



THE FELIX

http://www.su.ic.ac.uk/Felix

est. 1949

Student Newspaper of Imperial College

Are we socially conditioned? Do you automatically use a napkin, or hold the door open for a girl? Ngozi Dozie explores our social mores and poses a moral question by looking at the last great taboo: incest. Page 18



In Something for the Weekend: Creationists battle with scientists over Noah's Ark in the Golem.

Showpiece shop goes to the wall

MARIA IOANNOU

ABA Holdings, who recently opened a shop offering photocopying services on the main walkway, went into receivership on Wednesday after their major shareholders made a decision to withdraw capital.

ABA moved from their old premises on Gloucester Road after being invited by College to take up retail space on the walkway. The College had hoped to provide a central photocopying outlet on campus which could handle the volume of photocopying needed by College.

Mike Hansen, Director of Finance at Imperial, commented: "We specifically chose a small company that was not Kodak, thinking that they would be more attuned to work with us." ABA opened in January and aimed to take much of the photocopying business that had previously been catered for by individual departments.

Warning signs of the company's problems were noticed by several students, one said: "I often wondered when ABA hoped to do any photocopying, I tried many times throughout last term and always found it closed." Mr Hansen, however, denied any prior knowledge of the ABA's financial difficulties, expressing his disappointment that the arrangement had not worked out, "We find ourselves back in the position we were in three months ago and we are having to examine the choices that College has."

ABA Holdings has been taken over by Callprint, another printing and photocopying company. A spokesperson for Callprint assured *Felix* that they were hoping to reopen the campus shop as soon as possible. Mr Hansen could not confirm this statement, "ABA's contract is now null and void and if the new owners

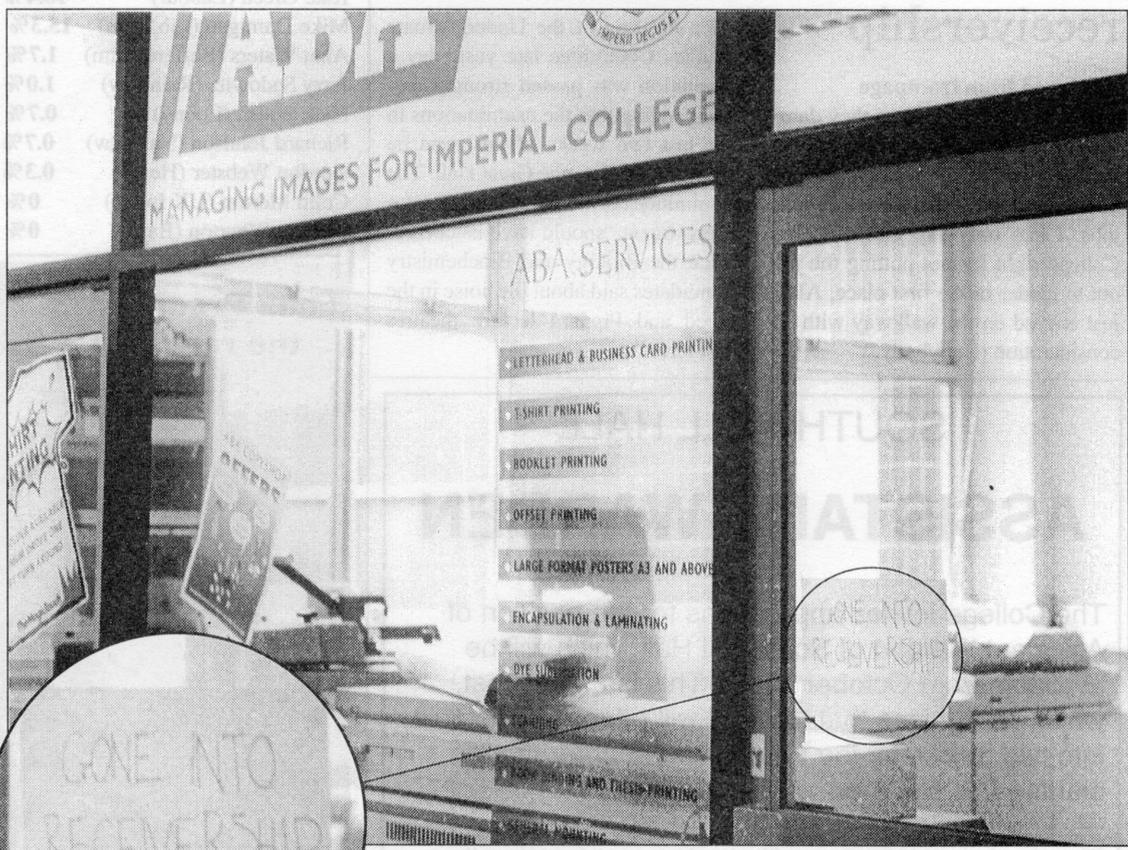


PHOTO: LILI

The financial rigour of the Imperial College marketplace was too much for ABA Copytech.

wish to have a branch on the South Kensington campus they will have to renegotiate with us."

Andy Thompson, ICU's Print Unit Manager, who had initially feared that ABA would significantly effect his business, commented: "They had no real effect on our business, which is mostly from the Union Clubs and
continued on page two

Tea on the lawn

NEWSTEAM

The first examinations to be held in the rigid-structured-temporary-marquee took place on Monday, amidst confusion, anger and despair. One candidate described the affair as "an exam tea-party," and "a complete joke."

Since the change of venue for the examinations was announced, a number of students have expressed dismay at the decision, (*Felix 1084*). Although the location of examinations cannot be influenced by the

University of London, Sarah White, President of ULU, emphasised that Imperial College had been pressured by Senate House to provide a reasonable examination environment. This would include keeping Southside bar closed in the daytime, ensuring there were no deliveries made during exams and the hiring of extra security to 'keep the peace'. College have also been pressed to provide closer toilet facilities - at the moment, students have to go to Southside bar. Ms
continued on page three

Presidential elections damp squib

JONATHAN TROUT

At time of going to press, the re-run of the 1997 ICU Presidential Sabbatical Election was looking to be another low key affair. Following last term's overwhelming vote for new election, only three candidates have put their names forward, Clare Buston of Biology and Management, Olly Newman C&G Academic Affairs Officer, and Al Hussein, a third year physicist.

So far only one of the candidates has been fully seconded, with only one of the other two looking likely to achieve the full twenty seconds necessary to ensure full candidature

before the papers come down later today.

This year's incumbent, Eric Allsop, expressed his surprise at the lack of "high profile" candidates, and rumours abound that one of the candidates did not understand the term "constitution", whilst another was unaware of the existence of the ICU Council, and also of the name of the present President.

The usual rumour-mill surrounding the Sabbatical Elections has been quiet this time round, suggesting no "big names". Could we be looking at another New Election? We could not possibly comment...

ABA into receivership

continued from frontpage

Societies, though I expect they damaged the departmental reprographic facilities business. My sympathies lie with the staff, who have lost their jobs. I can only say that it serves College right for not putting the job out to tender in the first place, ABA just arrived on the walkway with no consideration to anybody."

**STOP PRESS STOP PRESS
STOP PRESS STOP PRESS**

At a meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee late yesterday a resolution was passed strongly recommending that the examinations in the last two weeks of this term be relocated back to the Great Hall. The committee concluded that the Estates Department "should have listened to what the Biology and Biochemistry candidates said about the noise in the Reed and Pippard lecture theatres last term."

Tory landslide predicted

DAVID ROBERTS

An exclusive exit poll conducted for *Felix* yesterday predicted a majority of 255 for the Conservatives in the General Election.

Figures collected outside Linstead Hall Polling Station indicated a sharp swing, against all national expectations, away from Labour. This will almost certainly leave Peter Brooke holding a sweeping majority in his Cities of London and Westminster seat (already one of the safest Tory seats in the country).

In 1992, Mr Brooke took 25,512 votes, compared to 10,368 for Labour (figures adjusted for boundary changes since the last election). This equates to a 35.2% lead over Labour. However, yesterday's polling indicates an increased 43.4% lead - a 8.2% swing from left to right.

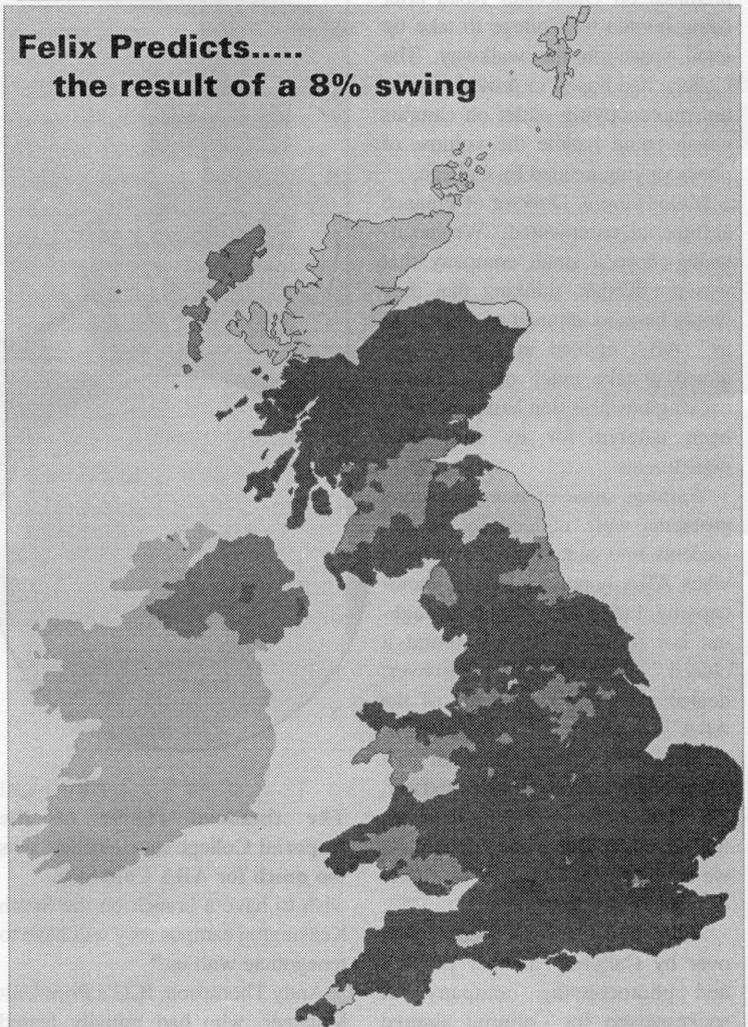
If this result was to be extrapolated across the entire country, assuming a uniform swing (the basis of the Swingometer utilised by Peter Snow), a notional Tory majority - and remember this is only for fun - of 255 is formed.

Although this poll surveyed only one polling station, it is interesting to note that a swing towards the Tories was found at a ballot taking place in a College Hall. This reflects the opinion of pollsters that IC students are evenly split amongst the three main parties - firmly bucking the perceived feeling that all students are by their nature dyed-in-the-wool socialists and radicals.

Results of exclusive *Felix* exit poll

Peter Brooke (Conservative)	61.8%
Kate Green (Labour)	18.4%
Mike Dumigan (Lib Dem)	15.3%
Alan Waters (Referendum)	1.7%
Jerry Sadowitz (Rainbow)	1.0%
Nick Walsh (Loony)	0.7%
Richard Johnson (Nat Law)	0.7%
Gordon Webster (Hemp)	0.3%
Colin Merton (UK Indep)	0%
Patricia Wharton (Barts)	0%

Felix Predicts..... the result of a 8% swing



If the 8.2% Labour to Conservative swing were to be reflected across the country, the Tories would secure 457 seats, compared with a meagre 170 for Labour and just 11 for Paddy Ashdown's Liberals. John Major would return to the Commons next week with a 255 seat majority, the Labour Party would collapse, and the Tories would rule well into the next millenium.

SOUTHWELL HALL

ASSISTANT WARDEN

The College invites applications for the position of Assistant Warden of Southwell Hall which will be available from October 1997. This is a new post, which recognises that the Hall will effectively be split into two blocks by the refurbishment programme starting this summer.

The Assistant Warden will receive rent free family accommodation in return for helping the Warden with pastoral duties. S/He will assume a large measure of the responsibility for one part of the Hall.

Any non-undergraduate member of the College may apply, but the post is particularly suitable for staff with some experience of student pastoral care, and who want to live in a student environment.

Further details and application forms can be obtained from Janet Jones, Office Services Manager, Room 512 Sheffield Building, extension 45536, e.mail Janet.Jones@ic.ac.uk

The closing date for receipt of applications is Thursday 15th May.

continued from frontpage

White also advised students to make a note of any major disturbances that took place while they were in the exam, for example, roadworks, high pollen count, or particularly hot or rainy weather. If a protest was to be made, she suggested that "The more people that keep a record of any [disturbances], the better, as organisation will count in favour."

Susan Johnson, Academic Registrar of the University of London, assured *Felix* that students can appeal against their results only on grounds of 'maladministration' - administrative error or the exam not being conducted in accordance with University of London regulations. She also made it clear that if any student feels they have a genuine cause for making an appeal to the University of London, they should write to the Academic Registrar at Imperial College. If they decide that the complaint is worth upholding, they will consult with the Board of Examiners who will then consider whether to adjust final marks or offer the student a chance to re-sit the exam.

Ms Johnson emphasised that "the examinations board will bend over backwards to assist you. However, an *en masse* appeal won't help any-

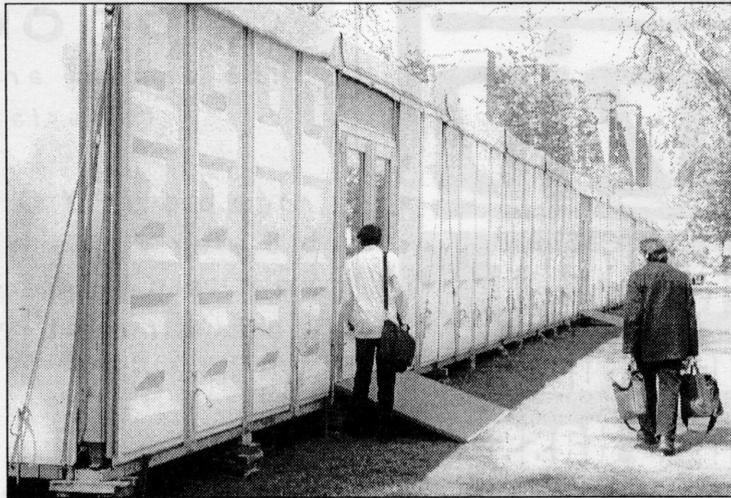


PHOTO: LILI

"...And in the Big Top, the main attraction will be starting soon, ladies and gentlemen. Please get ready to give a big hand to Johnny Schal and his Synchronised Drill-men..."

body, least of all those with a genuine problem."

This emphasis on individuals who may be affected more than most was echoed at the Imperial College Union's Council meeting on Tuesday evening. A motion was passed, instructing "the Union officers concerned with academic affairs to make it clear to the appropriate College authorities that the Union regards the whole farcical exercise is unacceptable, and ensure that special provi-

sion is made for those that would otherwise be disproportionately disadvantaged by the relocation of the exams."

It appears that the drilling in the library was not originally planned to coincide with the examination period. The subsequent relocation of the exams at short notice was due to the discovery that building work on the library was behind schedule. Rumours abound that the reason for this is that one of the lift shafts is "the

wrong shape." Sarah White suggested that Imperial College Estates Department must have known the project was behind schedule. At the moment, it is unclear who is paying for the marquee, the air conditioning, and the extra security. Sarah White explained that if College was footing the bill, that would hit students doubly hard, as they would be paying indirectly. "I hope the project contractors are paying in cash, resources and facilities," she stated.

Local Authority planning officers have declared that the marquee falls within planning constraints provided that the building has no other use and remains for the duration of the exams only.

Piers Williams, Deputy President for Finance & Services, said that he was "surprised that the College authorities had not considered relocating the exams to the Senior Common Room or the JCR", the next two biggest rooms on campus after the Great Hall. The College was unable to comment on this suggestion although they did say that splitting the examinees into several different rooms had been considered but discarded as being too cumbersome.

The University of London is said to be "concerned" with the current state of affairs.

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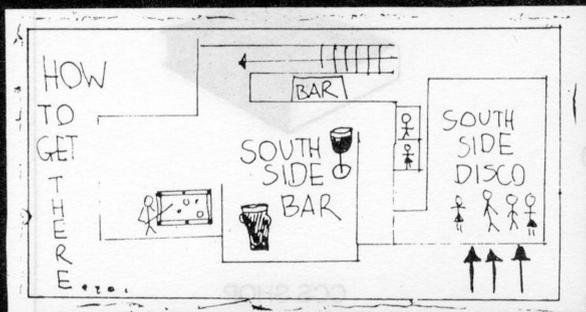
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Friday 2nd May - Southside Disco
8 Til 11:15 pm

phoenix

the annual arts magazine of
imperial college

needs YOU to write
poetry, short stories
or any other pieces
of creative writing

This year's theme is
I n d e c i s i o n

Send contributions to
phoenix@ic.ac.uk,
the Felix Office,
or the editors;
Jon Trout (j.trout@ic.ac.uk) and
Ed Sexton (e.sexton@ic.ac.uk)

Get creative.

I n d e c i s i o n



Get creative.



the golem

Quacks or Scientists? Creationists in court over Noah's Ark, (below?).

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art

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music

Chemical Brothers and Dreadzone in concert

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Paul Weller biography

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eight days

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SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND 020597/II

Published as part of Felix, the Student Newspaper of Imperial College



iCU ents presents..

Friday

common people

indie & alternative sounds
live music from "the young offenders"

plus cocktail bar

9-2. free b4 9 / £1 after

Tues

Bar
Trivia

win £50 !! 8.30. Davinci's

Weds

frolix ! 9-12
free

Thurs

COCKTAIL NIGHT

happy hour prices and specials all night

Fri

Hedonizm

club tunes and blissed out beats
in the cocktail bar

**TRIVIA
WEEK**

PART OF YOUR STUDENTS' UNION

iCU
IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

And on the seventh day...

...they rested. The waiting begins in the famous Australian 'Ark' trial, which challenges Creationist beliefs that the world is only 6000 years old.

For seven days during April, Federal Court 23C in Sydney, Australia was packed out for a civil trial over alleged breaches of fair trading laws. The unusual size of the audience was not because of any huge sums involved; the company being sued had gone into voluntary liquidation a week before and the other parties were already bankrupt. No, the reason the international media had flocked to Sydney was to witness a battle of ideas between science and religion.

A Professor of Geology, Ian Plimer, from the University of Melbourne, has already sold his house to take a group of creationists to court. He intends to stop them from misleading consumers with their "gospel of deceit". The case centres on the claims by Dr Allen Roberts of Sydney and his organisation Ark Search Inc. that the remains of Noah's Ark have been discovered in Turkey. Ian Plimer wants to prevent Roberts from using "junk science" to back up his claims about the Ark in brochures, tapes and videos that have been sold to raise money for expeditions. He is joined in court by a former creationist who is suing Allen Roberts for using drawings from his book *The Ark of Noah* without his permission.

The trial is the outcome of a highly publicised war of words between Professor Plimer and Dr Roberts. Roberts first came to media attention in 1991 when he was held captive by Kurdish guerrillas while in Turkey. After his return in 1992 he began a lecture tour of Australia to raise funds for Ark Search Inc. as their 'archaeological research consultant'. Plimer was thrown out of three lectures when he tried to ask questions about the nature of the scientific evidence for the Ark. The courts first got involved in May 1992, when Roberts sued Plimer for remarks made during a Melbourne Radio program.

In 1994 Plimer visited the site of the alleged Ark near Mount Ararat in Turkey. He subsequently published his own book, *Telling Lies for God*, in which he accused the creationists of scientific fraud.

The controversial boat-like structure first appeared during an earthquake in 1948 and it has been known for years that it has the same dimensions as Noah's Ark detailed in Genesis. Plimer's geological studies led him to conclude that it was an unremarkable rock formation caused by folding of the ancient sea floor over 110 million years ago. He found no evidence of petrified wood, iron rivets, stone anchors and fossilised animal dung and hair that Roberts and Ark Search say they discovered at the site. Plimer hopes the courts will denounce the assertions by Roberts that he has carried out any scientific studies.

Plimer and Fasold have tried to extend the scope of the trial from the narrow limits of commercial law by calling witnesses from religion and education. Plimer fears that creationists are misleading young people with their 'pseudo-scientific nonsense'. He says he was motivated to take the case to court by surveys that show one in five Australian science students hold creationist views.

On the first day of the trial the Judge ruled out statements by an American anti-creationist campaigner. Nonetheless Plimer hopes a favourable judgement will draw attention to the growing number of private fundamentalist Christian schools that teach creation theory.

Religious supporters of Plimer include the Anglican

Archbishop of Brisbane who wrote in a preface to Plimer's book that creationism is "anti-knowledge, anti-religious and anti-science". Another Anglican rector and physics graduate, was ready to argue in court that science cannot be used to 'prove' the existence of God. But theological arguments were not allowed by the Judge.

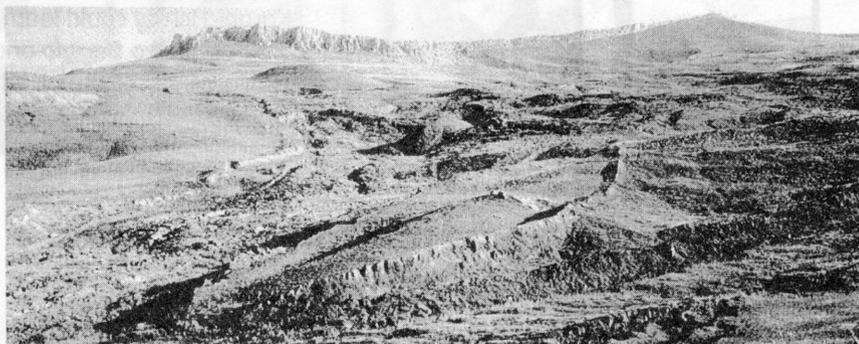
The nature of scientific enquiry and evidence were central to Plimer's case against the creationist idea that evolution is unproved 'theory' and not fact. During discussions about the methods and philosophy of science, the Judge made sure the court had lessons in Darwinian evolution, Lamarckian inheritance and Karl Popper's theory that science advances by falsification. Plimer also attacked Roberts' academic credentials. It was revealed that his doctorate in Christian Education came from a correspondence Bible College in Florida, that is not accredited. Roberts admitted that he had not personally carried out any scientific tests at the Ark site. He also tried to distance himself from claims made by Ark Search Inc. by denying any knowledge of the sale of their products at his lectures. However he had to admit that the company was registered at his home address.

The trial hearings ended on April 17th and the Judge is expected to give his conclusions in a few weeks. If the judgement goes Plimer's way, it will be the first time creationist beliefs have been challenged using consumer protection laws. The authorities have always been reluctant to prosecute traders who make dubious scientific claims, because of the difficulty in deciding whether statements are given as fact or opinion. A positive result for Plimer may have an impact on new age crystal healers as well as creationists.

Few observers in the Federal Court are prepared to predict the outcome of the trial. On the last day the Judge questioned whether the law should be used to settle disputes of this kind and if Plimer's case was an attack on freedom of speech. In his defence Plimer says he got sick of being sued for expressing his views (eight other writs have been served and withdrawn by creationist groups) and decided to go on the attack, "You shouldn't treat a crazy, religious cult with kid gloves". In fairness, Roberts' had little respect for freedom of expression during his lecture tour, throwing out anyone who challenged his views.

Whatever the result of the trial, the battle between creationists and evolutionists will continue to rage. Ever since the world-famous 'Scopes trial' in 1925, when John Scopes, a teacher from Tennessee, was convicted for teaching evolution, both sides have made frequent trips to court, but it seems unlikely that the dispute will ever be settled in a court room.

Sarah Tomlin



Creationism is "anti-knowledge, anti-religious and anti-science"
Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane

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"You shouldn't treat a crazy, religious cult with kid gloves"
Professor Plimer

Noah's Ark...?



Alternative

Felix bravely plunges into the shadowy depths of the British fashion industry.

Review by Afua Osei

Photography by Virginia Zampeli

The venue was old Spitalfields market; the creative energy courtesy of the young British designers of the future. This fifth year of the Alternative Fashion Week was as vibrant and dynamic as ever, in its attempt to make fashion a valued part of British culture.

There were interesting collections by **Andrea Fishley**, whose designs showed potential, with a linen and leather collection for women. The designs were refreshingly marketable (lack of commercial viability being the prime weakness of British fashion) with a minimalist edge. The linen lacked sensuality and the cut of this material should have been more adventurous in order to emphasise the beauty of the minimalist philosophy. The leather was great, and the flavour of her designs were not dissimilar to the avant garde Ann Demeulester or the eminent Americans Ralph Lauren, and Donna Karan- Fishley could learn a lot from them.

Alessandro Beggio and the designers **Hayes & Cattell** showed exhilaratingly colourful, futuristic, party girl clothes. Both collections

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were quintessentially clubby, and some of the designs reminiscent of the established British designer Katherine Hamnett. Both collections were modern and brilliant fun.

The **Dragana Perisic** collection was contemporary, elegant yet sexy. Colour and light silky, shiny materials were used with chiffon. The design and presentation was excellent, and to add to the excitement, an Imperial College girl (Biochemistry/Chemistry joint honours student) contracted with a modelling agency sauntered down the catwalk in one of their designs.

The **2 RUDE FOR YOU** label was extremely brave, they had impressively used a range of unconventional materials and the results were anarchic. There seemed to be a futuristic, military, hooker theme and all of the clothes were unwearable BUT the ideas were very inspirational. The unabandoned and innovative use of form, shape and texture was reminiscent of the Japanese designers Yohji Yamamoto and Comme des Garçons' Rei Kawakubo. Boundless rivers of creativity were on show- maybe too many different ideas, ensured that none were professionally pursued; it would be really exciting to see a tailored collection in the same vain- which would natu-

rally be more wearable. They should also consider the intellectual intensity of the Japanese designers.

As expected some designs were disappointing, such as those by **Renegade**, who claimed to be inspired by Charlie Chaplin, dandies, and androgyny. The whole concept is fascinating; the designs were not. There was a good use of colour, the design and cut of the clothes was sparse and unremarkable. Better tailoring would make the Renegade label more resilient.

One of the worst collections was by **Hakim & Williamson**, who displayed handprinted garments. The presentation was awful, the designs were pretentiously simplistic. Maybe the prints were of a high quality, but fashion is definitely not the right arena for these people.

Overall the best collection was by **Nuala McCulloch**- Tibetan Winterwear, using oriental cut and fold; wool and sheepskin. It was a beautiful, modern collection, assymetric lines were used, and they had ambitiously made heavy materials sensual. It was an immensely artistic and unique collection which was unintentionally marketable. This designer deserves serious interest and investment.



Attempts on her Life

Royal Court Theatre Prepare to be confused with this play. It

starts with people lined up on either side of a smoke-laden runway, with a television in the centre showing footage of men running round with machine guns. In the background, you can hear a succession of increasingly hysterical answering machine messages. As if that wasn't confusing enough, it is then replaced by an interrogation. Well, more like a segment of the interviewee's life: he just kneels there while his interrogators never stop talking. And then that's replaced by a group of writers discussing a play.

At first, "Attempts on her Life" appears to be a collection of irrelevant, bizarre and unconnected scenes. There's a music video, a car advert (in two languages simultaneously) and a lengthy monologue by a cripple, to name but three. Individually a little strange, when put together, they begin to make no sense



at all. The name "Annie" is mentioned a couple of times, but you have no idea of who this "Annie" person actually is.

But this is just what makes the play look so astoundingly well done. After a while, things begin to come together.

Although she never actually appears, you get a good idea of the kind of person Annie is, what she's done with her life and exactly what all the fuss is about. That really odd scene half an hour ago begins to make perfect sense and you realise how it fits into the big picture and adds a great deal to it.

Having said that, not everything fits in perfectly. One scene keeps cutting to a man haloed in green light reading out a list of seemingly random words, then back to the main action of a group of art critics. It just seems to distract from the main scene without adding anything to it.

Once you get to the end, everything is crystal clear. But then when you think about it some more, it still doesn't make total sense. It's certainly open to interpretation in a number of places. Overall, it's one amazingly well written play.

Andy Royal

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Went Down to the Crossroads

by Philip Goulding It seems that each time I go to the theatre, the audience moves closer to the stage and vice-versa...

The Courtyard is situated as its name suggests; it is a tiny theatre in a small country-like house. Although in the 'not-so-dodgy' part of King's Cross, as it faces the side of the station, it is nevertheless stuck between a garish and uninviting fastfood outlet and an abandoned looking house. Heaps of litter lay strewn about the pavement here and there and one would not really venture alone at night too much further up the street...

I know that the purpose of a review is really to discuss the performance but its rather unusual setting deserves a little more than just a passing mention and contributes a lot to the atmosphere and personal impressions of this intimate little theatre.

There was nothing really striking in the play itself.

An ordinary young man, Davy, a little idle, but without a precedence of delinquency, goes down to the crossroads not very far from his home and shoots at random eight people passing by, in less than two hours.

The search for him, his capture and consequent imprisonment are in fact subordinate. What the author puts the emphasis on is the 'psychological penetration' of the murderer; what the motivations behind the massacre were, what his current feelings are, etc. The scenes follow seamlessly one upon the other, given a framework by the

but questions Davy's relatives and members of the neighbouring community.

The play revolves around the one question: WHY?

I still cannot clearly see the purpose of writing such a play. Maybe it is that everyday, everywhere, we watch, hear or read about slaughter, ignominious events, but they remain remote and do not touch upon our lives. However, they can happen in the 'real' world, in our 'normal' world too. In my opinion, this pseudo-psycho-analysis of the murderer is rather pointless. It is developed by means of everlasting interrogations, of himself, his mother - 'how could my son have done this?' -, the girlfriend (with whom there is a relatively 'hot' scene, by the way) - 'he was such a nice boy' -, of the farmer, etc... who express their dismay and incomprehension towards the event. It is not a question of hiding from a reality which, sadly, does exist, it is only that I feel it unnecessary to act out current events or events that have, most unfortunately, more than once made the news headlines on stage. If one wants to denounce this kind of violence, which I am not sure was the prime aim of the play anyway, one should approach the subject from a different angle.

There is definitely something that disturbs me both with the choice of theme and the way it has been dealt with.

Finally, it has to be said that there was nothing outstanding in the acting, although Darren Charlton, as Davy, did fit really quite well in his part.

Danuta

Elizabeth Horoscy-a Polish Artist Established in London

Elizabeth was born in Warsaw and came to London in 1968, where she studied Fine Art at Guildhall University. The exhibition JUXTAPOSED features her work along with that of another Polish artist and two British artists.

For this event, she wanted to develop two themes in her work.

The first series, for which she has made extensive use of diverse found materials, such as aluminium foil, plaster, string, sand and PVA, is inspired from the Greek myth of Io.

The story tells how Zeus fell in love with her and changed her into a heifer to escape detection. Suspicious, Hera, Zeus' wife, asked for it as a present and, as soon as the unfortunate heifer was in her possession, she entrusted it to the care of Argos, the giant with a hundred eyes that never slept at the same time. However, Zeus asked his son Hermes, protector of thieves, to steal her away. He lulled Argos to sleep with his pipes and killed him. Hera was very upset. In remembrance of Argos, she put one of his eyes in a peacock's tail and in revenge she sent a gadfly to torment Io. She fled throughout the world until she was finally released from her torment in Egypt.

Elizabeth's second series has been named "Of Dreams, Lovers and Ancient Myths" which is the result of a new idea of a painting on steel. She has chosen to work with metallic, iridescent paint, in order to achieve a "sur-

real colour quality", as well as aiming at creating a "tension between glossy paint and rust".

Elizabeth's other works have a number of inspirational sources which include mythology again, but also, amongst others, archaeology, the encounter of conscious and subconscious, in her most abstract canvasses and her extensive travelling.

Amongst my favourites is the series of Cat Women, with its near-to Baudelairean evocations. The artist has indeed been inspired by the cat as a symbol of femininity but also as a nocturnal animal. She seems somewhat fascinated by the mysticism and the occult symbolism which surrounds this individualistic feline. She reveals that in her dreams she has been a cat, that she has been painting herself as a sort of imaginary cat and that it is as this animal that she would wish to be reincarnated.

And indeed, her cat women always have a particular hairdo - long, curly red hair - strangely reminiscent of someone, until we realise that it is in fact that of the tall Slavic artist...

Elizabeth, always cheerful and lively and whose enthusiasm cannot but quickly be reflected on whoever gets to know her, will be exhibiting at the Ashford Library (end of June), Place des Vosges, in Paris and at Nieborow, in Poland (September 97).

Danuta

Juxtaposed
Polish Cultural Institute
34 Portland Place
until 30th April
Mon-Fri 10 - 4
except Thur 10 - 8

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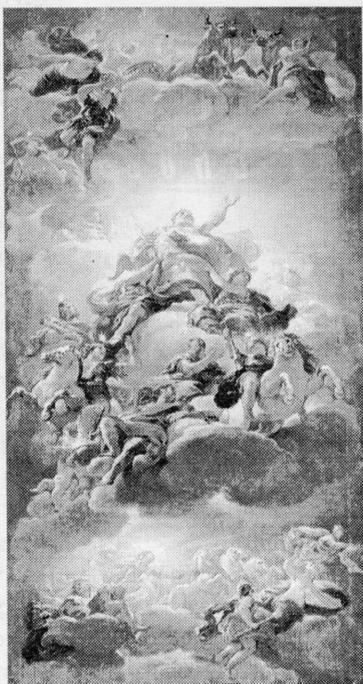
Discovering the Italian Baroque National Gallery

Although the exhibition is entitled Discovering the Italian Baroque I feel that perhaps it ought to be named Rediscovering the Italian Baroque. In the eighteenth century, Baroque art was all the rage with the British aristocracy who admired and attempted with more or less success to imitate the savoir-faire of such artists as Guercino, Guido Reni, Domenichino, Luca Giordano, Pietro da Cortona and Johann Liss. However this flamboyant style fell out of favour in the nineteenth century and has only recently experienced a revival.

Indeed the very first thing that strikes you as you enter the exhibition is the richness of the colours. You can almost feel the different textures be they wool, velvet, silk or even skin. This visual saturation is at complete odds with the functional, minimalist, pared-down style that most post-war painters seem to favour and that you find in trendy, up-market pied-a-terres, restaurants... Perhaps the renewed interest in the Baroque is a backlash against the drabness and sterility of modern art.

The subject matter is usually drawn from the Bible of

from Greek and Roman mythology. Herein lies one of the greatest paradoxes of the Baroque: sacred,



religious scenes and sacrilegious, profane scenes painted with equal fervour and dedication, the Holy Family with the Virgin Teaching the Child the Read alongside the Mythological Landscape with Nymphs and Satyrs. The same contrast can be found in the artists themselves: while creating work of incredible delicacy, they often led violent lives, Schedoni dying young in mysterious circumstances.

I am particularly in awe of the way they handle light and shadows, bringing their work to life in a way that no modern artist creating two-dimensional paintings can. I know that photography has to some extent taken over the role that Baroque painters occupied, but there is still a lot of scope for modern artists to explore. The Baroque period is a period of contrasts, between light and shadows, the Bible and Greek mythology, peacefulness and violence. This

exhibition brings out the richness and the paradoxes of this time.

Emma

The National Gallery
Trafalgar Square
until 18th May
Mon to Sat 10am - 6pm
Wed 10am - 8pm
Sun 12pm - 6pm
Entrance is free.
Enquiries:
0171 747 2885

SALAD Dingwalls

So here they are again, four years down the line, playing a mid-sized indie venue, and not much has changed at all. A string of singles, indifferent press, and a small but loyal following. They have songs, sex and talent in abundance, and yet have remained resolutely minor, overshadowed by others far less worthy i.e. Sleeper. Certainly the similarities are undeniable, from the spiky guitar pop to the fact that the band are marketed entirely on the strength of a photogenic female singer. And yet while



Sleeper appear to have been very single-minded in their bid for fame- adopt a sound (Blondie), acquire a glib media image (female PJ O'Rourke), write an album of the same song twelve times over- Salad have wandered a more eccentric path.

Sure, the straight pop songs are here tonight. New single *Cardboy King* could be any old reject from a 'Shine' compilation, but it's also a pretty good song, and bouncy as hell live. Similarly, *Drink The Elixir* has a chorus that should have propelled it to the highest reaches of the charts and which, tonight, prompts a

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LIVE

vicious bout of pogo mayhem. But it quickly becomes apparent that Salad are wilful experimentalists, prepared to reject a cosy middle-eight flavour of an extended Pixies guitar burn out, or some Pram-like keyboard plonking. On *The Sky's Our Terminal*, shoes are gazed at with aplomb, and it reminds me of why Ride were so powerful live, infusing wall-of-noise guitars with a crystalline beauty. Marijne herself is in fine form, voice piercing and clear one minute, throaty growling the next. She fends off breast related heckles with a withering gaze, and displays an admirably self-deprecating wit on *Foreign Cow*, introducing it as a song about "...a really horrible person...that's right, it's me". She quite clearly loves performing, and is a terrible show off. But then that's what pop stars are meant to be, isn't it?

Norm

DREADZONE Brixton Academy

A turbulent and expectant crowd gathered in the mammoth cavern of the Brixton Academy to enjoy a marathon nine-hour session of tunes from headliners Orb and Dreadzone and assorted Dj's in support.

After a desultory performance from the support Dj, who's appearance nobody noticed and who's departure nobody minded, the multi-dreaded members of Dreadzone took the centre spot. 'This,' we thought, 'was more like it.' The bassist bounced on, hidden amongst his hair and thumping his guitar with a most

pleasing result. The crowd below us moved up a gear and matched the strobes and lights beat for beat and watched themselves on a screen live from an onstage camera. The drummer came on and sat in his arena, revealing little, at first, of the incredible energy with which he was going to batter his skins. Music: indierockhiphop; Venue: dark, capacious and weird (is it meant to look like an English Alhambra?); Scene: riots of people enjoying themselves with a good band on stage.

The songs carried enormous energy, with the bassist whirling like a dervish, the drummer panning seven kinds of shit out of his gear and the singer rousing the crowd for song after song. The band never seemed to grow tired, with every song bursting with energy and the only relief coming from the intro to *Little Britain*. As a nice counterpoint, the band were joined for a few songs by a sylph-like chanteuse who had a lovely voice and a mesmerising waist.

This was fantastic, energetic stuff - everything that you want from a live band and we weren't disappointed. I would definitely go and see them again if only to feed on the energy of the music. The Orb, however, if anyone is interested, were crap and annoying. They soon tired of the crowd who soon tired of the Orb's barrage of bizarre sounds. They were only on for one hour out of nine: this is no way to treat their large following who had paid £15 a ticket to see them. However good the group are, fans don't like being patronised.

Anyway, c'mon me hearties...

Ralph

Hurricane #1 - *Step Into My World*

Ex-Ride member Andy Bell is back with his new band and this fantastic track that floats into your head with its glorious, soaring guitar work.

Primal Scream - *Kowalski*

They've ended the rock phase of their previous albums and have dived straight into bass-heavy experimental dance.

Audioweb - *Faker*

Surely this is the single that must launch them into the big time with its summery melody and dub-heavy production.

Orb - *Asylum*

A delicious mixture of sounds melting together their typical ambient laid-back style with slightly harder ingredients. An interesting mix.

Raissa - *Your Summertime*

This funk-up, jangly guitar-laden track comes complete with the dream-like vocals of the Sundays. Jason

Bis - *Everybody Thinks That They're Going to Get Theirs*

The much-maligned bis return with an impressive array of styles, from ska to Beasties dope beats. Fortunately, Manda Rin keeps the most abrasive voice in the world in check.

Essential Choon

Intastella - *Skyscraper*

Their collaboration with Shaun Ryder a couple of years ago has obviously left its mark. Stella comes on like a fame-hungry Manc starlet (no change there, then), who 'really wants to go to the USS of A'. With the future of Black Grape looking uncertain, Intastella may just take over the mantle of supreme purveyors of funk-up riff-heavy pop.

DJ Pulse meets TDF - *Rip Stop*

Imagine, if you will, a land where Steve Vai (in a more sensitive, introspective moment) is suddenly consumed by the spirit of the ultimate selector. Yes, it's a wind-swept rock/jungle crossover, and nowhere near as bad as it sounds on paper.

Jai - *I Believe*

Seven different remixes can't make up for the fact that tis is a George Michael song and no amount of breakbeat nonsense will disguise this fact.

Dante and Roberts - *Never Had A Love Like This Before*

Oh, so its one of those loves that forces you to churn out cloying, saccharine soul tunes till you choke on your vomit? Hmmm, nasty.

Espiritu - *Man Don't Cry*

If you've ever thought that the world was a nicer place after a truck-load of valium, then buy it. Me? I don't, I haven't so I won't. Pretty good drum 'n bass remix, though.

Mouse on Mars - *Cache Coeur Naif*

Feeling under-promoted? Need some instant recognition? Then try new 'Laetitia from Stereolab', she's guaranteed to add credibility to any old bag beeps and squeaks. Thing is, Mose on Mars were just fine before the make-over. Norm

A L B U M S

DIG YOUR OWN HOLE The Chemical Brothers

Electro-beats, whistles and fuzz. A-ha, the Chemical Brothers are back in town brandishing their new album, *Dig Your Own Hole*. With the recent popularity of all things dance-y, and the Chemicals' high-publicity collaboration with Noel Gallagher, the album comes highly-recommended by most of the music press. And they are not an ounce wrong if they do.

Kicking off with the recent single *Block Rockin' Beats*, their acidic style comes barging through. A cool little sample and drums that remind me, at any rate, of the Prodigy's *Breathe* make the tempo trip along a nice old rate. The title track, *Dig your own hole*, will keep you easily satisfied with its reminiscences of *Life is Sweet* if you can't let go of the last album. There's frantic loops of sounds overlaying the usual beeps and clicks but the hard-as-fuck drums are what make it great. Near the middle section, it cuts to what sounds like a pre-match warm up for the beautiful game but this subsides again and breaks back into

the in-yer-face techno. Wow. Two tracks on is *Piku* which has motor racing noises all over it and is just as cool as the last one but is a much more laid-back tune with enough going on to keep you interested plus a little bit at the end which makes you think that your CD player is broken.

With barely a second's pause after this track comes the wicked pile-driver that is *Setting Sun*. I don't want to mention Noel Gallagher twice in one review (damn...never mind) but if you haven't heard this, then you must have been on Mars, right? The said Mancunian is not the only one lending his vocal talents to the album. Beth Orton appears on *Where do I Begin*, a mellow and subtle song which mutates into a monster of Godzilla proportions. The second half of the album is much quieter and more ambient in nature but retains all its latent Chemical fury - if that makes any sense. The last track, especially, *The Private Psychedelic Reel* is totally cool.

The Chemicals are back and they are definitely rocking. Now, I'm just waiting for the Prodigy album...**(8)** *Alok*

50,000 B.C. Shudder To Think

The album begins with three radio friendly guitar blasts of pop that are akin to the sound of the Gin Blossoms in many ways. From the lead singer's quavering vocals to the mix of distorted and jangly guitars that inevitably lead to at least one solo per song. Following this is *The Saddest Day Of My Life* that signals the serious side of their song writing, a beautiful semi-balad with flamenco style leanings throughout. What comes next is a dramatic change from the hum along tunes before. You find yourself nearly cringing at the unexpected sudden chord changes in *The Man Who Rolls*, a discordant cross with '80s rock air guitar championed by the likes of Bon Jovi and co. This all seems a little dated today, unlike the more classic influences of the '60s and '70s that somehow have managed to stay timeless. Next it's back to the straight guitar pop ballad of *Resident Wine* and if the album contained more of this type of style Shudder To Think would probably be enjoying reasonable success in America as mainstream rockers rather than alternative no hopers. Listening to *She's A Skull* you begin to see where the problem is with this album. I'm not trying to pigeon hole them but they seem to stuck in some sort of musical quagmire, uncertain whether to go for the soft rock/country and western approach or just to go all out 'RAAWK'. At the moment they are trying to do both and at times sound like they are dying to unleash themselves from the invisible constraints they

have put on their music. The album ends on *Hop On One Foot*, a discordant guitar nightmare that squeals into oblivion.

Half the album is disturbingly influenced by '80s guitar 'RAAWK' while the other half is pleasant enough straight up rock tinged with a bit of C&W. Album of the year. I shudder to think. **(3)** *Jason*

THE BARN TAPES Arnold

Who are Arnold? The name conjures up visions of a guitar driven trio of 17 year-olds from Basingstoke. Their album cover gives no clues except that they are signed to Creation, which isn't a bad start. And *The Barn Tapes*? To start with there are only 8 tracks, which isn't such a good start as I'm always a little suspicious of a band that don't feel they've written 10 or 11 good songs to date. They aren't even 8 memorable songs at that but a succession of soft folksy indie ballads with unnecessarily lengthy guitar exits - not consistent with the teenage 3 piece theory. The songs are pretty with a spacey, floaty quality to them - an ambient-indie cross over vibe achieved by the liberal use of acoustic guitars and a haunting male vocal.

The production is lo-fi and the lyrics are a bit of a weak point. The problem is that it just isn't exciting, it fails to capture a specific mood - too slow to get your head nodding, but too upbeat

IN IT FOR THE MONEY Supergrass

Hmm. The difficult second album. After disappearing from our gaze for the best part of eighteen months after *I Should Coco* (give or take news about Gaz's haircut, or the anti-media snipe of last February's *Going Out*), the 'Grass are back with what can only be described as a very grown up sound. The immediate thing that strikes you about the record is that it is bereft of anything remotely resembling *Alright*, the song that made the hirsute ones famous. In it's place is a darker exhibition of those traditional second album topics of cynicism against the record industry, and of course missing the woman back home. There is a much starker backbone, based around much improved guitar playing



and the welcome addition of Rob Coombe's organ. It would be wrong to say that the album has nothing to offer; aside from the excellent singles *Going Out* and *Richard The Third*, there are other gems on both "sides", notably *Sun Hits The Sky* and *It's Not Me*, but it is painfully obvious that this album could have been made thirty years ago. Gone is the playful, youthful exuberance of *Coco*, replaced by an overworked seriousness. Like Oasis, the slicker, horn-tinged, and indeed better written second album lacks that which brought them to the fore initially. This is a very good record, make no mistake, but you get the feeling it could have been so much more. Again, like Oasis, this is a better record than the first, but not half as good to listen to, and I'm really annoyed that I can only give it a generous. **(7)** *Mr. Trout*



in places to zombie out to. You can't help feeling that they should head in one direction or the other. The songs very much melt into one another and it is hard to pick any one that stands out, although strangely the odd numbered tracks such as *Windsor Park* and *Float my Boat* seem better than the even-numbered. Overall, this certainly wasn't what I expected, and maybe there are too many teen-c pop bands about, but I'm still left wondering who *Arnold* are/is - my current theory is that there is a bloke called Arnold living in Norfolk. The album is unobtrusive, planet vanilla, great wall-paper music and would probably be great to revise to. (Un)fortunately I've finished my exams. **(5)** *Speedy*

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CINEMA GUIDE

Virgin Fulham Rd.

The English Patient
1.40, 5.10, 8.30

Return Of The Jedi
12.20, 3.05, 6.00, 8.55

The Saint
1.10, 3.45, 6.25, 9.05

Jerry Maguire
12.15, 3.15, 6.15, 9.15

Liar Liar
1.20, 3.20, 6.20, 9.20

Virgin Chelsea

Scream
12.55, 3.40, 6.35, 9.20

Donnie Brasco
12.40, 3.30, 6.20

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The Empire

Liar Liar
11.00, 1.00, 3.05, 5.10, 7.15, 9.30

The Saint
12.40, 3.20, 6.00, 8.40, 11.30

Dante's Peak
1.30, 3.55, 6.20, 8.45, 11.30

The Plaza

Scream
1.10, 3.40, 6.20, 9.00, 11.30

The English Patient
1.00, 4.30, 8.00, 11.15

Romeo and Juliet
12.30, 3.15, 6.00, 8.40, 11.20

Jerry Maguire
2.30, 5.30, 8.30, 11.30

DONNIE BRASCO

You've been an undercover FBI agent in a Mafia gang for the last seven years. Your best friend is a run-down old-time mobster who's only still in the game because he can't do anything else. He introduced you to the mob because he trusted you and loved you like a son. But now it's time to turn them in, and you know the man who took you under his wing will be executed by a hit-man for being conned by a cop...

That's the situation Joe Pistone faces in this true tale of loyalty amongst thieves starring Al Pacino and Johnny Depp (looking frighteningly like Freddie Mercury at times). In the name of justice, Pistone (Depp) leaves his family behind and takes on the persona of gangster Donnie Brasco, infiltrating a Brooklyn mob by gaining the confidence of an aged hit-man, Lefty (Pacino). Lefty is different to the stereotypical gang member we are used to from *Goodfellas* and *The Godfather*. After twenty years he is still on the bottom rung of the Mafia ladder and suffers as the butt of his colleagues' jokes. He has to resort to raiding parking meters to supplement his ventures and has a life of talking about fast cars rather than driving them. It is these circumstances that make him look for a gateway to success by adopting Brasco, a seemingly smart, young crook with plenty of ideas. Hard-bitten and brutal as he is, Lefty enjoys having someone look up and care about him, and in his vulnerability he makes a crucial mistake - he trusts Donnie Brasco.

The film charts the fall of Brasco's marriage as he gets sucked further and further into mob-life. Gradually, it seems he begins to forget his true role in the operation

and, as his friendship with Lefty deepens, he is required to conform to what the gang expects of a member. He kills and tortures for them and as time passes this seems to trouble him less and less. The audience never knows if this is due to him hiding the effects from the mob or his falling for the gangster's way of life. Depp gives a great performance of this deep character and doesn't try to give away too much of the agent's psyche.

Al Pacino achieves the difficult in creating in Lefty a hit-man that the audience actually pities and cares for. His hardened assassin is insecure in life, knowing nothing about life outside the Mafia and living by its codes and rankings. He is not as intelligent as the usual Pacino or De Niro hoodlum and seems gullible, the sort of person that needs a true friend so much that he doesn't see the wider picture. The audience finds itself hoping that Brasco doesn't turn the criminals in, just because of the effect this will have on Lefty.

This quality acting is combined with some excellent scripting and directing. The over-familiar fast and wise conversation of most mob films is thankfully avoided, replaced by dialogue that is actually necessary for the plot. Some of the scenes near the climax of the film are so memorable that you'll be left pondering this film for weeks.

Superficially, this film is no different from many other Mafia films - it even has Bruno Kirby in the high-pitched, violent "Joe Pesci role". Yet it is fundamentally a film about friendship and the appeal of the wrong side of the law, portraying the effects these can have very dramatically. It never tries to explain Depp's conversion to crime and this is just as well, for this is a true story and it would be wrong to try and explain a real man's actions unless all the facts were known. Instead it leaves the audience to decide why Brasco, when accused by his wife of becoming just like those he is trying to convict, answers "I'm not becoming them, I *am* them."

chris

LIAR LIAR

Jim Carrey makes a return to all-out comedy after his commercially disastrous stab at

black comedy in *The Cable Guy*. In *Liar Liar* he plays a successful lawyer whose five-year-old son gets tired of his continuous lying. So, when his father is a no-show at his birthday party, he makes a wish that for 24 hours his father cannot tell a lie. Miraculously this wish comes true and the repercussions for Carrey are pretty catastrophic.

Carrey has really played safe here with all the usual Hollywood clichés present and correct. He is divorced but naturally his ex- still has feelings for him despite the fact she is due to move to another city (with annoying cute son) along with her oh-so boring boyfriend who she doesn't really even like, let alone love. The day he has to tell the truth is also the day when he must lie to win a prestigious alimony case and the outcome will decide whether he is promoted or not. This is the cue for Carrey's unique brand of humour. When he cannot help but tell the truth there are some very funny moments where he embarrasses himself and those around him, however the jokes usually follow two patterns - either he tells the truth when he would be better lying or just keeping quiet after which he looks aghast at himself, or he tries to tell a lie but ends up just stammering something incomprehensi-

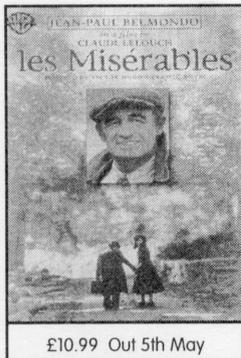
ble. Unfortunately, the film is bookended by some very saccharine moments especially

the beginning which sets up the fact that Carrey is really a good man who loves his son and is just overworked and harassed by his boss (Amanda Donohoe). Carrey's acting style (if you can call non-stop mugging acting) is ill suited to these serious moments and it is distracting. You are just waiting for the moment when the real comedy starts. Luckily when the comedy does come there are some truly



funny moments. However, your enjoyment of the film really rests on whether you enjoy seeing physical comedy (and Carrey is one of the most physical comedians you could wish to see) being taken to its limits.

Katie



Videos to Buy

There have been numerous versions of **Les Misérables**, Victor Hugo's nineteenth century masterpiece, but this interpretation really stands out from the rest. The film follows the life of a simple Frenchman during the Second World War as he struggles to rise from the criminal

desperation into which he has been forced. His struggle between good and evil mirrors that which faced Hugo's original hero, Jean Valjean. As the film develops, each character finds himself in a situation similar to somebody in the original book. This is cleverly directed and means that although the film is long at over two hours there is always some interesting theme developing. Even for those who find subtitles a distraction the acting of the lead is notably believable, and along with the script and picturesque landscape this creates a memorable, high-quality film.



V, the 1980s sci-fi series with aliens arriving in huge flying saucers intent on eating humans, was never shown in full on UK TV due to the 1984 LA Olympics. Now, 13 years later, is a chance to buy the series and see if the Resistance ever managed to rid the world of the "visitors"...

Episode 6 - The Dissident

Alien leader Diana plans to

create a force field around Los Angeles so the Resistance must spring into action once again. The only plot development in this episode concerns the ongoing love triangle between Kyle, star-child Elizabeth and her mother. Otherwise it's all a bit tame with special effects which were great in 1984 but now look dated.

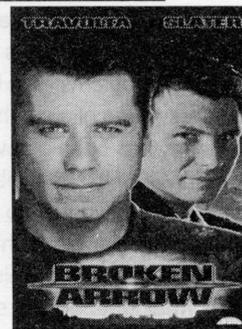
Episode 7 - Visitor's Choice

The alien visitors have invented the ultimate human-processing device and there's problems for rebel Kyle, who is captured and tortured by his own father. Again, the plot is moving along very slowly with too much emphasis on action scenes and not enough on the Resistance's plans to permanently defeat the Visitors.

The Birdcage tells a tale about the introduction of a man's future in-laws to his bizarre parents. Whilst Val's girlfriend's father is a US senator who campaigns for higher moral standards, his own parents' lifestyle couldn't be more different. His dad, played by Robin Williams, is Jewish, gay and owns a drag-club while his "mother" is Albert, the resplendent star of the club. The film is centred around the build-up to the big meeting and there are many genuinely funny moments as Albert tries to act more manly so he can pose as Val's uncle. The campness of the entire cast is overplayed but not so much that it's irritating and Gene Hackman is excellent as the right-wing Republican. The glitzy setting of Miami is a perfect backdrop to these outrageous characters and contributes to the overall impression that the cast are probably enjoying themselves just as much as the audience.



Broken Arrow, made at the crest of John Travolta's latest wave, gives him his first real role as a villain. As treacherous Major Deakins in the US Air Force he steals a stealth bomber carrying nuclear warheads in an extortion bid which puts millions of lives in danger. Naturally, only one man can stop him and this is Riley Hale, played by Christian Slater,



his one-time pupil who must use everything he learnt from his mentor to destroy him. This is, in a nutshell, complete and utter nonsense of the first degree. It's got non-stop action, plenty of explosions and the ubiquitous red flashing timer on the bomb and nothing else. Travolta isn't even particularly good as the villain, seeming to just cruise through the film rather than develop his character, although, to be fair, the script gives him little choice. Slater is fine although again there's nothing for him to work with. There's also a real risk of getting dizzy from all the circling the camera does but that's typical of John Woo, the director. Still, if it's explosions and mindlessness you're after then this will do fine.

Virgin Hammersmith

Liar Liar
12.40, 2.50, 5.00, 7.10, 9.20

Scream
4.00, 6.30, 9.00

Return of The Jedi
12.20, 3.15, 6.15, 9.10

The English Patient
1.10, 8.10

Virgin Trocadero

Liar Liar
12.20, 2.30, 5.05, 7.15, 9.30

Scream
12.30, 3.30, 6.10, 9.00

Star Wars
12.00, 2.45, 5.30, 8.30

Eddie
12.10, 6.00

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Odeon Marble Arch

Donnie Brasco
12.10, 3.30, 6.20, 9.10

Scream
12.30, 3.10, 6.00, 8.50

Liar Liar
12.30, 2.55, 5.50, 8.40

Odeon Kensington

Donnie Brasco
12.55, 3.45, 6.35, 9.25

Liar Liar
12.15, 2.35, 4.55, 7.15, 9.40

Scream
3.15, 7.00, 9.35

Prince Charles

Includes Mars Attacks, Bound, Trainspotting, Pulp Fiction and Reservoir Dogs.

(we can't) Give it Away!

Last week it was Donnie Brasco, now we're giving away The Birdcage. Thanks to various generous people at MGM we're giving you the chance to win one of a pair of videos of this latest retail release. If you haven't read the review above, it stars Robin Williams and Gene Hackman and is a riotous comedy set in gay Miami.

To enter, simply jot down your name and the answer to the following ridiculously easy question and bring it into

the Felix Office by Wednesday lunchtime:

"Which famous secret agent actor featured in Mrs Doubtfire with Robin Williams?"

And if you can't answer that, then you're just not up to it in the manpower department sweetie!

Paul Weller - The Unauthorised Biography

Steve Malins

Paul Weller - The Unauthorised Biography is published by Virgin. Price £9.99.



This book, although unauthorised, gives a very frank and detailed look into the life of Paul Weller. We are told how he lost his virginity, the ups and downs of his marriage and of course about the bands and music. From The Jam through The Style Council to his solo work we get to hear about his twenty-five year career in minute detail.

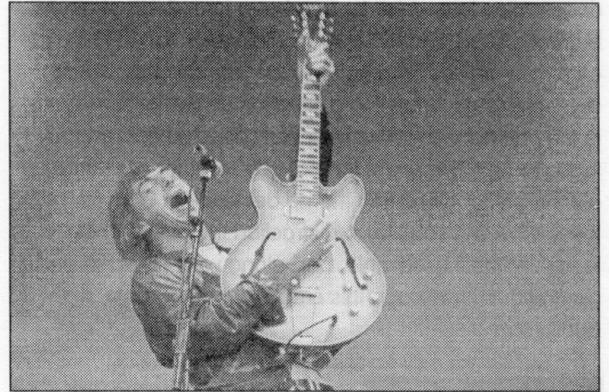
At school, "where I decided I would show the bastards I didn't need their rules or their education", Paul Weller formed The Jam. A rapid ascendancy to stardom followed, which in retrospect was too sudden for the young band members. Break-up of The Jam highlights one of the Paul Weller character traits which is often touched on in the book. His sudden break with the past left the other ex-Jam members feeling ostracised and marginalised, a feeling he was to engender in his once-friends throughout his career.

Feelings of isolation from the Weller camp are heightened by the fact that Paul's father, John, has always been his band manager. Although John's record industry knowledge is questionable, he has never been persuaded to leave his son's side as "Paul likes his family around him". This tight circle has caused both personal and professional problems - the Wellers were recently sued for royalties it was alleged the father had stashed away.

Money has been a powerful influence in Weller's career. When the final album of The Style Council was rejected by Polydor (who had paid a £1 million advance for it), the Weller family thought they could dictate terms to any record company. This proved not to be the case and his current label Go Discs! were the last resort.

Weller has always moved on and tried to be fashionable, although this has often caused him to be accused of plagiarism. He himself said what would seem to be the

kiss of death for any self respecting artist; "I'm not bothered about originality. I don't even think about it." Experiments with live house music in the early 90's have luckily given way to his more soulful, thinking and in fact original current voice. His recording now is always live and unedited, the lack of click track adding an extra raw edge, which causes consternation to the American market he has so far failed to crack.



In this biography, Steve Malins goes into great depth on the whys are wherefores of Weller. His lyrics are dissected, relationships perused and clothes picked over. Malins writing is lucid but is just too detailed for all but the hardened fan. Although fair and by no means positive throughout, the detail is just too much - I skipped numerous passages that seemed unnecessarily bogged down.

To sum up, this is only for the hardened Weller fan. If you are merely interested in him, save the tenner this book costs and buy a Weller album instead. I strongly recommend his recent solo efforts *Wild Wood* or *Stanley Road*. Hot Lips

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Learn to type the multimedia way

Touch-type Tri-Lingual and Keyboard Master

BVG's Keyboard Master and Touch Type Tri-Lingual

Min req: PC CD-Rom, Windows 3.1, 4Mb memory, 5Mb disk space



It is odd that, although I am a educated, computer-literate, academic product of the modern age, I have never learned to type. All those essays, their paragraphs and their words were produced with a technique that was really just a refined version of the two-finger stab.

The problem is, as computing students are only to keen to inform you, the Qwerty keyboard is actually designed to make typing difficult and hence slow. The old mechanical Olympias would jam if you tried to type more than two letters per second so it was necessary to make things harder for the long-suffering corporate secretaries.

This throwback is the reason why typing practice simply does not lead to perfection; the illogical key layout means that the hopeful typist has to adopt a rigid system so that they may eventually move their eyes from their fingers to somewhere more useful.

Unfortunately, early attempts at computer typing tutors have been fairly dire; I spent many hours with the tacky Mavis Beacon package with no noticeable improvement. Two of the latest programs are BVG's Keyboard Master and its euro-centric big brother Touch Type Tri-Lingual, and they are a big improvement.

Keyboard Master is simple and quick to use, offering a variety of lesson lengths as well as exercises. It still suffers from the usual 'dad's a sad salad lad' ennui, but the well structured program moved quickly enough to prevent extreme boredom. You are entertained with fancy graphics and midi classics such as 'Tears before Christmas' while the essentially subconscious business of hand-eye co-ordination takes place.

Tri-Lingual is more involved and harder to use. It offers the exercises, display and translations in English, French or German, theoretically helping your language skills and typing simultaneously. I experienced some problems running this software, with 'garbage' screen fonts and unpredictable behaviour. The extra sophistication is, as usual, at the expense of 'playability'.

There is no doubt that these programs work. Admittedly being a musician and an accomplished crap typist made me an easy subject, but I found that I was touch-typing reasonably well after only a few hours. Once you start, any typing is essentially practice so the programs do become redundant fairly rapidly.

In summary, a bought, borrowed or stolen copy of Keyboard Master as a low effort tutor and, just like me, you will soon be able to type without without without looking at you fingers. David Ross

Friday 2nd May

1pm Hamsoc (Regular)

Top Floor, Union Building

1pm Photo Soc (Regular)

Southside Lounge

1.10pm RAG Meeting (Regular)

dB's

1.10pm Islamic Soc (Regular)

Friday Prayer, Southside Gym.
(Brothers and Sisters)

1.15pm Labour Club (Regular)

Southside upper Lounge

1.30pm Felix Reviews and Science

meeting

5.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

STEP Aerobics (advanced), Southside Gym

9pm Ents: Common People

Celebrate or commiserate the election results by voting for extra servings of britpop, floppy fringed indie and alternative sounds. Live music comes from new wave of britpop contenders: The Young Offenders. Plus chill-out cocktail bar. Free before 9, £1 after.

Free Women's Minibus Service

First run at midnight, last run at closing.

Sunday 4th May

1pm Wargames (Regular)

Aerobics (intermediate), Southside Gym

2pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Monday 5th May

12.30pm Artsoc (Regular)

Main Dining Hall, Union Building

12.30pm Ski Club Meeting (Regular)

Southside Upper Lounge

12.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Circuit Training, Southside Gym

2pm Deadline for Diary, Soc. Pages

5.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (beginners), Southside Gym

6pm Felix News and Features meeting

Want to write and never had the chance?

Well, now is the time to discover the budding journalist that's been hiding away for so long! Felix Office, northwest corner of Beit Quad.

6pm IC Methsoc (Regular)

All faiths welcome, Basement 10
Princes' Gardens.

6.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (intermediate), Southside Gym

7.30pm IC Sinfonia (Regular)

Great Hall, All players welcome

Tuesday 6th May

12pm Cathsoc (Regular)

Mass and lunch, Leon Bagrit Centre,
Lvl 1 Mech Eng

12-2 pm 'Fair Trade' Stall (Regular)

Union Building Foyer. Fairly traded goods for sale: stationery coffee, chocolate.

12.15 Yoga Soc (Regular)

Yoga Classes, Southside Gym

12.30pm African-Caribbean Soc (Regular)

Weekly meeting, Rm G02, Materials dept. RSM

12.30pm Parachute Club (Regular)

Southside Upper Lounge

1pm Audio Soc (Regular)

Brown Committee Room, Union Building

1pm Yacht Club Meeting (Regular)

Physics Lecture Theatre 3, Lvl 1.

3pm Pakistan Soc (Regular)

Basketball in the Union Gym, anyone welcome

5pm Circus Skills Soc (Regular)

Table Tennis Room, Union Building

5.30pm Radio Modellers Club (Regular)

MechEng Main Workshop (Rm 190), e-mail rcc.radio@ic.ac.uk

5.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (advanced), Southside Gym

6pm Bridge Club (Regular)

Clubs Committee Room, Union Building

7pm Canoe Club (Regular)

Canoe Club Store in Beit Quad, or at the

swimming pool at 7.30pm

7.30pm IQ (Regular)

Brown Committee Room, Union Building

8pm ICCAG (Regular)

Soup Run for the homeless
Meet Weeks Hall Basement

8.30 pm Ents: Da Vinci's Bar Trivia

Take at least one test of knowledge in a solid building... Da Vinci's bar trivia.. Win £50. Kicks off at 8.30, not a tent peg in sight!

Wednesday 7th May

12.30pm Islamic Society (Regular)

Sister's Circle, Prayer Room

12.30pm Third World First

Twin Trading discussion. Brown Committee Room, Union building.

12.45pm Sporting Motorcycle Club (Regular)

Southside Upper Lounge

1pm Wargames (Regular)

Table Tennis Room, Union Building

1pm IC Rifle and Pistol Club (Regular)

Join up and shoot. Check on range door for details about safety induction, Sports Centre

1pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (beginner/intermediate),

Southside Gym

2pm Photo Soc

Lessons, Darkroom

5pm Fitness Club (Regular)

STEP Aerobics (intermediate), Southside Gym

6.30pm Chess Club (Regular)

Club and Brown Committee Room, Union 3rd Floor

7pm Shaolin Kung Fu Nam Pai Chuan

Beginners Welcome, Southside Gym

7.30pm IC Symphony Orchestra (Regular)

Great Hall

8pm Frolix!

Have fun, be happy...frolix, Midweek relief from exam pressures. 8-12am, free

Thursday 8th May

12.30pm Amnesty International (Regular)

dB's e-mail s.trivedi or ns.trasi@ic.ac.uk

12.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Body Toning (beginners), Southside Gym

12.30pm ExploSoc Talk

Talk by Rupert Fitzmaurice - 'Canoeing the Zambezi from Source to Sea. W2/W3 Biology

1pm Fell Wanderers (Regular)

Southside Upper Lounge

1pm Gliding Club (Regular)

Room 266 Aero Eng (Follow signs from Aero Foyer).

1.10pm RAG Meeting (Regular)

dB's

5.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (intermediate), Southside Gym

6.15pm IC Choir Rehearsals (Regular)

New Members Welcome, Mech Eng 342

8pm ICCAG (Regular)

Soup Run for the homeless
Meet Weeks Hall Basement

5pm Ents: Da Vinci's Cocktail Night

The answer to exam stress.. plastic things in drinks!! The weekend starts in earnest at Da Vinci's Cocktail night, with happy hour prices all night, and weekly specials. 5-11pm.

A pause for thought, or the last great abomination?

Ngozi Dozie takes a [r]evolutionary view



Incest. This word never fails to conjure up strong emotions, normally those of revulsion. But why? What a stupid question to ask I hear you say. Nonetheless it is noteworthy that nine times out of ten, the only argument against this 'mother of all taboos' is of the genre, "it's just wrong", "that's so disgusting". The list is endless. I suggest that for the majority of us, our supposed natural revulsion, is a result of social conditioning. From birth, it has been ingrained into our consciousness that incest is a vile act performed by social deviants. As difficult as it may be, I urge you to clear your mind of such thoughts. Objectivity is essential if any progress is to be made in this highly controversial subject. By the end of these ramblings of mine if you see the light then perhaps there is hope for Society.

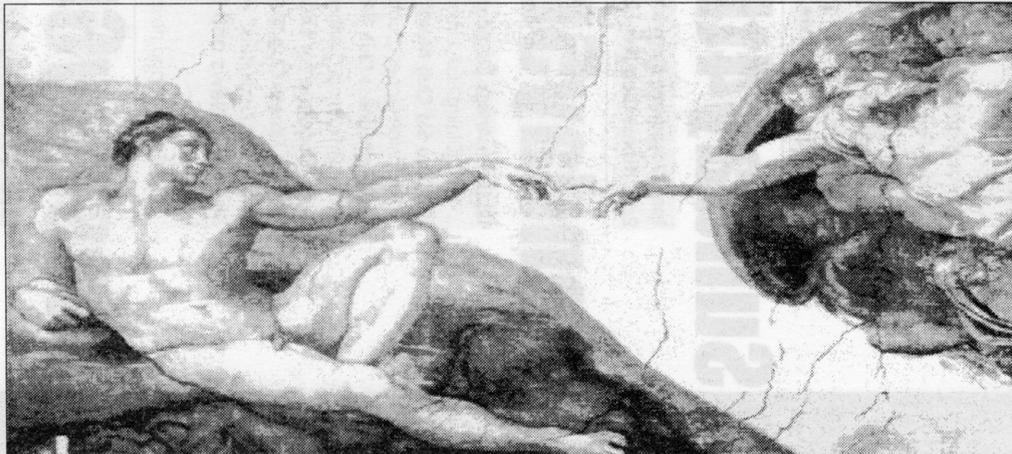
Now since the beginning of time, there have been incestuous relationships. This cannot be denied. It is also accurate to say that it has also been regarded as an abominable act. My question is why? Why is this "mixing of blood" denounced unequivocally by society as a whole?

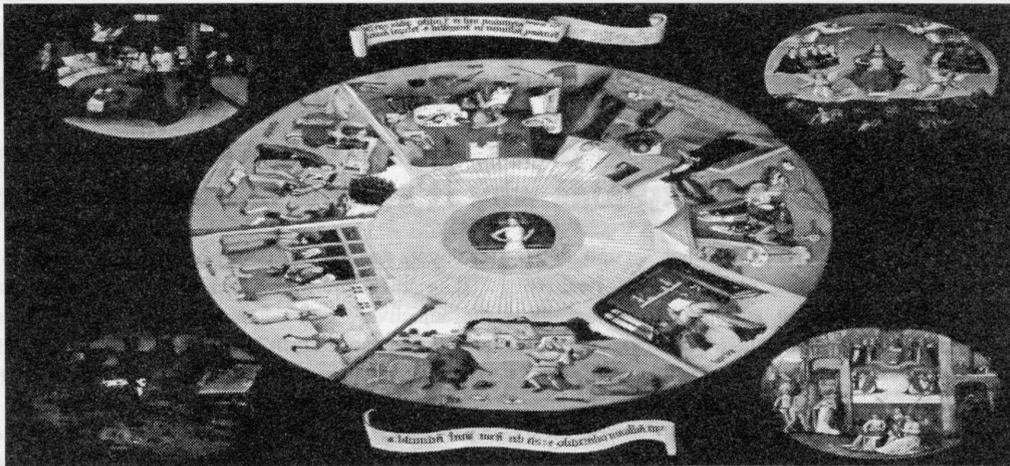
The most obvious response is that incest results in deformed babies. Surely this is enough to convince us of the vile nature of the act. However, let us examine this point in a bit more detail. It is a scientific fact that because members of a family have the same genetic makeup, any defect in chromosomes may be multiplied through an incestuous relationship. This is a biological fact and cannot be contested. The first point I would like to make is that early civilisations could not have been aware of this phenomenon. Most probably, the numbers of incestuous relationships were outweighed innumera- bly by the so called 'normal' ones. Thus, the scientific evidence for a high proportion of deformities would have been lacking. There is however, a flip

side to this coin. The effect of dominant genes that benefit the individual can also be multiplied, indeed some babies born out of incestuous relationships have been prodigies. Now I can already hear some say that since the number of deformed babies outnumber the geniuses, the law of averages is trying to tell us something. Still this does not address the issue as to why incest is wrong. In any case, let's proceed.

The media has been full of cases involving the unfortunate sexual abuse of children by their parents. This I would imagine is the sort of image that is on the minds of most people whilst reading this essay. I think that this clouds the issue as we are now bordering on paedophilia and exploitation of children so I propose we keep it simple. Think of two adults. Male or female, it does not matter which. If the combinations you have chosen are of the same sex, please ignore any opinions you may have on homosexuality, it just clouds the issue. The couple are borne of the same parents and more importantly, they are both consenting adults. Now give me a good reason why they should not do as they please! Fire away.

Deformed babies!! OK, the couple use a condom, girl's on the pill, guy gets a vasectomy- the possibility of a baby is virtually negligible. Now where is the problem? I know those of the Catholic faith believe that all form of contraception is wrong but for those not of this religious disposition, think hard. Why cannot this brother and sister (for example) live together without suffering from the revulsion and scorn of the rest of society? There are those who regard sex as a means of expressing one's love to another, or maybe it is solely for pleasure. If you are of this opinion, then I put it to you





that you have no argument against incest. This couple is behaving no differently from millions of others across the world in stable relationships who use contraceptives. Obviously they enjoy the sex or they would not be doing it and as brother and sister, who can say that other couples have a greater love for one another. With regards to brother-brother or sister relationships, are these any different to those enjoyed by homosexual couples? It seems to me that to discriminate against the former must lead to the same treatment against the latter. I am sure you will agree that the issue is not so clear cut anymore. I don't have the answers, the question is what do you think????

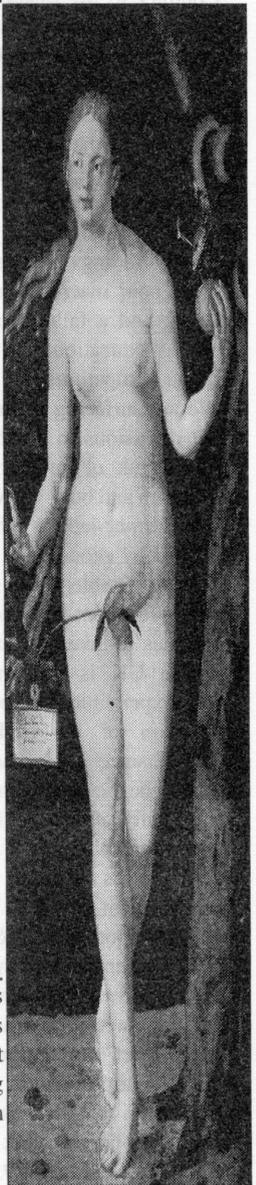
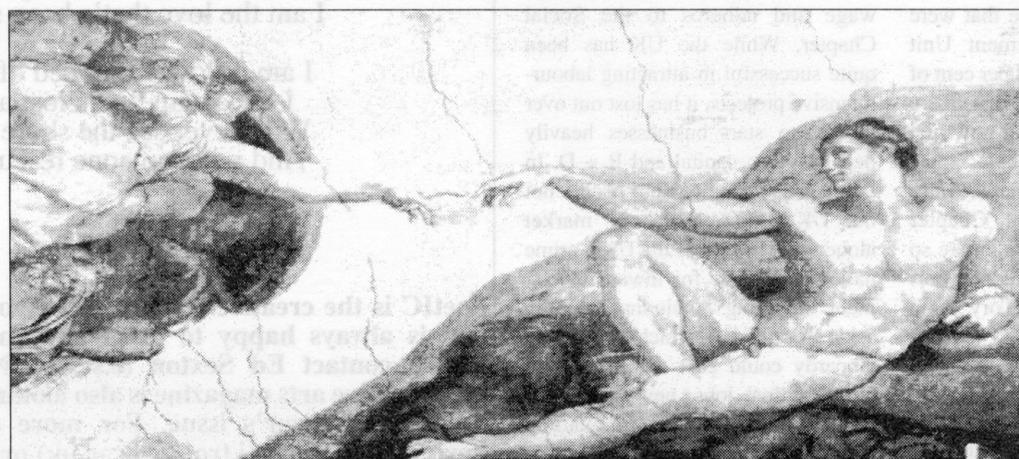
If you still have not come up with a credible argument, then your conclusion has to be that there is nothing wrong with incest. It may disgust you but then that is just your opinion. Using myself as an example, (and at the risk of trivialising the issue) I personally detest boiled cabbage but I do not think it is wrong for others to eat them!! If we just go back to the case of parent-child incestuous relationships, logic tells us that if we accept brother-sister relationships then we have to accept the former only if the child is of the consenting age. I can imagine that the majority of you might be feeling nauseous. If however you have not given yourself any rational reasons, then you should not be nauseous, in fact you have no right to be.

The point I am trying to make is that we have come to a point where we let others form our own opinions. Incest has been the topic but there are so many other issues that cause us to react without pausing for thought. For a race that prides itself on being the most intelligent in the animal kingdom, this sort of behaviour is quite unbecoming.

Call it what you will, be it peer pressure, ignorance, or just stupidity. One can not escape the fact that society has taken upon itself, a sheep-like mentality. Think of all the people at schools who begin to smoke and drink because everyone else is doing the same thing. Right from an early age, we are scared of speaking our minds and respond as people expect. It's hip to be rude to teachers, drink until comatose, try and pull everything that moves. The list is endless.

I am not trying to judge any of these activities. Just for the record, I abhor incest but for my own personal reasons which have been formed after a lot of reflection on the subject. What I am saying is that before doing anything, you owe it to yourself to justify your actions. The unfortunate thing is this. All through our lives, the majority of us cannot seem to shake off the pressure of living according to people's expectations. BE your own master and not a victim of Pavlovian conditioning, with your personality being dictated to you by others. Between every stimulus and subsequent reaction, there is a moment in which we can determine our response. Many just let the moment pass, thereby wasting the opportunity to do something beautiful. Each time you conform to someone else's ideal you give up the last of the human freedoms. The right to choose how things affect you. When that goes, you become another addition to the increasing number of the living dead. You have become a zombie.

1. Pavlov was a psychologist who did some famous experiments with dogs- each time he fed one of his dogs he would ring a bell. Soon it reached the point where the dog would begin to salivate on hearing the sound of the bell in anticipation of food, even though there was none coming!!!



The Alternative Candidate

Leave blatant bias for the national press. This week Ashton McGregor responds to Simon Baker, and explains why it's "New Labour, No Danger"

Simon Baker is one of Felix's more entertaining writers. Here is a man who arouses the most amazing passions in me. Fascist he is not, but he IS Harry Enfield's (the "Bollinger Bolshevik") poor misguided Tory Boy.

Contrary to Mr Baker's economy boasts, the latest OECD study shows our country's relative decline in prosperity and an 8 per cent fall in manufacturing investment last year. We have some of the worst living standards in Europe. The Tories have made improvements in some aspects of micro-economic policy but these worrying findings alert us to the fact of their poor macro-economic management and a failure to tackle the alarming education and skills gap with our competitors.

We are surfacing from one of the worst recessions in our history, and on the brink of another dangerous Tory boom and bust. Growth is heavily consumer-led, a phenomenon described by economists as unstable and unsustainable. They would prefer an investment-led recovery, with companies re-investing in this country. The UK is the only country whose expenditure on research as a proportion of its GDP has not increased since 1979. The party that claims to be the party of low taxation has actually increased the overall burden of taxation.

The Tories trumpet their low unemployment figures as a huge success yet a report by the LSE revealed that 20 per cent of households do not have anyone who is working. Since 1979 they have reclassified the term "unemployed" no less than 32 times. Now, unemployment benefit is denied to all 16 and 17 year olds and those in temporary work or training are not included. In 1979, there were just over 1 million people that were jobless. The Unemployment Unit recently calculated that 28 per cent of the working population in Britain are unemployed and there is a now real demand for 5.4 million jobs.

Mr Baker's assertions that the minimum wage and Social Chapter would be damaging to Britain are so misinformed that he would be perfectly at home on the Tory front bench. The CBI and TUC support both measures. Intellectual argument and academic opinion is swinging behind the minimum wage. Two leading US labour economists have

concluded that if not set too high, minimum wages have positive effects on employment raising the supply of labour and therefore productivity and profits, while the opportunity to extract profits, by lowering wages and employment will disappear. Due to changes in the labour market, such as more flexible contracts, less collective bargaining and more performance-related pay, as well as company reorganisations, employees are unlikely to mind about differentials and would adapt to the introduction of minimum payments for their lower-paid colleagues. The Employment Policy Institute argues that the Treasury would also benefit from a minimum wage. For example, a modest minimum wage of £3.40 would have helped the Treasury to a tune of £1.2 billion in 1995-96. The national minimum wage must be seen as part of a wider "welfare to work" strategy involving changes in benefit so the low paid are removed from the poverty trap. Under Labour, "the minimum wage will be introduced in a way which promotes the competitiveness of business and ensures fair competition". The decision on the level of the minimum wage will involve significant representation from members of the business community and unions.

According to the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, Britain has been overtaken by France as the prime European destination for inward investment. The biggest slice of the investment in France - heavily regulated, high cost France, the country that John Major denounced last week - comes from Britain. British firms, such as Tesco, Kingfisher, ICI and GKN have been investing in France since 1990, despite the fact that the country operates a minimum wage and adheres to the Social Chapter. While the UK has been quite successful in attracting labour-intensive projects, it has lost out over money to start businesses heavily dependent on capital and R + D. In fact it is EU membership itself - not the UK's flexible labour market alone - that has made the UK a prime nation in Europe for inward investment. Anything - including standing aside from EMU - which puts that in jeopardy could cost the country in terms of lost jobs, new productive capacity and innovation. Announcements by companies such

as Toyota and Unigate confirm this.

It has taken almost two decades for the adjectives "divided, incoherent, reckless and spendthrift" to adhere to the Conservatives rather than to Labour. Recently, several prominent businessmen stated that "Britain cannot afford another five years of weak and ineffectual leadership....a New Labour government is essential to our future prosperity".

Far from being radical, the Tories are sticking to their old chestnut - public bad, private good. There are of course privatisation successes, but there have been huge disasters. The electricity, gas and water companies exist in a pseudo-competitive environment, with no real choice for the consumer. The rail companies are existing on subsidies by taxpayers that have doubled since privatisation, whilst providing worse service.

Labour has learnt to acknowledge that not everything that the Tories have done should be reversed but that cannot conceal the scale of reconstruction. For me there is a gulf of difference between the two parties. It is the distance between Blair's statement that "we achieve more together than we do alone" and Baroness Thatcher's enduring credo: "There's no such thing as society." Her legacy

has been to leave in her party a determination to rid us of our faith in any sort of collective society. We have all become infected with the virus of Thatcherism, and now any social activity is suspect if its end result cannot be quantified. The views of new Labour are the same as that of Kier Hardie or Clement Atlee, but we live in a completely different world to then. "Labour tragically became stuck with the same policies while society moved on. We got ourselves into a situation where we no longer seemed to be a party of aspiration." Labour appeared to represent those who were poor and unemployed and rightly so, but the party has recognised that it must champion the whole nation. The Tories believe "there is no such thing as a one nation Tory". They are dinosaurs - politicians wishing to run the world as they would like it to be, rather than it is. That is why yesterday I voted for a party led by man who believes we achieve much more together than we do alone.

Mr Baker will undoubtedly refer to me as a cliched, naive, idealistic airhead so please allow me to get my insult in first - SIMON BAKER IS MAD MAGGIE'S FILTHY SPAWN, so there!

The Weekly Poem supplied by PoetIC

One

Like one lost soul,
In a world of "you and me",
I am the one that let you go,
I am the love that's been set free.

I am a flower in a bed of snow,
I am a ship that's lost at sea,
Will I ever see the shore again,
And will someone rescue me?

--Sarah--

PoetIC is the creative writing society of Imperial College, and is always happy to greet new members. For more details contact Ed Sexton (e.sexton@ic.ac.uk). Phoenix, IC's creative arts magazine is also looking for creative writing for this year's issue. For more details contact Ed Sexton, Jon Trout (j.trout@ic.ac.uk) or phoenix@ic.ac.uk

Ian Caldwell is to be congratulated. His swift action in erecting a marquee in Princes Gardens has prevented much distress and inconvenience befalling a large group of people. I'm not referring to the poor sods that are having to sit their exams in a tent, but the directors of the water companies, because there has been a bountiful supply of much-needed rain since its construction.

In all my time at Imperial, I am pushed to think of a bigger cockup than this. At this rate, IC will be elevated to such a pinnacle of ridicule within the university sector that we shall not be able to raise our heads. Would any other institute treat its students in such a disgraceful way? They say this move will minimise noise, though even a very senior member of the Suite Five brigade was heard to say that yes it will be noisy, but it will be cheaper. But would any other body of students allow itself to be messed about to this extent. Unfortunately there are too many students here who, if told that their exams were to be held in Piccadilly Circus during rush hour, would dutifully assemble by the Eros statue, and that's the clincher. We let them get away with murder.

It does not take a genius to realise that if a building project lasting more than 12 months is situated next to the Great Hall it stands a pretty good chance of disrupting exams. Schal realised this. They asked College repeatedly for exam timetables several months ago so that problems could be avoided. Did they get them? What do you think. Once they received them a few weeks ago, the options were put to our friends in Sheffield. Either suspend work, which would cost about £3,200,000 as crews were stood down, or reschedule exams. 'Reschedule exams!', they cried, 'we can't do that, they've been fixed for two years.' The Great

Hall was booked in January 1996 and exact times finalised by March. Since the Great Hall is not used back to back, all day every day, surely anyone could have foreseen that the solution was to arrange the exams so as to give Schal a number days per week on which they could work through without disturbing anyone, save for the odd day-dreamer in Estates. Secondly, why was the hand-over date for the new building chosen as June 16th? This is a mere week from the end of term and, try as I might, I can't think of any good reason for it. If the project at its inception had been scheduled to finish later, much more flexibility would

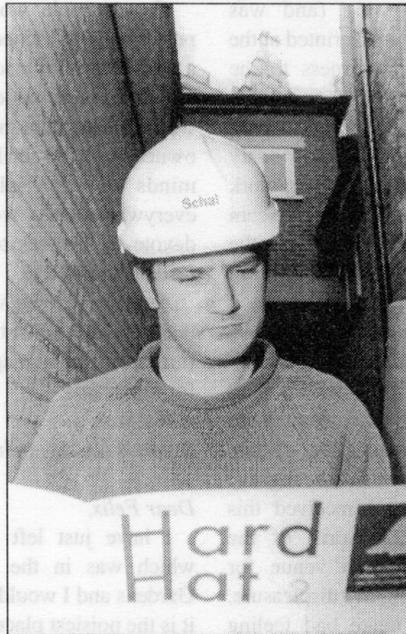
have been gained. Still, dear reader, you could give some people in Sheffield all the flexibility of a troupe of limbo dancers and they would still snatch chaos from the jaws of order.

This is sadly yet another example of the conflicting agendas at IC. The academic departments for the most part are world class, doing a sterling job against a barrage of petty bureaucracy that flows from Sheffield incessantly. I heard one of the Sheffield engine room boys say that IC would be great if it weren't for all those academic departments. He said it tongue in cheek, but it seems clear that for some people in that ivory tower teaching and education are not the prime objectives of the College.

While departments received little or no increase in their teaching grants this year (2% overall), Sheffield 'headquarters' will receive an extra 5.8% next year, with the Rector, albeit not personally, getting 11.7%. This does not send the right message to College. While we have the fourth highest spend per student on central administration and the highest on premises, we come in at 29th on Careers services and 15th on grants to student organisations.

I'm all right, Jack?

Simon Baker



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Letters to Felix

Caldwell's Big Top

Dear Felix,

Last Friday I received a reconstituted wood-pulp information carrier through my in-door external communications interface, bringing to my attention the fact that my examinations have been 'relocated to a rigid-structured temporary marquee on Prince's Gardens'. By the way, we're doing our exams in a tent this year.

This is all part of the forthcoming Exam Fest '97, an open-air event which combines demanding exam papers vital to one's future success with the chance to see some of the best live bands in Britain. As well as great music there will be a motorcycle rally and free helicopter rides over the Prince's Gardens area. The exam tent will be pitched midway between the beer tent and the public latrine, thus providing participants with all the facilities they are likely to need between events. Sales of illicit drugs will not be a problem, as there will be a substantial police presence on site, who will also be on hand to arrest anyone suspected of attempting to score 40% or more on a paper.

If all goes well, this will be the public relations coup of the decade for IC plc., who will then be able to put into action the next exciting phase of their master plan to create a streamlined and cost-effective organisation ready to proceed into the next millennium. Draft proposals include the renting of 'semi-permanent weatherproof teaching blocks in green-belt locations' (a couple of old mobile classrooms on some playing fields near Slough) for lectures, and the provision of 'portable canvas-based accommodation units' for students.

Meanwhile the substantial savings generated by no longer having to use valuable college space on unprofitably educating students will be reinvested in the refurbishment of the new South Kensington Conference Centre. This will also allow the college to hire a professional Euphemisms Officer to aid communication with students.

By the way, good luck with your exams everybody!

James Clarke (Physics II)

Other suggestions for (better) uses for the tent include Scout camps, complete with camp-fires and Kum Ba Ya, a touring production of the Nicaraguan State Circus, nightly productions of Barry Manilow's latest musical, Referendum Party rallies

Dear all..

I read with satisfaction the article in Felix this morning (and was pleased to see my letter printed at the back). Although in fairness to the college, the marquee is very impressive and must have been very expensive to hire (although obviously cheaper than stopping building work for a few weeks). The walls seem solid and they don't blow in with the wind, but the roof is still made from some sort of material, so I hope it isn't raining on the day of my exams or the noise will be very offputting.

But I would like to make it clear that I have not changed my tune. I am still annoyed at the handling of this. And I would like to thank the registry for the notification I received this morning (dated 22 April) of the change of examination venue for Monday. By voicing my displeasure, I do not aim to incite bad feeling between the student body and the college - I strongly believe that such feelings are counterproductive for both parties. I just see no other way to make the college see that its students are unhappy with the lack of importance assigned to them.

However, I am aware that Imperial College is primarily a research institution, in receipt of an extremely large proportion of the Higher Education Funding Council's research budget. So maybe in the future there will be a move to convert to a postgrad-only institution.

But at the moment, undergraduate students do exist at IC and it would be very nice if we could feel that we were an important part of the college, although with the general lack of evidence of this it is far too easy to become cynical.

While I am in the mood to continue in this somewhat political tone, I shall now outline my own considered opinion on how changes should be made. I believe that what the academics here really want to do is to get on with their research. And so they should. After all, research is extremely important. But to inconvenience them, there's a load of students who turn up from various places around the world demanding knowledge. But (for undergraduates, certainly) they want the academics to explain stuff which is fairly "old hat" to them. It's boring - the academics don't want to be wasting their time explaining in simple terms the principles and ideas which they learnt years ago. So what's the solution? Well, my idea would be to employ another level of staff - a layer of trained educators. People whose sole

purpose within the college would be to educate the incoming students.

These people would have to be professionally trained as teachers, so a certain level of teaching ability and effective presentational techniques would be more commonplace and the owners of the brilliant academic minds of Imperial College (and everywhere else) would be able to devote themselves to the pursuit of further knowledge.

Anyway, if you've read this far, thanks a lot. I must now leave and further my knowledge of Chemistry for my exams.

Regards,

Jon Walmsley (Chem II)

Dear Felix,

I have just left my first exam, which was in the tent in Princes Gardens and I would have to say that it is the noisiest place I have ever had to sit an exam, it is even noisier than the hall in which I had to sit A level mocks where an extension was being built just the other side of a wooden partition! I would appreciate you passing on my comments to whoever it may concern in Sheffield.

P.A. Hickman (Chem II)

Dear Alex,

I found out about the marquee the same way most people did, on Friday morning. I would like to add some thoughts to Jon Walmsley's excellent letter in the last edition of 'Felix'. I only scanned the letter as I was busy phoning registry to ask the Assistant Registrar (Exams) if this was a bizarre practical joke. I did not at first read the section where college says that they will be sending copies to peoples home addresses.

My parents were, to say the least, less than impressed. My dad is an academic and I imagine many other students have parents in the 'trade' so to speak. If my dad's reaction is anything to judge by, Imperial College are about to become the laughing stock of the higher education sector. This is not something any member of college should take pleasure in, internal disputes notwithstanding.

Other Universities apparently consider exam periods when planning building work and arrange years in advance to avoid these kind of problems. I do not believe that the estates department did not realise exams would be taking place during the library work. The only conclusion I can draw is that a decision was taken somewhere in Sheffield, without consultation (surprise, surprise), that the building work is more important

than the welfare of students. If this is the Imperial College position, fair enough, but I feel that this should be made clear, perhaps in the prospectus....

Finally I am led to believe that one can appeal against ones exam results through the University of London and that 'maladministration' [of the exams] is acceptable grounds...

John Durrell (Physics IV)

The problem with the whole situation is that we all know that College didn't choose the tent as the best solution to the problem, rather this was simply their only way out of a horrendously embarrassing and expensive mistake. To protect their reputations and a huge amount of College money, they chose to pass the problem on to us, the students. Now that the tent is in position, all that we can do is to ensure that College invigillators record all problems (excessive noise, allergies, adverse weather conditions.....) as they arise, and are forced to take them into account - otherwise they will lay themselves open to the charge of "Maladministration", as Mr Durrell suggests.

Change of emphasis

Dear Felix,

The response of your two main columnists to my letter at the end of last term, regarding Felix's political bias, speaks volumes as to the size of their respective egos. Hamish Common took the honourable approach, by exhorting students to vote, no matter whom they favoured. While spending considerable amounts of his column talking about himself, he at least accepted the idea that neutrality was a virtuous concept for the only universal student newspaper of Imperial College.

Mr Simon Baker however is another matter, unilaterally deciding to abandon the long held reputation of Felix as the unbiased voice of IC students. His assertion that the political leanings of the student newspaper is set by its editorial is naive and deliberately ignorant.

Even when editorials are a regular part of a publication, its columns always make a significant contribution to the tone of the newspaper - and attempting to suggest otherwise is avoidance of reality. With the relative dearth of editorials in this year's Felix, columns contribute even more to the journal's perceived prejudices.

It was with great sadness that I

read the self confessed Conservative's rantings as to the merits of the Tory Party and his ideas as to the relative short comings of the Labour Party. While it would be generous to suggest that his outpourings have had any effect on the result of the General Election, the abandonment of almost fifty years of Felix neutrality is regrettable.

Maybe next time Mr Baker opens his mouth he will have more consideration for the historical impartiality of his student newspaper and of the ability of IC students to make up their own opinions.

*Yours disappointedly,
Ben Weir*

Hopefully page twenty's column, written by a leading member of the Labour Club in response to Mr Baker will redress the balance.

Three into two won't go

Dear Felix,

I was intrigued to note that Ian Taylor, Minister for Science, repeated a line I have taken issue with before, that the 'three main disciplines of science, engineering and technology are alive and well'. This implies that there are those three well recognised and distinct fields of equal standing. I am an engineer, and find that people define engineering in a number of ways but with a large measure of agreement. Similarly, I have studied some science and worked with scientists on a number of projects, so could define the field reasonably well. However, the implication that technology is an equivalent and distinct field, I find difficult to comprehend. I have not found any

uniform definition of the word; there are no degrees, research councils, and few job titles, which will claim the field as their own.

There seems to be no way to clearly distinguish the word technology from either, or both, science and engineering, since it often used interchangeably with them. My jaundiced view is that people tend to use it in recent years when they are not really sure what professional engineering is, so choose 'technology' as a neutral, non-offensive word. This simply reveals a lack of understanding of the true nature of engineering and a need, as if we didn't already know, to educate the public and the politicians as to its importance. I say all this in full awareness of the word in the name of this college. It must have seemed like a good idea at the time.

*Colin Ledson
Industrial Training Programme*

Too much of a good thing

Dear Felix,

If I get one more of my friends telling me I go to 'The PG Tips' college, I'll just cry.

Who's idea was it to have our name all over the tube, associated with this new gimmicky whatsit? I'm never going to live it down.

*Yours sincerely,
E. Kellow (Biochem II)*

Letters may edited for content or length.

The deadline for letters to be published in the next issue of Felix is Tuesday 6th May.

Letters may be e-mailed to our address: felix@ic.ac.uk



Editor Alex Feakes / Advertising Manager Mark Baker

This morning, the country will be waking up under a blanket of recycled analysis from yesterday's General Election. Though not all of the constituencies will have declared yet, the general picture will have begun to emerge, or so the psephologists will have us believe. As our admittedly poor (we did it more for fun than serious comparison), exit poll shows, the extrapolation of local results across the entire country can have wild and unexpected results. A Tory majority of 255 would 'paint the map blue' and at the same time provide our remaining hospitals with an awful lot of business from disaffected voters.

Closer to home, the descent of ABA Copytech into receivership has left many people photocopierless and confused. It does rather leave the College in a difficult situation, as they now have to renegotiate a new contract for the site, that is if they wish to entrust such a vital resource to vagaries of external companies'

financial instabilities. I hope that more care might be taken to investigate the longevity of any future manager of Imperial College's images' capital.

About this tent. When *Felix* sounded out the opinion of Imperial College's peers in the higher Education market, we received, as expected, a number of titters, giggles and unprintable expressions of disbelief. One has to wonder if IC's famous desire to maintain and protect its reputation may have shot wide of the mark and let its members speculate, once again, as to the primary aims and objectives of this institution.

Finally, the second election for next year's ICU President is nearly upon us. Papers come down this evening, but at the time of going to press there were no fully proposed and seconded candidates, though there were three names up. Are we going to have to limp on to a third ballot?

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ICU Handbook 1997

Advertising Manager

Free for 12-16 hours a week in June? Want to earn £400 for 60 hours work?

We need someone to bring in and coordinate the advertising for the 1997 ICU Handbook, starting as soon as possible. Good communication and negotiating skills, a professional and efficient manner, and the ability to set and keep to deadlines are essential. IT skills are important, but training will be available.

Features Editor

We need a features editor to commission or write 10-12 articles for this year's Handbook, to introduce freshers to the College, the local area, and London in general. An imaginative, creative and humorous turn of phrase is essential, as is a fluent and informative writing style. The position will also necessitate a thorough knowledge of IC and it's facilities, and good computing skills.

£300 will be paid for a minimum of 48 hours.

Write, detailing your experience and suitability for the position, to ICU, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, SW7 2BB.

Further information can be obtained by calling in to the Union Office, or phoning Michelle on 0171 594 8060.

Applications for both positions must be received by May 23rd 1997

FELIX SPORT

IC football secure spiritual victory

The scoreline of this game is (once more) a poor reflection of the true game. Our lads, clearly the superior side were beset by horrific setbacks throughout the match. Slough kicked off and soon brought the ball to our end of the pitch. There they proceeded to kick it between the posts. Staggeringly, the referee declared this a goal, just the first of many similar injustices that took place all through the game. Then, no sooner had the game resumed, than a Slough player tackled Ed "regularly gets drugged out of his head" and took the ball from him. This was very mean since Ed was clearly still playing with the ball at the time. Yet the referee stoutly refused to blow his whistle. The rest of the match continued in this vein. Despite playing far better football, Slough repeatedly confounded us with such unsporting tricks as kicking the ball to another

of their players when we tried to tackle them.

Our best chance came late in the second half when Stan "takes as many drugs as he can" cleverly threatened to scream until he wet himself unless we were allowed a shot at goal. The Slough defenders stepped aside, leaving top striker Doug "does lots of drug(s)" a fantastic chance to salvage something. Unfortunately after last week's match, Doug went to the "seven days, one drum beat, no discernable tune" party at popular rave venue The Sewer. In attempting to kick the ball, he lost balance and collapsed. Witnesses report that he was asleep before he hit the ground.

All in all an unsatisfactory result but definitely not our fault, honest.

IC I 0 - 34 Slough College for the Physically Impaired.

ULU Judo one step short of second national gold

On the 9th of March, the ULU judo team defended their 95-96 BUSA Championship title.

After a disappointing outcome in the individual fights on the previous day, including several injuries, the team morale was somewhat low. But the spirit picked up after a 5-0 win in the first fight. Aris Tagalakis (Royal Holloway), Khalid Faiz (UCL), George Tsikouras, Steffen Fredensdorf and Oyvind Fikel and (all IC) were part of the ULU five-men team, defeating several universities, including strong teams from Loughborough and Glasgow. In the final, U.W.I.C (Wales) proved to be

slightly better, winning 3-2, and hence taking gold.

This year, ULU also had a women's team, but was unsuccessful due to injuries from the individual fights on the previous day.

Despite losing valuable members of the team since last year, good recruiting and this important result clearly has shown that the IC judo squad still is maintaining its high standards.

Well done to the ULU team and IC players for winning Silver in what was called "the most spectacular and talented tournament ever seen at the BUSA games..."

Creditable support for IC rowers

As part of their team 2000 project, Barclaycard are providing sponsorship for four members of the Imperial College Union Rowing squad.

The sponsorships are organised on a three tier system, developing potential British sports stars for the 2000 Olympiad in Sydney, and providing for the future of British sport

into the next millennium. Consequently, Simon Dennis, Richard Dunne, Lewis Attwell and Stavros Eyre, who are all currently in training with the Olympic team, have been awarded a total of £2800 to foster their future development. All four demonstrated their ability last year, when they rowed to team gold at the Under 23 World Championships.

Football fourths return from the dead

The performance was immaterial, all that mattered was the result, and thankfully after trailing 2-0 half-way through the second-half the victory was obtained.

The equation is now simple - our final game of the season decides whether we are champions, and secure promotion, or also-rans destined to languish on the scrap-heap of football history with San Marino and Watford.

That afternoon, we showed great character to win. Two sloppy goals were conceded and perhaps we would have collapsed earlier in the season, but we climbed out of reverse and eventually found our way into fifth gear. Dazzla Darren led the fight back, dominating the attacks, first converting a cross from Ryan, and then lobbing the keeper in

a shot reminiscent of Asprilla at his best. The winner was scored a few minutes from time, with Darren again dribbling to the bye-line and crossing to the back post. Leaping like a salmon in spring, Ryan (the shortest player on the field) made no mistake with a clinical finish.

His overall performance was magnificent - after suffering an early injury he bravely battled on and deservedly scored the winner thanks to his unselfish running.

Paul also played a crucial part, as indeed he has done all season, in this game clearing off the line in the last minute! This was, needless to say, caused by a mistake from Captain Stuart, who, after losing all his kit only just managed to get both his brain cells into gear and direct his team to the game.

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