



Felix

The Student Newspaper of Imperial College London

A person wearing a black and white cat costume is sitting on a dark red leather sofa. The costume has large, expressive eyes and a white muzzle. The person is holding a blue mug with both hands and has a blue, fluffy object on their head. A blue object is also visible in the background, partially obscured by the cat's head.

MUMPS: PATIENT ZERO

EDITORIAL

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Front Cover // Taja Strle

The Space Problem

Henry Alman – Felix Editor



Imperial has a space problem.

This is something that has been covered a couple of times this year in the paper – notably in the first issue’s Blackett refurb article, when we discussed the physics department’s approach to creating space and the difference in its approach to other departments (i.e. those that have packed up and left for pastures green in White City, or are planning to in future).

This week, we touched on it again with regards to the new counselling space in Bernard Sunley.

For those of you who are unaware: the College is straining at the seams and is desperate to expand. Overall student numbers have increased year-by-year in every department with the space to do so, and there have been heavy funding rounds made via the Advancement department for constructing new buildings at White City – notably the J-IDEA, Sir Michael Uren, and the School of Public Health buildings, each of which have been mentioned in Felix in some capacity already this year.

With the departure of the chemistry department to White City and the revelation in the Blackett refurb article that Michele Dougherty, head of the physics department, was asked to consider the logistics of a move to White City upon taking up office, it’s clear that this is a prerogative for the College. They have and will continue to invest a fortune into their new campus.

The sale of St. Mary’s, accompanied by promises of expanded facilities, such as a medic’s gym, likely at Charing Cross, are further evidence of the College’s drive to centralise the medical school’s various disparate facilities.

The result of this

initiative is written on the wall. Imperial is on its way to becoming a fully-fledged multi-campus university.

This is not a clearly stated directive yet. It’s merely implied. However, the transient nature of the student population and the glacial pace of progress, make spotting changes in the running of the college very difficult. Without any sort of institutional memory, students even only a couple of years apart can have wildly different experiences, with both of them believing that their experience was the ‘norm’. The shift, however, is occurring and I think very few of us have truly mulled over what it means.

I think a lot of us will have mixed feelings about this. Word around the Felix office is that this sucks.

Sure, there are numerous tangible benefits – the ability to cheaply expand laboratory and student spaces to provide better facilities for world-class research and teaching is not to be sniffed at. To remain a world-class institution, Imperial must move in this direction. South Kensington simply cannot accommodate the university’s ambitions – there is no more space on

campus, and continuously optimising the existing space can only take the College so far. Nearby property comes at a premium – although the fact that Bernard Sunley, a former second year accommodation block, has been left empty for four years beggars belief.

But we do lose something in the process – something valuable that should be mourned. We lose a bit of the Imperial community. Yes, yes – it sounds like a joke. “Imperial sucks”, I can hear you cry out sarcastically, “what community is there to lose?”

Well, actually, a pretty significant one. Being crammed into this tiny campus together is, I believe, a very significant reason why – counterintuitively to the popular griping – there exists such a strong student community. We have some of the highest student election turnouts in the country; we have one of, if not the, highest number of student societies in the UK, many of them run by ridiculously dedicated members. Constituent Union teams put in ungodly hours on top of their degrees. The 568 Union bar staff have their own internal community to get each other through long nights – and

a thousand other organisations and study groups and campaigns and initiatives exist. We’re actually a highly engaged student body.

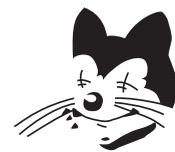
In the end, we may all agree that being at Imperial is a bit rubbish – but that collective whinging unites us. Our pessimism ties us together.

That will die with the multi-campus approach – the student body will fragment, no longer unified by the ability to mutually complain about those things which affect us all. At the moment, the library flooding screws us all over. In a few decades, it’ll only be a small contingent. They will develop their own internal jokes about it, but that will be meaningless to those on the other side of London.

I wouldn’t be surprised to see a resulting decline in, for example, the election turnouts – after all, why vote for somebody who you will never interact with and with whom you share nothing in common? Their problems are no longer your own. And, with that comes the breaking of a community which, let’s face it, is mostly unified by Memeperial and IC Exposed/Secrets.

We see this already with the separation of the medics. They have their own jokes and experiences, their own clubs and societies, even their own bar in Reynolds. This self-imposed exile separates them from the rest of the student body. I don’t wish to cast aspersions, that’s just the nature of the beast when the requirements of the medicine course are so different to most degrees. My point is that it would be a shame for this fragmentation to further splinter the student body.

I worry that unless we as a student body say something, the College isn’t going to give a damn.



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NEWS

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Mumps Outbreak Amongst Medics

NEWS

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There has been an outbreak of mumps among medic students over the last week, rendering several students confined to their homes while they wait for the infection to pass.

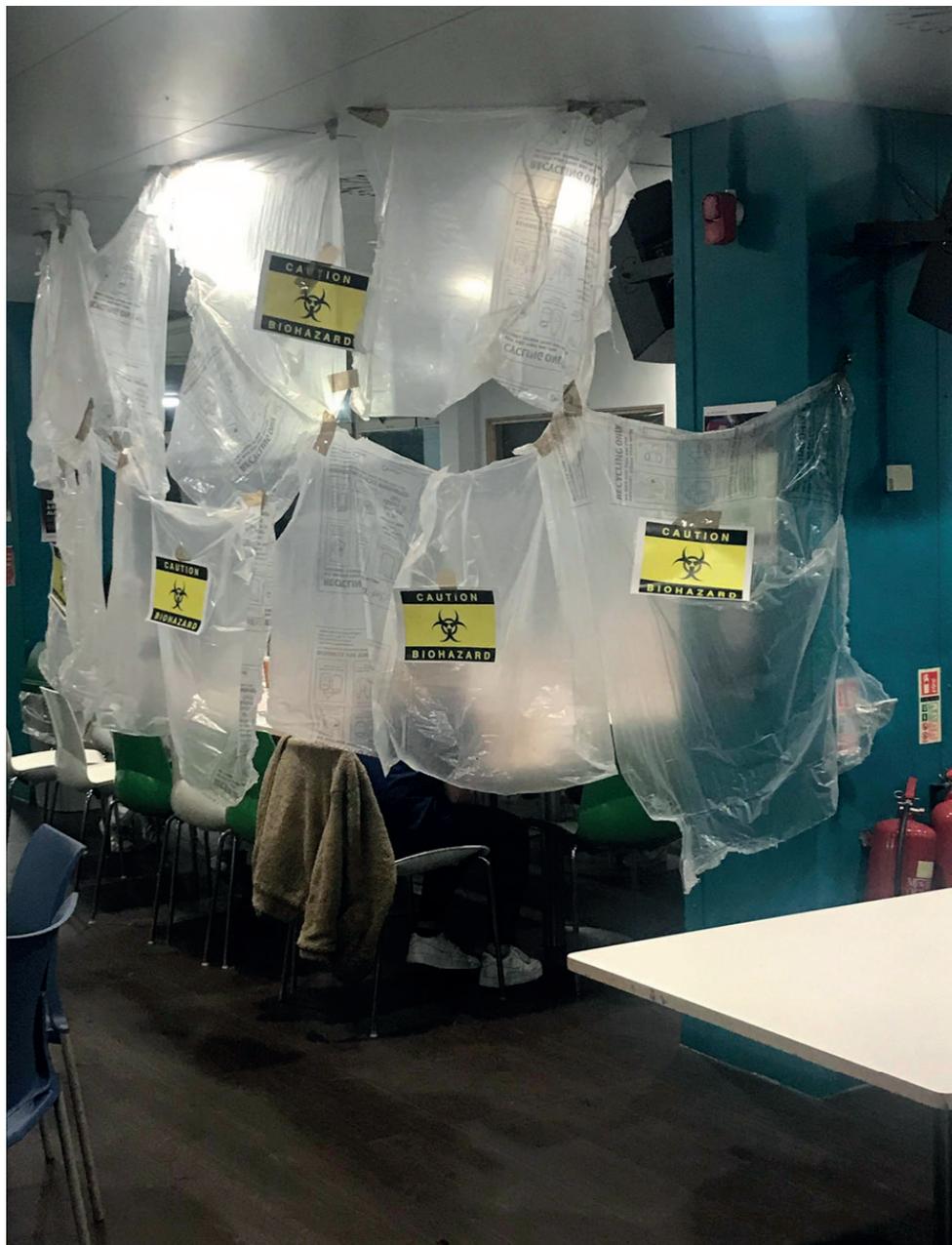
The NHS recommendation for isolation is five days, by which time infectivity is largely reduced as mumps is a 'self-limiting' infection – meaning that recovering amounts to symptomatic treatment and rest.

The infection reportedly began within the medics' football team, which then spread during Sports Night last Wednesday. An anonymous source also claimed that several players won a match against UCL while showing symptoms of the infection, and that the infection was then passed on to UCL footballers – this is currently unconfirmed.

All medics are required to receive double doses of the MMR vaccine, which protects against measles, mumps, and rubella, prior to clinical contact with any patient. However, the vaccine is only 88% effective according to research from the US' Centre for Disease Control.

Though there was concern about missed time on 'firms', or clinical placements, for the affected students, most firms are long-term enough that any missed time can be made up – especially accounting for the early starts, late finishes, and night shifts that medics are faced with.

An email sent from the medicine Faculty Education Office stressed to medics the importance of notifying Occupational Health as soon as symptoms develop and adhering to the recommended recovery period of five days – in other words, not to perform any clinical duties. They must be cleared by Occupational Health before being allowed to resume those duties. Fortunately, the disease is generally only infectious once general



Medics have taken the news with good humour // Eyad Abuelgasim

symptoms of malaise become apparent, rather than prior.

Almost all patients seen by medics are in hospital, and are therefore under 24/7 monitoring. The risk to them is therefore minimised – especially as medics are keenly aware of good health and safety procedures. Ben Russell, the ICSMSU President, clarified:

“There is always the risk of spreading any normal infection from person-to-person anyway as we are working with many, many patients in a close environment, but this is counteracted to the highest possible degree by the strict procedures and regulations which are in place across the health-care professions. These are constantly reviewed and taught to medical students as well as staff.”

Medics have taken the outbreak with good humour – with the netball team setting up a 'biohazard zone' in Reynolds during this week's Sports Night.

Imperial Renews Times Partnership

NEWS

Henry Alman

Editor-in-Chief

Imperial has renewed a partnership with The Times that gives both students and staff a free 12-month digital subscription, tied to their college accounts. The College originally started the partnership last year, but it was un-

known whether it would continue.

The offering has been expanded this year, with the subscription including the Times Literary Supplement as well. College members will also have access to discounts and deals, as well as event access run by the Times Plus scheme.

Included in the deal is also an opportunity for students to enter a competition in order to write for The Times. Last year,

Felix's then Deputy Editor and one of the student ambassadors for the first year of the scheme, Joanna Wormald, won a similar contest, granting her four articles across three months in the well-known Red Box column – a daily political briefing.

“It's a great opportunity for the budding journalists amongst our students to prove their writing skills on a national newspaper,” said Luke Blair, the Vice President

of Communications and Public Affairs.

One aspect that is not returning in full is the Times-sponsored events from last year. Though some were well-attended, others fell short of the desired goal because of scheduling – with the final event taking place in the middle of the exam period. The organisation of the events was chaotic, with student ambassadors reporting feeling confused and uncertain on what

they were meant to do to support. However, there will instead be an event and speakers in conjunction with the Great Exhibition Road Festival in 2020 – a yearly festival that Imperial organises alongside the plethora of South Kensington galleries and museums.

The partnership has been praised as being high-impact for students, for whom access to quality journalism is often locked behind paywalls

that student budgets cannot always afford. Luke continued: “Continuing our partnership with the Times will help the Imperial community to decipher and debate issues of the day through access to well informed journalism.”

NEWS

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College Counselling Service Expansion: A First Step

The College has invested into expanding the student counselling service after they had struggled to keep up with demand for several years - but this is just the beginning

NEWS

Henry Alman
Editor-in-Chief

The College has expanded the space available to the Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service, by renovating space in the old unoccupied Bernard Sunley hall in Evelyn Gardens. The new space opened on 7th October.

The budget for the expansion was around £150,000, which was used to convert and furnish five rooms in the building into counselling spaces – as well as a reception and a waiting room for students, a necessity which had been missing at the service's South Kensington location in the Sherfield Building.

The new rooms will be used by three full-time counsellors hired by the service last year, for whom there was

“This is just the space we need to simply do our job - previously, we were given resources but not space”

previously no available space in Sherfield – bringing the total up to 9.6 full-time equivalent staff. As Claire Fox, the Senior Student Counsellor, put it: “this is just the space we need to simply do our

job – previously, we were offered resources but not the space, so we couldn't give a meaningful offering from that.”

Rosie Summerhayes, the head of the service, said that the goal has always been to see students within 7-10 working days of referral – but that the lack of space has made that impossible, with the average wait time climbing from 8.2 working days in 2014-15 to 23.0 days in 2018-19.

Alongside the expansion, the service is also trialling a new system for conducting the first

“The average waiting time for a meeting at the service increased from 8.2 working days in 2014-15 to 23.0 in 2018-19”

meeting with students, dubbed the ‘initial conversation’. By cutting the length of these meetings to 30 minutes instead of 50, while still ensuring the initial conversations take place with an experienced counsellor, students are now being seen much earlier than they previously would have.

Claire expanded on this: “I am sure that any of us would be glad to have an initial conversation with a specialist – it's much better than waiting several weeks only to find that counselling isn't the right solution. It's a triage

assessment; we want to encourage students to start a conversation about what is troubling them and be heard, and then we can suggest the right support for them.”

The new system has received positive feedback so far, with students reportedly preferring to be seen quicker to develop an initial action plan than to wait for a longer session – but it will be assessed throughout the year based on student feedback.

Shervin Sabeghi, the Deputy President (Welfare) of the Union, was involved in hiring the new counsellors over the summer. He commented that he is “confident that it will result in far fewer students getting stuck in the system and not receiving the support they need.”

“I plan to keep up-to-date with how these changes affect waiting times and the student experience with the service throughout the year – so it's important for students to give feedback.”

The space has been praised as being a major improvement, by Shervin as well as the counsellors. Although concerns have been raised about the distance to Evelyn Gardens – a 20 minute walk from the South Kensington campus – Rosie believes this can be a positive.

“It gives students time to think about what they want to talk about on the way here, and time to decompress on their way back. Counselling is not always a joyous experience – it can be upsetting or disturbing. You need space between yourself and the rest of the world.” A similar benefit is offered by the new waiting room.

She feels that this is

emphasised when considering other wellbeing provisions, such as in departments: “you can't just flip back to being a functioning student upon opening the door. You need to go to a different space, talk about it, and then you leave it behind – rather than it being contained in your department.”

There is an essential importance to the feeling and particularly the entrance to a counselling building. Both Rosie and Claire stressed the need for it to be discrete, safe, and professional – for students to feel like they can share freely and to feel able to contain any problems they have to that space. This was, in fact, the primary consideration when new venues were being considered over the past several years – both in South Kensington and at other campuses such as White City or Hammer-smith Hospital.

The new space caters well to this, being placed off-site. There are, however, downsides – other than the distance, which may become a problem during exam time. The budget for the renovation ran out before all available rooms could be refitted, meaning that there are several available rooms which are still empty. This is despite the fact that the old hall has been vacant for four years.

This leaves a lot of room for future expansion,

“The number of students confirming and attending appointments rose a total of 76.2% since 2014-15”

which is useful as Rosie foresees the need for eventual growth to twelve counsellors in order to tackle the load during the busiest times of year.

Year on year, there is incremental growth on the number of students utilising counselling – growth far above that of the overall student population. The number of students confirming and attending appointments has risen by anywhere from 11% to 22.1% each successive year for a total increase of 76.2% since 2014-15, as compared to a total student population growth of 19.2% in the same time frame. Already, the service feels that it is “outgrowing” the space, as there is an evident need to expand the Mental Health Advice team. However, the transient nature of the student populace poses challenges in this regard.

“October to November and January through



There is still abandoned space, as budget ran out before renovating fully

// Henry Alman

NEWS

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March are very busy times of year. Having the staff to reach the 7 to 10 day goal in busy times means having a lot of staff with not enough to do at other times.”

In considering the possibility of interim staff for busy periods, further problems arise. Any student could then form a good relationship with a counsellor that they could not then speak to later – which especially affects PhD students who are at the College year-round. There are also problems with training new staff simply to have them leave immediately afterwards, as well as finding skilled candidates who only want short-term work.

The end result is that the 7 to 10 day goal is an “average” throughout the year, with waiting times rising and falling around that benchmark.

The newly available space could also potentially accommodate other wellbeing services that need to expand. The Disabilities Advisory Service (DAS) is similarly crammed into Sherfield, with offices spread across the 5th floor – and entrances located right outside lecture theatres, which can make students feel awkward to enter.

This potential is one that inspires Rosie in particular, who shared a personal vision for a bespoke ‘wellbeing hub’ for students. This would house the Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Service as well as the DAS, along with other provisions for students’ holistic wellness.

Hannah Bannister, the Director for Student Services, shared this viewpoint: “I’d like a ‘student centre’ bringing together most of the non-departmental services in one place that students can access – including the services in my remit such as the DAS, counselling, and the careers service, but also others such as

registry services. Students should be able to come with any question and get an answer or see someone quickly.”

However, a centralised hub near South Kensington would not address one of the core problems still facing the counselling service: the lack of an office in White City – although Hannah suggests that should the White City campus grow, hubs could be included in both places.

Counselling have been trying to find a space in White City for around seven years, but have thus far only been offered spaces that were unusable or were eventually book-marked for other uses. Recent attempts began approximately 2.5 years ago, the first of which ended in the space being given to medicine – and unfortunately, nothing was reserved for the service when chemistry moved to the campus. Successively, new spaces were offered, but each was turned down due to the inappropriate nature of the entrance. Several had full glass fronts and were adjacent to academics’ offices and work spaces or common rooms for students – a failure to acknowledge the particular essential needs of the counselling service.

A similar problem has arisen at Hammersmith Hospital, which is a short walk from White City. Although counselling has been offered there for eight years, the area outside the meeting room has now been renovated to feature working desks, rendering the office unusable for counselling – it will be shut down next week. Although an alternative allocated space has been identified for use five days a week, it is outside lecture theatres – and needs to be completely refurbished, meaning it will not open until at least the 6th of January.

The frustration at this situation is pervasive



The new space is airy and professional // Henry Alman

– however, it is out-matched by the strong sense of future potential that is felt throughout the service. There is no sense of complacency. Instead, there is a strong desire to improve and grow further to meet the needs of students – and in particular to engage in interlinked initiatives with other wellbeing services across the College community. Claire explained:

“The strength that the student counselling and mental health team have at Imperial is that we are an embedded, integrated service – not an outsourced agency providing it for the university. We are embedded because we are based at the College, and integrated because we talk to and work alongside academic departments and other support teams. We have that holistic view of the whole student experience and understand the student journey – we aren’t in a bubble, we are linked in. I want to see more such linkage.”

Currently, decisions at the College are often made in isolated “silos”

– for example, every faculty addresses wellbeing and mental health on a separate basis, rather than fully coordinating jointly, which could lead to

“There is no point in just talking a big game. You have to actually walk the walk. This is a great start – but it's not the end of the road. We have to keep momentum”

disparities in the support available to different students.

A ‘Task and Finish Group’, led by Hannah, recently looked into how to ensure parity of support

across the College – as Claire explained it, “we want to have consistency across the whole university, so you know exactly what support you have access to regardless of what department you are in.” The group found that broadly the provision is equal across departments. More essentially, it found a lot of positive benefit to meeting in person – and so also plans to propose setting up a network of student support practitioners, where developments and learning can be shared, and recommendations can be made that can then be put before a decision-making body with a unified voice. This is another step towards the idea of “joined-up thinking.”

The resulting feeling is that this is just the first step in a much broader push for resource allocation to wellbeing services – a vital change given the College’s notoriously low student satisfaction scores. Hannah is already pushing for consideration of this:

“The College is

considering a proposed Student Support Strategy created in collaboration with last year’s Union Officer Trustees, which will hopefully be signed off next week as College policy. One of the strands in that is asking the College to commit to considering students and student needs when planning discussions around space, as the College is fundamentally changing toward a multi-campus approach.”

As best summated by Claire herself:

“The whole conversation around space is really about value – it’s about the priority we put on student experience and their mental wellness. What is the value that Imperial is placing on that; what are they doing about it; what space are they offering. There is no point in just talking a big game. You have to actually walk the talk. This is a great start here – but it’s not the end of the road. Let’s keep moving forward, and keep momentum in terms of the big picture of student support.”

A CONVERSATION WITH...

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This week Felix spoke to the Deputy President (Finance and Services), Fifi Henry, about all things food – 568, hbar, Fusion, and Reynolds.



Fifi Henry, the DPFS //ICU

Felix: Firstly, Fusion. Do you have input into College decisions about on-campus food?

FH: Generally yes – they will check with me if they think there might be backlash from students to check on my thoughts. So I've spoken with College catering about the takeover of Fusion, as well as the visual revamp of Reynolds.

Felix: So why is the College taking over Fusion?

FH: Because taking over means the cost can go down – any profits can be reinvested, rather than taken away from the College. So, for example, the 'mix and match' box will be going down from £4.50 to £3.95, and a new meal deal for £3.50, which is a pound cheaper. I've been assured that these prices won't change for the foreseeable future. People are a big fan of the food in Fusion, so the College wants to keep that same offering while making it cheaper and better quality. We're doing food tasting sessions – which Felix is invited to – to confirm that students are happy, too.

Felix: If the College can offer cheaper and better alternatives, why do they ever lease out to outlets like NeoPizza?

FH: Well, sometimes they can. It depends on the food offering. The lease for Fusion was coming to an end, so the College re-evaluated the viability of taking over that service and realised they could do it better. However, for other outlets like NeoPizza or Kimiko in the JCR, that capacity may not be there – for

example, Kimiko have high buying power due to buying in bulk, whereas the College doesn't sell that food elsewhere and so would be buying smaller amounts which is more expensive. That means they wouldn't be able to operate it cheaper, and there's just no reason to if they have to increase prices and operate on a loss.

Felix: Tell us a bit more about the changes in Reynolds?

FH: It was one of the first things I worked on when I came into office in August! They wanted to rebrand slightly – they've repainted surfaces and put new vinyls in the window, which looks a lot nicer than the old peeling stickers. I talked with Ben, the ICSMSU President, about the changes as well, which was nice. They've also updated their food and drink menu – Reynolds operates a bit like h-bar used to, with a Union bar side and a College-run food side. The student experience survey showed students wanted more branded items, so they've included Starbucks, as well as looking into offering hot food like jacket potatoes and pastries.

Felix: Speaking of h-bar, what's happening with the food service there? Was it not meant to begin before term started?

FH: For context, the College decided last year to cut their late night tapas food service, which ran from 7pm until shortly before closing, and the Union began talks with the College to take it over from 7pm onwards. Plans were set up, and we conducted food-tasting

A CONVERSATION WITH...

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sessions – but over the summer, speedbumps which should have been foreseen popped up, and just as I began the DPFS role I stumbled into the middle of it. As a result of those, we haven't been able to deliver the offering we wanted to, and the project is now 'on pause' while we reassess the viability.

Felix: What sort of speedbumps came up?

FH: It was things like the College needing space to clean up the kitchen after 7pm, but the Union needing access earlier than 7pm to do preparation – these sorts of logistical issues just kept cropping up. This should have been noticed, but it just wasn't for a variety of reasons. There were also equipment issues – the use of equipment was never fully specified, so the Union thought they could use one thing and the College had different expectations, and every time this happened it meant another item on the planned menu couldn't be delivered. For example, storage space – to prevent risk of cross-contamination, the Union and the College would have to store food in separate spaces, especially if the Union changes supplier as has been considered.

Also, a lot of the equipment is broken – I believe the College factored this in when deciding to close the late service, as the cost of repairing it wasn't worth it if they were operating at a loss. There now has to be a discussion around who pays for what.

It is hard in my role – I'm joining the conversation halfway through. Hopefully I can resolve it this year, but if that can't happen, the same situation will happen to the next DPFS. It's hard

to generate consistent student-side pressure this way.

Felix: Has staff turnover at the Union contributed to these miscommunications?

FH: I do think so. In any team you need to trust people, and trust that there will be good handover. Sometimes that happens, sometimes it doesn't – as either an honest mistake or because someone is trying to get away with saying they've done something they haven't until they can catch up. It's the nature of working in any organisation or business. The thing is that this problem is exacerbated when you have high turnover – and even for a student union, we have high turnover. It's unfortunate that commercial services at the Union has had such a bad time with this between July and September, just when all these things were being addressed – so information got lost in translation. For example, we lost our operations manager, who sits just below the head of the commercial services directorate – but we have the replacement coming in on the 4th of November.

It's hard to deal with then. People step up and take responsibility for things that are not part of their role in the interim, and then you have someone new joining, and have to decide: do I trial them by fire, or do I try to take on more of the work so I can ease them into it? Which works better, what's the balance? It gets overwhelming. All I can do in my role is apologise – there is no excuse for it. But we're bringing in the new operations manager, and have hired three more bar managers to join Trish who joined in August, so once they are settled in there will be no excuse for the staff side of it not being able to deal with h-bar.

Felix: So the project is officially on pause?

FH: Yes. Abhijay, the Union President, and I will talk to College over the coming weeks to see if there is a short-term solution, and meanwhile we'll be assessing the agreement made with College as the premise of it – that the kitchen is ready-to-go – just isn't correct. Right now, the best we can do is offer small gestures, things like toasties and hot-dogs, but that feels really half-arsed. We don't want to do that, it's not acceptable. We want to provide something in the spirit of a true menu, rather than offer a token to try to quieten people and gloss over the issue.

I'm keeping my ear to the ground and listening for if postgraduates would prefer these small gestures over no service at all, but that's not what I'm hearing. I talk to the GSU President, Mohit, about this regularly, and do get emails about it from students. If I'm wrong and that desire is there, I'll look into it, but only then.

Felix: What about 568? The 'Welcome Week' menu lasted a lot longer than just the first week.

FH: We had the soft launch in Welcome Week, but realised we needed to make tweaks to the menu and to the presentation of the food. We've all seen the pizza on Reddit! So we've tried to improve quality control – which caused a delay, but we didn't want to expand to the full menu until we knew we had the limited one right.

Felix: So what was going wrong in terms of quality assurance?

FH: We've introduced 'spec cards' which detail portion sizes and how

meals should be presented, so that whenever you order a burger or pizza it should look the same every time. This is new, something we are trialling, and we've had to get the chefs and kitchen staff on board, as well as encouraging floor staff at the bar to take note of food that needs to be presented better and let a supervisor know. That just took some time.

Felix: Why has the menu only been changed now, if the previous one was dissatisfactory?

FH: I wouldn't say it was dissatisfactory – but if you look at the old menu, there were items that were never being ordered, and supplies for them just took up space. Nothing had changed in years – the most exciting thing was introducing sweet potato fries – so it was time to freshen it up, introduce more fresh produce, and to take up a better attitude with regards to presentation. There's no point in offering a billion items for the sake of it. If you want to be good at it, you need a smaller menu – that's what the best restaurants do, so they can perfect and finesse every dish. We've now got healthier and more seasonally appropriate food – we're doing soups, for example, and I've heard the hotpot is really good.

Felix: So will you be gathering feedback?

FH: Yeah – I've put QR codes on all the tables, which will take you straight to a short survey asking for ratings and open-ended thoughts on food, drinks, and service.

Felix: It's been noted that the prices have increased again!

FH: They go up every year. To clarify, we aim to maintain the same margin

every single year – when we raise prices, it isn't to increase profit, but to maintain it. The issue is that the cost of supply has raised every year as well. A few years ago, the prices hadn't been updated in a while, and the margins were getting very tight – which meant less money for clubs and societies. Our drinks prices have also increased, but that's partially because of our contract with the supplier, which specified that prices could increase up to 40% over the three year duration.

Felix: Is that not a terrible contract?

FH: I don't know the reasoning behind it – the people who signed it no longer work here. We're back to that same issue with passing down knowledge and turnover!

Felix: Regarding margins – it was noted that during Welcome Week, there were some very large ads pasted onto the tables, which has received some backlash.

FH: That's not actually a decision made by commercial services, and none of the Officer Trustees were aware of it prior. But I don't disagree with it. I understand that it might feel a bit cheap, and we don't want to give new or returning students the impression that we'll sell out for cash – but think about where that money goes. It goes back into clubs and societies and other Union services. The good that we can do with it is really valuable, and I hope that along with our events and the quality of the bar we can outweigh any negative impression.

Felix: Is there anything else you've been working on?

FH: Earlier I mentioned signing off on sponsorships for clubs and societies. I've introduced a

new system for it this year which means I'm getting through them a lot faster as they come up, rather than setting aside time for it later – which never turns out to be enough time anyway. I'm also trying to develop online video tutorials for chairs and treasurers to refer to – it won't be ready this year but hopefully will help next year. Currently our training is really good for people with a bit of knowledge, but for anyone who is completely new it doesn't work so well. I get a lot of specific queries about small things, and am slowly gaining an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of random VAT facts and such! So I want to use that and turn it into a more cohesive and comprehensive guide.

POLITICS

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The Turkish Invasion of Syria

The American withdrawal provides Turkey with chance too good to miss

POLITICS

Charlie Titmuss

Comment Editor

Turkey has always occupied a strategically significant place in history. As the bastion for the Byzantine Empire, as the base for Ottoman dominance of the Middle East and as the gateway to the Crimea, Turkey has always been a valuable prize. More recently, Turkey's membership of NATO was a diplomatic coup against the Soviet Union, allowing for the placement of short-range nuclear missiles at the doorstep of the Red Empire. With the advent of the Syrian Civil War, Turkey has become an ever more important regional power player.

The Syrian Civil War started in 2011. It has evolved over time into one of the most brutal modern conflicts, killing and disabling thousands and creating millions of both externally and internally displaced refugees. The war is multifaceted, with forces loyal to Bashar Al Assad, Salafist Islamist groups, mixed Arab-Kurdish fighters and Turkish backed militias, fighting to secure conflicting political goals. Bashar Al Assad's forces have received support from Russian warplanes and Iranian militias, the Saudis sent funds and arms to certain Islamist groups, and the US, until recently, supported the Arab-Kurdish branches of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

Two weeks ago, a conflict that had seemed to reduce in magnitude flared up again, when the US decided to remove its backing for the Syrian

Democratic Forces. Subsequently, Turkey decided to invade Northern Syria and set up an exclusion zone.

Turkey has taken this

“The nationalist, violent opposition to the creation of a region of increased Kurdish autonomy is entirely within his prerogative as a regional strongman”

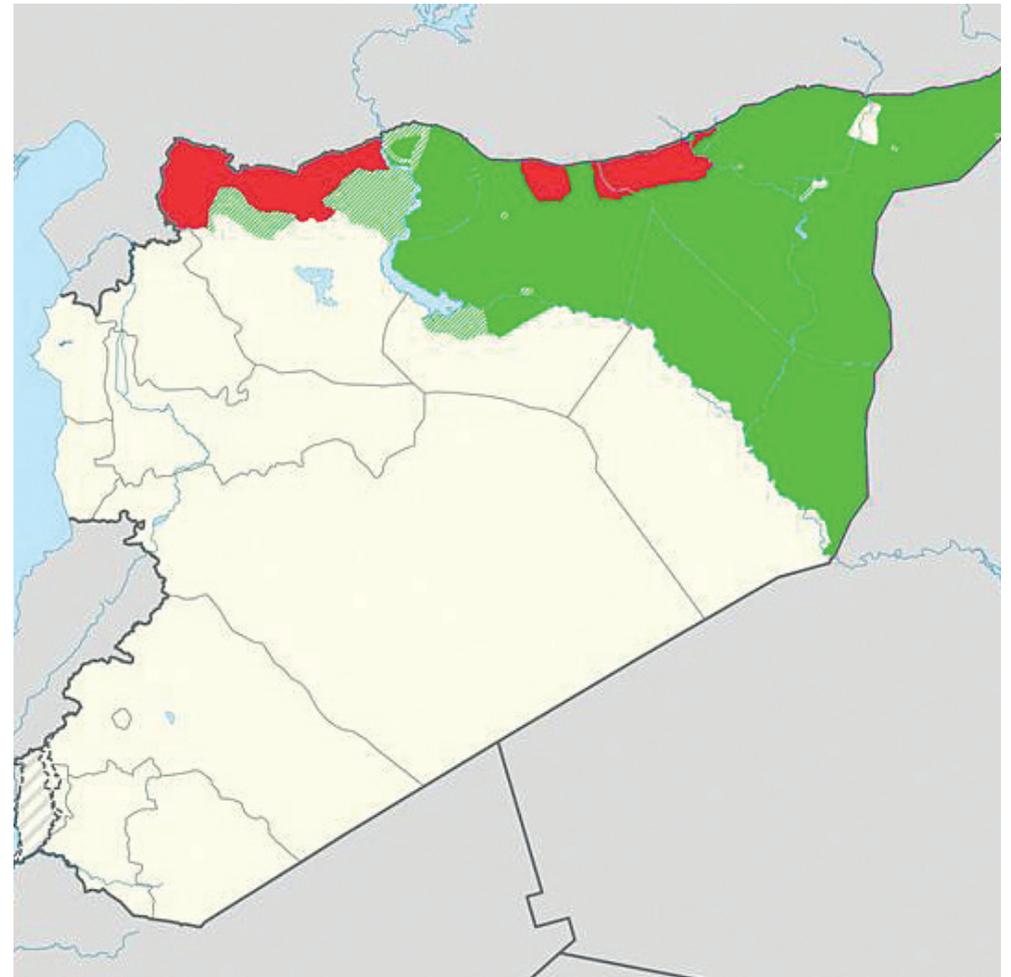
decision for a variety of reasons. The Syrian Democratic Forces is the main occupant of the contested region. The SDF's main component is the People's Protection Units (YPG, a Kurdish abbreviation), Kurdish militias set up to provide protection and security in the region of Syria following its abandonment by Syrian government forces. They have proved to be the West's key ally in the fight against Islamic State, acting coherently with Western special forces to degrade and ultimately destroy Islamic State. However, the Kurdish identity of the SDF is problematic for Turkey, as they accuse the YPG of having links to terrorist Kurdish organisations. Kurds are a large minority in South Eastern Turkey.

Terrorist campaigns run against the Turkish state since the 1970s in the name of an independent Kurdish state have killed many Turkish civilians. Naturally, the presence of a heavily armed, competent Kurdish force has given Turkish security forces much to worry about over the past several years.

However, there is an additional factor that must be considered - the increasing aggressive nationalism present in Turkey over the past 20 years. Politics in Turkey has had one man at its center for the last sixteen years. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was Prime Minister from 2003- 2014 and President from 2014. Over that time Erdogan has survived a violent coup attempt against himself and his government, as well as bringing into force laws that establish Presidential primacy. He has also stoked controversy both within and without Turkey with corruption scandals and attacks on women and minorities. The nationalist, violent opposition to the creation of an independent Kurdish state, or even a region of increased Kurdish autonomy is entirely within his prerogative as a regional strongman.

These factors have been the prime motivations behind the invasion of Syria. The only reason they had not yet been carried out was the presence of US forces in the area. However, Donald Trump, in yet another piece of stunningly blind diplomacy took the decision to withdraw these troops and give the Turkish operation the go-ahead.

The Turkish plan is



SDF-controlled territory (green) and Turkish-controlled territory (red) in October 2019 // Wikimedia

“It has evolved over time into one of the most brutal modern conflicts”

to assault SDF positions in concert with Turkish-backed militia allies and establish an exclusion zone deep inside Syria's sovereign territory. Turkey then plans to resettle some of the millions of refugees that it currently shelters in the occupied territories. Over the few days that the invasion was planned before the current ceasefire was started, accusations of human rights abuses,

as well as damming evidence that war crimes have been committed has come to the fore. Banned substances such as white phosphorous have been observed to have been used by militias loyal to Turkey in direct contravention of the rules of war. Additionally, the assault has created thousands more refugees, as families flee the assault. Fears of Turkish ethnic cleansing of Kurdish citizens are widespread. The Turks (and, to be fair, the Kurds) are definitely not beyond a little genocide, and then denying it for the rest of time.

The immediate impact for the West and the people living in the Syrian conflict can only be said to be negative. As well as losing the goodwill

and support of a useful local force, the West has also shown itself to be an unreliable ally, and it is unlikely to find willing partners in the future. Additionally, the West has once more betrayed the Kurdish people to their fate, as in the aftermath of the First Gulf War and the 1991 Kurdish uprising against Saddam Hussein.

Turkey has been proved to be a poor ally for the West. Its cooperation on Russia in purchasing the S400 missile system, its threats against the EU to release refugees should the EU condemn its Syrian invasion and Erdogan's confessed ambitions for nuclear weapons raise significant questions for the other members of NATO as to whether Turkey is a suitable member.

POLITICS

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WHAT IS CAPITALISM?



What is Capitalism?, Part 2: Nobody Nobody wants to take your toothbrush

In the second segment of an 8-part political economic series: "What is Capitalism?"; we look at private property, the state, and landlordism

POLITICS

Ansh Bhatnagar
Politics Writer

Last week we looked at wage labour and the class divide, where we assessed the capitalist class to be the minority that owns the means of production, such as land, a factory, or an office, and the working class to be the majority that are made to sell their labour power in exchange for a wage and use the means of production to produce wealth for the capitalist.

This state of affairs isn't 'natural': it is a system that requires the enforcement of 'private property rights' to exist. These rights pertain to one's ownership of property, whether that be land, a factory, or office, and they allow the owner to control it as they wish, forbidding access to unau-

thorised individuals.

While neoliberal economists like Milton Friedman speak favourably of private property rights as the fullest realisation of individualistic freedom, saying that "the only way in which you can be free to bring your knowledge to bear in your particular way is by controlling your property", other economists like Karl Marx drew an arguably more useful distinction between the idea of 'private' property and 'personal' property. Private property is defined as property that is unused by the owner and used to generate wealth out of other people's labour, with personal property referring to property that is used personally by the owner. This distinction lays bare the difference between owning multiple houses for rent, versus owning your own house that you live in. The difference between owning acres of farmland where employees produce profit for you, versus owning

your own toothbrush. Under this definition, the vast majority of us own no private property; we only have our personal

"It quickly moves from an economic question to a philosophical one to argue whether the idea of private property rights is a just one or not."

property, and our ability to perform labour.

There is a third form of property, which applies to property considered too large or impractical for a single person or family to realistically use. This form is called collective property and

refers to property owned and controlled by a group as a whole, whether that be by the community (via common ownership) or by a specific subset of the society (for example, the workers at an office). This is an alternative to private ownership and what some would consider to be a more just and democratic model of ownership. So what is there to stop us from owning our workplaces collectively? You guessed it, private property rights.

For one person to own large swathes of land and buildings that they personally do not use, and thus retain exclusive access and control of them, their private property rights need to be enforced. These rights are legislated for by the state, providing the enforcement necessary for these rights. The ownership of the capitalist is asserted through statist institutions, like the police, the courts, and through prisons. In

practice, the enforcement of these rights is done through violence.

If a group of workers were to assert ownership and control over their workplace on the basis that it is used primarily by them, then this movement would quickly be squashed by the police. If the workers were to occupy and resist against the police, they would be met with violence at the hand of the state. Therein lies the cost of private property rights: the requirement of statist violence to enforce them.

This state violence can be easily seen when we look at squatting: the practice of occupying empty homes owned by landlords so that rough sleepers can have somewhere to stay. In London, there are more than enough empty homes to house all those sleeping on the streets, yet they stay empty due to the practice of landlordism: owning a house that you don't intend to live in, for the purposes of renting it out

or for housing speculation. When squatters occupy these empty homes to provide rough sleepers with shelter, the state enforces the landlord's private property rights by sending in the police to violently evict them from the premises. Even when the house is being utilised fully by legal tenants, the landlord is making money by doing little to no work, due to the tenants providing a large part of their wages to the landlord in the form of rent. In this

"Under this definition, the vast majority of us own no private property"

sense the tenants work not just to sustain themselves, and their capitalist boss, but also to sustain their landlord.



In Mexico, slums sit shoulder to shoulder with homes of wealthier residents // Oscar Ruiz/Publicis

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In Mumbai, new high rises shadow the slums // Getty Images

It quickly moves from an economic question to a philosophical one to argue whether the idea of private property rights is a just one or not. If the capitalist owns the private property in accordance with the law, why wouldn't it be just for those rights to be enforced?

If you were to ask a capitalist where they got their private property from, they'd say that they either inherited it or bought it from someone else. In this sense, their right to own the private property comes from what used to be somebody else's right, which then transferred to them legally through inheritance or trade. Thus, the legitimisation of private property rights rest on the legitimisation of those who used to own the property before them. If you were to examine how the previous owners came to own the property, they'd also say that it was passed on to them through inheritance or trade. Trace this line long enough,

and you will end up at a point where the rights to the property were won through violence, such as through war and conquest.

And even prior to this phase of property being owned by those with the mightiest armies, the very conception of private

“Therein lies the cost of private property rights: the requirement of statist violence to enforce them”

property had to first come into existence: go back far enough and there were no states, no police, and no armies to enforce private property rights, and thus

there was no private property. All land was held in common, used by all through a natural principle of free access. In the UK, it was only until the process of enclosure, where the common land was siphoned off and entitled to aristocrats and landlords through legal acts passed by the Crown, that this land ceased to be available to the commons.

In this way private property rights are dependent on the state both historically in terms of enclosure, and in modern times through legislation and the continuation of the threat of state violence in order to enforce them. One widely used definition of the state is: a centralised organisation that wields a monopoly on the use of violence within certain borders. If you own private property, the state is there to use its institutions such as the police and military to enforce those property rights.

This is how modern

private property rights can be traced all the way back to medieval times, with legitimacy of these rights resting on the perceived legitimacy of enclosure and conquest. If we believe that the monarchy is an unjust system, and that it is not legitimate to take something by violent force (a.k.a. theft), then

“Therefore, the existence of a state is a requirement for capitalism”

that results in the collapse of the moral argument for private property.

If private property were no longer a thing, then the capitalist class could no longer restrict access and control of the means of production, and thus could no longer operate the wage labour system

to generate profits off the workers' labour. All property would be owned either personally, for one's own personal use, or collectively, with their fellow workers, tenants, or the community. Capitalism rests on the class system, which in turn rests upon the enforcement of private property rights, which in turn rests on the state. Therefore, the existence of a state is a requirement for capitalism. Without private property rights, the class system would collapse and so would capitalism, ushering in an economic system where the means of production are held socially under collective ownership: this alternative system is referred to as socialism.

That is the fundamental difference underlying the two opposing economic systems: who owns and controls the means of production? Is it an elite minority, or is it everyone? Markets

also play an important role in capitalism, and the perceived effectiveness of distribution of a market-based economy is why many would consider capitalism to be the most successful economic system that we could ever have, despite the authoritarian underpinnings of such a system.

Markets will be covered in a future instalment of this series, but next week we will have a look at the state. We have already introduced the idea of a state and briefly discussed its role in enforcing private property rights; however, there is a lot more to discuss regarding how it is used to prop up capitalism both domestically and globally. Make sure to grab a copy of Felix next Friday for Part 3!

POLITICS

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Resurgence of Catalan separatist violence

Prison sentences of up to 13 years handed down to Catalan leaders have brought people back to the streets

POLITICS

Jorge Martinez

Politics Writer

It's 10pm in Barcelona. On a street corner, waste bins have been set alight, the noxious smell of burnt plastic penetrating the air. The piercing siren of a police van shatters the silence of the night as it speeds onto the scene. Running towards the van, a group of hooded people begin hurling rocks, debris and anything else to hand. The van door flings open and riot police leap onto the pavement and start chasing. The people scatter as rapidly as they appeared, they flee in all directions and disappear into the

shadows cast by roaring flames of the burning waste.

This has been a common scene in Catalonia over the last few days. The recent events broke out on 14th of October when the Spanish Supreme Court sentenced nine former leaders of the Catalan independence movement to up to 13 years of prison. They were found guilty of sedition and misuse of public funds.

That day a pro-independence crowd blocked access to the airport of Barcelona, where more than 100 flights were to be cancelled as the crews couldn't arrive to their workstations.

Since then, many peaceful mass protests have taken place, with

over 500,000 people attending the *Marxes per la Llibertat* (Marches for Freedom) in central Barcelona last Friday. Many

“Supreme Court sentenced nine former leaders of the Catalan independence movement to up to 13 years of prison.”

of these demonstrators had arrived from all over

Catalonia after several days of marching, causing the closing of several highways and roads.

However, among them are around 2000 violent masked youths that clash with police forces every night. Since the beginning of the protests, more than 200 of them have been arrested, including 100 that have already been brought to justice. According to official reports, one quarter of them have been sent to prison on the basis that because the demonstrations are ongoing, their probability of reoffending is high. An especially remarkable case of an arrested citizen accused of throwing a firework cracker at a Catalan police helicopter.

Preparations for these

protests started weeks ago, in anticipation of the Supreme Court's expected guilty verdict, not only by the independence movement but also by the Spanish Home Office, who in the last month has sent more than 1000 additional policemen to Catalonia.

The situation is also having a great effect in national politics, as there will be general elections in one month, and all the parties want to show their own solutions for the conflict, while taking the most out of these situation for winning some more votes.

The President of the Government of Spain, Pedro Sánchez, has critiqued them for their lack of support to the

Context

These events are only the latest developments in the Catalan Independence movement that has hundreds of years of history. The most recent peak episodes of the movement occurred in October 2017 when an illegal referendum was held, followed by a declaration of independence from the President of Catalonia Carles Puigdemont and its approval by the Catalan parliament, which is controlled by separatist parties.

A judge ordered the detention of the movement leaders, but some of them, like Puigdemont, had already fled Spain. The arrested leaders were charged with rebellion by a public prosecutor, who accused them of promoting the violence during protests, especially the ones that occurred right before and during the illegal referendum. Moreover, they were charged with embezzlement for using public funds to finance a banned vote.

Ultimately, the judge has just found them guilty of sedition, which is a similar crime to rebellion in that it promotes the subversion of the established order, but is not as grave because the level of violence is smaller.

However, rather than writing an end for this long story, this seems to become just one more episode of the long dispute between Spain. We will keep an eye on the next occurrences.



“over 500,000 people attending the *Marxes per la Llibertat* (Marches for Freedom) in central Barcelona last Friday.”

Government in such a serious situation. He has also confirmed that the Council of Ministers will not approve an indult for the imprisoned leaders, and has rejected applying extraordinary measures to cool down the situation in Catalonia, as the more conservative parties have claimed.

Thousands massed outside National Assembly building in Quito // Reuters

POLITICS

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Election Section: Canada's Trudeau wins minority government

POLITICS

**Isabelle Zhang
Harvey Dolton**

Politics Editors

When first elected as the Canadian Prime Minister in 2015, Justin Trudeau was a breath of fresh air for a country that for 9 years had been governed by

the Conservative Stephen Harper. He was young, charismatic, progressive, and completely unlike the traditionally understated style of politics Canada has. That year, the Liberal Party won 184 seats in the House of Commons, up from 36 in the previous election, and Trudeau won 39.5% of the popular vote.

On Tuesday, the country held their 43rd general election. Justin Trudeau lost his House majority as well as the popular vote

by a slight margin, leaving the Liberal Party to form a minority government. He thus remains Canada's Prime Minister, but his narrow victory reflects his declining popularity over the recent spate of and scandals.

One of these involves the engineering firm SNC Lavalin charged with corruption, and efforts by Trudeau's government to pressure the former Attorney General to hand down a lighter

punishment, an improper political interference in justice matters. The other involves multiple pictures of Trudeau wearing black-face/brownface resurfacing, with him eventually admitting that he has lost count of the number of times he has worn it.

In this context, it's clear to see how his reputation as a progressive hero has eroded. The Attorney General that he tried to pressure into giving SNC Lavalin a less

harsh sentence, and later demoted for not willing to do so, was at the time the most senior government official who is a member of the First Nation. His brownface incidence brings to mind his uncomfortably costume-like attire when visiting India, for which he then explained that he has always "been more enthusiastic about costumes than is sometimes appropriate."

It's safe to say that Canadians are choosing to

keep in in office because he is simply better than the alternative.

Without a House majority to pass legislation on their own, the Liberal Party will have to form a coalition with other parties, likely the left-wing New Democratic Party.

Highs and Lows: Parliamentary Votes Prolong Brexit Uncertainty

Last week and Monday

Boris Johnson reaches a withdrawal agreement with the European Union, a 115 page Withdrawal Agreement Bill was published. The bill outlines the terms on which Britain will leave the EU and includes an exit fee, the price sum has not yet been established, to be paid by the UK to the EU. The terms are similar to those proposed by Theresa May with the key distinction being Northern Ireland. The bill suggests that it would continue to abide by the EU customs regime, which permits free trade within the union.

MPs were given 3 days to critique the bill before a final decision was to be made. The short timeframe for a such a voluminous and significant piece of potential legislation resulted in backlash from opposition parties.

Tuesday 22nd October

The government voted to pass the withdrawal agreement bill onto its second reading. The outcome of the vote was in support of the prime minister's bill 329-299. Nineteen Labour MPs, of the 245 seated in the house of commons, voted in favour of the motion and in doing so neglected the labour whip to oppose it, with many reasoning that they have a duty to fulfil the wishes of their constituencies. Despite this triumph for Johnson, with it being the first time parliament has voted in favour of a Brexit agreement, his victory was short lived.

MPs also voted on the PM's motion to push the bill through in three days. Unfortunately for the prime minister, his three day plan was rejected with the votes outcome being a 308-322 defeat. The prime minister has sent a letter to the EU calling for a three month extension, meaning Britain would leave the EU on January 31st. However, Johnson has previously stated that in the case of another extension, he would call a general election. motion and in doing so neglected the labour whip to oppose it, with many reasoning that they have a duty to fulfil the wishes of their constituencies.

What next?

Full extension to January 31st

The most likely outcome and one which the prime minister himself expects to happen, in which case he is planning to hold a general election on 12 December. For an early election to occur, two thirds of parliament must vote in favour of the motion. A member of the labour shadow cabinet has stated that that labour will support the prime minister's plan if the possibility of a no deal is ruled out. If an election is agreed to, the conservative will try to get their current deal through before beginning to campaign.

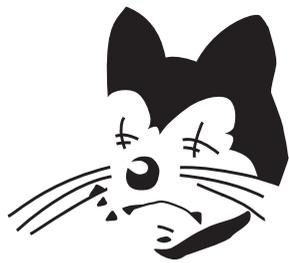
Shorter extension

A less likely scenario but Johnson's preferred option. He will attempt to get his current deal through parliament. With Labour's convicted opposition to a no deal scenario, it's likely that they would cooperate with the prime minister's efforts.



COMMENT

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COMMENT

Grumpy Bastard

Comment Writer

No, you can't have my number. Why? Oh, that's because I don't have a phone. Yes, that does make me a better person than you. Thanks for noticing! I've actually been living life without a phone for six months now, and I've really felt the benefits.

It's not because I'm scared that the Chinese government are going to comb through my dick pics. In fact I welcome the Paramount Leader's interest in my little comrade. It's not even because I am afraid of the imminent zucking I fear every time I drag my eyes through the pipeline of broken glass that is my newsfeed. It's because I'm sick of the cult of indulgence that has sprung up around consumer tech. Who the FUCK needs three cameras in one phone? Who is taking three selfies at once? Why not just have one camera that's three times the quality?

And while we're at it, who on Earth is paying £1,000 for a glorified brick? You'd be better off walking around with your PC in your back pocket. Try putting a screen protector on that. What was wrong with the audiojack? Not waterproof enough? Stop putting your phone in water then, you fucking bellend. You idiots are paying hundreds for

I hate phones

This week, Grumpy Bastard puts phones on the hotseat.



solutions to problems that you never had. Oh great, a digital assistant can make calls for you now? It's a phone, fuckhead. It could do that anyway.

You can piss off with 'foldable' phones, too. I'd rather fold myself into a plastic wallet and jump into a laminator (I hope Xi Jinping doesn't find those photos) than attend a keynote. What's a fucking keynote, anyway? A TedTalk for how you're going to shaft consumers this cycle? How fucking arrogant. I wish Tim Cook, or Mark Zuckerberg, or Jeff Bezos, or whichever human form he's appropriated this

time would just fuck off. If anyone was going to make the gilet any less fashionable, of course it was some horrible amalgamation of Pitbull and a naked mole rat. Tim Cook is just Steve Jobs with less megapixels and Sue Perkin's haircut.

Is it too much to ask for people to stop staring at the fucking black boxes in their hands while crossing the road? While holding a conversation? I'm shocked Panopto doesn't have a live comments section. Even if it is a cesspool of human interaction, at least I might see some sort of participation in a lecture. 'Like this if you're confused lol.'

Just give me some sort of meaningful human connection, for fuck's sake.

Black Mirror was right, we've all fucked our attention spans

"...my Pleasure Dome™, with VR deepfake porn streamed 24/7 into my dry and bleached eyeballs..."

What is even the fucking point of them. // Apple

away. So if we're going to ruin ourselves with a bit of dopamine, why stop at Insta's discovery feed? Catch me next year in my Pleasure Dome™, with VR deepfake porn streamed 24/7 into my dry and bleached eyeballs, while NHS-prescribed opiates are funnelled into my decaying, collapsed veins. Don't forget the added Wank Master 3000™, which stimulates my little comrade to near constant climax. Thankfully, I'll never have to leave the house again with iFulfillment, my newest comprehensive entertainment package that tricks my tired and decrepit

amygdala into believing that I'm living a life worth living.

Sent from my iPhone

*If you can **think**, and you **think** you can **write**, send us your opinions to: **comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk***

ARTS

arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Cabin fever is bad enough without the arrival of alien doppelgängers // Mihaela Bodlovic

Pretty fly for a sci-fi

Don't Solar-miss this futuristic alien drama!

ARTS



Where? Lyric Hammer-smith Theatre

When? 10th Oct - 2nd Nov

How Much? £10 - £42

Callum Drysdale

Arts Writer

Based on the 1961 book of the same name by Polish author Stanisław Lem, *Solaris* recounts the events that occur on a research station hovering in orbit above the titular ocean planet. Orbiting between two stars, Solaris defies scientific explanation, behaving not as a planet but more like a living being. The book is about the futility of humans trying to communicate with or understand alien beings.

The main drama of the novel comes in the form of the 'visitors', haunting doppelgängers

drawn from the minds of the researchers that seem to originate from Solaris itself. In the case of the main character, Kris Kelvin, a former lover appears, torturing

"...the play reaches to the heart of what Lem was aiming for while also updating it for a modern audience."

him with guilt over her suicide. This terrifies him, even as he begins a relationship with the clone that acts and behaves like the woman he has lost.

The play, adapted by David Greig, is a very

different beast. Stripping out a lot of the book's ambiguity, the play reaches to the heart of what Lem was aiming for while also updating it for a modern audience. What was previously all very high-concept becomes more accessible, without compromising on the original vision.

In the novel the characters are hidden away, deep in the psychological hell caused by their visitor. The play brings the crew (all, bar Snow, gender flipped) out of their rooms to argue about the proper way to respond to the nonsensical constructs that Solaris has sent them. While this may be a theatrical necessity to avoid long expositional monologues, it does give the characters a chance to voice the hopes and fears that the planet, and the thought of wider alien contact, inspire in them.

By making Kris' (Polly Frame) visitor the most advanced, Dr Sartorius (Jade Ogugua) and Dr

Snow (Fode Simbo) become the voices of humanity, shut out of the cabin where Kris sequesters herself with Ray (Keegan Joyce). The two colleagues are free to worry about what it would actually mean to make contact with a truly alien intelligence. Through this dialogue, the story, once regarded as Freudian and anticommunist, challenges the arrogance that inspired efforts to communicate with the planet. While possibly the clunkiest of the scenes, its earnest message reaches far beyond the words that carry it.

The setting of the narrative lends itself to interesting set design with a clean white spaceship interior, parts of which slide away to reveal beds, cabin doors, and cassette players. Charmingly

analogous, the play has its astronauts research in the library and smoke cigars. While it could easily be dismissed as quaint, and is

intentionally anachronistic, the effect is to create a chimera that has been left behind in time. The station and the scientists on it have dedicated years to studying a being that has no interest in them and may in fact only be dreaming.

It is in the third quarter that the play falters. The planet, no longer

"Solaris... is childlike, learning to talk to its visitors step by step"

the amoral Lovecraftian horror of the novel, is unnecessarily anthropomorphised. Solaris, in Greig's version, is childlike, learning to talk to its visitors step by step before manifesting in increasingly sophisticated

ways. One scene, in which Kris' visitor is on stage alone, seems to commit this version of 'Solaris' to one very specific interpretation of the story. Though a twist towards the end challenges this interpretation, the damage is already done.

In the end, the tender moments between Kris and Ray stop the play from becoming overly cerebral, by grounding it in Kris' pain and hope, and in Ray's horror at discovering his true nature. By developing a simpler romp out of a hugely complicated text, Greig and his director Matthew Lutton have created something worth seeing.

ARTS

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Inside the flashy mind of Tim Walker

Tim Walker, one of the biggest names in fashion photography right now, has created a collection of 10 photoshoots to be seen exclusively on the other side of Exhibition Road.

ARTS



Where? V&A

When? Till 8 Mar

How Much? £15

Amanda Hertzberg

Arts Writer

Dolls larger than humans. Hokusai's The Great Wave inside of a room. A living mermaid floating in a box. In Tim Walker's world everything is possible. As I walk through the door into the exhibition, I hear Tchaikovsky's music playing in the background. On the walls hang Lewis Carroll-like dreamscapes. Only none of this is produced by Walt Disney Animation studios. None of this is even photoshopped or CGI, it is all built in real life. In fact, Walker

shoots mostly in film. From the quotes scattered around the photographs it becomes apparent that he is a visionary. He reads, hears or sees something and can immediately watch it transform into a photograph before his eyes. For this exhibition, he has gone through the nooks and crannies of the V&A, one of his favourite places in the world, to find inspiration for 10 new photo-worlds. Given the fact that he is a Londoner himself, this feels very intimate, like stepping into his very own studio. Working with names like Tilda Swinton, Margot Robbie, Timothee Chalamet and Naomi Campbell, there is no need to wonder whether he is a big name in the industry. Walker is at the top of the fashion photography game right now.

Fashion photography as a phenomenon is relatively new. It only started

about a hundred years ago after a few decades of hand illustrated issues of Vogue and Harper's Bazaar. Walker actually worked as an assistant for one of the most influential photographers of this new wave of fashion photography, the American Richard Avenon. It is clear to see the influence of Avenon in Walker's work, from using the same models like Tilda Swinton to using animals and animal-like poses and expressions.

Walker plays with colour, perspective and scale. He takes a concept and stretches it like a rubber band – to the max. Sometimes the result is brilliant. Sometimes the rubber band snaps; the photos lose novelty. But maybe this is what fashion photography seems like to the outsider. Fashion photography is intrinsically flashy. It is pictures of the aristocrat, of a separate

social class to the rest of us, wearing brands we couldn't even dream of wearing in places we'll never visit. It's built upon an aura of unattainability. Maybe this is why I'm mostly drawn to his travel photography, which constitutes one of the ten worlds Walker has built inside the exhibition. The photos here are still staged and have elements of silky dresses, pearls and perfectly done makeup in them. But rather than being taken in a studio they're taken in an organic environment.

That's not to say some of Walker's shots aren't absolutely ingenious. They're taken straight out of a gleaming dream or a beautiful nightmare. It is definitely worth checking out for yourself. If the premise of fashion photography is to awe the viewer, Tim Walker hits jackpot this time.



V&A Tim Walker Wonderful Things Exhibition 'Cloud 9' Section // V&A Museum



V&A Tim Walker Wonderful Things Exhibition 'Pen & Ink' Section // V&A Museum

ARTS

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South Africa, France, Dance: An Unexpected Trio

Gregory Maqoma leads Vuyani Dance Theatre in an inspired performance that intermingles South African

ARTS



Shivani Gangadia

Arts Writer

Pioneering South African choreographer and dancer, Maqoma created “Cion: Requiem of Ravel’s Boléro” a few years ago, imaginatively setting his story inspired by South African literature against the music of Ravel’s famed orchestral piece, Boléro. Maqoma founded Vuyani Dance Theatre in 1999 with the vision to build a platform for South African artists, and in this performance he takes centre-stage playing Toloki, a professional mourner based on

the protagonist of ‘Cion’ and ‘Ways of Dying’ by Zakes Mda. He is joined by eight other dancers, and together a piece unfolds exploring themes such as death, loss, and religion through the medium of dance. Maqoma created this rousing piece as a commentary on the political events of not only his home country, but similar ones globally.

The inspirations for this show couldn’t be more different – two pieces separated by continent, culture, and time. But the music, reimagined through percussion and voice, live by the Soweto Gospel Choir, suited the performance perfectly. In fact, the stirring, transformative harmonies of Siphwe Nkabinde, Sbusiso Shozi, Simphiwe

Bonongo, and Zandile Hlatshwayo was my favourite part and deserves a special mention. Their singing was truly beautiful, and at times haunting. Nhlanhla Mahlangu was the music director who composed this interpretation of Boléro that this South African a cappella quartet sung.

I’m no expert when it comes to dance, but the intensity and dexterity, the changes from fast and energetic to slow and lamenting, the control and rhythm, dancing individually and then as one form – it was extraordinary. In particular, Maqoma’s solos were masterful. As soon as the dancers start moving, you’re completely entranced. I never thought I could sit still and watch people move like

this, with no words, for 70 minutes straight, but the time flew so quickly – it felt like you were being hypnotised.

Set in a graveyard, the piece takes you through a journey of emotions that come with death in a modern world where “we have all become professional mourners”, according to Maqoma. This show will keep your brain ticking for hours after it’s over, and the subject matter was so relevant to this day and age. Unfortunately, the show was only at the Barbican for a few days, but the show encouraged me to expand my horizons when it comes to the arts. I’d recommend you look out for the next Vuyani Dance Theatre piece!



Geology students are as satisfied as Sade // Wikimedia

Don Pasquale: A modern opera

A modernized rendition of an opera classic: Don Pasquale, is a hysterical and, at times, sadistically cruel comedy

ARTS



Where? Royal Opera House
When? 14th Oct – 2nd Nov
How Much? £39–£195

Mehreen Ishaque

Arts Writer

Michieletto reworks Donizetti’s classic comedy, Don Pasquale (Dom Pa-Skwah-Lay), at the Royal Opera House. The opera buffa stays true to its origins with a largely untouched storyline but successfully brings its characters into 2019. The result is fabulous: think traditional opera singing, but the song is about

discovering shady messages on your partner’s iPhone. Don Pasquale was an instant success when first performed in Paris in 1843 and judging by the copious laughter on opening night, this revamp has been met with equal enthusiasm.

Don Pasquale’s

“Don Pasquale’s dramatic storyline is resonant of an episode of MTV’s Catfish”

dramatic storyline is resonant of an episode of MTV’s Catfish with the aged and tyrannical Don Pasquale giddily marrying his dream bride, the beautiful convent girl Norina. Within seconds of the diamond ring slipping onto her finger Pasquale learns that what you see isn’t always what you get. Far from his smooth-sailing ‘happily ever after’, an artfully constructed tale unfolds – brimming with hilarious antics and scheming – all at the expense of poor Pasquale. As the characters grow more evil, the humour gains a darker, almost sadistic tone. Regardless, Don Pasquale is undeniably funny – I’ll guarantee you’ll laugh out loud.

Opera heavyweight Bryn Terfel offers a touching lead performance as Don Pasquale by bringing a delicate vulnerability to an otherwise despicable character. Olga Peretyatko dazzles as the bewitching Norina with glorious vocals and exceptional comedic delivery. One should note the show is entirely in Italian and that the subtitles (neck-breakingly displayed at the very top of the stage) are often incomplete or confusing. Despite this, the cast’s expressive performance and Evelino Pido’s superb conducting craft a captivating atmosphere to compensate for the occasional lack of understanding.

Paolo Fantin spares no expense when constructing his dynamic set: with a sports car wheeled on stage, hilarious use of a green screen and a house rotating on a platform. However, while Fantin’s ambition must be applauded, a lack of attention to transitions became disappointingly apparent. Crumpled paper airplanes thrown within the first five minutes of the performance sat strewn on the stage for the rest of the performance. Puppets needed for a later scene were callously placed at the front of the stage, waiting to be picked up. In addition, Fantin’s use of props swings from minimalist to overly detailed throughout the show. Certain mundane

conversations were staged beautifully, while other pivotal fights took place in poorly defined spaces on the side of an old set. Overall, while admittedly remaining visually striking and achieving its desired comic effect, the stage was occasionally left feeling either cluttered or incomplete.

While far from a conventional student activity, Don Pasquale offers a fresh avenue to anyone interested in exploring a new format of entertainment. With modern staging and a dramatic storyline, the performance is a fantastic hybrid of traditional opera and modern performance.

ARTS

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Stranger things called, they want their '80s gimmick back

Art Heist is challenging, innovative, exciting, and fresh. Such a pity that it isn't that fun.

ARTS



Where? New Diorama Theatre

When? 15th – 26th Oct

How Much? £16

Calum Drysdale

Arts Writer

Three thieves all with different motivations try to break into a gallery to steal a famous painting. As they work their way through the gallery, they unknowingly affect each other's progress before finally meeting. Of course only one of them can actually end up with the painting... The play begins

strongly. A penny dropped from a rooftop to judge a drop hits another thief's head who flips it to make a decision. The coin drops down a gutter and is found by the third thief crawling through the sewers. This is an exceptional sequence, and probably the best moment in the play. So why did the play as a whole feel so dull?

Art Heist often feels like a victim of its success. With a sell-out run at the Edinburgh Fringe and performances at various festivals during the summer, it could have been a stand out amongst the innumerable post-Fringe plays coming down to London to capitalise on their 5-star reviews. (The thinking goes that no Londoner

wants to see experimental theatre, but whack an EdFringe Review sticker on the programme and Bob's your uncle.)

The problem is one of hubris. The cast and writers, utterly convinced of their own hilarity and with a month's worth of in-jokes, start cutting up the script, chopping and adding till the original narrative can only peek out from between the newly added nonsense.

What was intended to be a challenging comedy that forces the audience to look inside themselves by exploring themes like art, capitalism, friendship, and reality became a cross between a summer comedy starring Simon Pegg and a game of

Dungeons and Dragons. The solid jokes are buried between fatuous add-ons like "maybe what the play is really about is labels" or "art, when you really get down to it, is just lines on a canvas".

There are clever moments and some genuinely innovative dramaturgy; all action is directed by and setting is provided from a desk next to the stage by someone doing the sound effects and occasionally acting as the gallery guard. What the guard says defines what is happening on stage. Characters ask what they can see and are told where to go. Although a clever technique, the play repeatedly breaks its own rules, frustrating and



Someone's stolen the fun out of this show // Poltergeist Theatre

confusing the audience. Maybe the whole play is a game the guard is playing? Or a dream? Nobody knows!

In the end everyone starts being nice to each other. It isn't a good

ending.

This is the sort of play you should watch. It is challenging and fresh with incredible staging. It just doesn't always make sense, nor does the end feel too soon.

Moving to Mars

"I've always wanted to die on Mars, just not on impact" - Elon Musk

ARTS



Where? Design Museum

When? 18th Oct – 22nd Feb

How Much? £12

Charles Titmuss

Comment Editor

Space travel and design go hand in hand in immaculately engineered glove. Rockets and rovers, space stations and satellites, the unique environmental challenges that extra-terrestrial exploration must solve are fascinating. The exhibition, "Moving to Mars," is the engrossing result of the human aspiration to find just what's out there beyond our little

blue blob.

The exhibition covers it all. Starting off with the

"The stitched together images of Mars are frankly breathtaking"

ancient obsession with the Red Planet, it moves on to looking at Mars in pop culture and literature. Other than the obligatory Bowie, "Life on Mars" CD, there some rather funny comics and books on show that certainly were inspired by the revelations of canals on

Mars and the expectation that we would discover life there.

However, these theories of Martian canals were evaporated by the extraordinary machines that mankind has built and flown to this distant rock. ESA's ExoMars rover occupies centre stage, with a mobile version wandering round the Design Museum foyer. One of the most staggering parts of the exhibition was the massive screens featuring photos from the Curiosity Rover. Stitched together hi-res images give you the disconcerting feeling that you're looking at a rather desolate place on earth as opposed to the desolate, alien, Martian soil of actuality. The images are,

frankly, breathtaking and worth going to see on their own.

The rest of the exhibition is firmly focused on future Martian missions. Videos of SpaceX's Falcon 9's launching and landing are perhaps worth seeing if you haven't already watched the videos a hundred times before. I really did enjoy the section on the habitation of Mars, but I've always been a sucker for miniatures. The only detractions of this exhibition were the bits and pieces of stupid art. Art is not design, and it certainly wasn't good enough to fit in with some of the actual design work present in the exhibition.

The whole purpose of



The ESA ExoMars Rover // ESA

this exhibition is not to show what is possible, but whether it is at all necessary. Moving to Mars is presented as a feasible next step for humanity, we only need to decide

whether we should go. It left one with the rather profound feeling of what if... And the disappointment that I'll be dead before I can hop on the next rocket out of here.

MUSIC

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Big riffs, small ideas: Foals are far too comfortable to leave the stadium rock arena

MUSIC

**Everything Not Saved
Will Be Lost Pt. 2**

Artist: Foals **Label:** Warner/Transgressive. **Top Tracks:** 10,000 Feet; Neptune; The Runner. **For Fans Of:** The Black Keys; Everything Everything; U2. 40 minutes

Adrian Lamoury
Music Writer

Early this year, following four years of relentless touring, Oxford-based indie quartet, Foals, teased that they had a new album ready. This was not to be any ordinary album, however, as they had recorded simply too much material for one record, meaning it would

have to be released in two editions, a sonic diptych, *Everything Not Saved Will Be Lost*, parts 1 and 2. Quite why they didn't opt for the conventional double album format wasn't immediately clear, but it now transpires that rather than two sides of the same coin, these two pieces are thematically and musically distinct. Companions for sure, but more Jekyll and Hyde than Ant and Dec.

Part 1 brought the biggest shift in their sound since the move from the jangly and staccato *Antidotes* to the funk-inflected introspection of *Total Life Forever*. Synth-laden and expansive, we saw a band revitalised with fresh creativity. It garnered them a Mercury Prize nomination, and set expectations high for the sequel. The

second act of their apocalyptic play, however, feels all too familiar. Rather than continue with

"It's unfortunate that their new age NME bait stadium rock comes at the expense of nuance."

this new style or venture further into uncharted waters, they seem to have settled back into their old template. It's more *What Went Down Part 2*, or even *Holy Fire Part 3*.

This isn't to say it's a bad album – far from it in fact – just that the progression from, say, 'Snake Oil' to 'Black Bull' or 'A Knife In The Ocean' to 'Into the Surf' feels a bit too linear. Less of an evolution, more a rehashing with added fuzz. There are undeniable delights though: in the menacing and brooding of '10,000 Feet' and ten-minute closing jam 'Neptune' we see them deftly navigating cavernous soundscapes, interspersed with huge crescendos, and awash with obscure and evocative lyrics. They serve as a contemplative reprise to the brash and raucous first side.

With its meaty riffs and howling vocals, Part 2 is made for big, high-octane shows. And it makes sense – Foals have, deservedly



Maybe it's better if we don't save this one // *DIY Mag*

so, earned themselves a reputation as one of the best live acts around, as anyone who has seen them will attest. While they don't really go in for onstage theatrics, the pure unbridled energy of their performances keeps the crowds flocking back. It's natural, therefore, that they should seek to distil that dynamism into this record. In this age

of streaming, touring is more than ever the significant source of income for artists, so you can't blame them. For many fans though it's unfortunate that their new age NME-bait stadium rock comes at the expense of the more nuanced, intricate, Talking Heads-esque quaintness for which they were formally known and

Decimal man still CRUSHing it after over four years

MUSIC

Crush

Artist: Floating Points. **Label:** Ninja Tune. **Top Tracks:** Last Bloom; LesAlpx; Bias. **For Fans Of:** Four Tet; Mount Kimbie; Burial. 44 minutes

Martin Flerin
Music Editor

Floating Points is a man with a PhD from UCL. Now, I wouldn't want to set the bar TOO high but FP's friend Dan Snaith, a.k.a. Caribou, a.k.a. Daphni, has a PhD from Imperial, as does Brian May. Looking at musicians with doctorates from the most (un?)prestigious London universities, that is an elite crowd. Does

Sam Shepherd stack up? I mean, hair-wise he has neither the aggressively balding forehead of Snaith nor the luscious foliage of May. So what is he then? Are his beats any good? Does Imperial's newspaper rate his new album, *Crush*?

Unsurprisingly, for a man whose academic background is in neuroscience, FP's music is very cerebral. The beats have a jazzy vibe to them, and despite being dense and layered retain a feet-moving verve. This has always been the case. It is the melodies which are a departure on his newest effort. On his previous LP, 2015's *Elaenia*, they were subtle, drawn out, and built up over a span of minutes. He had a whole band to round out the delicate electronic

sound: guitars, strings, percussion... This time around he goes it alone.

The first track on the album immediately links us to the symphonic depth that we're used to hearing from the nerdy producer who named himself after non-integers. By the halfway point of 'Falaise' the flutes, brass, and strings are mingling with a synth overdosing on grossbeat, and the album never looks back. 'Last Bloom' picks up with some nice glitchy arpeggios panning from ear to ear, as well as some very crushing beats, but never takes it above second gear. The ambient sound continues in the next track, 'Anasickmodular', after which another orchestral piece, hilariously titled 'Requiem for CS70 and Strings', prepares us

for the meat of the album.

'Karakul', which a google search tells me is the name of an Uzbek sheep breed, acts as the bassy platter on which the highlight of the album is served. The melodically roaming, kick-stomping, deep bass driven 'LesAlpx' opens with two elements which follow the entirety of the track. There is the one-note bassline and, at the end of the phrase, a little telephone beep of a flourish. They are joined by a relentless four to the floor and very curt closed hats. Finally, some deep-cave-sounding synths pan in and out to round out the aura of being a hawk on an intense flight over some very tall mountains. The best feat of the song is the way it completely recedes at the midpoint,



Look closely and you'll see the truth // *Ninja Tune*

before taking you by the collar and marching you to its conclusion.

The rest of the album then tunes it down a notch again, with some highlights of the mysterious and atmospheric sound including 'Bias', containing a bass that sounds like it wants to hurt me, and 'Birth', which sounds like the synthy cousin of a classical ballroom dance

piece.

So, Mr. biologist, what comes after Birth? Well, it all ends with 'Apoptose' in two parts, the so-called programmed cell death (he can't help himself with the weird science flexing, can he?), placing an exquisitely serene nightcap on an excellent album. You might be from UCL, but we have to give you this one...

MUSIC

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An interview with Imperial's very own Roy Juxon

First Year Maths student, Zeb Cobb (Roy Juxon) sits down with Hip Hop Soc President, Asad Raja, to talk about his influences, process and journey.

MUSIC

Asad Raja
Music Editor

Felix: So when did this all start?

RJ: Still pretty recently actually. I only really got into it during my gap year. That's when I did my Walland Hill EP, just before going travelling. But I hadn't really done any music until January this year.

Felix: Really? Ever?

RJ: So, I used to produce drum and bass stuff, like 3 years ago. But 'Waiting for Something' in January was the first song as Roy Juxon. I didn't really tell anyone about it, just tried to plug it to a few random people and they kinda liked it so I decided to keep trying stuff out. My first proper public track was 'Self-reflection'. That was the first one I let my friends hear.

Felix: I find it interesting that 'Waiting for Something' was your first track because I think a lot of people would just be messing about with their very first song to see what works, but it's actually got quite a deep theme to it – was there something specific that inspired it?

RJ: It was kind of inspired by this bridge outside the David Lloyd I was working at at the time. People said someone had committed suicide by jumping off it. It's kind of about the thought process about wanting to jump and then jumping, and

"waiting for something" as in waiting for something good to happen.

Felix: So where did you grow up? And what did you listen to growing up?

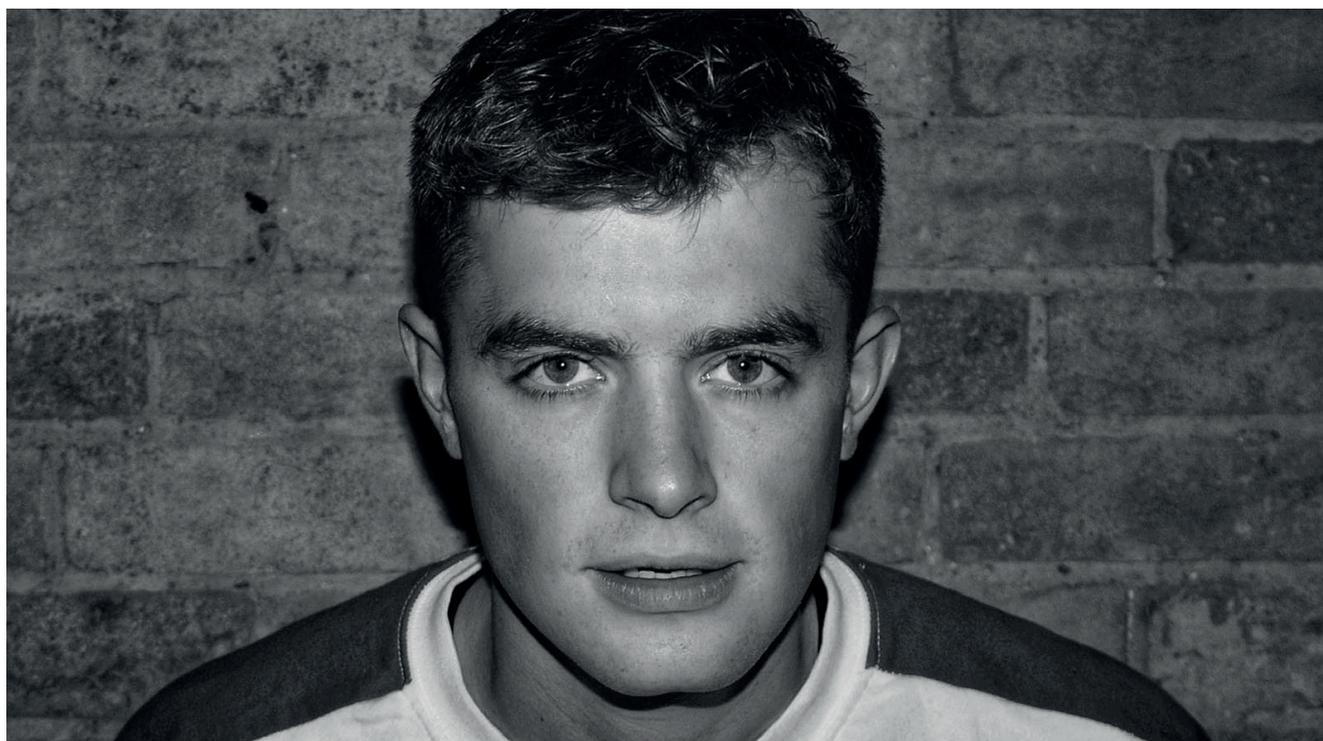
RJ: I'm from Exeter, down south. I've always done classical music – like opera stuff. I didn't really listen to that stuff though. I had my Eminem phase and then I went through 90s and 00s hip hop. Then I started listening to more alternative stuff and grunge. It was *Swimming* by Mac Miller that made me fall back in love with hip hop, and I just went through the modern greats after that – J.Cole, Kendrick.

Felix: I feel like that album hinted at him finally being able to cope with stuff. And that was just so tragically juxtaposed by his death.

RJ: That's part of why it's become so iconic. Like the last song, 'So It Goes', he's like saying people die and it's just whatever. And then literally a month later that happens.

Felix: We've had a lot of deaths in hip hop recently. Especially of rappers whose music is very personal for fans – Peep, XXX, Mac. Do many artists have a personal impact on you that inspires your style?

RJ: At the moment, I'm very much just starting out. Like, 'Confusion' is the first song I've put on Spotify. So I'm still just trying to find my style. In terms of influence, whenever I find a new



Mac Miller influenced introspection with a confident flow over daydreamy production // Zeb Cobb

artist or am listening to a song and really like it, I just try and do a song in a similar style to that. So something like 'START' – have you listened to that one?

Felix: Yeah, it's very Jaden Smith.

RJ: Yeah, very Jaden Smith and also Travis Scott. I liked that bit with that synth scale run kind of thing in 'Butterfly Effect' so I tried to just put that in, and also take inspiration from his use of autotune.

Felix: So do you handle your own production then?

RJ: No, I generally go out to external producers, mainly because I know how time consuming it can be to produce a track. My thinking is that I just want to get some momentum right now, actually get tracks out. Then once I've got that, maybe I can begin to focus on doing more of

my own production.

Felix: What's your song writing method like?

RJ: I always start with the chorus, I'm only really motivated to work on a verse once I have a catchy chorus. And then from the chorus I go to theme, and then the theme leads to me freestyling a verse just to get a flow. And then once I have the flow, I just re-write the verse with the lyrics that I want.

Felix: Tell me a bit about Walland Hill EP.

RJ: So, my old house was called Walland Hill. Moving was quite melancholic and I wanted to put together a concise project that reflected on that time in my life. 'Hours' and 'Summer She Said' are about my girlfriend, 'Self Reflection' is kind of about not wanting to waste away my life in a 9-5 and then 'Lost a Friend' is about how while studying I sometimes tend

to lose my creative side and wanting to get back in touch with it.

Felix: Would you ever consider working on a complete album?

RJ: Not for the time being, I'd only do that if I had the opportunity to work on it full time. I'm quite enjoying singles for the time being. It means I can enjoy the excitement of releasing regularly. And they're all their own entity, so that lets me get a bit of variety.

Felix: Are you kind of settled into a routine now with balancing uni and music, or do you tend to question which path is more important to you?

RJ: I think if I could do it full time and sustain it, I would. I quite like the balance though. If there's ever a day where the music isn't very good, at least I have maths, and vice versa. And also, for

the time being, I am able to successfully release a single at least every one or two months. Because in the Summer I made a load of songs that I can now progressively release. I'll probably release a song called 'Out of Touch' within the next six weeks. I've got others that are done too but I don't think they're up to scratch for me to release – I just want whatever I put out to be of a professional standard.

"I just want whatever I put out to be of a professional standard"

Check out Roy Juxon on SoundCloud, his new single 'Confusion' is out now. He also has a gig in London coming up at the end of November!

MUSIC

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50 years young – Led Zeppelin II celebrates half a century of blowing people’s minds

1969. The year of the moon landing. The middle of the Vietnam war. One band gaining hype from their first album is soon to cement themselves in rock history with their second album: Led Zeppelin II. This week marks its 50th anniversary.

MUSIC

Emily Freeman

Music Editor

Led Zeppelin II was formed out of incessant pressure from their record label Atlantic Records, who wanted to ride on the hype of Led Zeppelin’s first album, Led Zeppelin, released 7 months beforehand in March 1969. The important consequence of this meant that recording occurred throughout the multiple ongoing European and American tours of the first album, and ultimately gave the album an urgent feel. This insistent touring took its toll on production: writing would have to be squeezed in between travelling that morning and performing that evening, often in that night’s hotel room.

Recording wasn’t much different, as sessions took place in multiple studios across London, LA, New York, Memphis and ‘the Hut’ in Vancouver, so named because it was poorly equipped but was all that was available for recording. Jimmy Page eventually commented that he was “really fed up of it (the album). I’d just heard it so many times in so many places. I really think I had lost confidence in it.” Impressively, despite the restricted time, Led Zeppelin II highlights the band’s evolving sound, creeping from the blues-inspired first album to a heavier sound that also hints at the more acoustic direction they were to take on subsequent releases.

The album breaks open with the iconic riff of ‘Whole Lotta Love’, a staple of the Led Zepp setlist, complete with a swooning psyche-

delic middle section lovingly referred to as ‘the freakout’. This was a result of Page and engineer Eddie Kramer “flying around the room... twiddling every knob known to man” which made a “technique” that was extremely innovative for its time. Other effects were unintentional, including a happy accident involving Robert Plant’s faded vocals towards the end of the track, which came about as a take bled into the master vocal tape. Instead of re-recording, Page and Kramer added extra effects to highlight the sound. Plant’s vocals on the entirety of this record have noticeably matured from their previous album, as have his lyrics. The second song ‘What is and What Should Never Be’ on the album highlight this more sophisticated lyrical aspect, such as “And hap-

piness is what you need so bad/girl, the answer lies with you, yeah”. Effects placed on Plant’s vocals and again using the ‘twiddling knobs’ effect from ‘Whole Lotta Love’ combined in an overtly psychedelic noise.

Cracking open with another classic Page riff, ‘The Lemon Song’ swings back to Led Zepp’s blues-inspired roots. Said to have improvised the entire thing, bassist John Paul Jones plays a funk-up bassline, earning the song a medal just for it alone. The song twists and turns, going from its jazzy riff to a Page guitar solo, into a stripped back section to allow the bassline to shine through and finally into an all-out rampage with everyone giving it their all. It’s just an incredible song. After the slap of that, the album settles down next into a matured, lighter sound with ‘Thank You’. This track involved Page playing both 12-string electric and acoustic guitars, and with Jones on an organ this song truly steps back from the classic Led Zepp sound and ushers in the ever-evolving noise they will introduce more of on their next album Led Zeppelin III. Once again Plant outdoes his former self lyrically: “little drops of rain whisper of the pain/tears of loves lost in the days gone by”. By expressing his love for his wife Maureen, Plant gives the song a beautiful poignant feel in true ballad fashion.

Busting out of that

loveless nonsense, comes ‘Heartbreaker’, an absolutely iconic Led Zepp song, complete with an infectious Page riff and ostentatious lyrics from Plant. “Hey fellas, have you heard the news?/You

“Led Zeppelin II highlights the bands evolving sound, creeping from the blues-inspired first album”

know that Annie’s back in town?” instantly brings the listener in as Plant’s confidant, where we find out what Annie has done to Plant: “one thing I do have on my mind, if you can clarify please do/is the way you call me by another man’s name when I’m trying to make love to you”.

Naughty Annie. Plant’s boasting but sad story is overlaid with Jones’ bubbling bassline and intertwined with many showy Page solos (apparently, this song was written so Page could show off his solo skills – go figure). Interestingly, if you listen closely you can hear the difference between guitar tones of Page’s riff and solo – an incontinuity due to recording in a different studio from where the rest was recorded. Heartbreaker flows straight into ‘Living

Loving Maid (She’s Just a Woman)’, a classic rock song which paved the way for many more classic rock songs and majorly influenced the hair metal of the eighties. Whilst still brilliant, this song lacks the energy of Page’s other riffs, perhaps indicating his focus on making intricate and elaborate riffs and solos in other songs on the album. ‘Ramble on’ is an example of the sort of thing Page is focussing on instead; again, the band promote that acoustic noise they will move towards but with it comes the heavy rock element, psychedelic effects and another intense Page riff. If one song were to summarise the album, it would be this one.

‘Moby Dick’ is a break for Plant’s vocals – the instrumental song was added to showcase drummer John Bonham’s abilities and is a writhing, building song which well displays his capabilities. The closing song, ‘Bring it on Home’, starts off with mysterious bluesy harmonica before belting into the typical Led Zepp noise, accentuating the band’s nod to their blues route but ultimately displaying how they have already outgrown themselves in one certain genre. This song seems to be their goodbye to classic blues, before they would shortly be defining their own genres and defying others. In short, happy birthday to one of the most influential rock albums the genre has ever seen.



Happy Birthday and congrats on still being relevant // Fonts In Use

MUSIC

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Foundations of Hip Hop: The Memphis Underground

The widespread influence of the Memphis underground scene in modern music.

MUSIC

Avish Vijayaraghavan
Music Writer

Memphis hip hop emerged from the underbelly of Memphis, Tennessee in the early 90s. While the genre was distinctly underground, it has pervaded through decades of hip hop that followed. Characterised by dark lo-fi production, triplet flows, and repetitive hooks, the subject matter consisted mainly of street tales from Memphis ghettos with occasional references to the occult. Samples from horror movies and soul drum beats were the finishing touches to the hypnotic music you find in the cassette tapes of the era.

The short choruses and minimal synth melodies that were commonplace in the region went on to shape much of the future American club scene. Three 6 Mafia, the most famous artists of the original Memphis cohort, birthed the crunk sound that was later expanded on by other artists in the

“...created dreamlike soundscapes that would serve as the basis for the SoundCloud and mumble rap artists that followed.”

South. Over the next 15 years, trap would evolve out of crunk, but it wasn't until it re-acquired some elements of the Memphis sound again - for example, the triplet flow popularised by the Migos originated in Memphis - that it filtered into the mainstream and began dominating the charts. And artists are aware of this. Recent hits like “Look Alive” and “Powerglide” pay direct homage to the originals.

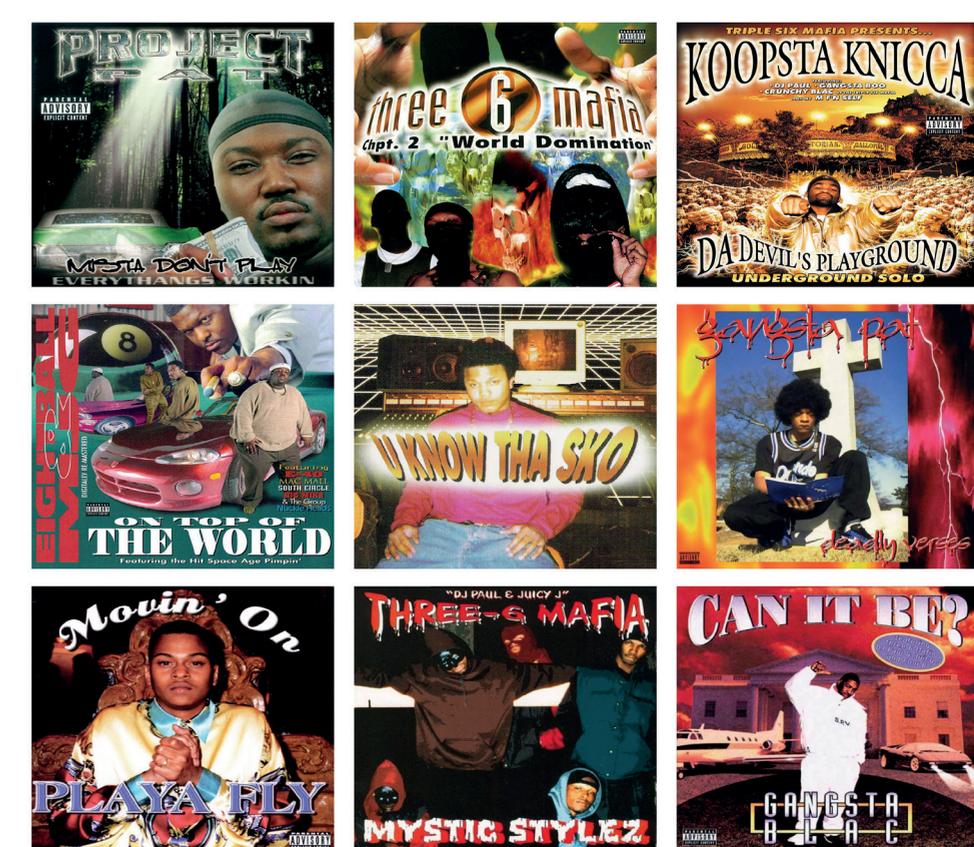
Outside of the South, Chicago had started to develop its own sound – drill music. And while drill was mainly built off trap with the help of people like Waka Flocka Flame and Lex Luger, Memphis managed to trickle in again. Chief Keef's breakout hit, “Love Sosa”, that transported drill across international waters, uses a flow from the Three 6 Mafia song “Stomp”. Drill rappers don't worry about metaphors and other lyrical tropes, instead focussing on gritty violent lyrics akin to those from the Memphis era. Both cities share heavy poverty and rife gang culture that combined to produce captivating music rooted in realism.

And this DIY ethos in the scene wasn't a conscious stylistic choice but, rather, a reflection of the area's reality. The distinctive drums (like the 808 cowbell) resulted from producers being forced to experiment within the limitations of cheap drum machines. Producers would use the same samples and sometimes sample each other's music, creating a very recognisable sound. Most artists would have to make hand-drawn flyers and try to sell their tapes at the local record shops.

They didn't care so much for lyricism as they did for style and atmosphere, and this focus on aesthetics is integral to many of the hip hop subgenres that followed in the 2000s onwards.

The influence is especially prominent in the internet genres that grew out of the late 2000s like cloud rap and phonk. Cloud rap is one of the biggest subgenres that took clear inspiration from Memphis' focus on atmosphere and mood. Many of its biggest proponents, like Clams Casino and Sad Boys, created dreamlike soundscapes that would serve as the basis for the SoundCloud and mumble rap artists that followed. In many of these genres, the focus on music is as important as the visuals - cloud rap and another microgenre called vaporwave both have artwork that takes inspiration from the layout and symmetry of Memphis album covers.

Phonk was popularised by one of the most important underground producers in hip hop, SpaceGhostPurrp (SGP). A member of Raider Klan, alongside prominent artists like Denzel Curry and Xavier Wulf, SGP gave his spin on the Memphis sound with his 2012 album *Mysterious Phonk: Chronicles of SpaceGhostPurrp*. He also worked alongside one of the other main producers of 2010s Memphis-style hip hop, Lil Ugly Mane (LUM). While SGP's work followed the mould of the 90s work, LUM took the production and revamped it for the 2010s. His underground classic, *Mista Thug Isolation*, is an over-the-top take on hip hop culture that adds emotive synths and



Popular tapes from the era // Various Sources

jazzy samples to the core sound. Without these two producers and Memphis, entire subgenres may not have existed and dozens of artists along with that.

This musical effect became more apparent when an emerging group of SoundCloud rappers started to build up a cult following around the world. Suicideboys and Ghostmane are two from that crop of artists that popularised the trap metal sound. They hover across a dark lyrical spectrum that draws on a lot of the horrorcore imagery from Memphis, combined with ideas from heavy metal, industrial, and emo music. Both of these artists sharpened the original Memphis aesthetic to give it a more abrasive edge, combining the drum patterns with more distorted bass and vocal aggression.

Looking outside of American hip hop, the impact is still there. British artists Dizze

Rascal and Novelist both pioneered a faster, colder form of grime called Ruff Sound that takes inspiration from the Memphis underground. The drums are skippier, and ice-cold synths replace the eerie pianos, but the sinister

“The Memphis scene has taught us that what's considered underground is dependent on time and location.”

feeling of gangs in impoverished inner-city estates remains - it's a distinctly English take on the Memphis sound. Early Memphis adlibs and hooks

still get sampled frequently in modern music, occasionally beyond hip hop - alternative pop artist Blood Orange has used samples from Memphis legends, Project Pat and Tommy Wright III, on his last two projects.

The Memphis scene has taught us that what's considered underground is dependent on time and location. It may not have been the biggest genre when it was around, but years later the impact is felt globally. Unfortunately, since this influence is often indirect, the scene doesn't get the acknowledgement it deserves. But one thing is for certain, the cascading number of subgenres spawned by hip hop retain some part of the original Memphis scene's DNA, even if they don't always know it.

Union Page



Let's talk about grime

To celebrate the release of a Wot Do U Call It?, a magazine dedicated to grime and Black British music, we're bringing to you all a panel discussion focused on Blackness in the music and creative industries. Come down to Metric at 18:30 on Saturday 26 October.

We still have a few more events for Black History Month, including:

ACS Great Debate Tour

Tuesday 29 October | 18:00-21:00 | City & Guilds Building 200

V&A Black History Month Art Tour

Wednesday 30 October | 14:00-15:30 | V&A, Exhibition Road Entrance

Throughout Black History Month, we are also celebrating the Black community at Imperial by sharing their life here, one story at a time. Follow their stories at [instagram.com/blackpeopleofimperial](https://www.instagram.com/blackpeopleofimperial)



Officer Academy

Are you on the committee for a Club, Society or Project? If you were unable to make the Officer Academy in June and September, you can still take part in the exact same sessions we're holding in the upcoming month. These include:

President Induction

Wednesday 6 November & Tuesday 26 November, 13:00-14:30

Treasurer Induction

Thursday 14 November, 13:00-14:30

Annual Budgeting

Tuesday 3 December, 13:00-14:30

Book your place at imperialcollegeunion.org/officeracademy

Imperial College
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University Challenge Tryouts

Did you catch our Imperial team on University Challenge this week? Found yourself answering many of the questions correctly? This could be your chance to represent Imperial and compete on screen in the legendary quiz show.

The Quiz Society are holding Round 1 trials so come along and take a written quiz and try your chance at getting to the final buzzer round. All students regardless of year or level of study can try out to be a part of team Imperial.

There will be two trials at the South Kensington Campus on Wednesday 30 October and Thursday 31 October, both from 18:00-20:00, and one trial at the Charing Cross Campus on Monday 4 November, 18:00-20:00.

Get more details at imperialcollegeunion.org/university-challenge

imperialcollegeunion.org



Make great memories



25 October, Friday

Thank Goodness It's Friday
Metric | 20:00 - 02:00

Karaoke
h-bar | 19:30 - 23:00

29 October, Tuesday

Super Quiz
FiveSixEight | 20:00-22:00

Games Night
h-bar | 19:30-23:00

30 October, Wednesday

ACC Night
Beit Bars | 19:00 - 02:00

31 October, Thursday

Pub Quiz
h-bar | 19:30 - 21:30

1 November, Friday

Thank Goodness It's Friday
Metric | 20:00 - 02:00

Bop
Reynolds | 20:00 - 02:00

[f](#) [beitbars](#) [f](#) [hbarpub](#) [f](#) [reynoldsbarcx](#)

BOOKS

books.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Celeste Ng // PBS News Hour

Celeste Ng's debut novel: *Everything I Never Told You*

Another masterpiece by Celeste Ng featuring a family drama surrounding the suspicious death of a young girl.

BOOKS

Jia Qi Tan

Books Editor

Celeste Ng once again has taken me on a bumpy ride of secrets and fears that will leave me absolutely breathless with *Everything I Never Told You*. Ng is the kind of writer who has keen eyes for one's deepest and darkest desires, and you can feel every character's flesh and blood as if you're living their life as them. She chooses the tell the narrative through a third-person omniscient point of view, and although she often skips around from character to

character, the story still flows and never feels out of place at any point. One may frame the story as the identity crisis of an Asian-American, but I think it's more of a vessel Ng utilises for us to see a bigger picture.

"Ng has keen eyes for one's deepest and darkest desires"

The story began with the sudden disappearance of Lydia Lee, the beloved daughter of James and Marilyn Lee. James came

from a family of Chinese immigrants, and despite being born and raised in the States, struggled to fit into American society. Marilyn was an aspiring doctor who had wanted anything but her mother's vision of her being the perfect housewife. Upon their first encounter, they saw in each other their innermost desire, one desperate to blend in whereas the other eager to stand out. Thus begins the story of the two and their three children.

We see through the eyes of each sibling as well as how Lydia's death affects each family member. We see James seeking comfort by having an affair; we see Marilyn trapped in immense guilt. We see

how Nath recalls the other side of Lydia, the one who craves just a little bit of love and comfort; we see Hannah sees past Lydia's smile that doesn't reach the eyes.

Piece by piece, it eventually became clear that Lydia had drowned in the lake, and the plot unraveled slowly as we learned how one expectation after another piled up on Lydia, with James projecting his social insecurities onto her and Marilyn forcing her onto the path of science. There's very little left she looked forward to, and in her quest for an answer, she returned to what she deemed the beginning of her unhappy childhood and found her ending there in the lake.

I could not pinpoint why exactly I resonated with the story, just like I could not pinpoint what exactly the story is about. It's a subtle, quiet family

"An unsettling journey that forces me to redefine family and sacrifice and empathy"

drama where each character came alive with Ng's writing. The motivations and feelings were crafted with such intricate details, and I was beyond awe

with how the characters are deftly interwoven together. It moved from the search for a simple question to an unsettling journey that forces me to redefine family and sacrifice and empathy. Yet it covered so much more beyond the issues of family, race acceptance and gender equality - it's the loneliness of being an anomaly; it's the courage to fight against fears and expectations; it's about the search for identity; it's something universally relatable. And that's my favourite kind of genre - the seemingly depressing with a glimmer of hope.

FILM

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Marriage Story: BFI Film Festival

FILM

MARRIAGE STORY



Dir: Noah Baumbach.
Script: Noah Baumbach.
Starring: Adam Driver, Scarlett Johansson, Laura Dern
 137 minutes

Dominic Ede
 Film Editor

What I love about Marriage Story. It's a great film, moving. The writing is provoking and real. It's a film that's honest, really honest. It makes you cry. It makes you laugh. It's very clear about what it wants to portray. It is excellent.

If this introduction seems a little strange to you, it will soon become apparent from the be-

ginning moments of this film, where we open with two heart-warming monologues from our protagonists followed by a startling yet hilarious realisation. With its UK premiere at the BFI Film Festival, Marriage Story follows actress Nicole (Scarlett Johansson) and her stage-director husband, Charlie (Adam Driver), through their messy divorce split between L.A and New York.

After quietly building a catalogue of films over the last 15 years, Noah Baumbach has built a reputation on excellent and authentic dialogue, and this is no different, with Marriage Story his best work since Frances Ha. Like many Noah Baumbach stories, this film is heavily centred around the characters and the relationships they have with each other on screen, with Driver and Johansson both giving their best performances to

date.

Much like The Squid and the Whale this is a film focused around a divorce, however, almost 15 years from his original break-out film, Baumbach has managed to kindle a different perspective on the tangled affair and comes at it from a vastly different angle. Where we previously saw the divorce through the eyes of an acting-out and troublesome teenage son, we now see it from the parent's perspective, with next-to no embellishment on the details.

What makes this film both devastating yet comedic is the head-on nature that Baumbach has tackled the story. We get to see the initially amicable divorce begin to turn more and more sour as the couple trade blows in petty arguments and subtle digs, all while vying for their son's time. The comedy comes from both the situation and the dialogue, with both



Separate seats for the Subway in this picture perfect shot // Netflix Productions

parties recognising the absurdity of the situation that they find themselves in. It's a story that showcases the breaking down of a relationship, and then the transformation that follows, as both parties learn more about themselves and their lost love than they ever knew while they were together. This transformation of the character's relationship takes centre stage and we're left to see how they discover what they find most important as their emotions are pushed to the limit.

Driver and Johansson really showcase their talent here, with subtleties in their performance that elevate the characters to the projection of what Baumbach intended. This is visualised in an argument where a whole spectrum of emotions are shown in just one sequence. This discussion turned screaming match shows minute details in moments of levity amidst anger that can only come from deep understanding of human relationships, with the writing and direction from Baumbach

cast brilliantly in the performance of the actors.

At around the 100 minutes mark there comes an onslaught of emotional hits as the characters start digging deep to take them through the divorce, and finding a growing puddle at your feet by the end wouldn't be out of place. This is Baumbach's best feature to date, and will leave you with the strongest bittersweet taste your palate has known.

Tammy and the T-Rex

FILM

TAMMY AND THE T-REX



Dir: Stuart Raffill
Script: Stuart Raffill
Starring: Paul Walker, Denise Richards
 108 minutes 1994

Miles Guliford
 Music Editor

Two years ago, a friend of mine first introduced me to Tammy and the T-Rex: "Dinosaurs? Romance? On YouTube?" I thought to myself. "This is too good to be true". It

was not.

We spent the next hour and a half watching Stewart Raffill's incredible brainchild, a memory I recall with great fondness. The Citizen Kane of dinosaur-romances – I invite you to treat yourself to this unique piece of cinema. Written in a week on the prompt of a shady animatronic T-Rex owner: "I don't have a story, but we have to start filming within the month!" TATR tells the story of star-crossed lovers Michael (Paul Walker) and Tammy (Denise Richards), kept apart only by Tammy's bitter, violent boyfriend Billy who decides to teach Michael a lesson roman-

style: by locking him in a lion enclosure.

One hospital kidnapping and a raunchy (don't ask) brain transplant later our protagonist finds himself trapped in the body of an animatronic T-Rex. A moment potent with emotion, fit to lacerate the heart of any hardened Game of Thrones viewer, follows as Michael watches his own body, lying dead on the laboratory table, from behind the T-Rex's plastic eyes. The viewer is best advised to consider this moment of character motivation when contemplating his later killing sprees. If the characters crushed to death under-

foot are too much to bear, remember that Michael is also an orphan raised by his alcoholic uncle.

Initially, the amount of murder Tammy's beloved T-Rex commits inclined me to suggest dinosaurs remain relegated to troublesome forces of nature, or less, as in Jurassic park (released conspicuously less than a year before TATR). Upon further reflection, this feels unfair. As a giant T-Rex, Michael's passion is uninhibited by the primitive Judeo-Christian values which keep us in perpetual servitude to capitalism's unjust and oppressive overlords, represented by the

manipulative, sleazy Dr Wachenstein. Only when our T-Rex-come-Casanova turns on its oppressor, killing him (SPOILERS), could Michael be liberated and the means of production that enslaved him be used for liberation. TATR works as a socio-political commentary, subtly illustrating how capitalism (as represented by our T-Rex) can only lead to death and suffering, calling each and every viewer to revolution.

If T-Rex killing sprees aren't so much your thing, fear not: romance abounds, as sparks fly between astoundingly famous leads Paul Walker (Fast & Furious, She's

All That) and Denise Richards (Starship Troopers, Charlie Sheen Spouse). I can't comment on dialogue, having watched an auto-translated Italian version of the flick, but I can tell that action trumps words here. When Michael appears at Tammy's window, a towering theropod, he does not lament her beauty, as in Romeo and Juliet's balcony scene. He instead carries her off and brings her flowers, a gesture this reviewer considers far more romantic.

This film scores on every level, emotion, action, deeper meaning. The only thing for you to do now is to watch it.

TELEVISION

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Binge of the Week: *Good Omens*

A fluttery angel and an eccentric demon become unlikely besties, and together they save the world from the apocalypse.

TELEVISION



Creator: Neil Gaiman.
Starring: Michael Sheen, David Tennant, Sam Taylor Buck, Adria Arjona

Jia Qi Tan

Television Editor

Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman's 1990 fantasy novel *Good Omens* was once deemed "unfilmable" given its absurdity but now it has been brought on screen as a six-part miniseries co-produced by Amazon Studios and BBC Studios. *Good Omens* proves to be a faithful adaptation of Pratchett and Gaiman's work, building on the fascinating premise and retaining its whimsical humour on screen. It takes a comedic turn on the mythology of the birth of an Antichrist and coming of the end times, with an angel and a demon lurking around here and there.

The prophecy of an apocalypse and Armageddon, the final battle between heaven and hell, is about to come true with the birth of Adam, the son of Satan. Due to some mishandlings in a satanic convent, both the angel Aziraphale (played by Michael Sheen) and demon Crowley (played by David Tennant) have lost track of Adam and must team up to find him and prevent the Final Judgement. The tale begins in the Garden of Eden, transcending history from Noah's Ark to French Revolution to London Blitz in the Second World War. The duo, who has been

fraternising for centuries

"The duo has been fraternising for centuries"

on earth despite being on opposite sides, has taken a liking to mankind and attempts to save the world.

Multiple subplots complement the main storyline, and although out of place at times, manage to come together at the finale. First and foremost is the tale surrounding *The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch*, starting from the burning of Agnes Nutter herself in the 17th century and her descendants up until the current witch Anathema Device inheriting her prophecies. The subplot of Adam being mixed up during his birth is interesting to begin with, but the scenes following Adam's upbringing appear to be quite detached from the main arc and comes across as a little incoherent and unrealistic. The part concerning the summoning of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, although excellent all by themselves, do not fit into the overall palette of *Good Omens*.

This brings me to my main problem with the plot. Although all scenes are beautifully crafted out, they lack an inherent coherence. Additionally, certain subplots often pale in comparison to the main narrative and could have been fleshed out better. All in all, while the story remains delightfully entertaining, it leaves a little something to be desired.

For any TV show, the production set serves a crucial role in bringing the story to life. It is no different in *Good Omens*, especially given the range it covers historically and geographically. Thanks to the way the scenes are framed, an angel and a demon never feel out of place, as they simply hang around in different corners of London, be it in Shakespeare's Globe Theatre or Aziraphale's bookshop or St. James's Park. But what really drew my attention is the way heaven and hell are depicted, with heaven taking the form of a modernised office in a skyscraper, while hell being a crowded basement lot where the sun never shines. This portrayal is one I never thought about, but it comes across as surprisingly accurate and theme-fitting. Creative takes are especially necessary for the fantasy genre, and *Good Omens* has definitely gone above and beyond in this arena.

All characters in *Good Omens* are wonderfully crafted and cast, especially for the leads Aziraphale

"Like a puff of fluffy cotton candy"

and Crowley. The angel Aziraphale is an adorable, soft-spoken angel whom one cannot help but love, and the same goes for Crowley who is equally charming despite being a chaotic, tempting demon. Sheen captures the essence of Aziraphale's personality perfectly, like a puff of fluffy cotton candy, and Tennant's



Good Omens//IMDb

acting is absolutely on point and could not have been a better fit as the sarcastic demon that is Crowley. The chemistry between the two definitely makes the show, and any scenes with them are simply golden.

From the moment I clicked on the trailer and heard Queen and David Bowie's "Under Pressure", I had high expectations for *Good Omens*'s soundtrack, and it did not disappoint. Every scene with Crowley features Queen in the background, be it

"Bohemian Rhapsody" as he picks up the son of Satan for the baby-swap bringing life to the lyrics "Beelzebub has a devil put aside for me", or "Another One Bites the Dust" as Crowley falls into his own trap, or "We Will Rock You" as he drives his flaming Bentley. Queen's rebellious, unique, borderline-devilish music fits Crowley's edge and swagger. Who knew *Good Omens* and Queen were a match made in heaven?

All in all, I probably can't help myself but continue to rewatch *Good*

Omens every now and then just for Aziraphale and Crowley's incandescent chemistry. (Plus, it's a lot of fun spotting *Sherlock* easter eggs.) While the narrative could have been stronger, Sheen and Tennant's chemistry is all the reason you need to watch this intoxicating, quirky, binge-worthy series.

GAMES

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EGX: Games Galore For Every Type of Gamer! Tabletop, Retro, Triple-A and more!

GAMES

Connor Winzar

Games Editor

This weekend I had the opportunity to go to the gaming convention EGX to scope the latest and hottest games - courtesy of press tickets #GamesEditorPrivilege #ApplyNow. The event was phenomenal, although its position at the distant ExCeL (Royal Victoria Dock) was less so. While the journey to the convention took about an hour, the journey back took two and a half, courtesy of signal issues on the central line. Putting my journey woes aside, the convention held some of the most anticipated upcoming games, including: Cyberpunk 2077, Pokémon Sword and Shield, Final Fantasy VII remake and numerous other triple-A hits. Not to forget the absolute onslaught of Indie goodness available to play and enjoy: Hollow Knight Silk Song, Untitled Goose Game and Castle Crashers Remastered.

So, what did I actually manage to get my hands on? Whelp, due to my lateness as a result of commute delays I couldn't try out as many games as I would have liked. With every Triple-A game having a minimum of a 30-minute wait, Avenger's was one of the worst offenders with a 2 hour wait queue. With what limited time I had left I managed to play RuneTerra, Dragon Ball Kakarot and Final Fantasy VII remake (the most devastating of queues). So, starting off with RuneTerra, the game's visual aesthetic was on

point giving the same glitz and glamour as its base material - League of Legends. The atmosphere and dialogue between cards added soul to the game as well as lore and immersion. The gameplay despite being slower than most typical card games was interesting, however, it does seem to be a Jack of All Trades (master of none) with respect to combining various features from other card games i.e. Magic the Gathering, Hearthstone. Gameplay was (as you would expect) back and forth, every turn the offensive and defensive sides were switched alongside every action the player makes, providing their opponent the opportunity to use/place down a card. Overall, I have a strong feeling that RuneTerra will definitely be able to compete against Hearthstone; alongside Riot's backing it may

“RuneTerra will definitely be able to compete against Hearthstone”

even come out on top! I also got the chance to play the Perfect Cell boss fight in DB Kakarot, which in my opinion was one of the best fights in the Dragon Ball game series in terms of mechanics. My reasoning behind this is that the fight actually felt both strategic and bullet hell-esque whilst retaining the original DB fighting game style, with there being proper boss phases as well as interesting abilities and movements;



A perfect fusion of retro for the switch // DotEmu

in other words I cannot wait to get my hands on a copy of the game purely for its gameplay! Final Fantasy VII remake left me enamoured by its visuals, it was like I was playing Advent children but in game form, the gameplay felt like FFXVII combined with FFXIV, when casting an ability time is slowed drastically to the point where it was borderline frozen (Za Warudo!), limit break is still available, surprisingly they took FFXIII's staggering mechanic and incorporated it into the game. When asking other people how they felt about the movement mechanics, they stated that it felt slightly clunky, similar to that of Uncharted, here's hoping that doesn't become a point of frustration when playing the game.

In terms of indie games the show floor was bountiful and amongst it all what really caught my eye was the section dedicated to

the new Streets of Rage 4 as well as Windjammers 2. Now, these games may not be on everyone's top 10 anticipated games list, but for me it's clear that these games are the epitome of the Switch's intention, simple games with greater depth that you would love to pick up with a friend whilst on the go. Windjammers 2, featured fun gameplay with even more enjoyable strats and tactics, whilst Streets of Rage 4's visual appealed to my love of side scrolling beat-'em-ups alongside the ability to dish out my pent-up coursework frustration on random assailants. Other games that I wanted to play included Hollow Knight the Silk Song, but my desires were stifled by extremely long queues.

Whilst journeying through the masses of crowds I also visited the tabletop section, which was in my opinion, a table-topper's dream with numerous games set up

and free for anyone to sit down, play and have a laugh. As expected of the area there were tabletop merchants as well, something I was particularly happy about given that I was able to get the entire Dark Souls Card Game collection including the new expansion for £50 - an absolute steal in my book given the price of the base game alone. Other areas of the convention included the fight zone, where a fighting competition for Street Fighter V was held, and it definitely had a lot of gusto and fighting spirit given my ability to hear the crowd shout and cheer from across the room. Retro zone was a vintage fan's dream with a massive selection of games to play with almost every console you can imagine being there, except for the commodore 64 - damn I really wanted to play asteroids on something that can't even run MSPaint. And last but not least at

the end of my journey I settled down and watched some of the speedrunners, the one I enjoyed the most being Spark The Electric Jester 2 played by Argick, my heart goes out to him for providing engaging commentary

“EGX definitely has something for any type of Gamers”

whilst dealing with some bullshit moments in the run. All in all, EGX is definitely something for Gamers of any type, may that be table-toppers, indie-lovers, retro maniacs and of course the Triple-A hordes.

GAMES

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POV: The 2019 CTWC - The Year of Upsettris

GAMES

Freddie Ugo

Games Editor

Following on from last week's article covering the Classic Tetris World Championship, it is time to share the results!

It took place from the 19th - 21st and I was following it the whole way. Friday started fairly low-key. A quick Dr. Mario tournament followed by a speedrun competition in Tetris: first to level 19. Surprisingly, last year's champion, Joseph Saelee, lost quite early on in the speedrun contest... I guess he was just warming up for the real action.

Saturday was the first day of qualifying, in which there were some

very notable highlights. Firstly, Joseph qualified first (surprising no one) but to everyone's amazement he did this with at least 3 max outs, (the max score you can get is 999,999). The qualifying had many fresh young faces, including Batfoy... who would go on to come 4th place which will be covered later. Many people are accounting the reason for this influx of young players being the success of 16-year old Joseph Saelee last year. Following this trend of diversity, it was nice to see more women take part, including one player's wife who managed to demolish him in qualifying.

The Sunday was the real show though, top 36 the clash of the titans. The day started with two major upsets. Two of the three previous winners Harry

Hong and Jonas Neubauer both were knocked out at the start of the day. This shocked the Tetris well, causing everyone to dub the tournament as the tourney of 'upsettris'. Even weirder still is the player that beat 7-time world champion Jonas did not manage to get through to the next round.

Top 8 was wild. A showdown of veterans, Terry and Koryan, showed the world how big of a skill difference can come with continued practice. Koryan practices every day, even when he is not playing Tetris he taps a portable button to keep his fingers fast. This was evident in the absolute destruction that was Koryan's 3-0 victory over Terry. Joseph went against Green Tea in probably the best match of the tournament. The first



Joseph (left) seen posing next to Alexey Pajitnov (right) // Tetris

game saw both players get to the kill-screen (the end of the game which is so rarely reached in tournament). The next game saw Joseph get the first-ever max out in a head-to-head tournament setting, causing the commentators to go crazy. But nothing would prepare them for the next

game which saw a max out from BOTH Joseph AND Green Tea - truly extraordinary. Batfoy the 15-year-old newcomer was sadly beaten by 40+ year old veteran Koryan. This meant that Koryan met Joseph in the final. A hotly contested match was finally clutched out by Joseph, winning by 3-2

when Koryan topped out early at 200,000 points. Joseph was awarded a beautiful trophy and \$10,000 by Alexey Pajitnov, Tetris' creator. An emotional moment and a great competition by all!

POV: Super Mario Bros. Film Because That Exists!

GAMES

Connor Winzar

Games Editor

This week I sacrificed my Sunday evening to watch (again) the horrific video game movie that is "Super Mario Bros.". Directed by Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel, the film was both atrocious in its directing and actual content, with so much miscommunication between previous directors and Nintendo that the eventual product was a gritty mushroom kingdom complete with strippers (I wish I was kidding). What makes this film even worse is that fact that it features a star-studded cast with Bob Hoskins as Mario,

John Leguizamo as Luigi, Dennis Hopper as Bowser - a role that was offered and turned down by both Arnold Schwarzenegger and Michael Keaton - and Samantha Mathis as Princess Daisy. Now you may be thinking that the film surely could not have been that bad, to which I would reply, "the actors actually drank on set in order to get through this movie" and "Bob Hoskin described it as the worst job he has ever done and the biggest mistake of his life". In both directing and content, the film was awful.

Heaven help me, I was going to write a whole section about the story ... but realising how many "crucial" details I would leave out has led me to advise you to read the plot from the wiki page - it

paints a better picture of the film's LSD-esque nightmare then I will ever be able to achieve, literally one of the lines from the wiki reads "Koopa informs Daisy that she descended from the dinosaurs, believing only Daisy can merge the worlds because of her royal heritage", which is completely accurate to the film. Allow me to provide you with further examples of how poorly things crossed over from the game to the movie, for starters, Goomba are now 7 feet tall monstrosities that are built like a brick shit house and have heads the size of an 8 ball, Yoshi is a small but somehow creepily adorable velociraptor, the entire city of Dinohatten- I kid you not, that they actually called it that- is coated

in white fibrous material which is apparently the remains of the king that has been turned into a sentient fungus. Last but not least the film features Mario teaming up with a

tight leather clad dance floor queen named Big Bertha - that's not a crossover I just thought I'd mention that. The wonders of Hollywood continue to amaze me!

If you're going to watch the movie (which I advise you do), watch it like the actors: drunk.



Because there is no God // Buena Vista Pictures Distribution

GAMES

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Ring Fit Adventure - Review: Buff Dragons and sentient Pilates rings... what more do you need?

A great game for fitness fanatics and gamers alike. Jump into a mythical world and battle demons... with your abs! A intense daily workout for anyone, anytime, anywhere!

GAMES

Ring Fit Adventure



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Genre: Fitness
Platforms: Switch

Freddie Ugo
 Games Editor

The latest in a long-running list of Nintendo's whacky peripheral ideas: Ring Fit Adventure, fight demons whilst doing pilates. Last month Nintendo announced the game seemingly out of nowhere. The premise is odd, attach a joy-con to your left leg via a strap and attach another to the top of a Nintendo-made, plastic pilates ring dubbed the ring-con. The joy-con's inbuilt gyroscopes can measure (to a surprisingly high precision) the movement of your upper and lower body. The game uses this premise and pushes it to its max with multiple immersive game modes and a jarringly intense workout to boot!

When I first popped in the game, I was given very detailed instructions on how to attach the equipment and how to follow the in-game prompts. You control the menu by spinning and turning the ring-con which is very intuitive. Before playing the main story, I attempted to storm through all the mini-games. There is a wide variety of mini-games which target

almost every muscle group. While playing the mini-games there is an on-screen guide, called Tipp, which shows you the correct way to do the exercise without injuring yourself. This self-care theme is very prevalent in the game. Nintendo knows that a large portion of their fanbase doesn't necessarily know a lot about fitness; there are always tips on how to eat, how to do the exercise and constant reminders to stay hydrated. Given that I had to play an average of 4 hours per day to complete this review, the water reminders were a godsend.

Other than minigames you also have the option to do challenges, where you do one basic exercise such as pulling or squeezing the

“Where the game shines though, is in its story mode.”

ring-con as many times as possible in 20 seconds. You can compare your scores with friends and is very enjoyable when you don't have enough time for a full work-out. If you have even LESS time, there is a great option to play while doing something else... In my 'breaks' I watched Netflix while squeezing the ring against my shoulder. After an episode or seven of The Good Place, I turn the game back on and behold it measured all of my squeezes, telling me how many calories I



The game is as whacky as it looks here, I can promise you that // Engadget

burned and giving me a job well done!

Where the game shines though, is in its story mode. You jump in with a short opening sequence that sets up the story: The evil Dragaux (a super buff dragon with gains for days) gets released from a ring and goes on to wreak havoc in the neighbouring villages. The ring turns out to be a sentient being, aptly named Ring, and together with him, you have to track Dragaux down and defeat him! Not the most imaginative story but for a fitness game I will allow it. The gameplay involves jogging on the spot to run forward, doing knee-lifts to climb up stairs and squeezing or pulling Ring to shot or suck in air to collect coins. These coins can be spent on clothing for the avatar character. There is a wide variety of options, a welcome addition given the very poor initial character customisation.

Running on the spot effectively means that

the game is very linear, with only a couple paths you can take in each level (almost like a 2.5D platformer).

However, the main reason that this game goes beyond your typical RPG is the combat sequences. At some point, you will run into white glowing enemies, which will start the fight. The monsters are hilarious re-imagining of exercise equipment, such as a crab-like dumbbell or anthropomorphic kettlebell. You fight in typical RPG style, with various offensive moves doing different amounts of damaging and targeting 1-5 enemies. The unique aspect is that each move is an exercise. I never thought I would be doing 26 squats to take the basic enemy down to half health but here we are. Each exercise is grouped into 1 of 4 types: Core, Arms, Legs and Yoga. Once you get past the 2nd world even more strategy opens up where certain types of moves hurt certain monsters

more. This cleverly opens up a way of making you do a whole body work out if you want to progress through the levels. I found myself switching from an under-arm press to chair-pose to knee-lifts just so I could survive a

“Each exercise is grouped into 1 of 4 types: Core, Arms, Legs and Yoga.”

fight against 3 different monsters.

I am yet to finish the game but at the moment I am loving it. The peripherals are so precise that sometimes I forgot I was even exercising. I guess that is the true mark of a great fitness game. Possibly the best part of Ring Fit Adventure is its massive amount of difficulty variation. It asks you

your sex, height, weight, fitness level and how difficult you want the game to be and makes, from what I can tell, a bespoke difficulty level that changes each exercises rep count as well as resistance. This is great as it makes sure that you are always pushing yourself as far as you want. Whether you are a complete novice or a fitness pro you will find benefit from this game, it even measures your calories and heart rate at the end of each level to let you know how hard you have been working!

If it is not clear already: I loved this game. If you are interested in getting fit but love video games too much, this is truly an excellent middle ground, with humorous characters, great music, limitless replayability and a good workout to boot! If you were put off by Wii Fit, fret not. This beats Wii Fit by miles and I thought very highly of it. For what it was trying to achieve, Ring Fit Adventure excels in every aspect.

GAMES

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The Gamification of Apps

The concept of 'gamification' is not new, but more than ever before it is being deliberately integrated into app design.

GAMES

Henry Alman
Editor-in-Chief

Gamification may be the best way to maximise revenue and grow the userbase of your app. It's a well-known technique these days, the darling of UX developers everywhere, and a fundamental part of design. Once a niche, it has become the standard – integrated from the very conception of an app idea.

The idea is to tap into human psychology and, being frank, to abuse the flaws in its structure.

Experiments such as the infamous “Skinner’s Box” or “Pavlov’s Dogs”, which explored the use of rewards in order to condition animals to enact certain behaviours, were the starting point – but the concept of reinforcement and conditioning rapidly expanded from academic study to real-world application.

Dopamine is a hell of a drug. Gamification relies on integrating repetitive behaviours into an app that trigger reward patterns in the brain, releasing dopamine and tapping into the human desire for reward, self-expression, achievement, competition, and status. This is

achieved by including gaming-type aspects into design – such as point systems, achievements represented by visual symbols, leaderboards, narratives, and avatars representing the user. Listing the techniques brings to mind countless examples of their usage – from traditional gaming, such as ranked systems in video games or the reward stimulus of slot machines, to apps such as Tinder or social media sites like Facebook.

Tinder is perhaps the best case study. The mechanics of using the app inherently prioritise proactive but repetitive motions – swiping left

and right. The same functionality could be achieved with a simple button-press, but the action of swiping is more actively engaging as a mechanic of operation. There's the additional benefit of the rapidity of the action – instantly offering gratification and lulling users into the idle repetition of swiping over and over, seeking the next kick of dopamine.

Then there is the reward loop – the satisfaction of receiving a match, accompanied by a flash of bright graphics and sound. The use of visual stimulus to push a sense of achievement onto players is longstanding, with slot

machines' tinny music and flashing lights being the easiest example to-hand. MMORPGs like World of Warcraft also tapped into this early – levelling up was accompanied by a flash of golden light. This doesn't even touch on extra features such as “super likes” or “boosts” – mechanics that have deliberately limited availability, instilling in them rarity and a sense of status to receiving them.

The stroke of genius in Tinder's design, however, is that it allows users to define their own ‘win condition’. While a traditional game has clear goals – such as levelling up – Tinder broadens its appeal

by allowing for more dynamic interactions. Users are able to seek different conditions to tap their emotional reward centre, depending on their preferences. Some seek reward in the number of matches they receive, never actually holding a conversation or going on a date; others by how many dates or hook-ups they can secure; others by engaging in meaningful conversations; and still more by finding love.

These design aspects – among many others – have catapulted Tinder ahead of other dating apps. Including them in your app design may well do the same for you.

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GAMES

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Poll: Lego Games! The weirdest great franchise.

Thank you all for your submissions last week! This weeks theme is Lego games! A franchise close to our hearts with Lego Star Wars, Lego Indiana Jones and many more!

What is your favourite Lego game?

Open submission

Which do you prefer, the games or the movies?

A. Games B. Movies

Which famous movie franchise should be made into a Lego game next?

Open submission

What was your first experience with Lego?:

- A. The toys
- B. The games
- C. The Lego Movie
- D. What is Lego???

On a scale of 1 to 10 how much did Lego Princess Leia turn you on?

Open submission

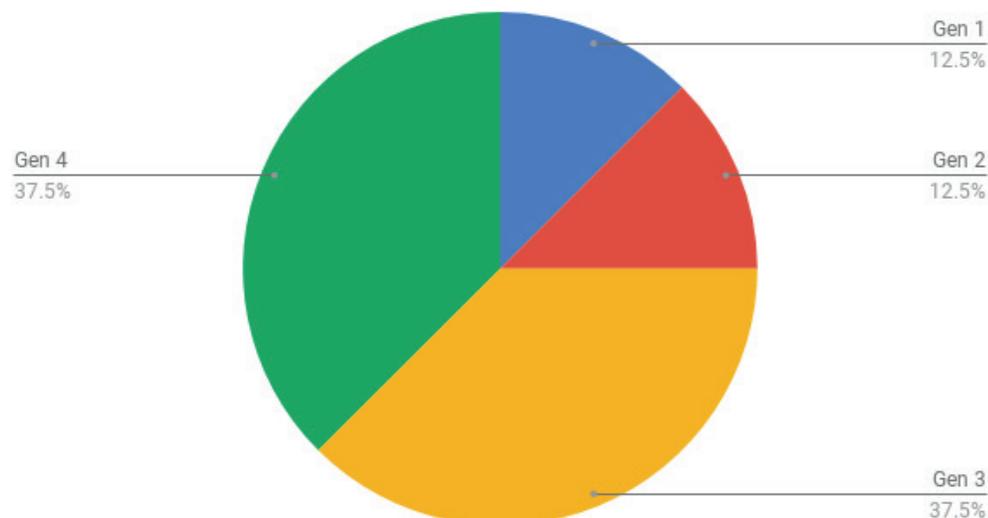


Hmmmm. Filthy casual I smell...// bricklink

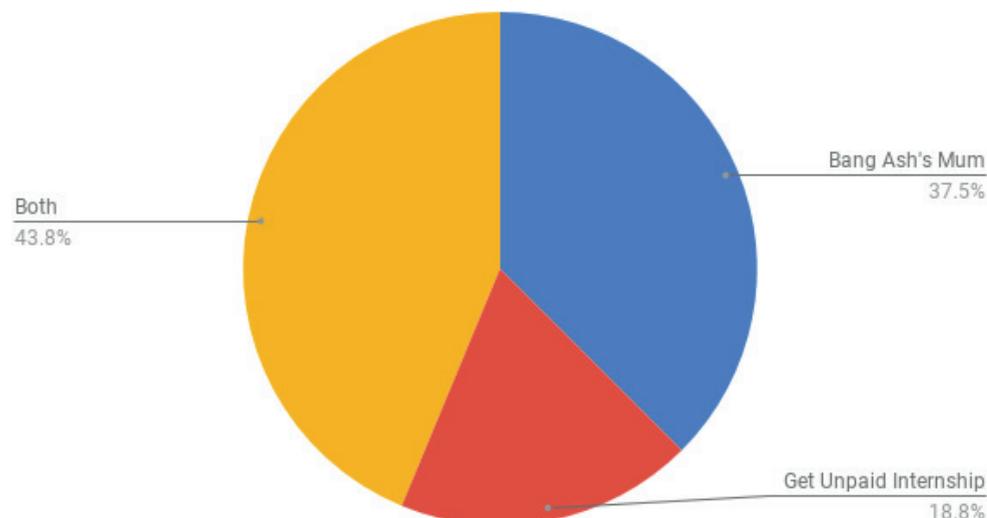
Submit your answers into the Microsoft survey - accessible through the Felix Facebook/Twitter page or scanning the QR code. No need to download an app! You can just hold down the screen on Snapchat or use your standard camera and it will scan the code for you. We'll get back to you next week, with infographics and more questions!

Poll Results

Favourite Generation



Why Did Professor Oak send Ash Away?



Question 3: Favourite Starter

Frookie, surprisingly, was the most common answer! Although unsurprisingly Torchic and Charmander were runner-ups.

Question 4: Most Disturing Pokemon

Spink bounces around on its tail. The shock of its bouncing makes its heart pump. This Pokémon cannot afford to stop bouncing – if it stops, its heart will stop.

Question 4: Most Disturing Pokemon

Almost everybody said Team Rocket was their favourite team, a classic to be sure both in the games and the anime. Shoutout to team skull with 2 votes though, yo!

INVESTMENT

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A Story of Pork Belly: Overview of the commodities market

INVESTMENT

Vanessa Tang

ICIS
Investment Student Writer

Pork bellies – yes, the pork that comes from the belly of a pig, was an iconic commodity for the futures market’s representation in pop-culture.

While it might be surprising that the financial market involves pork bellies, it made sense. The bellies were frozen and set aside, then used to make bacon during the summers when the demand for it

“...the pork that comes from the belly of a pig, was an iconic commodity for the futures market’s representation in pop-culture”

(think BLT sandwiches) rose. Therefore, consumers hedged against inflation by locking the price of the belly through the use of a futures contract (a contract for assets bought at agreed prices but delivered and paid for later). Pork belly futures reached its peak of popularity in the early 1980s. It became well-known to the general public after being referenced in magazines and movies – Eddie Murphy’s character

even used pork bellies to explain how a market works in a 1983 film titled “Trading Places”. (See Youtube: Trading Places – Bookies). However, the landscape of the business changed when pork bellies were consumed all year round rather than being a seasonal product. With bacon accompanying salads, hamburgers, and even milkshakes (think Five Guy’s free bacon topping), it removed the demand for frozen bellies. In 2011, trading pork belly futures came to an end on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) – it was not a shock as the volume of trades had shrunk to almost nothing.

However, bacon is back on the menu this year! Why? McDonald’s reported a 4.5% increase in comparable store sales in the first quarter in part due to bacon-related promotions such as “Big Mac Bacon” and “Quarter Pounder Bacon”. Bacon was ranked #3 (behind shellfish and barbeque) in the National Restaurant Association’s 2018 “What’s Hot Culinary Forecast” based on feedback from 700 professional chefs. Spurred by the growing popularity and the price volatility as seen in Figure 1, in May 2019 CME began to publish a new Fresh Bacon Index to provide a transparent weekly price to those across the bacon supply chain, for a better understanding on the market dynamics of bacon that is sold in the cash market.

You may wonder why the wholesale prices of pork bellies fluctuate so much? Think about the supply chain and the wider economic factors: US-China trade war and the pig-disease outbreak,

Bacon Gyration

Rising demand, pig disease have increased volatility for pork belly prices



Figure 1. The increasing demand for pork belly has led to large gyrations in prices // Bloomberg

which cause disruptions in price and supply.

An overview of commodities trading and a brief history

Pork bellies are an example of the commodities that can be traded on exchanges. Commodities are split into two types: hard and soft commodities.

Hard commodities are typically natural resources that must be mined or extracted such as gold and oil; whereas soft commodities are agricultural products or livestock such as corn, wheat, soybeans and pork bellies.

Trading commodities have been a long-running business – from seashells

“You may wonder why the wholesale prices of pork bellies fluctuate so much?”

to spices, the ancient civilisations saw the ability to create and manage complex trading systems and facilitate commodity exchange as a form of economic development. Throughout the years, the basic economic principles of supply and demand behind trading commodities have not changed: disruptions in the supply chain, such as livestock-related diseases, is likely to lead to a spike in the usually stable and predictable demand; technological advances also often have significant influences on prices.

What makes commodities trading interesting is its strong connection with the economic landscape. Often it is described as the “invisible hand” that moves the market. The most straightforward example is oil – many consumers only think about oil prices in the context of how it directly impacts their wallets; in other words, how much they will end up paying at the pump as the result of price fluctuations. However, the price of oil can potentially affect many companies, directly

or indirectly, simply because of the shipment of products (from where it is manufactured to the shelves). Furthermore, oil price is always a discussion point between politicians.

In addition, commodities are often the most significant exports of developing countries, and revenues obtained from them have an important effect on the economies and living standards in these countries. For example, many countries in Africa derive more than 90% of their export earnings from commodities.

How does commodities market work?

Investors can gain exposure to commodities indirectly by investing in companies that rely on commodity prices or through the purchase of mutual funds. Direct exposure to commodities would be buying into a futures contract. This is known as paper trading. Commodities can also be traded physically – companies secure a supply of commodities from end-producers and help

to market them across the geographies to a wholesaler or end-user. They add value to the supply chain through their unique know-how in the field of transportation, financing and risk hedging.

Something interesting to think about. The commodities market is

“Think about the supply chain and the economic factors: US-China trade war and the pig-disease outbreak”

complex, and it involves many players. While we are living in the digital world, keep an eye on how blockchain can create trading opportunities for commodities.

SUSTAINABILITY

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Imperial's surcharge on plant-based milks

SUSTAINABILITY

Tamara Fernandez
Sustainability Writer

While many green enthusiasts celebrated the rise in Imperial's coffee cup levy from 15p to 25p this September, there has been a new surcharge that has gone relatively unannounced.

Behold the new, sneaky little 30p surcharge on plant-based milks which has been introduced across Imperial food outlets. Now, choosing plant-based milk over the dairy equivalent in your hot drinks will become a costlier affair.

But what does this mean for the environment?

With green ads constantly reminding us to reduce meat consumption in order to save the Earth, the environmental benefits of swapping out dairy products for plant-based alternatives have been sorely understated.

According to a study by the University of Oxford, the greenhouse gas emissions from producing a glass of dairy milk is threefold that of other non-dairy milks. This can be attributed to the loss of carbon sinks when forests are cleared to make way for pastures, along with the gargantuan volume of methane produced from livestock rearing (an average of 70 to 120 kg per cow per year to be exact – yikes).

Higher greenhouse gas emission rates in turn accelerate the pace of global warming, which subject our planet to more dangerous effects of climate change. Moreover, dairy production is more land and water intensive compared to the production of other plant-based milks, making it a triple threat to the environment and its scarce resources.

By making dairy options cheaper than plant-based ones, it is safe to say that customers will be less keen to reduce their dairy intake, leading to further

fuelling of the ongoing climate crisis.

Non-dairy milk options are also often healthier

As much of the fat in regular milk is saturated, the NHS has warned that excess consumption could potentially lead to weight gain and raised cholesterol levels, putting one at increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

Milk also may contain antibiotics (used by farmers to prevent cows from getting sick), which may have an adverse effect on gut health, by damaging good bacteria, and disrupting the balance of gut microbiome.

On the other hand, plant-based milks contain largely unsaturated fats, is high in fibre, is antibiotic-free, and offer a plethora of added health benefits when fortified with calcium and vitamins.

The environmental impact of plant-based milk varies

Though proving to

be far better alternatives than the standard dairy options, different plant-based milks have varying degrees of effectiveness in protecting the Earth.

For instance, soybeans and almonds grow in conditions unlike those in the UK, chalking up hefty environmental demerit points due to fuel consumption from their transportation.

At the same time, the production of almond milk is the most water-intensive out of all other plant-based milks, with a single glass requiring 74 litres (more than the typical shower!). Not far behind, rice milk is the second thirstiest on the list, with a total of 54 litres of water used to make one glass.

However, it must be noted that these plant-based alternatives are still far superior to dairy milk when comparing different factors of environmental friendliness.

Fighting to abolish the surcharge

Thankfully, a student has boldly stepped

up to try and reverse this absurd policy. Environmental and Ethics Officer '19/20, Francesca Siracusa, has spearheaded a campaign to collect student and staff perspectives on the surcharge, hoping to discuss the situation with the relevant authorities as soon as possible.

Having enjoyed soy and alternative milks for free during her four years at Imperial, Francesca was surprised and frustrated to hear of the additional 30p charge.

Market research findings all point to a skyrocketing demand for plant-based milk in recent years as consumers are developing a better awareness of their environmental and health benefits. Thus, Francesca believes that the 30p surcharge could negatively affect the sales of campus food outlets as people who do not or cannot consume dairy may reduce or completely stop purchasing hot drinks from them.

Moreover, she believes that this form of tax disincentivises people from making an effort to reduce their dairy consumption and carbon footprint, especially since 30p is a disproportionately high charge for the small volume of plant-based milk in one hot drink.

Your invaluable role in this campaign

To ensure that views of the Imperial body are heard, Francesca has created a quick survey to gather perspectives to present during her meeting with the Imperial catering leadership team. As of today (23rd October), there have already been 288 responses – but Francesca is optimistic that

there could (and should) be far more!

By taking less than a minute of your time to fill in her short survey (accessed via the QR code below), you too can be a proponent for a more plant-based Imperial.

Even if you happen to agree with the surcharge, it would be great to type in your responses so that Francesca understands where you are coming from and can represent you accurately.

In summary

With the thermostat quickly dropping as winter approaches, the new charges imposed could not have come at a worse time as students and staff turn to hot drinks to warm up.

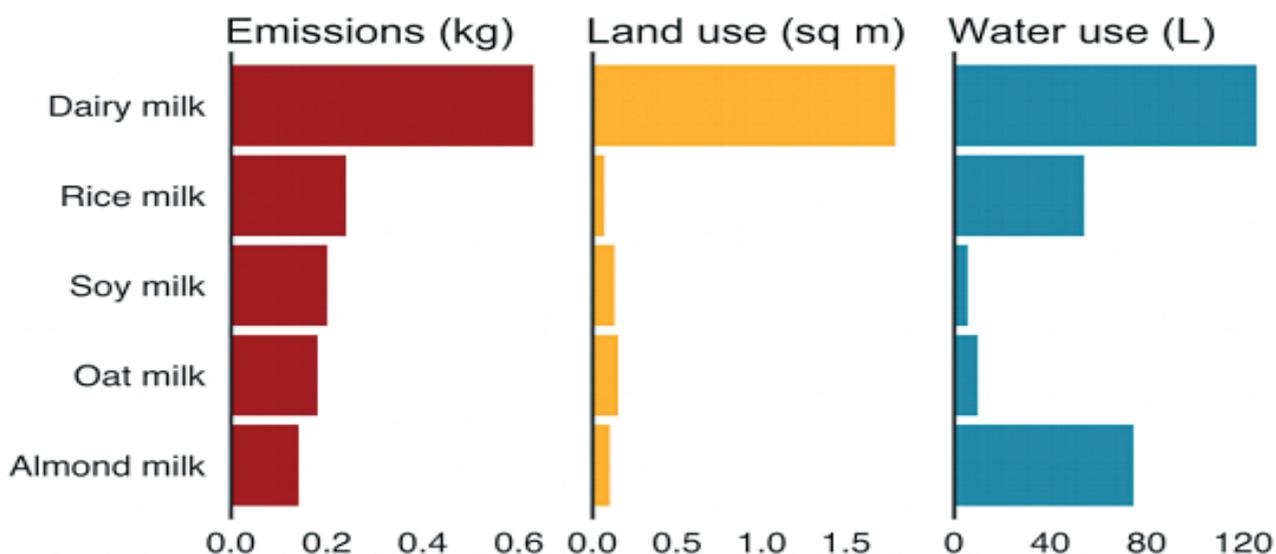
This 30p fee, though numerically small, is a big statement that shed lights on the university's true attitude towards sustainability.

As the school body, our collective voice has the power to champion the fight for a healthier planet. Let us act before it is too late.

To find out more about Francesca's campaign or if you have any questions/concerns/feedback, contact Francesca at enviro@ic.ac.uk.

Which milk should I choose?

Environmental impact of one glass (200ml) of different milks



Source: Poore & Nemecek (2018), Science. Additional calculations, J. Poore **BBC**

Environmental impact of different milks // BBC



SCAN ME

CGCU

Thomas Cross

CGCU President

Beyond Conversation: Soon they'll regret giving me this column. The CGCU President discusses his take/bitches on the mentality at Imperial.

2:19 on a Monday, 12 Hours of Lectures behind (Sadly impressive). Bev of choice while composing this masterpiece: Thatchers Gold.

By the time this all gets printed – if the copy editors or ICU staff don't merk me - it'll be the end of a blissfully hellish week, I'll have designed a jet plane (yay!), survived another week of daily emails and will be looking forward to dining with some of you at our Annual Welcome Dinner on Saturday (26th).

It's been another interesting week for the CGCU, with the highlight thus far being last week's Pub crawl. I'm slowly getting my life together having successfully cooked three square meals on Monday, which was navally appropriate given that it was Trafalgar Day. The next step is getting back into the gym #BigLAD. Now onto the deep shite. I think with this week's ramblings I am getting at something, topics or things you don't really discuss outside of therapy or a late-night DMC with your best mate. University is a period of life in which a lot of things happen, some good, some bad, regardless they all shape your character to a greater or lesser extent. The sum of my experience so far is that I am in a better place now than I was previously, despite the various shitty aspects of the past couples of years and the scars they

have left.

A lot of uni and your twenties is, I believe, about trying to figure yourself out. When looking at myself I've determined that I'm some part sympathetic/emotional and can be ridiculously compassionate (I was welling up after researching what happened during the UoL 2013 Protests <https://www.channel4.com/news/university-of-london-student-protest-ban-senate-house-occupy>), but I also have a ridiculously cold logical side. Overall, I'm quick to judge but fortunately quicker to change my opinion when it's clear someone is worth their salt.

I think that University is really an abusive lesson

in resilience. You gotta be there for yourself and help yourself. Imagine you're on a plane (Oh boy I love running gags) and the oxygen masks fall down in a crisis – you are told and probably will strap yours on first. You've got to help yourself first before helping others. If you become an incapacitated wreck then what good are you to your friends - the same applies here. An ex-MechEng legend who failed first-year mechanics like 5 times once told me: "I gotta stay fit and mentally robust, otherwise I'm deadwood to my friends when they need me".

Another thing that narks me is some students' fundamentalist mentality of "A mental breakdown

proves you're trying hard enough" being modern professionalism alongside the seeming abundance of intolerance at Uni... And I'm certainly not the most tolerant person. People make mistakes, every day. Boy, you should have seen the typo_s that were in this, or how hard I shafted 2nd-year exams. But people are not forgiving enough for the small benign typos of an email, or speech, and rush to take offence.

Modern professionalism seems fixated on how to react, and act differently around different people. Again, I'm a bit shite at this, as the Provost found out when I called him out the same as I would anyone else. I don't really believe in changing

the way I talk depending on the environment/ who I'm talking to - a toddler, a fresher, a good friend or even Alice Gast. Why change the way I am, I value authenticity and "knowing thyself" far more. Another bugbear on professionalism, to me it means not holding petty grudges when someone forgot to say please or was sharp on an email, realising instead that they have their own shit to deal with and getting on with it. Impersonally and efficiently, they would be the loveliest person over coffee maybe but they have stuff to do. Sadly for some people they can't seem to put little things aside and (with my rather blunt northern emails) find myself repeatedly at the bad end of sticks - despite the fact that I am lovely over coffee in a personal setting. Just in the office I'm Mr multitasker. It is however saddening that in our modern age there is the increased potential for misunderstanding and crossed wires in an email (With 80% of those "all comms" that are visual disappearing)

Perhaps I'm being marginally dismissive in general, I just hope that there are people out there who want to read this kind of mind-based bullshit which comes with heavily biased advice from a real person. Not totally unhinged but real. I started off this piece roughly with some talk of mental wellbeing and psyche, and it's true; people talk to me almost every day about worries and problems – do I offer something? I don't know. But I try to listen where I can, reassuring them that there is great value in talking, because there is. And it's not even about sharing something of myself with them - it's about understanding.

Understanding is one of the greatest things we have as a species. And being honest and open too. This is why above

all else I value straightforward, down to earth talk. Honest talk. – I hate corporate-speak, such as talk of "managing expectations" or "starting conversations". As one of my committee pointed out after CSPB (Clubs Societies & Projects Board) that kinda stuff is for "Goons in a room" who never get stuff done.

Naturally, it's easy to oppose, challenging to be in power, and hard to fix stuff. Which makes my criticisms of the system, which I've tried to lay off this week, easy to level. But hell, we are trying to put forward solutions. And we will keep trying.

Accountability is the stalwart position of an engineer. You sign off the plant, car, program etc with your mark - and are responsible for and answerable for what you do. In this way I hope that you'll always view us as being too. Humans are more questions than answers. But please if you have anything you want to ask, then ask me ask me ask me! My committee, like me, are a curious bunch of weirdos and spend time thinking – trying to make sense of things. So why not pop by CAGB 350 whenever you got a question and ponder with us. We're always open when the light's on.

I'm going to close again with parting words of wisdom from my flatmate, commenting that life isn't all that bad now for teenagers "When our parents were younger the music was better, and you could buy a house, everything else was bit shite tbf."



RCSU

Sung Soo Moon
RCSU Broadsheet Editor

Sorry, but your favourite half Dane, half Hong-Kongese Constituent Union President is occupied with a pile of “bruh” moments this week, so the RCSU Broadsheet editor has hijacked the CU section.

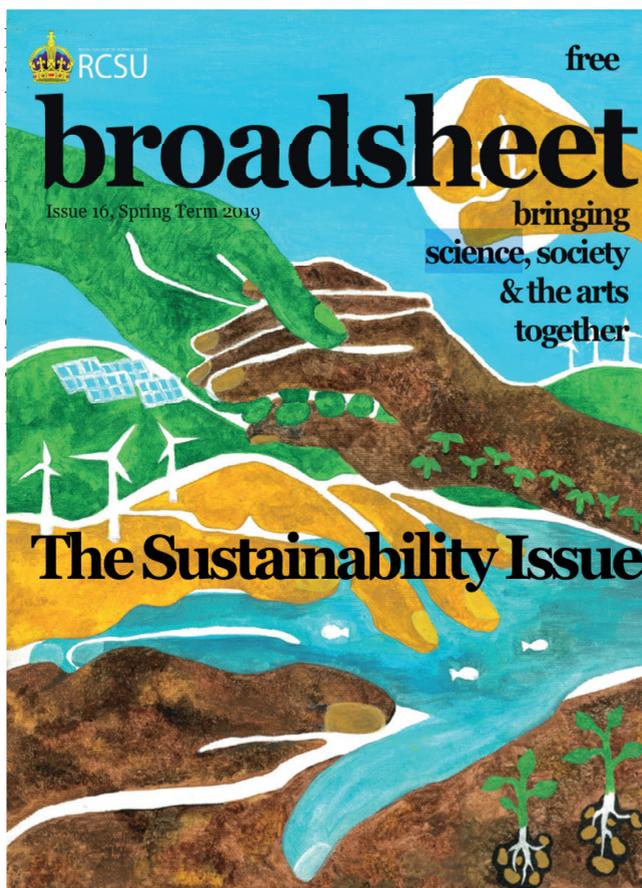
For those of you who haven't heard of Broadsheet, it's the RCSU's magazine that aims to bring science, society and the arts together. With a long tradition of being a pre-digital meme service and anti-CGCU propaganda machine, it served as a campus newsletter also too. In the last decade or so, Broadsheet has evolved into a pub-

lication that has become more or less a science communication outlet. With the majority of us overwhelmed by science through our degrees, I can understand why many don't care at all. After all, the world of science media is so oversaturated, so when that upon taking on the role of Broadsheet

“Without an audience, a publication is nothing - a soul-crushing thought”

editor, there was an we took the opportunity to do something different.

Without an audience, a



The cover of the last Broadsheet issue // RCSU Broadsheet

world, the detailed masterplan is slowly abraded away into something altogether different altogether. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't try.

Our 'Welcome to Broadsheet' event was held this Monday, and it was a success. With a fabulous turn-out of eager creatives, I'm excited for the fresh new ideas they will bring. It was a great opportunity to meet those interested in contributing by writing, editing, illustration, design and photography; we have ramped up recruitment and got together a great team. We're busy working on the first issue and will be ready to be picked up on campus in early December!

That's an insight into my life, thanks for indulging me. There'll be more of that quality regular

stuff from Alex next week, don't you worry.

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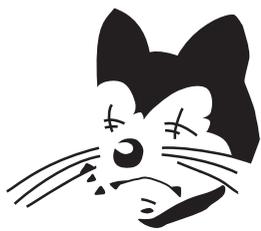
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Hangman



Look at these hunks and their sexy curves. (I really admire you guys)// Wikimedia

University Challenge Team Breaks the Internet with their Ibiza Tans and Curves

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

The Imperial University Challenge team arrives home to find that they have been turned into sex symbols

After a stunning defeat of Brasenose College, Oxford at University Challenge this week, the Imperial College team have been welcomed home as revered champions, but their newfound admira-

tion didn't just stop with a few congratulations – within days, they have become unlikely sex symbols for the student body.

Arriving back in Sheffield the after filming, the team was met with a cheering crowd of students and staff in Queen's Lawn, swarms of people chanting their names and sporting "We Love Quiz" banners and life-size cardboard cutouts of the quartet. "It was absolutely crazy," commented May Johnson, a second year Biochemist who was part of the crowd, "people were screaming the entire time, I even saw a few girls throw their underwear at

them." There were more than just a few. When the crowds finally cleared, cleaning services reported over 2 sets of panties, and 8 pairs of boxers left on scene.

"It's all a little overwhelming", the heartthrob team members Meely McMeel, Dick Rich, Rando Brandon, and Del Brooks told NegaFelix, "we're extremely flattered by the attention but it's been difficult to get around now." Rando Brandon elaborated, "I was biking home that night and a bunch of students were chasing after me. And I don't cycle very fast so they were basically just following me home."

On Wednesday, a pop-up shop selling Dream Team merchandise was set up in Sheffield, selling body pillows, printed bed sheets and pillow cases, and old

"Cleaning services reported over 2 sets of panties, and 8 pairs of boxers left on the scene"

tissues used by members of the team (kindly provided by their flatmates). Lines for the pop-up shop reportedly circled out the building and around Queen's Tower, the life-size posters of their chiselled physiques sold out online within 3 hours.

The craze hasn't died down for days and doesn't look to be calming anytime soon. The team has become the talk of the town. "I saw Dick Rich wearing a Jackwills hoodie and flip flops, so I bought a Jackwills hoodie and flip flops," said Charles Litmus, a fourth year chemist. Someone else told us, "one time, he punched me in face. It was

awesome."

"I've come such a long way from my Quizlamic State days," professed Del Brooks, "I'm trying so hard not to let the fame get to my head."

NegaFelix reports that an estimated 5 students will be dressing up as them for Halloween.

And though on the surface it seemed like the Team was enjoying their surging popularity, Meely McMeel reveals his struggles with the darker side of fame, "All people see when they look at us is our hunky features, but what about our brains?"

HANGMAN

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Mumps outbreak ‘massively overshadowing’ the fall in autism cases

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

A mumps outbreak that originated in the medical school has within two days spread to the rest of the student body. College sports teams have been particularly badly affected, owing to how much neck on neck action there is between team members. Darts player Gaaron Auha told NegaFelix “I went to greet my pal with our customary neck bump and by the time I noticed his one

was swollen to the size of a monk’s bollock it was too late”. Sports’ Nights at the Union have been poorly attended as sports players struggling to get through the doorways to the Union gave up and went home.

A union spokesman has responded strongly to accusations that permissiveness surrounding vaccinations was the cause of the recent mumps epidemic. Darlene Jewel Smith-Smith (Vice-Provost - Little Pricks) affirmed that it was College policy that all undergraduates were expected to have had their vaccinations. She

stressed, however, that the last thing she wanted to do was to force anyone to do something that they didn’t want. “After all, what if one of them drops out as a result afterwards. It would put the College in dire financial straits. They are already barely managing to pay my salary”

Rugby player Geoff Thompson explained that the reason that he hadn’t had his MMR jab was that his parents had been worried about him contracting autism from the vaccination. He revealed, however, that the prospect no longer worried him and he would

definitely vaccinate his own children. “How bad can autism be if the people I play with are defined as neurotypical?”

Fears of the mumps outbreak are causing non-sports playing students to avoid their more athletic peers. Feb Senton, third year IEI explained “I used to struggle to avoid sports players but now it’s easy. Just look for the people wearing big scarfs or 40-inch necks and walk the other way”. Sources in RSM have admitted that they are worried by this division between the sporty and non-sporty students as they fear it



AVOID!! You know he has a bowling ball neck under there// TheEverywhereist

may result in lower marks all over the board. “If the football players can’t get close enough to copy answers from their more capable course mates then we are in real trouble”



ARIES

This week you are elected liberation officer for incels.
-
You didn’t even run



TAURUS

This week you like your Canadian Prime Ministers like you like your coffee
-
Black



GEMINI

This week you’re an international student and Brexit is just days away. You misunderstand a Careers Speed Dating event and attend in the hope of a residency permit.



CANCER

This week you are invited to a fancy dress party. You calculate that doing blackface will only lose you 16% of your friends.
-
Probably worth it.



LEO

This week you are a dyspraxic vampire.
-
The lean months are finally over.



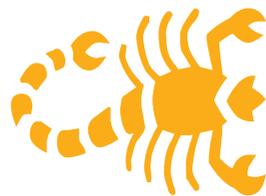
VIRGO

This week you find yourself on Tinder.
-
You swipe left.



LIBRA

This week you suggest dressing up as Boris Johnson for Halloween.
-
Your flatmates vote 208 to 197 that you shouldn’t



SCORPIO

This week to celebrate diversity at Imperial Canadian society throws one of its legendary Aladin-themed balls.



SAGITTARIUS

This week you’re the Union Bar.
-
You feel empty inside.



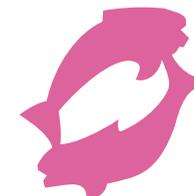
CAPRICORN

This week you’re a shark- you’re sick of the bad perception you get in the media. You don’t prey on drunk women.
-
You eat seals.



AQUARIUS

This week your bike wheel gets stolen. You wouldn’t mind but you’ve been riding it as a unicycle since the first one was nicked.

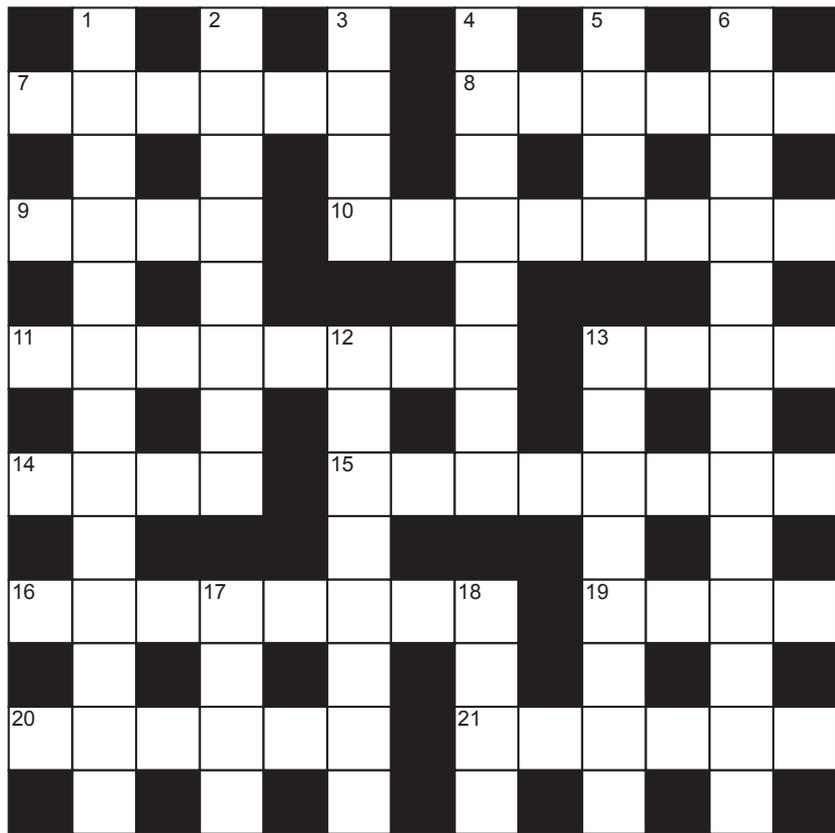


PISCES

This week you find your boyfriend on Tinder. His bio is Imperial professors only, so that’s why he’s getting all those extra credits.

PUZZLES

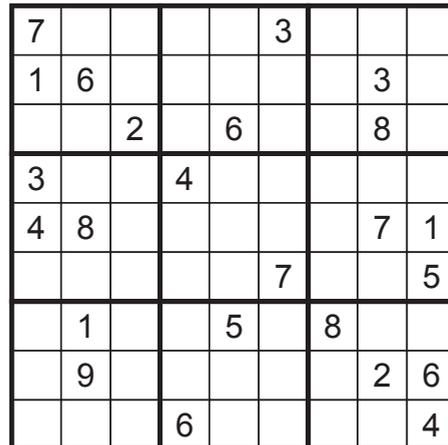
fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk



Hello Puzzlers!

Due to the utter mess-up that puzzles was last week, we are extending the deadline for the samurai sudoku and the nonogram until next Wednesday. There is a nonogram pdf on the Felix puzzles page! Happy Friday!

SUDOKU



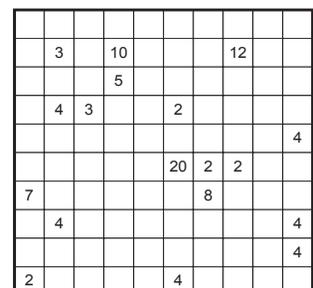
Across

- Reaction when the Union removed bendy straws (6)
- Relating to sexual desire or excitement (6)
- A Nigerian Prince, for one (4)
- Discovery associated with Archimedes' Eureka (8)
- Biblical epithet for Cain (8)
- Kismet (4)
- Half the title of Steve Bannon's popular book (4)
- People who fought in 'Nam (8)
- Two lines whose paths will never cross :((8)
- Grievance against Charlie in viral video (4)
- Cozy nook in the wall of a room (6)
- The Lord who defined absolute chill (6)

TRIVIA

- What name was given to the amendment that delayed a vote on Boris's deal and was passed by 322-306 last Saturday?
- What number is given the suffix "steps" in bingo after a Hitchcock movie and associated novel?
- Which team did Australia defeat 142-0 in the 2003 Rugby World Cup?
- Which figure in the arts was born Jacob Bruskin Gershowitz?
- Which King of England is shown dying with an arrow through his head on the Bayeux Tapestry?
- What links the General Election 2017 TV Debates, The Thick of It and University Challenge (for which trials are next week!)

Liked this quiz? A written trial round 1 for University Challenge will be next week: Wednesday 30th 6-8pm SAF Lecture Theatre 1, Thursday 31st 6-8pm Pippard lecture Theatre, Monday 4th 6-8pm Glenister theatre (Charing Cross campus). Check out our Facebook page for more details



SHIKAKU

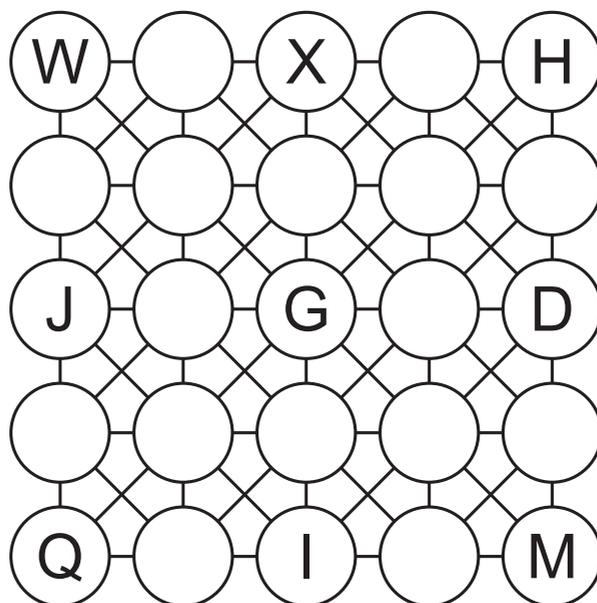
Divide the square into rectangles, such that each rectangle contains exactly one number. The numbers given represent the area of the containing rectangle.

Down

- In an impressive way (13)
- Day of the Last Judgement (8)
- Hello MTV, and welcome to my ____ (4)
- Elizabeth Warren, for one (8)
- Bendy sport (4)
- Smallest German speaking country (13)
- Type of handgun (8)
- One of the bomb shot Union offers (8)
- Abbr. for an unidentified author (4)
- Kept a part of Jesus' diary (4)

GOGEN

Write letters into each circle to form the listed words. Letters can be linked by moving between adjacent cells horizontally, vertically or diagonally in any direction. You may use each letter in the alphabet only once.



- Clues:
 BELARUS FAR FRY HELP
 JUNGLE JURY MOCK PECKING
 QUIT WAXED VARY

FUCWIT

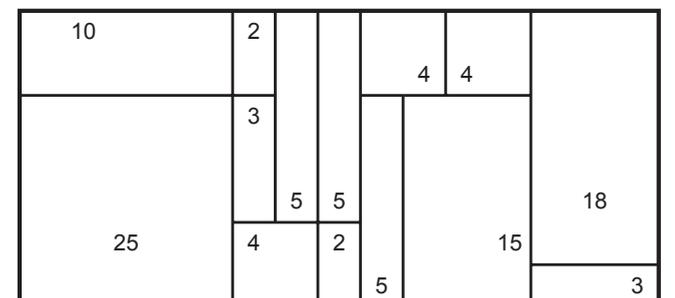
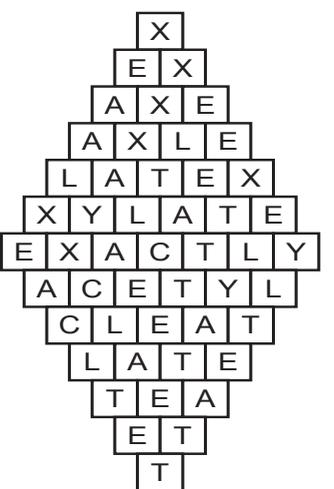
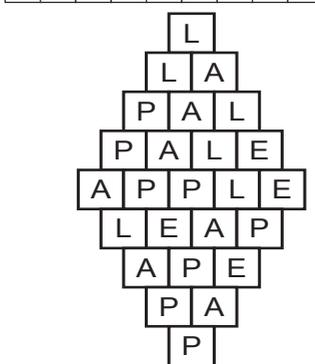
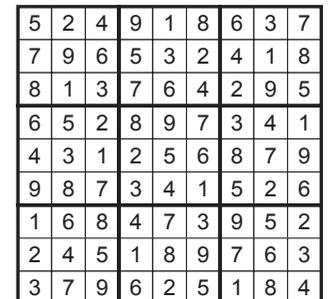
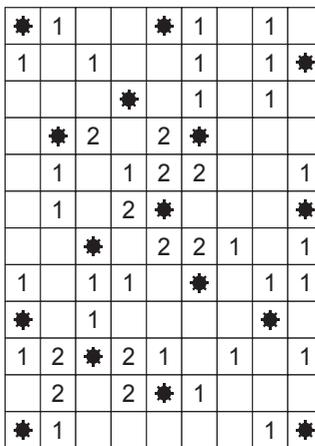
1	GodBlessHK	80
2	TNT	71
3	O1G	65
4	RIPPCR	61
5	F***URhys	60
6	StandWithHK_Fight4Freedom	59
7	Lochy Monsters	55
8	Péché	53.5
9	McL-DJ	53
10	RIP Pat	43
11	DQ	35
12	MB	18

Send your solutions to fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk before Wednesday midday to take part in the leaderboard!

Points available

Crossword	6
Sudoku	5
Gogen	2
Trivia Quiz	3
Shikaku	2
Total	18

Last week's solutions



SPORTS

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Triathlon, Cake, Karaoke and The Many Punctures that Broke Us All Together

Imperial Triathlon start off the year with an expedition in Kent

SPORTS

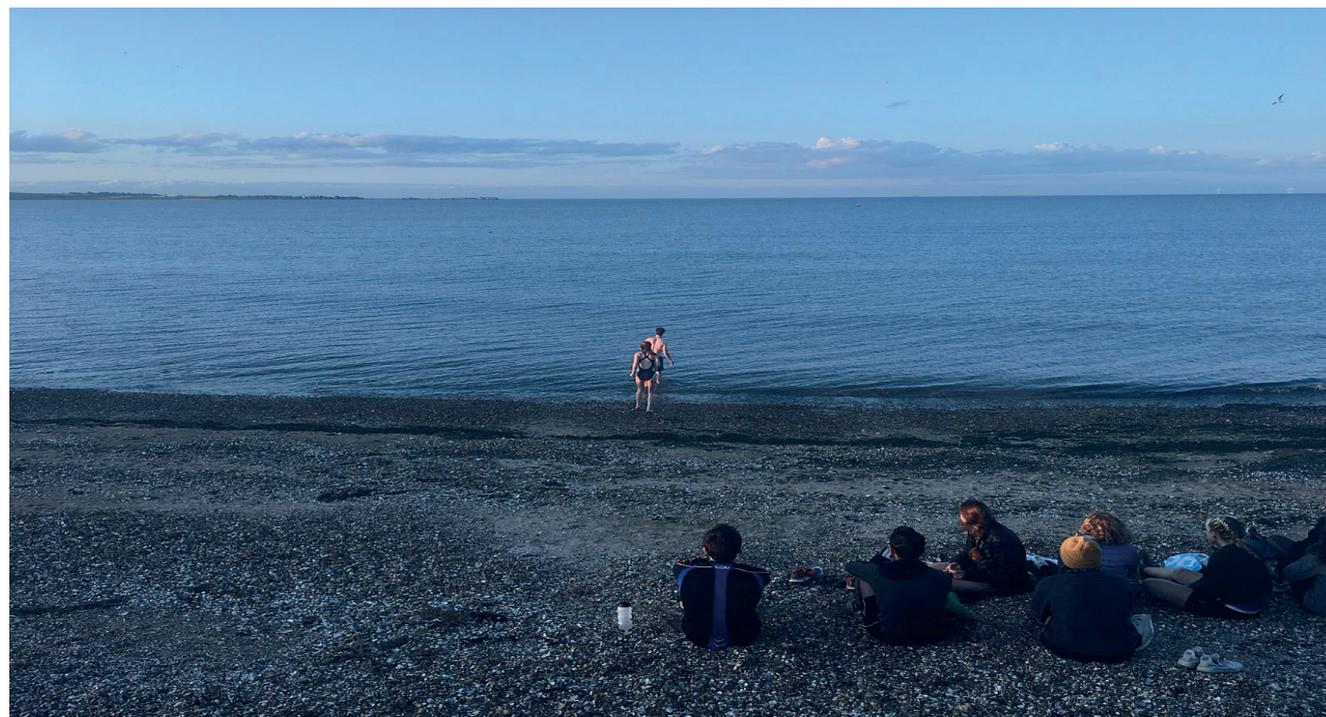
Emma Claxton

Triathlon Treasurer

Three weeks into the new term and guess who was already fed up of work and wanting to get away for the weekend? Why, 15 of Imperial's finest and freshest triathletes, that's who. On Friday 19th October, we packed our bikes (remembering to remove our pedals, don't want any scratches!) and made the quest to Kent. Having braved the rush hour traffic of London on a Friday evening, we arrived in the converted barn that was to become our weekend home, eager and ready for a weekend of cycling, running and swimming. Parking the vans was an interesting challenge when our tour sec decided that we can't hurt a single blade of grass and so decided to help the grass back on its feet.

On Saturday, we woke to glorious sunshine and promises of a phenomenal day. With copious amounts of porridge, toast and bananas having been devoured, everyone was out on their bikes and discovering the garden of England. Splitting into three groups encompassing all from beginners to ironman athletes, the distances ranged from 40 to 70km with no triathlete being left behind. Chatting on our bikes and meeting new people, everyone was enjoying ignorant bliss, unaware of the dangers

"A compulsory cafe stop in Canterbury was in order where we were able to investigate the cakes of Kent."



"It's not too bad once you get in!" // David Ho

that lay ahead. It all started with one puncture, then another, and before we knew it, there was a total of eight flats! Having stopped many times to fix these punctures, resulting in us all getting cold, a compulsory cafe stop in Canterbury was in order where we were able to investigate the

cakes of Kent. The carrot cakes and flapjacks did not disappoint! Having returned from our bike rides, (with the fast group returning after the slow squad), we ventured to the coast where people went running or walking, or sat on the beach trying to do coursework enjoying the glorious view of the sea. Some brave athletes kept true to the three-sport nature of the club and decided that a swim in the bracingly cold waters would be a good idea. This provided great entertainment for the (perhaps more sensible) crew remaining on the shore, so it was a win all round.

The sun was slowly setting, and we returned to our house where supper was cooked and an old triathlon triathlon of pass-the-parcel was introduced to our new members. Instead of a prize at the end, the lucky winner was given a variety of challenges, ranging from the physically impressive to the downright ridicu-

lous. Particular highlights included a hilarious series of karaoke duets - the sight of our glorious captain serenading the freshers is enough to make anyone want to join the triathlon club.

"Some brave athletes decided that a swim in the bracingly cold waters would be a good idea."

The next day, we woke early and ready for another epic day of adventures. Having experienced so many punctures a sweepstake began for the number of punctures that would occur that day. Being joined by Imperial tri alumni, three groups set

off on rides ranging from 40 to 100km. The tyre troubles of the previous day had spawned a sweepstake, but thankfully the puncture fairy was kinder: only three flats occurred that day. This was perhaps a little dubious, given that those who had bet three were the ones who had the punctures! Having returned again from our bike rides, a group decided it wasn't enough and sneaked in a cheeky run before we packed up the house and drove back to London. Upon arriving back in London, everyone was already missing the greenery of the Kentish countryside and looking forward to the next tour. Those who missed out on the fun should make sure to get their triathlon membership in so they can join us on our upcoming Easter extravaganza!



All smiles at the Canterbury cafe stop // David Ho

SPORTS

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk



The ICXCAC crew ready to tackle Parliament Hill // Georgia Curry

Members of ICXCAC return to Parliament, and they mean business

After winning the league last year, Imperial's Cross-Country team is back and setting the pace for the season in their endless hunt for Silverware

SPORTS

Aymeric Regnier
ICXCAC Secretary

Leaves are turning brown, leaves are falling down, weather turns chilly and the fields are getting muddy - it's time for some Cross-Country.

Last year, Imperial's Cross-Country teams absolutely dominated the field, winning the Women's league with the Men's team coming in second place behind the notorious St Mary's team, and the club won the Mike Baggs Trophy, which takes into account the performance of the club in general throughout the 5 races - a glorious season.

Instead of resting on their laurels, the squad has been training hard since then and didn't lay off training over the summer. With one goal

in mind, and led by a determined committee, 51 sturdy athletes rocked up to Parliament Hill last Wednesday to show the rest of London that they weren't going to give their opponents any slack.

I... C... X... C... I..C..X..C..I,C,X,C,ICX-C,ICXC! The crowd goes wild, the gun goes off, the pack leaves the starting line and storms off and up the hill. The much-coveted "King of the Hill" award went to Imperial's Silvio Barandun after an admirable sprint up the first hill - for those unfamiliar with this award, it is the ultimate honour in LCLs, the knighthood of Cross-Country one would say: the fastest up the steep hill, appropriately named "The Climb" on Strava at the very beginning of the hill, with a long race ahead of themselves, wins said award - absolute legend. Having won this

first honour, the Imperial athletes kept their focus and settled into their pace as they faced strong opponents from across London, especially from Saint Mary's for both the Men and the Women, and Brunel and UCL for the Women as well.

Stellar performances this day saw the Women's team top the podium: fresher Laura Wright came second, seconds behind Brunel's Tessa Mc Cormick, followed by Women's Captain Georgia Curry in bronze. Also in the top 10 were strong returning athletes Chloe Baker and Alix Vermeulen, just a second apart in 7th and 8th place. With such great running, the A team secured their first place, with a strong 24-point lead over Saint Mary's in 2nd place. Impressive running from the B Team, led home by trail enthusiast Lea Adamson

in 16th place, Stephanie Hewitt in 23rd place, Lara Sterritt in 28th place and Minty Hampden-Martin in 34th place - accumulating 503 points and sitting in a strong 6th position.

"The much-coveted "King of the Hill" award went to Imperial's Silvio Barandun"

On the Men's side, Oliver Barbaresi was the first to complete the 3 laps for Imperial, coming in a very strong second position, in SMU's Thomas Butler's heels and hungry for more, keep an eye out for him

this season! Next from Imperial was Daniel Mulryan in 4th place and Club Captain Henry Hart in 6th place, in a Saint-Mary's - Imperial sandwich, making for a very competitive atmosphere between the two clubs. Completing the A Team were Niki Faulkner and Oliver Newton in 29:44 and 30:02 in 12th and 13th place - rapid performances in a competitive field, this earned the team a worthy second place in the Team rankings with 968 points, just 11 behind rivals Saint Mary's - this race for gold is far from over! The Men's B team meanwhile also put in valiant efforts that paid off with Misy Ormay coming 15th, Tom Bayley 17th, James Krasucki 19th, Joe Pomfret 21st and Leo Maisonobe 22nd, racking up 911 points and coming in an outstanding 3rd place, in front of

Saint Mary's B Team and all other universities' A Teams!

The day ended with some celebratory baking-binge as the team was doing so well and currently tied first with Saint Mary's for the Mike Baggs trophy that they will seek to defend this year. Later in the evening, the runners headed to Miran Masala for a celebratory curry and to Oyster Rooms and Slug (what is this Redback thing people keep referring to?) for celebration drinks and a classy little boogie. The team is now looking forward to the next fixture in Mitcham Common this coming Wednesday.

If you're interested in joining the club and taking part in these races, contact them at run@ic.ac.uk