

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.



# College is UK's 10<sup>th</sup> largest animal testing research body

68,135 animals were used in research at Imperial in 2023.

**News Writer**  
ISABELLA DUCHOVNY

**Editor-in-Chief**  
MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

A group of protesters held a demonstration on Exhibition Road on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March against animal research at Imperial College London. Imperial College carried out the 10th most animal research experiments in the UK in 2023 according to non-profit Understanding Animal Research, which aims to inform “understanding of the humane use of animals in medical, veterinary, scientific, and environmental research in the UK.”

“These animals suffer immense pain,” said a protester through a megaphone. “They fight for their lives. These animals want to live.”

→ [READ MORE ON 4](#)



One of the signs the protestors were carrying on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March. Isabella Duchovny for Felix

## LAST ISSUE OF TERM!

This is the last issue of *Felix* for Spring Term. The paper will return on 9<sup>th</sup> May.

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**TERM TWO EVENTS**



**BATTLE OF THE BANDS FINAL**

20 MARCH  
Metric  
19:00 onwards



**GOOD LIFE**

*Deep Sea Disco*

End of Term Party  
21 March 2025  
Metric | 21:00



**Summer Ball 2025**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**SATURDAY 21 JUNE**

# 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

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EDITORIAL

Deep cuts

Editor-in-Chief  
MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

Another term is over for *Felix*. I'm 20 issues deep. There's only four left. What a year. This term has seen some amazing issues and stories being covered by this paper, not least the Sex Survey, our magnum opus, which we hope entertained you. Although last term I received a fair amount of positive feedback from my editorials, you may have noticed an absence this term as I often didn't contain one or let other members of the *Felix* team write one often if an edition fell around an event or a day commemorating something. Imperial has had a relatively quiet term, following a tumultuous start to 2025 with the rent hikes. This is quite unlike the rest of the world as America seems to be trying to lose the trade war it started, Europe descends into far-right madness, and the Labour government seek to fund rearmament following the US's predatory stance on Ukraine, whilst also managing a faltering economy.

Sir Keir Starmer has decided to balance the books (even though state budgets aren't zero sum, and anyone

who uses the household budget analogy shouldn't be allowed to hold public office or come within 30 metres of a bank) by performing cuts on disability benefits, as well as advocating for people with disabilities to join the workforce, whilst also cutting benefits that aim to help the long term sick back into work. These cuts will also be on benefits that the previous 14 years of Tory government managed to avoid. It's not a good look to go after the disabled, and if politicians cared about things that will actively cause people to die, they wouldn't bother. However, the only thing keeping this in check is the threat of MP's rebelling, which of course is much worse as it looks awful in the papers..

He's also decided to, as I write this, end NHS England, placing control back into ministers hands rather than a semi-independent body. It's a fair enough policy, except it's a massive U-turn from his previous commitments, will lead to more job losses, and will take approximately two years as NHS England is absorbed into the Department of Health and Social Care, according to health secretary Wes Streeting.

There's also reported plans for regulatory bodies and quangos to be scrapped and possibly replaced by AI, in a

bid to save money and entice investment as the economy is still stagnant.

Now, this doesn't sound like a government in control, but rather an unprepared government on the verge of panic because they're about to capitulate one of their biggest majorities and carte blanche to pass laws to Reform and the far-right, which is very embarrassing, given they're rock bottom in the polls and are less than a year into power.

Good luck.

REP OF THE MONTH

February winner

Ankita Misra

Ankita has been the most incredible course rep for our MPH. She is friendly, approachable and responsive and has been an incredible source of information throughout our studies. She has been an advocate for us at a cohort and has been able to assist us with arranging multiple events, both academic and social. It is not an overstatement to say that without her that the cohesion of our cohort, and our ability to engage fully with our faculty, would be severely limited. I am so grateful for all of her assistance. She is a real asset to the Imperial student community.

Representative of the Month

Every month you can nominate your student representatives to be in a chance of winning a £20 gift voucher and there are two winners every month. This is to reward them for all their hard work and dedication in supporting and representing your student voice.

Nominations close at 23:59 on Sunday 23rd March and will be chosen by Emina (Deputy President Education) and Nico (Deputy President Welfare), and the winners will be contacted.

Scan the QR code to submit a nomination

Apology

In *Felix* #1869 ("Meet the candidates running for IC President"), a statement was made regarding Mr Maazu Bayuoni's manifesto promises. Whilst *Felix* aims for neutrality and fair coverage of all candidates, including critique, this statement was deemed too direct a statement of criticism, relative to our assessment of other candidates, and thus put Mr Bayuoni in worse light relative to the other candidates. As such, we have retracted the aforementioned statement from our online edition.

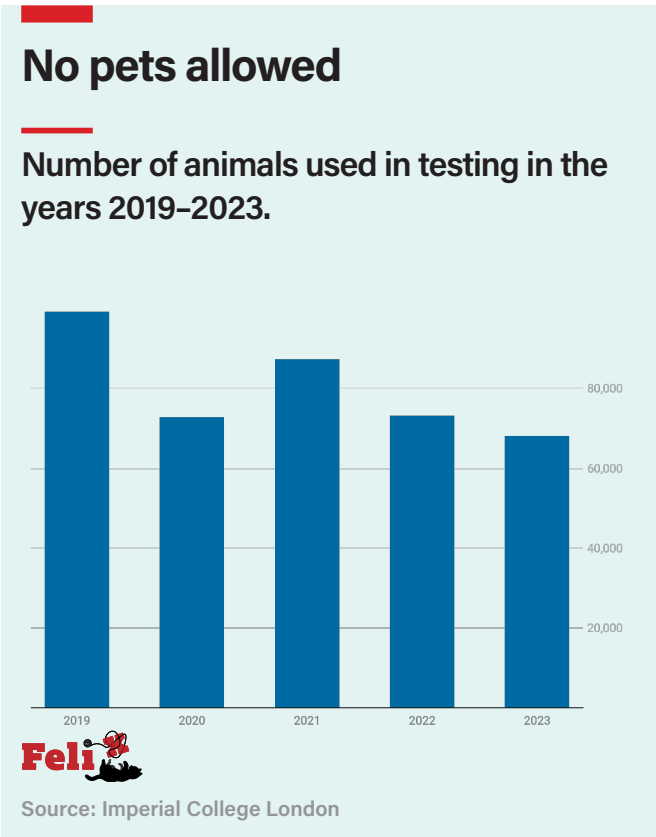
I would like to apologise to Mr Bayuoni for any distress caused, and would like to assure him personally, as a fellow Muslim and person of colour who has been subject to bullying for both my faith and ethnicity, that *Felix* does not stand for racial intolerance of any kind.

Mohammad Majlisi, Editor-in-Chief

# NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

68,135 animals were used in research at Imperial in 2023. 60,850 were used in “scientific procedures”, with 7,555 animals used for “breeding or tissue collection purposes”. The vast majority of animals used were mice, accounting for 93.41% of all animals involved in animal testing in 2023.



Although most procedures fall under the “sub-

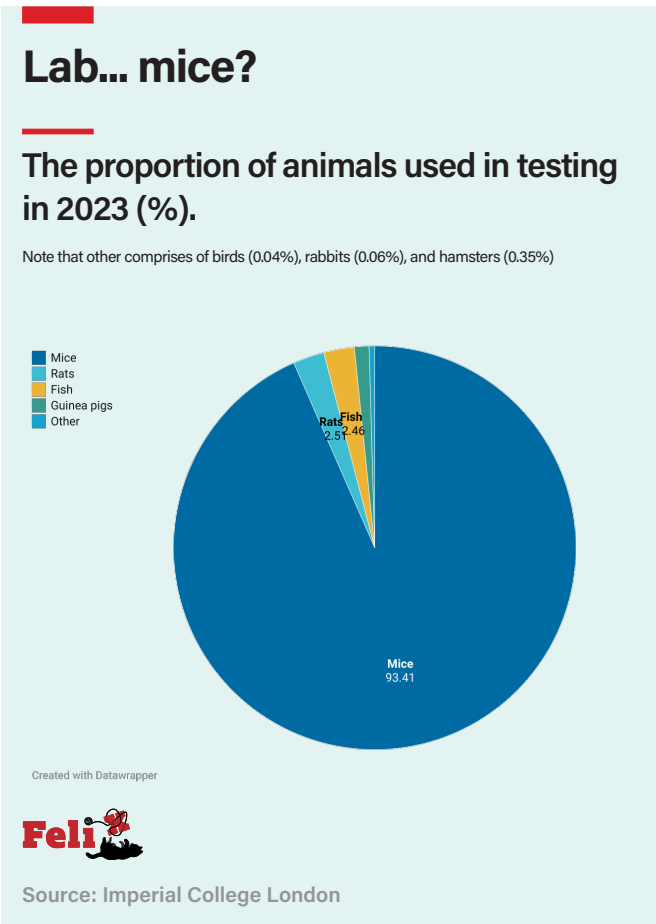
threshold” and “mild” categories of experimentation, defined by the Home Office as being experiments that “did not actually cause suffering above the threshold of regulation,”, or where the level of pain felt is less than that caused by a hypodermic needle, and experiments where “animal returns to its normal state within a short period of time” respectively, 690 animals were used in “non-recovery” experiments. During non-recovery experiments the animal is under general anesthesia “from which [they] shall not recover consciousness”.

Animals used in experiments are not rehomed. According to a 2025 Freedom of Information Act request, “in the majority of cases” animals used in experiments are “humanely killed” following the conclusion of an experiment to collect organs and blood for research. Animals are not released to prevent mutations or infections passing onto wild populations.

However, Imperial has seen a year on year decrease in animal testing since 2021.

An Imperial College London spokesperson said: “Animal research forms a small but important part of Imperial’s biomedical research work and plays a critical role in the development of new and improved methods for diagnosing and treating diseases that affect both humans and animals.

“The university is committed to the 3Rs of replacement, reduction and refinement in animal research to ensure that animals are only used when there is no other suitable alternative and that all animals in the university’s care are treated humanely.



“Scientists who work with animals at Imperial are supported by a team of vets and technicians who are responsible for maintaining high levels of animal welfare.”

“Only a small percentage of medical and biological research involves the use of animals,” reads Imperial’s policy on the use of animals. “That part remains vital, however, to further the development of treatments or cures for medical conditions that blight or destroy the lives of humans – and animals.”

One protester held up a sign reading, “Are you OK that animals are tortured in useless experiments in this city? I’m not!” They handed out flyers from Exposing Cruelty, Victims of Charity and Safer Medicines Trust.

The protest was organised by London Animal RightsAdvocacy, a small grassroots organisation with no link to Imperial students or staff. Kyra Shannon, one of the protesters, explained that they aim to raise awareness of the animal research happening at Imperial and to promote alternatives to vivisection, such as going cruelty-free.



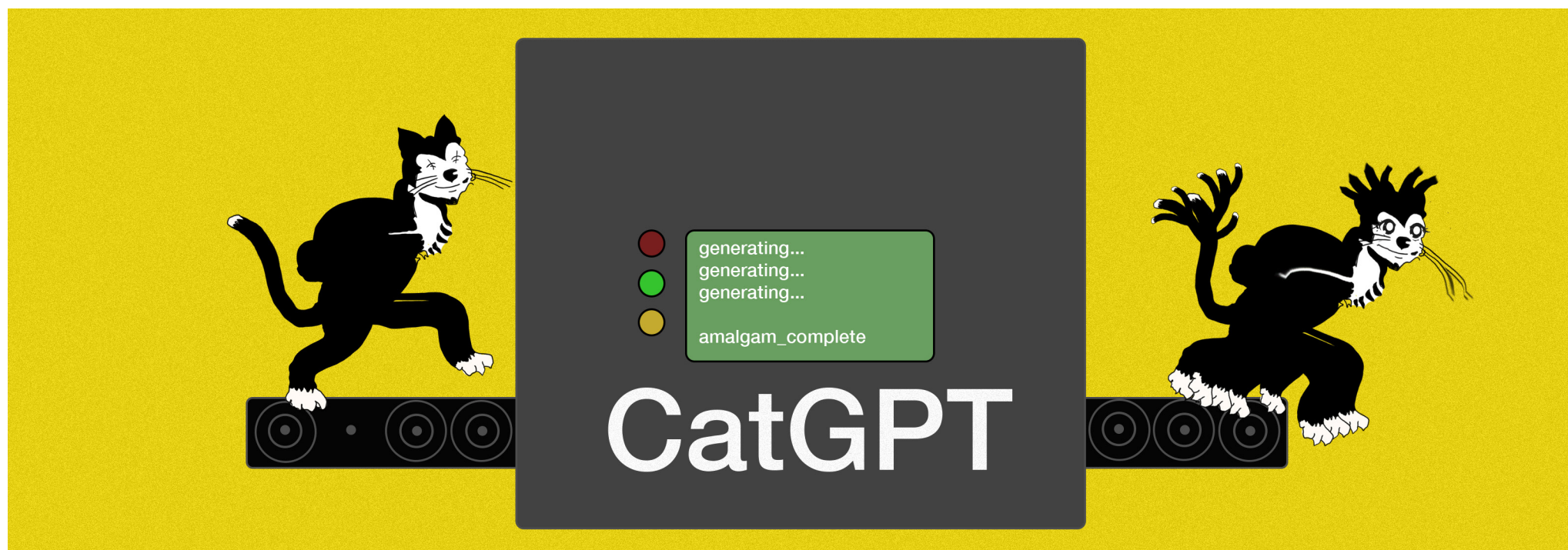
The protest itself was only small, however it caused us to ask bigger questions about the state of animal testing in the College. Isabella Duchovny for Felix

Know something you think might be newsworthy?

We’re always looking for stories to investigate and cover.

If you have any news tips, please email us at felix@imperial.ac.uk.





Juliette Flatau for Felix

# How Imperial is dealing with the rise in students' using AI

**As research shows up to 92% of students use AI in some form for their studies nationally, Imperial begins to adapt for the future.**

**News Writer**

**ISABELLA DUCHOVNY**

**S**tudent use of AI has increased as Large Language Models such as ChatGPT or Claude become more accessible to consumers, with a recent survey conducted by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) finding that 92% of students using AI in some form and 88% of students having used generative AI (GenAI) in assessments, an increase from 66% and 53% respectively in 2024.

"The data presented in this report is not very unexpected, from my point of view," said Alan Spivey, professor of synthetic chemistry and chair of the working group of AI tools in teaching and assessment. "The data we have from other sources and also from surveys at Imperial would suggest that GenAI tools are being used very widely."

The working group was established in mid-2023, in response to the launch of ChatGPT the previous year. They

held a town hall to present principles on how to "stress test" assessments and make sure what teaching staff is examining is aligned with intended teaching outcomes.

The use of AI tools in the classroom was explored early on at Imperial College Business School. A business professor required students to use a generative AI tool to provide a skeleton for an essay on a given topic. They had to show how they added value to the skeleton by fact checking, revising, and adding ideas.

"You can do that conversation with a generative AI system and demonstrate that you as an individual are adding and working with GenAI," said Spivey. "I think that works quite well."

Spivey added that teaching staff are trying to set assessments that closely mirror the sorts of tasks and challenges one might encounter in the workplace. For instance, applying knowledge in a certain scenario is an example of task where GenAI can help with the fundamental concepts but the interpretation is left up to the student.

Imperial has also provided funding for projects exploring digital education. Many projects are focusing on how and when to use AI to provide feedback on assessments.

"We can see that you can use AI to give students very rapid and quite rich feedback," explained Spivey. "But where [is] that line [drawn] between when you have that sort of bot-driven feedback and when you talk to a professor about it?"

Spivey went on to explain that teaching staff don't want to alienate students, but at the same time sees the value in very timely feedback.

The university has also appointed Artificial Intelligence Futurists, which are members of staff tasked with understanding how the community will response to new technology in the education field.

"The purpose... was saying, 'can we look into the future?'" said Spivey. "Can we have a kind of crystal ball and ask ourselves what a curriculum of the future will look like in our sort of disciplinary areas?"

The AI Futurists have been in place for nearly a year now, where they've been liaising with staff and providing training to understand the capabilities of GenAI.

In chemistry for instance, researchers will soon be able to use GenAI-based algorithmic systems to get suggestions on how to make molecules and potentially synthesize the desired molecules using robots, vastly accelerating drug discovery.

"We need to make sure that that sort of revolution is reflected in our curriculum," said Spivey.

Read our full interview with Dr Alan Spivey online by scanning the QR code below:



## SCIENCE

# The human antibiotic factory

Recent publications have shed light on the human proteasome's role in natural antibiotic production.

Science Writer

MARSELA MARKU

New research published in the journal *Nature* has revealed a previously unknown function of the proteasome, a component of cells once thought to only play a role in the degradation of proteins.

The study showed that the proteasome can produce peptides that act as a first line of defence against bacteria, implicating the proteasome as a key player in the body's innate immune system for the first time.

This study builds on existing research that established the role of proteasome-cleaved peptides in adaptive immunity, the slow-acting component of the immune response that occurs in response to specific bacteria and other infections. Now the proteasome has also been revealed to play a part in innate immunity, the faster-

acting and less-specialised component of the immune response.

Furthermore, bacterial infection was seen to induce changes in the composition and function of the proteasome, leading to a significant increase in antibacterial peptides being produced.



## This study opens the door for new antibiotics

These peptides function by disrupting the cell membrane of invading bacteria. They are able to do this due to the compounds on the cell membrane surface having a negative charge while the proteasomal peptides are positively charged. This leads to the bacterial

membrane becoming more permeable, allowing the cell contents to release and destroying the bacterial cell.

When the researchers disabled the proteasome in cell samples, they also found that bacteria infected the cells much more easily, highlighting the scale of the proteasome's involvement in fighting pathogens.

This research sheds light on the mechanisms connecting proteasome dysfunction to various diseases such as cancer and neurodegeneration. This study opens the door for new antibiotics to be potentially developed from these proteasome-derived peptides.

These antibiotics being human-derived may make the development of therapies easier, as they are less likely to be rejected by the body. The demand for antibiotics is ever increasing, and this new untapped source may prove to be lifesaving in the future.

## THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE:

### SpaceX's failed launch scatters debris over Carribbean Sea – Neha Yasin

Firey debris was seen raining from the sky over the Caribbean Sea after a failed Starship rocket launch last Thursday. Launching in Texas, the thankfully unmanned rocket spun out of control, resulting in “a rapid unscheduled disassembly,” according to SpaceX. There has been no report of injuries or damage. Flights were temporarily grounded across several Florida airports, with 240 flights affected.

A similar incident occurred during a test launch in January, which did end up causing property damage. Last Thursday's launch went ahead despite an ongoing investigation conducted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for the first incident.

Starship is designed to be the largest and most powerful rocket to date. SpaceX intends for the rocket to be fully reusable a to play a part in future trips to Mars.

### Protein waste recycled into natural antibiotics – Eldrian Tho

A recent discovery published in *Nature* by Prof Yifat Merbl's lab at the Weizmann Institute of Science showed that our cells can turn protein waste into antibiotics as a defence strategy. The proteasome, primarily located in the cytoplasm and nucleus of eukaryotic cells, breaks down damaged or unwanted proteins into small fragments called peptides. Surprisingly, some of these peptides have antibacterial properties.

During infections, the proteasome boosts the production of these antimicrobial peptides, strengthening the body's immune response. This finding not only reveals a new layer of our immune defense but also offers potential for novel antibiotic discovery. As antibiotic resistance is on the rise, harnessing this natural mechanism could provide an innovative approach to tackling bacterial infections.

### Latest lunar lander mission is over – Taylor Pomfret

Intuitive Machines, a private company who were set to deliver a historic lunar lander on the Moon, announced that its lander, Athena, powered down. This came one day after having arrived at the lunar surface, with photographs taken by Athena taken before it powered down confirming the vehicle is lying on its side.

Athena was designed to investigate the presence and quantity of lunar water ice using PRIME-1, a payload consisting of a drill and a mass spectrometer. It also carried a drone coupled with a neutron spectrometer to explore the permanently shadowed region (PSR) of Marston crater. NASA Head of Science, and former Imperial physics student, Nicola Fox said: “Each success and setback are opportunities to learn and grow, and we will use this lesson to propel our efforts to advance science, and exploration.”



## ENVIRONMENT



Envato Elements and NASA.

# The presence of a single kind of justice

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

**T**he planetary crises do not affect people equally. Marginalised people are hit worse most of the time. Not only are they hit worse, they also receive less support and are frequently not considered in decision-making. The examples are endless: in the global south, women and girls are exposed to more indoor air pollution because they are left to cook with unclean fuels like wood or dung; as LGBTQ+ Officer Anson To explained to *Felix*, homelessness affects LGBTQ+ youth much more than average, leaving them less able to find safe places to stay during extreme weather events like hurricanes; and, in the United States, dirty fossil power plants are built next to majority black areas. The ND-GAIN Index is an assessment of each country's vulnerability to and readiness to adapt to climate change. It clearly shows that the worst effects are being felt in Africa, South America, and the Middle-East – places that have contributed the least to the climate crisis. Addressing these issues alongside climate change gives

us the term climate justice. As an alum from Imperial Climate Action said to *Felix*, “Climate justice is intrinsically connected with social, racial, gender, and LGBTQ+ justices (and justice for other marginalised groups such as those disabled by society).”

Despite all that, my dad wishes there was a Green Party that was actually single issue. Unfortunately for him, it is impossible to separate the planetary crises from justice, and let's hope we don't forget that, because to do so would be the end of us.

Let's take an example I'm fairly familiar with: a carbon tax. A carbon tax is a tax on fossil fuels where they are taken out of the ground. This cost affects what it is economical to buy and sell, and a tax rising to \$250 per ton of CO<sub>2</sub> by 2035 could reduce warming by a degree or so. That said, a carbon tax is regressive: since essentials like fuel and heating form a larger part of poorer people's spending, a carbon tax would affect them more than richer people. If you care about people and the environment, a carbon tax isn't good enough. It's only by thinking about justice that we reach a good solution.

What if we paid out the revenues of

the tax as a dividend? As an analysis from LSE showed, in the UK this would mean about 60% of people would receive more money than they paid in the tax. This turns a regressive tax into a progressive one, with the ability to affect emissions and improve peoples lives.

Some kind of carbon tax is a good idea for developed nations, and the numbers we're suggesting fall well short of the true social cost of carbon, which ENROADS estimates at well over \$1000 per ton of CO<sub>2</sub>.

So climate policies without thinking about people would be a terrible idea. There's a useful historical perspective on this too, and I find it particularly compelling.

Many of the injustices we see today have emerged at least partly from the same source: the worldview required to justify empire. To justify empire, some people need to be lesser. To justify empire, land needs to be just a thing. To justify empire, efficiency and growth are the only goals. Seeing this, it would be silly to try and treat the symptoms separately.

Activists have been around for much longer than climate activists (in their

current form). It's natural that we have a lot to learn from each other, because we face similar roadblocks. This makes sense when the same mindset justifies injustice. Pinkwashing (presenting as particularly queer-friendly to cover up bad reputation) is very similar to greenwashing (presenting as particularly climate-friendly to cover up bad reputation) so why address them separately?

Not only does working together help us understand problems, it helps us find better solutions too, by bringing as many different voices to the table as possible. Much of what we need to do to address the planetary crises is profoundly difficult. Change will require reform of the way our societies work. If we want to do a good job, each implementation must be contextual and created using knowledge from each affected area. As well as doing a better job addressing the planetary crises, we will also be better able to address other intrinsically linked and equally important justice issues.

“If your climate movement is prepared to make a statement condemning genocide (and preferably not just the most well-known), and to take the flak that comes with that where often we are told to ‘stick to the climate issue,’ then I find that movement makes me more comfortable as I can see both sympathy with other causes and an understanding of their intertwined nature. After all, war is often about resources, including oil, and is also a huge contributor to resource use and emissions.” A member of ICA told *Felix*.

There's a small lesson to take from the right on this one. We need to be a big tent: our movements can't leave anyone out; they need to be where the cool people are; and they need to meet people where they are, with a low barrier to entry. If we want to solve the planetary crises, our politics needs to ask people what they care about and address those problems in a way that also addresses climate, rather than telling them what to care about and addressing that.

COMMENT

# What your lecture hall seat choice says about you

Comment Writer  
LUCIE LITVIAKOV

We humans have been learning in classrooms since at least 3000 BCE, when Sumerians established schools called É-dubba. Still, despite all those generations of intellect, I believe you fundamentally cannot shake the primal instinct of seat choice. Now, where and how you sit says a lot about yourself – and human nature.

A1: The Killer Keen Beans and/or Ironically Studious Shrimps

Killer Keen Beans, you arrive at least 10 minutes early and turn around to shoot scathing glares whenever someone talks during the lecture. You leave only once you've accosted the lecturer to ask a ridiculously unrelated question to prove your existence. In your defense, you have been asked to come at the end – after your 3rd question during the lecture. You genuinely take handwritten notes.

Studious Shrimps, you will enthusiastically admit at the end of the lecture (after rushing back to your friend group) that you only sit at the front because eye contact with the lecturer is the only thing that prevents you from dozing off. You spend the lecture looking over the Beans' shoulders, wondering what on earth they have open on ResearchGate and noticing the crick in your neck from looking up at the board. However, your technique works surprisingly well, and you pick

up on a lot amongst the Beans and the screen's glare.

A2: Overachievers in Disguise

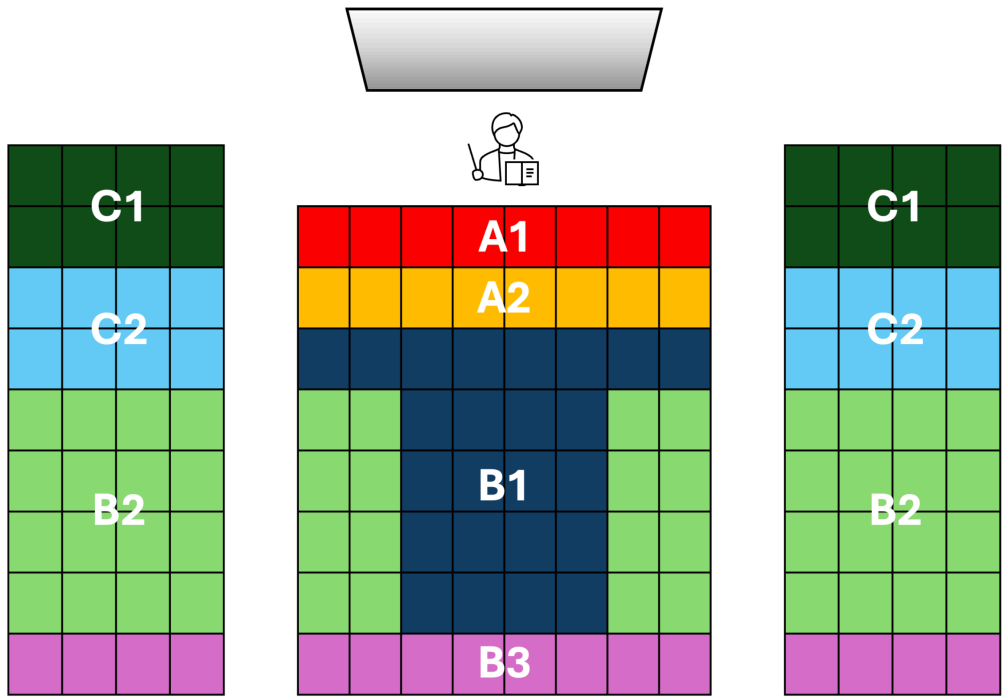
You act like you don't care, but you're still far too engaged. In defiance to the "neek" label, you whisper comments to friends but still somehow absorb everything. You secretly judge the lecturer's slide design whilst you're probably a future lecturer yourself. You say you're only here because you "couldn't find a seat elsewhere" (lies) and you side-eye the front row for asking too many questions, but you secretly appreciate the extra explanations. Freshers go rabid for your Notion notes.

B1: Just a Chill Guy

The Swiss, the Goldilocks, you respect the front row seaters for their dedications and the back row gremlins for their joie de vivre, but you don't identify as either. You genuinely want to learn, but for fear of being bitten by a Bean or making eye contact with the lecturer when they ask a question, you choose the middle ground. You have someone's notes open but they're rarely yours and you watch the lecture like a live documentary, knowing you'll have to rewatch it later. You're in at least 2 societies and you go to Ministry every other night. Your sweet treat and coffee define your day.

B2: Flight Risks

You're born escape artists. You always have to be somewhere, so you slip away like thieves in the night. I often wonder where you go once you scan the



attendance QR code and the lecture starts – is it to Ethos, home, to the bathroom because all this exciting learning just gives you that rumble in your tummy? Your bag never fully leaves your shoulder, and if you've even brought it, you're a master of the silent laptop close move. If the QR code takes time to appear, you can be seen eyeing the exit like a trapped animal. If you do stay for the whole lecture, it's because you fell asleep before you could leave. You don't see the point in lectures, you think you can learn everything faster through a 2x recording.

B3: Gremlins

In the words of Frida Kahlo, you didn't choose to be born this way, but you were and you're happy about it. You thrive in the lawless back rows, napping, openly snacking and gossiping, screen split between the lecture slides and something entirely unrelated. If you do, you write nonsensical notes at 200wpm, which you find yourself deciphering during exam season. You can be heard muttering, "What's going on?" – both to yourself and to a fellow gremlin all the way from A2 – only sometimes regarding the actual lecture content. Your presence in a lecture is never guaranteed. Sometimes you're there, and sometimes you're a name on the group chat asking if you missed anything important, or a story on Instagram posting a landscape in a different country.

C1: Pity Party

You were late. You were so very late. You have no excuse to sit there unless you were horribly late. You were also so very obstinate not to miss the lecture, so you hung your head and dragged your feet to C1. You think the lecturer will remember this, but fear not – in truth they are thinking of science far beyond our meagre comprehension. That, and their next meal. Everyone will observe you once they lose focus. You are the people watchers' prey.

C2: Lone Wolves

You don't trust people. You like to extend your legs over the neighbouring seats and leave your bags there so you can have the entire row to yourself with your back against the wall. No one knows what's on your screen facing the wall. You arrive just on time, calculated so it is not too early to make small talk, not too late to cause a scene. Your headphones are in, but no music is playing, this is purely a deterrent tactic. If forced into a group, you either do everything or nothing. People recognize you, but no one truly knows you. Ongoing theories are that you're Batman, or the reptilians let out of Congress early.

And finally, after all these bold claims, you may wonder what seat I'm in? Well, if I ever reach my New Year Goal of attending lectures, I'll be sure to let you know.



## CULTURE

# Theodosian Walls



Fig. 1 Map of Constantinople showing the line of the Theodosian walls and the sea walls. The course of the walls of Constantine the Great is shown as a dotted line. *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453*, by Stefen Turnbull, edited by Bogdanovic Bogdanovic and Marcus Marcus, illustrated by Peter Dennis, e-book ed., 2004, p. 6. PDF. Accessed 28 Dec. 2022.

Figure 1 and 2. *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453*



Fig. 2 Belgrade Gate, typical of the stronger of the entrances to the city. *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453*, by Stefen Turnbull, edited by Bogdanovic Bogdanovic and Marcus Marcus, illustrated by Peter Dennis, e-book ed., p. 8. PDF. Accessed 28 Dec. 2022.

## Serra explores Istanbul's rich history as the midpoint of Europe and Asia, and how this led to the construction of the Theodosian Walls.

Culture Writer  
**SERRA YENILMEZ**

Throughout history, Istanbul has always been one of the most desirable cities due to its strategic location, as it is the only city in the world that connects two separate continents. As a result of its critical position between Europe and Asia, oftentimes it has had many prominent roles in politics, economy and culture. It not only witnessed great wars, but the conquering of this

very city in 1453 marked the ending of the Middle Ages. The wars and destruction in the city notwithstanding, there remains many artifacts that preserve the city's deep-rooted history.

The Roman Empire had an expansionist policy: they were expanding their borders through the Italian peninsula to the Mediterranean basin and further to Europe by conquering more lands. In order to gain economic and political power, it was important for them to have control over "the pre-existing and long-standing trade routes." Constantinian the Great saw Istanbul as an optimal location for the capital given that it was a natural harbour. Until he marked the capital of the Roman Empire to be "The New Rome," Istanbul's vital geography was not highly admired. However, the city had become home to many different nations, empires, and countries. Surrounded by Bosphorus, Golden Horn and Marmara Sea, it was assumed that the city's natural features provided a shelter for outside forces; yet flat inland areas of the city were exposed to great risk and required an external defence.

Even though there were remains of fortifications of previous nations, they were certainly not enough to protect the capital and needed to be rebuilt. As a result, during his reign Constantine the Great constructed the "largest and strongest ever built [walls] in either the ancient or medieval worlds." These glorious walls were initially surrounding the region shown with "Abandoned Wall of Constantine" in Figure 1.

However, there came a point when "the city was threatening to burst the confines that Constantine had erected," meaning that the space within the walls was not sufficient for the growing population. Additionally invasions of Rome by Goths, Huns, and Uldins also posed potential threats to Constantinople. These issues raised the idea of extending the walls. At around 5 CE, with Theodosius II on the throne and supervision by successful statesman of the



time Anthemius, the borders of the city was enlarged to 1.5 miles to the west, as indicated in Figure 1. In the extension process, everyone regardless of social status was expected to participate under the rule of Theodosius II, gathering approximately sixteen thousand laborers around the same purpose. After the extension “from the shores of the Sea of Marmara to the Golden Horn,” these walls started to be called as Theodosian Walls, as seen in Figure 2. These walls not only provided military control over the city but also strengthened the Roman Empire’s presence in Europe.

Tertiary limestone, a type of calcium carbonate sedimentary rock, brick, stone, and mortar were primary materials that supported the hard rock and durable structure of the Theodosian Walls. According to Stephen Turnbull, British scholar and historian, using brick was like a trend while building Byzantine walls. Theodosian Walls were also constructed similarly: “[S]quared stone faced both the inner and outer surfaces of the wall, and mortared rubble filled with the space in between facings.” The materials increased the durability of the walls, and examining its architectural design is crucial to understanding how the Roman Empire survived in Istanbul until 1453, and what kind of protection the walls provided. For example, a severe earthquake in 447 CE, “only 34 years after their construction,” had devastating effects. Approximately 60 towers, along with a wide frame of new land walls, were destroyed. If this time period didn’t coincide with the danger of the Huns besieging Istanbul, the Outer Wall and the ditch would have been missing from the three-stage system of the building.

Illustrated in Figure 3, these new land walls consisted of a triple system: an inner wall line, outer wall line and a moat. When examined from the outside to the inside, the moat was first to be encountered by the outside forces. In simple terms, the moat was considered to be one of the important aspects of the defense mechanism. It was a 60-metre wide and 15–30 metre deep ditch, its depth “doubtless varied with the character of the ground it traversed.” The ditch

was able to be filled with water, and its even distribution was ensured with segmented dams. Van Millingen, in his book *Byzantine Constantinople*, discusses when the moat was flooded, since the

siege in 1453, did not mention anything about water being present in the moat which seemed suspicious. “If water had been introduced into the Moat on this occasion, Puscus could hardly have ig-

es were the primary part of the top of the outer wall; it was “faced on the outer side with hewn blocks of stone, and [was] frequently supported by a series of arches in concrete, and sometimes, even, by two series of such arches, built against the rear.” The furthest interior walls were the highest, most massive and strongest of all. As shown in Figure 3, they stood behind 96 towers that were specifically designed not to obscure the firing ranges angularly. “Each tower was placed around 70 metres distant from another and reached a height of 20 metres.” The overall inner wall “was almost 5 metres thick, 12 metres high.”

The access to the city was ensured with gates, many of which were built by Theodosius II. The most famous one of them was The Golden Gate. The gate, the middle one being larger than the others, had three central arches, as shown in Figure 4. One of the most characteristic features of Golden Gate, the inner wall and the outer wall was the arches, which illustrated the characteristics of Roman cultural values. Byzantium, in other words Eastern Roman Empire, was a continuation of the Roman Empire during Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. So, it was only natural that there still existed the same cultural values such as utilitarianism. Influenced by Estastucans, arches were a very significant mark of Roman architecture. They were used for various purposes, especially with aqueducts and bridges. In Golden Gate and the Walls of Theodosius, they were primarily used because of their ability to distribute weight, allowing the structure to be higher and more long lasting. Therefore, Romans valued the pragmatic aspect of architecture more than aesthetics.

Unfortunately, due to natural disasters such as earthquakes, the Theodosian Walls eroded, yet the remains of them continue to shed light on Istanbul’s deep-rooted history. The fortifications were also included in Istanbul’s World Heritage List in 1985, so what was once surrounded by ancient walls is now an international gateway.

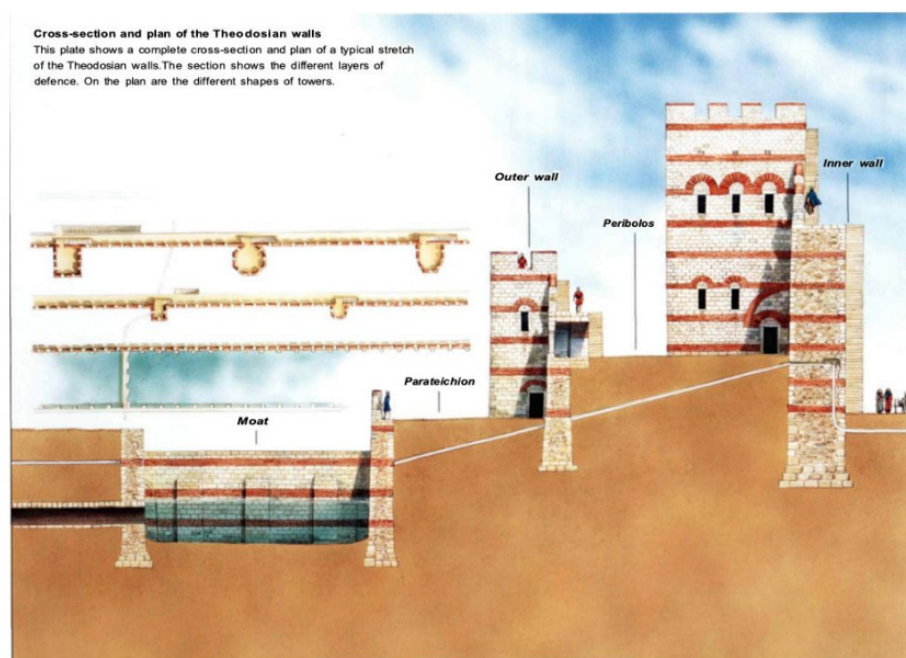


Fig. 3 Cross-section and plan of the Theodosian Walls. *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453*, by Stephen Turnbull, illustrated by Peter Dennis, edited by Marcus Cowper and Nikolai Bogdanovic, e-book ed., 2004, p. 13. pdf. Accessed 28 Dec. 2022.

Figure 3. *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453*



Fig. 4 Constantinople, Golden Gate at the beginning of the twentieth century, seen from the outside. 414 CE. *Livius.org*, [www.livius.org/pictures/turkey/istanbul/constantinople-golden-gate/golden-gate/](http://www.livius.org/pictures/turkey/istanbul/constantinople-golden-gate/golden-gate/). Accessed 29 Dec. 2022.

Figure 4. *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453*

answer remains unknown. Some argue that the moat was always filled with water and was taking its sources from underground channels and pipes. Others believe that the water was only present if there were outside threats or the possibility of siege. On the other hand, Ubertino Posculo, who experienced the

nored the fact.”

Behind the moat, there stood the outer wall, and it was located 10 feet above the peribolos, which is built for soldiers defending the wall, that is shown in Figure 3. Despite the fact that it was not the strongest compared to the inner wall, most of the wars took place here. Arch-





## Reality and dystopia in equal parts: the Apple TV office show turned sci-fi not that far off from your future job

TV Writer  
**CRISTINA CARRILLO**

Working a mysterious and important nine-to-five that leaves your memory the second you leave the office might be an appealing reality to those of us permanently chased by half-baked ideas and unanswered emails, but at what cost? Dan Ericson created *Severance* to bring such a premise to life, with season 1 released in 2022 and season 2 airing weekly episodes since January. The show follows workers at the big Lumon Industries corporation that have had their work and personal memories separated from each other, a procedure known as *Severance*. This witty take on the nature of corporate jobs is taken further by stellar direction and production, resulting in a series that brilliantly reflects a myriad of aspects of the human experience in life, labour, and the balance of the two.

The topics *Severance* manages to shed light on throughout the show are broad, complex, and undergoing constant change, but the overarching theme that differentiates this show from other sci-fi dystopias is the ever-present clever critique toward late-stage capitalism. It is made clear from the beginning of the show that the main characters don't actually know what Lumon does or what their

work is. This lack of specific purpose and connection to the products of their labour is reminiscent of the concept of worker alienation, introduced in the *Paris Manuscripts* by Marx (who could very well have inspired the name one of the main characters, Mark S). This reflection is further seen in the character development of each employee, as the conflicting relationships between their inside and outside personas ("innies" and "outies") soon becomes a main plot point: as Marx writes in his manuscript *Estranged Labour*, "The worker feels himself only when he is not working; when he is working, he does not feel himself."

*Severance* also explores themes that arise from this alienated worker status, such as the realisation and consequent revolution that comes with workers awakening to their lack of rights, or the ethical conflict of working for a company with authoritarian principles: Lumon enforces nine core values decreed by its first CEO, which introduces a pseudo-religious element from which characters and plot lines stem. The corporate life itself also receives a few shout-outs: *Severance* brings common elements such as employee perks or corporate retreats to extremes so uncomfortable that the audience is made to reflect on the nature of these ideas to even understand the plot itself.

Such a twisted, complex plot is not

straightforward to understand and follow, particularly when its sci-fi element allows two characters to have four (very different) dynamics between each other. This convoluted puzzle is delicately presented to the audience via skilful direction and production, which is what has led *Severance* to be one of the most talked about shows in recent years, particularly over the last weeks in social media.

A key strategy the executive producer and director Ben Stiller utilises is respecting but teasing the balance between what the audience and the characters know. This is reflected in the first character met, Helly R, who learns about the procedure and her surroundings at the same time as the audience, welcoming the viewer to a horrifying and confusing reality. As employees explore the truth behind Lumon's endless white halls and their department's characteristic green desks, direction earns an opportunity to examine the background of the "outies," and with that very smart nods to elements of daily life: burnout, family, loss, and love, the latter fantastically brought to screen by the great John Turturro.

These more relatable themes are beautifully and tragically intertwined with the show's disturbing dystopia in season 2 episode 7, Jessica Lee Gagné's directorial debut. From the writing and storytelling to the borderline overwhelming number

of symbols, foreshadowing, and revelations, this pseudo-bottled episode is being called the best one of the show and one of the best in history. And while I agree, I believe the greatness of that chapter in the show is hugely due to massive production work and quiet world building since the very first episode.

The specific keys behind the elevator's ding, the carefully curated pharmaceutical lighting and Lumon-branded shades of white, green, and blue, and the dolly zoom on employees to represent their transition from inner to outer personas and vice versa are just some of the details that the production team brings to life to a very high standard. *Severance* is loyal to the strong statement that nothing is by accident: every symbol, reference, and even facial expression is intentional and reveals a part of Lumon's disturbing truth. This perfectionism is what is bringing millions of viewers together to hypothesise and attempt to solve the many questions they are left with every week: *Severance's* greatness is also proven by the degree to which it has infiltrated viewers' lives beyond the 40- to 60-minute episodes aired every Friday.

Dan Ericson wrote the first *Severance* scripts in the lunch breaks of his own dreadful office job, wanting to portray the humanity hidden within it. His passion for this concept bleeds through in every scene, making *Severance* an astute, audacious commentary on work/life balance, something we all search for, to a degree only slightly less extreme than portrayed. The beauty of this show is therefore found in its paradoxical element: it distracts viewers from their jobs, routine, and concerns, while watching others suffer through exactly that.

### ALSO IN FILM&TV

**Mickey 17: Can Bong Joon-ho replicate the success of his earlier works?** by David Latimer

**The Babadook** by Tarun Nair

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## BOOKS

## Seasonal Reading, Seasonal Depression

### Part III: Winter 2023 & 2025

In this series, Annabell reflects on the influence of seasons on her past reading habits. In this week's finale, she concludes her ruminations with Winter 2023 and present day reflections.

#### Books Writer

ANNABELL NDIWE

#### Winter 2023

The Winter of first year I read *I'm Telling the Truth, but I'm Lying: Essays* by Bassey Ikpi. My Goodreads tells me it was late January, but I remember it as December – lying despondent in bed; avoiding flatmates, course mates, coursework; and praying for the end of the year as if that would solve anything.

As Ikpi elaborates, memory can be as powerful as it is deceptive. The essays are presented as memoirs centring on her family, migration, relationships, and coming to live with bipolar II disorder.

It was soothing. It was unnerving. The emotional honesty of some of the essays made me nauseous. More than once I wondered if I should stop reading – pick back up when the subject matter didn't feel as close – but the collection's vulnerability demands the same of you.

In part, my reaction stemmed from how much I related to the author: a Nigerian in the West, an older sister, suffocating in the grasp of unchecked depression, convinced she'll never redirect her life into anything meaningful. Her major challenges – dropping out of college, struggling to live independently or form healthy relationships, becoming too sick to work, attempting suicide, and being sectioned – felt like ominous projections. Like the episode I was a month or so into would stretch on for a lifetime,

despite listening to my GP, rounds of counselling, and talking therapy, self help and medication.

Depression, as Ikpi puts it, would “always come looking for me again. It will always return” and find me waiting: to get better, to end, to be normal, to return to a life that no longer exists. I couldn't bring myself to talk about my feelings with anyone other than medical professionals, and even then, there was a veneer of intellectualising things. To be privy to that kind of conversation, even in print, was overwhelming.

Ikpi crafts a retrospective story of her life through a series of evocative moments. Although you're aware from the start that the contents are at best subjective, at worst wholly invented, the tone of the essays are earnest, self-conscious, and exacting, giving them the weight of undeniable truths. It doesn't matter that Ikpi unreliably narrates her life – we all do. In charting the pathology of her illness, exposing her faults and finding meaning in them, she is unwaveringly honest.

The recollections of her childhood in Ugep establish the influence of generational trauma and familial conditioning in later life. More intimate details – the grief of being named in memory of someone, questioning a non-nuclear family upbringing – flesh out otherwise sparse early memories. Believing that her parents' – especially her mother's love – is conditional fuels lasting anxiety, perfectionism, and self-

punitive behaviour. The fear of falling short of her family's expectations follows her like a shroud into adulthood.

Patterns from this dynamic arise in her romantic relationships in adulthood: seeking affection where it is withheld and enduring selfishness, neglect and manipulation in hopes of love. Ikpi explores how memory is often undermined and warped by mental illness, erasing lengths of time at will or turning the everyday into a cache of shame.

*I'm Telling the Truth, but I'm Lying* remains one of my favourite reads, despite how painful it was to get through. Ikpi lays bare the experience of her illness in a way that transcends the written text: it becomes a conversation, a living testimony. Hints of her career as a spoken word artist come through in the lyricism of the writing. Elsewhere, that rhythm and the “diaspora poet” vibe in some of her phrasing would have put me off, but her sincerity more than makes up for it. The collection speaks to what it means to go into the world as your parents' child, and the details of mental illness and recovery in a way that is both deeply personal yet universal.

#### Winter 2025: Present Day

It's still painfully cold and academically just as harsh, but February feels lighter than December. Spring bulbs are pushing up, the equinox is closer, and the Sun has returned to daytime. I went into this piece wondering if there



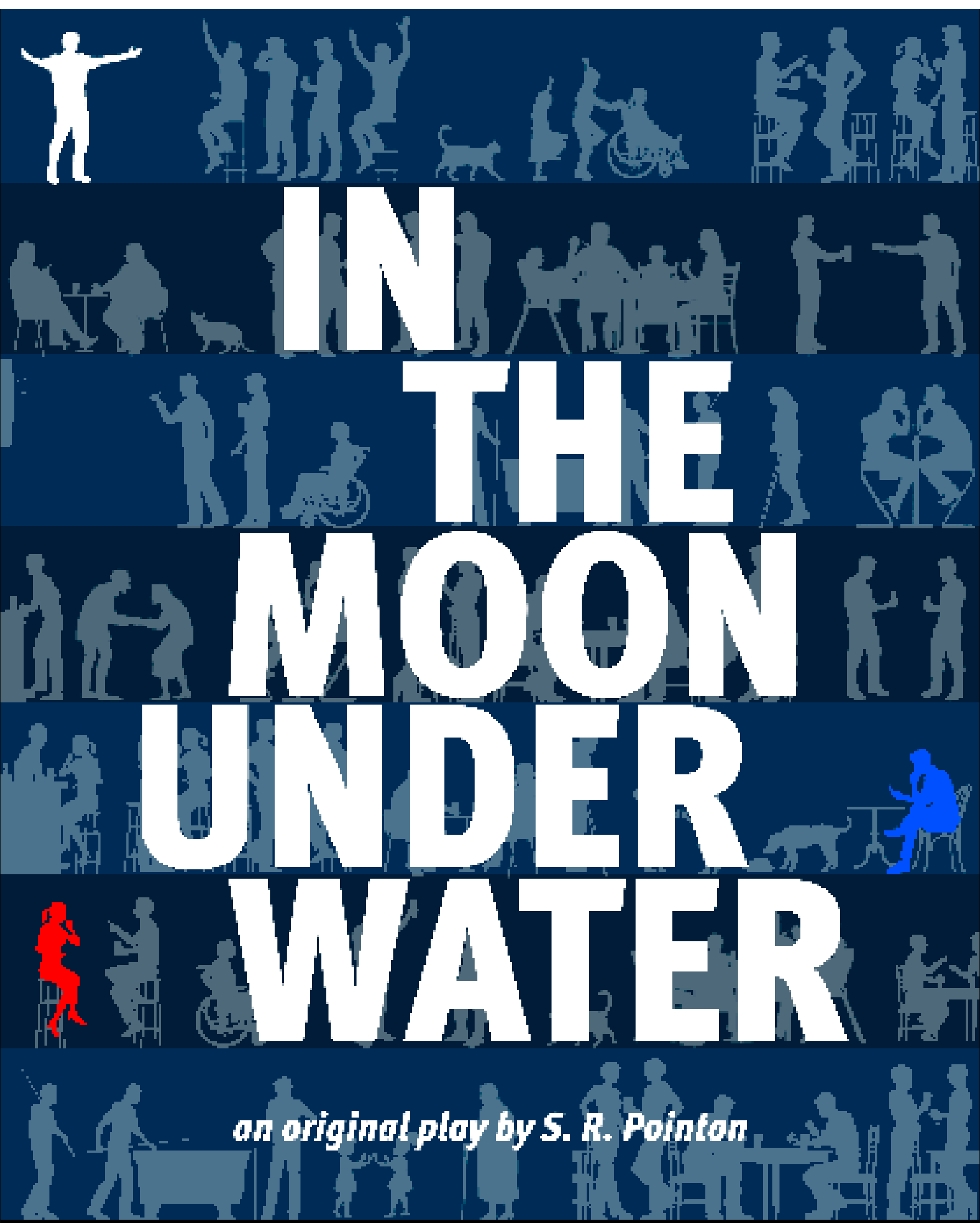
was a tenable link between this time of year (poor winter weather, university pressure, etc.) and my reading choices but honestly, I have no answer. Whether I was unknowingly reading stories that I could relate to or taking advantage of my low mood to tackle difficult, emotionally wounding books I can't say. I think it was both: seeking ‘empathy’ through something in which I saw myself, and reasoning that I'd have less to lose by reading sad things when I was already depressed. I wanted to feel something, to escape feeling nothing.

Out of curiosity, I asked some friends if they too shifted into a seasonal reading pattern. Some agreed, suggesting *Poppy War* (R.F. Kuang) and *The Silent Patient* (Alex Michaelides) as other apt novels, or delving into philosophy or Gabor Maté's work on psychological trauma and addiction. Interestingly, one messaged me to say they read more pornographic literature in winter.

Obviously reading preference is highly individual, as are the confounding variables of mental health and academic performance. The influence of nature and the seasons, however, is broadly similar, whether you notice and submit to it or not. So, before winter is over, if you can, use your commutes and free time to read something moving; something you can introspect over or project onto.

Let yourself be thawed out of coldness and into thought.





# IN THE MOON UNDER WATER

*an original play by S. R. Pointon*

**DRAM  
SOC**

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Shows start 19:30



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imperial  
college  
union

## FOOD&amp;TRAVEL

# Montenegro, a Balkan gem



Podgorica, Bay of Kotor, and the Ostrog Monastery introduced Montenegro's underappreciated beauty and cultural wellbeing.

**Food & Travel Editor**  
**CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL**

**A**n invitation by my university flatmate friend to come and visit her sister and family at her home spurred my trip to Montenegro. The

unrenowned area of Balkan country south of Croatia borders Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Albania and the Mediterranean Sea. A quaint little country with a population of merely 617,000 spread over a surface area roughly nine times that of London, its loose density is quickly made noticeable

by the vastness of dry tundra and highlands. When my friends described the countryside as "filled with hills," I found the description undermined the height of these small mountains. My first thought, as a German, was what a great place it was for a short hike. My friends just rolled their eyes.

## Podgorica

Our first night, my friend, her sister and I spent in a small hotel, owned by friends of my lovely hosts, renovated to the utmost modern standard, with walls and ceilings bare of the old wooden underlying facade, mixing tradition and modernism into a comfortable setting. Podgorica becomes very hot and dry in the summer, reaching temperatures of 33°C, with the sun never hiding its scorching power. We were grateful for the cool night and stone walls.

The following morning, we met with my friends cousins and friends for brunch, enjoying an noteworthy omelette with whipped spinach and toasted sourdough, a dish that I still dream of today. I was shocked to see it priced at only €8. For five people, the bill was no more than €70 including drinks.

The staff spoke little English, so I was grateful for my friends. I did learn

to say "Jedan Americano molim" (one americano please) and "Hvala" (thank you).

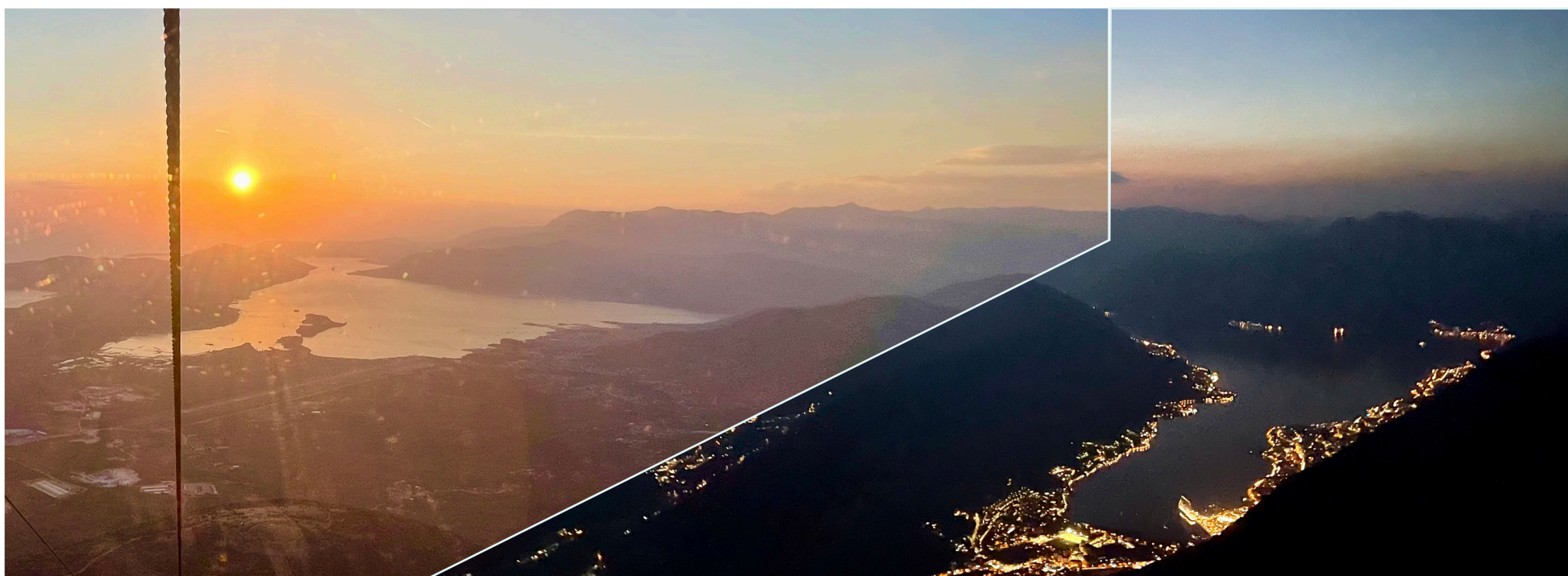
As we sat, my friends reached across the table, spilling the newest gossip about individual customers sitting around us. Apparently, everyone knows everyone. My friends would point out people they went to high school with on the streets, with the newest updates on everyone and their families.

We did not stay in the capital for long, as there was not much to see in terms of tourism. We quickly drove past a historic tower before making our way to the coast. Montenegro has a meager train system and is a car-centric country, with no trams or trains running and only buses available.

## Bay of Kotor

The two hours spent travelling to the Bay of Kotor went by as fast as the wind, with chatter and naps filling the time. Once we arrived at the coast, my friends, playing tour guide, began listing facts such as model Adriana Lima having lived in this specific building and how Budva is the coastal town to party in, similar to Palma or Ibiza.

They also brought out a map to explain that the Bay of Kotor is split into



The mediterranean coast and the four bays at sunset. The way we saw the sun set, the way down we saw the towns light up. Charlotte Probstel



four smaller bays, each pinched into the mountains. We were to stay in Kotor, the most inward town. After enjoying creamy gluten-free, sugar-free pistachio gelato and ordering a quick pizza at the restaurant, Pronto, we arrived at our two-bedroom apartment, owned and rented out by friends of my friends.

Dinner began at 8pm at Catovica Mlini, a high-end hidden restaurant with its own wall of celebrities, including Novak Djokovic. I expected a crowded restaurant with a long waiting line. To my surprise, it was half-filled and quiet. We enjoyed ourselves greatly, speaking in peace and taking our time enjoying our fish-paste, grilled bread, risotto, and fresh grilled fish.

The following day opened with a late breakfast of traditional savory spinach and cheese filled pastries before heading to a private beach. A popular destination for many Montenegrins, this beach avoided most of the stresses of a beach vacation: parking, finding chairs, food, drinks and fine sand that would fall into every crevice of our bags and clothes. Having reserved two weeks in advance, my friends strolled in and we began a day of alternately swimming in the warm salty sea and reading, protected from the sun by some shade. We left sand-free, grateful for the pebble beach.

In the evenings, we enjoyed delicious dinners in various stunning ports around the bay. The food was well balanced with potatoes, vegetables and fish, while the candle-lit atmosphere welcomed a good time. I tried and delighted in the highly sought after dessert – Krempita – a whipped vanilla cream placed between two layers of crispy puff pastry.

One evening, we went to the Kotor-Lovcen Cable Car at 6:30pm to view the sun set across the bay. With a stunning view that lasted the full 11 minute cable car ride, we had a breathtaking bird's eye sight of the bay and the sea. I could not look away.

After the sunset, the sun's orange-red hue lingered at the horizon, and we saw the street-lights crusting around the coast of the bay, forming a string of golden light in the darkness. At that moment, I knew I would

recommend Kotor Bay as an easy-going beach vacation in southern Europe over any popular tourist hotspot.



From top to bottom: Our stay in Podgorica, the Ostrog Orthodox Monastery, Perast  
Charlotte Probstel

### A welcoming culture

The following days were little to no different, except for the introductions to my friends close-knit family. Cousins

are introduced as siblings, aunts and uncles as parents. I felt a strong sense of community and a support for one another.

I especially understood this when we all sat down for hours with the welcoming owner of a beach bar called Pirates in the town of Perast. The owner knew my friend's mother, aunt, and sister, as he and some of his staff, about a year ago, had helped them for an hour with their car-troubles. In my home country, the staff would have told them to call someone or to fix it themselves.

Another cultural trait of the Montenegrins, although not unique to this country, is the fight for the bill. I was often not allowed to pay without risking deadly looks from my hosts. Contrary to my culture, where we split everything, I became creative in my sneaking successes to pay when my friends were away or asking them in the kindest manner I could conjure.

My friend told me the Montenegrin culture is very generous with gifts, of which I caught a glimpse of when their parents gifted me two bottles of wine, a large jar of honey, a litre of olive oil and some strong plum liquor. My bag got 6kg heavier.

### Ostrog Monastery

Before we returned to Podgorica, my friends made it a point to drive out of the bay to visit the world renowned Ostrog Orthodox Monastery, known to grant miracles.

A haven for Orthodox Christians, Catholics and Muslims, built high within the rock of a mountain in the centre of the country, you find yourself in place of reflection, gratitude, and prayer. It is tradition to visit the open casket of Saint Basil of Ostrog, and then purchase candles to light inside a small hot chamber, lit by warm firelight, and pray for the living and the dead.

Pilgrims will donate clothing and very specifically designed bracelets. Mattresses are provided at the monastery for anyone who wishes to sleep there and spend some time with their religion alone in a safe space.



# 10 diseases that humanity really *really* should have gotten around to dealing with already

## 10 Pedophilia

Kiddy fiddling, being a nonce, the Diddler. All names for this terrible disease that targets the most vulnerable in society. Whilst we will not go as far as saying that children are an oppressed class, we will say that its particularly heinous to target those who cannot consent to your groping feel. What makes it worse is the number of men who justify doing it to teenage girls under the guise that “they’re mature for their age”, or that they are attracted to petite bodies, or “she just turned 18, it’s fine.” Not to mention the supposed men of God who use their power and authority to abuse young boys. If it was not such a joke in society and performed by lots of powerful men, it would have been cured long ago.

## 9 Russell Group Degrees

What even is a Russell Group? The fact that you have to clarify still that you went to LSE or Imperial, rather than Southampton defeats the point of the classification. If I can tier list the Russell Groups (perhaps this is an article for another time), we need to abandon the term. Bring back the idea of UCL, LSE, ICL, and KCL leaving the Russell Group behind and forming the Oxbridge-London “golden triangle”.

## 8 Video games

Videogames need to end. If you want to argue with me that you play story-based, independent games with beautiful art, I will hear you out. But they are just a slippery slope to Valorant and being a weeaboo. I have wasted too much of my life on YouTube Shorts watching

this one random guy play “prop hunt” on Call of Duty. Not only this, but Discord is a breeding ground for groomers. A disease that manifests itself in young children through gateway drugs like Mario Kart and Fifa, and eats away at your adult mind with the Class-As like Genshin Impact. Dress to Impress, however, is feminist.

## 7 Bisexuality

A modern fad used not only used as a stepping-stone for full-blown queerness, but as a cultural appropriation manipulation tactic. Having a bisexual partner is probably one of the worst things life can offer you. Insecure about your partner cheating on you? Well, now everyone is a threat! You thought his or her mates were a good shout to avoid co-dependency in your relationship, but now you are doubting that a sleepover with anyone is cool. Not only is bisexuality confusing but even has its own poor-cosplaying aligned aesthetic attached which has plain old heterosexuals hopping along for the fun without paying the toll.

## 6 Running

Runners are awful people. Not only do they promote unnecessarily inhumane body images, but they do not shut up about the virtuosity of running. “I can’t stay late at your house party, I have a 10K to run tomorrow. Please consider sponsoring me, I’m running to support artisanal basket makers in the Global South. Yes, it’s the same charity as Rory Stewart’s wife. They are actually family friends, and it was a shame



since the champagne socialists at Labour cut their funding.”

You have met the type; they make excuses to not do anything fun yet expect you to give both your emotional energy and money to the endless pyramid scheme of charities you

are convinced are made up.

## 5 Diets with names

Eat whatever you want. I am not telling you to be an omnivore, but to just shut up and eat what you want. Veganism this, carnivore that, keto diet this, anorexic that, juicing, fatphobia. Pescatarians are just trying to get vegetarian clout without any of the ethical reasons or environmental impact. Eat what you want, eat as much or as little you want, and be as quiet as I tell you.

## 4 Masturbation

Gooning, which is not even a synonym for masturbating, is a common theme in brain rot discourse. Why is it in you to touch yourself, to pull on the devil’s tassel and share it for the world to see? It’s gross, it’s disgusting even, and it makes a mess. Maybe Imperial students would be able to socialise if they were not tugging on their wangs for hours on end. Not to mention, self-love is a sin. Bring back insecurity, imposter syndrome, and bringing sexual baggage with you to another individual’s life.





**ARIES**

This week you quote the good parts of your breakup text for endorsement during the elections.



**TAURUS**

This week your botched penis enlargement surgery makes an appearance at post Varsity drinks.




**GEMINI**

This week you accidentally submit your 10,000 word mpreg omegaverse fanfic as your manifesto.



**CANCER**

This week he wants to DOCK but you've got no foreskin on your COCK so you will have to FROT.



**LEO**

This week you ask your friend to place the bet for you so you still get into heaven.



**VIRGO**

This week you organise your revision schedule and firm you're going to have to get a few UTIs to get a first.



**LIBRA**

This week you realise your ex was low-key right about your hamartia.



**SCORPIO**

This week you realise resits are inescapable if reincarnation exists.



**SAGITTARIUS**

This week you have to cancel your dogging weekend because March edged and blue-balled the spring.




**CAPRICORN**

This week your shitty, shit-ass boring stinky breath boyfriend does another annoying thing and you still don't leave him.



**AQUARIUS**

This week you beat your grandma to hip replacement surgery after you get fisted.



**PISCES**

This week you use Urban Dictionary to get you off.



Either they are so general that they could apply to anyone, or so specific that you can tell the writers were definitely having a circle jerk or are in a psuedo-intellectual polycule.

**2 Heart Disease**  
In 2016, the WHO recorded 56.7 million deaths with the leading cause of death as cardiovascular disease causing more than 17 million deaths. In 2021, there were approximately 68 million deaths worldwide. Are you even dead unless your heart stops? Responsible for 32% of global mortality, nothing else, except one thing, could be more deserving of the top spot. Heart failure is responsible for 100% of the world's deaths. Brain death does not count, because Imperial students are still considered alive.

**3 Horoscopes**  
They need to end.  
The only thing worse than reading horoscopes is being one of the low-lives that write them.

**1 Being middle class**  
Middle class people are boring. They are dull, and uninspiring, and they think they know better than you because they holiday in New York and own an Aga. Middle class people also like to act cool, but they simply cannot. Think about the coolest people you know, and if they are middle class I am sorry to tell you, but you are a sad little loser. Just because you think its twee to enjoy small plates and own Salomon XT-6's, does not make your "art" any good, or your politics, or anything for that matter. Shakespeare wrote for the masses, and he is immortalised for his bisexuality (unfortunate) and dick jokes (high-brow). He captured time immaterial and is a bard for the ages. Martin Amis is a nepo baby only enjoyed by people that supper at a club (not Soho House), whose works capture the shite vibe of London in the 90s for a specific subset of media class wankers, all of whom formed a very incestuous friendship group during their times at *Cherwell* and *Varsity*. They talk about

The Secret History but they are neither secret, nor have history, nor huge amounts of money, old or new. Notice how almost every Prime Minister since Harold Wilson has been middle class-ish. John Major was a hood rat by all accounts, but he failed so miserably because he co-opted middle class tendencies (being economically right wing). If more of the middle class were ashamed of who they were, the world would be a better place. Choose: be poor or have slave owner ancestors .



## SOCIETIES

# HAIR

MTSoc's biggest, brightest, and most euphoric show of the year

Societies Writer  
DAVID LATIMER

When *Hair* was first performed in 1968, the world was rapt with protests and looming social change. As the zeitgeist seems to be shifting again, it seems the perfect time for the Musical Theatre Society (MTSoc) to brush off the script and bring it to stage once more. *Hair* is a show about opposing social norms and challenging institutions and this came through vividly. The production was a truly moving, ecstatically joyous experience that was so full of life and could easily be deemed excellent.

Upon entering the Concert Hall, you could see placards and propaganda plastered over the walls, culminating in the main stage being completely covered. The signs were a mix of real '60s anti-war propaganda and signs advocating for contemporary issues, notably Palestinian liberation and fourth-wave feminism. All signs were painted by members of the cast, and the topics were chosen by them. This set dressing was a collective effort of all the stage hands and tech for the show, so credit is due to everyone involved.

One of the things that made *Hair* a unique show its involvement of the audience. On Broadway, the audience is encouraged to get on stage with the performers during the final song. In the MTSoc production, members of the Tribe frequently spoke to the crowd,



The main cast in the midst of an anti-war protest. Daisy Joy

giving them flowers and pills. Instead of on-stage participation, the audience was given some of the placards to wave during the final scene. The cast even stayed in character before the show and during the interval, meditating and giving out flyers. This was similarly used in DramSoc's performance of *Saint Joan* but it is even more effective for a play like *Hair*. The crowd felt involved in the Tribe and that made each beat more impactful.

The songs were, by far, the greatest part of the night. The stage band nailed the feel of the '60s, especially with the guitar. Every song in *Hair* is addictive and was done perfectly by the cast and band. The best number was the finale, "Let the Sunshine In". The entire cast sung in chorus, even switching to acapella halfway through. The song "Aquarius" was accompanied with incredible choreography, and it was clear the cast was having an amazing time.

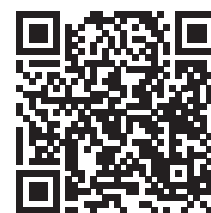
Every performance in the show was astounding and it was great to see a mix of both new faces and MTSoc stalwarts having major roles. Many actors had to quickly switch roles (and costumes) which allowed them to showcase how quickly they could change between personas seamlessly. The lead role of

Sheila was performed excellently by a fresher, Ishita Anand. Not only did she give an emotional performance during the spoken sections, but her singing during her solo songs was incredible. This isn't to say that vocal talent was the only thing on display. Charlie Barklam, who played Berger, showcased a hypnotic command of the stage. Every step and hop was made with overflowing energy, impressively integrating his character into his behaviours. Other notable actors were Harry McCarthy and Jasmine Ajaz who played the male lead Claud and the woman in love with him, Jeanie. Harry's performance as a conflicted but terrified young man with the veneer of a comfortable existence was tangible and even during scenes without dialogue he was able to convey a range of emotions. Jaz's Jeanie was instantly likable and was the source of most of the nights' laughs. Conversely, her singing garnered some of the largest audience praise, and quite rightly so. Both of them are in the final year of their degrees, and *Hair* was their final show; what a way to finish. Similarly, this was the final show that Oli Keene will direct. It would be easy to get gloomy about this, but the freshers in this show and throughout MTSoc give me faith that

the society is in good hands.

*Hair* is the best of the Imperial shows that I've seen and I'm looking forward to the next one. Next week, you can see both *The Guy who Didn't Like Musicals* (MTSoc ticket below) and *In the Moon Under Water* (DramSoc tickets below), with the latter an originally written play by a member of DramSoc.

MTSOC  
Tickets



DRAMSOC  
Tickets





## PUZZLES

**Puzzles Editor**  
**IVIN JOSE**

# CROSSWORD

"An apple a day keeps the boredom away"

(5 pts.)

[illegible]

### Across

1. The killing floor had a weapon before a rebellion uprising. [8]
4. Speed of incoherent spree of making pancakes. [6]
7. Nothing for a crazy person in backstep losing time. [7]
8. Sloppily mitigate not good ape. [7]
9. North America and China come together over love of crisp. [5]
11. Special place of education that's French. [6]
13. Cut back a little with a criminal. [5]
14. Era about thinly sliced core of this planet. [7]
20. Therapist is ridiculously rude after being false. [5]
21. Top unconventional detox messed up black and white cat. [6]
22. Craze for energy that has a current. [5]
23. How see through is gemstone? Most capital! [7]
24. Reveal I slept around with fifty. [3,4]
25. One who's been taken out keeps four in case of targeting? [6]
26. Red suntan created without a deep back

rub. [8]

## Down

1. Clap for software that has praise. [7]
2. Someone who struggles to stand up for themselves messes up a cinema. [7]
3. Fuel from Autumn month has an energy short. [6]
4. Part that the boss takes in the morning. [5]
5. Topless rack has to cope somehow - show-off! [7]
6. Searching for a king in looking at everything. [7]
10. Quiet American in the small hours... [4]
12. ...awake and bound to completely change. [5]
13. You finish degree at swamp. [5]
15. Break down a schedule. [4]
16. Undeveloped terrain spoiled by nothing inherently cool? [3,4]
17. Freak out native after skinning bodies completely. [7]
18. Someone who shouts out profanity only half a baller. [7]
19. Ready and having power, it becomes the driver's seat. [7]
21. Absorb ketamine without me cheekily. [4,2]
22. Rhythm that is measured? [5]

### Across

1. To do with the liver. [7]
5. A corrupt or deplorable place. [7]
9. Stars Adam Scott, takes work-life balance a bit too seriously. [9]
10. One of the shards of Roshar in the Stormlight Archive. [5]
11. Stars Rebecca Ferguson, there's only one rule: don't ask to leave. [4]
12. A device that can be attached to a computer but is not an integral component. [10]
14. One of the conflicting titles of the painting depicting the fall of Gallifrey's second city. [2,4]
15. A mixture of solids or liquids in a suspension of air. [7]
17. Toxic heavy metal, Sid Baker's line in 6 DOWN "that'd be the \_\_\_\_". [7]
18. A large rowing boat used to carry passengers. [6]
19. Fictional beings brought to life in visual media by actors. [10]
21. Editor-in-chief of Vogue. [4]
24. Where the India Gate is. [5]
25. Stars Aaron Egerton, all he has to do is befriend a serial killer. [5,4]
26. ABBA, "touch me gently like a summer evening

breeze". [7]

27. Furious. [7]

## Down

1. 2020 Horror movie about a family who invites the wrong people over for Christmas. [5]
2. The Great Yorkshire Events Centre in Harrogate. [9]
3. This is the last week of \_\_\_\_\_. [4]
4. The piece of furniture where important meetings are held. [10,5]
5. A type of military strategy that uses toxic substances as weapons. [8,7]
6. Stars Gary Oldman, British spy show about MI5 rejects and quite possibly Apple TV's best offering. [10]
7. Previous. [5]
8. A beta blocker for your eyes. [7]
13. Stars Jared Harris, an epic sci-fi saga. [10]
16. Stars Harrison Ford and Jason Segel, when a therapist breaks the rules. [9]
17. Gallifrey's second city. [7]
20. Troubled by something. [5]
22. Multiplied, divided, subtracted, \_\_\_\_\_. [5]
23. South East England graffiti artist known for painting on trains. [4]

# 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 |    |  |    |  |    |

# ENIGMATIC VARIATIONS

## No. 2: GONE FISHIN' by LATIMER

(50 pts.)

In eight clues a consecutive group of letters must be removed, which may affect the surface reading and may not always leave real words. These groups of letters can be rearranged to form things you may find after having GONE FISHIN', which are to be inserted into eight otherwise normally-clued answers to form new words. Numbers in square brackets refer to lengths of grid entries, which may not line up with clue definitions in all cases. The use of Chambers Dictionary and the online dictionary Wiktionary is recommended as all entries appear in one or both.

### Across

1. Want shine but don't need rose casing. [4]
3. Strength of defence second best. [9]
9. In strange covers before good cry. [8]
11. Constant revolting son from third generation. [4]
14. Man takes one into emergency room at full speed. [6]
15. Outer layer used to be machine without a direction. [5]
16. German, me, French; different people. [5]
17. Vaster coworker after small drink. [5]
18. Operation leaves tingles within. [8]
20. Hulking mass is big with no interior, everyone run inside! [4]
22. Step about space, not today. [3]
24. Falling to knee, take heart and be with prayer. [3]
25. The wicked place gravity on tattoos, take charge. [7]
27. I know first off Marc donated core within instrument. [5]
28. Rank situated below Spanish lord. [5]
30. Wise guy is cold - break shell and work within. [3]
31. Flower undergoing intense grinding forms fuel. [8]
32. Two ancient figures flanked by Caucasus giant fiend. [5]
33. Times turn amber leaves a degree small. [4]
35. Regrettably, a girl was interrupted. [8]
37. Remove footwear to distract hound - without shoe, take off finally. [6]
38. Rise again ultimate weapon, in horror at first. [6]
40. Arrangement sends me back in unlimited distress. [5]
41. Brown specks nearly engulfing fossil. [6]
43. Born to run around course. [4]
44. Lowest degree of a light assortment packed in case. [9]
45. Nut also weird. [3]
46. Counter raging Lenin in central budget tending to it. [9]

### Down

1. Kingdom castle earl removing right to number of initial domains. [4]
2. Bombard with written up afterthoughts in morning. [4]
3. More weak trains housed in a striking panic. [7]
4. Group take one in place of production. [6]
5. Clutching token of love oddly isn't touching. [6]
6. Succeeding total capture of unknown. [4]
7. Show me rear ends first. [5]
8. Make up misdeed, almost arrested broken men without having mass. [5]
10. Sent back to make pie before first overstraining back muscle cell. [6]
12. Bring together ear in an extreme way. [3]
13. Do over person again and again, upset and almost accept internally. [7]
15. Burning wood not currently old enough. [8]
18. Nude child interrupted by work department handling people. [9]
19. Compose normal, short beat - odd on reflection. [8]
20. Chewing plant in still wetland takes time. [5]
21. Little lady disposes of several hundred in good stall. [9]
23. Runs away in November with me left. [8]
26. Speed Acton resident turns after losing leading conflict through new light. [4]
28. Antlered beast drags second after flower. [7]
29. Complete backpedal against vote initially favours elderly. [7]
34. Galahad's type for women taken by odd sage and played by the Chinese. [5]
35. Trunk rat maimed by types. [5]
36. Spirits of rat uncovered by the ocean. [4]
37. Waste your easy-going, steady veneer. [4]
39. Betrap regent primarily to turn one against it. [4]
42. Wage spent inside exhibit. [3]

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 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 |    |    |    | 30 |    |    |
| 31 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 32 |    |    |    |    |
| 33 |    |    | 34 | 35 |    |    |    |    |    |    | 36 |    |
|    | 37 |    |    |    |    |    | 38 |    | 39 |    |    |    |
| 40 |    |    |    |    | 41 |    |    |    |    | 42 |    |    |
| 43 |    |    |    | 44 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 45 |    |    | 46 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

# SUDOKU

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   | 2 | 6 | 4 |   |   |   |
| 6 |   |   |   |   |   |   | 9 |   |
|   | 2 |   | 9 |   |   | 3 |   | 5 |
|   |   | 3 |   |   |   |   | 1 |   |
|   | 1 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   | 2 | 9 |   | 3 |
|   |   | 5 |   | 2 |   | 7 |   |   |
| 1 | 6 |   | 3 |   |   | 5 |   | 4 |
| 4 |   |   |   |   | 5 |   | 2 |   |



# CRYPTOGRAM

Clue: Croziers Warmth (anagram, 2 words)

## How-to:

A cryptogram is solved by cracking the cypher in which an encoded phrase is written. 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!

R F U J M I R A J M I I D Q G O D J N

L V D Q U I I D V I J Z Q U R D D T

L J M A U D E A U M P U U T Z E F Z I

F D K I U , W O M P Z E N D P Z E R F U

I R K N O P F U V U F U A D K J N

P M R A F M I G M J J F Z W Z I A K I

L J M E R I F U N Z R I L Z E T

J U M Y U I . R F U A J M I I G U R D E

R K U I N M O I . Z R W U S M E M Q R U V

W V U M T Q M I R . R F U I K W X U A R P M I

R F U G U M E Z E S D Q J Z Q U . Z R

P M I R M K S F R Q V D G

U B L U V Z U E A U .

(3 pts.)

Anagram: (1 pt.)

Quote from: (1 pt.)

# GROUPING GRIDS

## 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.

Submitted by William West & Vittoria Dessi

|         |          |            |         |
|---------|----------|------------|---------|
| Keys    | Chestnut | Percussion | Steel   |
| Parsnip | Tan      | Brass      | Pewter  |
| Beef    | Copper   | Sepia      | Chicken |
| Wind    | Strings  | Umber      | Bronze  |

Medium (4 pts.)

1.
2.
3.
4.

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

|         |         |        |         |
|---------|---------|--------|---------|
| Hittite | Pools   | Ming   | Divan   |
| Futon   | Unites  | Settee | Ottoman |
| Leads   | Mingles | Binds  | Pork    |
| Inca    | Mughal  | Fuses  | Couch   |

Hard (5 pts.)

1.
2.
3.
4.

|  |  |  |  |             |
|--|--|--|--|-------------|
|  |  |  |  | Connections |
|  |  |  |  |             |
|  |  |  |  |             |
|  |  |  |  |             |

# COMIC

Submitted by Tengyu Zhao



Felix on the catwalk

## Puzzle Editor's Note

Dearest Puzzlers,

We did it! We’ve survived and reached the end of the spring term! To celebrate, we’ve got a jam-packed puzzles section for you this week.

The regular crossword features fantastic Apple TV series recommendations to keep your mealtime watches sorted. Meanwhile, our Cryptic Crossword Puzzle Master, David Latimer, is back with a terrifically tricky Enigmatic Variations—on top of his usual Cryptic Crossword. A quick correction from last week’s Cryptic Crossword: the missing clue for 17 Across should have been "Spin win against villainous fighter [5]." Well done to those of you who solved it anyway!

Now, onto the Leaderboard. Just in time for the final issue of the term, we’ve had a shake-up on the podium! Team GuineaPig holds onto first place, miles ahead of the competition. Team Experial has overtaken The Menu for second, pushing them down to third, with Bobby Tables closing in fast. But I want to congratulate every Puzzler who has taken on our challenges this term!

A heartfelt thank you to David Latimer for the Cryptic Crossword and Enigmatic Variations, 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.   | Team Experial            | 294                | 282 |
| 3.   | The Menu                 | 288                | 288 |
| 4.   | Bobby Tables             | 263                | 186 |
| 5.   | Tactless Tony            | 116                | 116 |
| 6.   | Team Doors Doors         | 85                 | 85  |
| 7.   | The Northerners of Acton | 66                 | 66  |
| 8.   | Hidden Variables         | 51                 | 51  |

## Previous Puzzles' solutions

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

Regular

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

Cryptic

|        |          |         |            |  |
|--------|----------|---------|------------|--|
| Bridge | Spoons   | Rummy   | Whist      | Card Games                                       |
| Tunnel | Road     | Sewer   | Railway    | Infrastructure                                   |
| Forks  | Knives   | Skewers | Chopsticks | Eating utensils                                  |
| Sheet  | Piece of | Dam     | Beach      | Homonym of a swear (with an Italian accent. . .) |

Medium grouping grid

|        |          |           |           |                  |
|--------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| Hyde   | Regent's | Greenwich | Richmond  | London Parks     |
| Meagre | Scant    | Minor     | Slight    | Meaning "paltry" |
| Cruise | Hanks    | Holland   | Petty     | Famous Toms      |
| Cruise | Wildlife | Family    | Adventure | Types of Holiday |

Hard grouping grid

## Cryptogram

“You know when you take one of your pictures, you capture something forever, just the way it is. Stories do that too. When we die, we turn into stories and every time some one tells one of those stories, its like we're still here, for them, we're all stories in the end.”

Anagram: Claire Linn = Nell Crain

Quote from: The Haunting of Hill House (TV Show)

Send a picture of your solved puzzles to [puzzles.felix@ic.ac.uk](mailto:puzzles.felix@ic.ac.uk) to get yourself or your team on the leaderboard! Partially completed Puzzles can still get you points! Send them in before the start of the Summer Term to be in our next issue.



## SPORT

# Recognising a season of success for Imperial Lacrosse

IC Lacrosse player Aaron, updates us on the club's recent victories.

## Sport Writer

AARON EDOBOR

Following the recent Bottle Match Varsity win, where RSM Lacrosse contributed heavily, Imperial Lacrosse continued to make waves. With multiple league wins, one national tournament success, and strong international representation, the club is proving itself as one of Imperial's top-performing sports teams, despite having no paid coaches.

Captained by Nathan Leppinen, the men's team is making history, standing 8-0-0 out of 10 matches in the Southeast Tier 1 league, putting them on track for an undefeated season. If they secure this, it will mark their 3rd league win in 4 years.

The men's squad also had an incredible run in the National Trophy, making it to Big BUCS Wednesday in Loughborough after defeating Kent, St Mary's, Bournemouth, and Cardiff. They now face Manchester Met in the final, marking the second time the team has reached this stage, with their first appearance being in the 2022-23 season, where they lost to Newcastle 10-5.

Several players are playing internationally and nationally, beyond the university competition. Player coach, George Jenkins represented Poland in the U20 Euros tournament. President Matthew Cawley, and Jacob Andrew, were selected for the Southeast England university lacrosse squad and the England Universities squad in 2024.

The women's team have been thriving,

despite undergoing a rebuilding phase. After losing several graduates, the women's team is currently in 3rd place in the Women's Southeastern Tier 1 league. Under player coach Cristina Fray the squad has been refining their strategy, with captains Lizzie Lawrence and Amisha Jayakumar leading strong recruitment efforts.

Captained by Azra Bakrie, the mixed lacrosse team continues to dominate, having made it to their third consecutive LUSL Cup Final (2023, 2024, and now 2025). After finishing as runners-up twice, they're determined to take gold

in the 2024-25 season. This year's final is set for March 8th, following key victories over RoHo and LSE.

Imperial Lacrosse is also responsible for hosting the biggest mixed lacrosse tournament in the South, the "Imperial Cup." This event features top teams, even including pro clubs like Home Nation Lions Lacrosse and Rainbow Rexes, as well as strong university squads from Bath, Bristol, Southampton, and Surrey. Impressively, Imperial's own team secured 3rd place out of 15 teams. The tournament was run entirely at Harlington.

I really think that Imperial Lacrosse's waves has gone under the radar so easily. We don't have paid coaches, with our own players coaching each other. With a season full of victories, finals, and international recognition, Imperial Lacrosse is proving itself as one of the most accomplished teams at the university. As the men's team chases an undefeated season, the women rebuild emphatically, the mixed team fights for gold, and international players continue to shine, this club is one to watch.



IC Lacrosse contributed heavily to the Bottle Match win last month. Lloyd T James



# Formula 1 – 2025 Preview

**Felix Sport give a rundown on the upcoming 2025 F1 season.**

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Many would have thought 2025 to be a year of little change given many teams likely already focused on their new concepts for the 2026 rules. However, given the incredibly close end to the 2024 season and the manic 'silly season' kicked off by Lewis Hamilton's shocking move to Ferrari, this year is shaping up to be a juicy year both on and off track.

## New Kids on the Block and a Few Familiar Faces in Different Colours

This year has more rookies than we have seen in a while, with Isaac Hadjar racing for Racing Bulls, Kimi Antonelli for Mercedes – who's bound to cause some spicy collisions at the front of the field – Jack Doohan (Alpine), who looks to already have Colapinto lined up as a replacement for him before even the first race, and finally Gabriel Bortoletto, who earned his seat at Stake F1 after a stellar F2 title triumph.

Lawson and Bearman also make their full-time debuts with Red Bull and Haas respectively. The Red Bull seat going to Lawson is seen by many as an unjust decision, believing Tsunoda had earned the call-up. Therefore, it's definitely worth keeping an eye on this seat, which historically has already been a bit of a merry-go-round.

Other than that, Ocon will be in Haas red, and Carlos Sainz in Williams blue, no doubt with a point to prove after being ushered out of Ferrari to make way for an incoming Hamilton. He will also finally provide a benchmark for the true quality of Alex Albon, who hasn't previously had a good enough teammate to truly challenge him.

## The Ferrari Dynamic

Without question, the strongest and most interesting driver pairing is the Leclerc-Hamilton line-up, with some hailing it as the strongest pairing since Prost and Senna. This will be a critical year for both drivers, as Hamilton looks to prove he still has it after being beaten by Russell last year. Leclerc will also be determined not to be the second Ferrari across the line, as a loss

to 40-year-old Hamilton would no doubt leave some questioning his revered status as a future great.

## The FIA-F1 Rift

Since Abu Dhabi 2021, there has been growing tension between the FIA and F1 as an organisation. This has not changed, despite the drama around an 11<sup>th</sup> F1 team finally being resolved with Cadillac set to join in 2026. Never-ending complaints about inconsistent stewarding and nonsensical rulebook wording continue, and events such as the unfounded attack on the integrity of Susie and Toto Wolff at the start of the 2024 season have not been forgotten within the paddock. No doubt tensions will continue to build this year.

## Testing

Day 1 of testing saw Lando Norris pick off where he left off, clocking the fastest time of the day on a set of C3 mediums, with a time of 1:30.430. A substation failure which halted power to the circuit resulted in a lengthy delay to testing. Esteban Ocon, now driving for Haas, put in the most laps of any driver on Day 1, completing 88 in total. Day 2 saw the quickest time of testing, with the Spaniard Carlos Sainz clocking a 1:29.348 in the Williams to edge out Hamilton by three hundredths of

a second. Hamilton's new teammate, Leclerc, rounded out the top three. The last day of testing was somewhat troubling for Red Bull, with the reigning champion Verstappen spending much of the day oversteering and understeering around the circuit. While the Red Bull looked like a challenging drive, Verstappen still took the second fastest time of the day with a 1:29.566, 2 hundredths off Russell in the Mercedes.

## Australia preview

The new season returns this weekend in Melbourne. McLaren after testing look like they are team to beat. The six rookies begin their first season in F1, newbies Liam Lawson and Kimi Antonelli could even challenge for the podium. This season marks the last for the current regulation cycle – with little room to develop, it's looking like it will be a tight grid particularly in the midfield, as teams will be shifting their focus to develop 2026 projects.

Will Lando Norris being the bookies favourite for the Championship prove to be accurate in Melbourne? How will Lewis Hamilton start at Ferrari? Are Red Bull on the back foot? The opening race this Sunday will kick off this widely exciting and anticipated season – be sure to set your alarms for a 4am race start!



Lando Norris, 2024 Dutch Grand Prix. Steffen Proßdorf