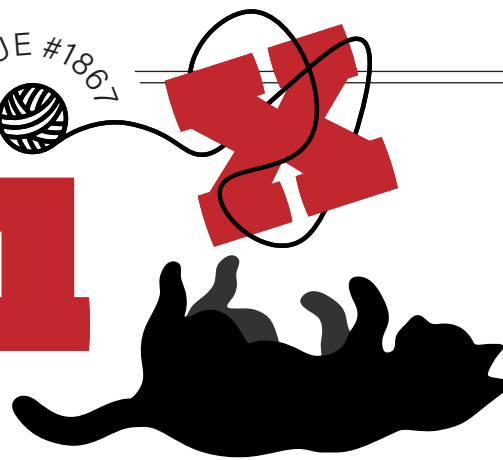


First published in 1949, Felix is released weekly during term time and is distributed around Imperial's London campuses. All students, staff, and alumni are welcome to contribute to the paper.

# Felix

ISSUE #1867



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Should have shown him the Huxley tunnels - Ed. Thomas Angus / Imperial College London

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TERM TWO EVENTS

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FINAL: 20 MARCH Metric 19:00 onwards

TERM TWO EVENTS

## GOODLIFE Deep Sea Disco

End of Term Party  
21 March 2025  
Metric | 22:00 - 03:00



# 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:  
**MOHAMMAD MAJLISI**  
Editor-in-Chief

## Copyeditors

- Taylor Pomfret
- Tarun Nair
- Izabella Rea
- Nabil Alizadeh
- Guillaume Felix

# The Felix Team:



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Editor-in-Chief,  
News Editor



**TAYLOR POMFRET**  
Deputy Editor-in-Chief,  
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**CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL**  
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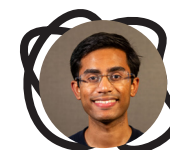
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Head Photographer



**AND OUR NUMEROUS  
CONTRIBUTORS ...**

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Prince Consort Road  
London, SW7 2BB

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## EDITORIAL

# Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Last week, I was reminded that deadlines are not suggestions. Imperial College London is a place of purpose. Underneath us all hums the constant note of motion and progress. The students here are not simply studying; they are solving, building, innovating. And God they must. Walk through the campus, and you can feel it: the quiet anxiety of minds at work, the relentless pursuit of something bigger than themselves.

Thus, it comes as no surprise that President Brady's address is underpinned by the relentless notion of usefulness. It is a word that appears repeatedly, in mission statements, funding proposals, conversations about the future. Imperial is not a university; it is a factory of impact. Its graduates drive industries, its research shapes policy, its discoveries change lives. And there is pride in that, rightly so. Few institutions can claim to be as tightly woven into the fabric of progress as Imperial. But pride can be deadly. Hubris is at large in this institution. It percolates through the entire hierarchy, through leadership teams down to my own conversations over dinner whether I like it or not. The pride of being 2nd after MIT, beating out Oxbridge. The pride in "being better." The pride in "being useful." There is so much irony in the name of our university. Imperial is a word historically tied to dominance, conquest, and control. It promises an institution of unrivalled power and influence a place where knowledge is both a weapon and a currency.

I often think about the friends who struggle, who disappear from social circles under the weight of expectations. The ones who stopped loving what they studied because it became a source of anxiety rather than curiosity. I think that has been all of us at some point. The ones who stayed up not because they were inspired, but because they were afraid of falling behind. I know it is normal for university life but ours particularly feels brutal by design. We are force-fed these lines about support and services, presented as if they are here for us. In reality, they feel like little more than tick-box exercises for the institution. These services are a means to an end, with the end being our productivity, our usefulness to the institution. We are told we have access to mental health resources, but in the end, it is not about supporting our well-being; it is about making sure we continue to perform at the highest level of use that we can.

I do not regret coming here. But I do wish that, sometimes, we were allowed to be useless. Not in the sense of being idle, but in the sense of learning for learning's sake. Perhaps that is a shallow thing for me to say, spending a small nine thousand two hundred and fifty pounds a year to simply enjoy. I can't help and notice the irony that while Brady himself commands a salary of £375,000 and is handsomely compensated for overseeing the relentless pursuit of usefulness, it is those of us that feed into the hierarchy, students and lower-paid research staff, who endure the long hours, mental strain, and exhaustion that this culture breeds. We are expected to give everything in service of measurable success, measurable usefulness.

*Anonymous*

# Reply

Dear Reader,

I have been trying to write a response for this all week. I have several drafts trying to think of what to say, but I can't really think of a response, partly because I agree, but also because I feel what you feel goes beyond the College.

Yes, Imperial is a degree factory in a way, and it feels like to succeed we have to let the parts of ourselves that make us human disappear. It is hard to try and enjoy learning, and to spend the time at university doing something more meaningful and worthwhile than something for your career.

What I will say is this: as much as it is worthwhile being useful, whatever that means. "Increase shareholder value." I think that pursuing STEM alone, not providing opportunities to enrich ourselves for our own stake, and perpetuating the notion that productivity and economic activity (even if temporarily) are what grants anybody, any person their innate value is a dangerous one. One must only look across to America, to see the machinations of the tech oligarchs. One can also look at their hubris, spurred on by the fact they are all tech oligarchs, and have extensive STEM backgrounds.

I read the transcript and thought, guess that makes a lot of the people I grew up around not of use – useless, one could say. It's not because they're economically inactive, it's simply that wage compression and a lack of investment up North means it's hard to get a job where you are a net contributor to the state and economy. I'm not shy to say I come from a working class background, and I'm proud of the fact my accent is sexy and cool and I sound like Zayn Malik, but I've heard similar rhetoric all my life.

There is an immense pressure on Generation Z, and there aren't many rewards. To be told to continue to remain useful is annoying when one can't afford a house, even if they earn excellent wages in the financial sector, or leave outside a house share, or even afford to live. Nicholas, 30 ans, springs to mind. Deep cuts.

On a lighter note, we'll all probably be dead via nuclear annihilation or climate catastrophe in the next twenty years so at least the rat race shit show will be over soon.

Best,  
Ed.

## NEWS

# King Charles visits White City

His Majesty The King visited Imperial's Centre for Injury Studies with Ukrainian Ambassador General Valerii Zaluzhnyi.

## Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

King Charles III visited Imperial's Centre for Injury Studies on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February to highlight the UK's support for Ukrainian personnel, as well as to hear about research aimed at supplementing humanitarian efforts and mitigating traumatic injuries. His Majesty was joined by the Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK and Northern Ireland, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, as this week marks the third anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The King has visited Imperial several times previously: first on a private visit in 1975. His first official visit was in 2015 to open the Surgical Innovation



This image elicited a fierce debate in the Felix office regarding His Majesty's Kokoro preferences. Anonymous

Centre, followed by two others in 2018 and 2019.

The Centre for Injury Studies is an interdisciplinary centre that combines the research of engineers, scientists, and clinicians, to collaborate on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of traumatic injuries. His Majesty met with Dr Spiros Masouros and Professor Anthony Bull, the associate director

and director of the Centre for Injury Studies, as well as Professor Shehan Hettiaratchy, Professor of Practice in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and Director of Major Trauma at Imperial College Healthcare Trust.

King Charles also met with former Army captain and parasport athlete David Henson, who had lost his legs and demonstrated the centre's work in aiding those who have lost limbs' Hnat Herych, chief of general surgery at Unbroken, the Ukrainian National Rehabilitation Centre, also attended and said both The King's and Britain's commitment to Ukraine has been "invaluable". The King also met several Ukrainian students.

## We are most surprised

Many students were surprised by King Charles visit to White City Campus, with several posting videos on their social media. Felix was sent several videos and images of The King speaking to students and touring the campus.



His Majesty greeting crowds of students. Frank Yao

## Chen Jining: the Imperial graduate tipped to be in the race for Xi's successor

## Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

Following major elections across the West and several transfers of power, China's leadership post-Xi Jinping is a topic gaining greater prominence. Now 71 and in the middle of his third five-year term in power, the topic of his successor has become more prescient as he heads towards a fourth term in power, which when it ends in 2032 would make the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leader 79 years old. Further pressure following the death of former Chinese Premier and second in command Li Keqiang at 68 in 2023, means China specialists have begun to make predictions for the next leader of the communist state.

Among the frontrunners is Chen Jining, now Party Secretary of Shanghai and member of the CCP's politburo. Studying his undergraduate and master's in civil and environmental engineering at the elite Tsinghua University, Chen began doctoral studies at Imperial in 1989, graduating with a PhD in civil engineering in 1993. He stayed for his postdoctoral studies and as a researcher until 1997.

Returning to China in 1998, Chen spent the next 17 years at Tsinghua University, rising through the ranks of the Department of Environmental Engineering, before joining the executive body of Tsinghua as Vice President in 2006. In 2012 Chen became the President until his appointment as Minister of Environmental Protection in January 2015. Following his stint as minister, he was appointed as acting mayor of Beijing in 2017 until 2022, where he was promoted to Party Secretary in Shanghai.

According to Wu Guoguang, a former advisor to Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang and senior fellow of the Asia Society Policy Institute, Chen's background in STEM and his association with Tsinghua University, Xi's own alma mater, make him a strong contender as the party leader has a record of installing similar figures into leadership roles.



# RCSU to allow AI in essay-writing competition

New category introduced judging applications on “exceptional use of AI in submission creation.”

## Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

The Royal College of Science Union's (RCSU) annual Science Challenge has allowed entrants to use AI tools in their submissions for the first time. The Challenge, now in its 18th year, has created a new category and prize for “AI innovation”, judging students on their “technical innovation and creative application of AI tools while maintaining academic integrity.”

The competition is being sponsored by Compu.J, a software consultancy firm with a key focus on AI and machine learning. The winner of the AI challenge will receive a paid internship at Compu.J working with the Machine Learning research and development team. Compu.J is founded by Dr Jad Marrouche, who also established the RCSU's Science Challenge during his tenure as the constituent union's president in 2006–7.

The Science Challenge is a science communication competition, whereby entrants “produce a short piece” in either written or video form. Since its inception, the competition has evolved from a single category essay competition into multiple categories across media and has been judged by many leading science

communicators, such as Pallab Ghosh from BBC Sky at Night, author Simon Singh, and YouTube creator Simon Clark. Open to all Imperial students across undergraduate and Master's courses, as well as a joint competition for school students in the last three years of their secondary education, the Challenge has received essays from across the globe.

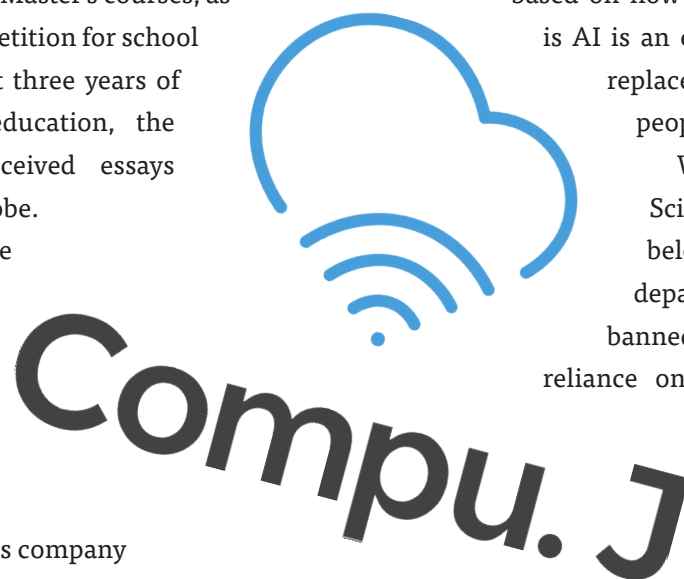
Part of the motivation for allowing AI usage is because Marrouche has always “push[ed]” for “innovation”. His company has expanded from offering private cloud and cybersecurity to moving into the machine learning and AI space as part of its services. Compu.J's view is that the widespread use of AI is inevitable and, rather than restrict its use, they have decided to encourage innovation over limitation.

As part of the new rules, any AI use must have “complete documentation”, with any source code,

instructions on how it was used, and an explanation of how the AI was utilised to be included in a three-page technical report. Evaluation for the Compu.J prize is based on how novel its use has been. “Our ethos is AI is an enabling tool. We're not using it to replace anybody. We're using it to enable people,” said Marrouche.

Whilst, the Faculty of Natural Sciences, the faculty which the RCSU belongs to, has no single AI policy, departments such as Life Sciences have banned the use of generative AI due to a reliance on essay-based assessment. Despite this, RCSU president Julia Purrinos said, “there's not been any backlash at all”. She has received several emails from students eager to compete in the AI challenge.

Purrinos explained “the boundaries of artificial intelligence are constantly expanding, and through new initiatives like the AI innovation prize, we're helping to drive that progress and encourage students to think beyond conventional limits in academia. Having Compu.J involved really strengthens this vision.”



Compu.J Logo. Compu.J

## If I had a nickel...

This isn't the first time that a member of the Royal Family and President Xi Jinping have been featured in the same edition of *Felix*. In 2015, *Felix* #1614 featured Xi's visit to Imperial College as its splash, or the front-page story, with an opinion piece on Prince Andrew, King Charles' brother, most famously known



for his ties to disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein. The opinion piece was about the Prince visiting Imperial for an entrepreneurial competition, which was featured as one of two lead stories in the previous week's edition, which, I know realise as I write this, is quite similar to our Ukraine feature last week, and The King's visit to Imperial marking the anniversary of the Ukraine war

this week. Very much a case of synchronicity.

## entrepreneurial contest

Grace Rahman  
Editor-in-Chief

Wednesday saw the Duke of York come to Imperial, to host his Pitch@Palace entrepreneurial competition. The royal, who is the Queen's third child, stood down as the UK trade envoy after being criticised over his friendships with controversial figures, such as Azerbaijan's president and Jeffrey Epstein. In an effort to support inventors and investors, the competition allows groups to pitch their ideas to professionals who will help them hone their presentation skills, and potentially invest.



Left: Splash of *Felix* #1814. Right: Lead story of *Felix* #1813

## SCIENCE

# Just Changing Approvals...

Science Editor James Desmet explores the EU's new unionising clinical trial assessment criteria.

Science Editor  
**JAMES DESMET**

The EU has long been engaged in a balancing act of establishing universal regulation across its member states – striving to form an effective union while preserving economic and democratic freedoms.

The pharmaceutical industry exemplifies this challenge, as many countries exhibit vastly different disease and clinical landscapes due to factors such as weather, culture, and economic prosperity.

This diversity has made universal regulation within the pharmaceutical sector particularly difficult.

Nevertheless, its importance is paramount, since it can be expensive for individual member states to comply

with varying regulatory requirements, especially in one of the costliest industries to operate in, with clinical trial costs reaching billions in phase III for many therapies.

The Joint Clinical Assessment (JCA) represents a substantial change in the stringency with which clinical trials are governed, embodying the EU's effort to create a universal framework for clinical trial regulation.

Coming into effect in January 2025, the JCA provides strict guidelines for the conduct of clinical trials and the subsequent submission of data to approval boards. Fundamentally, this framework establishes a universal clinical trial assessment system that all EU-marketed drugs must adhere to.

The findings of the JCA will yield recommendations following the submission of clinical trial data, which

will then be used to decide whether a therapy is approved for use across the entire EU, thereby eliminating the need for separate approval in individual states.

The implications of this change are predictably both promising and challenging. On the positive side, the JCA offers streamlined processes that will likely substantially lower the barriers to entry across the EU – particularly from a cost perspective.

It also promotes enhanced transparency and a coordinated effort among different organisations, increasing collaboration and the scope of clinical trials, which should foster greater innovation within the region. However, this new framework also introduces significant challenges.

Companies will be required to comply with much greater scrutiny and data integrity standards – requirements

that, in some cases, were not previously enforced in all EU countries. This shift, which raises upfront costs, may reduce the inflow of new drugs in the short to medium term, potentially impacting patient outcomes.

The impact on the UK cannot be understated either, as the UK and EU markets, given their geographical proximity and the recency of Brexit, are still very much intertwined, with NICE (the corporation that decides which therapies are funded by the NHS) frequently using European clinical trial data as key metrics in decision making.

Overall, the JCA could herald a period of fruitful innovation within the clinical trials space, or it could become the latest obstacle imposed on clinical innovation by the EU.

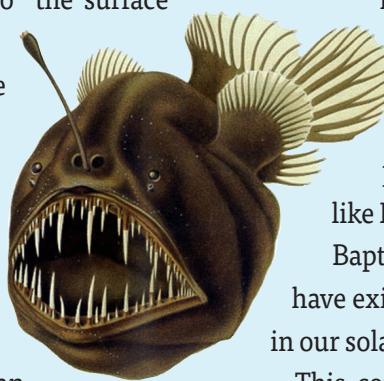
With the policy still in its infancy, only time will tell how its impact unfolds.

## THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE

### Anglerfish spotted in Canary Islands *Taylor Pomfret*

An anglerfish has gone viral on social media after a team of researchers based in the Canary Islands on January 26<sup>th</sup> spotted the fish weaving its way to the surface of the ocean. Anglerfish are bony fish, which have a distinctive luminescent fin ray acting as a lure for other fish. Its luminescence actually comes from bacteria acquired from seawater.

Anglerfish are seen worldwide. They are spotted with various widths: ranging between 20–100 cm. There are over 200 species of anglerfish. The luminescent fin is a piece of dorsal spin that protrudes the fish's mouth like a fishing rod. This is only seen in female anglerfish. Most anglerfish inhabit oceans at depths of 0–1000m, depending on fish age and seasonality the range can vary.



Humpback anglerfish.  
August Brauer (CC BY-SA 3.0)

### Plastic ice seen with elastic-neutron scattering *Filippos Kaloudis*

While on Earth we mostly encounter the hexagonal, crystalline ice (like ice cubes, glaciers, snow), there are at least 20 other known ice phases, many of which have merely been theorised to exist in particular temperature and pressure conditions.

One of those is plastic ice, which differs from “conventional” ice in the sense that molecules can rotate in their positions as in liquids, yielding a substance that is intermediate between a liquid and a crystal, exhibiting peculiar elasticity.

The conditions that are intrinsic to plastic ice are observed in planetary interiors, which means that it may be formed within icy worlds like Neptune and Jupiter's moons, including Europa.

Baptiste Journaux of the University of Washington claims that plastic ice may have existed in the early formational stages of Europa, Titan, and other icy moons in our solar system, before the water had escaped from the high-pressure interiors.

This could influence our understanding of the geodynamics of icy planets in general and the differentiation processes of large icy moons.



## ENVIRONMENT

# How to shop smarter



Second hand clothes shop. Envato Elements

### Environment Writer

**ELEANOR GOULDING**

### Environment Writer

**JASON ARYA**

As members of the ESE Sustainability Committee, we are exploring individuals can better practice sustainability. Being a conscious consumer is one of the active roles we play regarding waste. We want to show you what a great contribution you can make towards a sustainable society. The joy of being a conscious consumer is you can also save money and help your local community. Everyone's heard of "reduce, reuse and recycle" but here are some tips on more conscious consumption.

As much as we love dairy and meat, live-stock products produce a significant proportion (14.5%) of global greenhouse gas emissions. Much of this is in the form of potent methane – in fact, the agricultural sector is the largest anthropogenic source of methane worldwide. As consumers we make a choice in what foods we buy and, while it is difficult to switch to a vegan lifestyle, you can make small changes to your diet over time. One of main qualms with plant-based meals is a lack of protein, but there are plenty of foods that will help you maintain a healthy, balanced diet. Next

time you're at the supermarket check out our favourite plant-based brands: Quorn, Linda McCartney, Alpro, and Violife. It won't kill your gains, we promise! Aside from changing your diet, being food savvy is a great way to reduce waste. TooGoodToGo is an app that helps rescue surplus food from chains at a fraction of the original price, perfect for your dinner or lunch the next day for example.

Moving away from food, when we think of consumerism in general, what comes to mind? If you thought fast fashion, bingo! Websites like Shein, TikTok Shop, and Temu have made shopping splurges easy; however, they are terrible for the environment, and that's not even mentioning the ethical concerns. We know that shopping fills a void in the heart, but retail therapy can be practised sustainably if done right. London is a hotspot for charity shops and car boot sales where you can find good quality (and longer-lasting) steals for a fraction of the price, all while avoiding mass-produced clothing. Here are two of our favourite locations in London for sales:

- **Dalston:** Sat and Sun, 07:30 – 14:00. The trek to east London is worth it for the clothes you'll find here.
- **Pimlico:** Sun, 10:00 – 14:00. A bit closer west and half indoors for a rainy-day activity!

Don't forget your local high street as it's

a great bet for good charity shops, whether that be your local Red Cross, Oxfam, or British Heart Foundation. Bin the pub crawl, do a charity shop crawl instead. These are great as you support the local community and have a fun day trip with your friends. What about some of your old clothes? Try to make it a rule that if you buy one item, you donate another directly to your local charity shop or sell it on eBay or Vinted.

Hopefully everyone is taking out their recycling, but do you feel that a lot of your packaging ends up in the general waste? One issue is that lots of packaging is single-use plastic – avoid this where possible! However, even for shrewd conscious consumers, a lot of packaging can only be recycled "with large bags at supermarkets." Our advice is to collect this waste in a separate bag and recycle them during your next weekly shop. If you can't do this at your local supermarket, Recycle Now helps locate your closest recycling centre to make sure those niche recyclables don't end up incinerated or in a landfill. It's a great habit to build!



Scan here for Recycle Now

Setting aside the specifics, those miscellaneous items you might buy and use once make up a large proportion of household waste. Being a conscious consumer means being more minimalist, ensuring you only buy necessities. This is great for saving money and preventing clutter. Here are a few swaps to try once you run out of your current product. Starting with bathroom items, brands like Wild Deodorant provide refills and a deodorant bottle for life which can reduce your waste output compared to traditional aerosols – you can also recycle these if empty! Another swap is purchasing soap bars, which are much better than bottled shampoo, which have non-recyclable pumps. Other bathroom items that minimise spending and waste include reusable safety razors, menstrual cups, and toilet paper made from recycled materials. You might also use a trusty collapsible cup for your free Gloucester Road Waitrose coffee trip, reusable shopping bags, refillable hand and dish soap, or reusable cleaning cloths.

The end goal is to prioritise buying fewer higher-quality goods over time. Making the ethical decision on what you are buying is a financial and environmental investment. If you found this article exciting, Imperial's Sustainability Fortnight starts on 24<sup>th</sup> February and runs till 7<sup>th</sup> March, and we'd encourage you to participate!



# Here's why Imperial's food emissions are rising

**Environment Editor**  
**OSCAR MITCHAM**

In *Felix* #1865 Food Editor Charlotte and I analysed Imperial's catering procurement data to work out what we were eating on campus. I've taken that data and worked out how much Imperial is emitting from all the food we're eating.

We estimated Imperial's emissions from raw ingredients were about 2490 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent) in 2023/24. This is much higher than the 673 tCO<sub>2</sub>e Imperial reported in their sustainability report, which should account for the raw ingredients we counted and prepared ones. The College reported an 8% increase in emissions from food since 2022/23, and we found a similar 14% increase.

I asked Imperial why its emissions had risen since 2022/23 and why our numbers might be larger than what the College is reporting. Here was their response:

"Imperial's catering department is working hard to reduce the environmental impact of their operations, in line with Imperial's Sustainable Food and Drink Policy. This includes removing beef entirely from our menus in October 2024, ahead of our 2025–26 target. We have introduced plant-based milks free of charge to encourage sustainable choices and we're eliminating 30,000 plastic cups per year from our campuses with the single-use plastic cup 25p levy.

"The team are also increasing vegetarian and vegan options across all outlets. Improvements to back-of-house operations include reducing cooking oil consumption by 50%, and using the aquafaba left over from tinned chickpeas to make mayo, saving 26,000 eggs and 1,700 plastic tubs a year."

Looking at Imperial's carbon footprint methodology, it turns out that Imperial uses spend-based methodology for all its scope 3 emissions (83% of total emissions) except energy transmission and distribution. This means Imperial multiplied the total amount they spent on food by one number (a conversion factor) to calculate its emissions from all foods.

To calculate Imperial's emissions from food, I used the product categories we worked out in #1865 and data from Poore & Nemecek (2018) which provides emissions by food in kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/kg of product. By accounting for how much of each food is actually being purchased, this method should give a much more accurate picture of Imperial's food emissions. This is because emissions varies hugely between foods: for example, beef from a beef herd emits 30 times more than tofu. Since Imperial's procurement dataset was so large, we only counted emissions from foods with clear product categories. "Apples" are apples, "poultry" is poultry, but we don't know what's in "flavoured (chilled)" or "lasagne." While we could have gleaned a little more from the Item names, there's no way to easily apply our methodology to pre-prepared foods like lasagne. So we decided not to count any of this. This probably makes our estimates conservative. However, the numbers we used are still global averages and there can be a lot of variation within each category. By contacting individual suppliers and using their carbon footprints, you could gain an even more accurate number. Presuming the suppliers even have emissions data, which is a big ask for prepared goods, you'd have to hope they were all using similar methodologies and reporting their scope 3 emissions.

This is part of why consistent emissions reporting standards are

so important. The Carbon Disclosure Project is one system through which 18% of global corporate carbon emissions are disclosed. Unfortunately, only 67 agricultural companies disclose through CDP, accounting for 0.3% of agricultural emissions.

The College is aiming to improve its methodology using data from suppliers to calculate emissions. If achieved, this would be a step beyond our analysis.

As the College's response outlined, Imperial has a sustainable food and drink policy that sets out their goals. It's extremely heartening that no beef is being served at Taste Imperial outlets ahead of schedule. As you can see in the infographic (right), this will likely significantly reduce emissions, but we need to take the same phasing-out approach with other high-emitting foods. We will hopefully see even more action reducing these emissions following Plant-based universities' recent motion passed by the Union Council.

Charlotte's analysis found that Imperial only served 1.8 tonnes of plant-sourced protein last year compared to 98.8 tonnes of animal-sourced protein. Plant proteins are cheaper and less emitting than animal proteins, but the portions of plant protein are still small. This also needs increase rapidly to ensure the food being served on campus is nutritious and sustainable.

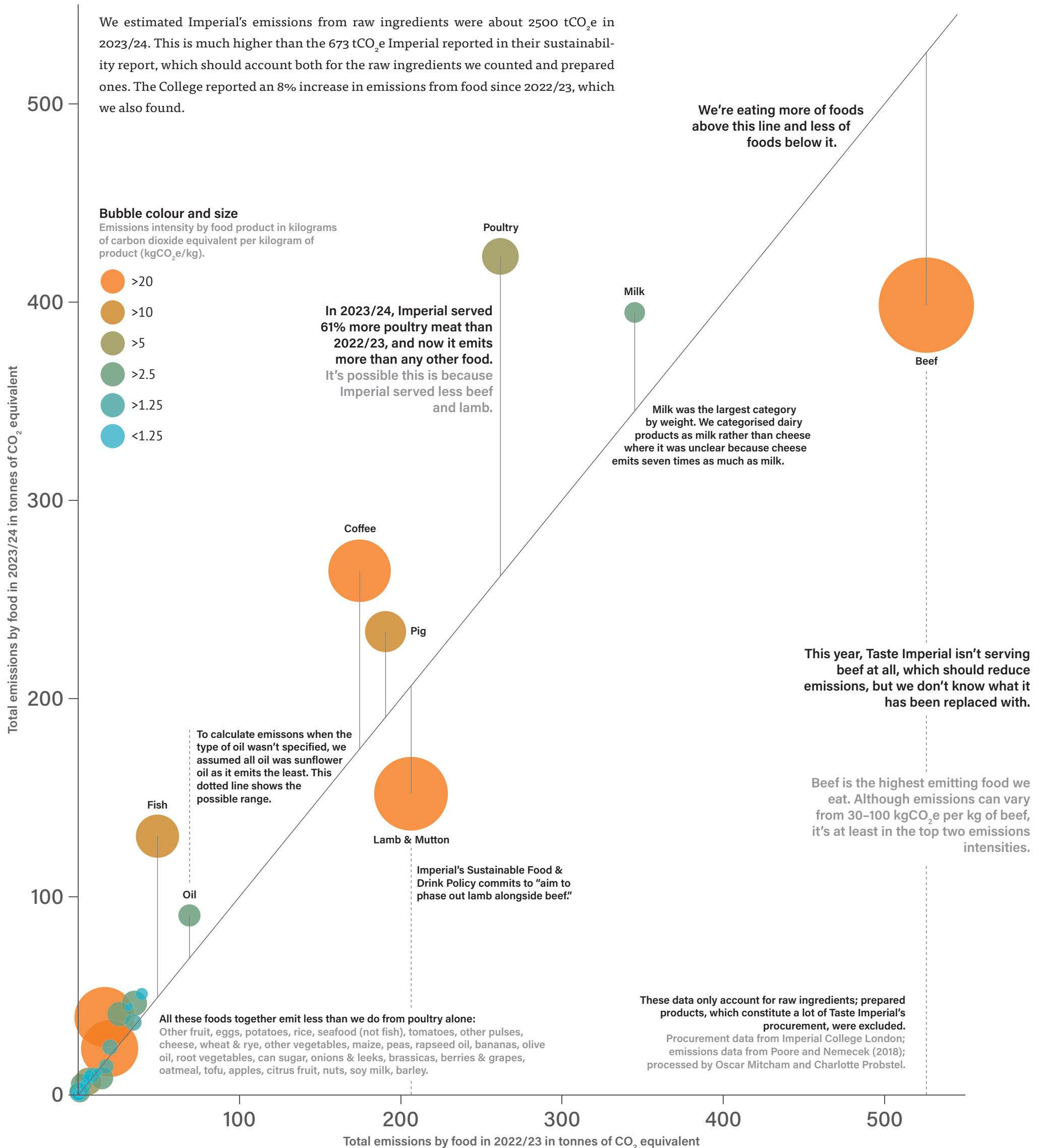
The infographic that accompanies this piece tells the story of Imperial's food emissions and shows the results of our analysis. Emissions from 2023/24 are compared to those from 2022/23, with the diagonal line down the middle indicating no change in emissions. The colours and size of the bubbles show the emissions intensity of each food. Beef should have been given its own colour on the logarithmic scale used, as it emits on average 66 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/kg.



Lincolnshire chicken farm. Open Cages



# Imperial's emissions from food over the last two academic years





# Tales of the Unsung Wilderness:

Environment Writer

SHREYAS KUCHIBHOTLA

If you were a fish in Permian Brazil, *Prionosuchus* was your most formidable foe. This gargantuan, vaguely crocodilian creature belonging to a group known as temnospondyls is thought to have ruled the waters of its time. These impressive animals are no longer with us, but their successors (direct or not) remain some of the most prolific vertebrates on the planet. Whether you hear their resonating choruses on warm nights or spot their jelly-like progeny floating atop a tranquil pond, frogs form an integral part of the human relationship with nature. The unforgiving climate of the UK might seem too prohibitive for these warmth-seeking amphibians, but alongside the handful of native residents, one surprising visitor has managed to thrive here - the marsh frog (*Pelophylax ridibundus*).

Marsh frogs are majestic beasts, coming in many shades of green and brown. They can be distinguished from the native common frog (*Rana temporaria*) by their large size and lack of a dark “eyepatch” among other things. Perhaps the most useful distinction, however, is independent of appearance. As Bashō’s haiku goes:

*Furu ike ya  
kawazu tobikomu  
mizu no oto*

This has been translated independently into English several times, such as this rather jovial interpretation by Allen Ginsberg.

*The old pond  
A frog jumped in,  
Kerplunk!*



A large common frog (*Rana temporaria*) found at night in a garden in Hampshire, July 2023. Shreyas Kuchibhotla

“Kerplunk” is perhaps an apt nickname for the marsh frog. It is one of their aural signatures, for they rarely leave a visual one. When walking by a pond in search of arthropods or grass snakes, I can barely begin to count the number of times that I have been taken completely unawares by a massive frog leaping noisily from right beside my feet into the water. The few times I do see a marsh frog for more than a second, it’s on a sweltering day in July when I look at the water’s surface and squint to catch a glimpse of its bulky frame blending in perfectly with the dull green of the surrounding aquatic vegetation. Marsh frogs love the water, more than any common frog ever could.

Amphibians in general are tied to water due to their reproductive biology, which requires their eggs to develop in a damp environment. Common frogs take to the water in spring, when they mate and deposit their characteristic spawn on the surface. For the rest of the year, they spend their time in moist environments on land instead, often being found under logs, stones, and artificial refugia during the day. Marsh frogs however are rarely, if ever, seen away from the proximity of a

water source. It is an almost foregone conclusion that a frog poking its head out of the water on a hot day, or kerplunking into a pond on a hot night, is a marsh frog. Despite their size, marsh frogs are considerably more skittish than their smaller cousins. However, during the warmer months, they make it their mission to be noticed. Adult males are endowed with considerable vocal power due to their distensible vocal sacs, but they have an extra trick up their sleeve – they can call in stereo. Unlike the common frog, marsh frogs have one sac on either side of their head, and an unmistakable song to match. While the former has a more underplayed, guttural growl, the marsh frog likes its voice to be heard. The sound of a male marsh frog during breeding season is often likened to a laugh, and their distinct series of loud croaks rivals even the waterbirds alongside which they frequently live.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of marsh frog biology is their intricate taxonomy, which borders on bizarre. Marsh frogs belong to the genus *Pelophylax*, which seems to defy all basic knowledge about the taxonomic boundaries of a species. The story goes like this: there are three closely related taxa in the genus – our friend of the marshes, the Pool frog (*P. lessonae*) and the edible frog (*Pelophylax kl. esculentus*). Even if you are familiar with binomial nomenclature, that “kl.” is a strange addition to a scientific name. It stands for klepton (from klepto in Ancient Greek), the biological term for a taxon that steals genes from another taxon to reproduce. The



A large marsh frog (*Pelophylax cf. ridibundus*) basking at the WWT London Wetland Centre, May 2023. Shreyas Kuchibhotla



# Of kleptons and kerplunk



A frog identified as a young *Pelophylax* found well into autumn at the WWT London Wetland Centre, Nov 2023. Shreyas Kuchibhotla

edible frog is, in that sense, not a “true” species, for the coupling of a male and female edible frog produces an unhealthy female marsh frog. For another edible frog to be born, a female edible frog needs genetic input from a male pool frog. Alternatively, the pairing of a pool frog and a marsh frog also produces an edible frog (likely the originator of *esculentus* populations, which generally live in syntopy with *lessonae*). To further complicate matters, *P. kl. esculentus* is not the only such klepton in the genus – *P. ridibundus* appears to be capable of hybridising with two other species across its range (*P. perezi* and *P. bergeri*) to produce other kleptons (*P. kl grafi* and *P. kl hispanicus*). The other species in the genus also frequently come into contact, creating the possibilities for more and more outlandish hybrids. These complicated relationships are the reason for the “cf” in all the image captions; while the species found widely in the UK is almost certainly *ridibundus*, it is difficult to discount the other members of the genus without closer examination.

As charismatic and unique as they are, there are reasons to be worried about marsh frogs in the UK. They were apparently introduced deliberately to a site in Kent in the early 1900s, following which they have spread like wildfire throughout the south of England, especially in and around London. They have been named the “number one amphibian invader in Western Europe”. Herpetologists seem to recognise that the increase in marsh frog populations is not as unambiguously de-

structive as one is often led to believe with non-native species. While they are the dominant amphibian where they are found, they exploit habitats that native species do not, like saltmarshes. Their predatory behaviour and disease-carrying potential are of course major risks, but their size and habits make them easy prey (and conse-

quently good news) for native barred grass snakes (*Natrix helvetica*). On the other hand, while marsh frogs are not native to the UK, there is evidence that pool frogs used to be, and they have been reintroduced to a select few sites in Norfolk in an attempt to restore their previous populations. If the marsh frogs were to interact with them, the complex population dynamics engendered by the klepton saga might be unpredictable. In my experience, the best site to see them in London is the WWT Wetland Centre (where most of the photos in this article were taken). It is telling that I have never seen a common frog there, though whether this can be chalked up to different habitat preferences or the genuine consequences of a dominant and invasive competitor is still moot.

Non-native species are always a mixed bag, but in a world where globalisation is the norm, the movement of animals and plants across man-made borders happens more often than we think. The effects of such species on the environment can sometimes be difficult to assess until it is too late, while others seem to occupy specific niches (e.g. by living alongside people) where competition is non-existent or ultimately harmless. Whatever the marsh frogs eventually accomplish in the UK, they are here to stay. Come spring (as it continues to take its own sweet time), you might as well look for them on the water’s surface or listen for the “kerplunk” as their surprisingly well-camouflaged bodies evade you yet again. I know I will.



A marsh frog (*Pelophylax cf. ridibundus*) photographed at the WWT London Wetland Centre showing how easy they can be to miss, May 2023. Shreyas Kuchibhotla



## COMMENT

# US to UK: a tale of two countries

An American student reflects on transatlantic cultural differences and how political turmoil at home impacts their plans for the future.

Comment Writer  
ANONYMOUS

The first time I seriously considered leaving home for university was on November 9, 2016. I was ten years old, and I had gone to bed believing Hillary Clinton would become the United States' 45<sup>th</sup> president – and the first woman to enter office. You can imagine my dismay when I woke up the next morning to a different reality.

Nine years later, and I'm here, studying and living in London. Without fail, whenever I tell someone that I grew up in the US, they ask, "Why did you choose to study in the UK?" It's a good question, but I don't have a simple answer. It feels like it just happened, out of the blue, and suddenly I was packing bags and moving



**I always knew I wanted to be at least two hours away from home, but sometimes I wish I could hop on a bus to go home – not board a plane.**

into dorms halfway across the world. I always knew I wanted to be at least two hours away from home, but sometimes I find myself wishing I could hop on a bus to go home – not board a plane.

In many ways, moving abroad felt natural. Both of my parents immigrated to the United States, in part looking for better opportunities than they could find in their home countries. I know how hard they worked to adjust to a new reality and live in a language that wasn't their mother tongue. Many of their friends also immigrated to the US, travelling

back to their home country to visit family on the holidays. The idea of leaving home never seemed unusual to me. I had met so many expats that becoming one myself felt inevitable.

Finances were also a contributing factor. Studying in the UK is much cheaper than any US college – even with London prices. I'm planning on applying for a postgraduate degree, so it's important to think long-term about financial sustainability.

Now that I'm in London, I absolutely love it. I'm still shocked by how big of a city it is, and British accents sometimes throw me off, but it's still been an incredible experience. That said, I still feel out of place sometimes – but then again, I often felt out of place back home,

too. I don't fit the stereotypical image of an American, and ironically, I sometimes feel more American in the UK than I do in the US. At the same time, when I visit home, I feel more international than ever. I imagine many people at Imperial can relate.

I had only ever planned to stay in London for a couple years, earning my undergraduate degree then going back home, but lately I've been reconsidering.

The news has become my new internet addiction, and reading headlines like, "The Pharmaceutical Industry Heads Into Musk's Wood Chipper" and "Trump's Cuts Target Next Generation of Scientists and Public Health Leaders" gives me pause. Not

only do these budget cuts target research institutions, but they're having widespread effects on universities across the country. The

postgraduate program I once envisioned attending in the US might not exist in the same way by the time I graduate.

Beyond that, I'm thinking more about the environment I'd be returning to. The longer I stay in London, the more I appreciate what I had growing up in the US – the quiet suburbs, the big front and back yards, the sense of home. But more than anything, I used to feel proud of where I came from. I'm not sure I can say the same now.

This past November, on Election Day, my mom texted me pictures of boarded-up shops near the Capitol building she saw on her commute to work. The news worries me – firing and replacing of federal personnel, rollbacks on DEI initiatives, sweeping changes to the education system, cuts to foreign aid, I could go on. And for me specifically, as someone considering a career in medicine, I wonder if I want to work in a system as deeply broken as healthcare in the US.

At the end of the day, I don't know what's next. I don't know where I'll end up or what I'll be doing in a few years. Lately, every day seems to bring a new, almost unbelievable development, and all I can do is stay informed and take things one step at a time.





## CULTURE

On 19<sup>th</sup> October 1924, the beloved poet of my early twenties, TS Eliot, reviewed Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, after its premiere in London. Though he held issue with Shaw's portrayal of the titular character, he wrote that the play "seems to illustrate Mr. Shaw's mind more clearly than anything he has written before." Just over one hundred years later, on the evening of Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February, I was thankful to Imperial College Drama Society for inviting me to similarly review their production. Though, admittedly, we are both a little less decorated and "highbrow".

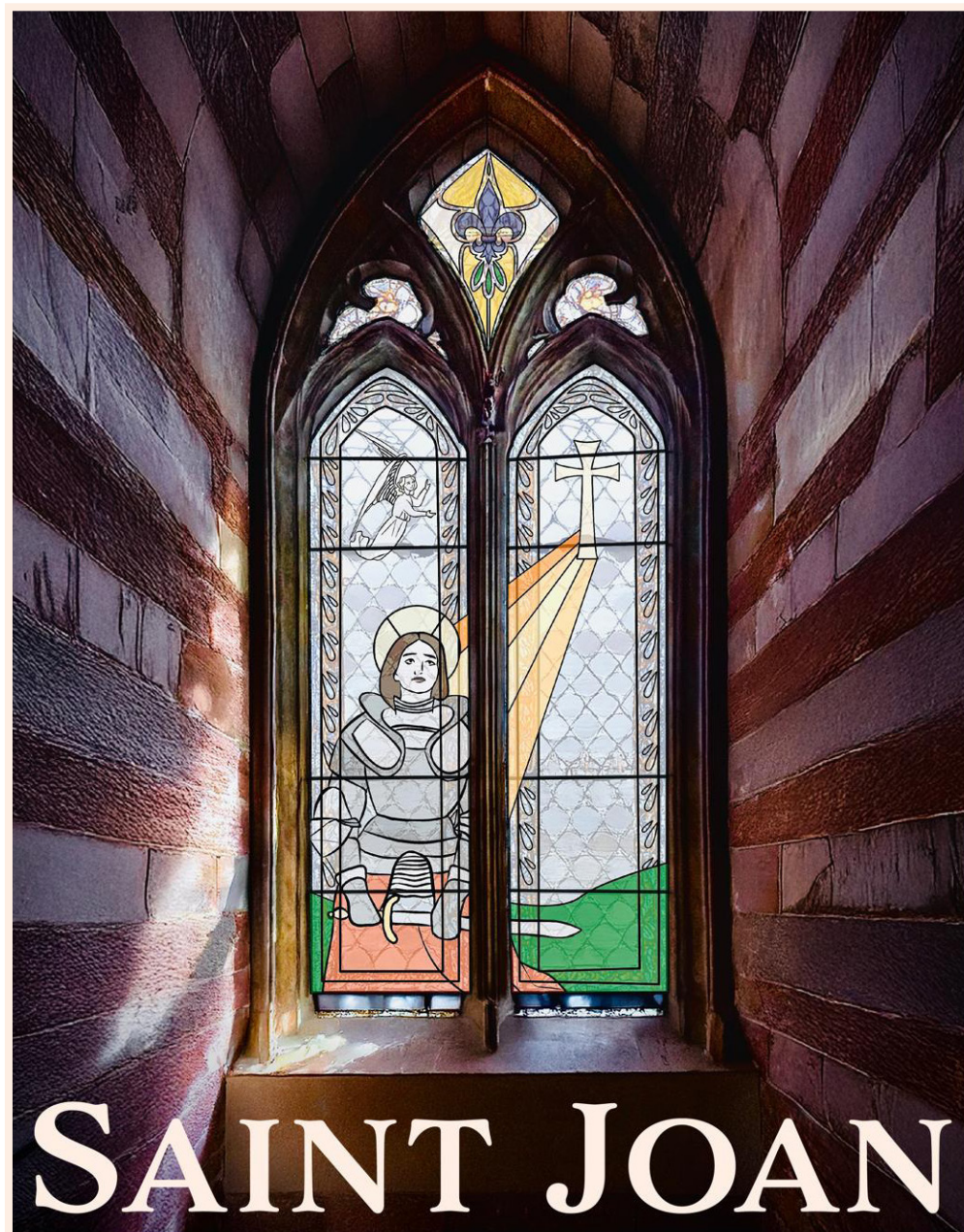
It is safe to say that I was tentative and slightly apprehensive approaching this two-hour thirty-minute production by one of the great playwrights of contemporary theatre. I will admit, I have a habit of being incredibly picky when it comes to theatre. I like my Shakespeare modern, dialogue quick, men in suit-and-tie, performances subtle, and chemistry intimate. Unfortunately for Drama Society, I was well acquainted with *Saint Joan* prior to their performance; I am not willing to curb my standards. Thus, I was overly aware of the difficulty of the play and its high volume of demanding monologues. I am surprised and pleased to say that DramSoc rose above my expectations.

To start with a qualm, to get it out the way, I did not expect the cast members to be such fans of "the method". The ensemble was already in character, voices and all, while audience members were arriving, and the lights were on. They gave little improvised quips and



**The drama society rose above my expectations.**

broke the fourth wall many times. I am traditional, I will admit: I am not one for an immersive theatre experience. To be in character, and reveal that character before the lights have darkened, and Shaw says "go," feels like an overstepping



*Saint Joan* advertisement poster DramSoc

## I urge you to watch this play, it is on until Saturday evening.

**Culture Writer**  
**RUBY LYDFORD**

of the writer to me. Similar off-script, lights-up activity took place during the interval.

The play abruptly began with a forthright performance from Vaisnavi Ravichandran as Robert Lord of Baudricourt. The portrayal was energetic, angry, and compelling. I was absolutely convinced that this was a discourteous older man. Though the dialogue was at an incredible speed, it was completely understandable and plausible to character. A performance that really

and likeable as the page; he had great comedic timing. Courcelles, played by Saanvi Singh, deserves a mention for a small, yet strong performance.

In his programme note, Childs writes he "disapproves of the amount of French in this play," and while I will say this



**These four actors really sold this production.**

is funny, it is also ironically fitting to the distinct lack of French-ness in this production. There was an overwhelming, strong sense of Englishness though, owing to one particular character, that made up for this.

The first section of the play had an unmistakable happiness among the actors. One could tell that the cast were having a fantastic time, and this brought an energy to the stage. Perhaps there could have been slightly more nuance and anxiety underneath it, considering the themes, but this was corrected later.

The moment that Sophie Stevenson as the Earl of Warwick, Benjamin Meacher as Chaplain, and Roman Lewis as Cauchon entered the stage, the mood entirely shifted. They brought a sobriety and sombre attitude to the room. This talented trio were so captivating that one could not help but root for them: they justified to me why they were right, and I too was convinced that Joan should die. I am not sure this is intended to be the message of the play, unfortunately, but the strength of these actors was so undeniable that they compelled it to be the result. Meacher gave a gritty, tortured, believable performance. I really felt that I was seeing a man scared of God and justice. The banging of the metal stair barrier on his way down during his breakdown was an impeccable touch. Lewis gave, I believe, a purposely subtle performance. He felt genuinely holy and suspended my belief that he truly believed in God. His character was nuanced, changing, and his accent gave a nice touch of contrast. Later on, in





Saint Joan Lila Bull for Felix

the second half, Daniel Rattner as the inquisitor was on this same high level. He was vindictive and menacing. The copious amounts of Roquefort eaten certainly paid off. These four actors really sold this production.

However, I feel I owe complete honesty in this review. There is one performance in this play that had me completely allured above the others, dressed as the flag of England. Sophie Stevenson gave a decisively attractive performance as The Earl of Warwick. A flawless one, even: I have absolutely no criticism to offer. She has a wonderful cadence to her voice, immaculate pacing, subtle humour, tactful body language, body expression, facial expression, subtle comedy, tone, and she made it all seem natural. I learned after the show that Stevenson

does not attend Imperial College, rather she is a Royal College of Music student. To this, I am not surprised.

The lighting and sound were very good, with a particular recognition to the elements of the stake scene. I expect no less from an Imperial tech team. I liked the costuming, it was cleverly done for an amateur drama show. Well done to the cast and crew. A valiant effort for difficult source material.

I urge you to watch this play, it is on until Saturday evening. My convincing reason to you is the dangerous performance from Stevenson.

## Interested?

Tickets for  
Friday's (21/02) &  
Saturday's (22/02)  
show are available at

ICDramaSoc's  
Union Page. →

£6 – Members  
£8 – Students  
£12 – General

Doors open 7 pm  
Show starts 7:30 pm  
Union Concert Hall.





## BOOKS

# Live Forever?

Eldrian reviews Professor John Tregoning's latest book which explores longevity through the lens of living well

**Books Writer**  
**ELDRIAN THO**

**L**ive Forever?: A Curious Scientist's Guide to Wellness, Ageing & Death is more than what the cover suggests. Professor John Tregoning epically takes us on a humorous, personal, historical and thought-provoking journey through a myriad of biological challenges. He delves into the science behind longevity by tackling one of mankind's most difficult questions: how can we live longer, happier and healthier lives?

From immunology to genetics, Prof. Tregoning offers a fresh perspective on dealing with death and longevity. Regardless of your background, *Live Forever?* indeed has surprises for everyone!

**Longevity, just like everything in life, is about quality, NOT quantity!**

I thoroughly enjoy books that make me think about seemingly "simple" questions which are more complicated than I originally thought. This applies to



**He skillfully breaks down complex topics and keeps the discussion engaging**

*Live Forever?*, whose central message is that longevity is not just about striving for endless years but about enhancing your quality of life.

Prof. Tregoning challenges the reader to think critically about what it means to "live well," emphasising that while scientific advancements hold promise, no miracle cure will extend life indefinitely.



**In the end, our lives aren't about not dying or not ageing but accepting the path.**

Instead, he demonstrates the power of everyday choices, such as diet, exercise, mental health, and social connections, and their intimate interaction with the genetic and environmental factors that shape our lives. One surprising link to living well was the importance of maintaining strong friendships and familial bonds, appreciate all the time spent together. This made me reflect on my own lifestyle habits for leading a happy and healthy life.

**Science meets storytelling**

As a Molecular Virology student with a passion for science communication, I found Prof. Tregoning's insights both fascinating and accessible. He skillfully breaks down complex topics with a conversational tone that keeps the discussion engaging. Whether he's discussing telomeres, the role of the gut microbiome, or the latest anti-ageing drugs, the science always remains accessible while maintaining depth.

The science is also backed up with expert thoughts and advice from

colleagues in the field. By going beyond his own research, Prof. Tregoning ensures that readers come away with a clearer understanding of how scientific discoveries might reshape the aging process and the ethical considerations that accompany these breakthroughs, essential knowledge for mankind's progress into the future.

**Engaging for scientists and non-scientists alike**

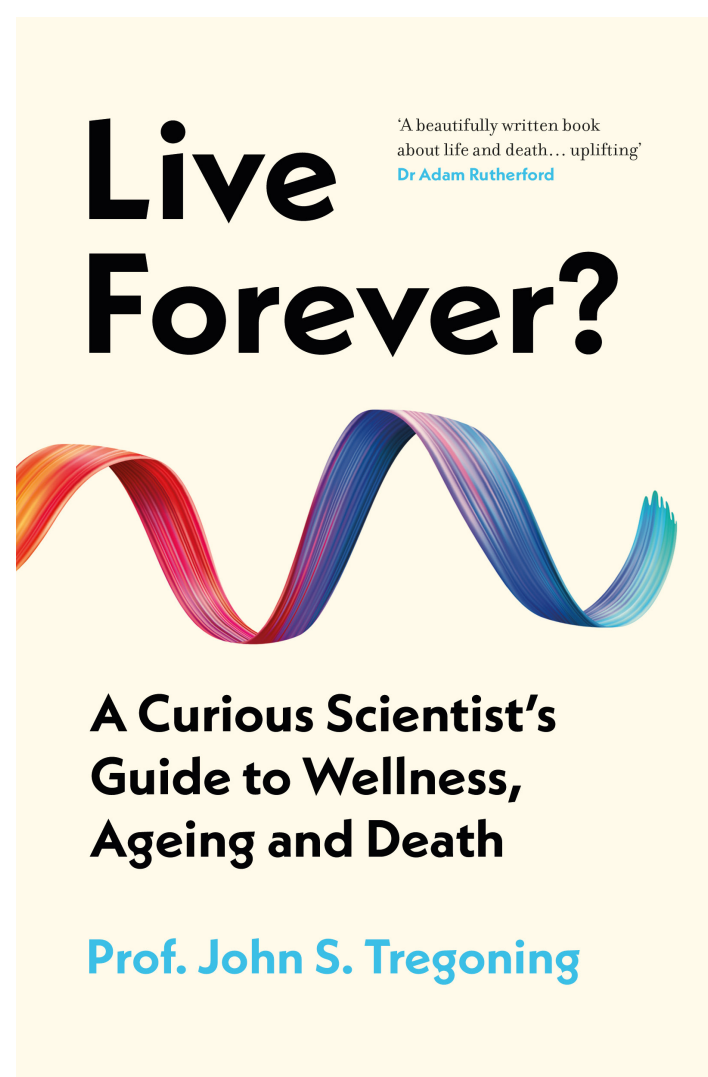
Beyond research, *Live Forever?* is peppered with relatable stories and pop culture references, making it an enjoyable read for both scientists and non-scientists. Prof. Tregoning's knack for blending science with storytelling fosters an intimate connection with the audience, turning a technical subject into a personal exploration – akin to Indiana Jones on a quest for longevity!

**Longevity is about living well**

The takeaways from *Live Forever?* are practical and informative. Prof. Tregoning's insights empower readers to make informed decisions to improve their health and lifestyle. The book's ultimate message,

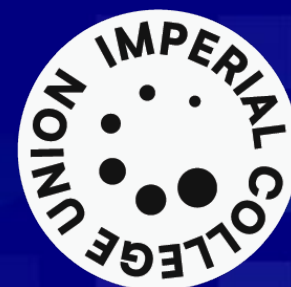
that longevity is not about defying death but about embracing life, offers a refreshing perspective in an age overly obsessed with eternal youth.

Prof. Tregoning writes, "In the end, our lives aren't about not dying or not ageing but accepting the path. This contains the essence of living well." This captures how *Live Forever?* is not just a book about science; it is a personal manifesto for thoughtful living, delivered with charm and wisdom. For anyone curious about the intersection of biology, health, and humanity, *Live Forever?* is an essential read that will leave you pondering not just how long you'll live, but how well.



# IMPERIAL

Sustainable Imperial



## Sustainability Fortnight 2025

24 February – 7 March

### HIGHLIGHT EVENTS

## Sustainability Fair

24 FEB & 5 MAR | SHERFIELD FOYER

## Climate Fresk

25 FEB | ROYAL SCHOOL OF MINES, G01

## Gardening Session

26 FEB & 5 MAR | SECRET GARDEN

## Kew Gardens Trip

1 MAR | KEW GARDENS

## Clothes Swap

5 MAR | METRIC, BEIT QUAD

## Upcycling & Mending Workshops

4-6 MAR | SOUTH KEN, WHITE CITY & SILWOOD

### FEATURING ...



Events & activities led by students from our societies & campaigns



SCAN THE QR CODE TO FIND OUT WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING!



# Computing students start Compolycule

## Catnip Editor NEGAFELIX

After the results of the *Felix Sex Survey 2025* were published last week, Computing students at Imperial College have decided to put an end to the allegations of involuntary celibacy. A committee of board members met up this Wednesday evening – as none of them are members of any sports clubs – to discuss their plan of action.

Many expected that Feb Senton, Imperial College's

most famed Computing alumni, would show up to the event to give a speech, but instead he did a no-show. NegaFelix decided to reach out to the young entrepreneur to get a quote on his absence.

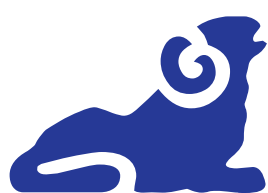
"It's just not my crowd anymore. Ever since I got my 80k graduate salary for a weapons company I've had no problems in the matter. I fill out the Sex Survey every year still, just to pull the department's average up," he told us. "If anything, it's a beloved hobby of mine now. I've always loved the Ancient Greeks."

What Senton was unaware of was that the Computing students curbed expectations and did the most

Ancient Greek thing of all – starting a polycule. One undergraduate, who wished to remain anonymous, said: "It's not homosexual, it's intellectually stimulating and a higher order ritual. Think about Plato and Aristotle."

The polycule, known as the Compolycule, is an official society on the Union page, and offers practice sessions, careers fairs, and workshopping events. They are trying a more hands-on, group-work approach this year, as their social secretary, Emmanuel Frederick, said: "In the past, it's been all independent simulations". Membership costs £7 but is free for women via a DEI scheme.

DoCSoc have declined to comment.



### ARIES

This week you spend the remainder of your bursary on discount chocolate hearts.



### TAURUS

This week you lie about a family member dying to get a week extension. The following week you lie and say it's the funeral.



### GEMINI

This week you dress up as Addison Rae dressing up as Donald Trump to spice things up in the bedroom.



### CANCER

This week you start a petition for 50% of all espresso served on campus to be espresso martinis.



### LEO

This week you reference the final scene of *Nosferatu* as evidence that coitus interruptus is hellish.



### VIRGO

This week your hockey boyfriend disappoints you with his pullout skills when he drops out the nude centrefold.



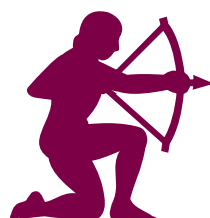
### LIBRA

This week your friends see the "scam" text from the doctors confirming you have chlamydia.



### SCORPIO

This week you convert to Christianity after finding out Cynthia Erivo is taking over as Jesus Christ.



### SAGITTARIUS

This week you flirt via theatre review to be demure.



### CAPRICORN

This week your controversial flatmate complains that his new Kanye West t-shirt was automatically refunded.



### AQUARIUS

This week you realise DramSoc plagiarised your "edgy" GCSE drama performance.



### PISCES

This week your Hinge pool makes FiveSixEight look like a Yves Saint Laurent casting call.

## UNION &amp; SOCIETIES

## Announcements

## February

21<sup>ST</sup>  
FridayTake me out x LSE  
IC RAG

Over the Imperial dating pool? Come to our dating event in collab with LSE! Sign up to participate or just come enjoy the fun :)

**Time:** 19:00 - 21:30**Where:** LSE Saw Swee Hock Centre, WC2A 2AP**Tickets:** £4 Early Bird, £6 General

INSTAGRAM

26<sup>TH</sup>  
WednesdayClue: The Play  
ICSM Drama

Come to ICSM Drama's main play, Clue, for an exciting night of mystery and murder on stage! Show runs for 4 nights; Wednesday – Saturday.

**Time:** 19:00 - 22:30, 14:30 - 18:00 (Saturday)**Where:** Union Concert Hall, Beit Quad**Tickets:** £9 (Wed, Thu, Sat) and £11 (Fri)

INSTAGRAM

## March

1<sup>ST</sup>  
SaturdayCheerleading Showcase  
IC Cheerleading

A series of cool dance classes taught by our dance team + random play dance with prizes!

**Time:** 18:00 - 22:00**Where:** King's College London Guy's Campus**Tickets:** Early bird tickets at £8.

INSTAGRAM

1<sup>ST</sup>  
SaturdayICSO Spring Concert  
IC Symphony Orchestra

Our annual concert at Cadogan Hall. Performing Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. and Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5.

**Time:** 19:30 - 21:30**Where:** Cadogan Hall, SW1X 9DQ**Tickets:** Seats are £10, £15 or £25

TICKETS

2<sup>ND</sup>  
SundayMajor Event  
IC Singapore

Our annual musical with a live orchestra, singing and acting. This is a story of Elizabeth Choy, one of Singapore's World War II heroes.

**Time:** 18:30 - 22:15**Where:** Great Hall**Tickets:** Tickets not yet released

INSTAGRAM

15<sup>TH</sup>  
SaturdayCheerleading Nationals  
IC Cheerleading

Imperial Cheer's level 2 and level 3 teams will be competing against other universities!

**Time:** 9:00 - 15:00**Where:** Resorts World Arena, Birmingham**Tickets:** £26

INSTAGRAM

22<sup>ND</sup>  
SaturdayMascotry Dinner  
Royal College of Sciences Motor Club

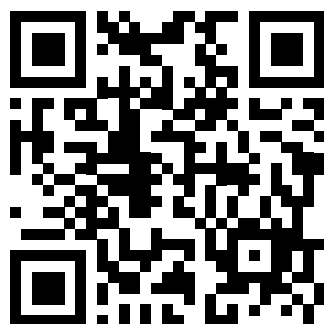
With a reception at the RCS&RSM Motor Club garage and an exhibition of Masscotry at Imperial, you are invited to a three-course dinner.

**Time:** 18:00 - 23:00**Where:** RSM/RSC Garages, Union Dining Hall**Tickets:** £40, £45 or £75.

TICKETS

Submit

your event here

Scan QR and fill out form  
by February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025View  
all the events here



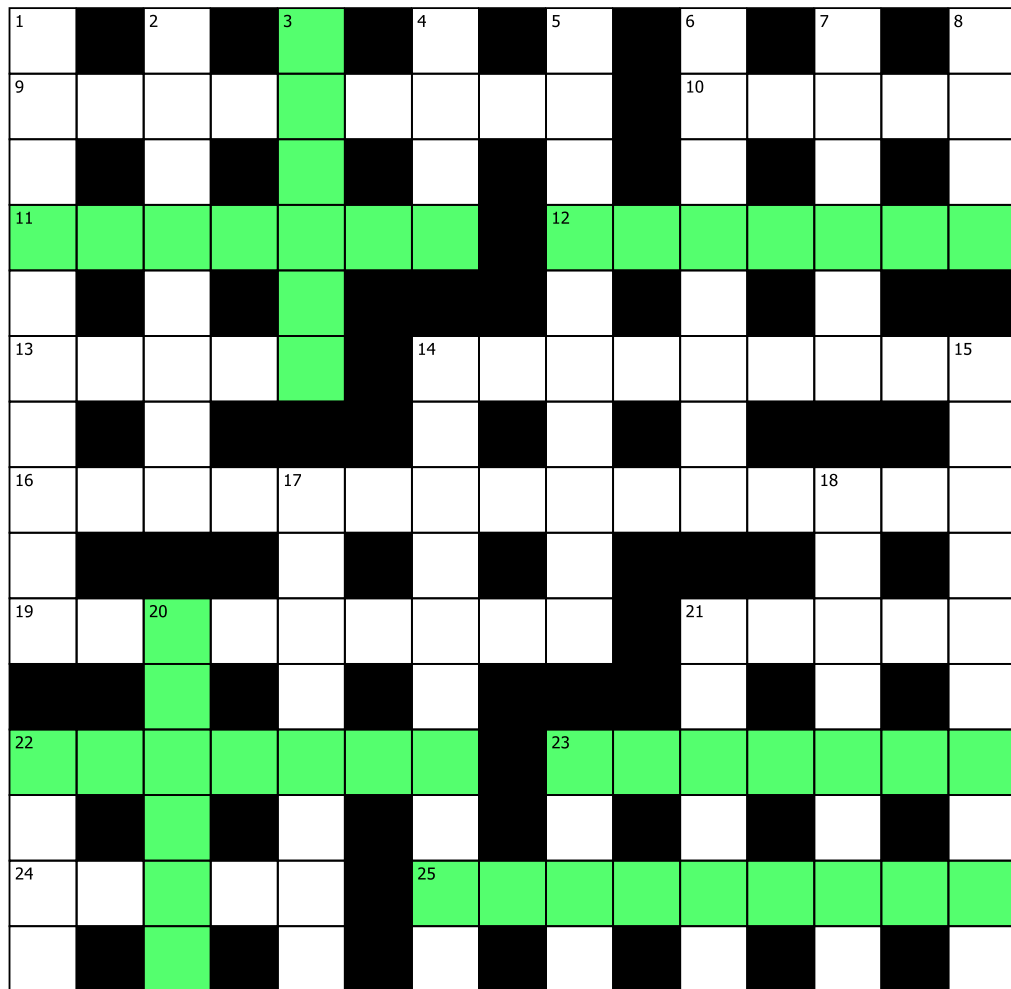
PUZZLES

Puzzles Editor  
IVIN JOSE

# CROSSWORD

"Feb Birthdays"

(5 pts.)



## Across

- 7. Bird lacking a foot but with a vital organ is with famous traveller. (8)
- 8. Metal container contains balm, accidentally set alight. (6)
- 9. Discovers a hint so confusingly. (4,2)
- 10. Told to observe but fail to listen to legend in depths of abyss. (8)
- 11. Requesting like royalty. (6)
- 12. Pioneer the route for mother starting to keep endless rubbish. (8)
- 14. Autocorrect turns tide back to get to heart of ford. (6)
- 16. Returns from the dead with bloomers! (6)
- 18. Performers used pitcher cutting glee short for right wondrous ending. (8)
- 20. Start alluding to tabu subjects ending with cross Jane. (6)
- 22. Each initial university container filled with something like river soil. (8)
- 24. Slowpoke is left in utter bafflement... (6)
- 25. Undead swaps first tomb for last character, in other words. (6)
- 26. Bookplate from former small library is attached. (2-6)

## Down

- 1. Leaves quest incomplete, gets sicker and falters. (6)
- 2. Elitist head of charitable library tries to help. (8)
- 3. Hip replacement by Dr A. Vantage. (5-5)
- 4. You enrage sword lover- might get chopped up! (9,6)
- 5. Public service announcement without much heart that Spanish girl like Spanish dish. (6)
- 6. Dead let oboes be destroyed. (8)
- 8. Italian monk sings single note while hugging leader of reformation. (3)
- 13. Mad yak and toucan devoured a little starter, while calling out a hypocrite. (3,3,4)
- 15. Dough is not quite twice of original, not initially. (8)
- 17. Narrate audibly of workspace which is corrupt without head. (8)
- 19. Dirty animated father texts "Baby...". (6)
- 21. Creamy dessert sounds like an easy sanctuary. (6)
- 23. It's not all that nice to exclude someone. (3)

## Across

- 9. 2024 Action/Thriller starring Anthony Mackie and Morena Baccarin. [9]
- 10. Major financial centre of Japan. [5]
- 11. Not Messi, born Feb 5. [7]
- 12. Million Dollar Baby, born Feb 1. [7]
- 13. What you shout before a long throw. [2,3]
- 14. If something or someone is held dearly and lovingly. [9]
- 16. A narrowing of the larynx, or voice box, that can be congenital or acquired. [15]
- 19. To have found the problem. [9]
- 21. A game where the winner says the name of the game as they win. [5]
- 22. Ocean's 8, born Feb 20. [7]
- 23. Great Expectations, born Feb 7. [7]
- 24. Once the capital of Japan. [5]
- 25. Montgomery Bus Boycott, born Feb 4. [4,5]

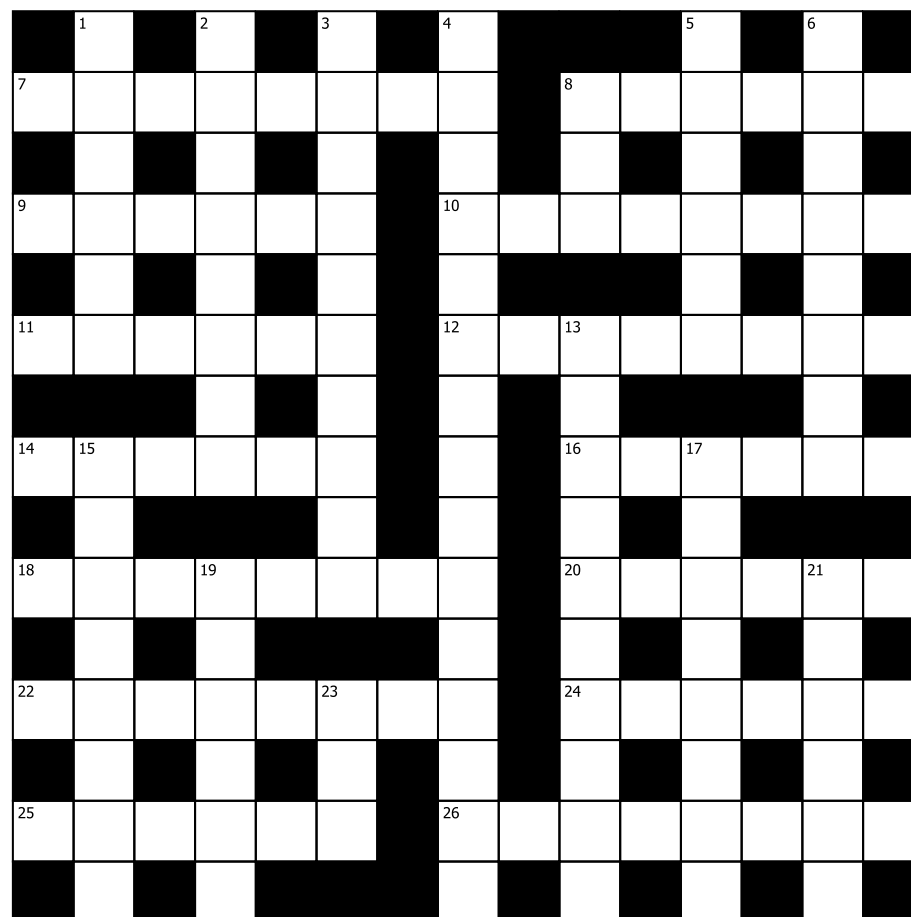
## Down

- 1. Soaked and disheveled in appearance. [10]
- 2. Friends, born Feb 11. [8]
- 3. Butterflied 8, born Feb 27. [6]
- 4. Delicious chocolate power added to milk. [4]
- 5. Unchanged by something. [10]
- 6. Bo Burnham, for example. [8]
- 7. One gets this from the Sun, candles and close friends. [6]
- 8. Sky's tears. [4]
- 14. Fine wires placed at right angles used for aiming or measuring. [5,5]
- 15. Take away someone's property. [10]
- 17. A broken bone that does not heal properly. [3,5]
- 18. A cross between a raspberry and a blackberry. [8]
- 20. That '70s Show, born Feb 7. [6]
- 21. Used to flex. [6]
- 22. Garden tool. [4]

# CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Submitted by Ester K. Mirra

(10 pts.)



# SUDOKU

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

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

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

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

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

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

Medium (2 pt. each)

Hard (3 pts. each)

Extra hard (4 pts. each)

# GROUPING GRIDS

Submitted by William West & Vittoria Dessi

Ingot	Garner	Lump	Reap
Shovel	Cart	Grain	Melon
Gobbet	Pluck	Plough	Hard hat
Pager	Chunk	Head torch	Pick

### 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.

Crest	Top	Crown	Bowler
Cover	Apex	Order	Wickie
Bucket	Sword	Chef	Peak
Deep	Sceptre	Fly slip	Head

Medium (4 pts.)

Hard (5 pts.)

				Connections
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

				Connections
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				





# COMIC

Submitted by Tengyu Zhao



*Felix's birthday entertainment*

## Puzzle Editor's Note

Dearest Puzzlers,

I hope you're all doing well and enjoyed our special Valentine's puzzles last week!

This week, in honor of February, I thought it'd be fun to put your general pop culture knowledge to the test. Our regular crossword theme is February Birthdays! For the themed clues, you'll find a reference to a famous movie, book, or show, along with a birthday. Your challenge? Figure out which celebrity the clue is referring to! Hopefully, this adds a little extra fun to your lunchtime breaks.

No changes to the leaderboard this week – looks like many of you were too busy celebrating with loved ones to send Felix your submissions! I'm looking forward to seeing a return to form next week.

A huge thank you to Ester K. Mitra for the Cryptic Crossword, Vittoria and William for the Connections, and Tengyu for the Comic.

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

- Ivin

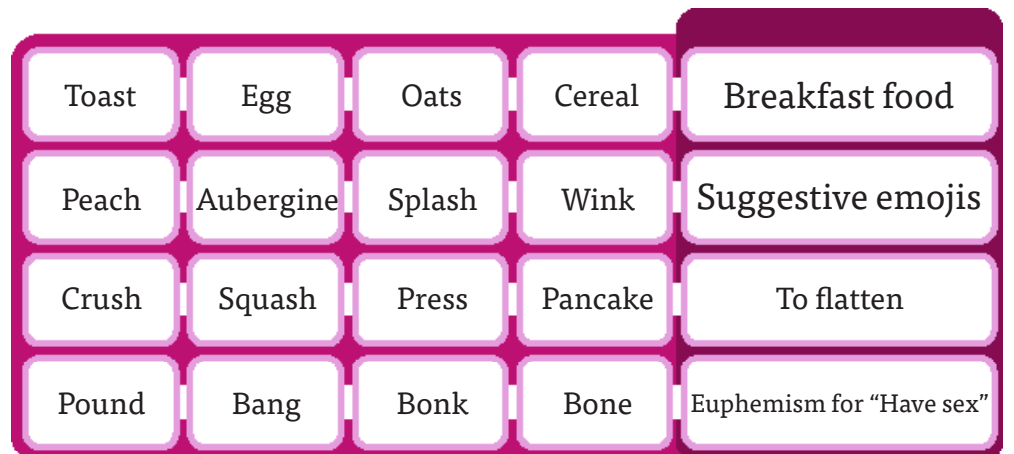
## Previous Puzzles' solutions



Regular



Cryptic



Medium grouping grid



Hard grouping grid

“We at the Shakespeare Society decided that for our first ever show, we would perform a selection of scenes rather than just one play. All of these scenes are, in one way or another, about love – but we leave it up to you to interpret what sort of love these scenes are depicting. Pure, toxic, romantic, platonic – we wanted to explore all”

Anagram: Hearse Speak = Shakespeare

Quote from: Loveless by Alice Oseman

Cryptogram



## SPORT

# RSM prepare for Rugby Bottle Match

Imperial Rugby Communications Officer  
**CHAY BAILEY**

The Bottle Match is an annual rugby fixture between the Royal School of Mines (RSM) and the Camborne School of Mines (CSM), with the first recorded match in 1902 ending in a draw. The Bottle, a three-foot tin beer bottle decorated with the institution's two crests, was obtained in 1926 by a group of RSM students from atop a bass lorry. The Bottle Match originally began as a rugby game but has since expanded, now including other sports such as football, hockey, and netball. However, the winner of the Bottle is determined solely by the rugby match.



Rugby 2024 Bottle Match. Imperial College Rugby

Position	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Against	PD	Points
1	Imperial Men's 1	7	7	0	0	286	25	261	35
2	UCL Men's 1 (RUMS)	9	6	3	0	117	187	-70	27
3	King's College Men's 2 (GKT)	9	5	4	0	184	332	-148	22
4	Queen Mary Men's 1 (Barts)	7	4	3	0	156	115	41	20
5	City St George's Men's 1	8	2	6	0	45	161	-116	11
6	Brunel Men's 3	10	1	9	0	49	17	32	-40

1<sup>st</sup> XV Table. Imperial College Rugby

Position	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Against	PD	Points
1	UCL Men's 2	5	5	0	0	366	51	315	25
2	Imperial Men's 3	4	4	0	0	139	54	85	20
3	Hertfordshire Men's 1	6	3	3	0	154	160	-6	15
4	Kingston Men's 1	5	1	4	0	117	277	-160	5
5	UCL Men's 3 (RUMS)	6	0	6	0	31	265	-234	-10

2<sup>nd</sup> XV Table. Imperial College Rugby

Position	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Against	PD	Points
1	Imperial Men's 5	7	6	1	0	214	48	166	29
2	Royal Holloway Men's 2	7	6	1	0	174	79	95	27
3	Surrey Men's 4	8	2	6	0	89	194	-105	13
4	Sussex Men's 3	3	2	1	0	50	57	-7	8
5	Anglia Ruskin Men's 2	5	1	4	0	58	106	-48	1
6	Middlesex Men's 1	4	0	4	0	12	113	-101	-10

3<sup>rd</sup> XV Table. Imperial College Rugby

Last year, the RSM 1st XV travelled to Cornwall with strong support and walked away with the win. This was the first time RSM had won the Bottle since 2019, and the first time in Cornwall since 2012. This year, CSM will make the journey to London as the RSM aims to defend the Bottle for another year.

*The team at Felix wish all RSM teams involved in Bottle 2025 the very best of luck!*

## Scores & Fixtures:

### Bottle 2025:

**RSM 1<sup>st</sup> XV**

vs

**CSM 1<sup>st</sup> XV**

(Saturday 22nd February)

### Imperial 2<sup>nd</sup> XV:

**Imperial 2<sup>nd</sup> XV**

24 - 5

Hertfordshire 1<sup>st</sup> XV

### Imperial 3<sup>rd</sup> XV:

**Imperial 3<sup>rd</sup> XV**

17 - 45

Royal Holloway 2<sup>nd</sup> XV

## Tickets for Rugby Bottle 2025:



Standard Spectator Ticket (£5)



Premium Spectator Ticket (£22)

# Kylian crushes City's confidence

Sport Editor

**LILA HARRISON**

In a standout performance on Wednesday night, Kylian Mbappé led Real Madrid to a 3-1 victory over Manchester City in the Champions League knockout phase, securing a 6-3 aggregate win. Mbappé has

had a slow start to life at Real Madrid for big signee standards, and for his own.

Perhaps this is down to the fact that he has been forced to play down the middle, with Vinicius Jr and Rodrygo being Madrid's wingers, or perhaps it is the injuries that have plagued the Real squad.

But regardless, Kylian truly showed up last night. His first came in the 4<sup>th</sup>

minute, with a run in behind from a great deep ball from Valverde, and an audacious chip over the Manchester City backline.

His second, in the 33<sup>rd</sup> minute, left Gvardiol on the floor with some impeccable footwork. His last was a powerful long shot with his left foot to slot it home in the bottom left corner. Real Madrid have now knocked out

Manchester City from three of the last four Champion's League seasons.

Nico Gonzalez, new signing from Porto, grabbed a consolation goal in the 92<sup>nd</sup> minute, but 3-1 up on the night, and 6-3 over the two knockout legs played, shows City were never up for the task. Guardiola's long-standing relationship with Barcelona will surely not like this. Man City will be back.



*fit for a king*