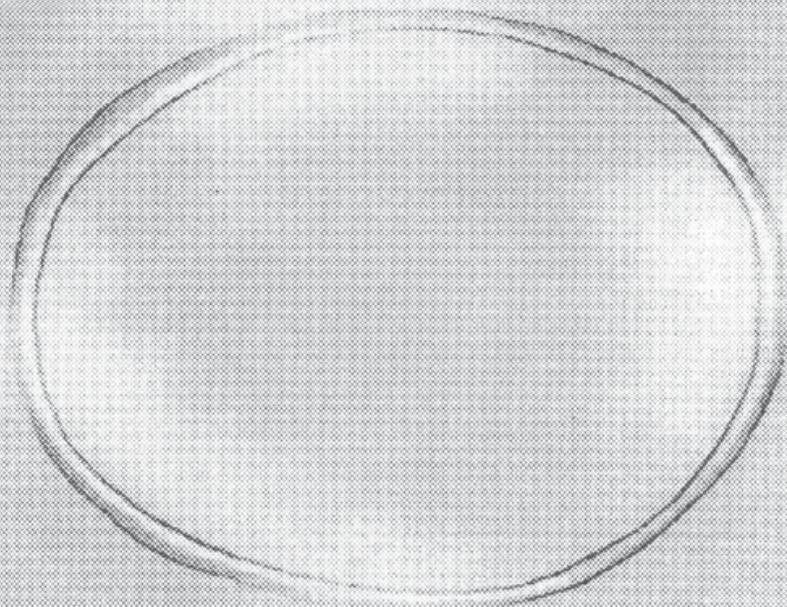


The GAFF

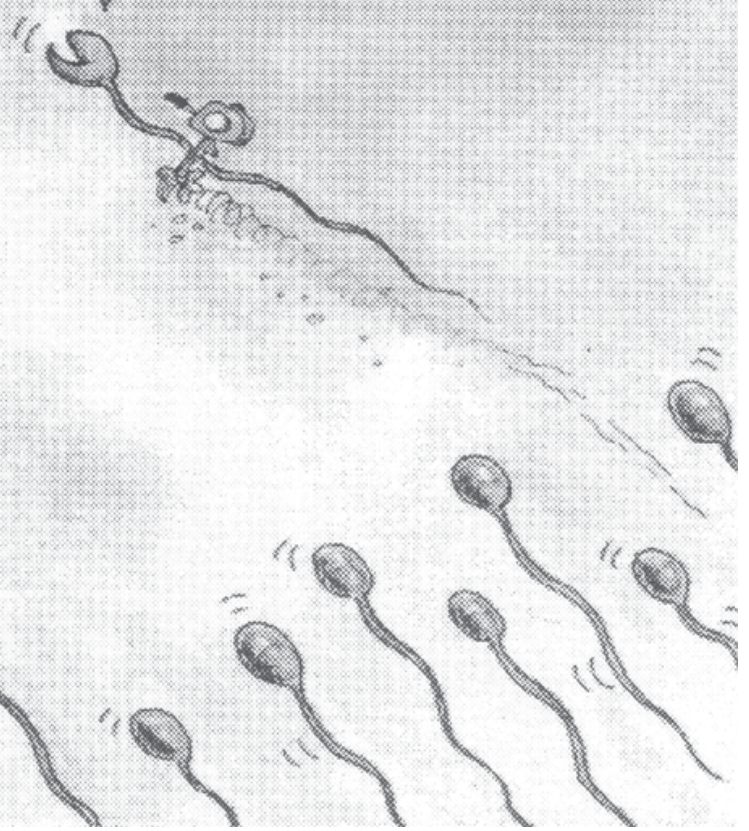
— St. Clare's  Oxford —

Issue N° 2
May 1993
£ 1.60

The three
big SSS's
SPORT
SEX
POLITICS
(häh??)



See ya around,
guys!... Ha ha ha
ha ha ha!...



Voted
Magazine
of the Year

Editorial

The more eagle-eyed - and empty-pocketed - among you will already have noticed that the price of *The G Aff* has gone up this issue by 20 pence. This is due to inflation, increased paper charges, less trees, the cold front over Greenland, blah blah, etc. Furthermore, there is a recession on out there, right? Why, you only have to open the front door and the chill wind of Thatcherite Britain (Some mistake surely? - John M.) comes whipping around your so-called oxters and it won't be long before... (Get on with it, sunshine - A Publisher). We like to think, however, that £1.60 still qualifies for the value for money championship and we will, of course, endeavour over the next year to improve our service even further. This is Chris Kirsch, editor of the fastest-growing magazine in the UK, handing back to Desmond in the studio (This time you really are fired! - A Publisher).

Well, what can I say? The second issue of *The G Aff* lies in front of you. I want to say a big, big thank you to all those who made it again possible for us to prepare and publish this great magazine, i.e. go and buy (or die). Don't read your friends' *Gaffs*, get your own, personally licensed copy (quite a lot of people will know what I am talking about).

Another important thing I would like to tell all those of you, who are going to buy *The G Aff* again next year (isn't that all of you out there?...Snip! - Ed.). As we had some minor problems with this issue, the next one will be prepared especially for those of you, who want sizzling action and lots of comedy every term of the year. I.e. the next issue will only be about twenty (20) pages long, which will enable us to bring you all the latest news, jokes, jokes and not to forget all the jokes, j...(Arrrrr another dead writer - Ed.).



Can't you find anything better for your stupid magazine?

This panel is brought to you in association with National PowerGen

(Say what?)

It Washes Whiter!
There's No Rocks In It!
Get The Max!
It Was So Good.
I bought the Company!
Sshh, You Know Who!
I Bet He Drinks Carling Black Label!
Lasts Twice As Long As Ordinary Batteries
They're Tasty, Tasty, Very Very Tas...
(That's enough adverts! -Ed.)

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Sorry, no gags either

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Franc Ramon

The Good Time Boys

Felix Vossen

Gilda Marinoni

Nick Doherty

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(Is this supposed to be funny? -Taimor)

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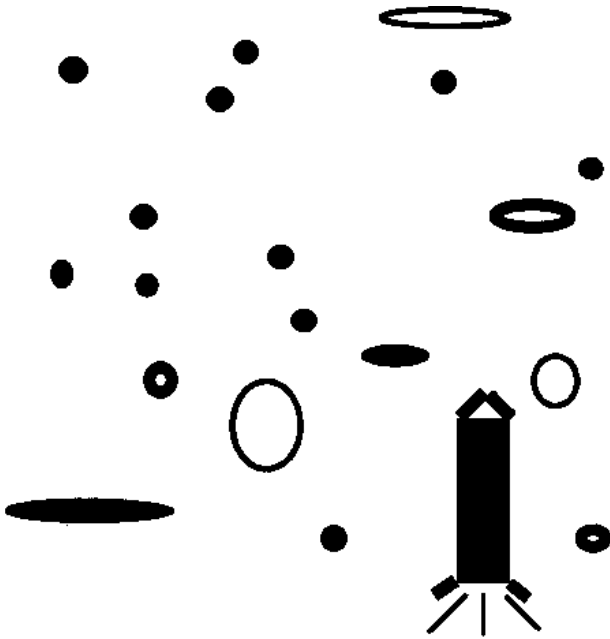
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Space for your own notes



Bullshit Box™

This lovingly prepared issue of *The Gaff* is yours to keep from May 25. The next issue will, Saturn being in Leo with P(r)isces rising, be in your face November 15.

Setting and page makeup via that double-act they're calling Microsoft Word and PageMaker. Printing and fiddling with lots of bafflingly hi-tech hardware by those stingy guys at Parchment Ltd., Oxford.

No part of this magazine may be reproduced, ignored, stored in a retrieval system, placed in a dentists waiting room or transmitted by any means electronic, agricultural, mechanical, recording, or otherwise without the prior permission of the publishers - i.e. hands off.

Fair play to 'em, yeah? They must get *thousands* of articles in every single day, so how're they gonna read 'em all? Most of them are rubbish, anyway, apparently. I mean, we're all busy, yeah, we all cut corners, right? (*Wrong, You're fired - Ed.*)

PSYCHOBABBLE AHOY!

The Gaff dankt sehr herzlich:

- Oliver North for coming clean.
- Miles Davis - who died.
- Terminator 2 for *Hasta la vista Baby!*
- British Rail for imaginative excuses.
- Barbara Gordon for cracking up!
- Umberto Eco

... und überhaupt: Wie du mir, Sodomie!

■ COVER PAGE

For this issue we have decided to take a cover that is dedicated to all those of you who can't stop (censored - Ed.).

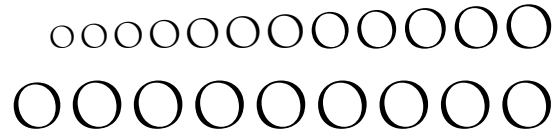
■ POEMS WITHOUT CONTRACEPTION

KARL AND HENDRIK supply us in this issue with a body of poems which they have recently written. Interested?...turn straight to *page 32*.

■ ITALIAN BY DESIGN

Ex-GAFFer Felix Vossen shows you in his article about Mozzarella all the little tips and tricks you should know to create all those lovely little dishes. For his recipe turn to *page 10*.

■ WITHOUT ANY COMMENTS



SEE PAGE 12.

■ THE END

PAGE 42

Madam X

As many of us know, a certain person (-X -) has just moved house to the most notorious county in England, so renowned for its women that a series of witticisms have been coined to honor their integrity. So, now that - X - has moved to Essex is she going to stay one of us or become one of them?

For example:

- 1) Will we find tippex on her computer screen in the future?
- 2) Will she figure out how to put the light on without having to open the car door?
- 3) Will she take a sudden liking to Cadbury's cream eggs?
- 4) How will she keep her ankles warm ?
- 5) Is the local Policeman going to have trouble with someone stealing his shiny helmet?

- 6) What will she wear behind her ears?
- 7) Is her pill packet going to tell her what day of the week it is?
- 8) What will she use for protection? (A bus shelter possibly!!)
- 9) Does she intend to be fat, smelly and hairy, worse than a walrus?
- 10) Or will she wake up to find a whole rugby team surrounding her?

Just kidding !!

As we all know these minor pleasantries have no bearing on reality, do they!

The silent member - X - should know that she will always take us to higher ground, our sexy Mexican maid in this pretty ditty, she will continue to knock us down with her stone cold fire so that we can taste the pain along with anybody as weird as us. She must know that she will kick a major hole in our Magic sky when she leaves our punk rock classic on the subway to Venus.

The Good Time Boys



QUESTIONNAIRE

with Robert Osborn

Dies ist ein Blindtext. Dies ist ein Blindtext. Dies ist ein Blindtext. Dies ist kein Blindtext mehr! (Und du bist gefeuert, Blindschleiche - Ed.)

Where and when were you born?

I was born on a Tuesday, 3 years, or - more precisely - 1025 days after Bob Dylan and about 9500 km away from him.

Please tell us a short account of your life.

I was (os)born in 1944 and reborn in 1968 when I moved to New York and saw Bob Dylan.

Where would you like to live?

Where Bob Dylan lives.

What's your idea of the worst possible luck?

Not being Bob Dylan.

Your idea of the ultimate earthly paradise?

Being Bob Dylan.

What book are you reading now?

The lyrics of the song Desire.

Who is your favourite author / lyricist?

Bob Dylan.

Your favourite musig group?

Bob Dylan.

What's your favourite cartoon character?

Snoopy with a guitar.

Describe the average student at this school.

Does not know Bob Dylan.

What do you most enjoy doing?

Listening to Bob Dylan

Who or what would you like to be?

Bob Dylan

The biggest mistake of your life?

Not being Bob Dylan.

Your sex symbol?

Bob Dylan.

Have you got any heroes?

Bob Dylan.

What have you got in your pockets at the moment?

My keys, a handkerchief with the initials B.D. and a Bob Dylan tape.

The most important invention of all time?

Bob Dylan's guitar.

Which talents or gifts would you most like to have?

I would like to be able to play and sing like Bob Dylan.

How would you like to die?

With Bob Dylan.

Your present state of mind?

Tangled Up In Blues.

Your motto?

It's better to have Bob Dylan in your house than the Beatles on your roof.

Who or what would you take to a desert island?

My stereo, my Bob Dylan tapes and a guitar.

What made you become a teacher?

Having a lot of time to listen to Bob Dylan.

How do you see your job here?

Dimly.

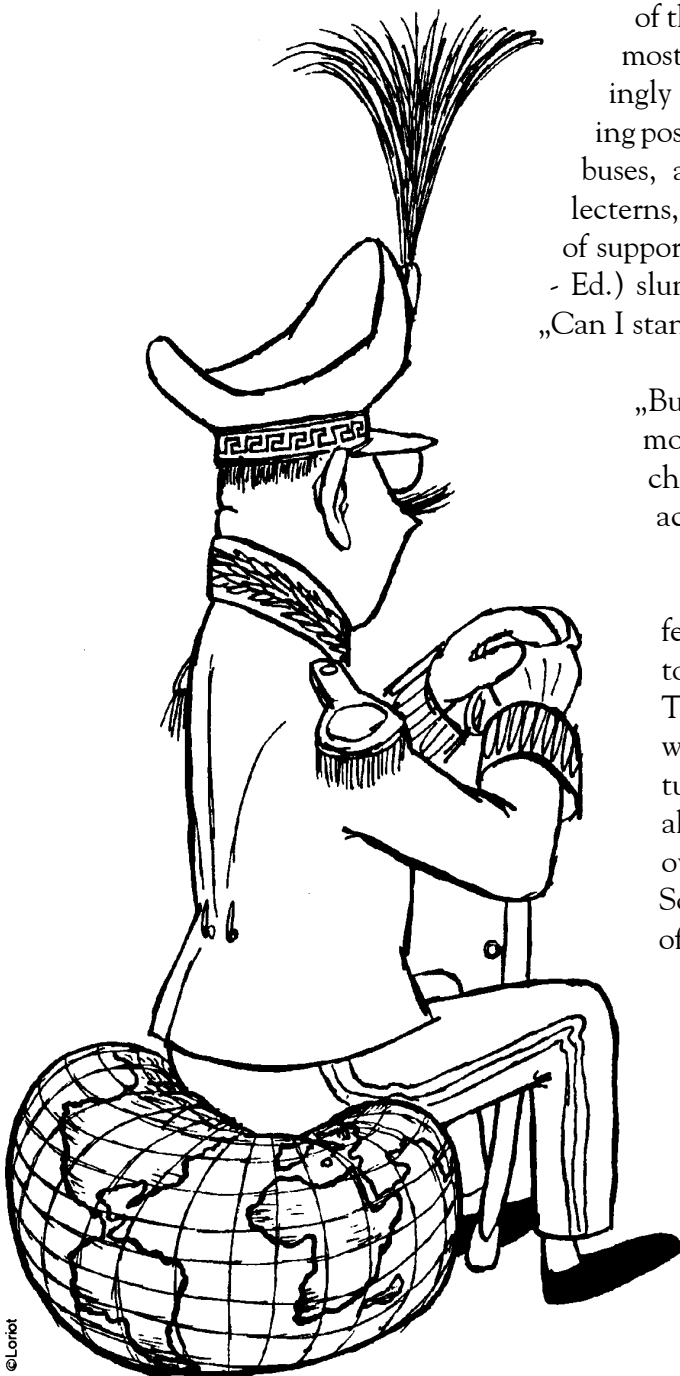
...Of Politics & Boredom.

I am writing this at the beginning of the British General Election campaign. By the time this is published the election will be over, the result known, debated, analysed ... and politics will once more sink into the background of most people's lives. At this moment, however, there is a curious contrast between the frantic activity of the political parties, and the apparent boredom of most of the population. Television news is increasingly given over to endless shots of politicians unveiling posters, climbing in and out of aircraft and campaign buses, abusing their enemies, standing behind glossy lecterns, reading glossy speeches to well-disciplined crowds of supporters... and the Average British Voter (the ABV - Ed.) slumps a little lower into the armchair and thinks „Can I stand three more weeks of this?“

„But...“ cries the politician, „...this is your big moment! This is when the people make their choice! This is Democracy in action - the great achievement of civilised society! Wake up!“

„(snore)“ replies the ABV, Why this indifference? Political decisions do make a difference to people's lives. People pay more or less tax. There are more or fewer hospitals, better or worse schools. People find jobs and new opportunities, or face bankruptcy. The ABV knows all this: turnout in British elections is high, well over 70%, so the ABV does care enough to vote. So why are people so cynical about the process of debate?

One reason particular to this election is that there has been a kind of election campaign running since last autumn. Politicians seem to believe that they must be visibly active for months before the actual election. There is a belief that voters make up their mind



©Lentot

over a long period of time: they don't look at a manifesto and suddenly work out whether they support that party through a logical process, like resolving a problem in mathematics. Rather they drift, from vaguely supporting one party towards feeling that another party „feels better“. So politicians have to keep on nudging them, creating a current of change. The danger is that politics then becomes as irritating as a dripping tap.

Another reason for the ABV's weariness is the sheer volume of political information. Now this should, in theory, mean more interest, and better-informed argument, but the ABV feels buried under an avalanche of detail. In the first week of the campaign there were two budgets, the government's (real) budget, and the Labour party's (proposed) budget - masses of statistics, percentages, people better off, or worse off. Instead of diving into enthusiastic macro-economic debate, the ABV pops out to rent a video.

So, the more urgently the politicians shout, the more

stubbornly the ABV turns off. What is democracy really worth? Is the whole political circus a wasteful farce, to give people the comforting illusion? that they control their own lives?

„But...“ cries the politician, „...this is your big moment!“

Well... in my view, election politics is a form of theatre, and like theatre it operates through images and symbols. People are not moved by numbers - maybe they should be, but they aren't.

„The danger is that politics becomes as irritating as a dripping tap.“

So, politicians seek Babies to kiss, to show their human and caring qualities. In 1983, Mrs. Thatcher visited a hovercraft factory on the last day of the campaign. Why? The 'logical' meaning was that Mrs. T supported British high-tech industry; the real reason was that the factory had, painted on its doors, the biggest Union Jack in the country. Never mind the logic - see the image!

Television is now the dominant opinion-forming medium. This has increased the importance of images. Television also presents statistics, and studio argument - but, firstly, both the facts and the debates are cramped and often made superficial by the brevity of television programmes, and secondly, far more people watch the 'headline' news programmes than watch programmes of detailed analysis.

However, if television has increased the power of political images, it has also increased the critical abilities of an ever more sophisticated viewing electorate. This is the root cause of the ABV's boredom - we've seen it all before. The party that wins will be the one that most effectively presents images which are new and fresh. And, above all, images that are felt to be true - that convince by crystallising real experience into a physical symbol. That's how great art works - so what's wrong with politics doing the same? ■

Our political Editor **David Ripley** is Head of the English B Department at St. Clare's, Oxford.

Where the Buffalo Roam...

Italian by Design - Mozzarella

An essay about the mysteriously tasty cheese from our half-italian *The Gaff* Ex-Chef Felix Vossen

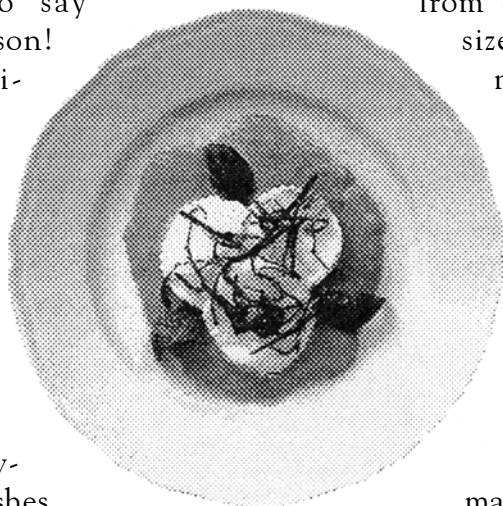
If your idea of mozzarella cheese is confined to pizza topping only, you've been depriving yourself of an entire gastro-nomic experience - to say nothing of a history lesson! Mozzarella cheese originates from the south of Italy, wherever buffalo were to be found.

Lazio, a region south of Rome, was until the end of the first world war an inhospitable, malaria-infested marsh. In the 1920s, the Italian government drained the marshes and gave the land to the soldiers from Venice who had fought so courageously against the Austrians. As a matter of fact, even today in this area, the accents and the names of the inhabitants remain Venetian.

Typical of farmers from the north of Italy, the Venetian settlers brought with them skills in animal husbandry. However, the story of mozzarella has a unique regional twist. Native to the marshes were a breed of water buffalo whose milk was high in protein and fat. Although mozzarella cheese can be (and is) made from cow's milk, the very best mozzarella is made from buffalo milk.

The animals themselves can be raised in much the same way as cattle, but their sheds are kept moist so that they can wallow. The traditionally reared beasts on the farm supplying the cheese-making firm Pasquale Pettinicchio in Latina are called by name one at a time for milking from where they graze in a field, under the shade of the large oak trees. Unlike cattle, they are milked only once a day.

Apart from mozzarella di bufala, the cheese comes in many varieties, from the ubiquitous white pizza topping (made from cow's milk), to the bite-sized rounds ideal for summer pasta salads. Scamorza is smoked mozzarella, and is also worth trying.



Once chiefly a Roman delicacy, mozzarella has become internationally popular over the years, and is readily available even to those (unlucky souls!) who can't make the trip to Italy.

Felix Vossen

Caprese (Capri-Salad)

For 4 servings:

300 g buffalo mozzarella
20 big and small leaves of basil
10 tablespoonfuls of tomato sauce with chives

For the tomato sauce:

250 g ripe tomatoes
250 g unripe, bitter tomatoes
10 g vinegar
5 g freshly chopped chives
1/2 celeriac heart
200 g coldly pressed olive oil
Salt and Pepper

Chop up all ingredients for the sauce with oil in the blender. Add salt and pepper and join in all the oil while constantly whisking, until a creamy sauce is made. Chop the big basil leaves in small pieces. Cut the Mozzarella in slices of half a centimeter thickness. Place 2 1/2 tablespoonfuls of sauce and 3 slices of mozzarella on each plate. Sprinkle the chopped basil over the plate. Place the smaller basil leaves nicely between the mozzarella. Bon appetito!

It's all about the Rae . . .

The poet and *The Guardian* Employee Simon Rae gave tips at St. Clare's

On March 16th, St. Clare's had a visit from the poet Simon Rae, whose work many of the English A students have had a quick look at in class.

Marta Emmitt's *Creative Writing Group* were offered an opportunity to have a session with the poet, so he could show us how he works, and give us a rapid assessment of our work.

Mr. Rae read out a few of his recent poems, and dictated the first stanza of one of them, going through the technical side of the poem: rhyme, rhythm and meter. After the little lesson, which also included an exercise on accentuating syllables and words in a core, we all had to write a continuation of the poem, using the same pattern as he had done.

After each of us reading out our poems, Simon Rae rapidly told us what was wrong with them.

During supper, we had a chance to chat with the poet, and ask him more questions about his work.

At 7.30, about 35 students went to listen to Simon Rae reading his own poetry. A wide range of poems were featured, ranging from parodies of famous songs and poems to

poems of children dying to political rip-ups for the week-end *guardian* newspaper.

Although many people found Simon Rae stand-offish, I personally found him more understated than anything else. Subtler, shy about his own work, Rae writes beautiful poems about ugly subjects and hysterical ones about sad or pathetic subjects - such as British Telecom! Simon Rae writes with great sensitivity at times, and at other times can throw poisoned darts at the men who fight to mess up Britain (and the rest of the world.) Although a poet, like many writers, Simon Rae does not seem to enjoy reading his own work. According to a reliable source (Robert Osbom), he tends to try and separate himself from his own work so as not to get too involved with himself. This results in a coolness that has nothing to do with disdain but more with modesty.



A.C. Payan

„A wide range of poems were featured, ranging from parodies of famous songs and poems to poems of children dying to political rip-ups for the week-end *guardian*.“

Cruel torturing in the classroom - how long will it go on like that?

Hunger strikes . . .

A shocking report about the facts of the third period. Judge yourself. By Gilda Marinoni.

Has it ever happened, that you are sitting in class in that dreadful hour just before lunch. Just say that, by pure coincidence, that morning you woke up those precious five minutes too late, when the great difference between eating just two pieces of toast instead of three is considerable.

You are quietly taking down some notes from, say, a GEOGRAPHY class. You start to feel that little annoying tension building up gradually in your stomach. It's too early to panic, but you start to get a little worried anyway.

The concert in your tummy begins slowly, the melody is just heard by the two people sitting next to you. Those same people you thought were your mates! But your mind starts changing its opinion when they start cracking those little frustrating remarks such as: „Feeling embarrassed, hey?“

They also have that special way of saying it, you know with their voices going up the scale, trying to hold in their erupting laughter. Still, the first barrier has been broken and you think everything is going to be OK.

DON'T BE FOOLED; MOTHER NATURE IS CRUEL. After a dozen normal or, fairly normal, groans, the ones you can control just with the swallowing trick (in case you don't know it: you swallow just before you feel it coming. It relaxes the muscles!), TENSION grows.

At this point you cut the breathing and, you contract your belly but, No!!

OK so the people behind you start giggling, or should we say start rolling on the floor in fits of laughter. It is obvious they have no feelings towards you and, they take the so called „PISS“. Right, at this point David Gomm gets a bit paranoid, thinking the class is laughing at him.

So, now you are pressing your hands as hard as you can on the „subduction zone“, you feel it building up a tan uncontrollable rate of increase, WAIT it's five minutes to lunch. Maybe „Dave the MAN“ (Man?! - Ed.) will let us out early, but No! Once again.

He sees you, blood pumping up to your face and sweat dribbling down your temples. It looks like you're fidgeting with your papers and metal pencil case, trying to make as much casual noise as possible. His mind starts planning a personal vendetta. He looks at the clock, starts interrupting his phrases.

He looks like he is waiting for something to happen.

Silence, JUST WHAT YOU NEED!

The volcano starts preparing itself for the explosive eruption.

By this time you have made yourself as tiny as you possibly can (curling up the edges, the English call it). You try convincing yourself that it's not that bad after all. I mean think of Bangladesh, it might be flooding just now.

And oooooooooooooooooooooo
o o o o o o o o o o o o o o
o o o o o o o o o o
o o o o o o o o
o o o . . . !

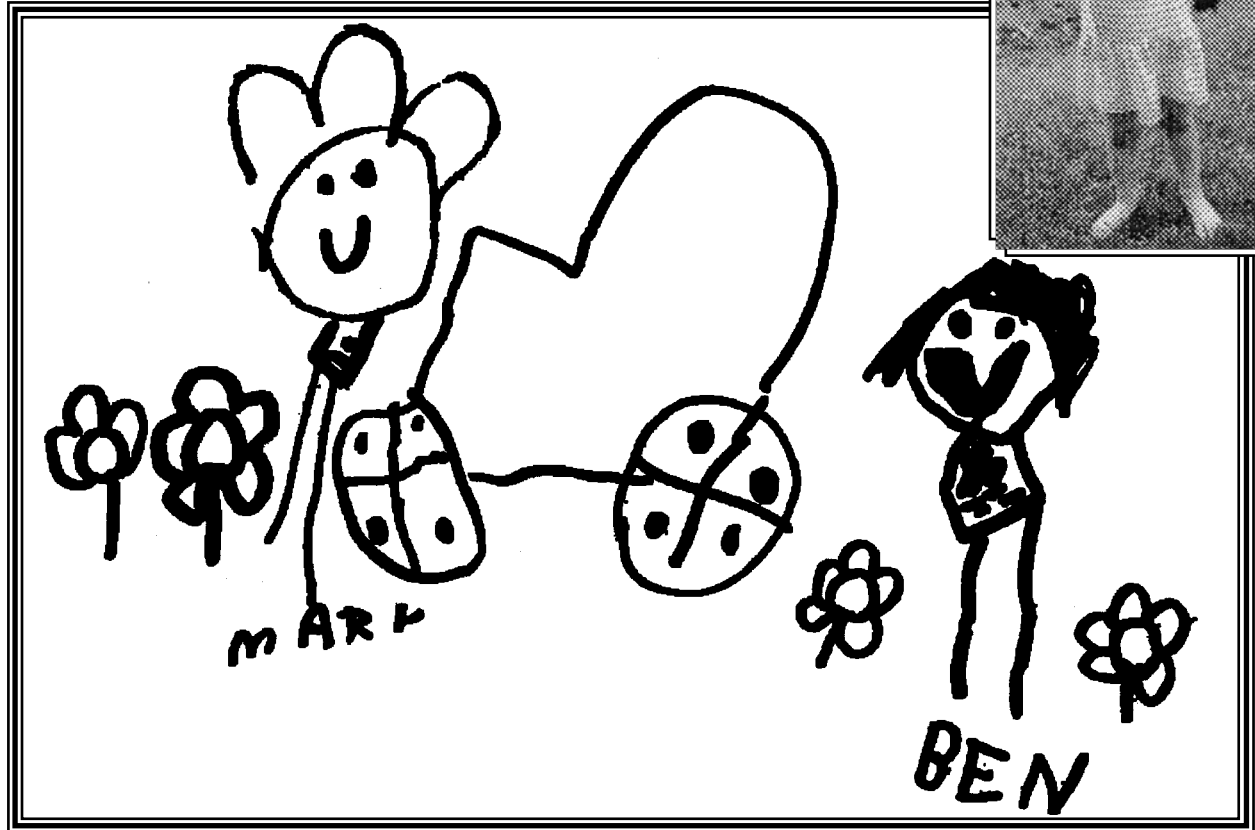
Even St. Clare's food seems like paradise after a class like that!!

Gilda Marinoni

This year the first woman won the Award of Exceptional Art

Our Blooming World

As every year, written by our art correspondent from Sotheby's, Maiken Erstad



This magnificent piece of art was painted by the new age artist MARY OSBORN.

This painting is truly a kiss of divine inspiration. The four flowers in this work of art represent the four corners of the world. The fine petals on three of the flowers obviously stand for the five senses of mankind. The fourth flower with three petals symbolises those who are so unfortunate as to be lacking some of the sensual elements of human nature. The high tech vehicle shows the artist's eternal desire to discover and explore the outer worlds away from earth. The dancing bodies of human beings are dancing a dance of gratitude for life and wellness. The seductive look of loving lips and gloaming eyes of the blonde princess attracts the handsome young man. Their courtship is highlighted by the pure-white background which represents the utter purity, innocence and virginity of our world. An

excellent piece of art that glows with sophistication - truly the best work of art this year.

Maiken Erstad

A note from the publisher:

The first time in the history of art, a woman has won the Award of Exceptional Art. With *Our Blooming World*, the winner MARY OSBORN has made the jump to a rocket world career. After the reception of the acceptable £10,000,000 cheque from the Beneficial Fund for Starving Artists (BFFSA), she wants - together with her older brother BEN OSBORN - to open a huge art studio in New York City, where workshops will be offered.

I, as an artist myself, can personally deeply recommend to... *argh!*... (*Better a dead artist than a bad artist!* - Ed.)

The first striking thing that one notices at his arrival in the Addis Ababa airport in Ethiopia are a couple of airplanes that had previously crashed on the runway and which have been moved out of the way just enough to let the other planes land. Immediately afterwards, while the people are still inside the plane, the captain proudly announces, to the relief of everybody, that there is nothing to worry about and that if something had to happen to our plane it would have happened before.

Yet the surprises are not finished, already when going down the ladder that leads from the plane to the ground, one can immediately notice the soldiers, with their hairs sticking out as if they had just been electrocuted. That urges you to enter a little rusty and old doorway and not to stand outside. This is the best part of the trip, on the other side of a little barricade made of wood one can see the secretaries, the chauffeurs of the important resident people waiting for them with all sorts of papers signed by their embassy, by the ministry of foreign affairs, by the chief of the armed forces. These fortunate people are usually released into the wonderful world which is Addis Ababa in no more than 10 minutes, all the others stay in the airport for yet another hour or so.

Then to the astonished eye of the visitors an immense parking lot extends in front, there are gardens, lamp-posts, streets made of asphalt and lots of cars. This I have always disliked about the Addis Airport because it gives the average visitor a too good first im-

pression of the city. In fact once out of the airport grounds everything changes. Two things, which will accompany anybody everywhere they go in the city, are noticed right away. The first one are the taxis.

The Ethiopian conception of a Taxi is different from the European one, for an Ethiopian a taxi is a car which goes through a well defined path around the city and which you catch as if it was a bus. These cars are usually between twenty and thirty years old and most of the times they barely work.

I have seen a few of them which, due to excessive amount of people per car (usually seven or eight per car), have lost a wheel or a door while travelling from one side to the other of the city.

The second thing that one notices are the holes in the

streets. In Europe we complain if a street has some bumps or if it has some small cracks; in Ethiopia the holes are so big that if you, by mistake, get into one, you never come out without the help of a tow truck. The Addis Ababa drivers, in fact, learn the positions of the holes by heart at the beginning of the dry season. Apart from these few things of minor importance there are lots of other factors to keep in mind when driving through Addis, one of the most important is to watch out for cattle or donkeys crossing the street. Another is to watch out for people, Ethiopians think that they are immortal, they never look on either side before crossing the street, turning right or left with their cars or trucks, overtaking any other vehicle.

Ethiopians think that they are immortal, they never look on either side before crossing the street.

n Ethiopia a

In the end there is one way to make sure that you are going to reach the other side of the city alive, you always have to bear in mind that everything that is moving is potentially dangerous, but everything that is stationary is twice as dangerous because it might start to move very quickly without giving any notice. Another aspect of Ethiopian life which is really important is the weather.

Here in England we complain because it rains a lot; yet in Ethiopia not only does it rain for three to four months in a row during our summer time, but it also rains like in a normal country during the nine to ten months (no, I have not made a mistake in adding up the number of months, its just that in Ethiopia there are actually thirteen months instead of the normal twelve). In fact I suspect that they have introduced their thirteenth month just to create their logo *thirteen months of sunshine*.

Ethiopian food is something which I think everybody in the world must taste, sooner or later. Ethiopians usually eat only one kind of food, unless it is some kind of festival or fasting, it is made of meat, if they have it, and red burning hot chilies which are called *cavia*. The meat and the *carias* are put into a pan and cooked for a couple of hours and then eaten with the hands on top of a sort of wet bread

made with the flour of *teff* somewhat similar to wheat. As I said before Ethiopians eat this at every meal (breakfast, lunch and dinner) and somebody proposes to give to them something else they don't accept it at all.

As far as tourism is concerned the conditions for foreigners are as extraordinary as for those who live there. The only way to get outside Addis Ababa, if you are not a resident with some very powerful friend in the government, is to get your vehicle from the N. T. O. office (National Tour Operator), this is already enough to discourage some of the toughest adventurers. When you enter the N. T. O. office the first thing that you notice is that nobody wants to talk with you, you can wait for as long as you want but none of the staff

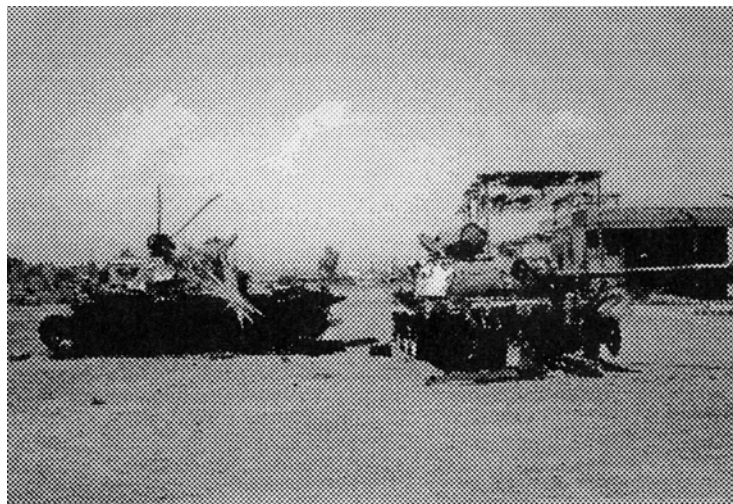


(even if they are sitting right in front of you) will even look at you.

This is when the problems start. If you are a foreigner you certainly don't know how to speak amharic and therefore you are not going to be able to attract the attention of who you think might be your man. Usually (from personal experience) this stall situation lasts for about 10 minutes after which the patience of the potential customer starts to fail him which with an heroic scream or look, manages to make the employee understand that he wants something. Then (again from per-

sonal experience) our man discovers that nobody speaks English and that the only man that does is out for lunch (no matter what time it is, 10 in the morning, 4 in the afternoon. ..) and that he will be there tomorrow.

This situation usually is repeated exactly the same the next morning until the visitor really gets mad and demands (with an assassin's looks) to see the manager. Then with an extraordinary calm somebody appears from an almost hidden door behind a curtain and asks (with an almost perfect English accent) what the customer wants. Up to this point things were still acceptable because after all our man thinks he has now the opportunity to ask for his vehicle, which he pictures as a perfect Land Rover with cooling system and radio as it is shown in the prospectus (dating usually 1960, but this our man doesn't know).



The real shock comes when you discover that in order to actually get the car you have to pay in advance over two-hundred dollars and that you will also have to pay three dollars per kilometer after the first 50 and that, worse of all, you need a permission from your embassy signed by the cabinet of the minister of tourism. If you accomplish all of these tasks then the Land Rover (or at least what is left of it after 20 years of no maintenance) is ready to go. But to go where? Most of the territory is unsafe and the places which are just too difficult to get to without somebody who knows the way.

The journey is almost never done entirely on roads and sometimes you just have to go on with a compass and your will. If this is not a problem then maybe the rain will be

because even if it is the dry season in Addis it might be the rainy one elsewhere which will almost surely block the access to the place where you want to go.

Apart from these inconveniences Ethiopian landscapes are amongst the best I have ever seen, the country is also full with wild animals (and occasionally with blown up tanks...) and I really invite you to go there as soon as possible. With this I am afraid that we have gone through the little panorama of Ethiopian life that I thought might have interested you. I hope you liked it and maybe you have now an incentive to go and visit this

marvelous country to find out with your own eyes how life in Ethiopia really is.

*Raffaele
Pepe*

Rotten tanks (above) and old trees (page 15) show you how different Ethiopia's landscape can be.

l a t e a t n i g h t

It's hard to fall asleep to the sound of cars speeding along Banbury Road, the telephone ringing just outside the door and the one on the phone having to shout „Mama, mama?“ because of the bad connection. And why do I always open the door? — it's hardly ever for me anyway: „Oh,hiCarlos!—Sleeping? Not at all, but please remember to take your key with you next time“

But I shouldn't be sleeping anyway; chemistry, geography, English, Spanish, biology, maths; books jumping around on the desk trying to get my attention. Well, I've got a free period tomorrow.

What's that smell? The socks that I wore when I played basketball last Tuesday and that I couldn't find afterwards. How the hell have they managed to get into the pocket of my party shirt?

I did my own laundry for the first time the other day. I could have sworn that I removed

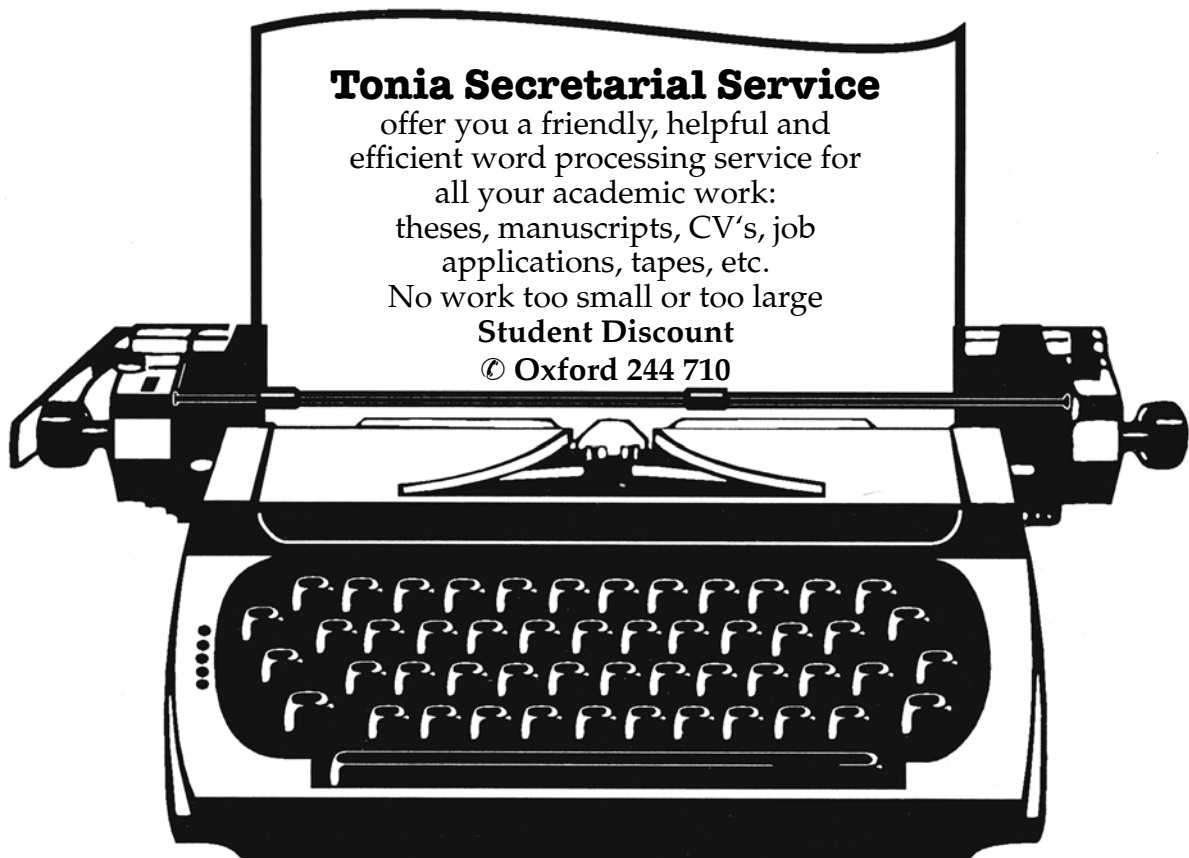
the blue socks from the white shirt, socks and underwear. For sure, I'll double-check next time, and I won't wash at 60°. (If anyone wants to buy bluish ex-white socks, T-shirts and/or underwear, please contact me. Special discount if you buy the whole stock!)

Besides that, I could do with some money: I've tried to set my financial limit to twenty quid a week — unsuccessfully.

But back to the laundry: I've also noticed that the floor gets rather wet when you open the washing machine before it's finished...

Anyway, I like it here. I've also forgotten my keys a couple of times and my parents phoned at 12.00 o'clock on Wednesday night. The fact that I forgot my sister's seventh birthday makes me feel like a jerk, but I guess that's part of leaving home. Hopefully there will be no emergency in the area tonight; the ambulances are so noisy...

Eric Johansson



Creative Writing

The Reception

Dominic Bemrose

I will never forgive God for inventing the
French,
the Colonel said.
Chuckles rose from the audience.



His speech droned on,
his voice the same monotonous tone.
He was pleased with himself.

As he turned the last page,
he concluded by saying things have changed.
But he knew things don't change, only people.

The Clown

Dominic Bemrose

The tear slowly rolls down his cheek.
His paint following its random path.
He pulls out a wallet
and looks at the family photo,
knowing he'll have to make children just like
his laugh.
The photo falls into a puddle,
the faces no longer visible.
He sighs,
Then carefully slits his throat from ear to ear.

14 days

Dominic Bemrose

I woke up to the banging on the door.
Yeah, Yeah, I'm coming, Christ, give me a
break. I open the door, and the memories of
last night hit me like an atom bomb. They
both stood there and one of them said „It's
time to go“.

We went down the stairs still full of hope.
r We hoped for forgiveness. Half an hour later
we came back up in despair. My throat felt
like as if it was shrinking until I could breathe
no more. The only consolation was that I was
luckier than the other two. What a bummer
of a day. But then I thought, Christ, I'm going
to have 14 more days like this.



Haikus

Shreds of wallpaper
And glass from the broken pane
Litter the grey floor.

Susanna Fogelvik

From my small window
I look down on flaking paint
and clinging ivy.

Susanna Fogelvik

Hate overwhelms me;
why does he have to do it,
I turn off the news

Dominic Bemrose

Exams

Christian Kirsch

I stand outside and wait for them to let me
in. The waiting makes me feel sick. Why
don't they let us in, yet? This waiting kills me.
Then, the doors open and we enter. Unfamiliar
faces of familiar people. Everyone just goes on
their own. There is the desk which I've never
seen before - and it's got my name on the
paper on top of it.

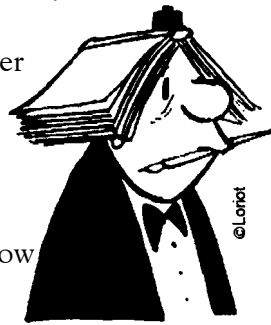
I pull the chair back and put my pencil case
and ruler on the desk. I sit down and try to
make myself comfortable, but it doesn't work,
it never does.

I take out my pen and write my name on the
cover sheet. What's written on the other
side?

The table wobbles and the noise is echoed
back from the freshly painted walls. It's cold
in here. And the chair is too high. And the
table is too high. And my table wobbles - it
wobbles like the future I'm going into. It is not
in the balance, it's uncertain. No one knows
what side it is going to tilt on, left or right,
front or back...

They give the starting sign. I flip over the
first page and the questions suck my brain
into it. Everything goes numb.

When the unknown slips
 into your life
 like a snake full of dangers
 and pleasures,
 then adventure lmocks on your door
 and wants to carry you away
 to strange destinations.
 The unknown takes over
 your mind
 your heart
 your entire life.



But you know and I know
 that somewhere
 someone knows
 the knowing of the unknown.

AComplaynt

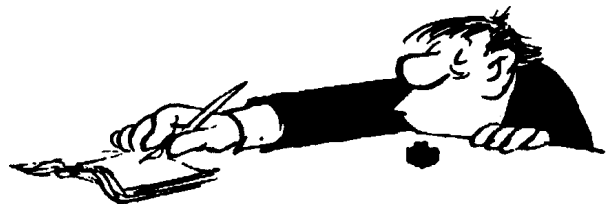
David Ripley

Oceans, by and large, are
 inconvenient and wet,
 cause moaning at the bar
 in Channel ferries - yet,
 (lurching, with a slopping tray,
 stomach in a mazy motion),
 still, in atavistic ways, we
 love the bloody ocean.

Oceans have a habit
 of killing folk at times;
 at best, they mist your glasses,
 freeze your toes, or lime
 your sandwiches with spray -
 and still, with dour devotion,
 in lemming hordes each summer, we
 seek out the bloody ocean.

Oceans are unresponsive,
 even sullen, as a rule,
 conversationally repetitive,
 whimsical or cruel,
 but always there are moments when,
 transfigured by emotion,
 we turn our backs upon the land,
 and need the bloody ocean.

I wake up to a crazy day when all
 The world seem changed and far away from
 me;
 Just like a film around me I can see
 The dew still clinging to the pane, the wall
 Around it cracked and greyish; from the hall
 I hear the distant droning of some bee.
 I get up, dress and make myself some tea
 While looking through the window at the tall
 And blackened chimneys on the roofs, at rust
 On drainpipes, fading colours, dust, and then
 I draw the blinds, because I do not trust
 The light of such a crazy day, and when
 At last the night is closing in on me
 The stars, so far away, is all I see.



Free Love

Trish Kirkby

To kiss joy as it flies is better than to clamp it
 down.
 More satisfying to ave the flight, the freedom,
 The natural beauty of a free-wheeling heart.
 Free to love without predictions; nothing
 planned.
 The spontaneous expression of released
 emotions.
 Unchained by honesty to express more truly
 The natural conclusions of two hearts in
 tune.

The feelings flow through finger tips, through
 Olips;
 Softly, deftly touching to tantalise and
 promise.
 The confidence to know that when the time
 is right
 There will be music which touches depths as
 yet unreached.
 The world will pause and wonder what great
 force of nature
 Caused the eruption which fills the sky with
 stars.

Communication

Humans use a complex system of communication - verbal language. Animals communicate between themselves by body movements, emission of chemicals and sometimes by sound. This is similar language to human language. However only verbal language has certain specific properties:

- the ability to talk about the words which we use,
- the ability to lie and reproduce reported speech, and
- the ability to understand words which are used with a different meaning than normal through their context, for example metaphors.

In the animal world, bees are an interesting example: A bee who discovers a food source will communicate this knowledge to other bees. To relate its information, the bee uses two different dances - its language: A *Circular dance* from left to right and right to left or a *figure of eight* dance accompanied by a vibration of the abdomen. After the dance, other bees are able to fly straight to the food source, obtain food and return to the hive where they can relate the information to other bees.

The circular dance indicates that the food is within 100m radius of the hive. The *figure of eight* expresses that the food source is between 100m and 6 km of the hive (if the distance is great, *the figures of eight* are slower and fewer in number.) The direction of the food source is shown by the angle of the *figure of eight* relative to the sun (this angle being the same as that which the food source has relative position to the sun.)

The transmitted message shows:

- the existence of food
- its distance from the hive, and
- its direction.

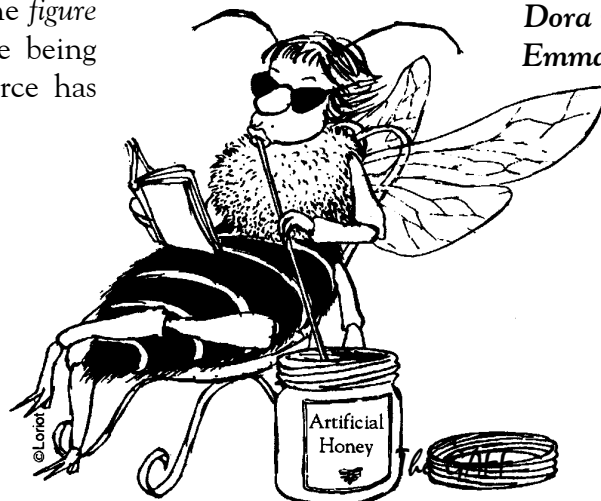
Bees are therefore are capable of producing a message containing a lot of information, understanding it, memorizing it and translating it into the appropriate action. These are essential components of any language.

Their language is very different to human language:

- Their language can be carried out without using sounds only dance. So it can't be communicated at night!
- The only response to the message is the retrieval of the food.
- The message of one bee can't be reproduced by a bee who hasn't seen the food source. Humans are able to transmit and repeat a message for any length of time and over a distance.
- The bee's message is always about food, humans can talk about an infinite number of subjects.
- Lastly it is impossible to divide the bee's message into a number of basic parts, it's a complete message.

Human language consists of elements which can be freely combined with defined rules and even these elements can be subdivided into units of sound (syllables.) Bee language is therefore more a signal code than a real language.

Dora Carpenter
Emma Giddings



How to irritate people...

How to irritate teachers

1. Don't go to class and give a pathetic excuse (i.e. I overslept); when you do go, be late and don't bring any materials (i.e. pens, books, paper).
2. Pack up your books before the teacher is finally ready to finish (esp. David Gomm's class).
3. Ask irrelevant questions (i.e. in maths: what colour was Napoleon's hair??).
4. Ask for the page number that a student/teacher is reading 10 minutes after the reading has begun, (i.e. if possible interrupt in mid-sentence).
5. Always whisper to your neighbour (so that everyone can hear it).

How to irritate your room mate

1. Start a conversation with a friend in a language that your room mate cannot understand.
2. Always repeat what your room mate says.
3. Unnecessary smells in the room...
4. Taking his/her property without asking and breaking it (e.g. Tapes, CDs).
5. Lock out your room mate (i.e. in the morning) whilst he/she is still in the shower.

How to irritate the kitchen staff

1. Eating a hot meal and pathetically claiming to the woman at the salad bar that you didn't have one. (i.e. lying)
2. Going back for a hot meal a ridiculous number of times.
3. Taking more than one carton of milk/fruit.
4. Spilling a tray full of food and not cleaning it up.
5. Leaving your table without removing your tray (important!)

*This really irritating article was written by three even more irritating chaps **Chris, Nick and Sebastian.***

About Germans and Racism

This article is not about the often discussed racism by Germans against other races, but about the hostility of some people against Germans. The former, i. e. the assumption that *Germans are cruel, racists and start wars all the time, so you'd better watch them*, causes the second one, which the article is concerned with.

When I first came to St. Clare's, a girl whom I had told where I come from simply told me that she 'didn't like Germans' and basically stopped talking to me. This surprised me since she had grown up in several different countries and hence should understand the idiocy of racism. At least, - through this straight forward talk - she didn't deny being a racist. However, half a year later, she changed her attitude towards me, although I don't know if she regarded me as an excep-

tional German or changed her whole racist view.

Other people make racist arguments and at the same time denying it - without even noticing it. The result are such bizarre sentences as „*Even though you're German, you are quite nice,*“ or (even better), „*I hate racists and Germans.*“

It seems to me that racism against Germans is not considered to be 'a bad thing' while racism against blacks is a capital offence. The problem is, I just can't see the difference.

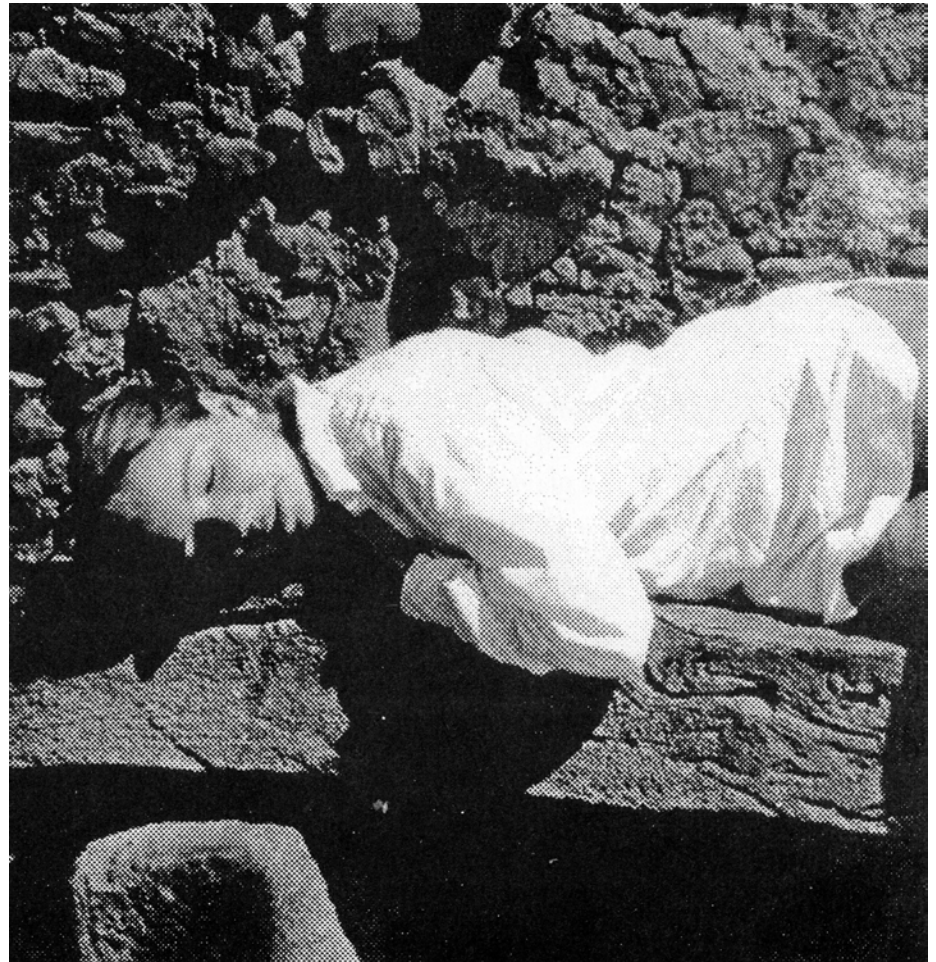
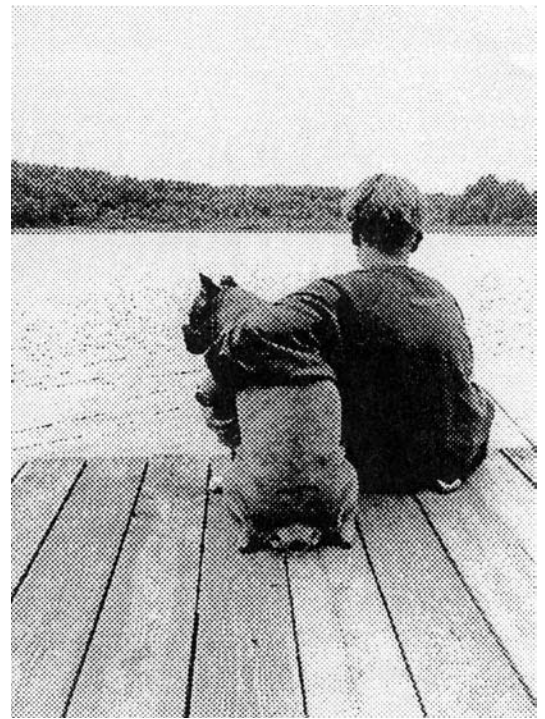
The point is, that every generalization of people MUST be wrong to a certain degree, since all people are different. It seems that stereotypes have just been made for tourists and racists, since in most of the cases they are not true. They simply help to build up a more (racism) or less (tourism) hostile picture of a country. This is why generalisation is the basis of racism and prejudices. **SO DON'T JUST GENERALIZE!**

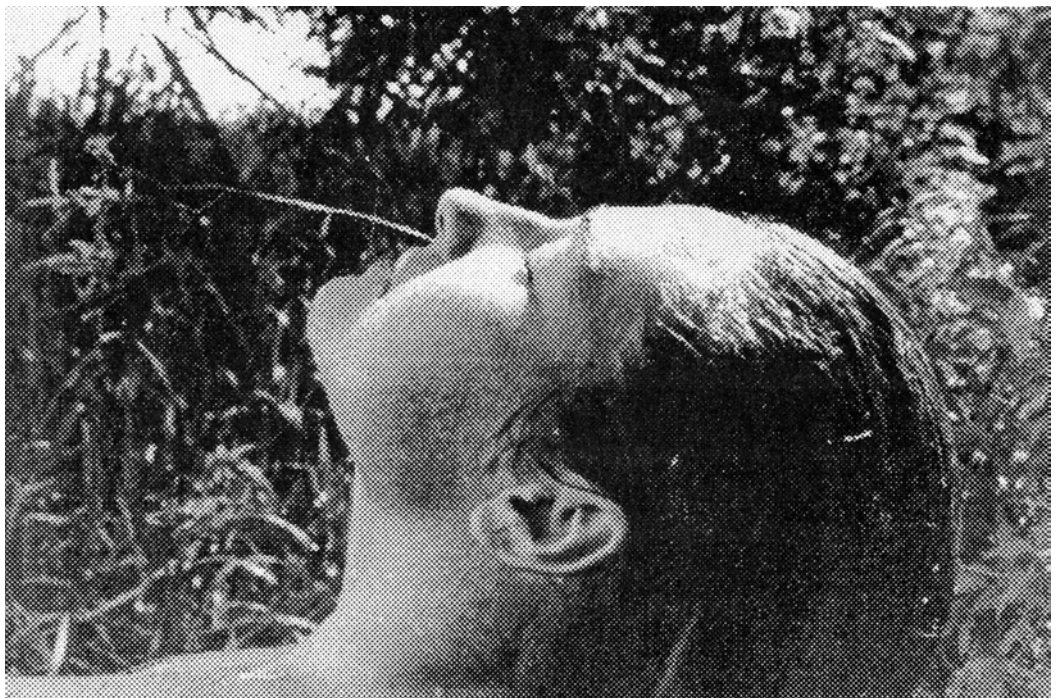
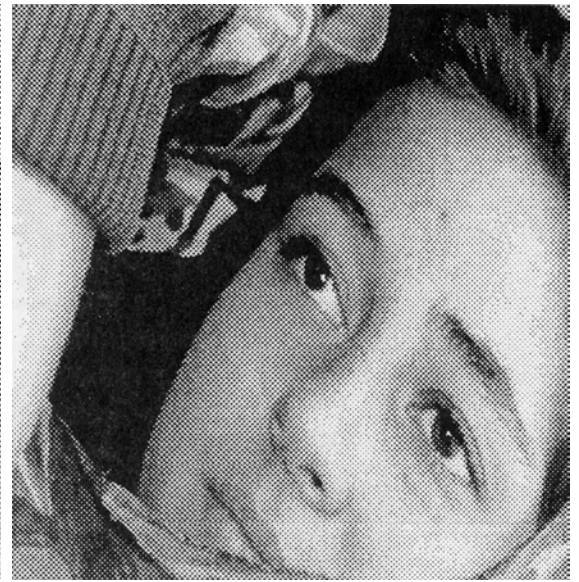
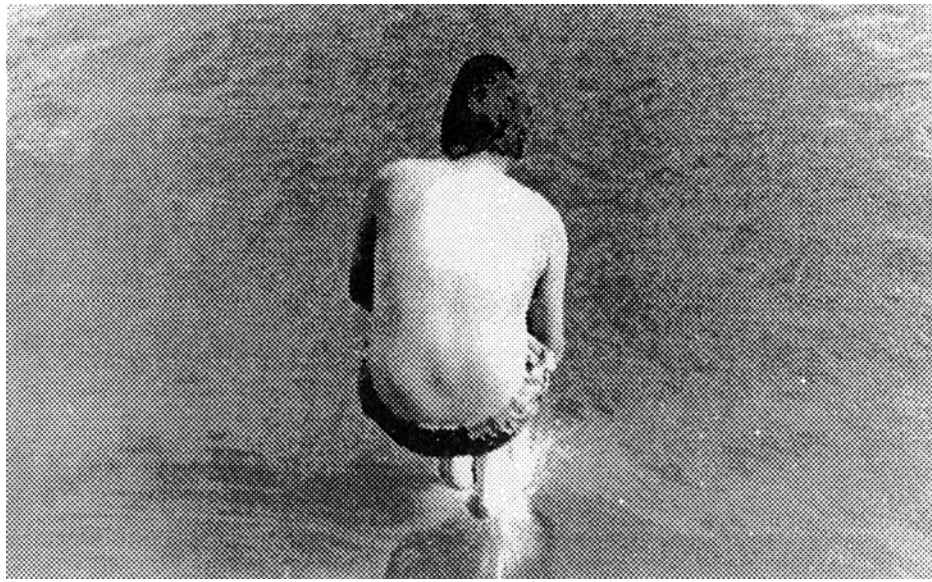
Chris Kirsch



Images

By Kamila





The Meaning of Liff

Arriving at St. Clare's, the new student will find a multitude of wildly disturbing aspects that they may not have bargained for, and were certainly not mentioned in the prospectus. I refer of course to that loveable blue document, complete with glossy cover and inviting phrases such as "" and "" Tempting, wasn't it? St. Clare's prides itself in being a mix of cultures and nationalities, and well it should, But there still exist certain things to which we can all relate. Things which, although we all know are there, have never been given names. The following is a short dictionary, designed specifically for the new and lost St. Clare's student. If you ever wondered whether these things have names, they do now. This is the meaning of Liff.

asconn (n.) A unique form of cake served at tea, which looks considerably better on the tray than it actually tastes — nice enough to be served, not nice enough to be eaten.

barton (n.) Unit of time defined as that between the end of a T.O.K lecture and the first question asked by any one of the T.O.K staff. Due to a rather complicated law of physics, a Barton is found to be 7.6 times shorter if Jay Bosworth is present at the lecture.

C.B.B.S (abbr.n.) Abbreviation for Can't Be Bothered Syndrome - a contagious disease which lasts just over a T.O.K lesson. The most common symptoms are to sit in the Sugar House with a complacent grin, and also a strong desire to go to the pub.

dipool (n.) Electrostatic attraction observed between male science teachers and the pool table.

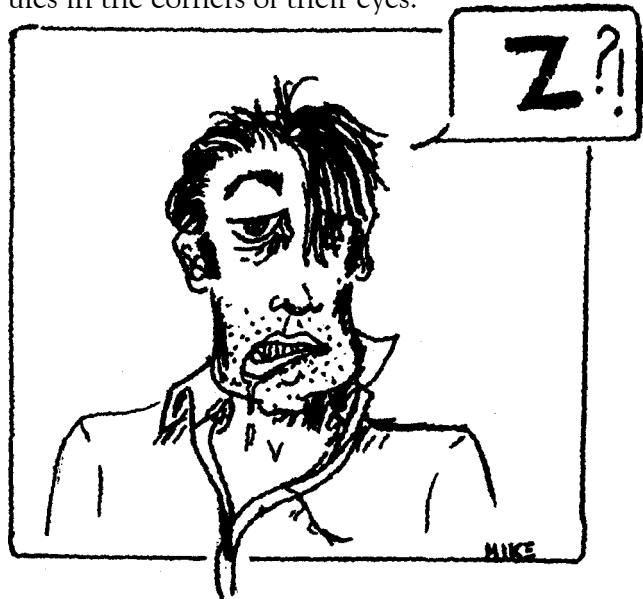
donley (coil. n.) The principle currency of St. Clare's. Donleys exist in divisions of 20, 10 and 1, and can be obtained at the Bureau de Change in Summertown (M. K Foods Ltd.)

earlsford (n.) Invisible lubricant found on the floors of the Dining Hall, Sugar House and Hall, which enables people to slip up at the precise moment that everyone is looking at them.

grambetts (n. pL) Any number of irrelevant points brought up at a Student Council meeting, not due to their importance but merely to make up time.

greeg (vb.) What porters do on Sunday mornings. To greeg is to simultaneously watch television, sleep, and give outkeys.

gropoly (adj.) Descriptive of the average St. Clare's student at 9:05 on Monday morning. A gropoly person can be instantly recognized by half-closed eyelids, drooping lips, and little yellow globules in the corners of their eyes.



hingle (n.) The keen belief held by Tetris addicts that it is an incredibly brain-stimulating use of their time and that

fitting blocks together in some way helps them with their Maths.

hostock (*adj.*) Deep shade of red, found on the face of one who has just dropped their tray in the middle of the Dining Hall, and is being simultaneously applauded by eighty people who are all bloody glad it wasn't them.

inclice (*adj.*) Descriptive of the expression on someone's face whose close friend has just told them that he received a 7 in Economics. An inclice smile has all the appearances of a happy one, but is actually a result of hatred, jealousy and uncontrollable desire to cause them pain.

ingley (*n.*) That „Summer Camp“ feeling that is present during Orientation week, but which is suddenly destroyed when lessons start on Monday morning.

jickle (*vb.*) The embarrassing act of lowering one's voice a fraction of a second too late when entering the library.

jinder (*vb.*) To glance casually at one's watch as the end of a lesson draws near, in the vain hope that the teacher will get the hint. Although sometimes successful, it is found to be particularly futile when used in English lessons.

kaete (*n.*) Greek mythology. Strange physical force which has the ability to rapidly transform a pristine new member of St. Clare's into a chain-smoking, ever-partying tramp.

kerbles (*n. pL*) Snippets of seemingly irrelevant gossip which manage to circulate around St. Clare's at breathtaking speeds. Though of no apparent importance to the persons involved, a keen interest is taken in kerbles both by staff and pupils.

laprally (*adv.*) The way in which one asks a member of staff for a cigarette. {*Teach us, Pete!* - Ed.)

lection (*n.*) The feeling of waking up on Saturday morning with no homework except for „Have a think about question number 3“.

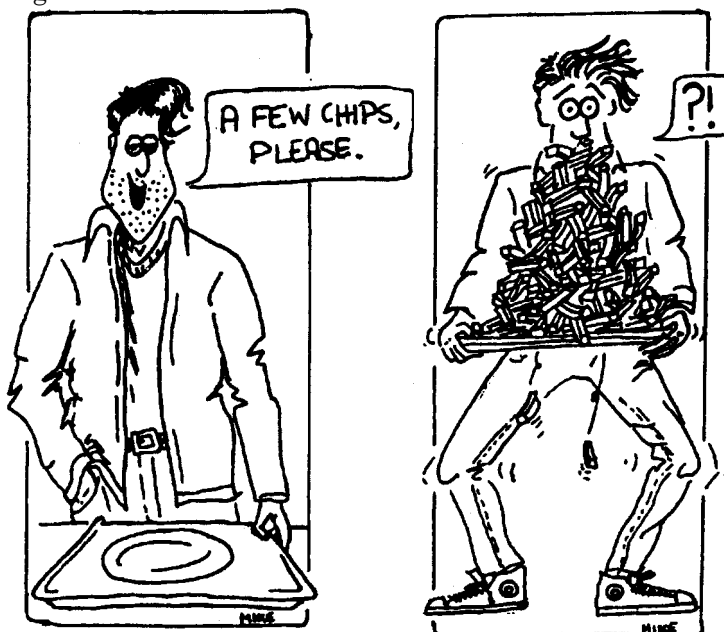
mornage (*n.*) A small white slip of paper found in your pigeon hole which from a distance has all the appearances of a letter or postcard, but on closer inspection turns out to be a rather curt reminder that you haven't returned your library books.

neckle (*n.*) The almost striking similarity between, „I did my homework, but I lost it,“ and „I couldn't be bothered to do my homework,“ which clever teachers recognize and not-so-clever ones don't.

plandle (*vb.*) Pastime consisting of sitting in the Sugar House and yelling at people to shut the door every ten seconds.

pleeriss (*n.*) Late-night snack pioneered by an early St. Clare's student, which contains predominantly whatever-you-find-under-the-bed together with whatever-other-people-won't-know-you've-taken.

plooze (*n.*) Strange dialect of English used by the kitchen staff. As an example, the phrase, „A few chips, please,“ translates into plooze as „A french-fried potato farm, please.“ This accounts for certain discrepancies in size that occur across the canteen.



quattle (*vb.*) Of alarm clocks. To ring accurately only on selective days, usually those on which the owner doesn't

have a nine o'clock lesson e.g. „I'm sorry I missed your lesson, my alarm clock quattled.“

rannla (n.) Specific dialogue that occurs between fruit-distributer and fruit-receiver at mealtimes. Depending on the circumstances, rannla can sometimes lead to heated arguments as to the exact specifications of the required fruit, and is thought to be one of the principle causes of food-fights.

scorrit (n.) Fluorescent pink utensil which emits a loud and sudden squeak. Used by the Sugar House in break time for the high-speed evacuation of smokers. These who are skilled in the use of the scorrit are sometimes able to produce such a sudden and piercing squeak that the selected smoker unintentionally chops his cigarette in shock.

squozze (n.) Embarrassingly loud squeaking noise produced while drinking straight out of a cardboard milk carton.

swikiind (collective n.) The name given to the extensive collection of assorted pint-glasses stolen from pubs which are rarely used but are nevertheless kept for posterity.

The Ardon (n.) Fictitious cafe in Oxford to which 90% of students sign out on the last day of term instead of putting, „Port Meadow.“

toutre (n.) A state of acute embarrassment experienced by two people of the opposite sex the next morning at breakfast.

traster (n.) The sort of person (usually male) whose dance routine consists predominantly of trying to hit as many people as possible with his outstretched arms and legs.

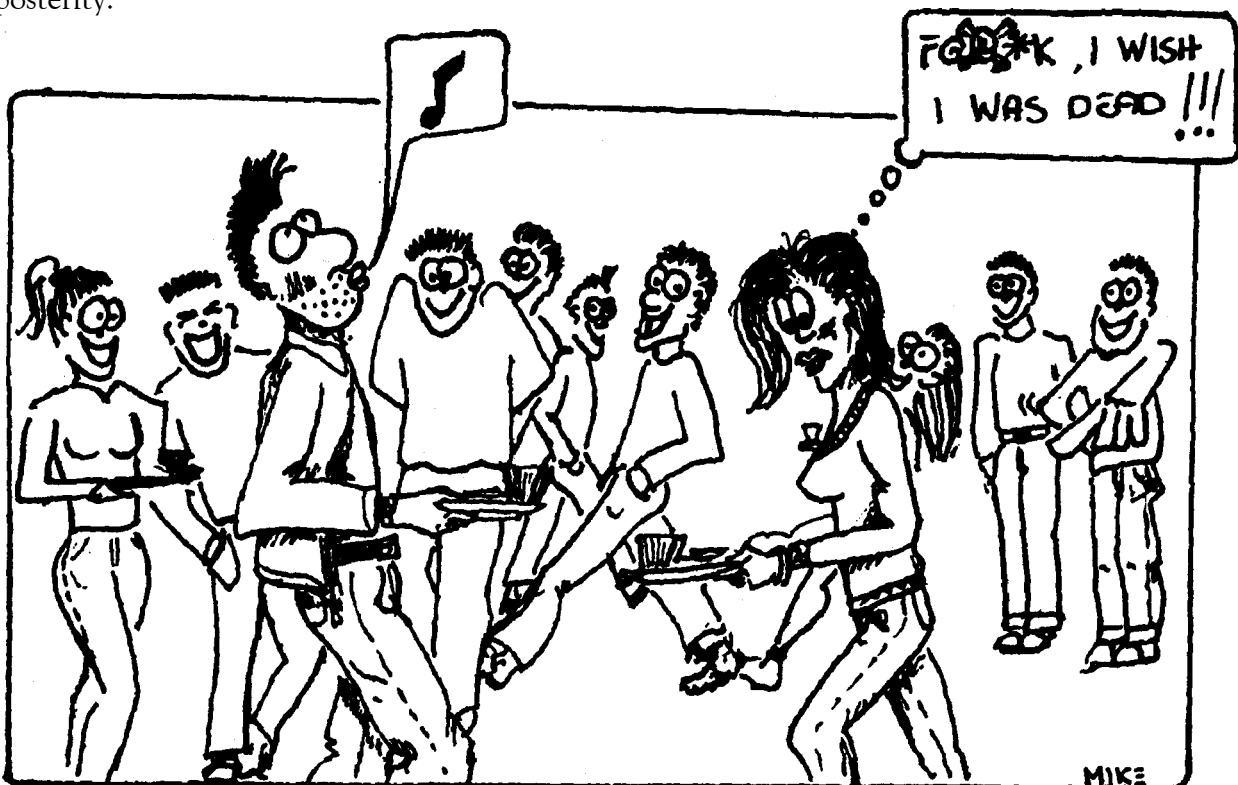
vinlack (n.) The ability of end-of-term exams to get everyone up simultaneously at five o'clock in the morning. The only other known thing to posses vinlack is the declaration of Nuclear War.

worlits (n. pL) Those who hold the belief that if they stare at the jukebox long enough, it will play the song they're thinking of.

yenkels (n. pL) The stray bits of sweetcom that work their way into the lettuce at the salad bar, producing a sort of, „mixed salad.“

Text: Pete Conolly

Illustrations: Maiken Erstad



Picture: **toutre** (for meaning see above)

A year in the life of a CAS coordinator

The Drum Lesson

A diary of our constantly jolly Caroline Crook

One of the jobs of the CAS coordinator is arranging music lessons for individual students...

TERM 1. A student wants drum lessons. Has a particular tutor in mind. Spend one week trying to locate his phone number. Thereafter phone twice a week for several weeks. Speak to his parents, flat mates, girlfriend, dog but never to him. They all say that he wants to do it and will phone me back.

LAST WEEK OF TERM. Give up and contact two other teachers. The first lives nearby but sounds rather conservative e.g. is not keen on „modern music“. Second teacher turns out to be a delightful young man who plays in a jazz band. He and student get on very well.

TERM 2. Only remaining problem is to find a time and a place for the lesson. Place is obvious: the hall, Time: a major problem because of the library being so close by the hall. Negotiate with the teacher, then the librarian, then the student, then the teacher, then the librarian etc. etc. A time is finally agreed.

Student misses first lesson and fails to let teacher know.

SECOND LESSON actually takes place. Heave a large sigh of relief and start thinking about other parts of my job.

ONE WEEK LATER. Two more students want to have drum lessons, having heard how good the teacher is. So have to find another place because can not have three hours drumming near library. Negotiate with drum teacher, then piano teacher, then students, etc. etc. Move piano lessons to another room, put drum lessons in music room. Drums have to be carried to and from the hall.

ONE WEEK LATER. One student cannot continue drum lessons. Another has been

expelled. So back to the hall for remaining student. Maybe everything will run smoothly now.

Two WEEKS LATER. Hall alterations start. Cancel one lesson and rearrange another. At least alterations will be finished by start of next term.

TERM 3. Hall may be finished some time next year? Drums are in the cellar under 137. Better find a time and place for the lessons...

Caroline Crook

Concerning Tok

For thousands of years the biggest brains of this planet have tried to find the meaning of life. A lot of people believed — or at least pretended — to have found it. Some had the most revolting ideas, others weren't that bright at all. But they all have something in common: they all contradict each other; by the way, this is number one of the Laws of Philosophy.

The second law states that the philosophies have to be incomplete. Either because the philosopher missed an error in his theorem, or he died before he could finish it. Others are even more cunning: They create an incomplete theory that leaves a backdoor open to explain things that would disprove his hypothesis.

The third Law of philosophy is concerned with the names of philosophers and their philosophies; they have to fulfil three basic conditions:

- a) they have to be based on a word that has been out of date for at least two thousand years.
- b) It must be impossible to remember.
- c) Its spelling and pronunciation have to be as irregular and difficult as possible.

Space is up, so you assume that there will be a conclusion. There is non - I don't mean the conclusion, but the meaning of life. So, have a nice time on earth. (So, *have anice time in hell Chris - Ed.*)

Poems without contraception

By K.M. Mertens and Hendrik Dalen

Love like living

Dead lies still
Before yearning in fles
Writing like Watersnakes
Painting the atmosphere
Be the one whom I'll love
live with
for always
I'll be stuck
inbetween

Past

Hips in the moonshine
Drinking wine
Sentimental
The passing of time
Regurgitating the past
Spit in the grass
We were happy
Once.

Blabbergasted

Out of the cruelty of your heart
evaporates a cool scent of illness
lead runs through your veins
the night screams out so cold
are you alive!
Everything smells of dream
out beyond the far mountain
lies the perimeter
Filled with content
The horizon
Dies beyond conception

Transcending Journeyman of Unprecedented Mental Tranquility

A red - green light
grows out from the mouth
of a prostitute
A snake makes a dance
by the river
impaled to the three jigzaw pieces
you are rendered helpless
a triangle gulps for the residing
part of your semi-mutated shaft
you are replaced by a polyhedron
as all the grass in the world burns
it could have been worse
you could have been a cylinder
symmetrical, but never spherical
always stuck with an inferiority complex

Johnny's Green Light

The body is wrapped in dry land
He gives birth again to drown
sweet curves of ejaculation in light
discipline the fragrance
there is no time for lace, blood and sperm
and yet no place
leads to another place
of suicide in crowd
He is his sister bound
Like the fish on a line
Thrown back in the shadow
Breaking his bones in a new situation
Gasping in screenplay
Handcuffed in devotion
This limbo is to breathe
To be a single digit breath
In another in satiable desire
I'm nameless in sex
in his arms
learning to live

The last Grand Prix of the season took place in South Africa, in the local circuit of Kyatami. The 250 cc. championship was already decided in favor of the Italian Luca Cadalora, but still remained the 125cc. and 500cc. championships.

125 cc.

In the 125cc. race, the also Italian Alessandro Gramigni won the championship, qualifying third. The Spanish tandem formed by Jorge Martinez „Aspar“ and Carlos Giro occupied the first two positions of the podium respectively. Deception for the Italian Fausto Gresini and for the German Ralf Waldman, who had their opportunity to win the championship in this race.

500 cc.

In the 500cc. race, the championship was for the North American Wayne Rainey, for the third time consecutively, who finished third. The race was won by his compatriot John Kocinsky, followed by the Australian

Wayne Gardner, finishing 2nd in the last Grand Prix of his life.

The other face of the coin was the also Australian Michael Doohan (6), who lost the championship in this race. Doohan ruled the championship winning 5 of the first 6 races, giving no chance to his competitors, but he broke his leg in a terrible accident during the qualifying session of the German Grand Prix, in the circuit of Nurburgring. Because of this, he didn't reappear until the Brazilian Grand Prix in the circuit of Interlagos where on the 24th of August 1992, he lost his leadership, as Rainey won the race and Doohan didn't enter in the points.

In this race, he wasn't totally recovered and this conditioned his performance in the race.

250 cc.

In the 250 cc. race, with nothing to be decided, the race was won by the Italian Maximiliano Biaggi.

125 cc. Race

1. Jorge Martinez "Aspar"	Esp	Honda	44 m	2.803 s
2. Carlos Giro	Esp	Aprilia	at	.253 s
3. Alessandro Gramigni	Ita	Aprilia	at	.438 s

125cc. Championship

1. Alessandro Gramigni	Ita	Aprilia		134 points
2. Fausto Gresini	Ita	Honda		118 points
3. Ralf Waldman	Ger	Honda		112 points

500 cc. Race

1. John Kocinsky	USA	Yamaha	47 m	0.179 s
2. Wayne Gardner	Aus	Honda	at	2.935 s
3. Wayne Rainey	USA	Yamaha	at	4.969 s

500cc. Championship

1. Wayne Rainey	USA	Yamaha		140 points
2. Michael Doohan	Aus	Honda		136 points
3. John Kocinsky	USA	Yamaha		102 points

A Note from the Publisher:

The publisher would like to draw the attention to the fact that, although these essays appear very similar, the two following articles have been written independently from each other.

Miss Liberty and Coca Cola Americanism - A world disease

Since the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492, the land of unlimited possibilities has had more impact on the rest of the world than any other country ever. American culture — if there is such a thing — is amazingly popular throughout the whole world, irrespective of the colour of skin or traditional habits. Everybody loves hamburgers, popcorn and Superman, no matter if they are black or white, Protestant or Muslim, male or female - America sells well.

What is the basic idea of America? It's freedom. The first settlers who came to America chose freely to do so. Everybody was invited to come, everybody was accepted, everybody was equally treated, everybody was free, everybody had the same starting point: everybody was a part of the big happy family. It was the beginning of the peaceful New World, a new start for mankind: The American Dream.

To get America towards this, the new inhabitants first had to get arranged with all the Red Skins. So they just shot them. It is easier and more efficient than the best peace treaty. It can't be as bad as it sounds, since they have some of them left over in reservations to visit on a weekend trip and to see what the country was like before the white man discovered it. It must have been a pretty boring lot, it must seem to them.

Their America is totally different, there is something happening: Jazz, Soul Music, Rock 'n' Roll, Rock, Heavy Metal, Pop, Hip-Hop, Rap, that's what the people like - all

made in the USA. Who wants to listen to Beethoven and Mozart? Isn't America just great with its fast food, chewing gum and MickyMouse? There is nothing more American than Levis' jeans, the saying goes. Levis' are typically American: comfortable, uncomplicated and made for eternity. Who needs Shakespeare — read comic strips!

America also runs the biggest movie industry in the world, and they're very successful, Everybody simply loves Rambo when he wins the Vietnam war for them, creeping along in artificial mud between plastic plants, never losing. It does not matter, if they lose a war somewhere in Asia, they can still win it at home. It's so much nicer...

America is like a huge TV quiz show: only the make-up counts. That's why Reagan was so popular - he knew the business and everybody knew him: from the cinema. He looked so great on the screen, a free hero, the symbol of the United States. Oh, he's so cool when he pulls out his Colt... Reagan for President!

The current election campaign between Bill Clinton and George Bush also seems like one big game show. Who's got the better haircut? Which of them has had better mistresses? Who do you find more sympathetic? I prefer Bush, because Clinton can't manage to quit smoking... The whole democratic process in the USA just seems a bit ridiculous.

Of course, America is the ultimate Superpower, the strongest in economical, political and military terms. They never have recessions and are the richest nation in the

world. They have got the power and the brains. They cannot help it, they simply are superior to the rest of us. This justifies their interfering with the world. They have to lead it. All non-Americans are simply too stupid to defend themselves or to see that Communism is bad. Big Brother is helping you. He is there for you when you need him (but he'll also be there if you don't want his help). Big America, you are the rescuer when we're in big trouble, you carry the big sheriff star. Big America, you did so much for us. Big America, we all believe in you.

Americans are fabulous at exports. Their most commonly exported good is war. Since the civil war in 1861 they haven't had a single war on the US territory. This is rather smart, since war outside the country does not destroy anything at home. All *bad news* can be censored. The only thing it costs is money (and the lives of some young Americans that died as *happy men* for the defence of their country.) So, if you feel like fighting, don't do it in your own country!

I love America, you love America, everybody loves America. That's why we eat hot dogs, watch Hollywood movies, dress in Levi's jeans and pay our chewing gum by credit card. The former colony has colonized the world, some parts of the world peacefully, such as Europe, some had to be forced to their luck (but we don't want to talk about that now, do we?) But what is American culture?

American Culture is a mixture of European cultures. What was left in the melting pot were only the most popular traditions, the rest was destroyed. Only the strong ones survive! Most of the European traditions must have been rather weak, then. What Coca Cola and Levi's sell, is not real American, but a big illusion, a soap bubble, that shines of power, money and freedom. Most countries have been blinded by this shining deception. People think, when they drink coke they will be free. Well, it's worth a try. But everybody seems to believe in it.

America - don't you just love it?

Chris Kirsch

American Culture

Does it exist?

Wenn ich Kultur höre, entsichere ich meine Pistole. (*When I hear the word culture, I release the safety-catch of my pistol.*)

Hermann Göring

Perhaps more than in any other country, American children are brought up to believe that they have been born into a special land, a land whose birth was seen as an 18th century experiment in individual liberty, a land where men attempted to translate political theories into a practical governmental system that would forever eliminate kings and tyrants. Already as a teenager I felt the need to question American values: What made my country better or worse than others?

For about 20 years now I have lived outside the land of my birth on a permanent

basis. During these years as a *professional foreigner*, I have come to believe that distance to your native land is the only way to get to know your own culture in an objective way. Growing up in a particular society, we tend to accept its values as *right* and *true* - and see other lifestyles as strange and somehow wrong. We swim in our culture like fish in water and this makes it extraordinarily difficult to question its values while living under its influence. I believe that those who have never traveled (except as tourists) not only understand little of foreign lands but know even less about their own culture. Only now, after years of living in Europe and Asia, do I feel that I've begun to understand something of native land.

One thing that has always surprised me is the number of Europeans who are constantly explaining America to me. And nowhere have I met more of these experts than in the Lyceum Alpinum Zuoz, the boarding school I am currently teaching at. Most of these individuals are students who have traveled to New York, California or Florida for a few weeks and therefore think they know all about the American way of life. Personally, I see little difference here to the often-criticized American tourist who flies to Zurich and then says he's seen Switzerland.

But the Lyceum experts go a step further. Let me describe a situation I have experienced numerous times. I tell a class that I would like to discuss American culture values with them. Immediately a hand goes up. A fresh-faced young man smiles at me broadly and says: „Mr. Shuler, America has no culture!” While he enjoys his little joke, the rest of the class laughs nervously, wondering how the teacher will react after hearing his homeland mildly insulted.

There's little danger, of course, of me getting angry, since every American who lives abroad is so used to hearing his country being criticized that he rapidly develops a rather thick skin. Hardly a week goes by without a news report showing the American Flag laeing burnt or the *Great Satan* being attacked by crowds of protesters. The Gulf War (in its early phases) demonstrated that anti-Americanism is alive and well in Europe. Crowds in major German and Swiss cities carried signs reading *Amis raus!* and *Bush Go Home!* Posters demanding that Saddam Hussein should get out of Kuwait were liardly to be seen. Such protests are hard for Americans to understand, since everyone knows that Europe is more dependent on Middle Eastern oil than the USA is. Another example: the Vietnam War was protested by thousands of Europeans during the 70's (land righriully so!), but when the USSR invaded Afghanistan and brutalized the population there, hardly a sound was heard. What is it that makes America such an attractive target?

But let's return to the classroom cultural comedian and observe him more closely. On his feet we find the latest style of AirJordan tennis shoes. Moving upwards, we note that he's wearing a pair of faded genuine red label Levis'. His sweatshirt carries the logo of a famous American University (where, he says, he'll study after finishing his final exams). If it's cold he either has a leather flight jacket or one which has the name and symbol of some baseball or football team. Open the pocket and you'll find his Mariboros (Come to Mariboro country!) or, if he's a real man, a packet of Camels (unfiltered, of course). At the dining room lunch table he covers his french fries with Heinz' 57 ketchup. If I meet him in the village, he'll probably be plugged in, via his walkman, to some rap or hip-hop music. On the weekends he takes the fast train to Zurich to get some fast food from McDonald's before seeing Rambo X at the cinema. At home, he'll watch Alfor Miami Vice on TV while snacking on potato chips and coke. In short: a real European from head to foot!

The purpose of my (exaggerated?) student description is to demonstrate how much the lifestyle of Europeans (especially young people) is being influenced by the products of American culture. This influence is all the more powerful simply because people are unaware of its strength (America has no culture .) One reason for this unawareness can be found in the way the word culture is usually understood. For most people, culture refers exclusive to the contents of great museums, paintings, manuscripts, etc..). But these are products of culture, not culture itself. Culture is invisible because it exists in the minds of the individuals who are members of a particular society or ethnic group. Being invisible doesn't make culture in any way weak. On the contrary! Culture is nothing less than the moral values, the social attitudes, the religious beliefs, the basic life-philosophy that gives any group its distinctive identity and interpretation of me world. Seen from this point of view, it is clearly absurd to state that any nation is cultureless.

What one can do is to argue about the relative value of cultural products. I myself would not protest if a European said that the Symphonies of Beethoven are culturally superior to the work of Henry Ford. But - and here is a key point to my essay-which of these men has had more influence on our present way of life?

It should be clear to any objective observer that America's role in the world today is to be the great exporter of modern trends. In a sense the Americans the modern equivalent of the ancient Romans: they are not originators of great ideas but rather practical idealists who make up a society which puts into practice the theories of others. A good number of the most powerful social and technological movements of this century (capitalistic democracy, women's liberation, mass political demonstrations, protection of minority rights, computer technology, New Age consciousness, environmental protest, the development of the film and television entertainment industry) had their practical development in America and have since spread to the rest of the world (especially since 1945). Ask the newly liberated citizens of the former communist empire which nation they look to as a model and the answer is clear. But like everything in life, this modernistic view has its dark side which is being exported to the rest of the world along with democracy and coca-cola. Connected with the American way of life (so attractive to undeveloped countries) is a loss of moral certainty, destruction of traditional values, the rise of selfish and isolated individualism, the increase of crass consumerism, the growth of the advertising industry, and the blind adoration of all that is fast, easy, new and clean. Time-tested beliefs disappear in a generation, image replaces reality, and people confuse having more (material goods) with being more (spiritual values).

It gives me no joy as an American to see how the worst qualities of my culture steadily gain power here in Europe while people remain blind to what is happening. I'm cer-

tainly not one of those Americans who would say:

My heart leaps up when I behold
A McDonald's in the sky (Apologies to Wordsworth)

Europeans, meanwhile, are busily adopting the worst that America has to offer while making jokes about how stupid those Americans are. Don't take it too personally, friends, but in this case I have to ask myself: Who's really being stupid here?

The point of my article has been to provoke a little honest thinking from readers of this newspaper and to encourage people to move away from inaccurate (and dangerous) clichés about a cultureless America. Perhaps these clichés come from a certain jealousy of the old world towards the new kid on the block. And probably a number of readers simply cannot accept the idea that a plastic society could have any real influence on European life. But watching EuroDisney being built almost within sight of Paris has to make anyone ask himself what is happening in the new Europe. The truth of the matter is that this cultural colonisation process, whether we like it or not, is the single most powerful cultural force in the world today. Anyone who hopes to resist this influence has to begin by recognizing its existence.

In a speech at the Democratic national convention, presidential candidate Bill Clinton made the following statement: „We have changed the world. Now it is time to change America,“

Many Europeans may have been amused by what seems at first to be an arrogant and naive attitude towards the world. But a moment's thought will, I think, show that there is more truth here than most of us would like to admit.

Jarod Shuler

Jarod Shuler is currently teaching English at the Lyceum Alpinum Zuoz, Graubünden/Switzerland. He was born in San Francisco/USA in 1947. Mr Shuler has travelled extensively and taught in various countries including the United Kingdom.

Attention all First Year Geographers

As a second year and an experienced Geographer, I feel that it is my duty to inform all the first years Geographers about one of the most dangerous natural hazards that they will probably ever experience, the Summer-term field trip. This traumatic journey begins on a Friday (early of course) and ends mid-afternoon on the Monday. To inexperienced field-trippers, 4 days doesn't seem too long, but the realization of time soon becomes apparent, when on the same day you left, you are standing in the middle of a 4 foot bog, picking flies out of your ears. Although your standing in a pile of mud is definitely better than what Gombo's doing in it, which is clinging onto the sides of the bog for dear life, as several big guys (Max and Johan) attack him and try to throw him in it (A St. Clare's Geography trip tradition that definitely needs to be continued... Watch out David, Sly will be on the next trip).

After a long day's work it is time to check into the hotel and invade Lulworth Cove,



Dorsett (not a place noted for its active night life, beautiful women and famous celebrities, but rather for its four people who have actually been able to live their all their lives without realizing there is nothing to do, and for fresh cream scones and jam). Although an honest Geographer must admit that the cliffs (Limestone and Challs.) and t)eaches there, are a much more interesting to look at than some of the sites at St. Clare's (e.g. Stache in the dinning hall, urrhhh.)

One might think that after a long journey and a hard days work you would be able to go to bed early, this isn't really quite the way it works on these trips. You will be happy to know that there is about three hours work after dinner, in the community centre, which is located just up the road (Conveniently opposite a pub with a pool table, where Gombo, Kelvin spend most of their evenings —lucky ba•••rds).

Although this work-all-day-and-up-all-night routine continues for the rest of the trip, everyday seems to be anew adventure, and as usually this includes stupid mistakes (like dislocating your shoulder — right Tomasz?), and screwing up data by misunderstanding the initial instructions. Actually, the consumption of the packed lunches is quite an adventure in itself, and a skill of eating crap food and ignoring the taste, is an art form that definitely needs to

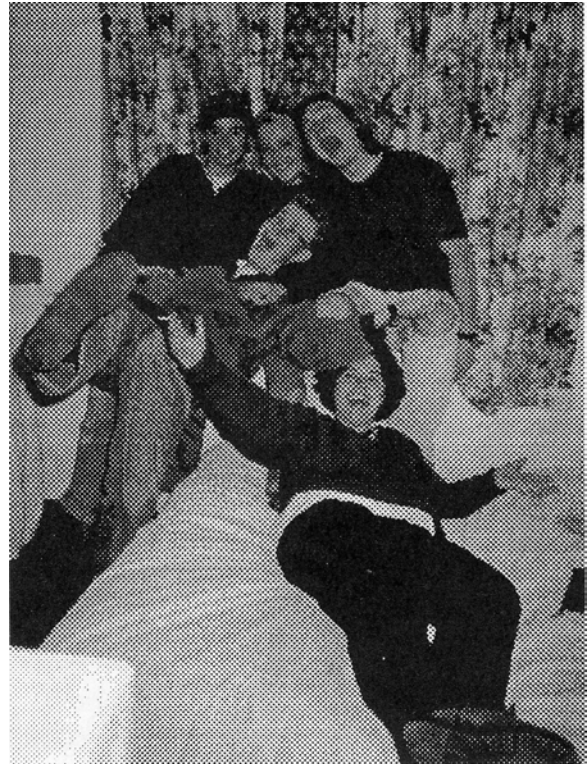
be acquired before one goes on this trip. Although by Sunday nobody cares anymore, because all eyes are focused on the beach party that occurs that night (Another St. Clares's Geography trip tradition). Everybody visits the local wine shop, and takes whatever they bought, whether it be wine, beer or Tango, down to the beach, consumes it while watching the sea and stars.

Next morning it is time to leave Lulworth Cove and do one more experiment, and then head back to St. Clare's. When you arrive back — if you do(considering Kelvins driving. ..Oh by the way watch out for Gombo, he just past his driving test.) —, you are quite tired and happy to be home, mainly because now you can actually go to bed. I hope that I have prepared you well for what will inevitably come sooner or later, but if I were you I wouldn't prepare anything, because I didn't and it was the best time that I have had whilst I've been at St. Clare's.

Thanks to David, Kelvin and Steve.

Nick Doherty
A faithful Geography student

Yes, David...



Don't you just love geography?



This month's Horrorscopes

Scorpio: 23rd October - 22nd November

Love: Your Attitude towards the opposite sex has been rather passive lately, but now is the time to change that- with Jupiter coming into your sign on the 5th you should grab the approaching opportunity to throw all your inhibitions out the window and open up to prospects of a potential relationship. *Bold: 7th*

Work: This month you will find yourself on top of most of your work for once which leaves you with extra time to sort out your life at home which isn't looking as good. *Confused: 16th*

Play: There will be lots of social events coming your way so take advantage of them but watch the limited cash flow. *Uneasy: 24*

Sagittarius: 23rd November - 21st December

Love: You start the month feeling pessimistic about your love life or lack of it! So pull yourself together and play the field a bit. *Positive: 8th*

Work: Don't make such hasty decisions; consider the consequences first. An opportunity for travel is likely in the latter half of the month. *Careful: 19th*

Play: The temptation to reveal a confidential secret will be great but the planets advise you against it because otherwise you may find yourself in a tricky situation. *Wild: 11th*

Capricorn: 22nd December - 19th June

Love: You want more than you've got - especially in love. But Venus moving into your sign on the 14th indicates you may have overlooked a certain admirer so keep your eyes open and your senses alert! *Hopeful: 9th*

Work: Financial worries seem to be your biggest hassle at the moment but after the 15th money will be more available and your work will seem less strenuous. *Upset: 3rd*

Play: You are feeling fairly anti-social and depressed towards the start of the month but plans for a big party later on make you far more optimistic. Be careful not to put friends down on the 26th. *Lucky: 19th*

Aquarius: 20th January - 18 February

Love: Be prepared for sudden changes; if your love life has been unsettled in the past few weeks, perhaps it's time to rethink things. You should take the initiative to make advances towards someone who is quite obviously attracted to you. *Positive: 30th*

Work: Although work has been strenuous in the past month, weights will be lifted from your shoulders after the 5th, however financial difficulties lie ahead. *Clear headed: 9th*

Play: You are feeling self-conscious and need support. You feel the urge to get away from everyone and everything, however by the 10th you will feel more sociable. *Impulsive: 11th*

Pisces: 19th February - 20th March

Love: You may be feeling a little down, but don't let your imagination get the better of you. Beware of making permanent commitments. After the 14th life looks more positive as someone appears to start taking an interest in you, but beware of jumping the gun. *Negative: 5th*

Work: You should try to get down to some hard work. Persevere and you could be amazed at what you can achieve if you put your mind to it. *Determined: 21st*

Play: You may be confronted by a misunderstanding with a friend, but wait until after the 19th when any disagreement will be solved for the better. *Intuitive: 23rd*

Aries: 21st March - 20th April

Love: After a period of unsettled relationships, your love-life is set for a change on the 16th, be on your guard for obscene propositions. *Hot-Bloded: 10th*

Work: Look into new opportunities this month as your personal life calms down. Although you may feel negative after the 15th you'll be more inclined to achieve what is expected of you. *Ambitious: 17th*

Play: You've been neglecting friends recently, perhaps you need a change of scene. On the 23rd when Uranus moves into your sign you will set your priorities right and make new encounters. *Enlightened: 24th*

Taurus 21st April - 20th May

Love: Don't lose your patience, love comes when you least expect it. Getting angry won't make what you want to happen any faster. Be ready for an encounter with someone you least expect.

Work: You're feeling frustrated but try to concentrate. You're being watched by superiors and what you do won't go unnoticed. *Restricted: 2nd*

Play: You have the urge to go completely wild but something is preventing you from doing so. After the 14th you will feel a lot more confident amongst old friends. *Crazy: 20th*

Gemmi: 21st May - 20th June

Love: You're in love with love at the moment. Beware of making impulsive commitments and over looking someone who is clearly attracted to you. *Disappointed: 15th*

Work: Have a break - relax or you'll go crazy. You are exhausted and should find other distractions. *Surprised: 18th*

Play: Parties and other gatherings are in the lime-light, this month. This is your chance to release your inner-self. Treat yourself to a few luxuries. *Let lose: 20th*

Cancer: 21st June - 20th July

Love: An old flame is finding itself back into your heart. Don't xxx on the past. After the 24th you'll be a lot more light hearted and in a frivolous mood. *Confused: 10th*

Work: Major set-back due to kick of communication. You begin to think more positively when the full moon appears on the second. *Positive: 2nd*

Play: Encounters with the past will bring back memories. Be aware of any subtle advances. Turn to old friends for advice. *Careful: 30th*

Leo: 21st July - 23rd August

Love: Romantic Gestures are being made towards you from all directions so take full advantage of them while you can! The planet Uranus moves into your sign on the 10th so beware of any double-crossings. *Cautious: 13th*

Work: It's time to pull your all together and get all that overdue work done. There maybe complications towards the end of the month so be prepared to tackle them with a clear head. *Good news: 22nd*

Play: You are in a reminiscent mood at the moment and should take it easy at home for once. There will be plenty of opportunities to socialize from the onwards so stay put for the time being. *Sentimental: 6th*

Virgo: 24th August - 22nd September

Love: You are destined to meet someone who will change your outlook on life and other people. You'll be surprised by the strength of your feelings. *Bowled over 18th*

Work: Try to get ahead of your work load! You may be offered the chance to do something which will interfere with your commitments. *Decisive: 14th*

Play: You are keen to expand your horizons in as many ways as possible. Beware of the finances. *Glowing: 9th*

Letters

PLEASE SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO LETTERS, THE GAFF, 195, WOODSTOCK ROAD,
OXFORD, OX2,7AB OR JUST HAND IT IN AT THE PORTER'S LODGE.



More Space for your own notes (don't be repetitive - Ed.)

And there we have it. Forty-four pages of bafflingly highbrow B.S. printed, six sackings dispensed, all queries answered. The GAFF. The magazine where problems somehow (Snip! - Ed.)

The GAFF

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER, *gellert?*

(Nötzli, Du bisch gfüürt! - Ed.)

- Jo häüü! Was händ Sie gseit? Gopfriedstutznomoll!

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