Win an iPod Touch!

Has the time come for porn to change? Exploring adult material.

Top date ideas for Valentine’s Day! Find a quirky way to woo the special scientist in your life.

Keeping Science Sexy since 1881!

Sexiest Scientist Awards 2012
We reveal the winners as voted for by you.
I suppose the idea for this issue started with a trip to the toilet last June. Whilst discovering the wonders of LaTeX late one night in a cold, concrete office in Southern Germany, when all the 1 am coffee building up in my bladder told me that it was time to spend a penny. I heaved my sleepy self out of the swivel chair and shuffled down the long, dimly-lit corridor towards the bathrooms. I had no luck though, the gents was out of order. Disaster. The two flights of stairs to the storey above seemed insurmountable at this hour so I quickly calculated the risks and went into the ladies room instead. In there I found something surprising. At this particular prestigious physics institute’s building, the gents is replete with six urinals and six cubicles however, the ladies was fitted with a paltry two cubicles.

Perhaps this seems trivial, they are only toilets after all, but I’ve since heard that wasn’t an isolated case, but rather the norm in science departments worldwide. I can’t help thinking that, however innocent the intention might have been, this is architectural sexism - a gender bias cemented into the buildings of the university - expressing an expectation that there will never be the need to provide facilities for equal numbers of men and women, and this got me thinking.

So please, dip in to discover more about hermaphroditic, penis-fencing flatworms, the unconscious male bias of scientific literature and some thoughts on pornography and censorship.

Ps. RCSU elections are coming up soon! If you would like to take over editing Broadsheet and want to know what the job entails, send your questions to broadsheet@imperial.ac.uk

Luke Kanczes, RCSU President
Sexiest Scientist 2012!

The results of that most exclusive of surveys has finally been collected and the competition has been fierce. It is with pleasure that I reveal the top sexiest scientists 2012, as voted for by Imperial students. Dylan Eales reports.

3. Marie Curie
The now official sexiest female scientist of all time comes in at number three in this exclusive poll. According to the great woman herself, “science has a great beauty” - it is clear now that Imperial can only agree.

2. Richard Feynman
The one man who has single-handedly won the hearts of all physicists comes in second. His presence, quotability, academic accomplishments and views that “Physics is to mathematics as sex is to masturbation” has earned him a special place amongst far too many Imperial students.

1. Brian Cox
Yes, this year’s wonder of the universe himself is now Imperial’s sexiest scientist. His perpetual wonderment shown for almost every physical phenomenon, as well his poetic science (e.g. his description of the sun as “a colossal fiery sphere of tortured material”) has proven to be infectious, hence affording Cox the top spot this year (by a large majority).
Gender & Science

Vanessa Hume explores how the seemingly objective language of science can conceal gender stereotypes.

The title Gender and Science often makes people think of the role of women in science and the inequalities often associated with this. However, discussions of gender should not automatically allude to women and this association has been conflated over time. This will not be a feminist article describing how women are just as capable as men to be good scientists as illustrated in the examples of Marie Curie, Barbara McClintock and so forth. For one, I am not a feminist but I find it rather interesting how underlying social views can become apparent in the way we think and write about things, especially in the supposedly objective realm of science and to me the most intriguing example of this is gender preconceptions. I intend to present a brief glimpse into the deeper pervasive influences of gender perceptions and how these are subconsciously realised in the scientific work that goes on around us.

Gender in itself, as opposed to sex, is a modern social construction with its origins lying in feminist movements of the 70’s, which wanted a way of describing the social and political roles of men and women beyond their biological distinctions. It could be further argued that science in itself is a social construction with its unique culture and unsaid social norms that as academics we all unknowingly follow in the way that we practice science. There is a lot more to it than just the production of knowledge through testing and proofs and it is the personal rooting of scientists that can perhaps explain why. Language and culture have played a part in the portrayal of scientific phenomena and processes than scientists would care to admit, due to the use of metaphors and narratives in scientific discourse.

The cultural properties of gender have been attributed to processes that occur within and between the two sexes such as sex determination and fertilisation which has led to a bias in the terminology used to describe them. In embryology, the development of sex is often told from a male perspective and based upon the presence or absence of male hormones, overlooking the fact that female sexual development also requires the presence of female hormones.

The description of fertilisation also has quite distinct connotations of gender bias as can be seen from this textbook:

“The egg is non-motile and aids survival of the maternal genes by providing large stocks of raw materials for embryo growth and development. The sperm by contrast is optimised to propagate the paternal genes by exploiting this maternal investment: it is usually highly motile and streamlined for speed and efficiency in the task of fertilisation” (Alberts et al., 2008)

Textbooks are supposed to be the epitome of scientific objectiveness presenting an overview of the facts for students to memorise. However, it is representative of the views that permeate our culture with strong and active men that provide the life force and weak and passive females that only provide nutrition.

The male/active and female/passive dichotomy has been pervasive in our culture for generations

Although these examples may seem small not very significant there are many more out there and together can have a wider effect. There are potential implications for redefining what is normal for each sex and these gender biases in science can naturalise associations of gender inequality in society. Science can give authority to these associations and it has a social responsibility to be aware of the impact it has on our culture.

Wassarman discovered a glycoprotein on the surface of the egg known as ZPA3 which activates a signal pathway upon binding with sperm changing the surface of the egg allowing the sperm to enter. Wassarman has consistently referred to this glycoprotein as the “sperm receptor” even though by biochemical standards it plays a ligand role in the fusion of the sperm and egg and subsequent literature does refer to it as a ligand. This is a seemingly small mistake on Wassarman’s part but if we look at an image of a generic receptor-ligand interaction maybe we can understand why the error arose.

Ligands tend to insert into receptors therefore by referring to ZP3 as a “sperm receptor” it appears that Wassarman’s underlying gender preconceptions about penetration during sexual intercourse have filtered through to his scientific research.

The image of the passive egg/female has been so influential that a significant scientist has altered the standard biochemical nomenclature of receptor-ligand interactions to fit in with his social perceptions. Paul

The male/active and female/passive dichotomy has been pervasive in our culture for generations. Aristotle emphasises this point strongly in his hypothesis of fertilisation in “Generation of Animals”. In fact, his ideas on conception were carried until the late 18th century when the true mechanism was realised by advances in microscopy.

The image of the passive egg/female has been so influential that a significant scientist has altered the standard biochemical nomenclature of receptor-ligand interactions to fit in with his social perceptions. Paul
Building a Better World with Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company. They work with the world’s most successful companies and government agencies to improve their businesses in many ways, but increasingly it is to help them move to a more sustainable business model. Broadsheet asks Peter Lacy, Managing Director of Sustainability Services for Europe, Africa and Latin America at Accenture, why sustainability matters.

BS: Accenture is a well-known, prestigious company but the details of your work remain a mystery to many students, why is this?

PL: Accenture is a huge company with around 244,000 employees in 120 countries. We offer management consulting, technology services and outsourcing to the majority of the world’s most successful businesses. We operate in a variety of sectors to improve the performance of organizations through management, operational and technology-led changes. Increasingly, many public sector organizations and companies are looking to develop more sustainable ways of working, making sure that they combine social and environmental stewardship with commercial or financial performance.

BS: Could you give me a concrete example of one way Accenture is doing this?

PL: Sure: let’s take cities. 70% of the world’s environmental footprint comes from urban areas. You and I are in London now, currently half of the 7 billion people on this planet live in cities but that will be increasing to 70% by 2050. Accenture is working on the concept of ‘Intelligent Cities’ to improve energy efficiency, transport and waste management that will help the world make the transition to a new era of sustainable urban living.

BS: What would you say was most appealing about Accenture to science students looking for a career in consulting?

PL: Accenture has a commitment to improve the way in which we all live, work and play. One way is through practically applying technology innovations, as well as tried and tested processes and business models to give our clients a competitive edge. We are results driven and we get stuff done.
“Cut that out Billy, you’ll go blind!”

**David Carr** disables his opinion filter to investigate the place of porn in our culture and considers who, if anyone, comes away badly from it.

Oh Billy, Billy, Billy – lock the damn door next time and get on with whatever you want. And be a good boy and clean up the keyboard after you’ve finished, yeah? Because what you do in the privacy of your own room, including watching consenting adults having sex, is no one’s business but yours – providing no one gets hurt in the process of course. And actually, the whole going blind thing is a myth too – thankfully.

However, one of the arguments against porn is that people do get hurt. And one of the feminist arguments against porn is that it is typically the women who are most hurt: pornography objectifies women, treating them as commodities for the use and abuse at the hands – and willies – of men. I can understand the argument and, after all, the word porn is derived from the Greek for prostitute. Clearly porn originates from a male sexual hegemony. But that is now changing. ‘Fem Porn’ is made by women for women, just one of the thousands of niches in porn that cater for all manner of tastes.

In The Female Eunuch, primordial feminist Germaine Greer encourages women to empower themselves by tasting their own menstrual blood. There is some logic to the sentiment, but if we treat it as a metaphor only, thus avoiding any hygiene issues, what gets in the way of female sexual equality is not porn. Pornography does not cut across the grain of sex, it runs through it.

You see, for people who have not watched porn, all porn stars – a very old-fashioned term now since a lot of porn is filled with anything but stars – have no pubes. First thing, as I have just alluded to, this is not true – you can find all sorts of bush if you are so inclined. Second thing, I’m sure the ‘Sex in the City’ girls were banging on about Brazilians long before your average Joe Porno knew anything about them. And thirdly, no man kicks a woman out of bed because of hair, but they’d definitely shave off their own to get her there.

There is a related issue, at least in the media, of a rising fad for labial surgery. Porn stars also all have perfect pussies, don’t you know, and women are rushing out at the behest of their sex-crazed partners to chop off their dirty lips. Whatever this is, it is certainly not a feminist issue.

Making porn into a feminist issue only creates a different hegemony, whereby the tastes of the vocal anti-porn feminists dictate what is appropriate for all. But if their argument is basically that porn is exploitative to women then what about homosexual (both male and female) or transgender porn?

**Who gives a fuck?** The modern western world is saturated in sex, dripping with it, wet. The Sun newspaper has had a daily topless model on page 3 for 40 years and even our very own Felix has a centrefold each week; and though no one would mistake either of these for serious pornography, they show that our culture has a much more relaxed view of the human body than it used to. Heterosexual and homosexual revolutions in the twentieth century brought sex out of the bedroom, essentially de-sinning the erotic. With the demise of sexual taboos and the emergence of the contraceptive pill women could take promiscuity into their own hands too. And they could get paid for it.

There are other arguments against porn though, like those propounded by the writer Tony Parsons: porn turns men and boys into sexual hermits. If he’s right, then the only people having sex in the future will be porn stars – an interesting dystopia, but not a sensible conclusion to draw from the small minority of men who have porn addictions. Parsons has, in his Daily Mirror column, also used the case of Vincent Tabak’s penchant for violent porn and its supposed link to his murder of Joanna Yeates to attack all types of blue material.

Viewing porn as a liberalisation of sex, it becomes almost desexualised. This has two consequences:

1) Being so easy to get hold of, so easy to dip into, porn dilutes ‘real sex’. Personally though, it makes me value the real thing even more. But then I blush at the video for ‘Dip it Low’, which brings up the second point

2) What we don’t have to worry about is the naughty stuff on your laptop, but the ‘pornification’ of our everyday culture.

The chicken and egg analogy here is: does porn shape our sexual preferences or do our sexual preferences shape porn? But the

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* I’m a feminist too*  
* It’s extremely difficult to write against the feminist angle from a male perspective without coming across as chauvinistic, because the idea of ‘masculine’ in the conventional sense is of an unemotional personality with an insatiable appetite for pornography and casual sex. But I don’t think I am against the feminist angle, really, if the feminist angle is based on ideals of equality between the sexes. What I am against though is the usurpation of the ‘feminist’ label for trivial and frankly perverted agendas. I’m speaking partly about the recent ‘Muff Marches’ against the apparently porn-influenced obsession with shaving off pubic hair.

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* David Carr

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* With a pinch of salt.
question is meaningless. There are shifts one way and the other and we become more conservative or liberal depending upon many things. Here, pop videos are more influential in dictating our sexual outlook than porn videos.

Totes on trend…
Most porn is made for men, there’s no doubt about that, and so porn reflects men’s ‘interests’ – including an unfathomable penchant for showing – in all its graphic detail – male ejaculation. In this cum-loving model, the woman’s role is primarily to please the man#, but there is also a lot of emphasis on the female orgasm. Is it a stretch to say that the education of men by porn has actually been beneficial to women’s sex lives? Without porn would we still be asking our ladies to ‘lay back and think of England’?

Striving to rebalance this situation, a new breed of women porn-enthusiasts have taken the cameras and started filming what turns them on. One such pioneer is Anna Span, who spoke to Broadsheet about her life in the industry. Span – real name, Anna Arrowsmith – has been a Liberal Democrat candidate and is now launching weconsent. org in support of anyone who works in the sex industry. She sees censorship as one of the main problems facing not only porn itself but also how we view sexuality in society; and the media is partly to blame: “TV and newspapers reflect porn through their own ideals of bodily perfection, but 50% of the market is amateur – porn is far more democratic than any other industry in terms of the body.” (See ‘All against censorship’)

If our attitudes to pornography change to embrace positive sexual values, which I believe they can, it must be a good thing, right? In such a world, the epithets ‘player’ and ‘slut’ will become somehow re-aligned and sexual freedoms will be equal among the sexes.

But think of the children!
The only recommendation for censorship I would make on porn – and call me the kettle – is to protect children. Most of the responsibility here lies with the parents to put in place the appropriate internet security. But even then an inquisitive teenager will find a way to view the good stuff. Just like with any pubertal development, porn will catch its prey when it can and each individual will be forced to make a choice for themselves at some point.

And that choice can be made with a better awareness if pornography is added to the curriculum. Yes, that’s right – I’m advocating porn in school. Not watching it, obviously. I’m against the nanny state as much as any normal human, but I can foresee porn hygiene classes. And before you think that this will lead to lunch-time queues for quickies in the broom cupboard you must realise that there’s nothing less sexy than having your teacher tell you all the ins and outs of S-E-X.

In the process of the extensive personal research I’ve done for this article I’ve had to stare in the face my own views about porn – head-on. Is this merely a justification for my own habits? Am I ignoring the worst of porn for my own peace of mind? Porn, like anything really, has its own particular historical narrative while at the same time being embedded in the social context of its day, a constantly changing and ephemeral thing. In the liberal Western world that I like to consider home we have taken a path towards freedom and equality. Porn represents one of the things – perhaps one of the major things – by which, through an ongoing discourse, those in the future will measure how far we’ve got.

For now though: just lock the damn door Billy.
The female orgasm is a much debated topic: Why does it happen? When does it happen? (and even for some) Does it happen? There are many myths surrounding it – and a plethora of literature trying to explain them, some of which seems to be helpful and some that really isn’t. However, a noticeable theme amongst readily available information on the subject is where to lay the blame when a woman does not experience an orgasm, especially when with a partner.

"some [people] never experience orgasms at all"

The inability of a woman to orgasm is often classed as a sexual dysfunction – on the NHS webpage citing female sexual problems (1) ‘orgasm problems’ has its own section. Woman who are unable to orgasm are advised to seek the advice of their GP or participate in psychosexual therapy to root out the cause. Whilst all of the advice on what to do seems very sound, and would help to allay the fears of someone concerned about their lack of orgasm, it does serve to imply that women who can’t orgasm have something wrong with them. It is not until you reach a page entitled ‘Is it necessary to have an orgasm to enjoy sex?’ that it is mentioned that ‘some [people] never experience orgasms at all’ (2).

The point is that even a well respected organisation such as the NHS appears not to be immune from the societal idea that there is someone or something to blame for the lack of an orgasm, and that it can always be fixed. Type in female orgasm myths to Google and the first website that appears is AskMen UK. The author of their ‘orgasm myths’ page (Isabella Snow – Sex Education Correspondent) writes that the “ultimate responsibility for a woman’s orgasm belongs to her” and “[A] man’s efforts are certainly helpful, but if she’s not achieving orgasm she has no one to blame but herself” (3). This rather unhelpful stance completely ignores the interesting statistic that 1 in 5 women have difficulty in achieving an orgasm, regardless of how much sexual stimulation they have had (4).

A desire to improve the female sexual experience is no bad thing. However, there seems to be a certain expectation of how women should respond and that if they don’t respond in that way they might need fixing. The NHS does state that “Trying other ways to show or achieve these things [intimacy, love and feeling aroused and sensual] can be more satisfying for some people than always trying for an orgasm” (2). If an orgasm doesn’t happen then, statistically, a woman is pretty normal, she just needs to have fun in the bedroom in other ways...

Sources available on request: broadsheet@imperial.ac.uk

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**Orgasm**

**Ingredients**

30ml Cointreau
30ml Baileys Irish Cream
20ml Grand Marnier

**Preparation**

Build all ingredients over ice in an old fashioned glass or shot glass. Garnish with cherry.
Science Challenge 2012

Enter the RCSU science challenge with an 800 word answer to one of the judge’s questions for your chance to win a grand prize of £2,000 and a tour of CERN!

“WHAT ARE THE FIVE MAIN ETHICAL ISSUES THAT FACE MODERN SCIENCE AND HOW DO WE TACKLE THEM?”
- Lord Robert Winston

“How should politicians best make use of science?”
- Mark Henderson, Science Editor, The Times

“What is the role of science journalism in the 21st Century?”
- Pallab Ghosh, BBC Science Correspondent

“What scientific breakthrough should we focus on to provide sustainable food, energy and water for nine billion people on a planet of apparently finite natural resources, and why?”
- Peter Lacy, Managing Director of Sustainability, Accenture

Deadline: 7th March 2012
rcsu.org.uk/sciencechallenge
Doing it like they do on the Discovery Channel

Chris Yates exposes the deviant habits our distant cousins in the animal kingdom employ in order to pass on their genes.

Picture the scene. You’re a male animal and, by whatever means, have managed to woo the female of the species. Maybe your pheromones smell like the finest cologne, your song sounds like a symphony orchestra, or your backside looks like a Jackson Pollock. However you’ve achieved it, just mating isn’t guaranteed to pass on your genes. You need to ensure you fertilise the eggs in order to get any offspring and having put effort into finding a mate, animals have a number of ways of making sure this happens.

One of the first requirements for successful fertilisation is, of course, an egg. Many animals, therefore, have induced ovulation, whereby the female only ovulates following sex. An example of this is the domestic cat[1]. Tomcats have barbed penises, which are used to stimulate the vaginal wall during coitus. This, combined with biting the back of the neck, causes release of gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) from the hypothalamus, leading to release of luteinising hormone (LH) and follicle stimulating hormone (FSH). Together these hormones cause ovulation, increasing the chance of successful fertilisation.

Oocytes grow within ovarian follicles and when an oocyte is released from a follicle, the follicle develops into a corpus luteum. This remains in the ovary and produces progesterone, which prepares the uterine lining for pregnancy. In humans, the corpus luteum decays if the egg is not fertilised, but in voles this is controlled by mating, with genital stimulation leading to the maintenance of the corpus luteum, preparing the uterus for pregnancy.

Unfortunately, even if you mate and the female ovulates, there is still no guarantee that you will be the father of any offspring. In many species, females will mate with multiple males and there is competition between the sperm of these males to determine which will be the successful father[3]. Because of this, males need some way of ensuring that their sperm are the victors. For example, male flies release enzymes within their semen which can degrade any sperm already in the vaginal tract[4], while the human penis has evolved to be able to scoop out the semen of competitors during thrusting[5]. In both these cases, the most recent male to mate with the female is the most likely to fertilise the female.

Another common way of ensuring you are the father is to ensure no one else can mate with the female by means of a copulatory plug, blocking the vagina to prevent mating. These are used by a variety of animals, such as rats, spiders and bees. In bumblebees, the plug also releases linolenic acid, which reduces the female’s sex drive[7]. Of course, you would assume that the male is free to go off and mate again, but this is not always the case, such as in one species of spider, the male’s penis snaps off inside the vagina and forms a plug, preventing re-mating by both the male and the female[8]. There must be easier ways to make sure your partner stays faithful!

A more passive-aggressive approach is taken by mice, in which pregnant females exposed to the scent of a new male may spontaneously terminate their pregnancies[9]. The Bruce Effect, as it is known, relies only on the scent of the male and only occurs when the new male is sexually mature and non-castrated, hinting at a role for pheromones. Males can take advantage of this by directing their urine towards the female and, as dominant males leave more scent markings, pregnancies fathered by subordinate males are less likely to prove successful.

Many interesting examples of sexual behaviour come from competition between males for females or vice versa, but one of the weirdest must be that of hermaphroditic flatworms of the genus Pseudobiceros. These have two sharp penises which are used in ‘penis fencing’. The winner is the first to inject sperm into the other flatworm, which produces eggs and becomes the mother[10]. Because being the mother generally requires more energy than being the father, violent sexual conflicts such as this are more common in hermaphrodites, where both are competing to be the father and to avoid being the mother[10].

Of course, just as in humans, not all animal sexual behaviour has reproduction as its goal. For example, in bonobo chimps, up to 75% of sexual activity is thought to be non-reproductive, with sex thought to play a part in resolving conflict and maintaining social bonds[11], while some chimps have sex in exchange for food. There are also examples of prostitution in female penguins, who will mate with males in exchange for material with which to build a nest, while homosexuality has been observed in some penguin species.

The world of animal sexual behaviour is a wild one, with many fascinating mechanisms in place across the animal kingdom to try and outdo the competition and ensure that genes are passed on. It’s interesting to consider, like with the shape of the penis, what the evolutionary roots of other human sexual features may be and how it all comes back to that battle for sex.

Sources available on request: broadsheet@imperial.ac.uk
Broadsheet needs a new logo. We’re looking for a new eye-catching mark which expresses Broadsheet’s free, science-loving ethos. Let your creative side loose and send your designs to: broadsheet@imperial.ac.uk.

All designs must be in a digital vector graphic format and received by 18th March to be judged by the RCSU’s executive committee.

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www.apple.com/uk/go/save

Win an iPod Touch!
Sexy Dates for Scientists

With the most romantic day of the year waiting eagerly just around the corner, Vanessa Hume and Clara Francesca Clark Nevola bring you their hot tips for all the best dates in town.

A Sunny Date
If the plan was to go to Venice but the student loan didn’t stretch quite that far, top up your Oyster card and make your way to Little Venice. With any luck, the sunshine will collaborate and you’ll be greeted by a sparkling canal, gleaming barges and a tow-path lined with spring flowers. Have a relaxed pint at the Bridge House Pub or, if it’s a special occasion, get the Waterbus to Camden Lock or London Zoo in a traditional canal boat.

The London Water Bus. Saturdays and Sundays only in winter time.

Bletchley Park
Home to the Enigma machine and the birthplace of Alan Turing’s Logical Computing Machine, Bletchley Park is a must see for not just mathematicians but anyone with a keen interest in spies and code breaking. A short train ride away, Bletchley Park is a good reason to go on a day trip beyond zone 3.

Urban
Yalla Yalla is a colourful, cheery and fun place to have lunch. Being just off Oxford Street it’s the perfect for an eating break while shopping (or window shopping), and it offers the hungry customer a wide range of sharing platters, meze and substantial mains. To maximise the possibility of choosing and minimising the budget, sharing a couple of starters and a main is perfect, and what could be more romantic than dipping pieces of bread into oily Lebanese dips on shared platters?!

Whilst you chose what to eat you’ll be brought little plates of olives and pickles and served water out of beautiful decorated glass pitchers, and treated to the waiters’ friendly, amusing, and slightly invasive patter—small details that contribute to making this “Beirut Street Food” experience one to remember.

Yalla Yalla 1 Green’s Court London, W1F 0HA
020 7287 7663

Geeky (and free!)
As the title has already eloquently explained, this is probably the best item on the list. A two minute walk from Imperial, the Science Museum IMAX has a great array of 3D documentaries ranging from Deep Space to Coral Reefs, and the best thing it’s totally free for Imperial students. Yes, this does mean it’s time to whip your Student ID out and stalk in like a VIG (Very Important Geek). If you’ve been staring at that girl on the other side of the lab bench for the last three months, this is the time to make a move: she’ll still think you’re a bit of a creep but nobody at Imperial could possibly resist such an opportunity for pure nerdiness, could they? The Science Museum also offers a late night event on the last Wednesday of every month. These nights are good fun with plenty of activities on offer including Speed Dating so if you can’t find someone to take maybe you can find your soulmate there.

Next Lates event is the 29th February and the theme is the Science of Surgery.
**Kew Gardens**

All girls love flowers so for a stunning and diverse collection of flora the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew are worth a visit. Their ‘Tropical Extravaganza’ display opens for a month on the 4th February for one month and looks to be a breathtaking display.

**Cinematic**

If you happen to be strolling down the South Bank one evening, enjoying the City’s lights reflected on Thames or browsing through the Book Market, consider dropping in on the BFI for an evening of good cinema. On at the moment are “Wise Cracks” (a Woody Allen fest), “Dickens on Screen” and “The London Comedy Film Festival” together with an eclectic mix of classic, obscure, historical and artistic films. For a romantic evening look out for Raj Kapoor’s confusing but emotional “Fire” (1 Feb 17:30 and 4 Feb 20:20), Powell and Pressburger’s dramatic and stunning “The Red Shoes” (10 Feb 18:10 and 14 Feb 18:10) and, definitely not to be missed, an Italian masterpiece of art, love, charm and cinematic suspense: the 1940s “Casablanca” (10-23 Feb). Whether you come out weeping and in need of sustenance or high on cinematic suspense it’s probably time to make your way to one of the BFI’s bars. The one at the back is the place to go if you want to loll about on retro chairs, talk loudly about your latest existentialist thoughts and bump into a few famous film peeps.

**Gastro**

If good food is your thing then ring your date and head for 32 Paddington Street, where you’ll find Casa Becci tucked away between Paddington Street Gardens and Marylebone High Street. From the checked red and white table cloths to the seriously good tiramisu, this family run restaurant is the real deal, very friendly and very, very Italian. If the Italian menu is too much to cope with, trust yourself to the Set Menu of the Day, sit back and enjoy the very reasonably priced treat that will ensue. House wine is served by the litre or half-litre carafe, a rarity in this country which adds both to the charm and the enjoyment of the meal. Buon appetito!

Casa Becci 32 Paddington Street, London, W1U 4HE
020 7935 7031

**Natural History Museum**

Right on your doorstep this is an ideal place to take that biologist you’ve had your eye on. If you want more than to just look at the cool fossils they also offer a guided tour of their ‘Spirit Collection’ which will give you the chance to see the world famous Giant Squid. The Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition is also definitely worth going to and will be running until the 11th March. And if you want something really romantic then the After Hours event on the last Friday of every month will give you the opportunity to view the exhibits with mood lighting and champagne; the perfect venue to woo your science lover.

Next After Hours event is the 24th February.

**Planetarium at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich**

Physicists, put your SSP knowledge into practice and take your girl to the Planetarium in Greenwich. Situated at the Royal Observatory in scenic Greenwich park, it’s one of the more romantic places to go. If you want to impress your date then the park is the perfect place to have a picnic overlooking the glowing skyscrapers of Canary Wharf.

BFI Southbank, Belvedere Road, South Bank, Waterloo, London SE1 8XT 020 7928 3535

**Grant Museum of Zoology and The Hunterian Museum**

These are slightly more unusual but if you think the way to someone’s heart is through formaldehyde then these are the destinations for you. The Grant Museum of Zoology located in Bloomsbury next to UCL is the only zoological museum in London and houses a large collection of preserved animal specimens. The Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons in Lincoln’s Inn Fields offers a similar experience but with a focus on humans.
The Attraction Principle

Niall Jeffry delves into the minds of those with a curious penchant for scientists and asks “what’s wrong with being a celebrity scientist?”

At a time close to the end of last term, I realized that I was hearing, cutting through the corpuscular murmuring and the squeals of rubber soles being dragged along the belly of the Sherfield building, the unmistakably personal sound of my phone crying for attention. Embarrassed that my phone was showing me up in public, I hurried to answer.

“Are you free to stalk Robert Winston?”

I’d heard about this! Her Majesty’s (slightly) secret services had obviously seen my potential and had chosen to pluck me away for a daring mission: stopping Lord Winston and his nefarious machinations. As a point of fact, this wasn’t the case. The crowd induced mental fuzz cleared and I recognized that the body of this disembodied voice belonged to a guy who lived in my basement. My collies were momentarily wobbled...

I think that’s what people immersed in more literary spheres call a “hook”, although, to be truthful, I’m not quite sure what it was. However, it’s at this point which I must check myself and make sure I stay within my jurisdiction, as by now you’ll be wondering how this fits within the “Sexy Broadsheet”, and our editorial Glorious Leader (he’s nice really) will be wondering what the hell he’s reading. So bear with me and let’s see how we can stick to our brief.

My subterranean friend has some kind of man crush on Robert Winston, and has pragmatically set himself up worshipping the professor as an idol. And as no golden calf either: Winston is the favourite teacher that whole generations have shared. So upon learning our Lord had a position at Imperial, he sellotaped his courage to the sticking place and made his mind up to be the merciful hunter. He was to get his quarry in his sights and not pull the trigger. What this symbolic shot would have represented, God only knows.

Once again I have to recheck the charter for this particular “sexy” issue and consider that my metropolitan hobbit most likely doesn’t like his target in that way. Having not recently checked and memorized the various forms of Greek love, which in modern times probably have the credibility of Nick Clegg, I cannot quote those Grecian definitions verbatim. However, I would have thought that his feelings can be squeezed into at least one of those classical pigeon holes.

In the world extending beyond my basement there is one name that cannot be ignored if we are forced to discuss the topic of “sexy” scientists. Most magazine and newspaper journalists call him a Rock Star Physicist, though at Imperial we know the title belongs to a certain guitarist called Dr May.

Really, barring Hawking and Einstein, there is only one physicist that most people know. The mention of his name has the potential to divide a room of science lovers, though Tweets, Facebook statuses and actual human contact show that there are people who really think he is endearing and, in the words of the internet, a “pin-up professor”. He’s probably currently standing on a mountain, flicking back his hair and pointing at stars as I write this. Everybody has heard of Prof. Brian Cox.

And it’s easy to pooh-pooh the idea of a celebrity scientist, though perhaps not as easy to defend that argument. I don’t think it can be fully said that Cox is a veneer on the surface of science, though that itself might not necessarily be a bad thing. He is a real physicist and is a truer representation of one than the tweed underpanted presenters of the past.

He has some magnetic charisma and therefore he has people who tag along with him who otherwise may have not. If you were to say, as some strangely do, that people (6 million of them) only watch his programmes because it’s him who presents them, I fail to see where the problem is. Think of all the people who have been given that opportunity to take a glimpse through the collective eyepiece of Hubble and realize that we can all see creation. One could quibble and complain that he misses out the important “stuff”, but no one is going to settle in for a mathematical proof, and in the circumstances they really have no value. The masses may still cry out, “I \[(x^2 + y^2 - 1)^3 - x^2y^3 = 0\] Brian Cox!”

He thumps the tub and waves the many flags of science, for science. It’s agreed science-type folks need to get better at that, hence the current RCSU competition. Some critics can get quite rightfully frustrated, because individuals who think that progress is a worthless investment are constantly complaining at this or that tabloid gobbet making it seem like that science is a bankrupt currency, yet the critics simultaneously complain when likable Brian Cox doesn’t seem to be serious or penetrative enough. Brian Cox shows the world that scientists are, occasionally, real people. For us, real, “sexy” or even just lovable scientists aren’t necessarily a risky venture. 😊
**SEX TAPES!**

**Watersports - Jean Painlevé**

A French polymath with a keen interest in Surrealism, science and experimental cinema, he's best known for his portfolio of over 200 videos covering everything from liquid crystals to the sex lives of octopi. You can watch them at the Tate Modern's 'Poetry and Dream' collection (or search youtube) for a mesmerising new perspective on underwater lovemaking.

**Queer - Isabella Rossini**

If you visited the Natural History Museum’s much-talked-about ‘Sexual Nature’ exhibition, you might have taken a few minutes to watch a lady imagining what sex would be like if she were a polygamous deer, knife-phalused bed bug, or perhaps a sequential hermaphroditic limpet? These were Isabella Rossini’s award-winning videos, which might make you question your preconceptions on what’s ‘natural’ when it comes to sexual reproduction. You’ll never be able to look a drake in the eye again...

www.sundancechannel.com/greenporno/

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**PICK-UP LINES!**

The eight cringiest, geekiest lines Broadsheet can find. Guaranteed to get a groan...

“Would you like to see the exponential growth of my natural log?”

“I don’t know if you’re in my range, but I’d sure like to take you back to my domain.”

“If you were oxygen, I would want to be an alkali metal so I could get in you and explode.”

“Hey baby, I got my ion you.”

“I’m attracted to you like the Earth is attracted to the Sun— with a large force inversely proportional to the distance squared.”

“Would there be any resistance if I tried to take you ohm?”

“If you were a concentration gradient, I would go down on you.”

If I had a choice between DNA and RNA,
I would choose RNA,
Because it has U in it.
A Poetic Vision of a Union in Albertopolis:
The Queen and the Deans Conceive The College

Jasper Bon Chance, 2012