

felix ...



THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

hang in there



Union helps with TEF submission

PAGE 3 News

The Central Library AC Dream

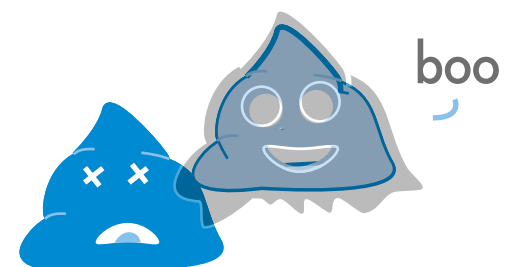
PAGE 5 News

Study drugs | Yay or Nay?

PAGE 8 Science

Why Sherlock why? an analysis

PAGE 18 Culture



How to not fall in love with that Metric hook-up

PAGE 26 Millennials

I will not challenge the status quo
I will not challenge the status quo
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Hang in there kitties



Blue Monday, alternatively known as the most depressing day of the year, came and went this week. (Blue like hands without gloves flaunted at passing strangers on the street. Wait what?) By now you've come to terms with the fact that you probably spent way too much money over Christmas. You've also been spending a disproportionate amount of time in bed, barricading yourself with every piece of spare linen you can get your hands on, trying to stave off the cold that Snowmageddon has brought. You're also involuntarily taking part in dry January, because you caught a nasty bug and are on antibiotics, while at the same time praying that it's not some untreatable superbug you've got and that dem sweet meds are actually working.

You successfully emerged from the worst Monday blues of the year only to be met with Theresa May, the UK's new iron lady, making chilling claims about the single market, the hard Brexit and the Library Cafe. (Wait no. I think I dreamt that last bit. I mean that

would explain how nobody seemed to care that I was being served a jacket potato with chilli con carne and cheese by the Iron lady in her tighty whities.)

And if you've made it thus far, prepare for the event of the year (so far) - Donald Trump's marriage to America during the 45th presidential inauguration in Washington.

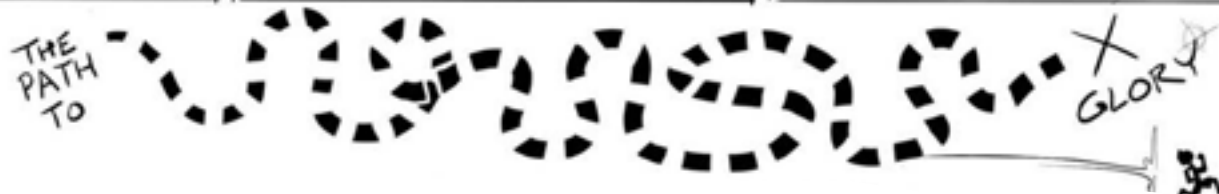
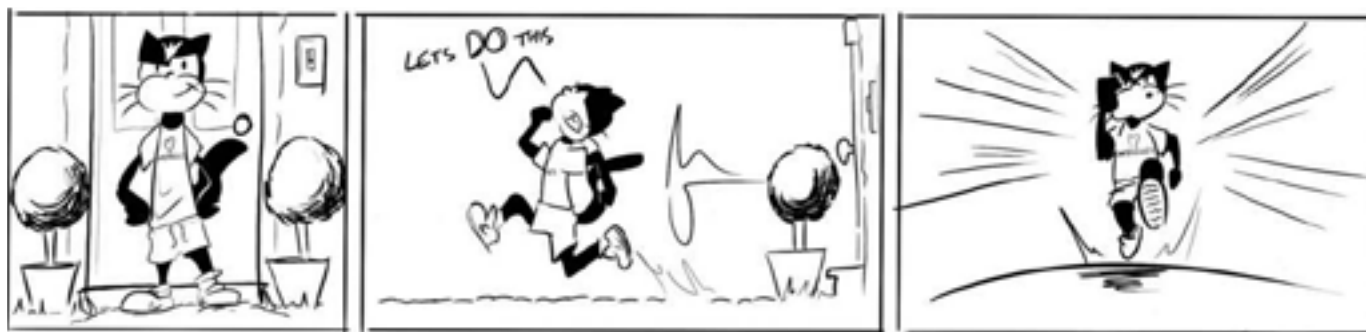
But wait. All is not wrong with the world. For starters kittens and puppies are still a thing. Also looks the Central Library will be getting some air con! And sure you might not be getting a cool study space to revise, despair and meltdown till at least September but if humanity survives till then, at least the Central Library will be cool and breezy. Though if let's say £13m have failed to fix the library's thermal regulation we can't say we're particularly optimistic that another £13.5m will.

Maybe we shouldn't be so jaded though. I mean it was Kim Kardashian who said "Hope dies last. Unless you're out of lipgloss. Then there is no hope." Or maybe I also dreamt that.

T H E T E A M

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Union to participate in TEF submission

felix reports on the extraordinary Council meeting

Alex Adler

An extraordinary Union council meeting was held on January 10th with the specific purpose of discussing the response the student body and the Union representing them should adopt with respect to the upcoming Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

The meeting was also an opportunity to discuss other government efforts to assess the quality of higher education, with an attempt to introduce a motion calling for the boycott of the NSS.

The motion was rejected due to having been submitted too late, but the wider theme of student evaluations being used to justify cost increases hung over the assembly for the remaining of the evening.

TEF is a new framework originally established by the Higher Education and Universities ministry to evaluate the quality of teaching at English universities, and adjust



It was "extraordinary" in the fact that people actually turned up \\ felix

their funding accordingly. As part of TEF, every university is required to submit a short document outlining how exactly they 'excel at teaching', with input from students and the bodies representing them. This seems innocuous enough, however the introduction of the government's new Higher Education and Research Bill

(currently in the Chamber of Lords) linked the results obtained by universities in the TEF with new fee increases. Fee increases would be indexed on inflation, either at half the inflation rate for universities awarded a "meets expectations" rating, or at the full inflation rate for the other categories.

This put the Union in a difficult position, since it had previously adopted a policy not to support measures that would result in further fee increases, and against the marketisation of higher education: both

**\\ This put the Union in a difficult position, since it had previously adopted a policy not to support fee increases **

stated objectives of the HERB. (Imperial was the only university in the country to approve of the 2011 fee tripling). Therefore, participating in the TEF could be seen as infringing on that policy.

On the other hand, good relations between the Union and the College have been key to several advances obtained by the students in the last few years. The College is asking the Union to co-write the TEF submission, a mark of goodwill that enables the students to have a real say (some universities reduced 'student input' to a couple hundred words on the submission according to ICU President Nas Andriopoulos).

After energetic discussions, the motion mandating the Union to engage with College on the TEF was finally passed with minor amendments, in a victory for the ICU President and the Deputy President for Education, Luke McCrone. However, the subject of tuition fees is bound to return to the limelight sooner or later, and the Union might have a tougher time defining the course of action to follow then.

Deputy President Education gives us his side

Luke McCrone

During this week's extraordinary council meeting, I proposed a paper to seek permission from Council to approve the following: firstly, for the Union to make contributions to Imperial's Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission and secondly, for Council to review the Union's existing Higher Education Funding policy. The paper was passed successfully.

The argument ultimately rested on whether the Union

should continue to be a strong advocate for the improvement of education at Imperial or whether it should make a political stance against the TEF. Following discussion, Council agreed that continuing our activity around striving for educational excellence would be of greater benefit to our members than making efforts to rebel against the TEF.

Council members came to respect that the TEF is inevitably going to be implemented and that some aspects of the TEF, aside from the inflationary fee rise, have

**\\ By opting to rebel against the TEF, by boycotting the National Student Survey (NSS), we would be neglecting the educational experience of 40% of our members **

positive implications. The very nature of the submission sent

to HEFCE requires institutions to measure the impact of their teaching, which should encourage academics to be more evidence-based in their pedagogic approach. TEF also aims to better inform student choices when deciding between universities by making more information about teaching quality available to prospective students.

International students, which comprise a staggering 40% of our member population, are not affected by the TEF since the inflationary fee rise only concerns home students. By

opting to rebel against the TEF, for example by boycotting the National Student Survey (NSS), we would be neglecting the educational experience of 40% of our members, whilst jeopardising our NSS Response, one of the Union's most powerful tools in lobbying College on educational matters.

I am personally pleased at the final decision made by Union Council and look forward to continuing work around educational improvement for all members of this institution.

Imperial to face LSE at City Varsity

Lef Apostolakis

Imperial will be taking on LSE this year during a showcase event to take place in March. The event, christened the City Varsity, will mark the first time in a long time that Imperial plays against another University. (Though earlier last year the first e-sports varsity was launched at Gfinity Arena between King's, LSE, UCL yours truly)

The City Varsity is almost exclusively student led, with some input from the Union, and at least for now will only

be featuring matches from Imperial's men's and women's rugby. This means there won't be any medics playing. When asked if there were plans to involve medics in the external varsity, club captain of men's rugby and chief organiser of the initiative, Josh O'Donnell told *felix* that it could happen but the process would involve holding trials and bringing medic players in just for the guest match.

Regardless, the launch of the City Varsity has been met with excitement. According to

O'Donnell, the rivalry with the medics has simmered down over the years and there's been a great appetite to find a new rivalry through an external varsity.

Whether LSE will prove a worthy rival remains to be seen. "There's no bad blood yet, but we're working on it" said Women's rugby captain, Charlotte Gisbourne. Women's rugby will be kicking off the event, followed by the men's games.

Although it may seem like this event is putting Imperial's

rivalry with the medics on the back burner, Imperial's internal Varsity with the School of Medicine will not be scrapped. Games will continue to take place as they have for the last 15 years and this year's VarsityFest will go ahead as planned.

Whether the City Varsity will become a tradition will depend on turnout, but organisers are optimistic. As ACC chair Ellie Winstanley puts it, the games are "testing the waters because the people want the water to be tested".

Hopefully turnout will be high unlike the 2011 inter-collegiate Summer Ball which suffered a loss of £100,000.

And if it is, there are plans for expansion, with expressed involvement of football, hockey and netball but also other sports club that don't traditionally participate in Varsity due to the lack of medic counterparts, such as Fencing and Shooting.

Vigil held at Iranian Embassy

Simran Kukran

Campaigners gather in South Kensington

A candle-lit vigil was held outside the Iranian embassy on Monday for Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a British-Iranian Thompson-Reuters charity worker. Organised by Amnesty International, supporters including Imperial students gathered on Princes' Gate calling for Nazanin's release from Evin prison in Iran. The 38-year-old was arrested

on the 3rd of April 2016 at the check-in desk of Tehran's Imam Khomeini airport on her way back to the UK after visiting her parents. Nazanin, a British-Iranian dual national, was with her one-year-old daughter, who has British citizenship only. The child's passport was also confiscated, preventing her from returning home to her father in Hampstead.

Nazanin was sentenced by a closed court to five years' imprisonment on secret charges relating to "national security". Amnesty International has reported she suffered an unfair trial, and was subjected to solitary confinement with no access to a lawyer or her family, and forced to make a confession. Her incarceration was appealed earlier this month, a decision is still to be heard. Accusations were published in Iranian media that she is the ringleader of



\\ Simran Kukran

a spy network for foreign governments attempting the "soft overthrow" of the Iranian republic. Her husband, who refuted these allegations, has been told she is being used as a "political bargaining chip" and will be released if the British government come to an agreement with her jailers. Nazanin's mental and physical health has deteriorated during her time in prison, with reports

that she was unable to walk merely weeks following her sentence and that she was on hunger strike in November, at risk of suicide.

The vigil marked exactly one year since four Iranian-American prisoners of dual citizenship were released from Evin prison. The prisoners of conscience, including a Washington Post journalist, a marine veteran, and a Christian

pastor were released in return for clemency of seven Iranian citizens indicted or imprisoned by the US government for sanctions violations.

Richard Ratcliffe, Nazanin's husband, attended the vigil and delivered a letter addressed to President Rouhani requesting a visa so that he might visit his wife and two-year-old daughter Gabriella, whose birthday was spent away from both parents. He asked that his wife be given a fair trial, and for letters of support sent to her to be delivered. The 43-year-old advocated for Iran and the UK to build better relations "grounded in mutual understanding" for his daughter's future. He wrote: "I ask for your help in bringing Nazanin and Gabriella home because framing the innocent serves no one, not even those perpetrating it - it risks undermining the values Iran and Islam are proudest of."

\\ Nazanin was sentenced by a closed court to five years' imprisonment on secret charges relating to "national security" \\

\\ Danskine's resignation came as a surprise to many Union staff members and students even though a College spokesperson said it was submitted in December \\

Central Library to get air con

Lef Apostolakis

Happy days. Imperial College will finally be taking steps to solve issues with temperature regulation at the Central Library. Probably.

According to a teasing announcement from Library Services just before Christmas, "early indications are that a project to improve the temperature at Central Library will begin in 2017."

This comes after *felix* launched a campaign last summer demanding humane studying conditions in the Central Library, notorious for reaching face-melting temperatures, particularly during summer term. According to Library Services, temperature regulation has been "the single biggest source of complaint from the student body for several years".

This development is meant to be the second phase of a larger project which began in 2014 and will most likely be taking place over this academic year's summer vacation period hopefully to be completed by

autumn 2017. Phase one saw the Central Library improve on issues with overcrowding and limited computer availability; the Science Museum Library was evicted from the third floor and the space was turned into a study area.

Phase two was meant to deal with temperature regulation and indeed there was a successful application for Planning Permission back in 2014, of a ventilation plant that would sit on the roof of Sherfield. The plant, occupying a space of 68 cubic meters, would be connected to the library by internally built ductwork.

Unfortunately the works, reportedly projected to cost an estimated £13.5m, had been put on ice, as only half the funding necessary had been secured. It appears though that the *felix* petition, which gathered 13,000 signatures (just under 10% of the student body), along with pressure from the Union and some NSS-induced panic have convinced College to go through with the plans.

Despite the hype, it has been stressed to us that nothing is

set in stone and there are still many sign-offs the proposed project needs to pass before promises are made and plans are finalised. This is perhaps why all announcements so far have been rather non-committal and Library Services, unable to contain their excitement, went rogue and spilled the beans.

However, the Library service recently made public a preliminary timetable of the works, bringing dreams of a well-ventilated library one step closer to realisation.

According to the timetable (which remains subject to approval from College) some preliminary works will be taking place during the end of this month/beginning of next month, including the erection of scaffolding and the relocation of some of the library's books and seating.

Some noisy work will also be taking place throughout spring term but it will be restricted between 6:00 and 9:00am.

No details have been released yet regarding plans for the summer term, however it is expected that the bulk of



Radical changes at the library \\ Alex Adler

the works will be taking place during this academic year's summer break.

Though generally the student community is excited for the prospect of study areas that don't send them into thermal shock, some students remain doubtful. "Yeah I wouldn't be too optimistic", says one student. "I swear a rumor about library air-con gets spread at least once a year and has been for as long as I can remember."

Indeed, climate control has plagued the Central Library for over a decade. The last major overhaul started in 2007 and cost over £10m. Issues with cooling of the higher levels

had from the beginning of the project become apparent, with the top two floors hitting 30 degrees Celsius. Efforts to provide solar shading were blocked by Westminster City Council due to aesthetic reasons (considering the aesthetics of the rest of South Ken Campus, one can only wonder) and the Chiller and Service Tower constructed on the roof of Sherfield and which cost over £6m failed to hit the spot quite the way it was meant to. College's last multi-million investment in Library Services, the Central Library door, has only managed to keep the heat in.

Head of Sport Imperial resigns

Lef Apostolakis

Grant Danskine, Head of Sport Imperial, has resigned amidst resurfaced criticism of the organisation's treatment of female athletes. Although the criticism - which resurfaced after Imperial published its institutional culture report - is unrelated to Danskine's direction of Sport Imperial, it did manage to receive national coverage once more.

The incident refers to the sexist mistreatment of the

Women's Rugby during the 2015 Varsity. Sport Imperial failed to provide adequate transport and changing facilities to the women's rugby teams despite the fact they were headlining. The players were also left without food, stranded without transportation and called "fat girls" by management.

Earlier this academic year, Sport Imperial also came under fire for running a sexist 'Imperial Girls Can' campaign. The campaign was meant to encourage sport participation amongst women

calling on them to "bounce the calories away".

Danskine's resignation came as a surprise to many Union staff members and students even though a College spokesperson said it was submitted in December. For quite some time, the Sport Imperial website listed Danskine as "Acting Head of Sport Imperial", with some sources telling *felix* he was on indefinite leave. It was only on Wednesday that the position was officially shown to be "vacant" online.

A College spokesperson

told *felix* that "Imperial is currently recruiting for a new Head of Sport, following the resignation of the previous postholder in December. The College is working closely with Imperial College Union on the recruitment process."

No information was released to us regarding the circumstances of Danskine's sudden resignation, though.

Next week Sport Imperial and the Union will be sending out a survey to students asking them for input on the sport services offered by College.



I'm sorry. I made a mistake.



Jian Li Chew apologises for his article last week in light of new information

\\ Reading the official SU statement, I am here to retract my previous article and to write an apology \\

After the publishing of my article last week, I was informed that *The Telegraph* article on which I based my own, which was picked up from *The Daily Mail*, was a gross misrepresentation of SOAS Student Union's campaign. Reading the official SU statement, I am here to retract my previous article and to write an apology.

neously teach about hitherto little known thinkers: the great Arabic minds like al-Fārābī, Avicenna and Averroes, the Indian thinkers Nāgārjuna, Dīrṅga, Uddyotakāra, Gaṅgeśa etc. and African philosophers like Kwami Anthony Appiah, Franz Fanon, Achille Mbembe, Valentin-Yves Mudimbe, Enrique Dussell and Walter Mignolo. The teaching of European philosophy is to be done by exploring the context of how they developed and how Enlightenment ideas of liberty, human rights and equality developed alongside the contemporary colonisa-



\\ I apologise for my writing and the condemnation I had heaped on the SOAS Student Union and retract the following lines \\

\\ They do not hate white people, white knowledge or white civilisation \\

\\ They are not snowflakes and do not epitomise hate, bigotry, ignorance and racism \\

After reading the article in the *Telegraph*, I went on the SOAS Student's Union site to find any news article about this topic. A cursory glance at the front page, where I had expected it to be highlighted, gave me no result, so I assumed that *The Telegraph* was a respectable and accurate source to use.

tion and imperialism. There is no intention to ban European philosophy, seeing how the intention of the course is to learn how different intellectual traditions interacted and developed.

SOAS students had voted to make "Decolonising the University" the top priority of the Student Union, with the focus on reviewing the curriculum and developing Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) academic staff and students as



a form of reparative justice. Whatever my personal views on the wider movement of decolonisation, as I believe that all actions in history should be viewed in context with the contemporary environment and not through a modern lens, this is the choice of the students involved and must be

\\ They do not want to create racist, narrow-minded, brainwashed, and hateful idiots, rather to develop themselves through a more critical understanding of philosophy \\

selves through a more critical understanding of philosophy. Lastly, they are not intolerant. Lastly in response to my point about colonialism, I was not making a moral or supportive case for it, but rather to state that instead of being a zero-sum game, to see colonialism for its contemporary context and that it had led to good and bad outcomes, whatever the morally dubious basis it stems from. Though it's coloured by my own personal benefit from British colonialism in Malaysia and the subsequent development of the nation after independence, I sought to challenge the prevailing narrative surrounding colonialism.

\\ Lastly, they are not intolerant \\

accepted.

I apologise for my writing and the condemnation I had heaped on the SOAS Student Union and retract the following lines. They do not hate white people, white knowledge or white civilisation. They are not snowflakes and do not epitomise hate, bigotry, ignorance and racism. They do not want to create racist, narrow-minded, brainwashed, and hateful idiots, rather to develop them-

This has been an interesting topic to cover and I welcome future opportunities for learning.



2017 | the year of the (big) cat

Jennifer Eden discusses the UAE's new ban on exotic pets and Ipswich's new hedgehog officer

Big news for big cats and other exotic pets. The United Arab Emirates has banned the private ownership and dealing of wild animals. Status pets are on the way out and, hopefully, back into the wild. Animal rights activists are understandably thrilled, for this is a triumph. The UAE was a hotspot for such narcissistic displays of animal investments and subsequent animal



unhappiness. Now according to *Gulf News* "Anyone who takes a leopard, cheetah or any other kind of exotic animal out in public will face a jail term of up to six months and a fine". Good stuff.

Having read this news after detailing the potential fate of neglected exotic pets, I can hold a glimmer of hope for human attitudes towards our animal friends. By the end of 2017 China is set to ban all ivory trade and processing activities. As a country hosting the world's largest ivory market, an end to this is the beginning of a much

brighter future for elephants. The process of male chick culling may also be a horror of the past with the development of new technology capable of determining the gender of a chick before it hatches. It would allow egg producers to remove male and infertile eggs before they enter incubation, so they can be used for human consumption rather than destroyed on hatching. But most significant of all the animal success stories is that Ipswich has finally got itself a Hedgehog Officer. With joint funding from the Hedgehog Preservation Society, Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Heritage Lottery Fund the role will be part of an effort to combat the decline of these wonderful creatures in the area.

Such positive progress justifies a moment of celebratory reflection. It appears the dependence we have on animals, and the importance of treating them well, is starting to sink in. Respecting our animal counterparts as equals, empathising with them, understanding that they are not so different from us are all crucial lessons in the move towards a better, less destructive co-existence.

What's happening now for animals provides a shred of optimism for the world. Amongst all the doom and gloom of Trump's presidency and cold war distrust re-emerging, at least those who had suffered in silence for the longest are beginning to be represented. We can be proud of this, even if it is just rectifying the problems we caused ourselves.

Don't let the Monday blues get to you



Emily Jane Cramphorn pumps you up and reminds you it's ok to get the blues

Have you been feeling down this week? Allegedly there is an explanation for this - some claim it is the most depressing week of the year. More specifically, the Monday that just passed has been christened 'Blue Monday' as a result of post-holiday reality kicking in and everyone generally feeling a bit shit. The third Monday of January was described as the most depressing day of the year by Cliff Arnell using an equation which supposedly took into consideration a multitude of variables such as weather, debt, monthly salary, time since Christmas, time since failing our new year's resolutions and low motivational levels.

It cannot be denied that January can be a tough month emotionally, financially and psychologically but many including Ben Goldacre, notorious for unpicking the misuse of science and statistics by journalists, have called the equation and the whole idea of Blue Monday, a farce.

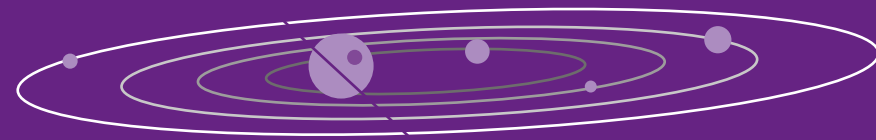
I cannot help but agree. A little research into the matter shows that Arnell's equation was derived to help airlines predict trends in bookings to improve marketing and in reality makes no mathematical sense. By telling us that we are miserable, airlines can sell holidays as a pick me up or a cure. By all accounts this is clever marketing,

exploiting the post Christmas lull to target January frugality; Blue Monday encourages us to buy holidays rather than pinching pennies throughout January.

Although the idea of Blue Monday may not be a reality, January is a tough month for many of us, especially at Imperial. January exams, coursework deadlines and leaving home comfort for student digs gets the best of us down, but that doesn't mean that we are all suddenly depressed.

Depression is a mental illness that should not be confused with sadness. Feeling sad or stressed in the face of January's challenges is not unusual or unhealthy, as long as we continue to prioritise self-care and the good things in life. If you are feeling the January blues treat yourself to a hot bath, a good movie or some time with friends. Revision is important but taking breaks is better for your health and your learning. And if you feel like you're taking January in your stride, don't doubt yourself or feel guilty - just because it is January doesn't mean you have to feel sad.





Is it stupid to take smart drugs?

Anjeline Joegi looks at the pros and cons to taking the most widely used study drug

It's the night before the final exam, but you haven't studied. If you had a small white pill which promised greater focus and productivity would you take it? The Tab website conducted a survey of 2000 UK university students and discovered that 1 in 5 have taken the drug 'Modafinil'. Many students take it to concentrate because they cannot cope with the demands of their degree. Furthermore, with an expanding job market and stellar CVs, many students take Modafinil to gain an edge over their competitors. Modafinil is a drug that increases wakefulness. It is strictly prescribed to patients suffering from ADHD, narcolepsy and sleep apnea, however recently more people, especially students are taking them to study. Since Modafinil is not a controlled substance but can be prescribed by a doctor, possessing it is not illegal, however selling it is. Many students purchase these drugs through unreliable pharmaceutical sources in India and Malaysia or through other students on campus. Modafinil increases concentration whilst studying. The University of Oxford analysed

**\\ Newly formed knowledge is not processed into long term memory **

24 studies between 1990 and 2014 and found that it boosted higher cognitive function, particularly attention and learning. It is known to enhance serotonin, histamine and glutamate levels which increase an individual's level of alertness and short term memory. One user needed to draft a proposal for the Dalai Lama Foundation but was suffering from writer's block, but after taking Modafinil was able to complete it. Online testimonials have also highlighted that it induces weight loss and enhances moods. However, there are several problems to Modafinil. Firstly, it can cause side effects like headaches, depression, and insomnia. This smart drug can severely disrupt sleep patterns so that they receive less slow-wave sleep. According to Professor Sahakian, a leading neuroscientist at Cambridge University, studies have only investigated the effects of a single dose and so the long term effects are unknown. It is also not known whether individuals may develop a



\\ Hula Health & Nutrition

tolerance to Modafinil after repeated use as with caffeine. It has also been noted that in approximately 5 cases per million, the smart drug can cause Steven Johnson's syndrome where the individual develops a life-threatening rash. Furthermore, many students have reported that they have become heavily dependent on Modafinil and it has become a habit to use it to pass their exams. On the other hand, some students have reported that it does not help them study because their focus shifts from their work to smaller things. One university student, for example, stated that he 'found [himself] focusing on more menial things like football matches rather than work'. Finally, although it is reported that Modafinil boosts focus and concentration, the learning is superficial

and the newly found knowledge is not processed into long term memory. So although it is a quick fix for an imminent exam, the knowledge cannot be applied and will not be retained in the long term. Students should instead find healthy study techniques to prepare for their exams. During times of extreme stress, distractions like exercise and meditation can improve an individual's state of mind.

**\\ Healthy study techniques are better in the long run, as study drug learning cannot be applied or retained in the long term **



Three most famous study drugs

- 1. ADHD Medications (eg. Adderall & Ritalin)**
Increase levels of dopamine in the brain allowing users to have increased concentration
- 2. Piracetam**
Derivative of neurotransmitter GABA
Also goes by the name 'Nootropyl'
- 3. Modafinil**
Can make certain forms of birth control (like the hormonal pill) less effective

Bro do you even lift?



Fact: The strongest living thing on the planet is gonorrhoea. *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (the bacterium that causes gonorrhoea) is a force to be reckoned with, given it can pull with a force over 100,000 times its own body weight. For a human to compete, you'd have to shift over ten million kilos, which weighs in at just over 50 blue whales.

The secret to the incredible strength of this bacterium is its winy tentacle-like structures called pili, which are attached to a biological motor not dissimilar from our own muscles. These allow the bacterium to crawl across surfaces, but the huge forces they can exert might also be a way in which the bug forces its way into our cells when infecting humans. Admittedly, this powerhouse is a little on the small side, weighing in at 0.000000000001 grams (one trillionth of a gram), so in real terms it can actually only pull something about 50 times lighter than a grain of sand. It could still beat you in a fight though - some strains of gonorrhoea could kill you in a couple of days, and with their growing antibiotic resistance there might soon be nothing your GP can do for you.

Another one of Mr. Aran Shaunak's Little Bites of Science

Pot and its potential

Lara Bailey looks at the useful applications of marijuana

Everyone is familiar with the perceived positive and negative connotations of Marijuana. In 2016 alone, 51% of Americans smoked cannabis, and its global use is on the rise due to recent legalisation in several US states. However, despite its widespread use, surprisingly little has been confirmed in terms of its effects on the human body. So far, its legal status has hindered rigorous scientific testing of cannabis, and studies performed so far have left more questions than answers. It is thought it could have significant medical potential. Unfortunately, any potential medical benefits are yet to reach the public sphere. A new study published by the National Academies of

**\\ A new study has collated all negative and positive impacts of the drug **

Sciences, Engineering and Medicine in Washington D.C., has collated all available negative and positive impacts of the drug. However, the main point of the study is that the legal status of cannabis needs to be changed, so that researchers can access it easily. If it is going to be treated as a medical drug, then it should be tested as one. Without more testing, claims of cannabis being a 'miracle cure' are relatively unfounded. From over 10,000 studies, several negative and positive effects of the drug were found. Use of weed can lead

to other drug addictions, alcohol abuse, and increased chance of developing psychological problems such as schizophrenia. Such issues can arise with long-term and regular use of the drug. There is very low support in terms of its effectiveness as a treatment for epilepsy, and cancer, despite claims. Encouragingly, researchers confirmed that it does not increase the risk of lung, head and neck cancers. However, the influence of the drug on heart issues and other cancers has not been researched. Positive effects include reduction of chronic pain, and multiple sclerosis patients have reported increased muscle spasms on taking the drug. The smoke may deter inflammation-related infection, but data on immune



responses is lacking. Few or no findings support its effectiveness in treating PTSD or Tourettes syndrome. This is not to say that cannabis is conclusively bad. While in some cases the negative links are clear, long-term studies are needed to test other health impacts. For example, the impact of cannabis on memory and attention span is known, but there is little data to support that use influences unemployment or school drop-out rate. Moreover, the clear health benefits, such

as reduced nausea in cancer patients, highlight the need to test it further. It is clear that marijuana has great potential. Currently in the UK, medical use of cannabis in the form of Sativex, containing two chemicals from cannabis, can be prescribed to MS patients. Cannabis itself for medical use is still illegal, and anyone using it for medical reasons can still be charged for possession. Several MPs have called for its legal status to be reassessed.

Fish from the Med, good for the head?

Alexandra Lim explains why the Mediterranean diet may be the best there is...

Think back to the last time you dipped sourdough into balsamic, mixed with a gleaming pool of olive oil. Extra virgin, please. As the world of nutrition science continues to shift our perceptions between food ideals, a new study has come to light featuring the sunny, olive oil lifestyle. The paper, published in the online journal *Neurology*, has shown that those who sustain themselves on a Mediterranean diet retain more brain volume than those who don't. There is however, one key and slightly unusual exception - the amount of fish consumed, regardless of how much other meat is

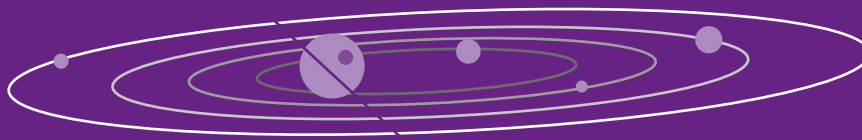


eaten, fails to make an overall difference. This particular finding contrasts with earlier studies looking into health benefits of a Mediterranean diet. So why is it so healthy for us, even without the fish? Looking at it in the big picture, the Mediterranean diet is full of fruits, vegetables, beans, cereal grains like rice, and legumes, as well as copious amounts of olive oil. Dairy, fish and wine (of course) are consumed

in moderate amounts, with limited intake of red meat and poultry. Researchers in this study gathered data on eating habits from almost a thousand Scottish people, all aged around 70, who did not have dementia. Participants all differed in how closely their dietary habits followed that of a Mediterranean lifestyle. MRI scans showed that those who followed the diet more closely over a period of three years

were less likely to lose brain volume than those who didn't. In fact, dietary difference alone explained 0.5% difference in brain volume. This doesn't sound like much, but is a significant proportion when taking into account that the total brain volume lost is solely due to the process of ageing. And how do we know that this difference really is completely attributed only to diet? Researchers went a step further by testing other possible confounding factors such as age, gender, weight, education, high blood pressure, or having a history of diabetes or obesity. Results nevertheless remained the same. The main, unusual

takeaway was that fish or meat consumption did not make a significant difference to brain health. It is important to note, following the study, that results could be attributed to specific components of the Mediterranean diet. Perhaps it was just the regular consumption of butter beans or two kilos of kale per week that did the trick. Study author Michelle Luciano, PhD, of the University of Edinburgh says, "As we age, the brain shrinks and we lose brain cells which can affect learning and memory. This study adds to the body of evidence that suggests the Mediterranean diet has a positive impact on brain health."



How hot can you handle?

Lizzie Riach looks at a study claiming that 'spicing up your life', could actually prolong it

Some like it hot. But others can't stand an inkling of chilli anywhere near their food. However, perhaps they ought to try, as researchers from the University of Vermont have found that spicy food may prolong life expectancy.



**\\ Capsaicin may have antimicrobial properties, keeping our gut bacteria in line **

In particular, consumption of red hot chilli peppers was associated with 13% reduction in total mortality in a large-scale study. Primarily these deaths were due to heart disease or strokes.

Perhaps this is why they have been used as an ingredient by our spice-loving ancestors, who seemed to enjoy the burning sensation of hell inside their mouths.

Using National Health and Nutritional Examination data from around 16,000 Americans over a period of 23 years, they examined the number and causes of deaths between two large subsets; those who ate red chillies, and those that didn't.

Perhaps the receptors

specifically used for sensing heat from chemicals like capsaicin could have something to do with the increased health levels, or maybe there's a component in capsaicin itself. Some theories include the idea that capsaicin can help to prevent obesity and regulates blood flow in the heart, as well as possessing antimicrobial properties within the gut.

So you heard it here. Next trip to Nandos, see how hot you can muster.



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Manchester by the Sea



Michelle Williams and Casey Affleck deliver devastatingly understated performances \\ Allstar/StudioCanal



Tom Stephens

A restrained exploration of grief, with exceptionally strong performances from Michelle Williams and Casey Affleck, *Manchester by the Sea* is the most moving film of the year.

If you were to rely on the list of previous winners of the Best Actor Oscar as a definitive list of cinema history's greatest performances, you would probably have one clear go-to when thinking of acting techniques for a sure-fire win

(apart from being white): shouting. It has seemed throughout the years that the only performances by leading actors that really catch awards committees' attention are the ones that go off with a flash and a bang – nuance and subtlety be damned. In

fact, Leonardo DiCaprio's landmark win last year for his role in *The Revenant* saw him in a performance that featured more yelling and exasperated grunting than actual speech.

So upon hearing the amount of Oscar buzz currently orbiting Casey Affleck for his performance in *Manchester by the Sea*, you might be led to believe, as I was, that this year might end up no different. Imagine my shock when by the time the movie was over I had counted just one scene – a very short one at that, and only about ten minutes into the 137-minute runtime – in which Affleck raised his voice. Where a different actor may have put on a grand gesture, we see instead a slight frowning of the brow; pursed lips and downward-looking eyes appear where we would usually expect an immense emotional outpouring. And yet this is no shortcoming: the immense delicacy of every movement, turn of phrase, and pained facial expression (and believe me, they are pained) adds up to a masterclass in restraint and subtlety in a performance that conjures the likes of Laurence Olivier or Marlon Brando in his later years. It's a masterwork inside another masterwork – the film itself.

Manchester by the Sea begins as Lee Chandler (Affleck) – a quiet, bitter, calcified janitor in Quincy, Massachusetts with a knack for starting fights – receives a phone call informing him of the death of his brother Joe (Kyle Chandler). He travels to the small town of Manchester-by-the-Sea to break the news to Joe's teenage son Patrick (Lucas Hedges), but learns upon examining his brother's will that he has been named as Patrick's guardian. As fragments of the family's past begin to appear in flashback, and we learn more and more about the troubles Lee and Joe have faced, we understand the deep grief that sits coiled at the heart of this film. I'm going to avoid details as much as possible, but you should be warned

now: *Manchester by the Sea* is devastating to watch.

But, surprisingly enough, it also has more laughs in it than any comedy I've watched for a while – not in any sort of dark comedy sense, but rather because the script by Kenneth Lonergan, who also directed, is bristling with conversations so naturalistic and organically funny that the slightest of reactions or the smallest of quips between friends hit like the punchline to a stand-up's best joke. Perhaps this is also because the characters having these conversations are so perfectly realised – the film is populated by such well-sketched people that within an extremely short time from meeting them they felt like close. It even gave me the all-too-rare treat of having a moment to recollect, some twenty-five minutes into the film, how glad I was that I had so much more time to spend with these wonderfully flawed people I was watching on-screen.

There may be yet another reason for this, however: the all-round, across-the-board brilliance of the performances. This may well be the performance of Affleck's career (a description I certainly don't use lightly as a huge fan of his), but he is backed up on all sides by the supporting players: Lucas Hedges pitches Patrick perfectly, with just the right

\\ It's difficult to forget the feeling you carry after seeing a truly great, truly sad film \\

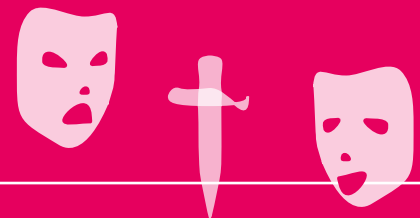
mix of adolescent cockiness, plucky humour, and tender vulnerability; Michelle Williams achieves the highest minutes-of-heartbreak-time-to-minutes-of-screen-time ratio since Anne Hathaway's performance in *Les Misérables*; and Kyle Chandler reasserts himself as one of the most likeable men to ever grace a

\\ Affleck delivers a masterclass in restraint and subtlety in a performance that conjures the likes of Laurence Olivier \\

screen.

It's difficult to forget the feeling you carry after seeing a truly great, truly sad film. I might just be a bit of a heartless bastard, but for me, crying during the first viewing of a movie is an extremely rare occurrence – *12 Years A Slave*, *The Lives of Others*, and – most recently – *I, Daniel Blake* are among the small handful of films that have managed it. But what's even more rare is that peculiar, gravely, sombre feeling that lingers after moments like the ending of *Fruitvale Station*, or the point at which *Bridge To Terabithia*'s plot takes a turn (if you've seen it, you know exactly what I mean): one part quiet hope, nine parts utter dejection. Truth be told, I have never felt it as strongly or for so long as I did after I first saw *Manchester by the Sea*. It's one thing to make an easy tear-jerker of a film, but it takes an enormous amount of talent to tell a story this crushing and make it as immensely watchable as it is throughout, for so many reasons. I've picked my brain over and over to find a single fault in this film since my first viewing of it, and I simply cannot. Lonergan has achieved something wholly incredible. It probably won't be the 2017 film that I rewatch the most – *La La Land* already has a pretty steadfast hold on that spot – but I will be astounded if I see a more moving film this year.





Taking a leaf out of Tove Jansson's book



(L-R): Tove Jansson's *Comet in Moominland*; Jansson in the 1940s; the recent film adaptation of *Moomins on the Riviera* \\ Creative Commons/2014 Handle Productions

For many, the Moomins hold nothing more than the nostalgia of childhood. While some have no idea what they are, for others the word conjures up a vague image of a hippo-esque creature that adorns cutesy bottles and notepads. There is no particular reason to go any deeper than these associations, but it was during attendance at an interactive exhibit dedicated to all things Moomin – and when I say interactive, I mean ducking through ‘forests’, crouching in a sandy tent, and wading through ‘snow’ – that the depth of these children’s stories, and their importance at times such as ours, came to light.

Tove Jansson, the author and illustrator of the Moomin books, was born in Helsinki in 1914. Becoming an artist and illustrator at a young age, depictions of the Moomin trolls can be seen in her early work in way of a signature.

They soon came into their own however, with the first book, *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, appeared in 1945. On the surface, these were cute stories for children – a family (albeit trolls) looking for their father, Moomin Papa, who has disappeared in an adventure filled with danger and crumbling façades. However, take into account the mood of the time, when so many fathers had

**\\ The simplicity and warmth of Jansson's defiance is what is striking: she made books that gave comfort to an oblivious audience, whilst including deeply personal and political messages. **

disappeared to the war, and a surprisingly political note arises. In fact, Jansson's own brother had ‘disappeared’ in the war with no idea when – or even if – he would be back.

The following book, *Comet in Moominland*, tells the tale of a comet that forces the Moomins to gather together and flee their home. This, again, was extremely reflective of the times. However, perhaps the starkest example of the use of her art form to express a piece of herself, a piece of her pain, was the creation of the characters of Thingummy and Bob. These two were only ever depicted together with a stolen red ruby – initially only referred to as ‘the content’ – hidden in the suitcase that they carried with them. By children’s character standards, this does not seem so unusual or noteworthy. However, we now know that this was Tove Jansson’s way of expressing her feelings towards her lover: a married woman called Vivica

Bandler. The secret ruby was their love, hidden away and illegal – as homosexual relationships were in Finland at the time. Jansson poured her anxieties and her broken heart into her art. It is now our turn to do the same.

This is only one example of an artist putting their pain into art. Go to any art museum and you can see whole rooms dedicated to artists’ creations that stemmed from civil war, emotional turmoil, and forcibly repressed feelings. The simplicity and warmth of Jansson’s defiance, however, is what is striking here: she made children’s books that gave comfort to a completely oblivious audience, whilst including deeply personal and political messages. The beginnings were very small, with the first Moomin Troll being drawn on the wall of her family’s outhouse when she was a child following an argument with her brother. She described the doodle as the “ugliest thing imaginable”. Her uncle had warned her of

the ‘Moomin Troll’, a horrible creature that would catch her if it caught her sneaking out of bed to steal from the pantry. When she was young, she was terrified of the Moomin, but she overcame the demon, developing ownership over it and creating the characters that are now so well loved.

The advice from Carrie Fisher, thrust forward in Meryl Streep’s wonderful speech at the Golden Globes, rings completely true: make your broken heart into art. But not having a giant platform or many means of expression doesn’t make it of less importance. Take what scares you, what breaks your heart, and turn it into something else, something you can overcome and maybe even befriend. Not all sources of heartbreak can be turned into a cuddly character (orange, wig-wearing Trump-in Troll anyone?), but the ones that can are a solid start.

Jenny Shelley



Cunts in conversation



Vaginas Occupy Wall Street \\ Paul Stein

Lucille Calmon tells us all about FemSoc's plans to put on *The Vagina Monologues*, Eve Ensler's powerful exploration of the role the snatch plays in society

bet you're worried. I was worried about vaginas. I was worried about what we think about vaginas, and even more worried that we don't think about them" wrote Eve Ensler in the introduction of *The Vagina Monologues*, a compilation of over 200 women's feelings about their body and their sexuality. Ensler interviewed and talked with them about their vaginas: how do they perceive it? How do they feel about 'the vagina' in general? What would your vagina say? Ensler gave them the space to talk freely, and listened to their stories.

In this 90-minute play, the actors beautifully express stories of shame, fear, fantasy, discovery, happiness, relief, and anger. It almost feels like, through listening to their perceptions of their vaginas, we are able to meet the original storytellers.

Watching the performance, you'll hear about plenty of pussies, countless cunts, various vulvas, tonnes of twats, plus some punanis thrown in for good measure. Some of the monologues are based

on an individual woman's particular experience: from a hilarious piece on a sex worker who pleasures only women, to an eye-widening (and leg crossing) account from a witness of a birth, and a strong testimony on the Bosnian war and sexual violence inflicted on women. Other monologues are thematically and emotionally linked, with Ensler combining different experiences together, such as the powerful discussion of the treatment of trans women by wider society.

The Vagina Monologues isn't an activist speech with complicated words, but rather manages to be elegantly written without being excessive. The messages of these combined pieces create a strong, emotionally charged narrative. It's funny and light hearted most of the time – a 6 year old says her vagina smells like "snowflakes," and you'll have to go see the play to hear what an ex lawyer said about moaning... – but between the joy and laughter, you can also find sad, despairing pieces about violence inflicted upon women.

The Vagina Monologues is

simultaneously an acceptance statement, an invitation to discussion, and a free expression. It is a beautiful and artistic way to give back to vagina owners the power to speak and control what is said about their own body parts; to redefine and re-appropriate themselves.

It felt therapeutic to hear and read the script: as both a spectator and actor in the play, it brings me relief to hear this strong testimony about what others have to say about their vagina. While some men might find it threatening or unnecessary, the play doesn't aim to exclude men – rather it shows them a rare, respectful portrayal of vaginal experience.

Indeed, it is refreshing and cathartic to finally hear voices break this taboo in a non-sexualised, non-male-centred way. In the end, it is not about vaginas, but rather about everything that gravitates around them: the ideas perpetrated by our society; how people are ashamed of their vagina; how people wish it was different – how they ended up believing it should not have hair, that its shape is

disgraceful, or that it naturally smells bad. It is about how difficult it is to discover and appreciate your vagina when it is physically hidden from you.

In a culture where shaming feels omnipresent, and general assumptions fit humans into boxes, demanding a certain body standard, relationship status, or orientation, *The Vagina Monologues* invites people to discuss and open up about their feelings. Everybody should feel free to be who they want and to love the bodies they have. They should not be told what to do with it.

Having a vagina shouldn't be a source of shame, or put a target on someone's back. To work towards greater tolerance, Ensler chose the path of artistic expression, and as more people read, watched and realised the impact of the play, it became a worldwide movement. In 1998, after a success in New York, the author created "V-Day" (V standing for Vagina, Victory, Valentine), a worldwide activist movement staging the play in different countries in aid of the struggle to end violence

against women and girls. This movement expands each year and poignant, game-changing representation takes place in countries where the condition of women needs urgent improvement. Each performance raises awareness as well as money for these causes. The play continues to give these women the power to talk, bringing gender equality back into the conversation.

This year, FemSoc and Imperial's student community will put on their own The Vagina Monologues in celebration of V-Day!

It's not too late if you want to play your part in this global movement so give us a shout (feminist@imperial.ac.uk) if you'd like to get involved. And make sure you come see us in February!

Love and cunts,
FemSoc

Article written with contributions from Eve and Jamie



Problematic faves | J Cole and Jesse Hughes

Alas, poor Jermaine. *Forest Hills Drive* was a huge success, the wider public had recognised your musical and lyrical talent, and you were being mentioned in the same breath as the likes of Kendrick; you'd made it big. Why did you have to sabotage it all by taking shots at Yeezy? Now, beef is nothing new in the Hip-Hop world but, as with the recent Drake-Cudi conflict, it's the timing and targeting of these insults that's suspect. Why go after him now, when he's been hospitalised? And why target his mental health? Cole falls into the classic trap of painting Kanye's struggles as something of his own doing. He paints West's issues as deliberate manifestations of an over-indulgence of ego, rather than recognizing that

likely the inverse is true. It would stand to reason that, perhaps, this projection of ego is an attempt to mask insecurity and depression, and ridiculing it publicly would only serve to worsen it. You either don't get this, or are deliberately ignoring it. Not cool, Jermaine. Oh, and as an aside, if you're going to go after one of the greatest producers of all time, don't do it on a recycled Joey Bada\$\$ beat.

\\ Cole falls into the classic trap of painting Kanye's struggles as something of his own doing \\



Jesse Hughes, frontman of the Eagles of Death Metal, is a fairly tough nut to crack. EoDM's music can generally be described as a lighter, more pop-like take on Queens of the Stone Age. So, it came as somewhat of a surprise to me when I discovered that Jesse Hughes was a full-on gun toting right-wing Republican. Now, this didn't really bother me at first because he kept his politics to himself and didn't actively support any of the crazies. However, the Bataclan incident changed all that. Hughes has since made comments that could be construed as islamophobic, and has taken the bizarre alt-right stance of blaming liberalism for terrorism. Given the traumatic experiences he's had, and given his history with drug use, I'm

\\ I discovered that Jesse Hughes was a full-on gun toting right-wing Republican \\

inclined to somewhat forgive this behaviour. But, I can't deny that his views have coloured my feelings about the music. Sure, I'm all for separating the art from the artist, and I still enjoy the music; just, perhaps a little less than I used to. Another thing to consider is that music is, at the end of the day, commercialised art. Jesse's may say some suspect things, but he's been through a lot and, at the end of the day, he's pretty harmless. So, I plan to keep listening: at least for now.

Anurag Deshpande



Rob's Sad Playlist

Got those pesky **January blues**? **Exam stress** getting you down? Bask in your own sweet, sweet **self pity** with this playlist from our very own **Rob Garside**.

Disintegration



\\ Paul Doherty \\

Moving onto the more melodramatic side of sad, The Cure take us into the wilderness that is *Disintegration*. With the disconcerting glass smashing samples, unwavering drum machine and self indulgent vocals, the song is weirdly mesmerising. If you like this sort of thing but fancy something more dynamic check out Converge's cover. Jacob Bannon's murmured vocals swirl in the background before building up to a shouted climax.

Reflections Of My Life

With this 1969 hit, Marmalade show that sad music isn't just about introverted arrangements. The song's sweet vocal harmonies and triumphant trumpet parts contrast with its bleak lyrics. The backing vocals in this song are a real highlight adding texture to an otherwise simple song.

Sylvia

The whole of The Antlers' concept album *Hospice* is pretty sad, with its stark storyline playing out amongst an ambitious, multi-faceted indie rock soundtrack packed with stellar musicianship. This mid-tempo song drifts between acoustic guitar segments and electronic passages before a restrained climax. So much of this song hinges on the croon of Silberman, which carries the narrative, sweetly juxtaposing the haunting lyrical content of this song.

All That Could Have Been

The continuing success of NIN is directly due to bringing industrial themed music to the mainstream through the use of clever hooks amongst militarist drum beats. One of their ballads, this track has a disconcerting structure that allows the song to build and build. The confessional self analysis of this of this song makes it one to pay attention to.



Tegan Neary \\

Interludio



\\ hannah k \\

I often find the process driven side of minimalist music too mechanical to be fulfilling, yet Luciano Cilio's work is beautifully restrained so that even a small raise in volume is meaningful and chilling. From the beautiful mandolin lead that opens the record to the wordless voices and desperate cello lines, this record excels in creating a depressive atmosphere.

Murmuring

When Bastions confirmed their hiatus towards the end of last year, one of the great lights of the UK hardcore scene was extinguished. The combination of using clever, efficient songwriting and the cathartic, tortured screams of their lead vocalist Jamie Burne helped them create vivid emotional soundscapes.

The Show Must Go On

Queen's finest moment in my eyes is their final album. Written during Freddie Mercury's deterioration due to AIDS, the whole album is informed by his gradual acceptance of his approaching end. Mercury's vocals as usual are on point, ably assisted by dramatic harmonising backing vocals. Despite the triumphant feel to this song, it is still heartbreaking to hear.

The Man Comes Around

Johnny Cash's *American* series with Rick Rubin is a stripped back, heavily reflective album, showing a slower, darker, more religious side compared to Cash's previously more comedic and upbeat works. Written in the last years of his and his wife's lives, Cash's deep, sombre voice is the main focal point throughout.



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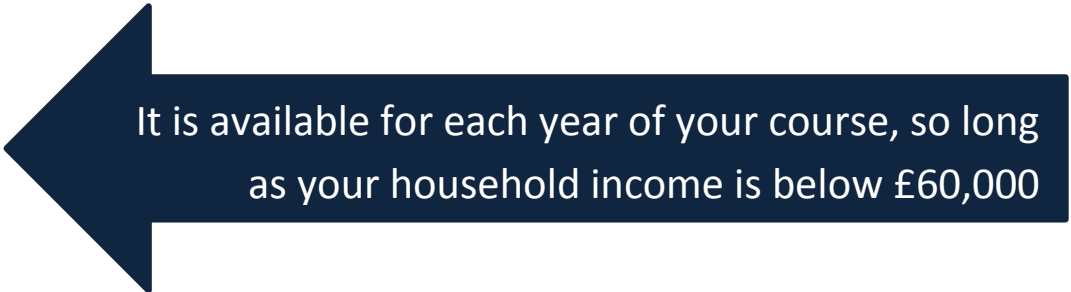


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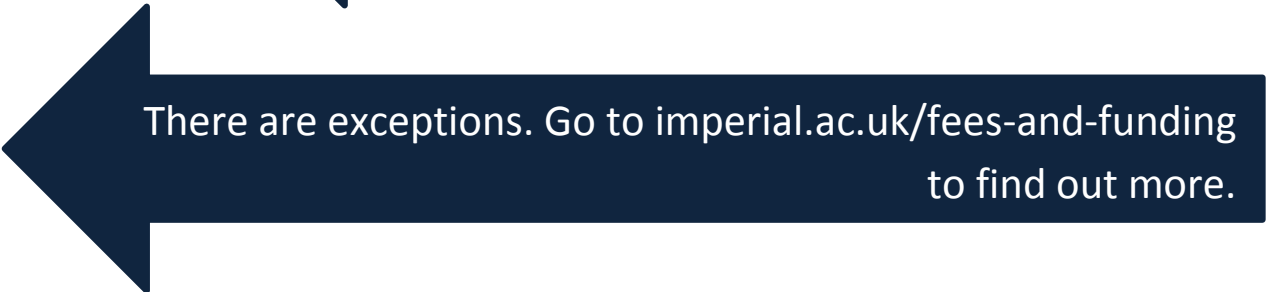
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A series of final problems | *Sherlock*



The hair's looking better this season,
at least \\ BBC



Indira Malik



In 2010 when *Sherlock* was first introduced to the world as Arthur Conan Doyle's great detective being brought into the 21st century, co-creator Steven Moffat explained his motivations in making the series to *Premium Hollywood* thus: "This wasn't a case of, 'Let's grab that off the shelf and update it.' It was, 'We love this, we think everybody's been getting it wrong, and we think we can get it right.' Unless you think you're correcting everyone else, you

**\\ What exactly did Moffat and co-creator Gatiss think should be done? **

shouldn't be doing something. You should be saying, 'Now this is the way it should be done.' " Admirable words, certainly but it does beg the question: what exactly did Moffat and co-creator Mark Gatiss think should be done?

The Final Problem, which could very well be the last ever episode of *Sherlock* given the demand for stars Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman seemed at points to be playing a game of "bad screenwriting" bingo – checking off one contrivance after the other. The *Sherlock Holmes* canon is known above all for its grounding in rational thought; that Holmes should remain the ideal of the triumph of reasoning over the mystical, substance over style was a conviction that Conan Doyle stuck doggedly to even though he was intrigued by the possibility of the supernatural in his life. Gatiss and Moffat's *Sherlock* in its seven year run was known for honouring this tradition even as the writers adapted and re-formed the original stories for the episodes. *The Final Problem* however chose to dive head first into the world of the impossible in a move that made watching the episode feel like being suspended in a constant state of anticipation – waiting for the other shoe to drop – waiting for Sherlock to wake up, waiting for everything to be

explained.

From the first moments we are plunged into a world populated with killer clowns, portraits that cry blood, men who can jump from burning second storey flats onto busy London streets and walk away unharmed, we are asked to believe that a secret omnipotent Holmes sister lives in an Azkaban-like prison fortress plotting revenge for the time her infant brother didn't play with her (despite her mind control abilities). We are asked to believe in a detective who walks into a brightly lit room and cannot distinguish glass from empty air, we are asked to believe that Mary Watson, before her entirely unplanned death, recorded several DVD messages and arranged for them to be delivered to her husband and to his best friend to aid them in their emotional journey from the grave. We were asked to believe a child turned the memory of his murdered best friend into the memory of a dog. We were, in short, asked to believe too much, suspend our disbelief for too long. *Sherlock* was once a show built on ingenuity – plot twists that were surprising but could be predicted if one looked hard at the clues, it was a show that invited the audience to deduce it, yet here, in its last hurrah, it gave up intelligent dramatization and character development for a remake of

Saw.

The problems with *The Final Problem* are the ones that have steadily accumulated throughout Series 4 which progressively became detached from any semblance of reality. Chekov's gun' is the principle that once a gun has been placed on the stage, the rules of fiction demand the trigger to be pulled. In Series 4 in general, and *The Final Problem* in

**\\ Sherlock threw gun after gun (both metaphorical and literal) onto the screen and allowed its characters to waltz through them **

particular, *Sherlock* threw gun after gun (both metaphorical and literal) onto the screen and allowed its characters to waltz through them as if they were wisps of smoke. Gone was the cerebral, carefully constructed show that we were first introduced to in 2010, in its stead was a show that introduced intriguing developments only to abandon them. What was the recurring dream Sherlock talked to his therapist about in *The Six Thatchers*? Where was the development from the "romantic entanglement, while fulfilling for



A sad reminder of what could have been \\ BBC



Keeping the queer-baiting really subtle, Gatiss \\ BBC

other people – would complete you as a human being” exchange between Sherlock and John in *The Lying Detective*? Surely not with Molly – the “I love you” that was so widely publicised before the series aired turned out to be part of a horrifically misogynistic and manipulative scene, the emotional fallout from which was never explored. *The Final Problem* revelled in its hollowness, watching it felt like being trapped inside a cardboard bunker – as indeed Sherlock was in the last scenes of the episode – the walls of the world *The Final Problem* created collapsed at the slightest scrutiny. “No loose ends, not on my watch” proclaimed Mark Gatiss as Mycroft Holmes in the second episode of this series – one could’ve drowned in the loose ends in the episode that followed.

If this is indeed the last episode of Sherlock, how will the series be judged as a whole? The subject of queer-baiting is likely to be one of the most associated. *Sherlock* is a show that delved again and again into the idea of Sherlock Holmes’ repressed romantic life; characters within the show mistake Sherlock and John for a couple across episodes and series – these assumptions are met with flustered denial from John and pointed

silence from Sherlock. Benedict Cumberbatch delivered a masterful performance of a man devastated by the marriage of the man he loves to someone else in *The*

\\ If this is indeed the last episode of Sherlock, how will the series be judged as a whole? The subject of queerbaiting is likely to be one of the most associated.

Sign of Three. The seeds of the idea that the Sherlock and John relationship could develop into a romantic one were steadily planted never to fully flourish. Subtextually the show referred heavily to *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, a film that both Gatiss and Moffat rate as one of their favourite adaptations of the original stories – Gatiss going so far as to say to *The Guardian* that the screenplay formed a template for BBC’s *Sherlock*. In *Private Life*, Sherlock Holmes is depicted as a closeted gay man desperately, silently in love with

John Watson, medicating with cocaine to hide his pain and guilt. Years after the film’s release, director Billy Wilder spoke of his great regret of never making the relationship explicit “I wanted to make Holmes a homosexual. . . . That’s why he’s on dope, you know.”

Wilder is a character that appears in *The Abominable Bride*: the skull in 221B, Sherlock’s junkie friend, even Sherlock himself (“William Sherlock Scott Holmes- if you’re looking for baby names”) are all named “Billy”, and numerous lines from “is tea code?” to “admirably high arches”, to the flower in John’s hair are *Private Life* references. Yet all this queer coding – nudges at Oscar Wilde, at *Private Life*, all those aborted allusions – at the tarmac, at the end of *The Lying Detective* come to nothing, or are treated as a joke. The villains on the other hand – from Moriarty, to Irene Adler to Euros are explicitly stated to be queer. Their queerness is often associated with violence or sexual abuse (Moriarty and Euros) or disregarded altogether in service of plot (Irene). Such blatant homophobia is always unacceptable but especially galling from Mark Gatiss, himself a gay man.

In an interview with *Gay Times* in 2011 Gatiss spoke of his dream of intelligently portrayed queer representation on TV; “That’s how the revolution happens... I think when the day comes that you have a big detective show... [in which the detective goes to work and] he’s a maverick and all the usual things and [when he gets home] and his boyfriend says, “Are you alright?”... then something would have genuinely changed.” On *Sherlock*, Gatiss was given the chance to stage that revolution and it would seem he had neither the courage nor the ingenuity to seize it.

Moffat has long been accused of misogynistic writing and the accusations follow him to *Sherlock*. Mary, the unseen housewife who dies off screen in the Conan

Doyle stories was transformed into a character with agency in the BBC show only to die on screen and be periodically resurrected to help her “Baker Street boys” along. It was a textbook case of ‘fridging’ a female character – an allusion heightened by Mycroft opening an empty

**\\It was a textbook case of ‘fridging’ a female character - an allusion heightened by Mycroft opening an empty fridge **

fridge in the moments after Mary’s death. Molly, a Gatiss and Moffat original character grew to develop beyond her infatuation with *Sherlock* through the series only to be forced back into that box in the final episode. These instances only add to the already long list of crimes this show has perpetrated against its female characters throughout its run.

Real world implications aside, in a purely narrative sense *The Final Problem* and *Series 4* as a whole set about systematically dismantling what the previous three seasons built up. In an interview with



What was it Nietzsche said about staring into the Abyss? \\ BBC

IGN in 2014 Steven Moffat said of the show: “it’s not a detective show. It’s a show about a detective. That’s why it’s exciting.” Yet in a voice over at the end of *The Final Problem* Mary declares “it not about who you really are, it’s all about the legends.” The show sacrificed character growth at the altar of high octane action and as a result fell utterly flat, becoming a parody of itself and its genre. Indeed the final episode’s incongruity with the show as a whole has led some fans to speculate on the existence of a secret fourth episode that is yet to air – and who can blame them, from the first moment of *The Final Problem* to its last it feels like Moriarty has hacked into every screen showing *Sherlock*.

If this final episode really is the end of series 4 (and at this point it’s far from certainty in my mind) then it was the protracted death of a once great show. The show runners doubt whether they will be able to make series 5; if this is was the culmination of their great plan, they don’t deserve to. *The Final Problem* got a standing ovation at the press screening. Why, we must ask ourselves. Perhaps, as one incisive friend put it, it was because it was finally, thankfully, over.



Rebooted | A Series of Unfortunate Events



Barney did not age well \\ Netflix



Saad Ahmed

Once again, Netflix rushes into rescue and, in this case, reboot a much loved property that had been poorly adapted. So, is the series any good, or does it become an all too literal rendition of its title?

The catchy theme song of this Netflix adaptation advises you to look away, warning you of a story that is dark and has no happy ending. If you actually listen to that advice, it would be an unfortunate event in of itself, as you would be missing out on a well-made, dark and incredibly self-aware series.

A series of *unfortunate* events were originally a much beloved book series, telling

**\\ The highlight of the show is Neil Patrick Harris as the zany and despicable Count Olaf **

the story of the Baudelaire orphans, Violet, Klaus and Sunny. Right off the bat, their parents die in a mysterious house fire and they are thrust into a grim and dark world, constantly shifting between guardians and being pursued by the menacing Count Olaf, who’s after their inheritance and plans all sorts of vile schemes to get his way.

While a previous film adaptation with Jim Carey was a bit more free with the source material, this Netflix series adapts the books very closely. Of course it helps massively that the real-life writer, Daniel Handler, is an executive producer and the show’s writer. Roughly, each book is divided into two episodes, and watching two, or even one is enough to tell a cohesive story for those not fans of binge watching. Watching several together, however, may feel a bit cyclic at times.

The highlight of the show is Neil Patrick Harris as the zany and despicable Count Olaf, who is always just about smarter than all the other adults so that he can conduct his meticulous plans. Harris is able to nail the ridiculousness of the character, while making sure he remains a frightening force to be reckoned with. The actors who play the older Baudelaire, Weissman and Hynes, are also terrific and instantly likeable, able to

hold their own against their experienced adult co-stars. This is both literal and figurative as the series portrays the children as intelligent and observant, as opposed to the adults who are depicted as dumb and corrupted by society.

Patrick Warburton is also a real treat as Lemony Snicket. He opens and closes the episodes as well as interjects between various key scenes, giving us a fourth wall commentary, explaining certain phrases or apologizing for the dark nature of this tale. His costumes and deliberately dry delivery are amusing to watch and add levity to the proceedings while allowing for fun visual transitions between scenes.

The show never shies away from its dark and dreary nature; it’s about a man maliciously after three orphans after all. Count Olaf’s actions always feel tense and creepy, whether it’s his plan to marry a fourteen year old girl or even his simple action of slapping a child. As weird and expansive as it is, this series is similar tonally to shows like *Jessica Jones* or *Stranger Things*, while being crazier and wackier.

This show also really flourishes on world-building and the style really makes each episode feel unique (almost like they were based on books). With a mix of practical design, CGI and beautiful set castings, every new location feels unique and well



The narrator can make or break the story \\ Netflix

designed, from the messy and decaying rooms of Count Olaf’s mansion and the vibrant and lively environment that is the Reptile Room. Though at times the CGI may falter, in some of Sunny’s scenes for instance, there’s always a stunning view with an appropriate atmosphere. There’s also a fun mix of the contemporary and the vintage with archaic clothing styles and steampunk devices amidst references like Uber and Haruki Murakami.

It honestly does not matter if you’ve never read any of the books filled with *Unfortunate Events*. This Netflix series is extremely welcoming to newcomers, opening its mystery box of encapsulating despair from the first episode and layering it with performances, writing and direction that keep you riveted until the end. An ongoing mystery keeps you coming back for more; even if you are a book reader, there’s something new as an intriguing new subplot is added not seen in the books.

At this point, any Netflix adaptation is bound to be good and this show is no exception. While the plot may get a bit repetitive, the charming cast and lingering mysteries are consistently engaging and just plain fun, for lack of a better word. Though Lemony Snicket may constantly protest, you’d be doing yourself a disservice if you don’t watch this show.

Union Page

National Student Survey 2017



Every year the National Student Survey (NSS) gives final year undergraduates the opportunity to share your views on your experience here at Imperial. By taking the survey you'll be helping prospective students make the right choices of where and what to study. Imperial College Union also uses your feedback to produce their annual Response to the NSS, which helps set priorities in their work with the College for the benefit of students.

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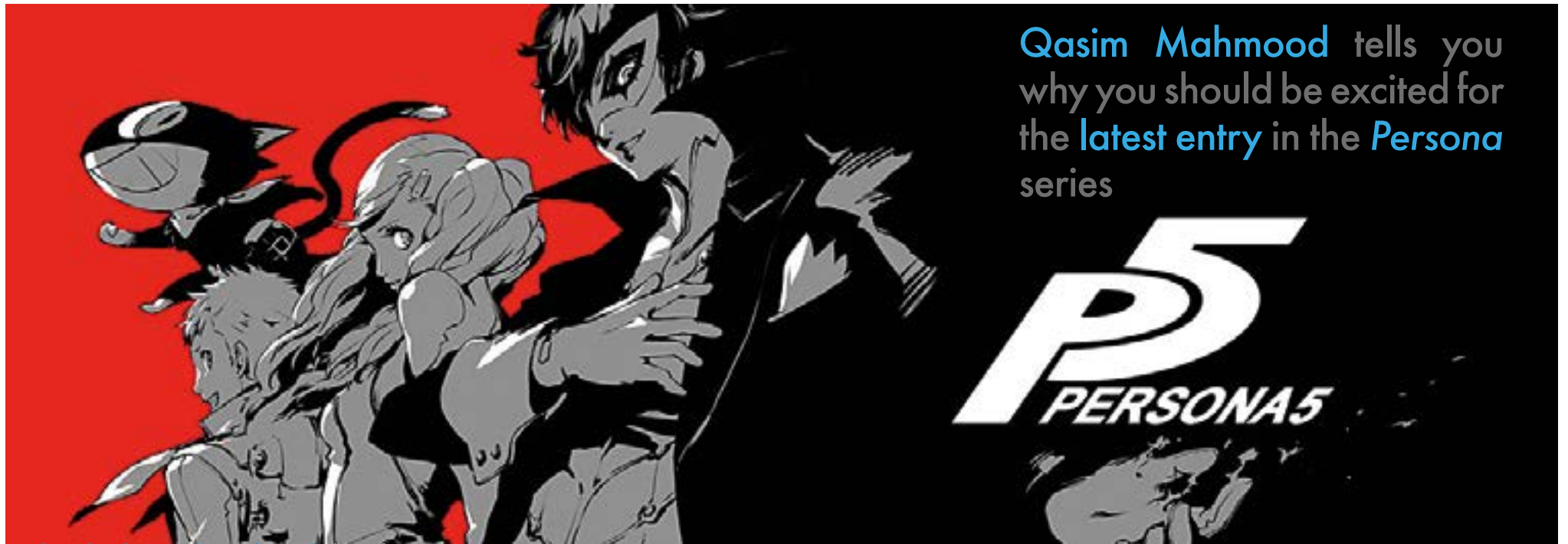
FRONTLINE

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Game spotlight | *Persona 5*



Students by day, vigilantes by night // Atlus

Qasim Mahmood tells you why you should be excited for the latest entry in the *Persona* series

There are very few games which I have absolute faith in. I was incredibly sceptical about both *Final Fantasy XV* and also *The Last Guardian*, which was my personal Game of the Year 2016; in fact, I was almost convinced at least one of them would be a massive train wreck. Even games like *Nioh* and *Nier: Automata*, both of which seem like they will be great, may not live up to expectations. However, I am convinced, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that *Persona 5* will be absolutely phenomenal. *Persona 5* is a turn-based role-playing game developed

// The *Persona* series has an interesting history, as they are, in fact, spin-off games of a larger franchise //

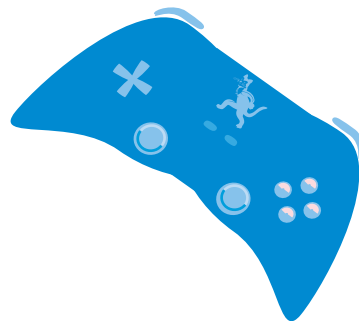
by Atlus and set in modern day Tokyo. The main character is transferred to a new school after being accused for assaulting a stalker.

However, he soon awakens a power: his titular Persona, a supernatural being brought to life as a manifestation of his personality and psyche. He and his friends all find themselves with Personas, and they form a vigilante group called the "Phantom Thieves" which they use to bring justice to those who deserve it.

The *Persona* series has an interesting history, as they are in fact spin-off games of a larger franchise. This franchise, *Shin Megami Tensei*, is extremely popular in Japan; the first instalment in the series was released in 1987 on the NES, and the series has only grown since then. The mainline games consist of *Megami Tensei* titles, and they spawned numerous spin-offs, including *Devil Summoner*, *Digital Devil Saga*, *Devil Survivor* and of course *Persona*, the largest and most successful spin-off of the franchise, which itself has spawned spin-off titles. There is little, if any, continuity between the games, though they do share certain elements such as gameplay mechanics, themes and settings.

Interestingly, *Persona 5* is actually the sixth mainline entry in the *Persona* franchise. The first few games have not

aged gracefully as *Persona 3* was where the series really hit its stride and changed up its formula for the better, which continued over to *Persona 4* and *Persona 5*. The games are an incredibly strange mix; during the day, you play as a schoolboy going about his daily life, going to school, interacting with his classmates, joining clubs and so on; but at night it becomes a



dungeon crawler where you hunt down demonic creatures and battle them using your Personas. This dichotomy seems strange, but the crux is that these two parts of the game depend on each other. As the Persona is based on the main character's psyche, then by forging bonds and relations with other people you increase the potential of your Persona and can unlock

new Personas. Every activity you do, be it interacting with friends, playing sports or even doing well in an exam, increases your stats and aids in the battles you will face later on.

Despite *Persona 3*, *4* and *5* sharing so many qualities, Atlus manages to make all three games feel incredibly different. All three games have their own distinctive colour; blue in *Persona 3*, yellow in *4* and red in *5*. These colours set the mood and main theme of the entire game; *Persona 3* is extremely dark and moody, as its main theme is death and rebirth; *Persona 4* on the other hand is joyful and its main theme is acceptance. *Persona 5* seems to be full of anger; its main theme is being freed from the shackles of society, and this is the driving force behind its main character.

Persona 5 is also oozing with style; every animation, menu and speech bubble has flair and a single unique aesthetic that looks absolutely gorgeous. There are no walls of text; everything pops and even the most mundane things, like the battle results screen, suddenly becomes very exciting. The gameplay remains solid with a

traditional turn-based combat system; enemies can be knocked down by exploiting their weaknesses, and if all

// Its main theme is being freed from the shackles of society //

enemies are knocked down, characters become able to perform 'All-Out Attacks', though now you can also convince other enemies to join you as a Persona.

Persona 5 is a huge leap forward for the series, especially given that the previous instalment was on the PS2. Despite the long wait and subsequent delay, it is finally launching in the west on the 4th of April 2017. The Japanese reviews are extremely positive, and I cannot wait for its release worldwide.



An immaculate conception?

Barrafina strikes again, causing **two food babies** to spring from nowhere with delights such as **croquetas**, **carabineros** and **milhojas**. Confused? Read on.

Christy Lam

Best friend in town? You just have to take them to one of the best restaurants in town and order three times your normal portion of food – and roll out of the restaurant with a six-month food baby hoping to ‘walk’ it off with a tube journey to the next.

So when my friend came down to London all the way from Durham (for a breather, she said), I got very excited, nearly as excited as those primary school days when I couldn't sleep before a field trip, and started preparing for her visit. The key was coming up with a list of restaurants to take her to. This was easy with our matching standards for good food. And with a few hours of discussions, we narrowed it down to (drum-roll please):

Barrafina! Barrafina is a mini-chain of tapas bars serving modern, authentic, Spanish tapas. Landing its first site in Soho in 2007, it has gained a cult following of hungry customers, reflected by the hour-long queues every day outside its doors, pages of heated reviews and a Michelin star. With the opening of its second branch on Adelaide Street in 2014 and its third brand on Drury Lane in 2015, its growth has been unstoppable, even under its no-reservation policy all through the years. If people

are still queuing up after ten-odd years, you have to admit this place must be good. Under our anxiety issues and shared hatred of queues, we dragged ourselves out of bed bright and early on a Sunday morning, making it to the door of their Adelaide Street branch a quarter-hour before the lunch session started. We were among the first to queue – perhaps the wintry winds and the January drizzle were off-putting to some.

After 15 minutes of waiting in anticipation, we entered (or happily skipped) through the glass doors into a brightly-lit, stylish room, and took our seats on the retro-looking red stools around a marble-topped bar. On the bar was their menus, with their tapas section on the left and various alcoholic beverages on the right. We were also presented with a chalkboard menu with their daily specials.

Following the hours of research in the form of scrolling through Instagram, I chanted out our order to the waiter behind the bar like a sorcerer, watching him key in the names after a slight nod. Our dishes were made into a list, thoughtfully sectioned so they would be served in 2's to a maximum of 3 at a time.

At Barrafina, all the waiters and chefs work behind the bar. We could see everything in action. I was amazed at how they worked in such an

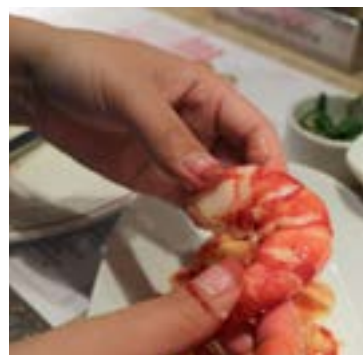


efficient, flawless, almost-relaxed manner despite the small space and during the busy lunch hour: waiters taking orders, serving food, chefs working at their respective stations.

Our first dish came as swiftly as the wind outside: a bite-sized fried oyster served on an oyster shell with

\\ The hot, sweet, salty juices from the oyster burst through the crunchy tempura skin in the mouth \\

a lime and chilli salsa. The hot, sweet, salty juices from the oyster burst through the crunchy tempura skin in the mouth. Next was the padron peppers – a staple dish at any tapas restaurant. These peppers came as a plate of bright green lanterns, gently fried and seasoned with sea salt. It wasn't greasy at all, and surprisingly sweet. Ending our first ‘course’ was



their signature crab croquetas – a pair of deep fried, golden brown crab balls with a creamy filling.

We let our taste buds savour the after-taste of the starters before our special order arrived: the carabineros prawn. This palm-sized prawn was in a deep red colour, still smoking hot from the pan. We took care, nearly burning the tips of our fingers, ripped off the head, sucked out the glorious juices, and greedily savoured the tender meat. It was a splurge for the wallet but a luxury for the senses.

The arroz de marisco landed on the table as we were licking the prawn juices off our fingers. Reminiscent of the traditional paella, the rice was like a mountain of gold nuggets with mussels, clams and squid studded amongst it. The rice exploded with the essence of the sea.

The stuffed courgette flower was a bit of a controversial dish between us. The flower, with the petals and the stalk, was the length of my hand, stuffed with goat's cheese and lightly fried. It was almost



like a dessert. The stalk was slightly sweet, the creamy, distinct flavours of the goat's cheese cut through, assisted by a drizzle of honey. If you love goat's cheese, you will fall in love with this dish.

Our last savoury order, the classic tortilla, arrived as a circular, inch-thick cake, created under the watchful eye of the chef who was constantly flipping the tortilla and testing the temperature with his hand. I understood the amount of care that was put into this dish as the golden yellow juices flowed out from the centre as we cut it in half – the egg was cooked to retain a slight liquidity, encasing the flavourful onion

\\ Reminiscent of the traditional paella, the rice was like a mountain of gold nuggets with mussels, clams and squid studded amongst it \\

broth inside.

It would be a crime to leave Barrafina without tasting their signature dessert – the milhojas. We added this to the list even knowing our food baby was entering the second trimester. The milhojas looked like a French millefeuille, but much better: two slices of airy, crispy puff pastry sandwiching a light vanilla cream and rich, indulgent, spiked custard. The combination of flavours and textures was miraculous.

Eight dishes, two girls with two food babies on a Sunday afternoon. What could be better?

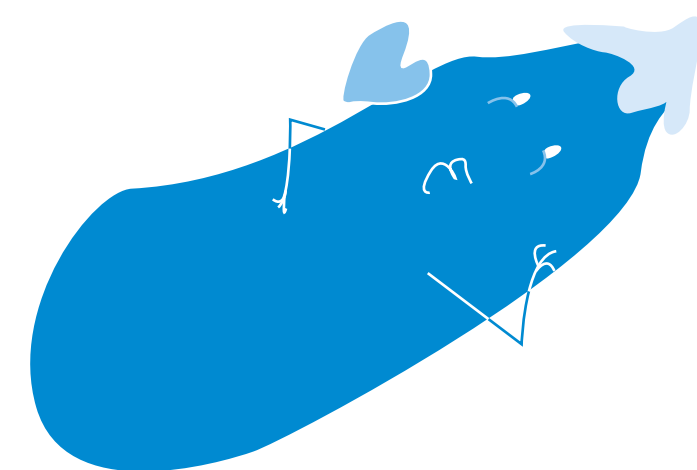
Aubergines and their many uses

Quite an **innocuous**, and yet surprising vegetable, the **humble aubergine** (or eggplant) is a **versatile** food for all manners of culinary pursuits, and others.

Yes, the aubergine – delicious in dips, smokey and rich, and yet equally at home in a spicy, lip-smacking curry, the aubergine is a vehicle for flavour without compare. I think my love affair began when I would take home small scoops of baba ghanouj, a levantine dip of smoked, roasted aubergine, with tahini and lemon, after school

from my local turkish deli. Savouring the creamy, salty and yet slightly bitter paste, I was transported away from deary England to an oasis, filled with travellers from across the desert, sharing tales and eating. What an innocent, and dull, life I lived.

In a family that ate very little meat, aubergines were used to great effect – they're a traditional northern Indian vegetable, and as such made their way into the



innumerable packed curry lunches that I faithfully took to school – not that I can complain, for those curries were the highlight of the week, compared to the Thermos of Dal from which I usually sipped. So you could say that

the aubergine and I have quite the history – and to this day, it is still one of my favourite vegetables.

And yet, some people are still so afraid of purple beast that they decry it as bitter, or seedy – allegations that are

so rarely true in this day and age. I would encourage you all to venture forth and try the recipe below with aubergines, as it really is very simple and much tastier than many of the kale and quinoa vegetarian dishes floating around.

If that doesn't take your fancy, however, I am reliably informed that aubergines also have a number of non-culinary uses, mainly as a sex toy for the enthusiastic experimenters who have gone well past the root vegetable size, and are looking for something with a bit more girth. I can't condone these uses, but I admire their efforts – some of the aubergines I've seen have been the size of my forearm. Whichever way you use your aubergine, I hope you enjoy it.

Melanzane alla Parmigiana

A classic Italian dish, our esteemed chef presents her **simple, student friendly version**. Cook it for that **hot vegetarian girl** on your corridor – who knows, she might **come back for seconds?**

Andrada Balmez

I still can remember my editor's voice, before Christmas, saying that I might want to try writing more meaty recipes: quick and easy, student friendly meat dishes. I can even see him smiling while he reads this (maybe I should say ‘Hello!’) but well, this is another meat-free edition.

But I have an excuse; I love all my vegetarian readers. And I have to think about them every time I write an article – finding subjects for you, pretentious reader, is

complicated to say the least. But next week we will all have the post-exams binge so you can start saving some money for that now.

\\ I love all my vegetarian readers – but finding a recipe is complicated to say the least! \\

Ingredients:

- 4 medium aubergines
- knob of butter
- 500 g mozzarella
- Tomato sauce
- 1 onion
- 1 clove garlic (the bigger, the better)
- 2 glugs of olive oil
- Fresh basil leaves (just in case you don't know that the edible part of the basil are the leaves – yes, I speak from my own experience: some people don't)
- 2 eggs
- Parmesan (depends on how big a cheese-fan you are)

Start by slicing the aubergines. They shouldn't be thicker than 0.5 cm and you can cut them either on the long side or the short one, getting nice round slices. Depending on how good your oven is – and if it's a hall oven probably not very good – you might need to pre-cook them a little bit.

You can either put them on a single layer on a tray and cook them for five minutes in a pre-heated oven at 175°C or you can slightly fry them in a frying pan – one minute each side will do.

Chop the onion and the garlic as fine as possible. Fry them in the olive oil until the onions are golden – be careful, you want them golden, not brown. Add the tomato sauce and stir on high heat for five minutes.

Use a pretty deep tray and spread the butter all over it, including the sides. Arrange a layer of aubergine slices in it. Cover with tomato sauce and add some mozzarella. Make sure to divide the sauce and the mozzarella – you want a nice spread between each layer of aubergines.

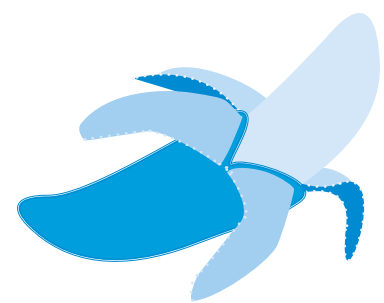
Repeat this step until you finish all the aubergines, sauce and mozzarella. If your tray is not very deep, you might not finish them;

remember that you want a bit of space left at the top of the tray so that nothing will overflow. Try to have a last layer of tomato sauce and mozzarella.

On the top, add some grated parmesan and the basil leaves – chopped or not, depending on your preference. Salt and pepper to taste (I add just the pepper and some chilli).

Bake it for 20-25 minutes at 175°. Five minutes before the end, pour over the beaten eggs and return to the hot oven – they make a nice creamy top.

Good job! Pat yourself on the back – you totally deserve this.



SEX JUST THE TIP

How not to fall in love with someone (from Metric)

Remember that one night stand in Metric? Time to deal with the fallout.

Lef Apostolakis & Tessa Davey

This is a follow up to our piece 'How to have a one night stand (in Metric)'. For those of you who somehow missed it, we provided a tried-and-tested plan of action designed to get you laid after a night in Metric. This plan was meant to get you in and out without leaving any trace. But expectedly, you failed. We know that some of you followed our 'foolproof' guidance, but now you're starting to be concerned that you may be feeling something more than just carnal desire. Call us jaded, but we think that falling in love is overrated. There's nothing like a bad case of The Feels to hold you back when you should be writing that coursework or revising for your finals. We don't think the expense, time sink, and eventual inevitable heartbreak is worth it, so here's a handy guide to not falling in love with your one night stand.

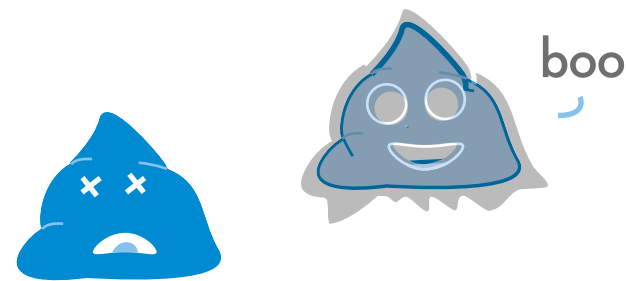
It wasn't a one night stand

So you had your one night stand, but clearly you fucked up along the way because you're still in contact. Stop, before this goes too far. Put your phone down and think about what you're doing. Avoid excessive texting. Communication should be solely for organising sex. You're literally just here for the orgasms. And if they're being thirsty and texting you all the time, don't reply right away. You're not there to meet their every need for validation. Give them your therapist's number. Or mine. Mine is great. We slept together last August and we never fell in love. He's a professional. You can be one too.

Dehumanise them

They're just a piece of meat. Don't save their number. That would imply commitment. So what if now you know their name, if you do need to save it for whatever reason, don't use their real name. Instead, use a code name, or a vague description of the circumstance in which you met, for instance, "Halloween ACC #2".

2



Just say no (to emotional blackmail)

You've successfully booty called them. Do not be convinced to have unsafe sex. It's just a trap, and they just want to be exclusive with you after they pass on whatever niche strain of HPV they're carrying. Sexual exclusivity is just a pretence, what they really want is emotional exclusivity and the corresponding emotional blackmail that comes along with it.

4

Metric comes first

So, you've arranged to see them again. Don't cancel plans to see them. You have your life, banging them is a pleasant extra. Like guac on your burrito, but it doesn't cost 75p. You do it after you've done whatever else you were doing, or on Sundays when you'd just be lying in bed watching TV anyway (and by that we obviously mean masturbating).

3

Netflix and chill?

There's no 'us' in 'friends with benefits'

Make sure you bring up your fear of commitment and your complete inability to form permanent bonds with humans, not just the first time you meet up with them, but every time you meet up with them. This manages their expectations, and stops them falling in love with you. There is a possibility that this will backfire. (Did I mention I'm in love with my therapist?) There is a high proportion of your sex-friends who will just want you more, by virtue of not being able to have you. (But it's cool, we're just friends. I don't mind. Honestly.) Play by ear, and proceed with caution.

5

Always pack condoms

There's no D in friendship

So you're spending three nights a week at their place. Don't forget though, you're not there to make friends. Steal the milk, make snarky comments about the decor, and never flush the toilet (only if you're doing a number one, if you don't flush a number two, you're an animal and as a serious high-profile publication we can't be associated with you). And don't introduce them to your friends. If you happen to run into them, immediately pretend to answer your phone. "WHAT?! MY DOG IS ON FIRE?!" or similar will do the trick nicely. Now run away. That's good. This is why you've been hitting the gym all year. That cardio's doing you proud. If you can't make an excuse, do not refer to the time you spend together as anything other than hanging out. Yep, just hanging out. Nothing suspicious going on here. Make sure you make it explicit that you're just hanging out. You may need to repeat this a few times so that people really know.

6

No sleepovers

Okay so you've failed at this one already, but you can start fixing it now. You get what you want, and then you get the hell out of there. Okay, we understand. They live in Acton, you live in Shepherd's Bush, it's cold outside this time of year. If they live more than 3km away, you're going to be inclined to stay. You just had sex, no matter how short it was, so you're probably feeling a bit fatigued. Stay there but DON'T leave a toothbrush. You leave no trace, like a ghost shit. (Where did it go?! I heard the splash!)

STOP RIGHT NOW

7

You're nobody's snugglebunny

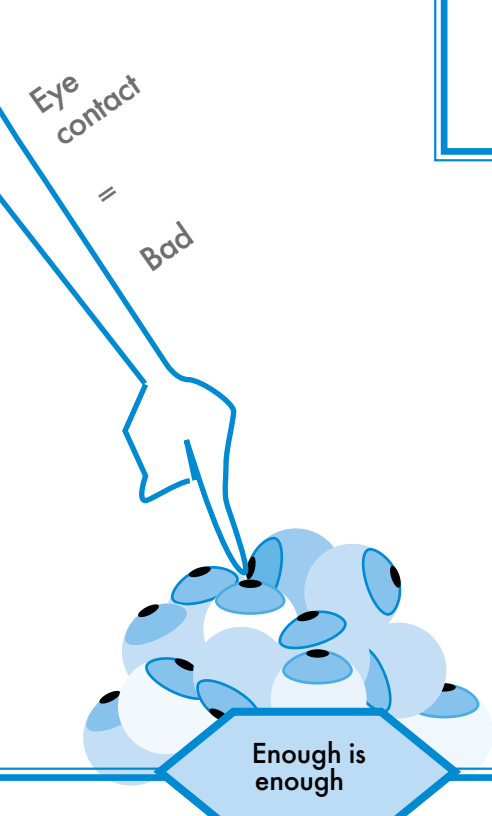
Cuddling is okay, but only as long as it feels good. Don't put up with Dead Arm Syndrome - you're here for you, not for them. It's still "me-time", even if you're spending it with someone else. Avoid affectionate nicknames. Don't by any means call them babe or honey. Do call them dude, man, or pal, regardless of gender. Pet names are the first step to emotional attachment, and after emotional attachment comes codependence, and we all know where that leads. Prison.

8

Avoid prolonged eye contact

As it is commonly known, gazing into someone's eyes for longer than five minutes (cumulative) means you'll fall in love with them. It's like your annual radiation dose, once you've reached your max, you need to end it. Immediately. You know you're in deep shit once you know your fuck buddy's eye colour. It's also common knowledge that during prolonged eye contact sessions, you lose control of your mouth, and are liable to blurt out something like, "I really like spending time with you", or, God forbid, the L word (and we don't mean lesbian). If you find them about to say something sappy, simply place your finger on their lips. "Shhhhhh..."

9



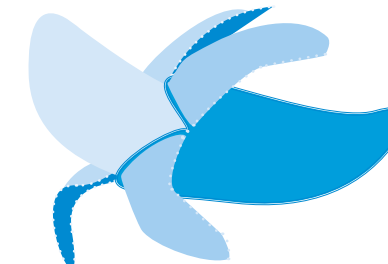
So you fucked up. You've been dating for a month and you didn't have a clue.

You realised because you were just grabbing a post-coital snack in the outside world (risky), and you ran into their friends. For some reason, they ask how long you've been seeing each other. HOW DID THEY KNOW? Was it something you said or did in the moment? Did you refer to them as babe? Or has your sex-friend been spilling the beans? Was this all planned? Maybe this wasn't a chance encounter! You're getting paranoid. You're sweating. All of these thoughts occur in your brain in a millisecond.

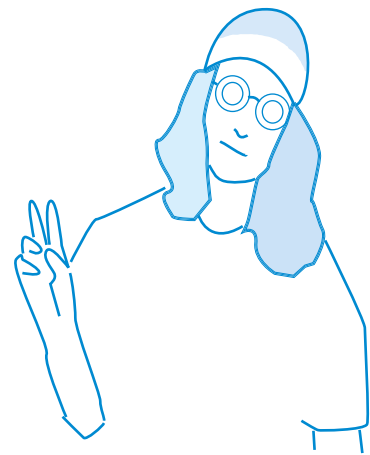
10

This is your own fault

Scenario 1: Abort mission Before you have a chance to think, you blurt out, "We've been hanging out for a week! Just hanging out. HANGING OUT!" You turn your head, only to witness the twinkling light of hope depart from your sex-friend's eyes. You know it's over. Damage control success? Congrats.



Scenario 2: Go all in You hear your sex friend say, "we've been seeing each other for a while," and for some reason, this doesn't make you panic. Your chest fills up with this fuzziness. Are you having a heart attack? No, it's lurrrrve. This sudden surge of emotion is getting you hard. Is that a rocket in your pocket? NO! It's a diamond ring! Boom. Wait, what? How? You find yourself on one knee. Maybe it was a heart attack and now you're just keeling over. You decide to just go with it and propose. Damage control... success? Congrats.



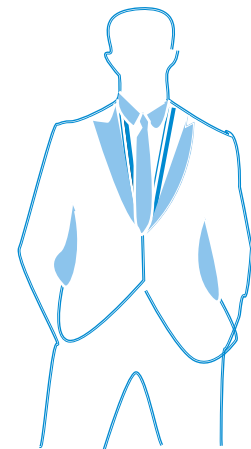
Find your safe space where your politics actually work

Jonathan Masters is looking ahead to when we're all pleasantly dead

VOS

When you're feeling down, laugh at others who have it worse

Monathan Jasters is thankful that he's the superior race



The sexist election of Donald Trump. The Brexit decision of the UK to leave the European Union. The fact that there is a minuscule amount of animal fat in the new five pound notes. All of these events brought the earth closer to its eventual apocalypse and it is precisely in times like this where we need to acknowledge the fact that better times are just around the corner.

My first thing is to surround myself with comical pictures of cats, of course making sure that the cats are of consensual age, as I have gotten into trouble before with various members of PETA for the possession of a few indecent photos of kittens. In order to distinguish yourself from the basic bitch stereotypes of Imperial (You know the ones. The girls that wear the green coats with the fur hoods, the ones who constantly share Humans of New York posts, and who always invite you to go to B@1s because it's "2for1") you must, of course, make sure that they're printed on recycled paper and that the inks contain no traces of any animal products. Now I'm just thinking of those stupid sexy cats. God.

In order to distract myself from the eventual implosion of the western political system, I have found this amazing way of changing politics. It's not getting involved in politics and trying to change things for the better as, of course, that would be too much effort. Instead I have found a way where lefty-politics actually works and manages to provide a stable economy - I have

started to take magic mushrooms. In this magical world, climate change is actually recognised as a potential problem, all old people are taken out and shot to prevent them from slowing the advancement of progressive politics, and we finally have a trans-leader in both 10 Downing Street and the White House.

We can also look forward to the fact that soon we will all drown and die as a result of the polar ice caps melting and causing the whole of life on Earth to become submerged. Eventually after every greedy human corpse and animal skeleton has decomposed, after a few million years we will be ready to restart and make a greater planet for everyone. There will also be less lube so a lot of plusses.

You know the times when it seems as though the world is constantly trying to bring you down, and you just want to retreat back into your house and not interact with anyone? Well I have had those times before and it is not easy to pick yourself up and continue. Just last Monday, my chef stupidly served my Kobe beef steak medium rare when he knows I like it bloodier than a Sunday in Derry - Mondays right?! Well of course we all need strategies to perk our moods up and you should look no further than my home-brewed remedies that are guaranteed to instantly return you back to full form.

First of all I recommend that you decide to support a political cause that will inevitably achieve a degree of success in the new year. As you will already be aware, the left is composed of known homosexuals and colluding communists (often the same thing) and as a result, they will not be having any success in the new year (thank God). One up and coming party I can see having a lot of success in the near future is the National Socialist German Worker's Party, and I believe there is a lot that can be incorporated from these bright upstarts into the New Republican Party - perhaps putting some sort of bright visible icons on minorities that we don't trust. The main thing that is keeping me going through this week of disappointments such as Chelsea Manning getting released (she or he - make a decision please) is the idea of the inauguration party I am hosting at

the end of this week. I've made a whole assortment of themed foods and I even managed to get a Bruce Springsteen cover band to play at it, due to a last minute cancellation. I will be serving journalists on a stick, grab 'em by the pussy pies, and she doesn't have enough stamina smoked salmon.

It is also worth reflecting (I think that's a queer word originally) on the fact that other people around the world have it far worse than you. Whenever I stop to consider this fact, it instantly puts a spring in my step - think about how there are women who won't be able to get abortions in certain states due to a lack of funding for Planned Parenthood - hilarious! There are still ethnic minorities who are afraid to approach the police due to relentless violence - lol not me! White is right! Syria is still under siege and the entirety of the West no longer cares about whether or not they receive help - less terrorists over here! Just remember that if it ever seems as though things are really bad, it's probably because you used to touch yourself.



CRISIS

Chris

Dear Xhris,

I have a drinking problem. Like right now. I'm drunk and I need help immedfately. I went out to Sports Night and got plasterd. I only had like six drinks. One vodka coke. One vodka redbol. One more vodka coke. No wait my mate John bought a round of Jagerbombs. Ok so one vodka coke. Then I got a round of tequeuela. Then I tried to mount the Union Bar. Then all I remember is white light. Then a vodka coke. Then a pink vodka coke. I think that last one was a double, but I'm counting it as one. So yeah. Six drinks. Now I'm not sure when I stuck my tongue down my mate John's throat, but I'm sure that I liked it and now I'm really confused cause I only watched gay porn once like as a joke and I had mixed feelings.

Anyway I'm homo now and my housemate just came in the kitchen and yelled at me cause I have been reading out loud everything I've been writing and its like very late and she was sleeping I think.

Pls help.

Yours faithgullu

John Smith (my real name I swear)

Dear John,

Wow. Just wow. I haven't received a letter like this since... well I've never actually received anything like this. Not a letter. Not an email. Not a call. I once got a series of drunk texts from an ex which went into a weird tangent about body hair (not even my body hair I don't think, just the concept of body hair and how ridiculous it is, and aren't mammals just a silly concept) but nothing quite like this.

Anyway as I was saying, yes, you definitely have a drinking problem. I mean unless you actually are terrible at maths, you certainly lost count of how many drinks you had... and there's no such thing as a pink vodka coke.

You probably also have a mild concussion. And you might wake up with a sexual assault case against you tomorrow morning, depending on how happy your mate John is with



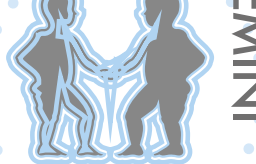









the whole 'tongue down his throat' situation. Actually you probably have a concussion so try not to sleep. Though considering you won't get to read this till Friday I guess this advice is not going to be particularly useful.

Back to useful advice: Do start going out with a sharpie so that you can tally drinks on your arm (though it might be better to tally them on your forehead so that your level of drunkenness can be easily conveyed to bar staff). Do start wearing t-shirts with homoerotic slogans such as "I'm not gay but a tenner's a tenner". This will give your peers fair warning and might help you come to terms with your budding sexuality. Finally, do get yourself a maths tutor.

You are in God's hands now.

Big luv, Chris xxxx

HOROSCOPES

 ARIES This week you're finally free of exams, until the next lab report that is. And then the next deliverable. Oh fuck it.	 TAURUS This week you're so obsessed with getting onto Memeperial you accidentally submit some dank memes into Turnitin. Unsurprisingly you get flagged for plagiarism.	 GEMINI This week you're Theresa May. You decide you're fed up of a red, white and blue Brexit and instead want a {Insert literally any adjective here} Brexit. It's what the people want after all.	 CANCER This week you're selected to play at the Presidential Inauguration. Sure, your only talent is drunkenly slurring Bohemian Rhapsody in Metric but you're the best they can find.	 LEO This week you're the Union Bar and you're 60 years old. We can only imagine the atrocities you have witnessed. We are truly sorry.	 VIRGO This week you're still on track to finish Dry January. Go you! Slightly less impressive invited you for drinks anywhere. For the whole month.
 LIBRA This week you're the Piccadilly Circus screens and aren't going to be turned on again until autumn. Kinda like my sex life.	 SCORPIO This week you're the moth that's been named after Donald Trump. Ironically, unlike your namesake, you're actually attracted to things that are bright.	 SAGITTARIUS This week you're still trying to get onto Memeperial. You take lessons in photoshop. You try to become more edgy. But it's all in vain, mememasters are born not made.	 CAPRICORN This week your political Facebook rants reach fever pitch with the POTUS inauguration and Brexit talks. Except you're not shouting into an echo chamber, you're shouting into a void. Cos nobody cares.	 AQUARIUS This week you realise the cause of the library cooling renovations is down to a FELIX petition. We did it guys, we're the voice of the students!	 PISCES This week you're freezing as you can't afford heating. Good news though, global temperatures mean soon you'll be basking in tropical climates all year round. Or you'll be under two feet of water...

FRIDAY 20 JANUARY



THE UNION BAR
est. 1957

60th Birthday Party

Saturday 21 January
from 17:30-02:00

The Union Bar
Where else would it be?

imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on




GIN MASTER CLASS

Become a gin connoisseur, learn all about the marvellous tipples history, and try our drinks. We're celebrating our new gins, and we want you to join us.

£6.50 per tickets, or four for only £20.00

Friday 27 January, 19:00

imperialcollegeunion.org/whats-on



Venue	Regular Events	Time	Day
The Union Bar	The Union Bar's 60th Birthday	17:30 - 02:00	Saturday 21 January
Metric & FiveSixEight	iPop at the Movies	20:00 - 02:00	Friday 20 January
Metric & FiveSixEight	Common People	20:00 - 02:00	Friday 27 January
FiveSixEight	Super Quiz	20:00 - 22:00	Every Tuesday
Metric	Cocktail Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Tuesday
Metric & FiveSixEight	CSP Wednesday	19:00 - 01:00	Every Wednesday
h-bar	Pub Quiz	19:00 - 21:00	2nd & 4th Thursday
h-bar	PGI Friday	19:00 - 00:00	Every Friday
Reynolds	Quiz Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Monday
Reynolds	Board Games & Film Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Tuesday
Reynolds	Sports Night	18:00 onwards	Every Wednesday
Reynolds	Pizza Night	18:00 - 23:00	Every Thursday
The Foundry	Quiz Night	19:30 - 22:00	Every Thursday
The Foundry	Quiz Night	19:30 - 22:00	1st & 3rd Thursday
The Foundry	Karaoke Night	20:00 - 23:30	2nd & 4th Friday



Time to become Immortal

Apparently one of the most hotly anticipated games of the NFL season happened a couple of days ago. Did you know? I certainly didn't, but it was played between two giants of the game to decide who would progress for a chance at the Super Bowl. No, not a huge piece of crockery for mammoth breakfast portions, but the most important date in the American football calendar. In pure American style the Super Bowl is an event of epic proportions, with the likes of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Beyoncé, The Who and Bruce Springsteen gracing the famous half-time extravaganzas. Before I even get into my attempt at taking this on, I'm already excited by a sport whose associated entertainment dwarfs the Monmouth Male Voice Choir who sang at the Six Nations last year (still brilliant I hasten to add).

I've played a number of sports in my time, but I've never really taken to the great American pastimes. Of course I played Rounders at school (close enough to Baseball) and being tall meant I could stand in front of a Basketball hoop with my arms held up with reasonable success, but having Welsh in-laws gives me loyalty to Rugby. Watching American Football always seemed so slow and simple: short plays culminating in "go-fetch", constant breaks and dramatized field goals. But I think it's fair to say, and you can quote me on this, I was wrong.

Sunday morning and I'm stood outside the Union holding borrowed shoulder pads and a helmet alongside our resident pig-skin team, the Imperial Immortals. The kit, provided for all members, makes me look far bigger and stronger than I am, but

I'll accept this as a momentary butch-boost. Under the stoic gaze of Prince Albert, training starts with some basic stretches. The camaraderie and encouragement are evident from the start, everyone high-fiving after each exercise. No boundaries exist between hardened members and amateurs, everyone was welcome and everyone was included. I'm introduced to the coach who is more than happy to integrate me in to the main training session even though I know next to nothing about what's going on. If I need to take a balanced view for fairness, I did not enjoy the running and was slightly left behind but that is

**\\ The camaraderie and encouragement were evident from the start – everyone was welcome and everyone was included **

exercises specific to their role. The coaches are clearly experienced and dedicated to improving the team's performance, having drafted new tactics over the holidays. Constant repetition of drills ensure each player understands their job to the letter. I've been grouped with the

code (not the official name, I've coined this particular term) is made up of numbers and words which indicate to each member of the team the strategy for this particular play. Where they need to run, who is tackling who and what part of the body they need to scratch next. OK, that last one is slightly exaggerated but trust me, it could easily be integrated and the opposition would be suitably confused. You'll have heard it before on any film featuring American Football but there is no agreed format. Each team has their own language and by the end of the session, your mother tongue will be less fluent in comparison. But

to work as a team. In that stifling helmet you cannot always see the entire picture, instead relying on everyone knowing their role perfectly.

Onto the plays. I'm asked to stand in as a blocker whilst the rest of the team practice their movements. This resulted in the coach giving me the best life advice I've ever received: "Crouch down, head up and when signalled move forward with a small waddle". And I did. Brilliantly. I'm being serious. Not a single opponent made it past me. The fact that we faced an imaginary foe makes it no less impressive. And knowing where to pretend block was pretty damn hard. It was made much easier by those next to me in line always directing and encouraging. I felt part of the team and even developed a hankering to try different field positions.

I take some time out of my budding tackling career to talk to some of the guys who were injured but still turned up, yet another sign of their commitment. I get the impression they miss being on the field, coming up with any excuse to be part of the session. This is a sport full to the brim with positive energy, not just on the pitch but off it too with plenty of socials and the upcoming Super Bowl party in the Union on February 5th.

If you're looking for a team sport with opportunities for all new-comers, I encourage you to take the first-session-free offer and become Immortal. Despite dropping down from the Premier League last season, they have recorded the highest number of points (and over best points difference) and have won three on the bounce.

Head on over to their Facebook page to find out more: facebook.com/ImmortalsAFC.



probably the extra pastry I consumed that morning.

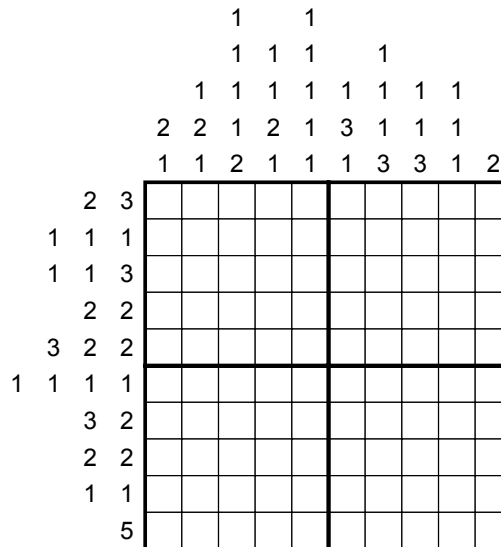
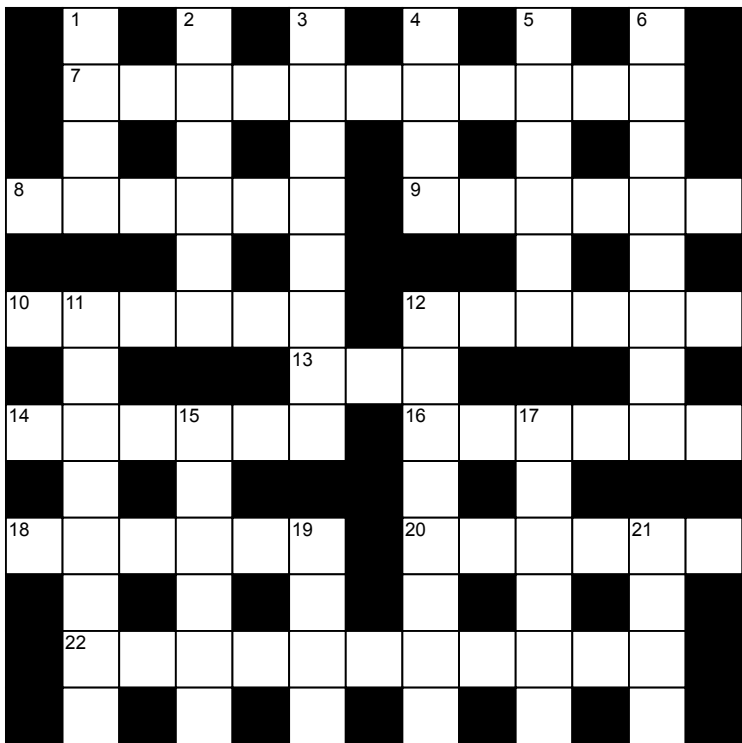
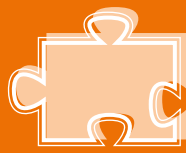
Now warmed up, we are split into Offense and Defence, where each part of the team has separate, targeted training. Today's session is slightly different, as these groups are usually split further into field positions where each player is given

wide receivers where we train in both running patterns and catching awkward passes (4 out of 5 isn't bad) and the coach is always constructive, giving tips on how to improve.

In light of the new proposed tactics, we move back with the rest of the offense to practice plays described by what I now call 'The Code'. This

the bottom line is this, the supposedly random collection of numbers and words coalesce into precise instructions for the entire team. My previous description of this sport certainly comes under scrutiny, as each player has a specific tactic determined by the code, which they must remember and carry out in order

felix ... PUZZLES



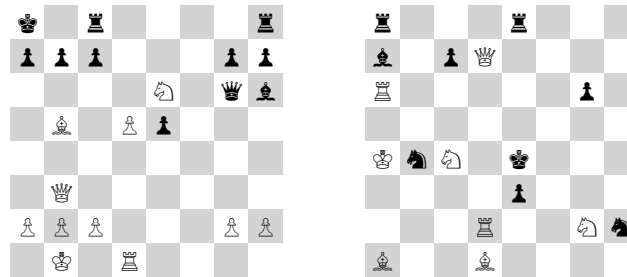
Nonogram. The numbers show, in order, the length of blocks to be filled along that row/column. Each block must be separated by at least one empty cell.

Across

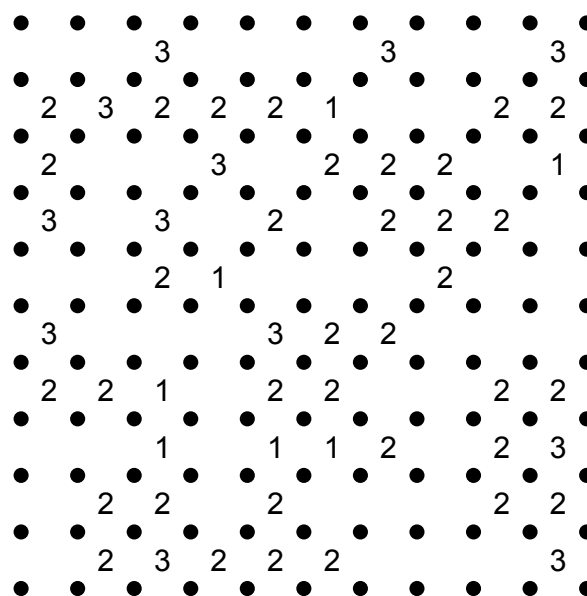
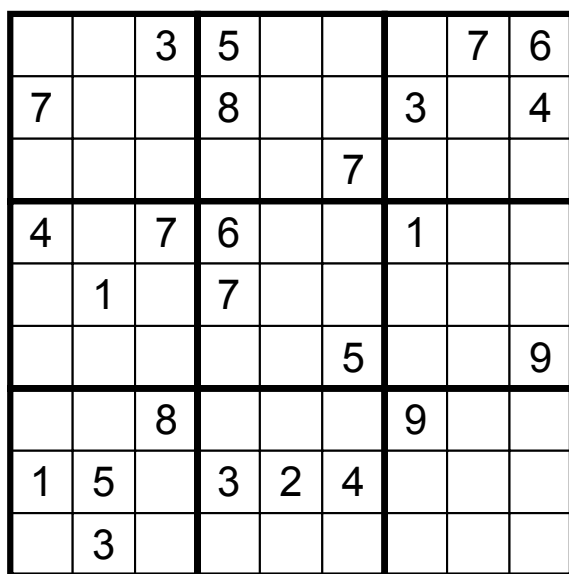
- 7. Puppets on strings (11)
- 8. Impart knowledge (6)
- 9. Petition to a deity (6)
- 10. Deteriorate (6)
- 12. Cunning (6)
- 13. Atmosphere (3)
- 14. Robbery at sea (6)
- 16. Overindulgence (6)
- 18. Yearly (6)
- 20. Innate (6)
- 22. Star-gazers (11)

Down

- 1. Portent (4)
- 2. Pointer (6)
- 3. Scottish New Year celebration (8)
- 4. Profound (4)
- 5. Capital of Canada (6)
- 6. Fire-resistant mineral (8)
- 11. Eastern (8)
- 12. One to whom money is owed (8)
- 15. Grown-ups (6)
- 17. It's built by a spider (6)
- 19. Big cat (4)
- 21. Hazard (4)



Forced checkmate in 4 moves (left) and 2 moves (right). White to move first in both problems.



FUCWIT

Leaderboard

The Czechmates	206
Anonymous	205
NSNO	199
Willie Rush	199
Schrödingers Cat Strikes Back	186
Sneezing Pandas	140
Guinea Pigs	104
CEP MSC	96
Les Nuls	96
The Gravitons	82
TIA	74
Puzzled	62
Grilled Cheese Inc.	59
Yellow Fever	53
Chemical Brethren	46
Kenny Wangler, Cunnyfangler	41
The Ultimate Fucwit	38
Big Mahmoud	36
Grand Day in Cullercoats	25
RollEEEE	25
Lube Lords	23
Bananana	20
THE Crystallographer	20
The Mystical Spankyman	20
Beasts	18
Les Baguettes	18
The Anti-Gravity Acorns	18
Poulet	15
Hillary Killed Harambe	14
The Couple on the Train	14
Computer Magic	12
G. Hackman	10
Salmon ft. Kanye	9
Pollux	7
Too gay 2 f(x)	6
Crosswordy McCrosswordface	5
Singed Potato	4
TP-LINK_M5_B057AD	4
Palo and Hippo!	3
Fanny Schmeller	2

Points Available

Crossword	6
Nonogram	3
Chess	6
Slitherlink	3
Sudoku	3

Solutions



Send in your solutions to fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk before midday Wednesday to get your score added to our leaderboard. Make sure you include the name/team name that you'd like us to use!

Slitherlink. Draw a single, continuous loop through adjacent points such that the number in each cell has that many borders filled. Each point should be connected to two or no other points.

