

Universities and privatisation

A new series begins by delving into the world of research councils: **Page 8**



Polish Club saved from closure

Protest outside Annual General Meeting precedes vote to ensure future of site

Matthew Colvin

The Exhibition Road-based Polish Club, Ognisko Polskie, has been saved from being sold following a vote for its members at its Annual General Meeting on Sunday 27 May.

The meeting itself saw 80 members vote for keeping the club based at its current site, where it has existed since 1940 and has acted as a significant part of the Polish emigre community. Three members voted for selling the site, and there were seven abstentions.

The day saw a large crowd of people demonstrate outside the venue against the sale. Flyers handed out at the protest gave a list of seven reasons, including its significant heritage, and claims that financial worries are unfounded, with a statement suggesting that the site could “yield at least £250,000 a year”.

Other reasons given by protestors included the “great potential” of the restaurant at the venue, the importance of attracting new members, and worries

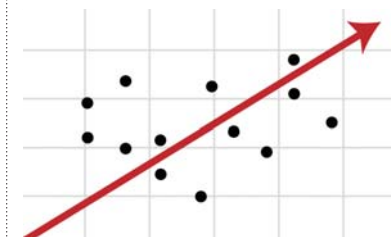
...Continued on Page 3

Philip Kent



Protestors took to Exhibition Road on Sunday

SCIENCE



Regression leading to progression

Page 12

TECHNOLOGY



Mouse hunt goes full throttle

Page 15

£73 million biomedical centre opened

Hammersmith-based research facility opened by Chancellor

Matthew Colvin

A new research facility built with the aim of channelling scientific discoveries into the prevention and treatment of diseases was opened on Monday 28 May on Hammersmith Campus.

The £73m six-floor, biomedical research focused Imperial Centre for Translational and Experimental Medicine (ICTEM) has enough lab space to host up to 450 scientists.

The ground floor is taken up by the

...Continued on Page 3



The Imperial Centre for Translational and Experimental Medicine is located on Hammersmith Campus

FOOD



A new Umami experience

Page 26

HIGHLIGHTS

Competition

NOVA

Win a ticket to the brand new music festival

We have a competition, hence, you know, the header at the top of this column. What is this competition, oh faceless person typing in this column? We'll keep you in suspense and you'll find out in the next paragraph...

You can win tickets to the **Nova Festival of Arts and Music** (see below for the awesome lineup) worth around £100 each. If you like music, or just have a penchant for wearing wellies and neglecting hygiene for a couple of days, then this one is definitely for you.

Send in your best festival story in 20 words to be in with a chance of winning one of the two tickets on offer. It's not like you have anything better planned on the 5 – 8 of July. You do? Oh. Well, cancel it and enter this instead.

Winners will be selected randomly in a precise and scientific procedure *cough* we'll have a read in the office *cough* and will be announced in the paper on Friday 8 June.

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

NOVA

FESTIVAL OF ARTS & MUSIC

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

MUSIC

Norman Jay & The Goodtimes Bus Soundsystem / Ghostpoet / Jessie Ware
Flann Regan / Fink / Crazy P / Psychemagik / Krystal Klear / The Do
tUnEyArDs / Speech DeBelle / Hexstatic / DJ Food / Jono McCleery / Soul Jazz
The Staves / Shepard / Reeps One / Mixmaster Morris / Pete Lawrence
Kinny / Seahawks / Sofar Sessions & late night campfires with the Nest Collective

ART	THEATRE & COMEDY SIDESHOWS	WORDS
Monsters Myths and Legends Rankin and Damien Hirst, Doug Fishbone's Adventureland Golf with Jake Chapman, Zatorski and Zatorski, Pete Fowler Jem Finer, David and Peter Adjaye, Andrew Logan, London Drawing life drawing classes...	The Pick of the Pleasance, Battersea Arts Centre, Gossiparty, Late Night Gimp Fight, Pop Up Casino, Teatro-Saurus, Kubla Khan Coffee House, stalling poets, prowling postmen...	Charley Boorman, Rankin, Gustav Temple (The Chap), Paul Trynka (David Bowie biographer)...
PLUS MORE	PLUS MORE	PLUS MORE
REJUVENATE	MAKE IT	FOOD & DRINK
Soul Pads for therapeutic massages, Reiki, Bliss Domes for sound and light baths plus Yoga Sonic presents Tandava Days...	Creative salons, The Roundhouse Choir flash mobs open rehearsals, Blink Art craft salons, cocktail making - Bompas and Parr, Jewellery making - Andrew Logan...	Long tables, family style dining, cooking classes in Disappearing Dining Club's Dining Room, Hurly Burly, Bompas and Parr; Nova Arms pub with local ciders and beer, twisted pub entertainment!
PLUS MORE	PLUS MORE	PLUS MORE

www.novafestival.co.uk
Tickets from Thursday: £100 (all students £100) www.dickifilm.co.uk/nova-festival
*Small and beautiful just £5000 on site.

Follow the action on [twitter](#) @novafestival

Queen's Tower bells to ring on Tuesday

From 10am-2pm, you might want to avoid the library, unless loud chiming gets you in the zone...



Apparently it's the Queen's Diamond Jubilee super-mega-weekend or something, which obviously means that the bells are being brought forth for a mass ringing session on Tuesday. If you're working in the library, bring industrial headphones.

Editor

CLASSIFIEDS

Yep, still nothing. Summer is obviously driving down classifieds fever. Buy and sell right here. Classifieds to felix@imperial.ac.uk, it's free!

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

Lolcatz of teh week



FELIX

Felix, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB.
Email: felix@imperial.ac.uk. Tel: 020 7594 8072. Fax: 020 7594 8065.
Printed by Iliffe Print Cambridge, Winship Road, Cambridge.
Registered newspaper ISSN 1040-0711.
Copyright © Felix 2012.



Editor-in-Chief Matthew Colvin **Editor-in-Prowling** Tim Arbabzadah **Deputy Editor** Charles Betts **News Editors** Sophia David Alex Nowbar **Reporters** Alexander Karapetian Aemun Reza **Features Editors** Katy Bettary Stephen Smith **Sports Editor** Indy Leclercq **Sports Rookies** Gabriel Oppetit Johnny Wong **Science Editors** Kelly Oakes Alexander Karapetian **Business & Finance Editors** Will Prince Deepka Rana **Politics Editors** Rajat Jain Joseph Letts **Technology Editors** Chris Bowers Feroz Salam **Comment Editors** Tim Arbabzadah Samuel Horti **Arts Editors** Will Prince Eva Rosenthal **Music Editors** Mark England Ross Gray Simon Hunter Íñigo Martínez De Rituerto Alex Ramadan **Fashion Editors** Saskia Verhagen Alice Yang **Television Editors** George Barnett James Simpson **Film Editors** John Park Lucy Wiles **Games Editor** Laurence Pope **Books Editor** Maciej Matuszewski **Food Editors** Anastasia Eleftheriou Michael Krestas **Travel Editors** Dushi Arumuganesan Chris Richardson **Online Editors** Philip Kent Jonathan Kim **Puzzles Admiral** James Hook **Photo Editor** Miles Robertson **Copy Editors** Carol Ann Cheah Philip Kent Jonathan Peek Annina Sartor

News Editors: **Sophia David**
Alex Nowbar

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

NEWS

Vote protects future of Polish Club

Polish weekly makes communism claims over Chairman position

Philip Kent

...Continued from Front Page surrounding a potential sale of the club to the Polish Embassy, which the flyer suggested would be “divisive”.

One of the most controversial reasons listed on the flyer was the claim that the Chairman of the club had been a “spy and collaborator in the service of the discredited Polish 1980s Communist regime”.

“a statement suggested that the site could generate £250,000 a year”

Polish weekly *Nowy Czas* published an article before Sunday’s vote claiming that chairman of the club Andrzej Morawicz had once acted as a secret informer for the regime, and during this period had been involved with the export of computer equipment from Britain to Poland during an embargo on trade between the two countries.

Following on from Sunday’s vote, Morawicz and deputy chairman Lucyna Quirke resigned from their positions on the club’s board.



Protestors opposed the loss of heritage that a closure would bring

New research facility opened at Hammersmith Campus

Chancellor discusses importance of intellectual enquiry at opening

...Continued from Front Page Wellcome Trust-McMichael Clinical Research Facility. Teams from the Medical Research Council Clinical Sciences Centre will be located on the second floor.

“The property houses the Imperial Cancer Research UK Centre”

The upper levels will house one of the largest cardiovascular research facilities in Europe, including the headquarters of the British Heart Foundation Centre of Research Excellence at Imperial.

The property also houses the Imperial

Cancer Research UK Centre.

Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne officially opened the facility, and said: “It is what this country’s vision for the future of life sciences is all about. This new Centre rises to the challenge of ensuring we remain a world leader in life sciences. The future is academic research, clinical practice and industrial application coming together.”

Osborne also took the opportunity to discuss the the value of universities:

“I understand that changes in student finance have prompted a lively debate about the role of the university. A university is not simply a business.

“We understand the importance of free intellectual enquiry which is worthwhile in itself. It is what I valued about my time at University – as I suspect did you too.”

Osborne additionally declared intellectual property advisors Imperial Innovations as a “national leader” in universities helping to commercially develop ideas, discoveries or inventions, claiming that “it is a model from which others can learn.”

“We understand the importance of free intellectual enquiry”

ICTEM has been funded by Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, the British Heart Foundation, the Medical Research Council and the Wellcome Trust.

Sponsored Editorial

More student cuts

Discount haircuts for Imperial students at Fresh Hairdressers

More student cuts for Imperial students at South Kensington’s FRESH Hairdressers.

Men’s cuts £22

Women’s shampoo and cut and shake dry £28

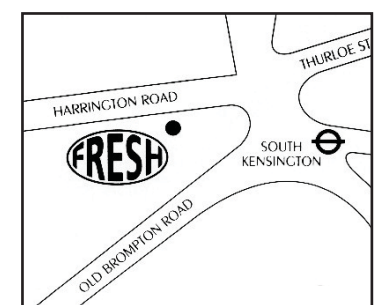
Women’s shampoo, cut and blow-dry £38

All of our cuts are done by highly experienced stylists.

Tuesday to Fridays 9.30 to 4.30 (sorry no discounts on Saturdays).

We are only 70 metres from South Kensington tube station

To book an appointment, call **0207 823 8968**. Ask for a student discount and bring your Imperial ID.



NEWS

In Brief

Central Library for 24 hour opening over Summer

For the first time in Imperial College history, the Central Library will continue its 24-hour opening times throughout the summer holidays. Imperial College has decided to keep its library door open to students who wish to use the library, starting from 30 June through until 30 September.

In previous years, the 24-hour opening policy would usually cease by the end of June. The new opening hours this year means that students will be able to use the library as they please, with the library only closing at 11pm on a Friday night until 10am on Saturday morning. The Library Café will also remain open in accordance to the summer opening hours but will be closed on Sundays throughout the holidays.

The main body of students intended to make use of the extended opening hours will be postgraduates who will be on campus over the holidays. Other targets include Master students, MBA students from the Business School and anyone who would potentially want to use the library over the summer.

Postgraduate student Sajjad Jaffer was wary of the new hours, telling Felix of his belief that “there aren’t many moments when you have to go to the library that late at night as a postgraduate”. He also added that “everything is online anyway like journals and books. You can use the VPN network to connect your home computer to the Imperial Network so you don’t need to go to the Library to get anything done”.

Director of Library Services, Deborah Shorley, told Felix instead of the benefits that she believes the scheme will bring, saying that library staff were “particularly conscious because of the Olympics and the disruption it would cause across town.

“Students such as postgraduates will find it hard to find a quiet place to work and so we are going to offer them a haven to work in regardless of the chaos that is happening outside.”

She continued: “what students want is a place to sit, a place to work and a place with a computer space. They don’t want complicated reference support all the time. We believe it will be cost effective and since this is a pilot we cannot be sure if it is really used or not until we try it – if it isn’t then we won’t do it again.”

She also said that some postgraduates do not use their offices to work: “we’ve learnt that students want to work in different ways and our aim is to give students as many different ways as we can by offering options such as different spaces in the library and quicker access to resources.”

She concluded: “When presented to the Student’s Union, the response was overwhelmingly positive. The Union has nominated us for the “Outstanding Library Team” award for the Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards and we are very proud of this and how much they appreciate our library hours.”

“It’s lovely to be nominated by the students. That is very important to us because we only exist as a service; we think this is another step to giving students more of what they want.”

Aemun Reza

Imperial graduates jump at chance to help at London 2012

New BP graduate scheme gives students an Olympic chance



BP graduates at the Olympic Stadium, including Claire Madden, but not including Kelly Holmes

Matthew Colvin

As excitement mounts for this year’s sporting summer, and as career opportunities become ever more uncertain given the unsteady financial climate, a group of Imperial graduates have been given the best of both worlds, with the chance to work at the London 2012 Olympics this summer as part of a one off graduate programme introduced by BP.

“the recruits will take responsibilities in a variety of areas”

Claire Madden, due to graduate in chemical engineering this year, is one of six Imperial graduates who will be taking advantage of the programme.

BP’s incoming graduate recruits have been given the chance, following an interview process, to work with the London 2012 Organising Committee (LOCOG) before starting their

careers in September. During short-term secondments, the recruits will take responsibilities in areas such as transport and main operations.

Claire admitted to Felix that the Olympics had seemed an attractive prospect before she was aware of the programme: “I wanted to go to the Olympics anyway, either to try and get tickets or try to get involved, so the fact that this opportunity became available is something that I was very keen to get involved with”.

Based in the transport sector at the media hub in Bloomsbury, Claire will be tasked with ensuring the media are sent exactly where they need to go. Claire also holds the position of team leader, and will ensure that everyone on her team knows what needs to be done for the day, making sure everyone is happy.

Claire explained how the new programme was set apart from ‘normal’ progression into a graduate scheme: “At university when you’re, for example, working in teams and doing projects you do develop certain skills but you never get placed in such a fast paced situation where you have to act immediately to make sure things work. There’s a lot riding on the success of the London 2012 Olympics but it’s good to know that we’re being trusted with

certain responsibilities that many of our peers would not get in their first role.”

“this experience ... will give us the confidence to know that we can manage people”

As to whether she was excited to be leading the way as much as this programme allows, Claire said that “a lot of the graduates who had just started in the last couple of years wished that they could have been on the programme as well.”

The graduates are currently being trained by BP before they start their roles in the summer, and will undertake further training by the London 2012 Organising Committee.

“Having this experience behind us will give us the confidence to know that we can manage people and we’ve been given the chance to do that on a massive scale.”

DIGGIDY DAWG

F E L I X M U S I C N I G H T

W I T H T H E I N C R E D I B L E

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

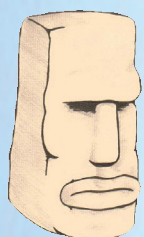
"Superb"

Alexander Nut

"Sounding large!"

L O V E

4 X V I



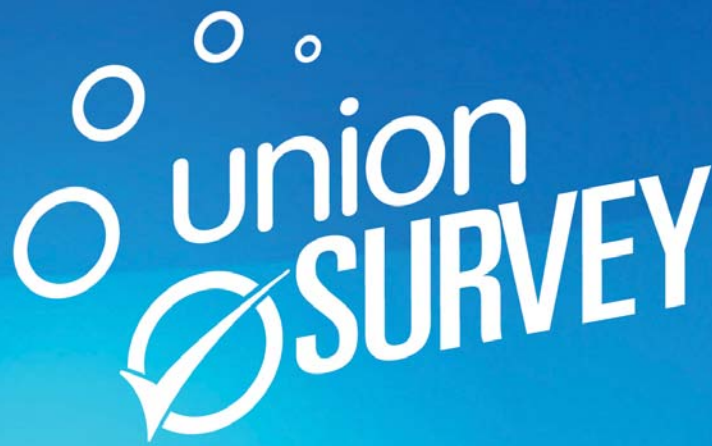
XVI



imperial college union



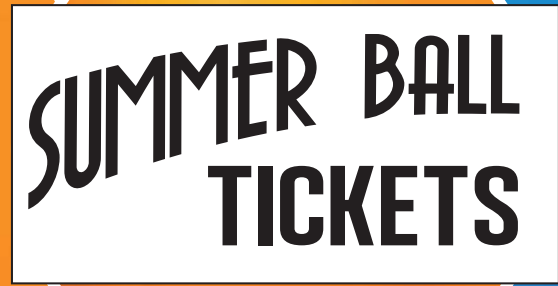
16
JUNE
ONLY £3



WIN AN IPAD



SHOP VOUCHERS



SUMMER BALL TICKETS

JUST TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

We want to find out your opinion on everything to do with Imperial College Union - From our Bars, Clubs, Societies & Projects to the Advice Centre and Representation.

This is your chance to tell us what you think about the Union and your answers will help us make our services even better for you.



imperialcollegeunion.org/unionsurvey



**FORMAL DINNER
GREAT FOOD
GREAT COMPANY
GREAT WAY TO START**

**THE
SUMMER BALL
2012**

**YOU ONLY HAVE
TILL MIDNIGHT
TONIGHT**



**GET YOUR FORMAL DINNER
TICKET NOW**

+£40

imperialcollegeunion.org/summerball

EVENT SUBJECT TO LICENCE. BILL SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. RIGHT OF ADMISSION RESERVED. NO REFUNDS.

LIMITS
yourlimits.co.uk

**imperial
college
union**

Features Editors: **Katy Bettany**
Stephen Smith

features.felix@gmail.com

FEATURE

Privatisation: the Ministry i

In the first of a series of articles on the privatisation of our Universities, Stephen Smith discusses

Our universities are being privatised, or so many on the Left would have us believe. But how true is it? And is it necessarily a bad thing? In a series of features over the next few weeks, I will be investigating several areas of privatisation at Imperial and at universities across the UK, areas where corporations are filling a role that used to be public.

I'll look at the Careers Services at our Universities, to try to find out why many students are dissatisfied with the variety they offer. I'll discuss Corporate Partnership schemes, to see whether academic-industry collaboration really can be a good thing.

But this week I'll look at every academic's nightmare: the Research Councils.

A case study: the EPSRC

Far to the west of here, in beautiful Swindon, you will find the head offices of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). They are the organisation which decides how to distribute the government's £740 million Engineering and Physical Sciences budget.

The EPSRC is remarkable mainly for its inability to use words: it conveys no meaning whatsoever in whole pages of text. The three "high priorities", for instance, are "Delivering Impact. Shaping Capability. Developing Leaders." Like all partisan political writing, the language here is intended to deceive. "Delivering Impact" in fact means "Funding only those areas which businesses want us to". "Developing Leaders" is a euphemism for "Funding only those researchers whom we have funded in the past". I confess, after weeks of research, to have no idea what is meant by "Shaping Capability".

But in spite of (or, perhaps, because of) its management-speak, the EPSRC has done a good job of convincing the Government to give it money. Indeed, its budget has fallen only 3.7% in real terms since 2007/2008, compared with total research council cuts of 25.2%. Regrettably, having money is only half the battle, and the EPSRC's new funding plan threatens to stall entire areas of research.

Mathematics, for instance. The Queen of the Sciences, according to mathematicians (the slave of the sciences according to everyone else), is currently a victim of the new "Delivery Plan". Since July 2011, EPSRC fellowships

in mathematics (the means by which postdoctoral researchers obtain funding for their projects) are available only to statisticians.

That is to say, all of pure and applied mathematics will be excluded. Current and future PhD students in Algebra, Analysis, Geometry, Mathematical Physics, Logic, and all of non-statistical mathematics will have to find other ways to fund their research.

"This will force many of the UK's best PhD students to leave the country to get their first academic job, and will prevent us from attracting the best foreign postdoctoral researchers," according to Cambridge mathematician Burt Totaro, "If EPSRC continues this policy, British mathematics will face mediocrity in a decade."

This is not a question of austerity and cuts. As I noted above, the EPSRC budget has fallen only 3.7% since 2007, but mathematics research grant funding fell by 54% over the same period. It is an attitude problem brought on by the perception that pure and applied mathematics don't have sufficient economic "impact". In other words, businesses aren't interested.

And it's true, businesses aren't interested in mathematics, because the research tends to be quite far ahead of its time: a theory developed now may not be used in physics or engineering for another 10 years. Businesses, however, are by nature only interested in short-term gains: try to convince your shareholders that their falling share prices will pick up again in a decade and they will laugh in your face. And then sack you. It should come as no surprise that few companies want to invest in mathematics.

And here is the problem: the EPSRC equates the value of a subject with business interest in it. Governments love this, of course, because the economy will boom while they're in office, and crash after they've gone. But for the UK it is self-evidently disastrous. So how did this "business-impact" position come about, and what can we do about it?

A brief history of funding

The famous Haldane principle states that decisions over how to allocate research funding should be decided by a council of researchers. This supposedly keeps academia free from government influence, or any outside interference. The principle has generally been in use since 1918, but a few decades ago Margaret Thatcher decided to shake things



David Delpy, CEO of the EPSRC and Gordon Brown. One of these men has been accused of "central planning and micro management," and "squandering British taxpayers' money." Can you guess which? (Clue: not Gordon)

up a bit.

In the 1980s, Research Councils came under the influence of a government policy to "strengthen the links" between science and business. In his book *Captive State*, George Monbiot explains that, "Britain [...] was renowned for generating scientific breakthroughs, but these seldom translated into economic success, as our discoveries were commercialised elsewhere." Thatcher's Government thought this a wasted opportunity, and so decided to let businesses influence research.

In practice, this policy change resulted in "business leaders" being promoted to Research Councils to "ensure that the needs of firms are fully taken into account in decisions on the direction, nature and content of publicly funded science and technology."

In effect, large businesses would suggest an area of research that would benefit them, and the Research Councils would fund it. As is now glaringly obvious, this policy simply led to companies getting the Government to pay for research which they would otherwise have paid for themselves.

This was the first significant undermining of the Haldane principle, the second came with the arrival of our current government.

In December 2010, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (it's telling, isn't it, that business and science funding are dealt with by the same Government department) published a document called the "Allocation of Science and Research Funding" which subtly reworded the Haldane Principle.

"The Haldane Principle means that decisions on *individual research proposals* are best taken by researchers themselves," but Governments can set "key national strategic priorities," and "ask Research Councils to consider how best they can contribute to these priorities."

In other words, Governments cannot choose which individual proposals to fund, but they can ask the Councils not to fund anything in Pure or Applied Mathematics.

Looking at the EPSRC in particular, the document states: "During 2011-15 EPSRC will deliver increased impact by engaging more strongly with business," and it will "act to improve further the quality of PhDs it funds [...] so that the skills base generated is most valuable to industry." It's worth reading that again: "[...] so that the skills base generated is most valuable to industry."

The document's section on the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences

Research Council (BBSRC) is even more imposing on academic freedom: "BBSRC will prioritise actions to aid economic recovery, drive growth, and influence public policy," "BBSRC will focus on extracting economic benefit," "BBSRC will provide [...] high-quality PhD training to boost business critical R&D."

Back at the EPSRC, a very sinister video for the 2011/2012 Delivery Plan states, "While our Strategic Plan set out how we will accelerate the pace of change, our Delivery Plan sets out a transformative agenda." So far, so remarkably uninformative. But listen between the insufferable jargon and the real agenda becomes apparent.

The Delivery Plan is "built around a Sponsor model of Research Management in which funding is viewed as a strategic investment and not as a transfer of funds without obligation." The EPSRC must remain "committed to generating the fundamental knowledge and the skilled people essential to Business, Government and other research organisations." "A world class research base is valuable only insofar as it generates economic and social value." "Anything that is excellent will have impact if the pathways are right".

Yes, "anything that is excellent will

Interfering at Hogwarts

Exposes the Government's latest assault on academic freedom, through the Research Councils

have impact if the pathways are right". Make of that what you will.

What the future holds

The councils today look much like you'd expect after 30 years of "change". In the EPSRC, for instance, half of the council is made up of "industry representatives," as the box (right) shows.

Two weeks ago, nine Nobel laureates sent an angry letter to the *Telegraph* calling, stating that, "the EPSRC is failing to maintain Britain's global research standing," and (appealing to the *Telegraph's* natural readership) accused it of "squandering British taxpayers' money."

"Through manipulating the processes of peer review to meet policy objectives and establishing favouritism schemes, where substantial funding packages are given to a few selected individuals identified by its own administration, the EPSRC is no longer allocating funds on a fair and transparent basis," said the letter.

In other words, allowing business-people and Government ministers to decide what to fund leads to "favouritism" and unfair distribution of funding. Should it come as any surprise that business-people want to fund particular areas (their own areas) at the expense of others? Should it come as any surprise that the Government's agenda doesn't coincide with what is best for

the country?

In September 2011, twenty-five high-profile mathematicians sent a letter to the Prime Minister complaining that the "EPSRC's model is one of central planning and micro-managing research. Civil servants in an unaccountable quango are picking winners, deciding which science to fund based on their perception of strategic priorities. They call it Shaping Capability." The letter argued that the Council's refusal to consult actual scientists was "likely to cause irreversible damage" to science in Britain.

Professor Richard Thomas of Imperial has also spoken out against the Council. "EPSRC often measures the quality of an area of mathematical research, or of an individual researcher, by the amount of EPSRC funding it has received," he said, in a letter to the EPSRC. "There is a real risk of unfairly directing funding to those have received EPSRC funding in the past."

Ah yes, this is what the EPSRC calls "developing leaders".

Referring to Mathematics in particular, he laments that people who "have no training in mathematics whatsoever, are being forced to decide the level of funding to areas of mathematics whose names they can hardly understand."

A general picture is emerging here of a Government wanting to exercise more control over universities, and to let businesses profit while the country suffers.

In true neo-liberal style, the idea that

"Industry representatives" on the EPSRC:

Paul Golby, former director of E.ON

Andrew Blake, MD of Microsoft Research

Jack Boyer, a general "entrepreneur"

Julia King, former Rolls Royce executive

Pierre-Louis Viollet, a Vice-President of EDF

David Watson, a director of IBM

Jeremy Watson, a director of Arup

Tony Wood, a head of Pfizer

universities (those pillars of civilisation) are sacred and should be exempt from the flawed and hostile world of short-termist money-making appears to have not occurred to our dear Government. Indeed, the desire to prove that Britain is "open for business" threatens all academia, the one area

in which the UK really does lead the world.

It is only appropriate, then, given the significance of this matter, to end with a remarkably apt quotation:

"Every headmaster and headmistress of Hogwarts has brought something new to the weighty task of governing

this historic school, and that is as it should be, for without progress there will be stagnation and decay. There again, progress for progress's sake must be discouraged... A balance, then, between old and new, between permanence and change, between tradition and innovation because some changes will be for the better, while others will come, in the fullness of time, to be recognised as errors of judgement," said Professor Umbridge.

"Meanwhile, some old habits will be retained, and rightly so, whereas others, outmoded and outworn, must be abandoned. Let us move forward, then, into a new era of openness, effectiveness and accountability, intent on preserving what ought to be preserved, perfecting what needs to be perfected, and pruning wherever we find practices that ought to be prohibited."

"There was some important stuff hidden in the waffle," said Hermione grimly. "Progress for progress's sake must be discouraged...pruning wherever we find practises that ought to be prohibited.' It means the Ministry's interfering at Hogwarts!" – *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

A fully referenced version of this article is available at rustylight.blogspot.com

Next week, I'll be discussing the career advice offered at Universities across the UK, and exploring why so many students claim to be unhappy with it.

Kadhim Shubber



Join Felix.

At the very least, you'll get a place to kip at lunchtime

CHURCH

everynation.co.uk

EVERY NATION

SUNDAYS
ACTIVITY SPACE 1
STUDENT UNION

Free café – 5:30
LIVE BAND

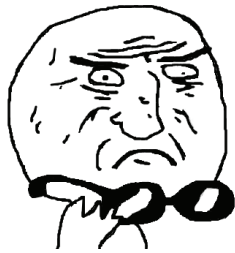


THE Skeleton Flood



And in the process beat a record set by this guy from Louisville, Kentucky in 1987, 25 years ago.

The entire length of Great Britain to help fund bursaries for Imperial students



Every penny you donate goes towards scholarships for Imperial students

Donate at [JustGiving.com/TheSkeletonFund](https://www.justgiving.com/TheSkeletonFund)

In brief

Shedding light on the Deepwater Horizon oil spill

U.S. Coast Guard



The BP oil rig ablaze

On the second anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, a new report suggests that existing scientific models were inadequate to deal with the disaster. The team, based at the University of California, Santa Barbara, have published the first comprehensive study of what happened at the Deepwater oil spill in 2010.

Releasing an estimated 206 million gallons of oil at unprecedented depths, the spill was the largest accidental marine spill in the history of the petroleum industry.

Chemical dispersants, which are often used in shallow-water and surface spills, were applied to the spill to clean up and contain the oil.

“That model works well for pipeline breaks and tanker ruptures,” explains co-author Sean Anderson, an associate professor at California State University Channel Islands, “but it is inadequate for this novel type of deep blowout.”

The study found that the majority of the oil is retained at depth, rapidly emulsified and dispersed by the resulting action of the pressurised oil jetting from the wellbore.

“We have generally hailed the use of (chemical) dispersants as helpful, but really are basing this on the fact we seemed to have kept oil from getting to the surface,” argues co-author Gary Cherr, director of University of California, Davis’s Bodega Marine Lab.

“The truth is much of this oil probably was staying at depth, independent of the amount of surfactants we dumped into the ocean. And we dumped a lot of dispersants into the ocean—all told, approximately one-third of the global supply.”

While the team have identified that the bulk of the impact would have been in the mid-water and deep ocean, very little is known about the marine ecology at such depths. As a result of these findings, the study calls for further investigation into the long-term effects of deep-water oil spills.

Flora Malein

Don't regress into despair

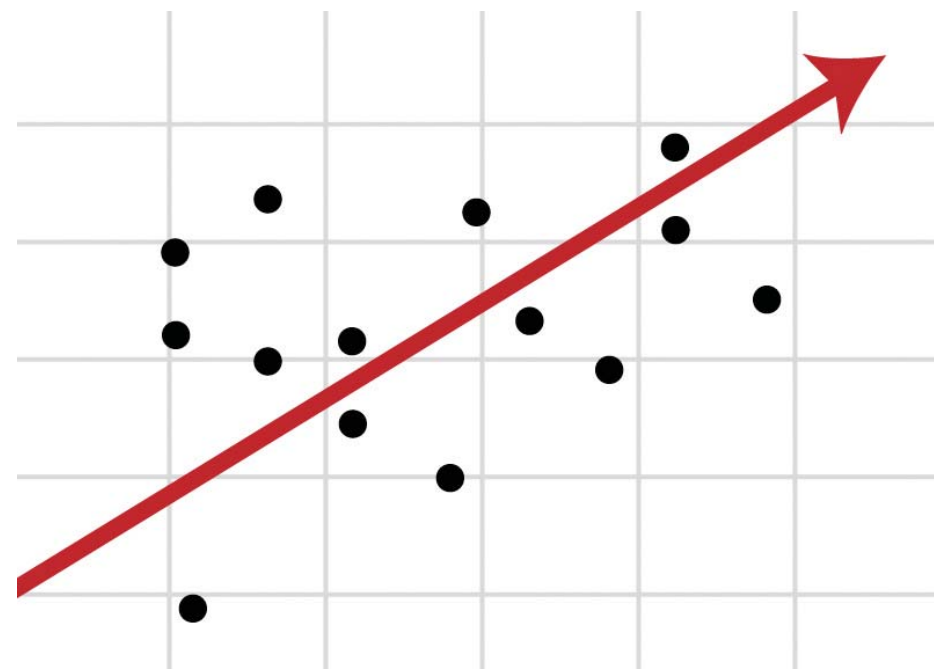
Maya Kaushik

For anyone considering a career in biological or medical research, the old catchphrase “Never work with children or animals” often comes into play. Biological data never quite does what you want it to. Sometimes a scientist’s intuition, or even looking graphs of your data, tells you that the trend you’re looking for does exist. But now the question is, how can one get the statistics to prove it to the rest of the scientific world?

This dilemma has troubled many a biology student over the course of time. There is nothing worse than the feeling of despair, after spending many weeks in the lab, or out in the field in the heat, rain or cold, to come to analysing your data and to discover that the result is...nothing. But with biological or medical data, this is often invariably the case.

There are many reasons for this. Firstly, animals, plants and people are affected by a multitude of complex factors that all interact with each other. Even if you have an idea of the main factors that may be affecting your results, and you measure these, it is impossible to measure every single factor, and account for every single bias. But statistics is a wide field, and there are some interesting statistical tests out there which can be very useful to biologists.

Quantile regression is a test that can be used when you have unequal variation in your data. Biological data often has unequal variation. This is because if many factors are affecting the variables you are measuring, this means that there is often more than one rate of change between one measured variable and another, due to some of the unmeasured factors. Biological data is also often subject



Regression analysis. Actually as simple as drawing a big arrow through some dots

to limiting factors, where the minimum and maximum responses measured may be under quite different constraints. Quantile regression analysis allows you to estimate multiple rates of change in your data, and using this you can often find results that other regression methods may have missed out on.

Another problem biologists often face is that of outliers that mess up their results. Why couldn't that one fish/fruit fly/mouse behave like the others? Does it make sense to ignore it, or is that bad science?

Robust regression is a method especially developed to deal with influential outliers. If

you're getting really fancy, you can even statistically prove that something is an outlier, by using tests such as the cook's D statistic. Robust regression does not ignore that one annoying ant/shrub/patient in your data, but it takes into account the fact that it is an outlier and down-weights it accordingly, often helping you to get more useful results.

So before your lack of results gets you down and makes you wonder why you didn't go for that career in the City, remember that it sometimes takes just a little bit more patience to pull out your breakthrough scientific findings.

How many blondes in Melanesia?

Robert Treasure

It's been nearly sixty years since Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell told of the gentleman's penchant for blondes, but it has recently come to light that mother nature herself may feel the same way: blonde hair evolved twice.

Now, I'm sure you were all aware that the principal evolution of blonde hair occurred in northern Europe about 11,000 years ago as a result of a mutation of the hair colour gene MC1R, right? Though you may not have known of the prevalence of naturally fair hair in Melanesia, a group of islands in the Pacific Ocean, north-east of Australia, where it is thought that around 10% of the natives display the trait (thus making the answer to the question posed in the title approximately one million). Despite possessing the darkest skin pigmentation of any non-African population, the Melanesians account for the greatest incidence of the blonde barnet outside of Europe.

It had long been the consensus of opinion that this unusual follicular occurrence was due to the seed-spreading of European colonisers, yet research undertaken by Kenny et al. (2012) confirms that its evolution is the result of a mutation independent to that of the aforementioned MC1R gene:

After comparing the genomes of blonde and dark-haired Melanesians, Kenny and his colleagues ascertained that the presence of the former is instead caused by a mutation of the TRYP1 gene, which is in turn responsible for an enzyme that denotes hair colour in various mammals. However, the gene in question has no bearing on pigmentation among European populations, meaning that the two varieties of blonde hair are completely unrelated in terms of their genetic basis. Further evidence is provided by the high likelihood that this particular mutation of the TRYP1 gene is exclusive to the Pacific Islands.

So how did this unusual physical characteristic reach such abundance throughout

the various isolated populations that constitute Melanesia?

This is surely the question that Kenny will now be asking himself, especially as the blonde mutation is proven to be recessive, meaning that it must be inherited from both parents in order to acquire the golden locks in question.

Perhaps said hair colour constitutes some sort of advantage when it comes to attracting mates, the same way it does in Europe (as well as a certain film from the '50s). Or maybe the mutation does not account for all cases of blonde hair among Melanesians: some such instances may be related to the relative age, gender or sun exposure of individuals.

In what will be considered by many the greatest anticlimax since the rapture of 21st May 2011, I'm going to put forward the theory that the high frequency of blonde hair in Melanesia was the result of simple chance.

DOI:10.1126/science.1217849

Sugar and the brain

Zara Shubber looks at scientists' warnings that high fructose diets may be detrimental to memory

topnews.in



Fructose, a sweetener used widely in processed food and drink, can also be found in fruits and High Fructose Corn Syrup. Antioxidants in fruits prevent their fructose from being harmful

Scientists have warned students preparing for exams that eating sugary desserts makes you stupid.

Scientists have known for a long time that sugar makes you fat. But now a group of neuroscientists in California believe that a sugary diet also slackens the brain, harms the mind's ability to absorb knowledge and disturbs memory.

The scientists believe that eating fish and flaxseed oils can minimise this damage, which is caused by a high fructose diet.

Fructose is a simple sugar naturally found in fruit. However, the type of fructose found in fruit is not harmful because of the high level of antioxidants also found in fruit.

By contrast, the fructose found in preservatives and sweeteners like High Fructose Corn Syrup is often injected into food and drink with no nutrients or antioxidants, such as fizzy drinks, condiments and other processed foods.

Many blame the introduction of High Fructose Corn Syrup onto the food market on President Richard Nixon, whose war on poverty led him to seek cheaper, sweeter and more easily

transportable sugar than normal table sugar.

Although a high fructose diet is well-known for its harmful effects on the body, leading to diabetes and obesity, the Californian study is one of the first to suggest that it may also harm learning and brain function.

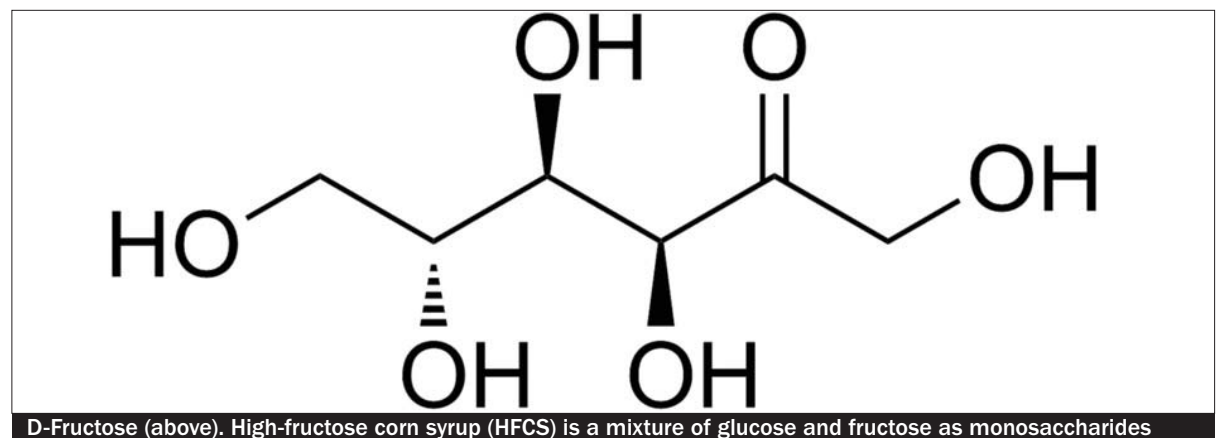
Four groups of rodents were fed a standard rat feed for one week prior to the experiment, which was conducted at the University of California and published in *The Journal of Physiology* in May.

The rodents were also trained to navigate a complex maze that only had one exit. The rats were able to locate and remember the exit using a series of visual cues or signposts scattered throughout the labyrinth.

An ordinary rat will learn to locate the exit, travelling directly there, after four or five attempts.

After this initial training phase, the researchers continued to feed one group of rodents the normal rat feed. Another group received the rat feed but also received fish and flaxseed oils, which are a source of omega-3 fatty acids.

The final two groups of rodents were



D-Fructose (above). High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is a mixture of glucose and fructose as monosaccharides

given a high fructose diet. One of these groups received additional omega-3 fatty acids along with their new fructose-enhanced feed.

Six weeks later, all four groups were returned to the maze. The rats that were fed a high fructose diet fared the worst, taking the longest to find their way out of the maze. By contrast, those who ate the normal rat feed that had been supplemented with omega-3 fatty acids navigated the maze faster than any other group.

After the challenge, the scientists

dissected the rats' brains to look at the effects of the different diets on the brain cells.

They found that the brains of the rats that were fed a high fructose diet displayed signs of insulin resistance, a well-known culprit of obesity and diabetes. Again, this resistance was greatest in rats that didn't receive the fish and flaxseed oils.

The neuroscientists who worked on the Californian rat study advise students gearing up for exams to skimp on dessert to improve their brain's ability

to absorb knowledge.

But, if the temptation to eat sugar proves too powerful, they also recommend eating more omega-3 in order to boost the brain's function.

Gomez-Pinilla, the lead researcher, recommends taking a gram per day of omega-3 by eating fish, flaxseed oil or fish oil supplements.

"It's like saving money in the bank. You want to build a reserve for your brain to tap when it requires extra fuel to fight off future diseases," he said.

Tips & Hacks

The Pirate Bay blocked by ISPs



At the end of last month, leading UK Internet Service Providers were ordered by UK courts to prevent their customers from accessing the popular torrent site The Pirate Bay. Virgin Media began their block just two days later, whereas BT have asked for “a few more weeks to consider its position”. This is something of a landmark occasion for anti-piracy campaigning in the UK, as it is likely any similar bans will pass through the courts with some ease after this first occurrence. However, The Pirate Bay themselves couldn't care less. The day following the ban, they claimed to have had 12 million visitors more than their previous record. Along with advice on how to bypass the ban, they are quoted as saying “We should write a thank you note to the BPI” with regards to the extra traffic. The problem with all this is almost all users of the site will easily bypass the ban, supporters of a completely open internet will be riled by the decision, and the copyright holders have – in effect – gained nothing.

BlackBerry OS may be licensed



It's not uncommon knowledge that RIM – the company behind the BlackBerry smartphones – aren't enjoying an easy ride in either the phone or tablet sectors. In the last year we have seen them suffer a large hit on their profits, the massive outage that affected millions of users, and the two CEOs of the company stepping down to try and ‘shake up’ the firm. They have warned of a loss for this quarter, and may have to make job cuts in order to survive. It seems the physical keyboard and excellent email system aren't enough to keep existing customers and attract new ones – RIM are going to have to start bringing something new to the table. One definite plan is the release of BlackBerry 10 – a new operating system that will, among other things, run Android apps on the BlackBerry device. However, some experts think this is ‘too little, too late’, and that the company may have to resort to more extreme measures, for example licensing their proprietary operating system to other phone manufacturers. Only time will tell whether or not RIM can pull themselves back into the land of profit.

The Kana: a mouse for all

Chris Bowers

The SteelSeries Kana is a gaming mouse promising a good specification but at a reasonable price. Armed with a high resolution sensor (3200dpi), two side buttons, two on-board profiles and a resilient, braided cable, it certainly looks good on paper. I've been using it for the past week, so let's take a look at how it is in practice.

First impressions were good – the Kana is certainly a striking mouse. Whichever colour you choose (it's available in white/black and black/orange), the contrast looks great. However, the colour doesn't really impact how good the mouse is, but thankfully SteelSeries hasn't sacrificed in that department to deliver on prettiness.

The Kana is an ambidextrous mouse – completely symmetrical. While this took a while to get used to (I usually use an ergonomic mouse), once over that bump the mouse is comfortable, and you could definitely use it for hours of continuous play. This design means there's a large button on each side of the mouse, which can be mapped in-game or using the SteelSeries Engine software.

The rest of the buttons are as you'd expect, with the addition of a profile toggling button – which allows you to switch between two on-board sensitivity settings on the fly. This all connects to your computer with a braided, durable cord, which feels like it will survive



Who can resist an orange glowing scrollwheel?

all manner of coiling and use, and promises to be tangle-free.

So the mouse looks good, and feels good, but how does it perform? I used it as my mouse for a week, for general use as well as gaming – including Call of Duty, where a slip of the mouse can be the difference between life and death. Regardless of the surface I was playing on – be it my multi-coloured mouse mat or the seat of the sofa – the Kana didn't miss a beat. The sensor within is evidently of very high quality. Whatever my hand did, my

cursor/gun/whatever did it too, with no skips or jumps.

My only minor (and it is minor) gripe with the Kana is that the side buttons are almost a little too easy to press. Sometimes when I put my hand back on the mouse, I would accidentally hit the button on the right-hand side. Certainly not the biggest deal in the world, but it could be a nuisance if that button were mapped to something important.

Other than that, I find it very difficult to fault this mouse. It has great performance, and ticks the boxes of both comfort and aesthetic appeal. The software adds rather than detracts to the package as well, allowing unlimited profiles, easy button mapping, and even a heat map of how much you press each button over some time period. Oh, and did I mention the scroll wheel is illuminated on each side (which can have different brightness settings based on the active profile)? How cool is that!

If you're looking for a reliable, high-performance gaming mouse for around £40, the SteelSeries Kana may well be for you.



Kana reasonably priced gaming mouse perform? THERE, I PUNNED

A big Leap for gesture control?

Alexander Karapetian

A company has produced a new USB device, dubbed Leap, that creates an interaction space of 8 cubic feet in which hand gestures up to an accuracy of 0.01 millimeters can be recognised. The company, Leap Motion, uses technology which proves cheaper than the current state of the art: Microsoft's Kinect sensor.

The technology, predicted to work with either a higher resolution camera or by using infrared Light Detection And Ranging (LIDAR), is about ‘two-hundred times more accurate than existing products and technologies on the market’, reports the manufacturer.

The Leap device is expected to ship next year for roughly \$70, and the technical details behind its operation are kept secret by Leap Motion, who only cite a ‘patented mathematical approach’ in their methods. The methods used



Is this box going to revolutionise how we control our technology?

in improving the device will start to emerge in the public domain as developers eventually get their hands on the Leap, and the company looks set to take the direction of Microsoft with their Kinect sensor, opening it up for the masses to use to improve their wide variety of applications - from research to leisure.

Leap's use case extends to a plethora of

technological applications, including virtual gesture based keyboards in mobile devices and futuristic, accurate navigation in desktops. The device gives rise to questions about the future of touch and gesture based navigation in current technology and has the potential to usher in an era of Minority Report style computer control.



The season isn't over yet for Women's Rugby. See out the year by taking part in a centrefold! Groups and individuals welcome: centrefolds@imperial.ac.uk

Comment Editors: **Tim Arbabzadah**
Sam Horti

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

COMMENT

FELIX

The Summer Ball you asked for

“The Summer Ball you asked for.”

This central statement has been behind the build-up for this year’s Summer Ball, and yet enthusiasm for the formal dinner has not been the instant sure fire hit that feedback from last year’s event and format has led us to believe. So why is it that when presented with the opportunity to congregate amidst a sea of tuxedos and ball gowns over a three course meal at Imperial, there are many opting out of ending the year over dinner at Imperial? Or even more pressingly, why aren’t students accepting what the Union has changed for them specifically?

This year’s formal dinner is due to be held in the Senior Common Room at a cost of £40, while entertainment tickets cost £35 to see the likes of Ms Dynamite and electro swing outfits perform.

Though the change to a festival format in 2011 was the result of a decline in the sale of formal dinner tickets year-on-year, this year’s formal dinner tickets mark a decrease in cost. Whereas in 2010 a formal dinner ticket would set one back by £85 (rising to £90), this year saw joint tickets rise from £70 to £75.

Following last year’s change in format from its prior formal beginnings, a common concern was that the Summer Ball, above all, “should be about having a special evening with our friends” as summarized by one individual. One commenter from our Summer Ball survey last year remarked that “to celebrate the end of our time at Imperial, we don’t really want big-name bands.”

Groups of students have suggested holding their version of a formal dinner elsewhere, whether privately at home or at a restaurant, though with some openly admitting that the price of their own events “could match that of the formal dinner itself”, there must be further reasoning behind why the formal dinner is not an instant-buy prospect. A range of reasons could immediately be raised, from the pricing, however reduced, to the location.

Feedback was the reasoning behind ensuring that the festival format was removed for this year. The Union has openly changed the format, yet the formal dinner has reverted to pre-2011 enthusiasm. While some consider the Summer Ball to be “an integral part of the university experience”, as the deadline approaches for the formal dinner tickets, we will see whether Imperial will recall its past desire for a formal dinner, and whether students will buy into a format that they actively had a part in organising.

Imperial outside the M25



Francisca Sconce

Following last week’s Felix story about Silwood Park, I felt it was important to write about what it’s actually like here at Silwood, which, uniquely for a London based university, is outside of London. Having been a student here and South Kensington I have found that they are very different.

With 160 students, 60 academic staff, and over 100 hectares of parkland, there’s lots more space than at a London campus. I am writing this outside in the sun, surrounded by flowering rhododendrons, and in the distance there is a lab group having their meeting by our lily pond, it is really beautiful. In 2009, Campus Dean Mick Crawley said to *Reporter* that it is “such a luxury to be able to do my fieldwork within a few yards of the laboratory”. We also have a small friendly community, where you can actually get to know almost everyone’s name, both staff and student.

There are, however, some downsides to being here; sadly I don’t believe that the campus’s uniqueness makes up for the lack of investment in our social and recreational facilities. We do have a shiny new teaching building, but our halls are only just adequate. We have a dingy squash court, weedy tennis court, and a tiny gym, which to be honest feels like you are exercising in a nuclear bunker. The refectory, bar and social room buildings were built for temporary use about 60 years ago; they’ve done well to still be standing but frequently leak and are freezing in winter. Added to that, they are not big enough to hold all of our students at once.

Why don’t we come up to the Union and go to GSA events at South Kensington? It can be a four hour round trip by train, and the last one leaving Waterloo is fairly early compared with when an average night out finishes; as we all know, train and tube fares are not cheap. We do have our Union minibus at Silwood, but we give priority to supermarket trips (the nearest is a 30 minute walk away), and activities, which inevitably clash with events. Recently we’ve borrowed a second minibus, which has been great, but we’re not sure if we’ll still have it next year.

Another issue here is welfare. In a small community people form close bonds and it can be very supportive. On the other hand it can be fairly gos-



Don’t worry, they’ve put a new facade on Mech Eng so it now looks as good as this...

sipy, news gets around between staff and students, so if you want some time out it’s not easy. I’ve had quite a few people asking me this year whom they can talk to about issues affecting their work and mental health. In most cases I’ve directed them to someone who can help, but the fact that they ask, shows me that the relevant services just don’t seem available.

Things have not been helped by the resignation of several staff members and hearing that more are considering their positions. Regarding the Applied Ecology courses discontinuing due to staff leaving, as I said I am sad that these courses are going, though it is encouraging that they will continue at another institution. They have been at Silwood Park in some form for over 50 years, whilst the remaining ones started within the last eight: we are passing a milestone here in Silwood history.

Overall, I feel there has been a bit of a negative atmosphere across campus. Don’t get me wrong, we do have some fun here, from our annual music festival Silfest to our comedy ‘homage’ to the staff at the Silwood Revue, we can be imaginative in entertaining ourselves over the year. It’s just College doesn’t seem to have any strategy regarding planning and investing in future Silwood staff and students. Why hasn’t this been complained about more? I think because staff are often reluctant to stick their necks out, as, understandably, they think that their jobs may be in jeopardy if they do. Students, on Biology related courses, are used to working and living in the field and making do with basic facilities.

Part of me wonders, probably naively, why should we have to be lobbying for things to improve? Shouldn’t College already be ensuring that we have the best possible experience? Either way, it seems College is finally realising that

“It’s just College doesn’t seem to have any strategy regarding planning and investing in future Silwood staff and students”

things need to be improved, perhaps aware that fees here are increasing by 78% and students will expect more bang for their buck. This week I attended the first meeting of the Silwood Action Group, a College Working Party looking into the student experience at Silwood. This didn’t really focus on the longterm picture for Silwood, as I was anticipating, but I’m hopeful that this discussion is the start of a transition, or more appropriately, an ‘evolution’ of Silwood Park. There’s a new MRes course starting here in October, lecturer positions replacing the leaving staff are being advertised soon, the Reactor Centre is beginning a decommissioning phase and there are exciting proposals for research to return to the Manor House, which has been empty for the last three years.

I originally started at Imperial back in 2003, in that time South Kensington has improved so much, particularly in facilities and support. I am really hoping that this can happen at Silwood and I look forward to the campus in years to come.

Don’t just write your opinions down on your exam paper, email them to us (probably not while you’re in an exam though, just a thought) comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

COMMENT

Greens and GM: a scientist's dilemma



Stephen Smith

I like the Green Party. I voted for them in May, on all three ballots, and I would vote for them again if there were a General Election tomorrow. But, as with most friends, they often disappoint me. While I was severely depressed by their pledge to offer homeopathic “medicine” on the NHS, and their plans to implement a health service for pets, the recent news about their opposition to genetically modified crops has been the most disappointing thing of all.

On Sunday, Jenny Jones, the Green Mayoral candidate, appeared at Take the Flour Back, a protest against experiments with genetically modified wheat. I say “protest”, but really it was vandalism. The “protesters” attempted (and failed) to “decontaminate” the countryside by destroying the scientists’ plants. And the Green Party, fools that they are, mentioned the event on their website.

I’m all in favour of vandalism as a form of protest, but the protest must be legitimate – and destroying scientists’ work is about as illegitimate as it gets. It reeks of the Catholic Church against Galileo, or Evangelical Christians’ hatred of Evolution. The Take the Flour Back logo is a loaf of bread with the head and legs of a cow. The whole affair is scare-mongering with no basis in fact, and a depressing sight for anyone who previously thought of Jenny Jones as the most science-friendly London candidate.

But official Green Party policy on the matter is entirely in favour of the experiment. “While the Green party is more sceptical about the way GM crops and gene patenting has been applied by multinational corporations like Monsanto, we are not opposed to GM research itself,” according to Green Party press officer Scott Redding. So that’s nice.

Jenny Jones, on the other hand, is a fool. Genetic modification of crops is, along with the worldwide emancipation

of women, the only solution to famine and constant poverty in the developing world. Opposing it amounts to a kind of pre-emptive murder, a bourgeois luxury that only those with no chance of starvation could endorse.

That said, the protesters do have something that vaguely resembles a point. The research is publicly funded, but the resulting strain will be sold to an agro-chemicals company, and few things are worse for social justice than large, powerful companies. There are, after all, no profits in helping penniless East Africans.

It follows that protesting against growing the crops is ridiculous, and instead the group should campaign to prevent the sale of the crop to a corporation. Of course, this is a very difficult thing to protest against, but such is life; destroying research is a cardinal sin, and for scientists like myself (the Green Party’s natural voter base) it is a huge turn-off.

I have even heard a large number of scientists and students claim that they will never vote Green again, which, though understandable, is actually quite a curious position. I suspect that had Ken Livingstone attended the event, we wouldn’t hear the same people thoroughly denounce the entire Labour party.

Some scientists and students said they would vote Liberal Democrat. That is remarkable, because (as I explain in this week’s Feature) no UK Government has ever done more to diminish academic independence than the current one. Compared with the increase of tuition fees, the privatisation of parts of the NHS, and the aggressively pro-business position of the Research Councils since the 2010 review, the Green Party’s opposition to GM seems minuscule.

Others said they would vote Labour. That is also remarkable, because no UK Government has done more to promote privatisation in science and academia



Don't blame the genetic modification for Brain's insanity

than that of Tony Blair, the same man who surged ahead with the Private Finance Initiative and introduced tuition fees in the first place. Also remember that, when asked, all Labour MPs refuse to answer the question of whether they will reduce tuition fees once in office. So they won’t.

Small, left-wing parties are held to impossibly high standards: one mistake and people will dismiss them instantly. One student told me he’d never vote for the Respect Party because George Galloway was an apologist for totalitarianism, but he was happy to vote for Labour or the Liberal Democrats. I pointed out that Labour’s David Miliband had engaged in business deals with Gaddafi in full knowledge of his use of torture and suppression of democracy. I told him that the Lib Dem Vince Cable had spent years working for Shell, a company with a dreadful record of human

rights abuses in Nigeria.

By this point he had stopped listening, but I like to think I won the argument. If, as all these students and scientists suggest, we can dismiss a whole party on the behaviour of just one of its members, then is there any party worth voting for?

The fact is, with all three main parties firmly in the right-authoritarian quarter of the political compass, the Greens offer the only genuine option for bringing any kind of socialism to Britain, short of a revolution. For a left-wing person to vote Lib Dem or Labour at this point in history (to use a horrible cliché) amounts to cutting off your nose to spite your face. Until people stop dismissing the Greens off-hand because of single-issue qualms, I can see no way out of this neoliberal mess. Yes, they’re not perfect, but of four evils the Green Party is the least by a long, long way.

Yes, they’re not perfect, but of four evils the Green Party is the least by a long, long way

EXAMS. Just in case you had forgotten



Tim Arbabzadah

You know when Facebook has that dumb “what’s on your mind” thing on the status box, well there’s been one thing on my mind all term. Exams. Trouble is, once you get old (I’m a 4th Year...) you just stop being phased by the whole not-being-able-to-answer-entire-sections-of-exams thing. Maybe I’ve become *au fait* with how exams at university work, or maybe all us final years are just burnt out and don’t care anymore, oddly at the most crucial stage of our degree. To

be honest with you, final years have had so many exams for so long that we’re just bored of them now.

I like to think it’s the former. I honestly feel sorry for this year’s freshers, and next year’s lot too. They needed a couple of A*s, not As. Even if you do say ‘meh, exams were harder in my day’ you still have to appreciate the error margin they have. 10% is not much to work with: one mistake and you’re like a screw on a construction site – totally screwed (I have exams alright, I couldn’t be bothered to think of a bet-

ter simile). Kids nowadays (uhoh, I am old) are so used to needing 90% on an exam that the adjustment to suddenly not being able to know absolutely everything perfectly and never be phased in an exam is just incredibly extreme. Suddenly entire parts seem like they can’t possibly have been on the syllabus.

So here comes the advice paragraph. Relax, a bit. Half of the battle is staying calm under the pressure. If you let the volume of content and short amount of time get to you, you’ll spend 2 hours in

a panic trying to look over 20 things; you could have spent that time properly looking over 10 different bits and it would have made a real difference to what you know, and makes you feel confident you’re making – admittedly slow – progress. Essentially, what I’m saying is look that exam right in the eye and say the following: fuck you, I’m a total badass. Quick note though, don’t say that if the exam is a viva; trust me, they won’t appreciate it. Anyway, I’m off to revise, calmly. Good luck with exams and projects everyone!

Comment Editors: **Tim Arbabzadah**
Sam Horti

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk

COMMENT

Social media never achieves anything



**Simon
Worthington**

I've got a problem. A problem with you. And your friends. The whole lot of you, in fact, and the way in which you all spread your ideas using social media. Basically, over the past couple of years social media has quickly evolved from a novel way of keeping in touch into a way for people to share their passions, problems and grievances – and in doing so I'm of the firm belief that it's become a useless, vapid place. People seem to think they are making a difference when they click the 'Like' button – but they are, unfortunately, kidding themselves.

You may remember that earlier this year Felix was accused of sexism – a claim that was correct, in many ways. Social media was partly responsible for the resulting scandal, but what you must really ask yourself is this: what's really changed? Hangman got a revamp, but it'll be back to its old tricks soon enough. That's because the content in Hangman is basically decided by the person who writes for it. If Hangman is sexist or racist or whatever other “-ist” you'd like to pick, it's probably because the person who wrote it was too. The author for that article may have got a wrap on the knuckles, but who's to say that the writer who comes along next won't be just the same? Maybe not this year, especially when the memory is still fresh, but next year or the year after when everyone's moved on there's not really anything that can change to stop it happening again. It's a problem with society itself that people have these sorts of opinions, and it's going to take a lot more than a few angry people on Twitter to change the opinions of a nation.

There's another problem. Given that (following from last week's sexism survey results) it was only a disgruntled minority that kicked up a fuss, and the majority of Imperialites don't really feel affected by sexism, was it even correct to have paid attention to these opinions? At the time, I remember asking various people what they thought,

and opinion was divided. Some thought that it was indeed trivializing rape, and others thought it was all a big fuss over nothing. I'm not going to be so dumb as to pass judgment on which camp I think was right, but I think it's fair to say that what I saw was a lack of consensus. Why, then, was this event a big deal – big enough to make it into a national newspaper?

I believe that it's basically because everyone is listening to social media too much. Governments and companies and even individuals seem to take Twitter very seriously – way too seriously given the percentage and particular demographic of the population it represents. Whenever someone reads some negative criticism on social media more often than not they seem to freak out a little bit, and normally end up making a far overblown response. The problem here is with the social medium itself – Twitter and Facebook are so quick and instant that a couple of hours without an official response is like a lifetime. Compare this with good old fashioned snail mail: the speed of reply gives a lot more time to actually think before blurting something out into the public domain.

Fundamentally, social media is faddy. People are always looking for what's new and what's original, and they want you to give it to them so that they don't have to find it themselves. The problem with this is that it's hard to keep people interested for longer than about five minutes – longer than that and they've moved on to the next big thing. You may remember the huge outpouring of emotion about the American bill SOPA, which would curtail Internet freedom. Wikipedia, Reddit, and perhaps even Google if I remember correctly, all got behind the 'Stop SOPA' campaign by making their webpages black or dark or whatever for just over a day. With that much exposure the message was got out to quite a number of people, and at the time there was a fair amount of public outcry about it – so much so that it's discussion in Con-



We've pre-emptively deployed police to Felix Online's cyberoffices to control the surge of comments that this article will inevitably create

gress was postponed until 'consensus' could be reached. Do you remember how that story ended? Unless you're well into your technology news, you probably don't. It turns out that whilst SOPA may not be such an imminent threat, there are still plenty of other tabled bills that are just like SOPA under a different name, but worse (go look up CIPA if you're interested).

So why aren't we hearing about these on social media? Because it's old news! Internet freedom is, like, so last month, guys. The thing is, social networks have gone from being a useful method of communication to being more like a game. No, game is too strong a word – popularity contest. People post links, statuses and tweets as a way of bulking up their own self-esteem and they use how many 'likes' or 'retweets' they get as a measure of acceptance amongst peers. In many ways this is a perfectly natural thing to do – I don't think that it'd be controversial to say that seeking acceptance is a big part of human nature – but what it means is that all people are interested in is scoring Internet points, not actually making a difference.

The common defense is that social media makes people aware of an issue -

this argument was banded about quite a bit when the campaign against Kony hit the stage. But so what? More people are aware, great. Now they can make even more people aware! Wicked. But then all we end up with is a lot of people who are very aware. Awareness is only useful if it translates into meaningful action. Because social media is so casual and so quick, people don't get involved and people don't get active in whatever cause they're promoting this week, they just get aware. Which, I might point out, is entirely useless. The example which I think is the climax of this was the fad of changing profile pictures to children's TV and film characters in the name of 'stopping child abuse'. For a while this was a huge thing and a lot of users got involved with it, but it had next to zero actual effect in the real world and the fallout from it was minimal.

So here's a tip: next time you find a cause that you care about, and you want to tell all your friends on Facepace about it, don't. Instead, consider actually doing something about it. Write to your MP, donate some money to a charity, you know, things that actually generate change in places other than cyberspace.

All people are interested in is scoring Internet points, not actually making a difference

Cat got your tongue?

Wrote up some notes on Monday, took a past paper on Tuesday, I was revising on Wednesday, and on Thursday and Friday and Saturday and then wrote for Comment to complain about it on Sunday.

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



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

music.felix@gmail.com

MUSIC

A night at Le QuecumBar

Íñigo Martínez de Rituerto finds a passage to 1930s Paris down Battersea High Street

One lazy summer evening, I proposed to my friends that we check out a jazz bar just down the street from our place, but which we had never been to in two years of living there. Le QuecumBar is a 1930s inspired gypsy jazz bar which hosts some of the best known players of the style first performed by the now legendary **Jean “Django” Reinhardt**. Django (whose nickname means “I awake” in Romani) was born in Belgium in 1910 to Romanian parents, before moving to Paris where he learned the banjo, and later the guitar, becoming absorbed in the music of the time. His virtuous, often said “hot”, guitar playing laid the cornerstones for a style which now reminds of silent movies in fast forward or smoky alleys in the deep Parisian night, drowned in gaiety and inebriation.

A friend I met during my second year at college had once told me about this place. He played in the **IC Big Band** and would often come to the QuecumBar’s Tuesday jam sessions to burn the night away. Gypsy jazz has always seemed to me a very wholesome style, not unlike Jamaican dub or even drum & bass. Stylistically it does not need great scope to do what it does. To the novice ear, all the songs might sound the same, perhaps somewhat like Disney’s *Aristocats* throwing a double birthday party. It is a fiery music that burns very brightly. The atmosphere is immediate. I imagine it might go very well in the summer with a coffee and a croissant around 6am before an after-party up Mont Martre. Though to understand why you might want a coffee before closing a night out you will have to listen for yourself.

“Somewhat like Disney’s *Aristocats* throwing a double birthday party”

As we walked in just shy of 8 o’clock, there was one lady in long feline spectacles sitting by the window and three musicians warming up in a corner. We were greeted by a waiter in piano key suspenders offering dinner or drinks. In the spirit of procrastination we opted for liquid dinner of the gourmet kind. Belgian blonde Leffe for my friend, Czech Budvar for myself (that golden pilsner our humble Union has so woefully forgotten in favour of the Ameri-

can dribble). The only other people in the place, a couple sat for dinner, were presented with the evening’s menu on a billboard over a metre high which – when stood on the floor – was entirely visible from behind the table.

After ordering, the three musicians made their way to the stage in front of us. Crammed atop it were four red velvet chairs that could just about fit three people. Behind them were plants of all forms, all a deep green; a botanical salad analogous to the societal metaphor. The wall behind them was the yellow of a century gone by, lined with the golden frames of photographs which bore witness to the scores of gypsy zealots who had passed through this place. Among them, innumerable portraits of Django and a street sign that read “*St. Germain des Près*”. By the stage was a disused fireplace inside which sat a bouquet of dry flowers, the sort that flourish in droughts. Candles lined all corners of the room, while chandeliers and fans hung brazen from the ceiling.

As the music begun, a second guitarist joined the group, perching his leg up on the stage for want of room to sit. Earlier I had overheard him speaking with the feline dame, saying he was Hungarian in somewhat broken English. It seemed somehow charming that he had come here to play a century old style of Romani-French music. As he played along, the female violinists exchanged solos before handing over the honours to the men’s curiously shaped guitars. The music resembled courteous small talk caught in a four-way flirt.

A slow shadow swept over my left shoulder. Three seasoned ladies made their way to the dining table closest to the stage. The eldest marked a frail figure beneath a hefty black coat. When she reached the table and removed her covering, the golden lights from the ceiling reflected on the purple sequins of her dress. She wore a silver necklace and a spectacular turquoise ring. There was a look of rejuvenation in her eyes. Perhaps this music had been her passion in younger years. If it is so nostalgic to someone of our time, I can only imagine how it might feel to someone who lived it during its prime.

Soon thereafter, more people started to arrive and the air filled with commotion as the jam went on. Like the ladies before, now a massive upright bass crept past my left shoulder and joined the song midway, suddenly giving it new character. The smell of delicious stew flew from the kitchen. The waiter came back, “another Leffe, sir?” and more musicians approached the stage.

After a couple of drinks, while searching for the gents’ I discovered a



Bohemian levels are currently through the roof

beer garden at the back. The walls were worn and decorated with murals of art nouveau. A straw hat that hung on one of the walls had been converted into a bird house. Later when I left I would notice a banner outside announcing an “*exotic oasis and tropical patio*”. This must be the place.

“The music resembled courteous small talk caught in a four-way flirt.”

The ambience was intoxicating, as perhaps our dinner too. I felt an impulse to write down what was happening on the nearest piece of paper, as the beer might later betray my memory. While I wrote through another drink, half the musicians had been replaced by twice as many more. It seemed I had underestimated the gussed up stage. A third guitarist found a way to capitalize on the fourth chair, while an accordion player whose instrument read “*Victoria*” sat at the front. One of the lady violinists was now replaced by a lad in his late teens with unkempt hair, wearing denim on denim and Nikes that looked like Vans. The bassist, whose curled goatee must have been longer than my beer glass, waved his hand in circles at a friend offering to relay the rhythm section.

The musicianship on display that night was as much an exhibition of virtuosity as an exercise in endurance. When one guitarist dropped his pick,

his absence was immediately noticeable through the thicket of the six-strong sound that reverberated from the hollow bodied instruments. Everyone played in unison at a dizzying speed. At times the violins were strummed like mandolins, making way to a frenzy of six-stringed resonance.

After a few songs, the bassist put his piece down, revealing an armful of tattoos as he clutched his music book. When the band resumed, they did so with a more solemn sound, marking the departure of the booming absentee. After a moment of silence, the first guitarist swung a sentimental tone reducing the tempo to a fraction. For a moment it felt like listening to the morning radio through the kitchen doorway and as the beer ebbed through my corpus I remembered this place was an island in time. Decked in the décor of the era, infused with the sound of nostalgia. An exotic oasis as promised from the outside, right in the heart of Battersea.

One jam ended beautifully with the two remaining violinists caught in a soft duet which enthralled the others to a rest. A burst of applause prefaced the burning pace of the next song. Howls came from the crowd and fists stomped on the tables. The smell of coffee at ten past ten. The room was on fire!

The music hardly stopped the whole night. If anything, they just seemed to play faster and faster as the hours went on, squared off against the night as if refusing sleep. The bearded bassist slapped his strings, nearly snapping them off. The others formed gangs, three guitars ripping through one riff, two violinists another, one lone accordion standing its ground. When the

flurry was over, the newest guitarist in the group, the fourth that night, panted.

Breaking the pace, the group got started on ‘Blue Drag’. This shot my heart back a few strides. This was one of the first songs I had heard of Django. I remembered the mornings digging through my father’s jazz collection during breakfast, memories now infused with the taste of toast and coffee.

I left the place having written on the back of seven flyers, each advertising a seemingly unique performance on nearly every night of the week. On the 10th and 11th of June, the **Moscow Drug Club** would blend “*1930s Berlin cabaret, hot club de France, New Orleans funeral parade & gypsy campfire songs*”. Among numerous Parisian cabaret performances would pass the **Kalotaszeg Trio** from the Carpathian forests of Transylvania on the 14th. Come the 18th, **The Boomtown Swingalings** would be bringing the “*sweet sounds of swing*” to life down the Battersea joint. Finally, on the 24th, **Paprika**, a Balkan super-group “*flying the folk flag for a largely anonymous code of music*” would grace the stage after having passed through Glastonbury festival, Edinburgh Fringe and Royal Albert Hall.

Dinner is served from 6 until 10 and judging by the amount of couples in the audience, it seems like a perfect place to surprise your better half. Cover costs around £10 depending on the evening, though of course the jam nights on Tuesdays are free and open to anyone with the spirit of Django.

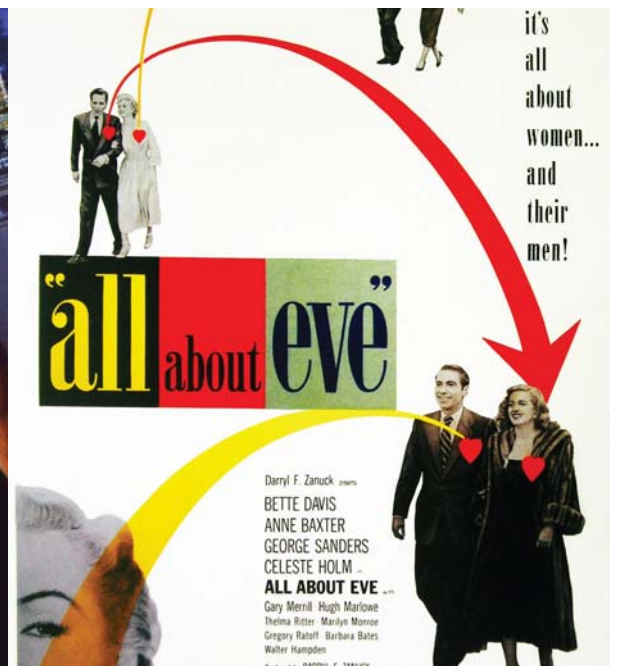
42-44 Battersea High Street, SW11 3HX

FILM

Film Editors: **John Park**
Lucy Wiles

film.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Marilyn: missed b



1. Career Beginnings: The Asphalt Jungle (1950), All About Eve (1950)

After an initial period of struggle that included a couple of successful screen-tests, modellings, small parts, a poorly reviewed film and an eventual termination of contract from Columbia, Monroe found her breakthrough in *The Asphalt Jungle*, an MGM-financed drama in which she played a girlfriend of an old criminal. Her performance caught the eye of Joseph Mankiewicz, a highly influential, talented director, producer and writer who hired Monroe for a small comedic role in his Oscar-winning masterpiece *All About Eve* as a slightly dim-witted aspiring actress. Monroe's profound acting influence and aspiration came from the works of Lana Turner and Jean Harlow whose films she extensively researched and studied.



2. Sex Symbol: Niagara (1953)

Following her initial success she signed a seven-year contract with 20th Century Fox. After a few moderately successful films and a potential sex scandal during which a nude photo from her past was circulated, she started receiving substantial supporting roles starring against huge names such as Barbara Stanwyck, Cary Grant and Ginger Rogers. The most eye-catching, talked-about role in this period however, was her performance in *Niagara*, in which she played a seductive femme-fatale plotting to murder her husband. Monroe's overtly sexual portrayal of her character attracted some criticism and outrage from the conservative audience at the time, although the press and interest surrounding the platinum-blond, effortlessly sexy actress kept the spotlight on her.

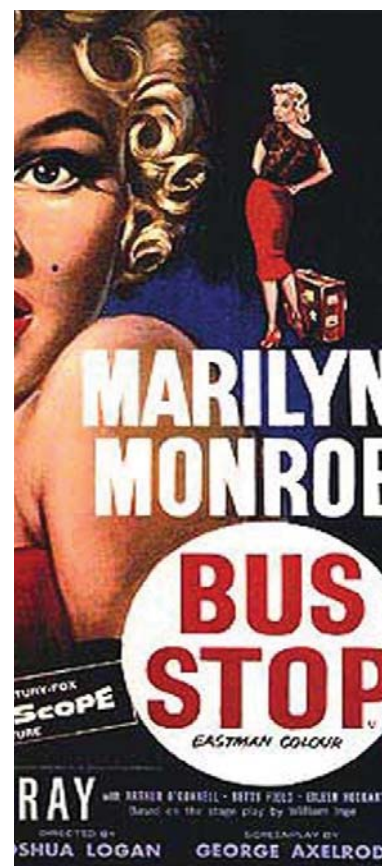
1 June 1926 (exactly 86 years ago today) marked the birth of Norma Jeane Mortenson, or better known as Marilyn Monroe, one of the most iconic, celebrated faces of American cinema and culture. Many mourned her sudden and tragic death, but her legacy and influences are still felt even to this day. In her short but undeniably remarkable career, Monroe achieved a wide range of repertoire and is often hailed as one of the top stars and actresses of the Hollywood Golden Age. In honour of the actress' birthday, as well as the 50th anniversary of her mysterious death, **Felix Film** looks over the highlights of a distinguished career of a truly unique and great all-round entertainer.

out never forgotten



3. Dumb Blonde Comedies: *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953), *How to Marry a Millionaire* (1953), *The Seven Year Itch* (1955)

Replacing Betty Grable in what would arguably become one of the most famous roles of her career, Monroe was required not only to act, but to sing and dance in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, playing a gold-digging show-girl. 'Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend's original performer was none other than Monroe (i.e. NOT Nicole Kidman) and the film was a success both critically and commercially with critics praising Monroe's diversity of talent. She followed this up with *How to Marry a Millionaire*, a light-weight comedy about three women (Monroe, Betty Grable, Lauren Bacall) looking for rich men for them to settle down with. Her hugely popular dumb blonde persona was further used with *The Seven Year Itch*, the film responsible for creating one of Monroe's most iconic movie shots, the skirt-blowing scene. And with this series of repeated successes she was named one of the top ten money making stars.



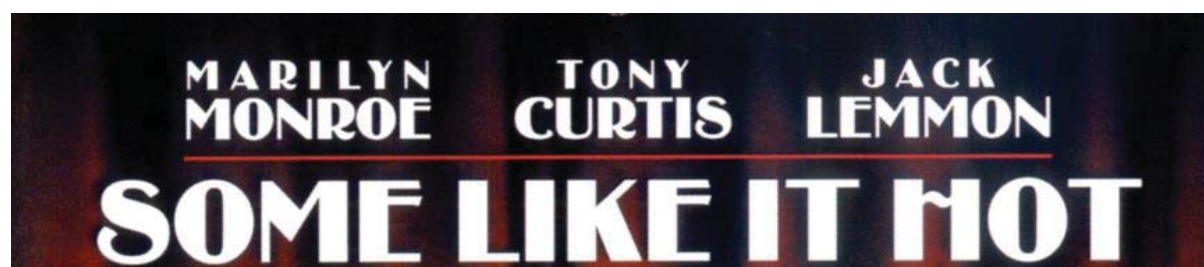
4. Transition to Drama: *Bus Stop* (1956)

In 1955 she was accepted to study at the Actors Studio under Lee Strasberg who agreed to have her as a student. He later commented that of all the actors he had trained, only two have truly stood out from the rest. The first was Marlon Brando, the second being Monroe. Her dedication to method acting and desire to turn to more dramatic roles landed her a role in *Bus Stop*, as a saloon singer who falls for a cowboy. The film won rave reviews for Monroe, with critics pleasantly surprised to see the actress perform so well in such an unexpected genre. Although her performance was campaigned for an Oscar nomination, she failed to receive one. She was however, nominated for a Golden Globe.



5. Declining Health: *The Prince and the Showgirl* (1957)

Throughout her career, Monroe was known for her shyness and stage fright, which caused frequent delays to productions. Following personal struggles that stemmed from divorces and miscarriages, she started relying heavily on alcohol and barbiturates, a combination which started spiralling out of control even on film sets. During the filming of *The Prince and the Showgirl*, her co-star and director Sir Laurence Olivier clashed with Monroe, and the English acting royalty found himself infuriated with the actress. She did however, win over the critics and audience particularly of Europe with this performance, winning a David di Donatello award (the Italian equivalent of the Oscars) as well as a nomination for a BAFTA.



6. *Some Like it Hot* (1959)

Paired up again with director Billy Wilder, he knew better than anyone else of Monroe's erratic behaviour having worked with her on *The Seven Year Itch*. During the production of *Some Like it Hot*, he noted how unpredictable she had become, turning up to the set hours late, and often not at all, and her severe forgetfulness that on one occasion required him to take over 50 shots for a simple scene. She failed to get along with her co-star Tony Curtis and her behaviour grew hostile. Her uncooperative attitude has since become something of a legendary folklore in the film industry, with some grossly exaggerated anecdotes, but what remains clear is that this was not an easy process. The film nevertheless, was a resounding success. Monroe herself was praised for her seductive performance, winning her only Golden Globe of her career.



7. Last Completed Film: *The Misfits* (1961)

Monroe's health declined even further in 1960, during which the production for *The Misfits* had started. She was frequently unable to perform, and ended up hospitalised for ten days. Monroe was not the only cast member with struggling health. Montgomery Clift, a notorious alcohol and drug user, was in terrible shape, and Clark Gable also became unwell, passing away before the film's release, one of many factors that contributed to her deterioration in psychological well-being. She was fired from the set of her next movie, *Something's Got to Give* due to her inability to meet her schedule, only to be re-hired eventually. But the production was permanently ceased when Monroe was found dead at her home aged 36, 5 August 1962. Around 30 minutes of footage remains of Monroe in her uncompleted film.

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

Tickets from Ticketline: £139.00 students £100. 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

Film Editors: **John Park**
Lucy Wiles

film.felix@imperial.ac.uk

FILM

Long live the evil Queen

Snow White and the Huntsman

Director Rupert Sanders
Screenwriters Evan Daugherty, John Lee Hancock, Hossein Amini
Cast Charlize Theron, Kristen Stewart, Chris Hemsworth, Sam Claflin

John Park

When it comes to beauty, it is easy to wonder just what Charlize Theron has to worry about. She asks her magic mirror the age-old question; "Who is fairest of them all?" The mirror, which turns into a magical gooey creature, in its infinite wisdom and omniscience, answers that it is Queen Ravenna (Theron) who is the most beautiful in the land. Not so surprising and hardly difficult to believe, given how gob-smackingly stunning she looks here. She also puts on a devilishly sexy English accent, which all the more boosts her appeal. But hold on, the mirror is not finished. There is someone destined to surpass her. And this is none other than her stepdaughter, Snow White (Stewart). If you pit one against the other, it is obvious that both in terms of talent and beauty, Theron thoroughly outclasses the helpless young princess. So don't begrudge yourself for secretly siding with the Queen throughout.

But it turns out the Queen is an evil tyrant whose insecurity has driven to do insane things. Her country is a war-torn mess of a dump, and in order to preserve her beauty, she sucks "youth" out of many innocent young women. When she hears her eternal beauty will be maintained if she consumes Snow's heart, you know she will stop at nothing to achieve exactly that. So imagine her shrieking anger when Snow manages to escape. The guard in charge, her brother, deservedly gets a massive slap, and in comes the scruffy but angry and aggressive huntsman (Hemsworth). And he is the unexpected hero of this tale as he finds it in his heart to help instead of hack the young girl. He goes directly against the Queen's explicit orders, and decides to join Snow in her quest to overthrow and reintroduce the rightful heir to the throne, i.e. the young princess herself.

Causing a slight kink in this potential love-line is William (Claflin), the Prince Charming-type character who was a close childhood friend of the princess. When Ravenna murdered her

"For the most part, the leads are given proper attention"



Theron a roll! Sorry, that caption attempt was a bit Grimm...

new husband the King and took over his kingdom, William managed to escape with his father the Duke, who now tries to lead a resistance against the Queen, whereas the young princess couldn't flee. Learning of her survival years later, he vows to find her and never let her go. He makes a rash decision to join the enemy's Snow White search party in the hopes of finding his first and possibly only love of his life.

Already, there are plenty of characters to develop and juggle. And for the most part, all the leads are given proper attention to, with actors more than merely looking the part. Oscar-winning Theron steals the show whenever her deliciously over-the-top, mentally unstable and dangerous Queen appears. She represents anything and everything related to death and decay, and her darkly majestic presence is truly a major casting highlight, which would explain why Theron has taken centre stage in much of the film's advertising. The film also provides a brief glimpse into her past and the abuse she witnessed as a child, which partly explains her constant wrath and fiery impulses. Although this undermines the evil stature of her character, the vulnerability Theron brings out in someone who was never expected to arouse an ounce of sympathy is an impressive feat, and introduces an interesting angle on a fascinating villain.

Her only realistic nemesis and one who can put an end to the wicked Queen's curse is Stewart. What she may lack superficially in looks, she makes up for by carrying innocence and general goodness. It is told early

on that Snow possesses rare beauty...in her heart, and that this will eventually vanquish evil. It sounds all too cheesy and childish, and the grown-up Stewart doesn't exactly look like the poster child of untainted purity, but it's her blossoming confidence and representation of "life" she carries that translates well on the screen. The nervous, twitching looks Stewart cannot shake off in any film she stars in do serve her well here, as with these she can convincingly look weak and worried.

Of the two men, coming out on top is Hemsworth, who trades in his usual weapon of choice, a Norse hammer, for some axes, assisting the princess with his macho charisma. He does also get a crucial scene of sentimentality that the actor handles with touching poise. Sharing a little less screen time is Claflin, last seen in *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* as the priest who lost more and more clothing as the film progressed. Here he's given as little to work with as he did in Rob Marshall's mediocre *Pirates* entry, and the single memorable aspect about his character is his considerable archery skills. Other than that he has a small role to play in the end, and his interaction with his childhood sweetheart goes disappointingly unaddressed.

Staying loyal to the tale of Snow White, the audience gets the meet the dwarves as well as the infamous poisoned apple. The dwarves are the most underdeveloped group of the lot, and we just have to settle for watching them as mild comic relief. But given the predominantly British talent involved (Ray Winstone, Toby Jones, Nick Frost, Ed-

"This two-hour long spectacle is worth sitting through"

die Marsan etc), it must be said there was a lot more potential to make something more out of these guys than to use them for a few comic scenes involving the sewer.

Focusing back and forth between the Queen's castle where she is plotting her next move against her stepdaughter and Snow White's justice journey, first-time director Sanders finds a simple yet effective way of weaving all the strands together. He throws in a whole load of extended shots of beautiful scenery capturing all sorts of landscapes and different weathers. It's nothing inventive or particularly original, but they serve their purpose, offering smooth transitions between scenes.

The action remains small-scale throughout, and despite the disappointing final showdown with the Queen, the rest of the pulse-racing action is filmed with focus and energy. Whenever you feel the narrative is slowing down slightly, Sanders brings back the healthy pace with bursts of energy stemming from the well-choreographed, compact action. It is long overall, with scenes that could have worked just as well, if not better in a shorter time period, but along with all the cute furry animals also making an appearance, this two-hour long spectacle is well worth sitting through, if not only for Theron's magnificently ferocious turn.

2012 Cannes Film Festival Winners



Palme d'Or (Best Film) – Amour (dir. Michael Haneke)

Grand Prix (Second Best Film) – Reality (dir. Matteo Garrone)

Best Director – Carlos Reygadas (*Post Tenebras Lux*)

Best Screenplay – Cristian Mungiu (*Beyond the Hills*)

Best Actress – Cristina Flutur and Cosmina Stratan (*Beyond the Hills*)

Best Actor – Mads Mikkelsen (*The Hunt*)

Jury Prize (Third Best Film) – The Angels' Share (dir. Ken Loach)

Discover a new taste at pan-asian Umami

Anastasia Eleftheriou
Michael Krestas

There's no way you can stand another lunch at Queen's Tower, or the Library Cafe, or even the JCR after your exams. It's just unacceptable! If you feel that life at Imperial has become monotonous (and at the moment your mind thinks of functions) then you need a getaway. Today we'll present you with an alternative choice.

Umami is ideally located in the middle of Cromwell Road and serves a combination of Thai, Malaysian, Vietnamese and Singaporean food. It has opened very recently (in March 2012) so if you didn't have the chance to visit it yet, you should do so soon. The award-winning chef Darren Kutty, formerly Head Chef at both the Ramada Hyde Park and The Washington Hotel in Mayfair, promises to treat you well.

The menu includes meals in two sizes, to taste or to share, and an adequate variety of food to choose from; a selection of salads, soups, noodles



Ped Makham: mange tout!

and curries together with grilled and pan or wok-fried dishes like Ped Makham (pan seared duck with tamarind and mange tout) and Ikan Bakar (grilled red snapper in banana leaf served with sweet tamarind and chilli).

As Food Editors, and computing students whose exams have already



Cromwell Road's Umami offers a unique and peaceful atmosphere

finished (hang in there, everybody!) we had the chance to pay a visit at Umami for lunch last week. We began our course with homemade vegetable spring rolls, leaf-marinated chicken, king prawns on scallops and a duck salad with lettuce and green mango.

For the main, we had green curry

chicken with peas, aubergine and baby corn, and soy-sauce sea bass. It could have just been this particular selection of dishes we made, but every taste was excitingly combined to form a delicious meal. For trivia-lovers, according to the Japanese, umami is one of the five basic tastes and we would

like to think that we mastered it last week! All dishes were fresh and very tasty. The portions are just right, giving visitors the chance to try many different combinations.

Realising that not everyone has the time – or the money – to indulge in a long, leisurely lunch, Umami has introduced an Express Lunch Menu; a three-course feast which is priced at an incredible £9.95 per person. Starters comprise a choice of tom yam soup, chicken toast or Thai beef salad, followed by a trio of equally tempting main courses: Malay chicken curry with potatoes served with steamed rice, Indonesian coconut and tamarind fish stew with steamed rice, or wok-fried tofu and seasonal vegetables with basil leaf served with rice or noodles.

Umami 100 Cromwell Road, SW7 4ER. Open for lunch Monday to Friday from 12pm to 3pm and for dinner Monday to Sunday from 5pm to 10:30pm. For reservations, call 02073412320.

Has the time come to adopt insect cuisine?

Laurence Pope

Grasshopper steak, anyone? If that doesn't tickle your fancy, how about an ant lollipop? Though these ideas may sound revolting, entomophagy, the consumption of insects, may well become more popular in the Western world as fish stocks dwindle and rising population reduces the space available for traditional meat farming.

Insect cuisine is already popular in many parts of the world, including South America, Oceania, most of Africa and parts of Asia. But why should we adopt their cuisine? What's wrong with traditional meat and fish-based dishes, already stable, plentiful sources of protein?

“Neither meat nor fish will be able to support a growing planet”

The problem is that neither meat nor fish will be able to support a growing planet. By most estimates, world population will increase to nine billion by 2050, putting an already stressed Earth under more pressure to provide – at the current time livestock occupies nearly two-thirds of all farmland. Unless intensive farming is extensive-

onechickennugget.com



Eeeewww... I hate radish!

ly practiced (an abhorrent idea), the amount of land available for rearing livestock will have to be scaled back.

And as for fish? The situation isn't much better, with rampant overfishing having caused numerous fish populations to crash. Even if strict catch quotas are enacted and actually abided by it will take years for stocks to recover to their former levels, during which time the world will scream out for meat. Worse still, if we want fish stocks to stay stable there's no way we can fish as brutally efficiently as we have done in the past. The oceans will not be our saviours.

Cue insects. They are a far better meat source, both environmentally and

nutritionally, than any animal regularly eaten in the Western world. Simple facts speak volumes – compared to cattle, insects can produce nine times more protein for the same amount of feed, are quite happy eating the stuff we don't want to, are rich in vitamins and minerals, and can be cultivated at a much higher density when compared to conventional livestock. Unfortunately the matter isn't nearly so simple; if someone shoved a plate of fried pill bugs under your nose and told you that they're “high in protein,” would you eat it? Western taboo is the major barrier preventing insects from featuring prominently in restaurants and supermarkets.

cargocollective.com/ento



Insect cuisine ala gourmet!

sect meat, projected to be in stores by the year 2020. By then the Ento team predict that the taboo would have been softened to the point snacking on fried woodlice at the cinema would be seen as normal and not freakish.

“snacking on fried woodlice at the cinema would be seen as normal and not freakish”

So are we likely to see insect delis or fast food beetle burgers anytime soon? Probably not as soon as Ento predicts. Western bug-eating taboo is likely to prevail a little longer, though it will inevitably crumble under combined pressure from Ento-like schemes and rising food demand. Who knows? Maybe in five years time future Felix readers will be reading about how best to grill tarantula meat or stew scorpions.

Such huge shifts in Western gastronomy will by no means come easily. The Ento group will unfortunately not be taking their ideas into the market place themselves, but the framework for enacting cultural change certainly gives one food for thought.

If you're interested in finding out more about Ento visit: www.cargocollective.com/ento.

PUZZLES

MEGA SUPER PUZZLE WEEK

For one week only, the Puzzles Section has exploded into a four-page bonanza.

No league tables, but double the points, we're going back to basics. That is, unless we've made grievous errors.

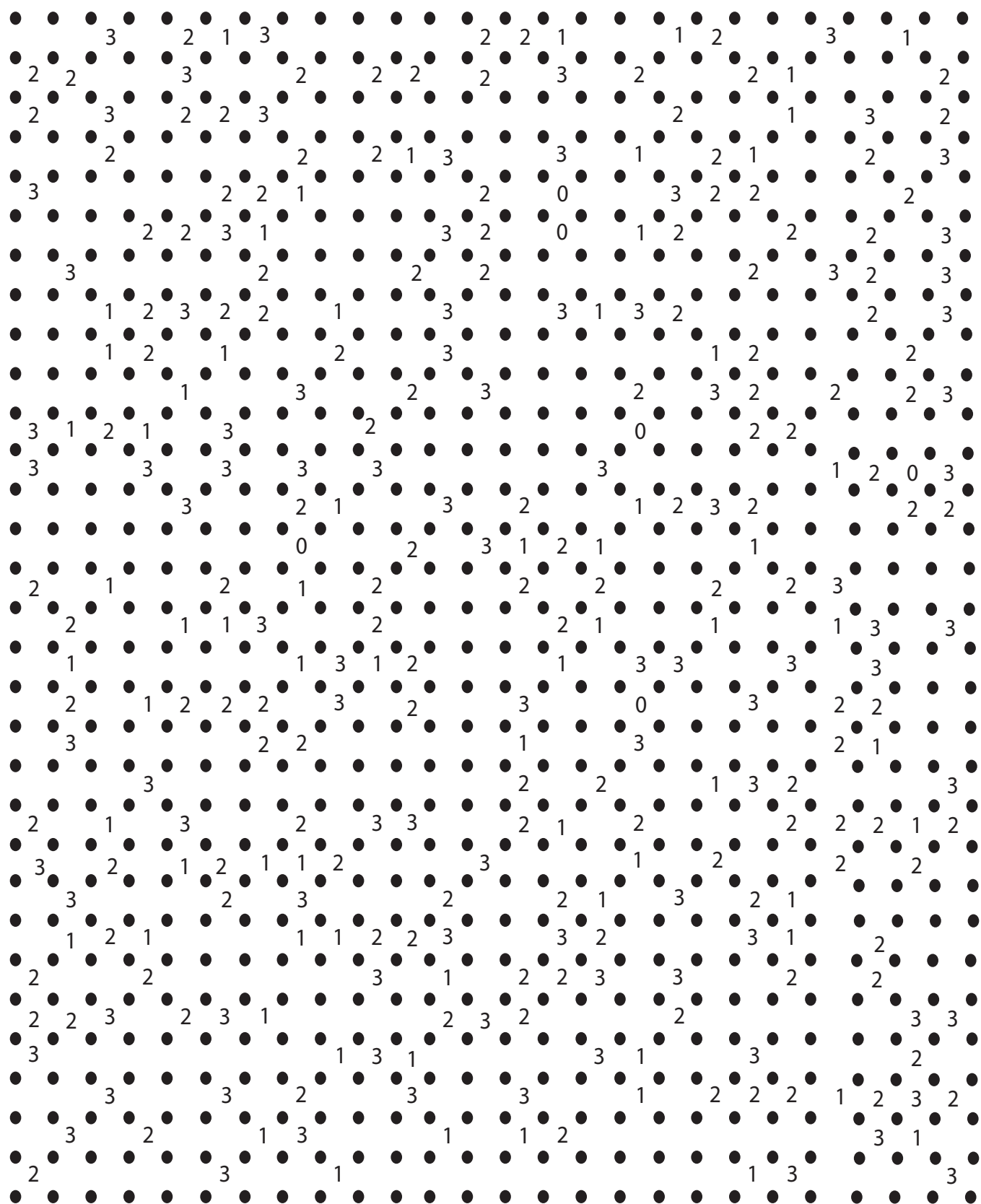
Bring the solutions and win eternal glory across Imperial and incredible (maybe) prizes.

Remember, if you ever want to submit your own puzzles to the section, just email puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk!



Everything is massive this week

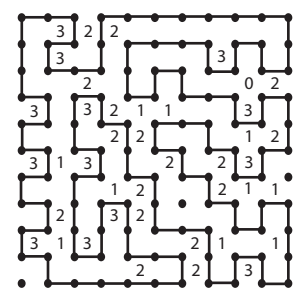
MEGA SUPER SLITHERLINK



Scribblebox

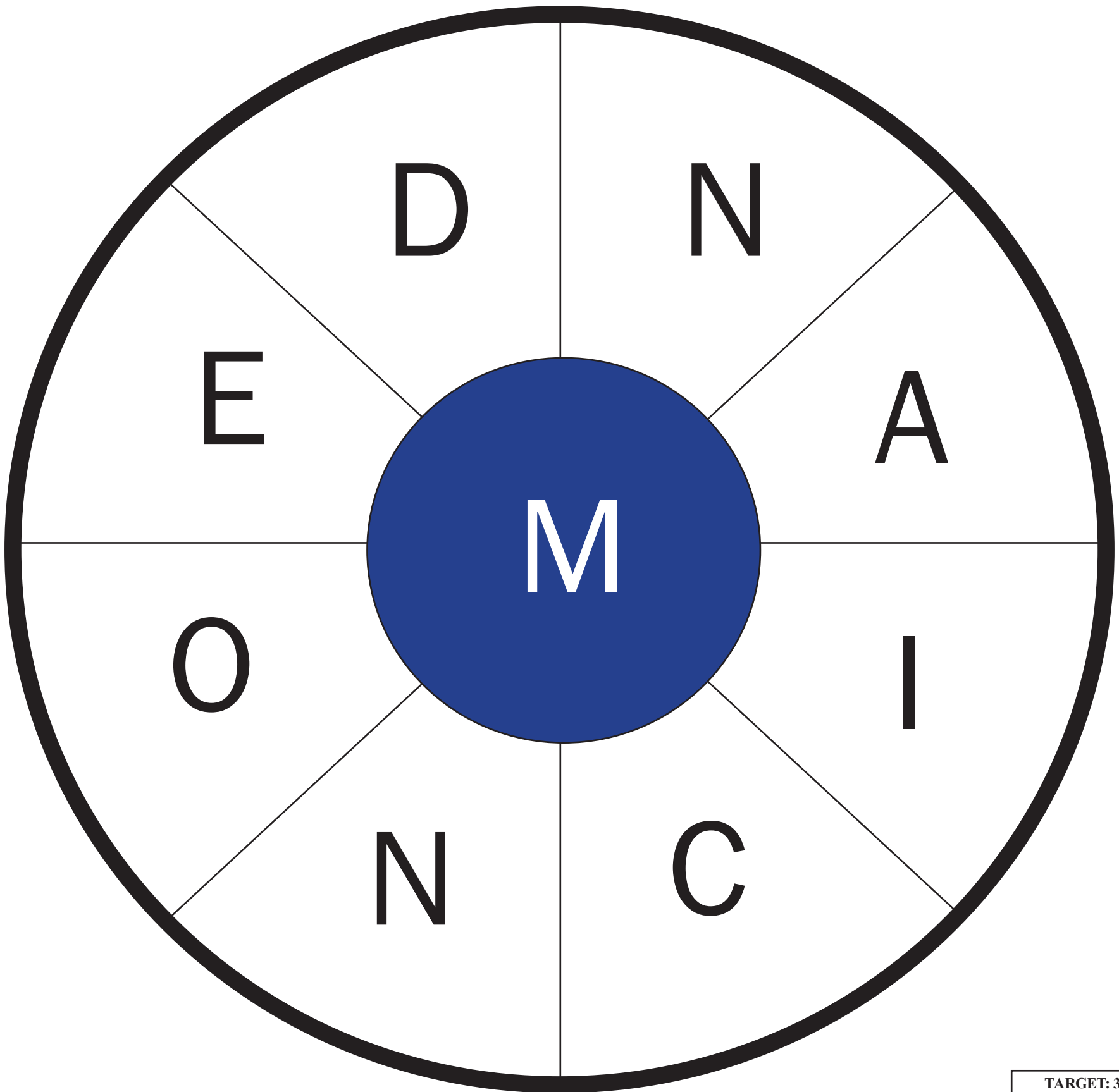
The aim with slitherlink is to make one continuous closed loop by connecting the dots. The numbers in each square indicate how many edges of the square are part of the loop, so if it contains a "2", you know that two and only two out of four edges have lines. That's all the info you need to get the one logical answer. Answers to puzzles.felix@imperial.ac.uk.

Generic Solution



PUZZLES

EXTREME WORD WHEEL



TARGET: 30

Make as many words of at least four letters as you can, always using the central one. **NO** plurals, conjugated verbs, comparatives or superlatives, because I said so.. There is always at least one nine letter word.

PUZZLES

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

We've snuck 7 differences into these two snaps of the Union of a standard Thursday evening twenty-five minutes before the Felix deadline. See if you can spot them all!



ARTS

BOOKS

BUSINESS & FINANCE

COMMENT

FASHION

FILM

FOOD

GAMES

MUSIC

NEWS

POLITICS

SCIENCE

SPORT

TECHNOLOGY

TELEVISION

TRAVEL

Free gigs.

Press screenings.

Restaurant reviews.

**Reporting on the latest
news.**

**Interested in editing or
writing?**

FELIX

The student voice of Imperial College London since 1949

Visit felixonline.co.uk

Email felix@imperial.ac.uk

Follow [@feliximperial](https://twitter.com/feliximperial) **on** [Twitter](#)

Search [Felix](#) **on** [Facebook](#)

