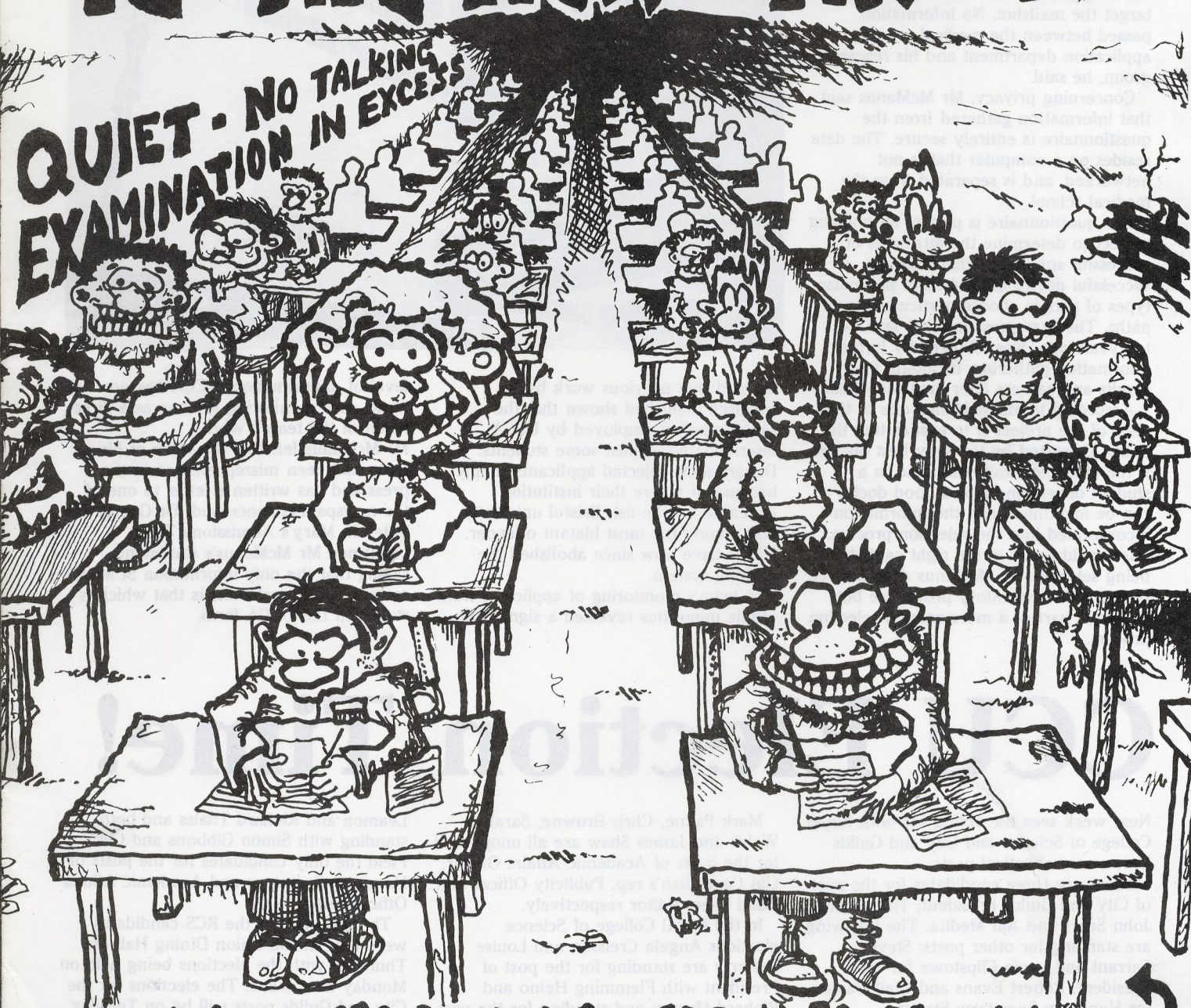


22nd February 1991 Issue Number 894



Felix

IC: THE NERD FACTORY



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Natural Selection

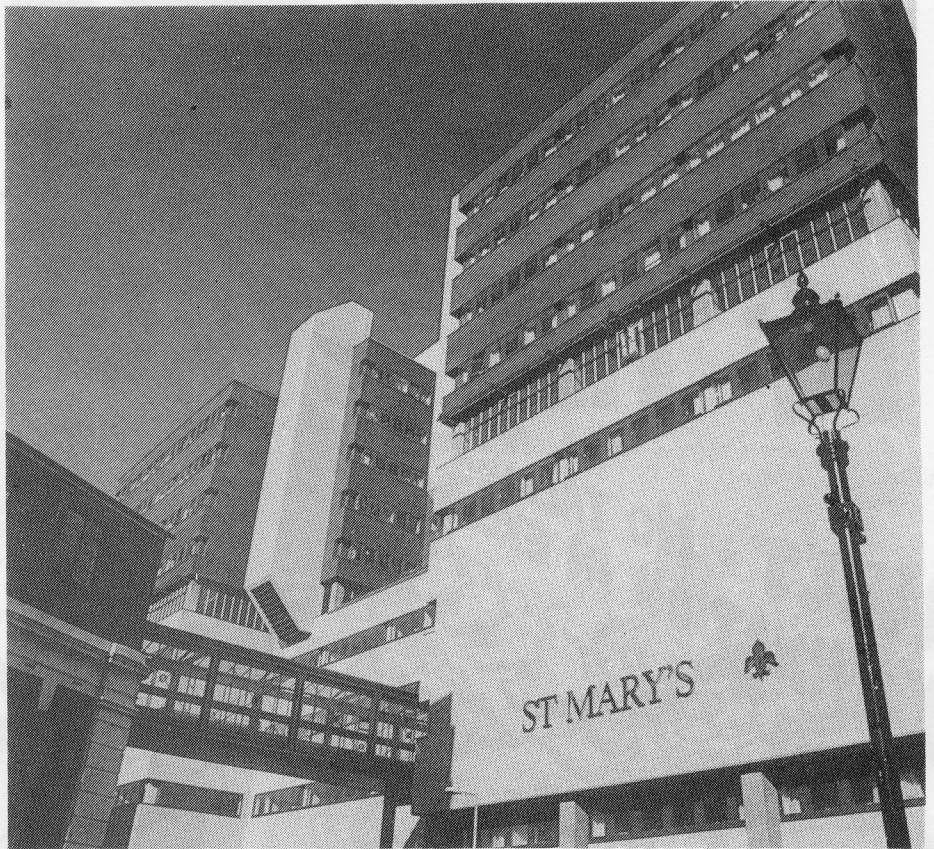
St Mary's psychology department has sent out questionnaires to all applicants for St Mary's Hospital Medical School and four other medical schools in the country. Press reports, originating from a recent article in the Times Educational Supplement, implied that the completion of the questionnaire was in some way linked to the success of an application.

Chris McManus, head of the research group which produced the questionnaires, dismissed the allegations, stating that completion of the questionnaire was entirely voluntary. He added that the only applications received by medical schools were UCCA forms and that the list of applicants were merely used to target the mailshot. No information passed between the medical school's application department and his research group, he said.

Concerning privacy, Mr McManus said that information gathered from the questionnaire is entirely secure. The data resides on a computer that is not networked, and is separated from the medical school.

The questionnaire is part of an ongoing project to determine the attributes of a successful applicant, what makes a successful doctor and whether particular types of people choose particular career paths. The first questionnaire, sent out ten years ago, was followed by further information gathering, including final results and careers after medical school.

According to Mr McManus one of the aims of the project is to ensure that the public is treated by the very best doctors. If the character traits that lead to a student developing into a good doctor can be identified, and the information incorporated into the selection process, this should result in the right candidates being selected. Mr McManus does not see this as a discriminatory procedure but rather as part of a more refined selection process.



He said that previous work by his research team had shown that the ranking policy employed by UCCA discriminated against some students. Departments rejected applicants simply because of where their institution appeared on the list; Bristol university was among the most blatant offender. UCCA have now since abolished the ranking system. The team's monitoring of applicants from ethnic minorities revealed a significant

level of discrimination. UCCA has now set up its own monitoring scheme as a direct result of the team's work.

Mr McManus felt that the work of his team had been misrepresented in the press and has written a letter to one of the newspapers concerned. Dr George Tate, St. Mary's Admissions Tutor, confirmed Mr McManus's statement, saying that the only information St Mary's receive about applicants is that which is stated on the UCCA form.

CCU Election Time!

Next week sees the voting for both Royal College of Science and City and Guilds Union non-sabbatical posts.

There are three candidates for the post of City and Guilds President; Tim Proctor, John Sears and Ajit Medtia. The following are standing for other posts: Steve Farrant and Lucia Clipstowe for Vice-President; Robert Evans and Niall Davies for Honorary Secretary; Steven Holbrough and Mark Jackson for Entertainments Officer.

Mark Payne, Chris Browne, Sarah Welsh and James Shaw are all unopposed for the posts of Academic Affairs Officer, Old Centralian's rep, Publicity Officer and Guild Sheet Editor respectively.

In the Royal College of Science elections Angela Creissen and Louise Rafferty are standing for the post of President with Flemming Heino and Richard Murray and standing for the post of Vice-President. For the post of Honorary Junior Treasurer Robert

Leamon and Richard Thaiss and both standing with Simon Gibbons and Chris Field the only candidates for the posts of Honorary Secretary and Academic Affairs Officer respectively.

The hustings for the RCS candidates were held in the Union Dining Hall on Thursday with the elections being held on Monday next week. The elections for the City and Guilds posts will be on Tuesday.

Candidates for the Royal School of Mines elections will not be known until next week.

Hub Explained

According to a college source Imperial's Hub office is about to advertise two clerical positions in 'The Guardian' media pages. Hub costs were not listed on last year's college accounts and this has led to confusion and suspicion about Hub's brief.

According to Lady Clare Ash, in overall charge of the office, Hub's activities are manifold. One of her main responsibilities is the pastoral care of long-term academic visitors and their dependants. Lady Ash and her assistant are particularly concerned with the welfare of non-English speaking dependants; help can range from finding part-time jobs for visitors and their families to finding schools for visitors' children. Lady Ash pointed out that the Union is the official caretaker of student welfare at Imperial and that, apart from the Hub office, there is no parallel organisation for academic visitors.

The Hub office is also responsible for organising the Christmas Caper and Summer Fair. Hub also organises a series of dinners throughout the year for new academic visitors and new members of staff.



Lady Ash disclosed that there has been some discussion about the creation of a new administrative post in the Hub office with an accommodation brief. Lady Ash said that she was unaware that the personnel department had made a decision to advertise any posts related to the Hub Office. Miss Cox, personnel officer for Hub was unavailable for comment yesterday.

Cock – up!! Deadline for manifestoes is actually 12.30pm, Friday 1st March, not as mentioned in the editorial...ASF

Lost Theatre

The Lost Youth Theatre, 450 Fulham Road, is holding two fundraising nights this weekend. The theatre has suffered funding cuts following the disbandment of the Inner London Education Authority and is struggling to make ends meet. Lost is always keen to attract not just audiences but new members; situated in

the heart of Fulham it is very accessible to IC students.

The weekend's entertainment opens tonight with 'The Blue Dye' an up and coming band from California, followed on Saturday by an evening of cabaret and improvisation. Both evenings start at 9.30pm, nearest tube Fulham Broadway, entry £2.50.

New Balls Please!

King's College mascot, Reggie, is soon to be reunited with his genitalia, say King's College Union (KQCU). The Mascot, a male lion made of concrete filled bronze, was taken by City and Guilds College Union (C&GU) in the spring of 1989. His wedding tackle were then removed, allegedly with a tin opener.

When ransomed back to KQCU for £100, his genitalia were not returned. Instead of which, they were hung behind the bar in our Union Building (Beit Quad). At about 8.00pm on Saturday KQCU, having occupied the bar and cleared an escape route out of the quad, removed Reggie's wedding tackle from behind the

bar and ran from the quad.

Several members of IC Rag attempted to stop them, but were unsuccessful. Steve Farrant, Rag chairman, was flung against one of the benches in the quad, fracturing a rib. Commenting that one of the assailants had been in his grasp, he said, 'I had three darts in my hand, but I couldn't bring myself to use them.'

Although King's may now be considering declaring Reggie's testicles a separate violate mascot, it seems more likely that they will be reattached to him, replacing the temporary set he is currently wearing.



False Arrest

A man was arrested in Garden Hall by a plainclothes policeman on Sunday 17 February for attempting to sell a bicycle. The bike was believed to be one stolen from a Garden Hall resident earlier this year. The man, who failed to identify himself as a student, was later released when the police could not prove the bicycle was stolen property.

Earlier that day, the same man had entered the hall and offered to sell a bicycle to one of the residents for £10. The student accepted and paid a £2 deposit. However, the student was suspicious of the man's intentions and contacted the warden, Ian Metcalfe. Mr Metcalfe immediately informed the police, who sent a plainclothes officer along to the scene. Later that afternoon, when the man returned with a racing bike to the hall, he was met by the officer and arrested.

The man was later released and given a warning for trespassing on private property. The student concerned, C H Wong, a PG student in Mechanical Engineering said; 'Well, it's a good deal. Cheap for just £10. The police couldn't prove it was stolen, so why not?'

The same man has been seen within the College grounds on other occasions. Another resident of the hall, Jean-Phillipe Carchano, recalled, 'Yes, this is not the first time I have seen this man, last time he tried to sell a TV for £5.' At around 8pm on Sunday evening, the man was seen again on College grounds, having a pizza in Belushi's.

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OPINION

The Status Quo
 In 1967, David Steel's Abortion Act made abortion a reality in Great Britain, ostensibly for 'hard' cases, ie rape, handicap, danger to the health of the mother. But such was the wording of the act that in practice, by extending the meaning of 'medical reason' to include emotional distress or inconvenience, it could be interpreted as allowing abortion on demand. Of the 183,000-plus abortions carried out in Britain in 1989, fewer than 10% were for 'hard' cases, yet it is by citing this small minority of cases that most of those who support abortion attempt to justify the remainder. The recent letter in FELIX from Athena was a typical example of using circumstances involving perhaps a few hundred cases to justify the remaining hundreds of thousands of cases. It is important to realise that the vast majority of abortions are for far less grave reasons, such as career disruption, financial difficulty and so on.

Why Pro-Life?

The difference between those who are pro-life and those who are pro-abortion, and the reason for all the antagonism between them, is that their reasoning stems from entirely different bases. Pro-lifers are not unaware of the arguments for abortion. They realise that great difficulty is often faced by the mother, and that the child may not always be brought up in ideal surroundings but they believe that the right of every human being to life is paramount, and that in no case can the prospect of hardship for one person justify the denial of life to another.

However, the same concern for human life that prompts these beliefs means that most pro-lifers would not wish simply to ban abortion, but also to change the circumstances in which the decision is made to favour the pro-life option. If, for example, adoption had enjoyed the same good publicity afforded to abortion, and DSS provision for the family was improved, abortion might seem less appealing.

Three areas of particular concern at the moment are Post Abortion Syndrome, the RU486 'abortion pill', and abortion and the handicapped.

Post Abortion Syndrome

It is unsurprising that women often feel emotionally disturbed as a result of an abortion, but in recent years evidence has been increasing that would suggest that the magnitude of the trauma is far greater than is commonly recognised. Many women, perhaps years after having an abortion, experience feelings of guilt and regret of such a degree that their mental health is threatened.

The medical establishment has yet to recognise what is becoming known as

IC ProLife Society give their viewpoint on the current letters page debate

'Did I Kick Too

Post Abortion Syndrome, and the health service and abortion agencies offer little help to the women to whom they so readily provide abortions. These women are, after the unborn child, the second victims of abortion. They deserve no resentment for having been pushed by circumstances into having an abortion, but only help and understanding in coming to terms with what they have been through. It is with the support of the major pro-life organisations that groups have been rapidly expanding that offer help and counselling to such

women, often run by women who have experienced abortion themselves.

RU486

The RU486 'Abortion Pill', already in use in France, is heading for Britain. Medical trials have begun, and a license has been applied for.

There are many worrying points associated with RU486, and even many of those who support abortion in general will have cause for concern.

The motivation behind the speed with which the French, and soon our government have licensed the drug may

about abortion

Hard?'

not be entirely honourable. Just as governments are keen on abortion as a means of relieving pressure on underfunded health and social services, they are keen on RU486 because it is an outpatient method of abortion, lowering demand for beds. RU486 has been promoted as a leap forward in women's rights, with the image of swallowing the pill and 'solving the problem'. The reality is less appealing. At least three appointments are required over a period of around ten days, to administer the drug and kill the embryo, then to

administer prostaglandin to expel the embryo, and finally to check abortion is complete. Severe pain and heavy bleeding is common, sometimes requiring a transfusion. The woman is more likely to see her aborted embryo, adding to the trauma already increased by the far longer procedure as compared with surgical methods. In 5% of cases, RU486 fails to abort, making surgical abortion necessary as well, heightening the psychological pressure on the woman.

RU486 is still an experimental drug, with nothing known about long term

effects on fertility or health or the consequences of repeated use, yet it seems likely that it will be licensed perhaps as early as this spring. We should question why the government is so keen to introduce an unproven drug which is more oppressive to the women that will use it than current methods of abortion.

The long term aim for RU486 is the colossal potential markets of the Third World. As operating theatres and blood transfusion facilities are thought essential precautions for British use, attempts to use the drug in areas where medical facilities are lacking could be disastrous for the women of the developing countries, as well as the worrying prospect that a convenient method of abortion might divert attention for methods of population control that do not involve the killing of the excess populace before birth. It would not be ridiculous to suggest that the support the drug is getting from western governments is not unconnected to a wish to reduce their responsibility towards the developing world.

Rights for the Handicapped

It's encouraging to see how much is being done to help the handicapped in today's society. For example much is being done to ensure that, when applying for jobs, their rights to 'equal opportunities' are recognised. On the practical side, no new building is planned without taking into account their special needs. And yet, the same society that welcomes these changes calmly requires that, whenever possible, the handicapped are killed before they are born.

It doesn't make sense. I can only think of one argument that would allow this double-think. However, rather than being an attempt to help the handicapped, it merely aims to keep the rest of us happy. It goes like this.... 'It must be a miserable life, and it's awful living side by side with misery. So, let's do all we can to make their life more pleasant—so we feel less uncomfortable—but get rid of all those who are coming up.'

Such a point of view is not very appealing. Not only does it stink of selfishness, but, far more important, it denies the very humanity of the handicapped. We will all happily say that all persons are equal—that means we exclude the handicapped. And so, the argument goes, what's to stop us killing them *after* birth? And the follow-on from that is—what constitutes a handicap? Okay, it may sound far fetched, but it is the logical conclusion.

To sort things out, we need to go back to square one. The handicapped are human beings—noone argues with that. This gives them the right to life itself, which urges us to help them live it, not kill them.



OPINION

A Woman's Right?

'A Woman's Right to Choose'

This is a phrase which never fails to come up in any abortion debate. One thing the pro-abortion lobby have been most successful in over the past years is to make it a feminist issue.

Well, speaking as a woman, I'm all for sexual equality. My rights to equal education and career opportunities are things I feel very strongly about; but I am also pro-life. This is not a contradiction—I just don't see this 'right to choose' as a right at all.

In the first place, abortion is not a legal right. The 1967 Abortion Act removed the criminal penalties for performing abortions in certain circumstances. It conferred no rights on anyone.

Secondly, this choice ultimately comes down to whether the unborn child in the womb lives or dies. For all my feminist beliefs, I don't accord myself absolute power over the life and death of anyone.

'A woman has the right to do what she likes with her own body.'

Absolutely true, but is the foetus really just part of the mother's body? I have not yet heard a convincing argument against life beginning at conception.

The Warnock Committee stated in their report that, '...once the process has begun, there is no particular part of the development process that is more important than another. All are part of a continuous process...'

There is no point at which the 'blob of cells' in a woman's uterus suddenly becomes a human being. This event took place at the beginning, when the sperm impregnated the egg to give the full genetic complement of the new individual. The unborn child is genetically distinct from both parents. Far from being another part of its mother's body, it is a different, distinct human being. If it were just the woman's body involved, then the 'her body and her choice' argument might hold up, but there are two bodies

involved, and in dealing with one it is surely not acceptable to destroy the other.

All this having been said, the immense difficulties raised when faced with an unplanned pregnancy can of course seem overwhelming. Whatever a woman may have believed before, the shock of finding herself pregnant may cause her to consider an abortion. The disruption of her studies, her career, the stigma of illegitimacy, the problems of being a single parent, and the worst thing possible, pregnancy as a result of rape, are pressures that must not be underestimated.

However, the central fact remains. The child is a human being. No matter how it came into being, it is there, and has the same right to life as anyone else.

All too often, the only real option offered to a woman in an unplanned pregnancy is abortion. Other avenues are simply not explored. The child is assumed to be a burden that the mother wishes to dispose of as soon as possible. An abortion is offered, carried out, and the woman is then left to carry on with her life as though nothing had happened. This is simply not acceptable. All the possible alternatives must be considered. Pregnancy need not mean the end of life as we know it. A great fear is that a girl's parents will reject her if they find she is pregnant. Although this is regrettably true in some cases, many will, after the initial shock, offer the support that the mother needs—it is after all their grandchild. Even when the mother is disowned, there is substantial support available from other sources. Pro-life groups such as LIFE offer both counselling and practical help, including help with claiming DHSS grants, guidance on employment protection and maternity payments, baby clothing and equipment, and accommodation both before and after the birth.

Pregnancy is a wholly natural occurrence. A woman's whole lifestyle needn't be changed because she is

A Woman Speaks...

pregnant. With support she can carry on with her work or education.

During the course of the pregnancy, many women find that the unwanted child is very much wanted indeed. However, for those who still can't cope with a baby, the choice of adoption is there.

Admittedly adoption can be traumatic—'giving up' a child is not easy, but what is abortion if not 'giving up'? With adoption, you giving are giving your child parents for whom a child is much longed for. An aborted child can give no one joy or happiness.

In fact, abortion can be far more traumatic than adoption. It can be physically damaging to the woman's reproductive system, and in very many cases the woman is emotionally scarred.

Post-abortion trauma is extremely common, and a very neglected condition. A woman can be pressurised into having an abortion, and then discharged only to suffer regret and confusion, with no back-up support. Here, surprisingly enough, pro-life groups such as LIFE and SPUC come into their own. Recently the pro-life movement has suffered a great deal from a small number of people standing outside abortion clinics hurling abuse and even debris at frightened young women entering and leaving. These people are no more a part of the mainstream pro-life movement than the terrorists who bomb the homes of scientists are part of a charity like Animal Aid. Both the aforementioned groups recognise the considerable social pressure that leads to so many abortions, and while never accepting that abortion can be right, offer counselling and support to women who have had abortions, to help them come to terms with their loss.

Of course, the hardest question to deal with is that of rape. Rape is almost certainly the most traumatic experience a woman can suffer, and it is argued that pregnancy can only compound this—a

constant reminder to the woman of her ordeal. Should then this be considered as a special case? Any woman must feel a horror at the thought of rape resulting in pregnancy. It was the most difficult problem I faced when coming to my pro-life beliefs. How would I feel if it were to happen to me?

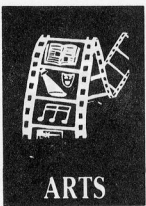
However the crucial fact cannot be altered. An unborn child is still a child. A separate, unique life has begun. There can be no 'special case' when it comes to the killing of a human being, wholly innocent of any crimes committed leading to his or her conception.

On the practical side, studies have shown that pregnancy following rape is very rare. The swift administration of drugs after the rape can prevent ovulation and therefore fertilisation. (This is *not* the same as the 'morning after' pill, which is an abortifacient.)

If the worst were to happen, and the raped woman became pregnant, then the support and practical help outlined above is available, along with the extra care and counselling a woman in that dreadful situation requires.

To sum up then, abortion is not, and can never be, the 'right' of a woman. An unborn child is not part of a woman's body, but genetically distinct—a unique individual—and therefore a woman cannot have the right to decide whether it should live or die as part of her rights over her body. Abortion causes emotional and sometimes physical damage to a woman, with post-abortion trauma often being left undealt with. A truly free woman is one who recognises the humanity of her child and can come through the social pressures of abortion, either to bring up the child for herself, or giving it through adoption to a couple who want it very much and can give it the love it deserves.

As a woman who believes in freedom from any submission and equal rights for all human beings, I cannot be other than pro-life.



Russia House

F The name's Blair, Barley Blair. Somehow, it doesn't have quite the same ring about it, does it? Sean Connery's return to the spy game is a long way from his outings as the world's most famous secret agent, and 007's glamorous world is a far cry from this much more realistic portrayal of East/West espionage.

Russia House, is a slow, cerebral thriller, set in the heady day of the introduction of Glasnost. The west remains jubilant, the Russians, cynical. They spymasters? They want the good old days of the Cold War back. When a beautiful Russian literary agent (the beautiful, if not Russian, Michelle Pfeiffer) offers drunken Scots publisher (Connery, who is, without doubt, Scots) a book which reveals that the Russians are well behind in the Arms race, they are positively drooling over the possibilities that open up.

This film is very much a product of Glasnost, both in it being the result of the author's first trip to Moscow, and in being the first film to be allowed to shoot freely in the USSR. The attitude is very post Glasnost too. There are no real 'goodies' or 'baddies', instead several different shades of grey. Even the most principled



characters are forced to sell out in the end, to preserve themselves. If anyone emerges in a truly negative light, it is the Americans, who ride roughshod over the British, desperately trying to restart the cold war, to facilitate greater arms contracts for American companies.

And so, this broad tale develops against the glorious, if surprisingly alien, backdrop of the major Russian cities,

beautifully fitted to the cinemascope in which it is filmed. The performances are all nicely measured, excepting Ken Russell's (better known as a director) bizarre appearance as an expert on Russia, about which I have certain reservations. Otherwise, this is an extremely acceptable espionage movie, the best I've seen in a while.

Pendragon

Rusalka

O Rusalka is the water nymph who falls in love with a human prince and begs the witch Jezibaba to transform her into a woman. She pays the terrible price of losing the power of speech and, when she is rejected by her lover, is estranged from both the human and spirit world.

Kvapil's text is inspired by myths as diverse as Anderson's *The Little Mermaid*, Czech poet Erben's ballad about *The Water Spirit* and Fouque's tale of *Undine*, but is suffused by Czech folk beliefs in which there is no good or evil, but where man, alienated from nature, is corrupt. Dvorak's setting is Wagnerian in scale and construction, but displays his talent for lyrical melody and rich orchestration. It also evinces bravery in composing for a heroine who is dumb for much of the second act.

Musically, this is an excellent production. Nancy Gustavson as Rusalka has both the strength and subtlety to handle the lead role; Norman Bailey as the Water Spirit has gravitas and conveys an old man's forebodings of youth's unwise choices; Felicity Palmer's Jezibaba is a malevolent delight, crisp and powerfully sung.

The set is also marvellous, contributing to the magical aura of the production. White boards slide back to reveal a cool blue pool in the centre of an almost



entirely white set; a mirror reflects the striking deep blue backcloth which depicts the sky; Rusalka sits on a swing suspended mid-stage. In the second act, the palace is represented by a glass room which revolves around Rusalka as she sits suspended on the swing; later she scuttles around its glass walls like a trapped spider. In the third act we return to the pool which is now darkened, the mirror is smashed and a bloated moon hangs against the inky night.

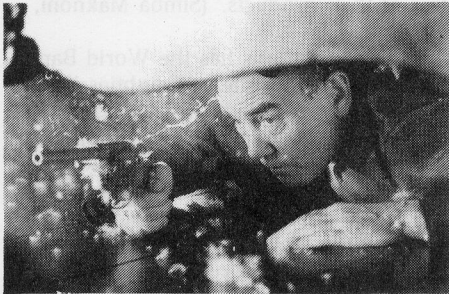
It is sad that the acting is not up to the rest of the performance. The portrayal of

the palace staff as spineless, mindless rag dolls shows some inspiration in the direction, but mostly the cast alternate between melodramatic hamming and aimless activity.

Overall, a production to see, if only for the orchestral playing which I would happily have sat through as a concert performance. However, it is sad that the sexual messages of the legend and the opera, exemplified by Rusalka's dumbness, were skated over and never properly addressed.

Liz W

Miller's Crossing



F This is a film by Joel and Ethan Coen (*Raising Arizona* and *Blood Simple*) so you are probably entitled to expect something very good indeed. This time the Coens have gone for the mob/mafia film, borrowing heavily from (or playing homage to?) the genre, as they did in *Blood Simple*.

The conscience of the film is the principal character, Tom (Gabriel Byrne). Tom is the brains behind the muscle of Leo (played by a slightly uncomfortable Albert Finney), the local boss. Unfortunately Tom and Leo fall for the same dame, Verna. Tom then leaves Leo's 'establishment' and joins up with a rival, Johnny Caspar (Jon Polito laps up the role of the deranged ape, Johnny). A gang war follows.

The Coens have tried to create the kind of modern tragedy that has become fashionable in Hollywood—prime examples being Coppola's *Godfather* films or Scorsese's *Raging Bull*. Tim is the man behind the man, he's the guy with all the 'angles'. But where's his conscience? This is the question the film tries to answer but never really comes to terms with. There's a lot of action, too much plot and not nearly enough reflection—although there are moments of insight—the scenes at Miller's Crossing (a majestic forest on the edges of the city where the hoodlums gun down their victims), for example, are indescribably beautiful.

The cinematographer is also from the two previous Coen films, Barry Sonnenfeld. *Raising Arizona* would not have been half as funny were it not for the highly original and rather crazy camerawork. In *Miller's Crossing*, however, Sonnenfeld hasn't quite produced the same kind of authenticity, but nevertheless the quality of the picture has the moody, dark feel which works well with the film.

I.H.

F —Film

C —Comic/Plug

O —Opera

The Field

F This is a film, not surprisingly, about a field. It's a lovely field, all green and lush, and a delight for all the cattle that graze thereon. Its prosperity is due to the toil of Bull McCabe (Richard Harris) and his son Tadhg (Sean Bean) who gather seaweed and carry it a fair distance to add 12 vitamins and minerals to their impressive turf. All the village know that the field is the Bull's, due to his love and labour, even though it is owned by the young widow (Frances Tomelty) from whom he rents it, so when the widow puts the field up for auction no-one will bid against him. Cue the American (Tom Platoon Beringer), who has come to Ireland to find his roots, who has piles (Oh No!) of cash (Phew!) and outbids the Bull. This is the crux that causes much trouble to the Bull, who has a right to the field, by the law of the land, but no legal claim. The bad feelings get worse and things get very out of hand with McCabe's fight for the field threatening to lose him his son, wife, freedom and sanity.

It is a captivating story of Irish life in

the 1930's and all the characters are true individuals. John Hurt's simple Bird O'Donnel (no chestbursters here) giggles a lot, grins near toothlessly, causes much mischief and carries a lamb, given half a chance. Richard Harris is excellent in his first film role for 10 years, giving us a proud man who lived for the land and is still torn from his first son's death in the famine. Beringer, just known as 'the American', emphasises the difference between the community and the outside and shows us a future that could destroy this way of life.

This is the second film by Jim Sheridan: the director of *My Left Foot*. It is beautifully shot and at times is reminiscent of Pertwee's *Die Kroppe*. The portrayal of a slower life and village happenings is captured in full, with the petty squabbles, small romances and donkey murder, better than any current soap (save *Lifebuoy*). It's Big, it's clever and it's got a good beat! Go and see it because it's smashing.

The Amazing Machine (Sans Gerbil)

Comic Relief Comic

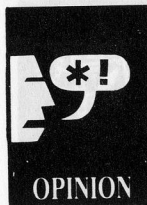


C From those lovable rogues who brought you those bulbous post office red olfactory enhancers comes a comic from the hearts, minds and loins of the best writers and artists, that this misunderstood little piece of life can offer. It's a tale of joys, woes and heartaches. Lenny Henry, Johathan Ross and Griff Rhys-Jones collect money little knowing that Griff has been replaced by a house-head double and that if only one person fails to donate to Comic Relief then the househeads will take over the world. To add to the dilemma a present-day Blackadder must be convinced into donating by being shown all the places Comic Relief money goes to work. Extra sideplots turn up with giant Ben Elton and Dawn French slogging it out over

London, The Turtles' approach to Red Nose Day and the inclusion of virtually every major comic hero (including Dennis the Menace (and Wolverine—Pendragon) (and Batman—ASF)).

The selection of artists and writers is incredible with new people working on just about every page (great mix of styles). It's a unique team up of Marvel, DC, IPC and numerous independents. Which hero has the biggest chin? What are the *Viz* characters up to on Red Nose Day? It's great fun and at times simply excellent. It's only £1.50 and all the money goes to Comic Relief. If you're into comics then it's a must. If not, buy it anyway.

The Amazing Machine.



A Good Deal for the West?

An Introduction to Welfare Week

Why is the world in the state it is? Why do some people starve, others wallow in plenty? Are things gradually improving? And are we in the West really helping to bring about a change for the better in the lot of the poor nations?

There has always been a feeling in the West that the developing nations need our help. If only they could learn from what we have to teach them they would not be so desperately poor. This was exactly the thinking which helped to justify the European empires in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Today, of course, this kind of moral validation of the European presence in these continents cannot stand up to any kind of scrutiny. It is quite apparent that the relationship between Britain and India, say was somewhat less than a symbiotic one—Britain was in India to exploit her resources and any gain on India's part was minimal and incidental. However, I would suggest that this argument is not very far from the one used today in order to justify Western actions, or rather interference, in developing countries today.

Let us start with the questions 'What is aid?', 'What does aid really involve?' If we look at the context in which financial help (be it loans or donations) is offered to developing nations, it becomes clear that the intentions of the West are not entirely benevolent. One of the prime lenders of financial aid today is the World Bank. The World Bank was set up by the USA and the major Western powers after World War Two, with the aim of rebuilding war-torn Europe and Japan, and after that to promote financial stability, economic growth and a cooperation with the member states. Today there are 151 countries which are members of the World Bank—most of the countries except Warsaw Pact signatories. A condition of membership is that each country must contribute a certain percentage of its Gross National Product (GNP) for the Bank's use.

Much criticism has been made by the poorer members concerning the conditions which the World Bank sets before releasing loans to developing countries. The undemocratic nature of the Bank means that developing nations are almost powerless to implement policies of their own choice: it is assumed that the West knows more about the problems in Mexico, for example, than the Mexicans themselves. There seems to have been no change in Western attitudes since colonial times. What determines the voting rights of countries in the World Bank is the size of their pocket. Thus the USA, Japan and all the industrialised countries have the majority of the voting power—the USA exercises 18.5% of the votes, while China

has only 2.5% despite the fact that its population is four times larger than that of the USA.

What all this means is that the World Bank in effect acts upon policies laid out by the USA and other industrialised nations.

The poor nations have very little say how the world economy should be run. This has had a devastating effect upon them. Over the last decade or so World Bank policies have been deeply unpopular in many countries. Unfortunately they are powerless to do anything—they have been denied a voice.

It is generally agreed that the 1980's were an appalling decade for the poor nations of the world. Many people also argue that the World Bank helped make things worse rather than alleviate the squalor of the poor. The crisis was brought about during the 1970s through the massive borrowing by the governments of developing nations from banks in the West which were overflowing with oil dollars from OPEC countries. These commercial banks (which of course include our friendly high street chums in this country) were very 'liberal' with their lending policies. The interest repayments were set at commercial rates, which seemed reasonable to both parties at the time. This was a period of economic buoyancy and it seemed that the developing nations might at long last break the vicious cycles of poverty. However this mood of optimism was not to last very long. During the late seventies, the West was set for a downward slide into recession. This brought with it very high interest rates which meant that debt servicing repayments by the poor to the rich nations were massively increased.

However, high interest rates are not the only problem. The fundamental problem the developing countries face today is that of inequality in the world markets imposed by the West. The system is rigged up in such a way that the value of manufactured goods far exceeds the value of raw materials (excepting oil of course). In the 1980s there was a sharp drop in raw material prices which meant that the West would have even cheaper access to them, whereas the value of manufactured goods has steadily risen. So it is apparent that the West is making a healthy (but sick) profit from the way the markets are structured. As one economist put it:

'The challenge for us is to eliminate the senseless dichotomy which makes us wholesale exporters of raw materials, and wholesale importers of finished goods, under terms determined entirely by the industrialised countries, terms that compel us to increasingly produce and sell more of our raw materials in order to afford

less of their products.' (Simba Maknoni, 1989.)

So what solutions has the World Bank proposed? During the mid-eighties it came up with a gem called SAPs (Structural Adjustment Programmes). The Bank will only allow governments to borrow if they agree to run their economies (and thus the whole political structure of that country) the way the Bank dictates. (We might recall the furore caused in this country by possible economic intervention of the European Community—it would seem that some sovereignties are very much more precious than others). Structural Adjustment Programmes involve liberalisation of trade policies (i.e. reduction or even elimination of import



tariffs), increase in production of cash-crops, and cuts in public spending (i.e. reduction of expenditure on health, education, removal of subsidies on food, travel and so on). As a result of these policies, the condition of the poorest sections of these communities have suffered the most, and in several countries there have been 'food riots' when the strain has become unbearable.

The economies of these countries have experienced a great step backwards thanks to the policies of the World Bank which is interested more in maintaining or 'looking after' the interests of the financial system set up by the industrialised nations than improving conditions in the developing nations. The World Bank insists that any country borrowing directly from or seeking its approval (without which countries are unable to borrow from anyone) must maintain its (crippling) interest payments on loans borrowed in the seventies. Thus these countries must earn lots of hard currency by selling as much raw material as possible to the west and then return it straightaway in the form of interest repayments. Unfortunately, since the Bank has told many other poor countries to do the same, there has been a glut in the commodities markets, resulting in prices going through the floor. So these countries have ended up being much worse off today than they had been before the World Bank intervened.

At 'Third World First' we recognise that the industrialised world has taken enough from the poorest countries in this world and it is time for the process to stop. If we are too selfish and greedy to put anything back (and let's not kid ourselves that we do) we should leave these countries alone so that they themselves can decide what kind of development it is that they want to pursue.

Third World First aims to increase awareness of issues concerning the developing countries. At Imperial College we regularly invite representatives from various groups (banks, charities, campaign groups, etc) to hold talks, debates and discussions which will hopefully motivate people to take positive action (however small) both now and after they leave College. These meetings are held almost every Thursday at lunchtime—look out for posters in the JCR and around College. We shall also have stands in the JCR during this term, so come up and talk to us if you are interested.

Iftikhar Hussain.

The student lifestyle can be highly demanding on your health. How often do you consider combating the stress caused by work? Or stop to think about your alcohol intake or diet?

Next Monday will be the start of 'Survival Week'. The week focuses on healthy lifestyles, covering topics such as drinking, smoking, stress, exercise and healthy eating.

Here is a brief introduction to what will be happening during the week.

Two **Stress Seminars** have been arranged for Tuesday 26 February, 1-2pm and Thursday 28 February, 5-6pm both in the SCR in the Union Building. These will be run by the local health authority and will offer practical ways of dealing with stress.

There will also be a seminar offering help with giving up smoking. This will be on Friday 1 March, 3-4pm, SCR in the Union Building.

If you would like to attend any of the

above seminars please sign up in the Union Office.

A health fair has also been organised where there will be the opportunity to check your heart rate when exercising, your carbon monoxide levels and blood pressure, and a chance to analyse the effect of your alcohol intake on both your body and wallet.

On a more light-hearted note the Contagious Performance Co will be visiting on Tuesday 26 with their show 'Scoring'. The show is described as a 'Chrage through the blood stream that blasts alcohol and drug abuse into insignificance with a buzz that is unforgettable'. Tickets are available now for £1 in the Union Office. The show is heavily subsidised.

More information about the week will be available in a special FELIX which will be out next Tuesday.

H Blacker,
Welfare Officer.

Voluntary Service Overseas

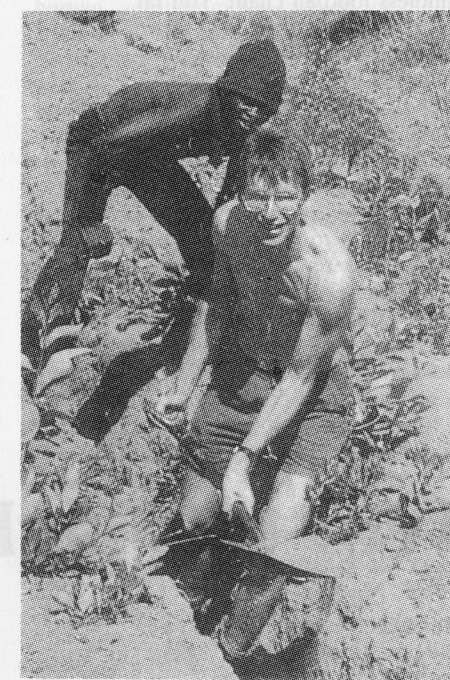
VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) is an unusual charity. By most yardsticks it does not conform to the stereotype of a 'third world' agency. No aid, no disaster relief. Its work is more intangible, perhaps more far reaching. It sends people—skilled men and women aged anything between 20 and 70 to work alongside local people in 48 developing countries around the world.

And last year it topped its own record with over 1,300 professionals working overseas in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Pacific. The people VSO now needs are drawn from an immense diversity of backgrounds. They range from accountants to builders, computer programmers to doctors, engineers through to zoologists and even the occasionally beekeeper.

One of the 1,300 currently overseas is former Imperial College graduate Philip Churn who is now working as an electrical lecturer at Ramat Polytechnic in northern Nigeria. As well as classroom teaching, Philip is renovating workshop machinery and passing on practical skills to local colleagues.

'It's hard work, but good fun,' he says. 'After nine months here I'm finally settling down. The two years will disappear so fast though.'

All VSO jobs are for a minimum of two years with pay based on local rates. Most involve a strong training element. Post



qualification experience is also very important, although VSO always takes into account practical work undertaken as part of a degree course and relevant vacation work.

If you'd like more information, please contact the Enquiries Unit, VSO, 317 Putney Bridge Road, London SW15 2PN or telephone 081-780 1331.



Carter USM

—30 Something LP

Gods Acre

—Ten Gospel Greats LP



Jim Bob and Fruitbat return to wreak revenge on vinyl with their second album '30 Something'. Armed with the musical equivalent of two 15 pound sledgehammers they set about destroying everything in their wake. Anyone who has the balls to start an album off with a mindless football chant 'You fat bastard...You fat bastard..' (Surfin' USM) has got to have something up their collective sleeves. Don't they? 'Bloodsport For All' their latest, much publicised and 'banned' single is one of the best tracks on the album: 'Suffer in silence said Brigadier General Holmes/or change your name to Smith or Jones/Learn to live with all the death threat notes/the big bananas and the racist jokes' Heavy stuff. Just reading through the inner sleeve notes you get an idea of some overriding sadness that drives them to do what they do, but they wrap it up in fun pop songs and their meaning could almost pass you by. Witty titles like

'Sealed with a Glasgow kiss' raise an initial laugh but the joke goes a bit stale after a while.

The album is steeped in cynicism but when it comes to 'Falling on a bruise'. I'm sorry but I can't believe they're not taking the piss. I could see them as the scene opens, Jim Bob and Fruitbat lying in the middle of the road, a ford Cortina stopped in front of them, its windscreen cracked and covered in blood. Looking around a crowd starts to gather and the ambulance siren can be heard in the distance. Then Jim (Fruitbat?) opens his eyes and as the ambulance stretchers them away the words come tumbling out:

'You win some and you lose some and I've lost the will to lose...'

Oh its so comically sad! Mixing in a dash of Red Dwarf, Michael Caine and lots of attitude Carter USM have made an album that kicks out in all directions but it never lose its sense of fun. Definitely recommended.

Harry Cross

God's Acre—the name may not immediately spring to mind but those in the know have been following the band, through its beginning as a solo project in '87 which gradually gathered members. From other no name bands in the Chicago area, awaiting with eager anticipation, this their debut LP.

Imagine *Jane's Addiction's* hippy glam sound processed by Iain Burgess of *Big Black* and *Naked Raygun* fame. The resulting meandering wobble through the domain of 'sub-pop soft-core' is a bit smooth for my taste but does provide some excellent tunes.

The album is full of contrasts. The sweetest guitar sound on rolling drum beats is followed closely by deep flower grooves all covered by deep throaty vocals. The accompanying tempo changes are welcome and sudden leaving little time to catch your breath. Addictive and catchy tunes make comparisons with *Nirvana's Sliver* easy. But the vocals do seem to be added as an after-thought and are in most cases indecipherable.

There are two songs of epic proportions. The *Jane's Addiction* come *Big Black* sound really comes to the fore and if they were the only two good tracks on the album it would still recommend you borrow it.

Seb



Trip the Light Fantastic

This band recently played two underpublicised gigs in College, in Southside and the Union Lounge bar. This is a shame because they are one of the cleanest sounding and listenable groups that I've heard in a long time.

The music, apart from a few covers, is a sort of fusion of early *Talking Heads* and strangely enough *U2*. Lyrically meaningful the singer/rhythm guitarist's agile voice is backed up by an excellent bassist (on a hofner acoustic a la Paul

McCartney) and drummer giving a very clean crisp sound.

Despite the lack of numbers at the gigs they managed to get the audience up and dancing and apparently went down very well on both occasions, watch out for them around College again, well worth a listen!

Sid.

All this from a man who manages the band—M. Ed.

INTERESTED
in reviewing an album/gig?
See FELIX Office
for details

Killing Joke



Killing Joke—the rock of legend and music of insanity. As they continued their conquest of uncompromising determination and gut ideology, The Astoria was expectant at the dawn of a new war against itself. Terror through anticipation ebbed and rose in the hard-cutting newsreel quotes, cut from the last few days of turmoil in the Gulf — another SCUD missile attack on Riyadh, more threats of chemical retaliation, pain, distrust and anguish. Then came the horror of American meat advertising. The sheer flippancy of the greed after the starvation just heard was pure irony. Through this backdrop — our world today — arise *Killing Joke* to shock us brutally from our satisfied apathy.

Killing Joke are a legacy, a constant reminder of what we should be. Only they could incite a riot, start massacres but instead they rip at hearts with their pounding chants. Their music is bare rhythm and beauty. They played and the earth changed. Now returned from diversification with bands such as *Ministry*, they have returned with new sounds, founded by vocalist Jaz Coleman, Guitarist Geordie, drummer Martin Atkins

and rejoined by their original bassist Paul Raven. God, these men should be immortalised.

Killing Joke made us care. The onslaught began with the single *Money Is Not Our God* and regressed via classic anthems *Wardance*, *Empire Song* and *Requiem*. They proved that their original insights and ideals are still true, and that their original visions are all the more valid now. The Astoria leapt and punched triumph at the roofs. All the while, the visions of hardship, depravation and horror complemented the charged-up purity flung at us. Rock music has become the only way of reaching the ears of such a self-centred society, by kicking and biting its way out from inside their very bodies.

The final conquest came in the final encore. Exhausted onlookers were dragged back to the eerily obsessive *Love Like Blood*, dedicated to 'all those who are going to die in the Gulf.' As the lines 'As we move towards no end we learn to die, Red tears are shed on grey' resounded, my heart bled. These men demand to be listened to.

SJH

Yabby You



So you've never heard of Yabby You? To be honest neither had we, but stick with us as we take you (with enthusiastic abandon) deep into the heart of, err, dub reggae.

Yabby has been around for quite a while and has done most of his recording in the late seventies. This album was actually recorded in 78/79 and has been re-released due to it being 'a much sought after collectors item ever since its release'. He does more or less everything

—*Beware Dub*

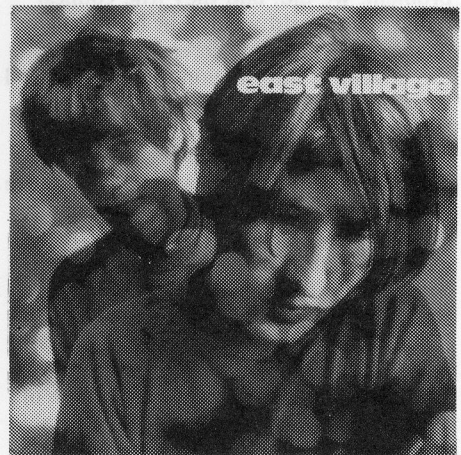


East Village

—*Circles 12"*

East Village have been around for about two years and have released a few singles on Sub Aqua, as well as supporting *House of Love*. They are now signed to the Heavenly label, home to the *Manic Street Preachers* (and um...*Flowered Up*). A fairly typical indie guitar band—they sound similar to early *Primal Scream*, but unlike Bobby and Co they have so far shunned any dance influences. In fact the similarities don't stop there—have a look at the bloke on the right of the cover—does he remind you of anyone? Their latest offering *Circles* is mellow, but monotonous—a tune waiting for a song to happen. The B-side *Here it Comes* is much more lively, but would score no points for originality. Other bands have been here before, only they have done it much better.

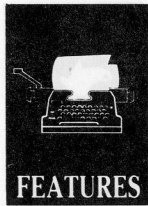
Egor, Hedgehog and the Bastard Allsort.



bar play on his album (which sounds kind of strange but he is credited with composing, producing and some of the singing on *Beware Dub*).

Deep, even bass underpins all the songs and a 'just-add-water' rhythm guitar gives each track the usual reggae sound. It's a very spacey album and we think it would be improved if you listened to it whilst being stoned, otherwise forget it.

Debaser and Pop Kid



Kids Stuff... or are they?

Zap!... Pow!... Khzamm!

'Take that, evil fiend! Your plans to rule the world are no more!'

And another muscle-bound idiot in a silly costume puts paid to another scheming evil mastermind, only to find that the baddie has escaped, and the whole pointless charade will be re-enacted next issue.

When most people think of comics, this is the kind of scenario that runs through their mind, or maybe a fond remembrance of the childhood days of *The Beano* or *Bunty*. It's hardly surprising: We live in a society that regards the comic as a childish medium, and are thus brought up with this attitude towards them.

But why is this? Comics did not, as most people think, start out being aimed at children, but at the same age groups as most popular fiction. Superman, the figure that arguably started it all, was created in the early Forties. At this time the strip was avidly read by a wide variety of the American people, from children to teenagers, to college students and beyond. Batman began as a much darker, mature figure than he later became in the public eye.

So what changed? Well, that's the problem: we did, and they (the comics) didn't. The world we live in has been changing at an ever increasing rate. With the advent of information technology, and the growth of the media industry, people began to see more of the world they lived in, and to understand a little more of its workings. As we have become more aware and educated, our understanding of ourselves and our society was affected. This has led to us placing different demands on the arts and entertainments that are meant to be relevant to the fluctuating world in which we live.

This is the reason that past fictional works, of any medium, can lose some of their appeal. They become less believable and credible when viewed with our greater understanding. This is not to say that they are not enjoyable, but in a different way, and often with a sense of nostalgia, thus making it very hard to suspend our disbelief. This suspension of disbelief is vital if a work of fiction is to hold our attention and have an impact upon us.

Television was one of the main forces behind these changes, transferring a huge amount of information to first hundreds, then thousands, and now millions of people. As such it was able to keep up with the transformation of people's demands. (Although it could be said that it was forced to by its very nature). The fields of cinema and literature have dealt



'The Dark Knight Returns' (Frank Miller) was the catalyst for a revolution in the comic book industry.

became something far more. By incorporating these elements, and his own interpretations, Miller showed us a far more complex character than had been seen before in a comic. He combined this with another groundbreaking concept in comics: Time. *The Dark Knight Returns* is the story of the Batman's future, of his old age. By making the Batman's character complex, Miller transformed him from a hero to a man, and with the addition of time, into a legend.

The Dark Knight Returns was the catalyst for a revolution in the comic book industry. Its sales were huge, it crossed the age boundaries set almost three decades before, and in its graphic novel form entered the Times best sellers list, the first to do so. It was an modern, adult story in every sense of the word. DC immediately took steps to bring the regular Batman titles in line with Miller's vision. More and more titles from all comic companies followed suit. With this more modern, adult approach there was a demand for better writers and artists, and the quality of the comics went up accordingly. People began to realise the true potential of the comic as an art form. Indeed, it has been hailed as the medium of the future. Comics cross the boundaries between traditional novels and the visual fields of cinema and art. It is possible to combine the visual impact of the latter with the depth of characterisation and narrative techniques of the former. Artists such as Bill Sienkiewicz have been at the forefront of this work, in both regular series like *Moon Knight*, and graphic novels like *Elektra: Assassin*.

This new wave has led to a new emphasis in comics. The heroics have become secondary to the characterisation and relationships of the heroes. They are becoming more human, more real, and less like two dimensional cardboard cutouts spouting inane comment at not very threatening bad guys. Marvel Comic's *X-Men* and related 'Mutant' titles have dealt very well with this area. Detective's *Green Arrow* has spent two years investigating the role of the victim in modern crime. The list continues to grow.

The implications of this are finally beginning to filter through to the public at large. The massive coverage of the Batman movie helped a great deal. Very soon we may find ourselves living in a society that has realised that comics aren't just for kids...

Next Week: A review of the major comic shops in London, and of the best titles available at the moment...

with the phenomenon with differing levels of success, but have generally managed to keep up, so to speak.

Then of course, we come to comics. Why have they not been able to change along with other forms of fiction? The main reason can be traced back to the McCarthy era of American history. In this paranoid frenzy of investigations all producers of fictional work were heavily scrutinized, and a huge amount of pressure put upon them. The comic book industry was all but destroyed by a group of senate house committee hearings, which amounted to a witch hunt on comic book creators. The main focus of these purges was EC Comics, the original masters of the horror comic, but in their almost ecclesiastical zeal the whole

industry was subjected to a concentrated attack. Companies went out of business, and some of the best artists and writers were forced to find employment in other fields, and even began denying that they had ever been involved in comics. So much for the 1st Amendment.

The remaining companies were faced with a choice (?): Clean up or close down. In order to survive they formed the Comic Code, a self-regulating body whose job was (and still is) to make sure that the American youth only read comic books that were pure and wholesome. Violence was reduced to a bare minimum, and sex (previously unheard of) became totally taboo.

The consequences of this are still with us today. Comic books (especially Marvel's output) became nice and clean and wholesome. And bland, and silly, and simple minded, and boring. At the same time the information technology and media boom got under way. This led to a change in the readership of the books. The older readers, becoming more aware of their society and themselves, demanded more than the comic books were giving, and thus stopped reading them. Thus the average age of the readership fell. As the readership became younger the writers were forced to aim the comics at this age group, or risk falling sales. Then there was the abysmal *Batman* TV series, which made a farce of one of the biggest comic heroes in the public's eye. All of this led to society's perception of comics becoming that which is typical today: Comics are for kids.

But things have changed. It began as early as the late sixties. Some writers became slightly more ambitious. They

began to produce slightly more mature stories, and managed to get them past the (by then) slightly more relaxed Comic Code. This happened in various titles, but mainly those produced by Detective Comics (the producers of *Batman*, *Superman*, *Wonder Woman*, et al). It was by no means consistent, and there were many periods where stories got silly again, but the spark was there.

Then came the Eighties, and with them a man called Frank Miller. Miller was something of a wild card, coming out of (apparently) nowhere, working as an independent, and producing his first major release, a graphic novel called *Ronin*, virtually single-handedly (ie he wrote and drew it himself). He then worked his way through various characters from various companies, redefining them with a far more modern, mature and complex viewpoint. His work quickly became very popular within the small group of comic enthusiasts, those die-hard fans that hadn't left their comics with their romper suits. At the same time several other writers and artists had begun experimenting with more ambitious ideas. Marvel Comics had introduced a character, Wolverine, who by his very nature was a killer (a first for the company), and various other titles were becoming more serious.

But the turning point for the whole industry came with Miller, and *Batman*. After having gained a large amount of respect and following in the industry after his work on Marvel's *Daredevil*, Detective Comics let him go ahead with a *Batman* story. The result was a four-part limited series, now reprinted as a graphic novel, called *The Dark Knight Returns*. It caused a storm. Miller had taken one of the most

famous comic heroes of all time, who was both engraved on the minds of comic fans worldwide, and who epitomized the essential silliness of comics to the general public (due largely to the TV series), and totally redefined him into a modern hero, without contradicting any of the work that had been done before. By doing this he dramatically demonstrated not only that comics aren't limited to dealing with childish stories, but also that one of the most 'silly' characters wasn't very silly after all.

The *Batman* had been portrayed over the years in various ways, originally as a darker, revenge driven vigilante, and then for most of the Sixties and Seventies as a rich, concerned do-gooder. In Miller's hands he retained both these aspects, but



Wolverine



Elektra: Assassin



Chris Riley looks at industry's attitude to the environment.

Problems and Pollutions

With the world population spiralling towards seven billion, it is unrealistic to revert to the stone age technology called for by some of the more radical 'anti-progress' pressure groups. 'We cannot look solely to the use of the land and windmills to support us in the future' explains Shell's public affairs officer, Mr Wyberry. 'Since the Second World War there has been a five fold increase in consumption of energy. This demand has been met primarily by oil, coal and gas. Today, the world (excluding the communist countries) consumes 53 million barrels of oil a day. It is, however, only in the last five years that we have become aware of the corresponding increase in CO₂ which has accompanied the increase in use of fossil fuels.'

Shell sees the global warming and climatic changes as a challenge to be met by improvements in technology. Waste handling, air quality...etc...can all be solved by technology if we spend enough money', explains BP's public relations officer, Mr Brown. 'However a technical solution is not a solution unless it is economically viable.'

'Europe has set itself the task of bringing CO₂ levels down to 1988 levels by the year 2005. We must switch from coal and oil to natural gas and ultimately to non-fossil fuels. 'For decades gas has been the Cinderella of the oil industry—a useless by-product, not readily transportable and instead, flared off from oil rigs. But with increases in technology its importance is increasing. Gas turbine technology is 60% more efficient than conventional turbines. Forty per cent of the world's proven gas reserves come from the USSR and Siberia, Iran and the Middle East. The potential to link the derelict Russian economy with an environmentally-conscious gas-hungry west is enormous.'

'It is on the fuel consumption side that the potential for saving energy exists', argues Shell. 'The gas used by western Europe equals that lost by leaking pipes worldwide. Simply by replacing an old fridge with new equipment, the best that's available, 70% improvements in energy efficiency can be achieved. Take a typical pump: simply by choosing the right pump for the right application energy efficiency can be improved by 60%.'

Despite these caring claims, when Shell were approached about the Petromiser, (reported in Issue 891) they were not interested. What it boils down to is that cuts in public consumption of energy mean cuts in business and profit for the major energy companies.

Shell are full of suggestions such as 'biomass electricity generation', (growing of fuel in fields for gasification to fuel gas turbines), but when approached about their own alternative energy research they have very little to boast about.

Energy companies should not be fighting to preserve and promote the present levels of energy consumption, but to diversify into alternative energy sources—to plan for the future. These so-called 'alternatives' will one day be our only choice, when fossil fuels are no longer an alternative.

When questioned about their investments in the future their excuse is always that long term predictions cannot be made in the oil industry. Shell cannot see far enough ahead to the point when there is no more oil or, more importantly, when the consequences of burning more oil are fatal. They argue that fifteen years ago, the North Sea fields were only going to support us into the 1990s. Since then exploration has shown them to be capable for fuelling us for the 'foreseeable

The simple incentive of saving the planet is not enough.

future'. The foreseeable future, like tomorrow, never comes.

BP, whilst prepared to discuss improvements in energy efficiency, are adamant that these goals are not pursued at the exclusion of exploration, their life blood. 'Continued exploration for expendable fuels and the preservation of the environment are not mutually exclusive goals'. Sadly though, as long as there is still the temptation of fossil fuels to be extracted and utilised, it seems that the 'alternatives' (renewable energy sources) will not be sought with any conviction. BP, like any commercial venture needs a financial incentive to diversify. The simple incentive of saving the planet is not enough. For now though, increasing production costs to clean up the industry does not make business sense. Until the political impetus to change this is supplied, industry will continue to generate their big profits at the expense of the environment.

Spokesmen for both BP and Shell stress that any environmental legislation must be implemented on an international basis. Each country should have its own high environmental standards governed by local law but based on international concepts. Whilst environmental policy in industry is still very much a voluntary action, few companies are prepared to follow BP's exemplary style. 'Many companies take advantage of the low safety standards and non-existent environmental laws of the underdeveloped countries to keep their costs to a minimum and to maximise their profits. Without common generic

standards this will always happen, and those companies who are first to make an effort to cut pollution will be punished financially. Consequently, no company is at present prepared to make the first move, and although our hopes and aspiration for the future are different we are all tarred with the same 'dirty' brush.'

But who then is to pay for this mass clean-up of the industrial bad guys? BP is resolute that any cleaning up of industry should be funded by the public in the form of taxes. 'The environment is for the public good. Costs should be shared by all beneficiaries—a fair share of the costs is vital.' Passing the cost to the customer in this way is all very well in the first world but it seems that such methods are not applicable to a third world country that cannot even afford to feed its own population.

Even within the 'black triangle' of eastern Europe, where Greenpeace workers are perceived as 'rich kids with nothing better to do', care for the environment is considered an expensive luxury. 'Perhaps it is' argues Peter Tickle, eastern block consultant to Greenpeace. 'Greenpeace have been accused of depriving seal hunters of a way of life. The fossil-fuel-free future that we fight for is ultimately suffocating mining communities. However if you consider the long term costs of chronic air pollution to public health, it seems sensible to stop the pollution before it happens. In Czechoslovakia some four million people live in the most heavily

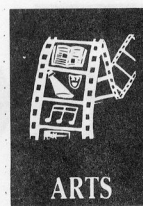
Leaving a window open at night results in throbbing headaches...

contaminated areas. During the winter, when continuous smog conditions prevail for weeks, children are forbidden to indulge in strenuous activity. Leaving a window open at night results in throbbing headaches the next day. In Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, air pollution has degraded the physical landscape and the human environment to the point where the suicide rate is the highest in Europe.'

BP may be more prepared than most for tougher environmental legislation which it calls for, but it will require more commercial evolution than just a change of logo to survive into the 21st Century. Ironically those who will dictate and implement any future environmental law are also the guardian angels of industry. It is in their own interests to nurture such companies pruning them annually for their taxes. The question is will this symbiosis finally suffocate the animals?

The Slow Moving Snail invites you to celebrate words.

Books for Living



In all the debate about literacy and our schools one small blue document, costing only £2.50, was overlooked. This is sad as it examines the very heart of the issue. It is also heavily ironic, as it is, unbelievably, the product of Her Majesty's Inspectorate from the Department of Education and Science. It is a delightful book that aims to persuade teachers that 'poetry matters and that its teaching should not be relegated to the end of the day, the week, or the term'. Why review it here, you may be thinking. Because *Teaching Poetry in the Secondary School* not only answers the question why we don't read poetry after school, it actually inspires a desire to start reading it!

Words

The arguments are nearly poetic in their clarity and enthusiasm. In looking for quotes I wanted to reprint the whole booklet. As perpetual students of life all of us should have a copy. More importantly we should ensure that all parents and English teachers buy it. Here is a small taste of the excitement of the book:

'Poetry matters because it is a central example of the use human beings make of words to explore and understand. Like other forms of writing we value, it lends shape and meaning to our experiences and helps us to move with confidence in the world we know and then step beyond it, to respond to the generation of meaning through significant, memorable and deliberate kinds of language. It is an activity to which we are drawn because in its range and rigour we feel both the presence and the pressure of human experience. Poetry embodies delight in expression, stretched between thought, feeling and form. As we become aware of the 'true soundings' of poetry so we become aware of what we ourselves might do with language.'

As George Orwell illustrates in the newspeak of 1984, it is language that gives us the power for our thoughts, extend language and you widen the horizon of our ideas and freedoms. This booklet is front-line ammunition in the struggle against the forces of ignorance and bigotry that feed Big Brother. It is a small step in promoting our species' sense of humanity.

A celebration of these steps, told through the history of human knowledge and science, has recently been re-published in paperback by the BBC. As part of their new Classics Series they have brought out Jacob Bronowski's book *Ascent of Man*. If you have lost your primary school inquisitiveness and

creativity, your sense of wonder at human knowledge because of the soulless nature of the secondary school and college curriculum; if learning has now become solely work to achieve a degree and job - then you need this book. It will infect you with Bronowski's personal enthusiasm and optimism. It will challenge you with science that has a human soul.

Bronowski is one of those scientists, poets, playwrights, historians and philosophers who celebrates the values and unity found in science and art. As he expresses in a second book, *Science and Human Values*, that should be reprinted and sent to all undergraduates before they start here - it might lessen the inhumanity of this place:

'In science and in art and in self-knowledge we explore and move constantly by turning to the world of sense to ask, is this so? This is the habit of truth, always minute yet always urgent, which for four hundred years has entered every action of ours; and has made our society and the value it sets on man, as surely as it had made the linotype machine and the scout knife, and *King Lear* and the *Origin of the Species* and Leonardo's *Lady with a Stoat*.'

Glorious

Miroslav Holub, the Czech poet and scientist, when he spoke here in November about *Science, Art and Ethics* quoted Bronowski. There is no better way of expressing such thoughts.

Holub expresses in his poetry ways of seeing the world through the turbulence of a society suppressed by Stalinism, in which truth is corrupted into power. The poems explore meanings with a sense that they give us the world, and yet, there is the cutting edge of the final lines that tell of loss. Are facts real? Do they relate to why? How can we know something in a society in which a fact is a fact through fear? This fear and sadness gives Holub's work a vitality and significance. Here is the pen as sword, science as liberator.

Holub is a poet published by Bloodaxe Books, a company set-up due to the anger of Neil Astley at the insult poetry was given by commercial publishers. He has published a compilation of the works of 56 poets, writers who have been encouraged and supported in their work by Bloodaxe. *Poetry With an Edge* is an introduction to contemporary poetry for those of us who don't know where to begin. Holub is there, as is Jo Shapcott. Her book *Electroplating the Baby* is a series of personal images, funny,

romantic, everyday, macabre, with an underlying sense of discovery. Her inspiration comes from a range of objects and events, as varied as a bookstand in a railway station to articles in Victorian science magazines to a mug.

On Valentines Day Jo aroused her audience with sex and science, the exploration of atomic particles became an erotic massage of her body. Using weird characters such as Tom the Cat, Marilyn Monroe and a cow with BSE, she turned her audience into anarchic word destroyers, body language physicists and scientists with an insane stare and a tendency for the shakes. The Haldane Library vibrated with words.

Two professional psychologists got together to publish a collection of quotations called *In a Dark Time*. This is constructed into a thought journey from shock to depression to the joy of hope, as it travels through the insanity of war. If you are depressed by the inhuman bigotry expressed in the present gung-ho attitude to the Gulf war this book will turn your depression into tears of hope, for 'In a dark time the eye begins to see'.

All the books reviewed here express the vital human need to read. By turning their pages, turning their words into our images and concepts, we are expressing and expanding our humanity. Sadly being human, apart from recognition for communication, avoidance or sex, is not a valued or well understood concept at Imperial. There are a few places here that do represent hope of higher things; the Haldane Library - sadly not the Humanities Department - and most importantly, in the Physics Department there is the Blackett Bookshop, just opposite the general office on level 3, open every lunchtime from 12:30 to 2:30.

Words

Here you can buy second-hand books that smell like human thought and imagination.

Long may the human spirit struggle to survive here and eventually tear down the present monstrosity that sacrifices science to the politics of financial management, utility and marketing.

All the Bloodaxe Books mentioned can be bought from the Union Bookstore. *Ascent of Man* from Dillons in the Science Museum. *Teaching Poetry in the Secondary School* can be ordered from HMSO tel: 622 3316. *In a Dark Time* edited by Nicolas Humphrey and Robert Jay Lifton is published by Faber and Faber and can be ordered from any good bookshop.



Clubs and.....

Rag

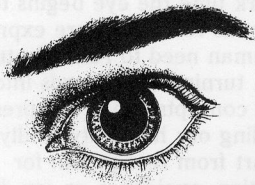
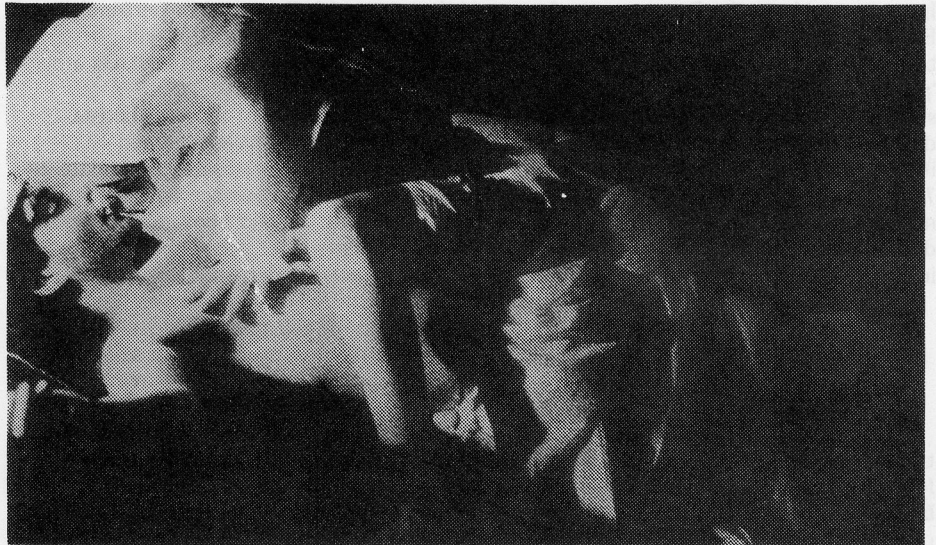
HYPNOSIS

Tonight there's the Spring Hypnosis Lecture. This is a very popular event especially for those who missed the Rag Week version. If anyone wishes to be hypnotised or watch the effects on others turn up at the Great Hall, 7.15pm tonight. It only costs £2.50.

For people who want to collect lots of money for charity, we have permission to collect in the Royal Albert Hall over several of the Eric Clapton concerts. See Martin Highway in the RCS Office for more details (or at today's meeting).

And finally, Comic Relief takes place on 15th March. Over the last 5 years this has raised over £44 million. If anyone needs help organising an event for this or has any ideas for stunts, come to a Rag meeting.

A Vision Of Christ



You Will Be There!

Rugby

Sunday 24 February sees the Gutteridge Cup final between Imperial College RFC and Charing Cross HMC at the ULU Sports Ground in Motspur Park. Kick off is 12.30pm so why not come and support us! Supporters coaches leave the Union at 11.30am.

FilmSoc

Betty Blue
Now that I've got your attention, I shall say that Jean Jacques Beineix, the director of that infamous film, is responsible for next week's Filmsoc presentation, *Div*. This is a stylish French thriller concerning an opera singer, some illegal recordings of her performing, and an assortment of criminals. The plot is sophisticated, with a few twists and turns, so come along at 7.30pm on Thursday, Mech Eng 220, and polish up on your French and culture.

Come & Watch Blasphemy.
There are bits in the Bible that are erotic, and in some people's minds pornographic. The 'Song of Soloman' is one of these juicy pieces. In the last century John Carlisle, being tried for blasphemy, was prevented from reading publicly these extracts.

There has been a tradition, within Christianity, to explore the sexuality to be found in its language and images. The concepts of worship and love of the body and spirit of Christ, as well as the nun's 'marriage' to God, have been described in sexual language. The famous blasphemy

trial of 'Gay News', prosecuted by Mary Whitehouse and her Christian 'moral' crusaders, was for a poem by a gay Christian following this tradition: A tradition that goes back centuries. The film, *Visions of Ecstasy*, was made by two Christians, based on the erotic dreams of a nun in the 19th Century. It was banned last year in this country for blasphemy. To examine why this was done and as a protest against the blasphemy law the T H Huxley Society will be showing this film in the Union Lounge at 1.15pm on Thursday 28 February. Come along and find out why it was banned. 50p entrance (free to members).

Dance

IC Dance Club took four teams (16 couples) and seven ex-student couples to Sheffield on Saturday February 2 for the Sheffield inter-varsity competition. The Sheffield is often viewed as a warm-up to the more competitive SUDA and IVDA events which will take place later this term. The overall team results were not startling, with both A and B teams ranking third. Cambridge took both first place trophies (which, incidentally, were won by us last year) but we did win the Team Knockout competition (won by Cambridge last year!).

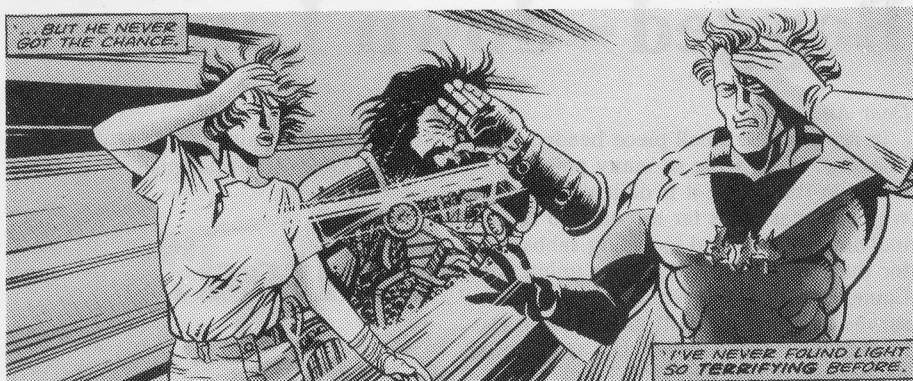
On an individual basis some of the results were quite encouraging: Team Waltz was won (rather casually!) by James Barron and Janet Bond (A team) who also came first in the Open Viennese

Waltz. Gareth Davies and Christine Bearpark (A team) took first place in Team Jive. We thought that our A team Cha Cha Cha couple Wendy Tan and Mark Highman were very unfortunate to have been knocked out in the semi-final and would probably have been placed quite highly had they made it to the final. Our B team Cha couple Paul Ng and Sarita Chandrasekharan took 3rd place.

In the Open competitions Eric and Anne came second in Rock and Roll with a very acrobatic routine—well done! Ex-students Steve and Nicki won the Open Samba but the fame went to Shuko Noguchi and Rachel Condor who entered with a hastily put together routine as an all-girl couple, and shocked everyone by coming sixth.



Picocon



It's back! The annual Imperial College Science Fiction convention is set to invade the Union Building for a whole day of transmuting, transferring, transporting and maybe even translating. We've got Don Abnett from Marvel comics (co-writer of the Knights of Pendragon, editor of Strip and contributor to the Comic Relief Comic) giving a talk and Alex Stewart (writer, editor) doing some, along with stalls, the real Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy (Archimedes owners bring disks), big quiz games, songs, dance, hopscotch, torture, alien impressions, videos and the bar is open ALL DAY!! The relevants (big grey things with trunks) are as follows:

1. It's on Saturday March 2.
2. It costs £4 on the day, £3.50 advance.

3. There's Dan Abnett.
4. There's Alex Stewart.
5. There's no 'R' in Picocon.
6. There's ALL DAY BEER.
7. It starts at 10am and dies from exhaustion, alcohol poisoning, satisfaction, brain damage and bowel relapse at 1

Whether it's because you believe in klingons, think you're a xenomorph, think Barbarella is horny, want to see the size of the collars in Blake's Seven, have anything even close to an imagination, you want to see an artist's ideas about science or you just want to talk a load of crap and have someone who'll listen to you. You'll miss Jim'll Fix It, Blind Date and Paul Daniels and still be back for Twin Peaks. Be seeing you.

Hyde Park Relay



Five months of begging, borrowing and stealing culminated on Saturday in the 43rd running of the Hyde Park Relays. Fifteen hundred students from all over Europe descended on Imperial College to take part in the biggest race of its kind in the world. This year the event was sponsored by the local Natwest Bank and also New Balance.

The event resembled the London Marathon in its professionalism; sponsors, 3A's officials, video cameras, official photographers and marshals all gathered to witness the mass start. 150 men and 53 women surged around the Serpentine at a time. IC Cross-Country Club relied on

tactics of a pre-race night spent on the floor in Southside gym to ward off the foreign competition.

Predictably, Loughborough won both the ladies and men's races, however Imperial runners used their advantage in knowing the course to all run well. The hero of the day being Frank who ran 3 legs, each for a different team. GB international, Simon Mugglestone, won the men's individual prize.

Thanks to Alex's wizardry, a computerised results service allowed the magnificent trophies to be presented to the winners whilst the hungry runners were still devouring the feast prepared

5-A-Side

IC Randoms: Top of Group
IC 1sts and 2nds: Out of Running

Five o'clock last Sunday morning, 15 of the toughest sped off in the 'hard seated, petro-powered conveyance mechanism: destination Southampton University via Fleet motorway services for overpriced coffee, muesli and tea.

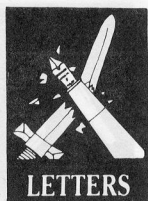


Having earlier been robbed in the cafeteria, the 1sts and 2nds couldn't believe that it could happen a second time losing to teams in their groups. It was down to the mighty 3rds to carry the IC flag. Against all odds and a partisan home crowd, they fought like wounded animals and twatted Southampton 1sts 2-0, Annan passing the ball at least twice in the warm up. A climax had been set up, a 2nds versus 3rds crunch match in which blood was spilt and the game was drawn. IC Misfits, winning their group and the support of the crowd went on to lose rather unconvincingly to Sussex, Nelson deftly slotting an own goal at the second attempt past keeper, Chris Collison.

By the end of the day we had ridden our luck too far. This became apparent when the mini-bus ground to a halt at Barons Court.

delicately the night before, using previously hidden culinary talents of the IC Trojans. Fashion conscious athletes purchased designer T-Shirts, of which there are a limited number remaining. There will be an opportunity to buy these and some of last year's memorabilia in the JCR on Tuesday between 11.30 and 2.30pm.

The event was an unparalleled success which couldn't have happened without the help of most of the club members, particularly Dave and Duncan. Thanks also to a brave FELIX photographer who stuck it out until the end.



Scribblers' Corner...

What's On

AN UP-TO-THE-MINUTE GUIDE TO EVENTS

FRIDAY

- Hang Gliding.....12.30pm**
Southside Upper Lounge. Come and find out about weekend training. Weekly meeting.
- Yacht Club Meeting.....12.30pm**
Huxley 413.
- Rag Meeting.....12.40pm**
Union Lounge.
- Huxley Soc Bookstall.....1.00pm**
JCR.
- Friday Prayers.....1.00pm**
Southside Gym. See Islamic Society.
- Kung Fu.....4.30pm**
Union Gym.
- C.U. Prayer Meeting.....5.00pm**
413 Maths.
- Yoga.....5.30pm**
Southside
- Christian Union Meeting.....6.00pm**
308 Computing.
- Swimming.....6.30pm**
Sports Centre. New members always welcome.
- Fencing Club Training.....6.40pm**
Club training.
- Rag Hypnosis Lecture.....7.15pm**
Great Hall. £2.50.
- Shaolin System Nam Pai Chuan.....7.30pm**
Southside Gym.
- Water Polo.....7.30pm**
Sports Centre. Come along and join in.
- Southside Disco.....8.30pm**
Southside Bar.

SATURDAY

- Kung Fu Club.....4.30pm**
Wu Shu Kwan in Southside Gym.

SUNDAY

- Sunday Service.....10.00am**
Anteroom Sheffield Building. See West London Chaplaincy.
- Catholic Chaplaincy Mass.....11.00am**
53 Cromwell Road.
- Wargames.....1.00pm**
UDH. All welcome.
- Yoga.....10.30am**
Southside Gym.
- Kung Fu Club.....4.30pm**
Wu Shu Kwan in the Union Gym.
- Catholic Mass.....6.00pm**
53 Cromwell Road, followed by supper.

MONDAY

- RockSoc Meeting.....12.30pm**
Southside Upper Lounge. All abnormalities welcome.
- Basketball Club.....5.30pm**
Volleyball Court. Men's Team.
- Keep Fit.....5.30pm**
Southside Gym.
- Intermediate Rock 'n' Roll.....6.00pm**
JCR.
- Swimming.....6.30pm**
Sports Centre. New members always welcome.

Bogged-down Lane

Dear Andy,

In reply to the small piece headed 'Real Funding', there were so many points raised in the article it is difficult to know where to start. It is far too easy to blame individuals up to and including sabbaticals for the state of the Union now (mind you, Council approved expenditure for surveying 2,000 students according to the President's report request, but at the UGM he claimed it was for 1,200-1,500 students, an increased cost of 25-40%. And he reckons I'm trying to mislead Council!?!? Couldn't resist that one Shan). But on closer reflection the blame can't lie there. Elected individuals are endorsed to try and put in their own ideas and feelings for what is best for the students, whilst enacting their will as well from UGMs etc. The failure of these are not an indication of the weakness of any proposals, but the inappropriateness of their conception in the current climate.

However, in the light of new proposals to abolish the UGM, I feel the first place to start is with the committee structure. Presently, the UGM is the sovereign body of ICU, followed by Council, then UFC is beneath Council. Now UFC is supposed to give advice and investigate the finances of the Union. So, it would be obvious that UFC should report to Council. BUT, a few years ago Council thought that it was doing too much work, and since the majority of UFC seemed to be a sensible committee, so why abolish it. Hence, all Union financial matters are decided by UFC, then theoretically rubber-stamped by Council, though now matters don't seem to get that far, they are just accepted.

So that's the current situation now, but it seems that the decisions of the Union's past are now catching up with us in a big way. If UGMs are to go then Council will have to take more responsibility. Is that likely to happen. Well, from Mr Eyers reckoning, only a few people bother to take part in important discussions. Thanks for that, I'm sorry if people are thinking that I'm not saying enough, but I'm not sure what's going on half the time. I can only presume that their education here is second to none and that they understand perfectly what's going on. I doubt that, but the more accurate answer would be that people are not bold enough to ask questions. And who can blame them? I've been here nearly four years and never for one moment felt 100% comfortable about what's going on!

Your editorial said 'the only way things can get any better is if you get involved'. A more accurate perception would have been '...if you get INVOICED!'

Yours,

Awfully-bogged-down,
Spenser Lane, SCC Chairman.

United?

Dear Andy,

I wonder what the Children of the Winnie Mandela Centre for the Under Fives, think about her recent appearance in court on the charges of assault and abduction. The allegations involve the feared Mandela Utd football team which she 'managed' whilst her husband was enjoying prison life. The captain of this football club has already been found guilty of the murder or poor little Stompie.

This centre for the under fives is not, as you would imagine in a shanty town of Soweto, but in the London Borough of Islington. I was wondering what a conversation between a pupil and teacher might be like at this centre: 'Well, Johnny don't drop that paint pot again or I'll rip your throat out with a pair of garden shears. Don't even think about telling your parents or we'll go round your house, set fire to it, and gang rape your sister.'

This would be consistent with the Mandela Utd code of practice. They have been responsible for the fear that has swept many black townships. This is shown by the reluctance of prosecution witnesses to come forward to testify against the 'manager'. I must admit I have very little respect for either Mrs Mandela or her terrorist husband, particularly since her now famous quotation 'With our matches and our necklaces we will liberate this land.'

Isn't it sad that whilst President De Klerk is doing wonderful work with his reforms in the Republic of South Africa, the main news that's coming out of this country is the trial of a wicked woman?

Islington council should immediately re-name the centre. Perhaps after some great British hero. How about the Margaret Thatcher centre for the Under Fives or even after Norman Tebbit or Enoch Powell. However knowing Islington Council as I do, they'd probably name it after Saddam Hussein!

Yours,

Alan Bailey.

P.S. I have accepted your challenge of a public debate. You've got my number so when will you let me know the details?



Apologies...?

Dear Saddam Hussein,

I'm writing to apologise for the terrible crimes our Imperialist Fascist Governments have committed against your country, and to assure you that even here and in 'the Great Satan' there are plenty of people who wish you no harm whatsoever.

All throughout this crisis we have been calling for a peaceful solution, and we have regularly condemned America's persistent aggression. Even now after four weeks of war we feel it is not too late to negotiate. You showed yourself to be a reasonable and amiable gentleman by the help you gave to the foreigners stranded in Iraq and Kuwait. Our leaders on the other hand are obstinate and pig-headed idiots whose refusal to negotiate is a damning indictment on our so-called democracy.

For the past month 'the Allies' have been bombing hell out of Iraq, and what has it achieved? Your continued missile attacks on Saudi Arabia and Israel show that the bombing is having no real effect on your army, and obviously you don't give a toss about civilian casualties. A bloke I met in the pub said this war is costing us over forty million quid a day—that's nearly half what the NHS gets! The Tories are closing hospitals to pay for someone else's war, and we say enough is enough.

Here's the plan: with everyone's attention turned to the Gulf (perhaps you could turn the heat up a bit?) we the people will rise up and seize power, smash the Tories, abolish the Poll Tax, and stop the Gulf War. We offer you this

compromise: if we pull all our troops out of the Gulf, you get out of Kuwait. You can keep everything you've nicked—the Kuwaitis are rich and will easily rebuild their country.

In fact—what the heck—you can keep Kuwait. The girl at the chippie reckons the Al-Sababs who ran Kuwait are dictators—all 1200 of 'em. The people of Kuwait aren't much better. The National Union of Kuwaiti Students say they've been trying to get rid of the Al-Sababs since 1964. It only took us eleven years to get rid of our dictator, so clearly NUKS aren't trying very hard. They don't deserve a country of their own. Besides, Kuwait has only been around since 1710, so they've no real historical claim to independence.

On top of all that, we don't even need Kuwait. Someone I was chatting to in the bog said they only produced 8% of the world's oil, so even if you nuked the whole place it wouldn't hurt us in the West very much. Of course, you would have to make a solemn pledge not to invade Saudi Arabia or anywhere else; and keep that promise, not like the one you made about not invading Kuwait—naughty boy! In return we will remove all American and UK forces and businesses from all Arabic countries; destroy all our atomic biological and chemical weapons; pay you substantial compensation for the millions of civvies you say have been killed; and make you honorary president of the London School of Economics.

Best Wishes,
Ultan McCarthy, Secretary Rampton
Rejects against the Gulf War.

God And...

Dear Andy,

1. I won't admit my name because I'm scared? Bullshit. As I have said before, I won't tell you because it reduces my credibility when arguing the point. Would Mr Cooksley (892) accuse me of being feminist if I were a 'bloke'? Would I be racist if I were coloured? (Sorry, I'd like to check with the white majority out there if I'm allowed to use the word coloured. No one seems to ask the minorities.) I will also admit that in my earlier letters I was deliberately inflammatory, and I don't promise not to do it again.

2. In the letters' page most people put forward a premise, and draw some logical opinion and conclusions from it. The logic is often incorrect or the premise perhaps leaves things out. But you try. There is an exception to this rule. Christians put

forward a premise such as 'In Luke 3:16...' *This is not a valid basis for any argument unless you are debating the Bible.* It cannot be applied to any other situation as the Bible (and Koran etc) is heavily biased. Do you Christians believe the book of Mormon, or the Moonies? No you don't.

I make a premise and conclusion and try to answer any logical discussion. However you religious types do not allow any logical criticism of the Bible etc. 'It's true, God told me in prayer.' Oh then it must be true. F**k off. It just doesn't stand up. Mr Butcher is not banning Christians from writing in, he is just saying he will not tolerate any argument supported by fiction, not matter how old it is.

3. South Africa. While I oppose Apartheid I would like to point out a few

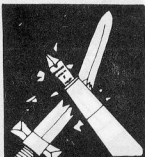
- Beginners Rock 'n' Roll**.....7.00pm
JCR.
- Talk by Heinz Wolff**.....7.30pm
Physics LT1. Plus Wellsoc AGM afterwards.
- Water Polo**.....7.30pm
Sports Centre. Come along and try one of the most physically demanding sports.
- Latin American**.....8.00pm
JCR.

TUESDAY

- C.U. Prayer Meeting**.....8.30pm
Chaplain's Office
- Grand T-Shirt Sale**.....11.30pm
JCR. Exclusive designs from £1.
- Riding Club Meeting**.....12.30pm
Southside Upper Lounge.
- AudioSoc**.....12.30pm
S.C.R. for cheap records, CDs and hi fi discounts.
- Radio Modellers**.....12.30pm
Southside Lounge.
- Cathsoc Mass**.....12.30pm
Mech Eng 702. Followed by lunch.
- Sailing Club**.....12.30pm
Southside Lounge.
- PhotoSoc**.....1.00pm
Southside Lounge. New members to join.
- Jewish Society Meeting**.....1.30pm
SCR Union Building.
- Gliding Club Lecture**.....5.30pm
Aero 266. A short talk with slides 'Mountain Soaring in the Alps'.
- Radio Modellers**.....5.30pm
Student training workshop, Mech Eng.
- Keep Fit**.....5.30pm
Southside Gym.
- Amenesty International**.....5.30pm
Clubs Committee Room. Weekly meeting.
- Wine Tasting Soc**.....6.00pm
Union Lounge. Weekly meeting. Everyone welcome
- Improvers Ballroom**.....6.00pm
JCR.
- Canoe Club**.....6.15pm
Beit Quad store or 8.30pm in Southside Upper Lounge.
- Judo**.....6.30pm
Union Gym.
- Ballroom Bronze Medal**.....7.00pm
JCR.
- Yoga**.....8.00pm
Southside Gym.
- Cricket Nets**.....9.00pm
Lords. Meet at 7.45pm in Mech Eng Foyer. Must bring whites.

WEDNESDAY

- Keep Fit**.....12.30pm
Southside Gym.
- Bike Club**.....12.45pm
Southside Lounge.
- Cycling Training**.....1.00pm
Meet at Beit Arch.
- Wargames**.....1.00pm
UDH. All welcome.
- Micro Club Meeting**.....1.15pm
Top floor NW corner Union Building. Every week.
- Kung Fu**.....1.30pm



LETTERS

Union Gym.

DramSoc	2.30pm
Union Concert Hall.	
Diving	6.30pm
Swimming Pool.	
Shaolin System Nam Pai Chuan	7.00pm
Southside Gym.	
Basketball Club	7.30pm
Volleyball Court. Women's Team	
Kung Fu Club	7.30pm
Union Gym. Wu Shu Kwan.	

THURSDAY

Fencing Training	11.30am
Intermediate & advanced coaching.	
Balloon Club Meeting	12.30pm
Southside Upper Lounge.	
YHA Meeting	12.30pm
Southside Upper Lounge.	
Postgrad Lunch	12.30pm
Chaplains Office (10 Princes Gardens).	
Fencing Training	12.30pm
Beginners Training.	
'Vision of Ecstasy'	1.15pm
Union Lounge. A film of a nun's erotic dreams. Banned last year for blasphemy. Entrance 50p (members free). Organised by Huxley Society.	
Fencing Training	1.30pm
General.	
Gliding Club Meeting	1.00pm
Aero 266. Come and arrange a trial flight.	
Keep Fit	5.30pm
Southside Gym	
Midweek Service	5.30pm
Chaplains Office (10 Prince's Gardens).	
New Beginners Ballroom	6.00pm
JCR.	
Judo	6.30pm
Union Gym.	
Improvers Ballroom	7.00pm
JCR.	
Intermediate Ballroom	8.00pm
JCR.	
Southside Disco	8.30pm
Southside Bar.	
ICCAG Soup Run	9.15pm
Meet Weeks Hall Basement.	

FOR SALE & WANTED

- ESTHER & SIMONE Ltd. Handmade card for any occasion. 24 hours notice required—Potato prints only.
- FOR SALE: Ricoh XRX Camera with 35-70mm zoom lens. Excellent condition. Boxed as new. £220 ono. Contact Kaveh via Felix Office (ext 3515).
- FOR SALE: Golf Diesel 1.6cc. Very good condition, low mileage for year (1980). £900 ono. Contact Yazi on 5180 (int) or 071-701 0827 (after 9pm).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 'POPULATION growth in developing countries', guest speaker from Mary Stoppes Int. Thursday 12.45pm, Mech Eng 5420.

PERSONAL

- MY KELLOGG'S Honey-Bun—you know tht I love you—Steve.
- FOREVER and twenty-three and a half hours.
- DEAR TIGER, Number 1, Love and Hugs—?

...Other Mascots

things. First; tribalism. In many African states white domination of blacks has been replaced with maybe one tribe dominating all the others. In South Africa we have the communist ANC and the tribal Inkatha movement. Because of world arms embargoes, South Africa now has a huge weapons industry. I do not think that either group is sophisticated enough to handle the responsibility yet. At the same time I do not think this should be used to perpetuate Apartheid. Anyone got an opinion?

4. Mascotry. This is a proud tradition. It enabled about eight guys on each team to play soldier and use warlike talkies, directing youthful freshers in defence of their mascot. It allows ten people to pile into the back of a Hertz van and drive at silly speeds around London. The Unions have squads of cars and motor bikes to pursue the vans.

Very soon a van will pull out of College at high speed and hit a child, a car, maybe just a lamp-post. The drivers are good, but there's no accounting for the other idiots on the road. There is going to be a witness who reports ten people running from the back carrying a metallic object. The hire company will piece together that a) ten people is illegal and b) the van was being used for mascotry. They are highly likely to say that the insurance is therefore invalid, and the Union is legally responsible for the repair of the van (thousands), and personal damages to the victim, which can come to millions.

This is not even a worst case scenario. Lots of schools crocodile children around the area. It will happen sometime. It will be a rare event, but when it happens for the first time there is going to be severe hell to pay.

This is something I think people should be concerned about. The mascots are hardly ever seen, kept in secret locations by the chosen few. They hardly ever raise money for charity as they are rarely stolen. Mines doesn't appear to care one way or the other (at least they don't risk lives).

I have an idea for an alternative:

The mascots must be stored somewhere on College grounds. They must be brought to all UGMs and any Union event.

I think this will have the following effects:

1. The mascots will have a much higher profile, creating support and reducing apathy.
2. They will get stolen a lot more often, generating even more patriotism and loads of money.
3. There is no chance of hitting someone with a van.
4. The *top secret* mascotry teams might complain that they'll have no fun. (Well not publicly, but they'll oppose my plan for that reason.) I would say to them that the challenge of getting it across College once a week or so will be much more satisfying.

Athena.

Toilet Talk

Dear Andy,

I'm not quite sure how it is that a small minority of people are allowed to graffiti and destroy the Union Building toilets but they have. Today I went to the bog by the bar for a good dump and find no toilet seat or functioning door lock. I then crossed to the one by the lobby at the foot of the stairs and found no bog paper and the walls covered in graffiti. Maybe I'm overly sensitive but I think that instead of £4K to a management consultant, perhaps £2K refurbishment and maintenance of the heads should be a good idea?

A man with a real anus.

P.S. At least the toilets were clean, last time I went I found a lake of chunder in one and a still vomiting member of Beans Club in the other, unconscious.

Mend-a-Bike
PETER THOMAS



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WALT COLEMAN -

Zen Lawyer

LONDON 1991 - Britain is in a bad way. Mass media mediocrity and fast food philosophy are rife. Only one individual stands against the tide of guano-thought, like a barium enema for the brain...

Speaker's Corner



KEVIN, THIS GENTLEMAN WISHES TO PASS. HE CLAIMS TO BE THE DEVISOR OF A NEW SCHOOL OF THOUGHT WHICH WILL TAKE HUMANITY INTO A PERFECT GOLDEN AGE OF HARMONY AND PROSPERITY.

TAKE HIS MONEY AND KNEE HIM IN THE WALNUT PURSE.

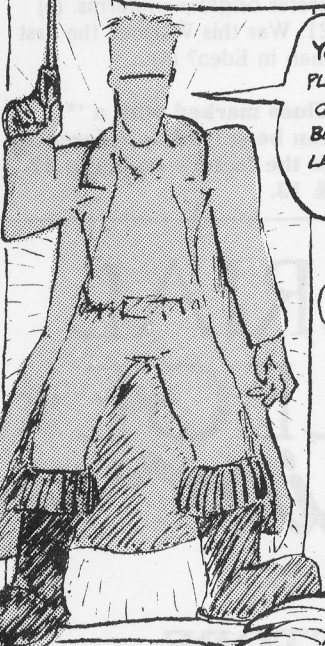
RIGHTO.



ahem!

DROP THE SPORTS EQUIPMENT AND WALK AWAY, TOE-JAM.

GOODNESS!

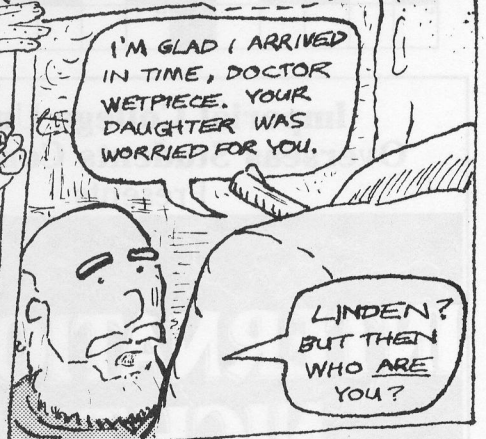


YOU SNAGS OF PLUG-FUZZ HAVE ONE SECOND BEFORE I PUT LEAD IN YOUR PENCILS.

'ONE'

THERE IS NO DISHONOUR IN EXERCISING THE BROWN-TROUSER PREROGATIVE, KEV.

YOU'RE SO RIGHT, MATE.



I'M GLAD I ARRIVED IN TIME, DOCTOR WETPIECE. YOUR DAUGHTER WAS WORRIED FOR YOU.

LINDEN? BUT THEN WHO ARE YOU?

WALT COLEMAN, SIR, FROM THE AGENCY OF REASON, EXCUSE THE CANNON, VIOLENCE ISN'T USUALLY MY THANG...

I SAW THIS BABY AT THE REJECT SHOP AND JUST HAD TO BUY IT. THE SIMPLES CRACK YOU UP TOO, EH?



erp!

BUT ENOUGH OF AMUSING CONSUMER GOODS. I'M HERE TO PROTECT YOU FROM A GREATER THREAT THAN THOSE STREET STOOLS. DOCTOR WETPIECE, YOU HAVE COME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE MOST EVIL MAN IN ALL LONDON TOWN...

CHAIRMAN TAO!

NEXT:

PHILOSOPHY PHUN WITH GURLIES AND GUNS

NO SHIT?





Pendragon and Alien Sex Fiend present...

Comicword

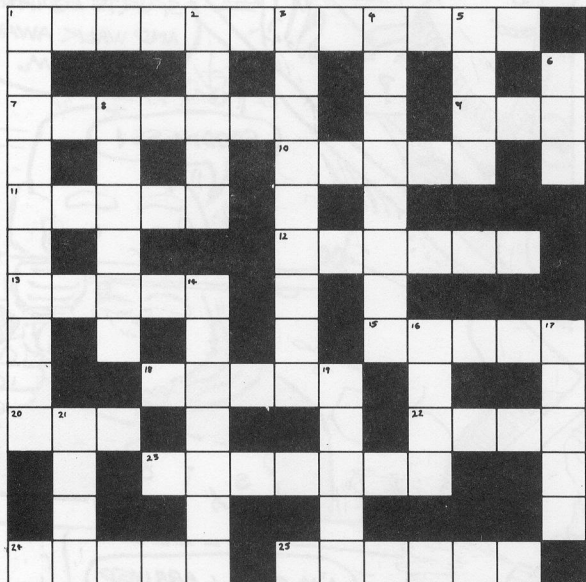
Filmword Answers:

Across:

- 1.Punisher, 6.Akira, 7.Slip Out, 8.He, 9.Home Alone, 11.AV, 12.TNT, 15.Ben, 17.Death, 18.Pyro, 19.Ishtar, 20.Monde, 21.Top, 23.Fan, 25.Rocky Two

Down:

- 1.Postcards, 2.In Laos, 3.Hopper, 4.Air, 5.Parenthood, 6.At Noon, 10.ET, 13.Marlon, 14.Child's, 16.Enter, 18.Pretty, 20.Mad, 22.POW, 24.No



ACROSS

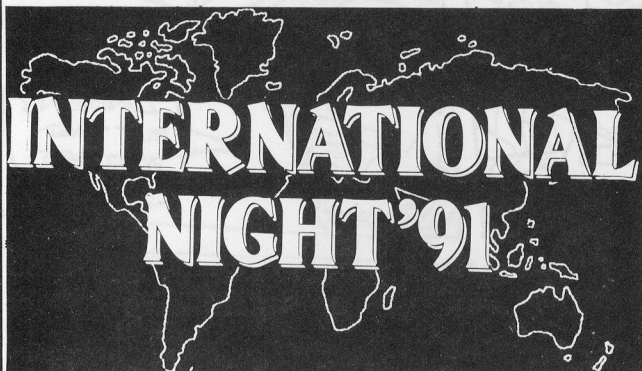
1. Comic becomes book. (7,5)*
7. ---: Assassin, by Miller & Sienkiewicz. (7)*
9. Once used by Bad Guys only, but not any more...(3)
10. Leader of New Mutants, or electricity carrier? (5)
11. Desert wanderer was once Captain America's Partner. (5)
12. Scottish dog meets Paul Daniels in playpark. Not in comic. (6)
13. Masterless samuri, first for Miller. (5)*
15. Fearful evaluation in Mega-City One. (5)
18. Honestly, he caused a revolution. (5)*
20. On crime or society? Decides the gulf between hero and villain. (3)
22. Reading comics is a good one. (4)
23. Britain, America. Who's in charge? (7)
24. Comics can, but often puzzle. (5)
25. Wolverine's nature was a deadly first for Marvel. (6)*

DOWN

1. Ecology pointer to a super hero with bow. (5,5)*
2. --- and feared. Most villains are. (5)
3. On crime or on comics? McCarthy chose the latter. (5,4)*
4. Singular way of dealing with tall buildings. (3,5)
5. Batman lives on it, and each of Wolverine's claws has one. (4)
6. --- of the story? At least, until next issue? (3)
8. Darksnake causes mean problem for Comic Relief Comic. (6)
14. Tell the story. Batman does it himself. (7)
16. The consequence of an angry Storm. (4)
17. Not always the end for a Marvel hero. (5)
19. Soldiers' colour: Heros prefer brighter uniforms. (5)
21. Was this Warlock the first man in Eden? (4)

Clues marked with a '**' can be solved by reference to the feature on pages 12 & 13.

Imperial College Union
Overseas Students Committee
Presents



Friday 1st March 1991

Food Festival—6.30pm, JCR
Cultural Show—8.00pm, Great Hall
Brazilian Carnival—10.00pm,

Tickets available from the Union
Office or overseas society officers:
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The Story So Far...

A
S
F
Bit

I'm back. Sorry; no clever little intro this week. I can't think of one.

The End

Last week Felix received a letter from a woman who had actually had an abortion. Out of respect for her and her feelings, and those of any other person at college in a similar position, I am drawing a close to the abortion debate. The opinion article written by IC Pro-Life Soc was only printed this week as it had been arranged before this letter was received. The discussion has been raging for several weeks, and clearly it is a very emotive issue, about which people have very strong personal feelings. It is also going nowhere. Both sides have had their say many times over, and thus I feel that to continue would merely cause more unnecessary pain to people who have had personal experiences with the subject.

Meanwhile, back at the Batcave...

As I've already stated, I'm back (bit obvious by now, really). The evil masterminds of the Brotherhood of Examiners gave me their worst, and I lived to tell the tale, although my degree may not have done. (Only joking, Mum. Honest). Thus you are once again the proud owner of a big, chunky, twenty four pager. However, at this point I must say a huge 'THANKYOU!' to the rest of the Felix staff for single-handedly (well, there are several of them, but you know what I mean...) producing the Valentine's issue last week, and more importantly for not saying anything really horrible about me in their editorial. It's okay, you can point the gun somewhere else now, guys...

As you may already know, next week is the (drum roll, trumpet fanfare...) Travel Special!!! Which means the whole of Felix is going to be jam-packed with articles written by people who have been to really nice hot places, and are very smug about it. If you haven't yet submitted (ooo-er) an article, then it's not too late (well, not quite). The final deadline is Monday, so get scribbling.

Next issue is also the penultimate one before the Imperial College Union elections. As such it will contain mugshots of all the candidates for the various sabbatical positions (President, Deputy President, Hon Sec (Events), and of course, the most important one: Felix Editor). More importantly it will also present their manifestoes.

So, if you're a candidate, bear this in mind: The deadline is Monday, 25th February, 12.30 pm **sharp**. All manifestoes must be 300 words or less. If they are longer they will be cut at the 300th word, even if in mid-sentence. Sorry, but it's the only way to ensure that no one candidate gains an advantage over any other.

If you're not a candidate, then it's going to be your first chance to see who's who, so read carefully. The people you vote in will be in charge of the Union for the next year. Too many people here complain about the Union; that it doesn't do enough for us; it doesn't do the things you want; you never know what's going on; etc, etc. If you don't make the effort to find out about the candidates, you won't know who you're voting for, and you won't be able to vote for the right person. Not voting at all is even worse.

This is the biggest chance we get to make sure things are how we want them. The Union is there for us, but if we don't make the effort and get involved then we've no right to complain. Apathy never



achieves anything, and neither does winging when it's too late. Right, rant over. But make sure you **VOTE!**

What will our heroes do next?

Well, we've got a couple of new things coming up (no, I'm not going to use the same joke twice in an issue. Next week, though...). The first is a regular diary column, written by a student here, and detailing his life in the previous week. I've already seen a sample, which he swears is true. The easily shocked need not read, but the names will be changed to protect the innocent (guilty?).

Next comes the 'Boring Lecture Forum'. Have you ever been stuck in a boring

lecture? Have you ever whiled away the time by producing an exquisite work of literature or art? Do bears do various naughty things in the woods? Does the Pope like the taste of concrete? If so (well, mainly if the second one...), then Felix wants you. Or rather, Felix wants your creations, whatever they may be. The only requirement is that it was produced in a boring lecture. So go for it: Show the world that not all students are time wasters! Drop your stuff off at the Felix office.

Also coming soon: A one off special set of interviews with the Sab candidates, asking them the kind of questions that they don't want to be asked, but that you want to know the answers to. This will be in the issue after next. AND a special post election round-up, in the issue after that. Yes, you are going to **VOTE**, whether you like it or not...

The heroes triumphant (ie, the end!)

Well, that's about it for now. With any luck the new cartoon will be regular (or a certain new cartoonist will be in trouble). You'll all be glad (?) to know that everyone's (?) favourite cat will be back next week, complete with high body-count (or a certain editor/cartoonist/part-time biologist/alien sex fiend will be in trouble). And remember that the C&G and RCS CCU elections are on Monday. Think of them as a warm-up to the ICU ones. IE: **VOTE!!!!!!**

Staff Meeting: Monday 12.30pm

The Super Team

Printing and Typesetting: InkMan and QuickFinger (aka Andy and Rose)

News Editor: TokenWoman (aka Anna)

Arts Editor: Idiotically Dedicated Man (aka Adam)

Music Editor: SuperRaver (aka John)

Books Editor: Wonder Bigot (aka Michael)

Photo Editor: FlashMan (aka Richard)

Features Editor: SuperSyntax (aka Roland)

Cartoonist: SillyPlotMan (aka Ian Cairns)

The SideKicks: ToneBoy (Stef), DataKid (James), Ian the Boy Blunder, EcoLad (Chris R.), the GerbilKids (Arts Reviewers), the GroovyTunes (Music Reviewers) and Pro-Life.

The Innocent Bystanders: Steven, Yasir, Karen, Indy, Nick, Mike, Simon, Parantha, Stefano, Clare, Nora (SuperRaver's Love Interest), Julia, Ruth, Wheezy, Rebecca, Rob, Sam, Frank, and The Rebel Alliance.

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