

felix ...

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON



NSS opens,
NUS **boycotts**

PAGE 3 **News**

SOAS **get**
real

PAGE 6 **Comment**

Actually
Rhodes
mustn't **fall**

PAGE 8 **Comment**

Film editors
spring **picks**

PAGE 14 **Culture**

Sherlock lets
down viewers

PAGE 20 **Culture**



University
memes pages
here to **stay**?

PAGE 26 **Millennials**



I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo

The post new year's blues



One of my friends recently pointed out I'm going through a quarter-life crisis, that we (our group of friends) all are. And I can see where he's coming from. We're all in our mid-twenties and we seem to permanently be at a crossroads. Transcending from adolescence into adulthood (it's... a process) – changing, adapting, compromising.

The other day I had a moment. I was sat in my living room, going over 2017 with my housemate Clive when I brought up climate change. I started talking about this thing I'd read in the news, the Larson C ice shelf. A 5,000 sq km wide, 300 m thick piece of ice getting ready to break off from Antarctica and become an iceberg; an event that might raise global sea levels by ten centimetres.

"Shit man, it's happening" said Clive. To which I nonchalantly spat back something along the lines of: "I don't even care anymore. We'll be dead by the time this planet becomes inhospitable"

There was a pause and I added: "I can't believe I just said that"

I was gonna clean up the plastic from our oceans. Holly would find a cure for cancer, Theo would

create a new anarcho-cryptocurrency, Mischa would eradicate malaria and Josh would become a rockstar.

But now we're all sat around a table, eating our gourmet burgers, with sides of whatever the latest vegetable trend is and we talk about how the world is fucked. How we all feel the flight rather than the fight instinct kicking in.

And maybe it's understandable to feel this way right now. The past year has been one bitch of a year.

And maybe you're muttering "Wake up hun – you're not a unique snowflake. You can't change the world". But fuck that. Cause the world doesn't need me to change. The world changes regardless of what I will or will not think and do. Just look at 2016.

Yes, there was a lot of death and destruction. But if you look up, you'll see a second moon now orbiting the Earth, a newly discovered prime number, and gravitational waves. You'll see that tiger numbers rose for the first time in over a century. You'll see that Austria didn't allow rightwing populism to take hold quite yet.

So what if we're not unique snowflakes capable of changing the world? Some will be lucky and determined enough to do so. The least the rest of us can do is keep our head up, and root for them.

T H E

T E A M

Editor-in-Chief | Lef Apostolakis || Deputy Editor | Mattin Mir-Tahmasebi || News Editor | Matt Johnston || Comment Editors | Vivien Hadlow, Tessa Davey, Jonathan Masters || Culture Ringmaster | Fred Fyles || Culture Editors | Indira Mallik, Simran Kukran, Tom Stephens, Meryl Anil, Anurag Deshpande, Theo Farah || Puzzles Editor | Hamish Beck || Clubs & Societies Editor | Abigail de Bruin || Science Editor | Lizzie Riach, Ipsita Herlekar || Millennials Queen | Tessa Davey || Millennials Editors | Saad Ahmed, Sanjay Battacharaya, Matt Johnston, Andrada Balmez || Sports Editor | Sam Smith || Illustrator | Nathan Macabuag || Copy Chief | Mattin Mir-Tahmasebi || Copy Editors | Alex Adler, Ipsita Herlekar || Cover | Joe O'Connell-Danes || Editorial Photography | Fahdi Canavati || Centrefold | Joe O'Connell-Danes

Address | felix, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB || Telephone | 02075948072 || Printed by | Ilifee Print Cambridge, Winship Road, Cambridge || Registered Newspaper | ISSN 1040-0711 || Copyright © felix 2016





National Student Survey open for 2017

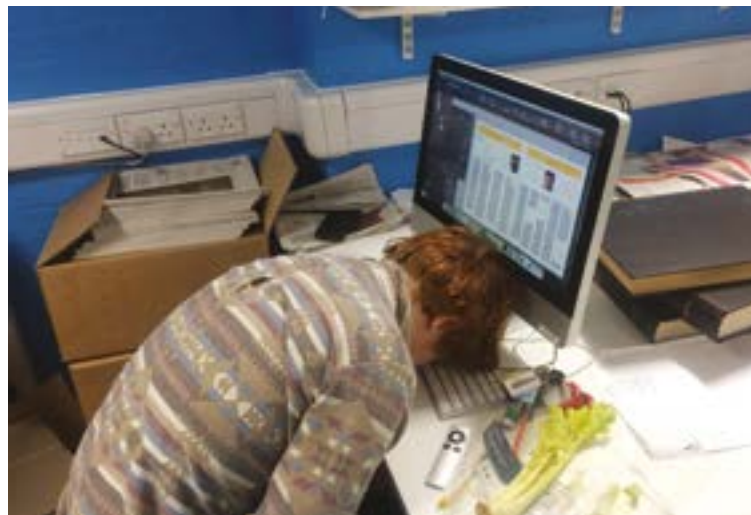
Lef Apostolakis

National Union for Students calls to boycott

...

It's that time of year again when final year students across the country are invited to fill in the National Student Survey (NSS), also known as Imperial's bane of existence. Last year's remarkably low student satisfaction scores saw Imperial dropping in ranking from number ten to 21 out of 24 Russell Group universities.

Whereas in the past this hasn't been a priority issue for Imperial, the NSS has now become a fundamental



No more emails about the NSS \\ felix

**\\ TEF is a tool by which to raise tuition fees **

part of the newly introduced Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and could affect tuition fee rates and the number of overseas students allowed. The introduction of

the framework is supposed to "ensure all students receive an excellent teaching experience that encourages original thinking" according to Minister for Universities and Science Jo Johnson. However it has been widely criticised and even despite amendments last November, concerns remain. As Professor Stephen Curry told *felix*

earlier last year " [TEF] still risks becoming burdensome and too heavily driven by metrics which (as we all know) do a very poor job of capturing or characterising educational quality, which is the thing that students, staff and government all ought to be working together on."

TEF also remains unpopular with the National Union of

Students (NUS). Earlier last year a national education demo took place demanding "no ifs, not buts, no education cuts". In a recent article for the *Guardian*, Sorana Vieru, vice-president higher

**\\ By boycotting, students will use the NSS for its true purpose – to show that we are incredibly dissatisfied **

education for the NUS denied any value to the NSS when it comes down to improving quality of teaching.

"TEF is a tool by which to raise tuition fees, taking a poorly thought through approximation of teaching quality that Johnson himself

has admitted is a test pilot, and using it to dramatically reshape the university landscape across England, with unknown economic and social impacts," she writes.

The NUS will be coordinating a nationwide boycott of the NSS. Vieru's appeal encourages students to stay strong and resist selling out. "Don't allow your feedback to be used against you, don't fill in the NSS. Not for a free coffee, not for an Amazon voucher, not even for a crack at a free iPad."

"By boycotting, students will use the NSS for its true purpose – to show that we are incredibly dissatisfied. Not necessarily with our courses or the university, but with the government and its attempts to dishonestly suggest it cares about the quality of our teaching, when really it's just trying to raise fees again."

Firefighters swarm the Science Museum

Lef Apostolakis

...

Just before noon last Wednesday, hundreds of visitors were evacuated from the Science Museum. As the visitors collected outside the museum on Exhibition Road, three firefighter squads arrived and created a perimeter around the historical building, amounting to a total of seven fire engines with aerial support from a helicopter.

The firefighters were responding to an automatic

fire alarm that had somehow been triggered.

While the firefighters entered the museum looking for the source of the suspected fire, Museum staff entertained children with games, to prevent the young explorers' investigative day from losing momentum. Some children were led to the neighbouring Latter Day Saints Church to keep them warm.

Imperial College students appeared mesmerised by the

red shiny fire engines.

When it was verified that there was no fire, only an alarm malfunction, Imperial College security opened the Falmouth Gate onto Queen's Gate to help the firefighter squads get out. The gate is only supposed to be opened for the Queen.

This is already the second time in 2017 that Exhibition Road gets packed with swarms of evacuated museum-goers. About a week earlier, visitors had to be

evacuated due to a bomb threat directed at the neighbouring Victoria and Albert

museum. The threat turned out to be a hoax.



That awkward moment something exciting happens at Imperial \\ felix



Animal rights group protest Imperial's receipt of animal research award

Abigail de Bruin

Cruelty Free International aren't buying it

Just before the end of last term we ran an article about the fact that Imperial College had been awarded for Public Engagement Activity in the annual 'Openness on Animal Research Awards'. In response we were contacted by Cruelty Free International and given a press release from the animal rights group.

It's worth noting here that the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection that published the controversial undercover investigation in April 2013 merged with its sister organization Cruelty Free International in March of last year, taking on their

name and branding.

Cruelty Free International have responded to the news of the report but stating that "it is deeply ironic that the College has been given an award for openness - by the main pro-vivisection lobby group - when it recently fought Cruelty Free International tooth and nail not to disclose how many hours care staff are on duty."

This comes back to the Imperial Animal Research Annual Report from 2014, which Cruelty Free International challenged for the reference to 'round the clock' or '24/7' care. The actual quote from the

Report states "In addition to world-class facilities, we are also committed to providing round the clock care for all our animals, with at least one veterinarian and five senior animal care staff on call 24/7", says Mandy Thorpe, Director of Central Biomedical Services (CBS). "We also monitor the animals' environment night and day, and if conditions fall outside of the Home Office Code of Practice, we will be notified by text and email alerts."

The Cruelty Free International response to the award continues "We now know - after the College lost our case at the Information

Tribunal - that care staff are on duty only from 8am to 5pm, considerably less on weekends and public holidays. This is despite the highly invasive surgical procedures routinely carried out by researchers, such as induced heart attacks and double kidney transplants". It should be noted that the challenged report states that research staff at Imperial "also have a long-standing practice not to carry out surgery on Fridays, weekends, bank holidays or College closure days."

So, whilst the Cruelty Free International has indeed established that there are

not 24-hour checks, there seems to be no particular fault in this area for College beyond a poorly worded report in 2014.

Certainly, though there's a strong sentiment that 24 hour care would be the kindest way to treat the animals vital to our research, we don't seem to have an actual legal requirement to do so.

Perhaps then it would be more effective for efforts of animal rights groups such as Cruelty Free International, to focus on lobbying the Home Office to update its legislation so all Animal Research Institutes have to follow better guidelines.

Prayer room refurbishment completed

And it took less than a decade!

Lef Apostolakis

The Brother's Prayer Room was successfully refurbished over the winter break. Earlier last year, felix revealed many maintenance issues that had plagued the IC Islamic Society managed prayer room for six years.

The issues included a dirty carpet emitting a strong smell, damp on the walls, peeling wallpaper and lack of appropriate plumbing to perform religious rituals.

The refurbishment was initiated following action

from Deputy Presidents James Cox and Rachel Blythe after they were approached by the Society which had been struggling to get issues with the prayer room resolved for over seven years.

Finally, towards the end of last term plans for the refurbishment were finalised and the works were set to take place over the holidays.

"We worked with College to provide alternative spaces to pray during the holiday period, works took around three to four weeks so by the time James and I came back

everything was complete," says Blythe, Deputy President for Finance and Services.

"This was a huge achievement for the two of us and it shows how the Union continuously listens to student problems and liaises with College to get things done"

However, whether the refurbishment will be long lasting is uncertain as there are plans to move the Chaplaincy to a different part of campus. Whether this move will include or even take into consideration the Brothers' Prayer Room remains unknown.



Finally somewhere to do Wudū, integral for ritual purity in Islam \\ ICU

Are you a

computing
GENIUS

Well thank god because we need one!

Dazzle us with your knowledge of PHP and help us keep
felixonline from crashing!

Our standards are low and the incentives even lower!

Seriously we're desperate and will take anything.

Get in touch

felix@ic.ac.uk

"Come mess with expensive Macs and
spend lots of time debugging why they do
completely counterintuitive things"

- Luke Granger Brown // Media God



A man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt, is holding a glass of beer. He is looking directly at the camera. In the background, there is a poster that says "HITS THE SPOT".

\\ These people epitomise the hate, bigotry, ignorance and racism which they claim to fight \\

\\ the SOAS
Student Union
wants the university
to decolonise its
philosophy to remove
Plato, Descartes and
Kant \\

To clarify my views on colonialism, it was indeed horrid, fuelled by greed and patronising ideas of ethnic superiority, leading to massive death and suffering; however, history has always been about death and suffering, with European colonialism merely the latest and most industrialised form of it. I don't see these people lamenting the massive destruction following the Mongol invasions, the Mughal invasion of India, and the fact that African slavery was carried out by indigenous African tribes decimating their enemies. Colonialism was also not a zero-sum game of the white man oppressing the natives. It was an interchange between the rich and powerful elites on both sides collaborating to benefit themselves, while the vast majority of people were simply trying to survive. Colonialism also led to massive benefits for the colonised in some cases. In my case, schools set up by Christian missionaries in Malaysia educated my parents (and an entire



All knowledge is important and valuable. The fact

\\ Instead the SOAS Student Union simply wants to create racist, narrow-minded, brainwashed, and hateful idiots \\

Unfortunately this feeds into a wider 'snowflake' society where freedom of speech and now even freedom to learn are being curtailed in order not to 'offend' people, and where the boundary of

To summarise, even if their claims of African and Asian philosophy being under-represented is valid, banning white philosophers is a stupid and ignorant thing to do, especially in a university in the UK, which incidentally is part of Europe and has developed under its cultural sphere. The SOAS Student Union is belabouring a moot point and making fools of themselves and our generation, because even if they are snowflakes, most young people aren't. These people epitomise the hate, bigotry, ignorance, and racism which they claim to fight. You may say that we have to tolerate or accept those views, but tolerance of intolerance is cowardice, and will ultimately erode the freedoms and rights we cherish. The SOAS Student Union should focus their energies on relevant issues, not this load of rubbish.



FREEZE PEACH

C O M M E N T ...felix



Imperial, Trump and other things that piss Sara off

Sara Hamilton is angry about the environment. Again.

One of my 2017 *felix*-related resolutions was to diversify my activist feelings away from the environment. Not that I'm bored about talking about it – not at all. Every week there seems to be some lab somewhere making breakthroughs on green energies, new legislation about restricting urban transport, or an international agreement to reduce our carbon emissions. And if that's not the case, there's always Trump sharing his insightful thoughts about how we're all making this greenhouse gas stuff up after all. Anyway the point was that there's a thousand other causes that are also worth protesting weekly about, but Lef asked me to write about climate change, so blame him.

This week in climate change news we have a giant iceberg, the size of Trinidad and Tobago, threatening to break off from the Antarctic ice shelf, which could lead to a global ocean rise of 10 cm. Big iceberg or not, temperature and sea level rises have been reported for the past few decades, with human activity being deemed directly responsible (sorry Trump, there's evidence).

If you're reading this, you're probably thinking either (a) "I know this, and I don't care- some UN people will make sure everything is alright and Venice won't become Atlantis any time soon" or (b) "I know this, and I do things in my power to fight it (recycle/buy one of those reusable coffee cups/am vegetarian, etc...)". I personally proudly sat in the library this afternoon researching decarbonisation of UK electricity sources for my coursework and thinking to myself how nice it feels to be in category (b).

And then for a second, the paradox struck me that while we're all here happily dreaming about a fossil-free world, Imperial, with its world leading leaders in renewable energies, cutting edge clean technology

labs and environmentally mindful individuals, is investing over 4 million pounds of its endowment directly in oil, coal and gas. Indeed, while leading universities worldwide, from Stanford to Glasgow, have managed to almost entirely divest from fossil fuels, Imperial is currently ranked 96th on the People and Planet 2016 University League, reflecting its lack of involvement in environmental issues. UCL is 29th, just saying.

I've tried to understand the logic behind this, but even after talking to Imperial's Energy Manager about the issue, I am convinced that nobody cares how much coal we burn to power our green technology research labs – such is the currency of a degree from Imperial. I feel like not only should we care, but demand an ethical investment policy from our institution and thankfully, there's a great bunch of people called Fossil Free Imperial who do just that. So spare a few seconds of busy student life to check out their Facebook page and sign their petition. Island-sized icebergs are breaking off after all.

The NHS is in a humanitarian crisis

Stephen Naulles discusses the government's inability to recognise the current crisis at the NHS.



The Society of Acute Medicine has revealed that the NHS currently has "third world levels of staffing and third world levels of beds". For the Red Cross, our NHS is in the midst of a 'humanitarian crisis'. This language may sound vitriolic, but a crisis of this magnitude is something medical professionals have been warning politicians about for years. Over the weekend, 42 A&Es had to divert patients to other hospitals due to their inability to deal with the number of patients coming in. Many of those that actually made it into the hospitals were left on beds in corridors, a damning indictment of the sheer lack of capacity in our NHS at the moment.

Indeed, there has been a 212% increase in the number of patients waiting more than 4 hours to be treated, and A&E attendances over the last ten years have increased from 16.5M to 21.8M. We constantly hear about the mounting challenge posed by an ageing population. Surely then it follows that we will have boosted our ability to cope with these additional pressures? Evidently not. Acute in-patient capacity is being reduced in many trusts as part of the government's sustainability and transformation plans; an elaborate cost-cutting exercise which places meeting financial targets in the name of 'efficiency savings' over patient safety. The Kings Fund estimates that NHS providers and commissioners ended 2015/16 with a £1.85 billion financial deficit. All of this coming from a government claiming to have learned from the mistakes of Mid-Staffs and vowing to never put financial obligations before patient safety.

The answer to the crisis lies in progressive taxation reform, not budgetary cuts. Despite us now being the world's 6th biggest economy (thanks Brexit), we spend just over 8% of GDP on healthcare. The IFS estimates that a 1% increase in the rate of income tax

could raise an additional £5bn in revenue; reversing the cut in corporation tax could raise an additional £1.5bn. Neither of these are particularly radical suggestions if they result in a health service that is properly staffed and resourced.

The bulk of this funding should be used to increase in-patient capacity, address staffing shortages, and bolster the social care system to reduce unnecessary or avoidable admissions. The Conservatives are wrong to use spin about weekend mortality rates – we should seek to improve outcomes over the entire week, acknowledging the concerns of junior doctors earlier this year.

We have a Prime Minister and Health Secretary going on national television to debate the semantics of whether the NHS is in a 'humanitarian crisis', or just your regular run-of-the-mill crisis. Instead of focussing on their image they should sack the spin-doctors, and work with the real doctors to make sure there is no crisis to debate in the first place.



Divyen Vanniasagaram believes Cecil Rhodes is just a product of his time

In recent months, the 'Rhodes Must Fall' campaign has gained significant traction not only at Oriel college, Oxford but at several institutions in the UK and abroad. The campaign has attempted to have the statue of Cecil Rhodes removed due to his strong support for the apartheid movement in South Africa.



The campaign has had already had an impact at universities, with Queen Mary's University, London having recently removed a foundation stone laid down by King Leopold II, a Belgian king associated with colonialism and the forced labour and death of many people in what is now the modern day Democratic Republic of the Congo. Many of those who have joined the campaign have not only riled against the statue of Cecil Rhodes as an individual who supported apartheid but against colonialism, imperialism and their historical influences on British education.

The views of Cecil Rhodes are of course abhorrent and would find no home in a modern civilized country but the issue of whether it is right to remove his statue is a very different prospect altogether. The removal of his statue would be an attempt to re-write history and ameliorate those parts that make us uncomfortable.

But this is not what we should learn from history and the mistakes we have made; we should be able to look on the

past honestly and learn its lessons whether these reflect negatively on us or not.

We wouldn't dare consider removing statues of Gandhi for all the great work he did in liberating India and bringing about her freedom because of his views on sexual assault and women's rights. Many historical figures have had views which run counter to modern day values and these statues stand as a testament of how far we have come as a society and how far we must go further to live in a truly just and equal society. It does these figures an injustice to judge them by 21st century ideals and disregard the context in which their views were formed. Imperial College has a long and rich history, some of which is based in Imperialism. Our motto "Scientific knowledge, the crowning glory and the safeguard of the empire" and one of our aims "exploring and developing the raw materials of the Empire countries" highlight these links but it would be wholly inappropriate to attempt to change our motto as it is a part of Imperial's history and is crucial to the story of how our university became what it is today.

Giacomo Bosaini-Gilroy examines Corbyn's latest boring opinion



News flash; Jeremy Corbyn emerged from his ferret hole in North London and made a speech! He must have read my article about how he needed to get his act together and talk positively about immigration. As if I were *felix's de facto* Labour immigration policy correspondent, I have returned to give a judgement on JC's words.

The summary is that despite wanting to remain in the single market, Corbyn is not opposed to ending freedom of movement, which he has claimed Labour "is not wedded to". Somehow he has taken on lack of enthusiasm as a political stance. He has compromised on his positivity towards immigrants in order to appeal to working class voters who showed their dissatisfaction with the status quo at the ballot box last year. The result is a point of view that is not particularly exciting – much like his arguments for remaining in the EU last June – but he seems to think that the anti-establishment overtones will invigorate the people. This remains to be seen.

He also pointed out the things about the EU that he hopes Brexit will consign to the past – for example, state aid laws that stop us helping the steel sector – but we always knew he was not keen on the European project. It is good he is still talking about making changes in Labour laws, in particular taking action against undercutting of pay and conditions, as that is a more constructive approach to eliminating immigration problems than closing borders.

It's rather novel for immigration to be hot on the lips of Labour politicians. MPs Emma Reynolds and Stephen Kinnock were in the news suggesting the introduction of a two-tier immigration system, in which highly skilled workers would be treated differently to low-skilled workers. This

potentially sounds reasonable since we do not want to put off skilled immigrants from finding work in Britain, although I still need convincing it would work in practice. I also read about

\\ He seems to think that the anti-establishment overtones will invigorate the people. This remains to be seen \\

suggestions for a 'London visa' in the Evening Standard, which sounded quite off the wall, but at least it acknowledges that metropolitan areas feel differently about immigration to the rest, and that even if more border controls are brought in, we should think about ways to help our successful firms employ from the pool of talent around Europe and beyond.

Jeremy Corbyn has been leader of the party for over a year, and only now has he come up with a strategy. Well, better late than never. It seems like a reaction to the threat posed to him by Paul Nuttall, new leader of UKIP, who has his eyes on Labour's Northern and Midlands heartlands. If his tenure kicks Corbyn into action, maybe it will be a good thing for all of us.



FREEZE PEACH

C O M M E N T ...felix

Southern Rail need to get their shit together



Tessa Davey just wants to be able to commute for less than five hours a day

\\ I'm certainly more competent and my main experience is playing Railroad Tycoon \\

There were train strikes this week, you might have heard. No, not the tube strikes, they happen like once a year; you can take a bus for a day, get over yourself, no one cares. I'm talking about Southern Rail, whose staff are on strike for three days this week, causing a genuine total shutdown of all services.



\\ Southern Rail is a shit company with apparently zero management structure, who couldn't organise a piss up in a brewery \\

300,000 people, including me, commute into Victoria each morning using Southern Rail, which, unsurprisingly, runs to the south of London, and provides essentially the only travel links into central London. You'd think that preventing – and I really do mean preventing – that many people from getting to work would make a point, job done, boom. But no, these three days are three out of at least six days without any service this month, on top of many last year. The train drivers have been on a permanent overtime

strike since December, and the conductors have been striking periodically, meaning that even when the trains are running, they're subject to huge delays, cancellations, and general unreliability. Although the strikes can hardly take all the blame for this: Southern were failing to provide the trains that they promised long before the staff stopped showing up to work.

Due to my general state of poverty as a past-the-end-of-funding PhD student, I'm currently living in Croydon. It should take me an hour to get to college, not much worse than living in Woodward, so not a problem. But of course, this assumes that Southern do their jobs. Last week, when there were no strikes, I spent a total of eighteen hours commuting over four days. Five hours a day travelling – and by that I mean largely waiting at freezing cold stations for a train that won't be cancelled at the last minute – is exhausting, and a waste of my time.

There are alternatives, sure. It should still be

possible to get into London, it might take a little longer. Which is fine, in principle, but in practice the additional pressure on alternative services such as trams and tubes is so great that the stations offering these shut down completely as a safety precaution. I could take five buses, taking around four hours if it goes smoothly, then have to immediately turn around and start back home as soon as I get into college. These aren't sustainable options.

I understand why the staff are striking. I don't really blame them, it's shit for them too. I've read enough think-pieces in the Guardian, I know that they're miserable, and it's all for our safety, and they're being forced to work outside their contracts and aren't being compensated. Southern is a shit company with apparently zero

\\ There comes a point where it is not acceptable to inconvenience such a vast number of people because they do not like the conditions of their job \\

management structure, who couldn't organise a piss up in a brewery, let alone the timely passage of hundreds of thousands of people, or, if that's too much to expect, at the very least update the expected arrival times at the stations. They say that they're losing money, and can't afford to employ the number of staff that they need to maintain their timetable. They say that being a train company means running at a loss. Well tell that to every other rail company operating on National Rail tracks, coming in and out of National Rail managed stations. They're all managing to keep trains running and turn a profit – maybe ask them for advice.

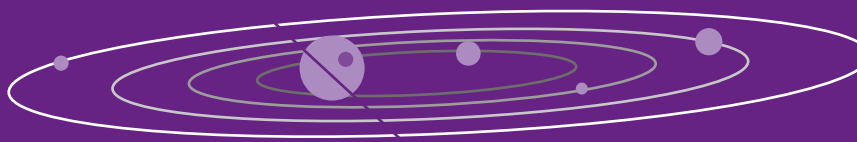
Or if you're really running at that much of an unsustainable loss, give it up and hand back over to the government so then at least someone accountable is in charge.

But enough is enough. This is not public sector. Southern is a private company and there comes a point where it is not acceptable to inconvenience such a vast number of people because they do not like the conditions of their job. Of course, Southern, in releasing a timetable and taking government transport grants, has a responsibility to its passengers, particularly the ones who spend a fortune on season tickets. As much as the staff who choose to

stay with Southern need to accept that their roles may change slightly, Southern needs to get its act together and do whatever it takes to provide the service it promises, or else hand over the reins to Sadiq Khan or someone who'll do the job properly. Or me, even. I'm certainly more competent and my main experience is playing Railroad Tycoon.

I hate Southern Rail as a company much more than I resent the staff that work for them on the ground. They're taking so much abuse from angry delayed passengers every single day, and they're taking it with better humour than they could possibly be asked to. Certainly these strikes have brought out a sense of community amongst fellow sufferers, and we all like the excuse to write sassy tweets. But we're bored now. The torture that commuters are facing is completely disproportionate to the point that the unions are trying to make, and the damage that this mess is causing to the economy is obscene.





Five-a-day to keep pathogens at bay

Rachel Gillepsie investigates why a low fibre diet can cause a myriad of health problems

A high-fibre diet protects against bowel infection, thanks to bacteria that normally live in the human gut.

Remember mum and dad harking on at you to eat your fruit and veg? Although perhaps nothing more than well-intentioned nagging at the time, new research has shed light on a novel scientific reason for shovelling in that daily fibre.

In an article recently published in *Cell*, an international team of researchers used a mouse model to investigate the impact of dietary fibre deprivation on resident gut microbes and the consequences for the health of the digestive system.

Their findings were a little disconcerting. As it turns out, when starving, our suddenly not-so-friendly gut bacteria feed instead on the natural mucus layer lining the gut wall, eroding it to the point that pathogenic bacteria can invade and instigate disease.

The intestinal mucus layer forms a critical first line of defence against infection by potentially harmful microbes. Mucus also serves as an alternative nutrient source for resident bacterial communities, which rely primarily on dietary carbohydrates, especially fibre, for energy.

The modern diet of western nations is inherently lacking in fibre, a deficit which has been linked to increased incidence of inflammatory diseases including asthma, allergies and irritable bowel disease (IBD).

The team of scientists led by Eric Martens at the University of Michigan Medical School, together with his former post-doctoral fellow Mahesh Desai, developed a novel mouse model which lacked

\\ The lesson we're learning from studying the interaction of fibre, gut microbes and the intestinal barrier system is if you don't feed them, they can eat you \\

any microbes of its own, but contained a transplanted microbiota comprising 14 selected species of human gut bacteria. Between them, these species were capable of producing ~1700 carbohydrate-digesting enzymes, similar to the number secreted by the 500 – 1000 species contained in a typical human gut.

It was found that when the mice were subjected to a diet regime which was deficient in complex plant fibre, the composition of the gut microbiota shifted from containing largely fibre-digesting bacteria, to one abundant in mucus-degrading species – a trend that has also been observed in IBD patients.

Notably, fluctuations occurred extremely rapidly, mirroring the daily alternations between fibre-rich and fibre-free diets.

"The lesson we're learning from studying the interaction of fibre, gut microbes and the intestinal barrier system is that if you don't feed them, they can eat you," said Martens. And indeed, as the number of mucus-digesting gut bacteria increased, thinning of the mucus layer was seen in the colons of fibre-starved mice.

Interestingly, when mice were fed prebiotics – purified, soluble carbohydrates commercially purported to stimulate the growth of



\\ Bounmy C

'friendly' gut bacteria – the same changes in microbiota profile and mucus thickness were observed as in mice on the fibre-free diet. Let's hope buyers kept their receipts.

Colonisation of the human gut by pathogenic bacteria – for instance, *E. coli*, a common culprit of food poisoning – causes severe diarrhoeal disease, amounting to substantial health-care costs. In order to access the gut wall and exert pathogenic effects, these bacteria must first get through the gut mucus layer.

Hence unsurprisingly, when infected with *C. rodentium*, the rodent equivalent of human *E. coli*, mice on the low-fibre regime were ~10-fold more susceptible to colonisation than those fed a fibre-rich diet. This higher colonisation was accompanied by severe inflammation of the colon, with over half of the mice losing at least 20% of their original body weight.

Whilst the health benefits of dietary fibre have long been recognised, the mechanisms linking fibre deficiency to disease risk have, until now, remained elusive.

The findings of Martens and his team have underscored how even subtle changes in the balance of our resident

microbial species can strongly influence host-microbiota interactions and our vulnerability to diverse diseases. These include not only enteric infections but also metabolic syndromes, inflammatory conditions, cancer, and even Parkinson's disease.

Perhaps most alarming about these findings is the speed at which, with externally applied forces (e.g. diet or antibiotics) we can unknowingly effect major behavioural alterations in our microbial control hubs. And not always for the better.

However, on the upside of this, the malleability of our gut residents opens the door to new methods by which we can manipulate the microbiota to improve human health and even treat disease. So far, experimental microbiota-orientated therapies have centred on faecal microbiota transplant (FMT; yep, it's what it says on the tin) – a technique which involves considerable procedural burden.

Future experiments by Martens and Desai will explore the prospect of using dietary therapeutics as a simpler alternative to FMT. Until then, should we follow the example set by Blue Zones and move towards a more plant-based diet?

The Secret to Immortality



\\ Shane Anderson

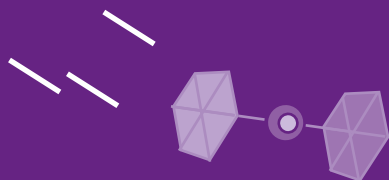
Fact: There is a jellyfish that can live forever. *Turritopsis dohrnii*, a small blob floating in the sea off Japan, has been classified as the world's only immortal organism, since it can develop to adulthood, reproduce and then go backwards in time to an earlier stage in its life cycle and start the whole process again.

The trick up its sleeve is a process called transdifferentiation. When a human cell becomes highly specialised (or 'differentiated'), it acquires useful properties but cannot go back, nor become any other type of cell. For example, a skin cell can't change its mind and decide to become a stem cell or a heart cell.

However, the immortal jellyfish has cells that are not bound by this restriction, so cells in the body of an old, injured or stressed adult can revert back to stem cells. These stem cells can then develop to produce entirely new adults, effectively allowing the jellyfish to cheat death.

Call it regeneration rather than transdifferentiation and suddenly the idea of Dr Who doesn't seem so far fetched.

Another one of Mr. Aran Shaunak's Little Bites of Science



Artificial Intelligence | fears and future

Lizzie Riach summarises a talk in the Royal Society's series 'Science Matters' on the direction of where **artificial intelligence** is heading, and why there's no need to be **scared** of it taking over the world...yet.

Last Wednesday I attended a talk comprised of five leading experts in the fields of machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI), mediated by the calming voice of Brian Cox. It was an enlightening evening. I hadn't really thought too much about AI, but what struck me was how much of what I did know was based on fiction films. What soon became apparent was that, obviously, we were no where near the likes of the humanoid robot seen in *Ex Machina*, a film for which one of the panellists, Murray Shanahan, was the scientific advisor. I mean, sure, a machine had beaten the number one Go player in the world, the last strategy game where humans, until now, could not be beaten. But this specific machine was built specifically for playing Go. It had no other functions outside the realm of game-play – it certainly wasn't going to take over the world.

The first question was: what exactly is the difference between machine learning and AI? The general consensus was that machine learning has a narrow function within the spectrum of AI. Machine learning is when an algorithm is given to a computer, allowing it to use data to learn its own solutions. This is becoming extremely widespread, it's used by Facebook to tag photos

**\\ Machine learning will be extremely widespread in the future, working behind the scenes in a range of roles **

using facial recognition – the more photos you tag of a person, the more data the algorithm gains to what this person looks like. Similarly, Siri uses voice recognition to understand commands. These algorithms decide what you may like on Netflix or Spotify, and you also may notice that adverts on Facebook tend to be customised to your likes, searches, and events. In my case, UV rave make

**\\ Using drones for photography and delivery are obvious applications, we should be thinking outside the box **

up ads haunt my newsfeed – perhaps a hint that I should stop clicking 'attending' to RA events, and actually get on with my Masters. The point is, machine learning is constantly becoming an integrated way to advertise, as well as becoming a basic interface for people and devices. The Amazon Echo and Alexa Voice service were among the biggest Christmas bestsellers, due to their voice recognition technology.

This can also be employed in healthcare. Identifying a cancer cell is one example. A machine, at first, could scan an image of healthy cells and cancer cells. With no data on either, the machine would simply guess which one is cancerous. After a doctor verifies which one is which, this data will be logged. Thousands of choices later, the machine will have found patterns based on why certain cells look cancerous, and in time may make more concise

diagnoses than humans. So this is machine learning, a fairly narrow part of AI, but one that has garnered the most attention in the past few years. AI uses machine learning, integrating it into a more general framework to become 'intelligent' by doing 'the right thing at the right moment' in an ever-changing world.

But how do we keep track of what exactly AI is learning or doing? Even the experts confessed that a lot of the time, the most complex and powerful computers used for machine learning give them next to no information on how they are doing it. This is because within their 'black boxes', inspired by the neural networks of our own brains, the algorithms get too complex to process. However, the scientists reiterated that the very architecture of these machines limit them to undertake the tasks given to them.

So what about the future? Predictions all pointed to machine learning becoming extremely widespread, being present behind the scenes, especially in healthcare to helping diagnose and treat patients, as well as public services – looking at houses most at risk of fire or youths most at risk from abuse. Self-driving cars will be everywhere, and buildings designed by machines to utilise minimal cost for maximum strength will prove extremely helpful to engineers and architects. Crime patterns, financial predictions, pharmaceutical drug synthesis, and genetic fingerprinting could all be aided by AI. Speech interface between humans and devices will be more equipped for handling complex speech and questions. "So which jobs are 'tech-proof'?" a



concerned audience member asked. Speakers stressed that although some jobs may be made redundant when AI takes over, for others, it will be there to do menial boring jobs, giving us more time to do the fun and creative ones. Jobs that are the 'most safe' were apparently those that retain the need for manual dexterity, such as a plumber or electrician, care-givers, as well as those in the creative or entertainment sectors.

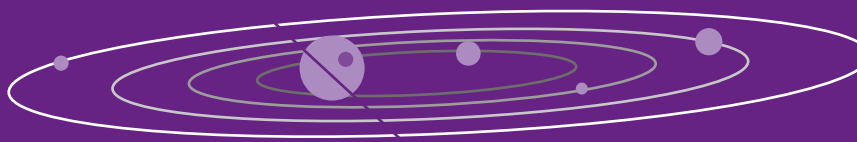
Our very own Director of the Aerial Robotics Laboratory, Dr. Mirko Kovac, graced the stage at this point to talk about where drone technology could be heading in the future. He stated that using drones for photography and delivery were obvious applications, and that we should be thinking more creatively about their wider uses. His bio-inspired ideas centred around the 'Build Drone', which can attach

itself to pillars by building 'webs' when they're running out of power to fly. Once attached, they can recharge and sense its surrounding environment, similar to spiders waiting for prey in their webs. By drawing inspiration from animal behaviours, Dr. Kovac and his laboratory have found a way to allow their drones to act autonomously.

This talk cleared up my own unfounded prejudices against AI, and opened up the possibilities it may hold in the future. Despite my amazement though, I couldn't help but feel AI may begin to know our habits and living patterns better than we do. Who will have access to this information? The biggest global tech companies are only going to grow in power with this technology, I just hope it's in a positive direction.

**\\ Although some jobs may be made redundant, for others AI may allow more time to do creative and fun jobs by doing the menial tasks for us **





It's a kind of magic | psychedelic mushroom trip soothes depression in terminally ill patients

Rachel Gillespie discusses the potential applications of psychedelic drugs for treating anxiety and depression

It was like a space shuttle launch...that gives way to the weightlessness and majesty of space..." These are the words of Patrick Mettes, a participant in a recent clinical trial looking into the effects of psilocybin – the active component of aptly named 'magic' mushrooms – on depression and anxiety in cancer.

The findings of this study, conducted at New York University, are published in the *Journal of Psychopharmacology*, side-by-side with those of a similar trial from John Hopkins University. The results from the two groups were remarkably similar, and showed that a single high dose of psilocybin was successful in lifting anxiety and depression in patients with advanced cancer for six months or longer.

Psilocybin is a hallucinogenic compound that, similar to the related recreational drug LSD, acts on serotonin receptors in regions of the brain responsible for non-verbal imagery and emotion. Overall, this produces a dream-like state lasting up to eight hours, which users often describe as allowing them to break free from negativity and intransigence.

The majority of participants in the high-dose group reported having "profoundly

meaningful and spiritual experiences" during the treatment session, which relieved their despair and caused them to re-evaluate life and death, ultimately leading to a lasting improvement in the quality of their lives.

Research on the medical utility of hallucinogens like psilocybin actually began in

patients develop some form of depression or anxiety, which can in turn lead to reduced treatment adherence, prolonged hospitalization and early death. Currently, such syndromes are treated with anti-depressants and/or psychological approaches, with limited efficacy.

Both US studies involved



\\ Stefan Böhm Fotografie

the 1950s and by 1965, over 2000 papers had recorded positive results for treating patients with a range of psychiatric disorders from depression to addiction, with no serious adverse effects. However, as recreational misuse increased among hipster youths of the sixties counter-culture, governments across the globe issued a moratorium on research, eventually banning psilocybin use altogether. Whilst in the UK, psilocybin remains a Class A illegal drug, the recent waiving of prohibition laws for medical studies has led to a resurgence of scientific interest over the past decade.

An estimated 40% of cancer

larger patient groups than previous psilocybin trials (29 and 51 participants at NYU and JHU respectively) and used a randomized double-blind placebo-controlled approach – the "Gold Standard" of intervention-based studies. And the findings are pretty conclusive – the single psilocybin dose led to an immediate reduction in clinician-scored depression and anxiety, with long-term improvements in life meaning and optimism reported by 80% of patients. The therapeutic effect was closely tied with the transcendent nature of patients' experiences.

Yet these results are not dissimilar to those of earlier

\\ It could be more effective at treating serious psychiatric diseases than traditional pharmaceutical approaches and without having to take a medication every day\\

studies by Professor Roland Griffiths (who led the JHU team) using healthy volunteers, in which psilocybin induced enduring positive changes in life outlook and even personality, suggesting that psychedelic treatment could be applicable to a variety of disorders. Ongoing research by Griffiths is analysing the efficacy of psilocybin for alleviating nicotine addiction, whilst the therapeutic potential of other psychedelics, including MDMA and LSD, is also under investigation.

The results from the two groups were published with no less than ten commentaries from lead scientists in the fields of psychiatry and palliative care, who all heavily back further research. "These findings, the most profound to date in the medical use of psilocybin, indicate it could be more effective at treating serious psychiatric diseases than traditional pharmaceutical approaches, and without having to take a medication every day", said George Greer, director of the Heffer Research Institute, which funded the trials.

So might our archaic drug policies finally undergo an overhaul in the name

of scientific progress? It's unlikely. Despite the ever-growing phenomenon of drug misuse in modern society, both the public and governments remain suspicious of psychedelic research. The popular image of psychedelics is tarnished not only by their association with today's 'rave' scene, but by a nefarious past; classical hallucinogens were studied historically by the US military for use as incapacitating agents, and by the CIA as interrogation devices. Furthermore, any research exploring alternative states of consciousness faces opposition from within psychiatry itself, with such experiments often branded as 'mysticism'.

Hence in order to move forward, psychedelic research must tread carefully. Although hallucinogens are considered non-addictive and relatively safe physiologically, their administration does involve certain psychological risks, and requires a highly controlled clinical setting, supervised by professional observers. Whether the significant time and cost of this support is an investment that our already strained NHS can afford remains questionable. But as the nation faces an unprecedented epidemic of mental illness and dire shortcomings in available treatments options, a thorough and dispassionate consideration of medical psychedelics, uninfluenced by social and political pressures, may just be a public health imperative.

\\ The treatment session relieved the patients' despair and caused them to re-evaluate life and death \\



La La Land



\\ Allstar/Lionsgate



\\ Dale Robinette/AP



Tom Stephens

The highly anticipated **modern day musical** which draws inspiration from the **old classics** is as amazing as the hype has made it out to be.

It turns out Ryan Gosling is as roguishly charming and wonderful in person as we all hoped he would be. I was lucky enough to see *La La Land* for the first time at a London Film Festival screening, after which he appeared to a hurricane of cheers and thrown roses/knickers for a Q&A. When asked about

the challenges he had faced singing and dancing for the film, he cracked that the real challenge was having his director Damien Chazelle constantly walking around the set in baggy old-timey gangster trousers, clown shoes, and an oversized monocle that he insisted on wearing. What. A. Dreamboat.

At the same Q&A, Chazelle (who also wrote the film) recounted the time he mentioned to his producer – before beginning the process of making his 2014 feature *Whiplash* – that he had always had the dream of filming a love letter to the golden years of Hollywood in the form of an original romantic musical. It's not hard to believe that a vivid expression of alarm came over the producer's face, or that the reply Chazelle received was "that's just about every taboo word you can say to a producer"; you can tell when you watch *La La Land* that it's a miracle you're watching it at all. With lengthily played-out fantasy sequences, a tap dance number, and several extended analyses of the joys of jazz, for Christ's sake, releasing a movie like this in 2016 certainly must have taken some guts – or, rather more likely, a hell of a lot of heart.

It tells the story of Mia (Emma Stone), Sebastian (Gosling) and – well, actually, nobody else. Minor players from the two Los Angeles-based dreamers' separate lives may flicker into appearance for a brief spell, but *La La Land* is very much The Stone & Gosling Show. Thank god then, that what we have here is a pair of the best performances either of these actors have ever given, and that their chemistry has never been stronger than it is in this film – it appears their crushingly lifeless work in 2013's *Gangster Squad* was only a fluke. When they are working in tandem, whether in conversation, song, or movement, they click so tightly that you wonder if you're watching two real humans or two beautiful clockwork contraptions. They're strikingly reminiscent of some of the great old-time silver screen couples like Ginger Rogers & Fred Astaire. And yet they excel individually too: Ryan Gosling brings every Ryan Gosling-ism in the book to his performance, and yet you always believe that the man you are watching is indeed jazz enthusiast Seb Wilder

(not least thanks to a strong grasp of jazz piano stylings and a startling baritone-bass singing voice, both of which he appears to have pulled out of thin air). But of the two stars, Stone shines the brightest. As we watch her struggle through failed audition after failed audition, and make coffee after coffee just to get by, her every action, every facial expression, every note carried by her beautiful earnest voice is an utter charm to behold, and she is deserving of every award that will undoubtedly be flung her way this year.

While Stone and Gosling prove proficient as musical theatre performers, their strength as actors is what is relied on most in *La La Land*. This feels very much intentional. One of the strongest aspects of this film is that director Chazelle understands what made classic Hollywood musicals so great; not an endless barraged of forced show-tunes (there are only 7 pieces that are sung by the cast in the film, and one of them is a reprise), but perfectly-timed transitions into that heightened version of reality that only a musical can conjure, signifying those moments in which, as Chazelle put it, "everything just comes together". These are moments like a playfully flirty conversation on a hilltop overlooking Hollywood that becomes a tap-danced duet, a poignant

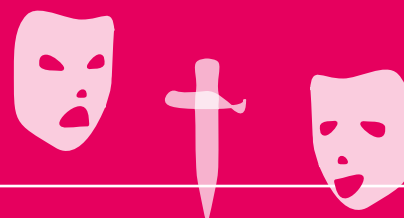
\\ Chazelle understands what made classic Hollywood musicals so great \\

reflection on a new-found love set to the beautiful yet tantalisingly short tune *City of Stars* (perhaps the film's best number), and the same tune's reprise which is reworked into a duet capturing Mia and Seb's relationship at its most serene and intimate. The other great positive of this technique is that in moments

\\ It tackles with elegance, eloquence, and bold honesty the act of chasing a dream \\

when a song is not necessary, it does not appear; some of the story's most crucial points take place in a spoken scene, not in song, but are certainly no less powerful for it. There is a scene in which a quiet dinner descends into an argument which, as well as being a frontrunner for the film's best moment, is in all honesty one of the best-written and best-acted scenes I have ever watched in a musical, onstage or onscreen; Chazelle proves that he has not let his razor-sharp skill for dialogue that he displayed in *Whiplash* be blunted by the grander aims of this project.

The immense, upbeat dance number that opens the film is something of a fake-out; while I suppose it's very much necessary to prepare the audience for the fact that what they're about to watch is a musical, the film that follows is so much more layered and intelligent than you expect following such a full-throated show-tune (the song's lyrics perfectly fit the themes of the film, but we only learn that after we have seen it play out). *La La Land* is not just for lovers of musicals, but for lovers of movies. It tackles with elegance, eloquence, and bold honesty the act of chasing a dream, whether that dream be acting or opening a jazz club, and the sacrifices that must be made to achieve it. After watching it, I left the theatre both heartbroken and blissfully happy. Chazelle reportedly says that it took six years of people saying "no" to him to get *La La Land* into production. Seeing the completed version of his film, the fruit of his perseverance, must have been worth every second of the wait.



A Monster Calls



Storytelling without bite \ YouTube/Focus Features



Storytellers are a threat," wrote Chinua Achebe, "they threaten all champions of control, usurpers of the right-to-freedom of the human spirit". It is this power, that of a simple story well-told, that director J. A. Bayona is trying to tap with his latest feature *A Monster Calls*, an adaptation of Patrick Ness' fantasy novel. But the simplest of stories are the ones the most difficult to tell, and unfortunately – despite a strong cast and proficient visuals – *A Monster Calls* fails to deliver.

The film centres around Conor O'Malley (Lewis MacDougall), a bullied schoolboy whose mother (Felicity Jones) is dying of terminal cancer. During her deterioration, Conor needs to deal with both his estranged father (Toby Kebbell), and his domineering grandmother (Sigourney Weaver). Luckily, he has the help of a giant tree-monster, voiced with gravelly gravitas by Liam Neeson, who tells Conor stories that are more twisted

and knotty than those in a traditional story-book. The *Monster* creates a visually stunning world – aided by the art team behind *Pan's Labyrinth* – where princes are not always good, and wicked grandmothers can be acting with pure intentions.

However, unlike *Pan's Labyrinth*, which was unafraid of handling mature topics with grace, *A Monster Calls* by and large avoids tackling the more difficult themes that are so sorely needed in coming-of-age films. A parent with cancer might seem like a grown-up enough proposition, but there is never any sense of menace or danger in the film, making it seem emotionally blunted. *A Monster Calls* plays the same sentimental note throughout, at times teetering over into mawkishness.

A Monster Calls is also marked by a number of incongruities in its reference points and unevenness in tone. With its perennial gloomy weather and suburban drear, Bayona is trying to hit thematic targets that range from British coming-of-age

flicks to kitchen-sink drama, but it adds up to an uncanny environment. Compared to the intricate pop-culture layers contained in, say, the Duffer Brothers' *Stranger Things*, *A Monster Calls* is constantly missing the mark in its portrayal of suburban English youth in revolt.

There are stand-out parts of the film: Sigourney Weaver is brilliant as the brittle, distant grandmother, trying desperately to contain the pain of a parent watching their child die before their eyes; and Lewis MacDougall is certainly one to watch out for – his Conor is able to ricochet effortlessly and naturally from happiness to despair to rage. The watercolour sequences – which appear too infrequently – mine a rich heritage of British cultural iconography, and are gorgeous indications of what the film could have been. Ultimately, while *A Monster Calls* may contain an emotional punch, it misses its mark too often, leaving us with only a sense of missed opportunity.

Fred Fyles

Spring term picks | felix's film editors let you



\ Cloud Eight Films

T2 Trainspotting – Released 27th January

If you've seen Danny Boyle's masterpiece *Trainspotting* (1996), this is a no-brainer. If you haven't then go watch it. *Trainspotting* (1996) followed the lives of Mark (Ewan McGregor) and his circle of drug addicts amidst the urban poverty in Edinburgh. It showcased the life, culture and the morals of the people living in that subculture. A highly stylised film receiving widespread critical acclaim, it could

be said it was this film that catapulted Danny Boyle into the main circles. *T2 Trainspotting* is the sequel to that sensation. *T2* follows Mark and his gang 20 years down the line from the 1996 classic. After being left with promises of living a 'stable, traditional life' from the former heroin addict, the film is a ticking time bomb and it explodes later this January.

Christine tells the harrowing story of Christine Chubbuck, a Florida news anchor who killed herself live on air in 1974. Rebecca Hall takes on the titular character in a powerhouse performance that mines the depths of Chubbuck's self-destructive tendencies; due to its release date, *Christine* missed out on eligibility for BAFTAs, but I'm hoping that Hall's performance is recognised by the American Academy come Oscars season. Watching her Chubbuck is like watching a volcano that's about to erupt, with all the

feelings bubbling beneath the surface. Director Antonio Campos perfectly creates the environs of sunny Florida, which contrasts with Chubbuck's increasing downward spiral; he handles the sensitive material delicately, without ever tipping over into exploitation. *Christine* is a profound, sensitive exploration of the depths some people are driven to by their mental health problems, painting a picture that is fair and just, but never shies away from darker issues.

\ Sundance





Following on from the messy hedonism of *The Wolf of Wall Street* – a three hour orgy of casual violence, over-sexualisation, and easy profanity – it is clear that Martin Scorsese is searching for a kind of ‘mea culpa’ with *Silence*, a mix of asceticism, endurance, and proselytism. It’s a hard pill to swallow.

Based on a Shusaku Endo novel, *Silence* follows the plight of two Portuguese priests – Father Rodrigues (Andrew Garfield) and Father Garupe (a little-used Adam Driver) – who journey to Japan in search of their mentor, Father Ferreira (Liam Neeson).

Ferreira, as we learn at the beginning of the film, was made to endure brutal tortures at the hands of the Japanese, and has since (it is rumoured) renounced God. He performs this apostasy – a word that recurs throughout the film – by stepping on a small image of Jesus; it’s a miniscule but meaningful act, and the Japanese converts who refuse to do so are put to

death.

Garupe and Rodrigues are accompanied to Japan by Kichijiro (Yosuke Kubozuka – a highlight of the film), who has already suffered physical and psychological torture at the hands of the government. What follows is a three-hour slog through the mountain villages of Western Japan, which progresses at such a slow pace, it’s like wading through a biblical flood of treacle. This isn’t helped by the bizarre decision to get Driver and Garfield to put on unplaceable, quasi-European accents, which veer all over the place, and make their acting seem strained. For Driver, the accent he puts on is like a thick lacquer that is nevertheless unable to hide the inflections of his idiosyncratic voice. For Garfield, meanwhile, the accent is more sure, but still off-putting, and not helped by the constant voiceovers he provides – for a film called *Silence*, there sure is a lot of unnecessary talking going on.

The film is at its most dynamic towards the last hour, when Rodrigues

(Garupe has since left the scene) encounters his sparing partner, the Inquisitor (played brilliantly by Issey Ogata), and they debate on the reasons for the Christian mission to Japan. It is in these lucid, enlightening moments, shot through with literary imagery – Japan is a swamp, the potential colonisers are foreign, intrusive concubines – that the near-monologue Garfield is forced to recite is revealed for what it truly is: a collection of religious-sounding platitudes, that ultimately belie any real meaning.

Throughout *Silence*, Scorsese documents with increasing brutality the torture used against Christians: from slowly dribbling scalding water down their bare torsos, to hanging them upside-down, a slit in their neck bleeding them drop by drop. It seems Scorsese wished to inflict similar violences on his audience: *Silence* is an over-wrought, un-nuanced work of film, which more than wears out its welcome. Pure (cinematic) torture.

Fred Fyles

Silence



A strained, off-putting work \\ Paramount



know their top films to look out for

20th Century Women – Released 10th February

Following his late breakout film *Beginners*, a semi-autobiographical film that dealt with his father coming out as gay in his mid-70s, Mike Mills returns for his long-awaited follow-up, *20th Century Women*. Again, Mills turns to his own life for inspiration, looking towards the strength of his mother and sisters when he was growing up. The film centres on Jamie (Lucas Jade Zimmerman), who is being raised in 1970s California by single-mother Dorothea

(Annette Bening). Dorothea seeks out the help of Abbie (Greta Gerwig), a young punk, and Julie (Elle Fanning), one of Jamie’s peers, to help raise him right. *20th Century Women* bills itself as ‘a collective portrait of the women who became our mothers,’ and while some might balk at such an epithet, Mills manages to remain on the right side of sentimentality.



\\ Film Society of Lincoln Center

Elle – Released 10th March

From receiving a seven minute standing ovation at Cannes and making the top films of 2016 list of a numerous critics and film magazines, *Elle* is a film that caused a huge impact in the festival circuit and is predicted to do the same when released later this March. Following a successful career orientated woman who after being raped begins to suspect all the men in her life, who both

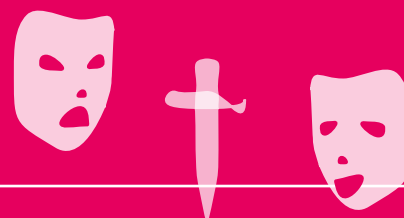
adore and resent her. Isabelle Huppert praised for her role, being called ‘the best living actor’, plays a woman who refuses to be the victim and instead uses her situation to her advantage. *Elle* explores the mindset of a modern independent woman and those that surround her – is she someone to be hated and pitied, or someone to be feared?



\\ SBS Production

By Fred Fyles
& Meryl Anil





This term in Arts



Terrains of the Body | Photography from the National Museum of Women in the Arts

Where? – Whitechapel Gallery
When? – 18th Jan-16th April 2017
How Much? – Free

There's no shortage of the female form in art, from medieval Madonnas to Renaissance goddesses, to Anish Kapoor's *Queen's vagina* on the ground of the Versailles, but in these works womanhood is filtered through the lens of the male gaze. In the art world, women are often portrayed as no more than male fantasies, as Margaret Atwood writes in *The Robber Bride*, the experience of navigating this world can be a discombobulating experience: "you are a woman with a man inside watching a woman. You are your own voyeur." In their haunting collage piece *Do Women Have to Be Naked to Get into the Met*, Museum the Guerrilla Girls state that whilst 85% of the nudes in the modern art section in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York are female, only 5% are by female artists. This new exhibition staged by the Whitechapel Gallery and The National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington is an all-female show exploring womanhood through the mediums of video and photography. The 17 contemporary artists featured include Marina Abramovic, Anna Gaskell, and Rineke Dijkstra. Their work will present the 'female body as a vital medium for storytelling, expressing identity and reflecting individual and collective experience'.

Indira Malik gives her tips for a term full of culture

It's safe to say that 2016 wasn't kind to the world of culture. In a year of blow after blow to the pantheon of iconic cultural stars, the passing of two more bright lights – Carrie Fisher and her mother Debbie Reynolds – left the arts world reeling once more. 2017 brings with it a new hope that we've left the curse of the past year behind us – at least in the world of art, dance, and theatre (the political climate of course is quite another matter). A brand new year means brand new shows and exhibitions to look forward to; in less than a week the first tickets for *Hamilton* will be put on sale, just as the cast of Lin Manuel Miranda's other great musical *In the Heights* take their final bows in the West End. *Hamilton* will land in London in October, but before that there's lots, lots more to get excited about, here are our 3 top picks for this term...



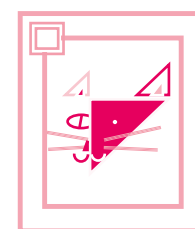
Hamlet

Where? – Almeida Theatre
When? – 17th February-8th April 2017
How Much? – from £10

London is rarely without a performance of *Hamlet* on one of its stages. Almeida's staging features Andrew Scott (of *Moriarty* fame) in his first performance in the role. Director Robert Icke is known for his startling updates on classic works. His last work at the Almeida was Chekov's *Uncle Vanya* whose star, Jessica Findlay Brown, returns in his *Hamlet* as Ophelia. Icke's plays skewer audience perceptions and expectations and challenge them to consider seminal works of literature as starkly modern and relevant commentaries. When he staged 1984 at the Almeida in 2014 in our modern world of constant surveillance a few years ago, a couple of audience members fainted during the torture scenes, though the stage was dark and nothing was shown. In an interview with *The Financial Times* earlier last year, he spoke of what compels him to reinvent classics to inject them with such vital and present energy, in *Hamlet* Icke wants to ask "to sit there in 1599 and watch this play that speaks directly to your anxiety: what does that feel like?"

Ballet Black

Where? – Barbican
When? – 2nd-3rd March 2-17
How Much? – from £16



A single trip to any of the ballet productions being staged in London every day can make it abundantly clear how great the lack of diversity is in the ballet world. Why this should be so has its roots in economic inequality, lack of representation and the ever-present spectre of entrenched racism. In March, the Barbican will be hosting *Ballet Black*, a small company for international dancers of black and Asian descent for the second time. Since its founding in 2001, the troupe has been critically acclaimed, winning the 2012 Critics' Circle National Dance Award for Best Independent Company. Led by artistic director Cassa Pancho, the classically trained troupe have been roundly lauded for their virtuoso performances of original choreography. Their second Barbican show will once again be a triple bill of original performances each with a different choreographer. Martin Lawrance and Michael Corder will create edgy, abstract performances to sumptuous orchestral music, while in the third, South Bank Sky Arts Award-winner Annabelle Lopez Ochoa adapts *Little Red Riding Hood* as a surprising, chilling, feminist ballet.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Phoenix is our creative outlet dedicated to showcasing the artistic and literary talents of our student body.

Submissions are now open for 2017

We are looking for

PHOTOGRAPHY

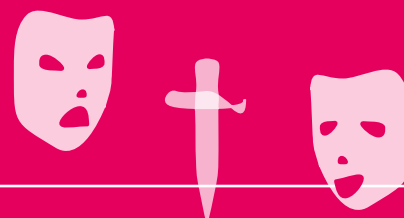
POETRY

ART

PROSE

To submit email your work to phoenix@ic.ac.uk

Deadline | 28 February 2017



Trivial Pursuits | Sherlock



Black is everyone's colour \\ BBC



Anurag Deshpande

Sherlock's always hotly anticipated new years debut proved disappointing this year. A lukewarm mystery made for boring watching. So why couldn't TV's darling detective find his footing this year?

After last year's somewhat disappointing bait and switch, *Sherlock* has finally returned with a full season this holiday period. *The Six Thatchers* picks up immediately where we left off at the end of the previous episode, with the government leaping into action over Moriarty's seeming return. The episode,

**\\ Credit where credit is due, all the performances are excellent as ever **

however, quickly distances itself from this plot line, as if the writers had realised that they'd backed themselves into a corner by needing to constantly raise the stakes.

We start with a helpful montage showing the passage of time that quickly establishes one of the recurring themes of this episode; padding. John and Mary become parents, and Sherlock continues solving cases while waiting for Moriarty to play his hand. Thankfully, this parade of banality is brought to an end relatively quickly, as the main case of the episode quickly catches our protagonist's attention.

Now, credit where credit is due, all the performances are excellent as ever, and Cumberbatch and Freeman fall into familiar grooves comfortably. However, this introduces some issues of its own. Perhaps I'm just fatigued, but the charm of *Sherlock*'s quirks is fading, and seeing the same gags rinsed repeatedly grates slightly. It seems as if the characters have reached the peak of their development, and the only way the writers seem to have of shaking things up is resorting to cheap tricks and the reset button. It's a real shame, since there was potential for really introducing a new dynamic by making Watson a father. However, it seems to go nowhere in this episode.

The episode is overly action

heavy, and feels like an attempt at a made-for-TV Jason Bourne movie. The action sequences are egregious and, again, frequently feel like padding. The worst offender here is the frustratingly long sequence of Mary hopping around the world. Not much actually happens, plot-wise, through the course of the episode.

Fortunately, the humour is largely well executed in this episode. There's a dearth of jokes that got a laugh out of me, and the occasional extended moments of self-awareness and lamp-shading are much appreciated bouts of levity. The dialogue, however, is not always at its best and drags down the episode at points.

And what of the central mystery? Unfortunately, the mystery itself isn't that interesting, and major event that it sets up is just poorly thought out. Firstly, the amount of contrivances and coincidences stretches suspension of disbelief, even for an episode of *Sherlock*.

The misunderstanding at the core of the plot is obvious to see through, and it seems suspect that someone as close to Mary as the episode suggests would think she was the traitor based on a throwaway sentence. Additionally, while the final solution to the mystery is satisfactory, the lack of time spent developing the perpetrator's character means that it is

nowhere near as cathartic as it should be.

Finally, Mary's death comes completely out of nowhere, and does not feel at all earned. It makes for a poor surprise, since there is no foreshadowing or build-up, and squanders perfectly good storytelling opportunities. The family dynamics could have allowed the creators to explore a lot of territory that isn't traditionally explored in

**\\ The lack of time spent developing the perpetrator's character means that it is nowhere near as cathartic as it should be **

Sherlock Holmes stories.

At the very least, it was smart of creators Moffat and Gatiss to avoid blowing the Moriarty load straight away on this episode. It would have left little room for the stories to heat up as the series went on, and would have necessitated increasingly absurd plots to keep audiences interested. This episode, while not a complete disaster, was quite disappointing. While it leaves a bad taste in the viewers' mouth, I am hopeful that it won't be representative of the whole series.



Martin Freeman's really changed in a year \\ BBC



M I L L E N N I A L S ...

felix

Most anticipated games of 2017

It's a new year and a new term, most definitely filled with new lectures, problem sheets and coursework to stress over. Luckily, there's also a number of upcoming games to enjoy and procrastinate with. So without further ado, here are the games that should really be on your radar, as recommended by Saad Ahmed

Mass Effect: Andromeda

The *Mass Effect* series was iconic and well deserving of all its recognition. Its ending may have been polarising but it did not take away from the hours of rich game play and world building. It was a thrill to learn that another entry in the series was coming. Although not much is known about this particular game, the limited footage we've seen was slick and all the familiar mechanics we know and love - conversations, romances, and shooting things - are back in action. With a release date of 21st March, the hype level of fans is off the charts.



\\ Bioware

For Honour

With intense melee combat between knights, samurai, and even vikings, this game definitely sounds like it will be popular. This is all about sword duels in the midst of large battles, as players aim to anticipate enemy attacks, read their stances and properly strategize to land the killing blow. Other than this, there is said to be a single player campaign that is touted to be varied and engaging; if this game kicks off, Ubisoft will have another franchise to keep gamers hooked.



\\ Ubisoft

Yooka-Laylee

Made from one of the biggest kick starters of 2015, this colourful game looks to recreate the fun and glee of old N64 games. Along the duo of Yooka the chameleon and Laylee the bat, players will get to explore huge, breathtaking worlds, interact with a whole host of colourful characters and collect as many...well... collectibles as one possible can. A lighter entry in terms of feel and tone but one which promises a lot of fun.



\\ Playtonic Games

The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild

Arguably one of the most anticipated games on this list, the latest *Legend of Zelda* is going to be released on the Wii U and the new upcoming Switch. The trailers have given us a look into a new model with a truly beautiful landscape. Hyrule is now a complete open world where you can enter dungeons as you wish, weapons now degrade over time and you need to forage for food and items. Fans have been waiting for this game for well over a year and hopes are riding high on the latest of Link's adventures.



\\ Nintendo

Injustice 2

Another sequel (sensing a trend yet?) coming this year is Nether Realm's *Injustice 2*. *Injustice* was well known for pitting the heroes and villains of DC comics against each other. Compared to the first game, this one will allow players to earn and unlock upgrades to characters, giving this fighting game an RPG element to it. With the developer saying it will have the largest roster of any DC fighting game up until now, it will be interesting to see how this one fares.



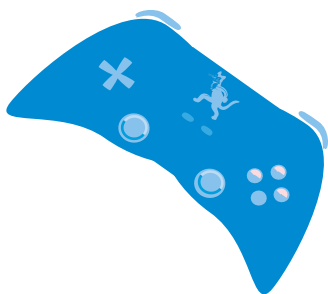
\\ NetherRealm Studios

Resident Evil 7: Biohazard

Resident Evil was a series whose focus changed with different instalments but the latest entry is set to bring back everything that defined the franchise in the first place. Exploring a creepy old mansion, this survival horror is expected to give players a constant feeling of dread and suspense. Because this is the first game of the series that will be in first person, the chilling scares are set to be all the more terrifying. This game is even fully playable in VR for those brave souls amongst us wanting the extra layer of tension.



\\ Capcom



There are plenty of other games on the horizons apart from our picks, with new entries also announced in the *Fallout*, *Assassins Creed* and *Uncharted* series. Regardless of what console you may have, there's definitely going to be something for everyone and 2017 looks to be a great year for gamers.



Breakfast, Hong Kong style



felix takes a brief trip to Hong Kong for an artery-clogging breakfast - best scrambled eggs, creamy white bread and gip milk tea

Christy Lam



some specks of 'black truffle' garnished on top. I was so hungry by then, I grabbed my dripping wet knife and fork off the damp napkin and dug in. Yes, I paid the extra £2 for the non-existent black truffle (the black specks were just burnt carbon bits), but the scrambled eggs were the best I've ever had. Creamy, velvety-smooth yet light - the cheap, spongy white bread soaking up the golden river of deliciousness. I washed down each and every mouthful with milk tea - smooth and just the right amount of gip (a Cantonese word for bitterness).

As I headed towards the forever pissed-off-looking lady at the till by the door, my

Plonk. It was the sound of a quarter-inch thick china cup hitting the glass-topped wooden table, as my milk tea lands before me just three seconds after the waiter took my order.

My mind snapped out from my fuzzy morning daydream of fluffy bunnies jumping over lush green grass back into full awareness of the reality. It was brunch time on a muggy Tuesday morning, but with a slight change of scene from the usual relaxed cafes in Shoreditch - I was sitting alone, next to strangers in a small, cramped room lit by bright, yellow lights. An oversized, gold piece of calligraphy, a gift from

a celebrity, was proudly displayed on one retro-looking, black-and-white tiled wall. Customers slurped their noodles, gulped down their tea, occasionally glancing up from their phones. Two waiters rushed around the tables, wiping down the tables after each customer, replacing the used cutlery with freshly washed ones, shouting orders to the sweating chefs in the open kitchen behind, dumping plates of breakfast food on tables and chatting in full-blown Cantonese. I was in Capital Café, a local café on a busy street in Hong Kong.

To be more specific, this café is a typical Cha-Chaan-Teng - a Hong Kong-style café. With that said, you can now ditch the stereotypical ideas of what a 'café' should be. Here, there is no overpriced coffee served in branded paper cups. Here, there is no good-looking baristas with suspected dyslexia. Here, there is no free Wi-Fi and no comfortable sofas with music blasting in the background. A Cha-Chaan-Teng is the place to fill your stomach with quick, affordable, truly Hong Kong-ese food. It is the place you'd go to when you finish work late at night, for an early morning breakfast or an afternoon tea at 15:15. It is the place where you eat surrounded by noise, and expect to be kicked out as soon as you've finished your meal. It is

the place where you witness a food culture that has formed through many years under British rule, a tradition that has survived through many generations, a well-loved cuisine that answers the true needs, tastes and lifestyle of working class Hong Kong-ese people.

Let's be frank. As a Hong Kong-ese raised by (slightly)

// A well-loved cuisine that answers the true needs, tastes and lifestyle of working class Hong Kong-ese people //

health-conscious parents, I've ever only entered a Cha-Chaan-Teng three times in 21 years. Why? Because the menu would be shock horror to any nutritionist. Fruit and vegetables do not make an appearance, except for a slice of tomato or a cabbage leaf in a sandwich. The menu here, in the form

of laminated sheets of paper tucked underneath the glass table-tops, was no exception. Breakfast: macaroni in soup with artificial ham, toast with peanut butter and condensed milk. No dim sum, by the way. Lunch: spam sandwich, spaghetti with barbeque pork. Afternoon tea: Deep fried French toast (a must-have Hong Kong-ese classic) drenched in golden syrup topped with a big slab of butter, finished off with a good cup of milk tea (extra-strong black tea with evaporated milk, an all-time favourite). No one cares about five-a-day, arteries or heart disease when you can get a filling meal for under 40 HKD (£4).

Plonk.

The black truffle scrambled eggs on toast on a flowery plate was dumped in front of me just like the others. This was what I came here for - an old-school café keeping up with the latest black-truffle-in-everything trend. The mountain of bright yellow scrambled eggs wobbled and shook on the inch-thick piece of white toast, with

// No one cares about five-a-day, arteries or heart disease when you can get a filling meal for under 40 HKD (£4) //

mind came clear of a truth. I needn't the best sourdough, fancy French butter with a Clarence Court egg; it was the cheap bread, the most horrible service you could ever imagine in a rowdy environment for a taste of the authentic, delicious local breakfast, and reunited my taste buds with my roots.



// Here, there is no overpriced coffee served in branded paper cups. Here, there is no good-looking baristas with suspected dyslexia. Here, there is no free Wi-Fi and no comfortable sofas with music blasting in the background //



MILLENNIALS...

felix

Basic food for basic students (you're basic)

felix has your back just in case you can't find a space in the library to study and you're forced to stay home a.k.a no more library cafe food for you

Andrada Balmez

For many of us, it's revision week time! Yay!! Can you feel the enthusiasm? I can feel it all around campus – especially in the library late at night or when I see some girl crying in the bathroom; I'm not saying that men do not cry in the bathroom, but I for one cannot see them – the perks of using the 'ladies room'.

But enough about depressing subjects! Or happy ones assuming you've been waiting for this time of year to show everyone just how smart you are (Good for you). As you might know by now, this is a food article and, hence, I am going to talk about food (duh!). Mostly about easy to make recipes that will allow you to spend a lot of time revising – and we all know that by this I mean learning stuff for the first time.

French cuisine at its finest

Pancakes! Maybe not the healthiest food in the world or the easiest to cook, but they give me the boost of happiness I need to continue my day; especially if they are Nutella and banana pancakes. Just don't think about American pancakes. Here we'll talk about the French kind – crepes.

Beat the eggs in a bowl, big enough to be able to hold all the ingredients. Add the sugar and a touch of salt. If you feel like experimenting, get rid of the sugar and add a bit

Ingredients:

2 eggs
salt
1 spoon of sugar
1 ½ cups of flour (I recommend white flour, but anything will do as long as it is not self-rising flour)
1 cup milk
Oil (if you don't have a non-sticky pan)
Nutella
Bananas
Strawberries
Cream

more salt. This way, you will bring out the contrasting flavours, assuming their pairing with excessive amounts of Nutella. Just be careful not to add too much – the seasoning of food is an art I cannot teach you; you must learn it yourself through trial and error.

To the mixture, add half of the milk and stir until it becomes homogenous. Slowly, start adding the flour and continue stirring. Add the rest of the milk until you get a smooth mixture, liquid enough to be able to pour it easily. Depending on the flour you've picked, you might need to add some more milk. If you are not sure about this, just try cooking a small pancake and taste it; you will know if it feels right or not – hopefully, it will! Be aware that the

opposite might happen and the pancakes might be too runny. In this case, they will take forever to cook – you might not even be able to flip them. If this is the case, just add a bit more flour.

The final step has come, now that you have the perfect batter. Just pour some of the mixture in a preheated pan with a bit of oil in it if you're not using a non-stick pan. You can try and flip them in the air – I mean, what loss is a crepe or two!

When you are done, stuff them with anything you want. You might try my favourite combination – and by my I mean, everyone's favourite combination – of Nutella, banana, strawberries and cream. When I am really desperate for some sugar I even add some maple syrup. (Yes, you can judge me and yes, probably I'll discover that I have diabetes in a couple of years). Or you can just come up with your own combination.

Congratulations, you are a French chef now that you know how to make crepes!

Healthy mind in a healthy body – keep lying to yourself!

This is just a simple salad, for those of you who just want to feel healthy from time to time... Or all the time. It will work if you are on a diet, too – but really now, who can be dieting and revising at the same time? For me, this is the best 15 minute recipe that can work for either lunch or dinner or both, depending on how much I make.

I really believe that you have enough imagination to know what to do with all these ingredients in order to get a salad – unless you have a howtobasic Youtube channel and you think you can eat the same things you upload. If this is indeed the

Ingredients:

2 eggs
1 large chicken breast
Feta cheese (or goat cheese or any creamy cheese you like)
2 tomatoes
salad leaves
1 small cucumber
small tin of corn
1-2 spring onion(s)
salt, sugar and pepper
Greek yoghurt for dressing

case, you definitely need my guidance. Or anyone's guidance for that matter.

Hard-boil the eggs (8-10 minutes). While they are boiling, cut the chicken breast in stripes (or cubes, or spheres or amino acids – maybe this way you'll finally remember them) and fry it in a preheated pan – if it's a non-stick pan, don't forget to add a tiny bit of oil.

Cut the tomatoes and the cucumber. Chop the spring onion(s). You might also want to chop your salad leaves if they are of the large variety. Add them in a bowl with the corn. Add the fried chicken breast.

Peel the eggs and cut them into bite-size pieces. Cut the cheese in 2x2x2 cm cubes (if they are 2.01 cm, you've ruined the whole thing).

Add everything to the bowl. Mix a bit – you can feel civilised and use a fork or you can go wild and use your hands. Add salt and pepper to taste. My secret ingredient in a salad is a bit of sugar – just a tiny tiny bit. Don't tell anyone! You can use it.

In the end, add some Greek yoghurt. As much as you like – or don't. I honestly cannot

congratulate you for managing not to ruin a salad, but I will once you share your very own recipe with me.

Go nuts for the nuts (with chocolate)

I might have a problem with sweets. And when it's revision week, it gets worse. I can eat a whole chocolate bar in one go. I mean it! I am a chocolate monster when I have to learn something. Or, if I don't have chocolate, anything with enough sugar. And I am not even 100% sure that it's scientifically proven that sugar helps learning – but my mom told me that when I was a little girl and I, as a good girl, must listen to my mom's advice. And you should listen to mine and eat as much chocolate as you can – at least you won't feel bad about it now. Just tell yourself that it helps you go through those boring soil lectures (I'm assuming that's all you geologists learn about).

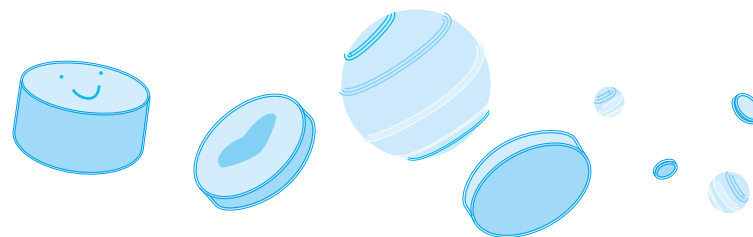
But if you plan to increase your chocolate intake, at least do it in style! Or be like me, and just wolf it down, you decide.

Ingredients:

Nuts
Chocolate

Melt chocolate. Mix with nuts. Attempt to wait and eat when cold, in reality eat when still molten and delicious.

And good luck with your exams!



DRUGS

Drug Bible | Mephedrone 101

Plant Food Meph Bounce
MCat Meow Meow Charge
Bubble MDog
Drone White Magic

What it does

How you use it

Mephedrone is a potent stimulant. Users expect to feel short rushes, alertness and confidence. Whilst the effects are not dissimilar to cocaine and MDMA, when taking, anticipate a much shorter experience than either of these other drugs. Whilst the influence of cocaine lasts between forty minutes and an hour depending on the strength of the drug and method of ingestion, mephedrone affects the user for no more than typically thirty minutes. After this period expect a severe comedown, a much harder crash than other drugs (heroin notwithstanding). Whilst the comedown may not be physical (there are no physical effects on the body due to the comedown), mentally users expect to be consistently wanting one more line, commonly referred to as fiending. Mephedrone causes a much more intense experience than cocaine, which goes some distance to explaining the more addictive comedown.

The most common ingestion method of mephedrone is sniffing/snorting. This writer has never heard any other practical consumption technique. Whilst MDMA may often be bombed (a process whereby the drug is wrapped in a small piece of tissue or cigarette paper and then swallowed like a pill) in order to prolong the effects, this is counter-productive when taking mephedrone due to the much shorter effects experienced anyway. Basically, the amount of time that would be added by taking mephedrone in this manner would not be warranted by the increased method of preparation.

Prices

Mephedrone is notoriously cheap. Expect to pay somewhere in the region of £15-20 for a gram. Although mephedrone is relatively unheard of in London, in certain regions and scenes such as the north of England and the gay chemsex scene (obviously just a weird, weird coincidence) it is the drug of choice. In cities such as Manchester and Sheffield prices can be as low as £25-30 for an eighth (3.5g). Whilst cocaine is often rated on its purity, which in turn can affect the price enormously, there is no such metric for mephedrone. This writer has never heard of 'pure mephedrone' for sale. Your best bet for a continuous supply of good mephedrone is a find a dealer you trust and hopefully your return business will persuade them they don't need to sell you the crap stuff.

Legality

Mephedrone has been illegal since 2010. Being a class B drug puts mephedrone in the same group as other substances such as cannabis and ketamine. As a result, if caught in possession you could acquire a prison sentence of up to five years and an unlimited fine. This situation is decidedly worse if caught in possession with intent to supply. This could result in up to fourteen years in prison and a potentially unlimited fine.

Glossary

meow

Rushing – Term used when experiencing increased levels of alertness and confidence. Used in a sentence as simply 'I'm rushing'.

Fiending – Used to express wanting more mephedrone when coming down. . For example, 'Now I've stopped rushing, I'm fiending'.

Gram – The common unit when buying mephedrone is a gram, similar to buying other uppers. Larger weights can be bought if you're richer than the rest of us. Smaller weights can also be bought if you're just looking for a quick hit.

Some statistics

According to the government, 1.9% of people aged between sixteen and twenty four took mephedrone between 2014 and 2015. This is well below other popular drugs such as cocaine (4.8%), ecstasy (5.4%) and cannabis (16.3%). From this we can conclude that mephedrone is not the most popular of drugs in the UK. However, this writer believes it is best to cover a whole range of drugs in *felix*, in order to provide the most comprehensive drug education possible.

Things to do when you're high

Do

- Make sure you're in an environment you're comfortable with.
- Place a limit on how much you will take. Whilst experiencing a comedown, you will want 'one more line', placing a limit helps prevent this.
- Take it with friends you trust. Whilst on mephedrone, due to the increased confidence you will feel, you will end up revealing your deepest darkest secrets.

Don't

- Let yourself be peer pressured. Drugs are a serious choice, you don't have to take anything. Especially if you've unintentionally found yourself in a chemsex party on a friday night
- Drink excessively whilst on mephedrone. Struggling to stand up being drunk whilst simultaneously rushing is not a pleasing experience.
- Mix with other uppers, a combination of MDMA. and mephedrone will ensure you don't go to sleep for days.

Imperial College has a strict zero tolerance policy on drugs. If you're struggling with drug use, visit talktofrank.com

Imperial College London



Student Support Fund

If you suddenly find yourself in **financial difficulties** or experience an unexpected change in circumstances, you may be eligible to apply for **emergency financial help** through the Student Support Fund.

**CONTACT THE STUDENT
FINANCIAL SUPPORT TEAM
TO FIND OUT MORE:**

+44 (0)20 7594 9014

Student Hub, Level 3,
Sherfield Building

www.imperial.ac.uk/fees-and-funding



The university meme page revolution

How Memebridge reignited the university meme scene

Cale Tilford and Paul Balaji

This strange world of memes which we currently find ourselves in – one where a president can be catapulted to the White House with the help of online fascists and Pepe the Frog – is terrifying. There was an undercurrent of darkness in the memes that defined 2016: we celebrated Harambe's death as if he were a messiah, exposed our inner self through evil Kermit, and philosophised over the trolley problem. It wouldn't be until the end of the year that the dankness would finally return.

What started as a simple meme page in Cambridge (Memebridge) has quickly exploded into a national ecosystem of university meme

pages each with thousands of followers. University memes are by no means a new phenomenon (the original Imperial Memes page has nearly 5000 likes) but this new crop of pages has succeeded in a different way, thriving on interuniversity rivalry and collaboration.

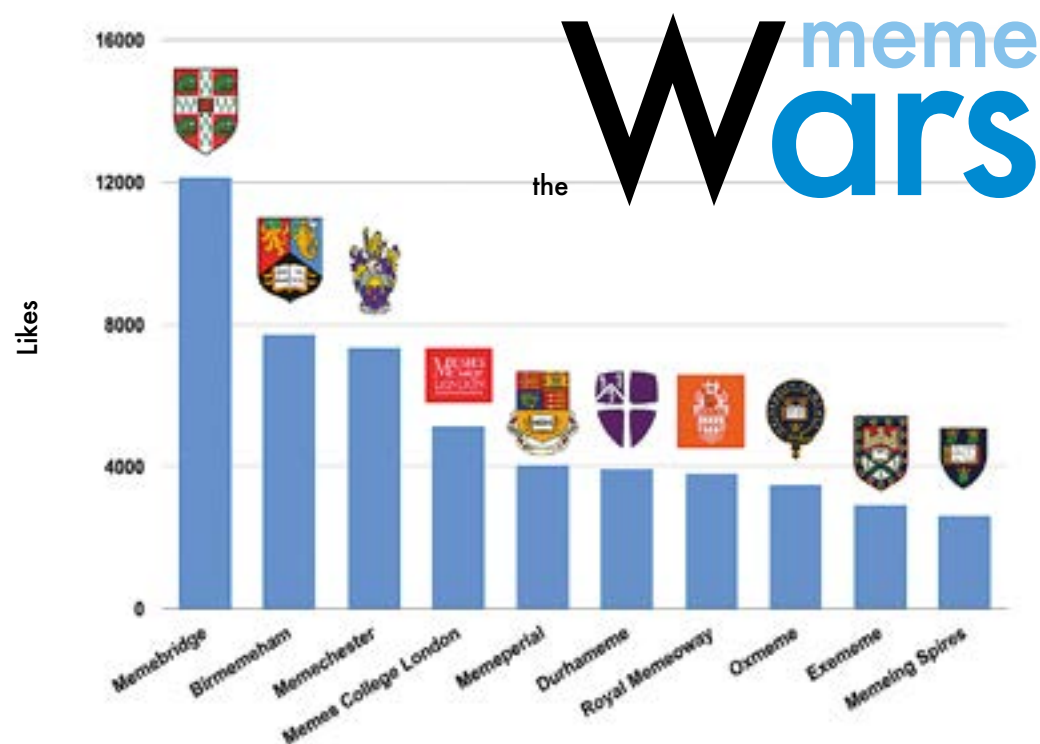
This rivalry was the catalyst for the growth of the university meme scene. Soon after Memebridge was created a group of Oxford students started their own page, Oxmeme. The long-term success of memes has always come down to the way in which they are reused and replicated. So naturally it wasn't long before Oxmeme decided to steal Memebridge's memes, a deadly sin in the online community. The war had begun.

As if one page wasn't enough, a second page was born from the English-speaking world's oldest university: The Memeing Spires of Oxford. As more and more rival pages appeared, the variety of Memebridge's memes grew. Durhameme

\\ It wasn't long before Oxmeme decided to steal Memebridge's memes \\



That can only meme one thing \\ Sent by James



UCL is no where to be seen \\ Cale Tilford

proved the perfect target with their attempt at introducing "Doxbridge" to the national lexicon, resulting in a number of humiliating 'roasts.' Thousands were liking and tagging their friends in the varsity meme wars but nothing had prepared them for what would come next.

On the 14th of December, Memebridge ("Sent by Alfred") shared a video which would shake the university meme world to its core. Poking fun at Memeing Spires, Oxmeme and Durhameme, "the bane video" set the bar for what a meme page could do and is essential viewing for any university meme connoisseur.

In the same week, a whole new frontier of the university

\\ Memeperial currently has over 4000 likes, nearly 300 more than felix's own Facebook page \\

meme conflict emerged. At least half a dozen new pages were created: Memechester, Birmemeham, Memes College London (King's), Exememe, Royal Memeoway, and of course, our favourite, Memeperial. While each of these pages has their own set of admins and running jokes, they all share a dislike of Oxmeme for no particular reason.

Memeperial currently has over 4000 likes, nearly 300 more than felix's own Facebook page, and it's gained that in a much shorter time. Writing for Cambridge's Varsity, Elizabeth Howcroft discussed whether Memebridge had become the new student voice of Cambridge, a place where students could freely share their feelings of existential dread that reappear during every exam period. Memeperial is similar to other pages in that it focuses on what makes life at Imperial bad; the dreaded 'Imperial ratio' is one of many recurring themes. The page is good at poking fun of the more trivial things that make

\\ The page is good at poking fun of the more trivial things that make our life at Imperial miserable \\

our life at Imperial miserable and maybe that's enough to qualify as the voice of Imperial students. felix, which so many of us hold in high esteem, could certainly do more to make students feel like they are part of a community of students who share the same struggles. Despite Memeperial's success, it is unlikely to sustain itself in the long-term. You only have to look at Imperial Memes and Imperial College Secrets, two pages which now lie dormant, to see that meme pages can be short lived. We can only hope that Memeperial and the rest of the new pages on the meme scene don't suffer the same fate.



MILLENNIALS...

felix

The Millennials are all that can save us in this post-truth world

We can do anything we want, and that's not usually helping people for the greater good

Giacomo Boscaini-Gilroy

As a year, 2016 really pissed me off. I remember when 2008 ended. I remember people saying that it would be consigned to history as the year of the Great Recession. My call is that 2016 will be seen as the year of the fuck-up. The future looks uncertain and shaky. No one planned for political tragedy and who knows when deaths of refugees on the Mediterranean, of Syrians in their homes and terrorist bombings will end. Last year the world saw a profound change.

\\ I'm going to make a stab at describing the fundamental differences between the lives of a 60s kid and a 90s kid \\

This was accompanied by a generational shift that has seen the concept of the Millennial placed centre stage. But do most of us fully grasp what this involves? I don't think so, so I'm going to make a stab at describing the fundamental differences between the lives of a 60's kid and a 90's kid. Why is this important? 2017 needs to be spent fixing this bloody mess, and if we make use of the character traits that set us apart from past

generations, we can get somewhere better. Also, we need to understand the broader picture of societal change. Answering the question 'What makes young people in general pro-EU?' is important in understanding how to clean up the turd 2016 left behind on the living room floor.

We need to acknowledge the fact that our life attitude, drive and aims are distinctly different from those of our parents. Many of us were brought up in an environment where we were told that we could do whatever we wanted with our lives, where avenues of opportunity opened up to us. How different that is from my Italian grandparents, who stayed near the villages they were born in, used to visit the same beach nearly every Summer on holiday. Nowadays, we are taught to take advantage of our individual freedom in such a way that all of these things become a personal choice. The world is your oyster, and you can travel and find jobs wherever you fancy. Also, you are not compelled to stick with the religion of your heritage.

Young Millennials will therefore make life choices in a new way, motivated by a different combination of factors than their predecessors. In 2010, Pew Research Centre found that of eight choices presented to US 18-29 year-olds, the third most important priority in their lives was to help

others in need. Having a high-paying career only came sixth. So there does appear to be a consensus that young people strive towards a life with purpose, in which self-fulfilment is achieved by making a positive impact rather than by pecuniary reward.

In my opinion, the growth of secularism in society has forced us to reassess our place in the universe. Faith prescribes meaning to people's lives. It tells you how to be good in the eyes of something higher. Without it, we must decide our role in the world for ourselves. There is less emphasis in our lives in working towards pleasing God and more on living either for ourselves or for the good of our community, whether it is local or global.

The job market has responded to our changing view of the world. Many of our parents will have worked for the same

company for as many as 40 years. When they were applying for jobs, it was seen as risky to employ someone who had done many different things for short amounts of time because they were more likely to leave and move elsewhere. Now we care less for the stability of a long-term job. It is now normal to spend several years in different jobs, then leave to follow a passion. The modern thinking sees this favourably since you have accumulated a variety of experience and have seen things from more than one perspective. In fact, it is harder to gain a promotion within your own company because recruiters will search outside for the best talent, and it becomes more appealing to go elsewhere to work.

It is apparent that we see our own personal development as more valuable than loyalty to an organisation. This gives us

the drive to do something that can selflessly take the world forward – perhaps

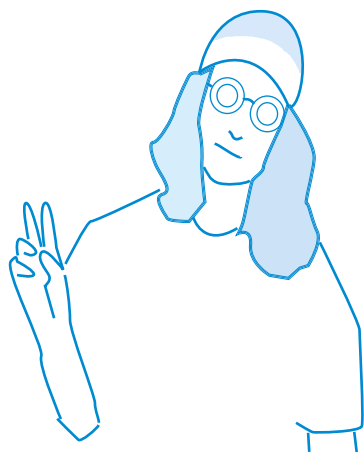
\\ I hope that as we come of age, a cohort more well-educated than ever will force post-truth politics to wilt \\

contributing to renewable energies or organisational transparency. As nations have become more prosperous, new technologies, in particular the internet, have been developed and put at the disposal of Millennials who want to do great things with them. However, there are times when personal gain is prioritised above the greater good, as can be seen by BuzzFeed's reports of teenagers from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia making money by creating fake news supporting Trump.

My hope is that our lot will one day repair the mess left by the year of the fuck-up. This cohort is more well-educated, tolerant and open to different perspectives – even though Brexit might seem like a vote for change, it was actually led by nostalgia and a resistance to modernity. As we grow older and Millennials become more dominant, I see a future where post-truth politics will wilt.



felix ... M I L L E N N I A L S

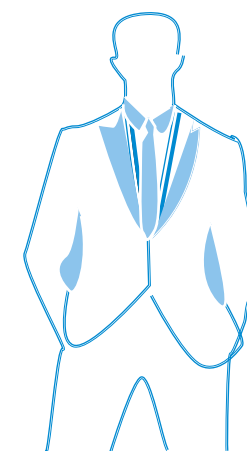


New year's resolutions are hard to come up with when you're perfect

Jonathan Masters will tolerate your ignorant, fat-shaming ass even though you don't deserve it

2017 seems full of promise after the great year that 2016 was

Monathan Jasters is excited to see trends and attitudes come back from last century



VOS

I hope you all had a relaxing, environmentally friendly christmas, filled with as many carbon neutral gifts as there are genders. 2016 was, as many of you know, the death of progressive politics and free thought, so as a result of entering the new year I have decided to indulge in the ancient tradition of declaring "new year, new me!". Of course I am a vegan (just in case you didn't already know) and hence I am already morally pure and perfect; however, even perfection has room for improvement. My new year's resolutions are threefold: 1) To get more in touch with my common man/woman/gender neutral thing 2) To become far closer to nature and 3) To be more patient with other people.

Many writers into this weekly column have told me that many of my views are 'elitist' and 'privileged' although frankly that sounds like something a poor person would say. With that said, however, I am not afraid to change (unlike the numerous gender normative toilets across the campuses of Imperial), and indeed I have decided that I will indulge in the activities of the lower, less eco-friendly members of our society. At least once a week I will attempt to drink a lager that is not made from organic hops; I shall attend one organised sports parade a month although I feel as though I shall have to call in advance to ask what their vegan meal choices provided for the intermission are.

In order to become even closer

to nature and life than I already am, I have decided to start sleeping with a pig. Of course it will be completely platonic, but if things start to happen... well the heart wants what the heart wants. Furthermore, how much closer to nature can you get than literally inside an animal? Pigs have been found to be able to experience pleasure as well and of course it would be consensual.

Thirdly I must of course be more patient with those not on an exclusively dairy-free-quinoa only diet. When people try to tell me that there are only two genders, I will take a deep breath and then try to find a constructive way to tell their cis-pig selves that they have obviously missed out at least six others. When people try to tell me that fat people are endangering themselves and are a burden on the health service, I will tell them to shut their skinny-bitch-over-privileged mouth and that they should recognise that all shapes are beautiful. Even the ones that cause coronary heart disease. 2017 looks to be an awful year but who knows? Perhaps Hillary did get more votes than Trump and will actually get to be president.

After such an amazing 2016 full of brown people being sent back home, borders being closed, and righteous leaders with good business sense being elected, I can't really imagine a situation where things could get any better. I am as much of a stickler for traditions like new year's resolutions as I am for marriage to be between a man and a woman, and just like marriage as God intended it to be, none of my resolutions have anything to do with homosexuals.

As it is a new year, I have decided that I will take up a new hobby; however, I am indecisive as to which hobby I should take up. First of all there is hunting. While On the one hand I love the idea of killing creatures that are weaker than me, on the other hand having to pay a licence and letting the government know what kind of weapons I possess doesn't sit well with me. Another hobby I have been considering is one that I'd taken up in my youth and I'm sure I must still have the outfit in my attic somewhere. I just don't know, if I still have the energy for all that cross burning and lynching. The fact that there will be a much larger intake of members soon due to the fact that being openly racist is now a presidential characteristic is also discouraging - I bet that some of them won't even remember Rosa Parks and how she ruined buses for everyone.

Another resolution I made was

to become a more respectable and likeable person in that new-age holistic way. I guess if I start to model myself more on President Trump then perhaps I can start to feel more in touch with the youth of today. First step will be to make a disabled friend who I can make fun of - my guess is if people see me making fun of tards they will accept me into the fold. I think in regards to my attitude towards women I am perhaps a little too soft - if I can train my one to stop answering back then that will hopefully elevate people's opinions of me. All in all, we have no idea as to what this new year holds for all of us, but as long as it involves the imprisonment of transexuals and liberal crooks, it's gonna be a good one.

* Sponsored by
AIM whitening
gel toothpaste



M I L L E N N I A L S ...

felix



Dear Chris,

CRISIS

Chris

I need some help with my new year's resolutions. See I normally don't make any – I don't consider myself a sheep, mindlessly adopting trends for no good reason. But this year I thought I'd give resolving a shot. And boy did I. I promised myself I'd workout every day, start eating more fibre (that was a request from my colon) and study real hard for my January exams. I said I'd walk my dog twice a day, quit porn and do some recreational reading every night before bed. I could go on for hours but what would be the point? All resolutions have already been BROKEN! Well with the exception of quitting porn, but that's solely due to a government ban on my favourite genres. Chris help me. How do I make successful resolutions?

Yours,
AP Nouya

Dear Nouya

I'm really sorry that 2017 has already sucked so hard for you, but I'd be lying if I said I didn't see your complete and utter failure coming. I mean you know it's amateur hour when someone promises they'll "work out every day".

Lesson number one. When making a resolution, be as vague as possible and avoid at all costs to specify time frame and magnitude. I said I'd work out in 2017. On January 2nd I did a push up. Boom. Success.

But you don't even need to try to keep your resolutions if you're tactical. For example, this year I promised myself I'd get sick less! But I don't really have an option because I can't

afford private healthcare and the NHS is in shambles! So it's either that or probably death in a corridor in a Worcestershire Hospital.

Finally, for a 100% success rate just keep your resolutions to yourself. Because no one can call you out on the mess you call a life if they don't know you tried to change. And let's be honest, no one wants to know your lame-ass resolutions unless it's something like achieving world peace or cloning Hitler.

Hope that helps!

Big luv,
Chris xxxx

HOROSCOPES



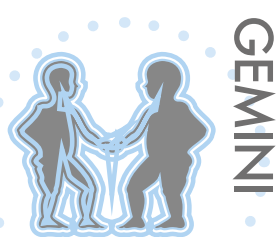
ARIES

This week you're The Queen and you weren't seen in public for two weeks over Christmas. She's not dead, she's just doing January exams.



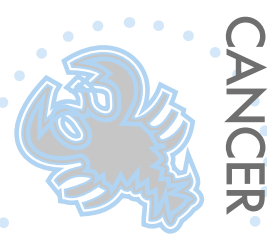
TAURUS

This week you're late to a tutorial because of the tube strike. But you weren't were you. You overslept. In Beit. Naughty.



GEMINI

This week you're a new you, it being a new year and all. Unfortunately the new you didn't get a new ID card so the examiners throw you out of the exam room for cheating.



CANCER

This week you go to the reopening of fabric. Unfortunately Citymapper didn't understand your drunken commands and you end up in a lovely little upholstery shop in Zone 7. You take some drugs and have a fantastic time all the same.



LEO

This week you join the 'No Pants Tube Ride' in London but you turn up on the wrong day. Nobody bats an eyelid though. Probably because you were clad in ICURFC gear.



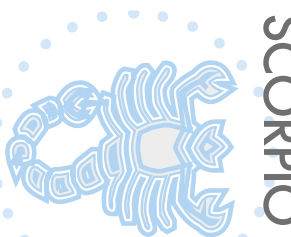
VIRGO

This year you're 2017. You're a prime number. Hopefully that means you'll be less divisive than 2016.



LIBRA

This week you realise that writing news is easy, the trick is to just lie.



SCORPIO

This week you discover a new found hobby, urinating on Donald Trump. Not in a sexual way though, it's purely out of malice.



SAGITTARIUS

This week you're back once again. You're the renegade master.



CAPRICORN

This week you leant on a wall in the Science Museum and suddenly all these sirens went off and everyone left in a hurry. How strange.



AQUARIUS


This week exams go fantastically well. In the grand scheme of things it doesn't matter though, nothing does.



PISCES

This week exams go poorly. In the grand scheme of things it doesn't matter though, nothing does.

FRIDAY 13 JANUARY




RNB, DEEP HOUSE, EDM, DNB & MORE

BPM (BEATS PER MINUTE) WILL GET YOUR HEART RACING WITH ITS CHANGING MUSIC SETS THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT

FRIDAY 13 JANUARY
20:00 - 02:00
METRIC || FIVESIXEIGHT || THE UNION BAR

£1.50 GUESTLIST

£2.50 ON THE DOOR



GIN MASTER CLASS

Become a gin coinessuer, learn all about the marvoulus tipples history, and try our drinks. We're celebrating our new gins, and we want you to join us.

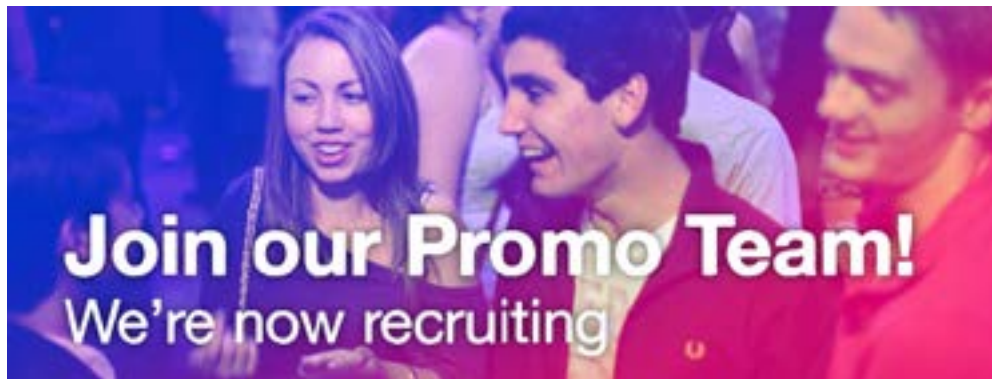
£6.50 per tickets, or four for only £20.00

Friday 27 January, 19:00

Venue	Regular Events	Time	Day
Metric & FiveSixEight	BPM	20:00 - 02:00	Friday 13 January
Metric	Nice & Spiky Comedy	21:00 - 23:30	Monday 16 January
Metric & FiveSixEight	iPop at the Movies	20:00 - 02:00	Friday 20 January
FiveSixEight	Super Quiz	20:00 - 22:00	Every Tuesday
Metric	Cocktail Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Tuesday
Metric & FiveSixEight	CSP Wednesday	19:00 - 01:00	Every Wednesday
h-bar	Pub Quiz	19:00 - 21:00	2nd & 4th Thursday
h-bar	PGI Friday	19:00 - 00:00	Every Friday
Reynolds	Quiz Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Monday
Reynolds	Board Games & Film Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Tuesday
Reynolds	Sports Night	18:00 onwards	Every Wednesday
Reynolds	Pizza Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Thursday
The Foundry	Quiz Night	19:30 - 22:00	Every Thursday
The Foundry	Quiz Night	19:30 - 22:00	1st & 3rd Thursday
The Foundry	Karaoke Night	20:00 - 23:30	2nd & 4th Friday

Union Page

Promotional Assistants needed!



Are you a people person, who is looking to work on a range of events? Then join our Promo Team! We're keen to expand our face-to-face interaction with our members, and our Promotional Assistants will help us to achieve that by talking to students about our events and projects, and help at events such as our Refreshers' Fair.

We're looking for of enthusiastic and dynamic student staff to help the Union. If you're looking for a part time job to fit around your studies, then this could be for you!

To apply go to: imperialcollegeunion.org/jobs

Say thank you with the SACAs

The Student Academic Choice Awards - or SACAs for short - are Imperial College Union's flagship event for empowering students to recognise, reward and celebrate excellence among College staff.

Launched in 2012, the SACAs enable students to reward excellence and innovation amongst Imperial's academic and professional staff. We believe teaching and supervision are skills of equal worth and value to research, and we aim to build a community in which academics, staff and students all feel empowered to bring forth new ideas. **You can nominate as many people as you like, in as many categories as you like** - and if your nominee is shortlisted, you might win a free ticket to the ceremony! If there's anyone who stands out to you, then let them know - by nominating them for a Student Academic SACA. Nominations are open until 26 February.

To nominate go to: imperialcollegeunion.org/sacas

Volunteer with the Pimlico Connection

ThePIMLICO CONNECTION

We are looking for students to volunteer as tutors, lending their knowledge and expertise to help and support hundreds of children in their studies in the schools surrounding our campuses. Inspire local children to succeed and reach their academic potential to become the next generation of STEM students. The programme runs **January to March with tutors volunteering between 1-3 hours of their time each week**. Our next briefing sessions to get involved will be during the week commencing 23 January 2017. For more information check out:

imperialcollegeunion.org/pimlico

JANUARY SALES

Visit our shops and venues to get great deals that are easy on the wallet this January!

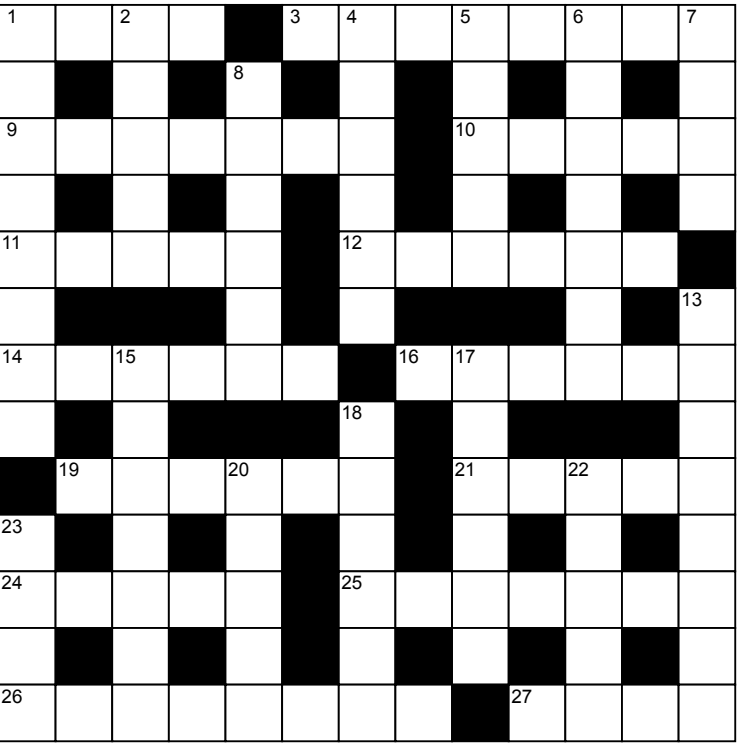
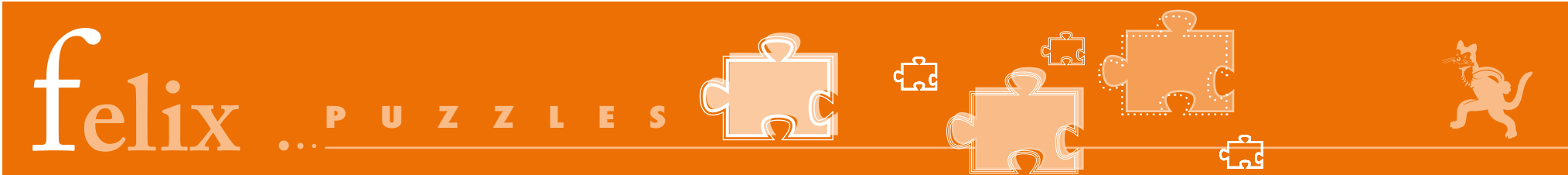
imperialcollegeunion.org/januarysales



imperialcollegeunion.org

Winter is coming...

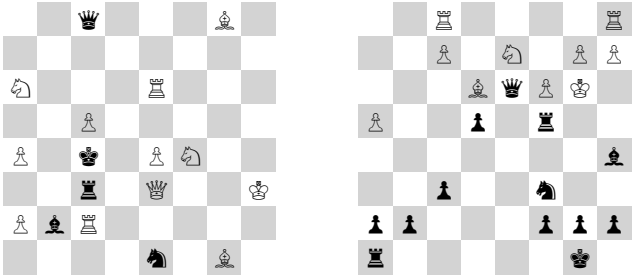
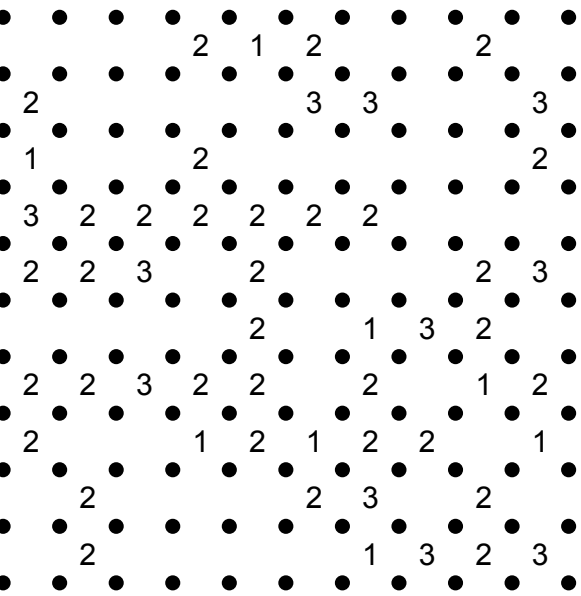
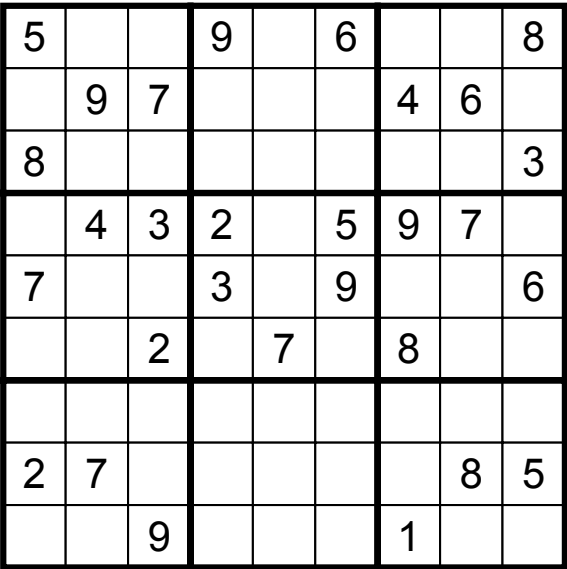




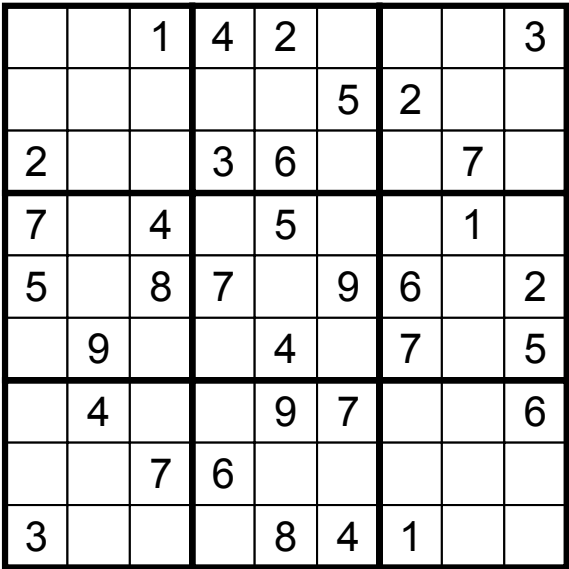
- Across**

 - 1. The majority (4)
 - 3. Golfing ability (8)
 - 9. Foremost (7)
 - 10. Brute (5)
 - 11. Relative by marriage (2-3)
 - 12. Concurred (6)
 - 14. Puzzle (6)
 - 16. Existing in fact (6)
 - 19. Conundrum (6)
 - 21. Loafer (5)
 - 24. Classical language (5)
 - 25. Trading ban (7)
 - 26. Surround (8)
 - 27. Optical glass (4)
- Down**

 - 1. Hat-maker (8)
 - 2. Shoulder-wrap (5)
 - 4. Sea between Greece and Turkey (6)
 - 5. Exclude (5)
 - 6. French castle (7)
 - 7. Compassion (4)
 - 8. Tent (6)
 - 13. Splendid (8)
 - 15. Foolish (7)
 - 17. Ascends (6)
 - 18. Make known (6)
 - 20. Giver (5)
 - 22. Big (5)
 - 23. Otherwise (4)



Forced checkmate in 2 moves (left) and 3 moves (right). White to move first in both problems.



FUCWIT

Leaderboard	
The Czechmates	185
Anonymous	184
Willie Rush	181
NSNO	178
Schrödingers Cat Strikes Back	165
Sneezing Pandas	125
Guinea Pigs	86
CEP MSC	84
Les Nuls	84
The Gravitons	82
Puzzled	62
TIA	59
Grilled Cheese Inc.	47
Chemical Brethren	46
Yellow Fever	44
The Ultimate Fucwit	38
Big Mahmoud	36
Kenny Wangler, Cunnyfangler	29
Grand Day in Cullercoats	25
Lube Lords	23
Banananana	20
The Mystical Spankyman	20
RollEEEr	19
Poulet	15
Hillary Killed Harambe	14
THE Crystallographer	14
G. Hackman	10
Les Baguettes	9
Salmon ft. Kanye	9
Pollux	7
Crosswordy McCrosswordface	5
The Couple on the Train	5
Singed Potato	4
TP-LINK_M5_B057AD	4
Palo and Hippo!	3
RIP Fray Bentos	3
Fanny Schmeller	2

Points Available	
Crossword	6
Slitherlink	3
Chess	6
Sudoku	6

Send in your solutions to fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk before midday Wednesday to get your score added to our leaderboard. Make sure you include the name/team name that you'd like us to use!