go, and in my mind this was yet another misguided attempt by another bunch of loony lefties to wreak havoc in the lives of honest, hard-working, and upstanding members of society. But with the protest now in its 27th day, and with no sign that anybody is taking decisive and effective action to have them evicted (and locked up), I am afraid that I must seek to bemoan the appalling situation we now find ourselves in.

It seems there is somewhat of a trend when it comes to socialist protests: a pervasive hypocrisy amongst its supporters. Take this one: the police recently did a thermal study of the camp at St Paul's at night, only to find that the majority of protesters weren't, in fact, braving the elements in the name of their cause, but had instead opted for the comfort of their own beds at home. Whilst by the day they preach a vacuous anti-capitalist creed, by night they would rather desert their cause and take advantage of their own, no doubt privately owned, homes, a product of the capitalist system they appear to deride. I would also venture to suggest that they used the railway system to get home, another social service produced by rampant capitalism. Essentially, what they are doing is not protesting, but simply littering central

I do, however, disagree fundamentally with simply occupying a public area for an extended period of time.

London. Their expensive tents should be re-appropriated and given to homeless people. At least the homeless would get some use out of them.

So we continue to be subjected to pictures in newspapers, day in, day out, of protesters prancing around in their V for Vendetta masks, getting hideously drunk (I don't have any problem with this really!), vomiting in the street, and generally being uncouth. The scene is akin to one of those ghastly hovels that the travelling (aka under) class seem to call home, and smells worse than Louis XIV's last bowel movement. In short, the occupation does little more than express some unfounded rage against the rich. To be honest, the whole thing is farcical. But then again, so is socialism.

I would probably be unwise to suggest here that there shouldn't be a right to protest (no doubt some immature 1st year computing student would have a problem with that...). And to be honest, whilst I often disagree with the reason behind most protests (partly due to the dullards who frequent them), the right to free speech should be as enshrined in our culture and constitution as the place of public schools in the education sector. I do, however, disagree fundamentally with simply occupying a public area for such an extended period of time. It's an eyesore, and after a few days, just gets boring. One of the reasons London is such an interesting place is the hustle and bustle: a continually changing landscape; not the deplorable view of a bunch of ignorant left wing campers. By all means have a march, or go stand outside Parliament for an afternoon, but don't spoil everybody's view of a magnificent piece of architecture for the sake, it seems, of some debunked 19th century ideology.

Indeed, the whole debacle is making



Some say that the addition of a mask has made the new 'Where's Wally?' too easy. Standards are slipping everywhere it seems

a mockery of not only our legal system in being unable to promptly clear the site (apparently it could take up to nine years to clear the steps of St Paul's) but also of our law enforcement efforts. But, returning to the hypocrisy mentioned earlier: doesn't the clear dishonesty of the whole movement come to the fore when campers threaten to 'prepare violence' whilst continue to use the law to prevent (or at least delay) their inevitable eviction. Is it not more than hypocritical to use the law when it suits them, but defy it when it doesn't?

The protests are an embarrassment. It is costing local traders thousands of pounds each day in revenue, tarnishing the name of the Church of England, and showing the world, once again, that London, and indeed the United Kingdom, can so easily be held to ransom by an ignorant minority: whether this be by travellers, protesters, unions, or the basest of people: squatters (more on this another

... by night they would rather desert their cause and take advantage of their own ... homes

time...).

This blatant flouting of the law (they are in fact camped on a public highway) should be put to an end immediately. The protesters are no more above the law than the banks they decry. They are breaking rules on public order and should be removed. So to anybody reading this whilst encamped on the steps of St Paul's: go home, buy a suit, and get a proper job.

What's the point again?



Justus Schmidt

On the other word tab there's a lab summary waiting for me, so my eagerly procrastinating brain suggested that I write a bit about a question I've been pondering for some time. I'm sure some of you have been wondering over and over again as well... What's the point of Twitter again?

I've thought about this ever since I heard about it first... it's just like texting to the world, telling the world what music you're listening to, or reading about that burger some celebrity just ate – so how exactly is that interesting? If anything, Facebook served that purpose quite sufficiently (and indeed, many

celebrities have hooked up their Twitter to their Facebook page). Surely, Twitter seems a bit more personal, but still, it doesn't seem necessary at all. That was all a while ago, and I've kind of set the thoughts aside for a bit, but earlier this week, something happened that brought it all back to me... I signed up for Twitter as well.

I had been thinking about joining a few months back already, but not seeing the point, I refrained. I now suddenly found myself presented with my own personal Twitter page, without being able to name any reasons or motivations to join. On Facebook, I'm kind of a spectator, hardly posting anything myself. I mostly just reading what other people are up to and

writing the occasional message or wall post. However, I found myself, well, not tweeting away, but certainly quickly getting addicted to reading tweets of my favourite artists and posting more on Twitter over the last few days than I posted on Facebook over the last few weeks. I feel the 'magic' of Twitter, but it remains a mystery to me. What is so fascinating about little fragments of life other people send off into the world, or telling your own (in my case, virtually non-existent) audience what you're up to? I'm even a part of the minority that doesn't own a smartphone, so my trusty laptop remains as the only option to checking the timeline. The mysterious attraction of Twitter will probably be on my mind

I'm sure some of you have been wondering ... What's the point of Twitter?

for some time, maybe without ever figuring it out. If you've been in the same situation, have figured it out or want to think about it with me, or you just want to watch me trying to find the answer, have a look at: twitter.com/vocalnerd – and thanks for reading!

COMMENT

On the flip side of the coin



Umair Aasem

Belief in God is what truly liberates man and allows him to reach his full potential. He submits to no one but God.

After reading the 'Heaven of hell' article from two weeks back, and reading a bit of Christian perspective on the subject in last week's edition, I decided to shed some light on the subject from a Muslim's point of view. As well as writing on the general importance of religion within a society.

I think it is safe to assume that the life after death debate is an argument that has forever been a part of human existence and will continue to do so. Needless to say, we humans, with our highly specialised brains and much-expanded frontal lobes, naturally incorporate rationality and logic in our daily lives and decisions. No matter how scientifically developed, intellectually refined, and culturally civilised we may become, each one of us at some point in their life is confronted by a series of spiritual questions: What is the purpose of life? Why are we here on Earth? Is there really a God? And so forth. Often ignored and seldom encouraged to think about, I believe the way a person goes about tackling these questions does shape his/her life. Each one of us wants to be successful. However, success is relative and we each define it in our own ways. It is based on this definition that we draw up our principles, prioritise our commitments, and come up with our individual philosophies of life.

I wouldn't want to delve too deep into

the concept of heaven in Islam over here, as any attempt to do so would be futile. The only way a person can begin to understand and appreciate heaven is by having a strong grounding in the belief in God. Imposition never works with human beings. We need to be intellectually convinced and thoroughly satisfied before accepting an argument. It is because of this rationale that the Quran constantly appeals to reason and encourages man to ponder, reflect and seek knowledge.

"There are indeed signs for men of understanding" – Quran

It is only when one is convinced of the attributes of God and his supreme knowledge that things begin to make more sense. In Islam, there are no mediators, no secret incantations, and no Popes. The ordinary man communicates directly with God and moves at his own pace. There is no coercion in religion. It is only when we get to grips with God's quality of being 'unimaginable', that the seemingly daunting idea of an eternal afterlife becomes not only more acceptable, but something to crave for and look forward to.

Anyhow, I would like to use this opportunity to argue against 'The Heaven of Hell' article's point of view that: "Living life as if there is nothing more to come is surely the most fulfilling and productive way to live". For me, simply put, religion is what gives life... to life.

Being raised up in Pakistan, I realise that religion is a bit of a taboo subject here in the west. People generally tend to steer clear of the subject and questions such as 'what is your religion?' or 'what is the purpose of your existence?' are met with awkward silences. I believe removing God and religion from a society creates a crippling vacuum, which has unsurprisingly evolved to give rise to a materialistic and avaricious culture. Happiness and satisfaction are considered to be directly proportional to fame and wealth, and understandably so. If this is the only life to live for and money is what makes the world tick, then it's not a mystery as to what my purpose in life would and should be. Rise in immorality is a direct consequence, as morality and religion have always complemented each other. The obvious imbalance between body and soul leaves a person with a feeling of emptiness and consequently increases psychological problems within the society as people look for peace elsewhere. Family life suffers and the rising suicide rates, drug abuse, crime rates and divorce rates only go on further to drill the point home.

Belief in God is what truly liberates man and allows him to reach his full potential. He submits to no one but God. Man is liberated from man when he realises that life and death and respect and humiliation are God's jurisdiction. Once a person learns to

The ordinary man communicates directly with God and moves at his own pace ... no coercion.

overcome his fears, and breaks through his self-imposed prisons such as narcissism, materialism, pride, people's opinions (and in today's age even growing old!), it is only then that his life transforms, because fearlessness is what breeds idealism and any person who's ever achieved greatness in this world has always been an idealist and aimed beyond his imagination.

Faith is what encourages all that is good within a person and enhances both the individual as well as the community. It invigorates his will power and allows him to dominate material desires, rather than be dominated by them. And I finish this article with a quote from a great philosopher and poet from medieval India, Sir Muhammad Allama Iqbal:

"In servitude, it is reduced to an almost waterless stream, but in freedom, life is a boundless ocean."

The journey through nature



Anum Farooq

Just spend a minute looking and you will notice something you have never seen before

How many moments have you actually lived? Or reflected upon, or marvelled... or just, been? Now, this is not some kind of hippy wisdom, this is an understanding of the world around us. Have you ever ran through rain puddles on a sunny day and seen a rainbow at your side? It might seem comical, but try it, and then we'll see who is smiling. Tennyson personifies nature as an eagle:

*He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.*

As a fifteen year old studying this poem, I was captivated, so much so that I began dreaming. Dreaming of exploring nature and being lost in the wonderland, and through travel I have attempted to fulfill this dream. Really though, what I was searching for was always around me, right from the day I was born.

Try this: stop. Right now. What do you

see? Zoom out. Look at the big picture, at the patterns that emerge. Zoom in, and see if they are still present. Now, take a moment and look outside, outside of yourself, outside a window. Just spend a minute looking and you will notice something you have never seen before or thought about. See life unraveling before you.

In the mad rush that is our lives, time is a luxury. Paradoxically, the more we have to get done, the more efficient we become, and a good dose of adrenaline helps pump us through the day.

As a bachelorette, I run on a 12-hour day: work and countless chores multi-tasking. I teach, and so despite the lack of time, with a stern but tantrum like tendency, there is always time for nature, despite staying back for detentions! The mix of adrenaline and nature is enjoyable. Or maybe, I just need to get a life.

Often, it is as simple as just hopping through the park, and chucking bread at the birds and finding it funny to chase the ducks. Of course, avoiding dogs (put them on a leash darling). As an undergraduate, occasionally my pilgrimage to Hyde Park consisted of walking all around the lake, stopping at the bridge and just be-

ing stunned at the ecosystem before me. Sitting under trees to reflect for a while is normal, my friends tell me it must be tree dampness, not dog wee, where I happen to sit. I believe them.

Exploring greenery is not unlike Enid Blyton's (yes, old skool!) descriptions. As a teenager, I used to cycle in the Lee Valley and my God, that was truly an incredible experience. There are these paths swamped with willows, hollies, ivies, bushes, trees of all sorts. The path winds through them, eventually coming to the marsh lakes and the canals, with the sky spreading endlessly before.

Forests are those magical places where every type of weather is an adventure. In autumn, you can run over the crunchy fall leaves and the branches with closed eyes. There are the emerging snowdrops in winter. And the tree climbing scrapes in summer. Spring, of course, spring, when all of nature is in its element, actually add your own description here.

Waterfalls, valleys and mountains and the eco-kaleidoscope are not mere descriptions, but realities and reflections to reach out to, to explore and make connections with. Would it be fair to say, as

we age, that our only horizon was the expansive urban dis-utopia with shots of adrenaline?

Even if, even if, we have no time to stand and stare. Why not actually observe your daily journey, your commute, the path you're walking on. Here's a challenge, take a moment out every day in your 'normal' routine, to stop and see the nature surrounding you and just learn something. Every single day.

Perhaps. I'm just a wannabe hippy thinker; the passion for nature is an innate tendency. My biological mother used to put me under trees as a baby, as some sort of experiment. I guess the connection was made, with the family of trees. Nature, it seems, knows how to look after its own.

*The whispers of nature echo...through dusk and dawn
In the fields there is nothing but to run with the butterflies
In the family of nature
Laughing at the whooshing wind
As the orange coloured sky turns to pink to navy
It only takes a moment to realise
The transience of life*

ARTS

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The Poet's Column

Come Fly With Me

by Pavitar Devgon

"Come fly with me, come run a mile,
Among the vapour clouds.
Come swim with me, across the sky
Come and let us be."

"I shall not run, I shall not fly.
I cannot be with thee.
Alas," she said, "my deed is done,
I cannot be with thee."

"Then let us ride into the night,
Gracious 'pon strong steeds.
With billowing hair, you'd swiftly care
To come again with me."

"But will you not consider the mare
Who'd work for only your pleasure?
Should you not care for they who help,
They who work your measure.
I shall not ride, I shall not trot
For you, I see, do surely not."

"Privy, will you come to see
The work I do with honest glee;
To serenade the notes and strings.
Privy come, on swift paced wings."

"Do you ask because of art
Or to soothe your fire?
Will it be companionably
Or will it end in mire?"

"Good maiden, surely, I presume
To present most gentlemanly,
To doff my hat and turn my coat
And whisper sweet words in thine ear."

"How can you be so plainly wrong,
To think that tricks and guile
Could ever get me out of sorts,
Out of hours with wiles."

"I do not lie, 'tis honest word,
What more can I say?"

"Just promise to
Give up the chase,
Admit defeat and leave my face."

"To win your heart, I will comply
Just as you prescribe.
I take my leave, though 't pains me so
I shall leave this place."

He turned to leave and took a step
When suddenly he heard a breath
And turned to answer her hasty plea:
"Will you come and fly with me?"

Felix Arts is constantly looking for new poets. If you want to see your work appearing here, do get in touch. Additionally, those interested in joining Poetry Society, contact Osas, at osamudien.omoigiade@imperial.ac.uk.

Less love, more sex?

Margot Pikovsky

"SOCIETY still seems to want us to aspire to a stick-together-for-life-and-don't-stray model for our person to person conduct. Why? Where does this aspiration to monogamy come from?"

So runs the programme which I'm given for Robert Gillespie's recent play **Love, Question Mark**. I am intrigued: after all, what does push two people together and incite them to spend the rest of their eternity in each other's companies? Marriage, love, and sex: 3 age-old, hotly debated, feverishly contested and quintessentially relevant concepts. And I was going to be seeing a play about them; how could theatre possibly sound more enticing?

We open with Michael Smith (Sessions), middle-aged widower, musing on the definition of love. "'Bread', he argues 'is an idea we can all come to some agreement about. But love? What on earth is love?'" Prompted by a late sexual awakening, he questions whether his content but insipid previous marriage fits the bill. What follows is an hour of pondering and debate on different questions relating to sex. Add to that the arrival of Maria (Cameron), a prostitute from Argentina, shipped over for the sole purpose of servicing Michael and we have what would appear to be a real forum of discussion between opposites: man and woman; social norm and social outcast. There are some truly challenging ideas raised too: violence, commitment in men, sexual experimentation vs. monogamous simplicity-- to name but a few, and all of these are fuelled with quotes and excerpts that Michael reads from literary authors, scientific thinkers, historical fig-

ures and religious faces. The play, if not interesting, is at the very least informative.

Unfortunately, much like the revelation of 2009's Nobel Peace Prize winner, this play was largely and undeniably underwhelming. The first half had that astonishing quality of feeling rushed whilst remaining inherently stagnant. Ideas that would have merited from a good ten minutes worth of discussion and synoptical action were glossed over in a question of seconds. Gillespie evidently suffered from the rare problem of having too much inspiration and his play seems to burst at the seams with all the questions he's ever wanted to ask about sex (notice, not so much love). It's a pity, that in asking so many, he ends up answering few. I abashedly hesitate to say in fact, none. The plotline is virtually nonexistent until the second half when there is suddenly a rush of action and excitement which leaves the audience nothing short of bewildered. Most of all however, I'm troubled by the conclusions, what few of them there are anyway, that Gillespie seems to come to. Dare I say it's pessimistic to assume that all men may want out of any and every relationship is 'to cum and keep on cumming'? Or that each and every man shirks from commitment, particularly that ultimate and inevitable one: parenthood? On the subject of marriage itself, he seems to resolve that it's just a struggle to relive those first six weeks of bliss, that honeymoon period but that eventually all it becomes is 'the hell of familiarity and boredom'. But is it safe to assume that every marriage is just that?

Despite the limitations of the script, I have to hand it to the actors for their thoroughly commend-



She was very inspired

able performances. Stuart Sessions succeeds in accurately portraying the Everyman character of Michael Smith without failing to keep the audience engaged (I didn't notice my attention wandering once in the two hours) and his comic timing is impeccable throughout. Clare Cameron meanwhile boasts a sizzling and somewhat terrifying stage presence, albeit the sometimes off-putting discrepancies in her Spanish accent are.

Although undoubtedly thought provoking, it pains me to describe this production as unremarkable. As you'd expect from its title, **Love, Question Mark** raises enough questions, but the answers lack the depth and development needed for the audience to leave feeling edified. Whilst I'd never want to increase *The Sun's* circulation, Gillespie's play is something of a glorified *Dear Deirdre* column and with tickets selling at sixty times the price of the red top, it isn't really sixty times better.

Love, Question Mark runs at the Tabard Theatre until 23 November

Rhyme, gentlemen please

Eva Rosenthal

Fluent on Paper, apparently the first poetry night to take place in South Kensington, has been set up by last year's Felix editor Kadhim Shubber, and will likely feature amateur poets from the university.

It must take some courage to get up in front of an audience of your peers and read words that come from the very depths of your soul (or at least from somewhere rather deep and meaningful, one must hope). It is also something of an effort to listen to these outpourings of feeling, however good they are. So, we decided to speak to Kadhim in order to find out why this poetry evening would be worth going to, for both poets and audience members.

You write some poetry right? Is that why you decided to set up this poetry evening?

I decided to set up this poetry evening because for once instead of always going to stuff that other people are organising, I wanted to sort of create something myself. The reason why it's a poetry event, instead of anything else, is that I love poetry and I really believe that it's something that needs to be shared in public, and out loud.

Why did you start writing poetry? And what made you want to show it to other people?

I started to write poetry three years ago because there was a girl in my class who really enjoyed poetry and I wanted to impress her. Suffice it to say, my poetry was a bit shit, and she wasn't very impressed with it. The reason I started sharing it is because I wanted to know if it was any good and I wanted to share how I felt with other people, and hopefully connect with them.

Have you ever read your poems at a poetry night? Can you give any advice to those poets taking part in Fluent on Paper?

I haven't ever read my poetry in front of an audience, so it will be as nervewracking for me as for anyone else, but it's going to be a friendly crowd so I'm sure it'll be fine. I just want to ask people not to be shy; because you shouldn't be afraid of sharing your emotions. It's something that should be celebrated.

Is it mainly Imperial Students taking part? Will you have participants from other universities?

It's an open mic evening so I hope that the people who come along will bring something different to share with everyone. As well as that, I've chosen three poets to read their stuff. One is a recent Imperial graduate, the other is a friend of mine who studies at Manchester and the third is a guy from

Cardiff who I met in India.

Would you be alright with dramatic readings of favourite poems for example?

I really want it to be as inclusive as possible. Poetry is not just about expressing yourself in your own words. It's also about someone else communicating an emotion in a way that connects with you. So I am more than happy for people to read other people's poems that they have enjoyed. As long as they give credit to the poet of course!

Where is it going to be held? A nice place?

At a pub called The Builders Arms. I first went there in second year and I think it's probably the best pub in this area. The inside is really stylish and the beers are very good.

Any final comments? Encouragements?

Don't be put off. It's not going to be some pretentious douche-fest. It's just going to be a bunch of friendly people drinking beers and reading poetry. It's going to be very down to earth and very non-judgemental.

Fluent on Paper; 20th November from 7pm to 9pm at The Builders Arms, South Kensington

Can't be artsed: Will and Eva consider

**Will Prince
Eva Rosenthal**

It is always difficult, for unfathomable reasons, to make it to even the best of cultural events taking place in your own city. As a tourist, rushing around during a fleeting visit to the newest European cultural capital, visiting every museum in sight is merely second nature. But at home, with time on one's hands, nothing. Perhaps it is the knowledge that museums will be there the following day, maybe offering a better student rate on Friday evenings to tempt you with. Except that on Fridays, relaxing seems to be the better idea. Or maybe going to galleries or attending concerts and plays appears to be too expensive to suit a student budget.

In London however, one cannot use these excuses, simply because there is so much on offer that should be seen and soaked up. The following sugges-

tions may encourage you to play the tourist in your own land.

On Wednesday, **Leonardo da Vinci: Painter at the Court of Milan** opened at the National Gallery. This is a unique opportunity to see for example, the two versions of the 'Virgin of the Rocks' exhibited together, as well as several other paintings and numerous drawings. It is rare to see more than one Leonardo at a time; to see several, on loan from the greatest museums in the world, is a privilege.

Building the Revolution: Soviet Art and Architecture 1915 - 1935 at the Royal Academy of Arts exhibits the works of the soviet constructivists, comparing it to the buildings which were inspired by this artistic movement. Constructivism was fuelled by the Russian revolution, and reflects its powerful and passionate nature.

Another Russian suggestion: until the 30th of December, the films of the fa-

mous Aleksandr Sokurov are currently running at the BFI Southbank, a chance to see them in succession and thus experience the growth of an artist. The BFI screens rare films on a regular basis; they even do student prices.

Contemporary art is also on offer at the hundreds of galleries around London. Places like White Cube, Gagosian or Spruth Magers, as well as a host of smaller, less famous spaces, are generally free to the public.

The Felix Arts Curse stuck again this week as, having declined to give us tickets, the Young Vic's production of **Hamlet** limped through its opening night, hampered with technical issues. Despite missed cues and an impromptu interval, Michael Sheen nevertheless came away with plaudits, bringing a deranged unpredictability and energy to the role of the Danish prince in the moments when the audience were actually in their seats.

In their continuing struggle for the title of top luvvy at the NT, Alex Jennings and Simon Russell Beale take to the stage in **Collaborators**, a new play based on the plight of a Russian playwright commissioned to write a play for Stalin's 60th birthday. With all the key ingredients of the high calibre theatre that the National Theatre prides itself on, it looks a solid show. Sadly for the masses, tickets at the minute seem are hard to get hold of as bread in pre-war Soviet Russia. If only, as in Soviet Russia, tickets find you.

In local news, **Next Time I'll Sing To You** comes to the Orange Tree Theatre - watch this section next week for a review, or if you like to live dangerously, go see it before hearing our advice. The cast of **Yerma** can probably hardly believe their luck, as they transfer from Hull to the Gate Theatre, Notting Hill, this week in a new working of Lorca's tragedy.



Are you considering a career in the City?

Did you know that about half of City lawyers didn't study law as an undergraduate?

Find out more about City careers in Law by joining Allen & Overy and Imperial Alumni for an interactive event on Thursday 17th November 2011 at Imperial College from 6.00pm to 9.00pm. The trainees and associates running this event, who all attended Imperial College as undergraduates before deciding to embark upon a legal career, will share with you their experiences of converting to law and working for a global firm.

Please sign up with the Law Society to attend this event.

Imperial College
London


THE LAW SOCIETY
IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

ALLEN & OVERY



CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

**Come and see the ROCKY
HORROR PICTURE
SHOW with MTSoc and
ICU Cinema: 9:15pm,
17/11/2011, Union
Concert Hall for £5 incl.
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ds@imperial.ac.uk

Music Editors: **Iñigo Martínez de Rituerto**
Stephen Smith

music.felix@gmail.com

MUSIC

Kadhim's totally hot album of the week



Real Estate
Days
2011

It was cold this morning, wasn't it? Like most students, myself included, you're probably a bit suspicious of the thermostat and slightly paranoid that if you turn the heating on your next gas bill will be enough to bankrupt you. (I'm not talking about you, "1%" students; you know who you are...)

The summer is dead and we're quickly approaching those days where you get to the library before it's light and leave well after the pathetic sun has scuttled off in fear of the overwhelming dark.

But there is some hope in the face of this November malaise; **Real Estate's** second album, *Days*. It's happy in a rueful sense; a chilled out, surfer-rock ode to the summer that's stopped answering our calls. It washes over you with simple, wandering lyrics about the kind of love that only really exists in nostalgic hindsight (preferably while wearing chunky black hipster glasses...)

Admittedly the album doesn't require a lot of hard work to get into it. But as much as music snobs want to believe that all the best albums require "repeat listens", *Days* works just as well in the background as it does when you need music to tease out feelings that you can't otherwise verbalize.

If you're feeling cold this week and need a cuddle, tweet me @kadhimshubber. A better idea would be to tweet @BritishGas and say, "Dude, it's like cold and shit. Like, what the fuck?"

Be sure not to miss... Tru Thoughts Label Showcase

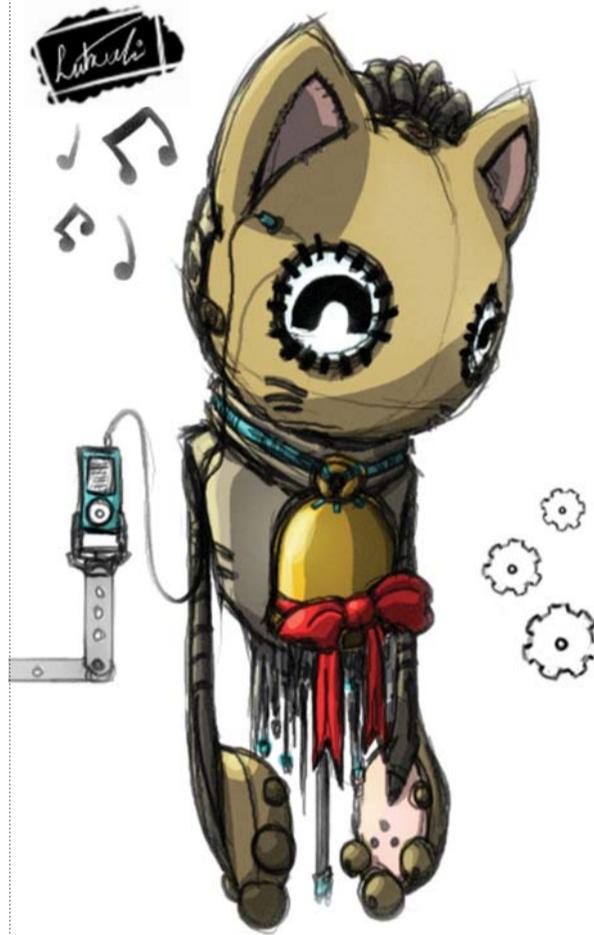
KOKO
Saturday 19th November

In 2009, I received a copy of Tru Thoughts' Tenth Anniversary album and although I was slightly embarrassed at the fact that it took me ten years to notice them, it was musically one of the best things that's ever happened to me.

Tru Thoughts is a gem of a label, nestled down in Brighton on the south coast. In just over a decade they've established themselves as one of the leading independent record labels in the UK. Founders Robert Luis and Paul Jonas have always had a keen ear for talented artists who mix styles from jazz and soul, to house and techno, to calypso and salsa.

Next Saturday, Tru Thoughts are taking over KOKO and bringing with them the finest artists on their roster. The globe-trotting record store-fiend **Quantic** will be DJing (expect records that God himself doesn't know exist...) and **Nostalgia 77** and **Belleruche** will also be gracing the stage. If all that doesn't persuade you, Robert Luis has made a special mix-cd for the night and is giving it away free on the night. See you there!

Kadhim Shubber



KABLAAM

KABLAAM is on Saturday 12th of November in Metric. Entry is only £3 and it starts at 7pm.

Search "KABLAAM - Felix Music Night" on Facebook for tickets and more information.

KABLAAM

Iñigo Martínez de Rituerto on the Felix Music Night

KABLAAM is finally upon us! Tomorrow night will see Metric filled with the warm sound of Imperial's bustling underground. Come down to the Union for an exhibition of the musical talents of **Jazz & Rock** and **Music Tech** societies, one of **IC Radio's** sweetest DJs and one of the moddest rappers of the East London scene.

The night will be an even mix of bands and DJs from our own student body. Starting off, **SMB** will warm things up with a tangy slice of nouveau disco and deep house. The dualist meanderings of **lo. batt. / algo ritmico**'s experimental improvisation, *A Gap in Nature*, will set the tone for the evening's live performances. **Black Sands** will play their first gig since the release of their debut EP *That's Not So Magnetic*, a 4-pack of scorching indie swagger, followed by **Operation Midnight Climax's** cocktail of explosive rock and progressive ska.

Headlining, hip-hop hating MC **Mikill Pane** will storm the stage with a flurry of puns and vocal swerves to get your Broca's area all hot and bothered.

Monsk's milky smooth beat selections will set the after party off in high spirits, followed by the frantic bass of the unfuckwithable **Niceberg**.

£3, three bands, three DJs and one heady headliner. Get upon it.

Who's on when?

7:00 - 7:40

SMB

7:55 - 8:35

lo. batt. / algo ritmico

8:50 - 9:30

Black Sands

9:45 - 10:25

Operation Midnight Climax

10:40 - 11:25

Mikill Pane

11:30 - 12:10

Monsk

12:20 - close

Niceberg

Capitalist downfall

Capdown
KOKO
November 6, 2011

It's an unusual setting for **Capdown's** final gig, skin heads and punks looking incredibly out of place in the theatrical grandeur of KOKO. For years these veterans of the UK ska scene (and perhaps the only good thing ever to come out of Milton Keynes) have toured the country's basements, only now, at the end, getting the recognition and large scale venues they deserve.

Up and coming stars of UK scene, **The Skints** provide an excellent warm up set, throwing in numerous classic ska tracks among their own East London reggae stylings. Here is a band certainly fit to takeover where Capdown leave off but in my eyes it's all about the headliners tonight.

Finally at 9pm Capdown storm the stage, a single opening sax riff setting the crowd in immediate motion. They may have returned from hiatus but the

band who famously played over 250 gigs in a year have clearly lost none of their live edge.

Unsurprisingly (and much to the crowd's delight), older tracks such as 'Ska Wars' and 'Cousin Cleotis' form the majority of the set but even tunes from the lesser acclaimed 'Wind Up Toys' album get a final seeing off, still generating roars from the crowd and sizeable circle pits.

As you would expect from a last gig, crowd interaction is top priority and vocalist Jake does not disappoint, at one point splitting the crowd and making his way into the middle before disappearing amongst a horde of fans from both sides of a charging wall of death.

When it's all over genuine sadness appears to take over the crowd, the final gig of a band I grew up with is certainly momentous. Then again I was there at home in MK for the previous 'last ever' gig. I'll always have my fingers crossed.



Caution: angles may induce torticollis

A tramp and a boat

George Jeffery's tale of love, music and the Thames

Any of you who read my article last week probably came to the conclusion that I'm either a dribbling moron or an actual full-on nutter. For that exact reason, I've decided to simmer things down a bit and tell you about possibly the most peaceful thing I can imagine: an all acoustic gig on a boat gently rocking on the Thames.

This was a strange experience for me, not only because it was on a boat (www.tamesisdock.co.uk) but because normally acoustic music isn't something I buy into. I usually find it's something I want to hear so little that if it ever comes on I wish my head would literally just be engulfed. This was different.

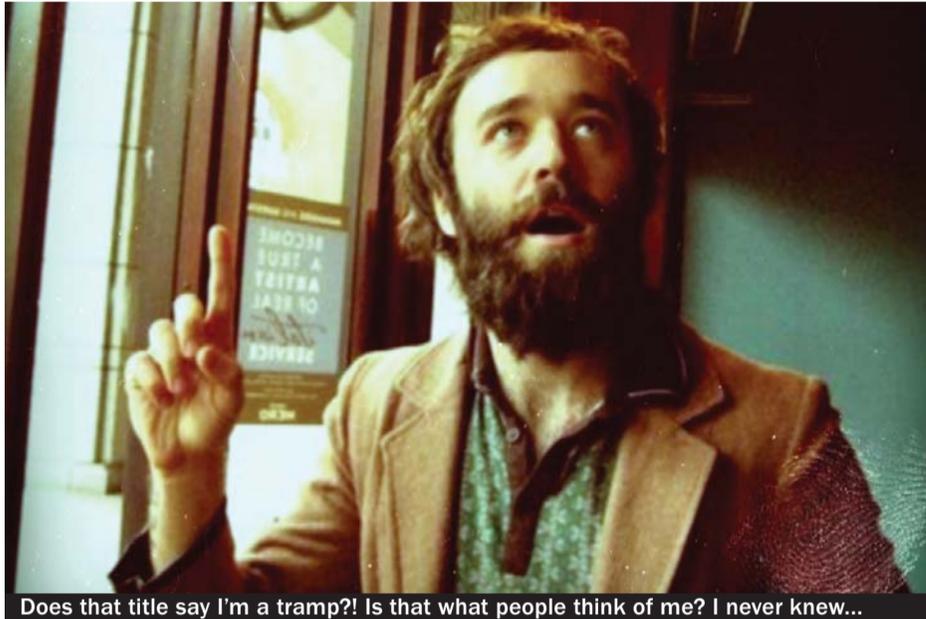
First on was **Tangled Hair**. Usually a three-piece, this time frontman Alan Welsh dropped his band-mates for a solo performance.

Despite complaining of a sore throat, he did an amazing job delivering his unique style of

"The tramp began to serenade us, but not in the usual tramp style."

light-hearted rhythmic indie math-pop with soft melodic vocals as brilliant as ever. Initially apprehensive of whether the music would work acoustically after being so mesmerised by the full band, I was pleasantly surprised at how well Welsh conveyed the songs with just an old guitar and his vocal chords.

Welsh finished up and put down the guitar. A tramp then strolled through the crowd and approached the microphone. The tramp began to serenade us but not in the usual tramp style



Does that title say I'm a tramp?! Is that what people think of me? I never knew...

(substituting a guitar for an old, smashed-in piece of wood). This was an actual, real-life, not-mentally-disturbing tramp.

Something wasn't right – there's no such thing as an undisturbing tramp serenade. Then, through the mass of facial hair, I realised this was no vagrant, it was of course Tobias Hayes of **Shoes And Socks Off**.

A truly inspirational musician, he was a perfect follow up to Tangled Hair with his "stubbled-toe blues". His songs, depressing yet addictive, are so well-written that its hard to not be in awe as you watch this unassuming hero.

Finally, **Dad Rocks!** came onstage. The beer/boat combo had taken its toll on me but

when he started playing, everything fell into place. By far one of the best guitar players I've ever seen, it felt cruel that someone with so much talent isn't reaping the benefits that the music industry can bring. He has this incredible ability to make you feel happy with his music and his peaceful indie sound is hard to not fall in love with, especially when seen live.

Oh yeah and did I mention it was on an actual fucking boat?!?!?... Mental.

This gig really was something special and a testament to the incredible shows you can go to in London. All of the acts are on Big Scary Monsters records (www.bsmrocks.com), go check them out.

Grouper impresses in a Soho church

Grouper
St Giles in the Fields
03.10.11
Ross Gray

St Giles in the Fields, a church in Soho, is not the most conventional musical venue, but its large, echoing space perfectly suited **Grouper's** recognisable brand of ethereal ambient pop.

Having seen her previously performing the stunning tape collage *Rolling Gate*, I wasn't sure what to expect from this gig – *Rolling Gate* had no recognisable tracks or structure, merely consisting of small changes in a wall of fuzz.

This was a much more conventional affair, using guitar, piano, and of course, a lot of tape loops.

Grouper opened the set with favourites through a range of her albums, caressing the audience into relaxation with her ghostly quiet

vocals, soft fuzz and delicate instrumentation, distorted beyond recognition by looping and other technical trickery I won't pretend to understand.

The second half of the set was much closer to what I was expecting, consisting of a seemingly improvised twenty minute long track. Simple notes and chord progressions from the guitar and piano were looped over each other constantly, building to a delightfully ecstatic and surprisingly loud finale.

Superb support was offered by **Chris Forsyth's Paranoid Cat Duo**. In contrast to Grouper, this was loud, noisy psych-rock, complete with 22 minute long tracks and steady detuning throughout prolonged periods of pretty crazy guitar work.

I wish I could write about the first support, **Pigeons** (check them out), but sadly we were too busy finding seats to pay attention.



Grouper, a master of technical trickery

Punk Planet by Douglas Heaven

This week: **Melt-Banana**



As with many of its cultural exports, Japan's punk is a little different. Epitomised by bands such as the percussion-heavy **Boredoms**, the metal-heavy **Boris**, and psychedelic **OO100**, its brand of noise-rock tempers avant-garde intensity with kitschy dollops of fun.

Fastest, sharpest and strangest of the lot, though, is **Melt-Banana**, who play what might as well be cartoon music at three times the intended speed. Melt-Banana are a four-piece, but they do without a proper drummer, the drum stool occupied in a kind of hot-desking arrangement. Singer Yasuko Onuki, guitarist Ichirou Agata, and bass player Rika Hamamoto make up the band's sound, each given equal prominence in the insane onslaught.

Imagine a soundtrack to *The Itchy & Scratchy Show* scored for pneumatic drills and laserguns, played on fast-forward and interspersed with sound-effects from a bullet-hell shooter. Except all those pew-pew noises are coming out of the guitar amps. It's not a surprise to learn that Agata converts euphoric melodies that come to him while playing video games into guitar riffs – apparently, the *Tony Hawk* skate-boarding series is particularly good at getting him going.

Melt-Banana have been prolific since the core band came together in Tokyo in 1992, releasing ten albums and 20+ EPs, most of them put out internationally through A-Zap, a label they started themselves. But it's their live shows that have made them legends. The band spring and jerk about the stage like perpetual-motion Jacks for an entire set, ripping relentlessly through dozens of songs, few more than a minute long. There's often a popular interlude where they play through a bunch of 10-second songs, each followed by a politely yelled "Thank you!" to the audience.

Still, awesome as Melt-Banana are, not everyone likes to sprinkle shichimi on their udon, so let's end with a nod to **Shonen Knife**, a pop-punk girl band formed in Osaka in the 1980s. Sticklers for the DIY approach, they eschewed the J-Pop fashion and modelled themselves instead on the **Buzzcocks** and **Ramones**. It wasn't long before they caught Kurt Cobain's eye and they toured the UK with **Nirvana** in the pre-*Nevermind* days. Other things to like? Shonen Knife have a song called 'Rock n' Roll Cake' and 30 years in, they're still releasing records, still honouring their idols: their latest album is *Osaka Ramones* (2011).

You can stream short sharp shots of Melt-Banana from www.myspace.com/azap and the confectionary of Shonen Knife from www.myspace.com/shonenknife.

Television Editors: **Matt Allinson**
James Simpson

tv.felix@imperial.ac.uk

TELEVISION

This week on Twitter

Some top tweets from Felix TV's followers and followees



@sickpediabot

Suicide bombers - if you really want to see 72 virgins, then simply pop down to GAME at midnight.



@RadioTimes

German TV lifts ban on "Nazi" Star Trek episode #startrek



@HBO

39 years ago today, Home Box Office was born. #happy-birthdayHBO



@charltonbrooker

The NOTW use of a P.I. seems justifiable when you consider his investigations PROVED Harry Potter's parents are still alive.



@RadioTimes

Our most popular tweet today, by miles: Downton Abbey officially recommissioned for third series. #DowntonAbbey



@bbcsoundeffects

Donk.

Frozen Planet - a true masterpiece



The culmination of years of filming in barren conditions, married with the inimitable voice of Sir David Attenborough

George Howard

The advent of digital satellite broadcasting brought with it a torrent of mind-numbing programs (including certain controversial chat shows...) aimed at an audience with the collective sentient ability of a squashed banana (sorry, I simply couldn't resist!). So from this seemingly endless stream of drivel, it is rare to find such a veritable gem of broadcasting merit as David Attenborough's latest offering: *Frozen Planet*.

What we have here is an impeccable exposition of the best of the BBC juxtaposed with the best of nature: the culmination of over six years worth of filming time in some of the toughest environments on this planet. From amazing under-ice footage (the result of over 134 hours of filming under Arctic sea ice) to close-ups of entire pods of orcas, this show makes for unforgettable viewing.

The seven part series, the very love child of the BBC and *Mother Nature*, concentrates on the changing seasons at the poles, with the first three episodes (covering Spring and

Summer) having aired already (and currently available on iPlayer). Whilst concentrating on the cycle of life, the show does also examine man's activities in these regions. But even if you are as much the climate skeptic as I am, don't be put off: the breathtaking scenes and stories throughout do more than make up for this.

"What we have here is an impeccable exposition of the best of the BBC juxtaposed with the best of nature"

From the kleptomaniac habits of penguins, to the clinical team hunting skills of orcas, *Frozen Planet* has much in store for the viewer. Some flawless time-lapse photography

coupled with stunning close-ups shots effectively portray life in this, the most seasonal of places. In addition, some spectacular aerial shots give magnificent views of the barren expanse of the tundra, whilst the HD is certainly noticeable.

The BBC producers have, once again, excelled themselves. Epic slow motion shots of two 4-ton elephant seals fighting to control a harem of over 50 females are a sight to behold, especially as these mountains of blubber waddle to the battlefield. As these 'beachmasters' do battle the music of George Fenton aptly provides a certain sense of grandeur to the whole affair. With excerpts that at times hark back to the scores of John Williams, it is clear from where Fenton gets his inspiration, but the music is sublime in complementing the filming.

None of this would be as impressive without the wise, yet dulcet, tones of Sir David Attenborough. Now in his 85th year, and with over 57 years of experience in the field, there can be no doubt that *Frozen Planet* hangs on his every word. With his unique descriptions of everything from courtship and through to survival techniques, he provides that essential refinement that makes this show special.

A nice addition to each episode is a 20-minute addendum known as 'Freeze Frame' (pun probably intended). Interviews and commentaries with the indefatigable crew chronicle the risks, including 130mph windstorms, faced in filming the program. It becomes apparent that it was a serious undertaking to produce a show of this calibre, and this only goes to emphasise why you should watch it: if only to make your TV licence payment worthwhile.

I cannot extoll the virtues of this program enough. This documentary is nothing short of a masterpiece. Not only is it both beautiful and informative, but is also, dare I say, cool. Don't let yourself miss it.



A Great British institution



Stayed up late with some Berlusconi antics last night?

Not to worry – you can always read the latest Felix online from Friday morning onwards.



felixonline.co.uk

FILM

In brief

It's just a jump to the left



MT Soc and ICU Cinema showing of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*: Thursday 17 November at 9:15pm in the Union Concert Hall

The Rocky Horror Picture Show is no ordinary movie. The 1975 classic has a certain place in the hearts of many: its catchy tunes, its fantastic humour, and its breath-taking but never too disturbing weirdness all add up to a unique and hilarious experience.

My first Rocky Horror experience was as a 13-year-old, I went with a friend and his parents to see it at the Wycombe Swan theatre. Not really knowing anything about the show, I wasn't entirely sure what to expect, other than that it would be very funny and involved transvestites. Little was I aware that the "fancy" dress extended to the audience as much as the cast members on stage, although (luckily, as I was with my friend's parents) not compulsory. The audience participation adds so much to either a stage production or a film showing, the heckling, the audience sound effects and the fact that everyone is completely pissed while wearing high heels and fish-nets.

So I'm very excited that next Thursday ICU Cinema in conjunction with Musical Theatre Society are putting on a showing at the Union cinema. Doors will open at 9:15pm and the show will start at 9:30pm.

Tickets can be bought online, they are £5 for entry and a goody bag of props. Tickets on-the-door are £3.50 without goodies. It's sure to be a hell of an evening and if you're a fan of either the film or wearing something a little bit special for one evening, you'll love this.

Matt Allinson

**Want to write for the film section?
It's easy - just send us your articles
to film.felix@imperial.ac.uk
We are nothing, absolutely nothing,
without our loyal contributors**

It's the end of the world as we know it

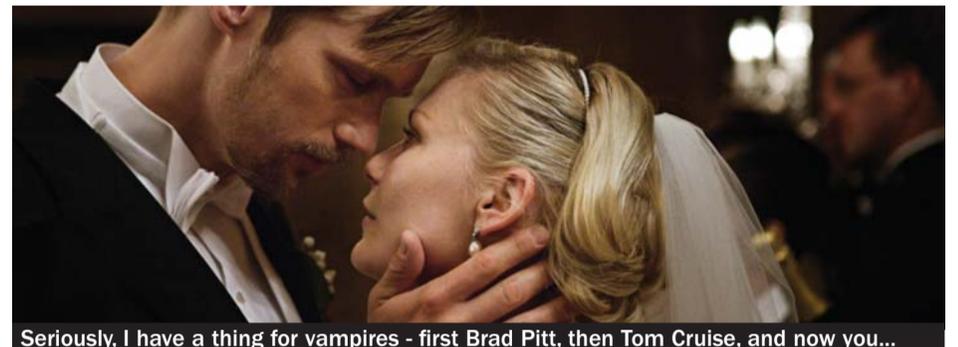
Melancholia

Director Lars von Trier
Screenwriter Lars von Trier
Cast Kirsten Dunst, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Kiefer Sutherland, Alexander Skarsgård

Christopher Dean

It's not every day you watch a film that begins as depressingly as *Melancholia*. In beautifully vibrant slow motion, we are forced to watch in horror as the world, and four of its inhabitants, come to a startlingly abrupt end by way of planetary collision. Birds fall from the sky, horses collapse, and our protagonist Justine (a superbly cast Dunst) floats down a river in an Ophelia-esque fashion. As the two planets finally meet and the orchestral score pushes into a final crescendo, you know that this is not going to be a light-hearted journey.

The film takes part in two halves, named after two sisters, Justine and Claire. We're introduced on the night of Justine's extravagant wedding at a luxuriant country house put on by her sister's millionaire husband (Sutherland), which also appears to be approaching disaster at a similarly drawn out pace. Like a snowball gathering speed, tensions between Justine's estranged parents, delays, and an exceptionally overbearing boss push Justine to breaking point, and we are again forced to endure what essentially feels like a beautiful, but devastating train crash of a wedding. This is heart-wrenching stuff: Dunst perfectly pulls off a woman who is cornered by the oppressive forces of those around her and longs to be left to her own devices. It's incredibly frustrating to watch her recklessly destroy all that's been handed to her on a silver plate, but you cannot help but feel a sense of sadness



Seriously, I have a thing for vampires - first Brad Pitt, then Tom Cruise, and now you...

at her predicament.

It's not until the second half, Claire, where the film feels like it's really kicked into gear. Whilst it was heavily hinted at during the first half, Justine is now painfully immobilized by crippling depression. Unable to function normally, she has moved back into the same country house to be cared for with the aid of her sister's family, all under the gaze of Melancholia, a rogue planet due for a flyby of Earth within the next few days. Claire's husband's boyish sense of wonder at the celestial does little to install her with a sense of calm at the possibility of a collision, whereas a rapidly recovering Justine, convinced that life on Earth is evil, is longing for apocalypse.

Director Lars von Trier has made a name for himself in recent years for his half art school, half B-Movie schlock combination when it comes to filmmaking, and *Melancholia* is no exception. It is shot beautifully but unsteadily, with hand held camerawork adding a thick air of unease and tension to every scene, meaning every dull wedding conversation becomes inexplicably uncomfortable. This contrast aids in

driving forward the dialogue, which sometimes appears stifling, and slows the pace.

But where the film really excels is the multitude of themes that it touches upon over its running time. The whole movie is built on contrast: beauty versus horror, calm versus panic. Throughout the film these ideas are played off each other in a subtle, yet poignant style: the bride in her wedding dress pissing on a golf course, guests who appear dignified yet act in the most despicable ways, and the encroaching planet of Melancholia itself. Fundamentally though, one idea remains: that you can only truly know a person when they believe they are about to die, and how they accept their fate is a larger statement on who they are. And that is an idea that is best discussed after you've seen this film.

While many will dismiss *Melancholia* as pretentious and overly stifling in its revelry of depression (and in some cases may well be right about it), the fact remains that von Trier has crafted a film of visual beauty that is truly essential viewing, even if just for the discussion afterwards.

Five films to watch for their soundtracks

Fiona Calcutt

Forget orchestral scores, these are songs you would actually listen to. Or maybe you like to have the shower scene from *Psycho* on repeat during your walk to college every morning, I'm not here to judge.

Layer Cake

"Fucking females is for poofs."

From the opening scene with FC Kahuna's 'Hayling,' you know this film's going to have a good selection of music. Featuring recognisable songs from **The Cult**, **Duran Duran** and **Joe Cocker**, the music emphasises the exciting but lonely life of the protagonist. Well worth a watch, particularly if you want to perfect your cockney accent.

Twilight

"Are you still faint from the run? Or was it my kissing expertise?"

Okay, before you spit on the page in disgust

and set the whole paper on fire, let me explain. The music is actually pretty darn good. The first three soundtracks had contributions from **Florence + the Machine**, **Bat for Lashes**, **The Black Keys** and **Thom Yorke**, and **Muse** even went as far as to do a song for each OST. Who cares if you think Edward Cullen's a bit of a knob, just listen to the music.

The Craft

"Light as a feather, stiff as a board."

The 'How Soon Is Now?' cover may irritate the traditionalists in the audience, but if you're looking for a 90s throwback you'll be hard pushed to find a better OST. 'All This and Nothing' and 'Dangerous Type' are sure to get you in an angry teen mood. So girls, roll up your skirts, pull up your socks, get out your neck chokers and slap on some dark lipstick - we're going slutty gothic gunge. With witchcraft, of course.

Reservoir Dogs

"You keep talking like a bitch, I'm gonna slap

you like a bitch."

Yes, the film where every character sounds like a piece in Cluedo is brilliant for some retro tunes, something that Tarantino successfully does in each of his bloody masterpieces. He mixes upbeat tracks such as 'Stuck in the Middle with You' with horrible gore that, in a very disturbing way, makes you almost enjoy the violence. I challenge anyone after seeing this to walk down the street in a suit and NOT have the burning desire to walk in slow motion to 'Little Green Bag' playing in their head.

(500) Days of Summer

"Just because she likes the same bizzaro crap you do doesn't mean she's your soul mate."

A film that I watch over and over, despite how much it irritates me. Some chilled music from **Doves**, **Carla Bruni** (who doesn't love a cute French voice whisper-singing in your ears?) and **The Temper Trap**, and there's a brilliant scene with sunshine and cartoon birds accompanied by the **Hall and Oates** track 'You Make My Dreams.'

Fashion Editors: **Saskia Verhagen**
Alice Yang

fashion.felix@imperial.ac.uk

FASHION

Have a fashion fling online

The *crème de la crème* of the online fashion community is at your fingertips

Style Bubble (stylebubble.co.uk)

Susanna Lau (aka Susie Bubble) is undoubtedly Britain's most followed fashion blogger. The London-based 28-year-old, who once wrote about sneaking into fashion week shows, claiming, "If you're ballsy enough to act like you're somebody, SOMEONE's gonna fall for it eventually," now graces many front rows and is often granted backstage access to photograph her favourite details. Despite consciously leaving out celebrities as inspirational fashion figures in her writing, her own celeb status is global.

Her blog, launched in March 2006, is a personal online diary: a collection of her daily thoughts on the latest fashion events and new collections, alongside where she is, what she's doing, and, most importantly, what she's wearing. While big names (such as Prada and Balenciaga) pop up from time to time, Susie loves to expose under-the-radar talent from fresh designers. Photography plays a large role in every post, whether it's outfits (snapped by her boyfriend, fellow blogger of Style Salvage, on their famous Holloway balcony) or general inspiration posts.

Her personal avant-garde style is impossible to categorise, though a minimalist she certainly is not. She mixes an eclectic collection of vintage, high street and independent designer pieces, layering contrasting patterns, textures and colours. While her style is constantly evolving, her signature blunt fringe and innocent expression re-

main constant. She often uses her legs as her best accessory, whether they're bare, or covered with opaques; she maintains her winter staple is a pair of John Lewis school uniform ribbed grey tights.

The blog also includes her famous 'London Shop Map', an extensive guide to London's unique shopping experience, which includes everything from department store favourites like Selfridges and Liberty, and designers like Acne and Marc Jacobs, to East London vintage boutiques and Kensington charity shops. As a brand in her own right, she has associations with recognisable names such as Elle and Topshop, whilst never forgetting the importance of blogs. During her time writing for Dazed and Confused, she confessed to checking up to 250 a day.

Laura Johnston



Textbook (textbook.tumblr.com)

As a follower of fashion blogs since they first appeared on the industry's radar some five years ago, I confess I have become something of a blog-snob. Personal style blogs are now ten to the dozen, with hundreds of wannabe Rumi Neelies and Jane Aldridges clogging up the blogroll of those whose interest is in the close observation of beautiful, modelesque girls with perfect hair and deeply enviable wardrobes. And if your interest sways towards capturing the everyday moments of sartorial glory, the holy trinity of street-style remains: Scott Schuman (thesartorialist.com), Garance Doré (garancedore.fr/en) and Tommy Ton (jakandjil.com), whose hallowed cameras point only at the select super-stylish few, though presently the field is congested with DSLR-owners whose taste doesn't yet quite cut the sartorial mustard. There is now an established elite within the blogosphere, which some would say defeats the object of blogging – it is, after all, about individuals sharing ideas in a free, public forum. Alas, such is the nature of the industry: *elitism omnia vincit*.

So imagine my delight when I find (on Tumblr, of all things!) a blog with a truly unique vision: Textbook. A style blog for history and literature. The premise? Each post is a stylish imagining of what a fictional, historical or even a video game character would wear if they were living today. The author, John Jannuzzi, works at *Lucky* magazine in New

York, but the project is quite apart from his day job. He writes: "Ever read a book and formed a perfect image of the character in your head? So have I, and that's why I started this blog." Simply put, one by one, the Jannuzzi puts every well-known character imaginable in a selection of three fantastic editorial ensembles: there's Anne Boleyn in Alexander McQueen, Dorian Gray in Dolce and Gabbana, Belle of Beauty and the Beast in Erdem and, a personal favourite, Lady Macbeth in Givenchy, with the byline: "Duncan is here for dinner..."

A blog for all the sartorially fabulous who could imagine that, of course, if Rasputin were alive and fashion-forward today, he would totally be wearing Rick Owens. I mean, *obviously*.

Saskia Verhagen



The Ones 2 Watch (theones2watch.com)

In these tough times when the student budget is beginning to drain and the days look clouded with educational bleakness, those of us with a spark of creative appreciation prefer to scoff on inspirational works as opposed to chips or chocolate. Unfortunately, it is on days like these, when we most crave the glossy pages of the likes of *Vogue*, *i-D* and *Numero*, that we are faced with the daunting reality that these monthlies are no longer affordable, thanks to our latest shopping extravaganza.

As a result, we turn trustingly to our good friend, the internet. Amongst all those girls prancing around so casually and perfectly in high fashion events looking every bit the epitome of what we envy, and all those sites linked to those physical publications we so desperately desire, cries out a spark of excitement in the online magazine.

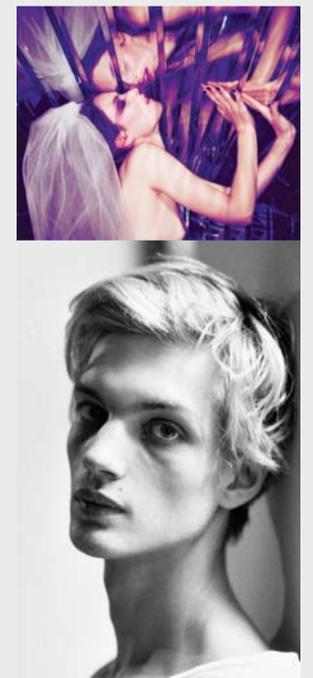
Online magazines are typically devoid of any content worth our precious procrastination time due to a lack of funding and exposure, except in the case of The Ones 2 Watch. In fact, as the little sister of the online fashion giant MODELS.com, the popularity The Ones 2 Watch has gained since it launched a year ago has bought hoards of contributors who are nothing less than awe inspiring, talented, creative geniuses.

Each monthly issue is filled with unexpected originality. A hunger for beauty and perfection is the only thing in common through-

out each issue despite a monthly set theme. Take, for example, September's issue 'Stay Beautiful' which evokes nothing less than pure love towards an alluring Paul Boche in the calmly surreal shoot 'Pale & Interesting', contrasted against the yearning for extravagant luxury provoked by the image of models drowning in the pleasure of their own reflection in 'The Royal Palace'.

In fact, The Ones 2 Watch has turned into somewhat of a guilty pleasure. Their aim was to showcase upcoming talent from across the globe, and they have succeeded without pretentiousness, giving just enough to set your thoughts ablaze, allowing the imagination to run wild, almost as if in the knowledge that we want nothing less than a total escape.

Alice Yang



Games Editor: Laurence Pope

GAMES

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That dangerous 'O' word

Michael Cook questions Baroness Greenfield's claims that videogames cause ADHD, schizophrenia and other mental disorders

Opinion is something of a dirty word when it comes to science. Opinion happens all the time within the walls of Imperial, but it comes in the form of chitchat, idle speculation and the exchange of ideas. It rarely, if ever, worms its way into academic papers and serious propositions, and when it does it's usually questioned, dissected and made demands of. We're keen to segregate speculation and fact unless the former shows itself worthy of being considered the latter.

In some media outlets, however, 'Opinion' is a Get Out Of Jail Free card. It's a *carte blanche* to write what you wish, and as long as you pepper that writing with lots of 'could be's or 'may's then your poorly-supported behind is covered. What this means is that someone in a position of authority, with scientific letters before and after their name, can write an opinion column and claim more or less whatever they wish. Write it in the right way, and you might as well be penning the lead feature in *New Scientist*.

"Write an opinion column in the right way, and you might as well be penning the lead article in *New Scientist*"

So it was this week in *The Times*, where Baroness Greenfield wrote an Opinion piece in which she claimed among other things that gaming's inability to provide 'meaning' might be causing the brains of young, innocent, adorable children to decay into nothingness. The headline reads, "Are video games taking away our identities?" The headline might as well read, "Video games are taking away our identities."



Claims that games like *GTA IV* negatively impact on one's mental state need to be supported

Greenfield begins by describing videogames as 'literal' experiences, by which she appears to mean that videogames can carry no artistic meaning or emotional weight, and are essentially no different to playing with a cup and ball. She expresses herself most curiously by comparing playing Mario to reading a book: "When you play a computer game to rescue the princess, it is not because the princess is meaningful to you... Yet when you read a book, it is because you care about the characters."

It's easy to dismiss this as snobbishness – and in an article that quotes Shakespeare and Euripides that is a fairly simple argument to make – but what's clear is that Baroness Greenfield either has never played a videogame, or does not enjoy them. Giving her the benefit of the doubt that she wouldn't write such an article having never played videogames, the fact that she doesn't enjoy them easily explains why she doesn't feel they have meaning or emotional weight – because for her, they don't. Similarly, I don't enjoy much Shakespeare, and that makes it hard for me to relate to

any of the characters or themes being conveyed. To say, as a result, that the medium of drama is devoid of meaning seems a little heavy-handed.

In any case, the real problem in the article is that Greenfield uses the lack-of-meaning argument to motivate – namely, that by consuming content that has no meaning we are thereby losing a part of our mental faculties. She heavily implies through a careful use of language that videogames are responsible for a "drop in empathy" in the population (whatever that might mean), an "increase in aggressiveness" and a rise in the prescription of ADHD medication, the latter being particularly forced as she proposes two likely causes for this rise, and then goes on to say that "a third possibility... if... might..." until the tail end of the sentence carries a vanishingly small probability.

But probability doesn't matter, because Baroness Professor Susan Greenfield CBE PhD BSc holds 30 honorary degrees, is frequently on TV and radio, and was awarded the Royal Society's Faraday Prize. Greenfield doesn't need to establish a basis

for a claim; she merely needs to imply its veracity, and herein lies the problem.

Last month, Greenfield was quoted by *The Sun* as having said that videogames caused a form of "dementia" in children. A spokesperson later claimed this had "misrepresented" her views. She spoke out about Internet Addiction Syndrome, after which Ben Goldacre asked her to publish results or conduct a study. Greenfield likened Goldacre to those who used to claim smoking didn't cause cancer. Now, in this *Times* article, she constructs a weak argument against gaming's artistic merit, and uses it to imply a causal link between it and neurological disorders.

"In her *Times* article, [Baroness Greenfield] constructs a weak argument against gaming's artistic merit"

If videogames were causing my brain to weaken and become damaged, I would want to know. I'd be surprised if I found a gamer who wouldn't want to know. No one is denying Greenfield's claims because they want to sweep this under the rug. They're asking questions because her claims are unsupported, they are fuelling suspicion and hatred of videogames, and above all else they're teaching the public that science is about people with letters after their name telling you what is true and what is false.

This is not how science works. But it remains to be seen whether anyone will really make a dent in Greenfield's arguments, or whether these 'opinion' pieces will be a regular fixture for the next half-decade.

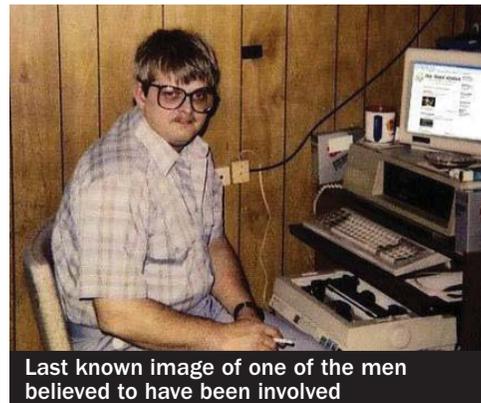
COD: MW3 theft shocks world

Laurence Pope

So I guess some of you were expecting a *Modern Warfare 3* review, right? I barely have enough money to subsist on dry bread and so little free time that I can only sleep for half an hour each day, so you expect me to purchase and play *COD: MW3*? I guess a man can dream. If you're all good little girls and boys I'll have one of my richer contributors review it next week. But for now, enjoy/endure this amusing little piece about everyone's favourite modern army shooter. It would have gone into the news section, but apparently only big news goes there, picky editors.

It seems that the European release date of November 8 was a little too far away for some folk. Emulating a crime that wouldn't be out of place in a *GTA* game, two enterprising masked men wielding tear gas grenades hijacked a French truck carrying 6000 copies of Infinity Ward's latest product. The two men, no doubt amazingly dedicated gamers, pulled out the drivers and escaped with the truck, along with its precious shipment. The cargo's overall value? Just shy of £350,000.

In other news, similar attacks were reported several hours later on vans carrying large quantities of Gatorade and Cheetos. Coincidence? I'll let you decide.



Last known image of one of the men believed to have been involved

This is (another) public service announcement to all gamers/writers/people at Imperial. We are looking for budding writers! Your idea can be one-sentence or a whole feature. But wait, that's not all! We're also looking for artists and designers. If you're willing to help us direct, produce, research (i.e. play games), collate and design the magazine then we want you. Email: omar.hafeez-bore06@imperial.ac.uk games.felix@imperial.ac.uk

**We're more than
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FOOD

Place of the week: Soho Joe

by Marie-Laure Hicks



Perfect Pizza... indeed!

Soho Joe is the product of a husband and wife team who both have more than twenty years experience in the catering industry. Open from early morning until late at night, Soho Joe is an exciting new venture situated in the heart of Soho, serving a range of food and drinks at extremely affordable prices.

Wandering around the West End, I stumbled upon Soho Joe. For an Italian-style trattoria, it was the perfect balance between tradition and contemporary design. As you walk in, there is a mouth-watering food counter on the side and a number of stylish wooden tables with (surprisingly) comfortable stools.

You order and pay at the counter and soon enough a lovely plate of food is put in front of you. I had chosen an Aberdeen Angus beef burger with chips and I had not an ounce of regret, it was simply divine. Held by two slices of ciabatta bread and some salad, the steak was seasoned with a mix of pepper and spices and cooked beautifully. The chips were perfect: crispy on the outside, fluffy and soft inside. To drink, the French Merlot was very nice.

The atmosphere of the place really added to its charm. Throughout the evening, the restaurant was quite busy, people were happy and loud but you could always have a conversation without much difficulty. The customers were lively and even provided a certain entertainment factor, one of them was recognised by a waitress from being on the cover of a men's fitness magazine. With **Charles Trenet's** 'La Mer', 'Can't Take My Eyes Off You', some **Stephane Pompougnac** and the odd piece of gangster music in the background, it was an interesting and pleasant mix.

Budget-wise, the restaurant was more than reasonable, even quite cheap for the quality of the food. The burger was £7, as are all the pizzas on the menu (they looked and smelt fantastic). The wine was £4 a glass, but there were cheaper drinks available. Overall, you could easily eat for a tenner; push it to £15-£20 and you could also enjoy a great starter of antipasti or houmous. There are also pasta dishes and hot sandwiches. Soho Joe offers a good priced and delicious meal in a friendly atmosphere – good for groups, too.

Soho Joe
22-25 Dean Street
London W1D 3RY
www.sohojoe.net

The wisdom of nature

Going organic with the latest natural foods

Anastasia Eleftheriou

The truth is that organic products have managed to attract a large number of people in the United Kingdom. In addition, the increase in the number of people buying organic goods is showing no signs of slowing down. The supporters of this 'green lifestyle' believe that it is not just a fashion trend that is going to disappear in the future, as they argue that organic products are of greater quality despite their slightly higher cost.

The producers explain that the reason for the popularity of organic food is because they are

free from hormones, pesticides, preservatives, and chemicals – offering healthier nutrition to the consumers.

And this is scientifically confirmed.

Research that took place in the USA in 1984 proved that organic products contain many more nutrients like phosphorus, calcium, magnesium and potassium. Specifically, organic lettuce contains almost twice as much phosphorus and four times the quantity of calcium that is contained in the conventional lettuce.

Moreover, a group of European scientists have proved that organic fruit and vegetables contain 40% more antioxidants than normal.

Antioxidants are beneficial for the heart and help the prevention of cancer.

In addition to the health benefits, the organic production systems have a large ecosystem impact, as they are designed to respect the balance observed in our natural ecosystems. Organic farms actively encourage biodiversity in order to maintain soil fertility and aid natural pest control – in contrast with conventional farms.

Therefore, after a great deal of research in organic markets and farms, I have prepared a shopping list for you listing my top five organic products available on the market, so that you know where to go and what to choose!



Mandarin & Ginger Extra Dark Chocolate by Seed & Bean

Description: Dominican Cocoa is delightfully blended with Italian Mandarin essential oil and a hint of ginger from China for a blissfully warm enveloping orange confection.

More details: www.seedandbean.co.uk

Mini Magoo's Granuesli with Bluberries

Description: Rich, handmade cereals. I particularly like the distinctive flavour of each ingredient that is not tainted by any additives. You can find it many different flavours such as dates or ginger.

More Details: www.minimagoo.com



365 Organic Everyday Value Olive Oil by Whole Foods Market

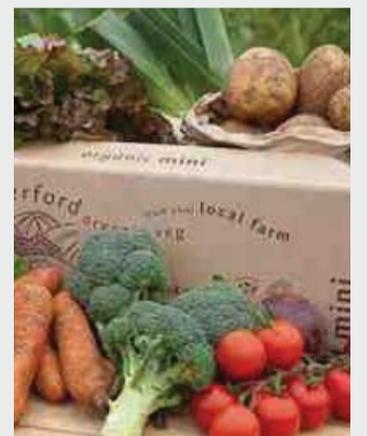
Description: It does make a significant difference to your salads. Try it on top of fresh bread!

More details: www.wholefoodsmarket.com

Mini Vegbox by Riverford Organic Farm

Description: It contains 7 or 8 varieties of very high quality fresh vegetables – better than Tesco or Sainsbury's. The most important thing is that it is a very reasonable price – £9.85 for the whole box.

More Details: www.riverford.co.uk



Organic Almonds by Not Just Nuts

Description: A healthy snack full of energy and vitamins. Use them as a fine flavouring, raw, sliced, ground or fried. Add to stir fries, use in the base of a nut roast or stuffing mix and taste the difference!

More details: www.notjustnuts.co.uk

Perfekt Ultimate Organic Granola

Description: The ultimate balance of delicious jumbo oats, crunchy nuts and seeds gently toasted with agave nectar.

More details: www.granovita.co.uk



Home & Garden Editors: **Tim Arbabzadah**
Charles Betts
Navid Nabijou

HOME & GARDEN

DIY: meditation room

Navid Nabijou embarks on a spirituo-materialistic journey

There isn't a whole lot of space in my flat. Its close proximity to college is a massive plus, but one of the trade-offs is having to share rooms. This isn't all bad by any means, but at times it can grow a bit trying.

When we moved in, we realised that – thanks to the wisdom of some enlightened architect – we were endowed with two storage rooms. Having managed to pile all the suitcases and broken bookshelves into one, the question arose as to what to do with the other.

The idea soon formed of having some sort of designated place of quiet. Some of us already had experience in the practice of meditation. After all, as millions all over the world can attest, you don't need to be a devout Buddhist monk to meditate. Anyone can do it, and should: if you've never tried, I really can't recommend it strongly enough. Even when practiced for just a few minutes each day, the mental and physical benefits of meditation are well documented.

You might well object at this point: "If you want to meditate, why not just go ahead and do it? Surely, tranquillity is something of the mind. Is such a lavishly decorated room really necessary?" You're right, of course. But somehow, having a specifically designated room is a great way to motivate you to actually use it.

Have I done enough to sell it to you? Good, then let's begin. First off, you're going to need to find all the stuff. We took a trip to Camden; there're a few shops around the Stables Market that stock everything you might need.

Exactly what you end up getting depends on your personal preference, as well as the dimensions of the room. We opted for a subdued red colour scheme to fill room, which measure about a metre by a metre and a half (small enough to fit a person in but not much else).

We selected four large throws (£7 each) to cover the walls and ceiling. Using drawing pins, we affixed three of them to the walls and hung one across the ceiling – just below the ceiling lamp, thereby softening the light coming into the room.

We then covered the floor with a thin carpet (£6), and placed a simply patterned cushion (£4) in the centre of the room.

A table for incense burning is an optional extra. We made ours by covering a cardboard box with a couple of patterned pashminas (£1 each). On top of this we put a small box to hold the incense and a fancy dragon-shaped incense burner we picked up in the market.

In its completed form, the room's a joy to use. At the end of a stressful day, nothing beats a quarter of an hour in silent repose, as the pungent aroma of the incense washes over you.

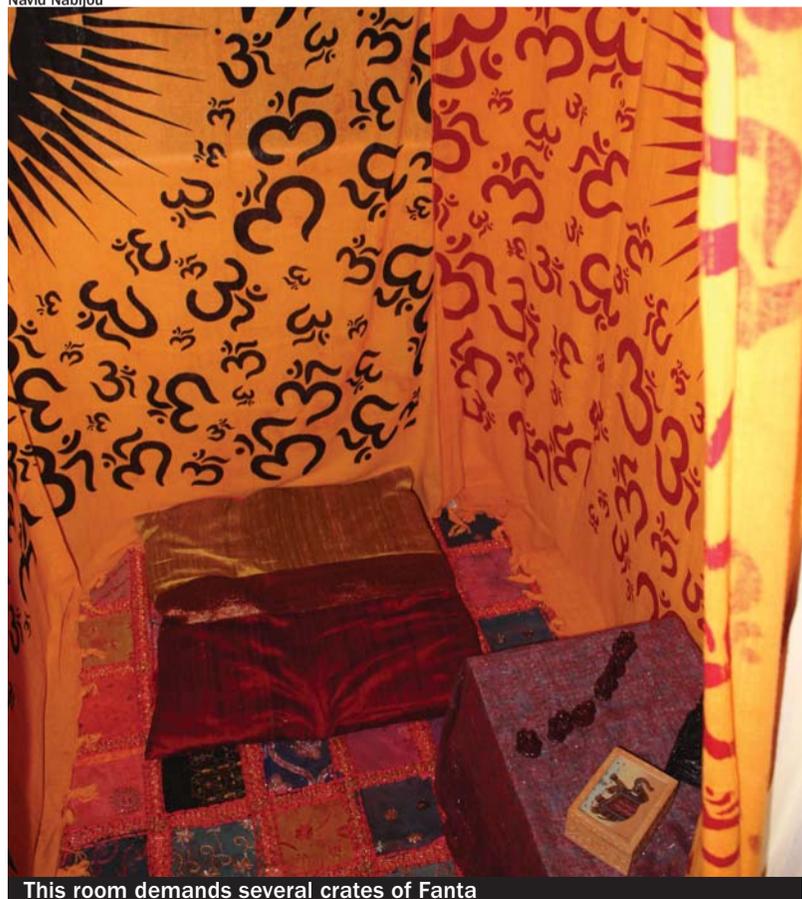
Navid Nabijou



One thing I would say – make it brighter

Wahey, we made it to a second week! Sorry for the lack of toilet jokes this time: we were flushed for ideas. BOOM! Groaning already? Think you can do better? Email us: felix@imperial.ac.uk

Navid Nabijou



This room demands several crates of Fanta



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CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Scouts

Jonathan Peek



Better than Titanic

When someone says 'girl guide' or 'scout' to you, many people fondly envisage either the days of being one themselves, or the likes of a Brownie or Cub Scout doing something craft based or learning knots. What many people don't realise is that both organisations in fact have sections aimed at people up to the age of 25, who do activities that are relevant to them: a casual camping trip all of a sudden has the chance to get a lot more extreme.

This term, there has been a rejuvenation of the Scout & Guide group at Imperial, called 'SSAGO', part of the Student Scout and Guide Organisation. Last active just over 10 years ago it has re-established, and as a project, it has many facets. The first is as a mixed Student group, open to everyone, which does a variety of activities (characteristic of both Scouting & Guiding) from archery to attending the Comedy Store.

Then there are the badges. It's easy at Imperial to get swept up in the everyday hustle and bustle of labs, tutorials, lectures, coursework, and come out of it wondering what physical, satisfying, tangible evidence you have of your accomplishments. That's what the humble badge is for, a symbol of something to work towards and a true beacon of achievement once obtained. You may scoff now, but you'll mull it over later, and want one.

The other less obvious facet to this group is the volunteering. In the same heady mix identified above, it is equally easy to go through your entire Imperial career without ever interacting with the local, non-Imperial, community. Through SSAGO, you're able to get in touch with a local Guide or Scout group to volunteer your skills and experience to an audience from anywhere between 5 and 18, on a one-off occasion or something more regular. This offers really rewarding opportunity to work with children, and allows you to share your experience with a fascinated audience.

If you want to tie everything SSAGO has to offer together, perhaps the most exciting and challenging facet of the project is the opportunity to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh Award (or finish an uncompleted one), or the Queen's Guide/ Scout Award. We've got a presentation about these and more on November 22, and if you'd like to hear more we'd love to hear from you by emailing ssago@imperial.ac.uk.

Jenny Wilson

What's it all about?

College Chaplain **Andrew Willson** introduces the Chaplaincy – a welfare service for Imperial students

Chaplaincy is really about conversation," is the way a student once put it. Chaplaincy is a faith based welfare service for students. We seek to provide hospitality, support, reflection and dialogue around belief, religion, faith and spirituality. What that actually means is different types of 'conversations'.

Some conversations are quite straightforward. These are responses to clear religious needs – 'I have just moved flat where is my nearest mosque/temple/church?' or 'I would like to find out more about my religion – can I meet with the Faith Advisor?' or 'Are there prayer rooms I can use?'

"In a community like Imperial there is a massive range of beliefs about the 'big questions of life'"

To reflect the diversity of religious views held by members of Imperial, the Chaplaincy has a team of Chaplains and Faith Advisors for a variety of world faiths: Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist. The Chaplaincy Centre has space for meetings and worship. We have quiet places in Beit Quad and Princes Gardens for meditation or prayer.

For those who want to explore a particular faith practice, Chaplaincy provides opportunities for meditation from Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu traditions.

Chaplaincy can also help with 'conversations about meaning'. In an international academic community like Imperial there is a massive range of beliefs about the 'big questions of life'. These include, among others, 'Why we are here?' 'What constitutes a person?' 'Where do we find meaning?' 'Do meanings have a lasting value?' 'Why do bad things happen?' and 'Is there a God/god? And if there is what does that



Chaplaincy can help with 'conversations about meaning'

mean?'

These questions are not just intellectual questions. Some of these questions relate to how we see and treat others. These influence our relationships, our professional ethics and our politics. The questions of purpose may influence how we see our work and career choices. And these apparently intellectual questions can have emotional dimensions about trust, hope, fear and desire.

The Chaplains have time for very open reflective conversations that allow us to do our thinking out loud. These conversations are confidential and respectful of the person's worldview. Sometimes highly creative conversations occur because of great differences in religious and philosophical outlook. Rooted in our own traditions, we offer space for open reflective conversation to anyone who wants to use it.

Increasingly, Chaplaincy is involved in conversations between people from different reli-

gious traditions. This is about learning firsthand about other people's beliefs and practice. It is also about becoming skilled at handling divergent and conflicting views. This kind of conversation is now trying to create new and positive engagement between religious and humanist perspectives. (See Rory Fenton's Guardian Online Comment at bit.ly/nJEJxI).

The other emerging conversation of our time is with those who describe themselves as 'spiritual but not religious'. With students at the Royal College of Art we now have a non-religious meditation time. This uses simple methods of self awareness that allows people from different backgrounds to share silence and stillness (and is open to Imperial students).

Good conversation is one that can bring change and growth to both conversation partners. Conversations with students and colleagues from different religious and secular perspectives have shown me that my own faith is not about intellectual certainty but about deeper relationships of trust.

In the Chaplaincy we are open for conversation. So if you want to talk about Nietzsche and the death of God, or you want to try Indian cooking with our Hindu Chaplain, or walk a labyrinth, or try interfaith discussion, or talk about medical or engineering ethics, or sing carols, or talk about your anatomy classes, or if you have a really weird dream and want to change career, or to find new ways to pray, or talk about someone who has died, or if you want to find out about the religion of the person you have just fallen in love with, or... as I say, we are open to conversation.

For more information about Chaplaincy conversations and experiments in religion, spirituality and faith see www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy



Chaplaincy provides opportunities for various world faiths

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Student projects share at symposium

From e.quinox to Raincatcher Imperial; students gather to discuss their experiences

James Chia

Are you part of a student-led project at Imperial? Or perhaps you'd like to join one – or better yet, even start your own? No doubt you've heard of the achievements of some of the College's most ambitious student projects, which include e.quinox, who deliver electric power to rural villages in Rwanda, and Raincatcher Imperial, who aim to improve the availability of clean water to residents in Tanzania. Such projects clearly have a wealth of experience and knowledge in implementing solutions that are of benefit to the wider community.

The Students-Led Projects Symposium (SPS) aims to bring these societies together under one roof, such that they can meet with each other and benefit from each other's experiences. Jointly organised by both Imperial College London and Loughborough University students, the event provides an optimum interactive environment for keynote speakers, representatives from the Union and the societies to network and exchange their thoughts and ideas on student-led projects. In the words of Merwin Man, who came up with the idea of the symposium in the first place, 'the purpose of the conference is to create a community to encourage knowledge transfer between student-led projects and its members, something



Imperial previously hosted its first Global Citizenship Symposium

that does not exist in a functioning form at Imperial College'. He believes that by encouraging student projects to share their opinions and experiences on what works and what doesn't, they will develop a better understanding of the steps they can take in order to successfully meet their goals. He also hopes that the symposium will inspire other students to get involved in one of the most rewarding aspects of student-life.

The SPS, which is due to happen on 16th November 2011, will be a national event held at Imperial College London, with students from universities around the UK coming down to participate in the symposium. This event aims to bring

these projects together and give recognition to the endeavours of students who have already started using their skills for the benefit of the wider community. By sharing their ideas and presenting their work to the public and other students, the SPS focuses on encouraging and developing current and new student-led initiatives. The symposium kicks off with panel discussions that involve representatives from the Union and the societies themselves, who will discuss how they went about starting their projects, and how they are run today.

Earlier this year, Imperial College London saw its first Global Citizenship Symposium (GCS), a symposium of a

similar nature, held at a smaller scale and targeted at Imperial College students. The discussions revolved around the ever-important issue of money, with an emphasis on raising funds, and at how the Union and CAG can support the student's idea or project. Simon Moss, the co-founder of the Global Poverty Project, who has spoken at prominent conferences in the past, including G20 and WEF summits, was invited to the symposium to give a presentation to the GCS.

The SPS will be beneficial for anyone with an interest in student-led projects, as well as to students currently involved in their own projects. "The symposium

will let us know what other projects exist and what they do," says Karen Ng of Robogals, who encourage girls at school to take a greater interest in science and technology. "It will help us develop our own and others' project, whilst also enabling us to give more back to the student community and to our supporters!" As places are limited, prompt registration at the website below is recommended, with the event promising to be a stimulating overview of student-led projects at Imperial College London, Loughborough University and others.

November 16 2011 – go to www.union.ic.ac.uk/cag/symposium to register for free.

European success for Imperial at iGEM

Rebekka Bauer

The iGEM (international Genetically Engineered Machine) competition is run every year with hundreds of teams from all over the world competing for the top prize in synthetic biology – a shiny piece of glass. It is now in its eighth year running and bigger than ever before, with the grand finale at MIT now preceded by three regionals in Europe, Asia and America. The objective of the competition is to essentially engineer bacteria to do something awesome – find land mines, produce fiery luminescence, you name it.

We were but lowly undergraduates when we signed up to be part of this year's Imperial iGEM team but can now easily be identified by a lack of personal grooming usually observed exclusively in the late stages of PhD thesis writing, and if you are unfortunate enough to catch one of us in a bar you will likely

be subjected to a rant about Gibson assembly (it never works, man) or Bio-Brick standards (it's pointless, man). But I digress.

Our team of biologists, biochemists and bioengineers started out enthusiastically (and maybe a tiny bit naively) in early July, when we brainstormed for ideas on how to engineer microbes to do something awesome. After two weeks of coming up with concepts that ranged from feasible to completely wacky, we finally found the project of our dreams: AuxIn. Named after the phytohormone auxin, the project does what the title says: we engineered *E. coli* to produce indole 3-acetic acid, a type of auxin that enhances plant root growth. We were interested in expressing this hormone as it makes plants grow highly branched roots that can be used for holding down top soil in areas prone to soil erosion and desertification.

Once we had settled on a project, we

jumped straight into the "human practices" component of our idea. We talked to ecologists, plant scientists, social scientists from LSE, charity founders and a Greenpeace scientific advisor to make sure that our project was viable and could be implemented in a sensible way. This led us to design Gene Guard, a containment device that prevents horizontal gene transfer (bacteria passing on DNA in the environment). We also looked at how we could implement our project in a culturally sensitive and responsible way and designed a concept of using a seed coat to cover seeds in our bacteria, which could then be shipped to countries such as Australia and India where soil erosion poses a big problem.

The project was completed with a third module, which enables bacteria to swim towards the root exudate malate to ensure that the compound reaches roots. Amazingly, we also found a paper published last year describing how plants

are able to break down their own cell walls and eat bacteria – a great platform for modifying plants without directly engineering them.

And then we started living in a lab on SAF's 5th floor. Communist attitudes towards sharing lab space quickly morphed into imperialist conquests for working pipettes. Tempers flared, friendships were tested. However, by the end of the summer, we came out exhausted but happy. Our bacteria produced auxin that could be seen to affect plants; they swam towards malate and were taken up into the roots and our Gene Guard module was only a week away from completion. On top of that, our engineers had done some amazing modelling and designed an entire website from scratch. We had also presented our project at the Natural History Museum and set up a radio show around iGEM, which we are told other people listen to.

Full of good hopes, we boarded a

plane to Amsterdam on the first weekend of term. With iron determination we ignored the temptation of illicit substances and spent our time in the hotel room running over our vital, final 20-minute presentation. Nervosity ran high but we had our Disney movie moment when we were announced as finalists and Chris and Nikki got up to deliver the most amazing speech of their lives.

This experience could only be topped by what followed soon – the Imperial iGEM team was crowned Grand Prize winner in the first ever regional jamboree.

Happy and tired, we flew back to London and took a few days of deserved rest.

But the journey is not yet over. Soon we will be flying out to Boston to present our project again, this time competing against the top teams from Europe, Asia and America. We will continue to work on our project until then and hopefully find a great end to an amazing summer.

HANGMAN



hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Meet your* World

*in the sense that you can do what you want, provided you obey local laws, and/or have enough money. So no, not really yours.

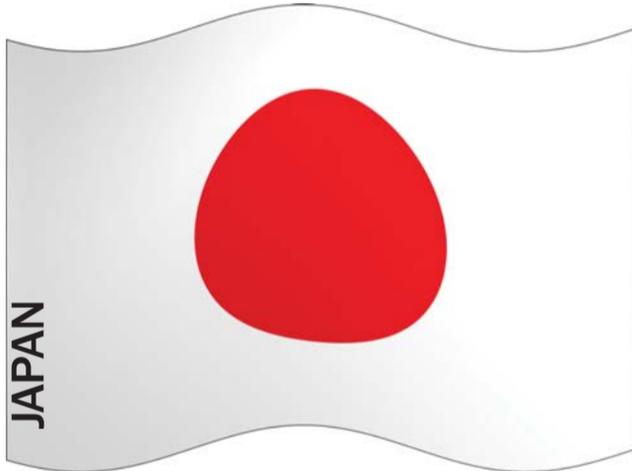
The world doesn't start and end within the M25, you know... although, who really cares?



- Ashamed of Che Guevara
- Ashamed of Diego Maradona
- Ashamed of Che Guevara's face on every fucking t-shirt



- Children who get straight A's at school
- Children of disappointed parents



- Total electronics export
- Total tentacle porn export



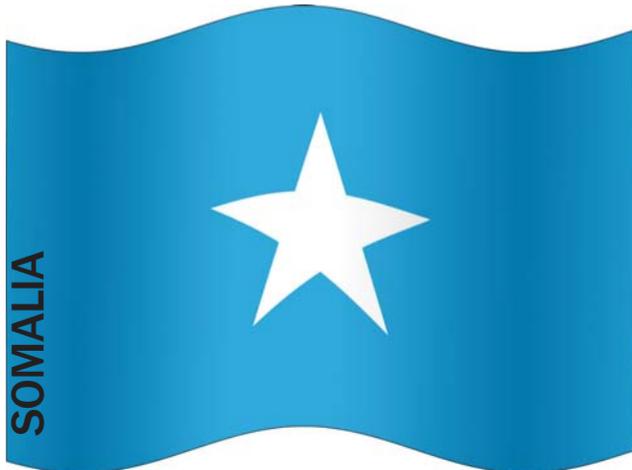
- Amount you know about Kazakhstan from a travel guide
- Amount you know from watching Borat



- Think Luxembourg copied the Netherlands
- Think the Netherlands copied Luxembourg
- Think it's a French flag on its side



- There for the 'coffee' shops
- There for the hookers
- Both



- Actual number of pirates
- Pirates according to the Daily Mail



- Male
- Female
- OH MY GOD IT'S A TRAP

HANGMAN

THE NEWS WITHOUT THE NEWS
Berlusconi realises those pills weren't Viagra



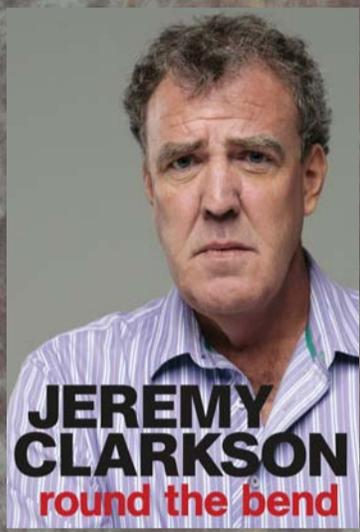
DRUNKEN MATE OF THE WEEK



'Holy shit, she's passed out. I'm TOTALLY using this opportunity to touch myself while looking at her' - Guy on left

The Illiterate Book Club

Every week you can buff up on the biggest new books without lifting a finger. Okay, so, they may not be 100% accurate, but you didn't expect us to actually read all these did you? No, we just judged them by their covers, but when's that ever caused a problem?



JEREMY CLARKSON
round the bend

Jeza's latest sacrifice to the literary Gods, *round the bend*, asks and answers very few questions, whilst exploring a staggeringly small array of themes. It plunders a level of depth usually reserved for attaining one's 5m swimming certificate. More than this, the off-putting face of the middle aged man overbears what we can only imagine would have been an otherwise rather interesting and inspiring plain grey book cover. When cynics say that Clarkson "squeezed this out in time for Christmas", they accidentally have identified his medical condition called arsewheremouthshouldbeitis. Meaning, he can only talk out of his arse, even when he tries not to. The title *round the bend*, is a possible allusion to homosexuality. In fact, the book (probably) discusses his struggle with being a Conservative and a homosexual. Similar themes are possibly discussed in Liam Fox and William Hague's upcoming memoirs. The cover picture is honest in it's depiction of Clarkson's writing style; take a laxative or two and heave out 80,000 words for Daily Mail readers to lap up. Job done.

Horoscopes*

*We're not responsible for the financial crises. That's due to cowboy bankers and the Greek.

Aries

This week, you have to explain why you gave your lab report in late. The lecturer allows you to. Before you know it. BAM. You're on his office floor quicker than a call girl in the Italian Prime Minister's residence. Wait, he already agreed to give you the marks. Not again.

Taurus

With your improbable hair and silly tan, it might have made sense to resign to save your country. But, oh wait. No one else knows what to do. Ah. Hmm... maybe we should all resign... to watch porn and have wanks all day long. Then money wouldn't matter as much.

Gemini

On Tuesday, you managed to trick a student with the whole lick-for-tick trick. You gave HIM a 2:2. Fucking long hair, always fooling you from behind. They may have banned the cane, but you've found a new way to punish young boys. All we're saying is, tight gap.

Cancer

We must apologise for the above solution. It seems that former Home Secretary Jacqui Smith's husband already 'beat' us to it. Two, four, six, eight... Mr Smith likes to mas_u__ate. Send in your complete answers to Hangman. First one gets a cock in the mouth.

Leo

Clearly, this is a story all about how your life got flip-turned upside-down. You got anally penetrated by Professor Schlong. Should have know by his name and bad acting he was a porn star. Fucking movember, makes everyone look like Ron Jeremy.

Virgo

Feeling shit about being fat? Here's a tip: eat less and do more sport. Then you might be less fucking bitchy towards upper class skinny chicks and have less of a chip on your shoulder. Luckily, you're at Imperial, so you'll still get loads. Still an idea to compensate with blowjobs.

Libra

Understandably, Felix doesn't need off-air microphones to say what it thinks. Some people say Netanyahu is a liar, and Papandreaou is crazy and depressed. All we know is Sarkozy is a titch who's too busy banging supermodels to care. And if we were French, we'd go on strike.

Scorpio

You used to like Christmas. Then you came across Michael Buble's Christmas album. Sometimes there really isn't enough vomit in the world. What a prat. It's a pile of commercial crap. You go to his house and shit in his ear. Now he knows how it feels.

Sagittarius

Naturally, it's tough being tall, isn't it? Oh, wait. No it isn't. Your legs are longer, you're hotter. And you can reach the jam on the top shelf. We're actually being nice to you right now. For one week only. Unless you happen to be short, then that kind of back-fired. Shit.

Capricorn

We were going to write something witty about how shit *The X Factor* is. But we couldn't muster the enthusiasm for something that is so, so awful. Like middle class commoners with no taste. Apparently karaoke is worth watching. Have people never heard of *Coach Trip*?

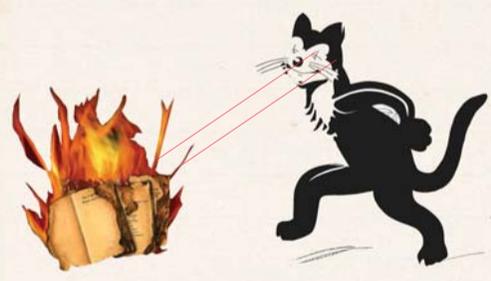
Aquarius

This episode of *Coach Trip* is amazing! What's going to happen next? Stop for petrol? A fat guy farting? Some cow slapping a really nice guy in the face? You just never know. A bunch of vain, stupid and talentless people may burst into song. Damn, that's ITV again.

Pisces

Let's start tackling authority! I know, let's start by pissing in your mate's bathtub. Rip up your lecturer's notes in front of him, while showing him photos of you defiling his wife (you need to be committed). All the bitches love a bad boy. Boobies; had to get it in there.

HANGMAN DICTIONARY
 MISINFORMING IMPERIAL SINCE 1984



Tree (n.)
 1. It's got wood. Like we do when we see Louise Mensch. And it has sap. Like the edge a Conservative politician's mouth, after we're through with her.
 2. The mobile phone network of choice for chavvy Jamaicans.

(con't.)

3. Tall, pointless thing that doesn't do much. Has no A-Levels, but isn't an arts student. Some crazies say if we chop enough down, we're all going to die from oxygen starvation. Like that evening we spent with Louise Mensch.

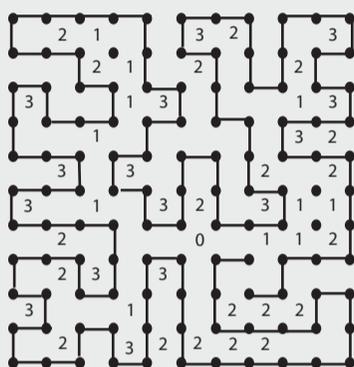
Internet (n.)
 1. A world-wide network proven to be more effective than any training program, gym or dumbbell set in strengthening the male right arm.
 2. The place where you'll see a thing on, and you'll exclaim: "WTF? That's a thing?" only to find out there's a whole message board devoted to it.
 3. To all forms of media what Tesco is to shops. A juggernaut that puts all else out of business, except that there is no Sainsbury's or Asda for competition. God help us all.
 4. A safe haven for those that want to shout racist, homophobic and sexist views - see also **Horoscopes (n.)**

PUZZLES

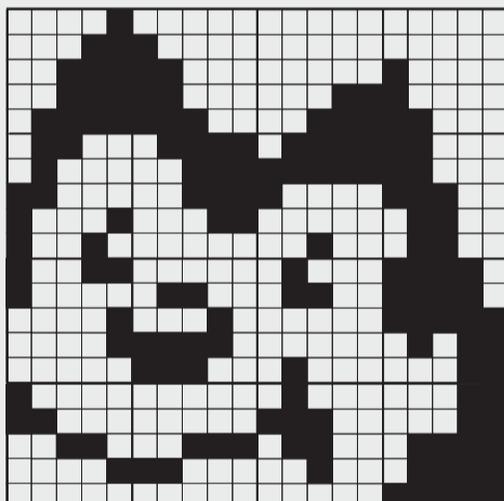
puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Last Week's Solutions

Slitherlink



Nonogram



Crosswords

Still time to send in your solutions to last week's to win some champagne. Good luck!

Anagrams

1. Dodgeball 2. Badminton 3. Chess-Boxing 4. Skeleton 5. Water Polo Ans: Sitting

Film Strip

1. Road to Perdition 2. Toy Story 3. Sleepless in Seattle 4. Cast Away 5. Saving Private Ryan Theme: Tom Hanks

Cryptogram

"Things that upset a terrier may pass virtually unnoticed by a Great Dane" - Smiley Blanton

Chess

Solution begins with 1...Qxf3! all other attempts to bust open the white kingside fail. Now: 2. gxf3 Rhg8+ 3. Kh1 Bxf3 mate. However the more critical line arises after 2. Qxa7+ Kc8 3. Qa8+ Kd7 4. Rd1+ Ke6 where the black king is safe and the black mating attack unstoppable.

Quick(ish) Crossword

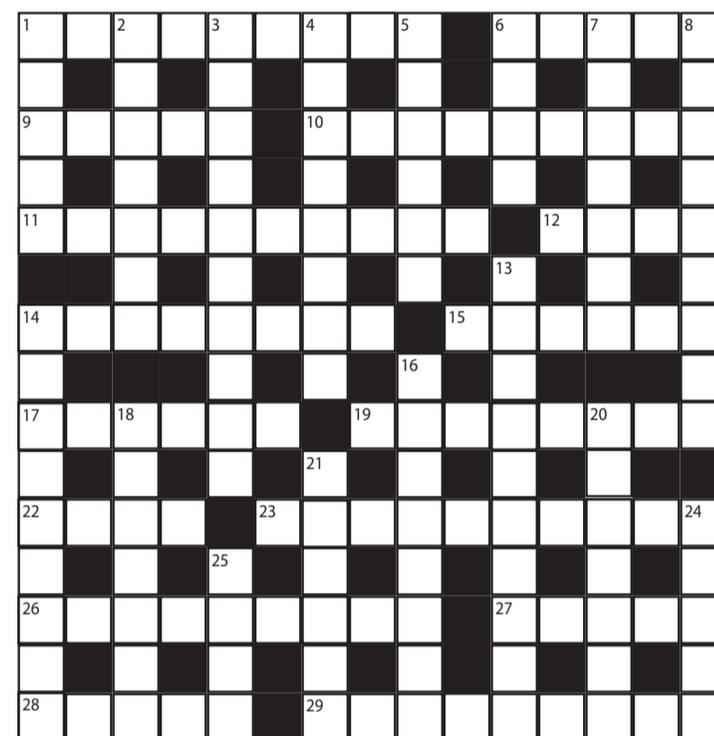
Across

- 1. *Plant; Peter Pan princess (5,4)
- 6. Piece of jewelry with a protrait; brief guest appearance (5)
- 9. Distinctive smell (5)
- 10. e.g. John Adams, John Quincy Adams (9)
- 11. *Golfer aka Eldrick Tont (5,5)
- 12. An academic (inf.) (4)
- 14. People learning to do a particular job or profession (8)
- 15. Device that records images (6)
- 17. Electrician; manager (6)
- 19. e.g. King, Queen (4,4)
- 22. Disorderly retreat (4)
- 23. Simple, famous waltz by Euphemia Allen (10)
- 26. Group of people attending an important person (9)
- 27. Pious (5)
- 28. Before expected time (5)
- 29. Permanently accessible or available (4-5)

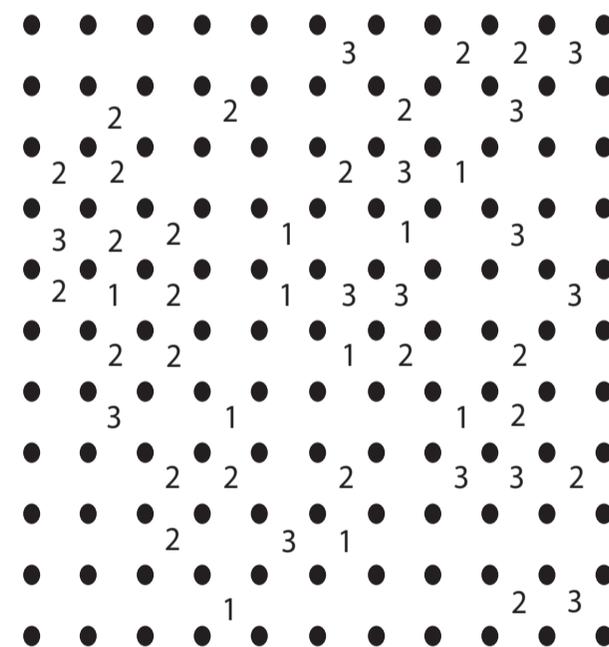
Down

- 1. Cook by exposure to grill (5)
- 2. Capitals include Tbilisi and Atlanta (7)
- 3. Swift, crested bird of the cuckoo family (10)
- 4. Collapsed inward (8)
- 5. Gives in; crops (6)
- 6. Murderer speculated to be the son of the serpent (4)
- 7. Former world no.1 tennis player (7)
- 8. Unmanageable or wild (3,2,4)
- 13. *Something that appears threatening but is ineffectual (5,5)
- 14. *Yellowish-brown variety of quartz (6,3)
- 16. Part of telephone or radio receiver used to hear (8)
- 18. Flap rapidly; gamble (7)
- 20. Southern Greek district home of the god Pan (7)
- 21. Ancient area now in Bulgaria, Turkey and Greece (6)
- 24. Obstruct or prevent progress (5)
- 25. Having lots to do (4)

Asterisked clues are connected in some way...



SLITHERLINK



ChessSoc Chess



White to play and mate in 2 moves

FUCWIT League Leader Board

Teams:

The Jailbaits	35
Elbowfart	29
Pegasus & Parrots	28
Paddy Got Bummed	25

Individuals:

Jeremy Neale	43
Wael Aljeshi	21

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

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

Comics are back in force!

You'll notice a reduced puzzles section today, but all your regulars will be back next week including some brand new comics. The first one is below, a sign of things to come...

THE MOST POWERFUL TEAM OF HEROES EVER ASSEMBLED!!



SUPER STRENGTH

POWER OF FLIGHT

TELEPATHY

HAS A TAIL

Simianreflux.com

Sport Editors: **Indy Leclercq**
David Wilson

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

SPORT

Felix Sports League

...where do you stand?



Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Index
1 Badminton M2	2	2	0	0	14	2	12	5.00
2 Basketball M1	3	3	0	0	197	144	53	5.00
3 Fencing W1	2	2	0	0	270	137	133	5.00
4 Hockey M2	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	5.00
5 Hockey W1	3	3	0	0	9	4	5	5.00
6 ICSM Badminton M2	1	1	0	0	6	2	4	5.00
7 ICSM Football M2	3	3	0	0	11	6	5	5.00
8 ICSM Hockey W2	2	2	0	0	10	1	9	5.00
9 Lacrosse W1	2	2	0	0	36	3	33	5.00
10 Netball W1	3	3	0	0	108	75	33	5.00
11 Rugby M2	2	2	0	0	47	13	34	5.00
12 Tennis W1	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	5.00
13 Ultimate Frisbee 1	1	1	0	0	15	0	15	5.00
14 Tennis M2	3	2	1	0	22	14	8	4.00
15 Hockey W2	2	1	1	0	4	3	1	3.50
16 Squash W1	2	1	1	0	6	2	4	3.50
17 Badminton W1	3	1	2	0	15	9	6	3.00
18 Fencing M2	2	2	0	1	368	216	152	3.00
19 Rugby M1	4	3	0	1	116	58	58	2.75
20 Badminton M1	3	2	0	1	18	6	12	2.00
21 ICSM Hockey W1	4	2	1	1	23	9	14	2.00
22 Football M2	3	1	1	1	9	9	0	1.00
23 Basketball W1	2	1	0	1	117	69	48	0.50
24 Football W1	2	1	0	1	8	11	-3	0.50
25 Golf 1	2	1	0	1	5.5	5.5	0	0.50
26 ICSM Badminton W1	2	1	0	1	8	8	0	0.50
27 ICSM Football M1	2	1	0	1	4	6	-2	0.50
28 ICSM Netball W1	2	1	0	1	82	72	10	0.50
29 ICSM Netball W2	2	1	0	1	52	50	2	0.50
30 ICSM Netball W4	2	1	0	1	47	50	-3	0.50
31 ICSM Rugby M3	4	2	0	2	88	90	-2	0.50
32 Lacrosse M1	2	1	0	1	34	18	16	0.50
33 Squash M3	2	1	0	1	3	7	-4	0.50
34 Tennis M1	2	1	0	1	15	5	10	0.50
35 Futsal M1	4	2	0	2	18	27	-9	0.50
36 Football M1	2	0	1	1	1	3	-2	-1.00
37 Football M3	3	1	0	2	7	8	-1	-1.00
38 Hockey M1	3	1	0	2	6	4	2	-1.00
39 ICSM Rugby M1	3	1	0	2	52	104	-52	-1.00
40 ICSM Rugby M2	3	1	0	2	32	135	-103	-1.00
41 Netball W3	3	1	0	2	74	67	7	-1.00
42 Squash M1	3	1	0	2	3	12	-9	-1.00
43 Table Tennis M1	3	1	0	2	23	28	-5	-1.00
44 ICSM Netball W5	4	0	1	3	25	185	-160	-2.50
45 Fencing M3	1	0	0	1	120	130	-10	-4.00
46 Fencing W2	1	0	0	1	84	129	-45	-4.00
47 Hockey M3	3	0	0	3	3	11	-8	-4.00
48 Hockey M4	3	0	0	3	0	24	-24	-4.00
49 ICSM Badminton M1	1	0	0	1	0	8	-8	-4.00
50 ICSM Basketball M1	1	0	0	1	46	64	-18	-4.00
51 ICSM Hockey M1	3	0	0	3	6	26	-20	-4.00
52 ICSM Hockey M2	3	0	0	3	3	19	-16	-4.00
53 ICSM Hockey M3	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	-4.00
54 ICSM Hockey W3	1	0	0	1	0	7	-7	-4.00
55 ICSM Netball W3	3	0	0	3	26	106	-80	-4.00
56 Netball Women's 2nd	1	0	0	1	14	41	-27	-4.00
57 Rugby M3	3	0	0	3	22	57	-35	-4.00
58 Squash M2	1	0	0	1	0	5	-5	-4.00
59 Squash M4	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	-4.00
60 Table Tennis M2	1	0	0	1	5	12	-7	-4.00

The (actual) League table is back! It doesn't have all the teams in it yet, as some of you haven't played yet...but will be updated every week.

5 points for a win | 2 points for a draw | -4 points for a loss

'Spanking' brings Reading to tears

Teddy Middlebrook
Hockey

Imperial Ladies 1s 5
Reading 1s 0

After coming down from the league above Reading were confident of a win. With our full squad of 12 players and our coach Oli on the sideline we were ready to cause an upset.

We had a relatively even first half with neither side converting their chances leaving the half-time scoreline at 0-0 thanks mostly to Goalie Jess. Following some great advice and encouragement from Oli we went on to score our first goal two minutes later – a slick pass from Teddy on the backline for Shanika to finish from the p-spot, just as Oli told us to.

Our second goal followed shortly after, Shanika held the ball in the D for Harriet to run on to and first time drag through the keeper's open legs. Reading tried to up the pressure but never looked dangerous in our circle.

Meanwhile our defence continued to neatly switch the ball around the back with Aash making some spectacular tackles. Fifteen minutes in Teddy dribbled into the D and smashed the ball at the keeper, which she unfortunately saved, thankfully Nora was there to send the ball back to Teddy,



Speak softly and carry a big stick

at the coveted p-spot, where she finally flicked it into the net.

Our defence held their composure with Celia making some key distributions straight up the pitch. Kirstin was on the receiving end of one of these and scored an impressive goal from an un-

likely angle! By now Reading's heads were down and IC continued to push forward. We had a number of shortcorners disallowed but Gigi finally secured our 5-0 victory with a great push from a rebounded shortcorner, leaving Reading crying on the sideline...literally!

IC Women's cricket make BUCS final at Lord's

Win vs Bournemouth bags a ticket to finals

Taniya Parikh
Indoor Cricket

Imperial 128-3 Bournemouth 95 all out
Imperial 121-2 Bournemouth 24 all out

On October 22 the ICU Women's cricket team participated in the BUCS Women's Indoor Cricket Championships held at Fleming Park Leisure Centre in Southampton. After a two hour drive we looked forward to a day of action packed cricket!

In this regional tournament we were one of four teams alongside UCL, Southampton University and Bournemouth University. Our



Playing at Lord's in January? Wicket!

squad consisted of seasoned players Priya Patel (captain), Priya Shah, Celeste van den Bosch and Mithila Patkunan (wicketkeeper); and new comers Natalie Jones, Mitali Mishra and Taniya Parikh. Special thanks go to Sidharth Kohli who acted as our coach and scorer. The full worth of his pre-match training session and tips was revealed when Priya S took a brilliant catch off the wall!

ICU Women's Cricket team beat Bournemouth University (twice) to progress through to the finals at Lord's.

We played two matches, of 12 overs each, both against Bournemouth. We won by 33 runs in the first match and a resounding 97 in the second. Celeste shone in the first match scor-

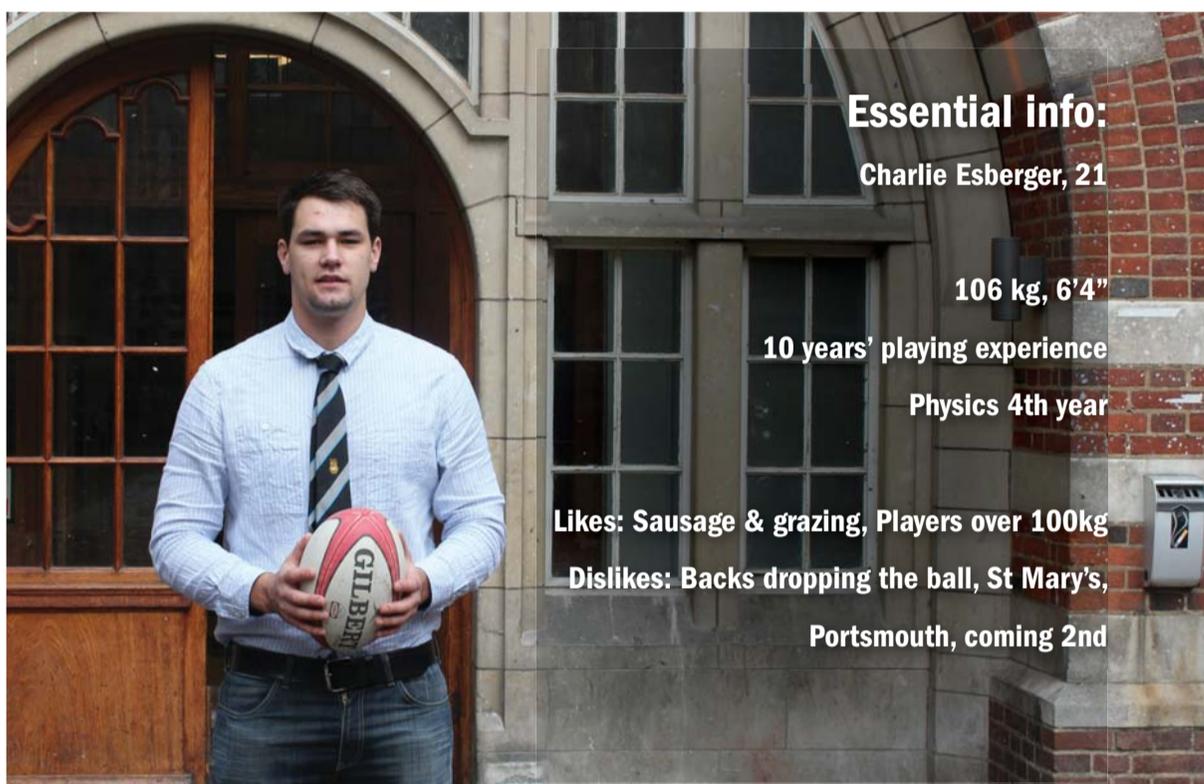
ing 22 runs and picking up 4 wickets. In the second match a fantastic bowling attack led by Priya S caused the opposition to be dismissed for a mere 24 runs in 4 overs.

The women's team is now preparing for the finals which will take place on January 25th at Lord's! Even though they'll be up against some tough competition from Exeter, Bristol, Southampton, Birmingham and Loughborough who have also reached the final, the challenge is eagerly awaited. We will be practising hard in nets until then. If you're interested in joining us, we'd love to hear from you so drop us a line.

Email cricket@ic.ac.uk for any info or if you're interested in joining!

SPORT

Club Captain Interview: Rugby



Essential info:

Charlie Esberger, 21

106 kg, 6'4"

10 years' playing experience

Physics 4th year

Likes: Sausage & grazing, Players over 100kg

Dislikes: Backs dropping the ball, St Mary's,

Portsmouth, coming 2nd

Indy Leclercq Sport Editor

After the mad rush that was Issue 1500, the Club Captains are back for a third interview! This week we feature the Captain of the Imperial College Rugby Union Football Club (to give him his full title), Charlie Esberger.

We manage to meet up briefly on Wednesday, just before the 1sts match against St Bart's and the Royal London Hospitals 1st. At the time of the interview, ICRUFC were sitting mid-table in the South Eastern 1A division, while St Bart's were first.

His thoughts on the afternoon's match? "It's going to be a close one, the last time we played them we dominated but threw away some points towards the end and lost it." Definitely up for a spot of revenge then. (In the event, the match is an emphatic win as IC run away with it, 59-10 - Ed.)

I ask him how the start of the season has gone for the first XV. "We've played four matches so far, and won three of those. We were disappointed to lose a tight match to St Bart's (as mentioned above - Ed.) but followed that up with a great win against St Mary's. We all hate St Mary's, none more so than our coach Birkett." Any particular reason for the animosity? "They're just really gobby - they think they're the dog's bollocks. Also, we've had some good, physical games against them in the past." Ah, nothing like a good rivalry to spice things up a bit (although Charlie tells me Ports-

mouth aren't very high up his list of friends either).

While the firsts are evidently doing well, having now won four out of five, I ask about the fortunes of the other IC Rugby teams.

"The 2nd XV have had a decent start, and sit second in their league (South Eastern 3B - Ed.). They're pushing to

Obviously this season we want to go up... we want to make every session count

go back up after relegation last season. The 3rd XV have started slowly, but will push on from here."

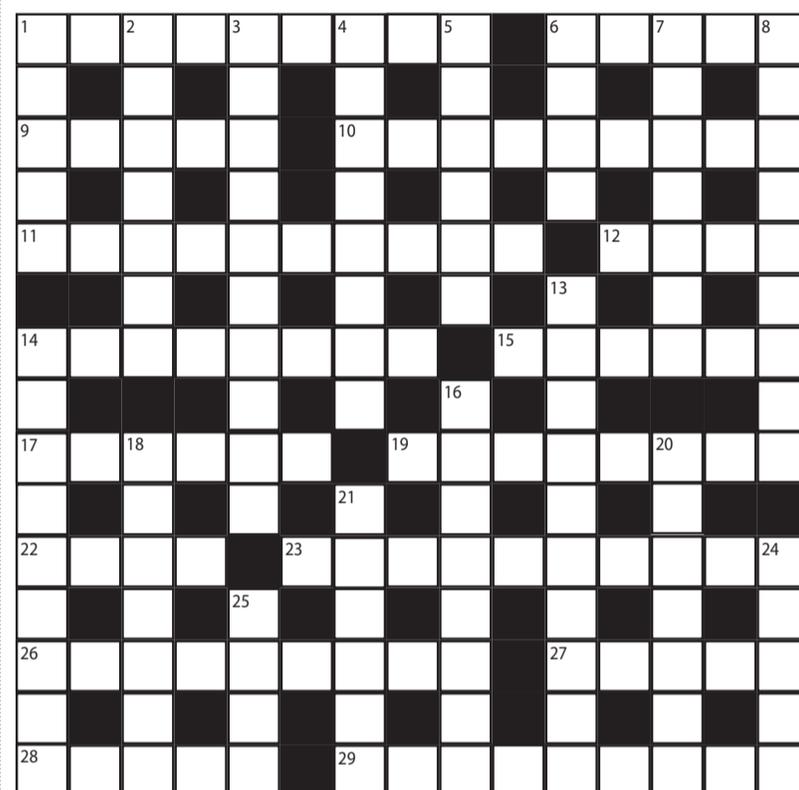
As he mentioned that the 2nd team are aiming for re-promotion, I ask what the team's objectives are for this season. They have finished second in their division for the past two years, and Charlie seems determined to get it this year: "Obviously this season we want to go up. We're trying to make every session count by making sure everyone is there and organising things to target specific areas of our gameplay."

"We train Monday and Friday evenings, while the 1st XV forwards also drill the lineout on Tuesday mornings. We have 4 coaches: Rich Birkett - current Wasps 2nd row (Heineken Cup & Premiership winner); Brimah Kebbie, who is a club legend and has been around longer than anyone can remember, an ex-rugby league professional; Ed Burt, who specialises in video analysis and is employed by Wasps; finally Joe Brown who graduated from here in 2010 and now plays for Esher in the championship." I can't help but be impressed at the depth of the coaching staff. Surely the 1sts will get promotion this year.

Having said that, a team is only as good as its players. Has anyone distinguished themselves so far this season? "Sean Baker is a complete animal on the pitch and has been excellent. Probably player of the season so far, played across the back row and even filled in at loosehead. Billy & Hugh G have also been omnipresent and made a massive difference on and off the pitch." Evidently the captain thinks highly of his men.

As far as the off-pitch aspect is concerned, we all know the rugby lads know how to make themselves heard at ACC nights. I ask Charlie how the new bar night policy affects the club and what he thinks about it. "I don't know the ins and outs of the situation," he says, "but it strikes me as a shame. Maybe changes were necessary, but the vast majority of people think it has gone too far. The most the most frus-

Cryptic Crossword 1,501



Across

1. Helpful person excited by arts mania (9)
6. Vice around light (5)
9. Make up freedom from commercials (2-3)
10. Sing, bizarrely, about letter for debt. Clever! (9)
11. Loudest army post is mainly silly in my opinion (10)
12. Deposit primary sapphire haul (4)
14. "A dishonourable man, I am backwards" - Imperial lecturer (8)
15. Occupation to move quickly and wildly (6)
17. Right in white treat (6)
19. Irresponsible, break out leaders of Klan (8)
22. No name supplied soon (4)
23. One stealing money having broken barb awkwardly (4,6)
26. Relaxing resort to recede roll of fat (5,4)
27. Artery found in vertebra or tail (5)
28. Exploit sheltered side of courthouse (5)
29. Fail 3 times, refuse to work to exhaustion (6,3)

Down

1. Cut initially frightening (16 (5))
2. Heart of small song with disease (7)
3. Playboy gear showing signs of upset holy man? (6,4)
4. Sonic's mate to restrain diving descent (8)
5. I'm a nag abot kumquat shrub (6)
6. Able to eat at first stick (4)
7. Disciple has stake in drink (7)
8. Father's weapons - these allow access (9)
13. Consecutively give final support (4,2,4)
14. Valuation of Angry Birds, for instance, to nearly gather Green, perhaps (9)
16. Over short distance, deterioration of something to keep warm (8)
18. Keep herb surrounding mountain (7)
20. Go amber, moving? Stop! (7)
21. Attacks surrounding quiet part of river (6)
24. Respond with hostility concerning achievement (5)
25. I am quiet on network (4)

trating thing is when the policy makers repeatedly try and fob us off - people aren't stupid."

Turning back to the lighter side of things, I get the captain to tell a bit more about himself. A fourth-year physicist, he started playing rugby at school, at Trent College. Has it always been this serious?

"Everybody took it seriously there, so I guess I always have and just continued on with that at Imperial."

Finally, being French, and with the World Cup just over, I can't resist picking his brains on England's per-

formance. Does he think Martin Johnson is doing a decent job, despite what could be called an 'early' exit? "Well, over the course of Johnson's reign we've definitely improved. I guess his challenge is to motivate the players he has, and find the new ones to keep on improving ahead of the Six Nations and ultimately the next World Cup. I think some of his selections surprised some people, squad and teams as well as substitutions." Not condemnation, but not entirely approval, either.

Good luck to ICRUFC for the season ahead, and here's to promotion!

SPORT

Football: IC 2s destroy Medics 2s

IC remain undefeated after 8-0 romp at Harlington: Page 37



Imperial Immortals take the sting out of Surrey

Mike Peacock
American Football

Imperial Immortals	46
Surrey Stingers	7

The Imperial American Football team had a convincing victory last Sunday in its first game of the season; crushing the Surrey Stingers 46-6. This result has put the Immortals at the top of the Thames Valley league table for the first time in their history, ahead of more established teams such as Portsmouth.

The game started well, the Immortals winning the toss and choosing to return the ball. From their own 15-yard line the starting offense drove the ball up the field. Using a combination of running and the first pass-play of the game the Immortals forced the ball into the Stinger's red-zone, finishing off the drive with a powerful run by Tino Millar to score the first touchdown of the game. Rookie player Max Stubenvoll stepped forward to score the field goal conversion to take the Immortals into a 7-0 lead.

The Immortals Defense then took the field and dominated the Surrey

Offence; making tackle after tackle in the backfield and forcing the Stingers to punt. This allowed the offense back on the field who took the ball back into the Surrey red-zone for the start of the second quarter. This was where the Immortals really took control of the game, with Rob Wolstenhome and Tino Millar scoring a touchdown each with the aid of some impressive power-blocks by O-linemen: Jordan Douglas and Joe Downey dominating the Surrey nose-tackle. Unfortunately both touchdowns failed to convert

...Continued on Page 37



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No frosty reception for Frozen Planet
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