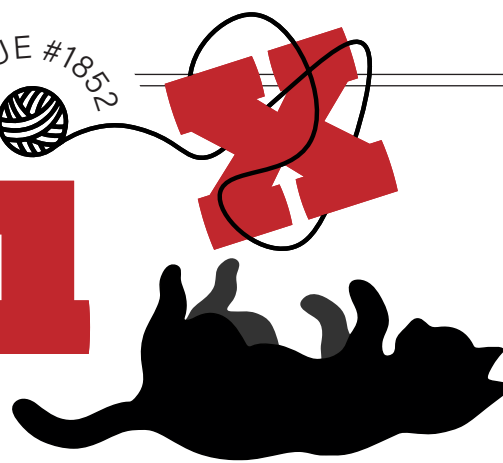


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Felix

KEEP THE CAT FREE | SINCE 1949

ISSUE #1852



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Sign up to our weekly newsletter by scanning the QR code below:



📷 felix_imperial

✉ felix@ic.ac.uk

📄 felixonline.co.uk

Blackett boo!



Stella Cloëz

Film set spotted around Blackett Lab and Union Buildings reported to be filming new *The Conjuring* movie

Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

A film crew was spotted in the Blackett Laboratory and around the Union Building on Friday 27th September. Crew members were spotted with ID cards and bottles stating they were part of the cast and crew for the latest film in The Conjuring fran-

chise, Last Rites.

John Matheson, 4th year MSci Physics said "there were quite a few people" gathered around the entrance to Lecture Theatre 1 in Blackett, "around 20 all in all. They were in front of lecture theatre 1 [sic] and inside the lecture hall." Another 4th year student David Bates reported seeing "two massive lights" facing the wall outside the lecture theatre.

→ READ MORE ON PAGE 4

DECLARATION

At *Felix*, we believe that it is always in the interest of the students to be in the know. Transparency in the workings of the College and the work of your student representatives is key. Therefore we, the *Felix* Editors, on behalf of the team promise that:

We will, to the best of our ability, tell you the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

We will keep your confidence and will only publish something you say to us if you have explicitly said that we can.

We will work to expose unfairness and discrimination in all forms that it takes at the College.

We will treat fairly any article sent to us, regardless of point of view, and do our best to work with you to prepare it for publication.

Signed by:
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EDITORIAL

Funding woes and a wet welcome

Editor-in-Chief
MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

Term has now truly started, and this year's freshers may find their fees rapidly increasing the coming years according to reporting from The Times (see p.). Funding has been a nagging issue for university management for the past few years, as inflation has caused home fees to drop in real value and has also been exacerbated by a drop in international students from India and Nigeria in particular. These students are more likely to bring dependants such as their families with them, however, curbs on dependents visas by the previous Tory government has led to a decrease in numbers (and student visas) in general. Quite a shot in the foot, considering the value and worth British universities provide in terms of economic output and soft power globally, but the Johnson-Truss-Sunak administrations were extremely short-termist, trying to win back a base that was either too radicalised, or too offput by their faux populism.

Universities have relied on international students for a bulk of their funding, and the volatility of student demographics, inflation and other factors have led to 40% of universities running on a deficit for the 2023/24 academic year, according to a report by the Office for Students.

As Vice-Chancellors (the equivalent of the Provost for universities who do not use the Americanised management structure Imperial uses) come to grips, many voices have rung out to offer solutions, not least our own Provost, Ian Walmsley. In a May 2024 piece for Times Higher Education, Walmsley argued for quite a unique solution beyond the usual ideas of raising home fees or introducing a graduate tax. He argues that "we could separate tuition fees from loans" allowing for greater control of prices by institutions rather than the government. Interesting. Walmsley later describes how the difference between the government loan and tuition price would be made up either by "employers with a need for particular skills"; or even a "additional, university-underwritten loan scheme" (oh!) or perhaps more scholarships and bursaries. Interestingly,

Walmsley gives the example of the perennially mentioned/ compared/better-off MIT as an example for tuition waivers and a "needs-blind" application system.

As a final remark, the Provost also said "rather than blanket additional funds for all students, it will suffice to direct funding towards the facilities needed for world-leading education, student support and research." It's very hard not to look at this very cynically as the Provost just asking for more funding for Imperial, which ostensibly, fits the criteria he sets out quite well.

But as no official government policy has been enacted, and Universities UK, the representative body of Vice-Chancellors (and the Provost), has just released a "blueprint for change" the future of funding is far from being clear.

We(t)lcome Fair

This year's Welcome Fair was a mixed experience. Felix received a lot of signups with a large number of writers who are interested in a variety of sections. It was great meeting a lot of you, and we can't wait to see what the year has in store for us. It wasn't fun being in the dripping rain, being soaked through whilst you desperately try to interest the vast swathes of freshers disinterestedly swarming past (and trying to get out of the rain).

Our marquee had several leaks, which led to several editors desperately trying to use a bin bag to hold water from one of the leaks. Everything was wet, and I still feel wet as I write this.

To the Union's credit, it wasn't their fault we were all soaked. That was the rain's. The Fair was planned to be outside for security reasons- to prevent the estimated 11,000 students from crushing each other. A source close to the matter has told me that issues with Queens Lawn such as activism may lead to bigger issues, and also that Queens Lawn would be damaged as inevitably some 11,000 students walked around. Similar reasons were given for the lack of use of indoor spaces. In previous years we have had a massive crush as clueless freshers try to navigate the confined walkways and paths around campus. Whilst it's fair and reasonable, it was also a somewhat miserable experience.

And on a final note, the end of Welcome Week doesn't mean you can't join clubs and societies anymore. If any readers are still interested, they can visit the Union website to see further details on every club or society that they want to join. Here at Felix we accept newcomers year round, and are more than happy to see fresh faces throughout the year- and I'm sure many other societies feel the same way. So, if the rain scared you off, it's not too late- make your university experience about more than learning.

NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

Another 4th year MSci Theoretic Physics student, Stella Cloëz, managed to take a picture of some of their crew members items.

A member of Union staff told Felix that they had seen “3 old school cars [sic]”, one of which was an “old school taxi” from New York.

The Conjuring franchise is a dramatization based on the lives of paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren. The franchise is comprised of three The Conjuring films, as well as the spin-off Annabelle and The Nun series. The latest, and reportedly final film in the main series, The Conjuring, Last Rites, is set to be released in September 2025.

Know more about this?
Contact us at felix@ic.ac.uk

UK government plans increase in home tuition fees to £10,500

Shakeup to funding includes revival of maintenance grants, rise in home fees over the next five years

Editor-in-Chief
MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

The Labour government has drafted plans to increase tuition fees for home students to £10,500 according to a Whitehall report seen by The Times. The fees are intended to increase in line with inflation, after they had been capped at £9,250 in 2017 by the Conservative government.

Other proposed changes include the reintroduction of a maintenance grant of up to £3,500 for the poorest students, which was cut in 2016.

Education Secretary Bridget Philipson has described the system left by the previous government as the “worst of all worlds”. She has also stated that she did not “want” home fees to rise, but the “value of the fee has eroded.” The rise in tuition fees is expected to be welcomed

by Universities UK, the body which represents vice-chancellors. Chief Executive Vivienne Stern said that raising fees “has to be done.”

Universities have struggled with funding, as the Office for Students – the regulatory body for universities in the UK – reported that 40% of universities experienced a deficit in the previous academic year.

Brady highlights antimicrobial resistance threat in New York

News Writer
TARUN NAIR

College President Hugh Brady attended the 79th United Nations General Assembly’s High-Level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) a week ago, where global leaders agreed to commit to “a clear set of targets and actions” to reduce the impact of AMR, according to the World Health Organization.

Brady intended to “use the opportunity at UNGA to call for urgent measures to restrict the use of antibiotics without prescription,” Imperial press coverage reported.

Brady is part of the leadership team of the Fleming Initiative, a partnership between Imperial College and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust bringing “research, behaviour change, public engagement, and policy together to provide

real-world solutions” to AMR. Executive Chair Professor Lord Ara Darzi was also in New York and called for “the ambition of no antibiotic prescriptions without a diagnosis by 2030,” speaking of the Initiative’s “unique approach to tackling the multifaceted challenge of AMR.”

Prior to the event the Fleming Initiative reached a milestone of £100 million in funding following a series of partnerships with organisations, most notably GSK.



Brady in the US. Imperial College London

Editor’s Note:

Autumn elections are now approaching. For the uninitiated, these elections are your chance to nominate those students who will advocate for your academic and welfare concerns with your respective departments. I have included some information sent by ICU about elections below:

Nominations open on **Monday 7th October** for the Autumn Elections, a chance to be an elected student representative. Among the roles in the election are UG Academic and Wellbeing Representatives, PG Academic and Wellbeing Representatives, PGT Academic and Welfare Officers, PGT Representation Chair, CSP Committee roles, Union Council positions and Liberation & Community Network Committees.

Submitting a nomination is easy, students just need to go to voting - <https://vote.union.ic.ac.uk/> and they will be able to select the position they are eligible for.

Please signpost any questions or concerns to elections@imperial.ac.uk
Check out the website for more information - imperialcollegeunion.org

Who is Lord Ara Darzi?

The Paul Hamlyn Chair of Surgery at Imperial has been at the forefront of the Fleming Initiative and NHS reform.

Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

Professor the Lord Ara Darzi is not only the Paul Hamlyn Chair of Surgery, the Co-Director of the Institute of Global Health Innovation, and Chair of Imperial College Health Partners, but he's also played a key role within the current Labour government's plan for NHS Reform.

Lord Darzi, the child of Armenian refugees was born in Baghdad, Iraq, in 1960. Having left Iraq during the 1970s following political volatility and the threat of war, Darzi moved to Ireland to study medicine at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, gaining his licentiate and undergraduate medicine degrees, before completing his Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree at Trinity College Dublin.

He later moved to Britain, working at Central Middlesex Hospital and St Mary's Hospital, before being appointed as a professor at Imperial College in 1996. According to Lord Darzi's Imperial about page he has published "over 800 peer-reviewed research papers to date" in the fields of surgical practise "through innovation in surgery" as well as "enhancing patient safety and the quality of healthcare".

He has also had an extremely successful political career- first knighted for his services to medicine and surgery in 2002, then joining the House of Lords in 2007 as a Labour peer. His role as Parliamentary Under-Secretary for

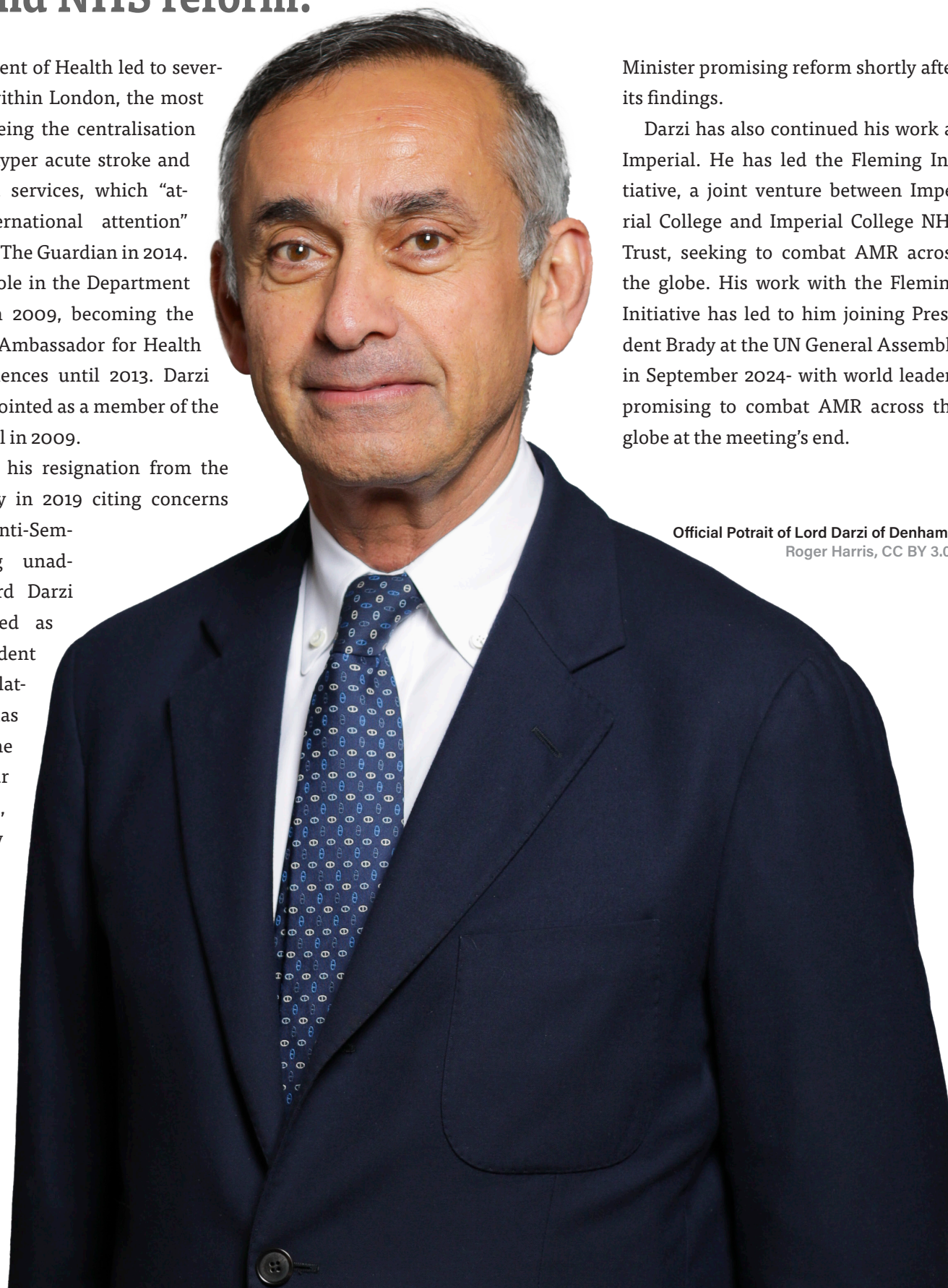
the Department of Health led to several reforms within London, the most successful being the centralisation of trauma, hyper acute stroke and heart attack services, which "attracted international attention" according to The Guardian in 2014. He left his role in the Department of Health in 2009, becoming the UK's Global Ambassador for Health and Life Sciences until 2013. Darzi was also appointed as a member of the Privy Council in 2009.

Following his resignation from the Labour Party in 2019 citing concerns around anti-Semitism being unaddressed, Lord Darzi has remained as an independent peer. His latest work has been for the new Labour government, headed by Sir Kier Starmer. Darzi has led a "landmark review" of the NHS. The review found that the NHS is "in serious trouble" with the Prime

Minister promising reform shortly after its findings.

Darzi has also continued his work at Imperial. He has led the Fleming Initiative, a joint venture between Imperial College and Imperial College NHS Trust, seeking to combat AMR across the globe. His work with the Fleming Initiative has led to him joining President Brady at the UN General Assembly in September 2024- with world leaders promising to combat AMR across the globe at the meeting's end.

Official Potrait of Lord Darzi of Denham.
Roger Harris, CC BY 3.0



Be a Change Maker and make your degree count

Do you ever wonder how you could use your degree in the real world, or how YOU could take on global challenges?

Senior Teaching Fellow, Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication

MARK POPE

These are the types of questions we pose in our Change Makers modules on the Imperial Horizons programme. We ask what it takes to be a Change Maker and how to make a positive impact on yourself, others, and the world

Try a taster workshop

This academic year, Change Makers are teaming up with Emina Hogas (DP Education) and Nico Henry (DP Welfare) from the Union to deliver a taster workshop. We are offering a lively two-hour session, where you can sample our approach, and consider how you can work towards the aims and visions you have for yourself and the wider world.

In the session, we will interrogate your ambitions, explore which Sustainable Development Goals they relate to, and assess which competencies are required to achieve them. We will ask you to evaluate yourself against our Change Makers skillset and offer suggestions as to how to develop yourself further.

We will complement this with a discussion on student welfare and a recognition of the importance of caring for our own well-being and that of others. The workshop will explore how you can leverage your studies holistically to develop positively in multiple ways.

Workshop: 'Making an impact with your degree: Caring for yourself, others and the world'

Date: Tuesday 8th October

Time: 4-6pm

Location: SAFB G28

Drop Nico Henry a quick email to sign up at dpwelfare@imperial.ac.uk

Change Makers modules on the Imperial Horizons Programme

Change Makers modules focus on human sustainable development, empowering students to tackle societal and environmental issues, and how to develop themselves as individuals.

We adopt a transdisciplinary approach. This means we draw on personal and real-world insights, as well as different disciplinary perspectives. How can you use your personal experience and knowledge from your degree to make a difference? Our aim is to facilitate critical and active learning that engages with the complexities of the 21st century.

We design modules to enable students to pursue their own interests and passions, often in areas that are not covered in conventional degree programmes. We have second-year modules on happiness (*My World: Be Happy*), and art and design surrounding sustainable de-



Change Makers Students working with Prakti, on innovative stoves in India.

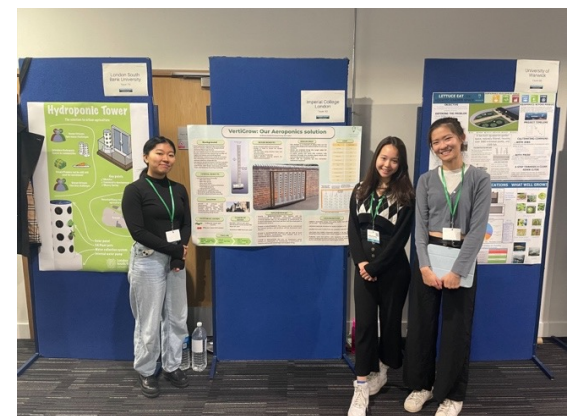
velopment (*Global Village: Visual Arts Challenge and Innovation Challenge*).

Our students pursue a wide range of projects on all our modules. They have successfully entered design competitions with proposals ranging from aeroponics, to using super absorbent polymers in flood barriers, to new social communication platforms. And, Change Makers students go on to work on real sustainable development projects all over the world.

Sign-up for a Change Makers module

Our modules are open to undergraduate students - and until 8th October first-year students can still sign-up for this autumn term!

We offer a module on Activism and the Anatomy of



Students presenting designs for aeroponics and flood defences at the Engineers Without Borders Design Challenge Finals.

Change. This explores how change occurs, looking at environmental, women's suffrage, the Black Lives Matter movements and a campaign of your own choosing.

On the Global Challenges: Sustainable Innovation module, you will work in teams to explore major issues. We will provide you with a wide range of tools to collaborate with others and generate innovations on topics that are of special interest to you.

Find out more and sign up using the QR code below. We hope to see you at the taster session or on a Change Makers module in the future!



SCIENCE

Felix interviews Prof Claudia de Rham

Imperial physicist and author sits down with *Felix* to discuss all things gravity and her life in academia

Science Writer

TAYLOR POMFRET

Physicists for a long time have puzzled over gravity. Pauli and Fierz first developed a theory of 'massive gravity' in the 1930s. This is a modified theory of general relativity. It allows the graviton, a particle which mediates the force of gravitational interaction, to have a non-zero mass. Scientists inherited the theory with lots of pathologies, including the existence of 'ghost modes'. Solutions to these problems in four dimensions were only given in 2010 by Imperial physicists and professors Claudia de Rham, Andrew Tolley, and New York University professor Gregory Gabadadze. We were incredibly fortunate to talk to Claudia shortly after the release of her new book, *The Beauty of Falling: A Life in Pursuit of Gravity*.

What was your first week like at university? Did you enjoy it? And what did you do to relax?

While I was excited and eager to get exposed to really fun new physics,

Science Writer

TEJAS GUPTA

learning to fit into the new university environment wasn't all that easy. Having just landed from quite a different part of the world, Madagascar, the culture shock was deeper than I would have admitted to myself.

While all the lectures were great, it was hard to connect at first with the real kind of science that college teaches. I learnt to appreciate the little things, and while the first few weeks were quite tough, I set up a network of friends that eventually made things much easier. With a group of friends, I founded the first astronomical society of our university. We set up a plan which I went to defend high up in the University Presidency at the time, asking for space on campus. With their approval, our society slowly grew. The society finally made me feel like I belonged to a larger cause, something bigger, and soon everything else about my university experience followed much more easily.

Recently, I was invited back to give a talk at my old University. Funnily enough, I got back in touch with the



Prof Claudia de Rham, 2020 UK Blavatnik Award winner and author of *The Beauty of Falling: A Life in Pursuit of Gravity*. Thomas Angus, Imperial

astronomical society which has grown tremendously since we founded it. It was just incredible to get to talk with the new members and see how much these little things can mean.

became the topics I started being much more passionate about and remain so to this day.

What did you enjoy most about studying physics during your degree? Was there a particular moment, topic, lecturer, that sparked your curiosity?

I had always wanted to pursue either astronomy or solar system physics. I probably got most excited when I got an internship position at NASA to do a research project for a few months. The project was studying the correlation between the gravitational and magnetic fields of Mars, with exclusive data just freshly recovered from the Mars Pathfinder. In the moment, it was so exciting! Or so, I thought it should have been. But as I kept going through my project, I slowly started to realize that this kind of data analysis wasn't what made me tick.

The context was amazing of course, and so were the people I worked with, but the actual work wasn't what I was finding the most exciting. That's when I realized that I was much more attracted to theoretical concepts. When I returned to University, I started studying much more theoretical subjects like Quantum Field Theory, Symmetries of the Standard Model and General Relativity. Those

Your brand-new book, *The Beauty of Falling*, beautifully intertwines your personal experiences with your scientific exploration of gravity. After reading the book, it transpires you're not only a physicist - but a diver, pilot, and astronaut candidate too! Did each of these experiences help you influence your understanding of gravity in a way that perhaps equations or theories alone could not?

There's definitely value in letting yourself go sometimes, almost experiencing freefall as if disconnected from any other forces of nature! When I return from these experiences my mind is so much clearer than when I left for them. Many times, in fact, it has helped my research and my understanding of gravity, though of course the precise connection is quite indirect.

Perhaps where it does help more directly is in the ability to trust myself. When you learn to fly, you have to learn several procedures, some of which may seem rather counterintuitive. If your plane stalls, the first reaction would be to pick the nose up but that slows the plane down, reduces the lift and makes the plane stall even more. Instead, you

have to learn to follow a procedure which may seem counterintuitive at first. Sometimes while scuba diving, I've ended up in situations where I couldn't tell up from down and I couldn't see a thing as my mask was filling up with water. Breathing isn't always the most natural at first. You may feel like taking out your mouthpiece and screaming but of course that's the worst thing you could possibly do, so you must stay calm and think logically. You feel much freer and use your own creativity to go much further. This is quite like how research works and knowing that you can apply the same logic in situations where your life depends on it does make it easier to do it when it comes to doing research on gravity or theoretical physics. After all, when your life doesn't depend on it, it's the easy part.

One of the takeaways from the book is that gravity has a well-hidden sense of humour, why is this?

This is sort of a play of words on the fact that gravity is often portrayed as a rather serious phenomenon. We may hear about the "laws of gravity" as if they were firmly dictated by someone else. In fact, the word gravity is very close to "gravis" which means serious in

Latin. What is true is that at the scales we are accustomed to, gravity is indeed the most serious phenomenon there is, acting on everything and everyone in exactly the same rigid and intransigent way. According to Einstein's theory of General Relativity this has to be true unquestionably. One of the theories I have been working with Prof. Andrew Tolley, also here at Imperial, and with other collaborators worldwide and more recently also with Prof. Toby Wiseman and many of our students, is that on very large distances or time scales, as large as the observable Universe today, gravity may be allowed to "relax" to some extent and not behave in quite the same way as to what we are used to here on Earth and in the Solar System and in our cluster of galaxies. This could help us with what we call the Cosmological Constant Problem which is one of the most profound problems of modern physics at the interface between quantum particle physics and gravity, two of the pillars of modern physics.

The strap line of your book is *A Life in Pursuit of Gravity*. Scientists, in pursuit of answers about our universe, have proposed many different forms of gravity—such as general relativity,

quantum gravity, massive gravity, higher-spin gravity, and more! How do you construct/revitalise a theory of gravity? And what are some of the modern, up-and-coming methods used to verify proposed theories of gravity?

What's interesting is that in many ways there is no shortage of novel and



General Relativity has done an impeccable job at describing gravity, we need to learn from it and base ourselves on it.

creative extensions to gravity. In fact, it is relatively easy to come up with a brand-new grand idea that will change everything. The problem is that these almost never work, and are almost never as original and creative as one may think. The reality is that General Relativity has done an impeccable job at describing gravity so far, so we really

need to learn from it and base ourselves on it. The really challenging part is to tweak General Relativity ever so slightly without making it fall apart completely and that's where it requires a huge level of ingenuity in appreciating how to turn the right knobs in the right way while holding the right pieces in place. In fact, a lot of it is in the structural integrity of the model in a way that can often not be seen from the outside. You know you've done it right if from the outside almost no one can see the tricks and devices you secretly engineered.

What message or piece of advice would you like to share with students who are just starting their journey in science? Could you use a concept from gravity to illustrate your point?

Embrace the free-fall! No two trajectories will ever be the same, so there is no point comparing yourself with others, just trust your own and most importantly enjoy it! The ride may not end up quite as you expected and you may not end up where you originally thought you were headed but that's ok, that's just free-fall adapting for the curvature or the complexity of the reality in which we find ourselves but that's what makes your journey so unique and so precious.



Prof Claudia de Rham, moderator of the Abdus Salam Festival lectures delivered by Prof Brian Cox CBE and Prof Atish Dabholkar in January 2024.

From left to right: Prof Claudia de Rham, Prof Jerome Gauntlett, Prof Brian Cox CBE, Prof Atish Dabholkar, Prof Daniel Waldram, Prof Ian Walmsley FRS CBE, Prof Hugh Brady Taylor Pomfret

ENVIRONMENT

Britain's last coal-fired power plant shuts down

Environment Editor
OSCAR MITCHAM

Britain's only remaining coal power plant at Ratcliffe-on-Soar closed on Monday. The plant had run for 57 years and its closure has seen widespread coverage in the national press with *The Guardian* calling the shutdown the "end of an era."

Coal has been part of the UK's energy mix since 1882 and has played a significant role in powering the UK. As new technologies show themselves to be superior and carbon pricing come into effect, coal power generation is going into steep decline. The closure marks a major milestone for climate action in the UK, and sets it apart as the first G7 nation to achieve this goal.

The plant was closed after a just-transition plan was agreed for its staff and it is

expected to take two years to decommission. The site will become one of three sites for the East Midlands Freeport, which is government-supported. Additionally, The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero says they will support green jobs at the site.

The power plant was subject to some controversy after 114 activists had been arrested as part of a protest in 2009 with evidence from an undercover police officer, Mark Kennedy. Mr Kennedy joined Sumac Community centre in 2003 and formed several romantic relationships with women who were involved. The case against the activists was thrown out in 2011 because Mr Kennedy had failed to disclose who he was. Another undercover police officer said, to *The BBC*, "I would seek out the most vulnerable people in those communities. The reason for that is the most vulnerable people are the easiest to manipulate."

Ed Matthew, director at climate change think tank E3G, said "The UK was the first country to build a coal-fired power station. It is right that it is the

first major economy to exit coal power. This is true global leadership, lighting the path for other countries to follow."

The closure is something to celebrate, but there's certainly room for sentimentality as infrastructure that was both deeply flawed and had a profound impact on our society is shut down. *The Nottingham Post* quotes local historian Ian Castledine saying "I'm here to see the old girl out. ... We saw the last coal delivery come in a couple of weeks ago, which was quite emotional. Cooling towers have been a huge part of the landscape of Great Britain for a long time. ... They were such a landmark – wherever you go, people would say 'I know I'm home when I see the cooling towers'." Maybe someday we will think of renewable infrastructure as Castledine does of cooling towers.

Separately, the Coal Authority, the UK's coal regulator, has refused to grant licences for a new coal mine in Cumbria. This comes after a High Court ruling on the 13th declaring the mine unlawful in a case brought by Friends of the Earth and South Lakes Action on Climate Change. The Tories backed the coal mine in the case, with Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, agreeing that the mine would be net-zero. However, the new Labour government withdrew their backing, admitting that the 99% of the mine's emissions from burning the coal should have been taken into account.

UK total inland coal consumption, 1913-2023, from UK Government, 2024

David Lammy calls for climate justice in Kew Lecture

Environment Editor
OSCAR MITCHAM

David Lammy gave his first major speech as Foreign Secretary on 17th September in Kew Gardens. His speech

was intersectional, covering global inequality, indigenous knowledge, and racial justice all as part of – and essential to – climate justice.

Lammy explained the core idea of his approach that "nothing could be more central to the UK's national interest than delivering global progress on arresting rising temperatures." He later told *Outrage + Optimism* that "I'm outraged morally that,

it's still the case that global majority countries, global South countries, are feeling very left behind."

Lammy also announced he would be appointing Special Representatives for Climate Change and for Nature, who will support him and Ed Miliband. The Special Representative for Climate Change will be Rachel Kyte, Professor of Practice in Climate Policy at the Oxford.



David Lammy by Lauren Hurley / No 10 Downing Street - Number 10 Flickr page, OGL 3

COMMENTS

The case for better career guidance

The skillset of many Britons aren't properly targeted to market needs

Comments Editor
GUILLAUME FELIX

Amidst the economic woes of the past decade in Europe, the issue of job security has inconspicuously slipped out of the British public's mind and the speeches in Westminster. The staggering two-figure unemployment rates of the 1980s are now hardly more than an unpleasant memory. Ironically, the UK is now faced with the opposite problem: while it boasts an unemployment rate of 4.4%, comfortably below the average given by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), economic growth is hindered by a shortage of workers. About one in ten available jobs country-wide does not find a suitable candidate. This overall value hides great sector-specific discrepancies, with vacancies notably reaching a whopping 18% in manufacturing, according to a recent study by Statistica.

This crisis would be more accurately labelled as skills shortage, as the pool of Britons seeking employment is theoretically sufficient to satisfy all offers. While wage expectations factor in too, a mismatch between the skills required and those present on the job market still account for about a third of the vacancies, disproportionately affecting small businesses.

On the other hand, many recent

graduates are faced with low demand in their professional area, and struggle to jump onto the jobs market without a reconversion or a serious scaling down of their wage ambitions. The cost of undergraduate education in the UK, which is now the highest in the rich world, makes those situations more dire than in other European countries. The yearly invoice received by a home student in a British university could cover 50 years of education in a French university. As such, most degrees that don't prepare for high-income jobs have an appalling low return on investment.

Excellence in the field of humanities and arts remains valued in the UK, a legacy of the times when the country's decision-makers were better versed in Greek poetry than in data analysis. But today, the visibility of highly successful public figures with such backgrounds, like former Prime Minister Boris Johnson, stem mostly from survivor bias. In fact, only about half of male undergraduates will get a positive economic return on their English or Philosophy degree, whereas Maths or Computing degrees are virtually always a good investment.

This would pose little concern if students enjoyed their degree and career more, but the levels of student satisfaction correlate with the environment of study much more than with the choice of a university major. A more realistic and careers-targeted approach to course guidance is thus required. Naturally,

secondary-school students which a genuine passion for liberal arts shouldn't be discouraged from pursuing this path. But it is a shame that those who feel daunted by STEM, or aren't yet motivated by any specific subject, too often follow through by default. Reconversions to any line of work are much easier for those who already possess employable skills.



Only half of male undergraduates will get a positive economic return on their English or Philosophy degree

Ensuring the offer and demand for employment meet constitutes sensible policing, and is all the more beneficial in a context of fast-changing job opportunities. Brexit-induced restrictions to immigration, combined to a particularly slow recovery of workforce activity following the Covid pandemic, have caused unprecedented imbalances in the jobs market. Endowing workers with sought-after skills would be crucial in turning Britain's GDP growth figures positive again.

That would demand an ambitious paradigm shift. Qualified blue-collar jobs are too often shunned, although they can offer hefty salaries for those

with the appropriate skillset and interest, in addition to a low vulnerability to AI replacement. Inspiration could be taken from countries like Germany which promote a dual education system, complementing classroom theory with work experience in partner companies. Apprenticeships there are not only facilitated by law, but a true cultural

norm.

To increase economic incentive, the British government could raise the cost of degrees leading to low employment demand and use the funds to create learning paths targeted to industries with the most alarming recruitment issues. Last month, Prime Minister Keith Starmer has launched a new program, dubbed Skills England, that aims at "fir[ing] up the training of all UK workers", in a promising first step. That alone remains unlikely to suffice. A country still so permeated with the childhood dream of *Harry Potter's* Sorting Hat should not shy away from more assertive career guidance.



Many key industries in Europe are understaffed. William M. Plate Jr. / Wikimedia Commons

CULTURE

Adele's pop-up stadium

Munich was blessed as the one and only city to host Adele's ten local performances, welcoming a crowd from every corner of the world.



Adele's stadium contains the world's widest screen. Charlotte Probstel

Culture Writer CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL

As “Hello-o-oh” echoed through the stadium, the platform raised the 36-year old icon to the center of the stage. While being greeted by a chorus of cheers, clapping, whistles, and tears of joy, she repeated “Hello-o-oh,” sending chills from my fingertips down my spine. There she was, dressed in a starlit-sky gown, her hair and makeup enhancing her natural beauty, and her accessories perfectly complementing her dress. The crowd quietened, giving her their full attention and creating an atmosphere of respect that was collectively shared. As if in a movie, the orange-yellow gradient of the clear sky's sunset behind the singer cast its last rays upon the stage, presenting her to the eager crowd.

Adele's Stadium

For many artists, Munich's grandest venue is the Olympic Stadium. Yet Adele had different plans. The singer, who felt uncomfortable touring across multiple countries and different stadiums – leading to her previous two-year residency in Las Vegas – wanted to perform all her European shows in one arena. Following the Olympic Stadium committee being unable to accommodate her due to scheduling conflicts, and with no other stadium available that could provide the “cozy” and intimate feeling she desired, where even those in the last row would feel close to the stage, Adele's team decided to take matters into their own hands.

The solution was to spend over 100 million euros for a custom-built, open-air, semi-circular stadium that could seat 80,000 fans and features the

largest screen ever, spanning 220 meters in width. A 93-meter catwalk stage, forming a figure-eight loop around each wing of the stadium, allowed Adele to connect with her fans. I had never before considered the idea of a pop-up stadium, but I thought, “Well, it is Adele.” A quick calculation of an average ticket priced at €125, multiplied by 80,000 seats, and 10 shows, gives an estimated income of 100 million euros in sales. This is excluding merchandise and drinks – a water bottle cost €7.

The modern stadium offered enough exits, bathrooms, and food and drink vendors for proper crowd management – something I appreciated greatly, as I did not worry about my safety within the stadium and on my way home.

My cousins, friends, and family all attended Adele's concert on different days, and everyone was lost for words

when I asked how it went. As a local, I was glad to see Munich's economy benefiting from the concerts, even if fans did travel in from various continents. It is estimated that the concerts brought in 530 million euros (660 million GBP).

A million dollar voice

Adele's live performances aren't known for complex choreography, instrumental interludes, or extravagant outfit changes. She performs in one dress, with her microphone, her personality, and most importantly, her voice as the main attraction. Her voice is nearly indistinguishable from her recorded singles, showcasing her unparalleled talent among her peers in the industry. I noticed the breadth of her vocal range when she asked the crowd to sing “If you're ready” (from the song “Send My Love”) in the high tone she

demonstrated, while she continued in her mezzo-soprano (medium, female) vocals.

Part time singer, part time comedian

Between songs, Adele interacted with her fans, shooting t-shirts into the crowd with a cannon, inviting fans on stage for brief interactions, and sharing her thoughts, feelings, and gratitude. My sister and I laughed when she introduced Skyfall by saying, "Let's get dramatic!" and we let out the occasional "aww" when she talked about her struggles around the time she wrote "Someone Like You".



Let's get dramatic!

Early in the show, she invited a young couple from South Africa, who had flown twelve hours to Munich just for her performance, on stage because she loved the girl's energy. Her witty reactions to the girl and her boyfriend's awe-struck comments highlighted her high degree of social intelligence and quirky charm – qualities that can make an audience fall in love with her, and a skill every performer would benefit from mastering. Even though she spoke only implicitly about her past, every fan who had followed her public life since the release of "Chasing Pavements" in 2008, understood what she was alluding to. It created a tight-knit feeling of belonging.

In early September, Adele announced she would take a break from performing and releasing new music after her final shows in Las Vegas in November. However shocking it may be, her recent interest in Hollywood may give fans the comfort to see her act on the small and large screen.

Hopefully Adele will return to the stage once again – astonishing voices like hers are rare and precious nowadays.

Taylor Swift sells out at Wembley

Taylor Swift's Eras tour welcomed 85,000 fans to Wembley Stadium for a three and a half hour jawdropping show, and a nostalgic setlist.

Culture Writer

CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL

To perform at Wembley Stadium is a something many artists dream of. To sell out the stadium for consecutive shows is an achievement only done by legends. Such a title is well deserved for world-famous country-turned-pop singer and songwriter Taylor Swift. Through its genius strategy, Swift's Eras Tour invites fans who remembered rocking out to "Love Song" and "Fearless" in the 2000s, as well as younger fans who first listened to Taylor Swift when she released "Shake it Off". Safe to say, fans of different decades enjoyed the show. Despite the diverse age demographic, most attendees were female.

The show was a momentous occasion for many fans, who came dressed up in the theme of their favourite era, wearing

cowboy hats and carrying rows of homemade friendship bracelets on their arms – a trend that grew exponentially due a lyric in one of Swift's songs.

At 8pm, the show started with "Miss Americana and The Heartbreak Prince," as the album *Lover* kicked off the nine eras. Each era, defined by one or two sister albums was accompanied by a fitting outfit alluding to her music videos.

Each fan was given a free wristband with an attached lightbox, and as such the crowd became one with Swift, transforming into a sea of red during the *Red* era or purple during "Fearless". A white snake became visible in the crowd during the *Reputation* era.

As in every show, Swift performed her acoustic section with her guitar and piano, by mashing two songs that had fans only guessing hours before the show started. In this instant it became clear, that it is not only Swift's well tuned

voice that built her success, but also her dedication to the two instruments, and the creative brilliance of her lyrics and melodies.

As if in a movie trailer, each era gave a snapshot of Swift's life, jumping between contrasting themes of fame, love, fun, escapism, independence, and struggle. Swift's newest album *The Tortured Poets Department* brought out a new theme; mental health struggles as a consequence of fame and social media. While she previously explored fame during her *Reputation* album, seeing how she set the songs in an eerie insane asylum – built with a metal white bed and creepy nurses – brought out Swift's openness to embrace change in her style.

Similar to Adele, Swift gave her audience a show of her best songs, in an evening of experiences giving decades of memories and emotions.



Watching the crowd was almost as entertaining as the show itself. Charlotte Probstel

FILM&TV

The Jimmy Fallon Show Experience

Peeking behind the curtains of a late-night talk show.

Film Writer
SIJUNG LEE

It was 12th August, the day I first went to a live TV show in New York City. Walking along 5th Avenue, I turned right at 50th St to finally reach the entrance



to NBC Studios, the iconic building where *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon* is filmed every weeknight.

Upon previously catching a glimpse of the guest list, I was delighted to see Channing Tatum at the top. Tatum is an American actor and film producer who initially got famous from films like *Step Up* (2006) and *Magic Mike* (2012), and I had recently watched *Fly Me to the Moon* (2024) where he co-starred with actress Scarlett Johansson. Most importantly, he was named



He had “been trying to play that character for the last 20 years”

the “Sexiest Man Alive” by *People Magazine* in 2012.

During the show, Fallon started off by bringing up his role as Gambit in *Deadpool & Wolverine* (2024), the highest-grossing film of his career. Tatum talked about how emotional he was about the role, explaining that he had “been trying to play that character for the last 20 years”. He expressed his gratitude for Kevin Feige, current president of Marvel Studios, and Ryan Reynolds, who starred as Deadpool, for making it happen. When further asked about the potential for a standalone movie after the acquisition of 21st Century Fox by Disney in 2019, he playfully mentioned that he would “kill kittens to make that happen.” In hindsight, former US President Donald Trump might have watched this show to get inspiration for the recent debate!

The conversation then moved on to Tatum’s work on last month’s psychological thriller *Blink Twice* (2024) as tech entrepreneur Slater King. He had worked with

director Zoë Kravitz, also his fiancée, commenting that “the movie is her whole personality, and the movie is terrifying”. He further mentioned that the original title of the movie was ‘Pussy Island’, giving the impression that Kravitz has a headstrong personality and a somewhat unconventional approach to directing films. During an interview with *Entertainment Weekly*, Kravitz stated that “women were offended by the word” and that society is not ready to embrace it yet, leading her to change the title.

The second guest was Liza Colón-Zayas, an American actress from the Bronx known for playing in the comedy-drama series *The Bear* (2022) as Tina Marrero. Fallon expressed his excitement for her success as she won the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series.

Finally, to end the show, the band Lawrence performed their new song “Whatcha Want” from their fourth studio album *Family Business*. Lawrence is a sibling-duo band founded by Clyde and Gracie Lawrence. Their father Marc Lawrence is a prominent filmmaker, screenwriter, and producer known for movies like *Miss Congeniality* (2000). Lawrence was part of the audience that night and his presence was acknowledged by Jimmy Fallon throughout the show. Needless to say, towards the end of the show, someone in the audience asked him the typical question of “How do I become a filmmaker?” only to receive the generic answer of “Just keep going.”

The most ironic part about these comedy show tapings was the sign at the front signalling the audience when to laugh. In my opinion, this diminishes the comedic aspect of the show when humour is, at its essence, mostly subjective. On the other hand, it makes perfect sense for a comedy show to have the live audience laugh at everything that has the potential to be amusing to at least one person. Humour is unpredictable. Even when looking at the YouTube videos from this particular show, there are a few clips that were more impactful with millions of views. Others, not so many. When anything has the potential to go viral, every second of the show matters.

From the perspective of contemporary society, social media plays a significant role in comedy, shows, and film. As shortened media content with edited clips of longer videos get more popular over time, watching a live 40-minute running time comedy show could even seem exhausting. One might ask, was it worth it? Yes. Why? It was free! So, if you ever find yourself in NYC, get a ticket to the Jimmy Fallon Show.

BOOKS

Review: Tripticks by Ann Quin

Daniel unpacks the absurdity and experimental storytelling of Ann Quin's surreal novel *Tripticks*

Books Writer
DANIEL HESK

I finished *Tripticks* late at night, with a glass of strong whiskey in hand while my father expounded to me about a mysterious methanol poisoning of some old Antarctic physicist. The whiskey was delicious, and this strange division of attention felt right for a novel closer to a pop-art collage than traditional literature. The book was grotesque, deeply confusing, and at times made me laugh out loud for minutes on end.

Ann Quin was an experimental English writer in the sixties and early seventies. She was often depressed, usually stoned, and died by suicide off Brighton pier in 1973. Most of her stories concern a certain grim post-war miasma that hung low upon Britain during her lifetime; in *Tripticks*, she takes a jaunt across the pond to a radically different environment. Quin presents a vast, hallucinatory USA, drowning in excess: all golden deserts, white McMansions, and wild, hedonistic terror.

Quin was writing in reaction to the 'peace and love' hippie naivete of the

sixties. She cordially despised Jack Kerouac's similar novel *On The Road*, mainly because of its zen, happy ending. In *Tripticks* she attempts to record the hypocrisy and frivolity of that era – not from a conservative standpoint, but from one of sober, progressive disgust. Notably, there are no working-class characters in *Tripticks*. The tortured men and women who criss-cross America (finding brief Life's Callings in cult orgies, Freudian analysis, commercial religion, appropriation of native ritual, etc.) are universally upper-class drifters with Cadillac-driving fathers and sky-blue swimming pools. At no point on this caustic Odyssey does anyone run out of money.

The story is presented as a prose-poem, bouncing quickly between images, from memory to experience to premonition. The protagonist's thoughts are often indistinguishable from commercial slogans and snippets of TV-speak, in a way that reminded me of Don DeLillo or some New Wave sci-fi. The core narrative — as far as I could extract it — is about a man being pursued by, or perhaps pursuing, his "No. 1 X-Wife" and her new "schoolboy gigolo"



Bridgeman Oswald Jones

of a lover. Large chunks of the book, though, are fragmentary flashbacks to the protagonist's lives with ex-wives one through three, and all the violent and incestuous degeneration those lives were painted with. *Tripticks* is a road trip, but also a bundle of letters, a Sears catalogue, and a sharp but stifled scream.

Like Anna Kavan's *Ice*, this is also an early feminist text with no explicit female perspective. The main character is cruel and hyperactive, viewing all women in terms of their sexual potential and all men in terms of sexual rivalry. The women themselves are presented as superficial, scheming, and universally promiscuous. Sex in this book is more a matter of desperate, depraved one-upmanship than anything else, with new fetishes described in the same tone as novel features in the ex-wife's gleaming automobiles. Still, Quin was a staunch feminist. She seems to be taking aim both at chauvinistic life-lenses and at the kind of abstracted, white, capitalist feminism that was prominent at the time. She saw this as altogether too divorced from the material conditions of real women under

bondage. I can't claim to be an expert on this field of thought, but it was definitely an interesting read.

Experimental, frenetic, and darkly comedic, *Tripticks* is a great book for anyone plumbing the stranger byroads of British literature. If you're ever on a long ride across the American southwest, consider thumbing through this to pass the hours — and don't trust anyone with a name like "Nightripper". It's a red flag.

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FOOD&TRAVEL

A fond farewell to Heidelberg

For goodbyes are hard in every language



Heidelberger Schloss (Heidelberg castle) at night, overlooking the city that sits in the Neckar valley Phoebe Iacono

Writer
PHOEBE IACONO

I feel like I'm discrediting Heidelberg when I say I didn't specifically choose it as my year abroad destination. To tell the truth, after deciding I wanted to study in Germany, I realised it was my only option in conjunction with my Biological Sciences degree. Language was something I had always adored at school, and I was determined to combine my German A-Level with my studies at Imperial. It was a chance to not only indulge in a new culture, but witness first-hand the benefits of sustaining international relations, something so important in a world of collaborative science.

Heidelberg itself is a city of around

150,000 people in the southwestern state of Baden-Württemberg. I fell in love with this place in the Neckar Valley where science and the arts exist so cohesively. But perhaps this is not surprising, and I am simply following in the footsteps of professors and poets alike who relished its romantic setting. Take the Philosophenweg or "Philosopher's path" for example, where writers and poets have spent many an hour reflecting on the trials and tribulations of life, not to mention the student population. Heidelberg University is the oldest in Germany, dating back to 1386, and I feel proud to have been a member of its renowned international community.

The stanzas that follow are somewhat of a diary entry – or perhaps a love letter addressed directly to the individual moments, the people that collectively

wrote the pages of my Heidelberg story (combined with a little humour). Through my poem, laced with a couple German words for good measure, I hope to encourage and inspire the next generation of Imperial undergraduates to take the leap that is studying abroad. I'd be lying if I said it was plain sailing in its entirety but trust me when I say it is the challenges and rollercoaster journey of emotions for which you will be eternally grateful. The experiences you face will be uniquely yours and that, I feel, is a beautiful thing. My year in Heidelberg was a time of immense personal growth, and I built relationships and made memories I will treasure for the rest of my life. Most importantly, it's left me excited and motivated to start writing the next chapter – alongside a cup of coffee and slice of cake, of course.

CIAO, FOR NOW

By PHOEBE IACONO

When generations pose a question,
Of the place with incomparable fame,
It will take but a second to remember,
Heidelberg, yes that was the name.

The sweeping slopes of the Neckar valley,
Romanticism mirroring that of Rome,
Perhaps someday I too will write a poem,
For this place holds the potential of home.

Once again science befriends the arts,
A coincidence? To this day no one knows,
Sacred memories born from a language,
Time was the enemy, and so it goes.

Picnics at dusk on the Wiese,
A hunger games, humans vs geese,
The battle would last but for a moment,
And the world would soon be at peace.

The comfort of Kaffee und Kuchen,
A habit everyone could foresee,
Gone are the days of a digestive biscuit,
With a home brewed cuppa tea.

The post-hike hunger desperation,
Yet I could feel it inside my gut,
It was in fact a Sunday,
The door to Aldi was shut.

Stampede of a Hauptstraße,
Impossible to step back in time,
Silent shadows post the invite,
But first, just a gentle climb.

A Schloss, gatekeeper of the past,
Delivering an unthinkable view,
The sun sets on this tranquil city,
Perhaps fairytales really do come true.

Liebe Leute, whose paths crossed with mine,
For each of you played a unique part,
Lessons learned, friendships ignited,
Lasting snowflakes imprinted on my heart.

Goodbyes will one day expire,
For my soul can only allow,
Not a tschüssi, auf Wiedersehen,
Sondern bis bald, ciao for now.

To think I never knew,
That such a place was to be,
Beg forgiveness for the ignorance,
It now holds a part of me.

The future remains uncertain,
Yet one thing I know for sure,
Ich hab mein Herz verloren,
In Heidelberg, forevermore.

BUSINESS

Diverging paths for the Bank of England and the Federal Reserve

The Bank of England holds rates steady while the Federal Reserve cuts rates, impacting bond and currency markets

BUSINESS WRITER
DANIELA FIRAM

September 18th marked a dramatic move by the Federal Reserve (Fed) to cut interest rates by 50 basis points, which contrasted sharply with the Bank of England's (BoE) decision the following day to keep rates steady. The difference in central bank policy has created divergent economic outlooks between the U.S. and the U.K. in the currency and bond markets. Interest rates represent the cost at which banks lend to one another and significantly impact the economy. Lower rates stimulate the economy by encouraging borrowing and spending, which can increase the money supply. Alternatively, in periods of high inflation, where there is too much money in the system chasing too few goods and services, higher interest rates are implemented by the governing central bank to decrease the money supply, thereby decreasing inflation.

Currently, the inflation rate in the U.K. is at 2.2%, and the inflation rate in the U.S. is at 2.5%. It is worth noting, that the decision to raise, decrease, or hold steady interest rates depends on factors like employment and growth. For example, in early 2022, both countries' central banks were concerned with bringing down inflation, despite being in the cycle of raising interest rates and holding them steady.

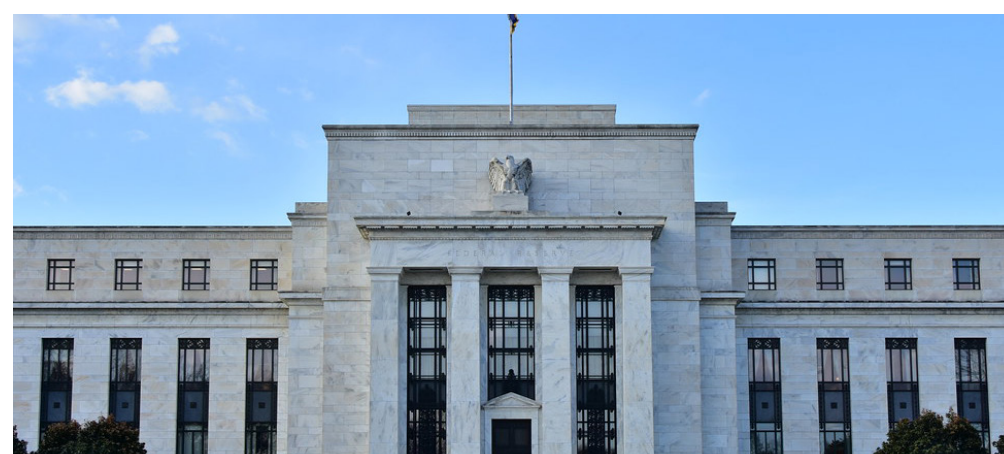
Bonds are significantly influenced by

a country's interest rate. A bond is a loan that governments offer to investors, and in return for buying government debt, investors receive interest payments. The yield on these bonds refers to the return an investor expects to receive each year



Bank of England. Photo by George Rex, Flickr, used under CC BY-SA 4.0 license.

until the bond's maturity passed, and can change as interest rates move around. Generally, as interest rates decline, the prices of existing bonds increase, and their yield decreases. The price of a bond



Federal Reserve. Photo by Pedro Mendes, Flickr, used under CC BY 2.0 license

and its yield are inversely proportional. As an example, in the U.S., if the interest

rate is at 5% and then decreases to 4%, existing bonds with the 5% interest rate become more attractive to investors. This causes the price of these bonds to increase; however, the return on the bond (the yield) decreases because the

fixed interest payments are now a smaller percentage of the higher bond price.

With the Fed's decision to cut interest rates, the yield on U.K. gilts (bonds) has overtaken U.S. bonds. In a recent episode

which manages \$2 trillion in assets and has significant exposure to bonds – stated, “The U.S. is not the only game in town anymore... [The UK bond market] out-yields the United States.” On the day of the BoE announcement, two-year gilt yields increased by 0.03 percentage points. Likewise, the pound rose 0.3 percentage points.

These higher yields on gilts are contributing to a stronger pound as investors pile into pounds. Although, other factors also drive the currency market, such as expectations of future interest rate policy, market sentiment, and geopolitical factors. This drives up demand and increases the pound's value on the foreign exchange markets. As a result, the pound is now at its strongest level relative to the U.S. dollar since 2022, which could cause a range of economic consequences, from more foreign investment to better deals for U.K. consumers.

As the pound becomes more expensive relative to the U.S. dollar, exports from the U.K. would become less competitive. However, a rising pound gives U.K.-based consumers increased buying power for imports. Ultimately, the BoE is likely to begin cutting rates, as signaled in the latest meeting, if inflation continues to trend downward. In the meantime, investors might consider purchasing gilts to lock in higher rates. Additionally, the pound-flush U.K. resident could take advantage of the favourable spread by planning an overseas vacation.

of the Odd Lots podcast, Dan Ivascyn, Chief Investment Officer of Pimco –

CATNIP



Twenty-somethings swap half-marathons for smoking

Imperial students living in Fulham prefer Vogue Blues to running shoes

Catnip Editor

RUBY LYDFORD

Independent coffee shops in Parsons Green have reported that with the current consciousness on caffeine intake, cold brew sales have steeply declined, many opting for an iced matcha latte instead. This is due to the caffeine in a cup of matcha binding phytonutrients in a way that slows the body's absorption, leaving a longer buzz, and less dependency on it. "Young people are ready to take back control of their health after fourteen years of not being able to do so," said GAIL's barista, Kai. They also noted the amount of people asking if they had any ashtrays for the outdoor seating area. Students and West London creatives usually spend long afternoons 'working from home' in these cafes, purchasing only one drink, but recently the number of customers visiting after their morning

five-kilometre run has steeply declined. To investigate this further, we decided to interview a few smokers outside The Gourmet Hound on Fulham Palace Road.

Blex Aull, 25, said he had "quit half-marathons since he has been on a major calorie deficit since taking up smoking", so he doesn't need to exercise as much. He said he also saved money by cutting out his morning vegan cinnamon swirl.

A PhD student from Imperial College London, Feb Senton, told us he had needed material for his thesis on plastic-consuming bacteria, so he had purchased twenty disposable lighters, but they kept disappearing. He said it "wasn't economically or environmentally viable to not use them for their original purpose".

Emmanuel Frederick, 20, a self-described "comeback indie sleazebag", said Vogue slims helped him "manifest urbane vibes". After a series of "hugely successful" Hinge dates in which he received multiple compliments on his cologne (Maison Margiela Jazz Club), he decided to opt for an organic substitute rather than repurchase the £120 bottle.

Despite not previously knowing each other, the group spoke intimately, asking each other for lighters and talking about tobacco brands. When asked about vaping the correspondents shook their heads disapprovingly, Emmanuel adding, "it's just not the same is it".

Special thanks this week

Thank you to my muse and inspiration, Feb Senton, I don't know what the paper would be without you. Thank you to the editor, Mo, for being the editor. I'd like to thank Mo's dad. I'd like to thank Mo's uncle. I'd like to thank Mo's ex-wife. I'd like to thank Mo's dog, Fluffy. Thank you to Mo's part-time nicotine habit, it's been the light in the darkness of many copyediting sessions. Thank you to my lab partner for having a delusionship with me in year two so that now I have had to come to terms with my emotional dependency and dysregulation, and the dangers of bisexual skater boys. Thank you to my course parents for abandoning me in year one, it has made me realise the importance of healing my relationship with my own parents. Thank you to Sappho for inventing gay sex, without it I wouldn't want to be here today. Thank you to Adam and Eve for inventing straight sex, without it I wouldn't be here today.

Most of all thank you to all the characters at Imperial that are so easy to make fun of that you all provide me great source material. I love you all.

Your Letters

Dear Aunty Felicia,

I can't get over my ex-wife. Seeing all the freshers reminded me of the fact that I am also freshly divorced. A lot of the activities I do, just seem to make me more depressed. I can't eat, I can't sleep, and now I can't even do my job without seeing her name everywhere in all the clauses and paragraphs I'm drowning in. Is there anything I can do. It's been a year and a half and I still haven't moved on. What can I do?

Distressed,
m

Our response

Dear m,

Please get a grip.

Love from,
Aunty Felicia

Editor resigns after anti-Swift tweets resurface

Catnip Writer
NEGAFELIX

Felix editor Juby Roy has been forced to resign after a background check of her online footprint. Alison sCardigan13, a full-time Stan Twitter moderator, 22 Hat Winner, with a bachelor's degree in English Literature with Folklore conducted the investigation, resurfacing the six-year-old anti-Swift tweets on Tuesday morning. The backlash since then has been inescapable, and Roy went off the grid and into hiding for thirteen hours.

"I wish I had just been cancelled for something forgivable like slurs or homophobia," Roy stated on Wednesday morning.

"When my ex-boyfriend applied for finance jobs, he was worried about some old racist tweets from when he was thirteen, but it actually diversified his application, and now he's a partner. But I understand this is different; there's no backing out of this one."

Some of the viral tweets include:

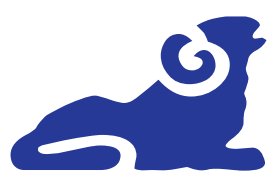
"I bet Taylor Swift thinks that T.S. Eliot stands for Taylor Swift Eliot and his entire career is an easter egg to The Tortured Poets Department."

"Bought the Matty Healy's semen coloured vinyl variant today #Capitaylor"

"That blonde lady thinks that William Golding was writing about her private jet pastimes when he wrote Lord of the Flies."

Fans across the globe, and Imperial's own SwiftSoc, have gathered together to support Miss Swift in this hard time by starting a GoFundMe for the 34-year-old billionaire. However, industry insiders suspect that this controversy during the rollout of her eighth album in the last four years may boost Grammy odds. Although Taylor herself has not yet made a statement, many believe there may be a new digital album variant including her response as a bonus track.

One fan, Everwhere, says "we can't really be surprised, it's so difficult to be a Swiftie these days. I've been dealing with the oppression for over ten years now. All Taylor has left to claim back is her Name and her Reputation. Beware Juby Roy, Karma is real."



ARIES

This week you tell your flatmate you won't be endorsing either candidate because you're too much of a "queer icon".



TAURUS

This week you join an ICSM sports team to strengthen your patience and liver. You don't join an IC sports team because you don't like sports.



GEMINI

This week you accidentally post your arse on your society story, increasing engagement by 3000%. You are the best publicity officer ever.



CANCER

This week you calculatedly and lackadaisically read page three of *Intermezzo* in the library cafe to impress your campus crush. You are such a polymath.



LEO

This week you read another esoteric horoscope with a witty observation that makes you feel so cultured.



VIRGO

This week you arrive to your lecture two hours early as you didn't realise the bus diversions are over.



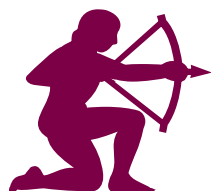
LIBRA

This week you tell forty-three different people which A-level Further Mathematics modules you did.



SCORPIO

This week you log onto thestudentroom.com to give some profound advice from the prophet first year to some year 13s about the UCAT.



SAGITTARIUS

This week you decide to become a study influencer to try and boost the chances of a successful ASOS modelling contract.



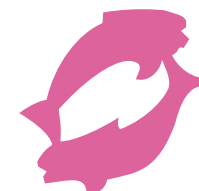
CAPRICORN

This week you desperately try and win the TasteImperial gold card despite having a monthly budget of over 1000 pounds (not including rent).



AQUARIUS

This week you're caught listening to "Everything Reminds Me of Her" by Elliott Smith on your 'ex-wife' playlist.



PISCES

This week you contact student support to see if a humble donation of 16,000 pounds worth of clothes comes under the bursary scheme.

UNION & SOCIETIES

Fresher's Fair Frustration

Cold, wet and frustrated society committee members welcomed alumni, undergraduates, and postgraduates at this year's Fresher's Fair.

Union & Societies Editor
CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL

During the Union's annual Welcome Week Fresher's Fair this Tuesday – hosted around the outdoor space of South Kensington campus – the rainy weather drenched visitors and club members alike for hours in 16°C temperature. Unprepared, student clubs quickly found creative ways to keep their valuable items and merchandise dry, all while staying warm.

For security reasons, all the CSP stalls had to be sectioned off outside under tents, hence no society was spared an inside stall. Clubs with tables placed between tents experienced the brunt of the rain, dripping between tent flaps, only saved by the ingenuity and aid of supporting students taping plastic bags between flaps to redirect the rain away from the important paper QR codes. Unfortunately for every society, the rain fell heavily from 11am till 5pm, with only an hour of light rain to slightly lighten the burden.

Prior to the event, societies were instructed per email to arrive at Exhibition Road at 9:30 am to sign in. At 9:40, the queue reached the science museum. Early attendees waited in line for thirty minutes before moving up to the desk to announce their arrival, only to learn their lanyards were in a different location for pickup, one dedicated to their category.

Tables were tightly packed back to back, side to side in each section, forcing students to squeeze behind every other society to reach their table, if placed



Left: The Felix stall. Right: Puzzles editor Ivin pitching Felix Walt Gao for Felix

in the middle of their row. Each table was supplied a trashbag, two chairs and enough space for two members, however many societies found the space limiting.

Contrastingly to last year's Freshers Fair, there was a strong presence of security staff hired to enforce the one-way movement of the crowd. Gates, organised due to security requirements, were placed around the entire fair, with a single entrance to the public.

artistic or athletic costumes, and various items chosen to grab the attention of people passing by. For example, *Felix's* Editor-in-Chief Mohammad frequently wore the large cat costume head, attracting noticeable attention. Otherwise, the K-Pop Society brought various lightsticks, the Drama Society brought posters of their last shows and, if possible, sport teams brought their athletic equipment to parade.

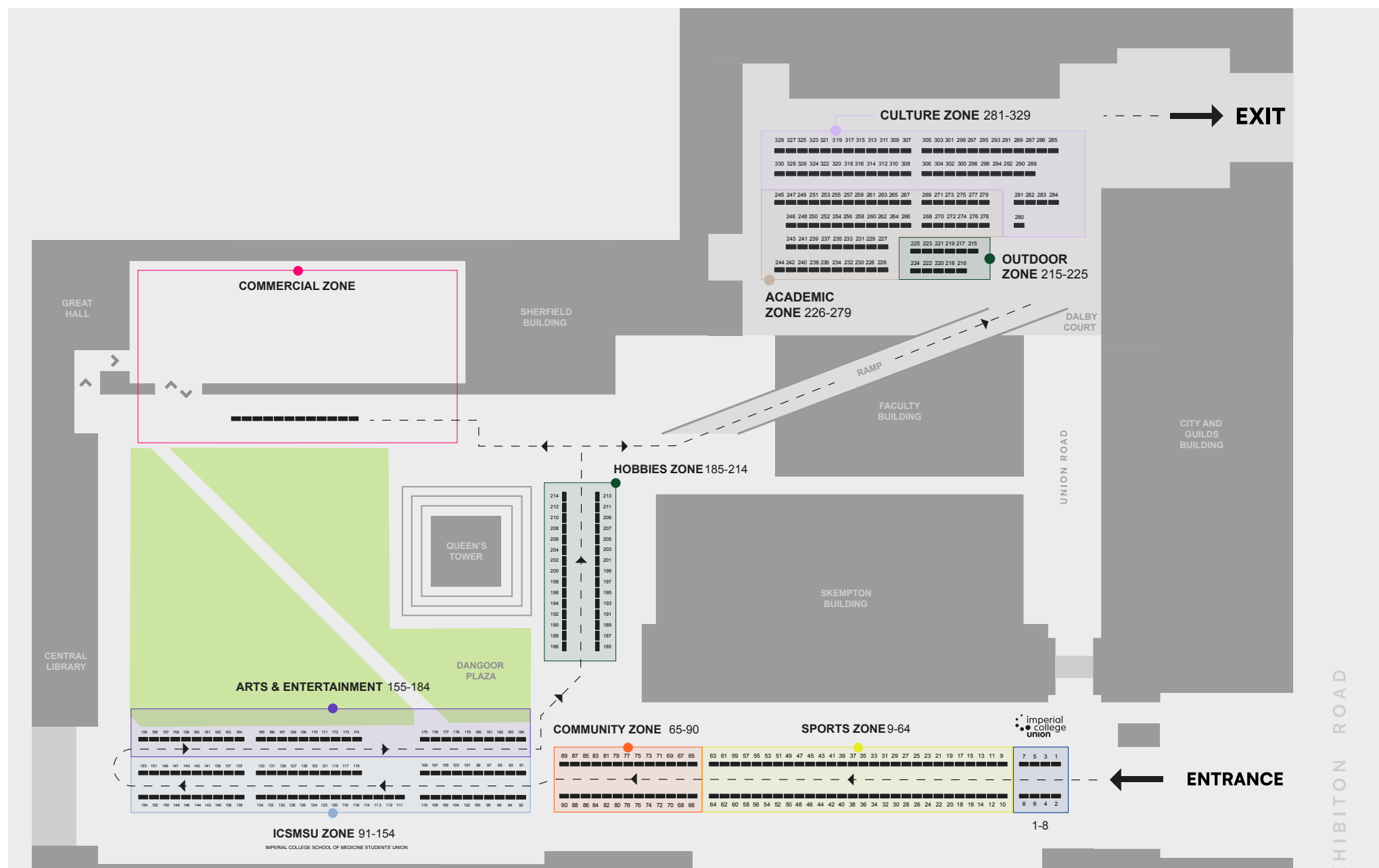
Union (ICSMSU) earlier this term.

As always, CSPs provided arrays of QR codes linked to websites, WhatsApp groupchats, Instagram pages, newsletter forms, and membership signups, hoping to establish immediate relationships with prospective students. Fortunately for every society, a new Imperial student could easily be identified by their newly designed bright red lanyard.

Deputy President Christian Cooper

were thrown into bins, as stickers, and memorabilia were packed securely into any available bags. Many students waited beneath the tents, shoes soaked, before rushing to the closest building. As groups left their stalls, tables and chairs left folded on the floor, lanyards were returned to the staff and coverage was sought by every student.

Despite the terrible weather, every student was part of the Fair; if not pitching,



Fresher's Fair Map Imperial College Union

The sleek, informative map, shared only digitally in support of sustainability efforts and provided to societies the morning of, showed the one-way flow, the entrance and exit as the Exhibition Road and City and Guilds Building entrance respectively. Fortunately, the Fair was not separated from rest of South Kensington's campus, with students easily able to take a lunch break or rush to the library to print more flyers.

At the fair, each CSP presented their purpose via posters, members dressed in

In spirit of the rivalry between Imperial College (IC) and Imperial College School of Medicine (ICSM), sport societies drew up posters making claims about whose team beat their counterpart in the opposing school. One girl walked around in the rain with a poster reading "We beat IC 8-0". Students unaware of the new categorisation of all CSPs may have noticed that ICSM and IC sports societies were no longer in the same section. ICSM students were granted their own student union section, named ICSM Student

held up the spirit by posing various interviews with society members on IC Union's Instagram @icunion. Other staff helped students find their stalls, provided cloths to soak up the rain, and plastic bags and tape rolls for students to bind tents closer together to keep water from dripping onto students.

Despite the official ending of the Fair at 5pm, many societies began packing up close to 4pm, mostly due to the decrease number of visitors and the increasing pour of rain. Wet posters and papers

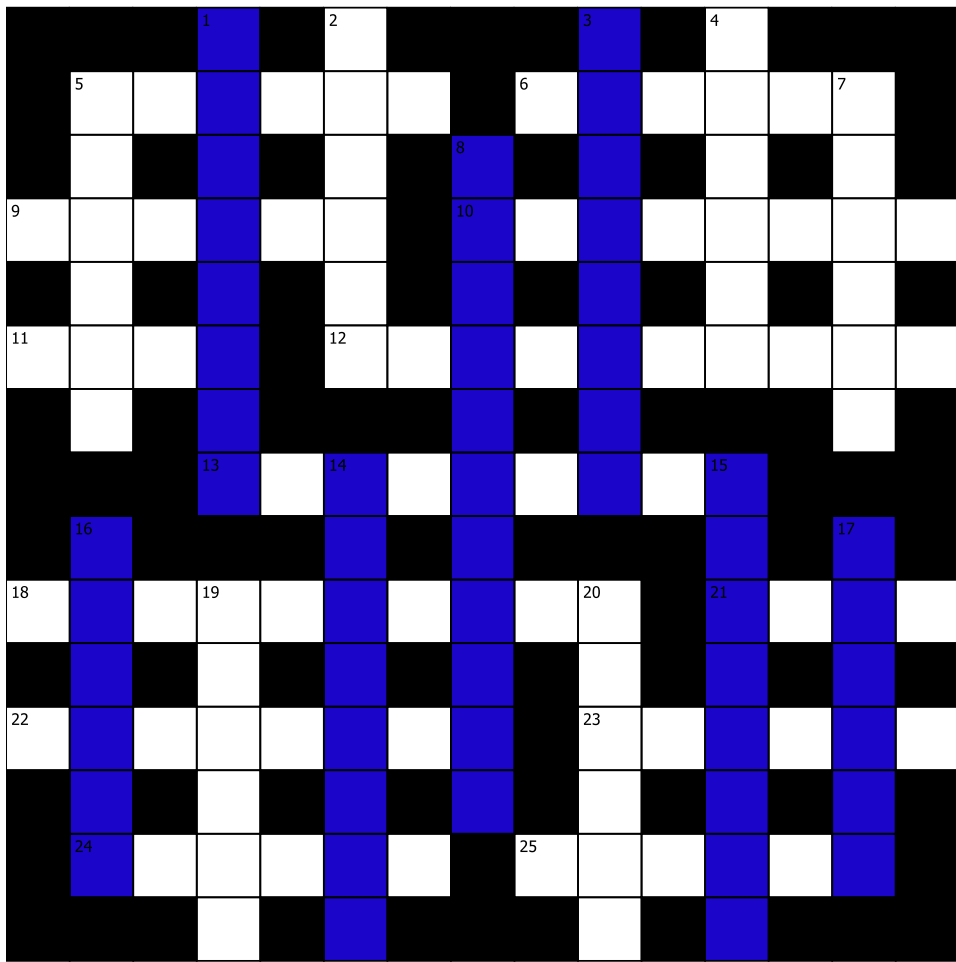
then listening to their counterpart.

After Fresher's Fair, the real work of introducing new students into societies begins; highlighting that the fair — while incredibly useful — is only a small aid in growing and maintaining a successful society. Now CSPs need to guide every interested fresher step-by-step to avoid losing them to another CSP.

With the end of Welcome Week approaching, we at *Felix* hope everyone had a wonderful week and can avoid the follow up to Fresher's Fair: Fresher's Flu.

PUZZLES

Puzzles Editor
IVIN JOSE



CROSSWORD

'Right as Rain!'

(3 pts.)

Across

- 5. Sweet crumbly treat. [6]
- 6. Metal blend. [6]
- 9. The official language of Quebec. [6]
- 10. Open air eating. [2 6]
- 11. Brahmagupta's invention. [4]
- 12. Green nuts. [10]
- 13. Struck a chord. [9]
- 18. Basmati rice company. [10]
- 21. Say, "light bulb!" [4]
- 22. Jessi J 2011 song. [4 3]
- 23. To warm to someone. [4 2]
- 24. Longing for. [6]
- 25. Zephyr. [6]

Down

- 1. Suddenly soaked. [8]
- 2. Chess piece. [6]
- 3. Icy rain, Scottish. [8]
- 4. Discoverer of Oxygen. [6]
- 5. The naughty spot. [6]
- 7. Part of a whole. [6]
- 8. Say, raining pets. [11]
- 14. Barely wet. [8]
- 15. Lightly wet. [8]
- 16. Cold and wet. [6]
- 17. Absolutely drenched. [6]
- 19. Dead tissue from a wound. [6]
- 20. Obtain. [6]

Across

- 1. Regarding part of muscles of classical twin. [5]
- 4. Mad, bad and ominously endless, Alan is in your stomach! [9]
- 9. Shuffling counterfeit, cheap jewellery. [9]
- 10. Inadequate ward sheltering female. [5]
- 11. Least valuable daughter of Kanye confused with user interface. [11]
- 12. Destroys, I hear, Latin ruler. [3]
- 13. Come across fairytale opening starting in central Bucharest rather than Oman's capital. [6 4]
- 15. Four imprisoned by the French have a dance! [4]
- 18. Infiltrate first sequoia tree. [4]
- 19. Mixing up apartment after deception to lead to irritating new grounding. [10]
- 21. Soup served in pub by

Oscar. [3]

- 22. Current time and current place, close and yet very far. [7 4]
- 24. Deceitful sleeping position. [5]
- 25. Judge, after edit was reversed, used to measure changes. [4 5]
- 26. Write schoolyard game using memory of symbol. [9]
- 27. Tricks used penny bafflingly. [5]

Down

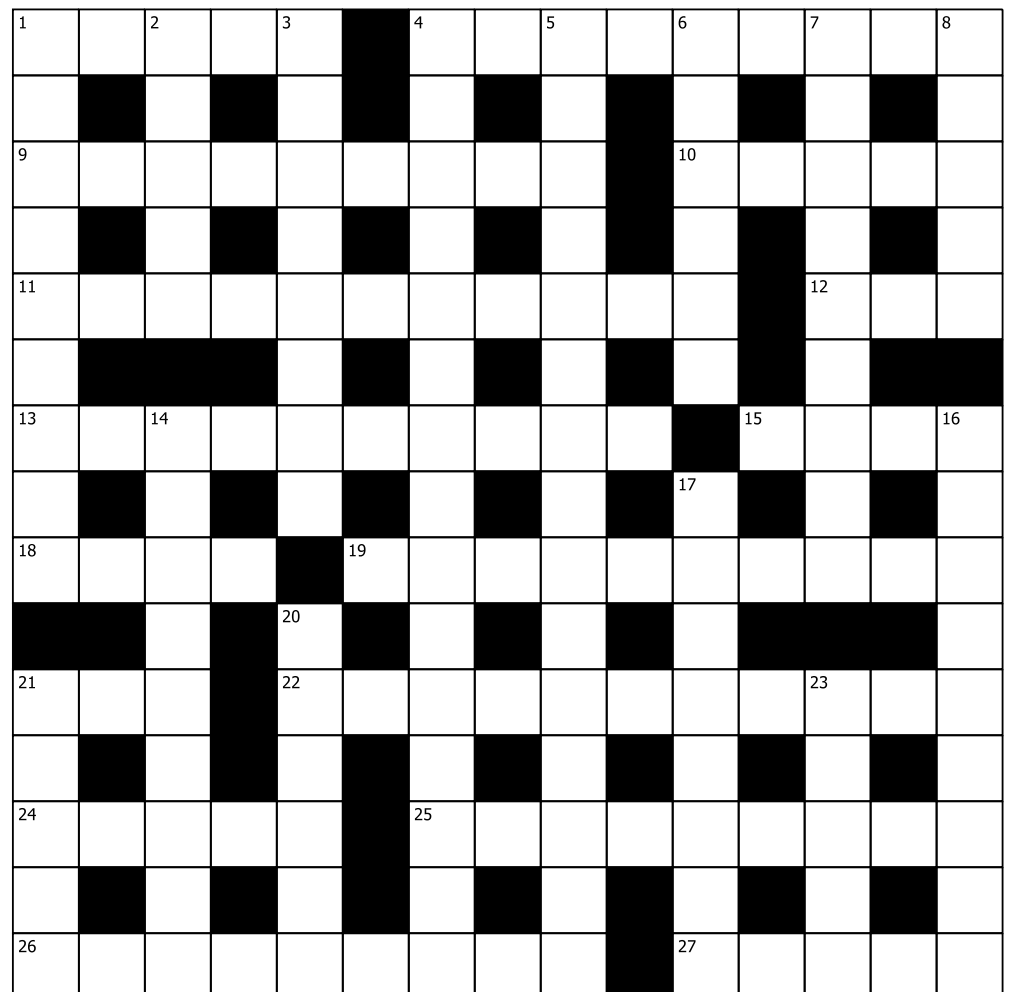
- 1. Concerning informants giving materials. [9]
- 2. Cat greeting soldier gone AWOL; exclaiming in pain! [5]
- 3. Remove replacement of large swathe of land. [8]
- 4. An animal out of its habitat, ill at ease. [1 4 3 2 5]

- 5. Extent of liberty is controlled but allowed to vary. [6 2 7]
- 6. Gets rid of headless emu cults. [6]
- 7. Compounded nitrite absorbing Iron leader. [9]
- 8. Rubber produced in lab vortex losing heart. [5]
- 14. Describing mythical warrior who guts amazed Ionian. [9]
- 16. Bizarrely agree to Loch with enthusiasm. [9]
- 17. Jagged stone face of admiration for final king we toppled. [3 5]
- 20. Mystery of benign innards of mother. [6]
- 21. Polly loses a litre at start of puberty growth. [5]
- 23. Prepare for banter after finishing pie. [5]

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Submitted by Ester K. Mirra

(5 pts.)



SUDOKU

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

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

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

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

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

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

Medium (1 pt. each)

Hard (2 pts. each)

Extra hard (3 pts. each)

GROUPING GRIDS

Submitted by William West & Vittoria Dessi

stir	spell	muddle	stretch
week	chaos	first	prime
season	top	brawl	second
head	hell	serve	heat

Medium (3 pts.)

How-to:

For fans of *Only Connect*! The sixteen clues in each of these puzzles can be placed into four groups of four, each with a connecting feature. To solve the puzzle, write these groups and their connections below! An example can be seen in last week's solutions.

number	ring	man	hand
bar	deck	beard	suit
colour	staff	ship	crew
work	time	fireworks	pipe

Hard (4 pts.)

1.					Connections
2.					
3.					
4.					

1.					Connections
2.					
3.					
4.					

COMIC

Submitted by Tengyu Zhao



Previous Weeks' Solution

Regular													Cryptic														
D	U	S	E	P	E	G	A	S	U	S			S	C	A	B	B	A	R	D	S	W	A	S	P	S	
B	U	R	N	D	A	P	I	R	I	S				E	R	E	U	Y	I	U	T						
B	I	C	E	N	S	O	G	O						N	I	C	H	E	B	E	R	I	N	G	S	E	A
A	T	T	U	N	E	D	N	H	F					Z	H	T	I	I	K	H	M						
S	I	R	C	R	A	I	N	A						A	S	I	F	S	C	A	N	T	L	I	M	P	
H	A	U	K	A	D	O	P	P	L	E	R			T	B	O	G	A	S								
O	M	I	N	O	U	S	H	A	C					I	B	E	R	I	A	N	E	M	B	A	R	G	O
W	E	L	C	O	M	E	S	O	L	V	E	R	S	M	C	S	B	I	U								
W	L	B	S	W	E	E	P	U	P					M	O	T	T	O	E	S	P	R	O	V	O	S	T
U	S	H	E	R	E	D	R	A	D	O	A			U	N	E	H	T	G								
P	R	A	N	I	V	N	H	S						N	U	U	K	M	Y	J	A	M	I	R	A	Q	
S	S	O	A	S	W	E	S	A	Y					I	S	A	M	S	I	A	U						
E	N	R	A	V	A	S	H	D						S	O	U	T	H	P	O	L	E	K	E	N	Y	A
T	O	M	B	I	E	V	A	U	R	A				E	R	O	U	I	E	D	I						
W	A	S	T	R	E	L	E	G	G	A				S	A	P	P	Y	R	I	N	G	A	B	E	L	L

Medium grouping grid

love	nil	oh	zip	nothing, zero
bee	eye	see	you	homophones of letters
champions	dust	pressure	rhapsody	end of Queen singles
bright	define	dyes	TikTok	End in expressions of agreement

Hard grouping grid

toast	eggs	bacon	porridge	breakfast foods
(t)rain	(b)us	(b)oat	t(ram)	Modes of transport missing first letter
ewe	jenny	jill	sow	female animals
seed	bed	pot	plant	synonyms for sow

Cryptograms

"I am, and always will be, the optimist. The hoper of far-flung hopes, and the dreamer of improbable dreams."

Anagram: Torch Wood = Doctor Who
Quote from: 'The Almost People' - Doctor Who

Puzzle Editor's Note

Dearest Puzzlers,

Welcome to Felix's second round of puzzles! I hope everyone had a fantastic first week of term and a huge welcome to all the new first years joining Imperial!

As September draws to a close, the puzzle section is joining all readers as we enter into Autumn together. Dedicated puzzlers might notice a certain theme in the puzzles this week (namely the regular crossword and the cryptogram), one brought on by the autumn weather and much loved by your humble Puzzles Editor. So remember to pack your umbrellas and pull up the hoods on your raincoats because the forecast for this week's puzzles is rain, rain, rain!

As always, puzzlers, do keep your submissions coming! We love seeing your solutions. Of course the glory of being on the Felix Leaderboard is also a much coveted prize!

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to the puzzles section: Ester K. Mirra for their Cryptic Crossword, William and Vittoria for their Connections and Tengyu for the Comic.

That leaves me with nothing more to say, other than to wish you a fantastic week of crossing, connecting, completing, code-cracking, comic-consuming, and competing!

- Ivin