



Felix

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issue no. 1588

November 14th 2014



Inside...

Penalties for the rugby teams revealed



News 3

Felix gets personal with the President



Features 12-13

Interstellar: the verdict is still out



Films 28-29

Is it time we took Mindy seriously?



Television 30

PHILIPPA SKETT
FELIX EDITOR

A petition to "Protect Silwood from losing its identity" has amassed over 250 signatures, after it has been announced that redevelopment work on the site is to take place. However, with no straight answers yet available as to what this redevelopment may entail, rumours are running rife through the student body based at the campus.

The redevelopment work in question is still in its very early stages, and reportedly cannot start until the nuclear reactor based on the site is completely decommissioned, which won't be until 2016. However, with parts of the Silwood site already closed off to students, concerns are mounting as to what the redevelopments may be.

Due to the Manor house on site being a listed building, Felix has been told that it may not be demolished but may be rented out as luxury apartments, although this has not been confirmed. There are also worries that more buildings may be placed on the green belt, although again this too has not been confirmed.

The Manor house on the campus is already off limits to students after being closed at the beginning of the summer. Previously, the Manor house was used for large social events and a conservatory was utilised for coffee breaks in the morning. It sits in the centre of Silwood Park, overlooking a lot of the greenery of the surrounding campus.

However, these facilities have now been moved to buildings elsewhere on the site and students are concerned that having private residents live in the centre of a student campus may detract from the students being able to enjoy their campus in peace.

Petition launched against redevelopment work at Silwood Park

Early proposals cause confusion amongst students at Silwood

Continued on page 5



This week's issue...

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Felix Editor || Philippa Skett

CONTENTS

| | |
|------------|-------|
| News | 3-9 |
| Comment | 10-11 |
| Features | 12-16 |
| Science | 17 |
| Games | 18 |
| Arts | 24-27 |
| Film | 28-29 |
| Television | 30 |
| Welfare | 29 |
| Music | 32 |
| Hangman | 33-34 |
| Puzzles | 35-36 |
| C and S | 37-38 |
| Sports | 39-40 |

What's on this week:

Tri-Union Bar Night

20:00 - 02:00, Nov 20th, Metric

The Royal College of Science Union (RCSU) gracefully allow all of the other inferior Faculty Unions to party hard with them in Metric next Thursday.

And by party hard, we mean drinking heavily in Metric on a Thursday night.

Tickets: £6.50 online

Ticket includes entry and three free drinks.

Rumours that the CGCU are participating to raise funds to buy a computer to replace the typewriter in their office are unsubstantiated.

SKETT'S BOX OF SHAME

Apologies for some mistakes in Issue 1587. These were:

- We misprinted Belly Dancing society's email. Their correct address is: bellydancing@imperial.ac.uk

Discussion and debate is only ever a good thing

This week we're reporting on Imperial College Union's penalties against the various rugby teams, the confusion over the Silwood redevelopment plans and the fallout from this week's Union Council meeting.

The Council meeting ran on for an impressive three hours, and was divided into two parts; the main bulk was discussing the papers submitted by the Sabbatical officers and some of the Council members, whilst the second part was a discussion on how to combat anti-social behaviour in societies.

Despite this discussion being insightful, this topic as a whole needs to move beyond the walls of Council, and beyond the same group of people who, despite, in theory representing the majority of the student body, are very much a select minority of the student population as a whole.

The Higher Education Funding policy is attracting a lot more attention than this discussion. Although Tom Wheeler has claimed that "yob culture" is something he wants to tackle, nothing is being said about how to further investigate drinking culture in clubs and the

THIS WEEK'S EDITORIAL

negative effects this may have.

A General Meeting has been called to finalise the Higher Education Funding policy, which requires 200 students to attend and vote on the policy before it is passed. However, why is anti-social behaviour being seemingly relegated whilst so many people seem to have to be consulted over a policy that, in reality, may actually have little effect?

The policy, once decided upon, will provide a foundation upon which the Union will lean when it comes to 'lobbying' parliament. What this lobbying entails has yet to be mentioned.

Whether parliament will even listen is a completely separate story. Yet hours of discussion is being dedicated to this topic, whilst addressing issues that are affecting the students currently at Imperial is being pigeonholed into informal discussions that aren't widely publicised.

Back over at College, the decision

to change bursaries also seemed to have little discussion that involved students. With Tom given such a small window to investigate what students may feel about the proposed changes, and the deadlines for the window set by the print deadline of next year's prospectus no less, it seems again that topics that should be openly challenged and debated are being hastily pushed through. Meanwhile, others that are being allocated hours and hours of debate are likely to be rather inconsequential.

This brings us nicely to the Silwood confusion. We spoke to a number of people, all passionate about the work that happens at Silwood, and yet all uncertain as to what to think of the plans.

Luckily, the petition is facilitating debate that could have an impact if no formal decisions have been made yet, and hopefully the redevelopments that may happen will be advantageous to everyone. Relevant discussion is better sooner rather than later, and this is something both the Union and College needs a gentle reminder of once in a while.



Are you lonely? Do you imagine up fake penguins in an attempt to validate your existence?

Join Felix!

Email: felix@imperial.ac.uk to find like-minded people, and potentially write an article or two.

Penguins not included.

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News

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News Editors || Carol Ann Cheah and Kunal Wagle

Council to call General Meeting to discuss Higher Education Funding

PHILIPPA SKETT
FELIX EDITOR

Imperial College Union Council agreed to a Union General Meeting last Tuesday, only the second General Meeting in five years and the first under the new constitution change.

A General Meeting needs 200 students to attend to meet quorum, and can be called to discuss any topic at any time.

The General Meeting was called to discuss the Higher Education Funding (HEF) policy, which has been bouncing in and out of Council papers since the beginning of term.

The Union wants to decide its stance on HEF, and wishes for this to be representative of the student body majority preference on the matter, however determining what this majority preference is is causing the issue.

The meeting was proposed via a paper submitted by Andrew Tranter, the postgraduate representative for the Faculty of Natural Sciences. The paper highlighted that despite

Council agreeing last year to a Referendum to choose between the three options for Higher Education funding, this was then replaced in a following meeting to introduce a “non-binding” survey that is currently open to all students to fill in.

Alex Savell, Deputy President (Finance and Services) is overseeing the survey and the policy. He explained to Felix the reasoning behind the survey. “We ran the survey to try and get a more thought out response generally and find out other opinions on subjects around the topic.

“We want to then make a more detailed policy from this.”

The survey will be analysed and then the policy drawn from these will be presented at the General Meeting. All students present will be able to vote to pass the policy, and add amendments if need be, although these too will have to be voted upon.

Continued Savell, “Once we have a policy, we are going to then come up with a strategy to lobby parliament and parliamentary candidates about our opinion on what is best.

“We aim to do this in the run up to the general elections.”

Said Andrew Tranter on his paper being passed, “I’m glad that council have finally agreed to let students have a vote on what our HE funding policy should be. There’s a massive lack of direct democracy in our union, and hopefully this will go some way to fixing that.”

Scott Heath, Union President during the academic year spanning 2011 to 2012, called the last General Meeting. The Meeting was held in June of that year and was called to discuss alterations to the constitution. The Meeting failed to meet quorum, with attendance numbers failing to rise into double figures.

The debate was then taken back to Council, again which failed to meet quorum, so the decisions were made over email and reported to the following Council meeting.

The meeting will be held on December the 1st in Blackett Lecture Theatre 1, although this time currently clashes with the Royal College of Science Union (RCSU) Science Challenge Launch.



Council voted to hold the General Meeting earlier this week. Photo: Alexander Karapetian

Date for your diary...

UNION GENERAL MEETING

1st December, 6:30PM, Blackett Lecture Theatre 1

Papers can be brought up at the meeting by emailing union.president@imperial.ac.uk up until a week before. Papers require 1 seconder.

Students have legitimate excuse to avoid tutors

Thomas Lim on the Microsoft Office 365 disaster that is sweeping campus

A scheme which will move all undergraduate email accounts from the College’s data centre to Microsoft Office 365 will conclude today. On completion, every Undergraduate’s mailbox will be hosted in a Microsoft data centre, as part of their Office 365 product. The move promises a range of benefits, including a mailbox fifty times larger than what is currently offered, as well as near unlimited file storage and much improved collaboration of Office documents.

Whilst the end goal should prove to be an improved experience, many users have complained of various issues during the migration process, including issues syncing phones and with passwords, as well as emails bouncing due to the move of mailbox. One student commented on the move “Initially Outlook was broken on the College machines, and now I have to access my emails from a different website”, with another adding “It may be inconvenient now, but we are getting a significant amount of extra space”. Most do accept that they do not like change, with comments like “I guess we just don’t like change, but

we will adapt and grow accustomed to the new way of accessing emails.”

John Shemilt, Imperial’s Director of ICT (who set up Microsoft Exchange for the College in 1997), had the following to say on the move: “I think there is a lot of publicity about the advantages, unlimited file storage, vastly increased mailbox size. We know there are some limitations as well as advantages, but what we need to understand, is where you and your colleagues have issues. Whether it is provided in house or on the cloud there will be issues but unless we know what they are we cannot try to resolve them.

So if you do come across issues do let us know via the ICT Service Desk [service.desk@imperial.ac.uk], and we will do all we can to resolve them with you... we need to have the best service possible.

This is a partnership to make sure the students get the best value service we can all achieve.”

The move does not stop with undergraduates; the plan is to move all college mailboxes to Microsoft Office 365, effectively removing College equipment or servers from running Microsoft Exchange.



Photo: Creative Commons

News

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News Editors || Carol Ann Cheah and Kunal Wagle

Medical robots lab opens at Imperial

PHILIPPA SKETT
FELIX EDITOR

On Wednesday the EPSRC Micro-Machining Facility for Medical Robotics was officially opened at Imperial College London. Costing £4 million, this new lab will allow the development of miniaturised surgical robotics that could reshape the way diseases are diagnosed and treated.

Professor Alice Gast, Imperial College London President and Dr Lesley Thompson, Director of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) opened the Facility. The Facility will be led by Professor Guang-Zhong Yang, Director of the Hamlyn Centre, in the Bessemer building, where the Facility is located.

The new facility will house advanced 3D printers for researchers to create the surgical devices on various scales, ranging from the microscopic to the nanoscale. The Faculty also boasts a micro CT scanner that allows researchers to view the microscopic components they are working on, alongside a micro-machine assembly line.

The robotics that will be developed in the Facility will hopefully improve the diagnosis of diseases and drug therapies, and lead to the improvement of minimally invasive surgical procedures.

The opening of the Facility also means that these technologies can

be developed on-site and in-house, reducing the cost by cutting out the need for third party suppliers. This will also speed up the process, making the development of such robotics both more time and cost efficient.

EPSRC funded the project, and the Facility is part of the UK Robotics Network. The Network is led by Imperial, and various other laboratories that focus on robotics are scattered throughout the departments of aeronautics, bioengineering, computing, electrical engineering and mechanical engineering.

The launch of the Facility also comes only a week after Imperial announced the launch of a £1.25m flying robotics lab. The Brahmil Vasudevan Aerial Robotics Lab will be a two-story structure that will feature workshops and a working laboratory. The lab will be installed on the roof of the City and Guilds building, and will have also teaching facilities for undergraduates and postgraduates.

Professor Guang-Zhong Yang said: "At Imperial we are already in the process of developing a range of miniaturised medical robots and smart surgical devices that improve the way patients in the UK are cared for. Thanks to the foresight of the Engineering and Physical Research Council, this new Facility will speed up and improve development and production processes not only for the Hamlyn staff but also for researchers across the College and at other institutions."



COMMENT: Chris Kaye discusses Remembrance Day

This week I had the honour of laying a wreath, on behalf of the Students of Imperial College, to those staff and students who paid the Ultimate sacrifice in service during the First and Second World Wars. The moving ceremony was held in the foyer of the City & Guilds Building and was led by the College Chaplain with a reading from the College Archivist.

This had me reflecting on the international make-up of our Imperial community. Remembrance Day and the poppy as a symbol of bloodshed and loss during War perhaps seems rather anglo-centric. But of course death, destruction and loss happened all over the World.

Last Christmas I went to Hong Kong, where I visited Sai Wan War Cemetery. This was particularly poignant, as Hong Kong fell to Occupation on Christmas Day 1941. It was another 4 years before Hong Kong was liberated, suffering some horrendous hardship which saw the population dwindle from 1.6 million in 1941 to just 600,000 by 1945.

Sai Wan War Cemetery (pictured) is on Cape Collinson, on the North-East corner of Hong Kong

Island. There lie some 1,500 graves of soldiers. These include Canadian, Indian, British and local Chinese servicemen who were killed. Over 400 graves are known only unto God.

A further 2,000 names are engraved at the entrance to the cemetery, listing the servicemen who died in the Battle of Hong Kong or subsequently in captivity and who have no known grave.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission maintains the Sai Wan War Cemetery, and is responsible for maintaining the graves of some 1.7 million deceased Commonwealth military service members at over 23,000 locations in 153 countries.

Many of these countries are represented in the make-up of our community at College here today. It is also important to remember that loss and suffering happened on all sides during conflict.

Looking around College today and seeing the diverse make-up of our student community, all striving for a common goal, is perhaps the greatest tribute to the sacrifices made by our predecessors all those years ago.

CHRIS KAYE



News

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News Editors || Carol Ann Cheah and Kunal Wagle

Silwood redevelopments still uncertain

Philippa Skett investigates the plans to build flats on the Silwood site

...continued from the front page

Felix spoke to the Estates Team, who said they too had no more information that was concrete at this moment in time. Upon contacting Vincent Savolainen, Professor of Organismic Biology who is based at Silwood, he explained to us that the operation of Silwood is split between the parts of the campus in use and the College Endowment, which takes assets from College once they are no longer of use. They then look to obtain “best value” for these assets, which are then reinvested back into the College.

Properties currently under control by College Endowment include the Manor house alongside some of the other buildings on site.

Said Savolainen, “It is now reviewing plans to redevelop the Manor House. The College will ensure that the Silwood Community, including students, are briefed once we have any further information.”

Vincent Savolainen led a meeting last Tuesday at Silwood to address any questions students had, and then emailed the students to answer any further issues. They reiterated that the plans are to take place over a number of years, and there will be no disturbance during exams.

They also explained “Any parts developed as housing would likely be fenced off... The College is absolutely committed to the use of Silwood Park as a field facility and the green spaces are protected by local planning.”

However, some remained unconvinced. Said one student: “It seemed that the staff didn’t know what was going on, although this may be because they too don’t have any definite answers.”

“We have been left with a feeling of helplessness. We feel that because many students at Silwood are only here for a year and the plans may not be put into place for so long, we don’t really have a leg to stand on.

“We are in the middle of nowhere, but now we can’t enjoy our campus if people are living on the site as rented tenants.”

Nika Levikov, a taught postgraduate that is now in her second year at Imperial, started the petition that is looking to amass 500 signatures.

She told *Felix* that she was initially concerned when the students were informed the Manor House was being sold, and then rumours began to spread about further redevelopment.

The petition, hosted on change.org,



Silwood Manor House in happier times. Photo: Creative Commons

is targeted at Simon Harding-Roots, the Chief Operations Officer, who oversees the Estates team, which includes Estates Master planning and Development, Estates Projects, and Estates facilities, as well as Campus Services.

The petition states that “Right now this campus is threatened by infrastructure development that would close off these areas to all students and staff (including the basketball court). To Silwoodians, both past and present, think about what we could lose and what would be left for future students. Sign the petition to keep Silwood beautiful!”

Said Levikov, “I received information from a source I’m unable to disclose here that management is planning to declassify Green Belt land and sell it so that areas, like the Japanese Gardens, will be destroyed and turned into public housing.

“I felt having this information was enough to go public with a warning to all Silwoodians about what kind of plans are being discussed in the hopes that management would begin a dialogue with students.

“Otherwise I feared that plans would be confirmed and land sold before students had the chance to react.”

She went on to tell *Felix* that she would like to start a dialogue with the management over potential plans. “I think students who have worked so hard to come to study at a university like Imperial have the right to know what is being planned since they are all directly impacted by any kind of development. Destroying nature for profit is not an option.

“Tim sent an email to all Silwood students reassuring them that redevelopment is not for that purpose. If this is the case, then

students should be told clearly where the money is going and why it is needed.”

Levikov was unable to attend the meeting Vincent held since she is currently based abroad.

Felix also spoke to Matt Jones, a PhD student based at Silwood and currently the Silwood Park Union Chair. He confirmed that the information available at this stage is very vague, but the land will be used to generate revenue in the future.

“For Silwood to be sustainable, it needs to generate revenue, and currently land is being under utilised. Whilst it would be sad to lose a lot of it, compromise has to be made.

“The problem is, we don’t actually know what land we are planning to sell off. They showed us a rough map but in no way is it finalised.

“There are always rumours at Silwood. Why they are now

having these meetings is because they realise the rumours are more damaging than that is actually happening.”

He explained that he has been invited to a meeting in then near future with the Silwood staff and the Estates team, to discuss the plans further.

“Tim [Barraclough, an academic at Silwood and colleague of Vincent] has gone into the effort of answering people’s individual questions, although I can’t say if it will be a shift in opinions [of other students].

“Some people are always going to stick to their initial opinions, but hopefully we are now opening up a dialogue between the students and the people planning this.”

It seems for now that there are no definitive plans for the site, but many questions still remain unanswered. *Felix* will report on updates as they come in.

News

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News Editors ||| Carol Ann Cheah and Kunal Wagle

Penalties for Rugby announced

Teams have been suspended and made to miss key matches

PHILIPPA SKETT
FELIX EDITOR

PHILIP KENT
DEPUTY EDITOR

Earlier this week, in light of the recent incidents concerning anti-social behaviour, Imperial College Union released the penalties that will be held against both Imperial College Union Rugby Football Club (ICURFC) and Imperial Medicals Rugby Football Club.

The ICURFC has been suspended for two weeks from the 11th November, with the 22 members on the team that played on the 29th October suspended from all Union rugby teams until the end of the calendar year.

Meanwhile, the Medics team is also suspended for two weeks from the 11th, with a suspension of all social activities of the club until the 19th December 2014.

These penalties affect around 120 students in total from across the two clubs and the three teams each that they contain. The Medicals will be unable to host the Christmas Bop at Reynolds as a result of these penalties.

Additionally, both the Medics 3rd team who played on the 29th October and the ICURFC's players will be made to perform "Union service". The nature of "Union service" is yet to be determined by the Union, however the ICURFC members are said to be keen to spend their time taking part in some grassroots rugby training for children, through Community Connections.

The sanctions were announced to members of Union Council, who met on Tuesday evening in their third meeting of the year.

Union President Tom Wheeler added that the entire ICURFC is being punished, due to the fact that the club has decided that it is to take responsibility for the incidents as a whole, not just the individuals who were responsible.

ICURFC members were reported to have stripped on several Tube platforms on the 29th October, causing a District Line train to temporarily suspend its service. The Medicals were also recently involved in the smashing of a window of a coach whilst on their School's Tour. The Medicals also are under further scrutiny after alleged drunken misbehaviour at the new Heston sports ground.

In a comment to *Felix*, Tom continued, "We, as a Union, are willing to vigorously defend student-led, independent activity in the Union. It is never our intention to



We couldn't be bothered to find another image for a rugby story. Photo: gettyimages

stop students from having fun whilst participating in activity, however these incidents clearly crossed a line.

"I believe that the decision made by the Governance Committee is the first step of the process towards achieving a truly progressive, inclusive and positive reputation.

"The Sabbatical Team and I are willing to dedicate as much time as it takes to assist Clubs, Societies and Projects in reaching this common goal."

The penalties against ICURFC are considered stricter than those imposed on the Medicals, due to the team's compliance with the Union's investigations. Said Tom, "We can only commend George Cross [the Imperial Medicals' Club Captain] for how he has responded during the investigation."

Council was also informed that a Motion of No Confidence would be brought forward to the next meeting of Council against the Club Captain of ICURFC, Thomas Hobson.

As it stands currently, members of Council will be voting for or against this motion of No Confidence at the next meeting, on the 9th December.

Tom Hobson spoke to *Felix* about the sanctions and how this will affect his team.

Said Hobson, "I would first like

to say that I believe these sanctions have been very harsh on our club and all our members will feel these punishments. It has put all three teams in a very difficult position, however this is not the end of anybody's season.

"The 2nds and 3rds will only miss two games, and even though the 1st team will not be playing or training until after Christmas, we will still have the majority of our season left. This is plenty of time to regain a decent league position.

"As regards to the vote of no confidence, I believe this is mainly due to the fact we faced this issue and any consequences as a team and club.

"As Club Captain it is natural to bring my position into question, especially due to the media traction this event gained."

In a statement published on the Union website, a spokesperson said: "Whilst we regret that some individuals who may not have been involved in these incidents will suffer as a result of the punishments, the culture and behaviour of the clubs as a whole needs to change."

The Governance sub-committee of the Board of Trustees of Imperial College Union met earlier this week to determine these penalties. The sub-committee, made up by four

members of the Board of Trustees, included Abi de Bruin, Deputy President (Clubs and Societies); Andy Heeps, Lay Trustee; Paul Beaumont, Council Chair; and Hiba Saleem Danish, a fourth year medical student who is also an elected Student Trustee.

Tom Wheeler and three members of Union staff were also present to observe the meeting.

The decision made by the Governance sub-committee does not affect other teams within the two clubs, who can, and will, continue to play matches in the British University and Colleges Sport (BUCS) League.

In an email to the club, Thomas Hobson advised all people in the ICURFC first team who were not part of the team sheet for the match on the 30th October to play in the second team, who can still play for BUCS points too.

As a result of these suspensions, the Medicals will miss three matches, but should be able to make their next one on the 10th December.

ICURFC will miss a total of four games, one being a cup fixture. Two teams will be relegated, and the total BUCS points for the ICURFC will be 0, whilst the Medicals will sink down to -9 points.

"A Motion of No Confidence would be brought forward to the next meeting of Council"

"The culture and behaviour of the clubs as a whole needs to change."

News

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News Editors ||| Carol Ann Cheah and Kunal Wagle

Council “condemns” Provost Board decision to alter bursary allocations

Philippa Skett reports on Council’s damning motion

Union Council on Tuesday voted to “condemn” the College’s Provost Board decision after the changes in bursary allocations for undergraduate students were announced.

A table of figures featured in Tom Wheeler’s Council Report showed the differences between his proposed allocations and the Provost Board’s decision. The table displayed the new allocations for each student on an annual basis, which varies on the income bracket of the student’s family household.

Council members were quick to voice outrage over the changes, with one saying that they were essentially “Anti-Robin Hood”, due to the fact that students from households with a lower income were getting less money at the cost of students from a higher income getting more. Said another Council member, “These changes are essentially evil.”

A statement was drawn up by a member of Council after the paper was discussed, that was then read out towards the end of the meeting so as to be included officially in the minutes. The statement read that “The Imperial College Union Council would like to condemn in the strongest possible terms the Provost Board’s alterations to the bursary structure. “We feel the College has not con-

sulted extensively enough on this decision and that it does not reflect the needs of low and middle income students.

“We are particularly concerned with the large decrease in support at the £50k boundary and decrease for the poorest students in the under £30k category.

“We call on them to revisit this issue as soon as possible with a full and extensive consultation that fully takes into account all students’ views and needs, and to provide full details of the reasons for any changes made.”

All members of the Union Council passed the statement unanimously.

The Provost Board has decided to reduce the bursary allocation by £1,000 for students from a household of an income of less than £16k, meaning they will now receive £5,000 a year. Those from a household with an income of £16 to £25k have seen an annual reduction of £2,000, with the Provost Board deciding to allocate £4,000 instead of the previous £6,000 they receive.

Meanwhile, those students coming from households with an income above £35k will have seen an increase in the bursaries they receive. Students from a household of £35k to £42k previously received £1,200 a year, but now will also be looking to receive £4,000 from now on.

At the top of the bracket, students from a household with an income of £55k to £60k will receive £2,000 a year, quadrupling what they previously received before the Provost Board made the changes.

Tom Wheeler explained that he was given a very short window in which to survey students about their living costs, due to the Provost Board keen to make a decision in time for a print deadline of next year’s prospectus. Wheeler ran a forum for students to talk to him in person about their bursaries, and, after turnout was low, ran an online survey open to all those that receive bursaries from the College. He received over 300 responses, which he used to make recommendations to the Provost Board.

However, none of these were reflected exactly in the final figures decided upon by the Provost board, although they did use the survey results to finalise their own figures. Tom Wheeler said in the meeting that Council citing its displeasure at the figures was unlikely to influence a change in the figures in the near future.

In a quote to Felix, Tom Wheeler said: “To ensure student input on the changes to the distribution of the College Bursary, I carried out an Open Forum meeting, as well as an online survey to discuss these changes. The

responses I received to these were used to draft a recommendation to Imperial College’s Provost Board.

“There are differences, particularly in the lowest income brackets, between the recommendations I

made and the decision that was made. I welcome the increase in support to the students in low-to-middle income brackets, however the decision to decrease funding to the students in the <£16k bracket is concerning.”



An artist's impression of the fridges in Wilkinson Hall after the Provost Board's ruling. Photo: Aude

Diabetes walk is a sweet success

On November 7th, nearly 21,000 people took part in WALK2014, a walk to raise awareness of diabetes, in Abu Dhabi. The walk was organised by the Imperial College London Diabetes Centre (ICLDC). It is estimated that over 150 million steps were taken in total during the walk, which was at the Yaz Marina Circuit.

Last month, Felix reported that former Basketball legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar had agreed to join the campaign to raise awareness of diabetes. Abdul-Jabbar took part in a walk in Al Ain around a municipality building.

Earlier at the event, a presentation on healthy living was given to 400 students from the Indian School Al Ain and Brighton College Al Ain, all aged between six and thirteen.

When talking about health and fitness in the United Arab Emirates, Abdul-Jabbar said, “People should not try for perfection – they need to try to improve.” Abdul-Jabbar can speak from experience – his mother was diabetic, whilst he himself had a battle with

leukaemia in 2009, which he has now fully recovered from. When asked about it, Abdul-Jabbar said “When you have a threat like leukaemia in your life, you have to make some changes. I’m very fortunate to be alive. I’m going to make the best of these years.

“The most important message that I want everybody to get is that diabetes is preventable.”

During a question and answer session, a pupil took the opportunity to ask Abdul-Jabbar whether he actually liked vegetables. Abdul-Jabbar replied, “I really don’t like vegetables”. He later added that his grandmother would “smack him” on the back of the head if he didn’t eat them, and he now ate them regularly.

When speaking about the visit of the Basketball star, Bashar Al Ramahi, Chief Executive of the Imperial College London Diabetes Centre, explained that young people are more likely to take heed of a message on healthy living from an athlete. When the proper message goes to younger generations, “they accept it much more easily than the older generation.”

KUNAL WAGLE



Photo: Keeneland

News

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News Editors ||| Carol Ann Cheah and Kunal Wagle

Self-righting wheelchair technology developed by students

CAROL ANN CHEAH
SECTION EDITOR

A team of students from the Department of Bioengineering have augmented a sports wheelchair in order to enable disabled athletes to re-right themselves back on their wheels after a crash. Jacqueline Beddoe-Rosendo, Bianca de Blasi and Simone Castagno developed the prototype during a UROP this summer, which caters to wheelchair basketball athletes and potentially other athletes of high-impact sports such as wheelchair rugby. The technology has been trialled with members of the London Titans wheelchair basketball team, who the team extensively consulted with over the course of the project.

Their solution consists of a simple rigid metal roller with a rubber casing attached to the front bumper of a sports wheelchair, which rotates in only one direction. Containing a clutch mechanism and coated with anti-slip PVC tape, this is designed to provide a lockable pivot point between the front bumper and the floor. This allows the player to push

themselves up and resume playing in less time.

Bianca de Blasi, in her 4th year of Bioengineering, cites the durability, ease of use and simple replacement/maintenance of the roller. "More importantly, it also fits with wheelchair basketball regulations – for example, the tape that we put on the roller does not leave marks on the basketball court."

The team also made a video, which has been published on the Imperial news website, demonstrating how the roller works in two different cases: athletes who have weaker upper arm strength (and cannot push themselves up) due to having no abdominal control, and athletes who do have some abdominal control. This variation is due to the varying degrees of spinal cord injury (and therefore paralysis) present in different wheelchair athletes.

In the video, Jacqueline Beddoe-Rosendo, also in her 4th year of Bioengineering, explained the challenges that wheelchair basketball athletes face. "During matches, collisions are very frequent and these often lead to players toppling over. These cause disruptions to the game because in many cases, these players

cannot right themselves."

Wheelchair basketball athletes are strapped into the wheelchair and often have the ability to move it into a frontal position in the event of a crash, but find it difficult to push the wheelchair upright by themselves because of the way they are currently designed. At present, players often rely on officials to stop the match clock during a collision and bring external assistance in order to re-right them, or for other players to stop playing and help them up. This is often time-consuming and disrupts the flow of the game.

The UROP itself was a spin-off from a second year Bioengineering Group Design Project in the 2012/13 academic year, which the three previously worked on as part of a larger group with a number of other coursemates.

An initial prototype, which utilized different attachment methods and dark sandpaper, was first produced by the larger group, which was also demonstrated at the 2013 Imperial Festival. The final prototype produced by Beddoe-Rosendo, de Blasi and Castagno solves the issues that the first one faced with regulation compliance (sandpaper

would damage the rink flooring), as well as the durability of device attachments and materials.

Both the group design projects (part of the second-year Bioengineering curriculum) and the UROP are part of the five-year Rio Tinto-sponsored Sports Innovation Challenge. Now in its third year, the challenge aims to widen the accessibility of sports to disabled athletes, as well as improve the training and competition equipment available to them, by harnessing the skills and creativity of Imperial students. To speed up

the process of bringing their product to market, the team is approaching sports wheelchair manufacturers and offering their technology for free as a philanthropic gesture.

Now a graduate student in Imperial's Department of Medicine, Simone Castagno said: "We want to empower players who compete in wheelchair sports, so that they don't have to rely on others to get them upright and in back in the game. Ultimately, we hope to see our device being used by sportspeople in the near future."



Field testing at Imperial College Photo: Imperial College

Union's Annual Report celebrates a successful year

PHILIP KENT
DEPUTY EDITOR

Earlier this week, the Union released the 2013/14 Annual Report. This document, prepared by Union managers and officer trustees, provides a summary of the activities of the Union over the last financial year.

As with previous editions, the report was opened by the exiting Union President, in this instance David Goldsmith.

In his opening statement, David highlighted the Union's main achievements from last year. Opening with the Union's successful lobbying of the House of Lords over the Immigration Bill, he continued onto the Residential Experience Review and Student Academic Choice Awards.

Meanwhile, Chair of the Board of Trustees Dame Julia Higgins praised the Union's new governance arrangements as brought in as part of the new constitution.

Aside from detailed coverage of the

Union's achievements and statistics over the past financial year, which also included the Representation Conference and improved satisfaction in the Union survey, coverage has also been given to the Union's plans for this financial year.

As the year is still in its infancy, it gives some insight as to what the Union has planned going forward.

These include new "exit interview" and "development plan" schemes to increase the support given to Club, Society & Project (CSP) officers, a new report on "diversity, inclusion, and liberation", expansion of customer promises, and proposals from a Democracy Review by March 2015.

The Annual Report also contains the Union's financial statements, which are produced and audited each year in line with Charity Commission guidelines.

This year, the Union reported an overall profit of around £55,000, although this is partially due to an increase in grant from College and an increased value of the services College provide free of charge to the Union.

Once CSP finances have been

excluded, as they are held in a restricted fund separate from other operations, the actual profit is closer to £160,000.

Expenditure has hugely increased in the activity of "Social Enterprise" – a somewhat arbitrary label referring to the bars and retail outlets. This year, the Union's commercial operations have run at a loss almost twice the value of last year's, being subsidised by other operations, although this is likely due to an increase (of 23) in the number of student staff.

In a welcome page to the report, the Union's Managing Director noted that "Together we have taken the Union from a precarious position in 2011 to an organisation with a strong balance sheet, three successive years of strong surpluses and a clear vision for the financial future for the organisation," reflecting the significant improvements the Union has made financially since a number of deficits in the early part of the decade.

The report is available for download from the Union's website.



Photo: Imperial College Union

Anger over Odeon Cinema demolition

Carol Ann Cheah reports on controversy on High Street Kensington

Kensington residents have been up in arms over a recent planning application submitted by Minerva Ltd to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC), which entails demolishing a number of iconic Kensington High Street buildings, including the Odeon Kensington cinema.

The specific sites which will be involved in the development work are 257-265 Kensington High Street, as well as 4-10 and 24 Earl's Court Road, all in the W8 area. Minerva holds the freehold interest in these properties, with prior planning permission granted in December 2012 for c. 100,000 square feet of "private residential accommodation, with a basement car park and cinema".

The new application, received by the council on the 14th October and publicly viewable on the RBKC council website, describes the proposed work as involving "demolition of the former Post Office delivery office, Whitlock House office building and the cinema building with retention of the cinema facade to Kensington High Street."

A major development proposal, it states that its purpose is to construct

"63 residential units (including affordable housing units) and associated residential facilities, retail/class D1 and office accommodation, car parking spaces, cycle parking [...] public realm improvements and associated works." It also mentions the "construction of a basement and buildings to provide cinema facilities", presumably to replace the resulting loss of the Odeon facilities. It is yet to be known however what capacity this new cinema will hold, if it will be open to the public, or who would be in charge of running it.

To date, over 200 objection letters have been received by the council since late October. Common concerns raised in these include proximity to noise and dust for residents near Pembroke Place, the loss of small independent businesses caused by demolishing the W8 portion of Earl's Court Road, as well as potential hazards arising from congestion due to moving the proposed new underground cinema's entrance from Kensington High Street to the smaller Earl's Court Road. Many have also denounced the proposed development as "another faceless, monolithic building" that adds "no cultural value to our High Street".

Several objection letters also

mention that the proposed plans appear to have had the height of the main housing block increased, which is unfavourable to residents near the Odeon from a privacy standpoint "due to increased noise and light pollution". Comments on the planning application will close today (14th Nov), with the council aiming to reach a decision by 16th Jan, 2015.

This is not the first time that the Odeon Kensington has been threatened with closure. With its existence dating back to the 1920s, it was initially known as The Kensington, before being renamed the Majestic in 1940. It was known for its then-revolutionary architecture, as its design was a deliberate attempt to move away from the fairground origins of cinema in the day. The Rank Organization, a now-defunct entertainment conglomerate, were

responsible for its current name after a takeover in the late 1940s.

The original Art Deco interior of the building, is believed to be no longer intact, which prevents English Heritage from listing the Odeon Kensington for preservation (it currently has a Certificate of Immunity which prevents it from being listed until 2018). However, the Cinema Theatre Association suggests that some of its original features may be hidden by false walls and ceilings.

A firm favourite of the late Michael Winner, the Odeon Kensington appears in the press every now and again as his "designated local cinema". He was also rumored to have made an arrangement with its management where he donates to charity every year in return for free pick n' mix on every visit.

"Demolishing a number of iconic Kensington High Street buildings, including the Odeon cinema"

"Over 200 objection letters have been received by the council since late October"



Photo: Nigel Howard

47 killed by a suicide bomb in Nigeria

CÉCILE BORKHATARIA
NEWS WRITER

On the morning of Monday 13th November, an explosion detonated by a female suicide bomber killed 47 people and injured 79 others in Yobe, Niberia. The attack took place at a local school, and the suicide bomber entered the school undetected, wearing a school uniform and carrying explosive materials in a backpack.

The attack follows a five-year Islamic insurgency in the country, and it is believed that it was orchestrated by the Islamic extremist group *Boko Haram*.

The group has been responsible for a number of other attacks on Nigerians, notably the kidnapping of 276 girls from a town in North Eastern Nigeria in April 2014.

The failure of government and military forces to effectively fight the insurgency has caused widespread anger amongst the Nigerian people, and indeed soldiers who arrived at

the school disaster were chased and heckled by the people for failing to deal with *Boko Haram*.

The attack took place during an assembly attended by 2,000 students at the Government Technical Science college. Musa Ibrahim Yahaya, one of the students who survived the blast, said that he "... heard a deafening sound and I was blown off me feet. People started screaming and running, I saw blood all over my body."

Musa is being treated for some minor head wounds but unfortunately some of his peers have more serious injuries, some of which may require amputations.

Boko Haram, the primary suspects for the brutal attack, are notorious violent non-state actors, with ideologies much like ISIL.

The groups advocates a particularly strict form of *Sharia* law, and its ultimate aim is to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria. It completely opposes Western influence on Nigerian society, and wishes to focus its efforts on the mainly Christian

Southern region of the country.

The *Boko Haram* are a Jihadist group that actively seek and kill people who engage in activities that they consider to be 'non-Islamic,' such as dinking alcohol, attending school if you're a girl and not wearing the full niqab.

Interestingly, for 7 years since the group was founded, it was not so violent and mainly practiced its beliefs in remote villages of the North-Eastern Region of the country.

In 2009, Nigerian police arrested nine *Boko Haram* members who were suspected to be planning terrorist attacks, with their weapons and bomb-making equipment also confiscated.

Since 2011, the group's steady rate of attacks has claimed many lives, and the attacks are only increasing in scale. As the group continues to pillage the country, there is increasing pressure on the Nigerian government to deal with the insurgents in order to restore peace to the country.

"A female suicide bomber killed 47 people and injured 79 others in Yobe"



Photo: IRIN/Aminu Abubakar (file)

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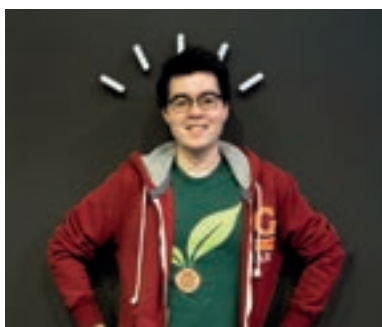
Comment Editor || Tessa Davey

The darker side to student journalism

Thomas Lim discusses Union censorship of student papers



Felix is proud to be independent from the Union and College. Photo: Max Hunter



THOMAS LIM
COMMENT WRITER

A recent article in *The Guardian* explored the world of student journalism, and the often strained relationship between student journalists and their Universities and Student Unions. One such story took place at Plymouth University last year, where the Editor faced thinly veiled threats from their Union, who would put her degree at risk if she covered a story about cuts to student amenities. When trying to run a story about how University staff had an all expenses paid trip to Miami, she was told by the University's communications team that they would rather she didn't print stories which portray the University in a bad light, adding that if she had gotten on better with the University, perhaps she could also have gone to Miami.

It was a similar case at Durham University, when a story about a controversial appointment of their new Master of University College caught the attention of the Union and University. Their Editor was also threatened with "serious disciplinary measures" and the University demanded to proof read each issue

"...if she had gotten on better with the University, perhaps she could also have gone to Miami."

before publication.

The Ripple at Leicester was delayed going to print after their Union threatened to close the paper if a front page investigation into the Union's engagement with students was not removed from the paper.

It's only natural that institutions want to protect their reputation and image, but these stories show a worrying trend towards the idea that they can bend student media and student journalists to prevent the publication of critical pieces: effectively preventing them from holding their University and Union to account. As Universities have grown and expanded their operations, they look further afield for sources of funding. In parallel, rises in student fees means they face increased competition from rival institutions to attract students. The number of TV and tube adverts we see now for undergraduate degrees epitomises this change.

These changes have pushed Universities to act more like large corporations than they have ever done before. Image and corporate

communications move up on the agenda. I don't blame them for this – it makes a lot of sense. Image is important. It is, however, unrealistic to expect student newspapers and journalists to not investigate issues that affect them and their institution, or are of interest to the University community. In the rest of the world, spokespeople for big corporations will try and quell stories, but have no way of controlling what is reported. I fail to see why this should be any different within a University.

We must stay on the right side of defamation law (slander and libel), but this is the case with every publication. With the right training and guidance, this is achievable.

I'm proud that we can print without having our paper scrutinised by an Officer of Imperial College Union, or Imperial College London. The day when we have to submit every page for review will be a sad day for quality journalism and free press. As Professor Michael Bromley, interim Head of Journalism at City University said: "This all seems a bit Stalinist to me".

"It's only natural that institutions want to protect their image"

Comment

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Comment Editor || Tessa Davey

The diversity of opinion that shapes elections

Samuel Bodansky discusses the issues in the 2015 elections

In the 2015 election, one of the largest issues will be the size of the Government. People are asking questions, such as “what should the Government provide?”, and “how much control should the Government have in our lives?”. These questions split the political parties, with Conservatives generally in favour of having a smaller Government, and Labour in favour of a larger one. Parties have a spectrum of answers to this question.

As economists, however, should we even attempt to answer these questions? Economists often debate whether economics is normative or positive. Positive economists argue that values are irrelevant in discussion of economics, whereas normative economists argue for value judgements on important economic issues. Often someone will assert “growth is good” or “unemployment is bad” without questioning it. In reality, economic issues have pros and cons, and affect some positively and others negatively. In political economics especially, no answer is straightforward.

For positive economists, there is no distinction between values and truth. The correct size of the government is a question with a correct answer, just like there are correct answers to scientific questions. These answers

can be found using the tools of political economics; economics becomes almost scientific. A positive statement might be: “Sweden has a higher level of taxation than the USA”.

By contrast normative economists focus on ideas like justice and fairness and ask what government policy ought to be. For example, a normative economist may say: “the Government needs to raise benefits because the poorest people need higher living standards”.

Politicians often evaluate economic policy in terms of macroeconomic objectives. These objectives might not be in the speeches of some party leaders, but they are important. These objectives are: growth, unemployment, inflation and the balance of trade. One way to measure government efficacy is whether the government has used economic policy efficiently to fulfil these objectives.

Economists often talk of real GDP per capita. This is simply the total amount of UK goods and services per person, after factoring in inflation. Growth is simply the percentage increase in this quantity per year, and is a key indicator of a country’s economic performance. Currently, UK growth is 0.8% for the past three months, or an average of 3.2% this year. The government does not set a



A success for the coalition? Photo: Manchester Evening News

specific target for growth, but 2.5% is considered to be a sustainable level.

After the recession (half a year of negative growth) during the tenure of the previous government, this could be considered a success for the coalition. However, all economic

arguments have counterpoints and caveats: many people question the way the economy has grown. Has this growth come with high prices and unbearable living costs? Is the growth environmentally sustainable? Some say that this growth has

merely benefitted the richest in the economy, as the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Does growth justify inequality? These questions are debatable, and this debate forms the diversity of opinions that will shape the next election.

Do you like baring all?

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Features

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Features Editor | VACANT

In the final instalment of the *Sabb* interview series, **Bernadett Tildy** talks Tinder, “Lad Culture” and the Imperial Ratio

Bernadett: Where are you from and do you think it affected your outlook of Imperial?

Tom: In a very positive way, yes! I am from Salcombe in south Devon. The international population at Imperial has always been very stimulating for me. I went from a very un-diverse community to meeting people at Imperial who are from fascinating places.

B: How representative do you think this year's sabb team is of the general student population of Imperial?

T: I'm excited we have a postgraduate research student, Alex, as an officer trustee, because we have a massive postgraduate population. We also have Philippa, the Felix editor, who was a taught postgrad student. In terms of the international aspect, we don't have any non-EU students as sabbs. We are always looking to diversify, but we have no input into who runs and who is elected in the Union elections.

In terms of gender, although the 35:56 girl to boy ratio is not represented this year, it's not massively far off, and this year is kind of an anomaly. The biggest concern is the lack of international students.

B: How do you think you'll address this issue?

T: We're trying to increase engagement. We do have a high level of engagement with our international students because a lot of them are members of overseas clubs. However, there is an issue

because international students don't tend to run for sabbatical positions.

This may be because their degree seems like more of an investment because of the higher fees, so they would prefer to do their degree then get a high-salary job straight away. I think it's a shame; I'd like to see more international students run in the elections.

B: But do you not think because they are paying so much more, they would expect higher quality education and clubs and welfare?

T: I'd like to think that was a part of it, but the awareness of how much their degrees are costing is too much... But it'd be great if they had more input into how we could improve how their courses are run. I would like to help improve things for international students, but it is difficult, because I'm not an international student myself, I don't have as thorough understanding as they do.

B: What do you think about the sabb salary? Especially after Chris said it was too high?

T: I have a lot of respect for Chris for donating a third of his salary. I couldn't afford to do that myself because I've accumulated a lot of credit card bills throughout my three years at Imperial, because I couldn't afford to live in London. So I'm paying those off now.

It's also a combination of living in London and wanting to do as much as I can. If you look at what our salary works out to be, it works out to be in total mid to low £20,000, including living allowance. Whereas

"I had a job offer from Deutsche Bank before I decided that I wanted to do this instead."



Photo: Thomas Lim

I think the average Imperial graduate salary is around £28,000, so sabbs are getting paid less than what we could expect to get.

I had a job offer from Deutsche Bank before I decided that I wanted to do this instead. I didn't turn it down for money, but because I didn't want to go into that industry and I wanted to do more and change here. I think I would have a better experience here.

B: So what do you want to do after your sabb year?

T: I'm going to hopefully go and do a

"I was always very envious of the people who had the courage to run..."

postgraduate medicine degree.

B: Pff, woah! That is totally different to banking! Did you always want to run for a sabbatical position?

T: I was always very envious of the people who had the courage to run, to put themselves in a public forum so open to judgement and criticism. I didn't think I had it in me.

Also, because I was in my final year with my friends, I didn't think my friends would have enough time to help me. I was looking at the option of running for president and it was

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How would I do?



customers and College should have to engage with the students more when making changes to the education they are providing. An example of this is moving Chemistry to Imperial West: where students were asked what they want and College is actually doing what they want.

B: But how can this aim even be achieved? I thought all you could do was put forward the student opinion?

T: The thing my predecessor, David, taught me (and what Paul taught him) was that things don't get decided in meetings. Things get 'approved' in meetings, but things get formulated outside and that's where influence comes in. As President I have the most amount of influence of the sabb because I can have meetings with very high up people (like the President and Provost of the College) and hopefully influence people's opinion on how they perceive students as an organisation, and ideas will then hopefully trickle down. I can agree that at the end of the year, there will be little perceived change. I know things won't change overnight, I'm a realist like that, but I think there will be visible change in about five years' time.

B: Do you think you can be held accountable at the end of this year?

T: I hope so. A couple of things I want to achieve are like that; long-standing changes in attitude, which aren't quantifiable. But I also want to campaign around the time of general elections to change student engagement in politics. The student voter turnout is about 20% and the national turnout is 40% but the elderly turnout is 70%. The current attitude is: why should politicians listen to students when they get more votes from the elderly? I think we need to do something about that. I think we should have a lot more political weight. And since the election's in May, hopefully I will be able to say more quantifiable things when it comes to accountability.

B: Do you think student body should be given a vote to decide the quality of job you've done?

T: We haven't spoken about this as a sabb team yet since Chris brought this up. My individual opinion is that if we ask for a student referendum whether we get Honorary life membership at the end of the sabbatical year, students are more likely to pay attention to the negative things that the person has done and they are more likely to vote if they dislike the person.

I think the students who are voting, if they are interested and want to hold us to account, they should come to Student Council, which is the forum to hold us accountable. I don't

think a cross-campus ballot would be as representative of an informed opinion. Council is designed for the Sabbs to give a balanced report about what they've done and for their actions to be questioned by students. I do think the majority of people who would vote in the ballot would not go all the way to make an informed decision.

It's quite a controversial thing to say, but I don't think there would be that level of engagement. I know, because I've done a lot of surveys without having done enough research beforehand to be wholly informed about an issue.

B: Other than changing college attitudes, what other issues would you like to tackle?

T: The general election stuff I mentioned before, and the national movement on 'lad culture', which is a title I absolutely detest. It's not representative of the issue and it is inherently gender specific. A lot of research indicates there are a lot of women participating in it too. 'Lad culture' is defined as 'homophobic, and generally misogynistic and/or racist behaviour amongst groups who in general have been drinking and/or participating in a sport'.

Giving it a gender specific title is going to exacerbate the issue, both genders should be approached, saying 'we need to stop this'. We are looking at branding it as a part of the solution, we are working on coming up with a new title for it.

Another issue I want to look at is Evelyn Gardens. They're definitely closing next year for refurbishment, but then the following year, there might be some opportunity to push College to keep them open, because they still have a 30 year lease left. They are such an asset!

B: Will the rent increase though?

T: Absolutely, because College had to pay so much to refurbish them. But with Acton, by the time you've paid for a travel card, total cost is going to be the same as the refurbished Evelyn Gardens. But at least Evelyn Gardens is closer, quicker and nicer.

Tying in with this, another issue I want to look at is the affordable living cost. Currently Imperial can't afford to give bursaries to the 'middle income' students, an issue that I am particularly concerned about. So we're trying to collate some data; asking students how much their parents give them monthly, and where they are spending that money, so then we can better inform College about living costs.

B: In your role of President, who is accountable to you?

T: Our predecessors have changed the previous structure: I am now not in charge of the other sabbs, because they were elected for their separate

reasons, and it's less democratic. The Manager of the Union reports to me, technically.

B: So you're like the 'CEO of the Union'?

T: Yep.

B: Who trained you?

T: We get training throughout the induction period in the last two weeks of July. I also attended Students Union conferences, about how to run a student union. I also got a handover from David, and also have open dialogue with past presidents.

B: How do you think David did last year?

T: I think David did a very good job. I think the most impressive thing he produced was a consultation framework about how presidents should engage with students, it offers kinds of rules and framework on when they need to speak to students and how much, improving student consultation.

B: What is the thing you most like and dislike about the Union?

T: The thing I most like is that we're so student-led. One of the downsides is that students sometimes get frustrated with certain aspects, like they don't like queuing too long at the bars and they don't like paying entry into the Union. Entry fees are a contentious issue, but it's free til 9pm and it's £2 after. But all of this money is re-invested to the Union, which goes towards the students.

B: If you had to have tinder, what bio would you have?

T: Oh God knows. I'd probably put what I like to do, so: skiing, climbing and that kind of thing. I'd probably put how tall I am, some girls get put off about how tall I am!

B: How tall are you?

T: *no hesitation* 6 foot 3. That really caught me unaware, I wonder what IS on my tinder profile...

B: Okay, say your tinder bio WAS actually amazing-

T: What 'WAS amazing?!', are you saying it's crap?!

B: -and successfully earned you a date but because you are so busy with all your sabb duties, you don't have time to leave campus, and have to have your first date at an Imperial establishment. Where do you go?

T: On campus?! Crippling! I'm technically a postgrad, half staff member, so probably h-bar.

in the back of my head, but I thought I wouldn't be able to take 2 weeks out of studying. I was concerned about my degree and putting too much pressure on my friends.

But when I did ask my friends, the support I got was absolutely overwhelming. Seeing my friends pull through like they did was one of the greatest things to happen to me during my time at Imperial.

I didn't expect for a second that they would do anything like that for me. The good stuff that they did helping me impressed me so much; it almost outshone the fact that I won the election.

B: Why President?

T: It's a weird one. I'm from a clubs background and I'd been asked if I considered running for DPCS. I think it was the fact that the things I wanted to achieve were not clubs based, but what I wanted to try and change was the wider relationship College has with students. College perceives students as customers and the transactional perception of how education is viewed upsets me; students are seeing education as a way to get a higher salary in the future. I think students should be more like members rather than

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The biggest Forum to discuss change

Pippa Smith introduces the London Climate Forum 2014

Climate change is a hotter topic than ever. The 2014 IPCC report, hot from the press, recommends that 80% of the world's power should be from low-carbon sources by 2050. This will limit the warming of the atmosphere to 2°C, the agreed 'tipping point' for disastrous consequences.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon's response noted 'There is a myth that climate action will cost heavily', but he commented that 'inaction will cost much more.'

The search for sustainable solutions to the problem of climate change has never been so important. And Imperial is rising to the challenge. This term, Imperial Hub launched its brand-new 'Skills for Sustainability' programme. Perhaps, though, our biggest contribution to the cause is the London Climate Forum, hosted here on 22nd November.

The London Climate Forum is the biggest student-led conference on environmental issues in the UK. Last year over three hundred students attend to listen and engage with twenty-one speakers from business, academia and politics. This year the conference is back, aiming to repeat last year's success, with a distinct focus on solutions.

The keynote speaker, Professor Sir Brian Hoskins, will discuss the latest predictions. He returns to outline what has changed in recent years and what the scientific community really thinks about climate change. Professor Hoskins will weigh the effectiveness of current initiatives and see if we need to ramp up our efforts locally and globally.

Michael Mathres, Co-Founder and Director of World Climate Ltd, will be launching the 'Road to Paris 2015' campaign at the forum. 'Road to Paris 2015' is a new, global initiative to tackle climate change from the bottom up through collaboration between the public and private sectors. The campaign recognises that there can be no international deal on global emissions targets without any agreed framework securing economic growth and prosperity.

'Road to Paris' promotes green economy solutions and is endorsed by prominent and influential figures including Arnold Schwarzenegger. Through the London Climate Forum, Imperial is privileged to be the first university in the world to get involved with 'Road to Paris 2015'.

The conference will also hear from SustainAbility, an environmental consultancy firm focusing on research, analysis and strategic advice



Based at Imperial College London, the London Climate Forum is taking place on November 22nd. Photo: London Climate Forum

to businesses that seek to make sustainable changes.

Alex Kirby, an environmental journalist, will represent how the media can be part of the solution. Kirby is outspoken on the ongoing problems of reporting climate news. Even today with scientists conducting ground-breaking research to maximise the resources of our planet and governments bringing in binding new laws to reduce CO₂ footprints, journalists are facing limits on what they can report as fact.

This conference is about the potential impact students can have and are already having, which is why it is as much about discussion, debate and interaction as hearing from eminent speakers. As part of the programme, the conference is hosting a screening of 'Sunset over Selungo', a new documentary on deforestation

from Ross Harrison.

'Sunset over Selungo' takes a look into the everyday lives of the people of the Penan tribe in Borneo and documents their struggle to protect their land from logging companies. Ross will be hosting a Q&A after the film screening on the 'Penan Peace Park', the response of this community to localised environmental destruction, as well as his experiences as a filmmaker.

Interaction will be encouraged during the day, with workshops and debates with exhibitors including Climate-KIC and the UK Young Climate Coalition. Charities and companies will be present to discuss their initiatives and how students can get involved through projects, volunteering and graduate schemes.

Climate-KIC champions student involvement by offering business

and research opportunities. With a similar focus UKYCC is run purely by student volunteers but works with those in the very top level of government to bring about policies directly addressing the issue of sustainability.

However, possibly the most valuable part of the conference is the opportunity to talk to other students. Consequently, delegates will not only discuss with each other their ideas for environmental innovation, but will also interact with current PhD students working at the Grantham Institute of Climate Change and other departments at Imperial.

If you want to be part of the solution to climate change, we encourage you to get involved. Buying a ticket to the London Climate Forum is just the first step in saving the planet.

"There is a myth that climate action will cost heavily"

"This conference is about the potential impact students can have and are already having."

Features

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Features Editor || VACANT

Educating the masses on Funding

Alex Savell and Andrew Tranter explain Higher Education Funding and how you can help in shaping its future

Higher Education Funding (HEF) is certainly not sexy. Like British Politics it has all the charisma of your average British politician. But it is important. It's important because defining the future of how Universities receive funding is something that will affect thousands of young people who (for the most part) can't vote in the upcoming UK General Election next May, and yet their lives could be profoundly altered by the next government's stance on this issue.

You might say: "But I'm already here, it won't affect my fees", but many of these young people are your brothers and sisters; your nephews, nieces, cousins; your friends or perhaps one day your children, they are your future colleagues, employees and perhaps even employers. And let us not forget that Higher Education Funding does not just mean home undergraduates. The debate includes all kinds of students and while it may be easy to focus on Home EU fees we should bear in

mind that even that has a knock on effect on what other fees Universities may charge to all other students.

Another reason I have heard a lot over my time here is: "Why should I bother? We'll never change anything." Which I think is surprisingly defeatist for a group of over 16,000 of the brightest people in the world, at an institution recently listed as the second best in the world, who last year managed to have information from their response to the government's

Immigration Policy read in the House of Lords. And particularly at a time when the nation will be asked to choose its next set of representatives. This moment presents a true opportunity to hold those we ask to lead our nation to account and to raise our collective voice to make a change.

The union over the next few weeks will be defining our stance on Higher Education Funding and we can only do that with your help. Come along to our first Union General Meeting since 2012 at

6.30pm on December 1st in Blackett Laboratory LT1 (Physics). The issue we're looking at most closely is the debate between which funding model the union should support; 'Free Education', 'Tuition Fees', 'Graduate Tax' or 'None of these' which you may recognize as the less well-named brother of R.O.N from our union elections. Many of you may not be entirely familiar with these models, particularly if you are not a Home undergraduate yourself so we've attempted to lay out the case for each below.

Free Education

Free Education means just that: university education which is free for all students. Education is a public good, not a commodity to be bought and sold. How can we compromise an idea so fundamentally important? Increasingly we hear students referred to as "customers", research being prioritised based on what makes money instead of what serves society. That attitude is created by a system that is turning universities into businesses – a system which cuts education funding while

making students pay more and more ludicrous sums. Free education works in France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Scotland. And anyway, increased tuition fees basically aren't saving the taxpayer any money.

Free Education is the only system which takes commercial interest out of the equation, and it's the only system which doesn't leave students in £60,000 of debt. Taking a firm, principled stance is the only way to stand up to those who would change University for the worse.

Tuition Fees

Tuition Fees are the system we have now. They're not trendy or popular but at the end of the day they work. At the end of the day more students from poorer backgrounds are coming to University now than ever have in the past so it's not the barrier to entry that some would like you to believe.

And is it really so bad that people should have to pay for a specialized education and qualification? In a few years most of us will be paying income tax, why should we pay for someone else

to be educated? What makes it a right for those fortunate enough to score better in exams to be given more than those that don't?

Plus, tuition fees encourage competition: competition to offer the best course so that they get the most funding and are seen as the best institution, attract the best researchers and then other sources of income.

No one is saying Tuition Fees are perfect, but they're a damn sight better than any other option.

Graduate Tax

There has to be something better than bankrupting the nation to pay for thousands of students to do Mickey Mouse degrees or loading students up with debt and making universities treat them like walking income. A Graduate tax seeks to achieve just that.

Instead of a loan you pay a percentage of extra tax on income over a certain value for a number of years. So you literally pay more if you get a really great job due to your degree than if you struggle to earn anything. There isn't

ever an actual 'debt' and there isn't a real or perceived barrier to entry to Higher Education Funding.

My favorite thing about the system is those that gain the most as a result of their degree give back the most in return for it. That's like being able to only pay for the cinema if you enjoyed the movie... you pay for the value of your degree not the cost of it.

Why pick a second rate system when you can have the best of both and extra benefits on top?

None of these...

What are you kidding? These three models are so wrapped up in proving that they are better than each other they fail to notice that being the best of a bunch of bad options is still a bad option. Why would anyone support a one size fits all solution to such a complex problem? Why would we swallow the downsides of any of these in order to have just one way to fund a degree. There isn't good evidence to show that Tuition Fees will make University more accessible and it will

definitely cost the nation and taxpayer money. Tuition Fees leave students with debts that can hang on their shoulders for decades and if we supported them of course they will slowly creep upwards.

And a graduate tax is a laughable thing to try and implement and the only 'improvement' it has on tuition fees is hiding the amount you will have to pay back from you.

We should be campaigning for fresh ideas and admit that it's time to go back to the drawing board.

What model do you agree with most?

The Union over the next few weeks will be defining their stance on Higher Education Funding. Fill in the #HEF_ICU Higher Education Funding Survey to have your say, which closes on November 19th at Midday.

Find it at imperialcollegeunion.org/HEF-Survey

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Science

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Science Editor || James Bezer & Lauren Ratcliffe

How Noble are the Breakthrough Prizes? James Bezer asks whether they've achieved their lofty goals

"I don't like honours."

When asked how he felt to have been awarded the Nobel Prize, the most prestigious honour that can be bestowed upon a scientist, Richard Feynman seemed rather unimpressed.

"I've already got the prize," he said. "The prize is the pleasure of finding the thing out, the kick in the discovery, seeing other people use it. Those are the real things. The honours are unreal to me."

Presumably then, Feynman would not have had much interest in the Breakthrough Prizes.

Founded in 2012 by some of the world's most famous billionaires, the 2015 awards were announced this week to recognise those scientists behind the biggest 'breakthroughs' in life sciences, fundamental physics and mathematics.

Starting with a \$3 million prize fund that spits in the face of the Nobel's puny \$1.1 million, everything about the Breakthrough Prizes is big. They aim to turn scientists into "rock stars" with a star-studded, Oscars-style awards ceremony, and inject some "raazzmatazz" into the rather tedious business of curing cancer and finding a theory of everything.

One of those funding the prize, Mark Zuckerberg, thinks they have "the potential to provide a platform for other models of philanthropy,

so people everywhere have an opportunity at a better future."

Those behind the project seem to think of themselves as doing something good for humanity: encouraging breakthroughs in medicine, recognising genius, and generally making science seem sexy.

How they hope it will achieve these lofty ambitions, I'm not quite sure.

Unlike the excellent Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, another billionaire's philanthropic gesture, the Breakthrough Prizes do not directly pay for any new research. How is giving away \$3 million to blow on a house or a yacht supposed to have a better impact on humanity than using it to fund a lab? It's not even like the people receiving this money have gone previously unrecognised—many are also Nobel laureates, and all command salaries vastly greater than what the average researcher could ever hope to achieve.

The entire project seems as empty as the wiry ball that serves as a trophy. Among the criticism of the prizes was an editorial in *Nature* which points out: "you cannot buy class, as the old saying goes, and these upstart entrepreneurs cannot buy their prizes the prestige of the Nobels."

Even its name is the biggest cliché in science reporting.

Unusually for an award, news

coverage has been directed more towards those handing out the prizes than their recipients. They come across as a feeble attempt at philanthropy by a bunch of billionaires who don't want to be shown up by Bill Gates and Warren Buffet. How many people could name a single recipient of any one of these prizes? So much for making scientists famous.

It's true that we need to do all we can to promote science and technology. We need to make sure that bright new ideas for treating diseases get the funding they need to make it into hospitals. We need to promote more esoteric research into mathematics and fundamental physics, not just so we better understand the world we live in, but to lay the foundations for potential future technologies. We need to encourage bright young people to take science up as a career, and to ensure that the public is aware of the enormous benefits of scientific advancement.

But the Breakthrough Prizes achieve none of this. The way to promote science is by showing it as it is: interesting, rewarding and useful. Science isn't about becoming rich and famous. Science is about doing science. Trying to dress it up with a pointlessly large cheque really isn't doing anyone any favours.

"The Prizes aim to turn scientists into rock stars."



Mark Zuckerberg: one of the founders of the Breakthrough Prizes Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Rosetta probe successfully lands on comet

JAMES BEZER
SCIENCE EDITOR

On Wednesday afternoon, the signal came through that one of the most ambitious space missions ever attempted has successfully landed on a comet.

In the ten years since it was launched, Rosetta has travelled six billion kilometres to reach comet 67P/C-G, currently orbiting the sun between Mars and Jupiter.

Rosetta arrived at the comet in the summer, and has spent the past few weeks in orbit around it, creating detailed images of the surface to determine a suitable landing site.

The final landing was complicated by the unusual shape of the comet, and the 30 minute delay in radio communications due to the enormous distances involved.

Rosetta travelled with a probe called Philae, designed to detach from the craft and carry out the landing.

Philae is equipped with two

harpoons, intended to fire into the surface and ensure it doesn't skip off because of the comet's weak gravity. It carries a mass spectrometer, radiation detector, and high-resolution cameras.

The European Space Agency (ESA) first proposed the mission more than 20 years ago, to investigate the chemical composition of a comet, as well as its general structure and magnetic environment. Information on organic compounds is also hoped to give us a new understanding of the possible role of comets in the origin of life on earth.

The Rosetta probe, still in orbit, will continue to take data from above, and analyse dust and gas released as the comet heats up during its approach to the sun.

Despite the successful outcome, the mission has not been without its problems. It was originally intended to land on a different comet, 46/Wirtanen, but a delay caused by a rocket failure meant a different target had to be found.



Artist's impression of Rosetta in orbit around the comet. Photo: Creative Commons

Games

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Games Editor || Max Ettl & Calum Skene

The Epic Return to Middle Earth

Maximilian Ettl reviews the latest addition to this titanic franchise

Yes, ok, the *Lord of the Rings: Shadow of Mordor* was released a while ago, but after completing it just last week and being so thoroughly impressed, I felt that I really needed to share this with you guys. For all of you who missed it, the *Shadow of Mordor* is a new Stealth-RPG style *Lord of the Rings* game, that takes between the happenings of the *Hobbit* and the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Its completely new material that aims to add a new franchise and lore to this already extensive world. You play as the ranger Talion, who, with his family, has been murdered by the Hand of Sauron, as Sauron returns to Mordor. Strangely enough you do not die, as your soul bonds with that of an ancient wraith. With your new added powers of the wraith you aim to uncover its past as well as avenge your loved ones.

The story of the game was absolutely outstanding. From start to finish I never felt that I wasn't playing a cheap knock-off of a Tolkien story, but an actual proper story living and breathing in Middle Earth. Without revealing too much (even though I really want to gush about the epicness that is some scenes), I can tell you that we see the return of very familiar characters like Gollum, as well as being introduced to new ones that further the lore. All of the cutscenes were really well done, and the acting was all incredibly good. So good in fact that I actually felt like I was in my own personal *Lord of the Rings* movie. Very rarely have I gotten chills when playing a game, but I definitely got them in this game. While these shivers could be

"I actually felt like I was in my own personal *Lord of the Rings* movie."

amplified because I love *Lord of the Rings* so much, there still is certainly something magical about this worthy admission to Middle Earth.

The game itself takes place in Mordor. Now the Mordor you probably have in mind, is the one portrayed in the movies, black, burned and full of lava. The Mordor of the *Shadow of Mordor*, could not be any different. Sauron has just returned back home, and his armies have not had a time to ravage this green landscape. Also, there is a super green area around the sea of Núrn! How else do you think that the Orcs would get their grub? Magic?! So, basically you are surrounded by green grass, ancient ruins of Human buildings, and great trees dotting the area you traverse. Furthermore, the creatures and Orcs that roam this land, do so at random, and gives the world a vibrancy and life I have found hard-pressed to find in most games.

The missions in the story, fit in extremely well, and the fact that I could do them at any time I wanted to removed the forced element that you sometimes have. All the missions I did themselves never really followed those clichéd RPG missions, where you collect stuff and grind away for better gear. In fact, I never felt that I needed to grind at any point, I rarely cared about my runes I had equipped because it was so fun to play.

The mechanics of the game, while quite similar to the *Assassin's Creed* series, was still really well executed. The stealth element works really well, and I felt so amazing when I stealth dropped and cut a throat. The combat is also really fun, and holy



Talion was arrested soon after for indecent exposure... oh, and for murdering a innocent orc... Photo: Gamespot

shit those executions are really epic. While obviously there is a finite amount of animations, it never felt repetitive and I would whoop with joy when a particularly bloody came up. The only thing that I can say that slightly disappointed me was the whole mind control thing. I am definitely not saying its bad, and to be honest I didn't really know what to expect, I still felt like there was something missing.

The thing that I really liked was the whole nemesis system! I brutally scarred one Orc leader while trying to kill him, but didn't actually decapitate him, meaning he survived! I can tell you, he definitely didn't take being mutilated well. His face was a horrible mess, and according to information I procured, he was actually unable to chew properly! Basically, the fact that I was able to uniquely influence the future of those I met, was an experience that I had never had before and to perfectly frank it was incredible. Furthermore the vendetta missions, which basically were just missions to kill Orc leaders, but with the twist that you were avenging the deaths of players who had been killed by these guys in their OWN game. This added a whole new dimension of interacting with other people's worlds, and every time on of these came up, I dropped what I was doing to complete it.

In terms of the pedantic details, the graphics and sound track live up to the amazing standard set by all the other parts of this game. The graphics, are exceptional and if you have a graphic card that can handle the load, be ready to be awed by the visual detail that will burn your eyes.

"This one time reality managed to not only hold up to my hopes but soundly beat them."

The water, lighting effects make for such an immersive experience and definitely the sharpest rendition of Middle Earth I have ever seen!

Now the one thing I was slightly worried about was replay value. Would I be able to pick this title up once I finished it? After messing about for 30 hours on this game, I can tell you definitely! Killing Orcs, doing sick combos and slowly taking control of Mordor was just so fun. I could have probably finished the game early if I hadn't been messing about so much. Trust me, I will definitely be dipping back into the *Shadow of Mordor* pool again.

What I hope you have managed to convey in this review is how much this has managed to live up to my hyped expectations. I have this amazing ability of hyping upcoming games to the point that reality cannot possibly stand up to my imagination. This has ruined several game for me. As much as I tried to not get hyped for this game, I still did. I was super excited when I finally got my hands on it. In the back of my mind, I was truly afraid that I would once again be disappointed. However, this one time reality managed to not only hold up to my expectations but soundly beat them. The game made me fall in love with *Lord of the Rings* all over again. I would seriously recommend anyone getting it, as it is totally worth it.

Once I had finished the main story, all I could think was: "this was so incredibly good, where is the sequel, take my money." Its not often that you get that feeling, and one I hope that you will also experience when completing this game.



DUDE?! CAN'T YOU SEE THAT I AM BUSY??? GAWD!! Photo: Gamespot

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Arts

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Arts Editor || Fred Fyles & Kamil McClelland

My Art: *Tomoko Uemure in Her Bath*

Fred Fyles selects a powerful work from W. Eugene Smith

A picture tells a thousand words, as the old adage goes. But some of the best photos go deeper; not satisfied with a word-limit of a thousand, the photographer instead expands their range, taking in entire movements, nations, and histories with their lens.

One such photo is *Tomoko Uemure in Her Bath*, taken by the legendary American war photographer and photojournalist W. Eugene Smith in 1971. The picture, striking in its black and white intensity, is composed like a classical *pieta*, with Ryoko Uemura taking on the role of the Virgin Mary, cradling her daughter Tomoko, whose mind and body have been withered away thanks to the debilitating effects of Minimata disease.

The disease, a form of severe mercury poisoning that destroys the nervous system, was affecting Tokomo due to the pollution released by the Chisso Corporation, and this photo helped bring this injustice to international attention. This is what photojournalists do best; wielding their camera, they act as warriors for truth, unveiling what is happening and showing it to the waiting world.

But this is not only a great piece of journalism - it is a great piece of art. The composition of the shot is awe-inspiring, with the bathtub forming a dramatic diamond in the centre of the frame. The loving gaze with which Ryoko looks down at her daughter contrasts with the look of pain on the girl's face, which



Tomoko Uemure in Her Bath (1971) Photo: W. Eugene Smith

"The striking picture is composed like a classical pieta of old"

is drawn back in a silent scream of anguish. Tomoko's legs, atrophied so that they resemble matchsticks, are supported by her mother's strong, firm arms. The lighting, which comes in from one direction, reflects off the gently rippling water, creating an atmosphere of still and calm.

W. Eugene Smith is a paragon of a photojournalist - his unique eye, which took in horrific scenes in Japan, Haiti, Spain, and the US, is alone enough to place him in the higher echelons of photographers. But what sets Smith apart is his uncompromising vision, and fearless attitude. In 1972, one year after

"What sets Smith apart from others is his vision and fearless attitude"

this photograph was taken, he was attacked by employees of the Chisso Company, in an attempt to silence him. As a result his vision in one eye deteriorated, meaning he had to take a break from his work. It didn't stop him; in 1975 he released his essay *Minimata*, and continued to release work up until his death in 1978.

This wasn't the first time Smith had faced difficulty: initially working for *Newsweek*, he was fired for refusing to abandon 35mm in favour of medium format. Joining *Life* in 1939, he spent the next six years photographing conditions in Japan, eventually being hit by mortar fire. In 1954 he severed his ties with *Life*, owing to their interpretation of his photos of humanitarian Albert Schweitzer.

This uncompromising attitude, which earned him a thorny reputation, also led to his perfectly composed work. Other pieces, such as his photo of a demolition team blasting out a cave in Iwo Jima, or a US soldier in Saipan finding a wounded infant, are similarly shocking in their intensity.

Tomoko Uemure in Her Bath is, for me, a perfect example of the power of war photography; its ability to capture the human condition, in all its horror, is unrivalled by any other field.

W. Eugene Smith was unique in this respect, with his innate ability to enter into the void and then return - not only intact, but with pictures that speak long after their subjects cannot.

Editorial: The Conflict Issue

FRED FYLES
KAMIL MCCLELLAND
SECTION EDITORS

War. What is it good for? Edwin Starr might think it's absolutely nothing, but here at *Felix Arts* we take a more optimistic view, instead looking at the artwork that war has inspired throughout history, from the Bayeux Tapestry to modern photojournalism, in this special Conflict Issue.

We start off with a look at the iconic photography of W. Eugene Smith, and try and unpick exactly what the role of a photographer is, as well as the key qualities in a good photojournalist. Mario Lapore then take a look at the psychological conflict present in the tale of *JOHN*, whose internal battles are played out across the stage at the National Theatre.

What starts out as a review of Somerset House's new exhibition of photographs of ex-servicemen, *Wounded: Legacy of War*, soon turns into an exploration of what it means to remember, and the fine line between commemoration and canonisation. This topic is quite pertinent, especially with the centenary of WWI occurring this week.

The relationship between WWI and the arts has been hitting the headlines recently, in no small part thanks to the media storm surrounding the Tower of London poppies display, in which a ceramic poppy has been planted for every British serviceman killed in WWI. The debate reached a nadir this week, as David Cameron publicly supported extending its run until the end of the year. Luckily, we're here to give our own unique spin on what the poppies mean and represent.

Continuing on the theme of war photography, we look at the ethics behind the practice, and whether it is a help of a hindrance. With photographs returning every week from the front lines of the war against ebola and Instagram users hitting near-critical mass, it seems that there has never been more important time for photojournalism. We conclude with Jiaqi Shi's review of the new dance piece at the ROH, which revolves around the work of W. H. Auden and Benjamin Britten immediately post-WWII. War may be the engine-driver of history, but nowhere is this more evident than within the arts.

Finding Out What Makes JOHN Tick...

MARIO LAPORE
ARTS WRITER

"The normality of life is just to have someone you can express stuff with."

Devised by *DV8 Physical Theatre*, a contemporary dance company known for their original and controversial work, the atmosphere surrounding the press night of *JOHN* was electric.

The production was devised following a series of interviews performed on a group of 50 men regarding the topics of love, sex and relationships. An interview with one man in particular, *JOHN*, proved so troubled and complex that it inspired a verbatim work in which his story is explored.

JOHN's untypical life makes for a hard-hitting, fast paced production

that openly confronts complex issues. Born to a violent father and depressed mother, his troubled childhood paves the way for an even more unstable life.

The opening five minutes alone involves a cleverly rotating stage in which actors flicker through emotional scenes of domestic abuse, drug addiction, rape, and death. The use of verbatim speech coupled with intricate and skillful dance acts to intensify the emotion, enticing and rendering the audience silent.

The play follows *JOHN* as he grows up, his (numerous) encounters with the law, and his somewhat confused personal circumstances. In his later life, the concepts of male sexuality are explored, confronting some important themes: sex, addiction and man's search for something in life - whether love, approval or merely company.



JOHN: A sheer display of brute physicality Photo: Hugo Glendinning

This is, perhaps, not the type of play to bring your parents to - what with the full frontal male nudity, gritty conversation and "scenes of a sexual nature". However this is certainly a production not to miss. The intricate dance and impeccably timed dialogue makes for an exciting and stimulating

performance in which a man's story is delivered in an original and inspiring way.

JOHN is on at the National Theatre until 13th January 2015. Tickets are priced from £15

Wounded: Is This War's True Legacy?

Kamil McClelland explores what remains after Iraq and Afghanistan



Marine Joe Townsend. February 2013. Photographed by Bryan Adams Photo: Bryan Adams

I was a bit apprehensive of this new exhibition at Somerset House. I feared it might just be an attempt for Bryan Adams, the photographer, to try and reinvent himself, having been a washed up pop star for so long. Moreover, the advertising made it seem like just another one of those populist exhibitions, raking in plenty of publicity for Somerset House without actually having much substance. But it has got a lot of attention and will surely be popular, especially seeing that it opened just after Remembrance Day, ensuring people are still caught up in an emotional frenzy stirred up by our nationalistic media.

Unfortunately, it was just as I expected. The bandying around of “modern-day heroes” and “band of brothers”, such emotive phrases, gives you an idea of the tone of the show, not attempting to say “never again”, but in fact glorifying the war, telling us what role models these brave veterans are. As soon as you walked into the three-room exhibition space, you were faced with a huge photograph not of

the veterans as promised, but of a Union Jack, torn but still flapping majestically in the breeze. The agenda of this exhibition was so obvious, they might as well have spelled it out (which they kind of did in the introduction literature)! And this one picture pretty much sums everything up, I don't even need to say any more. The exhibition had absolutely no depth and was steadfastly sticking to this patriotic line; it was predictable and utterly dull.

‘Disabilities serve as a reminder of the battles beyond combat’ claims the show but I saw no attempts to reveal some of the darkness behind these deformities. Adams photographs these men with no context to the horrifying war they were involved in, with their white backdrop acting to conceal all of the horror behind it. Described by one serviceman as “the most real depiction of our lives I've ever seen”, I would love to see what every other disabled veteran would have to say about that. Yes, it showed disfigurements that would otherwise

not be seen but that is where attempts to depict the reality of their lives ended.

Is that really the reality of their lives: standing proudly in a blank room as if they were some kind of classical statue? What about the reality of lives torn apart by disfigurement, of people battling with depression, PTSD and broken families; that is the photography I want to see. All this exhibition does is tell the same old story, putting a patriotic façade on an extremely important issue. Where are the Lieutenant Dans? I can't imagine Adams going down to seedy bars and strip clubs photographing the veterans who hate their own existence, simply because that doesn't follow his shallow and unimaginative narrative. He is completely warping reality and the true legacy of war whilst offering forward no counter narrative of any authenticity.

And can one call an artwork effective if it requires a whole script beside it to explain the story of the people involved? Isn't it the job of

their expressions, their positioning, the setting to tell this story, all the things that define a photographer's quality and something completely lacking in this showcase?

One photo particularly stayed with me, and not in a positive way. It did not show the brutalised teenager's young face, just his mutilated hands alongside his medals. By directly equating the injuries with a nationalistic pro-military stance, Adams is destroying any vague attempt made to try and help the viewers gain insight into the lives of these veterans in any meaningful way. It is pure and simple propaganda! And just as ever, there is no profundity in his works, a simple man's attempt to try and make a comment on the atrocities and aftermath of war.

In conclusion, yes, this exhibition may show one aspect of the legacy of war but both artistically and in the choice of subject, it does the war no justice and is an insult to all those affected by its terror. It hides as much as it reveals in what ends up being no more than military

propaganda. Oh how heroic they were, protecting their country! No questions asked about was it worth it and the consequences for the people of Iraq and Afghanistan. What was their legacy? Surely much more horrific than anything on show here today!

For them, the legacy of war will last much longer and will have a much more devastating impact. And despite the Chief of Defence Staff, General Sir Nicholas Houghton, claiming that the primary mission in Afghanistan has been achieved, one has to wonder whether there was really anything achieved for the people on the ground. This exhibition makes a mockery of this true, less palatable legacy.

Wounded: The Legacy of War is on until 25th January 2015. Free Entry.

The exhibition is accompanied by a book, published by Steidl, featuring 40 photographs by Bryan Adams, available for £40. Proceeds from the book goes to veteran support charities BLESMA, Blind Veterans UK, Combat Stress, SSAFA, and War Child

Arts

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Arts Editor || Fred Fyles & Kamil McClelland

Blood Swept Lands: Why do we remember war?

Kamil McClelland examines the role of the Tower of London installation

The UK has been blown over in support for Paul Cummins's recent work at the Tower of London *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* to such an extent that the installation, which began being partly dismantled on Wednesday, was prolonged until the end of the month. Moreover, such was the public reaction that, with the help of David Cameron himself, some of the display will be toured around the country until 2018, after which it will gain a permanent position in the London and Manchester Imperial War Museums.

So yes, this work was hugely popular and almost everyone that you speak to found it intensely moving, especially if they also witnessed the Roll of Honour of the names of war dead submitted by the public, announced at dusk, a particularly poignant occasion. But is this way of remembering – a very British way of remembering – how it should be done?

This, as with almost all forms of British war remembrance, focuses on the victims of the war: the glorious dead, the heroic veterans, the women on the home front faithfully supporting the war effort. And although this way of remembering does have its merits, particularly in

the way that it allows very personal reflection on one's family ties to war and death, it doesn't remember much of the war itself. The poppy installation does, to some extent, give one a sense of the scale of death and ensures equality in death but it does not particularly reflect on the reality of war: the horror, the death, and the inhumanity.

Visual artists who have managed this in the past include Otto Dix and Francisco Goya, both of whom focus more on the sheer terror and insanity of the practice. Otto Dix served in the First World War on the German side and was deeply traumatised, suffering recurrent nightmares of his experiences. Because of this, his paintings are completely overwhelmed with terror and fear, even still after almost one hundred years. His works are not about remembrance, they are about war: real war and why it can never happen again. Now where is this reality of war represented in the poppy installation?

It seems now that the number of people that lived and fought in the First and Second World Wars dwindles to next to nothing, the memories of these everyday horrors fades with them and we are even more detached from it. And so, to

ensure these images are passed on, we rely on art. The memories of individuals will always be passed on – I know all about my relative who died in the First World War – but it is these other factors that won't be passed on because they do not exist in one's individual war narrative. Hence, because of this, we need to change how we publicly remember war.

So why do we not focus on this? Why do we not remember first and foremost so this never happens again? I think it is because we do not want to imagine these aspects of war, not because we necessarily support war but because we do not want to imagine someone ever went through that.

How could you possibly restart civil society after something like the horror of the Somme? As people, we want to remember our friends and family who died in war as opposed to the way in which they died; we want to celebrate their lives as opposed to dwell on the evils of their death. It is simply human nature.

Exhibitions like this will always be popular as they weigh heavily on our emotions and personal experiences but they play no role in disgusting us from war. However, I feel we have a moral duty to better emphasise

the horrors of war as opposed to just focusing on remembrance. For only then will the numbers 888, 246 actually mean something to us.

The installation at the Tower of London is, in this respect, indeed quite heartless and bland. It does not give us any sense of the experience of war and I do agree with heavily criticized Guardian writer Jonathan Jones in his use of the word "prettified" to describe how the work treats war. Also, as a piece of art in its own right, whilst striking in its scale and moving in its subject, it does not overwhelm you as it should.

The piece in itself is not moving, it is what it represents and how it was used with a Roll of Honour that creates emotion. Thus, I feel it failed quite crucially.

Hence, I feel we remember the people of war with no regard for our moral duty to prevent it from happening again; and it is because of this, as well as the fundamental dullness of the Cummins's installation, that makes it somewhat of a disappointment.

Let's hope we have more memorials in the future, which do address this duty of preventing war as opposed to just glorifying its memory. Then we wouldn't need to remember as we do.

"We have a moral duty to more greatly emphasise the horrors of war."

"Whilst striking in its scale ... it does not overwhelm you as it should."



Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red, Paul Cummins (2014). Photo: Matt Dunham

Arts

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Arts Editor || Fred Fyles & Kamil McClelland

The Ethics of War Photography

Fred Fyles explores the complex morals of photojournalism

On 11th June 1963, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, Thích Quang Đức, sat down at a busy intersection in Saigon, was covered in gasoline, and set himself alive. Protesting against the persecution of Buddhists by the South Vietnamese government, he burned for 10 minutes before collapsing backwards. The act was captured by Malcolm Wilde Browne, a 32 year old photographer, who was working for the Associated Press, and the rest, as they say, is history.

To this day, the photograph of 'The Burning Monk' is one of the most famous images of all time, and joins the litany of photographs of war that have shocked, stunned, and changed the world. But what of those behind the camera? What is their role in the conflict?

Susan Sontag, writing in her seminal volume *On Photography*, says "Photographs state the innocence, the vulnerability of lives heading toward their own destruction; this link haunts all photographs of people". So when the war photographer takes an image are they doing anything different from other photographers? By showing us an image of a Viet Cong prisoner being executed, Eddie Adams is simply reminding us of the fragility of humanity, similar to what Walker Evans does with his documentation of American poverty. And yet, there is something fundamentally different about war photographs – becoming an observer, an act implicit in the field of photography, is one thing, but in these situations

does the photographer act as a collaborator with the injustice they are documenting.

Judith Butler, legendary gender theorist, thinks that this is the case with modern war photography, particularly in the case of torture victims. Regarding the use of war images in the US, she writes:

"Currently, the state operates on the fields of perception and representability, in order to control effect, and in anticipation of the way that effect informs and galvanizes political opposition to the war."

But this doesn't take into account the role that photographs can play in disseminating information, such as Don McCullin's work in the Vietnam War, which galvanised popular opinion against the government. Sure, images can be used by a government as a means of propaganda – see Leni Riefenstahl's work which, despite its magnificence, is tainted by her associations with the Nazi Party – but they can also be used by individuals to bring inform and educate.

But what about the idea of intervention? In Kevin Carter's Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph of a child starving in Sudan, a hooded vulture leers down over the child's body, as if waiting for their eventual death. "Surely", some may say, "Carter could have chased the bird away; he could have given the child food; he could have done *something*". Ultimately, Carter did the only thing he knew to do; he took a photograph. To say that Carter was unfeeling, however, would be churlish – he

committed suicide 3 months after winning the Pulitzer, leaving a note:

"I am haunted by the vivid memories of killings and corpses and anger and pain".

Another issue is that of agency; to what extent do the subjects of a war photograph enter into the dialogue about what war is? It could be argued that when a photographer takes an image of their subject, they place them in the position of a victim, with or without their consent. The person in the photograph is destroyed, and all that remains is a symbol, a representation of warfare; it is, as Sontag said, like the photograph is "a sublimated murder – a soft murder", and by performing these actions the photographer further oppresses those caught up in the living hell of warfare.

Maybe this argument makes too many presumptions; perhaps those featured in the photographs are more than willing to have their suffering recorded and documented. More likely all they want is to return to normality. Could it be that war photographers humanise their subjects? Simone Weil, the celebrated French philosopher, puts the matter as follows: "... to love one's neighbour is a question of being able to ask simply: what is your torment?". The war photographer poses this question to the subject, and then allows their voice to project around the world through an image.

"Such photographs", says John Berger, "remind us shockingly of the lived reality behind the abstractions of political theory, casualty statistics or news bulletins". They reveal



Shell Shocked Soldier, Hue (1968) Photo: Don McCullin

to us the world as it really is, and ultimately this is the job of the war photographer.

They are not part of the political system; they are not there to fight, or campaign, or argue; they are

simply there to record the truth, no matter how horrific it may be. Their photographs, as Berger says, "are printed on the black curtain which is drawn across what we choose to refuse to know."

A Tempting Trio of Modern Dance

JIAQI SHI
ARTS WRITER

In front of a warm, receptive crowd, last Friday saw the opening of an exciting programme at the **Royal Opera House**, including a new ballet by Liam Scarlett, choreographed to Bernstein's *Symphony no. 2, The Age of Anxiety*.

This beautiful adaptation is based on the synonymous poem by W.H. Auden, awarded a Pulitzer for the tale in 1948. The nuances and complexities of the poem boil down to a simple story set in New York: four lonely strangers during the

tumultuous times of World War II who strike up a friendship in a bar, developing into intimacy as the night wears on.

The stage design was artistically arranged with a neon lit bar and American-style drinking booths. The four were alone in their thoughts, but a collective conscience resonated in each of them, of under-achievement, of helplessness and confusion as the radio broadcasts reports of the war far away. They soon become acquainted, with the characters deep in conversation discussing the anxiety of man and the human condition. Rosetta, the only woman in the group, invites the other three to continue the jollity back in her apartment, which

forms the second scene of the ballet. The characters dance and pirouette their way skilfully around the stage, at times in frenzy and others in quiet contemplation. This ballet was undoubtedly the highlight of the night, with a few pleasant surprises along the way!

Another eminent and celebrated contemporary of Auden's was composer Benjamin Britten, whose works form the music for *Ceremony of Innocence* and *Aeternum*. The former is an early Britten work, when he was undergoing some major events in his life: slowly maturing into an artist, creativity stalling, having just lost his mother in the same year. He was losing his childhood innocence; for

one is always a child in our mother's eyes, but she was now gone and he was struggling, innocence having played a great role in shaping his present life. The music grapples with this profound sense of a loss of innocence. Choreographer Kim Brandstrup resolves the problem in this nouveau coming-of-age story, saying that we must accept that we "are going to disappear, accepting the disappearance and the gaps as you go on". Aside from all this seriousness, there were some very creative use of shadows and a beautiful backdrop that changed dynamically, enthralling the audience with a images of the sea, a key theme in this ballet.

If you prefer the more ethereal (and without giving too much away), the final performance to the *Sinfonia da Requiem* ticks the box in every category: technicality, imagination and atmosphere. It is not surprising that it was awarded an Olivier for Best New Dance Production last year.

Whether you are an experienced opera-goer or a complete beginner to ballet, there is something on offer for you at this spectacular trio.

Ceremony of Innocence/The Age of Anxiety/Aeternum is on at the **Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, until the 17th November**.

Tickets are priced from £4-65, and can be purchased online from www.roh.org.uk

Film

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Film Editors | Ellen Mathieson, John Park & Jack Steadman

Mankind's next step will be our greatest

Jack Steadman reviews what he calls Nolan's near-perfect film

INTERSTELLAR

Director: Christopher Nolan

Screenplay: Christopher Nolan, Jonathan Nolan

Cast: Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway, Michael Caine, Jessica Chastain, John Lithgow, Casey Affleck, Ellen Burstyn, Wes Bentley



Christopher Nolan has a back catalogue to die for. A *Batman* trilogy that revived a character left for dead by the film industry (and in no small part helped revive a genre that was under the threat of suffering the same fate), a mind-bending take on amnesia that deconstructed conventional film structures and one of the most incredibly original films in decades, and that's barely scratching the surface.

And now here comes his biggest, boldest undertaking yet. And going by that list, that's saying something.

And yet, despite all that hype – all the images of Matthew McConaughey in a spacesuit, exploring a new planet, the shots of the incredible vistas – *Interstellar* starts off curiously low-key. It's focussed – intensely so – on the life of McConaughey's Cooper, a former test pilot forced to lead a life of farming as part of the 'caretaker generation' of Earth: those forced to ensure the planet ticks over for the future, in the face of a vaguely referenced natural disaster that saw food stocks and sources obliterated.

Within minutes of the film's opening, Cooper is sat in a parent-teacher conference (to borrow the American phrasing) with his children's teachers, discussing their respective futures; his son Tom is ideally suited to becoming a farmer, while his daughter Murphy – Murphy is something else altogether.

If the concept of this, a Christopher Nolan film about space travel and wormholes and incredibly theoretical physics, opening on a parent-teacher conference sounds a little jarring – that's most likely because it is. But it works. The early scenes are tender, involving – and the acting on display is top-notch from the start. McConaughey's career resurgence continues unabated – perhaps reaching its peak here (if not at the start, then certainly later), while the actors playing the two children both deserve enormous quantities of credit – not least Mackenzie Foy as Murphy: an actress to watch if ever there were



Matthew McConaughey in the sort protection one might wandering into *Metric*. Photo: Christopher Nolan/Legendary Pictures

one.

Eventually – inevitably – the film expands in scope, and it does so somewhat rapidly once Cooper comes into contact with NASA; but it never loses that intensely human focus. Cooper's goodbye to Murphy hurts, and the video messages sent to Cooper hurt just as much when the going gets tough.

This is a film about grand ideals, about physics that deals with concepts at the very limits of our comprehension, but it's completely unabashedly unafraid to stick to the core of what it means to be human. It even throws in a grand speech by Anne Hathaway's biologist Brand about 'love', and how it feels like it may just be another force, another dimension – like gravity, or time – that we still don't quite understand.

Said speech on love is just one of many similar monologues – *Interstellar* shares *Inception*'s penchant for incredibly exposition-heavy dialogue, but just as there the fact that it was exposition about something inherently fascinating – and new – helped carry the film through, here *Interstellar*'s never-ending ambition and drive, as well as that human focus, forces it beyond the dialogue into something more.

If that comparison to *Inception* makes it sound like *Interstellar* only borrows that one aspect from its predecessor, don't worry. The epic set-pieces are in evidence here too – if not even more so, on account of being set

(variously) in space itself or on new, uncharted planets – as is a twisty-turny plot that never quite lets the audience rest back in their seats.

There's always an underlying tension, not least the fact that, once the journey gets underway, Cooper and his fellow explorers have no idea of what they might find. And nor do we.

Interstellar does also occasionally borrow the bass-heavy tendencies of *Inception*'s score, at times to its detriment, but on the whole Hans Zimmer's score is incredible, bringing in strains reminiscent of Kubrick's *2001* while also retaining its own character. Unlike that other, more recent space-based cinematic outing (yes, *Gravity*), *Interstellar* opts to allow to the score to continue over the sections set outside the shuttle environment (although the sound effects do drop out accordingly). It's a move that initially feels slightly jarring – almost a tad inconsistent – but it soon comes to make sense, as the score becomes indispensable, and the jarring cuts in the other sounds are more than enough to achieve the necessary contrast between 'in' and 'out'.

More indispensable than the score, though, is the cast. Nolan continues to attract the talent – including long-time collaborator Michael Caine – and (as ever) it pays off in spades here. As already noted, McConaughey continues to shine, but it's really Mackenzie Foy who impresses here.

The other members of the supporting cast are universally excellent – Anne Hathaway brings her A-game to a very different role from her last outing with Nolan, while Jessica Chastain makes an immediate impression in her late-game appearance (as a character whose identity I won't spoil here).

Another A-lister also pops up in an unexpected role, delivering a note-perfect performance in a scene that elicited horrified gasps from the audience I saw this with. Michael Caine manages to continue his trend of making me cry in a Nolan film, while the likes of Casey Affleck and John Lithgow all put in solid performances. There are no complaints here.

There are some in other areas – despite my excessive praise, *Interstellar* is not a perfect film (there's no such thing) – but it comes damn close.

Some of the model-based shots are obviously of models, but in a film that manages to avoid the use of green screen so wonderfully, blending real-life sets seamlessly with computer-generated visuals (any reaction shots to the vistas were achieved by projecting them onto cloths for the actors to look at, rather than just a blank green screen), a few reasonably-but-not-perfectly realistic shots are allowable. The final stretch moves away from the realistic science and into what can only be described as "completely barmy" – but it's so glorious it's impossible to really care that it's borderline nonsensical.

The sound mix's occasional bass-heavy tendencies do threaten to drown out key dialogue, but in the end it all adds into the thrill of the experience, rather than taking away from it.

And in the end, *Interstellar* really is an experience. I have never been to a film in the cinema where, at the end, everyone burst into spontaneous applause, followed by fevered discussion of myriad different aspects of what they'd just watched. I've never been left physically shaking with adrenaline, to the degree where I can't do anything but sit and watch the credits. I've never been left so utterly convinced I've just watched a master filmmaker deliver his finest work. *The Dark Knight* may well go down in history as Nolan's masterpiece – and *Inception* as his greatest original work, but *Interstellar* is the culmination of everything he learned on those and all his other films. It is the culmination of making some of the defining films of the century, and because of that, it is utterly, utterly glorious.

"Michael Caine manages to continue his trend of making me cry in a Nolan film."

"Here comes his biggest, boldest undertaking yet."

Or maybe it won't be that great after all

Nathaniel Gallop isn't as impressed with Nolan's science fiction epic

INTERSTELLAR

Director: Christopher Nolan

Screenplay: Christopher Nolan, Jonathan Nolan

Cast: Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway, Michael Caine, Jessica Chastain, John Lithgow, Casey Affleck, Ellen Burstyn, Wes Bentley



Interstellar is to Nolan what *Sandinista!* was to the Clash; a brilliant work interspersed amidst layers of fatuous clutter and turgid artistic pretensions.

It is a film that displays Nolan at his very best and worst: a cerebral, tense, visually stunning one-and-a-half hour space opera buried in another one-and-a-half hours of pompous platitudes and mindless exposition.

It is clunky, bloated, and dissonant, yet in places undeniably breathtaking and atmospheric. Within a single scene, it will range from edge-of-the-seat exciting to dull-as-dishwater boring. It showcases Nolan's talent for visual effects, alongside a lack of cinematographic prowess.

Interstellar is, ultimately, a collection of contradictions; with the overall impression simply an average between the very good and very bad.

The story, at its core, is a simple one. The human population is dying, ravaged by world wars and an agricultural blight. The remnants of humanity are reduced to eking out a living as farmers, working the increasingly infertile land. Starvation is all but guaranteed, and eliminating the blight is no longer possible.



Anne Hathaway rocking the spacesuit look Photo: Christopher Nolan/Legendary Pictures

Humankind's only hope for survival rests on finding a new world to colonise. Thus four astronauts: Cooper (Matthew McConaughey), Brand (Anne Hathaway), Romilly (David Gyasi), and Doyle (Wes Bentley) must travel through a newly discovered wormhole in search of such a habitable new world.

Resources for the mission are limited, and the prospect of the returning is dependent on finding a habitable world before their fuel runs out. Should they be unable to return, they are to colonise a new world with thousands of human zygotes, leaving the population of earth behind to die.

It is an uncharacteristically straightforward plot for Nolan, and it is a good one. It is also distinctly human; much of the best material in the film comes from how the four astronauts perceive the enormity of

their mission and the prospect that they may never return home.

Of course, the core concept does not justify three hours of screen-time, and thus is padded out with subplot upon subplot until the film becomes completely saturated with superfluous subject matter.

Some subplots, like Cooper's relationship with his daughter back on earth, work excellently and drive the plot along.

Many others, however, are largely redundant and simply serve as a soapbox for Nolan as he spews New Age spiritual woo and inane technobabble. Because of this, McConaughey and Hathaway are forced to constantly juggle multiple contradictory facets of their respective roles, the end result being that neither performer can fully bring their talent to bear for any

length of time.

Indeed, one of the most frustrating aspects of *Interstellar* is that it is an excellent examination of the human condition, yet it is inhabited by surprisingly insubstantial and schematic characters.

Yet, in spite of this, it is ultimately a good – at times great – film. The use of relativity and other scientific tenets as plot drivers lends it credibility as a science fiction picture, while the bleak, foreboding tension that suffuses much of the film conjures up memories of Danny Boyle's *Sunshine* (and to a lesser extent, Clouzot's *The Wages of Fear*).

Nolan's realisation of a dying Earth, in contrast, is a homage to Steinbeck's corpus of dust-bowl literature, and the juxtaposition of exotic alien worlds against a portrayal of humanity as a fading, agrarian society proves to be one of his best flourishes.

The visuals, also, are breathtakingly realised; few films (Alfonso Cuarón's *Gravity* is only exception that springs to mind) manage to evoke the scale and emptiness of space as well as *Interstellar*. All in all, it is a work that speaks volumes about the power of Nolan's imagination as well his talent with aesthetics and a flair with the eclectic.

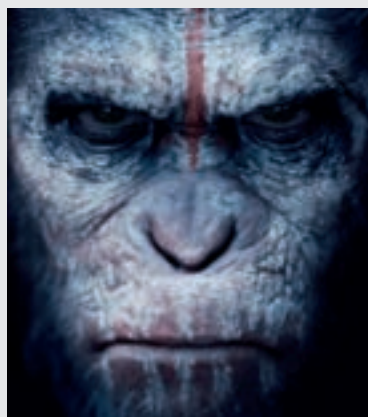
Ultimately, *Interstellar* is disappointing not because the film itself, but rather what it could have been. Had the story been more focused, the characters more fleshed out, the result would be have been a classic piece of sci-fi cinema, of a quality on par with Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Yet, Nolan proves to be his own worst enemy, as he sacrifices focus and simplicity for sentimentality and pretension.

In the end, *Interstellar* feels like a missed opportunity.

"Within a single scene, it will range from edge-of-the-seat exciting to dull-as-dishwater boring."

"Nolan proves to be his own worst enemy."

The week at Imperial Cinema



With the end of term little over a month away, the termly plays by the Drama groups are fast approaching. Unfortunately that means that this is the last film from us until the All-Nighter in the final week of term.

Dawn on the Planet of the Apes

Director: Matt Reeves

Screenplay: Mark Bomback, Rick Jaffa, Amanda Silver

Cast: Andy Serkis, Jason Clarke, Gary Oldman, Keri Russell, Toby Kebbell

This sequel to the 2005 hit film, *Rise of the Planet Apes*, is a return to the essence of the original films: political intrigue, complex ape families, and humans who are a bit silly.

Set a few years after the end of *Rise*, humanity is struggling to survive having been nearly wiped out by Simian Flu. The apes, however, have made the Redwoods their own and have continued to develop. When a group of humans are forced to enter the apes' land to

attempt to fix a hydro-electric dam to provide power to their colony in the city, the stage is set for a tense dialogue between cultures.

The relentless plot, fantastic battle sequences and decent characterisation (especially of the apes), make this a good film, it's the motion capture performances and visual effects that make it great.

Hailed as the best development in visual effects since *Avatar*, *Dawn* does with CGI what could only have been done with men in monkey

suits before, make the apes look truly realistic. This is mainly due to the use of the motion capture technology. It gives the apes true depth of character – this could very well be the film that finally gets Andy Serkis the awards recognition he deserves.

If that isn't enough for you, *Dawn* also features apes firing machine guns while riding horses. It's hard to go wrong with that. *Showing 19:00 18th November and 19:00 20th November*

Television

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Television Editors || Guila Gabrielli & John Park

Is Mindy Kaling too ugly, or are you just too rude?

Giulia Gabrielli on why *The Mindy Project* deserves to be taken seriously

After an incredibly well received debut, praised by viewers and critics alike, what is happening with *The Mindy Project*? After a bumpy second season that brought threats of cancellations, the Fox Network decided to renew the sitcom for another series.

This was largely due to the interest created by the finale to the will-they-won't-they between the quirky female lead, Mindy, and the attractive colleague/increasingly-more-intimate-but-just-a-friend-come-on-who-are-we-kidding-here, Danny.

Now Danny and Mindy are finally together, with the biggest drama on the horizon being how long she will be able to fake going to the gym in front of her man. The start of a relationship like this one is often the end of a show's charm. Ratings have progressively dropped, pushing the producers to schedule 15 episodes, instead of the usual 22.

Writer/producer/star Mindy Kaling must not feel great about this new development. Yet, she probably has no time to focus on the disappointment, since all her efforts have to be put towards answering ridiculous accusations. The latest being that the actor Chris Messina, who plays Danny, is too attractive for her.

Critics (which in this context I would more appropriately refer to as pure and simple trolls) have pointed out that many of her past co-stars were equally "out of her league". Are they suggesting that she tricked them into acting alongside her? Because any actor in their right mind would jump at the opportunity to work with Kaling, who has become one of the

most successful comedy writers in the US since her participation in the show *The Office*.

The long list of fitties includes actor Seth Rogen. How come when he stars in a movie where he plays the husband of Australian beauty-queen Rose Byrne, no one questions the plausibility of such a plotline? Mindy Kaling is just as talented and just as funny. She is possibly more powerful, yet she doesn't even seem to deserve realistic criticism.

You know what? The writing on *The Mindy Project* is getting progressively lamer since Mindy and Danny became an item. Its humour is more facile. Kaling's character has become too over-the-top to be relatable. And frankly nurse Morgan and receptionist Beverly are just a little bit creepy.

However, how screwed up is the world of TV that they can't seem to find a way to criticise Mindy Kaling for the content of her work? Instead it seems more worthy to spend time describing how she is the only fat and ugly lead on a sitcom, something which never happened to Seth Rogen. Or John Belushi. Or basically any other male comedian.

I'm not going to imply that our standards of beauty are far off from what girls actually look like, my rant has gone on long enough, and I actually have nothing against some of the beautiful actresses on our screens. It just so happens that I think Mindy Kaling is one of them. Or that, at least, she deserves to have her work shredded to bits for slightly more constructive reasons. And don't worry, she can take it. In this sense alone, we can say she's a big girl.



Photo: Fox



Photo: CBS

Yet another CBS police procedural

JOHN PARK
SECTION EDITOR

CBS is expertly churning out police procedural shows like clockwork and it seems to be working with the audience. Their newest show, *Stalker*, is winning its new Wednesday night slot across the Atlantic, competing against ABC's country music drama *Nashville* and NBC's police drama *Chicago P.D.* and it recently hit the screens over here in the U.K. airing on Sky Living.

The premise is a rather simple one. Every week there is a stalker who harasses someone and it is up to the Threat Assessment Unit (TAU), a team of highly skilled detectives led by the charismatic Lieutenant Beth Davis

(Maggie Q), with the newest addition to the force, Senior Detective Jack Larsen (Dylan McDermott) tagging along, to solve the mystery and catch the bad guy within the 40 minute episode slot.

Red herrings are of course used frequently, so the most obvious answers tend not to point to the right perpetrator, because otherwise the show would be over in five minutes. Instead each episode introduces nice little twists, although its amateur, frankly patronising, psychological profile the characters spew out that help them build some sort of a portfolio for the man/woman they are trying to catch, is somewhat embarrassing.

But there is fun to be had in a procedural that adds an element of horror into the mix. Creator Kevin

Williamson was also responsible for writing the *Scream* franchise back in the day, and there is certainly an element of torture-porn in here, although being on a network television show there is very little *Stalker* can do to push the boundaries.

Maggie Q and Dylan McDermott make a good team, with both characters carrying secrets that could and probably will affect the way they do their jobs in the future. No doubt when it comes to the ratings sweeps stage some dramatic can of worms will be opened that will stretch into a double-episode format.

Stalker serves well as a bit of harmless fun, particularly for those with an aversion for seeing all the fake dead bodies the *CSI* franchise hurl out week after week.

Welfare

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Welfare Editors || Diba Esbati & Chanon Wongsatayanont

Self-help tips and tricks

Chanon Wongsatayanont on coping with mental illnesses

Now that we've gone through some kinds of mental illnesses, it's time we talk about how to deal with them.

Friends, families and therapists can really help but they can sometimes feel inaccessible, especially during the height of an episode.

You might have told your friends and family before and they didn't react to it well. You might not want to tell people because you don't want to burden them, or are scared that they will treat you differently. You might avoid therapists or professional consultants for fear of being labelled as someone with a mental illness.

But you can beat mental illnesses by yourself. I'm not talking about making it magically disappear since it's never going to be that easy. Instead, you can learn to cope with it. You can develop a habit to deal with those phases or make them affect you as little as possible. So here are some self-help tips that you can try out.

Self-awareness

Also known as mindfulness. Basically being aware of what you think and how you feel. Being aware of when an episode is going to rear its ugly head and what thought cycles lead up to it. When you can identify what exactly triggers those phases, you can calm yourself down and prevent it from consuming you.

For those suffering from mental disorders, you might identify two voices in your head: your own and the disorder's.

Of course, there aren't really multiple voices, just the kind of things you think normally and what you think when you're going through a phase. With self-awareness, you can untangle these two voices and know which of them you should listen to. If you realize this early on in an episode, you can quickly dismiss the voice of the disorder and stop yourself from slipping further.

Here's an example. A phase of depression is often triggered by a difficult event which sets off a cycle of negative thoughts which put the blame on yourself. Before you know it, you're depressed and when you want to feel better, you find it nearly impossible. So you become more depressed about being depressed.

If the cycle of negative thoughts is broken early, you wouldn't have to lapse into a phase at the first place.

Keeping active

As difficult as it feels when, doing something active can be just the thing to wrest you from those monsters in your head. Playing sport, going to



Making a list can help take things one step at a time. Photo: martinrumack

the gym, taking a walk in the park or just going out to buy some groceries can break you away from the familiar environment you're always in whenever you experience the symptoms of the mental illness.

I understand, however, that 'doing stuff' is the opposite of what you want to do whenever you're going through a phase. Depression can shoot down any attempts to go outside with questions like "What's the point?" Anxiety can take you through every single scenario that can go wrong.

But by going outside you can prove those beliefs wrong.

Doing something, like sports, can lift your mood and increase energy levels. Exercising can use up adrenaline and other hormones that are produced when you are under stress, making you feel more relaxed.

You will have heard all these benefits about staying active from your mum when you're a kid, but do

give it a go. Doing something is likely better than nothing.

Make a list

Having a list of things you have to do or achieve written down in front of you will make it feel much less threatening. This is particularly relevant for anxiety because panic attacks often come when you're overwhelmed by everything you have to do.

You might think that you'll waste even more time making the list and it would be one more thing to add to the things you'll have to do.

But look at this. "I will do A, B, C today, D can be done tomorrow, and E, F, G can be left until the end of the week" sounds less stressful than having all those tasks dancing around your overburdened head. It gives you a sense of control, that all these tasks are manageable and that they're not infinite.

For depression, a list can also keep you grounded in day-to-day life, urging you to trudge on and complete what you have to do.

Doing everything in the list will give a sense of achievement that can break your cycle of negativity and self-blame.

Basically, the list can ensure productivity, making your disorder be less disruptive to your daily life.

I hope these tips will be useful in helping yourself get out of those horrible episodes whenever you next experience it. As always, some will be more useful than others, depending on the type of person you are.

So I would recommend that, even though you can manage quite fine on your own talking to friends, family or professionals can really help you cope with it in a way that is most meaningful to you.

Mental health helplines and resources

If you are concerned about your own mental health, or that of a loved one, there are people out there you can talk to who can give you advice, or will be there to listen.

Samaritans (24 hr helpline)

Phone: 08457 90 90 90
Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

Anxiety UK

Phone: 08444 775 774
(Mon-Fri 9:30 - 17:30)
Website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

No Panic

Phone: 0808 800 2222
(daily, 10am - 10pm)
Website: www.nopanic.org.uk

Beat

Phone: 0845 634 1414
(Mon - Thurs, 1.30pm - 4:30pm)

Alcoholics Anonymous

Phone: 0845 769 7555
(24 hour helpline)
Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Narcotics Anonymous

Phone: 0300 999 1212
Website: www.ukna.org

Student Counselling Service

Phone: 020 7594 9637
e-mail: counselling@ic.ac.uk

Imperial College Health Centre

Telephone: 020 7584 6301
e-mail: healthcentre@ic.ac.uk

You can also go to your academic or personal tutor regarding pastoral issues, especially if you think your mental health might be affecting your academic performance.

Music

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Music Editors || Grace Rahman & Amna Askari

Music to role-play to at the Royal Albert Hall

Eamonn Postlethwaite reviews *Distant Worlds: Music from Final Fantasy*

People not heavily invested in video games may not realise the reverence and devotion shown to the music from a select few series by the fans. One such, arguably the best, example is the music from *Final Fantasy*, which is almost entirely created by Nobuo Uematsu.

Part of the evidence I would present to support this statement (ignoring all the Asian performances and huge back-catalogue of recorded music) is this tour, now in its seventh year and quickly approaching its one-hundredth concert. Led by the Grammy award winning conductor Arnie Roth and with new orchestrations overseen by Uematsu, it travels across the globe to such lavish venues as the **Sydney Opera House**, the **Royal Albert Hall (RAH)** and the **Stockholm Opera House**, and introduces world class orchestras (the Royal Philharmonic last night!) to what I expect many in the classical world would scoff at. However, there is an interesting fact to be noted here: listeners of ClassicFM (and what better measuring stick is there?) voted Uematsu's body of work as their third favourite and indeed the piece 'Aerith's Theme' from *Final Fantasy VII* was the first video game composition played on ClassicFM. This is the third time *Distant Worlds* has come to England, each time to the **RAH** and coincidentally the third time I made the pilgrimage. It is also the third time it has completely sold out the **RAH**, this time in under two hours. Perhaps that is unsurprising given the predisposition to obsession we gamers all seem to have about the things we enjoy. To give some context as to why people are so fond of this music, listen to orchestral variants of 'Dear Friends' from *V*, 'Terra's Theme' from *VI*, 'Don't Be Afraid' from *VIII* and 'Not Alone' from *IX*.

After that brief history lesson, the review. This performance was exceptional, and I'm not saying that as some addled fan, foaming at the mouth, who would say the same if the orchestra had come on stage in *Final Fantasy* T-shirts, shat, and then left. Indeed the second performance was sub-par compared to the first and third, in terms of the selection of pieces and the quality of the orchestra, presentation and sound. However for their latest effort, that all seemed to have been rectified. The orchestra was true to the original orchestral recordings while still adding enough energy and emotion to the pieces to make it a truly live experience. Full motions videos and concept artwork from the games



Concentration of nerds at the RAH hadn't been this high since graduation. Photo: pushstartgaming

was in perfect sync with the melody and had moved back to the single screen configuration which made the organ available for use in the seminal boss-battle theme, 'Dancing Mad'. Seriously, hearing that played on Europe's second largest pipe organ was something to behold. There was a wall of pulsating sound towards the end of the organ solo where the heavy chromatic blocks slowly resolve into harmony which shook the hall.

And the surprises came thick and fast. Breaking all tradition the first piece played was 'The Hymn of the Fayth' from *X* rather than 'Prelude', an opener that features in every game somewhere. This rendition (new to the European tour) was beautiful in its simplicity. **The London Voices Choir** performed the complex intonation flawlessly and it was accented by gentle *gamelan* bells and a simple string line. What's more, and I believe this to be one of the reasons video game music has such a following, when you know what the piece represents in the game (in this case, the sacrifice of the self for those you love, and compromise between a foul-pragmatism and a seemingly unreachable ideal) your

emotional response is heightened, especially when similar memories are invoked in everyone you can see. The concert pianist who featured as the first soloist in previous incarnations to play the battle theme 'Those Who Fight Further' from *VII* was replaced by a classical guitarist who performed a beautiful rendition of 'Dear Friends' from *V* and a lively 'Vamo' alla Flamenco' from *IX*. It is interesting to note that 'One Winged Angel' was hastily dispatched immediately after the opener, losing its previous encore spot. I take this as vindication of my long held and unpopular opinion that it simply doesn't work in an orchestral setting.

I don't wish to continue simply recalling a list of pieces that were played and what I thought of them, so I shall briefly mention the highlights. For me these were: 'Hymn of the Fayth', the classical guitar soloist playing 'Dear Friends' the character theme medley from *VI* (including Terra and Kefka), the brand new arrangement of 'Festival of the Hunt' from *IX*, the battle medley, including most importantly 'Battle on the Big Bridge' from *IV*, and finally seeing Nobuo himself on stage playing 'Dark

World' with the opening credits of *VI* rolling behind him on the big screen.

All of this praise is not to say the concert was without its problems. First and foremost in my mind is the single appearance of vocalist Susan Calloway, the voice behind the soundtracks to the two online games in the series, *XI* and *XIV*. Not only did she appear only once during the concert, but she sang 'Answers' from *XIV*, by far the weakest song she features in, especially considering in the past she has performed stunning versions of 'Eyes on Me', the love theme from *VIII*, 'Suteki da Na', the love theme from *X* and 'Memoro De La Stono' (especially good), the main theme of *XI* from which the name *Distant Worlds* comes.

Along with this, the second act was almost entirely music from *VI* and *IX*, likely because it was the unofficial 20th birthday of *VI* and it happens to be one of Nobuo's favourite scores, along with *IX*. While I agree wholeheartedly, and I recognise the need to alter the set lists to keep the experience fresh, the over-focus meant we only got one piece, namely 'Don't be Afraid', from *VIII*, and nothing at all from the first

four games. While I know it's hard to criticise set lists without seeming like you're throwing a temper tantrum because you didn't hear your favourite pieces, to neglect five games in the series almost entirely seems a little fierce. Allow me a sole personal gripe, that even with all this focus on *IX* (including new pieces to the European tour) they still didn't play 'You're Not Alone' which is my favourite piece, and as yet isn't officially available on any of the non-Asian CD releases. Alas.

Distant Worlds will almost certainly come back to England, and I will almost certainly be there again and again until they stop. But I'm happy because I think, even after seven years, the quality still keeps increasing. The variety, the production, the performance and the presentation are all world-class, and as strange as it will no doubt seem to people who have never been affected by a video game, the experiences, morals, stories and characters (and of course music) will stay with me always. Each performance of *Distant Worlds* reminds me to unashamedly focus only on what I love and nothing else.

HANGMAN



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Biologists “enraged” by inaccuracies in latest Christmas advert

Biologists were left outraged this week after the unveiling of the new John Lewis advert.

The two minute feature that has gone viral on the Internet, features a small boy with a pet penguin, that, according to sources “displays anthropomorphic tendencies that are, at best, transparent replications of Disney-esque ideals and, at worst, are a disgusting attempt to replicate the intricate behavioural patterns seen in these aquatic, flightless birds.”

The video tells the story of a small boy, who, for unknown reasons, has a singular companion in the form of a penguin. The boy proceeds to enjoy various childhood scenarios, whilst the penguin seemingly joins in too. The bird is seen to help the child construct Lego buildings, put Christmas lights on the tree, and even at one point take part in a game of football.

The penguin however seems distressed, and is seen to stare “longingly” at those around him displaying loving affection to partners. The penguin soon loses interest in the world around him, and it is only when the boy is able to buy and package a new female penguin to gift to his pet penguin at Christmas, does the male penguin become happy once more.

The species of the penguin is never specified, nor is there any explanation as to why this penguin in particular is not residing in the Antarctic or in any other natural habitats these flightless birds are usually found.

Said one second year ecology

student “This digitalised penguin doesn’t bear any specific traits that allow for any sort of classic speciation.

“If I’m honest, I doubt they even tried to model it accurately on any sort of species, as the fact that it seems to enjoy sleeping on a duvet and eating processed food indicates that there were no biologists involved in the script writing process at all.”

Said another on the apparent mating rituals exhibited by this penguin, (known as “Monty”), the behaviour exhibited was “irregular.”

“In most species, the females are the ones that choose a mate, often via a long and arduous ritual that involves preening, nest building and vocal communications. In this case, the female was simply “presented” to the male in a gift box, a scenario that would be highly unlikely in usual mating circumstances.”

Others took issue to the breach of International animal movement laws that the advert implied. A third-year said that a young boy being able to both own and transport a penguin around Central London (on a bus, no less) is “nothing short of outrageous.”

“International legislation makes owning a penguin illegal, something that this advert neglects to address.

He went on to add: “Provisions should be put in place to care for the animal, such as a climate controlled enclosure that features large bodies of water that the penguin can swim in. None of these were evident in the advert.”

“It could be possible that is penguin was illegally purchased by the family,



The penguin in question was considered by biologists to act “irregularly” and display “distressing tendencies.”

and could be under considerable distress given the conditions it is having to reside in.”

He explained that what may be construed as “pining” may be troubling behaviour resulting from not having a large flock to reside in, or potentially being made to follow around a small boy whose taste in woollen hats is “nothing short of poor.”

None of the sources Hangman

contacted wanted to comment on the fact that the penguin in the end turns out to be a stuffed toy that has been imagined to be real by the boy.

They did however discuss at length the implications the advert may have on the mail-order industry of exotic pets, the reputation of behavioural biology within the wider community and the apparent ease of domestication of large birds.

Concluded one fourth year “I just

don’t think it is fair that this advert has been viewed so many times, and no-one is providing justification as to why so much of the behavioural biology we work so hard to research has been neglected.

“We don’t go on field courses to the Antarctic, trek for weeks on end in cold blizzards, stare at these birds for hours and hours, and then expect all of our work to be overlooked by the media.”

Imperial on Google+ only scores 4.7

This week Hangman was shocked to find themselves inadvertently using Google Plus, having clicked the wrong button on a phone screen. The stillborn social network appeared before us like a ghost town in a hackneyed Hollywood Horror, and we curiously took a look. The main discovery was a brace of embarrassing old photographs of friends on accounts set up 3 years ago when the G+ tried to launch itself as a competitor for Facebook, before turning into a glorified Youtube sign-in platform.

Our most exciting discovery, however, is the fact that Imperial College London has been rated 4.7 out of 5 on the site. Even better: most

of the reviews are hilarious. They are either written in broken English by people who have no link to Imperial at all or slightly twee thank-yous from former International students (one of whom has his profile pic as a selfie with the business school in the background). Total piss-take reviews by sarcastic home students are few and far between, but hilarious.

The only negative review was from someone who stayed in halls of residence over the summer and complained it was crap. However as they complained in Spanish, no one cares.

Imperial College doesn’t score as highly as its physics department, which actually has an astonishing 5

stars, based on its one review. Despite having a profile, at the stars, based on its one review. Despite having a profile, at the time of going to print, nobody had left a rating on the central library’s page. However it’s suspected that *Felix* editor Philippa Skett will probably replicate the weird flirty relationship she has with the Library’s twitter on Google Plus to attempt to get some form of hollow validation in her life.

Imperial is tied at 4.7 out of 5 with UCL, and both are ahead of KCL and QMUL which both have 4.4 out of 5.

It is important to note that Eastside bar, favoured by one anonymous Deputy President (Welfare) over all other bars on campus, has 4 out of 5



HANGMAN



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Diary of a Fresher, aged 18 3/4

Saturday 8th November

This weekend I'm going on RAG Jailbreak, how cool! Unfortunately I couldn't convince Dorothy to come with me so I've been paired with Kris Krays, the Welfare President, who for some reason doesn't have any friends to go with either. The point is to get as far away as we can from London without spending any money. I hope it goes well. I met up with Kris this morning and he handed me an identical t-shirt to the one he was wearing with a picture of the queen on the front, with "HM Ladz on Tour" across the back.

Sunday 9th

Diary I'm in the British consulate in Ashgabat. I had never heard of Ashgabat until today, and I'm still not sure where it is. Jailbreak's been very strange. The welfare president managed to call in some favours from a friend and once we hitchhiked to Heathrow we were smuggled into the cargo hold of an Aeroflot plane heading east. Mumbling to himself about "liquid lubrication" Kris rummaged around a container near the back of the plane and came back with two large bottles of Vodka. I blacked out and awoke this morning in the passenger seat of a Lada tearing its way across the Karakum Desert with "God Save the Queen" blaring loudly from the radio and Kris singing along at the top of his lungs. We were nearly at the Iranian border when Kris got arrested for being over the Drink Drive limit in Turkmenistan. I'm now awaiting to be repatriated on an army cargo plane tomorrow.

Monday 10th

Dear Diary, I won Jailbreak! The medics rugby team were on course to win: they'd managed to blag their way on a submarine and were travelling to the Falkland Islands but then a fresher smashed a window so I win by default! Woooo! Once Kris gets released from Turkmenistani jail he'll be so happy

Tuesday 11th

The funeral service for the medics rugby team was held today. There was a 21 window smash salute in their honour. I'm so far behind on my lab report this is such a mess

Wednesday 12th

Dorothy and I hung out again today, we went to the library together. I feel this is Imperial Dating

NEWS WITHOUT THE NEWS



THIS IS WHAT THE UNION PAYS £25K A YEAR FOR

HOROSCOPES



ARIES

This week you attend the Tri-Union bar night. After a few pints, you lead a rousing chant of "Oh RSM is wonderful". After beginning the verse about RCS, you realise that you are standing in the middle of a ring of angry chemists. You are pelted with colouring pencils and gravel.



TAURUS

This week you suggest that the Felix Editor will give you advertising space in return for sexual favours. Little do you know that this will get back to the Editor and she swears never to publish anything about your shitty constituent union again. You have been warned.



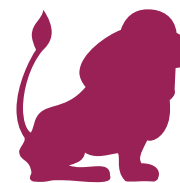
GEMINI

This week you decide that it's probably time to get back to work as the Deputy President (Welfare). After another unfulfilling day telling people that job culture probably isn't the best idea, you do what you know is what is best for your welfare. A couple of pints from Eastside, of course.



CANCER

This week in a desperate attempt to find a job and some free food at the same time, you attend yet another careers fair. Every table seems desperate you give you branded sweets, so you stock up. Twelve tins of tiny mints later, you realise that that probably wasn't the best idea as you are pretty sure you are never going to be able to go to the loo again.



LEO

This week your girlfriend leaves you for not being assertive enough. You're quite upset by this, but decide not to challenge. After all, who are you to argue...



VIRGO

This week it's fast approaching the deadline to get the newspaper printed, and you still haven't written all the horoscopes. You know that you can't leave it blank, so you write some waffle and hope that no-one will realise that you're just trying to fill space. Probably shouldn't leave it so late...



LIBRA

This week, after complaining about your hair getting too long for the last month, your girlfriend decides to cut it for you. Having a haircut from a person with no formal training goes about as well as you might think, and after the third bald patch you decide it's probably better to shave it all off. Oops?



SCORPIO

This week, as you are sat enjoying a slightly cold SAF breakfast, you're rudely interrupted by the most dangerous creature in the entire animal kingdom, the pigeon. As it flies overhead you scream and hide under the tables near the orange sofas. As you emerge to general laughter, you discover that the pigeon has pooped in your breakfast.



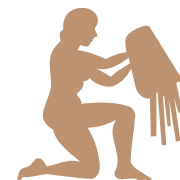
SAGITTARIUS

This week you manage to leave your room for the first time in a few days, as the flashbacks to the University Challenge tryouts are finally over. You spent weeks revising, but when they asked you a question, you panicked. "What small invertebrate is covered in spots and smells like fish." Apparently "My penis" wasn't the right answer.



CAPRICORN

This week you have to submit the plan for your final year project. Out of inspiration you turn to alcohol, and in the morning you realise that you've promised to make "The World's Best Dildo". At least your project supervisor seems to like the idea, grinning and asking what you plan to do with it when you're done.



AQUARIUS

This week you once again regret introducing your room-mate to your brother. Not only do they keep locking you out of your room to have sex, but room-mate absolutely also loves to discuss the relationship with you. There are some things you never need to know. How well-hung your brother is one of those.



PISCES

This week, after an accident in the Physics labs, you find yourself randomly teleporting back in time. After getting shot during the First World War, having a raunchy affair with a minor English nobleman, and drawing a rocket on a cave wall to trick archaeologists, you fulfil your childhood dream of being crushed by a diplodocus.

Puzzles

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Puzzles Editor || Michael Faggetter

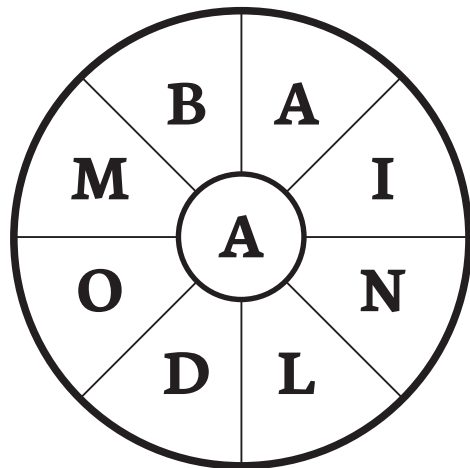
Word Finder

Try to find as many words as you can using letters to the right. Points are awarded for the total number of words found.

Can you find the 8- and 9-letter words?

Rules:

- Words must be 3 or more letters in length.
- Each word must contain the letter in the middle of the circle.



Chess

Max Ettl

White to mate in 2 moves.

The Hard puzzle has not yet been solved so it's back again and worth a few more points. Game on!

Easy

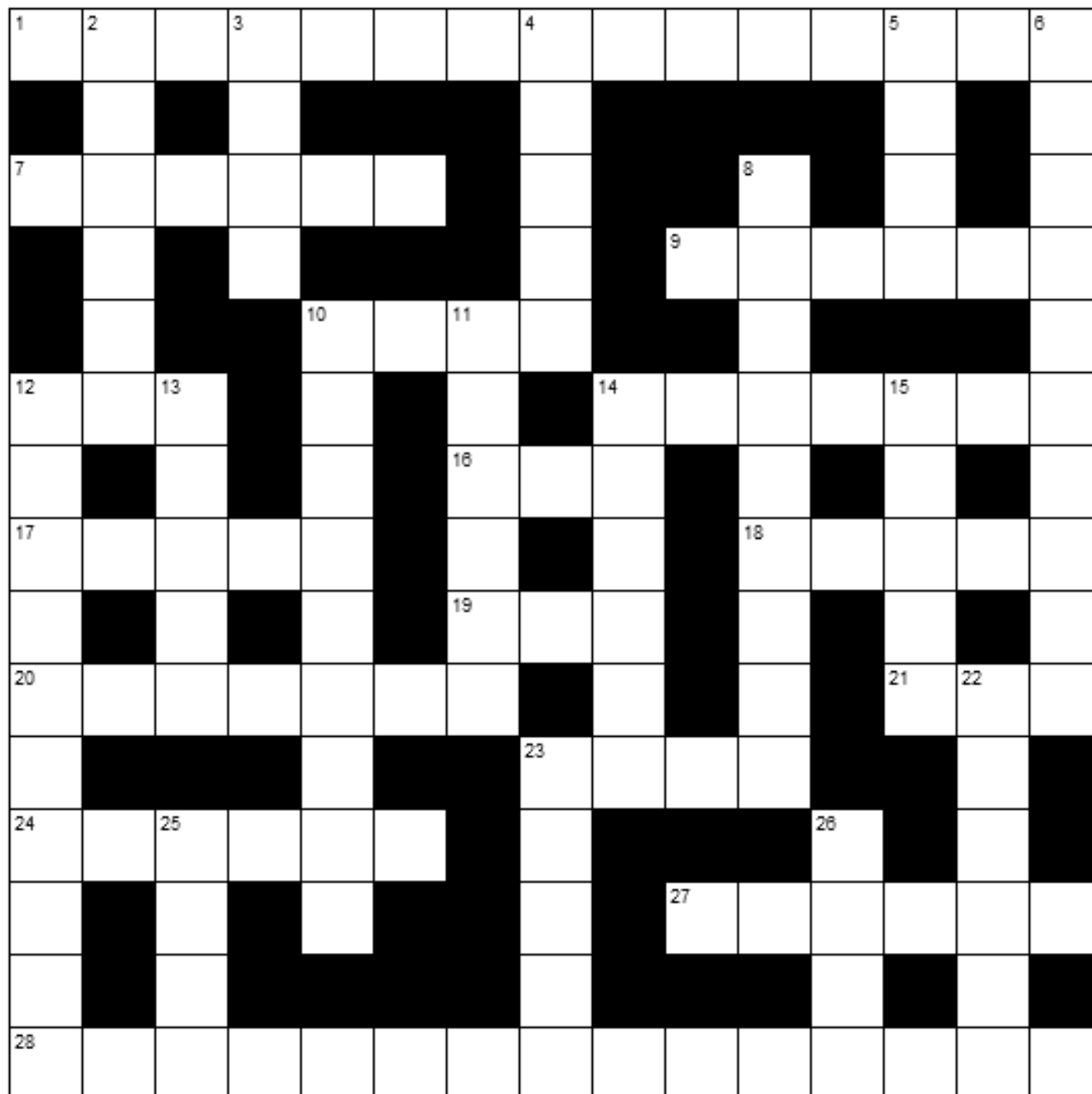


Hard



Quick Crossword

Jamie Dutton



Across

1. Beatrice Potter Character (7,8)
7. Star sign (6)
9. Large North American tribe (6)
10. French luxury goods company (4)
12. Common name for the Hedera plant (3)
14. Alternative name for Satan (7)
16. Italian word for more, most (3)
17. Liquid anaesthetic (5)
18. Muddle, confuse (3-2)
19. Long period of history (3)
20. Wheeled basket (7)
21. Deceitful (3)
23. Fluid-filled cavity in the body (4)
24. Common final words to a film (3,3)
27. Improvises (2-4)
28. Punctuation symbol (15)

Down

2. Isaac ____, inventor of the Laws of Robotics (6)
3. Unit of length (4)
4. English royal house (5)
5. Māori intimidatory dance/performance (4)
6. Style/appearance of letters (10)
8. Writing surface (9)
10. London street, home to The Muffin Man (9)
11. Large bird of prey (6)
12. Lack of skill/ability (10)
13. Internet corporation (5)
14. Foolishness, stupidity (6)
15. Dupes, outsmarts (5)
22. Section of the spinal column (6)
23. Lust after (5)
25. South Park character first name (4)
26. Morose (4)

Clubs and Societies

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C & S Editor || Ben Howitt

RAG goes wild: Jailbreak tea

RAG goes on tour – a Jailbreak report

MORGAN HEYCOCK
C&S WRITER

It's not every day that a group of three friends set off into entirely unknown territory, but last Saturday, three poised Jailbreak teams ran out of the Beit Quad and into a 24-hour adventure. Jailbreak is a competition where teams aim to get as far away from their University as possible (as the crow flies) without spending any of their own money. This type of charity fundraising event gains more and more popularity year on year as news flies out about teams that get to far flung destinations like New Zealand, Singapore and California: all within 24-36 hours. In times where a mere train journey to Edinburgh will take a hefty chunk out of your bank balance, travelling to the corners of the globe for free is a commendable feat. So, with baited breath and fingers crossed for success, Imperial RAG organized its first Jailbreak to take place on the 1st of November with the help of the event's chosen charity, East Africa Playgrounds. Three intrepid teams signed up for the task: RAGdollz, The 3 Stooges and The Prisoners. In total, the teams travelled 1150km, with the winning team (RAGdollz) travelling an impressive 600km. RAGdollz's success was made even more astounding considering that they moved from last to first place in 8 hours: a true testament to Jailbreak's exciting dynamism as a race. RAGdollz got as far as Dijon, France (598km) and came in 1st place. In 2nd place came The Prisoners, who got as far as Plymouth (304km) and in 3rd place came The 3 Stooges who, despite being first across the Channel only got as far as Lille, a mere 245km away. After the success of this Jailbreak, RAG is now planning a second one for the Spring term.

Morgan Heycock on the RAG Dollz' adventure to Paris

After 5 hours of nervous sleep and a night spent discussing almost military tactics, myself, Sophie Johnston and Will Daubney waited in Beit Quad for 09:00 to pass with trepidation.

At this point in our journey, we were still undecided about which plan of action would be best to follow; we were weighing up either raising enough money to take £32 flights to Antalya, Turkey at 18:15 or hitchhiking across the English Channel and getting as far away from London as possible by car. We were well aware of the pros and cons for both; to get a flight to Turkey we would not only have had to raise £96 for flights, but also find a way to get to Gatwick in time for the 18:15 flight and pay for a £20 visa each to allow us access to the country. Despite being an extremely attractive option, the cold indifference of London gave us pause for thought of this plan's feasibility. Getting across the Channel also had its own troubling risks: where to hitchhike from? How difficult would it be? Would we be safe? Even after discussing late into the night, we sat squarely on a fragile fence.

With no set plan in mind, we set off in the direction of Victoria to test

the water and ascertain how generous a city London truly is, with a heavy cynicism hanging over us. We were pleasantly surprised with how willing people were to give us money, but it soon became apparent that their generosity was not enough and raising the necessary money would be too risky a venture indeed. After raising £15, we called it quits and headed for pastures green.

After looking at the tangled, busy London roads in front of us we identified a large obstacle that we hadn't yet considered: hitching a lift to the South-East from the centre would be hard in a city where traffic is headed in every direction. Very hard. After a quick Google, we found a helpful site called hitchwiki that informed us that the best way to get to the Southeast was to take a train from Charing Cross to Mottingham, walk to a nearby Shell garage on the entrance of the A20 and hitch a lift from there. So, with a train to catch in mind, we started a brisk walk to Charing Cross station.

As we got on the train, Will had an unexpected phone-call. The 3 Stooges had already gotten to the Eurotunnel. For a moment we sat aghast at how far behind we were already. Before



RAGdollz in Paris. Photo: Morgan Heycock



Photo: Non Omnis Moriar

we had even left London, they could potentially already be on their merry way to Calais. We seethed.

After our train deposited us in Mottingham, we power-walked our way to the Shell garage and lay in ambush for likely victims driving to Folkstone, where the Channel Tunnel is located.

After 45 minutes of springing ourselves on unsuspecting drivers, we had success with a history teacher that was driving towards Folkstone to visit his mother. Our first successful hitch was pure exhilaration, which must have surely come across as we eagerly thanked our generous chauffeur.

Our chauffeur, whose name we promptly forgot, dropped us off at a service station near the outskirts of Maidstone and kindly wished us farewell after a drawn out conversation about Ireland and the London housing market.

No sooner had we arrived at the service station, Will received another unexpected phone-call, but this one

good. The 3 Stooges had been briefly arrested for trying to hitchhike across the Channel Tunnel whilst on the property's car park. The 3 Stooges were rapidly losing their lead, and we finally had news to celebrate. Not only was the phone call celebratory, it was also informative: we now knew not to attack the Channel Tunnel head on, so instead we began to cruise the car park for cars heading across the Channel. This plan was easier said than done, and became a lot more difficult when another bombshell hit. Despite RAG's forward planning, Warwick University was also doing a Jailbreak that day, which we found to our dismay as two other groups arrived on the scene and started competing for lifts. An urgent race covered by a thin veil of camaraderie ensued.

During our passive-aggressive scrambling for a car, a nice Belgian gave us €20 to cover costs when we crossed the border, further affirming my belief in the kindness of strangers.

Clubs and Societies

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C & S Editor || Ben Howitt

ms cross the Channel



of the slip road, we cried with joy and ran towards the car, already thanking him jubilantly as we climbed into his car from the dark, chilly roadside.

“The French Guy”, whose name we forgot to ask, was an interesting character. Our only record of him is a blurry snap of his number plate that we took as we piled into his car and the knowledge that he had a long, unspellable name. Our French knight-in-shining-armor turned out to be a student from Harper Lee Agricultural College who was returning home to Lyon for a week to visit his family. We were overjoyed by the news that he wasn’t going to stop in Calais and was planning to bypass Paris. It was fate.

However, as he started the long drive from Calais to Lyon, our faith in him deteriorated. Although lovely, he drove 30km/h above the speed limit and veered worryingly near cars as he overtook them. We wondered at the living stereotype for dangerous French drivers sitting nonchalantly in front of us. Although, despite his concerning driving, he made for amusing company.

During a description of a wild night-out where he went home with two girls in a state of pure oblivion, he described how he “fucked everything in the room apart from then”, which after a second of sleep-deprived confusion we realized that what he meant to say that he made a mess by being sick everywhere. We laughed with chagrin at his unfortunate antics as the speedometer hit 150km/h.

At around 04:00 the speed of the once hurtling car declined, and so did our driver. In a bid to keep his eyes open to watch the deserted road, he began to rock back and forth. Just as we were about to raise our concern, a stomach-dropping THWACK assaulted the car. At our great speed, the car had hit a hare. To our bemusement, he was rather distraught by the loss of life and less so by the detachment of his front bumper. After assessing the hare debris spread evenly underneath his car, we set on once again down the abandoned motorway, where he started to flag even further until we suggested he stop.

We pulled into a dark stop-site on the motorway furnished only by a few benches and a toilet block. Outside it was cold and rainy. After telling us to wake him in 20 minutes, we watched our driver pick up a pillow and duvet from the boot and lay himself down on a wet picnic bench and fall rapidly into a heavy sleep. We sat dumbfounded and in hushed voices began to seriously question the sanity of our driver. However, after 20 minutes had elapsed, we awoke our only option and started on the last

leg of our journey to Dijon through a rapidly forming dense fog.

By some miracle, we arrived in Dijon in one piece. Shortly after arriving we discovered that we had won the competition. This knowledge of success helped us break through our tiredness and organise our return to England via Paris.

We managed to secure a cheap train down with minimal difficulty and spent the day flouncing around the Eiffel Tower and enjoying our success. We all vowed that we would do Jailbreak again, but bigger and better than even this year. Jailbreak 2014 is not an experience that any of us will forget.



This approach apparently only works with Brits. Photo: Bella Dennis

After an hour and a half of bothering anyone unfortunate enough to pass us by, we scored a lift with a friendly vicar and beat the other two Warwick teams to a ride. Victory was sweet indeed.

The drive with the vicar was long and he was quieter than the History teacher who had given us a lift before, but was kind enough to give us £20 as he dropped us off at the P&O port in Dover. In a theme that recurred throughout the trip, our elation was quickly soiled after being greeted yet again by a horde of Warwick University students, a body of which was growing as every minute passed. After receiving no luck by the ferry port, we began to prowl further up the road from the port in hope of uncharted territory and relief from the piercing wind pushing in from the sea.

After an unsuccessful three and a half hours, we decided to fraternise with the enemy. We sat down with a group of unnamed students, shared

cake and energy drinks, then danced to tinny music from a compact speaker to ward off the pessimism that was falling over Dover like a dark shroud. After a further two hours with them, desperately hoping that a driver would take pity on us and give us a lift, we threw our hands in the air and labelled Dover as a waste of time. So, after exchanging a few more dance-offs with a girl wearing a fake moustache and sombrero, we said our farewell to our poorweather friends and used the £20 given to us by the vicar to escape Dover and head to Folkstone to attempt the Channel Tunnel. We sincerely hope that the Warwick students left Dover eventually.

After arriving at a roundabout a few hundred metres from the Channel Tunnel grounds, we waited no longer than 45 minutes until a French guy pulled over offering to give us a lift. We could not believe our luck after our five and a half hour wait in Dover. As he pulled into the hard shoulder

Jailbreak FAQs

How do you get anywhere without spending any money?

Many people have taken different approaches to get as far as they can, most following the route of hitchhiking. You can also try fundraising to raise money to take planes, trains and buy Visas.

How do you get back?

You will have to cover the cost of getting yourself back [you have to pay to get back? Rip-off. – Ed]. RAG, however, can give you plenty of

support in getting back and figure out the best and cheapest route for your return.

What if you can't afford to get back?

We will help you to find the cheapest possible route back, but of course if you are feeling brave, you can try getting back the same way you get there, for free.

How do you classify the furthest distance?

As the crow flies.

SPORT

Sports Editor: Kunal Wagle

Are Union punishments for Sports Clubs fair?

TONI SEMMENCE
IC NETBALL CAPTAIN 2013/14

In recent weeks two of Imperial College London's biggest sports teams have been embroiled in various activities that have brought Imperial College Union into disrepute. The sanctions against the teams are causing innocent students to miss out on playing sport. Is this treating everyone fairly or have the disciplinarians allowed themselves to get influenced by the media?

Regarding the sanctions affecting ICURFC; it was the 1st team that committed the offence not the entire club, yet the whole club is facing punishment from the actions of a few. The Union statement: "We regret that some individuals who may not have been involved in these incidents will suffer as a result of the punishments" they then go on to talk about how "culture and behaviour of the clubs as a whole needs to change."

Having been a member of a sports team here at Imperial for the last five years, I think it is important that the Union recognises the difference between a club culture and a team culture. Whilst all the teams are part of the same club the bond between team mates is completely different and maybe it is the team culture that needs to be dealt with.

I was Club Captain of Netball last year and I think the motion of no confidence against Tom Hobson is hugely unfair; it has made the issue personal. Club officers are all volunteers; while nominally you are



Above and below: The front pages of Felix 1586 and 1587, which broke the rugby stories Photo: Felix

in charge in reality you are trying to manage the actions of your peers. This is not an easy task. Whether Tom's actions were 'correct' or not in the eyes of the Governance Committee he was looking out for his club and his members' best interests.

Whilst stripping down and drinking on the tube is illegal and disruptive the safety of those involved and the public was not compromised, whilst a smashed window on a coach could have had dangerous consequences. I would infer that damaging the reputation of the College is seen as a more serious offence than putting yourself and others at risk.



I think the actions of both clubs needs to be punished but I question whether the best decision has been made and whether the severity really matches up with the crime.

IC Rowers set the standard

SORCHA COTTER
IC BOAT CLUB

The 174th Wingfield Sculls took place last Wednesday. It is a rowing race held annually on the River Thames in London, England, over a much longer distance than summer regattas (such as BUCS and Henley).

The course is 4.25 miles (6.8km) and competitors race from Putney to Mortlake. Wingfield Sculls is an invitation event with only four scullers racing side-by-side for the title.

This year Imperial was lucky enough to have three of the eight competitors; Tim Richards and Wilf Kimberly in the Men's event and Mel Wilson in the Women's event. Imperial dominated the results with Mel Wilson and Tim Richards winning for us on our home water.

The women's race began an hour before the Men took to the water. Imperial's Mel Wilson started strongly in a contest that also included GB rowers Vicky Thornley (Leander) and Imogen Walsh (London) as well as UL's Emily Craig. All four scullers reached the Mile Post within the course record time of 4:44, set by Anna Watkins in 2011, so it was some very tough competition! Mel took a lead and just kept building on it, she led through every time marker, also setting a new record to Hammersmith Bridge, bettering

Watkins's time of 8.03 by just over two seconds. Mel's winning margin gave her an emphatic victory by more than 16s. It was an outstanding winning performance that should give her confidence going forward this season for both Imperial and GB. Defending Wingfields champion, Walsh, finished two seconds ahead of Craig with Thornley retiring after the Chiswick Steps.

After the excitement of the Women's race, the Men's race didn't disappoint. There was some early battling between the Imperial and UL lightweights with Tim quickly taking the lead, he pushed on and significantly increased his lead between the first mile marker and as he went through Hammersmith Bridge he had gained clear water between him and the others. Meanwhile there was a tussle between his competitors, two of whom had been his teammates at the U23 World Championships last year. But as it was in the Women's race, Tim dominated from start to finish with a resulting winning margin of 14 seconds.

Both Tim and Mel have joined a group of prestigious past winners. After receiving their beautiful silver sculls presentation boxes at the prize giving ceremony, hosted by Tideway Scullers, both Wingfield winners are now preparing for GB Trials, alongside a very large contingent of Imperial College Boat Club representatives; student past and present.

Synchronised Swimming visit Brighton

Imperial College Synchronised Swimming team visited Brighton last Sunday and had the opportunity to swim with the famous Brighton Dolphins! After waking up with difficulty and taking an early morning train, our swimmers arrived at the pool where the Brighton team was waiting for them. The Brighton Dolphins is a very successful team involved every year in Brighton's fringe festival, most of their swimmers compete in Masters competitions, some in the 50-60 age group! And the best is: they usually win! National team champions for many years now and with three world champions among them, they look amazing

in the water! Their routines are very unusual, creative and inspirational, and swimming with them is a great opportunity for the Imperial team. Two hours later, feeling a bit more awake having practiced basic moves but also fun lifts with the Dolphins, they went for a nice brunch, followed by a Brazilian gig, and finally indulged in some churros while enjoying the sun on the pier and the beach. A few moves of land-drilling on the beach later the team went on to explore the famous lanes for some window shopping and to find a nice pub for drinks before heading home. If you are interested in discovering Synchro and learning your first moves while visiting Brighton,

swimming with some of the most experienced synchro swimmers in the UK, contact Luisa by email: syncswim@ic.ac.uk. The next events also include swimming at the Iron monger row bath, one of the first public baths in Islington, on the 22nd of November, and our Christmas show on the 14th of December; email us for more info! The team is also looking for more swimmers, whatever their experience, so if you are free on a Thursday evening don't hesitate to pop by St Mary's pool between 19:00 and 21:00 to try it and see if you like it, and trust me, you will!

**SYNCHRONISED
SWIMMING**



Photo: ICU Synchronised Swimming



FIFA, Rohit Sharma and Andy Murray - the World Sport Column

Kunal Wagle tells you what you may have missed out on during a busy week of sport around the globe

FIFA has released the results of its inquiry into corruption and the World Cup bidding saga. In a shocking turn of events, the document claims that Qatar was totally innocent in the bid, and criticises the FA for its part in the matter. The lawyer who wrote the document and sent it to FIFA has said that the final version contains “numerous materially incomplete and erroneous representations of the facts.”

There has been plenty else going on in Football off the pitch as well as on it. Convicted rapist Ched Evans has been invited to train with his former club Sheffield United. Evans was released from prison a fortnight ago. The topic has been hotly debated amongst many activist groups, a lot of whom don't believe that Evans should be allowed to play professional football again.

Former Manchester United manager David Moyes has been appointed manager of Basque side Real Sociedad. Moyes was manager at Everton for nearly ten years before leaving to replace Sir Alex Ferguson at United. He was later sacked before the end of his first season in charge. The Spanish side are currently languishing near the relegation zone, having only last year been one of David Moyes' opponents in the Champions League.

Morocco has chosen to withdraw as hosts of the 2015 Africa Cup of Nations, due to fears of the ebola virus spreading to the country. They have subsequently been expelled from the tournament.

On the pitch, Warrington produced the shock of the first round in the FA Cup. The eighth tier side beat

Exeter by a goal to nil. In the Premier League it was a great weekend for Chelsea, who saw off Liverpool, whilst Manchester City and Arsenal both slipped up.

Lewis Hamilton saw his lead cut by Nico Rosberg in Brazil on Sunday. Hamilton now needs to finish second in the season finale in Abu Dhabi to take the World Title.

In cricket, Australian legend and commentator Richie Benaud has begun treatment for skin cancer. In more light-hearted news, the Australian cricket board has cancelled pyrotechnics at grounds, after a flamethrower went off in front of opener Aaron Finch's face.

Rohit Sharma broke the record for the highest score in One-Day International by a long way when he scored 264 against Sri Lanka on Thursday.

England lost a narrow game to New Zealand in Rugby Union at Twickenham. Wales were (again) defeated by Australia, while Scotland beat Argentina and Ireland beat South Africa.

It was an identical story in Rugby League, where England lost a narrow game to New Zealand. This, coupled with an Australian victory over Samoa, sent England crashing out of the Four Nations. To add insult to injury, England hooker Josh Hodgson faces disciplinary action after a video emerged of him smashing a door at a party.

At the time of writing Andy Murray faces a crunch match against an in-form Roger Federer in his final group match. Novak Djokovic has looked imperious, whilst Milos Raonic has pulled out, with David Ferrer replacing him.



Photo: Getty Images



Photo: Getty Images



Photo: Getty Images



Photo: EPA

Immortals win 12-6

Saturday 8th November brought the Imperial Immortals American Football Club's first game of the season against Brighton Tsunami. It was a home game at the 'Runway' Harlington and from the start the Immortals came out strong and dominated on defence shutting down Brighton on their first drive. This brought on the Immortals' offence who ran the ball hard throughout the game consistently with the help of the new formed offensive line, made up mostly of rookies or returners that hadn't played line before. The ball was run with success as both Emanuel Olagbaju and Mohammed Hussian Noor scored rushing touchdowns in the first half. This took the Immortals to a 12-0 lead at half time. After half-time the offence drove the ball down the pitch but struggled to get the ball in the end zone, but the second half was where the Immortals defence really stepped up and made some huge plays. There were three interceptions in the game; all in the second half – Alex Hitchinson made two and Bob Wurstelholme made the other.

Another important defensive play was Harry Collini's forced fumble, which was recovered by Bob and allowed the Immortals to maintain good offensive pressure. Alex Hitchinson's pick toward the end of the game allowed the offence to run the ball out for the game. Brighton scored only once in the game but missed the extra point to make the final score 12-6 to Imperial. This game was not only a test for the returners but allowed rookies to make a statement, and many stepped up to the line and made some big plays – showing how well they have fit into the club so early on. The game's MVPs (Most Valuable Players) were: Will Fulton (Defensive Line), Alex Hitchinson (Safety), Emanuel Olagbaju (Running Back) and Sam Hill (Offensive Line). This was the first game in the Premiership South Division for the Imperial Immortals. The Immortals are all focused on carrying on this form and hope to make it 2-0 against an impressive Hertfordshire Hurricanes team next week.

SAM HILL
PUBLICITY OFFICER

Why you should join the Boxing Club

KARTIKEYA RANA
IC BOXING

A lot of people around campus look for a society that can teach them everything needed to not only be employable but also be a raging success in all aspects of life. There is only one society that will provide you with everything you need ranging from teamwork, discipline,

rigor to a level of fitness that makes you unbeatable- Boxing.

Imperial College Boxing Society has been a massive success over the years due to the determination and rigor needed to do well in the same. The regular training sessions teach you to be the fittest version of yourself and the sessions in All Star Boxing Gym will provide you with the technical ability and mental strength to be a dangerous fighter. Furthermore, the boost to self confidence provided by

such a sport is unparalleled.

There are very few clubs and societies in England that provide an opportunity like that provided by Imperial Boxing. The society has been growing through the years and last term we became a success in competitive boxing. From conducting sparring matches with universities such as King's College London and UCL, we have also been competing in University level boxing matches with growing success in the same!

But do not fear! Imperial Boxing is not a place where you will be forced into beating everyone up. We completely understand if you feel that you are not ready or even willing to compete. If your main focus is to have a much greater level of fitness than you had before then this is the society you must join!

So if you want to be the best version of yourself and grow during your time at university then why not give boxing a try?