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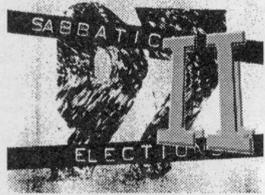
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THE FELIX

Friday 9th May, 1997
issue 1086

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

Student Newspaper of Imperial College



Happy days are here again!
The second election for ICU
President is upon us again.
Cast your eye over the mani-
festoes on page eight.



**In Something for the
Weekend:
Win Anaconda tickets
and John Squire returns
to the music pages.**

Expectant universities await Blair

MAHLINA PONNIAH

Whilst no-one can be ignorant of the Labour Party's landslide victory at last week's General Election, news of the new Government's attitude toward Higher Education has yet to filter out of Number 10. One of Labour's election campaign promises was to make education a 'top priority', and with their huge majority of 179, all those concerned in education expect New Labour to deliver.

Since Tony Blair took up the reins as Prime Minister, he has appointed David Blunkett as Secretary of State for Employment and Education and two other educational Ministers of

State; Stephen Byers with special responsibility for Schools and Baroness Blackstone with special responsibility for Further and Higher education. The Department for Employment and Education has said that so far no official decisions on education have been made but the intentions are in line with those laid out in the manifesto. David Blunkett has, however, expressed a wish to pass a short bill through Parliament to prevent expenditure on assisted places in private schools from September 1998 in order to release money to be used in areas such as the reduction of class sizes.

The education section of the Labour Manifesto focused on primary and secondary education. The more notable plans include the abolition of the nursery voucher scheme from which the money saved will be used to ensure nursery places for 4 year olds, an undertaking to reduce class sizes for 5 to 7 year olds, and a commitment to improve standards in primary schools and the teaching of the three 'r's'. Labour does not favour the eleven-plus which "divides children into successes and failures at far too early an age" but prefers modernised comprehensives where children are set according to

ability.

The proposals for Higher Education suggest that there is little money available in this area with the student loan system likely to supersede the already declining grant system. The manifesto states "costs of student maintenance should be repaid by graduates on an income related basis" and also says that the changes required in Higher Education cannot be funded out of general taxation.

Both the Association of University Teachers, which took strike action last November over university teach-
continued on page three

White knight for copyshop

KELLY ROBINSON AND MARIA IOANNOU

ABA Copytech Ltd, the company who went into receivership whilst leasing premises from Imperial College, were bought out by Callprint, a London based printing and photocopying company. It has now been established that Callprint have obtained a short-term, one month contract from College, after which the operating contract will be put out to tender.

Callprint's Director, Norman Krangel, met with Ian Greaves, Imperial College's Purchasing Manager, last Friday to discuss the possibility of Callprint taking over the printing shop, situated just off the main walkway. The contract that was decided upon subjects Callprint to the same terms and conditions as that agreed between College and
continued on page three



Proud (post)graduands at the second ever Postgraduate Awards Ceremony on Wednesday.

PHOTO: JITAN

Marquee decision condemned by USC

DAVID ROBERTS

Last week's Undergraduate Studies Committee (one of the key channels for students to air the air grievances with College) came down squarely against the examinations marquee in Princes' Gardens as a long term solution to this year's exam chaos.

Recognising the adverse problems of noise associated with the tent, they recommended that any possible alternative location should be sought for examinations in the last two weeks of term, when noise from the surrounding halls is expected to peak. The plight of those sitting examinations has now reached a wider audience with yesterday's edition of *The Independent* reporting on the students fate.

Despite complaints about noise levels from biologists and biochemists who sat their exams in the Great Hall in February, no changes to either the examinations or construction schedules were made, resulting in the last minute decision to erect the Tent taken in the final week of the Easter holiday. Indeed, the Undergraduate Studies Committee felt that with the benefit of hindsight the decision to move to the tent should never have been taken in the first place, with exams remaining in the Great Hall if at all feasible.

This mirrors the feelings of many staff, including some department heads, that the decision has, by putting revenue and College prestige ahead of student well-being, been a dangerous mistake. However, with the tent now in place, and the exams already having been moved once, the USC fear that the possibility of returning the last fortnight of exams to solid ground is very small.

Such a move would also (presumably) jeopardise the chances of the library extension being completed on time - an outcome which Estates have been at pains to avoid. Oddly enough, however, the Great Hall was quiet as a mouse on Thursday, whilst the Prince's Gardens mobile-classroom was a hive of frenetic activity. The recent re-adjustment of the work schedules on the main Bio-Medical Sciences building site to allow contractors to complete an electrical fit out suggest that it would have been possible to re-arrange some work on the smaller library site.

Meanwhile, attempting to restrict the levels of bias inflicted against those sitting exams in the marquee,

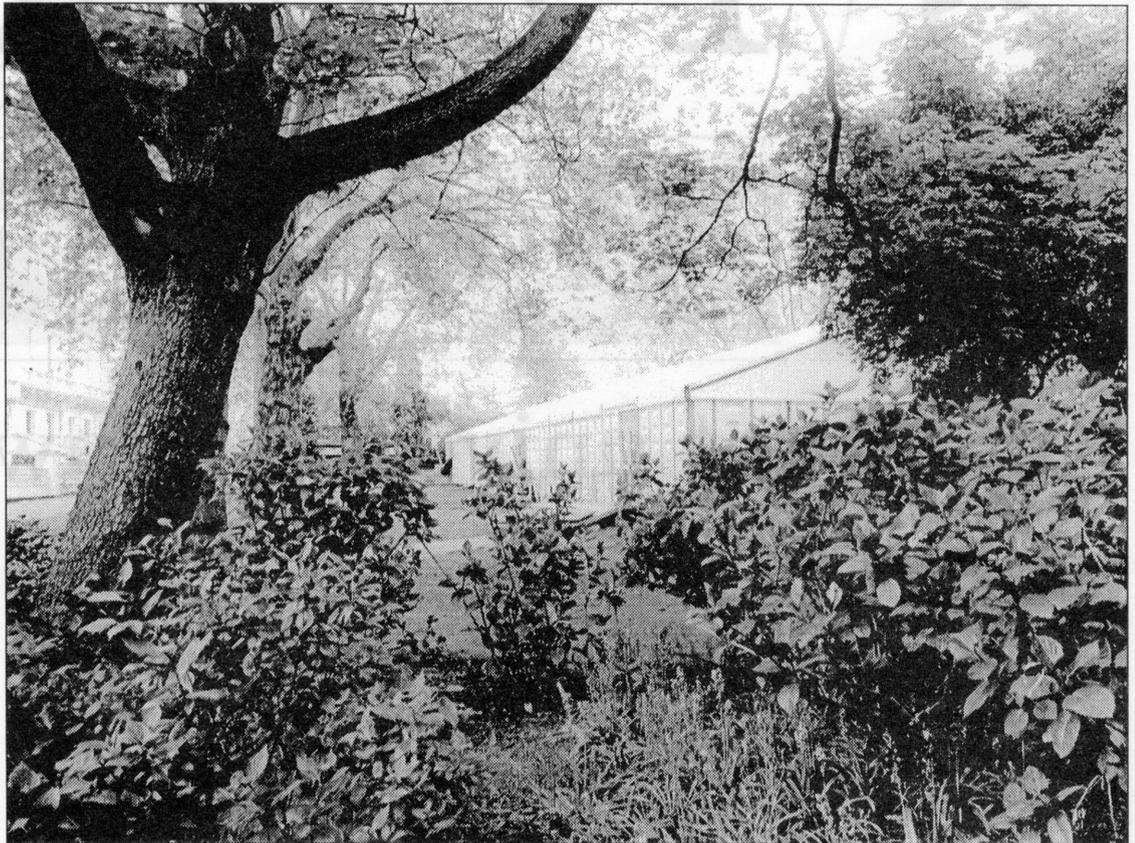


PHOTO: DAVID

The decision to site this summer's exams in a marquee in Prince's Gardens has failed to amuse the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Dr Margaret Goodgame, one of the College Tutors, has been deputised to attend all examinations held in the structure and note times of particular disruption. In addition, dedicated noise monitors are continually recording levels, so that any complaints from students can be verified and quantified. If all these factors are taken into consideration during assessment, then hopefully the detrimental effects to students can be kept to a bare minimum.

Complaints regarding maladministration of the exams (the only criteria under which students may challenge their results) should be made to the Imperial College Registry in the first instance.

Unfortunately, Sheffield staff were unable to confirm the total cost of this damage-control operation, in addition to the initial hire and installation of the Marquee, or to compare this cost with the penalties which would have been incurred by re-organising the building schedule. Mike Hansen, College's Director of Finance, was unavailable for comment.

editorial, page twenty three

CLAYPONDS WARDEN

The College invites applications for the position of Warden Clayponds which is available from 1st September 1997. Clayponds is a residential development of houses and flats in Ealing. It houses 2nd, 3rd and 4th year undergraduates and postgraduates.

Wardens receive rent-free in return for pastoral duties within this "student village". The post is open to all non-undergraduate members of the College but experience of pastoral care would be an advantage.

For further details and an application form contact 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 Friday 30th May.

Short-term copyshop contract awarded

continued from front page

ABA Copytech.

Before ABA went into receivership, Callprint had negotiated a deal to take over ABA, which was experiencing financial difficulties. However, Callprint only became aware that the company had gone into receivership when they were notified by a third party. They then commenced talks with the receivers and made a successful offer for what remained of ABA. It soon became apparent that ABA's difficulties started almost from the day they moved into their Walkway site.

Callprint are looking to re-hire those staff made redundant by ABA's closure and have already reinstated some, including the shop's former manager. The prices for the services offered by the shop and the concessions available to students, various clubs and departments will remain fixed until all parties involved have had the opportunity to discuss the matter.

The company have indicated their intent to work in conjunction with Imperial College Union to arrange

discounts for individual students as well as for College in general. Stressing this, Mr Krangel said "We believe close links with the students are essential if the venture is to be a success." He also talked of Callprint's wish to establish a second unit on the South Kensington campus, catering solely for academic departments in College.

Dr James Bayley, Imperial College's Procurement Systems Officer, appeared to be unaware of Callprint's future plans "We intend to allow Callprint to run the shop for the duration of their one month contract, after this we will be inviting certain companies, like Xerox and Kodak to bid for the tender."

ABA originally won the contract because of their willingness to provide a cost per copy contract, which none of the larger reprographics companies would offer at that time. The College has also been investing in the development of a software package to relay print jobs to network printers, which has generated a considerable amount of commercial interest. The software developers

hoped to integrate ABA's operation into the College network and use their business as a 'dry-run' for their new software. This project will have to be abandoned if one of the larger companies, who already have adequate software packages, win the tender.

Although Callprint specialise in large format and digital work for large companies they maintain that they can still offer a high quality of service to the College. Mr Krangel expressed Callprint's desire to greatly increase the level of management in the shop and expand their premises on campus to offer an improved standard and variety of service for all customers. This would prove a viable possibility only if they substantially increase their prices and will not happen immediately due to the short term nature of Callprint's existing contract.

Callprint's Mr Krangel appeared optimistic for the future "We believe in caring about people. If the need for such a printing service existed yesterday, then it exists today and Callprint is here to cater for this need."

A new hope

continued from front page

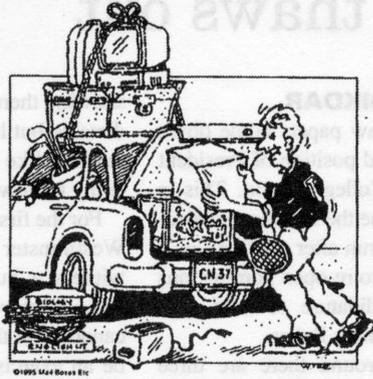
ers being subjected to real pay degradation, and the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals have many hopes of the New Government. The CVCP feels that UK universities want a change and the committee wants the new Government "to be bold, show the vision required and introduce a new system".

The AUT's general secretary, David Triesman, defined two key issues which are "preparing for a proper system of funding which would enable institutions to plan effectively, and a fair mechanism for determining the pay of academic and related staff in Higher Education".

The AUT are looking to the Dearing Report to recommend a "rolling five-year funding system" and whether this is in agreement with the non-specified intentions for funding which the Labour Party said in their manifesto they had put to the Dearing Committee is yet to be seen. The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, which is chaired by Sir Ron Dearing, is expected to publish its report in July.



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BMS work 'up a gear' to meet deadline

DAVE GOODWIN

As always, work on the Bio-Medical Sciences project continues. The pace has shifted up a gear following a 'hiccough' with the implementation of essential internal services such as piping and ducting that occurred a few weeks ago.

The complexity of fitting many pipes and cables into a limited space meant many specialists were needed on site at once which led to some delay. However, following a "re-squencing program" Phil Hilton, Schal site manager, confirms that the program remains on schedule with a "high intensity of work on all floors."

Recent work has included putting the steel roof struts in place and cladding the walls. He reiterated that the building work will be finished in time for the 13th April 1998 hand-over.

He added that the library extension will be complete by the 16th June 1997 despite losing some time due to exams in the Great Hall at the end of this term.



PHOTO: DAVID

The ever growing Bio-medical Sciences building viewed from the north. A recent 'topping out' ceremony marked the completion of the first stage of construction.

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Presidential elections race thaws out

SANJAY SIKDAR

Last Friday saw papers come down for the coveted position of President of Imperial College Union. This is the second time the Presidential election has been run after the first saw a massive vote to re-open nominations over the candidature of third year chemist Samantha Baker.

This time round there are three candidates standing. They are Clare Buston of Biology and Management, Al Hussein, a third year from the Physics Department and Olly Newman currently the City & Guilds Union Academic Affairs Officer. Despite widespread rumours, last minute entries of "heavyweight" candidates failed to materialise. New Election is also standing for the post

All candidates will be given the traditional grilling by the the student body at specially organised hustings. The official hustings will start in earnest at Imperial College Union in dBs on the 13th May. The trio will then take the arduous trip across Hyde Park to face the students of St Mary's the following day. A good

showing there is vital to win the predictable but lucrative block vote that the herd like medics will almost certainly bestow.

For the first time, Charing Cross & Westminster Medical School will witness a hustings on Friday 16th May, however since students there cannot vote this time round, this will be an exercise to give the School a flavour of Imperial College Union's great democratic system. This "dry-run" is seen as particularly important because following Charing Cross's merger next Autumn, a sabbatical post concerning medical issues will most likely be created.

Voting for 1997 Imperial College Union Presidential election will be held on the 19th and 20th May with the results declared at 20.00 hours.

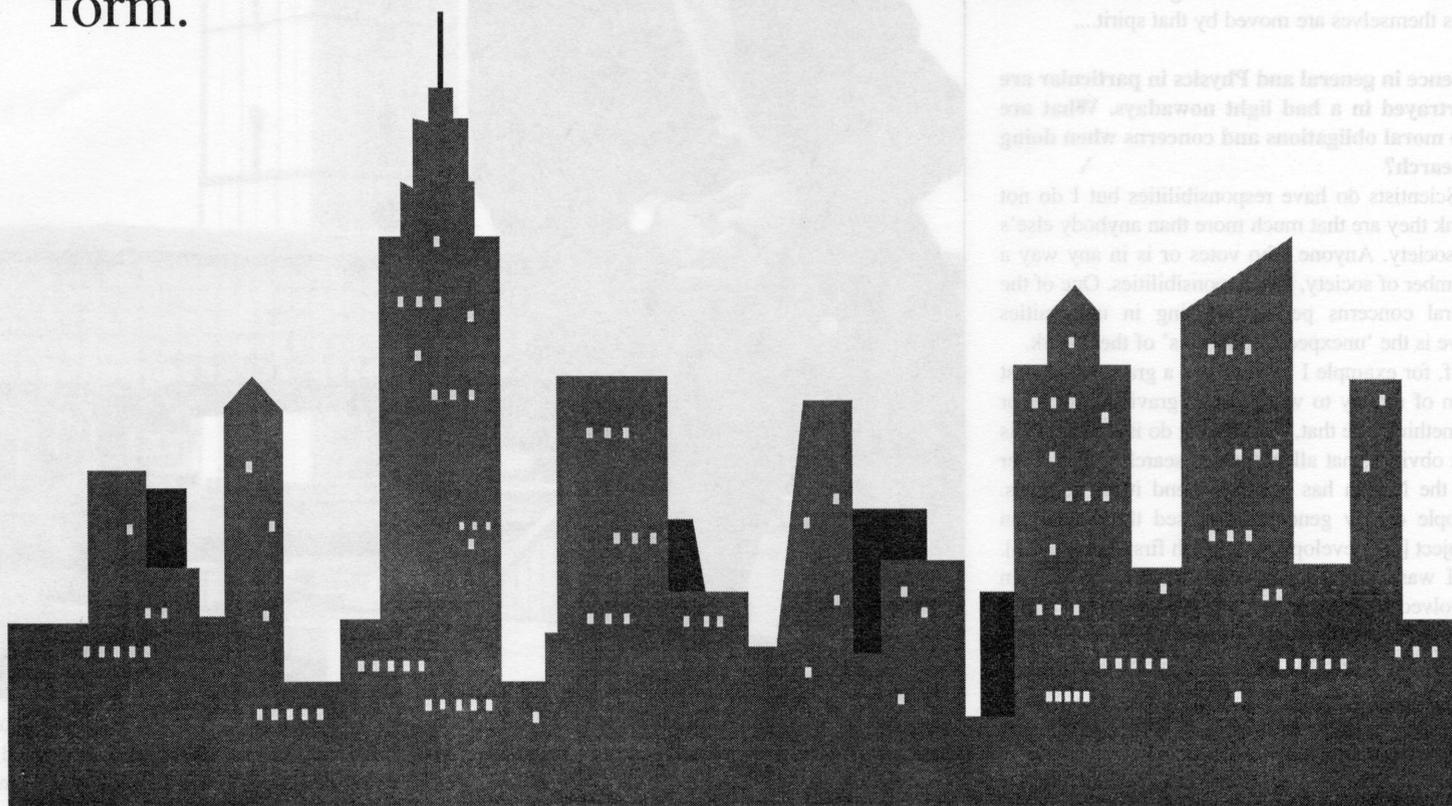
Last time out *Felix* were unfairly accused of swinging the vote towards New Election, but with or without the media, an absence of prominent candidates means the destination of the vacancy seems far from a foregone conclusion. **manifestoes on page eight**

Staying in London over the summer?

Need accommodation?

Bookings are now being taken for summer accommodation in Evelyn Gardens.

Call into The Conference Office, Watts Way, Princes' Gardens (next to Basics) to collect an application form.



Act now to avoid disappointment

CHRIS ISHAM

THE MAN WHO KNOWS WHAT'S GOING ON

Research and innovation in science continually bring the boundaries between technology and philosophy closer together - so is a conscience now a necessary qualification for budding researchers?

Andreas Mershin talks to one of the veterans of modern theoretical physics, Professor Chris Isham of our very own IC Physics Department.

What is the role of pure science?

For me, it is what you might call the whole question of the human spirit, it is the whole sense of the human race trying to achieve a deep understanding of everything. That sort of mystery and profundity is really what life is about.

So you see pure science as something like art?

Yes, but you cannot really use that as a very effective motivation for funding - unless the funders themselves are moved by that spirit....

Science in general and Physics in particular are portrayed in a bad light nowadays. What are the moral obligations and concerns when doing research?

Scientists do have responsibilities but I do not think they are that much more than anybody else's in society. Anyone who votes or is in any way a member of society, has responsibilities. One of the moral concerns people working in universities have is the 'unexpected bad uses' of their work.

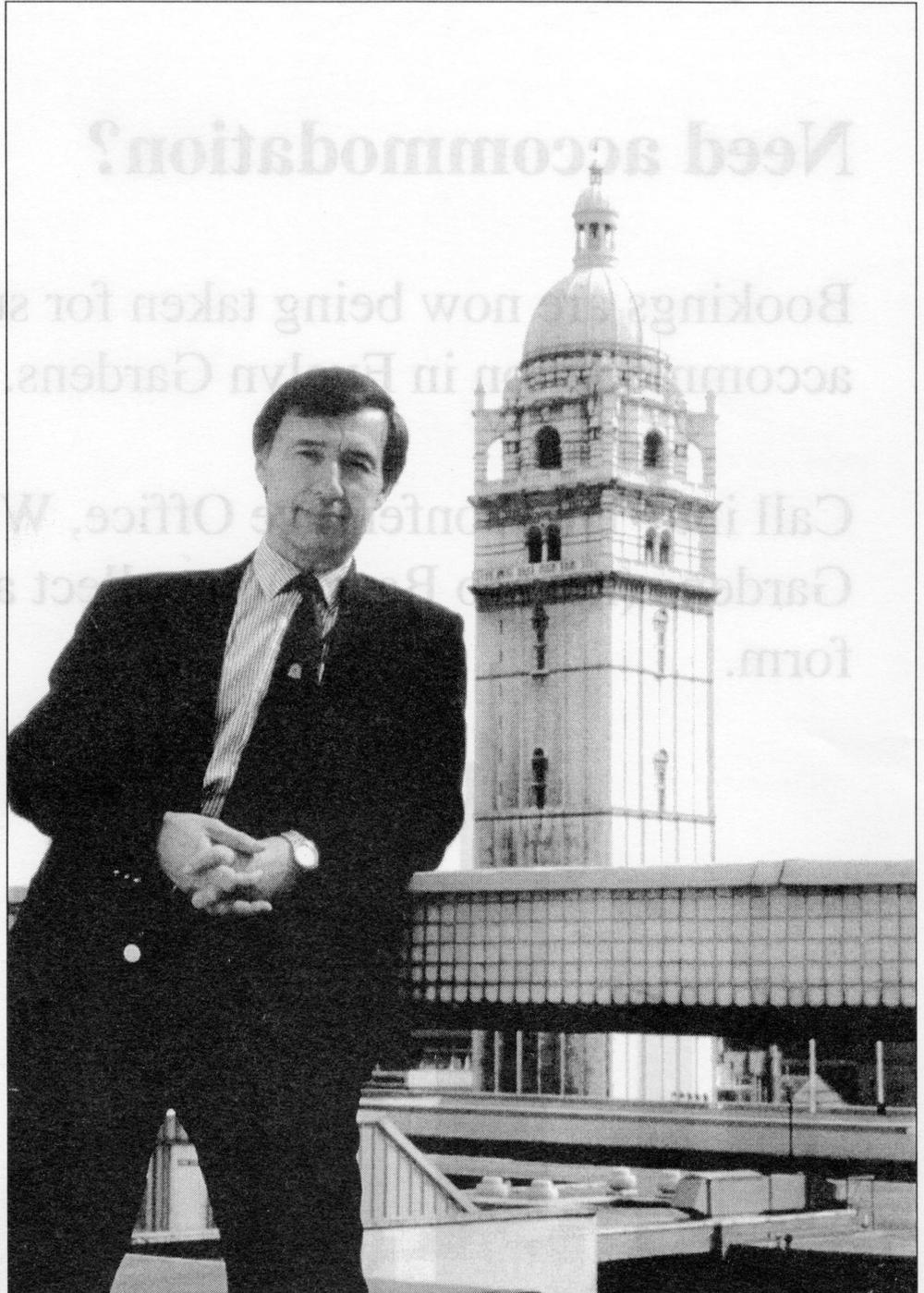
If, for example I was offered a grant, some vast sum of money to work, on a 'graviton bomb' or something like that, I would not do it although it is not obvious that all military research is bad, after all the Nation has had to defend itself at times. People of my generation missed the Manhattan Project [the development of the first atom bomb]. If I was twenty years older I might have been involved. With hindsight everyone says 'no I wouldn't have done it' but of course they did not know at the time, the problem is simply knowing...

There is hindsight now though, after the Manhattan project.

That is right, there is now about the role of things like Nuclear Physics and people working in those fields are very conscious but as far as my field is concerned you have to get really science-fictionary about it, people talk about creating new universes in the lab and this sort of thing, I do not know if I would do it...

I would

You would? But you see the effects could be catastrophic... (laughs), generally in theoretical physics we are not faced with such decisions. Even



if you think very hard about it, it is difficult to see how one could use our research in any practical way good or bad.

What is a 'Theory of Everything' and what does it have to do with Quantum Gravity?

When people talk about theories of everything or Grand Unified Theories (GUTs) they tend to refer to two different things: One side is the actual literal unification of forces: an attempt to find an overarching set of equations which in some way describes all of the known forces as different facets of the same thing. The other side is the theories that try to explain the origin of the universe. Quantum

Gravity, a theory that will combine Quantum Mechanics and General Relativity, is expected to be involved in both of those, because a GUT will have to include the gravitational force in some way.

Previous revolutions in Physics have radically changed the world. What will be the impact of such a theory on the average scientist or even on the person in the street?

This will depend very much on how they evolve. It is possible that a GUT will be constructed out of the existing framework of Quantum Theory and Relativity, when it will be seen as a very compli-

cated use of Quantum Mechanics and General Relativity. But of course it could be that we will have to change either or both theories very radically, i.e. change our concepts about space and time and change the very nature of Quantum Mechanics in very dramatic ways.

However, it is hard to see how it will be of 'everyday use' since even today we still use Newtonian rather than Relativistic physics to calculate orbits etc. So in that sense I guess, unless something totally unexpected happens these theories if they ever get developed will not have a totally overwhelming effect, but you never can tell!

So why all the fuss then since present theories work well on most practical scales?

The reason it excites people so much is that it is so difficult to do it. If you take General Relativity and Quantum Mechanics and try to put them together, they clash horribly mathematically and you get a whole mess of mathematical non-sense out of them. Quantum Gravity will force people to think about fundamental issues of space and time that you normally sweep under the carpet so it is in this sense that there is a clash in the very heart of these two subjects, people do feel that something very very deep is going on here.

Fundamental issues of space and time are intimately related to the very concept of 'reality'. If 'reality' is challenged how do you go about doing research and are the answers you get something like 42?

You can tackle these things in different ways. One way, at a purely empirical level, you can simply go and develop a mathematical framework that seems to describe a phenomenon rather well, in a clear clean-cut mathematical way and then you can go on and attempt to hang a philosophical framework about the theory.

Another way is to start with a conceptual revolution. Traditionally in theoretical science you have three things to think about: there is the mathematical framework itself, you have the conceptual framework attached to it, then you have the actual raw data. These three things intertwine and the art of the game is to fit the theory and the philosophy together in such a way that the philosophy makes coherent sense of what is going on yet at the same time the theory also describes the data. The problem with Quantum Gravity, is the total lack of data. So in that regard this area of research is unlike any other branch of science. Work in these areas proceeds in rather curious ways by either searching for internal consistency in the theory or by adopting a pre-conceived philosophical scheme and taking it from there.

So the problem is deeper than just better experiments?

The trouble is it is all very circular, because until you have the theory in the first place, you do not know what it will predict, so it might be that you and I sitting here at the moment is a prediction of quantum gravity but we do not know that.

We assume that the quantities known as the Planck length (10^{-33} cm) and time (10^{-42} sec) will appear in a Quantum Theory of Gravity. They are incredibly small distances and times so you can not

go about collecting data about phenomena at these scales directly but have to look at indirect data. You have to rely on secondary effects which you can not identify until you have the theory.

How far are we from such a theory ?

My personal suspicion is that we are a very long way, but not everybody will agree with that: people working on superstrings often get very excited and there are other approaches as well.

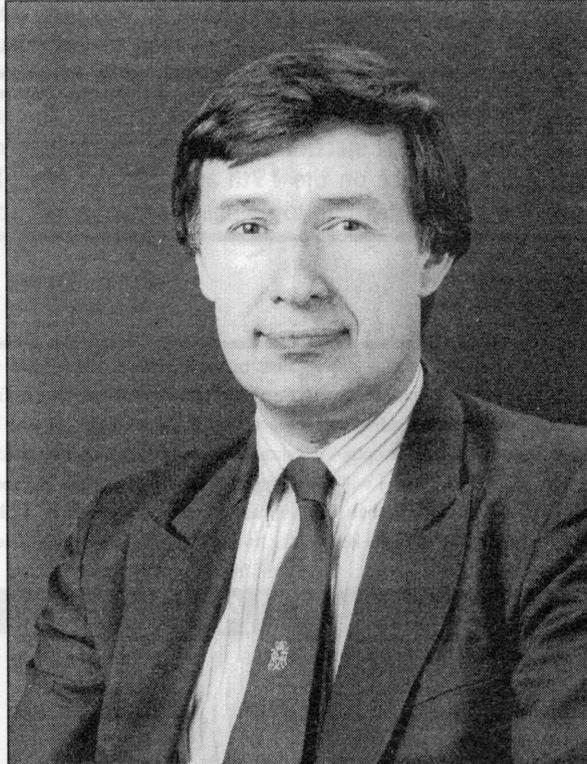


PHOTO: NICK JACKSON

It seems people working in such fields are very curious beasts. Is there a typical profile for a theoretical physicist?

I often wonder to myself is there a typical theoretical physicist. Certainly to be a successful theoretical physicist you have got not just to be good at maths but to really enjoy it. Professor Abdus Salam once said to me, slightly disapprovingly, "theoretical physicists should never marry" and since he had two wives and I was just married at the time too, it was rather funny (but not perhaps the most tactful) comment! What he actually meant was that to be really successful you have to put your work first, perhaps more so than in any other branch of science. My daughters [both doing maths degrees] will tell you that you probably need to be a bit of a nerd to be a theoretical physicist.

There is a public image of the theoreticians as people who belong to an exclusive monk-like community. One hears about 'enlightenment' and even Tao in physics. Are these really there?

I think there often is a side of Theoretical Physics that is genuinely mystical but I have to be careful in using the word 'mystical' as it often carries a pejorative meaning nowadays. There is undoubtedly a feeling that you are dealing with absolutely fundamental issues, and in doing so you find that normal common-sense ideas really do not apply. This tends to attract a certain type of person and I was that type, quite ecstatic about these things: for example, the idea that what we view as reality is only 'veiled reality'.

Do you ever feel -as it has been claimed by some in your field- that you're 'seeing God in the equations'?

You have to be careful because it would be terribly arrogant to say anything like that. The aspects of the world that the theorist can study are those that yield themselves to mathematical interpretation and what is perhaps surprising is the depth one can go with that and the strange nature of the world that is thus revealed.

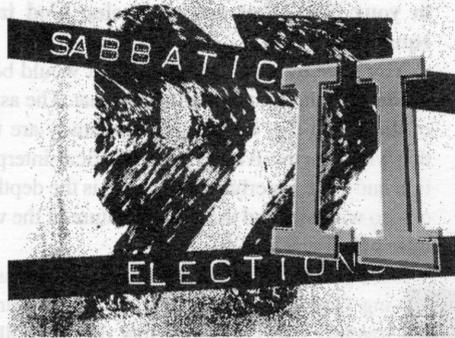
No, I find it slightly distasteful to say one is seeing God in the equations, as one is bringing together two categories that do not really fit. There is undoubtedly a sense of mysteriousness and if you do have religious views you tend to relate all profound things ultimately to a theological perspective but that is true whether it is theoretical physics or music or art or human relationships. They are all equally important and each one of them could be seen in religious terms.

You are religious but you seem to have no problem in combining science and religion, what's the trick?

It is a non-trivial task. You see perhaps I am not the stereotype scientist. I think Physics is one aspect of reality but not the only one and is certainly not the only authentic way of exploring the world. Some people bifurcate their personality being in a sort of schizoid state in the sense that they do their science during the day and have their religious views in the evening and they just do not relate the two. I have never been able to do that. One of the advantages of working in my sort of area, is that precisely because you discover that common sense does not work, you become potentially more broad minded about what might be right. On the other hand, people who work in well defined clear-cut classical branches of physics have perhaps more tendency to come to reductionism where you feel that everything can be reduced to the laws of physics and the dynamics of matter. In my field the very nature of matter is a profound mystery and the thought of reducing things to that is a bit of a misnomer.

In that case what is the definition of a 'religious person' that you use for yourself?

A religious person is a person who believes that the concept of God is a meaningful one. In the Christian religion particularly there is this idea that God is in some way 'personal' and that God can be addressed in a meaningful way. However praying for your son or daughter to pass their exams for example, is not necessarily a very sensible thing to do, nice if it happens of course!. Some people like Paul Davies talk of the laws of Physics being themselves God. This is a notion of a very abstract God, what Aristotle wrote about: the 'Prime Mover'. That is not what I mean by God, I do actually mean it in a religious sense not just a philosophical concept. I think it all boils down to the sacramental nature of human life which certainly affects the way you see the world and people. I believe various religions may be capturing the different facets of what may be profoundly true. It has always been very important to me to avoid being dogmatic about anything whether it is the correct interpretation of Quantum Physics or the 'correct' religion.



Sabbatical Elections (Part II)

You thought it was all over: Man United won the League, Labour won the country and Eastenders won a Bafta. But no! Not yet anyway, as Imperial College Union hasn't got a new President! So, this is where you come in... even if you didn't vote, don't play football and loathe Albert Square, you now have the chance to influence the running of your Student Union.

What a to do!

Yes indeed. As some of you may remember, we've been through this one before, but as the result was inconclusive a new election with fresh, sleaze-free candidates has been called. This time the ballot will take place on the 19th and 20th of May. Here, to help you in that oh-so-difficult choice, the candidates tell you what they are going to do if they get elected.

The candidates speak

As Union President I will use all of my skills to ensure that the successful running of the Union is maintained and that your needs are voiced via first class representation.

The University is continually undergoing change and I will strive to ensure that the welfare of students is at the forefront of impending plans and are not just financial gains for the College.

The merger is a very important issue and I intend to see that thorough preparations are made so that the interests of both existing IC students and those from the medical schools are protected and promoted further. This will involve issues such as providing adequate recreational facilities, accommodation and ensuring that the Union's level of funding isn't cut.

I would strongly advise you to vote, however as I am slightly biased, vote

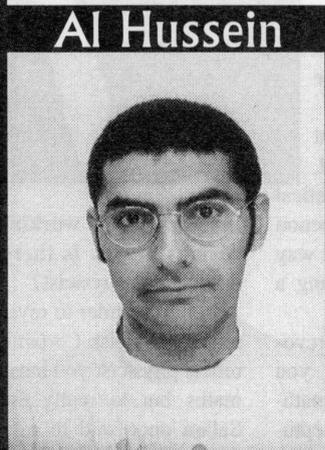
for me! Therefore all that remains for me to say is that as YOU make up the Union, it is important to register your opinion.

Why vote for me? Because I will do everything I can to ensure that the Union's commitment to students keeps on expanding.



Clare Bunstan

First of all, I believe that student welfare is the most important issue as far as the Union is concerned, and that ICU should do everything in its power to safeguard this at all times. We should demand greater respect from College for its students' well-being, and also for the Union itself. In particular, I will



Al Hussein

fight for the Union's right to obtain more space in Beit Quad after Biology moves out.

I will encourage a more versatile programme by including more specialist music nights and band nights during the week. I will push hard to get a licence enabling us to hire recognised bands to play here, thus increasing revenue for the Union and establishing ICU as a popular music venue.

With the impending arrival of St Mary's, I will do everything in my power, working with other Union sabbaticals, to ensure that their integration is as smooth as possible.

I believe that I am a suitable candidate because I know that I can do the job, and because I really do give a damn. I can make only one election promise: if you vote for me, you won't regret it.

My mission is to develop the human side of Imperial College Union. I'm fed up seeing so many people thinking the Union is irrelevant. So much more could be done to improve the way we look after our members. Here's a summary of the big deal...

Representation for all: I will create a representation system able to listen with interest, treat all with respect, and have confidence in consensus opinions.

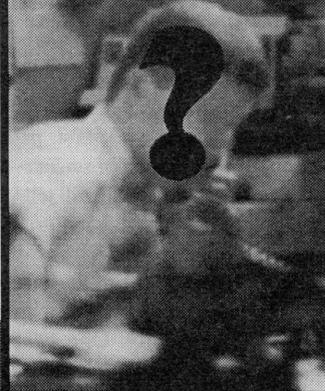
Respect for clubs: Improved understanding, support and co-operation; safety reforms and delegislation.

Thinking big: We should be more pro-active: facing problems head-on. We must not be scared to have our own ideas (taking an interest in student funding reforms etc). **No nonsense:** I will reduce the amount of bullshit that gets discussed and focus on real issues at Imperial (opposing profit motivated anti-student measures like exams in tents)



Olly Newman

Who am I?..... The most experienced representative at IC (AAO, Department and Year Rep). Expedition leader and Fellwanderers President. Leading opponent of annoying clubs with silly rules. Member of umpteen IC and ICU committees. I'm motivated, organised and keen for a big challenge. Choose progress. Trust me.



New Election

As we enter the second bout of Sabbatical elections, it has become my misfortune to take on the duty of standing on behalf of New Election. I'm hoping that this campaign will not be as

successful as the New Election campaign during the last round of elections, because then we'd have to go through all this palaver again.

For those of you who don't know, a vote for New Election is a vote to reopen nominations for the position of Imperial College Union President. Basically if you don't think that the candidates standing in this elections are good enough/pretty enough/smart enough to be President of your Union then vote for New Election.

All you need to do is get a Union card, so that you can vote, and then write a large number 1 in the box next to New Election on your ballot paper. It's as easy as that.

Hustings: 6pm Tuesday 13th dBs & 6pm Weds 14th St Mary's
Voting in all departments (more-or-less) 19th and 20th May.
Felix recommends you attend the Hustings.

SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND

the golem

The Golem investigates new research in to hayfever remedies

11

music

He's here (down there on the right): John Squire makes it back with a new choon...

12

cinema

Anaconda

16

eight days

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SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND 090597/11

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

(we can't) Give it Away!

This week:

Anaconda tickets to be won in association with Odeon Cinemas **ODEON**

and:

the winners of our Donnie Brasco competition

see the film pages.



iCU ents presents..

Friday

Hedonizm

**club tunes and blissed out beats
in the 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

Bust-A-Gut Comedy Club
The Daily Telegraph

Open Mic Semis
with Boothby Graffoe.

8pm. dBs. £2.50/£2

POP TARTS

TRIS WEEK

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Hayfever remedies to break your heart?

Jessica Sheringham reports on the recent findings of a link between heart attacks and hayfever treatments

As the warm weather seems to be here to stay, (despite the snow earlier this week!), we are entering the season of sunbathing, cut grass and, for the unfortunate, blocked noses and sneezing fits. As one of many hayfever sufferers, I am really thankful for current remedies like *Triludan*. However, a growing body of research suggests that treatments like these might be lethal.

Dangers

Terfenadine, the anti-histamine in many hayfever treatments, has been linked to 20 deaths from fatal heart abnormalities since it was licensed for general use over 14 years ago. From 1992, researchers have found that the drug can be harmful for people suffering from liver complaints; these can prevent terfenadine from being metabolised properly. A build-up of terfenadine in the body can result in potentially lethal effects on the heart. Also, some antibiotics can prevent terfenadine being metabolised, leading to this same build-up. However, this may not be too serious - terfenadine's safety record is very good when it taken as prescribed. The danger is only when the drug isn't used as it is supposed to be. Until now, doctors have been able to warn patients about the dangers of mixing antibiotics which they prescribe, with hayfever treatments. But most recent studies indicate that terfenadine's interactions are not just with prescribed drugs. Taking terfenadine even with grapefruit juice can cause heart problems.

ESSENTIALS

Terfenadine is found in the following treatments:

Aller-Eze Clear Histafen Seldane
Boots Antihistamine Terfinax Tablets
Terfenor Triludan Forte
Terfex Triludan
Boots Hayfever Relief Antihistamine Tablets
Boots One-a-day Antihistamine Tablets

- It should not be used if you suffer from heart or liver complaints
- Don't exceed the recommended dose
- Don't take with grapefruit juice or some antibiotics, for example erythromycin.
- Ask a pharmacist if you are any doubt about continuing with terfenadine or about possible alternatives.

(source: Boots Patient Information Leaflet)



A minefield for hayfever sufferers

Action

As a result of this, Professor Michael Rawlins, the Chairman of the Government's Committee on the Safety of Medicines declared that terfenadine "was getting too complicated for pharmacy use". He announced last week that terfenadine-containing treatments will be available only on prescription.

Why use terfenadine?

Terfenadine is one of the newer hayfever treatments. These are more popular than older style drugs because they are more effective and don't cause the sleepy side-effects associated with these older medications. Whilst other non-sedating hayfever treatments are available, terfenadine is the main ingredient in many of the main remedies. Moreover, doctors Ralph Edwards and Marie Linquist reported in *The Lancet* last week that various alternatives to terfenadine are also associated with a higher risk of death and of heart abnormalities.

Implications for the hayfever sufferer

For most of us, the drug is quite safe, yet will still become prescription only. Could this mean that we are destined to spend a summer of runny noses or return to treatments which send you to sleep?

This will not be the case. The proposal to remove terfenadine from the pharmacy is subject to a three-month consultation period. Only after this period will the drug be removed from pharmacies and restricted to prescription. So, we will still be able to get drugs like Triludan over the counter this summer.

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OK, it's taken us a while to set up but welcome to the new music pages news section. Here, you can find out what's happenings concerning some of your favourite bands. If there is anything you want to know regarding any bands, then come and tell us and we'll do our best to include some answers in future issues. So, enough of the blurb, here goes...

The Prodigy are trying to finish their album before their appearance at Glastonbury. They are playing Lollapalooza as well after plans for a tour in America with the Chemical Brothers and Orbital were cancelled. However, if the album doesn't get finished before their

American dates, the release could easily be anytime up to next year.

Radiohead are due to release their new album, *OK Computer* at the end of June. They are also scheduled to embark on a tour of the country at the beginning of September. Check out this week's NME for dates.

OK, I've restrained myself long enough...**The Seahorses** are in town. John Squire's new band has surfaced after nearly a year of press speculation and gossip. They released a single last week called *Love is the Law* and it went in at number 3 in the charts on Sunday. To accompany the release, there was a short but sweet English tour and you can read a review

of it below. For all you Stone Roses fans out there, I recommend you give the single a listen if you haven't heard it already.

Finally, are you in a band? If so, then get yourself some information on *The Break '97*. It is an opportunity for unsigned bands to get heard and win some great prizes. Just think, all that endless practising in dingy rehearsal rooms may well prove useful at long last. For more information, come into the Felix office for a leaflet. If you do enter, come and tell us what you're doing and we'll chart your progress through the competition. Also, check out the website at <http://www.thebreak.com/> for more information.

THE SEAHORSES
Northampton Roadmender

Around a year ago, after John Squire left the Stone Roses, he sort of faded into the wilderness. The rest of the Roses stayed firmly in the limelight, however, and slagged off the guitarist incessantly claiming that he had walked out on them in the middle of recording a new album and then saying that it was a good job he left because he was ego-centric and selfish anyway. They were determined to go on without him and this resulted in them acquiring the talents of a number of session musicians for their final show at Reading last year. Ahem, enough of that.

So what happened to Squire? The story goes that on the night of his departure from the Roses, he went down to a pub where he saw 21-year-old Stuart Fletcher playing bass in a local band. And so begins the story of the Seahorses. Around the end of last year, the final line-up was announced. He had a busker, Chris Helme, singing and playing acoustic guitar and there was Andy Watts performing all the drumming and backing vocal duties. Between then and now they practiced and practiced, even doing some secret gigs in Britain before going off to America to record their debut album. They returned with a completed album that sounded, according to those that had heard it, like a cross between early Beatles and early Roses material. Apparently Squire had left his Led Zeppelin impersonations to one side once more.

The venue that they played their tenth gig in is, being straightforward, modest. The support band, Rude Club, were really awful and when they left a sense of relief swept over the crowd. The previous gigs had caused some problems

LIVE

with the equipment breaking down, so clearly this time the techs weren't leaving anything to chance, evident in the amount of time they spent actually setting up. The arrival of the band was marked by a sudden surge forward as die-hard Roses fans tried to get closer to John. They started immediately with the very riff-friendly *I Want You To Know* which went down a treat, probably because everyone was still overawed with the ex-Roses' member. Screams of 'Johnny, Johnny!' accompanied the start of songs like *Suicide Drive* and *Round the Universe* which, incidentally, sounded like the Monkees. At one point, someone shouted 'Ian Brown!' only to be shouted down with loud cries of 'Fuck off' by most of the rest of the audience. There was a brief acoustic set when everyone except Chris left the stage and he did *Movin' On*, a beautiful little number which got probably one of the warmest receptions of the night.

Undoubtedly the song that got most people singing along was the excellent *Love is the Law*, which ended in an almighty jam where John reminded everyone just how good he really is at playing that damn instrument. Every time he launched into a solo, you could hardly hear it for all the screaming.

After an encore with the ridiculously-titled *Kill Pussycat Kill*, they left, leaving the crowd knowing two things. Firstly, that the Seahorses would probably never play such intimate venues again and secondly that John Squire is back and he means to stay.

Alok

Underlay: John Squire (God)

GOLD BLADE
New Cross Venue

'Music, no matter how technically accomplished, is meaningless without passion. Discuss.' You wouldn't go far wrong in citing Gold Blade as primary evidence for this proposition. On stage at the scum hole that is the New Cross Venue they exude passion, spraying the audience with with it like gobbets of freshly congealed kebab fat. Invective leaps from lead singer John Robb's lips as he hectors us to feel the soul power moving through him and his compadres. These six men, variously from London, Manchester and the birthplace of rock and roll, Blackpool, are preaching a gospel all wrapped up in three chord punk. They remind me of Reverend Horton Heat or Rocket From the Crypt, all shouty, bequipped upstarts who sound like they picked a guitar up for the first time just five



minutes before the show, and are still awestruck with its potential to cause sonic malevolence. But here comes the trick. Gold Blade have an added element, the philosophers of stone pop: STAR ATTITUDE. They really believe that they can change the world, one shitty venue at a time and, for a while, I am almost convinced. As John flies around the stage, face contorted and singing tunes about *Black Elvis*, their power is undeniable. And Yet, even with top notch tunes like *Strictly Hardcore*, which obviously has themselves hoarse on the chorus, it all too quickly descends into Blues Brothers parody. All the rock and roll cliches are there, from the gold lame to the guitarist clambering atop the speaker stack (only to have real problems getting down again - wuss).

Ultimately, there must be a caveat to our initial proposition. Certainly, music without passion is worthless. Almost as bad as passion without an iota of musical talent or innovation. A perfect description of Gold Blade, really.

Norm

Listings:

Friday 9th May	Finley Quaye , £5. <i>Monarch, Camden NW1</i>	Monday 12th May	Reef + Cable , £11. <i>Brixton Academy</i>
Saturday 10th May	Beck , £12.50 <i>Brixton Academy.</i>	Tuesday 13th May	Cake + support , £7.50 <i>Camden Dingwalls, NW1.</i>
Sunday 11th May	Beat Dis Jazz Band , Free <i>Market Bar, W11</i>	Weds 14th May	Superglass , £11. <i>Brixton Academy</i>
		Thursday 15th May	Brand New Heavies , £9.50 <i>Forum, Kentish Town</i>

A L B U M S

PURE 3 Colours Red

They rock, they have resurrected the dying remnants of punk, and they are determined to defy the present day apathy towards it. Formed by three blokes, including a veteran whose previous life was 'Senseless', they toured consistently throughout last year helping to build up their fan base and have been hailed by Creation boss Alan McGee as the best songwriters at the moment. This sort of declaration can only do wonders for any new band, coming from the man who brought us some of the creme de la creme of indie, such as Ride, Primal Scream, Teenage Fanclub.....

Pure starts this debut off with its swooning hooklines and in yer face guitar crunching onslaught that is mercilessly unrelenting as it sends you through a journey of deliciously smooth slowies and straight up three minute punk blasts of moshed out mayhem. They can attack the social ills affecting many of us with a crowd rallying passionate aggression while at other times sensitively sing about the long

awaited love of that *Copper Girl*. The Tinseltown image of the world gets a thrashing in *This Is My Hollywood* where they attack the falseness of the whole affair.

Distorted guitars crash on, underplaying the typically punk, all members of the band shouting along, rebel rousing songs that build up this album. Many of the songs contain fantastic guitar riffs that only pick up near their end and regrettably just don't last long enough such as songs like *Sixty Mile Smile* and *Alright Ma*. At times they embark on trips of metalled-out frenzy, (*Halfway Up The Downs* and *Hatesick*) akin to a toned down version of Megadeth while retaining some of their own defining qualities. Mellow ones are here as well with the beautiful *Fit Boy And Faint Girl* which erupts into an epic ballad of dynamic proportions.

Despite the obvious influences plaguing this album they don't sound like some second rate Sex Pistols but instead come across as sincere angry punk hopefuls with a bunch of decent tunes. (7) *Jason*

AFTERTASTE Helmet

Page Hamilton, vocalist, lead guitarist and mainstay of New York hardcore heroes Helmet, is a living example of Jekyll and Hyde. Talk to him for a while and you'll be impressed by his articulacy and mild manners. Heck, the man even loves jazz. Give him a guitar, on the other hand, and an angry, brutal music-creating monster smashes its way out of that hitherto calm exterior.

Which is a relief, because after three albums and considerably fewer record sales than the likes of *In The Meantime* merited, we might have expected Helmet to tone down their savagery to garner some commercial appeal. Not a bit of it. After a few seconds of superfluous feedback, *Pure* launches itself from the speakers with one of those crunching guitar riffs that have influenced everyone from Therapy? (definitely) to Sepultura (probably). But don't think for one minute that this is crass, tuneless music. *Pure*, like virtually everything else that follows, is deceptively melodic amongst its barrage of noise and thunder. In fact, in the likes of *Exactly What You Wanted* and the sublime *It's Easy To Get Bored* it's the TUNES that bang you around the head before anything else, leaving you gaping at how someone can write something so heavy yet so hummable. Meanwhile, Hamilton is busy spitting out diatribes against all and sundry with some of the best put-downs you'll find anywhere. Listen to ones such as, "I'd rather be insulted by you than someone

I respect" (*Birth Defect*) and "You speak the language everyone knows/Take over when the conversation slows/Another self-made luminary/Or maybe just the f***** tooth fairy/I'd send the brain you ration/To feed the smallest starving nation" (*Diet Aftertaste*) and that Jekyll and Hyde comparison becomes all the more obvious.

Ultimately then, Helmet's fourth proper album is a potent cocktail of sterling guitars, clever lyrics and some surprisingly wondrous tunes. Try it and rest assured that you'll be left with anything but a bitter 'Aftertaste'... (7) *Vik*

AFTER AFTER HOURS Sugar Plant

To borrow a footballing cliché, this Japanese duo's latest release is a record of two halves. The first half you're awake, the second you're not. No great loss, since there is such little variation between any of the tracks, although, like the white noise on the telly after Cell Block H, the finale (*Brazil*) wakes you up just enough so that you don't forget to get undressed and turn off the lights.

The mood is very dreamy, but the sound is sub-ambient, like Stereolab with the brakes on and no progression in the tunes. Come to that, there are few actual "tunes" at all. The repetitive nature of the album extends to the lyrics, where the same line is echoed again and again. It's almost as if Sugar Plant are constrained by the strict form of Japanese poetry, since none of

LET THE FREAK FLAG FLY Tranquillity Bass

With *Let The Freak Flag Fly*, Tranquillity Bass have produced a hippy album for the nineties with all the old school dreaminess of the sixties. The result is pretty good, apart from the odd change in style which spoils the overall effect.

The album starts off promisingly enough with the druggy *Five Miles High* and is followed by the equally promising *La La La*. A change in style then gives us the surprisingly dreamy tones of brass in *The Bird*, but the change in style that follows this is almost as unforgivable as David Bowie's recent drum and bass outing. *Soldier's Sweetheart* is the title of this undeniably sinful track, which is more country than hippy free-form as the sleeve notes suggest. Thankfully the album moves back to the hippy theme with *We All Want To Be Free* - a slow chanting song that drags its heels, and leaves the listener waiting for a crescendo that never comes. The pace picks up with *Never Gonna End*, and the result sits pretty as one of the stand out tracks on the album, along with *I'll Be Here* which takes more than simple influence from the Butthole Surfers *Hurdy Gurdy Man* with the wobbling vocal effect. The title track follows in ultra-hippy style and the sound is certainly interesting and innovative if not wholly impressive. As the album draws to a close Tranquillity Bass return to the country style with *Lichen Me To Wyomin*, and the less said about that the better.

Overall a very listenable album that would improve endlessly if two tracks were removed. (6) *James*

the songs stretch to 4 verses. This is a shame because the poems that they have produced have great entertainment value. It is very difficult not to laugh at someone who sings, with a straight face, "She loves the sun on freezy moon/ Too many empties to feel in peace". This is harsh though, and it is cheap to poke fun like that. In fact, the better songs on the album - *Here Rain Comes* and *Drifting* - have the greatest vocal contributions.

The band are trying to be too clever with this record, with the result that it is devoid of humour. However, this is where the album fails, since *After After Hours* is an undemanding, easy listen. From the intro to many of the tracks, one half expects some old crooner from the easy listening hall of fame to let rip. Nothing on this album comes near a noteworthy event like that. Throughout the record you get that strange feeling that something is missing - a manic breakbeat, or killer riff, say.... (4) *Magic Tom*

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HELIOSELF Papas Fritas

From the first bar of the first song of this record, everyone in my room started smiling. It's just so screamingly summery, with such teasing seventh chords and gloriously cheesy cadences that you barely notice the appallingly clashing lyrics; oh sod this it's absolutely brilliant. I'm listening to it as I write and I just want to jump up and down and sing along. From the power pop dive-around-your-bedsit of *Small Rooms* to the easy listening groove of *Live By The Water*, this is like nothing you've ever heard before. Incurrigibly likeable, so cliched and yet so new. They can't sing particularly well but it just doesn't matter, anyone who risks a pulse telephone solo and makes it sound sharp and funny deserves global recognition. There are twelve life heartening songs on this album, most under three minutes long, all of which you want to go on forever. The only let down is the slightly over slow *Just To See You*, which sounds like a tragically unsophisticated Beautiful South whinge, but this is more than blown out of your mind by the following track *Weight*, which features a silent movie style piano and a tap dancer as the only form of accompaniment to a charmingly stretched vocal about love. By the time the final track (*Starting to Be It*) comes around only thirty-five minutes later you are just pleading for more and you've just got to start it again; more of that pure sugar and hair-achingly original pop music that britpop is so startlingly lacking. I don't like this album at all. No really. (8) Mr. Trout

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The success of ambient trance has been unusually great, given its nature. Not particularly danceable, hooklines few and far between, it's more often than not solitary listening. Maybe there's just an awful lot of bedsit devotees out there. Certainly Aphex Twin, μ -Ziq (Mike Paradinas, who contributes a remix here) and Plastikman to name but a few have all acquired an unprecedented amount of bankability as artists, as well as reams of critical acclaim. And yet fundamentally, they all trade similar wares - Kraftwerk scrapping with Brian Eno in an airport departure lounge. It is curious that computer generated music, once considered such a sterile format, should now be one of the most effective ways to manipulate the mood of the listener, be it uplifting anthems or barren soundscapes. Those artists who manage the shift between moods with the most agility often produce the greatest works - see *Tango n' Vectif* (μ -Ziq) or *Patashnik* (Biosphere). Speedy J follows in this lineage perfectly, with an album dominated by



PUBLIC ENERGY NO.1 Speedy J

its transitions from rolling echoes of noise, through crushing, abrasive beats and back again. *Patterns* is a glorious savannah of sounds, womb-music for aliens that begins the journey from passive to aggressive. Soon *Pure Energy* welcomes us into the clanking Metal Machine Music room, fulfilling all the false promise of that doomed Lou Reed experimental outing. The sinister march of *Hayfever* is enough to make you dive for cover behind the sofa, instantly four years old again and terrified by the approaching threat of another 'Dr. Who' monster, before *Tesla* soothes you again with a choral overture that seems to be playing in a deserted cathedral. Throughout the album, Speedy J is the consummate tour guide through the unsettled territories of his mind. Book yourself on the next flight. (7)

Norm

Super Furry Animals - *Herman Loves Pauline*

Sub Blur rock with badly sung yet endearingly quirky lyrics; pretty much standard for the 'Animals. The B-sides are extraordinarily average.

Nick Heyward - *Today*

Blander than bland AOR with absolutely nothing to offer. All three racks have exactly the same riff, pace and feel, all of which are so fucking dull it makes you want to punch him. Shit. OK?

Speedy - *Time For You*

Any amount of well delivered vocal, brass, strings and "interesting" syncopation in the percussion can never disguise a Teenage Fanclub drudge fest.

The Beekeepers - *Lunar*

Will someone please invent a few more riffs? There are other things that you can do with guitars you know? This one is thankfully a little more catchy than your traditional fayre, but sounds worryingly like The Proclaimers picking

up a Metallica songbook. Hmm.

Essential Choon

The Dharmas - *Channel Hopper*

The only band today who looks like they actually made an effort with the song. A great Hammond solo, a jaunty lyric and a



real sense of fun lifts it some way towards the decent songcategory. But not all the way.

Rootjoose - *Can't Keep Living This Way*

Look. Can someone please give me a frigging

decent single to review? What is this then? Rhyming 'sick of beans on toast' with 'forever nothing in the post'? Oh sod off and take up golf or something.

Geneva - *Tranquillizer*

Pleasant enough, in the same way that watching your mum wash up is. Threatens to get interesting near the end, but doesn't quite make it. Utterly harmless.

Eicka - *Nothing To Lose*

Oh please. I'd like very much to say that this is a brilliant original new slant on rock and roll. But it's a great big sack 'o sh##e. Who lets people make records like this? Trad-indie battleship grey retro balls up.

Silicon - *Mono*

Trip hop by numbers with a bit of a James Bond tinge to it. It's alright but there is hardly anything to tell your mates about. Erm, it's different to the indie stuff at least.

Mr. Trout

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DOMESTIC MANAGER, APRIL 1997

Reviewers Wanted!

If you fancy seeing free films months before they hit the cinema in return for writing a review, then e-mail Chris on cph@ma.ic.ac.uk

Out now

Ghosts from the Past

Oscar-nominated James Woods stars with Alec Baldwin in this intriguing true story. Baldwin plays a prosecutor determined to reopen the case of the murder of a civil rights campaigner many years before. Woods is the man who walked then, and this film charts the attempt by Baldwin to stop him evading justice a second time. Nothing new, but a fascinating story.

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John Wayne. Not just a cowboy.

Anaconda

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Jennifer Lopez and Eric Stoltz star in this jump-fest about a 10 metre long anaconda living in the heart of Brazil. A bunch of scientists are involved in an expedition down the Amazon to film a mythical tribe when they rescue a shipwrecked snake-hunter, played by Jon Voight of Mission Impossible fame. Everything is not as it seems, however, and the explorers find themselves in the middle of a conflict between the hunter and his prey, the most deadly killer in the jungle. This anaconda is not just the largest and most vicious killer snake but actually enjoys the game, regurgitating its victims so it can hunt and eat again.

The aim of *Anaconda*, which has been the most popular film in America for weeks, is clearly to make the viewers jump out of their skin. The computer-generated snake pounces on its prey in a hissing burst of speed that has the audience cowering into their seats every time, even though it's expected. Unlike many similar films we're

never sure which, if any, of the characters will survive the encounter and this adds to the tension. Fortunately, though, it doesn't take itself too seriously. For example, there's a bizarre scene where we see the anguished face of a recently devoured victim through the skin of the snake. The acting is quite cheesy as well, apart from Jon Voight. His mysterious character that respects and admires the snake won't win any awards, but is memorable nonetheless. The rest just scream in the right places and get eaten on cue.

Belief needs to be suspended if you are to enjoy this one. The snake moves ridiculously quickly for a creature of its size, regularly defying the laws of gravity and sense. The plot is there purely to link together the frequent action scenes as is so often the case. Still, if you're a fan of thrillers which build up the suspense and then jump at you from behind then this film is perfect for you.

chris

Videos to Buy

Most of John Wayne's exploits weren't restricted to the monosyllabic cowboys for which he seems best remembered. Out now at £10 a pair the **John Wayne Collection** gives a new generation the opportunity to see the walk and hear the talk...

Blood Alley sees a bandana-clad Captain Wayne being sprung from a Chinese gaol by a mysterious gang of four including Lauren Bacall (in the days when she didn't expect to win Oscars). They need a wily old sea dog to evacuate a small village in Communist China to Hong Kong via a 300 mile dash on a clapped-out ferry. Bizarrely, Wayne is accompanied by an invisible girlfriend who apparently keeps him sane as he agrees to take on the job. With the entire Red Fleet in pursuit, the old paddle steamer sets off down Blood Alley on a trip that seems to take in Los Angeles Harbour and the Everglades but somehow ends in Hong Kong after only two days at sea. Unfortunately we never find out why the Chinese infantry wear tennis shoes but it's a satisfying Wayne escapade nonetheless.

In **The Three Godfathers**, Wayne and two fellow rustlers make a bad career move in robbing a bank. Fleeing

across the badlands of Arizona they meet a dying woman and her baby and, being decent outlaws, take the child into their care as they head towards their final destination - the town of Jerusalem. This captivating fable with biblical undercurrents is beautifully executed by director John Ford and is one of Wayne's most enjoyable films. Highly recommended.

Due to its hundreds of imitators, **They Were Expendable** seems like just another cliché-ridden propaganda war film. But this is harsh on a film which at its time was probably seen as innovative as we see *Trainspotting*. Wayne leads a small bunch of singing seamen in pitting their tiny motor torpedo boats against the mighty Japanese navy. Love, humour and tragedy are mixed with boredom in a film only worth seeing for its moody black and white camera work in the serious scenes.

Available now as part of the John Wayne Screen Classics at £10 for two:

The Cowboys	Green Berets
Blood Alley	The Three Godfathers
Haunted Gold	Reunion in France
Operation Pacific	The Sea Chase
The Searchers	Patricia

5 BABYLON

Volume 22 - Matters of Honour

The third year of the intergalactic saga unfolds as the year 2260 dawns. The Alliance faces turbulent times with the Centauri having blockaded the planet used by the Rangers, the covert force spearheading the fight against the Shadows. However, hope is restored with the arrival of an awesome prototype warship.

A key episode in the on-running Babylon 5 saga where the Shadows make their first, sinister appearance. The plot for this one is thick indeed and even the usually wooden acting of the B5 crew is easily forgotten in trying to appreciate the huge scale of the B5 story.

Convictions

A psychopathic bomber cripples Babylon 5, critically injuring Lennier. Meanwhile, arch enemies G'Kar and Londo find themselves trapped in the centre of a travel tube, leading to a very strange confrontation.

One of those unfortunate TNG-like character development episodes. Avoid.

Ralph

Babylon 5 - Volume 22 is released on May 12th

The Daily Telegraph

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mic

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Friday 9th 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: Hedonizm

Reach for the stars ...a night of classic club tunes with "Hedonizm", plus blissed out beats in the Cocktail Bar. Free before 9pm or £1 after.

Free Women's Minibus Service

First run at midnight, last run at closing.

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

Win yourself £50 cash in hand, at the STA DaVinci's Bar Trivia. Quiz starts at 8pm

Sunday 11th May

1pm Wargames (Regular)

Aerobics (intermediate), Southside Gym

2pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Monday 12th 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

12.30pm Islamic Society (Regular)

Sister's Circle, Prayer Room

12.30pm Third World First

Water Aid discussion. Water Aid is the only UK charity specialising in water and sanitation in the developing world. It works in partnership with communities in Africa and Asia to help them build their own sanitation projects. Brown Committee Room, Union

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!

More fun than the midweek lottery.... Frolix! 9-12. Free

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

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

6.30pm Work America orientation meeting

Clore Lecture Theatre, Huxley building.

8pm ICCAG (Regular)

Soup Run for the homeless

Meet Weeks Hall Basement

5pm Ents: Da Vinci's Cocktail Night

Drown your sorrows in style ...the Da Vinci's Cocktail Night. Happy hour prices all night, and the most fun you can have with a small umbrella Until 11pm.

Tuesday 13th 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)



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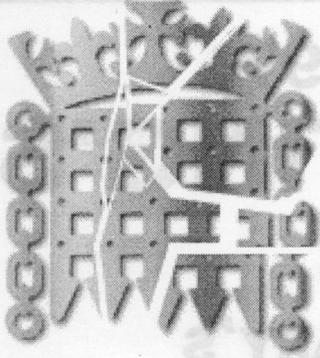


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Whilst Stocks last

9.30am – 5.00pm (Wed 10.00am – 5.00pm)



Westminster Eye - Hamish Common

I expect Tony Blair woke up on Friday or Saturday morning with a very wide grin on his face. Although few people were surprised by the Labour victory, the scale of it has come as a shock to even the most optimistic Labour supporter.

Labour have 419 of the 659 seats available in the House of Commons, giving them an extremely comfortable majority of 179 seats. Even if public opinion swung some way against them in the next five years, they could still win a working majority for a second term in Government. The Conservatives, for their part, are resigned to perhaps ten years in

Opposition, and there are predictions that they may tear themselves to pieces over Europe, in the same way they did over the Corn Laws in the 19th Century, keeping them out of power for generations.

They scale of Labour's majority has had some unforeseen consequences for the Labour hierarchy, with Labour MPs returned in seats that they had not expected to win. Such MPs include John McDonnell, who supports Sinn Fein over the SDLP and lists his hobbies to include "...fermenting the overthrow of capitalism". Some of the reporting of this problem has been exaggerated: politicians are always more extreme in their views within the party and within their peer-group, but the effect of arriving at Parliament generally moderates their views. However, they could well spell trouble in the future for Blair's government.

As most people know, John Major announced his resignation as Party Leader on his final departure from 10

Downing Street. He will continue as Leader of the Opposition until a new leader can be elected. This will take some time, however, since first he must set up an Opposition front bench of 70 shadow ministers. From the remaining 90 or so backbenchers, a new '1922' committee must be elected (the majority of the last one, including the chairman, Sir Marcus Fox, lost their seats). When that is done, the committee will then organise the leadership contest. All this will happen in a matter of months, so they can unite and form a proper Opposition.

The choice of leader will be the aspect that may tear them apart. Many right-wing grandees lost seats, leaving old left-wingers in the majority at the top, but the new Conservative MPs (not that there are many of them) have a majority of right-wingers. So far Ken Clarke has announced his candidature, with Peter Lilley, Michael Howard, William Hague and Stephen Dorrell

waiting in the wings. Michael Heseltine ruled himself out due to ill health. To many people this motley collection may sound like a freak show, and many Tories are quietly shaking their heads with sorrow at the quality of the candidates. Ken Clarke's pro-European views leave a bad taste in the mouth for too many Tories too stand a chance, and Michael Howard, although a strong performer in debates, is generally despised by the public at large. They may choose William Hague, who at 36, is young enough to skip a generation and provide an experienced but not too elderly opponent in a future General Election.

Whatever happens, they will all have to wonder just why they lost so appallingly, what the new Government is likely to achieve, and try to choose a sensible path. It is possible that they may need to reinvent themselves like Blair reinvented the Labour party. Most of the public would welcome the change.

You'll have to forgive me if I seem a little hesitant this week. It's this Opposition lark, you see, all new to me. I have never before experienced a Conservative election defeat, and my political memory stretches back no further than the glorious day in 1979 when Lady Thatcher stormed to power. The General Election was not a defeat, not even a landslide. I'm afraid it was a political earthquake that broke the Richter Scale. As I sat there in the wee small hours, I was utterly gobsmacked. The scale of the pounding was beyond anyone's expectation. Seats that have been blue since Noah was doing the rounds fell to Labour or the Lib Dems. Disbelief doesn't even begin to describe it. Still, it was nice to be consoled by all my political soul-mates here on Friday. Not.

The reasons for our defeat, if young Mr Weir will permit me to elaborate, are numerous, and I think that, although in the final analysis victory looked less than certain, we could have minimised the damage. The one reason that would have been difficult to change was the wish for a change and the general 'fed up with the Tories' attitude.

The desire for change led to some of the most successful and widespread tactical voting ever seen in this country. As those of you who watched the BBC's exceptionally good coverage will remember, the swing to Lib Dem in Labour targets

was small and vice versa for Lib Dem battlegrounds, maximising the scale of the defeat. Given that any government is bound to make the odd mistake, it is therefore obvious that the longer you are in government, the more errors you rack up and the easier it is for your opponents to capitalise on it and the need for change.

Though the Conservatives had some very good manifesto ideas - reform of the state pension (almost certainly to be implemented by Harriet Harman and Frank Field) and transfer of allowances from unworshipping spouses to name but two - this alone could not be enough. Party unity, or the lack of, was a major factor in the defeat. The old maxim that divided parties don't get elected was vindicated. Given the shift in the party, we should have presented a

Euro-sceptic front, but a coherent one. Euro-scepticism, to my mind, does not mean pull out of the EU, but rather strengthen and reform the core institutions of the Union, not least the Single market, rather than march

headlong into monetary union, the enabling step for political union, but that's another article. As it was, there was so much squabbling that little time was left campaigning. Which brings me to sleaze.

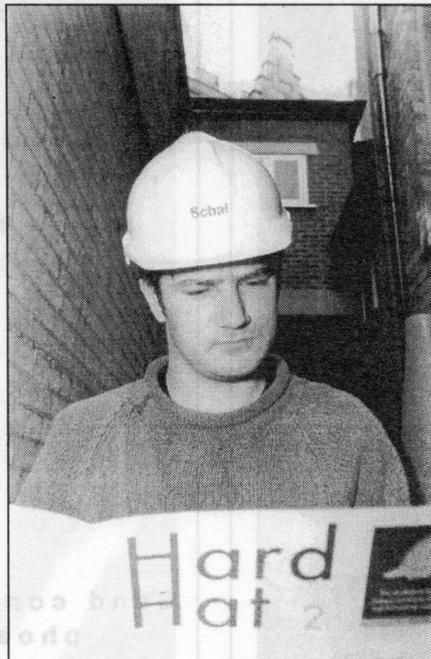
The exasperation that I have felt about this can be second only to John Major. I have argued in private on numerous occasions that, in the absence of mechanism for Central Office to remove a local candidate, Neil Hamilton should be shot. His presence did so much to distract the media and public, totally negating the extra length of the campaign. The

British Parliament is by far the cleanest, most honourable legislative body in the world, and to let it be tarnished by the likes of him, bereft of any sense of honour and decency, is saddening to say the least. As most MPs will agree, I'm sure, people like him are present in near negligible numbers in the House, but succeed in tarring all with the same brush. People like Mr Hamilton should realise that the job of an MP is not to serve himself or even his party, but to serve his constituents and his country.

Still, cometh the hour, cometh the man. The Conservatives will regroup under a new leader (my money's on Hague or Redwood) and will be back. After the 1945 landslide, Labour managed only one term. I'll give them a few weeks to settle in before passing judgement. It would be churlish of me to hope they screw the country up merely to prove me right, but let's wait and see. Lest you think I forgot, space has denied me the chance to reply to Ashton McGregor's article. Full marks for putting the other side, but let me say two things. Firstly, you are wrong on several points, and I shall respond in due course. Secondly, I shall not be bolstering my argument with cheap personal insults, as you predicted.

And finally, the cost of standing down Schal is £200,000 not £3,200,000, a figure arrived at when email savaged my pounds signs. Honest, Mr Caldwell.

Simon Baker

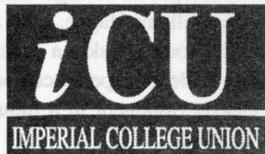


Voice of Reason

remove a local candidate, Neil Hamilton should be shot. His presence did so much to distract the media and public, totally negating the extra length of the campaign. The

SABBATICAL ELECTIONS '97. PRESIDENTIAL HUSTING'S

6PM, TUESDAY 13TH, dB'S
6PM, WEDNESDAY 14TH, ST MARY'S



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY 9TH MAY, dB'S

The following Officer posts for 1997-98 will be elected at the meeting:

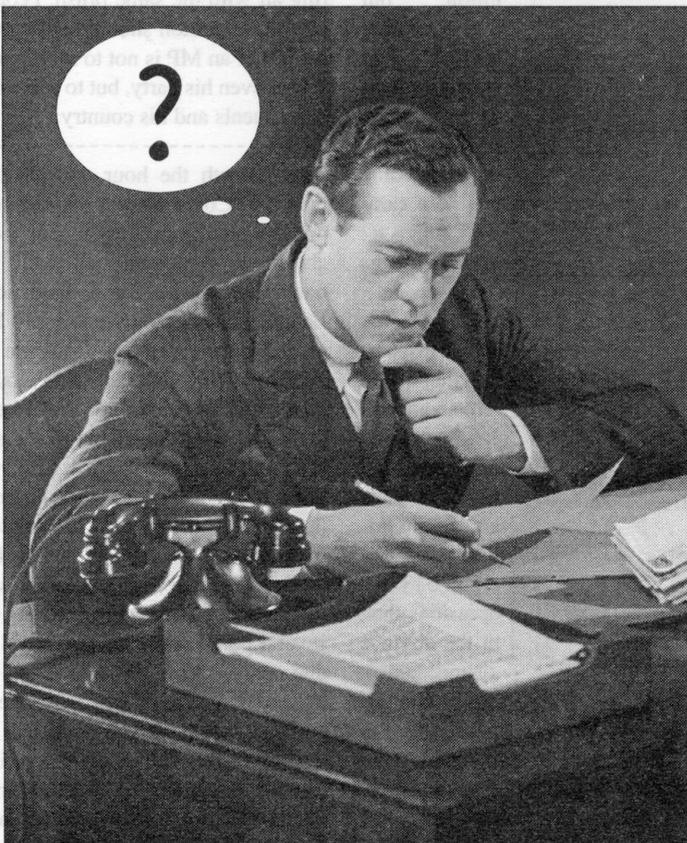
- Council Chair
- Rag Chair
- Postgraduate Group Chair
- Welfare Officer
- Women's Officer
- Equal Opportunities Officer
- Transport Officer

Any full member of Imperial College Union is eligible to stand and to vote. Nominations stay open until 12:00 on Friday. For more details contact Eric Allsop.

PLUS

Presentation of the ICU Annual Report.
Ratification of first round of Sabbatical Elections.
Fun for all the family, with Uncle Eric.

Indecision



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phoenix

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imperial college*

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poetry, short stories
or any other pieces
of creative writing

This year's theme is
Indecision

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.

LETTERS TO FELIX

Big Top is here to stay

Dear Felix,

I have just read the feature and letters in last weeks issue (1085) regarding the tent and I would like to say that after having sat three exams already with three still to go that I actually like the tent!

I have found it the most pleasant and relaxing exam room I have ever sat in, it is certainly better than the tense atmosphere of the great hall last year, I know this sounds a bit strange but so far all the press about the tent has been quite negative. My only gripes are that the floor wobbles about too much and there are no toilets otherwise I think that the college authorities have for the first time since I have been here made a sensible decision (although it has occurred due to a monumental cock-up on the part of Schal again).

Yours sincerely

Damian Fell

P.S. This is NOT a piss take.

Dear Felix,

In response to many letters of complaint that you have received recently, I feel urged to let my feelings known. I refer mainly to the tent scenario in Prince's Gardens.

I am lucky enough not to be affected by this piss-take, but it still annoys me that my fellow students have to suffer at the hands of this Caldwell character. All he seems to do in his job is mess things up and then make lame excuses. Why is someone, who is obviously so unsuited to a job that involves the use of the brain, allowed to make decisions that affect so many people? Who is this fool? Why is he still in his job? Why is he being let off scot-free after annoying so many? Why has he not at the least, been bombarded with eggs, or such like? At less subdued Universities he would have many such unpleasanties bestowed upon him. Why do we stand for this?

This is not a call to arms, but a stab at the apathy of IC students. Come on we cannot all be that busy. Look at the recent events in Trafalgar Square for example. The Reclaim the Streets people made their point perfectly as "the youths danced on the steps of the National Gallery." (OK, so a few anarchists and very heavy handed police spoilt the scene on the other side of the square. Trust the Police to bring horses and riot gear to

a party!) This is what can be done with a bit of bravado.

There have also been letters mentioning the prospective move to PG studies only at IC. These rumours have been flying around since I got to this College, but they will do it if we just sit back and let them. A bit of grief every now and then would make them think twice about shitting on us as often as they do.

Whatever happened to: "Don't let the buggers get you down!"

Neil Forsyth (EE4)

Democracy?

Dear Alex,

I would like to express my disappointment at the lack of publicity concerning the posting of papers for the forthcoming ICU Presidential Elections. Most students at Imperial, even those interested in the Union, have no idea that the re-run ballot is due to take place in just over a week.

Following the debacle of the March elections, I had hoped that the posting of nomination papers would have been widely promoted with a view to encouraging as diverse a group of students to stand as possible. As far as I can work out one small notice was placed in *Felix*, no posters on the walkway, no letters to *Felix* inviting candidates to stand, no banners across the front of the Union Building etc.

While the dearth of information following the posting of nomination papers may be contrary to the spirit of the Union's Constitution, section 2.1.1 of Appendix D (Election Procedures) explicitly states that "The opening of nominations shall be publicised at least five College days in advance." I believe that this did not happen and that consequently the election scheduled for 19th and 20th May is unconstitutional and should be postponed with nominations being re-opened, this time in accordance with both the spirit and the letter of the law.

There is still plenty of time for nomination papers to be posted again, allowing all IC students their democratic right to stand for election. The Annual General Meeting of the Union this Friday would seem an ideal opportunity for such an announcement.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Weir

Letters may edited for content or length. The deadline for letters to be published in the next issue of Felix is Tuesday 13th May. Letters may be e-mailed to our address: felix@ic.ac.uk



Editor Alex Feakes / Advertising Manager Mark Baker

Opinion over the virtue of IC's latest foray into the temporary-rigid-sided-marquee construction industry is divided!

On one hand we have the likes of Damian Fell (*left*) applauding this *al fresco* examination event, even going to such lengths as to assure us that his adulation is not the object of a deranged mind or a bar-room jape. On the other, we have the rest of the students arraigned against the Big Top at the centre of Imperial's Prince's Gardens folly convinced that the most important tests of their lives are of secondary importance to the individual considerations of the members of the Administrative Bloc.

While it would be foolish to suggest that this is another in a long line of measures designed to gradually phase out undergraduate teaching as Neil Forsyth has done in his letter (*left*), I think that Imperial College's priorities have become muddled, and not for the first time. The bizarre and opaque workings of the Sherfield administration over this matter became a little clearer last week when the Undergraduate Studies Committee more-or-less laid the blame for this fiasco at the door of the Estates Division.

As the Committee found out, Estates have known about the noise problem in the Great Hall for some time but faced with the enormous task of deciding whether or not to have a break in the Library works schedule (their own responsibility) or brusquely expecting that the exams would be moved (not Estate's responsibility but that of another division, the Registry), they prevaricated and vacillated before plumping for the latter, the financially cheaper option.

An earlier and much cheaper resolution could have been found. For example, Schal have demonstrated that rescheduling of work to meet deadlines is not impossible with their recent electrical work on the

BMS site. Instead we have a sort of cowardice akin to that of a child whom has scratched an expensive table but, instead of owning up, covers the mark and blames the dog when found out later. Is this really the way that a university and an emblem of international excellence that expects respect should be run?

It is easy to mark out the Estates Division for criticism, but the real problem that should be addressed is more fundamental.

The recurrent theme among this and other recent upsets and 'mis-understandings' is a distinct lack of communication between the various departments, divisions and cliques that comprise the administration side of things at this College, and the consumers of these services, namely the students and staff.

This is not a blanket criticism; mostly things work smoothly and all is well, but sometimes it all falls down, despite the best of recent efforts to publicise decisions. This is perhaps most neatly illustrated by what happened to an inquisitive columnist from *The Independent* who sought some information about the exam-noise-tent business. He phoned the Press Office hoping to be enlightened but was disappointed with the reply from a rather surprised employee who was able only to "make enquiries and call him back."

Let's have some transparency in the government of Imperial College. Let us, the consumers, see *who* makes which decisions, *what* they are and *why* and *when* they are made. For this current situation though, a workable solution to the exam-noise-tent dilemma acceptable to all involved would (and should) have been found in time. The last minute fudge we have will have to do for now, but has done nothing to lift the gloom that the students (and a lot of staff I'll warrant) feel about being secondary or perhaps tertiary considerations in their own College.

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NEWS: MARIA; WEB EDITOR: LEON; MUSIC: JASON; FILM: CHRIS; THE GOLEM: JESSICA; PHOTOGRAPHY: JIT & DAVE; GRAPHICS AND LAYOUT: DAVID; COLLATING LAST ISSUE: THE ELECTION NIGHT DRINKING GAMERS.

FELIX SPORT

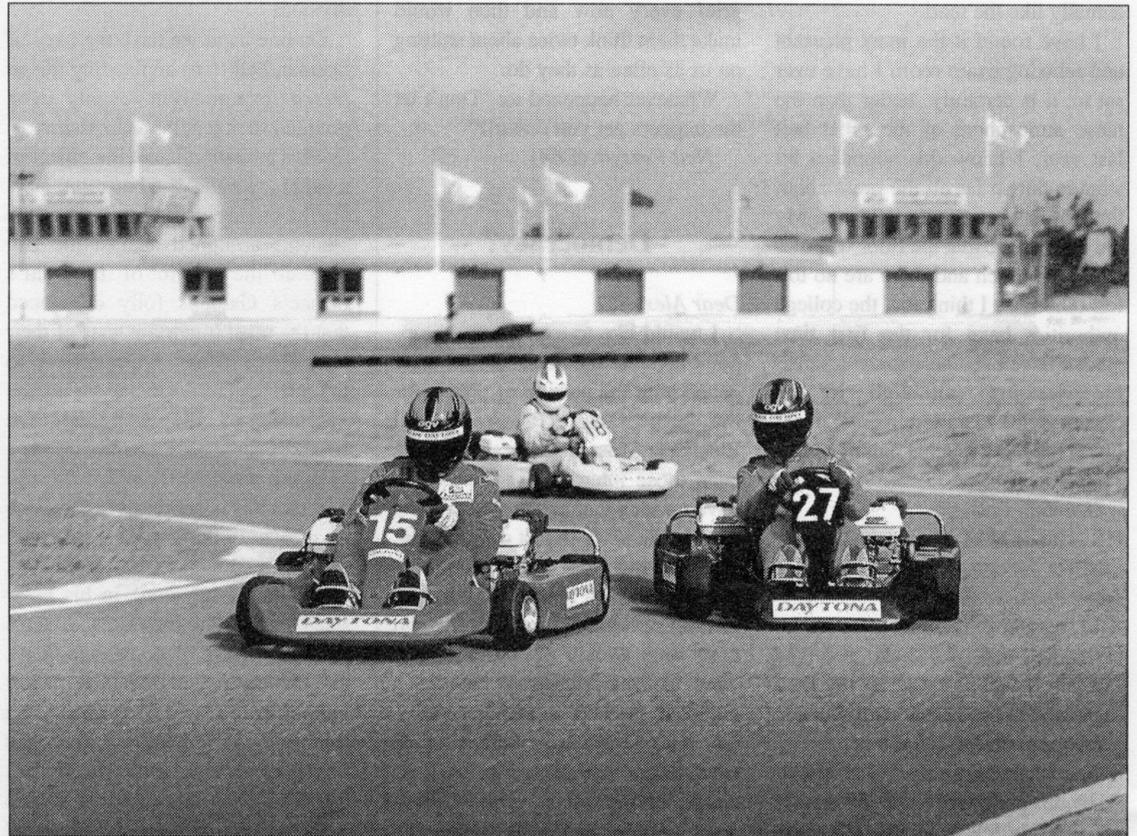
Silver for Imperial driving force

This was the first event of its kind, and Imperial's teams - Simon, Lawrence, Chris and Phil for the Firsts, and Tim, Simon, Niall and Phil for the Seconds - put in a fine performance, taking 2nd and 4th places overall. Only a mistake by Simon Cope in the opening laps of Race 3 prevented us from taking overall victory, which went to Warwick's 2nd team with a margin of only one point.

A good practice session saw Imperial starting Race 1 in 2nd and 3rd position on the rolling grid. However, we were outclassed by Nottingham, who had the big advantage of circuit knowledge. Imperial #2 finished well after fighting back from a 30 sec penalty incurred by Tim Atkinson for ignoring pit-lane signals.

Race 2 started wet after a brief rain-shower which caused much amusement in the opening laps. Nottingham, in pole position after their first race victory, dropped out of contention after a loose engine caused them to lose one of their drive chains. Imperial #2 had a poor finish; one team member blaming it on a 'shite kart'. Meanwhile, Team #1 drove a storming race with Phil Wise, who never put a wheel wrong all day, taking the chequered flag by over a minute for maximum points.

Hopes were high for the final race,



with Simon Cope of Team #1 on pole position. After building up a comfortable lead, he was penalised by the marshals for putting four wheels on the grass (bollocks, it was only two!). Team #2 found a return to form, with Niall Darwin doing an outstanding stint to take them into second place. They held this position until the final

lap when Simon Cross spun, handing 2nd place, and their final winning point to Warwick #2.

Many thanks to all those who attended, especially the sole female competitor from Warwick who had chosen not to wear a bra for the event. Nice short crop top, and good work, bird!!

Final result:

First - Warwick #2
Second - Imperial #1
Third - Nottingham #2
Fourth - Imperial #2

SPORTS SHORTS

The Imperial College Mens' Football Firsts came third in the ULU Intercollegiate League. The Women's Football Team, and Men's and Women's Hockey Teams all came in at fifth in their respective leagues. Unfortunately the IC Netball team came last in the league, but their St Mary's counterparts (who participate in the same league) came fifth.

REMINDER

Could all Clubs and Societies entries for the 1997 entry Handbook hand in their entries to Sarah Corneille by the end of May on disc or paper, with accompanying photos - and please remember to put the sport or society name on the entry.

Near miss for ace oarswoman

A twenty four year old student from the Imperial College Union Boat Club was injured in an incident which could have cost a lot more than the capsizing of a boat. Karen Jourdan was training in the Thames with a fellow rower, Anna MacDonald (a medical student from St Mary's) when their boat crashed into a crew of four from Tideway Scullers School.

The crash occurred near Chiswick Bridge where Imperial College Union Boat Club usually train. Karen was rushed to Charing Cross Hospital as she had a four inch gash and a cut nerve to her calf.

Karen Jourdan is a future prospect for Britain in many up and coming

major international events - Bill Manson the Imperial College Union Boat Club's manager said that Karen has potential in internationals in a light-weight class and is hoping that she will be ready for the Henley Regatta which is held in June.

The Tideway Scullers School boat had ridden up onto the Imperial College boat as both were travelling very fast in opposite directions. According to Karen, their boat went straight into her leg. This caused their boat to capsize. Their brave coach attempted to rescue them from his launch but as the girls panicked [!] they caused his boat to capsize as well as their own.

All were eventually rescued hero-

ically by crews from Quintin Boat Club and Auriol Kensington Rowing Club who pulled them out of the water [*Nice one lads - Sports Eds*].

Due to the severity of Karen's injury, surgeons performed an emergency operation and her boyfriend missed his sister's wedding in Kingston to make sure that she was alright and to comfort her after the operation [*Ain't that very sweet - Sports Eds*].

Karen, who is working toward her PhD, has been put on antibiotics and is expected to not be able to put any weight on her leg for the next few weeks

[*We hope that you're fighting fit soon - Sports Eds*].