



felix

The award-winning student newspaper of Imperial College

"Keep The Cat Free"

Issue 1,452

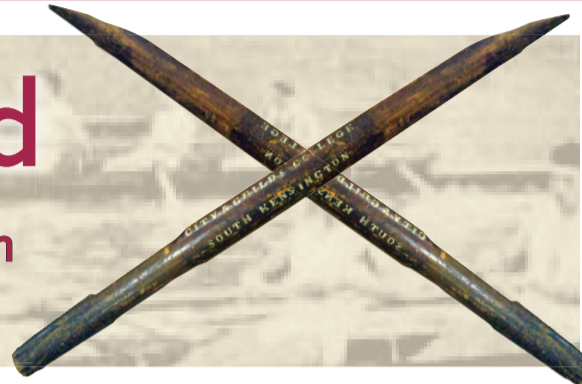
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05.02.10

Morphy Day revisited

felix looks back at an Imperial sporting tradition

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Finally a nightlife at Imperial?

The Union give students the chance to redesign and rename the new £2.4 million bar and nightclub, pages 4 and 5

Can lasers really help you lose weight?



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How Facebook could ruin your life



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Hottest new trends for 2010 in... travel?



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One week for one world

Charlotte Morris

This week has seen Imperial's first ever One World Week. One World Week aims to encourage equality relating to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion and disability.

Imperial College Union has put on various different events around campus this week, with each day having a specific theme. Monday's theme was Gender Equality, and so we had a silent documentary, which tackled sexism in the lab.

The documentary was produced by Women in Science, Engineering and Technology, a student-run society at Imperial for female students, and the short film was broadcast all around campus. There was also 'Interfaith Interactive' held on Monday lunchtime, hosted by the Chaplaincy. The aim of this event, held in the JCR, was for people to find out about different faiths and religion at Imperial.

On Tuesday we had a Sexual Orientation themed day, with help from IQ, Imperial's LGBT society. There was a screening of 'Milk', a recent film starring Sean Penn, which details the life of Harvey Milk, a politician and gay rights campaigner during the 70s. There was also a couple of 'One World Week' themed rounds in the Union Pub Quiz on Tuesday night, which, naturally, the IQ team won.

The theme on Wednesday was Reli-



gion and Belief, with a Religion and Science Question Time: a 2 hour discussion of science and religion, where they conflict or compliment each other. This was similar to an event held by the Christian Union last week in their 'Free Thinking Week'. Only this time, we had representatives from different religions including Hindu, Muslim, Baha'i, Christian and Humanist.

Thursday lunchtime saw a film screening of A Beautiful Mind to fit in with the day's theme of Disability. The film, starring Russell Crow, follows the life of John Nash Jr., an exceptional mathematician who develops paranoid schizophrenia.

The One World Week finale is International Night, an evening of en-

tertainment in the Great Hall. The performance includes input from various international societies, along with Capoeira society (an Afro-Brazilian art form which combines elements of martial arts, music and dance), and Belly Dancing Society. International Night aims to celebrate the diversity of race and culture that we have here at Imperial, and with the tickets costing £5, they also managed to raise some money for the Haiti appeal.

Imperial's first One World Week can be considered to be a success, with some very thought-provoking issues being raised and tackled.

It is an event that many people have expressed their hope to see return in the next academic year.

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The world beyond College walls

North Korea

A high ranking North Korean finance official has recently 'disappeared from view', according to South Korean intelligence, as the disastrous consequences of the communist country's failed monetary reforms accumulate.

Pak Nam-Ki, the Communist Party's director for planning and finance, has reportedly been absent from public activities since early January. On 30 November 2009, a decree was issued announcing old North Korean banknotes would be swapped for new ones at a rate of 100 to one. But the amount of currency people were allowed to exchange was restricted to 100,000 old won (no more than \$30, barely enough to buy a 50kg sack of rice). Any cash held above that would be worthless - effectively wiping out people's savings.

Many reacted with anger and panic, and the changes are reported to have wrought havoc to distribution networks and sparked chaos in shops and markets. Organizations with contacts in the North said some people had attacked security agents patrolling markets. The moves also led to spiraling inflation.

Italy

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's plans to recruit showgirls, models, and television stars, most of whom have little political experience, to run for office as People of Liberty party candidates.

The arrangement was reported to have been revived on Monday following his recent resurgence in popularity. The original plan, which was first scheduled for elections last June, was fraught with controversy. Also on Monday, in a speech in Jerusalem, Berlusconi stated that, "my greatest desire, as long as I am a protagonist in politics, is to bring Israel into membership of the European Union." Israel has not requested such considerations; moreover, economists and diplomats are questioning the feasibility of such discussions given the fact that Italy is Iran's largest European trading partner.



Afghanistan

Afghan President Hamid Karzai, under increasing political pressure, has attempted to assure his constituency over the future of their country and economy.

Karzai attempted to lift the spirits of his people by announcing some of the results of an unfinished USGS survey of Afghanistan's mineral deposits. He claimed that the total value of Afghanistan's reserves near 1 trillion USD. In order for the country to extract these resources however, quite a lot of infrastructure will need be built and purchased: thirty years of war and mismanagement have left such infrastructure decrepit or nonexistent. Increasing revenues from mining could help to boost the economy, decrease the country's dependence on the export of opium, and pacify the country.

Meanwhile, attacks on NATO forces in the country are continuing despite the harsh winter conditions in the country. Two US soldiers have been killed in a bomb attack in southern Afghanistan on Wednesday, a NATO statement said.

By Raphael Houdmont & Tom Greany

HEFCE-y cuts across UK universities

Sina Ataherian reports on the £518 million cuts on money given to universities by the HEFCE this week

Two weeks ago *felix* reported on the Government's plans for making British universities able to "offer more alternatives" with courses that would be "more flexible." The Government had also promised to ensure that sufficient funds are in place to avoid a repeat of last summer, when universities had tens of thousands fewer places than there were applicants to fill them.

However, this week the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), which is responsible for handing out tax-payer funding to universities, announced a £518 million cut for the 2010-2011 academic year, relative to this year. These cuts amount to £449 million more than was expected.

The cuts include 15% of the entire budget for universities' capital projects. Funding for teaching will drop by £215 million. Maintenance budgets for historic campus buildings will be particularly badly affected. Accelerated post-graduate courses will lose £24 million; as will two-year foundation degrees. Research cuts have been predicted to "cripple" the sector.

Universities themselves will only find out their individual allocations of the money in March.

As would be expected, groups rep-



Staying at home: There'll be less moving-in to do in the next few years if predictions for less student intake is true

resenting university Vice-Chancellors and students have reacted angrily. They described the moves as "an act of self-harm" and warned that it could have "a dire impact on teaching quality."

The University and College General Secretary Sally Hunt warned, "If these cuts go ahead the dreams of thousands of students, consistently encouraged to apply to university by the Government, will be shattered. Massive funding cuts will have a massive impact. The sector simply cannot do more for less. Our higher education system is already creaking under the pressure of government efficiency savings."

The Director-General of the Rus-

sell Group of twenty leading British research-led universities, Wendy Pittatt, agreed, "Our leading institutions cannot continue to be internationally competitive, provide a first-rate teaching experience and offer generous support to disadvantaged students without access to increased funding."

A spokeswoman for College announced they do not expect the announcements this week to affect the intake of students for next year.

"The number of new Imperial undergraduate students starting in 2010 is expected to be much the same as in 2009 – we don't expect to see an increase. The 2009 u/g entrants were:

1,575 home/EU, 722 overseas, so a total of just under 2,300," she said.

Universities are also to be fined for letting in too many students last year. Together with the new funding cuts, a 10 per cent increase in applications this year, and the bottleneck from many of last year's students having been offered deferred entry on the assumptions that the problems were one-offs, this could lead to hundreds of thousands of applicants not receiving university places this year.

Professor Les Ebdon, chairman of Million+, a body that represents younger universities, argued that the cuts are "completely counter-intuitive." He also added that "the evidence

points to rising demand but less funding for student support, which the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) provided to allow 10,000 additional students to be recruited in 2009 has been withdrawn and universities will not have these numbers available for students wishing to start university in 2010."

The Government's Universities Minister David Lammy has responded to the criticisms by claiming that "there has been a lot of scaremongering about savings we have asked HEFCE to make. But we are now confident that HEFCE can achieve these in a way that minimises the impact on teaching and students as we asked for in our recent grant letter." He continued by saying that "going to university has always been a competitive process. It is essential that we manage growth to maintain the quality of our higher education. Even given the increase in students attending university the ratio of lecturers to students is higher today than it was even five years ago."

Looking through the responses to this news on the internet, *felix* has found a generally negative consensus. Popular suggestions for alternative means for the government to cut funds include targeting them on less academic courses and universities.

At the bottom of the pile: Clubs and Societies

Dan Wan investigates how the Union will act in response to the now necessary College cuts

Whilst prospective students to Imperial may suffer from the budget cuts announced this week, current students may be wondering how they will be affected by the deficit left in next year's budget. Although experts have argued that teaching quality will suffer, *felix* looks into how Imperial's student union will suffer, and effectively any student involved with any of the 300+ Clubs or Societies.

Imperial College Union is set to take some slack of nationwide higher education cuts, the second time this has occurred in successive years. Last year, the Union took a 5% cut on the College subvention (money given to them by College the previous year). Next year's money allocation looks to follow the trend of further financial slashes in light of the HEFCE's recent announcements.

WHERE WILL THE UNION DECIDE TO TAKE FINANCIAL CUTS?

Realistically, there are two options that Union President Ashley Brown can take when deciding where to reshape his budgets to the latest money constraints. He can either create savings centrally, or allocate clubs and societies lower budgets. Central savings refer to staffing and essential overhead costs that help run the Union on a daily basis, and this is what took the brunt of the cuts in this year's budget.

This year, the clubs and societies did not see evidence of the 5% cut received by the Union, as Jenny Morgan, last year's Union President saw fit to compensate the 5% deficit by the money saved by making a senior member of staff re-

dundant. This year saw a total of £360,000 given directly across all clubs and societies. College's subvention totals £1.25 million.

Another option that the Union has considered is to use the money from Executive Reserve; a pool of 'back-up' money that is generally added upon each year and can typically be used for the one-off costs that are necessary during the course of the year. With extra funds added, the Executive Reserve money currently stands at approximately £20,000.

Some of the £20,000 will be used to upgrade the Union building's security, which is currently seriously flawed. In the past months, *felix* has reported numerous counts of vandalism and suspected break-ins.

However, *felix* can report that the money from Executive Reserve will not make up the latest budget cuts placed on the Union by College for next year.

CLUBS & SOCIETIES SLASHED

There will not be much spare cash lying around next year as hundreds of the Union-run Clubs & Societies look set to take a cut on their budgets from last year.

As club and society chairs finalise their budget requests for the year 2010-11 this week, there is certainty amongst the Union staff that the vast majority of them will not receive the amount they ask for. February each year usually sees each club or society committee decide on their budgeting requests for the following academic year starting that August.

On top of the grants given to each club or

society, finance and administration assistance generally equates to about a third of the Union's overall budget for each year.

Mr. Brown acknowledges that there needs to be other ways in which the Union can save money to mitigate the cuts.

He said: "We have been looking at other options, such as reducing the amount of paper we generate, particularly around freshers' week. This has benefits for both environmental and cost reasons, but is comparatively small."

HOW BIG WILL THE CUTS BE?

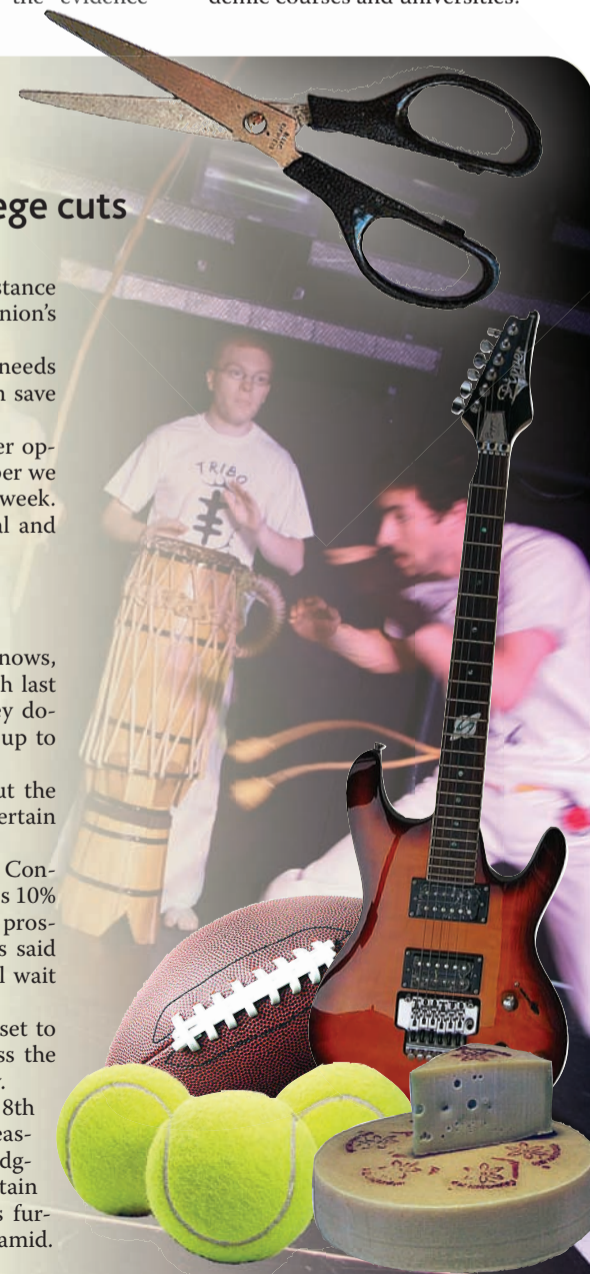
The simple answer is that no one quite knows, but there will be cuts at least on par with last year. There is speculation that the money donated by College to the Union could be up to 20% less than last year's allocation.

HEFC cuts look to be around 7-8% but the Union President is wary of other uncertain factors.

"The worst-case scenario is that a new Conservative government comes in and slashes 10% across the board. That's where the scary prospect of a 20% cut appears. Cameron has said they wouldn't do that if elected, but we'll wait and see," he said.

It has been said that The Union looks set to decide on an initial 15% reduction across the board in response to financial uncertainty.

Budgeting officially closes on Monday 8th February for all Clubs & Societies, and treasurers are now having to rethink their budgeting strategies for next year under uncertain circumstances regarding the size of cuts further up in Imperial College's financial pyramid.



THE UNION ALLOWS STUDENTS FULL-VIEW OF THE ONGOING 3RD PHASE OF BEIT'S REDEVELOPMENTS

It's Wednesday night and the clock is ticking slowly towards midnight; pints are downed and you're straight to the bar to order a very necessary round of tequila slammers. It's that time every Imperial student dreads: when the stewards usher you out of the mediocre establishment that is Da Vinci's bar and into dBs, what has been unanimously judged by students as an appalling attempt at a 'nightclub'. Staggering across the Union, cheesy flashing disco lights and ill-judged drum and bass meet scrums of people in drunken mob-mentality fighting for yet another drink at the one small bar dBs nightclub houses. Another drunkenly-torrid (but cheap) Wednesday night rolls on once again.

This is a typical Wednesday night for many a student at Imperial.

In the last few weeks, Imperial College Union President, Ashley Brown and his team have announced the imminent £2.4 million renovation of the Union's nightlife venues. By the new academic year, a typical Wednesday night will hopefully play out something closer to:

It's Wednesday night and you're not paying too much attention to the time. It's that time every Imperial student is warmly familiar with; the barman calls for last orders in [a new student-chosen bar name] bar. There isn't any need to make the last-minute dash for another pint there, so you drunkenly skip across the Union into the newly-opened [a new student-chosen venue name] nightclub. The reverberating bass line meets the lambent lights from an extensive bar area, and that girl you've smiled at in lectures is casually leaning up against it. A barman looks over to you to see

"Students are encouraged to keep providing feedback."

what you fancy, and a brilliant (and cheap) Wednesday night at the Union rolls on once again.

That's the plan, anyway. The official name for this plan is Phase 3. Whilst Phase 1 and 2 saw the refurbishment of the Union offices, reception and activity spaces, the final phase of the Union's revamp of their Beit Quad building is the one the vast majority of students have spent years waiting for. Freshers will be astounded and impressed, and just maybe they won't come to the same conclusion that we all did two weeks into our first years: "The Union is shit".

To make sure those words are never uttered again in South Kensington, this year's team of sabbatical officers have made sure Phase 3 has been entirely student-led. From initial design plans to giving the new bars their names, student views and ideas have been on the forefront of this project. During November of last year, Deputy President (Finance & Services) Daniel Hill spent time in the Junior Common Room extensively talking to students about what was wrong with the Union bars' current set-up. The Union have even taken the brave decision to hand over the naming rights to the students by running a "Rename the Bars" competition with *felix*.

The Union has continued to keep

this costly refurbishment as transparent to the students as possible. Felix was curious what was happening with the £2.4million so asked for 3D concept designs, and the Union were happy to oblige. Daniel Hill, Deputy President (Finance & Services) explains: "This phase will have a lot more student involvement as it's more front-facing. We've got everyone's feedback".

The Union have also set up a Phase 3 blog and are encouraging Twitter-led feedback (add #phase3 to your tweets) to keep students up to date with the latest developments on what they describe as a "much needed" renovation. There is an element of 'don't say we didn't ask' about the ethos of these accessories as students are encouraged to keep providing feedback on what the Union posts on the blog, found on the Union website.

It is clear the people working on Phase 3 are immensely proud of their progress so far, and are not scared to place potential stumbling blocks out into the public domain via their blog. The first of the inevitably long list of solutions needed to be found for problems during the planning stages is that of a load-bearing steel pillar directly in view of a newly-positioned stage in the nightclub currently dubbed dBs. The blog states that: "The pillar obscures part of the stage area and could be a problem when it comes to hosting live bands in the new nightclub." After providing images of the pillar's positioning, they pass over the question quite clearly to the student body to answer: "Do we really need to spend the time and money on removing this pillar? Will this pillar prevent bands from touring this venue?"

Your chance to name the new venues

The Union are handing over the responsibility of coming up with names for the renovated bar and nightclub, currently known as Da Vinci's and dBs, to the students. It's your chance to have a bit of fun and make your mark on Imperial's history in quite a big way.

The *Rename the Bars* competition will be implemented with an open suggestion box for names for both the bar and nightclub, then the Union President and his team will shortlist five names picked from the suggestions. The final decision is handed back to the students as they vote in an online poll on felixonline.co.uk from 18th February. So, have a good name for the Union's venues? See below.

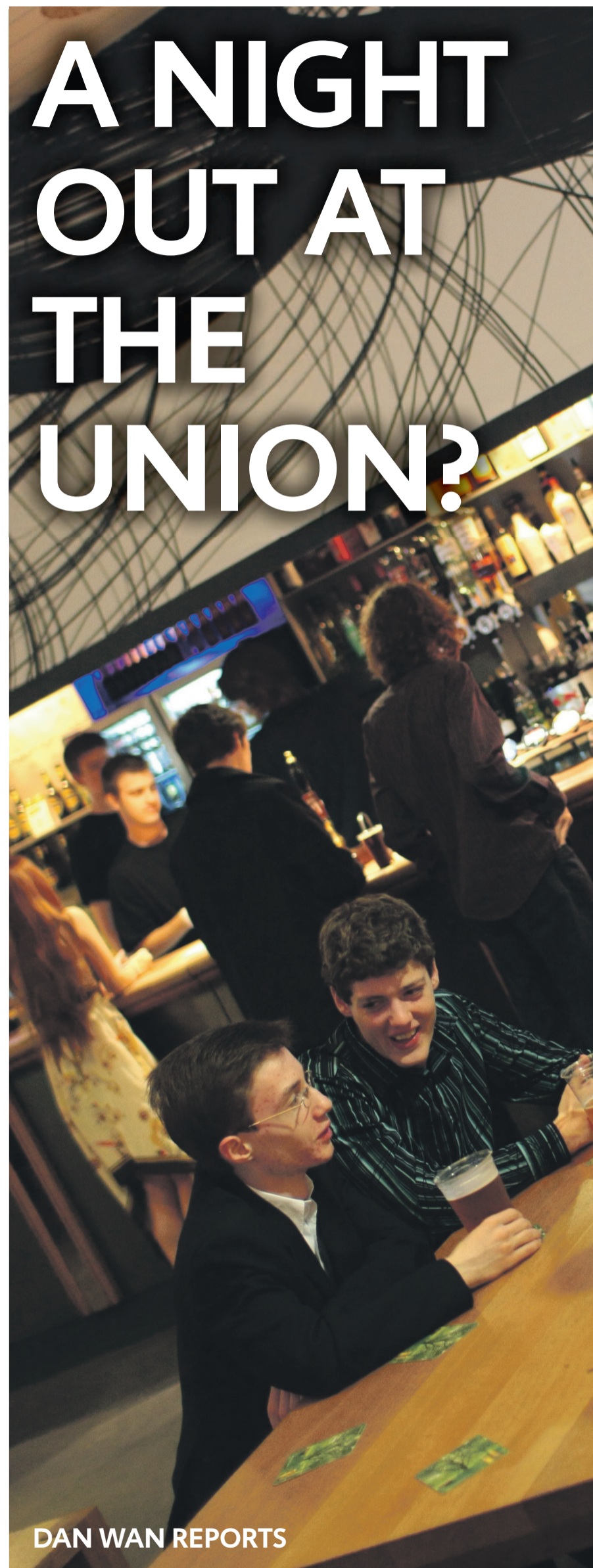
Send in your name suggestions for

1. The new nightclub (currently dBs)
2. The new bar (currently Da Vinci's)

to

renamethebars@imperial.ac.uk
or use #phase3 in your tweets

A NIGHT OUT AT THE UNION?



DAN WAN REPORTS

AS THE UNION RELEASE THEIR £2.4MILLION PLANS TO REVAMP IMPERIAL'S NIGHTLIFE, THEY WANT YOU TO RENAME THE NEW BAR AND NIGHTCLUB THAT WILL REPLACE DA VINCI'S AND dBs.



What can £2.4m buy you?
 20 weeks, 6 days, 2 hours, 9 minutes and 36 seconds of Wayne Rooney's footballing services

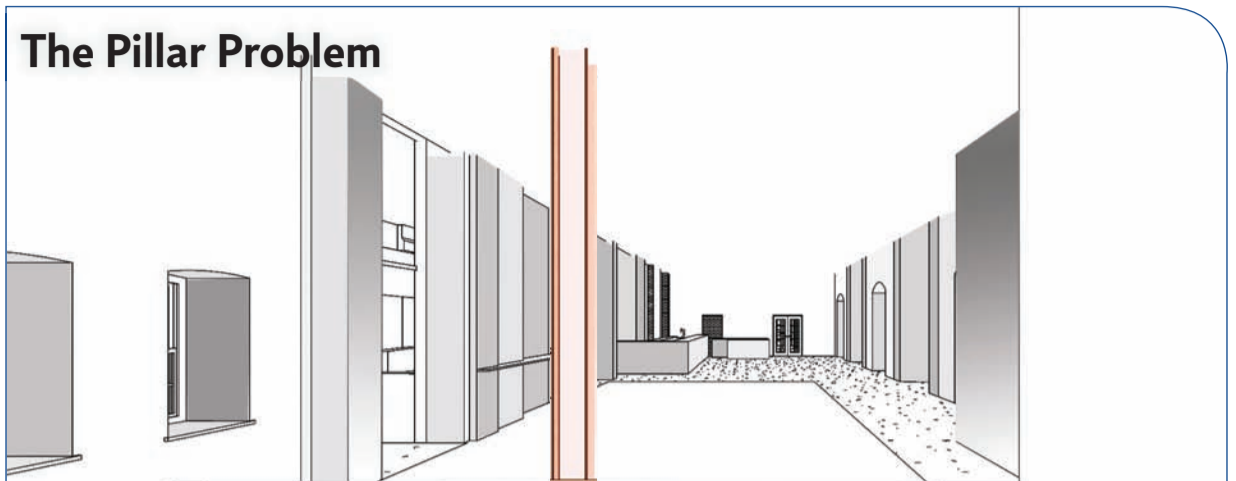
9.6 million
 Freddo chocolate bars

1.2 million
 pints of Snakebite at the Union

A three-bedroom flat
 in South Kensington

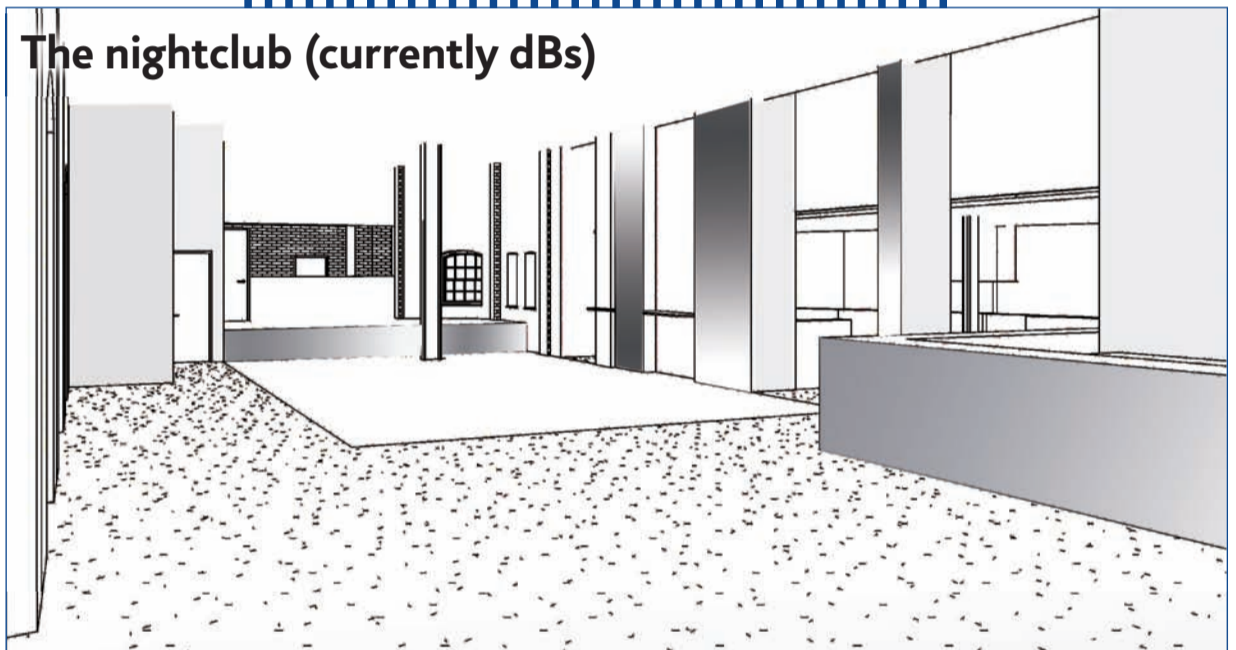
A nightlife at Imperial?

The Pillar Problem



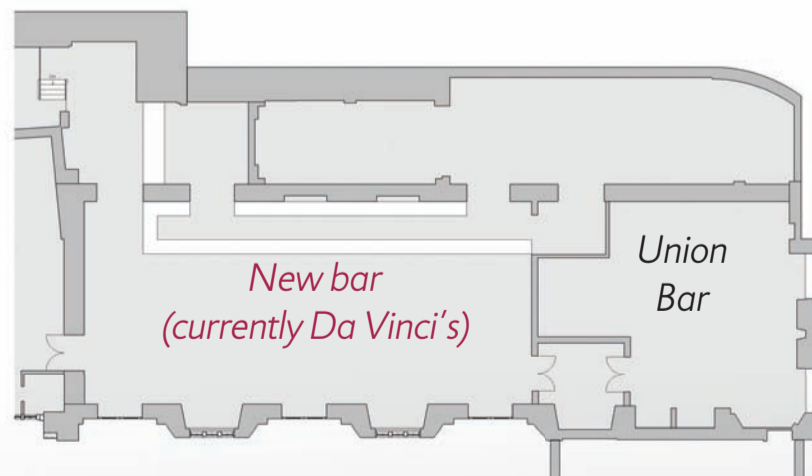
The pillar poses the first problem that Phase 3 has come across. The pillar, highlighted in red, is positioned directly in front of the stage. The view from the new stage is modelled here. However, the pillar is load-bearing, i.e. it holds up the building, and hence is structurally crucial. The removal would be a complicated and expensive procedure. There is mounting debate on the blog and amongst the staff whether time and money should be spent removing the pillar, which is thought to be expensive and may delay the opening of the venue by weeks.

The nightclub (currently dBs)



Presently called dBs, the nightclub is set to be the biggest project of Phase 3. The stage will be moved to the far end of the room, where the pillar (see above) will cause problems. The stage hopes to allow live concerts and gigs to be housed too. Where the bar and 'sandwich bar' are now will be replaced with an semi-enclosed area with comfortable seating, whilst the new bar will be much larger than present. More floor space and more doors to the outside will increase capacity to 650.

The bar (currently Da Vinci's)



Da Vinci's room plan will remain approximately the same, but the bar promises to be much longer than it currently is. All furnishing and decor will be changed, and designs are yet to be confirmed. The Union Bar on the other hand looks to remain largely untouched. Some paintwork will be undertaken leaving the traditional wooden-panelling.

KCL slash Humanities



Alex Karapetian

King's College London faces controversy and fierce opposition as they announce plans to make cuts in the School of Arts and Humanities, including the firing of several internationally renowned academics.

KCL's Department of Philosophy are outraged pending the forced retirement of Professor Charles Travis and lecturers Dr. Wilfried Meyer-Viol and Director of Graduate Studies Professor Shalom Lappin.

Professor Lappin commented online that he was "summoned without warning" by the Head of Arts and Humanities and told that his "position would be redundant as of September".

Professor Lappin claims to have turned down a position at Hebrew University's Computer Science Department after being assured that his job at King's was secure by the same Head that informed him of his upcoming redundancy.

A group of graduate students have written a letter which has been pre-



Dr. Wilfried Meyer-Viol was one of three renowned academics asked to leave as a result of KCL's cuts in their School of Arts and Humanities

sented to management, to which they await a response.

These cuts, called "callous" and "reckless" by the Research Assessment Exercise, were described by a letter of opposition from UCL and other universities' academic staff as "savage", and that "such a reduction of staff numbers through compulsory redundancy removes any appearance of job security for academics at King's." The letter adds: "The best candidates in the humanities will shun the institution, and those of strong standing now in post will all seek to leave. The reorganisation will succeed in the aim of making a once great institution

manifestly mediocre."

Imperial has come under similar scrutiny in the past for proposing cuts to make 60% of foreign language classes offered to undergraduates for credit disappear by 2010. Being a largely scientific community, many students believed the department was paramount to maintain foreign language proficiency due to its desirability in employment.

As well as the cuts in the Departments of Computer Science and Philosophy, concerns arose in KCL regarding further cuts in the Department of Music and the closure of the Paleography department.

The Times reports that KCL had intent to make 22 academics redundant in Arts and Humanities, while the lecturers union called an emergency meeting for February 10th due to the estimated 205 posts at risk and up to 533 jobs which could be lost.

A spokesperson from King's College London was not able to comment due to "prioritising our own student communications at the moment."

Societies in room trouble with College

Rox Middleton

After thousands of pounds worth of damage caused to our Union by individuals, it appeared this week that it is now some clubs and societies who are mistreating Union facilities and College property. They face the threat of being banned from the use of College rooms and being charged to use space in the Union as well if the behaviour does not stop. On Monday, Union President Ashley Brown sent an email to every club highlighting the worst offences. This included considerable damage discovered in the newly renovated gym and activity spaces after just a fortnight, inflicted by clubs who failed to report it. Mr. Brown now wants to talk to whichever club left paint on the new floor to arrange for its removal.

Another issue is dumping of rubbish at the waste disposal unit in Beit. Commercial waste is removed from the bins in the unit in Beit Quad but when it's filled with large debris by societies, the council will no longer remove it, and rats are encouraged within the quad.

College building managers have complained about rooms being persistently left in disarray, particularly in EEE and Huxley where there are large seminar rooms available, currently for no fee.

This is such a problem that they are threatening the clubs and societies with a ban from the use of College property. This would severely intensify pressure on space in the Union, which is already struggling to provide the space required.

Ashley Brown says he hopes spot checks of the premises, and socie-

ties being asked to report on each other will force them to be more conscientious.

Clubs and societies have also been abusing the room bookings system, meaning many rooms are booked and not used, and some clubs are using rooms for unacceptable amounts of time, given the pressure of up to 300 societies trying to find somewhere to meet. This comes after complaints about the fiasco which means there will be no Grand Finale at ArtsFest this year due to the Great Hall being already booked up. Mr. Brown threatened that, in order to prevent unscrupulous overbooking in the future, payment for Union rooms could be introduced. This would squeeze every club that makes use of these facilities.

Mr. Brown pointed out in his email that after cuts in the Union's budget by the university, they would be attempting to recoup some of the money by renting out the newly renovated spaces in Beit over the summer.

He said this could be the source of tens of thousands of pounds if the rooms were in good condition, something the Union cannot afford to lose by allowing damage by individual clubs.



Union President Ashley Brown sent out a threatening email warning clubs and societies about the misuse of College rooms booked through the Union.

Hacking away at the news

Dan Wan Editor-in-Chief



As Editor of a student newspaper in a student union without any real political agenda, you know these kind of weeks are coming. Those weeks where almost nothing happens of any worth are the ones when you try to prepare for, you think you've prepared for, but when push comes to shove, you haven't really. Well last week was the push, and this week's the callous shove into an oblivion of unfilled and pointless headlines.

Now, I'm not saying the headlines we've run with this week are pointless, and they're clearly not unfilled; there's black on white as you can see for yourself. The weeks of oblivion are the ones where the editors and writers have to dig deep and really dredge out topical and interesting articles for you to read. Mining for stories

that are both taxing, so I really do hope you appreciate this week's issue.

Anyone who uses the Student Activities Centre in the Union will have probably seen me relentlessly hunting down members of staff or certain Deputy Presidents of the Union, and the result of it is that this week's news is quite hacky. I can only apologise. If you don't know what a 'hack' is, it is the type of person that thinks the Union and its associated politics are the most important agenda in the world. They have an unnervingly concise knowledge and overstated opinion on every little aspect of the Union, from the internal society claim forms to constitution updates. Everything in Beit Quad is integral to the running of the nation, and a hack wouldn't be half-surprised if Gordon Brown marched into Beit and

announced that he was taking over the operations were so important.

By definition, I am a hack. I need to be, really. I have to understand Union politics like it's simple integration by numbers of four-compound alpha-uranium-produced matrices, otherwise I couldn't do my job. However, I do try and detach myself from the world of hackery and hopefully I'll come out of this job alive. I've tried to keep articles about Union finances and politics simple and structured, because the matters being discussed do matter to everyone, I promise. People just won't care if they have to sieve through the silly terms the Union use like "Executive Reserve".

Joking aside, after last year's rocky relationship, *felix* and the Union have a decent understanding this year. This is evidenced by their willingness to run

the competition to rename the Union bars through the paper. The best (possibly worst) way of describing this is if both *felix* and the Union had Facebook profiles (which I'm convinced they both do). *felix* would be in an 'Open Relationship with Imperial College Union'. We feed off each other, we both have needs each other can provide, but *felix* isn't scared of turning around on the Union, stamping on its feet and putting a gun to its head demanding answers when need be. It's just we're still waiting for that time when we can get our rifle out and load it.

See, 500 words or so and I haven't made a single cat pun like I usually do. I think you've all realised *felix* is a feline creature by

now without me making what I deem clever quips about claws and pussies and whatnot.



To pay or not to pay

When you are a full-time student you are entitled to certain benefits. One of these is not having to pay council tax – you can get an exemption certificate from the Student Hub. Send this to your local council and then you should be exempt.

In an ideal world showing your eligibility for council tax exemption should be as simple as above, however in The Advice Centre we see many students who have actually been billed for council tax. Why is this? Below are some of the reasons why students may get billed:

- The property the student lives in is also occupied by non-students. It is important to remember that it is the property that council tax applies to, not people, so if a student lives with non-students then the property is only eligible for a 25% discount.
- The council has no proof the student studies full-time. This problem can often occur when students forget to submit their exemption certificates or in some cases the council believes the exemption certificate is not descriptive enough.

- An international student who lives with their spouse. If the spouse is here on a visa and has no recourse to public funds in their passport then they should be exempt, however, the council is likely to still send a bill. If the International student's spouse is from the EU however then they are eligible to pay with a 25% discount.
- PhD students. Some councils this academic year have started to bill postgraduate PhD students. This is due to a test case in court where a PhD student in writing up lost an appeal. This issue can be appealed however and The Advice Centre has had cases of this overturned.
- Council admin error. There are some instances where a student can be billed due to an admin error at the council.

The rule to go by on council tax issues is that if you are a registered full-time student and you are studying over 21 hours a week, then you meet the criteria for council tax exemption. So, if you are billed you should approach The Advice Centre which can help with this issue for you.



It should also be noted that students themselves cannot be pursued for council tax, so for example, if the student lives with non-students then it is the non-students who are pursued.

If you find you are having any issues or problems with council tax please do not hesitate to contact The Advice Centre:

Email: advice@imperial.ac.uk

Tel: 020 7594 8067

Drop in: The Advice Centre, Level 2M, Union Building, Beit Quad, South Kensington Campus.

The Graduate Schools University Challenge Event

Thursday 18th February 2010
6pm, G16, SAF Building, South Kensington
6pm: Event Starts
7pm: Drinks and Snacks Reception

Based on the BBC programme, which is currently seeing Imperial's University Challenge team in fine form, this event will feature teams from GSEPS and GSLSM, pitted against one another as they endeavour to triumph in this annual event. The evening will be hosted by Peter Evans (BBC Radio 4, Science Now) and will be followed by a drinks reception.

This event is open to all Postgraduate students to attend.

Contestants Needed! If you are interested in joining one of the two teams - Please email the graduate.schools@imperial.ac.uk

Sabbatical
Elections
 2010

Bright candidates required!



Positions available:
 President
 Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)
 Deputy President (Education)
 Deputy President (Finance & Services)
 Deputy President (Welfare)
 Felix Editor
 & 4 Student Trustees

Nominations open 16 February



Majid Al-Khalil asks Israel to learn from history



"The entire Israeli-Arab conflict oozes with hypocrisy"



The Palestinian Society did indeed organize an event to remind people of what happened in Gaza a year ago. Not to look for sympathy, but because, as Mr. Amit so well recognizes, it is important to learn from history. In order to do that, people need to remember, understand and apply to the present and the emerging future whatever they can learn from the past. Not an easy task, as Israel clearly demonstrates to all of us.

The ferocity of the Zionist lobby is such that it has led to a climate where the only figures that the media dare quote are those published by the Israelis themselves for fear of being labelled as one sided or accused of reporting falsehoods – a questionable set of circumstances if ever there was one. In truth, the full extent of the impact of the Israeli bombardment of Gaza one year ago may never be fully known. What is known is that well over 1,300 Palestinians were killed during "Operation Cast Lead", over 400 of which were children, with more than 5,000 left wounded. On the Israeli side, 13 were killed, 10 of these were soldiers, 4 of which died as a result of "friendly fire".

There are even fears that many of those who were wounded, yet survived the attack may be at an elevated risk of cancer after the reported use of DIME explosives and non-depleted uranium. This from a nation that suffered appalling persecution and systematic murder in their own recent past. One wonders where the lessons of history went.

The obliteration of the infrastructure in Gaza and the starvation of its people of the most basic essentials, including clean drinking water, continues to this day and may be seen as a collective punishment for electing their own leaders in the form of Hamas. Although the Israeli settlements were dismantled in 2005, Israel remains in complete control of the air and sea around Gaza, as well as the crossings into Israel. It is still, under international law, deemed to be an "occupying power" and is therefore bound by the fourth Geneva convention to ensure the supply of food, medical and other essential services. The report of the UN fact-finding mission on the Gaza crisis published after the war found that "the Government [of Israel] retains wide discretion about the timing and manner of delivering fuel and electricity supplies to the Gaza Strip, and

that this discretion appears to have been exercised capriciously and arbitrarily."

With regards to the tunnels under the Egyptian border which it was alleged in last week's article were used to import "explosives instead of medicine and food" the same report called them "a lifeline for the Gaza economy and the people" and described them as "a necessary means of survival under the circumstances". With regards to the importing of weapons into the Gaza strip, one may well ask why it is that the people of Gaza are the only ones in the entire Middle East who should not be allowed weapons with which to defend themselves against one of the most advanced military forces in the world.

It is certainly true that Arab nations are partly to blame for the extent of the current situation. One could even argue that the continuous spectacle of the domination of the Palestinians is favourable to the corrupt kings, emirs and puppet presidents who rule the rest of the Arab world. For them, it may be advantageous to convince their native Arab populations that they should be docile and make no attempt to resist their dictators. However, what last week's article fails to mention is that this lack of solidarity is supported by

the Israelis themselves. Tzipi Livni, the then Israeli foreign minister used a stage in Cairo to announce that Israel was prepared to use military force in Gaza and embraced Hosni Mubarak almost as the first bombs fell. More recently, Egyptian plans have been announced to build an underground barrier beneath the border with Gaza in order to halt the tunnels. All this Egyptian treachery has been carried out through tacit complicity with Israel. Furthermore, to allege that the Egyptians have a greater obligation than the Israelis to provide for Gaza's starving due to a greater cultural or religious affinity doesn't seem to do justice to the principle that we are all human, regardless of race. Why should an Arab have a particular allegiance towards another Arab? Are we not all the same?

It is hypocritical for Israel to accuse the Egyptians of treating the Palestinians badly, but then again, the entire Israeli-Arab conflict oozes with hypocrisy. The Israeli government says that it wants peace and yet openly allows the further construction of settlements in the west bank that are deemed illegal under international law and does its utmost to decrease the quality of life of every Pal-

estinian through a system of checkpoints and apartheid that beggars belief. Since September 2000, 68 women have given birth at Israeli checkpoints, resulting in 34 miscarriages. To deny the Palestinians the most basic freedoms and then punish them for taking up arms is ludicrous.

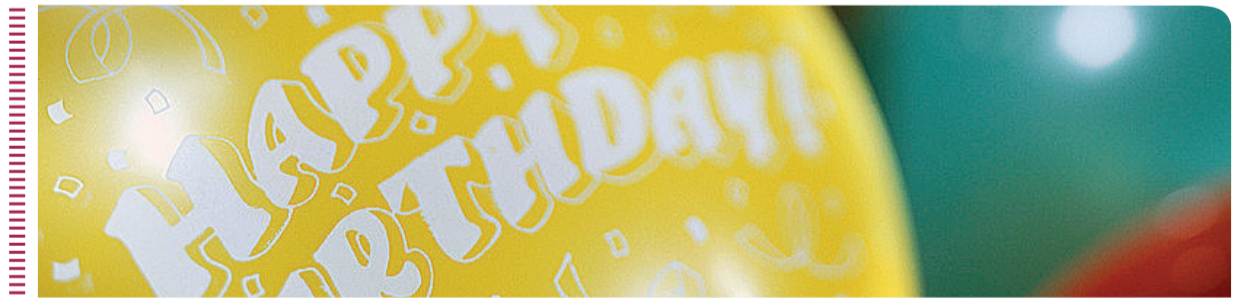
Perhaps the greatest hypocrisy of all is that Israel is a nation forged from the suffering of the Holocaust, surely the greatest crime ever committed in human history. We should indeed "learn from experience" and it is therefore unacceptable that Israel is a country whose very foundation is built upon race and which treats those in Gaza in the same manner as the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto. Anyone who raises these examples or who criticises Zionism – a political ideology rooted in racism, is simply branded anti-Semitic. The goal of the Israelis since 1948 can only be the complete erasure of all remnants of Palestinian culture and history. The Arab problem is reflected in the words of David Ben Gurion himself: "If I were an Arab leader I would never make terms with Israel. That is natural: we have taken their country... Why should they accept that?"

*Quote from page 99 of "The Jewish Paradox" by Nahum Goldmann, 1978.

Rhys Davies is an old birthday grump



"I don't understand the preoccupation with celebrating birthdays"



It's my birthday on Monday. Happy birthday me! I'll be twenty one..

But it's not a big deal. All it does is mark another lap of the Earth's continual circumnavigation of the Sun, the twenty-first with me tagging along for the ride. But my birthday isn't very meaningful in itself. To the regret of my colleagues and lecturers, I won't suddenly be filled with wit and wisdom that was absent on Sunday night. This isn't Pokémon – I won't suddenly evolve into someone stronger and smarter at Level 21. Shame.

Twenty-one isn't even a particularly spectacular year. I kissed goodbye to my awkward teenage years twelve months ago and am already well into the awkward twenty-something years. Yes, I can drink in America...but the Union is consider-

ably closer, and possibly cheaper too. Over here, all the fun stuff I can do at twenty-one I could do at eighteen at the latest.

I don't understand the preoccupation with celebrating birthdays either. It's not like the olden days of yore when surviving for a whole year was something to be congratulated. Living in modern-day London, I have little to fear from the Black Death, leopards, falling pianos and the countless other perils that plagued my ancestors – with the possible exception of TB. Providing I don't do anything too stupid (no promises – I am a medical student), it's quite certain I can reach pensionable age...whatever that might be when I get there. Maybe then there is room for celebrating birthdays at the beginning and end of life, those times when not dying for

twelve (consecutive) months is an actual challenge.

But one thing birthdays are good for is demonstrating the inevitable march of time. We don't get an infinite supply of birthdays, barely a hundred if we're very lucky and every birthday that passes is one closer to our last. Oh, that's a cheery thought...but I'm glad for the reminder. If I didn't have this impetus to get a move on and do something with my life, I might just wake up one morning and find out I'm dead. And that kind of thing can put a real crimp in your day, believe me.

So what lies waiting for me in the lay-bys on the highway of life? In comes The Plan. First of all, I have to finish my degree, obviously. Then I have to find a job and lather, rinse, repeat until I retire.

Then I can play bridge, learn to paint and take caravan holidays in Cornwall. All the while, I'll be trying to iron out the small print in the social contract, the bits that refer to a wife, kids and a Ford Focus on the drive. That's more or less it. And that's more or less...boring!

While I admit it's a good plan, a perfectly serviceable plan, there's no way I could be content with such a plan. It's too neat, too safe...too small! The Universe is nearly fourteen billion years old, and that's just the bits we know about! It is also what we in the business like to describe as "really big." Even if I never make it past the moon, there's still plenty to see closer to home. Twilights and sunrises, the nights of the northern lights, the heights of the Himalayas, the sights of Giza, Guyana

and Gloucestershire, the lights of New York (New York!) and frightfully more besides. And all far more interesting than catching the 7:13 bus to work in the midst of the morning rush hour. And I only have another sixty, maybe seventy years to see it all!

Life is undeniably short. That axiom is chiselled into my consciousness a bit deeper with every new birthday. But no-one said that life had to be impossibly small. Live big. Live huge. Live outrageously astronomical with a conservatory on the back!

I'm reminded of a birthday card I received last year. Inside it was a sentiment I've taken very much to heart; Growing older is inevitable. Growing up is optional.

Ken Wu discusses media sex sensationalism



"The devastating trifecta of Sex, Scandal and the Sun have robbed us of a great player"



BC News is widely considered to be the rock of British journalism. It is one of the finest broadcasting institutions in the world and I think of it as one of the quintessential sources of global news. So when the two most read articles on the BBC News website are about Jordan's marriage and John Terry's affair, I was thoroughly outraged. Somehow, the stories more akin to the allure of the Sun's page 3 has managed to make it to one of the most respected news outlets in the world. It seems that people care more about big boobs and the pulling prowess of a footballer than people dying in Iraq.

In the past few months, two sex scandals have rocked the celebrity obsessed world of Heat magazine – Tiger Woods and John Terry. Both are

world class sportsmen, earning millions and living the luxurious life of a modern sportsman. Both also have scintillatingly beautiful wives and enviable families. However, both men have, in the words of a good friend of mine "lost the control of the lower half of their body". Personally, I couldn't care less what Woods or Terry gets up to off the field and I think the majority of the public also couldn't care less. I think if John Terry captains England to World Cup victory this summer, no-one would care that he has slept with more women than a porn star. Similarly if Tiger Woods beats Jack Nicklaus' record of 18 Golf Majors, he would dominate the front pages for very different reasons.

The argument goes that they are more than sportsmen, they are role models for the public and their pub-

lic image is just as important as their sporting achievements. Unfortunately the fundamental flaw in that argument is that there is a microscopically small chance that anybody will copy every aspect of a celebrity's life.

Children and teenagers are most likely to be influenced by what they see and hear in the media, but it would be insulting to presume that all of them have no sense of judgement. If people are afraid that children will think that cheating and being promiscuous is cool due to the fact that their sporting heroes do it, then they are more naive and ignorant than those very children.

To quote "The West Wing", "show the average teenager a picture of a [tyre] wrench and his thoughts will turn to lust" I think teenagers do not require a promiscuous celebrity before they become promiscuous themselves.

There is a nagging inconsistency in both scandals. Aided by the sensationalism of the Sun and the machine that is the "Screw of the World" (News of the World), suddenly a plethora of women have come out claiming they have "rode and conquered" the sporting icons. Furthermore, the actual affair/one night stand happened several months ago. It begs the question "Why now?" and while some may be genuine others are just opportunistic. This is the point where I actually feel a bit sorry for Woods and Terry. You see the difference between sporting celebrities and Hollywood celebrities is that most sporting stars have talent while most Hollywood stars have talented looks.

The devastating trifecta of Sex, Scandal and the Sun have robbed England of a great player, and maybe even

the World Cup and the golfing world of an all time legend. Meanwhile, the "guilt-ridden" women will have earned a handy sum of money, got their "15 minutes of fame" and obtained a career being a professional celebrity, with magazine shoots by Nuts (case in point, Rebecca Loos).

I think the men, the women and the tabloids are all relatively blameless. The real culprits are the general public. The truth is, the public despite the fact that they hate it, have an insatiable appetite for sex scandals. It fuels the tabloids, drives the women to drool over any celebrity and culminated in the celebrity obsessed age that we are in today. It is only human to make a mistake in any situation but for someone like John Terry, a mistake sparks the inevitable fires of a sensational scandal.

Gilead Amit on the pushy salesmen of today



"Today's Purchase Intermediators have far more flexibility"



Excuse me, Sir, could you spare a moment of your time?

No, sorry, I'm in a bit of a rush.

Not to worry, Sir, it'll barely take a minute.

No; really, I'm terribly sorry, but I can see that a fresh round of bread has just been taken out of the oven and I'd quite like to get to the bakery aisle before the baguettes start to cool.

I completely understand, Sir. I merely wanted to show you a new product that I thought might be of interest to you.

Oh, well, if you put it like that.

Thank you, Sir.

Not at all. Would you mind loosening your grip on my scarf just a bit, I'm finding it rather difficult to breathe.

It's an exclusive new release, Sir, on an item that is bound to take the country by storm.

No, really, I can feel myself rapidly drifting out of consciousness.

Oh I am sorry, Sir – I am so terribly clumsy sometimes. As I was saying, by having the financial acumen to shop at this illustrious high street purveyor of goods, you have been granted the unique opportunity to try out free samples of the hottest product in the European market today.

I see, <cough>. And, uh, what <cough> would that be?

May I present to you, Sir, the Modern Purchase Intermediator – as he stands before you now.

A Purchase Intermediator?

That's absolutely correct, Sir – how perceptive of you to notice the distinction between the Purchase Intermediator of today and the 'Product Salesman' of the last millenium. The progress made in this field has been truly dramatic given the short space of time we've had to work with.

Has it.

Oh yes indeed, Sir. The old Salesmen, for instance, had the fundamental flaw of being available only in an uninspiring monochrome pinstripe suit. Today's Purchase Intermediators have far more flexibility in the sartorial domain, coming in a wide variety of clothing including casual T-shirts underneath tweed blazers, torn jeans with leather jackets, three-piece suits with fluorescent neckties and four distinct colours of Adidas trainers.

I see. And is that better?

Better? Oh, but Sir, there's simply no comparison.

Isn't there?

Why no! How can a person ever hope to Intermediate Purchases to a client's

satisfaction if he must remain rigidly confined in antiquated haberdashery? It says so right here on the label.

Right. And what is it, exactly, which I'm currently entitled to a free sample of to for then?

Why bless you, Sir – to this.

This?

But of course – this is your opportunity to see the Purchase Intermediator in action. To watch how he operates and to see whether he could fit into the busy lifestyle Sir clearly enjoys on his large and prosperous pig farm.

I...

Or is it a tanning business, Sir? I do apologise – my sense of smell is not what it used to be. In either case, Sir, our policy here at Salesbury's has always been: 'Offer Our Clients an Informed Choice'. And if the choice is between myself and a Product Salesman, Sir, I don't think you need me to tell you which is the more informed.

So what exactly would I be using you for?

Heavens to Betsy, Sir, I'm sure I don't know where to begin. We can perform any of a hundred and one different small jobs around the house more efficiently and with fewer casualties than any of your common or garden variety eggplants.

Eggplants?

Eggplants? Did I mean eggplants? Oh no, my apologies, Sir – I meant housewives. One of the things on which we pride ourselves is our flexibility.

So I would be getting a Salesman...

...a Purchase Intermediator, Sir, please...

...a Purchase Intermediator, then, because he would be more flexible than my wife?

I think, if I may be so bold, that Sir is rapidly getting hold of what could almost certainly be described as the wrong end of the stick. What we do is provide our clients with an unparalleled degree of enhanced positivity. We detoxify the inherent stress in Sir's enervated ganglions and channel the resultant symmetry into nodal field waves of radiative harmony.

Oh. Right.

We happen to have received an entirely new shipment of Purchase Intermediators today, Sir, all of whom are in our back room simply aching to come out and Intermediate like billy-o.

Where do you get these Intermediators from, then?

Oh, we fly them in directly from LA three times a week. No expense is spared in providing you with the Intermediation service you deserve. Our

Inspiration, if you would turn to the second page of your leaflet, Is Your Intermediation.

I see. Well, thank you very much for the presentation, it was really very informative and I say would you mind squeezing a little less forcefully with your thighs I'm sure I just heard something snap.

But Sir – you haven't even asked me how much our services cost, yet.

I'm fairly certain something in my ribcage has just broken.

That's absolutely correct, Sir – all these unique, irreplaceable services can be yours for the price of an old Toyota Prius.

I think I've lost most of the feeling in my left arm.

And I'm sure you don't need me to tell you that on the open market we're valued considerably more highly. So tell me, Sir, do we have a deal?

Please, just let go of my arm and you can keep my wallet.

Oh, that's very generous, Sir, but this is all we need. Thank you very much – I'm sure you'll agree this Purchase can be considered thoroughly Intermediated.

Can I go now?

I don't know, Sir – can you?

...no.

Ah.

Sports of Yesteryear: Morphy Day

Whatever happened to Morphy Day, more to the point, what is Morphy Day? Jovan Nedić looks back at the forgotten inter-faculty sporting events of Imperial's illustrious past

As some of you may know, Imperial was founded when three different college's joined together back in 1907; the Royal College of Science (RCS), the Royal School of Mines (RSM) and the City and Guilds College (C&G). There was a sense of belonging, a sense of identity to the constituent College's and rivalry that puts the current IC vs Medics one to shame. This rivalry, much like the Varsity matches of today, was focused around sports, however it was not exclusively left to the sports field, the rivalry also extended to the mascotry, but that's another story for another time.

This sporting rivalry was personified not on the fields of Harlington, but the muddy waters of the Thames; Morphy Day was, first and foremost, a boat race (yes probably both definitions). The day itself comprised of two races, the Lowry Cup was effectively the seconds crew, whilst the Morphy Cup was for the best rowers in the College.

Looking through the *felix* archive, I eventually came to a description of the very first race, written by David Hopkins in 1975.

"On the 21st March 1920, an RSM rowing eight beat C&G over a one mile course; this was the first time the colleges had raced since the revival of their individual rowing clubs after the 1st World War. Mr Arthur Morphy, father of the Guilds' stroke, Donald W Morphy, presented a cup which he had donated for the occasion."

D.W. Morphy was an Electrical Engineering student at the College and became a keen Old Centralian after he left the College, even when his company, Morphy Richards (you might of heard of them), became big.

There have been many recollections of the day in the *felix* and College archives, including video footage of the race in 1929 and this one on the IC Boat Clubs website by E. J. Cove, a Mechanical Engineering student between 1942-45.

"Apart from being Secretary of ICBC I was Captain of the C&GBC which really had no separate existence apart from the Morphy race which Guilds won both times I rowed in it. However we were awarded full C&G colours for



Morphy Day 1964: The Guilds and RCS President exchanging pies, the Mines President getting stopped by the police and the Battle of the Towpath

the event. There was always a large turnout of supporters from all three colleges on the towpath for this race and a fair scuffle normally developed to secure possession of the other colleges trophies and protect the Guild's trophy spanner!"

In one clean swoop, we see the day bring together the sporting rivalry as well as the mascotry. To begin with, the day was all about the race itself, the sporting rivalry, but as the years went on, the riverside antics increased and the Cup changed into a Day where they fought for the Morphy Oar. That's not to say that the race itself was not interesting, take the account of the race in the very first issue of *felix* back in 1949, where they had to restart the race several times because the boats kept crashing into each other. The result of

that race was a Guilds win, even though none of the boats actually reached the finish line after 80 minutes!

The race itself grew in importance over the years, with coaches being brought in to help the different boat clubs for the big day and more races introduced, including a women's race and a Rugby Race. The event was even used to unveil a new boat in 1971, when the then Rector, Lord Penny, and his wife came down to watch the races. By the late 1950s, it was considered a great honour to be part of the Morphy Crew and, more importantly, the number of spectators on the banks of the Thames increased, both student and local resident!

As the 1960s came about, the focus of the event, however, began to shift more towards the towpath instead of

the river. As the years went on, more and more of an effort was made by the Unions to organise something special and the event became a bigger RAG event year after year. Here we have the recollections from the Guilds President in 1963-64, and current Professor at the College, Prof. Bob Schroter.

"Morphy Day traditionally consisted of the constituent colleges, particularly the RCS and the Guilds, having a bit of a flour and tomato fight on the towpath. I always remember that there was a young policeman on one of those Noddy early motorcycle bike things, and that he thought he was going to stop this rampaging on the towpath, so he very foolishly rode his motorcycle into the middle of the foray and got totally, but totally, plastered in tomatoes and flour."

Don't worry though, it turns out that the supervisor of the Policeman was also there, so President Schroter went to apologise and offer to pay for the dry cleaning, but the Police Officer's response was simply that "Well, I think he has learnt to deal with crowd control". Even the then Rector, Patrick Linstead, who was hugely popular with the students and got involved with numerous student activities - mainly because

"There was a young policeman [...] who got totally, but totally, plastered in tomatoes and flour"

he was a student at the University himself - told the Faculty President's not to worry and that everything will be fine.

Flicking through the *felix* archive, I find that Morphy Day was always a social highlight of any student's calendar, becoming an integral part of RAG Week, as can be seen in the *felix* issue 402 which was a RAG special in 1975.

IC Boat

The historic Morphy Day was recreated in 2008 and 2009 in response to the many legendary tales from returning alumni about the day.

It was re-introduced as part of ICBC's annual "Christmas Eights" competition and similar to the original format. It is much more informal than the original event, and used primarily as a means of incorporating novice and senior men's and women's crews in a boat together. Although inter-faculty rivalry is not as intense as it was in the prime Morphy years, loyalty to Imperial as a single entity is unwavering.

Typically it's 07:20 am, -2 °C outside and crews have already been over an hour on the water. Sydney Olympic Gold Medallist and ICBC Head Coach Steve Trapmore is in a launch shouting instructions from a megaphone as the boat enters the final few minutes of a high intensity piece under Hammersmith Bridge. Hamstrings are



Christina Duffy, Press Officer for the Boat Club, tells us about the revival of the Morphy Cup and what it means to the rowers today

crying in pain, fingers are numb from the sub-zero water splashing over the inboard and minds are beginning to drift. The cox calls for more; you think you have nothing left to give.

And just then an exhausted voice (probably Alex Gillies), barely audible, comes wafting from the bows of the boat, "Come on IC!" The mere mention of those two letters; "I-C" and the boat surges on with renewed energy. Limp bodies are suddenly bolt upright, blades are speared into the water and Steve in the coaching launch has to flood the engine to keep up. Everyone wants a piece of the action and suddenly the whole boat is shouting; "IC! YEAH IC!"

Morphy Day encapsulated ICBC passion through faculty loyalties. This same passion lives on today at ICBC, racing as a united front.

History of Morphy Day:

Key
 ■ Royal School of Mines
 ■ City and Guilds
 ■ Royal College of Science

1920:
First Race for the Morphy Cup

1929:
Video footage of Morphy Day taken

1946:
Introduction of the Lowry Cup, a 2nd Eights race that takes place just before the Morphy Cup

1953:
Day incorporated into RAG Week as a highlight event

1961:
Initial signs of Morphy Day overshadowing the race itself

1973:
Morphy Day reintroduced
Introduction of Women's Race

1975:
D. W. Morphy dies

1971:
Morphy Day as a RAG event, banned for the first time
Introduction of the Rugger 8's as part of the Races

1986:
Banned again

1987:
Format changed, made more boring

1988:
Dropped from RAG due to lack of interest
Last ever mention of Morphy Day, both race and RAG wise...

2008:
Return of the Morphy

1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010



One of the Sabbaticals getting covered in crap in the 1980s



The policeman covered in tomatoes and flour in 1963

This tradition of Morphy Day and RAG continued throughout the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s, when all of a sudden, it just seemed to vanish in the late 1980s.

What effectively seemed to happen, as the years went on, was that two separate Morphy Days developed, a Boat Club one and a RAG one. It is the RAG one that seemed to get worse as the years went on. The first time Morphy Day was cancelled was in 1971, when a paper was presented to the Union Council suggesting that it was "inconsistent for students who wanted to show that they were responsible adults to disrupt traffic and generally behave in an anti-social manner." It was eventually brought back in 1973, although the races carried on through this ban. 12 years later, the event was banned again after it was deemed that the battles were again getting a bit out of hand, considering they were using "buckets of rotting fish and refuse" instead of the flour and tomatoes of previous years, it is not a surprise.

They tried to change the format but as a result the day lost its potency and eventually dropped all together as a RAG event in 1988 after it was deemed unpopular. Despite the antics on the towpath, the outcome of the races was fiercely cheered even up until its end, yet once the event was dropped, so did the crowds attending and it seems that race itself died out. There just seems to be no reference of the Cup from the 1990s onwards.

22 years on, and what has happened

to this once historic event? No one seems to know of it anymore, yet out of the College's 103 year history, Morphy Day was the highlight for 68 years.

When E.J. Cove came back to Imperial for a visit, he said that he was shocked that no one knew about the race and how it died out. The whereabouts of the Cup itself is a mystery, but the Morphy Oar, or at least part of it, which everyone fought over on the towpath can be found residing in the Guilds Office.

But it seems that not all is lost. A couple of years ago the Imperial Boat Club ran a series of races in which the students were split into their Faculties, and they even included the Medical School. The same was done the following year. The Morphy Cup, it seems, has made a very quiet comeback.

Back in the day, almost a third of the students at the University would descend upon the Thames to watch the race and take part in some light-hearted entertainment. Would the same happen again? Well getting a third of the University would be very impressive, it would match the crowds for the Oxford vs Cambridge Boat Race. Personally, I can't see that many people bothering to make the trip to the Thames on a cold winters day, but then again, that's how Morphy Day started in the first place. Who knows, 20 years down the line the columns of *felix* might be covering the phenomena that is Morphy Day. Or then again it might be covering the event that was Morphy Day. Only time can tell.



The RSM crew at the 2009 Morphy Race



Danny Rice comments on living with a disability

Earlier this week I was asked to write this article on disability. Why? Because I have a one. I'm not sure why this qualifies me to speak on behalf of everyone with a disability but apparently it does.

"What am I supposed to write about?"
"Whatever you want; discrimination, how some disabilities aren't obvious, how people with disabilities are the same as everyone else or how they're not and we should recognise this..."

I didn't reply then. I wasn't sure what to say at the time. I thought long and hard about what issues I would address, what message I wanted to give and here is my response:

Fuck off – everyone has something going on in their life, a disability is of no greater significance than anyone else's problems. The only difference is it's just more permanent.

I don't need to be singled out or recognised because of it. I don't need your pity or you treating me like I'm made of glass. By all means try to be conscious of my limitations to not make yourself look stupid but I'm just another human being – and that's how I'd like to be treated; not the same as everyone else, not different, but with the same level of custom consideration for what really matters that you'd show the next person. I don't understand how some people can find this so hard!

You need be no more nice to the guy in the wheelchair than you are to the next able-bodied person you meet. Or perhaps this advice is better in reverse? Be as nice to the next able-bodied person you meet as you feel you should the guy in the wheelchair – for all you know, the able-bodied individual may have more problems.

Long-term disabled individuals go through a period of acceptance where they recognise their limitations and develop an arsenal of strategies for overcoming them. The thing that makes this period of their lives hardest is the awareness of no matter where they go they're going to meet people who feel sorry for them or decide it'd be 'rude' to include them in the random selection of an individual for a task, lest it appear like they were singled out or otherwise feel 'whilst not impossible this would be harder for

them, therefore I should choose someone else'. The way people avoid giving you responsibilities (for no reason other than you possess a disability) can make you feel useless.

Perhaps you think you'd love all that attention though? The way people buzz around you trying to make your life comfortable? If you were actually experiencing it, the attraction of this idea to you would wither fast. Particularly when your disability is developed into this barrier that prevents people from talking to you. I would hate to have a disability as visible as being in a wheelchair, where it doesn't matter how old you get, there'll always be some well-intentioned person who will treat you like you're still a child or people that 'don't want to bother you'.

"Be as nice to the next able-bodied person you meet as you feel you should to the guy in the wheelchair"

Then there are the people that believe themselves as good as, if not better, than all the doctors and specialists in deciding your needs and resent you for the assistance and aid you attract, "Why does he need all that stuff? He doesn't look that bad."

This is not to say it is always necessary in every case but from time to time, doctors will come across someone and recognise just how little there is that they can do to address their actual problems and so the help is offered in other areas to try to reduce the strain.

Yet others feel they must look on and constantly be judging these decisions; deciding for themselves whether or not the individual's visible burdens are enough to 'deserve it'. Which is fine but then they will go on to resent the individual for accepting what to them could be a rare, soul-lifting break. Consider your last big problem, then imagine it was a perpetual

daily occurrence/pressure (perhaps it was/is – I'm sure you coped, are coping fine or else are aware of the many people whose job it is to help you with absolutely any problem you have though. i.e. your tutors to some extent, the college counsellors, your GP etc.), then imagine someone came along and offered you something to make life generally easier, would you not accept it?

Of course there has to be some moderation and consideration. As part of my condition, I suffer from a constant headache I try to control every day without dosing myself routinely with drugs. Some days I can barely function because of it. To partly address this I was once offered someone to sit in my lectures for me to take notes! I declined; most of the time this is something I'm able to do and I recognise the absurdity in the notion of trying to make my life as normal as possible without putting in effort. Sure, some things can and will be harder for me but I have successfully fought for my independence in these areas and I'd like to keep it that way and not make the incapable image others may have of me a reality.

As unsure as I was on how to begin this article am I on how to end it. I'm not suggesting you run out and befriend the next one-armed, paraplegic dwarf, neither am I saying you should aim to walk by them and given them no notice (as you might someone of a more typical appearance). I've highlighted the troubles of a particular sub-group of society, not to draw attention to them but to show how they're just people, like the rest of the human race they're just trying to get through life, playing out the hand they were dealt as best they can.

I'm saying we should all try to be a little less discriminatory; if you're going to give the disabled guy extra attention, don't ignore everyone else – get to know someone you pass in the corridors every day but normally don't typically say more than two words to, give some other people the attention for a change, get some in return and perhaps there's something to gain out of us just making that little bit more effort with people.

You may have noticed I've neglected to mention precisely what my condition is. I have done this intentionally, as I want to ask you to ask yourselves – does it matter?



Eye of newt... G major chord?

Brigette Atkins Science Editor

Last week one of our regular contributors emailed me regarding the 10²³ event which took place last Saturday. The event, organised by the Merseyside Skeptics Society, saw around 400 sceptics, including Simon Singh, take a homeopathic 'overdose' in an attempt to show homeopathy for the pseudo-science it is. Homeopathic remedies may be regarded as harmless placebos at best. At worst, they mislead patients by providing an unproven alternative to conventional medicine and prolonging the period before proper medical help is sought.

The British Homeopathic Association claims that many remedies have been clinically proven to be effective at treating a variety of illnesses. According to their website, they are able to treat anything from ankle sprains to HIV infections. Homeopathy is based on three principals laid out by its creator Samuel Hahnemann over 200 years ago. The Law of Similars is the first concept which declares that the remedy to an illness may be got from what caused it in the first place, such as prescribing caffeine for insomnia. The Law of Infinitesimals claims that the more dilute a remedy is, the more potent it becomes. Many homeopathic remedies are sold at 30C, that's 1 part original substance mixed with 99 parts water (or ethanol depending on the solubility) diluted in these proportions thirty times over. At 12C any solution would reach what is known as the Avogadro limit, meaning the chances of you finding any molecule of the original substance within your remedy are severely limited. The third principle is the Law of Succession whereby the dilution is shaken to increase its potency by helping the water 'remember' the original active ingredient it was mixed with.

These three principles go against

much of our current understanding of science and medicine. The fact that there is usually none of the original substance left within a remedy would surely mean that the treatment would be no more biologically active than distilled water. Homeopaths would disagree and say the water has 'memory'. We know comparatively little about liquids as states of matter go, and water is itself a peculiarity within this group. Yet this gap in our knowledge is clearly exploited here. Even if water had this 'memory', how could it possibly use it to help cure a patient?

The main trouble with homeopathy is that it has become so far removed from well reasoned science and rigorously tested medicine. Many common drugs in use today seek inspiration from naturally occurring compounds – such as aspirin, derived from salicylate-rich willow bark. Where the herbal aspects of homeopathy may have some scientific reasoning, there are many aspects that can only be described as bizarre, such as the potentiation of 'G major chord' – if anyone has an idea of what that treats, I'd be very interested to know. In this way, homeopathy cannot possibly be viewed with much respect by most of the scientific world, yet the NHS spends £4million a year on it.

Many of us buy the treatments (ar-nica anyone?); the industry is worth £40million per year. Many are adamant that homeopathy 'just works'. It seems somewhere along the line, everything we strive for in science such as thorough testing and well grounded theory has been thrown to the wind. How homeopathy has lasted so long, where any conventional medicine displaying such unsatisfactory results would have long ago been dismissed, escapes me.

One thing I'd like to know is if G major chord is soluble in water, or is an ethanol based solution required?

An alternative diet - with lasers

Can lasers make you slimmer in minutes, with no effort required?

Bernard Pereira

Trousers tight around the waist? Diet not working? Dreading the thought of pounding the pavement in the uplifting grey cold outside?

Save the sweat. In just half an hour, you can now have your fat zapped away with a blast of low intensity laser radiation that cuts through your fat cells and the inches they make up. The technique has already been approved in the US and in Europe, with clinical studies showing a statistically significant reduction in waist circumference in the subjects examined. The procedure is founded on the observations made by Rodrigo Neira in Canada (2001) that in vitro laser treatment of adipocytes (fat cells) resulted in the emulsion of intracellular fat: it seemed that the laser was disrupting the adipocyte plasma membrane and causing the release of the cellular contents, thereby destructing the cell.

This was expanded into a clinical setting, where patients undergoing liposuction were first treated with a laser, resulting in an increased volume of extracted fat during the operation as compared to 'laserless' lipo. However, with studies showing that laser therapy was an effective fat-removal tool even without liposuction, the development of non-invasive laser lipolysis quickly ensued. Here we are today then, able to have that elusive second serving, pop into a clinic and quickly destroy all evidence of having consumed the same.

How does it work? Unfortunately we're not quite sure at the moment, although we do have a rough idea. Transmission electron microscopy suggests that laser treatment causes the formation of transient pores in the adipocyte cell membrane through which the cell's fatty contents can escape as it quickly deflates. There obviously has to be some sort of photoacceptor molecule to respond to the laser, and it's likely that the well-characterised cytochrome c oxidase is involved. This enzyme's function is

critical in the respiratory electron transport chain that is ultimately involved in generating ATP, the so-called 'molecular energy currency of life'. It has been suggested that laser therapy increases the rate of ATP synthesis by fundamentally increasing the rate at which cytochrome c oxidase transports electrons. ATP synthesis is normally tightly regulated and any changes in ATP levels can have

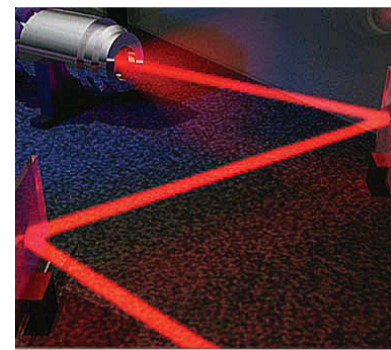
outside yours cells.

These fats can't be excreted, and your body has to therefore get rid of them using other methods: whether these involve normal metabolic pathways or some other system of fat degradation remains to be ascertained. As it turns out, it may be the case that the free fatty acids are being redistributed such that you are increasing your chances of becoming affected by other diseases. So far, however, there have been no noticeable problems with the treatment in its admittedly short lifespan, and things seem safe for the moment.

So what, then, about the tried and tested methods used in the days when – God forbid – there were no slimming pills, no lasers, no liposuction? Does the old-fashioned diet and exercise fix still have a role to play when I can take a quick nap in a private clinic and wake up half an hour later, capable of seeing my toes? Unfortunately, fat loss on its own does not necessarily equal good health: if you want to be in top shape, you're still going to have to make the effort to pant the miles, as nothing (as yet!) ultimately beats the good old lifestyle changes and healthy choices.

Besides, what good is it if you pay hundreds of pounds for a session of laser lipolysis, not make those changes and begin to bulge again a week later? What is most likely is that the growing market for quick fixes is behind all the excitement, with people ready to fish out the cash for temporary solutions, unwilling or too lazy to accept that there is no magic potion. What is especially interesting is that some companies are even marketing laser-based fat removal as a cosmetic procedure, encouraging anyone who wants to improve their body contour to give it a go irrespective of whether they are 'clinically' fat or not: surely you want to look better?

From this perspective, the laser diet may be good for people who need it, but perhaps the age-old 'be happy with who you are' adage should be considered before taking it any further.



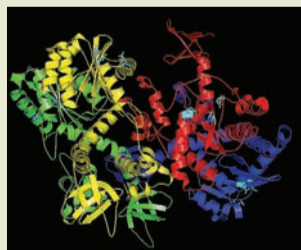
An image of a generic laser

all sorts of effects, including changes in metabolism that could lead to the degradation of adipocyte membranes through lipid peroxidation. Other plausible explanations do exist for laser lipolysis, including the possibility that laser-induced changes in gene expression may influence membrane proteins in a manner which increases membrane permeability.

It's a fair point, however, that it may not be so important to understand how the adipocyte's membrane is disrupted – for some people, it is perhaps more than enough to know that you can crack open your fat cells and cause them to collapse. On the other hand, it would be great to know where all their fatty contents go. Once your adipocytes have been blasted with a laser, you would have an assortment of fatty acids, triglycerides and other stored molecules passing through the transient pores into the extracellular space

HIV/AIDS drug puzzle cracked

Crystals of the enzyme integrase (which is found in retroviruses such as HIV) have been grown. It is an obvious target for some of the new HIV drugs. Researchers from Imperial college London and Harvard university undertook more than 40,000 trials to come up with crystals of sufficiently high quality to undergo x ray crystallography, the process wherein the structure of a macromolecule may be elucidated and visualised in 3D. The scientists said that having the integrase structure means that researchers may now begin to fully understand how integrase inhibitor drugs work, how they might be improved, and how to stop HIV developing resistance to them.



Super hard diamonds found in meteorite

Researchers using a diamond paste in an attempt to polish a slice of meteorite accidentally stumbled across crystals in the rock that were shown to be harder than standard diamond. Upon closer examination, two new kinds of naturally occurring carbon were revealed. The researchers were polishing a slice of the carbon-rich Haverro meteorite that fell to earth in Finland in 1971. When they then studied the polished surface they discovered carbon-loaded spots that were raised well above the rest of the surface, suggesting that these areas were harder than the diamond used in the polishing paste.



Labrador retriever maintains top spot

The American Kennel Club has announced its annual list of most popular pure breeds, and once again the Labrador retriever has achieved the number one ranking, as it has done for the past 20 years. This survey from the USA brings into light previous research that has scientifically proven the extraordinary intelligence of the breed to be able to perform tasks beyond the reach of other more primitive breeds. This combined with their general loveliness and calm, child-loving manner has made it the dog of choice for families. Historically celebrated, this survey serves to reaffirm our love for the labrador.





Intellectual Property - an oxymoron?

Chairman of IC Libertarian Society **Edward Townes** explains the philosophical and business case against IP

The issue of file-sharing and intellectual property is an interesting one, and I wish to discuss it here. Many people feel something is wrong with the current system, but disappointingly I have found very few interesting arguments as to why they think something is wrong. I want to change that for *felix* readers today. I will first make the philosophical case against IP, and then look at some practical ways in which the concept hurts businesses and individuals.

The philosophical objection to intellectual property is that it belies the original concept of property. I have no doubt that government-defined education invariably avoids a proper explanation of the concepts of property and ownership, and so I will gladly elaborate.

The idea of property is to prevent conflict over scarcity. In a world of scarcity situations arise where two or more people want to do different things with the same resource, be it an object, piece of land, slice of the electromagnetic spectrum, etc. In an uncivilised society, this conflict is resolved by who has the biggest club. But when we create the concept of ownership, and thus unique control, over a resource, and people respect those property rights, we foster an environment of security and voluntary exchange. These two things allow for long term planning and self-interested cooperation and prosperity. This is the basis of the free market.

This concept of property is necessary in the case of scarcity, only. If it is possible for any or all humans to claim a resource from an effectively infinite supply, there is no reason to be concerned of potential conflict over scarcity, as everyone can acquire their own. In the same way, up until recently, the

oceans and atmosphere have been infinite supplies for our purposes. These days, because we have forgotten the point of property rights, we are fumbling for solutions to the problem that the oceans and atmosphere are no longer practically infinite resources.

So, back to intellectual property. When I duplicate an idea, movie, etc, I have not in effect "stolen" from someone, since they still retain their copy of it and I have born the costs of duplication (e.g. electricity and internet bills) myself. Since any and all humans can

"People who are innovating must navigate a minefield of existing intellectual property"

duplicate this object at no cost to existing copies, should we really consider it scarce?

The first obvious objection to this argument is that ideas themselves are scarce; we do have finite ideas, knowledge, and information. But, you must realise that it is not the ideas themselves that are being claimed as property, rather the physical incarnations of them, like the commercial product, like the electronic data file, etc.

Instead, what intellectual property does is give a temporary artificial monopoly to someone over the creation and distribution of all copies of physical manifestations of an idea. I call it artificial because we can plainly see it is not a natural monopoly, it is en-

forced by the attempt to prevent people from voluntary trade and use of their own resources, as evidenced by many black markets related to intellectual property.

A second objection is that the existence of intellectual property rights gives security to producers so that they may have better incentives to innovate and create. This has merit and is not surprising. Why would the temporary granting of a monopoly not be desirable to the receiver?

However, this view ignores a plethora of negative consequences to intellectual property, and I will list some here. There is an impact on the creative output of society because people who are innovating/inventing must navigate a minefield of existing intellectual property, potentially having to use inferior solutions to problems to avoid infringing on them. There is an increase in the amount of resources diverted to lawyers and litigation, rather than productive output. Restricting the number of competitors in a market inevitably slows advances in efficiency, thus lowering the productive output of a society.

Another consequence is the delay of implementation of new ideas. In the best case, this means that the entity with their temporary artificial monopoly will take their time making use of the new idea, and in the worst case it means people just sit on intellectual property and sue others, with no attempt at all to actually use the idea.

I'd like to discuss briefly the media industry, as this is the clearest demonstration of some of the problems with intellectual property in my opinion.

What we have here is a business model that is outdated and dying. The media companies are attempting to conflate this with the destruction of the entire industry, but the reality is



World Intellectual Property Organisation headquarters inspires innovation

different.

What changed is that the Internet and computers made the duplication and distribution of their products effectively free. Most of them are apparently too stupid to realise this. They cling to the old business model (the example here is music) where they monopolised an artist and controlled the entire process, from the recording equipment to the production of CDs. They would sell the product in shops and take most of the revenue.

It's working less like that every day. Now what happens is a budding artist can create his/her own fanbase through the Internet. They can record themselves at much less expense, create

and distribute their own content. The media companies are cut out from this process, and obviously they don't like that.

Rather than allowing people to consume music at lower prices and employing a more meritocratic business model for artists, both clearly better for society, the media companies are demonstrating for us that intellectual property as a concept is flawed. They have created a clear example, where even average Joe can see the ridiculousness of fining a housewife millions of dollars (actually happened, more than once).

Is it too much to hope people are beginning to question the legitimacy of intellectual property?

On Google, Chinese state hackers, and typical American government hypocrisy

Edward Townes Reporter

As I am sure you are already aware, there was an incident recently where Google all but explicitly accused the Chinese Government of a virtual attack against it for political intelligence gathering and industrial espionage purposes.

For some bizarre reason, however, Google's reaction of threatening to pull out of the Chinese market has been attributed to its displeasure with censorship in China. The reality is that Google is probably just angry and playing a PR game. When Google originally entered China and accepted their censorship laws, it made the argument that the benefit of increased access to information outweighed the negatives of censorship. There's no reason to assume that this assessment has changed.

This story is, in fact, simply a great illustration of Western hypocrisy. Numerous Western governments, and governments friendly to the West, have internet censorship laws and snooping by the authorities. Just last week Australia state legislature passed a law requiring all internet commentators on election issues to identify themselves with their full name and post code.

Furthermore, the method that the Chinese hackers used to access Google was a backdoor built into Gmail as per the instructions of the US government so that they could violate people's privacy. Again, numerous other Western governments also legislate backdoors into software, and Google complies.

While it would be nice to believe that Google was making an ideological stand for privacy, the facts dictate otherwise. Let us remove the log from our own eye first, and don't be fooled by selective outrage.



Top Google image search results for 'tiananmen square protest' - guess which one is taken from Google.cn?



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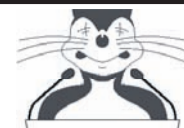
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Electoral reform

James Goldsack Politics Editor

Gordon Brown is set to ask MPs to vote next week on holding a referendum on electoral reform. The Prime Minister is backing the proposal to replace the "first past the post" system of electing MPs with an "alternative vote" (AV) system.

In the AV system, voters rank candidates by preference rather than choosing a single name. The Conservatives accused Gordon Brown of trying to "fiddle" the voting system, while the Liberal Democrats, who are proposing a fully proportional system called single transferable vote (STV), said the proposal does not go far enough.

The Prime Minister is set to announce on Tuesday that a referendum on changing the Westminster voting system, one we have had for centuries, could be held by late 2011 if approved by Parliament. This proposal comes after a protracted debate within the senior ranks of the Labour party about the merits of moving to a new system.

"Gordon Brown avoided a leadership election... and now wants to fiddle the electoral system"

With an AV system, if no candidate wins more than 50% of the vote in the first round, the votes of the candidates with the least support are redistributed, only stopping when a candidate has a majority of votes cast. Its proponents say the system, despite not being proportional, is fairer than the current system. Currently, many MPs are elected on a minority of the overall vote. The proposed system will retain the link to constituencies, as would the



Prime minister Gordon Brown is proposing a new, "fairer" electoral system

Lib Dem's STV system.

Due to the expenses scandal, there have been calls for wide political reform. Mr Brown wants the referendum plan to be inserted as an amendment to the Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill currently before Parliament. However, there may not

"It is not the voting system that needs changing; it's this weak and divided government"

be enough time for it to be approved before the next election. Many Labour MPs are said to be sceptical, fearing that their electoral prospects would be damaged. However, a growing number of senior ministers are keen on the reform as a way of depicting the Conservatives as opponents of political reform.

The Conservatives are opposed to replacing the current system as they claim it results in stable governments. There is, however, little reason why AV or STV should result in less stability. "Gordon Brown avoided a leadership election, bottled a general election and now wants to fiddle the electoral system," said Conservative chairman Eric Pickles. "It is not the voting system that needs changing; it's this weak and divided government."

The Liberal Democrats say the proposed AV option is "a small step in the right direction" but not a substitute for a required proportional system. "If they agree it, this is a death-bed conversion from a party facing defeat at the general election," said their home affairs spokesman Chris Huhne. Mr Huhne confirmed the party would put forward its own amendment to the bill. "It [the AV system] does not give voters real power over both the party and the person elected as MP"

The Pope meddles with Britain

James Lees comments on The Pope's message to British bishops



Pope Benedict XVI rallies his supporters. "Down with the iPad!" he screams to the crowds below

Pope Benedict XVI has faced a huge amount of criticism after he urged Catholic bishops in the UK to fight the Equalities Bill with "missionary zeal".

The bill in question would ban employers, including the Church, from discriminating against people on grounds of their sexuality. The Pope condemned the bill saying that "In some respects it actually violates the natural law upon which the equality of

"In some respects it actually violates the natural law"

The Pope on equality

all human beings is grounded and by which it is guaranteed".

The Pope should not be interfering in British politics. Unfortunately, religion still plays a part in the governance of the country, but since Henry VIII, the far more controllable Church of England has been the state religion.

The problem arises from Catholic bishops who maintain seats in the House of Lords, and as a result still have some say in the running of the country.

Later this year, the Pope will be making the first Papal visit to the UK since 1982. It is expected to cost the taxpayer £20,000,000.

Considering the Catholic Church is hardly poor, it seems odd that the taxpayer should be paying for this guy to tour the UK as we recover from a deep recession. Then again, so are most of

the things Gordon Brown does, so inviting the Pope at taxpayers' expense is not entirely extraordinary.

Why the Pope is worried that a gay person should want to be a bishop in a church is somewhat beyond me. Why would anybody want to preach that the way they live their life is wrong?

The Pope says that the Catholic religion does not allow for homosexuals to become priests, and that by saying that the church can't discriminate in this way, society is impeding the Church's religious freedom.

This almost sounds fine until you remember why religions such as Mormonism which, initially at least, allowed for polygamy, are not allowed to practice this 'freedom'.

The reason for this is that you are allowed to believe whatever you like, you're just not allowed to do whatever

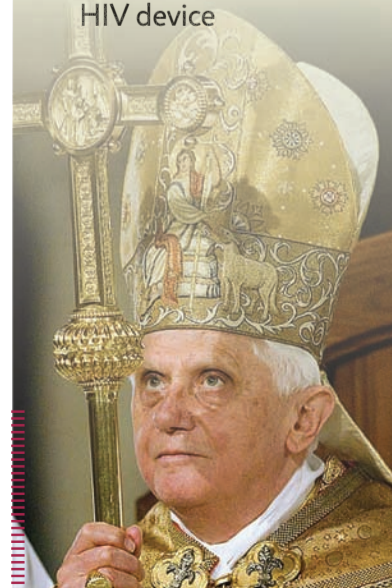
"The first papal visit since 1982 will cost the taxpayer £20m"

you like. Jonathan Finney of Stonewall, the gay rights group, has said that "We've got to guard against sweeping exemptions seeming to protect one person's freedom, which actually really impact on other people's."

He added: "What you can't start doing is saying that religious people have hard-won freedoms, we'll now restrict those, we won't give them to gay people, we won't give them to women."

Benedict XVI

- The 265th Pope
- Born Joseph Alois Ratzinger on 16 April 1927 in Bavaria, Germany
- Elected 19th April 2005
- Ex-member of the Hitler Youth
- Fond of cats
- Has stated the condemnation of condoms as an anti-HIV device





Why the pen is far mightier

Rosie Milton Arts Editor

So this week, we are printing a review by Rox Middleton on Van Gogh's letters, currently showing at the Royal Academy. The letters and drawings of any artist or writer (or both) are collected together and made into an archive, which as an entity of its own becomes something to be treasured and explored. So these things that started as just demotic letters and scribbles to family and friends are today pored over by thousands at the Royal Academy. Walter Benjamin was both a superb and diligent penman, whose letters themselves became a work of art - each script minute and beautiful in its entirety. I hope there will be an exhibition of his writing at some point soon!

My statement, over-clichéd, of course - that 'the pen is mightier' - is verified by another guest contributor, Andy Dolan, in a further addition to our 'Why I Like...' feature series. Miller's dark graphics bring to life the drawing on the page, with his popular and inspiring comics.

So the start to the new year has been somewhat slow for art exhibitions in the capital in my opinion. However, things should be hotting up towards the end of the month. This weekend I am definitely planning to trek down to the South London Gallery, to see 'Art Bin' - another one of those exhibitions that intends to 'shake things up' in the art world; works of artists (some unknown, others very familiar - like our old friend Damien Hirst for example), are to be 'given' to the gallery space, nay, chucked into a perspex pit where they will accumulate until the space is filled. The curator Michael Landy has promised not to take advantage of this accumulation of what is theoretically a pile of gold, speaking in market terms, and all the works will be destroyed at the end of the show.

Thinking then, about the value invested in Van Gogh's personal scribbles compared to works of art that are being just thrown away raises some interesting issues about the structure of contemporary vision.

Van Gogh, intimately

Rox Middleton on the letters of an extraordinary artist at the RA.

I'll admit I went to this exhibition with sky-high expectations. Van Gogh is my favourite artist and this show is the first major London one for forty years; amazingly, it didn't disappoint me. The gallery chronicles his ten year career, using letters alongside 95 drawings and paintings. The premise is that the letters give an insight into the artist's 'complex mind', but I think it misrepresents them to call them complex. The thousands of letters he wrote to his siblings and friends are less exciting than you might imagine. Rather than containing surreal hidden meanings, they are extraordinary only in their domesticity, precisely recording technical details and requesting pencils; it turns out the motivation behind most of his works was simply that he really wanted to draw and paint. A lot.

In 1880, when Van Gogh gave up his mission helping Belgian miners as a zealous preacher in order to become an artist, he made up for what he lacked in talent with his enormous fervour and dogged hard work. So, the exhibition starts off cataloguing his largely self-taught improvement by displaying his earliest works. Whilst there are some lovely drawings, his

inexperience shows; his portraits are rather lifeless and his first paintings fairly dull and plain. The breakthrough it seems came in 1885, after five years practise, when his painstaking composition, *The Potato Eaters*, was slated by his friends. This painful set-back gave him a kick - having lived back at his parents' home for two years, he moved back out and went to Paris; he met other artists and his skill leapt forwards. He experimented with pointillism, impressionism, Japanese style and his vibrantly pulsing colour and suddenly his work comes into its own. However much you know about art, the display in the gallery marks out these influences very cleverly with some of the prints and magazine pictures he liked and stuck on bits of card. It's especially interesting to see how the artist was incongruously inspired to make his busy, thickly painted canvasses by the fine lines and open space of Japanese artists like Hokusai.

In 1888, Van Gogh moved to Provence, and there he stayed for two years, producing some of his best known and loved paintings. There is no substitute for seeing these originals for real, prints just can't capture their extraordinary essence and vitality, the

magnificent rushing landscapes, swirling mountains and achingly bright landscapes. The art just speaks for itself, and this is a wonderful chance to see it brought together.

But if it speaks for itself, what's the point of the letters? Well, you can ignore them, but I think that they really convey Van Gogh's energy and passion for art, even before he'd learnt to capture it in his work. That brings to life the early studies, whose significance might otherwise be lost. As ever, Van Gogh's eventual suicide is terribly poignant, and is brought into sharp relief with his cheerful coherent letters; his paintings were by no means the wild outpourings of a troubled mind. His letters are humanising, and he describes his belief in figurative art's ability to picture things as they really are, not how a camera captures reality, but how we experience it, which is more important. I think for that claim, his work is the best evidence we've got.

The Real Van Gogh: The Artist and His Letters is showing at the Royal Academy of Arts until 18 April 2010.

Nearest tube: Picadilly Circus; Green Park. Price £8 for students.

Frank Miller's comical perspective from America

So I won't get into an argument about why comics, or graphic novels to give them their 'grown up' title, are art. I promised myself I wouldn't because the people who say that graphic novels are not art are the same people who say no good music has been made since the '60s, or worse, since Antonio Stradivari died. New things take time to become classics, I wonder if there were people like this years ago who said, 'Verily Mozart is a most irksome modern sound, I yearn greatly for the familiar sound of my childhood zither. You are that person. Graphic Novels are art because I said so. Shut up and read.

So now I introduce to you Frank Miller (wait for applause). He has shaped the modern graphic novel with the now widely disseminated idea of the flawed hero; it has even reached Hollywood, who of course did their best to butcher it. Further to this he was also seminal in the development of more adult themes and stories in the medium, leading to the dark and gritty (a horribly overused term) novels we see today.

To contextualise this in a manner to which you artistes and thespians may relate, Frank Miller is to the modern graphic novel as Wilkie Collins/Edgar Allan Poe (delete as you see fit) is to detective fiction. In the late '50s and '60s the medium was dominated by the clean cut, classic hero, for example Spiderman: 'With great power comes great responsibility'; the early title *The*

Amazing Spiderman and the idea of a 'Friendly Neighbourhood Spiderman', not to mention the cheesy do-gooder comments that litter his speech and thoughts. These themes were very much a result of the empowerment and invincibility that America felt after World War 2. Miller's early work on *Daredevil* (#158, 1979 onward) were his first major pieces as an artist and they were at the forefront of the movement towards the darker themes pervading comics of the era as the Cold War heightened into the '80s and the global fears of war, instability and armageddon were reflected in graphic novels of the time.

The art style of Frank Miller is much evident in the films of his which you may have seen. Much of his artwork from the late '80s onwards uses the film noir style to add the correct mood to the adult themes he wrote about. The use of silhouette is a common device in this style - this is particularly beneficial when publishing as serialised comics as it dramatically cuts down the time required for colouring, however it also, more importantly, is used to draw attention to the background of the panel by rendering the foreground character darkened. I find the artwork in Miller's work on *Batman* and *Sin City* to be the most compelling; *Daredevil*'s red costume is a little garish, however it noticeably darkens as Miller's time there passes. The setting of *Batman* is ideal to be rendered in an essentially black and white fashion with flashes of colour. The impact factor of the sudden

appearance of colour can be quite dramatic - think *Schindler's List*.

Time for a brief digression: I have rarely in my life understood how 'critics' extrapolate such a wealth of meaning and information from a picture, or a shitty bed or any art. I don't believe in extrapolating works because (to quote Oscar Wilde) 'To reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim.' Any interpretation of art is a reflection of the observer, not the artist. What is interesting is that graphic novels are a reflection of society at the time each novel is written. The novels that sell well are a truer reflection of the market's mood at the time, thus the whole market adjusts to be more sellable; over a long time this reveals how a society's mood has changed. This was probably more accurate in the heyday of comics, but is still equally valid even in the smaller market today. I hope you enjoy this idea as much as I do, as it is truly unique in the art world.

Back on course! Frank Miller is probably best known for his work on the *Sin City* series, which addresses as many of society's ills as Dante's *Inferno* does, but also for his work on *Batman: Year One*, which paints a picture of a flawed hero as well as Dostoyevsky (the guy who wrote *Crime and Punishment*) himself could. You are probably more likely to have heard of his recent film successes *300* and the *Sin City* film, (also *Robocop*, if you are interested!) however you should definitely make the time to look up some of the graphic novels. **Review by Andy Dolan.**



The dark terror of the night skies - the wing-ed Batman!



Is 3D the future of film?

Ed Knock

The vast majority of you will have experienced a film in 3D by now, most probably *Avatar*. Now it seems that every cinema is boasting 3D as one of its attributes. However I can't help but think that this new movement in cinema is just a gimmick employed by studio bosses to entice viewers away from their TVs and back to the multiplexes. After all, we have seen it all before in the '50s when early 3D was rolled out with cheap B-movies and, not surprisingly, failed. This trend was set to repeat in the noughties as a new 3D technology (which did not affect the quality of the visuals of the film) hit the market. We had many a second rate horror film such as *Scar 3D* and *The Final Destination* with knives and stakes that flew into your face.

Alas there was a glimmer of hope when James Cameron announced his intention to release *Avatar* in 3D. Even before the film was released, other prominent directors jumped on the 3D bandwagon; Tim Burton with *Alice in Wonderland* and Spielberg with *Tintin*. *Avatar* certainly looked more spectacular in three dimensions but it was never a distraction from the film. The glasses we are now required to wear manipulate polarised light instead of the tacky red and green lenses we are used to from our youth.

However all films released in 3D have been CGI heavy or animated. Out of the ten films nominated for best picture in this year's Oscars, two of them have been available in 3D; *Up* and *Avatar*. Both of these films had significantly larger budgets than many of the other nominated films such as *Precious* and *The Hurt Locker*. Would

these films have been just as impressive in two dimensions? Probably not, the films were constructed with 3D in mind; for example, the use of light in the night scenes for *Avatar*. In this sense the quality of a film could easily be affected if lighting is compromised for the sake of 3D.

Interestingly old films are now being adapted for 3D and re-release in cinemas such as *Toy Story*. I believe this is simply more than a marketing ploy though, *Toy Story* would look fantastic in three dimensions but what about other 'classics'? Just imagine Kirk Douglas marching down trenches in *Paths of Glory*, the famous tracking shot actually moving out of the screen - that would look amazing. Or the fleet of Hueys in *Apocalypse Now* hovering low over the horizon as we anticipate their attack on the Vietnamese village? Again that would benefit the crescendo of emotions the scene portrays.

I'm coming to the realisation that 3D may only benefit certain films; *The Godfather* with all its natural lighting would look terrible whereas *The Matrix's* 'bullet-time' sequences would look fantastic. 3D is not going to be the revolution that the development of 'talkies' and colour were but it is now another option directors have. The development of 3D televisions (soon to hit the market) is only going to increase the pressure on directors from money-hungry studio accountants to release their films in the new format. Many directors will of course shrug off 3D, viewing it as an infringement on the true aesthetics of cinema much in the same way that films are shot in black and white to give them an artistic feel. Apart from that, 3D is here to stay.

A very Precious film

Precious

Director Lee Daniels
Screenwriter Geoffrey S. Fletcher
Cast Gabourey Sidibe, Mo'Nique, Paula Patton, Mariah Carey

Jade Hoffman

This film is incredibly grim. That's a word that's been used to describe *Precious* quite frequently and, looking over the synopsis, that's definitely what you get from it. Clareece Precious Jones is an overweight, illiterate sixteen-year old girl living in poverty in Harlem, pregnant for the second time by her father. Her first child (a toddler with Down's Syndrome who is casually referred to as "Mongo") lives with her grandmother, but Precious lives with her abusive mother and has just been suspended from school.

Precious knows when to keep her mouth shut. In fact, for much of the film, Precious says very little and conducts herself with a slightly vacant indifference that many of the people in her life take for insolence or stupidity. The side of Precious that we are presented with, however, is different. Her narrative is sweet, hopeful and even humorous. It is surprisingly poetic, and is never self-pitying. Director Lee Daniels interweaves some of the most bleak and traumatic scenes of Precious' life with her glittering, exuberant fantasies, where Precious can be a glamorous celebrity, or dancer, or else a pretty blonde white girl getting ready for school. Precious does not just endure her hardships, she really shines through them with a strange kind of optimism that doesn't let her dwell too long on misery. "I feel all warm," she muses after her maths teacher praises her, and then ducks to narrowly avoid

her mother whacking a frying pan at her head.

But this is not a film that tries to shove a gratuitously gritty abuse story in your face, it never dares you to confront the harsh realism of it all in that frustratingly arrogant way that some films do. At the same time, the film does not see her magically lifted out of her old life with saccharine fairytale-like convenience, even as Precious is placed in an alternative school and is taught to read by her extraordinarily patient and caring teacher (played by Paula Patton). Daniels handles the subject matter in a way that is uncompromising, without being unnecessary, and positive, without being sickening. Sometimes, Daniels' abrupt scene transitions and choice of contrasts can fall flat or seem jarring (although it's very possible his intentions may have been for occasional bluntness), and they disrupt the flow of the story, but not enough to detract from the force of the film's strong cast.

Already nominated for several BAFTAs and several more Oscars, the cast of this film carry it very well. Newcomer Gabourey Sidibe in the starring role gives a powerful and impressively balanced performance, never overdoing it. Similarly astounding is Mo'Nique, playing Precious' mother with terrifying realism. Both are nominated for BAFTAs in the Best Leading and Supporting Actress categories respectively, and deservedly so. Their performances coupled with some hand-held shooting, give this film an almost documentary-like feel, often a quite disturbing sensation, considering the subject matter. The supporting

cast are equally strong, with Paula Patton, Lenny Kravitz and Mariah Carey as the few people in Precious' life who are working to improve her circumstances. Mariah Carey was very good (now that's a sentence I never thought I would be saying).

Many who have seen this film have mentioned on how they consider it to be an important experience, if not a particularly enjoyable one. Whilst I don't think that this is strictly true - Daniels doesn't go out of his way to create something that people will find uncomfortable to watch - this is a film that is definitely worth watching. Not that it will necessarily change your life, but because it is a tremendous presentation of a difficult story that showcases some truly impressive talent.



Nominations are in!

Ed Knock looks through this year's Oscars

Yes, it's that time of the year again - Oscar Season. The nominations for the 82nd Annual Academy Awards have been announced and there are a few pleasant surprises. The major difference this time is that there are ten potential candidates for the most coveted Best Picture award. The field this year is stronger than expected with *Up in the Air*, *District 9* and *A Serious Man* definitely meriting a win but I predict a two-horse race between *Avatar* and *The Hurt Locker* (My money's on *The Hurt Locker* though I'd love *District 9* to win). With a Golden Globe already in his cabinet, I can't see James Cameron receiving a statuette for best film or director as the Academy like to assert their independence and distance themselves from the hype (he also behaved like a twat after cleaning up the

Oscars with *Titanic*).

For Best Director it's nice to see that Tarantino has a nod and though *Inglourious Basterds* has its faults, it is probably superior when it comes to direction. Moving on to Best Actor and we find Morgan Freeman inevitably nominated for *Invictus* however the bookie's favourite is Jeff Bridges for music biopic *Crazy Heart*. Best Actress is the most interesting category this year; will the Academy be edgy and give Gabourey Sidibe a statuette for Precious or will Sandra Bullock take it for *The Blind Side*?

It's shaping up to be one of the most exciting Oscars for years, *Slumdog Millionaire* dominated in 2009, 2008 was lacking any real quality films and *There Will be Blood* and *No Country For Old Men* were so brilliant in 2007 that no outsiders had a chance.

82nd Annual Academy Award nominations

Best Actor

Jeff Bridges - *Crazy Heart*
George Clooney - *Up in the Air*
Colin Firth - *A Single Man*
Morgan Freeman - *Invictus*
Jeremy Renner - *Hurt Locker*

Best Actress

Sandra Bullock - *The Blind Side*
Helen Mirren - *The Last Station*
Carey Mulligan - *An Education*
Gabourey Sidibe - *Precious*
Meryl Steep - *Julie and Julia*

Directing

Kathryn Bigelow - *The Hurt Locker*
James Cameron - *Avatar*
Quentin Tarantino - *Inglourious Basterds*
Lee Daniels - *Precious*
Jason Reitman - *Up in the Air*

Best Picture

Avatar
The Blind Side
District 9
An Education
The Hurt Locker
Inglourious Basterds
A Serious Man
Up
Up in the Air
Precious

Best Screenplay

District 9 - Neill Blomkamp (adapted)
An Education - Nick Hornby (adapted)
In the Loop - Armando Iannucci (adapted)
Precious - Geoffrey Fletcher (adapted)
Up in the Air - Jason Reitman (adapted)
The Hurt Locker - Mark Boal (original)
Inglourious Basterds - Quentin Tarrantino (original)
The Messenger - Alessandro Camon (original)
A Serious Man - Joel and Ethan Coen (original)
Up - Bob Peterson, Pete Docter (original)



MUSIC

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What's the future of music?

Christopher Walmsley Music Editor

MMP3s have transformed music, that much is undisputed. This file format coupled with the internet has led to unprecedented access and portability of music, but at what cost?

Naturally the most talked about issue is copyright violation through downloading. Onlookers may find the current efforts by the industry reminiscent to the 'Home Taping Is Killing Music' propaganda of the 80s. I don't believe MP3s will kill off music, and the industry has to bear responsibility for the mess due to their reluctance to modify a stagnant business model. That doesn't make illegal downloading fine, but instead of looking to persecute their target market with draconian punishments, the industry should be looking for innovative new ways to encourage people to spend their hard earned money. The industry's slumber has allowed Apple to forge the model for them, and now holds an effective monopoly on the online sale of music, where the artist's cut is less than ever. I cannot believe that most CD albums are of a comparable cost to their digital counterparts! In my opinion, the whole pricing structure of music needs to be reevaluated.

So like many of you I expect, I have a bloated iTunes library. I'm finding it harder and harder to give albums the time they deserve or simply focus on tracks that initially catch my attention. What to listen to on my walk in to uni is

always subject to a great amount of indecision; I have too much choice on an MP3 player that can hold tens of thousands of songs. Limits are not always a bad thing. For me reverting back to predominantly buying and listening to CDs has been way of combatting this, and like vinyl I cannot foresee the complete death of the compact disc.

Digital libraries of music has also led to the decline of the album, and songs are often listened to well out of context with a library on shuffle, or a playlist. It has allowed us much greater flexibility to listen to music how we want to. The album is still relevant, and while playlists have their place, for me the album still reigns supreme. But with individual track purchases now the norm online, will we see the album becoming much less of a standard for releasing music?

I guess the final point should be given to sound quality, although it is just about as subjective as points come. The difference between middle to low bitrate MP3s and uncompressed audio can be stark if listened to with high quality equipment. However if the majority of people do not significantly care about sound quality, then why should record labels spend so much on decent recording and mastering? It would be a grave shame to 'audiophiles' everywhere.

In other news, Dion Dublin, the prominent 90's footballer, is inventing a new musical instrument called 'The Dube'. If that doesn't make you excited, I don't know what will.

Tommy T goes solo in Ethiopia

The sweaty gypsy punks from Gogol Bordello make particularly interesting music thanks to the incorporation of the different styles held dear by their multi-ethnic crew hailing from 9 different countries. Clashing violins, accordions and saxophones against distorted guitars and pulsating drums the band members have merged their transcontinental musical influences to create a sound of their own.

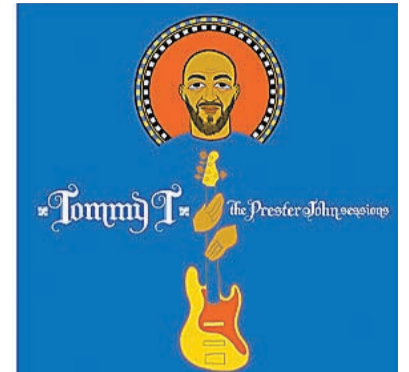
Thomas Gobena, otherwise known as Tommy T, has been playing bass with Gogol Bordello for four years now. Born in Ethiopia, he moved to the U.S. when he was sixteen and later started his own record label, C-side Entertainment, giving mainstream access to African artists. He has been working on his solo album for years now, but between endless tours with Gogol Bordello (200 gigs planned this year!) he has only just found time to release it.

The album is named "The Prester

John Sessions", after a legendary Ethiopian king who lived around the era of the Crusaders and sent letters throughout Europe ranting on about the massiveness of his army and his treasures. Just as Prester John wanted to bring Ethiopian culture to the rest of the world, so Tommy T exposes the rich musical culture of Ethiopia on record for all to admire.

The song titles are full of references to Ethiopian culture that Tommy T wants you to investigate further to get the full power of the songs. Ethiopian rhythms and instruments (like the Massinqo, an awesome one-stringed instrument played with a bow) pop up throughout the mostly instrumental dub, jazz and reggae jams. "September Blues" is a particular highlight: a saxophone duet featuring Ethiopian scales over a traditional Western blues line.

The few songs with vocals are the best on offer though, between the sultry callings of Gigi on "Eden" and the forever awesome Eugene Hutz on final



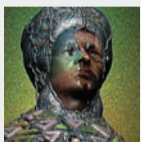
track "Lifers".

It is a very different ordeal from Gogol Bordello altogether, less in-your-face and more like a pensive journey through World Music soundscapes. But there is one thing in common here: as Tommy T puts it himself they always deal in "music without boundaries", and that can only be thrilling.



Tommy T (centre) genuinely hangs out on the street telling jokes and in no way is this photo set up

YEASAYER
 ODD BLOOD
 SECRETLY
 CANADIAN
 ALBUM



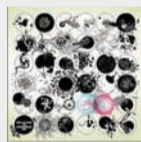
I've been looking forward to this album for a long time but it's a little disappointing. I used to think that Yeasayer combined 'pop' vocals with an unconventional trippy sound but the songs on this album are conventional in a 90s pop way; in the vocals and melody. Maybe it will grow on me... - Kadhim Shubber

MRK1
 SOUND OF
 CONTAGIOUS
 CONTAGIOUS
 COMPILATION



Most of the songs here are by Mancunian dj MRK1 so the name compilation is a bit dodgy. It has a greater dance-floor direction than say "5 Years of Hyperdub" and in that sense it's less 'varied'. Nonetheless every track makes you wish that you had Matter's soundsystem in your bedroom. - Kadhim Shubber

DAN LE SAC VS. SCROOBIUS PIP
 THE LOGIC OF
 CHANCE
 SUNDAY BEST
 ALBUM



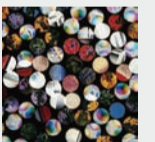
This album takes a few songs before it gets going. But songs "Great Britain" and "Get Better" are fantastic. Scroobius Pip is at his lyrically stinging best. He's political as usual alongside Dan le Sac's production which has reached new heights. Simply, they've nailed their sound. - Kadhim Shubber

SHY CHILD
 LIQUID LOVE
 WALL OF
 SOUND
 ALBUM



On their fourth album Shy Child have unfortunately missed one key element from the electronic/pop/psychedelia fusion; catchiness. The album keeps playing but there's little in the music that makes you notice or care much either. So not 'bad' but not 'good... - Kadhim Shubber

FOUR TET
 THERE IS LOVE
 IN YOU
 DOMINO
 ALBUM



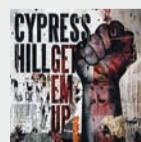
His 14 month residency at East London's Plastic People has been the testing grounds for Four Tet's fifth full length album. It's turned more in the direction of his split EP with Burial than his more ambient previous albums and is certainly a stellar release. - Christopher Walmsley

HOT CHIP
 ONE LIFE
 STAND
 EMI
 ALBUM



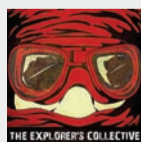
After their glorious 2008 breakthrough "Made In The Dark", it was always going to be hard for Hot Chip to raise the bar with even weirder electro-pop hits. Whereas the randomness of their previous album made it an intriguing listen, this album is slow and mostly boring. - Greg Power

CYPRESS HILL
 GET EM UP
 CYPRESS HILL
 MUSIK
 SINGLE



After a six year wait, Cypress Hill are unleashing new album "Rise Up" this April. As an appetizer for the taste of things to come, "Get Em Up" is one hot chilli. Flawless rapping, sweet-ass beats and shout-out-loud lines like "Smoke up a pound with us" cement this as a genuine tune. - Greg Power

THE EXPLORER'S COLLECTIVE
 RECORDS
 EP



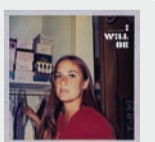
Like a calmer and less innovative Future Of The Left, Explorer's Collective play "hardcore pop": hook-laden rock n' roll with catchy choruses and far-out bridges. There's a little Beatles harmonies here, a little Led Zeppelin 70s rockin-out there. The lyrics are mostly childish. Decent at best. - Greg Power

TWIN ATLANTIC
 LIGHTSPEED
 RED BULL
 RECORDS
 SINGLE



"Lightspeed" is the first single from their debut "Vivarium". An up-tempo track with some guitar doodling to accompany pretty-boy frontman Sam McTrusty's passionate vocals. It's a solid rock song destined for arenas, with sprinkles of prog here and there for good measure. - Greg Power

DUM DUM GIRLS
 I WILL BE
 SUB POP
 ALBUM



Face it, fuzzy American low-fi pop is the "Big New Thing" and resistance is futile. Dum Dum Girls' (actually only one girl) debut is a fun but nostalgic record to which the only response is to dance around your room in your underwear. My favourite song is "Bhang Bhang I'm a Burnout". - Kadhim Shubber

Vivian Girls like wearing pants, what a shock...

Alexandra Ashford interviews Ali Koehler before their sell out gig at Hoxton Bar & Grill

For our readers who may not have heard of Vivian Girls, can you describe the kind of music you play?

We're a three piece that plays punk rock that is also heavily inspired by girl groups of the 60s and the Wipers.

The Wipers?

They're an American band from Portland I think, they're awesome.

Is it difficult for an all-girl band not to be stereotyped? With a sort of "girl power" label for example?

We do get labelled as a Riot Grrl band, which we don't identify with because our music isn't very political, but there are definitely disadvantages to being in an all female band because people want to stick that label on you as though that identifies you. People try to group you together with other girl bands even though we don't necessarily sound similar, it's just based on the fact there's women in the band.

That's weird you get called Riot Grrl because I haven't really heard of any bands describing themselves as Riot Grrl since the early 90s. You don't have an image like other female artists that focuses on being sexy, or shocking like Peaches or weird and fashion-y like say, Fan Death...

Yeah we don't really have an image that fits into those categories. I do love Riot Grrl though, my first tattoo was a Bikini Kill tattoo.

I used to love Bikini Kill! Do you wish you were around at that time? I feel that your music is almost nostalgic for the indie rock and punk of the 90s.

Thanks! We're all really into a lot of stuff from the 90s.

Your latest album, Everything Goes Wrong, sounds a lot heavier and more stripped back than your first. Would you say this is a deliberate reaction to the kind of lo-fi dreamy indie that is popular at the moment?

I think at that time we wanted to make a more punk record, and we did that with Everything Goes Wrong. It's not necessarily the sound we're going to continue with on future albums. But we're proud of it and the sound is just what we felt we had to do at that time.

Are you going to take a different direction in the future?

Yeah we're taking a more vocal heavy approach. We've been listening to a lot of music by these two sisters that are 10 and 12 from the 1950s. They're super innocent and they have these really cute voices and at times they sound kind of ghostly because of the recording aesthetic. We're kind of going for that. A more spectre-esque sound. We've also been really into Neil Young & Crazy Horse.

I think Everything Goes Wrong reminds me of bands like Beat Happening, is that sort of music an influence?

Yeah we're all big fans of Beat Happening but they're probably not really a conscious influence.

Do you think that the growing popularity of electronic music has changed the scene for punk and indie bands?

I don't know. I think that it's to do with technology. I think that a lot of the

bands that are like labelled as lo-fi are kind of an answer to all the electronic music and the high quality production that we have now. There is a deliberate return to old techniques.

What about shoegaze and the "shoegaze revival"? It's getting way more popular again, at least in the UK anyway.

I don't know, we don't really have much of that in America I think it's more of a British thing.

You've played a lot of shows on this side of the pond, do you think you get a different reception here to your native New York?

Yeah, well before this tour I would say they're much the same but on this tour we've become way more popular in the UK. Our recent shows in the UK have had the best turn out we've ever had.

That's surprising because you play a very American style of music.

Yeah it's weird, maybe because in New York so many bands are constantly touring through there, so there's more choice.

Hey, we get a lot of bands touring through London!

Yeah ha, I guess you do. I guess we don't know why we're so popular here.

Are there any UK bands you've been enjoying at the moment?

Yeah, Male Bonding are good friends of ours, they're really good. Veronica Falls who we are playing with tonight are really good. We're playing with Wet Dog in the U.S.

OLLY HEARSEY



Ali Koehler is the lady in green. I wonder what other tattoos they have...

Can you tell me a secret about Vivian Girls that's never been printed before?

Umm.... that's hard! Ummm.. I don't know - I can't think of one!

There must be something, some tour anecdotes or something like that.

We are so boring! We don't do anything. Every night people ask us to hang out and party but we just like to go home and go online. Our idea of a party is just sitting in our hotel room on the internet.

Hahaha, I guess that counts.

On crazy nights we watch There's

Something About Mary and listen to David Lee Roth, oh what's that song, a Van Halen song... I dunno. I'm a huge Taylor Swift fan, maybe that's a secret.

Who's Taylor Swift?

She's like a singer-songwriter girl who gets labelled as country in the U.S., kind of like Miley Cyrus. We like Lady Gaga too. You have to respect how hard she works, and she writes all her own lyrics and creates her own image herself.

Do you think Vivian Girls would ever go for a crazy outfits Lady Gaga type image?

No! We all really like to wear pants!

Want to go skiing and listen to De La Soul?

Kadhim Shubber does but unfortunately he has exams straight after Easter. No Snowbombing for him then...

Snowbombing Festival might not be the most convenient festival that you go to this year; being held in the Austrian Alps and all. It also might not be the cheapest festival that you go to this year, considering that you have to get to Austria and also find somewhere to stay. But with the possibility of a road trip, bands like De La Soul, Wild Beasts and Crookers and the fact that it's basically a snow festival, it may well be the most fun festival that you go to this year.

The festival definitely has a dj driven lineup, with acts Fatboy Slim, Scratch Perverts and 2manydjs along side Sub-focus so this festival might not be for financially challenged X-Factor lovers.

But if you've got some student loan lying around and you've got no time for festivals this summer, grab your skis and head out to Snowbombing festival. www.snowbombing.com



That's it. I'm buying an animal costume - www.kigu.co.uk

Most listened to this week by Felix Music members on last.fm

1. Radiohead
2. Bloc Party
3. Florence + The Machine
4. Four Tet
5. Coldplay
6. The xx
7. The Killers
8. Arctic Monkeys
9. Muse
10. The Beatles

Has anybody else heard Florence + The Machine's cover of Beyonce's "Halo"? It's really quite good. In fact the original was quite good. O.k. I'll just admit it, I like Beyonce. There I said it. Anyway, let's move on. Radiohead have returned to the top spot. How exciting...

-Kadhim Shubber





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JOKES, LETTERS, OPINIONS – WE WANT THEM ALL!**

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Single Girl Invites Lonely Boy To Play

We've got a letter this week from that rare Imperial species, a girl! I thought they had died out in South Ken...

Single Girl here. Your one and only source into the (un)scandalous lives of South Kensington's geeks. One thing about being a Single Girl at Imperial, the odds may be good but the goods are often odd.

That's not to say Single Girl doesn't appreciate an intellectual hottie, she does. Not just Jude Law in a lab coat either. No, what Single Girl rates above all is a guy with the wit to woo and the brains to solve complex differential equations. So where is the problem?

Enter Lonely Boy, a common fixture of the Imperial landscape.

Spotted on Library Level 4, Lonely Boy rocking the oh-so-geek-chic hoodie and loose jeans combo, drumming his fingers to his Spotify playlist as he takes on the latest CW... So dreamy! Is it getting hot in here or is that just the library radiators? Single Girl appreciates your dedication to cerebral pursuits, Lonely Boy, but why so serious? All work and no play makes Lonely Boy, well, lonely (and Single Girl single, and the Imperial student satisfaction dismally low). Haven't you heard that no man is an island?

So it looks like you could do with adding 'dating' to your to-do list. Come out an play, Lonely Boy. Single Girl awaits.

And who am I? That's one secret I'll never tell. You know you love me. XOXO

Single Girl

PS. Are you a Lonely Boy or a Single Girl? Single Girl craves feedback. Keep in touch at xoxosinglegirl@gmail.com

The Library: Love It Or Hate It?

Hate it. No reason, just hate it!
Hangman Editor

Meh, it's not bad...but we prefer the showers in Blackett.

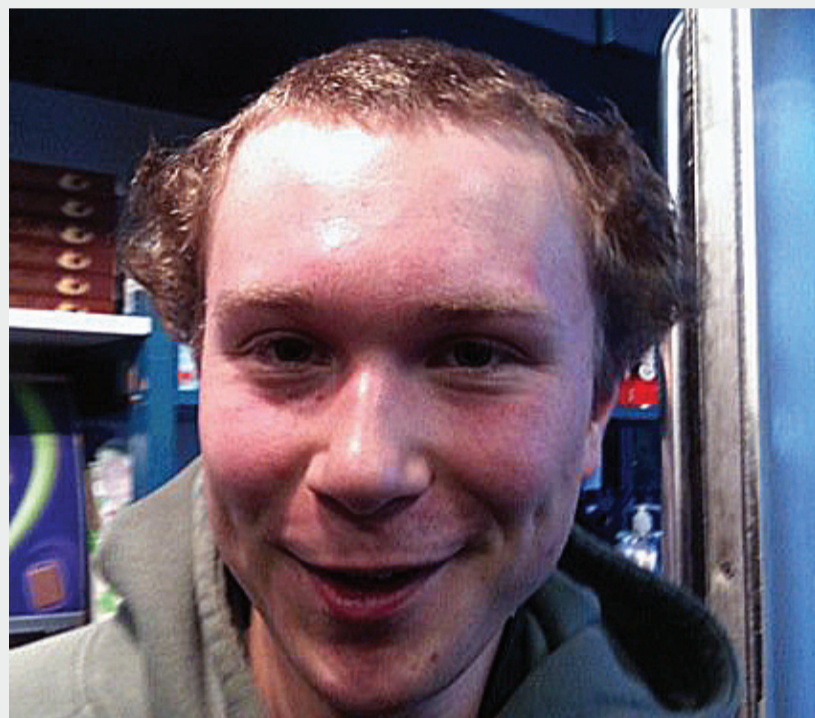
Physics Boys

I find it a quieter atmosphere to study in than Halls. However people using the computers for iPlayer or MMORPGs are thoroughly annoying.

Concerned First Year

Interesting replies...wait, someone was serious?! -- Catnip

Drunken-Mate Photo Of The Week

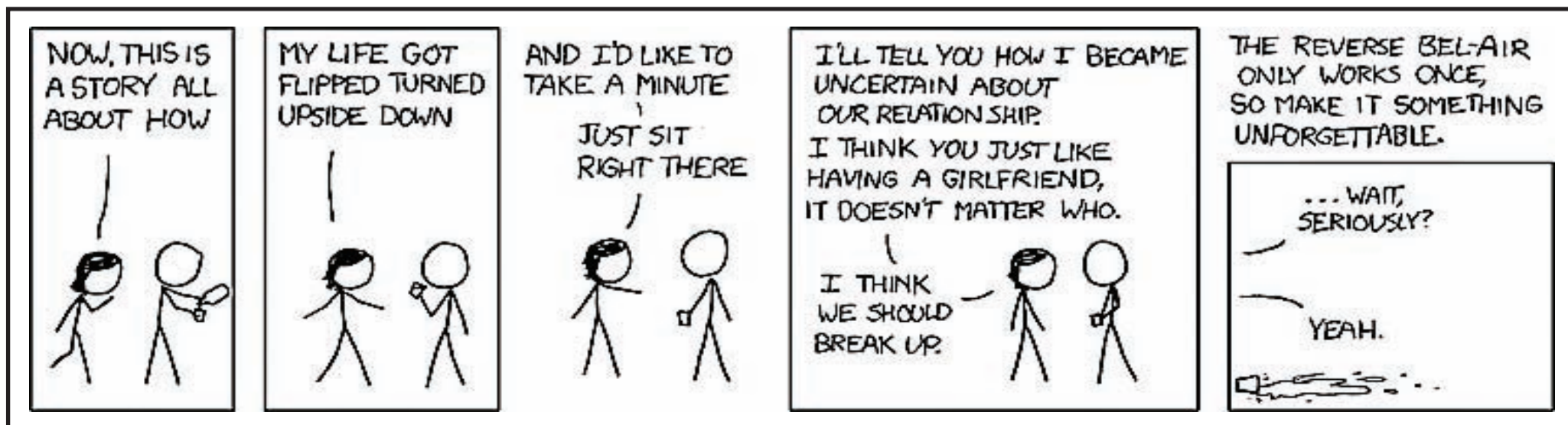


Got a picture of your mate being an absolute waste of oxygen? Well, get your camera out and email your drunken-mate photos to catnip.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Have you seen this man? He is wanted for assault and attempted murder. The last thing his victim remembers is a shock of absolutely disastrous hair.

Senders must have permission to use submitted photos and accept full responsibility for them

xkcd.com



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FASHION

Fashion Editor Kawai Wong
fashion.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Polygamists

Kawai Wong Fashion Editor

The common belief that women are creatures pining for monogamy is a misconception. Try to recount the last time you stocked your wardrobe with items from the same style category?

Fashion bachelorettes are unbound by the rules fashion bibles preach. They live and breathe chaos, an outfit is never just an outfit. A pink Valentino afternoon dress is to be topped with a studded belt. Patricia Field is the high commander of this live free and dress free hippie movement. For without her, there would be no Carrie Bradshaw. There would not be Rebecca Bloomwood and her rainbow coloured petticoat. So hats off to you, Patricia. You designed a one-off collection with M&S in 2008. It doesn't have to be one off. Please call again.

A bona fide fashionista loves all styles and never lets the press images fool them. They prey on a style, pick it apart and betray it with polar opposite accessories. The winning recipe is always about contrast. The fashion delinquent known as Vogue Italia, exudes mastery as far as contradiction is concerned. A model in a nude catsuit with an Elie Saab embroidered ivory bolero, wearing runny smoky eyeliner and morning fairy hair is just another day. How many

styles have they courted there? Fetish, romance, rock and casual.

Unlock your perfumery drawer and does the promiscuous musk of redolence and tincture tell a story about your aromatically unfaithful past?

The sweetness Incanto by Salvatore Ferragamo that represented your youthful and tireless self. The all nighters in the trashy east London warehouses were candyflossed by the fruity rainbow you painted in the stuffy and rotten room. The faint watermelon breeze from Issey Miyake L'eau d'Issey that emulated confidence and calm, a mature encounter in a hip Japanese city boutique hotel perhaps? And then the Yves Saint Laurent's Love's citrusy taste brought you back to that bitter sweet summer love on the French Riviera? And finally the inevitable affair in a wood panelled room, the thick and pungent taste of cigars as the perfect companion to Chanel No.5? Some time in the future, perhaps.

Lastly, due to popular demand – mainly and solely by the ex-fashion editor and now editor in chief, Dan Wan – SICK SHIT is back for one week only! Also, Saskia was invited to view Louis Vuitton's Pre-Fall collection at South Molton Lane last Tuesday. Check out her verdict on the shoes, bags and of course, the clothes.

Louis Vuitton Pre-Fall Preview

Part-time fashion intern Saskia Verhagen reports from the Louis Vuitton pre-fall 2010-11 collection press preview.

The designers at Vuitton seem to be channeling the left-bank Parisienne, a woman who loves fashion and with ever-elegant nonchalance mixes a lively palette of colours, textures and influences into the perfect "fashion gourmande". There are obvious allusions to the sixties with trapezoidal cocktail coats, flared skater skirts and the plays on dimension with a big sleeveless blond fox vest and boxing glove-size mittens.

This season, the design backstory goes, the Vuitton woman has stumbled across a set of vintage LV trunks filled with all types of goodies; the variation of textures was fantastic, amongst all the fur were touches of lace, leather fringing on shoes and jackets... And the graphics! Two-tone heart printed silk, tartan, Liberty prints and jacquards were all combined beautifully for this brazen Vuitton woman to cater for all her Parisian savoir-faire. She is a "Belle de Jour" – fresh, insolent and fabulous.

As for the accessories, for a brand that have been providing leather goods for the discerning customer since 1854, they

did not disappoint. The new bag is a quirky steel lamé jacquard on wool tote bag lined in quilted safety orange, huge and pillow-like for the young at heart. For the traditionalists there are the most gorgeous little alligator chain-strap shoulder bags in aubergine or slate patent finish – magpie-shiny and obviously luxe. Evening sandals come complete with fur

'The LV woman is a "Belle de Jour" – fresh, insolent and fabulous.'

leg muffs or schoolgirl knee-high socks, again with the obvious sixties overtones.

We can predict lots more for this Autumn/Winter, but in addition to the jackets we saw last year we will see plenty of fur trimmings and on accessories. The huge textural variety, reminiscent of Matthew Williamson's last A/W season, will help to continue the London fashionista's love affair with all things vintage. The huge metallic tote would not look out of place on the arm of an Olsen twin this fashion month and will, no doubt, spawn an army of counterfeits from the high street. The collection screams youthful nonchalance but has a clear luxe, high-fashion appeal; Louis Vuitton have provided a pre-fall collection for sexy, carefree, unbuttoned glamour.



Louis Vuitton invites you to discover the 2010 women's Pre-fall collection and the 2010-2011 Fall-Winter mens Pre Collection
Tuesday, 2nd February 2010 from 9:30-17:00
Louis Vuitton, 26 South Molton Lane Mayfair, London W1K 5AB
RSVP Press Office 020 7399 3868



News Strip

Gabriella Gentilcore

Kate Moss's New Design Collection

Kate Moss has designed a collection of bags for the French luxury label Longchamp. She has been the face of the brand for 8 years, and her collection will include shoulder bags and slouchy weekenders in a variety of colours, and it also features zebra print tote bags. The collection is launched next week and will be priced from £500.

Donatella's Secrets

A new book revealing all about the Versace family is out this week. The book "House of Versace: The Untold Story of Genius, Murder and Survival" claims that Donatella was saved from her drug problem by an interference from close friend Elton John.

Louise Gray at ASOS

Louise Gray has teamed up with ASOS to create an eight piece capsule wardrobe. The designer said she "wanted to make the most popular pieces from a mixture of seasons accessible to everyone".

Cos Heads North

Cos take on classic chic minimalism will soon be available to shoppers in Glasgow. This is the second store to open outside London. The store will offer women's, men's and children's clothes.

Grace Kelly's V&A Exhibition

The spectacular wardrobe of Grace Kelly will be on display at the Victoria and Albert Museum. The exhibit traces the evolution of her style from her days as one of Hollywood's most popular actresses in the 1950s and as Princess Grace of Monaco. The exhibition, called Grace Kelly: Style Icon, opens 17th April. Be careful though, an admission fee applies.



Victoria Beckham's Bunion

Okay...Vicky... It's time to pop your feet back into your limosine shoes... We honestly, honestly, honestly, prefer seeing you in your ridiculous 7-inch high heels. If you know all the rules about fashion, how about this one? Bunion. Does. Not. Go. With. Flip-Flops. Gross. Yuck. New diet-watch her feet and there goes your appetite for every single meal for the next 4 weeks...



Kanye West and Amber Rose

An obnoxious self-made blonde, attention seeking lesbian who is Kayne West's 'fiancé'? Kayne West said that the pair live fashion, 'WE LIVE IT MAN. F*CK THAT, WE LIVE IT!!! WE LIVE IT SO HARD PEOPLE LIVE THROUGH US!' Somebody give him some air. In fact, ultra pure oxygen. And throw a Zippo at them.

SICK

SHIT



Facebook privacy screw-ups

Simon Worthington looks at the privacy concerns of Stalkerbook & their consequences

From forgetting someone's name to getting drunk and passing out at a party, we've all had embarrassing moments. It used to be the case that we could consign those memories to the deepest, darkest depths of our minds and that would be the end of it. But now, with the technological wonder that is Facebook, everything in our lives is pasted online for the world to see. What we forget sometimes is exactly who can see, unaware that relatives, employers or even just regular strangers can easily access our information. For most of us, the worst that can happen is that our relatives catch a glimpse of humiliating photos, but it can be a whole lot worse. What follows are some (admittedly hilarious) precautionary tales of what happens when our privacy goes down the pan.

If you take a look through the Facebook photos of a standard 18-year-old, it's pretty likely that at some point you're going to come across pictures of alcohol, its consumption or after effects. This was particularly true for Caitlin Davis, an NFL cheerleader for the New England Patriots who was captured on camera scrawling on a passed-out friend in permanent marker. That's certainly nothing too unusual, but when her bosses at the team caught sight of the photos and saw that many of the 'messages' were anti-Semitic and racist, she was quickly booted from the team. Protests that she 'hadn't seen' the drawings had no effect, so she was left jobless and presumably wondering why she hadn't sorted out her profile privacy sooner.

For one Australian restaurateur, social networking actually helped him track down some rogue diners. Five sharp eaters, after working up a considerable tab at the bar, took a table and proceeded to 'work their way up the menu,' running up a final bill of \$520 (about £300). The group then 'went outside for a smoke' and, er, disappeared. Fortunately one of the men hit on a waitress and gave her his name,



which the manager used to track him down on Facebook. The profile told him the guy worked at a nearby restaurant and so, after a lengthy phone call with the boss, the offenders were marched down and ordered to pay the bill along with a weighty tip. To top it all off, they were all later sacked.

One of the most infamous violations of Facebook privacy happened last July when the wife of the new head of MI6 posted holiday pictures, details of where they lived and who their close friends were and forgot to make the information private. By forgetting to choose the right settings, Lady Shelly Sawers effectively got her and her family closer to being taken hostage or killed. Not only was this an embarrassing cock-up for the Government, but several experts also strongly suggested that 'the Sawers family will almost certainly need to be re-housed and the children may require extra protection.' Nice one!

Another example of a student getting busted is the case of Erika Scolliere, a 20-year-old from the University of Dayton, Ohio. Early in 2007, Erika was found guilty of drunk driving after a fatal collision with a motorcyclist. She was put on parole on the condition that she was not to drink alcohol or even be around anyone who had it. All of this was fine until police detectives examined her Facebook profile and found many recent albums showing her drinking heavily with friends and passing out. The judge was kind

enough not to send her directly to jail, but instead decreed that she must now wear a SCRAM bracelet: an electronic tag that alerts the police if alcohol is detected in the body.

Our final case is less about privacy and more about general idiocy. When a homeowner in Pennsylvania returned home one evening to find her house burgled, she didn't expect to see the criminal's Facebook profile open and logged in on her computer. Jonathon Parker stole more than \$3,500 worth of goods but just couldn't resist the Facebook addiction long enough to feel the need to log in at the house he had broken into (status update: 'burgling a house lol?'). Police quickly moved in, arrested him and recovered the goods. Jonathon now faces a maximum of ten years in prison.

Although all these incidents are pretty extreme, the message remains the same: be aware of who can see your information and photos. In a recent survey, it was found that a whopping 70% of employers not only look at potential applicants online, but have actually rejected applicants because of what they saw on Facebook or MySpace. It was also found that one third had fired employees because of negative comments against the company on their profiles. If any one of the victims above had taken a minute to review their privacy online, these stories might not have ended quite so tragically. Don't be a n00b, learn from them, and make sure you don't make the same mistakes!

Don't be a Nonce: Secure your Facebook with *felix's* top five privacy tips

Protect your profile

Change the default privacy settings. Go to Settings > Privacy Settings > Profile or Contact information.

Use friend lists

Sort your friends from acquaintances, then set privacy settings to these groups rather than individuals.

Protect your Photos

Decide who can see your photos on an album-by-album basis. Go to your profile, click the Photos tab and then Album Privacy.

Get rid of Networks

Networks are full of strangers (Imperial's got some 24,000 people alone) that really shouldn't be able to see your information.

Hide your wall posts

Worried about Facebook privacy? Install FaceCloak, a plug-in that scrambles Wall posts for all but your password-wielding friends. Find FaceCloak at <http://tinyurl.com/facecloak>



Samuel Gibbs Technology Editor

Internet privacy: is it a misnomer? Should you care about the information you so readily stream onto the internet? Well this week we've got an interesting and eye-opening report on the state of Facebook privacy from Simon, something everyone should take a look at. It's hard enough getting a decent job after university, let alone being hampered by some daft photos of your youthful, or not so, self, carparked with a cock drawn on your face.

Of course we're still in the wake of the Earth-shattering iPad announcement, where's that SarcMark when you need it eh? Bit sceptical that the iPad is going to change your life? Well, Feroz has taken a look at some of Apple's potential competitors in the tablet computing market for you to peruse; you might find something that you like.

The Tories entered my realm of reporting this week with their 100Mbps broadband promise. George Osborne, Shadow Chancellor, said that the Tories would deliver 100Mbps broadband speeds to the 'majority' of homes in the UK by 2017. OK, sounds good, but how are they going to make it happen? After all, we're quite a long way off at the moment with an average UK speed of just 4.1Mbps. Well, Osborne thinks that the BBC should pay for it. A 3.5% chunk of the Beeb licence fee that was set aside for the digital switchover would be made available for private investors to upgrade their infrastructure. Labour also has a smaller scope promise on broadband speed of 2Mbps to the majority of homes by 2012, which they intend to fund with a £6 tax on every landline in the country. Whichever government gets into power next term, it's clear that the UK broadband infrastructure needs some investment if we are to keep up with the high-speed world.

Weekly Wrap-up: A quick guide to the best of the rest you might have missed

Samuel Gibbs Technology Editor

Apart from the odd Apple announcement, the weeks following CES are traditionally a bit of a dry spell for tech news. This week we've scoured the interwebs to find you the latest in tech you might have missed.

First up a revelation that didn't really shock me: Britain sent 96.8 billion texts last year. That's 265 million a day winging their way across the networks. I don't know about you but I send quite a few texts, but perhaps less now that IM, email and social networking

sites are on your phone.

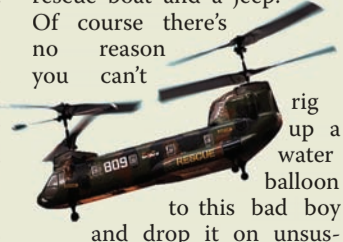
Speaking of text messaging, a US 16-year-old showed the world that there's no limits he won't go to send a text. Using a low-frequency radio, Alexander Kendrick managed to send a text from over 300m underground, making it the deepest known underground digital communication ever in the US and won him the Science Fair. Of course updating your Twitter status to 'It's real dark down here' is great, but a practical use could be to keep cave rescuers in contact with each other easily and efficiently, something that takes laying miles of telephone cable currently.



Monopoly, the classic family property board game, has gotten a refresh and gone all high-tech on us for its 75th anniversary. Not only has it gotten a new circular layout, like a round-a-bout, but they've ditched the old Monopoly money for Chip'n'Pin cash cards. No longer will you be able to slyly pilfer from the bank, nor is there any need for a banker at all as it's all handled by a central computer on the board itself.

More from gaming gadgets

this week in the form of a remote controlled Chinook. Spin Master are set to release the R/C Cargo Commander in the summer this year for whirlybird fans seeking a bit more from your RC toy. The mini-marvel can carry and release on command three pieces of included cargo; a container, a rescue boat and a jeep. Of course there's no reason you can't



rig up a water balloon to this bad boy and drop it on unsus-

pecting victims.

More China espionage accusations came out this week this time revolving around freebie flash drives. According to MI5, who issued a warning to UK businesses, the idea is that some hapless worker sticks said freebie into his computer unwittingly infecting the corporate network with trojans and viruses. Of course you can easily avoid such hassles by plugging the thing into a Mac and formatting it, after all you don't want to waste a freebie now do you?

Google has hit the news this week for two decent turns. First up was the announce-

ment that Google is joining the fight to get rid of the bane of the internet that IE 6 is. From March 1st older browsers including IE6 will cease to be able to access Google Apps including Google Docs. With a bit of luck, combined with the co-ordinated campaign from over 70 companies, including Microsoft, they will be able to rid the world of the 9-year-old browser.

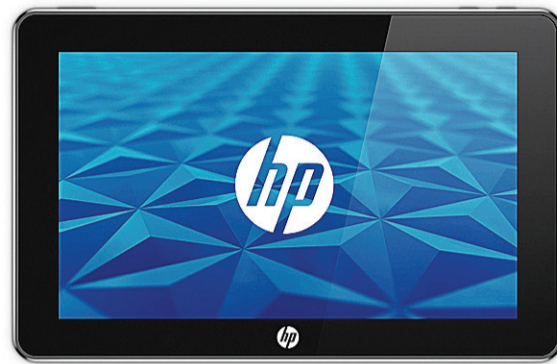
Google took the first step to transitioning the internet over to IPv6 this week. It quietly enabled support for the IPv4 replacement on YouTube, the 3rd most popular website on the internet. Good on you big G.

Apple iPad - meet the competition

Feroz Salam takes a look at some contenders the Apple iPad is going up against in the new tablet segment

Now that Apple has gotten the whole iPad announcement out of the way and the device is out in the hands of certain celebrities, it's not going to be long before you start seeing them everywhere. Like iPhones before them, you might even see the odd one riding the tube, taking the bus or being mugged out of tourists hands as they use them for maps out and about in the streets of our capital. Yet, if you're like me and don't fancy spending somewhere between £400 and £650 on yet another heavily-restricted Apple product, what are the alternatives? Though tablet devices have been around for ages, 2010 is set to see an explosion in their numbers. Electronics manufacturers worldwide, from the unknown to the well-known, are lining up to try and grab market share in what is widely seen as the next big market. So here at *felix* we thought we'd give you a quick and dirty run-down of some of the most promising alternatives to the iPad.

HP Slate



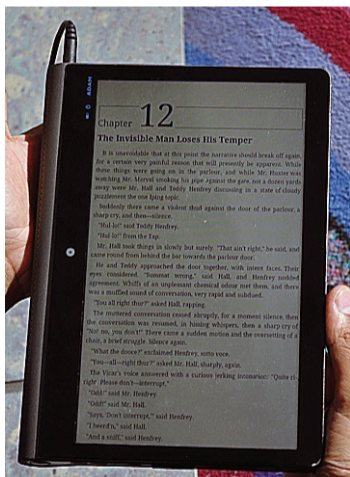
One of the major announcements out of CES was the Slate, produced by the now second biggest electronics manufacturer HP and running Windows 7. For your average user, the combination will probably provide a familiar interface albeit not as touch-friendly at a much lower price than Apple's, and could quite possibly be the biggest competitor to the iPad. With all the trimmings of a full OS including multitasking, a camera, Adobe Flash, a faster processor and no limitation on the programs that you are allowed to install on it, there's no question that you're getting more computer and less iPod touch in your device. The flipside of the many extra features, however, is the slightly chunkier body - the Slate is definitely one of the less-aesthetically pleasing devices out there. And, of course, with heavier specs comes a heavier price tag which is as yet unannounced, but don't expect to get this power house of a tablet on the cheap.

Archos 9



Unlike the other devices on this list, the Archos 9 is actually available for purchase right now. Featuring a 9-inch screen and an Intel Atom processor, the device sells at £450. Unlike the other tablets however, the Archos features a resistive touch screen, meaning that it's not a multi-touch device (a feature that's become a consumer favourite) and requires a stylus for fine control input. The device firmly favours functionality, however, delivering 60GB of disk space, 1GB of memory and a full Windows 7 operating environment. Yet the rather limited 5 hour battery life on the device isn't remarkable, being half that of what Apple is promising for the iPad under full usage. Weighing in at nearly a kilo as well, it's more a full-fledged computer than anything else, and it's pretty hard to see anyone using this device for entertainment on-the-go.

Notion Ink Adam



Courtesy of Engadget's hands on

Another Android-based device this time from India-based startup Notion Ink called the Adam, which has been garnering rave reviews from technology blogs. A full tablet-sized display of 10 inches is backed up by a solid set of features including a Tegra chipset and a neatly finished 14mm body, making it the dark horse in a field that's quickly being saturated with major technology powerhouses. While the device is as versatile as any machine running Android OS, the manufacturers are positioning it as a digital magazine and ebook reader thanks to some fantastic Pixel Qi crossover display technology and several content publishers recruited for the device. It is set to be fully unveiled at the Mobile World Congress later this year, and only then will we get to see whether the promises made by the prototype will be realised in the final device. Rumours are that the Adam is going to land around June for about USD 300. One to keep an eye on.

ICD Vega



The Vega is by far one of the largest tablets on this list, and with a diagonal width of 15 inches, matches standard laptop screens. Yet another Android device, the Vega has all your standard features, plus a magnetic dock that converts the screen into a monitor that can be wired up to a keyboard for a more standard desktop experience. The vast screen real estate comes at price though, with the Vega featuring the poorest battery life of all the tablets - a meagre 4 hours. While watching movies without squinting would be great, there would hardly be time for one movie and some browsing before you would be left with an (undeniably sleek) lump of glass and metal. Definitely not one for the long journeys, but with its capability to act as a desktop, it is a worthwhile investment for those who don't demand performance from their computers and want a tablet around the home.

Fusion Garage JooJoo



Predicted to release later this year, the JooJoo from Singapore-based firm Fusion Garage is an interesting take on the tablet experience that has had a rather a rocky start to life. The device, formally know as the CrunchPad, keeps in line with the slow shift away from desktop applications and the rise of cloud computing, having solely one focus - the web browser. The tablet boots directly to the browser window in around 9 seconds, and provides a neat browsing experience on the sizeable 12-inch screen. Yet whether this device will make it to the market is seriously in doubt. It was supposed to release on the 11th of December, but even today Fusion Garage is only accepting pre-orders for the device. Priced at around £320, it is significantly cheaper than the iPad, but also suffers from a much smaller feature set. Combined with Apple's more established reputation as a manufacturer of consumer electronics, the massive size of the App Store and Fusion Garage's legal woes with Michael Arrington, it's unlikely that the JooJoo is ever going to become a massive consumer hit.

Dell Mini 5



The Android-based Dell Mini 5 (shown left) is a bit of a mystery. It's gone from 'under design' a few weeks ago to 'out in a few months' just a few days back. Yet early specs and a few videos of the device are very promising. Whether the Mini 5 is a true tablet is questionable - with a 5 inch screen it's by far the smallest one out there, but it still boasts many features that the iPad doesn't have like a 5 MP camera, multitasking and a USB port for easy connectivity. Yet if you're looking for a tablet to completely replace your netbook (the role that Steve Jobs assigned to the iPad), the Mini 5 hardly fits the bill. While sleek and handy, it's only really suited for some light web browsing and a couple of videos on the bus home. Anything more would probably blow your eyes out. So probably best to think of it more as an iPod touch competitor rather than the iPod touch XL.



Travelling into 2010: trends to get you drooling in your Friday lecture(s)

Fashion may have plenty, but the world of travel has trends too. Travel Editor Dylan Lowe scrutinises the phenomena that are shaping the way we travel this year, and possibly beyond

Airport Body Scanners

Launching straight into vulgarity, body scanners – courtesy of our Nigerian friend. As though reborn from the ashes – befitting when the Christmas giftbringer spent more time roasting in flames than setting off explosion devices – the phenomenon of airport security is now *the* word of mouth even for Gordon Brown, who announced plans to introduce body scanners to all British airports.

Face it, it's going to get inconvenient. With the methods of security personnel intensified in thoroughness, minor delays and long frustrating queues are amongst those newly-enrolled into the air travel 'to-get-used-to' list. And should you have the misfortune of having the complexions abiding to what they call suspicion, then I do hope you like the coffee they serve at the airport detainment facility.

And by god I do hope they do check whether or not the recent applicants for scanner operators are perverts.



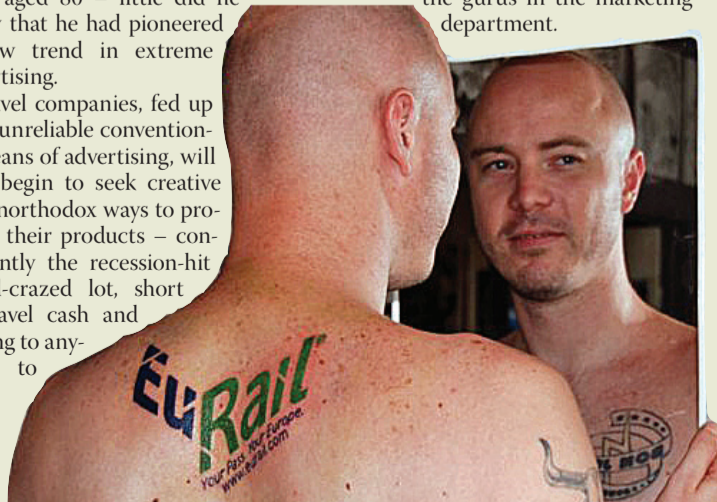
From top, clockwise: woman waits to be scanned; collage of unlikely souvenirs; train under backdrop of Tibetan mountains; the Coliseum in Rome, from Google Street View; Grant Burton and the Eurail tattoo; body scannings of a woman

Extreme Advertising

When Australian Grant Burton decided to tattoo the *Eurail* logo onto his back in exchange of *Eurail*-sponsored train passes – for his parents, aged 80 – little did he know that he had pioneered a new trend in extreme advertising.

Travel companies, fed up with unreliable conventional means of advertising, will now begin to seek creative yet unorthodox ways to promote their products – conveniently the recession-hit travel-crazed lot, short of travel cash and willing to anything to

get their hands on that big break, provide that supply of breathing walking billboards. I'm not suggesting what's happening next – I shall leave that to the gurus in the marketing department.



Unlikely Souvenirs

Forget the I [heart] something t-shirts, we can all do better than scooping the nearest resin Eiffel Tower or tribal face mask in our search for that little piece of personal memoir. The rumours have it that a latest travel trend is the collecting of unusual, unlikely souvenirs. I'm sure many of us would have got that idea already, judging by the sheer quantity of train tickets and placards from hitchhiking I've displayed in my bedroom door. But according to some experts, this craze is bound further for greatness.

An editor at TripAdvisors.com, Erik Torkelles, is a devotee - he goes so far as to call his pursuit a "hunt for 'unsouvenirs'". In his own words, what would set apart an 'unsouvenir' from its orthodox counterpart - both designs to store a thread of one's memory - is that "locals actually use them".

Train Travel

This one had perched in its cocoon since its decline and has recently blossomed due to several events that took place in 2009. Abdulmutallab, a.k.a. Christmas bomber, and his antics has tightened airport security and made air travel less appealing; Copenhagen – and numerous campaigns prelude to it – shamed many into growing a conscience and became more eco-friendly; and *Eurostar*, whose self-portrayal as 'green' transport is finally becoming more appealing to the consumer market.



Virtual Reality

Leaving the *Discovery Channel* on for over 48 hours will probably haul you across every corner of the globe, and leave your appetite for travel ravaged and diminished. And you get that just from watching another individual doing all the travelling – imagine virtually visiting the sites in a first-person perspective?

It was in 2009 when *Google* announced plans to send cameras to countless UNESCO World Heritage sites to capture imagery for *Google Street View*, the device which allows *Google Map/Earth* users to see their desired locality in panoramic views. It may benefit those more eager to explore the world in the comfort of their own homes, but it may strip of us our want to witness it in its physical form.

And with gaming platforms becoming more and more graphically stimulating, it's easy to see how many opted to explore settings through the scope of in-game char-



acters, in turn manipulated simply by the flick of a controller. When *Grand Theft Auto* brings you to the neighbourhoods, *Assassin's Creed* to historical Italy and *Grand Turismo* to, well, everywhere, no wonder we as a race of avid travellers (*cough snobbery *cough) tend to snub and avoid them.

'Personality Contests' for Travel Internships

From the 'Best Job in the World' phenomenon that conquered our hearts in 2009 sprung the waves of travel-related giveaways, with which came the contenders and the rigorous selection processes that examine their entries to the core.

Even from the top of my head can I yield several examples of contests so seemingly novelty and seductive that they can even make the most dirt-hating glamour girl screech and faint in excitement.

The World Traveller Internship, hosted by *STA Travel*, offers two survivors of intricate competition the opportunity to travel the world – all the while documenting their journeys through blogging and video-making – entirely at the expenses of the travel agency. See *WorldTraveller-Intern.co.uk* for more details.

As part of a media campaign, the lucky



(though well-deserved) winner of *California Calling* receives free tickets to Los Angeles, VIP club entries and US\$1000

spending money. The catch? Film your experiences – is that too much to ask? See for yourself at *CaliforniaCalling.co.uk*.

Travel & Social Media

As I mentioned a couple of weeks ago the sheer extent of this modern love affair between travel and social media is enough to woo conservative adventurers into taking blogging and twitter lessons. Equipping travellers with info. on local know-hows, shortening the distances between home and abroad, acknowledge its potential and watch it flourish in the new decade.



Domestic Tourism

This might not sound, the very least, attractive to us Brits but hey, if the Aussies can begin exploring the red gravel in their backyards and call it holiday-making, I'm sure you can take your break to somewhere a tad closer to home.

Ride the surfs in Devon; re-live the Roman times in Bath; stalk and hunt down your own venison in Scottish pastures; discover Snowdon with your own feet. Doubt me upon my statement that the possibilities are endless and you may no longer address yourself as a patriot.

Red Hot Chilli Destinations

It was shocking to find so many destinations previously perceived as hostile to visitors opening their doors to the tourism market. The more evident still when, a stroll and many *bilos* of kava at the *Adventure Travel Live* event later, I had stumbled across enough names of *those* countries to feel spontaneously fervent with desire to visit whilst terrorised by my mere expression of interest and lurid details of the, well, morbid stuff that might happen. For instance, this is what one company was advertising:



Blimey. Though it isn't the only one. Countries recently liberated from (or inching towards the end of) conflict – such as Sri Lanka and the end of its struggle against the *Tamil Tigers* – are expected to rapidly gain popularity in the tourism market.

Latin America is set to reign supreme in 2010 as a tourism destination, yet India and China have peeled off their aloof demeanour and tightened their reins as they present themselves as serious competition.

And as we, as tourists, become in-

creasingly brave and daring, even the harsh conditions and gritty environment aren't deterring us from invading with our rucksacks.

TripAdvisor.com has identified the following places as the top five destinations for 2010:



Troncones, Mexico



Nairn, Scotland



El Chalten, Patagonia



Patara, Turkey



Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Germany

In light of the recent revival of terrorism, Yemen is now amongst those countries deemed unsafe for travelling.



For my review of *Adventure Travel Live* visit *TheTravellingEditor.com*.



I lie, therefore you read

Dylan Lowe Travel Editor

Pity, may there be, for our younger generation.

The story goes that, in my perpetual quest to discover some form of excitement on my bus ride home, my bored-out-of-my-arse attention was captured by two mothers striking up a conversation.

Well, more like banter.

The theatrics unfolded when one parent extended her congratulations to the other, whose daughter had recently been admitted to a prestigious school.

"You're a very clever girl, aren't you?" committed the woman to flattery, albeit patronisingly.

The girl sputtered, out of her coyness, a whispered "thank you" below a blush; no doubt very well rehearsed, since she managed to confine her delight to a twitching foot.

The humbleness went on to infest and infect.

"My son is nowhere near as smart as you are – he's too stupid to get into [so-and-so school]."

As the compilation of her son's failings built up – to the amusement of the triumphant mother-and-daughter audience, so mounted my sympathy for the lonesome child, no older than ten, slumping further and further into his seat as his mother's tongue of deprivation and mockery clicked on.

"That's not true," he indignantly put forth his case in a spur of rebellion. Conveniently, the bus halted and, grandiose with the announcement, mother and daughter uttered their goodbyes and exited the stage.

Floodgates containing her suppressed embarrassment and crude rage unleashed the bile that was the all-too-familiar mother-to-son grilling. Poor kid, at the brink of bursting his own floodgate of tears, murmured apologetically and sheepishly followed so they disembarked, his head lowered as the mother took her unextinguished vengeance to the streets.

Pity, may there be, to our younger generation.

The equivalent of this anecdote-telling taking place in a pub would be the wonderful form of bullshitting. There were no such grillings happening on the no.22 bus bound for Putney Common; nor was the son's anguish over the mother's fury and disappointment an actual source of distraction. The conversation was neutral rather than hostile, the young prodigy's ecstasy genuine rather than rehearsed.

In short, the conflict was the fabrication of a storyteller seeking to entice his audience into, well, being his audience,

by smearing the mundane content with honey-trickling bits of suspense, contempt, and artificial flamboyance worthy of a best-selling commercial fiction.

So I basically conned you into reading my editorial, I guess.

But, at least my depictions weren't so exaggerated that, fictionally speaking, had the mother clasping her spidery fingers around the son's neck and squeezed life out of the oesophagus, or the daughter casting condescending looks at the boy as she gleamed in vanity.

It is a temptation, regarding travel writing, to elaborate one's experiences and the messages and morals one wishes to convey by fabricating a few harmless lies. But, when travel writing retains its readership through their blind faith in travel writers' honesty, surely 'betrayal' be more appropriate a word to describe the act of concoction?

A recent article in the *Guardian* by John Hooper describes how this 'creative' travel writing had existed for centuries before our time.

"Introducing 'colour', altering the sequence of events to make a book or article 'flow', exaggeration, invention and downright lying all have a history in the chronicling of travel that goes back at least as far as the ancient mariners who told stories of sirens and sea monsters."

Stefano Malatesta, an award-winning Italian author, goes further:

"The lie is intrinsic to travel books. And as ignorance of the world gradually diminishes, the difficulty of recounting it in books increases."

Yet unlike its 17th century counterparts, the main service travel writing in the modern world is not of temporal escapades from reality, but of sources of facts and figures possibly for the benefit of someone preparing to revisit the voyages of his storyteller.

I must also disagree with Malatesta's sentiment that the quality of travel writing must decline solely because of the resourcefulness we possess. Fundamentally, what sets apart good and bad travelling writing is that, while the latter fails to address anything beyond physical manifestations, an outstanding writer would capture the essence of a location, process and express such as it captivates the human mind into springing insights, spiritual enlightenments and the likes. It is an understanding of the world, unique in its own right, untampered and unfazed by the urge to appeal through dishonesty.

Upon these grounds I shall continue to write and deliver to you what I perceive as deliverable. In the meantime, slap me on the wrist for my betrayal, if you must.

We need a new travel editor!

Have you travelled? Can you write?

Email us at travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk, along with a sample of your travel writing.



This page is all about wine! Great news

David Stewart has the word... and the word is wine. From the vineyards of France, Spain, Italy and New Zealand, to the cases of our loveable Oddbins, get the word on the wines just a walk away.

High street wine shops have not been doing so well of late. Threshers (also branded as Wine Rack) recently announced that it has gone into administration. Unless it finds a buyer, we could be left with Oddbins as the only major chain on the High Street, with Majestic picking up the bulk buy customers.

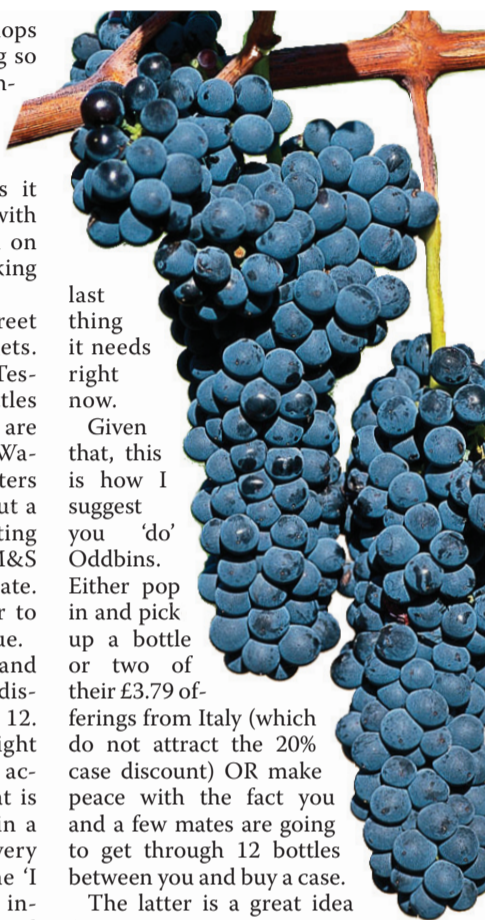
The challenge to the high street has been from the supermarkets. In terms of cheap, Asda and Tesco present a huge range of bottles priced below £4, many of which are not terrible. At the higher end, Waitrose, with its battalion of Masters of Wine buying the stock, puts out a large range of consistent, interesting and great value stuff; equally M&S has been keeping its end up of late. So Oddbins has quite a high bar to reach, in terms of quality and value.

Which is why I can't understand its pricing policy. You get a 20% discount if you buy a mixed case of 12. Nothing wrong with that, you might think, but the thing is that 20% is actually a lot. It makes a bottle that is £6.99 on the shelves cost £5.59 in a case. That is a spread over two very different 'price points': that of the 'I want to try something a bit more interesting with my dinner, tonight' and 'I'm looking for something for about a fiver to take to a party'. There's a correspondingly large discrepancy in your expectations. The upshot of this discrepancy is that Oddbins can seem expensive, which seems like the

last thing it needs right now.

Given that, this is how I suggest you 'do' Oddbins. Either pop in and pick up a bottle or two of their £3.79 offerings from Italy (which do not attract the 20% case discount) OR make peace with the fact you and a few mates are going to get through 12 bottles between you and buy a case.

The latter is a great idea for a party or a Christmas dinner anyway. If you do decide to buy a case, either trust to my recommendations (or those of the guy in the shop, of course), or swallow the by-the-bottle price while you decide how to build up your case.



Some real corkers from Oddbins...

The following wines were all tasted at the Oddbins Press tasting on 03/11/09. Prices as [bottle price]/[case price]

Fizz

Condesa Blanca Brut NV, Spain, 12%, £5.19/£6.49

So delicate it's almost non-existent, but retaining enough acidity that it's a good value decent fizzy (went down a storm at the Maths post-grad party).

Red

Rosso de Sicilia, Pasqua, 2007 Sicily, Italy, 12%, £3.79

It's actually okay and I prefer it to the house white. Very light, but it's dry with a pleasant hint of bitterness to add depth.

Rocca Maura Vin de Pays du Gard, 2007, Rhone, France, 14.5%, £4.79/£5.99

2007 has been declared a great vintage for the Rhone. Even at the lower end, this lives up to the hype. Very complex blend of five different grape varieties, very fragrant with good depth. The opulent syrah grape shines through.

La Multa Old Vine Garnacha, 2007, Calatayud, Spain, 14.5% £5.59/£6.99 Quite tannic actually. Some nice deep fruit rounded off with quite a bit of oak. So fat and fruity, it's difficult to see anyone disliking this.

Negroamaro, Vini Del Sole, 2008, Puglia, Italy, 13.5% £6.39/£7.99

I always seem to like this grape. This has a good sweet plummy depth. A gulp of tasty Italian sunshine.

Lobster Reef Pinot Noir, 2008 Marlborough, New Zealand, 13.5% £7.99/£9.99 Love this. I think pinot works best with a little savouriness and this has a sort of tomato/pomegranate action happening which stops it from tasting like a cartoon.

Chorey-Les-Beaunes Domaine Cornu, 2006, Burgundy, France, 13% £15.99/£19.99

Expensive, but that's what I call a Red Burgundy. A good tannic chew with massive violet florality. (My tasting note reads 'That's the F-ing S-, Might even buy some of that.')

Sweet

Château Filhot Sauternes, 1999, Bordeaux, France, 14%, £13.59/£16.99

You might think it's mad to say this is good value, but it is ten years old with much longer left in it. Raisiny buttery brioche notes combine with that plasticky twang of botrytis to give you a mouthful which is total opulence.

White

Bianco di Puglia, Pasqua 2008, Puglia Italy, 12% £3.79

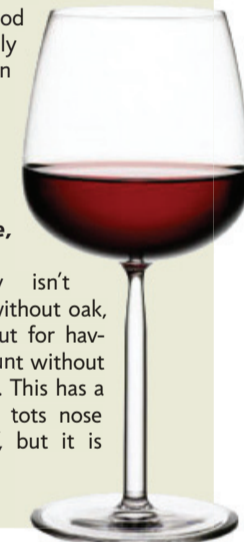
Comes across somewhere between an average Soave and a Pinot Grigio. Waxy. Just about drinkable.

Stratum Sauvignon Blanc 2008, Marlborough New Zealand 13%, £5.59/£6.99

This is entirely typical of the style: it stinks of passionfruit and elderflower with a big tangy grip. Not necessarily my favourite style but this is a very good example. Definitely worth the extra on the house white.

Bourgogne Chardonnay Etienne-Sauzet, 2007, Burgundy, France, £15.99/£19.99

White burgundy isn't white burgundy without oak, and this stands out for having a decent amount without being overbearing. This has a nice angelica/jelly tots nose to it. Good stuff, but it is expensive!



The top five snacks to complement your chosen wine, enjoy!

Holly Cumbergs thought you might like a list of the snacks that will really help your wine to taste heavenly

To go with the absolutely gorgeous wine, here are a list of the top 5 snacks to enjoy with wine. The top spot has to go to olives, not to everyone's choosing, but I personally adore olives especially with a nice glass of white wine.

There are so many different varieties- of which I am not going to list, as I am sure you all have your personal favourites. However, if you are looking to try a new olive I would suggest organic raw olives. These are left to ripen and therefore don't have the bitter flavour. I would advise buying these olives online as they can be extremely difficult to find in high street shops.

Number deux has to be cheese and biscuits. I can't get enough of blue cheeses, I have recently fallen in love with roquefort- it tastes amazing with a strong red wine. However, blue cheese is one of those things you'll either love or hate. It definitely takes an acquired

taste (and nobody can deny no matter how much of a fan you are that it smells extremely strong- pretty similar to rotten socks!).

If you aren't into your blue cheeses then there are plenty of other cheeses that go well with wine. I find that fruity cheeses such as white Stilton with apricots or Wensleydale with cranberries go well with all kinds of wine. Although saying that, if you're looking to enjoy a glass of red wine, I would personally suggest Brie or Camembert (however don't go for the Sainsbury's basics!). They go particularly well with a red wine from the southern French regions.

If you prefer white wines I would suggest a lighter cheese. I simply love Gruyère (it is slightly more expensive than other cheeses but well worth it), it has a slightly sweet and smooth taste. But, be careful when choosing a cheese as a too strong a flavour can spoil the taste of the wine.



Cheese, cheese and more cheese... I can almost smell it through the page.

If you are looking for a healthier snack try a bit of veg (trying adding dips to make it a bit more exciting). Raw vegetables, such as celery and carrot, go particularly well with white wine. They always go down well at parties and are super easy to prepare!

The next snack on the list is ideal for a student party (you can even get it from the take-away) and you've got to love it! From years of experience I have found that most pizzas go well with wine. However, I tend to opt for the traditional cheese and tomato. The ideal wines to go with pizza are either chardonnay or zinfandel.

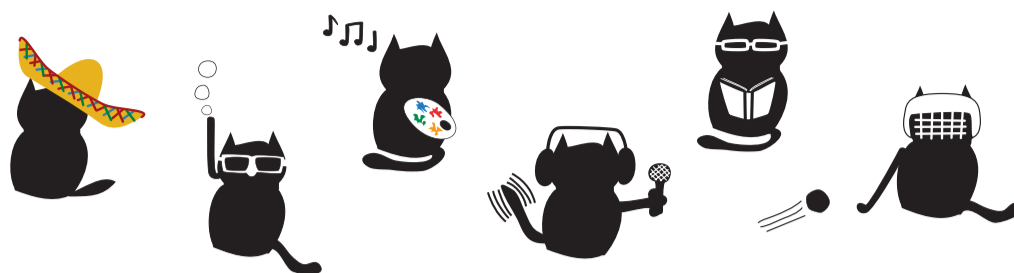
The easiest snack to prepare, and the one that I find is always popular, is potato crisps (I would suggest kettle chips- again slightly more expensive but well worth it!). Personally I prefer plain crisps, I have never fancied trying salt and vinegar crisps with wine, I feel it would slightly spoil the wine! Call me fussy, but I do like my wine.

What's on...

Clubs & Societies Calendar

Editors – Lily Topham & Rachel D'oliveiro

whatson.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Fri 5th Feb

International Night 2010

- 7:30pm, Great Hall, Sherfield
- £5 students, £8 non-students
- The grand finale to One World Week showcasing the diverse range of international students at Imperial College. Come and help us raise money for The Prince's Trust and The Haiti Appeal.
- **Afterparty:** 8pm-2am, dB's, Union, £1 for ticketholders.

ICSM RAG Dash to Amsterdam!

- From 10am
- SAF, South Ken to Amsterdam...
- Get out onto the streets and raise money for the Children's Hope Foundation.

one world week

1-5 FEBRUARY 2010

imperialcollegeunion.org/oneworldweek



Sun 7th Feb

Ukrainian Society Maslenitsa Festival

- 1pm-6pm, Potters Fields (between Tower Bridge and City Hall)
- Free for all!
- Come celebrate this traditional festival of Russian and Ukrainian culture (also known as Pancake Week) organised in partnership with the Mayor of London.
- Singers, bands, comedians will be there to entertain the crowd. There will also be stalls with traditional foods including as blinis and varenikis.

Mon 8th Feb

SIFE Rose Sale

- 12-2pm, JCR, Sherfield (all week!)
- Buy a rose with complementary chocolate only for £3.
- Alternatively, email your order to ma1207@imperial.ac.uk
- Collect your rose on 12th Feb

PPS Seminar: "What if India...."

- 6-8pm, Room 1004 Blackett
- Political Philosophy Society invites you to come to this discussion session led by the PPS Chair Ndubuisi Kejeh.

Tues 9th & Wed 10th Feb

SIFE Rose Sale

- 12-2pm, JCR, Sherfield (all week!)
- Another chance to buy a rose with complementary chocolate only for £3 and collect your rose on 12th Feb.
- Alternatively, email your order to ma1207@imperial.ac.uk

To Do....

1) Escape to somewhere with sun....

3) What d'you reckon:
events from Friday – Friday, OR
events from Monday – Sunday??

3) Send in your events!!
whatson.felix@imperial.ac.uk
(Club name & event, time, place,
price, pics...) **by end of Tues 9th Feb.**

Thurs 11th Feb

SIFE Rose Sale

- 12-2pm, JCR, Sherfield (all week!)
- Buy a rose with complementary chocolate only for £3 and collect your rose on 12th Feb.
- Alternatively, email your order to ma1207@imperial.ac.uk

The UN and Global Health Talk

- 6-7:30pm, G16 LT, SAF
- Free!
- IC Model UN, Medsin and Amnesty International invite you an exciting talk involving 2 speakers representing the UN: Natalie Samarasinghe from the UNA-UK and Caroline Hurford from the World Food Programme.

Fri 12th Feb

SIFE Rose Sale

- 12-2pm, JCR, Sherfield (last day!)
- Your final chance to buy a rose with complementary chocolate only for £3.
- Come and pick up your rose today if you ordered it earlier in the week.



Sat 13th Feb

Technology in Medicine and Surgery Conference

- 9am-5pm, SAF Building, S Ken
- FREE, make sure you register beforehand online via the Union website.
- ICSM Surgical Society presents its first TiMS Conference bringing students together to collaborate and discuss ideas to improve healthcare in the UK.
- With presentations from notable clinicians and the opportunity to win a prize in a Dragon's Den-style competition, this will be a fun and stimulating day!



Who knew hiking could be EXTREME?

First trip of the year and we lose a Tarpaulin, hack up a cupboard with an axe and generally fall more than walk. 'WTF?!' says **Caroline Bailey**, and finds that in the Imperial dictionary, there is no entry for 'Fear'

This was the first trip of the new decade and spirits were high, especially as this was many people's first Fellwanderers trip. Although we planned to leave the Union at 6pm, we were slightly late, maybe because when I, and later Alex, went down to the store, we found Jim, James and Joe reminiscing about their recent clean-out of the store (the bread-tree and banana gloop featured strongly!) and comparing favourite types of biscuit.

The good banter continued as the two packed minibuses set off on the wet Friday night. There were some banging tunes to be had on the radio and horror stories of high school house parties kept us all entertained. Unfortunately, disaster struck on the M1 when we were signalled by other drivers and realised the tarpaulin had blown off the roof of the minibus! After a minor panic, we pulled over and all the bags were pulled to safety inside the minibus. They were wet but luckily nothing fell off. We don't know yet what became of the tarpaulin but there hasn't been anything on the news concerning coach-loads of nuns or orphans crashing and burning, so hopefully no harm was done!

Rafal, Jules, Joe and James did a sterling job driving us to Wales and we arrived at St Mary's hut about 1am. Although there were lots of us, it was a freezing night – our breath hung in the air inside the hut!

We woke up at 7am to the smell of porridge with fruit and nuts (we reckon scavenged by Jim's forest friends!). We soon set off for our first day of walking. We climbed Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn, splitting into two groups and crossing paths halfway. The two peaks are connected by a ridge which made quite easy walking along the top. However, walking on



the steep slopes was generally made quite tricky because there was snow and it was quite slippery in places. The snow at the top was really nice and deep though (right up past your knees) so we enjoyed messing about and sledging down sections of the path on our bums! The views were really fantastic – the sun was low but bright – and you could see for miles at times. We passed a frozen lake and found frozen holes in the snow which James hid in. We also had a giggle at Angie's German chocolate, which was advertised on the packaging as being "Quadratisch. Praktisch. Gut." ("Square. Practical. Good.") – classic!

Dinner on the Saturday night was a bit of an extravaganza. As our boots

steamed by the fire (thankfully warming up the sleeping quarters in the process), Jim served up his Masterpiece concoction – Spaghetti Carbonara. Big success. For some of us, our last memory of this dish was the acidic out-of-a-jar mess that Jim served up on the Easter tour in Scotland (no offence Jim!). He cooked the equivalent of half a jar each but it was so bad that even Jim couldn't finish his fifth portion (although when the remainder congealed overnight, he did use it as sandwich filler the next day). Luckily, his home recipe version went down much better and lots of us went back for seconds and thirds. Pudding was really yum too – cake in the most sugary fudge sauce ever. The evening was spiced up by the

discovery of a bottle of vodka in which chillis and garlic had been stuffed (and were now pickling) that had been left in the hut by a previous society. Obviously, a manhood competition followed, along with lots of streaming eyes!

The Sunday breakfast was not quite as tempting as the first – everything smelt of burnt porridge and the yesterday's porridge had actually set into one big lump. Thea suggested taking it up the mountain, burying it in the snow and making porridge ice lollies! After tidying up the hut we set off for Snowdon and started off as one big group. We passed some beautiful waterfalls and could see the effects of mining and landslips in the area (cue brief geology of Snowdonia lesson!). The group soon

split, with the intention of approaching the summit from opposite sides, but as we climbed our side of the valley we could see the other group had taken the wrong route, meaning they had to scramble up the steep valley side instead of a longer, gentler ascent. Truth be told, we had quite a giggle at their expense (sorry guys!).

We soon hit snow and at the top of the ridge we could see the whole valley we had just climbed (with the cloud level dipping down below our height) and also over into the next horseshoe valley. It was a brilliant sight in the snow. It had been quite hard work though, and biscuits (Rich Tea) were handed around. They were so dry they sucked every bit of moisture out of your mouth, so a bit of crazy Camel Bak action followed! The walk became very tough from there to the summit – the wind was damn cold, and though the snow helped with footing in some respects, it was still easy to slip.

Once we reached the summit we couldn't see anything but greyness, and the wind was strong. Randomly, a seagull came and joined us in the snow (good camouflage tactic) – probably after some lunch. We passed the other half of the group as we started back down and had a brief chat.

The way down was pleasant but a bit dodgy in places – I was a Dumbo at one point and tripped over my own feet, falling off the path and quite a way down the mountain side, which gave Angie a fright! Luckily there were no cliffs! Paula also had a bit of a tumble later on but fortunately no-one was hurt. We got back to the minibuses in good time, but the other group had taken a different route to what was planned so ended up being a bit later. The journey home went smoothly though and we arrived back to a wet London about 11pm. An excellent start to the New Year!

International Food Night as it should be, with Ed Richards

On Thursday 21st January, the culinary scene of Great Britain was shaken to its very foundations. Gordon Ramsay's pants suddenly became fuller of skids than your drive would be if you invited Jeremy Clarkson for dinner. The head chef at Nobu fell on his sword. Heston Blumenthal admitted that the inspiration for snail porridge came from the time when he regurgitated equine ejaculate.

Yes, yes, the rumours are true; Erasmus Society's International Food Night (IFN) had arrived. Over 150 students and staff ascended the red carpet to the Level 8 Common Room, Blackett Laboratory, for a night of haute cuisine and fine wine accompanied by a musical backdrop of Rammstein, followed

by a morning of nausea, gastroenteritis and temporary blindness.

The French made Crepes (pancakes), the Norwegians made Lapper (pancakes) and the Spanish made Tortilla (pancakes). Kudos to the lady who made a curry and to the Swiss guy who made Raclette for making the cuisine a little more varied. Also many thanks to the two strapping ladies who let me taste their balls. The creamy filling was not only delicious but also proved to be very effective at moisturising my face.

The event provided an opportunity for current Imperial students considering a year abroad to meet some of their European neighbours and discuss life at their universities. In addition Imperialists were able to brush up their foreign language skills, learning new words such as: daylight, weekend, so-

cialising, pudenda etc.

There was a fully stocked bar serving the finest wine from France, Spain, Italy, Germany, California and some plum brandy made in a basement in Serbia and smuggled illegally through customs. We are very thankful to Adrian Hawksworth for providing all of the wine and definitely not drinking all of the brandy. Also thanks to the language department for helping to publicise the event. This article will make no mention of any personal grievances I may have due to my poor mark in my second year language option. These will be dealt with in person, bastardos!!

Upcoming events include a pub and club night next week, trips to Stratford-upon-Avon and Manchester/Liverpool and Valentine's Speed Dating. A bientôt.



'Hangover' may be different in every language, but it feels just the same

UNIONd's



Friday 12 February
22:00 - 02:00

SPORTS NIGHT

free entry!

EVERY WEDNESDAY

20:00 - 02:00



Fosters,
Blackthorn &
John Smith's
£1.50
a pint

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Photograph of the week

'Busker' by Baz Walker

An elderly busker playing outside the National Portrait Gallery in London. Coincidentally, his son went to Imperial College and studied Mathematics.

Submit your photographs of the week to felix@imperial.ac.uk





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COFFEE BREAK

Coffee Break Editor Charlie Murdoch
coffee.felix@imperial.ac.uk



I've gone off on one again. I offer my apologies

Charlie Murdoch Coffee Break Editor

To be brutally honest, I've had a reasonably quiet week. I've started to think about the Government's recent idea that is necessary, almost vital, for children of the age of five to seven need to be learned in the subject of sex education. Thus is opposed to sorting out the meltdown we find ourselves in. Personally, I am not too sure how many kids aged five are having it off behind the bike sheds, or fence to which bikes are chained if they're in a scummy school, but I'll stick my neck out and say not one. To further that, I am prepared to bet that many don't spent significant amount of time reflecting on sex, so they needn't be aware of that shit anyway. So who thinks of this diatribe? Jim Knight, the Schools Minister. Speaking in the Commons, he said: "The international evidence suggests that teaching aspects of sex and relationship education before puberty has a positive effect on such things as teenage pregnancy rates and sex education." Twat. (Although I must point out that those are my dots).

Stephen Burgess, National Director of Life Education Centres, agreed with

him, saying: "If we want to make a real and lasting difference to teenage drug and alcohol misuse, we must reach them early - at primary school. Then, they can make informed decisions based on fact rather than hearsay."

Right, at five, kids are too young to even find drawing a penis funny, let alone understand what to do with the thing- and don't bring beer into this, where's that come from?

When I first heard about this, I admit, I was so overcome with one pounding thought that I needed to take a few minutes just to consider 'WHAT THE F*CK IS GOING ON IN THESE PEOPLE'S MINDS?'

With useless wankers like that populating the upper tier of government, hell knows who they bring in at the bottom. Probably a tourist, or one of those retarded activists who camp outside the Houses of Parliament. They need to re-assess their lives for starters. Look mate, you're living in a tent, and pissing in a bucket- even the cave-men lived in caves, hence the name. Whatever you're campaigning for, can you not possibly, just possibly, piss off and shout at someone else?

Luckily, Geraldine Smith, MP for Morecambe and Lunesdale, stood up and said, "Boys, listen. If a five year old can't even see the underlying story of Bob the Builder, and his obvious lust for Wendy, then how are they expected to understand sex? So leave the leave the poor little fuckers alone yeah?" We've all noticed it... Just shag the bitch, Bob.

With people like Knight proposing literal shit, no wonder that Sir Peter Viggers managed to claim £1,645 for a duck house. A 32 foot square duck house. Crunch Corner yoghurts and porn I can entertain, but a duck house? This, my friends, I will not stand. To make matters worse, he then took the precaution of auctioning off said island, thus evicting the bloody ducks- without even giving them the mandatory 20 day notice.

These people have f*cked up more than one brain can feasibly take.

What a useless pile of shit the world has come to- even the Catholics have elected an anti-gay leader who used to be a Nazi. So there it is, I've said it all now, the shit has well and truly hit the fan.

Stuff Imperial students don't like:

13. Numerous pieces of coursework that often have minimal marks:

Coursework, we all have it, and we all spend an age on a single maths problem. And by and age, I more often than not mean hours and bloody hours. Why not just take a step back and think 'woah, this piece, even if I get 100% will contribute 0.001% to your whole degree. Fuck it, I'm off to the bar.' But we don't do we. We plod on through, copying mates as and when we can, eventually, stumbling along to an answer. Unfortunately your answers are more often than not incorrect so you have com-

pletely wasted your time for absolutely no gain. Well done.

However the other side to that coin is that if you do sod all, then eventually you're going to be get kicked out. Which would somewhat spoil your day. Meh. You win some and you lose some- that would defiantly classify as a major overall loss. Then you'll not be able to get a job. Then you'll get addicted to skag (for why I have no idea). Then you'll have to turn to robbery and prostitution to make ends meet. Still could be worse.



John Terry was expecting much paperwork for his forthcoming adultery trial

Quote of the Week

Thomas Sowell: "It takes considerable knowledge just to realize the extent of your own ignorance."

Wordoku 1,452

			O				
		D		E	A	S	
	E	A	S			W	O
	A					U	O
	N						W
S		U					N
	O	N			D	A	X
		S	A	X		O	
				U			

A mass of entries last week, really pleasing to see, so carry on. I've decided to award the evil wordoku **double points** (but there's no room for it this week) so make sure you get that done! Well, **Harry Potter Trio** won both.

How to play: 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.

Scribble box

Solution 1451

T	R	U	I	A	N	C	H	S
A	N	I	S	H	C	U	R	T
H	S	C	U	T	R	N	A	I
C	A	S	R	U	H	T	I	N
U	T	N	C	I	A	H	S	R
I	H	R	N	S	T	A	C	U
R	C	T	A	N	S	I	U	H
S	U	H	T	C	I	R	N	A
N	I	A	H	R	U	S	T	C

E	A	S	I	R	P	N	S	H
N	H	I	A	S	E	S	P	R
P	S	R	S	H	N	E	A	I
A	R	S	H	E	I	P	N	S
I	P	E	N	S	S	R	H	A
S	N	H	P	A	R	I	E	S
S	E	N	R	I	A	H	S	P
H	I	P	S	N	S	A	R	E
R	S	A	E	P	H	S	I	N

Wordpath 1,452

ORIGIN:
GOOD
DESTINATION:
BEST

Solution 1451
HEAD
SAIL via
HEAD-SAIL
TAIL (LS)

How to play:

Make a path from the origin word to the destination word by taking steps between words using one of the three following methods:

Letter Substitution: Substitute just **one** letter.

e.g. WORD -> WARD

Anagram: Rearrange the letters.

e.g. WARD -> DRAW

Wordslide: Replace the current word with a new 4 letter word from any 5+ letter word that contains them both.

e.g. DRAW -> WING (via DRAWING)

No consecutive steps may be made by the same method.
e.g. WORD -> WARD (by LS) -> WARE (by LS) would be **invalid**.

Points are awarded for the earliest SHORTEST valid path between the two words. Dubious words will be checked against the OED. Send your solutions to sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk.

Scribble box

Guest Puzzle Solution 1451

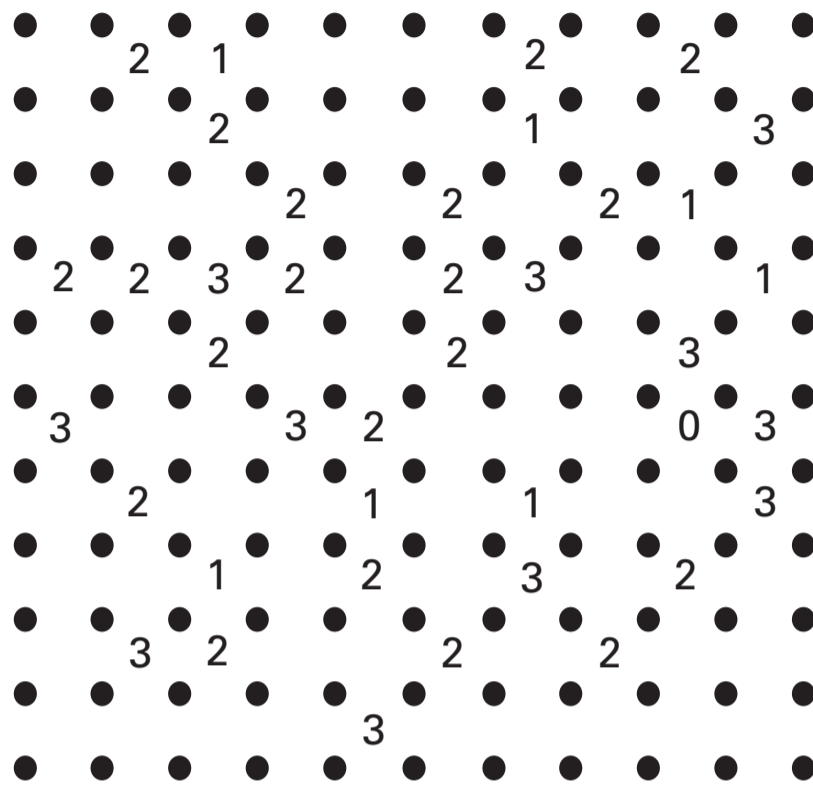
- 1 R to R T A = One Ring to Rule Them All
- 3 G make a H = Three Goals make a Hatrick
- 5 T at H A = Five Terminals at Heathrow Airport
- 7 D S and H V = Seven Deadly Sins and Heavenly Virtues
- 9 A C in T P = Nine Abbreviated Clues in This Puzzle

- 2 W in a F = Two Weeks in a Fortnight
- 4 F, 1 T = Four Fingers, One Thumb
- 6 C on a P F = Six Colours on a Pride Flag
- 8 P in the S S = Eight Planets in the Solar System

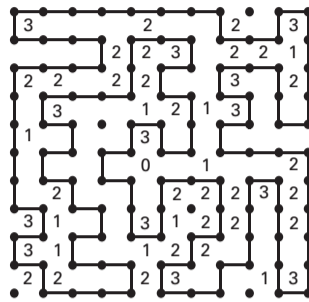
coffee.felix@imperial.ac.uk

COFFEE BREAK

Slitherlink 1,452



Solution 1451



It was 'GLT' not 'GTL' who got this and the Nonogram last week - also it's an individual with several email addresses! Not a team as was stated. Winner was **Happy Potter Trio**.

How to play:

It's quite simple, all numbers are in a cell and must be surrounded with a corresponding number of 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.

FUCWIT League Table

Teams:

Harry Potter Trio	161 Points
The Tough Brets	119 Points
The Cool Kids and Fergal	33 Points

Individuals:

Matthew Colvin	117 Points
Sheryl	74 Points
Kelvin Wong	48 Points

The Felix University/College-Wide Invitational Tournament League is new and improved, with an iPod nano for both the team and the individual with the most points at the end of the year.

5 points for the 1st correct answers for all puzzles on these pages, 4 points for 2nd, 3 points for 3rd, 2 points for 4th and 1 point for 5th.

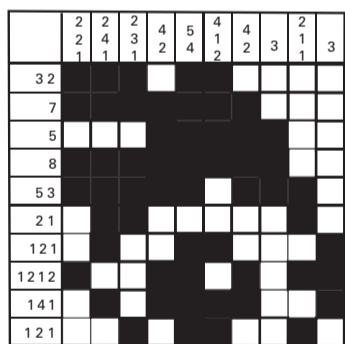
Now then FUCWITs, answers to sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk. Go!

Nonogram 1,452

How to play:

The numbers represent the size and order of blocks in each column and row. There must be at least one space between each block. See last issue's solution below for more help.

Solution 1451



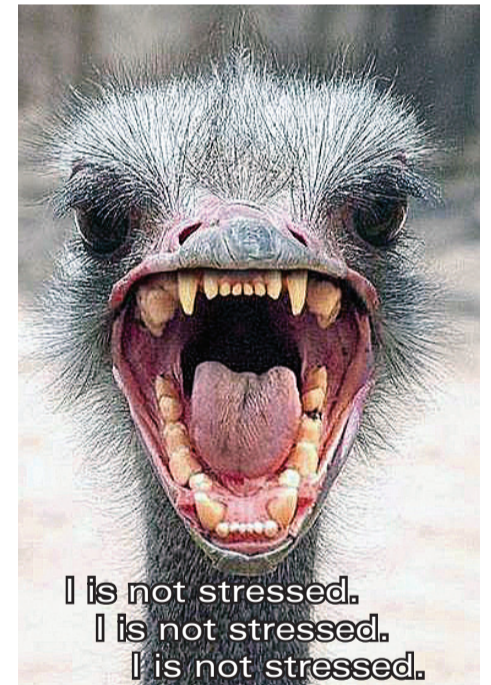
This issue's Nonogram provides you with the final quarter of a 20 x 20 solution image made by arranging them according to the indicator in the top left corner of each Nonogram from this and the previous three issues.

Last week's winners was the **Harry Potter Trio**. Well done on another win.



									1		
5	3	2	4	6	4	3	2	1	1		
2											
2											
1 1											
1 2											
1											
1 1 3											
1 2											
2 4											
9											
9											

Mate,
he is
angry:
Best
of lol
ostrich



I is not stressed.
I is not stressed.
I is not stressed.

RAG Week is nearly upon us: Prepare!

Rag Week is almost upon us!

RAG Week this year is going to be held in the first week of March and this year will be one to remember! As is tradition, the whole week will be packed with insane club nights, sweet raids and a slave auction, with all profits going to charity. For our sporty friends there will be a night football tournament at Ethos from 7pm - 1am. Clubbers will have their chance to party hard at the newly refurbished On Anon at a joint event with UCL (UCL = girls!). To find out more check out our section in felix in the weeks to come, keep yur eyes peeled for our poster which will be appearing over the next weeks or join our rag mailing list.



Girls! At UCL! In corsets! Well, maybe not corsets, but the prospect of UCL is pretty exciting. Oh wait, no the girls are

As a small taster this week, I'll write about our annual RAG raid. On the Wednesday of RAG Week, we're sending Imperial out to the City of Westminster to harass stingy Londoners for money. In the past, volunteers have gotten dressed in lycra, as busty nurses and even creepy clowns. Your imagination is the limit, so best start thinking about your costumes now. Your group

will be given a sheet of challenges to complete, such as pretending to have a group orgasm in a fast food chain or to permanently "borrow" an item from Kings, UCL or LSE. This event is our biggest of the year, so you and your friends should definitely check it out!

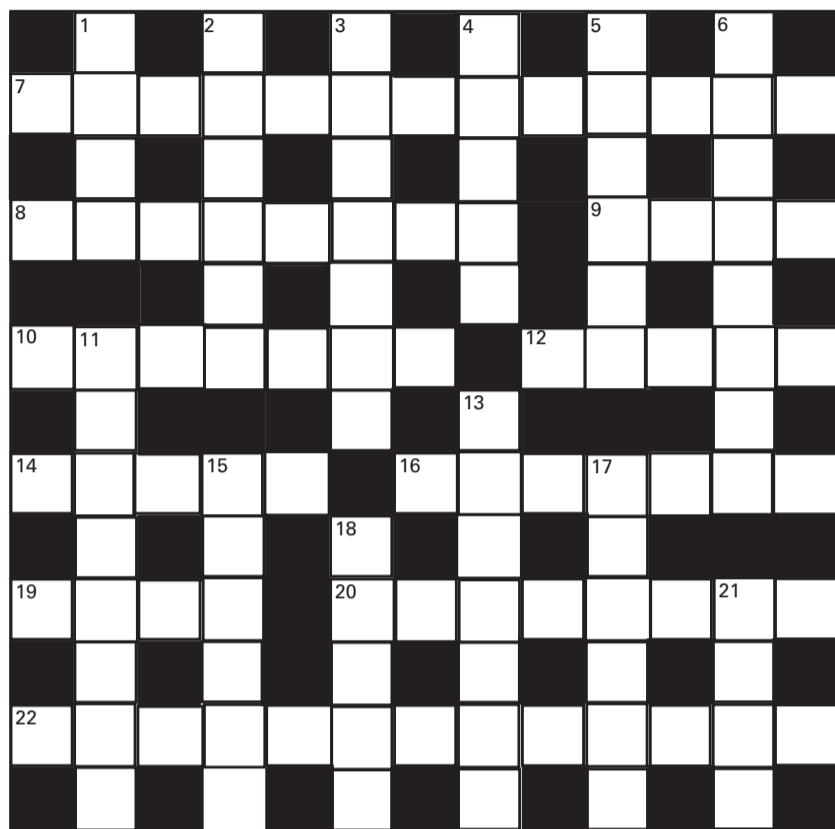
ALL the profits from the raid will go towards Broadway Homelessness and Support, a relatively new homelessness

charity whos vision is that "every person finds and keeps a home". As well as supporting the homeless with practical help, advice and training, Broadway conducts research into the homelessness sector, "seeking to influence policy and practice by contributing to a greater understanding of homelessness and social exclusion". Definitely worth raiding London for!

felix
Lovestruck

07726 799
424

A quickie (crossword) 1,452



ACROSS

- 7 Pastime of the piss-artist - King Bridge Inn (5,8)
 8 Without doubt! (2,6)
 9 Prey of John Terry/Show of canine glee (4)
 10 Soft drink (from NY island?) (4,3)
 12 _____ Starr, _____ "Buzz" Aldrin (5)
 14 Blow hard (5)
 16 The Windy City (7)
 19 Plucky sheep-herding pig (4)
 20 One brain (anag.) - Former Roxy Music synth wizard (8)
 22 Proverbially unattractive birdlets (4,9)
- 6 French kissing (8)
 11 Set of planned movements (military) (8)
 13 Minimises - Freuds? (7)
 15 Artfully bleach/stain (3-3)
 17 Gallic foodstuff, preserved in its own fat (6)
 18 Type of turn (5)
 21 Type of zone (2-2)

Last week's crossword was won by the **Harry Potter Trio**. We need more entries for this one, so I will be offering 20 points for all non team winners!

Crossword by **Peter Legg**

Solution 1451



Scribble box

DOWN

- 1 Soft blow - Nemesis of Marty McFly; hates manure (4)
 2 Gaoled (anag.) (3-3)
 3 Ornamented (7)
 4 Wailing alarm - Classical temptress (5)
 5 Crooked (6)

H to the O to the R-O-Scopes. It's the Horoscopes, yo!

We've gone back to our roots, that means the raving lunatic from last year is back, and keen to make up ground



Aquarius

Fuck! This has been a long time. I sometimes look back to the days where I could write just about whatever the

fuck I wanted and nobody would complain. You will look back on you life this week, and find that maybe killing babies and raping their dead bodies was not something that you should have indulged in. No fucking shit.



Pisces

Have you noticed how jelly babies encourages cannibalism? Well for most people the consumption of small

gelatine human shaped confectionary is not a reflection on how you should behave as an adult. For you, it is, and when your girlfriend asked you to eat her pussy, diving in with a steak knife was a big mistake. Nom nom nom.



Aries

Life is not what it used to be. Well that's what your friends tell you and they are pretty much right. Last week you were found

walking around the union with your cock between your legs screaming 'I've lost my fucking willy!' No mate, what you've lost is your fucking mind. Go and blow your brains out like Kurt Cobain. But don't do it in the Union- that'll be messy.



Taurus

Today you will take a long hard look at your life and realise you're a freak with not a chance in hell of getting laid.

Reinvention is the key my friend: buy half of Topman, pretend you live in Shoreditch and start snorting that plant food all the cool kids are doing. Actually, fuck that, stay a freak! Reinvention just leads to a drug addiction.



Gemini

Looking out of your window on a cold Sunday morning, you see a girl walk past hand in hand with another man.

You think you recognise the girl, but the rain running down the window blurs your view. Later the evening you find a used condom in your girlfriend's flat, except you've not had sex in months. Read the signs my friend.



Cancer

It's the fifth of the month and you should have paid the rent on the first. You happen to be quite attractive, and living with a

bunch of guys. Fuck it, you tear a hole in the arse of your tights and let them just go at it for hours and hours. You really begin to regret that you live with six other men. But you can't stop them. You'll never be able to now.



Leo

Two lads lurch towards you throwing lager over your smart new jacket and what appears to be the girl from the Exorcist has

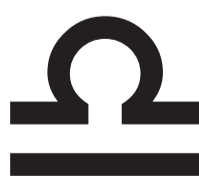
just fallen on your lap oozing vomit over your jeans. Drunk people, they're cunts. Go and join the ket-head in the corner stumbling around to dub-step. Ignore the fact he's actually listening to Britney Spears, it's all good on ketamine.



Virgo

Virgo. Oh Virgo. How I used to always love you. Well things are a-changing about here now. We grow up move on. Do

heroin. Actually, Heroin kills, so best not to do that. In fact I want you to go on a sky dive no rally, I've booked the ticket. With a bit of luck the parachute won't open and your body can be broken in to a million tiny pieces.



Libra

This week, your mother phones you and asks you which way you lean. She's making you a hammock for your

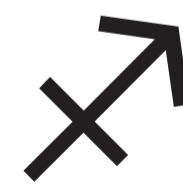
banana, and it's going to have "MUMMY'S FAVOURITE BOY" embroidered on it. She wants photos of you wearing it. Shame your friends got to first when they accidentally opened your mail.



Scorpio

You see a group of people coming out of a church smiling. Ha! They believe in a superpowered zombie for which is there

not a scrap of evidence that he exists, you scoff. You place the can of special brew on the ground, take a piss into a bin and pick a hepatitis infected needle out of your arse. You dirty junky scum, it all started when you took a drag of that spliff.



Sagittarius

Someone said to you that they could have done your coursework with a pencil rammed up their arse. You attempt your next

coursework with a Stabilo HB 3 inches into your backside. You're just bleeding all over your chair, and you're definitely not going to get your house deposit back now. Blood everywhere! Anyway, at least you've got extenuating circumstances...



Capricorn

Life is treating you badly, even the bar no longer offers you any enjoyment. You think about ending it all, right there and then You

decide to glass yourself, and rustle up the £1.60 for a Blackthorn. It's a Tuesday evening and the bar is half full with people sipping beer from fine glass pint glasses. You go to the bar and order your drink. You get served in a skiff. Pint?

Hangman

hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk



FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

HANGMAN INTERVIEWS ADOLF HITLER ABOUT HIS NEW ALBUM *Wrong Turnz*

After an arduous battle with a PR agent, Hangman secured ten minutes with Adolf Hitler, who gives us his exclusive low-down.



Hangman: Heil Hitler! What's happened to your moustache?

Hitler: I had to shave it off for my part in the upcoming Spielberg film.

Hangman: Spielberg? Wow! That surely must have been a bit awkward?

Hitler: Spielberg is a nice guy. We both just sort of laughed at the irony of us working together.

Hangman: So what's the film about?

Hitler: It's a sort of cross between E.T and Indiana Jones. I play a gay alien teacher who has to escape from a pit of snakes, whilst struggling to accept his sexuality. It's a really moving film.

Hangman: So have you seen the film *Inglourious Basterds*?

Hitler: Yeah, like fifteen times! I love Tarantino! Every time

someone says my name I'm like, 'That's me!' (laughs). I've also become a big star on youtube. People have put new subtitles over a scene with me ranting about being banned from Xbox live.

Hangman: So *have* you been banned from Xbox live?

Hitler: Nah, I'm more of a PC gamer. I was banned from Counter-Strike for using an aimbot though.

Hangman: So you're a PC gamer? Please don't tell us you have a World of Warcraft account.

Hitler: The game has a bad rep, but it's not as geeky as people think. When I first started playing, I was brutally raped by an Orc Rogue, and I needed four months of counselling from a Night Elf Priest before I was ready to return to Elywynn Forest. WoW rape is the worst! Then facebook rape, then normal rape.

Hangman: It has been rumoured that you and The Ginger One from Girls Aloud have been spotted partying together recently. Is there a romance blossoming?

Hitler: Well I see some things just don't escape the public eye. Yeah, we have been seeing a lot of each other recently since I've been in London promoting my album. I'm sure most people know that I used to have a thing for blondes (laughs) but she's well fit and we have great fun together.

Hangman: Judging by your latest photo in Hollywood Hunks, you seem to be in pretty good shape. Is there a lot of pressure to stay fit in your line of work?

Hitler: Oh of course, LA can be a very cruel place for those who don't conform to a 'normal look'. I go to the gym regularly, and love to play golf: The fresh air does me a world of good. I'm not as young as I used to be!

HM: Wow, you seem to be pretty busy. We hear that you are also releasing a new album, *Wrong Turnz*.

Hitler: Yeah it should be brilliant; I had so much fun writing it. My passion has always been Hip-Hop, and I was lucky enough to collaborate with the beautiful Taylor Swift for the title track and debut single, *Gettin' in da wayz*.

HM: What was it like working with Taylor?



Hitler: Fantastic! I was so nervous when I first met her, she's such a big star now, but we really hit it off. The song is really meaningful to both of us - we both hate people getting in our way. For Taylor it

was Kanye West, for me it was Belgium. I think people can relate to that.

Hangman: So what do you think of Kanye West?

Hitler: The guy is a dick. It's unforgivable. These celebrities get away with so much nowadays.

Hangman: So what does Hitler do to relax? Nothing too sinister?

Hitler: (laughs) I'm really into baking at the moment. I got Mary Berry's Ultimate Cake Book for Christmas and I haven't looked back. I'm planning on entering a charity bake-a-thon to raise money

for dyslexic rabbits.

Hangman: Now we know you don't like to talk about your past, but what would you have to say to the youths of today?

Hitler: Well, you know, I was a bit of a messed up kid and had a tough upbringing. Most kids in my position would have resorted to drugs or solvent abuse, but I went in a different direction. In hindsight, I wish I'd just listened to dubstep and got kettled off my face every night.

Hitler's single, 'Gettin' in da wayz' will be available for purchase and download on the 19th February!



TWATTER



Toe-knee_da_tiga

Fuck guys I'm not guna be able to cum paintballing dis weekend, gettin bollocked for Iraq :(



SUPERACEGORTHEROAR87

Ffs. That means well have to get cameron in and you know he cant aim for shit



Barack_attack_l33thaxor

Yer last time he shot his gun in the safe zone and got banned for leik 3 months. guys a total nab.



SexyOsama69

Dont worry, I've moved my hair appointment 2 monday so shud be able 2 make it. Barber is at some kind of poofs festival.



SUPERACEGORTHEROAR87

Urgh that will have 2 do den. Osie can u bring dat mate whos handy wid a sniper plx? BOOM headshot lol.

Fencers in good position for BUCCS Championships

Continued from back page

match. The Imperial foilists, destabilised by the unwelcome pause, failed to regain their composure and ended up losing the match by 11 hits. An uphill struggle awaited the epeeists, and they rounded off the match with victory by a single touch which meant that Oxford emerged victorious.

The next day saw the women's team fence epee and sabre, while the men took on Bristol and Cambridge.

Bolstered by the previous day's success, the girls won all but one of their epee matches (with Helen Pennington standing in for the injured Bottle) and dominated all of their opponents in the sabre. As effortless as it seemed, another premiership was in the bag. The third on in a row, to be exact!

Downstairs in the hall, though, events had taken an unexpected turn. At the previous day's close, the men's team had seen their hopes for second place dealt a massive blow by the defeat against Oxford. However, in the first morning match, Bristol registered an unexpected victory against Oxford

which threw the battle for second spot wide open; the Imperial team went into the Bristol match knowing that victory would send them there. The match started with foil, supposedly Bristol's strongest weapon; the IC foilists fenced exceptionally well to win by a single point, 44-33. The sabre followed this in an equally close match again won by a single hit. Imperial were two hits up overall going into the epee and seemed on course for the win. However, despite being eight points ahead in the final bout, anchor Marcello Colombino's form collapsed and he left it until the last possible moment before scoring the hit that won the match, and scenes of elation erupted in Ethos as the men secured second place. The final encounter of the weekend against Cambridge was a bit of a non-event as the result would not change the premiership standings and Imperial, physically and mentally drained after the previous match, conceded defeat 135-99. The weekend was rounded off with a well-deserved celebratory curry. Both teams now have a relatively easy path to the championship finals.



The weekend where we all almost had a heart attack, at least twice



FIXTURES & RESULTS



in association with Sports Partnership

Saturday 30th January Football (ULU)

Men's 1s 1-1 St Barts 1s
Men's 2s 2-1 Royal Holloway 1s
Men's 3s 4-1 Imperial Medicals 2s
Men's 4s 2-0 Queen Mary's 3s
Men's 5s 4-1 UCL 6s
Men's 7s 6-3 Heythrop College 1s

Sunday 31st January Football (ULU)

Women's 1s 1-0 Goldsmiths 1s
Hockey (ULU)
Men's 1s 3-3 St George's Medical School 1s
Lacrosse (ULU)
Mixed 1s 8-8 Royal Holloway 1s
Rugby (ULU)
Women's 1s 15-12 LSE 1s
Water Polo
Men's 1st 24-7 Cambridge University 2nd

Monday 1st February Basketball (ULU)

Men's 1s 74-89 Royal Holloway 1s
Netball (ULU)
Women's 2s 0-10 King's College Medicals 3s
Women's 3s 11-23 RUMS 3s
Women's 4s 3-53 St Mary's University 1s
Squash (ULU)
Men's 3s 5-0 UCL 2s
Men's 4s 5-0 LSE 3s
Women's 1s 3-2 LSE 1s

Wednesday 3rd February Basketball

Women's 1st vs Buckinghamshire New Uni 1st
Fencing
Men's 3rd 113-124 University of Essex 1st
Football
Men's 1st 4-2 St Mary's University 3rd
Men's 2nd 1-6 Canterbury Christ Church Uni 2nd
ULU

Men's 4s 4-0 King's College Medicals 3s
Men's 5s 1-3 St Barts 2s
Men's 6s 3-0 King's College 4s
Men's 7s 2-2 Imperial College Medicals 4th

Hockey

Men's 2nd 1-0 UCL 2nd
Men's 3rd 1-1 Royal Veterinary College 1st
Men's 4th 1-3 University of Portsmouth 5th
Women's 1st 4-2 University of Portsmouth 1st
Women's 2nd 1-0 Brunel University 3rd
Netball

Women's 1st 54-41 Queen Mary's 1st
Women's 2nd 29-18 Buckinghamshire New Uni 2nd
Women's 3rd 8-19 St George's Medical School 3rd

Rugby

Men's 1st 15-0 University Chichester 1st

Squash

Men's 4th 2-1 Brunel University 2nd

Tennis

Men's 2nd 8-2 University of Greenwich 1st

Saturday 6th February Football (ULU)

Men's 3s vs Goldsmiths 1s
Men's 1s vs Royal Free 1s

Men's 2s vs London School of Economics 1s
Men's 4s vs University College London 6s
Men's 5s vs Royal Free 2s
Men's 7s vs St George's Hospital Medical School 3s

Sunday 7th February Basketball (ULU)

Women's 1s vs King's College 1s

Hockey (Reserve cup)

Men's 2s vs Men's 3s

Lacrosse (ULU)

Mixed 1s vs King's College 1s

Rugby (ULU)

Women's 1s vs King's College 1s

Water Polo

Women's 1st vs University College London 1st

Monday 8th February Badminton (ULU)

Mixed 1s vs University College London 1s

Basketball (ULU)

Men's 1s vs Royal Holloway 2s

Netball (ULU)

Women's 4s vs London School of Economics 6s
Women's 2s vs London School of Economics 3s
Women's 3s vs Royal Holloway 4s
Women's 4s vs Central School of Speech and Drama 1s
Women's 2s vs St Barts & the Royal London 2s

Squash (ULU)

Men's 4s vs Royal Holloway 2s
Men's 1s vs University College London 1s
Men's 2s vs London School of Economics 1s
Men's 3s vs St George's Hospital Medical School 1s
Women's 1s vs King's College 1s

Volleyball (ULU)

Mixed 1s vs Royal Holloway 1s

Tuesday 9th February Netball (ULU)

Women's 2s vs St Barts & the Royal London 2s

Wednesday 10th February Badminton

Women's 1st vs University of Bristol 1st
BUCCS Cup
Men's 1st vs University of Birmingham 1st

Basketball

Men's 1st vs King's College 1st

Fencing (cup)

Men's 2nd vs University of London 2nd
Women's 2nd vs Oxford University 2nd
Men's 3rd vs University of Hertfordshire 1st

Football

Men's 2nd vs Royal Free 1st
Men's 3rd vs Imperial Medicals 2nd
ULU
Men's 6s vs Royal Veterinary College 2s
Men's 7s vs Royal School of Mines 1s
Men's 1st vs St Mary's 4th
Men's 4s vs London School of Economics 4s

Golf (BUCCS Knockouts)

Mixed 1st vs University of Portsmouth 2nd

Hockey

Women's 1st vs St Mary's 1st
BUCCS cup

Men's 1st vs University of Southampton 1st
ULU

Men's 4s vs London School of Economics 2s

Men's 1s vs King's College 1s

Men's 3s vs King's College 2s

Lacrosse (BUCCS cup)

Men's 1st vs University of Nottingham 1st
Women's 1st vs University of Exeter Women's 1st

Netball (ULU)

Women's 1s vs Imperial Medicals 1s

Rugby

Men's 1st vs University of Portsmouth 1st
Men's 3rd vs St Mary's University College 3rd
Men's 4th vs Royal Free 3rd
Women's 1st vs University of Essex 1st
BUCCS Cup
Men's 2nd vs University College London 2nd

Squash (BUCCS cup)

Men's 1st University College London 1st
Women's 1st vs Oxford University Women's 1st

Table Tennis (BUCCS cup)

Men's 1st vs London Metropolitan University 1st

Tennis (BUCCS cup)

Women's 1st vs University of Bath 2nd
Men's 1st vs University of Warwick 2nd



felixSports League

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	felixSport Index
1 Volleyball Men's 1st	10	10	0	0	20	1	19	5.00
Fencing Women's 1st	8	8	0	0	1058	747	311	5.00
3 Fencing Men's 2nd	6	6	0	0	803	559	244	5.00
4 ICSM Netball Women's 2nd	8	6	2	0	332	236	96	4.25
5 ICSM Rugby Men's 1st	12	10	1	1	444	141	303	4.00
6 Table Tennis Men's 1st	9	8	0	1	116	37	79	4.00
7 Lacrosse Women's 1st	8	7	0	1	145	21	124	3.88
8 Volleyball Women's 1st	8	7	0	1	14	4	10	3.88
9 Badminton Men's 1st	10	8	1	1	53	27	26	3.80
10 Squash Women's 1st	10	6	4	0	30	10	20	3.80
11 Squash Men's 3rd	7	6	0	1	15	6	9	3.71
12 Rugby Men's 1st	11	8	2	1	324	85	239	3.64
13 Netball Women's 2nd	8	6	1	1	274	155	119	3.50
14 ICSM Badminton Men's 1st	7	5	1	1	42	14	28	3.29
15 Lacrosse Men's 1st	7	5	1	1	73	44	29	3.29
16 Squash Men's 4th	10	8	0	2	12	9	3	3.20
17 ICSM Hockey Men's 1st	11	7	1	3	39	23	16	2.27
18 Football Men's 1st	10	6	1	3	19	14	5	2.00
19 Fencing Men's 1st	8	5	0	3	977	898	79	1.63
20 Badminton Men's 2nd	8	5	0	3	40	24	16	1.63
21 ICSM Netball Women's 1st	8	5	0	3	293	232	61	1.63
22 ICSM Hockey Women's 2nd	7	3	2	2	10	18	-8	1.57
23 Hockey Men's 2nd	7	3	2	2	14	13	1	1.57
24 Tennis Men's 1st	10	4	3	3	58	42	16	1.40
25 Netball Women's 1st	10	6	0	4	393	319	74	1.40
26 Hockey Women's 1st	8	4	1	3	38	10	28	1.25
27 Squash Men's 1st	7	4	0	3	19	16	3	1.14
28 Tennis Men's 2nd	9	5	0	4	46	44	2	1.00
29 Fencing Women's 2nd	9	5	0	4	947	1108	-161	1.00
30 ICSM Hockey Men's 3rd	7	3	1	3	15	26	-11	0.71
31 Basketball Men's 1st	6	3	0	3	387	388	-1	0.50
32 Badminton Women's 1st	10	3	3	4	43	37	6	0.50
33 Hockey Women's 2nd	8	3	1	4	19	26	-7	0.13
34 Football Men's 2nd	9	4	0	5	16	14	2	0.00
35 Squash Men's 2nd	7	3	0	4	13	22	-9	-0.14
36 ICSM Hockey Women's 1st	18	6	2	10	41	61	-20	-0.33
37 ICSM Football Men's 1st	7	2	1	4	9	14	-5	-0.57
38 Fencing Men's 3rd	8	3	0	5	851	961	-110	-0.63
39 Rugby Union Men's 2nd	8	3	0	5	164	110	54	-0.63
40 Rugby Men's 3rd	8	2	1	5	91	150	-59	-1.00
41 Football Men's 3rd	5	1	1	3	4	17	-13	-1.00
42 Tennis Women's 1st	10	2	2	6	31	69	-38	-1.00
43 Netball Women's 3rd	7	2	0	5	145	232	-87	-1.43
44 ICSM Netball 3rd	8	1	1	6	193	282	-89	-2.13
45 Hockey Men's 1st	8	1	1	6	15	27	-12	-2.13
46 ICSM Hockey Men's 2nd	7	0	2	5	7	29	-22	-2.29
47 Rugby Union Men's 4th	7	1	0	6	59	198	-139	-2.71
48 ICSM Rugby Men's 3rd	9	1	0	8	96	230	-134	-3.00
49 Football Women's 1st	6	0	1	5	2	34	-32	-3.00
50 ICSM Rugby Men's 2nd	10	1	0	9	101	349	-248	-3.10
51 ICSM Hockey Women's 3rd	7	0	1	6	5	59	-54	-3.14
52 ICSM Football Men's 2nd	6	0	0	6	4	33	-29	-4.00

Wakeboarders brave the cold



Altogether now : Wheee!

Will Parry-Jones Wakeboarding

Wakeboarding has never really been thought of as a winter sport, most of the images in popular media portray tanned athletes with Oakleys on glittering, sun-drenched water. In fact, over in America (where the sport originated) the idea of having to ride in anything warmer than a pair of boardshorts would be laughable.

It will therefore come as a shock to many of you that the European wakeboarding scene flourishes during the winter. The early nights mean that the lakes are usually empty but for stu-

dents, and the calm winds leave the surface eerily flat, ideal conditions for riding. Doubtless, the distinct riding style seen in UK pro-wakeboarders is in some part thanks to how determined they are not to fall!

Imperial wakeboarding continues to run weekly trips throughout the winter months, and it is generally where we see the new guys advance the most. The determination of our members to get their weekly adrenaline fix can be measured by the increasing wetsuit thickness seen at the lake, the last trip of term saw snow on the ground and a water temperature of less than 2 degrees! The rate of progress of all

the new members is very impressive, with almost all frequently trying rails and ramps and some getting fully legit tricks dialed already.

The club runs an annual trip to warmer climes, having previously been to Florida and Turkey. The trip caters to people of all abilities, and is an ideal opportunity to progress dramatically. Our destination this year is once again Turkey, we will be leaving on the 27th of March and staying at a beautiful lake complex for a week. The air temperature is usually around 26 degrees, and the water is bathlike. Non-members are always welcome! Interested? Email me at wjp106@ic.ac.uk

Gaelic football ladies' success in first-ever tournament

Katie Cullen Gaelic Football

Spirits and enthusiasm were high as the girls stepped onto the pitch for their 3rd match ever. Despite being pitted against St. Mary's college - veterans of the sport who had comprehensively beaten IC in their debut game - Imperial were well up for the challenge.

The opening half saw some well contested 50-50 balls, and some great passing and hassling from Imperial's girls in blue. Unfortunately, Mary's skill and experience were all too apparent as they dropped ball after ball between the posts. But, credit to the girls, not once did the heads go down. A couple of rockets were stopped by Goalkeeper Katie Cullen, much to the surprise of

Mary's man-sized power-forward, but the onslaught continued. After a tough start, the girls in blue found their feet; some brilliant clearances from Jane Bryant at centre back, and great hassling from Tabitha Skinner and Ellie Harrison saw Imperial make some headway into the forward line. A fairly dirty shoulder-ram gave IC their first chance in front of goal-which Eileen Brandley converted with ease.

The second half continued along the same lines, with some great play and classy passing between the midfield and forward lines. Deep winger Eileen got on the end of some well placed kick-outs, splitting the defence from the right and slightly stemming the flow of scores from Mary's. Another free kick awarded in front of the posts

saw Carla Mulas oblige with a second point for the team deep into the second half. However, when the final whistle blew, there was no mistaking the winners.

The second game saw Imperial take on a team of similar experience to themselves. Right from the throw in, it was clear that this was a whole different ball game. The evenly matched sides gave Imperial a chance to show off the skills they'd spent the last three months perfecting. With some great passing plays you'd be forgiven for thinking the girls had been together for years as opposed to weeks. Halfway through the first half, a goal-mouth scuffle was ended as Chloe McKeon floored the ball into the back of the net, and Cath and Carla popped a point

apiece over the bar with aplomb. Cambridge replied with a lucky goal that just dropped over the head of keeper Tabby Skinner in the oversized goals. To give Cambridge their dues, they fought hard, and every ball won was won with difficulty (one Cambridge player came away with a bloodied mouth, and another traumatised after Chloe tried to mount her in a tackle!). Three very experienced players on the Cambridge side ran the pitch, and succeeded in scoring a point in the closing minutes of the first half, bringing the score a bit too close for comfort.

However the second half saw Imperial really take control of the pitch in all areas. The skill of the three dominant Cambridge players was no match for IC's evenly spread capability and supe-

rior fitness, which drew compliments from both opposing teams' trainers. Cambridge kept the backs busy with a few breaks towards goal, but were quickly cut out by Imperial's impenetrable defence. One very close call, a shot on goal, was foiled at the last minute by a block down, compliments of wing back Tabitha Skinner. Teamed with impressive one-two play between Carla, Chloe, Sophie and Scarlett up front, and Cath Parkinson's beautiful crosses across the goal front, the girls kept layering on the pressure. This unyielding barrage of shots gave Imperial a further 3 points without reply, leaving the full time score Imperial 1-5, Cambridge 1-1.

Well done girls, bring on the Championships!



Three in a row for fencing



IAN BOTTLE

Weekend tournament sees women's team finish top of the premiership while the men grab second, reports **Indy Leclercq**

The girls have done it again. Last weekend, led by captain Clare Harding, the IC women's 1st team finished top of the southern premiership for the third year running. Despite only competing with a four-woman team (as opposed to a theoretical full team of nine people) the ladies' team dominated their opponents over both days of fencing.

They had come into the second round of league matches already occupying the top spot and feeling fairly confident that the title was in their grasp. However, with two fencers car-

rying injuries, the girls could not afford to be overconfident.

Matches were held by weapon, with the foil on Saturday morning and the epee and sabre the next day. The Imperial team, with two foilists, were favoured by this arrangement; Hannah Bryars, Alice Mitchell and Emily Bottle made short work of their counterparts. Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and Queen Mary's were no match for the IC girls and the women's team ended the day unbeaten in the foil, having established a comfortable lead.

As the girls went on their rampage in the second-floor fitness studio of

Ethos, down in the sports hall the men's 1st team were having a more mixed day. The boys were lacking their two best sabreurs, absent on international duty, and although the other weapons were in good shape, the team needed a strong performance from Cavaillez and Joubert, fencing in their inaugural 1st-team bouts of the season.

At stake during the tournament weekend were the first and second places of the southern premiership. These would translate into top-four seedings and home turf advantage for the BUCS knockout championships. As of the previous tournament week-

end, the men's team were second, having beaten Oxford and narrowly lost to Cambridge.

The initial match against UCL did not prove to be too challenging as Imperial improved on their score in the away match, winning by a large margin, 135-68.

The next confrontation, however, was an entirely different ball game (as they say). Starting off against a very strong team, the IC sabreurs could do nothing but limit the damage to a twenty-point loss. Following on from this, the foilists attempted to bridge the gap and stand some chance of beating

Oxford. Unfortunately, the match was marred with controversy as the dark blues made a mistake in the order of bouts and sent on the wrong fencer for the second match. To the best of the captains' knowledge, the official sanction for this was immediate forfeiture of the match. However, Imperial sportingly chose not to apply this; instead the Imperial captain decided to replay the match from where the mistake had been made. The incident put a definite damper on proceedings and resulted in much tension during the rest of the

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