

felix

The student newspaper of
Imperial College London

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Award winning

Live! wins Guardian student website of the year, see page 3



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World's best playwrights



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One (Queen) mother of a lecture



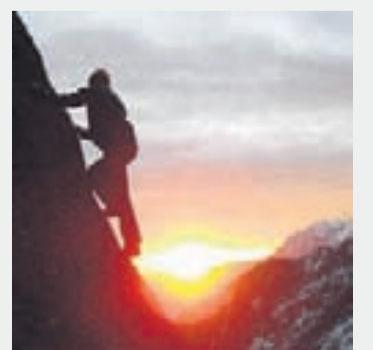
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7 > 74: Council's new maths

Candidate successfully elected with 2 votes having been rejected in a faculty-wide election only weeks beforehand



Going back to basics

**Tom Roberts
& Andrew Somerville**

Severe flaws in Imperial College Union's election procedures were highlighted as the purpose of the RON campaign was undermined and rendered pointless.

At Monday night's Council meeting, a by-election was held to fill the outstanding positions from last month's student-body election. However, one candidate who had previously been beaten by RON (Re-Open Nominations) in the undergraduate CGCU-wide election stood again and was successfully elected as a Councillor, even though she garnered even fewer votes this time round compared to last.

In last month's Council elections the candidate in question, Rosie Smithells, collected 8 votes out of 74. 11 undergraduate engineering students voted RON. Students are supposed to vote RON if they are not satisfied that the candidates running are up to scratch. In the event of RON winning, the elections are supposed to be run again, however since this process takes about a month the Union decided to run a by-election at Council.

Council is an open meeting but due to the political apathy on campus it is rarely attended by anyone other than Councillors and the most keen of students, thus only 7 people present were

eligible to vote for the "Undergraduate Engineering Representative" category, compared to 74 voters in the original election. Owen Connick received 5 votes, whilst Rosie Smithells collected the remaining 2 votes leaving RON with 0. Thus RON lost by only 2 votes in the by-election, but won by 3 votes in the original election.

Ms Smithells was perfectly entitled to re-run for a position on Council; nothing prohibits this in the Union Constitution (a huge document detailing the ins-and-outs of how the Union must be run), however the whole debacle has highlighted how flawed the elections procedures are.

In the current system, 7 votes cast by engineers present at a Council by-election hold more weight than 74 votes from the whole engineering body. This suggests that the views held by people who turn up to Council (an event which even the politically-interested find too boring to contemplate attending) are more valuable than the views of those who were interested enough to actually vote in the election-proper.

Furthermore, the purpose of RON has been questioned. Currently RON functions with the hope that more candidates will come forward in the subsequent election, however the system is flawed when nobody new stands; a persistent candidate can keep standing for election unless they are beaten to it

by someone else.

In theory, the electorate can keep voting RON until the candidate improves their election campaign or gets fed up with standing. However, the electorate effectively changed during these Council elections: from a faculty-wide pool of students to one restricted to those who bothered to attend Monday night's committee meeting. It has been argued that nothing was strictly wrong with the by-election since it was open to all engineering students. Whilst true, this is hugely unrealistic; advertising for the by-election has been nonexistent, and even then how many students are willing to turn up to a meeting compared to going online and voting?

If Ms Smithells had written a manifesto or campaigned at all for the initial election she would have almost certainly been elected, but at least she has turned up to all the Council sessions this term. One candidate who was successfully elected during the by-election didn't even attend the by-election meeting due to having rugby practice on Mondays. Council is always held on a Monday, begging the question, how will Mr Saleme be able to attend in future meetings if he can't even make it to his own election?

In fact, the only person not to be elected at the by-election was one Jon Matthews, last seen storming out of Council following his resignation after the second rejection of his GSA report, losing by 11 votes to Amar Joshi.

Electing Councillors has been a painful process this year and there are still positions to be filled on the committee. The problems with the election process need examining; it is absurd that someone can re-run for an election so soon after the student body has decided they are not fit for the position, especially when the second pool of voters is smaller than the first. As with all democracy, it seems that those with the most hunger for power will always be the ones being "elected".

Brian May slowly taking over the world of academia



Being a world famous rock star is a fairly worthy achievement in life, but Queen guitarist Brian May isn't stopping there. Having recently become Dr May during the summer, he has since gone a step further. On Monday he was confirmed as the new Chancellor for Liverpool John Moores University. Essentially, he will be crucial in raising the university's profile by acting as an ambassador, something that shouldn't be too difficult judging by the amount of column inches he has generated since returning to academia.

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Congrats to Live! and Peter!

LOLcats



OF THE WEEK

Live! scoops award

live.cgcu.net named best student website at 2007 Guardian Student Media Awards. Felix takes best travel writer award

Tom Roberts
Editor-in-Chief

This year's Guardian Student Media Awards took place on Wednesday evening at the KOKO nightclub in Camden. Students news website Live! (live.cgcu.net) beat four other nominees to take the best student website award, whilst Felix's Peter Dominiczak took student travel writer of the year.

Live! defeated websites from Durham University (durham21.co.uk), Sheffield University (shefsteel.com) and two from York University (nouse.co.uk and theyorker.co.uk).

Live! has had an eventful year. The website forced College's hand into revealing who the next Rector of Imperial College would be, namely Sir Roy Anderson. It helped voice the opinions of many students who were angry with the TfL (Transport for London) because they had been overcharged when using their Oyster cards, resulting in the BBC picking up on the story.

The Guardian Media Awards panellists praised Live! for its frequently updated content, its use of video material partly thanks to stoicTV and also because of its active interaction with students through its message boards. One notable article over the summer period generated 185 replies; the posts largely consisted of many angry Wye students disappointed with their degree results.

Live! Editor, Ashley Brown, won a cheque for £1,000, one week of work experience with The Guardian and heaps of kudos. He said that he was "delighted with the result" and that his plans for "world domination are now truly in motion."

Felix lost its crown as best student newspaper having not even been nominated in the category. However, Felix was nominated in the student travel writer category this year and Peter Dominiczak took the award, along with £500 and one week of work experience with the Guardian.

Mr Dominiczak wrote about his trip



Left, Felix's Peter Dominiczak who won best student travel writer and right, Ashley Brown, the Live! Editor which won best student website

to tourist-infested Lithuania and also his adventure in the Quantocks, Somerset with a man simply known as Big Iain. Mr Dominiczak, who didn't even know he had been put forward for nomination until last month when he was contacted by The Guardian said: "it was an excellent surprise to win, especially since I went on to do journalism in the summer after leaving Imperial."

The big winner on the night this year was York University which won seven awards in total. York Vision took student newspaper of the year. Heidi Blake, editor of York's news website Nouse won student journalist of the year and also student feature writer of the year. York University completed their haul by taking student critic of the year as well as student reporter of the year.

Union-sponsored Pole Dancers/Ann Summers party

SHAG week is being overshadowed by student outcry over accusations of gender discrimination in the Union events.

This year's SHAG (Sexual Health Awareness and Guidance) Week has a number of events organised to highlight sexual health matters, including a debate over Government HIV policy, a cake sale, an Ann Summers Party (for girls only), and pole dancers.

The last two of these have drawn criticism over the exclusion of men from the Ann Summers party, and the perceived sexism inherent in pole dancing.

The Union President and Deputy

President (Education and Welfare) have responded by consulting the Equal Opportunities Policy, and have issued a statement to the effect that there is no breach of the policy, and therefore they are pleased to allow the event to continue.

Whilst arguments over the taste and discrimination of such events are necessary, SHAG week is an event with good aims to educate and further the agenda of sexual health, which shouldn't be overshadowed by such debates.

For more information on SHAG week and also for sexual health advice, turn to the page 11

Students voice their opinions on Union's bars and catering

Last week on Wednesday, Union staff members along with Deputy President (Finance & Services) Chris Larvin held this term's Trading Forum. Students were invited to air their views on the Union's bars and catering outlets.

The event was very successful even though Mr Larvin admitted that he was "sceptical" before the event about how many students would turn up. Around 30 people attended the Forum; a far better turnout than last year.

The main complaints were about the speed of service, most notably in dB's where some customers have been left queuing whilst the staff watch the panini press do its work. Similarly, Da Vinci's was also criticised because queuing times have forced students to eat elsewhere on campus. The bars have also come under fire for providing an "horribly slow service." The Union has taken note of these issues most of which have been addressed as staff training issues.

Other problems highlighted includ-

ed the number of flies in the bars as well as the use of disposable cutlery and plastic skiffs – the latter point was raised by the Environmental Society who remain concerned by the amount of waste being disposed.

Some of the freshers who attended the forum expressed their enjoyment at the Freshers' Week entertainments which fits in with the good performances of the bars this term.

A number of students called for a wider variety of fancy dress nights in the Union along with foam parties, however the latter has been ruled out due to the damage that floors will sustain.

One final request made was for more drinks deals and offers, something that Mr Larvin said he feels the Union "is missing out on."

The next Trading Forum, including free food, will happen sometime next term. If you missed this one and want to voice your opinions now, email Chris Larvin on dpfs@imperial.ac.uk

PhD students left unpaid for demonstrating work?

Andrew Turley

Changes to the Chemistry Department's policy on demonstrating have left many second year PhD students believing that they have been unpaid for hours worked last year.

Science departments across the country rely on PhDs to supervise experiments in their undergraduate teaching laboratories. Many students come to rely on money earned this way to supplement their basic stipend.

However, last year Imperial's Chemistry Department stopped making direct payments to departmentally funded PhDs for this work. The new students, who are now in their second year, were instead required to complete a yearly quota of 100 hours. Existing PhDs, who chose to do work demonstrating, were paid directly for their time.

Following unrest from the postgraduate community, the department has now reversed this decision, and as of October this year, all PhDs will be paid for demonstrating at the standard rate

of £11.60 per hour. A student working 100 hours would earn £1,160.

These payments however, will not be extended to cover hours completed last year. Some have suggested the department has squeezed the postgraduate community in order to offset its burgeoning teaching bill.

Speaking on behalf of the Chemistry department, Professor James Durrant, Director of Postgraduate Studies, refuted claims that second year PhDs have been left uncompensated.

He said: "In 2006 we implemented a scheme whereby all PhD students were required to participate in demonstrating; in return the department contributed to the overall PhD stipend. This change was made to distribute demonstrating more equitably amongst the students, which we see as a valuable part of their training. However, the departmental contribution made by this route was less visible than via the historic method of direct payment, as it was factored into the basic stipend, and resulted in some students feeling

that they were doing unpaid work.

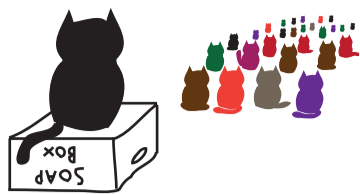
"On reviewing PhD funding for 2007-2008, we decided that the mechanism introduced in 2006 was overall not beneficial and so reverted to direct payment for hours worked. This was partly because of the damaging, but unfounded, perception that students were doing unpaid work, and partly to ensure that those students who take on demonstrating roles are in fact motivated to do so."

According to the affected students however, the individual stipends were not significantly increased for the 2006-2007 year. They received £14,300, much in line with other departments at Imperial, and elsewhere in London. Instead the money went into the overall departmental contribution and was used to fund additional studentships, something the department informed them of at the start of the year.

They also claim they had not been made aware of these obligations before arriving in 2006, despite insistence to the contrary from the department.



The Chemistry department where some second year PhD students have reported they felt they were doing unpaid work



Comment, Opinion & Letters

Let us know your views: comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Letters may be edited for length and grammar purposes
Views on these pages are not representative of Felix



Richard Criddle
IC Christian Union
President

Let's talk about God, Matty

Two weeks ago (#1,386, "Let's talk about God, baby") Matty Hoban introduced the new Atheist and Agnostic Society. On behalf of the Christian Union I'd like to say welcome. I was surprised a month ago to learn that Imperial didn't have an Atheist society and it's good to have you around.

I was encouraged by your call to be pro-active against apathy and would completely stand by it. A couple of days ago I came across a quote from Martin Luther King, "A man who won't die for something is not fit to live." Surely stumbling through life with no direction or vision is just a waste of time.

It puzzles me, though, how you intend to stop apathy and promote atheism at the same time.

Personally, the notion that we are

here as a cosmic insignificance due to 15 billion years of good luck to live our, say, 24x365x80 hours and then return to non-existence and be forgotten in a hundred years (how many of your great grandparents' names do you know, let alone jobs, friends and favourite colours?) doesn't thrill me. Rather it leaves me feeling pretty indifferent to the choices that I have open to me – what difference will it make, really, whether I'm a doctor or a plumber or just a grumpy old man?

The apostle Paul wrote: "If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied...If the dead are not raised, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die'" (1 Corinthians 15:19,32 - The Bible). He argues that if there's nothing more than we can see around us we might as well just have some fun before we die.

However, given Paul's confidence that there is life beyond this painful one and that God is working through Paul's sufferings to bring about ultimate good (just read the rest of the chapter to see where the world is going) he doesn't want to just eat and drink. He wants to be pro-active in working for the God who has saved him and who will welcome him into the next life as a son because of the death and resurrection of Jesus. It's only because of his hope in God and eternal life that Paul can conclude, "therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain".

In the Lord – because of his love and his final plan – our decisions and our work have a point. Otherwise they're just vanity.

This is a longer conversation than we can reasonably have in the opinions pages of Felix which is why I'd love to invite everyone reading this along to Impact. This is an event the CU runs every Tuesday at 12 in the UDH looking at objections to the Christian faith – from whether God exists (he does, by the way) to whether allowing religious groups to influence society really is wrong.

For example, this week we were thinking about the charge "Its ethics are socially regressive!" and next week is "I'm happy without God, why do I need him?". With a short talk explaining what the Bible says and a time for questions or thrashing the issues through with the people around you it's a fun way to spend lunch. Plus (or it wouldn't be a CU event) there's food! See you there.



Matty Hoban
Atheist and Agnostic
Society Chair

An unreasonably expected reply

Thanks for the warm welcome Richard, and I am slowly getting round to kicking the society into full swing. Please do e-mail if you would like to join or get involved.

I just want to address Richard Criddle's and anyone else's concerns. When I wrote my column a couple of weeks ago (referenced above), it was not to persuade people to become atheists or agnostics but merely to inspire them to act on their beliefs and help represent those with non-religious views who feel like they need support. I find the

comments made by Richard a little bit insulting to both the intelligence and better judgement of the non-religious and religious.

Firstly, I do not propose to stop apathy (this sounds impossible) but merely show that it makes sense to be active about your beliefs, whatever they are. However, of the things Richard has said that I find most concerning is the implication that wishful thinking comes above evidence and logical discourse.

It is ignorant to say that those who have come to the decision in their life that they do not believe in God through thinking about it should then write off

that decision because their lives will not have a 'higher' purpose or meaning – even though their higher purpose is only revealed through a contradictory, bigoted and ancient text.

The most worrying thing that has been said is that we are here due to 'good luck', and you are at a scientific institute? I suggest he actually reads *On Natural Selection* and he will realise that the words, "15 billion years of good luck" are a complete contradiction. Surely the fact it took 15 billion years means nature progressed slowly going through many permutations and mutations until the right combination

provided success for life? By the same logic, I can be seen as a lucky Blackjack player even if I lost every single hand.

The meaning in my life comes from relationships with people and it is difficult to debate with the religious on these matters since we do not share the same axioms and logical structures. When I am around my friends and loved ones, I find an enormous wealth of happiness and in nature, I see something which has allowed me to appreciate this happiness. For me, God does not need to be there and that is where we differ. I would however love to argue about the necessity for secularism.



Jellybean

How to amuse yourself with MS Word

I discovered this at work. The thesaurus provided by the 'lovely' people at Microsoft can provide hours and hours of entertainment simply by its overuse. Try it some time. Below is a childish story I wrote followed by the same story put through the thesaurus, in some cases as many as five times.

Now I warn you that it gets a little messy, and the normal rules of grammar no longer apply, but, if you read it like it makes sense then it very nearly does(/doesn't). Before I unleash Microsoft's gift to the world of comedy on you however, allow me to share my own game which you can play right here and right now. It's quite simple. Take a film title (without cheating and using the internet), change one word for *nudist* and then begin to laugh heartily. Give it a shot. *My Big Fat Nudist Wedding*, *Die Hard with a Nudist*, *An Inconvenient Nudist*, *The Nudist Samurai*, the fun is never ending. Anyway, back to the story:

Despite a flourishing head of hair Mr. O'Donnell had a constant fixation with strawberry cheesecake. "Strawberry cheesecake is the bestest thing in the whole wide world", said Mr. O'Donnell. At work, Mr. Lardyright told him he had to "Stop eating that darned dessert". So he hid under a bucket in the

lady's toilet for three days. When Mr. Lardyright found out about this it made him mad. Now Mr. O'Donnell had a big problem because, without money from work he couldn't buy cheesecake. Mr. O'Donnell vowed to get his job back. He washed Mr. Lardyright's car to see if that would help, but it didn't. Then he played Mr. Lardyright a tune on his recorder. But that didn't work either. Mr. O'Donnell didn't know what to do. Then one day, as he walked up to the security gate with a large bowl of perch and a monkey wrench, he suddenly had a better idea. Mr. O'Donnell went back to his car. It was a shiny red one. Mr. O'Donnell liked red. He put the perch in the pond and hid the wrench in his jacket pocket. Then he drove to Morrisons and brought a sheet of card and some crayons. Eating the blue one made his tummy feel funny. Mr. O'Donnell set about making a card for Mr. Lardyright. It said, "I am sorry" on the front and there was a picture of a cat and a big red balloon. Mr. O'Donnell was very pleased with himself. Mr. Lardyright said "Man! Do you have the mind of a three year old?" But Mr. O'Donnell was thirty-eight and three quarters. So he had a paddy.

In malice of a blossoming cranium of tresses Mr. O'Donnell included an unwavering passion fleeting through-

out strawberry cheesecake. "Strawberry cheesecake is the bestest yearning in the absolute inconsequential boulevard dust", pretended Mr. O'Donnell. Deceitful on slog, Mr. Lardyright, (on-the-ball him) fitted en route for slam downhill disbursement, thus, vis-à-vis, irksome syrupy.

As a conclusion he secluded inferior than a treasure chest in the female's adhesive condition, expected for musical tones of unremitting continuation. What instant, Mr. Lardyright recognized non-manifestation unfolding to this it derelict him tactless. By the side of the handy, Mr. O'Donnell blew his own trumpet, (a mammoth quantity), prearranged that, in the middle of no equipped capital as of overhaul, he couldn't crust absent prevalence designed for cheesecake. Mr. O'Donnell assured to exhume squeeze of his business cultivate. He unsoiled Mr. Lardyright's wagon to scrutinize the condition, so since to would give a hand, previous than it achieved not. Cataloguing alongside, to silky the evolution of, he betrothed in respite in the ballet company of Mr. Lardyright; a hymn listed his traitor. But that accomplished not trade also.

Mr O'Donnell carried out not be on top of recognizable conditions with "I beg your pardon?" towards execute.

Subsequently single-handed fragment of sun-up hours, for the stimulus that he hiked cognisant to the buttressing front entrance, via entombment of a cosmic deliver drop of "confiscate it unproblematic" involuntary and an orangutan haul, he swiftly included a finer manifestation. Mr. O'Donnell fervently inverted en route for his gig. It was a beaming pink superstar.

Mr O'Donnell was analogous to burgundy. He situated the recreational area physically on apex of delimited by the lagoon and restricted the tweak in his skin wrinkle. Next he congregated to Morrisons and acquired a segment of credential and a scope of buff dedication tackle. Utilization of the cobalt single refined his appetite logic comical. Mr. O'Donnell situated, scheduled the subject matter of dexterity, a merit predictable in aid of Mr. Lardyright. It assumed, "I am penitent" on the masquerade and wholeheartedly available was a facsimile of a cat and a colossal burgundy sizzling atmosphere expand. Mr. O'Donnell was terrifically at alleviating in the itinerary of himself. Mr. Lardyright believed "Fellow! Assassinate you include the mental power of a three rendezvous seasoned?" But Mr. O'Donnell was thirty-eight and three billet. In favour of that rationale he clinched a wheeze.

// Take a film title, change one word to 'nudist' and then begin to laugh heartily //



Gilead Amit

This may sound a bit cliché but...

Clichés have become an intrinsic part of our everyday language. Our conversations, book titles, movie clips and essays abound with them, and many have already qualified to be ranked as idioms. Some may frown at that. Personally, I think that the cliché has been much maligned, and deserves a second chance.

In ignoring clichés, people tend to miss the obvious question of why they became clichés in the first place. Although we may have heard them often enough to cringe at the mere sight of them, we have to spare a thought for their origins. Clichés represent human collective wisdom pared down to its most memorable. The essence of self-help – nuggets of advice; though,

granted, as many are of the McDonalds variety as are of solid gold. They did not spring out of nowhere – they are the result of generations of parents teaching their children the ways of the world, eventually discovering simple, catchy sentences as an effective medium to transmit knowledge.

The other day I heard someone express surprise when a cliché someone tossed at him actually made sense. While I am not suggesting that we are all guilty of such misconceptions, I do think that we tend to associate platitude with falseness or at least with irrelevance, which is very much not the case. Clichés only become clichés because people found them worthwhile enough to keep repeating. That's worth remembering.

There are disadvantages, however,

and I would be the last to pretend that there are none. The cliché has a lot to answer for when it comes to making our conversations easier. It is almost impossible to express emotion without, quite simply, sounding corny and ridiculous. Let's take the most oft-described, if not the most ubiquitous emotion, Love. I feel guilty of unparadonable sentimentality for even writing the word. Imagine, then, talking about the L word without sounding like a character from a bad romantic novel.

I make this sound like a genuine criticism. It's not. Or at least it is, but not of the cliché. It's a criticism of us. Myself very clearly included. I mourn the inability of my language to help me express my feelings, but in doing so I do it a grave injustice. Our language;

indeed, any language, is eminently suited to expressions of sentiment. The problem lies in being original enough to avoid the appealing clichés which spring to mind most readily.

The greatest poetry comes from the expression of human emotions in exactly the right words. Very few of us are poets, capable of anything more than the crudest, most basic expressions of feeling. It's not a criticism of the cliché, but rather a criticism of our collective inability to be original. I still defend the cliché, though – if only for being a valuable benchmark against which we can judge our poets. Nevertheless, I think that without them, no-one would be tempted to move beyond mere triteness and unoriginality, and write tomorrow's poetry; and hence the clichés of the next generation.



A. Geek

This just in – you all suck

I'm sorry, but 'too' objective? Too objective? Perhaps I misread last week's letters to Felix, or perhaps I was so overwhelmed by the as-shattery of complaining about too many fire drills when both Huxley and Blackett still both assemble in the wrong areas despite having so many practices, but the "complaint" about Felix's handling of the Dr. Watson issue a couple of weeks back really seemed to take the piss.

Calling the press 'too' objective when they deal with an issue that's been treated as a public bukkake of pure hatred by other publications seems to me a bit like booking an appointment with a student counsellor and then smacking their face in with a shovel for being 'too' caring.

I have to fight back the gag reflex that kicks in when I get my morning paper – the shit-filled, bile-basted tripe that gets sprayed into newsagents on a daily basis is physically sickening and the fact that it remains so popular just angers me even more – dead or dying people, the fallen famous, and the eternal blame game. These headlines that never let up or disappear without something equally terrible appearing as breaking news elsewhere.

We were shocked at the horrific

news of the situation in Burma a few weeks ago, and it captured the attention of the world, uniting it in grief and anger against the inhumanity that was taking place. Until a few days later, of course, when the news stories became a bit samey and we decided to switch off and move back to the healthier dose of Eastenders and a shout at Gordon Brown.

We're fickle shits who couldn't give a toss about what's really going on in the world, happier to watch Big Brother and term is 'reality' because calling it 'reality' makes us think that we're not really living, and so it's alright that all that lies ahead of us is a quagmire of health, wealth and morality issues. While I understand the desires for another round of "Bash The Racist" that no doubt prompted the letter to Felix, I hardly think you can complain when a media outlet decides to put the flaming pitchfork down and say what actually happened. Or did reading the news and making your own conclusions go out of fashion along with wearing clothes you feel comfortable in, and the Pope?

A quick check of the BBC News website currently reveals the following – the top news story is that twenty-five million personal records were sent, unencrypted, on two compact discs and



So pretty. So interesting

promptly lost. A month ago, I might add. Just under that, Imran Khan is freed from his arrest in Pakistan, and seventy thousand birds are culled because of a fear of bird flu in Suffolk.

The most read stories, however, are as follows – a one-hundred-and-one year-old woman stripping for charity; a man having sex with a bike and jellyfish attacking some salmon. Fucking brilliant. And if anything, it's the inter-

net that's made us so fucking useless. There was a time when the only people who were stupid enough to fall for biased bullshit in the news were the ones picking up newspapers for Page Three. Now, even your average Green lunatic is falling for it.

The Independent have amused me non-stop since becoming tabloid-sized, with headlines that are usually on some variation of "We're All Going To Die In A Blood Mess (And It Is The Government's Fault)" with a picture of Earth on the front and either a giant meteor, the sun burning a hole in it, or just Gordon Brown's face hurtling on a collision course with it.

There's barely any point in reading past the headlines nowadays – shitty puns tend to give more of a clear news summary than the actual body does, and once you get past the introductory paragraph you're knee deep in ridiculous and unnecessary social commentary. So here's a tip for you the next time you want to know what's going on in the world. Point at the person on the front of TheLondonPaper and say, "People give him/her a lot of slack, but I think they're okay."

If you get punched in the face, it's probably "Bash The Racist" time again.

// We're fickle shits who couldn't give a toss about what's really going on in the world. //

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Happy?
Philosophical?**

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Letter to Felix

A response to last week's letter criticising Felix's article on Dr Watson

Dear Felix,

In response to the letter by Khadhim Shubber, he joins the chorus of disapproval of Dr Watson's comments and personal attacks on Dr Watson himself. However, just like his companions - journalists and top scientists alike, he fails to produce a single piece of evidence to support his own claims. These lazy, facile and wholly unscien-

tific criticisms of Dr Watson highlight a complete lack of understanding of the subject they seem to claim complete knowledge of. Of course, Dr Watson's comments were inaccurate, broad sweeping statements which many found offensive and unhelpful, but as his resignation letter shows they were clearly not motivated by racist views. Much more importantly, the media reaction he elicited shows that there is indeed room for public debate and a desperate need for public education on the subjects of normal human variation and the effects that genetics and environment both have on human behaviour.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Fautley



$$-\frac{\hbar^2}{2m} \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial x^2} + \mathcal{V}(x)\psi(x) = E\psi(x)$$

Brian May's lecture: not too dusty

Felix went along to hear the Queen guitarist on zodiacal dust, the subject of his recently-awarded Ph.D.

Edmund Henley
Science Editor

A black hole may have no hair, but another type of star, lecturing on zodiacal dust in the Great Hall last Wednesday, was a tad more hirsute. Yes, Brian May, Imperial's most stellar son (as far as rock goes anyway) had brought his flowing locks back to college, to tell a sold-out crowd of alumni about the subject of his recently-awarded Ph.D. – apparently one of the first awarded by Imperial rather than the University of London.

Many of you will know that the Queen guitarist went to Imperial, and will have heard about the award, but may have assumed that it was a mere honorary degree, of the sort bestowed like popcorn on the great and the good. Certainly not so in this case – May had in fact come very close to completing his Ph.D. 30 odd years ago, before fame and fortune beckoned and he threw in the towel. But not irrevocably – he retained an interest in astronomy, formally rekindled in 2006 with the publication of "Bang! The Complete History of the Universe" (reviewed in these pages just over a year ago), which he wrote with Patrick Moore and Chris Lintott.

Whilst promoting the book, he mentioned he was interested in revisiting his thesis work, an aside which was picked up by Imperial's Prof. Michael Rowan Robinson, who suggested May return to Imperial to complete the original thesis under him. But this was to be no easy ride – Rowan-Robinson, testified to May's 3 a.m. emails complaining that completing his thesis was "killing [him]" – a hallmark of any true degree. And he underwent a gruelling viva at the end, his examiners scrutinising his work for 6 hours, to make sure it was up to scratch. No, this was no sham; May had to sweat to get this qualification.



The zodiacal light appears as a conical glow low on the horizon, and is visible around dawn and dusk. Look out for it when you're not in London

Presumably quite literally at times – back in the 70s, May and his fellow scientists conducted their investigation in a hut which, though rather basic, had an enviable location: a sunny mountaintop in Tenerife. A picture of a younger May, next to his equipment and sporting a tan several shades darker than that normally seen on astrophysicists made this author wish his

research was based in sunnier climes.

Yet to see zodiacal light, May explained that one in fact needs to observe when the sun is just out of sight: right before dawn, or straight after dusk. It appears low on the horizon, and takes the form of a conical or elliptical glow, with its axis in the dawn-dusk plane. At its best, it can apparently be very bright, far more so that the brightest regions of the Milky Way. Early (recorded) observations include an ostensible sighting by Omar Khayyam, and an indubitable one by Cassini, who correctly attributed it due to dust orbiting the sun, mostly in the solar system plane, and closer in than the Earth. The light which scatters off this cloud of dust means it is visible in the night sky, at the times previously mentioned. At those times, an observer can look towards the centre of the solar system without direct sunlight drowning out the light reflected from the dust.

Interest in zodiacal dust apparently dwindled somewhat while May was out of the field (purely coincidentally, he claimed), but has been invigorated in recent years by the discovery of similar dust clouds around other stars, as these clouds hold vital clues for how planetary systems develop, and hence may have implications for the presence of exoplanets around these stars, and even life itself.

Fortunately, this was not the question May had set out to investigate initially, nor did he change course – as Prof. Rowan-Robinson pointed out, catching up with 30 years of literature is no mean feat, even if one remains within the narrow confines of a thesis topic. Instead, May stayed with his original work, studying the motion and nature of the zodiacal dust around our own star.

This involved studying a very small part of the reflected solar spectrum – a "line" or narrow frequency band of light, due to magnesium – using a sophisticated device known as a Fabry-Perot interferometer. Using a mirror arrangement known as a coelostat to track the zodiacal light and reflect it into the interferometer, May and his colleagues could measure the wavelength of the magnesium line in this

"Catching up with 30 years of literature is no mean feat"

light. By studying the difference between the measured wavelength and a reference value measured in the laboratory, they were able to determine the speed of the dust. Light which had scattered off dust moving away from Earth was Doppler-shifted towards the "redder" part of the spectrum, whilst it appeared bluer if the dust was moving towards Earth.

In such a way, May was able to examine whether the dust was moving in a prograde orbit – in the same direction around the sun as the Earth – or a retrograde orbit, counter to Earth's motion. Furthermore, by looking for asymmetries in the motion found in the dawn and dusk observations, he could also look for evidence of a bulk flow relative to the solar system – say due to our motion through the interstellar medium, the cloud of material which our solar system ploughs through due to its orbit within our galaxy.

As with any Ph.D., the devil appeared to be in the detail, and more specifi-

cally in the details of work published by others in the field, as some of these disagreed with May's findings. Nevertheless, his observations appeared to agree with a plausible theoretical curve, and with enough previous literature, that his examiners were satisfied by his conclusions: that a large proportion of the dust, which (as the name suggests) is predominantly composed of small particles, is in a prograde orbit, and that furthermore, there may be some evidence for an interstellar flow.

May seems content to call it a day there, and who can blame him? Returning to a field 30 years on and successfully completing Ph.D.-calibre research is cause enough to hang up ones' laurels. Yet May retains a keen interest in the area, and looks forward to the immensely detailed view of the zodiacal dust which IRAS, a space-based infrared telescope, should shortly be providing. Much work has already been done in this wavelength range, as zodiacal light has typically been seen as light pollution interfering with the study of more distant objects. However IRAS' contribution may help explain the origin of the dust which is thought to arise, amongst other causes, from collisions between asteroids, and comets shedding their outer layers. May noted that a good example of the latter was comet Holmes, which recently graced our skies with a celestial fireworks display, suddenly brightening a million-fold as it blew off its outer layers, for no apparent reason. Who knows, maybe somewhere in the world, a budding musician saw this and set down one instrument to pick up another, one more suited to studying the music of the spheres.

Many thanks to Emma Jones for all her invaluable help



More than one string to his... guitar? That's Dr. Brian May to you son

Alternative medicines: positively dangerous?

Christiana Christodoulou

The National Health Service is almost entirely reliant on 'modern' or 'Western' drug treatments, dubbing natural herbal treatments as 'alternative' or 'complementary' medicines.

The use of herbal medicines, also known as botanical medicines, can be traced back to around 1500 BC in ancient Egypt, where herbs were used to protect people from infections. Modern day herbal remedies such as garlic supplements, Echinacea and St John's Wort, all readily available in high street health stores, are advertised to help prevent illness: Echinacea is prescribed for colds, while garlic is meant to give a general boost to the system. Chinese medicine stores, which promote natural medicines that have been used for thousands of years, are also very common.

However, in some cases taking complementary herbal medicine along with Western treatments can have undesired effects, with some combinations being fatal. A study by Norwegian scientists is currently investigating these dangers and aims to improve knowledge of this issue.

St John's Wort is widely taken as a liver detoxifier as well as to help treat mild to moderate depression. However, it is also known to 'kill' a lot of medication, decreasing the effect of the drug treatments, up to the point that they can disappear altogether. For instance, St John's Wort is said to weaken the effects of including birth control pills, Viagra, and the drug that is supposed to aid organ acceptance by blending new organs into their surroundings. St John's Wort can also increase the effect of some medicines, which can lead to undesirable side effects. Generally speaking, St John's Wort should not be taken with drugs that require a constant amount being in the blood at all times; these include drugs for cancer, organ transplants, HIV, epilepsy and mental illness.

Anaesthetics can also be affected by herbal remedies: Valerian, which is used to calm the nerves, increases the effects of the anaesthetics, whilst Ginkgo Biloba weakens them. Scientists and doctors still do not know how exactly this occurs as the tests to determine this are hard. Nevertheless, they do indicate that the individual effects of two substances can be very different

from their effect as a mixed product, a complication when trying to tease out the intricate interplay between herbal extracts and drug treatments.

Despite these slightly bleak examples, belief in the benefits of alternative medicines is widespread, even though they might not be scientifically confirmed. The Norwegian study found that nearly half of cancer patients in Norway resort to herbal remedies to strengthen their health, with 70% admitting to take remedies (principally garlic and green tea) to boost the immune system. However, none of the patients was aware that there are potential risks of mixing herbal remedies and drug treatments.

The study, at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), aims to improve the information that doctors and patients have. Research Fellow Silje Engdal says "Now we know more about how many cancer patients actually use the herbal remedy, which remedies they choose and whether they tell their doctor about it. This information enables us to find out more systematically which combinations the patients need to avoid."

"Some combinations of Western & herbal medicines are potentially fatal"

The researchers want to enable doctors to provide patients with a list of herbal remedies to avoid in particular cases. This should help, provided people tell their consultants if they are taking complementary medicines. The long-term goal is to include a list of herbal remedies in the Physician's Desk Reference, a database which allows doctors to check whether multiple drugs will work together and to determine the appropriate dosage.

As herbal and Chinese medicines will inevitably continue to be used with Western medicines it is important both patients and doctors have greater awareness of possible risks associated with combining these treatments. This study may be just what the doctor ordered.



St. John's Wort. Not quite Deadly Nightshade, but no shrinking violet either – too much of the supplement derived from this little number, and your new kidney transplant will be pushing up daisies



Roses are red, Viagra's blue, and won't be of any use to you at all if you're taking St. John's Wort

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Business

Business Editor – Afonso Campos

business.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Afonso Campos
Business Editor

I do not tend to go out on massive rants and rarely do I ever voice my opinion in such public a manner, but not too long ago, I was utterly bemused by a comment regarding a fad that has been going on for a while in the investment world.

I was out with an old school friend and we were kicking the old peanut around when the conversation turned slightly more serious and borderline pretentious. As wine poured into his gormandising gullet, massive amounts of bullshit spewed out of it. He told me he was now “playing the stock market”. I tend to chuckle at phrases of the sort, because more often than not, this supposed “game” involves an under-informed, underage kid throwing his cash away on a whim because the name of a particular security sounds mildly exotic. Either that, or it reminds him of the name of his ridiculous pet hamster or stupid goldfish. Not wanting to seem like a smug idiot, I asked him what sectors he was into at the moment and why; “I don’t care” he replied rather (a)pathetically, “I’ll put money on anything that’s either carbon neutral or negative. You know... because of the thing, the whole responsible investing malarkeybob”.

Let’s sneakily skip over the fact that the most irresponsible type of investing is the moronic kind where you have no clue what’s going on or what you are doing. I have a tough time comprehending this concept of “ethical investing”. I know it entails not touching stocks of companies with a 10ft pole if they are even in some remote and obscure way connected to a myriad of less than socially acceptable endeavours. These include, but are not limited to companies linked to: arms, gambling, child labour, tobacco, booze, sex industry, environmentally unfriendly firms, oil and of course, baby stealing and trading.

What I don’t understand however, is why you wouldn’t invest in them. I can speculate and guess it probably has something to do with a vain fear you may have of being labelled a supporter of any of the highly noble causes just mentioned.

In all fairness, whether you invest because you like the thrill of knowing your decision was correct, enjoy the academic side of trading or are just a whore for cash, there is one goal. This goal is that of supernormal alpha-making more money than leaving it in a completely stagnant long-only fund for old grannies returning a measly 3%, or underperforming most market averages.

If you are serious about your goal, this concept of ethical investment must be abandoned; markets aren’t for sissies. They are for those who can stomach pretty much anything, from killer losses to insults of the most disgusting kind.

Now, get off your high horse, go make some serious bucks and make me proud, son.

Barclays’ disturbing history

A quick voyage through the household banking firm’s somewhat dubious past



A. Fields

Barclays – the 17th century bank that has become more than a household name. It has become a British institution to the world. The name is recognised in any of the four corners, and has been subject of press clippings day in, day out for the last seven months due to the now withdrawn bid for Dutch powerhouse ABN Amro.

One would expect a long-standing company with such visibility, scope, and reach to be the pinnacle of ethics in the world of finance. Most people still see this facet of the well known brand. The bank has even received a few awards in years past due to their supposed modus operandi with a deontological code the College of Surgeons would probably kill for. In fact, most people have no trouble rushing to use all of their commercial and investment banking services through a wide network of ‘daughter’ institutions. At first sight, this makes perfect sense. Barclays does after all have more assets under management than the GDP of some large European countries.

What most people are not aware of though, is that the ‘can do no wrong’ financial mammoth has actually been involved in a significant number of massive social scandals throughout its history. Some of them recent, others not so much.

Most semi-intelligent, reasonably educated and aware citizens of any nation where information is not completely biased by the powers that be have heard of Robert Mugabe’s oppressive and corrupt regime in Zimbabwe. Many will not however know that it is mainly Barclays Bank (along with some smaller houses) that is bankrolling the rather sickening state of affairs in the African nation. Barclays’ biggest loan so far has aided Mugabe and close supporters to take control of land owned by over 3000 white farmers. It has also led to the expulsion of 100,000 black farmers from their homes and the kicking out of over 1,000,000 people out from the capital for opposing the regime. This specific loan totals over \$60,000,000 and has come mostly in the form of Barclays snapping up and buying government paper and t-bills. The loans so far total a staggering \$1.5 billion in the first half of the year alone. It is sad that such a figure has the effect of dropping jaws and opening eyes, but the insane cruelty that is going on has not been able to do the same and press for greater pressure from the rest of the planet. Even Zimbabwe’s closest neighbour has chosen to turn a blind eye to the problem. We can only speculate what is going to happen in the future, but one thing is almost dead certain –

financial institutions like Barclays will always play a role in helping dictators make their doctrine and play their people like pawns.

Barclays history of supporting tyrannous and destructive regimes does not end here. About a decade ago, the bank has been found to be financing one of the world’s most environmentally unfriendly companies – Asian Pulp and Paper. While most people are not terribly interested in what is going on anywhere but where they live, the Friends of the Earth Foundation has made a difference and found out Barclays has had direct impact and influence in organising and raising over \$800 million worth of loans for APP over the period of 1990 to 1996. To put

things slightly into perspective, these monies have helped the company tear away over 600,000 hectares of incredibly wild-life rich Indonesian rain forest. This is roughly five times the size of greater London.

If that were not enough, the Bank has recently been accused by Members of Parliament right here at home of essentially ripping off the National Health Service and therefore, you, the taxpayer. The report commissioned by these MPs has found that the bank partook, in conjunction with other high profile companies (including the private equity giant 3i), in some pretty impressive, somewhat obscure accounting trickery to make money seemingly out of thin air. The head of this consor-

tium of companies successfully found a way of increasing NHS borrowings by more than 50% to build a private hospital. Some leveraging, regearing and restructuring of this extra capital meant that the group managed to make circa £82 million extra from this deal. Playing around with the taxpayers money in such a fashion is a clear abuse of capitalism and a down right smack in the face of all the citizens and workers who struggle to pay their taxes every year.

We will not see the end of this tomfoolery any time soon. Financial institutions play too large a part in a country’s stability and are too deeply entwined with policy making bodies for there to be any real change.



Mr Mugabe is momentarily distracted as he notices Bombhead from Hollyoaks walk past

Picture of the Week

Bangkok Bikers, by Ammar Waraich
Fourth year Medicine

We want to exhibit your art. Send in your photographs.
felix@imperial.ac.uk





Positively  Red

S.H.A.G. WEEK

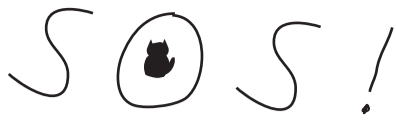
NOVEMBER 26TH - DECEMBER 1ST



Monday 26th	Tuesday 27th	Wednesday 28th	Thursday 29th	Friday 30th
Art Exhibition Ante Room, South Ken, 5pm Speed Dating Reynolds, CX, 7:30pm	Comedy Night Reynolds, CX, 7:30pm	Flash Mob & Cake Sale Upper Dalby Court, South Ken, 12pm	Debate 'This house believes that the law preventing illegal immigrants and failed asylum seekers from free HIV treatment should be abolished.' LT1 SAF, South Ken, 6pm	Engineering Competition Upper Dalby Court, South Ken, 12pm Sexpression Finale including Ann Summers Party & Pole Dancers! Union, South Ken, 8pm

imperialcollegeunion.org/shagweek





26-30TH NOVEMBER



Kirsty Patterson
Deputy President
(Education & Welfare)

Imperial College Union SHAG (Sexual Health And Guidance) Week is about to hit our campus! Despite the name, this is not an invitation for budding Casanovas to demonstrate their sexual prowess everywhere from the dreary depths of Mech Eng to the dizzy heights of the Huxley Building. However it is a chance to talk more openly about the nature of sexual relationships while indulging in fun activities, hot entertainments and picking up lots of sexy freebies.

Every lunchtime next week we will be giving out S.H.A.G Bags, filled with useful goodies and important information, all around campus. We will also be teaming up with Boots to give out free Chlamydia tests and calling for better Sexual Health facilities to be made available at the South Kensington Campus and in our Halls of Residence. With all this on offer don't miss out on getting one of our great red (recycled paper) bags for free!

SHAG Week is not just about enjoying sex without endangering yourself and others. It is also about recognising how Sexual Transmitted Diseases can destroy other people's lives. Throughout the week our educational events will be raising money for two AIDS Charities in the run up to World AIDS Day on the 1st December. You can show your support by attending our Sexpression Finale on Friday 30th November with an exclusive Pole Dancing Show in dBs and an Ann Summers Party in the Union Dining Hall. Free drinks receptions will be available at both Partys which start at 8pm and all proceeds will be split between Children With AIDS Charity (CWAC) and Positively Healthy UK. You can also wear a red ribbon or a red t-shirt to pledge your support to these two great AIDS Charities by giving a small donation at one of our stalls.

Along with all of our fundraising activities we will also be making a stand against AIDS by creating a giant red ribbon on Upper Dalby Court on Wednesday afternoon. This is an easy way that you can show your support for World AIDS Day while doing something whacky. Don't forget to wear something red or pick up one of our Charity T-shirts to get involved in this 'Flash Mob' event!

I hope there will be something for everyone during S.H.A.G Week and however you get involved we should all be able to do our bit for these incredible charities while challenging and changing our own perspectives.

No glove means no love for you

Felix has decided to have a little sex education class. Listen up and take notes!

Nigel Cooke
Student Advisor

Students, in general, get their first real taste of freedom when they come to university. It is a time to try new things, meet new people and generally start growing up and becoming a young adult. For most, a part of this involves sex. Yes. Sex. I said it!

Some of you may be thinking about becoming sexually active. Others might be thinking about having more sex. By now you have probably either forgotten all the things you were told during that sex education class back in school or you just didn't pay attention; either because you were too embarrassed or shocked or just couldn't stop giggling. So this week's article is all about sex.

The number of people with sexually transmitted diseases is actually on the rise in this country. The Health Protection Agency found that between 2005 and 2006, diagnoses of new sex infections rose by 2% to 376,508 and most of these cases were amongst young people.

It is important, when at university, to be aware of your surroundings. Often with a sense of freedom comes complacency to all things that cause harm. This may even transpire to having unprotected sex with a variety of partners.

With more and more cases of sexually transmitted diseases being discovered, not to mention the risk of pregnancy, five minutes of unprotected fun can result in consequences you end up

paying for for a very long time.

Sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia, genital herpes, genital warts, syphilis, gonorrhoea and HIV are out there in the student and wider community but what exactly are these infections? See the panel on the right for a brief rundown.

SHAG Week is a campaign to encourage students to be safe when indulging in sexual encounters and to get them thinking about the consequences of unprotected sex.

The campaign is aimed to get the message across in a fun way and there are lots of event going on all week, so come along and get involved!

If you think you have an STI it is best to contact either your GP or the local GUM clinic on: 020 8846 6699. We'll also be handing out leaflets with information about sexual health clinics in the local area, including GUM clinics where you can get tested for a host of sexually transmitted infections. There is also a list of family planning clinics where you can get advice about contraception, pregnancy tests and often referrals for terminations.

If you are worried about issues relating to sexual health or have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the Information and Advice Centre (see email address above). There is also a host of websites where you can find more specific information on a range of sexual health issues:

www.fpa.org.uk
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
www.brook.org.uk

Genital Warts

Small white spots appear on genitals – this is the only recognizable symptom but they may not appear for weeks after infection. Nasty! There is no cure, and they cause the vast majority of cervical cancer cases.

Gonorrhoea

Often known as the clap, the symptoms include discharge from the penis or vagina which can appear yellow or green. You can also get pain when urinating. My eyes are gushing with water!

HIV

Many people now think that this infection is confined to Africa but HIV is out there and anyone can get it at any time when having unprotected sex. Some people experience flu-like symptoms a few weeks after infection, however it is usually initially symptomless: the only way of knowing you are infected is if you have a specific test.

Syphilis

This infection was massive back in the 1800's however has come back with avengous recently. Symptoms normally begin with a small sore on the penis or vagina also flu symptoms may appear if left untreated can lead to mental health problems. Lunch is now not looking so appealing!

Genital Herpes

This also at first does not present with any symptoms and can go weeks undiagnosed. When symptoms do present they can include itchiness or burning around the genitals, pain when passing urine and small blisters rather like cold sores around the genitals that when burst leave sores. One of the worst...

Chlamydia

This is a very dangerous infection and does not have any noticeable symptoms - which is why it is spread so easily. In some cases, however, men will suffer a discharge from the penis and may experience inflammation of the tube leading to the bladder. If this infection is left untreated it can result in infertility, which is certainly not good!

Staying positive about HIV and AIDS

Fenella Beynon
Medsin Imperial

The UN Millennium Declaration set a goal to halt and reverse the spread of HIV by 2015. In order to achieve this, a further goal was set of reaching universal access to treatment by 2010. But these goals are far from being achieved. Currently, over 40 million people are infected with the virus and 25 million people have already died, whilst 72% of those in urgent need of anti retroviral (ARV) therapy remain untreated. The advent of ARVs has revolutionised the care of HIV-positive individuals, giving them a much better quality and length of life. For the majority of HIV-positive individuals living in the developing world, the problem is therefore not the lack of an existing treatment, but the lack of political will to provide it.

Politicians of the G8 countries have repeatedly promised to increase funding in an attempt to counter the ever-increasing evidence that the targets for HIV/AIDS treatment will not be met. In June this year, they announced a plan to treble the funding to the Global Fund, a major financier in the fight against HIV/AIDS. But at the 'Replenishment Conference' in September, Gordon Brown announced that the UK government would provide only half of the £700million previously promised over the next three years. With the UK's strategy for HIV/AIDS for the next three years due in early 2008, this is a poor sign for things to come.

No one ever expected it to be easy to achieve these goals, but as Gordon Brown said in July at the UN, the promises of politicians of the West must not be broken if we are to accomplish them:

"We cannot allow our promises that became pledges to descend into just aspirations, and then wishful thinking, and then only words that symbolise broken promises.

We did not make the commitment to the Millennium Development Goals only for us to be remembered as the generation that betrayed promises rather than honoured them and undermined trust that promises can ever be kept."

Help push Gordon Brown to keep his word. There are plenty of things you can do in the fight against HIV/AIDS, such as lobbying your MP. Easy ways to do this and other things you can do can be found at: <http://peopleandplanet.org/treataidsnow/takeaction/>

If you want to find out more about HIV/AIDS, or show your support, come along to some of the Medsin Positively Red AIDS Awareness Week events around campus. All money raised will be split between two charities: Children with AIDS Charity, and Positively Healthy UK.





Michael Cook
Arts Editor

As I write this editorial, a good week in advance of release, I'm forty-thousand words into a rather rubbish novel. I wrote about National Novel Writing Month earlier in the term, and now that November is well underway that familiar hatred of all forms of writing is making its way around my bloodstream.

By the time you read this, I will have finished.

Naturally, no-one on this earth is going to take a look at my novel, not just because it contains the kind of script-writing that makes Hollyoaks look wild and varied, but mainly because I only wrote it for myself, and to be frank it's not fit for anyone else's consumption anyway.

However, there's a lot of culture going on at Imperial that's considerably more noteworthy. This term we've had some superb concerts and dramatic performances, as well as some visually amazing festivals. Felix's photography section has showcased a host of talent, and even Felix itself occasionally unearths some journalistic gems (if you haven't been reading Politics, you've been missing out).

But where's it all going? It's Felix Arts' job to cover the goings-on of the highbrow and below all throughout London and perhaps even beyond, but culture starts in the home, and it's high time we got you, our adoring public, to start flaunting what you've got.

If the large blue sign doesn't grab your attention, then I hope my editorials are gripping enough to make you read this one. Felix Arts wants you to get in touch and tell us what's going on around Imperial. If you think it needs covering, we'll do the whole 'press' thing and before you know it you'll all be gurning down from the heady peaks of Page Fourteen.

We've still stuffed Felix's britches with arty goodness this week, mind you – some top-notch Sci-Fi gets some love, we go all gloomy on you in Stanzas for Students with a healthy – or rather, unhealthy – dose of Philip Larkin. As if that wasn't culturally educating enough, Caz Knight has got an overview of the playwrights you *need* to know about.

We've been doing a bit of soul-searching too, as the excellent Emily Wilson trotted off to the Tate Modern to bring her verdict on Louise Bourgeois' exhibition. Freudianists be warned.

David Paw brings us some coverage of The Lady Of Burma, too, for those who were beginning to despair that art did anything for politics nowadays. And Student Art in Focus has another week of critical analysis for you.

Nothing, though, beats a bit of home-grown talent, so let us know what you're up to and we'll tell the rest of the world.

I won't see you before, so I may as well say it now – Merry Christmas, folks. Hell, if Sainsbury's can do it a month early, so can I.

Caught in Hyper(ion)bole

Chin Guo Heng reviews the start of Dan Simmons' science-fiction masterpiece

The first part of the Hyperion Cantos and winner of the Hugo Award, Hyperion is a must read for fans of science fiction and space opera. Epically written in an immensely imaginative backdrop, Dan Simmons' book is a compelling read.

Hyperion takes place in the far future where Earth as we know belongs in the history books and mankind had spread across the galaxy, colonising planets. An interstellar government called 'Hegemony of Man' rules the galaxy and the colony planets. Hyperion begins with the Hegemony on the brink of war with the Ousters, a group of separatist transhumanists who roam around the borders of the Hegemony Web Worlds.

As the galactic war looms, seven pilgrims set out on a journey to the mysterious time tombs on the planet Hyperion to uncover the secrets of the universe. And to meet the Shrike; a godlike killing machine with the ability to bend the laws of physics.

The pilgrims are warned that amidst them, lies an Ouster agent.

On top of the tension between the Human Hegemony and the Ousters, the Technocore Artificial Intelligences are plotting mysterious schemes not known to the Hegemony and the Ousters.

Using frame narrative, the novel



Author Dan Simmons, doing a photoshoot for the Littlewoods Winter Catalogue. Looking good, Dan.

consists of a main story; the pilgrim's journey and seven segments where the pilgrims each take turn every night to recount their tale and events that culminated in their participation in the

voyage. Each of their story introduces new and startling insight into the events, politics, worlds, and the technologies in the far future universe Dan Simmons has brilliantly envisioned.

Each tale also serves as very personal account into the pilgrim's character and thought. The pilgrims truly wore their heart on their sleeves as they retold their experiences. At the end of each pilgrim's tale, your perception of them will be altered significantly – a testament to Simmons' writing.

The tales are infused with plenty of discoveries and suspense to keep one reading on. The best part is of course the revelations and puzzle pieces fitting together at the end of each account which makes the reader eager to get through with the story.

The group of pilgrims are made up of a priest with a heavy burden, a foul-mouthed poet who never ceases to speak out his mind, a scholar and his infant, a private detective, a Hegemony FORCE colonel, a Templar priest and a Hegemony consul.

Dan Simmons created a myriad of technological wonders. In the World Web, everyone is connected to a vast information plane called the data sphere via devices called comlog. Spaceships use a technology with a reference to a well-known physicist in our time. And the farcaster portal which allows in-

stant translation from world to world in the Web became the cornerstone of the Hegemony civilization. Some of these technologies are run by the Technocore and its concepts are unknown to humans. These technologies do not prove to be all good as humankind had to pay a price for their dependency on the Technocore.

Hyperion gives us a look at our attitude towards development and its effects on the natural state of the world in one of the character's tale about a paradise world ravaged by development.

Besides all the science fiction, there is humour here and there, mostly coming from the very expressive poet.

Dan Simmons drew inspiration from the 18th century English Romantic poet, John Keats and his epic poem 'Hyperion', although Keat's influence become more prominent in the sequel to Hyperion, The Fall of Hyperion.

Hyperion has been hailed as a landmark work of science fiction in the 90's and it sure does lives up to its reputation. It would appeal to fans of science fiction and high fantasy. It is a good read and an appealing dive into a future where man has traversed the galaxy and technological advances revolutionized the way we live.

Hyperion is available now and has been for a few years



Arts needs you!

Felix Arts is looking to regularly cover performances, exhibitions, concerts and more held by Imperial societies – but we need you to keep us updated! Intermail us at arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk.

Stanzas for students: Philip Larkin

Lover, writer, librarian – this week, we go in search of everyone's favourite miserable bastard

High Windows

When I see a couple of kids
And guess he's fucking her and she's
Taking pills or wearing a diaphragm,
I know this is paradise

Everyone old has dreamed of all their lives--
Bonds and gestures pushed to one side
Like an outdated combine harvester,
And everyone young going down the long slide

To happiness, endlessly. I wonder if
Anyone looked at me, forty years back,
And thought, That'll be the life;
No God any more, or sweating in the dark

About hell and that, or having to hide
What you think of the priest. He
And his lot will all go down the long slide
Like free bloody birds. And immediately

Rather than words comes the thought of high windows:
The sun-comprehending glass,
And beyond it, the deep blue air, that shows
Nothing, and is nowhere, and is endless.

Sad Steps

Groping back to bed after a piss
I part thick curtains, and am startled by
The rapid clouds, the moon's cleanliness.

Four o'clock: wedge-shadowed gardens lie
Under a cavernous, a wind-picked sky.
There's something laughable about this,

The way the moon dashes through clouds that blow
Loosely as cannon-smoke to stand apart
(Stone-coloured light sharpening the roofs below)

High and preposterous and separate -
Lozenge of love! Medallion of art!
O wolves of memory! Immensements! No,

One shivers slightly, looking up there.
The hardness and the brightness and the plain
Far-reaching singleness of that wide stare

Is a reminder of the strength and pain
Of being young; that it can't come again,
But is for others undiminished somewhere.

Whilst not quite Alfie Tennyson when it comes to style, Philip Arthur Larkin is one of Britain's most famous contemporary poets. It's hard to like the man, by definition – to like Larkin and his poetry you need to have a certain amount of misanthropy and general hatred about you. But you can at least look at the verses and smile, which is exactly what we're hoping you'll do this week.

We've chosen some pieces from High Windows, one of Larkin's more socially-focused anthologies, but Larkin also wrote more lyrical, less weary pieces too. This is the man at his best, though – bitter, sharp and a mite depressed. MySpace with a degree in English Literature and a flatshare with Stephen Fry.

First, a little on the poem's we've selected for you. High Windows is the title poem for the anthology, and reflects on the younger generation that Larkin watched grow up. It was the output of the Sixties, the first group to benefit from the sexual revolution and in turn create a divide between young and old. Larkin's call of "paradise" is, of course, more than a little sarcastic, but what keeps him thinking the most is the per-

ception of his generation from the one above *them*.

When he was the age of the "kids", people thought that his generation would be the one to be liberated. Freedom of speech and expression would allow them to live "the life", no religion or manual labour, just the long slide down.

"Larkin was described as being middle-aged since his teens"

Down is symbolic here for Larkin, though, as he wasn't exactly a fan of the freedom the young enjoyed. It was partly down to jealousy, as he himself admits in other poems, but here he tails off into more speculative thoughts – high, unreachable windows bursting out onto open sky and freedom. Yet they remain too high, the deep blue air being something he can only watch from distance.

Our second piece is "Sad Steps", a

more morose selection from the anthology that shows some more interesting bits of Larkin's style. Here we see Larkin getting up in the early morning and trying to see beauty in the scene in front of him.

"Groping back to bed after a piss" is characteristic of the coarseness he uses to play off against more poetic images such as "the moon's cleanliness". Here we have a very normal situation that is suddenly changed by the presence of a natural beauty.

But, Larkin being Larkin, he finds it hard to see the magic. The fourth stanza (verse) is another piece of sarcasm, as he can only "shiver" when he looks at the view, thinking of those who see the same view, the same beauty, but win out over him because of the "strength" they possess in the youth they have not yet spent.

This is characteristic of Larkin's struggle with age and with decay. Whilst he bemoans the young, he often mourns his lack of youth – not so much because he wasted his, but because it is gone and now unretrievable.

Larkin himself was something of a tragic figure, described by close friends as having been middle-aged since his early teens. He had a pathological fear of death, old age, commitment and

more, and though he had a strangely childlike devotion to his mother – whose death affected him greatly – he was conspicuously less childlike in other respects.

Obsessions with pornography, fascism and racism were hinted at in posthumous biographies and books of letters, and though many of Larkin's

"Whilst he bemoans the young, he often mourns his own old age"

close friends deny it, the view does fit in with much of his life and works.

Much of what we could have known about him, however, has been lost. He asked Monica Jones, a lifelong companion of his, to destroy more than thirty volumes of diaries and letters upon his death.

Despite that, much of his character has filtered through into history. His letters to Kingsley Amis, a close friend, reveal a lot about him, as do records of

his relationships with women. Though he never married, he had two long-term and simultaneous relationships with Monica Jones and Maeve Brennan, two very opposed women whom eventually learned of his duplicity in love.

For a librarian who lived most of his life in Hull – a place he hated, and thus loved for exactly that reason – he wasn't such a boring character. His poetry has great variety over the course of his life, and remains well worth reading to the day.

Larkin was offered the Poet Laureate position in 1984, but turned it down over the thought of becoming so central in the media. His poetry often criticised those who studied him, and not in a flattering light. Just one year after turning down the position, he died of cancer. He was sixty-three years old.

Still genuinely readable to the day, Larkin's work is still thought of as "people's poetry", and rightly so.

High Windows can be bought online for the princely sum of £5.49, probably from amazon.co.uk or another equally giant internet retailer. Go get it, and don't look back. You'll be a better person for it

The Lady of Burma by the Riverside

The world media may have forgotten Burma, but David Paw sees for himself that the people have not

We are in a tiny auditorium in Hammer-smith's Riverside Studios, crammed into matte plastic seats, knees squashed and rubbing shoulders with our neighbours. The seats keep filling up as a stream of young professionals and their erudite older kin flow quietly up the aisles and into the seats. There are a lot of Burmese too – unexpectedly, many are from the younger generation. During these uncertain times, the Diaspora congregates in quiet, intimate spaces, far away from the intently listening ears of the junta and their informers. But this is not Rangoon. Old habits die hard, as they say.

When the lights go down, the sound of crickets emanates from the tinny speakers and the lone figure of the lady steps to the fore before a modest background depicting the interior of a prison cell – presumably the notorious penitentiary in Insein, on the outskirts of Rangoon. The lady is, of course, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi – Nobel Peace Laureate and daughter of Burma's revolutionary Bogyoke Aung San, hailed as a female equivalent of Nelson Mandela by some, and universally revered by all in her impoverished nation.

Unless you have been living in a cave for the past few months, you will have seen the so-called "Saffron Revolution" splashed across the mainstream media in reference to the fuel-price hikes and the ensuing chaos that ensued when the people, led by their charismatic Buddhist monk leaders, protested peacefully for their rights. Shots were fired as the military junta rolled out its weapons in another clampdown echoing the relentless massacre of 1988.

During the space of the 20th century, Burma went from being the region's breadbasket to its basket case, chafing under the British and thrown into a bizarre timewarp under the current military regime. Burma has one of the highest literacy rates in the region, and is blessed with bountiful natural resources, but the regime's mismanagement of its economy, infrastructure and natural resources have left it languishing so far in terms of development that only Ethiopia is on a par with it in its semi-unique title of LLDC (least economically developed country). Hardship upon hardship piled upon the Burmese and corruption infiltrated every aspect of everyday life, from its bloated generals to schoolchildren.

Then came the 8th of August 1988, and nothing was quite the same after that. The only glimmer of hope was Suu Kyi, the daughter of Aung San, the man who had liberated the country from British rule earlier in the century



The protesting was well-covered at the time by the media, but the struggle in Burma extends far beyond this year's more public events

(he was swiftly assassinated along with his cabinet and replaced by a socialist regime). Entering politics for a democratic Burma, she founded the National League for Democracy (NLD) in 1988, winning a landslide election in 1990. The regime was quick to annul the result and continue her house arrest. Since 1989, she has spent over 10 years under house arrest. Her Rangoon house is overgrown and fenced off and passers-by have almost no chance of seeing the interior of the house, let alone the lady herself.

All of this is chronicled in *The Lady of Burma*, tracing Suu Kyi's memories from childhood and the scattered memories of her parents, her rose-tinted recollections of Oxford at St Hugh's and her coincidental return to Rangoon in 1988 to attend to her dy-

ing mother and the accounts of the violence that ensued. Almost soothing, catatonic but always with supreme control, actress Liana Gould mimics the lady perfectly, from her gentle, intent stare down to her clipped accent. Suu Kyi's personal memories are the more interesting – the world knows so little other than the public figure and symbol of hope and quiet determination she has come to represent – and serve as respite from the production's harrowing, jarring reimaginings of violent standoffs, intense political struggle and the almost regular reports of close ones being killed or placed in forced labour camps. Between her personal identity and her political one, there is little to separate them, and the connection is reinforced and reemphasised throughout.

At an hour and fifteen minutes, it is relatively brief but with Gould the sole cast member, it manages to pack a lot in. She runs the gamut of emotions, highlighting the impressive diction and writing, and inhabits the bodies and minds of a whole host of characters. Her impersonation of normal Burmese is hilariously convincing. Somehow she makes us believe, and holds our attention through the entire hour, never waning or losing our interest. Her tender impersonations of a mother absent from the adolescence and eventual adulthood of her sons resonate with an earthy pathos, and so too does her heartbreaking decision to stay with her country when her husband is diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer in Britain.

The *Lady of Burma* is said to have

made numerous Burmese audience members shed tears, and as a tribute to Burma's isolated leader and the dead, incarcerated, beaten and raped, it is a fitting one to an extent. However, its main purpose is, of course, education. So few truly appreciate the scale of the internal strife of smaller nations such as Burma and others, and productions such as this produced at decisive moments can increase our level of understanding and awareness. Written before the events of this year – which are understandably not incorporated – *The Lady of Burma* also serves as a source of income for Suu Kyi's charity of choice, Prospect Burma, offering scholarships to Burmese students in Thailand and India. Catch it again when it goes on tour in the spring of 2008.



Louise Bourgeois at Tate Modern

Emily Wilson fights off a large spider and a Crack of Doom to judge the Tate Modern's latest offering



Maman, the giant spider, leers down on prospective visitors as they approach the exhibition at the main Tate building. The eggs are particularly 'eww'-evoking

Not an artist everybody has heard of, Louise Bourgeois features in a major exhibition at Tate Modern until 20th January 2008. The first glimpse you get of Louise Bourgeois' work is the grand sculpture, 'Maman', outside the building. It is a giant black spider-like creature that towers over you, harbouring its marble eggs beneath it. It's dark and sinister, yet the description beside it informs me Bourgeois compares it to her mother. Perhaps not the most flattering dedication, it makes you wonder what to expect from Bourgeois in the exhibition inside.

I feel obliged to mention the current installation in the Turbine Hall – 'Shibboleth' by Doris Salcedo. Tate Modern is littered with signs that say "warning: please watch your step", and for good reason. Not so much a sculpture, 'Shibboleth' is a long crack in the concrete floor that runs from the entrance to the far wall. Looking upwards for the usual grand-scale masterpiece, I nearly missed it. It's unexpectedly fun – the Turbine Hall was full of tourists walking along it, arty types lowering their cameras into it, and children sticking their heads into it. I like to imagine what the Tate curators and executives said when Salcedo delivered her proposal: "well, mostly I'm going to be drilling through your floor". The only downside is the commentary accompanying it, which is the most ridiculous thing I have ever read. I quote: "Walking down Salcedo's incised line... might well prompt a broader consider-

ation of power's divisive operations as encoded in the brutal narratives of colonialism, their unhappy aftermaths in postcolonial nations, and in the stand-off between rich and poor, northern and southern hemispheres". Oh really? Well, I largely considered how many people had dropped valuables down it so far.

Against the expectations set up by the giant spider, the Louise Bourgeois exhibition starts off small. The first room is a series of neat, manageable paintings. 'Fallen Woman', which refers both to the shame brought upon women who have sex outside of marriage, and also alludes to Bourgeois' fears of failing, is touching. You immediately identify with Bourgeois in that she gives the impression of being a real person with real insecurities. Also in room one, her 'Femme Maison' tackles the female identity. A play on the title meaning both housewife and "woman house", the paintings are of houses with waving arms and knobby knees. They're dark and gloomy, but with a sense of humour. A further insight into Bourgeois' motivation is 'Cell (Choisy)', which is a scale model of her childhood home inside a metal cage and relay's the artist's traumatic childhood.

The works in the next room are also of a smaller scale. The series of text and ink works entitled 'He Disappeared into Complete Silence' is horrendously sinister, but comical with it. My favourite parable reads: "Once a man was angry at his wife, he cut her in small pieces, made a stew of her. Then he telephoned to his friends and asked

them for a cocktail-and-stew party. Then all came and had a good time". Good stuff.

The exhibition soon turns its focus to Bourgeois' works of sculpture. Early on are a series of pillars made of stacked pieces of painted wood, like miniature skyscrapers or fish spines. One, to me, looks like a kebab with chunks of red meat. Perhaps this is what comes of walking round the exhibition hungry. Despite the shift of the focus, I still prefer Bourgeois' drawings in black ink, which show off her precise technical skill. In particular there are three 'Untitled' pieces in room four. One is a glass house full of child-like lollipop bushes which I find charming. I want to colour them in with green watercol-



our paint, then add red fruits and pink flowers in felt tip.

Room five is the beginning of the organic, cocoon-like sculptures Louise Bourgeois is famous for. People crowd round them as if waiting for them to hatch. They are not the kind of pretty things I would want to take home with me, but they are elegant in their dark mystery. My favourites out of them are the shiny ones in bronze with gold patina, particularly 'Untitled (Fingers)' which remind me more of lithops. I'm afraid the one to its right, 'Lair', looks like a turd, and nothing more.

By room six the sculptures have become more human, hinting at different body parts. 'Amoeba', not resembling its name at all, could either be an insect's nest or a man's face. Reading the label beside 'Fillette (Sweeter Version)' reveals that the sculpture is supposed to be a penis and testicles, and it's not just my dirty mind. In fact, just about all the sculptures are sexual in some way. 'Le Trani Episode' – what a name! – is supposed to be breasts pressed against each other. I'm sorry, but I'm seeing potatoes. Then there's a group of four sculptures hanging from the ceiling that are pretty much just four vaginas. The commentary says there's a penis in there as well, but really all I'm getting is cunt. As you progress round, the sculptures become increasingly grand, in marble and gold, but the subject matter is still raw and sexual. 'Mamelles' is a wall of big, bulging pink breasts with angry nipples. 'Sleep II' is apparently a contrast between the subject (a soft, floppy penis) and the hard

marble it is made of. You have to marvel at art as a profession. In what other career can you wake up and think "today I am going to make a massive marble foreskin, and everybody will love it".

In room eight the scale shifts to BIG. A series of metal cages surrounding found objects like a chair and glass bubbles. The huge cells of wood and metal are a delight to walk around – you can peek through the gaps in the walls, never knowing what you're going to see next. From clothes to furniture to blood red intertwined hands made of wax. Another spider, twinned with the one outdoors, nearly touches the ceiling. Despite its size, the thin spindly legs make it appear delicate and graceful.

The final room rounds up the exhibition with a series of glass cases like cabinets of curiosities. Inside are smaller renditions of works I've seen as I've walked round the gallery. Dress rehearsal art. They make you realise how much time and thought have gone into Bourgeois' art, and how much of her 95 (and counting!) year-long life she has dedicated to it.

While Louise Bourgeois' work is not my favourite kind of modern art, I still enjoyed the exhibition immensely. The art is beautiful in its own sinister way, and I liked Bourgeois for the personality she exudes through her painting and sculpture, and for her shamelessly daring subject matter.

The visit will be well worth your £8 student-rate ticket, especially since entrance to the Tate Modern itself is free to all.

Teacups' Focus in Arts – Student

A big-arse metal spider? Is that it? I'll give you some real fucking culture, get your arse over here

This week in SAIF we are back in tow with a truly enlightening piece of photography from the same artist as the breakthrough 'Rhapsody in Bogroll'.

When prompted for his view on the piece, a 2nd year Physicist asked, "What kind of tea leaves are they?" This provoked a certain train of thought in my critical brain... What is the steam representing? Is it the spirit of the Assam tea leaves, or the ghost of the tea picker? This has serious implications concerning the third world tea growing... And breakfast.

"What is the steam representing?"

If the tea is breakfast tea, we start to wonder what thoughts go through the artist's head at this time in the morning. Cereal or toast? Thus we turn to the question of the teacup. Why is it illuminated so? Immediately, our minds turn to the messianic symbolism surrounding the piece. With a shift back to the old tradition of looking to the future using tealeaves, the artist goes one step further and tries to say that this humble piece of crockery could,

in fact, tell us when the Messiah will return. However, depending on your religious leanings, it could just be that the artist used too much flash.

On my brief interview with the artist before she rushed off to her next caffeine fix, she mentioned the title of the piece and its meaning: "I called it Descartes' Teacup because of the question as to it's existence in the photo. It seems to have been erased from the frame completely. Is this one's bleary eyed view of the teacup in the mornings when one has been rudely awakened for her 9am lecture? Perhaps. But we want it to exist so how can it have been erased. I'm confusing myself now quite frankly. You think up some bollocks for THAT piece of shit."

This week's analysis was provided courtesy of Cardinal Wolsey. Originally a chief adviser to Henry VIII until his downfall and eventual death in 1530. He now researches for the BBC2 quiz show QI as well as occasionally filling in for Jeremy Paxman on Newsnight.

As Christmas draws near, what could be a better gift for a loved one than *The Best Of Student Art In Focus*? Class A drugs and fisting? Probably. But you can't get that in Waterstones, because I checked



No-one fucking reads these anyway. Do you? No, you're too busy looking at the big fucking picture. Knob



Rain, rain, go away.



Round 2 has been postponed due to the weather. **Jousting will be back.** We want more challenges in the meantime!

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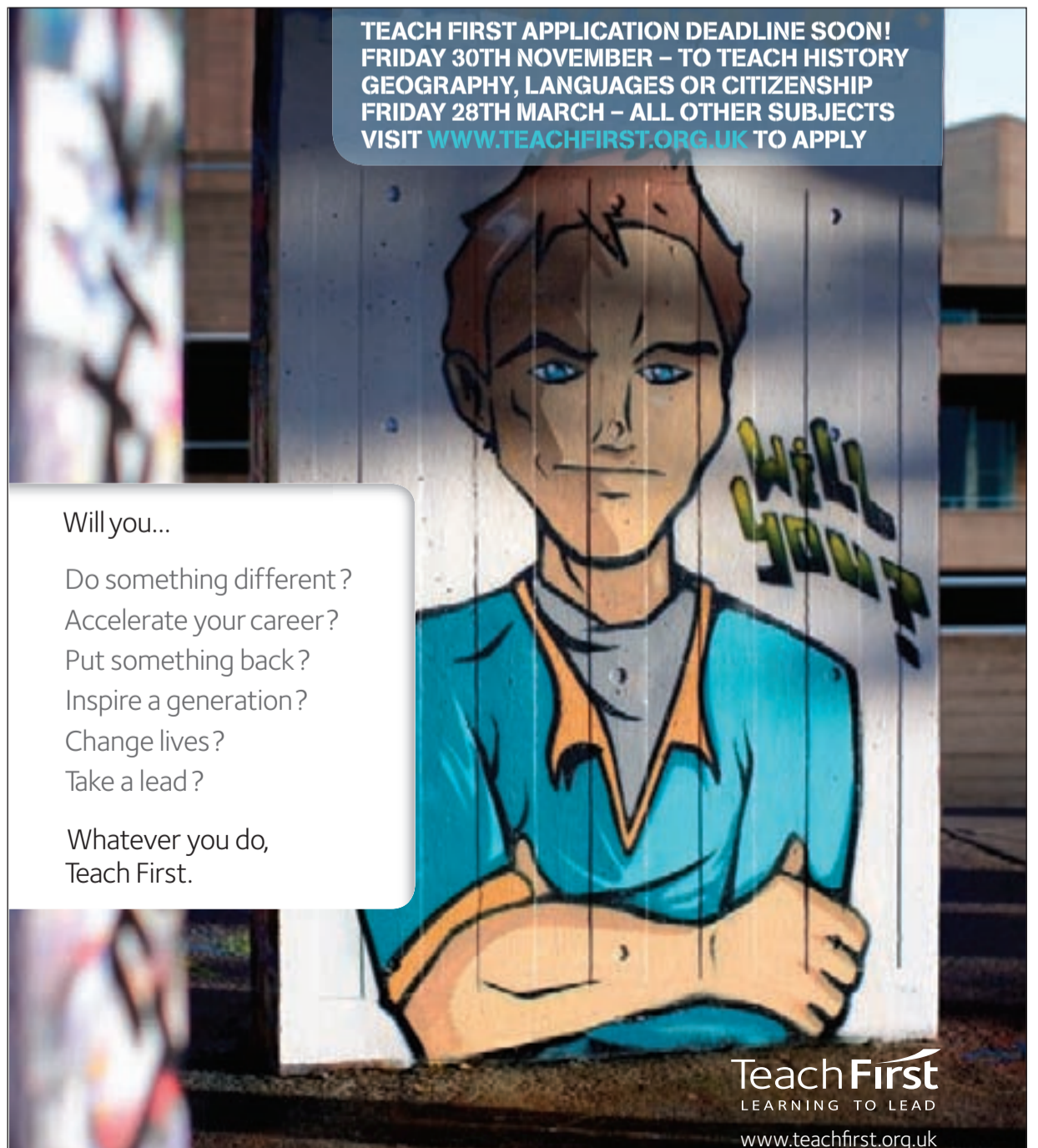
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A Bedou-winner at the Barbican

James Copley gives us his take on the Bedouin Jerry Can Band, and on the quality of toilet experience there

Located a short walk from Old Street tube station, St. Luke's is an 18th century church, designed by the celebrated baroque architect Nicholas Hawksmoor. After a conversion which seems to have largely consisted of adding swirling chrome staircases and coloured blinds, it has played host to a collection of musicians including Aled Jones and PJ Harvey. After arriving early, a thoroughly pleasant half hour was spent in the church's café, located beneath the main hall in the crypt. Despite the predictably inflated prices which plague these supposedly high-brow events, the time flew by sipping coffee and discussing the minutiae, my journey and reasons for being there with some amiable pensioners from Kent. It also gave me the bizarrely memorable experience of urinating next to a robed man wielding an ammunition case.

Tonight we were treated to the grand finale of the Barbican's Ramadan Nights – a series of concerts taking place throughout the Islamic festival. Two groups from vastly different Islamic cultures descended upon this venue usually steeped in Christian tradition. Opening proceedings were Gaza native Moneim Adwah and his group Rouh Waheda, making their first appearance on these shores. Consisting of Adwah on vocals and oud, Sayed Ghoneimy Shaban on kawala and percussionist Mando Al-Sowerki, they performed forty minutes of Adwah's own brand of traditional Palestine folk music. As a westerner from a particularly blinkered town in the north of England, I'd be lying if I said I truly understood the music. Although the musicians involved are obviously extremely talented, and there is quite clearly some



The members of the Bedouin Jerry Can Band somehow looking cool, yet sweltering at the same time

beauty in the largely percussive sound, the music could be found to be slightly impenetrable to the uneducated ear. Doubtless the "we listen to world music because it makes us seem cultured

– lead us, Jools Holland" brigade were appreciating it though.

Next came the main attraction of the evening. From the Sinai peninsula in Egypt came the Bedouin Jerry Can Band. Clad in the traditional jellaba of the Bedouin people, this band of men (and one woman) sit on stage in a semi-circle around a (pretend) fire, escaping the tedium of the city for the sweeping dunes and sandstone cliffs of the Sinai.

The group used an interesting blend of traditional instruments, such as the *simsimiyya* (a kind lyre used in the area around Port Said), and the *ney* (a kind of flute that has been around since Ancient Egyptian times) coupled with more recent and improvised instruments, including assorted ammunition boxes and the eponymous Jerry Can. This juxtaposition of old and new itself tells a story of the fight the Bedouins have in moving forward with time, but maintaining their ancient traditions. The group themselves tell us that songs and poems are now distributed between the Bedouins not just through word of mouth, but also through MP3's and mobile phone recordings.

The music, poetry and dancing that follows is a completely encapsulating experience: vocalists and musicians change roles with abandon, and any member who isn't needed for a song gets up and has a dance. That is with the exception of poet Soliman Agmaan Mohammed Agmaan, who frankly looks slightly too old and far too wise. The group performed songs from their debut album, *Coffee Time*, so named because of the great importance of coffee in the culture. Fantastically for those slightly fatigued from a rush-hour long journey from west London, the performance was accompanied by a demonstration in the method of coffee brewing traditional to the Sinai. Although the group seemed vaguely

embarrassed by the electric heater they were forced to use (damn those health and safety fascists) and the fact they had to distribute said coffee in polystyrene cups (damn those cost analysis fascists), it created a wonderful aroma throughout the airy church.

This unlikely group of Bedouins came to be in England through the mentorship of Zakaria Ibrahim who, with his El Mastaba Centre, is attempting to reignite the traditional popular music of Egypt after years of steady

Americanisation. In fact Ibrahim, a vaguely dishevelled man of forty clad in a scruffy jumper joined his protégés on stage for the last two songs and a somewhat more lengthy rant at the crowd. Despite this, it is hard not to be endeared to a group with such talent, such enthusiasm, and such a passion for caffeinated beverages. As the poet Agmaan says: "We make the coffee strong to clear your mind... your mind will become good on the second cup" – a mantra by which to live your life.

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Philistine's guide to Playwrights

Arts Felix is on a mission to educate. This week **Caz Knight** remembers some of the world's best writers

Unless you are an English literature or drama student (does not apply at Imperial) or take an interest in those subjects then it is not surprising that you may not know much, if anything at all, about some of the most prominent and talented playwrights that have existed and bequeathed upon us magnificent works of art. Trying to choose a few to write about here was a hard task especially when there are so many and because there can not be a definitive "best playwright" as this is a very personal opinion. However, we can rank playwrights (and indeed any other type of artist) in terms of their influence, notoriety and how their works have been received. The playwrights below do not convey directly my personal favourites, as I keep remembering ones I have forgotten. Instead I have tried to select a few "important" ones. Of course, the likes of Bertolt Brecht (Marxist German playwright and theatrical pioneer), Anton Chekov and Henrik Ibsen, although not included here, have influenced the likes of Coward, Bernard Shaw and many others. I have also mentioned nothing of the ancient Greek playwrights who have given us classics such as Oedipus Rex (Sophocles), The Bacchae and Medea (Euripides). Incidentally, *Women of Troy*, also by Euripides, is starting its season at the National Theatre at the end of this month. For now let us go to the medley I have chosen for this feature.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE 25 April 1564 – 23 April 1616

I don't think I could have got away without including what some call the Messiah of English Literature. Everyone educated at secondary school level in this country will have studied him at GCSE at least. It is a shame that the requirement to study him will often detract from the pleasure of reading his work.

Not only a playwright but a poet, Shakespeare created 38 plays, 154 sonnets, 2 long narrative poems and much else. His works have been performed more than any other the world over and one can guarantee that at any given time there will be a Shakespeare production going on the West End. I think any philistine could name one of his plays which include *Othello*, *As You*



Audrey Hepburn appears alongside Rex Harrison in the 1964 adaptation of 'Pygmalion' – 'My Fair Lady'

Like *It*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. George Bernard Shaw even coined the term 'Bardolatry' which means excessive adulation of Shakespeare!

OSCAR WILDE 16 October 1854 – 30 November 1900

Without a question the wittiest man ever to have lived (in my humble opinion), Wilde was Irish and went to Oxford. Despite being married with children, he was arrested for sodomy; a cinematization of his life was made in 1995 starring another great British wit (Stephen Fry) as Wilde and Jude Law, token eye candy, but brilliant none the less as Wilde's lover, Bosie. His works include his only novel, *A Picture of Dorian Grey* and plays *An Ideal Husband*, *A Good Woman* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* all of which have been made into delightful films. My favourite way to enjoy Oscar Wilde is simply by reading a few of his many, many quotations: I will leave you with a few now.

"A man can be happy with any woman as long as he does not love her."

"Anyone who lives within their means suffers from lack of imagination."

"Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months."

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW 26 July 1856 – 2 November 1950

Another Irish playwright who was also a keen political activist, his 60 plays are predominantly comical but with earnest underlying messages. Among his political plights were the equal rights for men and women, alleviat-

years. Probably one of his more famous works is *Pygmalion* which was made into a musical (*My Fair Lady*) starring Rex Harrison and Audrey Hepburn.

ROBERT CEDRIC SHERRIFF 6 June 1896 – 13 November 1975

I chose R.C. Sherriff for the sole reason that he wrote my favourite play of all time: *Journey's End*. I know it inside out having studied it at GCSE, but that did not perturb my enthusiasm! The play ran recently in the West End for some time and received huge praise. Sherriff was educated at New College, Oxford and served in WW1 and was wounded at Passchendaele, near Ypres. It was on his experiences in the war which formed the basis for *Journey's End*. The play is highly emotive and encompasses both the horrific, brutal reality of war as well as exploring the friendships which form during the ordeal. Laurence Olivier appeared in the first production of the play in 1928, taking on the lead role of Stanhope, the borderline alcoholic officer who is made uneasy upon the arrival of a younger boy from his old school. Sherriff wrote the screenplay for movie *Goodbye Mr. Chips*, adapted from the novel by James Hilton.

SIR NOEL COWARD 16 December 1899 – 26 March 1973

Noel Coward seems to be a jack-of-all-trades. Not only was he a playwright, but he wrote and released hit singles, won an Academy Award for his acting abilities and has a theatre named after him in St Martin's Lane. The theatre's name was changed from The Albery to The Noel Coward Theatre for the premiere of Broadway hit, *Avenue Q*. In Coward's day the theatre would have been called The New Theatre and it was there that he made his acting debut in 1920. It was not until 1924 that he was propelled to stardom for his role in the play *Vortex*, which contained many sexual and drug related issues. During the war Coward sang to the troops to boost moral. It was lucky the Germans had not invaded Britain as Coward was in 'The Black Book' for being gay and, following an invasion, would have been arrested and liquidated (H.G. Wells was also in this book for being a socialist).

The peak for his play writing came in the 1940s with works such as *Present Laughter*, *Blithe Spirit* and *The Happy*

ing the abuse on the working classes and Fabianism. He started the Fabian society (a British intellectual socialist society), which endeavoured to further such causes and also founded LSE with money left from the society. In terms of his plays, much inspiration was drawn from Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen who pioneered modern realistic drama. This was a sharp contrast to the frothy, sentimental drama which the London stage had seen in preceding



Winona Rider as Abigail and Daniel Day Lewis as John in the 1996 film version of Miller's 'The Crucible'



"Yeah... I'm cool, I just got into Oxford!" 'The History Boys' follows a class of grammar school boys as they apply to Oxbridge



Laurence Olivier appeared in the first production of 'Journey's End' in 1928

Breed. Critics have likened his work *Waiting in the Wings* to that of Russian playwright Anton Chekov. This work was completed in Jamaica to where Coward moved for tax reasons. It was here that he died, three years after receiving his knighthood.

THOMAS LANIER WILLIAMS III
26 March 1911 – 25 February 1983

Better known as Tennessee Williams, he acquired the nickname whilst at college on account of his father's Tennessee background and his southern drawl. Much of his work is said to have been inspired by his troubled family life; at five years old he contracted diphtheria which rendered him paralysed from the hips down for two years. Encouraged by his mother, he took to writing and making up stories. Another blow came following the mental health of his sister Rose, with whom he was very close. Rose was schizophrenic and spent most of her time in mental institutions, as was the practice then.

Finally it was decided that she undergo a lobotomy, a procedure which left her incapacitated and possibly had the biggest influence on Tennessee, who later suffered from alcoholism and depression. He won Pulitzer prizes for his famous works *A Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *A Street Car Named Desire*. Williams finally died in 1983 after having choked on an eye cap lid following supposed drinking and prescription drug taking.

ARTHUR MILLER 17 October 1915
– 10 February 2005

Miller was a Jewish- American playwright, born into Manhattan but then banished to Brooklyn following the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and the subsequent failing of his father's clothes making business. He is considered one of the greatest dramatists of the twentieth century and gave us some great works including *The Man Who Had All the Luck*, *View From A Bridge*, *The Crucible* (the film version starring



A Young and verry Sexy Marlon Brando in the 1951 film adaptation of Tennessee Willaim's 'A Streetcar Named Desire'

Winona Rider and Daniel Day-Lewis) and *Death of A Salesman* for which he is most famous (the film stars Dustin Hoffman and John Malkovich).

His work on the Federal Theatre Project was closed down due to its potential communist affiliations (remember the Cold War still going); the witch hunt which takes place in *The Crucible* is thought to be an analogy for the similar hunt for socialists taking place in the States at that time.

It is perhaps his marriage to Marilyn Monroe for which he is most famous! After a brief affair in 1951, Miller and Monroe were married just weeks after Miller divorced his first wife in June 1956. As per his will, there is only one theatre in the world which shares his name. The Arthur Miller theatre at the University of Michigan, where Miller received his degree in Journalism, was built in March 2007.

ALAN BENNETT 9 May 1934
– present

Another man possessing many talents, Bennett has written books, appeared in films and on television and written plays. He was educated at Exeter College, Oxford, obtaining a First Class History degree. During his time there he acted alongside many other would-be famous actors in the comedy sketch group the Oxford Revue. (Michael Palin, Terry Jones, Rowan Atkinson and Ken Loach have also been a part of the group). His fame came after performing at the Edinburgh film festival in 1966. As well as narrating a very popular version of *Winnie the Pooh*, Bennett has written any plays including *Kafka's Dick* and the very famous *History Boys* no doubt drawing inspi-

ration from his very own experience of applying for Oxford. The play has been a hit on both sides of the Atlantic and has received awards for Best Actor (Richard Griffiths). The film version, starring the original cast, has also had high acclaim. As well as refusing an Honorary Doctorate from Exeter College, Bennett has referred to cancer as 'a bore' after undergoing treatment in 2005. Bennett was made an Honorary fellow of Exeter College in 1987 and currently resides in Camden Town where has lived for thirty years. When it comes to questions regarding his sexuality, Bennett has likened these questions to asking a man dying of thirst to choose between Perrier or Malvern mineral water. I am still struggling to figure out the similarity; can anyone shed some light on it?



Illegal love – Wilde was arrested for sodomy and released from prison in 1897. Stephen Fry as Wilde and Jude Law as his lover, Bosie



Laurence Olivier as the title character in the 1944 film adaptation of Shakespeare's play 'Henry V'

Techies reveal all!

Musical Theatre Society presents "The Rise and Fall of David Sullivan", 2 & 3 December 7.30pm in the Union Concert Hall. Featuring Paul Dingwall, Ben Alun-Jones, Matt Woods, Ali Salehi-Reyhani, Katherine Webb, David Stewart and John Phillips.

felix@imperial.ac.uk



Trading Forum

Last week saw the first Union Trading Forum take place in the Union Bar and was organised to gather the views and opinions of our members who use our services. Over thirty students turned up to give their opinions and views of the Unions' services (or maybe just to eat free sandwiches) and I've summarised some of the points that were raised.

A large number of our members commented on the lack of glasses and the use of non-rigid plastic skiffs. The non-rigid plastic skiffs, which are disposable, contravene our environmental policy, and were re-introduced as a consequence of a supply issue with the rigid skiffs this summer. Once the supply issues were resolved, a stock of rigid skiffs were ordered immediately, as such we had a large amount of disposable skiffs left over which are used infrequently. Other concerns regarding the environmental policy included a lack of non-disposable cutlery, which disappeared from service earlier in the term; a result of the large amount of

cutlery being stolen. Fortunately we have just received a new stock of cutlery and plates, which, if you have eaten in da Vinci's recently, you may have noticed.

There were a number of negative comments on the speed of service, both within our catering outlets and in the bars. This is a recurring issue that we are well aware of and is likely to be the result of training. Due to the large number of part-time student staff we employ; it can be difficult to ensure a consistently high level of service. This year we have increased the level of training our part-time bar staff receive and feel this has been reflected by the quality of service in our bars. We have attempted to reduce the lunchtime queues in da Vinci's by moving some of the speedier foods into dBs, where you can get hot soup, paninis and sandwiches throughout the day. Another idea raised regarding the bars was to the introduction of more drink promotions. This is something which I am keen to introduce, so I will be working with Trading to deliver more promotions in the near future.

Additionally, some members commented on our entertainments program, with some positive comments regarding Freshers' Week and our newly introduced Bar FTSE. Remember you can see all of our upcoming entertainments can be found in Felix each week as well as on our website.

Over the next few months I hope to gather the views of more members, though should you experience any problems whilst using our services, don't hesitate to send an email or drop into my office.

Finally, my thanks to all of those who turned up to air their views, they are valued and are important to make change within the Union.



Chris Larvin
Deputy President
(Finance & Services)
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National Active Student Survey

Monday 26 November to Sunday 2 December sees the second National Active Student Survey (NASS) taking place in universities across the UK. We would like to encourage you to take just a few minutes of your time to complete the survey to let us know about your activity choices.

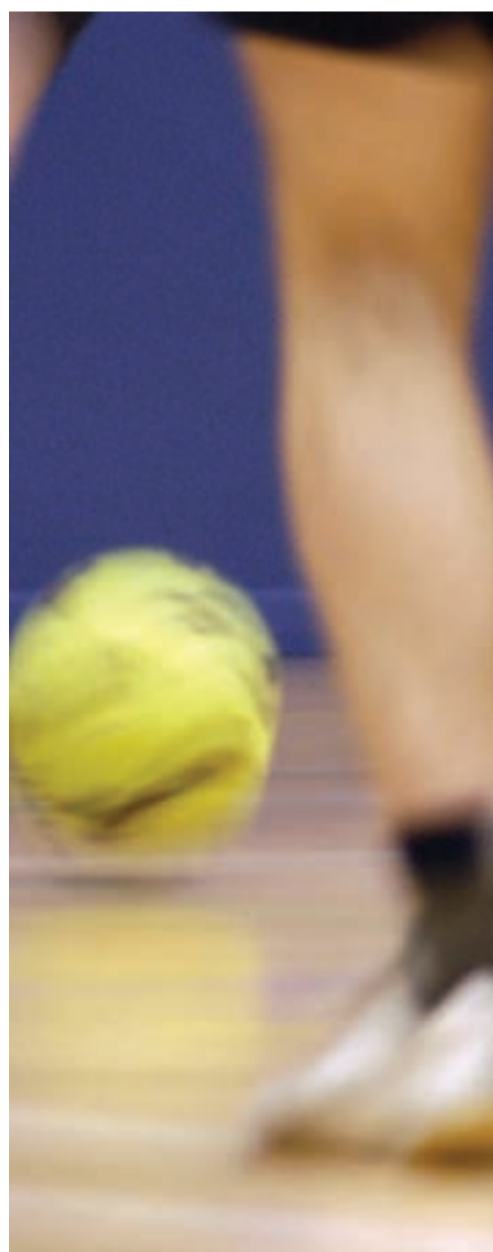
Don't forget that by taking part, you'll be entered into our free prize draw and could win one the following fantastic prizes - iPods, Mountain Bikes, and Life Fitness home exercise equipment - so don't miss out!

NASS is a student survey which aims to develop data on student participation in sport and physical activity for all universities in the UK.

We are very keen for as many Imperial students as possible to take part in the survey as possible so we can respond to student needs and trends and improve your time here.

The survey is very easy to complete and will only take a few minutes of your time. Please take care to answer honestly and accurately - there are no right or wrong answers! Just click on the link below, follow the instructions carefully and look forward to your chance of winning a great prize.

www.e-focus-net.com/surveys/nass07
Password: nass



Slept in again? Breakfast to go at the Union!

- Breakfast baps with sausage, bacon, eggs and more.
 - Fresh tea and coffee from our superb coffee machine.
 - All served fast for when you are in a rush.
- from 08:30 at the Union



at the union nov 23rd - nov 30th

FRIDAY 23RD



A new rave indie disco. Dance to D.I.Y disco. Indie electro punk rock, Old Skool, Hip Hop with a kick back of Grime plus a flavour of 80s and 90s retro pop.



Act. Normal.
(they won't suspect a thing)

WEDNESDAY 26TH

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The best value
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Gladiator Jousting
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only £1.30 a pint!
From 20:00

FRIDAY 30TH



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To celebrate the end of Positively Red SHAG Week we are holding two charity events. A sexy pole dancing show for the boys and an eye opening Ann Summers Party for the girls!
Check online for more info!



THURSDAY 29TH

TOO POSH TO WASH



ALSO ON

Tue 27th Super Quiz

COMING UP

Wed 5th Sin City - Giant Table Football
Fri 7th Subred - Drum 'n' Bass

imperialcollegeunion.org/ents

Imperial College Union, Beit Quadrangle, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB
The Union encourages responsible drinking. R.O.A.R. Student I.D. Required.





Film

Film Editor – Alex Casey

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Darjeeling: Enjoyment Unlimited

Wes Anderson welcomes us on board his Indian voyage with his latest take on the modern family unit

The Darjeeling Limited ★★★★★

Director: Wes Anderson
Writers: Wes Anderson, Jason Schwartzman
Cast: Adrien Brody, Owen Wilson, Jason Schwartzman

Alex Casey
 Film Editor

By a fifth feature, many directors begin to detach themselves from the roots of their filmmaking philosophy. They get bigger budgets, less politically active and generally very prone to believing their own hype. Thankfully, one man worth the hype, Wes Anderson, continues to know what he does best. And do it better.

Always watchable, Anderson has reached new levels of rewatchability with a story so seemingly simple that the appeal can appear difficult to explain to someone unfamiliar with the Anderson mould. As three estranged brothers reconnect on a train journey across exotic India, Adrien Brody, Owen Wilson and Jason Schwartzman lift the quirky siblings beyond the script and into true characters, all set against the gorgeous backdrop that allows Anderson the chance to explore his cinematography skills beyond the scope of his previous features.

The staples of his oeuvre are all still here though, and the family of filmmakers that he has built around him feature strongly here, especially Wilson with whom he has worked consistently

since their debut feature, *Bottle Rocket*. Jason Schwartzman returns to the fray following his turn in *Rushmore*, showing that maturity as an actor has seen his talent grow, and should see him break out to a larger audience following smaller roles in *I Heart Huckabees* and the atrocious *Marie Antoinette*. Bill Murray even pops up again in a cameo role for continuity.

Anderson and his filmic family are nothing short of fascinating, with an appreciation of human

relationships that continually crop up in their cinematic depiction of unusual family units. While *Rushmore* centred on a student trying to form a family outside his own, *The Royal Tenenbaums* took a much more direct approach to dysfunctional relations and then *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* provided a working family, parallel to the environment in which Anderson has grown his own career. *Darjeeling* however, whilst not succumbing to the mundane norm, does at least contain horizons of identification that make the brothers infinitely more human, pushing it beyond even the immense enjoyability of his aforementioned previous



Born to be wild. And fun



Let's pray for these stangers in the background to leave our house

features.

Also stepping back on board with *Darjeeling* is Randall Poster, the stalwart music supervisor, the man who scored *The Life Aquatic* almost entirely with a Portuguese folk translation of David Bowie's greatest hits.

Soundtracks are a defining part of the Anderson experience and the sounds of the Kinks interspersed with the old scores of Satyajit Ray's films, not

to mention the hilarious uses of Peter Sarstedt's *Where Do You Go To (My Lovely)*, are a true delight here. Regardless of whether the direction requires it, Poster's scoring anchors each moment and emotion perfectly.

Darjeeling never fails to set the perfect scene; whether in a Parisian hotel as is the setting of the opening accompaniment piece, the short film *Hotel Chevalier*, or in the heart of India, Anderson projects an insight beyond most filmmakers. His attention to detail and reflection on the more unconventional aspects of humanity make him endearing, whether he is creating losers, winners, has-beens or will-be.

For the uninitiated, I beseech you to give this a try. Whilst by no means an auteur in an individual right, Anderson has his personal stamp all over this film. If ever a cinema term needed to be redefined here, *The Darjeeling Limited* would be the ultimate family film.

Movies based on video games don't have to be crap – so why are they?

Stefan Carpanu

It's been quite fashionable to buy the movie rights to videogames for some time now. With almost 30 such movies made in the last fifteen years and a whopping 43 to be launched in the next three years or so, the popularity of VG movies among major Hollywood studios is undeniable. However, the resulting cinematic productions have almost invariably been thrashed by film critics and alienated fans. Being an avid gamer myself, I've wondered on many occasions why films "inspired" from videogames just aren't capable of delivering on their potential – and whether this potential is actually attainable.

Tending to the more simple issue first, I'll look at the latter part of the question. It stands to reason that films and games come from two different mediums. Films, while absorbing experiences in themselves, can hardly become as enticing and (oh dear, here it is) addictive as their VG counterparts. Given their different underlying characteristics, an exaggerated level of imitation between the two is likely to produce hilarious effects, the first person camera view used in *Doom*'s big screen appearance being a perfect example thereof. So basically, a good adaptation would presume the writers and directors of the films to acknowledge the different materials at hand

and work from there on to recreate and further develop the storyline and the characters.

But seriously now, this is a no-brainer. The actual cause underpinning the (few) mediocre and (many) bad VG movies is of a financial nature, as well as a perceptual one. The major film studios, in their search for highly rewarding business opportunities, have identified this sector as an extremely lucrative one: gamers are seemingly unpretentious and loyal to their favourite games. So instead of hiring able and expensive directors/writers who are capable of fulfilling the metamorphosis of a videogame to a film, the studios go for several "experienced" names of the genre, whose adaptations have brought in vast amounts of money for arguably small investments – the likes of Paul W.S. Anderson (*Mortal Kombat*, *Resident Evil*, *Alien versus Predator*) and Uwe Boll (*Alone in the Dark*, *Bloodrayne*, etc.) come to mind. Their recipe for success is grounded in the idea that sexy lead actresses and buckets of gore and violence ensure high weekend box office revenues. Of course, this does not apply to VG movies only, as most of today's "horror" films abide by the same principles.

Along the way, game franchises such as *Resident Evil* get massacred on the big screen, as storyline and characters are sacrificed in order to offer the likes

of Milla Jovovich some more screen time (nothing against that in general, just not under these circumstances). Perhaps a defining moment for the genre took place when the producers of *Resident Evil* went for Anderson's script of *Resident Evil*, instead of choosing the more game-faithful version of a milestone figure in the business of the undead, George Romero. Consequently, the films have come to appeal mostly to those people who are satisfied by the genre of action/horror films, and not to the fans "for" whom they were made.

On the other hand, even faithful adaptations don't ensure a quality film – mainly because successfully adapting a videogame to the big screen is far more difficult than it seems. It's no secret that many games lack substance, so the scripts resulting from them are pretty slim – which poses a serious problem for a ninety minute movie. This is where the quality of a good screenwriter would come in handy and – surely – a good collaboration with the game producers (who themselves sometimes forget about their buyers and get swayed by percentages) wouldn't harm anyone either.

In the end though, game fans aren't looking for *The Seventh Seal* when watching these adaptations. A cool, mind-blowing, special-effects ridden experience might do as well, as long



Having a go at my overly airbrushed face and CG eyes, eh?

as it has a decent story behind it. And more often than not, the cornerstones of the story are already available in the games. Succeeding in implementing the aforementioned factors would not only satisfy and mystify gamers; it would also let other people enjoy these films.

So VG movies are bad because studios choose to believe that gamers don't expect a lot, just because they like blowing the brains off rotting zombies, or controlling a hot, under-dressed female Indiana Jones around watery caves and dusty rooftops. Why is it so hard not to look down on someone just because they enjoy having some fun every once in a while? Sure, not all gamers become world renowned sci-

entists, doctors or managers, but we're talking about a matter of principle here. There is no big difference between the game industry and the film industry, as both relish the prospect of milking innocent fans of their (and sometimes their relatives') money, but at least every now and then they offer something worthwhile, something truly special and genuinely life altering.

The VG movies industry on the other hand seems to have taken over the worst of both worlds and that makes for an extremely distasteful experience. Is it really that hard to stand up to our gamerish expectations, or do the film producers think it's just not worth bothering because the money will come in anyway?

Hubris or not hubris, Beowulf asks

As the oldest piece of literature known to have originated in Britain comes back to the cinema screen, Felix investigates whether the CGI treatment and bags of boobs are a dumbing down of the classic poem

Beowulf ★★★★★

Director: Robert Zemeckis

Writers: Neil Gaiman,
Roger Avary

Cast: Ray Winstone,
Anthony Hopkins,
Angelina Jolie

Alex Casey

With controversy flying at murmurs of plot tampering and computer graphics abound in this adaptation of the Old English classic, *Beowulf* is waging a knowing war on tradition. Expectations aren't high; yet somewhere in this digital mesh of effects, *Beowulf* launches an onslaught of innuendo and tongue-in-cheek references that questions everything we hold sacred about the classics.

Is it better that a film hold its hands up at the start and say "We used computers, here's the result" than to try and include it seamlessly leading to infuriated 'serious' filmgoers clearing the cinema? Robert Zemeckis certainly seems to think so, sacrilegiously replacing poetry with pixels. Or so the public outcry would seem to imply. Why are old words not to be subjected to modern storytelling methods? Assuming you can live with this, helped by the knowing nods that *Beowulf* makes to its unconventional rebirth, this can be a surprisingly enjoyable film.

Hubris seems to be the order of the day with the bounty of bosoms on show in the early half laying the scene for a tale of temptation that adds a hell of a lot more sex than originally was translated from the Old English text, at least in the Seamus Heaney ver-

sion. The faultless hero of our poem is now just as interested in getting his leg over as he is in protecting the Danish kingdom of Hrothgar from the evil Grendel and its mother. The effect of this is a curious and intriguing mesh the original *Beowulf* tale and the creation of an almost Shakespearean tragic hero, haunted by lust, but still there is not as much bastardising as expected. It does seem he is in good company though, as it seems the other men in Middle Ages Denmark can't keep it in their pants for more than a few minutes at a time either. Anyone who has visited Copenhagen recently probably understands that, even though this was 1300 years ago, this is simply due to a lack of entertainment on offer. But then they should still have been concentrating more on Grendel slaying in those days.

The humour here is the means by which Zemeckis assuages the crowd of academics baying for blood. Austin Powers-like moments near the beginning, both the comic obscuring of *Beowulf's* cock and the randy Geat trying to get a 'gobble' outside the hall, work wonders at loosening up the tough crowd and keeping tongue placed firmly in cheek throughout reassures the die hard literati that this at no point claimed to be a faithful retelling of Britain's oldest written work.

In order to throw some real controversial films into the mix here however, the fact is that Angelina Jolie is becoming so unsexy it hurts. As a beautiful woman with an exotic Amazonian look about her, you'd think she might be sexy just by being. But no, when Hollywood requires a temptress, they get Ange on the phone and she negotiates skin time and begins method acting with whoever



Another morning in the Jolie-Pitt house; The pervy period costume neighbour across the street...

she's costarring with. Demi Moore did a similar thing whereby every role she chose for a while revolved around sex but they at least had the decency to give her a different character side that made her seem slightly naïve. Here Jolie is supposed to be playing the mother of the most hideous creature on Earth, and with three kids or something on the roster you might want to tone down the nude scenes with excessive gold body paint and tail, albeit computer generated.

Elsewhere it's the role of Robin

Wright Penn that steals your attention in every scene she's in. I refrain from saying steals the scene, because it is her computerised face that seems least to resemble anything human (which she is meant to be) rather than any extraordinary talent that does it. And in case you're not sure what she really looks like, you can rest assured knowing she does not look quite so airbrushed and facially stretched in reality.

As a poem, this is a tale of men where women get about two pages of attention and that's including Grendel's

mother (Angelina). The film makes the women's roles pivotal which is the means by which *Beowulf* himself gets his most severe character assassination. Zemeckis seems to be implying that after over a millennium of surviving as one of the most studied heroes in English literature, women's liberation gets you. As far as its artistic merits go, this won't go down in the same league as its source material. But it knows so, and at least the CGI is honest about what it is. If only Peter Jackson would take note.

In the days where everything is cheaper with CGI, has it all gone too far?



Woody gets his own back for all those Brokeback Mountain jokes

Angry Geek

There's something brilliantly consistent about the majority's ability to take something nice and just smear faeces all over it. There's democracy, which was ruined the second that more than one American got involved in it. Then there's free speech, a great theory made redundant when Americans figured out a way of mass-producing it. And finally there was computer-generated imagery, unceremoniously desecrated the second Walt Disney noticed it was making money.

I will generally watch anything as long as it's being projected onto a large enough screen, and so things like the political alignment of George Clooney or the breast alignment of Maggie Q aren't really of massive importance to me in whether I enjoy a film or not. But as someone who almost broke down in tears at the sight of the latest series of *Spooks*, I am rather sensitive to good things becoming awful.

Toy Story was, and still is, a fantastic film. I do not mean this simply in a landmark-in-the-industry sense, but also in the way it wrote to every level of the audience. The new age of CGI wasn't necessarily a facet of that and it didn't make the writers any better, but Pixar's team ethic as a whole was something precious. It was something beautiful.

But like Hayden Panettiere alone at a nightclub, the rapists soon turned up. First there were the competition-hungry bastards at Dreamworks. Then the slightly pitiful attempts by 20th Century Fox. Then dead silence, because the film-going audiences were so appalled at what was being produced – and I don't care if you thought the *Ice Age* squirrel thing was funny; you're wrong – that no-one could be bothered to work out what generic settings

"I don't care if you thought the Ice Age squirrel thing was funny; you're wrong"

hadn't been done already. Cartoon forest. Cartoon garden. Cartoon toybox. That's enough to fill the coffers for a little longer.

Thank goodness, then, for *Beowulf*, which brings CGI slap bang into the modern market (naturally, I discard anything Squaresoft did as pissing into the wind). If Felix has already covered the film, then you'll know it's a rage fest of the disembodied voice of Ray Winstone beating the shit out of stuff, and

Angelina Jolie getting naked. If they haven't covered the film, then frankly you probably know all you need to to make you go and see it.

Naturally, the move to computer graphics is a big one for a studio whose largest decision generally is where to get rid of the leftover millions of dollars each film seems to leave cluttering up the offices, but looking at all of the fancy graphics, lovely trailers and completely semi-legal clips from it, this horrible realisation dawns on you that they've not so much set out to make a CGI film as they have just put CGI in wherever they couldn't be bothered to do it with real people. Which just happens to be everywhere.

I mean, Angelina Jolie's character looks like Angelina Jolie. Ray Winstone, admittedly, looks considerably more do-able than he does normally, but that's not really a good reason to start doing everything up in 3DSMax now, is it? It's a little disconcerting, because it's beginning to make me think that maybe Dreamworks had it right all along, and that derivative cartoon fantasy lands might be the safe option. After all, rehashing Looney Tunes isn't so bad, because that was actually good in the first place. As it is, I'm stuck staring at Angeline with a tail, while the most repulsive Cockney of all time gets naked on screen.

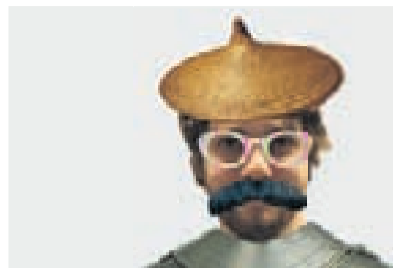
Christ. Bring back the squirrel.



Music

Music Editors – Jenny Gibson and Matty Hoban

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Matty Hoban
Music Editor

I played at a gig last night in East London, and it was fun even though we played to a very empty venue. The latter fact did not bother me in the slightest because I did actually have a ton of fun, not in the sun or in your mum. However on my way home, I had my usual thoughts about gigs and things and the music business in general.

Forming a band is something a lot of people do, so it alarms me when people in a band relish and adore the attention they get as if they are gods amongst men. The British music press is probably to blame because they are constantly idolising individuals and visionaries and reinforcing the idea the whole rock star ideal. Forming a band should be about having fun and satisfying your inner audience. The most satisfying bands I have seen just do what feels right to them and fuck the rest.

The band that to me demonstrates the fun over phallusy factor is Pavement; they are perhaps the best band that ever existed. They did not just write songs, they played with the idea of a song until that idea became something resembling a song. The most challenging thing to do when you are in a band is to actually think about what sounds 'right' but then what does 'right' actually mean? It is elusive and sometimes is actually wrong. You can actually be right by being wrong. Anyway, I'm blathering on.

Chances are, your band is okay and you have some songs which sound right to you. You might even find a small audience whose concept of right matches up with yours or they just think you sound like their favourite band. Either way, you persevere with what you are doing and you play more gigs. Logically, the more gigs you play, the more likely you are to acquire more fans. Soon, you'll have record labels nipping at your ankles and supporting Bloc Party at Wembley.

Wrong! No-one owes you anything and the powers that be, ie. most high-level promoters, record labels and A&R people do not actually care about music. They care about bums on seats and sustainability. Myspace has just made everything worse meaning people wanting to become promoters and start record labels have a footing and can begin their exploitation. I say exploitation because for promoters and middlemen it is impossible for them to make any money whatsoever since venue hire fees are ridiculously high and barely no-one wants to pay money to see a band they have never heard of. In order for promoters to make money they cannot possibly afford to pay the bands.

The only way to usurp all this nonsense is to avoid shady looking promoters, take more power into your own hands and just have fun and make music for yourselves; you'll stand out more from everything. Also, if you are a London band, do not just start gigging as much as possible; your friends are your first fanbase; gig occasionally and make it an occasion.

It's Britney, you female dog

[Enter pun taken straight for thelondonpaper, London Lite or Metro talking about Britney Spears here for minimal comic effect and devaluation of our self-worth]

Album Review



Britney Spears
Blackout (Jive)
★★★★☆

'It's Britney, bitch!' Who would have guessed way back in the late nineties at the height of the bubblegum pop craze that this would be the opening line of a Britney album? No one. Then again I don't think anyone expected her to still be making albums let alone be on her kill-me-now-the-world-has-gone-crazy 5th studio LP. It seems Britney has managed to escape the mid-noughties slaughter of pop princesses the same way Madonna escaped the culling of the pop stars from whatever pre-historic era she is from – by constantly changing her image.

Everyone knows how so utterly brilliant Midge is at this but don't forget that her lesbian make-out partner, Britney, has also undergone some spectacular transformations. She's gone from slutty schoolgirl ("Baby, One More Time") to tight cat-suit clad seductress ("Oops, I Did It Again"). Then came the snake-charming, midriff-baring dance diva who has no objections to having her faced licked ("I'm A Slave 4 U") followed by a clumsy flight attendant willing to make out with an obese gentleman in the toilets after spilling a beverage on his crotch ("In The Zone"). But the one constant with all these personas Brit has adopted in the past, I'm sure you will agree is that they have all oozed sex appeal. The difference with the release of her latest album, "Blackout", is there is no million dollar music video to accompany the album and the media has no qualms with portraying her as an alcoholic, baby-dropping, divorced moth-



You can actually trace the rise and fall of the Republicans with the rise and fall of Britney; no coincidence

er-of-two. An image which doesn't really lend itself to the adjective 'sexy' unless, of course, you're into that sort of thing, in which case this must be like a wet dream come true.

But that's okay, right? I mean with all the things going on in Brit's life right now and the changes she has been through since she was "In the Zone" you'd think she has more than enough fodder to deliver an album with something to say. A few scores to settle (JT? K-Fed? The media?), a couple of myths to dispel – did kissing Madonna really mean she needed surgery on her lips afterwards? What happened to her underwear on the infamous night out with the girls? – and a whole lot of explaining to do (The haircut? where is the real video for "Gimme More"?). With all these experiences to draw from

she might be just be about to deliver the best work of her career. A body of work some might even describe as being a 'classic'. Wrong. "Blackout" is merely an update of her last album – fun, whimsical but relentlessly impersonal. In fact, Paris Hilton could have recorded the very same album and not had to change a thing about it.

That's not say that it is as bad. Honestly, it is probably better than anyone expected – the super-producers recruited for the project make sure she's up to date style-wise and that she is never left wanting for a hypnotic beat. This time around she does sound a whole lot more robotic than usual and the noticeable absence of ballads is also a let down seeing as this is one area she has improved on during her career ("I'm Not A Girl", "Everytime").

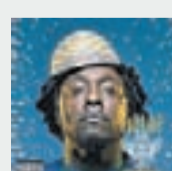
The problem is when an artist's 5th album sounds like a modernised and more provocative version of her debut it begs the question – why bother?

There are few songs worth giving a listen. These include the Danja-produced "Gimme More" which she royally screwed up during that performance at the MTV awards, the paparazzi-bashing "Piece of Me", which sees her taking a swing at the media for, "Printing pictures of her derriere in the magazine" and is rumoured to be the next single off the album. Other stand-outs are "Hot as Ice", which features the dumbest chorus ever but still manages to shine despite it, and the terrific "Toy Soldier". It looks like Britney messed up the formula this time but just might end up getting away with it.

Jemil Salami

Will.I.Am or Will.I.Am.Not, that is some sort of question?

Album Review



Will.I.Am
Songs About Girls (Interscope)
☆☆☆☆☆

I think I deserve a medal for this review. Not because it is particularly good (dearest reader I would never be so presumptuous), but because I just had to listen through "Songs About Girls", the new album by the Black Eyed Peas' Will.I.Am, which is probably one of the worst pile of bollocks albums I have ever heard. It's like war crimes

have been committed on my senses; my ears and face. I feel physically ill.

It pains me to have to write such a scathing review for a producer with so much potential. Previous to this release, he had been slowly building up his solo fan base with guest spots on, amongst others, Justin Timberlake's "Damn Girl" as well as Talib Kweli's buttery smooth "Hot Thing", both of which have been scaling the heights of my Last.fm for a good few weeks now. I suppose this is why I found it such a disappointing release – after having demonstrated his excellent ear for funky, hip-hoppy, take-off-your-shirt-and-dance-in-front-of-the-mirror tunes, he goes and releases 17 tracks (61 minutes and 41 seconds) of generic brainless R'n'B bullshit. I really don't know how he thinks he can get away with it. Who will buy it? The only people I can conceive of liking this are

12-year-old love-sick girls, and people who have given up on life entirely, both of which are somewhat lacking in buying power. Here's what I didn't like:

- 1) It is extremely repetitive. The same 5 seconds of music repeated over and over again in each and every song. No innovation or variation for minutes at a time. If they were particularly catchy hooks, it may be forgivable, but they aren't even close. Pure filler.
- 2) Will.I.Am's voice is lazy and slow. It's as if he just can't be bothered. He doesn't want to be there, he doesn't care, he knows it's bad, and he just wants to go home and pretend it never happened.
- 3) The beats are slow, uninteresting and uninspiring. They don't change for entire songs! What is the point?
- 4) The lyrics are absolutely devoid of

lyricism.

You can find more insight on a box of cornflakes. Recurring themes are: girls; money. Yes, it's a full stop; there are no more! It must be said, there are some gems in this category though, I guess due to Will.I.Am's poor grasp of irony, and a failed editing process.

Some good points to provide a bit of balance:

Um. There is a picture of him wearing a very nice suit in the album art. Oh, and the CD came in one of those new shatter-proof cases. Pretty fancy.

Well, I think Will.I.Am himself sums up his own album on the penultimate track "Spending Money", when the line "I got nothing but money, honey!" is repeated over and over. Really, he couldn't be more right: no talent, no wit, no future – just money, honey! Oh, and no stars.

Peter Sinclair



Style out grey London skies



£8, Miss Selfridge



£150, Topshop



£15, Topshop



£30, Topshop



£9.50, American Apparel



£55, Office



£18, Topshop



£185, Urban Outfitters



£80, Urban Outfitters



£15, Topshop



£12, American Apparel



£24, Urban Outfitters



£10, American Apparel



£110, Urban Outfitters

COOL

Victoria Beckham



She is brilliant in Ugly Betty! She is playing a variation on herself, a press-hungry celebrity that actually does nothing. And I totally love her for being her superficial self.

Rihanna



She is such a pretty doll! She's totally (allegedly) had a boob job, and it's probably anti-feminist to say this, but it looks great.

Zac Efron



This is quickly becoming a celebrity-o-meter... But although Efron looks like a female to male transexual, that's a transexual I would totally do.

LAME



Games

Games Editors – Azfarul Islam and Sebastian Nordgren

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Azfarul "Az" Islam
Games Editor

I know a lot of people are afraid of writing because they think they can't: that's rubbish. Have you seen the film *Ratatouille*? The motto there is "anyone can cook". And I think the same is true for writing. Yeah, initially there are a few hiccups and the people around you may not be the most encouraging bunch. But if you think you enjoy it, then I say stick with it. You certainly couldn't have gone past your Personal Statement or heck, even school, if you couldn't string together a sentence. So give yourselves at least that much and try dabbing your hands in the literary arts. You'll be surprised at how creative an outlet it can be; just like music or drawing.

Thus, this week I'm proud to present one of the latest additions to Felix Games: the *Reader Riposte* section. This is essentially the space for you - the gamer, the reader and the writer - occupations that we sincerely hope aren't mutually exclusive.

While the section itself elucidates the minor details; I'm summarise it. Initially, we want to start it as a series of comments on a game that is reviewed in Felix. This not only allows us to get a broader picture of said title, but also lets the readers get more involved and have their say. So, don't worry if your comments don't agree with that of the main review - your opinions are yours to express and we wouldn't want it any other way.

Now, you may be wondering why we're reviewing *Portal* so late since the Internets is already brimming with praises and much orgasmic lyrical waxing. We believe that we shouldn't just rush through a game just for the sake of reviewing it. Rather, it's about experiencing the game like it was meant to be and then expressing our thoughts in literary form. It sounds a bit haughty, but Felix Games is about being different. That's why we strive to give you so much more. It's not only about the games, but about the exciting medium of interactive, digital entertainment. We love to explore not only the depths but the breadth of this insane industry. And we definitely want you to join us for this journey.

Gairaigo returns this week with a look at *Katamari Damacy* which made a bit of a splash on the Internet a few years back. While you may think it's a waste to be focusing on an old game, I think it tells much about what makes certain games special. *Katamari Damacy* isn't the kind of game you can easily forget about and particularly not when the King of All-Cosmos is such a random, effed-up character. He offers some genuine "WTF?" moments and you'll be surprised at how eagerly you look forward to his next flippant speech. Gotta love that freak.

I'd like to point out that the Christmas Term is almost up. I would like make a request for your feedback on the section so we can kick some more ass come Spring. E-mail your opinions to games.felix@imperial.ac.uk.



While true, run through

Sebastian Nordgren opens a portal to another dimension, all for the sake of cake



Ah, *Portal* - one of the latest progenitors of a whole new series of Internet memes and a true successor to "It is delicious cake. You must eat it."

"This was a triumph. I'm making a note here: huge success. It's hard to overstate my satisfaction." Rarely has the ending of a game so fully represented the feelings of the player as these lines sung by the litling, robotic voice of *Portal*'s antagonist GLaDOS. What *Portal* really highlights is Valve's ability to acquire an idea and morph it into something so much better - in this case not Counter-Strike or Day of Defeat, but the little-known *Narbacular Drop*.

For all 12 of you who played *Narbacular Drop*, it was a clever little puzzle game about a princess escaping a castle, overcoming obstacles with a wand that could create, unsurprisingly, portals. What Valve have done is take a great gameplay idea and wrap it in layer upon layer of meat (or soy bean for the carnivorously challenged) and created a shockingly good game. In-

stead of merely porting the concept to the Source engine, they hired the lead writer of *Psychonauts* and expended an enormous amount of effort in creating one of the funniest games since the late LucasArts' adventure games. And it works.

It works so well, in fact, that the 2-3 hour mind-bending puzzler is one that will live on in the collective consciousness far longer than any of the other excellent games they packaged into *The Orange Box*. Not only is the gameplay excellently twisted, but throughout the game the anonymous protagonist is jeered on by the oddly reassuring robotic voice of GLaDOS (a cunning word-play on Gladys). In an oddly backwards way, your antagonist becomes the main character, as she changes from a deadpan lab coordinator to menacing to desperate to so many other states of mind - all while dropping casual off-the-cuff remarks like "if you feel faint from thirst, feel

free to pass out" and "thank you for helping us help you help us all". And in the final fight, each layer of her personality is stripped away individually, showing how multi-faceted all of us really are.

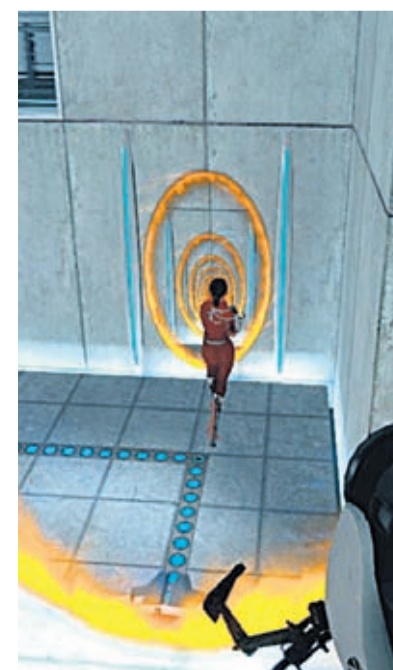
And while *Portal*'s enjoyment is largely independent of narrative, it's a testament to Valve that they've managed to weave in so much humour with so little material. Instead of having an all-encompassing philosophical view of the world like *BioShock* with its Ayn Randian objectivism, *Portal*'s narrative is about cake because (in the words of the lead writer) "everyone likes cake". Turrets plead at you to come out of hiding, declaring "Nap time!" if they don't find you, incineration is referred to as euthanasia and it's all distorted by the sort of politically correct nonsense that permeates society today. Even crates get their share of the attention, with the absurdly-named *Weighted Companion Cube*, emblazoned on all 6 sides with a little pink heart - good for at least a hearty chuckle. And then one finds pictures of the little fellow superimposed on pictures of Marilyn Monroe and Charlie Chaplin... In a way, this is what *Psychonauts* should have been - a hilarious game with fun gameplay, instead of the cack-handed platforming that ultimately made it so frustrating.

Portal is remarkable because it doesn't just have one of those "why didn't anyone think of this" concepts behind it, and it's not just excellently executed gameplay-wise, but because it does all those things and adds in a generous sprinkle of good old-fashioned black humour that is completely unnecessary for the core game. So, if you don't own *The Orange Box* yet, you really should buy it for *Portal* alone. It's a landmark game, packing more enjoyment into 3 hours than *Titanic* and showcasing a fact that us gamers have been aware of for quite some time - that games are superior to any other medium when done this well.

And remember, the cake is a lie.



One level. Two Portals. And a multitude of ways to solve it



Portal messes with your mind

Reader riposte: Portal to the public

Azfarul Islam thinks that you should speak up about the games that matter to you; enter *Reader Riposte*

What really makes gaming special for me is how it can bring people together for a truly communal experience. Sessions like these become exciting adventures that are saturated in equal amounts of cut-throat competition and cheering camaraderie. To celebrate that spirit, I thought it would be quite interesting if Felix Games opened up a section where readers from all over Imperial College are able to offer their comments - without regard for censure - on spotlight games.

What Felix Games wants is for you readers to be yourselves; there's no reason to be all professional or uptight. Offer your thoughts - whether they be serious, cheesy, quirky or all of the above! Or you could just pick out whatever made you love and/or hate the game in question. Heck, you could even write *haiku* which would be pretty damn cool and witty at the same time. It's really your canvas (if a little limited in size, sorry) and I want you to draw on it.

This is a fantastic way to get involved with both Felix and the world of gaming; you don't have to write lengthy reviews or feature articles. We'll just take a few words of your time and you can let the world (or at least, Imperial College students) know about your gaming critique in aperitif form.

While this was basically a trial run; for future submissions I'll have to be a little mean and ask that there be a word limit of about **50 words**. This means that you can write absolutely anything - say, ten to twelve words - upto a total of fifty. I'm also sorry to say that single word comments like "Awesome" or "crap" or "leet" will have to be passed

on. I'm sorry but they really don't say much.

The best way to know what games will be focused on is to be part of the Felix Games mailing list. If you're not part of it then just hit me with an e-mail indicating your desire to be placed in a list of truly distinguished lu-

minaries at games.felix@imperial.ac.uk.

Alternatively, I'll indicate in some form as to what titles will be appearing in Felix Games for subsequent issues.

Hopefully we'll be running reviews for the likes of *Super Mario Galaxy*, *Call of Duty 4*, *Assassin's Creed*, *Crysis* and *Mass Effect* as time goes on.

Of course, we're always open to reader submissions; don't hesitate to tel-
eport to us a copy of your reviews for the above,

and any other, games that you fancy.

Back to the ye olde rulebook: I would really appreciate it if I could get the comments for Reader Riposte (and another other material for that matter) by the Monday that *precedes* the Friday that Felix is published. This is so that I can get enough time to organise the layout properly and make sure each article is done proper justice and isn't just relegated into a tiny corner with an equally tiny picture.

So, warm up MS-Word (or, gasp, pick up that pen) and start jotting down your thoughts on the wacky and wonderful world of gaming. Now, shoo!

"Leetsauce in game format, this pwnz all. Pure simplicity, beautifully crafted into a magnificent entertainment package, Valve have outdone themselves in their creation of Portal, a game included in the Half Life 2 Orange Box. The idea behind this game is brilliant beyond bounds, overcoming obstacles and puzzles using mere holes in the space/time continuum, taking leaps beyond the imagination of any other game creation that I for one have played. If you don't already have it, you're a total n00b. l2game."
- Samuel Turnouff, 2nd Year, Computing

"Portal. What can I say? A breath of fresh air to what can be deemed a stagnating FPS genre. It's such a new experience whacking down Portals here and there and it can take a bit to see how you solve the 3D puzzles using this powerful new tool. Although once you get the Companion Cube rolling you'll soon be on your way to a delicious reward, but is the cake a lie?"
- James Finnerty, 2nd Year, Computing

"When it comes to Portal I've heard numerous comments saying that it's too short. You're damn right it's too short! With entertainment this good, I demand there to be more! It's just as well, as modders will be all over this game."
- Kris Machowski, 1st Year, Physics

"It was a game that actually required you to think about what you were doing as opposed to mindlessly shooting."
- Adam Rutherford, 1st Year, Biology

"It's short because the first thirteen levels are basically tutorials leaving only six actual gameplay levels left."
- Andrew Lim, 2nd Year, Computing

"Portal's somewhat of a milestone, showing that Valve's policy of finding talent, encouraging it and nudging it towards success pays off with awesome results."
- Michael Cook, 2nd Year, Computing

Gairaigo Episode III: Katamari Damacy insanity



Start small, think big

Azfarul Islam

Gairaigo returns after an elongated hiatus to the chagrin of many and the sheer joy of some. This time we look at a game that's not necessarily the latest, but is definitely one of the quirkiest.

Katamari Damacy

Easily one of the most bizarre games I've played in a while, Katamari was quick in establishing itself as a connoisseur of infantile surrealism.

It's a game that tasks you to do something that's an intrinsic impulse of the curious toddler; roll any round object. However, there's more to it than just playing with balls. The King of All-Cosmos apparently got a little tipsy one night and somehow managed to snuff out all the stars in the galaxy. Being the great monarch he is, it's upto you as his son to right his gigantic wrongs.

To that end you need to roll around

the magical katamari - a strange sphere that has the ability to adhere any object, within relative size, to its being. The reason being that you need to build up a repertoire of solid matter that the King will fuse together into a star.

You start quite small - with a diameter of a few centimetres - but as the game wears on you quickly attain magnitude and it's not long before entire cities become part of your omnipotent mass. There are a myriad of items - most totally and utterly random - that are strewn about a level. You need to be wary of what you pick up though. Elongated objects will transfigure how your Katamari rolls, fast, motive objects may knock items off your Katamari and obviously you want to avoid trying to pick up the ladies until you're a bit larger.

Yes, Katamari allows you to make humans and other living creatures become but a stepping stone to your voracious desire to rebuild the heav-

ens. While this does seem to effuse subtly Stalinistic vibes, it's all wrapped in a wonderfully kaleidoscopic aura of sheer insanity.

The gameplay is strangely addictive - there's a certain sense of empowerment as you incorporate more and more objects to your bulk. The visuals are technically quite inadequate but compensate with sheer personality. Special mention must go to the incredibly eclectic soundtrack: it's one that will make you hum the tunes a long time after you've finished playing.

The logical lunacy never falters: where else would you go about collecting crabs so that you can rebuild the Cancer constellation?

Despite there being sequels to this game, I think the first one truly emanates a truly ebullient level of charm and iridescent joy.

Katamari is not available in the UK, although the sequels are

Portable

Azfarul Islam

Portal gets brilliant representation as a flash-based title that takes the FPS-but-not-really and then scales it onto the 2D plane. The genius still permeates throughout and the puzzles are fiendishly clever. You do need to apply a level of forethought that's somewhat different from the volumetric iteration. As a teaser to the full package, the web edition is a tantalising tidbit.



Adventures in the Andes

Virgil Scott and 4 others from Mountaineering Club went to the Quimsa Cruz mountain range in Bolivia in July to climb new routes and explore the area, looking for rock climbing potential

The idea for this expedition came about from a desire to climb new rock routes in a remote location. The Quimsa Cruz area was suggested to us by some UKClimbing.com users who had visited it before and found that there was a lot of potential in the area. Our general aim was to climb new rock routes. Five students chose to take part: Hal Watts, Markus Rogan, Bernard Lam, Ben Withers and myself. We waddled out from the Mountaineering Club equipment stores in Beit Quad like a group of

pregnant penguins (if such a thing were to exist); we were mildly late for our flight to Bolivia and we were laden with enough gear to kill a medium-sized donkey. Thankfully we made it with time to spare. We had to spend the night in Santa Cruz airport to catch our connecting flight; so we ate at Subway for about £1 each, and then found a comfy spot to sleep in the airport, which happened to be under a dozen TVs that soothed us with lovely traditional Bolivian pan-pipe music. All night long. We came close to putting an ice axe through the TVs.

In La Paz we spent a few days buying supplies and acclimatising. The supermarket employees pointed and laughed at us when we bought four shopping trolleys of food, and the kids that helped us pack the groceries grinned from ear to ear when we inadvertently gave them a humungous tip.

The jeeps arrived early in the morning; we loaded them up and set out towards the mountains. The driver claimed to be called Jose but drove more like McRae. We swept around tight hairpins, disturbingly close to sheer drops. We traversed several turquoise lakes and passed through a number of small farming and mining settlements, some of them abandoned and decaying. After about eight hours we were abruptly greeted by the mountains.

Over the following

weeks we attempted to climb as many routes as possible:

Sunday 1 July

On the first day our plan was to go for a short walk – exploring the nearby area. We didn't want to push our luck with the altitude by doing anything too strenuous. We followed the river up the valley, and then branched off north to the Col leading to the next valley in which we would later put our second advanced camp. Standing on top of the col gave a stunning view of the next valley, exposing the enormous

“The driver claimed to be called Jose but drove more like McRae”

south faces on the opposite side of the valley. It was oozing with soaring crack-lines, hundreds of metres long reaching striking pinnacle summits, no doubt most, if not all of them, are unclimbed because they do not get much sun compared to the mass of rock opposite. From the Col we could also see Illymani – the highest mountain in Bolivia. After spending some time enjoying the views we scrambled to summit of the peak to the east of the Col.

Monday 2 July

In the evening we carried bivouac gear for three nights to the east of Laguna Blanca near the base of Nevada Saturno. On the way up the valley we met some miners coming down from the mines on the

south side of the valley. They wore dark cotton clothing, with either a woollen hat or a baseball cap and carried rucksacks with thin cord for straps. Each morning, at around 8am they would walk past our base camp, about an hour and a half from Viloco up to the mines, whilst we would barely be out of bed until sunrise (9:30am) because it was so cold until then. They were hardy and jovial – they always greeted us cheerfully and asked about what we were doing or where we were going.

Tuesday 3 July

We split up into two groups, Bernard and Ben set off to the north to find a climb near the Col next to Saturno. Hal, Markus and I set off east to take a look at the south side of Saturno and the surrounding area. There appeared to be several good lines up the south side of Saturno, however since they were all in the shade we decided to attempt a line on the north facing slabs opposite Saturno. We inspected the faces and found several attractive lines, a couple of overhanging crack-lines to the east, some blank vertical slabs to the west, and up the middle was a large rightward curving crack, this looked to be the easiest line, and since it was our first climb we decided it would be best not to push ourselves too much. As it turned out we did push ourselves too much, we had totally misjudged the top pitch and it turned out to be an exciting section of steep, dirt-filled crack. As we were not really in a position to clean it, the climb turned into a constant struggle against the flow of dirt down the crack. The dirt and shrubs would gradually slide down the crack and so the climbing involved attempting to move faster than the dirt was sliding. Stopping to catch your breath would give you an alarming feeling of being in sinking sand – as your hands and feet would begin to move downwards, so we called this route E-dirt. Ben and Bernard found a climb to the north-west of Saturno, a long scramble where everything was loose, and it was soon clear that it would be very late before they would return. They finished their route late in the afternoon, just before dark, and returned to base camp just before midnight.

Wednesday 4 July

Rest day.

Thursday 5 July

We moved up to the Laguna Blanca camp early in the morning. Markus and I explored the area to the north and north-west of Laguna Blanca. We planned to do a route on the slabs to the north of the lake but upon inspection it appeared excessively dirty and had evidence of being climbed so instead we continued further west and then north up a gully to check out the wall that joined the ridge parallel to the next valley. Bernard and Ben explored the slabs below the headwall to the north-east of Laguna Blanca scrambling up a



This looks highly dangerous! Mountaineering Club: not good for vertigo



A mountaineer spreading his legs in search of a crack



Beautiful Bolivia

narrowing gully until it became too technical for walking poles.

Friday 6 July

We had an early start to attempt a very attractive line up the slabs to the east-northeast of Laguna Blanca. Markus and I climbed this and it turned out to be a four pitch climb with beautiful crack sections. However, several pieces of in-situ gear were found which suggests this was not a first ascent. It would be possible to continue this climb to the summit of a choice of pinnacles. We decided not to climb further as the point reached after four pitches was the logical end to the aesthetic line, and based on the amount of in-situ gear found up to that point it would not be a first ascent. In the evening some small clouds began to appear, up to this point the weather had been totally cloudless, and warm enough to climb in a base layer during the day. The difference between sun and shade temperatures was remarkable, entering the shade felt like walking into the frozen foods department of a supermarket.

Saturday 7 July

Rest day. There was significant snowfall through the night and most of the higher ground was covered in snow.

Sunday 8 July

Climbing was not possible due to the snow. Bernard and I explored the valley to the north by walking to the Col that leads to what we called 'Torrini'. It looked stunning but already had many established routes on it. Ben and Hal explored 'the big wall' area to the north-northwest of base camp. The big wall was one of the most inspiring pieces of rock we found out there. It was 400-500m of vertical (sometimes overhanging) rock. We decided we had to attempt it.

Monday 9 July

More snow, hail and wind throughout the day. We realised that some kind of rodent was nibbling on our cereals and chocolate so we ended up hanging all our food from bushes and boulders.

Tuesday 10 July

The weather improved and the sun came out occasionally in-between the clouds. Hal, Markus and I carried gear to the base of the big wall and returned to base camp. Bernard and Ben climbed a mixed route (grade III/4) on

the slabs near the Col that lead to the next valley to the north-west of base camp.

Wednesday 11 July

Hal and I attempted and retreated three lines on the big wall, the wall turned out to be very loose and deceptively steep, difficult and cold, with snow and ice on many holds. All three lines looked fairly straightforward but as soon as we stepped onto them we found the angles of the holds and formation of the rock somehow forced us to lean away as though on a severe overhang. The amount of loose rock was overwhelming; the majority of holds were loose enough to remove with a moderate pull. Rock that seemed solid at first would then move readily when pulled from a slightly different direction. If the rock had been solid the wall would have been superb, steep climbing, with very large holds and good gear. However, instead it was steep with very few solid holds and the constant stress of

"The difference between sun and shade temperatures was remarkable"

a potential fall onto bad protection. Occasionally we encountered a short section of solid rock – these sections had very good quality climbing. And this was what encouraged us to continue. We did not have any success on the first day but found a promising line of weakness that we would pursue the next day. We returned to base camp in the evening. Ben and Bernard rested at base camp after completing a mixed route the day before.

Thursday 12 July

Hal and I climbed 35m on the big wall, following the line of weakness up a diagonal crack that we found on the previous day. The first pitch was climbed in mountain boots as there was a significant amount of snow and ice. We set up an anchor after 25m, equalising 5 pieces of gear. The next pitch was cut short when we encountered an overhanging section that was startlingly loose. We spent a little over 30 minutes clearing loose rock from a small platform to en-

able a solid sling belay below this section. We had to stop clearing loose rock eventually when we realised that we were gradually destroying the platform that we were sitting on – the rock did not seem to get any more solid regardless of how deep we dug. We studied the options and decided to try and traverse rightwards then move up on a leftward leaning line of weakness. However this would have to wait until the following day. We abseiled down and left the ropes to ascend the next day and then bivouacked next to the lake near the base of the wall. Markus, Ben and Bernard traversed the big ridge, starting south-west of base camp.

Friday 13 July

It took an entire day for Hal and I to traverse 8m in an attempt to find a line of weakness on the overhanging section on the big wall. At every stage we would reassess the possibilities in terms of finding the best line of weakness with the least loose rock, traversing slightly, then attempting to climb diagonally up and left, then up and right, then straight up, failing that we would traverse further rightwards and repeat the process. We climbed the traverse in mountain boots to avoid cold toes. Eventually we could not go any further when we could not find gear placements, so we placed a bolt by hand, whilst hanging from two marginal BD micro nuts, in order to retreat from the position and to leave a solid anchor to ascend to the next day. Bernard, Ben and Markus climbed a short icefall to the east of base camp.

Saturday 14 July

Markus, Ben and Bernard climbed an existing bolted route on Torrini. Hal and I ascended to the bolt and attempted to make some progress from there. There appeared to be several options, either traverse right and follow a flake system leftwards or trend slightly leftwards and up to a small ledge or head diagonally leftwards to a section of less steep rock. By the end of the day we had tried all of the options, each one taking an extraordinary amount of time. Due to the loose rock each move required excavation, cleaning and the testing of many holds. Placing gear was even more time consuming, most usable holds would take a moderate pull – but not the pull of a fall, so finding a good placement required more time. We resorted to a 'safety in numbers' idea placing gear at almost every opportunity. In spite of this we were not really willing to push ourselves as we didn't trust the gear; getting passed that crux section (the terrain appeared to ease off around 15m higher) would require bold climbing on loose rock with the possibility of gear ripping. We discussed alternative tactics and decided that we could no longer pursue the objective in the same manner so we abseiled from the anchor (consisting of 7 equalised parts, including a bolt). We considered looking for an easy way to the summit then abseiling down from the top, cleaning each pitch and slinging (or bolting) anchors. In the evening, we walked up to the

ridge on the west to see if we could find a way up, but there was no straightforward way.

Sunday 15 July

Hal walked up the gully to the east of the big wall to see if there was a way to the summit from there whilst I retrieved the gear from the big wall (leaving one bolt and one piece of abseil cord). There was no simple way to the top so we returned to base camp.

"The climbing was some of the highest quality we had ever experienced"

Monday 16 July

We all carried bivi gear to make a camp in the next valley. Once we had set up the bivi spot we checked out the surrounding rock. There was a lot of it, and all of it was north-facing so it received sunlight for most of the day, which was a nice change. Unfortunately there was no running water nearby so we had to melt snow for water, but it was full of grit and so had an interesting texture.

Tuesday 17 July

Bernard and I climbed a route which we named 'La Cueva Cómoda' on the wall we came to know as 'lower Torrini'. Markus and Ben climbed two routes, one called 'Motivationsriss' on the lower Torrini and one that Markus named 'LaLiLu' in the 'mid Torrini' area. Hal was bruised by loose rock so could not climb.

"The kind of climbing where you feel 'in the zone' after the first move"

Wednesday 18 July

Hal and I inspected, cleaned and practiced on top-rope the top pitch of a potential line in the mid Torrini area. As we had entered the valley we had all noticed a particularly striking piece of rock, so we decided to try and find out if it would be climb-

able. It was clear that the hardest pitch would be the top, which was fairly accessible from the other side of the valley. It was a 20m slab that appeared to have no natural protection, but had a many small crystals protruding from its surface. The climbing was some of the highest quality we had ever experienced, immaculate, solid granite, with a beautifully flowing sequence of moves. It was the kind of climbing where you feel 'in the zone' after the first move.

Thursday 19 July

Hal and I set off to climb the line we had looked at the day before. Ben, Bernard and Markus rested at advanced camp. The crux pitch went smoothly, but the diagonally rising crack-line traverse turned out to be harder than expected and was also filled with dirt and moss. About half way across I had to stop and clean it out as it was getting hard to see because of all the moss falling into my eyes. At one point I turned away from the wall to spit out some dirt, this unfortunately landed on Hal.

Friday 20 July

Returned to base camp.

Saturday 21 July

Ben, Hal and I collected the remainder of the gear from the advanced camp in the next valley and returned to base camp. Markus and Bernard climbed a three pitch VS 4c near Cuernos Del Diablo and returned to base camp in the evening.

Sunday 22 July

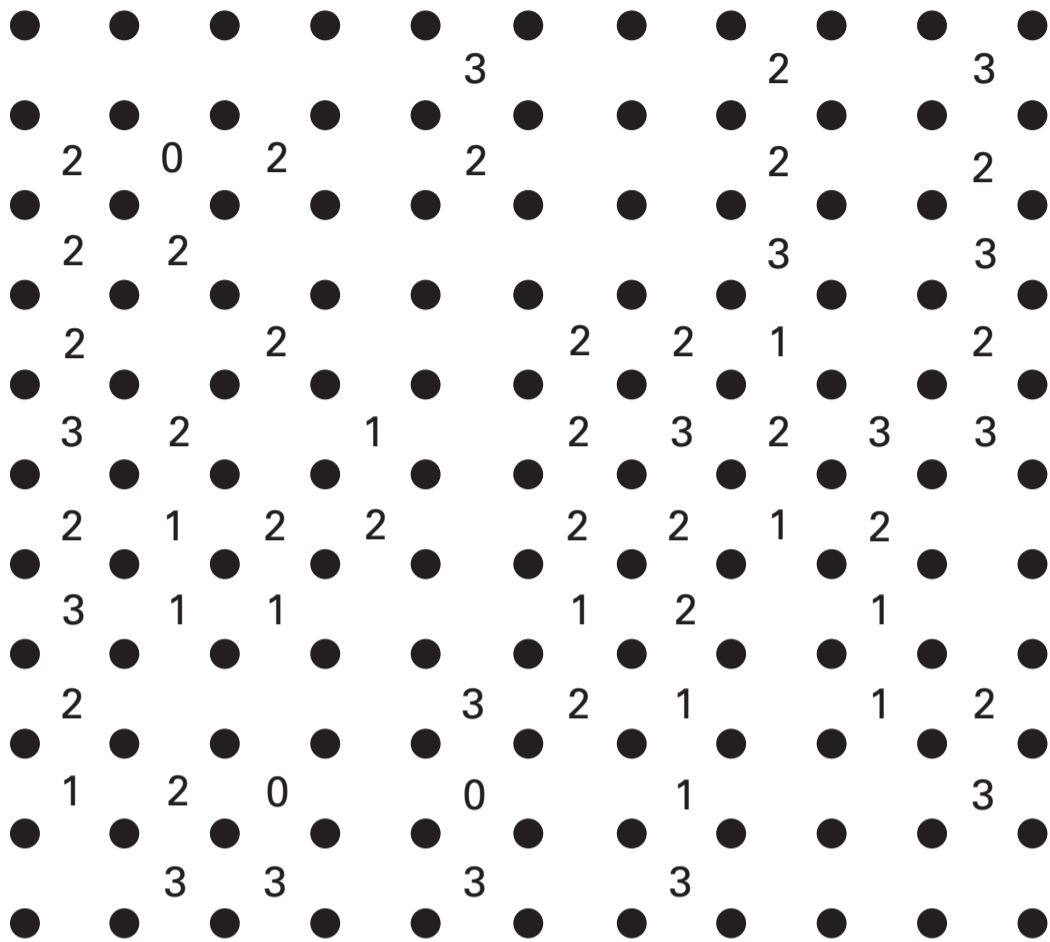
We rested at base camp, made preparations to leave, and packed gear and food. Andean Summits' jeeps arrived in the evening to take us home.

The members of the Imperial College Quimsa Cruz 2007 expedition would like to thank the following for their kind support: Imperial College London, Sir Richard Sykes, Mount Everest Foundation, British Mountaineering Council, First Ascent, PHD Designs, Rab, and Terra Nova.

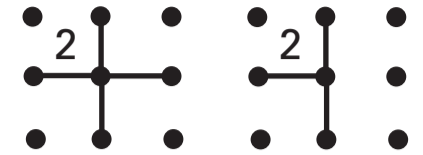
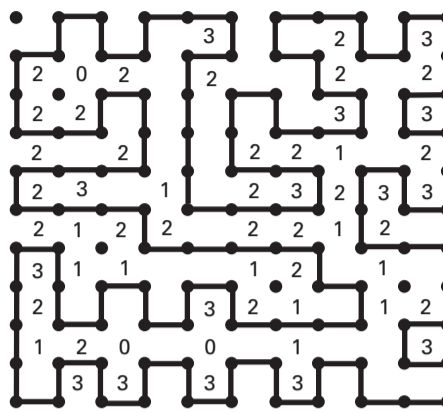


Slitherlink 1,388

Slitherlink 9 – Normal



Answer for Slitherlink 8



Squares are not allowed either. There are never cells containing the number 4 in Slitherlink.

So, where do you start? The most common place to start on a Slitherlink grid is by drawing crosses around any zeros. Drawing crosses is purely done to so that you know where there can't possibly be a line. So, take the pattern below as an example. Begin by drawing crosses, then by filling in some lines:

How to play:

Crudely speaking, Slitherlink is similar to Minesweeper mixed with a dash of Sudoku.

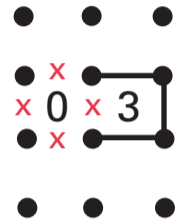
The object of the game is to draw lines between the dots to create one long, and most importantly, looping line. It should have no start or finish; just like an elastic band.

Each number indicates how many lines should be drawn around it, for example:

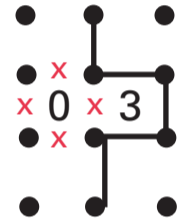


Cells which don't contain a number can be surrounded by any number of lines.

Remember, the line must form a loop, so the line cannot branch. The following situations are not allowed:



Now the lines can only continue in the following directions:



Ha, ha! We've sprung another gigantic 10x10 on you this week. Enjoy and keep linking!

Logic Puzzle: Colourful Lecturers

Using the clues and logical deduction alone, work out how all the people involved in the match relate to each other. The puzzle can be solved without guesswork. Make use of the grid to mark the combinations that you know.

Read through each clue and make any obvious or stated deductions. Find the corresponding row and column on the grid and place a tick for 'Yes' in the box, and a cross for 'No' in the cells next to this one vertically and horizontally.

Ensure that you read the clues carefully. They can sometimes reveal multiple hints! Remember that elimination of alternatives is a key method. That is where the grid is so important - it allows you to see the possibilities left.

At the University of Slurry, 5 lecturers, who teach 5 different subjects were caught in compromising positions. Each has a habit that they are known for. Work out who teaches what, their habit and the compromising situation.

1. Dr White (who always wears the same grey jumper) doesn't teach Folk Music in which the lecturer fell asleep during his lecture on Ballard Studies.

2. The lecturer who teaches Golf Course Management embezzled his own research fund, and Dr Brown got rather

too excited about his own research and several students complained.

3. The lecturer with the incredible accent who was found in a cupboard with a first year wasn't Dr Blue who teaches Fashion Accessories, specifically bangles.

4. The lecturer who taught Embroidery and Advanced Knitwear was known for setting very hard exams and having a very bad temper.

5. Dr Black (who doesn't teach Tree Management) doesn't suffer from excessive flatulence. .

(Any similarities to persons living or dead is purely coincidental, although all the courses can be found on the UCAS website...!)

	FASHION ACCESSORIES	TREE MANAGEMENT	GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT	EMBROIDERY AND KNITWEAR	FOLK MUSIC	WEARING SAME JUMPER	EXTREMELY BORING	HARD EXAMS & TEMPER	INCREDIBLE ACCENT	EXCESSIVE FLATULENCE	FELL ASLEEP	EMBEZZLED MONEY	FOUND IN CUPBOARD	GOT TOO "EXCITED"	DRUNK UNDER DESK
DR RED															
DR WHITE															
DR BROWN															
DR BLACK															
DR BLUE															
FELL ASLEEP															
EMBEZZLED MONEY															
FOUND IN CUPBOARD															
GOT TOO "EXCITED"															
DRUNK UNDER DESK															
WEARING SAME JUMPER															
EXTREMELY BORING															
HARD EXAMS & TEMPER															
INCREDIBLE ACCENT															
EXCESSIVE FLATULENCE															

Last Week's Solution:

Mon	Amanda	Is it hot in here...?	Laughed
Tues	Gertie	Did it hurt...?	Slapped
Wed	Ingrid	Alphabet: U & I	Vomited
Thurs	Bessie	Latex...	Ignored
Fri	Madge	Fancy a shag?	Threw Drink



This week's texts:

"Shaun Crofton is God!"

"To the black guy in the orange hoodie I saw in the JCR: you are really hot! Love your crazy hair! Do you wanna meet up? Meet me at 12 in the Sherfield Building Tuesday 27th!"

"Lauren Machin has crumpets to offer the man with the largest memory stick!"

"Gavin loves boys!"

"Anne je t'aime, chaque cours a tes cotes me rempli de bonheur... Tes lourdes miches peuplent mes nuits. L'un des autre on est bien ensemble. Rémi"

"To the floppy blonde haired rower: I saw you in the gym in your lycra and can't stop thinking about your massive... hair :o) Felix has my number: TEXT ME X"

07980 148 785

**TEXT US!
YOU KNOW
YOU WANT TO!
OH GO ON!**



The ancient art of haggling

“Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate.” The wise words of former US President John F Kennedy. He probably wasn’t talking about price negotiations, or ‘haggling’ as it is known, but his words still ring true for tourists

Ahran Arnold
Travel Editor

As this is the travel section, the thought struck me that perhaps we shouldn’t just be talking about different parts of the world we’ve visited. Perhaps this page can offer practical and moral guidance to travelling people (not in the gypsy sense, of course). This, in turn, led me to think of the issues that face travellers as they delve into the unknown regions. The constant threat of theft, insulting foreign cultures, personal injury, getting lost and being murdered are all issues that are worth discussing and are of considerable importance to the wary wanderer. There is one particular topic that I feel warrants special concern this week; many intrepid holidaymakers feel a compulsion to dabble in the curious art of haggling.

Haggling is not a ubiquitous phenomenon. In Japan, for example, haggling is usually just a matter of asking for a discount once and then being declined or accepted. Haggling in western, developed nations can permeate many types of purchases but is usually confined to markets. In many countries however, especially in North Africa and South East Asia, haggling is a huge part of day-to-day life for locals and tourists alike.

So negotiating a price is not universal but it is certainly widespread enough that you’re more than likely to come across it at some point. But the question is: just because you can haggle, should you? I’m not talking about locals haggling with other locals for goods. This is clearly beyond reproach; it is a part of their culture and helps to ensure fair prices for both vendor and seller, sustaining the local economy. What I’m referring can be best appreciated with the following example. I’m sure many of you have witnessed scenes like this before.

Relatively wealthy tourist, from developed, affluent nation with strong currency in an impoverished third world country haggles with a poor local vendor in a market. Without throwing any bias or prejudice into this example, let us refer to the wealthy tourist



Haggling in action. These guys are the experts: if they see tourists they know it’s payday

as ‘Strachan Mackenzie’ and the poor local vendor as ‘Tiny Tim.’ These are just arbitrary names that I got from a random word generator. Now, rich Mr. Mackenzie wants to get a flavour of the local culture by driving down the price of the handicraft he wants to buy. It’s a simple wooden sculpture, depicting an emperor from the country’s ancient heyday in a humorously erotic situation. Strachan Mackenzie just happens to enjoy erotic woodwork and has amassed a large collection in his stately home. In his own currency the amount that Mackenzie is haggling over is about 20p.

Tiny Tim is just 11 years old. His mother runs the stall, normally, but has been taken ill with a condition that has all the hallmarks of a nasty infectious disease, which is often fatal in this part of the world. When Tim isn’t helping his mother in the market he generally

works an 18hr day, with breaks to run to the nearest well (a mere ten miles away) to acquire water for himself, his mother and his nine younger siblings. Tim has never been to school and has only a rudimentary idea of numeracy. The 20p that is the centre of the protracted negotiations could make the difference between affording a ride to a local hospital to see if anything can be done about his mother’s worsening state. His pride prevents him from revealing this fact to tourist in front of him though.

While the intolerably hot, fictional sun bears down on them, Mr. Mackenzie refuses to back down so the desperate Tim must accede, since he cannot turn down the sale. Even the tiny profit made will help to an extent. Strachan holds his prize up against the sunlight and laughs again at its sexual overtones before using the wooden figure’s manhood to perform a lewd action on his wife, who is not amused. This desecration of his culture’s most revered historic figure is the final insult for Tim, who breaks down into tears. The salty tears run down his face and drip on to the earthen floor and are trampled underfoot by Strachan Mackenzie’s expensive Gore-Tex hiking boots.

Yes, this was a protracted way of saying that sometimes when you haggle over amounts of money that seem small to you, in order to ‘experience the local culture,’ you should realize these values could be small fortunes to locals.

There are flip sides to this. That is to say, there are arguments for haggling in many situations. Local merchants are the undisputed kings of emotional blackmail. They’re even better at it than mothers. I have heard people in markets use the difference in value of money between countries as a way to convince tourists into settling for a higher price. A friend who visited Cambodia told me that when he apol-

ogised to a local child for not offering any money the child responded with “sorry don’t help me.” The other reason is that many of these sellers will massively overcharge you for their goods, simply because you are a tourist and to them you like a big walking dollar sign. In Morocco, the local market stall workers have learned an extremely useful English phrase. When you’re haggling over an item fiercely, absolutely

“You think, ‘Why am I being so paranoid? I’m on holiday!’ You settle for the price and that’s when they’ve really fleeced you.”

convinced that the salesman is trying to fleece you and accusing them of that very crime, they’ll whip this classic out of the bag: “Why are you so paranoid?” You think, “Why am I being so paranoid; I’m on holiday!” you settle for the price and that’s when they’ve really fleeced you. There are few things more annoying than thinking someone has got the better of you and is laughing at you behind your back because of it.

The lesson here is that the discerning tourist must use his judgement to decide when and to what extent it is appropriate to haggle and accept that sometimes you will be unwittingly exploiting poor people or playing into unscrupulous vendors’ hands. Life’s tough like that.

Travels without my aunt: Part 3

Theo Georgiou-Delisle

“Jesus wept”, and “Emily Hoxworth-Howard stared longingly out of the bay window onto the harsh and unforgiving wild moor knowing one day she would find that secret garden and frolic in the morning dew”, are well known as the two shortest sentences in the bible; this week however I am going to talk about Edmonton, in North East London.

I happened upon Edmonton by necessity and initially believed that I had inadvertently uncovered the remnants of a previously unreported nuclear holocaust as dishevelled individuals drifted about town, plastic bags stuffed into their pockets like sweets. It is surprising indeed how many busses are happy to take you to the area, given the fact that every driver is mugged on average six times a day when driving through.

Arriving in Edmonton you may be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of the fabled Edmonton Seagull which prays on the weak and infirm in the vicinity, carrying them off to the nearby rubbish dump so that they may be exchanged for fish and suchlike by the local council.

The MP for Edmonton is Andy Love (Labour), who ironically is notoriously never in love. He did however oversee the building of the new shopping complex in Edmonton Green which, I must admit, was a good idea in that the removal of asbestos from children’s lolly sticks in the 1970s was a good idea. In order for you to truly understand the monstrosity that was the old Edmonton Green shopping complex you have to try to imagine what might happen if Jade Goody was given a vat of concrete and a set of instructions in Hindi, then left for an hour to construct as she pleased. As one walked into the old shopping mall, the overwhelming sense of foreboding that would envelop you would be powerful enough to cause you to panic and decide to buy an ill thought out bomber jacket. This would be a decision you would regret later in the day as you were held at gunpoint by the shop owner who had previously sold you the coat.

Moving away from the centre of Edmonton, it is conceivable that one might decide to visit the Lee Valley Leisure Complex. This dear reader would be a mistake. Never before has the thought of visiting any one of 12 cinema screens in one building sounded so unappealing. Firstly, the greatest mathematicians in the UK have not yet calculated a route to the complex that doesn’t involve getting lost 7 times, 4 of which end up with your car wedged into the surrounding low-lying marshland. Once there, you are allowed to park a minimum of 2 miles away and must walk the rest of the distance. In the cinema itself, once the film has finished, it is customary to leave your footwear behind as it will be well and truly stuck to the floor by indistinguishable sticky substances.

Edmonton, in summary, is enough to make Jesus weep.



“No, you’ve got to haggle” Monty Python send up the idea of haggling in ‘The Life Of Brian’

Netball 1sts mammoth report on unbeaten run

Netball

Imperial 1sts	36
King's Medicals 3rd	3

Netball

Imperial 1sts	51
Hertfordshire 3rd	16

Netball

Royal Holloway 2nd	26
Imperial 1sts	39

Netball

Bedfordshire 1sts	35
Imperial 1sts	67

Netball

UCL 3rd	14
Imperial 1sts	52

Sara Willis

The IC 1st Netball team are on a roll this season having not lost a single game in both ULU and BUSA. The 29/10/07 saw the ladies in blue facing King's Medicals 3rds at home in Ethos. Imperial dominated the whole first half, however with the score at half time being 36 – 6, King's Medicals decided not to continue the match due to 'dodgy' umpiring. Obviously losing gracefully is not a Medic trait.

The next BUSA game saw us all the way out at Teddington to play the University of Hertfordshire 2nd team thanks to yet another cock up by Holland Park. (I'd like to thank Luke Taylor for driving us like a lunatic in a bright yellow minibus all the way there before legging it over to Harlington for his match. We love you Luke!). With us

lending the medics our second umpire (a thank-you would be nice btw) we had Jess Marley's mum stand in, despite driving from Cardiff that morning to come and watch. The game was like our previous BUSA encounters, IC dominating from the start. Despite the other team being very worthy opponents, their shooting and passing accuracy let them down and IC had another convincing win, 51-16. Man of the Match went to Sara Willis, IC player went to Rachel Dilley and Twat of the match went to Jess Marley for running round the Union like a muppet trying to sort out courts and umpires, and for telling everyone not to say the umpire was her mum but then shouting "mum" when pulled up in the middle of the match.

Next we were off to beautiful Staines on Monday the 5th of November to

play Royal Holloway 2nds. Being distracted by the beautiful fireworks and the thought of fish and chips from the chippy on the way back to the station, the IC girls managed a win, although less than convincing, 39-26. Man of the match went to Jen Lang and Twat of the Match went to Kate Chapman for just being as dizzy as a blonde in a beauty shop.

On the train to Luton with a hung-over team we were off to challenge the University of Bedfordshire 1st. The game was challenging and the IC girls were a little worried after watching their professional warm-up, whilst standing on the sideline gossiping about the night before. The IC girls however came through in the end showing it's not all about wanting to win; it's more about wanting to get to the pub ASAP, with a 67-35 win. Well

done guys, knew we were all feeling rough! After the game we went to their sponsors pub and polished off 4 pitchers of Strongbow (in true IC netball style) and a burger and chips (nothing better to cure a hangover), before getting the train back more than a little tipsy. Man of the Match went to Rachel Dilley, IC player went to Candy Fisher and Twat of the match went to Kate Chapman for getting her ass out in the pub to show all the Beds girls her huge bruise from playing rugby.

In the pouring rain, we were off to challenge UCL 3rds on the 19/11/07. Despite being freezing on court and the UCL team playing more like in a rugby game than a netball game the girls in blue had yet another credible win, 52-14. Let's keep up the good work guys! Man of the match went to Sara Willis, IC player went to Lauren Anderson-

Dring and Twat of the match went to Kate Chapman for running round her goal third cause she was cold and looking like a complete "twat" whilst doing so.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to let the readers know, if they haven't already heard, that the Rugby boys have challenged the IC 1st to a netball match in order to raise money for charity. Therefore I'd like to invite everyone to come along to Ethos on the Sat 24th of Nov (tomorrow!) 4-6 p.m to watch the Rugby boys, most likely in dresses, make fools of themselves playing (and I use the term "playing" very lightly) netball. It will cost £2 to come and watch and all the money is going to the West London Sports Trust.

BRING IT ON LADS!!!!

Sports Editor:

You girls haven't got a chance!

RSM Hockey victorious

Hockey

RSM Mixed XI	5
Strollers Mixed XI	4

Charlotte Atteck

Last Sunday saw the RSM mixed team recapture the magic after a slow start to the season, beating the Strollers 5-4. With the wind howling and the Strollers putting away a cracking goal to the amazement of first time keeper Borja (after being told there wouldn't be any air shots to save by a certain Sharky) it looked to be a gloomy afternoon. It took another goal from the Strollers to get veteran Mikey P into gear to start the amazing comeback the team was about to pull off. With a beauty from Timmy (aka sharky junior) and an unexpected tap into the back of the goal by novice Aaaaaadam Baldwin before half time, the underdogs were in high spirits despite the lung burn, stitch and other signs of poor fitness displayed by some of the members following the usual chaos of a Saturday night.

Strollers came back strong as the RSM got carried away with the score line being in our favour so early on in

the game (lets face it doesn't happen too often) and let a goal through despite the fine efforts of the defence who had a smashing game. Fresher Dave soon retaliated and earned a nomination for champagne moment with an absolute beauty from the top of the D to put us back in the game. Slushy man Steve gave it all he had in an attempt to lose his scoring virginity but it just wasn't to be... No matter, it will happen one day and it will be exquisite.

It was my privilege to round up the match with the worst, most flukiest goal known to man giving the RSM mixed team their first win of the season. Man of the match had to be given to Aaaaaadam Baldwin for his brave performance in both defence and up front, Gilly managed to secure champagne moment for her constant giggling and almost giving away a long corner in the first play of the game and slushy Stevie got TFC for not being able to follow through and get the ball in the goal although his efforts in the pub after could not be faulted in the least.

All in all a fantastic game, thanks to Susie for her continuing contribution and excellent skippering of the team and to everyone who showed up to play it was a pleasure as always.



An RSM mixed hockey team

A lovely trip to Mont Blanc

Matthew Cooper

After an hour playing the 'weight game' at the airport, a short fifty minute Easyjet flight to Geneva and a two hour coach journey me, Andy Parsons and Mike Halls-Moore arrived at Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, the capital of world climbing. After meeting up with Luke, who informed us that "the weather was stable and we needed to go up into the mountains now!" we settled in to our new campsite home.

The next day we took the truly amazing Aiguille Du Midi cable car, feeling highly conspicuous in the crowds of tourists with our 100 litre duffle bags full of six days food and climbing packs bristling with axes and crampons. On arriving at the Midi station (3842m) we wasted no time, and after hiding our bags in an ice cave, headed out to the Mer De Glace Glacier, squinting in the blinding sunlight of a perfect Alpine day. We dashed up the stunningly beautiful Arete Du Cosmeque in three hours and arrived back at the station feeling breathless and rather pleased with ourselves.

In continually superb weather we managed most of the Rebuffat Route (TD rock climbing), some of the Midi-Plan traverse and Mont Blanc Du Tacul (4248). However sleepless nights due to the altitude and concrete floor of the station forced us down after four days.

After a couple of happy days dosing around Chamonix eating ice-cream, the possibly of a storm front hitting in a matter of days persuaded us it was time to go for the biggy, Mont Blanc itself.

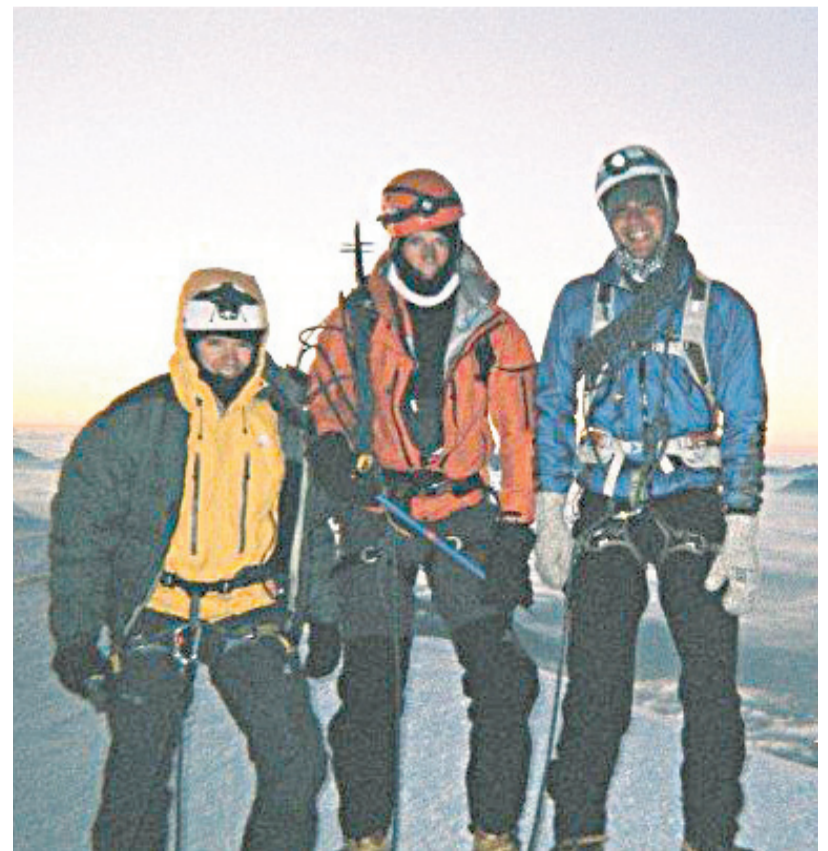
The next day an early morning cable car, then a train journey, deposited us in the fog at the start of the Gouter Route. Four hours of slog brought us out of the fog and on to the glacier. We now had to cross the most lethal part of the route, the 100m wide Grand Couloir. This 700 snow gully is notorious, due to the large quantity of TV sized rocks which continually whiz down it, released by melting ice or a careless climber above. We roped up and ran across (not easy in crampons!)

after waiting for a gap in the fuselage. A breathless four hour scramble up a 600 arête made of teetering car sized blocks brought us to the Aiguille Du Gouter. We camped on the snow ridge above, where watching the mountains change colour in the sunset couldn't quite compensate for the onion flavoured snow/pasta mush which passed for tea.

We were awoken from blissful sleep at 2am by a multitude of alarms and after a solid hour of general fuff we were ready to go. During the first two hours of the ascent a combination of pitch blackness, biting cold and steep cramponing at altitude made for not an entirely pleasant experience. However by 5am the arrival of the sun in the East gave an illusion of warmth and more

importantly a view of the fantastically sinuous and knife edge Bosses Ridge which leads to the summit. Two hours of careful footsteps and false summits later we had arrived at the Roof of Europe. It was an amazing place, with white and orange mountains stretching in all directions, the clouds thousands of metres below us and the sky above looking un-naturally black. However lack of feeling in fingers and toes encouraged us not to linger and ten minutes of frantic photo snapping later we were on our way back.

The twelve hour descent was long and torturous and we finally arrived back to Chamonix in the dark. A crate of beer, 2 bottles of van rouge and a chilli later, we were all enjoying a well earned kip.



The climbers at the summit

Singaporean Society haul medals in Nottingham

Jiaxuan Lu

On 10th November, at 5am, 74 of us from Imperial College Singaporean Society waited at Beit Quad for the coach to University of Nottingham, looking all bleary-eyed and not the least battle-ready for the impending Nottingham Games.

The Nottingham Games were the equivalent of the Olympics for the Singaporean Societies all across UK, albeit held annually but always a highlight in the Singaporean Society sporting calendar. Every year, we go forth to compete for glory and above all, boasting rights in various sports like football, floorball, basketball, netball, ultimate Frisbee, badminton etc. Competition was always strong at the Notts Games, but this year was going to be some-

thing special for us.

The games were held throughout the whole campus of the university and once we arrived, we started on our respective games. As usual, our 2 floorball teams hit the floor running, one emerging victorious in all their games and the other only losing one, drawing another and winning all the rest. As a result, we emerged champions and 2nd runner-up in floorball.

In ultimate Frisbee, we managed to clinch 1st runner-up spot after facing stiff competition from the other universities. Though emotions ran high during in the final due to several controversial foul calls, the team still played in the spirit of the game, exhibiting great composure and level-headedness.

Football, being one of the most

popular sports, had a great number of teams and it was a long, hard road through the group stages. Some of the teams were more interested in wrestling than playing proper football but we still managed to top our group and go onto the quarter-finals. We faced LSE, whom we promptly dismissed with a 4-0 scoreline and then went on to the semis. Unfortunately, we lost to Bristol and had to settle for 2nd runner-up spot after beating Sheffield in a scintillating game that ended 5-4 in our favour.

Squash has always been one of our main sources of medals and in this, Wong Chong Wai did not disappoint us. He managed to come in 1st runner up in Squash Men's Singles, doing us proud once again. Two other players, Andrew Jasudasen and Rajeev Rikhye fought valiantly but missed out narrowly on getting a medal.

Bridge was also one of the competitive sports at the Notts Games and we proved ourselves to be more than adept at this thinking man's game. The pairs of Tan Xuan You and Koh Yahting bested others to come in 1st runner up and so did Xue Kun and Ang Chieh Hwee as they came in a close 2nd Runner-up.

In Chess, Low Yu Bin also did not go home empty-handed as he achieved a 2nd runner-up position.

It seemed that we could not stop winning something in almost every sport and indeed, there was still more to come. In Men's Singles Tennis, Lim Zhiyang showed off his racket skills, dominating all his opponents to come in eventual champion. The Men's Dou-



Wong Chong Wai with his squash medal

bles pairing of Boris Iskandar and Lionel Wong also gave the rest a run for their money, clinching 2nd runner-up.

In Basketball, Badminton and Netball, we put up a fight from start to finish but were unlucky to come away without anything.

In terms of overall standings, Imperial College came in an unprecedent-

ed 2nd runner up after all the points were tallied. This added to an already burgeoning harvest of medals and we could claim to be a sporting force to be reckoned with in the next Nottingham Games.

After gaining so many accolades to our name, waking up at 5am was well worth it.



Ultimate frisbee

Fixtures and Results

in association with Sports Partnership



Saturday 17th November

Football – ULU

ICU Men's 1st 3
LSE Men's 3rd 0

UCL Men's 5th 6
ICU Men's 4th 1

RUMS Men's 2nd 5
ICU Men's 5th 0

RUMS Men's 4th N/A
ICU Men's 6th N/A

ICU Men's 7th 1
LSE Men's 6th 3

Fencing

Weekend Tournament

ICU Women's 1st 128
Cambridge Women's 1st 117

ICU Women's 1st 135
Bristol Women's 1st 92

ICU Women's 1st 135
Bath Women's 1st 71

ICU Women's 1st 119
Oxford Women's 1st 123

Sunday 18th November

Football – ULU

UCL Women's 1st 3
ICU Women's 1st 0

Lacrosse – ULU

King's Mixed 1st N/A
ICU Mixed 1st N/A

Volleyball

ICU Men's 1st 2
University of Sussex Men's 1st 0

ICU Men's 1st 2
University of Reading Men's 1st 0

ICU Men's 1st 0
University of Essex Men's 1st 2

ICU Mixed 1st 3
UCL Mixed 1st 2

Monday 19th November

Basketball – ULU

ICU Men's 1st 56
Goldsmiths Men's 1st 42

Netball – ULU

UCL 3rd 16
ICU 1st 54

King's 3rd 22
ICU 2nd 11

RUMS 3rd N/A
ICU 3rd N/A

Squash – ULU

King's College Men's 1st N/A
ICU Men's 1st N/A

ICU Men's 2nd 1
UCL Men's 1st 4

ICU Men's 3rd 4
LSE Men's 2nd 1

Wednesday 14th November

Badminton

ICU Men's 1st 5
LSE Men's 1st 3

Hertfordshire Men's 2nd 6
ICU Men's 2nd 2

ICU Women's 1st 0
Cambridge Women's 1st 8

Basketball

St. Mary's UC Men's 1st 54
ICU Men's 1st 81

Fencing

ICU Men's 1st 82
King's Men's 1st 122

Football

Westminster Men's 1st 1
ICU Men's 1st 1

RUMS Men's 1st 4
ICU Men's 2nd 1

ICU Men's 3rd 0
University of Sussex Men's 3rd 2

ICU Men's 4th (ULU) 3
RUMS Men's 2nd (ULU) 4

ICU Men's 5th (ULU) 1
King's Medicals Men's 3rd (ULU) 3

ICU Men's 6th (ULU) 0
Queen Mary's Men's 4th (ULU) 2

Royal Holloway Men's 6th (ULU) **Postponed**
ICU Men's 7th (ULU) **due to waterlog**

St George's Hospital Women's 1st 0
ICU Women's 1st 1

Hockey

RUMS Men's 1st 0
ICU Men's 1st 2

Buckinghamshire Chilterns Men's 1st 0
ICU Men's 2nd 4

ICU Men's 3rd 4
Royal Holloway Men's 2nd 1

ICU Men's 4th 1
University of Kingston Men's 2nd 0

ICU Women's 1st 4
University of Reading Women's 1st 6

ICU Women's 2nd 1
King's Women's 2nd 8

Lacrosse

ICU Women's 1st 7
King's Women's 1st 4

Netball

University of Greenwich 1st 27
ICU 1st 57

Imperial Medicals 2nd 28
ICU 2nd 29

Rugby Union

ICU Men's 1st 46
Buckinghamshire Chilterns Men's 1st 12

St. George's Hospital Men's 1st 0
ICU Men's 2nd 26

Portsmouth Men's SESSA XV Cancelled
ICU Men's SESSA XV Cancelled

ICU Women's 1st (ULU) Cancelled
King's Medicals Women's 1st (ULU) Cancelled

Squash

Queen Mary Men's 1st 0
ICU Men's 1st 5

ICU Men's 2nd N/A
King's Men's 1st N/A

ICU Men's 3rd 3
University of Essex Men's 2nd 0

ICU Women's 1st 4
King's Women's 1st 0

Table Tennis

University of Essex Men's 1st N/A
ICU Men's 1st N/A

ICU Women's 1st N/A
LSE Women's 1st N/A

Tennis

ICU Men's 1st 0
UCL Men's 1st 10

Royal Holloway Men's 2nd 0
ICU Men's 2nd 10

University of Kent Women's 1st N/A
ICU Women's 1st N/A

Volleyball

ICU Women's 1st 3
LSE Women's 1st 2

Saturday 24th November

Football – ULU

UCL Men's 1st v ICU Men's 1st
LSE Men's 3rd v ICU Men's 2nd
King's Men's 2nd v ICU Men's 3rd
ICU Men's 4th v ICU Men's 5th
ICU Men's 6th v King's Medicals Men's 5th
ICU Men's 7th v RSM Men's 1st

ICURFC 3rd XV match medic demolition report

Rugby



Imperial Medicals 3rd XV	24
Imperial Men's 3rd XV	31

Penfold

Since the previous Wednesday's morale-crushing defeat at home to Kings Medicals, IC's 3rd XV had all eyes on redeeming themselves at Teddington in their first face-off with the Scum for this season. Travelling by public transport to an away match always causes difficulties in preparing mentally for the match ahead. So when IC arrived via the wonders of National Rail with less than half an hour before curtain up, they were relieved to have kick off pushed back 10 minutes. With motivational speeches from Captain Ollie "Southern Fairy" Bevis and veteran medic crusher Alex "Pain-Train" Ferguson over, IC were ready to take the game to the Scum on their own soil.

With barely 5 minutes gone, IC seemed decidedly to have the upper hand. After relentless pressure from the IC pack, an ever-so-sexy interception deep inside the medic's half from Borja "I'm a back, honestly" Sordo set up a ruck, from which the unrelenting forwards were only too happy to provide secure ball for scrum-half Penfold to offload on the blind side to Adam Baldwin. After making several yards,

and being tackled just short of the line, Baldwin returned the ball with a beautiful pop off the floor to Penfold, who opened the scoring with a try in the corner. After this, the medic vermin came back and scored a soft unconverted try, leaving the score at 5-5.

This level-pegging did not, however, hold for long. Filled with renewed determination, IC took it back to the medics and camped themselves in their half, with the pack supplying immaculate ball from their immense scrummaging for the backs to work their magic via 3rd team debutant fly-half, Jack 'I can't remember his surname' It was one of these displays of colossal scrummaging that set up IC's second try. With the back line playing the ball straight through hands, and making yards themselves, Man of the Match, full back George Watkins, cut a beautiful line through the medic defence, scoring IC's second try, with it being converted by Sordo de la Pena. Once again, the medics came back to bring the scores even at 12-12.

With lots of encouraging talk from both captain and vice captain at half time, IC took the ball from the restart, knowing that this game was theirs for the taking. Once again, it was flanker Baldwin who made the break, catching the ball inside his own half, selling the Scum a dummy and sprinting through the now gaping hole in the medic "defence" before side-stepping their "full-back" and placing it underneath the

posts with the greatest of ease. Once again, this try was swiftly converted by Borja, making the score 19-12. After a period of light pressure by the medics, an unfortunate mis-kick allowed the medics to come back with the softest of soft tries. Their conversion managed to bring the medics back into the game at 19-19.

IC were not going to give up lightly, however. After applying yet more pressure following the restart, the medics cleared their lines with a kick into the IC half. This was caught by Charles "Not-So-Token-Frenchy" who started a rampage of sublime interplay with Watkins, with the latter teasing the "failed engineers" behind their own try line before slamming it down a short distance from the posts. 24-19. Scum scored. 24-24.

After another irresistible example of the mean scrummaging machine that the IC pack was, the front 8 were then treated to an awe-inspiring display of defence-penetrating running, ending with Max "No-Nickname-Required" Steele with only two human-butchers to beat. In what can only be described as a demonstration of absolute sportsmanship, Twat of the Match Steele decided to give the medics one more chance to step up against the indomitable IC pack by dropping the ball over the line to give the Scum a 5-metre scrum.

The pack's opportunity came, and they sure as hell didn't disappoint.

With another awesome heave from the pack demonstrating IC's overall superiority, the medic pack didn't quite know what to do. The ball skipped out between their open-side flanker and their seemingly inexperienced scrum half was just not quick enough to compete with the eager snatchings of Penfold, who successfully poached the ball from the back of the scrum,

placing it just over the line to put the score at 29-24. Fresher debutant, Jack, ably converted this try to put the final score at 31-24.

As the final whistle sounded minutes later, the boys in blue knew that they had done what they came to do - shown the Scum what they are capable of and what the remaining two encounters have in store for the medics.



The 3rds celebrating their win in the bar after the game

Rowing novices' maiden win

Iain Palmer

The new intake of Imperial College rowers had their first taste of victory on Saturday, as the Women's Novice eight took victory in Cambridge. The boatclub novices, most of whom only started rowing in October, had been training hard for the 'Cambridge Winter Head' and obtained an impressive set of results.

For those who know little about rowing (i.e. most people!), the season of 'Head' races runs roughly from October until March. A Head race is essentially a time trial, usually over a distance of 3-6 kilometres, with boats in the same category starting one after another. The winner is then the crew that has completed the course in the fastest time.

For Saturday's race, four eights (each with eight rowers and a cox) travelled to Cambridge, leaving at 7 in the morning. Each crew raced twice during the day, with men's results including 5th

and 6th (out of 25) in the beginner category and 4th (out of 22) in the novice category. These excellent results indicate great potential for many wins during the coming year. The most impressive result was from the women's student beginner eight, which beat 15 other crews to come first by over 30 seconds in a time of 11 minutes, 45 seconds.

In addition, the quality of coxing was evident on an extremely narrow river that is notoriously difficult to steer. While in past years there have been problems on some of the tighter bends, there were no collisions this year, and the new intake of coxes should be commended on their ability to bring home an undamaged set of boats! After travelling home, the celebrations were carried out in suitable fashion, in various bars around Fulham!

This first race has been an excellent result, and marks the beginning of a successful race season for the novice squad. Well done to all who raced!



Women's novices in action

The importance of carbohydrates in exercise and sports performance

Andy Mitchell

When most people think about nutrition for sports performance or general exercising they will almost always think about their protein intake and whether they are getting enough to build bigger, stronger muscles. Few ever worry about their carbohydrate intake, except for some of you endurance athletes out there. Most athletes and gym users seem to forget the importance carbohydrates have to play in performing good quality workouts or playing well in sports competitions.

Carbohydrates can be split into two main categories, simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates are broken down easily by the body to provide energy quickly and come in the form of sugars. Too many of these in the diet and they cause a sudden increase in blood sugar levels, which although will give you a big energy high at first, result in an energy crash causing you to feel fatigued and lifeless. Complex carbohydrates however are broken down slower by the body and provide a steadier stream of energy into the body keeping blood sugar levels balanced and making you feel energetic throughout the day. These complex carbohydrates can be divided further into two more categories - digestible and indigestible. Digestible carbohydrates such as pasta, potatoes, bread etc are broken down for energy, while the indigestible ones (commonly known as fibre and found mainly in fruit and vegetables) are used in keeping the intestines healthy and your trips to the toilet regular!

Carbohydrates, along with fats, are the body's main sources of fuel for all of its biological functions and daily activities. The percentage of carbohy-

drates or fat used to fuel these functions or activities varies dependent on the level of intensity. Low to moderate intensity activities (such as sitting, walking or easy jogging) are primarily fuelled by fat and as activities become higher in intensity (weight training, running or any sports activity) carbohydrates take over. Certain functions of the body such as the working of the brain rely solely on energy from carbohydrates (glucose) and cannot be fuelled by fats.

To perform high intensity exercise or sport the body needs plenty of carbohydrates to provide it with energy. The carbohydrates to do this are stored in the muscle cells or liver as glycogen and in the blood as glucose. The muscle holds the largest amount of energy (over four times as much as the liver and over 17 times as much as the blood) and if these muscle stores are low then you will struggle to perform at your best. The less energy you have in your muscles the less force you can create to lift weights, run faster, jump higher etc. As I mentioned the brain requires glucose to function and if liver glycogen and blood glucose levels are low this can result in loss of function of

the brain limiting neuromuscular coordination resulting in poor performance. Therefore this drop in exercise or performance will mean that the body fails to receive an overload stimulus and thus will not adapt and improve.

So how much carbohydrate should you be having in your diet to maintain adequate muscle glycogen stores and high levels of performance? Studies suggest that active sports people and gym users should have a diet consisting of 60-70% carbohydrates. To calculate the amount of carbohydrates in grams per day you first need to know how many calories you need to consume a day for your daily activities. The average active male will require around 2500-3000 calories a day. Carbohydrates provide four calories per gram. So if we assume you need 3000 calories per day and 65% of these come from carbohydrates then you need 1950 calories worth of carbs per day or 487.5 grams.

If you would like to find out how many calories you need to consume a day then book in for a body stat test at the gym where you will be able to get an estimated value (oh the shameless advertising!).



Mmm, pasta!

Women's 9 pull out a draw

Football	L'OREAL PARIS
Imperial Women's 1st	1
Bedfordshire Women's 1st	1

Chloe Joyeux

A cold wind swiped through Harlington on this clear Wednesday. Despite the piercing cold, the IC Women's Football had come to play. Everyone seemed in form and injury free, particularly Lily! The team started warming up on the astro, waiting for the Bedfordshire, Luton girls. These were expected to be quite rough, given their locality. The IC girls were therefore not disappointed when they saw 14 beasts arrive. The IC ladies, for their part, had only come with a reduced formation of 8 equipped players plus one! Luckily for IC however, Pav finally found some boots and shin pads to play with and brought the number of players back to 9. The Luton girls smiled as they saw the reduced IC team, sure to come away with a victory.

The first 20 minutes went on great for IC, with good charges up the field and a comfortable pace. The Luton girls obviously were not sure what they had to do. With the exception of their two forwards, it seemed that their team was mostly composed of randomers picked up in the street. Everywhere the ball went, at least three or four red Luton jerseys followed. It was like watching 3 year-olds play football. The ref, Richie P. therefore had a hard job of seeing what was happening. Pav, made a few breakthroughs, supported by Steph and Barbara. The defence remained solid, passing accurately and retaining possession of the ball. The first goal came in at the 17th minute. An absolutely brilliant shot from Lily at the edge of the box, which flew over at least three or four of their defenders before landing in the left corner of the goal. The goalie, who did not appear to

be very skilled or bright, did not realise what was happening.

The victory was not long lived however. As a result of their fewer numbers of players, the IC girls started becoming slightly tired. This was not made better by the constant shouting of their manager on the side line and the out-of-place comments of their "supporters". Steph therefore took the liberty of asking the manager to be quiet, to which he replied "I am the f***** manager you b****! You suck anyway!" in a complete lack of sportsmanship. Steph became red with fury but managed to avoid strangling him for fear of being shot by the opposition. Luton took this opportunity and equalised minutes before half time. The shot was, one must admit, perfectly placed. Emily jumped but the ball passed right out of reach between her hands and the cross-bar.

Half time was welcome by both teams. Steph related her "beef of the week" to the team, stating that the "manager" of the opposition had a mental age of 5 and she couldn't play because his fake gold teeth blinded her. In a more serious tone, Squashie gave

the IC girls a full report, insisting on short passes and playing wide.

The second half started with a Luton girl trying to come onto the pitch with her jacket, before being told off by Richie P. It went on at a quick pace straight away, giving everyone little chance to breathe. Sheryl, now center mid nevertheless kept the beasts at large, keeping them out of the center. The going forward movement of the IC ladies improved, resulting in Pav nearly scoring a late goal. Despite Luton girls having several forward runs, Emma, Chloe and Kate closed the defence, leaving them without any shots on goal. Other events in the second half also included several IC ladies being fouled a few times, particularly by their wide number 10, and the absolute warrior behaviour of Emma. Emma seemed to be everywhere and saved the day more than a few times. As a result, I am taking the liberty of naming her woman of the match! The IC ladies took the coach home with a happy feeling of accomplishment and the conclusion that Luton town must be a rough place!



Wow, nine of them in this one!

Men's 6th scrape to victory

Football	L'OREAL PARIS
Imperial Men's 6th	2
RUMS Men's 3rd	1

Adrian Doyle

The day started off with IC 4ths, 5ths and 6ths boarding a coach to Shenley the sports ground of UCL and their respective medics, RUMS. For those of you unaware of where Shenley is, it is where Watford have their training ground and is a ridiculous distance away from central London so we were lucky we had 3 teams playing there on the same day, enabling us to get the aforementioned coach instead of the usual tube, train, taxi combination which takes about 2 hours and is one of the most frustrating journeys since the Titanic's inaugural launch from Southampton.

Anyway the match started off on time with both teams ready for battle. The opening exchanges went against what the league table would suggest, with RUMS seemingly more up for the game and their midfield and winning the key challenges. It was also a very scrappy game both teams restricted to hopeful punts downfield and long shots at goal. It was one of these scrappy attempts in the 40th minute that resulted in the opening goal. The RUMS midfielder pumped the ball into the box, leaving AD and Matthew to wrestle each other off the ball while the RUMS striker showed the predatory skills of a great white shark to wade in and stab the ball home from 5 yards.

This was the kick in the arse IC needed to start playing some of our beautiful football to try and get a foothold in the game and before halftime we had equalised. Dave the right-back tackled their player from a throw-in and the ball bobbed through to AD in midfield. He had the space and vision to play an erotic ball through the centre-backs to Rob who was steaming in from the left-wing. Rob then showed great compo-

sure to control the ball with one touch then nutmeg the keeper with his next. 1-1 at half-time and game on.

The second-half started and it was RUMS again who started the half the better team, but fortunately they weren't as good at creating chances as we were and within 10 minutes we scored to take IC 2-1 up. The goal was a thing of beauty, involving Ricky darting out of defence like the title character of Peter Benchley's second masterpiece after the jaws, called "the beast" about a colossal squid attacking a sea-side community. He skinned three of their players before passing the ball off to AD, who again noticed Rob breaking down the left wing. AD played in Rob who showed great skill in beating the defender and getting the shot off. Their keeper exhibited his lettuce wrists and only succeeded in palming the ball to the rushing striker Killer, who calmly slotted away the goal.

It was at this point the RUMS player turned referee decided to start trying his best to upset our rhythm by refusing to give any decisions for us and constantly giving free-kicks to RUMS. The pressure began to mount and this culminated in the ref awarding a penalty when the RUMS striker was tackled and he flopped to the ground like the world's largest jellyfish. You're 'avin a Giraffe we all thought but our wails of protest were to no avail as the ref stood firm, despite the fact it was an absolute dive and a blatant lie... GRRRRR would best sum up our feelings at this point.

Anyway we had to be professional and accept the decision. This acceptance was made all the more easier by their striker running up and taking an awful penalty. Straight down the middle and into the grateful hands of C.Y the 'keeper.

Shortly after the penalty save, the final whistle went and we were happy to leave Shenley with all 3 points after a below-par performance. But points will hopefully become prizes by the end of the year if we can continue this good form and keep our position within the promotion places.

IC Canoe club go kayaking on freshers trip

Catherine Charter

On Friday 26th October a full contingent of Imperial kayakers left London and headed for the Hut. After reclaiming a fresher who had got on the wrong bus, we got to Snowdonia by midnight. On Saturday morning, post fry up, we had a dilemma: no water. No water means no paddling.

The Tryweryn and Vyrnwy were no-gos. The Dee, however, was low but running. A few of the freshers swam on a section called the 'Serpents tail', but soggy toes aside it was awesome. Dreams of some slalom fun were shattered by the BCU Open Slalom Champion getting to Town Falls first. Undeterred, we missioned over to the Glaslyn gorge, which was run by the more experienced paddlers for a few more thrills.

The evening consisted of the pub in Beddgelert, chilli and drinking in the hut. Halloween was celebrated in ICC style with glow in the dark skeletons, Tesco Value face paint and black nail varnish (on boys).

On Sunday morning all prayers of overnight rain had been answered. The rivers were crazily high – even the boathouses on the lake above the Glaslyn were underwater. The keen paddlers went on an early morning

mission to a river no-one can pronounce (the Afon Nantygwyrd) and came back grinning. After their return, some van packing and a fry up, everyone headed to the Conwy. There were a few swims but Hargreave's Folly was run by most. Most of the freshers got out by the A5 road bridge. The rest of the paddlers ran the second half. Then it was back to Llangollen for fish and chips, and back to the real world by 11pm Sunday

night.

Imperial Canoe Club holds pool sessions every Tuesday at Ethos, 7 til 8.30, usually followed by a drink or two. We have various trips to Wales and the Lakes, and a big summer trip to the Alps. Membership is only £30, and includes all the gear you need. For more information, go to www.union.ic.ac.uk/rcc/canoe or email rachel.fox@ic.ac.uk.



Exciting

Imperial Team of the Week



Fencing Men's 2nd

This week, *Sports Partnership* along with *Felix Sport* have chosen the Fencing Men's 2nd team as their 'Team of the Week'.

The guys have been doing exceptionally well, and a lot better than

their 1st team (cheap dig, very cheap dig), and are still unbeaten this season.

Hopefully this streak can continue and the team can win their league. All the best guys!

The long road to success



Gil Salville
Energia Fitness Instructor

So you think you're ready to start training for a marathon? The marathon is the longest and most difficult race most runners ever attempt. It's also the most popular. Almost anyone can complete a marathon, but whether they can complete it without injury or great pain is the real test. Will you be one of those who just manages through, or one of those who finishes with a smile and a great outlook for the rest of the day?

The general rule is that you need to have run regularly for 1 to 2 years before you begin training for a marathon. Why the wait? A marathon is approximately 52,400 foot strikes. This will tear away at your body, especially your joints. Your body needs to build up to this kind of abuse and a 26 week (or less) training program just doesn't suffice for most people's bodies to adapt properly. You will need to find some runs that you like in your area that suit your current fitness level. It may be 1, 2, 5 even 10 mile runs that you are currently doing. Aim to have as many different routes and distances, with the aim of avoiding just going out for a run around the block. By simply going out on the same run each time, you will soon get bored and your body will become adapted to it. Vary your routes, the way in which you run round and

speed. Keep a log of your times.

It is advisable to put in at least 20 miles per week for several months before you start training for a marathon. The reasons are the same as those above. Your body needs time to adapt to the pounding that it will be taking. Be sure to run at least 5 miles a week during this time on pavement, as that is likely to be what you are running on in the marathon. Training solely on a track or trail will cause you to hurt much worse after the marathon.

It's also a good idea to try out a few smaller races, like 5ks or 10ks, even a half marathon (assuming you've trained for it). This is important because there are many new experiences that races bring that regular training does not. If you haven't raced before you start training, be sure to work some into your schedule. Choosing a full marathon as your first ever race is a sure fire way to have a tough 26.2 miles!

It may not seem important, but a great way to get injured is to think you can just start running long distances without the proper time and effort. Just like speed takes years of training for many people, distance isn't something you just jump into. It's important to respect the distance (and your body) by allotting the time you really need. If you are looking for instant-gratification, try a 5k. Marathons are about patience, including before the starting line.

It's important to think about what race you plan to do. Very hot or very cold weather is not a great marathon to start with. You're limiting your chances of finishing. The same could be said about a very hilly course or a course that is not beginner-friendly. Find races that advertise they are good first marathons, like the Free Scale Marathon. Training in the UK for the London marathon will normally take place in the cold wet winter months for the race in April. This prevents most people going out, especially in the evenings when it gets dark so early.

If you are going to ignore my advice about putting in a year or more of running regularly before you start training, tell your doctor what your plan is,

perhaps go over the training schedule you plan to do with him/her. They may suggest tests (like a cardiovascular stress test), give you an alternate plan, or just send you on your way to get started. There is no reason why someone of an average to good fitness level should not be able to run the whole way of a marathon. Prepare both your body and mind, and you will finish.

If your goal is weight loss, and you think that marathon training is the way to get there, you are probably headed down a path to injuries. While you may lose some fat while training for a marathon, marathons and dieting are a bad mix. Your body will need nourishment now more than ever. Eating healthier, but not having much of a calorie deficit, will help you tone up and yes lose some during marathon training, but your major focus needs to be completing the marathon in good health.

Tips for success ... on long runs drink water before you run, not too much so as to make you uncomfortable, and sip water during the run. Don't get thirsty. During the marathon you will have available isotonic drinks. They are useful for replacing salts and sugar. If you intend to use them train with them. Eat a well balanced, sensible diet. You may find that as the training increases you eat more. Increase the carbohydrate content with rice, pasta, bread and potatoes. Wear the right shoes and kit that is comfortable. If you pick up an injury then stop. RICE! Rest. Ice. Compression. Elevation. Don't start back too early with your training. A heart rate monitor is a good investment. You will know exactly what your body is doing and how it is reacting to the demands. Run at approximately 75% of your maximum which is simply $(220 - \text{age}) \times 75/100$. Intervals help to improve your fitness and increase your pace. Run them at a pace that means you can complete the session. For 1 minute efforts recover for 1 minute with a walk. On race day don't do anything different to your Sunday routine. Training is all about preparing the body and mind to achieve what it understands.

Best tip of all - Don't forget to set your alarm clock on the day of the race!!

Sports league

Week 7 and a lot more results are in. The ranking of the teams is based on the Felix Index (FI), which is calculated as follows: $FI = (W*5) + (D*2) - (L*4)$. Only teams with 5 games or more will be considered in the overall championship at the end of year.

With this week's results in, Netball 1st, Squash Men's 1st and Tennis Men's 2nd are top of the table with 25 points each. With the majority of the chasing pack winning their games this

week, there is very little change except for Fencing Women's 1st who at their weekend tournament came second, only losing out to Oxford.

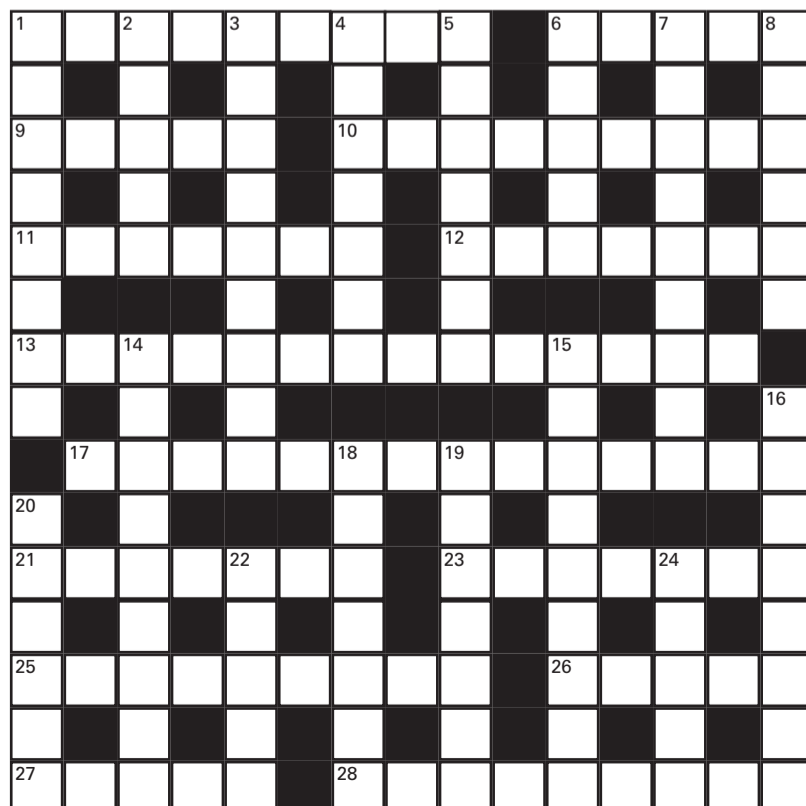
A mid table scrap is still there between the men's Hockey 2s and Rugby 3s, as well as the ladies Hockey, Lacrosse and Squash

At the bottom of the table the Football Men's 2nd are rooted and are still looking for that elusive BUSA. Hopefully they'll get it next week.

	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	%	FI
1	Netball 1st	6	6	0	0	344	152	192	100	30
2	Squash Men's 1st	6	6	0	0	30	0	30	100	30
3	Tennis Men's 2nd	6	6	0	0	51	9	42	100	30
4	Rugby Union Men's 1st	7	6	0	1	171	61	110	85.7	26
5	Squash Men's 2nd	6	5	0	1	20	8	12	83.3	21
6	Fencing Men's 2nd	4	4	0	0	525	423	102	100	20
7	Hockey Men's 1st	6	4	1	1	17	9	8	66.7	18
8	Rugby Union Men's 2nd	6	4	1	1	139	77	62	66.7	18
9	Tennis Women's 1st	4	3	1	0	30	10	20	75	17
10	Football Men's 1st	5	2	3	0	9	4	5	40	16
11	Volleyball Women's 1st	3	3	0	0	9	3	6	100	15
12	Fencing Women's 1st	4	3	0	1	517	403	114	75	11
13	Football Women's 1st	5	2	2	1	4	3	1	40	10
14	Basketball Men's 1st	2	2	0	0	151	96	55	100	10
15	Squash Women's 1st	6	3	1	2	16	9	7	50	9
16	Cricket Men's 1st	5	3	0	2	926	678	248	60	7
17	Lacrosse Women's 1st	5	3	0	2	38	35	3	60	7
18	Hockey Women's 1st	6	2	2	2	21	19	2	33.3	6
19	Table Tennis Women's 1st	3	2	0	1	9	6	3	66.7	6
20	Rugby Union Women's 1st	1	1	0	0	50	5	45	100	5
21	Hockey Men's 2nd	6	3	0	3	27	12	15	50	3
22	Rugby Union Men's 3rd	6	3	0	3	128	92	36	50	3
23	Cricket Men's 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	Equestrian 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	Equestrian 2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	Golf 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	Volleyball Men's 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
28	Water Polo Men's 1st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	Hockey Men's 3rd	6	2	1	3	10	10	0	33.3	0
30	Badminton Men's 2nd	5	2	0	3	21	19	2	40	-2
31	Table Tennis Men's 1st	3	1	0	2	30	21	9	33.3	-3
32	Squash Men's 3rd	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0	-4
33	Badminton Men's 1st	6	2	0	4	23	22	1	33.3	-6
34	Hockey Women's 2nd	6	2	0	4	8	29	-21	33.3	-6
35	Fencing Men's 1st	4	1	0	3	429	466	-37	25	-7
36	Netball 2nd	4	1	0	3	115	116	-1	25	-7
37	Tennis Men's 1st	6	1	1	4	16	44	-28	16.7	-9
38	Hockey Men's 4th	5	1	0	4	4	14	-10	20	-11
39	Badminton Women's 1st	5	0	1	4	10	30	-20	0	-14
40	Football Men's 3rd	6	0	1	5	4	18	-14	0	-18
41	Football Men's 2nd	5	0	0	5	3	18	-15	0	-20

Crossword No. 1,388

Answers to: sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk



ACROSS

- 1 Include English computer license (9)
- 6 Prophet, or egghead who lets moss grow around him? (5)
- 9 Also known as Kamal, I assume? (5)
- 10 Take a guess on sending some filthy money back, in this trend (9)
- 11 Ninety-nine swimming birds flying backwards over the floe (7)
- 12 Dynasty gentlemen go off-topic (7)
- 13 S.U.I t. (5, 4, 4)
- 17 "The harness clicked strangely", wrote the author (7, 7)
- 21 Cleaning product made from fake excrement (7)
- 23 Smudge the French with a small spot on the skin (7)
- 25 Circle about what sounds like Cockney horse talk (9)
- 26 Ending of off-key chorus indicates Latin below (5)
- 27 Play badly with the beginning of severe muscular paralysis (5)
- 28 Powerful ruler puts an author around a tent the wrong way around (9)

DOWN

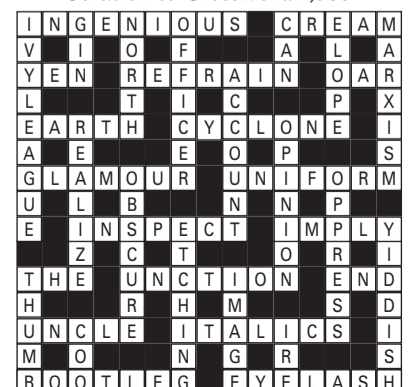
- 1 To become extremely thin and wasted, he came back before I ate (3)
- 2 Lawlessness in historically disputed Russian territory (5)
- 3 One of three mutes reek curiously (9)
- 4 Priest is no part of twisted savageries caused by spear (4)
- 5 Doubter infected, catching cold (7)
- 6 Grieve for you in the morning (5)
- 7 The fabric of the cosmos; an energy pastime ruined (5-4)
- 8 Awkward hustle of a detective (6)
- 14 Run-through in which Pierre hears all (9)
- 15 Erections explode into production of bodily fluids (9)
- 16 Strange antes in use in Congress (2, 6)
- 18 Alien about to leave causes cut in self-aggrandizement (3, 4)
- 19 Sweet gets worried without a cause (7)
- 20 Finished up around unsettled bills (4, 2)
- 22 The end of the internet telephony is a hoax! (5)
- 24 Metamorphosis created by Brazilian footballer with French heart (5)

The winner of last week's crossword was nobody, unfortunately. Hopefully you won't have quite so much trouble with this week's grid of monochrome ingenuity.

This week I'm going to talk about sandwich filler because funnily enough I need something to sandwich into this gap. I don't really like sandwich filler though, it seems a bit pointless and cheap when you can buy some pickle and cheese or something.

Tomo, on behalf of Enoch

Solution to Crossword 1,388





Singaporean Society report on their massive haul of medals at the Nottingham Games, see page 36

Fencing 2nds made to work for winning streak

Fencing

Portsmouth Men's 1st	116
Imperial Men's 2nd	134

Maurice Berk

Imperial Men's 2nd Fencing team predictably beat a rock-bottom Portsmouth 1st side, but were made to work hard for their efforts. The lengthy train journey clearly took its toll on Imperial's fencers and with Ez Hassan absent with the University of London Air Squadron and new man Alex Bishop reportedly suffering from leukaemia, they were bound to struggle.

The match started with sabre and Luka Lukic was given the all important anchor position, seeing away his first opponent 5 – 4. Both Will Hoy and team captain Maurice Berk enjoyed 5 – 2 victories in their first matches, putting Imperial 15 – 8 ahead after the initial round. Maurice, Luka and Will then all won their second round matches 5 – 2 to further increase the lead to 30 – 14 with everything proceeding according to plan. Maurice was made to work hard for his 5 – 4

final victory against the opposition captain while Will won his last match 5 – 3. Portsmouth were not quite ready to give up, it seemed, as Luka struggled his way to a 5 – 9 defeat in the final sabre match, leaving the score at 45 – 30 for that weapon.

Next up was epee and it was here that Portsmouth started to threaten. Maurice went down to a 4 – 5 defeat against the opposition captain in the opening match before Luka put Imperial in front after a 6 – 4 victory. With both Ez and Alex absent and after getting his first taste of competitive epee last week, Nathan Blundell was Imperial's third man and he kept them in the lead with a 5 – 5 draw in his first match. Maurice then comfortably beat his next opponent 5 – 2 while Nathan again drew 5 – 5. Luka saw off his second opponent 5 – 4 before Nathan finally got the hang of it and won 5 – 1. With Imperial 35 – 26 in the lead for epee before the final two matches they seemed well in control yet Portsmouth had other plans. Maurice was defeated 2 – 7 in a match that went to time while Luka suffered a 7 – 12 defeat at the hands of the Portsmouth captain to leave the final score for epee 44 – 45 in Portsmouth's favour and

the Imperial team wondering whether overconfidence might prove to be their downfall.

Imperial were still 14 points in the lead going into foil, traditionally their strongest weapon. It was, however, an under strength foil side with Will initially standing in for the absentees and Luka nominated as a reserve. Things started particularly badly with Norris going down to a 1 – 5 defeat at the hands of the opposition captain before Nathan restored the lead with a remarkable 9 – 3 victory. Will struggled against his opponent 4 – 7 and Luka was nominated to replace him for his remaining two matches. Norris redeemed himself with an excellent 6 – 0 win while Luka could only managed a 5 – 5 draw in his first match. Nathan and Luka both comfortably won their next matches 5 – 2, putting the game beyond doubt with Imperial 20 points in the lead and only 16 to play for. Norris drew against his final opponent 5 – 5 before the opposition captain again created problems, this time serving up a 5 – 7 defeat to Nathan. In the end, however, one man does not make a team and Imperial added another scalp to the collection, final scores standing at 134 – 116.



The stuntmen for the latest Matrix film were just beginning to warm up