



Phantom force

Do scientists need to rethink the laws of gravity? Page 4



Showing off

Two diabolos at once with our resident tricksters, page 12



Stop press

Yes, it really is J-Lo in a decent movie, page 16



An interesting character

Martin Grech: "absolute genius" says our reviewer, page 14



Felix



The student newspaper of Imperial College ● Established 1949 ● Issue 1323 ● Thursday 19 May 2005 ● www.felixonline.co.uk

Views from the top
Sir Richard Sykes, the Rector, gives his opinions on student finance, the University of London and the future of Imperial College in a wide-ranging interview.

► **INTERVIEW** page 10

Fun in Felix

Why don't British universities have US-style fraternities? What has Stormy been up to this week? And why do people write all this stuff anyway?

► **COLUMNS** page 8

Your letters

The Union President comes in for criticism over his handling of the Southside Bar affair. Plus your views on libraries, *Felix* columnists and sleepy security guards.

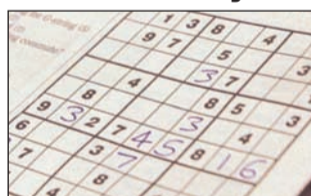
► **LETTERS** page 7

Coffee culture

It's the return of Coffee Break, complete with legendary mascot David Hasselhoff.

► **COFFEE BREAK** page 19

Number theory



The craze is sweeping the nation, and we're proud to say we introduced Sudoku before most of the national newspapers. There's a USB storage device or a crate of beer on offer this week as usual.

► **PUZZLES** page 18

THIS WEEK

Science	page 4
Comment	page 6
Letters	page 7
Columns	page 8
Felix Interview	page 10
Clubs and Societies	page 12
What's On	page 13
Music	page 14
Film	page 16
Puzzles	page 18
Coffee Break	page 19
Sport	page 20

Judge approves Babar Ahmad extradition

By Dave Edwards
Editor

A judge has ruled that Babar Ahmad, a former Imperial College student and ICT worker, should be extradited to face trial in the United States.

Mr Ahmad, 31, from Tooting, stands accused of running websites to raise funds and recruit new members for terrorist organisations in Chechnya and Afghanistan. His extradition hearing began in March, but two lengthy adjournments were made before the judge gave his ruling on Tuesday morning. Once again, hundreds of people, including a delegation from Imperial College Union, protested outside the court.

The verdict now requires final approval from Charles Clarke, the Home Secretary, within 60 days. Mr Ahmad and his supporters are likely to appeal against the decision, in which case the matter would be settled by the High Court.

Senior district judge Timothy Workman said that the risk of the death penalty



Protesters outside Bow Street Magistrates Court call for Imperial alumnus Babar Ahmad to be tried in Britain or released. A judge later ruled that he should be extradited to the US

was "negligible" and that "none of the statutory bars" prevented him from allowing Mr Ahmad's extradition. The Imperial alumnus is set to become the first British citizen to be extradited under a new law that does not require US prosecutors to present any evidence against him.

Imperial College Union has been campaigning for Mr Ahmad's release since December. Colin Smith, the Welfare Campaigns Officer, told *Felix*: "Obviously it's a sad day, but it's not over and we're not going to give up. The Home Secretary still has to decide. The fight isn't over

until the last protester lets go of the wheel of the aeroplane that takes Babar off to the US."

Mr Ahmad received 685 votes in this year's general election, standing as a candidate in Brent North from his prison cell.

● **Comment, page 6**

Staff say central library is 'an embarrassment'

By Dave Edwards

Imperial College's central library has become "an embarrassment" and "a total dump," according to some members of its staff.

In a letter to *Felix*, one central library librarian, who wished to remain anonymous, launched a scathing attack on College management for "putting finances before education".

"It is apparently the aim of IC to cram yet more departmental libraries plus their users into the central

library," the letter continues. The librarian goes on to question how these libraries can be transferred without losing huge amounts of stock. He/she also calls 24/7 opening "a nightmare" that has "transformed what usually looks like a second rate polytechnic library into a total dump".

The mechanical engineering and chemistry departmental libraries will be transferred to the central library this summer, despite opposition from students.

Round-the-clock opening hours during the summer

term were introduced last year, with the strong backing of Imperial College Union.

Sir Richard Sykes, the Rector, told *Felix* that the library is "not an embarrassment, absolutely not. This is the way forward, it has to be 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

He added that the College needs to transfer "as many of the departmental libraries as possible" to the central library, "because you cannot work in a departmental library 24 hours a day, 7 days a week".

Sam Rorke, Deputy President (Education and Welfare) of Imperial College Union, told *Felix*: "24 hour opening is very popular, but the situation is getting unacceptable as some students are finding it difficult to study there.

"If you were starting from scratch, you wouldn't create departmental libraries. The main issue is keeping a reasonable provision of study space in departments."

● **Letters, page 7**
● **The Felix interview, page 10**

Chemists' plagiarism panic

All third year chemistry students have been told that every lab report they have submitted this year will be reviewed as staff begin a thorough investigation into cases of plagiarism.

The students were called to a meeting on Tuesday afternoon, where they were told that they had until next Friday to 'confess' to any plagiarism they had committed. If they did so, their case might be dealt with internally. Otherwise, they could face a University of London (UL) tribunal. The most severe penalty is disqualification from all UL degrees.

"We have evidence that there has been a significant amount of plagiarism in the third year," Professor Richard Topley, the Head of Department, told *Felix*. He added that as in any society, "there are some people who will cheat".

One third year chemist said: "They never really told us what they meant at the meeting, so that sent most of us into panic."

Another called it "a blatant example of scaremongering to get people to confess. I think they know who's done it and they want them to own up."

A third student questioned why the issue had been raised now, during the busy exam and viva period. Staff explained that the plagiarism had not become apparent until recently, with a number of cases arising since the end of last term.

Professor Tom Welton, the Director of Studies, told *Felix* he had a strong suspicion that at least two students were guilty. He also reassured the majority: "People who have done nothing wrong have absolutely nothing to worry about at all."

● **Comment, page 6**

Imperial College Union Presents Summer Ball 2005

HOLLYWOOD

Sat 18th June

10096 →
SUNSET BLVD.

(MTV, Radio One)

TREVOR NELSON

JOE RANSOM (Fabric Live)

16900 →
MULHOLLAND DR.

(Radio One)

COLIN MURRAY

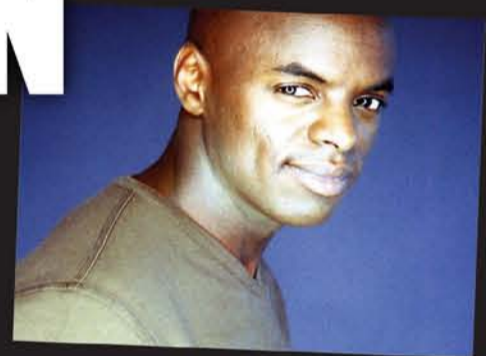
6700 →
HOLLYWOOD BLVD.

CASINO

£25 Ents ticket
£45 Dinner ticket

Over 18's only
Student ID required
R.O.A.R
The Union advises you to drink sensibly

Jazz Big Band, Fireworks,
Funfair, Formal dinner
(halal and vegetarian option)
Sparkling wine / Pimms reception
and breakfast in the morning
for every ticket holder!



Deloitte.

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STUDENTS' UNION EVENTS

felix@ic.ac.uk

Lights, camera, action!

By Aleks Corr and Samantha Dunning
Summer Ball Committee

Be prepared for Imperial College's most glamorous event to date: the Hollywood Summer Ball.

Close your eyes and imagine you're a Hollywood star. The evening will begin by walking up the red carpet towards the lavish reception, to be held in the Tanaka building. All guests will receive a complimentary drink, whether dining or not, and will have the experience of walking amongst Hollywood stars (lookalikes, of course).

Dining will be held at the prestigious Queen's Lawn Marquee where a four-course meal will be provided with wine. The marquee will then be transformed into a chic jazz room where you can relax and soak up the award-winning atmosphere.

The Queen's Lawn will have a funfair and various other entertainments, culminating in a spectacular late night fireworks display.

Prepare to be awed and amazed, as the next part of the evening continues inside our Hollywood-esque venue. Our esteemed guests include Trevor Nelson of MTV Base,



Part of the funfair on campus at the 2003 summer ball

who we are extremely privileged to have at our event considering this is the only London date that he has booked this year: very exclu-

sive!
Trevor will be playing in the Great Hall, where he will be whipping up the sensual sounds of RnB and the bang-

ing beats of Hip Hop. The popular Colin Murray, from the BBC Radio One lunch-time show, will be playing a selection of funky tunes and current and classic chart hits in the Main Dining Hall. If these splendid specimens don't tickle your fancy, there will be a range of in-house DJs to pump up the volume and amuse you all night with their block-rocking beats.

If dancing is not your forte, don't worry, we will be providing a casino and games room in the JCR, and the popular Bar Shisha will be available in the Ante Room. There will also be a photographer to capture the night's magic in the chill-out room (SCR). There's something for everyone!

Our sponsors Deloitte and Creative have kindly donated special giveaways, including MP3 players and chocolates galore. Also, cheap 'take-away' food carts will provide the peckish with burgers, candyfloss, crepes and toffee apples - yum!

For those of you who have the stamina, there will be a survivors' photograph at sunrise (not included in the ticket price) and breakfast (which is included), a remarkable and unique way to remember the most fantastic night Imperial

College has ever seen.

For an outstanding night to remember, get your tickets from the Union office in Beit Quad or the Union Shop on the walkway. Watch this space for special offers. The ticket prices will be £45 for entertainments and dinner, and £25 for entertainments - bargain!

The Hollywood Summer Ball will be the perfect opportunity to celebrate the end of the year and say goodbye to your university friends in style, whether it is just for the summer or if you are graduating.

The ball will be an amazing event, which has been made possible by the increased sponsorship funding that has been received this year. It will evidently be the best yet, so don't miss it for anything!

www.bamuk.com



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Felix

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Current and classic chart music

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imperial college union

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Science

science.felix@ic.ac.uk

Phantom force haunts physics

A mysterious legacy of the Pioneer missions of the 1970s remains unresolved. **Joao Medeiros** looks at the anomaly that may threaten one of the most ancient laws of physics

Pioneer 10 and 11 were two of NASA's most successful space missions of the 1970s. Launched in 1972, Pioneer 10 was the first spacecraft to travel through the Asteroid belt and the first to obtain close-up images of Jupiter. Pioneer 11 was launched in 1974 and went on to make the first direct observations of Saturn in 1979. But there was something else that made them special: each carried a golden plaque with a message from mankind to alien civilisations.

The plaques, for instance, depict our solar system and the path followed by the spacecrafts (see image below). The trajectory shows their way past Jupiter and out

"It was as if the spacecrafts were being slowed down by an unknown, mysterious force"

of the solar system. However unrealistic the aim of contacting aliens may be, there is no doubt of the symbolism. The Pioneers were the product of a generation of astronomers eager to communicate with the cosmos. It now seems that the cosmos has responded in a surprising way.

In 1980, John Anderson, one of the leaders of the Pioneer team at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in California, noticed something unexpected. Astronomers should have been able to exactly predict the trajectory of their spacecrafts by using the standard Newtonian-Einsteinian laws of gravity. But Anderson's calculations were all wrong. The spacecrafts were not where they were supposed to be. It was as if they were being slowed

down by an unknown, mysterious force.

Anderson was later joined in his efforts by Michael Martin Nieto, from the Los Alamos National Laboratory and Slava Turyshev, a colleague at JPL. Turyshev was one of the first Soviet scientists to work in the United States after the Cold War. When he first heard of the Pioneer anomaly, he volunteered to work on the project for free.

Convinced that there was an error in the way astronomers were calculating the trajectories, Turyshev studied more than 60 possible effects that could cause an abnormal reaction in the spacecraft. Every conceivable cause was taken into account, from gas leaks to the effect that ocean waves, hitting the shores in the Mojave Desert, had on the radio instruments receiving Pioneer's transmissions. After more than a decade of careful analysis, they realised that these effects were not even close to explaining the Pioneer anomaly.

The mystery then got even more interesting when similar effects were reported on two other spacecrafts, Ulysses and Galileo. How can we explain the same anomaly occurring simultaneously in four different spacecrafts? The scientific community was now paying attention.

Today, an increasing number of people believe that the Pioneer anomaly could actually be a discovery, a very big one. The call for new laws of gravity is getting stronger.

In fact, a solution may have already been proposed a long time ago. It dates back to 1983, when Mordehai Milgrom, a physicist at the Weizmann Institute in Israel, first considered a modification to the standard laws of gravity.

Back then, one of biggest riddles in physics was related to the motion of galaxies. Galaxies were observed to be rotating in a way that physicists could not understand. Milgrom, using a different law of gravity, was able to successfully predict such behaviour.

Nonetheless, his attempt was considered heresy against one of the most well-established physical theories. The Universal Law of Gravity was first formulated by Isaac Newton and had managed to describe how the planets moved with one single equation. But in the 17th century, Newton knew nothing about galaxies. Stacy McGaugh, a physics professor at the

"Milgrom, using a different law of gravity, was able to successfully predict such behaviour"

University of Maryland, suggests that Newton would probably be the first to propose a different law if he knew the facts about the galaxies as well.

Milgrom's theory on galaxies did not predict the Pioneer anomaly, but an increasing number of people feel that it may well do so. There are already several proposals for more complete versions of modified gravity in which the anomaly is accounted for. There is still a long way to go, though, both in developing the theory and getting attention. "I'm still shocked by how so few of us have heard about this theory, let alone know anything serious about it," McGaugh tells us.

In the meantime, at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Turyshev and his colleagues have initiated the development of a dedicated mission to study the Pioneer effect and understand the source of the anomaly. Whether it is a gas leak or modified gravity, Turyshev feels obligated to go to the bottom of this. "What if this is something that nature is telling us?" he asks, "We must be careful and patient to listen and understand what we are being told".

Sadly, the main characters of this story will not be around for its conclusion. NASA has received its last, very weak, signal from Pioneer 10 in 2003, and Pioneer 11 sent its last signal in 1995. The spacecrafts are probably plodding their way into deep space, in a way no-one yet understands.



Pioneer 10: not where it should have been according to gravitational theory

This week at the Dana Centre

Expand your mind for FREE. The Dana Centre is right next to Imperial College's South Ken campus. Go along to see controversial issues discussed in a thought-provoking, frank and entertaining way

Inquiries and bookings:

020 7942 4040

or email tickets@danacentre.org.uk



Today: Thursday 19th May 7pm

Is it you or I who should be in the asylum?

People with severe personality disorders, such as schizophrenia, are often perceived to be a danger to the public. But most are a danger to no-one, and some abnormalities in behaviour can lead to highly creative phases. So why do we lock them up?

Friday 20th May 7pm

Meet James Watson: DNA, Genes and the Brain

The discovery of the structure of DNA more than 50 years ago by James Watson and Francis Crick revolutionised science. James Watson will discuss 'DNA, Genes and the Brain' with Colin Blakemore

Tuesday 24th May 7.30pm

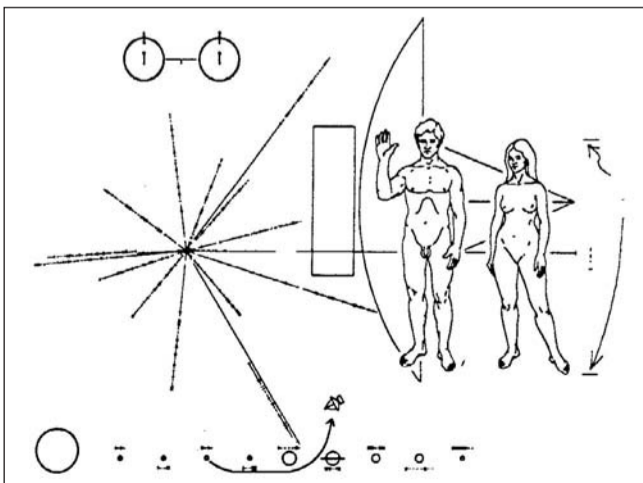
Punk science: the Albert Einstein experience

The comedy team discuss, amongst other things, whether Albert Einstein could control small animals with the power of his thoughts. Interesting, educational comedy

Thursday 26th May 7pm

Wireless Utopias 05: An open future for Spectrum?

A debate on the future of wireless communications and the strategic prospects for utilising the radio spectrum. Question international experts and Ofcom representatives who will be discussing technology, regulation and society



NASA Plaque – a message from mankind: it depicts Pioneer's path, the location of the Sun relative to nearby pulsars, and a naturist couple

SCIENCE

London's backstreet science museums

Zoë Corbyn and Tom Simonite explore beyond the South Ken comfort zone



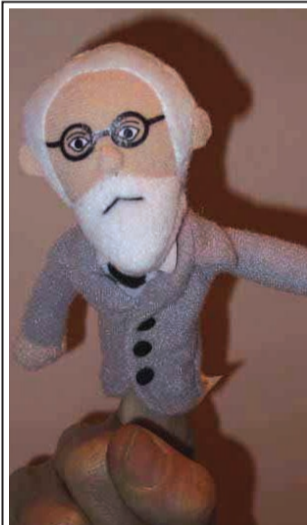
Kirkaldian wisdom set in stone above the entrance

Kirkaldy Testing Museum

This is the old Testing and Experimenting Works of David Kirkaldy: a man with a vision (and a motto) for the role of testing in engineering. It is dedicated to materials testing (stresses, strains, tensions, compressions, bendings and so forth) and the history of the Kirkaldy family. Built in 1874, it houses

es Kirkaldy's massive 'All Purpose Testing Machine', still in working order on the ground floor. A gem of an afternoon for anyone with an interest in engineering metrology!

99 Southwark Street, SE1 (nearest tube: Southwark) Tel: 01322 332195. Opening hours by appointment but unarranged visits may be accepted on the first Sunday of every month (ring the bell). Entry by donation. **1**



Merchandise for the discerning neurotic at the Freud museum

Freud Museum

He spent a ridiculous amount of time thinking about sex, gave us the term 'anally retentive', and was

inordinately fond of his dog. Sigmund Freud is still a cultural icon. His work started the field of psychiatry, informs parts of modern psychology, and has left us all with Oedipus complexes. The museum was the Freud family home after he escaped the Nazi annexation of Austria in 1938. Its centrepiece is Sigmund's library and study - complete with the original psychoanalytic couch. Don't miss the well-stocked gift shop, or your friends and relatives will never forgive you. Freud shot glasses, soft toys, slippers and finger puppets make presents no-one dare refuse. Best buy has to be the ruler - why not treat your mother to a Freudian twelve inches?

20 Maresfield Gardens, NW3 (nearest tube: Finchley Road) www.freud.org.uk. Open Weds to Sun 12-5pm. Admission: £5 (adults), £2 (concs). **4**

Grant Museum of Zoology (and Jeremy Bentham)

This little-known gem focuses on the wonders of the animal kingdom, deceased. Started in the 1920s by Professor Robert Grant, tutor of one Charlie Darwin, highlights include the plentiful specimens in fluid. Animal lovers, be warned, your goat may be got by the rare and extinct creatures, including the bones of a dodo, on display. But try and put it in historical context... While inspecting corpses at UCL, you could call on the university's 'spiritual father', utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham. His preserved skeleton, dressed in his own clothes and with a wax head, stands in wooden cabinet at the end of the South Cloisters, main building. Unlike the museum specimens, Bentham wasn't



Bentham: here all week

bagged by a Victorian collector. He asked to be preserved like this before his death in 1850.

Biology dept, UCL, Gower Street WC1 (nearest tube: Goodge Street). Open Mon and Fri 1-5pm, by appointment at other times. Admission free. **6**

The Old Operating Theatre Museum

Squeamish? You will be. The 'gore-ometer' is in the red and rising. Hidden in the roof of an old church is a 300-year-old herb garret, used as a store for the St Thomas Hospital apothecary until a new operating theatre was built in 1822. Now it's the oldest surviving in the country, lovingly restored so you

won't miss a scalpel blade. Marvel at instruments for surgery, bleeding and child-birth; see pathological specimens; take in the aromas of a fully labelled dried herb collection; wince as you remember it was the days before anaesthetic. Ouch!

9a St Thomas's Street, SE1 (nearest tube: London Bridge) Open daily 10.30am-5.00pm Admission: £4.75 (adults), £3.75 (concs). **2**



The Huntarian Museum

This is the place for backstreet science museum fashionistas to see and be seen. The collection was started in the 18th century by renowned anatomist and surgeon John Hunter, and subsequently transferred from his home (!) to the Royal College of Surgeons. If you're into comparative anatomy, complete skeletons, or just have a fetish for bits of famous people in lovely new glass cases, you know the address. It's all class, boasting the Bishop of Durham's rectum and Churchill's false teeth.

35-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2A (tube: Holborn). Open Tues to Sat, 10am-5pm. Admission free.



Hold onto your rectum **3**



The Alexander Fleming Museum

After the Old Operating Theatre, all we can say is bring on the drugs. Fleming discovered penicillin on the site in 1928. His small lab has been restored with original books, medical equipment and even a curator. The Fleming has also entered

Did you leave this man in the Fleming museum? **5**

the merchandising racket, so hurry before remaining stocks of out-of-date memorabilia commemorating the 75th anniversary of penicillin (2003) run out. A must for those who live on the wrong side of the Edgware Road.

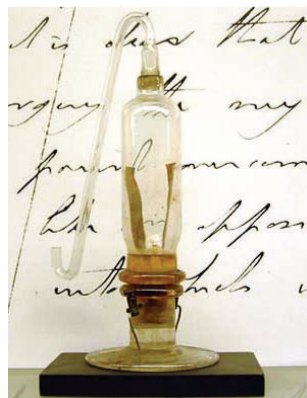
St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, W2 (nearest tube: Paddington). Open Mon-Thurs 10am-1pm and by appointment. Admission: £2 (adults), £1 (concs), IC Medicine students free. **5**

The Faraday Museum

Michael Faraday is hailed as the 'Father of Electricity' and since modern life, therefore, depends on his offspring, it's probably time you paid your respects. Tucked away in the Royal Institution's basement, this museum boasts yet another fully reconstructed laboratory. Here Faraday discovered and described electricity and electromagnetism, and constructed the world's first electric motor and dynamo. As well as being an all-round bright spark, Faraday had the 'gift of the gab' and could explain his experiments to almost anyone who cared to listen. He established the Royal Institution's televised Christmas lectures for chil-

dren... even before there was television. Told you he was bright.

21 Albemarle St, W1S (nearest tube: Green Park) Open Mon to Fri 9am-5pm. Admission: £1.00 (adults), £0.50 (concs).



Substance abuse at the Faraday museum **7**

If any of these establishments appeal, why not visit and let science.felix@ic.ac.uk know? A free visit to the Kirkaldy Testing Museum for the person who visits the most. For the runner up, a trip with Tom or Zoë to ogle the Horniman's birds is on offer. Photos courtesy of all museums.

The Horniman Museum

The Horniman is a museum as delightful as its name is suggestive. A top place to bring a date, it's an eclectic mix - natural history, African art, an aquarium and a collection of musical instruments to rival Denmark Street. It's also gone to town on its taxidermy. Guy or gal, date or no date, check out the birds. But the star turn has to be one alarmingly overstuffed bull walrus. Retrieved from Hudson Bay in the late 1800s, over-zealous taxidermists just didn't know when to stop stuffing! For the less stuffy, the Horniman boasts 21 acres of lusty looking park... so perhaps you could suggest some gentle 'exercise' in the grounds. Well worth a trip to London's deep south, just don't ask a cabbie to take you there. And if you ask for directions - watch your pronunciation. "To the

Horni-man please!" 100 London Road, SE23 (Nearest station: Forest Hill). www.horniman.ac.uk Open daily 10.30am-5.30pm. Gardens Mon to Sat 7.15am-dusk. Admission free.

See the Horniman's walrus today



8

Comment

felix@ic.ac.uk

Felix

Ahmad extradition will set dangerous precedent

Without presenting any evidence or allowing lawyers the opportunity to respond to its allegations, the US government has moved a huge step closer to extraditing Babar Ahmad, the former Imperial College student and ICT worker.

The judge called the case "difficult and troubling," and told the court that "if evidence were available, [Ahmad] could have been prosecuted in this country". What possible reason could US prosecutors have for withholding evidence from their British counterparts? Perhaps they know that their evidence would not hold up in a British court.

Babar Ahmad's extradition could set an extremely dangerous precedent – the 'one-way' Extradition Act does not allow US citizens to be extradited to the UK without a case being presented, yet this case could open the door for dozens of 'terror suspects' to be sent in the opposite direction. We can only look to the Home Secretary to take a step back, realise the absurdity of the situation, and order that Babar Ahmad be tried in Britain or released.

Plagiarists must pay penalty

Honest, hard-working students will find few things more infuriating than the small minority who cheat. Many at Imperial College can recall moments when, having spent countless hours on a piece of coursework to the detriment of the rest of their lives, they notice one of their colleagues hastily copying from a friend as the deadline approaches. Same piece of work, same grade perhaps, only one of you has put ten times more thought and effort into it than the other.

It can be equally frustrating when such blatant violation of the rules is not punished, and so the chemistry department should be applauded for taking a tough stance on the "significant amount of plagiarism" amongst third year students.

It is regrettable that students have been "sent into panic" at such a crucial stage of their degrees. More effort should have been made to explain the situation, confirm exactly what constitutes 'plagiarism' and reassure the innocent majority. However, we are optimistic that the cheats will be outed and everyone else will receive their marks on time without any further inconvenience.

Survey sends clear message on campus food

Few will have been surprised by the results of last week's survey on campus food. The figures send College caterers a clear message: cut your prices and introduce healthier options.

There is a large body of evidence showing that what you eat has an enormous impact on your health. So it is entirely plausible to suggest that by providing healthier food, the College can improve exam results and produce happier students who work harder. As for the cost, last week's 'price check' feature showed most local high street outlets to be significantly cheaper than the infamous JCR shop.

What can be done? Well, these issues, like most others, can be raised through the students' union. You can ask caterers why they are not providing enough healthy choices. And ultimately, you can take your business elsewhere. It might be less convenient, but it might also make a difference to what happens on campus.

Send us your views: felix@ic.ac.uk.

Felix

Why Southside can't stay

An apology

First off, I ought to apologise for my choice of wording last week. I've been told that some readers felt I was accusing customers and/or staff in the Southside Bar of racism. I didn't intend to suggest either covert or overt racism and if I gave that impression then I'm sorry I did so.

I had made a throw-away comment about an observation that others had made to highlight the difficulties of adequately serving student needs when the demographic is changing so markedly. More careful readers would have noticed that I did also say that I felt the Union's own facilities did not do much better.

Why can't Southside bar go into the new building?

This is a question I keep getting asked and, whilst no-one (sober) has disputed my explanation, they have said that I ought to print it. I must admit that when you've known the background for months it is easy to forget that everyone else doesn't know the details as well as you do.

The basic problem is that Princes Gardens is in the Knightsbridge conservation area and the existing building is Grade II listed by English Heritage. This makes it incredibly difficult to do any building work. In order to get permission for demolition, the College had to produce an architectural masterplan for 'restoring' Princes Gardens. This involves replacing the concrete mono-

STATE OF THE UNION



MUSTAFA ARIF
UNION PRESIDENT

liths (Southside and Linstead) with buildings that blend into the Edwardian houses still standing (such as Garden Hall on the north side).

The conservation issues impose practical difficulties. The new Southside will effectively have four less floors to be 'inkeeping' with the Edwardian houses. Something has to give...

Let's look at the priorities. The first is bed space. We need more – student numbers have grown considerably over the years but accommodation has not. The plans for Southside will provide around 70 more beds than at present, utilising every floor other than the ground floor (hardly a great leap forward, but a welcome step). The second priority is that the Medical Centre has got to be

housed somewhere and the only space large enough is the ground floor of the new Southside. Along with a security lodge, that leaves 200 square metres for a social area/café. That's not a lot once you include a counter area. There certainly isn't space for a bar cellar.

So what's wrong with Linstead?

I've said it before – installing a bar on the first floor would deprive Linstead hall of its main private communal space. It wouldn't be a replacement for Southside bar – the area is much smaller and security would have policed it tighter because it overlooked the wealthy neighbours who are influential with the local council. So it just wouldn't have had the same feel.

Yes, I agree that the ground floor shop in Linstead is going to be a waste of space. I've said it many times to College but they are hell bent on it – I cynically suspect because they will make a good coffee trade with the building contractors.

Long term

None of this is to say there shouldn't be a bar in the long term. The sports centre café will be licensed. The other new cafés probably will be too. And when Linstead is finally rebuilt (probably not for a few years whilst the College finds the money) there is space earmarked for both a restaurant and a bar (and an extra 300 bed spaces).

Intrusive behaviour

Obsession with someone else can be quite healthy if it doesn't cause problems for you or the other person. But sometimes, it can go too far.

Stalking or harassment can be very frightening for those on the receiving end. It can also make the person doing the harassment very emotionally distressed.

What is stalking?

Stalking or harassment (continuous tormenting) is any form of continued unwanted attention, and can happen through any of the following:

- Internet chatrooms
- Text messaging
- Phone calls
- Letters
- Personal contact (directly with you, or via your friends and family etc)
- Emails

Who are stalkers?

Stalkers can be people you've dated, people you've been in a relationship with, or someone you've never even met. If you know the person harassing you, that doesn't give them right to make your life difficult.

What causes stalking?

There are many causes that might trigger such behaviour, including:

- Many stalkers have psychological problems and may not be able to form relationships in the normal way.

ADVICE SERVICE



NIGEL COOKE
STUDENT ADVISER

- They may convince themselves that they are having a relationship with their victim, or suffer from other delusions about their victim.
- They may be an ex who can't accept that a relationship is over.
- Some may be motivated by revenge.
- A lot of stalkers believe that their feelings for their victims are reciprocated.

Is the law on my side?

Yes:

- The 1997 Protection From Harassment Act makes it a criminal offence for anyone to harass another person.
- The 1984 Telecommunications Act makes it an offence to send a message that's offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing by a type of public

telecommunications system.

What can I do if it happens to me?

Firstly, don't respond to any messages that you receive, because this may only encourage them to send more. Depending on the type of harassment you're receiving, you can also do a number of other things:

- Report it to the police. Whatever the situation, they'll listen and advise. In extreme cases they can also issue warnings or injunctions.
- Tell your phone company. Most phone networks, whether you have a mobile or a landline, have a malicious calls policy and can give advice to people about what to do if they're receiving unwanted calls.
- Tell your friends and family. If you're travelling, make some contingency plans to be picked up or meet someone, so that you're not on your own.
- Approach the Information and Advice Centre. We can help you. We also have close links with the Student Counselling Service, which we can refer you to if you feel that something like this is affecting you emotionally.

Remember that harassment, in any form, is not acceptable. It's not your fault and you don't have to put up with it.

If you have been affected by this article, please do not hesitate to contact the IAC on 020 7594 8067 or advice@ic.ac.uk. Don't let your concern turn into a crisis – make the IAC your first port of call.

COMMENT

felix@ic.ac.uk

Letters to the Editor

Library crisis

Dear Dave,

Your report of the closure of the Mech Eng library (Felix, 5 May), worrying as it is for hundreds of students of that department, barely reveals the tip of an iceberg which should be a much greater worry for all IC students. It is apparently the aim of IC to cram yet more departmental libraries plus their users into the central library (chemistry is moving this summer). Coincidentally, the great and good within IC (led by the College's Estates Dept, itself heavily influenced by the Rector) have their eyes on Level 5 of the Central Library, chiefly for admin purposes. So how many quarts can you get into a pint pot without withdrawing huge amounts of stock (which is exactly what is happening and is planned to happen via much more off-site storage at Wye) and by treating the Science Museum Library in such a cavalier fashion that it is likely to be forced out altogether? Allied to this is a report by IC's head of library services assessing the 10 years ahead. It assumes that electronic resources and services will be invested in so heavily that current stock (ie books and periodicals) will be steadily reduced throughout that period.

So who constitute this 'Council of professors' [running the mechanical engineering department]? How many ever visit and use the central library? If any did they would surely have commented on the nightmare that 24/7 opening has caused. This policy has transformed what usually looks like a second rate polytechnic library into a total dump. Few IC librarians are findable by students; we're all now stuck together in one massive backroom office from which few are allowed out. Students report that much is not findable on shelves. The library has become an embarrassment. So students should treat statements implying that senior decisions are made in their "best interests" with the contempt they deserve. IC has a very clear agenda, one which very definitely puts finances before education. How students react could well save or lose library facilities for a generation.

From a central library librarian

Southside Bar

Dear Felix Ed,

One should never write in anger, or so I have been told, so maybe this is an ill-advised letter; but sometimes you wait and wait and wait some more and still the anger remains.

So you write a letter.

I could be angry because Southside is about to close and will not be replaced. I could be angry because this decision was taken without any consultation with the people primarily concerned. I could be angry because 35 people, most of them

students, and a lot of them in need of the income in a time of top-up fees, will lose an opportunity. I could be angry because a place that has won a dozen awards over the past four years, which is packed full most of the week and whose closure has elicited quite an emotional response has been described as part of the "surcapacity in bars at Imperial". I could also be angry, to be honest, for personal reasons: 8 years spent at Imperial left me with quite a few friends and good memories.

I could, and I was, angry for all these reasons, but I discovered new reserves of anger last week when, in these pages, Southside Bar was described as "white, British, middle class" [State of the Union, *Felix* 1322].

That was a remarkably cheap shot. The truth is obviously different: given the nature of Imperial's student population today, Southside wouldn't stand a chance of surviving, let alone turning a profit – which it does – without appealing to the whole of the student body... as Mr Arif would have found out, had he ever taken the time to come down to Prince's Gardens.

I am certainly not saying that we are without faults and, yes, the place can still appear intimidating to some on a sport night, although we have taken steps to curb this problem in the last few years (notably the singing, just ask the members of the IC football teams with whom my personal ratings must be this year at an all-time low...). Nonetheless, I cannot help but think that, if the Union management had concerns with this issue, they would have been better advised to try and find a solution with us instead of having us close altogether (along with Linstead's and Weeks' bars, even if they have been barely mentioned so far).

Ultimately a bar is an empty shell, we do what we can to make the place a welcoming one but we can only smile that much. What we do is try and, if I can judge by the diversity of our customers, succeed in catering to (nearly) everyone whatever their requirements, be it a full-length session or just a couple of drinks. To accuse us of covert racism is not only cheap and craven, it also flies in the face of all my experience; our TV lounge is more packed, a lot more, when India plays Pakistan than during the Ashes!

This working class Frenchman has been accused of a lot of things in his time but being part of the white, British, middle class establishment is a novel experience.

Regards,

Arnaud Schmolinski
Southside Bar

I'm constantly amazed by comments Mr Arif makes about Southside bar. Despite the so called 'falling demand', Southside is popular with students and staff alike, and has won numerous awards, while the

Union bar doesn't come anywhere close.

If this is an attempt to increase the number of people going to the Union, then I believe it will end in failure as I, for one, and most people I know will simply choose not to go drinking anywhere in college rather than face the union.

I was very much looking forward to a new temporary bar in Linstead, and if the dining area is to be removed to make space for a shop and cafe, then the 'communal area' which seems to worry Mr Arif so much will disappear anyway.

It seems that once again Mr Arif has made a decision 'in the interest of students' without actually consulting any of them.

Sem

Nomination time

Dear Felix,

With the Union's Colours coming up, we felt the urge to nominate an individual who we feel is currently doing a major service to the Union and College in general; a surprisingly large number of people seem to think that his is a redundant presence, bend on estranging students and being the College administration's errand boy; we will set out however, hoping to prove these Cassandras wrong.

What has that extraordinary individual achieved so far? The list is never-ending, but with the utmost respect to your paper's space, it will be kept short.

1) Bullying over Choice: When Greece won the European Cup last summer, we were unsure whether we were more jubilant about not ever having to go to DaVinci's again (it being the "venue" where we watched the majority of matches), or about our victory per se. Let me tell you, that place is GRIM. Being RSM, it admittedly feels less uncomfortable in the Union Bar (what with the Bottle and all); DaVinci's however, and that dB's place (with the obscure events that seem to take place there) are really a disgrace.

2) Illusions of grandeur and actual power: "when I met College officials...", "I could either choose...", "I had to choose the hall bar closure option" ... it does get nauseating, so we stop. The man seems to think he is actually running the place! We have never felt comfortable with the primitive, semi-authoritarian personality cults that have inundated public life; when associated with people who hold absolutely no power whatsoever, it truly becomes unbearable. Someone has to tell him to just continue bowing his head to whatever directives he receives from College, or actually emerge from his spineless state and stand up for the issues that truly matter to students.

3) Inclinations to political-correctness: the last thing you would expect from a student member of a research-led scientific institution like the one we believe we are attending, would be for them to fall for the cheap rhetoric of the PC crowd; and not feeling guilty, as our candidate does, when College-outsiders point out the prevalence of white, middle-class students in Southside... reviled white, middle-class people, after all, have much better ways of chan-

nelling their spending power than being stuck in an underground hole, haggling over a pint of Carling for £1.53...

On top of the aforementioned contributions, we are eagerly awaiting our nominated individual's efforts to provide to "an ever changing student demographic... a social space that appeals to all". The absurdity of his own thought doesn't seem to trouble him, yet he goes on ranting on the need to accommodate every single need of a, largely imaginary, cosmopolitan student body... Surely it can only be a good thing that these maximalist fantasies are the only remotely political aspect of this person's meddling in our affairs.

Eagerly awaiting the due recognition our candidate for Union Colours deserves.

Yours truly,

Ioannis Fourniadis

PhD Earth Science & Engineering

Sleepy security

Dear Mr Editor,

In response to your article about security in the last issue of Felix:

This evening I went to the security lodge in Beit at about 1am, for whatever reason it doesn't matter. The guard was asleep, even to the point where he had turned all the lights off! I managed to wake him up, finished my business there and went to Sherfield to inform them of the situation, and was basically pooh-pooed and told to go away.

How, exactly, are we supposed to believe that security are "there to help us" when they are asleep, or rude?

Yours

Name and department supplied

Analysing the analyst

Dear Editor,

After reading this week's column penned by Mr Geraldles [*Analyse them*, issue 1322], I became rather perplexed as to the source of the author's knowledge on sports for 'rich boys'. Mr Geraldles seemed to be under the impression that the favoured sports of those born with a 'golden' (silver, surely...) spoon in their mouths were rather obscure and exclusive. This may well be true, however, I wonder if Mr Geraldles really considers 'golf, fencing or cricket' to be good examples of such sports.

In his definition Mr Geraldles suggests that these are examples of 'sports that no-one knows how to play or that they even exist'. I suspect the more likely case is that these sports exemplify those to which Mr Geraldles is ignorant of, since a quick look at viewing figures would demonstrate that several million viewers tune in to watch Test Match cricket or The Masters (that is a golf tournament for the benefit of Mr Geraldles).

I might suggest therefore that Mr Geraldles borrows a copy of the Penguin Guide to Sports for primary school children and looks up the relevant sports. Perhaps a better selection of sports might have

included 'The Eton Wall Game' or possibly 'Croquet'. Clearly though, since Mr Geraldles was not born with any cutlery in his mouth of any description, these sports are likely to be way outside his own sphere of influence.

Regards,

Name and department supplied

Diogo Geraldles replies:

As anyone with two heart pulses per minute and half a brain can see, my articles are written in a sarcastic way and are not to be taken seriously.

I've realised that, for some people in this college, a good sense of humour is not a common characteristic. They take life too seriously. What is scary is that we are students and need to relax and enjoy it a bit before diving into the stressful working world.

If you actually felt offended by an opinion column (where I made fun of almost every sport at IC – even the ones I play), you are the one who needs professional advice and to learn about a thing called IRONY.

PS By the way, just because a sport is well known here in the UK, that doesn't actually make it easy to understand for people that come from other countries. After all, we live in a multi-cultural society and need to respect other people's ways of thinking and viewing the world.

I would also like to quote a paragraph from my first Felix column: "If you took this article too personally, I would recommend you get a life! (You can start by buying a sense of humour!)"

'4th floor library dude'

Dear Editor,

During the past few months details have been revealed in the press of lying and corruption in the intelligence services leading up to the war in Iraq. Judging by the fraudulent coverage of activities on the 4th floor of the library, I'm surprised Rupert Neate didn't find any weapons of mass destruction as well as a '4th floor library dude'. I expect a position in the MI5 is waiting for him when he eventually graduates.

I do hope when he takes time off from spying he has time to revise for his exams so as to not be... a joke...? The very best of luck in becoming editor. Thankfully, I'll be graduating this summer so I won't have to see Felix in hot competition with the Sun and the Mirror in the tabloid stakes.

Ugochi Anomelechi

Rupert Neate replies:

Dear Ugochi Anomelechi, I'm glad you've worked out it was you I was talking about. The very fact that you have managed to identify yourself from my description shows that the description was accurate. I hope that now you have realised how annoying your behaviour can be to the majority of library users, you will curtail it. Thanks for the vote of confidence that you think Felix will by vying with mass market tabloids.

Columns

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The girl about town



by STORMY WOODS

Much has happened since we last met. So much so, that I'll just give a passing apologetic nod to those who were offended by my unintentionally unfair castigation of the Arab gentleman on the 211 bus the other week and move on to bigger and better things.

Such as my proposition from the lovely Mr Gerald. Diogo, I would be delighted to take you up on your

offer on the proviso that we go out for a coffee and get to know each other's likes and dislikes before doing the vertical and possibly the horizontal together. I'm sure you'd hate to find yourself in a disastrous situation where the action above the waist ends up being infinitely superior to that below, hence testing an admirer out on the dancefloor is the only way forward!

Latino lovers aside, the love life has been on the up. Not only was I asked out by a Springbok chemical engineering lecturer in Sainsbury's Local on Fulham Palace Road, but I've also been ambushed by various tramps whilst trying to further my way towards academic success in the library.

Stormy, in the library? I regret to confirm this is so, since my laptop exploded due to excessive 'right-click collecting' of numerous pervables, the latest being the unadul-

terated testosterone of Rog from Nowhere Near the Garden. Nick from Rooster should really get over himself – Rog doesn't need to watch Bon Jovi and Rolling Stones videos to create a stage show worth its salt. Besides Nick, Luke (an ex-LSE student) is fitter than you anyway.

And what do I find in the library? None other than all the stalkers I'd rather not see. There's Spotty, the owner of an impressive hentai collection; Greasy, also known as the permanently stoned medic with the fledgling metal band; and Oxbridge Guy.

Oxbridge Guy creeps the entire medical school out the most – his pervy grin, thirties glasses, Peter Stringfellow hair and surgically-attached best mate with the prosthetic limb fetish and chauvinistic views leave a lot to be desired. Imagine my disgust when he decides to announce his lust for Imperial

women to a computer room containing me and a group of second year surfers. I narrowly escaped puking over my keyboard when he fixed his gaze at me, and I ended up setting off the fire alarm whilst making a swift getaway. Irresponsible, I realise, but you'd do it too if an unwanted admirer tried to use his Cambridge cufflinks as a chat-up line.

It's not just Charing Cross library that attracts losers though. The sci-fi and central libraries do too. Central has its own 'loin-man', who walks past ladies taking a respite from the summer heat and, on making conversation, ends up asking whether they would like to feel something hot. When questioned further, he reveals that his loins are the item of relevance. Needless to say, he, and the rest of civil engineering, have managed to win themselves the title of 'Least Sexy Department' in my books. Whilst being aestheti-

cally tolerable, their arrogance is mind-numbing to say the least.

Sci-fi are, on the other hand, at one with their shortcomings, and try their best to over-compensate for their ugliness by treating their ladies like princesses. They come perilously close to winning the 'Least Sexy Society' prize, with only Micro Club and the blue-haired Mech Eng self-appreciation society beating them to it! Arrogance is unattractive, but vanity is seriously flawed.

I digress. The point of this column was to accentuate the positive, the positives being that I have managed to get a first on the presentation with Birkenstock woman and that the Jeff Hardy lookalike I almost ran over on Chiswick High Road has been keeping me happily occupied on Sundays. Living anatomy is the best lesson ever – and regular tutorials keep me very happy...

Analyse them



by DIOGO GERALDES

Do you know that Akhenaton was the first monotheist in history? And that 22 kids have been executed in USA since 1976?

OK! Now that I've written something smart and interesting, I can proceed to my usual "taking the piss" style without having any complaints about how my articles are so lame and uncultural.

This week's column is about life in halls. Or maybe that should be 'life in hall', because I've only lived in one (and I can't mention it because that would promote WILSON HOUSE more than the others!)

Anyway, life in halls can be divided in the following sections:

1. Parties
2. Studying (actually no... who am I trying to convince that your first year is dedicated to studying? Let's make it parties again and keep on moving)
3. Hall events
4. Living away from home
5. Living in society
6. Reapps and wardens

1 and 2. Parties

From freshers' nights out and birthday orgies, to halloween and random-parties-without-any-special-meaning, there's a whole range of opportunities for you to get wasted and finally pull the ugly-girl-from-the-floor-above-who-turns-you-on.

I've seen people arriving completely on fire and horny (rolling and hugging on the floor is one example), throwing up in a bin or in some random guys room, on a free ambulance ride or escorted by policemen, carrying wooden tables or traffic signs, spreading their dinner all over the common rooms and buses... and I could go on for a couple more lines, but that would make you envious.

This is basically what life in halls

is about: party as if tomorrow is the final judgement day!

3. Hall events

Hall events are great because they give all the new students the opportunity to mingle together, promote cultural, social, sporty and cheap days around London and make you forget everything about where you came from.

There's nothing better than waking up at five in the morning and crossing England by train to roll for the whole day on mud and rocks, shoot your mates and return straight to St Mary's Hospital with hypothermia and bruises on parts of your body you didn't even know existed (that's paintballing, in case you are reading this in your 24/7 study break in the library!)

4. Living away from home

After the first month of events and meeting new people, you finally discover that the smell in your room doesn't come from the corpse hidden under your mattress, but from your pile of clothes. Now there's no

mummy to help you!

You also realise that a balanced diet definitely does not contain pizza and shawarma and have to start to learn how to cook, even if that implies burning down the house, getting stomach cancer or finding someone to be your bitch and wait for you to get back from college to cook your stir fry.

There's also the continuous fight against the second law of thermodynamics that makes your room look like a battlefield where you can only walk with food provisions for a week and ammunition, just in case you get lost.

Who said there's nothing better than living alone?

5. Living in society

This topic only applies to medics and 3% of other students (the ones who don't care about their degree and who might be reading this masterpiece of literature). If you feel that somehow you are not included in this group, I'd like to introduce you to a couple of key concepts: SOCIETY and interacting with other people!

Staying in your room, eating you microwavable rice or noodles while ironing your underwear or programming Sudoku in your calculator is not sociable! (I find that the simple appearance of Sudoku in my article might raise the number of readers by 50%, from 2 to 3. No, mum, you don't count!)

6. Reapps and wardens

I was going to write a whole article about this, but I think my opinion on them (whether they are sporty, sick mixers, nature loving, nightwalkers, party people, drunk or married – and im definitely not licking arses for my next year as reapp) can be summed up in three little words: WE LOVE YOU!

So, life in halls can be amazing and exciting for sure, if you put some (little) effort into it. This year has been a great experience for me and I would like to thank everyone that participates in it for making my life without a beach, fit chicks, cheap alcohol, sunny weather, my own car, my best friends, my family and good food much easier than I expected!

Why?



by SUMA BHATTACHARYA

The question "why?" is just like a balloon floating forever with no

destination or string to hold it with. What I mean is that I don't have a clue why. I am humbled because I don't know, and I am empowered because I can still ask. Really, what is the point of either a music degree or a mathematics degree, other than to ultimately discover the right to ask any question you want? Surely education is about asking the question and believing in the right to do so, without needing a validation through the promise of an answer.

I find it quite amazing, you know, looking at a baby and realising she has absolutely no idea. She doesn't

know what to think, what to do or who to be. Suddenly she pops into existence and consciousness with such a clean slate – only to face six billion pre-existing ideas as to who she already is. Then it is just a matter of fulfilling that role.

I know I am kind of ignoring the genome here, but rightly so. You see, worse than just that child drowning in those six billion (and growing) expectations and having her future outweighed by too heavy a history, the real tragedy lies in the child being given the answers even before she understands how to ask the

questions. Every generation lives in the knowledge of undeniable truths (the world was undoubtedly flat for a very long time), which are only to be disproved in the face of advancement. There are so many things we take for granted that will cause silly brats of the future to sit in their junior schools and giggle uncontrollably at our stupidity!

In that sense, there is only one thing we can be certain of, if we were to learn a lesson from history: there are a significant number of "truths" that we take for granted and can't argue against now, that will eventu-

ally be discarded as myths at some point in the future. So before you know it, our little girl shuts up very content to have found all the light she needs and the world remains a constant – lit by the past and all those precious truths we must all succumb to.

If only we had the profound means of understanding through our limited minds, that in fact, all our life is just a confinement of our unlimited mind, then we could really appreciate how frighteningly beautiful it is, not to know. So, I proudly exclaim, I have no idea!

The Neighbours generation



by RUPERT NEATE

Why don't British universities have fraternities? Should we have them?

Anyone who has ever watched an American teen movie will be well aware of the US phenomena that are fraternities and sororities (the female equivalent).

Curiously, considering that they are labelled by Greek letters, fraternities have nothing whatsoever to do with the academic legacy of ancient Greece. In 1776 student John Heath started a secret club in which he and his friends could discuss the pressing issues of the day, and he named this club Phi Beta Kappa.

Fraternities mushroomed from this. Now at least one fraternity is present on most campuses.

Despite the fact that fraternities aim to encourage intellectual and social advancement, they are not wholly welcomed by the US educational establishment, who believe they could pose a threat to the power of the university.

Fraternities create groups that care for and feel responsible for each other, in a manner that is close to that of the familial love. This feeling of familial love is surely a benefit when many students are living away from home for the first time. But does it take a fraternity system to make students care for one another? Do we in the UK not care for our fellow students if they are not intimately linked to ourselves by such a system?

As we all know, the social aspects of life at Imperial are well below par. If we had a fraternity-like system, would Imperial be quite so anti-social? I reckon it might help oil the wheels a little, but the problems with Imperial are so deeply ingrained it would barely scratch the surface.

Fraternities may spew forth worthy ideals on their aims being 'to increase academic achievement', but I seriously doubt that is why the majority of students join. Frat parties have to be the main draw. How many movies have attempted to show the sheer drunken debauchery of a frat party? Imperial students' house parties can be fun, but they don't come close to the hedonism of fraternity parties.

This could be, and most likely is, due to the fact that fraternities greatly stack the odds on pulling in the fraternity brothers' favour. I'm told that even the ugliest of frat brothers can pull at a frat keg party. But we all know the ratio at Impy is ridiculous, and you couldn't possibly attempt to create an even 50:50 atmosphere.

There is a dark side to fraternities – the intense rivalry that exists between different frats has led to feuds reminiscent of gangland disputes.

Frats are also notoriously elitist and somewhat uninclusive, notably preventing or intimidating gay students and those of different racial groups from joining. They were

founded on the basis of religion and today remain largely religiously secular.

In order to join a fraternity, people have to show that they are 'worthy' of the privilege. Initiation ceremonies and hazing (humiliation) have been commonplace for years. But recently the nature of the tasks has changed from light-hearted fun to the bizarre and life-threatening.

What was once fun to watch, whilst perhaps not so much fun to undertake, has progressed into tasks so humiliating that people have even committed suicide. Six students died last year as a direct result of initiation ceremonies. Should young men be putting themselves at risk of death, just to give themselves a sense of belonging in a daunting environment?

Despite a university crackdown on hazing, fraternities appear undeterred. Some are even considering emulating the kind of naked humiliation shown to Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib.

The influence of fraternities is not bound by the walls of the campus. Fraternities' power reaches into

the outside world. The British 'old boys' network is, thankfully, less of a back door entry into prestigious jobs than it has been in the past. Contrastingly, it is not unheard of to see directors of major American companies to be seen exchanging secret handshakes.

According to *Forbes* magazine, over a quarter of CEOs in America's top 500 companies were fraternity members. This may sound like a small proportion, but consider that only 8.5% of university graduates are members of a sorority or fraternity. The influence of fraternities does not stop with big business – 48% of US presidents and 40% of the US Supreme Court justices were members.

Have sleeves been banned in Australia?

I'm wondering whether Australia has introduced a ban on guys under 25 from wearing T-shirts with sleeves. If *Neighbours* is to be viewed as a true representation of Australia (which I believe it most definitely is), then one must infer that such a law has been passed.

A new perspective on Union propaganda



by THE 'MAKE PRETENTIOUSNESS HISTORY' COALITION

Everyone needs a theory by which to explain the world, to manage relationships, to win friends and influence people. Now a new philosophical theory is emerging that could revolutionise our perspective on politics, law, and Union strategy. This groundbreaking new outlook touches on a largely unexplored phenomenon: the tendency to bullshit.

"There are exquisitely sophisticated craftsmen who – with the help of advanced market research, of public opinion polling, of psychological testing, and so forth – dedicate themselves tirelessly to getting every word and image they produce exactly right. Yet there is something more to be said about this. However studiously and conscientiously the bullshit proceeds, it remains true that he is also trying to get away with something."

Internationally renowned moral philosopher Professor Harry G Frankfurt has set out to broach this difficult subject. First exploring the concepts of bullshit and humbug, he observes that they are not quite the same as lying. In his thesis *On Bullshit*, he concludes that excessive indulgence can be an even greater enemy to the truth than old-fashioned deceit:

"It is impossible for someone to

lie unless he thinks he knows the truth. Producing bullshit requires no such conviction. [The bullshitter] does not care whether things he says describe reality correctly. He just makes them up, to suit his purpose."

Although there's something darkly comic about his academic text, regularly punctuated with the words bullshit and excrement, this new theory can provide a serious perspective on recent Union publications.

A glimpse at the impressive Union Strategy brochure reveals some characteristic qualities. Printed on thick high-quality paper in an unusual landscape format, the professional graphic design is something you might only expect from a burgeoning investment bank, a modern political party or a private arts college. But despite its incredibly glamorous presentation, the Union is still

fixated on its "brand and identity issues". Some recently published objectives for the South Kensington refurbishment reveal the severity of the situation:

- Objectives:
- Create a cohesion out of the disparate functions of the Union building
 - Establish a new Union identity
 - Unite the spaces together through the design language of the circulation and the spaces themselves
 - Wayfinding will be instinctive through the new identity
 - The functions will be distinguished but part of the same family

So, if you found the Union Strategy impressive, you can only wait in keen anticipation of the Union refurbishment. Once again, it appears that some budding executives, marketing managers and politicians

have united with postmodern artists and unwittingly (or perhaps strategically) disappeared up their own brilliance.

If you are inspired to investigate further then the elegantly printed Strategy document is available from your local Union office. It's incredible aesthetic qualities are evident and the dedicated effort is overwhelming. Hopefully there will soon be a revised 'Union Strategy Lite' that serves the same purpose as regular Strategy, requires only half the usual rainforest, and doesn't take hours to decipher – to express your interest please contact the Union bureaucracy.

In the meantime, Professor Frankfurt's tiny publication *On Bullshit* should be available from most bookshops, but be prepared for disappointment – it will be in short supply after last week's general election.

Comment on columns



by AARON S

Is it possible for girls to write about guys without sounding like a slut? Is it possible for guys to write about girls without sounding desperate?

Let's look at the evidence. The enigmatic Stormy. Is she serious? Does what she write have an ounce

of truth to it? We shall never know. Does she sound like a slut? Well yes, but to be fair, it's pretty hard to write about an interesting sex life and not sound like a slut. In my opinion, not quite as good as Ash last year, but still, after Coffee Break, the Quick Crossword, the front page and the adverts, it's the first thing I read in *Felix*.

(By the way Stormy, dead baby jokes are funny up until the moment you, or someone you are close to, loses a young child).

Then there's Diogo's 'Analyse Them'. Okay, so stereotyping is fun. But self-deprecating the whole university is going a bit far. There are plenty of nice normal people out there, and even the abnormal ones are nice once you get to know them. And contrary to popular

belief, there are loads of really nice girls at Imperial, just waiting to be asked out by a talented, interesting Imperial student with massive future earning potential.

'The Neighbours Generation'. Perhaps I've missed something, but what does a '50% of kids in university' target have to do with *Neighbours*? Rupert, I'm going to make a suggestion that might help you out, but I don't want this to be mistaken for an indication that I like you. Stop watching TV. Go to the Union. Buy a pretty girl a drink and live happily ever after.

My favourite column so far has got to be the refreshingly interesting 'Who am I?' by Suma Bhattacharya [*Felix* 1321]. The follow-up appears this week. To answer your question, Wikipedia used to say, "the

key to confidence is knowing that you are who you make yourself out to be". Whoever we are deep down inside doesn't really matter, since nobody else gets to see that. People see what we consciously or unconsciously show them, and everyone sees things differently, which is why you've been accused of being "all the pretty colours in the rainbow".

So it would seem that the most interesting columns have been when people write about themselves. However the most interesting thing I did this week was to go to a seminar on a compiler framework for thread-level speculation. And lose money at poker. And get drunk at an empty Union on Friday. Discovered for the first time that I have a tankard in the Union Bar, which I intend to make good use of

from now on. Discovered it leaks. Talked to three nice girls, and one not so nice girl.

Yeah, I think maybe I should leave columns to other people. But let's make it interesting. Let's hear about Imperial life from people living Imperial lives, not from people watching Imperial lives. That's you, dear reader. Got a story to tell?

Let's not turn *Felix* into a blog, but let's use this Columns section for people to write about life at Imperial. If enough people do it, then maybe some of it will be good. And if some of it is good, maybe it will entertain us.

And remember, good writers borrow from others, great writers steal outright.

You've got to be asking yourself why I told you that...

THE FELIX INTERVIEW

“We’re hanging on by our shirt tails”

Sir Richard Sykes, Rector of Imperial College, says that UK universities are “dominated by Government,” and finds it “amazing” that they can still compete internationally. **Dave Edwards** talks to him about tuition fees, 24-hour libraries, rebranding, Charing Cross Hospital and the future of the University of London

“I’ve never met anyone who didn’t have a high opinion of Imperial College,” says Sir Richard Sykes, the Rector. He worked as Chairman and Chief Executive of GlaxoSmithKline PLC before taking on the College’s leading role in 2001.

“To be very honest with you,” he says, “it’s the only job in the higher education sector I would have taken, because it plays to my strengths. I’m interested in the integration of science, technology and medicine, so there was only one job and this was it.”

When he first began work at Imperial, Sir Richard was “shocked” by the political arena in which the College operates, “being a private institution in a sense, but being totally dominated by Government.”

He thinks the Labour party is “the only one with a sensible policy on higher education,” and appears to regret that their majority has been reduced. “Even with a big majority they had difficulties getting their bills through, so making big leaps forward

will not be easy.”

A proponent of university top-up fees, the Rector believes that students should make a greater contribution to the cost of their education. According to him, the new system is a step in the right direction but doesn’t go far enough.

“To educate someone at Imperial College in the subjects we teach and the way that we teach them is expensive,” he says, outlining an argument he has made many times before. “Even with the £3000 contribution per student, we’ll still be making a loss on each student we educate. That money has to come from somewhere.”

So if £3000 per student per year is not enough, what would be the ideal solution to this complex problem? Anti-fees campaigners should look away now...

“For the top institutions in the country, and you can count them on one hand, let them operate in a market... let them make the decision about what they want to charge. We charge competitive fees for those who come

from overseas now, and that is what we’d charge.”

Based on the 2005-6 figures, this would mean that home students would pay enormous tuition fees of between £11,750 and £24,900 per year, depending on their course of study.

At first glance, it would appear that

“The higher you charge those who can afford it, the more you can use to pay for those who can’t”

such proposals might completely deter all but the richest prospective students from applying to Imperial College.

Sir Richard disagrees. “We did some modelling going back three years. If we charged 30% of students the full fees, we could pay for the 70% who couldn’t afford the full fees. It’s a

question of balance.

“In my opinion it’s totally wrong to say that you’re charging students to come to university therefore you’re denying those from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. It’s absolutely not true and the evidence is exactly the opposite – the higher you charge those who can afford it, the more you can use to pay for those who can’t.”

Although top-up fees of £3000 per student per year will not be enough for the Rector, the new system will still bring millions of pounds into the College. How will the money be used?

“As you know, a third of it will go into bursaries,” he says. “Then I think we’ve got to make sure that we try to ring-fence that money for students and teachers as much as possible. We’re already, as I’ve said to you before, still losing £2500 a year on average for each student, so it will help to make up that, but also we’ve got to put it into the infrastructure for good teaching, because teaching is critically important in an institution like this.”

Education and the Government

The Government is still persisting with its infamous ‘50% target’ of school-leavers going to university. Sir Richard would prefer to set a different goal: “Our target should always be to educate people to their maximum potential. Whether that’s 40%, 50% or 80%... you’ll have achieved your target by developing them to their maximum potential.”

He believes that “we have to help everyone,” but he stresses that people are different and have different needs when it comes to education. “Let’s not pretend that we all have the same potential, because we don’t have the same potential.”

He also finds time for a dig at the so-called ‘new universities’. “We call everything a university today, so of course there’s no differentiation.”

Sir Richard would prefer a move towards a US-style system, where it is easier to return to further or higher education after a few years out. “We need to give people the flexibility of choice, because not everybody will do well at the same time.”

Overseas students and postgraduates

National newspapers reported in December that Imperial College planned to increase its numbers of overseas students and postgraduates in an attempt to raise funds. Government restrictions on tuition fees do not apply to these groups, allowing the College freedom to charge whatever it wants.

Sir Richard acknowledges that the number of overseas students will continue to grow and that “it is difficult to believe that this College could operate at this level if we didn’t have access to that money.” However, he claims that the numbers are increasing not for financial reasons, but because Imperial is receiving more

applications from overseas students and because they are usually better educated.

Better educated? “It isn’t that they’re smarter, it’s the way they’ve been taught I suspect, because they tend to do traditional A-levels in Singapore and Hong Kong, whereas here we change things about so damn much, you can go through A-level maths without doing any calculus!”

Sir Richard favours a return to traditional teaching in Britain’s schools, especially in science subjects. “Science isn’t exciting from a book,” he insists, “science is exciting when you start to apply it. I was brought up to do biology three times a week, physics three times a week, chemistry three times a week, you know, in a laboratory, blowing things up in calorimeters, cutting out eyes and dissecting them...”

“You have to produce the teaching, you have to produce the money, and you have to have the commitment.”

Returning to the issue of funding, the Rector highlights the responsibility of the Government and stresses that British universities are in a difficult financial position: “The government of the day have to recognise that if they want internationally competitive universities in this country, they’ve got to be funded properly. I think it’s amazing that we still have a handful of universities here that can compete, but you know, we’re hanging on by our shirt tails.”

He accepts that if the financial situation worsened, the College might have to take more overseas or post-graduate students in order to boost funds. “That’s certainly one approach. I think that would be a very detrimental step, but it’s another option...”

The University of London

The University of London (UL) is a federation of 19 London colleges, including Imperial. Our degrees are officially awarded by UL, but today it has very little involvement in Imperial’s affairs. So what is the point of being part of it?

“Not a lot,” replies the Rector bluntly. He accepts that UL provides

“If we want to bring the best students here, we need to encourage them, show that we care about them”

access to sports competitions and intercollegiate halls of residence, but is confident that this could continue in a similar vein through agreements with other colleges, even without UL. “Otherwise,” he adds, “we are paying a lot of money to an organisation from which we get very little return. So the intention is to pull out.”

“As far as we’re concerned, we want ensure that students have access to the sporting facilities and the halls of residence, and if that can be sorted out quickly, that would be good.”



PHOTOS: WILLIAM TURNER

“It’s the only job in the higher education sector I would have taken” – Sir Richard Sykes, Rector of Imperial College (right), with Dave Edwards

Libraries

A letter in this week’s *Felix* from an anonymous central library librarian [see page 7] says that 24/7 opening is “a nightmare” and has “transformed what usually looks like a second rate polytechnic library into a total dump”. The letter claims that the College is aiming “to cram yet more departmental libraries plus their users into the central library,” which itself has become “an embarrassment”.

Sir Richard reacts with a smile. “I think people have to move with the times,” he says. “Twenty-four hour opening seven days a week is not easy because the library wasn’t built for that. People have to eat and drink, which does make the place a bit different, but we have to deal with that at the moment. If we had Waterstone’s converted into a nice café area, it would be much easier.”

He is certain that the central library is “not an embarrassment, absolutely not... rest assured, this is the way forward, it has to be 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We have to consolidate as many of the departmental libraries as possible, because you cannot work in a departmental library 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

It soon becomes clear that ‘consolidating’ a departmental library translates to closing it and moving the stock to the central library.

He insists that such moves are “in the best interests of students”,

despite the fact that a petition against ‘consolidating’ the mechanical engineering library was signed by over 500 students.

“The problem is not that [the departmental] library is not open 24 hours a day seven days a week, and I believe that’s what students want.”

Rebranding

Imperial’s recent rebranding exercise has received particular criticism from students. The famous traditional

“What’s the point of being part of the University of London? Not a lot. The intention is to pull out”

crest has been replaced by simple blue type on a white background.

“I just think one has to move forward,” says the Rector. “First of all, the old crest is from a bygone age. If you look on a page, you see a nice advert with Imperial College London and you don’t have to read all this other stuff about Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine.”

That might be a sensible policy for job adverts, but what about all those signs? “They want to be clear and uncomplicated. It’s not that we’ve

discarded the crest, we’re just using it for special occasions.”

I ask Sir Richard whether he knows any students who actually like the new branding.

“I haven’t actually personally gone around and done a survey,” he replies, after a long pause. “I think it’s an interesting concept, isn’t it, that students at Imperial are unbelievably conservative...”

The summer ball

This year’s Imperial College Union Summer Ball will be held on the South Kensington campus on Saturday 18 June, with £20,000 of funding coming directly from the College. I ask the Rector whether the ball is worth the investment.

“I think that these community occasions are very important. I know why it went to Alexandra Palace [last year] but I think it’s very important to have it here, because students associate with this place, you’ve got a beautiful area on the Queen’s Lawn, you’ve got all sorts of potential, so I’m happy to give that money for students to have a nice occasion that doesn’t cost them the earth, where they can have a meal if they wish to, and enjoy themselves.”

He is quick to add: “Speaking of ‘worth it’, what are we building an £18m sports centre for? It’s something that is part of the package. If we want to bring the best students here,

we want to encourage them, show that we care about them...”

Contrary to statements from the Union, Sir Richard tells me that the new sports centre will open in October.

Charing Cross Hospital

National newspapers have claimed that Charing Cross Hospital, a main teaching site for Imperial College medical students, is set to close. The Rector reassures current and

“It’s an interesting concept, isn’t it, that students at Imperial are unbelievably conservative”

prospective medical students that this will not occur in the near future.

“Hospitals don’t close quickly, it just doesn’t happen that way. To close Charing Cross might have been, in someone’s mind, a good idea in terms of efficiencies, but it’s going to cost them an enormous amount of money to do that, and I don’t see that money coming from anywhere at the moment. So I would think that Charing Cross would still be operating reasonably well in ten years’ time.”

The future

Sir Richard acknowledges the intensive nature of study at Imperial College. “This is a College where people work, it ain’t a College where people play.”

He is proud of its reputation and believes that “Imperial has done extremely well” to be consistently ranked in the top three UK universities. “It’s an amazing feat when you think we’re not even 100 years old... and that’s excellence, that’s quality, that’s standards, that’s bringing the best people here both in terms of staff and students. That has to be the future, and that can’t change.”

He stresses the importance of links between higher education and business. “It’s pretty obvious to me that if we [the UK] are to remain competitive in the world, our higher education system has to be turning out the right people. Otherwise people aren’t going to invest in the UK.”

He tells me that the College must “get more financial support from wherever we can. We’ll continue to rebuild this campus and the other campuses, because if we want good people we’ve got to give them a good environment.”

Next week: are you getting a world-class education at Imperial? We talk to Professor Rees Rawlings, Pro Rector for Educational Quality



The Rector enthusiastically highlights some data about Imperial’s student intake

Clubs & Societies

felix@ic.ac.uk

Ten things I can do that you can't

EPISODE NINE: Two diabolos

JUGGLING CLUB

By Chris Rowlands

This week's topic is the scarily named diabolo. If you're on a shoestring budget (and let's face it, who isn't at this time in the year?) you can assemble one from a pencil, two plastic bowls, two sticks and some string, but it's probably easier and less painful to buy one.

As a general rule, the faster you spin it, the more stable the diabolo becomes, and the less likely it is to fly off and hit something. Years of experience have

revealed that a diabolo gravitates primarily towards pints of beer – consider yourself warned.

At this point, some people may be nodding smugly to themselves and mumbling: "I can do that!" Since this may well be true, we have tried to make things a bit more impressive. While there are many ways to make juggling harder and consequently more impressive, we'll stick to just one – having more things in the air at once [see picture 1].

To keep two diabolos on a string is much harder than just one diabolo. First of all, they have a tendency to hit

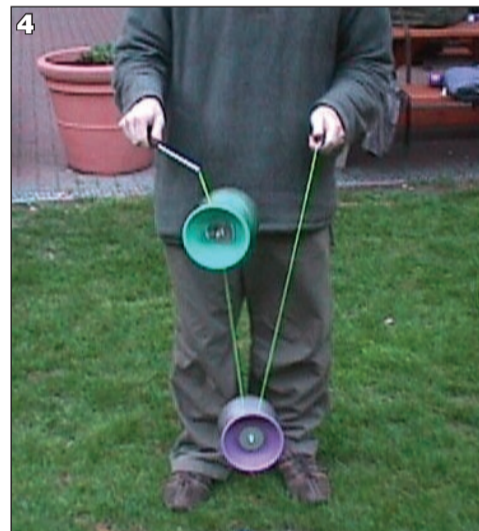
each other with catastrophic consequences and, as such, you've got to figure out a way to keep them apart.

First thing's first: just start one spinning. The easy way is to give it a good run-up [see picture 2] and just keep pulling the string. Alternatively, you can use Nez's "superior" method shown here [see picture 3]. Please carefully note the superiority.

Now wrap the string around the axle of another diabolo and with rapid whipping action (buy an 'S&M Action Man – with new kinky moves' for more details on technique), start the diabolo spinning [see picture 4].

Once it's up to speed, unwrap the string by moving the handstick. As the top diabolo falls down the string, toss the other one over it [see picture 5]. Be patient – if you toss it too early then you'll just end up in a horrible mess as it will collide with the other diabolo on the way down.

If anyone's still feeling smug, they can email juggling@ic.ac.uk and show us how wonderful they are every Tuesday throughout term at the Union from 6pm. Alternatively if you're amazed and want to know more, email or turn up and we'll be slightly nicer to you.



Qigong at Imperial

CHESS CLUB

By Oscar Dahlsten

It has been a fascinating two terms for Qigong at Imperial, and there appears to be more ahead.

Qigong is an ancient Chinese system of mind and health regulation. 'Qi' is often best translated as energy and sometimes as information. 'Qigong' is then 'energy work'.

In the traditional Chinese model, our wellbeing is dependent on the nature and behaviour of the qi in the body. In a healthy state one has abundant qi, which is led by the spirit in a harmonious manner. Whilst modern science would use a different conceptual network, it too is recognising the importance of the complex interaction between mind and body. At Imperial there is a small but growing group taking an interest in this.

The autumn term saw a one-month intensive course given by an eminent visitor from China, professor Yafei Liu, Director of the China National Qigong Training Institute. She taught us a Qigong system passed down to her by her father Dr Guizheng Liu. He is considered the father of modern Qigong and is credited with bringing many ancient practises under empirical scrutiny, naming them 'Qigong' and applying them successfully in China's first Qigong hospital.

Yafei was invited here by the London Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Qigong and the Imperial Chinese Wushu Society. It seems all enjoyed her clear method of teaching and charming, positive approach.

During this visit we were treated to a session by Professor John Gruzelier, principal investigator of psychophysiology at Imperial, on the mind-body connection in modern medicine.

He presented results from various experiments in his group linking performance as well as health with the mental state. They had used a method called biofeedback to improve performance of Imperial dancers and Royal College musicians. They also noted that antibody levels of Imperial students decreased during exam periods, but this effect was reversed for each member of a trial group practising positive visualisations from a Qi-based system called Johrei.

We are now hoping to organise research specifically on Qigong with Imperial. If you are a medical student and interested in doing a project, please contact the author of this article. Members of the physics department interested in experiments for detecting and quantifying qi, please do the same.

We were also honoured to have a very brief visit from China by Dr Yang and colleagues. He is the inheritor

and grandmaster of Yang Taijiquan, the most widely practised Taiji-style in China.

There are currently Qigong classes running every two weeks at Imperial, taught by Professor Zhao on behalf of the Chinese National Qigong Training Institute. There will be several more intensive courses given by Qigong world authorities visiting from China, beginning with Professor Shengbing Zhang, former director of Qigong research at Nanjing University of Chinese Medicine, in mid-May. From 27 July, Professor Tianjin Liu, director of Qigong research at Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, will teach for a month.

All are welcome (large discounts for staff and students). For more info or to be added to the email list, email oscar.dahlsten@ic.ac.uk

Websites: www.union.imperial.ac.uk/wushu/qigong, www.tcmqigongacademy.com.

Chess league champions

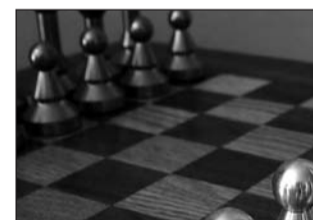
CHESS CLUB

By Beinan Liu

The Imperial College Chess club ended the year with one of the best performances seen in recent years.

The Imperial team of eight players competing in the Middlesex League (Division 3) won all our matches and gained automatic promotion as outright winners of the division, thanks to a brilliant team effort (key players: Peter Levermore, Kanwal Bhatia, Edward Leung, Richard Thursby, Richard Crampton, Malcolm Bovey and Anup Sinha) under the leadership of captain Slava Burenkov.

The club also entered a team in the ULU Chess League, captained by Beinan Liu (key players: Felix Balthasar, Robin Nandi, John Sargent, Dave Man), which dominated



the league throughout the season along with arch-rivals UCL but narrowly missed out on the top spot. However, on the bright side, we did beat our previous arch-rivals LSE very convincingly. Their final league position was third, a long way from causing any credible threat to the Imperial team.

This year, there has also been a significant increase in the number of internal chess tournaments and events. Thanks to president Anup Sinha for his hard work and a great team effort by the whole committee. Imperial Chess has stepped into a new era of glory!

What's on

felix@ic.ac.uk

FRIDAY 20 MAY

UNION EVENTS ROCK CITY

8pm-2am
Beit Quad
£3
The best rock party tunes, with DJ K. Snakebite and black £1 a pint in dBs bar all night.
Contact: union@ic.ac.uk

SATURDAY 21 MAY

SPORT FA CUP FINAL: ARSENAL v MAN UTD

3pm
Anywhere with a TV
Manchester United show the rest of the world that they can still win trophies, with or without bloody Malcolm Glazer. Ah, who am I kidding?
Anyway, if you're a confident Arsenal fan or just a neutral who wants to point and laugh, why not watch the action in Southside or Da Vinci's Bar?

TUESDAY 24 MAY

CHAPLAINCY WALK THE LABYRINTH

11.30am-2pm
Union Dining Hall
FREE
Open to all students and staff.
Contact: chaplaincy@ic.ac.uk

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 25 MAY

COLLEGE EVENTS THE FIRST ANNUAL DIVERSITY LECTURE

5pm
Lecture Theatre G16, Sir Alexander Fleming Building
Dr Ossie Stuart, writer, researcher and diversity consultant, will present: "Fear

and loathing in the mirror: does British society invent the 'black' man?"
Contact: c.yates@ic.ac.uk

SPORT CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL: AC MILAN v LIVERPOOL

7.45pm
Anywhere with a TV

Rafael Benitez's inconsistent Liverpool take on the mighty AC Milan in European football's showpiece game. Can the team that finished 37 points behind league leaders Chelsea cause one more upset and become continental champions? Why not watch it at the Union on sports night (see below)?

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 26 MAY

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
STAR WARS EPISODE III:
REVENGE OF THE SITH
(12A)
Daily: 11am, 12.30pm, 1.30pm,

2.30pm, 4pm, 5pm, 6pm, 7.30pm, 8.30pm, 9.30pm, 11pm, 12midnight. Fri to Sun only: 9am, 10am.

MONSTER-IN-LAW (12A)
Daily: 1pm, 3.20pm, 5.45pm, 8.15pm. Fri to Sun only: 10.45am. Fri-Sat only: 10.45pm.

THE JACKET (15)
Daily: 11.50am, 2.20pm, 4.50pm, 7.10pm. Fri to Sun only: 9.30am.

A GOOD WOMAN (PG)
Daily: 11.30am (not Sat-Sun), 2pm, 4.30pm, 7pm (not Fri).

ONG BAK (18)
Daily: 9.30pm (not Fri). Fri-Sat only: 12.10am.

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (15)

Daily: 11.15am, 2.20pm, 5.20pm, 8.20pm, 9.15pm (not Fri). Fri only: 9.25pm.

HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG)

Daily: 11.20am, 2.10pm, 4.45pm, 7.15pm, 9.45pm.

THE INTERPRETER

Daily not Wed: 3.15pm, 6.15pm, 9pm. Wed only: 11.25am, 2.25pm, 5.20pm. Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri only: 12.15pm.

ROBOTS (U)
Sat/Sun only: 11.30am.

VALIANT (U)
Sat/Sun only: 11am, 1.10pm.

Is anything happening this term??? If so, we'd love to hear 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

Surely you can't revise ALL the time.....

Holbein & Willis Jackson Halls

SUBWARDEN VACANCY

Applications are invited for a Subwarden position, which will become vacant shortly. Holbein and Willis Jackson Halls are Imperial College undergraduate residences in Evelyn Gardens; about 15 minutes' walk from College.

The Subwarden will assist the Warden in the running of the houses, particularly with regard to social activities, pastoral care and discipline. The main demands on Subwardens are during evenings and weekends and the Subwarden will receive a rent free room in one of the halls.

Applicants for the Subwarden positions should be either Postgraduate or senior Undergraduate students at Imperial.

Application forms may be obtained from:

Chris Roberts (Warden, c.roberts1@imperial.ac.uk, Mechanical Engineering Department, room 406);
Steve Bradshaw (Assistant Warden, s.bradshaw@imperial.ac.uk, Huxley Building, room 6M55);
Student Accommodation Office (15 Princes Gardens).

Closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 3rd June 2005

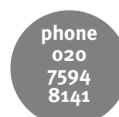
Imperial College
London

Fancy doing some volunteering?

Why not get active in the community whilst you're at Imperial College London? It doesn't matter if you work or study in Imperial – volunteering will have always something to offer you! We have over 250 volunteering opportunities in our database, so there should be a project for you.

The easiest way to get regular updates about volunteering is by signing up to our mailing list. You will receive all the latest opportunities on a weekly basis, directly to your email inbox. Simply send us an email to volunteering@imperial.ac.uk, clearly stating that you want to receive the weekly news bulletin and we will do the rest!

Imperial Volunteer Centre



Linking opportunities

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

Imperial Volunteer Centre
South Kensington campus
Union Building
Beit Quadrangle East Basement
Prince Consort Road
London SW7 2BB

Music

music.felix@ic.ac.uk

Straight outta... Newcastle?

New signings to Warp, Maximo Park, bring us their debut album, while our Millen gushes over ethereal advert music supplier Martin Grech's sophomore effort

ALBUM REVIEWS

Maximo Park

A Certain Trigger

(Warp)

★★★★☆

It would be a complete shock if this album wasn't brilliant. Maximo Park, hailing from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, are certainly a band on the up. Their latest single, *Apply Some Pressure*, made it into the top 20, and accolades range from "the next Franz Ferdinand" to "the Futureheads you can shag". The latter's not a bad comparison, but perhaps Maximo Park possess more pop savvy than the Sunderland lads, hopefully giving them a greater staying power.

A Certain Trigger is, simply put, brilliant fun from the very beginning to the end, packed full of short sharp pop songs. Ignoring *Acrobat*, the songs rarely graze three and a half minutes and they're proud to admit they give their audiences just what they want, ie tunes. This desire to put on a show explains their incredible stage presence and true musicianship.

Though there is a reasonably rigid framework to the structure of the songs (um... except *Acrobat*), there is still plenty of musical scope. You wouldn't expect anything else from a band signed to the pioneering Warp Records, normally home to brainy IDM (Intelligent Dance Music) artists. *Graffiti* begins with frantic psychedelia and screaming organ, whereas *The Night I Lost My Head* is all stop-start rhythms and military drumming. *Limasol* draws you in with hypnotic synths before bursting

into driving new wave, contrasting the sinister vibraphone and tom-tom rolls of *Once, A Glimpse*, which also features an intense chorus.

It's amazing to think that singer and co-lyricist Paul Smith was the last addition to the band, as he completely steals the show. He snarls through some tracks such as *Postcard Of A Painting*, exploiting his heavy and rich accent in the melodic *Now I'm All Over The Shop*. There are brilliant lyrics throughout (er... again forgetting *Acrobat*), often scathingly mocking the scenesters and trendies Smith finds himself surrounded by. For example, in opener *Signal And Sign*, he sings, "I hope you've achieved it all with your lies lies lies lies lies / How long has it taken to look so fine fine fine fine fine?" before imploring, "Don't waste your life, just go outside".

The best track in my opinion is the romantic and yearning *The Coast Is Always Changing*, documenting the excitements and perils of discovering the world. "I am young and I am lost / Every sentence has its cost," snarls Smith, before exclaiming, "We look out across the sea / The coast is always changing."

This is a pretty faultless debut other than *Acrobat*: beginning with the horribly pretentious sound of pages turning, Smith intones nonsensical spoken word. Musically it sounds like the Kevin Shields-heavy soundtrack to *Lost In Translation*, the kind of stuff shoe-gazers wet themselves over. Only done badly. It finally gives way to a stupidly wobbly overwrought chorus: cringe-worthy.

But there's no point boycotting an album for just one track. *A Certain Trigger* is great fun, clever and witty,



Maximo Park: "Well, it was either sign us or release yet another Autechre album..." (joke © Matty Hoban)

accessible and just quirky enough. It should sell shed-loads, so get along to a live show before they "do" that Franz Ferdinand. **James Millen**

Martin Grech

Unholy

(Island)

★★★★☆

Twenty-two-year-old Martin Grech is an extremely interesting character. He was discovered at a young age and allowed an amazing three years to complete debut *Open Heart Zoo*, released at age 20. He is a man wracked with self-doubt; doubt of his music, his voice, the world in general. During the recording process he became obsessed with the idea that every experience in his life could be split into three categories

– Holy, Sensual and Debauched – and daubed these motifs across the studio. Desperate to find a way of expressing the troubled ideas in his mind he began to pore over the dark biomechanical art of HR Giger, and the disturbing body-part photography of Joel Peter Witkin. Needless to say, Keane this ain't.

The opener *Guiltless* sets the mood for the entirety of the album. Threatening distorted guitar and bass sit low in the mix as Grech chants about the human psyche, punctuated with horror-film strings and dramatic orchestral stabs. Following this comes *Venus*, a mainly acoustic track that allows his rich voice to flow, before ending with a haunting incantation. Spooky vocals are evident throughout the record, with snippets of laughter and conversation flitting in and out, and Grech's unique voice switching between chanting and truly amazing falsetto.

The musical scope is intense and the production team are to be praised. Electronics, orchestration and complex guitar are all executed perfectly, switching from the warm and uplifting *Sun*, to the mental *I Am Chromosome*. The latter download-only single can only be described as a cross between the space age sounds of Muse, the shronk rock of NIN and the intense speed metal of Metallica.

Although the album is far from easy listening, I wouldn't want you to believe that it's particularly hard-going. Many of the tracks, such as the melodic *An End*, are incredibly warm and uplifting. The twin tracks of *Lint* and *Elixir* are ghostly and effervescent, shimmering lightly across your senses and evoking an extreme feeling of calm, before shifting to euphoria as *Elixir* closes with a spine-tingling end. It is a rapture which is dearly welcomed, following the terrifying *Worldly Devine*, a track so insistently sinister and threatening that it should come with a health warning. *Unholy* pulls you along like a film, completely full of

drama, intrigue and sorrow.

Amazingly, there is another gem hidden away in the middle of the album: the epic (almost ten minutes long!) *Holy Father Inferior*. After five minutes of dark choirs moaning under his voice you sense a climax, and when it comes it is all-consuming with its brilliance, as Grech screams unbelievably through the upper registers accompanied by what sounds like a whole army of drummers. Mind-blowing.

Never have I come across an album that provokes such emotion before; it truly transports your imagination to other (admittedly dark) places. The album provides a perfect dissection of what it is to be human and there really is nothing else that sounds quite like it. Absolute genius. **James Millen**

Queens Of The Stone Age

Lullabies To Paralyze

(Polydor)

★★★★☆

Enter the current Queens website and you'd be forgiven for thinking you were experiencing a new media version of some sort of *The Ring* meets *Blair Witch* medley. Two headed fairies smoking cigarettes drift across the screen beckoning "Click me", before resting in the twisted forests which occupy the screen... a little scary but then that's never a bad thing is it?

Mark Lanegan provides the scene setter with his eerie *This Lullaby* like something an old music box in a haunted attic might produce. From here on in, *Lullabies To Paralyze* provides 16 tracks which might temptingly be called more of the same – again not a bad thing, after all, if it ain't broke...

In My Head, most recently famous for its Italian porn connection, sounds suspiciously restrained until you realise you've been humming it all day. However this still remains the most out of place track on the album abandoning the echoic, chanting, loaded vocals available elsewhere. *Someone's in the Wolf* is menacing in its ascent and features chilly, groaning little voices, the likes of which might well be instructing you to kill your elderly neighbour.

Ultimately each song conjures a feeling. *Tangled up in Plaid* makes you feel like you've done something bad, and appropriately *Long Slow Goodbye* makes you feel like you got away with it. Revealing the darker side of fairytales turns *Lullabies* into more of a listening experience, something which is interesting enough to make you want to pay attention. What we have here is essentially an extremely atmospheric offering which manages all the spookiness of Marilyn and his counterparts with far more subtlety and far less showing off.

Giulia Clark



Martin Grech: Hates stubbing his toe

MUSIC

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We have sound

Making music in his parents' garage and looking like a cross between all your favourite indie boys, Tom Vek steps out into the daylight to play at Lock 17

LIVE REVIEWS

Tom Vek / Clor / The Chap

Camden Lock 17

★★★★☆

First up, brilliantly named The Chap, coming on like a post-punk Help She Can't Swim, ie a bit shonky but pretty cool all the same. Extreme quirkiness and genre hopping is evident, from The Rapture style dance, to dense "death metal" (their words not mine, more Queens of the Stone Age), to a song they call their "post rock epic", in which a thundering bass drum accompanies them seriously abusing a violin and a cello. If only post rock were that fun. Good effort, The Chap.

DANGER: EXTREME VITRIOL IN NEXT PARAGRAPH!

Clor are the Do Me Bad Things of MTV2-lite punk-funk, ie shit. They look annoying (sunglasses indoors!), sound annoying (front man sounds like Brett "I'm not gay" Anderson), have stupid annoying pixelated videos playing behind them, stick annoying light-sabre things in front of the stage, and do really annoying "rock" intros and outros. Some tunes kinda made you want to boogie, but they

always managed to turn them into a pile of guff. The Queens of Noize like them, which should pretty much be 'nuff said. They do nothing that Le Tigre, Suede and my Gameboy don't do 100 times better. Ignore any hype you hear.

Therefore thank my good friend Jesus Christ for tiny Tom Vek. A bizarre hiccup in the world of singer-songwriters, multi-instrumentalist Tom Vek makes really cool white-man electro funk, beefed up with some heavy beats and synths. And it sounds amazing. He has also rustled up a great band, even though the guitarist looks like The Zipper, acts like The Zipper, and has a fashion-mullet. Fashion mullets are the biggest crime to the music scene since, well, The Zipper...and Clor.

They open on a storming C-C (*You Set The Fire In Me*), with it's jazzy drums and break beat pauses, and follow it up with a much beefed up *If You Want*. The biggest surprise comes from the otherwise mediocre album tracks he plays. They are transformed live into sexy, grinding tunes. The audience was gyrating! The guitar break in *If I Had Changed My Mind* has the crowd go ecstatic, and previously lethargic *On The Road* and *That Can Be*

Arranged are seriously and extravagantly overhauled, with heavy guitar and spacey atmospherics.

You do get the fear he's going to be a bit pretentious (he was labelled "the saviour of Hoxton" at one point), as many made-it-in-my-shed artists are, but nothing could be further from the truth. He dances like a crazy robot, says "thank you very much" after each song and grins like a monkey. He did a brilliant little speech over his band at one point, saying "imagine you're at a Prince concert, and that my guitarist's black, and that my drummer is a woman and has a see-through drum kit".

There was also an incredible light show. The centrepiece of a glaring white neon *We Have Sound* (title of his debut album) was flanked on either side by mind boggling strips of multicoloured LED's. During *Nothing But Green Lights* the band were bathed in a traffic-light green, and in *Lower The Sun* rich yellows, reds and oranges lit up the stage. Most of the time his band are in shadow while Tom is spot lit - it is his show after all!

Unsurprisingly he finishes (no encore from this lad!) with anthem *I Ain't Saying My Goodbyes*. Frankly,



Tom Vek: Bite-sized

it was astonishing. Again you would normally get clumsy moshing from people to set closers, but the dance floor was really gettin' down! So thank you Tom Vek for making me forget about Clor, and also for mak-

ing girls dance again. Who knows where this young musician could end up? I urge you to find out, because I can't help feeling that it could be one of those "I was there first" moments. **James Millen**

New Order and new nu-wavers

New Order's new record is sonically conservative but still enjoyable, and the revival of new wave continues with yet another 'the' band - they aren't half bad, though

ALBUM REVIEWS

New Order

Waiting For The Sirens' Call
(London Records)

★★★★☆

Not being a child of the eighties, New Order were always something of a boat that left me on the island. Last Friday's performance of *Jetstream* (frankly a poor man's *Vertigo*) on Jonathan Ross did little to change my mind, although in fair-

ness I can't think of a single band who has ever sounded their best on his show. However, taking the time to listen to the album I find myself in the position of being something of a convert.

Opening track *Who's Joe*, with its strange electronic galloping beat, dramatic little tune and crispy vocals, proves that New Order may well have made a not altogether crashing transition into the new school of Keanes. In fact they already seem to be making friends in the playground with such coun-

terparts as Scissor Sisters and the lovely Gwen Stefani. *I Told You So* is a little too synthetic and Ace of Base-esque for my palette, but such crunchy effects find good homes elsewhere in *Dracula's Castle* and the rather epic *Guilt Is A Useless Emotion*. Ultimately, though, my special favour is reserved for *Turn*. Hidden near the end of the album it is clearly heartfelt and to my mind rather lovely.

The title track sums up this understated album; it's all about the tunes. Well sung, neatly arranged, and nice-

ly appealing to the ear, *Waiting For The Sirens' Call* won't win awards for innovation, but its delicacy and attention to detail make it a great uplifting collection, perfect for the end of term and a summer of doing nothing. Alternatively, should you prefer to fill your days, New Order headline the Wireless Festival Hyde Park on 24 June (tickets available from the usual outlets), expect at the very least an electric atmosphere. **Giulia Clark**

The Departure

Dirty Words
(Parlophone)

★★★★☆

It's hard to ignore the fact that Northamptonshire new wavers The Departure sound really eighties. I mean they sound and look like a cross between Duran Duran and The Cure, plus they dance like Rick Astley. It's also hard to stop this detracting from the quality of debut album *Dirty Words*.

It's an album you can dance to, and the singles are indie floor-fillers in much the same style as recent Interpol releases, but with a flavour of British eccentricity (the 80's were all about England). *All Mapped Out* and *Be My Enemy* are fantastic, as many a DJ has realised. But what about the rest of the album?

From the very outset the album is exceedingly cool. Opener *Just Like TV* starts with spacey guitar effects

before launching into trademark high hat and fast-track guitar lines. It's not lacking in tunes either; *Only Human* has a gloriously melodic chorus of "I am only human, why do you look at me that way?" suggesting someone has been a naughty boy. In fact debauchery springs up as a theme a good few times. In *All Mapped Out* vocalist David Jones declares "I see no future in this", and chants "this dance is just for tonight" in his striking tenor voice. This is surprising since he went through, and advocates strongly, a strict Christian upbringing, including going to a convent school. Cold showers for you, young man!

They do seem a bit formulaic in places, with their distinctive bass lines and guitar effects. Tracks such as *Arms Around Me* and *Time* fade away into nothingness for this very reason. Luckily for every duff song there's a gloriously quirky and off-beat *Lump In My Throat*, or a driving and funky *Changing Pilots*. The album also ends on a high, with title track *Dirty Words*. Featuring razor-sharp twin guitar lines and a sweeping chorus, it has rightly ascended from b-side to set closer.

Dirty Words is certainly more hit than miss, and has an enviable amount of fantastic singles for a debut. Steady touring and high profile support slots (Hot Hot Heat, The Killers) has built them up a solid fan base ensuring The Departure are five young lads to watch out for. **James Millen**



New Order: Who says Manchester is grim? Oh, wait...

Film

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Listings: page 13

Get your Jacket, this is dull

The Jacket is proof that good trailers do not equal good movies

The Jacket

Director: John Maybury
Starring: Adrien Brody, Keira Knightley, Kris Kristofferson
Length: 103 minutes
Certificate: 15

★☆☆☆☆

To summarise, *The Jacket* is – at best – mildly diverting. I found the script weak, leading to a lot of loose beginnings, an implausible plot, and the whole thing was slow moving until the end. Yawn.

The actors were good but miscast. Keira Knightley is adequate as the drunken trailer trash but there's little, if any, on-screen chemistry between her and Adrien Brody. Brody does well in his character, but the film as a whole doesn't fit well together.

By the end of it, *The Jacket* is one of those "in the future you can change your past" films. Brody, on good form, is cast as an ex-soldier who loses his memory and ends up committed to an asylum for the criminally insane, after being falsely

accused of murder. Enter wacko doctor who locks him in a morgue drawer, strapped in a strait jacket and jacked up with some banned drugs for a few hours. The aim: to rid Brody of his supposedly violent tendencies. What actually happens: Brody can travel into the future. And when he does, he finds out he is going to die in four days, so he tries to find out who kills him and, one supposes, stop this event. There are a lot of loose beginnings here, which seem to be the parts where the scriptwriters think: "OK so this guy killed him!" and then change their mind to the other one, then to the *other* guy and then... without changing the mini-climaxes dotted

"It's not scary either, so there's no point taking your girlfriend for the 'gripping-moments-in-the-cinema' thing"

around the place.

Knightley is a disjointed link to a little girl who becomes his romantic in the future (where he hasn't aged), and his reverse clairvoyant who helps him find out who kills him.

There's a lot going on that doesn't have anything to do with where the film is going, which is where I was disappointed. I do nitpick more than



Mind-numbing stuff

average, so maybe if you decide to part with seven or eight quid you will find the film more rounded.

And how slow can a film start? I was itching for it to finish for a good hour until the ten minutes where it got slightly interesting. It is only towards the end that you can get immersed slightly into the film, and begin to follow the characters with more interest. However this doesn't last long and the ending is too soppy

for me. Give me a Clint Eastwood boxing flick any day of the week!

Final say from me? Don't bother waiting for the DVD either (unless you like Hollywood's obtuse attempts at making the audience "think outside the box" or whatever rubbish they come up with). Oh, and it's not scary either, so there's no point taking your girlfriend for the 'gripping-moments-in-the-cinema' thing. **Amadeus Stevenson**



So boring that it even gave Brody a headache

Jennifer Lopez in a decent movie? It can't be true

Monster-in-Law

Director: Robert Luketic
Starring: Jennifer Lopez, Jane Fonda, Michael Vartan
Length: 100 minutes
Certificate: 12A

★★★★☆

I know what you're thinking... Jennifer Lopez and movies don't go very well together. Well yes, in the recent past this has proven true with celluloid disaster after celluloid disaster. However, this time, she may just have managed to come good. Her new film is *Monster-in-Law* and it is modern take on a very old tale... girl meets boy, they fall in love, girl meets boy's psycho mother. So there is no surprise that what ensues is a sweet comedy with a little romance, a lot of screaming and quite a few right (and left) hooks.

'Jenny from the Block' stars as Charlie, a loveable if directionless twenty-something looking for love. She meets Kevin, a handsome rich surgeon who wants to treat her like a lady. Meanwhile, Kevin's successful newswoman mother Viola (Jane Fonda) is blissfully unaware of her son's new relationship. This is part-

ly due to her very public and very funny nervous breakdown which leads to her being committed to a psychiatric hospital. So when Kevin and Charlie get engaged, Viola decides that Charlie is all wrong for her son and sets about driving her away.

Lopez does what she does best, playing the adorable and quirky heroine who is hindered in reaching romantic bliss by her loveless past. Michael Vartan (*Alias*) and Lopez shine brightly as the two young lovers but without being too syrupy and with just enough chemistry.

The comedy is provided through the friction between mother and daughter-in-law beautifully. Jennifer Lopez actually has very good comic timing and her slow but convincing conversion from innocent bride-to-be to irate daughter-in-law is very well done. Her tussles with Viola are naturally the highlight of the film and Jane Fonda is fabulous. Completely over the top and glamorous, she manages to demonstrate Viola's ferocity as well as clearly showing her insecurity of being left out of her son's life. Her crazy schemes to drive Charlie away draw a lot of laughs but it is her interaction with her long-suf-

fering personal assistant that really makes this film hilarious.

Ruby (Wanda Sykes) brings to life Viola's often ignored conscience, providing a voice of reason to her boss's madness. Ruby's dry humour contrasts beautifully with Viola's histrionics.

The storyline is a little thin on the ground but is just about enough to carry the film through. The auxiliary characters in the movie are not really utilised and I think Charlie's gay best friend was just a little too clichéd. That said, the supporting cast did do their best and did manage to provide a few extra laughs.

The film starts off well enough but somehow actually manages to miss out the meat and bones of any romantic comedy – the 'falling in love bit' that all the girls out there want to see. I guess this helps to make the film less saccharine and more about getting the audience laughing. And it's not so bad, as the film compensates by focusing on the relationship between the two women.

So *Monster-in-Law* is funny, it is sweet and, if on one of these lazy hazy sunny days that is what you're looking for, it definitely comes through. **M K Osakonor**



Drinking makes Jenny from the block happy

Quality scraps

More Asian extreme fun

Ong Bak the Thai Warrior

Director: Prachya Pinkaew
Starring: Tony Jaa, Petchtai Wongkamlao, Pumwaree Yodkamol, Suchao Pongwilai
Length: 109 minutes
Certificate: 18
★★★★☆

Ong Bak is a martial arts film with a difference in its making – the film's witty slogan reads: "No stunt doubles, no computer images, no strings attached." And if this holds true, it sure is an amazing piece of work.

The film, in Thai with English subtitles, follows the story of Ting (Jaa), a villager who travels to Bangkok to retrieve the head of his village's Buddha statue from an evil businessman. His travels lead him to his cousin Humlae (Wongkamlao), who has become embroiled in Bangkok's unsavoury underworld of drugs, gambling and sex. Humlae decides to help his cousin retrieve the Buddha's head and this film follows their adventure.

The film is littered with typical clichés about the importance of respect, loyalty, religion and family

relationships, but despite this it is hugely enjoyable. Maybe because the clichés are thrown in with a huge dose of humour and comedic dialogue, but also because the film can just... pull it off somehow. Every actor delivers a strong performance (apart from perhaps Yodkamol's delivery of Muay, which was very over-the-top and slightly unbearable at times) and the settings are perfect in bringing the script to life as we fluctuate from smoky drug-

"I'd recommend it to anyone who is up for a laugh – this film certainly had me in fits throughout"

den-cum-wrestling-arena to hidden mountain caverns.

The main thing that was impressive about this film were the fight scenes – and were they something to behold. Although the film boasts that all of the fighting and action sequences were done without strings and stunt doubles (some stunts

were shown two or three times from different camera angles to prove this), it made the actual fighting no less plausible – expect much of the *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*-esque scenes of incredible jumps, leaps and kicks. What really brought the fight scenes together and made them so enjoyable, however, was the humour that was weaved throughout the whole sequence – at several points throughout the movie, the entire audience in the cinema were loudly laughing as the fight scene unfolded on screen. Despite the blatant impossibility of it all, it is genuinely enjoyable to watch once you realise that the film is not taking itself entirely seriously either.

The well-crafted fight scenes had some trademarks reminiscent of both Jackie Chan and Jet Li, employing the flexibility and the suaveness of the former and the deftness and killer moves of the latter. However, instead of gracefully lethal Wu-Shu or Shaolin Kung Fu fighting, we see the rawness and energy behind Muay Thai (Thai kickboxing) which is an interesting variation but may just get a little too much for your liking. Although most of the fight scenes were highly



Tony Jaa kicks some ass

entertaining to watch, there is only so much relentless Thai kickboxing you can see before you start to get a little bored, and the fact that the character development of the main star seemed to lag a little did not help matters – Ting seemed far too noble for any hero and although his sincerity was supposed to be inspiring, it was actually rather corny.

Overall, though, this film was definitely an enjoyable one to watch – I would highly recommend it to any Jackie Chan or Jet Li fan or someone who enjoys films with plenty of meaty fight scenes. In fact, I'd recommend it to anyone who is up for a laugh – this film certainly had me in fits of laughter throughout.

Marya Ziauddin

Good Woman, good film

A Good Woman

Director: Mike Barker
Starring: Helen Hunt, Scarlett Johansson, Tom Wilkinson
Length: 93 minutes
Certificate: PG
★★★★☆

Helen Hunt plays the scarlet woman Mrs Erlynn, who wrecks happy households by sleeping with people's husbands for money. When she realises that her game is up in New York, she leaves for Italy where her life becomes intertwined with the Windermere couple. Lord Windermere and Lady Windermere (Scarlett Johansson) are the golden couple of the town; married only for a year, they are still apparently very much in love with each other. However, their marriage becomes complicated with the arrival of Mrs Erlynn and Lord Darlington.

Lord Darlington, an international playboy, is attracted to Lady Windermere's innocence and naivety, so he decides to steal her from her husband. Lady Windermere, innocent to a fault, misjudges Lord Darlington's intentions and decides to make him her friend. Simultaneously, Mrs Erlynn has a chance encounter with Lord Windermere in an antique store. After this encounter, Lord Windermere is spotted visiting Mrs Erlynn every day by the local gossip lady, Lady Plymdale (Diana Hardcastle). Lord Darlington, ever the opportunist, uses this information to instil seeds of doubt in Lady Windermere's mind about her husband. With his help, she discovers that her husband has been giving Mrs Erlynn a huge sum of money and jumps to the conclusion that her husband has been unfaithful. Lady Windermere is now thrown into a dilemma as she realises that her

husband and her marriage were not what it seems.

First and foremost, this movie is an adaptation of the play *Lady Windermere's Fan* by Oscar Wilde. Therefore, it is not a surprise that the plot was *par excellence*. With Oscar Wilde, you realise that nothing is ever a coincidence and that nothing is ever what it seems. However, the scriptwriters still have to be credited for adapting the play into the movie without destroying the play's excellent points. It is an achievement that not many adaptations (ahem... such as Harry Potter) can crow about. The decision to have the story take

"A movie that has both meaning and entertainment value in today's superficial film industry"

place in Italy instead of London is also a welcome improvement to the movie. It helps create a more picturesque and surreal atmosphere that makes the viewing experience a more enjoyable one.

However, the actors' performances still had room for improvement even though experienced actresses were chosen for the lead roles. Johansson is far from comfortable in her role as the sweet and innocent Lady Windermere. However, it could be argued that her awkwardness is a method of demonstrating Lady Windermere's naivety.

Helen Hunt did not give a convincing portrait of a seductress, but surprisingly, as the story progresses, she does manage to become a bitterly misunderstood Mrs Erlynn. Nevertheless, the most disappoint-



A good woman? Mrs Erlynn (Helen Hunt)

ing act in the whole movie was that of Stephen Campbell Moore as Lord Darlington. Not only did he lack the looks expected of an international playboy, he was simply not suave enough to convince viewers that he could steal Lady Windermere's heart. It is especially unbelievable when Lord Windermere (Mark Umbers) has wholesome American good looks.

Overall, *A Good Woman* is a thoroughly engaging movie despite its shortcomings. It is an enjoyable film

that helps the audience to learn some life lessons as well. These life lessons include the value of trust in a loved one, the wisdom of not allowing imperfections to affect one's otherwise perfect relationship, and the value of pride over love. Therefore, *A Good Woman* is a very much recommended watch, not just for Oscar Wilde fans but for everyone who is looking for a movie that has both meaning and entertainment value in today's superficial film industry.

Angela Lee

OUT NEXT WEEK

Released on Thursday 19 May at Vue Fulham Broadway:

● Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith



Visit www.myvue.com/student for more details.

Last week's winners of the *Star Wars* t-shirts and poster were Martin Smith, Vinod Aravind Muganathan and Ben Murdoch.

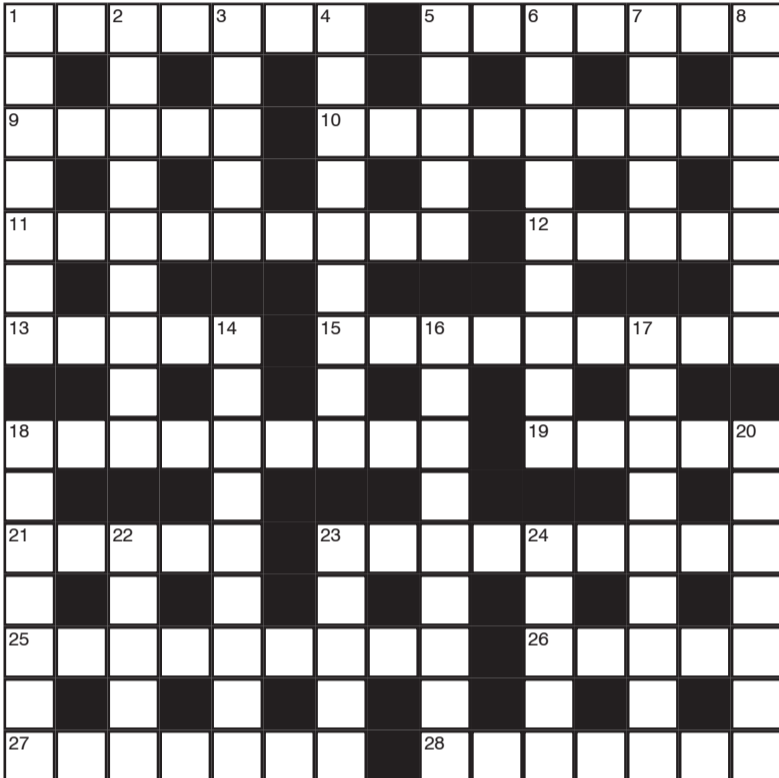
Tim Aplin, Ryan Dee, Jerome Ma, Marco Visentini, Andreas Liapis, Kriangkrai Arunotayanun and Rafael Gates have all won posters.

Alan Ng
Film Editor

Puzzles

coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk

Felix Crossword 1323 by Snufkin



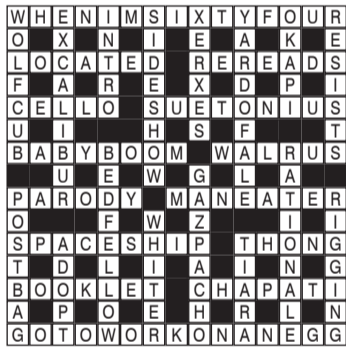
Across

- 1. Line art representation of part of the eye (7)
- 5. Get in a right mess when in a hurry (7)
- 9. Laid low in the French town (5)
- 10. Stage parts for old hands in ace production (9)
- 11. Drinking-bout? Only a fool would get involved in such a thing (1,4,4)
- 12. Miser ain't keeping caravan site (5)
- 13. Test pilot (5)
- 15. Oxford rival almost made it to Magdalen, for one (9)
- 18. Mao's retreat – a result of putting off All Fool's Day? (4,5)
- 19. Look! It's a record for Patagonian lake (5)
- 21. An author or two (5)
- 23. Saviour found in a patron of Descartes (9)
- 25. Queen backtracks on rises not yet paid (2,7)
- 26. Counting mechanisms present in comma bacillus (5)
- 27. Bowel movement of Nile rat (7)
- 28. Reg ain't working, selfish sod! (7)

Down

- 1. Trusting in translation of, er, Latin... (7)
- 2. ...describe ancient city in a devastated part of the world (9)
- 3. Requires new seed to be scattered (5)
- 4. Friend turns up at bop, starting to root for stripper (3-6)
- 5. Given time to wander, found treasure (5)
- 6. Camouflaged Lancaster is kept in the family (9)
- 7. Arrow shot in secret (5)
- 8. Sculpted Tangier stone (7)
- 14. Lay upside-down on thin layer of kelp (9)
- 16. Amir Shah is converted by one guru... (9)
- 17. ...while another is rendered mad with alalia (5,4)
- 18. Perverted, learn it in public toilet (7)
- 20. Get rani involved in cheesy fare (7)
- 22. Tailor's put a penny on fitting (5)
- 23. Get down on your knees (5)
- 24. Miasma ugly dragon's concealed by (5)

Issue 1322 solution



Last week's winner is Martin Cansdale, bioengineering PG

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

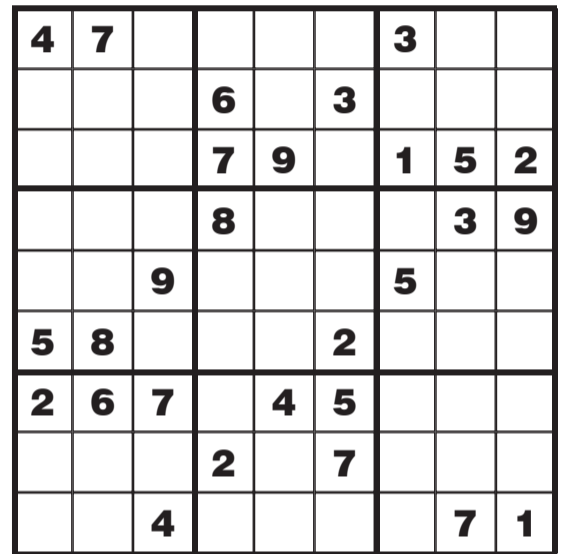
Each week, we'll choose a winner and print their name, thus providing them with almost unlimited kudos and self-satisfaction. Everyone who provides us with a correct solution will get an entry into our prize draw at the end of the year

Sudoku

SET BY FISHFACE

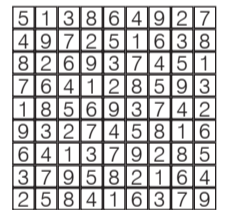
Complete the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 square (bounded by bold lines) contains the digits 1 to 9.

Email your solution to coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk by Tuesday 24 May. No attachments please. The first correct solution randomly drawn wins your choice of a 128MB USB storage device or a crate of beer.

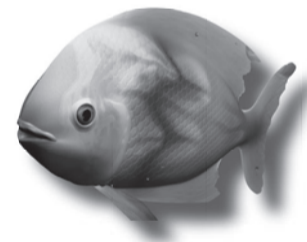


Issue 1322 solution

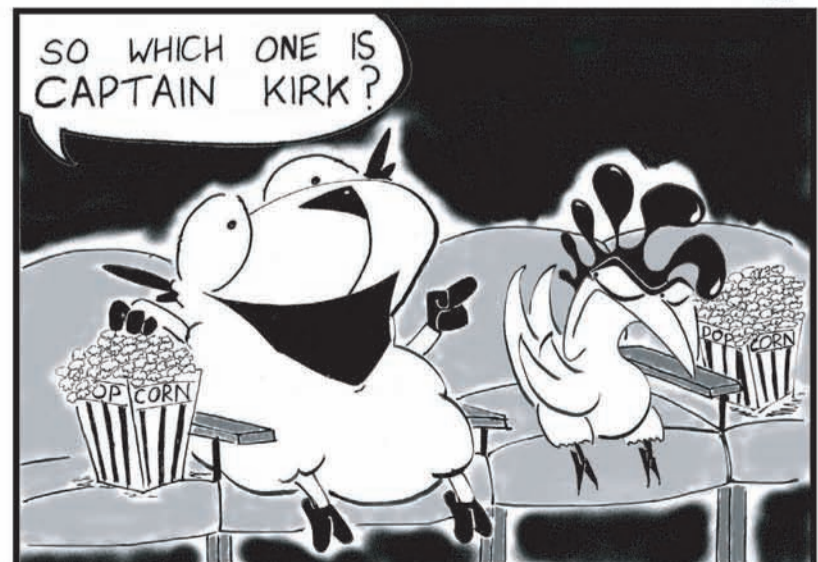
Thanks to everyone who entered. The winner is **Pongsathorn Ingpochai**, a postgraduate in mathematics



Yes, it's me again; I'm afraid Jabberwock has been felled by an examiner's vorpal sword. Which reminds me, I should explain a clue from last week that caused some trouble: 'Mammal whose time has come?' (6). A couple of solvers ingeniously suggested TAURUS, presumably on zodiacal grounds, but the answer I had in mind was WALRUS. In Lewis Carroll's poem *The Walrus and the Carpenter* – which, like 'Jabberwocky', comes from *Through The Looking Glass* – he wrote: "The time has come," the Walrus said, "to talk of many things."



IT IS AN EXCITING PERIOD. THE FINAL INSTALMENT OF THE EPIC "STAR WARS" SAGA HAS BEEN RELEASED. AT LAST, THE WORLD WILL SEE THE BIRTH OF DARTH VADER. SHEEP & CHICKEN HAVE GONE TO THE CINEMA TO WITNESS THE MOST EAGERLY AWAITED MOMENT IN CINEMATIC HISTORY...



Coffee Break

With David Hasselhoff




Welcome back, coffee fans. After a very relaxing few weeks of exams, Coffee Break is back to entertain you for the remainder of yours

We have a nice big prize budget which we'll be spending on worthless junk for the top twenty FUCWIT teams, so if you'd like to win something which, let's face it, is always nice, there are still a few weeks left to enter. If you're already in the FUCWIT League and you'd like to win something a little better than the rubbish you're in line for right now, there's still time to earn some extra points and get yourself a better prize too. Answers as always go to coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk



Hoff's Long Weekend



"So once again, Coffee Break returns for a few more pointless weeks of silly little 'puzzles' and our own brand of childish 'humour'.

Did you all have a good break? I didn't, but I don't want to talk about it.

OK, maybe I do. I spent most of my holiday in the hospital with a broken jaw, three fractured ribs and a severely bruised ego. All I was trying to do was help a poor drowning girl by giving her CPR, Hoff-style. Her boyfriend wasn't too pleased with my first aid technique (tongues) and decided to take on The Hoff. I tried to explain it to him: 'This is standard Baywatch procedure, I'm the hero, she's the big-breasted tart who's been bitten by a shark/pirate/rebel lifeguard, and you're the dim-witted, mildly retarded, redneck boyfriend. You let me do my job, and I'll let you do whatever menial, life-sapping job you do. If you have a job of course. I can't imagine Wall-Mart are that

desper-

It was about then that he began hitting me, and I don't remember much after that. I don't remember much before or during either, as I was steaming drunk after my Champagne breakfast, Daiquiri lunch, and Methylated dinner. I'd asked that senile old queen KITT to drive me to the beach for a little 'Baywatching' (advantages of having a robot car) but as the redneck began crushing my windpipe, I was starting to think it was possibly a bad idea, especially if the beach is full of lantern-jawed idiots who won't let me help out their attractive young girlfriends.

It was then that I made a vow: No more Mr Nice Guy. That would be the last nubile young lady I help out. No more doing favours for the good old US of A. From now on, I would be a bastard.

So after a painful and booze-free few weeks at the hospital, I was ready for a long weekend of bastardness. Needless to say, it didn't go to plan."

Match The Hoff's plan with the day he did it, where he did it, and why it

went wrong. There's **16 points** for this one, as we reckon it's quite hard. It probably isn't. Use the grid and the Hoff's clues below to work out what's true and false. Tick something which you know is true, and blank out something which you know is false, and you'll work it all out. Eventually.

"I had four dastardly plans:

A. Operation 'The Boy Who Cried Paedo'

B. Operation 'Sign People Up For LinuxSoc'

C. Operation 'IVF / Abortion Clinic Mix-Up'

D. Operation 'Iraqi Freedom'

It was a long weekend (Friday to Monday) and no, I didn't do them in that order.

They took place in Baghdad, Texas, Miami and at Imperial and went wrong for the same reasons that anything goes wrong: No Booze, No Women, No Money or No Plan.

Obviously, the LinuxSoc plan took place at Imperial, where everybody knows there aren't any women. Operation 'Iraqi Freedom' clearly took place in Baghdad, and clearly there wasn't any plan.

I went to the US on a weekend, and

	Paedo	Linux	Abortion	Iraqi	Baghdad	London	Texas	Miami	Booze	Women	Money	Plan
Fri												
Sat												
Sun												
Mon												
Booze												
Women												
Money												
Plan												
Baghdad												
London												
Texas												
Miami												

still had booze left on the Saturday. In fact, I'm pretty sure I was in Miami on Sunday.

The abortion clinic is run by a religious lot, they're always shut on Sunday.

I should have known better after the woman-free start on Friday."

FUCWITs

There are 16 points for telling us about Hoff's weekend, and another 14 (two for each question) for Real Men. That's 30 points, which is plenty to get yourself a slightly less rubbish prize. Answers in a fortnight's time.

FUCWIT LEAGUE 2004-5

1. Araldite Sniffers 264 points
2. Smith & Wesson 222 points
3. Forever Throwing Doubles 171 points
4. Caledonian Conspiracy 143 points
5. Tinkerbell 142 points
6. The Illegitimate Bionic Progeny of Jeremy Beadle 134 points
7. Management Slackers 127 points
8. Eastbound and Down 116 points
9. Kings of Kensington 110 points
10. Team Willy J 93 points
11. Team Robin 81 points
12. Schoolboy Error 80 points
13. KPN² 73 points
14. Team Bulwer 42 points
15. The Schist Ones 38 points
15. House of Earthly Delights 38 points
17. Withnail and I Society 31 points
18. Rod Watson's Super Army 29 points
18. Oliver Carson 29 points
20. Natasha Kundi 10 points
21. Shatner's Bassoon 9 points
22. Minzy's Special Needs Corporation

Real Men

The Y chromosome is failing, women are running the world, and the football season has just finished. Things are looking desperate for the male race. So trust Coffee Break to bring some much-needed testosterone to Imperial with our quiz celebrating the finest men the world has to offer



1. Fill the blank (comedy options welcomed): *Honey, I _____ The Kids!*



2. Chuck Norris sweats blood, and bleeds America. Fill the Blank: *Walker, Texas _____*



3. Robocop is seriously tough. But who's the man behind the mask?



4. Where are the Chuckle Brothers from? Clue: not France.



5. Hulk Hogan, 'nuff said. Name two classic Hogan films, not including bloody Rocky III.



6. An idol for slobs everywhere, just tell us what is Homer's middle name.



7. You can't do something like this without including the T. Complete the A-Team: BA, Murdoch, Hannibal and who else?

Answers:

Sport

sport.felix@ic.ac.uk

Imperial cueists take on the nation

SNOOKER

BUSA Championship

By Amar Haria

Once again, the annual BUSA snooker championship was attended by an Imperial team of exceptions to the norm that practitioners of 'stick and ball' must be corpulent suffumigating thugs.

Put through the indignity of pre-qualifying (apparently something to do with the vapid performances of the last two years), Imperial nonetheless sailed through to the main tournament, dispatching with aplomb a motley assortment of minor university teams (our hapless victims were Birmingham, Northumberland and some chavs allegedly from Newham College).

Then it was time for the real thing. Waiting for us on the first day were the winners from the last two years, Southampton and Glasgow. We had Southampton at 4-4 (matches are best of ten, with each of the five players competing in two frames each), at which point the valiant captain ran up against Five Flukes Man, who conjured a victory with some unsportingly adventitious play.

We held the mighty Glasgow to a respectable draw, ending the first day in moderate spirits.

Saturday was the important day of jostling and marauding for position in the group table, and first up was the Essex delegation, with whom we drew 5-5. Next, and glorious indeed, was a summary

8-2 demolition of a hapless Nottingham team who did quite well last year.

Buoyed with confidence and momentum, we ran into York who won 8-2. Nevertheless, qualification to the quarter finals was already assured, in part because of our solid performance and in part through the generous system whereby four of the six teams in each group got through.

Waiting for us that evening (it had been a long day) were the bibulous Irishmen of Queen's, steeped in history and tradition as a team of rare quality. Some of that quality was kindly meted out to us in a 6-3 defeat. Of note, however was a high break of 48 by Imperial's Jeremy Brackpool, estimated by some observers to have taken in excess of an hour to compile.

Thus ended our campaign, which was a more successful one than in previous years. We have yet to aspire to the zenith of Imperial achievement in the early to mid nineties, when we actually won the thing, but visitors to the top floor of the Union will affirm that the typical contents of the snooker room have recently transanimated from semi-pros and competent hustlers to vagrants, hooligans and a sordid crowd of fractured cues, which have no place in the procurement of champions!

In conclusion, we warmly invite you to partake of the game of stick 'n ball in our gentlemanly atmosphere, and to subsequently reach a standard of semi-pro in order to wrench back from rival universities the good name



Imperial's snooker team reached the quarter-finals of this year's BUSA Championship

of Imperial College (London), and also to win the BUSA championships again!

The team was: John Ryan (captain, fustpot, and occa-

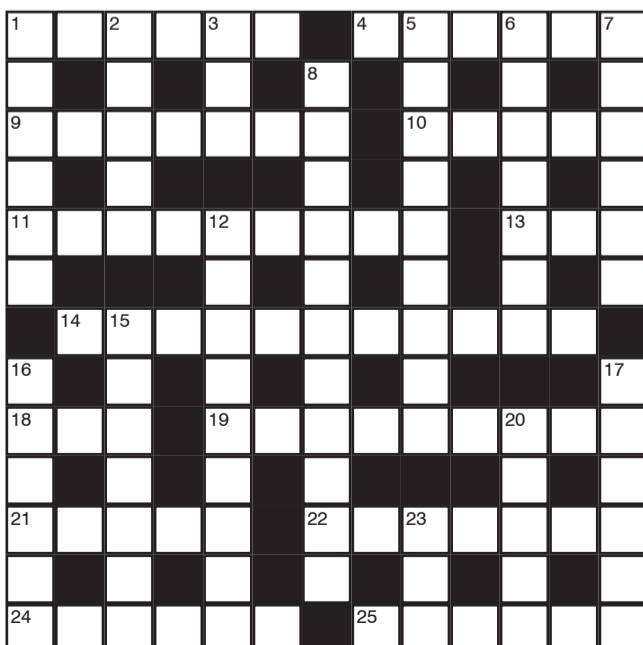
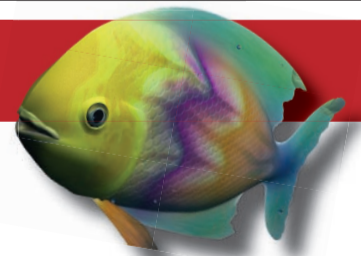
sional pottor of silly balls), Calvin Tsang (Prone to pithy Anglicisms; he to whom the soft shot is anathema), Shawn Ow (always likely to

pot something, and mostly with a loud noise), Jeremy Brackpool (surprise claimant of the high break, plays snooker too), Lakir Kachhia

(demoniac at the table; angelic at early breakfast) and Amar Haria (president, cheerleader, personal shopper and VIP).

Quick Crossword

by Fishface



Across

- Extra-terrestrials (6)
- Reference book (6)
- Large group of islands in south Pacific (7)
- Arrange in parallel (5)
- Dancer (9)
- Single entity (3)
- Emits light due to an external source (11)
- Letter of Greek alphabet; Basque separatist group (3)
- Striving against others to obtain a goal (9)
- Ruins (5)
- Staff or rod (7)
- Public procession (6)
- Loved (6)

Down

- Single-celled organism (6)
- Perfect (5)
- Female member of religious order (3)
- Snow or rock fall (9)
- Mythical white horse with horn (7)
- Surgical knife; medical journal (6)
- Craftsman who stuffs animals (11)
- Freed from evil spirits (9)
- Hide of an animal (7)
- Overhaul (6)
- Concurred (6)
- Place in grave or tomb (5)
- Finish (3)

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 1322 solution

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E	X	E	C	U	T	E	T	W	I	R	L	
A	C	L	C	C	N	S						
P	I	E	C	E	A	T	H	L	E	T	E	
					L	P				N	Y	
R	E	D	E	E	M	R	A	G	T	A	G	
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N	E	G	A	T	E	D	R	A	S	T	A	
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I	R	A	Q	I	A	C	C	L	A	I	M	
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