

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.



New fraud tactic targets Chinese students in the UK

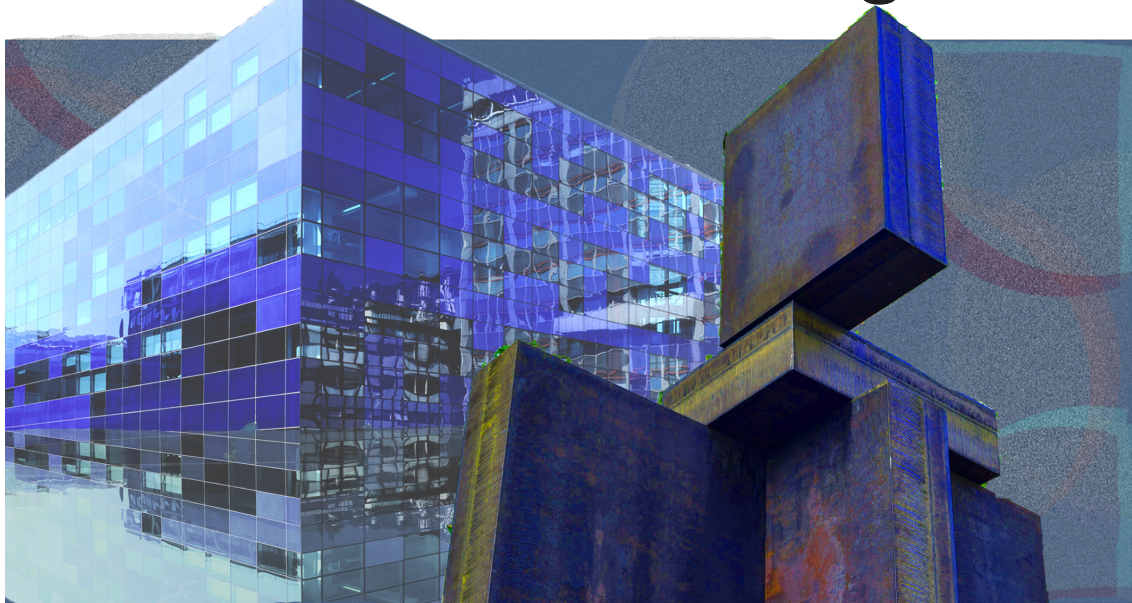
News Writer
NADEEN DAKA

Editor-in-Chief
MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

In recent months, several Chinese international students studying at Imperial have been targeted by sophisticated scams involving fraudsters masquerading as law enforcement and immigration officials. These scams, primarily executed via phone call or online platforms, coerce students into believing they are implicated in serious criminal activity and demand large sums of money under the pretense of legal fees or bail payments.

The scam typically begins
→ [READ MORE ON 4](#)

Up to 12% of staff members experience “bullying and harassment” at College



Juliette Flatau for Felix

HR report shows wage disparities growing between sexes and ethnicities.

Editor-in-Chief
MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

An investigation by Felix has revealed that “11 to 12%” of staff who filled out 2024’s staff survey “had experienced bullying and harassment” at Imperial. Similarly, according to the 2024 Annual Staffing and Organisation report, which aims to “outline the work” of the HR division”, both gender and eth-

→ [READ MORE ON 3](#)

SPORT

RSM win Varsity

Sport Editor Lila Harrison reports live from Harlington

→ [READ MORE ON 23-24](#)



Royal School of Mines Union

NEWS

College launches scheme calling for student feedback on White City

→ [READ MORE ON 3](#)

Business School ranked 38th globally

→ [READ MORE ON 5](#)

FILM&TV

Conclave review: Ralph Fiennes is “extraordinary” in Papal drama

→ [READ MORE ON 9](#)

BOOKS

Seasonal Reading, Seasonal Depression: Winter 2024

→ [READ MORE ON 11](#)

CULTURE



Writer Serra discusses how the patriarchal idea of virginity shapes art

→ [READ MORE ON 13](#)

Want to know what’s going on around campus?

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



 [felix_imperial](#)
 felix@ic.ac.uk
 felixonline.co.uk

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

Samantha ChowAnya Agarwal

Taylor PomfretTarun Nair

Katharina Felici

Sijung Lee

Hania Irzyk

The Felix Team:




MOHAMMAD MAJLISI
Editor-in-Chief,
News Editor



TAYLOR POMFRET
Deputy Editor-in-Chief,
Sport & Science Editor




CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL
Chair,
Societies Editor




TARUN NAIR
Chief Copyeditor
Film & TV Editor



RUBY LYDFORD
Publicity Officer,
Catnip Editor



ELIF CIVELEKOGLU
Social Secretary,
Arts & Culture Editor



IVIN JOSE
Treasurer
Puzzles Editor



OSCAR MITCHAM
Environment Editor



GUILLAUME FELIX
Comments Editor



ADITI MEHTA
Books Editor



ALIA FRIEDMAN
Business Editor



GILBERT JACKSON
Arts Editor Emeritus



ROLANDO CHARLES
Photography Editor



AMBER DUNMORE
Science Editor



JAMES DESMET
Science Editor



LILA HARRISON
Sport Editor



TIMOTHY LANGER
Senior Webmaster



ELSON THO
Webmaster



WALT GAO
Head Photographer



**AND OUR NUMEROUS
CONTRIBUTORS ...**

Located at Beit Quad,
Prince Consort Road
London, SW7 2BB

Printed by Iliffe Media
Winship Road,
Milton, Cambridge
CB24 6PP

Registered Newspaper
ISSN 1040-0711
Copyright © 2025 *Felix*

Advertising

MEDIA	SIZE	PRICE (£)
Print	Quarter-Page	25
	Half-Page	30
	Full-Page	45

Contact us

News felix@ic.ac.uk

Books books.felix@ic.ac.uk

Film&Tv film.felix@ic.ac.uk

Catnip catnip.felix@ic.ac.uk

Comment comment.felix@ic.ac.uk

Puzzle puzzle.felix@ic.ac.uk

Food&Travel food.felix@ic.ac.uk

Sport&Society sport.felix@ic.ac.uk

Environment environment.felix@ic.ac.uk

Science science.felix@ic.ac.uk

NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

nic minority pay discrepancies had increased over the course of the year.

According to the report, the most common types of complaint on Imperial's Report and Support tool were under the "other", "racial harassment", and "hate crime" categories. The report and support tool is available to both students and staff to report any experiences of bullying and harassment.

An Imperial College London spokesperson said: "No forms of bullying or harassment are tolerated at Imperial and the university takes all allegations extremely seriously.

"We are committed to making our community an environment which is respectful and inclusive. This includes eliminating all forms of discrimination,

especially direct and indirect forms of harassment, bullying and victimisation."

Pay disparities rising

Both the gender pay gap and the ethnicity pay gap had increased. The gender pay gap increased from 6% to 10.3%, and the pay disparity between ethnic minorities and their white colleagues had increased from 9.5% to 13.2%. The College HR department had also undertaken an analysis of the disability pay gap, which was recorded as 7.6%.

Whilst the proportion of ethnic minority professors at Imperial (15%) was higher than the proportion sector wide across the UK (12%), and London (13%), Imperial has significantly lower proportions of female professors at 20%, compared to 31% across the UK

higher education sector, and 33% across London.

Imperial has recently updated its sexual misconduct policy and is working on closing the gender, ethnicity, and disability pay gaps. According to its website, Imperial is "rolling out a College-wide mentoring scheme" and has made Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion training mandatory. In 2021, the College introduced a new pay review framework, aiming to ensure "equity and consistent application of achievement pay review awards."

Imperial calls for community feedback on White City

Campus of the Future and Naming Imperial Places schemes call for Imperial communities' involvement in new campus developments.



Perkin's Green, named after Imperial chemist William Henry Perkin. Jason Hawkes for Imperial College London

Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

Imperial College is taking calls for members of the Imperial community to provide suggestions and feedback on White City campus as development ramps up. The Naming Imperial Places and Campus of the Future schemes are asking for input from staff and students to "shape a world-class experience for all Imperial campuses."

Naming Imperial Places calls for Imperial staff and students and staff to "celebrate" Imperial's, and London's, heritage as a "unique" university and city. The

College is looking for names across three themes: "Diverse Imperial Notables", "Innovations", and "Local London Culture". Any names entered will be considered for a variety of buildings across White City and Imperial's other campuses. Names will be chosen by a "senior panel of colleagues" from across Imperial. Submissions are open on the Imperial website.

Campus of the Future calls for students to offer "feedback and insight" into the interior and exterior design of buildings, the public spaces and amenities on offer, and the provisions of staff and student services.

White City campus has recently opened Perkins Green, a green space on the north side of the campus. It's named after William Henry Perkin, an Imperial

chemist and entrepreneur known for his discovery of the first synthetic dye, mauveine. The name is a play on a later synthetic developed by Perkin later in life: "Perkin's Green". Last week His Majesty King Charles visited Centre for Injury Studies on campus and investigate their research linked to the Ukrainian war.

White City is also hosting coffee mornings with the development team to meet with stakeholders from across Imperial and beyond to learn of upcoming developments. The next event is being held at The Works café on the campus on 27th March.



Juliette Flatau for Felix

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

with a phone call, often from a spoofed number that resembles those of government agencies. The caller, speaking in English or Mandarin, introduces themselves as an official from UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), or either British or Chinese law enforcement, and informs the student that they are under investigation for crimes such as money laundering or visa fraud. To bolster their credibility, the scammers may provide fabricated emails or official-looking documents that mimic real government or university communications.

Once they have gained the student's trust and attention, the fraudsters then pressure the student into compliance by insisting on urgency and confidentiality, stating that discussing the case with others could result in legal repercussions. Many victims, terrified by the possibility of deportation or a permanent criminal record, comply with these demands. The scammers then instruct the student to transfer money as "security deposits" or "for bail", promising that the funds will be reimbursed once the investigation is over. However, once the money is transferred, the scammers vanish without a trace.

A Chinese student studying at Imperial recently fell victim to this scam, which also involved a "virtual" kidnapping, and lasted almost three weeks in December 2024.

The ordeal began with the student, who wishes to remain anonymous, receiving a call from an individual claiming to work for UKVI stating that authorities had repeatedly attempted to contact the student regarding an official letter. Another fraudster claiming to work for UKVI told the student that a phone number registered under the student's name had been used in a fraudulent scheme in China, violating their visa conditions, and they would be "deported immediately".

After being "directly" transferred to another individ-

ual posing as a police officer from the Shanghai Public Security Bureau, the student was told they would need to provide a testimony as a bank account in the student's name had been linked with a "high-level international scam case". The fraudsters had made use of official-looking documents, video calls, and called the student from a number linked to the Shanghai Pudong Public Security Bureau. They had also provided names and police ID numbers to ensure the operation looked legitimate. As the student was asked to remain under constant surveillance via Skype and WeChat (a Chinese instant messaging platform) as they were unable to return to China immediately. During the monitoring process, the student had to always remain on a Skype call with screen sharing enabled, preventing them from speaking to or consulting friends and family. The student was forced to submit a "safety report", including their name, location, time, and current activity, every two hours daily. They were also told to report all internet activity with screenshots of all the websites they visited and messages they received. Faced with the threat of deportation and losing their chance to an Imperial education, the student complied.

To ensure the student did not learn of others who had experienced the same, the fraudsters demanded the student delete Douyin, the Chinese version of TikTok, and Xiaohongshu, or Little Red Book, another popular Chinese social media app.

The student was told to liaise with a "police captain", who repeatedly reassured the student of their innocence and that they were "on the same side" whilst also providing the student with details leading to their continued investigation. On separate occasions the student was told that security camera footage exonerating the student had been deleted, or that another suspect had identified the student as being involved with the fraud. A fake prosecutor also told the student an elderly victim of the scam had

committed suicide.

As the scheme escalated, a fabricated prosecutor presented the student with two options: return to China immediately and be arrested upon arrival, losing their education, or pay a sum of money to remain in the UK during the investigation. The prosecutor assured the student that the money would be returned at the end of the investigation after proving their innocence.

Under duress the student opted for the latter of the two options. They were told to pay a total of 2.5 million yuan (approximately £250,000) for bail. With this, the student lied to their parents, requesting the funds under the guise for an urgent educational purpose. The money was sent to two accounts under the same name, supposedly belonging to the security officers conducting the "verification check".

By 30th December, the scam ended as swiftly as it had begun: the fraudsters had received all the money and disappeared. They had promised to be in touch by 16th January with an update but were never heard from again, and the money sent was unrecoverable. It wasn't until the student had seen online reports of similar scams that they realized they had been the victim of fraud.

Imperial College has provided advice for international students on its website. The College advises students to contact the International Student Support team at international@imperial.ac.uk. Additionally, the College has provided information on how to spot and report scams. Students are advised to stick to the "golden rule" of maintaining caution should they be asked for money, or personal or financial details.

The Chinese Embassy in the UK has sorted out several telecom fraud cases and can be contacted at London_lb@csm.mfa.gov.cn.

Imperial Business School ranked 38th globally in FT rankings

News Writer
ISABELLA DUCHOVNY

Imperial College Business School's MBA has placed 38th globally in the 2025 *Financial Times* rankings, improving by one position from last year.

The school received an overall satisfaction score of 8.406 on a ten-point scale and was ranked 24th for weighted research output by full-time faculty. The survey is completed by alumni three years after graduation and the ranking is derived from 21 criteria, including alumni responses, school data and research

rank.

Imperial ranked fourth in the United Kingdom, after London Business School, Oxford's Saïd Business School, and Cambridge's Judge Business School. Imperial College Business School's weighted salary, the average alumni salary three years after graduation, is \$162,604, a slight increase from the previous year .

It was also ranked 55th for its carbon footprint, which is measured using the Business School's net zero target year for carbon emissions and a publicly available carbon emissions audit report.



Imperial College's main entrance. Walt Gao for Felix



BATTLE OF THE BANDS

HEATS & FINAL

HEATS

3-7 MARCH

Reynolds

19:00 onwards

FINAL

20 MARCH

Metric

19:00 onwards

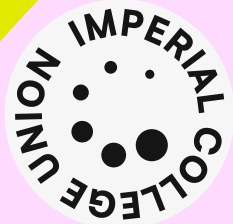
TERM TWO EVENT

GOOGLIFE

End of Term Party

21 March 2025

Metric | 22:00 — 03:00



TERM TWO EVENTS

SCIENCE

Ozempic: more than a weight-loss drug

Studies suggest that Ozempic has been found to reduce alcohol cravings, cigarette smoking, and obesity-related cancers.

Science Writer

MARSELA MARKU

Semaglutide, known commercially as Ozempic or Wegovy, has remained a hot topic in the media following its rise in popularity as a weight loss drug, with many concerned over its possible long term health consequences. Recently, new studies have demonstrated the drug's positive effects on various health conditions such as alcoholism, smoking, obesity, and diabetes.

One new study has found that semaglutide could reduce alcohol consumption. The study comes from Christian Hendershot and colleagues, who conducted a randomised controlled trial (RCT) providing participants doses of semaglutide or placebo injections and observed a reduction in cravings for alcohol and drinks per day and even showed an unexpected reduction in cigarette smoking.

Although previous research has shown a correlation between semaglutide use and reduced alcohol consumption in animals and humans, this breakthrough study is the first RCT of its kind.

While semaglutide is currently only used for weight management and diabetes treatment, this study raises a new possible use which could save many more lives and reduce the burden on health services.

Studies on semaglutide have also found a possible reduction in the risk of obesity-associated cancers. Scientists at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio found that patients with type 2 diabetes treated with semaglutide rather than insulin had a significant risk reduction for 10 out of 13 obesity-associated cancers including bowel cancer, the fourth most common cancer in the UK. These findings could be crucial in wider cancer prevention, as obesity is the second biggest cause of UK cancer cases. In March 2024, the US

Food and Drug Administration approved semaglutide for the treatment of adults with cardiovascular disease to reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke.

A double-blind trial of Wegovy drug use found a significant reduction in cardiovascular symptoms. Most life-saving drugs do not come without side effects and semaglutide is no

underestimated.

As an effective weight loss drug, it also has the capability to treat many conditions that arise as a result of obesity. We should become open to semaglutide becoming a widespread treatment to combat obesity as incidence continues to rise and research continues.



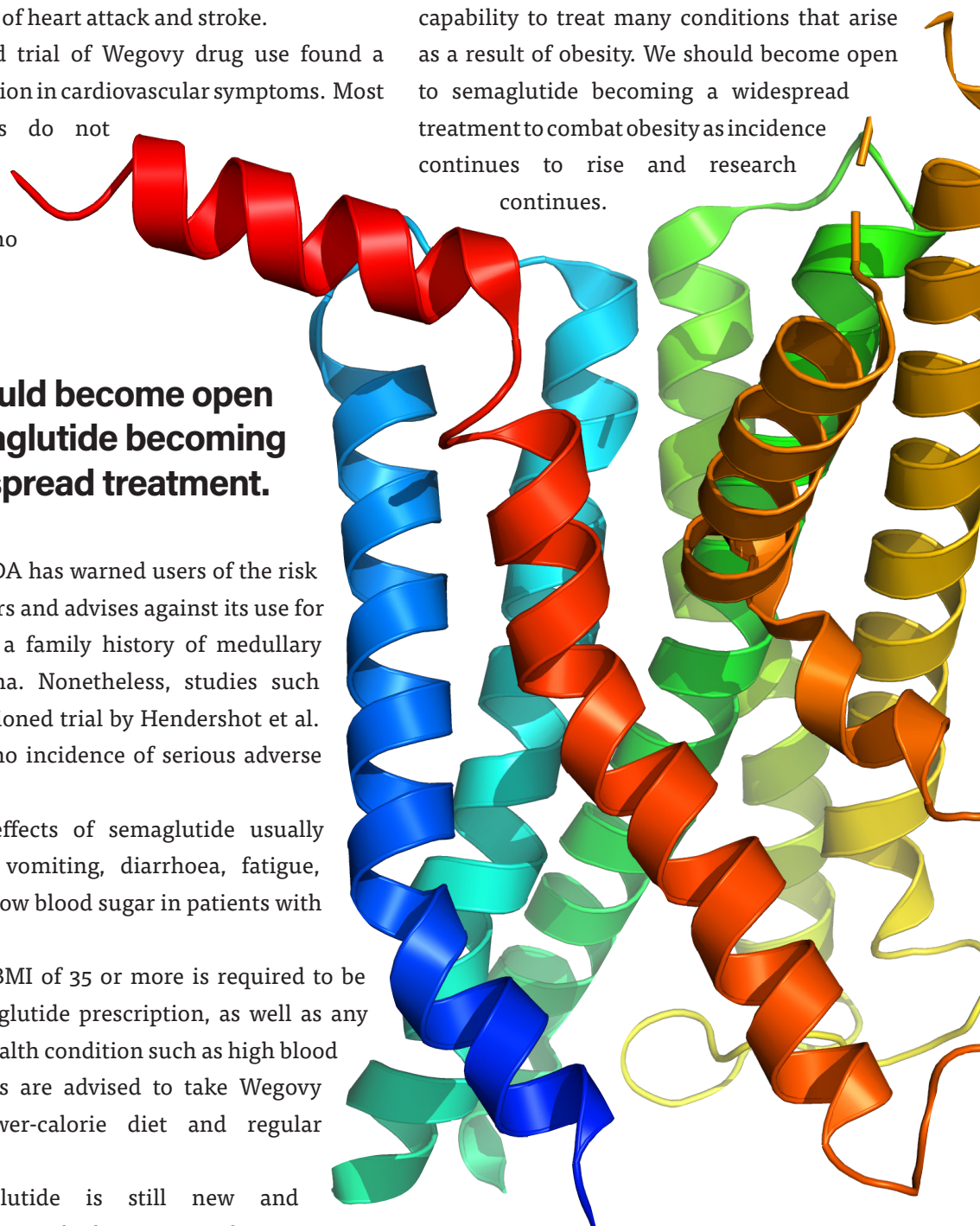
We should become open to semaglutide becoming a widespread treatment.

exception. The FDA has warned users of the risk of thyroid tumours and advises against its use for individuals with a family history of medullary thyroid carcinoma. Nonetheless, studies such as the aforementioned trial by Hendershot et al. showed little to no incidence of serious adverse effects.

Typical side effects of semaglutide usually include nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, fatigue, indigestion, and low blood sugar in patients with diabetes.

In the UK, a BMI of 35 or more is required to be eligible for semaglutide prescription, as well as any weight-related health condition such as high blood pressure. Patients are advised to take Wegovy alongside a lower-calorie diet and regular exercise.

While semaglutide is still new and continues to be researched, its potential to treat multiple common health conditions should not be

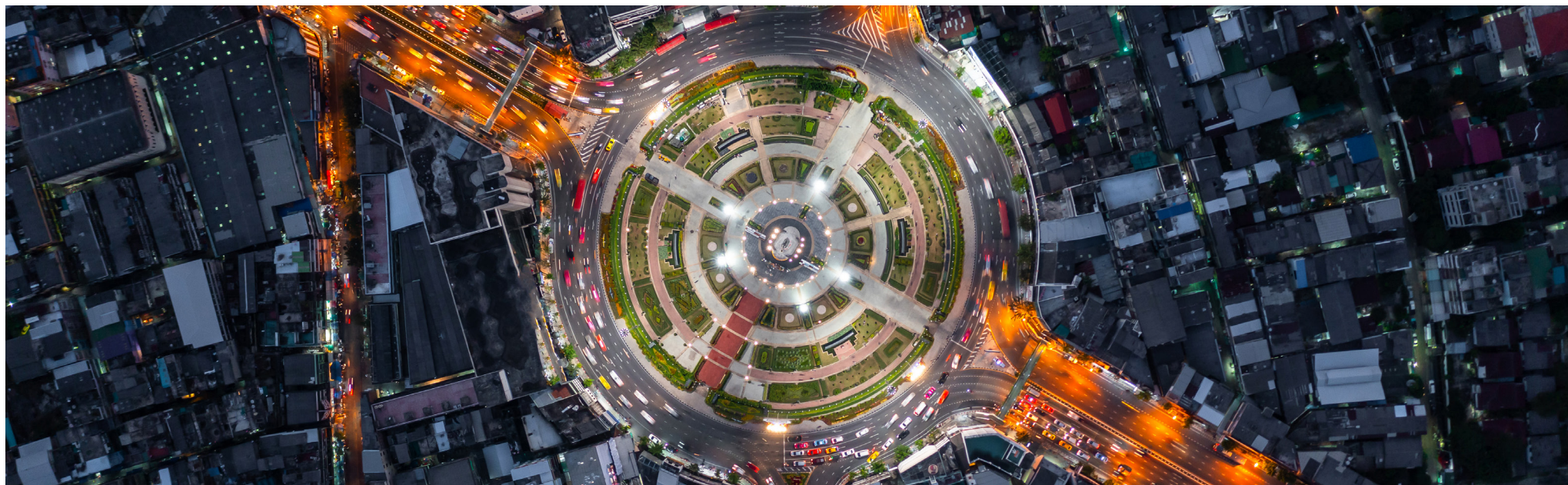


Glucagon-like peptide receptor 1 (GLP1), Ozempic's binding target. Scheng23 (CC BY-SA 4.0)

ENVIRONMENT

Noise pollution needs sound solutions

How exposure to noise pollution is overlooked by policymakers.



Comment Editor
GUILLAUME FELIX

Is your health slowly eroding due to radiation poisoning? That's more likely than you might think, but not because of decaying atoms. Indeed, in spite of the widespread anxiety regarding the risks of nuclear radiation, data-driven politicians and scientists should condemn sound radiation as the more dangerous cousin. Sadly, they do not. Around the world, sound pollution is critically overlooked: it is nowhere to be found in the UN's 169 targets for 2030, and it is consistently classified as an environmental concern of lesser importance by the EU.

It is not, at any rate, a new topic: close to two thousand years ago, Seneca already complained to his fellow statesman and poet Lucilius about "the assortment of sounds [in Rome], which are strong enough to make me hate my very powers of hearing". As if mere pain and annoyance weren't enough, noise pollution has alarming and well-characterised impacts on human health. Our ears have not evolved to process loud sounds, and

the vibrations of the modern world put stress on our hair and nerve cells, which quickly lead to hearing loss.

But what is much more concerning is that noise pollution is – perniciously – one of the world's most silent killers. Indeed, in addition to the expected hearing damage, overexposure to loud ambient sounds is known to cause a ghastly array of conditions, including tinnitus, cardiovascular disease, increased stress, sleep disturbance, and cognitive deficits. More incongruous examples include type 2 diabetes and low birth weight. Critically, all these symptoms are non-specific, and few would think of linking them back their root. Even less obvious, perhaps, is their link with inequality.

As with all types of pollution, the least privileged are disproportionately affected. The three main activities responsible for the bulk of sound pollution – namely air traffic, car traffic, and construction – are all noisier in less developed countries. Rapidly urbanising cities are bedevilled by the din of construction sites: in China, close to half of all pollution-related complaints addressed to the relevant government organisation concern noise.

Weak governance also favours lenient regulations for road and air traffic, be it in their legal grounding or subsequent enforcement.

Within countries themselves, noise pollution exacerbates ethnic and socioeconomic disparities. For instance in the United States, areas with low-income, low-education or otherwise marginalised individuals are statistically rowdier. Such an environment is responsible for childhood learning delays, cognitive impairment, and lower efficiency at work, meaning overlooked vicious cycles could very well be trapping individuals in soundproof glass ceilings.

Why then aren't governments taking stronger action? The difficulty of gathering reliable data hinders the development of tailored solutions. The effects of sound pollution is notoriously patchy in low-income countries, with another recent study denouncing the "very low" quality of evidence for health impacts of noise in such regions. Cautious lawmakers are also reluctant to pass regulations that might drive the price of growth-stimulating items up.

Nevertheless, the popularity cost of

tackling noise pollution wouldn't be as great for governments as that of most environmental policies. Immediate changes, not limited to noise itself, would be felt immediately. A recent study estimated that rates of violent crime causatively increase by 1.6% for each additional decibel of noise level, suggesting that lowering these levels could rapidly save billions in crime costs alone (and the list of sound-related vexations that could be solved goes on).

On the bright side, since many sources of environmental damage such as air conditioning, transportation, or urban sprawl, are also guilty of emitting noise, laws aiming to curb one would help reduce the other. Similarly, initiatives promoting more sensible urban planning and better public transport systems – although often not designed nor publicised for this purpose – naturally alleviate the racket of agglomerations. As many countries enter an economic slump, the question remains to know if action will be taken. Without it, the quiet enjoyed solely by the most fortunate might give new and disheartening meaning to the term sound barrier.

COMMENT

Comment Writer
NADEEN DAKA

Crash Course

What recent plane crashes reveal about global politics.

The skies are beginning to feel less safe. In just the past few months, a string of aviation disasters has dominated headlines – from the midair collision between an American Airlines flight and a Black Hawk helicopter earlier this month to a Delta aircraft flipping upside down just last week. At first glance, these crashes seem to be isolated disasters, unfortunate but random. However, upon a closer look, a pattern starts to emerge, revealing a world order that's growing more dangerous.

Each of these incidences tells a story, not just of mechanical failure, but of geopolitics in motion. Modern conflicts and power struggles are unfolding 30,000 feet above ground, and with every new crash, it becomes more apparent that we are flying in an increasingly unstable world.



Airspace is no longer just a transit zone, but also a battleground

Consider flight J2-8243, an Azerbaijan Airlines flight that crash-landed in Kazakhstan on December 25th, killing 38 people. While Russian state media initially attributed the crash to a bird strike, other reports suggested that Russian air defences mistakenly shot it down. The incident sent shockwaves through the region, further straining Russia's already tense relations with Azerbaijan. Whether it was another accident in a growing proxy conflict or a more deliberate show of power, this crash forces us to rethink the neutrality of flying, serving as a stark reminder that airspace is no longer just a transit zone, but also a battleground.

A month earlier, a DHL cargo plane went down near Vilnius Airport in Lithuania. At first, it was dismissed as an

accident likely owing to human or mechanical error. But soon after, speculation of sabotage began to surface. Germany's foreign minister even raised the possibility that the crash may have been a deliberate act amid escalating tensions between Russia and its NATO allies. In a world where the boundaries of international law are growing murkier, the idea of targeting aircraft is no longer as far-fetched as it once seemed.

Even beyond conflict-laden zones, political decisions are exacerbating the risks of flying. In the US, the newly elected



The recent door plug blowout on an Alaska Airlines aircraft is yet another example of what happens when corporate shortcuts trump quality control

Trump administration has fired hundreds of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) employees, including key safety



Illustration by: Ruby Lydford

inspectors.

Meanwhile, Boeing is still grappling with a deepening safety and quality control crisis, raising concerns that cost-cutting has taken precedence over passenger safety.

The recent door plug blowout on an Alaska Airlines Boeing aircraft is yet another example of what happens

are left facing the inevitable consequences.

If these recent crashes reveal anything, it's that modern air travel is about more than just getting from one place to another; it is about navigating a turbulent global landscape. The combination of weakened safety regulations, growing geopolitical tensions, and governments operating with impunity is reshaping the reality of air travel, making the sky more unpredictable than ever.

As these disasters continue to make headlines, we must not only acknowledge the tragedies themselves but also recognise what they reveal about the fundamental weaknesses in our global safety and state of the world at the time.

when corporate shortcuts trump quality control (no pun intended). When profits are prioritized over safety, passengers

FILM&TV

Conclave

The election of a new pope within the secretive walls of the Vatican

Film Writer
SIJUNG LEE

When encountering a film about the Roman Catholic Church, a modern audience might feel obliged to expect a story of political drama and corruption of the church surrounding the mysterious workings of the Vatican. *Conclave*, directed by Edward Berger and released in November 2024, is based on the 2016 novel by Robert Harris dealing precisely with these concepts. However, this film goes further by portraying the intricate traditions of the Catholic Church in an alluring manner and weaving in unexpected twists that add moral depth and a sense of uncertainty. *Conclave* has achieved large success, securing four awards including Best Film and Outstanding British Film in the recent 2025 British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA). It was also awarded the 2024 Golden Globe Award for Best Screenplay – Motion Picture.

The main character Lawrence, played by the extraordinary Ralph Fiennes, is a British cardinal, one of many powerful leaders in the hierarchy of the Vatican – a sovereign city-state ruled by the pope. The film’s setting is one of its most compelling aspects: the Sistine Chapel and Vatican chambers are rendered with striking and colourful cinematography, from the grandeur of the frescoes to the giant white columns enclosing the chambers. Berger’s direction captures the claustrophobia of the conclave, where these cardinals are locked away from the outside world, both physically and metaphorically. The

setting becomes a character in itself, emphasising the tension and the high stakes of every decision made within its walls. One of the scenes illustrates an almost heavenly light streaming through stained glass within the chapel – this symbolises the interplay of divine

grace and human frailty throughout the conclave. Furthermore, the score is a blend of solemn choral music and tense orchestral undertones, which enhances the emotional weight of key moments. The silence is intensified as cardinals cast their ballots one by one, with names being read out loud every meeting and hushed conversations echo through the stairs of the chambers.

Conclave, Latin for a “room that can be locked,” represents the assembly of cardinals for the election of a new pope. The film opens with the sudden death of the previous pope, who might remind the audience of the current Pope Francis. Cardinal Lawrence is forced to gather the College of Cardinals as the

new dean to initiate the conclave. He is associated with the American candidate Cardinal Bellini (Stanley Tucci), a central progressive figure who favours reforms within the church. Bellini seems reluctant to become elected pope but he strongly opposes the traditionalist candidate Cardinal Tedesco (Sergio Castellitto), a conservative Italian figure who not only wishes to bring back Latin masses but also holds an extreme stance against Islam. It is worth mentioning that there are some caveats regarding a less complex characterisation and underdevelopment of certain cardinals, which could have been more consciously addressed. An important exception to this, however, is Sister Agnes (Isabella Rossellini). As the nun in charge of overseeing the cardinals’ accommodations during the conclave, she remains in the sidelines and barely speaks, but when she does, everyone listens – not to mention her great side-eye. In general, the costumes play a symbolic and dramatic role throughout the film. The scarlet garments worn by the cardinals are part of their official ecclesiastical attire, symbolising their willingness to shed blood for their faith and evokes the sacrifice of martyrs. It also heightens the stakes and tension of the conclave, visually contrasting against the neutral backgrounds of the Vatican.

The film touches upon sensitive issues both within the Catholic Church and in society while depicting moral dilemmas – or crises of faith – that the characters continuously face. The conclave itself also has elements mirroring real-life elections in a society that drives controversy and political division. Nevertheless, there were some predictable moments and drastic twists that were placed too late into the film that may have undermined the dilemmas portrayed. What does it mean to lead with morality in a world so rife with ambition and corruption? How do personal agendas coexist with divine will? And how can an individual maintain hope in a system that shows such division in all aspects? At its core, *Conclave* seeks to ask unaddressed questions that apply to our daily lives.



Your mother would take the Substance

The Substance is the perfect allegory for mother-daughter relationships

Film Writer

RUBY LYDFORD

My sister recommended me *The Substance* (the film, that is). She told me it was the sort of film that one should watch with friends, rather than alone in your room, like she did. She also said, “I will never get the last ten minutes of my life back,” so it is safe to say that I was prepared for some unpalatable material. Looking back at her comment, I am appreciative of it, not just for the stand-out reasons – the graphic body horror, the final scene, the loneliness of self-image – but that I was with friends. Something I took from this film is that Elisabeth Sparkle decisively did not have enough friends or hobbies, and these are two of the only things that attack with purpose the ambiguity of what it means to be a woman. If I were bald and hobbling around the house, I would have purchased florals, joined a chess club with other old women, and read a book. The “hagsploitation” of Sparkle was intended to invoke disgust, a sentiment we do not extend to old men, such as the sexualised Dracula. Coralie Fargeat did an excellent job lacing her film with the irony of these tropes used by men in the industry, subverting the elements of psycho-biddy films.

I was startled that most people on the internet seemed to think this film is only

about a woman’s relationship with herself, or with her younger self, or with the expectation of herself. While I think this message is true and impactful, my friends’ discussion during the film made me contemplate another angle. Someone commented, “I feel so awful for her.” “Why? Because she’s uglier? What’s wrong with that?” This second friend was overwhelmingly correct with these rhetorical questions: there must be nothing wrong with that, otherwise the message of this film becomes redundant. We, the audience, only empathise heavily with Sparkle because we judge her beautiful enough beforehand. Had we not deemed her beautiful enough at the beginning, would we feel differently?

Instead, I was confronted with the reality of mother-daughter relationships. Elisabeth let herself be destroyed by Sue: she gave her half her time, her beauty, years of her life, and most of her joy. Yet, she still could not end the partnership. She lived vicariously through this younger self – a younger self that was, importantly, not entirely her. Margaret Qualley shares a notable likeness to Demi Moore, it must be said, but they are not identical. Why would anyone let themselves be destroyed for someone else to have a successful career just because their youthful selves share a likeness? Perhaps because they are mother and daughter. You were once the same, she came from you, and then

you separated and no longer shared a consciousness.

Mothers give their lives up to care for their daughters, putting their health and happiness before their own. They say goodbye to their youth, they can become bitter and sad, and they can also become envious. When Kathy Bates won the Oscar for *Misery*, her mother said to her, “I don’t know what all the excitement [is] about, you didn’t discover the cure for cancer.” Bates went onto justify her mother’s statement with “I forgot to thank her that night.” But she did thank her. Despite her denial, she was eventually shown the video of her speech. “Why did I think I didn’t thank her? Oh, what a relief,” she sighed with a huge weight of emotion. When asked why this meant so much to her Bates replied, “Cause she should have had my life.”

There is a small difference here to this anecdote: Elisabeth did have Sue’s life, once. But the point is the same. Regardless of whether a mother was beautiful and successful once or not, her daughter, does, in some way, owe her entire life to her. Then at some point, she does not. Bates had remarkable talent, like Sue independently being cut out for the new role. Yes, they should be thankful to their mothers, but not a life indebted. While Bates ended up extremely remorseful and anxious due to her berating mother, Sue ended up, as many do, hating her.

I was not surprised when Sue decided to also take the Substance at the end of the film in her misery, and a monster was born. If you do not love your daughter, and your daughter does not love you, I would not expect otherwise. The child will be a dangerous fusion of you both.



BOOKS

Seasonal Reading, Seasonal Depression

Part I: Winter 2024

In this series, Annabell reflects on the influence of seasons on her historical reading habits. This week: Winter 2024

Books Writer
ANNABELL NDIWE

Sub-optimal temperatures, looming deadlines and enveloping darkness at 3pm in the afternoon – the woes of first term are inescapable. If one of the viruses perpetually going around doesn't get to you, the joyless monotony of your daily commute will. Layers of puffers, hats, scarves, and gloves obscure the body and numb the senses (lest the temperature numbs them first). Rushing into univeristy off the damp, leaf-checked pavement, all seems grey, dead, and meaningless.

Adverts and shopfronts take a more positive spin; draping products in tinsel, fake snow, and fairy lights. For bookshops, seasonal selling tactics are a little more diverse, not just pushing books set in or related to Christmas, but displaying stories that capture the feeling of the season.

'Seasonal reading' is often used as a marketing tool, but many writers, bloggers, and BookTok users also write about coordinating books they read with the seasons.

That's not to say that word-of-mouth marketing and para-social influences don't drive how we buy. Two-part article 'All the Fictions for a Seasonal Feast' by American writer Doris Grumbach gives her thoughts on various contemporary works – loved, hated, and unread – for Christmas. The 'seasonality' lies not in the subjects of the titles, but in rounding up her reads for the year and offering them

up as holiday entertainment. Others have noted seeking 'comfort', 'contemplation', or 'melancholy' in autumn and winter and selecting books to match them. I've found myself unconsciously doing the latter and would like to examine why.

Are marketing, the weather, or seasonal affective disorder driving my choices? Or is this the time of year when I feel it's most socially acceptable to be sad; a time I allow myself sadness?

Winter 2024

In the depths of first term, reading on my commute into univeristy was a small respite. Midway through *Normal People* I realised that every winter, inadvertently, I'd read something emotionally fraught centred on loss, loneliness and/or the violent inevitability of change. I started Sally Rooney's second novel on a whim, perhaps to have something common to bring up whenever next I saw people, and it devastated me. It's written with a presence of mind that makes time feel flat. Rooney is ever attentive to the minutiae of life: the scrape of a chair; the destination of a popped cork. The prose is sparse, but it's impact is undeniable.

In a week or so when I had finished *Normal People*, the novel's revolving highs and lows had exhausted me. The characterisation felt hollow. Marianne's suffering was trite and affected. I felt nothing but in the midst of it, the injury of starving for joy and love that remains evasive was very dear to me.

I understand technically what Rooney tries to achieve through juxtaposition, but

after Connel and Marianne's first term at Trinity it became predictable and almost juvenile. Knowing a shift in the mood was coming eroded the impact of when it did. Some of the dualism was more effective, like the wielding of retrospect and nostalgia against Connell.

Post-Leaving Cert, Connell is caught between longing for the careless simplicity of his school life and guilt over his careless cruelty. He wishes to fix the past but wants to nestle into the shards of it, exactly as it was. His moral failings make it a struggle to fully believe in the sensitive, emotionally attuned masculinity he's positioned to represent, but they make his character multifaceted and realistic. He allows guilt to gnaw at him in a way that's almost transactional, as if he could understand and apologise to Marianne by also experiencing social isolation. His love is shown practically. He martyrs himself for her: Marianne both his idol and his damsel.

Although the chapters alternate focus between them, Marianne's characterisation felt restricted to how Connell saw her. Outside of their relationship, she dissolves into vague comments on class, fickle friends, and an unelaborated backstory. It's frustrating that her mental health isn't given the clinical validation that Connell's is, and that her self-sufficient nature (and stint maladaptively coping via sadomasochism – a little cliché) props up her lack of self-preservation.

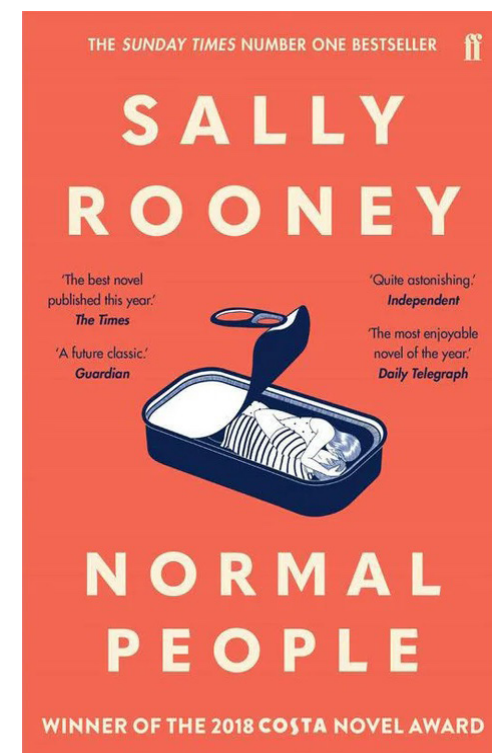
In the short story *At the Clinic*, which the novel is based on, a single allusion to her being abused by her mother's

boyfriend provides a satisfactory explanation. Without this in the novel, the sparse picture of her childhood and family dynamic makes Marianne feel unfinished.

At first, I sided with the common critiques of her character, refusing to believe she wasn't smart enough to help herself; but I've come to think that says more about me than it does about Rooney's character building. The way Marianne is presented as fragmented, incomplete, and contradictory makes sense when considered through the lens of low self-esteem.

Exploring the erosion of her self-image through a series of experiences over a single, casual event avoids melodrama. The novel's style is astute and errs on the side of Naturalism. There's an intentional distance between Marianne and the reader that makes what's known about her merely suggestive, rather than directly explanatory. We're given the space to consider how her family, her social ostracization and her partners shape her behaviour. The lack in her character permits that.

Normal People is the perfect read for a little escapism. Rooney is masterful in drawing out tenderness from the mundane. At time it felt too much, and as the novel progressed, predictability muted its impact. Regardless, I'd recommend it as a short, fairly enjoyable read. Although I didn't love *Normal People*, I'd like to read it again, being more attentive to how Rooney uses absence.



IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON



SATURDAY
8TH MARCH 2025

WOMENS KICK
MENS KICK-



LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS



CK-OFF: 17:00
-OFF: 19:00

ROSSLYN
PARK

CULTURE

The social construct of virginity, and the male dominance over women

From ancient myths to religious iconography, the writer explores how patriarchal ideals have shaped the way women and virginity are depicted in Hellenistic, Byzantine, and Renaissance art

Culture Writer
SERRA YENILMEZ

In patriarchal societies, reproduction and sexuality are considered out of the norm, and hence are suppressed and hidden in all circumstances. Because the power of men over women and children is only possible by enforcing monogamy, the primary value placed on sexuality is solely in terms of reproduction.

In a world where monogamy is not the absolute law, a social position called patriarchy would not have risen because the father would not be known. This situation would threaten the patriarchal social structures and cause men to lose control over women. Rights and ownership over women and the female body were established through virginity. Throughout history the virginity of women was seen as a commodity that could be exchanged in marriage, and it has been historically linked to notions of purity, virtue, and social value. Therefore, the concept of male dominance over the female body, specifically in relation to virginity, has been a prominent theme in art history.

This article focuses on how artifacts from different periods throughout the history – Hellenistic, Byzantine, and Renaissance – have reflected and perpetuated societal constructs shaped over women, predominantly depicted from the male gaze, and often portraying the female body and its virginity as objects to be owned, controlled, and commodified.

Rape of Persephone – South Italian red figured pottery volute krater c. 350 BC (British Museum)

Rape of Persephone is a South Italian red figured pottery volute krater, a two-handled vase, dating back to 350 BC and currently displayed in the British Museum. The krater depicts the dramatic moment of abduction in the myth of Persephone and shapes one of the first Greek understandings of how gender roles and power dynamics in antiquity can be viewed.

In Hellenistic times, the physical understanding of virginity was shaped by the presence of hymen. Women's virginity was considered their most valuable asset and it was believed that it ensured the purity of their offspring as well as the honor of their family. So women's sexual relations were only acceptable within a committed marriage, and were strictly prohibited otherwise. The criminalization of sexual relations outside of marriage exacerbated male dominance over the female body.

In the krater, Hades forcefully takes

Persephone, and as Sierra Schiano explains in her essay “The Rape of Persephone in Children's Media: Feminist Receptions of Classical Mythology,” although “textual and visual sources are vague about what happens to Persephone in the Underworld, there is plenty of sub-textual evidence to indicate to the audience that Hades sexually assaulted the young goddess.”

The fact that Hades had intercourse with Persephone without her consent depicts the idea that Hades consummated his relationship with her by not just abusing her sexually but also disregarding her autonomy and agency while trying to legitimize their marital relationship.

The krater displays Persephone as a submissive and vulnerable figure who is objectified by exoticising the idea of virginity. On the other hand, Hades is often portrayed as a menacing figure and his pursuit of Persephone shows his manipulative personality and reinforces the notion of male sexuality as predatory and violent, perpetuating harmful stereotypes about masculinity and power. These depictions highlight the lack of agency experienced by Persephone in this mythological narrative and emphasize the male domination over women.



Icon of the Virgin and the Child Tapestry



Throughout history, the virginity of women was seen as a commodity that could be exchanged in marriage, and it has been historically linked to notions of purity, virtue, and social value

Icon of the Virgin and The Child Tapestry – Egypt, Byzantine period, 6th century (Cleveland Museum of Art)

Icon of the Virgin and The Child Tapestry is one of the earliest examples of a common theme in Christian theology: Virgin Mary portrayed as the loving and protective mother, cradling the baby Jesus in her arms. Mary's throne is surrounded by flower figures. The white roses displayed in the tapestry are seen as symbols of Mary's purity and the innocence of the soul. In Christian understanding, Mary's purity and holiness are closely associated with perpetual virginity. It is seen as a symbol of her complete dedication to God and her sinlessness. It emphasises her unique role in the Incarnation. In addition, Mary's acceptance of her role in the Incarnation, despite its societal implications, is depicted as an example of faith, obedience, and surrender to God's will.

In Christian belief, Jesus is often regarded as “perfect” based on the understanding that he is both fully human and divine. Oftentimes, this belief of Jesus's perfection extends to Mary as his mother with the idea that Jesus would not be born to an imperfect or sinful

mother. However, since Mary's relationship with God is shaped by the idea of virginity, it is interesting to note that in Christian tradition, the relationship between reproduction and sexuality seems contradictory. Virginity prior to marriage was a virtue and it was a requirement of the marriage contract. Yet, after women lose their virginity, within marriage, and had children who were considered sacred, their closeness with God was somewhat threatened because their purity was lost. Then, their husbands, men who had sexual intercourse with them, had rights and ownership over their body. As a result, women ended up having no agency or control over their bodies and lives in general, connecting the Christian understanding of purity to male dominance over women.

The Annunciation – Leonardo da Vinci (1472)

The Annunciation is a Renaissance painting created by the Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci in 1472. The painting depicts the biblical scene of the angel Gabriel telling the Virgin Mary that she will give birth to the Son of God, Jesus Christ: “You will conceive in your womb and

bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.” (Luke 1:30) Based on this, it is believed that through the miraculous intervention of the Holy Spirit, without any sexual intercourse, Mary became pregnant with Jesus. This idea of perpetual virginity shaped one of the key ideas of Christian doctrine: “[Mary was] ever-virgin meant [she] was a virgin before, during, and after Christ's birth,” according to Renaissance scholar Jean-Pierre Isbouts.

In this painting, the concept of perpetual virginity is emphasized through the use of color blue. In Christian tradition, Mary is typically depicted wearing a blue robe. This portrays her union with Jesus, her role as the embodiment of purity, and connection to the divine. In addition, the lily held by Gabriel is associated with the purity and innocence of Mary. Mary's perfection revolves around the idea of purity, yet the concept of purity is so subjective. Thus power dynamics determine whose image gets to be shown. For example, in the 2nd and 3rd centuries the New Testament's officially recognized Gospels were written by men for a patriarchal social structure, and they included very few allusions to the Virgin Mary. In the first canonical Gospel, said to have been authored by Mark, Mary was not included in any of the writings. Although later versions of the Gospel were more credible, it is still important to note that the Bible, and by extension the Church's teachings, were influenced by males, so they got to choose which representation to focus on. This shows that, once again, male power dominates the portrayal of women in history.



The Annunciation Livioandronico2013 (CC BY-SA 4.0)



The Cast of St. Joan DramSoc

St. Joan: A timeless dive into politics, religion, and virtue

Culture Writer
RIDHI TALWAR

The curtain of Saint Joan opened to Captain Robert De Baudricourt storming at his steward over an immense tragedy – the hen had stopped laying eggs! Seemingly amusing, such a situation was considered very serious at the time, potentially threatening one's livelihood. However, the contrasting portrayals of the two actors immediately commanded the audience's attention – Robert with his almost-exaggerated rage, and the steward with his subtle levity, reflected in his offhand quip, "Sir: what can I do? I cannot lay eggs."

I'm unsure if it was intentional, but nevertheless their dynamic provided a slightly lighthearted start to the play before it delved into heavier themes.

As the play progressed, I admit that I struggled to fully engage with it. A plethora of characters (each granted a very long name) were introduced one after the other, whilst multifarious political and religious themes were being explored simultaneously. It became difficult to keep up and connect the individual scenes to the larger plot. My only saving grace was that I'd read the script summary beforehand, which might not have been the case for everyone. Also, the pacing in the middle felt erratic; some parts felt stretched out,

while others felt rushed. The occasional moments of mild laughter, primarily owing to the actors' (particularly Bluebird's) antics, were a highlight, providing momentary respite from the serious themes of the play.

Despite all this, my straying attention was brought back by the powerful performances and dialogues, and I was hooked. Benjamin's portrayal of the Chaplain was incredibly emotional – we saw him transform from someone vehemently against Joan to a man grappling with guilt, regret, and visible pain over Joan's death when he realized the depth of her goodness. His monologue was delivered with raw intensity and almost moved me to tears.

The epilogue shifted the tone of the play – moving from the social, political, nationalistic and religious themes to a more philosophical perspective. Even after Joan's posthumous honour, when she appears in the final scene in spirit and offers to come back, all the characters refuse! They'd be happy praising her as a Saint, but wouldn't accept her presence among them. This offered a broader reflection of the inherent inability of humans to accept pure virtue amongst them and gave the audience a glimpse into the character's flaws and shortcomings.

As I went through the director's note, Joan herself was quoted to acknowledge the somewhat daunting length of the play, "How long, O Lord, how long!" – a very accurate assessment if I may say so myself. Despite the sincere effort to trim and condense the lengthy monologues, the play still felt overwhelmingly long. However, the incredible casting made up for it. Special shoutout to Benjamin, Vaisnavi, Sophie, and of course, Abigail. Abigail's portrayal of Joan was amazing at tying together the raw innocence and purity that was central to her character, with the sense of purpose to protect her nation and serve God.

What stood out to me was the scale of the production, especially considering the fact that it was put up by a college's drama society. Speaking to a cast member afterward, I realized just how intricately planned and executed the technical aspects were: the set design, lighting, sound. These are much more deliberate than one might realize as a viewer. Tackling a classic play that weaves together such complicated narratives was an ambitious choice, but the team managed to pull it off. Shoutout to the directors Omar and Billy!

Saint Joan was a thought-provoking and moving portrayal of a complex and multifaceted story. Unfortunately, the final performance was last Saturday in the Union Concert Hall, but if it ever comes around again, I'd recommend seeing St. Joan having read a text summary beforehand, to follow along and better appreciate the wisdom of the play.



The Sophia Prize

*Write an article that covers and innovation
that benefits the environment.*

The best article wins £400.

Email: felix@ic.ac.uk

UNION & SOCIETIES

Announcements


February

28TH
Friday

Clue: The Play
ICSM Drama

Come to ICSM Drama’s main play, Clue, for an exciting night of mystery and murder on stage! The show runs tonight and tomorrow night.

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



INSTAGRAM


March

1ST
Saturday

Cheerleading Showcase
IC Cheerleading

A series of cool dance classes taught by our dance team and 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

1ST
Saturday

ICSO 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

1ST
Saturday

Picocon #42: Sentience
Sci-Fi and Fantasy

Talks from guest speakers concerning Sci-Fi and Fantasy, and other events run for charity.

Time: 9:00 – 17:30
Where: Blackett Laboratory LT2
Tickets: £6 student members, £8 student non-members, £10 non-members




INSTAGRAM

2ND
Sunday

Major 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

9TH
Sunday

Spring Concert
IC Sinfonietta

The Spring Concert featuring Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 2, Soloist James Chen, Adams’s The Chairman Dances and a Ceilidh.

Time: 19:00 – 21:00
Where: Great Hall
Tickets: £6.99




TICKETS

15TH
Saturday

Cheerleading 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

15TH
Saturday

Redefine Possible
Google Student Developer Club

To celebrate International Women’s Day, we invited amazing speakers and organised workshops for you to build your network.

Time: 9:00 – 17:00
Where: Blackett Laboratory, SK Campus
Tickets: £3




TICKETS

22ND
Saturday

Mascotry Dinner
Royal College of Sciences Motor Club

With a reception at the RCS&RSM Motor Club garage and a curated exhibition of Masscotry at Imperial, you are invited to a threecourse Dinner.

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



TICKETS

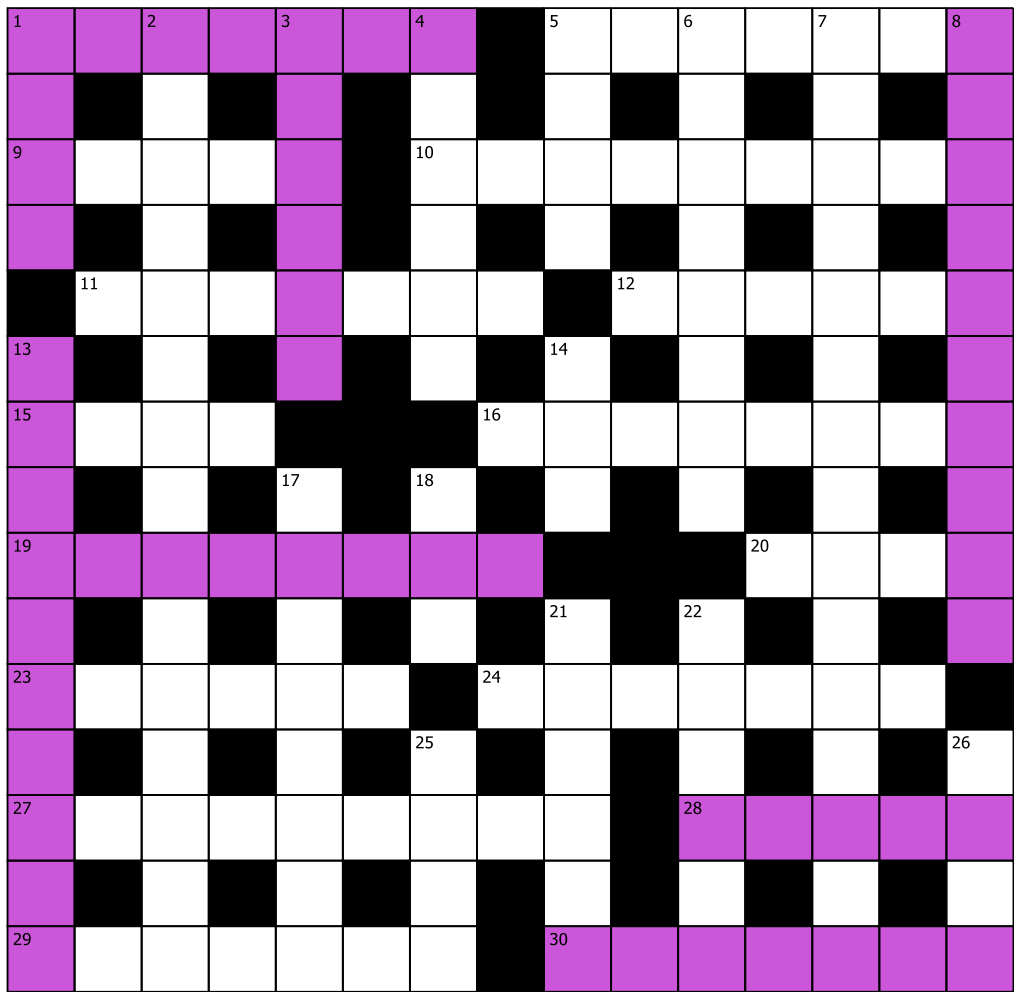
CATNIP



ARIES	TAURUS	GEMINI	CANCER	LEO	VIRGO
This week you realise the flat hunt was just an extended roleplay when you find out your flatmate is your landlord.	This week you hope that God accepts mitigating circumstances.	This week you spend two and a half hours of your three-hour lab perfectly curating your Instagram post with the caption “random dump”.	This week you hold your bladder for so long in the exam you develop a piss kink.	This week you find out on the third date that they’ve been using you for interview prep.	This week you hope that your innie is revising because you’re certainly not.
LIBRA	SCORPIO	SAGITTARIUS	CAPRICORN	AQUARIUS	PISCES
This week you end up with a concussion after lowering your gaze one too many times.	This week you attempt CPR on a man on the floor only to be told he was just praying.	This week you eat avocado and black mould on sourdough toast for breakfast.	This week you realise the three days in the month you left to do your lab report do not exist.	This week your RSM boyfriend bottles the blowjob in the rugby scrum.	This week you decide to try gooning after being told Imperial students need better hobbies at the club.

CROSSWORD

"Out of the frying pan, into the fire" (5 pts.)



Across

1. Carry out a crazy attempt, what do you think? [4,1,4,5]
6. I'm falling before running race blunder. [8]
7. Master craft is zany at heart. [7]
9. Viscous goop caused broken camera to fail. [7]
10. Design software nursing core virus - it might generate graphics! [4]
11. If the services fail without filing first – pirate! [5]
12. American Airlines fumble about with case. [4]
13. Adornments in party reverend trades with religious follower. [7]
16. Wear lust with me on the bottom. [7]
18. Three arrested for last attack after fine from island country. [8]
19. She'll change you quite a bit, taking what's left from your Father and his wife? [5,9]

Down

1. Wound up a shop-keeping, positive type. [6]
2. Headlong rushes amaze Kik's users... [9]
3. ...like certain push. [6]
4. Man with ultimate cold sounds unwell and flakes. [8]
5. Step inside balsam barroom. [5]
8. Bareness of the sound of recent song. [6]
9. A hundred jump ship after divide. [6]
10. Curved yellow fruit in grotto the centre of fancy meal. [9]
11. Over argument, couple is hurling. [8]
14. Without your top, give a hand like type on the route? [2,4]
15. One who takes out seed for energy to come back. [6]
17. Certain religious follower is taking power in Italian staple and introducing resistance. [5]

Across

1. In a tough spot. [7]
5. Shampoo – fragrant hair lotion. [7]
9. Lad, guy, bro, gent, for example. [5]
10. State of finding something funny. [9]
11. When the stall has an occupant. [7]
12. A must have on any charcuterie board. [6]
15. Midday. [4]
16. Above tenor in choir. [8]
19. Fellow contestant, adversary. [8]
20. Secure and prevent from being opened. [4]
23. Gained with age and experience. [6]
24. The lowest form of wit. [7]
27. Three month period. [9]
28. Intro song for *Arcane* Season 1. [5]
29. In accordance with what is correct. [7]
30. Goddess of vengeance and retribution. [7]

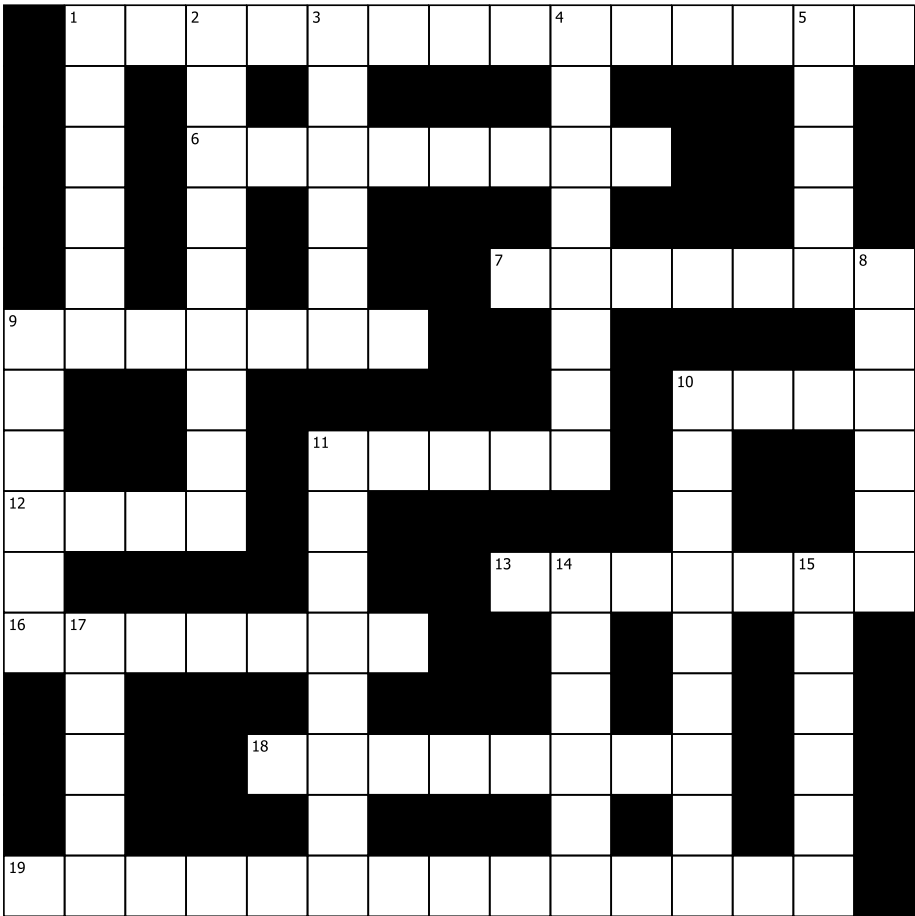
Down

1. Doubtful, filled with uncertainty. [4]

2. Engrossing, fully immersed. [3,12]
3. A bit of a sticky situation. [2,1,3]
4. Sliding storage compartment. [6]
5. 2020 Pixar movie about a finding your true passion. [4]
6. Violet quartz. [8]
7. The quality of making yourself appear or sound more clever than you are. [15]
8. Facing difficulties or problems in a relationship. [2,3,5]
13. Being in trouble or facing consequences for one's actions. [2,3,5]
14. The fastest horizontal flying animal. [3]
17. Mystery thriller starring Katherine Kelly, Lee Ingleby and Angel Coulby. [8]
18. The last page of a book. [3]
21. The paranormal demonologist couple. [6]
22. Edvard Munch's famous painting. [6]
25. Remain motionless. [4]
26. You close these when you just can't bear to look. [4]

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Submitted by David Latimer (10 pts.)



SUDOKU

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

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

Medium (2 pt. each)

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

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

Hard (3 pts. each)

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

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

Extra hard (4 pts. each)

GROUPING GRIDS

Submitted by William West & Vittoria Dessi

Ship	Car	Canon	Lemon
Fluff	Reform	Train	Further
Baking Soda	Advance	Tank	Salt
Vinegar	Lime	Bicycle	Skate-board

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.

Dear	Nacre	Baby	Energy
Leather	A	Sugar	Honey
Egg	Bed	Love	Gelatin
Fat	Cheese	Pin	Minerals

Medium (4 pts.)

				Connections
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

Hard (5 pts.)

				Connections
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

Submitted by Tengyu Zhao



- Ivin

LEADERBOARD

Pos.	Puzzlers	Points (Last week)	
1.	Team GuineaPig	467	467
2.	The Menu	288	288
3.	Team Experial	282	264
4.	Bobby Tables	186	97
5.	Tactless Tony	116	116
6.	Team Doors Doors	85	85
7.	Hidden Variables	51	16
8.	The Northerners of Acton	49	33

Cryptic

Medium grouping grid

Hard grouping grid

Send a picture of your solved puzzles to puzzles.felix@ic.ac.uk by Thursday to get yourself or your team on the leaderboard! Partially completed Puzzles can still get you points! Send them in by Tuesday if you want to see your points for this week in next week's issue.

CSM BOTTLE IT: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24



Action from the Second-Half of the Bottle. Lloyd T James



Rugby's Post-match celebrations with the ordained Bottle. RSM

tactic was straightforward: dominate the midfield from the outset and control the pace of the game.

Things did not go entirely to plan. Exeter struck first with an open-play goal, and by halftime, RSM found themselves trailing 2-1, and were even down to nine men at one point. Then the message at half time was to stamp their authority, and so they did. RSM equalised before quickly taking the lead, and from therethey managed the game expertly, holding on to secure a hard-fought 3-2 victory to win the Sharpley trophy. He made sure to emphasise the heroic effort from Oscar Cunningham.

Harlan could not resist a dig at Exeter, joking that their team was made up of students from “random degrees” compared to RSM’s more specialised disciplines. Supposedly environmental scientists and photographers are included in the CSM – hardly mines.

The second half of the rugby match was a more relaxed affair. RSM scored try after try, effortlessly converting each one. I could not help but notice the many

awkwardly shaved heads in the RSM squad, “a tradition frowned upon” by the Union but willingly embraced by the players. After a flurry of swearing and

“**Harlan could not resist a dig at Exeter, joking that their team was made up of students from “random degrees”**”

unwavering support from the Imperial crowd, the final score stood at 56-7. The sound was a stark contrast to the Exeter crowd, with their carefully styled haircuts, glinting singular earrings, and attempted RP ringing out. While RSM embodied a rough-and-ready brotherhood, Exeter carried the air of a university old boys’ club. One could say CSM “bottled” the occasion.

The Imperial Icicle

ICSC Commodore
HENRY HOLLINGWORTH

Last weekend saw Imperial Sailing host its annual team racing competition: the Imperial Icicle at Queen Mary Reservoir.

With twenty different teams from across the country and two teams from Dublin filling Travelodges, Airbnbs, and friends’ floors on the Friday night, it was set to be the largest competition in the club’s history.

Saturday saw us get through a hundred races, with a start almost every three minutes, thanks in large part to our alumni’s efforts in streamlining the race scheduling process with the development of imperialicicle.com. Competitors would often hear a drone buzzing overhead collecting valuable race footage, and it was a common sight to see competitors crowded around in the club cafeteria reliving their winning conversions. The afternoon brought sunshine and music to the pontoon with ABBA’s greatest hits putting teams in the racing mindset.

The forecast for Sunday predicted wind squalls

and upon arrival at the clubhouse the red “advanced conditions” flag was flying. Nonetheless, boats were quickly launched and despite the conditions, teams quickly made their way through another forty races of the round robin. Capsizes and breakages plagued the day with our two bosuns constantly running through the boat park with everything from rudders to sails and masts. The tough conditions did nothing to diminish morale and it was lovely to see so many smiles on and off the water – even post-capsize!

We moved swiftly through to semis as the wind continued to build and breakages forced us to retire twelve boats. Unfortunately, we only got through four races before the wind took its toll and a leaking boat brought an abrupt end to the day. The winning teams were determined from the results of the round robin discarding the results of semis.

Trinity College Dublin won the event doing an impressive job of drinking

their prizes before their flight. Sevenoaks Pirate Hawks and University College Dublin filled out the rest of the top three. The overwhelming response from participants was that it was an incredibly well organised event with all our volunteers doing Imperial proud. As the popularity of university sailing continues to grow, events like this keep Imperial Sailing on the map.



Race on Queen Mary Reservoir. Nigel Vick

SPORT

RSM win Varsity

Sport editor Lila visits Fortress Harlington for Bottle Match 2025.

Sport Editor
LILA HARRISON

I sat on the Piccadilly Line through West London down to Harlington last Saturday, for forty-five minutes, confused as to what “bottle match” meant. I thought it was some sort of idiom.

The “bottle,” in sport, signifies failure. To bottle a game is to throw it when you are clearly ahead; to bottle a league is to throw it when you are a significant number of points above your closest rivals to a title. Little did I know that the “bottle match” was the colloquial name of the second oldest rugby varsity in the world, where the trophy is an actual three-foot-tall tin beer bottle adorned with two crests. It is the prize of the match between Imperial’s Royal School of Mines (RSM) and Exeter’s Camborne School of Mines (CSM).

Upon arrival at Fortress Harlington, I met Amelia, the President of RSM. She spoke of her sleepless nights preparing for the varsity weekend and explained the series of matches that had taken place over the last forty-eight hours, culminating in the rugby match unfolding before me. The adorned bottle was then fetched and presented to me, etched with the marks of post-match celebrations over the years, along with the RSM logo (I didn’t bother flipping it to check for the CSM one). As last year’s varsity champions, RSM retained possession of it, and hurled it around amidst a vast sea of supporters clad in black and yellow. Thankfully, though it was clearly in need of some restorative

work, the top had been secured with plastic bands – necessary, given the result.

After informing me it was tradition to drink out of it, Amelia introduced me to some of the other winning captains of the varsity. I had tried to talk to the (injured) rugby captain at half time, but this was clearly foolish as not only was he laden with nerves but he was giving his team a vivacious talking to.

I soon learned from Bell, captain of the mixed lacrosse team, that the sport is not historically RSM’s strength. Lacrosse was only added to the varsity fixture list in 2017, and RSM lost every single game since 2018, including a crushing 26–0 defeat last year. IC was typically well-equipped for the sport, whereas RSM, with its smaller student body, faced greater challenges. Additionally, Amelia’s 50–50 minimum quota for RSM players in varsity matches meant that some team members were new to the game and had only a month to train. Despite this, the sport is growing in popularity.

Bell recounted an incident at the start of the match when RSM asked specifically the referee whether goals scored by a goalkeeper were allowed. The referee confirmed that they were. However, when the RSM goalkeeper later scored, CSM profusely protested, and the referee overturned the decision. In the end, it did not matter as RSM secured a historic 14–1 victory.

I also learned from Harlan, the men’s hockey captain, that he too had endured sleepless nights leading up to their big match. Last year RSM won with a convincing 7–3 win, and the team was determined to defend their title. Their



Men’s Rugby Squad.
RSM



Men’s Hockey Squad. Heroic star Oscar Cunningham is pictured top-left.
RSM



Mixed Lacrosse Squad. Bell is pictured bottom-left.
RSM