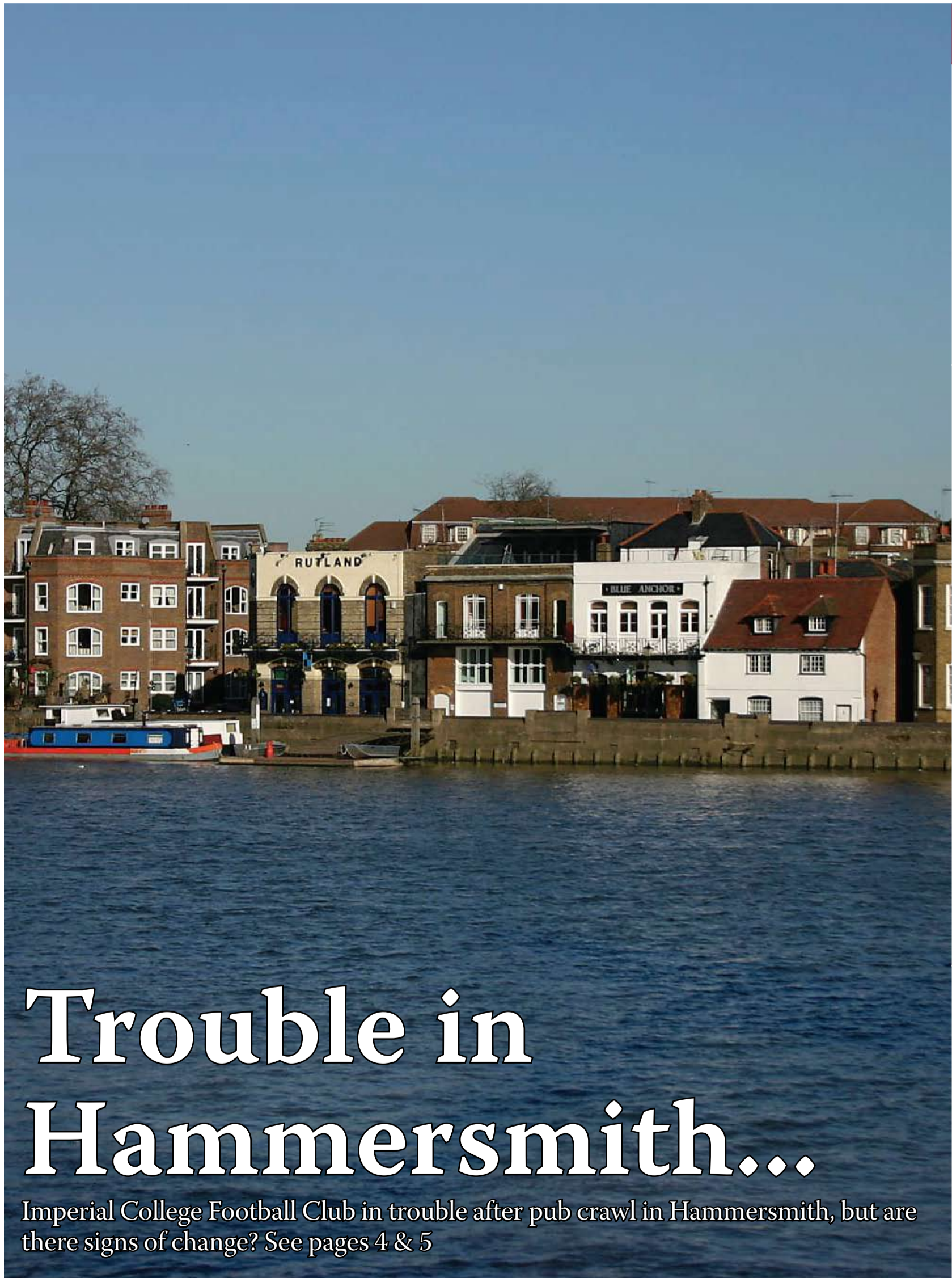


felix

The student 'news'paper of
Imperial College London

The Non-Epic Fail Edition

Issue 1,416
Friday 21 November 2008
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Trouble in Hammersmith...

Imperial College Football Club in trouble after pub crawl in Hammersmith, but are there signs of change? See pages 4 & 5

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New postgraduate and international positions to be created in Council

Jovan Nedić
Editor in Chief

Union Council Chair, Afonso Campos came under the spotlight after certain accusations on *Live!* that he was not acting appropriately. After clarifying the previous meeting's minutes on Council and on *Live!* the situation was resolved without a hitch.

After Council Chair made his points, there were three main agendas to be resolved firstly there was the bi-election to elect ordinary members for the faculty unions, which, rather unsurprisingly were all filled, apart for the Royal College of Science Union seat. The other two agendas covered the creation of two new seats on Council.

The first of the two papers to be discussed was the creation of a new International Student Officer. Council had to vote on amendments to the paper first, and decide whether or not all students could stand for the positions, or whether it would only be international students. Before any of this could be decided, Council first had to agree upon the definition of international students. It was decided that international students would be all those students outside of the United Kingdom. This included the Channel Islands, who College consider as International students and thus pay the full fee.

The second amendment to the paper was deciding whether or not all students should be allowed to vote. Alex Grisman, who is the Academic Affairs Officer (Taught) for City and Guilds College Union, made the point that the role would only effect international students and that therefore only international students should be eligible to vote. This turned out to be the case and the motion was passed.

The second paper presented by Deputy President (Education & Welfare)



Councillors voting at the meeting on Monday night

Hannah Theodorou, looked for a reshuffle of postgraduate positions. Miss Theodorou felt that the current representation of postgraduate students was ineffective. The paper suggested removing the current postgraduate positions from the faculties and placing it into the Graduate School Association (GSA), which would cover both taught and untaught postgraduates.

Again the question of representation came into question as it was discovered that any postgraduate could stand for the various positions. Other Council members commented on the fact that this method is the best solution in the current situation, although some disagreed.

Both of these two new roles will be effective immediately.

Conservatives see 50% target as unrealistic

Dina Ismaili
News Correspondent

The government's approach to university expansion is like "trying to drive a car with the accelerator and brake both pressed to the floor", says Tory universities secretary, David Willetts.

Willetts' remark was made in a speech at the University of Kent last week, at a time when the Higher Education Funding Council for England (Hefce) wrote to all universities asking them to 'review their planned recruitment for 2009/10', warning there will be no funding for extra university places in 2010/11. Although 10,000 additional student places were to be financed for 2009/10, those numbers have already been allocated to universities since January 2008. This means that university places will be capped for the next two academic years.

Willetts' went on to say: "In 1999, the government promised to get 50% of young people to university by 2010. It is a scandal that the figure remains below 40% and, for men, the chances of reaching university are actually going downwards."

"It is absurd to have a target for 50 per cent participation and specifically to prohibit universities from meeting it."

Although Labour committed itself long ago to sending half of all young people to university by 2010, the uni-

versity participation rate for young people has only risen by 0.6% since 1999-2000 and stands at 39.8%.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) annual evaluation of different education systems shows that the UK has slipped from 4th to 12th in the international league table for the proportion of young people going to university.

One of the countries overtaking the UK is Poland. In 1990, Poland sent one in eight of its young people to university, however, today it sends one in two. So while the UK will undershoot the 50% target, Poland has already hit it.

Government's aim of widening university participation may also be hampered by its recently discovered £200m funding shortfall. This prompted the universities secretary, John Denham, to announce Labour's u-turn on proposals to offer grants to students with a household income of less than £60,000. This has now been reduced to £50,020. This decrease in the limit is expected to affect some 40,000 students starting university next year.

Last week university think tank Million warned that restricting student numbers risked damaging widening participation, particularly among under-represented groups. A wide-ranging review of the higher education funding system is being called for, in particular costs and benefits of university expansion.



Tory University Secretary David Willetts

Imperial Bioscientist students win gold in worldwide competition

Daniel Wan
News Correspondent

An Imperial College team of nine undergraduate bioscientists are celebrating this week after returning from the International Genetically Engineered Machines (iGEM) competition with a gold medal and two additional top prizes.

As reported last week, the team had spent a week at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology competing against the 84 other universities from 21 different countries, in the renown undergraduate research synthetic biology competition. They triumphantly came home with the gold prize for technical excellence, top prize for best manufacturing-themed project, and another for best new 'part' which refers to *Bacillus subtilis* bacteria used

in the project.)

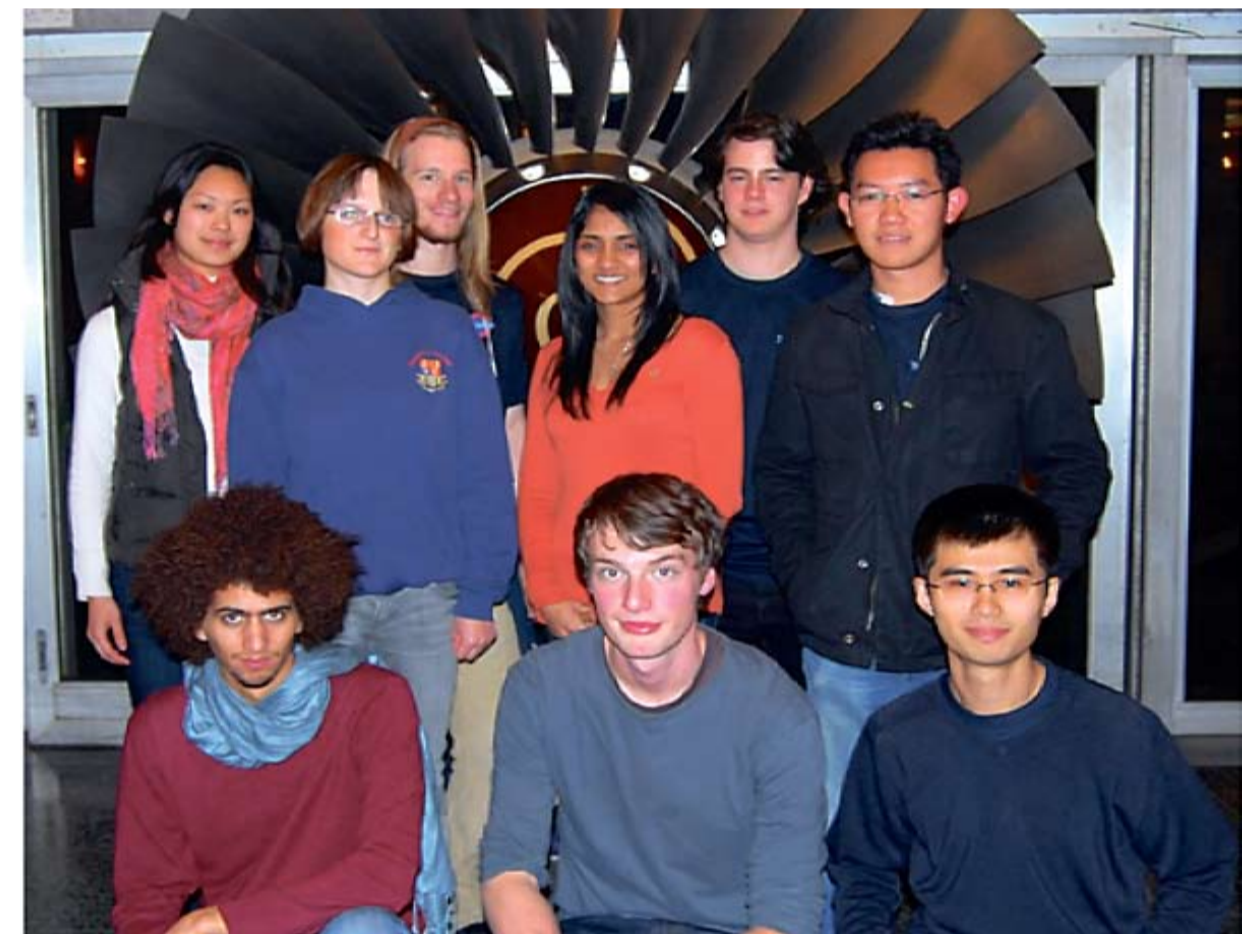
Professor Richard Kitney, a Professor of the Imperial team gauged the international achievement they attained, saying "Our team has performed brilliantly and it's fantastic that we did so well when faced with competition from other leading university teams from the UK and around the world."

The four-month project involved a team of nine undergraduates from Life Sciences and Bioengineering, four advisors and two professors with the concept of turning harmless bacteria, *Bacillus subtilis* into efficient biofabricators. The hope is that the bacteria will be able to produce self-assembling organic compounds, such as cellulose, on demand, and in a pre-meditated pattern.

The application behind the team's winning concept will go onto aid many

industrial procedures, from reconstructive surgery to the manufacture of eco-clothing. Professor Paul Freemont, another of the team's advising Professors had great hope for the future of the biofabricator, saying the team's hard work "sets up other engineers and life scientists from around the world to use this harmless bacteria as a chassis for other synthetic biology applications."

Undergraduates Erika Cule (Biochemistry 3rd Year), James Chappell (Biochemistry 3rd Year), Tom Adie (Biology 3rd Year) and Chris Hirst (Biotechnology 3rd Year), Krupa Hirani, Yanis Djinnit, Clinton Goh, Qin Qi, and Prudence Wing-Yan Wong (all Bioengineering Various Years) will all now return back to the day-to-day proceedings of College life.



The Imperial College 2008 iGEM team

New stealth tax increases cost of living for students

Kadhim Shubber
Deputy Editor

New laws introduced by the government as part of the Climate Change Bill shortly to receive Royal Assent, allow the Government to charge for bin collections. This charge, called a stealth tax by critics will increase further the cost of living for students.

Groups that are exempt from council tax, students the most prominent example, will not be exempt from the so called "bin taxes". Government guidance documents state that "a particular example might be households of students" as a group which is exempt from council tax but not the bin tax.

However there is also significant leeway for local authorities to exempt groups who do not pay council tax from the new bin tax, stating "authorities must take account of those groups who might be unduly disadvantaged as a result of the introduction of an incentive scheme".

Eric Pickles MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Communities & Local Gov-

ernment, said:

"This is a second hit on students, just days after the Government's decision to cut student grants. Gordon Brown's bin taxes will punish not just family homes, but any household with a large group of people. Labour Ministers are so obsessed with picking people's pockets that they now want to raid students' wallets. These new stealth taxes will increase the cost of living for cash-strapped students and student nurses, who are already struggling to pay their way."

If the proposals were unpalatable as they stand, Labour Deputy Leader of the House of Commons has said that MPs will be exempt, with taxpayers' picking up their tab.

The cross-party Communities & Local Government Select Committee has slammed the Government's plans for new bin taxes:

"We repeat what we said six months ago: it is hard to see why any council will want to set up a complicated charging scheme that earns it no money and risks widespread public disapproval"



Remember those happy days when bins were free?

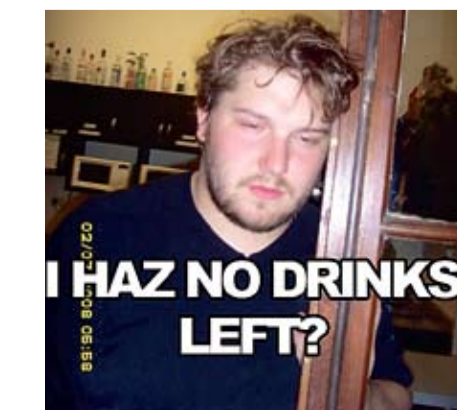
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LOLWUT

OF THE WEEK

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IC Football Club cause problems in Hammersmith

Jovan Nedić
Editor in Chief

Imperial College Football Club were in the spotlight last week, after complaints against them were lodged by several pubs in Hammersmith. The original complaint was lodged against Imperial College Hockey Club but it was later found that the club involved were indeed the Football Club. The hockey club were proven to have been in Fulham at the time of the incidents. The Hockey Club have since received an apology from the Football Club Captain James Skeen.

A number of complaints have been received from residents in Hammersmith about vandalism and drunken behaviour caused by Imperial College students taking part in a pub crawl last Wednesday. The main bulk of incidents apparently occurred in the area close

to Hammersmith Bridge, near the Blue Anchor and the Rutland Arms. Imperial College Football Club were in the spotlight last week, after complaints against them were lodged by several pubs in Hammersmith. The original complaint was lodged against Imperial College Hockey Club but it was later found that the club involved were indeed the Football Club. The hockey club were proven to have been in Fulham at the time of the incidents. The Hockey Club have since received an apology from the Football Club Captain James Skeen.

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The Rutland Arms, the scene of the incidents last week

to Hammersmith Bridge, near the Blue Anchor and the Rutland Arms.

Imperial College Football Club were taking part on their annual 'Hammy 10', a 10 pub crawl in Hammersmith that the football club have been doing for several years. The crawl starts in Stamford Brook and finishes in the Old City Gates pub next to Hammersmith Bridge, with the Rutland Arms and the Blue Anchor being two of the stops along the way. Nearly 90 members of the club took part on the crawl, with the group splitting into several smaller groups in order to, according to the football club captain James Skeen, 'not cause a disturbance.' Several past members of the club were also present in some of the pubs along the route, and moved on with the 'lead' group as and when they arrived.

The main allegations made against the club were by local residents and landlords, as the club reached the various pubs next to Hammersmith Bridge. According to residents, the club allegedly caused £600 worth of damage to the Rutland Arms by throwing glasses and bottles about, as well as damaging various artefacts in the pub such

as vases. After this, members of the club proceeded to go outside and then throw glass at houseboats moored on the river, before moving on to the next pub. Having seen the behaviour of the members involved, The Blue Anchor decided not to admit any more members into the pub, which resulted in some intimidation from the group. *felix* was also informed by the staff at the pubs that the police were called down, and a couple of students were apparently stopped and asked questions before being released.

From here, the group then moved onto the Old City Gates, the final stop on the route, where landlord Dennis McCarthy told *felix* that the group had trashed the male toilets, removed the handrail off the wall, trashed the cubicle as well as smashing a large amount of glasses and windows in the door. Staff at the Rutland Arms also

source of trouble. Many have argued that the lack of control of the members in the club is the fault of the club and by default the club Captain, whilst some members of the Football Club claimed that it is 'very difficult' to control a small minority of the members despite 'a lot of effort being made.'

Despite their every attempt, it is clear that there are members in the club that are the main source of the problem. Certain members of the club, who wish to remain anonymous, have also told *felix* that they found it 'unfair that the whole club gets such a bad name because of the actions of a few idiots.'

Whatever the reasoning for the behaviour, and the distinct lack of discipline in the club over the past few years, many from Imperial College Union and Imperial College have called for a radical change in the behaviour of the club. Sport Imperial have also

threatened of removing the club from British University and College Sports (BUCS) leagues which would effectively dissolve the club for the year.

One thing that can be said is that there are clear signs and willingness for change. In comparison to last year, the club is actively trying to rectify their image and are trying to hold their members to account. *felix* managed to get in touch with most of the pubs on the route, and found a mixed bag of responses from the landlords.

Landlords from the earlier pubs along the route told *felix* that they received no problems from the students and had no complaints. The landlord of the Rutland Arms, where most of the trouble started, told *felix* that he "had seen a lot worse before", whilst the Dennis McCarthy, landlord of the Old City Gates, said that the whole thing was "quite frightening for the staff, but no-one was hurt. However it was very good of them to come and apologise."

There are signs of improvement in the Football Club, but many from Imperial College Union and Imperial College wonder whether it is a new leaf or just empty promises.

What the residents say

The Rutland Arms

The landlord of the Rutland Arms spoke to *felix*, confirming reports from local residents that a large group of Imperial College students had been in the area on Wednesday night and had caused a considerable amount of damage to the outside of the property. The landlord has been in contact with college, in order to lodge a complaint and to recoup around £600 worth of damage to his property.

As things got out of hand, The Rutland Arms began to refuse service to the group, at this point they began to throw glasses into the river, in the direction of the houseboats.

The Blue Anchor

The Blue Anchor was scheduled to be on the route of the pub crawl, but refused entry to the group, having witnessed the chaos at The Rutland Arms.

They confirmed reports of glasses and bottles being thrown in the direction of the house boats.

Old City Gate

Dennis McCarthy from the Old City Gate told *felix* a "considerable amount of damage" was caused to the property including a toilet cubicle and a window in the front door. Glasses were "indiscriminately" thrown into the street, disturbing passers by.

He described the incident as quite "disturbing for the staff", and other customers. He added, "It was very good of them to apologise, but what probably should have been high spirited fun, went completely over the top. The main thing is that no-one was hurt. I'm sure it's not indicative of the whole of Imperial, it just takes a few people to ruin things."

Local Residents

Whilst having a drink by the riverside in Hammersmith on Friday evening, a group of Imperial students were approached by a resident of the nearby houseboats and were told they "should be aware that Imperial College students are not very welcome around here following an incident on Wednesday night," and that if they were planning on staying for a while they might be "advised to remove your 'Imperial College' banners in order to avoid unwanted attention."

Expanding on his initial comments, he told the students, "We had your hockey club down here, about 100 of them came through, they trashed a few of the pubs along the river and threw glasses at the boats. It was particularly upsetting because I have kids and they were quite scared." He added that the group "had claimed to be from a different college before admitting to being Imperial students."

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Negatives

This is not the first time that Imperial College Football Club have had problems with the University and Imperial College Union. Below are some of the incidents as well as the consequences.

Homophobic chants in The Union

Back in November 2007, *felix* reported on the events surrounding an incident in Da Vinci's after an official complaint was made against the football club over homophobic chants. The club denied that they were directed at any individual but at the rugby club. The entire club was banned for a week.

Rembrandt damaged during annual dinner last year

Damaged caused in the hotel with the £1,000 deposit not being returned. No apology was given to the hotel and as a result all Imperial students were banned from having events at the hotel again.



Trouble at the ULU Cup Final

Clashes with Royal Holloway supporters at the University of London Challenge Cup Final in Motspur Park football ground. Damaged caused to the facilities reached the sum of £60 after the Imperial football club accused the Holloway supporters of taunting and looking for a fight after Holloway won the match.

Various bans from The Union Bars

Several members of the club have been banned for various time scales for reasons. There have been several recorded incidents of players arguing and taunting door staff, to spitting and fighting with other students in The Union.

A statement from the Club Captain

James Skeen
ICUAFC Club Captain



A social event last week involving Imperial College Football Club is currently under investigation both by Imperial College Union and the club itself. Unfortunately the event which was attended by a large number of past and present members was spoiled by the actions of a small minority which has now brought both the club and Imperial College into disrepute.

The club and the Union are working together to ensure the guilty individuals are identified and suitably dealt with.

Following being given details of the alleged incidents, myself and another club official immediately personally visited the effected parties to offer our sincerest apologies on behalf of the club.

Further to this I would like to extend my apologies to the wider Imperial College community. I am deeply embarrassed by the behaviour of these members as well as the damage it will do to the reputation of the club and college. I appreciate that apologising doesn't change what has happened but the new club executive committee has recently been working hard to remove a previously negative culture which had been installed in the club.

Following the lessons learnt from this incident I am confident the club will move forward and proudly represent Imperial College as a majority of our members currently do.

Positives

On the pitch, the club as a whole has had varied success. They field a total of 9 teams, seven play in the University of London Union (ULU) leagues, four of which are in the British Universities and College Sports leagues (BUCS). Aside from the sporting abilities of the club, they have arranged community work in Eastern European countries.

ULU Challenge Cup Community Work

Imperial College Football Club 1st XI have reached the final of the Cup for the past two years, winning it in 2007 and losing to Royal Holloway in last year's final at Motspur Park.

The 1st XI are expected to reach the final of the cup again this year, hopefully with better results.

International standard players

Imperial College Football Club have several semi-professional and professional football players, with one reaching full international level.

Along with the help of Queens Park Rangers, the club has the facilities and expertise to improve on the pitch.

Whilst on tour in Germany and Czech Republic this summer, the club arranged to do some community work.

The club are looking to arrange more community work on their tour next summer.

Varsity Champions

Ever since football was included in the Varsity set-up, the Imperial football club have never lost a game, something which they are very proud of.

The club is looking to continue this winning streak this year when they will face Imperial Medicals yet again.

BUCS 'Focus' University

BUCS have chosen Imperial College as the only London based university to develop football in 6 key areas. The main objective of this is to engage universities such as Imperial in the new FA national football strategy, which aims to improve football at a grass route level.



PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE MURRAY

Headlines from around the globe

The world beyond College walls...



USA

Chief executives of the "Big Three" car manufacturers, Ford, General Motors and Chrysler have asked the US Congress for an urgent \$25bn bail-out. At a Senate hearing, the chief executives claimed that without financial help, the US car industry will face catastrophe, causing ripples through the rest of the economy as millions of people employed in car dealerships and auto garages across the USA will lose their jobs. General Motors has suffered the most, with sales down 45% from last month and losses of \$4.2bn in the third quarter. Republicans and Democrats are split over whether part of the government's \$700bn bail-out fund should be used to help the vulnerable carmakers, or whether they should file for bankruptcy. European states are also grappling with similar pleas from their auto sector, and Canada has already agreed to support carmakers there.



Northern Ireland

Self-rule is back on track in Northern Ireland after a deal was reached concerning policing and justice of the country. In May 2008 a devolved government was formed by a historic agreement between the Protestant Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Catholic Sinn Féin. But for the next five months the power-sharing government was dysfunctional because of deadlock over the several issues, principally the transfer of law enforcement from ministers in Westminster to Belfast. A breakthrough was finally achieved when it was agreed that a politician from a third party would be selected to run the new Justice Department. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has called it "the last building block in the process for bringing peace and democracy to Northern Ireland."



Russia

A constitutional amendment which would extend the length of the presidential term from four years to six in Russia is a step closer to passing as it was approved by the lower house of the Russian parliament. The amendment was proposed by President Dmitry Medvedev himself in early November, arguing the reforms will improve the political system, but Kremlin critics believe the initiative is tailor-made for Prime Minister Vladimir Putin to return to his former post as President again. The next step is the parliament's upper house, where if a two-thirds majority is achieved, the amendment will take effect and become the first ever change to Russia's post-Soviet constitution since its adoption in 1993.



South Korea

South Korea's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has recently demanded that history books be re-written to remove what it calls left-leaning contents. Though the ministry wants to encourage diversity in historical views, conservative critics are dismayed at how chapters of the textbooks "undermine the legitimacy of the South Korean government," through their explanation of the Japanese colonialism era and the Cold War conflict. The controversy has sharpened the larger debate in South Korea over how to appraise past leaders. Japan saw similar controversies over how their teenagers are taught history in 2005. South Korean schools will be able to use the revised textbooks from March 2009.



New Zealand

47 year-old John Key, a multi-millionaire former investment banker, has been sworn in as New Zealand's new Prime Minister. His centre-right group won 45% of the vote in elections on 8th November, knocking the ruling Labour Party from the seat of government which they had held since 1999. With recession hitting New Zealand during 2008, Key's election campaign promised to boost the flailing economy and tone down the previous government's ambitious environmental policies. Asians make up 9% of New Zealand's population and Key's cabinet includes New Zealand's first Asian minister. Pansy Wong who was born in China was appointed Minister for ethnic affairs and women's affairs



Iraq

Following months of negotiations, the Iraqi government - lead by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki - has approved a security pact with US military forces. The pact was approved by the cabinet, but crucially it must be passed by the parliament before it can take effect. The pact outlines the terms by which US troops stationed in military bases across Iraq would be governed, something which was previously covered by the UN Mandate which is due to expire on 31st December 2008. Most significantly the pact requires US troops to withdraw from all Iraqi cities and towns by June 2009 and from the country completely by the end of 2011. Parliamentary readings and debate have already begun, and the voting day for the pact is expected to be Monday 24th November.



Somalia

The Somali pirates who hijacked the Saudi oil super-tanker Sirius Star have demanded a ransom through the Al-Jazeera satellite television station. The full laden super-tanker is carrying two million barrels of oil - 1/4 of Saudi Arabia's daily oil output - and is among several Greek, Iranian and Hong Kong cargo ships hijacked in the Gulf of Aden off the coast of Somalia. Piracy from criminals in the east-African state has grown in recent years with the Sirius Star being the biggest vessel to be seized yet. The Indian Navy recently attacked and destroyed a pirate ship in the Gulf of Aden, and the UN and other national Navies are taking steps to further protect the vital shipping route.



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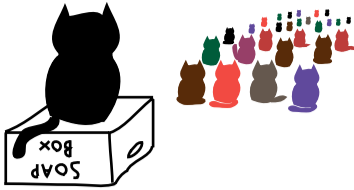
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Comment, Opinion & Letters

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

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

Imperial Girl loves Winter romance, hint, hint



So it all went a little bit wrong

Jovan Nedić
Editor in Chief

I will not lie, everyone, last week there were a lot of mistakes. In fact, there were more mistakes than I'd normally like there to be. Over the past week I have received several complaints about the spelling and grammar, incorrect maps and general shoddiness. For all the above, I apologise, yet at the same time I am thankful.

The number of complaints we received is clearly a sign that you lot are reading what we print each week, and that you all have a certain standard you expect the paper to reach. It is for those reasons that I thank you all for emails.

At the same time, I feel that I need to explain what exactly happened to result in such an epic fail, which I made jokes about on the front page! The network on which the paper runs decided to throw its toys out of the pram and not co-operate with us, and it decided to do this on Wednesday, which the regular contributors out there will know, is very, very close to our print deadline.

What resulted was a frantic rush to the finish line, with pages being passed around on USB sticks and many photographs and files subsequently going

missing. As a result, several pages were not printed: for which I apologise to my section editors and their contributors. Because of the lack of a network, our copy editors were not able to look at each page efficiently and so errors were bound to slip past them.

So there you go. Yes it was a poor issue, but at least it was an issue and like I said, it showed us that you guys clearly do read it and you really want a good quality newspaper.

With that in mind, you may have noticed that there have been a few changes to the appearance of the paper. Most of all in this, the comment section. We think it looks more modern and more stylish. We think that it works but if you think it doesn't, then please let us know by email or in person.

Next week's issue should be a good one too (fingers crossed) as it is the Guardian Students Media Awards. *felix*, *I science*, *Live!* and *Angry Geek* are all nominated in various categories and we will report on the outcome, hopefully with some lovely trophies.

Oh and *phoenix* is out! Get your free copy with *felix*. Copies can be found next to the library cafe.

Is this ranting cubed?

Dear guys at *felix*, and everyone else. I hope this is both the first and last article I write here, and I'm pretty aware of my family's history when it comes to letters of complaint, but I was left completely and utterly appalled at the content of *felix* last week. Not only was it filled with language a sailor would have trouble keeping up with, but a lot of the content was just pointless rants. You see, I was on the bus home from Imperial on Friday night, and as it did its random "This bus is being held here in order to regulate the service" thing, and with passengers beginning to complain, I thought that a one-to-one with my *felix* newspaper would give me a rest from the impatient, unappreciative company I had the misfortune of being with. But when I opened the newspaper, I was faced with just the same; students ranting about hospital waiting times, amount of work they have, petitions, and even about ranting itself (but am I just ranting about ranting about ranting, or as an imperial student would put it: Ranting cubed?)

The thing that I was most appalled with was the amount of spelling and grammatical mistakes made by the high-standard students that we supposedly are. There is no such phrase in the English language such as "I could of"; it's "I could HAVE"! And we aren't in America, so "defense" is spelt with

"Imperial Girl, some advice, try being a little less promiscuous" - Yasin Fatine



a C! No decent person would take an argument seriously if it contained such basic flaws. And another thing, to the girl who had the decency of bl*inking out part of the F-word in her article, at least put in the correct number of asterisks! (But maybe I'm just nitpicking with that one.)

So, I know that *felix* readers everywhere will be scrutinizing every word of this article to say "Aha! I got you Mr. spelling man with OCD!" Firstly, go ahead (you won't find any!), and second, I'm just trying to remind everyone that spell-checks do exist! But I do know that there are also terrible examples out there on the streets of London; take "St. James's Park" for instance. I think that's one of the few cases where graffiti on a sign should be legal. So really, the way we can improve society as a whole is not to just focus only on ourselves, but on the small things in life, like spelling for God's sake!

But on the other hand, maybe student life is so hectic that we haven't got time to check our spellings, just get the message out there! So yeah, keep up the good work *felix* guys! Anyway I'm off to complain to the council about the presence of lollipop ladies (or "school crossing patrolers" to be more PC) at pelican crossings. Have a nice weekend everyone!

P.S. Imperial Girl, some advice, try being a little less promiscuous and guys may actually start liking you!

A. Geek has had enough of Imperial Girl



"this godforsaken university and all of the fashionista arseholes will one day be behind you. But it's harder to get away from yourself."

something to be proud of. Anyway. To the present day. You're finding things tough at Imperial, and that's fair enough. The other day I had to have a conversation with someone wearing a leather jacket. We all have to make sacrifices to study at an institution like this, I guess. The reason I hate you is because you're one of those people who just can't stand to be a geek. You just physically can't bring yourself to do it. It scares you so much that you'd much rather truss yourself up in your warehouse best and stagger around London on heels higher than your sense of self-importance.

And I'm not someone who thinks everyone should strap themselves into a lab coat and enjoy the ride here, I just think that if you're the kind of girl who goes out to clubs wearing outfits that a nudist would consider revealing, and complains when boys you like don't like you back – a sob story worthy of Hannah Montana, indeed – then you should just be up front about it. You shouldn't claim one week that, gosh darn it, people are so superficial, and then the next describe your "fuck-me pumps", a phrase so stupendously awful that I can't bear to even add it to my word processor's dictionary.

People at Imperial, on the whole, are unhappy with who they are. It's a reality, genuinely terrible affliction and it's something they should aim to change at once. You can't blame a university for causing it. You can't bemoan a work-ethic and a scientific regime for turning you into a mentally-imbalanced prostitute in the evenings. That's just

who you are. Imperial is your day job, it doesn't define you as a human being. And if you decide that that person you've become isn't what you'd like, then you've got an impetus to change it. An excuse is not a way out. Especially if it's as feeble as IG's.

If anyone else is reading this, following Imperial Girl's passages of wisdom like they're a new season of *Sex and the City*, then I implore you – just look at yourself and try to be someone you respect. Because at the end of the day, this godforsaken university and all of the fashionista arseholes will one day be behind you. But it's rather harder to get away from yourself.

Want to know how to repel men at sixty paces using fishnet tights and sexually-alluring footwear? Email someone else at ImperialGirl@ic.ac.uk. Alternatively, choose the blue pill at anangrygeek@googlemail.com. A new topic next week. Honest.



Wise words A. Geek... wise words

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



"getting cosy with a loved one while it's cold outside is incredible"

Seriously, I can see you reading this right now and it makes me feel good. Actually it was the other day that I saw another girl reading my column in the Library Cafe, and I just got this warm fuzzy feeling. A little bit like the one you get when you've drunk too much alcohol.

I am loving this time of year. The winter is fast approaching and the

thought of getting cosy with a loved one while it's cold and snowing outside is incredible. One problem, I have the M&S chocolate con flakes mini bites (x2-they are on offer), I have the candles, the romcom DVD and the red wine - I'm just missing the guy. Okay girlies... I will get one before long. Now is the optimum time to be getting a boyfriend to snuggle up to. Why, you ask? Okay Christmas, NYE, Valentine's day... you need to get the guy now for optimum efficiency. I just love the feeling of being held close. You know, like when you are waiting for the bus and it's cold and he's got his arms around you keeping you warm. And when you are walking and you take your hand out of your pocket and he just grabs them and holds them close in his... My gosh! I am so soppy today! Let me go on: When he offers you his scarf when you say you're feeling the chill, when you drink hot choco in front of the TV at night, when he... boys i hope you are taking notes - I'm not dropping hints for nothing! Boys and Girls, we all know the 2 commandments. Thou shalt have fun in the time of High Sun (aka Summer). Thou shalt giveth your commitment(eth) in the time of the High Moon (aka winter).

Summer is for fun. Winter is for those relationships. Other things I love about winter is how everything around you seems so much more clearer. It's like the crisp cold sharpens your eyesight. When you're walking down the same road you do every morning to get to college, you suddenly realise the beautiful architecture. The other thing I notice is that girls make more effort to style their clothes. The other day I saw a girl whose hair look like she walked straight out of a L'oreal hair-colour advert, and she was wearing this turquoise winter cap. Oh so gorgeous. And I love these new tights girls around campus are wearing with boots. I like the way

the sky turns that pinky blue colour around 5.30pm. The smoky clouds that veil the bright full moon. The way the leaves fall in spiralling motion off the trees. The christmas songs and gift adverts that come on TV. Hmm. Winter is here soon my friends.but but before I leave you, I would like to take this opportunity to address some of the responses to the articles I have received over the past couple of weeks. Apologies if I haven't responded to your emails, please know that I read everything that is sent. One emailer who will remain anonymous quite elegantly commented, "Women like yourself are having a hard time working out the right balance between being a successful woman and an desirable woman. Unfortunately, while women go for successful men, men are put off by successful women" - and it couldn't be truer. When I was around the age of 16/17 I forcibly pretended to be a bimbo around people especially guys. Showing a guy that you are headstrong doesn't always bode well. So here's my modified tactic at university. Step 1: Don't make obvious to the guy you like that you are headstrong or any other strong personality traits that you may possess. Step 2: figure out if you like him and if he can fit well with your personality. Step 3: if the answer is positive from Step 2, slowly lure him into understanding who you are. This way you'll only be revealing yourself to promising candidate, hence being more efficient. Gosh i love efficiency today... I must have turned German.

And to the article written by Anon to my first column that wrote "Imperial Girl is a Geek like the rest of us" I found it really hard to follow your argument or views. I am not entirely sure what I was reading, not in an offensive way of course... Let me know, IG (ImperialGirl@ic.ac.uk)

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Big Ben (not a guy Imperial Girl knows) is beautiful in the snow

Alex da Flex discovers the truth about doctors



"I got chatting to a girl who thought a visit to the doctors involved having every orifice violated for a lollipop"

The curtains are drawn in the consultation room and all you see are the cracks on the wall as you lay patiently on your side with

your knees brought up to your chest. Your rare-end in the meantime is fully exposed to the coldness and you hear the snap of the rubber examination gloves as Dr. X playfully manipulates it onto his appropriate hand. You lie in wait, worryingly anticipating the inevitable as he rubs cold gel. Where he will enter you no man has gone before... This is just one of many descriptions I have encountered from patients and friends alike. Is it really the truth? Do docs really just stick their fingers where the sun-don't-shine as soon as you enter the room? Hell no. Medicine as a profession would cease to exist if that was common practice, for you would sue it for every penny. Just last week, I got chatting to a girl on the train and she thought a visit to the doctors involved having every orifice violated for a lollipop. The hospital is NOT a porno set and guess what? Doctors sometimes even talk to you, put you at ease, find out what's wrong from the conversation before sticking anything in, up or down you.

Before the 70s, before the internet, before all the facilities that provided you with "health information". You used to believe the doctors, remember that? They have trained for over 10years and do you really think you know more from surfing the net for 20minutes? Do you really think that every cough you

get is bronchial carcinoma? How times have changed. Now the media is filled with stories written by lay people who have never been to the doctors. Just the other week, I read that smoking reduces your chance of getting some obscure syndrome Z. Yeah it might do according to an equally obscure study, where all subjects died from every other disease under the sun because they never got old enough to get syndrome Z. It's this type of junk in the media that drives me crazy. It's this type of junk that always appears in newspapers that require the literacy of a five year old. Then what really hacks me off is



Don't worry, this Doctor is 100% above board... hot too

that these people then bring this type of junk to their doctors. "Errrr, I heard that smoking is good in the 'latest' research so I picked it up again. Errrr, see the funny thing is Doctor, I'm coughing up blood, what do you think that's about?" Well, I don't think it's because of the excessive dietary spinach intake. A common misconception is that doctors sometimes get things wrong; therefore we should not believe what they say. They are only human after all. So I'm not going to take the blood pressure tablets because they might kill me. OK, let's investigate it then. Don't take your meds and let's see if you are still

around next year. The funny thing is, in the face of such stupidity, doctors must still be civil, calm and professional. Now my beloved engineers, if your clients ask you stupid questions and say absurd intellectually challenged things to you too many times to count, can you act in a civil manner? Or would you lose it? Well doctors can't do that you see. They need to hold onto their sanity and be empathetic, which in medical terms requires doctors to understand how intellectually deficient some patients can be and respect their wishes. One other thought, maybe that's why they are called patients; you need a lot of patience. As this article draws to a close, one must say that although the preceding views were strong, they are close to the truth. Sometimes the truth is the most astonishing piece of information. But the bottom line is, the majority of patients are people undergoing suffering and deserve care and attention. It is a fine art to distinguish those who are ill from those who think they are ill, a skill unique to the medical profession and perhaps justifies the high costs of producing a doctor. Remember, the next time you go to see your doc, have a little trust and believe that maybe, just maybe, he or she will heal you without a finger up the...

Amna Shaddad: “student socialism is annoying”

The notions of socialism are not so popular, unlike the resistant scepticism of America; the scepticism against student socialism is perhaps more justified. If anything, the persistence of socialism amongst students is not at times seemingly uneducated, is simply of often rather simplistic notions of social change.

One of the mottos: ‘long manifestos don’t win struggles-practical unity does’ I think sort of sums up what I’m trying to say. It gives the impression of people in a room coming to the conclusion-Of course we all agree that’s really wrong!-Its placard making time!

They’re with everyone and against everything-the first sentence of their pamphlet reads like an insurance sales (-and perhaps all politics is like this) ‘whether in opposition to war, racism or privatisation’-we’re the ones you want- this generality-of the more the merrier here seems far too socialising-student-inspired. Immediately all that is translated is Sheila Rowbotham’s recollection of the all inclusive Oxford socialist students of the 80s who spent their meetings in pubs criticising the detrimental and fundamentally slowing effects of alcohol and women to society.

The soul of man under socialism may flourish. Those countries progressing from poverty through com-

munist suffer their criticisms despite obvious developments; take Cuba for example, surviving the American Blockade and the fall of the Soviet Union is desperate and struggling development personified.

But it is the repetitive and apparently pointless reappearance of student socialism that is annoying. We all know what they look like and can probably guess what they’re going to say more or less, while I may seem hypocritical criticising their confidence and optimistic relentlessness in the face of ignorance, I honestly don’t know that much of the effective history of student socialism beyond that of the contagious spread of the ‘change the world’ bacilli of the 60s, all that I realise is a noisy pointlessness.

Communism is difficult, and a struggle, even more than Capitalism. The recessions and current credit crunch will inevitably be overcome, be it through socialist bail-out means or otherwise; and besides, Communism? - Here? Simply looking out of an Imperial building window onto the excessiveness, and extravagance that is Kensington and all who inhabit it, the question is how?

The only faith to have in western humanity, without wasting a lot of energy is only in its capitalist development and ultimately insatiable drive. Forget the little man.

Felix Whitton: The ‘Big Question’ that needs to be addressed

Voltaire once said: “I may not agree with what you believe, but I will defend to the death your right to believe it.”

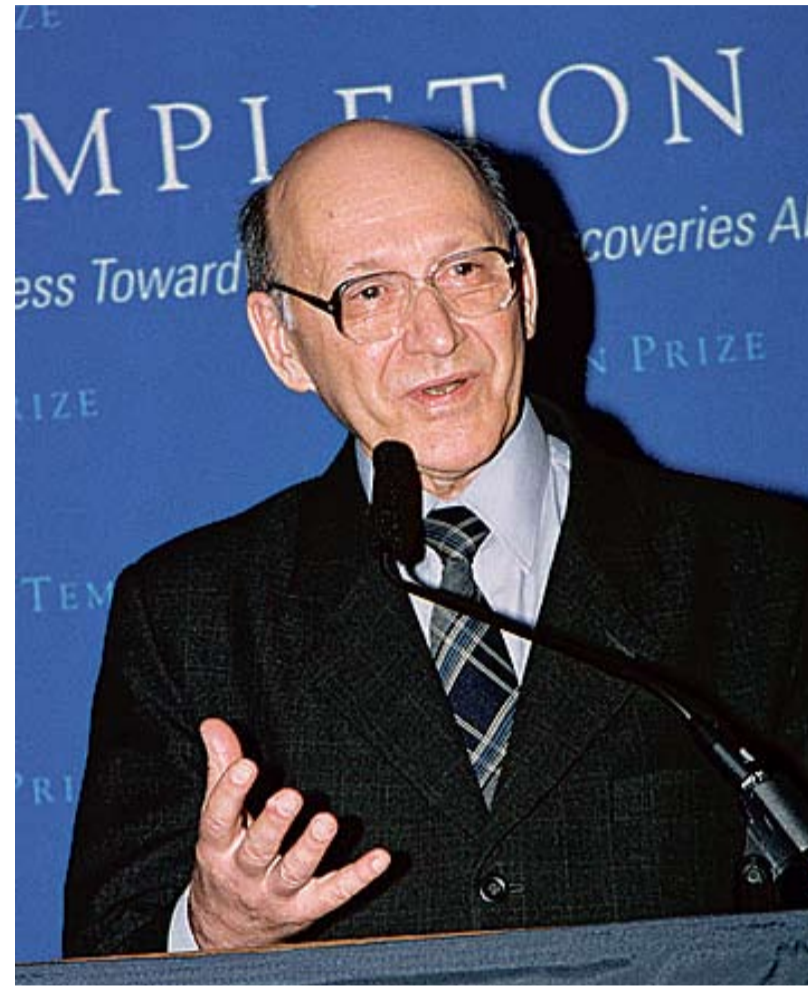
This pretty much sums up my attitude towards religion. As a scientist (and atheist), I just don’t ‘get’ it. Religious people make me a little uneasy, but so do the militant clan of faith-bashers – Dawkins, Dennett, Hitchens et al – with their fervent desire to see all forms of religion wiped off the planet. I know the majority of religious people are normal, and so I tolerate them, albeit sometimes through gritted teeth.

That tolerance ends, however, with philanthropic organisations such as the Templeton Foundation. This bloated American enterprise, founded by the late Sir John Templeton (a Presbyterian businessman who died earlier this year at the grand old age of 95), is dedicated, in the words of its website, to answering the “Big Questions” in life, by acting as “a catalyst for research on concepts and realities such as love, gratitude, forgiveness and creativity ... [and] questions on the laws of nature and the nature of the universe”.

In plain English, this means blurring the boundaries between science and religion by throwing as much money in as many directions as possible. Think of it as a benevolent hippo, waving its tail around and flinging shit far and wide. Or an amoral arms dealer, selling weapons to both sides in a conflict. Except that the conflict in this case is inside minds and institutions, and Templeton has gone a step further to actively promote it.

Among its many ventures, the Templeton Foundation has a publishing arm – which reads like a catalogue of discredited creationist pseudo-science – and an array of lucrative prizes, including the Templeton Prize (full name: The Templeton Prize for Progress Toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities ... they don’t do snappy).

The Prize, at \$2 million cleverly calculated to be worth more than the



One of the winners at the Templeton Prize

Nobel, is given to someone who has “made an exceptional contribution to affirming life’s spiritual dimension” or, in the words of Richard Dawkins, “any scientist ... willing to say something nice about religion”. The Foundation also gives out the “Epiphany Prize for Most Inspirational Movie”, awarded in 2005 to the Passion of the Christ, a film that was more notorious for inspiring people to leave before the end.

More insidious, and less well-publicised, is the gigantic funding arm of the Foundation which gives out around \$70 million annually to scientists, research groups and institutions. Name a university – British or American – and odds are that it has received money in some form from Templeton.

Oxford got £1 million for its Centre for Science of the Mind, and the free-market espousing Templeton College – now Green College – changed its name in 1984 upon receipt of a “significant” sum of money from the Foundation. Cambridge’s Theology Department gives out journalism fellowships to writers willing to “examine the ... creative interface between science and religion”, and recently received \$3 million to research what the Foundation quaintly terms “the great debate” over the evolution of biological complexity.

In fact, the more prestigious the university, the more likely it is to have gained in some way from this Leviathan. Harvard, Yale, Princeton, MIT ... the list goes on. Even Imperial is not beyond accepting money to study “Deep Beauty...the Search for an Underlying Intelligibility of the Quantum World”; or “Science and Transcendence”, which aims to find out the “nature, character and meaning of ultimate reality”.

Even the Royal Society – with its motto “Respect the Facts” – seems to see no inconsistency in giving out \$100,000 of Templeton’s money in the form of essay prizes, or allowing the winner to speak at its functions. The Michael Reiss controversy back in September is another example of the re-

cent clash between faith and fact.

Perhaps it is sanctimonious to expect all these institutions not to take such a good source of funding; after all, Templeton’s rise has coincided with a drop in government funding, both here and in the US. But studies have shown that researchers often, consciously or not, find the results their donors would like. This is why scientists have to declare conflicts of interest if, for example, they are working for a drugs company whilst testing a new medicine.

This should all be enough to set alarm bells ringing, but the British media has been eerily quiet on the issue of Templeton money. More strange still is, despite most of the UK press’s distaste towards the US Republicans, almost no journalists have made the connection between Templeton’s son, Jack, who now runs the Foundation, and his large donations to George W. Bush’s campaigns in 2000 and 2004, and to John McCain’s this year.

So what, you may be thinking; the money has to come from somewhere, and Obama’s campaign haul far outstripped McCain’s. But for a Foundation that preaches the benefits of scientific endeavour on the one hand, while giving oodles of cash to one of the most backwards post-enlightenment regimes with the other, the contradictions are telling.

This, together with a stated opposition to abortion and stem-cell research, and recent donations in excess of \$1 million to push through Proposition 8 – an amendment to ban gay marriage in California – plus countless links to shady US organisations like the Discovery Institute, is why British universities should say no to Templeton’s money, at least until they have made their agenda absolutely clear.

Otherwise, as writer and Imperial scientist Sunny Bains has pointed out elsewhere, this “subtle intrusion” of religion into science could be the thin end of the wedge for a more sinister presence in the future.

Gilead Amit heads back to the Wild West



“I’m back in town, and the most effervescent of apologies to you all for the period of lawlessness I so disgracefully abandoned you with”

I feel like Gary Cooper halfway into an old Western, bursting through the double doors of the saloon as the raucous, devil-may-care atmosphere abruptly quiets down. The doors swing back on their

hinges as suspicious faces turn in my direction. A jolly ragtime beat on the piano ends discordantly as the pianist edges away to a less conspicuous seat. The game of poker stops mid-hand, as the dealer looks over his shoulder, edgily chewing his hand-rolled cigarette from one side of his mouth to the other. The bartender quietly gathers the most valuable pieces of glassware and places them in assumed safety, somewhere out of sight.

“Didn’t think ye’d dare show yer heed ‘round these parts again, sheriff”, rings out a voice from a darkened corner – a voice with the texture of sandpaper and the smell of a marinated shank of lamb left to hang in a pair of socks overnight. A solitary pair of spurs can be heard jangling from somewhere behind the clouds of smoke.

A gun is whipped out of its holster: a mirror shatters, men dive for cover beneath the nearest tables, bullets fly, a chorus girl screams from an upstairs bedroom, a chandelier collapses, one patron of the bar generously knocks a fellow-drinker into the piano and a limp body falls from the second floor landing. Though not necessarily in that order.

The gunsmoke clears to reveal the cigarette smoke. I blow nonchalantly on the barrel of my Colt .45, twirl it with consummate elegance around my index finger, pick it up off the floor and stick it back in its holster. I walk over to the dead body and solemnly down a glass of firewater. You could cut the tension in the room with a knife. Come to think of it, you could probably have

cut the tension with a brick. Unfortunately no-one was there to try it, so you’ll have to take my word for it.

A sentence is formed in an attempt to restore the mood of hushed reverence so inappropriately broken. The crowded hall hangs on my lips as I look them over with cold indifference before turning and walking away. I stop at the double doors and say: “The bad times are over.”

And they are. I’m back in town; and the most effervescent of apologies to you all for the period of lawlessness I so disgracefully abandoned you with. For letting the riffraff take over the streets, control the concourses and hijack the highways, with their disregard for good syntax, good grammar, logical rigour, self-consistency, good taste, relevance, humour, generosity of spirit, imaginative thought, and minimum standards of coherence. For dragging this l’l town through sheer linguistic hell, I can never forgive myself.

And I’m sorry to all of you who let the independence get to your heads, and thought the parents were out for the night. You ain’t seen the last of me yet, boys.

There we go. A little apology, a touch of humour and we’re all right again. Aren’t apologies great? I’d say that they have to be one of my favourite inventions. Right behind bagels, the BBC iPlayer and those small buttons you press at zebra crossings to keep you occupied until the light decides it feels like changing.

Apologies are a wonderful concept: people would never have made

the transition from tribal habitation to living alongside each other in cities without some tool to indicate an admission of wrongdoing. Now using an apology to express regret is all very well in theory. But that’s not how it comes out in practice. Like with everything else in this era of global recession and financial armageddon, the net worth of apologies has depreciated considerably.

An apology is more of a way to soothe one’s own conscience than anything else. A receipt that if presented often enough and loudly enough, in a sufficiently large variety of ways, will refund all grudges and exchange all potential unpleasantness for something more appealing. This cheapening of apologetic sentiments is largely the fault of the English, and their deliberate, large-scale undercutting of the excuses market. If, in a flight of Douglas Adams-ian imagery, work could be obtained from an Apology Drive, the Industrial Revolution need never have happened for Britain to lead the world in terms of energy production.

Because you really like your apologies in this country. Right behind meteorological inquisitiveness and sports-related self-deprecation, contrition is your favourite mindset. It’s not that you necessarily have a lot to be apologetic about. It’s not as though you ever have anything to be particularly thankful about either, yet supermarkets and banks, pharmacies and train stations, greengrocers’ and museums up and down the land reverberate to the sound of the English apologizing for x or thanking each other for y. My Mediterranean impatience for meaningless, automated responses passed off as politeness makes me slightly nauseous every time one of your compatriots transforms an awkward silence into a diarrhoeic splurge of mindless small talk, liberally laced with the ‘s’ word.

Don’t be fooled into thinking it passes you off as a considerate people. You just acquire a reputation for being the worst and most awkward light conversationalists in the world.

If that seems a little harsh, I ap-hmm-hmm.



All right, y’varmint. Time to clean out this one-cat town.



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$$\frac{d}{dx} \left[\frac{d^2 y}{dx^2} + \gamma(x) \frac{dy}{dx} - \nu^2 y \right] = E \gamma(x) y$$

Large waist almost doubles the risk of death

Catherine Luckin

Having a large waist circumference can almost double your risk of premature death, warned scientists from here at Imperial last week. A study of over 350,000 people from across Europe showed that even if you have a normal body mass index (BMI) and are therefore not considered overweight or obese, excess fat around the waist brings serious health risks.

Obesity is currently diagnosed by measuring BMI, which is known to be linked to mortality risk. However, this study suggests that the distribution of body fat may be more important than BMI. The scientists involved believe that doctors should also record patients' waist circumference and that this should form a part of regular health check-ups.

Imperial scientists, with colleagues across Europe, compared people with the same BMI and found a direct correlation between subjects' waist circumference and their risk of premature death. In fact, the risk almost doubled for people with a waistline considered to be large, compared to those with a small measurement. Waist-hip ratio is also an important indicator of health, with a lower ratio being associated with a smaller risk of mortality.

Obesity is on the rise and its numerous health implications, includ-

ing heart disease and type two diabetes, are well publicised, as well as the estimated 30,000 deaths it causes each year. The scientists believe the increased mortality risk caused by excess abdominal fat may be due to the tissue releasing chemicals and messenger substances, such as hormones, which contribute to the development of chronic diseases including cardiovascular diseases and cancers. Although they did not investigate the reasons why some people have a larger waistline than others, they believe that a sedentary lifestyle, poor diet and

genetic predisposition are significant factors.

Professor Elio Riboli from Imperial said they were surprised that waist size had such an impact on people's health; "Although smaller studies have suggested a link between mortality and waist size, we were surprised to see the waist size having such a powerful effect on people's health and premature death. Our study shows that accumulating excess fat around your middle can put your health at risk even if your weight is normal based on body mass index scores."



This guy no longer can find belts that fit... he requires a tape measure.

Modern Alchemy: Turning tequilla into Gold

Jacob Aron

Mexican scientists have discovered a way to turn tequila into diamonds. It turns out that the chemical makeup of the drink has a ratio of hydrogen, oxygen and carbon atoms which places it within the 'diamond growth region.'

The scientists turned to tequila not for its intoxicating quality, but because previous efforts to create diamonds from organic solutions such as acetone, ethanol and methanol had proved unsuccessful. They then realised that their ideal compound of 40% ethanol and 60% water was remarkably close to tequila. Luis Miguel Apátiga was one of the researchers from the National Autonomous University of Mexico: "To dissipate any doubts, one morning on the way to the lab I bought a pocket-size bottle of cheap white tequila and we

did some tests. We were in doubt over whether the great amount of chemicals present in tequila, other than water and ethanol, would contaminate or obstruct the process. It turned out to be not so. The results were amazing, same as with the ethanol and water compound, we obtained almost spherical shaped diamonds of nanometric size. There is no doubt; tequila has the exact proportion of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen atoms necessary to form diamonds."

The diamonds were made by heating tequila to transform it into a gas and then heating this gas further to break down the molecular structure. The result: solid diamond crystals, about 100-400 nanometres in size. They could be used to coat cutting tools or as high-power semiconductors, radiation detectors and optical-electronic devices.



mmmm Tequilla... Golden Tequilla

Left handed snails

Katie Wookey

New research means that humans and other vertebrates no longer have a monopoly when it comes to 'handed' behaviour. Hayley Frennd, a third year Nottingham undergraduate, spent her summer studying the sex life and genetics of the pond snail. The young researcher found that the handedness of the snail's mating behaviour is matched by an asymmetry in the brain which is determined by its mother's genes. Demonstrating that, like humans, pond snails are genetically programmed to use left or right hand sides of the brain.

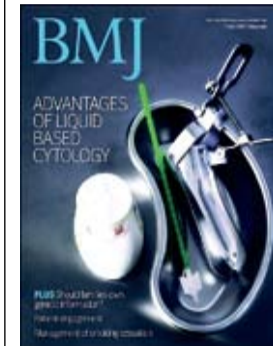
Pond snails usually have a right handed (dextral) twist to their shells, but occasionally it is left handed (sinistral). As dextral snails circle clockwise and sinistral circle anticlockwise, the 'mirror image' snails end up circling each other and the unlucky pair are frequently unable to mate. "The fact that this specialisation has evolved multiple times emphasises its importance for animals," says Dr Andrew Davidson, Hayley's supervisor.



Podview

Felix Whitton reviews medical podcasts

British Medical Journal



An interesting interview with Dr. Phil Hammond in a short podcast entitled "We're British, we don't talk about sex" ('sex' being a euphemism, in this case, for genital warts; so by doing that we've already gone and confirmed our Britishness, haven't we?).

Dr Phil's recent article, published in the BMJ, about the hypocrisy of the NHS regarding the HPV vaccination – purporting to offer 'choice' while at the same time denying it by offering only one vaccine, produced by our favourite evil pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline – caused a bit of a fuss in the medical community, so he defends his thinking to BMJ editor Rebecca Coombes. Is this another case of government pandering to big-pharma?

We can't be sure, but their woefulness in dealing with the situation lent a hand to the Daily Mail's ongoing campaign of vitriol against all things NHS-y and good.

<http://podcasts.bmj.com/bmj>

Medical Matters: Podcast of the Week



We couldn't have a Podview without a Radio 4 entry, and as usual Auntie is head and shoulders above the rest. Well-chosen stories introduced with a sense of humour – David Brent talking, wince-inducingly, about race: "You are half-and-half, aren't you?" "Mixed-race, yes" "That is my favourite. That's the melting pot, please" – lead on to discussions on issues like the phenomenon of 'colour blindness' in US children, who refuse to mention someone's race when it is different to their own.

We also get a round-up of current news, for example the new Mental Health Act coming into force this week – what will it mean for psychiatrists and patients? – plus a disturbing trend of suicides among ageing South Asian women in the UK.

If you're not keen on the specialist nature of the other podcasts, but still like to keep abreast of health news in society, this comes highly recommended.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/podcasts/medmatters>

The Lancet



The Lancet does a nice series of 10-minute weekly podcasts summing up health news and research

from around the world. Each week a different guest discusses a particular issue, ranging widely across themes such as malaria funding, global health policy and cutting-edge research on MS treatments. Web editor Richard Lane presents and his guests range from the engaging to the fantastically dull. A good way of keeping up to date with medical news, if you can withstand the tinder-dry content.

<http://www.thelancet.com/audio>



Russell Brand and The Meerkats

Mico Tatalovic
Science Editor

Now, you might wonder just what Russell Brand has in common with meerkats and unless he slept with somebody's granddaughter again you might be excused for thinking there is no link, really.

But the link is the BBC. What with this silly controversy over the BBC radio joke that's been all over the news in the last couple of weeks, many have criticised the BBC for wasting public money on offensive programmes. But how's this for a criticism: your money paid for a movie that's already showing in France, is scheduled in Germany, Belgium and Russia but its release date still TBC in the UK!

The Meerkats is a new BBC feature film about – you guessed it – meerkats, the highly social mammal from the deserts of south Africa. After success of the BBC's 'Meerkats Divided' and 'Meerkats United' from the early 1990s and the more recent global success of the Discovery Channel's 'Meerkat Manor' series it comes as a no-brainer that another meerkat movie would be a good thing to do: after all, people are getting tired of penguins. But there was controversy over this movie from the beginning.

It was scheduled for filming at the same time as Discovery's 'Meerkat Manor: Queen of the Kalahari', yet another cheesy take on meerkats and a prequel to the Meerkat Manor series. Both Discovery and BBC wanted to



British Baffoon



A family of Suricate... whatever that is.

film at Cambridge's Kalahari Meerkat Project in South Africa, but only Discovery got permission and the BBC ended up filming on a site some 50 miles away, at Tswalu, the largest private wildlife park in South Africa. Tswalu had the advantage of having a variety of wildlife including rhinos, giraffes and honey badgers that are not present at the Kalahari Meerkat Project (which is set on ranchland). However, there were no tame meerkats there so BBC had to recruit some of the former volunteers from the Project, trained by Cambridge scientists for research purposes, to habituate the meerkats so that the BBC could film them from up close. With lots of money invested and a film crew from Oxford Scientific Films at the Project site, Discovery sent out privacy agreements to all the volunteers and scientists at the Project to sign. These basically forbid anyone from talking about Discovery's production that was filmed with their



Awww aren't they sweet?

Stand-up comedy

Jacob Aron

As I sit down in the Soho Theatre, someone tries to hand me a programme. It's not an usher however, but Josie Long herself. "I'm sorry, do you mind sharing?" she beams, offering a collection of folded paper covered in her endearing and often hilarious scribbles. "Only I didn't photocopy enough."

This pretty much sums up Josie's approach to comedy. Her props are random objects from her personal life, she illustrates her points with hand-drawn graphs, and invites a friend to embroider handkerchiefs live on stage for the entire evening. Throughout the act she will pause, correct herself, comment on how the jokes are being received and generally chat with the audience. It actually feels a bit like you are watching the director's commentary of a movie – whilst trying to watch the movie proper on a separate screen entirely.

Josie's latest show is about her new found fascination for science. As a child she felt you had to pick a side between the arts and sciences. As she says, she went with the 'poetry and self harm crowd'; because scientists are all 'nerdy virgins' - of course. Now that she's older however, she's realised there is no such need to close yourself off from science. She's been reading about all manner of subjects, from the Enlightenment to astronomy and whilst the show is far from a lecture it did send me scurrying to Wikipedia to read up on some of her references.

Many stand-up comedians appear constantly miserable, as if the world is all too much for them to take and only dry wit will sustain them. Josie on the other hand seems to find delight in every corner of her life, be it watching regional news reports, buying a bottle of water or gazing into the heavens. Her enthusiasm is infectious, and you just how pleased she was with that last joke. This can mean that at times she is so eager to get to the next gag that she forgets to finish the previous one, but this slightly scatterbrained approach simply adds to the appeal.

The show is summed up with Josie's views on science. It's not about coming up with an idea and saying "this is the

truth for all time." Rather, you should take the view that "hey, it may not be perfect, but it's the best we know right now, and maybe someone will come along and make it better in the future." A pretty good description of the way science works.

You're unlikely to come away from 'All of the Planet's Wonders brackets Shown in Detail close brackets' (as Josie calls the show) feeling that you've learnt something, but you will certainly have been entertained, and if you're lucky some of Josie's bubbly enthusiasm might have rubbed off on you. Do go along - if you don't get to leave with one of the live embroidered handkerchiefs, you'll at least walk out with a smile on your face.



They're behind you...

How to Become an Astronaut

Dr Tim Jones



The secret of becoming an astronaut is that you have to really, really, really want to be one. Oh yes - and to be considered for the European Space Agency's 2008 recruitment round currently in progress (they recruit only every 15 years or so) you should also be at least the right age and nationality.

We were told this tonight by French astronaut Jean-Francois Clervoy during an event at the London Science Museum's Dana Centre. Three time shuttle astronaut Clervoy, who has spent 675 hours in space, was joined by a panel of experts in space history, medicine and psychology - to educate and entertain the forty or so of us who had volunteered for 'Space Station Dana'.

It wasn't all one way though. Armed with our Astronaut Training and Selection Manuals, we split into teams to engage in a range of psychological, physical, and knowledge tests that were both fun and sufficiently taxing to give us a flavour of what the Right Stuff is all about.

Consider a potential manned flight to Mars for example. As it takes 20 minutes for communications to travel from Earth to Mars, a problem on the spacecraft cannot be fixed via an iterative chat with the engineers back home, so our psychological test was built around getting things right first time through good planning and au-

thority, balanced with team working and individual respect.

As it turns out, you don't need to be super-human to be an astronaut. You will typically be 27-37 years of age; not because you automatically die in space after age 37, but rather your sponsors are looking for a sensible number of working years for their investment. After that it helps to have a PhD in a relevant discipline, to be able to speak Russian, to pass a raft of psychological tests, and to be reasonably fit. Again, the fitness issues are more about you not falling out of the programme and your career with ill health, rather than the ability to withstand physical extremes.

Those selected move onto an 18 month basic training in Europe, the USA, and Russia. Then you're on your way to the dream.

And that's how the memory of the adventure seemed to Jean-Francois as he described the effect of dimming the shuttle's cabin lights with the sun and earth behind the spacecraft, and looking at the "milky way like a highway" in the total blackness of space.

real thing?" asked one. "Yeah, I think it is!" said the other. They got nose-close with this valuable iconic piece, which was freestanding and unprotected in the centre of the room. "Ooooh" they cooed. I judged it best to leave them to enjoy themselves.

The exhibition did at times take on a preachy slant. It had a tendency to rattle on about how it's all our own fault that our bodies decline and showcased an excess of lungs ravaged by smoking. I got fed up of constantly being told to eat healthily, get lots of exercise and give up my excesses. But on the bright side, it did also emphasise, in the centennial village section, how we can beat time and live active and happy lives well into our eighties and nineties. I'm sorry to say there was a display entitled 'sexy at sixty', suggesting that even people in their sixties and seventies are able to enjoy fulfilling sex lives, defying the minor issues of erectile dysfunction and feminine lubrication. And there were pictures. I

basically had to wash my eyes out with bleach after reading that bit.

Additional highlights were the presence of a plastinated horse and a giraffe in the exhibition. The horse was being ridden by some plastinated humans, and was demonstrating how similar all mammals are inside. The difference is merely scale. I can't quite recall the purpose of the giraffe, but it was certainly impressive. Like most of the human bodies, this giraffe was male and offered the chance to observe that its reproductive regions were indeed in proportion. I will also note that its arsehole was particularly huge.

To criticise the exhibition, it did tend to stray from the purely scientific. The bodies were often contorted into more artistic positions, arms out-stretched. In line with the exhibition title 'The Mirror of Time', there was a display of two bodies floating through the air, twisting around each other and holding a mirror up. Why, Dr. von Hagens? Why? What purpose does that serve?

There was also quite a lot of arty,arty photography and poetry diluting the lessons in anatomy and medicine, which didn't sit well with me. The worst crime of all was the section on free radicals, operating too much along the 'Dr' Gillian McKeith line of thought. A helpful video demonstrated how the free radicals are coming to get us. This video portrayed a free radical as a floating cloud glowing different colours which wafted towards a big round cell (the free radical and the cell were approximately the same size). When the free radical bumped against the cell, the cell turned grey and shrivelled up and died. But don't worry! You can stop this happening by eating fruit and vegetables!

Aside from this bewildering display of pseudo-science, I would recommend the exhibition – and not just for the medics among you. It's a valuable and entertaining opportunity to find out what's inside us all and what time is doing to us. For your money you get

a long and substantial exhibition in a very nice venue that will change the way you see yourself. Just watch out for those pesky free radicals.

Body Worlds and the Mirror of Time is on until the 23rd of August at the O2 Arena. Tickets cost £9 for students.



Dr von Hagens gives new meaning to shirts vs skins

Walking on a cloud at Tate Modern

Leonardo Ramirez, while finding out more about Cildo Meireles, takes his socks off and wears a mask

There is something very democratic about Cildo Meireles. He is neither a snobbish art elitist nor the commercial type who will paint-to-order so to please clients/art dealers. His art is provocative, practical and a pleasurable experience.

As you enter the first room, conventional ideas of space are challenged. This was really the low point of the exhibition as I am not a fan of opt art. But it gradually became more interesting. A bundle of 100 cruzeiros, sold for 20 times that amount, is displayed. A topical issue which begs the question; "Are banknotes worth the paper they are written on?" Living under the in-

creasingly authoritarian Brazilian dictatorship of the seventies, he used the same medium to protest against the repression, writing political messages on banknotes. In the next room, there is an installation about prohibition.

Walking on broken glass, surrounded by rope barriers, doors and barb wire, you really feel as though you are breaking the rules as you wander around the maze. 'Missions' is both aesthetically pleasing and a political statement. A thin column of communion wafers connects a floor covered with one penny coins and two thousand bones hanging from the ceiling. The former represents the commercial interest of the Jesuit missionaries and the latter

the consequences of the Christianisation they carried out in parts of Argentina, Paraguay and southern Brazil. A circular tower of radios, all tuned to different frequencies and aptly called 'Babel', seems to be alive.

But perhaps the best piece is 'Fontes'. The whole room is densely packed with only three objects: the floor is completely covered with small vinyl numbers, the walls are densely packed with clocks and the space is crammed with long, wooden rulers hanging from the ceiling. Upon closer inspection, you can see that the order of the numbers in the clocks and rulers seem to be random and the spacing between the 'units of measurement' arbitrary. As if

this was not enough to overwhelm you, the whole experience is enhanced with ticks for music. After a while there, you begin feel that time and space are elastic.

My favourite installation of the whole exhibition was, however, 'Volatile'. While queuing (yes, it is worth it) you can read a disclaimer and some recommendations – you have to wear a mask and take your socks off, some people with respiratory conditions are advised not to enter. The floor of the U-shaped room is covered with about 25 centimetres of powder and the room is pitch dark except for a small candle at the far end. The sensation of walking along is much better than the fine sands of the

Caribbean or the Indian oceans or the sand dunes of certain deserts (maybe because only our sense of touch is being stimulated). Did you ever feel like walking on a cloud? This is as close as you can get. By the way, if you have ever skydived you would know clouds are not as pleasant as they look.

One word of advice: do not tackle your friends, otherwise you will be escorted out of the building by the security guards.

Cildo Meireles is on until the 11th of January at the Tate Modern. Tickets cost £8 or free with gallery admission concessions



This is entitled "Red Shift: 1 Impregnation 1967-84". I can see where the red shift bit comes from, but "impregnation"?



Monkey: Journey to the West

Kieron Stopforth journeys to the O2 to discover Jamie Hewlett and Damon Albarn's remake of a Chinese classic

Monkey: Journey to the West is an ancient Chinese tale of a monkey born in a stone egg who, after causing havoc in Heaven, annoys Buddha and then has to assist a Holy Man in retrieving some Buddhist scrolls from the West (India, not evil capitalist West). The journey is hundreds of miles long with plenty of trials thrown in for good measure. So the cheeky and strangely camp monkey meets up with a Holy Man, a horse (who can't talk), a pig (who can) and, as far as I could make out, a green man and off they go roaming westwards, being tested by Chinese dragons, fiery mountains and a slightly dominatrix-esque lady with a sword.

The story has been rewritten as a modern opera by Damon Albarn (of Blur and Gorillaz fame), the music fuses classic Chinese sounds with modern electronic to interesting effect and the style of the characters and sets has a

Gorillaz 'take' too, which is very cool. If that isn't enough, the players are from a Chinese circus who apparently spent most of their early lives stood on their heads (and other people's heads at that) as there are some seriously phenomenal acrobats in this show. So you have a brand new opera, written by an established pop-hero, acted and sung by Chinese superhumans, cool Gorillaz styling with a rich story and it's all in Chinese (with subtitles).

Now whilst all of this stuff is excellent and done pretty well in isolation, it was hard to feel as if the elements really ever combined to their full potential. Firstly, although the source book is rich and long, the opera just skims over it and at some points it's hard to know what is going on (hence not being able to tell who the green man is). Also, there are some serious plot holes – like the massive build-up to an encounter with an evil, face-eating army, which never really kicks off properly and then the token bad guy just sort of walks off.

There are some moments that leave you asking: what just happened? I want some proper vanquishing, dammit!

Secondly, although the stage combat is exciting at several times and makes good use of the players, it never really explodes and is unfortunately less Ong-Bak and more interpretive dance.

Finally, whilst the music is new and interesting, it's never really classic nor memorable, which is a real shame.

There are a lot of good points and good reasons to see this – conceptually it's great and it's new and exciting. The Gorillaz take on everything adds a modern slant to a classic Chinese story. It's not rubbish. It is a cool modern opera, it really is, and there is good stuff in here. The trouble is, it's not amazing and it should be.

Monkey: Journey to the West is on until the 5th of December at the O2 Arena.



Fei Yang as Monkey (dressed in yellow in the centre) and the cast taking a bow at the O2 Arena

A midsummer night's frolics

Benedict Fraser hot-foots it to Footsbarn for our favourite Shakespeare play

Ancient Athens. Hermia's father wants her to marry Demetrius, who is in love with her. But Hermia loves Lysander and their slave Puck. And it just so happens, on this night of nights, that an acting troupe are rehearsing their romantic tragedy amongst those same trees; Bottom tries to persuade Peter that he should play every part. Faeries dance. Who will fall in love, and with whom? Or is it all just a fantastic dream?

A park in East London. Trees and a tent. We are ushered into a space where quietly excited theatregoers mill and hum under draperies of leaves. The expectation is palpable. All around; leaning, gesturing, with assured humanity, we are the arbiters of our collective experience. Through again into a lofty amphitheatre; a broad stage (a bold statement) brought to life by the faces

on to a dancing mushroom). Body language both touching and hilarious oozes from the characters. Helena sighs and we fall in love with one so tender; one resigned look from Peter at the exasperating Bottom and we have seen it a thousand times. These actors have our hearts without saying a word, such that the exquisite poetry, once it comes, is more meaningful and beautiful. Also, crucially, because we are not straining to keep up with the dialogue we are able to relax and actually be entertained.

The set (more-or-less one broad, gnarled tree), though in concept simple, works to great effect in the atmospheric and intimate tent theatre. Visible to the side of the stage, and completely in keeping with it, is a small group of musicians: saxophone, oboe, drums, and, I'm sure, a sitar. They looked like they've been stranded there since 1969, grooving to an eclectic mix of styles. On costumes, these people do not skimp. Demetrius and Lysander are grotesque, comically vying for superiority when their interests collide. Tragedians' masks portray the austerity of Athens; once in the magical woods the masks are comic, mischievous works of art. Puck, with maracas

"This wonderful cast deliver genuine, selfless performances"



raised towards it, by the steady ebb and flow of the assembled revellers. Who said Shakespeare was a tweeber?

Welcome to Footsbarn's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. These are no ordinary theatregoers: the average age is well below thirty, the company are warm and welcoming and there is a definite sense that this is a cool place to be.

This is no ordinary theatre experience: wave goodbye to your nights spent in gilded West End prosthetics, to self-important actors spewing grandiose Pinter and Chekhov before an apathetic crowd. This uniformly wonderful cast deliver absolutely genuine, selfless performances and really connect with the audience. In doing so, they shed light on the true spirit of Shakespeare, so often obscured by rushed delivery or static body language. The bard must have been, first, an entertainer, but it is hard to see him gaining such popularity as he now enjoys based on many modern stagings. Footsbarn cut down the script considerably and give free rein to the quality and quantity of physical emotion displayed on stage (I lost my heart early

and a lovely bumbling glint in his eyes, expresses himself almost solely with a single noise.

These touches of aesthetic joy grow on you throughout the evening, and despite the two hours with no interval, I can honestly say I was never bored. One toddler did get a bit restless and, ambulating curiously across the front of the stage, was almost the star of the show. The actors took her into the fold.

A few giggles remain: Titania's diction is rushed, and much of her speech is very difficult to hear. This causes a dip in momentum, but such is the vivid characterisation and physicality of the actors that the effect is minimised. However, such weaknesses are hard to find in a show which, with its boundless humanity, restores our faith in life on a cold winter evening. Oh and there's free food afterwards. Will not disappoint.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is on until the 30th of November at Footsbarn Theatre. Tickets cost £15 for students.



Film

Film Editors – **Zuzanna Blaszczak** and **Jonathan Dakin**

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Plenty of action...

but a 'Payne-ful' lack of plot in Mark Wahlberg's newest film proves yet again that PC games don't make for great movies

Max Payne ★★☆☆

Director: John Moore
Writer: Beau Thorne & Sam Lake
Cast: Mark Wahlberg, Mila Kunis, Ludacris, Beau Bridges

Jonathan Dakin
Film Editor

Max Payne (Wahlberg), a cold-case investigator, is dragged into the world of death and destruction by the murder of his wife and child. Whilst continuing to search for the murderer so he can exact revenge, the arrival of a strange and dangerous new drug on the streets of New York temporarily distracts him from his vendetta. After two murders, both directly involving him, Max finds himself caught up in something bigger than he imagined, and with the help of Mona Sax (Kunis), a gun-toting dominatrix, they try to take down the people responsible for these deaths across the city.

The film starts off well, building an interesting and involving plot, before quickly descending into chaos. Many plot points are left unexplained or unresolved, and the many stock characters and locations are briefly introduced through clunky dialogue and obvious exposition. What begins as a crime thriller soon becomes supernatural, and without being well explained, it is hard to know what the point of having demons flying around



is (except for looking cool).

Wahlberg, who usually delivers a solid performance, seems bored and uninvolved, whereas rapper Ludacris struggles to be believable as a character or as an actor. The best performances in the film are by Kunis and current Bond girl Olga Kurylenko, both being evocative and seeping sex but at the same time being strong and powerful women. It is a shame that they were not in the film more.

Although the film plods along much like any other action-thriller, there is nothing original or unique about it, except for the amazing cinematography. The film is extremely well shot and looks amazing, the backgrounds and set pieces instantly creating a creepy and dark mood. The atmos-

phere is one of the film's strongest points, as are the fun and clever action sequences, which involve very slick and stylish slow motion shots.

If you ignore the standardised poor plot, the film is actually okay, especially for a film based on a computer game. I found it mainly enjoyable, and was not bored at any point in the film. It is just a shame that with a better script the film could have been so much better, perhaps one of the best films of the year. But this is not the case. It is a very same-y, usual action-thriller that is all style but no substance. Action film fans and Mark Wahlberg fans may enjoy it, as well as those who appreciate cinematography, but for anyone else I would struggle to recommend it.

Film Cynic Clinic

Stuart Higgins

Following on from last time's homage to cinema, this week we take a surreal and occasionally nonsensical look at the impact that the DVD format has had upon the industry.

In the early days before wax-coated discs were invented, films used to be shared from generation to generation by word of mouth. This is of course completely different to the process for passing on holy scripture (word of god), or indeed the art of dissociating yourself from real life in a fantasy on-line world (word of warcraft). This had some advantages. When the original script was somewhat lacking in flair or originality (think any teen movie released after *American Pie*) then it could always be spiced up a little. Who can forget Papa Joe's ragtime piano version of *Terminator 3*?

There were disadvantages too, such as the volatile human memory, which was easily corrupted by external influences: *Titanic's* "Iceberg, dead ahead!" or becoming "Iceland, dead ahead!", a classic example of frozen food shop interference. This, coupled with a blatant disregard for the accompanying soundtrack (Papa Joe could only do Arse-Trumpet), led to the development of more effective media for storing and viewing films. In the late 1990's, the DVD was born.

So what were the advantages of DVDs? Well for starters there was the enhanced picture quality, which was frankly quite marvellous compared to video cassettes. To really appreciate it all you needed to do was invest in a new six-figure television, complete with those oxygen gold-plated hermitically-sealed cables. If, like most of the population, you weren't able to do that

then you could still enjoy DVDs too. They would just look and sound like VHS. Other benefits included dual-layer discs. One side was the film plus bonus extras, whilst the other doubled as a handy coaster.

But the biggest difference with DVDs had to be the introduction of the unskippable copyright notice. With a good old-fashioned tape, the start of the video was always a wildly flickering collection of ancient adverts, random clips from your parents wedding, and white noise. Yes, you never really saw the first five minutes of any film as the fast-forward button always got stuck but at least you could fast forward. Now we are subjected to a TV licence-esque lecture reminding us how we're all criminals for watching DVDs.

Still all is not lost. It's been a few years since the first DVD, prices of equipment and films have been falling consistently in recent months, and many people have managed to accrue a rather nice back-catalogue of cinema. Just in time for Blue-ray. Blue-ray: What a format! Even more quality (once you've bought another new TV) and with an even more Draconian copy-protection system. At this rate the next format will be nothing but an onscreen message, telling us not to dare to think about watching a movie. In the industry, I suspect they call this progress.

Your weekly film horoscope:

With Jupiter, Mars and Venus all currently orbiting the sun, the astrological system is in a tumultuous phase. Your best bet is to keep things light to avoid any further confusion. Try short 30 minute comedies that take a satirical look at the week gone past, in a mocking fashion. In fact just stay in and watch TV.

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Film

Easy laughs with a frustrated virgin on the road

This year's version of 'American Pie' might not be one of the most original films but *Sex Drive* can proudly boast good acting, loveable characters and spot-on observations about the modern lascivious teenager.

Sex Drive ★★☆☆

Director: Sean Anders
Writer: Seab Anders & John Morris
Cast: Josh Zuckerman, Amanda Crew, Clark Duke

Zuzanna Blaszczak
Film Editor

The confidence that comes from using the Internet is amazing.

The title says it all. A high-school kid that just can't get laid, a long drive across the United States, a love triangle and a once-in-a-lifetime road trip that slowly turns into a journey from hell - if this doesn't sound familiar then you are seriously lacking some basic familiarity with teenage comedies. The now iconic *American Pie* which surprised everyone with its world-wide success exposed a seriously ignored and still largely un-tapped niche in the cinema market. Obviously, the 'oh my gosh, that's gross' reactions brought a lot of money. The capitalist forces of supply and demand, which are the unconquerable rulers of the film industry were allowed to act and the situation was promptly rectified. The result was a swamping of the screening rooms with comedies whose sole aim was to make the young and mostly unini-

ated audience cringe as much as possible. The plot never changed but the quality of entertainment provided followed a sharply negative slope.

Thus, the first scene of *Sex Drive* in which a pair of underwear suffers through a young chap's erotic dream and ends up on the floor only to be inevitably, stumbled over by a blissfully ignorant parent, understandably filled me with dread. Unrightly so, as it turns out, even though the movie follows a plot that is the benchmark of the modern teenage comedy.

This time, the sexually frustrated

kid is Ian (Zuckerman), a fresh high-school graduate obsessed with the fact that he can't lose his virginity. Lance (Clark Duke) who has found the way to get girls into bed with him does his best to help his best pal Ian but with little success. When Ms. Tasty, a girl met online, suggests that Ian comes up to Tennessee so that they can meet in person for a night of serious 'love making', Lance succeeds in convincing his friend to steal his brother's (James Marsden) 1969 GTO and act on the dream come true. Joining them, but not knowing the real reason for the trip is

take on an Amish car mechanic with a fondness for sarcasm is absolutely brilliant. His comedic timing is simply impeccable. Although the interplay between the three main characters is pretty flawless as well, which is partly due to the very well scripted dialogues.

Sex Drive has all the vital features of a typical road trip movie, which at heart it is - we have the unexpectedly long journey, the crazy drivers, the stalling car, the brief stop in jail, love lost, love found and a lot of references to male genitals. Where it's different than other films of its kind is in the details. Sean Anders' movie feels complete, there are no gaping plot holes and even the most wacky scene makes sense. Also it's pleasant when you watch a film and can clearly see in every scene that making the movie was a lot of fun for all involved.

I would definitely recommend joining Ian, Lance and Felicia on their cathartic journey when *Sex Drive* comes out on wide release in January 2009. There's only one 'but'; if you feel like you left your immaturity somewhere back in the 2005, watching this comedy would be ill-advised. But I hope that we're all still young enough to laugh at the behaviour of our peers, remembering that at one point we were all as Ray Bradbury wrote 'seventeen and crazy'.

Coming Out Soon

Get into the Christmas mood with Vince Vaughn and *Four Christmases*

Jonathan Dakin
Film Editor

Every Christmas happily unmarried couple Brad (Vince Vaughn) and Kate (Reese Witherspoon) go to romantic and exotic locations for their holiday in order to escape their disjointed and bickering families. But this year fog has closed the airport, and the couple are caught on television, so when their respective parents find out what they have been doing every year, they demand that this time they will spend Christmas with them. Cue schmalzy feel good fun and crude hilarity as Brad and Kate visit each of their divorced

parents in turn: making that total up to four Christmases. With an all-star cast including Jon Voight and Sissy Spacek, this is the feel good film of the year, where I am sure everyone will learn that the most important thing is family. Or love. Or something equally cheesy and vomit inducing. So if you want to get into the Christmas spirit, and learn that love is always close at hand, this is the film to watch. (But if you'd rather not, perhaps you should consider joining me in watching horror films and depressing dramas, in order to avoid glossy sugarcoated American family values at all costs. I feel queasy just thinking about it.)



Ahh, typical american Christmas. No wonder Reese has a funny face.

Democracy in the cinema: Mićo Tatalović takes a look at interactive films.

It was at the 10th Motovun Film Festival (renowned as the 'Woodstock' of film) in Croatia this summer mainly to see their 'interactive cinema programme': screenings that handed over the director's role to the audience. There were three such films: Czech 'Kinoautomat' Man and His Home (1966), Danish Switching (2003), and Canadian Late Fragment (2007), movies in which we decide what happens.

Kinoautomat, the first interactive cinema and brain child of Czech director Radúz Cincera was invented in 1966, which included two moderators sitting at the stage alongside the movie projection. The first and only film made for Kinoautomat system was *Man And His Home* (Člověk a jeho dům), which contained within the storyline several moral dilemmas for the main character, Mr. Novak. Each time Mr. Novak was in a predicament (nine times in the movie) the projection was paused and the moderators would come up to the stage and present each side of the story to the audience. The audience was then asked to vote on what Mr. Novak should do next; should he go after his angry wife, or stay in the flat with his barely clothed sexy neighbour? In a special purpose-built cinema hall seats had red and green buttons people could press to vote, the movie preceding once the audience voted, with the majority choice being shown.

The first screening of Kinoautomat took place in 1967, but the combination of demanding technical issues (to enable voting and parallel storylines, five different projectors had to be running at the same time and be switched between during the screening) and the communist regime that disliked the idea of people voting, even in cinema, meant that the concept of Kinoautomat ended up being forgotten for 40 years. Then, in February 2006, Radúz Cincera's daughter digitalised the film and brought it to the National Film Theatre in London where it thrilled the 300 audience members, who all voted using devices resembling remote controls. Since then screenings are also organised in Prague, as well as at various film festivals, and the interactive DVD and a book about Kinoautomat are now also available.

William Castle, popular for his unusual film promotions in the 1950s, also allowed the audience to vote in his film *Mr Sardonicus* (1961). This was at a time when television drew audiences away from the cinema, so Castle strived to make the cinema experience more interesting to get more viewers so he could make more money. Audiences would get a card with a thumb-up on, and depending on how they turned the card this could be a thumb up or thumb down. At the end of the movie, they would get their say as to how the movie finishes. This was known as the

Punishment Toll because the audiences could decide to punish the nasty Mr Sardonicus. IMDB says "Before the ending, Castle appeared on the screen and explained the poll. He then "counted" the votes. If mercy won, then the happy ending would be shown. If no mercy won, the original ending would be shown. It is doubtful, though, that any audience voted mercy."

This was a far cry from the sophistication of Cincera's Kinoautomat and a more recent Cinelabyrinth. Cinelabyrinth was promoted as "the world's first labyrinth-style Cinematic System" and shown at Expo '90 in Osaka. This is how artist Michael Naimark describes it: "Everyone began in a single large theatre sitting on the floor. At the front on each side of the screen was a door. After the first scene was played out, the audience was asked to choose one of two options by walking through one of the two doors. The story was an ecology yarn about kids trying to save a grand old tree from greedy developers. After seeing several scenes and making several choices, enough to totally lose one's sense of direction inside the pavillion, one watches the final scene, where the children successfully save the tree. At the moment when the kids shout "we did it!", the screen in front raises up to reveal a full-size replica of the tree used in the film. Simultaneously, three other screens on the other three sides of the tree rise up, reveal-

ing four theatres with everyone who began in the first room, now all facing each other. The gag was that no matter which options were chosen, the kids successfully saved the tree."

More recent examples of interactive films involve *Switching* (2003) and *Late Fragment* (2007). As interesting as they are, they are straight to DVD films aimed at a small audience and so it is hard to classify them as 'democracy in cinema' because viewers don't really get to choose what happens; by pressing the button they just switch to another scene - not knowing what this is going to be or why. So it is just switching between fragments.

I think that this interactivity feature



Imagine if you could give Jack and Rose a happy ending...

S.H.A.G. WEEK

24 - 28 NOVEMBER 2008

Sexual Health Awareness and Guidance Week

Sexual Health Advice

There are loads of myths about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) which range from the totally ridiculous to worrying truths. It is fair to say the risk you take when you have unprotected sex is more hassle than it is worth. This isn't a warning to abstain from sex; it should be a personal choice. However, it makes sense to carry a condom around with you and use it the next time you get lucky. The worry of pregnancy is a stress that no student needs. However, even if you or your partner are on the pill you can still catch a range of infections. So get yourself both checked out if you haven't already.

Needless to say, if you are experiencing any symptoms it is really important to have a check up soon. This can be done at your local GUM (Genito-Urinary Medicine) Clinic. These clinics can offer you advice about contraception, do regular screenings (if you have no symptoms) or do specific tests (if you are experiencing symptoms). If you are sexually active and have had unprotected sex it is really important that you schedule one in, even if it is just for peace of mind. Symptoms of sexually transmitted infections include:

- A change in the normal discharge from the vagina
- Discharge from the penis
- Sores or blisters near the vagina, penis or anus
- Rash or irritation around the vagina, penis or anus
- A burning feeling when peeing
- Pain during sex

The closest GUM Clinic to Imperial is:
The John Hunter Clinic
St Stephen's Centre
369 Fulham Road
London SW10 9NH
Tel: 020 8846 6699

This clinic provides an appointment only service which you can book either online or over the telephone. However, there are some situations in which you can obtain an emergency appointment such as needing the morning after pill or requiring attention following a sexual assault.

John Hunter Clinic		
	Clinic Opening Times	Telephone Results Line Opening Hours
Monday	08.30 - 16.15	10.00 - 11.00
Tuesday	08.30 - 16.15	10.00 - 11.00
Wednesday	12.30 - 19.15	
Thursday	08.30 - 16.15	10.00 - 11.00
Friday	08.30 - 16.15	10.00 - 11.00

They also run a new walk-in sexual health clinic, which requires no appointment. It is held every Tuesday between 5pm and 7pm and operates on a first-come, first-served basis. You can also book a slot in advance by texting between 9am and 3pm on the day of the clinic you wish to attend and you will be texted back a slot.

TEXT: 'JHC slot' to 07786202243

What will happen during your appointment will vary depending on why you are attending. Sometimes you might just need advice or to give a urine sample or prescriptions. Other times will require an examination- this may be external or it could be an internal swab. This is dependent on what your concerns are and whether you are experiencing symptoms. Results are usually sent to you via text within a week but you might have to have a follow-up appointment depending on the results.

All consultations are completely confidential, but if you don't feel comfortable going to your local clinic there are many options in London and near your home. To find your closest one, go to www.fpa.org and click on 'find a clinic'. You can then type in your postcode or address.

Did you know that:

- As many as 70% of women and 50% of men who have an STI don't have any symptoms?
- The number of Chlamydia cases in people under 25 has risen by over 200% in the last 10 years? This disease is mostly symptomless but can lead to infertility in women.
- Some STIs can lead to diseases such as cancer (HPV) and central nervous system disorders (syphilis)?
- You can catch some STIs through oral sex?

There are loads of places to get information and advice about sexual health, both within Imperial and from external organisations.

Come along to one of our information stalls during the week for more information and to pick up loads of free condoms or contact one of the people listed below:

Hannah Theodorou
Deputy President (Education & Welfare)
dpew@imperial.ac.uk

Nigel Cooke
Student Adviser
advice@imperial.ac.uk

Imperial College Health Centre
healthcentre@imperial.ac.uk
020 7584 6301 (24hrs)

Family Planning Association
www.fpa.org.uk

British Pregnancy Advisory Service
(for advice on abortion)
www.bpas.org

Terrence Higgins Trust (currently organising free Chlamydia testing for under 25s)
www.tht.org.uk



Hannah Theodorou
Deputy President (Education & Welfare)
dpew@imperial.ac.uk

Monday

S.H.A.G. Film: Born into Brothels
Blackett Lecture Theatre 1
18:30 - 20:30

This Academy Award-winning film is a portrait of several unforgettable children who live in the red light district of Calcutta, where their mothers work as prostitutes. Zana Briski, a New York-based photographer, gives each of the children a camera and teaches them to look at the world with new eyes with extraordinary results.

Tuesday

Global Health Forum: How will science prevent HIV infection?
SAF Lecture Theatre 1
18:30 - 20:30

Professor Jonathan Weber, the founding editor of the journal 'AIDS' and an expert in the field will be coming to talk about the future of HIV prevention.

Super S.H.A.G. Quiz

Imperial College Union
20:00 - 23:00

The Union's weekly quiz has been hi-jacked by some pesky STIs! If you think you know your clap from your crabs, come down and compete for prizes including beer and cash plus the prestige of being the biggest sex-pert at Imperial.

Wednesday

Sin City - Chav It! Plus Sex Bingo
Imperial College Union
20:00 - 01:00

Come along in your finest granny gear armed with your lucky Bingo Pens. Everyone's a winner, with goodie-bags for all participants and excellent prizes for the top players.

S.H.A.G. Week Information Stands

Information stands will be set up every lunchtime throughout the week in the following locations:

Monday: Outside the JCR
Tuesday: Outside the JCR
Wednesday: Union Foyer
Thursday: SAF Foyer
Friday: Outside the JCR

We've got 1000 SHAG Bags to give away full of Pasante products, plus the Terrence Higgins Trust will be telling students about their Chlamydia screening programme and Medsin will be raising money for their selected charities.

Thursday

S.H.A.G. Treasure Hunt
South Kensington
12:00 - 14:00

Collect your treasure maps from ICU or the ICSMSU from Wednesday onwards. STIs will be hidden all over College for you to find on Thursday lunchtime- bring back your spoils and swap them for prizes and get entered into our competition for the top prize announced at the end of the week.

Chamber Concert (hosted by Medsin)

St. Mary's Chapel
19:00 - 22:00

Featuring a string quartet and a vocal ensemble. All proceeds go to Shelter Trust AIDS Orphanage, Chennai, India.

Friday

S.H.A.G. Film: Miss HIV
RSM Room 301
12:15 - 14:00

This controversial film explores the international collision of HIV/AIDS policies while following the journey of two HIV-positive women who enter the contest in Botswana. Filmed across Africa and at the International AIDS Conference in Toronto this explosive film aims to share both sides of an ideology struggle.

S.H.A.G. Week Finale featuring the UNIONdjs

Imperial College Union
20:00 - 02:00

A whole evening of safe sex-focused fun, featuring condom games, raffles and naughty cocktails. Captain condom will be there to hand out loads of lubricated goodies too!

Pick up one of our S.H.A.G. Bags from the Information Stands!



Music

Music Editors – Peter Sinclair, Susan Yu & James Houghton

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Peter Sinclair
Music Editor

An apology to Leonard Cohen

Leonard Cohen played across the road at the Albert Hall last Monday and Tuesday, but I could not afford to go. Leonard Cohen spent 5 years in a Zen Buddhist monastery on top of a mountain in L.A. from 1994 to 1999. I have spent the last week or so disillusioned by the last two sentences - Leonard Cohen not only spent half of the 90s being mental in that disgraceful wealthy American celebrity way, but he also charges extortionate, arena-rock amounts of money to see him play.

So I thought I'd slate him a bit. "Here you go you overrated, wrinkled, depressed, depressing old schmuck, try this on for size. Your music brings no happiness to no-one. Nothing but misery, failed relationships, bad sex, bad breath and bad grammar ever came out of listening to any of your songs." I could say something like that. Then I could go on Wikipedia and get some references and take the piss out of them whilst framing myself as intellectually superior because I didn't spend 5 years being mental in a Zen Buddhist monastery in L.A. (racism waiver: not a comment on Buddhists, just people who become Buddhist after making loads of money and going mental). A previous musical and lyrical hero of mine would lie slain on the ground, ego reduced to dust, and I would stand triumphant, feeling slightly empty and dirty but on the whole pretty good about myself.

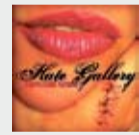
And that's what I tried to do this week,

but as you can see it didn't really work out. After reading some interviews and some Wikipedias, I made the discovery that despite having jumped on the 'celebrities who find religion after decades of drug use' bandwagon, Leonard Cohen is still an ace songwriter and, for a 67-year-old, a pretty cool guy. He still wrote 'So Long, Marianne' and 'Sisters of Mercy', and he still chain smokes. He may have lost his characteristic sense of cultural cynicism and powerlessness which permeated the majority of his work (he's Zen now, remember?), but the black gallows humour has remained, and I think has even been enhanced in recent years. "I think there's a laugh a minute" he said in a recent interview, in reference to his lyrics.

And faster than you can say 'After School Special', a moral lesson was learnt. It's all too easy to judge celebrities by the standards we live by, but you've got to remember the cultural divide which is being straddled every time a judgement is made. I could probably say something about most people in the music industry for being mental in one way or another, but the judgement would be through the pre-conceptions of a 20-year-old middle-class English male so it would be pretty much meaningless, and all but impossible to conceive the mentality which motivates so many of the entertainment industry's finest towards such spiritually eccentric ends. My message is one of tolerance, my friends, so c'est la vie - let the Kabbalah scrolls roll.

Too much love these days

Album Review

Hate Gallery
Compassion Fatigue
UNIT
★★★★☆

Duncan Casey

I have to say, I'd hoped for more when I picked up Hate Gallery's debut offering. I was never expecting anything big or clever - with titles like 'Good Things Come to Those Who Hate', it wasn't seeming likely from the start. Still, considering the pedigree of some of the band-members the whole album feels a bit paint-by-numbers - three chord metal repetes and lyrics from the Oasis school of song writing (i.e. make it rhyme) with angry lyrics about fighting things.

That said, if you don't listen to the lyrics and turn the volume up, it's not bad. The whole album clocks in at a shade over half an hour, with the effect of the punky three-minute rock songs amplified by the nice trick of leaving about half a second's pause be-

tween songs to give a staccato feel to the whole recording. It's apparent in places that the band own more than a couple of *Motörhead* albums between them: 'You Don't Know' borrows heavily from 'Ace of Spades', although there's nothing much wrong with that. It's also not as heavy as you'd expect from the unnecessarily Emo leanings of the title: if anything, it's a bit radio-friendly in places, although they've thrown in just enough swear-words to keep the fifteen-year-old rockers happy.

"They've thrown in just enough swearing to keep the 15 year old rockers happy."

Overall it's quite good fun, although I wouldn't necessarily rush out and buy it when it's released on November 3rd. Instead, keep an eye on the gig listings and see if they come to town - if they can translate some of the manic energy of the recording into their live shows, they could well be worth banging your head to.

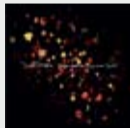
The waiting is Snover

Susan Yu likes what she hears with Snow Patrol's latest album. Will this band's snow plough of success ever snow down?



On the look out for some snow: "I seen some, boss" "Well don't just stand there, MELT IT"

Album Review

Snow Patrol
A Hundred Million Suns
Polydor
★★★★☆

Susan Yu

Snow Patrol are one of the hottest selling UK bands in the last few years, and they have now released their eagerly awaited 5th studio album *A Hundred Million Suns*, which is a great follow-up to the 2006 number one explosive extraordinaire that was *Eyes Open* which sold a staggering 4.5 million copies across the globe. Without any doubts whatsoever, Snow Patrol are among the elite group of artists that have achieved the peak, reaching the many times platinum status with their previous albums *Eyes Open* and *Final Straw*. Notably, the outstanding single 'Chasing Cars' has just received its 2 millionth download in the U.S. and its 100,000th UK radio play. With their incredible success, this band has a lot to live up to. So now, is it any wonder that there is a lot of hype and tremendous anticipation surrounding the release of this new album? Nope. Even the front-man Gary Lightbody has something to say on this: "I'm so proud of this record. Everybody played out of their skin. Musically, lyrically and sonically the best record we've made." Let our ears and hearts be the judge of this one."

The album breaks away with a rock-et indeed. "A fire a fire, you can only take what you can carry/ A pulse, your pulse, it's the only thing I can remem-

ber". The first track, 'If There's a Rocket Tie Me To It', has a cracking tune with equally powerful lyrics, alluding to self destruction, loss, and holding onto the faint traces of someone dear.

Similarly, 'Crack the Shutters' follows the magic formula of the somewhat calm verse which gets catapulted onto the surging, skyscraping chorus with the drums kicking in and laying down the pulsating beats.

'Take Back the City' is their most recent single that was released last month, which has a grand video to go with it as well. Shot in East London, these guys have Alex Courtes to thank for it, the magician behind The White Stripes' sizzling 'Seven Nation Army.'

One of the standout tracks from this album is 'Lifeboat', which seems to say "Hold on, hold on". Snow Patrol knows how to get a swanky groove going. This laidback treasure has a slinky rhythm with the coquettish violin hook in the

chorus. Dangerously catchy.

'The Golden Floor' is defined by its use of minimalism and lilting rhythm, held together by a repeated guitar motif and skittering beats. The pace accelerates in 'Please Just Take These Photos', with the constant under layer of guitar strumming whilst 'Set Down Your Glass' shifts again in the structure and makeup of the soundscape, diverging to a smooth, soothingly light number which almost has a Sigur Ros feel. The acoustic guitar in this track is the vocal's best friend. Seemingly timid and sweet in texture and sound, the delicate atmosphere is complemented by the tender, flawless vocalization of Lightbody's husky serenade, producing a winning ballad as a result.

Throughout the course of the 11 tracks, Lightbody (vocals/guitar) sings with unabashed sincerity and emotion. This album is definitely one to be experienced.



Snow Patrol vocalist Alex Hogan playing guitar hero

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Music

Another Day, Another Compilation



"Keates and Yates are on your side, while weird-lover Wilde is on mine" music.felix <3 Morrissey

Album Review

The Smiths
Sound of The Smiths
Rhino
★★★★☆

Shane O'Neill

The latest Smiths compilation is without doubt the definitive one: a must-play for every iPod in the nation and beyond. Though they existed for only five years and made only four studio albums, this quartet of Mancunians shaped the sound of the 1980s and still

inspire bands today. Morrissey and Johnny Marr, the undisputed Lennon and McCartney of their decade, had a love-hate relationship that would ultimately lead to the demise of The Smiths in 1987.

Steven Patrick Morrissey was the lyricist of the songwriting duo. His genius as a wordsmith (or perhaps wordSmith) was born out of his somewhat peculiar puberty. In his teen years at the tail-end of the 1970s he spent much of his time alone in his bedroom, reading Oscar Wilde, dreaming about James Dean and listening to music. He worshipped many idols during this time - mostly writers, actors and singers from the 50s and 60s - all of whom would shape the sound and style of The Smiths between 1983 and 1987.

Johnny Marr wrote the music. Four years younger than Morrissey, Marr was a wizard on guitar. His forever

memorable riffs, which echoed the jingly-jangly guitar music of sixties bands such as the Byrds and the Kinks, have inspired everyone from Oasis to Radiohead. Legend has it that some of the Smiths' riffs are so complex, even Marr can no longer play them. It was purely by chance that Moz and Marr met in the dreary setting of grey, rainy Manchester during the early years of the Thatcher government, bonded by their love of music and their desire to be Big.

The Smiths have an almost timeless quality. They made music in the mid-eighties but some of their songs sound like ditties from the sixties ('Ask', 'Panic', 'Girlfriend in a Coma'), while others have a seventies-style punkish edge to them ('Sweet and Tender Hooligan', 'London', 'Shakespeare's Sister'). They were at their best when they effortlessly combined sweet sixties-style

guitar melodies with harsh and frequently comical lyrics about life in the eighties. "I'm not sure what happiness means / But I look into your eyes / And I know that it isn't there", sings Morrissey on the tragic but beautiful 'Jeane', a song that sounds like it could have been No.1 in 1963, if it's lyrics weren't about bedsit life in Thatcher's run-down Britain of 1983. It is fitting that Sandie Shaw, the barefoot girl singer of the 1960s, did a cover version of this Smiths classic.

It is this mix of a sixties sensibility with eighties observations that makes the sound of the Smiths so attractive. In many ways, the Smiths represented a retreat from the eighties into nostalgia for 1960s Britain. So they eschewed the synthesised robotic nonsense of 1980s pop music (Morrissey said he waved flowers around as a sign of humanity amidst New Romantic dress) by creating a strictly guitar-based sound. And each of their single and album covers featured a black-and-white shot from a classic sixties film: snapshots of a bygone era when men were men, and women didn't wear tonnes of glitter and leg-warmers.

While they existed, the Smiths represented a form of escapism from eighties Britain. Morrissey captured perfectly the sense of doom in that period when he sang on 'Shoplifters of the World Unite': "Last night the plans for a future war / Were all I saw on Channel Four." By the mid-1980s, Thatcher had taken Britain well and truly from the 'Politics of Consensus' of the post-war 1960s era into a time of open class conflict and mass unemployment. She launched open warfare on the trade unions (smashing the miners in 1984), lowered wages, pursued an increasingly ruthless war in Northern Ireland, and made millions unemployed.

In many ways, Thatcher represented an anti-sixties mentality: she frequently attacked the liberal, druggy culture that was supposedly unleashed by the sixties counterculture and sought to replace the relative prosperity of life in 1960s Britain with new forms of austerity and control more suited to the 1980s. It is not surprising then that Morrissey (the anti-Thatcher who in 1988 would record a song called 'Margaret on the Guillotine') embraced the sound, feel and smell of the sixties as a refreshing alternative to eighties

Britain. In many ways, Morrissey vs. Thatcher, the beauty of the Smiths' sound vs. the ugliness of Thatcher's grey Britain, represented a major cultural clash between old-fashioned British values of solidarity and fair play and the new destructive British values of conflict and defeat.

The Smiths summed up well the pointlessness of life in eighties Britain on 'Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now'. Morrissey sang: "I was looking for a job and then I found a job / And heaven knows I'm miserable now." It is striking that the cover of this single featured a picture of the blonde bouffant-sporting Viv Nicholson, who became a household name in Britain in 1961 after she won the lottery and spent a fortune on fast cars and fur coats. Again, the Smiths seemed to contrast miserable Britain in 1983 with the sense of possibility and optimism that existed in 1961.

Some people call it nostalgia, but I call it escapism. And what is pop mu-

"The Smiths summed up well the pointlessness of life in the 80s."

sic about if not escapism? The Smiths managed better than any band before or since to sweep the listener off their feet and into more pleasant surroundings with their searing three-minute songs. The music made you smile and the lyrics made you laugh. Today, by contrast, we are surrounded by worthless, boring bands who insist we must wallow in the sorrow of the world rather than escape it. If the likes of U2 or Coldplay could stop making dull "protest songs" or patronising "world music" for just one minute, and instead allow us to rise above the daily grind, well, as Morrissey would say, "I'd get such a shock I'd probably jump in the ocean!"

So in this time of global financial crisis and political unease, my advice is to "Boot the grime of this world in the crotch, dear / And don't go home tonight, come out and find" the Smiths - and perhaps escape reality for a song or two.

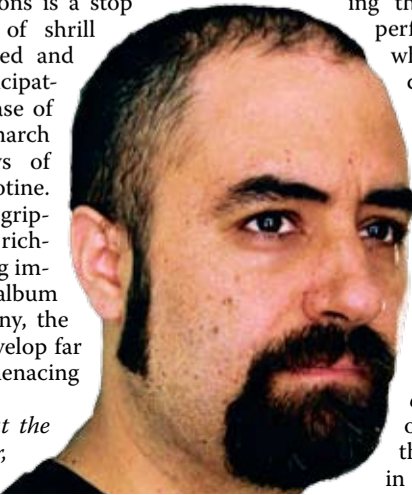
ity of a Gothic novel.

Ghastly grim and ancient raven wandering from the nightly shore - tell me what thy lordly name is on the night's Plutonian shore! With piercing flutes and plucked strings the fascinating opener 'Welcome to Versailles' smolders like a Chinese burn, but rarely are such heights reached again. Louis XIV's Demons is a stop and start burst of shrill violins reverberated and reversed, anticipating the future chase of a doomed monarch into the shadows of Madame Guillotine. Although at times gripping in its textural richness the overriding impression of the album is one of monotony, the theme not to develop far beyond a tense, menacing milieu.

Then, methought the air grew denser, perfumed from

an unseen censer. Like most sound art the tracks (particularly the 12 minute long *Spring In the Artificial Gardens*) the sessions are drawn out, a conscious decision acknowledged by Corona who after viewing the venue decided the compositions needed "more time for the sounds to develop and...resonate in that big space", subsequently reworking the piece before the performance. However when commissions are displaced from their setting into audio format this extended progression can seem lethargic, and the singular pace of development of each track becomes tired.

"Prophet!" said I, "Thing of evil! - prophet still, if bird or devil!" In the end one can only guess at the whole effect of the in situ performance - it



Album Review

Murcof
The Versailles Sessions
The Leaf Label
★★★★☆

Steven Burgess

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary/ suddenly there came a tapping, as if someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door. The arrival of Murcof's (a.k.a. Fernando Corona's) debut album *Martes* in 2002 was credited with establishing the genre of classically influenced electronic music, layering recordings, clipped beats and acoustic instruments to create vast minimalist soundscapes. Since then Corona's

Olafur Arnalds live at the Union Chapel

Jorge Costa

Movies and popcorn, hot chocolate and wintry days, Tim Burton and Johnny Depp, Amy Winehouse and a crate of JD; all, for one reason or another, are perfect combinations. Sure, you can have one without the other, but it's not the same. You could even try toying with the formula, but the results more often than not end up dubious: hot chocolate in summer? Sacrilege!

After experiencing Valgeir Sigurðsson and Sam Amidon in St Barnabas' Chapel earlier this year, I'd like to add "lovely, creaky folk music and Icelandic electronic neo-classical in chapels" to that list. It's a match made in heaven, one where the delicate musical arrangements and quietly emotive vocal deliveries perfectly complement the intimate setting, hushed reverence and dense atmospheres of these places of worship. This is why I jumped at the chance of seeing Ólafur Arnalds at the Union Chapel.

Hailing from the small Icelandic town of Mosfellsbær, the 21 year old has spent 2008 supporting Sigur Rós on their latest tour while promoting his acclaimed debut album. 'Eulogy For Evolution' is a promising start for this talented musician with its assured and beautiful string-and-piano compositions punctuated by sudden outbursts of post-rock chaos.

"This is probably what Amish spacemen look like."

Opening for Arnalds on the night was German folk singer, Finn. Walking on stage with white tape under his eyes, what looked like a baggy white shirt with a giant collar worn backwards, and black socks pulled up to his knees and over his mud-brown trousers, I was left with the impression that this is probably what an Amish spaceman would look like. His plaintive guitar-and-violin melodies earthed his set however, and his mournful vocals laid the mood for the rest of the evening despite a rather distant performance, overall.

Finn did make something obvious: his playing about with effects pedals to create 'extra' guitarists and echo-y backing vocalists was an indicator that Arnalds' set would unfortunately summon similar, ghostly musi-



Nickleback album review

The music.felix team gives a critical analysis of the Canadian quartet's new release



cians playing out of a Mac. Given the budgets of these relatively unknown acts it's probably unfair to complain, but it's still ever so slightly disappointing to discover that the live show you're about to experience isn't completely, well, live.

So I didn't particularly mind (or honestly, notice), when a few songs into his set, Arnalds forgets to press a button that would have conjured his frantic post-rock guitar and drum noise on '3704 3837'. His live piano and string quartet proved sufficient enough to fill that gap and despite some sound issues that prevented one of the instruments from delivering that extra 'oomph', the sound was general absorbing and hypnotic. The quartet was particularly

entrancing, their Philip Glass-inspired strokes washing over the pews, reverberating around the cold building and enveloping the audience with a bittersweet haziness. Sitting in front of a grand piano, Arnalds' melodies were just as affecting.

Throughout, Arnalds was perfectly inviting as he honestly and humorously mentioned any gaffs and as well as the terrors of having to come back for an encore: "You go back stage and talk about the horrors of the show, but then you realise that people are still clapping!" It was then that he offered to replay '3704 3837', this time with the button pressed.

A few weeks ago, I was having a conversation with a friend who had

become bored with live music. Having recently attended various gigs full of obnoxious, Red Stripe drinking piss heads who insist on speaking throughout an entire performance, I could understand where he was coming from. But when the crowd is perfect and the setting is right, there isn't a better experience. For this gig, that experience came with the main set's closing song, 'Himininn er ad Hrynju'. What sounded like the bleeps of a heart monitor was soon joined by a spooky and heavily distorted robotic voice as eerie projections of spirit-white bird silhouettes floated up from the chapel's altar and across the stain-glass windows.

It was an incredibly chilling, goose-bump-inducing effect and while Arn-

alds did little to stray from the sound of the record, it's surprises like this which make live music worthwhile. And the venue couldn't be more appropriate.



Hearts on Fire at Alexandra Palace

Fire at the disco! Nightlife Editor CJ reviews arguably the finest firework display in the whole of London.

Firework Display ★★☆☆

Alexandra Palace

Best: Fireworks

Worst: Frustratingly large crowds.

Price: Voluntary contribution £4/£6

Oow! My eyes!" Those were the ecstatic screams of a grown man, gazing with awe at the spectacular Ally Pally firework display on Saturday night.

North London came out in force, from families to chavvy youths, perched on the slopes of Alexandra Park. Reputably the most spectacular firework display in London, the benefits were obvious; unimpeded views for all.

The display more than lived up to expectation, essentially 'it was better than last year'. Set to a medley of classical music from film soundtracks, the fireworks kept to the style, with rhythmic bursts and interesting compositions lighting up the sky. At an intense pace, the fireworks detonated thick and fast.

The glittery clouds and sparkly fountains (apologies for the flaky, nontechnical description) were my personal favourites. My heart goes out to the poor animals traumatised by the deafeningly loud rockets. They were very,

very loud.

So far a perfect night, thoroughly deserving of five stars. Such a shame when things took a turn for the worse post-fireworks. Like an episode of 'The Simpsons', the people of North London stampeded up the hill in search of alcohol. The mob took down all security fences in their path, racing to reach the Bier Festival.

Suddenly the evening became extremely tedious, I lost all patience with being herded around by security. The whole experience became uncannily like a music festival. The crowd grew restless. The muddy slippery hillside ruined my footwear. The toilet queues grew exponentially longer. The bar, if you could get near, ran out of beer. Generally it showed all the hallmark symptoms of large-scale event disorganisation.

It's a shame these factors inevitably spoil the experience. The organisers clearly put a lot of thought into making a pleasant, family-friendly night, with a choice of ice-skating, fun-fairs, live music and the Bier Festival within the massive Victorian venue.

The kids clearly had the most fun on the night, running rampage on the trampolines, bungee-swings and rock-climbing wall. 'Queen on Fire', a fairly convincing Queen tribute band performed indoors in the main hall. However they disappointed many by cutting to playback on 'Bohemian Rhapsody'. The Bier Festival had a very poor selection of two German beers, which promptly ran dry at that. Security cracked down on revellers dancing on top of the long tables. It was 'alright' but many chose to drink elsewhere.



Fire work display at Alexandra Palace



I'm gonna hazard a guess and say that this is Alexandra Palace. Just a thought!



Virginia Woolf knows best



Afonso Campos
Food Editor

Today, I am writing this column and article not from the excitement of the *felix* office, but from the comfort of my bed. This is not out of sheer laziness or some sort of megalomaniac desire to appear like a big-shot writer to anyone who might walk into my room while I fervidly type away. The real reason is that I am rather drunk, and I apologise quite unreservedly should this column read like a bunch of gobblydeedoo. I am drunk because I just came back from a very good dinner with, incidentally, a very good friend.

Upon maintaining and preserving the small things that define every single one of us. These can be anything from the preservation of memories past, experiences or values we choose to live our lives by. To me, getting together for a meal with good friends is without a doubt all of this and more; it is an experience that whilst it may not be noted as such at the time, actually has a lot of power in your life.

Anytime you sit with interesting people you foster this preservation I talk about, a preservation of curiosity, intellectual pursuit and betterment of oneself through the sharing of ideas, and most importantly a preservation of friendships.

I don't know what happened to dinner parties or enjoying food together in our generation, but one thing is certain, the act of doing so with friends should henceforth become a symbolic invocation, a cry and a loudly voiced statement that reconnects us with the urgency of maintaining the good things in our lives. It is good for us. It invites us to discover not only those around us but ourselves.

Virginia Woolf puts it much better than myself: "The human frame being what it is, heart, body and brain all mixed together, and not contained in separate compartments as they will no doubt in another million years, a good dinner is of great importance to good talk. One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well".

Tonight's events made me come back to some thoughts I had a few years ago at a dinner in Oxford with some friends. The act of eating tends to be seen (especially by students) as single-minded. Not passing out of hunger seems to be the main motivator for a majority of the population to eat. Survival is without doubt a relatively understandable and not totally ignorable reason, but I wish the paradigm for food was wildly different, at least amongst a young crowd. While it may seem strange, I enjoy thinking of eating and dining as an extension to the concept of preservation.

If we think about it candidly, we may come to the somewhat abstract but paramount idea that one of life's aims is to preserve. Preservation in a way describes the evolved state of the Human Being. In every one of our lives, in what Aristotle describes as an anagnorisis (a moment of recognition if you will), we eventually realise this and set

PhD Opportunities in Materials

an informal event for all final year undergraduates

Thursday 27 November 2008, 12.15 – 1.45 pm
Royal School of Mines room G.02 with lunch provided

The Department of Materials at Imperial has a number of funded studentships starting in October 2009. Final year undergraduates from all departments are invited to come and meet potential supervisors and find out about our research.

Cross-cutting application areas include energy, the environment, transport and healthcare.

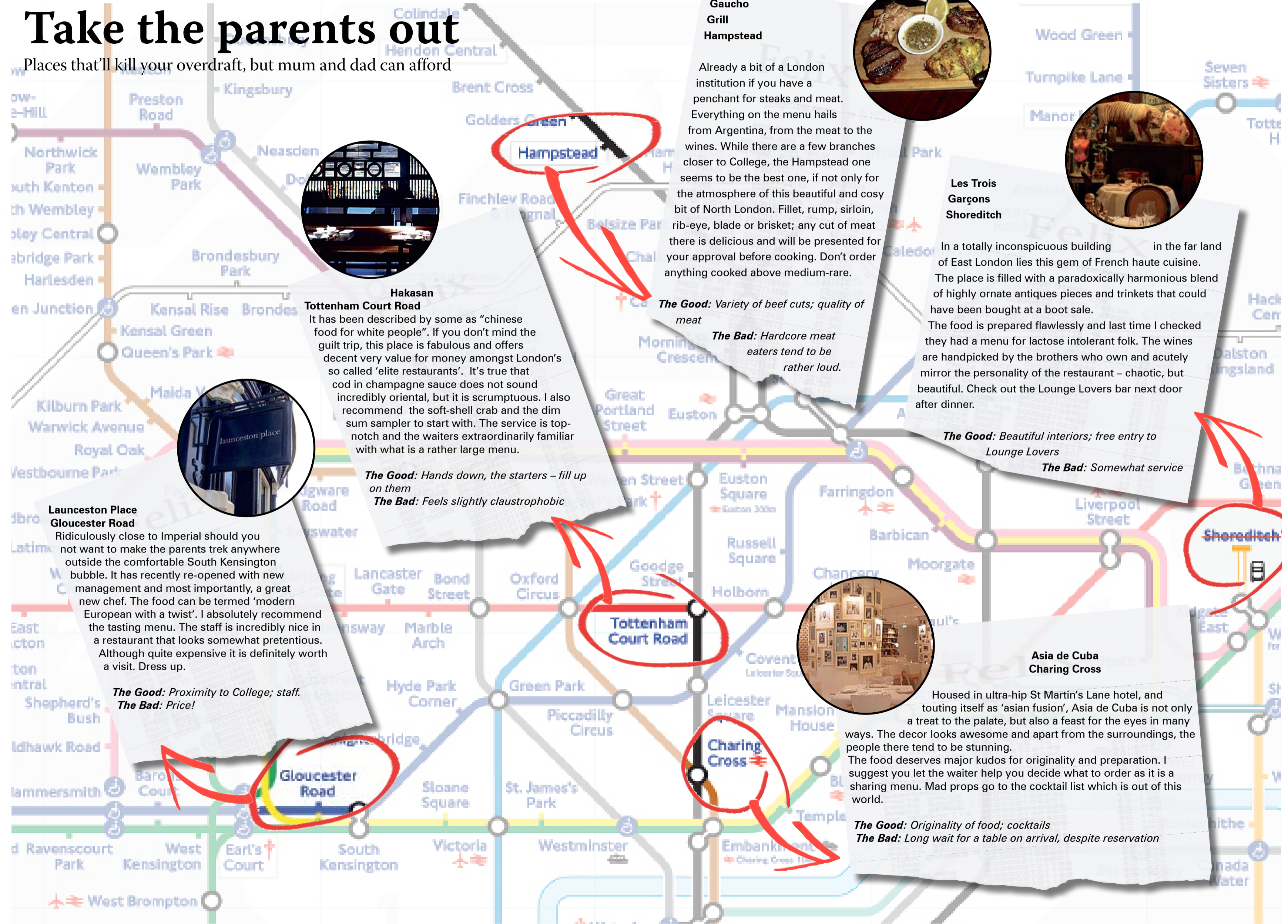
- Research topics include:
- Biomaterials
 - Advanced Alloys
 - Ceramics and Glasses
 - Nanotechnology and Thin Films
 - Materials Theory and Simulation

For further information please contact Miss Norma Hikel in the Materials Postgraduate Office: n.hikel@imperial.ac.uk

www.imperial.ac.uk/materials/

Take the parents out

Places that'll kill your overdraft, but mum and dad can afford



Hakasan
Tottenham Court Road
It has been described by some as "chinese food for white people". If you don't mind the guilt trip, this place is fabulous and offers decent very value for money amongst London's so called 'elite restaurants'. It's true that cod in champagne sauce does not sound incredibly oriental, but it is scrumptuous. I also recommend the soft-shell crab and the dim sum sampler to start with. The service is top-notch and the waiters extraordinarily familiar with what is a rather large menu.

The Good: Hands down, the starters – fill up on them
The Bad: Feels slightly claustrophobic



Launceston Place
Gloucester Road
Ridiculously close to Imperial should you not want to make the parents trek anywhere outside the comfortable South Kensington bubble. It has recently re-opened with new management and most importantly, a great new chef. The food can be termed 'modern European with a twist'. I absolutely recommend the tasting menu. The staff is incredibly nice in a restaurant that looks somewhat pretentious. Although quite expensive it is definitely worth a visit. Dress up.

The Good: Proximity to College; staff.
The Bad: Price!



Gaucho Grill
Hampstead
Already a bit of a London institution if you have a penchant for steaks and meat. Everything on the menu hails from Argentina, from the meat to the wines. While there are a few branches closer to College, the Hampstead one seems to be the best one, if not only for the atmosphere of this beautiful and cosy bit of North London. Fillet, rump, sirloin, rib-eye, blade or brisket; any cut of meat there is delicious and will be presented for your approval before cooking. Don't order anything cooked above medium-rare.

The Good: Variety of beef cuts; quality of meat
The Bad: Hardcore meat eaters tend to be rather loud.



Les Trois Garçons
Shoreditch
In a totally inconspicuous building in the far land of East London lies this gem of French haute cuisine. The place is filled with a paradoxically harmonious blend of highly ornate antiques pieces and trinkets that could have been bought at a boot sale. The food is prepared flawlessly and last time I checked they had a menu for lactose intolerant folk. The wines are handpicked by the brothers who own and acutely mirror the personality of the restaurant – chaotic, but beautiful. Check out the Lounge Lovers bar next door after dinner.

The Good: Beautiful interiors; free entry to Lounge Lovers
The Bad: Somewhat service



Asia de Cuba
Charing Cross
Housed in ultra-hip St Martin's Lane hotel, and touting itself as 'asian fusion', Asia de Cuba is not only a treat to the palate, but also a feast for the eyes in many ways. The decor looks awesome and apart from the surroundings, the people there tend to be stunning. The food deserves major kudos for originality and preparation. I suggest you let the waiter help you decide what to order as it is a sharing menu. Mad props go to the cocktail list which is out of this world.

The Good: Originality of food; cocktails
The Bad: Long wait for a table on arrival, despite reservation



Technology

Technology Editor – Ravi Pall & Richard Lai

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It's a good time to be alive...

Richard Lai
Technology Editor

Good day, everyone! Apologies about last week's absence - an update patch killed the connection between our Mac Tiger servers and Leopard iMacs, so our article submissions were flying all over the room and mine just got lost!

Like the folks on this week's Engadget podcast put it: "it's a great time to be alive", with two of my most-anticipated devices - HTC Touch HD and Sony Ericsson Xperia X1 - being launched, as well as the INQ1 Facebook phone from 3, and a new iPhone firmware expected to come out soon. I'm actually very surprised to hear that the Blackberry Storm does not have wifi, probably to milk more money from unlimited-data plans. If you're lucky enough to be an owner of the Touch HD, Storm, Xperia X1 or even the T-Mobile G1, we'd like to hear from you.

Whilst on the topic, I've recently picked up the unreleased (abandoned?) Sony Ericsson M610i smartphone from eBay. I don't know why but every now and then I do search for prototype mobile phones or even laptops. I've never used a Symbian phone properly before - the last one (and my first ever!) I had was the Sendo X, which I sold just two weeks after I bought it, simply because of my dissatisfaction with its sync speed with Windows. The hardware was well-built though, but that didn't save the company from liquidisation.

However, the M610i was overshadowed by the arrival of my Touch HD and Xperia X1. Both Windows Mobile phones are probably HTC's best phones to date, even though the latter is released under a different brand. Build quality is superb, probably only let down by the less-than-ideal OS (many wish for Android on them). The graphical interface is great but still far from perfect (laggy, lacking few practical functions, etc.). If I were to choose my favourite out of the two, I think the Xperia's keyboard has won my heart.

Moving on to cameras: have you seen the sample movies recorded on the Canon EOS 5D Mark II? This 21.1-megapixel DSLR does some real good HD video capture, and the quality beats the Nikon D90's jelly-like, 720p video recording (and I am admitting that fault as a Nikon fanboy). Although quite pricey, as with most prosumer cameras, I like the fact that you don't have to carry both a DSLR and an HD camcorder, as the former alone is painful enough to carry around, especially through airports where they still limit you to one hand-carry only. Well, I better start looking for a sponsor!

This week I decided to share my thoughts on my Mac virgin-experience, as it would probably appeal to most current Windows users (but not so much with stubborn Linux users). If you enjoy the article, please consider donating to the "5D-Mark-II 4 Richard Charity" - our phone operators in felix are standing by.

Hi, I'm a Mac virgin

Apple's anti-Windows campaign has been quite successful with getting PC users' attention, boosting their computer sales figure to an all-time-high 2.6 million in Q4 2008; likewise for their iPhone figure, jumping from Q3's 717k units to Q4's staggering 6.9 million units. If you're wondering whether it's time for you to join the Mac party, then you might find this article useful.

I had been waiting for the right MacBook for a long time, the previous generations being impractical with their scratch-magnetic polycarbonate cases. So when the aluminium MacBooks came out four weeks ago, I was so fascinated by its manufacturing process that I immediately bought my first ever Mac (the 2.0GHz MacBook) at the Regent Street Store the next day. It was about time as well: I've been through five or six Windows laptops and have suffered from the lack of built-in, professional-looking multimedia editors. Yes, Windows Movie Maker is very easy to use, but its boring templates mean your videos will all look the

"For a first-timer like myself it's very easy to use"

same; not the best choice if you want your video to stand out.

Back in the Windows days I was stuck with Adobe Premiere Pro and Nero Vision, both being very time-consuming to edit with and the latter provided only a few DVD menu templates of acceptable presentation. In the contrary, when I came across Apple's impressive iMovie app at the Regent Street store, I couldn't stop thinking how much better my DVDs could have been, and how much time I could have saved back then with a Mac.

Now my dream of owning the perfect machine has come true. Or has it? Here are my thoughts of my first-Mac experience so far:

Build quality / Service

Let's talk about the hardware first. I am probably the world's unluckiest guy to have gone through two MacBooks within four days after my purchase: the first one had a dead pixel (and apparently I was the first in the country to have reported a problem with the new MacBook), but fortunately Apple did a direct swap followed by an overnight migration service. I thought that was a smooth process, until on my way home on the bus I noticed that the replacement had a chipped hinge, which brought me back to the store. Hopefully my third one (which I'm typing on right now) will be less troublesome. Having said that,



The new MacBook with its shiny screen.

I must praise Apple's efficient service but do be careful with where you service your Mac: some Hong Kong users told me that they were refused replacements for having just one dead pixel instead of three or more.

The actual body itself is very well-built: London-born Jony Ive CBE, Apple's Senior Vice-President of Industrial Design, calls it "precision aluminium unibody enclosure" (kudos for not saying "aluminium") which provides a very strong structure with fewer parts. Like my old ThinkPad, I would happily pick up my MacBook on just one corner, with the lid open, knowing that it wouldn't flex. I originally feared that the metallic edges were going to be a problem, but they are actually nicely sanded for your wrists' pleasure, unlike the plastic MacBooks.

Input Interface

The new glass trackpad now supports multi-touch gestures, making life a lot easier: scrolling is the same as before with two fingers, three-fingers for forward and backward, four-fingers for Exposé (similar purpose to Vista's "Flip 3D"), the obvious rotation and zoom gestures etc. It really didn't take long to get used to these. Also, the click button is gone! Steve Jobs is known to hate buttons (although we have yet to see a touchscreen Mac) so now the entire trackpad has cleverly become the button. Again I found it very easy to use, as your thumb can still click on where the button used to be. Right-click is made easier as well by just clicking down with two fingers.

Ports and Guts

Now this is where Apple has let everyone down: the MacBook no longer has a Firewire port (a high speed connection for camcorders and hard drives). As mentioned before, one of my main intentions of getting a Mac was for video editing, so Cupertino has broken my heart a little here. To make up for it though, Apple teamed up with NVIDIA and gave birth to the 9400M chipset, which churns out much more graphics power than the old MacBook.

The sweeties from previous models are still here: the Mag-Safe power cord connector is probably still the best invention to date in the laptop world,

followed by Apple's compact power adapter which has two retractable hooks for cable management. The slide-in optical drive and the screen's gradual ambient light sensor alone are enough to force Oxford redefine the word "cool".

All the ports are neatly located on the left hand side of the laptop, which can be both a good thing and a bad thing: the good is obviously the neatness and clean look, but the downside is that you may have to relocate your various peripherals to reach the ports, and then you'll worry about the lack of extra USB ports: I personally find that five should be the standard for anyone (mouse, pen drive, iPod/iPhone, printer and camera), so MacBook users will have to invest on a USB hub (powered ones are recommended).

Stability

Now onto the software front: Mac users have always been proud of their system's stability, but over the last few weeks I had already had several crashes. For instance, I bought an HP all-in-one printer with the new MacBook, but when I attempted to do some scanning the entire system just crashed, forcing me to hard-reboot; and literally just now it crashed again when I was simply browsing my documents, and took at least five reboots to get back to the normal state. At neither events did Ravi's advice of using "cmd+alt+esc" (Mac's "Ctrl+Alt+Del") work. Perhaps it's just early days.

My other problem is iPhoto: it's simply stupid. I tried to burn an album onto a CD using iPhoto, but rather than having a disc full of JPEG files I got three versions of iPhoto library files instead, forcing you to use iPhoto to load the photos. Lame.

Ignoring all the above though OS X really is quite nice: even for a first-timer like myself it's very easy to use, and it takes literally only a few seconds from lid closed to fully awake, search is lightning-fast, awesome "iLife '08" suite bar iPhoto, expandable workspace using Spaces, powerful self-repair tools etc.

Verdict

Overall, the experience so far is quite nice and I have only the few regrets mentioned above plus a dented bank account. OS X is very easy to pick up, but if you think otherwise then I'm sure the free Apple seminars at Regent Street will be of great help. Many say that once you go Mac, you never go back (like felix has done), but I doubt I'll become one of those - Mac is obviously not as perfect as many fanboys claim, plus Windows machines love my wallet. If you insist on getting the new MacBook/MacBook Pro, I suggest that you hold on for a few more weeks to let Apple rid the bugs in the new systems.

Weekend Timewasters



CollegeHumor.com

In my opinion the best site for comedy sketches and funny clips. Must check out their original videos!



Syobon (a.k.a. "Mario Cat")

This classic annoying-yet-addictive Japanese game will keep you busy for hours: <http://is.gd/7Y1G>



DiggNation.com

Watch the co-founder of Digg.com and his friend talk about some of the week's hottest "diggings" on the site.



Bloons Tower Defense 3

The more balloons you pop, the more money you get, then you get to pop even more! <http://is.gd/7Yct>

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Technology

Backup your work

A review of the Western Digital My Book

Ravi Pall
Technology Editor

With a previous article about the online backup service provided by Mozzly, it may be thought it would be worth while investing in your very own backup solution. We are all hard working students living in the age of the internet, but it simply isn't worth while backing up all your data on an online service. The downfalls including bandwidth limitations, transfer speed and the knowledge that your data is with a 3rd party. It would seem for the average user at home, the simplest answer to this problem is to buy an external HDD (Hard Disk Drive). Therefore the first thing I did was to trawl through the

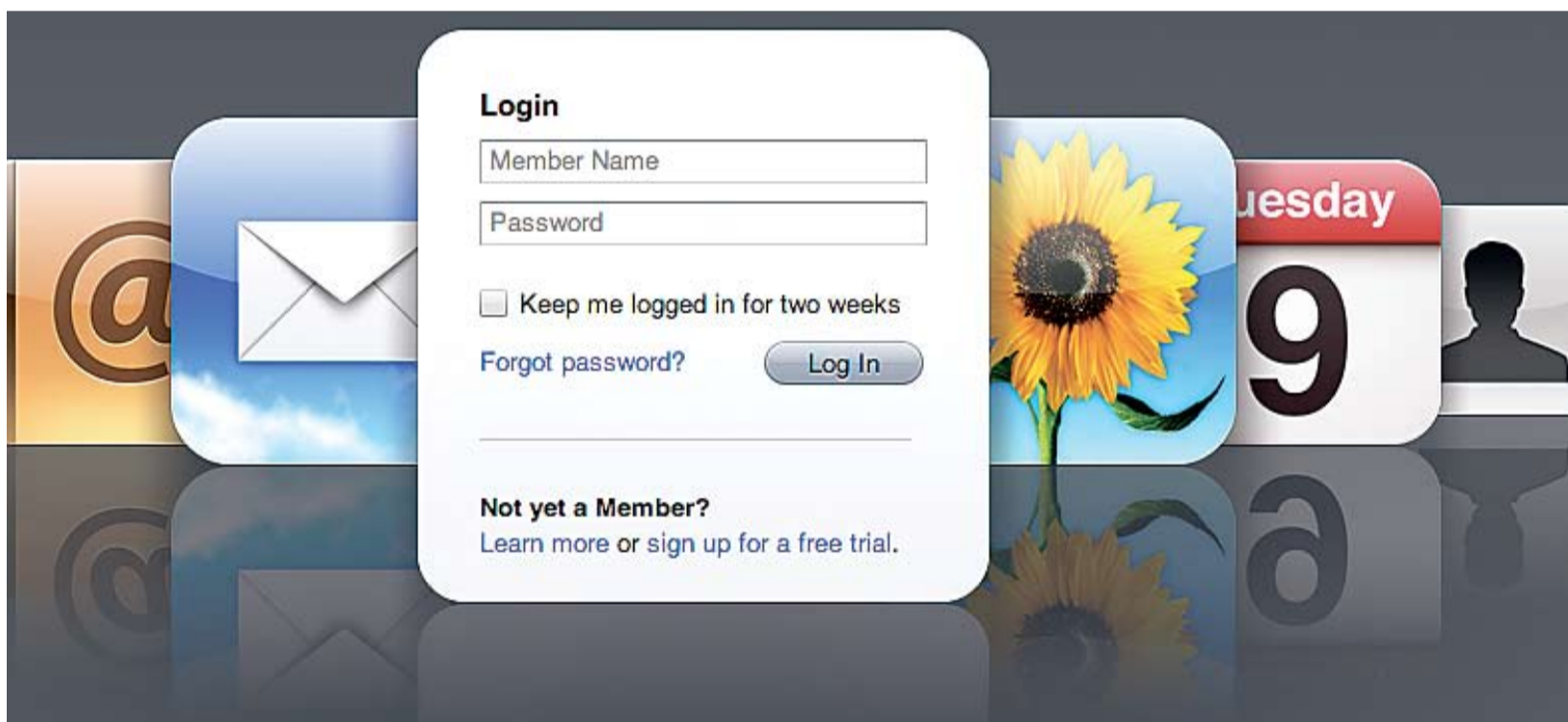
internet, looking for the best solution I could find at a reasonable price. Along came the Western Digital My Book. The model I chose was latest version of the My Book comes in a very sleek matt black finish. Aesthetics aside, let me engross you with the all so geeky details. My personal My Book has a 1TB storage capacity. A bit excessive I know, but some people need this storage now, and I'm sure there will come a day I will too. One of the first things I did was to transfer my 65GB iTunes library across, which blearily dented the capacity of this drive. At this point I'd like to mention how quick this was. Using Firewire 400 the whole library was transferred in less than 20 minutes. As I have just mention the Firewire 400,

now is the time to mention the connectivit. All the ports are on the back, which include the power input, 2 Firewire ports, a USB 2.0 port and 1 eSATA port. Thats alot of flexibility from a drive with the form factor of a small dictionary. It wasn't particularly cheap though. The 1TB My Book with eSATA cost about £120, but this is still very competitively priced with similar products available. WD is also a big name in HDD's so the 2 year included warranty, like the unit, is reliable. There is no noise, and it runs cool even though there is no fan. The top feature is the automatic on sevice which only turn the HDD on when connected.



WD My Book

Mobile Me + iPhone = Nice?



The web interface to the online Mobile Me service. Giving online access to your calendars, contacts, files, photos and mail.

Marc Kerstein

As one of many who have bought Apple's new iPhone 3G, I too know the drawbacks of email on a mobile device. The mobile distractions when out with friends (or even when, perhaps, in lectures) used to extend to receiving the occasional text message or phone call. This has since been upgraded to being able to instantly acquire the latest pointless news from some society's mailing list that you now regret signing up for in freshers' fair.

Unfortunately, having used a Gmail account for the past 4 years (has Gmail been in beta for FOUR YEARS?!), I was rather unhappy to find out that Google do not offer a push email service. Simply speaking, instead of having an email arrive on my iPhone soon after it is sent, my phone simply checks my Gmail account for new emails every x minutes, where x is a minimum of 15.

Apple originally came up with a solution by teaming up with Yahoo for their "YMail" service, which would give "free push email to all iPhone users." However, recently, some users including myself have noticed that the push email service seems to have silently stopped. Although there are many other push email solutions available online, I decided to try Apple's new MobileMe.

Despite being an avid mac user for the last few years, I have never tried using Apple's now obsolete .Mac service. Apple have since thoroughly improved this, renaming it to MobileMe, and giving great support for iPhone users. Even though MobileMe publicly didn't have a smooth start, I decided to sign up for a free trial account. MobileMe offers much more than push email, including an address book contact list which keeps in sync over-the-air (great for getting someone's number whilst

on your phone, and finding it on your PC or Mac seconds later, without any need to sync), a calendar service, highly comparable to Google calendar, a decent photo storage/sharing webapp, tightly integrated with the iPhone and iPhoto, and finally iDisk, which is very useful for having synchronized folders between your computers.

After using MobileMe for a few weeks and experiencing the tight integration service offered, MobileMe feels like a product which really bridges the small gaps. Even if I didn't own an iPhone, or even a Mac, MobileMe is highly useful for sharing files and photos with friends, and even having synchronized bookmarks and folders between my other computers. Setup is quick and painless, and the settings sync between all your devices. Back to my mac screen sharing is something hard to live without, and feels very responsive.

Overall, I would highly recommend

MobileMe for most Mac users. Even if you just sign up for the free trial for a short time, I think most will agree that it is a smooth and seamless service that keeps those important things in sync.

"MobileMe is a new Internet service from Apple that syncs email, contacts, and calendars from a secure Internet server, or "cloud," to all the devices you use: your iPhone, iPod touch, as well as Mac and PC computers. This data is accessible anywhere and automatically ensures that you get identical email, contacts, and calendars, no matter which device you use. MobileMe also provides a suite of ad-free web applications that deliver a desktop-like experience through any modern browser. Me.com is the place where it all comes together. MobileMe applications at me.com include Mail, Contacts, and Calendar, as well as Gallery for viewing and sharing photos, 20GB of storage, and iDisk for online file sharing"

Headlines we couldn't fit in

Apple launches new, pricey 24" Cinema Display

All sorts of new smartphones released

Fujitsu Siemens demos external laptop GFX card

Jerry Yang to quit as Yahoo! boss, sobs over MS offer

MacBook / Pro TrackPad seizures patched by Apple

FCC approves white space frequency Wi-Fi

Shuttle Endeavour upgrades Space Station

Acer consumer laptops No.1 seller in 3Q08 market

Samsung sued by Spansion over flash patents





Clubs & Societies

Clubs & Socs Editor - Alice Rowlands

Is your club cooler than the cat that got the cream? Write to us.

clubsandsocs.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Keeping the candle burning

Emily Wilson joins the Amnesty International society at their annual students' conference in Reading

Imperial College's Amnesty International Society recently joined over fifty other Amnesty student groups from across the country at the annual student conference, held at Reading University. Running across a whole weekend, the event was packed with talks, workshops, actions and a couple of well deserved social events.

Following a night on the floor of a sports hall, Saturday morning kicked off with two plenary talks by some key figures in Amnesty and the world of human rights in general. The discussion was led by Kate Allen, UK director of AI, who was joined by deputy secretary general Kate Gilmore and the BBC journalist Alan Johnston, who talked about how his own human rights were famously violated. Each told the audience of students about how they became interested in human rights, how they got involved with Amnesty International and what human rights means to them now. The second plenary that morning featured Gita Sahgal, head of the AI gender unit, and Maajid Nawaz, founder of an extreme Islamist organisation turned prisoner of conscience and human rights defender.

These talks were followed by opportunities for the attending students to learn more about specific campaigns and how to take action to defend human rights in a series of workshops. I attended a workshop on Amnesty's new campaign targeting world poverty, which quickly descended into a heated debate about the political ramifications of the campaign and the controversy it might generate. Such debates between the like-minded and passionate students I found myself at the conference with were the highlight of the weekend for me. The second workshop I went to was about how to motivate and activate your own student group. Some of my group members attended a workshop on taking action through disturbing public tranquility - so watch out for us on campus!

The afternoon plenary focused on the Control Arms campaign Amnesty is involved in alongside other charities.

Campaigner David Grimson touched us all with his story of how his own son was killed a result of uncontrolled arms trading. Oliver Sprague, the programme's director, told us about what can be done about controlling the arms trade and how to get involved. Famed comedian and political activist Mark Thomas talked about breaking into a weapons convention, his own dealings with arms dealer traders and more recently taking on Coca Cola. It came as no surprise to us that Mark is in the Guinness Book of Records for "most number of political demonstrations in 24 hours".

The weekend wasn't just about sitting through talks - in Amnesty International we like to have fun too! Saturday night was a more social occasion. We got to know members of other groups while eating free cake and being entertained by a stand-up performance by Mark Thomas and awesome ska band Brothers Bab.

Sunday saw the 260 students at the conference taking action to fight for women's rights in Iran. In Iran, women make up more than 60% of the student population but are second class citizens subject to many discriminatory laws.

An Iranian woman is under control of her husband or father, receiving half the inheritance of a brother and being targeted by honour killings for disobedience. An Iranian woman's evidence in court is by law worth half of that of a man. As part of Amnesty's ongoing campaign against these inequalities, we took part in a demonstration on the Reading University campus. Expect to see our faces on a TV screen in the near future...

I think I can speak for all who attended from Imperial when I say this weekend was not only fun but changed our perspectives on human rights and the work of Amnesty International. The conference has motivated us to take more action to promote and defend human rights, and we have walked away with so many ideas about how to make our student group bigger, better and louder.



Look at them. They care. And think they can make a difference. Eurgh. How disgustingly left-wing

About Amnesty International

Amnesty International is a non-governmental organisation dedicated to ending human rights abuses across the world, and supporting those affected by human rights violations. Founded in the UK in 1961, it is a secular, politically neutral body whose reputation has earned it a UN human rights prize and a Nobel peace prize. While Amnesty are best known for taking action on behalf of individual prisoners of conscience, you may also have heard of such campaigns as "Protect the Human" and "Stop Violence Against Women". Amnesty is also heavily involved in the Control Arms campaign alongside other organisations.

On a lighter note, you will likely have heard of the Secret Policeman's Ball, a fundraising event famously held by and in support of Amnesty International. Started up in the 70s and directed by John Cleese, its 2006 and 2008 revivals were both held next door in the Royal Albert Hall. The latter featured appearances by celebrities ranging from Alan Carr, Graham Norton, and Mitchell and Webb to Keane and Razorlight. It is still available to watch online if you missed it.

Amnesty is constantly introducing new campaigns and targeting new aspects of its human rights cause. In the coming months you can expect to see celebrations of the 60th birthday of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Amnesty's annual Greetings Cards campaign (which invites participants to send seasonal greetings at Christmas time to prisoners of conscience around the world), and events focused on the 7th birthday on Guantanamo Bay. In the new year Amnesty International will be launching an exciting (and potentially controversial) new major campaign to target the human rights violations caused by governments and multinational corporations that perpetuate world poverty.

Now is a better time than ever to act in support of a charity that reinforces the fundamental human rights that are all too frequently violated across the world. You can get involved on own your own through the actions suggested on Amnesty's UK website (also a good place to find more information about what Amnesty International do - www.amnesty.org.uk) or through Imperial's Amnesty International Society.

Amnesty at Imperial

Imperial has had an Amnesty student group for around six years now, but we remain a relatively small group and all too often hear "but I didn't know Imperial had an Amnesty group!" - we're hoping to change that. Amnesty is a wonderful opportunity to get involved in human rights, increase your awareness of current affairs and meet new, like-minded people.

We have various events coming up and in the pipeline. During the imminent S.H.A.G. week we will be showing a film and holding a discussion/debate.

This December we'll be running our annual Greetings Cards campaign helped out by Leonardo Soc, and we will be attending the London protests on the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Next year we're planning events relating to Guanatanmo Bay (yes - there will be cages and orange boiler suits for all!) and the Control Arms campaign. Anybody can attend these events, including non-members.

We always welcome new members and are always flexible about how involved you can or can't afford to get. Please come along to one of our weekly meetings (held on a Tuesday lunchtime - there are always biscuits!) or one of our major events to find out more. We look forwarding to hearing from you via amnesty@imperial.ac.uk.

clubsandsocs.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Tales of worrying bangs and clunks

Rick Smith reports on the Bo's adventures on the Brighton Run, with photographs from Jonathan Silver

Okay, so there's a Lord, a president and a physicist in a car (plus an engineer or two) - this is a story of nail biting speed, mountainous hill climbs, perilous oil slicks, CGCU top hats and stripy jackets - it can only be the London to Brighton Veteran Vehicle Run starring Bo. A little background before we go any further. Boanerges (affectionately known as Bo') - meaning sons of thunder - was manufactured in 1902 by James and Browne of Hammer-smith and has been the CGCU mascot since 1934. He has spent the last 64 years throwing up no end of unusual and worrying bangs, clunks and more fumes (unadulterated by a catalytic converter) than you could breathe in a lifetime.

Having recently had the engine cylinders extensively repaired some teething problems meant that an engine re-build was required the afternoon before the perilous drive to Brighton could even be started. On the Sunday morning at 6:30 AM Dave Hankin gently spun the starting handle and Bo', along with his new phosphor bronze bearings, playfully roared into action - I say roar, maybe more a pup bang pop bang! With our guests of honour Professor Lord Robert Winston and CGCU President Mark Mearing-Smith sitting comfortably and wrapped up warm, Henry Weaver, co-driver, and I [Rick Smith] began to drive the short distance to the start at Hyde Park Corner.

Having noticed a bit of oil outside the garage as we pulled out, we thought this was nothing more than Bo' playfully marking his territory of South Kensington and continued along our way. Pulling into Serpentine Road the place was a throng with cars and enthusiasts, all pre 1905 - and some of the enthusiasts were even older.

At 7:26 AM Bo' and his band of merry passengers crossed the start line and headed towards Hyde Park Corner roundabout. As we cruised through red lights and past waiting traffic - Police controlled of course - we quickly slipped into 4th gear and motored swiftly towards Buckingham palace, the game was afoot! At Streatham Hill the co-driver was changed to Robert Carter and we continued our way onto Croydon, where we doffed our hats to the Mayor and continued swiftly on. During the descent from the hill and concrete jungle of Croydon, no sooner had we reach cruising



Sir Robert Winston and members of the City and Guilds motor club put a brave face on a frightfully early start

speed when [CLUNK] and one of our front gas lamps had jumped ship from its metal bracket and plunged towards the road. Slamming on the hand brake and foot operated transmission brake we ground to a halt - some 50 yards later - to find that the brass lamp had broken its bracket and was supported nanometres above the tarmac by the acetylene hose, I detached the tube and thrust the lamp into the waiting hands of Lord Winston who interjected, "looks like metal fatigue to me". Bo' continued on from Croydon with one eye removed.

As the miles clocked up we sadly had to wave goodbye to Lord Winston just outside London but I am told that Clem - one of our support vehicles in the form of the RSM Motor Club's 1926 Morris T-type one-ton truck - quickly whisked him away to a slap up breakfast. As our halfway point approached I could feel something wasn't quite right, Bo' was telling me something. At the next lights we pulled up onto the pavement and gave him a quick once over, a squirt of oil in the bores and a well deserved drink of water. Bob Goodwill, co-driver, pushed the pedes-

trian crossing button and waited for the green man, and at the next opportunity we were back on the road. The town of Crawley offered us tea and a bacon roll which we grabbed and then made a surge towards the hill stage. We passed the half way point - by this time issuing less of an oil slick behind us. Our stop in Peas Pottage for a change of co-drivers and a more thorough once over revealed that the oil slick we had been issuing for the past 30 miles was not Bo' marking his territory (now extending into Sussex) but Bo' gently emptying the oil from his gear box through a significant orifice onto the highway. At once the support team jumped to action stations and within an hour and a half a wooden patch had been manufactured, gear box oil refilled and we were back on the road.

With the improved compression provided by our rejuvenated cylinders it was suggested that Bo' might just make it up the hill in second; however as the incline approached, we changed down the gears, 3rd ... 2nd ... cries of "Come on Bo' you can do it" were uttered by both driver and co-driver, Daniel Izzat, under their breath, sadly the revs slowed further and we were forced into first. That's first gear up a hill which a large proportion of Veteran cars are persuaded up by an RAC van and a less than subtle tow rope. As steam began to effervesce from beneath the floor boards we knew Bo' was ready to be at the top; asking attendants how much further, they encouragingly said only another 100 yards. As we rounded the

crest we slipped into 2nd, 3rd, 4th and we knew that our side mounted radiators would be cooling Bo's heart with the refreshing breeze.

Mark - now our only guest of honour and passenger was always keen to help, passing us the water, the starting handle, tool box or whatever other items he was lumbered with in the back. However, one piece of information I didn't think he would come up with as we were descending a gentle hill in 4th gear was our speed! Driving Bo' is not an easy task but is none the less a delight; going down a hill is not for the faint hearted. With the wind battering my hands and face - wondering if the top hat will stay in place Mark coolly interjects while reading from his BlackBerry, "23... 24... 25, that's 25 mile per hour!" - 25 was more or less our top speed for the day. But that's 25 mph provided by 1902 technology supported on wooden wheels, 4 leaf springs and enough split pins and steel gears to shake a stick at, 25 mph is fast enough for me.

As the final stage approached we cruised downhill into Brighton in 4th gear knowing we needed to keep the pace up to cross the line by 4PM; happily we were parked up on Madeira Drive by 3:45. Having been quizzed by a gentleman on the finish line with a microphone attached to the Tannoy he asked, "have you had any problems getting here today?" to which I could only reply, "no, not at all, just a minor oil leak which delayed us by about an hour and a half!"

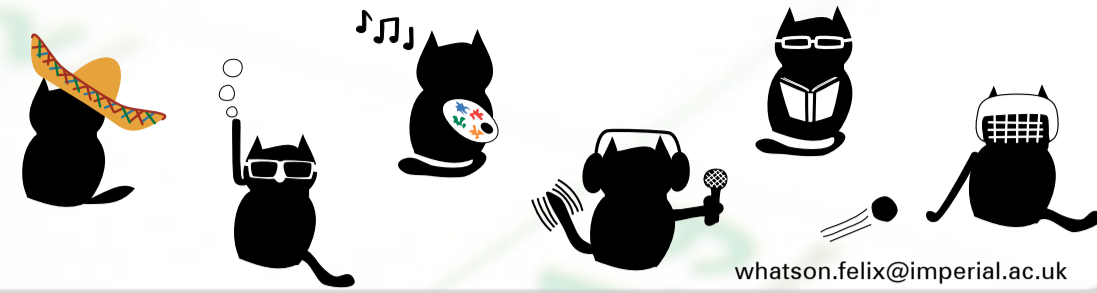


Members of the RCS motor club stop off for the infamous BJ breakfast- deep fried black pudding all round!

What's on...

Clubs & Societies Calendar

Editors – Lily Topham & Rachel D'oliveiro



whatson.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Monday

S.H.A.G Week

A free film showing courtesy of Amnesty International Society.

"Born into Brothels" is a portrait of several unforgettable children who live in the red light district of Calcutta, where their mothers work as prostitutes. Zana Briski, a New York-based photographer, gives each of the children a camera and teaches them to look at the world with new eyes with extraordinary results. Both uplifting and deeply sad, this film is unmissable.

Free refreshments provided.

Time: 6.30pm
Place: LT 1, Blackett
Price: Admission free

Ahlul Bayt Talk

Are we running out of food and oil? Why are prices fluctuating? Ahlul Bayt Society presents an unmissable talk with Nafeez Ahmed, Executive Director of the Institute for Policy Research & Development.

Free refreshments provided.

Time: 6pm
Place: LT 2, SAF
Price: Admission Free

Tuesday

S.H.A.G Week

Global Health Forum: How will Science prevent HIV Infection?

Hosted by Medsin's Global Health Forum, Professor Jonathan Weber, the founding editor of the journal 'AIDS' and an expert in the field will be coming to talk about the future of HIV prevention.

Free refreshments provided.

Time: 6.30pm
Place: LT1, SAF
Price: Admission free.

S.H.A.G Week

Super S.H.A.G. Quiz! The Union's weekly quiz has been hijacked by some pesky Sexual Transmitted Infections! If you think you know your clap from your crabs, come down and compete for prizes including beer and cash and the prestige of being the biggest sex-pert at Imperial.

Time: 8pm
Place: dB's, Beit
Price: Admission Free

Wednesday

S.H.A.G Week

Look out for Medsin's Krispy Krema sale on the South Kensington Campus.

Come along to gorge yourself on glazed delights. All proceeds will be going to Medsin's nominated charities.

Time: 12 midday

Improvisation Workshop

Try out a free improvisation workshop courtesy of Dramsoc. Anyone is welcome – no prior experience necessary!

Time: 2pm - 5pm
Place: Union Dining Hall, Beit
Price: Admission Free

Play: F20.0

ICSM Drama presents F20.0, *Paranoid Schizophrenia: One story behind the diagnosis*. The story of one man's journey from quiet, rural Jamaica to loud and bustling London.

Time: 7.30pm
Place: Union Concert Hall, Beit
Price: £4/6 (Students/Non-Students)

Thursday

S.H.A.G Week

Collect treasure maps from the Union or the Medics Union from Wednesday and find the STIs hidden all over College this lunchtime. Bring back your spoils and swap them for prizes and get entered into our competition for the top prize announced at the end of the week.

Time: 12 - 2pm
Place: All over College!
Price: Admission free

S.H.A.G. Week – Concert

Medsin invite you to a Chamber Concert as part of their Stop AIDS Campaign. Featuring a string quartet and vocal ensemble, all profits will go towards the Shelter Trust AIDS Orphanage in Chennai, India.

Time: 7pm
Place: Hospital Chapel, Mary Stanford Wing, St Mary's Hospital
Price: £3 (donations also welcome)

Play: F20.0

ICSM Drama presents F20.0, *Paranoid Schizophrenia: One story behind the diagnosis*. The story of one man's journey from quiet, rural Jamaica to loud and bustling London.

Time: 7.30pm
Place: Union Concert Hall, Beit
Price: £4/6 (Students/Non-Students)

Friday

S.H.A.G Week

Come and see a free showing of "Miss HIV", a controversial film exploring the international collision of HIV/AIDS policies while following the journey of two HIV-positive women who enter the contest in Botswana. Filmed across Africa and at the International AIDS Conference in Toronto this explosive film aims to share both sides of an ideology struggle. Hosted by Every Nation Christian Society.

Time: 12.30pm
Place: Room 301, RSM
Price: Admission free

S.H.A.G Week – Finale

Featuring the Union DJs. A whole evening of safe sex-focused fun, featuring condom games, raffles and naughty cocktails.

See the Union website for more details.

Time: 8pm
Place: Union, Beit

Play: F20.0

ICSM Drama presents F20.0, *Paranoid Schizophrenia: One story behind the diagnosis*. The story of one man's journey from quiet, rural Jamaica to loud and bustling London.

Time: 7.30pm
Place: Union Concert Hall, Beit
Price: £4/6 (Students/Non-Students)

ICSM Orchestra Concert

Come along to the ICSM Music Society Orchestra Concert! Repertoire includes Brahms Symphony 4, Dvorak's Slavonic Dances and Smetana's Ma Vlast. Conducted by Chris Gray.

Time: 7.30pm
Place: St. Stephen's Church, SW7
Price: Free/£5 (Students/Non-Students)

Saturday

What's on will cover events running from Monday-Sunday every week. If you would like to feature a Club or Society event in What's on, you will need to submit the following:

- Club name, Event name, Date(s) & Time, Place, Price (if applicable), Short description of the event (max. 30 words)

Deadline for submissions for next week's edition is midnight on **Monday 24th November**. There is limited space, so all entries are subject to editorial snipping and we cannot guarantee that everybody who sends an email will feature.

Email: whatson.felix@ic.ac.uk

Coffee Break

coffee.felix@imperial.ac.uk



felix fail attempt

Ravi Pall
Coffee Break Editor

Whadafuh happened last week? I'll tell you what! An EPIC FAIL of gargantuan proportions. Why you ask? Well it all started with a loving text from Jovan, the felix editor in chief. Within this all so loving SMS message were the words "felix down." Now I have just implied that this text message was more in depth than it really was. "felix down" were the ONLY words included in the all so friendly communication medium. Seriously, whadafuh? So as the storey goes, I aimlessly wandered down to the depths of the Beit west basement, to (in a not so aimlessly manner) discover the truth behind the looming words "felix down." When I eventually found out, it wasn't the worst news that could have come our way. The words "felix down" in fact meant the network had fucked up, and there was no way to access Dreamserve. Just to clue you in, Dreamserve is the central server felix runs on. What does that mean? well to put it bluntly, it mean no one could log onto the computers, no one could edit their pages for the weeks issue, and it also meant that last weeks issue was

going to be a total shambles.

However there was one solution. This involved everyone writing their pages on their respective computers, then transferring all the files and pictures via a USB memory stick. A painfully slow process that has a risk factor greater than going down on a girl with herpes. In the end, a 40 page issue was whittled down to 32. All because the confusion created caused files to be corrupted, of pictures to go missing. At one point a whole folder with a complete section of felix in it just disappeared. Again, whadafuh! The effect on the timing resulted in the issue not being copy edited. A point made by one irate felix reader who came into the office on the friday demanding an explanation.

I would like to apologies to you all on behalf of the felix team. We know it was a failed issue and a discredit to our loyal readers, but we will definitely endeavour to prevent this happening again. At the current time of writing, Dreamserve is up and working fine. No tearing up this weeks issue every time you see it Kadhim.

Stuff IC Students Like!?! :)

8. Sex:

There are 2 types of people at Imperial College. Those who have sex, and those that don't. Either way, everyone loves sex, just some aren't getting any. For those that arn't don't worry, just don't start sleeping with hookers. For

those that are, well done. With the reputation IC students have it's good that your rebelling. Also for those that are, don't forget S.H.A.G. week starts monday 24th November. it is the perfect place to pick up FREE condoms, lube and learn about the STI's your more likely to pick up because your sexually active.



Drink with me, I'm Snaky B and this week I'm dressed as Kylie.



Good day mate. I'm Snaky B dressed as Kylie. That's right, the really old aussie bird who everyone thinks is so hot. Not as hot as my younger sister Danni, but she's hot as the Queen? I got over cancer... she didn't even get over Guy Ritchie and make multiple babies. She was too busy spazing out over her imaginary (show me the evidence) religion. Plus I'm a much better actor, I did Neighbours for fucks sake- Madonna did 'Swept Away' I don't see that winning any awards. She needs to die. Mate.

ozone is the issues we now have with our Foster's... well you wouldn't want a warm beer would you? Mate. Well I don't care, I'm Kylie and I'm the Princess of pop, waiting in the wings for that scrawney bitch Madonna to die. Why is she the Queen? I got over cancer... she didn't even get over Guy Ritchie and make multiple babies. She was too busy spazing out over her imaginary (show me the evidence) religion. Plus I'm a much better actor, I did Neighbours for fucks sake- Madonna did 'Swept Away' I don't see that winning any awards. She needs to die. Mate.

Photoshop Competition -8



This weeks winner. Team Rubbish



Next weeks RAW image for you to go wild. See www.felixonline.co.uk



Congratulations to this week's winner, Team Rubbish. It was starting to become a bit repetitive, but we were short on entries this week, and we love hello kitty. You get the points this week, but other budding photo

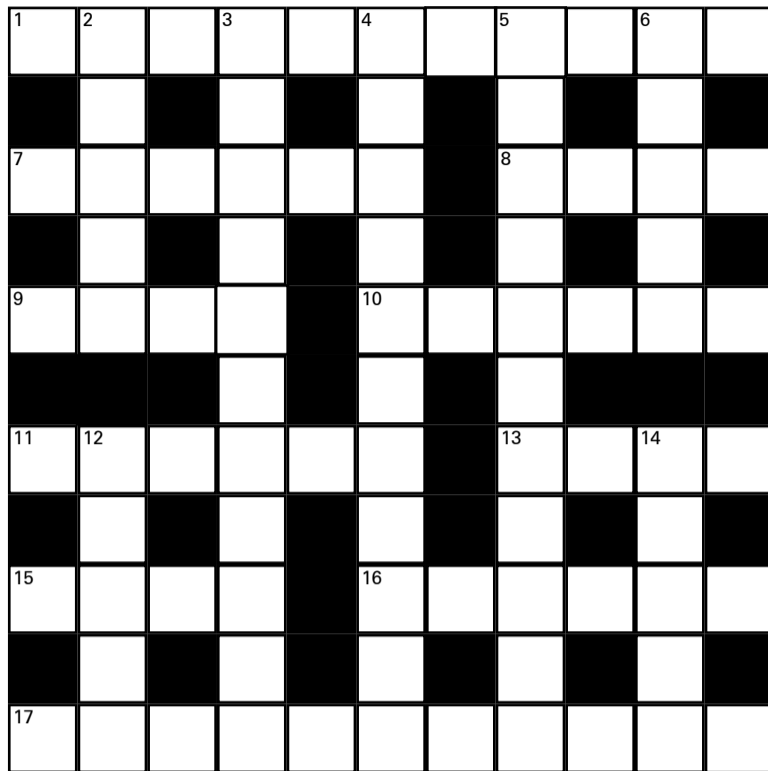
shop artists please join in. These guys are good, but i'm sure someone will stop their reign of terror victory.

Keep up the good work, and please enter again next week.

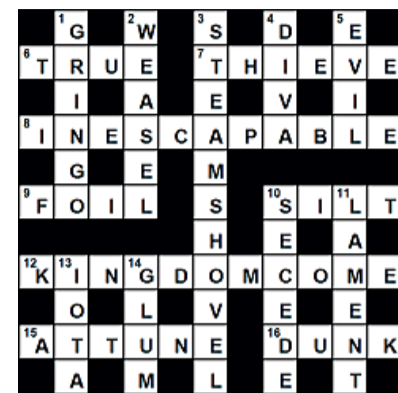
This week's image is of a certain 2nd year physicist. I was staring to think physics students were beginning to break the trend of the nerdy video game players. Obviously not as one was caught playing a Nintendo DS.

The high res picture can be found online. Click on Coffee Break in the sections tab. Email your entry to coffee.felix@imperial.ac.uk with your team name and .PSD file and you'll be entered into the FUCWIT league.

A Quickie (Crossword) 1,415



Solution 1,415



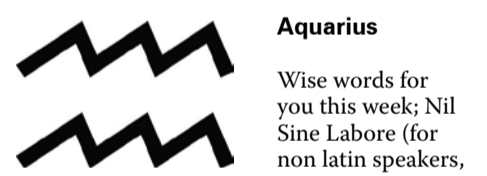
Winners of last weeks Quickie were **Top of the Table**, they were straight in there... bang, not bothered, next please. These guys are quickly getting a monopoly on the puzzles section, we must break this. I suggest getting your *felix*, having a Quickie and sending it in. Later.

ACROSS DOWN

- 1 Lightly; without being too serious (11)
- 7 Increase in price (6)
- 8 American predator (4)
- 10 Rectangle (6)
- 11 Put on one side (6)
- 13 At some other time (6)
- 15 French cheese (4)
- 16 Portion (6)
- 17 Menacing (11)
- 2 Core (5)
- 3 Fantasy (4,7)
- 4 Change for the better (11)
- 5 Nomenclature (11)
- 6 Citrus fruit (5)
- 12 Unforgiving (5)
- 14 Many-layered bulb (5)

Harrowscopes. Or Horoscopes if you prefer.

Apparently Horoscopes need to be more helpful and less... 'made up bollocks'. Here goes:



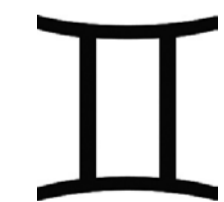
Aquarius
Wise words for you this week; Nil Sine Labore (for non latin speakers, nothing without effort). You know what you want but sitting around is not going to get it for you. However if you're prepared to put in the groundwork you could be reaping rewards as early as next Tuesday. (Only whilst stocks last though).



Taurus
So you did something stupid, but don't worry, the stars indicate now is an ideal time for all Taureans to learn from previous mistakes. Thankfully, this week's embarrassment will only last until next Wednesday when the collective social memory of the sports teams is eradicated by copious amounts of Snaky B.



Pisces
Caution is advised this week, as what seems like a good idea at the time could have dire repercussions (think Phil Collins on drums) especially if copious amounts of beer are involved. If you attract the attention of shady men in pubs, a swift exit is probably necessary. Remember guys: "women and alcohol can be a lot of fun, but if you mix them, it can turn you into a dumbass."



Gemini
You may feel like you're snowed under and have no time for social activities this week but a friend is counting on you to support them at an important event. Do not let them down unless you are prepared to spend the rest of the term earning their forgiveness. If all else fails, you'll have to buy it, but last time I checked forgiveness couldn't be bought in Morrisons.



Aries
New discoveries last week forced you to reconsider your plans. The change was unexpected and unwelcome, but the good news is that a new direction will bring surprising benefits. Remember your friends that got you through the bad week with cake and tea/beer, they may need your help with their own problems soon.



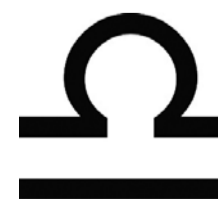
Cancer
Whilst your mate thinks this week's antics are just more harmless fun, you think this time they've overstepped the mark. You may not like conflict but things won't be the same between you until you say something. So bite the bullet, fight it out and make up over a couple of drinks or be prepared to loose a great friend.



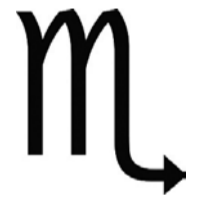
Leo
Things for you have been going swimmingly of late, so why not pass the good fortune on to someone else? You're full of ideas and inspiration at the moment which could really benefit someone close to you, so ask around and find out who is looking for a new muse. They may deny your help, but don't let up.



Virgo
Whilst the relaxed status between you and your supervisor/ housemate/bit of stuff has suited you well up to now, things are about to change. You need to sit down and address both of you expectations of the relationship now, because if unresolved differences in your desires will go on to become a major source of anguish between you. Stop it before it advances like Hitler.



Libra
You may think your friends are interfering busybodies and that is because they are. However it's nice to know that at least they are interfering busybodies with your best interests at heart. So when a close friend this week sets you up with someone unexpected, go with it. Some words that may come in handy; Może kupuję wam napój?



Scorpio
Well, well, well. Things are certainly looking up for you on the old romance front this week. It seems holding out for that special person is paying off, so take it slow and enjoy the 'getting to know each other' stage, safe in the knowledge the 'can't keep your hands off each other' stage is just around the corner.



Sagittarius
This week you need to address your work life balance. If you've been slacking off now is the time for some productive study, but if you're part of the majority of Imperial students and working far too hard then you need to take some much needed me time. So go on, cancel tonight's intensive study session and get out on the town with your mates. Vomit everywhere- it'll be fun.



Capricorn
Variety may be the spice of life, but it is also a known cause of Chlamydia. You are super attractive to the opposite sex just now, so enjoy it while it lasts - responsibly. Things will settle down soon and when they do you may be surprised to find a relationship that started as a bit of fun has further to go than you imagined. Pint?

FUCWIT League Table

- Top of the Table 39 Points
- Möchten sie mein Manschaft? 38 Points
- Team Rubbish 17 Points
- Hringur Gretarsson 16 Points
- Giramondo 16 Points
- Team Turner Gobels 12 Points
- Yu-Xi Chau 10 Points
- Martin '08 8 Points
- Team Rapid Bunnyz 5 Points

Right then, the Felix University/College-Wide Invitational Tournament League is officially back, and it's about time we explain what the hell is going on.

Basically, you get points for doing all the various puzzles and challenges, and at the end of the year, the winning team will win an iPod nano! Pretty cool right? The scoring is as follows:

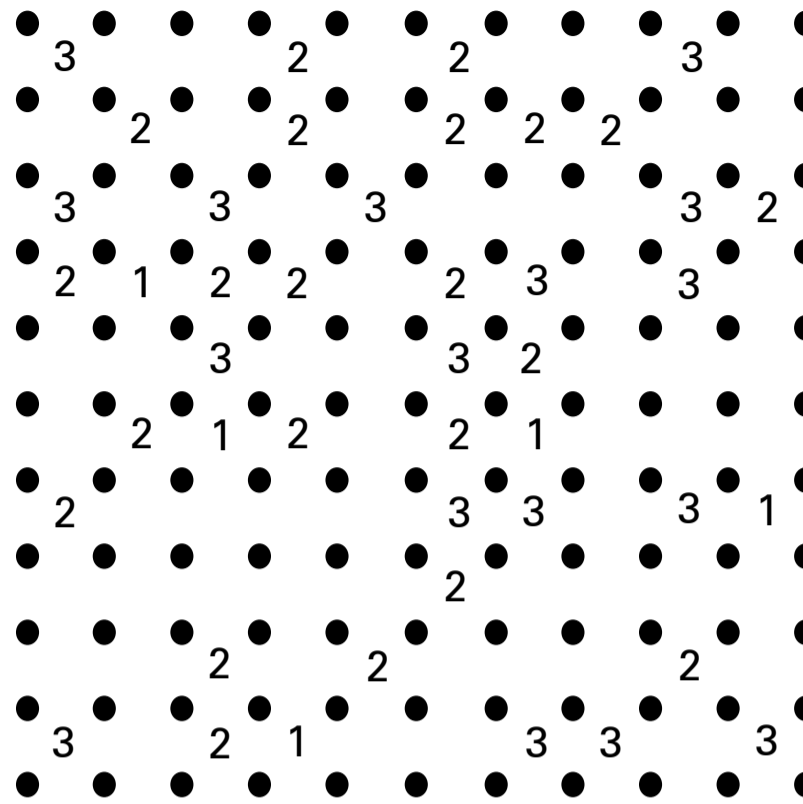
5 points for the first correct answers for Slitherlink, Wordoku, Photohop Competition, Caption Competition and Quick Crossword. 4 points for second, 3 points for third, 2 points for fourth and 1 point for fifth.

Double points will be awarded for correct cryptic crossword answers, because it's über hard.

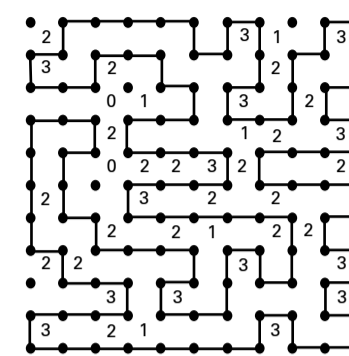
Simple! Now then FUCWITs, send in your answers to felix@imperial.ac.uk or sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk. Go!

sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Slitherlink 1,416



1,415 Solution



The winner of Slitherlink 1,415 was **Top of the Table**. Again. Seriously you are becoming repeat offenders. I'm getting bored of you... a pint may make me less bored though...

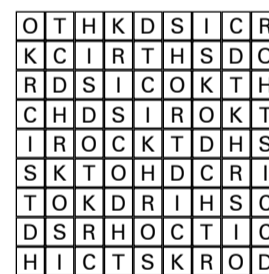
How to play:

It's quite simple, all numbers are in a cell and must be surrounded with a corresponding number lines. Lines cannot split and there can only be one continuous line. Any cells with no numbers can have any number of lines. Look at the solution above for help.

Wordoku 1,416



1,415 Solution



Wordoku is identical to Sudoku; we've just replaced numbers with letters. Complete the puzzle and then send the whole grid to sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk. You will not get credit for just the word alone. It's not an anagram.

WHA...DA...FUH? Competition is stiffer than when 'a mate' sees Polish girl. The first answer took less than 15 minutes to bounce onto my screen cutting my ___ short! Anyways winners were **Top of the Table** who found "SHORTDICK" hidden there.

Fun & Games

Caption time! -1

To help you waste time in lectures (if you want to that is, we're not going to come after you with a machine gun) we now have a caption competition. I can literally hear the exclamations of joy from here. However had to get the editor so drunk that he went home with a man to allow this; so use it wisely- he knocked a hole in £50. To the rules: 1) You make me laugh you get five points in the FUCWIT league. 2) Send captions to sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk, bonus laughs for placement of caption (so scan it if possible). 3) Make them funny.



This week we have unlucky Brit James Toseland bailing if from his Tech3 Yamaha M1 MotoGp bike.... Epic Fail!! Now you get captionating.



This week's texts:

"Sorry about the paper last week it all fucked up..."

"Thanks for coming all the way down to the office to tell us about the errors though..."

"It was even better that you offered to help copy read..."

"Actually... you didn't did you? What a nobbyer."

"Polish girl is actually too hot. I think I may explode."

"Shit guyz. Wherez my dignity gone?. I'z actually considered chewing throughiz my arm."

"Want to see something sexual?"

07980 148 785

TEXT US! OR WE WON'T FEED THE CAT!

Tamara asks: How tall is a Union mini-bus?



Me and some chums relaxing in a slightly warmer climate

Wednesday evening was unseasonably warm, so I decided to make use of the pleasure cruiser my second husband bought for me while we were courting. A little moon-bathing went down a treat, I was relaxing with a glass of champagne, when a number of young men from the Kings College Hockey Club came by on one of their community integration evenings. This year they were putting on a travelling performance to entertain the locals.

Not to be out-done by some kids putting on a show, I decided to put on a show of my own, thrashing my best pole-dancing moves out around the mast.

Clearly things were getting a little out of hand, so we laughed it off and I offered them some of my champagne. Unfortunately, I had run out of glasses and so they threw their's over for me to fill. Have you ever seen those guys trying to aim (might explain why they're doing rather badly this year)? Anyway,

their aim is about as bad as an RSM girl and they ended up giving their glasses to some of my neighbours instead.

Initially this caused some confusion, but thankfully it was laughed off by everyone and no one was offended.

In other news, I've recently discovered the wonderful Boujis for the first time! I was glad to see so many young things following my advice on finding themselves a rich husband, the competition was a little unnerving though. I was reminded that I'm not getting any younger and really must get a move on if I want to find that illusive fourth husband!

Apparently it's been a very good week for all of you too, as only one person has sent me their problems:

Dear Tamara, I recently cooked a delicious meal for my boyfriend and his parents, the only trouble is, the duck I cooked was one of my favourites from his farm, we called him Donald and everything! As delicious as the meal was, I now can't face the thought of meat and am considering

becoming vegetarian in memory of my beloved Donald.

I'm worried my boyfriend won't understand as he says my cooking has been getting better, he's even stopped going to McDonalds for a top-up afterwards!

What should I do? **Quacked off**

Dear **Quacked off**, I can't believe you're considering subjecting your boyfriend to a life of no meat! It would be one thing if you stopped eating meat and just ate the veg you cooked to go with his main meal (meat is very calorific anyway), but to deprive a man of his meat is asking for trouble! You need to be a good woman and ignore your own feelings in order to make him happy.

If you have similar feelings in the future, I suggest you counteract the negative karma by cooking a big roast dinner. Shame on you!

Got a problem, contact Tamara at felix@imperial.ac.uk



Snowsports Snowboard in Scotland

ICU Snowsports Club do us proud in the dual slalom. See page 36



Fives thrive, LSE deprived, Arnold revived, football well and truly alive

Football

L'ORÉAL
PARIS

Imperial Men's 5th	3
LSE Men's 5th	0

Ed Lobb

The well oiled machine that is Imperial Mens 5s paraded onto the hallowed turf of Fortress H looking for a positive result against LSE 5s after a raw deal midweek, getting an undeserved shanking at the hands of LSE 4s. Ron, as God had done on the 6th day, has

created a team in his own image and Imperial started playing the champagne football they have been unleashing on the ULU Division 1 throughout this season.

Almost straight from kick off a Mamzi cross was lashed home, via Big Deen's big shin, by the LSE left back. Obviously panicked by the presence of the predator, the defender took it upon himself to give IC an early advantage.

Only a minute later a ball down the left found Mamzi with barely enough space to hide a Dewsbury schoolgirl, but he still managed to squeeze off a shot with the outside of his boot that

went in off the far post. Unfortunately it didn't take much longer for the opposition to neutralise IC's most potent tactic, forcing a substitution of linesman Mo after giving offside every time they got possession. At 2-0 IC sat back with captain Ron Atkinson patrolling midfield like a commando and Tom Adams protecting the back four. Winehands, Dave, Simon and Jose were on call to clean up any unwanted discharge from the midfield and the attacking foursome of Big Deen, Mamzi, Mike and Tristan (just on time after a gamblers anonymous meeting ran late) repeatedly infiltrated the LSE

backline but were unable to inflict any collateral damage.

A few minutes into the second half and a Mo-rale boosting moment for IC as the disgraced linesman entered the fray for the first time since a life threatening ankle injury sustained during the 4-0 merkalisation of Holloway last month. It was not long after that IC had the game sewn up. A throw in found Ron who shot speculatively from 25 yards. The LSE 'keeper had clearly been paying attention when watching his VHS of "Goalkeeping Skills by Heurleho Gomes and Ryan Apicella" and proceeded to fanny the ball into

his own net.

From then on IC continued to shag the proverbial granddaughter and chances were laid on for Tristan and Dan Abebe, only for the first to fire straight at the 'keeper and the second to be twice denied by LSE's own corrupt linesman. The game careered to a sudden and unexpected end on 90 minutes and IC 5s powered their way to the top of the table. Late Paul in goal did everything asked of him on his way to a 3rd clean sheet of the season and for that reason, and for not being the last member of the team to arrive, was awarded man of the match.