



Felix

The Student Newspaper of Imperial College London



EDITORIAL

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Felix Office
Beit Quad, Prince Consort
Road
London, SW7 2BB

Tel: 020 79548072
Email: felix@ic.ac.uk

felixonline.co.uk
@feliximperial

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Front Cover // Taja Strle, Felix

In-Silo Decision Making

I think I've talked about this before, but I see no implication of it changing – so time to break it down again.

There's a fundamental flaw in the way the College seems to make decisions. Specifically, the issue is that decisions are made in very limited 'silos'. Different areas of the College's operation are divvied up and the responsibility for them is given to particular areas or divisions. So, for example, the halls rent renegotiations are led by Campus Services with the oversight of senior members of the College such as the CFO or the Provost.

This is fine. This is efficiency. We had a discussion in the Felix office this week about 'min-maxing', or running to optimal efficiency in everything you do. It's not always positive, but in the case of business, there's a lot to be said for that approach. This is efficient and expedient for quick decision-making.

The problems come when the silos don't talk to each other and make their decisions in a complete vacuum. That's when quick decisions are made, but not good ones – because every decision has ramifications beyond just the limited remit in which they are being made.

I'm going to take the halls rent example again. The rent prices are being increased significantly. This is according to what the College has described as a "break-even" model, in which revenue is matched to cost, and what the Union has described as not actually being break-even. Wherever you fall in that debate, the end result is rents hitting around £300 per week in South Kensington within

the next five or so years. It's hitting market rate, if not possibly over.

This is very high. Significantly above what most students can afford with just their maintenance loan. Significantly above even what many international students could afford. I don't think it is controversial to say that this will price many poor prospective students out of halls.

Let's put it this way, anecdotally: I, who joined in 2014, would almost certainly reject my Imperial offer if I were applying now, purely on the financial level. I worked between 20 and 45 hours a week every week at the bars while being a hall senior during part of my degree, just to get through. Adding another 5 or 10 hours per week atop that, as I'd have to do now, just wouldn't be feasible.

This decision was made by the financial side of the College just a couple of months after the Office for Students, the regulator for English universities, had essentially mandated them to increase the number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds because those numbers were so low.

To quote from the DPW's blog, "according to the plan, considering Undergraduate home student admissions, there is a gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 of 24.8% and

POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 by 54.2%." For reference, IMD and POLAR4 are essentially indices of deprivation and higher education participation respectively, with Q1 and Q5 being the lowest and highest quintiles.

From the College's Access to Participation Plan, a five-year plan for remedying this problem, 55% of students here are from the top quintile of POLAR4.

As a personal opinion: those numbers are pretty shocking.

And this is just weeks after the Union has established a Working Class officer for the same reason – hence the DPW's blog quote above.

Now think: can you even imagine what the people responsible for fixing that are feeling in the light of these rent debates and decisions? Would that not just be the most frustrating thing in the world? I can't speak for them – and if you are a member of staff working on this, please do contact me with your thoughts off-the-record – but it's just so obviously the College as an institution chasing two totally misaligned goals.

I don't feel like these two groups of people are talking. I don't see how they can be. The fact that a decision got a bigger Excel spreadsheet number is great for finance, but that it utterly screwed over another major goal of the College doesn't seem to be a factor in determining whether that was a good call.

It's not the only case of in-silo decision making. It's something that's popped up in quite a few News articles and investigations this year. And it's making things very difficult for many people, as different areas of the College push-and-pull on the same issue, trying to influence it in different directions for their own goals and purposes. That, then, destroys efficiency.

I would argue that this is partly the role of the Strategies – to provide a unified goal for different divisions of the College to base their decision-making on. That's great. But what's better is having a decision-making structure that involves people from multiple areas, with multiple goals, having an

input at an early stage. Decisions should not be made so unilaterally in an organisation with such a diverse range of pressures and requirements.

That's important to note. None of this is easy. A university has a very difficult job of keeping itself solvent, managing relationships with various stakeholders internal and external, and looking after its students. A corporation doesn't have that problem, and neither does a school. It's a unique position to be in, especially when confronted with colossal threats like Brexit. There's no "handbook" for that, no pocket guide, and fundamentally people are often doing the best they can.

So don't get me wrong – I think this can read as critical. In a way, it is – I am saying that the decisions being made are bad, I suppose. Or certainly have been made with a limited scope in mind. But the issue doesn't really lie on individuals, it lies in decision-making structures that have risen organically and before most of the senior people in the College were even in their roles. It's not a malicious thing, or even a question of incompetence.

If anything, it's a culture change that needs to happen. But rolling that out is an enormous challenge.

We can see approaches to this being developed on the departmental level – explorations of sharing space between departments, led by Chris Banks, for example. There is work on this. But it needs to be recognised as a serious problem and serious work needs to be done to roll it out across every level of College.



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NEWS

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

College to Override Union Council Rejection of Halls Rent Proposal

The College will continue with their final proposal for halls rent prices, despite the Union Council's third rejection of the model in an 'Emergency Meeting'. In response, they have begun an 'Imperial Cut the Rent' campaign

NEWS

Henry Alman

Editor-in-Chief

The College has decided to proceed with a financial model for halls rent prices over the next five years, in spite of Union Council voting once again to reject the model for raising prices beyond what they considered affordable.

The final model is a modified version of the original proposal delivered in early December, but with a new £3 million reduction spread over 5 years. £2 million of the reduction would equate to the second proposal given in January – which would see prices increase by 5.5% per year for three years then 2.5% for the remaining two. The remaining £1 million will be distributed across the 5 years in an unconfirmed way.

This new proposal was delivered to the Union's representatives in the negotiation – the President and Deputy President (Welfare) – just

“This new proposal was delivered to the Union's representatives just a few hours before the Council”

a few hours before the 'Emergency Meeting' of the Union Council on Tuesday 4th February, and overrode a tentative agreement set up just the previous day with College's Campus Services.

The Union Council additionally rejected this new model, despite the reduction, because the underlying “break-even” financial model – which they have heavily criticised and claim is not truly “break even” – remains the same. Additionally, they cited a lack of transparency on the College's behalf, as multiple requested documents have not been delivered.

They offered this statement on behalf of Union Council:

“The Union believes that first year halls of residence are a crucial part of the student experience and, as such, should be genuinely affordable for all. College should engage the Union in meaningful transparent negotiation surrounding halls prices including the financial model and potential subsidy. As part of this, College should be forthcoming with all requested information to allow the Union to make informed decisions. Negotiations to date have not met these criteria and the proposed prices are not genuinely affordable.”

After voting to reject the proposal, the Council voted to establish an 'Imperial Cut the Rent' campaign, which will be student-led and run by a committee comprising its members, and took indicative (in other words, non-binding) votes on

whether or not to endorse a spectrum of various options for further action – which had been collated at an open but non-mandatory meeting the previous week.

The actions which passed included lobbying the College and individual members of the College, creating publicity materials and social media campaigns – including some targeted at prospective students - and seeking external support, including approaching national press.

Two more drastic measures were also endorsed: firstly, exploring options for conducting

“After rejecting, the Council voted to establish a student-led 'Imperial Cut the Rent' campaign”

rent strikes in the future; and secondly, establishing a network of Union-vetted private landlords who can offer alternative accommodation to halls.

The vote for this latter option was a controversial one – out of 31 attending members, nine voted in favour, four voted against, and the rest abstained, meaning the vote passed predominantly due to abstentions.

Options that were discussed but not voted on include officially



The new Kemp Porter hall opening next year began the negotiation // Thomas Angus

endorsing demonstrations or sit-ins – on the grounds that these are reactive measures that any campaign would not need Union support or endorsement. Furthermore, a campaign encouraging students to give low NSS scores was rejected due to academic representatives on the Council stating that it would damage relationships with departments, within which there are many supporters of lower rents, and additionally could reduce the usefulness of NSS scores in identifying departmental

problems.

The 'Emergency Meeting' – an extra one not scheduled at the start of the year – was set up to discuss the proposals, and to discuss potential further actions. The latter discussion had been postponed following the previous Council meeting two weeks prior, due to many Council members feeling uncomfortable with having to discuss potential further actions without much notice.

Several additionally stated that they felt uncomfortable making

decisions in the Emergency Meeting, having only seen the new proposal and the options for further action at the beginning of the meeting. Their concerns have been addressed in the Constituent Union section of Felix this week. Additionally, the Union President, Abhijay Sood, has contributed to the Comment section this week, addressing various aspects of the negotiations.

The College did not offer a statement.

NEWS

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Jacob Rees-Mogg, Q&A and Raffle

Imperial Conservative Society invited Jacob Rees-Mogg to a Q&A and a raffle.

NEWS

Charles Titmuss

Deputy Editor

This week Felix attended the Q & A and raffle with Jacob Rees-Mogg on Tuesday the 4th of February, organised by the Conservative Society of Imperial College London. The event attracted over 200 students, filling up the rows of CAGB 200 in a manner not usually seen at a lecture theatre for Mechanical Engineering students. Though most attendees were Imperial students, there were some Imperial staff and external visitors present as well. The event ended with a group photo-op of the audience members with Rees-Mogg.

Prior to Rees-Mogg's arrival, Felix had the chance to interview some members of the audience. We asked attendees what party they voted for in the last election, how active they were politically, their thoughts on Rees-Mogg, and their view of STEM-centric Imperial as a space for political discussion. The responses we received are by no means comprehensive, but they are nonetheless informative. Unsurprisingly, majority of interviewees voted Conservative in the last election, though many did not vote for Johnson in the leadership election. Most interviewees were politically active to some extent, either as a member of a political Party, or at least engaged enough to vote in leadership elections and keep up with current political affairs.

Responses tell us that people do not think of Imperial as a particularly

political environment, though they also say this doesn't mean Imperial people are politically abstinent, rather just politically active behind closed doors. Some also mentioned that Imperial, not unlike other universities, may seem more tolerant of left-wing opinions than right-wing ones; but others say Imperial is actually quite civil. Overall, there seems to be demand for more political events at Imperial to engage students with more of these discussions.

The members of the audience were fairly enamoured by Rees-Mogg. Kane, a Brexit party voter appreciated Rees-Mogg for his honesty, whilst Tom, a Conservative voter and party member, liked him for his policies and found him entertaining

“Members of the audience were enamoured by Rees-Mogg, appreciating his honesty, mannerisms, and politics”

and charismatic. Joseph, a voter from Northern Ireland has followed Rees-Mogg for years and “loves him 100%.” However, this adoration was by no means universal; a Labour voter dubbed him a societal problem and of course, another member of the audience strongly disliked his views on Brexit. Some audience members didn't know what they thought



Rees-Mogg Presenting with the audience // Isabelle Zhang

of him and were hoping to find out by attending.

Once Rees-Mogg arrived, he provided a brief 10-minute speech summarising his views. For the remainder of the session, Rees-Mogg answered questions from audience members, about his politics and his policies.

Felix asked Rees-Mogg for his opinion on the creation of a new Liberation Officer position, a Working-Class Liberation Officer, by Imperial College Union. He stated that he did not believe people from different backgrounds should be treated differently or given special treatment, but he respected that Imperial College Union, as a Democratic institution, was entitled to do as it desired.

Rees-Mogg fielded many other questions on the dangers of being a young Conservative

at university, a potential union between Canada, Australia New Zealand and the UK, liberalising drug laws, and proportional representation. On the matter of HS2 Rees-Mogg plead the fifth and refused to comment on the ongoing renewal of the massively costly infrastructure project. A clear highlight for the audience was the memorable quote on the subject of his activity on social media, “Twitter was really quite fun, as you can really wind up the Left!”, which led to much laughter and applause.

Following the Q & A, Rees-Mogg drew the winning raffle tickets, with an amusing selection of prizes. Amongst others, Rees-Mogg presented a copy of the Communist Manifesto, European and Union flags, and of course an obligatory bottle of wine.

Overall, the Chair of

Imperial College Conservative Society, Marwan Riach stated that the event went “very well, with good turnout.” He was also pleased about the lack of disruption to the event offered by other left-wing societies such as Imperial Left Forum or Labour Society. When asked about other Conservative Party matters, such as their affiliation with the rather right-wing Turning Point UK, Riach stated that Imperial College Conservative Party was no longer associated with the group.

The event concluded with a group photo of the Imperial Conservatives with Rees-Mogg following attempts. Doubtless, the best moment of the evening was a photo opportunity with Felix. We hope Rees-Mogg picks up a copy of the paper in the future.

Occasionally referred to as the Honorable Member for the 18th Century, Rees-Mogg is a controversial figure in modern British politics. He chaired the highly Eurosceptic European Research Group until September 2019, widely viewed as propelling the UK towards Brexit, and generally stands on the fiscal and social right of the Conservative Party. Currently Lord President of the Council, Rees-Mogg has a large following amongst young members of the Conservative Party, appreciating his upper-class diction and mannerisms, with a large social media following and even a group named Moggmentum in his honour.

NEWS

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Union Elections Nominations Open

The Union's annual Leadership Elections, at which hundreds of student representatives are voted in every year, have now opened for nominations

NEWS

Henry Alman

Editor-in-Chief

The Leadership Elections, at which 737 Union roles are elected, have opened for nominations. The positions include senior Union roles such as the sabbatical officers (Union President, Deputy President, and ICSMSU President), Constituent Union Presidents, the Liberation and Community Officers, and academic and wellbeing student representatives.

Any student may stand for election, though final year students can only stand for full-time sabbatical roles.

The nominations opened on Monday 3rd February and will run until Friday 28th, followed by campaigning from the 4th of March and voting between 9th and 12th March. The results are expected to be announced

“Imperial has consistently had some of the highest election turnouts in the country, hitting 41% last year”

in Metric on the 13th, at the Results Party.

Imperial has consistently had some of the highest election turnouts in the country, hitting 41% last year. It has also had particularly fierce competition for certain roles in recent years, with more students standing and competing for roles.

The week prior to the votes opening, the ‘Meet the Candidates’ debate will take place, where nominees for the most senior positions will debate questions posed by Felix Deputy Editor Charlie Titmuss. The show will be streamed live on the ICU Facebook page and will be produced by ICTV and IC Radio.

The Head of Student Voice, Keriann Lee, said: “LE20 is the biggest

democratic exercise at Imperial in which all students choose full time sabbatical officers and senior volunteers for academic year 2020-21.

“The elections have improved dramatically in the past two years through a systematic management process and this has resulted in a smoother experience for students with increasingly higher nominations and voter participation. This year's nomination period will include talks about the major positions so that students have even more information about the responsibilities and commitment involved before standing. It's felt that the talks, held every Wednesday during February at the Union, should allow for even more realistic

manifestos and informed campaigning.

“Over the past four cycles, more time has been spent during the nominations process ensuring that students understand the roles, why they are important, and what the commitment is. This, coupled with greater multi-campus promotions and better segmented communications, has led to a stronger field of candidates, better campaigns, and ultimately higher turnout.

“An additional step has been inserted into the elections timetable to make the complaints process even smoother. In addition to the complaints deadline, students will now have the chance to indicate their intention to submit a complaint right

after polls close so that there are fewer surprises on results day and the team can administer the process more efficiently.”

THE Names Imperial Sixth Most International Uni

NEWS

Henry Alman

Editor-in-Chief

Times Higher Education has ranked Imperial College London as the 6th most international university in the world, and 1st most international in the UK.

The top two spots in the global ranking are taken by two universities in Hong Kong, the City University of Hong Kong and University of Hong Kong respectively.

University of Oxford takes joint 7th in the global ranking, along with

the National University of Singapore; whereas University of Cambridge is next at 9th. Other top UK universities are ranked as follows: King's College London at 11th, University College London at 12th, and London School of Economics and Political Science at 15th.

The ranking is calculated by weighting several factors: the proportion of international students, the proportion of international staff, the number of journal publications with one or more international co-author, and the international reputation of the university. These four factors are weighted equally. International

reputation is measured by Times Higher Education by inviting scholars to rank the world's best universities for their field, and looking at the proportion of overseas votes received for a university.

In 2017-18, 64% of newly admitted students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) were from outside the UK. Of this, 17% were from China, by far the largest non-UK nationality, followed by 5% from France, 3% from Spain, Germany, Italy, and Greece each, and 2% from Malaysia, India, Singapore, and Hong Kong each. Students from other nationalities make up 23% of the international

student population.

At Imperial, students come from over 130 countries around the world.



Imperial, 6th most international uni // Thomas Angus

NEWS

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Art Club Puts on Exhibition in Blyth

The exhibition, entitled 'Moment to Reflect', closes on the 21st - so there's still plenty of time to swing by

NEWS

Charlie Titmuss

Deputy Editor

Art Club launched a new exhibition this week, celebrating the work created by their members titled "Moment to Reflect." The exhibition is located on floor five of Sherfield in the Blyth Gallery and closes on the 21st of February. The exhibition is free to enter.

The exhibition opened on Tuesday, 4th February with copious amounts of wine and cheese provided



Art Club show off in front of their gorgeous work // Charlie Titmuss

by Art Club as the artists and interested parties clustered around the pieces to enjoy the artwork. The art is focused around the theme, "Moment to Reflect." The work certainly features many mirrors and other lustrous surfaces, a creative tent and, for those that attend early, free soap with suspended inspirational quotes.

Recently renamed from Leo Soc, Art Club has flourished in the last year, attracting many new members. As a creative space at a mostly technical university, Art Club provides a different environment than most areas

around campus. Keqi, the current President of Art Club has always enjoyed art, but unfortunately neglected her artistic urges until she joined Art Club. Her favourite part of the exhibition and possibly the comfiest exhibit there were two beanbags that were worked on collaboratively by all members of the society. Liva, an art scholarship student's favourite piece is entitled "before you go," towards the end of the exhibition coordinators, prefers the chamber of reflection. Felix recommends checking it out for yourself.

IDE and GID Students Exhibit in Main Entrance

NEWS

Ameena Hassan

Puzzles Editor

This Wednesday, the Main Entrance saw Imperial's Innovation Design Engineering (IDE) and Global Innovation Design (GID) students presenting the result of their most recent projects. In this day-long exhibition, students gathered to inform interested observers about their various designs. Between compacting ground coffee beans to make reusable plant pots and using human society to preserve the genetic diversity of endangered moss and lichens, the different projects spanned a variety of diverse fields.

The 14 groups of three to four students investigated technologies in

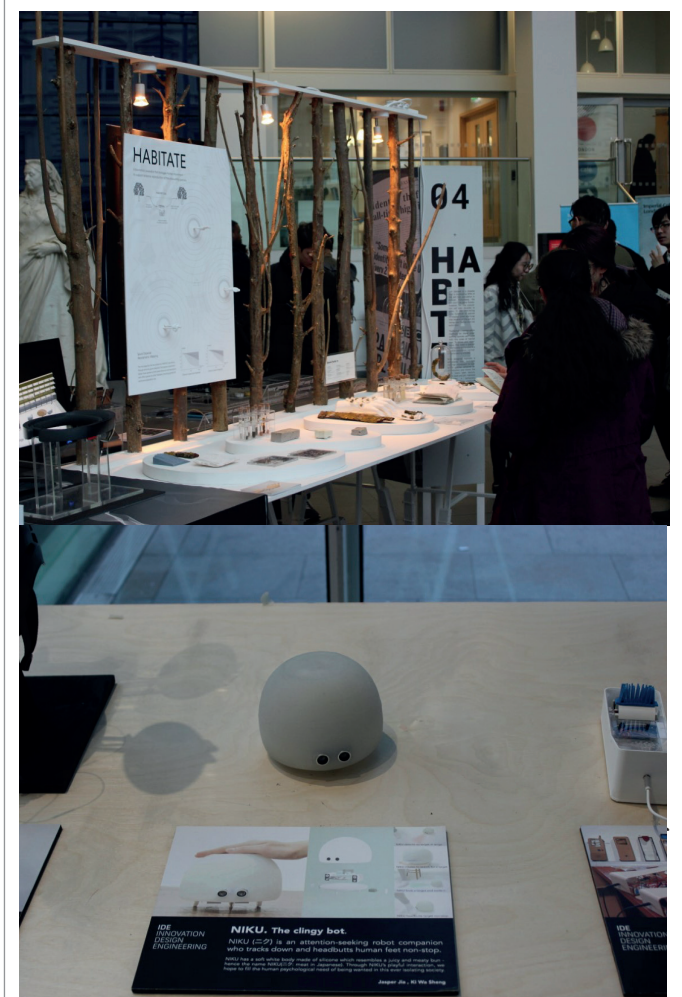
their area of interest in a joint venture between the Royal College of Art and Imperial College London. Felix spoke to Yishan Qin, an IDE student of a team that started the 'HABITATE' project at one of the 14 stalls, who said that this project aims to preserve endangered pH-sensitive moss and lichen species that grow on the bark of ash trees by creating artificial replicas of ash bark with 4 main features. These silicone replicas are created using 3D scanning of the micro-texture of bark, allowing moss and lichen to grow in the crevices of bark as they are accustomed to. These replicas have been made porous enough to ensure that the moss and fungi receive sufficient moisture. To replicate the exact conditions that make them so rare, the replica has a more acidic pH of approximately 6.8.

To maximize the light that the lichens receive for photosynthesis, light rays are concentrated by specially engineered lenses that have been partially affixed onto different sections of the replicated bark, ensuring a continuous supply of air.

Woodland Trust's website states that 95% of ash trees are projected to die as a result of a foreign disease called "ash dieback". The remaining 5% are expected to be resistant to this disease, but the population of ash trees is not expected to return to current levels for another 50 years. In the meantime, small animals that live in ash tree habitats will relocate or die out, with the side effect that moss and lichen unique to the ash tree habitat are not likely to be able to spread their spores effectively. This would accelerate their imminent extinction.

Hence, the group is now looking to remodel the silicone replicas into wearable habitats. Yishan explained further, stating that human society is very active, making humans a very encouraging substitute while ash tree populations are replenished.

Other projects covered topics such as using seawater rather than fresh water to create durable fabrics, thus using a less finite resource and reducing the usage of fresh water which could instead be used for other purposes, 'clingy' robots which seek out humans to nuzzle up to and could be kept like pets to reduce loneliness or address mental health concerns, and a device to reduce microplastic pollution from tyre wear.



Students tackle world problems // Ameena Hassan

COMMENT

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



COMMENT

Calum Drysdale

Comment Editor

The history of trade unionism in Britain is a long and proud one. Groups of workers, recognising the strength that their numbers and know-how granted them saw that while individually weak in the face of huge organisations, a withdrawal of labour was a powerful enough action to force changes in procedure.

Student unionism has a slightly less illustrious history but it should never be forgotten that student led movements have long been active and successful, fighting the Citizenship Amendment Bill in

Unions? What are they good for?

The student Union must remember that it is first and foremost a body that represents the interests of its members

India today or helping to prevent implementation of the regressive poll tax in 1990's Britain. The two forms of unionism share a common purpose of representing the interests of a group of individuals lacking in wealth, time and influence, to the university, college or company with which they are affiliated.

“There will be no spontaneous uprising”

Why then does our Union Council shy away from whole heartedly backing the campaign to oppose rent increases?

It has been established in these pages and by multiple other sources in the Union that the rent model proposed by the College is not in the interests of the students and that the models built by the College prioritise profit over student welfare. The model suggests for example that after 50 years of use the value of the halls buildings will be zero. Odd as it is that a building could change from being suitable accommodation for students one night and then suddenly become decrepit the next day, the model increases payments into a long term maintenance fund by 80%. What is the maintenance fund being used for if not to keep the halls in a good condition? Obviously, it is the Union's job to

“Why then does our Union Council shy away from whole heartedly backing the campaign to oppose rent increases?”

reject this rent model as unfair and the fact that the Council has done so three times now is a point in their favour.

This is not the end of the story, however. Having rejected the College's position the Union should now lobby the College as strongly as it is able to reduce or even prevent rent increases. Atop the College's egregious definition of what a 'break even' model is, the assumption that the College should be running a 'break even' model, in which the rent from the halls is equal to their cost, is an assumption that must also be challenged. This is the role of the Union.

Yet the only Union response has been a spineless endorsement of a hypothetical campaign to be run by a non-Council affiliated student. Their reasoning for this was that as Council meets only every month any campaign would be tortuously slow to react to changes in events.

Therefore, it was felt to be a better idea to allow a student campaign to run

and provide support in various activities such as the production of posters and leaflets, as it would look better if the impetus for the campaign came from students as opposed to the Council. For the same reason the Council discarded ideas such as sit ins or demonstrations as these would ideally arise spontaneously from amongst the student body.

In other words, second year and above students not in halls and first year students without a longitudinal perspective on hall prices are supposed to mobilise themselves spontaneously at which point the Union would step in and help them print posters.

I find this attitude particularly frustrating given that the Union has just created the position of

“What is the maintenance fund being used for if not to keep the halls in good condition?”

Working Class liberation officer in order to focus more on issues of access that affect students from less well-off families.

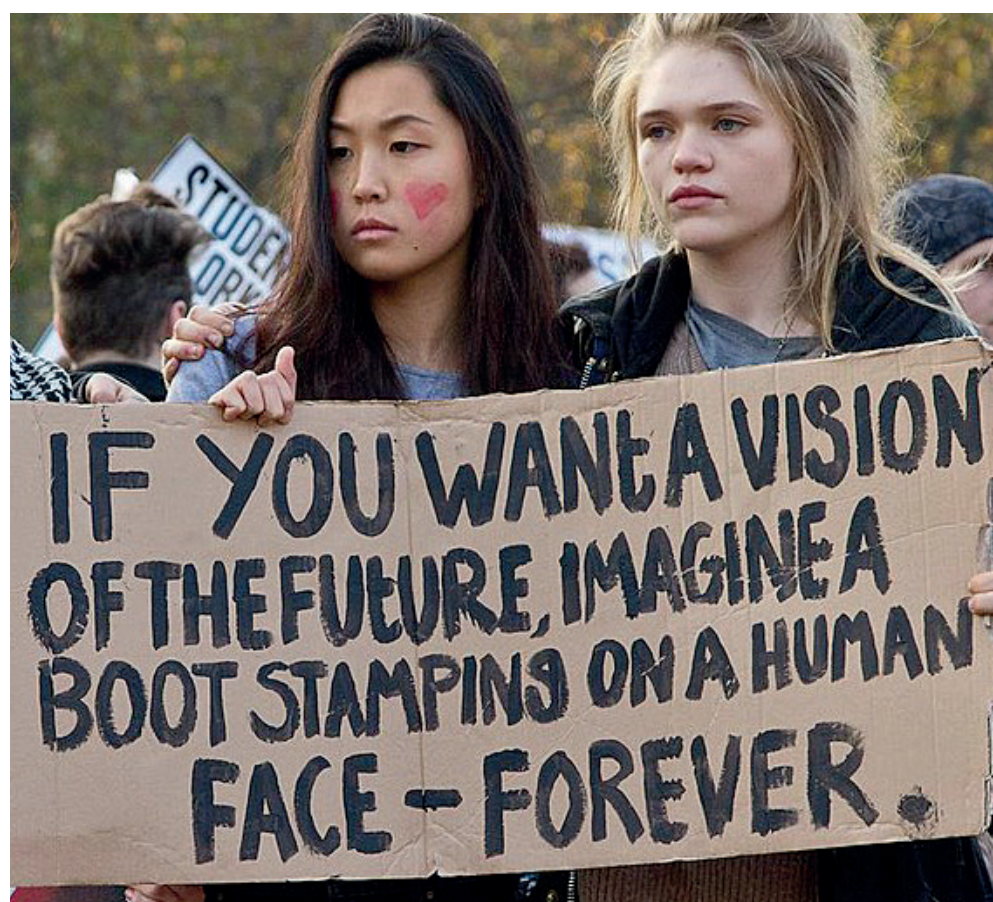
There will be no spontaneous uprising. As a result, prices will go up, and the ongoing issue of students from disadvantaged backgrounds being shunted ever further from South Kensington while wealthy students occupy ever more socially

homogeneous halls closer to campus will continue. North Acton will become a place to dump those that can't afford anywhere closer in.

There is an obvious route that the Union and Council should take. Members of the Council should remember that they are first and foremost students who have been elected to represent students. They have been given the responsibility to pay attention to issues such as rent increases so that students don't need to. A Union led campaign should be started with rent strikes or helping prospective student find private accommodation rather than enrich the College as very possible courses of action.

On the College side, I would ask academics, administrators and anyone else with a voice to remember their own university days. I would ask them to consider if an institution as wealthy as the College should be employing underhand tricks such as increasing the value of the debt from building the halls in line with inflation - a loan is for a fixed amount and due to inflation the real term value of that loan will decrease over time.

The student body understands that rents will inevitably increase. They came to London knowing how high the cost of living is. The last thing they expected, however, was that the College would be the one fleecing them.



An entirely unrelated image // Flickr

COMMENT

comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Union President Speaks: Rent Negotiations

*Union President **Abhijay Sood** explains why college intransigence has led to rent negotiations stalling*

COMMENT

Abhijay Sood
Union President

If you've been reading Felix over the last few weeks you might have seen that the Union has been conducting negotiations with the College over the price of rent in first-year halls of residence. These have come to an end, and the headline result is that we could not come to an agreement. However, by continually engaging in the negotiations and taking a firm view that we should not endorse unaffordable prices for students, we have been able to secure a £3 million reduction on the rent prices over a 5-year period. Here's how we've got to where we are now.

Background

Negotiations began late last year when the College provided us with an updated financial model for hall rents, to coincide with the opening of a new hall (Kemp Porter) in the coming academic year which will roughly double the number of available bed spaces in Acton.

The model included some costs our rents already cover, such as day-to-day and long-term maintenance, security and other staff costs, and capital costs: the costs associated with paying down the debt the College incurs in building the halls. It also included additional costs: certain staff whose salaries were not previously covered by student rents were added, raising the total figure. This led to



A house divided against itself cannot stand // Imperial Asset Library

questions, as did the logic behind the steep (80%) increase in long-term maintenance costs, the implicit assertion that the halls would totally lose their value after a 50-year design life (with students picking up the tab for this depreciation) despite this maintenance, and the way costs were being inflated. More fundamentally, the logic behind a "break-even" model, where student rents were made to cover any and all costs the College associate with these halls, was questionable. None of the revenue from the planned lease of Pembroke Hall would be factored into supporting these rents, for example.

The Negotiations

The ensuing back and forth led to some minor concessions. Proposals we were offered were rejected in deliberation

with elected student reps at Union Council, on the grounds that they still presented steep increases without a satisfactory explanation.

Most recently, earlier this week, we had some promising conversations towards a workable compromise. Unfortunately, the College's resultant "final offer" (£3m out of a total ~£110m over 5 years) wasn't enough for us to be willing to endorse it. Though it makes a small difference, this offer will still lead to steep increases in rent, beyond the realms of what's reasonable (in the short term), and we don't feel the College has truly engaged with us on the fundamental premises that led to these costs. We are now exploring other options to effect change on this matter.

From our experience,

we wanted to share our key takeaways:

1) Saying "no" works

Though the place we've ended up is far from ideal, it does represent a concession on the part of the College that didn't come by default. The College were expecting us to focus on how to spread the rent increases across different halls, as our predecessors did, rather than on the increases themselves. By saying "no", and having a more holistic conversation, we were able to shine a spotlight on this issue and shift the College's position.

2) Access to information matters

While some of the information we asked for was shared with us, lots of what we were given fell short of the detail we would have expected

either because the College was unwilling to provide the information, or the information didn't exist. We can't be expected to make informed decisions with such asymmetry.

3) The College's finances are prioritised over students' finances

While the College says what is being offered is affordable compared to other London university halls, there are some issues with this: 1) it's not necessarily clear if that will still be the case in 5 years' time, 2) many of these universities rely on private accommodation, whereas we are negotiating over an in-house provision, 3) rent in our halls would be increasing far in excess of rents in private accommodation, 4) by the College's own calculations, after any kind of increase on this year's rents, it would be cheaper for the average

"Landlords make a profit while the college ought to be breaking even"

student to live outside halls than in them. This is difficult to understand: landlords make a profit, while the College ought to be "breaking even".

First year halls of residence are very important to the undergraduate experience; to (in the College's words) "develop a sense of home and community." The idea that no central

funding should go into supporting them should not be taken for granted, yet staff members on key College committees were (to our knowledge) never presented with a proposal for such a subsidy.

4) The university is working against itself

Simply put, too many decisions at Imperial are taken in exclusion of each other. While the Provost's new academic strategy speaks about considering the experience of students holistically (i.e. acknowledging the blurred lines between our academic and non-academic experience of Imperial), the College's proposals on rent remain antithetical to any work staff and students do to improve our student satisfaction, or supporting underrepresented students in line with regulatory requirements. We shouldn't be in a situation where the efforts and spending of one team in the College directly counteract that of another.

5) Working together matters

We ran for these roles on a simple principle: that those affected by decisions Imperial makes (students and staff) should be involved in the decision-making process. This doesn't mean being consulted only to be put to one side: we need to work in partnership from the beginning on major issues like this. Were there faith that all parties want what's best for Imperial as a whole, there would be higher levels of trust across our campuses, and less ill-feeling when difficult decisions have to be made.

POLITICS

politics.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Italian Regional Election Results And Their Consequences

The Italian region of Emilia-Romagna confirmed its traditional centre-left stance marking the first major defeat for League's Matteo Salvini

POLITICS

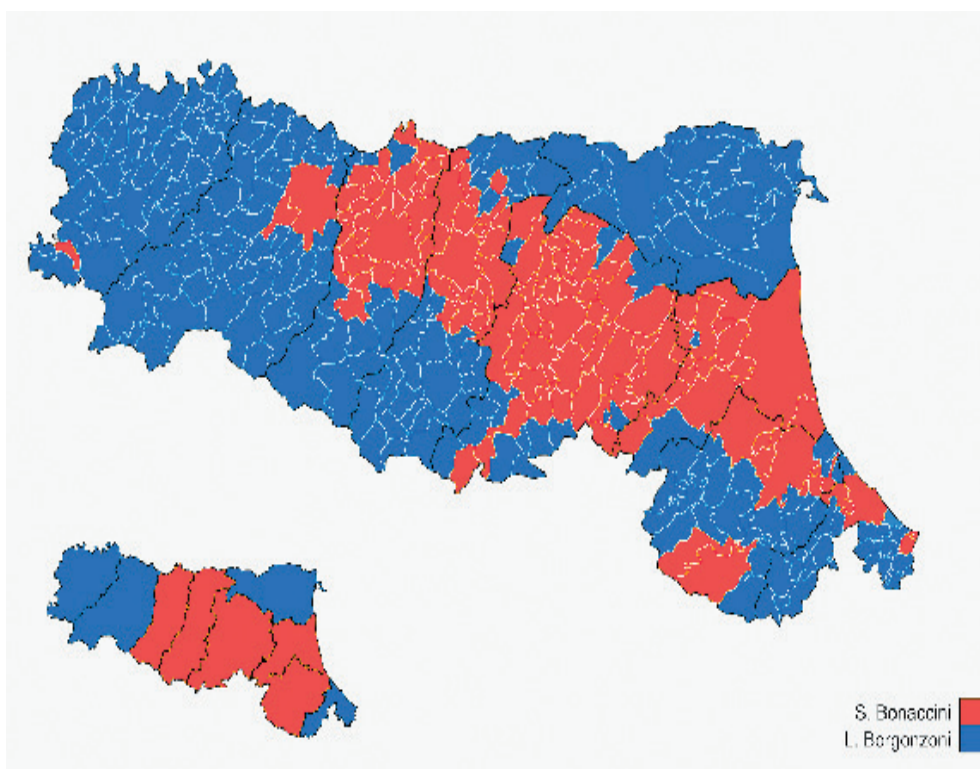
Luca Ramelli

Politics Writer

A couple of weeks ago I wrote an article about the importance of the Italian regional elections for Italy's national political equilibria. The 26th of January was to be the day in which populism would either continue its streak of triumph or be halted in its tracks, and the people of Emilia-Romagna delivered their message. While the people of the other region in which elections were held, Calabria, voted as forecasted in polls, with a remarkable majority (25%) for the centre-right coalition, the former region confirmed its septuagenarian tradition.

“The result is seen as the first major political setback for Matteo Salvini's League on the national stage”

Emilia-Romagna retained its centre-left administration 51% to 43%, confirming Governor Stefano Bonaccini for a second term. This 8% majority was even larger than the polls initially suggested, which predicted a



Electoral map of Emilia-Romagna, with centre-right in blue and centre-left in red

// Wikimedia

slim victory of around 2% to 4%.

The result is seen as the first major political setback for Matteo Salvini's far-right League on the national stage. He spoke during election night, along with defeated candidate Lucia Borgonzoni, denying any possible mistake that could have led to the election loss. He instead claimed that the party was on the right path, having obtained massive support in a region which has always been a bastion of the left. More recently he has been questioned by some party figures, among them the League

founder and now estranged leader Umberto Bossi, although such criticisms from the party veteran are nothing new. Salvini's status as party leader has, however, not been seriously endangered, nor it is likely to become so.

What these results have achieved is an increased stability of the national government, which could have collapsed in the case of the League's victory. Currently, the government is a coalition between the centre-left, plurality winning Democratic Party (PD), and the populist Five Star Movement (M5S). The

latter party was almost annihilated in Emilia-Romagna, winning just over 3% of the vote. Furthermore, M5S is currently the strongest force in the Italian parliament. Whilst PD's victory has strengthened their commitment to governing, M5S's loss has deepened their fear of a similar national election performance. The Democratic Party now holds most of the cards. M5S's embarrassing result is not their first: their candidates have also been recently crushed in regions such as Calabria.

An internal process for M5S to assimilate

the bad news and channel it into reshaping the party has no doubt begun, and it is likely to deeply shake the party's internal structure. Under this restructuring, the former political leader of the M5S, Luigi Di Maio, has fallen victim: he has been forced to resign as leader but retains his role in the government as Foreign Minister.

“Populist party M5S was almost annihilated in Emilia-Romagna, winning just over 3% of the vote”

Meanwhile, the “Sardines”, the political movement born in Emilia-Romagna to oppose populism and the League, has been credited for its role in successfully bringing back more moderate voters to the political debate. Indeed, a noteworthy statistic is that turnout has significantly increased from 40% five years ago to almost 70%, reaffirming greater public interest for these elections.

The leaders of the Sardines have confirmed their intention not to run for office and instead return to their private

lives rather than living under public spotlight. This announcement reminds one of the Roman hero Cincinnatus, who served his country loyally through the darkest hour and then retired to a life outside the public eye. It was nonetheless announced in a statement which ends in a declaration that now is time to “get their hands dirty”; their battle against populism therefore seems not to be just a parenthesis in the thick book of Italian politics but is destined to continue. Looking at the calendar, this assumption seems to be confirmed by the fact that more regional elections will take place later this year, and in many cases the League and the centre-right will try to win such regions, possibly striking a fatal blow to the government. As Italian politics is deeply unpredictable, the government's strength could indeed be eroded in the long term by the shifting equilibria evidenced above.

The first major defeat for the League has nevertheless shown that Mr Salvini is not unbeatable, nor is populism. There is hence a possibility that this may mark the beginning of its decline, or its transformation into something else, for better or for worse.

POLITICS

politics.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Jacob Rees-Mogg Comes to Imperial

Politics writer **Luca Ramelli** describes his experience participating in a Q&A and raffle with the Leader of the House of Commons at an event hosted by the Imperial College Conservative Society.

POLITICS

Luca Ramelli

Politics Writer

Last Tuesday, the 4th February the Imperial College Conservative Society hosted one of the most controversial characters of British politics, Jacob Rees-Mogg.

The MP for North East Somerset currently serves as Leader of the House of Commons and Lord President of the Council, but he is most known for his flamboyant and sometimes old-fashioned vocabulary. Among other occasions, he often distinguishes himself in debates in the House of Commons, sometimes without even a word, like the time he was reprimanded for lying on the bench during the Brexit bill debate. He is not new to controversy, particularly those concerning his strict Catholic beliefs and how they tie in with his view of politics and economics.

“He began his speech... and also took the opportunity to praise Imperial College as one of the most outstanding universities in the world ”

Mr Rees-Mogg, visitor to our university, showed up a little late to the event, apparently due to a cabinet meeting in which he and Mr Johnson were probably discussing new ways of making the UK great again. After a brief introduction by the Chair of the Conservative Society, he began his speech which touched on several points, from the opportunities Brexit offers to the intolerance of socialists. He also took the opportunity to praise Imperial College as one of the most outstanding universities in the world, and that he believes in our success in any industry we enter.

Afterwards, the audience was given the opportunity to ask questions and mine was among the ones chosen.

Here’s what I asked: “You have praised our university for its international status. Now, with Brexit having just occurred, which measures will be taken concretely in order to guarantee that universities like Imperial, deeply reliant on EU staff and students, maintain their research level and indeed international status?”

In his answer, Mr Rees-Mogg declared that universities are at the forefront of what will be a “global Britain”, that the UK should hence focus in looking at countries like India, which represent the future, rather than at the “narrow-focused” European Union, which instead represents the past. He then praised the ability of Imperial to fund itself through several sources



Jacob Rees-Mogg answers questions from the audience // Isabelle Zhang

rather than depending exclusively on public finances. No words were dedicated to the fact that the future of many research programmes in partnership with the narrow-focused EU, which actually greatly benefit British universities, could come to an end depending on the results of the impending negotiations.

“I was lucky enough to win a copy of “The Communist Manifesto” by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels as a raffle prize ”

After the question session finished it was time for the raffle. A series of prizes were offered, which ranged from chauvinistic Union Jacks to, more ironically, EU gadgets and leftist books. Drawing the winning tickers was of course the guest of honor. With ticket number 152, I was lucky enough to win a copy of “The Communist Manifesto” by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Part of the prize was an inscription: “Luca, This is not an important one. - Jacob Rees-Mogg”.

Although overtly satirical, I found it striking that a person who studied history could write such a statement, even as a poor joke. I am certainly not a communist or a socialist, but I find absurd that the work of a philosopher whose thought has profoundly shaped the last two centuries

is described as so. Not to mention the fact that the person who wrote so had also recently written a book about the Victorian Age, the period in which Marx’s theory and the entire socialist movement developed and had clear impact. Right after having my new book signed, I left as a queue formed to take selfies and speak with Mr Rees-Mogg.

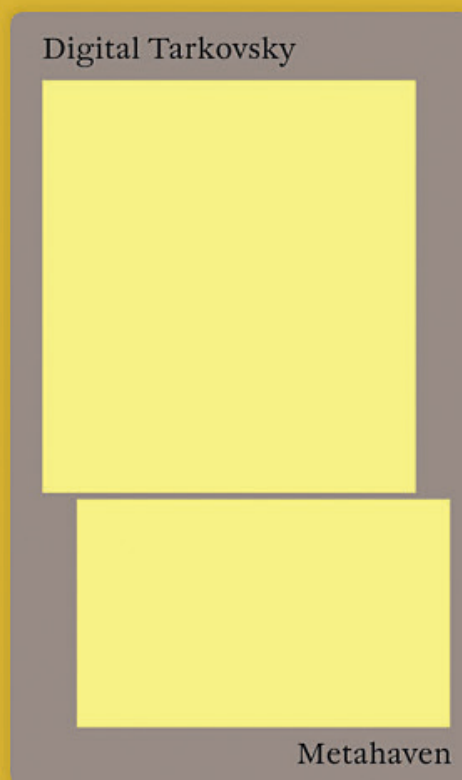
To end these remarks on a more positive note, I would like to thank the Chair of the Conservative Society for giving me a chance to ask a question. I also recognise that the event was well organised and I cannot imagine how much effort was required to set it up. What was memorable was the Mentimeter poll set up at the event’s start, which asked questions such as: what the most important issues the government should be dealing with,

which Democrat Trump should face in the US presidential elections, which minister should be kicked out, and more. In a question about what issue people most agreed with, at first place was freedom of speech, ranked above capitalism, immigration control, and Brexit.

I thought about that on my way home. While it is true that some fringes of the left are deeply intolerant, it is also true that that many people on the right are too, one of them currently in Downing Street. I then ask, can’t this invaluable freedom be upheld without the degrading the rigor of political debate with useless, dangerous offenses and populist slogans?

BOOKS

books.felix@imperial.ac.uk

*Digital Tarkovsky* by Metahaven // Bookmate

Digital Tarkovsky by Metahaven

How can we view the tiny screens on our smartphones through Tarkovsky's cinematic lens? Digital Tarkovsky is a poetic exploration of how our experience of visual entertainment has evolved over time.

BOOKS

Frederick

McCallum
Books Editor

What is Digital Tarkovsky, and how can I slip the phrase into a conversation? Under an interrogation scenario, you would probably guess that it's an "extended poetic exploration" written by a Dutch collective called something like Metahaven, and that you could never reasonably use the phrase in a sentence without spending a further five minutes trying to explain a term you're not even sure if you really understand. And you would be correct. But unlike most extended poetic ex-

plorations, I think that this one has a more prescient message hidden amongst the techno-political protologisms and Flaubert quotations.

The premise of the book is to question how we live and interact with digital technology through the lens of cinema. Specifically, the lens of Andrei Tarkovsky. The book recognises the contrast of trying to compare our fiber optic, attention redundant lives to a Russian film director famed for slow shots of almost still images and who "detested computers before they were omnipresent," but stick with it. The connection lies in the smartphone, the "yet-undeclared cinema of the interface," the technology that allows anybody to produce, share and view films on

demand. We are increasingly being immersed in this cinema, the average US adult spends two hours and 51 minutes on their smartphone every day, eight minutes longer

"The connection lies in the smartphone, yet-undeclared cinema of the interface"

than Tarkovsky's film *Stalker*. The book tries to define a new phenomenon of Digital Tarkovsky: "a cinematic discrepancy between speed of platform and lived experience

under all-encompassing computational force," or how digital services like Instagram aim to make life seem to move faster using techniques similar to Tarkovsky, controlling the pace and pressure of time to create immersive cinema.

The effects of this phenomenon range from mobile phone journalism to machine vision and dash cam crash montages. The book explores these tangents alongside plots from Tarkovsky's films and, to meet the brief of a poetic exploration, intersperses "cut to" sections varying from short scenes of everyday life to tales of St Francis of Assisi. Specific focus is paid to how, like in Tarkovsky's films, the technique of pacing is used to create a suspension of disbelief. It's not hard to see this

willful belief in fiction everywhere online from social media influencers to twitter bots spreading fake news. This is presented as a byproduct of technology overcoming the uncanny valley as well as almost universal access to cameras making everyday scenes more cinematic whilst destroying faith in images being truthful. In the age of Digital Tarkovsky we take the "spectre of techno-political force" as something inescapable and ambient. Importantly, the book touches on the psychological effects on the viewer like FOMO and a feeling of isolation when using services like Instagram where stories and are stitched together with the "post-continuity" of a Michael Bay movie. Metahaven ultimately ask us to question who

or what is directing this new cinema, and if they should have control over our reality.

So to answer the initial questions, *Digital Tarkovsky* is relevant, worrying and only going to become a bigger part of reality, and you could use it in sentences like "Wow that's so Digital Tarkovsky," or "Ah, that's due to the Digital Tarkovsky!" or maybe "You should read *Digital Tarkovsky*."

"Digital Tarkovsky is only going to become a bigger part of reality"

ARTS

arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Carmen: Tale of a Femme Fatale

ARTS



Where? London Coliseum
When? 1st Feb - 27th Feb
How Much? £12.50 with Access All Arias scheme

Maria Portela

Arts Writer

If you have always wanted to see an opera but never had the chance, Carmen might be a very good place to start. One of the most popular operas of all times, its music has appeared countless times outside of the opera world, including in cartoons and adverts, so you are sure to hear some familiar tunes. This particular production does great justice

to Bizet's masterpiece, featuring eye-catching ensemble scenes, captivating complex characters, and spotless singing all the way through. As a self-proclaimed "national opera company for all", English National Opera (ENO) translates all their productions into English, which, albeit unfaithful to the original work, improves engagement with the words and the story being told.

Carmen is a femme-fatale who is deeply aware of her seduction powers, enjoys using them profusely and entrances every single man on stage. Justina Gringytė lives up to the role, dominating the stage at all times with her fiery acting and clear mezzo-soprano register. If a fault must be found, she is a touch too blonde

for a gypsy girl. She falls in love with Don José, a passionate yet jealous army corporal, but later leaves him for Escamillo, a famous bullfighter with a big ego. The libretto explores the conflicts that arise, painting a complex picture of human relationships. All main characters are morally compromised in some ways and mistreated in others, but that is what makes them interesting and ultimately relatable.

This is overall a very enjoyable production, with impressive sets and unexpected moments. One scene in particular made me admire the cast's ability to sing and be quite physical at the same time, though my favourite moment has to be the famous aria "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle", mostly



It surely won't last long // Richard Hubert Smith

because my high expectations were fulfilled. There were only a couple of less fortunate moments. On one, a premature attempt at comic relief was simply weird. Then, the stomping of army boots muffled the singing of the ladies' chorus. But perhaps that

was intentional, showing how teasing woman for fun is simply annoying and not fun at all.

Bizet's genius orchestration, capturing intense Spanish rhythms, together with clever artistic choices, expand and amplify emotions.

We leave lost, having been fully immersed in a world of soldiers on duty, children playing on the streets, factory woman enjoying cigarettes, toreros and their legions of fans, and smuggling travellers - then suddenly brought back.

A Female Faustus: an ambitious twist on a classic

ARTS



Where? Lyric Hammersmith
When? Until 22nd Feb
How Much? From £15

Shivani Gangadia

Arts Writer

Award-winning playwright Chris Bush's radical retelling of the German legends of Faust, whose pact with the devil gives his unlimited knowledge and worldly pleasures – but as always, there is a price to pay. This myth exploring sacrifices, legacy, hubris, and greed has previously been the basis for many literary works (most notably Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, and



Jodie McNee in playwright Chris Bush's Faustus: That Damned Woman // Manuel Harlan

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Faust), but none have reinterpreted it in this way – an inversion of gender where the iconic character of Johann becomes Johanna. This allows countless new themes to be explored, which are perhaps more

relevant than those relating to an accomplished but bored man who squanders the powers he is granted playing practical jokes.

In this play, Faustus is reimagined as a young 17th century woman, the daughter of a plague doctor father and a mother

who was tried and killed as a witch years ago. Here, it feels like she has more of a reason to strike a deal with Lucifer – more agency and the ability to control her destiny. Her sex and social class changes the lens of the play, and what she chooses to do with her newfound abilities. Consequently, this play becomes an intriguing study on the female experience, and what a woman does with greatness. Bush has taken a classic male narrative and inserted a woman into it – this creates more obstacles and new directions for the story to take.

The beginning is confusing as the Faustus' backstory is so different from the original, but by the end of the first half I was thoroughly enjoying the play - the plot began to make sense, there were

interesting twists, and the characters were well-developed. Faustus struck a deal for 144 years of life with unlimited power from Lucifer's servant Mephistopheles and the ability to leap forwards in time. However, perhaps all these new ideas were too ambitious, as the second half feels muddled as she traverses further in time particularly as she enters the modern age. I feel the message is lost, and the aim of exploring women in history who have broken the social constraints of a male-dominated world is not met as expertly as in the first half. More exposition was needed, and though the play was 2 hours long, the half following the interval felt rushed.

However, I can overlook all this as Jodie McNee plays a brilliant

Faustus, saving the second half from falling flat. Furthermore, I have to commend the striking set design of Ana Inés Jabares-Pita and the lighting designer Richard Howell, who aptly reflect the tone of the play in the environment – first dark and cavernous, fluidly changing to reflect the location and time period all the way in to the 21st century.

This Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and Headlong co-production debuts here in West London before going on a national tour including the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Bristol Old Vic, Leeds Playhouse, and Northern Stage throughout March and April 2020 – so catch it when you can, where you can!

ARTS

arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Popcity UK Vol. 5

ARTS



Where? Shoreditch Town Hall

When? 25th Jan

How Much? From £10

Sid Basetti &

Arts Writer

I must be completely honest here and say I had never been to a Hip-hop event before, so the prospect of having to review one seemed daunting at best. However, after four hours submerged into the swirling madness that is this dance world the only word that comes to mind is: WOW. Now in its fifth year, the international dance competition housed in the flagship venue that is Shoreditch Town

Hall, brings together an array of international and UK-based artists of all ages in the Hip-hop and Popping world. The mood in the main room, however, wasn't one of fierce competitiveness but one of brotherhood, with dancers from different backgrounds coming together to support each other and share knowledge. The brainchild of Dickson Mbi, Brooke Milliner and Shawn Aimey from the prestigious UK Popping Crew Fiya House; PopCity UK is, in their own words "led by Hip Hop artists for Hip Hop artists, with the community at its core."

The love is apparent in the room as soon as you enter it, people are so welcoming, and they draw you into their culture. This is Popcity. The music was banger after banger

featuring the likes of DJ T-sia and DJ Fayme, they judged the crowd expertly with excellent technical mixes. Internationally acclaimed judges were present from as far as South Korea. Seeing them in action was something else, they had total mastery of their body, contorting and twisting in a mesmerising display of expression. Dancers compete an impressive feat considering the £100 cash prize for the winners of each category and the chance to represent the UK at the PopCity finals in East Asia.



Dancers getting in the groove at the prelims // Fiya House

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MUSIC

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Oh Wonder - *Ultralife*: A Fantastic Outing

MUSIC

Ultralife



Artist: Oh Wonder. **Label:** Oh Wonder. **For Fans Of:** The XX, Emotional Oranges, Maggie Rogers. *44 mins*

Ambika Bharadwaj
Music Writer

London-based duo Oh Wonder, Josephine VanderGucht and Anthony West released their sophomore album *Ultralife* in the summer of 2017. The album reception was bigger than their debut album. While they weren't designed to create bangers, the duo

proved that they have an ear for instrumentation & production tricks that give them their signature breathy synthpop sound true versatility & maintain the oh-so-delicate balance between soft pop & intricate indie. Their music carries the feeling of a controlled ray of sunshine.

'Solo', the first track explores the chaos that surrounds an individual and the innate desire to escape it. It starts with a lively beat. The dynamic, blended vocals and genuine lyrics make the track a perfect start to a joyful album.

"I'm breathing in, I'm breathing out" is a defining line,

coupled with heavy chords, which leave you wondering...

Then comes 'Ultralife', a song that has you hooked within the first 3 seconds. The drum sample is brilliant, the chorus is catchy, the electronic harmonies accenting the chorus are perfection and somehow avoid sounding messy, need I go on? It is the perfect soundtrack to fall through a wormhole and lose the concept of time too, feeling surrounded by a technicolour beat. The pauses are perfect, the lyrics are delicious, especially the alliteration

"I've got so much soul inside my bones,"

Go out and listen to this stunning song.

The next tracks, 'Lifetimes', 'High on Humans', 'Lifetimes' and 'Heavy' are bold choices, and don't adhere to the typical verse-chorus format. Instead, they hit you with choruses throwing caution to the wind, it's quite risky but the effort pays off and each track sounds poppy, edgy with plenty of catchy melodies.

'Bigger Than Love' defines a relationship that has the kind of love that is powerful and moving but also takes a dig at how a love that strong carries its poison.

"All my days are ready to be hopeless at the start", Vander Gucht and West sing on the bridge, amusingly questioning

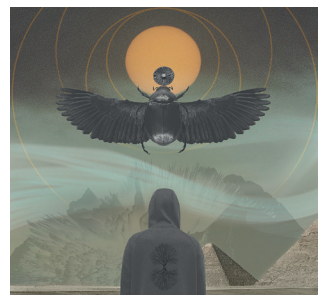
this celebration of love and implying that perhaps once such a love has been found, its sense of wonder and excitement fades. With beautiful strains and instrumentation, this track is a solid one that will make you think.

'Heart Strings' has a Lily Allen-esque pop sound. However, the chorus is a warmer and more fun listen. 'Slip Away' is a melancholic song, with poignant lyrics which make it feel like the ending of "Marriage Story". 'Overgrown' and 'My Friends' have an underlying theme of asking for help & helping someone out. They both have gorgeous crescendos throughout, slowly tran-

sitioning from a touch of melancholy into hope and promise. The piano instrumentation is impeccable. The album ends with 'Waste' which is about post-breakup loneliness. Although the song has powerful choruses, it lacks the lyrics and melodies found in previous tracks. However, it does leave you wanting more.

From a listener's standpoint, the enigmatic duo from south-east London has released a glorious collection of romantic ballads that help nurse you through the brutal realities of everyday life. If you know someone who likes. The Smiths, make them listen to this wonderful album!

Felix Recommends...



MUSIC

Visions



Artist: Orpheus; **Label:** Orpheus; **Top Tracks:** Ascension, Lull; **For Fans Of:** D'angelo; *43 mins*

Miles Gulliford
Music Editor

Jarrod Lawson, a electro-soul artist has adopted the moniker Orpheus for his latest record *Visions*. He speaks of "shamanic" journeys as the source of inspiration for this record.

While the spacious, funky instrumentals that

make up *Visions* are not psychedelic enough to evoke divine/drug induced inspiration, each track is undeniably cool. Despite some blatant D'angelo worship on tracks like 'Moon Halos' and 'Gamma Soirée', Orpheus' spacious, synth heavy take on neo-soul offers plenty of nuance.

Harmonic and textural complexity can be found at every turn, with giddy synth runs and a new instrument filling every nook and cranny of *Visions*. Referencing electronic, latin (notably on 'Acension') and even minimalist rhythms/sounds in it's satiny grooves, Orpheus is very much operating in a space beyond genre.

Visions comes on like a peaceful evening, and simultaneously relaxes and engages the listener, making it a worthwhile listen for any soul, funk or jazz fans.



MUSIC

Collaborations: Vol 1



Artist: Hackney Colliery Band; **Label:** Veki Records.; **Top Tracks:** Mm Mm, Crushing Latic; **For Fans Of:** Fela Kuti; *52 mins*

Miles Gulliford
Music Editor

The Hackney Colliery Band are a brass and percussion ensemble. Their latest release *Collaborations Volume 1*, is an extremely colourful blend of agile soul and afrobeat grooves. The most notable of these include

two tracks featuring legendary vibraphonist and icon of Ethio-jazz, Mulatu Astatke, as well as associates of Brian Eno and Carole King.

Thanks to the interesting selection of collaborators each track has its own energy. Tunes range from instrumental outings, typically with a more raucous energy, to engaging yet incredibly introspective spoken word outings like 'Why Yellow?', which explores yellow as an emblem of human vigour, "The light that surrounds us is a poached egg on a Saturday morning". With each track, however, the band brings the same upbeat sensibility, which ensures the listener never bores.

The record is a fun listen, the band's focus on accessibility make this a great starting point for any looking to get familiar with flavours of jazz, Africa or the Caribbean.



MUSIC

The Archer



Artist: Alexandra Saviour; **Label:** 30th Century Records; **Top Tracks:** The Archer, Can't Help Myself; *30 mins*

Miles Gulliford
Music Editor

Alexandra Saviour, signed to Columbia records at 18, is best known for her association with Alex Turner (of the Arctic Monkeys). Her second record: *The Archer*, is a breath of

fresh air in the singer/songwriter/indie scene. While mournful lyrics and spacious textures place Alexandra alongside contemporaries like Julien Baker and Snail Mail, her instrumentals here possess an energy of their own.

'Saving Grace', is a great example of this, with it's smoky riffs, and aching multi tracked vocals, it creates a potent atmosphere. The rest of the LP errs strongly toward the same dark pole. Instrumental palettes however, differ significantly, with some tracks built around naked piano, others featuring sparkling synth leads over slithering grooves.

Saviour's lyrics are largely embellishments, fitting well within the thick, emotional avenues of *The Archer*, but not offering much to chew over. Listen to this if you want to be sad, or already are.

MUSIC

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Jordon Alexander, Mall Grab, techno demon?

MUSIC

Martin Flerin

Music Editor

The shoulder-length hair. The spotless, mother Mary-looking face. The oversized black T-shirts and the cheeky smile. There are few bigger and more recognisable brands in electronic music right now than Jordon Alexander. With him kicking off the year by releasing two EPs in quick succession, it seems like a good time to see how his sound has changed over the past year, and what that might mean for the future. One thing is for certain – the broody overtones of his newest releases haven't come out of nowhere. Looking back, it was a dank and grimy set in the sweltering Parisian summer when I first saw him.

He's always had a special energy in his live sets. The kind of energy that separates those who

can command a dance-floor from pretenders. The sun was beating down on the plastic tarpaulin of the little open tent which gave shelter to fans of anything with a four to the floor at this mainly rock-y festival. All eyes were fixed on the slightly raised, rudimentary metal platform holding the DJ booth. It almost felt like the cigarettes he was smoking were a wise choice to filter out all the dust in the air. The epitome of focus, he kept his moves simple. A little back and forth, a little hair flick here and there. Eyes always on the decks. Like two gleaming lumps of coal.

The 26-year-old seems to be maturing into a superstar. Having put out EPs quite prolifically since becoming one of the symbols of the lo-fi house movement, he has recently announced that we should expect a full-length album debut from him at the end of this year. By all indications, his lo-fi days (a serendipitous sonic achievement even-

tually copied by everyone and their dog - now something he wishes not to identify with) are over.

The shift in his sound started with the release of the EP *Moogie* in May of last year. Having collaborated with his long-time friend and old roommate, Nite Fleit, the record carried on from his earlier release that year under his birth name. Carrying a cover adorned with something resembling radioactive jellyfish, the EP was not an explosive release in any sense but it did indicate a new trend. Up to that point, it seemed that with every release, Alexander was trying to change the soundscape a little bit, while staying within the sample house category. It seemed as though he was trying to evade being pinned down too much – a feat which has definitely cemented his status as one of the more eclectic producers of this era. With *Growing Pains* following *Moogie* after a matter of months, he had added another EP of the same ilk to his



MALL GRAB

SUNFLOWER

The track *sunflower* was composed in New York, looking over the skyline on an incredibly sunny day // Looking For Trouble Recordings

discography. Describing it as “Headbanging club music” it was an improvement over *Moogie*. He kept the rave sound and made it more glitchy, adding an interesting new layer to the sound. The opening track, *sleepless*, stole the show, with its swampy intro and off-kilter kick during the breakdown.

In December, he released an EP called *Don't Keep The Fire Burning* completely out of the blue as a response to the wildfires in Australia. Coming from someone who likes to tease fans by playing perpetually unreleased material in live sets, this 4-track nugget seemed like pure gold. The opener, *Positive Energy Forever* is a thumper of a track. A gritty combination of a bass distorted to oblivion, a nicely rhythmic arpeggio and the perfectly faded vocal sample drearily repeating “positive energy” culminate in dancefloor hypnosis. The metallic oohs and ahs panning in and out, paired with the breakbeat hats and

stomping kick, along with the tempo increase we already saw on his last few efforts shows all go a long way to confirming that Jordon has managed to find what he had been looking for.

Exactly what that is can be surmised from his statements regarding his musical influence. He had had no problems showing his love for old-school house, disco (in his releases with another one of his friends, Loods), and even grime (in the aptly titled *I've Always Liked Grime*). The *Sunflower* EP, released last Friday, is an indication that he truly has embraced the heavier side of electronic music as well. The title track flirts with rave but only ever so slightly, in the form of woodwind synths which brush your eardrums at the peak of the track, when the kick really bites down. The next track, *Hidden Worlds*, feature synths which would not sound out of place at the peak acid-era *Hacienda*. On *Switchblade*, he reverts to a sample-based paradigm

more like his previous sound. That is not the main reason for the track being the most unimpressive of the bunch, as it also sounds flat in many parts. Luckily, he still manages to finish with a flourish with *Leaving Tokyo*. The opening bars sound like a cell phone ringing underwater, and then the broken beat comes and sweeps you away for four minutes and seventeen seconds of electro apocalypse.

Mall Grab has become a worldwide phenomenon. *Sunflower* was recorded in what he says are two of his favourite cities - New York and Tokyo - but it is the grittiness of his hometown, the industrial port of Newcastle, Australia, which shines through. It will certainly be interesting to see how many different sounds and styles he manages to incorporate into his full-length debut and whether he'll be able to make it fit together into a coherent whole. That will, surely, be a pivotal step on his seemingly celestial rise.



MALL GRAB

DON'T KEEP THE FIRE BURNING

Bilnky Bill's Adventures in Bushfireland // Looking For Trouble Recordings

FILM

film.felix@imperial.ac.uk

The Oscars: A discussion on our favourite and most

With The Oscars this Sunday, the Felix Film Editors are taking a look at the nominations for each category this year. We'll be selecting which films we think will win, as well as what we want to win; they're seldom the same

FILMS

Charlotte Arrand

Film Editor

Dominic Ede

Film Editor

Who better to spout unsolicited opinions on the 92nd Academy Awards than two people who've individually seen less than 53% of the nominees? However, combining our watched lists we can brag a whopping total of 55% (statistics not verified). Wielding our consummate knowledge of these films, and brandishing our blind ignorance, we're going to go through each category individually and tell you what we want to win, what we think is the most

deserving, and what the actual verdict will be on the night. So if you're planning on grabbing some popcorn and sitting wrapped in your duvet at 2am, spare a thought to what the Felix Film Editors have to say about each nomination, and why we'll be probably be disappointed.

As this will no doubt apply to many of our selections, we must mention the fact that we believe this list would look drastically different if we had had the chance to watch *Parasite* sooner than two days before the ceremony. Going off of unanimous praise, we think it's a film that we will both enjoy immensely.

Best Picture

Well this year the

nominations in this category have just been plain strange. With *Jojo Rabbit* (in the words of Charlotte, "Why?"); *Le Mans '66* (who saw this film other than my dad?); *Joker* (a box office banger but bored us on the big screen), some of the nominations have been a bit of a disappointment. Taking spots where otherwise deserving films could've been given their recognition, a lot of cinema this year has gone underappreciated and underrepresented by The Academy and awards shows this season. With this in mind, here are our picks.

For what we would like to win, Dom has chosen *Marriage Story*. "One of the most honest portrayals of the hardships in divorce, it deftly avoided

all the shortcomings that could be found in the sombre legal proceedings. Heart-warming and heart-breaking, it was the stand out film for me this year."

For Charlotte, she's torn between *The Irishman* and *Marriage Story*. This conflict was brought into fruition because, with the memory of an overworked physicist, details of *Marriage Story* are foggy ("I know that I loved *Marriage Story* at the time, but four months down the line I'm struggling to justify why"). However, with the images still vivid in her mind, Charlotte has dubbed *The Irishman* as her Oscar winner, "with the veteran ensemble of actors and legend Martin Scorsese at the helm, this 3.5 hour epic is more than deserving of its nomination."

Despite our heartfelt opinions, we're (rather begrudgingly) expecting to see *1917* take home Best Picture this year. This isn't to say that it's not a great film with many excellent aspects in its own right, it just isn't really something we haven't seen before (war films, single takes? Been there, done that). It's almost like a factory-made film, tailored for The Academy; we'd like to have some more variety rather than the same 'grand-old-war-pic', but with foreshadowing from the Golden Globes and the BAFTAs, it's not looking likely.

Best Director

'And The Academy award for Best Director goes to...Greta Gerwig? Oh wait.

Upon hearing the absence of a nomination for Greta Gerwig (*Little Women*) in the Best Director category despite the Best Picture and Adapted Screenplay nom-

inations, we got in contact with The Academy for their explanation, the email we received simply said: "Love the film, hate her".

This year, with the exception of Bong Joon-ho, the nominations in this category just aren't all that exciting. Veterans Tarantino and Scorsese stumble on into the last legs of their careers, while Todd Phillips breaks ground with his first nomination. It would nice to see Bong win, but having not seen it, Sam Mendes would be Dom's pick for most deserving director.

"'Love the film, hate her'- The Academy's response to Greta's snub"

"The film was massively enjoyable, and despite lacklustre character development and story, the direction in *1917* was phenomenal."

Meanwhile, Charlotte goes with Martin Scorsese, but wants it known that she holds no strong opinions on this category and would be equally enthused if none of them won (Bong, sweetie, I'm so sorry, but I haven't seen *Parasite* yet).

Again, looking at this through the eyes of The Academy, we think that Sam Mendes is most likely to take home a win this year.

Best Actor

Contrary to the previous categories, we are in agreement that we'd both love to see Adam Driver on the podium this Sunday. His colossal performance in *Marriage*

Story allowed the other excellent displays from Scarlett Johansson and Laura Dern to orbit around him, grounding itself as both real and moving. We'd really love to see him win.

Putting this aside, it goes without saying that Joaquin Phoenix's performance in *Joker* was nothing short of astounding, simply disappearing into the role, and we're placing our bets on him to win. However, it's also worth noting that we don't think that this is his best ever performance; *The Master* and *Her* are two examples of outstanding displays of talent which we believe to have been more worthy. It will be nice to see him finally get an Oscar he deserves.

Best Actress

As self-confessed lovers of Saoirse Ronan, god, we'd really like to see her win this for her role in *Little Women*. As one of the best, young talents in film today, she simply melts into every role. For each film, it almost feels as though she really has become character, no longer in the domain of acting; she *is* Jo March, she *is* Lady Bird. She remains so in-touch with the character, it's easy to forget she's acting, and so her performance can be easily dismissed as understated, with no distinct standout moments.

In contrast with this, we have Scarlett Johansson, who in this instance, showcased a somewhat more performative role. It did not have the same effect as Ronan playing Jo March, where the actress becomes the character, but objectively this was a more clear display of talent than Ronan's nuanced style. Johansson really wore heart on her sleeve for this, allowing a



Brad Pitt as Cliff Booth in *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood* // Sony Pictures

deserving films at this year's Academy Awards

multitude of emotions to bounce between her and Diver, and we think she should win.

Best Original Screenplay

Another first in our indecisive, meandering account of the awards, we have a three-way tie. As this award considers both storyline and script, we find it harder to decide which one impressed us most.

On dialogue alone, we would give it to Noah Baumbach for *Marriage Story*, where powerhouse performances relied heavily on excellent dialogue in brilliantly written scenes.

For sheer cleverness and enjoyment alone, *Knives Out* had a storyline that is worthy of the acclaim associated with Best Original Screenplay, and we think it would be a shame if this film went the entire awards season unrecognised, poor Rian Johnson.

Of course, as with every Tarantino film, *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood* has its own circle of praise from amateurs and critics alike. One of the standout features of Tarantino's filmmaking is consistently the script, and this is no exception, with an intricate plot and, at times, hilarious dialogue, it's equally deserving of this award.

Best Adapted Screenplay

Charlotte will take the reigns here: having desperately speed-read the book in time for the film's release, I feel quite confident in saying that Greta Gerwig crafted a wonderful interpretation of *Little Women*. She made the film her own with a dual-narrative that did not exist in the source



Colossal Driver and serious Johansson in *Marriage Story* // Netflix

material. I've heard people claim that this made the film 'too confusing', but as someone who could decipher the change between long-haired Jo and short-haired Jo, I simply disagree. In this way, she added texture to a story that has been reproduced many times before and achieved it perfectly. Furthermore, for someone who has read the novel and watched the film, the final scene was a surprising addition, deviating from the book, that rounded the film off perfectly poignantly.

It's hard to comment on this award without having

“For sheer cleverness and enjoyment alone, *Knives Out* is worthy of acclaim”

read the source material, and so we can't discuss the other nominees.

Best Supporting Actor & Actress

We think Brad Pitt should get it, we want Brad Pitt to get it, and we think Brad Pitt will get it. Arguably the leading character in *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood*, Brad shone in his role as Cliff Booth, Rick Dalton's (Leonardo DiCaprio) stunt double. Whilst Leo was as consistently exceptional as ever, the fact that Brad Pitt stands out as the main character in this film gives every indication that this was an incredible performance, and he should receive this award.

Likewise for Laura Dern: we think, we want, we will get. With supporting roles in *Little Women* and *Marriage Story*, she has opened herself up for praise this awards season, giving two brilliant performances. For *Marriage*

Story in particular, she was hilarious, and despite having very little screen-time, she left lasting impressions, providing levity in an otherwise intense film.

Best Cinematography

As Charlotte did for Adapted Screenplay, Dom shall do for Cinematography.

It goes without much discussion, that for me Roger Deakins (*1917*) is highly deserving of Best Cinematography this year. While other films excelled in picturesque shots, excellent lighting, and pleasing colour palettes, *1917* had all three. It's easy to just focus on the continuous shot as the main feature of this film, but with dawn shots filling the sky in deep blues, and burning buildings illuminating the set, there really was the whole package delivered here. The continuous shot just provided more reason for praise,

and left me wondering how they did it.

Best of the rest

For the remaining categories, we don't really feel qualified to talk as in depth about them as we should, but that doesn't mean that we won't blindly try to.

“Adam Driver's colossal performance allowed other excellent displays to orbit round him”

For Best Score, we'd love to see Hildur Guðnadóttir take it home for *Joker*; her string arrangements provided

a refreshing take on the usual orchestrated scores.

For Best Costume Design we have to give it to Jacqueline Durrant for *Little Women*, whose pieces added a perfect prettiness to the film. An honourable mention, and perhaps dark horse, goes to Arianne Phillips for *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood* and her killer, late 60's outfits (could be refreshing to see this win).

For sheer transportation to the time period, we have to give Best Production Design to the team on *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood*; the dreamy 60's set just had us lusting to live in that era of Hollywood.

Having exhausted our word count, knowledge, and energy, we've now run out of space to blindly guess at who should receive the Oscars this year. In truth, we don't know. And in honesty, we don't care. Let's just see on Sunday.

TELEVISION

tv.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Taylor Swift: Miss Americana

The documentary delivers an intimate side of Taylor Swift, with her battling with eating disorder, gender inequality, the entertainment industry, public feuds, politics and privacy, and finally who she has come to be.

TELEVISION



Creator: Lana Wilson, Morgan Neville, Caitrin Rogers, Christine O'Malley
Starring: Taylor Swift

Jia Qi Tan
TV Editor

As a Swiftly myself I anticipated her documentary with silent gasps and screams since the release of the trailer - she is an artist with whom I have grown up; every album of hers reminds me of a distinct part of my own journey. Having a lens into the behind-the-scenes of her journey is something I'm sure many of us looked forward to. But at the same time, I could not help but wonder what I could expect since, as a celebrity, a huge part of her life is already public. Nevertheless, the documentary fulfills its purpose, delivering a soft and endearing narrative and filling in the missing pieces of who we perceive Taylor Swift to be.

The Netflix film is structured chronologically and describes her struggles and revelations in every stage of her life, starting off with her debut and early success, where she lived for the approval of others. Instead of confronting her insecurities head on, she interpreted it as a sign that she needed to work hard to be deserving, which translated into her diligent work ethic and body image issues. Even at the peak of her career, she recalled, she had no one to share that with.



Taylor Swift with her adorable cat opens *Miss Americana* // Netflix

“It fulfills its purpose, delivering a soft and endearing narrative”

That insecurity is deeply rooted in how women are treated unequally especially in the entertainment industry, which is why now she has chosen to stand up and voice out her stance.

It covers many controversial incidents or “feuds” in which Swift was involved, from Kanye West interrupting her speech at the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards,

her switch from country to pop music, her feud resulting #TaylorSwiftOverParty trending all over the internet, and her sexual assault case against David Mueller. In *Miss Americana*, we get a peek into her side of the story, which is often raw and vulnerable. We’ve had glimpses in the past, but this gives us a clear answer, a transparent outlook to her personal life.

As a documentary centered around a pop artist, the music is perfectly intertwined with every scene. I like how various forms of the songs are incorporated - the studio version, live stages at her concert, or a random recording playing from her phone. Almost every favourite song of mine was included, including

“Tim McGraw”, “All Too Well,” and “Getaway Car.” The fact that she writes every song on her album not only shows how talented she is as an artist but also reflects all parts of her journey - you can hear her screaming her loneliness in “Delicate,” her transformation from hatred to love in “Call It What You Want,” her true joy and contentedness in her album *Lover*. Music never lies, and Swift’s speaks to her audience so sincerely. The new song “Only the Young” included is such an inspiring, upbeat, and motivational political anthem that exemplifies the new and reborn Taylor.

The highlight of *Miss Americana* to me personally is certainly towards the end when Taylor Swift

chooses to go public with the her political views, from her urging her younger audience to vote to her staunch stance for the LGBT community. It’s truly a change from her strict apolitical profile in the past. Without her constant need to be the “nice girl,” she’s now free to express her views, unafraid of the potential backlashes like the *Dixie Chicks* received. The shift is not sudden or without reason, but is rather a result of her going through the David Mueller case. It’s evident that she’s tired of being in a position capable of change and impact but not do it.

All in all, *Miss Americana* delivers to the fan something that we’ve all wanted, the metamorphosis of the country

Taylor in her sparkly dress and cowboy boots to the 29-year-old Taylor in her pajamas set, eating burritos and speaking up against misogyny. It touches on topics, including some centered around mental health - dealing with the fear of not being good enough, the desire to be liked, building our self-worth on others’ approval, while others more societal and representative of contemporary female artists, celebrities, and public shaming. It’s not the strongest of documentaries nor the most touching of topics, but nevertheless it’s a genuine, compelling, and vulnerable watch that I’ll recommend to everyone.

GAMES

games.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Wargroove - How Does the Game Hold up One Year on?

Here is a review of Wargroove (for the Nintendo Switch), a frankly brilliant game that really highlights the strength of Indie Developers when they take inspiration from older series such as Advance Wars.

GAMES

Wargroove



Developer: Chucklefish
Genre: Turn-based Tactics
Platforms: PC, PS4, XBO, Switch

Freddie Ugo
Games Editor

Wargroove is one of the most charming games I have played in the last year. On the surface it is just a turn-based tactics game with a cute art style, but as you dive deep into the lore, gameplay and competitive multiplayer, you soon realise that this is a title more than fitting as the spiritual successor to Advance Wars.

Wargroove is developed and published by Chucklefish – a British video game developer based in London! They are known for some amazing Indie Games, such as Starbound and Stardew Valley, the latter being a masterpiece in itself.

With a team of only 13 permanent staff, it's truly amazing what they can accomplish.

As someone who is typically not a fan of turn-based tactics games, I was initially sceptical. I heard great things and decided to buy the physical copy on Nintendo Switch; it had a map and a strategy guide, so I guess I had to, I am a huge collector after all. I booted it up and was immediately greeted by a dramatic opening cutscene, hand-drawn yet

not lacking beautifully animated movement. From the moment I saw this, I knew the game had charm. There are three modes that you can play. The story mode is single player only and takes you on a journey through the continent of Aurania to defeat the evil forces of Felheim after Sigrid – a 900-year-old vampire – murders the main character's father in cold blood. I say the main character rather than just 'you' as you play as much more than just the princess Mercia. As you progress through the story you learn about 4 main warring factions throughout Aurania and have access to play as many of the leaders of these factions. The brilliant thing about Wargroove is

“What makes Wargroove really stand out is its artistic value”

that each faction leader has their own special ability or 'Groove' which dictates the play style of whomever you are given at the start of the battle. This groove can range from healing people in an area to summoning an undead skeleton to aid you in battle.

The gameplay is very addictive. Summoning units and capturing villages with said units in order to gain income is the main focus of each battle – as well as either destroy-



The characters in this game have so much...character! // Wargroove.com

ing the enemy stronghold or leader to eventually win. This seems simple enough, but with each unit having their own strengths and weaknesses (rock-paper-scissors style) and their own unique requirements to achieve a critical hit, there was a high level of complexity that I found deeply rewarding.

As well as the 50+ hours of main story, one can choose to play through the arcade mode, a series of smaller missions which upon completion you receive various rewards. Characters, as well as a multitude of pages of lore, can be unlocked by playing the main campaign. One could also choose to play the puzzle mode, a devilish brain-teaser of an option which poses puzzles which you have to solve given your knowledge of the mechanics of the game. These start off relatively simple but quickly grow to be insanely frustrating (in a good way).

My main complaint about the gameplay would have to be the artificial difficulty settings. Rather

than being able to choose a variety of difficulties that reflect the intelligence of the AI, you instead choose difficulties which alter the amount of damage you receive/do. This is understandable given the small team that worked on Wargroove, but a better difficulty system would have been great to see, especially when I wanted to up the difficulty on completion of the game but decided not to because it just felt pointless.

What makes Wargroove really stand out is its artistic value. By this I mean the beautiful sprite art, which in motion feels much more realistic than you would expect. Weather changes cause objects to move in the wind, and the spray of water as sea-based units move is far too satisfying to ignore. Being named Wargroove, you would expect to hear some banging tunes. Well, luckily, Chucklefish does not disappoint. The songs really set the mood of battle incredibly well, with a playfulness to them that reminds you that it is

just a game, a playful one at that. The light-hearted nature of this game is reflected in its music and art style and allows it to have an almost Nintendo-like charm. I compare Wargroove to Nintendo games (as a massive fanboy of Nintendo) because it is just so chock-full of things to do. When you aren't playing you can read through all of the lore or listen to the music within the music player menu. Alternatively, you can marvel at the artwork, including concept art for all the characters.

After all of this though, there is also a rich multiplayer mode. You can design your own maps in a level editor, which I must say is top notch, or play ready-made maps against friends (or strangers) online. The technical level of players is variable (you will get your arse whooped) but it is always fun, and you never really feel like you have been cheated from a victory. The multiplayer is still thriving today and hopefully with the free DLC update (Feb 6th)

that introduces a whole new faction and 2 new units, there will be even more returning players to face.

After playing this game to death and still not getting bored, other than the occasional insane difficulty spike and annoying difficulty settings, I would

“Multiplayer is always fun. You never feel as though you have been cheated from a sure victory”

say that Wargroove is excellent value for money. It is available on PC, PS4, Switch and Xbox One for around \$20. If you are a fan of tactics games, or just love a game with a lot of charm (and dogs, omg I forgot to mention all the dogs), then I could not recommend this any more! 4/5 stars.





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Tech Writer

Sony Playstation 5 & The Future of Console Gaming

Sony teased its Playstation 5 console last month at CES by unveiling its official logo and announcing that it was set for a holiday 2020 release; Microsoft's Xbox Series X is also set to be launched in a similar timeframe. However, unlike Microsoft, Sony didn't reveal the actual console. Rather, it's rumoured that Sony is set to reveal it at a special event later this month or early next month. Since the teaser, fans have been speculating the price, design, launch titles, and specifications of the highly-anticipated device.

It's also rumoured that Sony would wait for Microsoft to launch the Series X first and then determine the price of the PS5. Although, Microsoft doesn't seem too worried about Sony or Nintendo; in a recent interview, Xbox head Phil Spencer said that "Amazon and Google are Xbox's real competition." Microsoft is trying to push Xbox over to the cloud with its Azure cloud infrastructure through Project xCloud. Thus, Microsoft is, in essence, directly competing with other companies that have world-class cloud infrastructures and a focus on gaming; these companies include Google, Amazon,

and even Apple.

Sony and Nintendo, on the other hand, are more traditional companies, focusing on creating products rather than shifting to services. Coming back to the PS5, it looks to have great backwards compatibility with the PS4 and highly

"Amazon and Google are Xbox's real competitor"

impressive performance upgrades. The console's processor is based on AMD's Ryzen architecture and its graphics would be powered by a custom AMD Navi GPU. Like the Xbox Series X, the PS5 would ditch hard-drives for solid-state-drives; games would now launch much faster and load times would reduce significantly. Furthermore, the PS5 is confirmed to be backwards compatible with the PS4, meaning that most of your old PS4 games would still run on the PS5. In addition, most of the games released in the next year would be cross-generational, meaning that they would still run on both generations of consoles.

Samsung Galaxy Z Flip & S20 Series

Samsung seems to have been facing a lot of problems with containing the excitement for its next range of flagships. The Galaxy S20 series of phones as well as the

new galaxy foldable - the Galaxy Z flip - have all been leaked both through Samsung themselves as well as through other sources. At this point, it looks like the idea of having an event about the devices seems pretty insignificant considering that almost everything has been leaked about the devices, down to their prices and even colours.

Anyways, the Z Flip is set to be a direct competitor to the Motorola Razr and features a tall 6.7" foldable display. From the rumours and leaks, it looks like Samsung has learned from its experience with the Galaxy Fold as the new device promises to be much more durable and reliable in the long run. Further, it is set to be priced lower than the Fold and higher than the S20 series. One disadvantage with a foldable, though, is that you're paying for the form factor rather than for the specifications.

The Z flip would run on the older Snapdragon 855+ processor, not have a 5G variant, have a battery capacity of 3300 mAh, and only possess a

"You're paying for the form factor rather than for the specifications"

dual camera module. The S20 on the other hand, would have a 5G variant, run on the Exynos 990 processor, possess battery capacities between 4500



Oculus Quest Hand Tracking // Oculus

mAh and 5000 mAh, and feature rectangular camera modules (similar to those on the iPhone 11 series and the Pixel 4 series) with around 3 to 4 cameras. Furthermore, these phones are rumoured to have a buttery-smooth 120 Hz OLED displays with an Infinity-O cutout. The S20 line, in general, would resemble the the Note 10 series. The Galaxy Unpacked event is less than a week away, so get ready for a rather fresh dose of android flagships.

Oculus Quest Gains Hand Tracking Feature

Late last year, Oculus's Quest VR headset received a software update that enables the device to track its wearer's hands. This experimental feature makes use of the onboard cameras to track the user's hands for a more natural, immersive, and

controller-free gaming experience. A recent update makes the experience much better for end-users; however, there isn't really much to do with the hand

"A natural, immersive, controller-free experience"

tracking apart from navigating the user interface and using it to control the device's built-in, native applications. Also, there aren't any games on the Oculus Store that currently support this feature, though it's interesting to see where Oculus and game developers would take this feature in the future.

UK To Ban Gasolines & Hybrids By 2035

In an effort to encourage people to switch to electric vehicles, the UK government has planned to ban the sale of gasoline cars and hybrids by 2035, five years earlier than planned. Prime Minister Boris Johnson said that "There can be no greater responsibility than protecting our planet." This shows commitment towards a positive change that may influence other countries and would certainly benefit our planet environmentally. These cars can still be sold on the used market, but you can expect heavy road taxes and fuel charges. With Norway, Netherlands, France, and even India on a similar track, it's only a matter of time before the rest of the world follow suit.

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SCIENCE

science.felix@imperial.ac.uk

The Fearless Scientists: the Female Minds that the World Forgot

Christine Parry reviews Rachel Ignatofsky's Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers who Changed the World, in light of the countless forgotten scientists no one talks about

SCIENCE

Christine Parry
Science Editor

Books must be the most guessable of gifts. There may be a fleeting moment where the square, snugly wrapped present could still be a box of chocolates, but that thought is quickly discarded on picking it up – even the priciest choccies are no match for a book in weight.

I received one such gift this Christmas, excitement dimming the

moment I sussed out what it was. But I was too hasty in my judgement, as this book – *Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers who Changed the World*, by Rachel Ignatofsky – turned out to be a delightful eye opener.

Published in 2017, it was bang-on trend with the meteoric prominence given to women, in virtually any sphere of life. By now, moving into 2020, you could be forgiven for an eyeroll at a bandwagon-jumping title – yes, yes, we all know science is for women too (and if you don't, where have you been hiding?!). I'll admit

to being a tad sceptical myself.

So yes, the title may be a bit of an obvious hook. However, once I actually settled down to read it, the real selling point was still there, hidden in that title – fearless pioneers. Irrespective of their gender, the individuals Ignatofsky profiles in her book are the forgotten geniuses, overlooked by history – and yes, in some instances buried behind a more prominent male scientist, but it is their achievements, not just their gender, that burns off the page.

How could it be that I

hadn't heard of Hertha Ayrton, whose success improving electrical street lights used in Victorian Britain forced the Royal Society to let her, a woman, present a paper there? Or the American geneticist, Nettie Stevens, who discovered sex was determined by our chromosomes? What about Chien-Shiung Wu, who disproved the law of conservation of parity concerning radioactive atoms?

Each of these profiles is accompanied by a page-wide stylised drawing of the woman under the spotlight, busy with some

sort of scientific activity. Ignatofsky both authors and illustrates the book. The era-appropriate outfits are a nice touch, showing off the diversity of these individuals from women in Greek togas to Renaissance period clothing, modern-day suits, astronaut gear, and, of course, white lab-coats. It makes a clear statement that women have been advancing science for over a millennium, and yet were consistently written out of popular history.

Quotes, diagrams, and factoid captions are sprinkled liberally across the pages, crowding the

margins, making for a teenage-girl-diary feel that probably reflects the target audience of the book. The additional information clustered there definitely piques interest, whatever the design intent.

The short one-page profiles make for sporadic reading, and given this amount of novel information crammed into each one, it's probably best to limit reads to a few women a day for maximum assimilation. But far be it from me to put limits on you!

I shall, however, recommend a read.

Forgotten scientists: Battle for the sexes – Nettie Stevens

Never heard of Nettie Stevens? That's precisely the point, as Science writer Lydia Melville profiles this scientist

SCIENCE

Lydia Melville
Science Writer

Nettie Stevens is not a household name, yet her discovery of how sex is determined is common household knowledge. Born in Vermont in 1861, Nettie graduated at 19 to become a teacher before further pursuing her studies and enrolling at Bryn Mawr College in her late 30's.

Thanks to Nettie's work, we now know that the 23rd pair of chromo-

somes in humans varies between male and female as XY or XX, respectively. Nettie Stevens' major paper in the field of cytology, the study of cells, was written in 1904 with the 1933 Nobel Prize winner, Thomas Hunt Morgan, a geneticist and zoologist. At the time, science was unsure of what determined an animal's sex at birth, humans included. Was it down to temperature, as with some reptiles such as crocodiles? Could it be the diet of the parents? She was involved in discovering that sex is determined by the X and Y sex chromosomes, and

that in humans, the sperm determines the sex of the foetus.

Chromosomes were named because of how they absorb dye when stained, after the Greek chromo for colour. Interestingly, the X chromosome was named not so much from its shape but from its unknown function at the time, described by Nettie's previous advisor, Edmund Miller. The second copy of the X chromosome provides a back-up for X chromosome genes, explaining why certain conditions, such as colour-blindness, occur more in XY individuals who lack a second

copy.

The immune system in those of us with XX is actually primed to respond to the foreign Y chromosome, making fertilisation an incredibly complex process with all the odds stacked against its success. Additionally, the foetus is only driven towards an XY phenotype upon activation of the sex-determining region (SRY) gene, making gender a naturally complex journey to rival the story of the mechanism's discovery by Nettie.

Nettie cracked the code of a scientific mystery which had puzzled researchers for years.

However, as she died in 1912 from breast cancer, she was not recognised for her work for a long time after her death. Other similar cases of missed recognition of scientists' ground-breaking research include, most famously, Rosalind Franklin for her contribution in the discovery of the double helical structure of DNA. Sometimes, it may still feel as though scientists work this way, worlds apart from equality, despite such a small genetic difference between the male and female sexes.



Nettie Stevens // Christine Parry

SUSTAINABILITY

sustainability.felix@imperial.ac.uk

The Vegan Butcher

A family history in charcuterie did not put veganism off the menu for Joe Wallwork, he is proud of both

SUSTAINABILITY

Joe Wallwork

Sustainability Writer

As January 2020 draws to a close, thousands of people will have resolved to spend the month without eating or using any animal products. The Veganuary charity, based in the UK, anticipates 350,000 people completing the challenge worldwide. But why would so many people want to do this? Before getting into the reasons, let me tell you a little about my own story.

For eight years I worked at my uncle's butcher's shop in my hometown, in North

West England. I started working part-time in my early teens, continuing throughout my secondary school and sixth

“I don't envy teenagers today, who hear about catastrophic fires and global protests every single day”

form years. I fondly recall my colleagues, the work banter and delicious pork pies, and I feel that working there

was a big contributor toward my development of a good work ethic.

I had been concerned about climate change for some years, but somehow this wasn't at the forefront of my attention. I don't envy teenagers today, who hear about catastrophic fires and global protests every single day. I, on the other hand, didn't hear too much about climate change and could safely deny (in the passive, personal sense) that it was happening, as many people continue to do today (sometimes in a less passive manner).

I started an undergraduate degree in Manchester, close enough to my hometown that I could go back to work the odd Saturday shift at my uncle's shop. I

became involved in environmental activism. As I learned about the climate crisis, I became

“I started to question the consistency between my views and my part-time job”

more and more aware of the environmental impact of the meat industry, at which point I started to question the consistency between my views and my part-time job.

My uncle's shop is very much a family business, which has

employed every one of my family members. We are all very proud of what he has achieved. But at some point the hypocrisy of promoting climate activism and working in the meat industry became too much for me. The day that I finally declared I was going vegetarian - and for what reasons - there was a lot of confusion. Whilst it is perfectly understandable that my uncle would be defensive about my reasons, I am of the belief that everyone is entitled to their own lifestyle choices and that this should be respected. I do not criticise others for eating meat, so I don't expect to be criticised for making the opposite choice. I am happy to say that my uncle and I are able to talk quite openly about these topics. Once he even recommended a restaurant to me for its vegetarian options!

There is no one reason that people choose to be vegan; reducing animal suffering, health benefits and consciousness about the contribution to climate change are driving forces in differing proportions. Whilst I focus mainly on the latter aspect in this column, there is a lot to be said regarding how veganism can help both human and non-human animals alike.

The vast majority of the energy available to us on Planet Earth comes - directly or indirectly - from the sun. A proportion of this energy is taken on by plants as they photosynthesize, converting the solar energy into chemical energy. Herbivorous and omnivorous animals

are able to tap into this chemical energy by eating plant matter, although the process is not perfect - plenty of the energy is wasted during the consumption process. The same can be said for when carnivorous and omnivorous animals consume other animals lower down the food chain. Ultimately, we observe that the total energy required to provide a carnivore with one calorie is generally greater than that required to provide one calorie to a herbivore.

The great advantage of human omnivory is that we get to choose!

By choosing a more herbivorous diet, we are able to reduce the amount of energy required to grow our food. That means fewer links in the food chain, smaller transportation networks and increased scope for ultra-efficient

“By choosing a more herbivorous diet, we are able to reduce the amount of energy required to grow our food”

growing methods, such as vertical farming. Each of these aspects comes with a reduced carbon footprint, compared with conventional livestock farming. In addition, research suggests that cows emit a considerable amount of methane - a greenhouse gas which



Don't be fooled by appearances, this moving mountains burger is fully plant based // Flickr

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The vegan diet is associated with a significantly lower carbon footprint // Pixabay

is shorter lived, but far more potent than carbon dioxide. Cutting down your beef consumption on its own can lead to a significant shrinking of your carbon footprint.

A 2014 study by Scarborough et al. surveyed over 50,000 Brits including a representative numbers of vegans, vegetarians, pescetarians and meat eaters. They compared the age-and-sex-adjusted mean greenhouse gas emissions associated with each of these diets and found that the equivalent number of kilograms of carbon dioxide per day was 7.19 for high volume meat eaters (more than 100 g per day), 5.63 for moderate meat eaters (50-99 g), 4.67 for low volume meat eaters (less than 50 g), 3.91 for pescetarians, 3.81 for vegetarians and 2.89 for vegans. This implies that even someone who eats a moderate amount of meat can almost half

the carbon footprint associated with their diet by becoming vegan.

I am sure some readers will call me out for hypocrisy, but I didn't admit that I still help my uncle out every Christmas (by far the busiest time of year) for a couple of days. Sometimes helping your family has to come above your lifestyle choices.

On a similar note, I am very much in support of flexible veganism, sometimes referred to as freeganism. If your flatmate is about to throw out some cheese they don't want, why not eat it? If you visit a friend's house and they cook you something non-vegan by accident, are you really going to be so rude as to reject it? Someone who is vegan for environmental reasons may be willing to 'freegan', as waste is more of a concern than philosophical considerations about whether

animal products should ever be consumed. Someone who is vegan primarily to reduce animal suffering may well differ in opinion, of course.

In recent years, many people have brandished the environmental movement a failure, pointing out

"I am very much in support of flexible veganism, sometimes referred to as freeganism"

how, despite its existence, global emissions have continued to rise steadily for the past 30 years. I am of the opinion that a big con-

tributor to this failure is how environmentalism has been linked most strongly to individual actions - a natural conclusion within our consumerist society. Within this paradigm, an environmentalist can be one of two things: (a) a hypocrite, or (b) a purist, zero-waste, vegan hippy who never travels anywhere using fossil fuels and may well be regarded as politically irrelevant. In such a paradigm, you can't win!

Nobody is perfect, not even world leaders, celebrities or activists. Instead of calling each other out, we should be working together to build a better world. One group who propagates this philosophy is Extinction Rebellion (XR), whose occupations of central London grabbed headlines across the world in 2018 and 2019. One of the fundamental values of XR is that no one person is responsi-

ble for climate change. We all play a part in the problem. The implication of this? We should

"Instead of calling each other out, we should be working together to build a better world"

all play a part in the solution.

There is little doubt that 2019 was the year where climate change was forced into discussion as an existential threat to many species and to many communities. Let's make 2020 the year where something significant is finally done about it. Reducing the proportion of animal

products in your diet is one clear way of making a contribution towards this goal.

Felix Sustainability was founded to create a platform for discussion about environmental issues and sustainable development. We are open to articles from all points of view.

Please get in touch if you would like to write for us using the email address in the header.

INVESTMENT

icu.investmentsociety@imperial.ac.uk

To Diverge or Not to Diverge?

INVESTMENT

Marios Papadopoulos
ICIS

Investment Student Writer

In a recent interview with the Financial Times, Sajid Javid, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, warned businesses that the government wished to diverge from EU regulations following Britain's exit from the European Union. Representatives from the automotive and aerospace industry immediately expressed their concern, prompting Mr. Javid to provide assurances that the government will adopt a cautious approach in subsequent interviews. Regulatory divergence will have an impact on all sectors, especially on financial services. According to the House of Commons Library's records, financial services accounted for 6.9% of total economic output in 2018, which underscores the sector's importance to the UK's economy.

Predicted Future Relationship

According to the political declaration

regarding Britain's future relationship with the EU, access to Europe's financial markets will be granted using an "equivalence system". Under this system, the EU allows third countries access to its financial markets if countries' regulations align with the EU's regulatory framework. The Chancellor has stated that this system allows the UK to adopt its own regulations, but it must ensure their outcomes are equivalent to those produced by the EU's rulebook. This approach will certainly provide more flexibility to the UK. However, there is no guarantee that the EU will agree to this plan. Even if it does agree with it, the EU will probably be able to limit Britain's access in the case of regulatory divergence. The government expects an agreement on the form of the future relationship to be finalized by the end of the year, which many consider an overly ambitious deadline.

The Case for Alignment

The case for remaining as aligned as possible with EU regulations is not difficult to argue for. Established financial institutions will face significant obstacles

in offering services to European customers if the UK were to no longer have access to European financial markets. Consequently, the trend of relocation to competing financial centres, such as Frankfurt and Paris, would significantly exacerbate, thus endangering a larger number of jobs in the sector. Having to deal with two widely different legal frameworks would certainly discourage inter-

"Diverging from EU regulations will not necessarily be harmful to all sectors of the economy..."

national firms from maintaining their headquarters in the UK. Remaining aligned with the EU rulebook is essential for export-dependent companies, such as car makers and manufacturing firms. An overhaul of current regulations would be associated with extra costs since businesses would

strive to ensure their products comply with both EU and UK rules, in addition to the costs due to the trade barriers that will be likely be introduced. All these costs will eventually result in higher prices for consumers and a reduction in earnings, which will discourage investment from the public in these companies.

The Case for Divergence

Diverging from EU regulations will not necessarily be harmful to all sectors of the economy. Particularly, the technology sector could benefit from a shift away from the current European framework, which is viewed as restrictive by many voices in the tech community. Recent examples include articles 11 and 13 of the controversial copyright law along with announcements about banning the use of facial recognition in public spaces. By diverging from EU standards, the UK could become a testing ground for upcoming technologies, such as driverless cars, robotics, and AI. This spur of technological innovation would also benefit the fintech sector Tailoring new technologies to the needs

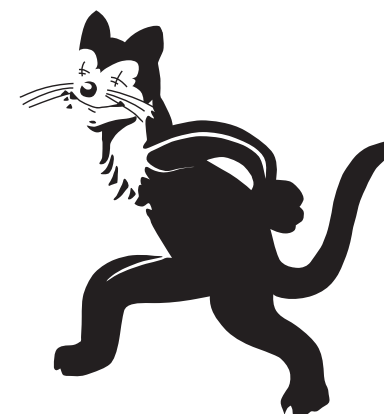
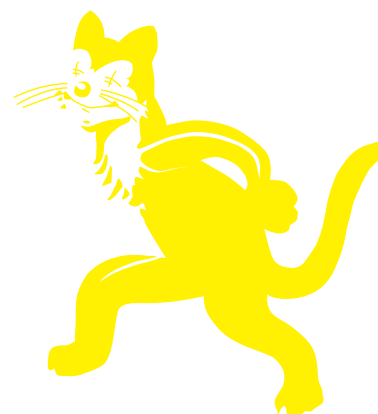
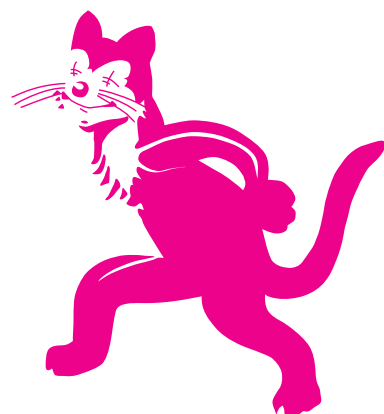
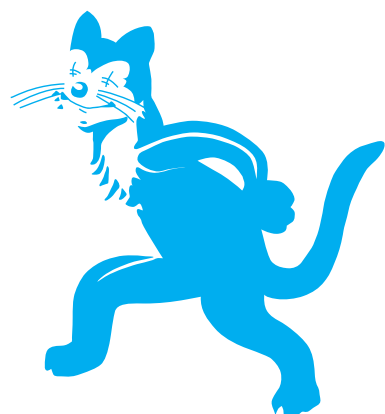
of the banking sector would facilitate further growth and more effective competition with China and the US, regardless of whether access to EU markets has been maintained or not. The UK's leading pharmaceutical industry could be further boosted in the case of divergence. The ability of the UK to develop its own regulations for pharmaceutical products would facilitate harmonisation with the regulatory regime of other nations, whose markets UK pharmaceutical companies want to access post-Brexit. Given that UK's Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is a highly respected body worldwide, the EU will most likely wish to continue its cooperation with it. As a result, the UK would maintain a large number of EU rules, while crafting others of its own in an effort to back British interests. It is hence possible that both sectors could represent significant investing opportunities moving forward.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is apparent that a nuanced approach should be adopted. The UK should be careful not to diverge

just for the sake of it; a sudden shift in policy will likely cause significant short and medium-term damage, especially in financial services and export-dependent sectors. Securing a trade deal with the US, which is frequently cited as the main argument in favour of extensive deregulation, may require a policy shift in industries such as food processing. Deregulating such a sector would face opposition from a broad swathe of public opinion. Considering that the list of the top ten UK export destinations includes seven EU countries, and Switzerland, which is a member of the European Economic Area, a sudden disruption in trading relationships due to divergence from European standards would likely offset or even outweigh the gains expected by this decision. All of these factors suggest it would be in the interests of the UK 's economy for the country to remain in close alignment with the EU, at least in the short term.

Felix is recruiting!



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A closer look: Trade Deficits and Surpluses

INVESTMENT

Pavan Singh Gill

ICIS

Investment Student Writer

Let's begin with some definitions. What is Trade? It is the concept of buying and selling of goods and services with compensation provided to the seller by the buyer. A more direct explanation would be the exchange of goods and services between parties.

“The effects of a trade surplus might result in a trade deficit. How does this happen?...”

Why is trade important and how is it relevant to me?

At the fundamental level trade occurs daily. For example when you purchased that cup of coffee. You were provided with a service from the interaction and the goods is coffee. In return, you handover cash which was the compensation you owe for the goods and service. Trade, in this aspect, is vastly important because it allows individuals to leverage each other, instead of having to produce all of the goods and services that she or he consumes. At a global level, we can talk about the trade between countries using terms such as Deficits and Surpluses, but before that, we need to introduce the notion of exports and imports.

What are exports and

imports?

In the context of international trade, export refers to any goods or services produced within the jurisdiction of a country that is sold outside the country. And imports are any goods or services produced outside the jurisdiction of the country that is purchased in the country. For example, if Italy produces apples and sells them to the UK. This would be an example of Italy exporting apples to the UK and the UK importing apples from Italy.

What is a surplus?

A surplus refers to the notion that the monetary value of the imports of a country is greater than its exports. Taking the previous example of the UK and Italy, where Italy exports apples to the UK. Let's say the UK uses the imported apples to make apple cider and sell it to Italy. We can logically assume that the cost of the cider is more expensive than the apple. Therefore, if the UK uses all the apples it imports to

“Surplus - the notion that the monetary value of the imports of a country is greater than its exports”

make cider and sell all the cider it produces to Italy. The monetary value of the goods sold by the UK would be greater than that of Italy. Hence the UK would have what is called a trade surplus. And Italy would have what we call a trade deficit.

What is a deficit?

A deficit refers to the notion that the monetary value of the exports of a country is greater than its imports. In layman terms, we can oversimplify this concept and say that the country behaves like a friend who spends more money than she/he has.

Does this mean a trade surplus is always good?

In general, it is fair to say that a trade surplus is good. However, there might be situations where a country, companies or individuals might choose to run a deficit. For example, a country could choose to run a trade deficit if it decides to spend millions of pounds importing energy due to unforeseen energy consumption, to provide for its citizens.

An interesting effect of a trade surplus

The effects of a trade surplus might result in a trade deficit. How does this happen? Let's take the cider example. The UK sells cider to Italy and Italy sell apples to the UK. Earlier we said that the UK has a trade surplus but we did not take into account the effect of currencies.

This surplus might increase the value of the pound against the euro because the UK sells its goods in pounds and for Italy to purchase ciders it would need to buy pounds.

As a result, the demand

for pounds goes up, relative to the euro. And more pounds would flow into the UK, giving it better control of its currency. This, in turn, makes ciders seem more expensive to Italy due to the cost of pounds and results in Italy importing fewer ciders from the UK. Since the UK sells fewer ciders, its imports are

“Agreements between two or more countries, usually in the form of a treaty”

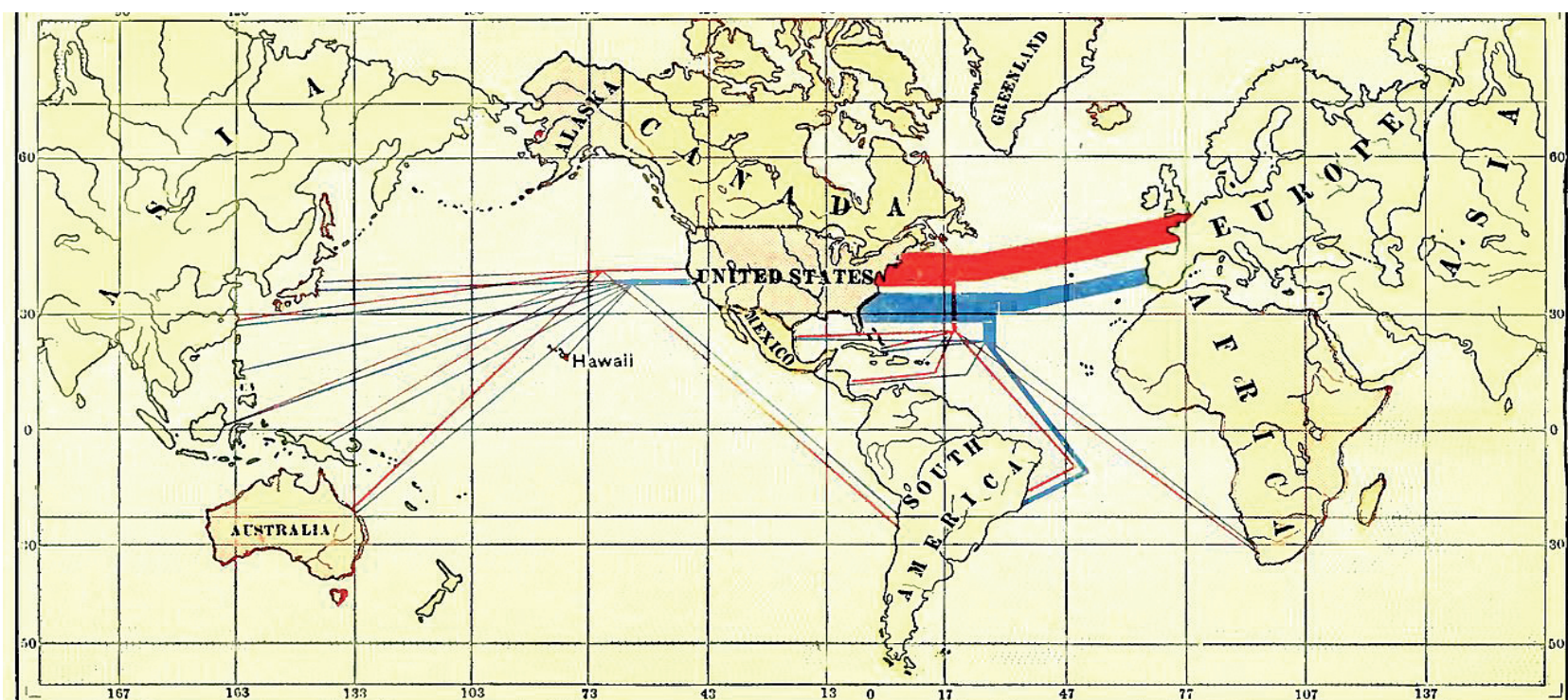
worth more than its export and it experiences a trade deficit.

Trade deals

The discussion on trade would not be complete without talking about trade deals. What are they?

Trade deals are agreements between two or more countries, usually in the form of a treaty, underlying how they can trade with each other. This, however, does not take into account the World Trade Organisation (WTO) trade rules, which allows member countries to trade with each other on predefined rules, without a trade deal.

The lack of a trade deal provides less favourable trading terms for the countries involved. For example, taxes imposed on goods by another country which result in more expensive goods and thus reducing the overall demand for those same goods.



A country could be in surplus and deficit to different countries at the same time! // Carroll D. Wright, 1899

FOOD

food.felix@imperial.ac.uk

An introduction to interview and dining etiquette

FOOD

Timon Schenk

Writer

Have you ever been invited to a job interview? Well, if you haven't so far, imagine that you were to attend an interview followed by a lunch. How would you say hello? How would you behave at the table? What are the do's and do not's? In the following, we want to introduce you to what many students don't know and what they will learn once they start working: etiquette in two scenarios.

1st scenario: a typical job interview

Imagine you are applying for your most wanted job and you are finally invited to attend a personal interview. How exciting! But do you also know how to make a good impression?

It all starts with the first impression. No boss likes waiting, so you should arrive well in advance to an interview with your potential boss.

If you take public transportation to get there, take a bus or train that arrives at least 30 minutes in advance. If you have a car or bike, check the parking spots and to which facility or office you must go. Keep in mind that companies can be huge and the respective office could be at the opposite end of the facility. For appropriate clothing, you can always call the reception to ask about the usual dress code. You should be at least one style level above the company's usual dress code to show that you value the company and its employees.

Once you've managed to arrive, register at the

reception so that your interviewer can be informed about your arrival. Afterwards, the interviewer is probably going to pick you up. He or she will then bring you to the interview area. This is normally the time for handshakes and small talk.

If you are sitting while being offered a handshake, stand up. Also make sure that your hand is dry even if it might be a hot day and you are sweating. Additionally, be aware that there is a certain hierarchy you must follow when performing a handshake. Usually, the host offers his guests the handshake and the more senior person reaches for the less senior person's hand. This means that an older man offers a younger man the hand, a lady offers a man of any age the hand and an older lady offers a younger lady

“Be aware that there is a certain hierarchy you must follow when performing a handshake”

the hand.

Don't try to force a handshake. If several people are offering you a handshake, take the first one that is offered to you. Never decline a handshake that is offered to you, unless you have a good reason, like you are sick. A situation where you decline the handshake of a gentleman to one to a lady might make the gentleman feel uncomfortable and the lady a little strange.

Furthermore, let the

handshake be a solid one, which would not seem like you are being offered a dead fish or that you want to destroy the extended hand. Don't shake the hand longer than five seconds. Keep eye contact with the inviting person to avoid staring at your own beautiful hand. Introduce yourself with your name and keep in mind that a real professional would repeat the name of the person he is shaking hands with. This is a good way of signalling our brain to remember the name.

Afterwards, the interviewer may ask you how you are doing, if it was easy to find your way to the building or something similar. Please be aware that this is the wrong moment to complain about any inconveniences you have experienced earlier this day. You should reply that everything went fine since you want to show that you are a person who can handle stressful situations and knows how to make a proper small talk. Don't hesitate to ask a question in return if you feel the need to, since this demonstrates your self-confidence.

It is recommended to have a fresh breath. It's a well-known tip amongst experts to have peppermint candy or chewing gum in your pocket, but don't forget to finish it or take it out before you meet your interviewer.

If you are offered a beverage, you can decide whether or not you want to accept it. There is no right or wrong here.

The interview itself will not be covered in this article but we recommend you to be confident and polite to leave a good impression.

After the interview, be sure to say goodbye properly by looking into the eyes when giving an appropriate handshake, as



Proper dining etiquette leaves employers with a good impression // Kaboompics

discussed before.

2nd scenario: a casual dinner during an assessment centre

Now imagine that the interview went great and that you can consider yourself a master of giving handshakes. Instead of sending you home, your potential boss invites you to a lunch in a restaurant with some potential colleagues. This might sound amazing for some people, but for others it might be quite stressful: what do you do in the case you don't like the food offered or if you are allergic to it?

If you are allergic to any food, don't hesitate to tell the host or the waiter, since it can endanger your health. Usually there are lots of different dishes even at restaurants specialised in something like seafood.

There are a few things that you need to know about rules at lunch table. Good etiquette can be impressive but it should lead to a pleasant time where you enjoy food together. It is recommended to mute your mobile and even better, to not use it in the presence of others as

it is very impolite. Once the table is set, wait to be seated or wait for what your host. If he sits down, you can sit down as well. You should sit up straight, but comfortably. If there is a napkin on your plate or next to it, you should put it on your lap right away. You will use this one napkin to wipe your mouth when needed during the meal.

In the Western world, there is usually a plate

“There may be several sets of silverware but a general rule of thumb is to work your way from the outside in”

and next to it at least one fork and knife. Cutlery for desserts is usually placed on the top side of your plate. A soup spoon would be placed on the right-hand side. There may be several sets of silverware but a general rule of thumb is to work your

way from the outside in. If you are not sure which cutlery to use, just have a look around you and observe what other people are doing. On the top right of your plate, there will be a water glass and a wine glass. On the top left you could find a small plate with a small knife, which is for bread and butter.

During the meal keep your elbows off the table, since it is considered to be impolite. While you are chewing it is good to keep your wrists on the table. When it comes to spoons, everything that is served in a bowl or boolean cup is supposed to be eaten with one. Be careful that the meal is not too hot to avoid burning yourself. Also, don't salt your food before trying it, since a hiring manager may think that you'd rather make assumptions than decisions based on fact and this could have a negative impact on their decision. It may also be disrespectful for the chef. Once you've tried the food and still find it to be underseasoned for your taste, you can ask for salt and pepper.

Chew with your mouth closed and avoid making unpleasant noises at any time. Furthermore, you should avoid talking

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while chewing food. Since it might be the case that someone asks you a question while you have just put the next bite into your mouth, signal to the asker that you will finish chewing before you answer.

Once you have finished with a course, you should put your fork and knife at a twenty past four clock angle to signal that you are done. You must not put the used silverware on the table; simply leave it on the plate, so that it can be taken away. After the meal, you can then rest your elbows on the table, as long as your body language shows you are interested in the ongoing conversation.

You should actively participate in the conver-

“Once you have finished with a course, put your fork and knife at a twenty-past-four clock angle”

sation, but neither be the most silent person, nor the only one talking. Furthermore, you should avoid talking about politics, religion, and sexuality, since these topics are very inappropriate for the lunch or dinner table.

Finally, be aware of cultural differences. Some things you are used to, may appear to be rude in other countries.

You are now prepared to impress your future boss and everybody else at the table. The best would be to practice the above mentioned so that you know all the relevant information by heart, but you have just learned the basics of etiquette! Congratulations!

Ways to spaghetti your pasta to the next level

FOOD

Ellie Fung

Food Editor

Pasta ticks all the boxes — quick, easy, cheap — but spaghetti with jarred tomato sauce can get boring, to say the least, after the twentieth time. So, how can you elevate it without dishing out an arm and a leg and without honing in on your busy work/study/procrastination schedule?

First things first: salt your pasta water! I’m sure all good chefs will unanimously agree with me on this one (I’m not claiming to be one myself, I just watch a lot of cheffy food videos on YouTube). It adds a ton of flavour to really elevate your final dish. Liberal seasoning is typically why restaurant food tends to taste so much better. Optimally, the cooking water should be as salty as your ex. The sea would do just fine too. That might seem like a heart attack-inducing quantity, but you’re going to be draining most of the water, with most of the salt, anyway. The salted water does double duty: you can also use it to blanch vegetables (think broccoli, frozen peas, asparagus) for a couple minutes before you toss it

with sauce and pasta.

If you’re going to be dressing your pasta (I sure hope you do) later, cook your pasta until its *al dente* (Italian for ‘to the tooth’; aka with a firm bite). Pasta continues to cook as you stir it into warmed sauce or if you decide to toss it in a saucepan with something else. This way, you don’t end up with mushy pasta. The timing should be on the packaging, but if you’re unsure, don’t go about throwing a strand of spaghetti to a wall and seeing if it sticks. Taste it! Go for something a bit firmer than you’d like, or bite and look at the centre. If there’s a small, whitish, dry core, it’s *al dente*! If you like your pasta super firm, cook it a minute **orzo** less than what it would take to reach *al dente*.

After cooking your pasta (and maybe vegetables), reserve some cooking water before draining. It contains starch released by the pasta in the cooking process which does wonders for emulsifying any sauce you add in later. Another thing: don’t rinse your pasta! This only prevents sauce from clinging onto any remainder starch on your pasta to coat it evenly. We don’t want sauce to be sliding all over the place.

Now that we have beautifully cooked pasta, it’s time for sauce. To spice

things up (literally), add a pinch of paprika, chilli powder, red pepper flakes or ground black pepper when you’re reheating that jarred tomato sauce. A sprinkling of fresh or dried herbs, like basil, oregano and rosemary, or even a drizzle of balsamic vinegar, can also add depth of flavour that’ll only cost you a mere **penne** more. If you’re feeling fancy, opt for fresh herbs for an extra punch.

If you have a little extra time, feel free to elevate the tomato sauce with extra ingredients. Heat oil in a saucepan and fry some garlic (minced, thinly slice or smashed — it’s down to how lazy you feel) until fragrant. To up the nutritional value and taste, add in diced or thinly sliced vegetables (perhaps blanched in the salted water beforehand), mushrooms, ground meat and/or chopped bacon or sausage and cook until nicely browned before adding in the sauce and perhaps herbs and spices. What you add depends on how much time you want to dedicate to chopping and what you have at hand. All this sauteeing might seem like a hassle, but it can be done while your pasta is boiling away.

Don’t just limit yourself to tomato sauce though. There is a huge spectrum of prepared sauces available on supermarket shelves, such as various pestos and cream-based sauces, including plenty of plant-based options for my vegan friends. Add some to the same pan with the extra veg and/or meat to reheat, then on goes the drained pasta. Here’s where that reserved pasta water comes in. Treat it like a strong alcoholic drink. Without, the pasta and sauce might mingle, exchange small talk, but a little splash of starchy water will **really** get the

sparks flying. At this point you may want to add in some cheese — grated parmesan is always reliable, but try ricotta or feta to enhance the creaminess. Don’t worry if it all looks a little watery — the sauce will eventually thicken to give your pasta

“A sprinkling of fresh or dried herbs, or even balsamic vinegar, adds depth of flavour”

a gorgeous glossy coat. If you’re feeling healthy, stir in some tender greens until wilted — spinach, rocket, fresh basil or parsley are good options.

Or, ditch the jarred stuff altogether and come up with your own sauce in the same time. It might even come out cheaper than if you were to buy premade sauce. Heat up some oil and/or butter, then add in garlic until fragrant. And then sauté whatever you like as described above before adding in your pasta and pasta water. Try olives or capers for an umami boost, or lemon juice/zest for brightness, or heavy cream for creaminess, or mix and match different cheeses to see which combinations you like. There are endless **pastabilities**.

Since you’ve already gone the extra mile (without spending too much extra time), why not add toppings? More grated cheese is always nice, but chopped nuts, toasted seeds and breadcrumbs provide a nice contrasting crunch while fresh tender herbs or greens lightens up a rich, creamy dish. If

you’re feeling adventurous, yoghurt can provide a bit of welcome tanginess.

One more thing: switch up the pasta shapes! There’s a reason over 600 different shapes exist: they are optimised for certain sauces. Rule of thumb: wide noodles = thick, heavy, chunky sauce. Thin noodles = creamy, light, smooth sauce. Ridges and hollows, as in penne or rigatoni, are ideal for trapping hearty sauces and pestos. Shorter pieces, like fusilli and farfalle, are great for pasta salads (which also take minimal time and money). You might find you prefer the texture and sauce-retaining ability of other shapes over what you are normally having now.

On hectic days, you probably want to go for something even quicker. Instead of microwaved ready-meals, opt for one-pot pastas — they are superior in cost and flavour, with a multitude of online recipes. All you do is chuck the ingredients (yes, including raw pasta) into a pot, cover and simmer. In under 20 minutes, you end up with a tasty and filling meal, minus the hassle of draining pasta, reheating sauce and washing multiple pans. Plus, you can always make extra portions to cut down on cooking time on upcoming busy days.

Hopefully by now you’ve gathered some inspiration for your next meals, or at least some vague idea in the back of your mind. No need to follow all these tips religiously; simply adopting a couple can step up your pasta game. Since you’re likely going to be eating pasta for the next few years at uni (and probably beyond that as well), you might as well experiment and keep things **saucy** in the kitchen.



Every uni’s student best friend // Wikimedia

THROWBACK

felix@imperial.ac.uk

ESTATES

The Sabbatical Credibility Game

Next term the sabbatical race will start in earnest. There are many pitfalls along the road to your free room, free sherry and postgrad grant, and also there are many unexpected ways to increase your sabbatical credibility. It would be tiresome just to list all these, so learn for yourself—play 'Estates and Scaffolding'.

Rules

Men start at the beginning of the game. However, women should determine their starting position as follows: take your chest measurement (in inches) and subtract from 42. Then divide your measurement by the result of the subtraction. (Note: if your measurement is 42 or above, congratulations—you have already won!) Deduct 1 if you have hairy legs and 2 more for a face like a horse, then position your counter on the square number closest to the result and start from there. If you land at the foot of a piece of scaffolding, follow it up to the top. If you land on the head or hands of any of the Men from Estates, go down to the foot. (Upper foot for an odd throw, lower foot for an even throw.)

Instructions

Get your mummy (or another grown-up) to cut out the tokens. (You can do this yourself with round-ended scissors, if you are very careful.) They can be made nice and stiff if you stick them to pieces of card with sellotape or glue. You can draw your own face on the blank one if you like. Then find a pair of dice and off you go. Have fun!



Ian Bull



Mike Stuart



You?



Dave Parry



Jonathan Gerson



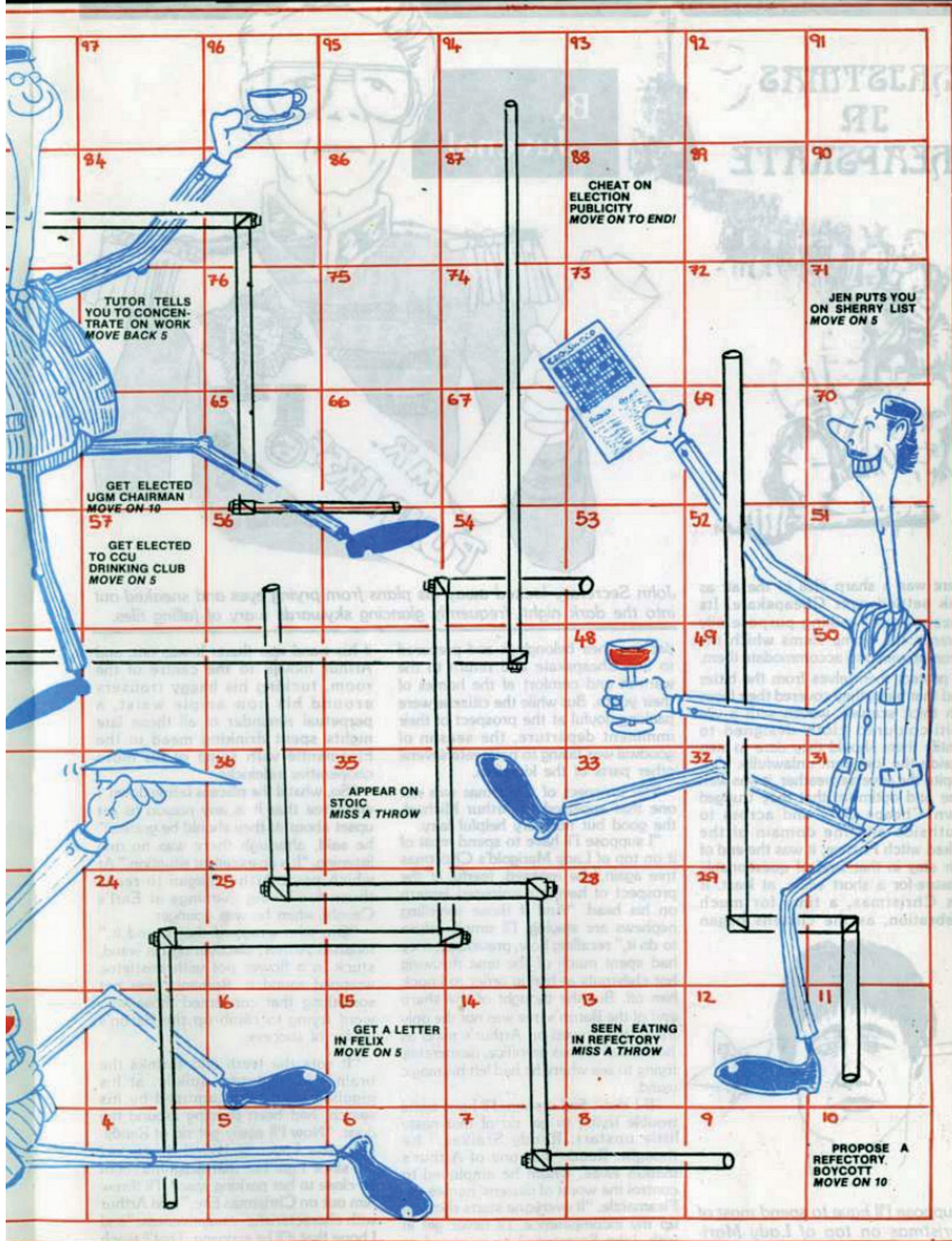
Peter Burt

And
UP
DOWN

99	99	99
Sabbatical!	FAIL EXAMS JOIN BAR STAFF	
81	82	83
GET PISSED ON ONE BOTTLE MOVE BACK 10		
80	79	78
PROPOSE PRO NUS MOTION AT UGM BACK TO START		
61	62	
DRINK A YARD AT CCU BARNIGHT MOVE ON 5		
60	59	58
41	42	
SPEAK ON ANTI-PORN MOTION AT UGM BACK TO START		
40	39	38
	GET YOUR PHOTO IN FELIX MOVE ON 5	
	22	23

THROWBACK

felix@imperial.ac.uk



Union Page



#icuElections

STAND

Nominate yourself and lead the change at Imperial

imperialcollegeunion.org/elections

You can lead Imperial

Nominations in the Leadership Elections 2020 are now open! There are over 700 opportunities available in which you could lead the change at Imperial. As a Union, this is our biggest annual democratic exercise, where every student at Imperial gets to decide the student experience by choosing the people who lead and represent us. Each position has a big impact on the student experience, from your academic department, Club, Society or Project, to general student life and wellbeing. We encourage you to stand for a role if you believe you can make a difference.

Stand for one of the Officer Trustee positions, which includes the President and four Deputy Presidents, and make some real change in these year long, full-time, paid positions. Or if you'd like to advocate for the voices of under-represented groups, stand to become one of our nine Liberation & Community Officers. You could also be our next Felix Editor, Council Chair or Student Trustee. Read about all the roles, find the one that best suits you, and nominate yourself at:

imperialcollegeunion.org/elections.



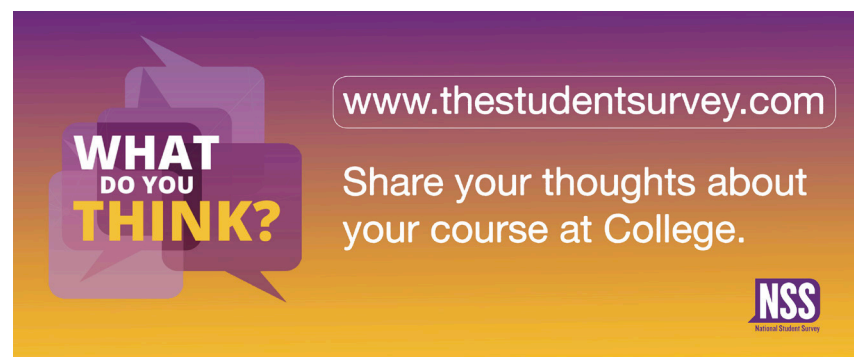
LGBT+ History Month

We are celebrating this year's LGBT+ History Month with a programme of events, developed in partnership with the LGBT+ Staff Network (Imperial 600) and students from ICSM, IQ (Imperial's LGBT+ Society), CGCU and your LGBT+ Officer. Join us at a range of events and activities taking place from now until the end of February, including networking events, film screenings, presentations, social activities, and more.

Events are open to all students, whether you identify as LGBTQ+ or an ally to the community.

With an overall aim of promoting equality and diversity, the month seeks to increase the visibility of LGBTQ+ people's history, lives and experiences. You can find the full programme and details at:

imperialcollegeunion.org/LGBTHistory.



Complete the National Student Survey

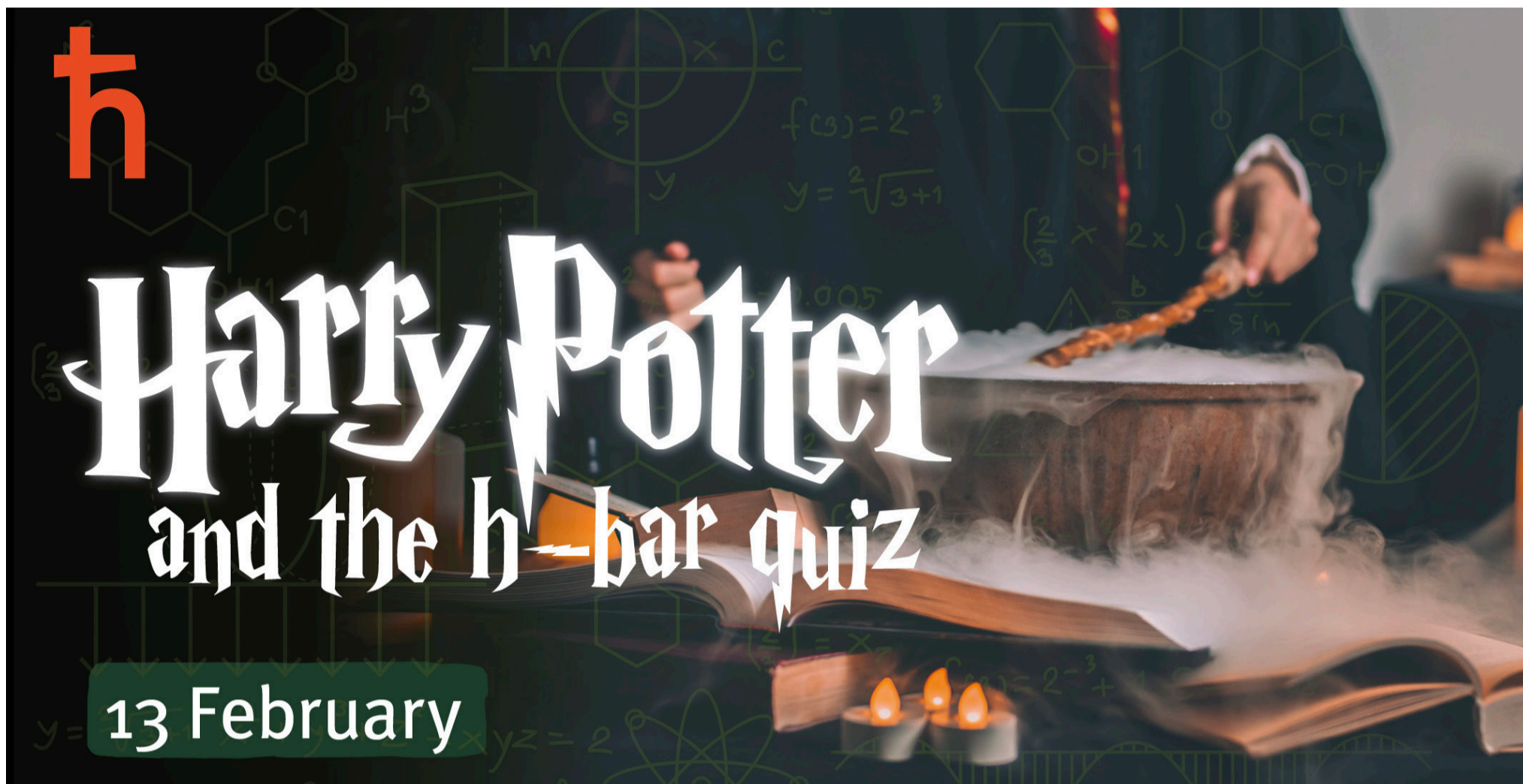
The annual National Student Survey (NSS) gives students the opportunity to help shape the future of their course at their university. By taking part in the survey, you play a key role in helping College identify where they can improve.

Once the results of this survey are released later in the year, each department creates an action plan aimed at enhancing areas such as teaching and student support, as part of the College's strategic commitment to enriching the student experience. The Union also uses your feedback to produce our annual response to the NSS, which helps set priorities in our work with College for the benefit of students.

This survey is for only for final year Undergraduates - share your views on your experience at Imperial at thestudentsurvey.com.

imperialcollegeunion.org





7

February, Friday

Thank Goodness It's Friday

Metric | 21:00 - 02:00

Karaoke

h-bar | 19:30-23:00

Battle of the Bands (Heat 1)

Reynolds | 19:30 - 23:00

11

February, Tuesday

Super Quiz

FiveSixEight | 20:00-22:00

Games Night

h-bar | 19:30-23:00

13

February, Thursday

Harry Potter Pub Quiz

h-bar | 19:30 - 21:30

12

February, Wednesday

CSP Wednesday

Metric | 19:00-01:00

Club Reynolds

Reynolds | 20:00-01:00

14

February, Friday

Thank Goodness It's Friday

Metric | 21:00 - 02:00

[f](#) [beitbars](#) [f](#) [hbarpub](#) [f](#) [reynoldsbarcx](#)

CONSTITUENT UNION

felix@imperial.ac.uk



We'd Like to Make Our Discomfort Official

RSMU & CGCU

Chris Carter*RSMU President***Fatima Khan***CGCU President*

Rent prices in halls is a tricky topic. Almost every elected representative on Union Council, Imperial College Union's highest elected deliberative body, agrees that the proposals that the College have delivered to the Union Leadership are unacceptable. The original proposal would have seen rent in halls rise either by 12.2% between 2019/20 to 2020/21 followed by a yearly 2.5% "inflationary" increase until 2024/25, while the second proposal would have resulted in a yearly average of 5.5% from 3 three years until 2022/23, followed by the inflationary increase of 2.5% until 2024/25. The implications here are dire, reaching >£300 pw for halls in South Kensington by 2024. The financial model that College has proposed is allegedly a "break-even" model, with assumptions such as valuing the building as worth nothing after 50 years, not including profit from Pembridge, which is being retired, and applying inflationary uplift to the part of the revenue used to pay off the loan and interest used to build the new Kemp Porter halls (which does not increase with inflation). To us on Council, that model is unacceptable and certainly not "break-even".

But opposition to this is clear. Council has now rejected this model 3 times, as the fundamental basis of this model is flawed and the effects of implementing it would be disastrous no matter how you tweak the numbers – minor concessions cannot offset the damage that

these rapidly increasing prices would cause to the student experience. But that isn't really in contention.

On Tuesday, Union Council met to continue this ongoing discussion, after a majority of Council members noted their discomfort at the Council Meeting on 21st January. At the behest of Council, an 'Extraordinary Meeting' was arranged for two weeks later, to discuss our next steps. This 'Extraordinary Meeting' featured the third and (allegedly) final offer from College, which Council voted to reject as well. This third model featured a £3m subsidy that could be distributed how the Union desired, should we have voted to accept the deal. It was presented to Council for the first time at the meeting, with minimal detail into how the subsidy would be distributed across the various halls of residences. However, this lack of detail or clarity made us feel that we could not vote either way on this proposal, regardless of our personal opinions on the subject.

As voting members of Council, we chose to abstain from this vote due to a lack of clarity around the third proposed model, lack of time to deliberate on the issue, and a general discomfort with the proceedings. We're very aware that the figures were given to the Union President about four hours before the meeting and there is slight time pressure since College need to start advertising the price of halls soon. However, we should not have been expected to vote on an issue that we did not have enough time to process individually or consult our committees and members about. Absent Council members

were also deprived of the opportunity to speak up about the new proposal, or to even see it, before it was rejected. The blame for this lack of clarity lies squarely with College – providing a "new" model mere hours before student representatives are asked to vote on it is shameful and blatantly disrespectful.

After that third rejection, the vote turned to a much more contentious topic – what to do next. Council had rejected the College's financial model three times, and a plan of what to do next was deliberated at this Extraordinary Meeting. Of course, the Union President and the Deputy President (Welfare) will go back to College and re-negotiate. We believe that College have so far been somewhat willing to negotiate, albeit with a frustrating lack of transparency, and still have some leeway, but

"Providing a new model mere hours before student representatives are asked to vote on it is shameful and blatantly disrespectful"

beyond that no concrete plan had been mentioned. And this is where things got strange.

On Wednesday 29th January, the Union held a preliminary, two-hour-long meeting where any interested members of Council could come along and have their say on possible options. We were

not able to attend this meeting due to prior commitments, but a document was written following this meeting.

This document comprises two main sections: first, a recommendation from Council that a Union campaign called "Imperial, Cut the Rent" be started, which "any student would be able to join" and would "be run by a committee elected from its members". The second part of the document was a list of possible options of campaign strategies, which we as a Council debated individually as discrete strategies to endorse. There are numerous things that we thought were weird about this.

First of all, this document was presented to members of Council before we had voted to reject the third model. We appreciate that the document had been written before the meeting, but isn't it inappropriate to state the intention of Council to proceed with a campaign against the model before we'd voted to against it? Regardless, voting on options that we are presented with at the start of a session is ludicrous; there is no time to form a full opinion, which limits the effectiveness of any debate.

Secondly, after asking for clarification about this possible campaign, it became clear that despite Council recommending this campaign, there would be no explicit oversight by Council over the actions of this campaign. The campaign would be encouraged to report to Council, but it would not be directly responsible to Council. Why?

If Council is recommending that a campaign is started, that is essentially a stamp of approval of the campaign,

writ large, regardless of whether or not we as a Council actually endorse it. Regardless of whether or not that is true, that is how it looks, and that is how a campaign could argue: "You don't like our actions? Why not? You endorsed us." It's odd that Council would want to vote to create a campaign over which it would have no oversight and in which members may not be involved. If a student had started a campaign independently, we should definitely support them, and they should be free to campaign in whichever way they see fit. But creating a campaign over which we would have no oversight, but to which we would put our name, is odd.

Clearly, the Union wishes to retain control over some aspect of the campaign, or we wouldn't have gone through a list of campaign strategies and chosen which individual options to endorse.

We should have chosen a more definitive path. The campaign should either be led and fully endorsed by the Union, or fully student-led. The idea here was to get a "best of both worlds" scenario - a campaign that is student-led but with a limited range of actions endorsed by Council. While a campaign would technically be able to proceed how they wanted to, the implication of control from Council is clear. A student-led campaign should be able to use their voice in any way they see fit, and not be controlled by an external body of students who are not necessarily heavily involved in the campaign. But should this campaign lead to an irreconcilable breakdown in negotiations with College, there is very little room for Council to denounce

its actions, given that we recommended its creation.

Concerns were raised about Council oversight limiting the impact and responsiveness of the campaign – and we agree. But endorsing the creation of the campaign without having any explicit control over its actions leads to an uncomfortable grey area where we can't really raise any concerns with the campaign if things go south. We are now linked to the actions of any campaign that starts, regardless of whether or not they choose to adhere to the strategies that Council chose to endorse.

This is not to say that we think a campaign will go south. We fully support the right of students to use their voice how they see fit, and to fight to make Imperial a better place. But Council should not interfere in that voice. We should either support our students with their endeavours or take a stand ourselves, but the votes on Tuesday 4th February created a neither-nor scenario where Council voted to hand this matter over to an independent group of students. This in-between stance looks weak and jeopardises the power of the campaign, by both attempting to influence the actions of any campaign that starts, but not being officially spear-headed by the Union. Options should have been presented in advance of the meeting to give us more time to consider them before voting on these matters.

This statement solely reflects the opinions of Chris Carter and Fatima Khan and does not reflect the opinion of the RSMU or CGCU Executive Committees or the RSMU or CGCU as a whole.

CONSTITUENT UNION

felix@imperial.ac.uk



Volunteering at university: a perspective

RCSU

Michaela Flegrová

Vice President of Education

I've been volunteering with the Union since my first year. There have been ups and downs, but overall, I've had a great time. I've met about 90% of my good friends at Imperial through being a rep; Union work has been my main "So what do you like to do in your free time?" thing, and some of my best life achievements have been through my role. It is fair to say that being a Union volunteer has shaped my University experience and life in general so much

that I can't even imagine what I'd be doing now if I hadn't become a year rep three and a half years ago.

There can be many reasons why one would become a volunteer, for the Union or for any other organisation. You might want to improve things or help other people, volunteer because your friends are doing it, perhaps you just want to boost your CV and learn some new skills, or maybe there just isn't anyone else who could do it and you care too much to leave the spot unoccupied and see your club or society fail.

No matter what your primary motivation is, you need two key things to stay driven for long

periods of time and generally have a good time volunteering:

- See the results of your work and achieve things you can be proud of

- Have good relationships with the people you are working with

It's probably not hard to guess which of these two is, usually, more important to most volunteers at Imperial, a university which ranks among the best for research and academic achievements, and among the worst for student satisfaction.

We've become overly obsessed with measurable success; we want to deliver the best events and sell all of the tickets, offer subsidised hoodies and

organise free bar nights, arrange a trip abroad and have great publicity and make all of the money along the way to be able to deliver even more next time. That's why people voted for us anyway, right?

While focused on our main objective of delivering results, we often lose sight of our most important asset – the people we are working with. There might be a lot of tension over small (or big) problems, and while striving for perfection, things can get very personal – we just want to get the job done and often forget we are dealing with individuals with real feelings that can get

hurt. We end up achieving

"Maybe we should try to prioritise people's feelings a bit more when making decisions"

great measurable results but leave a bitter aftertaste of broken interpersonal relationships.

Maybe we should try to prioritise people's feelings a bit more when making

decisions. Being happy in your role is not only good for your wellbeing, but it also keeps you motivated to continue working in the future and makes you more likely to have a keen successor. A happy committee is the key to overall success, and it should be the thing we measure and take seriously alongside other achievements.

So, if you are considering running in this year's Leadership Elections (and you totally should) remember that sometimes the real success should be the friends you make along the way.

Science Challenge

sciencechallenge.org
scichal@ic.ac.uk

**Interested in science communication?
Want to think about science in a broader,
societal context?**

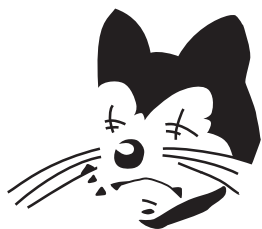
**Submit an entry
for a chance at
winning £1000!**

**Or, if you're a PhD student, get paid to mark them!
Contact science.challenge@imperial.ac.uk for marking enquiries.**

Visit sciencechallenge.org for contest rules and questions.

Presented by the RCSU with support from the RCSA





Hangman



Unrelated image // Wikimedia

Left Forum struggle to stay relevant

HANGMAN

Negafelix

Editor-in-Chief

In the aftermath of a highly successful TorySoc event, Left Forum committee members were left scrabbling to retain student attention

An emergency committee meeting, called at the insistence of Deputy Chairman (Tankies) Zisabelle Hang, was convened in order to address falling membership figures and a growing feeling of irrelevance in the 21st century.

Proposals ranged widely from changing

the biscuit selection to automatic non-opt-out-able first-year student enrolment. Sen Febton proposed shooting anybody that reported membership numbers that didn't conform to the five year plan. However, this was later erased from the minutes and defective committee members were assigned to shore up the work in the Union offices instead. Deliberations took 5 weeks and it took the three largest factions banding together and non-platforming their opponents to achieve a consensus. This was especially hard on the RMT union representatives as without a platform they lost all leverage. Passenger numbers arriving at South Kensington plummeted.

One RMT representative was observing, "well, at least we've got the trains"

The newly formed and victorious Imperial Committee of Committees (ICoC) decided that the Left Forum should have their own event to show the fascists that the Left can have fun as well. Executive Chairman of the ICoC Bansh Hatnagar declared that the target quota was eight fun per person and commanded the Sub Committee (Events) ((Fun)) (((Soros))) to get to organising the event.

The 144th Party Conference was arranged to go ahead that Friday. Security was provided by the Central Sub-Committee for the Peaceful Use of Icepicks. All attendees entered the fortified

compound via a long tightrope, nicknamed the "Party Line" and constantly moving to the left. Falling off was deemed to be undeniable proof of

"The talks were successful and the group declared that they 'would work again'"

reactionary tendencies. NegaFelix reporters were nevertheless able to gain

access and sent this report.

Stalls set up by the various groups, looking to influence Imperial left wingers, handed out pamphlets and tried to sign people up on their mailing lists. There was uneven take up and not every group left the conference happy. The Moët and Dom Perignon representatives admitted, however, that they were quietly happy at the reception they had had and that they looked forward to coming next year.

The speaking schedule which had been highly anticipated was released early on in the day and was met with a mixed response. Some applauded the bold interspecies gesture of inviting John McDonnell's guinea pig

while others felt that it only highlighted the access problems that remained for non-four-legged animals.

A brief moment of excitement arose after disagreements over how to pronounce the word 'scone' during the tea break led to a sit in protest by the "People's Liberation Scone Bomb Squad (Marxist)". The issue was quickly resolved, however.

The splinter group had emergency meetings via representatives of the Imperial College Carpenters union. The talks were successful and the group declared that they "would work again".

HANGMAN

negafelix@imperial.ac.uk

Union campaign against rent increases gives students mental health problems!

HANGMAN

Negafelix
Editor-in-Chief

Crisis of confidence engulfs Imperial undergraduates as they ask themselves who is to blame for their situation

The ongoing efforts by the Union to resist proposed increases in halls rents has caused many students to reconsider their prejudices. Hating the

Union having long been such a default position, students are struggling to adjust to the news that the Union might be doing something for them.

Though some students are pleased to hear that their interests are being represented others have clung on to their old attitudes.

NegaFelix reporters found Tarlie Chitmuss hiding in a lower basement of Blackett, wearing a tinfoil hat and muttering "It's all a ruse! They're all in on it!" over and over again.

Others have been able

to cling to their sanity but have suffered huge trust crises, turning their ire on anyone in reach.

Third year Materials student Feb Senton referred himself to the College counselling service after suffering from crippling cognitive dissonance. "I was suffering. My nadir came when I accused a man in a Mr Whippy van of ruining my last piece of coursework"

Senton's experience is not atypical. Though studies are sparse, anecdotal evidence points towards rocketing levels of imposter syndrome. Students that were once



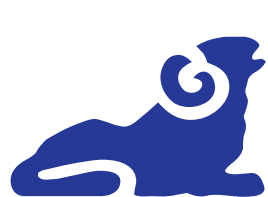
AHHHHH I AM ANGRY AND CONFUSED // Pikrepo

able to get by just muttering "Bloody College" or "Bloody Union" under their breath have also been caught out by the

recent increase in student engagement.

"I used to be considered pretty clued in" said one such student "but I've

had to stop because it is now met with genuine opinions. I thought the Union was just the place to get beer."



ARIES

This week you finally get that lump checked out.

-
You're disappointed. Why benign when you could be a ten?



TAURUS

This week you're Alice Ghastr and your new salary means that you get to expense the take over of McVities.
Cheaper than expensing biscuits I suppose



GEMINI

This week you put yourself forward on a joke nomination

-
We'll see you in September you poor bastard



CANCER

This week you are Dominic Cummings. You look at your reflection. The reflection in your gopping forehead stares back



LEO

This week you're the Union kitchen
-
The rats have moved back in and the curly fries finally taste right



VIRGO

This week will be the last that you remember to watch your sodium



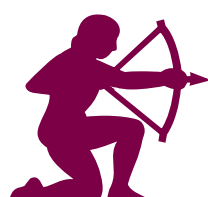
LIBRA

This week you are acquitted due to simple mathematics
-
Turns out big number beat small number



SCORPIO

This week you realise that you achieved dry January effortlessly and are doing well into the early weeks of February
-
You are a cactus



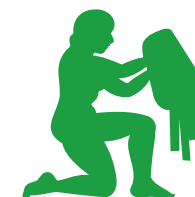
SAGITTARIUS

This week try not to focus on the rhythmic banging coming from your flatmate's room. You're not sure how he got that in there, but you're sure as hell not going to be the one to drag it out



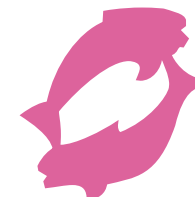
CAPRICORN

This week you're String Boy. You hope to one day grow up to be Rope Man and take up employment with the Indonesian government



AQUARIUS

This week your partner says he needs to talk. You hope he's going to break up with you but he really just wants to talk about his feelings
-
Pathetic liberal cuck

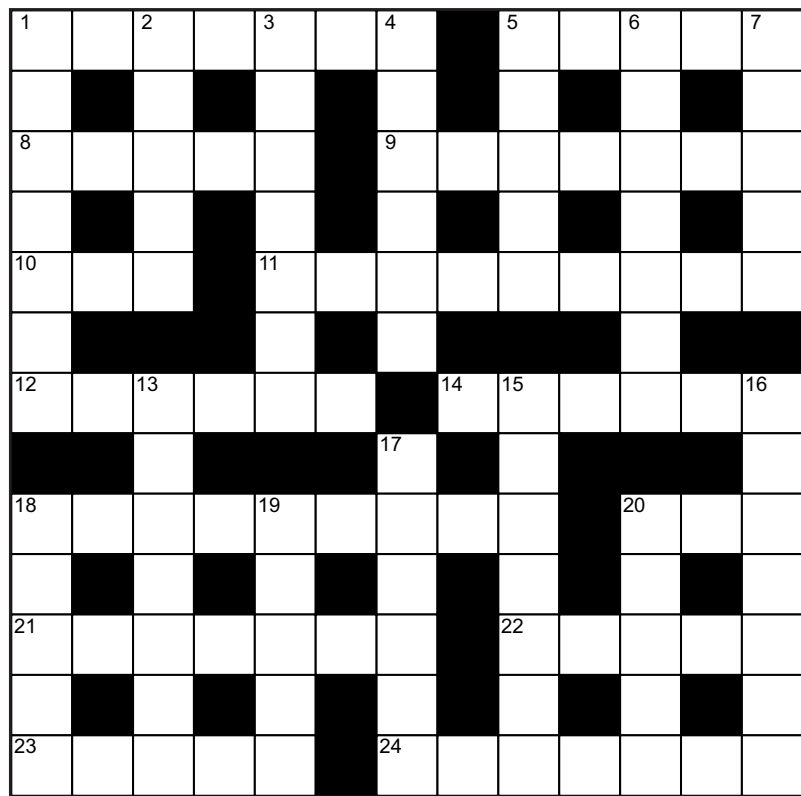


PISCES

This week you discover your fetish for tall lanky posh boys
-
Shame he's married with six kids

PUZZLES

fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk



Across

- 1. False impression of bravery (7)
- 5. Not suitable in the circumstances (5)
- 8. Northernmost state of the US East coast (5)
- 9. Letter deliverer (7)
- 10. Borrower's note (3)
- 11. Korean martial art (9)
- 12. Lawyers can do this in court (6)
- 14. Hidden CIA recorder (6)
- 18. Its capital city is Managua (9)
- 20. Ostrich relative (3)
- 21. Headache disperser (7)
- 22. Vietnam capital (5)
- 23. Indian guitar (5)
- 24. Ryan of LaLaLand (7)

Down

- 1. Italian child (7)
- 2. Goodbye forever (5)
- 3. Surgically sterile (7)
- 4. Bird also known as fish hawk (6)
- 5. Take stitches off (5)
- 6. Annual publication containing data of all kinds (7)
- 7. Argentinian dance (5)
- 13. Lottery target (7)
- 15. Suggestive emojis (7)
- 16. Bear attack (7)
- 17. Out-of-season cocktail (6)
- 18. Indian flatbreads (5)
- 19. Less common than (5)
- 20. Boredom (5)

FUCWIT

1	Lochy Monsters	59
2	DQ	56
2	StandWithHK_Fight4Freedom	56
4	RIP Pat	55.5
5	F***URhys	55

Points available

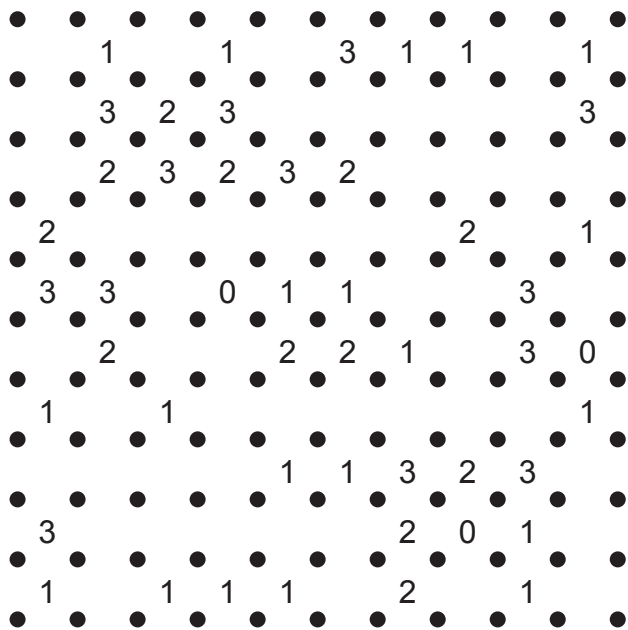
Crossword	3
Shikaku	2
Slitherlink	2
Gogen	1
Trivia	3
Sudoku	4
Word search	3
Minesweeper	2

Total **20**

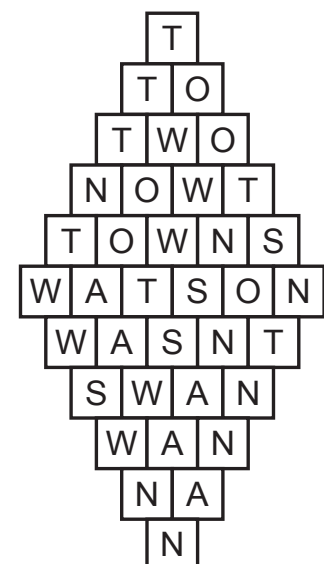
Send your solutions to fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk before Wednesday noon to take part in the leaderboard!

SLITHERLINK

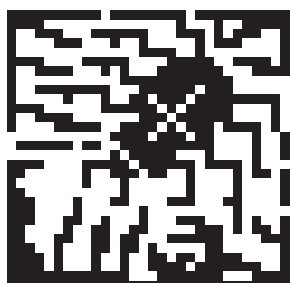
The numbers represent the number of corners that are used to make a shape on this grid. Join up all the points with lines to make this shape!



Last week's solutions



3	4	2	5	9	1	8	6	7
1	7	5	4	6	8	9	3	2
9	8	6	2	7	3	1	4	5
7	3	1	9	5	6	4	2	8
5	2	8	3	4	7	6	1	9
4	6	9	8	1	2	7	5	3
8	1	7	6	3	5	2	9	4
6	9	3	7	2	4	5	8	1
2	5	4	1	8	9	3	7	6



R	M	I	A	P	M						
M	A	K	O	S	U	B	U	R	B	A	N
P	U	L	U	O	R						
E	I	N	S	T	E	I	N	D	A	L	I
E	S	D	I								
U	R	S	A	F	R	A	G	M	E	N	T
P	H	E	A	S	A	N	T	S	U	M	O
I	N	T	U								
E	T	N	A	D	E	F	L	A	T	E	D
L	C	E	U	C	S						
S	E	A	H	O	R	S	E	H	U	L	K
R	E	S	L	E	I						

Hi Puzzlers!

Have you been well? We've been on a puzzles spree the last few weeks - so, here you go, almost 2 pages of puzzles. Again.

We've got a new trivia contributor, HaarMeasure! Congrats to Lochy Monsters and DQ for being the two teams that were able to weave through the nonogram last week, we will continue to make puzzles varied and difficult.

New puzzle this week: a word search with cryptic clues.

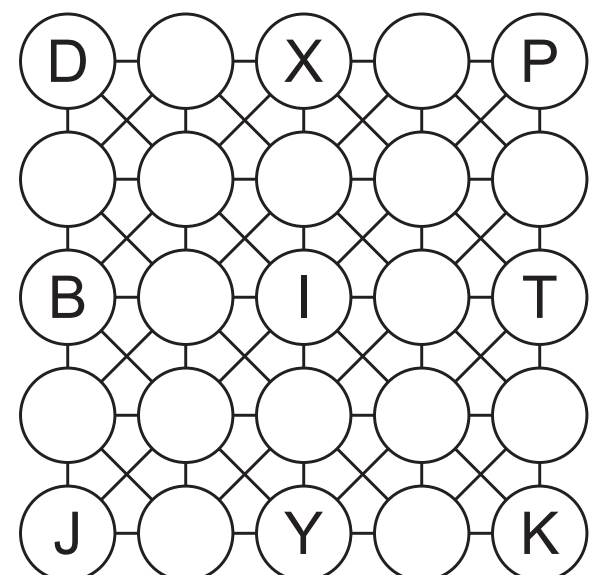
GOKEN

Fill in the grid with letters form A-Y to make the words given. Words can be formed by following any neighbouring letters!

- Clues:
 BUSY
 CUB
 DRAWING
 FRAIL
 HEAR
 INC

- JUNE
 LIMP
 MOVE
 POX
 QUIETLY
 VEINS

				2	3			2
						3		
		6		4				10
		5				3		
		4		4				
					2	3		12
	20			4		3		
			8	2				



PUZZLES

fsudoku@imperial.ac.uk

SUDOKU

Fill all the boxes with a number between 1 and 9. A number can only appear once in a row/column, and only once in each sub-box.

		3			6		2	
	6						4	
9			3			8		6
		8	5					1
			6		8			
2					9	5		
7		1			5			4
	4						7	
	8		2			3		

MINESWEEPER

The number in a cell represents the number of mines adjacent to that square (up/down, left/right, diagonal). Find and mark all of the mines to clear the board.

			1	1		2			1			1	
	2	1		1		2					2		
					1	1					1	2	2
1	1	1		1		1			1	1		2	
						2		2		2		2	
	1			2		1							
				1	2				1	2	1		
		1	1									2	
1						1	2					2	
	1				1		1	1	2			2	2
	2		1		1	1				1			1
	1		1				1						1
1		1		1	2		2	2		2			
			1						1	1		1	

Play a game of tic-tac-toe or hangman with your friend(s) here:

WORDSEARCH

Using the clues, find and circle the answers in the grid. All letters in the grid are used in a word. Theme: physics.

A	A	R	F	L	Y	M	A	N	B
P	M	E	R	I	A	C	K	E	O
E	P	M	E	G	R	I	R	I	Y
R	E	L	E	H	X	N	A	N	L
T	R	A	F	T	O	O	U	S	E
U	E	B	A	U	E	M	Q	T	U
R	V	O	L	T	W	R	M	E	Q
E	H	L	L	H	E	A	T	I	R
M	I	L	E	N	S	H	T	N	O
C	O	H	E	S	I	O	N	T	T

Clues:

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Current measurer | 8. Astronomical hydrogen emmission series | 15. Clinging together |
| 2. Light hole | 9. Quirky ups and downs | 16. Confirm a broken bone |
| 3. Waving particle | 10. Mommentum | 17. Motion through vacuum |
| 4. Weight misnomer | 11. Energy per Coulomb | 18. Mathematical family |
| 5. Electrical omega | 12. Qualifying race | 19. His gas law's famous |
| 6. Spectacular views | 13. Musical series | 20. Amp |
| 7. UV emission series of hydrogen spectrum | 14. Relatively famous at Imperial | 21. Power |

TRIVIA

HaarMeasure brings to you:

- Which married celebrity couple separated in September 2016?
- Which Swedish tennis star rose to fame during the 1980s who was known for his placid personality and his rivalry with John McEnroe?
- Which English poet wrote the words, "Water, water everywhere, / Nor any drop to drink"?
- Which candidate for the Democratic Presidential Candidate is the first Hindu member of Congress?
- What weapon supposedly killed Edward II?
- Which 17th century 'revenge tragedy' by John Webster follows a widowed duchess who secretly remarries and is ultimately killed by her brothers for it?

Liked this quiz?

QuizSoc is holding a Harry Potter Quiz in Hbar next Thursday, 13/02/2020. Check out their Facebook page for more details.

SPORTS

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk



ICSC squad that took on the Turtle! //ICSC

Imperial Sailing take on the Turtle

SPORTS

Harry Fox
ICSC Member

The University of Warwick's annual sailing event is famous both for bringing together teams from all over the UK for a fantastic weekend's racing, and notorious for the excellent social the hosts put on.

With the aforementioned in mind, Imperial College Sailing Club sent a huge 5 teams (over 30 sailors) up to Leamington Spa to experience the very best of what the Midlands had to offer. Arriving late on Friday, Commodore Ariane de Saint Victor led her salty crew to Neon, the club allocated for the first night's party. Following some wily queue-jumping, the weekend was kicked off the way any good sailing event should be: with a

good old boogie. One notable performance was from Greg Reich, who was removed from the dance floor and premises for crowd surfing (like the club mascot he is to all of us!) but somehow

“The weekend was kicked off the way any good sailing event should be: with a good old boogie”

made his way back in to continue the festivities.

Saturday morning brought the start of the weekend's competitive sailing at Draycote Water. Conditions were initially far from ideal, with barely

enough wind to sail in the mid-morning. However, as the day progressed, the breeze filled in, and eventually all 5 teams got racing. For Imperial, it was an event for the underdogs; the 2nds (Imperial White) and the 4ths (Imperial Python Tornado) stole the show, punching well above their weight and outmanoeuvring many more revered and experienced teams, including, in the case of the 2nds, our own first team (Imperial Blue)!

Following this long and tiring day everyone headed home to nap, before preparing their best fancy dress for the evening's entertainment: a curry before a sample of the best (worst) of what Leamington Spa has to offer on a Saturday night. Despite an urban population of almost 100 000, the town managed to provide barely a single partygoer to either Kelsey's Bar or the club Assembly.

However, never ones to let circumstance ruin an evening, especially with such a strong contingent in tow, Imperial simply brought the good time with them: singlehandedly transforming both venues from quiet bars and empty dancefloors to the unquestionable places-to-be that night. Tables were danced on, barmaids were wooed, security was evaded (if only Anahita had passed on her stealthy skills to the Firsts - they might have avoided some of the numerous penalties they picked up during the course of the racing!) and friendships were formed with sailors from across the UK, as far North as Durham; as far South as Plymouth.

Nursing hangovers the next morning, the sailors headed back to Draycote to continue the competition. The breeze was much stronger, allowing some of the heavier boats to shine. Despite some

more close racing, no Imperial teams qualified for the semi-final stages, but regardless the lessons learnt over the course of the event would prove invaluable going forward into the national Qualifier event next weekend in Oxford.

“Tables were danced on, barmaids were wooed, security was evaded”

I would award Warwick Turtle 4 out of 5 sailing boats as a weekend away with ICSC, mainly for the excellent social that the hosts put on. One sailing boat has been deducted because despite good overall conditions across the weekend, most teams

only sailed 8 races across the two days, which was a bit disappointing. A further half sailing boat (the leeward side) has been deducted for the ridiculous line bias on many of the first day's races, but as we are rounding up that's OK.

Many thanks to Warwick University for once again organising a great event – it has been the source of sailing gossip for the past two weeks now! Also thank you to Rooster Sailing for providing us with our amazing sailing kit, without which we would have frozen. And last but definitely not least, a mahoo-ssive thank you to our drivers Toby, Harry, Daniel and Nik – the latter of whom we have managed to steal from Gliding and American Football!