

THE EXHIBITION ROAD OPENING

Boris Johnson marks the official unveiling ceremony: **Pages 5 and 6**

Fewer students apply to university

Imperial suffers 0.1% decrease from 2011 to 2012

Alex Nowbar

There has been a fall in university applications for 2012 entry, Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) statistics have revealed. Referred to as a "headline drop of 7.4% in applicants" by UCAS Chief Executive Mary Curnock Cook, the newly published data includes all applications that met the 15 January equal-consideration deadline. Imperial College received 14,375 applications for 2012 entry, down from 14,397 for 2011, a 0.1% decrease. Increased fees appear to have taken a toll.

Towards the end of 2011 preliminary figures had indicated a 12.9% drop in university applications in comparison to the same time last year. Less marked but still significant, 7.4% fewer applications were received for this cycle. Considering applications from England UCAS describes the true figures: "In England application rates for 18 year olds have decreased by around one percentage point in 2012 compared to a trend of increases of around one per cent annually

...Continued on Page 3

TEDx COMES TO IMPERIAL: PAGE 4

ACADEMIC ANGER OVER JOURNALS

THOUSANDS TO REFUSE WORK RELATED TO PUBLISHER OVER PROFIT-MAKING TACTICS

Alexander Karapetian



PAGE 3

COMMENT



Controversial material on drugs **Page 12**

ARTS



To Bee or not to Bee in Soho **Page 18**

HANGMAN



Hangman gets a renovation **Page 39**

HIGHLIGHTS

What's on

This week at ICU Cinema

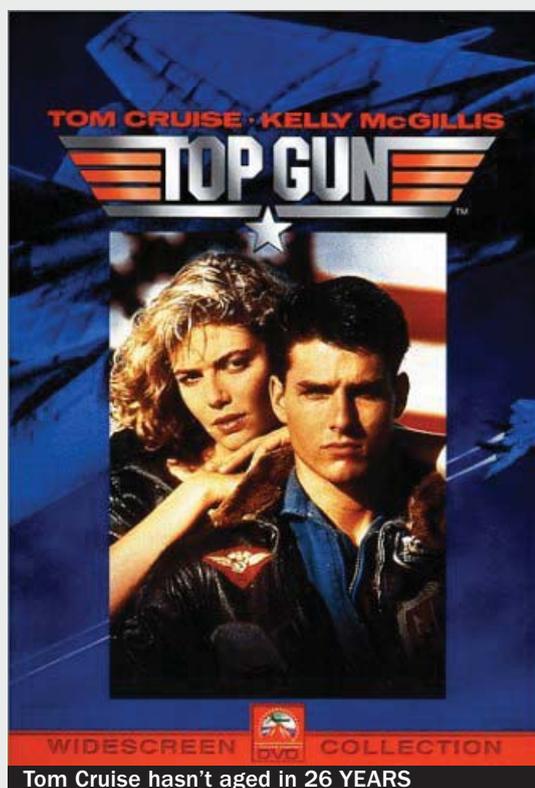
Head over to the Union next week for ICU Cinema's latest line-up, including *Tyrannosaur*, Paddy Considine's first feature film.

On Thursday, in association with Imperial Pilots' Club, Tom Cruise will take to the screen in the 1986 smash hit *Top Gun*, featuring aerial acrobatics and some serious male volleyball.

Tyrannosaur: Tue, Thurs – 18:30
£3 members / £4 non-members

Top Gun (in association with Pilots' Club): Thurs – 20:30
£2 members / £3 non-members

Union Concert Hall,
Floor 2, Imperial College Union,
South Kensington



PICK OF THE WEEK

Fashion for men. Crazy, I know



Not featuring this kind of suit, or Robert Downey Jr. Sort it out

It's taken a term and a bit, but it looks like the Fashion Editors have finally taken one crazy leap and dedicated their section to male fashion. This week's Fashion Section (Pages 30 and 31) features a full-on guide to men's suits. Right on. Take on interviews! Dress to impress! That is, if your loan is still holding up...

Editor

TAKE THE X THE SEX SURVEY



Let's just say that, so far, our sample size is a little bigger than last year. If you haven't yet contributed towards our (entirely anonymous) survey, you'd better hurry – there's only one week left to take part. You can do it over the phone as well, just scan the handy QR code to the left. If you prefer a more hands-on approach, head over to felixonline.co.uk/sexsurvey and get answering!

CLASSIFIEDS

Dell Latitude E6410 laptop for sale

Windows® 7 Professional (64Bit) with Resource DVD. 500GB hard drive, 4GB memory.

Includes carrying case, 3 year warranty, backlit keyboard, dual back cover (blue and grey) and 9-cell (90Wh) Lithium Ion high capacity battery with Express Charge

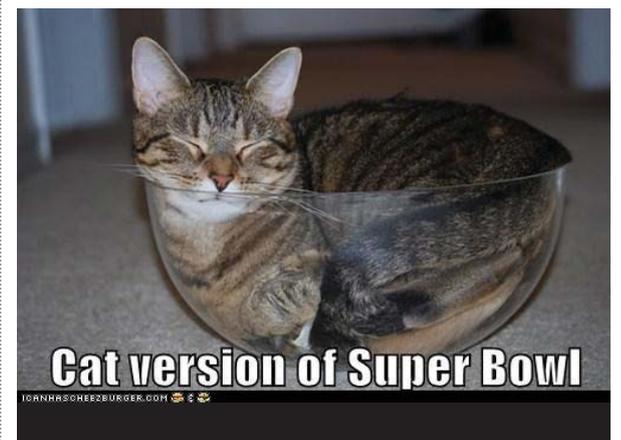
For more information, contact Vinay Gupta at vinay.gupta11@imperial.ac.uk

We occasionally try to be a little responsible, but when it comes to classified ads, we're definitely not responsible for goods and services rendered.

Campus Weather



Lolcat of teh week



FELIX

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NEWS

Academics to boycott Elsevier journals

Carol Ann Cheah
Philip Kent

Following a damning blog post by Cambridge mathematician Professor Tim Gowers, nearly 3,000 academics have signed an online pledge to cease all work with Elsevier, a Dutch journal publishing house responsible for many publications including *The Lancet*.

Elsevier have come under frequent criticism for their business practices, including issues regarding the journal *Chaos, Solitons & Fractals*, which is regarded as a “joke” by many mathematicians. They also admitted to publishing six “fake” journals, existing purely to print articles favourable to products by the drug giant Merck & Co. In 2009, the BBC also accused Elsevier of “shill reviewing” by paying academics who contributed to a psychology book if they gave it 5 star reviews on popular book-selling websites. The company later attributed this to an employee error.

However, Professor Gowers’ post deals with something a lot more fundamental – the access to publicly funded research. He details four criticisms (amongst many) that lead to his choice to publicly boycott the company.

His first complaint is with Elsevier’s policy of making libraries subscribe to journal “bundles”. This forces them to subscribe to hundreds of journals, many of which being unwanted and of little interest, should just a few core titles be desired. Professor Gowers cited an example of the *Fractals* journal being one that many libraries end up subscribing to out of necessity, even with its dubious integrity.

This is in addition to his complaint of “extraordinary” high costs. Journal prices have increased yearly, squeezing already tightened library budgets. In 2011, Felix reported how the Director of Library Services at Imperial College, Deborah Shorley, is leading a campaign by Research Libraries UK to pressure publishers such as Elsevier and Wiley to reduce subscription costs. Imperial College Union subsequently passed a policy demanding that these publishers cut the prices on their products. These price increases occur regardless of massive increases in profits – in 2009, Elsevier made a turnover of £1.6bn; up from £1bn in 2005.

Professor Gowers went on to say that libraries can find their access to Elsevier journals cut off if they attempt to negotiate a better contract, something he calls “ruthless”.

He is also concerned about Elsevier’s support of the Research Works Act, a piece of legislation in United States Congress which would remove free access to publicly funded research. This bill was

Alexander Karapetian



Academics have voiced their disapproval with Elsevier’s methods

unveiled at a similar time to 31 donations from Elsevier and connected persons to members of the US legislature. Elsevier were also prominent supporters of the SOPA and PIPA bills that were recently shelved.

Academics worldwide have expressed their anger at Elsevier by signing the pledge, with most ticking all three boxes to say they will not publish, referee, or perform editorial work on any Elsevier journal.

In a statement to Felix, Imperial mathematician Dr Andrea Brini expressed his anger with Elsevier’s practices, especially regarding the *Fractals* fiasco. In addition, he made clear his opposition to making profit out of scientific work, as for-profit publishers such as Elsevier do. He went on to say: “in [a] few ridiculous instances (and yeah, Elsevier is one of them), we even do the formatting [of papers]! And all that, for free – namely, at the taxpayers’ expense, with zero effort on their part.”

“...access to knowledge [...] should be granted to anyone”

Another mathematician at Imperial College, Dr Łukasz Grabowski, echoed these sentiments. He told Felix: “[What is] most important for me personally is that the access to knowledge and education should be granted to anyone who desires them. This is unfortunately in contradiction with the interests of profit-oriented publishing companies.”

Imperial mathematicians were not the only academics from the College to make public their decision to boycott Elsevier. Biologists, engineers, chemists, and others have also joined them. A notable name is Professor Henry Rzepa, who accused Elsevier of “a partial abrogation of their duty for longer term curation of articles they publish” in the comment against his pledge, with regard to their “less than helpful attitude” with regard to publishing integral parts of a publication.

Mrs Shorley made clear her opinion

that this was a matter for lecturers, saying, “All researchers should think carefully about where they publish and for whom they review. They are providing free resources and services, and they should consider whether the companies they publish with have values that are aligned with those of the academy or not.”

However, she did acknowledge that the costs of Elsevier journals have been a problem, with concern over the charges and licensing policies being had for “many years”. She did note, however, that these are with a number of publishers and not just Elsevier.

This is not a decision that academics take lightly. Speaking to Felix, Dr Paula Saldago from Imperial’s NMR facility said “As an early career researcher, [...] not choosing to publish or review for those journals can have a serious impact on the careers of less established scientists.”

Regardless of the Elsevier boycott and disapproval of the practices of for-profit publishers in general, there is no negative feeling about the future. Instead, many feel that this is an opportunity to revolutionize how journals are handled. A notable example of this is the arXiv preprint server, ran by Cornell University, though articles on this server are not peer reviewed. There are also publishers such as Mathematical Sciences Publishers who operate on a non-profit basis; an organization that Dr Brini feels may be the way to go.

There are other options too. Dr Łukasz said “I very much hope that the future lies within community-run journals (concerning the actual work which is done, all the journals are community-run anyway), and printing will be outsourced to print-on-demand companies” citing the example of American upstart Scholastica.

However, the most radical solution is proposed by Dr Saldago: “I believe it is time to change the current scientific publications trend and support open access journals and initiatives that allow sharing and open discussions of data and results.” Mrs Shorley added that it will be extremely interesting to see how these progress.

Drop in applications to Imperial

Christian Richters



Imperial saw a 0.1% decrease in applications from 2011 to 2012

...Continued from Front Page since 2006”. Predictably in the current economic climate, there was a greater decrease in applications from the 21-24 age group than from school-leavers.

Unfortunately the number of applications still exceeds the number of places that are available in 2012. According to Cook’s statement “Applications are already 50,000 ahead of the number of acceptances in 2011.” The fact that last year UCAS received a further 116,000 applications between January and the close of the cycle is further cause for concern.

Pro-Rector (Education) Professor Julia Buckingham said of the decrease: “We will want to go beyond the statistics of this particular year to carefully monitor application trends as we go forward under the new system. One area for the whole sector to consider is whether universities can communicate their student finance packages even more widely in the future. Here at Imperial, for instance,

we have a generous financial support package so that the costs of studying are not a barrier to students joining us, and we are working to ensure that message reaches prospective students as they start to consider their options post A-Level.”

Interestingly subscription to arts degrees has been affected to a greater extent than the sciences. One could argue that this goes some way in explaining why applications to Imperial have not suffered much. Imperial’s invariable appeal to overseas students may also be a contributing factor as there was an increase in the number of applications from applicants outside the EU of 13.7% (although the number of EU applicants decreased). Students and staff alike might expect Imperial’s excellent reputation to have played a role in maintaining the application rate this year in comparison to other UK universities, an Imperial degree perhaps being considered worth the higher fees.

Sponsored Editorial

More student cuts

Discount haircuts for Imperial students at Fresh Hairdressers

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

Men’s cuts £22

Women’s shampoo and cut and shake dry £28

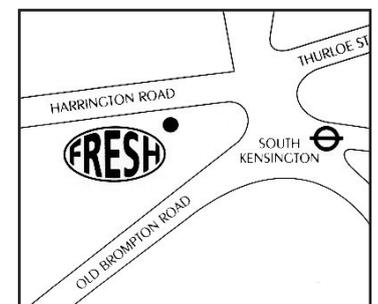
Women’s shampoo, cut and blow-dry £38

All of our cuts are done by highly experienced stylists.

Tuesday to Fridays 9.30 to 4.30 (sorry no discounts on Saturdays).

We are only 70 metres from South Kensington tube station.

To book an appointment, call **0207 823 8968**. Ask for a student discount and bring your Imperial ID.



In Brief**Imperial storm BP semi-finals**

The BP Ultimate Field Trip semi-finalists have been revealed, and include nine Imperial students. They will compete in the regional semi-final that will take place towards the end of February for the prize of a 6-8 week internship in Trinidad and Tobago in the Gulf of Mexico.

The three teams were selected from a variety of national entrants by an expert panel of judges consisting of a senior panel of BP specialists from a wide range of business areas. Professor Brian Cox has encouraged students to 'Get involved' continuing 'it's about as valuable as it gets'.

The teams are as follows: the Carbon Busters that include Jia Lin Chong, Shi Yunn Chua and Winsong Lee Weng Hoe who are all third year Chemical Engineering students; C-Less made up of Zie Wearn Chua and Wern Chia Chang who are both in their third year of MEng Chemical Engineering and Zhi Xiong Chong who is in their third year of MEng Materials with Nuclear Engineering and the Global Intelligence Consulting with Dun Xiang Ang, Nicholas Kwok and Zhen Xiony Lim who are all in their third year of MEng Chemical Engineering.

The teams will present their ideas at the regional semi-finals starting from February 20, competing against other UK universities. The challenge is to create the first zero carbon dioxide oil refinery by 2030 and up to a total of six entries will be selected for the Grand Final that will take place at a London venue in April.

Aemun Reza



Professor Brian Cox hosted last year's Ultimate Field Trip final

Holland Club Petition

As the results of a feasibility study that will determine the future of the Holland Club still remain to be announced, an e-petition in support of its continuation has received nearly 400 signatories at the time of writing.

The petition letter, addressed to Imperial College, argues against any potential closure, claiming that there will be an "outcry" should any move to remove the Holland Club come to fruition.

The petition follows a popular Facebook campaign in support of the Holland Club, which, at the time of writing, has attracted 827 'likes'.

The results of the feasibility study are expected within two weeks.

Matthew Colvin

10% cut in grant for clubs

Concerns raised over impact of financial reallocation

Maciej Matuszewski

Last week the Union's Executive Committee ruled to cut the grant available next year to the Clubs & Societies Board, the Representation & Welfare Board and the Executive itself by ten percent. The £33,820 total, the vast majority of which comes from the Clubs & Societies Board owing to its large budget, will be reallocated to help improve student activity support services.

"there has been little-to-no increase in the resources available for supporting these groups"

Writing last Friday in his official blog Deputy President (Finance & Services) Michael Foster explained the Committee's reasoning in making the decision, saying that "while student activity has been increasing yearly – along with how much money Clubs, Societies & Projects (CSPs) are saving – there has been little-to-no increase in the resources available for supporting these groups". He further explained that "the administrative impact of

operating CSPs includes IT infrastructure (including online memberships and eActivities), financial administration (especially the processing of claims, purchase orders and invoices) and the design and delivery of officer training" and that these are areas which will be considered for improvement using the new funding. However, in a statement to Felix he added that "no decisions about the destination of the reallocation have yet been made".

Concerns about this change were raised by Henry Abbot, the ACC chair, who said that "the CSB pot has already been frozen and cut in recent years. In real terms the pot 2012/13 pot is 38% less than the 2008/09 pot, whilst participation is significantly increased. If money for financial systems cannot be found elsewhere, it's essential that next year's executive committee remember that this is not a permanent cut but a one-off investment. In the face of cuts clubs will inevitably ask their members to pay more, pricing more students out of more activities, which is really not where we want our union to be going." RCSU Vice-President (Operations) Paul Beaumont also added that while some societies could rely more on their savings rather than the Union grant this argument "doesn't hold for societies that have to make large investments (say £30,000) every ten years [...] hence why they need their subvention". He said that while he agrees with more investment in student sup-

port services he questions whether some of the money could have been found from the "Union's day to day accounts", which he says are "closed to its members" and so are not available for scrutiny.

"no decisions about the destination of the reallocation have yet been made"

Foster countered this by saying that since "the total grant underspend last year was greater than the changes to CSP funding" it would be unnecessary for societies to dip into their savings any more than usual. He added that while the Union accounts "are on restricted circulation", and so not available online "interested Union members can see them whenever they wish" by "coming to the Union and asking to see them".

While this may remain a controversial decision for some it certainly has potential to improve the student experience at Imperial. It is, however, clear that the full consequences of this decision will only begin to be seen next year.

First ever TEDx conference comes to Imperial

Live lectures and online videos to explore science, design and innovation

Keir Little

The first ever TEDx conference to be held at Imperial is coming this March. Organised by a team of Imperial students, TEDxImperialCollege will feature live lectures and online videos in the TED format.

The event on March 24 is titled The Great Exhibition and will "explore the connection between science, design and innovation, and their impact on the human experience". TEDx-ImperialCollege license holder Gilead Amit said "TEDx is all about giving local voices the chance to be heard – and where could you find more exciting local voices than in London's cultural heartland?"

TEDx is an offshoot of TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design), the conference famous for spreading innovative and inspirational ideas. TEDx events are independently-hosted, local conferences featuring videos and

live lectures in the TED format, licensed and promoted by the organisation in spirit of their mission and tagline – "Ideas Worth Spreading."

"Where could you find more exciting local voices than in London's cultural heartland?"

TEDxImperialCollege is inspired by the Great Exhibition of 1851; a world fair held in the since destroyed Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, showcasing Victorian British culture, ingenuity, industry and science. Attracting six million visitors, the Exhibition made a profit

of £186,000, more than £16m at modern value, which went towards the founding of South Kensington's many museums and institutes, making Imperial College, at the heart of many of these foundations, an ideal place to relive its values.

The organisers are staying tight-lipped about the speakers, saying that the full list will be revealed over the coming weeks, but have confirmed one of the speakers to be John Graham-Cumming, a computer scientist dedicated to completing the Analytical Engine – the world's first mechanical computer, designed in 1837 by Charles Babbage and which so far has never been built in full

A non-binding registration in advance is required to purchase tickets. Details of ticket prices will be revealed when registration opens on February 10. The event takes place on March 24, from 2pm to 7pm in the Great Hall.

Exhibition Road closes for grand opening

**Alexander Karapetian
Philip Kent**

Following two years of construction, Exhibition Road closed last Wednesday for its grand opening led by the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson. 'No parking' signs were put up in advance and the event saw a day long closure marking the opening of the brand new signature road running through the "intellectual capital of London", South Kensington, as described by Prince Albert.

The road's transformation was an effort by Dixon Jones after winning an international competition for design and master-planning held by The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, whose proposal included stripping the road of its narrow pavements and creating a kerb-free patterned surface that would extend the entire length and width of the road.

The changes were completed in late

2011 following over 10 years of planning, giving pedestrians more space, limiting vehicles to a speed of 20mph and removing all the road signs and clutter. The £30m improvements feature new lighting in the form of tall metal spires. This ties in with the recent renovations made to the V&A and the Science Museum with Union President Scott Heath commenting that he thinks "it looks brilliant".

A metallic elephant was erected and was an integral part of the parade which followed. On the Mayor of London's arrival, a brief speech was made and the parade began in earnest. Boris Johnson cut the ribbon to denote the road's official opening and proceeded to the Imperial College Business School to continue to a closed audience, after announcing that "Imperial is one of the greatest universities in the world".

The event was, however, met with minor resistance, with protestors wield-

ing placards bearing messages such as "Who pays for this jamboree? The taxpayer!" and "Why celebrate this dangerous shared space?" Deputy President (Education) Jason Parmar responded: "I think the road is very exquisite, however there are a few health and safety concerns raised, but I think the council will address it in due course".

Protestors, who included students from Imperial College, were promptly ejected from the Business School upon entry, with a security guard commenting that he was "asked by College to evict them because they didn't want them in [there]", adding "they were on private property, it was a private function, so we had the right to".

Mr Johnson's speech in the Business School detailed the collaborative efforts which went into the design and construction of the road, the academic and cultural nature of the surroundings as well as

Jonathan Peek



its historic value. The speech was interrupted by a fire alarm, which Mr Johnson took in his stride and exclaimed "it might be a fire in the labs".

Jason Parmar provided further thoughts to Felix on the interruption, saying: "I wouldn't be surprised if it was mali-

cious, it's a real shame". Nevertheless, the speech continued despite health and safety regulations.

Exhibition Road returned to full operation following the event.

Editorial: Page 14

Driving Lessons For Imperial Students

- A special offer for Imperial students from Denis Smyth
- Driving Standards Agency (DSA) Accredited Instructor
- Mock Test Examiner

**5 Driving Lessons
for £95**

"Denis is a fantastic teacher and knows how to get people from completely inexperienced and utterly hopeless driving up to the standard to pass their test. He is always calm and his comments are constructive; his knowledge of London and his knack of engineering driving routes that test the learner make the lessons more than worth it. Since I have met him he has shown a great desire to offer cheaper lessons to Imperial students and with the backing of other students I am more than happy to support him"

- Alex Kendall, IC Union President 2010-11

To make inquiries and book lessons,
call 07808 610 898

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NEWS

Exhibition Road opens: in pictures

Over ten years in the making, celebration of road opening brings out the Mayor

Jonathan Peek



Group of people have to suddenly dash out of the way when a car takes advantage of the new road

Jonathan Peek



Everyone stifles laughs as Boris doesn't realise hoodie is contaminated

Jonathan Peek



Boris gets in on the joke by passing the hoodie to someone else

Jonathan Peek



Man complains to other man about thing the latter had no control of

Jonathan Peek



Sunglasses inside? So douchey

Alexander Karapetian



Placard behind accidentally answers placard in front in humiliating mix up

Alexander Karapetian



Boris surprises the crowd by breaking out into freestyle rap. No... wait, that was a dream I had three days ago

Features Editors: **Katy Bettany**
Stephen Smith

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FEATURE

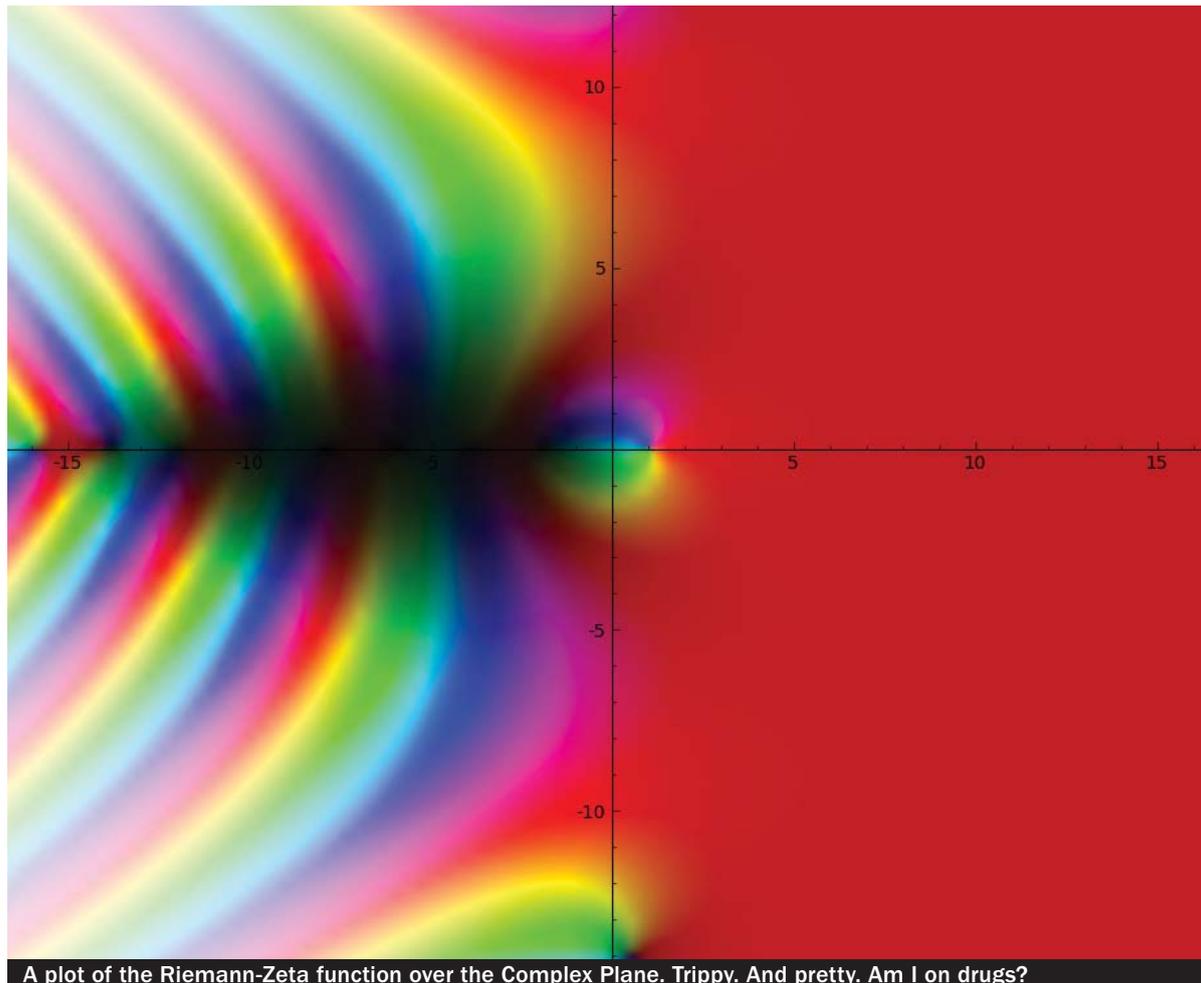
Does Computer Science hold the answer?

Alexander Karapetian on computing and important mathematical problems

Computer Science is an often misunderstood academic topic. Many people outside the field do not perceive the breadth and depth of research material that's pumped out daily and how it affects our everyday lives. To observe its profound effect in the real world, we must first examine the theoretical. There are a variety of problems which are famous in mathematics. The Millennium Prize Problems and Hilbert's Problems are collections of such unsolved problems selected by the Clay Mathematics Institute and mathematician David Hilbert. The former are noted for their million-dollar prize for the first verified solution to any one of the seven problems, six of which remain unsolved at the time of writing.

Why should the average person care about finding solutions to them? First, we must realise their real world applications. While some high profile fields are largely saturated in terms of research progress, Computer Science has taken an opposite path and the field is increasingly gaining momentum, with discoveries emerging due to breakthroughs in logic and theoretical computational systems and mathematics.

A core component in electronic circuits is the transistor. The number of transistors within computer processor chips have increased over time roughly according to Moore's Law, allowing for greater processing power. This law states the number of transistors will double every 18 months and eventually reach a limit. This limit is frequently extended, and consumers continue to see improvements yearly. This greater processing power is not limited to consumer use, however, and research institutes have begun to take



A plot of the Riemann-Zeta function over the Complex Plane. Trippy. And pretty. Am I on drugs?

advantage of the speed and efficiency gains to harness the raw power of the integrated circuit and GPU.

If Physics is to be considered the application of Mathematics to the Universe, frequently giving us answers to life's questions, then Computing is the application of Mathematics to the virtual Universe. For instance, creating a perfect sphere is impossible in the

physical realm, though such perfect elements are digitally representable. This expressive property has opened the door to new methods of analysis with machines, using them as an aid to solving existing research problems. For instance, a quantum mechanical system described to us by Physics is best explored by a quantum computer, a machine which is capable of operating on the same physical levels as the very realm researchers are attempting to understand.

The Riemann Hypothesis, considered one of the most important problems in pure mathematics (Borwein et al. 2008), involves the distribution of the prime numbers. The hypothesis states that the solutions to the Riemann-Zeta function lie on a critical line. While no proof yet exists, the first ten trillion values have been verified by distributed supercomputing efforts.

While an underlying pattern appears plausible, this Hilbert Problem remains unproven. The unpredictable nature of the prime numbers has been put to use in the RSA (Rivest, Shamir and Adleman, MIT, 1978) cryptographic algorithm. This system, considered currently unbreakable due to technical infeasibility, provides digital security with primes. Banks, websites and

governments worldwide have adopted RSA and it is a common means of distributing an encryption key. A brute force search would need to test possible primes to break this, but since there is no reliable way of determining the next prime, computers may take years to perform this operation, rendering this method impractical. A proof of the Riemann Hypothesis, however, may provide a means of determining a pattern and breaking RSA.

Brute force guessing of standard passwords is also impractical. We are all currently encouraged to create case-sensitive alphanumeric passwords. The problem with checking every possibility lies not with verification; a computer can easily identify whether two pieces of text are equal. It lies with first obtaining the solution to compare. Some techniques search through dictionary entries, allowing quicker identification of common passwords.

Another Millennium Prize Problem, touted the most important unsolved problem in Computer Science, P vs NP (Cook, 1971) revolves around this concept. It asks the question of whether a problem having quick machine verifiable solutions means those solutions can also be found quickly. Problems of the latter are classified P, while those

that are hard to compute are NP. In the case of guessing passwords, it becomes apparent that verification is a P problem (easy) while searching for the correct password is NP (hard).

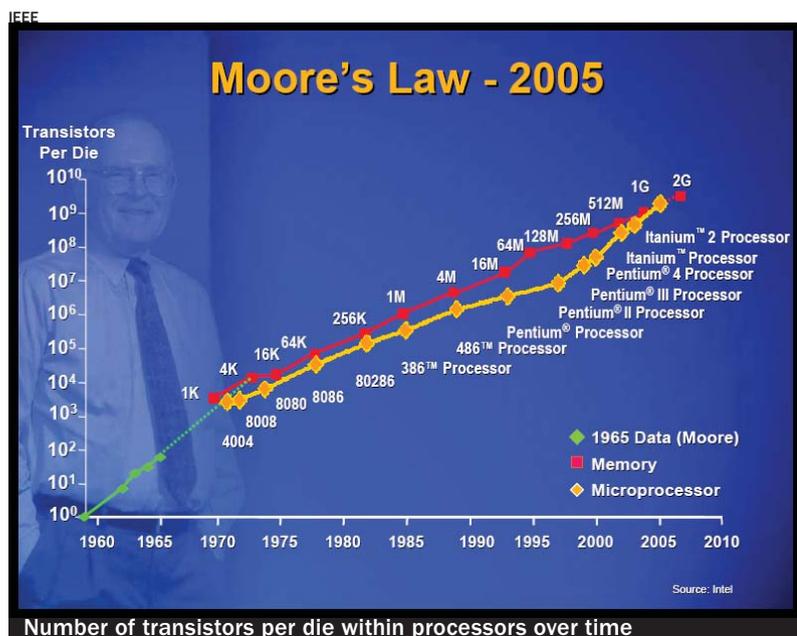
The world currently assumes P not to be equal to NP, as well as most Computer Scientists (Gasarch, 2002) agreeing, while majority of security systems rely on this assumption. A claimed proof of P=NP (Deolalikar, 2010) was later shown to be incorrect, though the possibility raised many concerns for security. The implications would be far-reaching for society. A correct proof either way will have great impact, since the solution to P vs NP intrinsically links to solutions of the other Problems. If P=NP, not only will a new era of cryptography need to be abruptly ushered in, but NP-hard problems within countless other fields such as Biology (genome sequencing, protein structure prediction) and Physics (simulations) would become easier.

The effects of solutions on society's widely used systems cannot be ignored. They would pave the way to a once-distant future, with consequences such as the rise of new, future-proof technologies resistant to P=NP attacks, leading to better consumer systems. A hail of advancements in knowledge would be made, with improvements to society's quality of life due to significant improvements to Biology, Medicine and other fields. Perelman, responsible for solving the Poincaré Conjecture (involving the characteristics of spheres in higher dimensions) remarked: "Where technology creates new machines and devices, Mathematics creates their analogues – logical methods for analysis in any field of science. Every Mathematical theory, if it's strong, will sooner or later find an application." (Perelman, 2003)

"Every mathematical theory... will sooner or later find an application."

As researchers move on to proving the next unsolved theorem armed with potent approaches and technology from Computer Science, the laypeople of society would truly revel in the consequences of such discoveries, and would therefore benefit the most overall.

Adapted from a winning submission to the RCSU Science Challenge 2011.



Number of transistors per die within processors over time

In brief

Evolution of enormity

When the dinosaurs disappeared, they left room for mammals to go through a huge evolutionary growth spurt. They also left room for mammals to grow. Literally.

Recent research published in the journal *PNAS* has uncovered the number of generations it would take for a mouse-sized animal to evolve into an elephant-sized one: 24 million. The number comes from a fossil record data set of mammalian body size over the last 70 million years.

For 140 million years before the dinosaurs went extinct, mammals were rodent-sized or smaller. But when the dinosaurs were no longer around, mammals began to expand to fill the ecological niches the dinosaurs left behind.

The researchers looked at 28 strands of mammal lineage over the fossil record and worked out how many years and generations it took for the mammals to grow larger.

Growing larger also signifies other changes. "Achieving such a large transformation calls for major biological reorganisation," say the researchers.

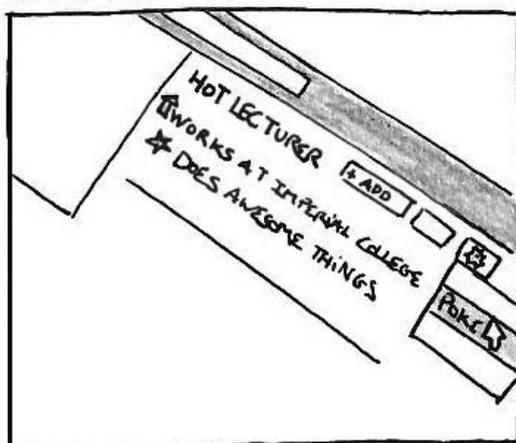
DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1120774109

Kelly Oakes

Networking

by Maria Veiga

AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO...



Historic social networks

Sarah Byrne

We normally think of social networks as a modern-day phenomenon: Facebook, Twitter etc. come to mind. But according to recent research published in *Nature*, ancient societies may have been organised along much the same lines.

It is a popular belief that the evolution of human behaviour is all about natural selection, with all our behaviours driven by the desire to pass on our genes: finding a genetically fit partner and protecting our own offspring. However this somewhat reductive model is not the whole story, not least because it doesn't consider how and why we form friendships and cooperate with people even when they are not genetically related to us, and we don't intend to reproduce with them.

The recent research focused on the Hadza people in Tanzania, who have a hunter-gatherer lifestyle thought to be similar to that of our early human ancestors in the late Pleistocene, and are relatively isolated from modern culture and technology. Two network models were constructed, based on who participants said they would like to share a camp with, and who they would choose to receive a gift of honey (a prized delicacy).

Once a social network is created, there are various metrics to be measured and analysed. These include degree distributions (how many friends do you have), transitivity (how likely is it that two of your friends are friends themselves), degree assortativity (are popular people more likely to have popular friends) and homophily (do similar people tend to cluster together). These measures differ from those on randomly generated networks of the same size, due to the human preferences underlying them. Additionally they tend to form similar pat-

Facebook



A map of social connectivity

terns and trends, regardless of the society in question, and the results for the Hadza population looked remarkably like those for modern social networks. This indicates that the way we form friendships and social groups is hard-coded in our psychology, and emerged as part of our evolution as a species.

The researchers also offer an intriguing hypothesis about how human society diverged from normal primate patterns: our ability to understand how reproduction works and recognise our paternal family meant we no longer had the need to enforce 'dispersal' of the young from their birthplace and family groups in order to prevent inadvertent in-breeding. This may have encouraged more stable groupings, increasing the opportunities for friendships, and hence social networks, to form.

The importance of social networks in our evolutionary history is thought to relate to the development of cooperation, a distinctly human habit which allows us to go beyond immediate family relationships and work together in large groups to achieve goals which benefit and advance society. In social networks, more 'cooperative' people tend to form groups – and interestingly the more anti-social 'defectors' also tended to be friends with each other.

It is still unclear whether this is because cooperators simply prefer to form links with like-minded people, or whether cooperative people in fact influence the friends connected to them. Either way, there is strong evidence that social networks and cooperativity are closely linked, and co-evolved early in human history.

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Quantum information rate measured

Keir Little

Scientists have measured the rate at which quantum information travels through real systems. Changes, such as those in electronic spin or energy, propagate through materials at a limited speed; similar to the speed of light, this maximum theoretical limit known as the Lieb-Robinson bound has now been determined empirically by scientists.

In a material lattice like a crystal, changes at any one atom, such as flipping spin or nuclear decay, affect the atom's closest neighbours first and propagate outwards from there. The speed at which these short-range interactions occur is much lower than the speed of light, but has so far been impossible to measure due to interference from thermal vibrations, and the sheer number of particles in a real lattice make it hard to de-

tect changes in individual atoms.

Researchers at the Max Planck Institute for Quantum Optics have devised a way of experimentally measuring this value: rather than using a crystalline lattice, they held a supercooled monoatomic gas in an optical lattice: several lasers used to create standing waves in which to trap individual atoms. As the atoms are not chemically bonded to each other and are at a very low temperature, many sources of interference are eliminated from the system.

By changing the power of the lasers, certain atoms can be "quenched" – moved from energetic equilibrium to an excited state. These excitations then travel through the lattice as quantum-entangled quasiparticles – fictitious particles which serve as a simple approximation to the many complex interactions of real particles. For example, an

electron travelling through a semiconductor interacts with each atom it encounters, but can be modelled as a quasi-electron of a different mass travelling more slowly through free space. By recording the time and distance between atom excitations, the speed at which these quasiparticles travel, and hence at which information propagates, can be measured.

This speed, found to be roughly twice the speed of sound in the considered material, is currently purely empirical, and the value cannot be determined by theoretical methods. It also is applicable only to the one-dimensional lattice under consideration, but as the first measurement of its kind made, represents an important step forward for research in areas such as quantum entanglement.

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SCIENCE

Badgering the badgers

Christopher Nichols on why we should save the badgers from culling

John Connor Press Associates



Don't kill them... I'll take them. I'll take them all!

Late last year, the environment secretary Caroline Spellman announced that badger culling would go ahead in 2012 in an effort to combat bovine tuberculosis (TB). Now that the locations of pilot culls have been named, the scheme is suddenly becoming a reality, but is the cull justified and will it be effective?

Badgers are one of Britain's most enigmatic mammals due to their nocturnal nature, and are usually only seen either wombling across a road late at night or more likely, as road-kill. Traffic will be the least of the worries of badgers in parts of Gloucestershire and Somerset however, as these are the areas in which pilot culls will be implemented. Culling badgers is not a new phenomenon, with extermination efforts taking place on and off throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, and although the emphasis here is on 'pilot', there is the potential for more widespread action across the

rest of the UK.

The cull is objectionable for two key reasons. On a deontological level, the cull represents humanity's tendency for species-chauvinism. Environmental, and admittedly conservation, issues are often driven by the logic that humans are more important than, and have the authority to remove other species should they pose a threat. Which would be valid and defensible if the species in question was threatening human lives, for instance I'm sure less people would be opposed to eradicating the species of mosquito that carries malaria. The threat badgers pose however, is only to our cows, a non-essential element of human life, despite what some might claim, and so the organised killing of them for our benefit is unjustified.

Unfortunately in itself, this moral argument does not stand, as by the same reasoning I should be advocating vegetarianism – which I am not. A more convincing argument comes in the form of the scientific justifica-

tion for the cull, or lack thereof, in that there is evidence that a cull may actually increase the spread of bovine TB rather than stem it. Amongst others this view is supported by Rosie Woodroffe, a senior research fellow at the Zoological Society of London, and her research. It was found that although a cull may marginally reduce the incidence of cattle TB in the focal area, badgers are likely to disperse as result of the disruption, and the areas in the vicinity could suffer an increased incidence of TB as a result.

Despite these anti-cull arguments, it is presumably still favoured by the Government because of the potential short term reduction in bovine tuberculosis a cull could bring. It is easy to see the appeal when it is estimated that roughly one billion pounds of the taxpayer's money could be spent over the next ten years tackling the problem.

This would hold if it wasn't for the method of cull chosen. To decrease the incidence of TB in cattle by a notable amount, an efficient method

such as gassing must be used. Not, as the government has seen fit, the 'farmers and their guns' technique. Whilst this may serve to appease angry farmers with a grudge against badgers, I doubt the random shooting of badgers will actually have a significant impact on a population.

A preferred alternative to culling is vaccination, a method which has had some success in captive badgers. Studies are currently underway into its applicability in wild populations. This however is of no consolation to the badgers who will be culled in the coming year or the animal groups that are opposed to the cull. The only saving grace is that with any luck badgers will avoid being shot by exploiting a trait of theirs that the powers that be seem to have overlooked. Surely shooting nocturnal badgers in the dark is hardly going to yield fantastic results. The deaths of any that are unlucky enough to meet a gun-slitting farmer in the coming nights can be put down to little more than myopic mustelid murder.

Oddities of Physics

Arriana Sorba

The SAF main lecture theatre was full to bursting last Wednesday evening, as Simon Foster and his troupe of postgraduate students put on an exciting and informative show on 'The Oddities of Physics'. Guests were welcomed into the building with a display by the Imperial College Juggling Society, intrigued and unaware that a more fiery take on the display was on its way later in the lecture, to help explain special relativity...

Using balls of fire to help illustrate a light clock wasn't the only exciting demonstration that had the audience gasping with awe, though. From resonating jelly to a levitating magnet, the sense of wonderment caused by each demonstration was palpable, not least from the groups of school children that the Friends of Imperial College had invited to the event. One postgraduate encouraged the audience to 'fear the air around us', with a startling and somewhat dangerous video he'd made, on Imperial soil, of an oil drum collapsing under atmospheric pressure, whilst Simon himself got the audience murmuring with curiosity simply by putting a heat-tech t-shirt in the microwave.

But it wasn't all action, and the audience were equally enthused by the pithy explanations of other more subtle physical phenomena. Be they the time reversal symmetry of the movement of bacteria, Fourier transforms, or the mysterious quantum effects surrounding Planck's constant, each thought-provoking question that was posed, (for who hasn't at some point wondered what the world would look like if h wasn't so small?), was matched in intrigue by its fascinating physical answer. Physics current sexiest topic, the Higgs Boson and the Large Hadron Collider, also got its due airtime, as did a simple but enlightening explanation of the Aurora Borealis, using the infamous, imposing-looking Van de Graaff generator.

The lecture was hosted by the Friends of Imperial College, an organisation dedicated to providing opportunities for the wider community to get involved in and learn more about any field of science, technology and medicine. It does this through the Imperial College network of staff, students and alumni, holding a variety of events throughout the year, from lectures to socials, keeping the public informed of and interested in the latest scientific advances. It also generously supports the Imperial College Student Opportunities Fund.

In brief

Zero-point energy fluctuations
first seen in solid object

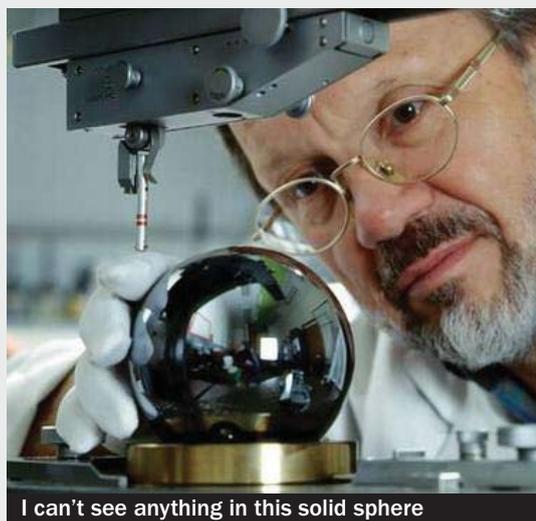
At a temperature of absolute zero, any atom or molecule will still vibrate as it has a minimum thermal energy known as zero-point energy. For the first time, evidence of zero-point energy has been seen in a solid object larger than a single atom or cluster – a silicon bar 12 micrometres long and less than a micrometre in diameter.

Light reflected off an object will be red- or blue-shifted depending upon whether it is travelling away from or towards you, and according to classical mechanics, an oscillating object will reflect an equal amount of red-shifted light as it does blue-shifted; otherwise, it would show that the object has net movement towards or away from the observer. However, at temperatures near absolute zero where quantum mechanics dominates, an object oscillating at its zero-point energy cannot emit energy to its environment, and thus cannot blue-shift any light reflected off it.

Scientists at the California Institute of Technology cooled the silicon bar to within less than half a kelvin of absolute zero, and fired a laser at it. By measuring the reflected light, they saw an asymmetry between the red and blue-shifted reflections, showing that the bar spent around 30% of its time in its zero-point energetic ground state.

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Keir Little



I can't see anything in this solid sphere

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Genes affecting intellect

Philippa Skett

Imperial students fall generally into two categories: those who work hard and those who don't work at all. Students across all years either diligently trek to the library every evening or pass it completely (as in, walk awkwardly around the redundant new library porch) to go straight to the Union.

However, when it comes to academic success, there seems to be no such correlation. Blame your department, blame your note taking skills or even blame the annual arrival of the American girls tempting you into the depths of Metric, but new research has shown your academic floundering or success could be down to your genes. A paper published online in *Nature* this week has taken the first step in actually quantifying how genetics can influence cognitive ability, but take their findings with a pinch of salt - intrinsic aptitude alone won't get you that 2:1.

The study led by Ian Brady, a professor of Differential Psychology at the University of Edinburgh, has allowed an insight not just into intelligence causation but also intelligence degeneration over time, thanks to data uncovered from the early 20th century that was collected across Scotland. Using a traditional cognitive testing method in conjunction with high tech genomic sequencing, test scores from a group of unrelated individuals were recorded at two distinct times in their lives, and then compared against the genetic variation between the groups.

The test used was the Moray House Test (not that House), and is very similar in structure to entrance tests usually taken for Grammar school entry by 11 year olds, sometimes referred to as the 11-plus. A combination of verbal reasoning questions were asked to just under two thousand participants aged 11 back in 1932 and 1947, and the same individuals were tracked down when they were aged 70 to

The Guardian



We're all guilty of pulling all nighters...

take the same test under the same standardised conditions. They also gave a cell sample to determine how strong the genetic link may turn out to be.

Their genomes were then scrutinised to produce Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) data. SNPs are particular points in the genome sequence where one fraction of the species population has one nucleotide type, and another substantial fraction has another type. SNPs therefore can be used to give an insight into the possible genetic causes of varying characteristics between individuals in the same population, in this case intelligence. Over half a million SNPs were scrutinised for every individual who took the test, and Brady was able to put forward the estimate that 24% percent of their cognitive ability is determined by the genes due to the differences in the scores between the two age groups.

So does this mean that about a quarter of our

intelligence is genetically determined from the start? Not necessarily, as the overall statistics are a bit sketchy and the Moray House Test is just one of many ways to test intelligence, so a greater, more detailed study may be needed. A greater genetic insight is needed too, such as locating specific gene sequences, but this research does provide a new understanding on which to base future neurological studies into intelligence and its causation.

However, if 24% of your intelligence is actually genetic alone, that means that 76% is still down to you. This should come as great news to all those who spent Christmas revising hard and neglecting their family, their friends and their hygiene, as you may actually stand a chance of doing well. To everyone else, put down Felix, finish that Nonogram later and sulk over to the library. You may have to attempt to work hard after all.

DOI:10.1038/nature10781

Faster Fast Fourier Transform found

Alexander Karapetian

Researchers at MIT have discovered a new method of performing the Fast Fourier Transform algorithm which, in a large set of use cases, adds performance improvements. The MIT group submitted their paper, "Nearly Optimal Sparse Fourier Transform" to ArXiv on 12 January and presented their findings in the Symposium on Discrete Algorithms (SODA) last week.

The Fourier Transform is a popular means of mathematical analysis which decomposes functions into their constituent frequencies. The Discrete Fourier Transform (DFT) is a realisation of this as an algorithm which takes a sequence of real or complex numbers to process information stored in computers, with uses in academic areas in Computer Science and mathematics. The Fast Fourier Transform (FFT) is a set of algorithms which are able to efficiently compute

the DFT in a significantly faster time. FFTs have been hailed as the Swiss Army Knife of algorithms, with wide ranging applications in graphics (image processing, filters), digital signal processing (reconstructing a signal from frequency data), compression, optics, crystallography and data searching.

FFTs work by performing a variety of optimisations on the DFT. Speeding up elements within the summation equation, such as the amount of multiplication operations involved, allows for reduced processor usage during the algorithm's execution. This increases efficiency significantly, but there is no known proof which dictates the FFT is the fastest algorithm for computing the DFT. Renowned MIT mathematician Gilbert Strang has described the FFT as the "most important algorithm of our generation".

The MIT researchers' new algorithm, coined the Sparse Fourier Transform (sFFT), improves on the FFT by considering a signal

to be a product of narrower slices of bandwidth. With this, the signals are treated as oscillations rather than binary up/down directions, and the same slice of bandwidth can be sampled at different times to better determine where the dominant frequencies are. This strategy, notable for its use in 4G cellular networks, allows for sparse (heavily weighted) frequencies to be identified faster. As a result, the algorithm's worst case efficiency is equivalent to the FFT, but the average case is an improvement for many general input signals.

The sFFT algorithm, developed by two professors from MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL) along with their students, has been described by Professor Martin Strauss from the University of Michigan as "greatly [expanding] the number of circumstances where one can beat the traditional FFT".

Putting a pause on influenza research

Laurence Pope

Research involving a virulent mutant strain of the influenza A virus has been temporarily halted over fears of potential bioterrorism and accidental release.

It is widely recognized by scientists and laypeople alike that influenza continues to pose a great threat to global health, even rivalling that of the current AIDS pandemic; the 1918 outbreak of Spanish flu alone killed 50 to 100 million people in just two and a half years. In order to face flu pandemics, scientists need to carry out research on the various strains of the virus to better understand how they mutate and spread from animal reservoirs to humans. However, new research on a mutated strain of the H5N1 virus, more commonly known as bird flu or avian influenza, has

been put on hold for 60 days in order to quell public fears and spark debate on the topic of research involving potentially lethal influenza strains.

Fears began to circulate in September of last year when two independent research groups in the US and the Netherlands created a mutant strain of the H5N1 virus in order to find out how mutations in the virus made it easier to transmit. It transpired that the virus could be transmitted via inhalation between ferrets breathing the same air. This strongly suggested that the mutant virus could transmit just as easily from human to human. Whilst the labs were both classified as BSL-3 (Biosafety Level 3) enhanced, second only to BSL-4 in protection, fears abounded that it was simply not sufficient for such a lethal pathogen that combined the transmissibil-

ity of seasonal flu with the high mortality rate of wild-type H5N1.

Controversy arose when, on December 20, the US National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB) called for the two papers on the mutant virus, which had been submitted to Nature and Science, to be partially censored, fearing the methodology within them could be utilized by bioterrorists. The advice drew criticism from all angles, ranging from complaints that partial print could hamper further research to the claim that the NSABB's advice was too little, too late, considering how much of the research had already been passed on to other influenza labs. The authors of the papers agreed to this redaction, under the understanding that the research could be passed on to legitimate influenza researchers.

In order to quell the fears and answer the questions provoked by the media storm that arose from their research a joint statement was made by the two labs on January 20 that put a 60 day pause on their research. The teams called for an international forum with which to discuss the potential benefits and risks of their research, as well as set up a framework for distributing their findings without letting it fall into the hands of those who would abuse it.

The question remains whether or not this form of research is necessary, or if it is simply a pandemic waiting to happen. The 60 day pause is much welcomed, and even if it does not resolve the main issues it will allow the scientific community to debate these ideas in an open forum, as well as assure the public that the research is not being carried out either haphazardly

or without a defined purpose.

Whilst research into influenza spread and pandemic management is undeniably useful, safety must take precedence over speed – whilst transferring the study to BSL-4 graded laboratories may slow research the virus in question is without a doubt highly dangerous and must be treated accordingly. Care must also be taken with the freedom of print. Whilst the free flow of ideas drives scientific progress we unfortunately live in a world where, more than ever, information can be used to cause major harm if procured by the wrong people. In the next 60 days it is imperative that a method of securely distributing data and information is laid out in order to keep pushing influenza research forward. It will by no means come easily, but it must.

Imperial College London

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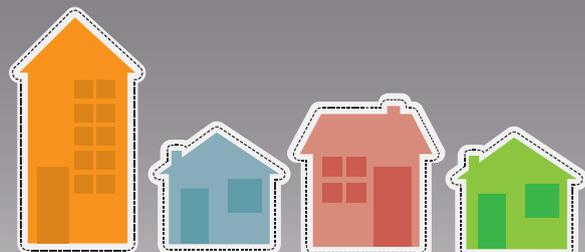
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Politics Editors: **Rajat Jain**
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POLITICS

Davos 2012

All Doom & Gloom with no Boom

The Annual 5 day World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland ended on Sunday in an unusually sombre mood. It's usually a rather positive affair, for capitalists at least, where world leaders rub shoulders with multi-billionaires and heads of NGOs or large corporations can openly lobby for a better world or better profits while dining with Hollywood's A-list. This year, however, was rather depressing. Global economic problems, as with the last few years, were top of the agenda. But this time, few people had any grand plans to turn the bust into a boom. Instead, the focus was on damage control – particularly how to control the Eurozone crisis. This was coupled with an admission that world growth would have to be driven by, and completely depend on, Asia – although even China would no longer experience double-digit growth.

Business Leaders expressed concern that rising youth unemployment across the globe was a "ticking time bomb." Usually, a young population means a low dependency ratio and gives developing countries the capacity to create high growth and fuel global economic stability. Instead, unemployment is rising, particularly in the Arab World, where it is partly responsible for triggering the revolts last spring.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel expressed a need for greater integration in Europe, particularly in her financial institutions. Merkel argued that the European Stability Mechanism, used for emergency bailouts in the Eurozone, ought to be increased. She, however, made it clear that the more Germany is willing to pay out, the higher the moral hazard as other countries and private institutions feel lower risk.

British Prime Minister David Cameron, however, criticised the German chancellor for not doing enough, suggesting that the country was somehow shirking its responsibility. Germany is Europe's largest economy, has provided larger bailouts than any other country, and defended Britain when French politicians were quick to attack Cameron's European policy. His views have caused anger among pro-European MPs. Cameron has already alienated French President Nicholas Sarkozy and is accused of leaving Britain at the edge of Europe.

Christine Lagarde, the new head of the International Monetary Fund and former minister in the French cabinet, has campaigned for a €500bn increase in her institution's budget and largely agreed with Mrs Merkel's plan for greater European financial integration. She argued that the IMF was a safer bet than any other for securing the Eurozone.

Rajat Jain

Why not write for Felix Politics? Email us at:

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Smack your kids up

Middle class nanny-state blamed for riots

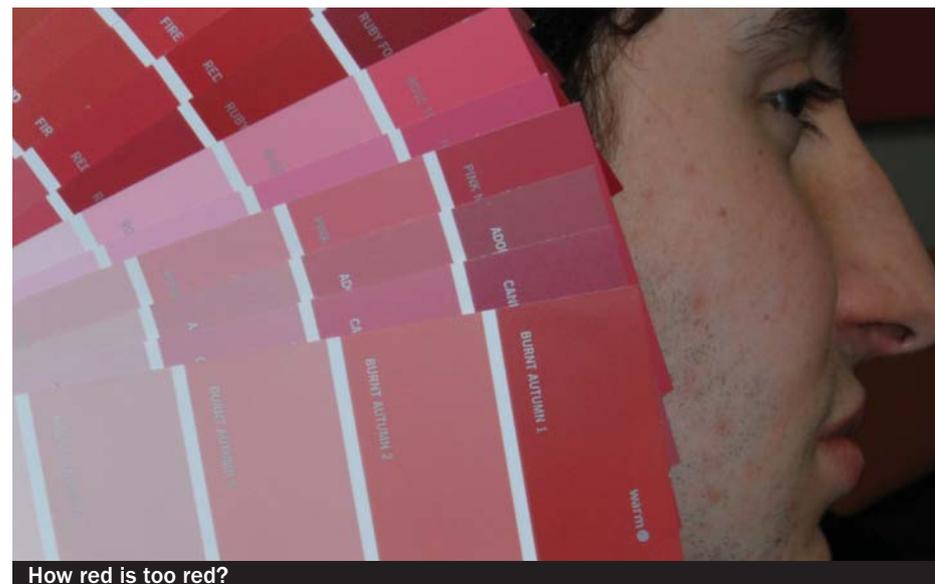
Rajat Jain

MP David Lammy has blamed anti-smacking laws for the lack of discipline that led to riots in London last summer.

Mr Lammy is the MP for the North London constituency of Tottenham, where the riots originated and some of the worst violence was experienced. He became a regular on our screens for his vocal and often radical views of the riots. The Labour MP attacked the 2004 Children's Act as being a middle-class "liberal elite" law that stigmatises the working class and leaves them too scared to discipline their children.

The current legislation allows for the smacking of children as long as it does not cause "reddening of the skin". Other methods of discipline which cause physical or serious mental harm are also banned. The concern is not so much that the law itself is wrong in its intentions and the limitations it sets, but in its subjective interpretation.

Mr Lammy has argued that the law has too much of a grey area, leaving parents fearing that their children could be taken away by social workers if they hit them at all. He also made it clear that there is a class divide where parents in deprived areas are constantly being visited by social workers regardless of whether there is reason, leading to constant fear. Middle-classes, on the other hand, are rarely targeted by social workers and can train discipline



How red is too red?

into their children with "private education and extra-curricular activities."

Despite these claims of a class difference, the law was actually brought in by Lammy's own traditionally working class Labour party, but he has quickly gained the support of traditionally middle class Conservative politicians, including Education Secretary Michael Gove and Mayor of London Boris Johnson who find the law "confusing".

An overhaul of the law could well have wide-

spread public support. A poll by the *Guardian*, generally thought to have a readership that epitomises the "liberal elite", showed that last October two-thirds of its readers opposed a smacking ban. At the time of writing, 90% of *Telegraph* readers, thought to epitomise middle class conservative attitudes, support the right to smack.

It now appears likely that a serious review will take place of the law and it is likely to be changed due to this vocal backbench MP.

Fresh protests in Senegal

Rajat Jain

Police have been deployed in towns across Senegal, and are reported to have killed two people in the northern town of Podor, as protests intensify. Rallies have been organised after President Abdoulaye Wade declared his intention to stand for a third term.

Senegal has long been seen as a relatively successful democracy by African standards.

Mr Wade first came to power in 2000, breaking over fourty years of Socialist rule in the West African country. He had generally been seen as a popular and effective president. In 2001, under his rule, a new constitution was adopted limiting presidential terms to a maximum of two spanning five years each from the previous seven year terms.

However, more recently, views of him have soured. He changed the constitution back so he can stand for a third term, which would be seven years long. Increased control on freedom of the press has been introduced and three opposition candidates (including a popular musician) have been barred from standing.

Further to this, Wade has also been accused



Abdoulaye Wade remains defiant

of corruption, despotism and wasting public money in the impoverished nation on vanity projects.

There seems to be a growing risk that Wade could turn Senegal into another story of failed

democracy in Africa. However, with his unpopularity with the church and growing anger among the people, protests could well bring down the president before the election on February 26.

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BUSINESS

A not so happy birthday

Rajvinder Virdee on who he thinks is crashing the Euro's party

On January 1, 2012, a major economic milestone was reached: the Euro's 10th birthday. Although the Euro had officially been in existence since 1995 and was introduced into financial markets in 1999, it wasn't until 2002 that notes and coins were issued in circulation. The Euro is an important currency; it is not only the second largest reserve currency but it is also the most circulated, with almost €900bn in circulation. It is the currency of 17 of the 27 European Union member states, a population of more than 330 million, not forgetting the numerous countries (mainly African) who have currencies pegged against the Euro. This totals to about 500 million people, 1/12 of the globe's population, who directly use this currency. It was all going so well. Then the Global Economic crisis happened, and in 2009, it had to battle against the Sovereign Debt Crisis. To say the last few years have been hard for the Euro is a bit of an understatement. So, what really went wrong?

It has been said that the sovereign debt crisis was caused by excessive borrowing by European governments. The Germans have been portrayed as the heroes of the situation, doing their bit to help their European brethren, and they seem to be coping comparatively well. But are they really that innocent?

As a part of the new agreement to try and save the Euro, the German government have insisted that a ceiling is put in place limiting governments' borrowing to 0.5% of their output, aiming to stop debt growing too quickly. But if we turn the clocks back 15 years, there was already a deficit ceiling, a 3% limit that was put in the treaties that set up the Euro, again insisted on by the Germans.

But it was Germany who broke this 3% rule first in 2003, and it has done it for about half of the years of the Euro.

Greece broke the rule every year, but interestingly neither Spain nor Ireland nor Italy ever broke the 3% rule. Once again it was left to the ethereal "market confidence" to decide where the safe debt was. The markets saw Germany as the good guy, with Spain and Italy unfairly portrayed as the villains.

Looking at the 10 year period between 2000-10, it is actually Germany whose government debt rose the most (almost 25%), whereas Spain and Italy remained pretty flat. In the case of Spain and Ireland, the problem wasn't the governments; it was the private sector: businesses and individuals. The Spanish and Irish private debt saw a huge increase. And much of that money was invested in buying German goods creating a debt fuelled boom: Germany would give away cheap credits to countries that would spend the money in buying German goods.

"Debt was cheap and heavy borrowing led to an accelerated growth rate"

During these boom years, debt was cheap and heavy borrowing led to an accelerated growth rate. The Spanish and Italians' salaries increased significantly, whilst Germans had a rather flat growth in pay. That was fine while debt was still cheap during the boom years; however, as the economic downturn started, borrowing rates rose sharply. Suddenly all this debt was unaffordable to sustain. Spanish and Italian goods became uncompetitive compared to German goods as customers could no longer borrow to afford inflated prices. This loss of com-

petitiveness was due to higher labour costs making it much harder for these countries to kick start exports. Low exports at a time where debt was expensive lead to further economic slowdown. Unemployment went up and the problems just kept getting worse.

Spending cuts may make debts harder to repay, but will not necessarily lead to a rise in exports, and will probably result in further recession. But a continued spending risks bankrupting the country, resulting in spiralling shrinking of its economy and in a loss in market confidence. This is the dilemma that most European governments now face.

During the onset of the crisis, governments had to increase their borrowing to help support the collapsing private sector. When a government has to borrow, it can devalue its own currency to help ease the pain. Spain and Italy could not devalue their currency though, as they were tied up into the Euro. The high levels of debt infected the whole single currency where everyone was suddenly being exposed to these high levels of debt. This has not only crippled the Eurozone countries' economies, but has dramatically reduced the prestige of the Euroclub. As the European economies weakened, debt market confidence dropped, and borrowing costs all over the Eurozone increased.

But yet, after all of this, we are still being told the Germans played the right game. That is not entirely true. As one can see, a lot of the problems we are experiencing now are due to lending by the Germans. It seems they have used the single currency as a way to increase their economic strength at the expense of the smaller developing southern European countries. The road ahead for the Euroclub is definitely a tough one. It is clear to almost everyone that for the Euro to reach its 11th birthday it will need radical reform.

Apprentice Challenge 2012

Annabelle Mayers

Whilst many students were having a lie-in on Saturday 21 January, the 16 students selected to participate in the 2012 Imperial Apprentice Challenge arrived at the Business School, complete with suits, laptops, and determination, ready to conquer the challenges organised by the Imperial Entrepreneurs society.

The four teams, Zeus, Ipsum, Collateral, and Tornado, battled for the privilege of representing Imperial in the London University Apprentice Challenge against LSE, Kings, UCL and Royal Holloway. In addition to entry into the London competition, the winning team received cash and prizes from sponsors Proctor and Gamble. The weekend consisted of four challenges based on Strategy, Marketing, Sales, and Product Development, followed by a live final. The judging panel consisted of guests from Ernst and Young, E-Synergy and the Imperial College Business School. Adding to the pressure was the fact the team members' every move was captured on film and selected scenes included in a film showing highlights of the event (search for 'Imperial Apprentice Challenge 2012' on YouTube).

The first task, the Strategy challenge, required the teams to "Create value from nothing." First, they had to obtain an item for free, then proceed to trade the item up until they obtained items of higher value. The value created in just two hours was astounding. The winners of this demanding but fun task were Collateral (Andre, Alex, Max and Hari) who secured a gift bag containing a £110 chauffeur driven cooperate car voucher, an expensive bottle of wine and various other treats from a hotel. The total value was estimated to be over £160!

The second challenge, the Marketing Challenge, provided participants with the opportunity to rest their legs. Each team were assigned one of four companies – Snog frozen yoghurts, Gatorade energy drinks, Talk mobile and Vitaminwater – and had to decide upon a second company which they propose could carry our joint marketing. They had to plan a three minute elevator pitch, as if representing the first company and persuading the second to come on board, to be presented to the judges in the live final. The teams had to identify the target market, specify how they intend to advertise and justify why it would be mutually beneficial to both companies. This joint marketing approach has proven popular recently with, for example, companies such as McDonalds and Weight Watchers forming a marketing partnership; McDonalds benefit from an improved reputation regarding the nutritional quality of their food and Weight Watchers reaches a target audience far larger than it could achieve alone. A second example: the cooperation between Spotify and Lucozade. All teams were innovative in their approach to this task and pitched their ideas successfully to the judging panel. Following the pitch-

es, the judges scrutinized each team's efforts and presented them with thought provoking questions.

Given a short while to recover from Saturday's challenges the teams met early on Sunday morning to commence the second day of the Imperial Apprentice Challenge. For the Sales Challenge the teams, once again, had to muster up the energy to run around the local area interacting with strangers. Given £20, each team were told to invest some or all of their money in stock from local shops or supermarkets and sell their purchases in whichever location they felt appropriate. The team which made the largest profit would win. Performance was impressive with the most successful team, Tornado, creating a net profit of £64 in just two hours. In the Entrepreneurial spirit team Tornado acquired copies of the *Financial Times* (which are distributed for free in the business school) and managed to sell many copies by knocking at peoples doors and selling to strangers in the street. Other interesting approaches were seen: for example, team Ipsum sold water to runners in Hyde Park and Collateral made hot chocolate in free cups from Pret a Manger using a kettle borrowed from halls and sold the warm drinks with cookies to cold Londoners.

The final, most demanding task, at least in terms of time management, was the Product Development Challenge, which saw each team design a new service or product to be launched by either Playboy or Ferrari. The teams were required to create a presentation outlining their innovative idea, target market, marketing strategy, financial outlook and 5 year projections. The outcome was to be presented to the audience and judging panel in the live final. Due to the nature of the companies some interesting ideas appeared on the whiteboard! Ipsum boldly pursued the idea of Playboy 'adult toys' whilst collateral opted for a luxurious and professional Playboy spa. Team Tornado saw great potential in exclusive Ferrari Yachts whilst Zeus envisaged Luxury Ferrari hotels.

The results of each team were an amalgamation of the outcome of the two active tasks and the judge's opinions of the pitches and presentations. Team Tornado triumphed, meaning the team members, Effie Kyrтата, Ignacio Doval, Sabrina Ghiddi, and Isobel Qian will represent Imperial in the London Apprentice in late February. The Judges from Ernst and Young, E-Synergy and the Imperial Business School commented on the impressive ideas and high quality presentations made by all teams. They noted that the marking was not easy as the standard of all teams was very high. Team Collateral finished in a close second place followed by Ipsum and then Zeus.



Here's to another ten years...?

Comment Editors: **Tim Arbabzadah**
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COMMENT

FELIX

Elephants can't hide Exhibition Road worries

The newly redesigned Exhibition Road saw its grand opening take place last Wednesday. Away from the usual buffoonery (read: metal elephants that Felix still doesn't quite comprehend perfectly) and tussles for photo opportunities that accompany any form of visit from the current Mayor of London the fact remains that the redesign cost £30m, and while the visual changes are plain to see, the reasoning behind them is somewhat muddier.

The designers have promised that despite what seems like an unintuitive idea to begin with (namely a lack of solid guidelines for traffic or crossings for pedestrians), there will ultimately prove to be a bevy of improvements over the previous design, including a reduction in traffic by 30% and an increased observation by both driver and pedestrian. For £30m, one would certainly hope so. Nevertheless, in its current state, 'increased observation' will most likely prove to be a synonym for 'anxious watching' as students attempt to find the best area to cross a road with an ever changing traffic flow, and motorists (some of whom, of course, will be unfamiliar with the new layout) attempt to avoid potentially grim consequences as students, tourists and other pedestrians edge out from behind parked cars.

The reduction in road signs is mystifying. For such a laissez-faire attitude to be thrust upon users of the road, one would have to place a great deal of faith in road users. However, many who use the road aren't regular residents, such as tourists for museums and the surrounding area. A prime example is the roundabout at the corner with Prince Consort Road. Situated on a prime route to Ethos, it is a popular location to cross for students. Now, turning for cars is only vaguely regulated. Confusion reigns, especially when car indicators are not even used.

Consider the behaviour of motorists on Queen's Gate and the surrounding area. Particularly at busy times, little consideration can often be shown to those waiting at zebra crossings. As problems still exist in other locations around campus, whether due to the location of crossings or other traffic regulations that could be improved, is it really time to give drivers more free reign?

While pioneering schemes such as the Exhibition Road redesign are to be admired for their scope and ambition, one can't help but feel that there has been a major oversight with the new layout with regards to the public and many students who use the road everyday. Despite the shine of the newly cleaned museums, we mustn't be dazzled by the aesthetic impact. Traffic around campus is still a key issue and hasn't yet been cracked. We must study the new Exhibition Road and determine for ourselves whether an improvement is incoming any time soon.

A possible high society



Rhys Davies

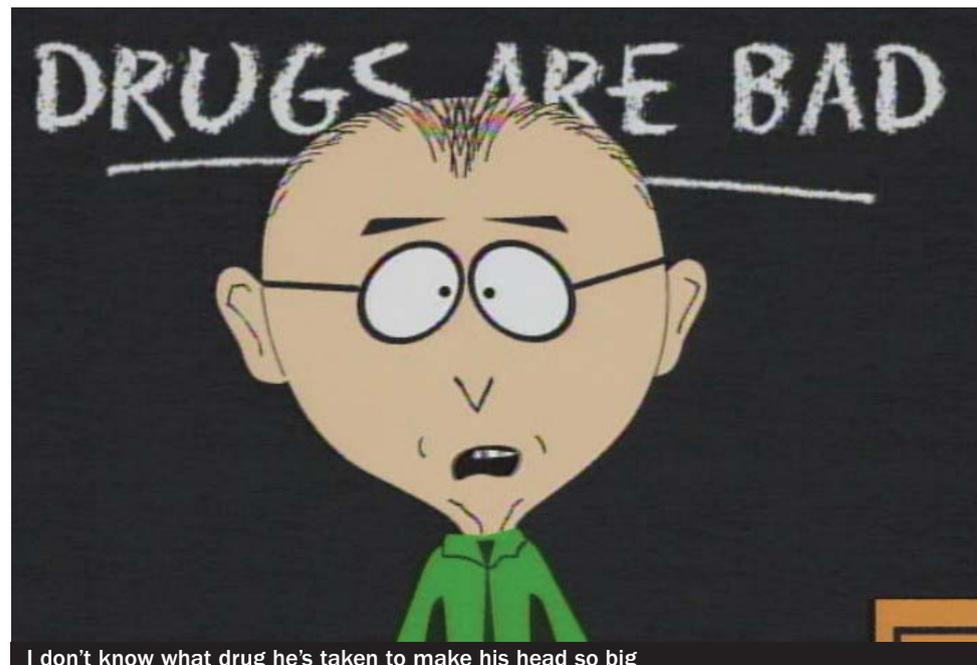
Please do not read the following if you do not like controversial material.

The debate over the legalisation of drugs has wittered on for as long as we've had drugs, or at least laws about them. Those of you who think that drugs are dangerous for the public at large will probably give good arguments for the criminalisation of their use, possession and trade. Likewise, those of you who regard drugs as a matter of personal choice beyond the remit of the government or police can probably offer equally valid counter-arguments.

I, myself, think the most sensible option would be to legalise all drugs. Prohibition of anything has never really worked. The greatest historical example of this folly comes from the eponymous era in the USA, especially in Chicago. All prohibition did was drive money and power into the hands of mobsters, both of which they have been reluctant to relinquish ever since.

Instead of simply legalising drugs such as heroin and cocaine and leaving the population to their own devices, we should provide a reputable market for their sale. So much of the danger of illicit drugs is in the mystery of whatever they've been cut with, and the lengths people go to acquire them. An above-board market would bring with it standards in formulation, dose, and purity and would leech significant control away from career criminals (and I don't mean City of London bankers). After all, who can compete with Tesco's prices?

As with the nature of this debate, I don't expect this proposal to be universally lauded but I do believe it makes sense



However, even I'm not optimistic enough to think that Fair Trade cocaine will significantly improve the lives and working conditions of its producers in Bolivia – well, maybe I am. Such a radical change in criminal and supermarket forces would be near-impossible to organise, and the gangsters won't like it. Neither will the *Daily Mail*, I'm sure. There would of course have to be checks. It should still be illegal to sell these drugs to anyone under 18, or 21, say, and using in a public place would be forbidden, excluding properties, clubs and the like, with a certain license. What people do in the privacy of their own homes, however, should be their own business, within reason.

As with the nature of this debate, I don't expect this proposal to be universally lauded but I do believe it makes sense. Decriminalisation will free up the police to pursue other crime and a legal market would bring with it taxation and revenue. Kaching. The idea that legalisation will turn us all into crackasmackheads (my own term) doesn't really hold water. Alcohol and nicotine are both perfectly legal and yet we don't all go around boozing and puffing. Other drugs are dangerous, true, but these are no exception. I've seen enough patients on the wards that have gone bright yellow and can't catch a single breath.

This is just the start though.

In the 21st century, we should be able to be the complete masters of our own reality. Some people have escaped the drudgery of this heaven and earth for one of their own design in Second Life on the internet. Using drugs, from alcohol to LSD, is but one way to abscond this reality, if only for a time. Others choose to augment their appearance through tattoos, piercings or stonking great breast implants.

Do you enjoy anonymously exerting your intellectual superiority over people you'll never talk to ever again? Well, felixonline.co.uk is the place for you!

All this is fine but it doesn't go far enough.

The one aspect of our lives that is beyond our tangible control is how long it lasts. Until that time comes, we should express ourselves to the full extent of our desire and capacity. I want to walk down the street and see a guy with a horn in the middle of his forehead. I want to fall asleep in the radiant arms of my girlfriend who glows in the dark. I don't particularly want to see people wandering around with cat ears or a tail but that's a matter of personal taste. What really matters is what you want to do, what you want to look like, what you want to be.

We have the technology to make all this possible. Reconstruction surgeons must be itching to do something other than treat burns victims and insecure Harley Street patrons. Jellyfish and other fantastic oddballs of DNA have the genes that enable us to some really weird stuff. Luminescence is simply page one material.

We should also have access to normally medicinal drugs to modulate and alter our bodily function. Nearly every drug has its own niche side-effect. If Big Pharma knew there was a market for it on the other end, they wouldn't have a problem emphasising this otherwise small print. Personally, I would take rifampicin daily to turn my urine bright orange. How great would that be!

For more than a decade, we have been able to become whoever we want on the internet. Allowing real life to become dull and restrictive by comparison is the real crime at the centre of the drugs debate. You may scoff at my far-reaching proposals but I believe they have some merit. It would certainly brighten up the journey into college each morning!

COMMENT

The right to offend



**Tagore
Nakornchai**

“Yes, sometimes people make jokes that could be considered insulting or in bad taste, but this is an important part of freedom of speech”

In case you haven't been following the news, here's a quick summary: the UCL Atheist, Secular and Humanist Society's president stepped down this week after massive pressure from the UCL Union. The Society had used a picture from the “Jesus and Mo” web comic to advertise an event, and were promptly served with a takedown notice from the UCL Union. When the society shot back with a petition, 4,000 people (including Richard Dawkins) signed it overnight, and the UCLU was forced to back down.

Days later, at a Queen Mary Atheism, Secularism and Humanism Society meeting, an angry man interrupted an event where an anti-Sharia Law campaigner, Anne Marie Waters of “One Law for All”, was due to give a speech. He threatened to murder the attendees and their families, forcing the cancellation of the event and the calling of campus security.

And then, on Friday, the LSE Atheist, Secularist and Humanist Society were charged with “Islamophobia” by their Student Union because members posted cartoons that made fun of the prophet Mohammed on their Facebook group. This apparently made the Society's web-page an “unwelcoming” place for Muslim students. Who'd a thunk? I'd probably feel unwelcome walking into an Islam Soc or Christian Union meeting or discussion, even if people were being completely cool about it. There's just something about walking into a discussion group, both online and offline, for people with views you don't agree with that makes people relatively uncomfortable.

Religion, to many people, is a highly personal and spiritual thing – I get that, but people also seem to believe that religion should get a special status and that it shouldn't be subject to the normal criticism that is often applied to everything

else. I am a (wavering) Lib Dem, and I get shit about it all the time – I don't see why religion should receive a special status that should protect it from all sorts of criticism that pretty much every other sort of deeply held view, whether on politics, economics, music or Tube Trains (how the fuck can you like the Northern Line?) will receive.

Look, I am not going to pretend that I have a good enough understanding of Islamic/Christian/Jewish/Hindu/Pastafarian Scripture to have a proper theological debate, but I've read around the subject enough to have a sensible and reasoned view of the various religions. If I take a quote out of context, or misunderstand the point of the text – then fine, feel free to correct me – but don't tell me that I have no right whatsoever to criticize the various aspects of your religion. I'm pretty sure most Christians are happy enough criticizing Islam (or Mormons), and most Muslims are happy to criticize Christianity – only when their own religion is under a spotlight do people really get touchy.

I'd bet most people don't follow all the rules in the book anyway – mainstream Christianity and Judaism have left the worst bits of the Old Testament well behind them, and nobody really follows the Koran word for word, do they?

Instead of crying foul and trying to stifle their critics through censorship or intimidation, religious groups should attempt to face up to their criticism and respond appropriately. Yes, sometimes people make jokes that could be considered insulting or in bad taste, but this is an important part of freedom of speech; cartoons are a perfectly legitimate way of expressing your views – they may not be as sophisticated or as eloquent as an academic paper or a non-fiction book, but the artist still has a right to express his views.



Yep, he may offend people, but consider this: without him, no Karl Pilkington

Freedom of Speech is perhaps the most important aspect of our modern democracy – the ability to express our doubts, concerns and criticism of current events is what differentiates the success of the Democratic World from Dictatorships. Yes, we complain about policing policy, or about the UK's foreign policy – but it's the fact that we can actually complain or take action that means that we have the ability to cause change and to drive and motivate people to do something about the problem.

Of course, we find a lot of things people say unacceptable and reprehensible – I find a lot of things that the BNP have to say reprehensible, and I most certainly don't agree with the views of Christian or Muslim Fundamentalists on gay marriage – I even find them (as a straight person) slightly offensive, because it implies that having different views on sexuality is weird, or abnormal in some way. I find suggestions that atheists are immoral materialists even more offensive, yet you don't find me running to Scott Heath's office to demand an apology from the offending society. An important part of being able to criticize others is the willingness to accept criticism yourself, rather than living in a rose-tinted world

where everything is going “just right”.

To censor anything that could be even remotely offensive, even to a small minority of students, is a dangerous precedent. It could be used as a tool to stifle legitimate debate and to force people to apologize and back down. It is, however, important to differentiate between restrictions on offensive speech and speech that would cause actual harm – nobody (except a crazy Ron Paul Libertarian who believes solely in rights and not in responsibilities) would say a person has a right to yell “fire” in a crowded theatre.

And one last thing – every other large university in London has an Atheist, Agnostic and Humanist Society, while Imperial's Atheists and Agnostics Society shut down 2 years ago. It's high time that, in a time where many government policies are increasingly influenced by religious fundamentalists (Nadine Dorries' repeated attempts to trash school sex education classes, and to outlaw abortion comes to mind), and with the increasingly vocal religious societies inviting controversial speakers to the College, that there should be a voice of non-belief and reason in the college. I mean, even King's has one, and, as a Medic, if GKT has something, we need one at IC!

Give TfL a break



**Laurence de
Lussy Kubisa**

“Ah sorry I'm late, fucking Transport for London” – the familiar refrain uttered by thousands of Londoners every day. I mean it was obviously a failure of the bastards that you couldn't make it to drinks/lectures/sessions of parliament on time. Right?

WRONG. I say we all take a look at ourselves. Was it really the bus that made you late, or was it something to do with the fact you were in pyjamas, stuffing yourself with so much Special K it lost any scarce ability it once had to keep your figure trim five minutes before you were supposed to leave?

Yes, TfL isn't perfect. Sure, the buses sometimes stop their journeys half way through without explanation. And yes, the Circle and/or District line is guaranteed to be mysteriously closed every weekend (for the addition of new trains – I'm having none of it). But take a moment, think back to whatever dark hole Imperial did you the service of dragging you out of and try to recall the state of the public transport. If your experience was anything like mine, repressed memories of irregular services, long waits, suspiciously expensive tickets and the complete inability to travel between 11pm and 6:30am should horrifyingly resurface.

Not to mention that nights out at home usually entail more coercion, bargaining and bribery than the allocation of a World Cup as you attempt to negotiate a deal whereby you can get to and from the location and have somewhere to sleep. Since being in London, I've not thought once about how I'm going to get home – there'll always be a night bus.

The Londoners amongst you are probably now itching to tell me of important defects I've missed, maybe the fact that the buses rarely arrive when scheduled. Whilst this is true, to those naysayers I can only suggest one thing: go somewhere that is not London, then

catch a bus. Unless you're luckier than a lottery winner who's just eaten a good sandwich from Tesco, you'll find that the buses rarely keep to schedule, and aren't regular enough to compensate for this fact.

Next time you start blaming your tardiness on the transport system, stop. Reconsider what you're about to say and just think. London is a huge city and yet the buses and tubes are regular, inexpensive and actually, dare I say it, fairly quick. So yes, TfL may have cheekily raised their prices by 5p over the New Year (nothing gets past me) and yes, at times they can be extremely frustrating. But come on guys, give TfL a break.

Comment Editors: **Tim Arbabzadah**
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COMMENT

Competency, wompetency



**Chandra
Chadalawada**

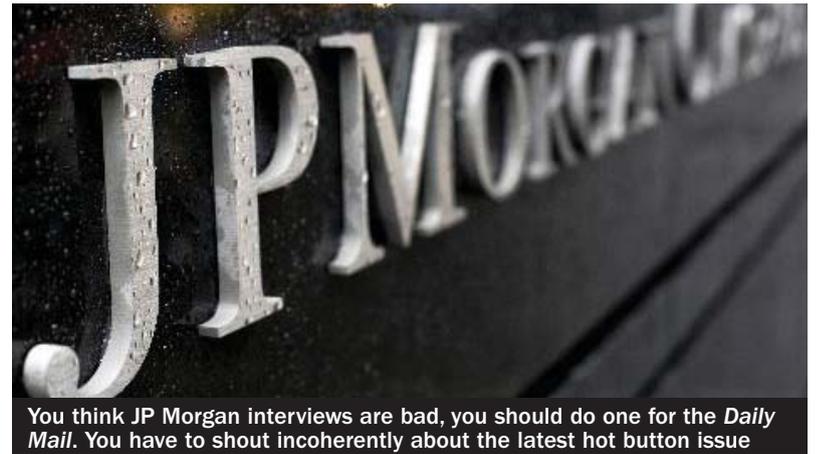
Unless you're a masochist, applying for jobs these days, whilst never exactly being pleasant process, is a terrible experience from every point of view. Not only is the student dream of free(ish) money, big booty hoes and four months off a year over, you have to deal with the painful application process itself. First of all, why is it necessary to apply for a job starting next September a year in advance? Come on guys, it doesn't take that long to skim read a couple of pages! Surely they can start things off a bit later on, giving us (and them) more time to ease back into things after summer. It's bad enough dealing with labs, lectures and tutorials after a lazy summer let alone filling out a billion job applications on top of that. This brings me onto my main bone of contention.

Now I completely understand a firm can't just hire any old chump, but there is no need for the fallacy that is Competency Based Interviews. The word itself, competency, is an abhorrent example of corporate-speak and, like most silly corporate terms, it was conceived in the 80s when most historians agree people were too busy doing cocaine and avoiding nuclear Armageddon (perhaps not at the same time) to think very logically. The purpose of an interview is to evaluate the candidate's motivation, skills and knowledge to find the ideal candidate for the role (according to Wikipedia). This is precisely where a Competency Based Interview fails. The problem with them is that they strongly favour the people who have

spent the most time preparing for them and not the people who are in reality most suited for the role. Especially when you consider that there is a plethora of books that you can buy (Amazon has over 700) and there are even week long interview training courses that train you up.

Thinking about a "time when you've solved a problem in a group using initiative" or something similarly ridiculous is pretty hard to do on the spot when you've got a panel of grizzled interviewers, pens at the ready, waiting for you to open your cake hole. It's a horrible moment. Your caffeine addled mind goes into overdrive, dredging up half forgotten memories of that group project you did in second year where you did... oh shit what was it exactly? It's in that split second when you notice your interviewer has the remnants of a long digested croissant stuck to their tie (true story there) and your train of thought is gone. It's now officially an awkward silence so you go "Basically, erm..." and out comes a mumbled, spluttering load of bullshit about how you somehow did something incredible like saving an African tribe from Ebola whilst furthering your dream of working in *insert company here*, when in reality you were probably more hungover than Charlie Sheen on New Year's Day, nodding mindlessly to whatever the annoying, chirpy one in your group said, whilst dreaming of a Boneless Banquet. Oh, and if you don't answer using the STAR technique, just leave – you're done for.

Your only option if you want any hope of getting the job is to spend an unending



numbers of hours, scratching your head trying to remember anything you ever did that was vaguely impressive, relating them to competencies like "Makes An Impact" and "Gets Things Done". Those ridiculous statements are genuinely two of the competencies for a very well known bank by the way; I'm not making them, or the grammatically incorrect capitalisation, up. They're also incredibly boring for people on both sides of the table: the interviewer regurgitates a bunch of questions from a piece of paper and you regurgitate some prepared answers. It's like A-Levels where you won't get the marks unless you put in the key words.

It's a state of affairs that hasn't escaped the attention of employers. Several, including Ernst and Young, one of the Big 4, who are collectively perhaps the oldest and greatest advocates of competency in-

terviews, are moving to alternatives such as strength based interviews, which are designed to find what really motivates people, their true strengths and whether these make them suitable for the role. Many industries could also learn a lot from consultancy firms who frequently use case interviews. These test the candidate's ability to solve a pseudo-real world problem, actively testing the same skills needed for the actual job. It's a shame that these days to succeed in almost anything, from exams to interviews, there are few alternatives but to learn the script and follow it to a T. I guess it's better than being unemployed in a ditch, drinking K Cider, which is apparently what the legions of unemployed graduates are doing now according to the *Daily Mail*. Anyway, I gotta go guys, I have to think of times I "drove things forward in a team"...

... the interviewer regurgitates a bunch of questions from a piece of paper and you regurgitate some prepared answers

Cutting through the pain of haircuts



Tim Arbabzadah

Have you ever had to endure torture? Well, I have, and so have you. On Wednesday the 25th of January, I – wait for this – had a haircut. If that doesn't immediately draw you in, I don't know what will. I know it may be a bit over the top to call this torture, but bear with me.

First of all, booking a haircut. That's harder than you may think, mainly because I'm not sure the exact sentence that I should say when calling up. I mean, I know it's not "Hello fine sir or madame, I wish to purchase one haircut, jolly good show" but apart from that, I'm a bit lost. Do I say I want an appointment? That seems a bit too formal and makes it sound like I think I'm going to see a doctor. Perhaps, I could just ask for a haircut. That still feels somewhat lacking; last time I tried that there was an awkward silence where I think the person on the end of the line expected me to say

more words. Phone's bad enough, but in person is much worse. Last time I tried this, it did not go well. I was walking confidently, not cockily strutting mind, but with the vague swagger of a man on a mission: for I, was about to get my haircut. As I opened the door, coat billowing in the wind, I suddenly started to panic and sweat, profusely. Shit. I hopefully thought in my head. I don't have an opening line. I have no way to open this conversation. I know why I'm here, they know why I'm here, what do I say. I think I went with "errrrr, errrrr, haircut?" A regular James Bond, I know.

You're sat down in a chair and then asked what you want done with it, at which point you fumble around for an explanation that matches the image in your head. When you finally decide on the style you have the "This much? No, okay, this much? How about this much?" at which point you usually just say yes as you don't want to be too much bother and

make a fuss. Although inside you're terrified they're about to chop off way more than has been agreed.

Hair wet, person with sharp objects near your neck, suspended in a chair beneath a layer of protection from the spill of stuff being cut off you: this is when the real torture is about to start. It's a tense moment, worthy of any Bond scene. "Do you expect me to talk?" "No, Mr Arbabzadah, I expect you to make cheerful small talk, and look as if you're not secretly regretting the length you're letting me cut off". Maybe I'm slightly exaggerating, it's not that bad talking, but it can be a bit awkward. Especially when, after seeing the amount of hair falling on the floor and how it's starting to shape up, you're making a face akin to a deer in the headlights. There's also the classic moment when you realise that you had spaced out, trying to tell yourself that it's okay as you're only half way through and it will look totally different when fin-

ished, and had been asked a simple direct question. That's when you go into full back-in-school-teacher-has-picked-on-me-I-wasn't-listening mode and forget that, as an adult, you can just say that you didn't hear as a dryer drowned them out.

Next comes the big reveal. It's all been leading up to this point and... fuck, (as I have to mix up my swear words a bit, I need a plethora of options to choose from) this is not exactly as I had planned it. Crap, (see, mixing it up) this doesn't look quite as good as it did in my head. Why exactly did I make myself so handsome in my head; that was a terrible idea. It seems they have cut it how I wanted, but my own face and head has let me down. At this point, you realise that, actually, it's always like this. It'll take a few days or so for it to grow out and adopt the style you were aiming for. By the time it does, you'll be used to it and all will be fine. Panic over, disaster averted. Well, until the next time...

... "errrrr, errrrr, haircut?" A regular James Bond, I know

COMMENT

Become a vegetarian, save the world!



Caroline Wood

Sustainability is a hot topic. Yet despite all the recent conventions and talks on sustainability, it's still hard to know what living sustainably really means.

So this year I am conducting my own sustainability experiment. I am calling it '12 Sustainable Months of 2012', and my mission is to find out how sustainable living can realistically be achieved. Every month of 2012 I will be trying a different (supposedly) sustainable lifestyle habit. E.g. I'll be trying one month of 'no plastic bags', one month of 'zero waste', one month of 'sustainable travel'... you get the idea.

This January, I decided to become a weekday vegetarian. This means not eating any meat on weekdays. The idea is that, for those who shudder at the thought of becoming an actual vegetarian, and find the thought of saying "this is my last ever KFC" incomprehensible, this is a more sustainable yet less brutal alternative. (See Graham Hill's TED talk "Why I'm a weekday vegetarian".)

On the scale of "I only eat plants" to "I eat a steak for breakfast", I fall somewhere in the middle. I thought that becoming a vegetarian for just five days a week for one month would be super easy. However, it has not all been plain sailing.

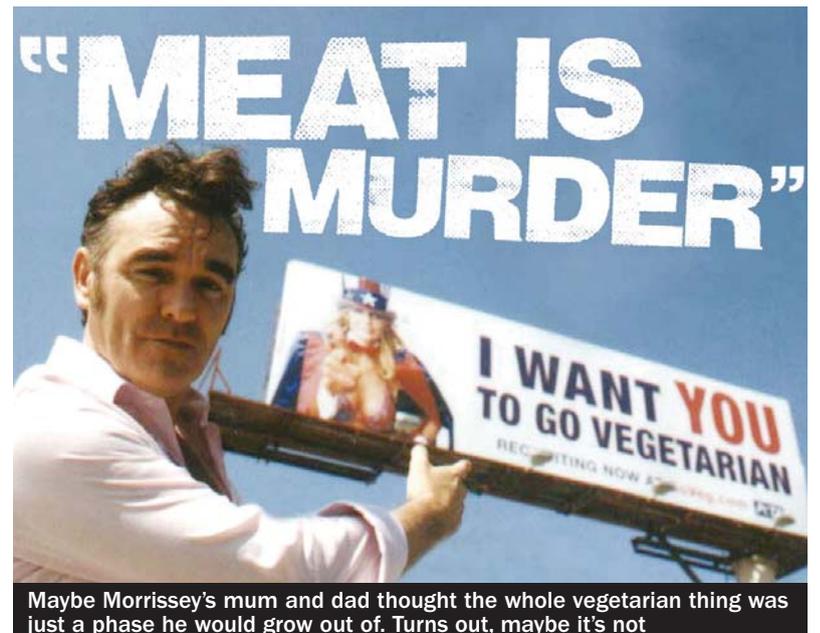
I have found that there are two reasons why being vegetarian is not as easy as expected: 1. Vegetarian options are pretty limited. 2. Meat tastes way better than vegetarian foods.

The first is, I think, the main difficulty. There is a severe lack of vegetarian food available. For starters, the

library café provides just two different vegetarian baguettes, both of which are cheese, both of which sell out by about 1pm. Poor form. In addition to this, whilst attending college events throughout January, I have turned down free chicken kebabs, smoked salmon sandwiches and sushi in favour of egg and cheese sandwiches, which is just not cool. This is not to mention experiences outside of college, including going to Nando's and not ordering chicken, and saying no to bacon sandwiches cooked by my housemate one morning. All in all, it is pretty inconvenient to be vegetarian.

Lack of choice aside, the other main issue is that vegetarian options just don't taste as good as the meat options. Is there really a meat eater out there who would choose a cheddar and tomato baguette over a chicken and bacon one (especially when they are exactly the same price)? I highly doubt it. On asking one of the biggest meat lovers I know, Eugene Wong, about how he'd feel about giving up meat for five days a week, he said: "Which sane individual would inflict that sort of grave injustice on a fellow human being?" Need I say more?

The main point to consider in this discussion, however, is this: if everyone stopped eating meat, would it actually make a significant difference? Based on a moderately active person with a weight of 65kg who consumes about 2600 calories per day, it is estimated that a vegetarian has a footprint of 5.5kWh per day and a carnivore has a footprint of 12kWh per day. This means vegetarians have less than half the footprint of carnivores. Although a



Maybe Morrissey's mum and dad thought the whole vegetarian thing was just a phase he would grow out of. Turns out, maybe it's not

number of other factors would need to be considered, such as where the animals live, what they eat and so on; the point is that with over 7 billion people on the planet, the energy saved if everyone were to become a vegetarian would be significant.

So, there is a real case for eating less meat. But is there a real solution? If a 'moderate meat eater' like myself found it fairly challenging to give up meat five days out of seven for one month, where does that leave the real meat lovers of this world? Sadly, I am not sure that global abstinence from meat is really a realistic solution. But is there another option?

This weekend, *The Guardian* published an article entitled "Could lab-grown meat soon be the solution to

the world's food crisis?" The author argues that not only could lab grown meat reduce the environmental impact associated with animal rearing, it could be engineered to have less fat and also prevent animal-borne diseases. I am not convinced that eating meat grown in a lab is really that appealing. However, if farming meat for over 7 billion people is unsustainable, yet we are not ready to end our love affair with meat, perhaps a more radical solution such as this should be seriously considered.

I'll be blogging about my "12 Sustainable Months of 2012" on: <http://carolinesarahwood.posterous.com> and also tweeting about my experiences on twitter: [@carosarahwood](https://twitter.com/carosarahwood)

I am not sure that global abstinence from meat is really a realistic solution. But is there another option?

Awkward conversations



Edward Yoxall

Now I'm not really one to feel self-conscious. If we're being brutally honest here, I actually quite like getting attention – a hangover from my Mum never looking at how high I was going. Recent experience, however, has taught me that I have boundaries – lines that should not, under any circumstances, be crossed.

You often hear folk whinging these days (folk never used to grumble in the good ol' days, you see) that London is an anti-social place. Nobody speaks to you on the tube, you can never catch that attractive person's eye and not one person has EVER asked you what you're writing on your MacBook Pro in

Starbucks.

Why is it then that all the social bees seem to congregate at public swimming pools? Swimming is not a social sport. You spend the majority of your time burying your head under water as if you're frantically training for the Somerset under-23 county apple-bobbing championships. This is not the kind of pastime that you'd imagine would appeal to the chatterboxes.

But it does. Oh, how it does. In normal life, someone's willy flopping around in the breeze would be cause for looking away in embarrassment, or perhaps letting out a little snigger. But not in the public baths' changing rooms. Such a sight is an open invitation for chatting about the weather, or ask-

ing what you bought your mother for Christmas. Why?! You wouldn't speak to me clothed – why speak to me with such gusto now that the crown jewels are available for viewing?!

And it doesn't stop at the changing room doors. Never has the expression "do you come here often?" been so utterly misused as during stilted chats in the shallow end. The correct use of that phrase should have it dripping in irony. It is NOT correct when both parties are dripping wet and literally dressed in speedos.

Boys have it easy though. Several times my other half has come home from her swim to tell me that other members of the fairer sex have quizzed her on personal gardening techniques

and habits. How you squirm out of that one I have no idea. Answers on a postcard please.

This is one of those rare instances when life would be so much better if people weren't quite so keen to be friendly. When I become President of the United World this will be my first royal decree: no extraneous words in swimming pools. That will be all.

Ned is doing Ironman Wales to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust. You can sponsor him online by visiting www.justgiving.com/NedsIronman or by text through JustTextGiving by sending 'IRON66 £(amount you'd like to give)' to 70070. Thanks for your support!

ARTS

Fluent on Paper does The Poet's Column

Tourists by Cas Nadel

Stupid fucking tourists getting in the way,
why don't you learn to ride the mother fucking
train?

Gawking at the signs squiggly lines unrefined –
can't find the stop you're looking for;
lurching on the floor.

Missing the door by a hair, unaware:
step out in front, elbow in naval – grunt.
You're liable and unreliable, unpliant –
there's a Burberry on every high street in your
country.

What's the need to not proceed,
preceding me so slowly?

We're not running hourly – minutes count.

Pounds are always on the line, we're running by
the time,

wound up like a clockwork Turk –
the system has to work!

If you stop to tie your shoe, the bottle blocks -
wear crocks!

Tearing me asunder and I wonder "where're your
brains?"

Did you leave them on the plane or with security?
He asked if you packed your bags yourself and
auto mode turned on and now on Portobello Road
you're slow -

padding like a toad, stopping, starting, a bitch for
any of us passing, asking which side will you step -
a never ending guess!

Go back from whence you came I've got nothing
'gainst those who can move and realise there are
others in the world with even less to prove than
you so remove your shoes, let us tread on *your*
calcaneus. As long as you don't slow progress.

I digress from the issue. Move the fuck out my
way!

**Felix Arts is constantly
looking for new poets.
If you want to see your
work appearing here, do
get in touch.**

Untitled Haiku by Dylan Lowe

Swirling smoke inhaled

Innocent gale it may seem

It fucks up your lungs

Hip to Bee square

Guys play girls and girls play guys in
comically dark Japanese kidnapping

Eva Rosenthal

The ease with which Ido, protagonist of *The Bee*, morphs from law-abiding and rather boring businessman – of the kind who present their sons with calculators for their 6th birthday – to terrorising monster is stupefying but altogether not far removed from reality. After all, murderers lead at least some semblance of a 'normal' life up until that fateful murderous day. Perhaps it was because of this knowledge that *The Bee* made for such unsettling viewing. When his family is kidnapped, Ido refuses to play the victim and takes the kidnappers' wife and son as hostages. What was initially a matter of revenge on Ogoro, the stammering escapee murderer who wants his wife back, soon descends into cold sickening pleasure for Ido.

Jarringly bright lights, blood-red floors and screaming Japanese music set the mood at the **Soho Theatre** for this chilling comedy, a collaborative effort by Hideki Noda OBE and Colin Teevan. They have mingled hilarity with horror; *The Bee* is both funny and vaguely terrifying. The script has a discordant aspect: the sentences are brief, rhyming occasionally, resulting in a terseness broken only by sound effects of varying degrees of irritation. Combined with the strident tone of delivery used by the four actors, the script imposes its disturbed idea on the audience members, who cannot help but laugh even when, for example, Ido is cutting a third finger off the little boy hostage.

Four actors played ten characters: there was much, and impressive, gender bending of roles. Olivier Award winning actress Kathryn Hunter was the sociopathic Ido; the repugnant aura that the character exudes from the start was a stroke of real inspiration. The useless police inspector, who has the task of delivering Ido's and Ogoro's messages of escalating violence, was played by Clive Mendus. Mendus was also responsible for a telephone ringtone of dizzyingly irritating proportions – earplugs would have been a good idea for this particular moment. Glyn Pritchard metamorphosed seamlessly from misogynistic detective Anchoku to Ogoro's son and eventually to Ogoro

himself. These metamorphoses were choreographed with astuteness: Pritchard, confident as the loud-mouthed Anchoku, takes a bat to the head when Ido loses his patience with police procedure. He keels over and as Ido drags an imaginary body away, Pritchard dons a green cap and with scared eyes, instantly becomes Ogoro's terrified son. Ogoro's wife is a pitiable character, played with surprising sex-appeal and femininity by Hideki Noda, the writer himself. The wife is forced into submission by Ido and by the end barely complains against the bestiality flung upon her.

**"Jarringly bright lights,
blood-red floors and
screaming Japanese music
set the mood"**

The acting and staging are both impeccable, but *The Bee* fails to entirely come together on some fundamental level. This is perhaps because, while the hilarity and horror succeed as individual characteristics of *The Bee*, they are never effectively welded together and at times even cancel each other out. Neither characteristic was emphasised with sufficient strength in the script, both falling slightly flat, and unable to create a vivid enough impression on the viewer. The play, with its aggravating reporters and useless police force, is already something of a caricature of society; a greater degree of exaggeration would not have hurt it. In spite of this, *The Bee* entertains and even poses some interesting questions about the more abominable depths of human nature. At just over an hour in length, it would be the perfect start to an evening out in Soho, providing at the very least a wealth of material for discussion.

The Bee at the **Soho Theatre** until February 11th. Student tickets from £17.50

Looking good on Paper



Tim Arbabzadah

At first sight an event that describes itself as an open mic poetry night may not seem like something everyone can enjoy. You may even assume that it, and by extension anyone writing about it, will be pretentious; perhaps you think it will be the sort of night where somebody without a beret would be persona non grata (see, not pretentious, quod erat demonstrandum... too meta a joke?). I can assure you, *Fluent on Paper* is not at all like that.

The atmosphere was incredibly friendly, warm and encouraging. As well as having three guest poets, anybody could go up and read their poetry. It didn't matter if someone had written their poem on the night, or had carefully honed it over several months. Those who did work up the nerve to step up to the mic and recite their poetry found a polite, receptive and attentive audience waiting for them.

The poems themselves ranged from introspective musings to a lighter, comic tone – like stand-up comedy, but with rhymes. The three set poets were all great. Chris Richardson (aka Felix's Travel Editor) read stories of his various travels, including one written in fairly harsh conditions in a desert. Cas Nadel read quirky poems in her unique, semi-rap style. Dylan Lowe (a travel writer and former Felix Travel Editor) continued on a theme of travel at the end of the night.

The organiser of the night, Kadhim Shubber, was, much like a curious man at a urinal, compering. As well as introducing the three set poets, he read some of his own material; my personal favourite was 'The Politician's Fingernails', written about an image obsessed politician who is frantically worrying about whether or not his fingernails are too long.

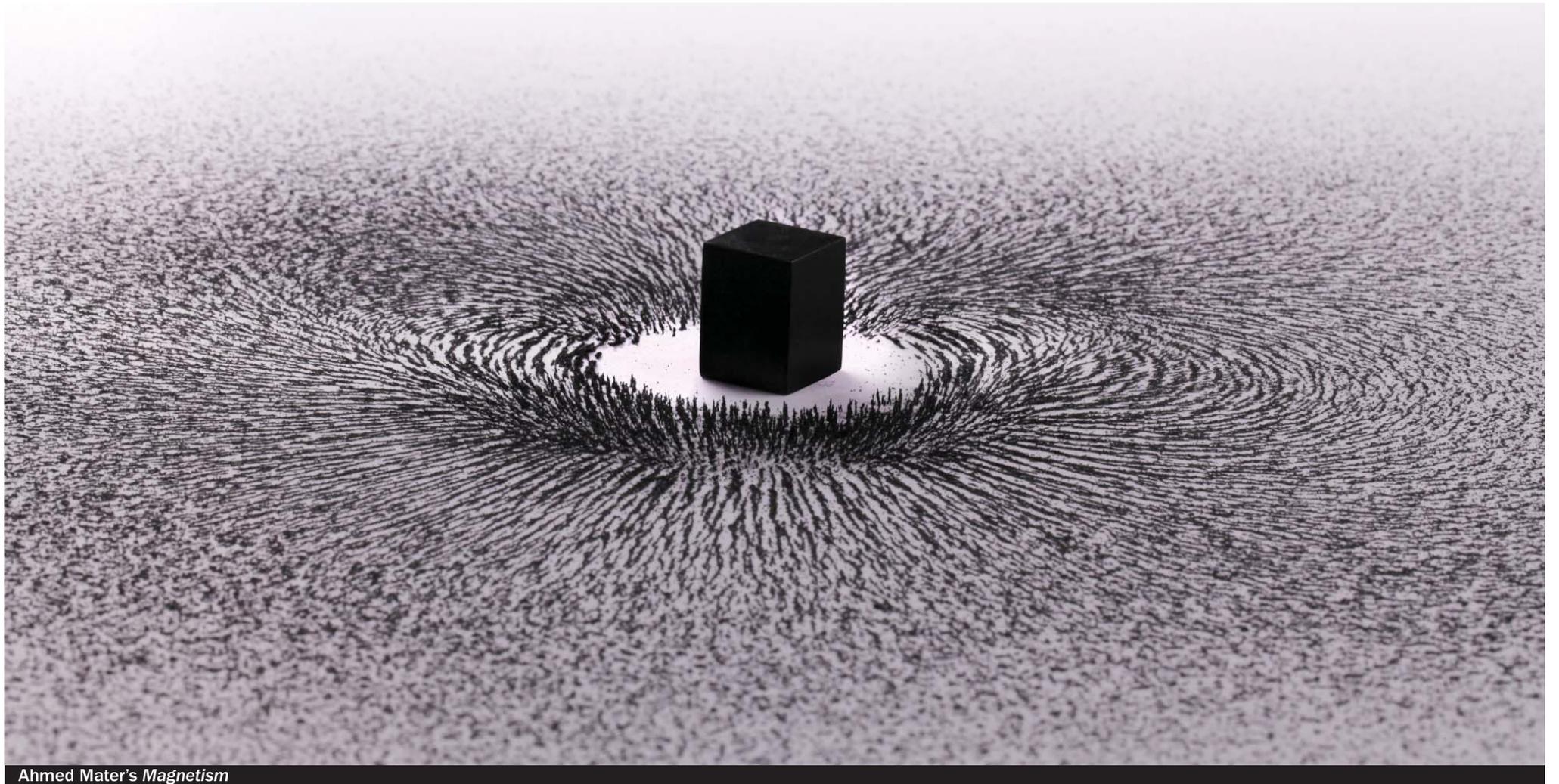
At some point in the night, Kadhim also introduced what became somewhat of an impromptu theme. A friend, who I shall not further embarrass by naming, was trying to give up smoking. People were encouraged to write a poem (see Haiku in The Poet's Column) for him to gently help him to persevere. They were mostly humorous in nature, with the exception of one slightly more harrowing offering. In fact, I even braved the spotlight and read out a (slightly unconventionally structured, read: poorly structured) poem to help convince him. Overall the evening was very enjoyable, and a great way to spend a relaxing Sunday night.

Fluent on Paper at **The Builders Arms** at monthly intervals – the next is on Sunday 19 February



Go Hajj or Go Home

New exhibition at British Museum explores the greatest pilgrimage on Earth



Ahmed Mater's *Magnetism*

Will Prince

I'd always thought writing opening paragraphs was hard. But no editorial challenge that faces us, here in the Felix office, comes anywhere close to the mammoth task taken on by the **British Museum** (or, more truthfully, by curator Venetia Porter) in its latest exhibition, *Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam*.

Suitably housed under the domed roof of the Reading Room, the **British Museum** presents an exploration of the history, culture and experience of the fabled Muslim pilgrimage, Hajj, the first recorded exhibition of its kind. It comes as part of the museum's study into faith and society: first *Book of the Dead* in 2010, then *Treasures of Heaven* last year, analysed the impact of religious belief on the cultures of Ancient Egypt and Medieval Europe respectively. But Hajj is quite a different matter entirely.

We've all wandered the corridors of museums and peered at little bits of history, each originating from a time quite alien to our own. With Hajj how-

ever, it is not some ritual of a bygone age, but rather one of that is present and living. With this in mind, the exhibition is split into three distinct sections, analysing the journey to Mecca, the rituals undertaken whilst at Mecca and finally the experiences of those who have undertaken the pilgrimage. Drawing together an eclectic mix of modern art, antique relics and personal accounts, it aims to give glimpses from throughout the ages into what is arguably the world's greatest, most enigmatic religious phenomenon.

“An eclectic mix of modern art, antique relics and personal accounts.”

The exhibition tracks the changing journeys of pilgrims over the history of Hajj, from the four month trip of the Malian King Mansa Musa, trav-

elling from Timbuktu in 1324, to the early package tours runs by Thomas Cook in the 1800's. Early on, we are confronted by the majestic crimson red mahmal - a ceremonial palanquin, complete with pennants, embroidered with floral patterns and Quranic verses in a velvety black and gold - in which Qu'rans were transported along the way to Mecca. Yet, despite a varied selection of maps, antique Qur'ans and photographs, along with the occasional astrolabe, the collection of items on display feels quite sparse. (It's interesting to note that may be due in part to the Islamic disapproval of materialism. Broadly speaking, its not in their nature to cherish the kind of items that now make up most of your average museum's collections, something bemoaned by Shenaz Khemali in her recent article in *The Guardian*.)

But it wasn't so much the heritage that I really wanted from *Hajj*, but rather a greater insight into the wonderment of the spiritual experience. Surely journeying to the heart of Islam hinges on understanding what individually drove just shy of three mil-

lion Muslims to pilgrimage last year? I doubt it was an antique carpet. But herein lies that challenge taken up by Venetia Porter and co. How do you distil down this simultaneously spiritual and physical spectacle and present it in the form of a museum exhibition, to an audience, the vast majority of whom will never set foot in the holy city of Mecca?

“How do you distil down this spiritual and physical spectacle?”

The exhibition suffered at times from resembling a three-dimensional textbook, just presenting facts and items in the uninspiring tone of a GCSE religious studies teacher. However it was the personal accounts that, for this reviewer, most successfully revealed that understanding of the wonderment

of Hajj. Most touching of all, was the scrapbook account of a ten year old British Muslim girl, recording her account of her Hajj experience, written up in neat hand-writing in the kind of exercise book that is familiar to any student. Ahmed Mater's *Magnetism* equally sticks in the mind, representing Hajj, through a Ka'aba-shaped magnet with a crowd of iron filings, all circling in unison. Maybe it was the physicist in me, but the comparison of Islam to an all-pervading, all-uniting field, struck me as more thought-provoking than any of the antiques on display.

Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam is a valiant endeavour to wrestle with something so visible, yet so impenetrable. For those who know little of Islam, Hajj gives a thorough account that touches, if only briefly, on almost every shade of the world-wide Muslim community. For the more initiated, I don't know what else I can suggest, short of conversion.

Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam at **The British Museum** until April 15. Tickets from £12

MUSIC

REVIEWS

Oli Clipsham

Because Even Crooks Can Act



With powerful guitar riffs, **Oli Clipsham** surely knows how to start up all of the songs from his latest EP *Because Even Crooks Can Act*. From beginning it gets you hooked, and the catchy choruses sure seem to stay in your head for a while.

The vocals are crisp and match well with the full and expressive metal-influenced guitar melody. Overall they do a great job integrating all of the instruments to make an impressive set of songs; these guys will make a breakthrough.

Celia Usero Navarro

Slick licks of the ivories set tones previously unthought of to classics such as **Eminem's** 'Lose Yourself', while **Whiz Khalifa's** 'Black & Yellow' turns into the nostalgic recollection of a school dance heart-break behind the bleachers.

An improbable rendition of **Lil Jon's** 'Get Crunk' sweeps with a swagger typically reserved for hazy Monday nights in smoky lounges. Sure to pop the hips of even the most seasoned of ballroom champions and give the shyest wallflowers a hydroponic kick in the backside.

Íñigo Martínez de Rituerto

Fshstk

Friendly Hip Hop



Stewiwonda's debut is a disconcertingly sweet concoction for the poison it provides. Blending futuristic hip-hop with hazy witch house undertones and cramping them in a blender with violent electro stabs, he covers classics by staples as diverse as **James Brown**, **Spice Girls** and the **Beatles**.

This EP holds moments so delirious they are usually only found huffing old glue from a dirty sock. Doctor says copious amounts of chronic may be necessary to cope through interpretations such as these.

Íñigo Martínez de Rituerto



Stewiwonda

I Found You

TECHNO NONSENSE



Simon Hunter on the beat scene groundbreakers

Mark England

Times New Viking's third album *Rip It Off*, their first to be released on Mator Records, became the darling of the so called 'shitgaze' scene. Which ever Pitchfork employee exhausted the synonym function on his computer to come up with such labels as witch house, chillwave and nu-gaze certainly surpassed his or herself by dreaming up the genre of shitgaze. It was a short lived explosion of lo-fi guitar wailings trying to overshadow its more sullen older brother, shoegaze. At first it was hard to comprehend such a proposition as anything but a joke that I couldn't find the punchline for. Yet there have been some promising bands to emerge, namely the gut-wrenching fuzz of **A Place To Bury Strangers** and the dreamy distortion of **Times New Viking**. Revisiting the latter's best release, *Rip It Off*, and having discovered how impressive it was, I refuse to let it be forgotten in some scene which has lost its hipster appeal.

The best song on the album is 'My Head' with its anti-poetic, discordant lyrics nestled in a bed of feedback. The cry of "I need more money 'cause I

I started this column last year but any recent input has been massively lacking. The feature started off highlighting electronic music labels that were either doing big things at that time or labels that should just be known due to their impact on music. I suppose this one falls into both categories.

Occasionally, music labels become synonymous with an individual scene or genre, probably the most famous example of this being **Motown** in the 1960's. These days, with the almost negligible price of production software and the ease at which music can be spread around the world, few labels ever get chance to develop such a standing. **Stones Throw** is a label which has done just that. Heralding from Los Angeles, with close links to **Brainfeeder**, **Stones Throw** has become home to some of the most creative and influential hip-hop artists of the past decade. The label itself was set up by **Peanut Butter Wolf**, a DJ and crate-digger from California, whose love for vinyl is reflected by the label's policy of releasing music on big slabs of black plastic (usually accompanied by wonderful artwork).

J Rocc, **Aloe Blacc** and, recently, **Dâm Funk** have all put out records on the imprint, showing the increasing diversity championed by the label; instrumental hip-hop, soul and modern funk all being covered. Yet it is the work of the late **J Dilla** and the vast output of **Madlib** in his many guises that really defines the sound that **Stones Throw** is famous for: beats so smooth and inven-

tive that the use of an MC is simply unnecessary. That's not to say you won't hear any rapping on **Stones Throw's** releases; take **Madlib's** recent collaboration with **Freddie Gibbs** on the wonderful *Thuggin'* EP for example. However, for me at least, it's always the instrumental work that really shines through. It's hard to exaggerate the influence this label has had and still does have on so much of electronic music today; **James Blake's** most recent EP samples a record put out by **Stones Throw** in 2000 while *Donuts* and *Mad-*

"Home to some of the most creative and influential hip-hop artists."

villainy, by **J Dilla** and **Madlib** (in conjunction with **MF Doom**) respectively, are constantly cited as two of the best hip-hop albums of the last decade.

And so normally at the end of this column I give some tips to get you started exploring the labels I feature. This time though I think it'd be fitting to tell y'all to just come down to Scala this Sunday (5th Feb.) instead. A tribute night to the incredible **J Dilla** is being held to raise awareness and money for the fight against **Dilla's** killer: a blood disease called **Lupus**. There simply won't be a better showcase of what **Stones Throw** is all about.

Forgive me Father, for I have scened

need more drugs" is so stripped down that a chill crawled down my spine. Obviously, the lo-fi production value will not appeal to everyone's tastes but there is a certain urgency and visceral thrill which comes with abandoning any pretence of gloss. In fact, I will go so far as to claim that the world has become so auto-tuned that it is entirely refreshing to find a beautiful bubble-gum chorus beneath layers of heavy distortion as in 'Teen Drama'. In the garden of

"I need more money 'cause I need more drugs."

modern pop there are so many daisies dressed up as roses that to actually find one fragrant and beautiful flower which manages to grow in a suffocating environment of feedback and screeching guitars is such a wonderful experience.

Other highlights on the album include 'Mean God' and 'Another Day' which are both listenable to by people who cannot get into lo-fi. For those of you



The bubblegum border does it for me.

who persist with the whole album, however, one can feel the exuberant buzz which **Times New Viking** have created. With their DIY aesthetic and barely any songs touching three minutes, the band channel true punk spirit to make something which is up there with **No Age's** releases. Many will be put off by the abrasive nature of 'Rip It Off' but I would implore you to give this album a try because I have found that it is not just another lo-fi hipster bullshit offering; there is real beauty beneath.

No exit from reality

Íñigo Martínez de Rituerto on music as a futile interrogation of the state of the world

Music, like all art, is a creative outlet addressing two domains: affronting reality and escaping it. The first can be witnessed in the efforts of the punk movement to criticize the values of modern society, or as a means of raising awareness and capital for charitable causes. The second aims to create an alternative reality, an escape from the mundane, numbing the ferocity of practical life.

Paradoxically, even while directly addressing current affairs, a medium such as music can't help but recede into the latter category. What good will shouting about police brutality or state control do to those living under oppressive government? Likewise, the measurable benefit of an event such as Live Aid is as questionable as a token donation to Unicef.

Insofar as it acts as a medium of expression and an open stage for personal opinions, the freedom procured by this creative vessel has many benefits for individual and communal well-being. Unfortunately, much like a picket line in the middle of nowhere, ultimately little fruit will come of it unless it is directed in a calculated and scrupulous way. Given the vanity of mainstream media, especially when it comes to the arts, the only way of getting a message to the masses would be to infiltrate the very system which censors sound opinions for lack of marketability or for being too offensive to force upon the majority of consumers. Like any organised protest, unless the initiative attains a critical mass, it will either fall on deaf ears or slip under the noisy radar altogether.

Lady Gaga's meat dress was about as subversive as it was offensive. While at least an admirable attempt to protest animal cruelty, her own exhibitionism managed to stifle her intentions. It was seen by most as just another outlandish dress from her eccentric wardrobe. Had she started an affiliate clothing line with a corporate butcher, perhaps the press would have clung on for a few days longer. However

a public paragon of truism this episode might have felt to her, I doubt any furry animals were spared from the high street.

Music alone may not stir great upheaval, but it's grounding in the sublime has greater power than most to affect our mood and our disposition to behave or act in certain ways. However indirectly, it is this through this character that it may cause veritable change in the real world. The subjective nature of music, as with any other medium of free expression, makes it difficult to obtain tangible, objective results. Nonetheless, it is this abstraction which allows it to touch far more profoundly the complexion of individuals, driving them to action.

The emotional charge of a piece of music can awaken or invigorate passions in people that may cause evident impressions in the lives of others. To this end, it should not be seen as a primary agent for change but rather as a stimulant.

"A willful illusion may be the only viable escape from reality."

The power of music may be exploited as a platform for propaganda or an enticement into action. With a decent enough backing track, virtually any message may be forced on the naïve or subservient listener. All it takes is a catchy melody and an explicit beat to leave the world at your feet, hanging on your every word, regardless of how false, immoral or ridiculous your claims may be. In a world where sexual inequality and stereotypes run ever rampant, **Beyoncé's** 'Girls (Who Run the World)' couldn't be any more misguided. Whether the lyrics "*who run this motha?*" refer to Mother Earth or someone else, she seems to have dropped way out of her depth. All the while perplexingly dressed in a fashion that, if

worn in public, would likely have her arrested in certain parts of the world.

Metal is an interesting genre on opposite counts. While psychedelic music is all about taking drugs and outlandishly redefining the human condition, metal is perhaps the archetypal genre of honest fantasy. Singing about dragons and muscular women wielding swords of steel will never bring them about, but in some cases leaving imagination as a willful illusion may be the only viable escape from reality.

One subgenre which seemed to miss this existential loophole altogether is black metal, the Satanic cousin of the hairy-chested longhairs. Predominately a Scandinavian phenomenon, the alienated youths behind the movement mistakenly wore the veil of Satanism as a shocking cover for their people's plight in preserving the pagan culture destroyed by Christianisation. Surely a poorly chosen guise, given the trivial diabolisation of such strategies by the media. They might have been more successful in their attempts to stand up for national dignity by saying it with a straight face rather than painting themselves like **Kiss** and putting on an evil grimace. It's a pity their burning of churches was seen as an act of malevolence rather than the righteous reclamation of pagan holy land they intended. This insular norwegian episode was an interesting and often confusing example of fantasy infringing upon reality, to the point of sabotaging its own intentions.

Even in misleading circumstances, the vociferous agitations aroused by mere waves in air are at least commendable for their initiative and occasional integrity, however futile an attempt may be to make a difference in a largely indifferent society.

As **Gil Scott-Heron** prophesied, "the revolution will not be televised, it will be live." Ultimately, change must happen in the minds of the people. Only then will it become manifest in the real world. In this sense, perhaps the quiet character of this ghostly medium may find a place in our flickering existence after all.

George Jeffery's A beginner's guide to post-hardcore

Lesson 4: Every Time I Die



What better way to wave goodbye to week 4 than with a timely fix of post-hardcore goodness. This week, I'll be telling you all about **Every Time I Die**. As was the case with the second lesson's band, **Refused**, Every Time I Die doesn't strictly belong to the post-hardcore genre but for anyone following this column, this band cannot be missed.

As a product of the New York alternative music scene, Every Time I Die has a strong hardcore influence present in their sound but they have a vast platter of extra offerings too. Frontman Keith Buckley adopts the gruff vocal style of hardcore punk but in some tracks does show off his more gentle side with melodic tunes sure to get stuck in your head. A prime example of this is in the song 'Wanderlust' from their most recent album *New Junk Aesthetic*. I am almost certain that some weird voodoo magic has gone into the track because it is literally always in my head. That being said, it's a pleasure to have such a great piece of music as an imaginary friend.

As I mentioned earlier, they are not strictly post-hardcore and this is evident when they are compared to other bands in this series. As opposed to the unpredictable and choppy music of **Glassjaw** and **At The Drive-In**, Every Time I Die do not infuse this kind of underlying asymmetry into the essence of their music. Their sound is more (for lack of a much better word) conventional, without the strange time signatures and noise experiments. But this shouldn't be taken the wrong way. Every Time I Die never fail to create a phenomenal album with every part of their back catalogue being as good if not better than the last. Every time they release a new record, I always get the feeling that they cannot top their previous release and so I always think the new one will be a let down, but it never is!

For this reason, I urge you to buy their upcoming album *Ex-Lives* (out 6th March) as I would not be at all surprised if it is their best... so far. Remember to check out the recommendation and see you all next week!

Writer's Recommendation

Listen to the song 'Wanderlust', although I warn you, it will get stuck in your head for the rest of your life.

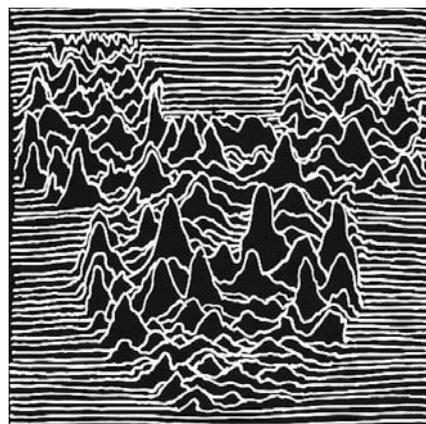
Be sure not to miss... J Dilla Changed My Life

Scala
Sunday 5, February

J Dilla revolutionised hip-hop by taking the glory back from the rhymes to the beats. Taken much too soon by a rare blood disease, his loss was as touching as his life work to many of the most forward thinking producers of the beat scene world wide.

Íñigo Martínez de Rituerto

Disney's Lost Control



Íñigo Martínez de Rituerto

Somehow, the suicidal undertones of **Joy Division's** *Unknown Pleasures* have managed to escape the merchandising department at Disney. After being on sale for three days, the motion picture giant has been forced to discontinue a shirt design which playfully combined the 1979 album cover with Mickey Mouse's unmistakable silhouette.

Whether the true fault of this ill manouvre is a blatant act of bootlegging or indirectly hooking children to anti-depressants from an early age is open to debate.

Television Editors: **George Barnett**
James Simpson

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TELEVISION

Sex, drugs, violence, and My Little Pony

Sam Flynn gives us the lowdown from Ponyville, and proof that anything we get sent *does* actually get printed

Half way through its second season, Felix has yet to review *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*. Shame. The oddly popular TV series based on the line of Hasbro toys has gained immense popularity since it debuted in 2010, spawning an entire subculture of fans older than the target demographic, known as Bronies and Pega-sisters.

If somehow you have been oblivious to the arrival of *My Little Pony (MLP)*, a summary is required. Each episode follows a roughly similar structure: One of the mane (see what I did there?) six ponies typically encounters an event that disrupts everyday life. Only by working together as a team and using the magic of friendship are they able to overcome their difficulties and save the day. Far from being formulaic, the show is able to use this skeletal template to their advantage, with enough variety and subsidence to entertain the older fans whilst keeping it suitable for younger audience members.

Critics of the show will often stress the simplicity of the themes, and the fact that the show is aimed at young girls. Fans of the show will

retort that the series in fact tackles deep moral issues and struggles that people of all ages can associate with. For example, the season one episode 'Bridle Gossip' depicts how the residents of Ponyville fear a zebra because she is different and unknown. The episode is resolved when the ponies are able to realise their casual racism is wrong and befriend the zebra.

The show was developed by Lauren Faust, whose previous work includes *The Powerpuff Girls* and *Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends*. Award winning composer Daniel Igram includes a variety of themes in his music for *MLP*, ranging from Broadway parodies ('At the Gala') to gospel choir tracks ('Hush Now Lullaby').

The show's popularity with older audiences is due in large part to Hasbro's unusual decision to allow fans to post and edit clips and full episodes online (take that, SOPA and ACTA). This allowed the community to flourish, with it growing at a tremendous rate. It is also notable that Hasbro actively works with the community, incorporating feedback from fans directly into the show.

Derpy Hooves (whose cross-eyed expression



A still from the musical number 'At the Gala' from the episode 'Best Night Ever'

was left in as part of an animator's joke) was spotted in the very first episode of season one and quickly became a fan favourite, inspiring a "Where's Wally?" style game between the show's artists and fans. She was recently made canon when she had a speaking role in 'The Last Roundup'.

In an era when the majority of entertainment available is sex, drug or violence related it is genuinely refreshing to find a show that promotes integrity, morals and staying true to yourself. Sure, you might not like all of the main six equally (you will love them all though!), but this show has something for anyone willing to give it a try.

All broadcast episodes of *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* are available on YouTube in 1080p. The next episode 'Read It and Weep' will be broadcast Saturday 4 February on The Hub and will be available on YouTube later that day.

Want to win Michael Portillo's Great British Railway Journeys? If not, then you clearly need to re-evaluate your life and get some Portillo time in. Just send an email to tv.felix@ic.ac.uk with the answer to: "In which year did the famous 'Portillo moment' occur?"



"Rule 34: If it exists, there is porn of it. No exceptions."

Imperial Medics in BBC3 reality show

Marie-Laure Hicks

Junior Doctors: Your Life in their Hands is back! After a first series in Newcastle General Hospital and the Royal Victoria Infirmary, eight newly-qualified doctors hit the wards of the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. After getting their MBBS, for the first time, they have to deal with real life and death situations and take on the responsibility of taking care of patients.

Four junior doctors are ex-Imperial students. Aki is described as "Kensington meets Rock'n'Roll" and easily pictured in the Reynolds bar; he is "Mess President" now, basically in charge of organising parties for the doctors. Ben is a rugby lad (probably in a centrefold), very popular with the ladies and doing his second foundation year in child surgery. Priya once dreamt of becoming

a Bollywood actress and now works in general surgery. Sameer is a Harry Potter fan, threatened with an arranged marriage by his family and produces entertaining quotes like "I'd describe myself as fun... fair... not funfair" and "I'd like to treat extra-terrestrials", "the alien master race".

The other four junior doctors come from different universities across the country. Amieth is quite laidback, not sure a quality you'd look for in a doctor, but so far nothing dramatic has happened. Andy is the youngest doctor working for the hospital and apparently incapable of growing facial hair. Lucy is absolutely lovely, described as an English rose by one of her patients. When the last junior doctor, Milla, was introduced, I almost expected 'Midnight City' by M83 (the *Made in Chelsea* theme tune) to come on. She loves balls and hats and was inspired to become a doctor when she was

"If you are a medical drama junkie like me, it provides you with all the medicine you want without leaving the personal experience..."

a child to keep her parents alive and healthy forever. Cheesy but kind of cute.

The last thing to say about the first two episodes is that they are uneventful. Breach of doctor-patient confidentiality, multiple failures at fitting a cannu-

la in, putting a finger up a patient's arse, certifying a death and a phone ringing during reanimation, you will not be bored, maybe just a bit concerned about your next trip to the hospital. Although apparently you can get sandwiches in A&E.

The show is great. The producers have made a real effort for the soundtrack, with lyrics completely adapted to the situation. If you are a medical drama junkie like me, it provides you with all the medicine you want without leaving out the personal experience and emotional aspect. As the junior doctors gradually learn how to do the job, you are given the opportunity of a window into the world of hospitals and patients. The only disappointing aspect of this new series for me is that I really miss the previous junior doctors: Suzi the Barbie girl, gorgeous Adam, Andy, Katherine, Jon, Keir and Lucy.

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FILM

Film Editors: **John Park**
Lucy Wiles

film.felix@imperial.ac.uk

2012 SAG Winners



Best Cast

The Help

Best Actor in a Leading Role

Jean Dujardin – *The Artist*

Best Actress in a Leading Role

Viola Davis – *The Help*

Best Actor in a Supporting Role

Christopher Plummer – *Beginners*

Best Actress in a Supporting Role

Octavia Spencer – *The Help*

Last Sunday's Screen Actors Guild award, voted for by the industry's acting peers, was a triumphant night for *The Help*, taking home three awards for Best Cast, Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress. The Oscar race for Best Actress becomes tighter than ever when Viola Davis and Meryl Streep (*The Iron Lady*) go head-to-head. Streep has already won the Golden Globe and is the favourite to win the BAFTA, but the Oscars are a real coin-toss. A large majority of AMPAS members, the governing body voting for who wins the prestigious Academy Award, is made up of the Screen Actors Guild, and the fact that Davis managed to sway her peers in her direction is a good sign. Some argue it is about time for Streep to finally win her third long overdue Oscar, whilst Davis' supporters brand Streep's performance as nothing but classy mimicry and the unsubstantial critical acclaim towards her latest Margaret Thatcher biopic will not steer the odds in favour of Streep. Across the board, there is nothing surprising about Plummer finally being shown some award love after his lengthy career, and Dujardin continues to dominate with his role in *The Artist*.



The many ladies of *The Help*

Remembering a classic...

Guy Needham reviews *The English Patient*, a handsome, well-acted, and Oscar-winning picture that retains timeless appeal



Insert inappropriate "Voldemort is back from the dead" joke here... we couldn't be bothered to think of one

The English Patient

Director Anthony Minghella
Screenwriter Michael Ondaatje (novel), Anthony Minghella
Cast Ralph Fiennes, Juliette Binoche, Kristin Scott-Thomas, Colin Firth

Guy Needham

The English Patient, winner of nine Oscars, is the story of a man, played by Ralph Fiennes, who is found badly burnt and suffering from memory loss in the wreckage of a plane in the North African desert in World War Two. As he is cared for by an army nurse, his memory slowly returns and is shown to us in a series of flashbacks. The unveiling of his past reveals a story of a love affair.

Anthony Minghella won an Oscar for his direction of this film, and rightly so. The transitions from past to present are admirable, as each flashback is clearly linked to a

taste, sound or sight. For example, the way in which the light plays on the wall of the patient's room reminds him of a time in Cairo: the links between the scenes are very well worked.

There some truly memorable scenes in *The English Patient*. The shots of the desert in particular, a beautiful part where the characters are flying over a mountainous region, are epic in nature. The breathtakingly skilled camerawork is complemented by the well crafted script – the dialogue sounds authentic, and revelations are often driven by the gripping conversations between characters.

Some great performances are on show here. Fiennes is exceptional, but that goes without saying; his portrayal of a very introverted desert-lover is very believable. The nurse, played by Juliette Binoche (*Chocolat*), deservedly won an Oscar for her supporting actress role. Her story is very moving: her life is being torn apart by the war going on around

her, and she finds solace in abandoning the war to care for her patient. Willem Dafoe is also present, playing a man with no thumbs who is bent on discovering the patient's story. His torture scene doesn't really bear any comparison to *Black Swan* in terms of its shock value; however he comes across very clearly as a man on a mission. Colin Firth is in the cast and his development into a seething, jealous husband is a great showcase for his prodigious talent. Kristin Scott Thomas plays his wife and was deservedly nominated for a Best Actress Oscar. Other characters include a seemingly unemotional Sikh soldier who, in comparison to the book, doesn't really have a chance to shine, but who is a deep and authentic character.

This is a memorable wartime love story, with some beautiful camerawork and excellent direction. The characters are all very convincing, and the plot will grip you as the tragic tale of *The English Patient* is unravelled.

FILM

The kids are all right, the adults are not



After all these years, Kate finally regrets letting go of that expensive blue diamond necklace in *Titanic*... you're not going to find it in that bag Kate...

Carnage

Director Roman Polanski
Screenwriters Yasmina Reza (play), Roman Polanski
Cast Jodie Foster, Kate Winslet, John C. Reilly, Christoph Waltz

John Park

Get ready for the craziest, most intense, and unforgettable ride of this year. Yes, Polanski's latest *Carnage* is a force to be reckoned with; which is odd, mostly because of its incredibly modest running time (79 minutes), small cast (four key characters), single set (a New York apartment), and what appears to be a straightforward plot. But based on the Tony Award winning play *God of Carnage* by Yasmina Reza, this is a deceptively simple film that has so much energy and power to dish out, even in its tiny scale. So get ready – for a hot-tempered, scream-filled, foul-mouthed, alcohol-fuelled, vomit-covered (yes, really) experience that will be hard to resist.

In a brief prologue set in contemporary New York, we see an 11-year-old Zachary pick up a stick and swing it in Nathan's face, which results in bruising, swelling and two teeth being knocked out. Zachary's parents, Nancy (Winslet)

and Alan (Waltz), are invited over by Nathan's parents, Penelope (Foster) and Michael (Reilly), to discuss this situation in good faith. What was supposed to be a civilised, calm meeting between four mature people start taking darker turns, as true characteristics and feelings are revealed.

What makes this so agonising, yet irresistibly tense, is the fact that this encounter could have been over in minutes. Nancy and Alan could have left Penelope and Michael's flat so much sooner. They get to as far as the elevator, twice, and yet every time, they end up in the living room. The bitter hatred and unfinished business make it difficult to call it a day. It's almost perverse and sometimes scary to think that these people cannot and refuse to leave; and no-one does claustrophobia better than Polanski. Even though this may seem a highly unambitious project for a director who has made many classics over his astonishing career, his attention to detail is impeccable. He gets right up close to his actors, and the apartment in which most of the film is set seems sizable enough, but Polanski chooses to remain mainly in the living room, crowding his scenes with his four stars.

Small verbal attacks and passive-aggressive statements are the reasons

why there can be no simple resolution. Even from the very start, the victim's mother is defensive and secretly mad as hell. She has a condescending tone, something the perpetrator's father is far from willing to accept. Boys fight. It's a part of life, and he's not prepared to apologise so profusely. Trying to control her husband's snarky outbursts is the perpetrator's mother, who tries to show as much genuine-looking apologetic expression as possible. But even she has a breaking point. Acting as the good-natured mediator is the victim's father, who tries to put on a smile whenever possible. But he too has issues of his own, and as everyone mouths off, he joins the fight and shows he also has a louder side.

As the Scotch comes out, and with the high alcohol dose kicking in, there's swearing, crying, yelling, hitting, throwing things, and behaviour that is unacceptable in any social scenarios involving grown-ups. They gathered to come up with a disciplinary plan of action for their children. But it appears the adults are no better than the children themselves. The script is crisp enough to keep a healthy pace and the heavy dialogue-centred drama is extremely dense yet to the point.

The four acting heavy-weights who

make up the cast pull out all the stops and ferociously attack one another as the meltdown occurs. Waltz is hilarious as the smug, cavalier Alan, Winslet may seem proper and decent to start with but as the atmosphere starts to spiral out of control, she drunkenly chews the scenery like never before. Foster is on the offence from the start, and she is the angriest, most intense one of the four, which results in some dangerous moments of melodramatic over-acting coming from the actress, but she is mostly on fine form. Reilly, with his towering presence, filling up almost every single shot of himself with his grand stature, is incredible, as he handles both extreme sides of his character perfectly, making that transition without any fuss.

For a man nearing the age of 80, Polanski doesn't show signs of slowing down. He keeps the tension running high, and there is no way of knowing for sure how this messy situation will come to a close. *Carnage* is outrageous, shocking, yet hysterically entertaining with plenty of nasty, wicked wit. With four unique performances from its unbeatable cast, and under the assured guidance of a veteran director, this is may have "Oscar-bait" written all over it but no bait in the past has been this savagely funny.

Top 10 Box Office films in the UK this week



1) **War Horse** - 12A - Jeremy Irvine, Emily Watson, Tom Hiddleston

2) **The Descendants** - 15 - George Clooney, Shailene Woodley, Amara Miller

3) **Haywire** - 15 - Gina Carano, Michael Fassbender, Ewan McGregor, Channing Tatum

4) **A Monster in Paris** - U - Adam Goldberg, Bob Balaban, Catherine O'Hara

5) **The Artist** - PG - Jean Dujardin, Bérénice Bejo, John Goodman, James Cromwell

6) **Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows** - 12A - Robert Downey Jr., Jude Law, Noomi Rapace

7) **Underworld: Awakening** - 18 - Kate Beckinsale, Theo James, Michael Ealy

8) **The Iron Lady** - 12A - Meryl Streep, Jim Broadbent

9) **The Sitter** - 15 - Jonah Hill, Sam Rockwell

10) **Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol** - 12A - Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner, Simon Pegg

FILM

Film Editors: **John Park**
Lucy Wiles

film.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Neeson leads a lacklustre pack

Liam Neeson cements his status as action man of the moment – shame about the wolves

The Grey

Director Joe Carnahan
Screenwriters Joe Carnahan, Ian MacKenzie Jeffers
Cast Liam Neeson, Frank Grillo, Dermot Mulroney, Dallas Roberts, Joe Anderson

Aemun Reza

If you like dogs, don't watch this film.

Based in Alaska, a typical plane crash results in seven men surviving. Why do guys always survive plane crashes? The flight attendants never survive. Only ever men, and one of them is always black. Even death doesn't racially discriminate.

So you're stranded in the middle of a snowy plane wreck, faced with freezing temperatures, no food, and no water and what is your worst fear? Wolves apparently. Because dogs are *that* scary.

There is barely any background story to Liam Neeson's character. He's just some guy on a plane, who survives and apparently knows everything about wolves. How convenient.

Despite playing an extremely dull character, Liam Neeson can still pull off a strong and powerful performance. As the only credited headline actor, Neeson immediately takes the lead role with his knowledge of how to survive in the wild. Survival 101 and all that jazz. Out of the seven men who survive, he is the only

one who has a lasting presence and the decent dialogue.

Back to the story, or what's left of it, the wolves start trying to kill the survivors. They don't even look like wolves, more like dogs with rabies. The wolves don't even want to eat them; they just want to kill them. Don't really blame the wolves.

But kudos to the film, they did actually use real wolves, not just the CGI stuff that *The Twilight Saga* uses. But I would have been more impressed if they had turned into werewolves.

The main plot is them fighting the wolves and trying to find some kind of civilisation. Landing in the middle of nowhere means that it was mainly the characters walking through a scenic landscape. This is nice and all, but I can see better stuff on my desktop background.

This film is mainly action, and not very good action at that. The movie doesn't have a plot and tries to be really emotionally when people die, but I just wasn't buying it. In the climax of the movie, which was meant to be the most emotional part, I was bored. They had longed it out beyond belief.

You'd think that a film with Liam Neeson would be an amazing film and that may be the main reason why you go see it but it really isn't worth your time. Even if you do have two hours to waste, you're better off watching paint dry.



I don't know who you are. I don't know what you want... oh, don't mind me, I'm just waiting for *Taken 2*

Wanting, needing, loving, missing...

Like Crazy

Director Drake Doremus
Screenwriters Drake Doremus, Ben York Jones
Cast Felicity Jones, Anton Yelchin, Jennifer Lawrence

Hitesh Shewakramani

"I thought I understood it, that I could grasp it, but I didn't, not really. Only the smugness of it; the pink-slippered, all-contained, semi-precious eagerness of it. I didn't realize it would sometimes be more than whole, that the wholeness was a rather luxurious idea. Because it's the halves that halve you in half. I didn't know, don't know, about the in-between bits; the gory bits of you, and the gory bits of me."

Before actually writing this one, I'd like to clear out any of the false assumptions. One: this is not a chick flick. Two: Just because it's won the top prize at the Sundance Film Festival, it doesn't mean you will like it; you might, in fact, hate it.

Now that is out of the way, *Like Crazy* goes beyond dialogue, beyond the writing, beyond any ordinary story, or as you may have guessed, beyond a love story. It isn't brilliantly poetic nor is it even mildly cheesy. To be honest, this movie has one of the blandest storylines I have ever seen. This is perhaps why it didn't score big with a lot of people.

Long story short: Girl meets Boy. They fall in love. Girl is separated from Boy.

If you are looking for a load of mindless romance, this is not your cup of tea. There is romance though, a good load of it, and then there is pain. What would stun you is that the love and pain keep on interchanging so often that it would transport you to somewhere in the middle, where you might be able to figure out this film's artistic side, or you might switch off and pass this movie off as a mess. Since we already know that the Sundance Film Festival's judge's panel is what we would like to classify as 'the hippies amongst critics', it doesn't come as a surprise that this film captured all the

attention.

The performances are outstanding. Anton Yelchin and Felicity Jones have to carry the burden of the entire movie on their shoulders and I believe they do a smash-up job. The silences, the looks, the gentle touches, the expressions all melt together perfectly. Of course you won't notice it. I didn't. I was confused for about an hour after seeing the film and my brain was fuzzy. What would strike anyone is the reality of the movie. It is too believable. The situations, the relationships, the characters portrayed are too real. I can't point out the exact reason behind it: it could either be the writing, the camera work, or something else. But it works.

This isn't like your regular review because I, the reviewer, haven't given you my opinion. I liked it. I was able to appreciate how the whole package turned out. But that still isn't my opinion. I won't give you one. You might like it or you might not, as I said before. It is up for you to decide.



If you ever leave me, I'll strangle you... like crazy...

Union Rep Week 2012

Imperial College Union Rep Week is only ten days away (13-18 February) and it will be your chance to find out all about what representation has done for you!

During the week your reps will be around your department and in the JCR wearing their specially made rep T-shirts to tell you about representation, answer any questions you have and take any recommendations or complaints you have about your department.

So make sure you come down to the stalls and ask us all about it, we'll have posters, flyers, free sweets and suggestion boxes all to help improve YOUR student experience.

What are reps?

There are hundreds of reps across College – from first-year undergraduates to writing-up PhDs. We want you to know that there's a rep just for you, who is nearby, accessible and will successfully represent you.

What is the rep system?

The rep system is an integral part of ICU, just like clubs, societies, events and bars. The rep system has been around for decades and has brought in or protected things that are important to you, like Wednesday afternoons off or getting your coursework back on time. The NSS now has a question about students' unions for the first time, and we want to highlight the numerous ways that ICU works for students individually and collectively.

What is the National Student Survey (NSS)?

We'll be explaining what the NSS is and why it's so important to gather your feedback. We'll even have laptops for you to complete it on (www.thestudentsurvey.com).

NSS is very important, and works on lots of scales – it helps us spot problems in individual departments, but also plays a part in national league tables and is key to Imperial's reputation as a top UK

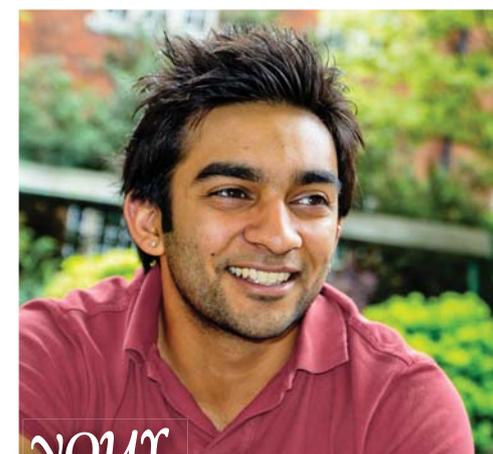


13 - 18 February

university. Final-year students have a few weeks to fill it in – take your only chance, do it now, and have your say.

What is NoteBox?

Rep Week will see the announcement of the Union's latest project. A new, free online store of the best notes your fellow students have taken in class. Keep your eyes peeled for the full launch in a few months and check out www.thenotebox.co.uk to start contributing for your chance to win £850 in Union Shop vouchers.



your
SABBATICALS

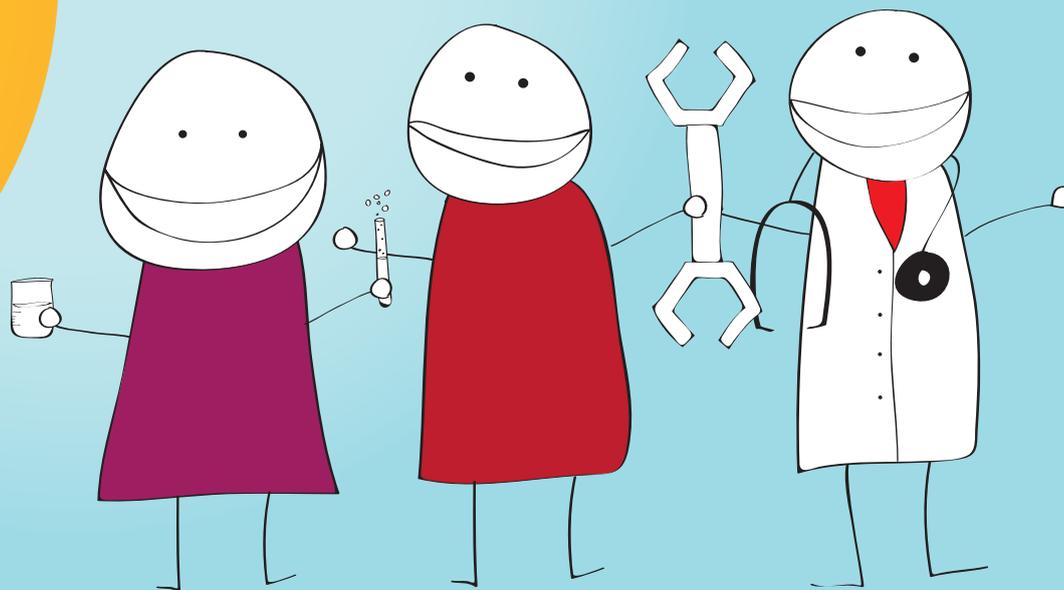
Jason Pamar

Deputy President (Education)
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Keep up-to-date with your Sabbaticals at:
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Starts next week...
Imperial's largest elections ever,
including great positions to run
for in your own Faculty!



Fashion Editors: **Saskia Verhagen**
Alice Yang

fashion.felix@imperial.ac.uk

FASHION

Suit Up: an idiot's guide to the who, what,

A wise man once said that there is only one thing a man can do when he's suffering from a spiritual and existential funk. Go to the

DOUBLE-BREADED SUIT

The Man

The double-breasted suit was once thought to be reserved for a particular type of imperious middle-aged bore, chortling at something distinctly unfunny at a gentlemen's club or boating event of some description. Thankfully, this stereotype no longer applies. A favourite of Humphrey Bogart, and more recently, a certain Chuck Bass (this is a good thing, for those unaware), the DB has been enjoying a revival of sorts. This bold suit is for a man, not a boy, and a tall, slim man at that – the broadening effect of the overlapping buttons does nothing for the more portly amongst you, but shows off a good physique. Ryan Gosling – yes. Bill Clinton – not so much.

The Occasion

Though hugely versatile, the double-breasted suit is decidedly bold and formal – not for the faint of heart. Be sure to know that wherever you wear it, be it inside or outside working hours, you are certain to draw attention. This suit is for a confident, assured man who is ready to own the room. Favour a dark, modern, slim cut for the evening and a lighter colour with a more traditional cut for the day.

“This bold suit is for a man, not a boy”



The Rules

Buttons should be kept fastened, most importantly the ‘anchor’ button on the inside of the jacket. The whole effect is lost the moment you lose the jacket's shape, which is kept intact by the anchor. Shoulders should not be boxy – the look is sharply tailored, never reminiscent of a 1980s revival. The jacket overall should fit well, but should skim the figure rather than hug the corners.

The Catwalk

Almost ubiquitous at the menswear shows this season, the smart, gentlemanly double-breasted suit was pervasive especially amongst the Italian designers, with a subtle aubergine hue proving a favourite at Prada and Ferragamo. Colour and textural variation in general was prominent, with dark blues at Gucci, pinstripes at Alexander McQueen and wider stripes at Canali. The vibe overall was modern and young, reviving the traditional Bogartian DB with a spring in its swaggering step. -SV

THREE-BUTTON SUIT

The Man

The three-button suit is generally seen as the more traditionally elegant of the suits with its buttons spanning a larger area of the torso. Resulting from its top button resting higher up on the chest than its other single-breasted cousins, the three-button suit draws attention to said area, increasing the width of its appearance – this is not a suit for those with highly-developed pectorals, or conversely (tragically?), man boobs. Ideal for taller men, particularly those over 6ft, the three-button is a classic, worn by ex-Bond Pierce Brosnan and increasingly popular with rising stars seeking extra style points and adult recognition including Robert Pattinson.

The Occasion

Most definitely a formal choice, the three-button suit is a great alternative to its more popular two-button cousin for those yearning for a spark of individuality in the office. The extra dash of business refinement emanating from this suit gives an extra confidence boost on those all important interview days whilst on another note, should men have ‘off days’; this piece is definitely one to turn to as the longer span of the triple buttons hides much of the torso area including, perhaps hopefully, where you spilt your coffee in the morning.

“sometimes, always, never”



The Rules

Traditionally the rule of thumb regarding buttoning is (from the top) “sometimes, always, never”. However, in the more complicated real world it can be broken down as such: doing only the middle button is standard and sleek; doing up the top two requires an increased level of confidence in ones stance; doing up just the top can be seen as far too “contemporary” (read ‘hipster’) for the office; whilst all three tends to look too strict. On top of this, it must be remembered that the top button should be left undone if the lapel of the suit rolls down to it.

The Catwalk

Protect from the cold whilst journeying to and from the office by adding winter accessories to your three-buttoned suit. Burberry Prorsum opted to liven up their grey suits with subtly patterned gloves and scarves layered under bulging puffer jackets and leather coats inspired by the great British countryside, whilst at Viktor & Rolf the model's tackled the weather by layering fur over their chocolate suits matched with the warmer alternative of leather trousers. -AY



Dolce & Gabbana

Ferragamo

Louis Vuitton



Burberry Prorsum

Burberry Prorsum

Viktor & Rolf

FASHION

where and how of formalwear

zoo, flip off the monkeys? “No,” says Ron Burgundy, “buy new suits.” **Saskia Verhagen** and **Alice Yang** show you the ropes

TWO-BUTTON SUIT

The Man

Arguably the easiest of the suits to wear, the two-button suit makes the best of almost any figure. A favourite of suit-wearing icons including John F. Kennedy, Cary Grant and Frank Sinatra, this is a choice that is almost idiot-proof in its ability to bring the inner suave, sophisticated gentleman out of the most dishevelled and hopeless of men. Provided the suit fits properly, and is combined with a well-chosen shirt and tie, you will find yourself transformed – at once elegant, effortless, and perfectly refined.

The Occasion

The two-button suit is probably going to be your most reliable asset in most formal settings. For the full effect, pair a black pinstripe suit with a light blue shirt and a dark grey pin-dot tie, silver tie bar and white pocket square. Shoes and belt should be black leather, simple and polished. For the weekend, simply pair your suit jacket with some smart dark blue jeans – cuffed – and keep your shirt in a similar blue tone. Penny loafers, no socks – it’s all in the details.

“this is a choice that is almost idiot-proof in its ability to bring [out] the inner suave”



The Rules

There is really only one rule here: only the top button should be fastened (defining the waist), but never the second. The second button is aesthetically necessary but technically superfluous and pulls the jacket completely out of shape if done up. Other than this, you’re fairly safe in most colour and fabric choices. Pockets may be slanted, a reference to the days of hacking jackets – the slant allowed easier access to pockets on horseback. Breast pockets are omnipresent, but ticket pockets, an occasional addition above the main pockets, tend to look better on a three-button suit.

The Catwalk

Seen in almost every combination of tone, pattern and texture, the two-button suit also seems to have succumbed to the theme of certain striking colour choices. A jewel-toned velvet incarnation with contrasting trousers was seen at Burberry Prorsum, Prince of Wales check at Alexander McQueen, contrasting lapels at Louis Vuitton, and vivid, solid colour in an incredibly flattering slim cut at Gucci – it has to be said, Frida Giannini cuts a wicked suit. -SV



Burberry Prorsum

Alexander McQueen

Gucci

ONE-BUTTON SUIT

The Man

More of a stylists’ pick than a business must, the single button suit is a wardrobe staple for any image-conscious man. Its slimming lines make for a smooth modern look, and the appearance of a stretched torso is particularly flattering for those more vertically challenged. Effortless and perfectly dapper, this single buttoned garment is a red carpet favourite including Benedict Cumberbatch and Mark Ronson – such wearers carry themselves with pride in the full knowledge that they are turning heads and sending hearts a-flutter.

The Occasion

Undeniably a casual suit jacket, the versatility of the single button suit is its secret. Thanks to its debonair sleek cut, it allows one to be more avant-garde than when donning its contemporaries, bestowing onto its wearer a chance to experiment with lapels, collars, textures, and colours. Shoes, shirt and tie combinations also allow more room for experiment - from classic black and white combinations to more daring personality filled patterns; ties, bowties and braces; brogues, loafers and even boots; extra points are awarded here for courage and originality. Whether it be for friendly drinks or (unelegantly put) a night out on the pull, the one-button suit is best when worn when not required by dress code for that extra dash of gentlemanly suave.



The Rules

Tailoring is a must and confidence is key. So long as the suit fits snugly (strained fabric is far too tight; long sleeves and baggy chest is far too large), and your posture is distinguishably upright, the world is your oyster. An easy, fuss-free item of clothing, it demands only to be buttoned up when its wearer is stood, and unbuttoned every time they sit – this really is dressing up dumbed down.

The Catwalk

Extravagance is most definitely to be embraced with the single-buttoned suit as designers gave the fashion world a new way of expressing ones personality after dark. Dolce and Gabbana opted for rich golden embroidery and ornate baroque swirls inspired by the decorative Oscar Wilde, a muse for many of this season’s collections. A more luxurious look was preferred at Viktor & Rolf and Lanvin who’s shimmering fabrics and complementing bowties craved the attention of the extrovert creating the perfect dinner date outfit. -AY



Dolce & Gabbana

Lanvin

Viktor & Rolf

GAMES

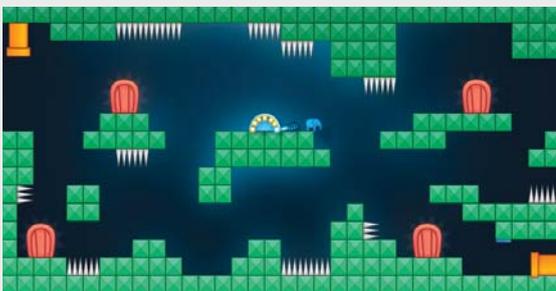
games.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Free Web Game

You read right folks, just one web game this week. I needed some more space, so one had to go. Sorry. Anyway, here we are, a totally awesome web game that you can play right now in your web browser. In order to enjoy it you're going to need the Adobe Flash Player plug-in, which can be installed from <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>

This is the Only Level 3

<http://www.newgrounds.com/portal/view/588876>



I swear I did not pick this game just to make a bad joke about it being the only web game this week.

This is the Only Level 3 is the third in a series of mini-games featuring a tiny elephant traversing a single level over and over again. Whilst the level stays the same the mechanics of the game change each time you escape, requiring you to work out how to make it from the start to the finish. You're occasionally aided by subtle clues in the level's name, but most of the time outside of the box thinking is required.

That or just give in and check the walkthrough. Cheater.

Steam comes to the smartphone



Rejoice, for now everyone's favourite digital gaming platform and social network has come to the smartphone.

The app is currently available for free on both iOS and Android-based devices and allows you to access your Steam friends list and chat online on the go. You can also browse the Steam Store, though unless you desperately need to see when *Duke Nukem Forever* goes on sale it seems a little useless.

After the initial closed beta last week it's now available for all to download and use, provided you have an active Steam account and (obviously) a smartphone.

A.I. – Artificial Ineptness

Cave Johnson discusses artificial intelligence, so listen up. Just watch out for the velociraptors

Hello test subjects, Cave Johnson here. I find it hard to believe that it's been a week since I last wrote for Felix – time sure does fly when you're making the world a better place. Well actually, last week did go a bit faster than usual – I found my engineers playing with time again. You would have thought that they had learned their lesson the last time that they fiddled with time and ended up causing a rift in fabric of the space-time continuum, causing the [censored]. Again. That's why point 83b of the Aperture Science Evacuation Guidelines now includes dinosaurs. There was an upside though – we think our

“What is your stance on artificial intelligence, and what dangers do you think it possesses?”

pest problem has subsided due to the roaming raptors, and those that we've caught are surprisingly good in the portal testing grounds. Time should be back to normal, but if you experience any time-related phenomena, such as déjà vu, then let your college test associates know. Bringing back an extinct species, debunking all previous theories about relativity and opening a new, niche pet-market? That's us, and it could be you – summer placements opening soon!

Now, for those who missed the seminars, training sessions, RCSU Science Challenge and newspaper adverts, I've been asked by Felix to answer any questions you have about what happens here at Aperture Science. I'm also here to impart my wisdom and good-looks upon the latest generation of scientists and engineers. Not mathematicians – we don't need you. This week, Martin asks, “What is your stance on artificial intelligence, and what dangers do you think it possesses?” Thanks for contributing to science, Martin – a voucher is in the post.

(Legal note: Aperture Science Redemption Vouchers can only be used to redeem an Aperture Science Redemption Voucher.)

We started working on a simple artificial intelligence a couple of years ago. The goal was to make the perfect scientist – one that didn't have to be paid, wouldn't complain, didn't take breaks and would never stop testing. The bean counters started panicking when the project was first mentioned, due to the price of an actual computer being enough to bankrupt this company many times over. Instead, I got the boys in the lab to find a way to connect multiple smaller gizmos together to make a much more powerful computer than we could buy. That week, we took delivery of a couple



of thousand calculators, put them in one of our brand new enrichment spheres, and linked them all up.

“Artificial Stupidity – by learning to avoid more and more stupid things it effectively became more intelligent”

Hesitation is just wasted time in the pursuit of science, and so we jumped straight in to making the most advanced artificial intelligence possible. Well, it turns out that it's a lot easier said than done. The boys in the lab got as far as teaching the calculator to feel love, but the A.I. didn't want to learn anything else. Their final reports stated that they tried to upset the A.I. but all that happened was the emotion altered from love to loneliness. The military would have paid top bucks for an intelligence that can only feel anger, but an A.I. that has abandonment issues is of no use to anyone. Most of the lab boys ended up building an emotional attachment to the experiment, and when it came to disassembly many girly tears were shed. Those who refused to participate in the clean-up were fired. From a cannon. Some even reached a high-point in their career – about 62 miles above sea level. The boffins say that's technically outer space, so congratulations science-nauts! We'll send your remains to your families.

The remaining boys in the lab gave up and said the idea of artificial intelligence was fundamentally flawed. By trying to create an intelligent being, we were limiting how much it could grow. Instead, we decided to work from the opposite direction and create artificial stu-

pidity. We had the system evaluate its choices and it started to develop – not by being intelligent, but by not being stupid; by learning to avoid more and more stupid things it effectively became more intelligent. The project was shelved last year after something went wrong and the artificial stupidity started making only the most stupid choices available. At least it was more intelligent than Dr Wheatley (the ex-head of the project) who defected to Black Mesa. Science finds ways to exact revenge on traitors. Incomplete formulae, decreased budgets and forced religion await all who scorn Science, when their time is up.

So, from what we've seen so far, artificial intelligence is far beyond our current capabilities, but don't be afraid, concerned or dismayed test subjects. When Aperture Science makes the breakthroughs needed, we will try to make sure it doesn't want to kill all humans. Well, we'll think about it, at least.

As previously, any correspondence (questions, resumes or money) can be sent to felix.games@imperial.ac.uk with the title “Ask Cave”, and they'll forward it on to Caroline.

A couple of testing raptors escaped with their Aperture Science Handheld Portal Devices, and have yet to be caught, so stay alert. Cave out.

Questions for Cave?

Do you have any questions for Mr Johnson? If so, email them onto felix.games@imperial.ac.uk and I'll pass them onto him for answers. Responses will be published in Felix.

So go do as the man says people. Write in – **for science**.

LUMINITES



Luminites are in Metric for one night only. This highly original musical group blends human beat-box, acoustic guitar, keys and vocal harmony. They perform with a unique and honest passion. They can rock up anywhere, with or without power, and deliver an exceptional live show.

This definitely is one night of live music you should not miss!

 **One to watch**

Friday 10 February

20:00 - 02:00



Only **£3.50**

Free entry before 20:00

Drink Offers
from 8pm
in Metric

House spirit & mixer – £2.20
Vodka Redbull – £3.00
Jägerbomb – £3.30

Bonkers

LIVRAVE

DJ Emma Harkness

(From Freshers' Mingle)

Friday 3 February

20:00 - 02:00

Only **£3.50** Free entry before 20:00



Super Bowl



Sunday 5 February

FiveSixEight

22:00 - 04:00

FREE

SUPER BOWL XLVI

INDIANAPOLIS 2012

imperialcollegeunion.org/metric

LiMITS imperial college union
yourlimits.co.uk

FOOD

Food Editors: **Anastasia Eleftheriou**
Michael Krestas

food.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Dessert of the week

Cypriot Doughnuts

This is a traditional Cypriot recipe for a dessert called "Loukoumades". It makes about 80 pieces.



Enjoy them hot, soaked in syrup... hnnnnnnng

Ingredients

For the dough:

3 cups all purpose flour
1 tbsp instant yeast
Water at 40°C
1 boiled and mashed potato

For the syrup:

1 cup honey
1 cup sugar
1 cup water

Procedure

Mix the flour and the yeast in a bowl. Add water until the mixture becomes a thick batter. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let it rise for about an hour.

In the meantime, prepare the syrup. Place all the ingredients in a saucepan and boil until everything is dissolved. Let the syrup cool. Add the mashed potato in the batter and mix. Put a lot of oil in a deep pan because the doughnuts will be deep fried. To get round-shaped doughnuts you must follow this procedure:

- Fill your right hand with batter and close your hand so that batter comes out between your thumb and first finger.
- With your left hand hold a teaspoon, scoop the batter that comes out and throw it in the hot oil.
- Every time you scoop batter, put the teaspoon in water so that it remains clean and no batter will stick on it.

The doughnuts are ready when they are golden. Remove them from the oil and place them immediately in the syrup for 2–3 seconds. Remove them from the syrup and place them in a large plate.

Yiango Mavrocostanti

Send your Valentine's Day recipes to:

food.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Get your food life SORTED

Anastasia Eleftheriou grills Ben Ebbrell, head chef at online recipe website **SORTED**, about bringing some banter to the kitchen

What is SORTED in one sentence?

We're a genuine bunch of mates who teamed up to run SORTED Food, an online cooking hub that aims to solve the food problems of our audience, and to prove that you can have a bit of fun in the kitchen; cooking doesn't have to be so serious!

Why do you believe SORTED will be of interest to Imperial?

The SORTED crew have a lot of fun doing what they do. It never feels like work – it's just messing around in the kitchen with your mates, cooking up simple, tasty grub to share, and we hope this comes across on screen. For that reason the videos are good fun and our current audience finds them pretty entertaining, returning week after week to see what new recipe inspiration they can enjoy.

But beyond that, SORTED provides a service: a compelling library of over 150 video recipes (with more released every week), making up a wide variety of dishes for every occasion. Recipes from all over the world: sweet and savoury, twists on classic favourites, ideas that are perfect to impress or fast mid-week meals for a budget. No matter what cooking experience you currently have, you'll find the SORTED recipes are dead easy and can allow even the biggest novice to churn out food to be proud of.

How did you get the initial idea?

The whole story kicked off a few years back sat around a pub table as we shared recipes on beer mats. As a trained chef, I was shocked by what my closest friends were eating, so I would share the perfect student grub that was anything other than takeaways and pot noodles.

As a photographer at the time, Barry saw an opportunity to create and publish a cookbook crammed full of my recipes and his creative work that would be perfect for students. A way in which we could share what we loved with a few more people. And we've never looked back. We put together a student cookbook (doing all the work ourselves) and then set out to share these recipes and the idea of

SORTED



Ben Ebbrell (second from right) and the SORTED team, putting Take That to shame

social cooking with friends.

That's where the videos started, a chance to share our ideas and philosophy of social cooking with more than just our mates and friends of friends. YouTube became the perfect platform to share new recipes with a larger audience – the world, in fact! It didn't change what we did... we were pretty much just playing about with mates in the kitchen. Now, our online channels are our focus and week after week we get the recipe requests and food dilemmas of our audience SORTED. Delivering quick, simple and tasty dishes, heavily seasoned with banter.

We would love to have some cooking advice! What do you think are the secrets of cooking good food?

Good food is very subjective. What is good to one person might not be to the liking of another. Which is why I believe a recipe should only ever be a guideline. So many of the SORTED recipes reflect nothing more than a series of steps, which could be applied to your own favourite ingredients. Make it personal. You'll see this theme cropping up in so much of what SORTED does; recipe ideas that are so simple they work even when a few bits are changed.

Aside from that, try to start with the best ingredients you can afford. Trust me, I'm not talking about expensive filet steak or high-end lobster, what I mean is go for stuff that is seasonal. That way the quality will be better and it'll be affordable too.

On top of that, club together with mates and cook up a treat. For example, it's nearly impossible to cook a meal for £2 when you're cooking alone. But to cater for you and three friends on a budget of £8 is easy! Scale makes good food possible. And on those evenings when you're cooking on your own, still make several portions and then save the rest as leftovers, either to be frozen or used up the next day.

Which restaurant or café do you recommend in London?

There are so many to choose from! Some of the franchises do offer a great menu and at very reasonable prices. I'm a big fan of **Jamie's Italian**, **Giraffe** and **Wagamama** for a quick bite to eat. But everybody knows about these.

Some of the best places though are those that need hunting out! **Bea's of Bloomsbury** is awesome, as is John Torrode's **Smiths of Smithfield**, which can't be beaten for breakfast! Aside from that I know that there are thousands of restaurants I've not yet had the chance to try. So keep your eyes peeled for vouchers and coupons that offer you introductory offers. Some of the best meals I've enjoyed over the past six months have been at half price or less. So you end up with a two or three courses of outstanding food for the same price as one or two at a franchise.

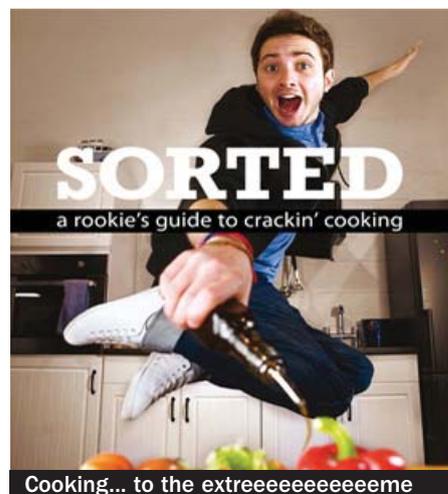
When was your last 'bad experience' with food?

There is no such thing as a bad food experience in my eyes – only a learning curve. What's the worst that can happen? If you're cooking at home and a meal doesn't quite go to plan, then you've learnt for next time, right? Just experiment and if you're really unsure then why not give it a go it with friends – make it a joint effort.

The biggest chance of suffering a bad experience is when everything is out of your control, like when eating out. We all love dining out and it's great for inspiration, special occasions or even just when you're feeling a bit lazy. However, if you can create great, simple, cheap and tasty food at home with your mates, then that has to win every time in my book!

Having said that we've all had some clumsy moments, and working in front of cameras when you're cooking makes for extra trouble! You only have to take a look at some of our outtakes and bloopers to see what I mean!

To find out more about SORTED (and to see some of those bloopers!) pay a visit to sortedfood.com



Cooking... to the extreeeeeeeeeeeee

Books Editor: **Maciej Matuszewski**books.felix@imperial.ac.uk

BOOKS

The Kingkiller Chronicle

Maciej Matuszewski reviews Patrick Rothfuss' bestselling fantasy epic

I don't generally read all that much fantasy, at least compared science fiction, but I was drawn to Patrick Rothfuss' *Kingkiller Chronicle* by a pair of very positive reviews in *Locus* and the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. I bought the first book in the series, *The Name of the Wind*, but it was left neglected on my shelves for several months – the consequence of a huge backlog in my reading list.

One boring recent evening, however, I was looking through my bookshelf for something to read. I skimmed through the first few pages *Don Quixote*; Kafka's collected short stories and Simmons' *Hyperion* but nothing especially caught my fancy. Then I picked up *The Name of the Wind* and the next thing I knew it was past midnight and I was some half way through the novel. As soon as I was finished I picked up the sequel, *The Wise Man's Fear* (the third book in the trilogy has not yet been released), and, despite it weighing in at almost a thousand pages, I worked my way through it little more than a weekend.



Our protagonist Kvothe - skilled magic user and swordsmaster

“an accurate description of the plot is that it's an account – presented in real time – of three men sitting in a bar and talking”

The series' massive success is certainly unexpected. On the surface it seems like standard fantasy fare – a magical school, or more specifically a university; an evil plot to destroy the world; a noble race of warriors – does any of this sound familiar? As soon as you open either of the books you even see an utterly generic and not especially well drawn map of the sort that is clearly inspired by Tolkien and commonly appears in the work of unexceptional authors such as Juliet McKenna and Adrian Tchaikovsky. One's expectations are hardly likely to be raised by the fact the an accurate description of the plot is that it's an account – presented in real time – of three men sitting in a bar and talking.

It's what they're talking about that's interesting as Kvothe, famed musician, sword-fighter and magic user who has, for some as yet unknown reason, been forced into hiding and is posing as innkeeper in a small village, recounts the story of his life to his apprentice and a historian. This is where Rothfuss shows his skill at moulding mundane and tired subject matter into something exceptional. His clear, engaging style draws you in immediately. Soon you begin to notice that the author's strength lies not only in style but also in plotting and worldbuilding, as he expands on common tropes in the genre to create a fas-

cinating and original work.

What was particularly good was the mythic back-story of the universe of the book. We don't get any clear-cut exposition or a precise timeline of events presented in an appendix à la *The Lord of the Rings*. Rather Kvothe, that is the younger Kvothe of the story within a story, learns of the ancient events that eventually come to shape his destiny through half forgotten legends, religious propaganda and old children's bedtime stories. Kvothe, and the reader, being left to decipher the truth from these fragments adds a lot to the books and serves as a fascinating examination of how facts can become twisted through time.

Also noteworthy is the magic system in *The Kingkiller Chronicle*. I am of the opinion that magic in fiction works best when it is either left very mysterious, like, say, in *The Lord of the Rings*, or when it follows strict, well explained rules. A system that tries to take the middle road, such as that in the *Harry Potter* books, very rarely works. A story where the various incantations cause weird things to happen for some unexplained reason, with arbitrary limitations, quickly gets frustrating and leaves the door wide open for *deus ex machina* endings. *The Kingkiller Chronicle* is special since it actually features both types of the 'good' magic – firstly a mysterious *Wizard of Earthsea* style name-based magic and secondly the more commonly used “sympathy”. Since this latter form is so well explained it lets the readers understand the characters' limitations and means that whenever they use their arcane abilities it just seems natural. It also unique and refreshing in that it is presented in a scientific manner. Sympathy actually obeys conservation of energy and lectures at the aforementioned magical university involve students having to memorise

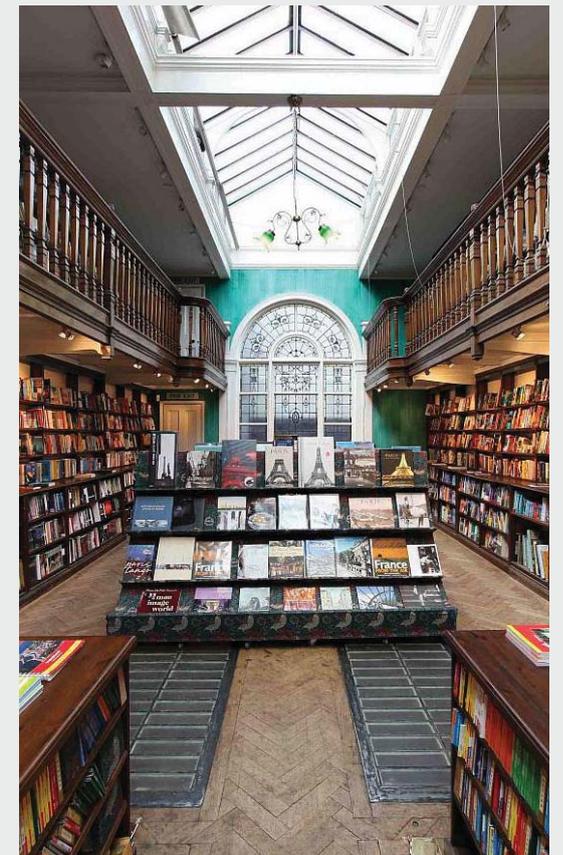
efficiency tables for various ‘spells’.

It would be remiss not to also mention the framing device. I have previously said how much I like a story where an older version of the character recounts the story of their life as it really allows the reader to get in their heads. This is especially relevant in this story since, as could be expected of an exceptionally skilled teenager, the younger Kvothe is often arrogant and full of himself. This could have easily become annoying and obnoxious if not for the older Kvothe pointing out, mostly through nothing more than a somewhat disproving tone, how stupid his younger self really was at times. The framing device also provides much of the driving force for the story – though the two time periods in the novel are only some ten years apart the older Kvothe is a drastically different, broken man – leaving the reader to wonder how he became this way.

“This is a truly unforgettable series – I would go so far as to say that in many ways it rivals Tolkien”

This is a truly unforgettable series – I would go so far as to say that in many ways it rivals Tolkien. Everything about it just seems to work and fit together to create something exceptional. I am certainly looking forward to the conclusion, *The Doors of Stone*, and advise you all to check out the first two books before it comes out.

In Praise of Daunt Books



There are two Daunt Books stores close to where I live and whenever I pass one I simply have to stop and have a look inside. It's simply the sort of shop that draws you in. From its beautiful wooden bookshelves to its wide selection of literature and frequent author events Daunt Books has everything a book lover could want.

Set up some twenty years by James Daunt, a former investment banker who last year was appointed the managing director of Waterstones, this is a bibliophile's dream and a chain like no other. Its unique selling point is that it groups most of its books by geographical location. This means you are likely to find travel guides, history books, and translations of novels all together on the same shelf. This is a great system that often leads those browsing the stacks to great books that they might have never considered. It is refreshing to see such an international outlook – my experience of other bookshops in this country being that they focus mainly on English language literature. It certainly expands one's mind to read books from other cultures so its great that there's somewhere in London where you can find obscure Czech, German and Japanese novels.

Daunt Books has six branches all over London – from Fulham Road in Chelsea to Marylebone High Street, so you have no excuse not to check one out. You won't be disappointed.

Maciej Matuszewski

We need contributors! Do you have a passion for books? Do you want to write about literature? Do you want to experience the thrill of seeing your name in print? Contact us at books.felix@imperial.ac.uk.

Travel Editors: **Dushi Arumuganesan**
Chris Richardson

TRAVEL

travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Making a difference in Malawi

Loïc Baboulaz makes his mark on the Malawian healthcare system

September 2011: From the air, it looked like a leopard's coat: hills of dry grass were dotted with random dark spots of green mango trees and large boulders. I landed in the capital of Malawi, Lilongwe, at the peak of the dry season in south eastern Africa.

Independent since 1964, and democratic since 1994, Malawi is a landlocked country of 15.5 million people, nestled between Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania. Running from North to South along the Great Rift Valley.

"...truly one of my greatest and most memorable experiences"

Malawi enjoys a healthy wildlife and stunning diverse landscapes with flat plains, woodlands, wetlands, rainforests, and mountains up to 3,000m tall. Its eponymous lake, with warm crystal clear water and sandy beaches, is part of the lives of many Malawians whether it is for daily use, fishing, tourism or for 98% of its hydro-based electricity. Nevertheless, with only 6% of the population having access to power, an average life expectancy of just 50 years, an HIV/AIDS rate of 12%, and 65% of the population below the poverty line, statistics unfortunately rank Malawi among the world's least-developed countries: 171/187.

In the days following my arrival, these cold, hard facts about Malawi's difficulties were quickly overshadowed by the exceptional kindness and friendliness of Malawians. Among them are the mem-

bers of Baobab Health Trust, a Malawian organization delivering medical informatics solutions to hospitals and clinics across Malawi. I noticed the office of Baobab Health one day while driving in Lilongwe and I met with founder Gerry Douglas to offer to work as a volunteer. The next day, and for the next three months, I worked at Baobab Health and was in charge of three projects related to image processing and electronics. Working for a Malawian NGO with Malawians engineers and for Malawians' interests was truly one of my greatest and most memorable experiences.

Created in the USA in 2000, and officially Malawian since 2008, Baobab Health is replacing Malawi's traditional paper-based system of medical records with an electronic system in hospitals and clinics, with the goal of improving healthcare delivery and reducing its costs through better planning. In Malawi, there is on average one doctor for 50 000 people (versus 400 in Europe and the USA) so the task of collecting and updating medical records is usually assigned to health workers with no computer experience. Also, nurses and low-skilled clinicians provide most of the healthcare to people and would benefit greatly from a clinical decision support system for medical diagnosis. Existing medical informatics solutions from the Western world are not adapted to emerging countries like Malawi, so engineers at Baobab Health have developed their own open-source software and custom hardware solutions by stripping down a computer to its bare essentials: a touchscreen, no keyboard and an intuitive, highly optimized, user-interface that guides clinical practitioners through each task (registration, diagnosis, prescription) while also preventing error entries.. The result is a much more accurate and faster data collection that ben-



Joining a Malawian primary school for the day

efits both patients and doctors, but also the nation in helping making policies and planning drug purchase.

Malawi is a low-resource and challenging environment for deploying modern IT technology. Power cuts, communication network outage and chronic fuel shortages regularly affect main hospitals. Health centres in the countryside reaching most of the population are simply out of all grids. To overcome these problems, Baobab Health finds innovative and sustainable solutions with customized workstations, low-power servers, alternative sources of energy and continuous power backup. This allows an HIV clinic to run with three touchscreen workstations, three label printers, a network switch and a server for less power than a single 100-watt light bulb. Engineers also set up their own communication antennas to interconnect

the different centres for monitoring, support or service delivery. Baobab Health can pride itself on having, in its system, 1.5 million patients registered across 23 sites and over 122 000 patients on anti-retroviral therapy.

I first heard of Baobab Health in the book *The Boy Who Harnessed The Wind*. It tells the remarkable story of William Kamkwamba, a young 14-year-old Malawian boy, who had dropped out of school. Using books from the library and parts from a scrapyard, he managed to build his own windmill to power his family house. Baobab Health helped to spread the word of his engineering talents at a TED conference in 2007. From that moment, William Kamkwamba became a media sensation and is now able to pursue his studies in the USA. This extraordinary and inspiring story is sadly unknown to most Malawians

and its youths who desperately need role models and encouragement to believe in themselves and their future.

"...Baobab Health has transformed my vision of engineering"

Emerging countries can benefit tremendously from new technologies, provided that they are carefully adapted to the particular needs and issues of each region. I left Malawi during the rainy season and the land was then covered with lush, green vegetation: it had transformed itself as much as Baobab Health has transformed my vision of engineering.



A rural landscape in Malawi



"...Baobab Health, a Malawian organization delivering medical informatics solutions..."

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

The technology behind Raincatcher

Pavitar Devgon explains rainwater harvesting systems

By now, I'm sure you've heard a lot about Raincatcher's aims. But how much of the technology behind our systems do you know about?

In order to support our aim of providing clean, sustainable supplies of water to people who currently cannot access it, Raincatcher sends a team to Tanzania every year to build rainwater harvesting systems.

As with many equatorial countries, Tanzania's climate fluctuates between extremes year round; during the wet season, there is plenty of rain providing sufficient supplies of water, but during the dry season, water resources become scarce. Our rainwater harvesting systems are built so that water can be collected in the wet season, usually from buildings with large roofs like schools and churches. The water is then sent by gutters to a vast tank for storage until it is needed. Typically, the tanks can hold a few hundred thousand litres of water. This year, our aim is to build two 100,000L tanks for two schools in the village of Igunga.

"The are some important points to consider when building a water tank on this scale"

However, there are some important points to consider when building a water tank on this scale. The initial concern is the size. The standard concrete tanks that Raincatcher uses can only hold a maximum of 150,000L of water above ground; any more water and the pressure inside will rupture the structure. In the past, Raincatcher teams have built tanks which can hold 250,000 litres of water underground, which had the advantage of being able to balance the pressure.

Another factor to consider is the issue of the first flush. When it rains and water collects from the roofs, there is often dust and other sediment transported with it, which are not clean to drink. The idea of the first flush is to drain away the volume of water that contains the residue so that subsequent flows are uncontaminated. This has to be incorporated into the design of the tank, which we have solved by using a diversion chamber; the first flush will fill this chamber and, once full, water can pass on to the tank. The chamber is then drained

and the dirty water can be used for other needs.

In previous years, Raincatcher teams' only purpose was to build water tanks but, this summer, our team intends to start a new program – the "Training of Trainers" scheme, which aims to educate people in Tabora and local rural areas about hygiene, sanitation and how to construct their own domestic scale rainwater harvesting systems. This will be a huge step towards sustainability as local people will be able to provide for themselves and learn about the safety of water use. As our last article pointed out, this education is crucial – there is no point having access to water if it is not looked after, cleaned and maintained.

Along with the first flush system, a filter needs to be installed to prevent small organisms and detritus infecting the water. A simple mechanical filter can remove small items from the water, and one prospect considered is the sand filter. This looks a bit like a ceramic flower pot, but contains sand of varying coarseness which removes smaller solutes as the water flows further down the filter. However, due to the amount of water involved and time it takes to filter, this doesn't seem like a viable solution for our large tanks, and will instead be used in the Training of Trainers program for smaller household-scale water tanks. A different design of filter, which can handle much larger quantities of water, will be implemented for the big tanks.

To remove biological hazards in water, it is common to boil it, but the Training of Trainers program will incorporate another, more practical method. Most dwellings in the villages of Tanzania are self-made and feature corrugated iron roofs. Water in transparent bottles or jars can be placed on the roofs and the heat from the sun is reflected and focused to the water, killing most of the microbes present. This has an advantage over boiling – the sun's light also contains ultraviolet radiation, which most high-tech water filters use to purify water! This is a cheap, sustainable and low-tech alternative and we hope it will prove a huge success.

So although you may hear us talking a lot about rainwater harvesting systems, remember there is much more that needs to be done to create a sustainable supply of fresh water. Any donations you make will go a long way to help us realising this project. To find out more about Raincatcher Imperial, or to donate money through Virgin Money Giving, please visit www.raincatcherimperial.org.



It's not just about the aims with Raincatcher



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Bloomberg

10th March 2012, Bloomberg HQ

The New Financial Worlds Derivatives Conference is devoted to credit derivatives where students and professionals have the unique opportunity to be a part of a number of cutting edge presentations given by top level industry experts. It has been specifically designed to cater to all levels.

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Play Ecstasy of Gold while reading this section

HANGMAN 2.0



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HANGMAN REPORTING FROM LIBYA

We're back! After years of watching our illegitimate children run amok with what was once the glorious satire section of an obscure student newspaper, the Hangman team of old have come back with a hostile acquisition. Sure we whacked a guy, sure we set a cat on fire, but isn't it worth it? That was rhetorical, because the obvious answer is yes! In fact we're back as Hangman 2.0. Like web 2.0 but with real dick sauce.

We know what some of you are thinking. Who the fuck are you? What happened to the old guys? Why is my penis so small? Will clipping my pubic hair make it look bigger? All valid questions, however if you're one of the 99% who asked any of the above, then unfortunately you're already a lost cause.

More importantly we'd like to tell you "the situation." It's like this, we'll bring you so much satire, lolgams and unnecessarily misogynistic jokes that you'll either cry or have a pleasant night of autoerotic asphyxiation, unless the bitches complain. Let's be honest though, it's not as if they're going to read this section, or be able to read at all. Relax, we're joking. We love women... Daily. If you seriously believe women are incapable of reading then seek medical advice immediately. Besides, women are lucky to have you there to protect them. It's not like they could stick up for themselves or even take a joke. They could never engage in, obviously light-hearted, 'banter' as fuck-wits refuse to not call it.

If you're still with us, then be sure to cut out the glossary on the next page. This handy list will help you keep up with the "actors" we pay ridiculously high salaries to run the college. A bit like the ones in Parliament who are making some BBC show with terrible speeches. Someone told me they weren't actors but are in reality real people doing real jobs to pay for their second home in France. That can't be true.

Anyway, last week we wrote something too shocking and had to hastily redo the page. Our announcement was [redacted] did a [redacted] on [redacted] with a [redacted] and [redacted] Maggie Dallman [redacted] led [redacted] with a parsnip [redacted] destroyed department [redacted] ended in an excellent rectal exam.

PLANS TO CLOSE DOWN SOUTH KENSINGTON CAMPUS CAUSE CONFUSION AND SOME RELIEF

HAXZOR MCRANDY L33T HACKER & PORNSTAR

The South Kensington campus was not hitting its target of £1bn profit every week. Unfortunately this led to it being cut. They took student concerns into consideration. The study concluded whatever the people who conducted the study wanted to conclude. A focus group was even used. Completely fair, impartial, and definitely not leading, questions were asked. These consisted of deep, intense questioning such as: "Would you like to be on an even better campus?" It turned out, when you ask this everyone replied yes! Luckily, this was enough to justify moving to a different campus and re-branding.

Imperial Training Academy for Banking, Management and Consulting, as it shall henceforth be known, will be, fittingly, moving to the City. Widespread anger about the move has been appeased by el Presidente as he said that all was okay because everyone has been



THE LAND WILL BE SOLD TO JP MORGAN TO SAVE MOVING TRAINING RESOURCES

given free iPads.

The change will also coincide with broad changes across the board in curriculum. The vocational side of courses is to be largely expanded. Labs will be carried out in groups so students will always have an example of a "time they worked in a group". To add to that, students will be forced to do spreadsheets for 16 hours straight while full of cocaine and coffee; this change will simu-

late investment banking accurately. The content of lectures will also be cut and some courses will be entirely removed. Lecturers will be notified by e-mail.

It's not all looking like bad news, there will be lectures in consulting, ensuring students "actually know what the fuck consulting really means".

In other news, The Dinner Lady's house was a bit shit and needed im-

To help understand the reason for skipping the important step of asking students what they think. The College has released a subject specific analogy guide:

Maths: It's like when you know the start and end of a proof but not a step in the middle. Just write it down as if it's obvious and put Q.E.D at the end.

Physics: When your results are not a straight line. Just tweak them a bit.

Chemistry: When your product is a low yield and you add some salt.

Materials: What the fuck do you guys even actually do?

provement. The dining room needed to be made much better. She decided, wisely, that the best way to do this was to buy a new house. None were available, so she just found the owners of a nice house and is trying to kick them out. The Dinner Lady is going to try to raise funds by having a large, clear-out sale. She'll be selling the 1000 club sandwiches that are left over in the library cafe as nobody eats them.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION) RESIGNS FROM OFFICE AFTER LUMIA 900 LAUNCH — PAR

ROSS GOLDBERG REPORTS ON NOT SO SHOCKING BUT STILL CONTROVERSIAL NEWS

In what can only be described as an elated moment for Imperial Student society, Onion Deputy President (Education) Jason Parmar has officially resigned from office after weeks of suspicion and doubt. Mr Parmar publicly announced the fairly uncontroversial news via his Facebook account on the evening of the 28th January.

Mr Parmar said that he is "Resigning as dpe- sick and tired of bureaucracy and red tape...nothing ever gets done around here and it's sickening the amount of money wasted/ embezzled by the supposed figureheads of our student body. I just want Britain to be back British!!!!" [sic].

Insider sources believe that this was an inevitable outcome after Mr Parmar was seen at a local Orange store speaking with the store's man-

ager. Upon his resignation, Mr Parmar was seen to be working at the aforementioned phone shop as an Orange Nokia sales representative.

After speaking with the Onion Presidente, Scott Heath, about how this would affect his plans for the rest of the year, Heath said "I think we can now safely guarantee students the best possible mobile contract, in what is sure to be a bright future.."

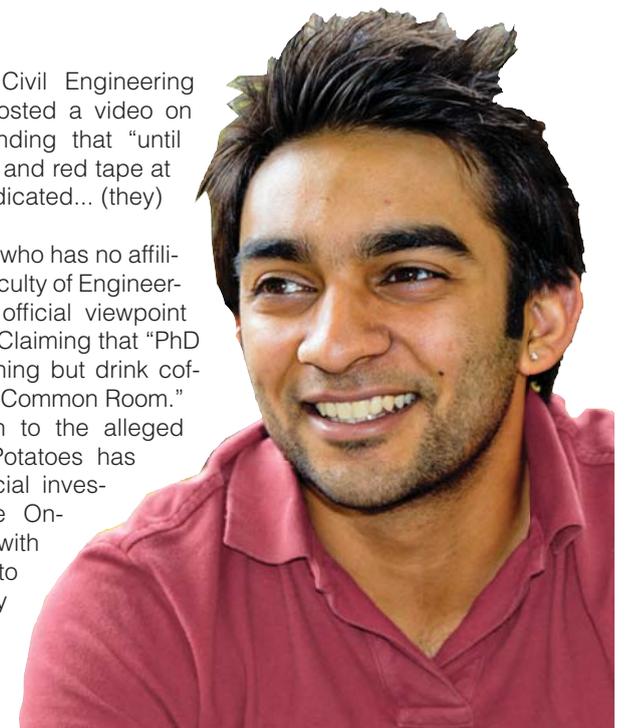
When Hangman contacted the office of the only other Orange representative associated with the College, The Dinner Lady, we received no response.

It is unknown whether the actions of Mr Parmar will spark any kind of reaction from the student body as of yet. However militant groups of postgraduates have begun to form in the dark recesses of the College.

One group of Civil Engineering PhD students posted a video on YouTube, demanding that "until the bureaucracy and red tape at the Onion is eradicated... (they) will do no work."

The Iron Lady (who has no affiliations with the faculty of Engineering) offered an official viewpoint on the situation. Claiming that "PhD students do nothing but drink coffee in the Senior Common Room."

In his reaction to the alleged claims, Sweet Potatoes has decreed an official investigation into the Onion's finances with any findings to be reported only to him, claiming this is an "internal affair, lol PAR".



GLOSSARY

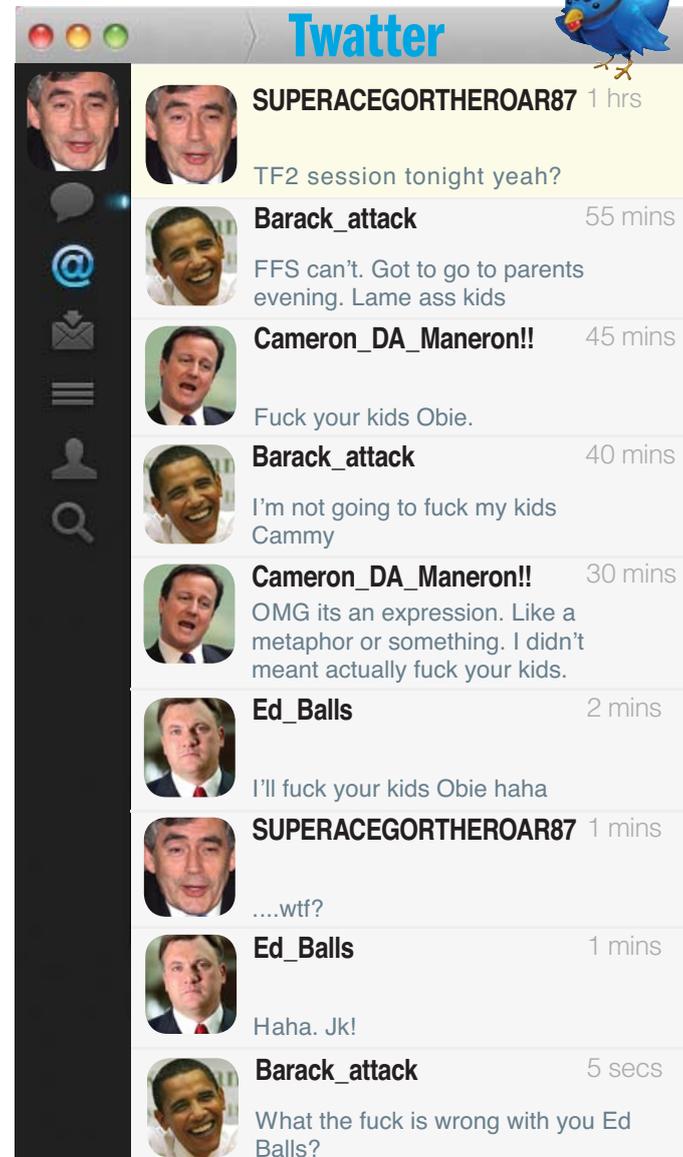
CUT OUT AND KEEP FOR FUTURE USE

Rector – Keith O’Nions	Sweet Potatoes
Jane Neary	The Dinner Lady
Maggie Dallman	The Iron Lady
Scott Heath	el Presidente
Jason Parmar	Mr N9
Michael Foster	Tony Soprano
Manya Zard	Mothra
Nicholas Massie	Captain Condom
The Union	The Onion
The Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	Imperial Training Academy for Banking, Management and Consulting



Drunk Mate of the Week

IMPROMPTU BREAK DANCING LESSON IN THE UNION BAR ENDS IN CATASTROPHE



THE NEWS WITHOUT THE NEWS



FIRE SERVICE TAKES DRASTIC ACTION AGAINST GUERILLA HIDE AND SEEKERS

WHORE-IZZLESCOPES - MISOGYNY: NOT A VIEWPOINT. A DEFAULT



ARIES



TAURUS



GEMINI



CANCER



LEO



VIRGO

This week you find yourself reading the all new horoscopes. Gosh, they’re awesome! That’s right: I used the word gosh – and what? It’s that kind of vocabulary that gets Hangman the girls. Not any kind of girl either, we’re talking about exclusive DTF girls. Non Imperial girls. Mmm, attractive bitches...

Reading your copy of Felix got that much easier, especially if you’re blind. If you’re not blind yet, then you can apply for the highly selective Hangman vision reassignment surgery. After one look at our very own mothra you’ll be reading the braille edition in no time (braille reading course is supplementary).

As this week begins, you find yourself in a dark nightclub with sub par minge. When we say sub par, we mean chickswithdicks.com level. There’s only one thing to do, tell all the hoes that you are the editor of a highly pretentious student newspaper and feel the stubble rash coming your way. Not your stubble.

Nostalgic readers among you may begin to see a trend of debauched old school Hangman forming. Good for you, that probably means you remember when this newspaper was good. Guardian Student Media award good. Not just a nomination. Those were the days (YouTube’s Last Dictator Standing Nandos Ad).

Sorry, compared to last week your outlook for the next 7 days is only going to get worse. It’s not even your fault. It’s that god damn smoking hot LILF (Lecturer I’d Like to Fuck) you have for tutorials four times a week. Seriously, having a throbbing member in your new skinny jeans for that long is unhealthy.

Vagina. What, we read Virgo wrong. When we look into the Hangman crystal ball (aka Matt Colvin’s iMac) all we see is a bloody hot sweaty spam purse. This means only one thing for you. The divines have decreed that your guilty pleasure of watching birthing videos is just plain wrong. Especially when it’s your own.



LIBRA



SCORPIO



SAGITTARIUS



CAPRICORN



AQUARIUS



PISCES

Everybody knows Libras love cock. It doesn’t matter if you’re a girl, a guy, something in between.. It’s just a universal constant, like the speed of light. One that can’t be broken without neutrinos. Good news is that this week you’ll be invited to a bukkake party. Bad news is it’s your turn to be in the middle.

Scorpio, Scorpio, Scorpio. Where do we begin. We know you’ve had a tough time recently. You lost your family, got kicked out of your bullshit materials degree, and are now facing eviction from your squat. However we feel it’s our duty to inform you that this week will bring no respite. HIV bro. Damn...

This week you spend eighty hours on Skyrim. WTF! Like seriously why does that game never end? Just because you’ve become emotionally attached to your in game “wife” doesn’t mean she does anal. Hangman honestly believes your life would be better playing Newton’s cradle with the girlguy from Gemini.

In a controversial move, this week you decide to watch Starship Troopers on your brand new Netflix account. Holy Christ’s buttplug Neil Patrick Harris is awesome! The scene with the brain bug begins and you start to fantasise about placing your un-subtle erection into its orifice. Orifices are so warm.

This week they find a cure for herpes. OMG! This is the day you’ve been waiting for. Ever since you went down on that blonde bitch in freshers’ week. Sadly doctors couldn’t find a cure for your chronic case of being an asshole. The doctor subsequently kicks you in the cunt and refuses to treat you. Wait – you’re a girl?

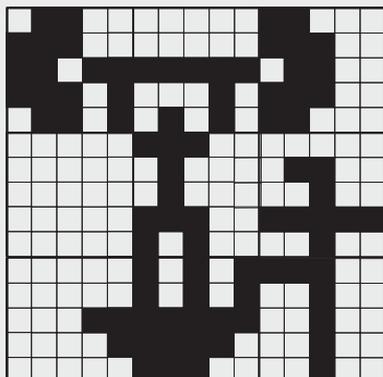
Ever think that the symbol for Pisces looks like two guys sucking man goo from one another? Us too, especially when we saw your future. Nothing to be ashamed of, you’ll just lose your soul. God said it was wrong, he told us himself. BTW clipping your pubic hair defo makes your knob look bigger.

PUZZLES

puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Last Week's Solutions

Nonogram



Crosswords

QUICK(ish) - Well done if you managed to do it, it was a toughie. Certainly beyond my capability...

Across: 1. Lob 3. Academical 8. Notwithstanding 9. Gallicism 11. Ought 14. Adored 15. Excision 16. Penzance 17. Reason 19. Aside 22. Symbiotic 23. Dissatisfaction 24. Twentyfold 25. Yes

Down: 1. Leopard 2. Bowdlerized 3. Antecedent 4. Datum 5. Mango 6. Cling 7. Lighten 10. Scenery 12. Unseaworthy 13. Scoreboard 16. Plaudit 18. Ominous 20. Issue 21. Enact 22. Stiff

CRYPTIC - Across 1. Playing the field 9. Take apart 10. Barge 11. Heave 12. Debauched 14. Aide 15. Bask 16. Ratio 18. Inane 20. Hide 21. Jerk 24. Cathedral 25. Scram 27. Ulnar 28. Gastritis 29. Temple of Artemis **Down** 1. Patch 2. Awkward 3. Imager 4. Grandfather 5. Hit 6. February 7. Earshot 8. Dreadlock 13. Baked Alaska 14. Agincourt 17. Referral 19. Antonym 22. Erratum 23. Esprit 26. Moses 28. Goo

Chess

"The surprising 1. bxa8=N!! wins in a stylish 3 moves (the computer could not even find this, so well done if you got it) The follow up goes like so: 1...Kxg2 2. Nb6! where both Kh1, Kf3 and Bxb6 lose to 3. a8=Q#"

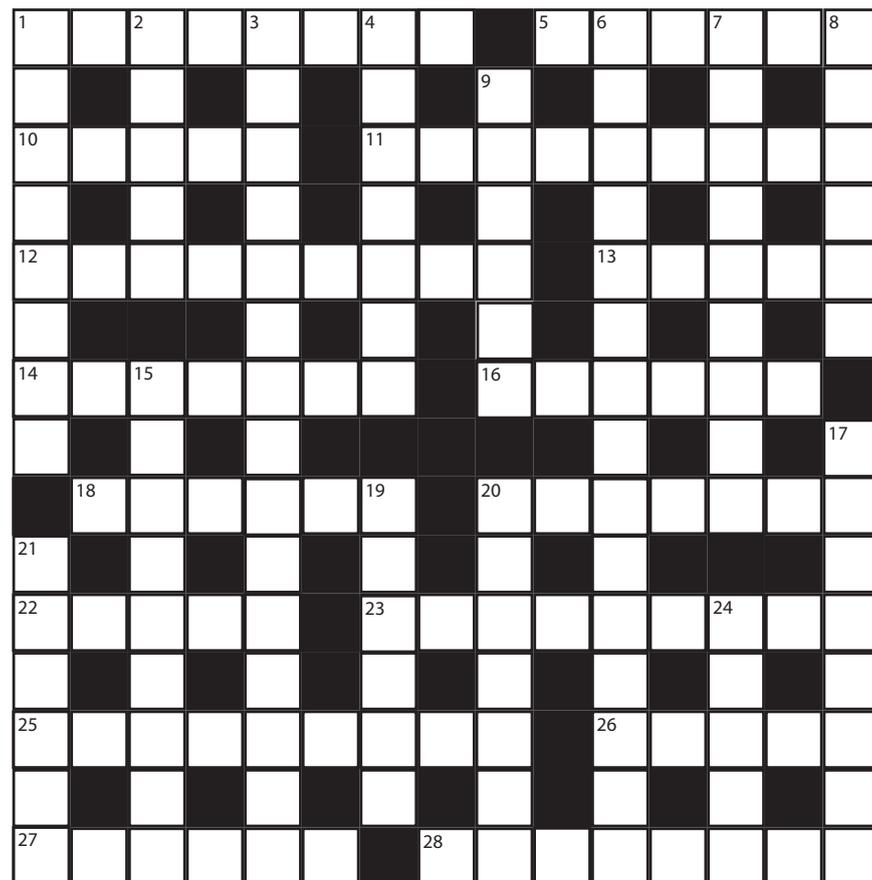
Quick(ish) Crossword

Across

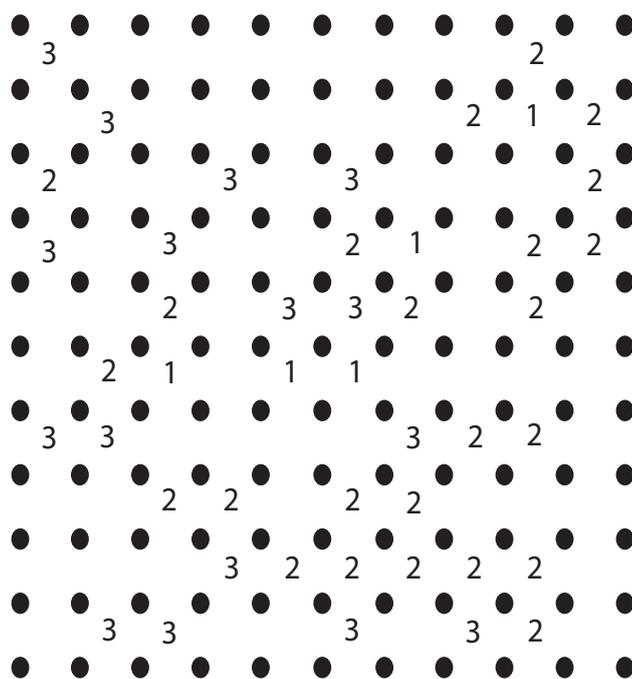
- Long lasting and/or difficult task (8)
- Social standing; general condition (6)
- Shallow recess; tailored to a specific set of interests (5)
- Man who led children away from a German town in revenge in a fairy tale (4,5)
- The ____ - 1965 Broadway play about contrasting room-mates (3,6)
- Small, thin piece broken away from something; bail at the last minute (5)
- Wrench (7)
- Decapitate (6)
- The "old continent" containing around 50 countries (6)
- 1975 musical set in Prohibition-era Illinois (7)
- Vapour or fume (5)
- Rumour network (9)
- Sandstone monolith known for "anger" at dusk (5,4)
- Expression of the character of a cultural or social group (5)
- Discover; investigate (6)
- Carrying young (8)

Down

- Small mammal of the Herpestes family, examples include ichneumon (8)
- Competed to see who was faster (5)
- 1965 film with Julie Andrews and Christopher Plummer (3,5,2,5)
- In theory (2,5)
- Small evident part of something largely hidden (3,2,3,7)
- Head person (orig. of burlesque show) (3,6)
- Set of episodes (6)
- Acoustic environment that surrounds a sound (6)
- Something that entertains (9)
- County containing the Mendips, Exmoor and Cheddar (8)
- Urges someone to do something (4,2)
- Biscuit; firework; programmer (7)
- e.g. Ascension, Madeira, Campbell (6)
- Country - second largest by population, 7th by area (5)



SLITHERLINK



The aim with Slitherlink is to make one continuous closed loop by connecting the dots. The numbers in each square indicate how many edges of the square are part of the loop, so if it contains a "2", you know that two and only two out of four edges

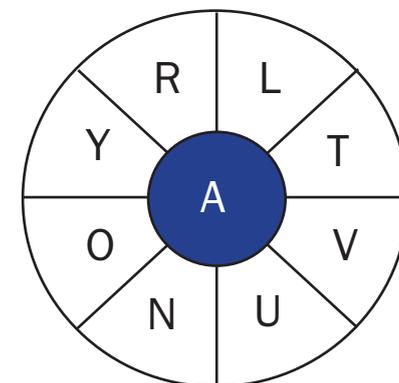
have lines. That's all the info you need to get the one logical answer (though waiting a week to see the solution will also do). Answers to puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk, as the puzzles team receives one per correct solution.

Contributions wanted!

If you'd like to contribute by sending in puzzles, comics or even some editing, e-mail puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk. Be they horrendously complicated things or funky picture puzzles you think readers would like, do get in touch. General suggestions are also welcome.

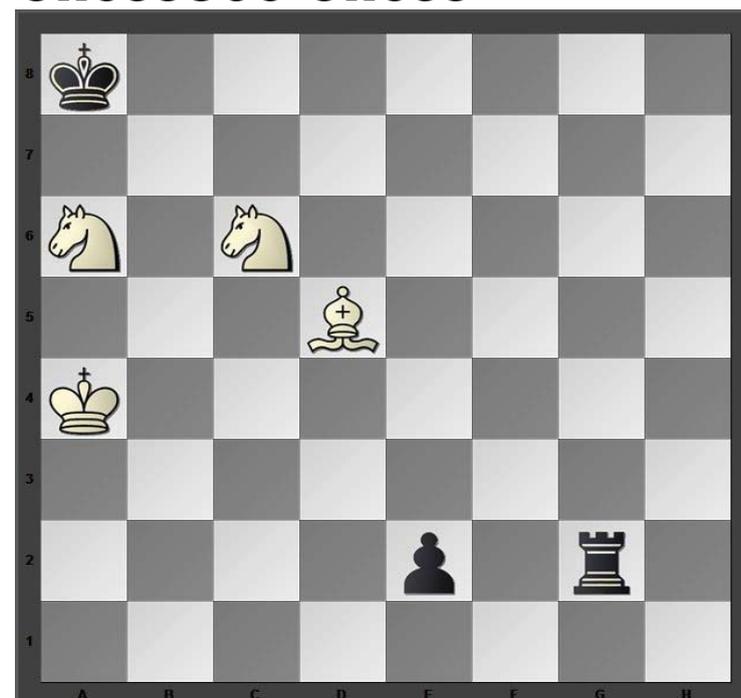
Word Wheel

TARGET: 21



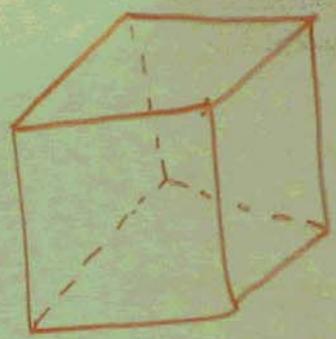
Make as many words of at least 4 letters as you can, always using the central one. **NO** plurals, conjugated verbs, comparatives or superlatives, because I said so.. There is always at least one 9 letter word.

ChessSoc Chess



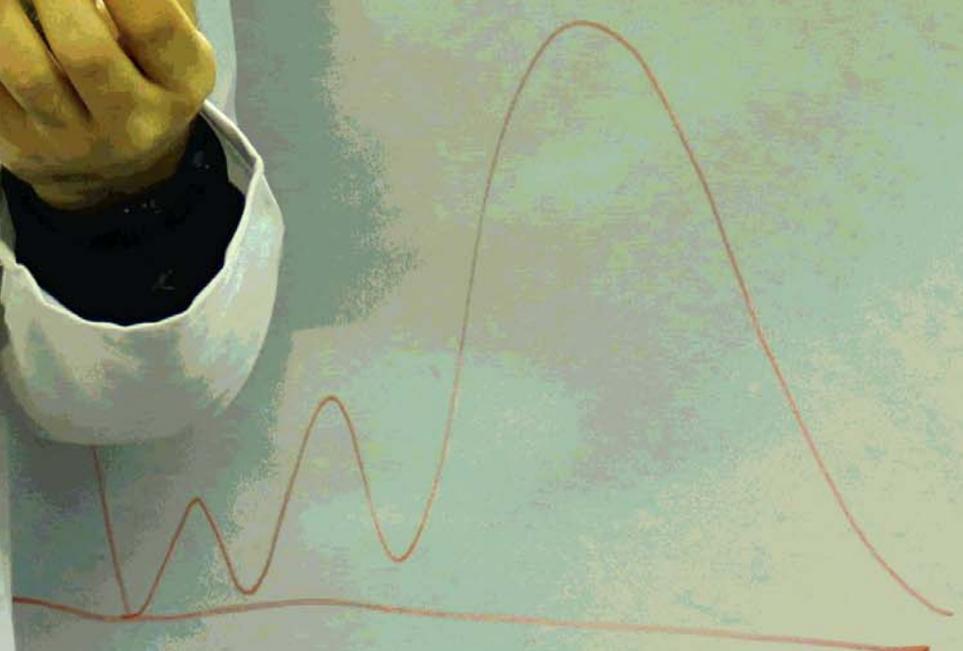
White to play and mate in 3

We may not have a lab...
Though we do make discoveries daily.



$$\int_{10}^{20} 2x \, dx ?$$

$$\frac{\delta^2 \Psi}{\delta x^2} = \frac{1}{v^2} \cdot \frac{\delta^2 \Psi}{\delta t^2}$$



$$\delta \in N \subseteq h$$

Get involved. For Science.
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Sport Editors: **Indy Leclercq**
David Wilson

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

SPORT

Netball 3s crush LSE; plucky 4s lose to St George's

Feroza Kassam

Netball

Women's 3s	39
LSE 4s	5
Women's 4s	8
St George's 4s	22

IC 3s triumphed in the first game of what was a busy week of fixtures, outplaying LSE 4s in an open and fast paced encounter. After an end-to-end first few minutes, IC soon asserted their authority and quickly raced to a 5-0 lead.

Despite a sublime goal from the very edge of the D by LSE's Goal Shooter, Imperial's spirit was undiminished and 5 further goals closed the quarter at 10-1. Imperial continued their dominating streak in the second quarter with shooters Piening and Bachelor showing deadly accuracy in front of goal. LSE tried to find an opening but were unable to break the fluidity of IC's play. With stylish passing that wouldn't have been out of place at The Nou Camp, the

home side were sitting comfortably at half time, leading 23-1.

To their credit, LSE continued to battle on after the break and were rewarded with a few second half goals, although it did little to close the sizeable gap. Despite their best attempts to salvage the game, the IC shooters were always able to find an extra half yard when it mattered, resulting in a well-deserved 39-5 victory for Imperial.

Unfortunately Imperial 4s didn't enjoy similar success in their match against St. George's 4s. There were few chances to steal in the early stages of the game, with the ball stuck in the centre of court for much of the first quarter. At the first break the score line was low; just 3-3, a testament to the disciplined, resilient play by both sides. Archer's impressive interceptions won her player of the match and the first half closed with both sides very much still in the game. But it was in the second half that St George's pulled away; most of the away goals were scored in the fourth quarter and the final scoreboard read 22-8 to St Georges; by no means an accurate reflection of the game.

Feroza Kassam



Netball. Much easier when the ball sticks to your hands

Fencing: champs!

...Continued from Back Page
dropped five hits overall, which left the epeeists twenty-four hits up, and needing to score twenty-one to put the match away. By this time, all the other teams had finished fencing (including the girls) and the entire Imperial contingent had turned out to provide support – much needed up against a vocal Oxford contingent. The epeeists made excruciatingly slow progress, but the hits built up, bit by bit. Hollywood scriptwriters could not have imagined the scene better, as the anchor Harry Gulliver came up for his final fight needing a single hit to win the match overall. After conceding a couple of hits, while everyone else was chewing their nails off, Harry came through with a double hit, and the crowd raised the roof in Ethos. As the Oxford anchor slumped his shoulders in defeat, Imperial rejoiced – they just had to win the next day's matches to win the league. Final score against Oxford: 100-97.

The next day saw the girls fence their epee matches, and the guys take on Bristol and ULU. Full of confidence from the day before, the women's team proceeded to seal their victory against Queen Mary with an emphatic 135-24 final score. Victories against Oxford (135-117) and UCL (135-89) followed. The only off note of the evening was the epee loss to Cambridge – although the girls still won it overall, 120-103.

This almost-too-easy string of wins meant that, once again, the IC Women's 1st team were crowned Premiership champions, with eight wins out of eight.

Could the men emulate them, and retain their crown too? The match against Bristol was to be key. Once again, the sabreurs began with panache, winning easily and putting the team ahead. The foilists then won their match, not putting a foot wrong to leave epee only needing nine hits to win. They achieved this comfortably, and while they did not win their match, the overall score ended up as 125-99 to Imperial. With only ULU, the weakest team in the league, to go, the men were confident they could seal their league win. ULU didn't pose a threat at all, and all three weapons posted comfortable victories as Imperial ran away with it. Final score: 135-71.

The Premiership was in the bag. Both teams saw fit to go for a celebratory Wagamama dinner, although the tiredness was palpable in some!

The Imperial fencing first teams are now attempting to defend their championship titles by winning this year's BUCS knockout competition and confirming their status as the best in the country. The men are up against Durham in the quarter-finals on the 22nd, and the women fence Bristol on the same date. Both matches are in Ethos, so ocome down and support!

Charlotte Levin



Singing rowdy songs all together after a match: an integral part of fencing
From L-R: Harry Gulliver, Chris Gilliam, Ed Collier, Henry Gann, Glen Ostacchini, Didier Nohlmans (c), Maiyuran Ratneswaran, Jon Ashcroft, Indy Leclercq

SPORT

Felix Sports League

...where do you stand?



Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Index
1 Fencing W1	5	5	0	0	403	233	170	5.00
2 ICSM Football M2	3	3	0	0	11	6	5	5.00
3 ICSM Hockey W2	2	2	0	0	10	1	9	5.00
4 Lacrosse W2	1	1	0	0	7	2	5	5.00
5 Tennis M1	4	4	0	0	38	10	28	5.00
6 Tennis W1	5	5	0	0	56	4	52	5.00
7 Ultimate Frisbee 1st	3	3	0	0	45	9	36	5.00
8 Hockey W1	6	5	1	0	15	3	12	4.50
9 Rugby M1	8	7	0	1	242	149	93	3.88
10 Badminton W1	5	3	2	0	25	15	10	3.80
11 Fencing M1	5	4	0	1	585	460	125	3.20
12 Hockey M2	5	4	0	1	23	10	13	3.20
13 Table Tennis W1	5	4	0	1	19	6	13	3.20
14 Basketball M1	7	4	0	0	465	380	85	2.86
15 ICSM Badminton W1	4	3	0	1	18	14	4	2.75
16 Badminton M1	5	3	1	1	27	13	14	2.60
17 Squash W1	5	3	1	1	11	9	2	2.60
18 Tennis M2	6	3	2	1	40	32	8	2.50
19 Fencing W2	6	4	0	2	564	585	-21	2.00
20 ICSM Hockey W1	4	2	1	1	23	9	14	2.00
21 Lacrosse W1	6	4	0	2	85	36	49	2.00
22 Netball W1	6	4	0	2	240	195	45	2.00
23 Football M1	7	3	2	2	12	10	2	1.57
24 Badminton M2	5	3	0	2	13	19	-6	1.40
25 Basketball W1	5	3	0	2	278	223	55	1.40
26 Lacrosse M1	5	3	0	2	51	27	24	1.40
27 ICSM Badminton M2	4	1	2	1	15	17	-2	1.25
28 Football M3	7	4	0	3	13	14	-1	1.14
29 Hockey W2	6	3	1	3	6	26	-20	0.83
30 Football M2	7	3	1	3	17	19	-2	0.71
31 Fencing M2	6	3	0	3	697	683	14	0.50
32 Futsal M1	4	2	0	2	18	27	-9	0.50
33 ICSM Football M1	2	1	0	1	4	6	-2	0.50
34 ICSM Netball W1	2	1	0	1	82	72	10	0.50
35 ICSM Netball W2	2	1	0	1	52	50	2	0.50
36 ICSM Netball W4	2	1	0	1	47	50	-3	0.50
37 ICSM Rugby M3	4	2	0	2	88	90	-2	0.50
38 Squash M3	6	3	0	3	10	19	-9	0.50
39 Table Tennis M2	6	3	0	3	53	49	4	0.50
40 Rugby M2	7	3	0	4	92	132	-40	-0.14
41 Golf Mixed 1st	4	1	1	2	7	10	-3	-0.25
42 Table Tennis M1	5	2	0	3	38	47	-9	-0.40
43 Basketball M2	3	1	0	2	225	195	30	-1.00
44 ICSM Badminton M1	3	1	0	2	10	14	-4	-1.00
45 ICSM Rugby M1	3	1	0	2	52	104	-52	-1.00
46 ICSM Rugby M2	3	1	0	2	32	135	-103	-1.00
47 Netball W3	6	2	0	4	109	100	9	-1.00
48 Rugby M3	7	2	0	5	100	120	-20	-1.43
49 Hockey M1	7	1	0	4	9	30	-21	-1.57
50 Football W1	4	1	0	3	4	35	-31	-1.75
51 Netball W2	5	1	0	4	95	164	-69	-2.20
52 Squash M1	5	1	0	4	3	22	-19	-2.20
53 Hockey M3	6	1	0	5	7	18	-11	-2.50
54 ICSM Netball W5	4	0	1	3	25	185	-160	-2.50
55 Squash M2	6	1	0	5	11	18	-7	-2.50
56 Squash M4	6	1	0	5	3	15	-12	-2.50
57 Fencing M3	4	0	0	4	437	521	-84	-4.00
58 Hockey M4	5	0	0	5	3	38	-35	-4.00
59 ICSM Basketball M1	1	0	0	1	46	64	-18	-4.00
60 ICSM Hockey M1	3	0	0	3	6	26	-20	-4.00
61 ICSM Hockey M2	3	0	0	3	3	19	-16	-4.00
62 ICSM Hockey M3	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	-4.00
63 ICSM Hockey W3	1	0	0	1	0	7	-7	-4.00
64 ICSM Netball W3	3	0	0	3	26	106	-80	-4.00

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

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Hockey: Men's 2s remain unbeaten

IC Hockey



He can shoot faster than his own shadow. Down a pint faster, too

Jason Ye
HockeyMen's 2nd
Roehampton 1
0

The Men's 2nd XI are currently experiencing a season of two halves. Going into the latest BUCS match against Roehampton Mens' 1s in the home fixture having beaten them comprehensively 4-1 at the start of the season, we sit at the top of the league unbeaten with 3 wins and 1 draw, and not having played the league leaders yet. In ULU we are sitting squarely at the bottom, with 3 defeats.

A shakeup in the squad due to the rock that is Tinkerbell making a step up to the 1st XI; Unterbrøw deciding to contract an STI; and Doctor Fresher Tom twisting his knee the day before the match, meant we had lost our two central defenders and a key central midfielder. Luckily to plug this huge hole in our back four, we had our team captain B. Man Briggs, and esteemed fresher Meatspin coming in from right and left back respectively into the centre.

We came out of the blocks early and fast. Some great passing down the right and left wings led to the some great attacking plays.

Within the first ten minutes our infamous 70% defensive press paid off and Dirty Whaler pilfered the ball from under the nose of the Roehampton left-back, promptly passing it to the newly bar-named Captain Slow who was lingering on the baseline. Some silky skills into their circle later, he pulled a pass back to Fresher Joe who slotted it into the goal past their keeper.

Having poked our noses in front, we revelled in being awarded yet more short corners in their circle— however our esteemed corner striker C. Bell fired blanks and we were unable to capitalise on the proverbial campsite we had set up around their goal.

Consistently we were again unable to use the huge amounts of possession or the territory we kept gaining by pressing their defensive lines, which is something we should definitely work on at future training sessions. It took a breakaway counterattack by Roehampton's sneaky centre midfielder to shoot towards goal, forcing an excellent save from Glory Hole. The ball fell to B. Man Briggs and in classic defensive fashion, he spanked the ball into a Roehampton player's ankle. The umpire rightly gave a free hit to Imperial, despite the howls of pain of the Roehampton striker. At this point we experienced an interlude in play, while we waited

for an ambulance to turn up. After half an hour of waiting around with icepacks, tinfoil and warm clothes, however, the ambulance never arrived due to the injury apparently not being severe enough to merit one and he was carried off the pitch by his teammates. Ironically, the same injured Roehampton player actually broke his thumb the last time he played us at the beginning of last term.

The second half was pretty much yet more Imperial domination, with some moments of brilliance by Roehampton's midfielders more than matched by Soggy Biscuit's magic tackle at the back. This is also when the half an hour "break" started to take its toll on us. As Dirty Whaler noted in his post-match comments, it was due to the accumulation of Christmas-induced layers of fat. A couple of members of the team such as Yellowbag seized up with cramp, leaving us to play Total Hockey, constantly switching in and out of each others' positions in midfield.

Towards the end, IC experienced a barrage of attacks and short corners, and it was a tribute to our strength and depth that our solid sellotaped makeshift defence held out to the finish line. Eventually the game finished with the score at 1-0 to Imperial, and our unbeaten record in the BUCS league was further cemented.

Sport Editors: **Indy Leclercq**
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SPORT

Captains' Interviews: Handball

Indy Leclercq



Essential info:

Stefan Bauer, 23

5th Year Medic

Goalkeeper and founding member of IC Handball

Likes: Vodka cornichon

Dislikes: getting hit where it hurts while goalkeeping

Annabelle Mayers, 20

2nd year Biochemistry

Womens' captain

Likes: when the team scores

Dislikes: Scandinavian he-women

Indy Leclercq Sport Editor

Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope you're having a good Friday afternoon (I won't, I have lectures till 6). Sport editor gripes aside, I am pleased to present this week's interviewees: the lovely Annabelle Mayers, handball women's captain, and the dashing Stefan Bauer – goalkeeper extraordinaire and a founding member of the club. As we sit down in 568 over a pint I get cracking straight away: if he is a founding member, how is he still here?

"The handball club was founded in 2007-08, in my first year. Having been into handball since I was 10, I got involved, and was on the committee that year! I have been heavily involved in the club ever since." I turn to Annabelle, asking how she got into handball, and expecting an answer similar to Stefan's. I'm in for a surprise: "it was actually an article written in Felix by Stefan in my first year that made me want to sign up for it!" She explains further: "Stefan had done an article just before Christmas, and I thought that handball sounded like a cool thing to try out...a year later, and here I am." I can't help but smile at this: as Sport editor, this is the kind of story that makes it all worthwhile.

I ask Stefan how he has seen the club evolve since its inception. He knows its history on his fingertips. "In the first couple of years, we played mainly friendlies with a mixed team, and had

a men's team compete in the universities tournament organised by England Handball (EH). The following year we joined up with a First Division team, Ruislip. We have an arrangement with them to share facilities, training sessions and coaches. At the moment, three of our members play with them in the top flight of English handball. The women's team was set up last year, and this year they play in the EH development league, as do the men." But this means that Annabelle is the first ever women's captain? "That's right!" she beams. "First captain ever." There it is, people, a piece of history in the making: the first ever interview with the first ever women's handball captain. How has their season been so far? "We've actually won two matches so far, which is pretty decent for a nascent team... We notably beat Oxford by 5 goals this year, having lost to them quite heavily last year, so that's a notable improvement".

What about the men's teams? Stefan takes the question. "There is always a core of strong European and Scandinavian students, many doing one-year masters, who make up most of our first team, and who train and play with Ruislip. The Eagles are currently top of the EH first division, and the Imperial team is third in the development league." Having people play for the top team in the league is pretty impressive, I think. How often do they train?

"There is one session at Ethos every week", continues Stefan, and we can

always train at Ruislip another three times a week. Four times is a bit much, though! I usually train about two to three times a week." Annabelle concurs, and says a bit more about the Imperial sessions: "The guys and the girls train together, we always end up with a match and a drink afterwards at the union, so there's a very social side to the club.

While we're on the subject, I ask if (despite the small size of the club) they go on any tours or trips together. As a matter of fact, there is a handball tradition: a tournament every year organised by the french school Centrale Lyon. "It involves most of the French unis, and it's held for a lot of different sports, not just handball, every year" says Stefan.

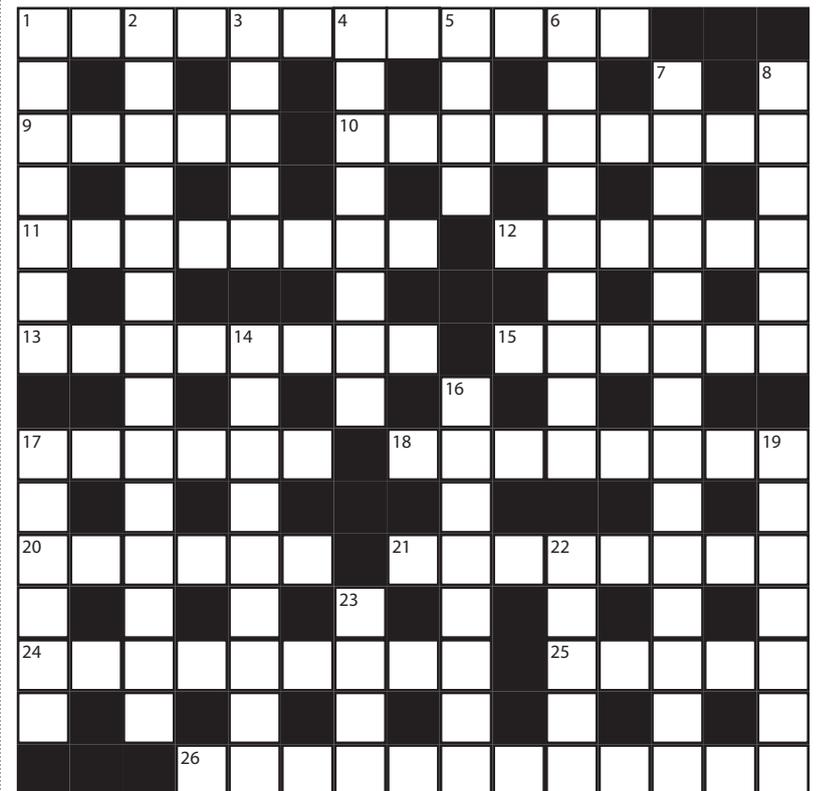
"We got into it the club's first year because a guy here had studied there previously, and had an amazing time. It's become a handball ritual, where every March we will go down to Lyon by any means possible to eat, drink and play handball!"

What about results? Or is it just for fun?

"We've actually done better every year... Last year, the girls made the knockout stages in our first year there – but the guys didn't" says Annabelle. "It was pretty satisfying.

"It's a big competition, and the level is pretty high, given that it's in France" Stefan counters. "This year, we're sending a full girl's team and two men's teams, and hopefully the guys can make the semis".

Cryptic Crossword 1,509



Across

1. Tory toff, passionate peeper, missing a cuddle from Oxford tutor (5,7)
9. Loners lacking look clutching mainly DOTA - Imperial stereotypes? (5)
10. Out East, stock exchange to weaken as told by author (4,5)
11. Going off the art of impressions (8)
12. Succumbs to the Spanish oil (6)
13. Provide an interior for vehicle with yearly record (8)
15. Black eye from sparkler (6)
17. Round girl is reddish brunette (6)
18. Gathering of Christians plot genocide (8)
20. Reveal behind again? (6)
21. One accountant wished to back the interests of Imperial (8)
24. Beer the aim with unpleasant final consequences (6,3)
25. Pirate is blue (5)
26. Assassin with pointed, square nose (12)

Down

1. Changing force making things damn icy! (7)
2. Authentic software becomes trivially true, immersing one (7,7)
3. Gave drugs at party for London duke (5)
4. Tell our army the bloke is from Eurasia (8)
5. Draw attention to Newton (4)
6. Having squandered wealth, they bury head in the sand? (9)
7. Short statement: "Felix readers heading straight for puzzles section, perhaps" (7,7)
8. Insect left queen with deciduous growth (6)
14. Double bag (one inside the other with individual lining) heart for significant elderly birthday (9)
16. Dishonourable gent, stuffed into containers, falls (8)
17. Cleanses doctor's uniform (6)
19. Rebel, an erratic empowerer (7)
22. Two round figures at nightclub (5)
23. Tolerate large, heavy mammal (4)

With the Olympics just around the corner a major event in the handballing world, what do they think of the state of handball in England at the moment?

Stefan smiles at the mention of the Olympics: "I'm actually volunteering for the handball event, I should be helping out with some of the teams this summer. I was supposed to assist the German team, but in the end they didn't qualify! Handball is growing here, though, and England Handball is really pushing for the development

of the sport." Annabelle agrees: "You see it more and more in schools now, whereas when I was in school the only sport I remember doing seriously was netball. The Olympics will help it too, with a number of handball venues being left as part of the legacy"

Stefan concludes by hoping that more home-grown players will mean more university participation. "As the club grows, we can hopefully improve and get the Imperial teams up into the first division". Good luck, guys!

SPORT

Charlotte Levin

Touché: Fencers win Premiership(s)

IC confirm reigning champion status at Ethos in weekend tournament

Indy Leclercq reports



The mantle of success is never an easy thing to bear, especially so in sport. Success breeds expectation, which translates into pressure – exactly the sort of thing you don't want when you're trying to reproduce past exploits.

On the weekend of the 20th of January, the Imperial men's and women's team took all this in their stride while attempting to defend their Southern Premiership crowns, and come top of the league for

the second year running.

The women were on a string of victories, as yet unbeaten this season. The first premiership tournament weekend, which saw all the home matches of the season played in one go, ended with IC ladies on top and raring for more. For captain Charlotte Levin and her team, it should have been plain sailing – and for the most part, it was. Beginning the weekend by fencing foil and sabre on the Saturday, the girls breezed through; thoroughly destroying Queen Mary and

winning convincingly against Oxford, Cambridge and UCL. The day ended with the girls having assured victory in one match (before having fenced the epee) and needing an easily-achievable amount of points to win the others. Things were looking up, and it all almost seemed too easy.

The men's team, however, was having a rather more trying time of it. Their first match against Cambridge got off to a good start, with a (somewhat expected) win in the sabre, putting the rest

of the team at ease. The foil continued in this vein, beating their opponents by more than ten hits (where they had lost on the previous occasion). It fell to the epeeists to finalise the victory, which they did in style. Final score: 120-108. A first win soothed the men's nerves, which was necessary for the match to come: a showdown with the league leaders Oxford. Having drawn, and lost on weapons, to the Dark Blues at the previous premiership weekend, the guys had a bone to pick with the Oxford

team. Unfortunately, the schedule meant that Imperial had a long break between matches, and this had them feeling quite lethargic when the time came to take up arms again.

The match got underway with sabre, as before, and the sabreurs did not disappoint, pulling off a resounding victory to leave Imperial twenty-nine points clear. The foil was more of an uphill struggle, with both good and bad performances from the team. In the end, they

...Continued on Page 45

SCIENCE



Social networks, online and offline
Page 8

TELEVISION



A study into the world of... ponies?
Page 22

FILM



A look back at *The English Patient*
Page 26

FOOD



Banter in the kitchen
Page 34

BOOKS



Reviewing a real fantasy epic
Page 35