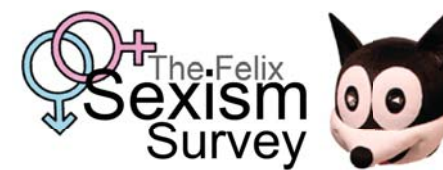


## The Felix Sexism Survey: Results

We've collected together the results of last term's survey: [Page 15](#)



# Life Sciences cuts at Silwood

Staff depart natural science campus as select courses are suspended

**Alexander Karapetian**

Christian Richters



Academic campus Silwood Park is situated near Ascot

Concerns regarding staff shortages have risen as entry to postgraduate courses in the Department of Life Sciences has been suspended. Courses such as the Entomology MRes and MSc, Integrated Pest Management MSc and Plant Science and Biotechnology MSc, held in Silwood Park, are marked on the postgraduate online course list as ‘suspended for 2012-2013 entry’.

An anonymous report alerted Felix to claims that an increasing amount of Life Sciences staff are beginning to leave Imperial and take their courses elsewhere. The closures of courses taught by such staff will affect the reputation of Silwood Park, famous for Applied Ecology, Pest Management, Forestry and Entomology, and Imperial as a whole.

A suite of closely related Masters taught postgraduate courses run by Dr Simon Leather, including Entomology MSc and Conservation and Forest Protection MSc have been suspended. Felix spoke to Dr Leather, who is moving to Harper Adams University in Shropshire to continue teaching the courses. He commented that ‘circumstances mean that the future teaching

of my subjects are at stake’, and that regardless, ‘I’ve enjoyed my time at Silwood’.

‘I feel it’s my duty that when I retire’, he continued, ‘entomology is still taught in the UK, and if I stay at Silwood, entomology as a taught subject may stop’. Dr Leather expressed his concerns for the teaching of such unique fields in Life Sciences and emphasised the intention to move was for

the subject to continue to be taught in a healthy environment with the right people, not for personal progression.

Entomology is a subject which has been taught at Silwood Park for more than fifty years, and Leather said that ‘the events of the last year have made people feel less settled’, increasing fears that the department may be lacking a strategy.

Silwood Park President Francisca

Sconce spoke to Felix and said ‘these Applied Ecology courses have been held at here at Silwood for a long time, we are seeing the end of a part of Silwood Park and Imperial College history’, adding ‘as a student on the Entomology MRes it’s really sad to see my course leave. I also feel that it is very short-sighted of Imperial to let these courses go, they focus on ar-

...Continued on Page 3

## TECHNOLOGY



**Sexism in the realm of technology**  
[Page 13](#)

## FILM



**All you need to know about Cannes**  
[Page 24](#)

## TRAVEL



**Cruising through Kerala**  
[Page 28](#)

# Imperial falls in university ranking

Controversy over drop from 10th to 13th in latest Guardian tables

**Matthew Colvin**

Imperial has dropped from 10th to 13th place in the Guardian University Guide 2013, the results of which were published on Monday 21 May. The guide, which ranks universities across the United Kingdom, saw institutions ranked across various areas, including

results from the National Student Survey, expenditure per student, and the student to staff ratio.

The continued presence of a ‘Value Added’ category in the results has caused significant controversy. The result, a score out of ten, is formulated by comparing a university’s entry requirements with students’ final degree

results, which ostensibly helps to determine the effectiveness of teaching at an institution. Imperial scored 4.5/10 in comparison to the leader of the rankings Cambridge, who scored 5.7 and second place Oxford, scoring 6.7.

The University of Hertfordshire saw the highest score under the ‘Value Added’ category, with a score of 7.7

out of 10. The University had an overall ranking of 76th on the table.

Imperial did however see success on the table with relation to the category ‘Career Prospects’. The score for this category is the percentage of graduates who find graduate-level jobs, or further study, within six months of gradu-  
...Continued on Page 3

# HIGHLIGHTS

blyth gallery

**Call for proposals:  
2012/13**

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Places are strictly limited. Early booking is advised.

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**Fees: £875**

**Student rate: £500**

For further details contact:  
Stephanie O'Mahony, School of Professional Development  
E-mail: [cpd@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:cpd@imperial.ac.uk) Tel: +44 (0)20 7594 6882  
[www.imperial.ac.uk/cpd/scienceonair](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/cpd/scienceonair)

## CLASSIFIEDS

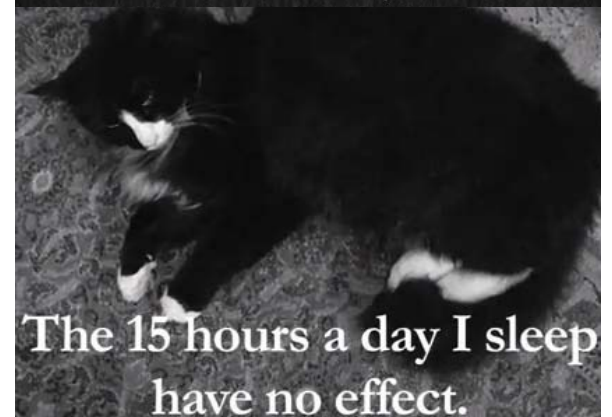
Fancy £12K for your wedding? *Don't Tell the Bride* are looking for couples to get married in 2012! Email [weddings@renegadepictures.co.uk](mailto:weddings@renegadepictures.co.uk)

*Just so we're clear, Felix accepts no responsibility for unexpected marriages, cool? Cool.*

## Lolcat of teh week



I'm surrounded by morons.



The 15 hours a day I sleep have no effect.



I alone feel this torment.

# FELIX

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**Alex Nowbar**

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NEWS

# League table results questioned

Deputy President (Education) criticises choice of league table categories

...Continued from Front Page  
ation. Scoring 84% under the category, this placed the institution above the London School of Economics' relative score of 82% at the top of the leaderboard for this category.

Imperial is placed third amongst the London-based universities, with the London School of Economics being placed in 3rd position overall, and University College London placed at 6th position.

Deputy President (Education) Jason Parmar was particularly outspoken on Imperial's position in the rankings, and league tables in general:

"I believe that prioritising the student experience as a criteria for UK league tables is commendable of the *Guardian*, *The Sunday Times* and others. However, it is fair to say that the methodology of these tables have meant that they can be seen as doing a complete disservice to the prospective students who use them"

"We should be asking ourselves the question: should career prospects and research have greater weighting in modern league tables if we are to provide future students with a good service? In the current financial climate career prospects are crucial to a student's choice of university, now more so than ever. The fact that the *Guard-*

Ranking 2013	(12)	Institution	Average Teaching Score	NSS Teaching (%)	NSS Overall (%)	Expenditure per student / 10	Student:staff ratio	Career prospects (%)	Value added score/10	Entry Tariff	NSS Feedback (%)
1	(1)	Cambridge	100.0	93	94	9.77	11.8	82	5.7	589	75
2	(2)	Oxford	94.4	93	93	9.81	11.1	73	6.7	572	72
3	(4)	London School of Economics	93.9	82	84	8.62	11.8	82	6.8	526	68
4	(3)	St Andrews	86.1	95	93	7.93	13.6	71	7.3	518	69
5	(6)	Warwick	82.1	89	88	8.56	14.5	73	6.4	496	62
6	(5)	UCL	80.7	87	88	8.63	10.1	77	7.1	495	61
7	(7)	Lancaster	78.4	89	88	7.63	14.8	70	5.3	409	70
7	(8)	Durham	78.4	89	90	6.24	15.3	74	5.6	500	69
9	(14)	Bath	75.8	89	91	5.55	17.1	76	6.8	459	66
10	(11)	Exeter	75.3	91	90	5.53	19.3	69	7.3	455	71
11	(9)	Loughborough	74.6	87	88	6.63	17.0	69	5.3	391	71
12	(19)	Surrey	73.5	87	87	7.46	17.9	69	6.1	394	69
13	(10)	Imperial College	73.3	84	85	8.16	11.6	84	4.5	553	55

The 'value added' score in the rankings (above: left) have been criticised by Deputy President (Education) Jason Parmar (above: right)



ian league table doesn't even consider research worries me.

"In addition, their analysis and measure of the student experience, which contributes so heavily in the table, is unreliable as it is based solely on the National Student Survey. We even saw in Felix that the NSS could

be hacked by students with very little effort. In addition to this the three student experience areas taken from the NSS are 'Overall Satisfaction', 'Feedback' and 'Teaching'. But this doesn't cover, for example, 'Learning Resources', which is a very important part of the student experience."

Parmar was particularly vocal regarding the 'Value Added' category:

"Although in principal the 'Value Added' category aims to "show how effective teaching is", it could easily do the exact opposite. To top the table in this criteria, which is worth 15% of the overall score, a university can

simply increase the amount of firsts and upper seconds it awards, lower its entry requirements, and have terrible teaching effectiveness. This is counter productive as it lessens the academic integrity of graduates, and hence the table can easily misguide prospective students."

## Courses end at Silwood

Matthew Colvin



These departures follow cuts to the Department of Life Sciences last academic year

...Continued from Front Page  
eas of food security, which will be a pressing issue with the growing global population".

Other staff who are leaving include Dr Tilly Collins, Senior Teaching Fellow in the Department of Life Sciences, which will have a further impact on undergraduate Biology degrees since Dr Leather also undertook a significant amount of teaching for them.

Deputy President (Education) Jason Parmar told Felix that "the reasons for the staff leaving are their own which we are unaware of, but it may be fair to assume that the low demand may have played a significant role in their decision."

"Unfortunately," he continued, "due to the courses' reliance on the two staff members they have had to be postponed. It is concerning that these

courses relied so heavily on individuals and we have been assured that the college is looking into preventing future risks like this occurring again."

The Conservation Science MSc, Ecology, Evolution and Conservation MSc/MRes and Quantitative Biology MSc will continue to run at Silwood Park in 2012/2013, with a new Biodiversity Informatics and Genomics MRes starting in October.

Sponsored Editorial

## More student cuts

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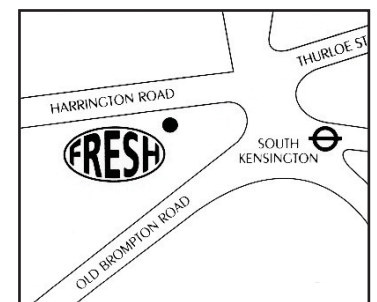
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## SUN GLITTERS

"[Sun Glitters] pitch-shifted vocals and chopped-up melodies create a compellingly itchy, glitchy R&B"

- the Guardian

A L S O F R O M X V I R E C O R D S

## HENRY WU & EVERMEAN

L O V E

4 X V I

T. Williams

"Really good vibe"

Mary Anne Hobbs

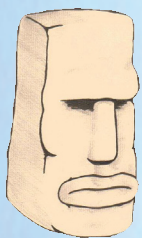
"Superb"

Alexander Nut

"Sounding large!"

L O V E

4 X V I



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News Editors: **Sophia David**  
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# NEWS

## Scientists protest to protect research

**Sophia David**

On Tuesday 15 May, around 80 physicists and chemists from around the UK held an unusual protest against their research funder by parading a coffin and a horse-drawn hearse down London's Whitehall to Downing Street.

The protest marked the start of the Science for the Future campaign which is fighting for the reform of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). The protesting scientists argue that a number of policies introduced by the council place British research in mortal danger.

The unpopular policies include a decision to stop funding PhD studentships on research grants, limiting fellowships to specific subjects and a ban on the resubmission of most rejected grant proposals. A new funding scheme also means that more money is being allocated by EPSRC staff rather than through a peer-review process. The council's "National importance" criterion, for which scientists must explain how their research might meet "national strategic needs" over 10-50 years, has also drawn much criticism.



Imperial professor Tony Barrett is the chief organiser of the campaign

Professor Tony Barrett, a synthetic-organic chemist at Imperial, is the chief organiser of the campaign, and has called for the chief executive of the EPSRC, David Delpy, to take action or step down. He described the moves by the council as a "Stalinist collectivization of science."

Prof. Barrett said, "I don't want more money for science. I just don't want tax-

payers' money to be spent on a top-down diktat programme emblematic of what went on in East Germany."

The turnout of the protest was low with only 80 out of 8000 researchers funded by the EPSRC attending.

Prof. Barrett commented that, "A number of my colleagues were afraid to be here. They are concerned that their future

grant proposals will be in danger."

The protest has drawn criticism from some commentators including Professor Athene Donald of the University of Cambridge who argued, "They are not representing all of us and many of us do not agree with their stunt."

The council also argued that the protesters were a small and unrepresentative mi-

nority of the scientific community.

They said, "If we are to continue to excel in areas of strength, we must take a strategic approach in how we invest – so we have the right balance of funding between different research areas, making sure the UK has the right national capability in core disciplines and is addressing major societal and economic challenges."

## Lecture podcasting to become reality after test successes

**Matthew Colvin**

Plans to record lectures are set to finally come to fruition next academic year. College is set to work with video capture platform Panopto in order to ensure that lectures are made more accessible to students.

The collaboration will result in live lecture streaming, the opportunity to view previous recordings at any time, the ability to view lectures on mobile phones and tablets, and follows suggestions by students listed in Imperial College Union's response to the 2011 National Student Survey Report.

Panopto was founded in 2007, and was built with technology developed at Carnegie Mellon University's School of Computer Science. The platform now serves several markets and institutions with video capture technology.

This academic year the system was piloted in every faculty with over 1,000 successful recordings made by staff.

Jason Parmar, Deputy President (Education) who also sits on the e-Learning Strategy Committee involved with the plans said "it has been



Panopto provides services for Fortune 500 companies

fantastic to work with the committee and see resources be dedicated to this innovation in teaching. It will improve educational access to students and improve the student experience here at Imperial so I hope as many lecturers

as possible will take advantage of it."

The beginning of Autumn Term 2012 will see an anticipated gradual introduction of the scheme, though implementing the video capture is entirely at the discretion of lecturers.

## Imperial students organise major conference about Portugal in London



The LUSO 2012 organising committee

**Joana Moscoco**

Following the success of previous editions, this year welcomes LUSO 2012, the Sixth Meeting of Portuguese Researchers and Students in the United Kingdom.

LUSO 2012 will take place on the 16th of June at the Senate House in London. Its main theme is "Powering-Up Portugal", aimed at encouraging disclosure, communication and interaction in the fields of science, technology, entrepreneurship, and arts, among others. LUSO 2012 will host a diverse panel of prominent guest speakers from the academic, entrepreneurial, and political fields.

Some of the confirmed speakers include Nuno Crato (Portuguese Minister for Education and Science), Miguel Seabra (President, Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology), and Sir Tim Hunt (Nobel Prize Laureate in Physiology/Medicine 2001).

Notwithstanding being the annual meeting of Portuguese Researchers and Students in the United Kingdom, LUSO 2012 welcomes participants across all areas of study/work, ages and nationalities. Registration for LUSO 2012 will be open until 9 June.

More information can be found on LUSO 2012 website <http://www.2012.luso.org.uk>.

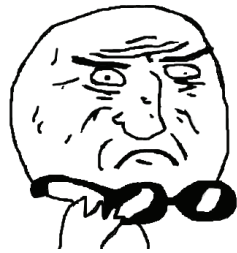


# THE Skeleton Flood



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# the **Summer Elections** 2012

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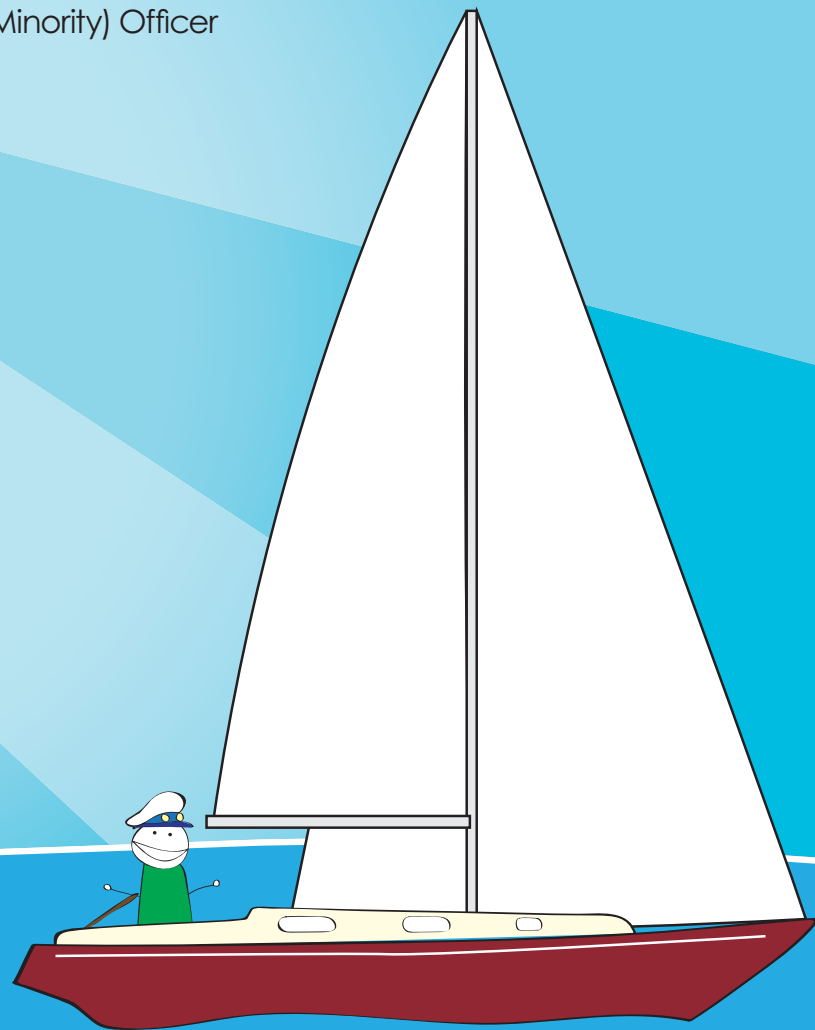
**Welfare Officers:**

- International Officer
- LGBT Officer
- Environmental Officer
- Gender Equality Officer
- Interfaith Officer
- Disabilities Officer
- BME (Black, Minority) Officer

**Graduate Students' Association Positions:**

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### Mains

Spiced cannon of lamb with a rich & creamy massala jus  
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## In brief

Disney want to make all the world  
a touchscreen

Tree or surround sound system?

Researchers at Disney and Carnegie Mellon University have published new research which could make everyday objects and even the human body into a touchscreen.

This could mean traditional interfaces would no longer be needed, as smartphones could be silenced by holding a finger to the lips, and the volume on mp3 players could be controlled with a tap of the hand.

The technology, known as Touché, uses Swept Frequency Capacitive Sensing, which is similar to the technology used in smartphone screens. Smartphones only detect electrical signals on one frequency, allowing them to know when they are being touched. Touché takes this one step further by using a range of frequencies, so objects not only detect touch, but 'sense' how they are being touched.

Everyday objects can be equipped with the new technology by attaching only one electrode. "It could immediately be used to create new and exciting ways for people to interact with objects and the world at large," says Ivan Poupyrev, senior research scientist at Disney Research.

The researchers envision a Touché-equipped home where the television is turned on when the user sits down on the sofa. The lights automatically dim when the user leans back to enjoy the show, and if they fall asleep, the room darkens and the television is turned off.

The research, presented at the Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems in Texas, investigated how this could be used in existing tablet computers. Depending on which fingers were used to touch the screen, and whether a 'pinch' or 'grasp' motion was used, the computer could perform different functions, such as zooming in or right-clicking. Touché technology can also be applied to liquids, detecting whether one finger or a whole hand is submerged in a container of water.

By wearing electrode on the wrists in a similar way to watches, smartphones, mp3 players and computers could all become gesture-controlled. "This might enable us to one day do away with keyboards, mice and perhaps even conventional touchscreens for many applications," says Munehiko Sato, a PhD student involved in the work.

Disney is also conducting research into how living plants can be made into surround sound systems for use in their theme parks.

Siobhan Chan

## Humans are still evolving

Douglas Heaven

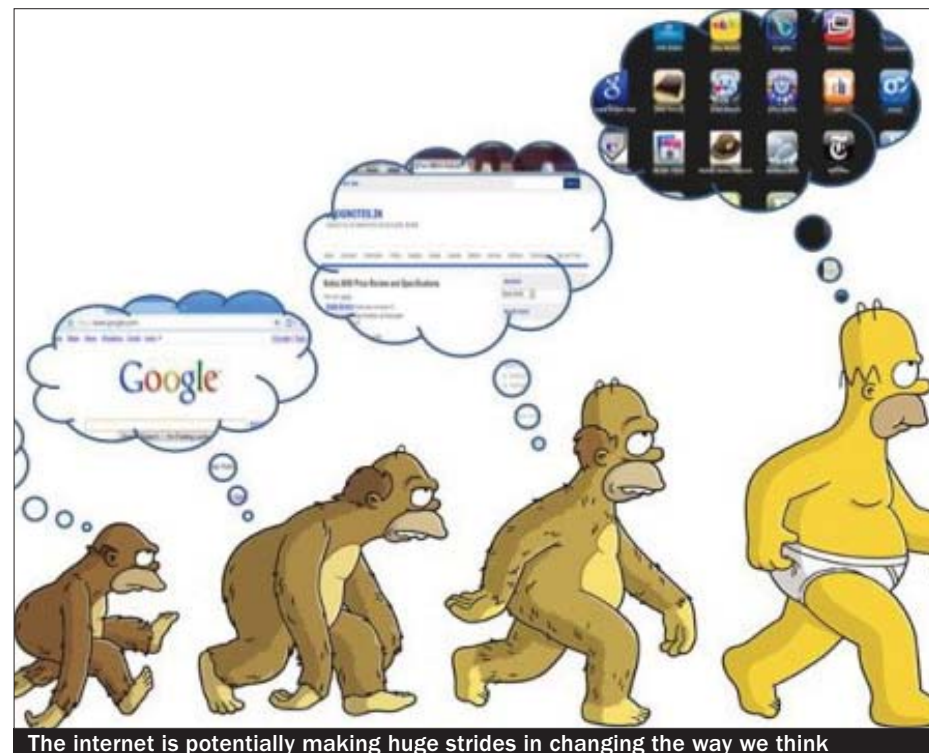
A study of the reproductive success of 6000 Finnish people born between 1760-1849 suggests that the technological and social advances of the agricultural revolution did not put a stop to human evolution.

"It is a common misunderstanding that evolution took place a long time ago, and that to understand ourselves we must look back to the hunter-gatherer days of humans," says project leader Virpi Lummaa, of the Department of Animal and Plant Sciences at the University of Sheffield.

But in a collaborative study, involving teams from Germany and Finland as well as the UK, Lummaa and colleagues looked at the life cycles of a large set of individuals using church records going back 250 years. They concluded that "significant selection has been taking place in very recent populations, and likely still occurs."

By tracking variables such as survival to adulthood, mate access, mating success, and fertility per mate, the researchers found that the intensity of Darwinian selection in the population they analysed was in line with that measured for species 'in the wild'. The findings also appear to suggest that sexual selection can still be at work in a society where the marriage system is strictly monogamous.

This is in stark contrast to the traditional view, held by many evolutionary psychologists and social scientists, that selective pressures in human evolution have been significantly weakened – if not put on hold entirely – by the



The internet is potentially making huge strides in changing the way we think

flexibility our species gained through social and cultural adaptations.

The researchers also found that evolutionary rates varied between men and women. Though individuals in the population were assumed to maintain monogamous relationships, men were more likely to remarry after the death of a spouse, exposing them to

slightly greater sexual competition on average over their lifetimes.

However, selection seems to have been indifferent to social status. "Surprisingly," says Lummaa, "selection affected wealthy and poor people in the society to the same extent." Yet another thing that money can't buy?

DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1118174109

## Trio of proteins to ease food demand

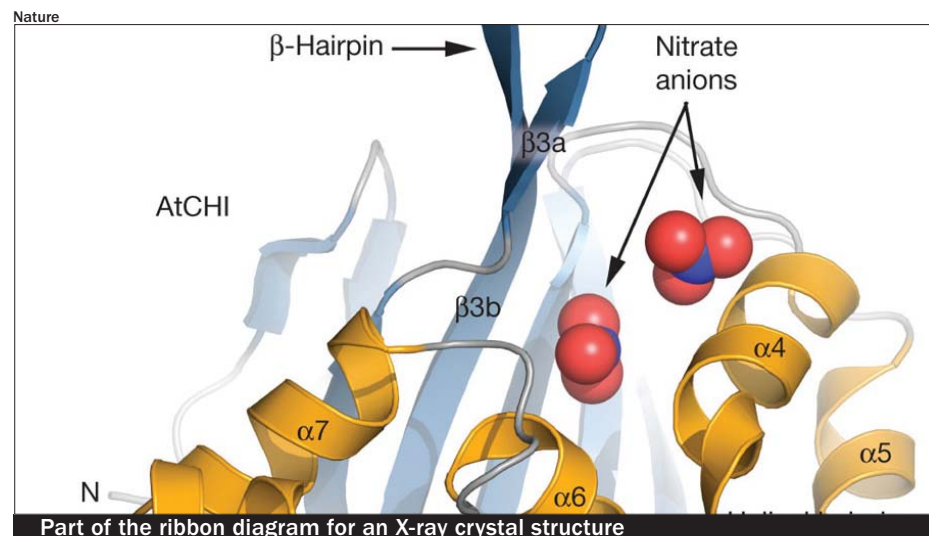
Nicola Guttridge

A new study has identified three key proteins in plants that may help the development of improved crops yielding higher qualities and quantities of oils. The scientists, of the Salk Institute for Biological Studies and Iowa State University, say that such plants could help to reduce the growing global demand for food and fuels, and negate the detrimental effect such demand may have on our environment and ecosystems.

The research, headed by lead authors Joseph Noel and Eve Syrkin Wurtele, analysed genomic plant data and pinpointed the proteins responsible for regulating the metabolism of fatty acids in thale cress plants. These three proteins, dubbed FAP1, FAP2 and FAP3, control the molecular pathways responsible for plant oil production and bind fatty acids such as omega-3.

"This work has major implications for modulating the fatty acid profiles of plants," says lead author Joseph Noel. The researchers found that altering the expression of these proteins changed the amount and quality of plant oil produced via these pathways.

Plant oils are triglycerides and are stored in seeds. They consist of three linked fatty



Part of the ribbon diagram for an X-ray crystal structure

acids, which are very high-energy molecules formed in a plant using solar energy. Utilising these acids could therefore provide a very efficient method for producing biorenewable chemicals and fuels. This would help to alleviate fears over petroleum security and global climate change, as well as aiding international industry, nutrition and transport.

FAP1, 2 and 3 are linked ancestrally to

enzymes that control flavonoid production, compounds that play many roles within a plant and have great nutritional and health benefits in human diets. Further study of plant proteins may result in a greater understanding of how proteins evolve into enzymes, a mechanism that has huge industrial promise.

DOI: 10.1038/nature11009



## SCIENCE

# The decline of British bee power

Kelly Oakes reports on a possible cause of falling bee numbers

Muhammad Mahdi Karim



Wildflower meadows are a bee's favourite stomping ground, but 97% of them have been lost over the past 60 years, adding to the decline of bees

**P**esticides may be the bees' knees when it comes to protecting crops, but researchers from the UK and France have shown that exposure to one common pesticide leads to a dramatic loss to the number of queen bees, and another pesticide affects foragers' ability to find their way back to the hive. The new findings might go some way to explaining recent decline in bee numbers.

Scientists at the University of Stirling and the Lancaster Environment Centre, both in the UK, exposed colonies of bumble bees to realistic levels of imidacloprid, a pesticide chemically related to nicotine, in the lab. They then placed the colonies into the field to forage on gardens, wildflowers and a variety of crops, and watched as the colonies that had been exposed to the pesticide suffered an 85% reduction in the number of new queens compared to colonies that were not exposed. The exposed bees also gathered less food and produced less workers, but it was the drop in queens that was most dramatic. The findings were published in the journal *Science*.

A meta-analysis published last year showed that imidacloprid was not lethal

to bees, but since then there has been growing evidence from laboratory trials that the pesticide does harm memory and navigation. This new research is the first time such an effect has been found in realistic conditions.

A separate team of scientists from France found that bees exposed to low doses of a different pesticide, called thiamethoxam and belonging to the same family as imidacloprid, had trouble finding their way home. The team glued tiny radio-frequency tags to the backs of 653 honey bees. Up to 43.2% of the bees given the pesticide did not return to their hive, depending on how far away from the hive they were released, compared with 16.9% of the untreated bees. The researchers say that this level of homing failure could put a colony at risk of collapse.

The news comes five years after bee colonies in the US were devastated when they were hit by a strange condition called colony collapse disorder. Millions of bees vanished from their hives, leaving young bees to fend for themselves. The latest US Department of Agriculture data, released in 2011, suggests that colony collapse disorder is still alive and well – unlike the bees affected by it.

Bees, along with other insects, pol-

linate around one third of the crops we eat. But in the past 25 years honey bee numbers in the US and UK have suffered a drop of around 50%. The reason for the decline has been unclear, but pesticides, parasites and the destruction of flower-rich habitats are thought to be the key reasons.

Several European countries have stopped using certain pesticides for fear of falling bee populations, but the UK is not among them. A spokesperson from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs told the *Guardian* that the new research did not change the gov-

ernments position, but they would not hesitate to act if presented with any new evidence.

Campaigns to encourage the growth of wildflower meadows – a bee's favourite habitat – will go some way to encouraging numbers to rise. But these studies, and others, show that it is unlikely to be that simple. Identifying the cause of colony collapse is essential to protect food security, as well as the wild flowers that bees pollinate and the animals that depend on them.

DOI: 10.1126/science.1215039

DOI: 10.1126/science.1215025

## Bee decline: in numbers

**50%**  
the drop in honey bee numbers over the last 25 years

**2006**  
colony collapse disorder first reported in the US

**£1.8 billion**  
the amount it would cost per year to hand pollinate UK crops without bees



Attaching an RFID tag to a bee

## Genetic privacy

Philippa Skett

Science and the law have clashed again this week, and it seems that the US is adamant in attempting to inhibit scientific advances yet again in the name of public safety. This time, it is the geneticists that are under pressure, as Californian senators are attempting to pass a bill that could hinder on-going research into genetic diseases.

The bill, known as The Genetic Information Privacy Act, aims to introduce consent forms covering the explicit intended use of the genetic sample, which the person who is donating the material must then agree with. The bill also states that such genetic material must be destroyed after, and cannot be stored to be accessed at a later date. Supporters for the bill are keen to point out that it doesn't stop research, just adds a new bureaucratic component to protect personal information.

With the National Human Genome Research Institute predicting that the cost of sequencing a genome is dropping at a greater than exponential rate, it is only a matter of time before anyone can get their own DNA sequenced at a reasonable cost. It is with this increase in ease of access that concern arose into how such sensitive and personal information should be treated, triggering the new law.

However, the proposed paperwork will cost researchers around half a million dollars annually, according to the University of California, not to mention the time delay it will undoubtedly add to any sort of investigation in the future. This will especially hinder key research into the genetic causes of diseases as they require thousands of genomic samples at a time.

This echoes the reasoning behind the significant delay seen earlier this month of the publication of a key virology article detailing the artificial creation of an influenza strain. In that case, paper publication went ahead in *Nature* without consequence. Should this new bill be passed and then ignored, penalties will range from \$1,000 to \$10,000 depending on the circumstances.

With many other states already putting into motion their own interpretation of bills concerning genetic research, it seems that this new expenditure is going to be an unavoidable reality very soon. This highlights again the definitive need for some other mandate to form a bridge between public safety and scientific advances, so both can be satisfied without any detrimental effects to the two.



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# POLITICS

## Student Debt Fears?

Try being a candidate in a national election!



Is that all you've got? I'll raise you by \$20!

Normally running is a cheap affair; running for the bus only costs several seconds of embarrassment and the occasional penalty of abject failure when the driver leaves you behind in the cold. The cost of running for a sabbatical role in the IC Union? For most merely the embarrassment of selling your dignity to secure a victory, begging for scraps of votes from people you have suddenly decided to pay attention to after blanking them on campus for the last few years. Of course there is always a small amount of spending on advertising but you are restrained from breaking the bank, well as long as you can spell your name correctly.

However, compare all of this to running for an important political office, say for instance President of the United States. Now that is what those in the industry call "crazy money". Well, comparatively. It's true that when campaigning for votes for a national election to become the holder of the highest office in the land one must spend a certain amount of money spreading awareness of your quest and publicising your political views, otherwise people wouldn't know who to vote for and you would be the last choice of everybody in the playground.

One key part of electioneering involves airing a large number of negative campaign advertisements on local television networks, something the pro-Romney Political Action Committee (PAC) "Restore Our Future" can certainly attest to, having spent \$35 million on attacking fellow Republicans Gingrich and Santorum. However, campaign finances aren't always the easiest things to manage. It seems some presidential candidates make more promises than they can fulfil, especially Newt Gingrich.

When Gingrich pulled out of the presidential race on May 2, he did so having incurred a debt of \$1.3m in the month of April alone. Although some of this was paid back his total debt currently stands at \$4.7m, including a bill of \$12,000 owed to Twitter and \$16,000 to a political company run by former presidential rival Herman Cain.

However bad Gingrich might seem it could be worse. After running in the 1984 presidential elections Senator John Glenn owed \$3m: it took him until 2007 to finally pay it all back. Some former candidates have been unable to pay their debts back, instead writing off their debt, which is not a popular move with the small businesses that supported them. But then who cares about small businesses? Certainly not the powerbrokers in the Beltway.

Joseph Letts

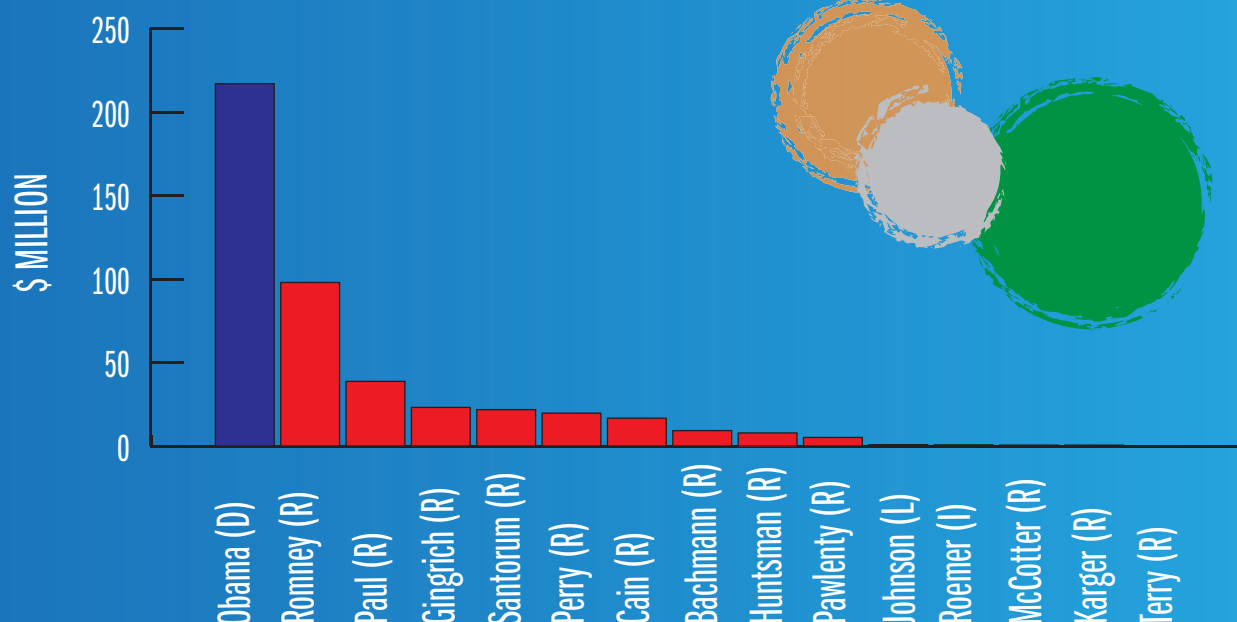
Got something to say? Send your articles to:

[politics.felix@ic.ac.uk](mailto:politics.felix@ic.ac.uk)

# Felix Politics explores...

## ...spending in the US Presidential elections

Candidate Expenditure until April 30th, 2012

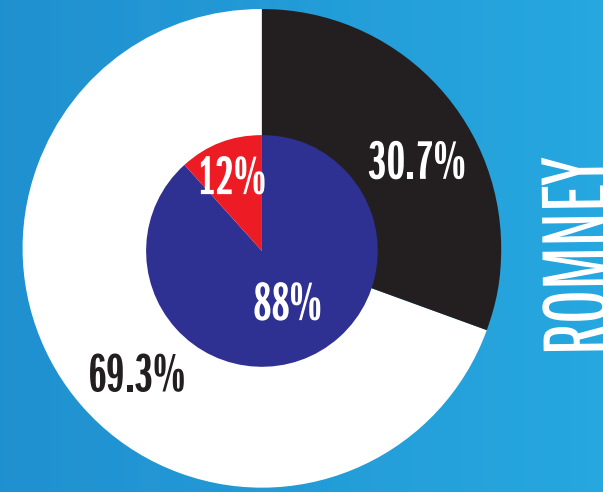
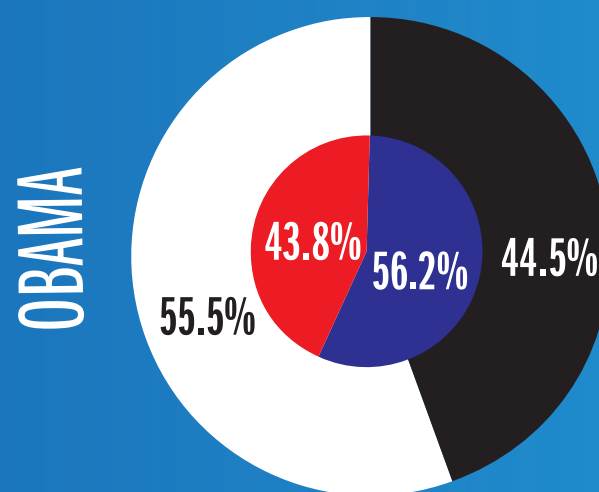


**DEMOCRATS: \$217.215 MILLION**

**REPUBLICANS: \$241.310 MILLION**

**TOTAL AMOUNT SPENT ALL PRO-CANDIDATE PACS: \$90,470,112**

Candidate Donation Demographics



Largest Company PAC Contribution:

Microsoft Corp: \$347,916

Goldman Sachs: \$573,080

Female Donors  
Male Donors

Small Individual Contributions  
Large Individual Contributions

Source: [opensecrets.org](http://opensecrets.org)



Technology Editors: **Chris Bowers**  
**Feroz Salam**

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# TECHNOLOGY

## Too few women and no change in sight

Feroz Salam on how equality is a long way away in the world of 'brogrammers'



The girl takes care of the sparkly two-bit house in nauseatingly named 'Heartlake City' while the man holds down a real job. Both sets are aimed for the same ages

If you like your Felix lighthearted, you may want to turn the page, because this article is anything but. The seeds of my piece were planted when I heard that one of my friends was planning to attend CodeF, a Google networking event 'exclusively for female computer scientists' attending top universities here in the UK. These kind of events are commonplace at Imperial, women-only events meant to encourage female scientists and engineers to apply to the top jobs in the country, jobs that are skewed heavily towards men. Unfortunately, these firms are fighting a battle that is very near lost in a fashion that places gestures over results. The losers are not the women already at Imperial, but the many women who will be turned away before they even get the chance to wine and dine with Britain's best.

### An opportunity lost

The information revolution is the first major 'revolution' to have occurred after women's rights rose to prominence. It was as such an excellent opportunity to start off with an attempt at gender equality. Looking at where we are now, however, it is obvious that this mission (if it ever existed)

has failed. Imperial is split 65%-35% between men and women, while the ratio in Computing is almost certainly worse.

Top City and tech firms vie to attract the handful of female computing graduates that do make it in, but an undercurrent of mild sexism in industry has also been well documented. In a now infamous presentation at a Ruby conference in 2009, a presenter used soft-porn images to illustrate how your servers could 'perform like a pr0n star', while an excellent article in *Mother Jones* magazine titled "Gangbang Interviews" and "Bikini Shots": Silicon Valley's Brogrammer Problem', documents countless examples of women in the industry being not just discriminated against but (perhaps more insultingly) being completely ignored.

It is a depressing fact that this battle that could have easily been won many years ago has now been almost completely lost. This is leaving us with yet another highly paid, booming industry where men vastly outnumber women. Firms that scrabble around for female computing graduates are not making things worse, but are not really making things better: the ratio of women to men entering the tech industry is still at best 65% to 35%.

It's because of this that it's hard to believe that

the fight for equality has to be won in the workplace, or even at university. Most of the women I have worked with and taught in my four years of Computing at Imperial have been highly ambitious and passionate about the subject. They will probably go on to great things at workplaces that will bend to their terms rather than vice versa, as is often the case with graduates from Imperial.

The mission to motivate them into graduate technology is arguably not as vital, as they are obviously already motivated enough. Hiring the 35% already in the doors is easy, but fixing the reasons why there are only 35% is where the real problem lies.

### Forcing an attitude change

The first port of call needs to look at our children, and the influences they receive. Toys and games play a huge role here. The blogger Kate Bachus (at [www.katebachus.com](http://www.katebachus.com)) takes the brilliant example of Lego sets. Those targeted at boys are a magnitude more complex than those targeted at girls of the same age. Skills you learn on Lego sets are pretty much the exact same ones you apply when problem-solving in programming, and it's hard to imagine girls having an interest in the latter when they are never challenged by the former.

Setting toys aside, games are another area where women are almost unconsciously sidelined: games targeted at girls tend to be of the 'Good Housekeeping' variety (simplistic family and food management routines), while their male-oriented counterparts involve journeying across nations/planets/fantastical lands to slay terrorists/aliens/dragons, often at a budget that would be enough for twenty versions of *Cake Mania* (I've played three versions, so I would know). Given that so many people I know first discovered programming when they were young 'to make a game', I suspect that a fair chunk of the 65/35 gap lies there.

Now that we have girls interested in programming, how do we get them to put that down on their UCAS forms? This problem is more complex, but I suspect a lot of it boils down to representations of programmers in the media. I can

think of only two major productions where the techie is a woman: *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* and the American drama *Criminal Minds*. The majority (*CSI*, *The Social Network*, *Swordfish*, or virtually any major production with the need for an IT professional) all portray the person behind the computer as an awkward male with a one-dimensional personality.

Even before you begin to delve into the expectations placed on women, you have to ask, who wants to be that man? I certainly don't. That we have any women applying to work behind a moitor should amaze us.

### Clawing back some equality

The truth is, a brilliant opportunity to turn the tables on ingrained sexism at our universities and workplaces was lost some time ago, probably before our generation was born. Instead, we start off with the same representation of gender as we have in the other, older fields of engineering (Mecano for boys, Barbies for girls, anyone?), and the smelly, antisocial male programmer as our protagonist. Is the fact that we end up with abysmal numbers of women in the field any surprise?

My advice for the bevy of tech firms lining up with their women-oriented programs would be this: fight the fight where it will make a difference in the future. Campaign for girls to be treated as they are: fully intelligent and creative members of society, with the potential to be excellent engineers. School outreach programs help, but even more necessary is the promotion of media and toys that focus on girls working with computers too. Destigmatise the notion of working as a programmer, by showcasing the best men and women in your company doing things that make a tangible difference.

Finally, there must be a campaign to root out the sexist culture in technology that is so brilliantly (albeit unintentionally) encapsulated by the movie *Swordfish*: a woman on her knees giving a blow-job while a man does the real work. A buffet lunch at a networking event is something, but not nearly enough.

**Tweets**

**Sqoot** @sqoot  
@arizzitano We're sorry [bit.ly/reallysorry](http://bit.ly/reallysorry)  
↳ In reply to Ari Rizzitano

**Sqoot** @sqoot  
@kristengrote We're sorry [bit.ly/reallysorry](http://bit.ly/reallysorry)  
↳ In reply to Kristen Grote

**Sqoot** @sqoot  
@ashedryden We're sorry [bit.ly/reallysorry](http://bit.ly/reallysorry)  
↳ In reply to Ashe Dryden

**Sqoot** @sqoot  
@benxo We're sorry [bit.ly/reallysorry](http://bit.ly/reallysorry)  
↳ In reply to Ben XO

**Sqoot** @sqoot  
@jacobian We're sorry [bit.ly/reallysorry](http://bit.ly/reallysorry)  
↳ In reply to jacobian

**Sqoot** @sqoot

**Event Details**

**Tweet and get in for free!** <http://bit.ly/A36MBL>

**Boston API Jam**

**Saturday March 31st through April 1st, 2012**

Forget everything you know about hack-a-thons. We're bringing together the brightest mind in Boston to hack on the hottest new technologies. Web 3.0 is about finding meaning in data (aka semantics). Recommendation & personalization technologies are acquired as fast as they are launched. You could be next!

Be part of a kickin' team and build something amazing in a weekend. Learn something new. Have fun. Win some prizes. Meet amazing people.

**Great Perks:**

- **Messages:** Take a break from hacking to unwind.
- **Live DJ:** Let great beats get you in the groove.
- **Gym Access:** Grab a free pass and run across the street to the Boston Sports Club for a workout.
- **Food Trucks:** Clover, Kick Ass Cupcakes, Lobsta Love, Staff Meal, & Cupcakory. Don't like those options? Grab a \$10 LevelUp credit and try something different.
- **Top Shelf Booze:** Choose from a selection of great imported beer or sip on a speciality cocktail.
- **Women:** Need another beer? Let one of our friendly (female) event staff get that for you.
- **Drinks:** By our math, you'll need at least 4 to get you through the week.
- **Perfect Fuel:** Dark chocolate for a healthy & active life! More.

**Startup Sqoot learnt a hard lesson the in consequences of advertising women as a 'perk'**



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**Sam Horti**

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# COMMENT

## FELIX

### League table responses expected

League tables yet again come to the fore this week as Imperial College London saw a drop from 10th to 13th place in the *Guardian* University Guide 2013. These latest results however caused considerably more controversy than previous league table announcements.

The *Guardian*'s use of a 'Value Added' category, and Imperial's low placing, compared to its traditional contemporaries in league tables, has ignited the opinions of many across the Imperial community. The category is scored after comparison between a university's entry requirements and the final degree result received upon graduation.

The Union's Deputy President (Education) Jason Parmar has openly criticised the methods used by not only the *Guardian*, but by league tables published by other league table-featuring publications. Certainly, it is mystifying that the value of an Imperial degree is deemed, by the *Guardian*, to be significantly less than many of us would prefer to believe, especially with Imperial's top ranking for career prospects compared with other universities. However, the aim of the 'value-added' score – to assess the effectiveness of teaching at a university – opens a whole new avenue of questions.

Is the result representative of the teaching at Imperial, or rather the comparative rarity of first class, and indeed 2:1 grade degrees, delivered to students in comparison with other UK universities? Doubtless there are those who would argue on both accounts.

It is not hard to understand why this latest news has been met with such a negative reception. Prospective students invariably make use of such tables and with a large number of students having to pay in the region of £30,000 (if not supported by financial aid) towards their degrees from next year, making the right choice of university is critically important. The lesser 'value' that the league table assigns to an Imperial degree has been an affront to some who applied here on the basis of a world class education.

Gaining a first from Imperial is no easy feat, but the difficulty of attaining a high grade appears to have brought with it the risk of plain and simple statistics painting Imperial in a less than favorable light.

This whole situation simply goes to show that there is a long way for league tables to come before full weight is placed behind them. The reasoning behind the 'Value Added' score may have raised many tensions, and it does deserve to be questioned.

# Is the right to know right?



## Joseph Kaupp

**O**n the U.S. political scene, a Republican sponsored bill is causing quite a stir. The "Women's Right to Know Act" requires females seeking to have an abortion to first undergo an invasive transvaginal ultrasound. This is a procedure that involves what is known as a "10-inch plastic wand" to be inserted into the vagina. The purpose is to dissuade women from having an abortion by forcing them to acknowledge the fetus that they intend to abort. In some states, congressional members have suggested that women should also be made to listen to the heartbeat of the fetus before they are able to proceed with an abortion.

This medieval type prescription is the latest tactic being invoked in order to moralize the country. It is a demented way around *Row v. Wade* (an important Supreme Court case in the USA regarding abortion), and is meant as a firm punishment for women irresponsible enough to have gotten themselves knocked up or raped. (Generously, Republicans in some states have amended the bill, making the procedure optional for rape victims.)

"Women's Right to Know" rests on two baseless presumptions. First, that the right wing has the one and only moral code. Abortion is one of the most polarizing issues being bandied about in philosophy or politics. It's a moral grey zone for which there is no consensus. For a faction to claim they have the answer displays an especially base type of arrogance. Second, Republicans seem to believe that women are blasé about having abortions. Devoutly religious or

**This medieval type prescription is the latest tactic being invoked in order to moralize the country.**



The question of whether or not Congress should dictate morality is key

incorrigibly hedonistic, it is unlikely anyone is having a red-letter day when an abortion clinic is involved.

Although innocuous sounding, "Women's Right to Know" is a flagrant assault on those views that contravene right wing religious doctrine. And far too many Republicans find women justifiable fodder for achieving their questionable objectives. What is being called the "war on women" is the result of the increasing encroachment of religion into politics and the arrogant tendency of the right wing to forcefully prescribe their values onto the secular savages who are deprived of virtue.

There is a saying in catholic education (of which I am a product) that "religion does not impose, it proposes." Except with regard to women, into which religion transvaginally imposes a 10-inch plastic wand. You don't need to recite the annals of moral philosophy to know this bill is wrong. It is a cruel attempt to torture women who are already going through a challenging time in their lives. It's misogynistic and it's spiteful.

As always in politics, a variety of airbrushed half-truths are being perpetrated to market this proposal. Virginia's Governor, Bob McDonnell, massages the truth by stating: "a woman should have all of the information possible before she makes a decision about terminating a pregnancy." Kristi Hamrick, an alleged spokeswoman for American values, eloquently asserted that "it is vital to protect women's health and ultrasounds are absolutely vital to women's health." This is of course two-faced baloney. It is devious word play meant to legitimize malicious intentions.

Senator Lin Coleman is right to refer to "Women's Right To Know" as state

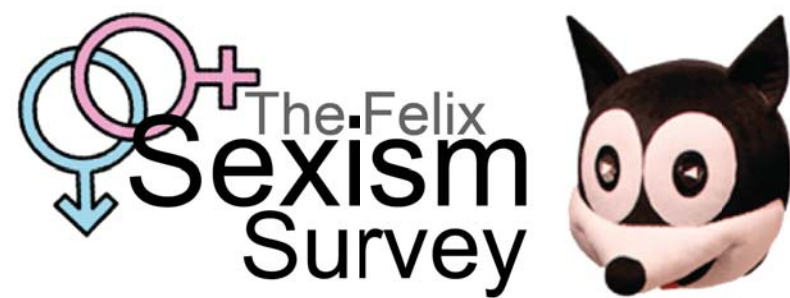
**As always in politics, a variety of airbrushed half-truths are being perpetrated to market this proposal.**

sanctioned rape. Although its supporters disguise it as governmental oversight, this proposal is nothing other than an attempt to punish women for making "bad" moral decisions. It is rape by proxy. Plain and simple.

At best the republicans think of this bill as tough love, wherein the ends justify the means. More likely, however, this state-sanctioned rape bill is an instrument intended to punish the dissolute for their transgressions.

Some might argue that decisions regarding moral grey zones, like abortion, should be left to the individual or to the family, and that the state's purview ought to be limited by consensus driven issues. But why shouldn't it fall on Congress to dictate morality? Surely their 12% approval rating is a strong mandate to supply moral direction and shepherd our personal decision-making. Surely representatives in the state legislatures in question, 83% of whom are males, know what is best for American women.





Over the past year, 10 articles and 231 comments were written about sexism in science and at Imperial. Stephen Smith's "Sexism at Imperial College" has been viewed over 7,500 times on the Felix website. Sexism is clearly an issue that concerns the Imperial community and 631 of you gave us your opinion by filling in the survey. Thank you.

Women have always been students at Imperial College, even though it has always been a strongly male dominated environment. A lot has changed over the past few decades: Helen Kemp Porter became the first woman lecturer at Imperial in 1959, **women were first allowed into the union bar in 1972** and the ratio is slowly improving, currently at 63.7:36.3. **Imperial is actually doing better than the national average for female undergraduates in SET**, which was 33.2% in 2007-2008 compared to 35.29% at Imperial.

**Credits:** Marie-Laure Hicks, Silvia Araguas, Philip Kent, Matt Colvin and Jonathan Kim

### How to report sexism

There is a full procedure for reporting and dealing with sexual and racial harassment at Imperial: <http://bit.ly/aWqSqO>

### What is sexist at Imperial?

Here are the examples you gave us of what you find sexist at Imperial:

WSET's 'Girls Girls Girls' event

**The drinking clubs:** The Links, the Chaps and the '22 Club. These all-male clubs founded in the 1920s were criticised for being anachronistic, having a selective admissions policy and being far from the "respectable" societies they used to be. These clubs however are completely independent from the Union.

Tutors, lab demonstrators and lecturers

Imperial Memes

Hangman and Felix

Jokes and comments

Men feeling that women are inferior and less capable in SET

Metric Moments

**The Hunnies and Bunnies night at the Reynolds, described as being full of "drunk slutty bitches"**

**Sexist events:** some examples include groping, calling women 'babe', sexual harassment and lab demonstrators giving the 'easier' task to female students because they are 'less capable'

**Voting for women in ICU elections based on attractiveness**

**Positive discrimination:** women's only careers events and the belief that women are more likely to be offered a place at Imperial because of their gender

**The 'Imperial attractiveness rating scale'**

**The male orientated choice of films shown by ICU Cinema**

**Sport societies:** they were heavily criticised for their behaviour and comments, especially during sports' night and ACC, and making it unnecessarily difficult for women to participate. The rugby club and medics men's hockey club, in particular, were also mentioned regarding their mailing list. When asked about the emails, a rugby player joked: "who wants another boring email? At least if it's demeaning to women...". Other respondents referred to inappropriate and sexist comments made to the cheerleading squad and general objectification of women or, as some sports players would say, "birds".

### Is Imperial sexist?

**10.14%** of people said 'yes'

**51.48%** of women answered 'sometimes'

**49.41%** of men said 'no'

"I can't help but feel this isn't an Imperial problem, but just how "lads" act in such maleheavy groups. It's society who has fostered this "lads" mentality. Let's blame British society. Bloody Tories."

"There can be times when, as a female at Imperial, you feel like a statistic!"

"Women at IC are given so many extra opportunities for careers events, WSET and are generally treated with more respect than men."

"There's a pervasive atmosphere of thinking misogynistic comments are acceptable and that women should accept 'banter'."

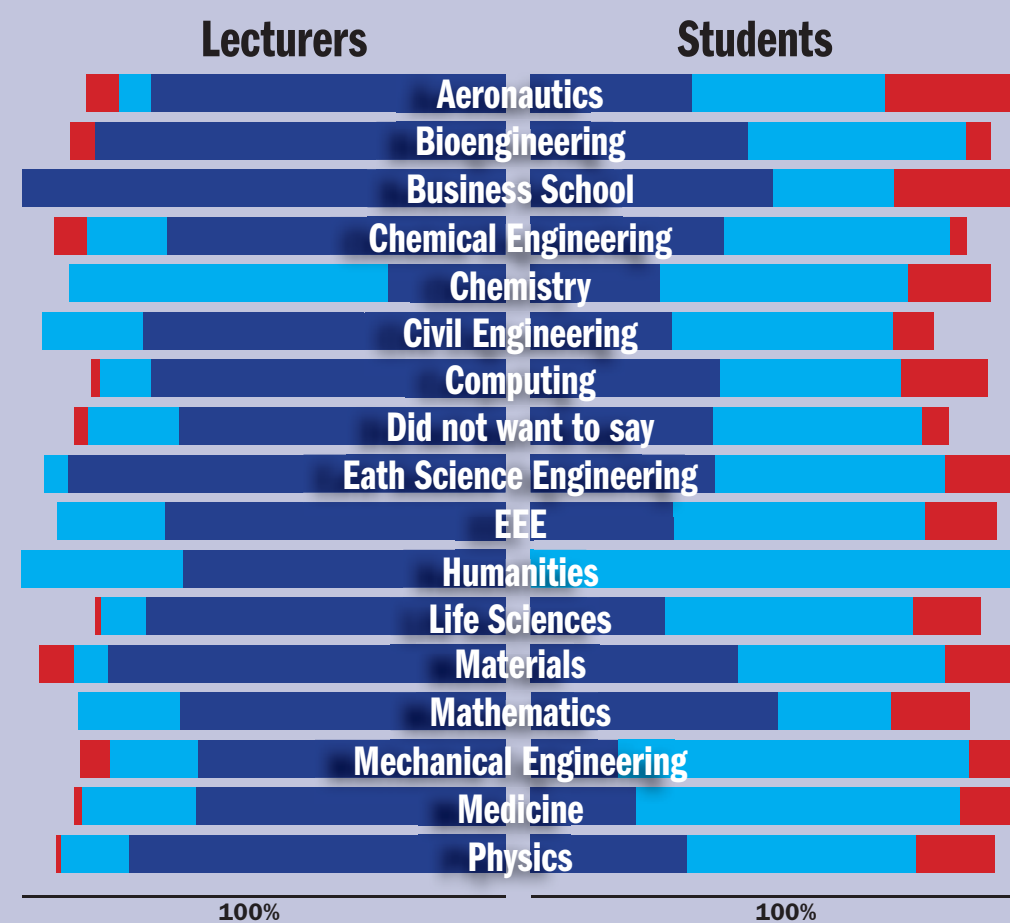
Sadly, there's just a hell of a lot of sexist 'banter' from some blokes. For example, dismissing a female lecturer's opinions on the basis of being unattractive or 'menstrual'.

"There have been times I felt hugely annoyed at being a female at Imperial however I think this was combined with being from a lower class/income household than many of my fellow peers, this is something I felt more angered with than any sexism issue. But how do you stop the attitudes of petty little rich kids who know no better? They are a minority anyway."

99% of the people I met at Imperial are what they should be; intelligent and respectful young people open to new opinions and most importantly open to changing their opinions all mixed in with a dry sense of humour. Have we confused this with sexism at Imperial? In my opinion, at time yes but I'm fairly sure the many 'lads' who attend Uni's such as Leeds/Manchester did so with the hope of many sleepless nights with various northern beauties. At least we know the guys at Imperial didn't apply here with the mindset of f\*\*\*\*\*g everything with a pulse; they don't have the chance!"

### College life

■ Sexist  
■ Sometimes sexist  
■ Not sexist



Ever wondered which departments are considered by the respondents to house the most sexist students and lecturers?

Aero comes out as a clear winner. More than one in four students answered that their fellow students are sexist. Aero was also amongst the departments with the highest proportion of students claiming their lecturers are sexist, only 6.67% though. Another department with seemingly sexist lecturers is Chemistry, with 65.85% of respondents stating that lecturers are sometimes sexist. Students in Mech Eng, Medicine and Civ Eng are also more likely to be sexist according to their fellow classmates, 62.5 to 72.73% of them saying they are sometimes sexist.

The award for least sexist department goes jointly to Bioeng and the Business School. Materials was a close runner up, 42.86% and 82.14% of respondents saying that fellow students and lecturers, respectively, weren't sexist. No-one in Maths, Chemistry, Civ Eng, Earth Sciences, EEE or Humanities claimed that their lecturers are sexist.

### Do you think that there is a gender advantage at Imperial?

Are men advantaged? **14.81%** of women said yes  
Are women advantaged? **24.85%** of men said yes

### Representation in Imperial College Union

**54.81%** of women said that they **were not** appropriately represented  
**52.07%** of men said that they **were** appropriately represented

### Does sexism have a negative impact on your Imperial life?

**6.67% women and 4.44% men said yes**  
In the recent *Times Higher Education* Student Experience Survey, Imperial dropped nine places. We wondered whether sexism might be a factor affecting the lives of people here, especially as Imperial's low scores were in the 'good social life', 'good community atmosphere' and 'good personal relationships with teaching staff'. A small percentage of students expressed that sexism had negatively impacted their experience at this university, however almost 40% of female respondents felt that it occasionally tainted their student experience.

### Sexism at other universities

Universities continue to make the headlines under accusations of sexist behavior. One needs only look to this week's news and see the University of Cambridge's online site The Tab come under fire for its 'Rear of the Year' competition. In March, a rugby team at the University of East Anglia was the subject of complaints over its behaviour, which culminated in its disbanding after exhibiting racist and sexist behaviour at a party. However, it is not always the student population who are featured in the column inches. In 2009 a university vice-chancellor at Buckingham University was criticized after claiming that female students were a 'perk' to be enjoyed by male lecturers.

### So what can be done?

We asked what can be done to combat sexism at Imperial, here are some responses:

### Campaigns and Talks to Raise Awareness on Sexism, Feminism and Gender Equality

Women-only space

Imperial College could be more proactive in understanding why there are less women in SET and encourage them to study at Imperial

Increase the number of female lecturers and professors

**More female toilets:** according to Imperial College Estates, the number of toilets complies with the Building Regulations standards which, for a workplace, state that "suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences shall be provided at readily accessible places" and define a specific number of toilets and washbasins per number of people.

### Improve the 'ratio'

Re-establish the Equal Opportunities Officer (both this role and Gender Equality Officer already exist. Next academic year will introduce the role of LGBT officer) ✓

### Look to start a Gender Equality/Feminism Society

A Ladies' Night in Metric

Open an architecture school to improve the 'ratio'

### Stop complaining about the 'ratio'

No event segregation

Quotas for the Sabbatical team

A zero tolerance policy against sexism - this is already in place at Imperial ✓

"How to be a grown up human being" lessons

50% of women said that Imperial College Union should take action

### Union Response

Since February a lot has happened on the Gender Equality front. We've had a Gender Equality Forum, kindly sponsored by the Equality and Diversity Unit, attended by over 50 undergrads and postgrads, which generated several discrete areas of focus taking us forward into the new year. Two of the most important ones have already been put into action - the Gender Equality Officer role has been re-defined, and senior members of College have agreed with the principle of having a women's tutor in every department. These should provide ample opportunities for students and staff to address or seek help with non-gender-equal behaviour. We also discussed a Gender Equality/Feminism society in some depth and it looks as though this could well be up and running by next year. Want to get involved? Get in touch at [DPWelfare@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:DPWelfare@imperial.ac.uk).  
**Nicolas Massie - Deputy President (Welfare)**





**Business as usual on the second year field trip to Sardinia.**  
There's still time to be in a centrefold! Groups and individuals welcome. [centrefolds@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:centrefolds@imperial.ac.uk)



## COMMENT

# The tale of why I hate food shopping



**Veli Akiner**

Say you're on your way home from college, and you need to pop into the supermarket for a cheeky bit of grocery shopping, even dropping by the reduced section to buy a whole cheesecake that not only you're never going to finish before it goes off but you end up paying more per unit of cheesecake eaten despite the reduction, but you buy it anyway because it has a yellow sticker and you grab it like a magpie in a jewellery shop. There's also that sense of accomplishment that you've 'beaten' the supermarket by not paying full price, even though you're probably playing straight into their hands.

As you turn around to move on to the next isle with your booty in tow, you bump into someone you know, whose beady eyes were probably eyeing up that cheesecake you just took. Ignoring them is out of the question now: you've made eye contact within talking distance and both of you are stationary. Plan B: you exchange pleasantries, talk about the weather, ask redundant questions like "doing a bit of shopping, eh?" and generally lubricate the conversation until you part, before it grinds to an awkward halt.

The problem is that supermarkets are designed specifically so that you traverse its isles in a scarily predictable manner: fresh produce, then meat, dairy, the frozen section, and finally all the sweet, carbohydrate-laden goodies at the end. So you're browsing the milk section calculating how much you'd save by buying four pints instead of two and weighing that up against the odds of you finishing it before it goes



I refuse to use self checkout. I'm basically temping for free by PLEASE REMOVE ITEM FROM BAGGING AREA

sour, all the time looking like an idiot because the saving you make is something like five pence. You decide to take a walk on the wild side and take a six pint bottle, turn around, and... oh it's you again. Hi. Buying milk, I see? It could be your best friend, housemate, mother or girlfriend: there is no way this isn't going to be painful.

If it is your housemate, you now need to navigate the logistical and etiquette nightmare ahead of you: you're obviously going to wait for each other since you're walking exactly the same way home, but you might be at different stages of shopping or one of

you has bought way more stuff than the other. So one waits for the other, looking on, not in an annoyed way, but still wishing they'd hurry up – while you feel their unintentional glare pile the pressure on you to get through the self-checkout sooner. You scan your items more quickly, except the scanner fails to read the barcode so the moment you bag that box of cereal the machine blares in that voice that reads "my words say you made an honest mistake but by my intonation I'm accusing you of trying to steal".

Sometimes if you really addle its silicon brain you're forced to call one

of those people with the store ID card to save you. This not only defeats the purpose of self-checkouts to minimise human contact during shopping, but also that of theft – if on the off-chance the employee sees you've paid for 5 kilos of carrots yet all you have in your bags are chorizo, you're not going to be able to explain it by saying you thought the sausages were just a different cultivar.

Finally, with your groceries bagged and paid for (or stolen), you and your housemate now just want to get home.

Then you realise you forgot to buy bread...

... the machine blares in that voice that reads "my words say you made an honest mistake but by my intonation I'm accusing you of trying to steal"

**Do you enjoy West End musicals? Do you take pleasure in not paying for things? Do you find joy in watching others fail and pitifully stumble around on stage as they try to remember dance moves that they've only had ten minutes to practise?**

**If you answered yes to any of the previous questions, then don't miss out on MTSoc's 24 hour musical! In the space of just 24 hours, Imperial's finest and worst will learn the entirety of a well-known musical and then perform it for you at the measly price of £0!**

**There is simply no excuse for missing out! Revision is not an excuse. Not liking musicals is not an excuse. Not being alive is sort of an excuse, but not a very good one, so drag your cold dead ass along to this summer's hottest event – other than summer.**

**24**

**HOUR MUSICAL**

**Imperial College Union Concert Hall  
Sunday 27 May, 7pm**

*[The musical is NOT 24 hours long. The audience are just expected to turn up at 7 and watch a musical of a fairly standard show length (2 – 3 hours)]*



## ARTS

## The Poet's Column

By That Long Scan of Waves  
by Walt Whitman

By that long scan of waves, myself call'd back,  
resumed upon myself,  
In every crest some undulating light or shade--  
some retrospect,  
Joys, travels, studies, silent panoramas--scenes  
ephemeral,  
The long past war, the battles, hospital sights, the  
wounded and the dead,  
Myself through every by-gone phase--my idle  
youth--old age at hand,  
My three-score years of life summ'd up, and more,  
and past,  
By any grand ideal tried, intentionless, the whole  
a nothing,  
And haply yet some drop within God's scheme's  
ensemble--some  
wave, or part of wave,  
Like one of yours, ye multitudinous ocean.

Our Felix poets are on holiday this week (or possibly on exam time) so instead we bring you a bit of the sea from the great Walt Whitman. With this weather, who doesn't dream of the sea?

## Win Nova Festival tickets!



The Arts Pages this week bring you a new competition – and this one is even bigger and better than the last. The **Nova Festival – music, art, theatre & comedy all taking place in one big field in Sussex** – is offering us a pair of tickets, valued at £100 each, for the winners of our competition below. For all you festival fanatics out there, this is the perfect chance to spend four drunken days swimming in love, happiness and just a little mud. Even if festivals aren't exactly your thing, it will give you something to do in the long, hot summer (5 – 8 of July to be precise) if you were planning to spend it doing not much of anything...

Send us your **best festival story** – in 20 words max. – to be in with a chance of winning one of our two tickets!

The two winners will be selected on Wednesday 6 June and will be revealed in Felix on Friday 8 June.

# WitTank spoons out hilarity at King's Place



What a wunch of bankers!

## Will Prince

Having first seen comedy group WitTank two years ago at the **Edinburgh Fringe** on the recommendation of a friend, I've been coming back for more at every opportunity. These are the guys who compete against some other 2500 shows for an audience at the Fringe every year and still manage to pack the house for every performance.

At first glance, it's not easy to see why: the threesome don't have the media fame of other Fringe rivals such as Jimmy Carr, Eddie Izzard or Shappy Khorsandi; nor are they born out of a traditional representation like the Oxford Revue or the Footlights. It seems improbable that the set, whose existence alone arose after a rejection to perform in the Durham Revue, could succeed in not only winning over but also multiplying their audience every year for the last five years.

But succeed they have. Their sketches are brilliant, original and unforgettable: there may not be anything particularly witty about them but the boyish charm, charisma and excitement that WitTank bring to the stage draws you in immediately. See what you like at the Fringe, but I can guarantee you that these are the guys

you will be quoting and imitating months after.

With this in mind, I was over the moon when I learnt that I would be reviewing one of their rare shows out of the Fringe milieu. Even in the sleepy **King's Place** venue every seat was taken, word-of-mouth being crucial to WitTank's fame. As the lights fade and the three take to the stage their appearance electrifies the viewer as they seem to bounce off each other and the audience.

My only disappointment was that to a dedicated Edinburgh fan like myself, the material presented at this London viewing was largely recycled from their previous shows. Even so, I was still able to thoroughly enjoy the performance. It hardly mattered that I wasn't hearing these jokes for the first time, I was laughing myself into a stitch anyway. If there's one thing these guys are good at, it's timing – something the other shows of the night (The Three Englishmen and Nish Kumar) fell short on.

Going to the Fringe this year? Make sure you check these guys out. I know I'll be in the audience again.

WitTank returns to the **Edinburgh Fringe Festival** this summer. Shows from 1 – 26 August.

# Surfing the wave of weird

## Iain Bower

I was in two minds on how to write this. On the one hand as a stalwart Imperialist (person of Imperial College) with a thorough grounding in scientific lore, the word ether when referring to waves conjures up memories of an as-of-1887 defunct theory of a medium said to transmit light through space. On the other, after having spent Easter in a less than scientific family in a less than scientific country, something inside me says possibly the importance of something doesn't always lie in whether it is true or not. It is this that leads to my somewhat Jekyll and Hyde opinion of the Ethometric Museum.

*The Ethometric Museum* itself is an installation in a room full of whirring, buzzing, beeping, flashing, soft siren-screeching machines. It sounds part Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory and part primitive view of a brave new world of robotics. But of course the sounds are a mere by-product of the ethometric waves filling you with good will and positive energy. That is the whole point. These archaic looking machines were 'rescued from a fire' and carefully tuned to produce these never-before-heard-of-to-science waves: ethometric waves. This is not a night out using Hangman's recommendations. These were guaranteed to induce happiness by the time we left.

In a darkened room, about twenty duped individuals milled around looking at machines with names like the Sonaesthetic Ethometer and Ether Flux Magnifier while things flashed, machines beeped and a middle aged man in a tweed suit with white gloves altered dials, generally looking serious and occasionally making magnets move metal objects. Enough to make anyone smile right? Well isn't that just it? This man lectures in contemporary arts and music at Oxford Brookes University. I find it hard to believe anybody in the modern age could fall for this sort of rubbish so instead I plug for the option that it's some sort of elaborate piece of art where the exhibit is more the acting, the people viewing it and their feelings. A happening perhaps, I'm not sure, I'm not *au fait* with this lingo. This view could explain why it was shown at **Battersea Arts Centre** and not **Imperial College London**.

So that's my take. Of the show itself, highlights included a blonde assistant, the fact that she was eastern-European and her acting ability. I was particularly impressed by how she didn't laugh when she told some of her stories; a favourite of mine was how Einstein calculated the age of the universe after an ethometric sesh. Would I recommend it? Well I did leave happy, but a free beer will do that to you.

*The Ethometric Museum* at **The Battersea Arts Centre** on the 25 and 26 May. Tickets are £10



Small and beautiful,  
just 5000 in a Sussex  
country garden!

from producers of the Big Chill comes a wonderland of art and music...

# NOVA

FESTIVAL OF  
ARTS & MUSIC

5th – 8th JULY 2012, BIGNOR PARK, PULBOROUGH, WEST SUSSEX

**tUnE-YaRdS / Ghostpoet / Jessie Ware / Norman Jay / The Dø /  
Phenomenal Handclap Band / Fink / Speech DeBelle / Crazy P /  
Fionn Regan / The Staves / Soul Jazz / Reeps One / Late Night Tales  
with Belle and Sebastian (DJ set) / Zero 7 (DJ set) / Howie B  
'Myths, Monsters and Legends' by Rankin and Damien Hirst / Doug  
Fishbone's Adventureland Golf with Jake Chapman and David Shrigley**

## MUSIC

**Valley stage** Jessie Ware, Ghostpoet, Norman Jay, Fink, Speech DeBelle, Crazy P, tUnE-YaRdS, The Dø, Jono McCleery, Fionn Regan, Kinny, Reeps One, We Were Evergreen, The Staves, Phenomenal Handclap Band, Mother Feather, Chris Coco, The Roundhouse Choir, Stumblin' Slims and The Black Kat Boppers, Late Night Tales with Belle and Sebastian (dj set), Zero 7 (dj set)

**Super Nova Cocktail Bar** Krystal Klear, Psychemagik, Duffstep, The Good Times Bus, Soul Jazz Sound System, DJ Food, Hexstatic, Cheeba, JFB, KeepUp, DJ Shep Dog, Toby Fluffy Logic, Tim Love Lee, Pathaan, Leggo Beast,

**Nova Arms Pub** Aidan Larkin's Big Ten Inch and late night chilled sets from Mixmaster Morris and Pete Lawrence

**Sofar Sessions** Anna Phoebe, Indigo Earth, The Midnight Barbers, Joker And The Thief, Bird Radio plus surprise guests live and unplugged

**Nest Collective Campfire Sessions** Carrie Tree, Vic and Tina Smith, Tim Cumming, Ballina Whalers, Sam Brookes, Magic Lantern, James Morgan, City Shanty Band, Mick Sands

## ART

'Myths, Monsters and Legends' by Rankin and Damien Hirst (featuring Dani Smith), The Hunger, Doug Fishbone and Friends' Adventureland Golf with Jake Chapman, Brian Griffiths, Gary Webb, Zatorski & Zatorski, Pete Fowler and David Shrigley, Jem Finer's 'Still', David and Peter Adjaye, Andrew Logan, Dynamic Junk, 12 Months of Neon Love by Lucas & Wheeler... plus late night illuminated art in the woods

## THEATRE & COMEDY SIDESHOWS

The Pick of the Pleasance: Late Night Gimp Fight, Abandoman, Doc Browns, Pappy's Max & Ivan, The Beta Males, Ginger & Black, Delete The Banjax, Sheeps, Battersea Arts Centre: Nurse Knows Best, Home Correspondence, And The Birds Falls From The Sky, Gooseparty, Pop Up Casino, Green and Pleasant Land, Red Sarah, John Hegley, Teatro-Saurus, Kubla Khan Coffee House, stalking poets, prowling postmen and more surprises in the woods!

## WORDS

Charley Boorman, Rankin, Paul Trynka (David Bowie biographer), Clive Arrowsmith, Tony Grisoni, Ben Rivers, Andrew Kötting, Gustav Temple (founder editor of The Chap zine), Neil Palmer ('Rockhunter'), Peter Hancock (aka comedian Jinx Jones), Katy Darby ('The Whores' Asylum'), Neil Ansell ('Deep Country'), Michael Smith ('The Giro Playboy'), Joe Dunthorne (Submarine) and Rachel Lichtenstein

## MAKE IT

Creative salons, The Roundhouse Choir – flash mobs open rehearsals, London Drawing life drawing classes, Afrikokoa drum sessions, Blink Arts craft salons, cocktail making with Bompas and Parr, Jewellery making with Andrew Logan, foraging, cooking, burlesque, photography, painting, filmmaking and much more...

## FILM

Ben Rivers, Andrew Kötting, Tony Grisoni, The Flicker Club, The British Guide To Showing Off – live! Late night screenings

## REJUVENATE

Yoga Sonic presents Tandava Daze, Soul Pads for Deep Tissue, Aromatherapy, Thai massage, Shiatsu, Acupressure, Reflexology, Indian Head, Reiki, Tui Na, Bliss Domes for sound and light baths plus Yoga, Wild Run and Hot Tubs

plus much more – check the website for details...

[www.novafestival.co.uk](http://www.novafestival.co.uk)

Tickets from Ticketline: £139.00 students £100. [www.ticketline.co.uk/nova-festival](http://www.ticketline.co.uk/nova-festival)

Join the action on [twitter](#) and [facebook](#)

## FOOD & DRINK

Communal dining, cooking classes with Disappearing Dining Club, Hurly Burly, a world-wide feast, top notch cocktails from Bompas & Parr, Nova Arms – stocking local beers & ciders... plus twisted pub entertainment



act:onaid

PLEASANCE

BUNKART

THE CHAP

HUNGER



Sofar



CLASH



LateNightTales



# MUSIC

Music Editors: **Íñigo Martínez de Rituerto** **Alex Ramadan**  
**Ross Gray** **Mark England** **Simon Hunter**

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## 5/4 Respect: A Tribute to Math Rock

Pt. IV - Hella



Although they have often used larger set ups, **Hella**, at its barebones, is guitarist Spencer Seim and drummer extraordinaire Zach Hill, who have played together since high school. They released their first EP, *Leather Diamond*, in 2001. Even in that early release, the Sacramento, California band have a distinctive tone, consisting of technical, breakneck riffs and outstanding drum performances from Hill.

Zach Hill's drumming talents are utilised on a plethora of other projects, such as work with **Orthrelm's** Mick Barr, or trending experimental hip-hop group **Death Grips**. Seim also has a solo project and Nintendo cover band **The Advantage**.

Hella have been branded noise rock, but I disagree with this label. While their music can have a chaotic air to it, Seim's guitar often flirts with melody. Slow it down and make it 4/4 and it could be the makings of some standard indie. The importance of polyrhythms sets Hella apart as math rock, or a noise rock/math rock crossover. Experimental rock is perhaps another tag that may be applicable because Hella have never shied away from experimenting.

Indeed, primarily an instrumental group, they included vocals from friend Dan Elkan on certain tracks in early EPs, and from Aaron Ross on 2006's *There's No 666 In Outer Space*. Use of vocals does little to mellow their music or blunt the band's sense of experimentalism as while this album does contain some of their most accessible songs, it also has some of their most experimental work, where vocals merely add to the psychedelic blur of the instruments. Their music has also been known to include elements of other genres such as 8-bit and dance, shown by working with synths and a split with **Four Tet**. The culmination of their experiments was the 2005 double album *Church Gone Wild/Chirpin Hard*, two independently recorded solo albums from Hill and Seim respectively, Hill making a noise rock release and Seim going in a 8-bit/punk/math rock fusion direction.

Hella continue to produce quality music, releasing their latest album, *Tripper*, last year, once again as a duo. As in the past, they created yet another physically exhausting album, at once aggressive and catchy, with a groove running through the majority of the songs, resembling a less noisy **Lightning Bolt**. In contrast to the above albums, *Tripper* takes a restrained approach, with a sound that is more traditionally Hella, which no doubt pleased many, but still breaking new ground.

In many ways, despite spending most of their time as a duo, Hella are the perfect culmination of the rock band; never afraid to try new sounds, but with a propensity for catchy hooks and a pop-like sensibility that makes them manageable at all times.

Riaz Agahi

## O. Ambarchi: an introduction

Riaz Agahi goes deep on three of this year's offerings

**M**odern music has few people prolific as Australian guitarist and multi-instrumentalist **Oren Ambarchi**. He started out as free jazz drummer in his native country before moving to guitar, which he plays experimentally and unconventionally, producing sounds alien to traditional music.

His music is of a consistently high quality and he puts out an amazing amount of collaborations, with people as respected as **Sunn O))),** He has a simply huge discography, with more than 3 releases this year so far and an album with **Sunn O))))**'s Steven O'Malley and Keiji Haino in production. While I admit his regular output is often a challenge to keep up with, he rarely lets the quality slip and has an outstanding range.

The logical starting point is the only solo work released this year, *Audience Of One*. What surprised me about it was the prevalence of vocals on the first track. I have to admit that that from the opening of 'Salt' I was puzzled, even disappointed. On further listens, however, I realised that it was both relaxing and resonant, if a little lacking in experimentation. The same could be said for the last two tracks, which are interlinked and contain some conventional use of acoustic guitar over ambient soundscapes. If all this sounds like a quaint ambient album, it's because I haven't mentioned the second track. As nice as the pieces are, the main event is the 33 minute cen-

**"They are masters of creating hypnotic platforms for the build-up of intensity, at once ominous and reflective"**

trepiece 'Knots', which is a noise rock/drone/free jazz/hard to define piece, and one which doesn't disappoint. It's very hard to describe because it is a persistently evolving musical journey, starting ambient, with a beat that slowly speeds up, building in intensity, until it drops out, leaving a more empty soundscape led by metallic sounds.

The second album is a collaboration with Swedish free jazz band **Fire!** entitled *In The Mouth A Hand*. **Fire!** are a super group of sorts, as all of the trio have made their names in other projects. They are signed to the Norwegian Rune Grammofon label, and are masters of creating hypnotic platforms for the build-up of intensity, at once ominous and reflective. It must be said that the album is closer to **Fire!**'s natural style than Ambarchi's and in fact, on the first listen I struggled to work out what exactly Ambarchi did on the album. He is credited as playing guitar, but as touched on above, he makes sounds that little resemble the traditional guitar. On further listens it became



Big O. doing what he does best

clear what his role was. The album is one of those brilliantly layered albums where the listener notices new elements on every listen and this subtlety is due to Ambarchi, with a wide array of effected tones and various ambient sounds. This is unlike a lot of free jazz in that it doesn't stop and restart threateningly loud. **Fire!**'s rhythm section maintain hypnotic rhythms giving these songs the impression of slow burners, which gradually rise and fall with their own momentum. It is not bereft of intense moments though, as **Fire!**'s trumpeter and Ambarchi's noises often combine to great effect to provide claustrophobia, even within such an expansive sound.

Live collaboration with **Keiji Haino** and **Jim O'Rourke**, *Imikuzushi*, completes the set with the most extreme of the offerings. The first track is a statement of intent, from 0.01 going straight for the jugular with some balls-to-the-wall, blistering noise rock, which eventually settles down to a steady rhythm with recognisable instruments but still noisy guitar. Oren Ambarchi returns to his original instrument, the drums, and links up well with O'Rourke, who plays bass on this album. Later tracks settle down to a more conventional style, still intense and building, and this album is definitely a notable departure from their earlier works, where the music could often be an interminable mass. This sounds more like **Boris** on an acid trip gone bad. A further departure is that this really sounds like a Haino project as he plays the guitar and does vocals. A highlight for me is the third track, which starts of muted and ambient, a soundscape imbued with haunted beauty until after 8 minutes it drops into a normal beat, which I can't help but interpret as a nod to Krautrock. Album of the year so far.

While the order I've reviewed them in seems to suggest ascending quality (and does to me), I hasten to add that it's almost not applicable, because each album has a different scope of moods, and caters to a different musical whim:

*Audience of One* is a catharsis sandwich with ambient relaxation instead of bread; *In The Mouth A Hand* is a set of fierce but hypnotic soundscapes, only added to the organic sound of **Fire!**'s jazz instruments; and *Imikuzushi* is an exploration of some darker elements, often intense but just as often slow ominous and building.

It is a common belief that prolific musicians are often inconsistent and that when you release that much output, some is bound to fall flat. While I have far from listened to Ambarchi's entire discography to truly confirm or deny this, it is worth pointing out that every one of these albums is well worth listening to. Perhaps it's the amount of collaborations that lead to this, but every album seems to be endowed with a little bit of genius, impressive on the first listen but imbued with more and more depth, subtler and subtler elements with each subsequent listen.

### Be sure not to miss... Floating Points

**Plastic People**  
Saturday 26 May

Floating Points, as well as being everyone's favourite programming term, is also a London based PhD student and purveyor of excellent, jazz-infused electronic music.

The last Saturday in the month sees him at Plastic People, a tiny club off Old Street with the most insane sound system. Expect to hear everything from jazz to disco to techno. But more than anything expect to lose yourself.

Simon Hunter



# Zulu Winter: worth the hype?

Mark England travels to the Boston Arms to find a band guaranteed to soundtrack future O2 adverts

**Z**ulu Winter are a curious band. They seem to be a band beloved by hipsters at the minute, yet their soaring ambitions surely cannot be contained to playing to only the trendy crowds of London. The band's recent singles are highly reminiscent of the stadium bothering doom-pop of **White Lies** and the lead singer's powerful vocals remind me very much of Chris Martin in his prime, (I am not entirely sure when that is but I can definitely say it is not now). Therefore it was quite a surreal night when I went to their debut album's launch party show at a small venue in North London. It was an odd sight looking at a crowd of East London hipsters, industry liggers and fashionistas stroking their moustaches and sipping their Red Stripe whilst the band bash out some massive choruses smothered in swooning guitars, clearly with much bigger venues in mind.

Zulu Winter have been widely tipped by BBC 6 Music, NME and Zane Lowe and so they came accompanied with lots of buzz to London to play their first major headline show in the capital. They started the show looking very confident and assured, and it was clear from the first song that the band were primarily concerned with sounding huge. The song that most people knew, 'We Should Be Swimming', was carted out as their second song and this can be attributed to one of two reasons; either the band were extremely confident of their remaining songs or they understood that the crowd was so full of muted industry types



More hairstyles than you can shake a hipster at

that an energetic and enthusiastic response was never going to be forthcoming so what did they have to lose by using the big guns first? I still remain undecided as to what was the real reason. Other stand out songs were 'Silver Tongue' and 'Let's Move Back To Front' which proved a real hit with the crowd; it was impossible not to get caught up with the soaring choruses and sweeping guitar parts. From the majority of the set it was very clear to see why, even before the release of their debut, Zulu Winter are tipped to break into the mainstream.

The issue which I would raise to all those jumping on the bandwagon is that there is

nothing revolutionary or especially different about Zulu Winter. Everything they produce has been done ad-infinitum before and probably done better. Many words used to describe the band go along the lines of massive, epic and ambitious but one description sticks better than most: **Coldplay**-esque. The comparison with Chris Martin and co. is not hugely wide of the mark with their album aimed towards stratospheric hugeness, aided by swooping melodies and 80s styling. In the end I would definitely recommend checking Zulu Winter out. Be aware they are in no way groundbreaking but they do prove to be a very satisfying listen.



A band to look out for

## The Hundred in the Hands

Chris Richardson

Following what appeared to be an indefinite hiatus after the release of their eponymous debut in 2010, **The Hundred in the Hands** are back on the scene. And while that said debut managed to rapidly rack up favourable reviews from the likes of Pitchfork and Metacritic, it looks as though we can expect much more from their forthcoming second album *Red Night*, which gets released next month.

As with all great electropop duos, Eleanore Everdell (vocals) and Jason Friedman (beats) have a brilliant synergy that they manage to maintain throughout their tracks. As far as production is concerned, think of those beloved twinkles that made **Jamie xx** a buzzword, but with a side order of amphetamines fed to the BPM that invokes constant foot-tapping. While sceptics were initially dubi-

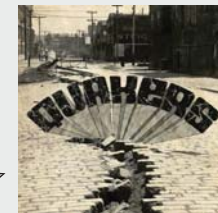
ous about Everdell's vocal abilities, any such reservations will probably subside once they hear the new material: she manages to brilliantly capture the elegance of **Lykke Li**, but also kick things up to **Karen O** when the crescendo calls for it. Combined, the duo have managed to create some brilliant tracks, the lyrics of which carry their appeal even further.

While THITH have managed to maintain a place in the hearts and iTunes libraries of those who stumbled across their debut, I have a hunch that their new material is going to be big on the blogosphere and beyond. At a time when people are becoming increasingly disgruntled with electronic music that is so fixated on a 'drop' (at that beloved 55 second mark, no doubt), people are all ears for the more ambient artists that offer you a massage, not a massacre. If **The xx**, **Grimes** or **Purity Ring** are your sort of thing, THITH are certainly one to add to your repertoire.

Want to see The Hundred in the Hands live? Catch them at White Heat, Madame JoJo's, on Tuesday 29 May, with support from Young Man. Tickets are £7 from [whiteheatmayfair.com](http://whiteheatmayfair.com).

## Reviewed in 60 seconds

Quakers  
Quakers  
2012



For someone who's as big a fan of Stones Throw Records as I, it's a wonder I didn't get on this album earlier. In all honesty, it's probably due to it still not being available on Spotify (Grooveshark to the eventual rescue). Anyway...

Quakers is a 35 strong hip hop collective, massive even by hip hop's standards. At the core of the group are three producers, one of which being **Portishead**'s Geoff Barrow, and they also have their very own brass ensemble. Rappers include Stones Throw stars **Guilty Simpson** and **MED**, but the majority were recruited from the vast wilderness of MySpace (back before it lost all relevance).

The beats are as good as you're likely to hear and the variation in rappers keeps the flows fresh. The reason I haven't given this five stars is that it's perhaps not the most original production you'll hear on a hip hop album this year, but if you like hip hop, you love this.

Simon Hunter

Shuggie Otis  
Inspiration Information  
1974



Inspiration Information is the third album from R&B legend, **Shuggie Otis**. It marked a divergence from his first two efforts in that this album was self-produced. This and his use of early analogue drum machines helped him create a slightly different sound from his earlier, more traditional rhythm and blues.

The appeal in this album has been lasting; many producers still cite it as being hugely influential to them and songs have been sampled by the likes of **J Dilla** and **Madonna**. Hell, 'Aht Uh Mi Head' became hugely popular one summer after it was used in the soundtrack to TV show *Skins*.

The best part? Summer seems to have hit us and there isn't a better tracklist to an evening barbeque than this album.

Simon Hunter

Got an album you want to shout about?

Send us a short review with a rating and we'll be your soapbox

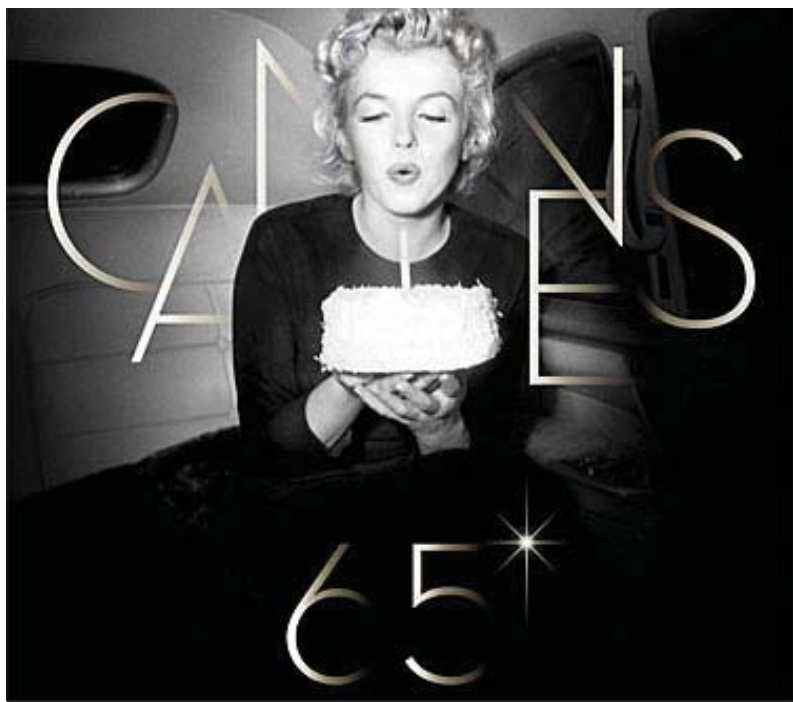


# FILM

Film Editors: **John Park**  
**Lucy Wiles**

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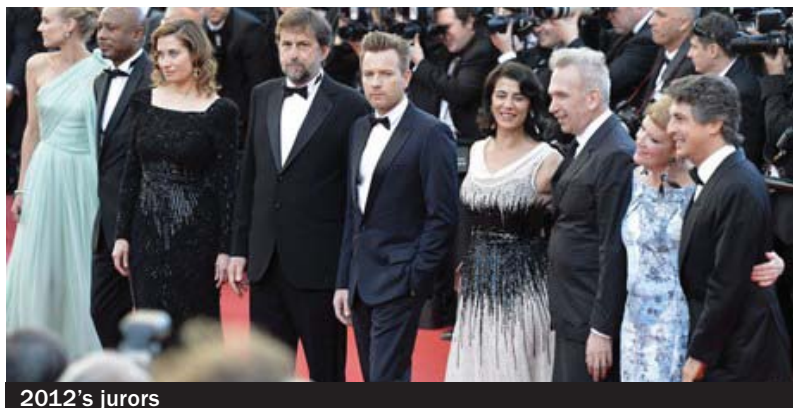
# Your guide to the 65th C



Marilyn Monroe – honouring the 50th anniversary of her tragic death



12 not-so-angry but beautiful women of Cannes 2012 (from the top: Cheryl Cole, Diane Kruger, Eva Longoria, Jane Fonda, Jessica Chastain, Berenice Bejo, Salma Hayek, Marion Cotillard, Isabelle Huppert, Naomi Watts, Freida Pinto, Tilda Swinton)



2012's jurors

**W**elcome, or should we say *bienvenue*, to the world's most celebrated, prestigious film festival of the year. Every May brings numerous respected actors, directors, producers and other famous miscellaneous guests from all around the world to the fabulous red carpet of Cannes. This year, there are 22 films from all over the world competing for the festival's many prizes, and **Felix Film** takes a quick tour, highlighting the important films in this glamorous, highly-publicised event.

## The Prizes

Essentially, what people really care about. The results are announced during the closing ceremony of the festival, where quite frankly anyone involved in the 22 films of the main competition could walk up the stage to nab a prize. Being well received in

front of the tough Cannes crowd, who are known to show no mercy, brutal honesty and outright dislike for unworthy films with boos and hisses, is a major achievement, and to be awarded one of the major prizes is an honour some say are more gratifying than winning an Oscar.

**Palme d'Or** – best film

**Grand Prix** – second best film

**Prix de la mise en scène** – best director

**Prix du scénario** – best screenplay

**Jury Prize** – third best film

**Prix d'interprétation féminine** – best actress

**Prix d'interprétation masculine** – best actor

**Camera d'Or** – best first feature film director

**Palme d'Or du court métrage** – special mention

## The Jury

Now these guys are the ones directors

need to impress with their films. Sure, there are harsh film critics with their knives out expecting the best of standards in the Cannes screening rooms, but really when it comes down to judging the prizes, the Cannes Jury are the ones who have the final say. Made up of directors, actors, writers and other key influential members of the film industry, this internationally diverse group of people watch the films in the Official Selection and decide who walks away with the coveted prizes.

**Nanni Moretti** – Italian filmmaker (President)

**Hiam Abbass** – Palestinian actress and director

**Andrea Arnold** – English filmmaker

**Emmanuelle Devos** – French actress

**Jean Paul Gaultier** – French fashion designer

**Diane Kruger** – German actress

**Ewan McGregor** – Scottish actor

**Alexander Payne** – American filmmaker

**Raoul Peck** – Haitian filmmaker



Palme d'Or - much cooler than an Oscar...



FILM

# annes Film Festival 2012

## The 22 films in competition this year

### Moonrise Kingdom

Dir: Wes Anderson

Cast: Bruce Willis, Edward Norton, Bill Murray, Frances McDormand, Tilda Swinton

Plot: A couple flee their eccentric town, whilst a search party tries to find them.



### Holy Motors

Dir: Leos Carax

Cast: Denis Lavant, Édith Scob

Plot: Lavant travels through time and space, living multiple parallel lives.



### Rust and Bone

Dir: Jacques Audiard

Cast: Marion Cotillard, Matthias Schoenaerts

Plot: Love story between an unemployed 25-year-old man and a killer whale trainer.



### Cosmopolis

Dir: David Cronenberg

Cast: Robert Pattinson, Jay Baruchel, Paul Giamatti, Juliette Binoche

Plot: A young billionaire in Manhattan goes for a limo ride. Things get complicated.

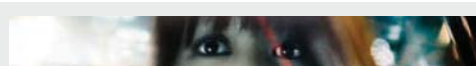


### Like Someone in Love

Dir: Abbas Kiarostami

Cast: Rin Takanashi, Tadashi Okuno, Ryo Kase

Plot: Struggling to finance her studies, a Japanese woman resorts to prostitution.



### The Paperboy

Dir: Lee Daniels

Cast: Zac Efron, John Cusack, Matthew McConaughey, Nicole Kidman

Plot: Two brothers attempt to exonerate a man who they think is innocent.



### The Angels' Share

Dir: Ken Loach

Cast: Paul Brannigan, John Henshaw, William Ruane, Gary Maitland

Plot: A young father is determined to sort his life out after avoiding a jail sentence.



### Killing Them Softly

Dir: Andrew Dominik

Cast: Brad Pitt, James Gandolfini, Richard Jenkins

Plot: A point man investigates a heist that occurs at high stakes poker game.



### In the Fog

Dir: Sergei Loznitsa

Cast: Vladimir Svirskiy, Vladislav Abashin, Sergei Kolesov, Yulia Peresild

Plot: A man is accused of collaboration in western frontiers of the USSR in 1942.



### Reality

Dir: Matteo Garrone

Cast: Aniello Arena, Loredana Simioli, Claudia Gerini

Plot: An Italian fishmonger enters his country's Big Brother House.



### Beyond the Hills

Dir: Cristian Mungiu

Cast: Cosmina Stratan, Cristina Flutur

Plot: Two young women enter an Orthodox convent in Romania.



### Love

Dir: Michael Haneke

Cast: Isabelle Huppert, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Emmanuelle Riva

Plot: An elderly couple must deal with the fact that they're close to death.



### After the Battle

Dir: Yousry Nasrallah

Cast: Nahed El Sebaï, Bassem Samar, Menna Shalabi

Plot: An ex-military man meets a divorcee in the midst of the '11 Egyptian protests.



### Lawless

Dir: John Hillcoat

Cast: Shia LaBeouf, Tom Hardy, Gary Oldman, Jessica Chastain, Guy Pearce

Plot: Three brothers' business in the Prohibition Era is threatened by newcomers.



### Mud

Dir: Jeff Nichols

Cast: Reese Witherspoon, Matthew McConaughey, Michael Shannon

Plot: Two teenage boys decide to help a fugitive reunite with his one true love.



### In Another Country

Dir: Hong Sang-soo

Cast: Isabelle Huppert, Yoo Jun-sang

Plot: Three characters, played by one actress, each telling a different story.

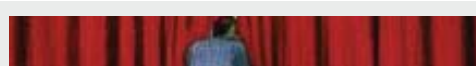


### You Haven't Seen Anything Yet

Dir: Alain Resnais

Cast: Mathieu Amalric, Lambert Wilson, Michael Piccoli, Anne Consigny

Plot: A group of actors gather for the reading of a dead playwright's will.



### The Taste of Money

Dir: Im Sang-soo

Cast: Kim Kang-woo, Yoon Yeo-jeong, Kim Hyo-jin, Baek Yoon-sik

Plot: The story of South Korea's 1%, where the rich crave sex, power and money.

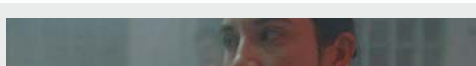


### Post Tenebras Lux

Dir: Carlos Reygadas

Cast: Adolfo Jimenez Castro, Nathalia Acevedo, Willebaldo Torres

Plot: The enjoyment and suffering of a family living in the Mexican countryside.



### Paradise: Love

Dir: Ulrich Seidl

Cast: Maria Hofstätter, Margarete Tiesel, Inge Maux

Plot: A 50-year-old woman travels to Kenya as a sex tourist.



### On the Road

Dir: Walter Salles

Cast: Garrett Hedlund, Sam Riley, Kristen Stewart, Amy Adams, Viggo Mortensen

Plot: A young struggling writer takes a road trip following the death of his father.



### The Hunt

Dir: Thomas Vinterberg

Cast: Mads Mikkelsen, Alexandra Rapaport, Thomas Bo Larsen

Plot: A man becomes the centre of mass hysteria in a small Danish village.





# FOOD

Food Editors: **Anastasia Eleftheriou**  
**Michael Krestas**

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## Boston Tart

by **Yiango Mavroconstanti**

Modified recipe from the recipe book “Vegan Pie in the Sky” by Isa Chandra Moskowitz

### Ingredients:

#### For the base:

1 3/4 cups graham crackers or digestives  
3 tablespoons sugar  
4 tablespoons melted non-hydrogenated margarine  
1 tablespoon milk

#### For the cream:

6 ounces silken tofu salt  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice  
1 cup soy milk  
1/2 teaspoon agar powder  
1/2 cup sugar

#### For the Cake layer:

1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1/2 cup flour  
1/2 teaspoon baking powder  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
3/4 cup milk  
1/2 teaspoon vinegar  
3 tablespoons sugar  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

#### For the Ganache:

1/4 cup milk  
3/4 cup chocolate chips  
1 tablespoon margarine



### Procedure:

Preheat the oven at 180 °C. Oil a 9-inch pie plate. Crash the biscuits and add the sugar and melted margarine and milk. Press the biscuit mixture in a 9-inch pie plate and bake for 8 minutes. Let it cool and remove it from the pie plate. Make the cake layer by mixing together the milk and the vinegar. After 2 minutes add the oil, vanilla extract and sugar. In a separate bowl mix all the dry ingredients. Then, add the liquid mixture in the bowl with the dry ingredients. Mix until just combined. Do not overmix. Place the batter in a 9-inch pie plate and bake for about 12 minutes. Let it cool. To make the cream filling combine the tofu, salt, vanilla extract in a blender. In a small saucepan combine 1/2 of the milk and the agar powder, cook for 5 minutes stirring occasionally. Add the sugar, soy milk and cornstarch in a cup and whisk. Add this to the simmering soy milk mixture and stir for about 5 minutes. Add the cooked cream in the blender with the tofu and the other ingredients and blend until very smooth. Pour it immediately into the baked pie shell. When the cream filling cools place the cake layer on top of it. Finally, make the ganache by melting the chocolate, margarine and adding the milk. Use a spatula to spread the ganache on top of the cake. Refrigerate for at least three hours.

# “You are what you eat”: A character

**Renos Karamanis** analyses Imperial’s food habits. With illustrations by **Yiango Mavroconstanti**

From the title, one will probably think that this article is about uninteresting food habits or a nutritionist’s advice and stuff that the majority of people don’t care about. To be honest that could have been my editor’s picture of what I should write but indeed, the theory of relativity suggests that everything is relative, and because we are scientists it’s good to apply it sometimes. Therefore, I am relating eating habits and food preferences with actual human behavior and diversity of characters, with a more specific zoom in on our life here at Imperial. In this college, there are several kinds of people, from different nationalities, studying different courses having different interests and hobbies. All of these factors affect the way we are fed and therefore one can define the kind of one’s personality by using this information. In the following article, I will analyse some of the most distinctive kinds of people here at Imperial, extrapolating from their eating habits.

## “I will analyse some of the most distinctive kinds of people at Imperial”

Let’s begin with the “money spoiler cliché”. This kind of individual spends more money on food than on accommodation for a flat in Central London, and I do not mean a lot of money on food because of quantity. You might be wondering, how is that possible? Well, it is quite obvious that choosing to eat at expensive, highly valued restaurants for lunch and for dinner on a daily basis, you would probably enjoy delicious meals but this also induces other conclusions. I would personally describe this kind of individual as shallow and a snob. Why is that? The fact that these people do not accept anything that might be cheaper, spend their parents’ money extensively and judge others on the strict rules of *savoir vivre* says a lot.

On the other hand, a very attractive type is the “intellectual”. Students that belong to this category are those who enjoy cooking their own food, sometimes using sophisticated recipes, and also throw on some music while they cook. If you are an intellectual you will probably feel proud of belonging in this category. Intellectuals are considered to be very interesting people. There is no doubt that if you enjoy cooking, you are passionate not only about cooking but probably about other things as well. This kind of person sees food as a source of inspiration and not just a physical need for nutrition. Therefore, intellectuals can be very approachable and at the same time mature. Maturity comes from the fact that they have taken food seriously and converted its preparation from something that might seem a time wasting need, to an attempt for a perfect creation. The way



The “Money Spoiler Cliché”: spending daddy’s money at Michelin restaurants!



The “Intellectual”: Food is life!



The “Asian”: Interesting and brave!

that intellectuals “treat” their food is similar to the way they experience life in general.

## “I had no idea what my kitchen-mate used to be cooking!”

Next eating type: Asian! I personally love delicacies such as sweet and sour or noodles, but from personal experience, I had no idea what my kitchen-mate used to be cooking! Were those gigantic 30cm shrimps or huge insects from the Jurassic age? Were they alive? Each nation has its own food traditions but I can say that Asians have been the most brave in my eyes, including ingredients in their nutrition that I wouldn’t even think of as edible. Many kinds of insects are included on their menu, but I have to acknowl-

edge that they have high nutrition value.

What’s next? The “Cholesterolian”. The description of this eating type is quite obvious. Cholesterolians simply eat pizza, burgers, fried chicken and all kinds of fast food only, at a regular day to day basis. One thing to note is that a Cholesterolian’s excuse for this is the fact that there is no time to cook. WHAT? SERIOUSLY? My dear Cholesterolians, feeding yourself is not something that just appears on your schedule to waste your time, it’s something you do for your own good!

We are now moving to a very common eating type at Imperial. This paragraph describes the “Sandwich Nerd”. In my mind’s dictionary, the Sandwich Nerd only eats sandwiches from the Central Library or JCR day and night as he or she literally studies all the time. Why all the time? People of this category may be buried under the illusion that if they don’t study enough in order to get an A or A\*, they are Imperial failures. As you might probably know, some of the Sandwich Nerds actually

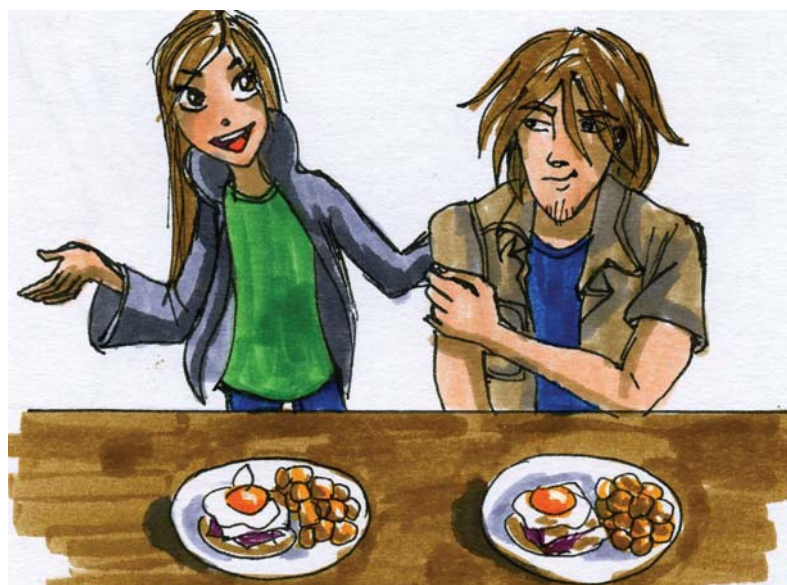


# Character criterion or just philosophical bullshit?

Illustrations by Ioanna Kalogeraki



The "Cholesterolian": Don't bother on a 2-1 Tuesday!



The "Lucky Ones": Lazy and bored or just the smartest people at IC?



The "Sandwich Nerd": boring, dull, and a genius; we all need one of those!

live in the Central Library (but they still pay rent for a flat!). It's a pity, isn't it? Sandwich Nerds may like and actually be good at other things like music, sports or dancing and be talented but put them aside as "there is no time for those". Therefore, they are

## "Getting a 2:1 will definitely not ruin your future career"

most of times unhappy and complain about Imperial life. I would describe this attitude as ironic. Why complain about Imperial life while it is your own responsibility to find the correct balance of curricular and extracurricular activities that makes you happy? After all, getting a 2:1 will definitely not

ruin your future career. What's more tragic, is the fact that Sandwich Nerds have no idea that they are drowning in the sea of pointless academic success.

Contrary to the last two eating types, the next eating type appears to be the one I would like to be. I call this type the "Lucky One". Being a Lucky One implies that you have your friends cooking for you all the time! How great is that? It is like an Imperial "mum version", with the friends being your flat mates, friends that live in your hall, a boyfriend, a girlfriend or just a friend with benefits. The Lucky One most probably has no idea of cooking, which is a reasonable conclusion as he or she never cooks. There is one major advantage and one major drawback about the Lucky One. The negative side is that if a person doesn't know how to cook, then that person can't survive alone (unless eating ready meals from supermar-

kets). I believe this fact can describe the Lucky One as a slightly immature person or not yet an adult to be fair. On the other hand the positive thing about the Lucky One is that is a very approachable person. A Lucky One has many friends, or at least he or she has some very good friends. Why? Who is cooking for the Lucky One? FRIENDS! Now if I try to do some chemistry here, adding the approachability with the immaturity, we have a person who is very sensitive!

## "The Lucky One most probably has no idea of cooking"

Got tired reading this? WAIT! We're not there just yet! I can't say I saved the best for the end but "the Mummy's Kid" is an eating type that deserves to be mentioned. "The Mummy's Kid" is of course the student that when returning from vacation, fills the freezer with tons of homemade food, cooked with extensive care by his or her loving mom. The supplies include all the kinds of food that the Mummy's Kid wouldn't dare to cook and taste deliciously great. If Mummy's Kids leave in hall they probably occupy the whole freezer themselves (yep, a lot of stuff!). I remember a floor mate asking me last year while I was unpacking the "goods" (yes I'm one of those): "Renos! Mother Karamanis must have spent days of cooking!" Well she did, she still does, but let's move on to discover some of the characteristics of these eating type. Furthermore, the fact that Mummy's Kids store food that can last for a long time, means that they think about the future, hence a Mummy's Kid

might be always prepared on anything, thinking two steps forward each time (that's all hypothetical). It would be undeniable to also claim that Mummy's Kids are most of times guys that have the greatest love for their moms. This great love, combined with the fact that they sometimes share their food supplies with others, suggests people who are approachable and sociable, which earns them lots of friends. The obvious thing to notice though, that always happens, is that "Mummy's Kids" con-

vert to any other eating type mentioned before, as soon as the supplies run out. Summarizing, we have gone through

## "What eating type are you?"

seven eating types in enough detail for you to start spotting yourself into one of those. What eating type are you? You can't find yourself into one of those? You may be a combination of everyday life here at Imperial makes us synoptic, which may be described as a new eating type. Is what you eat a character criterion though? Or is it just philosophical bullshit? It depends on how someone understands the article. You can reach to your own conclusion depending on the way you think. For me, the eating type is a character criterion. I wouldn't write the article if I did not believe so. For others it could be just bullshit someone had the idea and pleasure to write about in Felix. My tip is that if you have reached this paragraph reading the whole article, you clearly believe it is an actual character criterion. If you still read the whole article but still believe it's bullshit, then there is clear evidence that you prefer wasting your time reading bullshit in newspapers.



The "Mummy's Kid": Marry him, you marry his mother too!



# TRAVEL

Travel Editors: **Chris Richardson**  
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## Wishing you were here



'Seoul lotus lantern festival' by Jeon Heon-Kyun

## Travel on your doorstep



The legendary Camden Lock

**Get there:** Northern Line  
**See:** The lock, the markets  
**Eat:** BYOB Brazilian at Guanabara  
**Cost:** £10 for a tasty burger

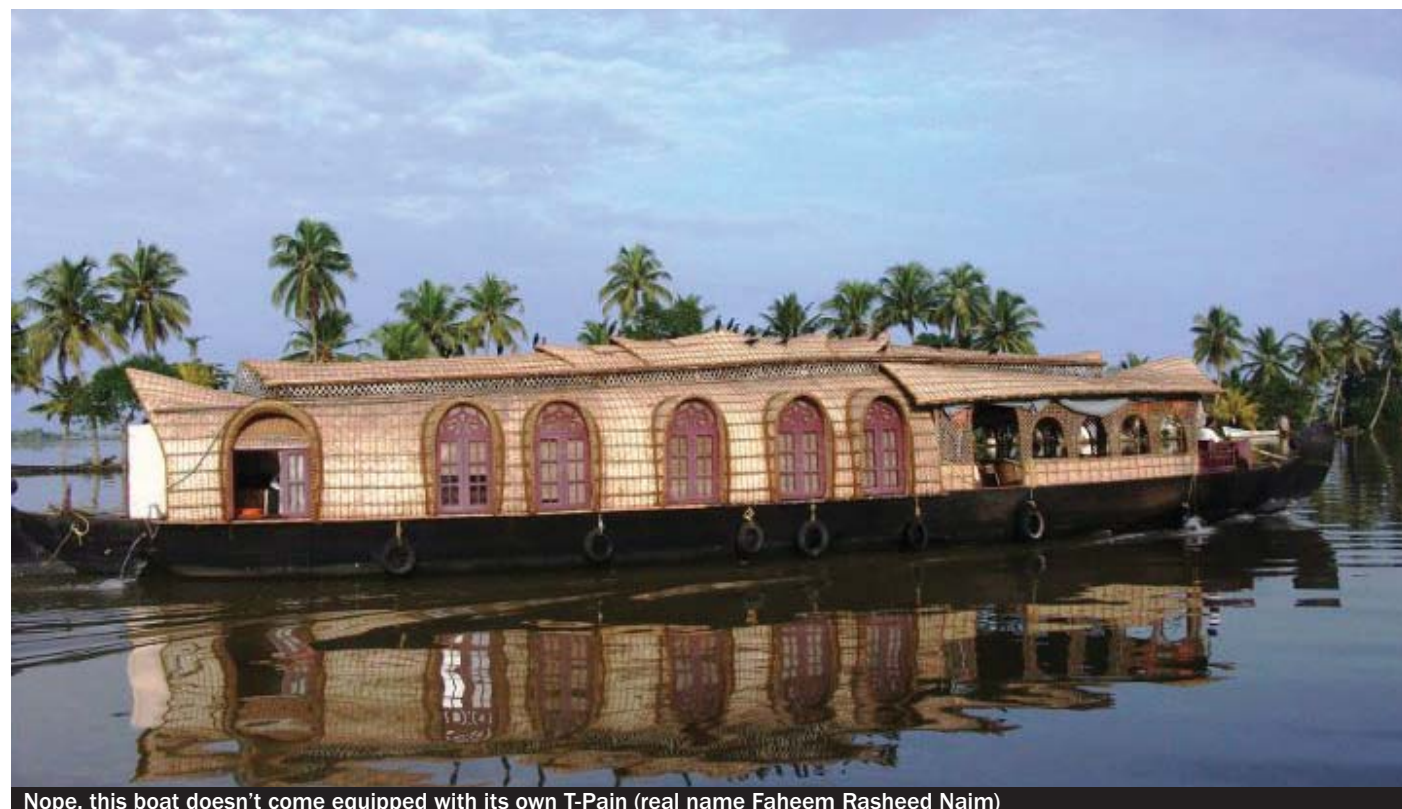
Some say it's had its day, but Camden still has some little gems on offer. If you can't be bothered to trawl through fake band T-shirts and the other miscellaneous bric-a-brac, check out what's on at the Proud gallery, then follow it up with some deep conversation over some tasty beers at BrewDog, or head down to the Barfly for a wiggle.

**Planning a trip?** Want some quick advice from experienced travellers? Have a travelling tale to share with Imperial?

Drop us an email at [travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:travel.felix@imperial.ac.uk), or send us a tweet using [#FelixTravel](https://twitter.com/FelixTravel)

# Cruising up the backwaters

Kicking back on a luxury rice boat in the heart of Kerala



Nope, this boat doesn't come equipped with its own T-Pain (real name Faheem Rasheed Najm)

### Chris Richardson

As the saying goes: even a poor-quality photo taken on a beaten digital camera can tell a thousand brilliant words. Or something like that. If the accompanying photograph doesn't appeal to you then hopefully the remainder of this article will inspire you to take a trip.

The destination in question is Alleppey, in the heart of "God's own country", Kerala. I know what you're thinking: isn't India usually affiliated with dusty temples, sprawling metropolises and aggressive tuk-tuk drivers? Usually, and that's why I'd urge you to take a train (or plane, if you're feeling fly) to the more serene south coast.

Kerala boasts the highest literacy rate in India, and the government places huge emphasis on education and clean streets, which probably contributes to its popularity as a global holiday destination. While I've covered some of the other attractions on offer, by far the greatest reason to take a trip to Kerala is to take a ride on a rice boat through its famed backwaters.

The best place to see the backwaters is by heading out from Alleppey, where there are probably more boat operators around than there are kilometres of canals (more than 900, or so I'm told). Inevitably, many of these operators will provide you with sub-par bang-for-your-rupee, which is why Felix Travel has already tested the waters to find a more reputable kettuvallam provider.

Gambit Cruises ([GambitCruises.com](http://GambitCruises.com)) offer a variety of packages on their humble kettuvallams that can be tailored by time and destination according to your needs. Your houseboat package includes a captain, chef and handy-man, and can sleep up to four should you stay overnight.

The company has a flawless safety record, and all boats come equipped with more accessories than Xzibit would ever consider including if the

### "experience the true serenity of the canals"

boats were to appear on *Pimp My Ride*.

While you could catch a glimpse of the backwaters in the course of an afternoon, most people I know who opted to do so left dissatisfied and hungry for more, which is why I opted for a one-night stay. It takes a few hours to get away from those trying to cram in a trip in a single afternoon, and by lunchtime you get to experience the true serenity of the canals. Gambit Cruises have the experience of navigation and knowledge of other tour operators' plans to make your trip as isolated and spectacular as possible.

After floating through larger lakes and drifting down windy, narrow canals, you're able to stroll through villages and rice paddies, en-route to a local fisherman's market where you can pick out your dinner and grab a refreshing coconut to enjoy on your upper deck. Regardless of where you look, you'll have so many beautiful sights on offer to keep you entertained as your chef prepares you a proper Keralan banquet.

In addition to the sheer time increase to enjoy the area's gorgeous flora and fauna, opting for an overnight stay opens up other interesting opportunities, depending on your interests. It's possible to continue strolling through welcoming rural villages as the sun sets, which could prove even more memorable should your trip coincide with a festival (though I recommend not leaving

this to coincidence).

After a tiring day of enjoying the feast of sights on offer, you'll no doubt be ready for darkness and tranquillity at this point. What's cool about certain parts of the backwaters is the thousands of fireflies they house, which, if you're lucky, will come out and greet you for some evening entertainment before you retire to your cabin.

It's no surprise that this ranked in my recent India top five: when you're kicking back with a coconut on your kettuvallam, there's really very little to complain about. Whether you're interested in unrivalled scenery or just want to live out I'm on a Boat, be sure to make a backwater cruise your top priority when visiting Kerala.

**Kerala**  
Holidays.com

**Planning a trip to Kerala or any other part of India?** Contact **Kerala Holidays**, who offer tailor-made custom packages for groups of any size, that start and end at the airport and include everything in between. Awarded as the **Best In-Bound Tour Operator by the Kerala Government**, and with a friendly staff who know the ins and outs of the country, it's no wonder they're attracting holidaymakers and celebrities alike. Visit [KeralaHolidays.com](http://KeralaHolidays.com) to find out more, where you can call them for free and check out some of the testimonials for yourself.



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## CLUBS &amp; SOCIETIES

## Snowdonia in style

All you need is food... Sejal Mahida reports on the latest Fellwanderers trip

**O**n Friday 18 May at 7pm, a group of 15 of us met outside the Union and packed onto the minibus alongside bags filled with Waitrose goodies, ready for a weekend of luxury. After stopping at a huge Tesco, dodging a cat in the road and listening to classical music being interrupted by a whale repeatedly falling into a huge swimming pool, we arrived at the hut in Drws-y-Coed around 1.30am and went straight to bed.

Waking bright and early on Saturday we had our first luxury meal – bagels with smoked salmon and cream cheese. We then set off on the minibus to Arenig Fawr. We were lucky that it didn't rain all weekend, but on Saturday there was a thick fog that unfortunately made it pretty hard to see any of the views from up high. After the ascent, we stopped at the top (854m) for our luxury lunch, huddled in the shade of a memorial. Once stuffed with posh bread, cheese, salami, wild boar, other assorted meats and organic chutneys, we began the descent via Moel Llyfnant (751m). Soon enough, it was time for some Darjeeling tea (courtesy of Harrods) alongside scones topped with Duchy raspberry and strawberry jam (best food on the trip) and clotted cream. We then headed off for the last stretch down from Moel y Slates (557m) towards the minibus through what is probably the longest stretch of bog that any of us have ever walked through, and got thoroughly soggy – with Rob's jump/skid/fall definitely being the most amusing.

Upon returning to the hut, the won-

Thea Powell



Another weekend of desolation, only without any revision involved

derful cooks attempted to make a barbecue for our luxury dinner, but in the end had to resort to the oven. In the mean time, our soggy clothes, shoes and feet were dried by the fire. Our luxury dinner consisted of (many) burgers, chicken, sausages, salads, summer trifles, wine, port, champagne and elderflower cordial. Once suitably stuffed full of luxury, some went to bed whilst others enjoyed polishing off the wine and after dinner mints.

We woke a little later on Sunday to

a beautiful morning and had our luxury breakfast (croissants with more amazing jam and butter) on the scenic minibus ride whilst listening to classical music. Several people were feeling a little worse for wear after the previous day's walk, and so they went off to enjoy a ride on a steam train and walk in the 'Welsh rainforest' in a nearby town. The rest of us headed up towards Moelwyn Mawr (770m). The sun was peaking through the clouds and there was a slight breeze, making it perfect walking

weather. The hike up was tiring but we were rewarded with wonderful views all around, including being able to see out to sea. Our luxury lunch on top of the trig point consisted of more posh bread, cheese, assorted meats and salad.

After lunch we happily clambered along a rocky ridge before dipping down and then ascending back up again to Moelwyn Bach (710m). On the descent we stopped for some tasty homemade luxury Welsh cakes, courtesy of Jim. Soon after, we hit some bog, but

thankfully it was tiny compared to what we walked through on Saturday. We got back to the minibus around 4pm, met up with the rest of the group, put some lovely dry clothes on, and headed home. After stopping at The Harvester for a tasty dinner, texting in to an agony aunt on the Radio 1 'Sunday Surgery' and singing along to Maroon 5, we made it back to London for 11pm, in time for everyone to catch last tubes home and have a much needed luxury shower and sleep.

## Strictly hate dancing? Give it a shot!

Stephanie Walton

I used to loathe dancing. I was one of those people who stands in the corner looking awkward, refusing to join the dance floor. However, in a moment of daring, I tried Latin American Dancing and not that long after I found myself travelling one Sunday morning to the south coast for my first competition.

The day got off to a bad start. I arrived at the Hove Dance Centre with relative ease, rather smug at having successfully negotiated National Rail's replacement bus service. But as soon as I arrived I started to notice that something was not quite right. The building was very small, its door was locked,

the lights were off, and the only sound I could hear was that of seagulls – there was evidently no dance competition here. After a few frantic phone calls I ascertained that yes, I had got the right date, but no I wasn't at the right place; I was meant to be at the town hall over 2 miles away. When I finally arrived, I knew I'd made it. Women in blindingly bright sequined dresses and thick layers of makeup were rehearsing their moves in the lobby. I panicked. Not only did they look terrifyingly good at dancing, but I also realised that I was both under and over dressed for the occasion; underdressed because I hadn't stuck sequined jewellery on my forehead or greased back my hair, and overdressed

because I was obviously wearing far too many square inches of clothing. I was then issued with a marathon-style number to put on my back, and from then onwards I was just "96".

**"I had been paired at the last minute with a charming Parisian"**

When it was time to dance all my apprehension vanished. As the music started playing I was transported to Brazil and I remembered how much I

loved this type of dancing. Samba is a "progressive" dance, which means that you describe a circular shape around the room as you dance. Rather inevitably as we (my teacher and I) "progressed" in front one of the adjudicators, my routine "progressed" out of my brain causing me to come to a rather embarrassing halt. Needless to say I did not get through to the next round. However, spirits remained high since the "pairs" event was yet to take place. I had been paired at the last minute with a charming Parisian whom I was to Cha-cha-cha with. Seeing that the individual events were taking some time, I took the opportunity to take a stroll along the seaside and get something to eat. Hove looked

beautiful, bathed in the first sunshine of the summer. Too beautiful perhaps, as on my return it emerged that I had embarrassingly missed the pair event, my final chance to dance! I set off for home, dejected but convinced I should redeem myself at another competition.

Was the whole day worth it just for two minutes of dancing? Definitely. It was great to see so many dancers of so many ages enjoying themselves (there was a whole section for 50 plus age group), and I picked up some tips about how I should dress (!). I also saw dancing of the highest standard which was truly incredible. I certainly no longer have any inhibitions on the dance floor. That is, when I make it there on time.

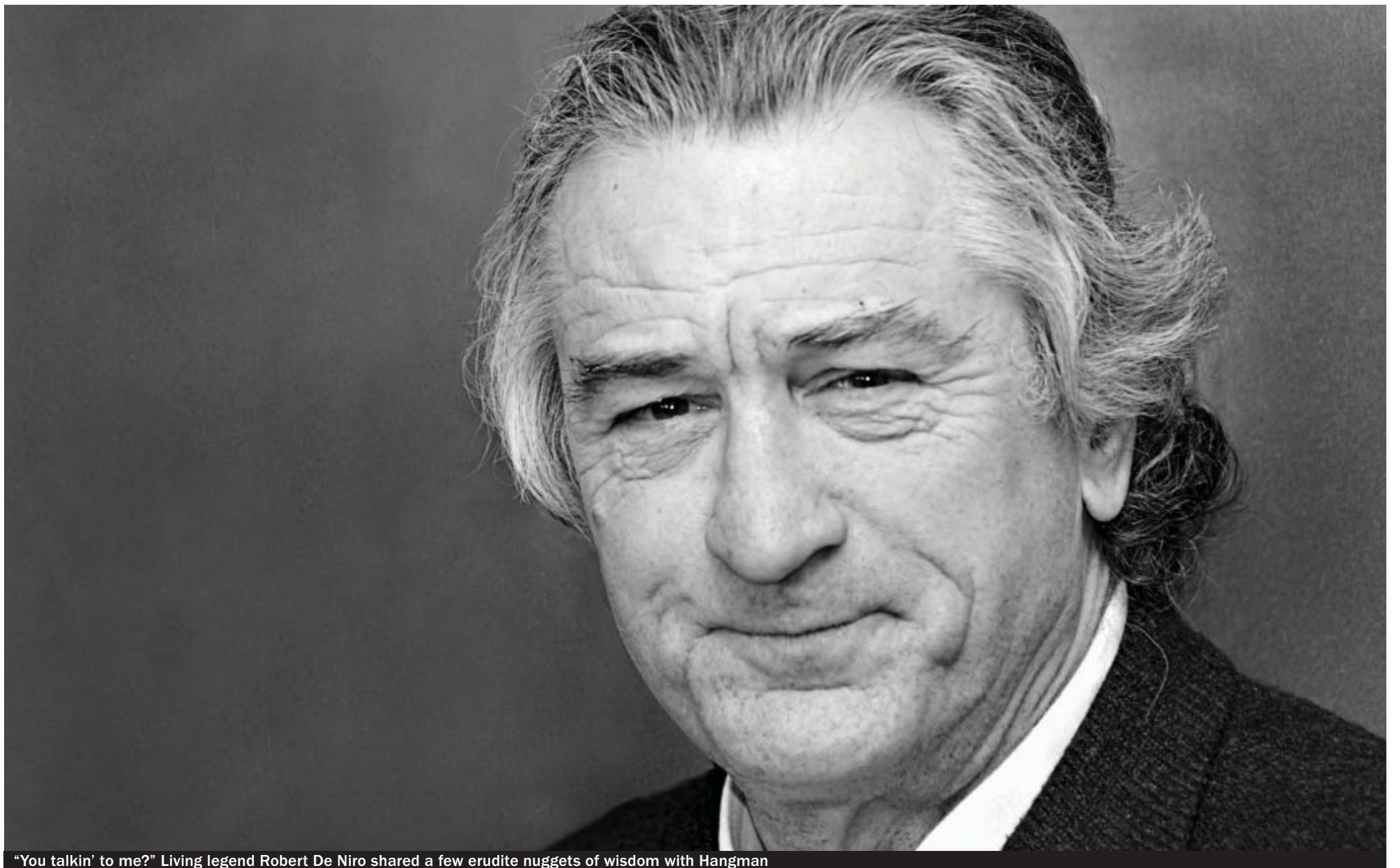


# HANGMAN 2.0



HANGMAN.FELIX@IMPERIAL.AC.UK

# EXCLUSIVE HANGMAN INTERVIEW WITH **ROBERT DE NIRO**



"You talkin' to me?" Living legend Robert De Niro shared a few erudite nuggets of wisdom with Hangman

The stars have been descending on Imperial over the last couple of weeks, with Robert De Niro dropping by the Library Cafe on Wednesday for a chat with Hangman over a frothy cappuccino:

**Hangman:** Hi Rob.

**De Niro:** Hey.

**H:** Did you hear people thought that we actually interviewed Will Smith last week, like, for real?

**D:** Haha.

**H:** We've been running low on inspiration for horoscopes lately, have you got any ideas?

**D:** No.

**H:** Thanks for your time!

# NEXT WEEK...

## PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA IN BEIT QUAD







IC Synchronised Swimming

## Tri-umph en France

IC Synchronised Swimming take third place out of all French university teams, reports **Delphine Rolando**



**W**e already knew London was the sixth French city, now it also has a synchronized swimming team ranked third in the French University Championship (the French equivalent of BUCS). With its five keen members and two amazing coaches, it was no mean feat for Imperial College Synchronised Swimming team to just to participate to this competition. Being the only university team in the UK, they had no choice but to try to compete abroad.

After convincing the French organisers that an English university team has its place in a French competition; fighting to get enough swimmers to compete in the middle of the undergraduate student exams; and struggling to get enough training to be ready in time; they finally arrive in Thiers, a small city in the middle of France best known for its knives, on the morning of the competition. They found very friendly organisers and French teams to greet them, but also discovered soon that the other teams had not been training three hours a week as they had but two to four hours per day!

After the usual warming-up session when they had the opportunity to go through the last details to perfect, they have a few hours to eat and get prepared for the competition itself: make up, put their hair up and put some gelatine in to keep it from falling in front of their eyes in the water. Then they were called for their training with music: the last time they could do the whole routine in music before the actual competition. The pressure is on, not only do they have to perform their routine in front of their future competitors but also in front of all the swimmers taking part in the traditional swimming competition taking place in the same pool that day. They now have a few minutes to relax and rest before the competition starts with the duets and then the team combination routines. The stress is at its highest; despite a training well they have to stay focused as this is their one shot at showing what they have been working on all year long. Four minutes of effort, four minutes of

intense concentration, four minutes of smiling despite the tiredness; but also four minutes of happiness, four minutes of fulfillment, four minutes looking at the people around the pool between figures and letting their cheers give them a push to keep going and swim better than they ever did. And then they came out of the water, waving at their names and laughing with relief, with the best feeling of all: the feeling of achievement.

**“Pretty, clear, and worth a medal”**

They did it; they showed that despite the lack of training opportunities, despite having only five girls competing, despite having two girls who only started synchro six months before, they can still swim, and compete a nice routine. It might not be as good as a routine with ten girls; it might not be as technically difficult as a routine from girls who did ten years of synchro and practice every day; but here it is, pretty, clear, and worth a medal. After all these emotions they were thanked by the organizing committee with a special scarf for coming all the way from England, and got their medal. A little push and their coach ends up in the water, fully dressed; they join her, a few last pictures and this is it, it is time to leave the pool. Eat a little, take off this synchro make up and silly gelatine in their hair, have a few well-deserved drinks and then a good night sleep. Tomorrow, a little stroll in Lyon and then back to London; after all synchro is not all, they have to work as well.

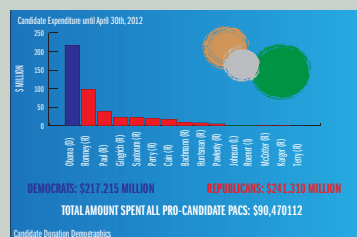
Here it is, end of the story for now; but if you would like to live it next year, they are going to France to compete again, so you could join them, whatever your level; they will be happy to take you on board and teach you all you need to know. And if you do not want to compete, well why not still give synchro a go, just for fun, IC synchro team would be delighted to introduce you to the sport or help you practice if you already have some experience.

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