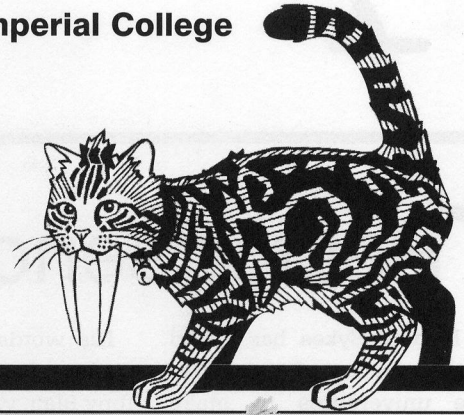
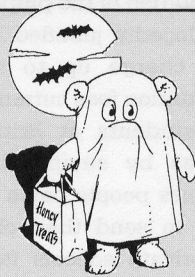


felix



<http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/felix/>

Supernaturals, or just blokes in sheets? (Page 10)



Choose your own adventure, but with no scantily clad female barbarians. Shame. (Page 8)



Housing Concerns Deepen

Senior College officials have told *Felix* that the College has insufficient cash to fund the Southside refurbishment. Nonetheless, Dr Chris Towler, the Director of Strategy, confirmed that the College still intends to spend £12.7 million on a new 'headquarters' building.

Felix has also learned that the Clayponds hall of residence will definitely be sold, but only once alternative accommodation has been found near the South Kensington campus. Clayponds currently houses 332 students, most of whom are overseas postgraduates.

An interim balance sheet approved two weeks ago by the college Council shows £30 million raised through the sale of student residences with only £8 million being spent on residence refurbishment. Although the original justification for selling halls close to the South Kensington was the need to fund Southside refurbishment, the money now seems to have been diverted towards the new headquarters building and the imminent Sports Hall redevelopment.



Southside: looking up?

The new Director of Estates, Mr Brooks-Wilson, is understood to be considering various options for the Southside refurbishment. Several Universities have already gone down the private finance route, either by selling off their assets to developers and leasing them back, or by engaging a private management company. However, the enormous cost of the Southside refurbishment makes it unlikely that any developer could make an acceptable profit over the life of the proposed contract.

The College might also turn the whole complex over to a housing association, who would then be able to spend Government subsidies to bring the building back up to scratch. However, the hall would still be controlled by College, and the wardening system maintained in its present form.

Union officials, already angry at the lack of student consultation over the Clayponds sale, were blunt in their assessment of the College hierarchy. "They know where they want to eventually end up, but they don't seem to know how to get there..."

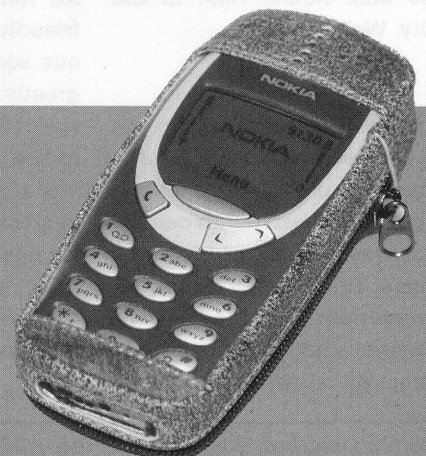
Dr Towler told *Felix* that "we don't yet have a College-wide strategy for residences... we're only part-way through a hugely iterative process." He also stressed College's long-term commitment to the provision of accommodation for first year undergraduates and overseas post-graduate students. *Etienne*

REFERENCE COLLECTION

Imperial College and Science Museum Libraries

g/2
giving a broad swipe at
-capitalist Western
struction to meet
Bar at 7.30."

txt msgs: wA 4ward?



Rector sends PM warning

Sir Richard Sykes has called for the creation of a group of elite universities to make Britain a world leader in science education.

In an interview with the Financial Times published this week, the College's Rector - who is a member of the Council for Science and Technology set up by the Government, and was recently appointed a member of the new science policy strategy board of the Department for Trade and Industry - called for the establishment of twelve universities that would be free to charge students tuition fees at market rates that could exceed £10,000 each year. This, he believes, would enable the British higher education system to attract the best students from around the globe by offering "the best conditions in the world."

His words were seen as a warning to the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who only last week told the Royal Society in London that he wants "to make sure the UK is one of the best places in the world to do science." Sir Richard responded by claiming that it would be impossible to have "a successful science and technology policy without first tackling the universities... the government has to concentrate on the tertiary education system, which is in trouble, and do something radical."

Referring to the inflexible funding system currently in place, he allegedly told the FT "we have to compete internationally with one hand tied behind our back."

While Sir Richard conceded that the idea of elite universities would be difficult to promote on a political level, espe-

cially to wealthier parents who would bear much of the financial burden of the proposals, he allegedly justified his plans to charge up to ten times the tuition fees currently paid by students at British universities by saying that "middle class people pay a lot of money to send their children to private schools from three to eighteen and then they rail at the idea of paying for tertiary education." It is thought that students from poorer backgrounds would be supported through their time at these universities through a scheme of means-tested scholarships.

Throughout all of this, however, College officials have insisted that Sir Richard has been misquoted, and assure students that the Rector will discuss this issue with them in the near future. *John S*

f

Issue 1238

31 May 2002

Editor: will Dugdale
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Books: Jon Matthews
Arts: Jon Brenner
Film: Darius Nikbin
Sports: Vacant
Crossword: Dr. Hot Fudge

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Other News

ICU Rag Totals

The final totals for ICU Rag this year are in! £3767.25 for the Rag Raid, £108.80 from the pub crawl in the City, £847.15 from the pub crawl in Met Police area, and £704.39 for the Milk Round Raid in the City. Well done all.

Obituary

It is my sad duty to inform you of the recent passing of Jim "Jungle Jim" Chapman, following a short battle with cancer. Jim was a member of the IC Men's IVs Hockey team for longer than any of the current players and, despite living some distance from college,

continued to play an active role in the team. He went on the club tour to South Africa last summer, and was due to go to Barbados on tour this summer. He showed incredible commitment to the team for many years and was a friendly presence on numerous social events. He will be greatly missed by everyone in the club, and especially those in the IV team. The IV team has a website on which there is a tribute section to Jim. If anyone would like their tributes added, please e-mail them to:

andrew.mickinley@ic.ac.uk

JAT

Corrections: Iain Angus wrote the ACC report in last week's *Felix*. The warden of Clayponds is Dr. Mark Tyner. Mark Tyler, previously identified as the warden, is an 80s glam-rock singer.

Dolly Mixtures

A hot mix of favourites 2 dance 2

Every Friday

**dBs Bar opens at 8
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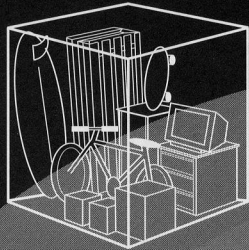


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“See Spot run.

Who needs sentences anyway? Clarissa Saunders

Literacy. For almost three centuries, this fairly arbitrary concept has been one of the predominant signs of national prosperity and ‘social evolution’ (whatever that may be). GDP, average life expectancy and imperial might may come and go as symbols of power and prestige, but the ability to read and write has been universally accepted

(note that when I say “...communicating in real, grown-up words is just a bit old-hat for the digital age...” I obviously mean in Western Europe and the US) as a surefire statistical sign of ‘progress’ since the early eighteenth century.

90% of your population meets basic literacy standards? Well then, you must be a great and wonderful country, where the streets are paved with gold and every town is an utopian idyll...

Which is all very nice, but what’s it got to do with the price of fish? Well, it appears that that’s all just too simple for enlightened twenty-first century thinking. Communicating in real, grown-up, three syllable (second letter f), words is just a bit old-hat for the digital age. We want something shorter, less personal and altogether vaguer from our language – preferably available in orange and purple Ikea flatpacks. Basically, it all boils down to this – when was the last time you sat down and actually wrote someone a real letter? Handwritten or typed, I don’t mind, just as long as it involved a stamp, an envelope, a postbox and more than a hundred words (there are 113 words in the first paragraph, so I don’t think that’s asking for very much). A month? A year? Never? But we don’t need snail mail, you say – we’ve all got email. It’s newer, it’s faster, it’s free; ergo it’s better. Maybe – but it’s not the same. The whole point of email is that it’s supposed to be quick. It’s definitely not supposed to suggest an agonising process of drafts and redrafts, carefully selecting the most poignant and meaningful words in order to honestly convey your feelings.

You’re supposed to write slapdash English, preferably with some suspect spelling and absolutely no regard for grammar. And that’s the form that our primary form of non-verbal communication has now taken? As Darwin so famously said, “evolution’s a funny old game”.

“...communicating in real, grown-up words is just a bit old-hat for the digital age...”

(I’ve been pre-approved, you know). I’m even happy getting mail from the Readers bloody Digest. But from a friend? I’d be scared witless before I’d even opened the envelope. I mean, what kind of correspondence requires someone to actually write a letter? To sit down and compose, to select their words, to construct and mould their sentences? To, in a word, write? Scary correspondence, that’s what. They’re either (a) horrendously depressed (not good), (b) dying (worse), (c) in love with you (very bad indeed), or (d) all three (...bugger). Basically, this cannot be A Good Thing.

Y’see, we all want to be young, hip and groovy (to paraphrase Eddie Izzard), and thus we have to be seen to be footloose and fancy free (to paraphrase someone else... can’t remember right now – might be Cole Porter). We must not, under any circumstances, spend our time contemplating the meaning of existence, the nature of our feelings, or the mental wellbeing of subsistence farmers in Azerbaijan. Unless you’re very, very drunk. Or Thom Yorke. Or a friend of mine called Ed. So (to cut a long story sideways), we can’t spend time writing letters. We can’t let anyone

know that we’ve spent the last month-and-a-half trying to fathom the best way to tell them something. Even saying something serious or thought-out via the medium of oral communication (that’s talking and telephoning to you and me) are fairly heavily frowned upon. In fact, we can’t do anything but bounce electronic messages back and forth. We can’t write in the style of Helen Fielding, let alone Fitzgerald or Hardy or whoever (I’m not going to suggest that anyone would want to exchange pleasantries in the style of Shakespeare – even in the Sixteenth Century that was pretty daft), so we email or (queue gasp of righteous indignation from assembled English professors of the world), we exchange text messages.

And (to finally get to the point that I was trying to make several hundred words ago) we write complete tosh. Now, I know that’s a very unfair thing to say. Perhaps you really do fill your Sent Items folder with delightful, insightful, witty remarks on the state of the world today. Perhaps. And perhaps your friends eyes light up every time they receive a text from you, in response to yet another cleverly constructed haiku that combines a broad swipe at the state of neo-capitalist Western culture with an instruction to meet you in the Union Bar at 7.30. Well, perhaps...

But (and, like all the best butts, it’s a big one), that’s only the tip of the iceberg:

How about PowerPoint presentations, corporate reports, and the whole, benighted, bullet-point ridden world of corporate Americana? There’s not a proper sentence in sight – it’s as if someone, somewhere has decided that the people who run the world are simply incapable of interpreting a few sentences on their own, and must only be fed grammar free strings of short, punchy words. Perhaps the implication is that we’re too busy to

Let’s try a different question: How would you feel if you received a real letter (Basildon Bond and everything) from one of your friends? From the bank, fine. From the RBS platinum card people, fine

erly constructed haiku that combines a broad swipe at the state of neo-capitalist Western culture with an instruction to meet you in the Union Bar at 7.30. Well, perhaps...

“...perhaps we’re too clever, too media savvy and just a little too ironic...”

Run, Spot, run”

investigates the sudden demise of the written word

read anything that can’t be summarised in a series of slides. Perhaps we’re too clever, too media savvy and just a little too ironic (don’t you think) to be swayed by wordy descriptions and careful juxtaposition. Or perhaps we just don’t like long words – they’re big, they’re scary, they have things hidden up their sleeves.

How about advertising? From newspapers and magazines, tubes and buses, billboards and a million identical fly-posters, we’re constantly under threat from written adverts – and what form do they all take? A company name, a five word slogan, web address and a pretty picture. Even on the most impossibly vast hoarding or the most extravagant magazine ad, there’s still no space explanation, description or anything more than the most meagre wordplay – just big, bold text telling you that it exists and that it’s great. You’d be forgiven for thinking that it ‘twas ever thus, but that’s certainly not true – once upon a time, copywriting was a skilled art form, performed by trained professionals operating without the safety net of funky graphics and expensive photography. Once again, well-written words (let alone sentences and paragraphs) have been ruled obsolete.

Finally, how about the ways in which (we’re taught) good web pages should be constructed? The user won’t scroll. The user won’t read long blocks of text. The user needs bullets. The user won’t respond to plain text. The user likes short words. The user wants... The list of design dos and don’ts is a long one indeed, and would make the journalists of thirty or forty years ago spin in their G&Ts – because it all adds up to one simple thing: the user doesn’t want to read anything unless he or she absolutely has to. The user, to put it bluntly, has a passionate dislike for the written word.

On that rather depressing note, let’s

change tack for just a moment, let’s back track a couple of centuries, to a little town in 15th Century Bavaria where Johannes Gutenberg has just had a really clever idea. He’s just invented the world’s first mechanical printing press, and, despite the fact that, so far, he’s only run off a few hundred copies

of a rather nicely illustrated version of the Bible, Europe is very rapidly waking up to the fact that it’s a shockingly good idea. So much so, in fact, that within a century his invention had begun to completely change the way in which Europeans wrote and (eventually) the way in which they communicated, by allowing a whole new form of writing, the novel, to exist (text can be non-linear, y’see, whereas oral communication forces us to tell stories in a straight line... it’s all very complicated and, quite frankly, I really can’t be bothered to go into it right now). Perhaps the latest radical shift in the way we put words on record will produce a similarly radical shift in the way we write and, ultimately, the way we think. History seems to teach us that the form of writing that best suits the medium in question becomes, when that medium reaches the impossible-to-ignore, couldn’t-live-without-it, freely-available-in-Guadalajara levels of saturation that email and texting have now achieved, the form that we are most fluent and adept with. And so, given a little time, our ability to write anything else (and thus anything complex, passionate or inspirational) disappears into the void from whence it came.

But does this actually make society any less literate? Endless statistics will happily demonstrate that literacy is increasing year by year across the globe. I don’t

think I know anyone who couldn’t read An Unbearable Likeness of Being or Love in the Time of Cholera, but what does that mean – I’m certainly not sure that they’d all understand them (they confused the hell out of me). Literacy really means a lot more than simply being able to read. And it also means a lot more than the ability to construct complicated sentences and use \$12 words ad nauseam. According to a standard definition, it’s about the ability to function in modern society, and to understand, interpret and manipulate all that you read and write – so is anything really changing here? After all, if we all change the way in which we read and write, what’s the difference? Literacy levels won’t change – just the way in which they’re tested, right? Maybe. But, as the norms of written English (and French, German, Spanish and Italian, for that matter) dissolve, the test becomes impossible to write. Globalisation should protect us from a return to incompatible regional dialects and grammars, but the ability to convey the last nuance of meaning and essence of thought may well slowly vanish, as we lose both the language (the nouns) and the global referents (the verbs and the adjectives) that that requires.

So is this really a bad thing? Well, it destroys art; it destroys romance; it destroys imagination. I’d say that’s quite bad. None of these can exist without the kind of writing – the kind of words – that these forms just don’t encourage. Without the ability to write down or interpret complex ideas and ideals, our language will head down an inexorable road towards the land of Tubbyspeak, and we’ll be left with a culture whose literature is fuelled by asides, pop culture references, curveball tangents, a complete disregard for the rules of English grammar and stacks of bad puns. Not entirely unlike this.

“...the user doesn’t want to read anything unless he or she absolutely has to...”

“...we head down an inexorable road towards the land of Tubbyspeak...”

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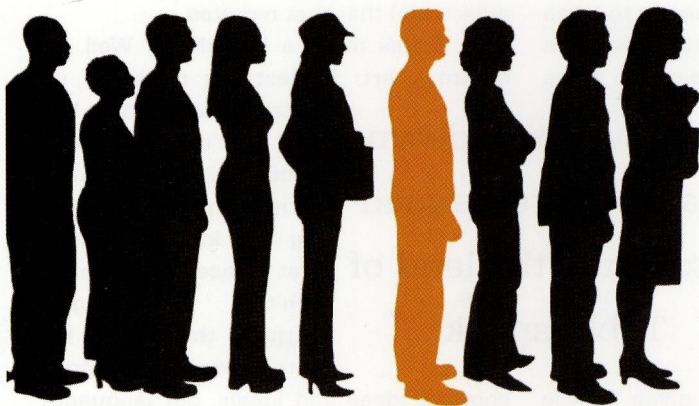
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Theatre of Science

Fresh from a sell-out run at London's Soho Theatre, BAFTA winning, Emmy nominated scientists Simon Singh and Richard Wiseman bring their Theatre of Science to Imperial on June 11th. Their two talks focus on the mathematics of chance and the psychology of deception, offering up some very bad jokes, some suspiciously useful lifestyle tips and a lot of distinctly odd concepts along the way.

What are the chances of that happening? by Simon Singh

Having studied Physics at Imperial (before moving to Cambridge for his PhD), Simon Singh rose to prominence in 1996 with the screening of his breakthrough documentary on the world's most famous mathematical puzzle, Fermat's Last Theorem. A BAFTA and an Emmy nomination later, he turned his hand to the written word, producing two of the best-selling maths books of all time - Fermat's

Last Theorem and The Code Book - as a result. He is now an occasional TV and radio presenter, a frequent lecturer and a all round clever bloke. So anyway...

We live in a risk society, one in which there are no surefire bets. Doctors offer treatments with only a certain probability of success, climatologists discuss the likelihood of global warming, and the dodgy chap on the street corner tempts us with games like 3-card Monty. But can mathematics help us to live longer, predict the future and beat the dealer? Take a free bet, perhaps win a drink and learn about probability through the experience of gambling.

Mental Trickery by Richard Wiseman

Having started his life as an award-winning professional magician, Dr Richard Wiseman made a major left at the traffic lights when he turned his attentions to psychology, taking his doctorate at

Edinburgh before moving to the University of Hertfordshire, where he leads a team investigating the psychology of magic, chance and the paranormal.

There is more to magic than mere dextrous trickery, and in the second half of the show, Richard exposes the psychology behind the tricks. There is more to a magician's trickery than sleight of hand, and however big your hands are, it helps to understand the workings of the human mind. Using magic tricks, demonstrations, video clips, mind games and lots of audience participation, Richard shows how to become a master of deception.

The event will take place on the 11th of June 2002 at 7pm in Lecture Theatre 1, Physics, Imperial College. Tickets cost £5 (£3 concessions), all of which will help to support this year's ICU Rag charities, and are on sale in the Union, the Physics Undergraduate Office, and from members of Rag.

Bandanna Week

Choice. We're surrounded by it and it's great. A coffee preparation method for every day of the year. "Choose life", as Ewan McGregor says. Yes, very good.

But weren't the teenage years tough in the choice department? You try to go clubbing but your mum/the bouncer/your D.O.B says no. And all those career choices: "What are you going to be when you grow up?", "Where..." etc

Some teenagers don't have a choice though. At an age when many people are choosing to experiment with cigarettes and alcohol, the teen with cancer is being pumped full of cytotoxic chemicals. The dose measured to be poisonous enough to cure you but not quite enough to kill you. At an age when most are choosing to assert their individuality, the teen with cancer is going through devastating physical changes and in pain.

They have no choice about it, and it's simply not fair. And neither perhaps is the geographical roulette wheel of the NHS which traditionally treats teenagers in either children's or adult oncology units, both of which are far from ideal.

The Teenage Cancer Trust (TCC) was set up in 1990 in response to this gap in care. Since then they have funded six dedicated teenage oncology units in the UK and have plans for 14 more over the next 10 years.

The units are designed and run on the basis of listening to those that know - teenagers in treatment and remission and their families. They bridge the gap between the needs of a dependant child and those of an independent adult. Individualism is respected and, encouraged to question and ask, most patients are fluent in 'cancer language'. They not only know the names of their drugs but which vein with which type of needle the nurses should use. The staff are lively and encouraging and there is an atmosphere of a youth club in the wards with music, posters on the wall, a pool table, computers and a separate room with TV and games where the patients can hang out without staff or parents (unless invited in!)

This week is Bandanna Week 2002, the second year that the TCC has run this massive fundraiser (£100k in 2001) to fund

their ongoing work and raise awareness of these issues in both the public and NHS eyes. The Bandannas are designed by designers such as Stella McCartney and Paul Smith and by buying and wearing one, you can express solidarity with young cancer patients.

There are many larger cancer charities that do essential work, especially in research. But the TCC, in the words of Mark Woods, one of only six people the charity employs, "makes a difference to young people right now." These wards help the patients find companionship with their peers and go a long way in overcoming many of the mental difficulties, which are often overlooked, of facing such devastating illness alone.

You can purchase the bandannas in many shops including Selfridges and Top Shop, and also in the Chaplaincy office in Beit East Basement.

For more information check out:
<http://www.bandannaweek.com/>
or email:
gillian.straine@ic.ac.uk

Editorial

Oh my God. That was like, *the* most stressful diary ever. Last week's was positively a dream compared to this one. I had to apply brain and everything for this one. Oh well.

So, what's been going on, I hear you ask. Well to start with, those of you who read the letters page may have noticed that last week I said that we weren't going to have anything more on the Palestine-Israel debate, as well as no more on the NUS debate. Strangely I've had six or seven letters continuing one, but not the other. I'll let you guess which. So to solve the problem of representing student views without turning *Felix* into a private forum, I am going to be organising a debate between the various different protagonists for some time in the next few weeks before term ends. I will then attend this debate (but not mediate it: that will be someone else), and write it up as a feature for the final issue of term. I hope this provides a reasonable solution for everyone, especially me. Look out for publicity over the next few weeks.

Apart from all this I have the bloody Alternative Prospectus to sort out, as well as a handbook, so anyone who thinks this job is easy can kindly come and take over from me before I have a nervous breakdown, and possible a brain haemorrhage.

Respect, incidentally, is due to all of you who have exams this week, and all other weeks, for that matter. I was just trying to help a first year friend of mine with her maths the other day: I have done four years of Physics, and I still had absolutely no idea what was going on, so I think that either the quality of degree has gone up, or the quality of my brain has gone down. Either way, I'm impressed.

Um. Sex? Usually an interesting subject, but I'm afraid it's all been a bit quiet on that front lately. I haven't fallen for anyone grossly unsuitable (except perhaps for a mild age gap) recently, and when I saw another ex-girlfriend this weekend (because my life is *that* exciting), it was all fairly easy and none too stressful, and we didn't even do anything stupid.

So on to pastures new, I suppose. Maybe I'll find some way to spice up my life, but I'm not sure I can deal with any extra stress, so maybe I'll just make the most of some me-time, as I think the Americans say. That's not to say that I'm not welcoming any advances, ladieeeee. Hehehe. Come up and see my snake, etc. Oh arse, I can't be bothered. I'm going to bed. On my own. Now.

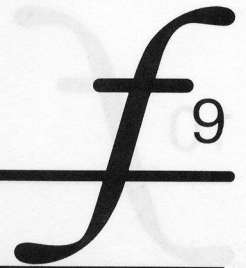
Whoops, forgot about the other four pages of *Felix* I've got to do first. So much for me time.

This Week	Friday	Weekend
Union Events	42 Dolly Mixtures You're dancing on the floor, when you see this beautiful person eyeing you up. But then you vomit on them. Oh well. <i>Union, All Night</i>	41 Yummy beer. The elixir of life. But wait! There is so much more at the Union! Lets do something else! Yes? (31), or would you just rather get pissed? (38)
Student Activities	29 How dull is that? You're just going to go home? Mind you, I suppose you have got work tomorrow and there's that project you have to finish. The hell of having a job...	30 For some reason the decor really appeals to you, and sticky floors have always been your thing. Do you come here to work (2), drink (38), or watch football (13)?
At The Movies	28 Do you like your Uni friends? Perhaps to watch the World Cup with (13)? Or do you look down on them patronisingly because you've got a job (37)?	27 You end up at the Prince Charles Cinema watching <i>Sing Along-A-Sound Of Music</i> . Can you see yourself doing this every week? Yes, go to 35, or no, go to 12.
Television & Radio	15 You seem quite well rounded. I don't trust you. Oh well. Let's go for a drink. Do you fancy a Union bar (41), or would you rather go to Southside? (30)	16 Simpsons You stick around to watch the Simpsons, and spend the winnings from the quiz. Just one episode (12), or two? (8) <i>Sky One, 7pm Saturday</i>
Gigs & Concerts	14 While you're not hardcore enough to die just yet, you'll probably become an alcoholic, alienate all your friends, and wake up one day, alone in your own vomit.	13 Oooh, world cup fever. Beckham scores with his dodgy foot, and Owen nicks one in past the French. Hurrah! After a game like that, it's time to go clubbing. (20)
Choose Your Own	1 You are born. Probably a mistake in the first place, but there we are. After a while, you have the option of Uni. If you take it, go to box 33, if not, go to 10...	2 You find the years passing faster and faster, and one day notice that you have become the bar manager. Oops! Oh well, at least you're still at University.

Start Here



choose your own adventure



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>40 You get a first, and everyone thinks you're boring and geeky. You'll become old and grey, wear sandals, and even your friends will call you 'The Professor'...</p>	<p>39 Trivia Do you know who the second man in space was? If you do, you're clever: go to 16. If not, you're dumb. Go to 25. <i>Union, Evening</i></p>	<p>38 Wednesday Wotsits By a process of osmosis, you end up at the Union, dancing to silly songs, and you wake up with a hangover. Watch TV. (21) <i>Union, All Night</i></p>	<p>37 Well, frankly you can piss off then. Nobody thinks you're big or clever. In fact we refer to you as grand-dad behind your back and make rude gestures.</p>	<p>36 Dolly Mixtures You and your friends go to the Union, have a little drink, and you meet someone nice, who likes you too! Happy ending! <i>Union, All Night</i></p>
<p>31 Alternative Music Lo Fi, Glitchcore, Riot Grrr!, and all that stuff. How great is that? Not very? Oh. Go to 21. Love it! Yes! Go to 7. <i>Da Vincis, 5pm</i></p>	<p>32 Yay! Scandies, or whatever it's called now. Can't go wrong with a bit of cheese. And you meet some students who invite you back to the Union on Friday. (36)</p>	<p>33 You are at Uni. You can either study really hard (go to box 40), study a bit and drink a bit (box 15), or get very very drunk every day (box 22). The choice is yours.</p>	<p>34 Alternative Music You are too old and boring. You should never have gone to work. You can't take the noise, and die of internal trauma. <i>Da Vincis, 5pm</i></p>	<p>35 For years you go every week to watch the hills come alive with the sound of music, and one day you realise that you are in fact Julie Andrews. Good effort.</p>
<p>26 You go to the Union to try and find something else to do, have a few drinks, and meet some friends. They persuade you to stay on for the evening. Go to 36.</p>	<p>25 Ah. Stoopid. But are you friends with the winner? If you are, stick around (16), but if not, follow some of your mates. I think they're going clubbing... (20)</p>	<p>24 Not the worst way to spend your life, but a bit dull. Oh well, you meet some nice guys who you can go out with of an evening, and life ain't too bad, really.</p>	<p>23 So one night you decide to go out with some of your friends at Imperial. But what are you going to do? Drink? (6), Music? (34), or perhaps some Trivia? (39)</p>	<p>22 Drink drink drink drink drink. Doesn't that sound a bit boring to you? Are you sure that's all there is to life? Are you <i>positive</i>? If so, 11, but if not, 5.</p>
<p>17 Well you're not too excited after that, but maybe you can salvage the rest of the evening. Is it worth a try going for a drink (24), or will you just go home? (29)</p>	<p>18 You've found some friends! Like minded individuals who you can share experiences with. But believe me, you might get bored in a few years. Watch out...</p>	<p>19 Are you serious? You don't know a single student? Even an art student? Just someone still in touch with how to have fun? If not, go to 3, but if you do, go to 28.</p>	<p>20 So are we going to go cheesy clubbing (32), or are you a serious hardcore techno trance jungle massif dancer. Let's hit the West End. Bo Selecta, etc... (4)</p>	<p>21 Oh well. At least you tried. Maybe something else is your bag. Star Trek marathons, for instance? (18) Or just an episode or two? (9) <i>Sky One, 5pm</i></p>
<p>12 Hmm, what to do now? It's getting to the time in the evening where you have to make decisions. Are you going to go home (29), or have a drink with friends? (24)</p>	<p>11 You wake up dead one day in a ditch, your trousers round your ankles, and a dog sitting on your face. Although I have to say that you did die happy...</p>	<p>10 You may have a job, but you can still have a social life (just). For instance, do you still have any friends at Uni? If so, go to 23, but if not, then go to box 19.</p>	<p>9 Hmm, you are difficult to please, aren't you? Is there anything social that you like to do? If so, then go to 36, but if you just want to sit around and drink, go to 24.</p>	<p>8 A friend suggests you go and watch Boo at Underworld, and after some thought you agree, but once you're there, does it rock (26), or does it leave you cold? (17)</p>
<p>3 Fair enough. You make some money, meet a nice girl, settle down, get married, have some children to assuage your fear of anonymity and die. So there.</p>	<p>4 In an effort to have the hoojest nite of your life, you get pilld up to your eyeballs on Cake, or something, and become permanently stuck in an alternate state. Wibble!</p>	<p>5 I knew there was still hope for you. There's so much more to life! You could go out and do something. How does some music strike you? Yes? (31) No, Drink! (14)</p>	<p>6 Oh dear. You do love your alcohol, don't you? Have you drunk too much to move (42), or can you actually still move your legs to go to the cinema? (27)</p>	<p>7 But is it all you like? Are you so one track minded? Surely something else tickles your fancy? If so, go to box 26, but if not, then your destiny is in box 18.</p>



The Breeders

Title TK

Out now on 4AD records

Kim and Kelley Deal return with another Breeders album chock full of indie-rock goodness. Sounding a little more stripped-down and bare than the older material, *Title TK* finds soft and scuzzy guitars picking their way across strange song structures, whilst Kim smothers almost unfathomable lyrics over the top ("Has anyone seen the iguana?" goes one chorus). The whole thing is held together by the sheer beauty of the arrangements.

A lack of glossy production brings the intimacy of the songs into a sharp focus - close your eyes and the band could be jamming on tiny little amps in the next room, if it wasn't for the obscure sound effects that keep dropping into the songs for a couple of seconds before disappearing.

The great little vocal harmonies put together by the Deal sisters gain a lot from the rawness of the sound, helped along by the fact that their gravelly 40-a-day voices are so similar. This is put to great use on opening track *Little Fury*.

The brilliant *Off You* finds Kim singing along with a lone guitar and bass, sounding like someone at the far reaches of sadness, letting the heavy sighs between lines hang in with the music. Although the second half of *Title TK* starts to sound a little alt-country, the album rarely strays from this minimalist aura, and is the better for it. A welcome return.

Title TK was recorded by Steve Albini in Chicago. The Breeders play the Astoria on Saturday and the Mean Fiddler on Sunday.



Ben



The Supernaturals

What We Did Last Summer

Out this Monday on Koch records

As you may have read previously in these pages, The Supernaturals once produced such gloriously fun records as *Smile* and *Lazy Lover*, but their recent singles have been somewhat less than great. So what's the album like? Well unfortunately, it seems that the mighty have fallen, and just as badly as I first feared.

My main criticism is that they have ditched the crisp organ/guitar collaborations, and now seem to use a cheap keyboard to add Nintendo-style soundtracks to the songs, making it all sound amateurish. Worse is the fact that they now sound like a new romantic band, and a bad one at that.

The only track that works is *Life Is A Motorway*, which shows that under all the electronic noises and sequences lies the talent that is desperate to be released. This is by far the best track on the album, and is suitably cheesy and light. It is a great shame that the rest just don't match up.

Too much of this album sounds as though they are just putting on a brave face and trying to hide the turmoil under their skin. Hopefully the 'Naturals will come out of their musical coma and produce songs like those of old again. And please ditch that keyboard!



Tank



Belle & Sebastian

Storytelling

Out this Monday on Jeepster records

This album is an extended and half-cut soundtrack of the Todd Solandz movie *Storytelling*. Belle and Sebastian were originally taken on to write the music for the second half of the movie, then asked to do it all, before being given just the second half again. Consequently, what you have here are the basic pieces that they wrote for the whole film, half of which were never used.

So what does this mean for the album? Well, as you go through it, you do get the impression of a story being developed, but without seeing the film you can't quite tell what that story is. However, I do know that I want to see it, as the music suggests that the film has a certain amount of depth and will make you think.

In terms of the music, Belle and Sebastian have done a good job of varying the pieces around a theme. The snippets of dialogue from the film which appear between tracks both help and hinder things - they help you to see pieces of the story, but tend to interrupt the flow of the album.

All in all, this is relaxing, having as it does that typical Belle and Sebastian lo-fi indie sound. But you get bored of it too quickly.



Tank

OUT THIS WEEK - Monday 3 June

ALBUMS

- BELLE & SEBASTIAN - Storytelling
- GARY NUMAN - Exposure
- DJ SHADOW - The Private Press
- THE SUPERNATURALS - What We Did...
- VARIOUS - Escape To Formentera

SINGLES

- BUSTA RHYMES - Pass The Courvoisier
- LAST MAN STANDING - Fate
- LIBERTINES - What A Waster
- NELLY - Hot In Herre
- SILT - In Line

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Live and In Person

It all started in September 1998, when an Australian actress better known for her famous husband than her acting ability took to the stage at the Donmar Warehouse. Eight sell-out weeks, universal critical acclaim and a drooling British public later, Nicole Kidman left the country with the kind of credibility and respect that most actors would die for. And it worked. No longer an Aussie also-ran, she starred in two of the most critically acclaimed mainstream movies of 2001, has her pick of star roles, and picked up an Oscar nomination into the bargain.

Dramatic as her career turnaround has been, it might easily have been dismissed as a fluke that had more to do with the play's nudity (there was a lot of it) than her acting talent. However, when Macaulay Culkin revived his flagging career with an appearance in *Madame Melville* in October 2000, the pattern was set. American actors looking to lend their career a bit of credibility now have a new destination - the West End. In particular, whilst Broadway critics drool over the prospect of tearing their performances to shreds, London's theatre reviewers are regarded as more forgiving, thereby tempting Hollywood's finest across the pond - particularly as the US media tends to only pick up on the successes, thereby limiting the chance of terminal embarrassment back home. The chance to spend a couple of months in London seems to appeal too, as does the opportunity to work with some of the hottest young directors (Sam Mendes, the man responsible for *American Beauty*, directed the *Blue Room*, whilst Shakespeare in *Love* helmer John Madden has reunited with Gwyneth Paltrow for *Proof*).

As a result, this summer will see the West End inundated by some of the finest talent Hollywood has to offer. After eight weeks in the limelight, Anna Paquin and Hayden Christensen were recently replaced by Matt Damon and Summer Phoenix in *This Is Our Youth*. Gwyneth Paltrow and Madonna have made tabloid headlines thanks to their appearances in *Proof* and *Up for Grabs* respectively. Willem Dafoe recently starred in a short run of *To You, the Birdie!* At the Riverside. Glen Close and Saffron Burrows are both lined up to star in (separate) productions at the National Theatre this summer. And the astounding-

ly talented Philip Seymour Hoffman recently led an acclaimed run of *Jesus Hopped the A Train*. Quite frankly, you're more likely to catch your favourite star in action this summer via Ticketmaster and Shaftesbury Avenue than via the Odeon and Warner Village.

The strangest knock-on effect of all this, however, has been for British actors. None of these stars are here for the money (Gwyneth Paltrow, for example, will earn £300 a week for her run at the Donmar) and they'll all have to put up with badly ventilated dressing rooms and the occasional spot of mould backstage - and it's for precisely these reasons that most British actors were only too happy to leave the stage behind them when fame, fortune and state-of-the-art trailers beckoned. Now, however, the trend that's been set by their US rivals is dragging the Brits back into the West End. Ralph Fiennes has signed on for a season at the NT this autumn, whilst Maggie Smith and Judi Dench will team up in *The Breath of Life*, Emily Watson will tackle *Uncle Vanya* and *Twelfth Night*, and Sean Bean will assay the role of Macbeth. Even Britain's busiest movie star, Ewan McGregor, is looking to take to the stage later this year (although he has yet to find a suitable role).

So where will it all end? Who knows. These people certainly aren't the best stage actors around, and if that's what you want, you should look elsewhere. On the other hand, you'll rarely get the chance to see stars who command upwards of £5 million a movie for under £20, so it really is a chance not to be missed. As valuable as credibility and critical success may be, a lot of the US actors are really here to take a break from an unforgiving work environment which will rarely see them end the day with a "well done", let alone a standing ovation - so go on, do your bit, help to make a movie star feel a little better, catch a bit of culture and have something really cool to tell your friends about this summer.

Many of these shows will sell out many weeks in advance, so for your best chance of getting a ticket, call the theatre and find out when they release returns. You may have to turn up at an unpleasant time of the morning, but it's not exactly a long way to go. Plus it's a lot cheaper than buying from a tout.

Distance

Tonight I hit my head on a piece of furniture that was hard and hurt myself. It was not so much the hurt that mattered as the fact that no one was there who would have seen the hurt and tried to make it better. There was my mother who was far away, and my father who was also far away; there was my love, whose words and face and habits I knew so well that I could hear and feel what he would say or do if he had been here. Since he was not, I pretended that he was, and now there was his voice in my ear scolding me in his funny and gentle way for being so clumsy, saying you should be careful, as well as his hand patting the curve of my head to take the pain away.

It is like this most of the time. Outside the window is someone's back garden, and back gardens in South Kensington are like magic forests that have accidentally woken up in the middle of all these old, elegant brick buildings, so that looking out of the window is seeing something spectacular. By myself, the beauty of these trees sings a sad, sad song when the branches sway as the wind comes blowing through them, but when I pretend that he is here, sitting on the windowsill without caring how far below the ground is and looking out of the window too, the trees sing a love song of the cold months that are coming, because cold weather is an excuse to stay close to your love.

When I looked at the clock it was so late that for him, half a world away, it would be so early. Now he would be in the back seat of his father's car, head back and eyes closed, staying asleep but coming awake, and the famous, terrible traffic of our home roads would be flowing around him so that if you thought about it he would be made so small in the midst of all the iron and steel and rubber moving single-minded in two directions parallel and opposite. On the highways you are only a person inside your car; to the highway there is only the rush moving over it from seven to eight in the morning and then at four to six in the evening, the hottest, grimmest parts of the day. It is fun when you are not the only person inside your car, when friends drive friends and words fly and happiness happens as simply as that.

I don't know if he has that kind of happiness any more. I want to know, because there is nothing worse than having him unhappy and not realising how bad it is for him. In between us there are seven hours of time and thirteen hours of plane-flight, and it is hard to tell from a voice over the phone how someone is doing. You miss all the clues that he drops when he lowers his eyes to the floor, when his head leans to one side, when he says something lightly but there is no smile so you know what is wrong.

At night I sit down and try to write, or draw, when I know I should be studying instead, but the things I think about need to be translated to words and lines on paper, words and curves on an LCD screen, rather than words and pictures unsaid and untold that drift away as though longing was a gas and expanded

when heated and was lost to the cold air outside the window. The window moves up and down and the lock is too stiff to close. If I lock it do you think my dreams will be able to go out and join his dreams? We cannot even dream at the same time; he wakes up when I am going to bed, I wake up when he is travelling home again, exhausted from those terrible things called lectures and classes.

Maybe my dream tonight will hang in the air and take a full day to travel east to where he is so that it will cleverly arrive just as he is going to sleep. Maybe dreams are clever and can manage all this time-twisting. Maybe if we can see each other in dreams it will not be so bad and we will not grow so far apart and the dreams will come true if we are patient enough.

And in the meantime, I love you.



Housing Questions?

- What does a tenancy agreement mean?
- Can you move out early?
- Do you need repairs to your flat?
- What if you fall out with your housemates?
- Do you need a TV licence?
- Who has to pay for gas and electricity?
- What is council tax?
- What if your landlord keep bothering you?
- Can your landlord keep your deposit when you leave?

No Problem too Big or too Small!

Sofa Surfing

There I was at four in the morning, yet again berating myself for allocating two pages for sport during this, the summer term, when obviously all students are inside all day, when suddenly, like an angel from Heaven, a freak shaft of lightning hit Felix towers, travelled down the mains line to my computer, and by some miracle allowed my computer to intercept an e-mail that was bound for the BBC sports desk. So here it is, hot from the press: a report on the latest new sport to sweep the world. Enjoy! - Ed.

Welcome one, and welcome all, to the exciting new world of sofa surfing. This sport sees teams of fat slobs vying for a chance to win the fabled Goblet Of Lard, as well as a Playstation, and a multi-purpose remote control.

The game itself is like bingo, but instead of numbers, one has to collect words, chosen from the vocabulary of our fair language by a panel of experts who have nothing better to do. The teams, each of three players, then have five cable televisions, but only two remote controls, and they have to use wit, cunning, and team work to zap between various channels to collect the 'hot' words from the mindless effluence of waffle that emanates from their goggle-boxes.

However, all this must be done while drinking Special Brew at the rate of a can every half hour, and eating crisps at the rate of a jumbo bag of sea-salt kettle chips every twenty minutes, and obviously you must never rise from your sofa, which clearly imposes a natural time limit.

The first professional match ever played was between the Suffolk Sloths and the Gloucestershire Gluttons.

The match started well, with both teams finding the word 'salubrious' in the same five minutes, on two different channels, thanks to the BBCs obsession with Jeremy Paxman. However the game waned after that, and with only 'gallant' missing from the Gluttons bag, and 'musty' from the Sloths, a fight broke out between the Suffolk team when one member wanted to see what happened at the end of *Star Trek*, and another spoiled it for him, informing him that they went back in time in a space hole to fix the problem with superglue. The excitement proved too much, and they forfeited through lack of bladder control.

The next match was between the London Louts and the Yorkshire Yobs, and this game started well until yells of 'Northern Donkey' and 'Southern Pansy' broke the concentration of the referee, who was trying to watch *Neighbours*, who promptly disqualified everyone for preventing him finding out who Toadfish was shagging.

Therefore only one team went through into the Grand Final, and this was the Gluttons. However, foolishly, and perhaps due to over-confidence (since you must complete the challenge to win, regardless of opposition), they started slow, enjoying a full episode of the *Good Life*, and had to admit defeat for sanitary reasons, while, ironically, still searching for the word 'chicken'.

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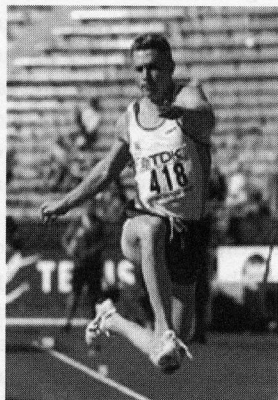
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**Sunday 2nd June,
Bar 10.30am, no alcohol before 12pm
England v Sweden 10.30am
Spain v Slovenia 12.30pm**

**Wednesday 5th June
USA v Portugal 10.00am
Ireland v Germany 12.30pm**

**Thursday 6th June
Cameroon v Saudi Arabia 10.00am
France v Uruguay 12.30pm**

**Friday 7th June bar 11.30am-3pm
Spain v Paraguay 10.00am
England v Argentina 12.30pm
Bar open at 12pm unless stated.**

Runs, Wickets and Cups of Tea

It is typically the case with the cricket season that the rain only comes the day before the games, and this year has been no exception. The first two games were both washed out, despite glorious sunshine on the day of the game, by heavy rain the day before and the inability of groundsmen to read the weather forecast.

However, the season got underway for the IC 2nd XI against RUMS 2nd's on Sunday the 12th May. The preparations didn't begin as planned, with one of the players forgetting that we actually had a game and Pete being drafted in, still the worse for wear from the night before. We eventually arrived (no thanks to the Union, who had provided a bus that left a trail of oil for us to follow on the journey back), only a little late, and our skipper Gopi was persuaded into batting first, if he won the toss, by an opener very keen to score some runs.

He duly won the toss, we batted and the opener, Spuggy, got 46 before managing to hit the ball to one of the only players in the RUMS side who could catch. The other opener had already made his way back to the hutch, bringing a very timid Shagnasty to the wicket. He began very slowly, showing that a good batsmen must use all of the willow provided, before he began smashing the very mediocre bowling all over the field, hitting a six to bring up both his fifty and hundred. Gopi also got 31, but was beaten to third highest score by the extras, who were helped out by bowlers who couldn't aim straight. Karan, yes that is his name, Rob and Tom, helped bring the total to 246 for 5 from 32.3 overs, before their captain persuaded us to end their misery and

declare.

After a very nice tea, which was most appreciated by Spuggy, we set out onto the field to bowl. We soon discovered that they couldn't bat very well either, with only three of their batsmen getting double-figure scores. Everyone bowled well, with Spuggy and Tom picking up two wickets each, and Gopi and a very excitable Hanut taking three wickets apiece. A mention must go to Pete who bowled extremely well given

rest of the batting line up would not have looked out of place in England's 1st innings at Lords' last week, and rumour has it that some of the IC middle order batsmen have been called into the England squad for the second test at Edgbaston. However, our captain had decided to leave his secret weapons at the bottom of the order, Irish Pete (We didn't know they played cricket in Ireland) and Metronome (57 not out) putting on 100 for the 8th wicket, rescuing us from a

ment by the skipper, several shots went through the slips at catchable height, Pete and Pumpman, he must have got the fielders in the right place for his own bowling, took three wickets each. Tom Hodgson also got a wicket and Marcus avoided the Thanks-for-Coming prize by claiming a wicket as well. This reduced UCL to 95 all out, a win by 95 runs.

The 2nd XI were due to play a fairly strong LSE side, but ULU had pinched a couple of their players on the morning of the game, so we knew it would be a close match. Our side batted first, and after a slow start by Hussain, no relation to the England skipper, and Mike (30), Gopi (67 not out) and Julian (38) helped themselves to the buffet bowling. Suraj, Karan and Muhammad all helped to get the side up to 209 for 5 from 40 overs.

The 2nd XI set about their task of bowling LSE out with great determination, Hanut and Damien, who is more famous for his command of the ball while batting, both picking up a wicket. In fact none of the bowlers disgraced themselves, everyone took a wicket, but unfortunately the game proved to be a lot closer than we'd have liked. LSE scored the winning runs with four balls left in the innings. This defeat meant that LSE, and not IC 2nd's would progress into the knockout stages of the UL Cup.

The 1st XI still wait to hear their fate, which looks likely to be decided by the calculator of Becky Fawcett at ULU, if she decides to come back from holiday in time anyway. Group A will almost certainly be decided by the run rate, since three teams look likely to finish on 4 points each.



his problems focussing on the stumps at the other end. We had bowled RUMS out for 114, giving us a comprehensive win by 132 runs.

The following Wednesday saw both the 1st and 2nd XI's in action, against UCL 1st's and LSE respectively. The 1st XI were expecting an easy win against a 'weakened' UCL side, we were told they would have to pick some women, which actually contained a ULU squad member, one more than the IC side. Our captain, Pumpman, won the toss and decided to bat, and being captain decided to open the batting himself, along with Tom Sterling. The pair started well, both players getting into the 20's before getting out. The

monu-fucking-mental disaster. However, Pete got out for 43, bringing James to the crease, only for him to walk back one ball later. Most of the team thought he had cracked one through the covers for four, but the more eagle-eyed spectators saw that he had in fact stood on his own wicket as well, Kwality! After, the middle-order collapse a score of 190 after 40 overs was a reasonable total.

After the tea-break the wild-west bowling partnership, Jesse/James, opened the bowling. They both started well, with James picking up his wicket second-ball and Metronome making Glenn McGrath look wayward. Despite some poor field place-