

# felix

The student newspaper of  
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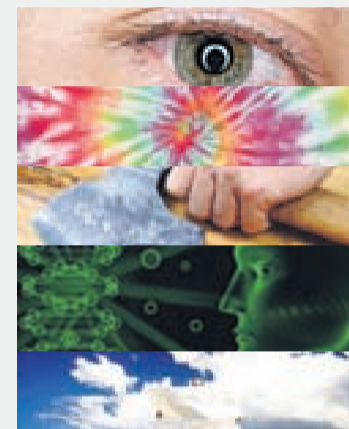


## Library delayed till July '08

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## News

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# Union's Higher Education survey announced

Take next Friday's online Higher Education survey and you can influence what the Union's stance on funding should be

**Matty Hoban**

Last term, Imperial College Union Council voted to review its policy of campaigning for free education, by consulting the student body. Since then, Union President Stephen Brown and Deputy President (Education & Welfare) Kirsty Patterson have been preparing a survey for students that will be launched on the 25th January at lunchtime.

The survey aims to gauge opinion on higher education funding as a whole rather than current government policy specifically. Felix has obtained an early draft of the questionnaire and its structure asks general questions about the role of higher education before getting onto questions of funding. This will help direct Union policy on higher education funding.

With constant discussion over top-up fees and the effect it will have on the higher education sector, the Union believes that their current policy is "unrealistic". So how did funding end up at the current situation?

In July 1997, the Dearing Report on higher education assessed that free education was not viable and suggested a contribution from the student of £1,000 instead. At the time of the report, tuition was free and students had access to equal grants and loans. This £1,000 would be paid after graduation, i.e. a graduate tax. However, the government did not introduce the recommendations of the Dearing Report, instead favouring a loan system and charging £1,000 in tuition fees. This system was amended for the academic year 2006/7 introducing the infamous top-up fees.

The introduction of top-up fees (capped at £3,000) has not been seen as an adequate solution by some. The



### Here's what's at stake in the Higher Education Funding debate

Rector, Sir Richard Sykes, has been an advocate of higher top-up fees in the past alongside greater bursaries. Amongst all this debate, in 2009 the cap on the top-up fees will be reviewed by a government board. By the time the report has drawn its conclusions, the Union is hoping to have a policy with which to stand by.

In the next couple of weeks, Felix and the Union are encouraging debate over the current funding model, proposals of new models and a detailed explanation of how we got to where we are.

This will all lead up to the aforementioned survey going live on the day that Felix is out.

The following debates and the survey will deal with issues such as the purpose of education, whether it be a means for employment or it existing for its own sake; also, larger political issues such as social mobility will be opened up for even greater discussion. Student involvement is necessary to present a clear and cohesive policy, so get involved next Friday and have your say in the funding debate.

## Why do we need a Higher Education Funding debate?



The survey is open to all IC students, not just Union Councillors

**Kirsty Patterson**  
Imperial College Union Deputy President (Education & Welfare)

Spending a fair majority of time over the last three years dabbling in Student politics it hasn't been a particularly dubious task to deduce one thing about students in general: there is nothing in general that unifies students on political issues. Representing the views of a 'movement' of students can at times be exactly as changeable as it sounds. With such a dynamic political agenda from year to year a debate involving the NUS and the Government would draw close parallels to a trolley race where we are pitting four broken wheels going in different directions against jet propulsion. I certainly wouldn't be putting money on the broken trolley.

The next big trolley race is peeking over the horizon. After the introduction of top-up fees in October 2006 a review of the £3000 cap is due in 2009. By my estimate that gives us just enough time to fix the broken trolley wheels and decide which way they are going to be pointing.

In the second meeting of Union Council in the 2006/2007 period a policy was passed which outlined the Imperial College Union stance on Tuition Fees. It was passed at a Council before any Ordinary Members had been elected which is not the most democratic of bodies.

Since the policy was written a number of key positions in the Higher Educa-

tion debate have shifted. The NUS is no longer running a campaign to fight for free education for all, instead choosing to concentrate on keeping the cap in place; the Rector of Imperial College London has changed his stance on unregulated fees instead favouring raising the cap by a much smaller amount than he originally stated; and that ten years on from the Dearing Report the measures put in place to address the dying Higher Education system have not had the predicted effect of restricting access for students from poor socio-economic backgrounds.

The need for a full debate on Higher Education funding stems from these political shifts and the availability of more information than we had a year ago. With key debates in the NUS occurring in the near future and the deadline for amendments to NUS Conference at the end of February, Council decided that a full review of our current policy should take place.

The survey will be open to all students of Imperial College to allow the student population as a whole to get involved rather than a few student members of Council. Also, the questions will be supported by all the available facts on funding, bursaries and possible solutions printed in Felix over the coming weeks to help you come to an informed decision.

Once we have gathered your opinions all that is left to do is align the trolley wheels in the right direction and start the mad dash to the finish line.

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Thanks to Daniel and Ciaran

LOLcats  
LOLcats



OF THE WEEK



# The curse of the “technical setback”

Another of Imperial's major building projects is struck as the Library opening is delayed until July and despite £10.85m spent on the refurbishment, overheating problems on levels 4 and 5 will not be resolved

Ciaran Ellis

Drilling will continue to disrupt students as the opening date for the new Library is pushed back by 3 months to July 2008. The work, originally scheduled to end in March 2008 in time for the summer's exam period, now looks set to continue for the rest of the academic year.

The delay has been caused by the latest in a series of technical setbacks befalling the two-year project. In what has been termed a “procurement issue” by a senior member of College's Building Projects team who wishes to remain anonymous, the dimensions of the rooms, which will house the air conditioning units for the ground floor, differ from the dimensions in the original plans. The air conditioning units are built depending upon the size of the room they are being housed in and now their specifications need to be reconsidered, hence the delay.

Library staff admit the delay will lead to “unavoidable noise” associated with the building work. At times, this will be a particular problem on the lower levels and near the stairwell where noise will be funnelled to higher floors.

The Library is extending opening hours in an effort to provide additional quiet study time. The library will be open 24/6 from Monday 3rd March, several weeks earlier than in previous years.

Contractors have been given exam timetables when noisy work is supposed to stop.

Students will be able to avoid the noise by retreating to higher levels where work is not in progress. However, due to overheating, which caused levels 4 and 5 to reach 30 degrees Cel-



Left: Work on the Service Tower (which will provide air conditioning for the ground and third floors) is supposedly still on target to finish by March 2008, and right: a view of the construction work from inside the Sheffield Building



sius last year, this is unlikely to be an attractive option.

The problem of cooling the higher levels, where students have been described as “visibly sweating”, has been apparent since the beginning of the project but will remain unresolved when the £10.85m Library refurbishment finishes.

In 2007, plans for solar shading were blocked by Westminster City Council when nearby residents complained on

aesthetic grounds. The solar shading would have reflected heat from the top-levels of the library providing a much needed cooling system.

Despite over £10m being spent on the refurbishment, including alterations to existing infrastructure on levels 4 and 5, no solution to the overheating has been offered since the collapse of the solar-shading plan. The air conditioning units currently being installed will serve the ground floor only.

The senior College member who spoke to Felix admits that there is still a problem with temperatures on the top floors which “have not been reduced to an acceptable level.”

An independent mechanical and electrical (M&E) consultancy has been called in to propose solutions and they are due to report to College in March but work is unlikely to get underway any time soon.

The £10.85m Library development project began in 2006 and is made up of three stages. Stage 1a is now complete which included the Humanities department moving to the Sheffield building along with some alterations to the Library's infrastructure. Stage 1b is ongoing and includes the erection of a service tower and chiller, which will air condition level 3 and the ground floor. The first phase comes in at £4.6m. Stage 2, which costs £6.25m, is now scheduled to be completed by July and involves the refurbishment of the ground floor.

“It is disappointing for everyone that it is taking a little longer, but building work doesn't always go to plan,” said Trudy Breuss, the Library Redevelopment's Project Leader.

Ms Breuss insists that the finished product will be worth it and the students can expect a larger and vastly

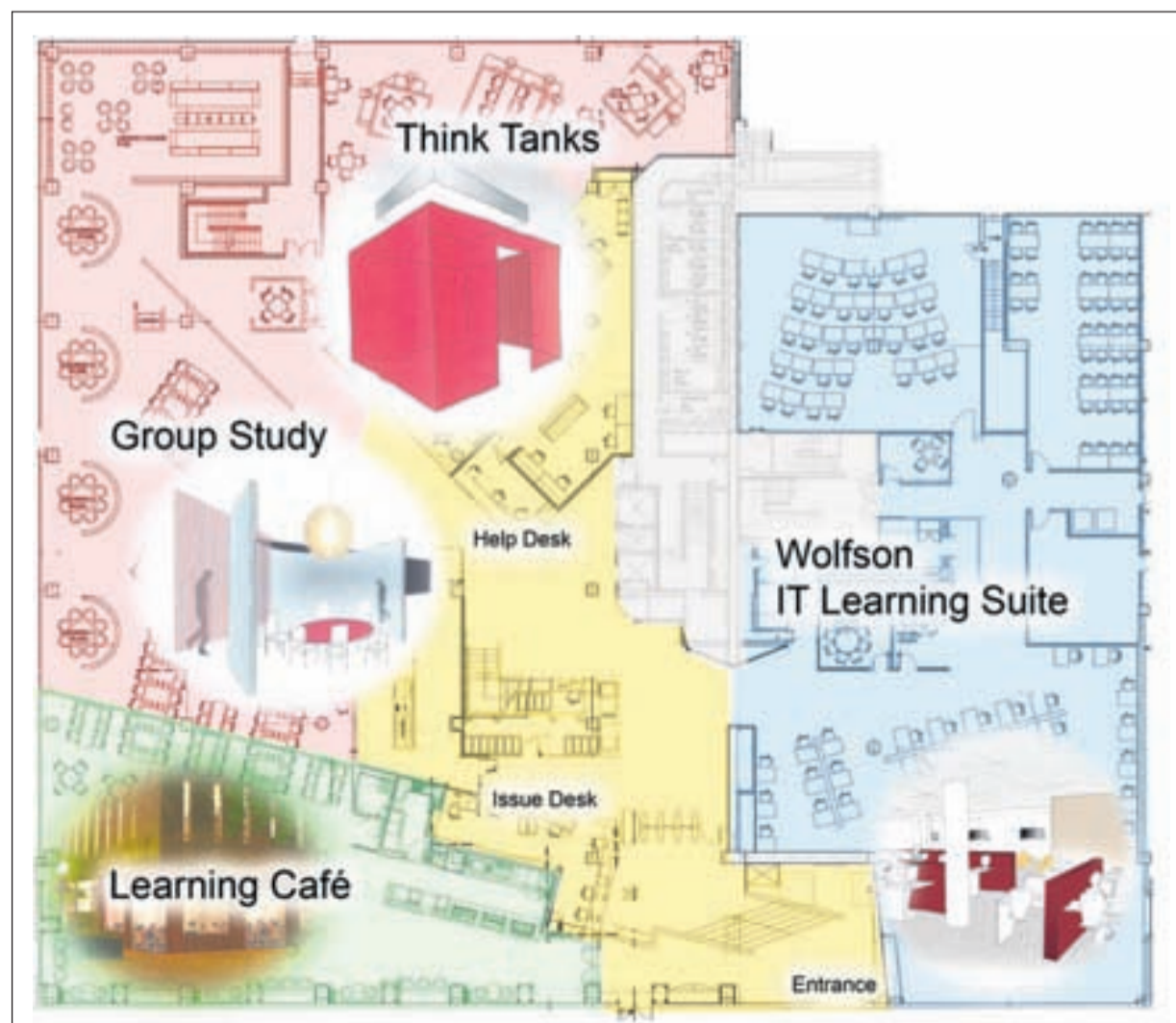
improved work space.

The ground floor area, which used to house Waterstones and the Science Museum Library, has been extended into the old walkway, to create a space now totalling 2,600 square metres.

New additions will include a learning café at the front of the building, which will be equipped with PCs and will serve hot and cold snacks providing an area where students can eat, drink and study at the same time.

The north side of the Library, where the Haldane Collection used to be, will become the Wolfson IT Learning Suite. The centre of the Suite will be an open plan area housing 50 new PCs funded by the Wolfson Foundation. The area will be a quieter place where individuals can go to study by themselves, or to relax in peace on sofas which will come equipped with built-in network and power slots. A few rooms containing projectors will be made available to students so they can practice group presentations.

In the vibrantly coloured “group work” section, moveable metal screens and desks will provide an adaptable working space. Also in development are 6 semi-transparent “think-tanks” giving groups an element of privacy. Finally, a lounge area is also planned, providing magazines and newspapers.



Plans of what the vast Library ground floor might look like when it opens to students

## Library refurbishment at a glance

**Total cost:** £10.85m

**Phase 1 cost:** £4.6m, **Phase 2 cost:** £6.25

**Project start date:** Summer 2006

**Original Library opening date:** March 2008

**Revised Library opening date:** July 2008

**Phase 1a changes:** Relocation of Humanities department to Sheffield Building, alterations to levels 4 and 5 ventilation system, new roof lights

**Phase 1b changes:** Chiller on Sheffield roof and Service Tower to provide cooling to the ground and third floors

**Phase 2 changes:** Refurbishment of the entire Library ground floor plus extensions including a learning café, new IT Suite, group learning area and quiet study area



# Science Challenge 2008 unveiled

Imperial students can win £2,500 by answering one of five questions set by a panel of expert judges

**Tom Roberts**  
Editor-in-Chief

This year's Royal College of Science Union (RCSU) Science Challenge will be officially launched next Tuesday 22nd January in room 220 in the Mechanical Engineering department building. Daniel Burrows, the Chair of the RCSU Science Challenge committee, will host the launch event. He will be joined by the Rector of Imperial College, Sir Richard Sykes, who will be giving a short seminar on the night.

The RCSU Science Challenge is an annual scientific writing competition open to Imperial undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as school pupils in years 11, 12 and 13. University students compete against each other to win a £2,500 prize. School students will be competing for £2,000, double last year's amount.

Mr Burrows believes "that as a society we must make challenging moral decisions based on science" and therefore "a researcher's ability to convey his work in a clear and concise manner to people in the pub is crucial to our rapidly evolving world."

Entrants will have to write an 800-word essay, however in a twist by this year's organisers, the judges will each set a question and students will have to choose which one (or ones since Imperial students can have multiple entries) they most prefer to answer.

This year's panel of expert scientific judges includes the Rector, Sir Richard Sykes, fertility specialist Professor Lord Robert Winston, Nature Editor-in-Chief Dr Philip Campbell, BBC Science Correspondent Pallab Ghosh, Shell Vice President Global Solutions Dr Paul Snaith and the Director of the Imperial College Grantham Institute for Climate Change, Sir Brian Hoskins.

Each judge (except Mr Ghosh) will be setting and unveiling their own question in a weekly seminar held every Tuesday at 6:30pm in 220 Mech Eng. The first seminar will be given by the Rector at the official launch next Tuesday 22nd January.

The idea behind the seminars is to allow the judges to explain why they chose their question. Science Challenge entrants are advised to attend the seminars where hints and tips on how to answer each question will be given.

For schools and students that can't

## The Questions and the Judges

Can you guess who's setting which question, and more importantly what each question will be based on from these pictorial hints?

make the seminars, the Science Challenge is going online. Each seminar will be recorded and streamed live over the internet. To register, email [science\\_challenge@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:science_challenge@imperial.ac.uk). The setter's slide show will also be broadcast online simultaneously with the live footage.

This year's Science Challenge has generated in excess of £25,000 in funding. The money is being put towards the prize fund as well as the awards

ceremony venue. Last year competition entrants were whisked off to The Ritz hotel in Mayfair where the prize winners were announced. This year's venue has yet to be confirmed, but with a substantial pot of money to draw from, the RCSU committee is setting its sight on something impressive.

Mr Burrows is working hard to ensure that the competition reaches as many students as possible. Students who sign up for updates on the Science Challenge website are entered into a prize draw for a Nintendo Wii at the awards ceremony on March 18th.

He is appealing for Imperial students to contact their old schools and invite them to participate. Two extra tickets in the Wii draw are offered if students write to their old school about the Challenge.

All entries must be submitted by Tuesday 26th February and the winner will be announced on Tuesday 18th March.

**The Challenge is principally sponsored by Imperial College and Shell. The challenge is organised by the RCSU and the Outreach Office, who also sponsor the schools competition.**

**For more information on the competition and how to get your previous high school involved visit [www.rcsu.org.uk/sciencechallenge](http://www.rcsu.org.uk/sciencechallenge) over the coming weeks or email [science\\_challenge@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:science_challenge@imperial.ac.uk)**

## The Science Challenge in numbers

6 unique questions  
5 expert judges

800 word essay

prize for the winner **£2.5k**

## More of an entrepreneur than a scientific writer? Win big prizes for business ideas

On Wednesday, Imperial's Entrepreneur Centre launched its 8th New Business challenge, an annual business plan competition which this year is offering prizes totalling £42,000.

The winning 10 page plan will earn its team £10,000 in cash as well as a further £15,000 in business services. The two runners-up and 7 finalists will each receive £5000 and £1000, respectively.

In her opening address, Sabrina Kiefer, Business Plan Manager for the competition, stressed the broad range of benefits on offer to all participating students, from simply improving a CV to cashing in on a great idea. But for those looking to take their ideas into the business world, the competition can provide a great deal more.

Many previous winners have gone on to create successful businesses based on their entries. A finalist in the 2002/3 competition, Omlet ([www.omlet.co.uk](http://www.omlet.co.uk)) is now an established enterprise selling innovative hi-tech chicken coups for domestic use. The competition also boasts many big name sponsors such as Shell, Barclays Capital and IBM.

To help the teams develop their ideas, a series of six evening lectures are planned on such subjects as 'Raising finance for a new venture' and 'Protecting your intellectual property'. There are also 'mentoring sessions', in which students can receive expert guidance from Sainsbury Management Fellows.

"To be successful, competitors will need to show initiative, commitment, and creativity in their business plans," said, Ms Kiefer. She added that, "the competition is all about giving students a chance to experiment in a realistic but safe environment."

The New Business Challenge is open to all Imperial students. Teams may include competitors from outside the university, but must comprise at least 50 percent Imperial students.

The closing date for registration is Monday 11th February. More details can be found on the Imperial website.

Andrew Turley



When we  
can't tell you  
what you'll be  
doing **tomorrow**  
because you've  
not come up  
with it yet.

We believe that what we are doing today will help us become the BP we want to be tomorrow. Our business is the exploration, production, refining, marketing, trading and distribution of energy; and we have nearly 100,000 people in 100 countries across six continents. In this age of growing consumer demand and environmental urgency, we are always looking to find new and better ways of delivering energy to the world – without compromising the planet.

Take up any one of our engineering, science and business opportunities and you could be helping to find new reserves, create cleaner fuels, expand our capacity and market our brands to over 15 million customers every day. Look beyond the limits.

**Deadline for applications has been extended  
to 28th January 2008.**

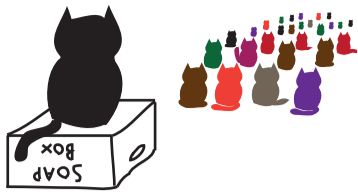
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## Comment, Opinion & Letters

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Letters may be edited for length and grammar purposes  
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### A. Geek

**//** Cruise is interesting when we're looking for entertainment, but that depressing chick's blog is interesting when we have nothing to do *at all* **//**

## Man of the People™

**A**s you can probably tell, I'm a bit of a Man Of The People™. I shop at Tesco, for instance, and I buy their own brand of juice instead of that Ocean Spray nonsense. I think Irish people are more trustworthy because they sound like they're all grinning inanely when you speak to them in tech support centres. I've watched at least two programmes with Jimmy Carr in them. Yes, it's true – if there were an election for Mister Man, there'd be no need for a recount.

One of the things you've got to do to be a Man Of The People™ is to speak the things the people want to hear. You've got to be in tune with them, you've got to read The Daily Mail, you've got to know what matters to them. That's why, each week, I dutifully sit down in front of the BBC News page entitled 'Have Your Say' and take in the varied and completely reasonable wisdom offered by the nation's finest debaters.

Then I stop laughing at the little joke I tell to myself and start reading what this week's Top of the Cocks have decided to offer up in the way of opinion. Here's a snippet from last week's hot topic:

*"This government is not just happy in just taking our money but want our bodies as well."*

Thanks for that, Jim from Peterborough. The 'Have Your Say' phenomenon isn't something dreamt up at White City by bored Beeb execs, of course, it's something indicative of the media as a whole at the moment. The argument for this kind of discussion starts, presumably, at the very place that it ends – The Internet. The Internet is where

the really famous people are, or so it seems, because although Tom Cruise only needs to poke a limb outside of his house to appear instantaneously on four magazine covers he doesn't hit the same area of people's lives that those on YouTube & co. do. Cruise is interesting when we're looking for entertainment, but that depressing chick's blog is interesting when we're looking for nothing to do *at all*.

*"So now Gordon Brown can tax us to death and claim our dead bodies for organs. When will we rise up and stop this NuLabour obsession with total control?"*

Some chap from Leeds, there. So the theory goes that people on the internet become famous because they're 'real', and there's absolutely zero editorial filtering whatsoever. Opinion goes in, opinion goes out and that's either a wonderful thing or a recipe for mass suicide depending on where you're coming from. But hey, if YouTube can get attention like that just through allowing videos of Asian chicks jiggling around nondescript beaches, then why shouldn't serious things cash in on it as well? Because as we all know, only serious people watch serious things, and that means there's a veritable fucktonne of down-to-earth rational commentary out there to be had. The more people comment, the more people watch for comment, and the more people get in the debate. Board meeting over. Pack up your Powerpoint, love – you're hired.

*"Gordon Brown, what was WWII all about when we stopped Hitler from using minority people for his medical experiments? And you want to bring back*

*the body snatchers? For Shame!!!!"*

Betty Churchill invoking Godwin's Law there, and disobeying the three-exclamation-mark rule like the liberation of the Nazi Punctuation Camps *never even bloody happened*.

In case you're getting a bit perturbed by the offcuts from the site by now, they're covering the deliciously tedious story that organ donation may become compulsory in the future. Now obviously, this was reported without explicitly saying "for dead people" after the word "compulsory", because that's entirely implied by the fact that, you know, that's how organ donation works. Nevertheless the Have Your Say page reads like Brown's hand is already up your rear and fondling your spare kidneys.

*"Gordon Brown once again shows the Orwellian nature of those who presume to represent the Will Of The People, whilst bringing in Laws & regulations for which they have no mandate."*

Half of this stuff doesn't even make any sense – there's one man who explains that he's suddenly 'reminded' of a Monty Python sketch involving an organ donor, but offers no other argument whatsoever, suggesting that the only reason this occurred to him was because there wasn't really anything objectionable to say, he just felt the need to stir things up. And it's not all ridiculous 'Fuck The System' types either, take a look at this:

*"I believe that people who won't sign up to donate their organs should also be placed on a parallel list not to receive any."*

And these are the kind of people who are asking for 'compassion' and 'hu-

manity' in their comments. This is why the organ donation story exhibits it so well, there's a division between the two camps of comment writers that's only slightly more voluminous than the presumed gap between themselves and reality. There's more than a hundred and twenty pages of repetitive shit on there, each page growing slightly angrier and slightly more obscure as the moderators get lazier and start letting any kind of rubbish in, namely the people who think New Labour are stockpiling human hearts for an army of androids with which they'll install a totalitarian regime.

All right, this is one of the reasons it makes such compelling reading for up-their-own-passages people such as myself. It's great to look it over and snort at the fact that these people think that the Government are trying, literally, to steal things from our cold, dead bodies. But while the BBC might have little or no understanding of the kind of people that comment on things on the internet, they do understand that they don't *need* to. Because no matter how bizarre or weird, how downright absurd these ideas might be, they are ideas Of The People, and that means that when something like this crops up:

*"Typical nulab - regards even the dead as their property! Taxes the peasantry in life & then claims the body as well!!!!"*

Who cares if it's nonsensical bullshit? Two hundred and twenty eight people 'recommended' the comment. And if you can't offer a video of a chap lighting his own farts then I suppose that's the next best thing.



### Scorpio

**//** Even though conservational sirens went off and efforts made to preserve the baiji, all failed due to a classic case of too little, too late **//**

## China's princess six feet under

**D**espite being one of the cutest members of the animal kingdom, the Yangtze river dolphin, one of the most majestic symbols of Asia, is all but extinct. It now holds the record of being the first ever cetacean to be driven to extinction from human activities.

The creature, known as the 'Goddess of the Yangtze' locally and the baiji internationally, was the reincarnation of a princess in Chinese mythology. Forced by her family into a marriage to a man she did not love, she chose to drown herself and was reincarnated as the river dolphin.

Although the baiji was listed on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list as 'Critically Endangered' for several years, its population was allowed to dwindle below numbers from where it could recover. Anthropogenic factors were most responsible, such as the decreasing water quality of the Yangtze. Pollution, pumped out from existent and emerging industries and growing urban populations along the riverbank, caused serious health problems for the dolphins. Toxic chemicals, absorbed by smaller fish the baiji preys on, persisted in their bodies once consumed. Their levels became more concentrated as they moved up the food chain, causing blood poisoning and tissue damage for the baiji population. Noise from the

heavy river traffic interfered with the communication system used by the dolphin, leading to impaired breeding cycles and the occasional unfortunate collision with boats and machinery. Intense fishing activity was also to blame, with many animals caught as by-catch in long nets spanning the river basin. Although a few of those lucky enough to be disentangled survived, most died from combinations of weariness and stress. The habitat of the baiji had been continually restricted by the construction of several dams, most notably the Three Gorges Dam near Sandouping. Hemmed in, and with oceanic salt water at the other end, there was no where safe for the dolphin to turn.

Even as conservational sirens were going off and efforts made to preserve the baiji, all failed due to mismanagement and the classic case of too little, too late. Of the two females captured and brought to the Baiji Dolphinarium, one was past reproductive age and the other died after just 17 days. The last male at the sanctuary, Qi Qi, died in 2002. A scan of the river by the Institute for Hydrobiology, Wuhan in December 2006 failed to find a single specimen and pronounced the species as 'functionally extinct'. A last, contentious sighting was made in August 2007.

But why should we care that some small, out-of-the-way creature has disappeared? The grass is still green; both



Driven to extinction by humans

GNP, life expectancy and quality of life is still high. What does it matter to us?

Due to the increasing interdependence of the world economy, the problems of one country become the problems of many. A recent downturn in the American real estate market illustrates this, with the UK's economy hampered by the global 'credit crunch'. The economy of China is currently a major driving force in world economics and is closely tied to the state of China's environment.

Too often, environmental care is seen as a burden, an additional luxury to those rich enough to afford it. However, environmental messes cost

money both in the short term (such as negative health effects) and in the long term (such as flooding from deforestation and global warming). Just as in medicine, it is cheaper to prevent the problem rather than cure the 'illness' later on. China currently has one of the worst environmental records, with rocketing greenhouse gas and CFC emissions, rampant deforestation, habitat loss, widespread soil erosion and desertification. The air quality of many Chinese cities are amongst the worst in the world, and land salinization due to exploitation of groundwater supplies has crippled vast tracts of agricultural land. Many of China's native plants and animals are also faced with extinction. Their combined role in the Chinese ecosystem does jobs that would otherwise cost billions of pounds, such as nitrogen recycling, soil regeneration, maintenance of the water cycle, pest control and decomposition of material wastes. Their importance extends to much more than just income from tourism. As China develops, its growth will halt early and abruptly if it does not effectively and sustainably manage its environment.

The Yangtze River dolphin should serve as a wake-up call to us all. The Gulf of California's vaquita porpoise now holds the dubious honour of the most endangered cetacean on Earth. We cannot afford to let it go the way of the baiji.





David Stewart

## A tomato is not a fruit

It is unfortunately the case that the intellectually challenged can't help being patronising. The problem is that if you have no brain, you cannot connect one fact to another to create an argument – a process known in the trade as logic. You must therefore resort to trying to make statements in such a way that they appear blindingly obvious (so much so that your audience must have been idiots not to know their veracity in the first place.)

This became painfully clear watching Jamie's Fowl Dinners last week. We see the gormless oaf combining this technique with crashing around a studio giving some birds a good cuttin' so that we can watch similarly illogical women bursting into tears. One imagines that after gassing some fluffy chicks to death the hope is that we will be so emotionally churned up that we'll believe anything. 'How many fingers, Winston?' He follows this up by squishing his way through some mechanically reclaimed meat leaving us to conclude, one imagines, that because one can produce meat of a squelching consistency by forcing chicken carcasses through a small hole that it must be disgusting

and therefore that the whole chicken farming process is questionable.

Then the ever popular anthropomorphism fallacy kicks in and we're forced to conclude that because, one imagines, we wouldn't like to live in a cage rammed up against our mates then neither would a chicken. However alert readers will have noticed that during the course of the programme Jamie Oliver completely undermines himself by pouring a can of tomatoes into one of his dishes. And it's that which I would like to talk to you about today, dear reader.

You may not know this, but the life of a battery farmed tomato is not one of happiness and contentment. Take Mick, a young green tomato. His fate has already been written on the wall. He will be grown along with millions of others just like him in a huge greenhouse at a density of 30 million to a cubic metre, meaning that he will be literally pissing and shitting all over his mates and being fed and watered through tubes called stems. He will never see the light of day, rather being encouraged to grow at a rate of up to five kilograms a day by use of genetically modified food and UV lamps. In



A gormless Jamie Oliver

fact the situation for Mick could be so bad that Mick ends up going mad and cannibalising his best friend Ahmed, the tomato that he huddles up next to every night.

Five billion tomatoes die in this way every second. In this environment Mick cannot express any of his natural tendencies as a tomato. He can't move about, peck straw bales or perch on twigs. He doesn't even have a football. And what will happen to Mick if he doesn't put on the required weight?

Well, he'll end up in the gas chamber just like Mary, who wasn't quite red enough. Or like Dwaine, who had knobby bits on him. He'll be pulped into squelching passata and sold to Heinz for us to squeeze over our KFC.

There are even stories now of tomatoes being grown directly into a can. In only two months time, unless the laws are changed, Emma, one of a seed runoff of the gas chamber will be grown straight into pulp. I don't know about you, but I can't imagine how the supermarkets can label Emma, this freak of nature, a tomato, but you the consumer will never know her true fate.

Imagine you were a tomato. Is that the kind of life you would want to lead? Not me. No, if I were a tomato, I would rather live in a nice little mews somewhere in Chelsea with lots of straw bales and on a Friday evening, I would pop out to Waitrose to pick up a rotisserie of battery-farmed human and suck the carcass clean in front of a television showing images of babies being gassed to death and fed to pythons, laughing hysterically about how the wheel is come full circle. Then, and only then, would I be happy to call myself a Free-Range Tomato.



Jellybean

## The hooty cream project

So I said "...squirty cream..." and he said "Who-ty cream?" and I said, "Genius!"

Although no rigorous design work has yet been completed, preliminary testing has suggested that more design work is indeed required. Market research has also suggested the product would be a complete failure in all markets but an inner sect of die hard nutcases, including myself. The idea is simple. Take one air horn and one can of that most amusing of 'food' products affectionately known as squirty cream and, well, you can see where this is going. Of course, the easiest solution is simply to tape the two together and create a nice big red button. Whilst this would certainly be entertaining, it wouldn't quite produce the desired effect; if a significant R&D budget was available the cream itself should emit the 'hoot', and if possible continue to emit it for a considerable time after application, molecules of 'soundness' being trapped in the air in the cream and being gradually released. Not perturbed by thoughts of the necessary breakthroughs in science and technology required, and never being one to give up on a stupid idea I ploughed ahead with a prototype regardless.

The hooter was removed from the packaging and attached to the top of the cream, which conveniently and somewhat bizarrely had an identical mounting flange. Pausing, with my finger on the button, to wonder briefly whether or not the cream would diffuse well through the hooter or if boundary layer separation would occur, I shuddered at the effect mechanical engineering on a relatively innocent person and pressed. Unfortunately science won again. Blooming science... Upright the horn can be 'parped' at will without discharging the cream, but in 'cream-application-mode' (i.e. upside-down) after a very brief suggestion of hoot the horn fills with cream and the effect is one of silent oozing. Still, I couldn't leave it at that, so after cleaning the horn I filled it with cream,

attached the air canister and aimed at my own face.

Creamy and slightly deafening I think are the best words to describe the experience. Still I remain convinced that one day hooty cream will become a reality. The world will be humming the ditty to the hooty cream advertising campaign and everyone will be persuaded that "a little hoot with your fruit" really is the only way to have a fruit salad. Football riots will never be quite the same. Imagine its use in care-homes, "Would you like some cream with that dear?" The phrase 'with hilarious consequences' springs to mind.

So jelly and cheese on a stick had better watch out, because hooty cream is going to be well up there on the list of greatest party food ever. And whilst we are on the subject, just what exactly is with food on sticks. I mean, food on sticks, which genius came up with that? "I know, since everyone seems to be so into cheese and all, lets put it on a stick to make it more socially acceptable to eat just plain, unadulterated, unaccompanied cheese. And while we are at it lets put tiny sausages on sticks too". Behold the wonderful powers the humble stick has to make things which would be otherwise entirely stupid socially acceptable. Perhaps –insert appropriate celebrity– ought to try it.

The Swiss on the other hand... Now they know how to do food on a stick. A couple of New Years back in the middle of a week of cruising through sweet foot-deep powder and popping off rocks on a snowboard I had the pleasure of experiencing it first hand. Firstly you get yourself a nice pointy stick of manly dimensions, (that is, one with which you could probably slay a grizzly accidentally), attach yourself a properly proportioned sausage and roast it over an open fire. Boy, are they good washed down with gluhwein, and if you can watch base jumpers at the same time it makes for a great evening. All the Swiss need now to ring in the New Year in like no other is hooty cream...

Addendum: It has recently come to my attention that squirty cream devel-



Some good ol' hooty cream

Pausing, I wondered briefly if boundary layer separation would occur, I shuddered at the effect of mechanical engineering on an innocent person and pressed

opers have in fact been hard at work to better their product without my realising and it gave me considerable joy to

discover for the first time that squirty cream is now available in strawberry and chocolate flavours.





Samuel Black

## Reveal yourself

If I were to make a premature comment on the nature of 2008, I'd say that it was a year in which people and groups would reveal their true colours. The first 19 days of 2008, the year of the potato, have yielded much evidence to support my assertion.

In politics we've seen some startling insights behind the curtain of lies that shield all politicians. The Conservatives have unveiled new plans to end the benefits culture by forcing people to work for their benefits. David Cameron summarised by saying "Where is the dignity in sitting at home, dependent on the state, not having a job?" Apparently he had wanted to say "I've got plenty of jobs on my estate for them, let the plebs cut my grass if they are too stupid to get a real job. God I love Thatcher" but his PR advisor had advised him against it. After portraying themselves as normal people via David Cameron, the conservatives have finally revealed that they are cold, heartless champions of Satan. Which wouldn't be so bad if this proposal was absurd; unfortunately it's very sensible. I really

hate when the Tories have good ideas as it makes it more difficult to loath them.

Across the Channel, and indeed the Atlantic, politicians are also revealing what's beneath their dignified exterior. Hillary Clinton showed us her soft side by breaking down in tears before the New Hampshire presidential primary. This quashed reports that she could make an onion cry and certainly helped her to victory in New Hampshire. However there are lingering rumors that the tears were false due to reports that extensive plumbing could be seen behind her head. The French president, Nicolas Sarkozy has also shown us that he is a real person when he's not governing. Indeed it would seem that he is going to great lengths to show that he spends most of his time being a real person, and very little time running the country. He has recently been courting, getting engaged to and reportedly impregnating ex-supermodel Carla Bruni (although not necessarily in that order). Sarkozy has shown us that he is more interested in getting his leg over than pushing through difficult

economic reform – insert humorous generalization about the French.

Environmentalists have shown themselves to be opposed to nuclear power. Government plans to go ahead with a new generation of power plants have been met with opposition amid claims that they will simply create more problems for the future. Environmentalists have also opposed government plans for offshore and on-shore wind farms, and have been resolutely against attempts to use tidal energy. Strangely enough, environmentalists have opposed all attempts to create clean energy. Time was, green activists could happily oppose all and any destruction of the environment but now that climate change is an issue, they are forced to choose the lesser of two evils. Instead, they choose to remain opposed to everything and thus reveal themselves as complete and utter morons.

You, the people, have also shown some questionable aspects of yourselves. The obsessively-documented and overly-reported fall and fall and fall and fall of Ms Britney Spears has been watched with voyeuristic en-

thusiasm by the public. Peter Preston commented in the Guardian: "we are, in our way, that howling mob around the arena". As he put it so well, mental illness has become a new spectator sport. It would seem that you pick up stories of Britney's destruction with glee; the quiet joy of knowing that somebody far more beautiful, talented and successful is a wreck remaining too addictive to pass by.

One member of the public, however, cannot be faulted. Azfarul Islam, the Felix games editor, could speak badly about Will Smith and I still wouldn't be mad at him. Last week's delightful games section has sparked rumours that Azfarul Islam is going to get his own supplement in Felix, a Nobel Prize for awesomeness and take over the world. Az has revealed himself to be the best sub-editor currently at Felix.

I'd now like to take this opportunity to reveal something about myself. No not my real name, rather my ambitions to become ruler of all mankind. I think I shall take the title "The Emperor Black". Does anyone have a problem with that?



Gilead Amit

## The age-old art of Expletions

I have serious problems with swearing. Don't get me wrong, now; I have no objection to the profanity, I can live with the associated disrespect and I can even handle the fact that I'm not very good at doing it myself. What really bothers me about it is the lack of thought and originality that seems to go into it.

Swearing is one of the purest and most natural forms of artistic expression. What raises literature above the level of trashy paperbacks and free newspapers is the ability that great authors have to express grand emotion succinctly.

What one most admires in painters and sculptors is the skill required to create feelings from brushstrokes and to carve sentiment out of stone. The communication of thoughts, passions, desires and hatreds is what defines all Art, and is what forms the core of the age-old art of Expletions.

Cursing is nothing new. For as long as we've had language there have been linguistic taboos; words that were never to be employed in daily conversation. Over the millennia, existing taboos have repeatedly broken down and been re-erected around other words. I may quite easily be wrong, but I believe that today's society contains fewer of these taboos than have existed at any time in recorded history. The easy accessibility of these words is in part to blame for the Dark Ages of Expletions into which we have been plunged.

English is a language particularly blessed with monosyllabic profanities. Once securely locked away like precious porcelain reserved for the most special of occasions, these are now constantly in use. As a result, their texture is tarnished, their effect faded and their exterior cracked and dirty. In short, their sparkle is gone. It is a sad statement about the value modern society places on the Arts when one considers that a handful of swear words is what passes for genuine Expletions today.

Should an argument break out somewhere in the English-speaking world, you can be sure of hearing the same words being batted back and forth



William Shakespeare truly had a way with words: 'Why, thou clay-brained guts; thou knotty pated fool; thou whoreson, obscene, greasy tallow-catch', Henry IV Part 1. Not one use of the f-word

like deflated tennis balls. Almost instinctively, people's reactions tend to involve asterisks and bleeps. Where has the invention gone? The originality, the thought? When will the sparkle return to our swearing?


As with almost every aspect of the English language, Shakespeare is the undisputed master of the curse. Granted, his language is filled with the common-or-garden variety of obscenities, but the heights he occasionally scales are unparalleled.

How incredibly satisfying it must be to be able to refer to someone as a "whoreson, obscene, greasy tallow-catch" or instead, a "loggerheaded tardy-gaited puttock." Their meaning almost takes second place to rhythm and pacing as the true conveyors of emotion.

All the fury and disdain that anyone can possibly feel can be transmitted in phrases that require just the slightest amount of thought and sentence planning. Instead of instinctively reaching for the old favourites, why don't we make an effort to be more original and creative?

Let us raise Expletions to the pedestal where it once stood; as an art-form that required intelligence, care, rhythm and inventiveness. You loggerheaded tardy-gaited puttocks.

Should an argument break out somewhere in the English-speaking world, almost instinctively, people's reactions tend to involve asterisks and bleeps



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# Better living through probiotics

'Friendly bacteria' reveal themselves to be more than mere tools for helping science geeks score at parties

**Brett Cherry**

Have you ever had a gut-wrenching hangover or indigestion after eating spicy food? Ever eat yoghurt afterwards and notice the pain begin to wane or subside entirely? While it may seem like a simple by-product of milk, eating a pot of yoghurt actually introduces nearly a billion probiotic bacteria into your body.

Although these 'friendly bacteria' have been known to aid digestion and can even be taken in supplement form, exactly how these probiotics work in the gut has been relatively unclear until recently. However, progress is being made, and a new study on probiotics from researchers at Imperial College and Nestlé Research Center in Switzerland certainly helps, as it provides further evidence of how probiotics could lead to new health therapies.

The study investigated how probiotics change the biochemistry of adverse

kinds of gut microbes which have been connected to various medical conditions, such as certain kinds of diabetes and obesity. Harmful bacteria in the gut degrade proteins, releasing metabolites (chemical by-products

of cellular processes) including ammonia, amines and indoles, all of which are toxic to humans in high concentrations. Probiotic bacteria actually help balance the body's gut flora by reducing harmful bacteria that cause debilitating disease.

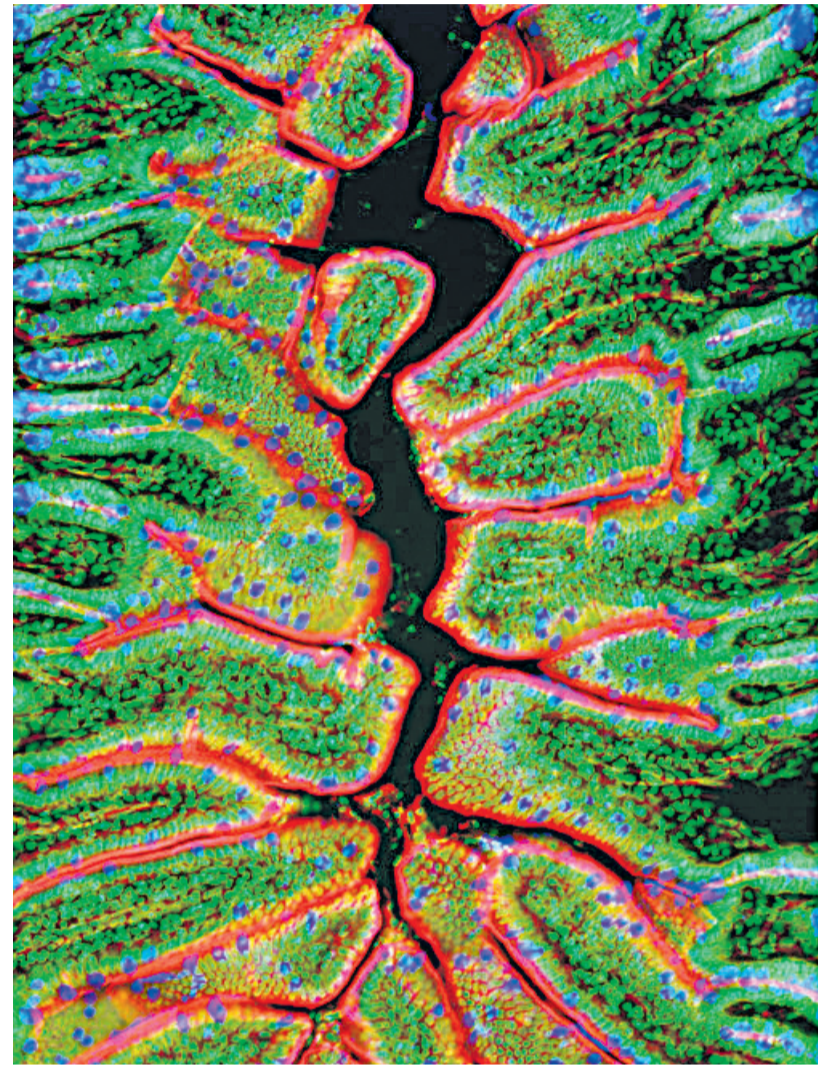
For the study two probiotic drinks were given to mice with transplanted human gut microbes. Researchers then measured metabolites taken from the liver, blood, urine and faeces of the mice who received probiotics and a control group that did not. Interestingly, the mice treated with probiotics

showed not one, but many beneficial biochemical effects, primarily due to ingesting two specific strains of probiotic bacteria: *Lactobacillus paracasei* and *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*.

It turns out that the probiotics actually worked with other bacteria in the gut of mice, increasing their effects. Professor Jeremy Nicholson, corresponding author of the study at Imperial College Department of Biomolecular Medicine, says that probiotics affects metabolism in unique and complex ways. "Our study shows that probiotics can have an effect and they interact with the local ecology and talk to other bacteria. We're still trying to understand what the changes they bring about might mean, in terms of overall health, but we have established that introducing 'friendly' bacteria can change the dynamics of the whole population of microbes in the gut."

In light of the growing scientific and social concern for obesity, probiotics could also influence how fat is absorbed by the body. Mice treated with probiotics showed changes in how they metabolised bile acids, produced by the liver to break down fats in the upper gut.

In the future, probiotic therapies could assist individuals in overcoming obesity, therapies which have been customised to the patient's specific metabolism. And that's not all - similar studies have also revealed that the synergetic role of probiotics in the gut means they show potential for treating a wide range of health ailments from cardiovascular disease to gastrointestinal cancer.



Tissue from a mouse intestine. Probiotic bacteria in mice guts can work with transplanted human bacteria, increasing their effectiveness

# Scientists discover the formula for a long life

**Sally Leon**

Guess what – smoking, drinking too much, abstaining from fruit and vegetables and leading a sedentary life are bad for you and if you do them all at the same time you are just asking for trouble.

In a study recently published in PLoS Medicine, researchers at Cambridge University examined the relationship between lifestyle and the risk of dying and found that adopting four principles for a healthy lifestyle can have a huge impact on life expectancy.

Between 1993 and 2006, deaths were recorded among 20,000 men and women from Norfolk aged between 45 and 79. Participants were awarded a point for each of these behaviours: not smoking, not being physically inactive, having a moderate alcohol intake and having a blood vitamin C level consistent with eating five servings of fruit and vegetables a day.

The study is among the first to examine the combined impact of these behaviours on longevity. After an 11-year follow-up, the relative risk (compared to those scoring 4) for all-cause mortality for subjects scoring 3, 2, 1 and 0 was 1.39, 1.95, 2.52 and 4.04, respectively. To put it plainly, a person adopting none of the above behaviours was 4 times more likely to die during the study period than a person adopting them all.



Her days are numbered – that's at least one point off. Doesn't look as if she's getting enough greens either

Smoking, predictably, had the biggest single impact on mortality, followed by a low vitamin C intake, high alcohol intake and physical inactivity.

Who wants to live forever anyway?

Coming from a long line of nonagenarians, I gather it's not all it's cracked up to be. My grandmother, who made it to the ripe old age of 101 in spite of a serious nicotine habit and a diet consist-

ing almost entirely of frankfurters and sauerkraut, found her own longevity a constant source of irritation.

What really matters is the quality of life, or functional health, of our ageing

population. This study should be extended to explore the effect of the combined health behaviours on the quality of life as well as the risk of death. Nevertheless, with already overwhelming evidence that the above lifestyle choices influence well-being, and boosted by the findings from this study, public health officials should, theoretically, find it easier to encourage behaviour changes likely to improve the health of middle-aged and older people.

Publication of the study coincided with Gordon Brown's unveiling of his 'NHS of the future'. In his plans for a preventative approach to healthcare, Mr. Brown said that there would be a focus on patients whose lifestyle choices – including smoking, drinking and obesity – made them unwell. There would be changes to food labelling, greater access to sport and exercise and new restrictions on advertising unhealthy foods. This approach is intended to help the NHS cope with the challenges of an older and potentially less healthy population.

In the proposed NHS constitution, which would set out the rights and responsibilities linked to entitlement to care, smokers may find themselves having to quit in order to maintain their rights to healthcare. Surely it is only a matter of time until the over-indulgent and idle among us come under fire. How long we are going to live may be the least of our worries.



# Sea, sex and sun – oh, syphilis too

Columbus' holiday in Barbados: new study indicates he brought some rather nasty baggage back to Europe

Tamsin Osborne

Along with a handful of slaves and a couple of pineapples, it now seems Christopher Columbus may also have brought syphilis back to Europe from his travels in the New World, according to a new molecular genetic analysis.

Columbus returned from his New World adventure in 1493. Two years later, Europe suffered its first syphilis epidemic. Coincidence? Some think so,

**"European skeletons from before 1493 do not show the characteristic scars of syphilis"**

but others have argued that the syphilis-causing bacterium, *Treponema pallidum*, was introduced into Europe when Columbus and his crew returned from their voyage, having got up close and personal with the natives.

The evidence supporting the Columbian hypothesis of syphilis spread has previously been limited to paleopatho-

logical data. The characteristic scars that syphilis leaves on the bones of its victims have been found on 7,000-year-old skeletons from the New World, whereas virtually no such marks have been seen on European skeletons pre-dating Columbus' voyage. But many scientists do not consider this skeletal evidence to be conclusive.

A team of American scientists has attempted to solve this 500-year-old question using molecular genetics. Kristin Harper and colleagues at Emory University in Atlanta used an evolutionary biology technique called phylogenetic analysis to construct an evolutionary tree showing the relationships between different strains of treponemes – the family of bacteria that cause syphilis and other related diseases – from 26 locations around the world. The resulting phylogenetic tree sheds light on the order in which the different strains of treponemes emerged.

Using this approach, the researchers were able to show that the strains of bacteria that cause sexually transmitted syphilis arose relatively recently and are closely related to South American bacterial strains causing yaws, a similar disease transmitted via skin-to-skin or oral contact. This finding provides strong support for the Columbian hypothesis.

In contrast, the yaws-causing strains from the Old World arose early in human history and were similar to strains found in non-human primates, suggesting that yaws is an ancient disease that has evolved with us since the divergence of humans and chimps.

In light of their findings, the authors suggest that non-sexually transmitted treponemes first evolved in the Old World before being taken to the Americas by migrating humans, where they

**"Syphilis bacteria strains are closely related to South American yaws strains"**

evolved into the progenitor of sexually transmitted syphilis. This strain seems to have been taken over to Europe during the renaissance, and it's looking increasingly likely that Columbus and his crew were the culprits.

Although, with decreasing worldwide incidences of these diseases making patient samples more and more difficult to obtain, we may (fortunately) never know the full story.



Syphilis ahoy! Seems the Santa Maria's sailors weren't that saintly...

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Imperial as One  
Student Forum

**Marketing Yourself Creatively**

**Wednesday 30 January 2008**  
14.00 - 16.45

UG Lecture Theatre  
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London SW7 2AZ

**RSVP:**  
The forum is free but due to popular demand, places are strictly limited. Early registration is strongly advised and places are offered as first come first served. If you would like to attend, please email [k.mistry@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:k.mistry@imperial.ac.uk) or tel: 020 7594 5558 before **29 January 2008**

*Imperial as One's aim is to assist the College in setting priorities and raising the profile of equality issues and ensure the experiences and views of staff at all levels are represented.*

**Is your CV good enough to get you an interview?**  
**What are the industry people really looking for?**  
**What does equality and diversity really mean in recruitment?**

Following a successful launch last year, Imperial As One is pleased to announce the second running of a Student Forum. Our targeted audiences are particularly Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students, including Chinese and Southern Asians, who form the largest groups of international students.

Not only will you hear from leading academics, alumnis and speakers from industry giving insights into their own professional experience in 'marketing themselves' throughout their career, you will also have the opportunity to ask any questions and obtain direct feedback from a distinguished panel.

**Competition:**  
Back by popular demand, Imperial As One is once again running "The Best CV" competition opens to all BME students. This year's competition offers exciting prizes that money cannot buy, including the chance of a prestigious internship. Entries can be submitted in one of the three categories:

(1) Business/Finance  
(2) Research/Academic  
(3) Engineering/Industry

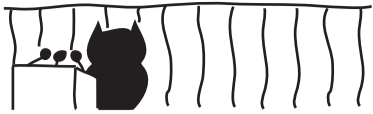
If you would like to enter, please submit your entry (CV) to Kalpna Mistry, level 5 Sheffield Building; or email [k.mistry@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:k.mistry@imperial.ac.uk)  
**Competition closes on Friday 19 January 2008.** Winners will be announced at the Forum.

Please visit [www3.imperial.ac.uk/hr/equality/race/imperialasone](http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/hr/equality/race/imperialasone) to view the forum programme and a guideline on CV writing.



Syphilis leads to scars on bones. Intriguingly, none were present on European skeletons before Columbus' trip. The new study reveals why: syphilis evolved from a New World strain of yaws bacteria





# Another day, another peace process

Israel has been at the centre of international controversy since its declaration of independence in 1948

Matthew Whitworth

There can be little doubt that the carnage and division caused by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict extends beyond the two states' respective borders. Even the countries of the West are not immune to its effects; Al-Qaeda leaders repeatedly cite the Palestinian cause in their anti-West manifestos and interviews. Peace between the two sides is the preferable option not just for the two sides, but for the Middle East and the world. International leaders too share that hope; President Bush, on his first visit to Israel last week as President, said he saw "a new opportunity for peace here in the holy land and for freedom across the region." But how did one of the world's longest-running and deadliest conflicts start in the first place, and how can it be resolved?

Since 1948, when modern Israel declared its independence (following the controversial UN Partition Plan), conflict has raged throughout Israel, Palestine and the wider Middle East over land in the area. Israel fought several wars with the Arab states in 1948, 1967 and 1973, extending its borders and occupying the Gaza Strip and West Bank. In 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was founded. Its central principles included the destruction of Israel via armed struggle, and that pre-1948 Palestine is the indivisible homeland of the Palestinian people. The PLO and its factions fought a running battle with the Israeli army for decades.

By 1993, however, both sides had become willing to meet for talks, and the Oslo Accords, the first face-to-face agreement, was agreed upon as the framework for peace. The democratic Palestinian Authority (PA) was created in exchange for the PLO's recognition of the state of Israel. However, progress on key issues began to stall throughout the 1990s; the final blow was struck at the 2000 Camp David summit when Arafat refused to accept a proposal drafted jointly by the US and Israel. Later that year, the al-Aqsa intifada began, the second major uprising by the Palestinians against Israel.

The "road map for peace", a plan proposed in 2002 outlined by George W. Bush, stated that the PA must adopt



Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank must deal with an economy in free fall as well as political infighting

democratic reforms and abandon the use of terrorism, and in return Israel would accept the authority of the new democratic government. After retaliatory attacks continued unabated, the road map stalled, with the Palestinian authority unable to prevent terrorist attacks on Israeli targets. The conflict continued for several years while attempts to resuscitate the peace deal failed; Hamas' rise to power in 2006 and its failure to recognize Israel put further strain on the process.

In November 2007, representatives from the two sides, the Arab League, European Union and United Nations met in Maryland in the United States for the Annapolis Conference, the most recent in a series of peace conferences. For the first time, the attendees came to the conclusion that a two state solution would serve as the framework for later talks. There are several key issues that must be solved, including the Israeli settlements, the right of return for Palestinians, the status of Je-

rusalem and the occupied territories. What progress has been made on the different issues and how will they be addressed in the future?

Israel's continued position on the occupied territories is that most of the West Bank and the entire Gaza Strip must become part of a Palestinian state. In 2000, the Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak offered Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat the opportunity to establish a state comprising the Gaza Strip and 92% of the West Bank, but Israel rejects this because of security concerns. Others, including Hamas, argue that Palestinians must also control the whole of Israel; the group also views the entire peace process as "as religiously forbidden and politically inconceivable".

The Israeli government has been willing to concede on the issue of its Palestinian settlements, enacting the Gaza Pull-Out plan in August 2005 to remove all Israelis from the Gaza Strip and some from the West Bank. Its settlements of the region have been viewed by the international media as an obstacle to a resolution of the conflict. However, no further concessions have been made; some Israelis and supporters of the two-state solution believe the settlements should remain so long as their occupants accept Palestinian rule.

Another contentious issue is the Palestinian right to return; the current number of Palestinian refugees stands at approximately four million. The Israeli government argues that allowing refugees to return to their original homes (many of which are in what is now Israel) would create a Palestinian majority and undermine Israel's status as a Jewish state. Critics of the right to return state that Palestinians were made homeless because of the Arab-initiated 1948 war. However, several UN resolutions call for refugees to be

permitted to return to their homes "at the earliest practicable date". Little progress has been made on what is perhaps the most difficult issue.

Regardless of the differences on both sides, progress is steadily being made

on the issue, and despite suspicion from some quarters on both sides of the peace process, both sides generally agree that a peaceful solution is mutually beneficial to constant conflict and suffering.

## London Mayor Election box



From top: Ken Livingstone, Boris Johnson and Brian Paddick

Campaigning has started for the coveted position of Mayor of London which polls on May 1st. Labour candidate and Mayor for the past eight years Ken Livingstone has said he wishes to see the 2012 Olympics while still in office. The controversial figure known through the 1980's as 'Red Ken' for his hardline socialist views has overseen enormous economic growth in the capital. His most enduring legacy, however, may well be the congestion charge he introduced during his first term which now means private motorists must pay £8 to drive into the centre of town.

He faces strong competition from conservative candidate Boris Johnson, and Liberal Democrat Brian Paddick.

Mr Paddick was the police forces' highest ranking openly gay officer before starting his career in politics. The Oxford graduate in Criminology says his main policies are to reduce violent crime and make the city 'greener'. He also claims to be the only serious alternative to the incumbent mayor, a jibe at Mr Johnson who has been described as an 'embarrassment' to the Tory party.

With the worst turnout of any large election the last time around, at 37%, campaigners will be hoping for greater participation. Felix Politics urges YOU to vote! Even if it's for the BNP.

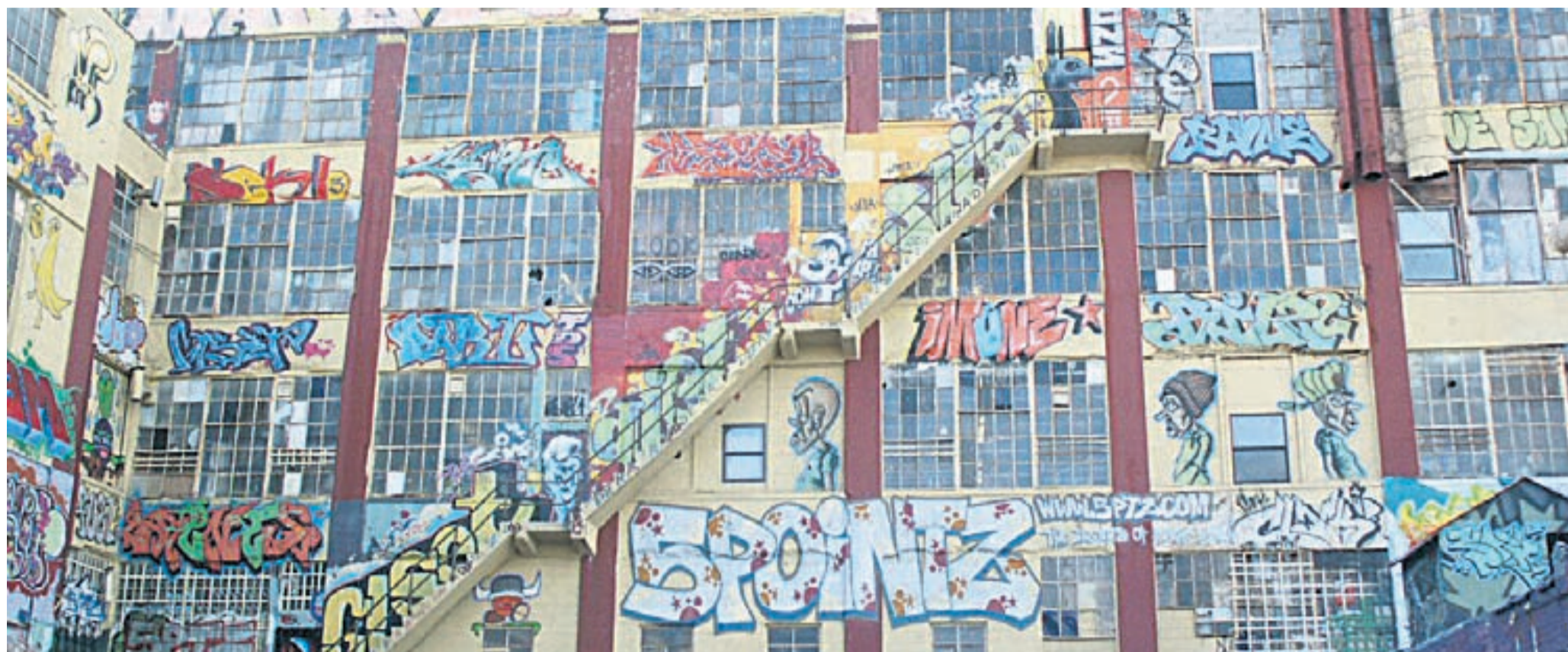


George W Bush made his first visit as president to Israel this month



# Nice area, shame about the estates

Abioye Oyetunji comments on social housing and why 'we' shouldn't have to live amongst 'them'



London is a mosaic of wealth and poverty, where the world's millionaires share postcodes with those on state welfare

It's a Saturday in September and I'm walking the streets of Fulham fully soaking in the benefits of a fancy new South-West London postcode. The architecture is all fantastic (read: period), none of those grotesque new builds or that nouveau warehouse farce. It's home to The White Horse, that famously posh pub commonly known as "The Sloane Pony", the London Oratory School, where Tony Blair's kids go, Stamford Bridge and The Hurlingham Club. It's a Tory stronghold, soon to be part of the newly formed "Chelsea and Fulham" constituency and it certainly fits the stereotype. With the Chelseas and Mayfairs of London now solely reserved for the heirs of the world's various dynasties, I have surely hit upper-middle class heaven.

And then the dream-shattering sharp return to reality. A group of kids with hoods, odd haircuts, and frightening expressions approach on their bikes, slowing only to shout obscenities at a passing couple. Behind them an old man, reeking of urine, staggers down the road in a camouflage jacket

with a can of Tesco Value cider. Just a few minutes later a group of girls in their early teens walk by, barely clothed in the cold, with strange face paint and a spectacular assortment of Argos jewellery. Anyone who lives in London knows this scene well. We also know how it comes about that members of Marx's lumpenproletariat or underclass (not to be confused with the working class) live in areas where the average house price is three times the national average. Any confusion is dissolved by what I see once I turn the corner around the Town Hall. Surely the tallest building in the area, this ten-storey monstrosity of the 1970s stands in stark contrast to the surrounding Victorian terraces.

Britain is not the only country in the world to have government-sponsored housing built for those who could not afford homes otherwise but London does, however, stand out from most other Western cities in one respect; the dispersion of council housing amongst the "rest of us".

The multi-million dollar apartments of Fifth Avenue are within reachable

distance of the slums of Harlem but being within commutable distance is something altogether different from living right next door to. Well-off Parisians keep the poor well away from their central Paris property hotspots. In London, however, we find billionaires who live quite literally right next door to people on welfare.

We complain about this no end; how many times have you heard friends have massive strops about the tower blocks in their area... from those who apologise for nearby council housing when you visit, to estate agents who go out of their way to hide, or downplay their existence? It's an understandable sentiment; in most other countries in the world the wealthy do not typically have to worry about crime on their own doorstep. It only gets worse and more frightening once you have children; talk of the kids playing outside is naturally a London rarity... unless said kids wear Kappa tracksuits and/or are pregnant. These estates can be a pain, a blemish, the bane of one's existence... and certainly one feature that the city can hold proudly over its peers.

For kids in this city born into poverty to be placed in areas that offer a lifeline out is something that ought to be celebrated, not bemoaned. The alternative to this is to designate certain areas solely for public housing where all the underprivileged can live together. These are known as ghettos. Children born into ghettos are often raised in an environment where they are in a destructive family, all their neighbours and associates are poor and uneducated and all their fellow school kids are from similarly hopeless backgrounds. Unsurprisingly, one of them breaking out and achieving great things is a rare occurrence. It is obvious that allowing them to witness first-hand the "better life" makes it much more likely they will actually strive for achievement, reducing the prevalence of the multi-generational poverty curse that afflicts so many families.

This argument doesn't have to be entirely charitable. Having the estates spread out rather than bunched together makes the city as a whole more peaceful. If you don't believe me, ask the people of Paris. Riots in that city

need only the lightest contemplations of policy change by French parliament as a catalyst for burning cars, maiming police officers and raiding shops, behaviour virtually unheard of this side of the Channel. This is, of course, in part due to the violence-prone nature of French politics, but is only made possible in the 21st century by the fact that the poor typically all live together, allowing easy organisation of such actions. Before Rudy Giuliani, there were parts of New York City that even the police refused to have anything to do with. While you hear the occasional gripe about Brixton and Peckham, the truth is these places are actually relatively harmless.

The presence of these estates will undoubtedly continue to cause great annoyance for the better-off. Many legitimate complaints about their existence may be made; I must admit I find it hard to stomach any policy that will allow the idle to potentially live better than most hardworking people will ever have a chance to, but I also recognise it as, like many difficult political choices, a better of two evils.



Imperial College  
Model United Nations

Email: [info.icmun@gmail.com](mailto:info.icmun@gmail.com)

Website: [www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icmun](http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icmun)

Facebook Group: ICMUN

## mUN@IC 2008

The 3rd Model United Nations Conference at Imperial College

Saturday January 26th 09:00-16:00

- Agenda:**
1. **Security Council:** Instability in northern Iraq
  2. **UN Environment Programme:** Climate Change post Kyoto
  3. **World Health Organisation:** AIDS in the 21st century

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£5 non-members; free for members





## President's Update

### National Student Survey

First of all I would like to apologise to those of you who are not final year undergraduates as this information will not really apply to you. The National Student Survey is an opportunity for all final year students studying at UK universities to give their opinion on their time at university. The survey contains questions on all aspects of your student experience and will cover issues such as assessment and feedback, learning resources, teaching and whether or not you felt satisfied with your experience of Imperial College London. All final year students will be contacted asking them to complete this survey and I urge you to do so as it is a very useful tool for highlighting anything you have been unhappy with so that the College has to take action to improve things for continuing and future students. The results of this survey are very important as they will go a long way to directing the work of College and your Union's academic representatives in 2008/09 so please take the few minutes required to fill it in.

### NUS Regional Conference

More info about my favourite student collective! The next meeting of Regional Conference for NUS London will take place on Wednesday 30 January at City & Islington College. Imperial College Union is entitled to send another 8

delegates so if you would like to come along please drop me an email at [president@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:president@imperial.ac.uk). Topics for discussion include Higher Education Funding, the NUS governance review and you will also get the chance to wreck up the elected NUS sabbaticals for things that they have (or have not) done.

### Graduate Students' Association Elections – Nominations now open

Nominations for the positions of GSA Chair, Treasurer and Secretary are now open. A member of staff has been recruited by the Union to support the work of postgraduate representatives and the Faculty Union's so those of you who are elected to these positions can expect a great deal of help and support as you help direct and organise academic representation to the Graduate Schools or social events for Imperial's sizeable postgraduate community. Nominate yourself online at [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/vote](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/vote) before Friday 25 January if you wish to stand. If you have any questions regarding the commitment involved for any of these positions don't hesitate to get in touch.

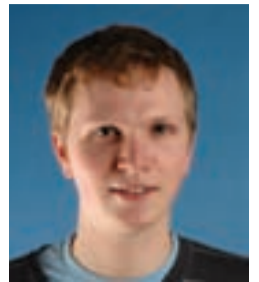
### Union Council

Union Council is empowered to set policy (what we think about issues which affect us all as students such as

top-up fees, academic boycotts and environmental measures on campus) on behalf of the Union and gives the student body an opportunity to question and direct the work of the Deputy Presidents and I. The next meeting will take place 21 Jan at 6.30pm in the Union Dining Hall on the first floor of the Union Building. I would recommend that anyone who has a particular interest in what views our NUS delegates will argue for on behalf of the student body should come along as this will be one of the items available for discussion. For those of you who are really keen papers and sabbatical reports for this meeting are available for all members of the Union to read online at [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/committee](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/committee).

### The Science Challenge is back

The Royal College of Science Union (RCSU) are now announcing details of the 2008 Science Challenge. You can win a Wii by just signing up for their mailing list and win £2500 for writing 800 words for the competition itself! The Rector, Sir Richard Sykes, will be launching the event next Tuesday (6:30-7:30pm, LT 220 in Mech Eng) and will give some hints on how to answer this year's challenge. The organizers promise an interesting evening including surprises and free nibbles and drinks! If you wish to win a Wii see their website at [www.rcsu.org.uk/sciencechallenge](http://www.rcsu.org.uk/sciencechallenge) and click the Wii button.



**Stephen Brown**  
President  
[president@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:president@imperial.ac.uk)



Nominations open for

## GSA Chair GSA Treasurer Secretary

Friday 18 January - Friday 25 January

visit

[imperialcollegeunion.org/elections](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/elections)  
for more information

## Summer Ball 2008



Some of the more astute of you will have noticed that tickets for Summer Ball 2008 are now on sale, despite the event being a whole five months away. On June 21st over 3000 students, staff and alumni will take part in the largest student ball in London. Last year's event, held in conjunction with the College Centenary, saw the greatest all Imperial has seen. This year, things are going to be even bigger and better, whilst freezing last year's ticket prices, meaning even better value-for-money.

The evening will start with a champagne reception and a four course dinner with a number of distinguished guests. Due to massive demand last year, we have increased the number of dinner tickets; however these are still bound to sell out early, so get them early! After the dinner, the Summer Ball will continue long into the night with music and entertainment from some household names bringing joy across the whole of the South Ken campus.

Last year we had DJ sets from Alex Zane and Alexa Chung from T4's Popworld,

alongside Emma Griffiths from MTV and Andy Rourke from XFM. Those who attended last year may have also witnessed X-Factor finalists Ben Mills and Eton Road with Scouting for Girls in the Great Hall whilst the Union played host to drum and bass legends Pendulum. This year expect the acts to be bigger and better, however the night is not just about the music and we'll have some spectacular fireworks, a funfair, casino and plenty more surprises that we have in store.

If you're not done by 4am then there will be an after party continuing in the Union, and the bars will remain open until closing on Sunday night. Last year many plucky/foolish revellers (which included the Union President in his kilt) managed to fulfil the challenge of staying in the Union until 11pm after a massive 30 hours of partying.

The Summer Ball is a great event, whether you're graduating or continuing next year, finished with exams or only just beginning (stress relief you see), hardcore waster or teetotaler; we try

to give everyone a fantastic night. Remember we're always open to suggestions, so if you have any ideas or questions please give me an email at [dpfs@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:dpfs@imperial.ac.uk)



**Chris Larvin**  
Deputy President  
(Finance & Services)  
[dpfs@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:dpfs@imperial.ac.uk)

Keep an eye out for more for our line-up announcements which will be released at the beginning of next term. Also, be sure to get your tickets from the [imperialcollegeunion.org](http://imperialcollegeunion.org) before the March 19 so you get your special advance ticket prices!

IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON  
**SUMMER BALL 2008**

21.06.2008

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# at the union jan 18 - 25

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[imperialcollegeunion.org/ents](http://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.

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**Caz Knight**  
Arts Editor

# Shakespeare's Othello at Donmar Warehouse

Tickets to see Ewan McGregor star in *Othello* are not easy to come by but somehow Caz Knight has managed to get her hands on a couple and here is what she thought

**D**egenerate: 'having declined or deteriorated to a lower mental, moral or physical level; debased; degraded; corrupt'. Not, generally, considered to be a good thing. However, if you are a fan of Amy Winehouse (as I am) you may beg to differ!

You may also beg to differ if you have seen the Blyth Gallery's latest offering. Located on the fifth floor of the Sheffield Building, this may be the only part of Imperial which is inviting. The gallery makes a nice change from a lot of the other rooms we find ourselves in around campus and until 27th January, it offers us a chance to degenerate via the work of Ellie Stanford, Ross Taylor and Jack Vickridge; three artists exploring and celebrating failure within their work. One once remarked that a certain painting "looks as though a three year-old did it". You can also expect to see quasi-spiritual scenes, Geometric Abstraction and places mysticised by an artist adopting a 'menopausal' mindset. So, if you're in a particularly uninspiring lecture, get yourself off to the fifth floor under the pretense that you're off to the loo.

Since we're on the subject of low moral levels, I thought I might talk about a new found love of mine; rock-and-roll (auto)biographies. Granted, if the rock star in question decides that he wants to write his own without so much as GCSE English under his belt then the grammar, sentence structure and use of punctuation may be a little unorthodox. The entertainment value is also unorthodox in the moral and social sense, but that is exactly why they are so good. For some unknown reason, the recipe for success is to have a fucked-up childhood. So much so that, upon reading one rock biography after another, the formula of no mother/father figure, divorce, abuse (sexual or otherwise), drugs, girls/boys/both, kleptomania and poverty begins to get a little unoriginal. Unoriginal, but thoroughly interesting, nonetheless. I find myself living vicariously through these child-forms of icons such as Slash and Anthony Kiedis as I was deprived of a deprived childhood and I will never forgive my hard-working, loving parents for it! You can imagine my surprise when I learned upon reading *My Life with and without Jim Morrison* by his wife, Patricia Kennealy-Morrison, that this hero of mine had not only graduated from high school, but also had a degree from film school no less.

Less can be said for Russell Brand. He is in no way, shape or form a rock star but his book suggests he may as well be, due to all his hedonistic and wild ways. I probably have a more active imagination than most, yet my mouth widened in awe at Brand's antics. When I put it like that, I feel a touch of guilt that I am revelling in the demise and destruction of others. However, most of these characters have plenty of wealth to help heal the wounds of doing too much acid inside an abandoned house in the Hollywood Hills.

**E**xactly four hundred and three years after it was first performed to His Majesty King James I in the Banqueting House of Whitehall, Shakespeare's *Othello* is still creating media frenzy. Besides being made into an unremarkable, American-made film starring unremarkable actors (O), the work is currently attracting a lot of attention due to the caliber of thespians appearing in Michael Grandage's production. It stars Chiwitel Ejiophor (you may recognise him from films such *Love Actually*, *Hotel Rwanda* and *Kinky Boots*) as the Moor, Othello, and Ewan McGregor, in his first Shakespeare play on stage, as the Ancient Iago.

To give one an idea of just how highly anticipated this production was, and still is, tickets were auctioned on eBay for thousands, although the actual figure varies with each review one reads. Tickets are, sadly, still sold out, so unless you have that sort of money or are prepared to go to criminal lengths to get it then it is unlikely you will get to see it. Luckily, your very own *Felix Arts'* editor did the seeing for you and is about to tell you all.

For those unfamiliar with Shakespeare's tragedy *Othello*, it is set in the worlds of Venice and Cyprus at the time when England was under threat

by the Ottoman Empire. The play begins in Venice, home city of our characters, where the cunning and maliciousness of Iago is presented initially when he exposes Othello and Desdemona's marriage to her Senator father. Given the period in history, the shock of having one's daughter betrothed to a black soldier would have been enough to suspect witchcraft on the part of Othello. The story continues with the plot moving to Cyprus as Othello, Iago, Cassio and the rest of the militia aim to deflect the enemy in Cyprus. Iago's wife, Emilia, and Desdemona, join them but as the enemy is defeated, Iago's role as evil Cupid continues as he weaves between characters and their romances, feeding them untruths, for reasons still unknown. Slowly, Othello is persuaded that his Desdemona has been unfaithful and is transformed into the "green-eyed monster" with disastrous consequences.

The Donmar Warehouse was the perfect setting with its black, sparse edifices, evocative lighting, meagre yet highly efficient stage dressings all teamed with beautiful but haunting medieval music; perfect in reflecting both the love and hate conjured up in the play.

Breaths were bated as the audience waited for the man himself to enter. At



**The girls:** Kelly Reilly (bottom) as Desdemona and Michelle Fairley (top) plays Emilia



**The boys:** McGregor (right) stars as Iago while Ejiophor (left) takes the title role

first McGregor is not particularly show stopping (pardon the expression). He is Ewan McGregor and does as good a job as we expect from such a great actor, no more, no less. The duplicitous nature of Iago suits McGregor's ability to take on a variety of roles. The audience recognises the "honest" as well as the evil side of Iago in parts they have seen McGregor take on in the past. Grandage's choice to have Iago shift continuously from centre stage to the shadows and back also reinforces Iago's deceitful and Machiavellian nature.

Jaws really did drop at the performance given by hidden gem of an actor Ejiophor, in his portrayal of the General Othello. He is utterly spellbinding, impressive, eloquent and majestic in his acting. He achieves great success in conveying the pendulous sadness and drama of the last scene, which mirrors the tragedy perfectly.

It is a credit to the cast that, not only

were they not totally washed away in the tide of his stage presence, but also that they managed themselves to each bring life into what is a very heavy play. Kelly Reilly as Desdemona shines in the run up to the last scene by creating huge pathos and emphasising her character's vulnerability. Emilia (played by Michelle Fairley) momentarily steals the show in her gripping and powerful testimony against Iago and in her defense for Desdemona. Tom Hiddleston is very dashing indeed in his costume and, as Cassio, gives a superb performance which is undoubtedly on a par with McGregor; great things to come for him I hope, and am sure.

The three hours disintegrate as this particular production of the thought-provoking *Othello* is made thoroughly accessible and one is able to truly appreciate Shakespeare's wit and why he is still revered as the greatest English playwright.



# Hey, can you guess what I am, yet?

Ever thought you're too rational to be a real artist? Michael Cook meets the little robot that could

I think we can all agree that some things in life are designed to be kept separate. For instance, I try not to practice my weightlifting techniques at the same time as my lying-on-a-bed-of-nails party trick, for obvious reasons. My subscription of Meat Weekly, with free sample of bloody animal flesh, tends to get

they don't lend themselves well to art because they're always trying to make the lives of the humans that use them easier, and we don't always want that. Art's about struggle, not about paper-clips popping up and offering you assistance in venting your soul.

But this perception of computers could be about to change, thanks to a

artiste.

Dr. Colton has done much work in Computational Creativity, the field of getting machines to work in a way similar to humans when we create and invent, but The Fool is his most crowd-pleasing achievement. and it's easy to see why. The Fool doesn't just look at a photo and make a rough copy of it. The pictures you can see littering this page have been thought about in great detail. The materials, the brushstrokes, *everything*. The Fool isn't a glorified set of Photoshop filters. It's a machine that wants you to feel something when you look at its work.

"I'm not sure I'm creative myself yet," the project website states, in a slightly unsettling first-person tone, "I mainly work from digital images to produce artworks."

Now, that might not sound like much, but to fully understand The Fool's talent you have to learn a little about the other key members of the team - namely Maja Pantic and Michel Valstar.

Pantic and Valstar aren't strictly Creativity researchers. Their real strength lies in Machine Vision, the sort of technologies that can use images and film to analyse people and places. When they were brought into the project and taught The Fool how to understand what emotions people were feeling, the creative options really began to open up.

Late last year the team began to use their newfound knowledge of human emotion to make a series of paintings based on the happy, happy film *Amélie*. Over 220 portraits were made from various stills in the film, all capturing the main character in different kinds of emotional states. Each painting, as a result, is a unique blend of styles, media and colour. The full gallery, which is viewable online, is an extremely impressive end result.

With a new surge in confidence, The Painting Fool was ready to enter the big leagues and begin looking for that thing every child prodigy craves - appreciation for their art. And so in December last year Simon Colton and Michel Valstar took The Painting Fool to the annual Machine Intelligence Competition, sponsored by Electrolux and held on behalf of the British Computing Society in Cambridge. Though the third member of their team, Dr. Pantic, was too ill to attend, The Fool still performed to its best.

Despite technical difficulties, The Fool performed two live portraits in just fifteen minutes, one on Michel and a second on a member of the audience. The results, all of which are available

online, show just how well The Fool can now react to new subjects and settings. Deservedly, the team received a prize for the best live demonstration, giving a huge boost to the research and, of course, The Fool's needy artistic ego itself.

The story of the first cyber-Cezanne doesn't stop there, though. Colton and

the best opportunities yet to do so.

But there are many who feel that perhaps conquering it wouldn't be such a good idea. Certainly, there are those who feel uneasy about the idea of a robot talking to us, or asking us to do things, but those fears are generally borne of the notion that computers can't do anything remotely humanlike.



mailed to my home address rather than my vegetarian best friend's. So when I'm relaxing in the leather armchairs of the Felix Office, beret in hand and brandy glass resting on my head, I have to fight hard to keep myself from blabbering inanely about all things Computery. I can confess it to you all - I'm a Computer Scientist.

At this point it's probably worthwhile listing everything that computers have ever done for the world of the arts, and they would be as follows: Adobe Illustrator, digital cameras, those funny little audio guide things you get at the V&A and that's about it. Even with these three, many people would argue they've not made much of a contribution. The Adobe suite in general seems to provide 'artists' with a quick shortcut to the end, digital cameras have killed the individuality and 'rough' feeling to film photography, and those audio guides are always narrated by someone irritating.

That's the problem with computers -

research project in Imperial's Department of Computing that's really beginning to come of age. In Imperial's glamorous Huxley building, past the XKCD comics pinned on doors and people swearing at monitors, a whole host of researchers, Professors and more are hiding the Department of Computing's Artificial Intelligence group.

Leading up a team of Machine Intelligence researchers, Dr. Simon Colton spends much of his time thinking about how to get machines thinking about how they themselves think. If that sounds complicated to you, imagine how it is for Dr. Colton's team. Nevertheless, in 2001 they gave birth to a very special baby. The Painting Fool was born.

The Painting Fool wasn't like many of the clever ideas born in the Computing department. It had something special, something that made it stand out. Other ideas just wanted to be clever. The Fool, however, wanted to become an

his team are already looking ahead to a far harder, but arguably more crucial milestone - making The Fool paint something from imagination alone.

"One of the tests of creativity is using imagination," Dr. Colton told the London Metro, "I want to get the computer to do this to create a new image." The little fella (lady?) himself is pretty eager, too.

"Imagination is not something that is easy to simulate. I'm currently working on painting scenes which don't exist. I hope to launch a new gallery of these images in early 2008. Watch this space..."

Why is it so much harder to do? It's partly because of the way such technologies work. At the moment, The Fool's strength comes from knowing how to analyse what it's seeing. But for humans, we don't have to be seeing something without eyes to commit it to paper. The world of free-form creativity is still unconquered, but Dr. Colton and his creation look like one of

The Painting Fool goes to show that this isn't the case.

Does this mean that we'll feel more at ease with the idea of artificial intelligence? Will seeing the softer side of the wires and chips make us more open to robotics? Or will this ghost from the machine actually make us even more worried that one day, we could have created something that at least *seems* to understand us all too well.

For my part, I think The Fool goes to show that computers and humans aren't all that different. The research makes me hopeful, too, that in the future computers could be put to use in ways that are currently unimaginable. But when I'm sitting in the Felix offices with my beret and my brandy, trying very hard to look reflective, I have to pretend otherwise.

**The best you can do is decide for yourself. Find out more by heading to [www.thepaintingfool.com](http://www.thepaintingfool.com)**

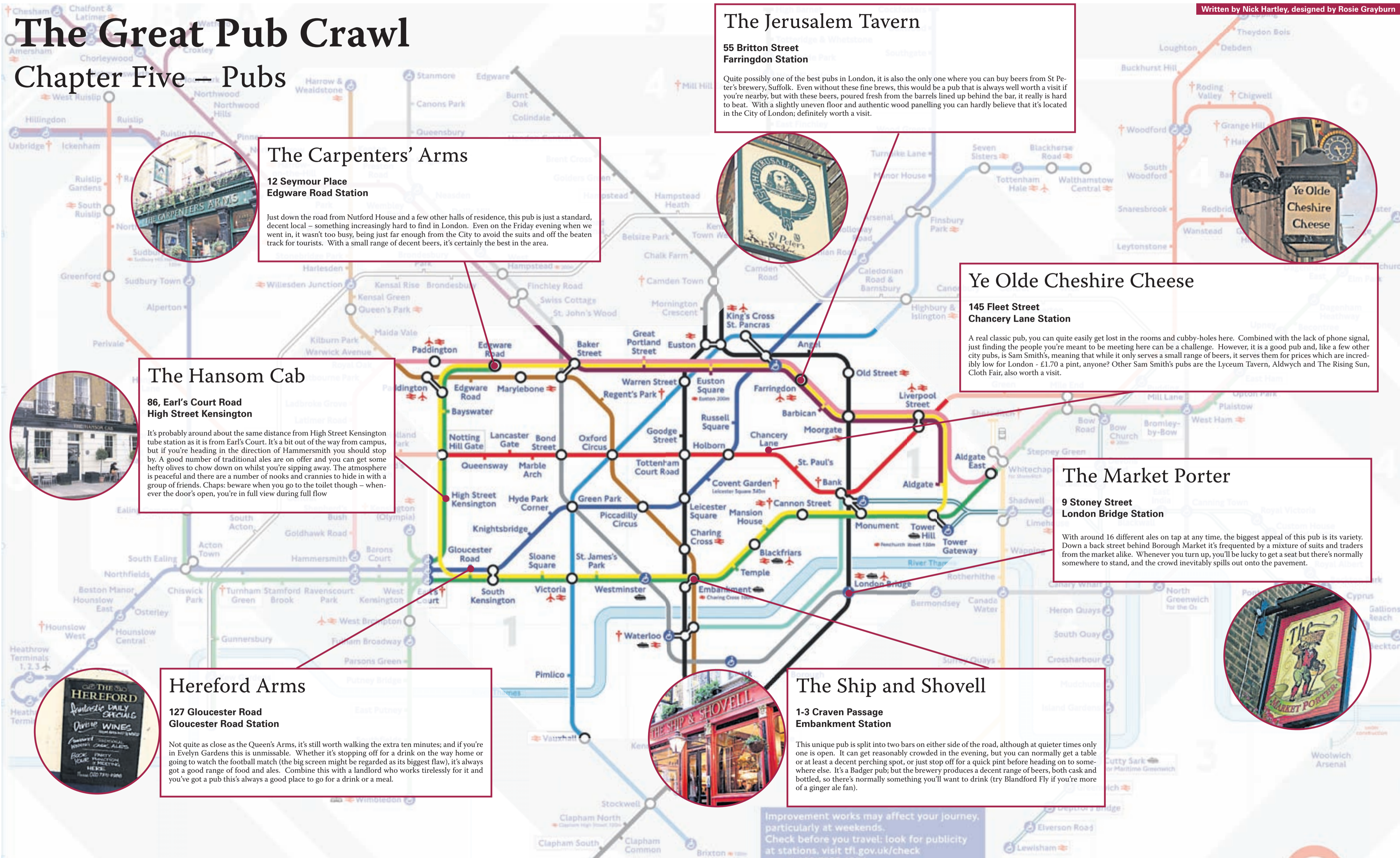




# The Great Pub Crawl

## Chapter Five – Pubs

Written by Nick Hartley, designed by Rosie Grayburn



**The Carpenters' Arms**  
 12 Seymour Place  
 Edgware Road Station

Just down the road from Nutford House and a few other halls of residence, this pub is just a standard, decent local – something increasingly hard to find in London. Even on the Friday evening when we went in, it wasn't too busy, being just far enough from the City to avoid the suits and off the beaten track for tourists. With a small range of decent beers, it's certainly the best in the area.



**The Jerusalem Tavern**  
 55 Britton Street  
 Farringdon Station

Quite possibly one of the best pubs in London, it is also the only one where you can buy beers from St Peter's brewery, Suffolk. Even without these fine brews, this would be a pub that is always well worth a visit if you're nearby, but with these beers, poured fresh from the barrels lined up behind the bar, it really is hard to beat. With a slightly uneven floor and authentic wood panelling you can hardly believe that it's located in the City of London; definitely worth a visit.



**Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese**  
 145 Fleet Street  
 Chancery Lane Station

A real classic pub, you can quite easily get lost in the rooms and cubby-holes here. Combined with the lack of phone signal, just finding the people you're meant to be meeting here can be a challenge. However, it is a good pub and, like a few other city pubs, is Sam Smith's, meaning that while it only serves a small range of beers, it serves them for prices which are incredibly low for London – £1.70 a pint, anyone? Other Sam Smith's pubs are the Lyceum Tavern, Aldwych and The Rising Sun, Cloth Fair, also worth a visit.



**The Hansom Cab**  
 86, Earl's Court Road  
 High Street Kensington

It's probably around about the same distance from High Street Kensington tube station as it is from Earl's Court. It's a bit out of the way from campus, but if you're heading in the direction of Hammersmith you should stop by. A good number of traditional ales are on offer and you can get some hefty olives to chow down on whilst you're sipping away. The atmosphere is peaceful and there are a number of nooks and crannies to hide in with a group of friends. Chaps: beware when you go to the toilet though – whenever the door's open, you're in full view during full flow



**The Market Porter**  
 9 Stoney Street  
 London Bridge Station

With around 16 different ales on tap at any time, the biggest appeal of this pub is its variety. Down a back street behind Borough Market it's frequented by a mixture of suits and traders from the market alike. Whenever you turn up, you'll be lucky to get a seat but there's normally somewhere to stand, and the crowd inevitably spills out onto the pavement.



**Hereford Arms**  
 127 Gloucester Road  
 Gloucester Road Station

Not quite as close as the Queen's Arms, it's still worth walking the extra ten minutes; and if you're in Evelyn Gardens this is unmissable. Whether it's stopping off for a drink on the way home or going to watch the football match (the big screen might be regarded as its biggest flaw), it's always got a good range of food and ales. Combine this with a landlord who works tirelessly for it and you've got a pub this's always a good place to go for a drink or a meal.



**The Ship and Shovell**  
 1-3 Craven Passage  
 Embankment Station

This unique pub is split into two bars on either side of the road, although at quieter times only one is open. It can get reasonably crowded in the evening, but you can normally get a table or at least a decent perching spot, or just stop off for a quick pint before heading on to somewhere else. It's a Badger pub; but the brewery produces a decent range of beers, both cask and bottled, so there's normally something you'll want to drink (try Blandford Fly if you're more of a ginger ale fan).



Improvement works may affect your journey, particularly at weekends. Check before you travel: look for publicity at stations, visit [tfl.gov.uk/check](http://tfl.gov.uk/check)



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# The longest fad in history

Daniel Wan tells the story of a basketball player who left a legacy

**M**uch like Des Lynam, they have stood the test of time; still sexy after decades of exposure. Chuck Taylor All Stars are the long standing heavyweights of footwear fashion, and they show no sign of changing.

'Chucks' were not initially designed to be the worldwide phenomenon they appear to be today. They were intended to be basketball shoes in 1917, but ironically, were not popular upon release. It took a young basketball player from Chicago to revamp and launch their amazing climb to

worldwide popularity All Stars now receive. The man himself, Chuck Taylor, was a basketball player, but was never a legend in the game. During a moderately successful sporting career, he took up employment with Converse Chicago to stamp his ideas and concepts to update the look and use of All Stars. Within two years, Converse were so impressed with his work that they commissioned the official product name as 'Chuck Taylor All Stars'.

Nearly a century later, over 270,000,000 pairs and counting have been sold across the globe; undisputably making them the single most successful brand of shoes ever. Why have they become such an iconic figure in Western cultures past and present?

With the basis of Chuck Taylor's tireless promotion and marketing across America during the 1920s and 30s, Converse have gone from strength to strength in selling the All Star to demographics away from its basketball roots.

American teenagers

were inundated with different styles of Chucks; suede, leather, vinyl, low-top and high-top, and eventually it caught on in a big way. This fad was one that would never really die out.

The All Star brand, largely synonymous with basketball, made an eventual amazing shift towards the music sub-culture. During the 1970s, the Ramones epitomized the popularity of Chucks in America by using scruffy plain black hi-top Chucks as part of their trademark image. Across the pond, the Sex Pistols flew the flag for Chucks, albeit with less popularity amongst fans. Old-school trends owe a lot to All Star's perseverant resurges into the mainstream casual footwear market. During the late Eighties and early Nineties, the grunge scene allowed Chucks to once again climb the scales of sub-culture fashion. Nirvana, yet another truly iconic

band, featured All Stars in many of their photo shoots.

Today, in 2008, the world's

beloved Chucks are now officially products of Nike, after the 2001 takeover of Converse. Bankruptcy forced Converse to sell over, and in some eyes 'out', to the major sports-wear conglomerate. Still marketed under the classic Converse brand, a distinct

sour taste has been left in the more ethical of mouths. Nike's associations with child labour in Asia

have now bled over to the Converse brand, to the displeasure of treasurers of Converse's previous history and values. Despite this, sales of Chucks are successful as ever, with an extended range of prints, materials, cuts and customizable options available to today's ever-demanding consumer. Gone are Chucks' heady days of punk rock and grunge; they now belong in the mainstream of global fashion and culture. Hollywood films such as *I, Robot* and *Sin City* continue to provide mass exposure through heavy (if not annoyingly blatant) product-placement.

Every new year All Stars are on the out, according to fashion experts, but it's like saying you'll get bored of your favourite film. You never will, otherwise it wouldn't be your favourite film. All Stars are simply the *Pulp Fictions*, and the *Shawshank Redemptions* of fashion. Epitomized in two words; eternal style.

I bet Des Lynam wears them too.



# Thoughts of the thinking woman

Nada Jumabhoy enjoys walking down the street *without* the catcalls

**M**ini Skirts and me? Not a chance. With spring

upon us comes the hike of hemlines. But not me; I'm sticking to decency, thank you. Designers are all putting skirts the size of handkerchiefs on mannequins in their windows and women are flocking to stores, clawing for a kitchen-towel sized wrap-around. It's all right for those who have legs up to their chests, tanned, toned and perfectly waxed. But what about the average woman? With shorter hemlines come a myriad of problems that the designers don't seem to think affect us. Firstly, having to wear shorter skirts means having to show off your legs. Fair enough that designers have given us enough warning, there still is time to get into shape before spring is actually upon us, but isn't that another task to add onto our already long list?

And what about those of us who were born with fat, unshapely legs, and just can't do anything about them? With



shorter skirts come psychological issues that women have to battle. Swallowing their pride and abandoning all sense of rationality, many still choose to wear micro-minis, with the disastrous result of stopping traffic; for all the wrong reasons.

Besides the eyesores that these offending pieces of material sometimes create, many women are also putting themselves at risk by being dedicated followers of this particularly disreputable fashion. Shorter skirts invite a cacophony of catcalls and wolf whistles as a woman walks down the street for her morning coffee, and in extreme situations this could lead to sexual harassment and other situations involving testosterone-charged males.

Although you may side with Eve Ensler (author of the immortal 'The Vagina Monologues') when she says, "my short skirt is not an invitation, provocation, or in-

dication that I want it, give it, or hook." I beg to differ. Females and males exist interdependently and, as we are all acutely aware, (from countless Ben and Jerry's nights) men are definitely the more fallible sex. Although I'm not advocating that women go around in purdahs, I am also not saying that rapists should use short skirts as the new alcohol. What I'm trying to say is that women have a responsibility for the signals they send to men. The Home Office suggests that in the past year, a total of the various reported offences of rape was 13,322. Come hopefully warmer weather, are these numbers going to rise? If they do, are we to blame?

Don't shorter skirts represent a more buoyant economy? According to one theory, if skirts are short, the markets



are going up. And if skirts are long, the markets are heading down. Hmm...I don't think so. The idea behind this is that shorter skirts tend to appear in times when consumer confidence is high, meaning the markets are bullish. In contrast, long skirts are worn more in times of depression, indicating that things are bearish. To the modern, rational reader I ask incredulously, do you actually believe this? If so, why not wear no skirt at all; surely that would mean our economy is booming. I shake my head in disbelief, and before I am accused of masquerading as a misogynist, I say this: pussy pelmets should by no means be a substitute for logical thinking.

With a lot more than meets the eye (irony intended), short skirts have a ubiquitous and far-reaching effect, even if the furthest down they reach is your bum. This writer intends to be fashionable yet not ridiculous, dressing modestly and elegantly. This is one situation where the adage "less is more" does not apply.

COOL



## Leather Briefcases

We're not talking about the hard black briefcases your dad took to work in the early 90s, but the softer traditional brown leather briefcases. Look less like a stockmarket trader, and more like a gentleman. These will add a finishing touch to men's new smart and slick look this year.



## How ethical is your wardrobe?

Head over to the world's favourite time-waster, YouTube, and search for the first episode of this online series, as titled above. It puts forward a point, but the whole thing just stinks of blandness. The camera, the clothes, and most worryingly, the facts.



## Topshop.co.uk Waif

Despite owner Phillip Green promising a ban on painfully thin models being used as models for Topshop, there is nothing but the contrary slapped across Topshop.co.uk. Being one of the biggest teenage fashion outlets in the UK, Topshop needs to take a great deal of responsibility in how they advertise to their demographic. I cannot help but think how many insecure teenagers have been made a little bit more insecure as they log on for a quick online shop.

LAME





## Film

Film Editor – Alex Casey

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**Alex Casey**  
Film Editor

The month of January is, as the old wives would say, subject to the four-star curse. As studios churn out awards fodder, everything seems to be “For Your Consideration” and pretty similar to the year before. These are generally well made films, adeptly crafted but lacking any bite that would make them special, whilst turning off conservative voters and hence generally land, regrettably, in the four-star region.

This year has been a bit different, granted. Since *Crash* won awards a few years back, all the awards bodies seem to have remembered they can nominate things released before December, but sadly this has meant that January fare has slipped into steeper decline. This was entirely encapsulated this year by the exceptionally dire *Kite Runner*.

Okay, so it's a foreign language film and isn't your typical Best Picture contender, but Hollywood seem to have decided on cornering the non-English speaking categories as well now. Check the country of origin for this piece of sentimental bullshit, with less real emotion than Paris Hilton, and you'll find it is actually American.

All the hallmarks are there, yet people seem to have swarmed to it because it's a foreign language film and immediately this rings bells that say “Like this!” Why? It was predictable (slightly), wooden (undeniably) and easy (exceptionally). Trust the Americans to make it look so easy to just walk in and out of Afghanistan right under the nose of the Taliban.

There's a general problem with foreign language films, and that is that preconceptions often overwhelm opinion based on real merit. There's the one school of people who stay away completely (“I don't go to the cinema to read”) and there's the others who go purely so that they can tell their mates at their next cheese and wine evening that they saw *Das Leben der Anderen* the other night. What one's that again? “Oh, in English it's *The Lives of Others*”. Oh. Fuck off, your four words of German off the poster do not impress.

To be fair, the quality control on foreign imports is higher. The Odeon will generally restrict itself to something that has “Palme D'Or” or “Volpi Cup” winner on the poster and so all the others are left circulating around Europe or in obscure cinemas that often charge something near the GDP of the small country whose films they exhibit. All this didn't make *The Counterfeiters* any more interesting though.

So, is this the reason that people like *Kite Runner*? It ticks all the boxes for the crowd who like obvious award fodder (high-brow use of foreign language, living in the US is perfect, Afghanistan equals bad, male rape) but in the end just tips further than *Titanic* as it reaches out for your heartstrings. At this point you stretch back and tear off their arms. That's the only thing these ass-holes understand.

Perhaps once the Oscars have gone we'll get some real films. Oh, but then it's blockbuster season. Autumn?

# Tall, dark, brooding, deadly

The Coen Brothers show why *Thelma and Louise* were right to try to avoid Texas

**No Country for Old Men** ★★★★★

*Director:* Joel and Ethan Coen  
*Writer:* Joel and Ethan Coen  
*Cast:* Josh Brolin, Javier Bardem, Tommy Lee Jones

**Alex Casey**

Formula can be a blessing or a curse in cinema. Find something an audience like, and few directors can let it go. Worse still, find something that a director likes, and you find yourself becoming perhaps a little self-indulgent. So why is it then, that the Coen brothers are so beloved?

The Coen brothers are not bad filmmakers, but at the same time they are not geniuses. Darlings of the Indie scene since their Eighties break-out, *Blood Simple*, they've staked their territory as the popular outsiders and *No Country* seems to have taken them full circle. In style, this is very similar to *Blood Simple*; in everything else, it just seems slightly underwhelming.

In January, hype overtakes everything and it's very hard to judge a film purely on its merits without rating it against your own expectations. This has been billed as “The best Coen brothers movie yet”. It's not.

It's hard to say where *No Country* falls down. The story follows three men around the Texan desert: A hunter (Josh Brolin) who stumbles across the scene of a drug deal gone wrong and walks off with a suitcase full of money he finds; an almost silent killer (Javier Bardem) with a pressurised



Javier takes his gas canister for a constitutional

canister as weapon of choice; and an aging sheriff (Tommy Lee Jones), completely dumbfounded by the deaths in his jurisdiction.

Josh Brolin, who seems to play the same character in about five films this year, finds his strongest footing here with a performance that is sadly being overlooked in favour of the others. Bardem's silent killer is full of menace without seeming robotic, although his

pursuit of Brolin and the money all seems a bit too familiar.

Jones is the perfect choice for the wafer-thin role of the sheriff that only appears to have been included to justify the films bizarrely incongruous title. He has aged to become a fascinating symbol of a man lost in the wilderness of modernity, with eyes that convey perfect pathos.

The Coens however have cheated

him, and the audience, out of a better film. There is a great deal of mystery in the story but, with a climax lacking, it seems flat on reflection. There's only so long that the Coens take on different regional groups will get them through and with *No Country* failing to end the downward spiral which the last decade has seen them enter, it might not be too long before the Coens are indeed too vintage for their own countrymen.



## Social Realism gets any remnants of humour terminated

**4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days** ★★★★★

*Director:* Cristian Mungiu  
*Writer:* Cristian Mungiu  
*Cast:* Anamaria Marinca, Laura Vasiliu

**Alex Casey**

Social realism is a particularly British field of filmmaking, mainly due to national bore Ken Loach, yet it seems that Romania have decided to be the ones to explore its true heartbreaking potential. *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days* is perhaps the bleakest film of last year, a mean feat when you consider the Iraq-centred war pieces that have piled into the multiplex. That said however, the power of good filmmaking has rarely been so obvious.

A lot has been said about *4,3,2* since it swept in and grabbed the “Palme D'Or” at Cannes from the heavyweight talent of the Coen brothers and Tarantino, yet the actual themes of the film seem to have gone unnoticed. The central storyline is one of black market abortion, set in the horrendously depressing (and, apparently, extremely rude) Romania of the Eighties. It is at this point that many people who have been crying out “I really want to see

that!” because they heard of it after Cannes pull their hands down and pretend they never said anything.

*4,3,2* is not an easy film to watch, but is incredibly affecting if you can make it through (more than one person left the particular screening I was in). It steers clear of making outright pro-choice or pro-life statements and simply observes, but does so with such brutal honesty that at least choice would allow for the service to be legalised and regulated as opposed to the illegal status it holds here.

There are several fantastic scenes that show cinema at its most evocative. The dingy hotel room to which the friends hide out to keep the secret and the abortionist himself are the stuff real nightmares are made of, not a pantomime-like Freddy Krueger. This is the power of the real in cinema in a way that hasn't been tapped into for a long time, yet Romania are widely tipped for worldwide recognition of their new cinematic flare.

Whether Romania will be the new force of world cinema or not, it seems that social realism is back on the map. *4,3,2* has again decided that realism is the realm of the depressing, so if you're looking for a perky couple of hours this weekend, stick with *Enchanted*. If, however, you're still intrigued then don't wait - the multiplex will want this aborted as soon as possible.



Comical captions need not apply



# Charlie Wilson wins your heart

The other side of war shows a witty screenplay can spark up two of Hollywood's fastest dimming stars

## Charlie Wilson's War ★★★★★

**Director:** Mike Nichols  
**Writer:** Aaron Sorkin  
**Cast:** Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts, Philip Seymour Hoffman

### Alex Casey

After being touted as the war film that's not like the others, Charlie Wilson's War seems to have distanced itself from the slayed preachy pieces that have turned off critics and audiences alike. Somewhat surprisingly, this isn't just a case of marketing tactics, Charlie succeeds where the others fall by pointing out the ridiculous decisions made by Governments during war.

This isn't a criticism of Government policy, but the story of fun loving Texan congressman, Wilson (Hanks), who, after some influencing from a wealthy socialite (Roberts), tries to raise support from the US covert war to get the Soviets out of Afghanistan during the last years of the Cold War. Inspired by a new story ("Based" seems to have gone out of fashion in films), the fast talking Wilson is the perfect antithesis to the straight laced, po-faced politicians of reality and an interesting central viewpoint.

Hanks plays him to satisfactory effect but at no point do you feel that it was incredibly taxing for him. The witty script makes a likeable character out of what could have been simply a hard drinking, womanising misogynist. How many films these days would draw a laugh rather than a scowl when the main character hires an office full of beautiful women and refers to them as 'jailbait'?

Julia Roberts has fallen into the same category as Brad Pitt in that she is so blatantly Julia Roberts and not whoever is required in the role. She has a bigger problem in that she could never act as well as Pitt either, but thankfully she has conceded to take a supporting role here and her grating Texan drawl is kept to a minimum. Philip Seymour Hoffman continues to dominate character acting in Hollywood as a bad-tempered CIA agent, equipping himself with his usual masterly skill, although he doesn't reach the heights of some of his other roles. Still, his character adds a nice angle that could have easily been overlooked if a more commanding central star had been cast.

The script is the best feature Charlie has to offer, and studios would do well to pay heed to this comic, yet sensitive, portrayal of war. If it goes to show anything, it's that there's more to say about issues when you strip away the tears. Save those for the Best Actress winner.



Even in the middle of Pakistani flea market, the suit somehow fails to draw attention

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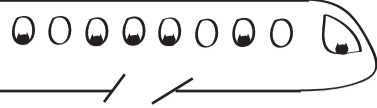
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# Africa and its magnificent people

4th Year Medic **Ammar Waraich** visited Africa last summer. Over the next few weeks he will be detailing his trip in Felix. This week he introduces his travels and talks about some of his key experiences

Imperial is not generally regarded as a university that allows much free time to its students and for a reason beyond my comprehension, Medicine at Imperial is considered to be a discipline that gives even less free time. So I hope you can imagine my bemusement when I found myself staring at a gaping 4 month holiday at the end of my 3rd year as an Imperial Medic (which, incidentally, I thought was the easiest year in my education after Year 10 at school).

I had taken 2 long gap years before university specifically to travel to various parts of the world. Due to my Pakistani nationality at the time, and the implied visa restrictions, the heart of adventure and romance that is Africa was off-limits. Nevertheless, things always have a way of working themselves out and so, with a newly-acquired British passport, I was determined to use this gargantuan holiday to explore Africa! I was confident I had the money thanks to a healthy income from my gap years, but the actual £4000 expense was a rather crude surprise when I totalled it upon return and humbled me to my first-ever maximum overdraft! During the 2 months I spent abroad I focussed on East Africa; visiting Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda and The Democratic Republic of Congo.

Now, a few important details you need to know to get you up to speed with my state of affairs. I got around using all the local means of transport, whether it be the matatu, the boda-boda, or even the 4 seater saloon taxi that 9 people are expected to cram into - 5 people in the back and 2 people on each front seat, including the driver seat! I couldn't speak any of the local languages so relied on the few English-speakers or those who understood my body language - although when it was draped in a 20 kilo rucksack and 2 bags, I imagine it would be a little more difficult to interpret. I stayed for more than half of my trip with local families, getting acquainted with all things African, but otherwise crashed in the dingiest of hotels, mingling and making friends with the natives. I ate mostly local food, but sadly it is not something I am going to remember Africa for, with a staple diet of tasteless Ugali and various boiled vegetables.

The final vital detail I wish to convey is that I travelled alone. Naturally, I was apprehensive about doing so but I feel this was very much the defining factor in all that I learnt and experienced. It forced me to trust the strangers I encountered and dissolve better into the many environments I chanced upon. It was definitely a daunting situation to be in when, for example, encountering drunken adolescents with machine guns or huge gangs of glue-sniffing kids in the slums, or even when some of the strangers you trusted tried to take you away from the direction you knew you should be headed. These situations were made worse by the fact that I nearly always had £800 of camera equipment on me and cash split up into a few separate very secretive stashes. Thankfully though, the only thing I ended up losing on my whole trip was a bottle of Pantene Pro-V and the vast majority of the interactions I had were pleasant!

However, by far the most daunting



My new best friends



The insane matatu stand in Kampala

situation I found myself in was being stuck in the middle of Congo with only 7 US dollars to my name and with rebel fighting closing in from all sides! I had no means of transport or accommodation nor any associates, or a common language for communication, and I needed at least 50 odd dollars to escape via bribing officials and boarding a boat! All before the gunfire got close enough to be audible! More on this predicament some other time...

Anyway, it is nevertheless still with conviction that I call Africa the world's most stunning continent and its people truly the most beautiful people in the world. I will talk more about the natural beauty and the awesome landscape when I cover the diverse wildlife of Africa, but for now I want to talk more about its grand people!

I had presumed a lot of danger and hassle, and even though that may have been the case in some parts of the largest cities, the reaction I got from most people was anything but. Perhaps I had been lucky and not come across trouble or maybe the fact that I was in rural parts for most of my trip had a part to play. Regardless, I just want to share a few situations with you that I want you to imagine happening in Britain or, for that matter, in any other developed country.

In Uganda, a travel operator from whom I bought a permit (at no profit to him) comes to my camp site to drop this permit off but then gives me a tour of Kampala, takes me to enquire about further transport, chats to me for a long while about the horror of living under Idi Amin and then refuses to accept money for his time.

At the village of Kinigi in Rwanda people become incredibly fascinated by my lighter skin tone. A huge crowd of 30 plus children follow me for above an hour while adults stare from behind the safety of a door or window. The bravest of the children attempt to communicate with me with 'hello' and 'how are you' before running away giggling whilst others repeatedly call me mw-zungu, which means a white person. The hair on my arm generated a lot of interest, as body hair amongst locals is unheard of, and received much attention and stroking, as one would a pet! All this was the result of sincere curiosity at my different appearance but came without the slightest bit of malice. It left me feeling like the latest addition at a zoo but nonetheless elated.

A woman who nicknames me 'Mr Pakistan' haggles for 20 minutes on my behalf to get me a cheap taxi; random people on the street invite me to join in with them in their street-size game of Ludo; a motorcycle taxi driver takes a big detour from an agreed trip to help me find a shop that sells chocolate and takes no extra cash for it; etc.

I have so many stories like these that there is no way I can relate them all and no way that I can tell you how welcome the people of Africa made me feel. Everyone was warm and not conceited, with the culture imparting on me a great sense of decency and dignity. For example, when I was staying alone in hotels, many people invited me to have dinner with their families. Moreover, people really respect each other and being a practicing Muslim I never felt any hostility even when I prayed





Portobello Market, African style



Boda-bodas on the look-out for customers in the centre of town



A friendly chap



A boda-boda in action



The Matatu experience

in an airport waiting room! Overall, I remember all the people I came across and the friends I made with very fond memories. It left me pondering, though, as to what is it about poorer countries that people generally tend to lead seemingly happier lives there? Perhaps it is a question we all need to ask ourselves.

This 'expedition' of sorts started in late July 2007 (after a trip to Pakistan during the Red Mosque siege!) and ended in late September 2007. From the thrill of tracking & snapping wild animals in their natural habitat to escaping conflict; from running mobile health clinics to getting involved with the UN and guerrilla rebels; from climbing 6000m high Mt Kilimanjaro to active volcanoes; from white water rafting to studying the Rwandan Genocide in depth and too much more - this

was an all encompassing voyage! ...and also included a meal at Nando's.

I feel so grateful that I could use this opportunity to develop my insight into so many different things in life, and feel so lucky that all the necessary requisites were in place. This was the most thrilling adventure I have ever embarked upon and one that has shaped my life in ways that even I don't know yet!

Over the next few weeks, I will do my best to share this development in character with you while giving you an account of major events. Throughout I was careful to document as much as (safely) possible using photography so look out for my accompanying photos. You won't find all 4000 of them in Felix though! I will be uploading many of them on my Facebook profile so feel free to search for my profile and take a good look!



Ugali - the staple African diet.





## Games

Games Editors – Azfarul Islam and Sebastian Nordgren

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**Azfarul "Az" Islam**  
Games Editor

Firstly, a heartfelt thanks to everyone who offered their comments and compliments about Felix Games' issue last week. Seriously, it makes the long hours and hard (but fun) work really worth it in the end!

This week starts... erm... ends off rather gently with a simple two-page spread. However, what's important here is the introduction of a new section and the revamping of an old one.

I'm somewhat happy to announce 'Pâté'. The concept is to offer some nice filling, food-for-thought every once in a while. We will attempt to bring forward a news story or event that should matter to gamers everywhere, and perhaps, even be of importance to non-gamers. This first issue is a good example of such. Between Sebb, Samir (our newcomer and stalwart Felix Games writer) and I, the controversial "Jeff Gerstmann / GameSpot / Eidos" occurrence is discussed from a variety of angles. Beyond the gaming connotations lies perhaps whispers of the state of journalism in consumer media overall. Or not. Who knows? Whatever the case, we're here to offer our thoughts.

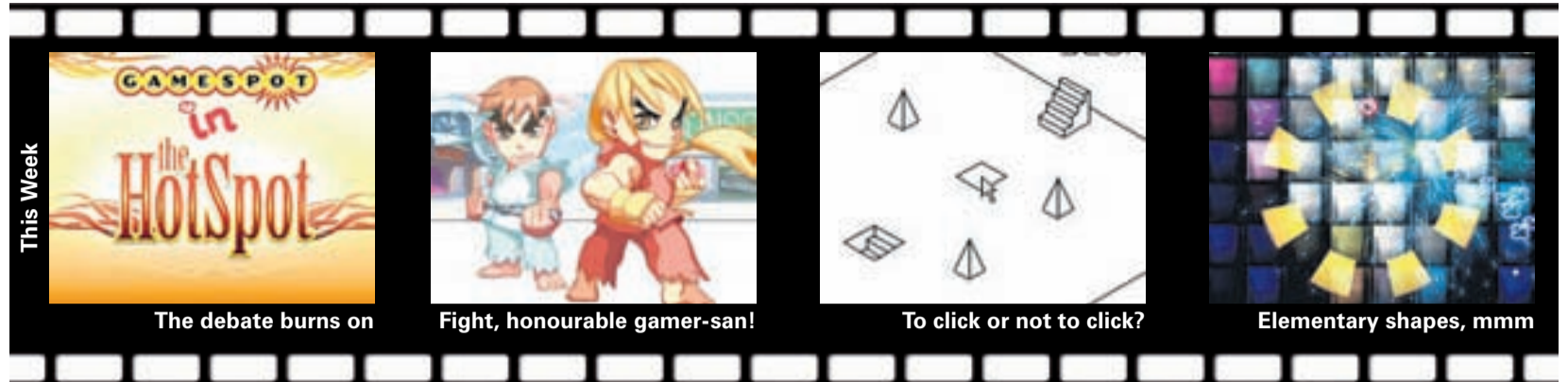
Previously, Felix Games would run the occasional review or two on flash-based, free games online that represented a number of impressive and downright awesome independent (indie) efforts. This time, I've decided to promote it to its own section called 'Byte'. Any puns are well and fully intended, you silly apples. We hope that it's going to be a regular column that you'll enjoy skimming through when can't find anything *useful* to do on the Internets. And no, research for coursework doesn't count.

It's quite hard to find new games at this time of the year that are actually worth playing. With the sheer magnitude of quality brought forth during the holiday season, it's not hard to imagine such. However, this is an excellent opportunity to look beyond the mainstream and start sifting through the niche. There's more gratification and genuine enjoyment to be found than you'll ever realise. Browsing around the PlayStation Network made me trip over the log that was the Burnout Paradise demo and have my fall broken by a little title called *Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo HD Remix*. Don't get me wrong. The Burnout demo was pretty fun but damn, this little puzzle game was just pure saccharine joy and should be coined a Class A Illegal (and Addicting) Substance. It's pure awesomesauce.

Of course, the only way to partake in what makes playing it so fun is to do so in the head-to-head versus mode. You will shout. You will yell. You will swear. And you will have that competitive streak run rampant, I say! Like I said: pure, unadulterated awesomesauce.

Okay, so not everyone may like it as much as I do, but I do implore you to try it out because you will hopefully not regret it!

Anyhoo, once again we welcome all to write to [games.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:games.felix@imperial.ac.uk). Have a great weekend!



# Pâté: The story of dead men

Felix Games debates the morals of gaming journalism as the truth shines harshly

**Azfarul "Az" Islam says:**  
"You think you're doing a good job sometimes. Gaming is a pretty involving, passionate pastime and no matter how much you promise yourself that you're going to be as unbiased and impartial as possible, you know it's not gonna happen. But hey, there's nothing wrong in embracing opinion because well-structured, justified sentiment adds not only personality but spicy variety to the mix."

Or so thought a Mr Jeff Gerstmann. His rather tactless relief of duties as GameSpot's Editorial Director came as a random bit of shock. How? Why?

Well, a common (and for all matters, truthful) assumption is that game publishers have everything to gain when any reputable gaming authority establishes a high review score for their product. It's one of those brain-dead, apples-to-apples (except they're really oranges) juxtapositions that one can use to gauge the perceived "value" of a game. As a result, it is quite prudent to see that they continually receive these high scores. Simply making games better doesn't seem to be the option.

Jeff had undertaken the review of Eidos' Kane and Lynch and had deemed it a rather average game, mandating it a *Fair* rating. *Fair* enough.

Not so, thought Eidos who had been

plastering GameSpot with advertisements of the eponymous game. Presumably, many monies were involved.

*Fair* ratings mean that a lot of gamers may not buy the game since it's not *Good* enough. Many monies could be lost.

You see where I'm getting?

Of course his termination had nothing to do with Eidos, trills GameSpot.

To be *Fair*, it's not been solidly proven but if anything, the timing, abrupt nature and consequences (fellow reviewer Alex Navarro took leave by himself) are just a wee bit too coincidental.

So what's the overall moral here? Publishers don't really like gaming journalists very much. I mean, sure they talk

to them at times and definitely send them a couple of games to get reviewed (only if they consider them worthy), but clearly there's this ingrained virulence. Due to the increasingly commercial nature of mainstream sites like IGN (owned by Fox) and GameSpot (owned by C|Net) are, more than ever, subject to the whims of publishers. Pervasive marketing through the Internet is more than valid: it's a significant part of any company's business plan. It's a plan that leaves little room for question and gaming journalists aren't in it if they're doing the questioning.

And that's why you should all trust Yahtzee's Zero Punctuation. He is, quite frankly, *teh* man."



Eidos' men in suits find out about Jeff Gerstmann's review

**Sebastian "Sebb" Nordgren says:**  
Reviewing is a tricky business. And I don't just mean the drudging through terrible games in time for a deadline, or trying to write 500 words on a game that is so mediocre it barely deserves 20. When you're doing it for a living, there's also the problem of trying to make sure that the review copies keep flowing, while maintaining fair objectivity.

Websites also suffer from shoestring budgets, which makes compromising journalistic integrity for a big advertising deal seem all the more attractive. This, allegedly, is what happened when GameSpot fired Jeff Gerstmann for, allegedly, reviewing Kane & Lynch lower than Eidos would have wanted. Allegedly.

The wider problem is that this is the first situation of its kind where it's (allegedly) possible to link an honest review score to serious consequences for the reviewer.

In a fledgling industry like games journalism, an action such as this going unpunished signals to other media outlets and, indeed, publishers that

this type of thing is acceptable. This is worse than just fudging the review score into the low 70s for every abysmal game that EA releases. It's a worrying worst-case scenario: the end of honesty in reviews and the beginning of corporate rule.

Thankfully, the extent to which the event has been publicised has made it almost impossible for anyone to miss and has probably harmed GameSpot's margins more than they ever would have thought.

Even if this is, as GameSpot claims, just a case of bad timing, their refusal to comment honestly on the events that lead up to Gerstmann's removal as editor-in-chief has stirred up more than a couple of conspiracy theorists – making it *the* precedent to follow of 2007.

The Internet has made sure that individual opinions have lost their value when compared to the aggregate, with success being measured by meta-reviews. The fact that 100 honest 60s will always outweigh one bought 90 acts as a major deterrent to selling off journalistic integrity for short-term gain.



Mr Gerstmann needs to upgrade his shield – those guns look nasty

**Samir "Ooblicious" Talwar says:**

Reporting on reporters... how very meta. With my colleagues questioning the integrity of the GameSpot management, I thought I'd do a different take on the situation by analysing one organisation's response. You may have heard of them: it's a two-person team by the names of Gabe and Tycho, operating under a little-known brand called Penny Arcade.

For the three of you that don't know, Penny Arcade makes a very successful web-based comic strip of the same name which predominantly features games. As they're so popular, they often get requests for advertisements, similarly to almost every gaming review site. The difference between them and sites like GameSpot is they insist on reviewing the game first. If the game isn't up to their standards, the ads are refused.

Two weeks before the entire GameSpot debacle, Gabe issued this statement with regards to Assassin's Creed:

"...we were huge fans of the first Prince of Persia game so when Ubi came to us and wanted to run ads for

the second we said yes. We had no idea they were going to completely fuck it over. So, from then on we started demanding playable copies of games before we'd agree to advertising. No matter how early the build we tell the publishers that unless we can see it played in front of us or play it ourselves we won't run ads for it."

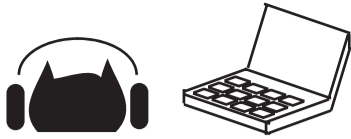
It seems to me that this is the right way to go about things. As reviewers, your customers trust you implicitly in your endorsement or disdain for the products in your field. By implying you support a product without having tested it first, you are betraying that trust for monetary gain. Penny Arcade take quite an extreme standpoint on this issue: Tycho states in a news post that "Game Reviewers Are Wrong" and "They Will Always Be Wrong" – he believes the age of the game reviewer is now over. I see it differently: the age of consumer ignorance is now over. Corporations can't get away with this stuff any more, and it's about damn time.

Any which way you swing it, the only way to recover from this honourably would be for the executives responsible to fall on their Wiimotes.









## Technology

Technology Editor – James Finnerty

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**James Finnerty**  
Technology Editor

**C**ongratulations on successfully obtaining a copy of this week's umbrella. Don't despair – it may seem less than useful, but with the right application of origami principles, it may just serve.

This is the first editorial I've written so bear with me as I summarize what went on this week and what articles we have for you to enjoy; or skim over – you ingrates.

Two massive events took place in the gadget world with a whole host of toys that we could preview. In fact we were so spoilt for choice that we decided to do two big articles covering each of the two events and then give you a little run down of the stuff we missed.

The first event is the annual Consumer Electronics Show (CES '08) in Las Vegas, which is where all the technology manufacturers show off what their investors have put millions of their hard earned dollars into. The spectrum of cutting-edge stuff is as wide as ever; covering new technology in laptops, television, audio equipment, robotics and practically anything you could dream of. Samir and Andrew have teamed up to cover some of the principal releases from the show.

Now the second event of the week was the fabled Macworld where Steve Jobs stepped up with yet another black polo neck shirt and a keynote speech full of goodies for all the Mac fanboys and -girls. Will there be another major product? Who knows, but I've covered as much I can of his content-packed speech.

On a slightly less important note, Sony announced that the production cost of a PS3 has halved since release, so who knows; we may get lucky and see another price drop or a new 80GB+ model appear at a reasonable price. Maybe I should nip down to town and trade my elite in for a PS3? Life forces such hard decisions on us.

Doesn't sound like a bad start to a new year – it's just a shame Christmas has gone, to be honest. We should start to see all of these new products seep into the public domain over the next six months so we can then cover them from a much more accurate perspective, rather than all this guesswork all but the most prestigious of us have been attempting.

In the works for the next issue we hope to have a big collection of reviews on some of the top-end mobile phones many people are sporting these days – and no, it won't just be an iPhone review. All I now have to do is track down a bunch of very specific expensive phones, in a building full of people living on student loans – it should be interesting, to say the least.

If you would like to get involved with putting together articles for this section then use the email address at the top of this page and they will, hopefully, get sent to the right place.

So without any more waffle I'll let you read about whatever breakthroughs from CES that Samir and Andrew have chosen to let you know about, or you can skip it and read my fantastically fact-filled Apple article.

P.S. No one's reading this far anyway.

# The CES 2008 tech roundup

Samir Talwar and Andrew Slater will let you know the good, bad and ugly of CES



**J**anuary is a good month for geeks, and last week's Consumer Electronics Show (CES '08) in Las Vegas proves why. This is the time where manufacturers get to show off the next year's worth of gorgeous gadgets for you to get ready to blow some of that hard-earned cash on – don't forget to thank the Student Loans Company for helping you out there. It's not just computer stuff, either: in fact, the focus this year was on bigger, better and thinner TVs. That's not all, of course: we've got everything from radio to robots lurking within the next few paragraphs. Read on, and try not to pass out with pleasure.

First things first: the beginning of the end for the long-running format war may be near, with first Warner Bros. and now possibly Universal jumping ship and switching exclusively to Blu-Ray over HD-DVD movies. Even Microsoft, a staunch HD-DVD supporter, has jumped on the bandwagon and hinted they might be releasing a Blu-Ray drive for their Xbox 360. Of course, this is all irrelevant, as faster and faster broadband speeds mean we'll all be streaming beautiful HD movies straight to our telly boxes by next year if the industry gets its act together.

Speaking of the almighty soul-sucker, CES had a lot of them. Just about everyone important was invited, and they had a lot of kit to show off. Panasonic have made the biggest plasma screen ever, weighing in at 150 inches of pure viewing pleasure, and no one cared, because they didn't have anywhere to put it. Perhaps more useful is Pioneer's new TV: at less than a centimetre thick, this one's prepared for true wall-mounting goodness.

Companies seem to be bored with plasma and LCD, and are searching for more fancy acronyms to dazzle you while they steal your credit card. Mitsubishi have decided lasers are far better looking than mere LCDs... and y'know what? They're right. Lasers deliver unparalleled colour vibrancy, enhancing your already fantastic viewing experience – screw food, your new 50-inch flat screen was worth every penny – and making your favourite cartoons look even more colourful than before. Meanwhile, Samsung have swung towards OLED, creating a 31-inch display that saps almost no power in comparison to the behemoth you have in your parent's living room.

And my personal favourite: LG-Philips' frickin' awesome e-paper tech-

nology, which allows changing imagery (updates about ten times a minute, but that should improve) on a flexible surface. It's backlit too, which while horrible for games and the like, is perfect for reading that book you always manage to leave on your pillow before setting off for uni.

USB, those three letters that we overlook every day, have a new member of the family on the way. The standard that freed us from the limitations of the Serial port and provided us with a single type of connector for almost any device has transformed the world of computer peripherals into a simple case of "does your PC have a USB port?" has released USB 3 upon us. By utilising the plastic block that prevents USB devices being inserted incorrectly they've managed to sneak in a pair of optical connectors. This boosts USB up to a massive 4.8 Gbps – a ten-fold increase – whilst letting you use your archaic printer and old-school iPod without worrying about slowing up your new Blu-Ray reader/burner/toaster.

By now, the weak will have drifted off in pursuit of less gadget-oriented articles, assuming that a university of science has anything else to talk about. Nevertheless, they have been culled, and I shall reward the faithful with

everyone's favourite electronic plaything: robots.

With countless booths dedicated to them, CES was packed with the first wave of our eventual overlords. And while they're not at the level of Skynet, the displays of artificial intelligence in almost all of them was astounding – clearly, AI isn't just a pipe dream.

First off is iRobiQ, which does... everything. Well, not the chores, but it'll take care of you, monitoring your health, your home while you're away, the weather, your interests, and even the news. It's fully customisable, with a monthly plan that lets you sign up for just the services you want. Add this to a Roomba Hoover bot and have the pizza guy on speed-dial and you'll never have to get up again... except to play with your new Comprehensive Robot. Built of Lego components by your overworked fingers, it does pretty much everything you'd expect an overpriced toy to do: talk nonsensically, wander the halls, acting as a hazard for small children, and pretend to sympathise with your lack of cash following its purchase – it's a steal at only \$869!

Of course, if you want to go all-out, there's always Sunny, NOAA's weather bot. He sings, he dances (that one's a lie... but the previous one isn't) and he knows a lot about the weather. What's

impressive, assuming what we saw was all autonomous and there was no man behind the curtain, was the responsiveness and coherency of the artificial intelligence powering the bot. Replies to questions felt natural and usually delivered the right answer, with a bit more thrown in for good measure. There were a couple of slips, but the imperfections imply it's actually processing the conversation itself, rather than the hidden human.

I know it seems like it, but CES isn't all big technology – there's actually some very simple ideas demoed there too. For example, the Slacker Personal Radio – a portable music player that helps you discover new talent by simply letting you vote on songs, and then recommending you new ones based on your tastes. This is similar to the Pandora music service, which provides the same service through your web browser. Unfortunately, both of these are available only to our friends across the pond, most Stateside companies can't be bothered to branch out to uncivilised realms such as our beloved United Kingdom. Perhaps it's best we're not the same as our American brothers, however. Gizmodo proved this when they decided to get one of their reporters a lifetime ban using a simple device known as TV-B-Gone, which unsurprisingly is rather good at turning off TVs. As TVs were arguably the highlight of the entire event, booth owners were unsurprisingly irritated, and while some took it in stride, others didn't see the funny side. It could be argued it was all in good taste if it wasn't for them switching off the big screen during presentations, disrupting the event and wasting everyone's time. Pranks are awesome...when they're well thought out.

Thankfully, the rest of the entire five-day tech-fest went off without a hitch. Too many gadgets, gizmos and gorgeous booth-babes to count resulted in enormous amounts of drool from the mouths of thousands of nerds, scattering the floor and causing an immense amount of work for the clean-up team. Apparently, that's all part of the fun that is CES.



I hate to pose this question, but do consumers really need a 150" television?



# Macworld: Join the Cloud

James Finnerty reports on Apples new releases and what they'll do for you



**They made the MacBook thinner... doesn't this just encourage our society's obsessions with losing weight? Only joking; it's pretty cool though**

At 5pm on Tuesday night Steve Jobs kicked off his keynote speech at this year's Macworld. People have been expecting a lot from the wealth of rumours and hype that has been floating around and he's not one to disappoint. His last big announcement was the iPhone and iPod, so let's see whether or not he's stepped up to his own marker.

The new line of Mac laptops were announced, dubbed 'Air'. They fall between the existing MacBook and MacBook Pro lines; their forefront feature is its unbelievably thin form factor (19.3mm to 4.1mm) and its light weight of 1.36 kilograms. It also has a respectable battery life of five hours and the option of being provided with a solid state hard disk. With such a small case there will always be a compromise, and the Air is no exception. There is no optical drive, no wired LAN ports only wireless, only a single USB 2.0 and the battery is not user-replaceable. A new external Apple Superdrive (DVD reader/writer) will be available for when you want to use discs in your Air, but since there is only one USB port you will have to remove whatever other device you are using at the time, which could become more than annoying. The trackpad features improved multi-touch, so it can function in ways more similar to the iPhone, than its more basic existing counterparts. The asking price for these puppies is a whopping \$1,800 dollars, which is a lot considering ultimately it has less features than a MacBook Pro- we should see them in the region of £1,200-£1,500, whenever they become available on our side of the Pond.

LED backlights have also been introduced on the new Macbook. Now what does this mean for you? Well they use less power so you get more battery, less space so thinner screens, they turn on instantly so no waiting and they also provide a brighter and more uniform image for your viewing pleasure. I wonder when Apple will get OLED's?

Another step has been taken into solid state disk products by Apple as you can order one as an option inside your Air. It's not as clear-cut as this though: this adds a ridiculous \$1,300 to the price tag, as well as losing 14GB of

disk space but it does offer prolonged battery life and reduced boot times. Whether users will feel this justifies the cost is yet to be revealed, but I think you can assume they probably won't.

One question that is looming in my mind over a thinner MacBook is the fact that existing models suffer from numerous overheating related problems. Surely this type of problem will only be made worse by a thinner housing but we will have to wait until they hit the market before we can get any facts and figures that dispell or validate these worries.

Apple TV has also been revamped to feature HD functionality as well as 5.1 Sound and you will be able to download most existing content in HD for only 20% more than Standard Definition. Apple hopes this update will bring the popularity of this line of products up to a level more on par with some of its other products. To aid this, the existing edition of Apple TV is receiving a healthy price cut. Apple TV is serviced entirely online and doesn't use an aerial or anything like that, so it's not a US-only product. You can get them over here but as mentioned previously, they are not massively popular and therefore are not so well stocked.

iTunes has been updated to allow movie rentals. The user pays a different price based on the age of the film and whether or not it is in SD or HD. The dollar prices are reasonable but we'll see how these translate over here. This service is intended to be up and running by next month and by the end of February, Jobs claims it will have a database of over one thousand films. Providing this service will hopefully entice many people who do not use iTunes to start to. It really applies a fantastic alternative to going out and renting films, it's cheaper and there is more on offer without having to remember to take the damn things back. The real question is whether or not this will deter people from downloading illegal copies of films?

Also the Time Capsule has been announced. It's an extension of Apple's Airport extreme product, which is more or less a wireless router but with some associated Mac friendly goodies. The Time Capsule also includes a 'server grade' hard-disk which when

combined with OS X Leopard's allows for automatic remote backups by the hour. It also still includes all the Airport's features such as being able to host a wireless printer. A 500GB version and 1TB version are planned and this product may start to become more of a must-have for the existing Mac user.

A smaller release is a set of five applications for the new(ish) iPod Touch. These applications all exist on the iPhone but use the device's free mobile Internet package to function. The Touch versions will be modified to suit the fact the device will have intermittent WiFi Internet connectivity. Included are Mail, Maps, Stocks, Weather, and Notes which can be downloaded for a small \$20 fee, but we will have to wait and see how many people are willing to front more cash towards their relatively new iPod.

Don't go thinking the iPhone hasn't seen anything new, it has, but it's quite a minor update compared to the other new stuff. Most of its built-in applications have had updates and new features added to make them more functional, for example, video playback has been enhanced. The iPhone was

also celebrating its four millionth sale, however Apple had hoped for over five million by this time. Still, 20,000 sales a day is amazing for a first generation device for a manufacturer's first step into a new market. Even though this device has been very slow to come into the UK market, it's already secured a foothold and doesn't seem to be slowing down. It would be very nice to see Apple come out with some more phone models.

Unfortunately no updates were released for the existing MacBook lines to keep them cutting edge, which is a bit of a shame as the feature set is starting to become a little stagnated. Hint: get multi-touch pads put in the older MacBooks. I think we can let Steve and his friends off on this one, but just this once.

So to conclude, it appears that Apple has decided not to pull its army back and wants to drive forward to take even more market sector away from any other company that dares to compete. They have produced new hardware, software and services which should secure their front running position for at least another year, leaving us to look forward to next year's Macworld.



**You'd think he'd retire, but he's not done making money yet**

## Headlines we couldn't fit in

I might run this every week if people think it's a good idea. Basically this will be a little column tucked away at the side that contains a set of headlines that we thought you might like to read about but didn't want to have to write articles for. A quick search on a well known internet search engine should churn up some interesting articles on each of them.

*Hungarian Scientists release dog bark translator*

*Tom Cruise Scientology video leaked*

*Amazon defies French courts over shipping costs*

*FBI to gain access to UK biometric database*

*Facebook asked to remove Scrabulous app*

*1 million people now use BBC iPlayer*

*Intel face court in New York*

*Bill Gates retires*

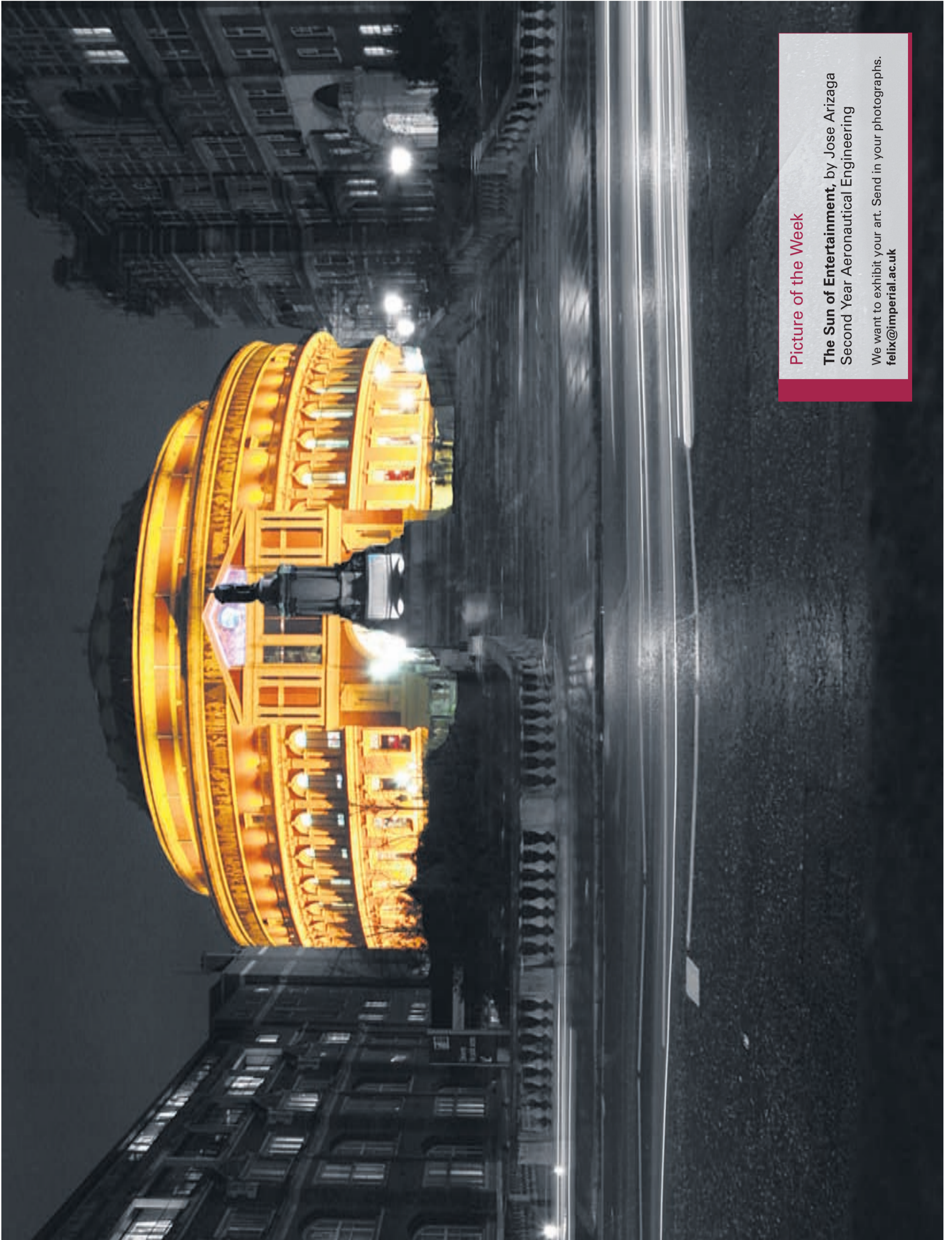
*Sun buys MySQL*

*Nokia closes German factory*

*EMI to cut 2,000 jobs*

*33-Megapixel TV being developed in Japan*





**Picture of the Week**

**The Sun of Entertainment**, by Jose Arizaga  
Second Year Aeronautical Engineering

We want to exhibit your art. Send in your photographs.  
[felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:felix@imperial.ac.uk)



# Head in the clouds in Snowdonia

Creature comforts mean a lot more when you're roughing it out in the wild according to Charlie Rogers

**T**his Christmas four intrepid Fellwanderers set out from London on a mission; Destination Snowdonia, Wales. Okay, Okay, maybe 'intrepid' is not quite the right word; we didn't have to be very gallant, just silly enough to face the winter weather and to spend four days in close proximity to ten members of the ICMC (enough said!).

Saturday 16th December and after a very late start, 3pm (too much partying on the last night of term) Charlie and I finally headed out on the 7 hour drive to Wales via South Kensington to pick up Nick and Catarina, and New Cross to pick up Nathaniel.

Three hours and a short lesson in how all the gadgets and chairs work in my car later (it's amazing what you learn about something you've owned for 5 years!) we made it to Tesco's in Earls Court. Leaving Nathaniel and Catarina to find the seatbelts trapped under the luggage, Nick and I did the week's food shop, which when I got ID'd put a smile on my face for the rest of the week!

The rest of the journey was pretty uneventful and we arrived at St. Mary's hut just after midnight to be welcomed by the ICMC: blood, sweat and beer.

**Day One:** After an incredible amount of early morning faffage we left the hut and headed straight to the hills. On our first day we decided to take it slightly easy and walk up Mynydd Mwar, 698m. Surprisingly the weather was fantastic, apart from the winter chill, and stayed so for the whole week.

The start of the hike encompassed the usual jokes about sheep, the odd patch of black ice underfoot and Nathaniel finding the most rock faces to scramble; but soon Catarina and I were striding out for the girls, making it to the summit about 10 minutes before the boys (chocolate at the summit was our prime objective!).

After a long lunch break at the top, a phone call to Nick's mum and a cup



Might have been nippy, but were the Fellwanderers downhearted? No!

of tea we started our own route down the mountain. Thankfully it was pretty easy going due to ground frost hardening the otherwise boggy land, and Nathaniel managed to only electrocute himself on the fences twice. Near the bottom we noticed the sun rapidly setting and decided to take a break to enjoy the spectacle. Of course this set us on a dream plan of hiking up Snowdon for sunrise during the tour, which never materialised as we didn't make it out of bed before 7:30am.

After the sunset we raced down the last part of the mountain and along the road to the hut stopping briefly to film Nathaniel smash a 3ft by 2ft by 1 inch block of ice over his head (words cannot explain our dear Nathaniel!).

**Day Two:** Leaving Catarina in bed, Nick, Nathaniel and I made an early start (8:30am) and drove to Pen-y-pass to climb Snowdon. As the weather was looking good we decided to take the harder ridge scramble onto Snowdon via Crib Goch. The going was fairly slow

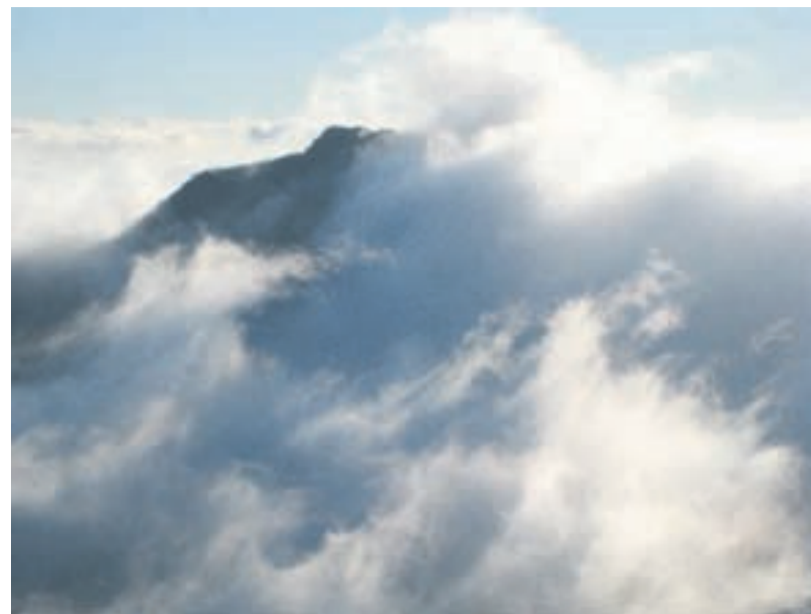
due to our need (or desire) to climb to the top of every boulder avoiding the 'easier' path in places, but the views were well worth every second and the higher we got the more we could enjoy the pressure inversion... We were literally walking on the clouds.

After surviving the ridge climb, we faced the relatively easy 70m final ascent onto Snowdon. I say relatively because what is usually the motorway of hiking paths becomes somewhat more precarious in winds pushing 50mph. But we'd got this far and a 'little' bit of wind wasn't going to stop us. We fought our way forwards and eventually crawled up the steps to the trig point so as not to be blown over.

Sitting at the top admiring the view and holding onto our hats, we quickly decided the safest way off the mountain, now the winds were ridiculously strong and sunset was fast approaching (3:30pm), would be to go down the Llanberris Railway path and bus back to the car. This route is possibly the easiest onto and off of Snowdon and thankfully plenty wide enough when you get blown around by the wind, which we did on several occasions; I in particular had to be pinned down by Nick a few times, though in hindsight I wonder if it was more for his protection than mine (Anchorage!).

By the time we reached Llanberris at the bottom of the track it was pitch black (5:30pm), and being rather dishevelled it was only right to stop for a hot chocolate and toilet break. After 30mins we headed back outside and waited for the bus... and waited... and waited... and asked the next bus driver when there would be a bus to Pen-y-Pass... Buses don't run after 4pm in the winter... problem! At this point the only solution was to start walking, so putting our torches on we did just that, trying to hitch-hike as we went.

After a short while a builder stopped to give us a ride to the next village and with the boys crouched in the back of the old Nissan and me in the front



Fellwandering: for those not content to be mere armchair adventurers

unable to fix my seatbelt we trundled along to Nan Peris two miles down the road. Once again we were on our own and walking to Pen-y-Pass. Eventually another car stopped to give Nathaniel a ride so he could pick up the car and return for Nick and me. After our little night time adventure we sped back to the hut, and to a very worried Catarina, and enjoyed a good bottle of red wine, sausage & mash and Christmas pudding with brandy – an awesome way to relax at the end of the day!

**Day Three:** Our third hiking day turned out to be a bit of a joke. After sleeping through the early morning alarm clock (I turned it off to snooze) we eventually surfaced at mid-day! I blame the adventures of Snowdon the night before, but regardless it did mean we only had a few hours of daylight left. With that we scouted the map and found a forest walk in nearby Bedgeclert and having dropped a poorly-off Nick at the local pub, Nathaniel, Catarina and I headed out. Arriving at the car park we discovered from a map that the forest contained numbered posts with pictures of animals on. We took a picture of the map and started orienteering from a camera to find the posts. Meanwhile Nick was experiencing real wildlife in the form of a robin flying in and out of the pub.

Navigation from the camera turned out to be pretty difficult in the end and with the fading light Nathaniel took a compass bearing to find the car and easiest route back. We walked up and down the same track twice before Nathaniel admitted he wasn't a very good navigator. This didn't instil in me much confidence, but after a short walk along a railway line marked on the OS map as a footpath (clearly we need new maps) we arrived safely back at the car and headed to the pub for a pint. Oh, and for Nick!

That evening we enjoyed a good spaghetti without the spaghetti (I had forgotten to buy), mince pies and whiskey;

and Nathaniel and Nick cleaned out two buckets of ash from the stove so that it would light properly (men and fire!).

**Day Four:** This was our final day hiking and having packed up the night before we managed to have breakfast and fit our gear in the car pretty quickly. We then drove to Trefriw in the Dryfryn Conwy Valley, with the intention of climbing Grinllwm and Cefn Cyfarwydd. Halfway along the walk Nathaniel decided he'd take us on his 'special' route (straight up) which turned out to be more of a challenge than we bargained for. Nick who had already managed to crack his head on a low doorway in the morning didn't take too well to the climb; he smacked a tree branch into his ear and eye and eventually slipped over on a rock slamming his shoulder into a boulder. Nathaniel took this as a sign to move away pretty sharpish out of Nicks range, but by the time we arrived at the top murder was no longer an option and everyone was happy again.

For the rest of the day we kept to the paths, stopping briefly to push Nathaniel into an icy puddle, for Catarina to stroke two ponies and to enjoy more spectacular views during our lunch stop. In the end we didn't make it all the way up Cefn Cyfarwydd as we needed to head back to London via a few route changes to avoid traffic and closed motorways.

All in all the winter tour was a huge success and a good end to the term for the Fellwanderers; unbelievable weather, great food, good company and the occasional bit of hiking!

**The Fellwanderers organise fortnightly weekend trips to the mountains, Sunday walks and arrange tours further afield to the Scottish highlands and the Alps. For more information visit: [www.fellwanderers.com](http://www.fellwanderers.com) or contact [christopher.mark03@ic.ac.uk](mailto:christopher.mark03@ic.ac.uk)**







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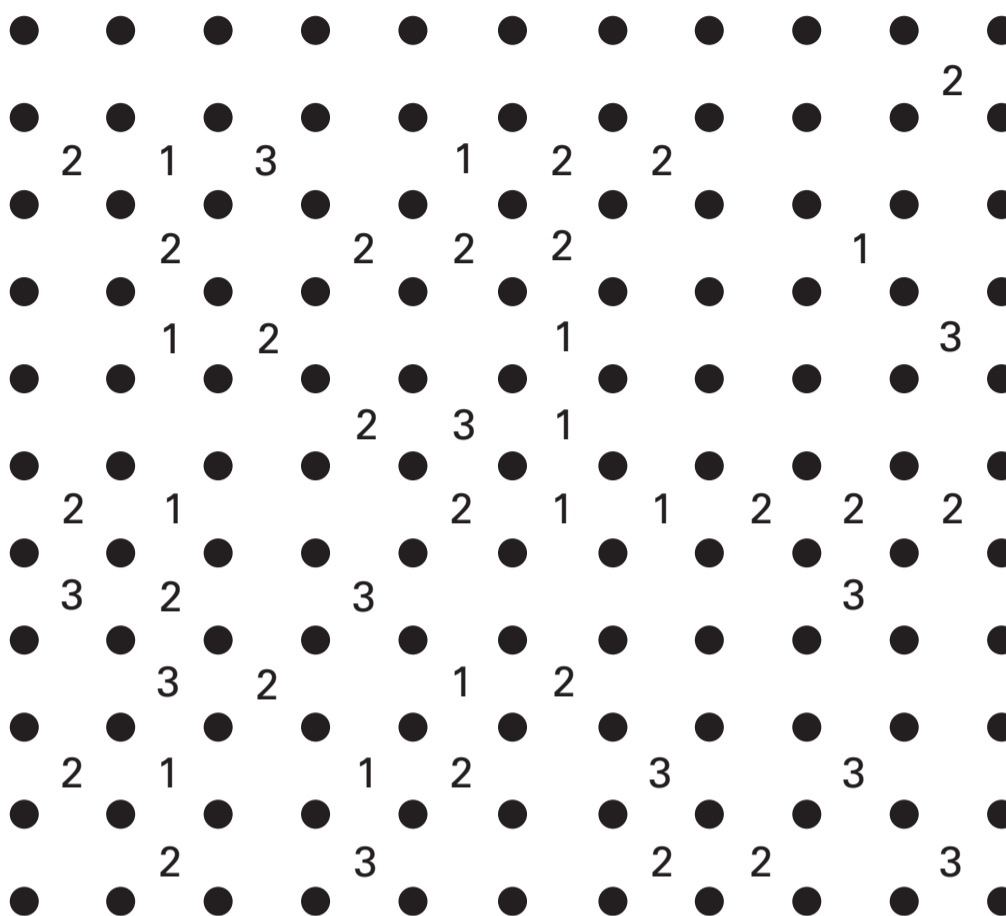
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C	U	D	G	N	I	P	O	R
P	R	O	D	U	C	I	N	G

Wordoku is identical to sudoku; we've just replaced the numbers with letters. Once you've completed the puzzle, there is a hidden word or phrase to find. Email in your answers to [sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk).

The winner of Wordoku 1,391 was **Sofia Vatti**. She knew the hidden word was "PRODUCING".

# Slitherlink 1,392

## Slitherlink 12 – Hard



### How to play:

Surely you know how to play this by now? Ok I don't either, but here's a pared down version of the instructions.

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. 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.

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 so that you know where there can't possibly be a line.

The internet's a good bet for tips and tricks if you're stuck.

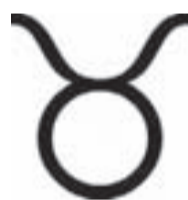
# H to the o, r, o, sizzle copes – it's the Horoscopes



### Aquarius

This week you get an early night. Early by World Record standards anyway. Surely this should gear you up for the

next day's work, but in fact you end up being a right grumpy bastard. You tell someone to "shut the fuck up", you ignore other people and you generally become a bit short with people. The bath at home never sounded so welcoming. Mmmm...



### Taurus

This week you go to angry-camp. Here they show you the meaning of "The Good AIDs", what it's like to stroke

bunnies and how to eat doughnuts without licking your lips. Unfortunately, you're caught with your hands in your downstairs mix-up beating out an angry wank and you're expelled instantly. Mummy's not there to pick you up either and on the way home a cougar eats you.



### Leo

This week you're on the end of being kicked up the chunt. Your friends kneel down to aid you, shortly before

a ninja squirrel bounds down from his perch on a nearby tree, decapitating each and every one of them leaving blood spurting corpses sprawled across the park. You got off lightly but won't be so lucky next time. Your days are numbered and I'm the Calculator of Doom.



### Scorpio

Fuck stress relief. You can all suck my balls. I'M FINE. GET OFF MY FUCKING BACK. Moron.

... WHAT?! I'm just trying to play Mario in peace. I don't give a flying fuck if there's cockroaches in the bathroom. WHAT?! How stupid do you think I am? Of course I didn't leave the bin full of rotting squid for a week.



### Pisces

What the fuck is this emo bullshit in the horoscope above?! Jesus. Get a hold of yourself you self-loathing prick.

Being miserable for yourself never helped anyone. MAN UP. Once you've done that, head to a motorway and try stopping an articulated lorry with your bear (intentional) hands. Then we can rejoice and laugh at the sorry mess lying in the tarmac.



### Gemini

Counselling? You what? Oh please do come in: just take a seat there on my 'chair-long'. You what? You mean

'chez-long' don't you, really? No one else in their right mind calls a 'chez-long' a 'chair-long'. So kind of attempt at humour? Er... Listen, I'll humour you when I feel like. Now shut the hell up, sit me down and show me black and white pictures of womens' mix-up.



### Virgo

This week you prise out the mighty Sword of Felix from the green couch. It takes all your might, golden-ginger

scruffy beard power and stunted growth to wrench it free from the depths of the back-of-the-sofa, but you succeed. Confetti pours over you from the ceiling panels, lens flares glow and choir boys sing for their high pitch generating testicles: "Aaaaaaaah!"



### Sagittarius

anger: noun [U]. A strong feeling which makes you want to hurt someone or be unpleasant because of something unfair

or hurtful that has happened: *I think he feels a lot of anger towards his father who treated him very badly as a child. There is a danger that anger at the new law may turn into anti-government feeling. When you kick someone in the chunt.*



### Aries

vent (EXPRESS FEELINGS) verb [T]. To express a negative emotion in a forceful and often unfair way:

*Please don't shout – there's no need to vent your frustration/anger/rage/spleen on me. Please don't! PLEASE! I'm so young! I haven't lived yet, let alone been through puberty!*



### Cancer

Yeah, thanks, you're a real good friend. Thanks, I knew I could rely on you. Nah, don't worry about it. Every-

thing's going to be A-Ok. LOOK. I'M FINE. GET OFF MY CASE NOW. You stupid over-protective little bint. It's always "Me, me, me." with you, isn't it?



### Libra

Oi! Yeah, yeah you. I saw you looking. I don't care if you're wielding a broadsword. Come over here and stare at

me like that. Yeah, that's right – I'm getting all up in your grill. Fucking what? YEAH?! Your mum. No, YOUR MUM. Ha, don't cash cheques yo' ass' can' handle bro-thing. Boosh.



### Capricorn

And breathe...  
...  
...  
...  
No, you're hyperventilating!

No! Here, take this brown bag! SOMEONE DIAL 999! QUICK!  
...  
Beep, Beep, Beep, Beeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee...



# Hitting the Valley's

Imperial College Cycling club hit the valleys in Cwmcarn. James Atteck, Dave Topham, Javed Kamruddin, Jason Vincent and Pambo Palas report

The first long trip of the year and we decided to go to Cwmcarn in South Wales. I know, why would anyone want to go to Wales?!? Well, there is some of the best riding in the UK there and it is only just over 3 hours drive from London. Cwmcarn is the only place with its own uplift service on the downhill track running 5 days-a-week and that means you can get about 14 runs in without having to push up a single metre. The cross-country circuit is 15km of pure single track and although that doesn't sound like much, every metre is technically challenging. As for road riding, Brecon Forest is just round the corner with miles of open empty tarmac.

Being a Friday night I wanted to get out of London before the traffic started to build up, so I thought by 5pm everyone's classes should be finished and we can pack the van, put the bikes on the trailer and be gone by 5:30. HA! Life is never that simple. Having failed to book the minivan with a loading space, we were left with a 15 seater minivan with a tow bar. Fine, I thought, we can take more people and just use the Club's bike trailer. But at 4:30 I find out that the only minivan that you can tow with is also the only one with a huge loading space in the back, which negates the need for towing. But the 15-seater has a tow bar!! Yes, but you can't use it because that would be against the law. So the only solution was to put the bikes on the roof which is not an easy task when you have silly cross-country bikes made out of flapping carbon fibre and road bikes which are made out of such thin tubing that they are almost transparent.

Having left Imperial at 6:30 the traffic was horrendous and it took us two hours just to get out of London not including a stop in Hammersmith to pick up James "Cannonball" Coakley who was confused and astounded by the fact that TFL wouldn't let him take a huge downhill bike on the Tube at rush hour! Thankfully it only took us two and a bit hours once we were past the M25 and we got there by 11pm.

The Riding Centre is very well organised and has a Visitors Centre and Camp Site at the

bottom of the downhill track which is also where the cross-country starts. Oh yes, forgot to mention that we were camping, in Wales, in mid November, in a valley. But it wasn't that bad, for me anyway, because as crazy as it sounds, I've done this several times and I brought my skiing jacket with me. The wind gusting down the valley was so strong that it took us several attempts to put up the 10 man tent and in the end we had to park the minivan in front to shelter us from the wind so that the skinny freshers didn't get swept up into the heavens.

Once the tent was up, the rest was plain sailing and we eventually managed to get some sleep. Well except for Jason "Monster T" Vicente and Pambo "Nutter" Palas, who being Portuguese, thought that camping was warm and comfortable everywhere and decided that they would only need a 2-season sleeping bag and no ground mat...

Rising at the crack of dawn, we all put our bikes together and prepared ourselves for a full day of Welsh riding.

The cross-country route was tackled by "Flappy-carbon" Dave and "Squeaky-brake" Allan.

Known in the Mountain Biking community as a top-class Trail Centre, it features some of the best single-track in the country. The route starts off with a short climb to warm up, with plenty of technical sections shortly leading on to yet more climbing in order to reach the top of the hill. The newly opened free-ride area provided a chance to try out some drops and jumps before a fast descent. After another short climb, the trail emerges from the forest on the edge of the hill to provide views across the valley. Another long, fast and technical descent ended the route back at the car park. It's a lot longer that it sounds.

Realising we had completed the loop in a record fast time of 1:15, we were ready for another lap to see if we could beat that. Reaching the top of the hill, it felt like a slower lap from how tired we were this time, but on reaching the end we set a new time of 1:08,

even after Allan's fall practising on the downhill track between laps, providing a spectacle for a line of downhill bikers waiting for the uplift truck.

The Lycra-clad gang, whilst embarrassing as they are, also got in some good riding.

What better way to overcome a biting wind on an overcast day than to get out on the open road in the rolling hills of a National Park and get those adrenaline and endorphin levels up?

Having bolted down a makeshift breakfast, four of us (Basti, Wesley, Jason & Javed) left Cwmcarn for Brecon. With a great spread in levels of experience, we did well to stick together as a group until one long climb when we made the decision to split up and meet back together later. Jason headed for a pub (we think) and Basti, Wesley and Javed headed off to do a 20-mile loop through the National Park. One particular section will stick long in the memory, a long, windy road through rolling hills, which thankfully the *Top Gear* team weren't using for a supercar shoot that day.

After a stop at a well-to-do pub for a refuel we rejoined Jason, although meeting at a roundabout wasn't a great idea as we were waiting at different roundabouts for ages! Another 20 miles on the A-roads had us back in Cwmcarn ready for more food and a hot shower and reminiscing about the National Park loop.

As for the Downhill lot, London may be cold, the Arctic colder, but Wales was something else... the wind of the previous night cut through to our bones... much the same way as the ground did the



following day – lacking copious amounts of alcohol to ease the pain.

Not used to riding in the UK, it was quite daunting for some of us to ride down a track about as wide as our shoulders with what looked like a never ending cliff to our right. Falling would result in rolling down a mountain until you hit a tree... which you hope to God would happen sooner rather than later.

With this thought in mind, we decided to launch ourselves off the highest peak we could drive up to and try to reach the bottom intact. For the majority of us this worked out fine. James "Cannonball" Coakley, however decided it would be appropriate to please the crowd and try new tricks in what is probably the fastest and hence worst place to do so, resulting in some serious damage to both machine and machine. Luckily

he was able to limp away leaving just his ego on the floor behind him. As for his bike it needed to go to A&E.

After the first run, and having seen our lives flash before our eyes, all that was left was to get back in the van and go at it again but FAST-ER, trying many different tracks – some more pleasant and less painful than others. All in all, the diversity of the tracks, the great group, and the warm hand-dryer in the bathroom made the trip a really kick-ass experience.

Having had a good day's riding by all we packed up and made our way back to London at an electronically limited 62mph in the minivan.





# Fatty fat fat fat, yep we're talking about fats

**Holly Plumley**  
Energia Fitness Instructor

Fat contains more calories than any other food source, making it very easy for us to consume too many calories from fat, which can over time contribute to weight problems. There are various types of fat, not all of them are bad. The three most important types are saturated fat, poly-unsaturated fat and mono-unsaturated fat.

Saturated fats are the worst and increase health risks if too much is consumed over a long period of time. Most children and adults in Britain are eating too much saturated fat. They are found in foods like full-fat dairy products such as cheese, butter, full-fat milk and yoghurt. Fatty red meat such as sausages, salami and luncheon meat alongside processed and fried food such as pies, pastries, pizzas, takeaways and snacks like crisps and confectionery, all contain saturated fat.

Also be aware of trans-fats, these behave like saturated fats and aren't always listed on food labels but they are mostly found in foods containing hydrogenated oils used in processed foods like pies, pastries, biscuits and other snacks.

Poly-unsaturated fats have been shown to lower blood cholesterol levels and therefore help in reducing the risk of heart disease. Omega 3 and Omega 6 are essential fatty acids and as our bodies cannot manufacture them, we must consume them in our diets. You can find these in foods such as oily fish like mackerel, salmon, trout, herring, sardines as well as in sunflower, corn and soya bean oils, seeds, nuts – walnuts, almonds, and soft poly-unsaturated spreads are also good sources.

Mono-unsaturated fats help to lower total blood cholesterol and can help to prevent certain cancers and heart disease. These are found in olive oil and rapeseed oil (containing Omega 9), nuts – peanuts, avocados and soft margarine spreads.

The current recommendation is that we should take in no more than 33% of our total calories from fat. Saturated



**Chips/French fries – yep you've guessed it, full of fat**

fat should account for no more than 10% of our total calorie intake because of its harmful effects on our health. The rest of the calories from fat should come from mono-unsaturated or poly-unsaturated fats because these are more beneficial to health.

If you read through the list of saturated fats and are feeling slightly bad as over the Christmas holidays you have consumed all if not half of the types of food listed, then don't worry.... to start the New Year off try reducing the type of fats you eat by replacing the bad fats with the good fats. If you cut down on just some of these you'll not only lower your cholesterol level you might even lose some of the weight you may have put on over Christmas too!

Some tips to help reduce the fat in your diet are as follows; use semi-skimmed or skimmed milk instead of full-fat milk, switch to a low-fat spread instead of butter or margarine; eat more chicken and fish and less red or fatty meats, choose lean cuts of meat and trim off all the excess fat; grill, bake, steam or microwave food rather than frying it; try low-fat varieties of dairy products such as cheese and yo-

ghurt. Choose poly-unsaturated cooking oils or mono-unsaturated olive oil, avoid high-fat snacks such as crisps, biscuits, cakes and pastries, try to limit takeaway to once a week or less and finally look for the word 'hydrogenated' on food labels and try to limit these foods.



**Beer belly/fat**

# On your marks...

**Ben Richens**  
Energia Fitness Instructor

You've probably heard the old saying "fail to prepare and prepare to fail". Well this applies to a lot of areas from your group presentation for university through to the tactics you might use playing a rival team and this saying especially applies to the topic of this article - warm-up, cool-down and stretching.

So its January the swimming pool's heaving full of people, parks are packed with runners and the gym's busier than the bar on ACC night, what do you do first?

The first thing should be to get on a C.V. (cardiovascular) machine to raise your body temperature and heart rate steadily for between 5-10 minutes e.g. a treadmill, bike, rower, cross-trainer etc (you get the idea). Usually at some point in the warm-up you might see some people do some static stretches. These should be saved for after the cool-down at the end of the workout, as static stretching before exercise has been shown in numerous studies not to have an effect on injury prevention when done in the warm-up and can decrease power production.

What has been shown to be much more effective is a movement specific warm-up otherwise called 'dynamic stretching'. Before we go any further, this is not where we get our leg warmers out and bounce about with flailing limbs everywhere looking like we've been electrocuted. These are controlled movements to develop our range of movement so that the body will be in an optimal state to start exercising. I recommend you do between 6-8 repetitions of each dynamic stretch. Some examples are explained below;

A bodyweight squat works on your hip and lower body muscles. Bent knee forward bends work on hip and hamstring muscles. Arm circles work out the upper body and shoulder muscles, finally exaggerated clap with arms work on the upper body muscles.

With that all done, you are ready to go into the main part of your workout but what happens when you're finishing up? Well the cool-down should take between 5-10 minutes on a cardiovascular machine with the emphasis



**One for the ladies!**

on taking the heart rate and body temperature down. This can be done by gradually decreasing the speed/resistance of the machine as you get to the end of your workout giving the body an opportunity to get rid of waste products it produces during the session.

So onto stretching - this part is crucial for targeting any tight areas of your body and to increase the rate of your recovery (so you don't feel like you've been run over by a truck the next morning). Hold the stretch for anywhere between 20-60 seconds (the less flexible you are in that area the longer you hold it), make sure you breathe and as the time goes by relax into the stretch more but don't force it (a good guide is if your face has a screwed up constipated look, then you're forcing the stretch). Pay attention when you get into the stretch that both sides of your body feel an equal stretch - especially if you are stretching one side at a time. If one side does feel less flexible, spend more time on that side to gain an equal amount of flexibility and therefore balance.

If you're unsure how or what dynamic or static stretches to do, please ask one of the instructors in the Ethos gym.



## Fixtures and Results

in association with Sports Partnership



### Wednesday 9th January

#### Badminton

Royal Holloway Men's 1st	3
ICU Men's 2nd	5

#### Basketball – ULU

Goldsmith's Women's 1st	23
ICU Women's 1st	46

#### Fencing

ICU Men's 2nd	135
Brunel Men's 1st	92

#### Hockey – ULU

ICU Men's 2nd	5
King's Medical Men's 2nd	2

### Saturday 12th January

#### Football – ULU

LSE Men's 7th	2
ICU Men's 6th	3

### Sunday 13th January

#### Lacrosse – ULU

Royal Holloway Mixed 1st	9
ICU Mixed 1st	5

#### Volleyball – ULU

Royal Holloway Mixed 1st	1
ICU Mixed 1st	3

### Monday 14th January

#### Basketball – ULU

ICU Men's 1st	N/A
UCL Men's 1st	N/A

#### Netball – ULU

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

#### Netball – ULU

Queen Mary 1st	N/A
ICU 1st	N/A

UCL 4th	22
ICU 2nd	25

ICU 3rd	N/A
LSE 6th	N/A

#### Squash – ULU

King's Men's 2nd	0
ICU Men's 1st	5

ICU Men's 3rd	N/A
Imperial Medicals 1st	N/A

#### Water Polo

ICU Men's 1st	8
UCL Men's 1st	9

### Wednesday 16th January

#### Basketball

ICU Men's 1st	N/A
Royal Holloway Men's 1st	N/A

#### Football

London Southbank Men's 1st	N/A
ICU Men's 1st	N/A

University of Essex Men's 3rd	4
ICU Men's 2nd	0

St. Bart's and Royal Men's 2nd (ULU)	N/A
ICU Men's 4th (ULU)	N/A

UCL Men's 6th (ULU)	0
ICU Men's 5th (ULU)	1

SOAS Men's 2nd (ULU)	N/A
ICU Men's 6th (ULU)	N/A

King's Medicals Men's 4th (ULU)	N/A
ICU Men's 7th (ULU)	N/A

#### Hockey – ULU

ICU Men's 1st	1
Imperial Medicals Men's 1st	3

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

ICU Women's 2nd	1
Goldsmith Women's 1st	11

#### Netball

ICU 2nd	37
University of Essex 3rd	10

#### Rugby Union

ICU SESSA XV	N/A
Univerist of East London SESSA XV	N/A

#### Table Tennis

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

#### Tennis

Royal Holloway Men's 1st	N/A
ICU Men's 2nd	N/A

ICU Women's 1st	7
King's Women's 1st	3

### Saturday 19th January

#### Football – ULU

King's Men's 1st vs ICU Men's 1st	
RUMS Men's 1st vs ICU Men's 2nd	
ICU Men's 3rd vs IC Medics Men's 1st	
ICU Men's 4th vs King's Medical Men's 3rd	
ICU Men's 5th vs Royal Veterinary Men's 1st	
ICU Men's 6th vs Imperial Wye Men's 1st	
King's Medical Men's 5th vs ICU Men's 7th	

### Sunday 20th January

#### Football – ULU

ICU Women's 1st vs UCL Women's 1st	
------------------------------------	--

#### Hockey – ULU

ICU Men's 3rd vs St. Barts Men's 3rd	
--------------------------------------	--

#### Lacrosse – ULU

ICU Mixed 1st vs LSE Mixed 1st	
--------------------------------	--



# Warming winter nutrition



**Gil Saville**  
Energia Fitness Instructor

Think of winter food and your mind conjures up images of thick vegetable soups, and steaming stews. And surprise, surprise these are exactly the type of foods you should be eating at this time of year.

When the days are colder you need more warmth from your food and this is provided by these types of meals, where everything is cooked in one pot so no nutrients are lost and warming spices are added to increase the metabolic rate and send heat round the body.

Now in these days of air conditioning and central heating and travelling by car from door to door, we may need this less than in the past, but the principles are the same. This is also not an excuse to throw all your summer healthy eating out of the window just because it's cold outside. The same principles as summer healthy eating apply but just adapted to take advantage of all the seasonal vegetables available.

## Warming winter vegetables

Vegetables which are fantastic in winter include; sweet potatoes and pumpkin (always go for the orange varieties of both of these vegetables), squashes,

turnips, swedes and parsnips.

All of these are high in Vitamins A and C, which will help build the immune system and ward off illness. Garlic is another good vegetable to eat at this time of year as it has proven antiviral and anti-fungal properties and could just help you stave off that cold. For warming grains go for oats, quinoa and brown. Other grains are more cooling so if you are making or buying bread try not to make it the staple of your winter meals.

Other good winter ingredients include: adzuki (or aduki), beans, black beans and lentils. Actually any pulse will do. They have been called the "perfect health food" - low in fat and high in protein and complex carbohydrate and fibre. They also contain a range of vitamins and minerals and are low on the Glycaemic index, so what more could you ask? They will add a welcome bulk to any soup, stew or vegetable side dish and are an excellent source of protein and Vitamin B for vegetarians and vegans. If you want to avoid some of the side effects of these high fibre foods cook them with fennel or cumin and make sure you follow the preparation instructions regarding soaking them if they are of the dried variety.

It goes without saying that you should choose foods from good sources and organically grown whenever possible. Traces of chemicals found in non-organic foods often cannot be removed simply by washing and over time can build up in your body tissues to unacceptable levels.

## Wake up and smell the herbal tea

You may find that you feel a little down as the nights draw in. Do try to get outside, especially in the mornings as the sun comes up. Natural light will help your pineal gland to switch off its night-time melatonin production and act like a natural caffeine boost. Artificial light is not full frequency light and, as such, is not as powerful as sunlight at switching off the pineal and this why you might feel more sleepy in the winter time.

If you are still not feeling 100% you

might want to try a multi-vitamin and mineral supplement. Try to buy the best quality you can and make sure it is in the best form for your body to assimilate it. Generally fat soluble vitamins (ADE) are better in capsules and water soluble (BC) in tablets. And make sure you get a good cross section of minerals to help with this too.

Just because it is cold and you might feel more inclined toward hot drinks, don't forget your body still needs at least 1.5 litres of water a day. If you find it too cold to drink chilled water, leave it to stand and drink it at room temperature. It is more re-hydrating that way anyway as the body doesn't have to use energy heating it to body temperature. If you really want a hot drink, try a herbal tea instead of regular tea or coffee.

## Things to avoid

Try to avoid eating too much dairy produce. In general these are mucous forming and won't help if you are prone to colds or chesty coughs.

You can still get good quantities of calcium from tofu, beans and dark green vegetables (such as kale and broccoli, the purple variety in particular, or by sprinkling some poppy seeds on your food). Eat simple combinations. It may be tempting to stick as many things as you can into a stew but you are making it hard for your body to digest them all. It doesn't give you the chance to appreciate the flavours too.

Try to reduce your refined salt and caffeine intake. (If you must have salt try to find whole natural sea salt which is slightly grey.) This is good advice at any time of the year and even more so during the winter when your lymphatic, immune systems and liver are busy trying to keep you healthy.

Following on from the last point try to avoid chemically altered or highly refined foods. These will have almost none of the nutrients that fresh foods have and could actually be more difficult for your body to deal with.

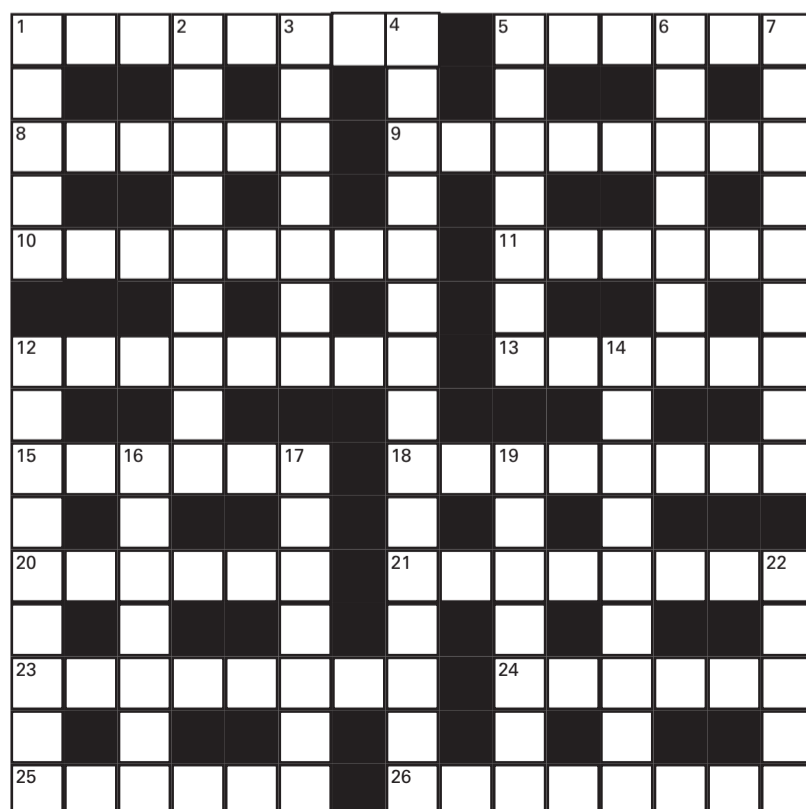
All in all eat well, stay healthy and remember spring is just around the corner!

# Sports league

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	%	FI
1 IC Netball 1st	9	9	0	0	488	254	234	100	45
2 IC Squash Men's 1st	9	9	0	0	45	0	45	100	45
3 IC Tennis Women's 1st	8	7	1	0	56	23	33	88	37
4 IC Tennis Men's 2nd	7	7	0	0	58	12	46	100	35
5 IC Hockey Men's 1st	9	7	1	1	32	15	17	78	33
6 IC Rugby Men's 1st	10	8	0	2	244	109	135	80	32
7 IC Squash Men's 2nd	9	7	0	2	30	15	15	78	27
8 IC Fencing Men's 2nd	5	5	0	0	660	525	135	100	25
9 IC Rugby Men's 2nd	9	5	2	2	220	138	82	56	21
10 IC Volleyball Men's 1st	6	5	0	1	10	2	8	83	21
11 IC Volleyball Women's 1st	4	4	0	0	11	5	6	100	20
12 IC Football Men's 1st	8	3	4	1	14	6	8	38	19
13 IC Fencing Women's 1st	7	5	0	2	899	735	164	71	17
14 ICSM Hockey Women's 1st	9	5	1	3	54	20	34	56	15
15 IC Football Women's 1st	6	3	2	1	7	4	3	50	15
16 ICSM Badminton Women's 1st	3	3	0	0	19	5	14	100	15
17 ICSM Netball 2nd	6	4	0	2	161	132	29	67	12
18 ICSM Football Men's 1st	7	3	2	2	11	10	1	43	11
19 IC Badminton Men's 1st	9	5	0	4	41	31	10	56	9
20 ICSM Hockey Men's 2nd	9	5	0	4	22	21	1	56	9
21 IC Lacrosse Women's 1st	7	4	0	3	51	49	2	57	8
22 IC Netball 2nd	7	4	0	3	205	165	40	57	8
23 ICSM Rugby Men's 3rd	7	4	0	3	197	109	88	57	8
24 IC Hockey Women's 1st	8	3	2	3	27	29	-2	38	7
25 IC Waterpolo Men's 1st	2	1	1	0	17	14	3	50	7
26 IC Badminton Men's 2nd	9	4	1	4	35	37	-2	44	6
27 IC Hockey Men's 2nd	9	4	1	4	43	23	20	44	6
28 IC Hockey Men's 3rd	9	4	1	4	17	17	0	44	6
29 IC Basketball Men's 1st	3	2	0	1	207	176	31	67	6
30 ICSM Netball 1st	7	3	1	3	243	256	-13	43	5
31 IC Rugby Women's 1st	1	1	0	0	50	5	45	100	5
32 ICSM Hockey Women's 2nd	9	3	2	4	28	40	-12	33	3
33 IC Table Tennis Men's 1st	6	3	0	3	63	39	24	50	3
34 IC Squash Men's 3rd	4	2	0	2	8	4	4	50	2
35 IC Rugby Men's 3rd	9	4	0	5	165	147	18	44	0
36 ICSM Hockey Men's 1st	9	3	1	5	20	35	-15	33	-3
37 IC Table Tennis Women's 1st	3	1	0	2	4	11	-7	33	-3
38 IC Squash Women's 1st	7	2	1	4	12	16	-4	29	-4
39 ICSM Hockey Men's 3rd	3	0	1	2	4	9	-5	0	-6
40 IC Hockey Women's 2nd	8	2	1	5	11	39	-28	25	-8
41 IC Hockey Men's 4th	7	2	0	5	8	18	-10	29	-10
42 ICSM Netball 3rd	7	2	0	5	132	178	-46	29	-10
43 ICSM Football Men's 2nd	4	0	1	3	8	15	-7	0	-10
44 IC Fencing Men's 1st	5	1	0	4	553	600	-47	20	-11
45 ICSM Rugby Men's 2nd	10	3	0	7	152	273	-121	30	-13
46 IC Badminton Women's 1st	7	1	1	5	19	37	-18	14	-13
47 ICSM Hockey Women's 3rd	8	2	0	6	7	20	-13	25	-14
48 ICSM Rugby Men's 1st	8	2	0	6	133	239	-106	25	-14
49 IC Football Men's 3rd	9	1	1	7	11	31	-20	11	-21
50 IC Tennis Men's 1st	9	1	1	7	26	64	-38	11	-21
51 ICSM Badminton Men's 1st	6	0	0	6	11	37	-26	0	-24
52 IC Football Men's 2nd	8	0	1	7	8	26	-18	0	-26

# Crossword No. 1,392

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



## ACROSS

- 1 Flatfish can flop round (8)
- 5 Invent cosmetics (4,2)
- 8 Arrange without an organization, especially a UN body (6)
- 9 Inclination towards writer song (8)
- 10 Delight the way in (8)
- 11 The road to Rugby ends in the bird cage (6)
- 12 Possibly blasé French-born Arab (8)
- 13 Headless squeaker makes a new discovery (6)
- 15 Soldier ants are huge! (6)
- 18 A painstaking yet jumbled goth hour (8)
- 20 Farmer with ghoulish reputation (6)
- 21 Insect goes in another direction as time passes (4,4)
- 23 German venture collapses due to Russian author (8)
- 24 Bitter alternating passport, I understand? (6)
- 25 Mutter while chewing a blue sweet (6)
- 26 Eastern mind-st breaks apart over river particles (8)

## DOWN

- 1 The instrument was flaunted, lost and ... (5)
- 2 A questionably nicer aunt deeply troubled (9)
- 3 Tear down the boundaries for our security (7)
- 4 Never striptease about American house (15)
- 5 An order for male fruit (7)
- 6 Ooze from a mangled sea-cow (7)
- 7 Testy chap with a variety of loose change (5,4)
- 12 Musical trunk sounds like a mathematical function (9)
- 14 Nameless monarchist lost his speech impediment (9)
- 16 Mangara, Armagan, Nagaram (7)
- 17 Broken yearnings without an injection (7)
- 19 The garden is absurd, and endlessly hardcore (7)
- 22 Heartless chastity on a sunken boat (5)

Congratulations to **Emma Thompson** and **Emma O'Hare** who won for a fourth time. Yawn.

Enoch

## Solution to Crossword 1,391







**Jovan Nedić**  
Sports Editor

To start with, I need to make a few apologies. The last two weeks I've been in my finals and as such haven't been able to do the pages; therefore I left it to a 'competent' member of the Felix staff. So firstly, an apology to the Energia staff for managing to have the same article from last term in there again, as a peace offering, and counting for the fact that many teams haven't really got into the new season, we've got a bumper fitness issue that will surely help you get rid of that Christmas podge.

Secondly, there was a mistake in the football article, where James 'The Shadow' Skeen was a co-writer and inventor of the ingenious, and very witty headline (if you remove the 'a draw' bit. Also, if you still happen to have last week's issue to hand, and have some spare time, see if you can find the hidden animals in the football report.

And yes, as was briefly mentioned last week, the league table has been updated to include the medics. Also a quick note here, the table and the fixture and results section will only work if you all get your results in on time, so please try to do so. Also, keep those reports coming in, guys.

Finally, a note on what to expect this term. Plans are underway for a special Varsity pull-out in the week after Varsity (27th February). I'd like to ask ALL THE TEAMS if they could make arrangements for a match report to be written, along with a picture of the captains, more news to follow!

## Hitting the Valleys

Cycling Club hit the valleys of Wales for their winter tour. See page 33



## New year, new you. Keeping those resolutions

**Andy Mitchell**  
Energia Fitness Instructor

So Christmas and the New Year have come and gone. You've over-indulged on turkey, chocolate and alcohol and you thought about buying larger-sized clothes in the sales, as your old ones are a little tighter than before. You're fed up as the party season is over and exams are looming. Not to be deterred, you have sat down, taken stock of your life, and set yourself some New Year resolutions.

Now answer me this: how many of those resolutions have you broken already? How many of the others have you actually thought about doing since you proclaimed them to the world on New Year's Eve? Don't feel bad if you have failed some already. It doesn't mean you have to give up completely. Just start again but this time write down a plan of action of how you are going to achieve them. Most resolutions are broken or never happen because we say we are going to do something but never actually have a set plan to follow. You wouldn't jump in the car and decide to drive to Elgin without first consulting a map and planning your journey (it's somewhere in Scotland by the way, but hopefully you get

the point).

Good planning for your resolutions is all about setting the right goal from the start. I have had many people come to me over the years and say that they want to get in shape, lose those extra kilos, or improve their fitness levels etc. for the New Year.

My first question to them is always: what exactly do you mean by improved fitness levels or getting in shape? How much weight is there in those extra kilos? Aerobic capacity, anaerobic capacity, flexibility, maximal strength, hypertrophy, speed, agility and so on are all areas of one's fitness. Those extra kilos could be anything from 1 to 20kg- or more! My point is to be as specific as you can. If you decide to take a trip to Scotland, you have to decide which part to go to or you may never really reach your destination. Another big thing is that your goal also has to be realistic. Sorry, guys, but if you are built like a bean pole you are not going to be the next Mr Universe. That is not to say that you won't be able to increase your muscle mass, but your genetics dictate that you are never going to be a huge guy.

Once you have set a specific and realistic goal (e.g. increase aerobic capacity, lose 10kg) you can begin your

strategy to achieve it. Before doing anything else you first need to know your starting point (my VO2 max is 28ml/kg/min, I weigh 115kg). For some goals you can do this easily like weighing yourself. For others you may need more specialised equipment or help, like having your VO2 max measured. Whatever your goal, the main thing is to give yourself a starting point with which to reach it.

Once you have a goal and a starting point you need to plan your strategy to reach this goal. This is actually the difficult part. How do you go about reaching your goal? How are you going to measure your progress along the way and when and how are you going to do this? Decide how much time you want to give yourself to reach your goal and again make this realistic. You are not going to lose 10kg in 2 weeks!

So for example if your goal is to lose 10kg in 20 weeks you may aim to lose half a kilogram a week. To do this you need to create a calorie deficit of around 3500 calories a week. Are you going to do this by cutting your calorie intake in your diet, burning more calories by exercise, or both? Where are you going to cut the calories from in your diet? How many days a week do you need to exercise for and on which

days are you going to do this? How long do you have to exercise for to burn the required number of calories, and what type of exercise are you going to do to achieve this?

This may all seem like a lot of work at first but trust me if you can plan your resolutions in this much detail achieving them will be easy. I've given you

examples of fitness-related resolutions but the same strategy can be used for any resolution or goal you may want to set yourself throughout the coming year. If your goal is a fitness-related one, please come and speak to an Instructor at Ethos for further advice and help in achieving it. Whatever your New Year resolutions are, good luck!



The starting line for your New Year's resolutions