

# Interview: Lord Carrington of Fulham

Student finance, housing and more **6**

# NHS moving to the Cloud

What happens to your information? **8**

# FELIX

"Keep the Cat Free"

31/01/14  
Issue 1566  
felixonline.co.uk



## Imperial and Huawei to cooperate on new data laboratory

Nida Mahmud  
News Editor

**A** top global ICT solutions company and Imperial will collaborate and invest on a data science lab. The research will be in areas such as energy, healthcare and smart cities.

David Willets, Universities and Science Minister said: "Science and research are major contributors to the UK economy and our Universities are central to ensuring that we have the skills in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) that we need to compete in the global economy. Big Data technology is one of the areas where UK universities can take the

lead in research and development and that is why I welcome today's announcement of the collaboration between Imperial and Huawei"

The CEO of of Huawei Enterprise, William Xu said: "Investing in innovation is central to Huawei's business strategy and this exciting collaboration will help us stay at the cutting edge of data science developments. Imperial College is a global institution with unrivalled knowledge in this field. By bringing its experts together with our engineers we believe we can create new products and services that will harness the huge potential of big data.

This collaboration with Imperial also bolsters the wider partnership programme we have with British universities, which includes working with other institutions around the UK on the 5G technologies that will revolutionise how we communicate in the future."



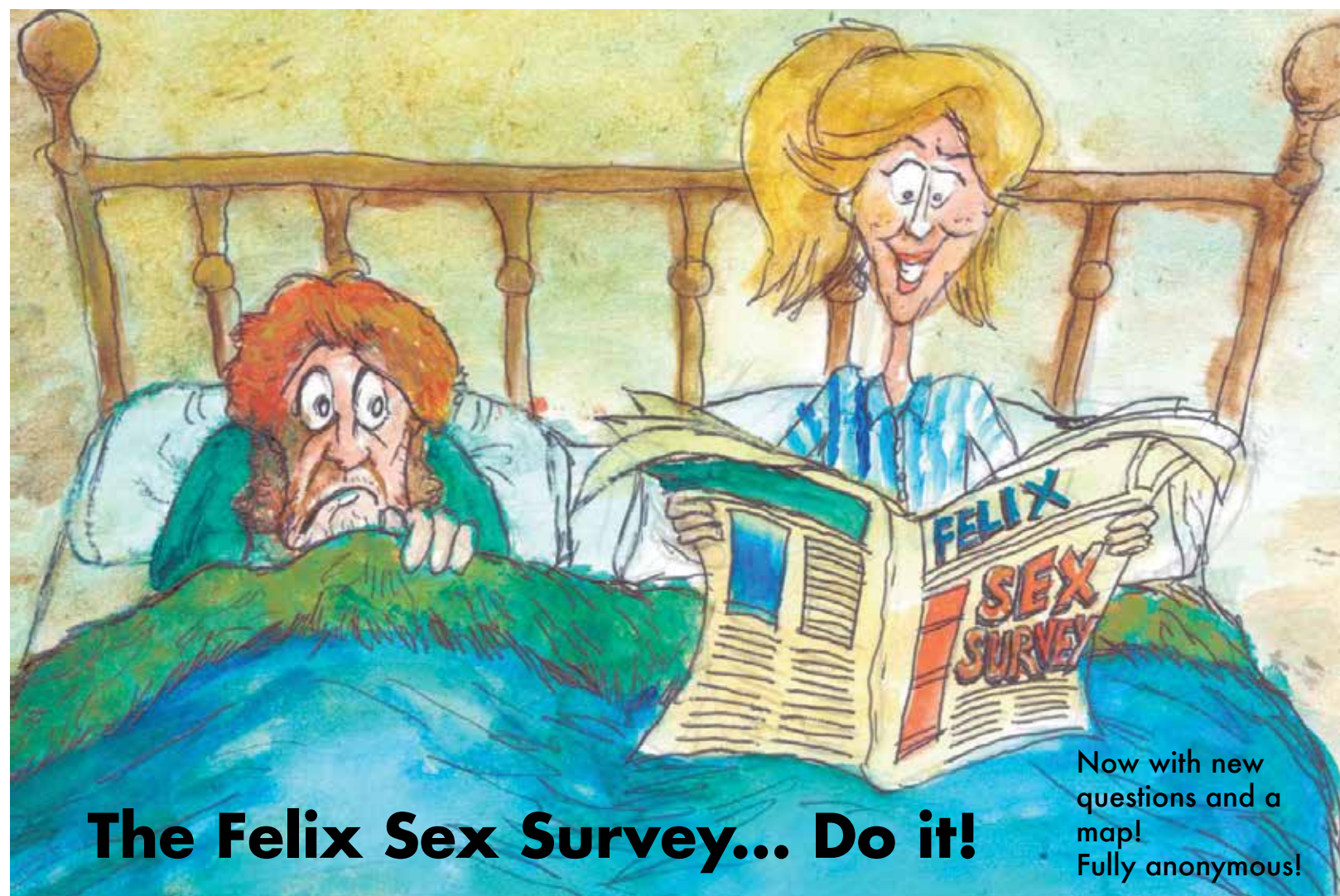
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## THIS ISSUE...

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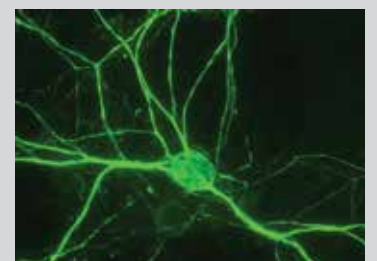
This week you are a rock. **39**



## The Felix Sex Survey... Do it!

Now with new questions and a map!  
Fully anonymous!

### SCIENCE



A trip down memory lane **10**

### FILM



Catch fire with Cinema this week **31**



# EDITOR'S PICKS

## FOOD

### Chinese New Year

Why not make some dumplings?



## COMMENT

### Open Letter

This week features an open letter about the Residential Experience Review.



## TELEVISION

### Sherlock

What makes a Sherlock a Sherlock?



## Felix Sex Survey

That's right ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, our sex survey is open this year!

The survey has been open for 5 days so make sure to load the link in your browsers and fill out some

survey.

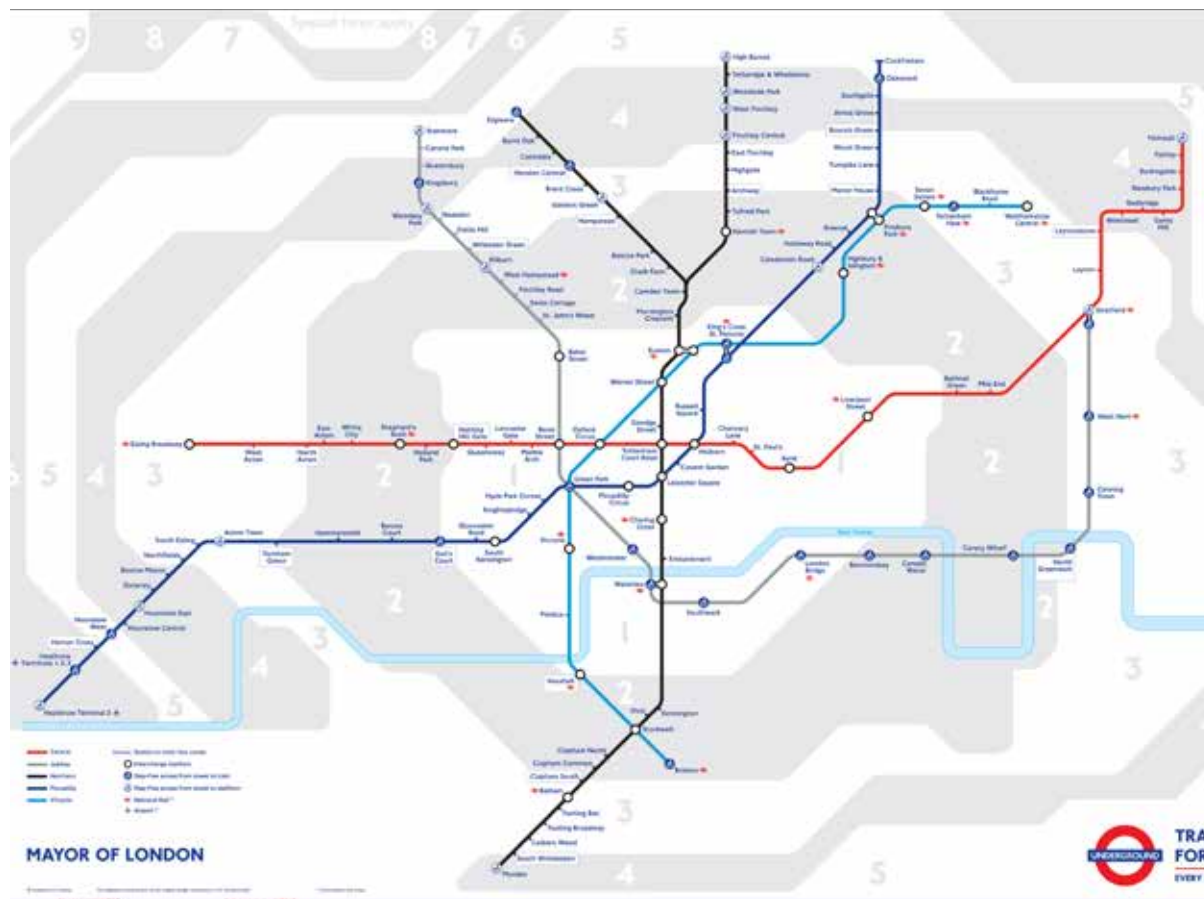
With new questions and moar analysis, this year's survey is bound to be a corker!

Whether you're a saint or sinner, clubber or reviser, come and tell us about yourself!



[bit.ly/1l2exlo](http://bit.ly/1l2exlo)

## New 24 Tube Map Unveiled



MAYOR OF LONDON



TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

### LOLCAT OF THE WEEK: More from teh Lolcat editor



Aamna Mohdin  
News Editor

Last year the mayor of London Boris Johnson announced a new Night Tube which will provide services on the Piccadilly, Victoria, Central, Jubilee and Northern lines. TFL will now run on weekends during a 24 hours service. These new plants also involve ticket office closures and up to 750 job cuts.



# THIS WEEK FELIX WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY

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## Car crash driver admits causing death of Imperial researcher



NEWS LIMITED

**Maciej Matuszewski**  
 News Editor

**A**n Australian man has admitted causing the death of two men, one of whom was the Imperial College researcher Dr Sean Barrett, by dangerous driving.

Dr Barrett, 36, had travelled to the West Australian city of Perth on October 16 2012 to attend a quantum physics conference but was in the country for less than an hour when the taxi he was in was hit by a speeding 4x4. Dr Barrett and his driver, Kuldeep Singh, 28, died instantly.

Speaking in the Supreme Court of Western Australia last week Prosecutor Therese Austin outlined how Anthony Fogarty, 24, had led the police on a high speed chase around Perth in the 4x4, which had been reported stolen several days previously. Mr

Fogarty, who has never held a driving license, was clocked at speeds of up to 170km/h (105mph). The ground pursuit was eventually called off to reduce danger to the public. However, a police helicopter observed the car running a red light on Orrong Road and hitting the taxi. Subsequent tests showed that Mr Fogarty had high levels of cannabis and amphetamines in his blood.

While Fogarty, who escaped from the crash with only a broken leg, initially denied being the driver he was overheard in prison admitting to his guilt. In a court sitting on 21 January of this year he pleaded guilty to the charges against him, saying: "I just want to apologise to the families. I know sorry won't bring them back, but I still want to let them know I am sorry."

Dr Barrett had studied at Cambridge University for his undergraduate and postgraduate degree. His doctoral work was on quantum information processing in a condensed matter system. He moved on to a junior posi-

tion at HP Labs in Bristol, eventually returned to Imperial College London where he held the Royal Society University Research Fellowship. At the time of the accident, he had been lecturing for one year.

A statement from Imperial College praised Dr Barrett's research, adding: "His loss will be greatly felt by the scientific community. Our thoughts and condolences are with Dr Barrett's family, friends and colleagues at this tragic time." Speaking to the Manchester Evening News, his mother, Jan Barrett, described her great loss saying: "Everybody absolutely loved him and had great respect for the work he was doing. He would have gone on to do more great things."

Speaking of the incident, Ms Austin said: "This is a case in the very worst category – he drove intoxicated, at excessive speeds through suburban streets, in gross contravention of traffic laws, whilst evading police with no intention to stop." Fogarty will be sentenced next month.

## Imperial academics on list of top UK practising scientists

**Maciej Matuszewski**  
 News Editor

**T**wo Imperial College researchers have been placed on list of 100 top practising scientists compiled by the Science Council. Professor Michelle Dougherty and Dr Ahmer Wadee join other well known scientists on the list, including Lord Martin Reese, Sir Paul Nurse and Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell.

Professor Dougherty's citation praises "her leadership in space science as team leader on the magnetometer instrument aboard the NASA-ESA Cassini Mission to the Saturn System and ... her contribution to encourage young women into science". Professor Dougherty has been responsible for world leading research on Saturn's moon, Ganymede, and was named a Fellow of the Royal Society in April 2012.

Dr Wadee, of the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department, was praised for "his research in the field of nonlinear

mechanics of structural stability, primarily involving modelling buckling instabilities in metallic and composite material structures".

The Science Council was formed by a Royal Charter in 2003 with the aim of promoting both research and popular engagement with science. Diana Garnham, chief executive of the Council, said that she hoped the list would serve to raise the profile of scientists who are normally ignored by the media. She added: "we must ... recognise and encourage the many ... types of contributory scientific talent and experience".

## Changes to Alcohol Policy for Varsity 2014

**Joe Letts**  
 Editor-in-Chief

**I**mperial's Sports Partnership has recently sent an email to stakeholder of the annual Varsity match outlining changes to the acceptance of alcohol during the event.

The declared Varsity Day Alcohol Policy affirms that the focus of the Varsity event should be on "sporting competition". The email cited a significant number of incidents related to alcohol consumption and how they were inappropriate at a sporting competition.

In preparation for Varsity 2014 several changes have been put in place which will affect the use of alcohol during the day including:

Alcohol can no longer be taken onto coaches.

Participants and spectators will be unable to carry externally purchased alcohol onto College/Union/The Stoop owned premises.

Any personal supply of alcohol found on said premises will be confiscated.

People who are judged to be overly intoxicated by Harlequins security will not be given permission to enter The Stoop."

## Tube strikes to cause chaos in February

**Joe Letts**  
 Editor-in-Chief



AFP/GETTY

**T**ransport for London have announced that next week there will be disruption to underground travel. On Wednesday 5 February and Thursday 6 February walkouts are expected. Services will be affected from as early as 21.30hrs on February 4 so don't get caught out.

Talks to avert the strikes are being held. However, TfL have devised a strategy to keep London moving should the industrial action go ahead.

Extra buses will be laid on, and 'ambassadors' will endeavour to keep Tube stations open, providing travel advice and information as necessary.

TfL advises that Tube services will finish early on Tuesday evening so customers are urged to complete their journey as early as possible. Tube services are expected to return to normal on Friday morning.

### Sponsored Editorial

## Student Discounts At Fresh Hairdressers 70m from South Kensington tube



**Men's cuts £22** (normally £35)  
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**Women's cut and salon finish blow-dry £38** (normally £55)  
**Highlights from only £40**

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Check out our website:  
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# Union Page

## The Big Elections 2014



[imperialcollegeunion.org/elections](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/elections)

**The Big Elections 2014 are coming!** Launching next month, the Big Elections are approaching and we are running a series of information sessions that will help you to understand what positions are available and how to put together a successful campaign and winning manifesto.

Every information session is open to all students and they are a great way to get an idea about each role and find out which might be suitable for you to run for. They are not compulsory but will certainly give you a head-start in The Big Elections 2014. Don't worry if you can't make one of the sessions, we will be making the slides available online for all to see.

Have a look at [imperialcollegeunion.org/elections](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/elections) to find out more!

## SACAs



[imperialcollegeunion.org/sacas](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/sacas)

**After a successful launch last year, the Student Academic Choice Awards are back!**

The Student Academic Choice Awards – or SACAs – enable students to celebrate and reward excellence and innovation amongst Imperial's academic and professional staff. We believe teaching and supervision are skills of equal worth and value to research, and we aim to build a community in which academics, staff and students all feel empowered to bring forth new ideas.

Nominations are open now until 28 February. For more details visit [imperialcollegeunion.org/sacas](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/sacas).

## Rep Conference



[imperialcollegeunion.org/repconference](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/repconference)

**On 19 February 2014, Imperial College Union will host its first ever Rep Conference.**

Themed around the question What Is Excellence?, this free half-day event will bring together Academic Representatives and College staff to discuss the future of staff-student interaction at Imperial College London. Delegates will hear keynote speeches from senior College and Union speakers, and take part in workshops designed around four sub-themes:

- ▲ Delivering Excellence
- ▲ Campaigning for Excellence
- ▲ Rewarding Excellence
- ▲ Measuring Excellence

To register or find out more, please visit [imperialcollegeunion.org/repconference](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/repconference).

## Stress LESS SPRING 2014

**EVENTS THIS WEEK**  
[imperialcollegeunion.org/stressless](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/stressless)

**MEDITATION MADE EASY**  
Wednesday 5 February, 12:00 - 12:50

Free  
Meeting Room 3

De-clutter your head space with a meditation skill you can use at your desk, at home or before an exam.

**STRESS LESS WORKSHOP**  
Wednesday 5 February, 13:00 - 13:50

Free  
Meeting Room 3

This quick session explores strategies to slow down, have more of a work-life balance and strengthen your stress response. Keep calm and rise above it all.

**MINDFULNESS MEDITATION**  
Tuesday 4 February, 13:00 - 13:50

Free  
Chaplaincy Multi-Faith Centre

An introduction to meditation not connected to religious tradition. Gives simple ways to practice meditation in daily life. Run by the Imperial College Chaplaincy team.

**ZEN LOUNGE**  
Thursday 6 February, 11:00 - 17:00

Free  
Metric

Drop in for a free massage, kick back and relax with our chill-out music. This is a work free zone.

# French Energy Giant to Invest in UK Fracking

Eoghan Totten  
Comment Editor

**F**rench resource company (and energy giant) Total is set to invest up to £13 million in the immediate future in the fledgling UK Shale Gas (fracking) industry.

A forty per cent stake of two exploration licenses in Lincolnshire will be turned over to the multinational owned by IGas Energy. It is the first such investment of its kind in hydraulic fracturing industry in the UK. Chief Energy executive of IGas, Andrew Austin, hailed the milestone as “a further endorsement of the potential that exists.” It bolsters the findings of the British Geological Survey: 1,300 trillion cubic feet of shale gas may lie beneath the north of England. To quote Joe Lynam, a BBC Business correspondent, a recovery of ten per cent for a resource this size could satiate national energy demands “for almost fifty years.”

Recent developments, however, have helped reinvigorate the intense debate centred on the hydraulic fracturing practice. A balance between economic profitability and environmental sustainability has been advised by many. A significant number of anti-fracking lobby groups have evolved to counter the stance of the Government on fracking. They fear that any development of the practice will be uninhibited and will be to the detriment of environmental and social well-being, rather than to improving them.

Developments within political circles in County Fermanagh serve as a case in point. Local politicians have proposed a local referendum on fracking. Many in the local community (justifiably) feel that their efforts to form an opinion on the process are curtailed by a lack of Governmental clarity. In the words of a local Sinn Féin councillor, “one of the things I am hearing is that people’s voices are not being heard and decisions are being taken miles away from where the



actual mechanics of fracking are going to happen.”

On the other hand many politicians have hijacked the fracking agenda: a contentious issue generally promotes voluminous and continuous discourse. This, in a way, might also be construed as a betrayal of public confidence. Northern Ireland Minister for Environment Mark Durkan denounced the Fermanagh developments in an interview to BBC Radio Ulster:

“Tourism is the key economic driver in Fermanagh. What impact is the virtual rape of the Fermanagh countryside going to have on tourism there?”

It is disturbing that a politician would sensationalise their stance on a complex issue and lace it with hyperbole, but it is not surprising. When viewed in panorama, the fracking debate is dynamic; and varies with respect to each locality under consideration. On the other hand these localities (and their associated communities) tap into the wider, integrated National Grid to obtain their electricity (excluding Northern Ireland where an energy pact is

currently in place).

A July 2013 Ofgem report into the health of the UK energy sector proved to be both damning and harrowing. It believes that spare energy margins could plummet to as low as 2% by 2015. To put this in the context of a Domesday scenario, if each household were to simultaneously trip their kettle, major and uniform blackouts could take place. Ofgem’s Chief Executive, Andrew Wright, was quick to vocalise his anxiety: “Britain’s energy industry is facing an unprecedented challenge to secure supplies... Preventive action taken now will help protect consumer supplies”.

The logical conclusion (on the part of the Government) is to galvanise major shifts in the balance of energy sources. There is already evidence of real and tangible progress. October 2013 saw George Osborne endorse Chinese funding in future UK-based nuclear projects. Within a matter of days EDF Energy (yet another French consortium), kept afloat by a sizeable proportion of Chinese investors, agreed to development Somerset’s Hinkley Point C site. While the developments were encouraging they

are not sufficient in their own right to remedy the UK’s skewed reliance on North Sea gas and foreign coal, oil and gas. It will provide no positive feedback for the looming date of 2015. Couple this with legal conflicts concerning the Republic of Ireland – An Taisce, the National Trust for Ireland, are considered legal action over the decision.

“Despite the nuclear power plant being nearer to the coast of Ireland than it is to Leeds, the UK decided not to consult with the Irish public about the decision before it granted consent in March,” it said. “The first time many Irish people learned about the nuclear power plant proposal was when the decision was announced.” The UN Implementation Committee of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context have also expressed concern.

Hydraulic fracturing is thus understandably attractive to a British Government obligated to ‘keep the lights on’. A sense of immediacy surrounds the issue, heightened by the finite term of the ruling Government: which, regrettably, when pared back reveals an ugly truth: pandering to

votes rather than to the higher cause. Fracking in the United States (which went from blueprint to production within a decade) demonstrates that it can provide rapid energy stability.

The UK Government is not alone in this. Other nations within the European Union are equally worried over long-term security. Instability in the Middle East has catalysed the energy agenda (in addition to, one hopes, the monumental humanitarian crises in Syria and the surrounding region).

A joint 2011 paper between King’s College London and the European Centre for Energy and Resource Security put forward some justifications for the recent fracking ‘gas glut’: “From a global perspective, unconventional gas has far-reaching geopolitical implications. It has the potential to balance the EU’s energy equation by breaking a market dominated by a few suppliers.”

It also proceeded to flag the many emotive issues common to the communities of Fermanagh and Balcombe alike.

“Important questions about future market structure, the regulatory environment, political risk, investor confidence... (all) need to be answered.” Its chief insight was the identification of fracking as a redeeming player in the energy market. “With local unconventional gas availability enabling gas-to-gas competition, negotiating power is shifting from a hitherto sellers’ market into a more balanced and favourable market for buyers.”

This is an important point. It serves to unify the chief objections of many to the practice of Hydraulic Fracturing in their local environment. The economic benefits must not become alienated from their ultimate purpose (the betterment of societal well-being). Germany is a favourable case in point. Despite each federal State advocating its own energy policy things appear to move forward. Perhaps the same logic might be applied to UK fracking in the future, taking into account the fully-fledged economic and environmental impacts for the higher cause.

## Chemistry building under consideration for future move to Imperial West

Joe Letts  
Editor-in-Chief

**F**ollowing an email from the Rector to staff last week it has been revealed that parts of the Chemistry department will be moved to the Imperial West campus.

As part of recent study of critical path issues on the entire College estate,

master planners have established several parts of the South Kensington campus where space has become an issue. It was felt that the provisions for these areas was below what College aspires to as part of its goal to become a world leading academic institution in the coming years. These buildings (the Chemistry building, the Blackett Building and the Huxley building) have been identified as being on the “critical path” of the assessment due

to the need of more space for core academic functions in need of new facilities that can be solved by new buildings or refurbishment. It has been decided that some functions of departments will probably be required to relocate to the Imperial West campus in order to acquire more space.

The Chemistry Department has agreed with College Cabinet that Chemistry has the highest need of

new space due to intensive laboratory use and requirements and it has been decided that the need to move some parts of the Chemistry to facilities is “pressing”. This has led to the creation of a detailed feasibility study of the possible options, along side options for refurbishment and future use of the building.

In response to our online article last week, the Director of Undergraduate Studies for Chemistry left the

following comment: “

Of course, this is only the beginning of a process not the end. I spoke with Tom (Head of Dept) and Debra (vice-Provost Education) over the weekend, the Dept Rep, Catherine Lu, this morning and intend to meet with all student reps... to work out how we involve all Chemistry undergraduates in the process of planning how Chemistry undergraduate teaching is developed at Imperial.”



# FEATURES

Editor: **Shiladitya Ghosh**  
felix@imperial.ac.uk



## Interview with Lord Carrington of Fulham

The alumnus discusses the Conservative Party, tuition fees and student housing.

*Interview with Matthew, Lord Carrington of Fulham.  
8th January 2014*

**Alexander Morton: Thank you very much for your time this afternoon Matthew. If I recall correctly, in 1967 you were the Chairman of the Imperial College Conservative Society?**

Matthew Carrington: That's right, 1967-1968, I don't think I did it in my final year which was 1968 - 1969, so yes it would have been that. It was quite an active society at that time, although I can't for the life of me remember how many members we had. We had a lot more signed up members than were active members.

**AM: So why did you get involved in politics as a student?**

MC: Well you know I'm one of these rather sad individuals who has always been involved in politics. I was involved in politics at school, and I was very political, and my late mother used to maintain when she was talking to people that I was passionate about politics at the age of eleven, but I don't quite remember it being that early. However, it was certainly a natural progression going from school to university to getting involved with the Conservative politics. Frankly the passionate has never left me, so I've always been involved in Conservative politics.

**AM: How do you feel Conservative politics has changed from when you were a student to where you are now in the House of Lords?**

MC: When I was a student, politics generally was much more patrician, the Conservative party infinitely more patrician. We used to have things like, what's now CCHQ, but in those days was Central Office, send around excellent ladies (and they were ladies, the ones we had) and do public speaking courses for students and things like that, which you know, were really quite useful. However, the Party doesn't do things like that anymore and it is very different now. In fact, they don't provide much support to anything these days. Back then it was the Party of Ted Heath, obviously, having just been the Party of Sir Alec Douglas-Home. I remember sitting in Beit, in the Union Building, on the first floor, where they had a television set, which was very unusual in the building or in any part of Imperial at that time, and watching Harold Wilson making his television broadcast about the Pound in your pocket not being devalued. So that dates me a bit! [He laughs]

**AM: I was thinking that one of the things that has changed is that we haven't lived through the era where socialism was really Socialism ...**

MC: ... and we did live through it! And we lived through a time, dare I say it, the Conservative Party was prepared to go along with a lot of the socialist assumptions about the way the economy should be run and that of course changed with Margaret Thatcher. And it desperately needed to change. I graduated in 1969 and fought my first election in 1979. I fought Fulham in 1987, having fought it a by-election in '86 after Martin Stevens died, and then lost the by-election for a lot of very good reasons. Governments lose by-elections and that was no exception. Various crises come up during the election, but we didn't lose it that badly and I won it back convincingly during '87 and stayed on and won it in 1992 with increased majority and sadly went down the great crash of 1997 with Tony Blair's victory.

**AM: Entering the Commons during the latter part of Lady Thatcher's time in office, could you tell us what she was like?**

MC: She was an amaz ... an astonishing lady as everyone knows, but she had no interpersonal skills at all. It's one of these sad things about people who are very, very good and very driven and know exactly what they are trying to do and can force their views through a great deal of opposition .... but she was extremely difficult in dealing with groups and she had none of the natural personal charm which you might assume that a great political leader would have. For instance, just to give you a silly little story which is so silly, but is fairly typical of her. She would be in a receiving line of MP's, so she knew us all, and we'd be going up and shaking her by the hand for a reception at 10 Downing Street. And what her way of operating in that was to grab you by the hand, pull you straight through past her by her hand, while looking at the next person coming up. Laughs. So no eye contact, absolutely no personal tosh at all, and she vaguely knew who you were, but did she even do that really ...

**AM: You were just lobby-fodder?**

MC: We were just something she had to get through, and she got through it in an efficient way and who is to say getting through these things in an efficient way isn't the right way to do it if you are a very busy lady? It did mean though that some of my colleagues, not me as it happens as I thought very highly of her, did swallow once or twice before proclaiming that she



DODONLINE.COM  
Lord Carrington

was a wonderful leader. Which is of course one of the reasons why she had the problems she did in 1990 when the leadership contest came up.

**AM: What was it like being in the Party during the leadership crisis?**

MC: It was frenetic! There were cabals of people getting together and discussing what they were going to do and how they were going to do it and all sorts of rumours about who was going to vote for Mrs Thatcher and who was going to vote the ... "Other Candidate" [Michael Heseltine]... It was one of those, if you like politics, one of those, dare I say, exciting times. In retrospect it was a beastly time, but at the time it was all very exciting.

**AM: After Mrs Thatcher, you had the surprise of John Major winning the 1992 election ...**

MC: It wasn't a surprise, it was a surprise on the opinion polls. Having said that though, my old constituency [Fulham] had been very marginal. It was less marginal after the 1992 election because I got over 50% of the vote, but we always had fought it and canvassed it very closely, and so we had a very detailed record of what people's opinions were on the doorstep from the general election in 1987, the by-election in 1986, from the election in 1983, and indeed the election in 1979. As such, we could match the present canvass returns against the past canvass returns. And we did. We would do this on a daily basis and then on polling day we would do it on an hourly basis as people were turning out. Our results, consistently, all the way through the 1992 election were better than they had been in 1987 and 1983, so it wasn't a surprise to us at all as our canvass returns were much better [than the general media polls]. So when we increased the majority and got a very good result, we were not the least bit surprised.

John Major is very underrated. In fact, part of his great problem was that as Prime Minister, and it's the same as Ken Clarke as Chancellor of the

Exchequer in the latter part of John Major's Government, is that they did a fabulous job, almost too good a job for the politics as they were very, very good at running the country, but they weren't very good at making people realise they were doing a good job of running the country and then saying to people, "now we have the economy straight, this is our vision for what we are now going to do with it". As such people felt, I think, in 1997 that they wanted someone a bit more exciting than John Major on television and they thought the economy was in good shape and so they thought that someone could come and spend some money. Which they couldn't of course ... in hindsight it was a disaster. ... One of the strong messages coming out of the Treasury is that the economy is improving, and actually is improving quite rapidly, but isn't improving to the extent that we can ever relax about it. Certainly not for the next four to five years, which takes us well through the next election.

**AM: What would you say were the main failings of the Conservative Party, and why it has not been able to win a majority at a General Election for 17 years?**

MC: It's been a puzzle to a lot of us. I think it comes down to looking back on the 13 years we were practically out of power, and I think we were seen as a Party which didn't do what the Conservative Party always been very good at - being very conservative on the economy, being very rigorous on the economy, but socially being really quite liberal. We lost that feel. People felt we were telling them how to run their lives, rather than moving with the flow of the way people wanted to live their own lives and encouraging them to be able to do what they wanted to do, rather than doing what we thought what they should do. I think we lost a bit of that, and then of course a party which can't agree amongst itself on things like Europe, and tears itself apart, which we did in the Maastricht debate and continued through practically to the present day, faces a real uphill struggle to convince people that we are a unified force which could change things. I think we are much better at it now, I think that David Cameron has done a phenomenal job in that, in what are nightmare circumstances of having the Liberals in Coalition.

**AM: On the subject of the Lords how can you sell the idea of an unelected, undemocratic chamber?**

MC: I think there are a lot of mythologies about the Lords these days. People who are used to having a Senate with a bicameral system have

to understand that we don't have a bicameral system. What we have is one chamber, which is the Commons, which is not only paramount, but is the only real elected chamber, which has the ability to make laws. The Lords is an advisory chamber, and it is really no more than that. We don't really even have a delaying power anymore. We can vote against things, they get sent back to the Commons, the Commons overturns our vote and sends it straight back to us. What we are however, being an advisory chamber, is full of people who are hugely experienced in what they do. We have High Court Judges, we have very senior surgeons, we have very senior academics, we have very senior people from industry here - the sort of people who would not get elected to any chamber in the world and many would certainly not stand for election and never put up with it. They come here and put in a lot of time. They spend time with their colleagues debating things in the Chamber, but also more informal places around the Lords. So - hugely influential.

For example, I was in a debate a few days ago where we were discussing a rather obscure part of Children's legislation, where we had six very senior judges stand up one after the other, discussing how this clause in the bill would actually work in practice in the courts. You wouldn't get that anywhere else and so it does have an advantage. It gives the Government the ability to be able to tap into a depth of experience which they would find very difficult to marshal, and they also have to take account of such experience. It also means that there is a debate, there is a structure, and there are 800 members of the House of Lords, and it means while in a Committee you would have maybe 20 people at most, here you can have very senior judges, you can have very junior barristers, and you can have solicitors standing up on the same thing in a structured environment, having to make their points, and having to argue it, and having to stand it up against other people's criticisms in public, on the record. So it has advantages. It is a very peculiar system, I think everyone would recognise that, but the way it has evolved, it probably has some strengths as well as clearly some weaknesses.

**AM: When you were a student at Imperial College your tuition costs were provided for by the State. What are your views on tuition fees?**

MC: I got a grant even! I got a maintenance/living grant, the sort of thing which is unheard of these days. I think it is very sad. I would like not to have student tuition fees, but on the





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# FEATURES

other hand when I went to University, between 10-15% of people coming out of 6th Forms went to University, now it getting close to 45-50%. That is a huge change. Universities were underfunded then and are probably underfunded now, but the amounts of money involved were much smaller than now. Having said that, I think you have to make sure that the ability of students to fund their way through and the terms of which the student loans are made are sufficiently, in banking jargon, 'soft' – that they are affordable and aren't something that is going to make people who should go to University feel they can't afford to for financial reasons. So I think there is a balance to be drawn. I'm not sure that the balance we have at the moment is right, but there is a necessity to make sure that people do pay for their education a bit more than they did just purely on the numbers going into education.

**AM: It is becoming increasingly difficult for young people to get onto the housing market, let alone the fact that students in London don't have access to student housing that students in at other institutions have. What are your views on this issue?**

MC: I think housing in London is in crisis, and I think it is not just confined to students – it's confined to anybody who isn't extremely rich or qualified for social housing. We desperately need to build housing in London, we need to rethink densities, and we need to rethink the use of brownfield sites. So there is a general problem. There is a lot to be said for building upwards, which comes down to density. Our density ratios, which for all the right reasons we've wanted to keep low densities, are unsustainable and that has to change. I think Boris Johnson has said effectively the same thing,



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and I think that is probably right. Students are a particular problem, and it was as bad, I can tell you, when I was at Imperial because we had very little student housing at Imperial. There was Beit Hall, which has been there a long time, and there was the old Southside building, Southside Hall, and apart from that there was very little student accommodation. Imperial went out and bought a few houses in Earls Court when I was there, but it was all pretty basic, there is more now than there was then.

It is real problem, and there has been a lot of money put in, there has been a lot of effort into getting private money to finance student housing, which I think Imperial has built some halls of residence with that, but it isn't an easy one to solve in London. Some of it is in North Acton I hear ... which is not clever ... It is all part of, dare I say it, the housing crisis in London which no Government has successfully tackled. I think the Mayor is making the right noises, but I think the problem is that it is hugely difficult, which is why nobody has come up with a solution to it. It does mean major changes to planning laws, to be then accepted by local authorities, because planning

is one of those things which central Government puts the framework in and local Government puts the details in. And then, you are up against people who say, well I quite like my part of town not "being full of high-rise blocks and not being high density". If you go to other cities though, Paris is much more densely developed and so is New York, just to take two examples.

**AM: Naturally this wouldn't be a complete interview with a Conservative if I didn't mention Europe, especially given that the media attention to the EU Referendum Bill ...**

MC: ...I think we need to start getting that right. I think we face a real challenge in getting allies in Europe and if we can't find allies for change in Europe, we will probably need to take some tough decisions. They will be forced on us in any case, regardless of what we want to do, by the clear determination to persist the Euro in the other counties. There is only one future for the Euro ... actually there are two: one is that it collapses, which politically they are not allowed to do, the other one is that it becomes effectively another State and we will

be outside it because we are not going to join the Euro.

I think that if we can negotiate sensible terms to be outside the Euro, but inside what would be effectively the free trade element of Europe, that would be the best solution. Free movement of people is very difficult, because the people we want to stop having free movement are the people who are the people going to come and not contribute to the country. If we have got people who are coming in who are highly skilled, we want to bring them in. So you have got to get the right balance. I'm not sure that bringing in even lots of skilled Polish builders was terribly good for British builders and I think it is a real shame for them.

**AM: Why did you decide to accept a Peerage?**

MC: I decided to accept because when you are offered something like this you don't refuse. Being a political animal, just getting back onto the front lines of politics, or close to it was reason enough. Why was I offered it? I think a variety of reasons, although the short answer is I don't know! They don't tell you why you are going in. You don't get a citation which says "Dear Mr Carrington, we would like to join the House of Lords for the following six good reasons ...". I would guess the reason include having been a Member of Parliament, I've been also been very active in the voluntary part of the political party, been London regional Chairman and I am currently an Association Chairman. I've also done a lot of other things, for example I chair the Party's appeal board. So, I guess it's a combination of those things. And of course because I'm a brilliant chap and they love me to bits!

**AM: Well naturally! Finally, why**

**should the students of today care about politics and why should it be Conservative politics, given the traditional student image of it being full of old boys, big business, rather socially dispassionate and uncaring.**

MC: That often is the view. It comes down to, what is certainly is one of the driving forces of the Conservative Party, although sometimes we lose sight of it, is that the only way of paying for all the support we want to give to people who are less able to look after themselves is to have a very strong economy. The only way to have a very strong economy is to have a free economy. The difference between the parties always used to be between central planning and private enterprise – people having the right to succeed and the right to fail in the businesses. The 50 years after the war, I think, proved pretty conclusively that central planning doesn't work. We are now getting back to an economy where we are seeing businesses able to grow and being rewarded for their efforts, people being able to pay to tax which allows us to finance the things we need to finance.

Students should get involved because all of you are going to be working, all of you are going to have a stake in this country or the country you come from or are going back to, and I would hope that you are going to be passionate about making this country, or indeed any country, better for your children than it was for your parents. The only way you are going to be able to do that is by making sure that you are driving that change and stopping other people driving the change in the wrong direction.

**AM: Lord Carrington, thank you very much.**

MC: Pleasure.

## Introducing TEDxImperialCollege 2014

**Chen Yann Qi**  
TEDxIC Organising Team

Following the success of the first TEDxImperialCollege conference held at Imperial College two years ago, and TEDMEDLive last March, students from Imperial can now look forward to yet another thought-provoking, mind-engaging TEDx conference to be held on 29 March.

TED conferences rose to fame globally by spreading innovative and inspirational ideas. TEDx events are organised independently but adhere to the TED format, and are licensed by the organisation in the spirit of their mission Ideas Worth Spreading.

This TEDxImperialCollege conference promises something more futuristic and forward looking than the first TEDxImperialCollege which was centred around the theme the Great Exhibition. With the bold theme 'One Step Ahead', you can expect this to be a conference filled with the great ideas of tomorrow. This conference promises to explore ideas that are breaking new ground and revolutionising the human experience.

TEDxImperialCollege 2014 will be moving back to campus after last year's TEDMEDLive popped across the road to the Royal Geographic society to entertain and inspire 450 Imperial students and staff. This time, however, the event has been moved from the Great Hall, the venue of 2012's runaway success, to the Business School. This means attendees will

have to secure places more quickly than ever as the new venue is smaller and there will only be approximately one hundred tickets going on sale this time round.

Ticket details haven't been announced just yet, but if previous years of TEDx and TEDMEDLive at Imperial are anything to go by, they'll be some of the hottest tickets in town.

In the coming weeks, the full list of hand-picked speakers will be released and Felix will report on these announcements as they are made. You will find updates as well on the website and social media pages. A lot of excitement is building up as the countdown towards the next TEDxImperialCollege begins. And indeed, to become part of TEDxImperialCollege and all the exciting ideas that define our



TEDXIMPERIALCOLLEGE

tomorrow, be sure to keep an eye on the TEDxImperialCollege website at [tedximperialcollege.co.uk](http://tedximperialcollege.co.uk)

TEDxImperialCollege is also

on Facebook ([facebook.com/tedximperialcollege](https://www.facebook.com/tedximperialcollege)) and you can follow TEDxImperialCollege on twitter @TEDxIC.





# Egypt's New Constitution

## The metamorphosis of an Arab state from autocracy to anarchy

Jash Rughani  
Politics Editor

In January 2011, when Egypt's political landscape was marred by widespread distrust in President Hosni Mubarak's regime the citizens of Egypt took to the streets with zeal for new hope and better governance. Protests were bolstered by the involvement of youth and there was a unanimous demand for transfer of power. Today, in 2014 young secular Egyptians are languishing in jails at the mercy of a coup which once enjoyed their outright support.

On August 2012, When President Mohammed Morsi appointed Gen Sisi as general commander of Egypt's armed forces and defence minister; it was seen as an attempt to reclaim political power from the military, which had seized control after President Hosni Mubarak was ousted. However, Gen Sisi publicly warned Mr Morsi of another army intervention if the government failed

to respond to "the will of the people." Following on from that date, Mr Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood assumed power as the head of state until its first anniversary marked with show of extreme discontentment by different factions of the society. This time round the army issued an ultimatum to Mr Morsi, instructing him to respond to people's demands or step down within 48 hours. When he failed to do so, it removed him from power and placed him under house arrest. The army appointed an interim civilian leader in Gen Sisi and issued a roadmap leading to fresh elections. This was viewed by anti-Morsi protesters as the saviour of democracy, rather than the perpetrators of a coup.

It was announced that Mr Morsi and more than 30 others in the Muslim Brotherhood's leadership were to stand trial for "conspiring with foreign organisations to commit terrorist acts", with prosecutors alleging that Mr Morsi formed an alliance with the Palestinian militant group Hamas and Lebanon's Hezbollah. Mr Morsi is also facing fraud charges in connection with the Muslim Brotherhood's economic and social programme for Egypt's recovery, called Renaissance

(al-Nahda). Separately, Mr Morsi is facing a third trial relating to his escape from jail during the 2011 uprising against former President Hosni Mubarak

The military intervention was not well received by many who had to bear the brunt of their atrocities in the turbulent period following Mr Mubarak's ouster. Women were subjected to brutal virginity tests



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under false claims of safety measures. In order to appease the masses Gen Sisi released statements stressing the importance of ensuring social equality.

On 3 July, Gen al-Sisi, known to enjoy "strong ties with US officials on both diplomatic and military levels", suspended Egypt's constitution and called for new elections. He was

backed by liberal opposition forces and the main religious leaders. Known to be a religious man, Gen Sisi has enjoyed perpetual support from religious bodies across the nation. Mr ElBaradei, a former Morsi loyalist and coordinator of the main alliance of liberal parties known as the National Salvation Front, was appointed interim vice-president with responsibility for foreign affairs as a means to win his consent. Tamarod, a new group that organised nationwide protests against Mr. Morsi, gave the president an ultimatum to resign or face an open-ended campaign of civil disobedience and it was also backed by the army.

Under the military's pressure a referendum was held on January 14th, 2014 to draft a new constitution and pave the way for another general election. The terms of the new constitution provide for a President to be elected for a maximum of 2 terms of four years each. The defence minister, however, would continue to be from the military.

A respectable 38% turnout at the referendum was a tell-tale sign of people's disgruntlement with constant violence and instability in their

country. Egypt's weary public is fearful, having learned through three years of turmoil how protests can evolve into weeks-long cycles of violence. Clearly, the participants in the referendum mainly included Gen Sisi's supporters. While Morsi's supporters boycotted it, a large proportion of the country's youth refrained from voting as well. Such discrepancies reflect not only the hardening of a dangerous polarization between Islamists and their foes, but widespread dissatisfaction among Egypt's youth. Harsh prison sentences have recently been served on youths for such crimes as illegal assembly and vandalism. Prosecutors recently slapped travel bans on a score of people, pending charges against them for "insulting the judiciary". A number of journalists remain in prison under vague charges of "falsifying information" and news channels that broadcast a different point of view from the military coups' are banned. All steps are taken to keep the once elected President from garnering the support of his countrymen or even the ability to explain his stance and in return question his people's impressionable minds.

# Care Data: Live saving tool or invasion of privacy?

Aamna Mohdin  
News Editor

The NHS has recently dispatched a leaflet titled "Better information means better care" to everyone in England. The leaflet describes a new initiative, care data, in which patient's data from GP records will be extracted and shared with the Health and Social Care Information Centre. The NHS hopes to roll out care data in the summer and for the first time in British medical history there will be an anonymised medical database which will include details of every NHS patient – unless you opt out. The database is hoped to achieve better patient care and efficiency, but a recent risk assessment published by NHS England shows that Patients "may lose trust" in the confidential nature of the health service.

The risk assessment claims if the care data scheme is to go ahead then this runs the risk of damaging patient trust in the NHS and making information vulnerable to hacking.

There is also a "small residual risk" that patients will be re-identified. The assessment states that these risks can be mitigated by allowing patients to opt out by contacting their GP. The risk assessment concludes that the benefits outweigh the risk. The care data initiative will support economic growth by turning the UK into a "global centre for life sciences and health research" and creating a "vibrant App marketplace."

"The most valuable thing we have in health and social care is data," said executive medical director of the NHS Information Centre for health and social care, Dr Mark Davies, at the healthcare efficiency through technology conference in October.

Supporters of care data insist that this kind of technology is essential in order to provide an excellent standard of healthcare. Large volumes of health records can transform the way in which diseases are treated and managed. This is hoped to ultimately save lives because it will allow researchers to track the impact of drugs and surgery on patients.

Privacy experts warn the trouble lies with the data being sold off to

drug and insurance companies, with patients not being able to tell who has their medical records or to what use their data will be put. Organisations can apply to the new Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) to gain access to the database and if an application is approved then the organisation will have to pay to access the data. A process known as "pseudonymisation" occurs where some personal identifiers will be removed, but not enough to make the information completely anonymous. The English database of medical data will also include NHS numbers, date of birth, postcode, ethnicity and gender. Critics fear that this data can be pieced together with insurers, pharmaceutical groups and other health sector companies own medical data, essentially re-identifying certain patients.

A Pulse survey conducted last week with nearly 400 GP respondents found a deep divide between those who support the care data scheme and those who don't, with 41% saying they intend to opt-out, 43% saying they would not opt-out and 16% undecided.





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# A trip down memory lane

**Utsav Radia** on why and when you stop remembering your early years

**H**ave you ever wondered why we tend to remember some things more than others? Our nervous system is a highly organised, complex system of neurones (units that communicate via electrical signals), their dendrites (highly branched outgrowths) and support cells called glia (involved in processes such as maintenance and protection). It is estimated that the human brain contains around 86.1 billion neurones, with some capable of having up to 400,000 dendrites.

In the developing embryo, undifferentiated precursor cells develop to form the neurones and glia. What is fascinating about these processes is what follows the differentiation phase: up to 50-70% of neurones can undergo programmed self-destruction – apoptosis. This concept of neurones being remodelled and constantly forming new synaptic connections is known as synaptic plasticity – it is speculated that this occurs to fine-tune the connectivity in the nervous system.

This process is believed to slow down immediately after birth (and then on throughout life) and is supposed to be crucially important for memory development in infants. Children use their memories to learn new information; however, very few adults can recall events that occurred before the age of three. Sigmund Freud coined the term “childhood amnesia” to describe this observed loss of recall of events in the infant years.

An experiment run by a team of psychologists at the Emory University, led by Professor Patricia Bauer, documented early autobiographical memory formation in children (starting at the age of three and then successive years) to determine the age at which these events were forgotten. Their findings, published in the journal *Memory*, show that children between ages of five and seven could recall more than 60% of early-life events, whereas children who were eight to nine years old remembered less than 40% of early-life events.

Interestingly, they also found that although children aged five to six could

remember a greater percentage of early-life events, their narratives were less complete. However, older children – despite remembering fewer events – were able to describe the events they did remember in more detail. Several possible explanations have been put forward to explain this observation, such as improved language skills and reinforcing of synaptic connections with each subsequent recollection of these memories.

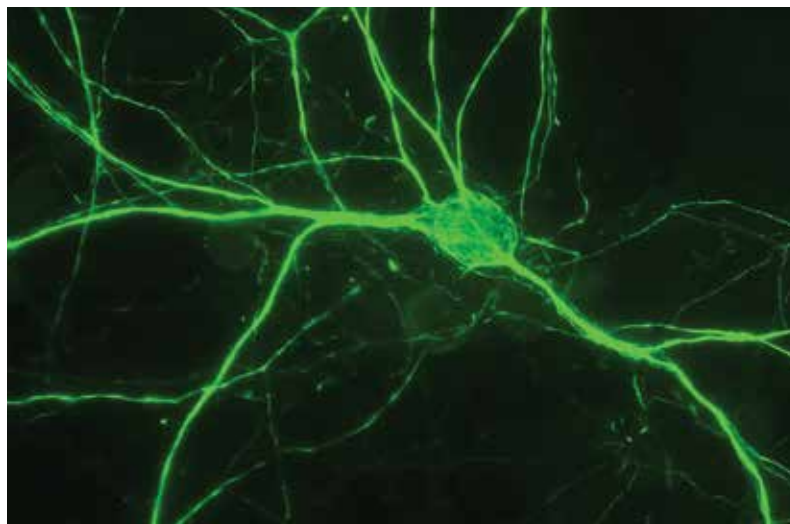
The analogy used by Professor Bauer was that of pasta draining in a colander: “Memories are like orzo [rice-sized pasta]... as the water rushes out, so do many of the grains of orzo” whereas adults use a “fine net instead of a colander” to retain many of their memories.

Although we may be closer to knowing the changes that occur between early childhood and adult memories, the precise timing of this change is yet unknown. Professor Bauer ended her interview by saying, “We’d like to know more about when we trade in our colanders for a net.”

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Rat neurons stained with a green chicken antibody

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## A grand genome: the new cost of genome sequencing

**Chris Yates**  
Science Writer

In 2003, the Human Genome Project was declared complete. At a cost of around \$3 billion and taking 13 years, for the first time we had a sequence of around 99% of the human genome.

On January 14, Illumina, the

market leader for genome sequencing technology, revealed their HiSeq X Ten Sequencing System, which they claim will be able to sequence a human genome for just \$1000 and with the potential to sequence 16 human genomes in three days.

Just five years ago, the same company was offering whole genome sequencing for around \$50,000 per genome, showing how far the

technology has developed in this time. In fact, for many applications the rate-limiting step is no longer sequencing the genome but in analysis of the large amount of data generated.

Unfortunately, the figure of \$1000 per genome only applies if you buy a set of at least ten sequencers at a cost of around \$10 million. This is outside the reach of many academic labs, although the Broad Institute in

Cambridge, Massachusetts is amongst the first customers.

This development could also bring down the cost to labs that outsource their sequencing, undercutting the price offered by competing company Complete Genomics by around 80%.

Another sequencing company, Oxford Nanopore (ONT), does not yet have a sequencer on the market, but caused a stir last year by announcing plans for the GridION, an affordable desktop sequencer that would deliver the \$1000 genome.

They also described the possibility of MinION sequencers that could fit into USB sticks. Using nanopore technology, a fundamentally different system from those currently available methods, these sequencers have been released on a trial basis but have error rates of around 1%, making them unsuitable for most applications.

As this is improved, however, it seems likely that ONT could become a rival to Illumina, who are developing their own nanopore-based method after selling their shares in ONT last November.

In 2012, David Cameron announced the 100k Genome Project, an ambitious project to sequence the genomes

of 100,000 individuals, many with genetic diseases, by the end of 2017. A total of £100 million was pledged to deliver this goal, meaning the falling cost of whole genome sequencing is a step in the right direction for this project. While Genomes England, the company set up to bring the 100k Genome Project to fruition, is not on the list of customers to have already ordered a HiSeq X Ten, the promise of \$1000 genomes at a fast rate seems tailor-made for them.

The decrease in sequencing cost is also promising for the field of personalised medicine. The risk of developing many diseases, such as cancer and diabetes, is to some extent determined by your genetics.

Additionally, some drugs only work in patients with certain genetic variants, while some variants are associated with increased risk of side effects with some drugs, including statins, a widely-used group of anti-cholesterol drugs.

In the future, your GP could use your genome sequence to help decide which medications to use, as well as to help determine whether you are likely to be at risk of developing a genetic disease.



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# Do you want brains with that?

Anand Jagatia takes a look at prions, the bad behaving proteins

**P** rions (rhymes with “neons”) are really interesting proteins. They can also be very dangerous. The name is a derivative of the words “PROtein” and “INfectious”, and as the etymology suggests, they cause a group of infectious illnesses, called “transmissible spongiform encephalopathies” (TSEs).

Encephalopathies are diseases of the brain, and spongiform comes from the fact that over time, tiny holes appear throughout the cortex of the victim – just like you’d see in a sponge.

Prion diseases are degenerative and always fatal. Probably the most famous example is the bovine variant, BSE, or “mad cow disease”. The UK epidemic of the disease, which began in 1986 and led to a ten year ban on the selling of British beef, was the result of feeding cattle the mashed remains of other slaughtered animals (including bones, brains and spinal cords). The feeding practices led to the spread of prions from infected to healthy animals and accelerated transmission of the disease.

Human forms of TSE come in

several varieties. In rare cases, mutations of the gene for prion protein may cause disease, but the majority of the time it is exposure to infectious prions is to blame. “Kuru”, a disease endemic to tribal areas of Papua New Guinea, is probably the condition with the most gruesome history – it is believed that the spread of the disease among the Fore tribe was due to the cannibalistic funeral rights practised by its members. The incidence of infection was found to be much higher in women and children, who were generally given the less desirable body parts to eat, including the brain, where most of the prion matter is concentrated.

Misfolded prions are also extremely stable and can’t be destroyed by heat, so cooking meat doesn’t prevent infection. Despite claims of the UK government during the BSE crisis that infected beef was completely safe to eat, there have been 175 reported cases of the human form of the disease in the UK since the ban. Most of these cases are thought to be linked to consumption of beef infected with prions.

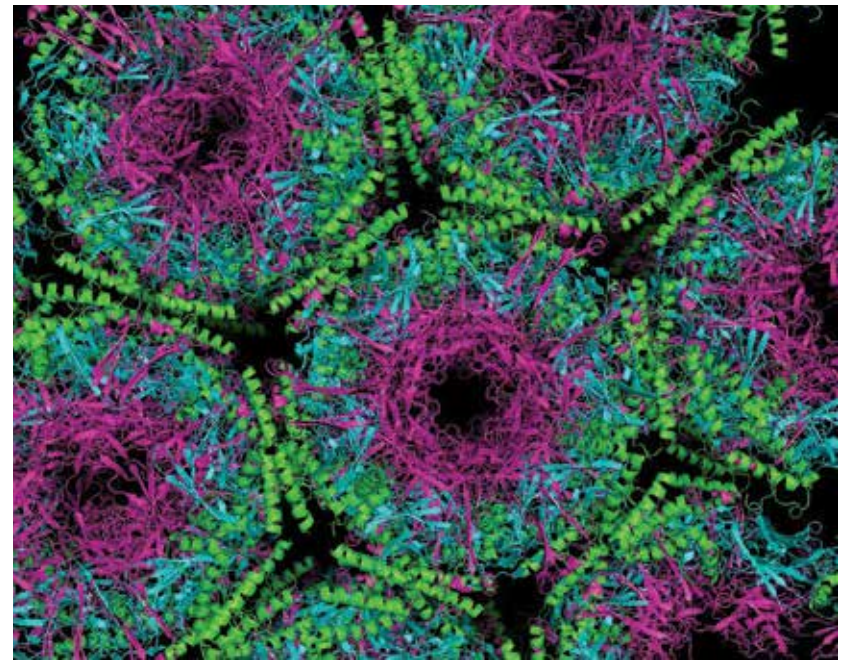
Scientifically, the puzzling thing

about prions is the way they replicate. Not all prions are infectious – the normal kind is found in many cells throughout the body, especially the cell membranes of neurons. But prions can also exist in a misfolded state, and this is the kind that leads to disease.

According to the popular scientific view, infectious prions can act as a scaffold for normal prions to misfold themselves, and this chain reaction causes the infection to spread throughout the brain.

Once misfolded prions are formed, they clump together in big chains called amyloid fibres, which are toxic to cells and cause them to die. The prion hypothesis is still controversial, because all other infectious agents, (like viruses) need RNA or DNA to replicate themselves, but it does seem that prions can be infectious without containing any genetic material.

To date, there has been little headway in explaining how all this might happen. Recently though, scientists from the Prion Biology Laboratory in Italy have made promising progress. Last week, the group published a



These prions may look pretty, but they can be deadly too

paper in the Journal of the American Chemical Society, outlining how they used small proteins, called nanobodies, to stabilise misfolded prions and then used X-rays to explore their structure.

For the first time, their research sheds some light onto the early stages in the mechanism of prion misfolding, which might be the first steps to understanding how these peculiar proteins are so deadly.

# Ancient traces of water found on Mars

James Bezer  
Science Writer

**F** or a vehicle designed to last just 7 earth weeks, Opportunity has done remarkably well. Ten years to the day since the rover first landed on the surface of Mars, its new analysis of some of the oldest rocks ever found there show environments potentially suitable for life were around on the planet much earlier than we previously thought.

The samples, estimated at over 4 billion years old, contained clay minerals, rich in iron and aluminium, that suggest the red planet may have been much warmer and wetter in the very distant past.

According to the mission’s Deputy Principal Investigator Ray Arvidson: “these rocks are older than any we examined earlier in the mission, and they reveal more favourable conditions for microbial life than any evidence previously examined by Opportunity.”

Since it landed in a crater on the Meridiani plains on January 25 2004, Opportunity has sent 170,000 images back to earth, alongside data from its two spectrometers, which can analyse the chemical composition of soil and air samples. Its many significant discoveries include the first meteorite ever seen on another planet, and soil layers similar to structures on Earth that appear to have been caused by the movement of wind and water in the distant past. It has also performed a detailed analysis of the Martian atmosphere through tracing of argon gas.

Opportunity has travelled 25 miles from its original landing site to the Endeavour crater, where its most recent results have come from. Its path has been guided by data from the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, a NASA satellite that can take highly detailed photographs of the planet’s surface.

Opportunity is one of a number of craft currently analysing the environment on Mars. Its larger cousin Curiosity, which landed in Gale crater in July 2012, has already

made significant discoveries. In December last year, it encountered evidence of a huge lake that existed around 3.5 billion years ago. Much like Opportunity’s recent discovery, the water had a neutral pH, and contained key elements vital for life on Earth, such as carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus, potentially making it an ideal place for microbes to live. The discovery prompted John Grotzinger, project scientist for Curiosity, to describe parts of Mars as “extremely Earthlike”.

So far though, while many potentially habitable environments have been found on the planet, no complex organic molecules – the building blocks of life on earth – have yet been detected. Such a discovery could provide the first direct suggestion that some forms of life may have existed there in the past: one of the key aims of Mars exploration.

Nobody knows how much longer Opportunity has left until its systems begin to stop working. Its twin, Spirit, which landed around the same time, stopped sending back information four years ago. Intense dust storms and



The Mars Opportunity rover has surpassed all expectations

MARS.NASA.GOV

huge temperature fluctuations make Mars an inhospitable location for any piece of technology. Many electrical components have stopped working, and one of its wheels is broken. But despite this, Opportunity’s condition has deteriorated relatively little recently, and it is fully expected to

keep going for another few years yet. “There’s more good stuff ahead,” said Steve Squyres, Opportunity’s principal investigator. “We’re examining a rock right in front of the rover that’s unlike anything we’ve seen before. Mars keeps surprising us, just like the very first week of the mission.”





# Shine bright like a vagina

Philippa Skett on the silver lining that is coming to a crotch near you

**W**hat's hard, metallic and found down your pants? Despite the common answer to this usually referring to some sort of recreational, copulation mimicry device, perhaps owned by a maternal figure, this time, the answer may in fact be an anti-viral cream.

A new cream containing silver nanoparticles is currently being developed that may control the transmission of HIV. After previous research demonstrated that silver particles can hinder entry of the Human Immunodeficiency virus into a cell, the idea to incorporate it into a cream to ward off the virus followed shortly after.

Researchers from the University of Texas have developed a vaginal cream that once applied, can take effect in less than a minute and can offer even offer protection for up to 72 hours. Not only that, but despite being targeted for vaginal application, because it effectively inactivates any traces of HIV, it can also protect any sexual partners too. It does this by essentially

disarming the way in which the virus transmits its genetic material, by halting its transmission through the cervical mucous membrane.

HIV is a retrovirus; it infects cells by injecting its own RNA genome into the target cell. The RNA is then used to make strands of corresponding DNA to incorporate into the genome of the host. This injection of RNA is only possible if the virus can adhere correctly to the cell membrane of the target cell, which for HIV is a subset of immune cells known as CD4 cells.

CD4 cells can have various functions, but are so-called because of the glycoprotein on their surface, called Cluster of Differentiation 4. This surface glycoprotein binds to another on the HIV surface, called GP120, which ensures HIV latches on to those immune cells to transfer its precious RNA cargo.

This is where silver comes in. Silver nanoparticles act as a microbicide, and attach to GP120 to block its adherence to other proteins. A novel feature of this HIV treatment is that it therefore doesn't actually act within

the host cell to tackle the virus, but can stop it in its tracks long before cellular infection.

The cream currently has shown signs of success when tested on samples of human tissues, but some issues still remain. Even if any inflammatory side effects of creams for such a delicate area are fully overcome, there still remains the costs of future clinical trials to consider too.

However researchers are hinting that the cream could be preventive of the transmission of many other sexually acquired viruses, like the Human Papilloma Virus, or even for bacterial agents that may also be stifled by silver nanoparticles.

However, the uses of the cream could outweigh the costs should it prove to be a success. Not only could the cream be used as a barrier during sex, but it could also be applied to gloves to protect those dealing with contaminated blood too, or for those in the medical profession to wear in surgery or clinics dealing with STI patients.

For now, the cream is still confined to the laboratory as opposed to the



The contents of your pants could one day look like this

IMAGES-OF-ELEMENTS.COM

bedside table. However, it may only be a matter of time before this life-saving

delivering not just protection but possibly a bit of class too: no-one can say no to some silver lining in thier pants.

**Do you find yourself sitting and waiting for the conversation to swing back to science?**



MAX HUNTER

Maybe you secretly love **science...**

Drop us an email – **science.felix@imperial.ac.uk**

And we will take care of you.



## Weathering the Storm

**Marissa Lewis**  
Wellbeing Editor



This week's wellbeing section is going to focus on cycling safety. In recent months, cycling has been in the news following a spate of deaths in London, many of which involved incidents between cyclists and heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). At the last meeting of the Union Council, the Union adopted a stance to lobby for improved cycling infrastructure as the lack of safe cycle routes is a problem for many of our students.

As a cyclist myself, I can say with confidence that cycling into College has a great number of benefits, not only for your physical and mental health but also your bank balance as you avoid the (ever-rising) TfL fares. However, it doesn't come without its drawbacks as, although I've been fortunate to have not been involved in any serious accidents myself, I can't say the same for my friends. I think one of the most difficult realisations that I've had since starting cycling is that no matter how competent you become on a bike, you can't control other people's actions and ultimately in a competition between a cyclist and a motorist, the motorist will always win.

Still, there are a few steps we can take, especially if we're just starting out, to help ensure our safety on the roads.



Cycling can make you look as cool as these guys

PA

# Top Tips for Cycle Safety

Many students pick up cycling on moving to Imperial, usually when they realise that there aren't many affordable student flats in South Kensington. The tips below are aimed at students who have recently started out cycling in London, so seasoned cyclists may want to look

### Practice makes perfect

Getting a bike for the first time as a Londoner can be exciting – you've just graduated into the lycra-clad elite. However, before you hasten out into rush hour in central London, it's a good idea to just have a quick practice around a quiet suburban area or park first. Make sure you don't venture out until you're comfortable raising either arm for a turning signal and you can look over your shoulder while still cycling in a straight line..

### Suit up

Ok, lycra isn't a necessity but it is true that cycling in winter can be rough – it's cold, it rains and the wind can be a nightmare. At a bare minimum you can make do with a lightweight waterproof you can stuff into a bag and a decent pair of gloves. A helmet and reflective clothing are both very good ideas from a safety standpoint although not legally mandatory.

### Beware the lorry

Lorries and other heavy good vehicles (HGVs) pose a significant danger to cyclists, mainly due to the size of their blind spot. For a really good demonstration, check this out: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9E1\\_1M-qhU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9E1_1M-qhU). The advice around HGVs is 'stay safe, stay back' and be particularly wary about passing on the left even if they are stopped at junctions.

### Be assertive

You may have seen the signs advising cyclists to ride a door's width from parked cars at bus stops around the Union. This seems like pretty sensible advice but on the narrow roads around South Ken, I'm sure I'm not the only one who's faced the odd impatient driver coming up behind you and making their presence known. Although it can be tempting to move right over to the left so they can try and squeeze past you, this is wrong. Cars should not be passing you if it is unsafe to do so - on narrow roads, you are within your rights to move into the centre of the road to prevent dangerous overtaking if you think it's necessary.

### Keep safe, be seen

Lights are a legal requirement for cycling in the dark and should also be used in the rain or when it is overcast. Good practice seems to be a steady front (white) light and either a steady or flashing (red) light with accompanying red reflector. Wearing light-coloured or reflective clothing also helps.

### Find your way

If you're new to cycling and are used to getting the tube or bus, you might not be aware of the most cycle-friendly way into College from your house. The site [www.cyclestreets.net](http://www.cyclestreets.net) allows you to plug in your start and end address and it will generate routes for you based on your need for speed or the quietest roads which is really valuable when you're starting out or travelling somewhere new.

### Get the BUG

Imperial College Union's Bike User Group is a project that represents and runs events for cyclists. You can check them out here: <https://www.union.ic.ac.uk/presidents/icbug/>. As well as providing advice, you can sign up to their mailing lists to hear about events such as the bike auction, Dr Bike sessions (mechanics that provide free checking and repair of bikes) and police marking when they take place on campus.

## What's On This Week in Stress Less

### Mindfulness Meditation - 4th & 11th Feb

An introduction to meditation not connected to religious tradition. Gives simple ways to practice meditation in daily life. Run by the Imperial College Chaplaincy team. All Stress Less events are free. There's no need to book - just turn up!

13.00 - 14.00 in Chplaincy multi-faith centre

### Meditation Made Easy Workshop - 5th Feb

De-clutter your head space with a meditation skill you can use at your desk, at home or before an exam. This session is run by Inner Space (meditation and personal development centre). It is anticipated to be popular so please arrive early to avoid disappointment

12.00-12.45 in Meeting Room 3 (Union Building)

### Stress Less workshop - 5th Feb

This quick session explores strategies to slow down, have more of a work-life balance and strengthen your stress response. This session is run by Inner Space (meditation and personal development centre). Keep calm and rise above it all. This session is anticipated to be popular so please arrive early to avoid disappointment.

13.00-13.45 in Meeting Room 3 (Union Building)

### Free massages in the Zen Lounge - 6th Feb

Drop in for a free massage, kick back and relax with our chill-out music. This is a work free zone. Massages are available between 12:00 - 16:00.

11.00-17.00 in Metric (Union Building)

### Drop-in Arts and Crafts session 12.00-14.30 UDH

Release your inner child with our fun arts & crafts session. Have a go creating fun thumb-print characters, a Valentine's Day card or a funky robot. Mathematical colouring-in will also be available. No artistic talent required (imagination optional).

12.00-14.30 in the Union Dining Hall (Union Building)



# COMMENT

Editors: Eoghan J. Totten, Tessa Davey  
comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



## International Developments

Hugo Paquet explores international development

There is little doubt that when development involves the empowerment of communities and spread of innovative ideas, lives will be changed. From the poorest of the poor to the war-torn regions of the globe, issues concerning people's needs and rights interlink each and every one of us. When the standard of living and quality of life suffers in the face of issues such as healthcare, food scarcity and education, then onlookers beyond borders must act. Contributing to international development is of paramount importance as we head into mid 21st century. From technology to policy or social movements, progressive reform can take many guises. The introduction of large-scale, low cost vaccination to lower infant mortality, or strains of crop designed to survive harsh conditions to provide agricultural livelihoods both exemplify actions that have lessened huge health and environmental burdens on developing countries. Yet, these reforms make the news for their scale and involvement of international governments. Dig below the surface and you'll find a whole host of progressive movements that are revolutionising the face of development. And most of the time these can be identified by three key features: community, technology and

the presence of youth.

On average, 60% of the population in the world's poorest countries are under 25 years old and are persistently affected by the problems that stem from poverty. From unemployment to HIV risk to poor governance, the problems that young people face are only exacerbated further by the fact that young people are frequently overlooked or excluded from the decision making practices that directly impact on their lives. Corruption within schools often means quality education is only available in exchange for a sex act, or a back hander, and for many young women there is often no other option than engaging in risky and exploitative activities. But when given the opportunity, young people can and young people do. Which is why, at the Imperial International Development Conference 2014 we want to turn the focus to the amazing things young people are doing globally to be recognised as the solution to many of the world's problems, and how young people are paving the way for change. Technology is also a huge driving force for change. From instant messaging, to mobile-phone based sexual health lessons and solar drive technology for refrigerating vaccinations, tech based solutions are helping to address some of the problems frequently encountered in developing countries.



## IMPERIAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2014

Harnessing Youth Power, Science & Technology for Global Change

Not only this but they are providing a tool to empower youth to be active participants in developing their country, to voice their opinions and ideas about economic growth, and to promote social stability.

On the 15th February, highly acclaimed academics in the international development arena, from leading universities, institutes and NGOs, will offer up an incredible

insight into the dynamic change that can result when youth, science and technology intersect. Centred on 'Harnessing Youth Power and Science & Technology for Global Change', a series of talks and panels will aim to reveal the true worth of youth empowerment and technological growth in developing countries. Prepare yourself for no holds barred question sessions, heated debates and inspirational speakers and expect

no less than to gain a huge amount of knowledge and to be swept up in the youth led revolution. You do not have long to wait either, as early bird tickets (until this Sunday!) are flying off the shelves. This is one event in the Imperial calendar that you do not want to miss out on!

Details of tickets and speakers at [www.imperialidc.org](http://www.imperialidc.org), [facebook.com/ICIDC](https://www.facebook.com/ICIDC), twitter @ic\_idc.

## In defence of Justin Bieber

Tessa Davey  
Comment Editor



I love Justin Bieber. There, I said it, I outed myself as a Belieber. I am a self-confessed fan of The Biebs. I know that this proclamation generally elicits a fairly strong reaction, but let me defend this view before you cast me out to the place where Directioners go to die.

So I'll start with his music. This is probably his weakest point, let's be honest. It's mostly pretty terrible, designed to draw out those girlish squeals from teenage girls. The vast majority of the songs that he releases in the States do fairly badly here; you never hear them on the radio or played in public places (except maybe TammyGirl, or wherever these just-about-pre-pubescent girls shop these days). Despite this, it's hard not to admit that some of his songs are distressingly catchy. You might find the vocals grating, but who doesn't love a bit of Baby (baby baby oh) now and again? The horrendously cheesy

video to Beauty and a Beat mars it a bit, but the inappropriate use of Nicki Minaj brings it back, and I'm pretty sure that his music triggers my serotonin production, it makes me happy. While I'm sure that conclusive proof is not priority research, I'm sure it's not just me that feels this way. Yes, it's painfully cheesy, but that's why it's so wonderful!

His merchandise is a demonstration of some of the most successful marketing in history. He's made millions from the ability to get little girls to fawn over his products. Every single item that bears his name is arguably horrible, but what it represents is magnificent. I can't help but admire someone who's managing to make a fortune and take over the world, purely based on the parental persuasion powers of little girls. Extending from that, he's so polarising that he's somehow managed to target the ironic market without damaging his success within it. Serious props to whoever managed to do that!

Yes, these things are part of the Bieber brand, not The Biebster himself. So what about him? The hardcore Beliebers might love him because he's

such a good person, but he's evidently not a great demonstration of good behaviour. He's been filmed with a Brazilian prostitute, arrested for racing supercars through the centre of Miami while under the influence of drink, drugs and prescription pharmaceuticals, and had a capuchin monkey confiscated at the German border. His fans regularly threaten and intimidate anyone who they perceive as a threat, and despite their obvious hysteria (at least calling it Bieber Fever sounds vaguely sinister), he hasn't taken any and all necessary steps to staunch his idolaters. Obviously he's not someone you should hold up as a shining example, but what nineteen year old is? Few teenagers ever come close to experiencing the levels of fame, money and power that he has. He's ignorant and completely removed from reality, and any mistakes he makes are magnified a thousand times. He exists in a world where everything he does is publicised immensely, but he is ultimately faultless. Everyone does stupid things when they're nineteen, but for most people the range of shame extends at most to a couple of degrees of separation.

I'm not saying you should love him for the same reasons that a besotted fourteen year old girl does; he loves his mom, he's proud of where he comes from, oh he's just like me, he loves candy too! But don't hate him because he does stupid things. His purpose is ultimately to entertain, and whether it's because you're fawning over him or ripping him to shreds, you're probably

enjoying it. Even if you don't declare it outwardly, let him have that little warm spot in your heart.

And face it; he's just damn cute! Look at that little face! Like a foolish, hapless puppy that keeps running into a window or barking at a mirror, I think he's adorable. I can't wait to see what ridiculous thing he gets up to next.





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COMMENT

# Sorry for droning on...

Christy Kelly  
Writer



**A**t the time of writing, the Guardian has just run an online story about Obama. It seems he is ready to bypass congress when it comes to his 2014 agenda. Dan Pfeifer, Obama's senior advisor for strategy appears particularly 'American' in the most pejorative European sense of the term: 'We need to show the American people we can get something done... the President is not going to tell the American people he will wait for Congress.'

“

**Where was it for all the various issues Obama spoke of that made us-on-the-left so delighted with the fashionable young black presidential candidate five years ago? Where was this single minded determination when it came to Guantanamo? Or the healthcare reforms? Or the economy?**

”

Suitably gung-ho for a president who saw a number of high profile gun crimes in 2013 and refused to use the word gun, even in his 'angry' and 'heartfelt' speech condemning these err, unspeakable, crimes. But then something struck me about this new gung-ho attitude... Where was it for all the various issues Obama spoke of that made us-on-the-left so delighted with the fashionable young black presidential candidate five years ago? Where was this single minded determination when it came to Guantanamo? Or the healthcare reforms? Or the economy? I thought the whole problem was that Obama was essentially a good guy but held up by all those blood-sucking Republicans? Didn't they shut down the government last October? If Obama had the powers of dictator-elect, why for heaven's sake (and this is coming from an atheist), didn't he use them then?

Clearly his plans for 2014 were bigger and better than such minor issues as stopping (direct) US torture or somehow making the efficient private-sector health service in the US better than Cuba's. Incidentally in 2011, annual government expenditure on healthcare amounted to over 17% of GDP in the US – something like

40 times total Cuban GDP, strangled as it has been for half a century by an economic embargo. What are these plans? We will find out in Obama's state of the union address on Tuesday (time of writing is Sunday 26th Jan) and needless to say I am breathless in anticipation. Barack the builder, can we fix it? Yes, we can!

Yet bizarrely enough, there seems to be a whole host of other things that Obama has done without the express approval of congress. No doubt many in senate would approve of the two American-backed coups in Honduras and Paraguay since Obama started office, and perhaps they even largely knew about it, but I fail to recall express approval of any such actions reported in the press. Similarly, the assassination of Osama bin Laden without trial was not something trumpeted to the world until after the

fact. Who in Senate knew about the numerous murders in Pakistan and Yemen in the deliberate campaign of war waged against farmers and children and other threats to 'national security'. Well everyone, this civilised practice of modern warfare was approved in the House. But who gets to judge exactly who gets, um, droned? Is there a vote every time a potential drone candidate is found? No; Obama has a 'constitutional' right to act as judge, jury and executioner.

For surely, Obama must be acting constitutionally? We may, err, disapprove of some of the more abstract and less appetising moral or ethical consequences of drone attacks, such as: is it really fair for soldiers to be able to kill targets from thousands of miles away without any risks to themselves? Is it surprising when those soldiers, from thousands of miles away, end up killing the 'wrong' people? But, I suppose, as I have argued before, ethical considerations are a luxury only affordable to the comfortable, and we shouldn't let such abstract scruples worry us when our very way of life is at risk from, um, Islamo-fascist fundamentalist evil Jew-demon monster people. Have you not seen Four Lions?

Because, to get back to the point, Obama, as a trained constitutional lawyer and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize must surely be innocent of any crime? Would an American President, the most powerful individual in the world, knowingly commit a crime? Nixon knows better:

“

**Do I argue that, while I may not approve of certain actions made by the US government they damn well ought to be democratically approved, constitutional and legal? No I don't. I can't imagine anything more stupid.**

”

it is simply 'impossible' to commit a crime as American President because that's the way democracy works. You voted for me so shut-up and quit whining. For four years I, as American President, have a God given right to assassinate, torture, extraordinarily render, and misabuse the English language. Since Clinton, I can even change the meaning of sex.

You see the US, by virtue of being the US, is allowed to kill people in other countries without trial. Especially if they are not white, though the good men and women (wouldn't want to be sexist – American women have the right to indiscriminately kill Arabs too!) of the CIA can get over their scruples if it is a matter of 'national security'. These matters transcend such petty things such as constitutional rights, as was clearly shown in the case of Anwar al-Awlaki,

radical Islamist American-Yemeni Imam suspected of terrorism – though actual evidence directly linking him to a terrorist attack is still forthcoming. Rest assured, he was guilty of thought crimes – he approved of suicide bombing – so he was 'really' a terrorist, even if he wasn't really a terrorist. I thus presume that Abdulrahman Al-Awlaki, al-Awlaki's son killed in a drone attack two weeks later at the age of sixteen while eating in a restaurant with his cousin and friends, was guilty of blood crimes. That is guilty by virtue of being the son of his father. The people criminal justice system will be glad to have found such a sure-fire way of making their jobs that much easier. And don't worry, even if there was no official backing from the Senate, the Senate's majority leader assured Candy Crowley on CNN that sixteen year old Abdulrahman got what he deserved.

Before I conclude, there are two things I would like to clarify. Firstly, I wrote about Abdulrahman and Anwar al-Awlaki because Jeremy Scahill has told their story and could do so because they were American citizens. Many of the less fortunate, those born in Pakistan or Yemen, are killed without so much as the tribute of an angry journalist, and certainly lack the exposure of the English language press. While the news can pick up on the tragedies that paint a nice picture about us (the fifteen year old Malala shot by regressive misogynist Islamist fundamentalists in Pakistan and saved in Britain) we are less likely to tell the stories that see us as the guilty party. Secondly, would things be better if the American Senate voted on each drone attack approved? Or more unlikely, if the people of America made the same decision? Do I argue that, while I may not approve of certain actions made by the US government they damn well ought to be democratically approved, constitutional and legal? No I don't. I can't imagine anything more stupid.

Alas, with the ineluctable passage of time we have lost the right to target whomever to those brash young Americans. May they bear it responsibly.





# COMMENT

Editors: Eoghan J. Totten, Tessa Davey  
comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



## On trains and privatisation

Keir Little  
Science Editor



**T**he British railway system is the biggest example of the failures of privatisation. I'm not old enough to remember the change, but I'm sure the arguments were the same as those touted today for the privatisation of other well-functioning institutions: "private companies will run an efficient service, and competition with each other will improve that service while driving down prices." This school-level economic argument hinges on consumer choice, but when it comes to transport, there is none.

I took the train home for Christmas. The Virgin Pendolino service got me there in an impressive two hours; however, even with a railcard and booking weeks in advance, it cost over £50. It was the first non-peak train of the evening, and was massively oversold. People were sitting on the floor, filling the aisles and blocking the doors. Going to the toilet was an exercise in jumping over legs and not treading on fingers. Filling a lecture theatre to such over-capacity

is dangerous and illegal, but on transport, it's seen as business as usual. Charging for a fast journey is something I can understand, but charging an eye-watering amount for overcrowding is despicable.

My friend who lives in Stoke can take the same train as me, or a quiet, cheap one that takes a little longer. I have no such choice: the Manchester to London journey, like so many other

commuter routes, is monopolised by a single company. No competition to drive down prices, no incentive to improve services.

Compare the London Underground, a truly public public transport system, and to some extent London's buses, managed by private contractors, but with fares and routes set by TfL. London's transport is not only faster, more frequent and more reliable than

other cities; it's also far cheaper. Tube trains may be crowded, but that's allowable on a ten minute journey, not a two hour one. This is no overpriced, inflated bureaucracy: it's a world-class transport system to be proud of. There's no reason public inter-city transit couldn't be the same.

The naivety of the privatisation argument doesn't end with trains, though: the examples are many. The

oligopoly of energy companies raise prices frequently and in sync with each other, happily resisting any political control. What point is there in having choice, if all the choices are near-identical?

The NHS is a particularly horrific case: now that the wide-scale use of private contractors is in its remit, it is subject to competition laws: hospitals have been prevented from merging; neighbouring NHS Trusts are forbidden from sharing resources; GP practices have been reprimanded for giving treatments to patients themselves rather than referring them to private clinics. This, all in the name of supposedly service-improving competition, and at great detriment to us, its patients.

Transport, energy and healthcare are all essential public services, the provision of which is completely at odds with the profit-driven nature of privatisation. Public services have no obligation to make a profit, nor do they need competition: they should be accountable to government, and ultimately to the public, not to shareholders. Unfortunately, with nationalisation being a dirty word to all of our major political parties, overcrowded trains and crumbling healthcare will be the norm for the foreseeable future.



THELINCOLNITE.CO.UK

## Confessions of a GTA: Part 9

Here, let me Google that for you... Actually, that's not our job

The GTA  
Anonymous



**T**his week's confession is pretty bad. Most of the time I enjoy GTAing. The students are nice and unusually polite, but in every class there are always students you try to avoid. These have been getting more frequent and must stop for our sanity. So here are a few you might recognise:

### The Safety Blanket:

These ones which catch GTAs like spiders in a web. "Could you help me start this one off?" is normally a sure sign. Once they snatch you, that's it, you are there to the bitter end of a question. No matter if they are doing great by themselves, they need the attention in order to be able to do any question. Their brains simply cannot work properly if there is not someone on hand to sort everything out. The

worst thing about these people is that they are normally quite good and their craving need for attention means other people who really are struggling miss out.

### The Impossible:

These people believe that if they cannot do the question, it is impossible. There is absolutely no point in checking their own work for mistakes or checking with a friend, because they are perfect and the question is wrong. Normally these will have breezed through any prior work to a session, because it was easy, but strangely none of their answers match those given.

### The Question Master:

There is always one in every year. They are the ones who ask the questions after a terribly boring guest lecture, which is useful, as to be honest, who can think of anything anyway? But during a marked lab or demonstration, it is not the time. Keep these burning questions for after, everyone else has to pass too.

### The Google it:

These are quite often well-meaning students, who simply are not doing enough work. They ask politely about something, but after about five seconds with them, it dawns on a GTA they know absolutely nothing about a subject. The worst of these are the packs, which fire off question after question about stuff they should have done at A level. Thus 'Google it' quite often comes to mind.

### The Aggressive/Argumentative:

"I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS". Students like this are the worst. I admit I met one yesterday and frankly felt I wasn't paid enough to deal with it, so I didn't. This is an immediate no brainer for a GTA. Raised voice, implying the GTA knows nothing or arguing pointedly with us will send GTAs running. Good luck with this tactic.

So please if you recognise yourself or anyone else, please stop. Even GTAs have a limit.



GTAs are not there to act as your comforting unicorn blanket.



# Spin

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**Metric**

Entry £2.50

**Spin the wheel 90s night**



[imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on)

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# Open Letter: Regarding the Residential Experience Review

It has recently been announced that the College has set up a consultation process to review the “residential experience” at Imperial, with the purpose of shaping the residential experience for students in College accommodation.

Halls of residence and wardening must be some of the most reviewed areas of College life, with a frequency that almost mirrors that of senior management changes. Even so, the purpose, timing and speed of this latest one seem rather alarming. You see, although one would expect that the purpose of any review is **to improve** (or better, make recommendations for) what it is that gets reviewed, this one seems to differ. It aims **‘to shape** the residential experience’ but at the same time excluding from the process those who are at present instrumental in delivering it, this being as far as I can recall the first residential **review without a single warden on the panel**. Announced days after the College’s announcement for the new President (Professor Alice Gast will succeed Sir Keith O’Nions when he retires in September 2014, to lead the college’s strategy, and as part of this to develop the new Imperial West campus and the College’s links to industry, philanthropists and alumni), the review is to be completed in time to be implemented for next year’s academic cycle. The residential experience affects all aspects of student learning and its importance to any institution’s strategy is well recognised; so what’s the rush? and while there are so many questions in the air:

*Who are the wardens? What do they do? Why do we still have them? Do we really need them? and similarly: What are the halls of residence for? Do we need them? What is the college running them for? and so on...*

How I would describe what our halls and wardening aim to provide is simple: **A HOME AWAY FROM HOME**. At Imperial, students come from all over the UK and overseas, some from small rural towns and villages, and can often find London and studying at Imperial hard to cope with. Most have left their homes for the first time; some are homesick and miss their families and friendship circles. Our halls at Imperial are living communities for first year undergraduates aiming to ease the transition from home to university, from living at home to living on their own.

Any accommodation a University offers cannot by magic become a learning community. There is a clear need for systematic effort to facilitate the multi-cultural/multi-disciplinary nature of a hall of residence, with students residing together and supporting each other, resulting in a greater sense of connection to the place and to the University. Historically the provision of wardening has been central to this. This is a model that emphasises living arrangements where subwardens and seniors live under the same roof, under the guidance of the warden, a member of the academic staff who also resides there.

At Imperial, we do not believe that it is possible to draw an artificial distinction between academic and personal problems. Academic difficulties may lead students to display antisocial behaviours in the residence, or to become withdrawn; personal issues may have a deleterious effect on academic performance. Because wardens and subwardens have all been through the university experience, they are able to reassure students that there are very few problems which can’t be solved if they are addressed soon enough, and that they themselves have probably experienced the same feelings of uncertainty and alienation, doubts about whether the course they are on is the right one for them, etc. A resident will often feel that s/he is the only person to suffer from a particular problem, and it can be a great relief to them to realise that this is far from the truth.

It is important that the warden or subwarden should not solve problems for the student, but should help them to discover how to do it themselves. Wardens and subwardens are required to have a comprehensive knowledge of the University’s regulations and support services and, crucially, to understand and identify the boundaries of their competence. They are not counsellors, doctors, chaplains, financial advisers, etc., but they know how to refer residents to those who are. Because wardens and subwardens are outside the resident’s academic line of authority, it is easier for him or her to approach them with any concerns. Confidential discussions may take place without the personal tutor or their department becoming involved; this may later be necessary, but frequently issues can be resolved in an informal chat with the warden or subwarden.

At the same time, we are trying to create a situation in which students can form social connections – friendships, mentorships. We’re trying to achieve a good balance between learning to be independent and also learning to live with other people. Part of the experience of living in halls is not to smooth every way for every student. The conflicts that are naturally going to arise around who left their dishes in the sink, or who is messy, who is neat, who is playing music, and who wants to study – all of those kinds of things are part of the skills those students are learning.

Of course, it’s not all about problems! Most students thoroughly enjoy their first year in College, the only year that they are guaranteed a place in halls. Theory says that the first year shapes their overall University experience and is what drives their overall connection to it. Studying at Imperial, as with many of the top Universities, comes with hard work, and people have to quickly reach a balance between their studies and the fun side of their ‘freedom’ away from family and home. Our role on this is to encourage students to channel their energy and enthusiasm into activities that do not conflict with their studies and which help them to relax, rest, make friends, and enhance their personal profiles as responsible young adults. All halls have hall committees; residents stand for election to these and, with the assistance of wardens and subwardens, organize the social, cultural and sporting activities of the hall. The election itself is a developmental experience, as students learn how to run the democratic process. The Committee ensures that activities are organised and amenities are managed in a way which reflects the wishes of all the residents of the hall. Annual dinners, trips abroad and parties in and outside the hall between other numerous diverse activities and events are organised... The committee also keeps an eye on the members of the hall, telling the warden or subwarden if anyone appears to be unhappy or unwell.

As wardens, we are here to facilitate a culture that aims to manage halls as lively communities rather than mere dormitories. Our overall aim is to work together with academic departments and College support to engage with students, merging their learning and residential experiences into a University one that they are proud of. Needless to say Imperial is not alone in offering this, to the contrary, the value of wardening provision is widely recognised by most Universities (all of the top ranking ones) as demonstrated by numerous benchmark surveys done by the College (the most recent ones in 2008 and 2011). Why the concern, then? you might ask; why be alarmed with another review?

In the past half-century we have also observed a different trend in some universities, as the need to house higher numbers of students at lower cost led to the erosion of the traditional halls of residence. As they became more centralised and bureaucratic, the oversight of campus life within them had been largely hived off from the faculty to a class of full-time residence ‘life managers’. However well-intentioned these officials have been, because they are detached from the academic structure of the university, evidence shows they have not been able to create meaningful educational environments for students. Even more noxiously, some universities have come to see campus residences as income-generating tools analogous to parking lots and vending machines. For more than a generation these deep structural flaws have cheated students out of the most important thing a university can offer them: sustained contact with their teachers in a rich and diverse educational environment.

With the danger of British education losing its appeal to international students, such systems are often heavily criticised for creating a real conflict particularly with the image of UK education sold abroad. For a long time the UK has been able to rely on the reputation of British education to keep applications rolling in. But competition has been intense. North American and Australian universities, many of which have gone back to residential systems, recruit aggressively throughout Asia, and in University rankings a strong performance from Asian countries has prompted warnings that the UK’s global success is at risk without greater investment to see off such “fierce competition”.

We have also seen luxury dorms becoming very popular for a while – rooms tricked out with all the amenities, like double beds, private bathrooms with

full tubs, gyms in the hall, a trend in my view, created by private providers to increase their market share, pushing institutional provision away from their monopolies and into areas of the market where they control the rules. On one side people say, *‘Well, the students come from a home where they have their own room and their own bathroom and they have their own everything’*. On the other side, the real question is what we offer so that they choose to live in halls. Our job is, as a university, to make the living situation so attractive and such an important and integrated part of the college experience that everybody is going to want (or want their child) to live on the campus, at least for a year. Institutions that turned halls into luxury hostels faced many problems, particularly as they ‘lost’ students in their rooms, limiting the ways for the University to interact with them or to know what is happening there: people may be having huge parties in their suite or else getting totally isolated in front of their PCs. That should have been educational common sense in advance, particularly with reference to first year students, but when universities place marketing come-ons to students – “we give you what you want” – ahead of educational objectives, it isn’t surprising that the result is disappointing.

In this ‘race to quality’ it quickly became clear that student accommodation is more than that. Recognised as an important part of the educational process, the last few years saw the return of wardening systems in both University and privately owned halls trying to challenge the non-monetary value of institutions’ historic monopoly on providing pastoral care, support, security and sociability. The 2009-10 NUS/Unipol Costs Survey concluded that *“when universities enter into agreements with commercial operators to provide student housing, they should find it important (as many do already) to ensure that the level of service and support students receive is in line with that provided by the institution”*. The ANUK Code for Educational Establishments (2008) similarly addresses the need to ensure that tenants clearly understand who is responsible for student care, with **appropriate residential presence** required in any residential development, which houses in excess of 150 students. Furthermore, the latest NUS/Unipol Accommodation Costs Survey (2013) is revealing in terms of the significant increases in the availability of student bed spaces in the UK being private sector-provided, increasing from 4% under 10 years ago (in 2003) to 39 % (79% of the 18,607 bed spaces that came on line in 2013). In light of this, the report warns: *“It would be easy for institutions to lose sight of what they are actually selling students in letting their own accommodation... If education institutions start to look like private suppliers, they stand to lose at least some of the market advantage which has traditionally come from student perceptions of the security that attaches to renting directly from an education institution. If this happens, students will bypass the accommodation office and rent directly from a supplier. There is evidence that this is already happening ...”*

There has been **one** University that recently replaced wardens. In 2011, a team of 28 ‘Resident Support’ Staff (with no reference to ‘pastoral care’ or ‘duty of care’ in their job descriptions) replaced 82 wardens at the University of Southampton, with staffing costs, at £824,000 per year, similar to the cost of providing accommodation to the 82 wardens lost. All views were taken into account but did not determine the outcome of the decision (which was to be reviewed after two years). In the words of the director who took it, it was a decision “not based on a democratic vote in the RSS nor by University wide consensus” but was **“an informed business decision”**.

This raises another serious implication when Universities shape the residential experience. Looking at the provision of student services at different Universities, institutional choices in treating students as customers or learners play a significant role in how students ‘realise’ the educational, residential and overall university experience. While we might argue that students are both customers and learners, the dividing line between the two has become dangerously blurred. Since the introduction of the ‘Blue Cube’ as a concept, a building and a management structure at Imperial, many share the view that it feels as if the Faculty has passed all power to central administration, and although this could have worked, the dichotomy created with the introduction of the *Hub* blurred even more the lines of decision making between *College administration and Campus Services*.

As a current subwarden and ex-president of the Union said earlier this year in his letter to the Rector, in reference to the changes in cleaning offered in halls **‘Whilst the central administration might not see students as cash-cows, the Commercial Services certainly do (re-branding to ‘Campus Services’ fools no-one – the whole ethos of the department, not just the name, needs to change before any noticeable effect is felt)’**. Strong words coming from students, but really not much of a reaction from us. In my view, there is going to be a point where a University really must decide whether it is just another service provider or a community of scholars, and I think we have reached the point where we need to make that choice now. University experience and student satisfaction are not the same. Student satisfaction is of compelling interest to universities as they seek to continually improve the learning environment for students, meet the expectations of their constituent groups and legislative bodies, and demonstrate their institutional effectiveness, but unlike service industries, which hold satisfaction as a goal in and of itself, universities typically perceive satisfaction as a means to an end. Higher education tends to care about student satisfaction because of its potential impact on student motivation, retention, recruitment efforts, and fundraising.

On top of the above, one has to consider how Imperial, an international university which provides rigorous, intensive, and research-led degree courses in science, engineering, medicine and business, located in London, with one of the largest estates of any higher education institution in the UK, is different in many respects from other Universities. For example, there is much rhetoric about the link between research and education. Indeed, at Imperial we believe it is essential to encompass and excel in both. However, there are might be many fine teaching-only institutions that offer students an excellent education, but the fact that an institution produces world-class research does not mean that its pedagogy will be research-led: peer interaction is critical, and the environment in which students learn important. Here, a residential experience has most to offer. Education does not stop at the end of a lecture or tutorial: it continues through debate with one’s peers or students of different disciplines socialising in the hall. This is one of our halls’ unsung but great strengths. Again, if one looks at the institutions that regularly top the world rankings, they all have similar attributes: high-quality research, outstanding students (like ours) and a residential experience that enhances both research and education. Although other types can do well in the rankings, the evidence suggests that they do not make it to the very top.

With the recent development of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in higher education, and the prospect that technology could fundamentally change how education is delivered, it is even more critical to understand the link between the residential experience and the academic one. We might still be a long way from being able to train students to be scientists and scholars by online instruction, but the scalability and economic efficiency of online education is already causing a paradigm shift, with a new kind of mission for top universities. The leaders of Harvard and MIT that founded edX were quick to review implications to the residential experience in the future. After the launch of edX, the presidents of both Harvard and MIT emphasized that their focus would remain on the traditional residential experience. *“Online education is not an enemy of residential education”*, said MIT president Susan Hockfield. Yet this statement doesn’t hold true for most less-wealthy or middle range universities. At institutions like Harvard, large investments are under way not only to create the online courses of the future but also to renew the College’s residential Houses as places for students to live, interact, and learn. The recently renovated Quincy building, which now houses about 180 students, has two new elevators and internal corridors connected horizontally creating a new way for resident tutors to relate to their student neighbours and advisees, and for students to interact with each other. With several kitchen-equipped suites in the building for resident tutors; the vision for many improvements was to bring core academic activities into the House: its state-of-the-art smart classroom was championed by Michael D. Smith, dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, member of the HarvardX leadership committee and member of the board of directors of edX.

Whether the predictions of how education will look in the future prove right, nobody knows. The only way to predict the future is to have the power to shape it. In that respect, I hope that the on-going review will open rather than close the doors to the necessary discussion we need to be engaging in now. Imperial has a great history of residential experience and urgently needs to have its accommodation provision realigned with its academic mission. The review process could start by understanding who we are before deciding what we can be. The potential for Imperial to place itself amongst those top Universities that will lead the future, is here, and it’s the choices we make now that will determine if we will be able to reach it. Shaping the residential experience for the College is critical. Everyone should engage in this discussion. As long as decisions are not being taken for us, and we are all involved in the process, we should be able to shape our future and have nothing to fear.

\*Dr Nick Voulvoulis is the Warden of Southwell & Bernard Sunley Hall, and Reader in Environmental Technology at the Centre for Environmental Policy. He has been the Warden of Southwell Hall since 2003 and Southwell & Bernard Sunley since 2011 when the halls merged. He was Subwarden and then Assistant Warden in Garden Hall from 1997 and till 2003 when he moved to Southwell. He was the Chairman of the Wardens’ Committee between 2003 and 2011, and is currently responsible for ‘Legacy and Alumni’ for the Committee.



# Camembert all with us at CheeseSoc

Every Thursday in Metric, 12:30 - 1:30





# COMMENT

Editors: **Eoghan J. Totten, Tessa Davey**  
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**This week we eschew the common editorial model to write the following:**

# Write for Felix

**It's really not as hard as it looks,  
see:**



**We're really keen to get more people on board, whether expert writers or first timers! Come on and give it a go!**

**#ironicYOLO**





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ARTS

# AMAZING, IN CAPITAL LETTERS

Clara Clark Nevola

Writer

**What:** King Lear  
**Where:** National Theatre, SE1  
**When:** 23rd January to 28th May  
**Price:** Various

**A**s I sat down in my plush theatre seat, tucking my kiddo school bag under my legs, I suddenly felt very small. Everything about the evening ahead of me seemed designed to dwarf me: the cavernous Olivier theatre, the word famous director Sam Mendes of *American Beauty* fame, the BAFTA winning Simon Russell Beale in the main role and, of course, the play itself - *King Lear*. More than 400 years old, it has been performed in all the major theatres on the globe and has been interpreted by the greatest actors in Britain, both on stage and on screen.

So it was with trepidation that I leant back in my seat for the three hour performance. And, almost immediately, I forgot my qualms as I became enveloped in a complex, dark and captivating world.

For those of you who are struggling to remember which of the many Shakespeare plays *King Lear* is let me give you a quick lowdown. Lear, King of Britain, is getting old so decides to

divide his kingdom between his three daughters based on how much they love him.

The eldest two (think Ugly Sisters from Cinderella) start proclaiming their love, while Cordelia, the youngest, answers honestly but with no exaggerations, stating that she loves him as a daughter. Lear gets angry, disowns Cordelia and send her off, penniless, to marry the king of France. The Ugly Sisters pop off to enjoy their new kingdoms, refusing to host their dad and all his rowdy knights. Lear's slightly losing the plot by now so he strops around having fights with everyone and ends up falling out with all three of his daughters and many of his close friends. Not good. Add to this a side-plot of the Earl of Gloucester being tricked into disowning his son on the advice of his illegitimate son and you've got quite a lot to be going on with.

The beauty of this production is that at no point you'll be scratching your head wondering who's who and what is actually happening. Mendes has created a seamless production - a perfect production. The stage set is minimal but effective, creating a dark world which gradually disintegrates under civil and international war.

Playing on the strong 20th century imagery of refugees and military dictatorships, stage designer Anthony Ward uses the vast Olivier theatre to its full potential, with groups of soldiers and civilians tramping

around wearily with suitcase and sleeping bags throughout the performance, helicopters and military planes roaring overhead.

The cast is amazing. Am I allowed to use capitals for that? It's AMAZING. It's so rare to see a cast in which every single character is strong and real and doesn't over dominate the stage. Russell Beale is an outstanding Lear: despotic in his military, unpredictable manner but touching in his self-aware ageing. He creates a Lear that we can all relate to, the dementia ridden old man, refusing to give in to his age.

But Mendes again works his magic by making this production a snapshot of life, rather than a play about a man. You will witness the unravelling of a State, a court and a family, with the effects this has on every person involved. And in the three hours betrayal, madness, age, loss, poverty and homelessness will dominate the stage, with faithfulness, filial love and forgiveness fleetingly counterbalancing the scenes.

From its origins, this is what theatre has been all about. Bringing life, a life you cannot or might not want to experience, to a place where you can do so fleetingly - the stage.

Here you'll experience a dark, war-revenged, gory world full of death and betrayal but you will experience it so incredibly vividly that as you make your way along the South Bank on leaving the theatre you'll blink, amazed, at the happy, shiny London that meets your eyes.



MARK DOUET

# Russel Tovey shines in The Pass

Christopher Hong

Writer

**What:** The Pass  
**Where:** Royal Court, SW1  
**When:** 13th January - 5th March  
**Price:** £20, £10 Mondays

**W**ith the latest revelation from Thomas Hitzlsperger, and Tom Daley's recent announcement that he is in a gay relationship, the topic of high profile sportsman and homosexuality is currently much discussed. This new play by John Donnelly is set over a 12 year period of a professional footballer Jason's career. It begins on the evening before his first appearance for the team, sharing a hotel room with a fellow debutant and friend Ade. Their relationship is perhaps something



MANUEL HARLAN

more than just friends and teammates. A few years later, at the height of Jason's footballing fame and success, he spends an evening with a table dancer in a hotel room with dubious intentions. In the final act, Jason invites Ade to catch up in his hotel room where he is living, having sepa-

rated from his wife. By then, his star has waned and he is battling with injuries, looking for a club that will take him for a final season or two.

At first instance, it can be seen as a play about a gay footballer having to conform to a heterosexual footballer stereotype, ending up being dissat-

isfied about his life despite his footballing achievements. But the play covers a wider scope and looks much deeper at the role of money and success, especially how it enables one to control and manipulate the media and those around.

The play explicitly draws on the example of Jimmy Savile as to the extent of the appalling behaviour which some of the rich and famous get away with. All these are handled in the play with great skill, mixing subtle look and gesture with overt excess in confrontations and debauchery. Although the writing occasionally wanders and becomes distracted with details, it soon snaps back to its core message and story.

The direction by John Tiffany incorporates his usual choreographed scene changes performed to music with a heavy beat. The arrangement of the audience on the opposite sides of the central stage alludes to a football stadium, and provides some interesting possibilities for the audience to choose their focus when

performers are on either end.

The choice is not always an easy one with the excellent cast. Russell Tovey is outstanding as Jason, managing to convince as the youngster full of innocence and optimism in the first scene. It is also played with suggestions of thoughtfulness that enable him to transform believably into this calculating and cold monster in the subsequent acts. Gary Carr's Ade is understated and mellows as years go by. Lisa McGrillis plays the WAG type dancer with a mix of strength and vulnerability and at the same time, holding onto a degree of dignity. Nico Mirallegro stands-out playing the smaller role as the off duty hotel worker Harry, joining in with Jason's excesses. Mirallegro's story of a stag party in Krakow is beautifully delivered.

This is a thoughtful look of modern celebrity culture and observations on the topical subject about machismo of sport. It is delivered with wit and craft, with a good dose of danger and tension.



# FASHION

Editor: **Cécile Borkhataria**  
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# A little something for the boys

## The banker stlye is back again. Time to get rid of your topman gear and channel your inner Patrick Bateman.

**Cécile Borkhataria**  
Fashion editor

If you're like most people who love the cinema, you've probably seen the Wolf of Wall street by now. Most girls I've spoken to thought it was shocking yet so entertaining, but when I talk to guys about it they say they they're absolutely mad about it. They WANT to be Jordan Belfort and live that raucous plane orgy, cocaine snorting, prostitute ringing exhuberant lifestyle that he did. Well, I can't teach you how to become a billionaire banker wanker, but I can certainly show you how to dress like one.

### Yacht-cation

All work and no play may apply to Imperial, but not in the banking world. When the work day is done, play hard on your yacht: here are your style essentials



Navy pinstripe Italian Wool Suit Jacket , £230.00, Banana Republic  
Matching trouser, £120.00, Banana Republic



Marks and Spencer, £59.00



Sartorial pure wool 2-button dinner suit, Marks and Spencer, £199.00



Slim fit mesh polo, Ralph Lauren £65.00



Slim fit chinos, uniqlo £29.90



Fine oplin shirt, uniqlo £19.90



Argyle Sutherland repp slim Tie, Brooks Brothers £79.50



Classic Khaki straight fit in pool, Gap, £39.95



Slim secret wash shirt in autumn coral, J.Crew, £65.00



Pleated front slim fit dress shirt, mytuxedo.co.uk, £24.99



2-eye boat shoe, Timberland £100.00

### In the office

Look smart in the office (or at that job interview) in a pinstripe suit. Team it with a basic white shirt and statement tie and people will start mistaking you for Gordon Gekko in no time.

### The shoe makes the man

These black dress shoes are a multi purpose winner and can be worn for a formal work setting, pesky assessment centres, fancy dinners, parties, and for post work cocktails. Invest in a good quality pair and you wont regret it because you'll be wearing them all the time! A top tip would be to keep them polished and looking shiny whenever you wear them. Leather polish is relatively inexpensive but makes shoes look brand new everytime you theyir worn.

### Casual drinks

The art behind a smart casual look is all in light colours. Team some casual chinos' with a light coloured blazer and you'll look like you belong in a Ralph Lauren ad in no time.

### Tuxedo time

Every aspiring, dapper man needs to have a tuxedo in his closet for the numerous dinners and parties he'll be going to for corporate functions. If you're running low on cash for your usual Boss tuxedo, have no fear! M&S offer great reasonably priced options.

### Accessory essentials



Marcella silk self tie bow tie, Thomas Pink, £45.00  
Medallion print pocket square, Hackett, £40.00



Loake leather lace up brogue, Dune, £150.00



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## MUSIC

Editor: **Simon Hunter,**  
**Riaz Agahi, Stuart**  
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# Deer Tick (but no Lyme Disease)

Stuart Masson reviews the alt-country band's Garage performance

I have managed to catch Providence based alt-country act **Deer Tick** a couple of times at festivals before. I allegedly first caught them back in 2010, although the performance was unmemorable to the point where I actually have no memory of the set. Of course, this could well not be indicative of the quality of the performance; I have forgotten any number of mid-afternoon festival sets over the years.

The second time I caught them was a few years later, and at an even more ridiculous time. They were doing a secret set at 3am in the smallest tent. To describe them as drunk would be an understatement, for which, given the time they started, I really can't blame them for. I was stewarding at the time, so I was (fairly close to) sober during the set. This means I remember with 100% clarity the end of the set, where singer John McCauley played



Unfortunately I couldn't find any knob pics

the guitar with his penis. Not even slightly kidding. Genitals aside, the set was incredibly good fun. I would say I've never enjoyed sobriety at 3am so much in my life.

I was therefore really excited to catch them again at the Garage in Islington last week. I should probably put a disclaimer here that I am by no means an alt-country expert. My knowledge is limited to about three bands I've seen at festivals and thought were pretty good. This meant that the crowd for this gig was not quite what I'm used

to. The average age was definitely a lot higher than my own, and the percentage of men with beards and plaid shirts was mind-boggling. This meant that the bar was a lot busier than at the majority of gigs (apparently old people have lots of money to spend on drinks for themselves and Jägermeister shots for strangers), and so, after a painfully long wait, my friend and I finally managed to get ourselves a pint and settle in for Deer Tick.

The crowd were definitely pretty drunk again, but the band seemed to be a lot more sober. This is most obviously attributed to their more sensible stage time, but they do have a reputation. It might not be cocks slapping strings every show, but they are well known for rowdiness. The more subdued set might be down to the presence of John's wife, pop-singer **Vanessa Carlton**, who even came on to perform her duet with the band, *In Our Time*, although I admit that meant

very little to me until I googled her. The two got married last December with **Stevie Nicks** of **Fleetwood Mac** officiating the ceremony. I couldn't think of a way of seamlessly dropping that in, but come on, Stevie fucking Nicks. That is knowledge worth having awkwardly shoehorned in.

The actual music was up to its usual quality. Renditions of early fan favourites *Dirty Dishes* and *Ashamed* went down an absolute treat. The newer tracks were also generally well received, including excellent performances of *The Dream's in the Ditch* and *The Rock*. It was definitely further incentive for me to give the new album a proper listen.

The undoubted highlight for me was a performance of *These Old Shoes*. Taken from their 2007 debut album, *War Elephant*, it has long been my favourite Deer Tick track, and live it's even better.

The whole thing just felt like some-



Deer Tick's latest album, *Negativity*

thing was missing. I mean, it was a good show, but I can't help but compare it to the brilliance of the last time I saw them, but this felt a little flat. Maybe it was the more subdued nature of the band, maybe it was the atmosphere, maybe it was the new album, maybe it was me. Whatever the case, this time the stars didn't align, and I couldn't help but feel slightly disappointed.

## AMS album of the week

### Bastions – Bedfellows Part 2: The Forgotten Daughter

Ed: OK, so technically this week it's EP of the week rather than album. Sorry.

Since releasing *Kingdom of Dogs* in 2009 and *Island Living* in 2010, Welsh four piece **Bastions** have showcased a talent for writing bleak, arty and desperate songs, a talent they expanded on for their 2011 full length release *Hospital Corners*. Whilst previous releases have been conceptually driven (*Island Living* is based on living in a small town and *Hospital Corners* is based on Bastions' vocalist's experiences working in a mental asylum), none have been as bold as their two part *Bedfellows* series.

Released in two parts (started with 2013's *The Bastard Son*), it tells a story of two siblings unable to cope with being abandoned by their father. Partially based on the institutionalisation of vocalist Jamie Burne's grandmother, the two EP's delve into the mental health issues faced by the siblings. Despite being released a whole year apart the two parts work well together, both conceptually and musically, with the ep's arguably representing Bastions finest work.

*The Forgotten Daughter* shows a grittier side to Bastions sound. Beginning with the brooding and swaggering *Empty Vessels*, contrasting Burne's poetic lyrics with bluesy guitars building to shouted climax. *Foreign Bodies*, *Mothers Ruin* and *The Water Tower* follow showing a nastier side to Bastions sound with *Foreign Bodies* and *The Water Tower* featuring drumming that wouldn't be out of place in a **Cursed** or a **Cursed** record. *Mothers Ruin* plays verses featuring almost droning guitar lines against choruses which feature Burne's thin vocal style at its most desperate.

The EP doesn't slow down until the fifth and final acoustic led track. Featuring a slow distorted guitar riff and again building to a climax before dying down to close the EP.

While no means a perfect EP, *Bedfellows Part 2* showcases a band not content with writing lazy drone riffs and utilising predictable beatdowns to satisfy mosh bros but willing to push the artistic limits of the hardcore genre.

Rob Garside



## Raving on About Mogwai Going to Shit

Stuart Masson  
Music Editor

Rave is not a word I would ever have associated with the music of **Mogwai**. As people, it makes a bit more sense. They has always been a certain distance between them and the more pretentious attitudes most post-rock bands employ. On a Mogwai album, you won't find made-up languages (I'm looking at you **Sigur Rós**), songs about bizarrely specific historical events (**iLiKETRAiNS**, and I could have picked on the stupid typesetting as well) or any of the myriad of pretentious bullshit **Godspeed You! Black Emperor** do. Mogwai have always insisted they just make rock music. During live performances, they talk about football and other bloke stuff in between songs. The idea of them going to raves doesn't sound completely nonsensical. Either they don't go to raves, they are so out of it at said raves that they don't know what happened or they just didn't put that much thought into their album title, because this isn't suitable music for raves. This is the same post-rock they've been chugging out for years.

Mogwai's first three records, *Young Team*, *Come on Die Young* and *Rock Action* were all fantastic slices of innovative exciting post-rock. Their fourth, *Happy Songs for Happy People*, is an absolutely beautiful record, and stands as one of my all time favourite

post-rock records. It was here that things took an inevitable down turn. 2006's *Mr. Beast* features most of the bands best known tracks, and is certainly a really good listen. It's not exactly groundbreaking though, and marked the point at which Mogwai seemed to stop caring about being ahead of the scene. Their albums up to this point stood in contrast to the vast majority of post-rock, but from *Mr. Beast* onwards that stopped being the case.

In the years following that we've had *The Hawk is Howling* and *Hardcore Will Never Die, But You Will* and now this one, *Rave Tapes*. They are all serviceable albums, but they're all quite post-rock by numbers. Once you've listened to *Mr. Beast*, or you know, **God is an Astronaut**, you've kind of covered the territory. I'm not a fan of bands who just keep releasing the same material but slightly worse each time. If you're going to start releasing poor albums, at least take a risk, and that's something Mogwai don't seem willing to do any more.

I suppose I should say something about the music on *Rave Tapes*. It's adequate. In fact, the opener, *Heard About You Last Night* is a really nice track. With some ambient leanings, it reminds me slightly of the aforementioned *Happy Songs* which is a great thing (I appreciate how bitter I'm starting to sound, I've no intention of keeping it in check). The spoken word sample in *Repelish* makes for a fairly refreshing listen, whilst *Hexon Bogon* is legitimately a pretty tasty



post-rock number.

The rest of the songs here aren't really anything to write home about. The main innovation that came with *Mr. Beast* was the addition of vocals on a few tracks. They kind of worked there. Sadly, that is no longer the case. The only track here that has singing, *Blues Hour*, is a dreary pile of shit. The rest of the tracks are just forgettable. It's a shame, because I still have quite a bit of space to fill, but there's really nothing I have to say about them. I mean it's also a shame because this is a band who I have loved for many years, and this has just bored me.

Mogwai are still a credit to British music. I would certainly still recommend going to see them live. They are always loud as fuck, which makes even their most mundane material sound a bit more exciting. They also still play loads of their old stuff. On record, it's getting to the point where me recommending them is going to have to come with the standard hipster caveat: start with the early stuff.



## Student Picks

**Eva Rosenthal picks:**

The White Review: *a literary magazine*

The White Review publishes a selection of new, experimental fiction and poetry as well as interviews with writers, visual artists and musicians. I must admit that I was initially drawn to the magazine itself as merely an object: the style integrates beauty and simplicity and... oh the paper! Yes, the design would almost make up for boring, commonplace pieces. Not that it needs to.

The first piece in the first copy I picked up was preceded by a black-and-white photograph of a man, dead in the snow, with arms outstretched and hat lying several feet away from him. The semi-fictional account that followed, on the death-moments of the writer Robert Walser interspersed with thoughts about hats on heads that would soon be rolling, was written with a tenderness and pathos that stayed with me as little twenty-first century fiction had before. I have since read in The White Review many insightful, searching interviews that go beyond the scope of what one might find in newspapers or even in the slew of 'pretty', modern magazines. I am by no means in love with every piece of fiction and every poem in the magazine, but their experimental nature and the way they surpass in thought the mundanity and dullness of most contemporary fiction makes them worth the effort.



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# Neil Gaiman's Sandman

**Maciej Matuszewski** explores one of the best and most influential graphic novels

Comic books and graphic novels have a, not entirely undeserved, reputation for not being the finest example of modern literature. Poor plotting, tired characters and woeful dialogue still continue to plague the medium. However, there have always been a small number of creators – such as Alan Moore, Warren Ellis and Neil Gaiman – who have been held in much higher regard than their compatriots and who have managed to elevate the medium into a respectable art form. Of these, I have always admired Gaiman the most. This is partly due to his versatility – as well as working on comics he is an acclaimed novelist and screenwriter – but mainly because of his amazing writing talent. This talent is on fine display in one his earliest and most enduringly popular works, *The Sandman* series.

Nominally set in the standard DC universe, *The Sandman* graphic novels expand its mythology by creating the Endless – immortal anthropomorphic personifications of the seven basic driving forces of life and the universe. These are Destiny, Death,

*“Destiny, Death, Destruction, Despair, Desire, Delirium and our protagonist, Dream... Morpheus”*

Destruction, Despair, Desire, Delirium and our protagonist, Dream, also known as Morpheus. The story begins with our protagonist captured by human magician Roderick Burgess. The first sections of the story deal with Morpheus' eventual escape and the consequences the consequences of the imprisonment of the Lord of Dreams on the universe. As the story progresses, however, Gaiman gets the chance to explore the world of *The Sandman* further. World building is one of Gaiman's great strengths. As in several of his other works he draws heavy inspiration from many different mythologies and cultural traditions. He takes great pleasure in mashing together ideas as diverse as Judeo-Christian mysticism, Egyptian mythology and English folklore. This is a world in which different divine pantheons compete for worshippers and fairies coexist with ancient Greek witches and eastern djins and ifrits. Building on an existing foundation allows Gaiman's creation to be far deeper than would otherwise have been possible and the combination of the various disparate elements gives lends it colour and a bizarre uniqueness.

One might think that, with so many competing influences, the result might



be big mess. However, this is certainly not the case here. Morpheus is the Lord of Dreams, and therefore also the Lord of Stories. On a certain level the entire series is an exploration of humanity's fascination with stories. It therefore seems natural that to explore such a wide range of ideas.

The main reason, however, why all of this works, is that Gaiman is such a brilliant writer. He skilfully juggles multiple plots and – thanks to his crisp, witty dialogue and complex characters – manages to make every one of them individually interesting. While many of these plots initially start out disconnected, Gaiman's great achievement is eventually drawing them all together in a way that provides a satisfactory resolution to all of them. I won't spoil the ending but I will say that its focuses centrally on the characters of the Endless. While they are,

quite rightly, strange and otherworldly, over the course of the series we begin to get to know and care for them. Their growth and development, and how this links to the growth and development of the forces that they are personifications of, is at the heart of *The Sandman* – and this is the series' greatest strength.

*The Sandman* is one of the best and most influential graphic novels out there. It has spawned many of spin offs and influenced countless fantasy works. Even the list of fans of the series who have contributed introductions to the collected editions of *The Sandman* – among the Samuel Delany, Gene Wolfe and Stephen King – reads like a who's-who of the best modern speculative fiction authors. This is a must read.





# Jack Steadman vs. Jack Ryan



## Jack Steadman

Treasured Writer

### Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit

**Director:** Kenneth Branagh  
**Writers:** Adam Cozad, David Koepp, Tom Clancy (characters)  
**Starring:** Chris Pine, Keira Knightley, Kevin Costner, Kenneth Branagh  
**Runtime:** 105 minutes  
**Certification:** 12A



The latest entry in the Jack Ryan franchise (a character who shares with James Bond and The Doctor the habit of being played by multiple different actors with varying degrees of respect for previous iterations) punches the big red 'reboot' button – for the second time, with *The Sum of All Fears* taking the same road over a decade ago, only this time it doesn't even bother to use one of Tom Clancy's many novels as inspiration. Nope, for the second reboot in a row (which should really be telling Hollywood something, but whatever – money talks, and *The Sum of All Fears* made a lot of it), we're treated to a brand spanking new, original story. Oh, how I wish they'd used one of the books.

There's little point in beating around the bush, and *Shadow Recruit* certainly doesn't, so here goes: the story here is terrible. There are almost no redeeming features. It's dull, it's uninspired, it's so patently predictable and by-the-numbers it's just (painfully) funny. The script features some of the most painfully on-the-nose dialogue since pretty much forever. The

opening line, the opening line, I tell you, comes from a student who says, quite simply: "You're American, aren't you? I'm sorry, mate." HE'S TALKING ABOUT 9/11. I MEAN SERIOUSLY, COME ON. WHO LET THAT ONE THROUGH? It's certainly no "As far back as I could remember, I always wanted to be a gangster", is it? No, it is not. But I digress, and I digress thoroughly and in block capitals. The script's terrible, let's just leave it there. Or not – one last jab. It tries so hard to be cool, to be the kind of breezy, effortlessly suave film that it probably should be, but the one liners are forced and the characterisation is thinner than a slice of Sainsbury's basics processed ham (for those of you fortunate enough to be able to afford 'actual' ham, that's thin).

Everything about the first half of the film screams 'I am terrible'. It feels almost impossible to care about any of the characters. The first bout of violence does at least seem to be given some form of consequences in terms of its impact on Ryan, but after a couple of scenes of addressing this (extremely bluntly) that's it, it's done. And even then that glimmer of something deeper gets wiped out by the fact the choppy editing almost makes the fight unwatchable. The sole redeeming feature is that it's bad enough to be funny, not just bad enough to be bad. So you can at least laugh at how terrible it is.

And yet, after that first half, somehow, *Shadow Recruit* redeems itself. The story remains utterly appalling, but by that point, if you've got any sense, you've stopped caring. Fortunately, so do the writers. The far too wordy setup gives way to the payoff, and it's almost worth it. A restaurant scene that mixes in with Ryan breaking into the baddie's headquarters is nicely tense and almost engaging, before the action finally kicks off. And

with your brain firmly in 'whatever, I don't even care anymore' mode, it's actually pretty fun. The sins of the past hour fade away, and the kicks of decent tension manipulation (even if this is obviously a film where the hero always wins) and neatly-handled action take over. It's nothing spectacular, and it certainly won't win any awards, but it works. It does exactly what it's meant to and nothing more.

The real saving grace for the film comes from Chris Pine's earnest performance. He doesn't quite own the role, not like Harrison Ford did, but there's room for growth, and with a better script the franchise might actually take off again. Kevin Costner's a complete badass, of course, but he's let down by an otherwise boring role, as is pretty much everyone else. Keira Knightley gets completely shafted with hers, while Kenneth Branagh's villain just isn't scary. His motivation feels somewhat lacklustre (side effect of that damned script), and his plan... whatever. I gave up at that point. It's rubbish, is the long and short of it.

The direction is competent (which is a pity – Branagh passed on *Thor 2* for this, and it really feels like a missed opportunity on that front), the soundtrack is generic and the visuals are... functional, so calling *Shadow Recruit* somehow greater than the sum of its parts isn't saying much. But it is, it really is. It relies far too heavily on you possessing the dual ability of laughing at terrible films and then switching off into a mindless popcorn entertainment mode, but if you do have that capacity, then it's decent, and worth a watch if you have two hours to waste and haven't seen *The Wolf of Wall Street* or *Inside Llewyn Davis* (or pretty much any other big film on at the cinema) yet. I really wish I could pay it higher praise than that. A decent action flick let down by a terrible script.

# The Brothers Grim



## John Park

Film Editor

### Out of the Furnace

**Director:** Scott Cooper  
**Writers:** Bret Ingelsby, Scott Cooper  
**Starring:** Christian Bale, Casey Affleck, Zoe Saldana, Woody Harrelson, Willem Dafoe, Forest Whitaker, Sam Shepard  
**Runtime:** 116 minutes  
**Certification:** 15



Shocked to see how Christian Bale was a 'fatman' in *American Hustle*? The clearly dedicated actor is back to a healthier looking shape in Scott Cooper's highly depressing thriller that highlights that not all of America is a land of opportunity. No protagonist here can catch a break in this grim, bleak look at what it's like when money is tight and jobs are scarce.

Russell Baze (Bale) is managing to make ends meet with his blue-collar factory job in Rust Belt, a part of America that doesn't appear in the usual flashy, glamorous depiction. With his sick, dying father to look after from home (a sure dig at the ever-so-criticised American health-care system, or the lack thereof), his dream for a better life seems to be slipping away. His younger brother Rodney (Casey Affleck) is a soldier about to be deployed to fight for his country (again, something that hints at the government's failure to take care of its citizens). The only positive aspect here is his girlfriend Lena (Zoe Saldana), who is eager to start a family with him, although he's hesitant for obvious reasons.

The set-up alone is dark and depressing enough. And it truly is a shock to see such desperate individuals stuck in a perpetual cycle of hardship. But then what happens? Something to make it all worse for everyone involved. A fatal DUI lands Russell in jail, and whilst serving his time, Lena has moved on with Sheriff Wesley Barnes (Forest Whitaker), his father passes away, and Rodney, returned from war, is suffering from post traumatic stress disorder, not quite settling into civilian life,

participating in illegal underground street fights and getting mixed up with some very unpleasant characters who don't take kindly to unpaid debts.

Director Scott Cooper is nowhere near done yet. For the film's major source of conflict, something that kicks our protagonist into gear is the mysterious disappearance of his brother. The brutal fist-fights Rodney has gotten himself mixed up in are run by Harlan DeGroat (Woody Harrelson), who is a nasty piece of work played so disturbingly brilliantly by Harrelson. There is most certainly a real sense of danger whenever this unpredictable, trigger-happy villain appears, and that he's lurking around the tightly-knit community of the Ramapo mountains which virtually shields him from the law, is an even more troubling prospect.

His father and girlfriend gone, and now his brother missing, Russell ignores the advice of Sheriff Wesley to stay away and let law enforcement do their job. Teamed up with his uncle Gerald Baze (Sam Shepard), Russell is out for answers and possibly for blood, given the uncertainty surrounding Rodney's circumstances.

The glacial pace at which it moves works to the film's advantage in its build-up, setting the general scenery, but when it comes to actually getting on with the important crime-solving, thrilling part, Russell starts taking charge, gets his hunting rifle out, and starts to do some vigilante crime-fighting of his own. Despite Bale's typically strong, convincing lead performance, there is too much back and forth meandering of the narrative, and too much relies on contrived plot developments to move forward.

Plus there are far too many wasted characters and actors to mention. Zoe Saldana's role is completely thankless and somewhat unnecessary, given how quickly she's written off, it's confusing to see why Forest Whitaker was cast in a role that doesn't end up being at all crucial, the same goes for Willem Dafoe and Sam Shepard.

*Out of the Furnace* finds its best scenes when it pairs up the siblings. Affleck is outstanding in the wounded, traumatised role, and with Bale, the two embody the difficulties and hardship of an everyday working man and their relationship provides some heart-breaking insight into how it's not a wonderful life they lead.



# Survive at all costs

John Park

Film Editor

## Lone Survivor

**Director:** Peter Berg  
**Writers:** Peter Berg, Marcus Luttrell (book), Patrick Robinson (book)  
**Starring:** Mark Wahlberg, Eric Foster, Taylor Kitsch, Emile Hirsch, Eric Bana, Alexander Ludwig  
**Runtime:** 121 minutes  
**Certification:** 15



Even those with an entirely understandable objection to Hollywood's never-ending, contrived war films ramming American patriotism down everyone's throats should check out Peter Berg's latest modern day military drama. It is turning out to be one of the more financially successful contemporary war films, after the less than stellar efforts of *The Kingdom*, *The Hurt Locker*, *Rendition*, *In the Valley of Elah*, *The Messenger* amongst others.

*Lone Survivor* has a broad range of appeal. It is an intense, action-packed vehicle that goes above and beyond, giving its audience a lot more than the expected material. The set-up is simple: after a montage of United States Navy SEALs being put through all sorts of tough, gruelling army training to be turned into the toughest fighters, we see four SEALs embarking on a recon mission to capture and kill a notoriously violent Taliban leader.

There is a fair amount of build-up before the four are dropped into the Afghan wilderness. Marcus Luttrell (Mark Wahlberg), Michael Murphy (Taylor Kitsch), Danny Dietz (Emile Hirsch), and Matthew Axelson (Ben Foster) clearly share a tight bond and

even within the relatively brief scenes designated to develop each character, the writing ensures that they all stand out within the group, all of them with their own individual strengths to contribute to the unit as a whole.

Their mission should have been a simple one, and yet a chance encounter threatens to unravel the entire operation. The unit encounters harmless goat herders from the village where their target is hiding out. Do they kill these unarmed civilians to not jeopardise their mission? Do they let them all go in accordance to the Rules of Engagement and morality in combat? There is intense debate between the four of them, as there no doubt would be some heated argument amongst audience members too, but in the end the prisoners are set free, which triggers deadly consequences.

With the Taliban alerted, the four have no choice but to retreat and call for back-up. But military support is virtually impossible when their communications equipment fails to work in the harsh, wild terrains. Ultimately they are left to fend for themselves; heavily outnumbered and disadvantaged, about to face the never-ending, relentless action scenes of hardcore,

adrenaline-fuelled combat.

It starts off simply and swimmingly enough for the Americans, with their high-tech weapons loaded and picking off one bad guy at a time, but soon they are forced to take cover and start jumping into rocks and valleys to escape the incoming hail of bullets. Every loud horrific thud, crush, crunch and bang plays a huge part in portraying an intimate, horrendously realistic, tense, continuous scene of unflinching bloody, gore-filled action that never holds back.

When people are shot, we see the wounds. There is a lot of blood, torn flesh, and even some sustained looks at the injuries too. When there are broken bones, they stick out and cause immense pain. There is nothing neat or slick about how the action develops, and the film is all the better for it.

As the title suggests, there are deaths, a lot of them dragged out and given the slow-motion treatment to bring out the tragedy. Possibly the only moments where the film slows down, they provide much-needed breathing space from the fierce, unyielding shoot-outs.

Is the film pro-American? Why not. But the film tries its hardest to hold

back on that. It's not an unbiased film by any means, but it at least steers clear from overly glorified heroism. Pro-military? Sure. But it's more than that. It's pro-humanity. Pro-camaraderie and brotherhood. These men were brothers in arms, they were trained to never give up under any circumstances and yes it does sound corny, but given the time we have spent with the soldiers over the past couple of hours, the personal angle the film strives to achieve is not only commendable but highly worthwhile.

Performance-wise, the four men are outstanding. Particularly impressive is Foster who, covered in all sorts of cuts, bruises and wounds, brings out more energy and ferocity as the film carries on.

It's incredibly well-structured, and from start to finish by focussing on the tough challenges these men face, there is an enormous sense of authentic excitement that lasts the whole way through.



## Imperial Cinema



### The Hunger Games: Catching Fire

*Catching Fire* sees the next installment of the mega hit adaption of Suzanne Collins' bestselling Young Adult series starring Jennifer Lawrence et al.

We start off back at District 12, looking as decrepit as ever. Katniss (J Law) is still traumatized from her experiences in the arena and rightly so, as she was both forced to kill and to watch as friends died in her arms. Before she has any time to reflect and properly grieve, she's whisked off with fake bf Peeta on a victory tour of the other districts to spout Capitol propaganda in order to quell the growing insurrection against the brutal, autocratic government of President Snow. When this inevitably fails, ruthless Snow has one more drastic idea planned to wrestle back control: he decides to reap the contestants for the next Hunger Games from the pool of existing victors, meaning Katniss and Peeta once again enter the blood-stained battle arena.

*Catching Fire* is a superior blockbuster not only because of its pulsating, thrilling action sequences but also because of the strength of its characters and its allegorical premise which is strikingly current. Best in show as usual is Jennifer Lawrence, although her Katniss is self-reliant and often stoic, her eyes betray the horror of her situation and her will to survive.

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# Director masterclass: Joel & Ethan Coen

## Peter Brook

Star Writer

The Coen Brothers have been able to create such strong, individual voices for their characters for so long now it's hard to imagine a small town life in America without thinking about it in terms of Coen Brothers movie. They have consistently been able to create complex and compelling narratives throughout their 16-film career and everyone of them brimming with dark, dark comedy. They have created a very cohesive body of work which shares the use of many themes, tropes and stylistic choices to the point that it is blatantly obvious when you are watching one of their films. They have made a particularly strong use of musical and dance numbers that have come to head in their latest work *Inside Llewyn Davis*.

### Blood Simple (1984)

Opening with a situation found throughout the Coens' work, a conversation taking place in a car on a long straight road. The conversation is between a married woman and a man who is not her husband as they drive to a motel for a liaison. The husband finds out from a Private Investigator who he subsequently hires to kill them both. However with double crossing and chaotic misunderstandings we are left with a darkly comedic piece with wonderful thriller edges. The killer is also an archetype who we see again and again in the Coens' work; cold and calculating often with psychopathic tendencies. Specifically in *No Country for Old Men* where the duo have been praised by forensic psychiatrist Samuel Leistedt for portraying one of the most true to life depictions of a psychopath in any movie.



### Fargo (1996)

*Fargo* tells the story of a man (William H. Macy) who wants his wife kidnapped so that he can take the ransom money that his wife's wealthy father will pay. However, as is the norm with Coen Brothers' films, it does not go to plan. The bungling kidnappers carry out the kidnapping in a sort of violent slapstick routine, which is as horrible as it is hilarious. It opens with the title card and then this message

"THIS IS A TRUE STORY. The events depicted in this film took place in Minnesota in 1987. At the request of the survivors, the names have been changed. Out of respect for the dead, the rest has been told exactly as it occurred." Now I actually think this is a total fabrication and at the time in an interview and the real reason this title card is there is explained by the this quote from Ethan:

"If an audience believes that something's based on a real event, it gives you permission to do things they might otherwise not accept."

There are some terrible cold-blooded killings in this film by the typical psychopath archetype and his bumbling talking kidnapper buddy Steve Buscemi, they almost have a J and Silent Bob repartee, except they both kill people. The big star of this movie has to be the yocal pregnant cop, played by Frances McDormand. She has been written wonderful dialogue for her comedic Minnesota accent and is the character we sympathise with the most and just puts in an utterly stellar performance. This film also deserves specific mention for its cinematography by the Coens' long time collaborator Rodger Deakins. Who makes these desolate snowy backdrops infinitely beautiful and as such the violence that occurs in them all the more perverse.



### The Big Lebowski (1998)

This is the cult movie of our generation. There is so much hidden joy in every scene and so many quotable lines, it's no surprise that this is still on heavy rotation at the Prince Charles Cinema where you can go to drink white Russians, wear a dressing gown and say repeatedly "Shut the fuck up Donnie!", "That rug really tied the room together." and "That's just like, your opinion, maaaaan." It has some of my favourite hallucination scenes as well, there is nothing like a large scale bowling themed 1940s Hollywood Musical with all the dancers in amazing costumes set to Kenny Rodgers.

This is arguably the Coens' most famous and deserves all the praise it gets.



### Inside Llewyn Davis (2013)

*Inside Llewyn Davis* is a film that follows the life of a musician struggling to get by in the Folk Revival Scene in New York circa 1960. It follows him through an awful few days, starting him with locking himself out of a flat that he was staying with the cat. Which he can't return. It turns out he has burnt many bridges and is generally disliked in the community.

The first thing to mention is that Oscar Issac's portrayal of Llewyn Davis was fantastic; on top of this almost all of the songs were recorded live on-set and are each played out in their entirety. Issac is clearly a very talented musician. Alongside this the music is produced and written by T-Bone Burnett who created a litany of songs that could just as easily be found on a 1960s vinyl as in a modern film and includes one hilarious 'space race novelty song' that is so silly and so of the time.

Unfortunately, despite many interesting facets it turns out that Llewyn Davis is quite an unlikeable guy and spending this much time with wasn't always very fun. Unlike last week's *The Wolf of Wall Street*, where we spent time with the unlikeable Jason Belfort, there was a strong didacticism and the point was clear that his behaviour was unacceptable. Here there didn't seem to be any strong message or point, and though the Coens are known for putting deep hidden meanings in their movies, this was being irritatingly obfuscating. Also the narrative arc wasn't just confusing but seemed to totally lack cohesion. Though there is a lot to enjoy, I would argue that this isn't one of the brothers' best.





# 2014 at the Oscars - we were robbed



**Tom Hanks**

First everyone thought a double-nomination was well in the works for Hanks, Best Lead Actor for *Captain Phillips* and Best Supporting Actor for *Saving Mr Banks* (he did play Walt Disney). Then they thought nah... a double nomination could be too generous. So just the one for *Captain Phillips* will be an easy score. Right? But no, the Academy shut him out completely. So much for being a double-nominee eh? The miss for *Captain Phillips* is a real upset and surprise however, since his breakdown in the film's final moments alone should at least have warranted a nomination.



**The Butler**

Early on in the race, Oprah Winfrey was a sure front-runner to be nominated for and ultimately win the Best Supporting Actress award. Then *12 Years a Slave* came out when Lupita Nyong'o practically stole the limelight off of Winfrey. Forest Whitaker was also a favourite when the film was released. Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay, were all up for grabs but alas, *Lee Daniels' The Butler* walked away with nothing. That's right, not a single nomination for this inspired-by-a-true-story biopic of a White House butler. Shows even ticking all the right boxes doesn't work sometimes.



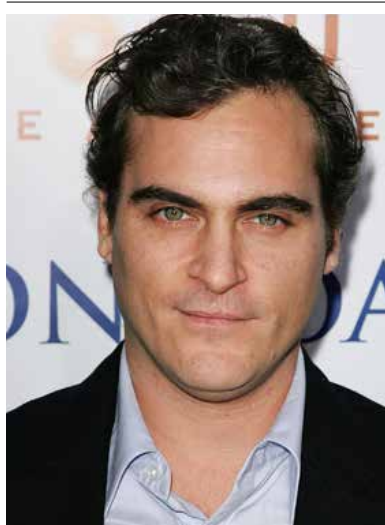
**Robert Redford**

Yes, that's Robert Redford. Robert Redford a few decades ago but Robert Redford nonetheless. Redford has in fact publically spoken out about his lack of Best Actor nomination, blaming the studio for not spending enough on marketing and promoting his performance in *All is Lost*, a one-man survival thriller at sea. Is he just being a sore loser? Perhaps, but he does also have a point. *All is Lost* was practically dumped by Roadside Attractions, its distributor, as it started to perform less than ideally at the box office. A real blow to the veteran who clearly deserved a nod.



**Fruitvale Station**

The critical success at 2013 Sundance Film Festival was all but forgotten as the dramatic retelling of the tragic killing of Oscar Grant was completely overlooked. Not even a Best Supporting Actress nod to the deserving Octavia Spencer. Seems the hype and attention surrounding the film fizzled out and couldn't sustain its buzz facing competition from strong December films. It would have been a triumphant rags-to-riches story had this been given some sort of recognition, but Ryan Coogler's debut feature will have to settle for a handful of Best Breakthrough awards.



**Joaquin Phoenix**

There was love for Spike Jonze's futuristic science-fiction romantic-comedy *Her*, but none for the leading actor who made it all the more touching and gave it the much-needed human spin, deeper connection and understanding to a plot that initially comes off as being too quirky and unrelatable. Was the Academy put off by his negative attitude towards the awards season? Or was the competition really that stiff this year? I say get rid of Christian Bale of *American Hustle* and replace him with Phoenix for the absolute best of the best of 2013. So far no Oscar wins for Phoenix which is sacrilege.



**Inside Llewyn Davis**

There are some years when the Academy cannot get enough of the Coen brothers (just look at how they swept the board in 2008 with *No Country for Old Men*). The same however, could not be repeated for 2014, when their latest folk-music drama *Inside Llewyn Davis* only managed two nominations in technical categories (i.e. the ones no one outside the movie industry really remembers or cares about). Not even Oscar Isaac's singing voice of an angel could sway the voters, and to be honest, if that couldn't do it, no film magic the Coens could conjure up would have scored anything.



**Emma Thompson**

Perhaps the most shocking of all acting snubs, Emma Thompson, putting on an icy but incredibly moving and layered performance as P. L. Travers in *Saving Mr Banks*, was outrageously ignored by the Academy. Sure the Best Actress award is definitely going to Cate Blanchett, but Thompson was sure to be a more than worthy nominee. So who stole her spot huh? Amy Adams? Sandra Bullock? Meryl Streep? Dame Judi Dench? The least deserving on the list (though it breaks my heart to say it) is Adams. Trying to compare Adams to Thompson is just a laughable, unbelievable insult.



**Rush**

Absolutely nothing for Ron Howard's critically-acclaimed Formula 1 biopic *Rush*. It was never going to be in for the big awards, but some nominations in the technical categories (cinematography, sound, production design in particular) were certainly expected and deserved. Plus some were hoping for Daniel Bruhl to squeeze his way in to the Best Supporting Actor race. Sadly, nothing came to fruition, and the gripping James Hunt-Niki Lauda rivalry drama walked away empty-handed. Doesn't mean the film isn't any good - your pulse will be racing from start to finish.



# TELEVISION

Editors: **John Park,**  
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## Sherlock's success: It's Elementary?

Emily Fulham considers a competitor to Sherlock's crown

**S**herlock's third series debuted on New Year's Day to tremendous hype. After two years of being off-air, fans were hoping that it would match their high expectations. Now that the dust has settled on the last of the three episodes, what was the final verdict?

As with anything, it depends who you ask. *Sherlock* seems to inspire mass hysteria in its fans: IMDB gives it a rating of 9.3/10 from its users and critical opinion, making it apparently better than *The Shawshank Redemption* (9.2), *The Godfather* (9.2), and *Casablanca* (8.6). Unless I'm living in an alternate universe and watching a vastly different show to everyone else, I don't think it's so controversial to posit that *Sherlock* might – just might – be a tad overhyped.

The three episodes of the latest series met with generally favourable reviews from critics, but divided opinions among fans. The Guardian described the final episode as 'perfect', but some viewers felt that the show's writers were trying too hard to please the hardcore fans of tumblr and the like – the second episode was more reminiscent of some kind of bizarre fanfiction than a detective show – while more casual viewers were left baffled at what the point to the ninety minute episode had been.

Then there was a third opinion offered up: *Sherlock* might have lost its touch because, in its long two year hiatus, a better successor had come along. There have been no shortage of adaptations of Sherlock Holmes since Arthur Conan Doyle published his novels: in the past five years alone, we've had the films starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law, BBC's *Sherlock*, and now *Elementary*. *Sherlock* was novel in that it transported the crime-solving detective to the present day. *Elementary* takes things one step further, with an alcoholic Sherlock Holmes, played by Jonny Lee Miller, up and moving to New York, where Lucy Liu is Joan Watson, his sober – and

female – companion. When Holmes decides that the best way to spend his recovery is to assist NYPD with solving crimes, Watson reluctantly accompanies him to provide support for the recovering addict.

The initial casting of Watson as a woman was met with controversy, not least of which came from angry *Sherlock* fans. Steven Moffat himself, writer and producer of the BBC show, said he was 'annoyed' and worried about it 'debas[ing] the brand' – presumably choosing to ignore the many, many adaptations that had gone before his, including a 1986 Disney film in which Holmes was portrayed by a mouse. This provoked retaliation from those who felt that *Sherlock* had lost its touch, or indeed had always been overrated, with the result that before the first episode of *Elementary* had even aired, it already had both a loyal fanbase and dedicated haters.

So who was right? At the risk of pissing off the legions of *Sherlock* fans, I'm inclined to say that *Elementary* has the edge over its predecessor. It's by no means a perfect show, but is, in my opinion, far better than the try-hard, self-indulgent mess that thinks it's cleverer than it is, which is what *Sherlock* has become in recent years.

One of the big differences between the two shows is the character of Sherlock Holmes himself. The oft-repeated 'high-functioning sociopath' of the BBC adaptation is callous, cruel, and seemingly incapable of forming a meaningful relationship with anyone except John Watson – who, even then, he still treats with a disturbing lack of disregard. The partnership between Holmes and Watson in *Elementary* is far more equal, with Joan Watson's compassion and resilience providing a balance to the thornier personality of Holmes, who demonstrates repeatedly that he can learn from others and is even occasionally – shockingly – nice. While this may be hard to imagine for anyone familiar with Cumberbatch's portrayal, it actually bears far closer resemblance to the Holmes of the Doyle's original



CBS

novels who, although dispassionate and sometimes arrogant, is still capable of sympathising with his clients and treating Watson with the care and respect of a friend.

*Elementary's* main weakness lies in its format: Owing to it being a crime procedural, episodes can seem at times formulaic, with each following a fairly standard 'crime of the week' storyline. This is somewhat offset by the way that the victims are very rarely faceless bodies, and the help of a strong supporting cast.

Another initial concern with the show was that the decision to have Watson played by a woman was made to facilitate a romantic relationship between her and Holmes. Thankfully, the show's creators have already said outright that a romance between the pair is not on the cards and never will be. Joan Watson is a well-rounded, sympathetic character, in sharp contrast to virtually all of *Sherlock's* female characters, who are defined entirely by their relationships to the two main (male) characters. Steven Moffat has been criticised for his writing of women on several occasions, both in *Sherlock* and the new *Doctor Who*. *Sherlock's* Irene Adler was a often-naked lesbian dominatrix who inexplicably falls in love with sloth-faced Benedict Cumberbatch, culminating in her being rescued by him at the end of her storyline. *Elementary's* Irene Adler, played by the brilliantly cast *Game of Thrones'* Natalie Dormer, is, without giving anything away, an ingenious take on the character.

I realise that there are those who'll remain unconvinced, not least big

fans of Benedict Cumberbatch; I'm prepared to admit that *Elementary* isn't for everyone. (Although, incidentally, both Holmes actors – Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller – starred together in a recent theatre adaptation of *Frankenstein* in which the actors alternated between

playing the doctor and his monster on different nights, so they have more common ground than you might at first realise.) However, for those others who found themselves watching *Sherlock* and wondering if they were maybe missing something, it might be worth a try.

### Five things we learned from the new 'Game of Thrones' trailer

#### 1. Joffrey is still a little shit

With his marriage to Margaery Tyrell looming on the horizon, everyone's most hated character still has no idea of any of the responsibilities involved in ruling Westeros. We can't help but feel that Margaery might be more than a match for him, though.

#### 2. Jon Snow knows something

Now reunited with his fellow brothers of the Night's Watch, Jon Snow is using the insight he gained during his time with the wildlings to help prepare the Wall for an impending attack.

#### 3. Jaime Lannister looks damn fine with short hair

He may be lacking a certain something in the limb department, but the Prince Charming of the Lannisters is still capable of wooing the ladies even without his golden mane. Shame he's got eyes for no one except his sister.

#### 4. There'll be some unfamiliar faces

Get ready for some new characters, including Oberyn Martell (nicknamed the Red Viper) who is set on revenge for his sister's death at the hands of Gregor Clegane.

#### 5. When it's on

The first episode is set to premiere on HBO on the 6th April, and will air the following day on Sky Atlantic. Get ready... winter is coming.



Hearthrob Benedict Cumberbatch demonstrates why the ladies love him

BBC



 @feliximperial

 FelixImperial

# GAMES

## DayZ Stories



Maximilian Egg  
Games Editor

*The DayZ standalone has been released, and given the amazing stories that occur in that game, I decided to make a kind of series out of it! So here it goes:*

### Episode 1: Yannick's tale

I woke up to find myself cold and thirsty on beach in chernarus. All I had on me was a the clothes I was wearing and a flashlight. Time to survive the Zombie apocalypse. I saw immediately a town sign which said Камышово which, I knew from my limited Russian, was Kamyshovo. However my knowledge of my location did not help that much, and therefore in dire of need of water I decided to loot the nearby abandoned houses. As I made my way through the wreckage a glint on the floor caught my eye. A compass! Now I could actually get somewhere. My tired and thirsty mind vaguely remembered that due west of my position there was the big town Electro, where I new that there were several supermarkets which must have some kind of food and drink.

It was time to venture out onto the road. I kept a low profile, avoiding the lone zombie who stalked the countryside. Soon I arrived at the outskirts of the town. Thinking it may be prudent to check the surrounding houses before I dived into a potentially fatal situation, I clambered through a window to see if I could find anything. As I scavenged through the houses I came upon a closed door. Not thinking anything of it, I entered, scanning the floor for loot. As I looked around, my eyes fell upon a two pairs of shoes. I looked up in surprise and saw two helmeted guys looking at me in surprise, pointing their rusty M4s at my face. Before I could even utter an "oh", they opened fire on me. As I lay on the floor bleeding to death, I felt them rustling through my clothes looking for anything to steal. Couldn't even wait for me to die couldn't they?

# Gemcraft: What a gem!

Imran Rashid  
Games Editor

Gemcraft Labyrinth is the 3rd Chapter of the epic tower defense series of Gemcraft from Game In a Bottle. Gemcraft Labyrinth offers a deep gameplay with its combination of strategy and RPG elements making it easily one of the best tower defense games of 2013.

The basic gameplay of Labyrinth remains the same as the Gemcraft series: Monsters of various types will approach the orb on the map by means of meandering pathways, and it is the gamer's job to place gems in strategic locations to try to destroy them before they reach the orb. Monsters reach your orb and damage your mana by varying amounts. If your mana falls to zero, you lose the game. Your mana slowly replenishes over time and you with every kill and mana are also the currency to purchase and upgrade towers and gems and many other traps and advantages. Having a lot of mana will make you withstand a lot of attacks but every



so often a large monster will appear that can crush your orb altogether.

The crux and strategy of the game, as the title suggests, is with the gems. There are eight different coloured gems each hue with distinct special ability in addition to their attack points some of which include slowing down enemies, creating chain hits and re-

ducing enemy armour. Gems can be combined, combining the hues and retaining a portion of the special abilities from each gem. While most stages only give you a few colours to use, you can actually combine gems to increase their potency and give them new abilities. You can stick with the gems the level gives you to begin with and

think strategically, or you can spend mana to instantly unlock any colour you wish for the duration of the level. Gems can be upgraded to increase attack speed, attack damage and attack radius, and upgrading the gems brings about a different shape gem.

A new addition to the labyrinth chapter is the 'apparition'. These are rare innocuous beings that sporadically appear on a few maps that fly into and out of your view during the game. Destroying apparitions gives you upgrade points directly. Upgrade points can be used to acquire advantages that last through the entire game such as increasing your mana pool at the start of every game or increasing the potency and special abilities of gems. Gemcraft Labyrinth is entirely meritocratic, you can adjust the difficulty of the game on each map which gives you extra XP points after you complete it which convert to upgrade points.

Gemcraft Labyrinth is a must-get game for Tower defense game lovers and can be played for free on Armor-games and Kongregate. Game In a Bottle has announced that the sequel to this game Chasing Shadows will be released shortly in the beginning of this year.

# Time to pack out Braid

## Time travelling, platformer...what is there not to like?

Calum Skene  
Games Editor

Indie Game the Movie is a great film for games fans. It follows the creation and reception of 3 Indie Games; Super Meat Boy, Fez and Braid. I already had played a lot of Super Meat Boy, and soon after the movie I caught Fez in a humble bundle. These were some of the best games I've ever played and were instant favourites of mine so it is of no surprise that once I finally caught Braid on sale it instantly followed its predecessors into my top 10. Braid is a puzzle game created by Jonathan Blow. The film had showcased how much time and effort he put into making this game and the finished result echoes this. Visually the game is stunning! Braid showcases a unique art style that I would describe as artistic Mario. It even has the same kind of enemies and definitely takes more elements from Mario, in its platforming style. A new enemy however is a killer bunny rabbit that often pops out of nowhere and chases

you, which I feel is definitely inspired by Monty Pythons the Holy grail. The game itself sees you searching for a Princess by traversing various worlds each made up of levels. At first I thought the game was a simple platform game, you can jump on enemies and climb up ladders and everything you might expect (except run), but the first time I died I got a big surprise. You can turn back time! Every move you make can be reversed, and not just for a few seconds. It is possible to rewind time all the way back to the beginning of the level. This mechanic is what makes Braid such a unique game. It makes each level into a puzzle, rewarding you with jigsaw pieces which can be made into a picture for each world. Some elements are immune to the time reversal which provides some great puzzles. How do you get that key at the bottom of a pit? Jump down pick up the key, and because the key is immune to time travel, simply time reverse so you exit the pit holding the key. Braid becomes progressively harder and each world adds a new mechanic which helps keep the game fresh and entertaining as you go through. One

world for example adds the ability to set up a sphere which slows the flow of time, and another has time linked to your steps meaning that the enemies can't get out of your way and you need to be creative to get to the end. One great thing about Braid is that you can just run through all the levels, and have done all the worlds in minutes, but you don't get anything out of it. The game rewards getting those jigsaw pieces and completing the game properly and truly. It's an easy game to just jump in and out of,

collecting more jigsaw pieces each time but also a game to get competitive at. It is almost made for a speed run, and even sports a speed run mode for the more competitive player. Braid caters to all types of gamer whether you just want to run through the game to say you've played it, complete it 100%, play it casually from time to time or be competitive and speed run it. It's a charming game, unique and inventive, and really shows off what Indie games have to offer.







# Felix on the move!

## Maximilian Eggl, interviewing Kunal Wagle, creator of the Felix app

**ME: Introduce yourself!**

KW: I am a first year Computing student from London. I currently reside in the Southside Halls of Residence.

**ME: What is your position in Felix?**

KW: I am the sports editor. I follow most sports, particularly football, cricket and tennis, so I felt that when



the opportunity arose, I could see no reason not to take it on.

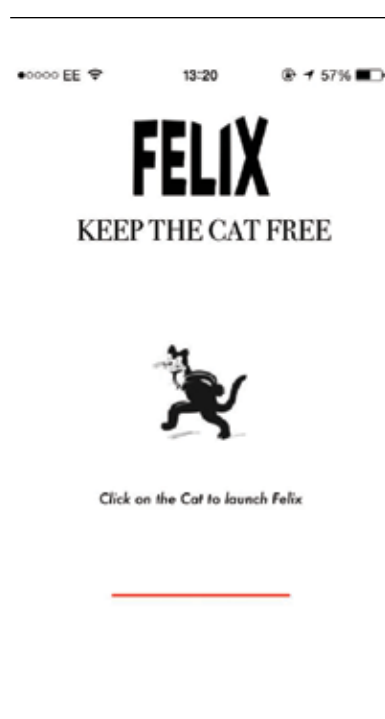
**ME: How did you get the idea for the Felix app?**

KW: I was trying to read an article on my phone one time and found it frustrating. It was inconceivable to think that a newspaper such as Felix, which already had a brilliant website to accompany the printed version, did not have its own app for students to browse on the go.

**ME: During your coding stage did you encounter any problems? Did you have to omit any features (e.g.)?**

KW: There weren't any major problems. The API wasn't well suited to an iPhone app, so I came up with ways to work around that. The maker of the API, Jonathan Kim [an imperial alumni, who also made the website], is currently working on a new version that would ensure the next update of the app works more efficiently.

**ME: What are the main features of the app?**



KW: Users can (predictably) browse through the latest articles from Felix. In addition to this, we have a sidebar that offers many social features. One can create their own account and post to discussion boards, "like" articles and connect with other users. From early indications, it can be said that it makes for a much more interactive user experience.

**ME: What are the some of the current problems with the app?**

KW: We are taking a look at ways of implementing a comments section. Unfortunately the only true way of finding problems is by users reporting them. Fortunately, this hasn't happened yet.

**ME: In your opinion, why should people use the app?**

KW: For the exact reasons we created it. It is useful for following Felix on the go. Our social features also enhance the Felix experience.

**ME: What are your future plans for the app?**

KW: There are many. As I said previously we are looking at implementing a comments section. Another item on the list is the addition of an issue archive, allowing students to browse past editions. But, as is the case for most apps, we will try to implement what the user wants us to implement. There is a feedback section in the app's sidebar that can be used for this, or you could send us an email at felix@imperial.ac.uk

At this point the app is only available for iOS sadly, however there are plans for an android app. If you do own an iOS device and want to try out Kunal's great work, either scan the QR code on the left or just head over to the App Store and search "Felix Imperial". Just keep in mind that the account you make there is separate from your official imperial account.

# Paying in style: #yoyonotyolo

## Maximilian Eggl

Technology Editor

You must have seen it around these days, the proliferation of pink flyers littering imperial's walkways. Flyers that seem to have the word yolo written on them. However fear not my dear students, our university has not descended into a swag-palace. No these flyers actually say yoyo on them, and what they talk about is actually quite intriguing.

Its been actually quite hard to evade the information that has been bombarding imperial students concerning Yoyo. Emails from sabs, posters and/or flyers have been almost ever present since the launch. However for those of you who do not know what yoyo is here is a quick overview. It is a company funded by Imperial that is meant to counter the yearly calls for allowing payments with our college ID cards. Capitalising on the prevalence of smartphones and the rise of mobile payments, we now

have an app for iOS and Android which allows you to pay at all taste imperial outlets (which excludes the union). You connect your bank account to the app, then load it up and are good to go. At the actual till all you do is pull

out the app, let the cashiers scan the QR code that your phone shows you. Now as a lazy imperial student (I know why I am one), you are probably wondering why should I go through the hassle of downloading an app



(gasp, such an effort!) and linking my bank account to it? Well imagine this scenario: You have just gotten out of a horrible double lecture, haven't eaten for an age and generally feel like you take a large bite out of anything that stumbles across your path. As you make your way to your food stop of choice you suddenly remember that, damn, you have no cash. Sighing, you make your way to the cash machine. As you arrive a look of horror spreads across your face as a line starting at the ATMs going all the back to south kensington station fills your view. You ain't going to get your lunch easy. This is where Yoyo steps in. You can cut out the entire cueing by just topping up your account on your phone, entirely on the go. Furthermore the fact that you do not need to fumble for cash at the register means that once you have scanned your phone you are good to go. Imagine if everyone had this? It would make getting food so much more quick and efficient, and that's what we imperial students like right? So essentially the reasons that you should go for Yoyo

is because of the hassle yo safe if you are cashless and looking to get it at peak hours, as well as the speed you can check out without any change falling potentially falling to the floor.

On the other hand what are the cons of getting Yoyo? There are actually quite a few, related to security. Pretty much, if you lose your phone and you have no security measures they at leisure to spend as much as they want on your account. Furthermore if you are pretty open with your account details you should also be worried, as anyone can set up a Yoyo account with your details without any further verification.

In my own experience of using the app, I have generally not encountered any problems. The quickness and ease of paying with my phone is something that I have thoroughly enjoyed. Furthermore if you are planning to use Yoyo, then start today! Today is the last day that when you top up you get a 10% bonus! My last piece of advice, even though this thing is pretty useful, carry some cash, because everyone knows: Cash is king





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FOOD

# (Chinese New) Year of the Horse is here

Don't worry - no horse meat involved in the production of this issue...



**K**ung Hei Fat Choi! The year of the horse has once again arrived and if you feel like having something festive, but find Chopstix slightly too greasy, here's a healthy recipe for you!

If people tell you Chinese food is hard to cook, they are lying to you. There is an Chinese idiom "People rank food heavenly high", so the cuisine has developed itself to be as accessible as possible, while keeping the good taste.

## Festive Treat

A good example is dumplings - or jiaozi. They came from the Ming Dynasty, when its name and looks resembled the money used at the time, so serving them is believed to bring prosperity - especially at midnight on Chinese New Year's Eve. And since then, it has become one of the most popular foods of the nation, with variations served at breakfast, lunch and dinner - the same can't be said for

fish and chips!

### Ingredients:

- 500g of minced pork
- 100g of prawns
- 4 dried shiitake mushrooms, reconstituted with some hot water
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 spring onions
- 1 thumb sized chunk ginger
- 1 tablespoon of soy sauce
- Some salt, pepper and sesame oil
- Dumpling/Wonton skin (available in Asian supermarkets)

1. Finely chop the garlic, ginger, spring onions, mushrooms and prawns. Add them to a big bowl with the mince pork, a bit of soaking liquid from the mushrooms, soy sauce, salt and pepper. Mix it up with your hand.

2. Put a tablespoon of filling onto the centre of the skin, then put a little bit of water around the edges and squeeze it into the "dumpling shape". Here is where your creativity can kick in, any form is fine as long as it is sealed.

3. Put it in boiling water for around 5-10 minutes, or until they start to

float. Usually served with noodles, but it's up to you!

The brilliance of dumplings is the flexibility it provides. You can essentially put any filling - chicken, beef, mixed vegetables - as long as it is sealed properly (don't overfill!) You can also steam and pan fry these dumplings to give it a different texture and flavour. To pan fry them, put a tablespoon of oil and once hot, fry the dumplings for around 3 minutes, until the base is golden. Add boiling water just around half way up, cover and let it steam away. You can serve it with different dipping sauces - my favourites are the sweet chilli sauce or soy sauce and worcestershire sauce mixed together!

The recipe above does make quite a big batch but dumplings are freezer-friendly (freeze raw.) So make them over the weekend, then just take a few out when you want them. No thawing needed - just cook from frozen for a little longer.

## Mandarin Orange Creme Brulee

East Meets West in this delectable dessert. Makes x8 small/x4 large

thewi.org



Before we begin, a disclaimer: Satsumas, clementines, tangerines - basically any easy-peel citrus orange with easy to separate segments you can think of falls under the category of mandarin oranges. Think of it this way - all clementines are mandarin oranges, but not all mandarin oranges are clementines. (Mandarins are usually bigger in Asia...but these will do.)

If you must/insist there's no diff, feel free to substitute with your standard non-easy-peel (Navel) oranges. You may feel the pernickety wrath of some Asians in the process (myself possibly included)...but hey, all citrus deserves some love! Also, recycle Gu dessert pots for ramekins. You're welcome.

- 3 large eggs
- 5 large egg yolks
- 200g light brown sugar
- 600ml double cream
- zest and flesh segments from 6 mandarins (or 2-3 normal oranges)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 175C. Mix (do not whip) the egg yolks, eggs, mandarin juice, and 110g of brown sugar (remainder is for topping!) until fully combined. Over medium heat, warm cream and mandarin zest in saucepan to scalding point - stir occasionally. Gradually pour the egg mixture into cream, stirring constantly (too quickly and you get scrambled egg.) Add salt and vanilla. Strain custard using a fine mesh strainer into a jug (it will still be liquidy.)

Place a tea towel on the bottom of a deep roasting tin, then arrange ramekins on top and put 2-3 mandarin segments in ramekins. Pour hot water from a kettle until it reaches halfway up the ramekins, then divvy up your custard mix between the ramekins until they are about 3/4 full.

Bake custards for about 25 mins, or until they are set with a slight wobble in centre when shaken. (Or get geeky and make sure your food probe reads) Remove from the water bath and allow to cool, then refrigerate until they thoroughly chilled. Can be made ahead 4-5 days in advance, just keep them well-covered to stop other fridge smells seeping in!

For topping: Preheat oven to 150C. Line a baking tray with parchment, spread out remaining sugar into an even, thin layer. Put in oven until it starts to dry out (around 3-5 min.). Remove, allow to cool, then crunch with a rolling pin to break up into granules again. Reserve until serving time.

To serve: Sprinkle an even layer of the dried sugar on the custards. Torch with quick swirling motions, or bung under a hot grill until bubbly. Let cool (very briefly) to allow topping to solidify (gives you that satisfying crack when hit with your spoon.) Top with mandarin segments - dig in rightaway!

## Where to go for a Taste of China

Okay, apart from your local Chinese takeaway and Chinatown...

If easy home cooking is not really for you, then you're blessed that we are in one of the most culturally diversified cities in the world, but Chinatown is not your only option either!

### SCR & QTR

TasteImperial is serving Chinese specialities at their outlets on Friday. In SCR, the classic five spice chicken

and crispy pork is available in the SCR, along with coconut cake and sponge cake. You can also get stir-fry and chow mein at the QTR. Free fortune cookies are offered there and also when you get the meal deal at F-East in the JCR.

### Yam Yam! Festival

Yam Yam! is a 15-day festival (the duration of Chinese New Year

celebration) at south-east London which consists of workshops and food around the world!

All ingredients used in the food served are sourced locally and all waste is recycled on site since they aim to become zero waste to landfill by the end of 2014. So definitely a place to go for a fun weekend while enjoying some guilt-free yummy food! [www.thealbany.org.uk](http://www.thealbany.org.uk)

Tasted some amazing food this week?

Share it with us:

#FelixFood on Instagram







# Ask Annie, your friendly Agony Aunt

**A**gony Aunt Annie Whiteley is the woman who fought for women's cloakroom facilities at Imperial, and thus is qualified to solve all your problems.



*Help! I was too shy to make any friends during Freshers week, and now everyone's formed groups of friends in Halls and on my course, and I'm always left out. How can I make friends this late in the year?*

**Lonely in Ladbroke Grove**

This is a really easy trap to fall into for the introverted Imperialite. But don't worry, it's still easy to make friends! It's not too late to join a club or society, which is a really easy way to meet a bunch of new people. In Halls, you can just hang around common areas and occasionally try and join conversations, and people will automatically start incorporating you. On your course, you can hang out with people after tutorials and lectures – drag out any social interactions and people will start including you.

*Help! I'm the only girl in my group of friends, which means that I'm constantly surrounded by guys. This sounds great, but it's a massive pain as other guys never dare to approach me. What can I do to get around this?*

**Cockblocked in Cockfosters**

Have you considered that one of your male friends might actually be the way to go? If you really want to branch out, why not try manning up and approaching the guys yourself? It really isn't as scary as it sounds. If you think a guy is eyeing you up from afar, just go and say hi. If that's too brave for you, why not separate yourself from your friends and make yourself more approachable?

*Help! I'm a plus size guy, and I want to change, I want to start getting healthy, but I'm scared that if I go to the gym, people will laugh at me. What can I do?*

**Overweight in Oval**

Most people at the gym will have serious respect for anyone who wants to make a positive change in their life, and will, if anything, be helpful. Anyone who's a douche is probably a douche to everyone, probably because they have a tiny penis. Anything they say isn't personal, don't worry about it. However, if you really don't want to face the gym, there are plenty of other ways. For the ultimate people avoidance, late night jogging is easy, and the powers of little things like walking instead of taking the bus shouldn't be underestimated.

*Help! My girlfriend's moving away for six months in March, and we haven't talked about what's going to happen when she leaves. We haven't been together that long, is it too soon to try and make it work long distance?*

**Worried in Waterloo**

Maintaining it over long distance will put an extra strain on your relationship, that is more likely to make it break. It's hard to keep that kind of trust, especially if you haven't been together for long. If you really love each other, you can easily get back together when she comes back, and you might even find that neither of you want to get with anyone else when you're apart. It is possible to do long distance though, so have a really honest conversation about it before she leaves.

*Help! I have a massive crush on my lecturer. I can't pay any attention in his lectures, and when we're alone during office hours, I swear he feels the same! What should I do?*

**Besotted in Baron's Court**

I'm gonna be honest with you, babe, you're young. He's probably old. Why don't you go for someone your own age? Imperial is a goldmine of fresh young men. And he probably doesn't think of you that way, that's just wishful thinking. Whatever you do, don't risk any embarrassment by making a move. He might be entertaining a fantasy of the hot young student, but making fantasy a reality doesn't always live up to your expectations...

## Annie's advice that Imperial sorely needs

### How to ask someone out: A guide for girls (or boys)

#### 1. Be confident

If you always act confident, you'll look confident. If you look confident, people will think you're confident. And believe it or not, that's hot. Anyone, male or female, loves to be asked out. If you find someone attractive and ask them to go for a drink, you stand as much chance as any of them saying yes. If you don't know them it'll be a purely physical decision, but at least that takes the pressure off in terms of being rejected. After all, you're much more than a pretty face.

#### 2. Be friends

It's unusual for a romantic connection to develop without some sort of friendship forming first. When you first meet someone, be flirtatious, but not to the point that they're intimidated by you. It's a lot easier to see if you like them, and get to a point where it's easy to ask them out. After all, is it weird between friends to suggest that you do something together?

#### 3. Be sneaky

You don't have to go up to someone and say, "Will you go out with me?" If you're really nervous, you don't even have to directly ask them to hang out with you. If you're already friends, you can arrange to hang out as a group, and "accidentally" tell them to arrive earlier, or "coincidentally" have everyone else cancel. If you get caught out, you can always pretend that you made a mistake. The key is to make it easy for them. Let them see how you get on when you're alone. Once this idea is in their head, they're more like to make a move. But remember, you can take a horse to water, but you can't make him drink.

#### 4. Be bold

If you do it with confidence, you can pull off anything. Make it seem like it's no big deal. Ask someone out with enough swag and if they turn you down you can strut away with your head held high and leave them feeling rejected. Don't be afraid to turn it back on them if it goes wrong, "You thought I was asking you out? What's wrong with you?"

**What important advice should Annie dish out next week? Email any ideas to the address below!**

Send Annie your problems and suggestions at [catnip.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:catnip.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

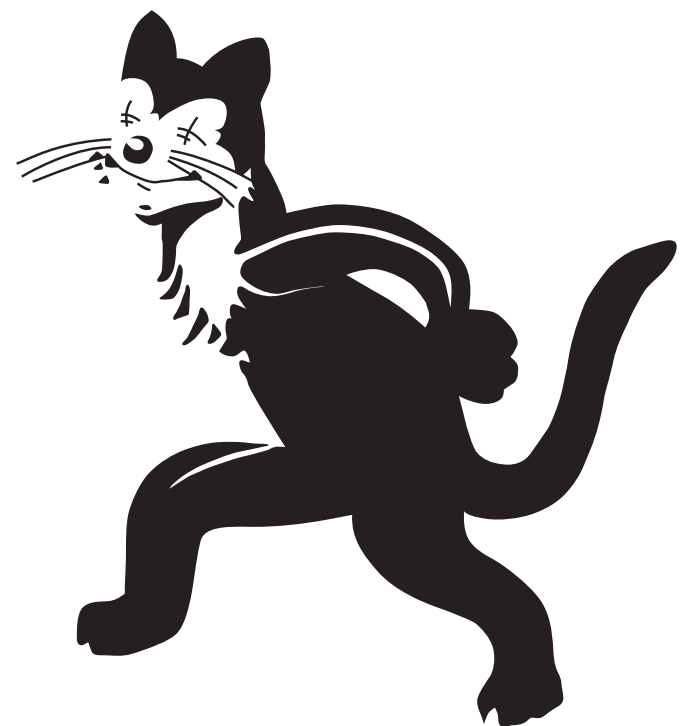
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# HANGMAN

hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk



## This Week In The Past

The Historian  
Hangman Contributor



**2002** – During the State of the Union address, George W. Bush officially declares the Y-axis to be the Axis of Evil.

**1959** – The MS Hans Hedtoft – a ship declared “as unsinkable as the Titanic” – hits an iceberg and sinks on its maiden voyage.

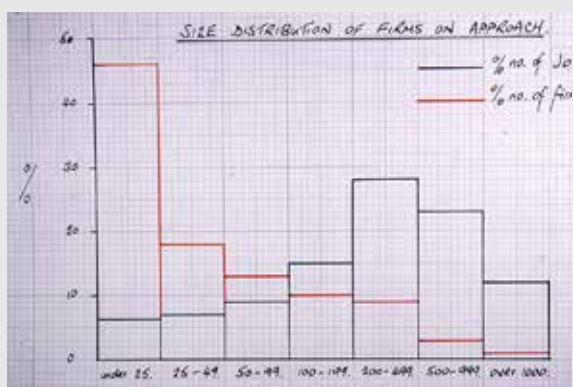
**1933** – In an event now widely regarded as ‘not great’, Hitler is sworn in as Chancellor of Germany.

**1911** – In controversial circumstances, the Canadian Naval Service unorthodoxly remains itself to the Royal Canadian Navy

**1886** – Karl Benz patents the first gasoline-driven automobile. However, given that no car insurance companies existed, he never drove the thing out of fear of accidents.

**1863** – Bear River Massacre. Now we’re sure this is an extremely sensitive issue, but we cannot for the life of us work out if this was the massacre of a lot of bears by a river or the massacre of a lot of rivers by a bear. Alternatively, it could’ve been the massacre of a lot of uncovered rivers – it really isn’t obvious.

**1662** – Oliver Cromwell is exhumed and ritually executed by King Charles II. It was the kind of thing that everyone agreed afterwards was awkward and weird.



FLICKR/THE JR JAMES ARCHIVE, UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

It is clear to see from this picture why the Y-axis is the most evil of the axis. I mean look at it, sitting there tall, proud and fascist. What a bastard.

## ICEDITORIAL

The Hangman  
Hangman Editor



**celand, Kentish Town** – Following the news this week that three people are to be prosecuted for stealing food from bins, this editor believes that the police should be going further and arresting all those who look remotely desperate.

The police must be praised for their swift action against those work-shy

bastards that were attempting to procure things that no one wanted for free.

However, this good work would have been for nothing if it wasn't for the noble zeal with which the Crown Prosecution Service carried out their role. Unfortunately, this is but once incident which should not have been allowed to happen in the first place.

This writer believes the police should be given sweeping powers with which to arrest, detain or otherwise use any force necessary to stop those who look

desperate.

In fact, not only should police efforts be doubled, but each and every one of us should confront anyone who looks either desperate or poor. Let us never forget that these people are in an awful situation because they choose to be and basically just want your sympathy and your hard-earned cash.

So, place alarms on your bins, take a homeless man's stuff and stop giving to charity because these people don't deserve your time.

## Nan Sweeps Grannys

Timothy McSweeney  
Hangman Contributor

**Y**our Nan was amongst the winners this week at the Grannys award ceremony in Los Angeles. Scooping the prizes for ‘Best New Dentures’ and ‘Knitted Jumpers of the Year’, your Nan dominated the annual prize-giving.

Whilst the mainstream rewards went to your Nan, some of the more niche ones went to your Nan's friends. ‘Best Rocking Chair’ for example, went elsewhere whilst she received no nominations in the ‘Baked Goods of the Year’ category.

Overall, however, your Nan's dominance of the Grannys and Grandparent industry in general.

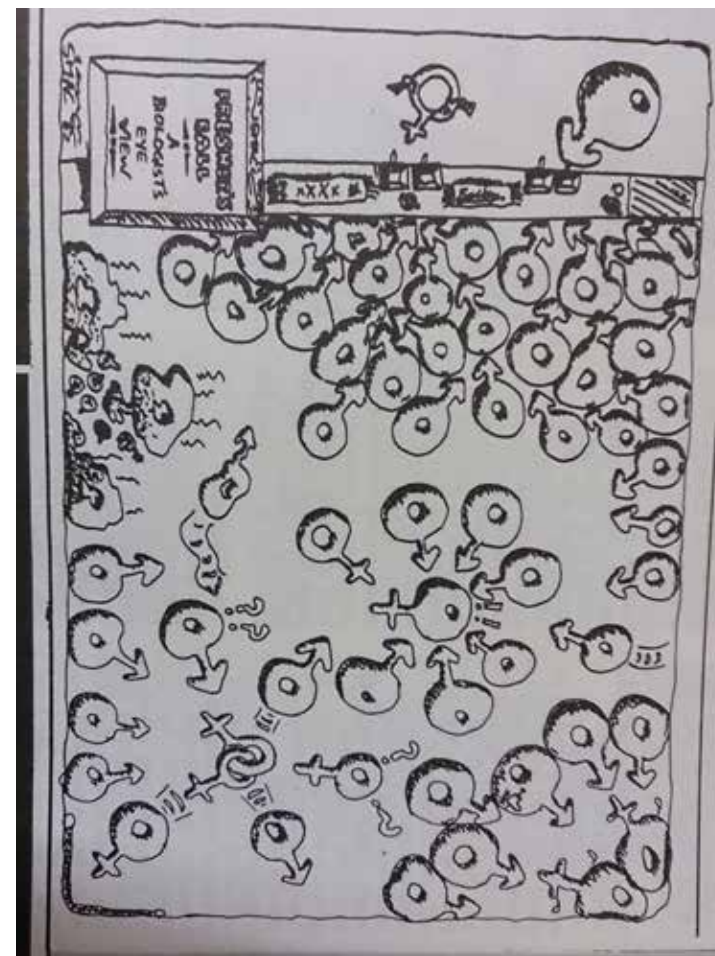
In a statement to Hangman, she said “I'm glad I'm still able to win such a prestigious awards, especially at my age”.

“I look forward to celebrating by meticulously going through my forty-odd photo albums with my grandchildren [you]”

“Enjoy having emails sent straight to junk? Email hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk and give it a go!”

“Need attention? Email hangman.felix@imperial.ac.uk and give it a go!”

## Felix in the past. The Birth of the Ratio (30 Sept 1985)



## “Union In Transition State” - Obama

The Hangman  
Hangman Editor

The President of the United States of America this week addressed the USA on a multitude of issues in the State of the Union address. Whilst many topics such as inequality were discussed, Obama was keen to emphasise the fact that the Union was “in a transition state”.

The President added that, as such, the Union needed to be stabilised. “As every good chemist and biochemist knows, it's not easy to catalyse a

reaction if you don't have means of stabilising the transition state”

“the same applies to Unions”

“to that end we're planning on introducing some coordinating metal atoms on the East and West Coasts of the country”

“We're also hoping to introduce a point mutation in the Gulf of Mexico to form a stronger interaction with Florida”

The President went on to explain in great detail with aid of a Powerpoint presentation some of the finer points



Obama explains some of the finer points of chemical importance of stabilising the transition state of the Union

of stabilising the Union during this transition state. The President finished by stating that the whole address was examinable but that if you were aiming for a First you'd need to read around the address.





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# HANGMAN

## the turnip

Hangman's Finest College News Source



### Norway Attempting To Anger All The Major Powers

#### Snowden Nominated For Peace Prize

With the nomination of Edward Snowden for the Nobel Peace Prize, Norway continued its quest this week to alienate and anger all the World's major powers.



FLICKR/ABARANSK

In 2010, they were able to anger China through it's awarding of the prize to Liu Xiaobo. Whilst, in 2009, they were able to alienate and anger any logical thinkers by giving the prize to Barack Obama who had essentially made very little contribution towards peace. This year, however, the plucky Scandinavian country went one step further and pissed-off the most powerful nation on Earth directly.

Who will Norway infuriate next? Could it be you?

This, however, has left many commentators wondering who Norway can anger in the future, one observer stated: "With no major powers left, who is there left worth insulting? I suppose they could begin hostilities emerging powers like India or poke an old-fashioned bear like Russia"

### DODGY DEAL INTRIGUING

#### XBOX FOR SALE

2 Controllers, 5 games, headset etc...

So clean condition that, i have never even cussed whilst playing it.

Email: [redacted]@yahoo.com

Price : email to discuss but lets say 120 poundish

A pic of la vache qui rit to convince you, email me in any circumstance, even if you want to talk about your gf or bf



bayram iptalmış beyler

### Different Forms Of Frozen Water to Play Big Role in Sporting Tournament

Winter Olympics Beginning



FLICKR/LET IDEAS COMPETE

Frozen water takes centre stage only once every four years, however athletes must spend years perfecting their performances on frozen surfaces.

Next week, differing forms of frozen water will take a leading role in a variety of sporting events across two weeks.

The competition will feature many of the world's nations facing off to see who can perform the best on a range of frozen waters. It is also essentially the only time so much attention is given to frozen surfaces at any one time.

The competition runs in stark contrast to the Summer Olympics which features much less water and basically no frozen surfaces at all.



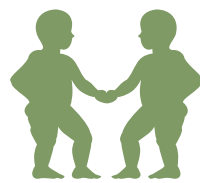
ARIES

This week, you wake up as rock. Yes, a smooth, grey, emotionless rock. You sigh to your rocky self, well at least I won't have that annoying horniness anymore, right? However you quickly notice that due to your permanent hardness, everything has just gotten infinitely worse. Fermented gravel?



TAURUS

This week, you find a rock lying on your roommates bed. You decide that since you do not have friends anyway, you may as well adopt him as a pet rock. You decide to call him Wilson, and you become bestest of friends. However when trying to escape the clutches of Imperial's solitude, you lose him... WIIIIIIIISSOONNNNN!!!!



GEMINI

This week, you see a rock on Queen's lawn. To prove that the average Imperial student has the personality equivalent to a rock, you nominate him for BNOC. You convince your friends to write in letters to extol his virtues. They praise his stubborn approach to student representation. A rockaye wins by a landslide.



CANCER

This week, tired of being isolated due to your love of Justin Bieber you decide to steal that stupid rock which won BNOC. Once you hold that rock, you notice that it's much more awesome than you could ever be. You throw it through the nearest window and resume your stalking of J-Biebze.



LEO

This week, as you are innocently doing coursework, a rock hits you on the head. All of a sudden you think its a good idea to run naked around campus, screaming "Shine bright like vagina" and eating lots of vagina cream. Your personal tutor sees you, and immediately gives you a first on your degree because you "show initiative".



VIRGO

This week, feeling like flicking your bean after seeing someone run around naked, you decide to use the rock you found. It is oh, so smooth, and before you know it, it's slipped up inside your snatch. Strangely it feels harder than anything you've had in there before, which for Imperial doesn't say a lot.



LIBRA

This week, as a medicine student you have to deal with someone coming in with a rock stuck in their vagina. Looking at the beat and listen to them telling you up genitalia, you wonder why you deserved this torture. As you induce labour, you swear to yourself that you're actually going to follow your dreams. Then the rock slips into your stretched hands...pint?



SCORPIO

This week, you finally tell your medic crush how you feel. You invite them to dinner and listen to them telling you about their day, which included a rock inside someones vag. You seize the moment and wink creepily and say: "I have something rock hard for you!" You're forever known as 'that creep' on campus.



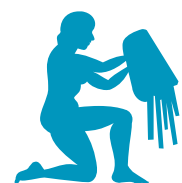
SAGITTARIUS

This week, you have to decide between either always having the smell of excrement in your nose, or having One Direction songs in your head. Both of these options are too horrible to consider, and because you can't decide, both happen simultaneously. You go insane and end up crying in your room. At least you aren't 'that creep', right?



CAPRICORN

This week, so tired of having to listen to your roommates wailing, you move to the library. Out of unused books you build yourself a castle, and proclaim yourself lord of the top floor. Soon the cleaners declare war upon you. You successfully defend your keep at the battle of silent space, securing your rule.



AQUARIUS

This week, you walk past the destruction of the library battle. You think to yourself, at least you are not as crazy as that weird knight guy. Then you remember that you are actually a hipster and everyone really hates you. Oh well, at least you don't live in a castle made of old books right?



PISCES

This week, after failing yet another coursework. You dream that you become a rock, become BNOC and end up in someones vagina. Once you wake up you decide that Imperial has so completely screwed your mind, you move out to California to become a beach bum and live happily ever after





Download the new Felix iOS app today!

## Premier League Predictions

James White gives his midweek predictions

**Man City v Chelsea**  
(Sky Sports 1, Monday 8pm)

2-0

What a platform for one of these two frontrunners in the title race to lay down the gauntlet and send out a real warning to their title rivals. Man City will be favourites, and rightly so, but, they are far from rock solid at the back, whereas you can bet Jose Mourinho will not stand for any defensive mistakes. The more experienced of the two managers, Mourinho has successfully played for a 0-0 at both Arsenal and Man United already this season. I expect him to do the same on Monday and, while he will do well to keep a clean sheet with the likes of Sergio Aguero et al on the pitch, I do think Man City will struggle to outscore the Blues.

1-1

**Newcastle v Sunderland**  
(BT Sport 1, Saturday 12:45pm)

It seems an eternity ago that Paolo di Canio announced his arrival at Sunderland with an emphatic 3-0 win in the corresponding Tyne-Wear derby last season. Since then Gus Poyet has steadied the ship, and Sunderland have not lost on the road in the league since November. High-flying Newcastle's French contingent will provide a stern test of their defensive credentials. On paper, the Magpies are stronger in every department, but with precious little to play for, the Black Cats can extend their run of away form with a valuable point.

1-1

**West Brom v Liverpool**  
(Sky Sports 1, Sunday 1:30pm)

The Baggies had to fight hard to hold Everton in Pepe Mel's first outing in charge, but for all their attractive play, the Toffees do not possess the same clinical cutting edge in attack as their Merseyside neighbours. The lethal Suarez-Sturridge partnership is back in business and although Mel will try to frustrate the Reds, Brendan Rodgers' side need a win to stay on course for a top-four finish. That incentive should make it a comfortable afternoon for Liverpool. Rather like Man City, you always feel Liverpool can outscore any opponent.

1-3

**Arsenal v Crystal Palace**  
(Sky Sports 1, Sunday 4pm)

The Gunners keep rolling on, and have made a nice habit of cruising to 2-0 wins in recent home ties against the likes of Hull, Fulham and Cardiff. They know at least one of Man City and Chelsea will drop points this weekend too.

**West Ham v Swansea**

Make no mistake, this is a relegation six-pointer. For all their slick passing, you could argue the Swans have been off song for a year now. The Hammers have not won at home since the opening day, but with Andy Carroll back fit, this is a great opportunity.

2-0

**Cardiff v Norwich**

This is another massive game at the wrong end of the table, but Ole Gunnar Solsjaer will be hungry for a first home win after an embarrassing home reverse to West Ham. Chris Hughton's Canaries do not win away often, especially when the pressure is not really on

1-0

**Everton v Aston Villa**

It is always dangerous to back against Villa away – they showed yet again at Anfield that they are a different animal on their travels. But the Toffees are in with a real fighting chance of a European finish so Roberto Martinez will demand nothing less than a win.

2-1

**Fulham v Southampton**

The Saints are in a bit of turmoil at the moment but do not seem to be letting the off-field troubles affect their performances on the pitch. The Cottagers will have targeted this as a must-win match but they are just not in the same league for me

1-2

**Chelsea vs. West Ham**  
(Wednesday 7:45pm)

Tim Sherwood's Spurs are in fine form and even the very well-organised Tiggers will have their work cut out trying to contain Emmanuel Adebayor and co. Spurs have to keep winning to remain in contention for the top four, and should prevail over the 90 minutes.

0-2

**Stoke v Man United**

You don't really know what you are going to get with Man United these days. Some weekends they pick up routine wins, others they slip to horror defeats. Although their record at the Britannia is decent, Mark Hughes has already claimed a few scalps there since taking over.

1-1

## Made in Chelsea vs The Only Way is Essex



IC HOCKEY

**Eleanor Kettleborough**  
IC Hockey

**A**fter the initial blinding from the blonde hair and the fake tans, we collected as a team. RomVom slotted in a quickie, smoothly followed by a mid air bitch slap into the net from 3 x a Fish, and we pulled ahead. Some great defending protected Fresher Wearing

III from the formidable Jacky Essex with FrauBrau and Fresher Brave pushing hard up the right (shaft). Double Decker and Fresher Me scared them away from our D with their very real hair...

Suffering from a bad bout of hat trick avoidance and ably assisted by Shark Bait (ooh ha ha) 3 x scored again.

Dominating in the first half, we gave them a charity goal, cos ya know, they're from Essex. Some great one-two's, aerials, drag flicks and general reem teklers from the solid centre

playaz U Bender, WC and Tenth Hole led to a 3-1 half time score line.

Some rousing chat from Banana Split and Willy Board direction from Reginald Maximilian Tarquin Clarence "Pete" Duke of Egham, encouraged some great all round work in the second half.

They were well jel though, and OMG, copied our stick and ball handling skills to get a second in. Despite their dazzling vajazzling, old hats Sucky Sucky and Herpes held the line. Final whistle babes. Game over. #3-2 #OMG #babes #ICHC #ladies1s

## World-wide talent to teach I.C. Wing Chun

**Susannah Molisso**  
IC Wing Chun President

**I**t's been a big year for I.C. Wing Chun. We've joined the UK Wing Chun Kung Fu Association (UKWCKFA), a leading association for Wing Chun with links across the country and the world. Imperial students now have the opportunity to train with Sifus from Britain's leading VTTA approved association; headed by Sifu James Sinclair, who has impressive experience.

Our new Sifu, Nick Martin, will be joining on Feb 7. He is currently giving Wing Chun seminars across India. We're extremely excited as a club for the new talent and energy Sifu Nick will bring. We'd like to welcome any new members to come down and join us for a free taster session on Feb 7; his very first session with I.C. Wing Chun. This will run from 6pm-8pm in

Activity Space 2 in the Union Building.

As well as high class training, joining the UKWCKFA also means our members can use associated clubs across the country. This means training can continue throughout the holidays.

We strongly believe in giving our members the best training available, and fostering a fun and friendly environment as a whole. One of our most recent achievements has been taking our members to perform in the Victoria and Albert Museum along with the CSSA for Chinese New Year Celebrations. We want to keep creating fantastic opportunities like this to improve skill, confidence, and control.

Come down and check us out! You can contact us via wingchun@ic.ac.uk or search I.C. Wing Chun Union on Facebook. Everybody is welcome, whether you've done martial arts before or if this is your first time. We look forward to seeing you!

## What happened between ICUFC and St. Georges?



**T**his week's football report, while hilarious has been independently banned by 12 countries, each citing rules about indecency, too much punnage and too many embarrassing confessions about private viewing habits.

So, tune in next week when we hear from the team again, hopefully after they've had a cold shower!

- Ed.