

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.



KEEP THE CAT FREE | SINCE 1949

WHO WILL YOU VOTE FOR?

FELIX Leadership ELECTIONS 2025

RANK THE CANDIDATES

STERN FELIX
HAS GREAT EYEBROWS,
CRIPPLING FOREHEAD
WRINKLES



LUSTY FELIX
HAS SIGNED UP FOR
EVERY TAKE ME OUT
THIS YEAR
NO MATCHES.



'MISUNDERSTOOD' FELIX
THIS CANDIDATE
BLOWS...INTO HIS
TROMBONE



'SUMMERS IN THE HAMPTONS' FELIX
FOR THE LAST TIME,
SUMMER ISN'T A VERB



A seven-candidate Presidential race. Meet the candidates for this year's Leadership Election.

[READ MORE ON 4](#)

EDITORIAL

Felix's female contributors discuss what International Women's Day means to them

→ [READ MORE ON 3](#)

COMMENT

Europe's political dilemma explained

→ [READ MORE ON 8](#)

FILM&TV

Oscar is a man's name after all: Writer Ruby reflects on the Oscars and misogyny

→ [READ MORE ON 11](#)

BOOKS

Seasonal Reading, Seaonsal Depression II: *Norwegian Wood*

→ [READ MORE ON 14](#)

PUZZLES

Four pages of puzzles!

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

Hania Irzyk
Lila Harrison
Charlotte Probstel
Taylor Pomfret

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

EDITORIAL

Why International Women’s Day doesn’t matter

Felix Contributor
ANUBHA SUKHADA BAL

International Women’s Day doesn’t matter. It is just another day when big brands will post girlboss choice feminist advertisements, where male world leaders will “stand in solidarity”, and women will continue to be oppressed. Feminism does matter. Almost all of the world’s women are still subjugated. Many endure lives filled with male violence. In war and occupation, women still pay the heaviest price, becoming even more susceptible to sexual and reproductive violence. Those of us who are relatively very fortunate compared to other women around the globe still cannot walk in our home towns and cities without fear or obstacle, are hindered from pursuing our academic passions, and are still susceptible to violence.

I am still aware, however, that the difference between a life where my obstacles (which are, of course, still relevant and worth fighting against) are misogyny in the workplace, or lack of representation in parliament, and a life in a part of the world where women’s obstacles include female genital mutilation, forced child marriage, war, occupation and apartheid, is unquantifiably enormous. As I write this, I know that there is a woman my age, who has academic ability in abundance, and talents which far exceed mine, who will never be allowed to finish secondary school. And there are women who will watch their homes destroyed by bombing. And those who will be married against their will. It is difficult to be hopeful about the liberation of women when the reality is so bleak.

Women in the “western” world are not free either – while we may live in countries with some legal advancements, women are still living in fear of their lives. One in four women in the United Kingdom will face domestic violence in their lifetimes, with the same proportion being raped after the age of 16. Women have fought and died for their liberation for centuries, and have never been granted it. We are still not seen as people. The condition of women does not warrant a special day, or even just a simple protest, but a complete overturning of the systems which oppress us. If this day is to have any impact at all, let it be to inspire you to be part of that change.

“What does it mean to be a woman at Imperial?”

Books Editor
ADITI MEHTA

With International Women’s Day approaching, and our Editor-in-Chief asking if I was interested in writing for this week’s editorial, I thought long and hard about how to approach the question.

I considered tracing a historical journey, imagining experiences of the first women who were granted permission to attend ‘occasional lectures’ at Imperial in the late 19th century. I thought about contrasting that epoch with today, where gender no longer presents the same stringent barriers to admittance. I pondered showcasing my own achievements as a woman in STEM at a top university, or even discussing how being a woman shapes my perspective as Books Editor.

Eventually, remarkably, I realised I had little to say; that I have the privilege of mundanity. While I recognise that experiences vary across individuals (I am rather fortunate for the balanced gender representation in the Department of Life Sciences), I haven’t experienced notable gender-related advantages or disadvantages.

I have still formed profound friendships. I explore London freely. I mostly thrive academically. And through it, gender is not at the forefront of my university identity.

I appreciate the profundity of this privilege I take for granted. So, this Women’s Day, I have decided to celebrate the luxury of nonchalance: the freedom to focus on my studies, my writing, and my relationships – to live as I wish – without emphasis or consideration of my gender. I will be cherishing the women who have made a difference to my life, but I will also carry about my day as usual, because the world will not stop for me – nor do I want it to.

Men should look to Ian Wright as a role model

Sport Editor
LILA HARRISON

If you’ve spent enough time on social media, you have probably come across a widely shared video of a man in a football stadium being surprised by a much older man, which causes the younger of the two to cry tears of joy while saying, “I thought you were dead.”

That man – and former football player – is Ian Wright. Whilst I could focus on his remarkable football career and his status as an English football legend, I would rather discuss his work as a passionate advocate for women, especially in sport. Ian Wright has never been afraid to speak out against the inequalities women face in sport. His vocal stance on fairer pay and better media coverage for women’s football continues to challenge outdated attitudes and pushes for a future where both men’s and women’s games receive equal respect.

During the Lionesses’ Euro 2022-winning campaign, he remarked, “Whatever happens in the final now, if girls aren’t allowed to play football just like the boys can in their P.E. after this tournament, then what are we doing?... If there’s no legacy from this, like what we saw with the 2012 Olympics, then what are we doing? Because girls should be able to play... This is the proudest I’ve ever felt of any England side. This is what it’s all about.” Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos earlier this year, Wright expressed his belief that some club owners are simply “ticking a box” with their investments in women’s football.

“I really think something needs to be done to incentivise people who want to invest in the game. We are playing catch-up on every level: infrastructure, training, coaching, and development. And it does come down to money. If we can create an environment that encourages investment in women’s football...we can accelerate the growth and sustainability of the game.”

Given the rise of misogyny in football – from sexual assault by federation presidents, to footballers abusing their economic power, and clubs ignoring the toxic environments within their fanbases – a voice like Wright’s is increasingly crucial for men to hear.

I understand the irony of writing about a man for International Women’s Day, but in a world full of figures like Joey Barton, there should be more Ian Wrights.

NEWS

Meet the candidates running for IC President

Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

The 2025 Leadership Elections are underway, and this year the competition is stiff. Current President Camille Boutrolle can no longer run following her two year stint, and with no incumbent officer, the role is up for the taking. This year, seven candidates have put themselves up for the position, including both a former and a current Officer Trustee.

Yi Yang

Former Deputy President (Education) 2023-24, Yang is rerunning for the top role this time round. Her manifesto has made 17 promises across three themes: student welfare, academic excellence, and amplifying student voices. Ranging from improving the UKRI allowance for postgrads, and improving study spaces availability, to increasing the number of student representatives at College Council and Senate, her manifesto promises a lot of different goals across different spheres of college life.

Maazu Bayuoni

Business School Master's student and Chevening Scholar Maazu Buoyoni is leading on a career focused platform. He aims to build Imperial Link, "an exclusive platform connecting Imperial students and alumni". It is unclear how that will differentiate from Imperial's Alumni Mentoring Scheme offered by the College Careers service. He also aims to improve access to the hardship fund, and "liaise with careers to create

a pathway to secure agreements with top employers, ensuring that a fair percentage of job opportunities are reserved for Imperial students."

Teodor Tiriyaki

Fourth-year Biomedical Engineering student Teo Tiriyaki has extensive experience across various societies, with experience as President of the Sailing Club, and Sports Sector Treasurer. His manifesto runs on improving support systems for students, focusing on support given for student visas, GP registration, and counselling and the Disability Advice services. He also aims to speed up budget and event approvals and expanding the number of Varsity. Tiriyaki also takes aim at "transparency in College spending", possibly a response to Imperial's expensive rebranding in 2024.

Charlie Reed

This candidate only provided a geophysics lecture for his campaign, with his manifesto comprising of the phrase "ahhhhhhhh gowan".

Om Mahajan

This candidate has provided a brief manifesto calling for stronger mental health support through faster counselling access and expanded peer support programs, academic fairness and flexibility by "advocating for reasonable course deadlines and improved learning resources", and financial support and affordability by expanding hardship funds and "reducing daily student costs".

Cedric Poon

Last year's second place candidate, Poon has returned for another shot at the office. Starting his manifesto with the line "To all subjects of Imperial Corporate London", the manifesto takes aim at Imperial's high international student fees, and "profit and the stockholders" of Imperial. Imperial College like the vast majority of British universities is a public body and thus is not a tradeable stock, nor is it run for profit. Poon's manifesto seems to offer "UROP funding, financial transparency, and even fixed tuition fees" as part of his plan to "DEMOLISH" Imperial's "lies".

Nico Henry

This year's Deputy President (Welfare) Nico Henry is running this year for President. Running on a slight continuation of his campaign this year, Henry is focusing on creating a private rental support service, greater job opportunities, scholarships and prayer spaces. His focus on third spaces across campus is continued with a plan to repurpose Metric into a café or collaborative workspace, and more green spaces. Henry also plans to facilitate more "open forums with university management" to discuss Imperial's investment, following a divestment forum earlier in the year, and calls for consultation and collective input on Imperial's investments.

Editor's Note: VOTE!

This is like your only chance to actually vote for a candidate that you think can make a change and represent you in things that matter to you and the wider student body.

You don't have to vote for every role, but please do consider voting in the Leadership Elections because these will be the students in those important meetings with staff across the College who will aiming to represent changes, so if you want some change to happen, if you want something to improve then you should consider reading through the manifestos, or maybe getting an AI summary, which I know is very in vogue nowadays, and picking your preferred candidate. We won't tell you who to vote for, just that maybe student democracy is important and you should totally vote.

RCSU mag Broadsheet relaunches

Felix sat down with the *Broadsheet* editorial team as they gear up for their first issue since 2022.

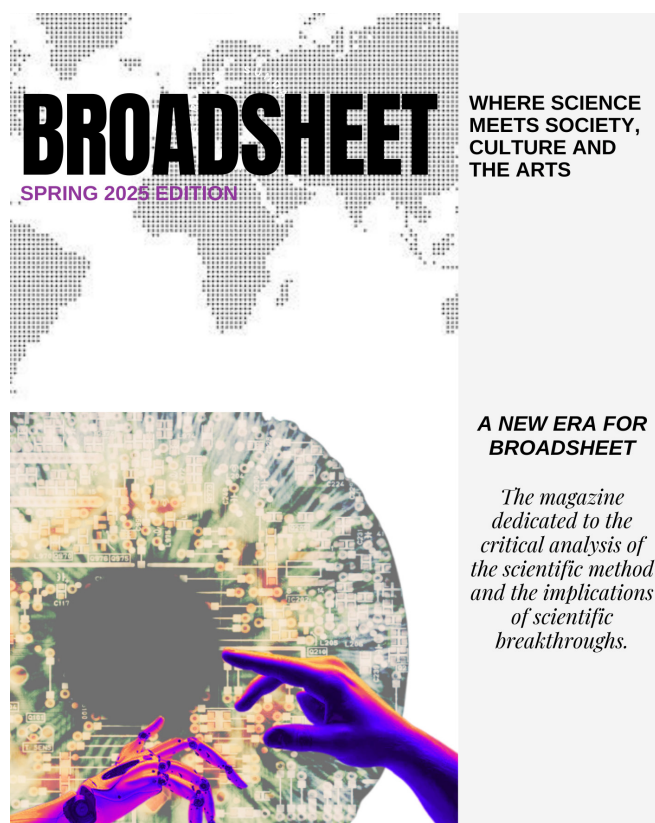
Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

The Royal College of Science Union (RCSU) is re-launching the *Broadsheet* magazine after more than three years of hiatus. Editor Amber Patara and Deputy Editor Begum Yener sat down with *Felix* to discuss the new edition, set to be digital only and released in the final week of Spring term.

The duo decided to reform *Broadsheet* earlier this academic year after noticing that the publication had lain dormant for several years. Both are in their first year at Imperial, with Amber completing a Master's in Security and Resilience: Science and Technology, in the Department of Physics, and Begum starting her undergraduate studies in Biochemistry. Begum said seeing the magazine defunct "made me upset that something exists but isn't utilised well."

Amber was similarly inspired by the motto of the magazine: "Bringing science, society, and the arts together". She completed her undergraduate degree at LSE, reading Philosophy of Science. Amber's undergraduate education led to an interest in how "paradigms



A sneak peak at Broadsheet's newest edition. Broadsheet/ RCSU

inform hypotheses." She viewed it as opening up a dialogue between the natural sciences and subjects such as sociology, psychology, or political philosophy. Broad-

sheet is all about "complex science becoming accessible to anyone without a scientific background," said Amber.

So why not *Felix*? Begum and Amber were both in agreement- to them *Felix* was a generalist project and had a broad scope and many sections to write for, but for the duo, they needed something not only with editorial "control" but also the ability to narrow down and focus on, in the case of Amber, her interests.

Anyone is welcome to contribute to *Broadsheet*, across faculties. The magazine is open to contributors and will have a variety of features in its first issue back. Included will be a double page spread on upcoming science events in London. The magazine will feature longer pieces of prose, with both editors' contributing.

STUDENT
STEERING GROUP



Apply to help **shape** the event!



SUMMER BALL 2025

DEADLINE TO APPLY: 9 MARCH

STUDENT
ACT AUDITIONS



Apply to **perform** at the event!

SCIENCE

The state of the European healthcare industry

Felix sat down with Imperial graduate and life sciences consultant Sayak Bhattacharya to discuss the state of the pharmaceutical industry.

Science Editor
JAMES DESMET

The healthcare sector is one of the largest employers of Imperial's Chemistry and Life Sciences graduates. Sayak Bhattacharya graduated in 2023 with a BSc in Chemistry and today works for Trinity Life Sciences, one of the largest life sciences consulting firms in Europe. In this interview, Sayak and I discussed the increasingly uncertain healthcare landscape across Europe and the UK as the first quarter draws to a close.

What is consulting?

Felix: Some may not have heard of the profession before, could you explain life sciences consulting to me?

Sayak: Life sciences consulting is like all consulting; it is a thought partnership between pharma companies and us. These pharma companies can be big or small, you know, from the big ones like Pfizer, GSK or Merck to small startups or mid-size companies like Ionis. Fundamentally we help them with strategic decisions.

Now, what are these strategic decisions, you may ask? They range from companies trying to decide what to do with an early-stage asset – such as a new drug coming through their pipeline that is really promising for a certain disease. It takes a lot of money to develop a drug. Companies need to make these big

decisions, and consultants, usually with their expertise, come in as a second pair of eyes.

Felix: Can you give me an example of the work as a Consultant at Trinity?

Sayak: There's a wide variety of project types offered across Trinity with their different divisions. In my division, Evidence, Value, Access and Pricing, we do a lot of the pricing and access work. This means going to insurers and governments to see what price and access can be achieved given a specific drug's trial data. Then we provide forecasting of revenue and strategic recommendations.

Another example would be due diligence projects with companies looking to make acquisitions, as well as value communication work, which is almost like science marketing. We go to insurers and governments to see what price can be achieved for a drug, and seek to learn what pushes their buttons so clients can market their product in the best possible way.

In reality, the work we carry out varies enormously depending on client needs, department and the state of the market, so while I have provided some examples this barely scratches the surface of the type of work in this sector.

Upcoming Therapies

Felix: What pipeline therapy are you most excited about?

Sayak: I think the beauty of Pharma is that there are always interesting

drugs in the pipeline either with new mechanisms of action, precision medicine approaches, or new biomarkers for example. There's always something or the other that science is innovating, and I get to work with a lot of them. I would personally pick cancer vaccines as my current favourite. They are based on the same mRNA technology that was used in the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine that we got a few years ago, and it has the potential for long-term control of several cancers which hasn't been achieved before.

How does this work though? Like traditional vaccines, these aim to harness the immune system teaching it to identify specific markers known as antigens on cancer cells, usually taken from a biopsy. The therapy aims to integrate seamlessly with traditional surgical methods as the removed tumour mass, can be used alongside mRNA technology to create a vaccine that trains the body to recognise a patient's specific cancer cells. All this put together gives you a vaccine specifically tailored to you and your cancer type I believe it genuinely has the potential to make some very serious cancers much more treatable through simply leveraging our own body's immune system, which is incredibly powerful, incredibly powerful.

The Joint Clinical Assessment

Felix: What do you think is the most impactful ongoing change in the pharmaceutical space right now?

Sayak: The most interesting thing, I would say, depends on what you

want me to focus on. Keeping it science-communication and business-themed, and not too heavy on finance. I think an interesting thing going on in the pharma industry, or at least in Europe right now, is a legal change to the European Medicines Agency unifying the drug assessments of all European countries through a 'Joint Clinical Assessment (JCA)', which is a framework that will be used to recommend whether a drug should be covered across the EU – a major shift from before when each country had complete autonomy over these decisions. And it's coming in soon; it's rolling out this year. There's actually been a lot of discussion and controversy around it.

Felix: Interesting, why is it so impactful and what makes it controversial?



Sayak Bhattacharya

Sayak: First of all, I would look at it from a holistic EU perspective. Some countries have robust healthcare systems and strong healthcare bodies like the UK with NICE or Germany with the GPBA. These authorities have good judgment and conduct rigorous clinical evaluations of drugs, and are very strong systems. However, other EU countries don't necessarily enjoy the same luxuries – this is who the JCA aims to assist. In this sense, it is a crackdown on under-expenditure across the EU, referring to the total expenditure of healthcare bodies, which has been steadily declining due to widespread governmental budget cuts.

The caveat is that the JCA could significantly heighten the barrier to entry into the EU market for new therapeutics, which many think is not necessary, arguing that a lot of drugs – particularly from less well-funded studies – may not be able to afford this extra regulatory hurdle, therefore potentially leaving less 'profitable' disease areas in an even worse position.

Felix: Do you think this is a valid argument considering all sides?

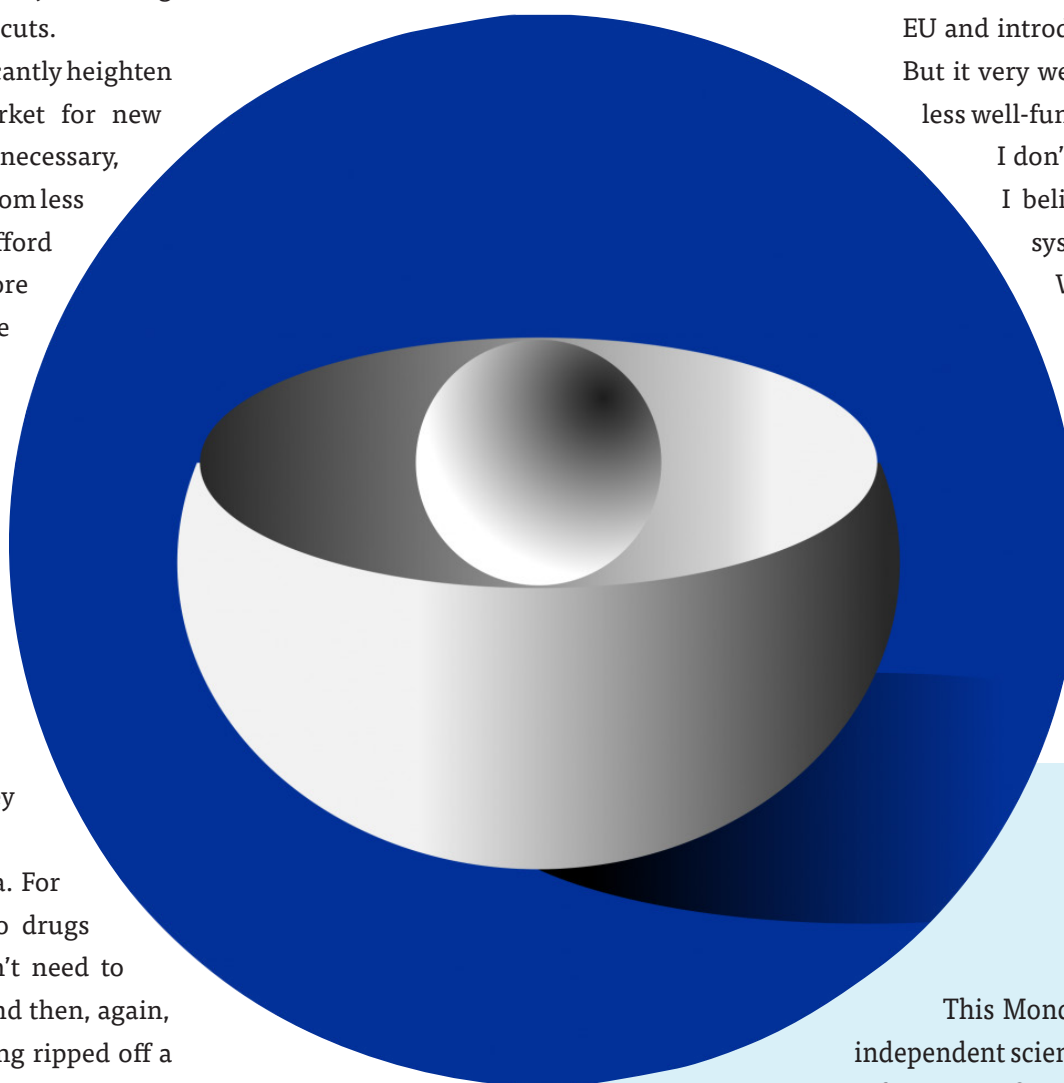
Sayak: It's important to remember a key distinction: at its essence, this is a recommendation. It is not that each country must follow it; they have their own autonomy to make decisions, and most of the data will be submitted to them anyway. It's just an extra hurdle they need to pass.

It can also do good things for pharma. For example, because of the JCA, access to drugs could be much faster, as countries don't need to conduct as many individual analyses. And then, again, it could also prevent the payer from being ripped off a little bit. Sure, they might lose access to some therapies,

but there is now more universal quality control on the kind and quality of data a clinical trial needs to gather.



The caveat is that the JCA could significantly heighten the barrier to entry into the EU market for therapeutics



European Medicines Agency Logo
Union Européenne

Here's the thing though: the payers aren't the patients – the payers are healthcare bodies. They're the ones buying the drugs. The government is the one who holds all the power. If they decide your drug's data isn't enticing, that's it – they won't onboard your product, irrespective of clinical trial results. So there is already a lot of incentive not to exploit the clinical trial systems in underfunded countries.

Overall, the joint clinical assessment does standardise and strengthen clinical data, which is great; maybe it will streamline data analysis and drug rollout across the EU and introduce better quality control as is intended. But it very well could restrict access to therapeutics in less well-funded disease spaces.

I don't think the outcome is set in stone either.

I believe how governments react to the new system will have massive implications. Whether they embrace the change, and advocate for realistic improvements, I think will be a key deciding factor to the JCA's overall legacy.

In conclusion it's a black box – we just don't know what's going to happen, how much power it will have or its long-term impact.

Elon Musk Remains Royal Society Fellow - Taylor Pomfret

This Monday, members of the Royal Society – an independent scientific academy of the UK – met up amid a row involving one of its members – Elon Musk.

Many scientists have raised concerns over Musk's behaviour, who has overseen unprecedented funding cuts to research in the United States.

Over 3500 scientists have signed an open letter organised by Imperial emeritus professor of structural biology, Professor Stephen Curry, calling for Musk's fellowship in the society to be revoked. 150 fellows attended the meeting on Monday hosted by the Royal Society, which was arranged to "discuss the principles around public pronouncements and behaviour of fellows".

They expressed concern about the "fate of colleagues in the US who are reportedly facing the prospect of losing their jobs amid threats of radical cutbacks in research funding."

Despite concerns – Musk remains a member of the society. In a statement released by the Royal Society, fellows remain "united in the need for the Society to step up its efforts to advocate for science and scientists at a time when these are under threat as never before and yet at the same time have never been more necessary for humanity at large". The society will continue to explore "potential further actions that might help make the case for science and scientific research" and will "counter the misinformation and ideologically motivated attacks on both science and scientists".

THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE

Gene Therapy Trial for Inherited Deafness - Eldrian Tho

Regeneron's, a New York-based biotech company, experimental gene therapy, codename DB-OTO, shows promise in restoring hearing in children affected by a rare type of hearing loss caused by a defective otoferlin (OTOF) gene. 12 children received the treatment through an injection into the inner ear. So far, 10 out of the 11 children tested after treatment have shown improvements in their hearing. Among them, normal hearing levels were achieved in three children, and remarkably, one child was able to recognise words without the need for lip movements. Treatment was considered safe, although some children experienced temporary dizziness, nausea, or eye movement issues, which disappeared within a few days. This therapy works via delivery of a fully functional OTOF gene into the inner ear, aiming to restore hearing in children born with this genetic condition.

COMMENT

Outside pressure forges diamonds

The geopolitical upheaval of Putin's invasion of Ukraine, Trump's betrayal of the Transatlantic Bond, and the unpredictability of a multipolar world leave Europe with all but one choice: unite or disappear.

Comment Writer
EDGAR SCHÄFF

The challenges awaiting the current and next generation of Europeans are daunting. Many Europeans are still lulled into the false sense of security and that emerged after the cold war. Under the impulse of Vladimir Putin's War in Ukraine, Donald Trump's second term, his suspension of aid to Ukraine, and an increasingly overconfident China, we are finally waking up. But past crises show that the conclusions our leaders are drawing are too timid, too short-sighted, too uncoordinated, and too national.

Europe's politics, focused on national benefits, seems ever more lacklustre and underwhelming. Having 27 separate small voices won't solve the crises of the 21st century. Europeans and our leaders need to think in European terms, give up more of our national sovereignty, and reform the European Union. The EU needs to evolve into a truly democratic parliamentary democracy, where legislation is made in Strasbourg rather than Brussels and where the European people – rather than anointed bureaucrats – are in control.

If it doesn't, the centrifugal forces unleashed by an increasingly multipolar world, dominated by climate change and great power struggles, threaten the internal stability and democracy of Europe and drive its nations apart. A

look into the continent's recent history illustrates the need for an ambitious step.

A Short History of Crisis

The 2000's started with a vision that the "End of History" had come, that world democracy was only a question of time, and that Europe could now finally do away with military might.

The European Union was vitalised by the Treaty of Maastricht and the adoption of the Euro. Bolstered by the belief that Europe was the beacon of a peaceful and prosperous future, the EU was significantly enlarged in Central and Eastern Europe. Relations with Russia warmed, with common investments like Nordstream 1.

In its bliss, Europe fell in a deep and complacent slumber and Europeans reverted to thinking in national terms. Hence, the attempt to formulate a unified constitution for Europe was rejected by the French and Dutch electorates in 2005 and replaced by the much less ambitious treaty of Lisbon in 2007.

But then arrived ever more urgent and frequent crises, whose fault lines wedged European nations apart. In 2008, Europe was subjected to Putin's invasion of Georgia and the financial crash. Each nation mounted its own recovery response, showing underwhelming financial solidarity with other countries, and exposing the inability of an economic union that lacks a fiscal or political union to intervene swiftly.

Thus, in 2012, the financial crisis led onto the Eurocrisis, where austerity measures set the stingy North against the more indebted South. With it, the seeds for anti-European sentiments and populism were sown. They deepened in 2015 through the migrant crisis, as reactionaries yearned for past glorious sovereignty, blind to the short sightedness of economic nationalism.

The 2010's marked the surge of populist and radically right-wing parties across Europe. The founding of the AfD in Germany coincided with the creeping success of Vox in Spain, the Front Nation-

orate properly, this worrying trend will continue.

Europe was so self-involved in its own crises that it could not react potently when Putin annexed Crimea in 2014. Instead, the Europeans chose appeasement – disguised as diplomacy and sanctions – with little effect. While Eastern European nations prudently increased defence spending, their western neighbours, primarily Germany through its Nordstream 2, recklessly deepened their reliance on Russia.

This varied response hurt Europe's credibility in foreign policy and showed a pattern that can now be witnessed again in Europe's uncoordinated response to the Israel-Palestine conflict or the Nagorno Karabakh crisis. The aftermath of the Minsk accords shows that Europe did not learn its lesson. European nations largely stayed complacent and idle, counting on Uncle Sam to remain their backbone in security and deterrence.

For this blindness, we are now paying a heavy price. In 2022, Putin's most recent invasion of Ukraine violently ended decades of peace in Europe. The European Union was Europe's answer to "Never Again" after the atrocities of the World Wars, and indeed Europe had not faced any major conflict since the collapse of Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

In this *Zeitenwende*, even pacifist Germany upturned its foreign policy. For the first time since the end of the cold war, terms like "Abschreckung"



**The EU
now needs
understands
itself as not just
an economic, but
also a military and
political entity**

al in France, and PIS in Poland. The most heartbreaking consequence of this development was the 2016 Brexit referendum, which ripped a key nation from the European Union and undermined the unspoken consensus of a common European destiny. As long as Europeans fail to look beyond our national borders and collab-

and “Aufrüstung” – deterrence and rearmament – appeared across all media in a country that had sworn to “Never Again” possess military might.

As a selfish and short sighted MAGA America is denying future aid for Ukraine and threatening Europe with tariffs, this has never been more urgent.

How Trump is undermining the transatlantic relationship

Putin and Trump are now forcing Europe into a crisis that upsets its fundamental pillars of security. Trump, Vance, and MAGA America have done their best to foster in Europe the belief that the United States of America has become an unreliable, exploitative and dangerous ally.

Both Vance’s catastrophic speech at the Munich Security Conference this February and his framing of Europeans as the ones undermining their own democracy were outrageous. If anything, it is the Trump administration, its Musk lead Department of Government Efficiency, and MAGA Republicans that are meddling the foundations of their own democratic constitution.

The exclusion of Europeans and Ukraine on the talks over a peace treaty in Ukraine is another outrage. Ukraine and its European supporters deserve a say in its future. The EU has now committed more money to Ukraine than the US, and cannot let Trump cut selfish deals with Putin over its head.

On this note, the Raw Minerals Deal Trump is trying to impose on Ukraine and Volodymyr Zelensky without even giving the Ukrainians security guarantees is abhorrent. Trump, like in his first term, is sowing distrust and uses the threat of lessening US military presence in Europe as a bargaining chip.

The root of Europe’s current crisis is its historic over-reliance on the US. It is unlikely that after the second Trump term the transatlantic relationships will return to where they were before.

In its current state, Europe is still far from reaching the necessary strategic independence. Europe should never again be so exploitable to any outside power.

Only by acting as one and by overcoming their national barriers can Europeans

truly harness the power of their continent. The EU has already shown that through its economic unity that it can overcome Trump’s tariffs, it now needs understands itself as not just an economic, but also a military and political entity.

Selfishness, internal divisions and inefficiencies

With 27 member states and competing interests, manoeuvring Europe through these crises is challenging. On the bright side, European nations are realising that more cooperation is essential. Notable successes include the Next Generation EU fund, the coordination on vaccine procurement in the Covid Pandemic, the common Ukrainian defence assistance, and the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

However, the great promises of the single market and open borders are incredibly fragile. From telecommunication and banks to arms and energy, every European nation has been pushing its own national champions and agendas. Notable examples are the recent German pushback on the Commerzbank takeover by the Italian Citigroup, the Nordic countries’ unwillingness to integrate their energy grid with Germany, wary of rising energy prices, or the current development of two European fighter jets spearheaded separately by Germany with France and the UK with Sweden, where one would reduce research and logistics costs.

These countries seem unwilling to take on any burden, although an integrated banking system, energy grid, and defence would lower structural costs for all.

Decision-making in the European union is inefficient, overbearing in regulation and often comes too late. The fact that the common market was never translated into the digital domain, and that Europeans have only now agreed on a digital markets and services act, shows this failure of utilising Europe’s economy of scale. It is the main reason we are losing our technological and economic edge. Our greatest firms produce goods of the last century and are small compared to the gigantic companies that are growing in the US and China.

We would all do well by reading the



Presidents Trump and Zelensky in the Oval Office, last Friday. Trump’s brutish diplomacy is doing its best to alienate allies across the globe. The White House

Draghi report and the European Commission’s Competitiveness Compass. Only with more economic and fiscal integration – such as a common capital markets union – can European nations compete with the US, China and other countries in this multipolar world.

Beyond these issues lie graver ones. Croatia, Poland, Czechia, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Romania are in a balancing act between pro- and anti-EU forces, and Hungary has succumbed to an anti-European obstacle. The EU needs to rid itself from the unanimity clause and be tougher on “illiberal democrats” like Victor Orban, who are nothing but the cronies of authoritarians.

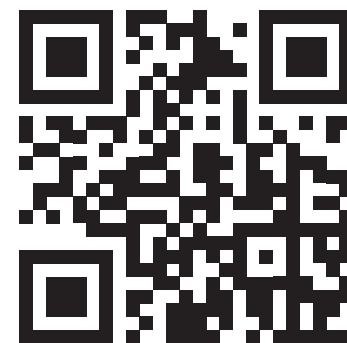
Not only Russia and China but also Trump’s America become dangerously involved in European affairs. Divided as it is now, Europe seems more exposed to foreign meddling than ever. Russian involvement in the recent Romanian presidential elections, Musk’s support of the AfD – a party with chilling ties to China – in Germany, and China’s Belt and Road Initiative are there to stay.

Europe has come a long way, but it cannot persist in its current state. In face of this century’s challenges, European nations need to overcome their national boundaries, strengthen ties within Europe and limit strategic reliance on the United States. Never have Europeans worked together as closely as today in the European Union. Yet we risk a backslide. Europe’s common future is not guaranteed. The promise of an ever-closer union is not a self-fulfilling prophecy but an active choice that needs reemphasising time and time again.

If Europe does not walk this path, it will fade slowly and steadily away from history, sharing the fate of the Hanse before it. These cooperating cities along the North and Baltic Sea that were left out of the transatlantic trade and slowly succumbed to the warring kingdoms and absolutist nobles that ruled Europe from the sixteenth century. The European Dream needs to be instilled in every heart and mind.

We should hand sweeping powers to the European Parliament in matters of foreign affairs, defence and common fiscal and monetary policy, while retaining a federation of states. Only together we can build a more united federal Europe, overcome outside challenges and internal divisions. Trump, Putin and Xi have done no more but throw the first stone that awakens the European giant.

If you want to get involved in discussing the pressing issues of Europe at Imperial, join the Imperial European Society (QR code below). Anyone is welcome, and we would love to see non-EU nationals getting involved as well. May Brexit be temporary!



CULTURE



Clue ICSM DramSoc

From the table to the stage, from tokens to people, the ICSM Drama Society's performance of Clue was a sweet escape from academics.

Culture Writer
LANA BEGÜM YENER

Spoiler alert!

Interestingly enough, my high school had performed this play leaving me with some sort of expectation.

Arriving, I was greeted very warmly by the cast and crew. Even from the moment I had my hands on the program, I could see that the show was produced with fun. You could feel that everyone involved in this play put a lot of laughter, inside jokes, and heart into this production.

The play opened with Wadsworth, the key character of this play – played by Alex Zhou – who had a consistent and engaging performance throughout. Yvette, played by Ai Niimura, was a hilarious character in general and I appreciated her antics. Out of all our suspects, I think Krithika Nag's performance as Professor Plum and Flurina Briner's performance as Mrs Peacock were the most outstanding. It is not easy to be funny, and it is even harder to be funny whilst on stage; they deserve an extra applause.

This is not to say the other members of the cast weren't charming. I think Alving Chung who played Mr Green stole the stage at the end of the play when he revealed that he was an FBI agent among them all along. Two other small yet notable performances were delivered by Chad Lakhanpal, who played the cat, and Frances Jin, who was the Singing

Telegram Girl. Their addition to the play is proof that even a small role can add a lot to a production.



I could see that the show was produced with fun.

One thing that prevented this play from reaching its full potential was the pacing of the actors. It really took away from a lot of the one-liners and the comedic potential was unfortunately not reached. I also think that the blocking of actors was ineffective and poor during some parts of the play.

There is a lot to praise and some to improve regarding the technical side of the production. I thought that the different colors of light representing the characters was brilliant. The lighting in general was helpful for immersion in the suspenseful environment of a murder house. However, I must admit

that the ending of the play wasn't very well executed. It felt very repetitive. The changes between scenes were unfortunately very long and thus distracting. As much as I can understand that the change of props are a burden for the backstage crew, I think the Union Concert Hall (UCH) stage could've been utilized much better.

Overall, I don't think it was the most intellectually stimulating play I watched, but at the same time I don't think anyone should've gone into the UCH with that expectation; it is a play based on Cluedo, a board game. However, I do think that the team would have benefitted from having one more week of rehearsals because some parts did feel unpolished.

Nevertheless, at the end of the day, it was a college production and it felt like a college production: it was sweet, welcoming, not fully professional, but enjoyable regardless. I would like to use this space to thank the ICSM Drama time who kindly invited me to this play and I am looking forward to seeing their upcoming performances.



Oscar is a man's name, after all



The 97th Academy Awards forgot about International Women's Day. Just like the 96 Awards before them.

Ruby Lydford

once again stayed up on Sunday evening to watch the elegantly dystopian Academy Awards into the early hours of the morning. Usually, I have a lot to say about the “snubs” and my disagreement with the outcome of each category. Unfortunately this week, the week of International Women's Day, I am unsurprised and disappointed with both the results and my mispredictions.

Many fans online have sparked up controversy over the Best Actress in a Leading Role award being awarded to Mikey Madison for her role in *Anora* over Demi Moore in *The Substance*. Demi Moore had swept the awards season this year, similar to Lily Gladstone last year, winning the Golden Globe, SAG, and the Critics' Choice Award. Mikey Madison had only won the BAFTA. Others are similarly angry that the award did not go to Brazilian actress Fernanda Torres for her brilliant performance as a mother and activist in *I'm Still Here*. After Cynthia Erivo's staggering performance at the beginning of the evening with Ariana Grande, some

felt that she was more deserving of the award.

Many have been quick to point out that Madison's win over Moore feels awfully ironic, even a direct parallel to the plot of *The Substance* – a younger actress replacing the older one in a sex-appeal driven performance. I cannot say that I disagree, but this has always been the case. The average age of the youngest Best

Actress winners is 24; the youngest ever Best Actor winner was 29.

I was more disappointed by the lack of women winning in the other categories, especially behind the camera. Of the 23 categories in the ceremony, 20 were won by men, and nine were won by women. Of the 23 categories, 14 categories were won solo by men, three

were won solo by women. This includes the Best Actor and Best Actress categories. The lone category won by only women not by default on Sunday evening was Best Documentary

Short, with *The Only Girl in the Orchestra*. This is not to say that I think

the men who won on Sunday were undeserving, but it is to say that I think the Academy and the film industry is deeply sexist towards women who cannot be



Phil McCarten / The Academy (©AMPAS)

paraded naked or cry tears on the silver screen.

Sean Baker broke the record for the most Oscars won for the same film in one evening, taking home four: Best Picture, Best Director, Best Original Screenplay, and Best Editing for *Anora*. To say the least, it would have been nice

first being for *The Pianist* in 2003) for *The Brutalist* and gave the longest acceptance speech in Academy Awards history, clocking in at five minutes and 40 seconds, throwing his gum

across the stairs, and telling the academy to stop the music so he can continue. “I’ve done this before,” he said. Zoe Saldana, the winner of the Best Supporting Actress award, gave a similarly long speech. This unfortunately meant that the winners of the other categories afterwards were rushed and cut short. This was yet another reason for the watchers to dislike Saldana after she beat out fan-favourite Ariana Grande in *Wicked* for her vocal AI-assisted performance in the widely critiqued *Emilia Pérez*. This vocal AI-assisted performance went on to win Best Original Song.

Overall, a demoralising evening. The



Mark Von Holden / The Academy (©AMPAS)

“

The Academy and the film industry is deeply sexist towards women who cannot be paraded naked or cry tears on the silver screen

”

if a film about a young female sex worker had more female creative control in it (perhaps then we would not have had to hear *Anora* say a man has “rape eyes”!).

Adrien Brody won his second Best Actor in a Leading Role award (the

97th Academy Awards made the historic wins of the three women winning Best Director feel like showy pity prizes with a reluctance to change any of the other categories or the industry.

IMPERIAL V

JOIN U

ETHOS, Friday

19.00 – 2



UNIVERSITY

S!

14TH March

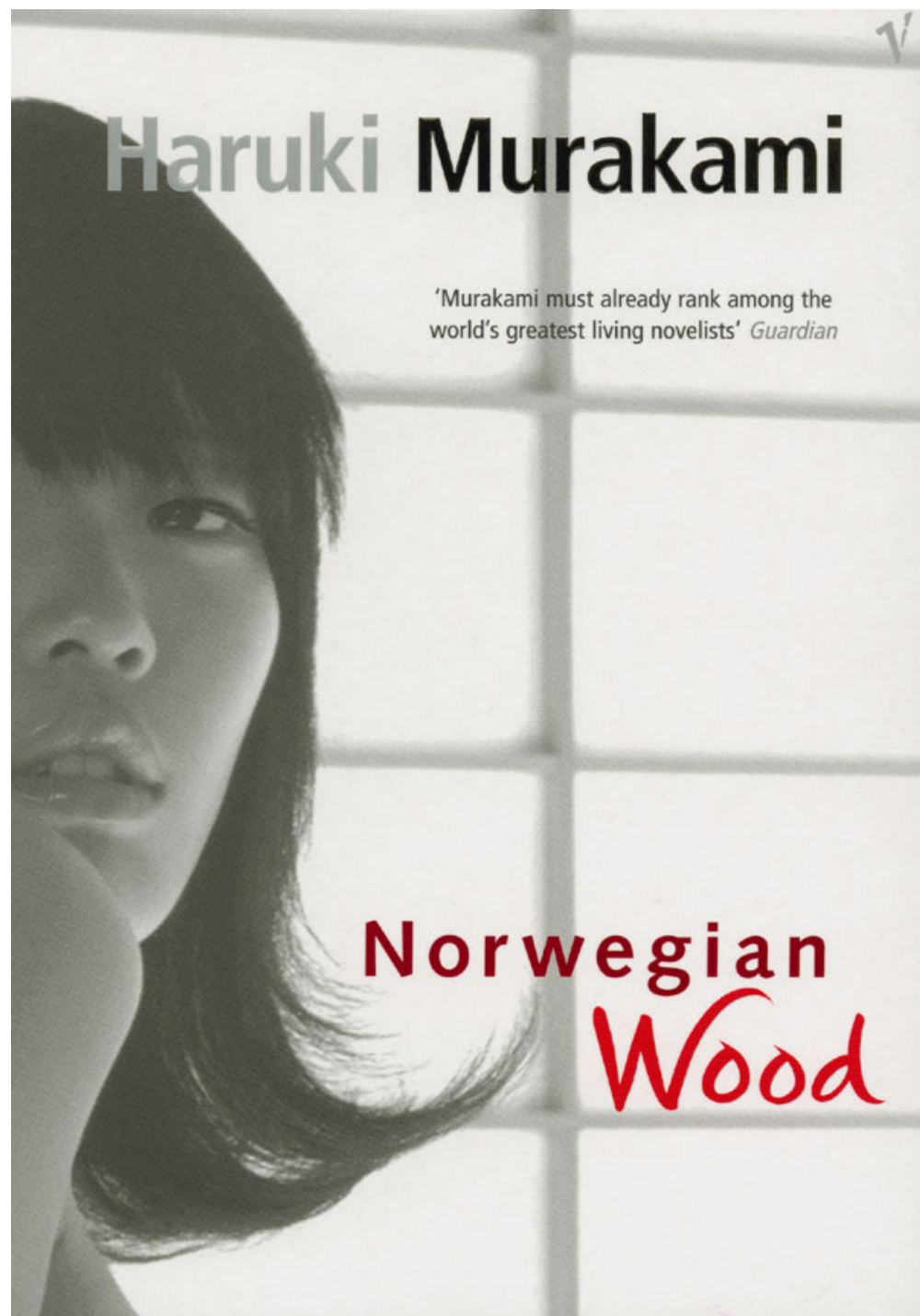
2.00



SCAN ME
To donate to
Macmillan Cancer
Support



BOOKS



Seasonal Reading, Seasonal Depression

In this series, Annabell reflects on the influence of seasons on her historical reading habits with the novel *Norwegian Wood*

Books Writer
ANNABELL NDIWE

The January of my second year I read Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*: one of the stereotypical expansive reads for sad, self-pitying 20 year-olds. I

knew the novel as a favourite of a waifish, artistic girl I'd gone to secondary school with. After seeing it candidly pictured in a friend's Instagram story, I bought it.

Having read *Desire* and *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki...* I was no stranger to Murakami's casual yet surreal treatment of reality, and of course the often disappointing one-dimensionality of his female characters.

At times *Norwegian Wood* felt weighed down in the latter: Naoko's hypersexuality in and amidst her emotional instability, as well as Toru's willingness to indulge her – I'd argue use her – despite his hesitance and later guilt, felt inescapably bleak.

Despite this, the novel showcases a comforting beauty and humour in the mundane. Toru's militaristic dorm and his neurotic roommate's radio exercises spring to mind. His waiting for Midori in a quiet railway café, or them watching a fire engulf her neighbourhood from her balcony. The opening memory of the meadow, edged by mountains and an endless sky, establishes the powers of nature, the idyll and an insatiable craving for normality that the novel returns to again and again.

Murakami intersperses these moments in the wider context of grief, creating an atmosphere symbolic of the loss, conflict and strain that comes with entering adulthood. Death passes from Kizuki – Toru's best friend – to his girlfriend Naoko, who Toru spends the novel trying to relieve from its burden. Midori's father and Hatsumi both display the meshing of life and death into one spectral experience.

I spent that January in my little room at Parsons House spiralling: plagued by bouts of insomnia and anxiety, desperately trying to convince my Senior Tutor that I wasn't ill enough to have to take an interruption of studies (I was and later did). The hazy, liminal recollections of someone else's adolescence were a welcome distraction.

Toru, the protagonist, is an unfailing everyman. Apolitical, detached, and passionless, Murakami uses his banality

as a starting point from which to build the characteristics of those around him. His character expands and revises, absorbing or avoiding elements of the people he meets across the novel.

Arguably, these acquisitions are through moments of intimacy. From nursing his sick roommate, he rediscovers his sense of empathy amidst the sterile conservatism of his dorm. Midori coaches him on how to be her boyfriend, providing a more normal relationship than his tumultuous bond with Naoko. He rejects both the student protests and womanising with Nagasawa for their superficiality and lack of commitment.

Naoko has the greatest influence over him as through her death he finally, fully experiences grief – and the destabilisation he's been avoiding. As Murakami writes, death is “not as the opposite [of] but as a part of life”; therefore inescapable.

Retrospectively I can appreciate the exploration of grief through his character, but I hated Toru while reading the novel. In his emptiness, he is selfish, tactless, and, though modest enough to know his faults, fails to fix them.

I preferred to think of it as Naoko's story, for which Toru was but a confused interpreter. For her letters, her intermittence, the remote mountaintop sanatoriums where she convalesces, she's the more romantic of the two. But in their opposite journeys in grief, hers is the ‘failure’ – Toru survives, and she doesn't.

This is, I think, the core message of the novel. It serves not only as a roadmap through the challenges of early adulthood but as a hope; an assertion that they are survivable. Everything will end. Time will move forwards, taking heartache and frustrations with it, ending habits and relationships in its wake. Each period of life is encased by the next, pasting each experience over another. Eventually what surrounds us now will be nothing but memory, waiting for a familiar song or a certain moment to draw us back into the past.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Sustainable Consumption

The Imperial College Sustainability Fortnight depicted by student photography

Photography Editor
ROLANDO CHARLES

One of my most memorable life experiences was the Tour de Mont Blanc just before entering university. It was the hardest physical challenge I had ever completed, especially given how unprepared my group was for the hike. However, I distinctly remember one of the many climbs along the way, just before reaching the border between France and Italy. The sun was shining just past the top of the peak we were hiking towards, and below, the lower mountains were still surrounded by darkness. The contrast between light and dark around us, Mont Blanc rising ominously on our left, and the fatigue of several days camping surprisingly combined into unexpected, blissful awe. I felt a connection with the world around me so intensely that I somehow



Ashtray on my balcony Mohammad Majlisi



Orange Gold: A Taste of Sustainability Antoine Robinet

regained strength and vigour – simply by existing. In that moment, I was a titan conquering the world in a symbiotic way, something which might seem like an oxymoron but somehow made perfect sense.

This personal memory came up naturally whilst thinking about what “Sustainable Consumption” means to me, as a photography theme. Discussing sustainability implies a sense of communion with the environment around us, whether that is Queen’s Lawn or the Alps. The feeling of the sublime is what has provided me with personal favourite pictures from my hiking trip and what has inspired great photographers such as Ansel Adams and Yann Arthus-Bertrand (who I mentioned in “Seasonal Landspaces”, Issue #1848), as well as countless other artists, poets, and writers. To me, “Sustainable Consumption” is about realising that relationship with the world and understanding that to exist, we must erode part of it, yet there is a balance to look for, which does not assure mutual destruction.

In the midst of the now overly touristy Camden Market, Antoine shows a different view of this theme, which I admittedly had not thought about. Sustainability here doesn’t mean the inclusion of the sense of unity, but rather the exclusion of those characteristics which make consumption unsustainable in the first place.

In the photographer’s own words: “No multinational brands, no excessive transport – just locally sourced produce, consumed on the spot with minimal waste. This image celebrates a model of sustainable consumption: direct, low-impact, and mindful of both people and the planet”. From a technical angle, *Orange Gold* has journalistic characteristics: the wide-angle lens and low framing show great understanding of the nuances of documentary photography.

Finally, I should mention *Ashtray on my balcony*, a more experimental submission this week, which captures aggressive shadows and uncomfortable shapes and lines, while still framing the subject precisely and unequivocally. I think this picture might be a sad reminder of the sort of damage that consumption can create – cigarettes are not known for being a healthy choice.

Scan the QR code
to submit for the
next theme
‘The bus stop’



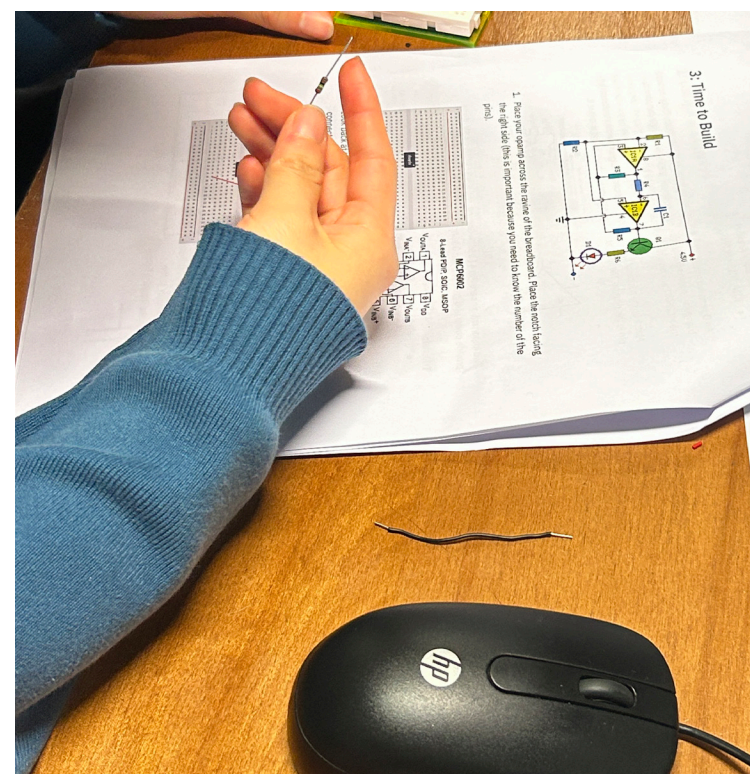


Image by Kesley Chance

					
ARIES	TAURUS	GEMINI	CANCER	LEO	VIRGO
This week you review Normal People for the third time hoping that it will prompt her to text you back.	This week you break your tooth outside the club and your heart inside it.	This week you use Ash Wednesday as an excuse to empty your ashtray.	This week you make your partner wear a suit during sex to attract future investors.	This week you email the editor asking if you could buy a full page Advertisement begging for a girlfriend	This week you lose the argument so you say that you were only joking.
					
LIBRA	SCORPIO	SAGITTARIUS	CAPRICORN	AQUARIUS	PISCES
This week you realise your situationship picking the fresher over you is literally the plot of The Substance.	This week you break the record for the longest time spent inside your girlfriend, clocking in at 5 minutes & 36 seconds.	This week you were so focused on Emilia Perez losing you forgot about Sean Baker and Adrien Brody.	This week your girlfriend does not appreciate your comment on how pancake day came early when you slapped her ass.	This week you plan your third hypothetical novel.	This week you wonder how Hugh Brady knew to escape Bristol.

SOCIETIES

WiEE: Circuits, switches, transformers & resistors.



Left: Year 9 students listening to Imperial College professors, Right: Students solving problems together **Monika Koppuravuri**

Societies Writer CARA HOGG

Last Wednesday, *Felix* was given exclusive insight into Women in Electrical Engineering's (WiEE) seminal event aimed at inspiring the next generation of female engineers. The "Tech for Good Hackathon" welcomed 75 girls from secondary schools across London for a day of interactive activities showcasing the opportunities within the field of electrical engineering.

Aimed at pre-GCSE students and thus before key academic decisions are made, the event was designed to spark early interest in engineering among the 13–14 year old girls. WiEE President Bhavya Sharma told *Felix* that by promoting the subject at a grassroots level, they hope to have a bigger impact than efforts made further down the line. Teachers at the event echoed this sentiment, noting that

Societies Writer LARA BEGÜM YENER

Year 9 is a crucial turning point when students begin refining their interests.

The day began with a panel discussion featuring four esteemed Imperial professors from the Electrical & Electronic Engineering (EEE) department. Dr Sonali Parbhoo, Dr Chen Qin, Dr Tania Stathaki and Mrs Esther Perea Borobio represented cutting edge research in areas including AI and computer vision, as well as their tangible applications in areas such as healthcare.

Discussion revolved around the ability to have a real-world impact within engineering and the opportunity for continuous learning as the field evolves at a rapid pace. The panel also explored future trends, speculating on AI-driven patient-doctor interactions and the increasing importance of

ethical considerations as automation progresses.

On the issue of female representation, Imperial College professors and students shared their experiences as women in a traditionally male-dominated discipline, noting that confidence was key to their success. Imperial's own statistics indicate as recently as 2020, female students made up just 20% of those in the EEE department, reinforcing the importance of events such as this.

In the afternoon, students' creativity was put to the test in a hackathon. They were tasked to design technology solutions which addressed a problem in one of 3 three key areas: health, sustainability, and education. This was complemented by workshops which allowed the students to see the more technical side of engineering, as they learned to design and build an LED Pulsar circuit and assemble a DIY smart light switch.

WiEE received feedback which revealed that many attendees were surprised by the vast applications of engineering beyond mechanics, noting that the event broadened their understanding of the field and its opportunities. Participants also praised the fun hands-on challenges as well as the incredible support they received from Imperial's students volunteers to tackle them.

Following the event's success, Bhavya shared with *Felix* her hopes that this initiative would be the first of many. Teachers at the event also expressed enthusiasm for expanding similar programs, with some raising the possibility for even earlier intervention at the primary school level.

With momentum behind it, this initiative could mark the beginning of a broader movement that encourages more young women to see themselves as the astrophysicists, software developers, and biomedical engineers of the future.

2025 FemTech Conference

Speakers and start-up companies in the emerging Femtech field gather at Imperial to discuss innovative technologies for women's health.

Societies Writer
SIJUNG LEE

Societies Writer
KATHARINA FELICI

Societies Writer
ABIRA PRASAD

This year, Imperial College Femtech Society hosted their annual Femtech conference on Saturday 22nd February with the theme: 'Bridging Innovation & Accessibility in Femtech'.

Hosted in the City and Guilds Building, the event consisted of a range of speakers and start-up companies advocating for women's health, including founders of companies and non-profit organisations, researchers, strategists, and a general practitioner. The speaker choices were well-selected overall, with diversity in careers, opinions, and outlook onto the Femtech field. We noted key moments from speakers and panelists, insightful interviews with Dr Sioned Jones and Kathrin Folkendt, as well as highlights from the start-up fair.

Key speakers and panel discussion

Dr Helen O'Neil is an associate professor in reproductive and Molecular Genetics at UCL and the founder of Hertility, an innovative women's health company renowned for its unique at-home diagnostic tests and comprehensive gynecological care. She has dedicated over 17 years of research into fertility and women's health. Since there are so many different causes of female infertility, a large amount of data is required. Age is considered the main factor, but genetic and lifestyle factors are also essential understanding someone's pathology.



Speaker Tori Ford IC FemTech

Hertility produces person-facing results, with reference ranges built on real, proprietary data, producing a predictive AI model that acts as a 98% accurate diagnostic tool for 18 conditions. This has the potential to reduce diagnosis, thus treatment times, of these conditions by months, considering data longitudinally from menstruation to menopause.

Tori Ford is a health researcher currently studying Primary Health Care at the University of Oxford and is the founder of Medical Herstory, an award-winning non-profit storytelling platform that aims to tackle medical sexism and stigma by allowing people to share their health experiences and improve patient advocacy. 80% of women in the UK feel healthcare professionals have not listened to them; this dismissiveness can be attributed to systemic ignorance of women's bodies, creating a trust gap between healthcare practitioners and women's account of their own bodies. Tori shared her personal experience with chronic vulval pain, sparking

conversations with friends about their patient experiences and tolerance of long-term pain, which led to the innovation of this platform, embracing the power of patient perspective – "people are the experts of their own experience and their own bodies."

The panel discussion, comprised of Kathrin Folkendt, Dr Sharon Dixon, Dr Melis Ada Ekinci, Dr Ada Humphrey and Dr Rumbi Muntega, highlighted the importance of listening to women, the value of collaboration and staying true to the mission of improving women's health – "we all have a sphere of influence", as Dr Muntega stated. Topics such as the accessibility paradox of rapidly developing technology being difficult to reach for everyone, roadblocks preventing current healthcare systems embrace Femtech solutions, expanding female care to beyond just reproductive health, and prioritising medical impact over marketability, were all dissected. The insightful conversation underscored the importance of diversity, from investment

panels that are informed about female health, to including underrepresented groups in research. Introducing women's health institutes at universities and women's health grants, improving health economic data through Femtech solutions, and structuring companies to intrinsically value family support instead of the perk-based system, all were suggested solutions that are yet to be fully embraced.

Interview with speaker Dr. Sioned Jones

Dr Sioned Jones is the co-founder of BoobyBiome, a health tech start-up focusing on using the breast milk microbiome to revolutionise infant health. She was awarded the 2023 Potts Medal and listed on the 2024 Forbes 30 under 30 list.

Q: How have you navigated useful findings in the recently developing microbiome field for insight into your own company?

The Human Microbiome Project,

which was a multi-billion-dollar project established between different institutions and a global effort to characterise the microbiome in our body. The study looked at our guts, skin, and various components of the body, but sadly not at breast milk. This is yet another example of women's health, maternal health in particular, being overlooked. When we started BoobyBiome, people had a very good understanding of the species present in breast milk – but what was missing was strain resolution. This is why, back in 2019, we started building what is now the world's first shotgun metagenomic database of the breast milk microbiome, which further gives us insight into the functional elements of the strains. Recent developments in sequencing, building libraries, and bioinformatics convey a very good foundation needed for us to build a pipeline that can help identify relevant strains in breast milk for infant development.

Q: What are your thoughts on the long-term personalisation of breast-feeding in the context of the microbiome? How do you imagine your company getting there and what challenges do you expect to face?

Our microbiome is completely personalised to who we are. However, we need to have a very good dataset to know what is in the breast milk microbiome before we can start to personalise it. For example, if a baby is born by C-section, it will have a different microbiome compared to a baby that is born vaginally. How do factors like antibiotics, geography, and diets, all play a role into this? To answer this question, we are collecting metadata from our donors to understand how these affect the breast milk microbiome. As we continue to build this rich database, the future is being able to create tailored solutions for everyone. Imagine a world where you can send a sample of your breast milk and infant stool sample, which we can compare to our database for personalised substitution. Currently, we are focussing on the first 6 months of life, which we believe to be the early critical window to ensure correct bacterial seeding. We believe it is crucial to have tailored

products for each of these developmental stages.

Interview with speaker Kathrin Folkendt

Kathrin is the founder and CEO of Femtech Insider, now the globally leading platform for women's health innovation and media. She is a leading strategist and thought leader in women's health innovation with a background in Finance. Her company covers innovation space, diagnostic and many types of industry.



Startup Fair IC FemTech

Q: What is one of the cutting-edge women's health tech innovations you are exposed to as a CEO of a news company that you are particularly excited about?

There are some exciting recent developments in Biotech and medtech areas, both on diagnostic and care side. These include for conditions like PCOS as well as ovarian health and biology. Right now, the ovary is not very well understood. It is a control centre for lots of hormones and if we understand more about it, we could extend the reproductive lives of women, push back menopause, and perhaps understand more about PCOS and endometriosis,

conditions that impact many women. There is also a lot of promising innovation in the fertility sector. Innovation around financial accessibility, automation, and optimisation to bring the cost down and improve access.

Q You've shared how you found out about your PCOS diagnosis despite growing up in a good healthcare system. How can PCOS be prevented, especially through more rigorous screening procedures even in these developed systems?

PCOS is difficult to diagnose as there

information and find any instances of misinformation. Sometimes I can evaluate information, but I will also send it to specialists in the field to ask if it is sound. There have been instances of this in the past due to influencers increasingly advertising supplements and workout programmes; sometimes excess advertisement can potentially harm women instead of helping them.

Start-up fair

The start-up fair was located in the Breakout space of the City and Guilds Building during lunch time, featuring fourteen start-up companies.

This included several companies founded by some of the speakers, like BoobyBiome, Woost Health, Medical Herstory, and Hertility. One of the products that stood out was Nettle, an award-winning brain simulation device for menstrual pain and PMS developed by Samphire Neuroscience. Our other favourite product was the proprietary device from BoobyBiome, which is a patented oxygen-reducing device integrated to any breast milk bottle tested to improve shelf-life.

During the fair, we asked some of the students their opinions on the conference and the fair. Some people commented that a few of the companies had relatively little scientific background to their ideas, where their products – often wellbeing apps – were simply methods of tracking your health.

Others mentioned that they would definitely return to the conference next year.

Overall, the breadth and diversity of the speakers' academic backgrounds and current focus was impressive and enjoyable to see. However, this diversity meant that not all of the speakers nor panelists were thoroughly connected to each other, sometimes feeling disjointed. This may have led to a less focused discussion on connecting innovation with accessibility.

Nevertheless, the conference was an excellent opportunity for anyone interested in women's health to network and experience not only the innovative potential but also challenges in the field from a wide range of perspectives.

are patients with many kinds of PCOS that have different symptoms. Screening procedures can be made more rigorous starting by creating awareness of the condition overall so women might identify their symptoms sooner. There should also be more healthcare literacy for women and the carers and providers should have a better understanding of women's health.

Q: How do you and your company filter misinformation and combat limitations in previous research in this industry while writing news?

We often send information off to medical advisors to scrutinise the

Announcements

— March

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

12TH
Wednesday

Holy Week Showcase
Imperial College Gospel Choir (ICGC)

ICGC presents their annual Easter Showcase
themed ‘Holy Week: The Word Fulfilled’. to tell
the story of Holy Week in a unique way.

Time: 18:30 - 20:30
Where: Hampstead Baptist Church, NW3 1DN
Tickets: £10 for one, £15 for two



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

15TH
Saturday

East Meets West
IC Indian Soc

London’s longest running Indian cultural show.

Time: 17:00 - 21:00
Where: Great Hall, South Kensington Campus
Tickets: £22



INSTAGRAM

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



Submit

your event by scanning the QR and fill out form by March 10th, 2025



View

the online calendar with updates and newest events here

PUZZLES

Puzzles Editor
IVIN JOSE

CROSSWORD

"Birds of Hyde Park" (5 pts.)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9						10								
	11							12						
13														
14										15				
								16		17				
18								19						
				20		21								
22								23						
													24	
25										26				
27								28						

Across

1. Return to its original state. [7]
5. Resplendent bottle cap green head, yellow beak and known to quack. [7]
9. Delightfully crested head plumes decorate this water bird. [5]
10. Reptilian and oily black, usually holding out their wings to dry. [9]
11. Extremely drunk, informal. [6]
12. Second largest city in Orange County. [7]
14. Iconic, exotic green with red beaks and piercing screeches. [8]
15. Gesture to convey information. [4]
18. Six on the solfège syllable major scale, plural. [4]
19. Fancy feathers than can write, students use them in Hogwarts. [8]
22. Ski resort in northern Italy. [7]
23. A deed or piece of property held in trust and will be turned over to grantee once all conditions are fulfilled. [6]
25. The person you share your bed with. [9]
26. Grey feathers, long orange beak and has legs for days. [5]
27. Never ending. [7]
28. A reporter or correspondent. [7]

Down

1. Wrath, Nicolas Cage 2014 action/thriller. [4]
2. Southwark, Vauxhall, Lambeth, for example. [5,4,6]
3. Catch up and go past. [8]
4. The Apple Ecosystem is this. [8]
5. A pestle and _____. [6]
6. A sponge for washing your body. [6]
7. Structured course of study at a school or university. [8,7]
8. Finding patterns from big data sets. [4,6]
13. Pertinent and relevant. [10]
16. White, beautiful and long-necked but have orange beaks. [4,4]
17. Woody, bushy plant that produces black berries that were traditionally used for menstrual cramps or labour pain. [8]
20. Chestnut brown, grey body and with a distinctive white wing patch. [6]
21. A Jewish prayer of thanksgiving, means praise in Hebrew. [6]
24. Author of Diary of an Oxygen Thief. [4]

Across

1. Figure spoken about before faced a different kind of figure? [8]
5. Droop and have a top nestling, Carl. [5]
8. Get rid of idiot real cool style! [4,3]
9. Last bit of gunk breaks off and covers us in slime. [5]
10. Discuss details of deal after power turns to work with Graham Norton? [4,4]
14. Very street way of talking about a low point. [6]
15. Match some young, new cheerleaders with tops. [4]
18. Within ship second quarter, drinkers - poor things! [4]
20. Decree either Scandi should be listened to. [6]
21. Release something you enjoy to send off forcefully? [4,4]
25. Bird cries out after wing attack - is it a cry of joy? [5]
27. Horns embedded in the soldiers with exploding shell alert. [7]
28. Hardy creation is many-headed. [5]

29. Played out like archaic front with down and dirty fun before. [8]

Down

1. Have an effect when you construct some shakers? [4,5]
2. Implied you span the kitty around it. [5]
3. Treasure inside last stop before nobleman. [5]
4. Hidden gem has love without being changed. [5]
6. Hangar manufacturer smuggling supply. [3]
7. Dr. Louks embracing some science after sending out little way of making a change? [7]
11. Important phrase worked around integral young one. [7]
12. Try and take your turn. [4,1,2]
13. Mage wage subject under layer of security. [7]
16. Told criminal to spill before me. [9]
19. Nothing in New York is misbehaving. [7]
22. Standard scheme includes one... [5]
23. ...beginning with number and with heart of iron. [5]
24. Work with a thousand messing with dean. [5]
26. Row causes pig to get head chopped off. [3]

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Submitted by David Latimer (10 pts.)

1		2		3		4		5	6		7		
8								9					
		10			11		12		13				
14										15			16
					17								
18		19						20					
					21		22		23		24		
25				26			27						
	28						29						

SUDOKU

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

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

Medium (2 pt. each)

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

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

Hard (3 pts. each)

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

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

Extra hard (4 pts. each)

GROUPING GRIDS

Submitted by William West & Vittoria Dessi

Whilst	Bridge	Tunnel	Rummy
Piece of	Chopsticks	Road	Sheet
Sewer	Spoons	Skewers	Beach
Railway	Dam	Knives	Forks

Medium (4 pts.)

How-to:

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

Greenwich	Family	Slight	Richmond
Adventure	Petty	Cruise	Hyde
Regent's	Scant	Meagre	Holland
Minor	Cruise	Hanks	Wildlife

Hard (5 pts.)

1.

2.

3.

4.

Connections

1.

2.

3.

4.

Connections

CRYPTOGRAM

Clue: Clare Linn (anagram, 2 words)

How-to:

A cryptogram is solved by cracking the cypher in which an encoded phrase is written. The first few letter correspondences are given to you, and your job is to use your linguistic and logical skills, as well as your quotes knowledge, to work out the secret message. Bonus point for giving where the quote comes from!

G H M U D H C C R B D G H M X E U B

H D B H V G H M I J K Z X M I B N G H M

Z E J X M I B N H Q B X R K D Y V H I B S B I

W M N X X R B C E G K X K N

N X H I K B N F H X R E X X H H N H

C R B D C B F K B C B X M I D K D X H

N X H I K B N E D F B S B I G X K Q B

N H Q B H D B X B O O N H D B H V

X R H N B N X H I K B N K X N O K U B

C B I B N X K O O R B I B V H I X R B Q

C B I B E O O N X H I K B N K D X R B

B D F

(3 pts.)

Anagram: _____

(1 pt.)

Quote from: _____

(1 pt.)

COMIC

Submitted by Tengyu Zhao



Puzzle Editor's Note

Dearest Puzzlers,

March is here, and Mr Blue Sky has returned! I hope you're all enjoying the clear skies and warmer sunshine.

This week's theme, inspired by an unusual bird sighting in Hyde Park, is all about birds! Every themed clue this week describes a bird you can quite assuredly spot on a leisurely stroll through our favourite royal park.

Now, onto the Leaderboard! Not much change to report – Team GuineaPig continue to soar ahead, breaking the 500-point mark with an impressive 512 points. The rest of the board remains much the same as last week, except for The Northerners of Acton, who have glided into 7th place, just ahead of Hidden Variables.

As always, a huge thank you to David Latimer 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

LEADERBOARD

Pos.	Puzzlers	Points (Last week)	
1.	Team GuineaPig	512	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.	The Northerners of Acton	66	49
8.	Hidden Variables	51	51

Previous Puzzles' solutions

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

Regular

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

Cryptic

Train	Further	Reform	Advance	Meaning to improve
Bicycle	Tank	Car	Skateboard	Things with wheels
Lemon	Vinegar	Baking Soda	Salt	Ingredients to bleach hair at home
Fluff	Canon	Lime	Ship	Fanfiction terms

Medium grouping grid

Bed	Pin	Egg	A	___ head
Leather	Cheese	Nacre	Gelatin	Animal products
Honey	Dear	Baby	Love	Terms of endearment
Fat	Sugar	Energy	Minerals	Nutritional information

Hard grouping grid

Cryptogram

“It is already noteworthy that we laugh at all, at anything, and that we laugh alone. That we do it together is the satisfaction of a deep human longing, the realisation of a desperate hope. It is the hope that we are enough like one another to sense one another, to be able to live together.”

Anagram: Code then = Ted Cohen

Quote from: Jokes: Philosophical Thoughts On Joking Matters

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.