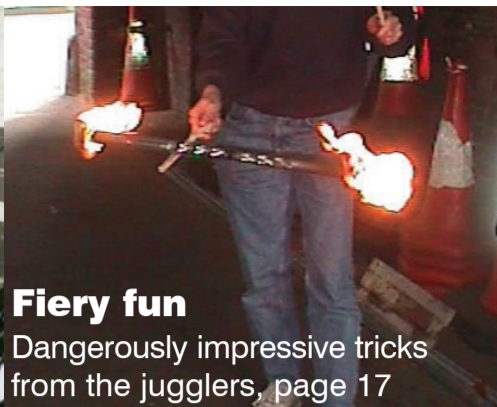


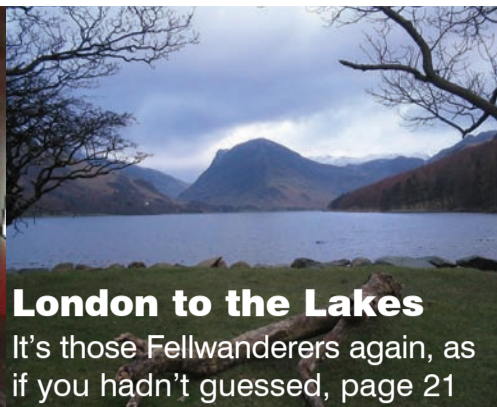
### Still undecided?

Find out more with our general election pullout, centre pages



### Fiery fun

Dangerously impressive tricks from the jugglers, page 17



### London to the Lakes

It's those Fellwanderers again, as if you hadn't guessed, page 21



### Festival of frisbee

Disc Doctors impress at south east regionals, page 26



# Felix



The student newspaper of Imperial College ● Established 1949 ● Issue 1320 ● Thursday 28 April 2005 ● www.felixonline.co.uk

### Extradition hearing

Imperial alumnus Babar Ahmad will discover on 17 May whether or not he is to be extradited to the United States under new terror laws. **►NEWS** page 3

### Tackling poverty

"We live in a world where poverty causes the deaths of 30,000 children each day; a world where 38 million people live with HIV..."

Colin Smith explains how you can get involved in the Make Poverty History campaign at Imperial, while Numaan Chaudhry investigates what the richer nations are doing to address the problem.

**►BUSINESS** page 4  
**►COMMENT** page 7

### Poker aces

Imperial students finish third and 20th out of 259 competitors at the inaugural UK student poker championship.

**►CLUBS AND SOCIETIES** page 18

### Nighthike 2005

Twenty-five teams of Imperial students hike through the night in sub-zero temperatures. Madness.



**►CLUBS AND SOCIETIES** page 20

## Charing Cross Hospital set to close?



Charing Cross Hospital, a centre of learning for Imperial College medical students, may have to close

**By Dave Edwards**  
Editor

One of Imperial College's main teaching sites for medical students faces closure, according to national newspaper reports published during the Easter break.

Consultants at Charing Cross Hospital, in Hammersmith, told the media that "closing the Charing Cross... is the only realistic possibility" to combat the local NHS trust's huge debts and maintenance costs. The hospital's main services would transfer to the Hammersmith hospital in Acton, but no-one knows what the future will hold for Imperial College teaching at the site.

According to an article in *The Observer*, "consultants at both hospitals were told of

the plans last week, but were warned by their chief executive that it would be officially denied if the plans emerged in the run-up to [general election] polling day". The electorate's opinions on any closure or partial closure

**"Closing the Charing Cross... is the only realistic possibility"**

could dramatically influence the result in the key marginal seat of Hammersmith and Fulham, where Labour currently holds a majority of around 2,000.

The plans are likely to be officially unveiled in June,

and there will be a full public consultation before any final decisions are made.

In a statement, Derek Smith, chief executive of Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, announced: "We expect to have to spend up to £400m on renewing our estate during the next ten years. With that level of investment, we have to look at all the options available to us to demonstrate that what we're planning is the best way of spending public funds. We are looking at options at the moment, but as yet have no plans, so have nothing yet to consult on, and are unlikely to have for some time yet."

Professor Stephen Smith, Principal of the Imperial College Faculty of Medicine, responded: "Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust is cur-

rently considering a range of options with respect to their service configuration. Imperial College would expect that any substantial alteration in services would take into account the appropriate arrangements for any transfer of our undergraduate and postgraduate education, and honour the provisions for our research activity and facilities."

Lucy Pickard, President of Imperial College School of Medicine Students' Union, told *Felix*: "It's difficult to say what situation we would be in if Charing Cross closed. It's understandable that students are very worried about it. We would like to maintain the medical school's facilities, and if that means we need to fight for them, we will."

**► Comment, page 6**

## Union reveals plans for postgrad sabbatical

**By Dave Edwards**

Imperial College Union has announced ambitious plans for a new Sabbatical Officer, the Deputy President (Graduate Students).

Funding for the post will become available from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). Within the next two months, the Union plans to elect a student who will then work full-time in the role from 1 August, taking the total number of sabbaticals at Imperial to seven.

Mustafa Arif, the President, told *Felix*: "Everyone recognises that postgraduate representation is a problem, and in our QAA [Quality Assurance Agency] submission it was highlighted as a major weakness. The College has accepted that and we have ringfenced money from HEFCE available next year to fund an extra sabbatical to look over the whole remit of postgraduate activity."

The Deputy President (Graduate Students) will focus on academic representation, postgraduate welfare, postgraduate involvement in student activities and other issues.

The plans must still be approved by the Union and College Councils, but Sam Rorke, the Deputy President (Education and Welfare), said he was confident of having a "champion for postgraduate affairs" in place for the 2005-6 academic year.

Only postgraduates will be eligible to stand for election, but all students will be able to vote.

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# Felix

Issue 1320

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## NEWS

# Hit-and-run 4x4 kills Imperial staff member

An Imperial College ICT manager was knocked off his bicycle and killed by a 4x4 vehicle at around 10.20pm on Friday 11 March.

Thomas Sippel-Dau, who was 54, died on Cromwell Road, near to Imperial's South Kensington campus. The driver of the dark coloured vehicle drove away after realising what had happened.

Arthur Spirling, Imperial's Deputy Director of ICT, said: "[Thomas] seemed to have a particular affinity with our students and his patient and calm approach endeared him to many".

On the *Felix* website, several students have paid tribute to Mr Sippel-Dau, who was originally from Germany.

Simon Clark, Computing III, wrote: "It's a terrible shame. From my brief dealings with Thomas, and from

reading his numerous posts to mailing lists, he was a very personable, very intelligent, helpful, friendly man."

Police have asked anyone who may have seen the incident to contact them on 0207 259 0324 or 0800 555 111.

● **Read students' views and comments at [www.felixonline.co.uk/v2/article.php?id=2413](http://www.felixonline.co.uk/v2/article.php?id=2413)**



The busy Cromwell Road, where ICT expert Thomas Sippel-Dau, who had worked at Imperial College for 25 years, was knocked off his bicycle and killed

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Imperial Volunteer Centre



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# Terror trial reaches final chapter

- Imperial alumnus Babar Ahmad remains in custody
- 500 people, including media and high-profile speakers, attend protest outside court
- Ahmad stands as general election candidate in Brent North
- Judge will give verdict on extradition on 17 May

By Dave Edwards  
Editor

After nine months in prison, an Imperial College alumnus should finally discover whether he will be extradited to the United States when a judge gives his ruling on 17 May.

Babar Ahmad, who studied engineering and went on to work in ICT at Imperial, stands accused of acts of terrorism including running websites for terror organisations in Chechnya and Afghanistan. Though he has not been convicted of any offence, he remains in custody due to the gravity of the allegations and the supposed risk of continued terrorist activity.

Around 500 people protested outside Bow Street Magistrates Court on 18 April as the latest chapter of his extradition hearing began. Around 20 Imperial College students were present. Protestors used megaphones, banners and balloons to make their message clear, accusing

George Bush, Tony Blair and the police of being "the real terrorists".

Mr Ahmad, 30, could become the first British citizen to be extradited to the United States under the Extradition Act 2003, which does not allow him the chance to respond to the allegations made by the US government. He was first arrested in December 2003, but was released by the British authorities without charge. He was rearrested in August 2004 and has been in prison awaiting extradition ever since.

Writing for *Felix* in January, Mr Ahmad said: "I know, and God knows, that I am not a terrorist and that I have not done anything wrong or illegal. That is what matters to me more than what others think. And I will have my day, for sure, no doubt about it."

Speakers outside the court included Martin Mubanga and Moazzam Begg, both of whom were imprisoned under terror laws and recently released.



The former Guantanamo Bay detainee Martin Mubanga speaks up for Babar Ahmad outside court last week

Mr Mubanga gave an emotional description of his time as a detainee at Guantanamo Bay, adding that Mr Ahmad could also finish up there if

lawyers and governments made the "wrong" choices.

Dr Adnan Siddiqui, a spokesman for 'Stop Political Terror', spent part of the day

in court before coming outside to address Mr Ahmad's supporters. "It's been quite harrowing listening to what's happening," he said.

"But if they extradite him, do you think they can extradite all of us? No! That's the message we have to put across: we will not be silenced. We are standing up for the truth, and we expect our leaders to stand up for the truth. But they have given up on the truth, so now it is time for the people to take over."

Colin Smith, Imperial College Union's Welfare Campaigns Officer, led the demonstration outside the court. He told *Felix*: "Once again it was fantastic to see such a large demo in support of Babar. As we get closer to judgement day, it is vital that we continue with the campaign."

"Continued resistance to what is being done to Babar can't fail to have an influence on this case, which is why I would encourage everyone

to be back at Bow Street Magistrates Court on 17 May when the judge will rule on Babar's fate."

Last Wednesday, it was announced that Mr Ahmad will stand as a candidate in the forthcoming general election. He will represent the Peace and Progress Party in the constituency of Brent North. The party, founded by the actors Vanessa and Corin Redgrave, focuses on human rights and is campaigning for British troops to be withdrawn from Iraq.

A statement from Mr Ahmad's election agent read: "Babar firmly believes that civil rights and liberties have been sacrificed in Britain in an attempt to create a climate of fear among the population. Voting for Babar symbolises the British public's opposition to this suspension of civil rights, which millions of British men and women sacrificed their lives for over 50 years ago."

● Comment, page 6

## Have a slice, there's plenty to go around...



Sir Richard Sykes, the Rector, cuts himself a slice of Imperial's largest ever pizza, which was unveiled in the JCR at the end of last term. The event was organised by engineering student Saurabh Dhoot as a celebration of Italian manufacturing, and the 4m long pizza was eaten in just 20 minutes. It was sponsored by Videocon Group, India's largest electronics conglomerate



# Business

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## Poverty could finally be history

The US and UK have taken several steps closer to providing mass debt relief for poor countries. **Numaan Chaudhry** takes an objective view

Last week, the US and Britain edged closer to an agreement that could provide billions of dollars in debt relief for impoverished nations, but they remained split over the question of whether to provide even more new aid to relieve global poverty.

The negotiations raised hopes that the two nations – who are leading the debate among G7, the Group of Seven major industrial powers – will be able to settle on a developing world debt plan by the time their leaders meet in Scotland in July.

“We believe we can make substantial progress in the next few months in alleviating debts of poor countries and increasing the resources available for poverty reduction,” British chancellor Gordon Brown told reporters after a meeting of top economics officials from G7 nations on Saturday.

“It is now recognised for the first time as a result of these meetings that more money will have to be made available.”

Mr Brown’s claims of progress appear overstated, however. So far, US President George W Bush, who faces enormous federal deficits and tough budget fights with Congress, hasn’t agreed to provide additional financial aid for the developing world, according to US officials.

For its part, the Bush administration said over the weekend that it persuaded Britain that any effort to address the \$40bn that 33 countries owe the World Bank and African Development Bank must include a complete write-off – not just relief from debt payments, as the UK had proposed.

Under the US plan, debt cancellation would be financed through World Bank resources, not additional funding from the US and other wealthy nations. British officials say the US approach is acceptable only if it comes with new aid resources.

Behind closed doors, the G7 finance ministers discussed rising oil prices, slow growth in Europe, massive US budget deficits and tensions over China’s policy of keeping its currency artificially weak against the dollar and euro.

Nonetheless, the ministers from the US, Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Japan and Canada concluded that “the global expansion has remained robust and the outlook continues to point to



Tony Blair and George W Bush, involved in a heated debate at the 2005 G7 conference. “So Tony, the plan is to donate this dosh to a country, accuse ‘em of buying nuclear weapons and slam them like, like, ker-pow! Right?”

solid growth for 2005”.

The finance ministers, many of whom believe their nations’ companies are unfairly handicapped by the artificially low value of the yuan, reiterated their hope that China would adopt a more flexible exchange rate system. French finance minister Thierry Breton told reporters that the ministers considered it “clear that the yuan is undervalued and there was a consensus that China has to address this”. China keeps the yuan in a tight range of around 8.3 to the dollar.

US officials, under pressure from Capitol Hill to defend US manufacturers against Chinese competition, have been particularly vocal in recent days about Beijing’s currency practices.

US treasury secretary John

Snow took the opportunity at the G7 meeting to repeat the Bush administration’s line that China has taken all of the necessary preliminary steps and should now relax its hold on the yuan.

US negotiators broached the subject of inserting sharper language aimed at China into the joint G7 statement, but the group rejected that idea as potentially counterproductive. “It’s ultimately up to China to decide, and I hope China makes the right call,” Japanese Finance Minister Sadakazu Tanigaki said.

The UK, which holds the one-year rotating presidency of the G7, is using its position to press for more assistance for poor nations, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The initiative has led to months of sparring with the US.

Prime Minister Tony Blair

faces a general election on May 5 and has been losing some popularity because of his support for Mr Bush and the war in Iraq. Mr Blair and Mr Brown, who is considered to have his eye on the top job in the UK, have staked a good deal of their personal prestige and political fortunes on the promise that they will come to Africa’s rescue.

Mr Blair has called for a doubling of aid flows from the rich world to the poor world, to \$100bn a year. Privately, US officials complain that the Bush administration isn’t getting credit for the aid increases the president has already put into place, including his AIDS programs and his signature Millennium Challenge Account, which is slated to provide its first grant today, a \$110m package for Madagascar.

Despite Mr Brown’s claims that the issue is settled, the G7 ministers left open the question of additional aid in the communiqué issued at the conclusion of their meeting.

The group cited “progress” in agreeing “to provide as much as 100% reduction” in debts “without reducing the resources available to the poorest countries through these institutions.”

● Colin Smith, page 7

### NEWS FROM THE SQUARE MILE Former JP Morgan executive probed

Michael Weinberg, a former top real estate executive at JPMorgan, the multinational investment bank, is being investigated for possible wrongdoing in the awarding

of contracts.

The inquiry, conducted by the New York law firm Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP, is looking at Mr Weinberg’s relationship with JT Magen & Co, a New York construction company that undertook work for the bank and also on Mr Weinberg’s personal apartment in New York. The firm also is looking into Mr Weinberg’s relationships with other vendors. The review is likely to be concluded within a few weeks, according to a person familiar with the situation.

Joseph Evangelisti, a spokesman for JP Morgan, says that when “issues were raised concerning our contracting practices, senior management launched a thorough independent review and is taking swift and appropriate action.”



# Science

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## Who wants to live forever?

Is ageing just another disease that can be eliminated by modern medicine or an unconquerable force of nature? **Darius Nikbin** attended a talk at the Darwin Centre by a prophet of immortality

We don't like to talk about it. Most of the time, we try to ignore it. Death. To many, it is the ultimate taboo subject.

It is said that Alexander the Great scoured his empire in search of an elixir of immortality. At the height of his empire, Ghengis Khan called upon a Chinese priest to ask him the secret of everlasting life – right until the end, Khan complained that death was the only force preventing him from conquering the world. Throughout history, humans have sought a solution to the problem of death. It forms part of our universal culture.

Today, there are some who are attempting to find an elixir. One such seeker, Aubrey de Grey, is either a visionary or a loon. Judging from his outward appearance, he is a bit of both. Despite his long, wispy beard, he looks far younger than his 42 years would suggest. He puts this down to a carefully planned, wholesome diet and listening to his mother. Sitting cross-legged in front of an assorted audience of experts and non-experts at the Darwin Centre, he outlined his views.

De Grey believes that some

humans alive today will go on to live for more than a thousand years. A ludicrous pipe-dream? Thankfully for him, he is also an expert in gerontology (the study of ageing) at Cambridge University. But De Grey's background is actually in computer engineering. He believes that the problem of ageing can be solved and that the elixir will take the form of an engineering solution.

In its most simplistic form, De Grey's argument is

**"...some humans alive today will go on to live for more than 1000 years"**

appealing. Ageing is a disease like any other. Modern medicine, taken to its logical conclusion, should prevent death (or 'deanimation' as De Grey likes to call it) as a result of ageing. Once the relevant medical tools have been engineered, there is no reason why humans would have to die of 'old age'.

Of course, put in such glib terms, it is too easy to overlook the practical difficulties.

There are a few. Despite the progress made in recent years, the causes of ageing have not been fully understood. There is no consensus on whether accumulating DNA mutation, telomere shortening after DNA replication or any other such mechanisms can alone explain why we age.

One evolutionary theory suggests senescence is a consequence of natural selection. The reason why we age is because the damaging genes that are activated in old age are not selected against earlier in our reproductive life. These genes survive natural selection. But remarkably, senescence is also not universal and there are species in which ageing has a negligible effect.

Beyond the practical difficulties, Aubrey de Grey's vision is questionable on a sociological level. If individuals were living for hundreds of years, what consequences would this have for society? In a country that is already struggling under a mounting pensions burden, do we really want more old people?

So, perhaps thankfully, according to experts such

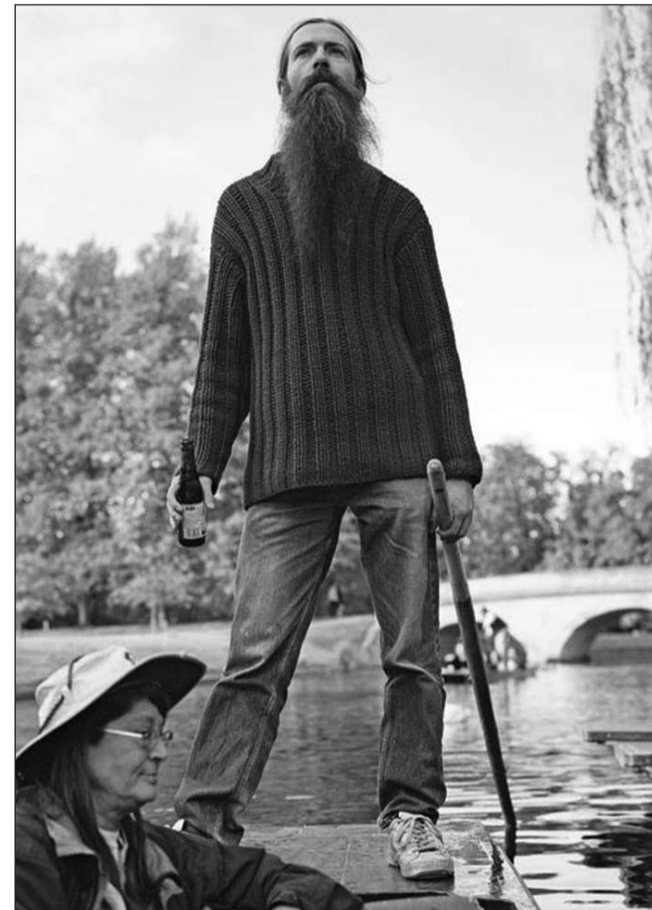
as Jay Oshlansky at the University of California, "nothing in gerontology even comes close to fulfilling the promise of dramatically extended lifespan". In his view, the likes of De Grey are weaving another "seductive web of immortality", one that has been woven since time immemorial.

Who wants to live forever? Who wants to find out whether humans will colonise other planets, to see the moment of first contact between humans and an alien race? So can we be forgiven for believing in what De Grey has to say?

The truth is that without any major breakthroughs, the science of immortality constitutes better subject matter for an episode of *Doctor Who* than a viable area for concerted scientific research.

There are two problems: one is the sheer complexity of the challenge, the other is that not everyone actually wants to live forever.

Maybe, for these reasons, gerontologists should be more focused on improving quality of life rather than trying to flog the dream of immortality... again.



Aubrey De Grey: a visionary or a loon?

## Fear that giant 'burp' could trigger global warming

By **Sophie Hebden**  
Science communication

As evidence for global warming stacks up, it is the speed of change that is now alarming scientists. As a result, climatologists are turning to our geological record to investigate what may have amplified global warming events in the past and how quickly we might expect things to change in the future.

At the beginning of the Eocene period, 55 million years ago, the Earth warmed very rapidly by an unprecedented amount. In some places, temperatures rose by eight degrees in a few thousand years. In 1995, geologist Gerald Dickens put this down to an enormous 'burp' of methane released from soils and from beneath the ocean floor. Since methane is a greenhouse gas, the trillions of tonnes of methane that were released into the atmosphere acted like an enormous blanket, warming things up and causing sea-levels to rise. The trigger for the belch, however, is unclear; it could have happened as ocean temperatures

rose above a certain threshold, or due to a comet impact or a sea floor landslide.

The evidence for the Eocene global warming event comes from ocean-drilling experiments near Antarctica. Fossils of shells and plankton extracted from bore holes allow geologists to construct a detailed chronology of events, based on the carbon and oxygen isotope ratios they contain that vary over time. The carbon-12 isotope timeline shows an abrupt spike, indicating a huge massive release of carbon-12 into the atmosphere 55 million years ago. At the same time there is a sudden leap in the proportion of oxygen-18 isotope in the fossils, corresponding to an increase in sea temperatures of seven or eight degrees.

The best explanation to date, Dickens' methane-burp theory, ascribes the carbon spike to methane escaping from ice in Arctic tundra soil and frozen stores beneath the sea floor. The warming climate may then have affected ocean circulation, so that once a tipping point had been reached, warm water was

channelled down to the crystallized hydrates. This destabilised methane hydrates in the ice, which are extremely sensitive to changes in temperature and pressure, releasing the methane gas. Some of this methane combined with dissolved oxygen to produce water and carbon dioxide.

Since both carbon dioxide and methane are greenhouse gases, this accelerated global warming and destabilised more methane hydrates in a positive feedback loop. Global temperatures were then reduced over the following 100,000 years by increased amounts of vegetation, ocean phytoplankton and erosion. Then another rapid episode of global warming occurred during the Jurassic period, about 180 million years ago.

The same underlying mechanisms causing these runaway greenhouse events still exist today. Jan Zalasiewicz, of the University of Leicester, pointed out that for these ancient global warming events, the Earth reacted non-linearly to environmental stresses. "A small amount



Is our climate poised to suddenly change?

of warming triggered a catastrophic release of methane," he says. "It's difficult to model or predict".

Furthermore, things can deteriorate quickly even with-

out a methane burp. In the last glacial ice sheet melt, sea-levels rose by five to ten metres in only a decade. Also the biosphere's ability to soak up the damage is weaker than

that of pre-human times. All in all, the Kyoto commitment to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 5% might not be enough to avoid another tipping point.



# Comment

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## Felix

### Hospital closure must not affect teaching

Current and prospective Imperial College medical students will have reacted with concern to news that Charing Cross Hospital may have to close. Whilst it is entirely reasonable that Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust needs to look to the long term and consider its financial situation, every effort must be made to ensure that any closure or potential closure does not affect students adversely. The President of the School of Medicine Students' Union is right to say that their facilities will be fought for if necessary.

It would be regrettable if such an important hospital, both to Imperial students and local residents, had to close its doors. It would be even more regrettable if, as national newspapers have suggested, the proposals are being covered up until after the general election.

### End in sight for Babar Ahmad

A British citizen sits in custody accused of committing acts of terrorism. He has been there since last August, when he was arrested for a second time.

If he has committed a crime, Babar Ahmad should be tried and sentenced under British law. Instead, he faces the grim prospect of becoming the first ever Briton extradited to the United States under the Extradition Act 2003. He and his lawyers may not respond to the allegations against him. No evidence needs to be put forward. Prosecutors must simply demonstrate that a US court believes it has a case.

The Extradition Act 2003 would appear to be a particularly dangerous piece of legislation, yet it passed through Parliament with barely a whisper of discontent. No other country could extradite a British citizen under these terms. Britain would not be able to extradite an American citizen under these terms. And yet these terms are now the law. On 17 May, a judge is due to rule on whether Babar Ahmad will be extradited. We await his verdict.

### Electoral system fraught with problems, but your vote counts

Andrew Ireson, writing on page 8, is not the first to describe the British electoral system as undemocratic, and he will not be the last. The 'first past the post' method currently favours the two main parties – in 2001, Labour and the Conservatives received 73% of votes between them, but claimed 88% of seats in the process. The Labour party also seems to benefit from the way in which the country is divided into constituencies, and a sitting government has the massive advantage of choosing when the next general election occurs, provided it is within five years of the last one. In a country of 60 million people, major parties have admitted to concentrating their efforts on less than one million key voters in crucial marginal seats, while everyone else seems to be forgotten. Recent fraud scandals surrounding postal votes in Birmingham and Blackburn have only served to increase the public's dissatisfaction with the system.

But despite these problems, and however disillusioned you might feel with politicians and politics in general, it is important that you take a moment to cast your vote in the 2005 general election in a week's time. Only 39% of 18-to-24 year olds voted in 2001. Students are the future of this country and, in large numbers, they can make a noticeable difference at the ballot box. Do you really have the right to complain about the way Britain is being run if you haven't tried to change it? As the Liberal Democrats are so keen to point out, there are numerous constituencies in which the student population exceeds the current MP's majority. Your vote is your voice, and failure to use it is akin to admitting that you really don't care who wins.

Turn to the centre pages for our general election pullout.

## Felix

## Wye and postgrads

This term will hopefully see two very important sets of elections in the Union. The first is for the Wye College Union Society (WCUS). The second will be for a new postgraduate sabbatical and a Graduate Students Association.

### Representing Wye

Regular readers will be aware that the Wye campus is going through a process of change. All of the science teaching is closing, with the research being phased out. However, the applied business management course will remain and a College review has begun to identify new academic activities to take place on the campus.

The next few years will therefore see considerable change at Wye – much more so, probably, than when Wye first merged with Imperial in 2000. The College has made guarantees, I believe genuinely, that every student will get the degree they signed up for. However, in any change process,

cracks develop that might get overlooked. That's why the biggest issues for the Union at Wye in the next couple of years will be to identify areas where teaching quality or other student needs may fall short and ensure that these problems get rectified swiftly.

### STATE OF THE UNION



**MUSTAFA ARIF**  
UNION PRESIDENT

The Union's representation at Wye happens largely through WCUS and so it's incredibly important that next year's WCUS officers are level-headed and able to effectively represent students' needs and opinions. WCUS elections take place in about two weeks' time. I hope that every Wye student takes an interest. The more students involved in the election process, the better officers you will get.

### Embracing postgraduates

You will have read on the front page that the College has agreed to fund a new sabbatical post of Deputy President (Graduate Students). This is a wonderful opportunity to kick-start a Graduate Students Association and elections are accordingly planned for mid-June. We hope to have the new sabbatical in post for the new academic year. Hopefully we will then be able to start the work of building a College-wide representation structure for graduate students.

## Beating exam stress

All of us have done exams at one stage or another. Below are some tips to help you reduce your stress levels during this difficult time. I hope you find them helpful.

### Believe in yourself

You wouldn't have been given a place on the course if you didn't have the ability to do it. Therefore, if you prepare for the exams properly you should do fine, so there is no need to worry excessively.

### Don't try to be perfect

It's great to succeed and reach for the stars. But keep things in perspective. If you think that "anything less than A+ means I've failed" then you are creating mountains of unnecessary stress for yourself. Aim to do your best but recognise that none of us can be perfect all of the time.

### Take steps to overcome problems

If you find you don't understand some of your course material, getting stressed out won't help. Instead, take action to address the problem directly by seeing your course tutor or getting help from your classmates.

### Don't keep things bottled up

Confiding in someone you trust and who will be supportive is a great way of alleviating stress and worry. Make use of your personal tutor and talk to them. If you can't find anyone to talk to, the door of The Information and Advice Centre is always open to anyone who needs it. You may even get a cup of tea.

### Keep things in perspective

The exams might seem like the most

### ADVICE SERVICE



**NIGEL COOKE**  
STUDENT ADVISER

crucial thing right now, but in the grander scheme of your whole life they are only a small part.

### Tips for the revision period

- Leave plenty of time to revise so that you don't get into a situation of having to do last minute cramming. This approach will help to boost your confidence and reduce any pre-exam stress, as you know you have prepared well.
- Develop a timetable so that you can track and monitor your progress. Make sure you allow time for fun and relaxation so that you avoid burning out.
- As soon as you notice your mind is losing concentration, take a short break. You will then come back to your revision refreshed.
- Experiment with several alternative revision techniques so that revision is more fun and your motivation to study is high.
- Don't drink too much coffee, tea and fizzy drinks. The caffeine will 'hype' you and make your thinking less clear. Eat healthily and regularly; your brain will benefit from the nutrients.
- Regular moderate exercise will

boost your energy, clear your mind and reduce any feelings of stress.

- Try out some yoga, tai chi or relaxation techniques. They will help to keep you feeling calm and balanced, improve your concentration levels and help you to sleep better.

### Tips for the exam itself

- Avoid panic. It's natural to feel some exam nerves prior to starting the exam, but getting excessively nervous is counterproductive as you will not be able to think as clearly.
- The quickest and most effective way of eliminating feelings of stress and panic is to close your eyes and take several long, slow deep breaths. Breathing in this way calms your whole nervous system. Simultaneously you could give yourself some mental pep-talk by mentally repeating "I am calm and relaxed" or "I know I will do fine".
- If your mind goes blank, don't panic! Panicking will just make it harder to recall information. Instead, focus on slow, deep breathing for about one minute. If you still can't remember the information then move on to another question and return to this question later.
- After the exam don't spend endless time criticising yourself for where you think you went wrong. Often our own self-assessment is far too harsh. Congratulate yourself for the things you did right, learn from the bits where you know you could have done better, and then move on.

If you would like a more in-depth chat about exam stress, then please feel free to contact the Information and Advice Centre on 020 7594 8067 or advice@ic.ac.uk. We are based in the east wing basement of Beit Quad.

Don't let your concern turn in to a crisis. Make the IAC your one stop shop for all your welfare issues.

# Making poverty history

*"Sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation. Let your greatness blossom. Of course the task will not be easy. But not to do this would be a crime against humanity, against which I ask all humanity now to rise up."*

Those were the words of Nelson Mandela addressing 40,000 people at a Make Poverty History rally in Trafalgar Square on Friday 4 February 2005.

For those of you who weren't in Trafalgar Square, or around Parliament Square the other night when 11,000 turned up for a candlelit vigil in Westminster Abbey and midnight march down Whitehall, and who haven't been reading the papers or watching the news, I'll start with a brief introduction...

Make Poverty History is a massive campaign, launched this year and backed by over 400 charities, non-governmental organisations, faith groups, activist networks, trade unions and celebrities. The basis of the campaign, and Mandela's emphasis on our generation, is that today we live in a world that has the resources and potential to lift the entire population of the planet out of poverty. And yet, we live in a world where poverty causes the deaths of 30,000 children each day; a world

where 38m people live with HIV; and a world where the gap between rich and poor is wider than ever before, and increasing by the day.

The causes of these global inequalities are not, however, natural. They lie in the corruption and self-interest of the world's major powers, which in turn result in a glaringly unjust global trade system and the huge burden of third-world debt that contrasts with pitiful aid donations. This was highlighted in the wake of the tsunami crisis that struck south-east Asia on 26 December last year, when the total sum of money donated to the relief effort by the British government amounted to less than one week's spending on the Iraq war.

An example closer to home that draws some of these points together nicely is that of our beloved Rector, Sir Richard Sykes. As chair of Glaxo Wellcome in 1999, he earned, in a combination of salary and bonuses, over £3.5m. At the same time, he was in the courts trying to pass laws to stop people in the third world receiving cheaper AIDS drugs, in what Oxfam described as "an undeclared war against the world's poorest countries".

So now, the aforementioned organisations have come together to challenge global poverty under the name of Make Poverty History, with three



**COLIN SMITH**  
WELFARE CAMPAIGNS  
OFFICER

central demands: the dropping of all third world debt, trade justice, and more and better aid. This year was chosen to launch the campaign for two reasons. First, in July, the G8 (the meeting of world's eight richest and most powerful leaders) will be held in Gleneagles in Scotland, and second, Britain will hold the European Union presidency for the second part of the year.

The central focus of the campaign is a massive demonstration that will be held in Edinburgh on Saturday 2 July, while the G8 leaders meet nearby. People are already talking about over a quarter of a million people demonstrating. The basic idea is

simple: to make it clear that people from all across Europe who will join the demonstration don't just want world leaders to pay lip-service to global poverty... they want them to end it.

In the run-up to the general election, each major party is trying to trump the others in championing the cause of the world's poor. But from past experience, particularly of meetings of the G8, there is little talk and even less action on issues that aren't about strengthening the positions of the eight participant countries, usually to the detriment of everyone else. And this is why it is vital that as many of us as possible are up in Scotland on 2 July, to make sure that global inequality is on the global agenda, whether Bush, Blair and company like it or not.

All of this is why the Make Poverty History campaign has just been launched here at Imperial too. It is hoped that the breadth of support nationally will be mirrored within the college, and the response so far from clubs and societies, faith groups and individuals has been impressive. A large rally is currently being organised for the third week of term, but before then, there are two things you can do if you want to get involved:

● A motion is being taken to Union

Council, which will next meet on Thursday 12 May, to obtain official backing for the Make Poverty History campaign at Imperial. To show the breadth of support, as many people as possible need to second this motion, which can be viewed alongside this article at [www.felixonline.co.uk](http://www.felixonline.co.uk). If you wish to join the list of seconders, please email me with your name, department and year at [cs602@ic.ac.uk](mailto:cs602@ic.ac.uk).

● Come along to the first Make Poverty History organisers' meeting at 1pm on Monday 2 May in the cafeteria area inside the entrance to the SAF (medics' building at South Kensington).

And remember, as Nelson Mandela highlighted, that it would be a crime not to speak out against the inequality that exists today in our world. Our government has the means to vastly change this situation, but as we have seen before, this won't happen without pressure from below, pressure from us in our hundreds of thousands marching in Edinburgh in July.

Finally, if it seems like a daunting task, then remember the phrase: "They are G8... we are six billion."

● **Numaan Chaudhry looks at making poverty history in this week's Business section, page 4**

# Energy policy a sign of progress

**Simon Bennett** welcomes the introduction of Imperial's Energy Management Policy but calls for specific targets and student vigilance to ensure that it really makes a difference

Readers who recall the embarrassing gap between the Rector's rhetoric on environmental commitment and the College's implementation record (as reported in *Felix* on 3 February 2005: 'Sir Richard and the Environment') may also recall that a College energy policy was promised. This policy was finally approved on 22 February and is now in place to guide staff and contractors towards achieving a 'showcase low carbon heritage estate'.

This is cause for celebration, I'm sure you'll agree, considering the battle that has been fought by the College's Energy Manager to have it implemented. The College should be applauded for having dragged itself up to speed with the country's other universities, but as students we must remain vigilant to ensure that the measures are implemented as promised.

Imperial's Energy Management Policy makes the ambitious and welcome statement that the College "aims to become the leading UK academic institution in applied energy efficiency and utility management". However, the published policy consists only of four bullet points indicating the areas in which improvements will be made. No detailed blueprints for the essential changes are included, though the policy does refer to a separate Energy Management Strategy, which is sadly not provided. Thankfully the key areas of concern are mentioned in the brief text, with energy efficiency of new buildings, procurement and energy awareness all receiving attention.

From the publication of what is considered a "bold and ambitious statement", it appears that the College is now committed to pursuing good environmental stewardship. But if this is really the case then why not publish the agreements and targets that underpin meeting the objectives? In this respect, Imperial still lags behind its counterparts.

UK universities currently spend £200m on energy requirements. This vast sum has prompted the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), to promote better energy management practices through the Green Gown awards.

On 22 March, the University of Glasgow was named the most energy efficient higher education insti-

tution in Britain for an innovative lighting system. Thirteen universities received awards or were commended, three of these for energy efficiency. Unsurprisingly, Imperial College did not appear amongst those commended in 2005, but what is perhaps more telling is information that appears on the websites of some other institutions that also missed out. Whilst Imperial is far

from alone in having high aspirations for energy efficiency, its lack of explicit targets seems to distinguish it from the majority.

For example, Oxford intends to reduce total carbon emissions by 20% from 1990 levels by 2010 by using more renewables. It is also monitoring CO<sub>2</sub> reductions by measuring kgC per m<sup>2</sup> of floor space. Bristol University has allocated £60,000 to identifying energy-saving initiatives and boasts that it has begun carbon trading through the EU emissions trading scheme. Cambridge is even prepared to publish a breakdown of energy costs alongside a detailed energy policy that aims to reduce energy consumption by 5% over five years.

Ultimately, adoption of an energy policy at Imperial is cause for celebration, as inefficient energy use campus-wide can now be held to account. The next step is to make it clear to the Rector and to the College that students, staff and the public deserve to see the full strategy. If Imperial is to successfully reduce its environmental impact through its actions as well as its research, then clear targets must be met.

So let us now see if the published energy policy can be increased to at least match Manchester's four-page document. And let us ensure that the Environmental Policy, due in 2005, is sufficient to put Imperial in line for some Green Gowns in the coming years.

● **Simon Bennett is an MSc student of environmental technology**

## IMPERIAL'S ENERGY MANAGEMENT POLICY

**"Imperial College London is a world-class teaching and research institution providing scientific and technical excellence, innovation and solutions for the global needs of the 21st Century. Best practice in energy management will become increasingly important in support of this position."**

The College aims to become the leading UK academic institution in applied energy efficiency and utility management, demonstrating sound environmental governance and global citizenship, and providing a showcase low carbon heritage estate.

This will be achieved by:

- Energy management including the implementation of an Energy Management Strategy, clearly defined objectives, targets, responsibilities and operating principles, and the efficient management of energy in the estate;
- Energy efficient design including Energy Standards, Monitoring and Targeting systems, continuous improvement of the estate and best practice in new buildings;
- People solutions including the development of a culture of energy awareness and accountability; and
- Procurement, which integrates low/renewable energy and carbon reduction into decisions regarding energy purchasing and generation and the purchase of equipment and materials.

The Energy Management Strategy will be reviewed and updated annually.

Energy Management at the College is the responsibility of the Director of Estates. Faculty Heads, with the support of their Faculty Administrative Officers and the Estates Energy Manager, are responsible for identifying and implementing agreed priorities within their Departments/Divisions. The efficient use of energy is the responsibility of all staff and students."

● If you have any comments or suggestions about energy issues at the College, you can contact the Estates Energy Manager, Phil Evans, on 020 7594 9652 or [phil.evans@ic.ac.uk](mailto:phil.evans@ic.ac.uk).



## COMMENT

# An election strategy for the dispossessed

As the country prepares to go to the polls, **Andrew Ireson** argues for electoral reform

The election is coming up. Politicians and the media subject us to an all-out tirade of facts, figures, soundbites and promises in order to allow us to make an 'informed decision' on 5th May. This is what democracy looks like, apparently.

The last thing I want to do is add to this clamour, but I would like to raise a rather awkward point, which doesn't get mentioned very often on the BBC: the electoral system in Britain is completely undemocratic.

It is well understood and uncontroversial that the current 'first past the post' electoral system favours the two main parties. If in doubt, just consider the statistics from the past five general elections, shown on the graphs to the right (source: UK Election Statistics, House of Commons research paper 03/59).

The contrast between the Liberal Democrats' percentage of votes and seats in parliament is stark, and whilst 'Other' parties have more than doubled their share of the vote since 1983, their number of seats has only increased by about a third.

But even these simple statistics don't tell the whole story – surely people would vote differently if they didn't have to enter into complex calculus about whether a vote for X or Y might be more effective in their constituency. The voter has one vote to decide both which candidate best represents their local interests

and which party best represents the national interest. So unlike the United States where the executive is directly elected, in the UK we have only an indirect say in who actually forms the government.

In my mind, this simply amounts to a system of divide and rule. Does it matter? Well, at the very core of western civilization is the proclamation that the only legitimate form of authority comes from the consent of the people. So, I would say, yes it does matter, especially at a time when we are exporting our superior values of democracy all over the world.

So, other than choosing to forget this inconvenient little flaw, what can we do? Well, what I am getting at, of course, is the need for electoral reform. In the long run, I think that a coalition between the progressive smaller parties and the Liberal Democrats is the best way to challenge the present two-party dictatorship. They would only have to win one election to implement a system of proportional representation, and could then return to their separate camps knowing that their supporters would be fairly represented in parliament in the future.

In the short term, if you are not

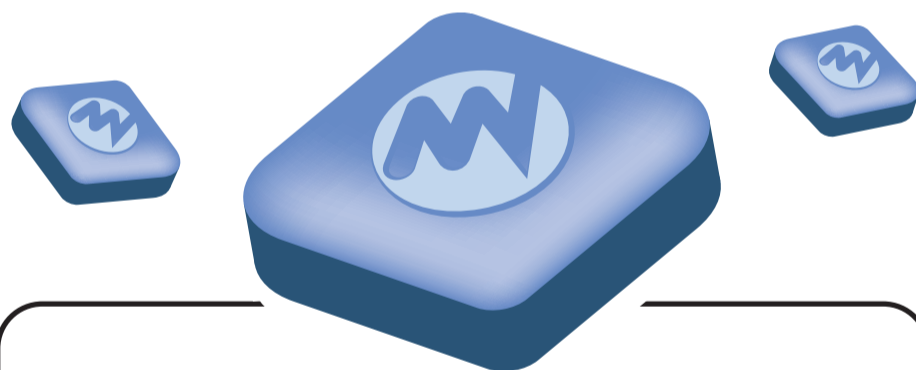
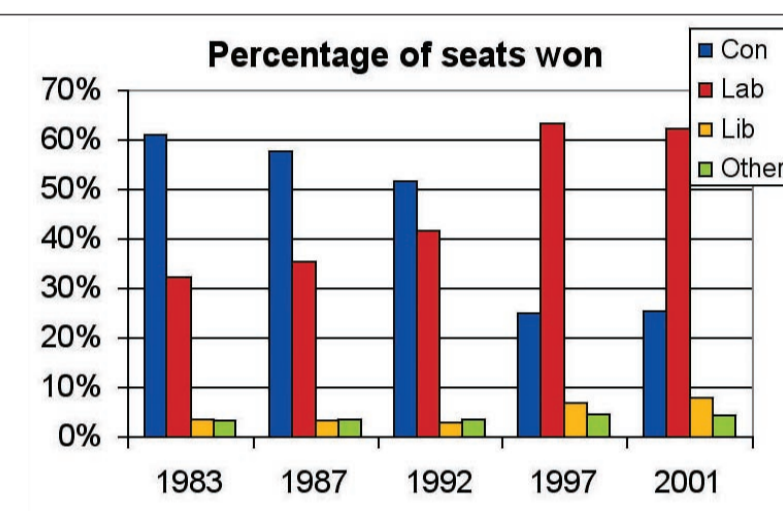
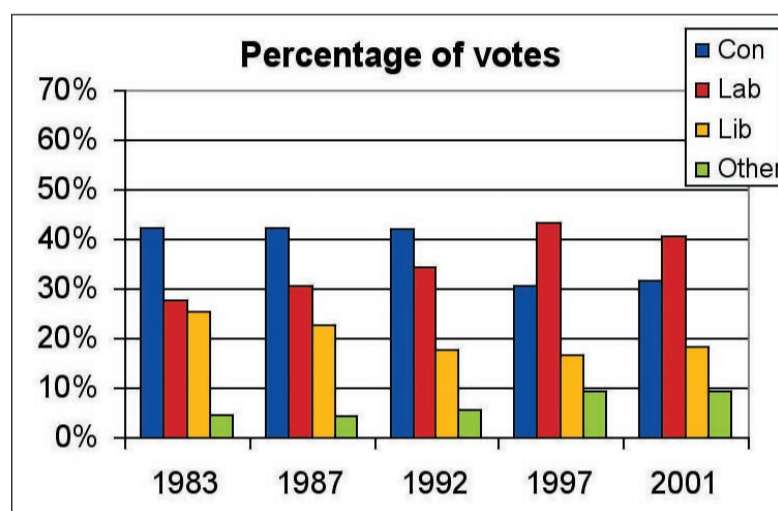
happy with either Labour or the Conservatives, then I think there is a way that you can have an impact at this general election – by tactical voting. This is where large numbers of people organise themselves outside the influences of the mainstream media and politicians. It is important that this be a co-ordinated effort if it is to be effective, so the internet is the perfect tool. There are numerous websites you can find which outline such strategies. I personally like [www.strategicvoter.co.uk](http://www.strategicvoter.co.uk).

Noam Chomsky describes the electoral process as an exercise in marginalizing the public, that is:

"Reducing them to apathy and obedience, allowing them to participate in the political system, but as consumers, not as true participants. You allow them a method for ratifying decisions that are made by others, but you eliminate the methods by which they might first, inform themselves; second, organize; and third, act in such a way as to really control decision-making."

We can accept this if we want to, but that is a choice we are all free to make.

● **Andrew Ireson is a PhD student in the civil engineering department**



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## Letters to the Editor

### Tanaka trouble interrupts revision

Dear Felix,

I am writing to you rather than studying for my finals as my preferred place of study has been rendered unusable by persons unknown...

Working in the Mechanical Engineering reading room this afternoon, my productivity was severely hampered by an almost continuous stream of clattering and banging as a small army of caterers set about transforming the Tanaka building entrance hall into some sort of Japanese themed dining room. Later on we even had pleasure of listening to the PA system technician repeatedly booming out "testing, testing, one, two, testing...", informing us that whoever was going to be out there later was going to be armed with electronic amplification.

However, what finally stopped me working was the string quartet, only 20 feet from the windows to the reading room. I realised that it would be futile to complain tonight, but I felt that I would like to know who organised the event so I could register my gripes with them some other time. Sadly when I went to

enquire about about the identity of the organiser/organisers I was met by a security guard who informed me the area was closed. When I said I was merely trying to find out who was in charge, he informed me, with his face two inches from mine, that I would have to find out tomorrow and there are other libraries to work in. I'm not sure whether his close proximity was intended to aid communication over the din of Vivaldi's greatest hits or to deliberately emulate the style of a bouncer, presumably in deference to the importance of the event.

The crux of my gripe is that, not for the first time, Imperial College seems to be putting the undergraduate student way down its list of priorities by hiring out the Tanaka Building, presumably as part of a lucrative conference deal. One does wonder what its future plans are: to continue as a centre of teaching and research excellence, or perhaps the powers that be have deemed it more profitable to cash in on the name of Imperial College and go head to head with the Marriott on Cromwell Road for the conference market.

Yours sincerely,  
Andrew Worrall  
4th year, Mechanical Engineering

Send your letters to [felix@ic.ac.uk](mailto:felix@ic.ac.uk). This is the page where you can make your voice heard on just about any topic. Letters may be edited for length but not for spelling or grammar, and are printed at the Editor's discretion



# Imperial College Union Strategy

## 2005 - 2009



Last term the Union Council agreed a new Union Strategy: a plan for the next four years to keep what's best at the Union and make it better. Without you and your help we couldn't have done it.

So, thanks to all of you who took part in the on-line survey last November and all the other students who helped out in focus groups we learnt what we needed to know about how you feel about your Union.

### What did we learn?

That you really value Clubs and Societies. That these are at the heart of what we do. We also learnt how you want us to improve them.

That though you like the information and advice service we provide you think we should advertise it better, so that students who need help or just need to find something out know where to go.

That though many of you would like us to provide life skills training (and we do!) you don't know what's on offer.

In fact we know now that we have to communicate with you a lot better.

We also know that you think we need a stronger and clearer voice when it comes to representing you to the College and beyond.

We've learnt that to many of you our governing structures seem distant and obscure; that it's time we opened them up and made our Union really representative.

But we've also learnt how much you value our shops, bars and services and you told us you want them improved. You also said its time we work hard to turn the Union building into a modern facility with the kind of bars, catering and spaces you want.

So that's why we have now put a Strategy in place.

### So....What next?

If we are going to make the Union building fit for the 21st Century and a place where you really want to go, we've got to find out what you want us to do with it. Watch this space for details of how you can get involved with this next consultation on the future of the Union Building.

### What does the Strategy mean for you?

It means ACTION.

The strategy tells us that over the next 4 years we have got to make some key improvements to your Union.

We're going to develop a Communications strategy so you know what's going on and how you can get involved in all the things we do.

We are going to make sure you have access to top quality advice and training relevant to your needs.

We're going to review and expand our Clubs and Societies so more and more of you can get involved at the level you want.

We're going to fundamentally improve our governance and our administration: making it more representative, open, accountable and efficient.

We're going to improve our representation of you to the college: making the whole academic rep system simpler and making sure we look after all students equally.

We've going to improve the customer focus of our shops and bars and entertainments so more of you want to use them. We will need to learn from you what you really want and deliver.

And, first of all, we are going to overhaul the Union building.

To view a full copy of the Imperial College Union Strategy 2005 - 2009 visit:

[www.union.imperial.ac.uk/strategicreview](http://www.union.imperial.ac.uk/strategicreview)



# Columns

felix@ic.ac.uk

## The girl about town



by STORMY WOODS

Ladies and gentlemen,

Secrets make the world go round. No, not that cheap lap-dancing chain, where chavess after chavess tries and fails to get my attention onto the perma-tanned acne collection that masquerades for a face. Those things you disclose, those things you hide from others – secrets are the very reason other people are inquisitive. Good things, let me tell you.

Welcome to a final term of decadence and debauchery, in which I, Stormy Woods, aspire to usurp the dizzying heights I've previously reached in my quest to enjoy life to the max.

Final term, eh? Isn't that when

you're supposed to be on a caffeinated diet in 24-hour library conditions whilst attempting to get that vital 2.1 passport to Merrill Lynch and similarly prestigious wanker banker firms? Sadly not, dear readers, for I am a fourth year of the witchdoctory faculty, in my BSc year, cruising through my final term of freedom before wards, exemplary behaviour and trying to flirt my way through placements become things of the present for me.

So what will this term bring to the eternally pervy Stormy? Perhaps I'll get to enjoy some exotic males from far flung countries, the Latino-heat kinda thing? I might even get to emulate this Spring's couture with an African tribal-inspired consort. My friend and I know that those international students have an impressive array of bedroom customs we're yet to experience in the sack. It's looking increasingly likely that they shall impress – the Kama Sutra didn't originate in England!

Racist stereotypes aside – stereotypes of which I myself have been the unfortunate victim when a chap asked me to be more subservient,

since that's what Asian girls did (needless to say, he ended up in A&E with testicular torsion) – I've not been especially inspired with regards to matters of the pants.

There have been a couple of interlopers – one of whom was hideous to the point where he had to be kissed with the lights off at night, and the other so attractive I practically came on looking at him. The Stormy paradox has been set: the uglier the guy, the better he is in bed.

Ugly guy was courteous, considerate, willing to learn and, most importantly, willing to compromise and try new things. The handsome chap was selfish, unadventurous, patronising, hurtful and presumptuous, assuming I'd like everything that the last six million girls he'd been to bed with liked. Each and every man and woman is different, and I cannot stress exactly how considerate it is to ask your bed partners how you're doing and whether there's anything they'd like you to do. Satisfied people are often happy people – and if it wasn't for ugly guy's inability to eat with his mouth closed and the rest of his hygienically-challenged lifestyle, Stormy Woods would have

a boyfriend.

Caveats are always interesting, aren't they? How would... what if... if he didn't... life would be different, I guess, and so would I. If I didn't meet the Shreddie at Retribution, I might not have developed the never-ending white rasta-look obsession. If I didn't stalk the very same Shreddie at college, I'd never have come across and had the time of my life with ugly guy. These things are circumrotary. I could be married with children in Bangladesh by now.

But I'm not. And I'm bloody grateful for not having to do a Jemima Khan and miss out on a glittering social life in my prime whilst attempting to find myself amongst the luxury mansions in Lahore. Jemima looks so dated. I wish she'd use her considerable fortune to buy herself a wardrobe befitting of a princess; she's got a lovely figure, and stunning features, which seem to be swamped by her ridiculous Aslan-type mane.

I also reckon a few women above their stations at College need Stormy makeovers too, starting with a female union worker regularly ridiculed for her permanently

miserable face complete with oversized hair. Eww, don't make me sick. Pervy thoughts, think pervy thoughts. Nathan Constance. Yum.

And yum is where I'll end this entry. Yum-lick man. The human pug, as he's more affectionately known by women who can't help but fancy him thanks to his scrawny figure and defenceless puppy-dog eyes. Inspiration to ugly guys everywhere, yum-lick man has proved you don't need looks or a stunning personality to get the goth scene's version of Carmen Electra worshipping at your bruised feet. You just need a fetish that both yourself and your object of affection click with.

In his case, it's slavery – he does what she says, and enjoys it – in both the carnal and real life form. She (about whom I shall not reveal any more details) loves the control she experiences on telling him to kneel before her as she is his master. Riveting stuff for those aware of these relationship dynamics, let me tell you. I'm not actually supposed to know what's going on, but voyeurism is so much more fun when you know everybody's little secret.

## Analyse them



by DIOGO GERALDES

Well, analysing Imperial and not mentioning the nerd community would be a glaring omission (like not connecting Einstein with  $E=mc^2$ ). So, this week, I will try to focus on the following topics:

1. What is a nerd?
2. What kind of nerds are there?
3. How do you know you're a nerd?
4. You're a nerd. Now what?

### 1. What is a nerd?

'Nerd' probably comes from the Latin word 'nerdus' – one who, when he dies and looks back on his life, sees nothing. But there are more things beyond this simple word. There's a whole universe to explore: a geeky underworld.

We all know how they look (glasses

like Dexter's, pen in their unwashed 1970s shirt pocket, laptop/PDA suitcase under their left arm, 848 books under their right arm, pictures of their favourite lecturer's sons in their wallets), so I won't waste your time with that.

If you have no clue about their appearance, just stop reading this article (if you have a sad enough life to be wasting it with lousy columns), raise your head and look around. You see? Wherever you might be (Junior Common Room, Main Dining Hall, the computer room in your department or a picnic towel in Hyde Park) you are surrounded by them. Yes, all those strange eyes looking at you like they disapprove of your laid back attitude are those of N-E-R-D-S.

Unfortunately, as you noticed, they are not extinct, even after all the hard work of anti-nerd movements. They are stronger than cockroaches (and believe me, cockroaches have survived major natural catastrophes – from the dinosaurs' extinction to the re-election of George W Bush) and are hard to exterminate.

### 2. What kinds of nerds are there?

- Front row nerd – sits in the front row and smiles at the lecturer while

taking notes with five different coloured pens of every-bloody-thing he says in a perfectly organized notebook. Always arrives 15 minutes early for optimal viewing position in the lecture theatre.

- Arse-licking nerd – an evolution of the front row nerd. Has the improved ability to melt even the coldest lecturer's heart with sympathy, offers to help him with his research (even if that means losing three hours of study a day) and makes geeky jokes about physics and maths. Always tries to approach the teacher when the lecture finishes, even if that means grabbing someone by the neck.

- Rebel nerd – a nerd trying to get a more normal life (and by that I mean going out of his room to buy some bread or, eventually, waste his time with music). Sometimes, tries to do something outrageous and only hands in the coursework five days before the deadline or drinks coke without taking all the gas bubbles off.

- Nerd wannabe – a bad student that wants to raise his Third to a 2.2 degree and so starts imitating front row or arse-licking nerds. Lacks quality and years of experience, though.

- Nerd converter – wants to bring even more people to his religion

(geekianism) by: a) inviting them to join his workgroups, b) letting them copy a third of his homework, c) not ordering all the books from the library (unless he's desperate).

- Nerd leader – he talks, they follow. He's THE NERD. Like male lions and red iguanas, there can only be one in each classroom. He leads all the other nerds through their boring university lives.

- LAN parties nerd – this is a different breed - most of them are bad students! You cannot separate LAN nerd from his most loved treasure: his laptop. Usually spends Friday and Saturday nights (or even the whole week) playing LAN games with his fellow nerds.

### 3. How do you know you're a nerd?

If you're reading this article, you are either:

- a) an Imperial College student
- b) an Imperial College lecturer not caring about his research
- c) an Imperial College student's or lecturer's friend
- d) an Imperial College student or lecturer's parent.

So... I'm sorry to inform you, but you are probably a nerd! And in case (d), it's your genes' fault!

Don't you agree? Well, think about

your life and if you answer YES to any of the following questions, jump immediately to part 4.

- Have you ever had a LAN party?
- Have you ever spent a Friday or Saturday night studying?
- Do you study for more than 45 minutes a day?
- Do you not give a crap about what you're wearing?
- Do you have names for your computer or calculator?
- Did you break up with your last girlfriend because "I can't have a girlfriend and do this course at the same time"?
- Do you only see your friends when you go to the computer room?
- Have you ever had more than one meal at the college in the same day?
- Did you go to Dixon's or any other hi-tech shop the last time you left your room?
- Have you never watched a football game or a teen movie?
- Have you never got slightly tipsy?
- Is your favourite pet called Frodo or Heisenberg?
- Do you have trouble tying your shoe laces?

### 4. You're a nerd. Now what?

Make the world a better place and please stop spreading your genes!

Imperial College Union Summer Ball  
The biggest event of the year, June 2005





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This study has been approved by an independent NHS research ethics committee. Guy's Drug Research Unit is independent of The Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital Trust.



# What's on

felix@ic.ac.uk

## THURSDAY 28 APRIL

### FILMS WHAT THE BLEEP DO WE KNOW?

7pm  
ICU Cinema, Beit Quad  
Free preview screening  
A radical departure from convention, this film demands a freedom of view and greatness of thought so far unknown.

The protagonist, Amanda, played by Marlee Matlin, finds herself in a fantastic *Alice In Wonderland* experience when her daily, uninspired life literally begins to unravel, revealing the uncertain world of the quantum field hidden behind what we consider to be our normal, waking reality.  
Contact: cinema@ic.ac.uk

## FRIDAY 29 APRIL

### UNION EVENTS 80s AND 90s DISCO

8pm-2am  
£2.50  
Eighties and nineties clas-

sics. Vodka and draft mixer £1 a shot in dBs bar. With summer barbecue.  
Contact: union@ic.ac.uk

## TUESDAY 3 MAY

### COLLEGE EVENTS LUCOZADE ENERGY STUDENT ROADSHOW

11am  
Queen's Lawn  
FREE  
Lucozade Energy's student roadshow is touring select university campuses to celebrate the launch of a unique promotion that offers 100 lucky winners the chance to compete for a once in a lifetime opportunity to train as a rally driver and race in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC).

Parked up on the Queens Lawn, the action revs up from 11am, offering you the opportunity to experience the intoxicating mix of speed and adrenaline that is the WRC.

Burn it up with your friends around the impressive remote-control rally circuit.

Experience the intense action of WRC 4 on the PS2

driving simulators, and watch exclusive footage of the Pros rallying at speeds of up to 200 kph.

Contact: kimberley.orchard@lighthouse-world.com

### UNION EVENTS STA TRAVEL QUIZ NIGHT

8-10.30pm  
Beit Quad  
FREE

Cash and beer prizes on offer. Get a team together and see how much you really know.  
Contact: union@ic.ac.uk

## WEDNESDAY 4 MAY

### UNION EVENTS SPORTS NIGHT

8pm-12midnight  
Beit Quad  
Free entry before 9pm  
Current and classic chart music. Carlsberg and Tetley £1 a pint in all bars all night. With Bar Shisha in the UDH. Free cloakroom for sports bags. Now with summer barbecue.  
Contact: union@ic.ac.uk

## THURSDAY 5 MAY

### GENERAL ELECTION VOTE

7am-10pm  
Exercise your democratic right today. Use your vote. Turn to the centre pages for our general election pullout.

### VERY IMPORTANT FELIX PUBLISHED

10am onwards  
Pick up the next issue from your department or the Union building.  
Contact: felix@ic.ac.uk

## ALL WEEK

### FILMS: VUE CINEMA, FULHAM BROADWAY Student discount ALL WEEK HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG)

Daily: 12noon, 1pm, 2.40pm, 3.40pm, 5.20pm, 6.20pm, 8pm, 9pm. Fri to Sun only: 10.40pm, 11.40pm. Sat to Mon only: 10.30am.

### XXX2 (12A)

Daily: 2.10pm, 4.40pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm. Fri to Sun

only: 11.50pm. Sat to Mon only: 11.40am.

### WEDDING DATE (12A)

Daily: 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6pm, 8.15pm. Fri to Sun only: 10.30pm. Sat to Mon only: 11am.

### GUESS WHO (12A)

Daily: 1.20pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.15pm. Fri to Sun only: 10.45pm. Sat to Mon only: 10.45am.

### AMITYVILLE HORROR (15)

Daily: 4.50pm, 9.45pm. Fri to Sun only: 12midnight.

### THE INTERPRETER (12A)

Daily: 12.10pm, 2.55pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm. Fri to Sun only: 11.30pm.

### SAHARA (12)

Daily: 1.50pm, 5pm, 7.45pm. Fri to Sun only: 10.50pm. Sat to Mon only: 11.10am.

### DOWNFALL (15)

Daily: 5.10pm, 8.30pm (not Thurs). Tues to Fri only: 1.40pm.

### HITCH (12A)

Daily: 7pm. Tues to Fri only: 2pm.

### ROBOTS (U)

Sat to Mon only: 10.40am, 12.45pm, 2.50pm.

### VALIANT (U)

Sat to Mon only: 10.50am, 12.50pm, 3pm.

## Running an event? Tell us about it!

Felix will print your listings free of charge. Just email felix@ic.ac.uk with LISTINGS in the subject field, and tell us:

- the name of the event
- who is running it
- the time
- the location
- the cost (if any)
- a brief description of the event
- a contact email address

## Competitions

### Win VIP tickets and transport to the Cuervo de Mayo party

# Cuervo

DE MAYO



Cuervo Tequila is bringing a dash of cool Mexican culture to the UK this year as they celebrate Mexican Holiday on 5 May with their Brit-Mex Culture Clash at the Scala. Roni Size, the Freelance Hellraiser and Larry Capolla from Electronic Latin Freaks form the DJ line-up along with XFM's Eddie Temple Morris and Dan Greenpeace.

We're offering one reader a pair of VIP tickets plus exclusive transport in Mexican style low rider bouncing cars. For the chance to win, just answer this question:

#### What country does Cuervo tequila come from?

- Morocco
- Malta
- Mexico

Email your answer to felix@ic.ac.uk by 5pm Friday 29 April. The first person to be randomly selected after the closing date will win the prize. Usual Felix competition rules apply.

If you don't win, you can still text Cuervo on 86025 to enter the prize draw for tickets.

DRINKAWARE.CO.UK

80's AND 90's Disco

Friday 29th April  
08.00pm - 02.00am

vodka and draft mixer £1 shot

All night in Dbs bar only

Now with summer B-B-Q!

Get down, fools!

The Union advises you to drink sensibly

£2.50 union and guest  
£2 ents card  
Over 18's only  
Student ID required R.O.A.R



imperial college union



# The General Election

# 2005

4-page Felix pullout special ● Thursday 28 April

## Local candidates speak to Felix

We interview a candidate from each of the three main parties:

- Mark Field (Conservative)
- Hywel Lloyd (Labour)
- Jenny Kingsley (Liberal Democrat)

## Imperial students ask for your vote

We invite five students to explain why you should vote for the party they support:

- Chris Hampsher (Conservative)
- Tom Tibbits (Green)
- Alex Guite (Labour)
- Gez Smith (Liberal Democrat)
- Kian Sing Low (Respect)



**USE YOUR VOTE  
ON 5 MAY**

Why you should vote...

## GREEN

Green Party   
Real Progress

**By Tom Tibbits** (Green party national spokesperson for energy and Imperial College PhD student)

“If you vote Green, you’re wasting your vote.” That’s normally the key argument I hear as to why someone will not be voting Green in any election. They consider a vote for a minority party to be a waste, as minority parties don’t win and if you vote for them you’ll just (a) let the Tories win, or (b) give Blair five more years (delete as appropriate).

Faced with this argument, you can see why the Green Party has needed tenacity during its 30-year life. In each election since 1974 we’ve contested seats, won votes, lost deposits, kept deposits, beaten the Tories and beaten Labour, but we still haven’t been elected to Parliament in a ‘first past the post’ electoral system.

But if you vote for a party you don’t believe in, isn’t that a wasted vote? Voting for a party with beliefs you share is surely the right way to vote. There are certainly arguments for tactical voting, but in most constituencies in the UK the same old party will win it, presumably because voters don’t want to ‘waste their vote’ by voting differently. So we end up with the status quo. Again.

If I had a penny for the number of times I’ve heard the following phrase, I’d be a millionaire, (or at least wouldn’t have an overdraft): “I agree with everything the Greens say but I’ve always voted Labour so I’m going to vote Labour.”

The very implication is that they don’t particularly *want* to vote Labour – it’s just like a very bad habit they can’t give up! So why not vote in a different way? Did you agree with the invasion of Iraq, on spurious grounds of hidden weapons? Or do you think that top-up fees are the best way to ensure all Britons get a fair chance at a quality education that suits them? Perhaps you’d like to know why National Insurance has gone up under Labour whilst public spending on health is still less than public spending on ‘defence’.

Greens approach both foreign and domestic affairs in a holistic manner that would see public funding given to conflict resolution without violence and increased provision of local, familial health care through a universal benefit, called the citizens’ income.

Take Europe – why are we hell-bent on join-

ing a federal economic model where we lose national sovereignty over important national tools like our ability to set interest rates? Or back to the defence issue, will the proposed EU Constitution just serve to force us to put more money towards enormous defence projects? Looking at the experience of other nations, Germany for example, we can see that the single currency has actually caused them immense national economic difficulties – rising unemployment, lower labour costs from intra-EU competitors and the inability to set appropriate national interest rates have given them no end of problems.

Greens aren’t anti-Europe; far from it – we have a rich history of internationalism – but we are anti-Euro. Whilst some modern industries are indeed global – communications, oil, electronics to name but a few, it hasn’t escaped us that we still rely on local economies for a lot of our needs – food, water, friends, and most of the social fabric we rely on. Localisation is a key tenet of green thinking. Local economies, local communities, local food and water production all serve to keep our own communities alive and well.

In an age of over-arching globalisation, aren’t we forgetting something a little more fundamental to our own well-being? In spite of ever-growing GDP, last month there was the tragic story of a man found dead in his council flat, six years after he actually died. The Coroner was reported to have remarked: “We need to ask what sort of society could let this happen?” We do indeed. We will never achieve a just, close-knit, trusting society if we forget about all the ingredients for such a society!

Asylum and immigration seem to be emotive issues at this election. Only the Greens would tackle the root causes of economic migration, ensuring fairer distribution and taking a tough stance on the real tax cheats.

Oh, and I almost forgot to mention our clear commitment to progressive environmental issues.

Whoever you vote for in this election, make sure you believe in what you’re voting for. Don’t waste your vote voting for a party you don’t believe in and can’t trust. Vote Green.

Why you should vote...

## RESPECT

*RESPECT*

**By Kian Sing Low** (Imperial College Socialist Worker Student Society)

Respect is a political party born out of the mass anti-war demonstrations and opposition to an increasingly right wing political climate. Since its formation in January 2004, it has made astonishing progress. Respect was formed as an alternative to the three main parties: the warmongering New Labour, the Conservatives who fully supported them in going into Iraq, and the Liberal Democrats who turned their backs on the anti-war movement and backed the carnage the second it started.

Respect stands on an anti-war and anti-privatisation platform. When local schools and hospitals are already under-funded in some areas, their privatisation will not help matters by making ordinary working people use services that will deteriorate further in the hands of big business, putting profit before people. Respect wants more investment of funds to provide decent public services.

The war on Iraq and continued occupation is still the central issue of these elections. The Labour Government killed over 100,000 Iraqis and wasted £6bn in a war based on a lie about the existence of weapons of mass destruction. This money could easily have been used to provide the things that Respect stands for. £1bn would allow for each of these:

- Scrapping the top-up fees we will see very soon for university students.
- Raising the basic state pension to £100 a week (not means tested) and installing free central heating and full insulation in 370,000 homes.
- Building eight new hospitals with state of the art equipment.
- Building a family centre in every constituency providing healthcare and homework clubs for children.

Respect are targeting 30 specific constituencies, including those where they did fantastically well in last year’s European elections. For instance, in Newham, Respect came second with 32% of the vote, being beaten by Labour with 42%. Respect beat both the Conservatives, who polled only 15%, and the Liberal Democrats, with 11%. Just a 5% swing could bring victory for Respect.

Respect is very well placed to win seats in several parts of East London, particularly in the area of Bethnal Green and Bow where George Galloway is standing. Also Lindsey German (convenor of the Stop the War Coalition) has a good chance of taking a seat in West Ham, where the Liberal Democrats recently withdrew their original candidate and the local press are pitching the battle as a two-horse race between Respect and Labour. Respect is also mounting a strong challenge in areas such as Plymouth, Bristol, Birmingham, Preston and Leicester.

If any Respect candidate manages to gain a seat, it would be a massive blow to the Labour government, and a boost to the majority of ordinary people who lack real representatives in Parliament. It would show that the British public elected an anti-war, anti-privatisation candidate and that the majority of the public now believe that going to war was wrong. It would also place in parliament someone who is not fed on lies by their leadership and will be willing to tackle the other parties on issues such as education and healthcare.

The Labour Government said they would rather lose thirty seats to the Tories than have a Respect MP in parliament. This is the kind of impact that Respect are having without any seats. Just imagine the gains with a Respect MP.

But seats cannot be won without campaigning. There are people from Imperial going to help out in East London this Saturday, and on polling day itself (next Thursday), and there are many more activists working around the area. More are still needed to help in the run-up to the election. If you want to be part of the Respect campaign and want to help out, there are many things going on at the moment. Please email [swss@ic.ac.uk](mailto:swss@ic.ac.uk) for more information.

If there isn’t a Respect candidate in your area then vote with your feet and get over to East London to help campaign for what are looking set to be some historic results. If a Respect candidate is standing in your constituency, then when it comes to 5 May, make your vote count. Vote Respect.



# Election interviews: local candidates speak to Felix

**CONSERVATIVE** Mark Field is MP for the Cities of London and Westminster, the constituency containing Imperial's South Kensington campus. Here, he discusses tuition fees, immigration and his chances of re-election with **Rupert Neate**

Mark Field is one of the youngest ever MPs to represent the Cities of London and Westminster. He has already had three careers and is only 40 years old. After leaving Oxford University, he became a lawyer, which he found "boring", and then went on to be a graduate recruiter before starting his own recruitment business.

He decided to become a politician because he "felt politics was too important to be left to somebody else". His German mother was a refugee twice before her 15th birthday. He believes that professional and articulate Germans eschewing politics was "one of the reasons we saw the rise of Hitler".

Field's political career started with a setback, when he failed to win the 'safe' conservative seat of Enfield North in 1997. One wonders how he went from that defeat to being selected as MP for the prominent Westminster constituency. He was lucky.

"In the 1997 defeat," he told me, "the Tories lost over half their parliamentary seats. A lot of the more prominent figures went to the house of lords... the local party association took the view that if they couldn't have a 'big name', they might as well have an unknown."

## Universities

Field went to university at a time when instead of paying tuition fees, he received a government grant. He, like Sir Richard Sykes, believes that universities should be independent of the state. It is his view that this is the only way to stop the "brain-drain of our most talented youngsters getting a scholarship and going to Harvard, Stanford or wherever". He believes that a bursary or endowment scheme would remove the disincentives of studying in Britain. But who will fund a bursary scheme at Imperial? Field

“Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial are already rapidly going down international league tables”

believes it should be the alumni – so we pay now and pay later!

His biggest worry, and one that must also be felt by all of us at Imperial, is the declining reputation of UK universities.

"Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial are already rapidly going down international league tables. That process will only continue if we don't get it right. Graduating from Imperial means something, that's high currency around the world. If in 20 or 30 years' time Imperial College was just another university it would be a tragedy."

He believes that the government's current target of getting 50% of people into university is a "bums on seats policy. We should concentrate more on quality rather than quantity." He even cites his own sister as "someone who should never have gone to university. She got a D and two Es at A level. She ended up going into a job that she could have gone into perfectly easily without going to university."

I put it to him that surely the Liberal Democrats' policy of abolishing tuition fees is more attractive to students. Field says that "no-one who votes Liberal Democrat believes they are going to see a Liberal Democrat government," and "no-one in the Liberal Democrat party believes that," so they can afford to make promises that haven't been properly thought through.

## The 'real opposition'

Charles Kennedy recently declared that the Liberal Democrats are "the real opposition". Is



Mark Field on recent Tory leaders: "In all honesty, if one looks at Iain Duncan Smith and William Hague, I don't think one could really envisage them walking through the door of number 10."

Field scared of the Liberal threat? "The reality of the situation is, Liberal Democrat policy doesn't hang together".

But he is under no illusions with regard to the failings of recent Tory leaders: "In all honesty, if one looks at Iain Duncan Smith and William Hague, I don't think one could really envisage them walking through the door of number 10".

He has more belief in the current Tory leader, Michael Howard: "He's a credible figure... [but] people are never going to love Michael Howard". Field thinks "Howard is not suited to the *Richard & Judy* thing. He should play to his strengths – the intellectual abilities." Field does not believe Howard, 64, is too old to run the country, although he concedes that "he will need a young team around him".

## Economic migrants but not refugees

Field believes that the UK should pull out of the UN convention on refugees "because it's not working". He is worried about maintaining "sustainable numbers" of refugees, despite the fact that his "own mother was ethnically cleansed" and found refuge in the UK. In contrast, he is a strong believer in the idea of economic migration. "If they want to make a contribution, bring 'em in," he says.

## War in Iraq

The Conservative candidate voted in favour of the war in Iraq and doesn't regret it. However, he wishes that Tony Blair had been up front about the reasons why Britain went to war.

"If he had stood up and said, 'look, we owe America for the last 100 years,' the people would have respected that. But he was dishonest. He simply didn't tell the truth at all."

## London

Field has always been against the London congestion charge, despite its' success at reducing traffic. "It has not made enough money," he argues. He is against the enlargement of the congestion charge to include the area around Imperial College, even though this would drastically reduce commuting times for those of us who travel by bus.

He is not too enthusiastic about London's Olympic bid either, and is sceptical as to whether Tony Blair would be so keen if we were not

in an election period. However, Field is a big sports fan and supported Bury FC, who currently languish in League Two. "I think their fortunes are even worse than the Tory party's in recent years".

His constituency includes Soho, and he is surprisingly liberal for a Tory, believing in "live and let live" on gay rights and those sorts of issues".

## The NHS and MRSA

Like most politicians, Field can wax lyrical about the threat of MRSA and dirty hospitals, but he failed the Felix Science question: what does MRSA stand for? He said: "That's a latin question isn't it? I'm going to have to fail on that one".

I'm sure you all know the answer, but just in case, it's Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus.

## The other candidates

Field is quietly confident that he will be re-elected, although he is sitting on a majority of only 4,500. He didn't appear particularly concerned

“If Blair had said 'look, we owe America for the last 100 years,' people would have respected that. But he was dishonest”

when I told him that the President of Imperial College Union, Mustafa Arif, could be standing against him.

After a few chuckles, Field stated: "It's a free country, and he's entitled to stand if he likes, but there might be other candidates I'm a bit more concerned about". Arif has since decided not to stand.

If he's successful in the upcoming election, I believe we'll be seeing more of Mark Field. His political ambitions include holding ministerial office, for London, International Development or Foreign Affairs.

"But," he adds, "we'll worry about getting re-elected here and getting into government first."

**LABOUR** Hywel Lloyd is set to be Field's closest rival for the Westminster seat. The former students' union president, nightclub manager and charity worker talks to **Dave Edwards** about his political views and passion for the environment

The trouble with politics and government, says Hywel Lloyd, is that they always disappoint. "In politics," he continues, "it's very rare for people to be able to say 'I've achieved what I set out to do, and now I can stop.'" Nonetheless, Lloyd, who describes himself as an "optimistic pragmatist", is aiming to become the first ever Labour MP for the Cities of London and Westminster. The thought occurs that he might well be disappointed when the result is announced on 5 May, but he insists he has a "reasonable chance" of victory.

Born in 1964 to Welsh parents, Lloyd grew up with "the sense that I'd always wanted to be in politics". He studied chemistry at Bath University, where he was also elected president of the students' union.

After that, he ran a nightclub for two years and then worked for a charity for the deaf. He says his varied experiences have allowed him to "pick up a fair amount of what I'd call real life. My job now is as a management consultant in public services, but I've worked in the voluntary sector, I've worked in the public sector, I've run a business, I've started one and I've had a couple fall over, so I think I've got a reasonable sense of what it is that really means something to people."

## Universities

Lloyd claims that the new top-up fees arrangement, which comes into effect next year, is "definitely a fairer system than existed", but, not for the first time in this interview, he reveals that his own view is different to the party line.

"My personal preference," he says, "would be for a graduate tax that applies to all graduates, including me. But the party and the population in general don't accept that way of gathering money."

“My personal preference would be for a graduate tax that applies to all graduates, including me”

I put it to him that Labour's seemingly arbitrary target of 50% of young people entering higher education will not only make it increasingly difficult for graduates to obtain jobs but will also lead to a shortage of workers in key areas that do not require a degree.

Lloyd counters: "It's a profound part of Labour's philosophy that more and more people should gain the opportunities that education can give them. It might well be more difficult for graduates to get jobs, but I don't see that as an argument for denying others the right to a good education. You could have a superb service for a very small number of students, which would be the academic envy of the planet, but that isn't the point."

However, he accepts that "it would have been both more understandable and more coherent" if, in 1997, the government had also dealt with what he calls "the missing part of the equation", ensuring that the other 50% of young people would have opportunities to level 4 or 5 on an NVQ scale, be they vocational qualifications or otherwise.

## War in Iraq

If he had been in Parliament at the time, how would Lloyd have voted on attacking Iraq? He begins his response like a typical politician, only to surprise me at the end:

"We did endeavour to use the UN and have it make a collective judgement on what should happen. It didn't go all the way with what Britain and America wanted, so then we had



Hywel Lloyd on the 50% target: "It's a profound part of Labour's philosophy that more and more people should gain the opportunities that education can give them."

to make a judgement – do we go or not? The Prime Minister made the judgement to go, but as a back-bencher I would have made the judgement not to. I would have voted against."

His reasons are interesting, too. "Partly from an environmental perspective," he argues, "war is a very wasteful way of solving problems."

## Going green

Lloyd lists 'the environment' as one of his major interests. He is co-chair of the Socialist Environment and Resources Association (SERA), and when I ask him if he has any ideas on how Imperial can improve its impact on the environment, he replies with enthusiasm:

"Probably hundreds! There's got to be a way – and students can be involved in it – of making the College sign up to various voluntary codes. Universities can actually save money, or at least use resources more effectively, if they have a better sense of 'where is our energy use? Are our buildings properly insulated?'"

"I think a lot of student feedback could work here. You can use a technical or economic argument: maybe we can save 10% of our energy budget [and help the environment at the same time]."

I suggest that, given the emphasis he places on environmental issues, Lloyd might be more suited to the Green Party than Labour. His response is swift, short and demonstrative of his political ambitions: "The Green party is never going to be in power."

## Negative campaigning

On a Labour party promotional web page entitled 'Cities of London and Westminster forward not back', just over half the text relates to how bad the area would become under the Conservatives. Lloyd argues that Labour are not being negative: "I think the party has got a profoundly positive message, but what's difficult is getting that past some newspapers."

However, he does take the chance to have a dig at the Tories. "The point does have to be made that you're choosing between a Conservative government and a Labour government, and if you're facing that choice you need to know what the alternative is going to look like. The Conservative manifesto is pretty light on anything, in terms of what they'll do, how it will work and how it will add up..."

Lloyd expects that Labour will maintain a

large majority in Parliament. "I can't imagine people will wake up on 5 May in the morning and think 'right, Michael Howard will be better for Britain'", he says confidently.

## London

Lloyd is backing the capital's 2012 Olympic bid, but he urges caution because "Paris already has most of its infrastructure in place and all of that." After a long pause, he says that the bid is worth the money even though London is less likely to succeed than Paris, because the process will help to "drive collaboration" and "regenerate the north east quadrant of London".

And what about the congestion charge? "I think managing traffic is very important, and at the moment the congestion charge and road pricing is the best mechanism we've got."

## What are his chances?

The turnout in the Cities of London and Westminster was just 47.4% in 2001. Less than 22% of constituents voted for Mark Field, the Conservative MP, who is standing again this

“I can't imagine people will wake up on 5 May in the morning and think 'right, Michael Howard will be better for Britain'”

year. This is just one reason why Lloyd feels that he can win.

He also points out that "the Liberal vote last time was greater than the Conservative majority, and the Liberals don't appear to be fighting this seat, because they don't appear to consider it winnable in their terms."

I am surprised to discover that, at the time of the interview, three weeks before polling day, Lloyd and Field have never met. Lloyd seems unconcerned by this, and suggests a reason for it: "I'm out there doing stuff, he's not."

Perhaps, with an unexpected victory on 5 May, Lloyd can stave off the disappointment of politics for a while longer and cause Field to experience it instead.

**LIBERAL DEMOCRAT** Jenny Kingsley, running for the neighbouring seat of Kensington and Chelsea, tells **Rupert Neate** about her defection from the Tories

Local councillor Jenny Kingsley left the Conservative party in 2003 as she felt she could not support its views on the war in Iraq, and because of the "lack of transparency and accountability" in the Tory-controlled council's dealings with the public. Kingsley, now a Liberal Democrat, is an elected member for Cremorne, a ward in the borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Since she defected, people who she once regarded as friends now snub Kingsley in public. This childish behaviour of Tory councillors, "many of whom should have retired from the council by now," although clearly making life hard, just reaffirms to her that she made the right decision.

Not intimidated by the actions of those councillors, Kingsley, 47, decided to stand as the Liberal Democrat parliamentary candidate for Kensington and Chelsea, one of the safest Tory seats in the country. She has very little respect for Michael Rifkind, the Conservative candidate, or Michael Portillo, the incumbent, who is stepping down after six years.

She believes that Rifkind, who lives in Scotland, "is not interested in local issues... he looked like he'd fallen asleep in a meeting once" and has been "given this seat because the Tories see it as less of a challenge". Yet Rifkind, despite having had so much trouble finding a parliamentary seat, is touted as a possible successor to Howard, should the Conservatives lose the election.

One may wonder if Kingsley has switched allegiance purely out of personal political ambition. She was a two-a-penny local Councillor with the Tories, but by switching to the Liberals she has increased her profile considerably.

She argues that there was "no perceivable political advantage" to be gained by the defection, which was "soul-destroying". She says her

“Students are the future of liberal democracy”

reasons for standing are altruistic: "We need a local champion to bring local issues to parliament."

In fact, her local roots (not in a *League Of Gentlemen* way) seem to be her trump card. She equates Rifkind's likely involvement in local issues to "having a girlfriend who you never see – you can't maintain a decent relationship".

Kingsley says she believes in the principles of the Liberal Democrats. But she does not ooze liberal ideals: she lives in a sizeable property close to South Kensington tube station, both of her sons went to Eton, and the NHS is not her family's primary health care provider. She admits that although in the past she "did not view the Liberal Democrats as a credible political force," she does now. "They seemed woolly... they didn't seem to take themselves as seriously as they deserved."

## The 'real opposition'

Charles Kennedy recently declared that the Liberal Democrats are the 'real opposition'. Kingsley believes that the party will pick up votes from both Labour and the Tories as a result of the war in Iraq, the public's lack of trust in the present government and their lack of faith in the Tories' ability to deliver.

According to Kingsley, her leader doesn't live up to the heavy drinking portrait painted by the media. She finds Kennedy "friendly, confident and extremely focused," and believes he is "an excellent leader". Kingsley believes that nationally the Liberals can "at most win; at least come second".



Jenny Kingsley on Charles Kennedy and the party's chances: "He is friendly, confident and extremely focused... [We can] at most win; at least come second."

## War in Iraq

An American by birth, Kingsley believes that "what a country might have is not justification for waging war". Although she feels the war was "against America's spirit of liberty," she is not ashamed to be called an American.

## Universities

According to Kingsley, "students are the future of liberal democracy". She is hardly surprised that we are sometimes made to feel unwelcome by our neighbours: "There is a very unpalatable feeling amongst residents towards young people." She suspects that the opposition against the Southside redevelopment on aesthetic grounds could be a "pretext" for anti-student feeling.

She loved her time as a student, studied Social Anthropology at LSE and received an MA in International Relations from Georgetown, Washington DC.

“We need a local champion to bring local issues to Parliament”

## The congestion charge

Kingsley is opposed to the extension of the London congestion charge, as it will adversely affect local businesses. She would prefer a "road pricing" scheme.

## What are her chances?

Jenny Kingsley has a considerable uphill struggle to even make a dent in the Conservative majority – in 2001 Portillo collected 54% of the vote – but Labour, on 23%, may be catchable. The Liberals received 16%.

What about the threat posed by minor parties? In 2001, Ginger Crab of the Jam Wrestling party received 100 votes. I don't think Kingsley is quaking in her boots.



## Why you should vote... **CONSERVATIVE**

By **Chris Hampsheir** (Chair Elect, Imperial College Conservative Future)

**W**e, the people of the United Kingdom, deserve better. The Conservatives have made clear promises to make our lives better. How is it that more taxes are required to provide the same, sometimes less, service that has previously been made available?

Civil service bureaucracy is wasting our limited resources. Michael Howard has identified £12bn over the next two to three years in duplicated and wasted paper-pushing that can be reinvested into our tired public services.

The chief culprits of overspent pen-pushing are in the NHS and the police force. It is surely common sense that there should be more doctors and nurses than administrators. Hospitals are places for the sick to recover and should be run by doctors and nurses, with doctors and nurses for the better treatment and recovery of patients. The less time a doctor has to spend filling in forms, the more time is available for treating the ill. With fewer forms, fewer admin staff are required and in turn fewer managers, all of which frees wasted cash which can be redistributed to

front line services.

Labour has said that more police have been recruited. This is true, but rather than pounding their beat, they are filling in pieces of paper to satisfy the Home Office. For example, there is a form that a police officer has to fill in for trivial matters such as stopping and questioning someone in the street. Even if this mass of paper is required, the work can be done by civilians, which will free up the trained personnel to help protect the citizens. Jobs need to be brought under control. Too often, the victim of a crime is the one punished.

In both the cases highlighted, public services should be about serving the public – not providing needless jobs to help bring down government unemployment statistics.

Even if you do not believe in his politics, you should believe in the man that is Mr Howard. The Conservative manifesto is short and to the point, with every single pound in the GDP accounted for. What you see is what you get. There are no economies with the truth, unlike the Labour premier, Tony Blair, who says one thing and does another.

Top-up fees are a prime example. It was stated that Labour would not introduce them, yet latest reports show that they are currently increasing to £3000 a year and will be increased further in the next parliament. Why should a medical or engineering student be charged £3000 per year tuition fees and then be in the higher income tax bracket? This person is providing a service to the public, helping to save and make better the lives of those around. Education should be free to those who want it. By scrapping the ridiculous 50% student target, money can be saved by removing virtually worthless degrees.

Mr Blair is not the only problem, however. Gordon Brown has stolen money from pension funds. My parents should have retired years ago, but thanks to the depleted pension funds this is not possible. The dream that so many couples had of a well-funded retirement is no longer possible. Some find it hard enough to scrape together enough for basic sustenance, all because of the greed of Number 11.

With state pensions in disarray, hard working families switched to paying into a private

pension fund. The latest from the Chancellor: he plans to raid the private pension funds in the next budget. How long can this disgraceful behaviour be allowed to continue? If an old aged pensioner withdrew their lifesavings and was mugged in the street, wouldn't society demand vengeance? The final nail in the coffin is that with what little money is left, pensioners must then pay council tax which has risen by an average of 78%.

We need to put trust in the people, not the civil servants. How can pen-pushing Europeans decide the future of our country? With self-determination, we can preserve our history, culture and heritage. We are British, not European. The same goes for Westminster too. Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland need control over their own laws and councils, but without the costly expense of the Holyrood fiasco. Money should be available for councils to spend as to their requirements; schools in one area will require a different amount of funding and different style of teaching to another.

You have a voice. You can make it count. Vote for a change. Vote Conservative.



## Why you should vote... **LABOUR**

By **Alex Guite** (Chair, Imperial College Union Labour Society)

**“T**he Government's support for research is declining, falling further behind that of our main industrial competitors in Europe whose policy is to increase investment in scientific research. There is no excuse”.

This was the 1986 plea by a group of university scientists, bought together around a common concern that the then Tory government was slashing British science budgets, making it increasingly difficult to fund world-class research. The response amongst academics to their half page advert in *The Times* was overwhelming and within a year the campaign 'Save British Science' was founded.

Today, the picture is very different. In March, Tony Blair visited Imperial College to announce plans for an extra investment of £10bn into British science research, continuing a commitment to sciences and engineering that has run throughout the last eight years of Labour Government, based on a belief that vibrant research is key to our continued prosperity.

In his budget, Gordon Brown re-affirmed this commitment with a pledge to continue increasing the share of GDP invested in science, raising us even further above the 1997

levels after 18 years of Tory cuts. Meanwhile, in the thinnest manifesto by a major political party in recent times, at a scrawny 28 pages, the Tories fail to even mention the word 'science', let alone set out a plan for funding and encouraging world-class research.

Perhaps it's fortunate that the Tory's skeletal manifesto isn't longer. The 28 pages are terrifying enough: a return to the dodgy economics of promising to lower taxes and borrow less, yet simultaneously vowing to increase spending. Are you thinking what I'm thinking? It just doesn't add up: you can't use the same money twice to increase spending and cut taxes. They tried it before, and we got economic boom and bust as a result.

It might seem odd that as one of the many members of the student movement who fought against top-up fees, I'm urging you to vote Labour. It might even seem appealing to give the Government a kick in the teeth by voting Liberal Democrat, but the truth is that it is a choice between a Labour government and a Tory government. A choice between a government that is increasing public spending on higher education by over a third, or a party that wants to slash university places by sending over 100,000 students home and

charging commercial interest rates on student loans.

Voting Liberal Democrat only makes it easier for Michael Howard to walk into Downing Street as we wake up on 6 May. The Liberal Democrats make much of their claim to have abolished tuition fees in Scotland, but it's not the full story. Up-front fees were replaced with a deferred graduate payment, a system that was condemned by student leaders as a betrayal of their pledge to abolish all forms of payment. The Liberal Democrats' university funding plans would deny many the chance to study at Imperial College: to save costs they have said that they want students to stay at home and study locally. In abolishing council tax, they would also abolish the student exemption, hitting students who work hard to fund their degree with their new local income tax.

Some lucky voters were recently targeted with a direct mail from the Tories outlining their 'plan for action' should they be elected. It's not so much a plan to tackle the big issues facing Britain today, rather a plan to dismantle the positive changes that Labour has introduced since 1997. The Tories have a record on this: whenever Labour has held

office they have set up a Department for International Development with a clear mission to tackle poverty, only for it to be ditched by an incoming Tory administration.

Hillary Benn, Secretary of State for International Development, speaking at Imperial College in February, described how aid has more than doubled since 1997 and now, having cancelled the debt of the poorest countries, Britain is urging others to follow our lead and offer 100% debt relief. Thanks to British leadership in the G8, the scandal of global poverty cannot be ignored by affluent nations. Similarly, Labour leadership in the international community has led to action on climate change. The UK has already met its Kyoto obligations and was pivotal in persuading Russia to ratify it.

The Tories are fighting a negative campaign and show more interest in spreading fear than presenting a positive vision for the future. When setting out the choice facing you on 5 May, Sir Alex Ferguson puts it well:

“This Labour government has led this country into a period of unparalleled prosperity. Britain is a fairer, more prosperous, tolerant and caring country that it ever was under the Tories.”



## Why you should vote... **LIBERAL DEMOCRAT**

By **Gez Smith** (Vice Chair, Liberal Democrat Youth and Students)

**Y**OU MAY THINK of the Liberal Democrats as still the third party in the UK, but did you know that among students, the latest poll figures show Lib Dem support standing at 47%, higher than Labour and the Conservatives combined?

Membership of Lib Dem Youth and Students (LDYS) is rising at its fastest rate for as long as we can remember, and the number of our university and college branches has doubled since the Iraq War. So why are so many students turning to the Lib Dems?

From what people tell us, it's because we're honest, open and consistent. We've opposed Labour's tuition fees and top-up fees from the start, and have openly shown where the money will come from to remove them (a higher rate of tax on earnings over £100,000). We've already removed the fees

from Scottish universities, through applying pressure in our coalition government with Labour.

We opposed the Iraq War from the start, unlike other parties who just criticised it when they saw how unpopular it was. We were the first major political party to call for the legalisation of cannabis and for drug addiction to be treated as a health issue, not an issue for the criminal law. We've been fighting for action on world trade injustice and environmental destruction for years.

But behind our policies, often eventually 'copied' by other parties, is something unique. We're the only party that allows all its members to have a genuine say in what goes on. Any party member can write a policy and have it debated at LDYS or the main party conference, where everyone gets

to vote on it. If it gets passed, it becomes national party policy! No other party puts this amount of power and influence in the hands of its members.

We have a belief in liberalism, a belief that everyone should be ensured the same opportunities in life regardless of their background, that people should be trusted and encouraged to run their own lives, provided what they do does not harm others. Because of this, we also want to see the way people vote in this country changed to proportional representation, so every vote will have an impact on the outcome. For us, a democracy should truly represent the views of all its voters, not just the wealthiest or the most vocal.

So what does the rise in Lib Dem support amongst students and across the country

mean at this election?

Well, there are 14 Labour and 13 Conservative seats around the country where the number of students exceeds the gap between the sitting MP and the Liberal Democrat candidate.

In Norwich, Charles Clarke, the former Education Secretary responsible for pushing top-up fees through parliament and current Home Secretary responsible for the terror bill and ID cards could lose his seat. There is a majority of 9,727 over the Liberal Democrats and a student population of 9,000.

We Liberal Democrats will be campaigning for every vote in every constituency. We want a fairer, safer, greener Britain that acts responsibly on the international stage.

Exercise your democratic right and make a difference.



### USE YOUR VOTE ON 5 MAY



# Clubs & Societies

felix@ic.ac.uk

## Ten things I can do that you can't

### EPISODE EIGHT: The Devil Stick



1. Safety first, boys and girls; 2-5. We recommend you try these steps without the stick on fire, at least the first few times...

#### JUGGLING CLUB

By Chris Rowlands

The Chinese consider the number 8 to be lucky, so I'm told. My own personal opinion is that they must be having a laugh at my expense - during the preparation of this article, we forgot to take the photos, I forgot to write the article, I lost the fire extinguisher for a few days (how do you lose a bright red fire extinguisher in a small cupboard?) and I nearly poured paraffin all over my feet. Which just goes to show that the ancient Chinese can't have been that smart after all.

The devil stick is one of the finer Chinese inventions (after such inconsequential things as gunpowder, paper and the decimal system), consisting of a pair of handsticks and a short 'centre' stick. When European missionaries went to Asia, they took the idea back home with them, and since they couldn't pronounce 'Hua Kun' properly, they named it 'devil stick' instead.

First thing's first: fire safe-

ty. Don't wear artificial fibres, and always have a fire extinguisher nearby [see picture 1]. You should also bring a fire blanket and a friend. The friend is very important, since they will tell you that the artificial fibres you're wearing look crap. As usual, nobody is responsible for your burns other than yourself - if you don't think you can handle the devil stick competently and safely, don't pick it up.

Start in the position in picture 2, without the stick on fire to start with - since you're about to let one end drop, it would make sense to check whether you can keep the stick in the air before you set fire to your toes. The position of the handsticks is important - they should be about four inches from the end of the devil stick.

OK, now let one end drop [see picture 3]. There will be a brief moment of panic as a ball of fire travels past your genitals, during which you wait until it is at about 45 degrees before you gently 'throw' the devil stick across to the other handstick. Once it's there, catch it on the other handstick then throw it back.

Pause a second to laugh in the face of both gravity and death, before trying something more tricky.

To get into a horizontal spin, start from the position above, but every time you catch and throw with your right hand, push the devil stick a little bit forward, and with your left hand, push a little bit towards you. After a while, the stick will level out and spin horizontally [see picture 4].

Alternatively you can throw it under your leg. Lift your leg in the same way as a dog at a fire hydrant, place your handstick under the leg and tap the devil stick as before [see picture 5]. Observant readers will no doubt be aware that this is similar to the top secret handshake of the masons - try it on a suspected mason when you next meet one.

That's all there is to it. There's no shortage of other tricks you can try, and if you fancy a go at fire juggling, diabolo, devil stick, poi and so on, all in the (relative) safety of Beit Quad, then you can come to juggling on Tuesdays from 6pm. Email [juggling@ic.ac.uk](mailto:juggling@ic.ac.uk) for more information.

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## CLUBS &amp; SOCIETIES

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# Imperial 'take it down' at UK student poker championship

## POKER SOCIETY

*Einstein was right. God doesn't play dice with the universe. Perhaps he plays poker.*

Our universe is governed by laws of chance. Sub-atomic particles, the very stuff of reality, can only be measured in terms of probabilities. Albert Einstein famously found this idea hard to accept. He could not bring himself to accept that events such as spontaneous radioactive decays were truly random. He believed that "God does not play dice with the universe"; his metaphysical conviction was that there were certain hidden variables at play.

If God doesn't play dice with the universe then surely he plays poker, where there is an element of design and chance. It is against this cultural backdrop, perhaps, that poker has gone from being a fad in this country to something resembling an organised religion. And if you were there at last month's UK Student Poker Championship, you would be



**Poker faces:** action from the early stages of the UK student poker championship, in which Imperial's Darius Nikbin claimed third place out of 259 competitors

blinking an organised religion. And if you were there at last month's UK Student Poker Championship, you would be

forgiven for conflating poker with religion.

The inaugural championship was highly organised

and involved 259 students from around 35 different university poker societies. The game was No Limit Texas

Hold 'Em, as featured on TV series such as Channel 4's *Late Night Poker*. Tickets to the event were worth £30 each, making a total prize pool of £7,770.

The organisers, St Andrews University Poker Society and Betfred (who are soon to launch an online poker website) claimed that this was the biggest ever tournament poker event in the UK. Rumour had it that it was the biggest ever in Europe.

It wasn't hard to see why, especially with the top prize being a prestigious \$10,000 seat at the World Series of Poker in Las Vegas, where there will be \$50m of prize money at stake.

A team from Imperial's Poker Society travelled up to St Andrews in Scotland to take part in the event. Adam Latimer, Saurabh Pandya, Robert Glasspool, Karan Lohia and *Felix* science editor Darius Nikbin had qualified via an Imperial satellite tournament.

The first day was a ten hour marathon, during which the 260 players were reduced to 30. These 30 would go on to play for a place at the final table on the second day. Two out of the five Imperial players, Robert and Darius, made it to day two – in itself an excellent result.

Eventually, after an grueling two days of playing poker, Rob finished in a superb 20th position. Darius fought his way through to the final table, where he finished the tournament in third place overall. To the delight of the home fans, the eventual winner was Calum MacNicol of St Andrews University.

Third and 20th places were excellent results for Imperial PokerSoc, and with more tournaments this term and next year, it looks like tournament poker at Imperial is going from strength to strength.

For more information about poker at Imperial, visit the poker society's website, [www.icups.co.uk](http://www.icups.co.uk).

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## Sub-Warden Position at Beit Hall

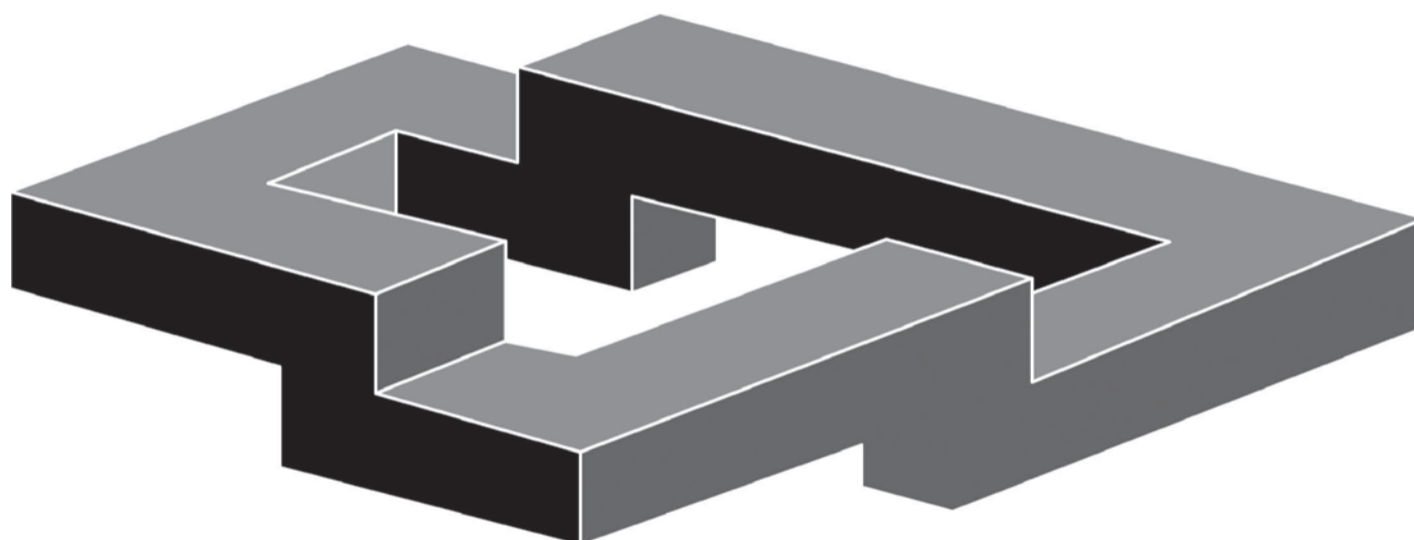
A sub-warden position will be available from September 2005 in Beit Hall. We are seeking energetic and dedicated members of College to fill this position. Responsibilities include pastoral care of students and organising the social life of the Halls. No payment is available for these duties, but rent free accommodation is provided within the Hall. The posts would best match PG students but other categories are eligible.

To apply please send a hardcopy of your CV and letter of application, plus supporting references from two referees. The CV should highlight relevant past experience and the letter of application should explain succinctly why you are suitable for the post. Please include your e-mail address in your application, as this will aid subsequent communication. E-mailed applications are not acceptable, but e-mailed references will be accepted.

All applications must be received by 17:00 on Friday 13th May 2005. These should be sent to: Dr. Neil McIntyre, The Warden, Beit Hall.



# WHERE IS THE TOP OF THE STAIRS?



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## CLUBS &amp; SOCIETIES

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# Nighthike 2005

## RECREATIONAL CLUBS

By Daniel Carrivick

Members of the Recreational Clubs Committee (RCC) had been up since the crack of dawn to organise the 2005 Nighthike. Having written and printed the necessary documents and maps, it was over to Amersham to set out the course.

A few snow showers threatened to hamper proceedings, but fortunately they came to nothing.

This year's base, Amersham-on-the-hill scout hut, had been used as the base for some Nighthike events in previous years. However, this year's event was to differ from those in the past, which had gone south of Amersham, by heading north around Chesham.

Soon after 8pm, the first of the 25 pre-entered teams started to arrive. Last minute preparations were still underway, so some took the opportunity to visit the local for a pint or two.

At 9.30pm, teams registered, picking up their maps and instructions. They had to copy down the descriptions of where each checkpoint was located and mark the check-

points on their map from the grid references they'd been given. Checkpoints were worth different amounts of points and teams had six hours to collect as many points as possible, so efficient route choice was critical.

The first team set out at 10.30pm into the dark night, where the temperature was already well below zero. The last left just before midnight.

There were two different categories: 'novice', for those who weren't very familiar with navigation skills, and 'competent', for those with a little more experience.

Novice teams had a choice of visiting up to 15 checkpoints in the area to the north east of Amersham, while all 26 checkpoints were up for grabs for the competent teams. Many competent teams elected to head around Chesham clockwise, as this saw them reach the furthest checkpoints, and hence those worth the most points, first.

Situated on a fence behind a tree only a few metres from the path, checkpoint 001 proved elusive to a number of teams. The Incredibles, having fought their way through the undergrowth to where they thought it was, had given up on finding it and were mak-



The 'shining beacon' award was given to the person with the brightest trousers (far right)

ing their way back to the path when they stumbled across it!

The first team to reach the most northerly checkpoint, 026, did so just after midnight and were surprised to be met by the Red Bull Energy Team (see picture, above left). Many competitors were energised, which kept them mentally focused and alert; just what was needed to keep them going for the rest of the night.

The muddy paths had frozen solid, making the brideways treacherously uneven and unforgiving. Unfortunately, a person from team Run Away twisted their ankle so badly they were forced to withdraw at 2.50am. They got a lift back

to the Nighthike base in one of the patrolling minibuses, while the team continued.

Warm drinks, along with something that was supposed to be soup but looked more like wallpaper paste, awaited the teams as they finished back at the Nighthike base. Most came back on time between 4.30 and 6am, with lessons being learned from last year when lots of teams arrived back late, incurring severe penalties as a result.

Extra time was awarded for visiting manned checkpoints but not everyone had read the rules and hence some teams failed to take advantage of this opportunity. Sausage and egg sandwiches were served

while results were compiled and we waited for the final team, The Stumblers, to finish. They finally ran in, slightly out of breath, at 6.34am, having collected the most points (940 out of 1000) but in the end they finished the novice category in second place with 760 points as they were 31 minutes late. Winners of the novice category were The Lost Spaghettis with 834 points.

In the competent category, third place went to The Incredibles, who got 830 points (also out of 1000), and in second place, visiting 22 checkpoints and gaining 875 points, was Special Brew Crew. Visiting the same number of checkpoints, but with 890 points, were the winners, Smoffat, who took home the 'most competent competent' Nighthike team award.

Of course, there were other prizes, including the 'shining beacon' award that traditionally goes to the person with the biggest, brightest torch but which this year was awarded to the person with the brightest trousers – they were an eye-dazzling fluorescent orange (see picture, above right).

Naturally, wooden spoons were up for grabs too, and

these fiercely contested awards ended up going to The Team and The Hopeless Hikers for being the 'most novice novice team' and the 'most incompetent competent team' respectively.

By 7.30am it was all over for another year, and the participants headed home for a well-earned sleep. It wasn't so easy for the organisers though – the hut had to be cleared and cleaned, and then all the checkpoints collected in. However, in our fatigued state, all the maps had been sent back to London in a minibus, so we had to rely on our exhausted memories as to where the checkpoints were. In the end we managed it, though we couldn't have done it without the Red Bull – thanks girls!

Special thanks must also go to Nick and Phil for helping me organise this year's event, Chris and Adam for driving minibuses and manning checkpoints, and Seb and Olle for standing in and helping to man the kitchen. Also thank you to the eighty-odd competitors who took part. I hope you had a good time and hope to see you again next year.

For more information, pictures and results, visit [www.union.ic.ac.uk/rcc/nighthike](http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/rcc/nighthike).

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# Fellwanderers take on the Lakes

...and this time it's personal

## FELLWANDERERS

By Tristan Horner  
and Chris Mark

In a desperate bid to take over your precious newspaper pages, the Fellwanderers embarked on yet another misadventure into the north of our fair nation. Yes, this meant spending nine bloody hours on the M6 in a cramped minibus negotiating with other Londoners who had the same idea.

Was it worth it? Well, on arrival at our camping barn we unlocked the doors to find nothing other than two drunken Geordies stinking up the place with incessant belching and foul language. In a desperate bid to take back our barn, we tried to strike a compromise in which they could sleep downstairs if they just let us get our stuff out and get to sleep.

Come the morning, however, the two were friendly and bright, offering to help us put up some more tents before



A big lake. Beautiful isn't it?

they set off on their way. This, of course, is a lie, seeing as the two were still completely drunk and rather incoherent. Feeling little sympathy for them, our ever-courteous president decided

to outwit them using complicated words and not starting every sentence with a four-letter profanity in a desperate bid to get rid of them (eventually the local farmer 'took care' of them, in case you

were wondering).

After that incident, we set off in search of the tallest hills to climb and the best scenery the Lake District has to offer. While one group tested their skills with the ice axes

on Striding Edge, the other group walked for a good solid eight hours up three different mountains! Although we had to fight off the occasional blizzard on the summit and the biting wind, the views were incredible and literally left you breathless (although that could have been the bitter cold).

Eventually, el presidente (Sarah) managed to get us all rounded up like so many zombie sheep, into the minibus and back to the barn, where 'Trial by Gas Stove' began. For the uninitiated amongst you, this is an ancient mythical ritual whose origins are long forgotten (too many bar nights I suppose). The hand-picked sacrificial victim spends at least half an hour trying to insert the gas pipe into what on closer inspection turned out to be the air vent, and then turns the gas on and leaves it to gather for ten minutes while hunting down and cornering a lighter. As everyone else takes cover, the lighter is waved in the vague direction of the stove, result-

ing in a small fireball, lots of cursing and a distinct singed look around the eyebrows.

Dinner was eventually achieved (special thanks to Sarah and Tristan for making it not just edible, but tasty) and it was time to ply Soundtrack Matt with alcohol until he burst into song - a sight to leave strong men trembling and weaker souls pleading for mercy. To the haunting refrain of innocent Disney songs being brutally savaged, it was time to head to the local tavern to get to know some of the Welsh people who were camping with us before retreating to the sleeping bags.

Sunday morning dawned grey and overcast - perfect weather for a little free weights training, the weight of choice being the Cardiff University Outdoor Club minibus, which, with patriotic Welsh stubbornness, was refusing to cross an English bridge. It's amazing how fast Fellwanderers can push a minibus when it's between them and the hills...

After an hour's snooze on the bus, all of a sudden we'd got to the second day's hill. Hill? Well, it looked sort of like a hill on the map, but our ascent was actually up an ice-covered rocky ridge spearing ever upwards into the clouds. However, everyone got up intact and the views eastwards (and straight down either side, for that matter) were stunning.

A last scramble over knee-deep snow and the summit was ours, the sun breaking through the clouds to generate a moment of awesome beauty, marred only by the near-universal reflex posing, which can be viewed in full horrifying detail at [www.fellwanderers.com](http://www.fellwanderers.com). After that, it was all over, barring the snowball fights on the way back down. All in all, this was a fantastic trip. Thanks to everyone who went for making it so good.



Left: yes, it's those Fellwanderers again, posing on top of yet another hill/mountain/peak/thing. Right: "it looked like a hill on the map, but our ascent was actually up an ice-covered rocky ridge, spearing ever upwards into the cloud"



## It's gripped, it's sorted... let's paintball!

## FELLWANDERERS

By Matthew Mayne

Leaving the union at seven on a bitterly cold Saturday morning (is there any other kind?) the Fellwanderers were set to prove they could socialise without hiking or drinking.

When we got there, it was a challenge to see just how many layers you could fit under an oversized camouflaged jump suit without restricting the blood supply.

Paintballing. Sounds easier than it really is. Less painful, too.

It was a delight to see the way everyone's true colours shone through as they were shot at by some short kid with a sparkingly clean boiler suit and custom gun. Clearly, orange trousers were off the agenda (too much of a target).

Our Quartermaster decided to direct from the rear, leaving our president ("I can't shoot so let's just run") to lead our budding members (fresh meat) to the front to try to capture the flag, charge a castle full of defenders and generally get shot amongst the giant cotton reels.

It's amazing how little you

could see of some of our more cautious members stalking nearer the back.

Much fun was had by all, and we would have done better, too, if it weren't for the terrain (we don't do flat ground).

A certain ex-president decided to take one for the team, running towards the flag for all of two metres before being repeatedly gunned down by everyone, including us ("oh, oh, it hurts, stop, stop, I'm dead, I'm dead"). My tip: never leave the only thing that distinguishes you from the enemy behind, especially when it's your gun!



Paintballing: war has never been so much fun



# Nightlife

clubs.felix@ic.ac.uk

## Clubbing. All weekend

"The plan was to start on Thursday and go out every night of the weekend. We also had to go to every lecture and practical..."



**AARON MASON**

The idea I had was to go out every night over the weekend and make a diary of where I went.

I needed someone else to come along, so off I went trying to find one of my friends who was willing to do the whole thing. That's when I realised that not many people want to completely abuse their bodies.

A lot of friends were up for it until they heard what would be happening, then they told me to stop being stupid – apparently you need sleep, don't you know? Anyway I asked my friend Mike, who agreed. He doesn't like his course much anyway and didn't care about being off his face for the whole weekend.

The plan was to start on Thursday and go out every night of the weekend. We also had to go to every lecture and practical. I don't think my lab partner appreciated me turning up and not being able to focus properly. So where did we go?

### THURSDAY

**Discotec**  
The End  
£6 before midnight  
★★★★☆

As this was our first night, we didn't want to burn out, so we decided to take it easy until we arrived.

Did you know if you get to The End before 11.30pm drinks are really cheap? When I say cheap, I mean ridiculously cheap – £1.60 for a house spirit and mixer. How good is that? We arrived at about 11.15, as we knew the door guy would be a twat as they always are, so we only had 15 minutes to drink as much as we could afford from the cheap bar. We ended up buying mini bottles of champagne. Why? I don't know, but it seemed like a good idea at the time.

The End has two rooms. One was house and the other was urban/R&B. This room I avoided the whole night – there is something slightly unsavoury about all those Urbanite pop-tangled groups. I mean, who calls themselves 'snoop-bitching-ho gunna bust a cap in your ass' anyway? I'm sure that's what those crazy kids were saying on the street. Or is it hood?

Anyway, the main room started off with the usual generic safe funky house to get people in the mood, which happened very quickly I might add. Then, as the evening pro-



Who said bingo isn't fun?

gressed, it became a bit more progressive before slamming straight back into proper disco house with no warning. There were the classics which everyone who goes to house nights will know, and they were the actual originals, not those crappy remixes that are around at the moment (I'm not mentioning anything in particular, except that Freeloaders' *So Much Love to Give* is a crime and I hope they die a horrible, painful death).

Ok, to the crowd: When we arrived, we were greeted by a group of random Orientals thrashing in front of the speakers. It was quite chilled at that point, but they seemed like they were having fun. If you don't like seeing people on drugs in a club I wouldn't go to Discotec, but then again, I would never bother going to a club at all but would sit at home with my Horlicks and my many cats and then shout at the plant in the corner.

Discotec is an attitude-free night. This means that it doesn't matter who you are, who you like to sleep with or what drugs you like to take, people aren't going to bat an eye to it. This provides a nice atmosphere, giving the whole night a kind of fun and easiness.

As this is the case, Discotec attracts a range of people. It was about 50:50 on the guy-to-girl ratio and about 70:30 gay to straight, but the big homos are raging queens like in GAY so it was all pretty normal. Well, kind of. Oh yeah, Mike and I had a great time as was to be expected. We met a very attractive lesbian who took her top off and was dancing around in her bra for a bit, which was nice. They also had an entertainer, who had this amazing

ability to dance in the highest shoes I've ever seen.

We left at about 3am – we thought we should get an early as we had a 9am lecture.

### FRIDAY

**Mylo**  
Neighbourhood  
£12  
★★★★☆

Neighbourhood is a great venue for performances – it has a stage and the balcony stretches right around the top of the room giving a perfect view of the stage to everyone. Getting in was no problem at all, as we arrived within an hour of the doors opening, but the place was already pretty busy.

As we arrived, we were greeted with free shots of cocktail, which was nice. If you like non-vocal electro this was perfect, though I like my vocals in most types of music.

The drinks in Neighbourhood are unnecessarily expensive and the staff don't seem as though they want to be there, which is quite clear when you order your drink. We didn't stay for a huge amount of time as we had to get to Café de



Pills = stuff glows.

Paris by midnight.

The mixing was impeccable the whole time and the crowd had an amazing time. The whole night was very gig-like, from the attitude of the crowd to the way they were dressed. Everyone was chilled out and comfortable, they were there for the music. When we left, the queue was stretching right around the building.

**Café de Paris**  
£10  
★★★★☆

Mike and I arrived at Café de Paris at about 12 midnight, only to be greeted by a bouncer who was telling guys they couldn't come into the club unless they were with at least one girl. Luckily we snuck past and got in after a small amount of hassle from the guest list guy, who was being harassed by two over-enhanced bleached bimbos.

We were fortunate enough to get an interview with the promoter of the club, who gave us a tour around the place and spoke to us about the club and the crowd they try to pull. From the chat, the most relevant thing was that they are planning to start a student night. Not a Café de Paris style student night, but a proper one with cheap drinks and party games.

Something that became very clear from the night was that people, mostly guys, were there to show off and try to make themselves out to be something special. As Mike put it, they had sold their personality to the devil to get into the club. He wasn't joking. There was no-one having a great time, just lots of pretentious wank. I wouldn't go back there again if I wasn't getting in for free, because I sure as hell wouldn't pay to be given that much attitude on a night out.

Watching a hen party go on the pull was the one source of amusement in the short period of time we spent there (we left at about 1.30am).

Unfortunately, Café de Paris was over-priced and full of tossers, with bad music and a bad attitude to match.

### SATURDAY

**Garlands**  
Liverpool  
£12  
★★★★☆

First thing's first, a quick run-down on how I felt. Having been out two nights already I was feeling a bit tired, mainly because I had to get up early both days, but I was generally in good spirits.

Garlands is a club in Liverpool, which isn't that difficult to get to with the wonder of the Megabus – £4 each way per person. It did take five hours though.

We arrived in Liverpool at about



Breasts. Well spotted.

four in the afternoon. The further north we got, the darker it became. I knew the north was grim, but to actually watch the sky get darker was ridiculous. We all joke that the north is cheaper than London, but it's not even funny – we went and got two alcoholic drinks as we arrived and they came to about £3 in total. Can you imagine doing that in London?

We spent our evening just poncing about, going from bar to bar, eating and drinking until about nine. As we were going home the next day, we didn't stay anywhere and the plan was to just stay awake, so when it came to getting ready to go out this had to be done in the toilets of a bar. I don't think they see such goings on very often up there.

We headed over to Garlands at about 10.30 to ensure there were no problems getting in. The queue was building up before the doors even opened. For those of you who don't know Garlands, it is the Studio 54 of our time in England. Have a look at their website, [www.garlandsonline.co.uk](http://www.garlandsonline.co.uk), and you will know what I mean.

Every week has a different theme – when we went it was rollers and tabards. Think Thora Hird from *Last of the Summer Wine*.

Garlands is the gayest gay club in the world, but it attracts a huge straight following. This is probably because they focus on making the night an amazing experience for everyone rather than trying to pull in the big names. Yet somehow they do this as well. If you like your hard house, Garlands is a great place to go in Liverpool. They quite regularly pull in the likes of Fergie and Judge Jules, to name a couple.

To try to describe Garlands is one of the hardest things to do, I would just say go and see for yourself, or look at some pictures – I think they speak for themselves. The drinks in the club are no different to a normal bar in London, so you won't feel like you have been ripped off.

I know this is a bit of a pants review but I have just got home and, at the end of my weekend, am quite incapable of talking (see my photo at the top, and no I don't sell crack).





# Arts

## Modern theatre and Hollywood

### Tatum Fjerstad is unmoved by Kevin Spacey

#### THEATRE

##### National Anthems

Old Vic  
The Cut, SE1  
Box Office: 0870 060 6628  
www.oldvictheatre.com

Oh Kevin Spacey. So many critics are disappointed in you. You swoop over from the United States, buy yourself a theatre, pick out a few plays and star in all of them. Can you see how that might look a bit pretentious? Not to mention that when any actor makes a move as bold as that, the theatre community doesn't need justification when they sit back, cross their arms and say, "Right, let's see how he's going to pull this off."

*National Anthems* is set in the 1980s in a Detroit suburb. Arthur Reed, played by Steven Weber, and his wife Leslie, played by Mary Stuart Masterson, are greeted by an offish neighbour Ben Cook, played by Spacey, as he waltzes in one evening and introduces himself. The evening to follow is full of absurdity, hilarity, and fraught with emotion.

I want you to take a deep breath before this bit of information: Kevin Spacey has played this role before, in 1988 when the play was called *The Party Crasher*. I found that a bit disconcerting. Let us go back to the beginning scenario. Spacey saunters to London, purchases the Old Vic, picks a few plays and stars in all of them – but one of the first plays he chooses is something he's already done before?



Just so you all know what you will be looking for when you venture out to see a production at the Old Vic

Bravo, Spacey, way to be original. The theatre community is smug and awaiting your next move, now you really have to prove yourself.

Stuart Masterson's experience as

**"Bravo, Spacey, way to be original. The theatre community is smug and awaiting your next move... prove yourself"**

a screen actor was present on stage. She made too much of an effort to actually act. But as the performance went on, she relaxed into her role and I became more willing to believe her.

Spacey and Weber complimented each other wonderfully; they carried the performance as if it were a delicate feather for all to see. Spacey's acting skills are not on the line here. He is a very talented man, but with that talent, he has a lot to live up to. To get the credit he deserves, he needs to work a little harder.

All bitterness aside, the play was decent. The script was well written and the actors delivered a proper

performance. I do think that Spacey should have chosen a different play. If this play was in any other theatre, with actors of any other name, it would have been seen as a remarkable and delightful. But with all the hype that Spacey has been given, this wasn't anything more than a pleasant evening out.

##### Wild East

Royal Court Theatre  
Sloane Square, SW1  
Box Office: 020 7565 5000  
www.royalcourttheatre.com

Perhaps I'm not a fan of modern theatre. Like modern art for some, it can be hard to appreciate because the issues being dealt with are issues that we confront every day. Even though the issues are important, it can sometimes be numbing, and hearing them expressed in several different formats can either make you more passionate about a certain issue or wish the contemporary artist would quit whining.

*Wild East* at the Royal Court is set in a job interview. A delightfully awkward candidate, Frank, is being interviewed by two women. The interview starts uncomfortably and gives the audience a good laugh. Then strange things begin to happen and, as time passes, the interview worsens and any sane human being would have found the door and never looked back. However, for the sake of entertaining and passing a message along to the audience, the interview goes on, and on, and on.

Tom Brooke, playing Frank, does a good job of giving the audience the best view into the world of an estranged nerd that wants more than anything to catch his lucky break. The two women, actresses Sylvestra Le Touzel and Helen Schlesinger, compliment each other nicely, but it was difficult to really figure either of them out.

*Wild East* is a play about corporate mongers and the awful work they do, about masks, personas, and how our jobs and the success of a measly interview can give us our soul or take it away.

**"A play about... how the success of a measly interview can give us our soul or take it away"**

As I mentioned before, I don't think I have the capacity to truly understand and appreciate modern theatre that addresses present issues. I don't think it's because I don't want to, I think it's because I'm still developing my craft as a theatre critic. It's easier to talk about issues from the past because they have been addressed and analysed many times over. But since I don't fully understand how I feel about issues at hand, modern plays that comment on these issues feel more like propaganda than a different way to look at the world around us.

# The art of procrastination

## Why revise now when there's so much other stuff you could be enjoying?

The summer term is always a nightmare. Between revision, exams, projects and hayfever, it's a wonder we don't all end up in a variety of institutions by the end of term. Or perhaps it's just me my own terrible hayfever and nervous disposition. Either way, a method of relaxation is always vital to retaining some form of sanity, and as we all can expect, I am going to suggest some cultural ways to relax.

Staying with the theatre theme, as both of the productions reviewed above have just closed, let me suggest both establishments' new productions.

For those of you enjoying new plays, the Royal Court Theatre is definitely the place to go. Opening on 7 May is David Eldridge's *Incomplete and Random Acts of Kindness*, directed by Sean Holmes. The Old Vic, on the other hand, will be going for a classic piece, the 1939 hit by Philip Barry, *The Philadelphia Story*. Perhaps best known in its film version starring Katherine Hepburn, this run will star Jennifer Ehle (Miss Elizabeth

Bennet in everyone's favourite BBC adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*) as the society girl Tracy Lord. Of course we will also have another chance to see the ever-present Mr Spacey, however I'd go see it just one the strength of casting Ehle as Lord. Both theatres have good ticket offers, so don't let cost put you off, and visit their websites for details.

One service that should not be ignored by those of you seeking cheap theatre or musical tickets is the 'tkts' booth in Leicester Square (just like the ones in New York). Half price tickets are available to buy on the day of performance from 10am to 7pm. Their website is www.tkts.co.uk.

The Caravaggio exhibition at the National Gallery runs until 22 May. Having just been to see it, I cannot recommend it enough. This exhibition is a worthy successor to the gallery's recent Titian and El Greco exhibition.

The art showcased in here is representative of Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio's (1571 – 1610) final

years. Something of a firebrand, Caravaggio died before reaching 40 and spent the last four years of his life on the run from justice for a murder in Rome. The 16 works in the exhibition are primarily on biblical themes, as is typical for the period, all reflecting the artist's fear of divine justice for his crime. The change in the artist's mood is clearly pointed out in the exhibition's first room, as both of his interpretations of the Supper at Emmaus are available for scrutiny; with one painted in 1601 and the other in 1606, the darkening of the mood and more contemplative style are instantly visible.

All of the works are beautifully executed with composition and lighting being used to their utmost. *The Flagellation* (1607), *The Raising of Lazarus* (1608-9), *The Martyrdom of Saint Ursula* (1610), and *The Annunciation* (1608-9) are, in my opinion, the highlights of the show. Tickets can only be bought on the day from the box office in the Sainsbury wing of the gallery on Trafalgar Square. They're £3 for

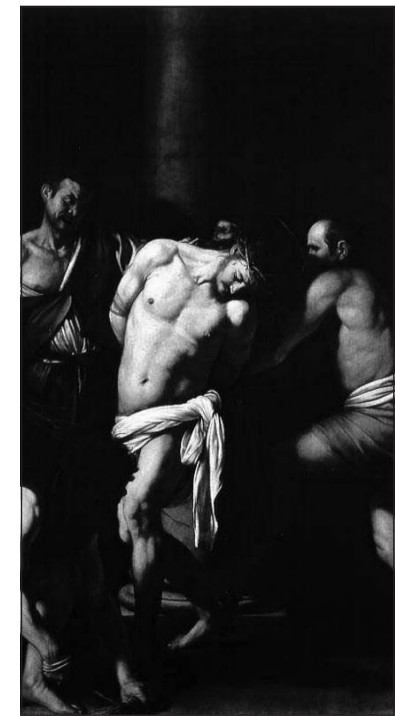
students, and during the final week the exhibition will be open late every day.

If live music is more appealing to you, I cannot remind you often enough to keep watch for the London Philharmonic's special student offers (www.lpo.org.uk). Also worth remembering is that the Proms will soon be upon us at the Albert Hall.

The Royal Opera House has now opened public booking for its latest productions, as well as unveiling next season's programme. Possibly following criticism received for this year's rather 'greatest hits' laden programme, the Royal Opera will be performing numerous less famous works in the new season.

One last recommendation would be *Orphée* in the Royal Opera House's smaller performance space, the Linbury Theatre. The chamber opera by Philip Glass will put younger, rising artists in leading roles and runs from 7 May to 5 June. Tickets are £15 for students (www.roh.org.uk).

Paola Smith  
Arts Editor



*The Flagellation*, Caravaggio, 1607



# Film

film.felix@ic.ac.uk

**vue**  
cinemas  
www.myvue.com/students

Listings: page 12

## An unconvincing love story

Debra Messing pays \$6000 for Dermot Mulroney's services. **Angela Yuen Lee** is unimpressed

### The Wedding Date

Director: Clare Kilner

Starring: Debra Messing, Dermot Mulroney, Amy Adams, Jack Davenport, Jeremy Sheffield

Running time: 89 mins

Certificate: 12A

★☆☆☆☆

*The Wedding Date* is a *Pretty Woman* remake, only this time, the 'escort' is male.

The movie revolves around Kat Ellis (Debra Messing), a successful career woman in New York. However, her life is less than perfect. Her ex-fiancé Jeffrey (Jeremy Sheffield) inexplicably dumped her two years ago. Her younger half-sister Amy (Amy Adams) is getting married to Ed (Jack Davenport), whose best buddy – Jeffrey – will be the best man at the wedding.

Hence, Kat decides to hire a top-notch male escort, Nick Mercer (Dermot Mulroney), to pose as her boyfriend to Amy's wedding. She wants to convince everyone that she is fine despite her last relationship. Being a master of his trade, Nick has a keen understanding of human behaviour. With his insight, he helps her to learn to cherish

herself again.

What started as a business transaction soon turns into something deeper. However, Nick finds out why Jeffrey left her two years ago and decides to hide the truth to avoid hurting her. Unfortunately, the truth is soon let out of the bag. Kat is left feeling like a fool and her faith in Nick is questioned.

Firstly, the love story is not convincing. The first half of the movie focuses on how pathetic Kat is, as

**"It might be a failure of the script or that Debra Messing simply needs more acting lessons..."**

she allows people such as her tactless mother and her spoilt sister to push her around. The second half tries to show that she has changed when she tells Jeffrey to leave her alone.

It might be a failure of the script or that Debra Messing simply needs more acting lessons, but the second half just fails to showcase Kat

as a feisty woman with a mind of her own. Therefore, it is difficult to perceive how anyone could fall for her, unless of course Nick has an uncanny soft spot in his heart for damsels in distress.

Secondly, the flow of the story is not continuous and is basically filled with too much rubbish to tug at your heart strings. This includes the scene where Kat and her sister cruise around London drunk in a limousine after Amy's 'bachelorette' party. It does not fit in with the main theme of the story and seems like a pathetic attempt at a 'Promote London' video.

The script tries to inject some humour into the movie by poking fun at Kat's insecurities. One example would be the scene where she had to try on dozens of dresses before she could decide what to wear to her sister's wedding party. Honestly, a fresher and more original attempt would have been better suited to save this film.

There are some good points about this movie, though. It has an excellent soundtrack. Next, from a female perspective, it is perfectly understandable how Kat can be so riddled by single-woman anxiety that she was willing to pay \$6000 for Nick



Debra Messing plays the insecure Kat Ellis in *The Wedding Date*

Mercer's services. Plus, Dermot Mulroney does have a talent for saying trashy lines such as "I'd rather fight with you than make love with any other woman" and succeed in

making them sound halfway decent.

But overall, it is sad to say that these saving graces aren't enough to make *The Wedding Date* a worthwhile watch.

## Who's the white boy over there?

### Guess Who

Director: Kevin Rodney Sullivan

Starring: Bernie Mac, Ashton Kutcher, Zoe Saldana, Judith Scott, Hal Williams, Kellee Stewart

Running time: 106 mins

Certificate: 12A

★★☆☆☆

Percy Jones (Bernie Mac) hasn't always been the supportive dad with his daughter Theresa's (Zoe Saldana) boyfriends. When she informs him of her new boyfriend, Simon Green (Ashton Kutcher), from *That 70s Show*, who she will be bringing back home for their 25th anniversary party weekend, Percy investigates the boy a little further by doing a credit check on him. Simon's records come back promising with a wonderful job, good investments and an assuring future. Percy's excitement level builds up due to knowledge of the "secure" guy and he believes that his daughter may have finally found the right person.

Unfortunately, Simon isn't the Denzel Washington that Percy, who is black, was expecting. The paper records missed out the fact that Simon is actually white! Not that this would matter unless he wants to marry Theresa, which he does. Percy, claiming to be open-minded, finds out that it's just too much to handle, knowing that his daughter is going out with a white guy.

*Guess Who* is a pretty funny movie, though I did expect to laugh a bit



Ashton Kutcher and Bernie Mac share a dance in *Guess Who*

more! The combination of Bernie Mac and Ashton Kutcher brings out the comedy side of the film. You have the boy going to meet his future in-laws, who is terrified at the idea of meeting Percy. Then you have the

**"The film is based on the cultural unfairness that still exists..."**

protective father who just doesn't consider any guy to be appropriate for his daughter and wastes no time in displaying those emotions openly.

The movie's comedy relies on the

dialogue and not on the plot. Actually there isn't much of a plot anyway. It's all based on racial difference, which is mainly used as humour rather than to illustrate serious points and learning to accept the fact that love is indeed colourblind.

So where have we heard this story line? Yep, *Guess Who* goes in the same tracks as *Meet the Parents*. However, Bernie Mac pulls off the

facial expressions much better than De Niro did. As for Ashton Kutcher, he doesn't live up to Bernie's performance and it seems as though he could have done much better if only he stopped trying so hard. However both characters balance out and they end up sharing a bed, a dance

and each other's views on love.

Add in the race bets, which involve crashing through barriers, and you get a more or less good comedy.

There isn't much to say about the other actors' performances. The women in the film are all strong, independent, do not live in their men's reflection and have a mind of their own, which does bring a little refreshing difference to the normal romantic comedy films.

Overall, this movie isn't very smart or all that funny, though the message that is sent across isn't misread or lost. The movie shows how far we have come and how far we still need to go.

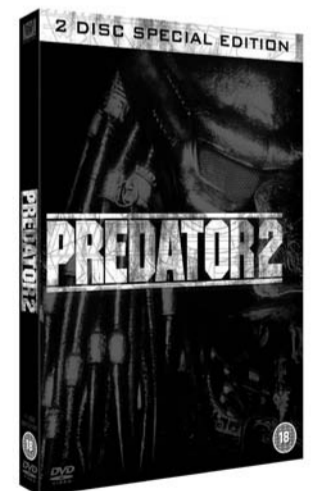
It is hopeless to try to review a movie like *Guess Who* without mentioning race. After all, the film's foundations are based on the cultural unfairness that still exists, opposing interracial marriages. It's basically a romantic comedy about difficulties in interracial relationships with mismatched individuals finding points of mutual understanding.

So is this movie highly recommended? Unfortunately, the answer is no! If you are looking for a great movie to lift your spirits up and give you stomach cramps, due to the exams just around the corner, this really isn't the one to go for, though it can provide a few smiles. The last thing you need is to worry about the wasting of your time and money. So save yourself from this pain, walk away and, if you are interested, wait for the DVD version.

**Vidula Vinayagamorthy**

## WIN Predator 2 Special Edition on DVD

*Predator 2* Special Edition is out to buy on DVD now (RRP £22.99) from all good UK retailers. It was released on 18 April by Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment. Visit [www.fox.co.uk](http://www.fox.co.uk) for more details.



We've got three copies to give away. Just tell us:

**Who is the link between the films Predator, Terminator and Aliens?**

- (a) Bill Paxton  
(b) Michael Biehn  
(c) James Cameron

Email your answer to [film.felix@ic.ac.uk](mailto:film.felix@ic.ac.uk) by Tuesday 3 May. Usual *Felix* competition rules apply.







# Disc Doctors in south east

## ULTIMATE FRISBEE

### Preamble

To many people, 18 March 2005 was a significant date. It signified the end of term and a time to celebrate and pass out on a seedy London street due to excessive alcohol consumption. But for the Imperial College Ultimate Frisbee team, the Disc Doctors, it marked the start of the South East Student Outdoor Regionals.

Now for a little background. There are two main student events on the Disc Doctors' ultimate calendar: South East Indoor Regionals and South East Outdoor Regionals. Qualifying in the top three for both would put the team into the national indoor and outdoor event.

Unfortunately the team didn't qualify for the indoor nationals this year. We like to blame it on the fact that we haven't played as much indoors as we have outdoors! So South East Student Outdoor Regionals was to be the big one.

The Disc Doctors (dD) had been training hard in Hyde Park every Wednesday and Saturday in sub-zero temperatures, and even snow, building up to this tournament. So, as the guys got aboard the train to Royal Holloway ready for a weekend of "disc action", it was hard to predict what would come next.

The 'Ultimate mini book of



Toby, of Disc Doctors 2, stretches to make a high catch

'mumbo jumbo frisbee jargon' (see grey panel, right) may be useful in reading the reports that follow!

### DD1 MATCH REPORTS

**DD1** 13  
**Sublime2 (Portsmouth) 0**

Our first game is never our best, so the first team were relieved to find we didn't have a crunch match to start the day.

We soon gained a comfortable lead after forcing Sublime's handlers to make some tricky throws under the pressure of our junk zone. Sublime's handlers were learning, towards the end,

how to get around our junk, and use hammers to get over our wall. Nathan has asked me to say that he played superbly in this game.

**DD1** 8  
**UCLSE (London) 5**

UCL and LSE didn't have enough players to form two separate teams, so they were allowed to combine to form the considerably stronger 'UCLSE'.

We managed gain a bit of a lead at the start, thanks to some good play from, amongst others, our new rising star Sui.

Things started looking very unsettling when UCLSE

managed to take advantage of dD's unusually weak deep marking. They took advantage of several turnovers by using quick hucks and some zippy receivers. Our opponents levelled the game at 5-5, but dD managed to cut down on the throwaways and eventually win.

**DD1** 13  
**Aye Aye2 (Norwich) 0**

Aye Aye 2, from the University of East Anglia, were short on numbers, and the effect of the earlier games in the gorgeous weather showed from the beginning.

Towards the end, Aye Aye2, realising all was lost,

## SOUTH EAST STUDENT OUTDOOR REGIONALS: THE RESULT

1. Brunel Ultimate
2. Disc Doctors 1
3. Strange Blue 1
- 
4. Aye Aye 1
5. Sublime 1
6. Holloway Hammers 1
- 
7. UCLSE
8. Thrown (Spirit)
9. Mohawks (Plate)
10. Surrey Scorpions
11. Strange Blue 2
12. Disc Doctors 2
13. Sublime 2
14. Holloway Hammers 2
15. Aye Aye 2 (Spatula)

Top three teams qualify for University Outdoor Nationals 2005. Fourth, fifth and sixth place qualify for "Not the Nationals" (NTN)

pulled out a play called the 'Braveheart'. This play involved Aye Aye waiting in their zone and then charging down dD with cries of "freedom!" when we approached, to scare us or simply surprise us and make us laugh uncontrollably.

The tactic worked, Aye Aye got the disc and almost scored. We struck back with the 'cup-o-saurus' play.

**DD1** 10  
**Brunel (London) 5**

This game was the first of what was to be a series of stunning dD1 performances over the weekend. dD1 rose to the challenge of playing, arguably, the best team in the South East this year. I cannot begin to tell you all the notable performances that were part of the best team play I've seen from Imperial in 2004-5.

Brunel were without their main man Malcolm on the day, so dD took advantage of their lack of handling depth. Brunel's Dan tried his hardest but their deep threat was neutralised by a combination of K-man, Stylish, and the good luck invoked by Jay deciding to ditch his tracksuit bottoms and wear shorts, thereby allowing our handlers to work their way up the pitch.

There were tense moments towards the end when Brunel managed to claw back several points, but our early lead, and resurgence in the last ten minutes, sealed a very satisfying victory.

**DD1** 10  
**Strange Blue1 (Cambridge) 12**

This game was, in some senses, the most exciting and most disappointing of the weekend. Lewis had joined us for the day, we were on a high from the day before, and thanks to three-pint-challenge-free party the night before, none of us were feeling rough.

This game showed that dD had great potential, but far too many drops and throwaways were made. Our junk zone wasn't working very well, but a transition to the 'brownie zone' caused an impressive dD fightback which was, unfortunately, too late.

Highlights included a huck from Lewis, which a Cambridge player blocked but didn't catch. K-man neatly caught the still-flying disc, and then threw to Steve-O for a stunning point. K-man also scored the first ever Callahan Point of the tournament, a first for dD, and even Magic managed to score.

**DD1** 10  
**Sublime1 (Portsmouth) 5**

Last year we got utterly spanked by Sublime. We honestly didn't know what to expect this time round, especially with ex-Sublime player Lewis now on our side.

It was a pretty charged, physical game. Sublime were laying out everywhere like deranged ultimate frisbee-playing penguins. Neville did well to hold onto the disc for a score when two Sublime players laid out on him, in a hopefully non-malicious attempt to block the successful pass.

K-man managed yet another Callahan point, and Jay's zone was hot hot hot. Sublime's handlers tried to beat our zone by taking advantage of the still day and throwing long cross-pitch hammers, but Cripple managed to block most of them. The result was a game that dD had under control for the majority of the time.

**DD1** 15  
**Strange Blue1 (Cambridge) 4**

The crazy Triple Elimination tournament format used over the weekend meant that, with Cambridge losing to Brunel on Sunday morning, and with us beating Sublime1, a



Imperial's first team celebrate second place and qualification for the nationals



# festival of frisbee

rematch was inevitable.

We were buoyed by our previous success, and the knowledge that winning this game would guarantee us second place and a spot at the Student Outdoor National Championships.

Cambridge were slightly short on numbers, and after being worn down by some long early points, resorted to playing a zone against us when we were 6-2 up.

Faultless handling by Boon, solid popping by Yoong, a few committed layout O's from Steve-O and some top sideline support from our friends on the KCL Ultimate team allowed us to deal with their zone easily.

Lewis walked into the zone for a score from a short pass by Magic towards the end of the game, and we managed to reach the 15-point cap before the time deadline.

## dD2 MATCH REPORTS

**dD2** 0  
**Hammers1**  
**(Royal Holloway)** 10

The weather was fantastic for the first game as dD2 huddled together for a team talk and "peanut power" call. dD2 captain Ian (Munky) had won the toss, breaking the Disc Doctor curse of losing it.

At the start of the match, dD2 lacked a bit of flow and Hammers had no problem grinding our offence to halt. Always one step ahead,

Holloway used their height advantage to throw a number of deep overheads, which dD2 struggled to stop.

By the time dD2 had rediscovered their funky rhythm, it was a little too late. They had held Holloway off well and were the only team to not be beaten by the 13-point cap of the first game.

**dD2** 2  
**Strange Blue1**  
**(Cambridge)** 13

This game was likely to have been dD2's hardest match up. Strange Blue, the second seeds, had a reputation of being a consistent team, never short of Ultimate talent (pun intended).

As predicted, Cambridge started the scoring, again taking advantage of dD2's lack of deep players. dD2 kept SB on their toes with quick cuts out of the stack, allowing them to move the disc upfield quickly. Towards the end, dD2 changed their playing style: Munky tried some more long upfields to Stas who got a few but who was beaten in the air by some of the taller SB players.

Thanks to some sweet cutting by Snazzy, Mary and George, dD2 managed to score two points against a very sporting Strange Blue team.

**dD2** 6  
**Strange Blue2**  
**(Cambridge)** 12

In the next 'Battle of the 2nds', dD2 took on a very determined Strange Blue2. Eager to show their strength, SB2 worked quickly to score the first three points of the game, but dD2, who were determined to stop them, brought back the score to 6-4.

dD2 attempted to break the constant SB2 line force with some 'dump and swing' tactics, whilst simultaneously playing their own line force.

Hats off to Denim and Snazzy who caught some very high discs with hands safer than an international cricketer. Unfortunately Strange Blue 2 walked away with the win, but dD2 felt they had played a lot better during this match.

**Surrey Scorpions** 6  
**dD2** 5

This was last pool game of the day, and dD2 were shocked to see Cedric who had turned up around half a day late! Still, better than never.

The team made Cedric run hard as punishment for sleeping all morning, as dD2 attempted to wear-out an Iron man team of Scorpions.

The Doctors found themselves in a good position early on, scoring the first few points. With the sun glaring down all day, playing was tough, but thanks to great handling by Toby dD2 flew upfield quicker than Jo was getting sunburnt.

Despite Jay lying by the

sideline showing his support for dD2, the guys (and girls) began losing their lead over Surrey. A few unlucky turnovers left both teams fighting for the match at 5-5 after time. dD2 had a very good opportunity to win, but didn't manage to stop Surrey from getting the final point. It was a close match indeed, both teams fought well, and the score could have gone either way.

Since dD2 had retained their original seed in the pool, they were put into a three-way round-robin on the second day with Aye Aye2 and Holloway Hammers2.

After losing all their pool matches, the only way for dD2 was up! Well, they could have gone down further, but were determined to win, inspired by the progress of the first team. Despite losing Finnish, Toby and Cedric on the Sunday, dD2 still had a good roster of enthusiastic players, ready to take on Aye Aye2.

**dD2** 15  
**Aye Aye2 (UEA,**  
**Norwich)** 4

The Aye Aye bunch are renowned for being a very spirited team. They are regularly found singing songs and chanting, up until the point that everyone within about a 2km radius is about to beat them to the ground with their frisbees. They sang this one song about how "Will is the

## THE ULTIMATE MINI BOOK OF MUMBO JUMBO FRISBEE JARGON

**Handler** – One of a team's primary throwers

**Zone** – A form of defence when two or more defensive players mark the thrower and move with the disc when it is thrown

**Hammer** – An overhead throw with a forehand grip in which the disc is released at an angle so that it flattens out and flies upside down

**Huck** – A long throw, preferably the length of the pitch

**Receiver** – A player on the receiving end of a throw

**Popper** – In a zone, an offensive player that cuts in and out for a short pass

**Layout** – The act of diving while running in order to catch a disc out of your ordinary reach

**O** – An abbreviation of 'Offense'

**D** – An abbreviation of 'Defence'

**Callahan point** – This involves a disc, thrown by the offensive team, being intercepted and caught by a defending player in the defending team's own zone, thus resulting in a score

**"Peanut power"** – The Disc Doctors' team shoutout. Hey, you'd just have to hear it!

**Flow** – When the offensive team connects a number of passes together to advance the disc toward the endzone they are attacking

**Endzone** – Area at either end of the pitch within which a point can be scored

**Overhead** – A throw that travels over the top of a player

**Deep** – A defensive or offensive player who generally stays in the area of field furthest toward the endzone to be scored in

**Cut** – A run by a receiver to shake off his defender

**Stack** – Offensive strategy in which all the players line up down the middle of the field and alternately make cuts out of the stack to be open receivers.

**Force** – When a defensive player positions him/herself so that the thrower can only throw the disc to one part of the field

**Iron man** – Playing without any substitutes

**Turnover** – Possession changing to the opposing team during play

**Point block** – A defensive block by the marker occurring immediately after the release of the disc

captain of their ship" and how "their ship is a tanker and Will is a..." well, you get the idea.

dD2 got off to a good start, forcing sideline and trapping Aye Aye play. Aye Aye made quite a few mistakes, allowing dD2 to send the disc up field to Lisa and Stas, who worked hard to get to some of the longer throws.

With a few points under their belt, dD2 decided to throw a zone. The 'junk' caught Aye Aye 2 off guard and it took them a while to get used to it. By this time dD2 had the match well under control and were working very well as a team, even playing calls of 'Princes Gardens', where the last player would run deep for a long overhead.

It was a fun match to play. Both teams were friendly towards each other and everyone had a laugh at the end, playing a game that involved slapping each other on the ass... cheeky.

**dD2** 9  
**Hammers2**  
**(Royal Holloway)** 2

It did seem that all the way out on pitch 6, the number of spectators had more than quadrupled as Holloway Hammers2 brought along all their support with them.

dD2 still had a full, uninjured team (apart from Snazzy who had received a mild case of 'disc in the groin'. Luckily it

wasn't terminal).

The Disc Doctors fought well against the home team advantage. They played a number of zone variations and Munky even managed a point block whilst chasing! Hammers2 tried playing a lot of long overheads, whilst handling with their bigger players.

Luckily dD2 had it all covered and turnovers were quick. Skilled handling from Jo and Denim combined with great play from G and Mary in the middle kept Disc Doctors ahead.

At full time, Disc Doctors 2 had proved themselves as one of the best 2nd teams in the region. Overall they had finished just behind Strange Blue 2 in the table.

This commendable achievement was thanks to every player on the team, all of whom had worked hard for it. All the players had really enjoyed the weekend and the experience had clearly improved everyone's game.

## Summary

Thanks go out to both dD1 and dD2 for playing their guts out at the tournament. Everyone walked away with huge smiles on their faces and right now as dD1 prepare to go to the nationals, the whole team is just as eager to succeed as before. Don't forget to watch this space!

**Ian Ballantyne**



Jay (left), of Disc Doctors 1, marks Brunel player Dan





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# Imperial cruise into BUSA final



Imperial's women's tennis team enjoyed a comfortable 10-0 victory over Warwick in their BUSA Shield semi-final

**TENNIS**  
**BUSA Shield semi-final**  
**Imperial Women's 1st 10**  
**Warwick Women's 1st 0**  
**By Mili Josson**  
 Riding high after a quarter-final victory over Brunel the previous week, the Imperial ladies' tennis team were all

too ready and waiting for Warwick, their next victims. However, long after we were ready, we continued waiting for the opposition to arrive. Warwick were randomly on their way to Teddington instead of Ealing. In retrospect, it is possible to see this geographical error as the point where it all began to go so horribly wrong for Warwick.

Eventually they turned up, and unfortunately for our opponents they probably spent longer getting lost on their journey than playing on the courts. Sarah 'Speedy' Statton won her singles comfortably 6-2 6-1. Mili was feeling quite ill but managed to win 6-3 6-3 against a dubious line caller. Special thanks here must go to Lucinda "oh-my-god-that-

ball-was-so-far-in" Lo, who was a greatly appreciated, unofficial and intimidating line judge! Yet again Caryl "I love tennis" Poon showed little mercy in her singles match, respectfully spitting in the face of her opponent 6-0 6-0. Meanwhile on court one, Warwick's number one player went down 6-3 6-2. This was much to the disappointment of her

team-mates and ever watchful mother, whose hopes for her daughter's success were savagely crushed by Emma 'The Ironfist' Marsdin. The doubles were nicely one-sided, Emma and Caryl winning 8-1 followed by Sarah and Lucinda's 8-2 victory. After just three hours, we had won the semi-final by completely destroying Warwick 10-0 overall.

## Rowers get revenge on Nottingham

**ROWING**  
**Women's Head of the River**  
**By Ben Anstiss**

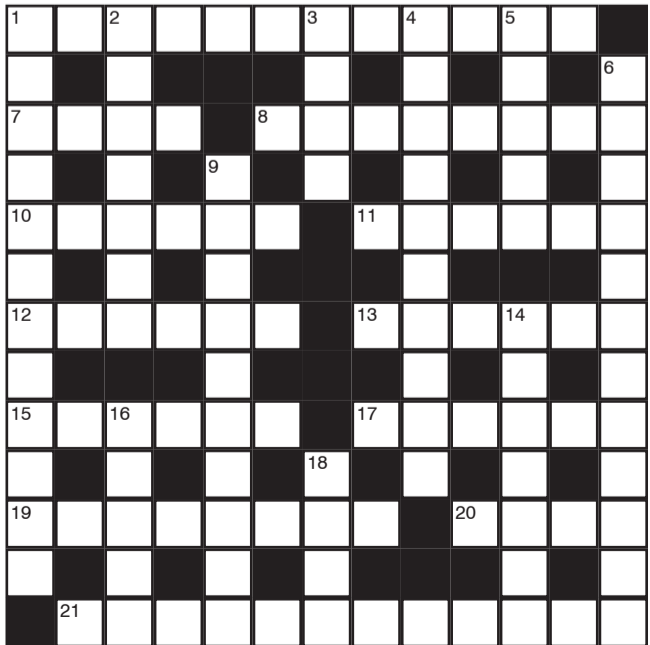
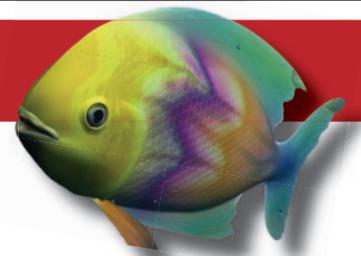
The Women's Head of the River Race was held on Saturday 4 March, running from Mortlake (near Chiswick Bridge) to Putney Pier (near Putney Bridge). Two hundred and forty all-female crews took part in the timed race across Elite, Senior, Novice and Veteran divisions. The event was a tie at the top of the board with Leander and a GB composite crew (including an Imperial College alumnus) both clocking a time of 19 minutes 20.83 seconds.

Imperial College Boat Club entered two crews, one in the Senior 3 category and one in Novice, as well as an additional Imperial/Thames/Westminster composite crew in Elite (who came 71st overall in a time of 22:10.01).

The novice girls performed well, especially considering their diminutive size, coming 13th in the Novice category in a time of 24:08.39.

The top squad ladies did remarkably well, coming 21st overall in a time of 20:52.92 and fourth in Senior 3. They were just beaten by Cambridge and Oxford's women's crews for the Senior 3 Universities pennant. It was still sweet though: after the debacle of Nottingham winning the BUSA Head eights, our ladies easily beat them into fifth place.

# Quick Crossword by Fishface

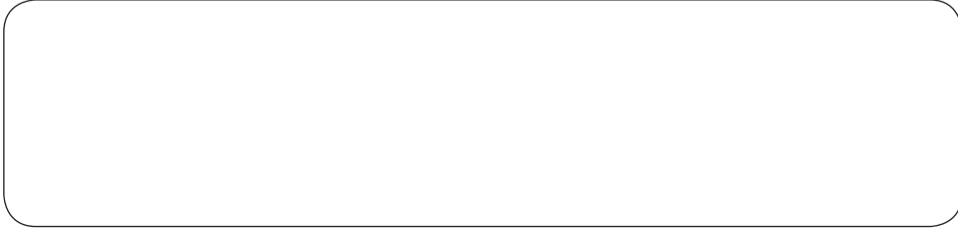


**Across**

- 1. Confusingly (12)
- 7. Requirement (4)
- 8. Remove (8)
- 10. Hebrew prophet (6)
- 11. Film (6)
- 12. Lectern or platform used at religious service (6)
- 13. Walking, often over long distances (6)
- 15. Consisting of 12 astrological signs (6)
- 17. Give in (6)
- 19. Toilets (8)
- 20. Boast; bird (4)
- 21. Theatrically (12)

**Down**

- 1. Large Chilean tree with intertwined branches (6,6)
- 2. Exceptional (7)
- 3. Possessive form of *you* (4)
- 4. Providing nourishment (10)
- 5. Contract granting use of property (5)
- 6. Instantly (8,4)
- 9. Economic system based on private ownership (10)
- 14. Violating principles of right and wrong (7)
- 16. Put off (5)
- 18. Not straight (4)



Send your answers to coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk or bring this page to the Felix office in the West Wing of Beit Quad

**Issue 1319 solution**

M	I	N	T	C	O	N	D	I	T	I	O	N
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