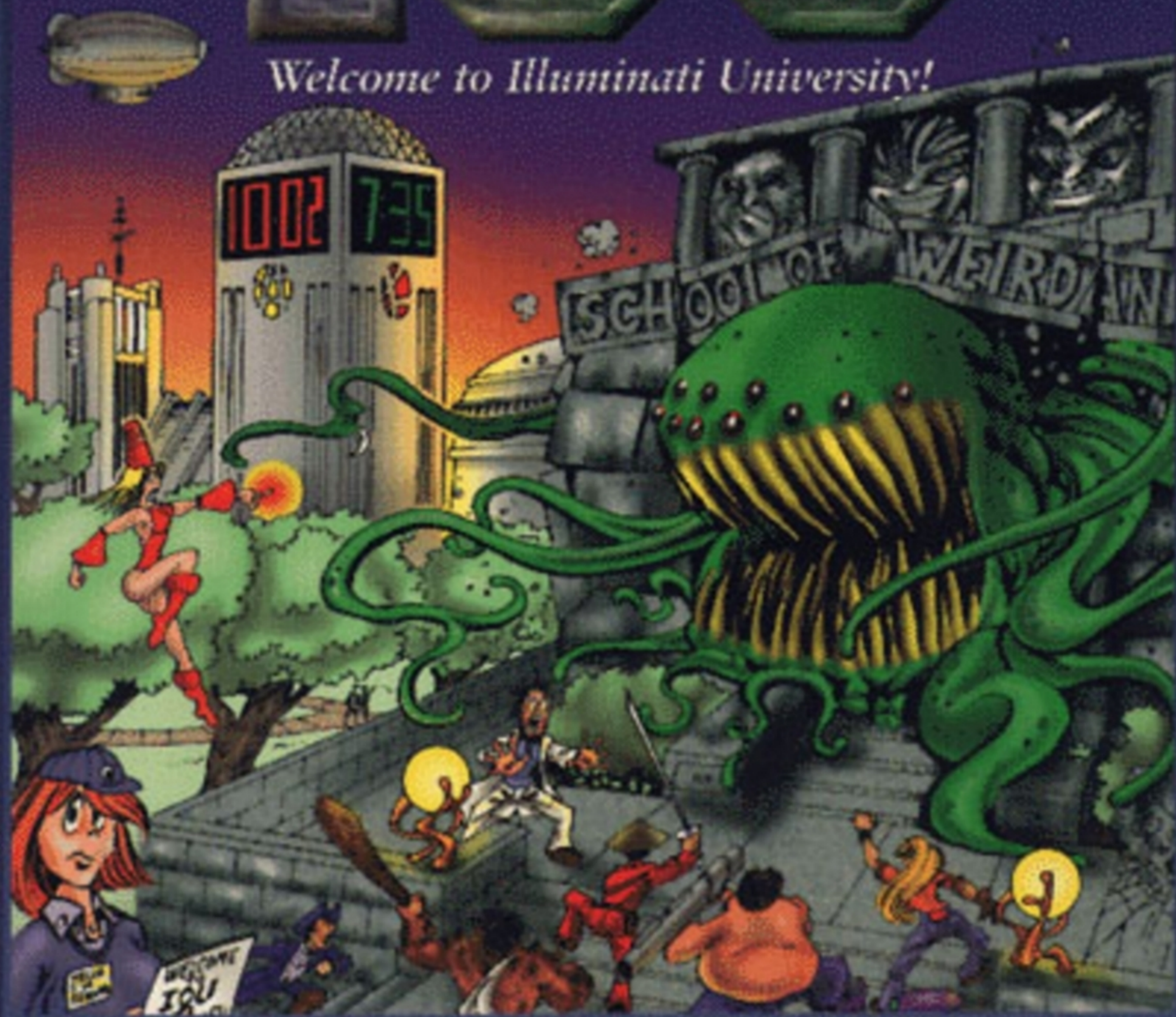


G U R P S

# IOU

*Welcome to Illuminati University!*



BY ELIZABETH MCCOY & WALTER MILLIKEN  
ILLUSTRATED BY PHIL AND KAJA FOGLIO

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

# GURPS

# IOU

## WELCOME TO ILLUMINATI UNIVERSITY!

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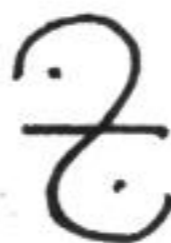
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Our thanks to the original IOU crowd:

Founder Yarblek, Walter Milliken, Archangel Beth, Professor Esteban, The Mentor, The Ogre, Green-Eyed Lady, THE Unseen Dean Cloudcat, TempDean Sleeve Coat, Dave Nalle, Chairthing Metalhead, Brett Slocum, Mike Hurst, Earl "Shiva" Cooley, Research Subject Krome, Stefan Jones, B.C., Elric, Chairthing Ryden, Professor Padraig, Silver, Ivorythorn, Student Judah, Student Gremlyn, Professor Case, Laughing Lemming Boy, Professor Grendel, WindLord, Pat Crumhorn, Ed Gore, Chairthing Mephron, Justin Case, Invading Alien X'noleun Tenz, Dean Gus "Lestat" Smedstad, Student Voltaire, tkm, Student Monty, Morgoth, Professor Elros F., Mark Hagerman, Sean Rodden, Michael "Wintermute" Eaton, Crackpot, Mack Pitchford, compucious, Professor Dr. Memory, Talisar, C. David Dent, Invading Alien/Professor Caradon "B'thorai Argh," Schadwen, Deliamber, Professor Bughunter, Captain "Newob Det" Zwack, Professor Anselm, Student TanisHalf-Munchkin, Chad Irby, Urhixidur, Student Two-A-Day, Rif Christiansen, Student Jim Cowling, Student Mikey the Kid, Deliamber, Amal Hess, Mercurio, M\*n\*r "Captain Yid" N\*s\*nc\*, Heathen God, EggHead "Dr. Igor von Torkemoff," Tomb, Phillip "Dr. Phil Off Sophy" Velá, IOU Campus Reporter, IOU Campus Security, Ghost In The Machine, Royce Day, Student Yossarian, Chairthing Tse-T'non-Chai, Ghost In The Machine, Freshthing TSRminator, Mason Kramer, TempDean Lady Tamiko Danica Drake, Professor bonsai, Liberator, Freshthing Paranoia, Student Wolverine, Dr. ditto, The Cure, Christian Death, Razor, the highlander, KC, F.B. "Ches" Vecchio, Kirk Anderson, Nick Kinnas, Dean Dr. What, ken "thingfish" primer (and Battlesmurf), Professor Howard the Dolphin, Chairthing Astral Advisor, Professor Ancient Gnome, Curator John M. Ford, Edward Goldstein, Secretary Lilith, Dean Mephisto, Steve Jackson, Thanatos, Bob Schroeck, Count Zero, Chairthing Red Fox, Baron Helstar, Chief of Security (Hacmaniac), Steve Brinich, Psychotic Budgie, Jeff K, Professor CWM, General Counsel Trag, Gradthing Traveller in Black, Terry McCombs, Lone "Dr. Whateless" Wolf, Mandrake, Highland Thing, Alan "Alanator" Goldstein, Arnold, Thugbuster, Hunter, Chrome Sync, Rick Gerdes, Invading Alien Fareless Liter, Digital Brujo, and everyone from the branch campus on ARRAKIS BBS.

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# STEVE JACKSON GAMES

# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>	Department of Computer Wizardry .....	29	<b>4. UNIVERSITY (DIS-) ORGANIZATIONS ..</b>	<b>46</b>
<i>About GURPS</i> .....	4	Department of Military Biology .....	30	The Administration .....	47
<b>1. WELCOME! .....</b>	<b>5</b>	Department of Military Science & Cost Overruns .....	30	<i>Axioms of Administration</i> .....	47
Obligatory Marketing Hype .....	6	<i>Government Grants</i> .....	30	<i>Campus Mail</i> .....	47
<i>Top 10 Reasons for Coming to IOU</i> .....	6	Department of Physics .....	31	<i>Board of Trustees</i> .....	47
<i>Politically Correct Speech at IOU</i> .....	6	Department of THE Computer Science .....	31	<i>Campus (In-)Security</i> .....	48
Admissions .....	7	<i>Forming a New Department</i> .....	31	Health Services .....	48
Financial Aid .....	7	College of Obscure and Unhealthy Professions .....	32	<i>Forms</i> .....	48
<i>College Acronyms</i> .....	7	School of Medicine .....	32	<i>Student Union, Local 666</i> .....	48
<i>The "Smith and Wesson" Scholarship</i> .....	7	<i>Other COUP Departments</i> .....	32	The Library .....	49
Continuing Education .....	7	<i>Creating Courses</i> .....	33	<i>The Illumni Association</i> .....	49
IOU Overview .....	8	School of Law .....	33	<i>Career Planning Center</i> .....	49
The University .....	8	College of Temporal Happenstance, Ultimate Lies, & Historical Undertakings .....	34	Student Disservices .....	50
<i>Where in the World Is IOU?</i> .....	8	<i>Faculty Blood Feuds</i> .....	35	<i>Vehicle Pool</i> .....	50
<i>Campus Rules</i> .....	8	Department of Prehistory .....	35	<i>Student Investment Services</i> .....	50
History (Oral Tradition Version) .....	8	Department of Ancient History .....	35	Student Organizations .....	51
Student Handbook (Readers Digest Version) .....	9	Department of Medieval Studies .....	36	Student Senate .....	51
<i>Major Dorms</i> .....	9	<i>Other CTHULHU Departments</i> .....	36	<i>Campus Crusade for C.T.H.U.L.H.U.</i> .....	51
<b>2. BUILDING CHARACTER(S) .....</b>	<b>11</b>	Department of Modern History .....	37	<i>Campus Crusade for Cthulhu</i> .....	51
Point Levels .....	12	Department of Future History .....	37	<i>Democrats for Cthulhu</i> .....	51
Character Types .....	12	D.O.C.T.O.R. .....	37	<i>WIOU and KIOU</i> .....	51
Advantages .....	15	School of Conservative Arts .....	38	<i>ROTC</i> .....	51
Disadvantages .....	16	<i>Other SCA Departments</i> .....	38	<i>The Daily Illuminator</i> .....	51
Skills .....	17	School of Performing & Creative Arts .....	38	<i>The Student Underground</i> .....	51
New Advantages .....	18	<i>Other SPCA Departments</i> .....	38	Student Liberation Organization .....	52
New Disadvantages .....	21	Department of Cinematography .....	39	<i>Society for Unimaginative Anachronism</i> .....	52
New Skills .....	23	College of Metaphysics .....	40	<i>Fraternities and Sororities</i> .....	52
<b>3. COLLEGES &amp; DEPARTMENTS .....</b>	<b>25</b>	<i>Other CoM Departments</i> .....	40	<i>Sample Fraternities &amp; Sororities</i> .....	53
School of Weird & Unnatural Sciences & Engineering .....	26	Department of Alchemy .....	40	Sports .....	54
<i>University Organization</i> .....	26	Department of Temporal Metaphysics .....	41	<i>Basic Moopsball Rules</i> .....	54
<i>Reorganizations</i> .....	26	Department of Thaumaturgy .....	41	<b>5. PEOPLE .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<i>Other WUSE Departments</i> .....	27	College of Communications .....	42	Personalities .....	56
Department of Chemistry .....	28	<i>Other CoC Departments</i> .....	42	The ArchDean .....	56
Department of Genetic Engineering .....	28	Department of Journalism .....	42	Dr. What? .....	57
		Department of Mass Media .....	43	Clark M. Walters .....	58
		School of Social Anti-Sciences .....	43	Dean of Metaphysics .....	59
		<i>Other SSAS Departments</i> .....	44	The Unseen Dean .....	59
		English Department .....	44	William Waldon .....	60
		College of Zen Surrealism .....	45	Lilly Ann Bie .....	61
		<i>Other CZS Departments</i> .....	45	Patricia Miller .....	61
				THE Computer .....	62
				George the Janitor .....	62

The Librarian .....	63
Robocrat.....	63
Madame Curry .....	64
Sample Students .....	64
Gillian Brent .....	64
Joe Calderwood .....	65
Loriel deForest.....	65
Guido .....	66
Sarah Holden .....	66
Johnathan Lirden III .....	66
Og .....	67
John Smith .....	67
Swomi Tift.....	68
Generic Staff.....	69
Campus Security .....	69
Sahudese Gardeners.....	69

## 6. PLACES.....70

Buildings and Landmarks.....	71
The Pent.....	71
The Main Building.....	71
Mapping the Campus.....	71
The Founder.....	71
The Clock Tower.....	72
The College of Metaphysics	
Building .....	72
The Avant Gardens .....	72
The Avant Guardsman.....	72
Generic Buildings.....	72
The Library .....	73
Student Scab Building.....	73
Student Confederacy.....	73
The Museum .....	73
Campus Bookstore.....	74
The Botany Building .....	74
The Public TOILET.....	74
Madame Salome's Performing Arts	
Center.....	75
Solar Power Plant.....	75
Croesus Illumni Center.....	75
Dorms .....	75
Borgia Center.....	76
A Typical IOU Meal.....	76
Maiham Stadium & the Sports	
Complex.....	76
University Regulation of Pocket	
Dimensions.....	77
The Steam Tunnels .....	77
The Town.....	78
Pyramid Mall .....	78
More Off-Campus Sites of Interest .....	79
Campus Map.....	80

## 7. THINGS.....81

Tech Level IOU .....	82
----------------------	----

Matter, Anti-Matter &	
Doesn't-Matter.....	82
Braindumping Machines.....	82
Campus Reality Stabilizers.....	83
Dimensional Gates.....	83
Miniaturizer .....	83
Po-Peel Artifact .....	83
Resurrectatron.....	84
SuperDuplicator.....	84
THE Computer.....	84
Vending Machines .....	84
Magic Items .....	85
Bare Skin Rug.....	85
The Crockpot of the Gods.....	85
Dimensional Gates.....	85
Life-Savers.....	85
Protection Racquet.....	85
Stupid Hat Tricks.....	86
Three-Piece Suits .....	86
VCR Remotes .....	86
... and THINGS! .....	86
Bimbiras.....	87
Bio-Ogre .....	87
Cats, the ArchDean's .....	87
CIA Gulls.....	88
Dryads.....	88
Gerbils, Zombie .....	88
IRS Agents.....	88
Kajones .....	89
Meeps.....	89
Pigeons, Campus.....	89
Rabbits, Lab.....	89
Rats .....	90
Squirrels.....	90
Stranglevine Cactus .....	91
Turtles, Arctic Furred .....	91

## 8. THE IOU CAMPAIGN.....92

IOU in Other Genres .....	93
Campaign Style .....	94
Silly.....	95
IOU and Time Travel.....	95
Weird .....	96
Darkly Illuminated.....	97
Using IOU in a Time	
Travel Campaign .....	97
Campus Life .....	98
Housing.....	98
Parking Permits.....	98
Transportation.....	99
Roommates.....	99
Food.....	99
Money .....	100
Recreation.....	100
Jobs Table.....	101

## 9. BEYOND MUNDANE.....

Technology .....	103
Weird Science and TL Modifiers .....	103
Do-It-Yourself Rubber Science .....	104
Control Ratings &	
Legality Classes .....	104
Gadgeteering at IOU.....	105
Catalogs.....	105
IOU in Space.....	106
Guaranteed Play-Balance Table .....	107
Character Death (or Otherwise) ....	107
Random Side-Effect Table .....	108
When PCs Own Too Much.....	108
Alien Tech .....	109
Gadgets for Non-Gadgeteers.....	109
Enigmatic Alien Device	
Button-Pushing Table .....	110
Loaning or Selling Gadgets.....	110
Gadgeteering: Inventing	
New Devices.....	111
Creating New Equipment .....	111
Bugs in Gadgets.....	111
Malfunctioning Gadgets .....	112
Optional Rule: "Gizmo" Gadgets ..	113
Gadgeteering During Adventures ..	114
Quick Gadgeteering.....	114
Psionics.....	114
Superpowers .....	114
Magic.....	115
Pun Magic.....	115
Weird Magic .....	115

## 10. IOU ADVENTURES.....117

One Card to Rule the Mall.....	118
The Ultimate Plot.....	118
The Egg and IOU.....	118
The Spammish Inquisition.....	119
From Bad to WUSE .....	119
Drafted into Security.....	120
Recruiting Drive .....	120
Sneak Preview.....	121
Old MacDonald had a Byte -	
AI IOU! .....	121
The Martian Morons.....	121
Terminal Exam.....	122
Off-Campus Adventures.....	122
Ya Cain't Get Heah From Theah! ..	122
Lights! Camera! Illuminati!.....	123

## GLOSSARY.....124

## BIBLIOGRAPHY.....125

## INDEX.....127

# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the **GURPS** system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

**Pyramid.** Our bimonthly magazine includes new rules and articles for **GURPS**, as well as information on our other lines: *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre Miniatures* and more. It also covers top releases from other companies — *Traveller*, *Call of Cthulhu*, *Shadowrun*, and many more.

**New supplements and adventures.** We're always working on new material, and we'll be happy to let you know what's available. A current catalog is available for an SASE.

**Errata.** Everyone makes mistakes, including us — but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all **GURPS** releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request.

**Q&A.** We do our best to answer any game question accompanied by an SASE.

**Gamer input.** We value your comments. We will consider them, not only for new products, but also when we update this book on later printings!

**Illuminati Online.** For those who have home computers, SJ Games has an online service with discussion areas for many games, including **GURPS**. Here's where we do a lot of our playtesting! It's up 24 hours per day at 512-448-8950, at up to 28.8K baud — or telnet to io.com. Give us a call! We also have conferences on CompuServe, GENie, and America Online.

## PAGE REFERENCES

Rules and statistics for this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition, Revised**. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to a page in the **Basic Set** — e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the **Basic Set, Third Edition, Revised**.

Page references that begin with an M refer to **GURPS Magic, Second Edition**. Other references are G for **GURPS Grimoire**, TT for **GURPS Time Travel**, P for **GURPS Psionics**, UT for **GURPS Ultra-Tech** and SU for **GURPS Supers**.

**N**o, this isn't a **GURPS** supplement about moneylenders . . . exactly. "IOU" stands for "Illuminati University." If you happened to be wondering what the "O" is for — you're not cleared for that information. IOU is the ultimate in cross-genre campaign worlds — one that combines the worst aspects of the modern-day world, weird science, bizarre happenings, time-, space- and dimension-travel, and the imaginative world-view of those newspapers found only in the supermarket checkout lines, and puts them all in a blender set on "puree."

**IOU** is the campaign setting that will let you use *everything* in the **GURPS** system. Of course, you can run an **IOU** campaign using nothing more than the **Basic Set**, but no one at Steve Jackson Games is going to complain if you want to use every **GURPS** supplement you own, and go looking for more. We do recommend you have **GURPS Magic** and **GURPS Time Travel** is required if you plan to do anything with actual time travel at IOU. **GURPS Grimoire** will also be very useful, especially its coverage of high-tech magic. **GURPS Supers**, **GURPS Psionics**, and **GURPS Fantasy Folk** may also be helpful if the GM allows the more exotic abilities from these books.

## ORIGINS

Illuminati University started life as we know it as a message area on Steve Jackson Games' Illuminati BBS, and will — probably — end life as we know it in its incarnation as this worldbook. (No, we're *not* going to explain what we mean by that — it's left as an exercise for the student . . .) The IOU board evolved (or degenerated, depending on how you look at things) into a freewheeling hybrid between a shared-world anthology and a roleplaying game. Meanwhile, one of the authors had been running a series of **GURPS** games at gaming conventions, partly inspired by R. Talsorian Games' *Teenagers From Outer Space*, but with university students for characters. One day, the BBS board and the convention series suffered a violent collision, and this worldbook somehow resulted.

Among other dubious distinctions, Illuminati University was the first university to be seized by the Secret Service (in the now-infamous Steve Jackson Games BBS raid).

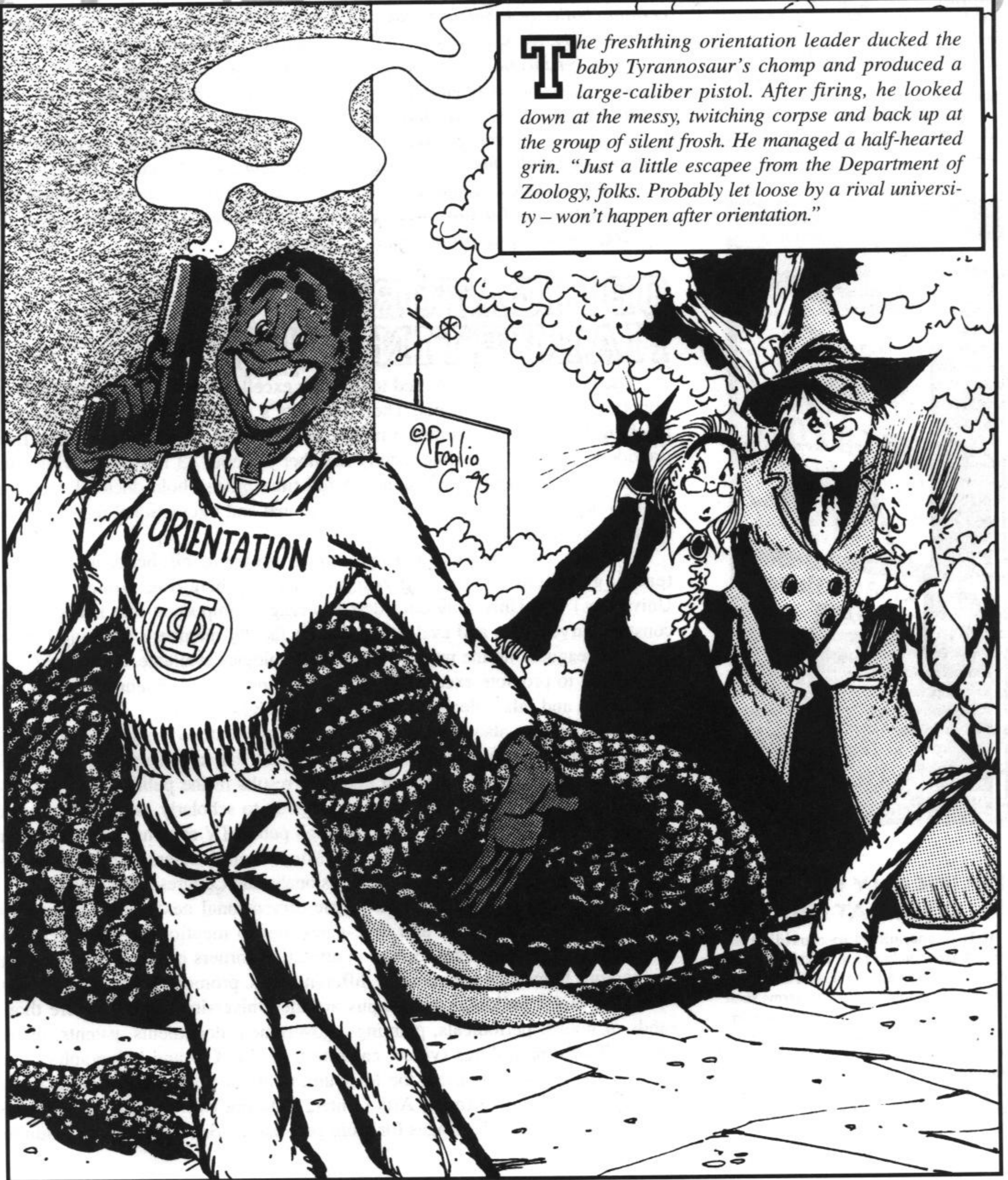
## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Elizabeth McCoy**, formerly of Austin, Texas and currently living in the Frozen Wastelands of southeastern New Hampshire, has numerous qualifications for being one of the authors — including five cats, a twisted sense of humor, experience at three colleges of various sizes and a degree in English which would make a dandy dartboard if it weren't rectangular. Of all the "traditional" literature which she has been forced to read in her studies, she recommends "A Modest Proposal" by Jonathan Swift, but hastens to point out that *Illuminati University* is much sillier.

**Walter Milliken** lives in the temperate, rational suburbia of southeastern New Hampshire, and has a well-paying *real* job as a computer programmer and systems architect. So it isn't quite clear how he got into the business of writing warped nonsense like **GURPS IOU**. Must be brain-damage — a view justified by the fact that he previously wrote the offbeat adventure "Sahudese Fire Drill" in **GURPS Fantasy Adventures**.

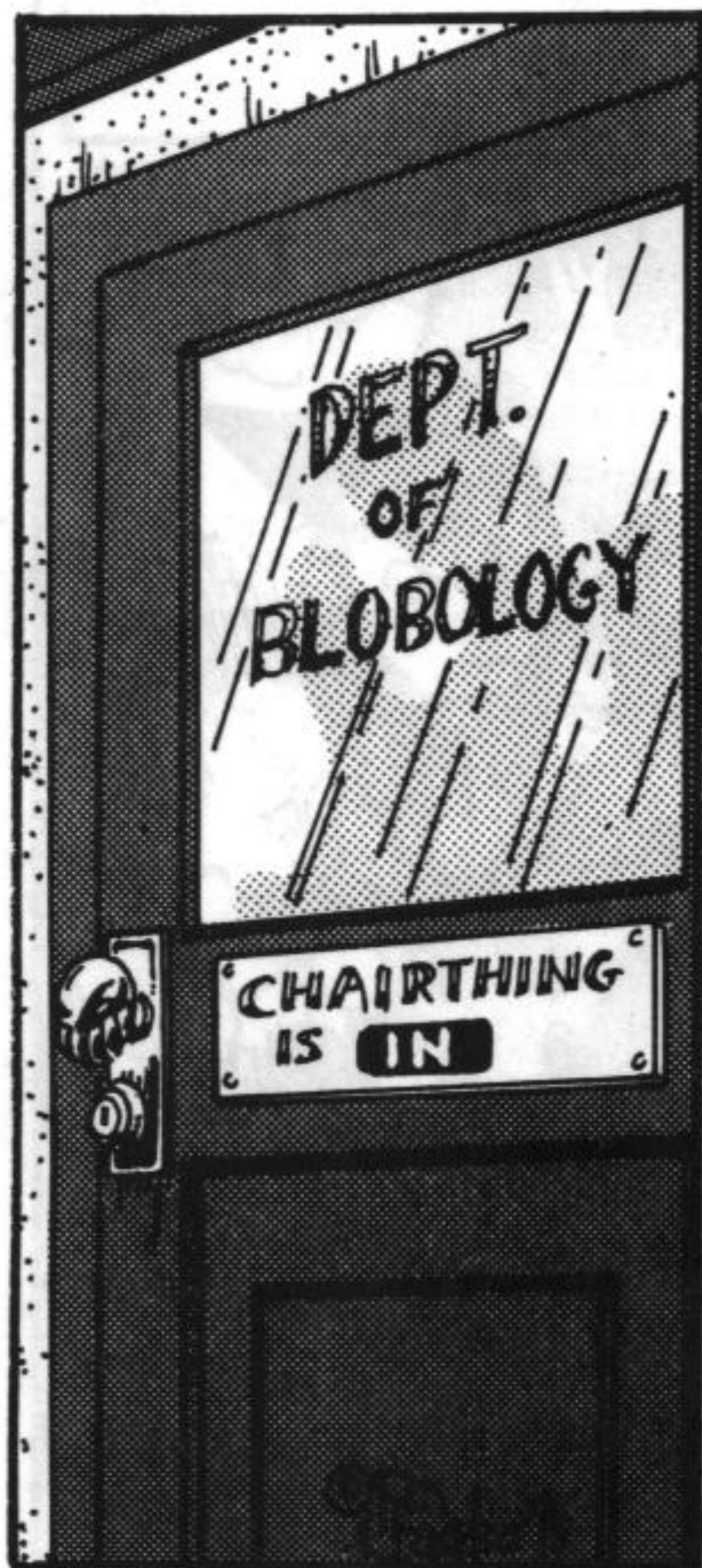
# WELCOME!

**T**he freshthing orientation leader ducked the baby Tyrannosaur's chomp and produced a large-caliber pistol. After firing, he looked down at the messy, twitching corpse and back up at the group of silent frosh. He managed a half-hearted grin. "Just a little escapee from the Department of Zoology, folks. Probably let loose by a rival university – won't happen after orientation."



## TOP 10 REASONS FOR COMING TO IOU

10. University? I thought this was a movie studio tour.
9. I'm not in Kansas (any more).
8. My saucer crashed. Here.
7. They threatened my dog.
6. I had a Critical Failure on a Teleport spell.
5. I made a wrong turn at Albuquerque.
4. I was paid to come here – this worries me.
3. I was kidnapped.
2. I like it here.
1. Fnord.



## POLITICALLY CORRECT SPEECH AT IOU

IOU is committed to providing an environment conducive to learning for all races, genders and species. Therefore, instead of potentially offensive terms such as "freshman" and "chairman," the administration will use politically correct terms such as "freshthing" and "chairthing." We wish to thank the battlefleet of the Zubenelgenubian Interspecies Hostility Reduction Council for their helpful advice and military restraint.

Gillian Brent was sure that he was lying through his teeth, and she muttered as much to Pyewacket, the black cat in her backpack.

One of the other freshthings was equally dubious. Hysterically, he wailed, "But – but the explosion in that building! The **creatures** you said were just staff! Those – those **flying saucers**! And the Botany building is a **tree**! How can anyone expect us to actually **study** here?!"

The orientation leader grimaced and coughed into his fist. "Well, there's a certain challenge inherent in taking courses at IOU, but people seem to adapt pretty quickly. Heck, by your second semester here, you'll be doing just fine."

From his incoherent moaning, the student didn't seem convinced. A couple of the Campus Security guards converged from somewhere, and helped the gibbering freshthing away, heading for the Health Center.

"Especially if you get your major from the Department of Hysteria," the leader added under his breath as he watched them go. "Mundanes. Gah."

Gillian snickered. "I think I'm going to like it here," she whispered to Pyewacket.

The feline eyed a slow-moving animal that looked rather like a puff of fur with legs, licked his chops and replied, "Me too!"

## OBLIGATORY MARKETING HYPE

The University is committed to offering excellent educational programs and opportunities for its students. The University's approximately 783.2 full-time teaching faculty (not counting Emeriti, faculty stored in cold sleep or MIAs) provide a ratio of 1 full-time faculty member to about 13 full-time, living, students. Sixty-nine percent of the active full-time faculty hold doctoral, terminal or third degrees, and many have earned national and international reputations in their professional fields.

A faculty member's second responsibility is earning his, her or its pay – i.e., teaching students. (The *first* responsibility is bringing money into the University.) The University considers teaching so important that it engages in constant surveillance and evaluation of each faculty member's teaching by students, colleagues and the most advanced technologies available. Such evaluation is intended to promote excellence in teaching and is used in tenure, promotion, termination and salary decisions concerning teaching faculty.

The University also requires its faculty to contribute to the growth of knowledge through scholarly research and to disseminate that knowledge to the community beyond the campus. Research normally results in the publication of books, articles, video tapes, holo-vids, or in talks given to scholarly associations, while wider dissemination is accomplished through public TV stations, appearances on talk shows, subliminal messages, Orbital Mind Control Lasers, explosive dispersal, various programs for educating professionals, and Congressional lobbying.

The University is located at a scenic dimensional nexus with convenient access to numerous world- and time-gates, not to mention the local town(s). The student dormitories are located in attractive corners of the campus and are harmonious homes for a number of different races, promoting cultural diversity.

Other major buildings on campus are the University Library, where thousands of books, periodicals, paintings, government documents, patents, maps, photo albums, recordings (video, cassette tape, LP, CD and holographic) and sensory bio-chips are housed; the Museum, home of many fascinating exhibits and artworks; the Performing Arts Center, featuring two conventional theaters and over a dozen smaller stages for more personal works; and Maiham Stadium, the sports complex.

WELCOME!

Illuminati University is accredited by the InterDimensional Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. Accreditation by the Association indicates that the institution has been carefully evaluated and found to meet financial standards agreed upon by various professional organizations, such as the ability to pay them substantial paperwork processing fees.

## ADMISSIONS

The University welcomes visitors to the campus. Visitors – especially prospective students – are encouraged to contact the office of Admissions ahead of time to arrange for a group indoctrination session, interview or tour of the campus with a qualified student admissions representative. These representatives are well-briefed on the current academic organization of the University, and have up-to-the-minute information about the criteria used by the Admissions Committee in reviewing candidates. They are also able to plausibly explain student activities, living arrangements and other aspects of campus life – and un-life.

All candidates for admission to IOU are required to submit the results of a College Entrance Examination Board Scholastic Aptitude Test, Credit Rating, Signed Release Form, at least three favorable references obtained from prominent members of the community and a large suitcase filled with small, unmarked bills for the application processing fee. Candidates applying for majors in Art, Music, Journalism, Photography and Character Assassination should include a portfolio of their work in the suitcase. Videotapes are also acceptable, as long as they have not yet received commercial distribution, and all rights are signed over to the University.

Once all appropriate forms are filled out in good order, and the student's credit references are verified, the student will matriculate at the start of the next semester. (No, it's not obscene, merely a big word for "entering school.")

## FINANCIAL AID

The University encourages students to be self-supporting, or at least University-supporting, but many students and their families lack sufficient funds to pay for tuition, room and board, and other necessary college expenses – such as a really good stereo. So, first the University takes the money away from the student, then it takes it from his parents, and finally, it is forced to take it from someone else.

The traditional source is the government (which, of course, will take it away from the student, his parents and *everyone* else – except the University, which is tax-exempt). Other sources include rich (and foolish) Illumni, who've bought themselves immortality by creating scholarship funds; corporations, which think they're investing money in a future, useful employee; and banks, which will loan the student money and take their pound of flesh right after he graduates.

IOU has carried the student loan process a step further, by cutting out the middleman and loaning the student tuition money directly out of University funds. Since it promptly gets the money back, *and* owns the student's future earnings for the next 20 years or so, this little bit of circular accounting is quite profitable, and won IOU's administration the Machiavelli Bureaucratic Duplicity Prize in 1984.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

Not content to stick to traditional educational roles, the University offers courses for the convenience of working people who seek a degree or merely wish to broaden their knowledge of the world. A wide variety of courses are given after normal working hours, so that people in the outside community can benefit from the educational opportunities that IOU provides.

## COLLEGE ACRONYMS

These are the acronyms used for Colleges and Schools within the University. For more acronyms used on campus, see the Glossary, p. 124, which also contains definitions of common campus terms, such as *Illumni* and *Fnord*, as well as acronyms used by the U.S. government.

*CoC*: The College of Communications.

*CoM*: The College of Metaphysics. Specializes in magic, alchemy and explosions.

*COUP*: The College of Obscure and Unhealthy Professions. Specializes in covert operations of all sorts, and explosions.

*C.T.H.U.L.H.U.*: The College of Temporal Happenstance, Ultimate Lies and Historical Undertakings. Specializes in time travel; explosions optional. Don't forget the periods in the acronym.

*SASS*: School of Anti-Social Sciences. See *WUSE*.

*SCA*: The School of Conservative Arts. Specializes in raking in money. Explosions are unprofitable.

*SPCA*: The School for Performing and Creative Arts. Specializes in artistic and physical arts; explosions rare, but pretty.

*SSAS*: The School of Social Anti-Sciences. Specializes in depressing literature and theories unconnected with reality. There are *no* uncouth explosions here.

*WUSE*: The College of Weird and Unnatural Sciences and Engineering. Specializes in computers, gadgets and explosions.



## THE "SMITH & WESSON" SCHOLARSHIP

Some students choose to invent their own form of financial aid – by stealing their way through college. At IOU, this is considered a sign of a highly-motivated student, and generally encouraged . . . unless the student tries to steal from the University!

A student who pays his tuition with no visible means of support (and the University has all his financial records, so it knows what he can afford) is said to be on a "Smith & Wesson Scholarship." Such students often become quite wealthy after graduation, so the University keeps close watch on them. Gathering blackmail material before they learn enough to be cautious *greatly* increases Illumni donations . . .

## WHERE IN THE WORLD IS IOU?

The first obvious answer is that it's everywhere, with branch campuses that are interconnected by arcane means. (IOU is an interdimensional nexus . . .) The second obvious answer is that it's wherever the GM wants it to be.

The GM is encouraged to set it in place of a local university, if one is handy, or a famous one if it's not. This worldbook generally assumes that the campus is near a small-to medium-sized town, and has at least 8,000 students.

As a reference, mundane universities have about 5,000 to 80,000+ students, and range from being the sole reason for a town (such as College Station, Texas) to sitting in the middle of a thriving city (such as those in Boston, Massachusetts).

## CAMPUS RULES

In a nutshell, these are the main rules that will be enforced by major deans and administrators, and not just Campus Security. In more complex terminology, most of these can be found in the student handbook, but this is the simple version that is passed down from student to student (and professor to professor).

- 1: The ArchDean always gets 10%.
- 2: There aren't any exceptions to Rule #1. No freebies!
- 3: Don't mess with cats.
- 4: Thou shalt never lower the ArchDean's stock values.
- 5: First-semester freshthings are completely off-limits.
- 6: No black holes on campus. Except small ones on pizza.
- 7: No antimatter on campus, either. Even on pizza.
- 8: Destruction of the Earth, the Sun or other Solar System objects requires the written permission of the ArchDean.
- 9: No faculty blood-feuds without a current permit!

IOU is proud to be the university that pioneered the concept of "drive-through" classes – just the thing for today's busy citizen with little time to spare for education.

## IOU OVERVIEW

### THE UNIVERSITY

Most universities strive to bring together a wide range of people from different cultures, worldviews and branches of knowledge, to create a vibrant intellectual community. Illuminati University takes this concept a step farther out: it is an intellectual crossroads in time, dimensions – and weirdness. The entire campus is a Weirdness Magnet; if something strange happens on Earth, it probably happens at IOU. At least once a semester . . .

IOU is the odd corner of the world where all the strange, non-mainstream people collect to find their own kind: the witches, the mad scientists, the vampires and werewolves, the psis, the rock stars . . . even the chiropractors. Similarly, odd artifacts and books find homes in the campus Museum, the Library and forgotten basements where old research projects are left to molder away until some unfortunate grad student turns them up on a scrounging expedition. IOU is the place where New Age became Old Hat – in 1892.

The University is the epitome of the academic counterculture, a bastion of academic ivory-tower isolation from the crass, material world. Yet the name implies that the whole campus is somehow associated with the ultimate masters of that same world . . . the Illuminati. Is IOU a dumping ground for the world's misfits, or a training ground for its future rulers? Anyone studying the campus carefully will probably decide that both theories are accurate.

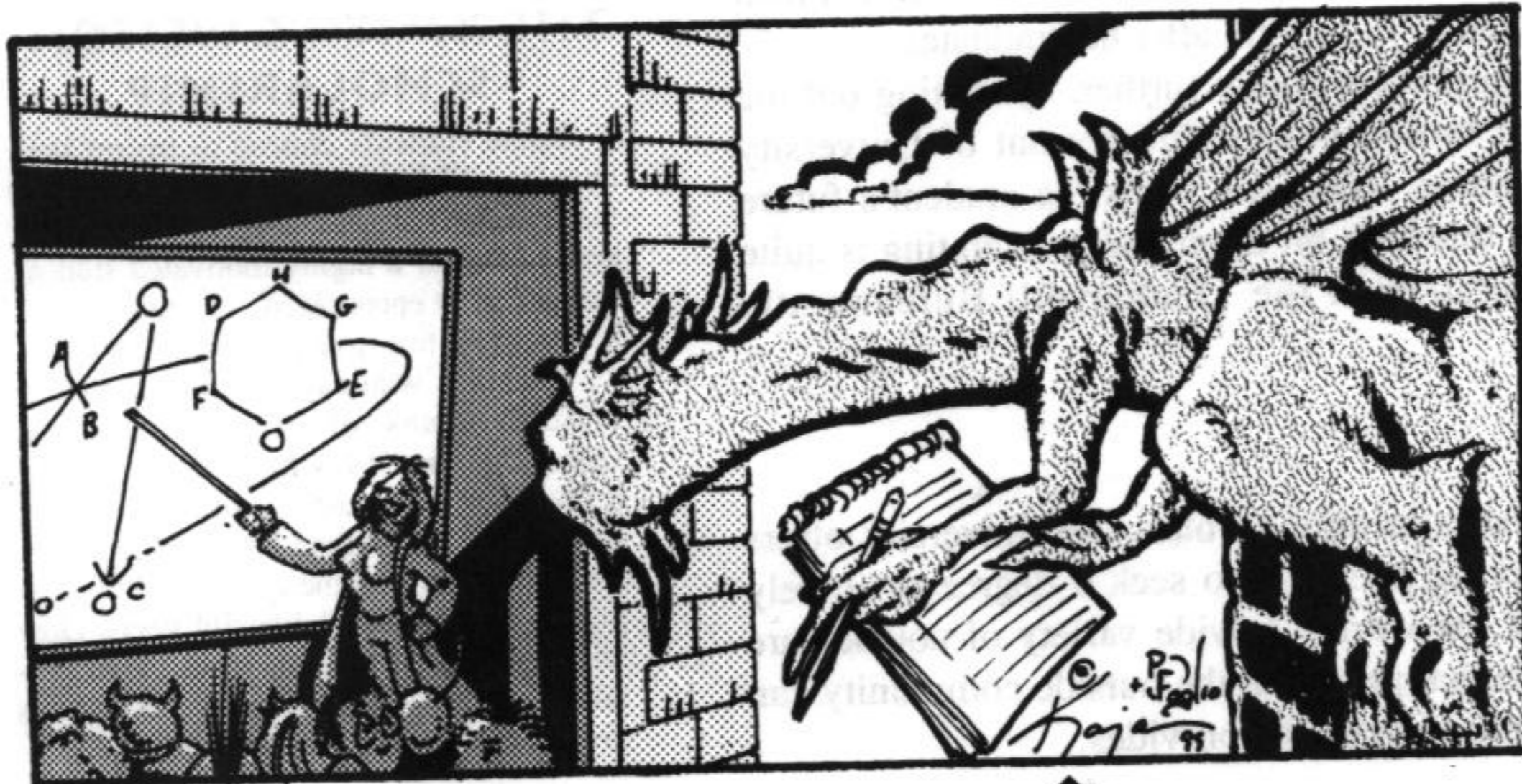
Superficially, IOU looks like any university campus – clusters of buildings set in expanses of lawn and carefully-tended shrubbery, with students wandering along the many pedestrian walks, lounging on benches studying and playing Frisbee behind the dorms. Those people not blinded by a mundane worldview, though, will notice more: some of the architecture is decidedly odd – how many universities hold classes in a giant treehouse? Or have bomb craters where one of the science buildings used to be? Or have gargoyles that actually move to watch passers-by? And many of the students and faculty are . . . *different*.

## HISTORY (ORAL TRADITION VERSION)

According to campus legends, the University is as old as the universe . . . and maybe even *older*, which would make the universe just another failed

WUSE experiment. However, this theory is hotly contested by students from the College of Metaphysics, who point out that "Universes, Creation of" is *clearly* under the jurisdiction of the Department of Applied Theology (and cite J. Halvah's thesis project, "Universe Creation in 144 Hours or Less" as evidence).

Since it is so old, the University had no name until a few more educational institutions were created and organized



WELCOME!

sports teams were formed. Not having a catchy name was bad for morale, so the Team convinced the administration of the need to choose something. Thus did Illuminati University (IOU) first appear in the Moopsball Hall Of Fame.

For a time, IOU thrived, producing numerous politicians, lawyers and high-ranking leaders in government, insurance and other forms of organized crime – as well as many notable Nobel Prize winners (frequently posthumous) and Pulitzer Prize-winning authors (frequently posthumorous). Unfortunately, the administration started suffering from that common bureaucratic affliction, *creeping Mundanitis*, and the University began a downward spiral into oblivion.

Rescue arrived in the form (and such a compelling form . . .) of the current ArchDean. Mysteriously, she just appeared one day, announced that IOU was under new management, and posted a list detailing who was being hired and who was being terminated. With the aid of her attractive secretarial corps, who handled much of the University's public relations (and fundraising) at the time, the ArchDean gained financial and political backing from many leading community figures – and Illuminati University was back in business.

Today, IOU is the Alma Mater for more Illumni than you can shake a conspiracy at, and generates a tidy profit for the administration. Once again the students can learn important things like how to deal with bureaucracy, the best ways to get people to give them money and how to eat the *weirdest* pizza on Earth.

And still no one knows what the "O" stands for . . . except maybe the ArchDean.

## STUDENT HANDBOOK (READER'S DIGEST VERSION)

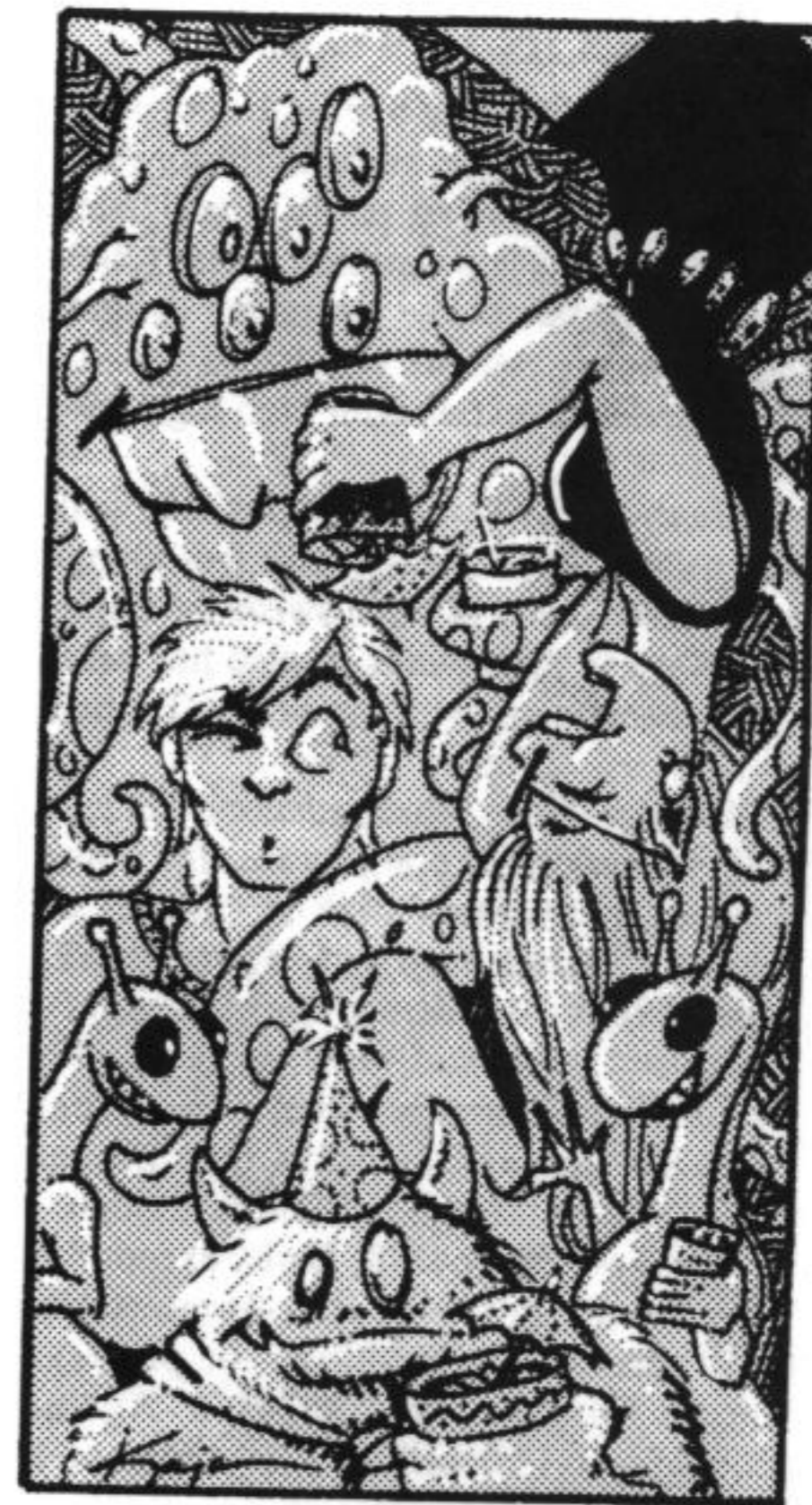
The following sections, excerpted from the IOU Student Handbook, provide useful information on University policies of interest to student characters.

### CLASSES

Full-time undergraduate students are expected to take from 12 to 18 credit-hours of courses each semester. Most courses are 3 or 4 credit-hours, though some offer variable credit at the whim . . . ah, discretion of the instructor. Students may take fewer courses only with the permission of the dean of their school, or they may switch to part-time status and pay by the credit hour (which costs about twice as much as being a full-time student). Any excess hours above 18 must also be approved by the dean of the school the student is majoring in, and require a nominal (*translation*: ruinous) fee per additional credit.

Normally, a bachelor's degree requires a minimum of 120 credit hours, with specific requirements set for each major by the school and department involved. In addition, the University may set certain general education requirements, subject to change without notice. These always include Freshthing English, and a minimum of three courses outside the school of the student's major – to provide the student with a broader view of the world. (Not to mention that several of the schools support themselves by providing "gimme" courses for use in fulfilling these distribution requirements.)

Each full-time student PC should choose courses; the player may make up interesting and suitable ones, or select from some of the sample courses in Chapter 3, or from a list provided by the GM. Due to scheduling constraints, competition for limited space, and the whim of the gods (or at least the University administration), students don't always get the courses they sign up for, often necessitating last-minute scrambling at the start of a semester. Also, due to forces beyond the student's control – such as the pro-



### MAJOR DORMS

This is brief overview of notable dorms on campus, where students live and study. The descriptions are what a student will be presented with . . . the removal of load-bearing walls, addition of a few coats of paint and purchase of new carpeting can make the scruffiest dorm room quite habitable.

**Butler:** This dorm is officially off-campus, and parties can get *wild* – "the Butlers did it," is often said when reports come in of green food coloring dumped in the town water supply. According to English majors, residing here is the kiss of death for any "artistic" hopes a student might have.

**de Sade:** Cramped rooms, deceptively comfortable-looking furniture, and itty-bitty windows for fresh air. At least it only houses about 150 students – all others can escape it. Incongruously enough, it is also a "party dorm." (Don't ask.)

**Faustus:** Gargoyles perch on the roof of this building; rooms are highly variable, but usually livable. The first floor is prone to unexpected, noisy parties around finals week, though.

**Jackson Hall:** Locally known as "Jackson's Hole," this is the major party dorm on campus. Because of a profitable relationship with Campus Security, just about anything goes here, if it doesn't violate the Campus Rules (p. 8).

*Continued on next page . . .*

## MAJOR DORMS (CONTINUED)

**Louis XVI:** Expensive and luxurious, this U-shaped, three story building (surrounding a swimming pool) is populated by rich students and those on sports scholarships. The penthouse rooms are delightful. Parties are tasteful, elegant affairs – or drunken debaucheries with high toga quotients.

**Monty Hall:** Thirteen stories tall, with tiny rooms, this is where most freshthings are housed; many of them swear the building sways in high winds. It also has basement connections with the Steam Tunnels (p. 77).

**Murphy Hall:** Where random students with Unluckiness congregate, for some reason. Thermostats stick at “arctic” or “sauna,” lights burn out, doors creak, pipes break, windows spontaneously crack, and most students visit the Health Center several times per week. Aside from frequent accidents, not a bad place. Nobody dares throw a party here, though.

**Torquemada:** Like de Sade, except the furniture doesn't even look comfortable and there are no windows or parties. Known for poor air circulation. Again, only about 150 unlucky students are trapped here.

**Wilson:** All the *really* illuminated students hang out here. Has a lot of pyramid designs tucked away in it (wallpaper, carpeting, elevator buttons, etc.). Parties are usually surreal.



WELCOME!

fessor getting lost in a black hole for three months – courses may disappear or mutate at any time. However, the University does *not* refund any tuition or fees if this happens!

If the GM wishes to deal with the bookkeeping, successful completion of a typical one-semester course counts as half a character point towards the primary skill taught in that course.

## GRADES

Full-time students are expected to meet minimum academic – and financial – standards. The University uses a four-point grade scale for both. Any student

unable to maintain at least a 2.0 average in at least one of the two categories will be terminated. (Any unpaid tuition or fees are still due to the University, of course!) In no case will a student with less than a 1.0 average in either category be allowed to continue at IOU.

Students should note that most professors are *quite* flexible in their grading procedures, and suitable arrangements can usually be made if the student is having academic difficulties in a particular class. As an alternative, students with academic problems may wish to petition the deans of their schools for special exemptions, based on impressive non-academic activities on behalf of the school, such as fund-raising or donations of cash or valuable properties.

## STUDYING

Students are expected to study outside of class – approximately two hours of study time each week for every credit hour in a given course. Naturally, study time varies with the capabilities of the individual and the demands of the professor. The GM should note that many professors suffer from the Delusion that “Other professors don't give students any *real* homework, so I should make up for this.”

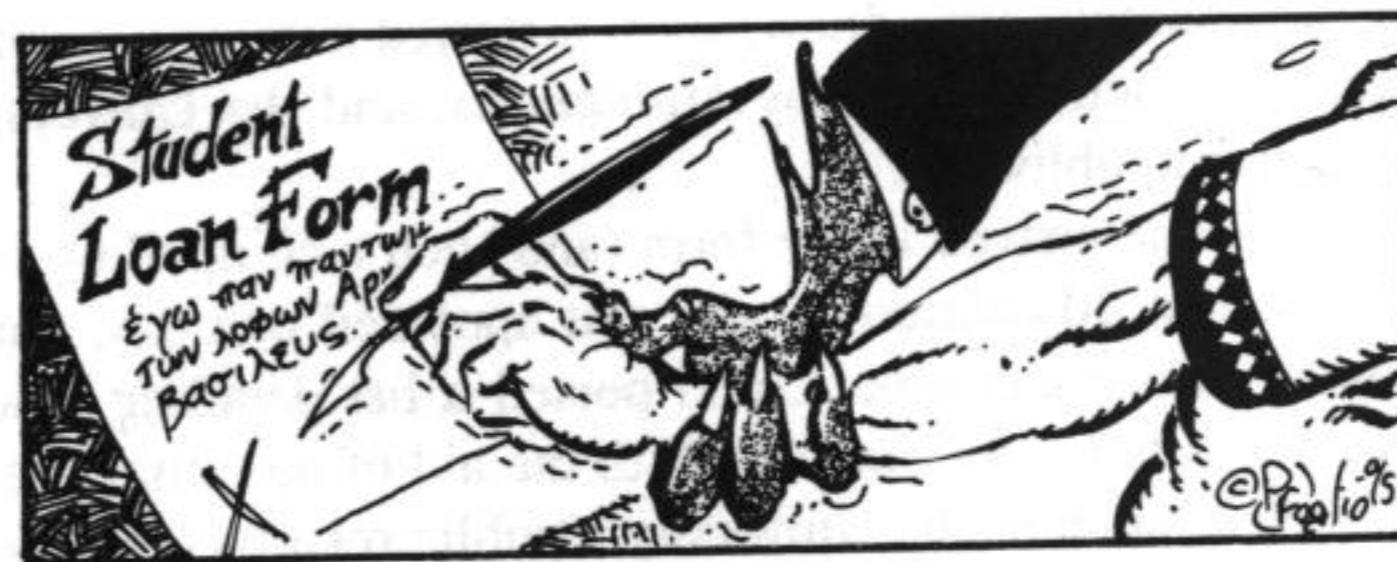
The University provides many places suitable for studying, including the Library, student lounges and sound-insulated dormitory rooms with spacious desks. (Most of these are actually noisy, cramped and filled with discarded soft-drink cans, candy-bar wrappers, bags half full of moldy potato chips and less-identifiable substances, all of which contribute to an atmosphere conducive to learning – or deafness, ulcers, insomnia and major brain damage.)

Some courses may require study off-campus for special projects. Students may need to make special arrangements if they need to be off-campus on a project for an extended period of time.

## CULTURAL EVENTS

For the cultural enrichment of the student population, the University sponsors a wide variety of cultural events, including moopsball games; movies in the Pent; speakers on many topics; performances of dance, music, theater and other artistic endeavors in the Performing Arts Center; the Homecoming Carnival; and, of course, the weekly “Casino Night” held in the chapel.

Many of these enrichment activities require the payment of a modest entry fee; others are funded from the “Student Activities Fee” included in tuition. The Casino Night is “free,” though anyone with a Gambling skill of less than 18 is likely to find it *quite* expensive.



# BUILDING CHARACTER(S)



"Your name?" asked the secretary.

The fur-clad student shifted nervously, and adjusted his loincloth. "Og. One 'g.' Tribe of Larh."

"Year and major?"

"Freshthing. Ancient History. College of Temporal Happenstance, Ultimate Lies and Historical Undertakings," Og recited proudly, and thumped his club on the floor for emphasis.

The secretary seemed unimpressed. "Very nice. I presume you're here on a scholarship, too." She waited for Og

to nod. "All right, we'll just skip birthdate and age right now. Here's the key to your room and a copy of the rules for University dormitories. Ah, can you read them?"

Og took the booklet and turned it in a few different directions. "Og get somebody read it, then Og remember. No problem." He nodded politely to the secretary and went outside, passing by a pointy-eared woman and someone with orange and green striped hair. Og tied the room key to the leather thong hanging from his club, examined his campus map and set out to find his dorm.

## POINT LEVELS

IOU campaigns can be run at a wide variety of point levels. A student-oriented game would typically involve second-semester Freshthings, with a total value of 100 character points. This lets students start with a general knowledge of the University and some of its eccentricities, and allows plenty of time for adventures before graduation. Besides students, various other inhabitants of the University and environs may be played at this point level.

Due to the hazardous nature of the environment, point values rise rapidly with academic achievement: sophomores are about 125 points, juniors, 150, and senior undergraduates have point totals around 175. Academic levels convey a small amount of status on campus, but only the transitions from freshthing to sophomore and undergraduate to grad student are significant enough to require point expenditure for increased Academic

Status. A freshthing who has earned 125 points has probably also gained sufficient credit hours – or the equivalent in cash or blackmail material – to advance to sophomore status.

If a higher-powered campaign is desired, characters can be graduate students (200-300 points), assistant professors (250-300 points) or full professors (300-350 points). Those wishing to indulge in interdepartmental politics can become department heads/chairthings (300 points and up), or deans (500-1000 points). Those aspiring to the position of ArchDean should have at least {fnord} points.

Denizens of IOU often have major problems, especially if they are powerful. Suggested disadvantage limits are -40 points for characters designed on 100 total points or less, -60 points for PCs up to 250 total points, and -100 points for characters over 250 total points.

## CHARACTER TYPES

Universities are full of peculiar people with wide ranges of skills, interests and eccentricities. Many of these characters would have a hard time living in the real world – academic isolation is a wonderful thing. This allows a great deal of latitude in character design, since the troublesome constraints of other settings are not important in university environments. ("Your character does *what* for a living?" "Early Middle-European Alliterative Poetry. He's got a Ph.D. in it." "Oh, that's okay then.")

IOU characters have even more latitude in the area of esoteric skills and exotic abilities. Most universities would find the sight of a group of students playing Frisbee – in mid-air – at least *slightly* unusual. Practicing witches, budding telepaths, illegal aliens from Betelgeuse V and novice supers are all welcome at Illuminati University, as long as they (or their parents) have good credit ratings. The University is truly an equal-opportunity institution.

### UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

#### 100-175 POINTS

As a general rule, low-level undergrads will not have many points in skills, but will often have a considerable number of points invested in attributes, advantages or odd abilities. More advanced students will have substantial skill levels in their majors, as well as Area Knowledge (IOU) and Survival (IOU).

Undergrads don't leave campus much until their junior or senior year, but then will find themselves participating in field trips and other assorted hazards. Players should note that undergraduates have a short life expectancy if they don't have student life insurance for some reason.

Refer to Chapter 3, *Colleges and Departments*, to choose a major and determine any special requirements for characters in

that subject area. Most full-time undergrads take four courses each semester.

### GRADUATE STUDENTS

#### 200-300 POINTS

These students, commonly called "gradthings" – or "free labor" – spend a lot of their time working for professors in labs (read: experiment fodder) or as teaching assistants (read: babysitters). Other important activities of grad students include starting their own side-businesses and assembling blackmail material on their thesis advisors. (Of course, in COUP, these are often the same thing.)

Gradthings often spend much of their time off campus, participating in conferences, running experiments on an unknowing populace of mundanes. Course loads for grad students vary: one nearly finished with his degree will probably not be taking any courses, but rather be working hard on his thesis research (see below). New gradthings usually take from one to three courses per semester.

Useful advantages for grad students are Wealth, Luck and Combat Reflexes. Typical skills include high skill levels in their degree areas, Fast-Talk, Scrounging, Teaching and often combat skills. Running and Stealth can also come in handy. Any of the Thief/Spys skills can be considered survival skills.

The hazards of graduate life are myriad, ranging from rival students out to steal one's research, to dealing with crazy faculty, to keeping one's latest experiment from devouring all the vending machines on campus. Even more than undergrads, grad students should make sure their student life insurance is paid up.

Graduate students need thesis advisors. The player may design an NPC professor in the appropriate department, or the GM may inflict one on the student. Advanced gradthings must

## BUILDING CHARACTER(S)

have a thesis topic, which the player should pick, with the GM's approval. To graduate, the student must defend his thesis to a panel of professors from his department. At IOU, this may involve anything from blackmail, to Fast-Talk, to armed combat, and can make a good adventure plot.

## FACULTY

### 250-350 POINTS

In many ways, the life of a junior faculty member is like that of a grad student, only the pay is better. In place of a degree, junior faculty are pursuing the Holy Grail of Tenure, but the methods are often similar to those used by gradthings (e.g., bribery and blackmail). Faculty are expected to do research and publish papers bringing prestige – and profit – to the University. “Publish or Perish” can be literally true at IOU!

Besides the usual hazards of doing research, faculty also encounter the dangers of departmental politics. These include promotion by assassination (character or actual), lack of funding and faculty bloodfeuds (see p. 35). Faculty are usually covered by life insurance provided by the University, which is a deluxe version of Student Health Insurance. However, faculty members in the ArchDean's bad graces may find their coverage has suddenly lapsed, especially if they've been skimming profits. Tenured faculty are eligible for the first level of The Treatment (p. 20).

Typical advantages include Academic Status, Wealth, Unfazeable and Tenure (for senior professors). All faculty have a required -10 point Duty (to the University, quite often, frequently hazardous), and many have the Absent-Minded and Greed disadvantages. A very few have Sense of Duty (Students), while others, especially senior professors, have Intolerance (Undergrads). Skill levels in the 20+ range are typical in the professor's field, though many faculty have narrow specializations. Other important skills include Research, Acting, Detect Lies, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Merchant, Law and any of the Thief/Spy skills. Teaching skill is optional.

Faculty are members of a department. The player should pick a subject area, based on the professor's skills, and choose an appropriate department from Chapter 3, *Colleges and Departments*. (Or, with the GM's approval, the player can invent a new department to be in, as long as the character isn't the chairthing.)

## ADMINISTRATORS

### 300 POINTS

The University employs a number of people as professional toadies . . . that is, administrators. These are the cream of the crop – the faculty and staff who have shown outstanding abilities in management, political infighting, profiteering, sophisticated blackmail and survival against all odds.

Major administrative positions include: deans of the various schools within the University, the Bursar, the Chief Librarian and the President of the Illumni Association. Lesser administrative positions include chairthings of departments, the Head of Food Services and the Head of Student Disservices.

All administrators are required to have at least the first level of The Treatment advantage (see p. 20), and the disadvantage Duty (to the University, -10 points if the character has The Treatment below level 3, -5 otherwise). Major Department Heads/Chairthings and minor Deans should have two levels of The Treatment. Major deans must have the full three levels, or they won't last in office long . . .

Skills appropriate to administrators include Administration, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Accounting, Merchant, Detect Lies, Psychology, Politics, Acting, Intimidation, Leadership, Tactics and any of the Social and Thief/Spy skills. Combat skills can also come in handy at faculty budget meetings. Other skills

related to job position are strictly optional – at this level, actually knowing what you are doing is less important than being able to tell others what to do, and getting *them* to do it.

Besides The Treatment, all administrators have Academic Status appropriate to their position (see the table on p. 18). Other typical advantages include high levels of Wealth, Luck, Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense or outright psi powers, Magical Aptitude, Patron and Ally Group –underlings, often unwilling – and private hit squads.

Disadvantages common to administrators include Bully, Enemy, Megalomania, Greed, Miserliness, No Sense of Humor, Paranoia, Laziness, Intolerance (students) and various Odious Personal Habits. Very few administrators will have Gullibility, Sense of Duty (students), Honesty or Truthfulness.

Deans of schools and other major administrators will typically be built on 500+ points, while major school deans like WUSE, COUP and Metaphysics may be up to 1,000 points. Department heads and other lesser administrators will be 300-500 points, depending on the competition for, and hazards of, the position. Department heads in major schools like WUSE, COUP and Metaphysics are often 450+ points, while the head of the English department might only be 250.

## STAFF

### 0-100 POINTS

Besides professors and administrators, the University employs a large number of people to perform a variety of necessary (and unnecessary) jobs around campus. These jobs include cooks in the dining halls, flunkies in the administrative offices, departmental secretaries, the ever-busy repair and maintenance crews, the groundskeeping staff and members of Campus Security.

Most of these people provide color to the campaign, and make convenient obstacles for the PCs' plans or “red-shirts” (i.e., expendable targets) for the Monster of the Week, but some of them may be PCs. Also, students fill many of these jobs on a part-time (and sometimes terminal) basis. See the Jobs Table, p. 101.

As a rule, departmental secretaries are usually Bimbiras (p. 87) or Kajones (p. 89) and the higher-status the boss, the higher the secretary's Appearance. Some secretaries only *appear* to be Bimbiras or Kajones, and can be quite formidable. Some have something on the boss . . . Their status is their bosses' Status -2.

Staff members need skills appropriate to their positions, as well as Survival (IOU) and Area Knowledge (IOU). It can be very embarrassing to be late to work because you forgot that the building would be on the *south* side of campus this week. *Exception:* Campus Security members need *no* skills whatsoever – the University will take anyone who hasn't yet heard about the working conditions (and expected lifespan).

Useful advantages and common disadvantages vary with job position. Cooks, for example, can benefit from Immunity to Poison and Cast Iron Stomach and often have No Sense of Smell/Taste. Members of Campus Security who have survived more than a month in their jobs usually have Paranoia and Cowardice. All staff normally have health insurance, for no point cost, and must have at least a -5 point Duty (to IOU). Many staff members have Greed or Miserliness, and few have more than average Wealth.

## ILUMNI

### 200 POINTS

These are the lucky few who have graduated from IOU. They may be visiting campus, or a campaign could be developed around a group of classmates who have graduated. Some Illumni may hang around campus because it's one of the few places in an otherwise mundane world where they fit in. Or they may have more sinister reasons for lurking . . .

Illumni should be designed much like senior undergrads or grad students, only their skill levels will be somewhat higher. (Wealth levels will usually be *much* higher.) Most Illumni will have jobs of some sort, usually suited to their skills.

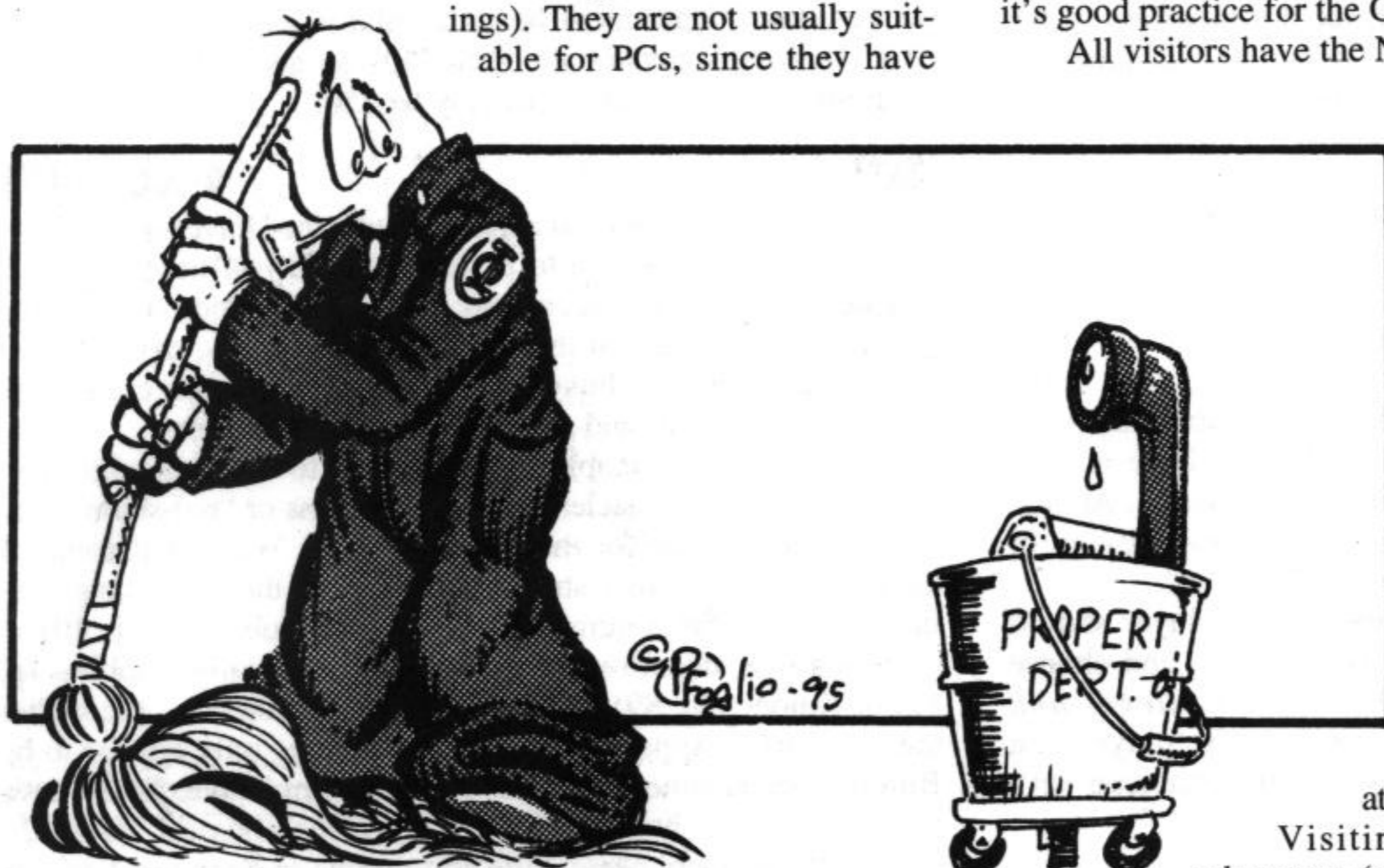
As a rule, Illumni have the No Insurance disadvantage, since they aren't part of the campus community, and thus are not covered by the peculiar medical services available at IOU. However, a local Illumnus has the option of buying University life insurance through the Illumni Association. Cost varies with the character's income, but will always be *at least* 20% of the character's monthly income, due promptly on the first of each month, in advance.

## VISITORS

### 25-150 POINTS

Visitors to the campus come in five general flavors: prospective students and their parents, academic visitors, job-seekers, salespeople and intruders.

*Prospective students* are treated very well indeed (as long as they've got decent credit ratings). They are not usually suitable for PCs, since they have



low point values, and aren't yet clued in to the true nature of IOU. They mostly fall into the category of "innocent bystanders," though sometimes they may be the source of problems. However, an IOU campaign might start with students visiting campus, in which case 100-point characters are recommended. This is also a good way to introduce a new player into an ongoing IOU campaign.

*Academic visitors* are professors and students from other universities who are on campus for a conference, a sports event or are working on collaborative projects with IOU professors. They should be designed like the corresponding IOU denizens, except that they will have the No Insurance disadvantage. (There *are* other universities inhabited by weird characters with odd powers – often IOU rivals.) These characters are best suited to one-shot games.

*Job-seekers* are would-be staff, usually attracted by IOU's high pay, good benefits and totally deceptive "Help Wanted" advertisements. They should be designed like ordinary staff, though Mundane Background is a common disadvantage, as are Gullibility and low IQ. New players with staff characters may be brought into the campaign in this way.

*Salespeople* are generally known on campus as "targets."

They are not usually suitable for PCs, though there are some outside food and handicraft vendors who regularly bring push-carts onto the campus. The primary characteristic of salespeople is a high level of Fast-Talk skill, and they often have Voice or other influence-related advantages. Salespeople who bother the ArchDean (or fail to pay her "tax" for on-campus sales) usually disappear quickly.

*Intruders* are visitors with sinister motivations, often spying on the campus, attempting to sabotage someone's research or kidnapping a Filthy Rich student. Or they could simply be IRS agents or other terrorists. They may be masquerading as any of the more innocuous visitors, but are much higher in point value (150+ points). Intruders are normally heavy in Thief/Spy and Social skills, and have corresponding advantages; Mundanity (see p. 19) is common – and annoying. Typical disadvantages include Intolerance, Greed, Fanaticism, Secret, No Sense of Humor and Duty. Most intruders are quickly discovered by the ArchDean's efficient surveillance systems and intelligence sources, but she doesn't always inform anyone else . . . after all, it's good practice for the COUP students.

All visitors have the No Insurance disadvantage, though the ArchDean might "generously" allow use of the campus medical facilities to a potential student caught in crossfire. (The parents are likely to sue . . .)

## VISITING

### FACULTY 150-400 POINTS

These are professors with permanent positions at other schools, temporarily working at the University for a semester or two. They may be working on a special project requiring facilities only available at IOU, or they may have special expertise in an esoteric subject, and have been invited to lecture at the University for the prestige value.

Visiting faculty never have the Tenure advantage (at IOU – they may be tenured at their "home" school), nor can they have any level of The Treatment. They *are* covered by the University's faculty life insurance plan. Academic Status is normal for the professor's rank, but Wealth levels will usually be below those of comparable IOU professors. Skill levels in Area Knowledge (IOU) and Survival (IOU) will be lower than average IOU faculty – visiting professors have a distressing tendency to get lost, or get eaten by wandering monst . . . ah, experiments. Otherwise, they should be designed as normal IOU professors.

## LOCAL CITIZENRY

### 0-100 POINTS

Like any university, IOU is surrounded by off-campus businesses catering to the students: bars, pizza joints, rental housing, fast-food franchises, tarot readers, used book/clothing/furniture stores, laundromats and police stations. There is also the nearby Pyramid Mall, with 523 stores (give or take a dozen – they change frequently) and the quiet residential district of University Heights, where many of the IOU faculty live.

This provides a wide assortment of irate shopkeepers, local weirdos and eccentric neighbors. It is also possible for some of these characters to become involved in a campaign as PCs, if the GM is sufficiently clever.

Local citizens never have any of the University-related advantages (such as Tenure or The Treatment), and will always have the No Insurance disadvantage (unless they are also Illumni who pay for the privilege). Skills and advantages tend to match the citizen's job; many of them have high levels of Merchant and Detect Lies skill. Since the University is a Weirdness Magnet, the local citizens may have odd advantages like psi powers or Magical Aptitude. Few of the locals will have the Mundane Background disadvantage, unless they're Mundanes or recent arrivals – they've witnessed too many odd things coming from the campus. (Many locals have developed the Unfazeable advantage as a result.)

## OTHER

IOU is a Weirdness Magnet without peer: sometimes hapless individuals or groups wander onto campus by mistake, or hitchhikers are dropped off by alien spacecraft on their way to Mars, or pesky heroes are teleported in by evil wizards from alternate dimensions.

What with one thing and another (like over-reactions by students in the Department of Military Science and Cost Overruns' course, "Military Overkill and its Applications"), these transients often lose their transportation and get stuck on campus for a while; some of them for several centuries. Others simply like the University's ambience (such as the radiation leaks from the power plant, or the frat parties) and just hang around. A few of them are still trying to find their way off-campus – helpful students keep giving them directions.

Whatever the reason, an assortment of entities not strictly affiliated with the University can be found on campus. Such characters can

## VARIABLE

make interesting PCs, though it is rather dangerous – the No Insurance disadvantage is required. On the other hand, anything goes for other advantages, disadvantages and skills (at least anything that doesn't send the GM screaming for the door). All you need is a character story, and for IOU, it doesn't even have to be very convincing.

## ILLUMINATI

## {FNORD} POINTS

Since playing Illuminati is so expensive, there are none in the campaign. This is really true. Trust us.



# ADVANTAGES

This section discusses standard advantages that need special treatment in an *Illuminati University* campaign. Also, advantages from any *GURPS* sourcebook or worldbook can be used for IOU characters, with the GMs approval. Psi, magic and super powers are all fairly common, and aliens with odd abilities are not unknown.

## ALLY

P. B23

At IOU, it is possible to obtain an *unwilling* Ally through blackmail or other forms of coercion. Such allies work differently than the "reliable" allies described in the *Basic Set*. An unwilling Ally does not have the PC as an Ally, and the character isn't required to treat the Ally as well as he would a "normal" Ally. However, if the PC endangers the Ally, or attempts to get him to do something sufficiently unpleasant, the "Ally" may rebel, and the hold on the Ally is lost. (In game terms, the PC loses the Ally advantage, permanently.) Naturally, betraying the Ally will also terminate the relationship. (This happens if the PC reveals the Ally's Secret, or otherwise loses the "hold" through exposure.)

Because unwilling Allies are less reliable – and probably hate your guts – they are cheaper than regular Allies of the same power. An unwilling Ally has 25 more character points than a willing Ally of the same point cost. Example: a "standard" Ally

of 100 points costs the PC 5 points, while the same 5 points buys a 125-point unwilling Ally.

## ALLY GROUP

P. B232

Typical small groups include apartment mates or a lab team. The Team, the members of a sorority or fraternity, or a professors' class of students count as a medium group. The local Illumni Association, the professors in a University department, or the students in a particular dorm count as a large group. The 100-point limit on members does not apply at IOU – each additional 25 points per member raises the Ally Group's cost by 10.

An entire school of the University may be purchased as a Patron, but cannot be an Ally Group.

*Unwilling Ally Groups* are groups of people who owe a collective Duty to the character through coercion. A typical example at IOU is a class of students, who must do as their professor orders or fail the course. Members of an unwilling Ally Group are 25 points higher as individuals, for the same point cost for the Ally Group. For example, for a base cost of 10 points, an unwilling Ally Group of small size would be composed of 100-point characters. See *Ally*, above, for more on the behavior of unwilling allies.

## LUCK

P. B21

Both normal Luck (15 points) and Extraordinary Luck (30 points) can be useful to students at IOU. So, for that matter, can *Ridiculous Luck*, usable every 10 minutes, for 60 points. The GM may also permit *Super Luck*, which allows the player – rather than rolling dice at all – to *dictate* the result of any one die roll made by his character (or by the GM, for his character) once per hour of playing time. Wholly impossible attempts still cannot succeed, but the player can choose any result which would be possible, no matter how unlikely, on a single normal die roll. This costs 100 points.

A character can take *Super Luck* and any degree of “normal” Luck, but *Super Luck* cannot be taken more than once.

## PATRON

P. B24

Like Allies, Patrons may be acquired at IOU by coercive means. The basic rules for unwilling Allies also apply to unwilling Patrons. Unwilling Patrons have a base cost 5 points less than “standard” Patrons. For example, a 150 point character normally costs 10 points as a Patron. An unwilling 150 point Patron has a base cost of only 5 points.

Since Patrons are more powerful than PCs, taking an unwilling Patron is risky – if the Patron can find a way to break the “hold,” he will, and will probably become an Enemy! Unwilling Patrons are most popular with COUP students.

Students with a professor as a mentor may take him as a regular Patron.

## UNUSUAL BACKGROUND

P. B23

This advantage is nearly meaningless at IOU. In most cases, the cost of an advantage or exotic skill will be enough. GMs could charge an Unusual Background for a student who somehow managed to take (and survive) the first level of *The Treatment*, say. Real live demi-deities, people with unrestricted access to

# DISADVANTAGES

Like advantages, disadvantages from other *GURPS* world-books are generally applicable to an IOU campaign, with GM approval. A few disadvantages from the *Basic Set* and other *GURPS* books need special explanation.

The GM may choose not to count disadvantages that will vanish over the course of the campaign (e.g., negative Academic Status) against the disadvantage limit for characters.

## DUTY

P. B39

Duties are very popular at IOU, especially with faculty and administrators, who think that anyone below them in the pecking order owes them . . .

Examples of common Duties at IOU:

*Students to professors:* homework, aka scutwork: quite often, but not *usually* very hazardous, -5 points. (This covers *all* the student’s classes, not just one.)

*Grad students to thesis advisors:* almost all the time, may or may not be hazardous, depending on research topic, -15/-10 points.

*Research assistants to professors:* fairly often, usually hazardous, -5 points.

*Campus Security to IOU:* almost all the time, extremely hazardous (see p. SU16), -20 points.

## ENEMY

P. B39

A common Enemy for students is a roommate. Such Enemies are usually worth only -5 points, and appear quite often (roll of 12-). A *very* irritating roommate, or several normal roommates, might be worth -10 points.

## BUILDING CHARACTER(S)

technology above TL8 and greater demons would have an Unusual Background at the University.

## WEALTH

P. B16

Large quantities of cash are very useful at IOU. A carefully-suppressed survey of IOU students showed that 91% of them come from Wealthy or higher backgrounds. In addition, many students, faculty and administrators are *extremely* wealthy. To represent this, use the Multimillionaire advantage (p. B237). Student Wealth levels below Very Wealthy receive special treatment – see *Money*, p. 100.



## ILLITERACY

P. B33

All students, faculty and staff at IOU should be literate, to avoid taking remedial English courses for the next decade. The only exception is the Team, for which literacy is optional. Illiteracy is a -10 point disadvantage in a modern IOU campaign.

## POVERTY

P. B16

Illuminati University gives the term “Dead Broke” a whole new meaning – this disadvantage is often fatal at IOU. Poverty may be survivable, if the character has some overwhelming special talent that will win a scholarship, like being the world’s best moopsball player or the ability to spin straw into gold. Taking the ArchDean as a Patron also works, but costs a *lot* of points, and will put the character in line for many dangerous and unpleasant jobs, like cleaning litterboxes for the ArchDean’s cats.

PC students with Poverty can be assumed to have a scholarship, but must either have a non-mundane advantage, or an IQ or DX of 14 or above. The character will almost certainly need to have a job, as the scholarship will only cover the basics of tuition and room & board. Edible food, transportation and text-

book costs are all additional expenses, requiring the character to cough up his personal cash.

## PRIMITIVE

P. B26

Because IOU students come from a wide variety of Tech Levels, this disadvantage is fairly common. When the TL difference is large, this can lead to "useless" characters, requiring the disadvantage to be bought off quickly. Thus, it is recommended that the GM not count Primitive against the standard 40-point limit for disadvantages. (This also ensures that the GM will have some "hooks" left on the character when the Primitive disadvantage is bought off.)

## SOCIAL STIGMA

P. B27

*Nerds* (most WUSE students and faculty) have the "outsider" Social Stigma, getting a -3 reaction from virtually everybody,

except that they get a +3 from other Nerds (including WUSE faculty). Jocks (p. 18) react to Nerds at -4, and vice versa.

*Mundanes* (characters with Mundanity, p. 19, but not Mundane Background, p. 22) also qualify as "outsiders" at IOU, getting a -3 reaction from most residents, and a +3 reaction from each other (they tend to band together).

## WEIRDNESS MAGNET

P. B239

This disadvantage usually has no effect at IOU, since anything can and does happen to characters already. The GM *may* permit a PC to take Weirdness Magnet, but should escalate the weird happenings to an entirely new level – to be worth -15 points at IOU, occurrences should be *truly* inconvenient. Say, being kidnapped on the way to finals to be a tour guide for aliens looking for the San Andreas Fault, or falling down a meep-hole into an alternate dimension based on television commercials.

# SKILLS

Virtually *any* skill imaginable is taught somewhere at IOU, so characters may have skills from any *GURPS* book. New specializations of two standard skills are very useful on campus:

## AREA KNOWLEDGE (IOU) (MENTAL/EASY)

Without this skill, the character will get lost on campus with amazing frequency. Buildings at IOU are poorly labeled, and connected together in ways that would give topologists nightmares. Sometimes buildings seem to move around . . . without notice . . . even while you're inside. Walkways and tunnels that start on campus don't always end there – sometimes a path leads to a building in an entirely different city, or another time.

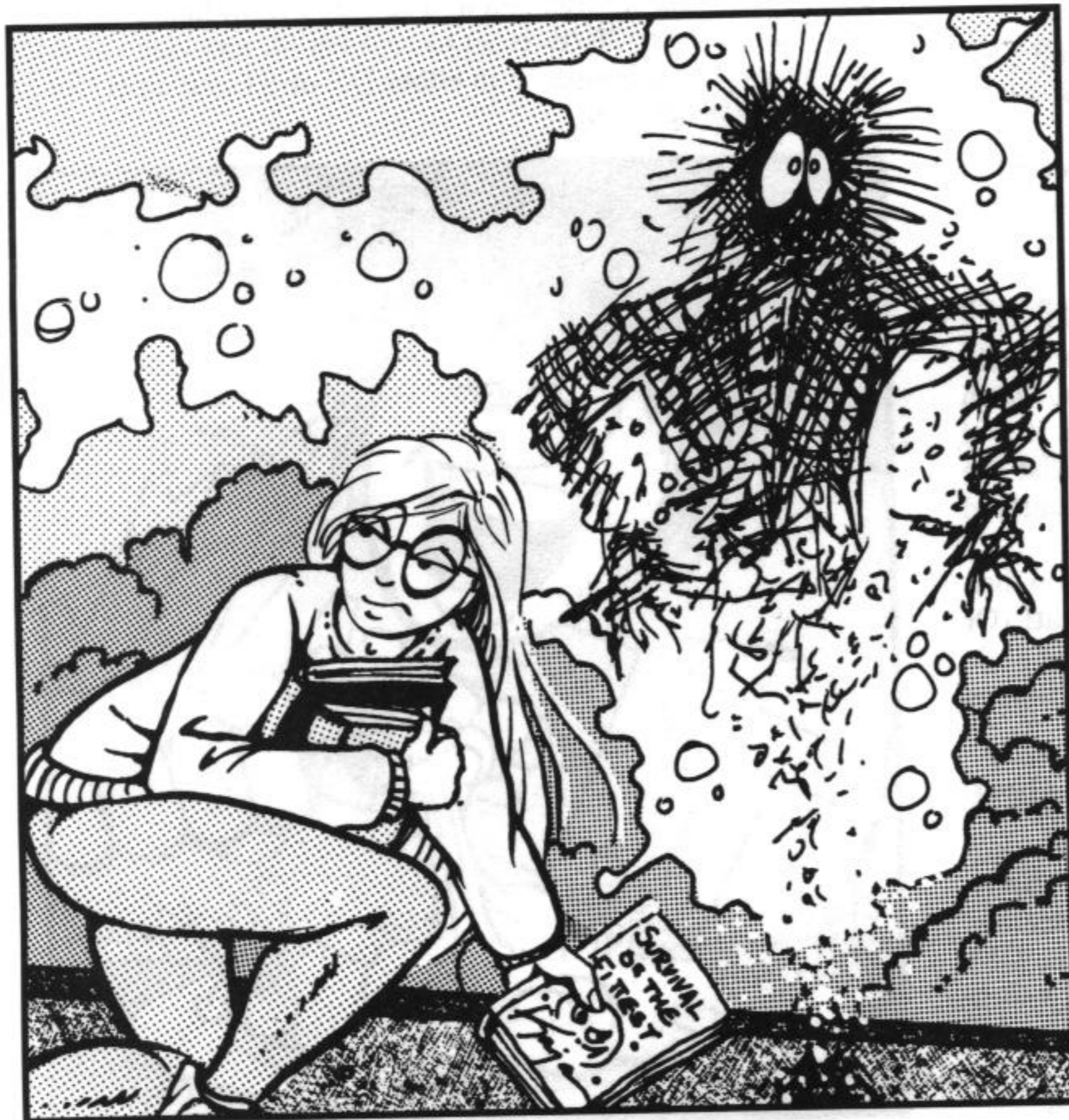
A successful Area Knowledge (IOU) roll is required to locate a specific building, or to find a shortcut to a class you're running late for. On a critical success, you may arrive at your class before you left your dorm. On a critical failure, you may take a shortcut through the nuclear power plant's reactor core or find yourself at Custer's Last Stand. An ordinary failure just makes you late for class or sends you right past the office of the professor you've been avoiding for the last week.

## SURVIVAL (IOU) (MENTAL/AVERAGE)

This skill is a wide-ranging general knowledge about the hazards on the IOU campus. Characters with this skill will know how to get around "Keep Off Grass" signs, where to find a safe cup of coffee, which buildings are sturdy enough to survive giant simians sitting on them and where the vending machines with *edible* food are located on campus. They also know which drinking fountains are spiked with Everclear, and the fourteen different hazard symbols that indicate one should *not* push that button or pull this lever. High levels of Survival (IOU) can result in almost prescient-seeming actions – such as nonchalantly ducking just as a UFO sweeps overhead, or removing valuables from a window sill before something big, winged and ugly crashes through the window – as the character becomes attuned to subtle and subliminal cues from the surrounding environment.

In particular, any roll to notice something potentially dangerous *on campus* should use the higher of the appropriate perception roll, a relevant skill or Survival (IOU). For instance, walking into a trap could get a roll on Danger Sense, Traps skill or Survival (IOU). Sometimes this can result in "defaults" to odd skills. GM: "Francis, make a Vision roll. Okay, there's a flashing sign on the reactor saying 'Radiation Hazard.' Yolanda, roll against Nuclear Physics. You notice that the neutron absorption rate indicator is too low – the reactor's gonna blow soon. Wolfgang, ah, roll against your Survival (IOU) skill. You notice George the Janitor is leaning on an extra-large push-broom, over behind the blast shield."

The Danger Sense advantage gives a +2 bonus to Survival (IOU).



## ACADEMIC STATUS

5 POINTS/LEVEL

Status on campus depends more on position in the University pecking order than status in the outside world. This is represented by the advantage (or disadvantage, for lowly students) of Academic Status. The following table shows the levels of Academic Status.

Level	Title
7	ArchDean
6	Dean, really senior administrator
5	Department Head, Chairthing, senior administrator, cats
4	Titled professor (holding a titled chair), Junior administrator
3	Tenured professor, petty bureaucrat
2	Professor
1	Assistant professor, really senior staff
0	Graduate student, senior staff
-1	Undergraduate student, departmental secretary, staff
-2	Freshthing
-3	High school students and other clueless lowlife

Like Social Status, Academic Status requires "upkeep" expenses – use the cost for the equivalent level of Social Status (see p. B191), divided by two. This represents living expenses, including hosting parties, paying bribes and the considerable costs of insurance and security services. (Armored cars don't come cheap.)

Academic Status also confers some Social Status off-campus; halve the level of Academic Status and round down to get Social Status. Social Status derived from Academic Status requires no cost to maintain, beyond that required to maintain the Academic Status.

Regular Social Status may also be purchased, and adds directly to Academic Status. For example, a Freshthing with a Social Status of +2 would have a total status of 0 at IOU.

Because students will normally buy off negative Academic Status during the campaign, it does not count against character disadvantage limits.

## CAST IRON STOMACH

15 POINTS

You can eat things no self-respecting campus cur would touch (gristle, month-old pizza, half-rotten vegetables, warm beer, fuzzy blue-green meat, cafeteria food), as long as it's of the proper biochemical base. You also get a +4 to resist the effects of any poison, disease or drug not specifically tailored for you.

You can reduce your food costs by 75%. However, you then get a -3 reaction modifier from anyone watching you eat! (Or even afterward, if you forget to brush your teeth after eating . . .)

This advantage is mostly found among aliens and campus food service cooks.

## GADGETEER

25/50 POINTS

You are a "natural" inventor. You can modify existing equipment, and given enough time and money, create entirely new gadgets. This advantage allows you to use the gadgeteering rules on p. 111. Standard gadgeteering costs 25 points. The GM may also allow the 50-point Quick Gadgeteer advantage, which permits you to build weird and wondrous gadgets almost instantly, from common household materials.

## HEALTH/LIFE INSURANCE

0 POINTS

All denizens of the University normally get some form of health and life insurance, which provides a "death benefit" of resurrection (see the *Character Death (or Otherwise)* sidebar on p. 107), and also entitles the holder to treatment in the University's medical facilities for lesser trauma. Since this is a "built-in" advantage in IOU campaigns, there is no point cost. However, a character might not have this insurance for some reason, giving him the No Insurance disadvantage (p. 23).

Mundanes (see p. 19) are only eligible for traditional medical insurance, as most of the methods used to make death a temporary inconvenience will not work on them. Fortunately, they are often unaffected by typical campus hazards. ("That can't be a *real* nuclear bomb!")

## HONOR STUDENT

3 POINTS

Honor students get a +1 reaction from faculty and administrative personnel, and a -1 reaction from Jocks. An Honor Student must have a minimum IQ of 13. Glasses are optional.

## IMMUNITY TO POISON

15 POINTS

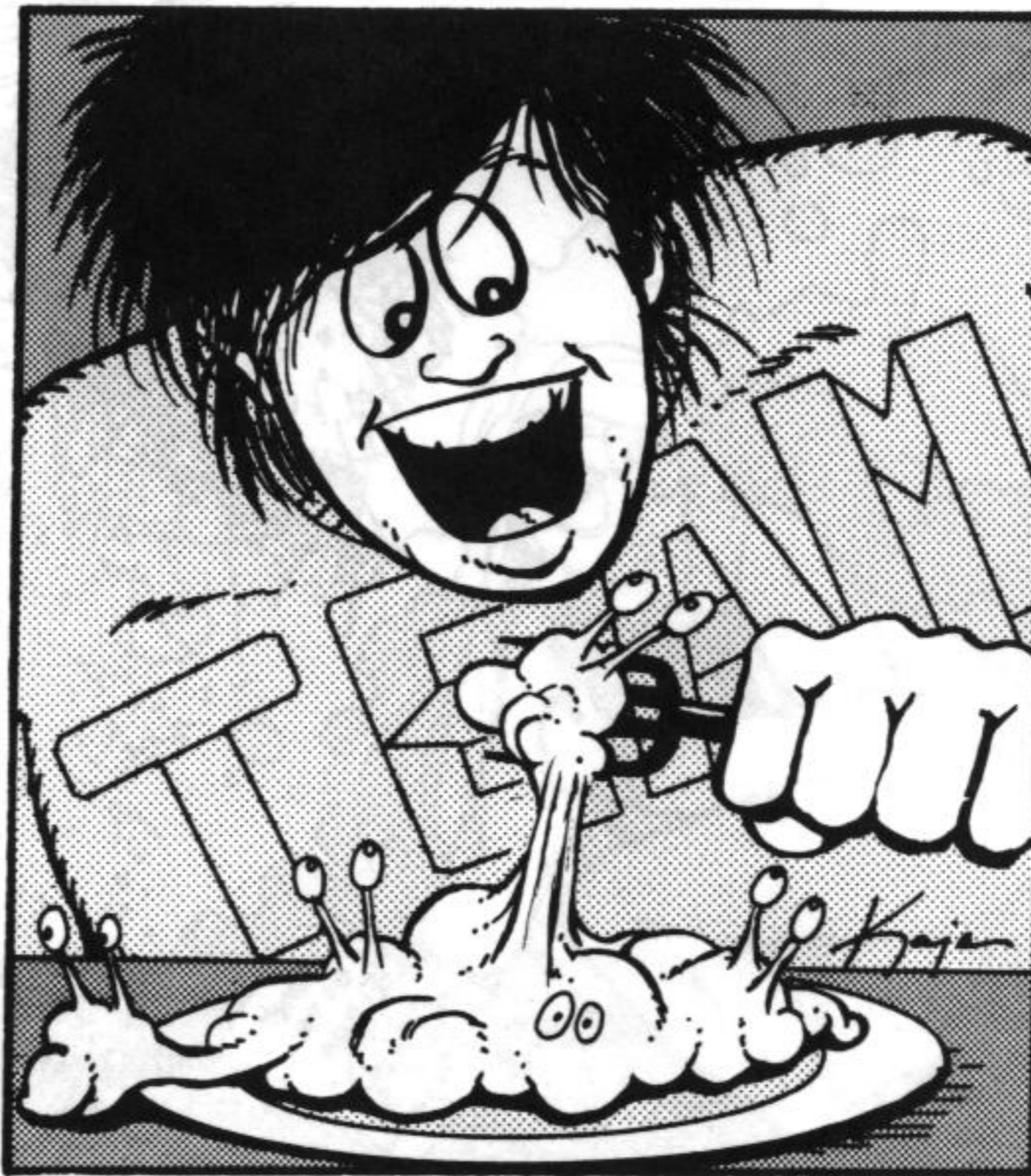
You are immune to the effect of any toxins. This doesn't confer immunity to a corrosive substance such as hydrochloric acid, just to bona fide biological or chemical poisons. If there is a question, the GM's decision (as always) rules.

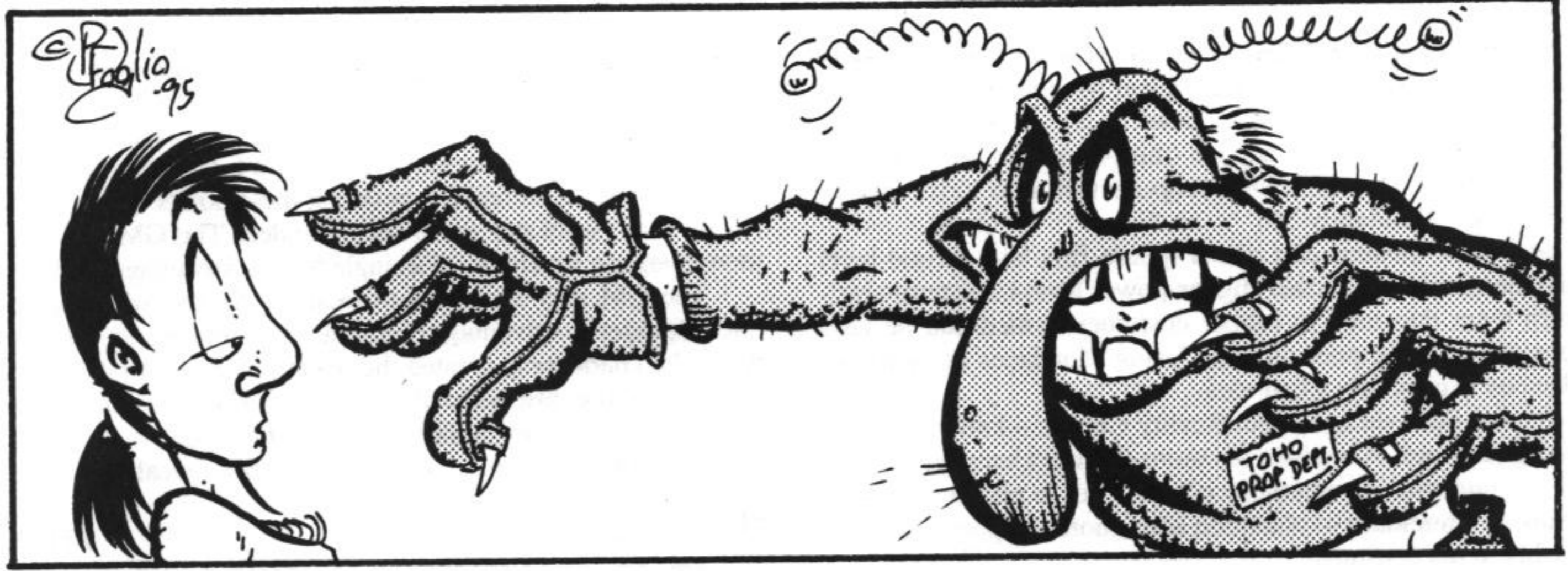
This advantage is found in alien species, cafeteria cooks, and as part of The Treatment (p. 20).

## JOCK

3 POINTS

Jocks get a +1 reaction from faculty (through intimidation) and sports-loving Illumni, and a -1 reaction from honor students and administrators. Nerds react to Jocks at -4, and vice versa. A Jock must have at least a 13 in either DX or ST and an HT of at least 11. IQ is optional.





## MUNDANITY

### 5 POINTS PER LEVEL

You are that unfortunate (or fortunate) creature known as a Mundane. On the strange and wonderful grounds of IOU, you see nothing out of the ordinary. You automatically have the Mundane Background disadvantage (p. 22) and get no points for it, though you might wish that fantastic powers and UFOs *were* real. You cannot have any paranormal advantages or disadvantages, and couldn't use them if you did (though Mundanity itself can be considered a "closet" superpower).

Nothing "odd" (magic, psi, Weird Science, aliens, summoned demons, etc.) can affect a character with Mundanity. "Odd" is defined as anything the GM rules to be totally inconsistent with the Mundane's worldview – this can include "normal," but unbelievable, hazards like being strafed by an F-15 or standing next to a nuclear bomb. The strength of this effect is measured by the character's *Reality Check* level, the use of which is described below.

The GM should note that Mundanes native to other times or realities, who lack experience with high technology or similar magic, may suppress standard TL7 technology!

*First-level Mundanes* simply don't notice strange things. If a flying carpet swooped in front of one, he would blink. The most that he could see of a strange manifestation would be something he could explain away as "special effects." He might or might not see illusions – the GM decides each case, based on how "normal" the illusion looks. Deliberate attempts to show the PC something strange will fail, even if it necessitates a "GM *ex machina*."

Attacks on the character using non-mundane means must pass a Reality Check first (see below). Otherwise, laser-toting aliens, psionic mind-blasts or fireball-throwing wizards will all have "bad luck," while the unwitting target is busy looking at the attractive co-ed diving for cover across the Pent. (Mundanes often think other IOU denizens are crazy: they seem to overreact to everything, and are so *paranoid* . . .)

It is possible to read the mind of a first-level Mundane, or otherwise harass him with strange abilities, but it has to be done in such a way that there is a plausible mundane explanation, and does not *directly* affect him; again, the GM must decide. For example, a UFO couldn't hit a Mundane with its death ray, but could topple the building next to him – falling walls have many possible causes.

First-level Mundanes have a Reality Check level of 13.

*Second-level Mundanity* is much like the first level, except that the character has a mundane "aura" that affects the six hexes immediately adjacent to him – nothing "odd" will work in that area. (Summoned demons and other metaphysical nasties won't be able to enter that area at all, which other characters may take

advantage of.) At this level, there is a -5 to attempts to read the Mundane's mind, cast Knowledge spells on or about him, affect his personal belongings or use similar indirect abilities.

Second-level Mundanes have a Reality Check level of 15.

*The third level* adds the effect that anything the Mundane notices becomes mundane while he looks at it. This will not normally impact things that don't directly affect him, but any aliens threatening him with zap-guns will find that their arsenal has turned into stage props while he's enjoying the antics of the "drama students." Savvy characters will equip their flying carpets with "wires" lest a Mundane see something more than special effects being tested.

Third-level Mundanes have a Reality Check level of 17.

If any further levels of Mundanity are permitted, they would have the effect of making things remain mundane for a while after the character left the area—maybe even permanently! The Reality Check level remains at 17 for any additional levels of Mundanity.

This powerful advantage is cheap because it comes with a number of built-in disadvantages. First there is the Mundane Background that accompanies it, which cannot be bought off. Second, it only works for a character created in the IOU world; it usually wears off if the PC is somehow transported to another dimension. (Unlike many lost advantages, the player may get to buy another advantage with the freed points after a while. Former Mundanes have been known to mutate into powerful psis, for instance.) Finally, a Mundane character leads a dull existence, comparatively speaking, and often gets fewer experience points. This advantage is most appropriate to NPCs.

Most characters on campus react to a obvious Mundane at -3 (an "outsider" Social Stigma), since they cause so many problems with "fun" abilities and toys. Powerful Mundanes often have an additional negative Reputation. Mundanes frequently have the Clueless disadvantage (p. 21).

*Some students have wondered what would happen if a Mundane and the ArchDean interacted. Unfortunately, no one can ever remember seeing this happen. Perhaps the Universe prevents irresistible forces from meeting immovable objects.*

## REALITY CHECKS

Any time something "weird" (GM's decision) might be seen by, or affect, a Mundane, the GM should make a Reality Check roll for the Mundane character. Roll three dice against the character's Reality Check level, like a skill roll. If the roll succeeds, the Mundane has forced a Reality Check on the attack or power, and it fails. Otherwise, proceed normally with the attack or power use.

The GM should decide the results of successful Reality Checks according to circumstances, the type of effect attempted and the level of Mundanity of the character. A few guidelines:

Attacks on the Mundane miss (first two levels of Mundanity) or misfire (third-level and higher Mundanes).

Weird happenings aren't noticed at all (first- and second-level Mundanes), or fail to happen (third-level and higher).

Unbelievable gadgets and weapons turn into kids' toys or movie props (Mundanity 3+).

Monsters, demons and aliens ignore first and second-level Mundanes (and vice-versa). Higher-power Mundanes temporarily turn them into men in rubber costumes, which can be very disconcerting to the poor victims! Using Mundanes as sacrifices to demons is generally a bad idea.

IQ and skills do not affect Reality Checks – knowledge is a two-edged sword. A smarter (or more skilled) character is more likely to understand something is “off,” but is also more likely to think of a mundane explanation and ignore the phenomenon – probably to his detriment.

If the Reality Check fails (i.e., the attack or power works on the Mundane), the Mundane will be affected, but will develop a minor Delusion about what happened. For example, if a Martian succeeds in shooting Fred with a laser pistol, Fred will be firmly convinced that a terrorist shot him with a .44 Magnum, and no argument or evidence to the contrary will shake this conviction.

On a Reality Check roll of 3 or 4 (a critical success for the Mundane), the GM should treat it as a critical failure of the skill that provoked the check. A critical failure on the Reality Check roll (17 or 18 for Mundanity 1-2, 18 for Mundanity 3+) not only permits the effect, but the Mundane must roll on the Fright Check table at +5 and take an appropriate Delusion to cover the memory of the actual event.

## RAPIER WIT

5 POINTS

This advantage allows the character to use verbal attacks in combat. Roll a contest of Bard skill vs. the IQ of the opponent. A success causes the opponent to be mentally stunned (see p. B127). A critical success also causes one point of physical damage – the opponent injures himself accidentally (by dropping something on his foot, choking on his own tongue, etc.). A failure has no effect, and a critical failure enrages the opponent. (This may trigger disadvantages like Berserk or Bloodlust . . .) A Rapier Wit attack does *not* count as a combat action, since talking is a free action (p. B107).

Rapier Wit may be used to affect a group, with a skill penalty of -1 for each additional opponent. The enemy group must have something in common which is known to the character using this advantage, e.g., the Team, a group of Men in Black or students with a particular major.

For PCs, the GM may assign a modifier based on the player's description of the verbal attack. There is a -2 penalty to skill if the target has the No Sense of Humor or Clueless disadvantages.

This advantage is available to characters with Mundanity or Mundane Background

## SECRET ADVANTAGE

VARIABLE

The character has some advantage he is unaware of. This could be a latent magical, psi or super ability, a secret Patron, resistance to magic or psi, Immunity to Disease or even secret social advantages (the character will inherit a million dollars from a distant aunt, or is the long-lost Princess of Upper Fnordia).

The player sets a value for the Secret Advantage, and the GM picks an appropriate advantage worth 5 points *more* than the cost of the secret. (The player should not be told the nature of the advantage.) *Example:* a player designs a character with a 20 point Secret Advantage. The GM determines that the character is the half-breed child of a human with an alien, and is being

watched over by a TL12 AI – a secret 25-point Patron who will intervene indirectly if the character gets into *serious* trouble.

When the advantage is revealed (usually determined by the GM's sense of dramatic timing), the extra 5 points for the advantage must be paid as soon as possible; these points were effectively “on loan” until the secret was revealed. The GM may assign more than one advantage to a single Secret Advantage, if desired.

The GM may also wish to treat the Secret Advantage as a “Schrödinger's Advantage.” Instead of choosing an advantage when the character is created, he waits for some critical juncture in an adventure, just when all seems lost. Then the character suddenly discovers a new ability, which *just happens* to be the ticket out of trouble. Of course, the advantage, once revealed, is “fixed.”

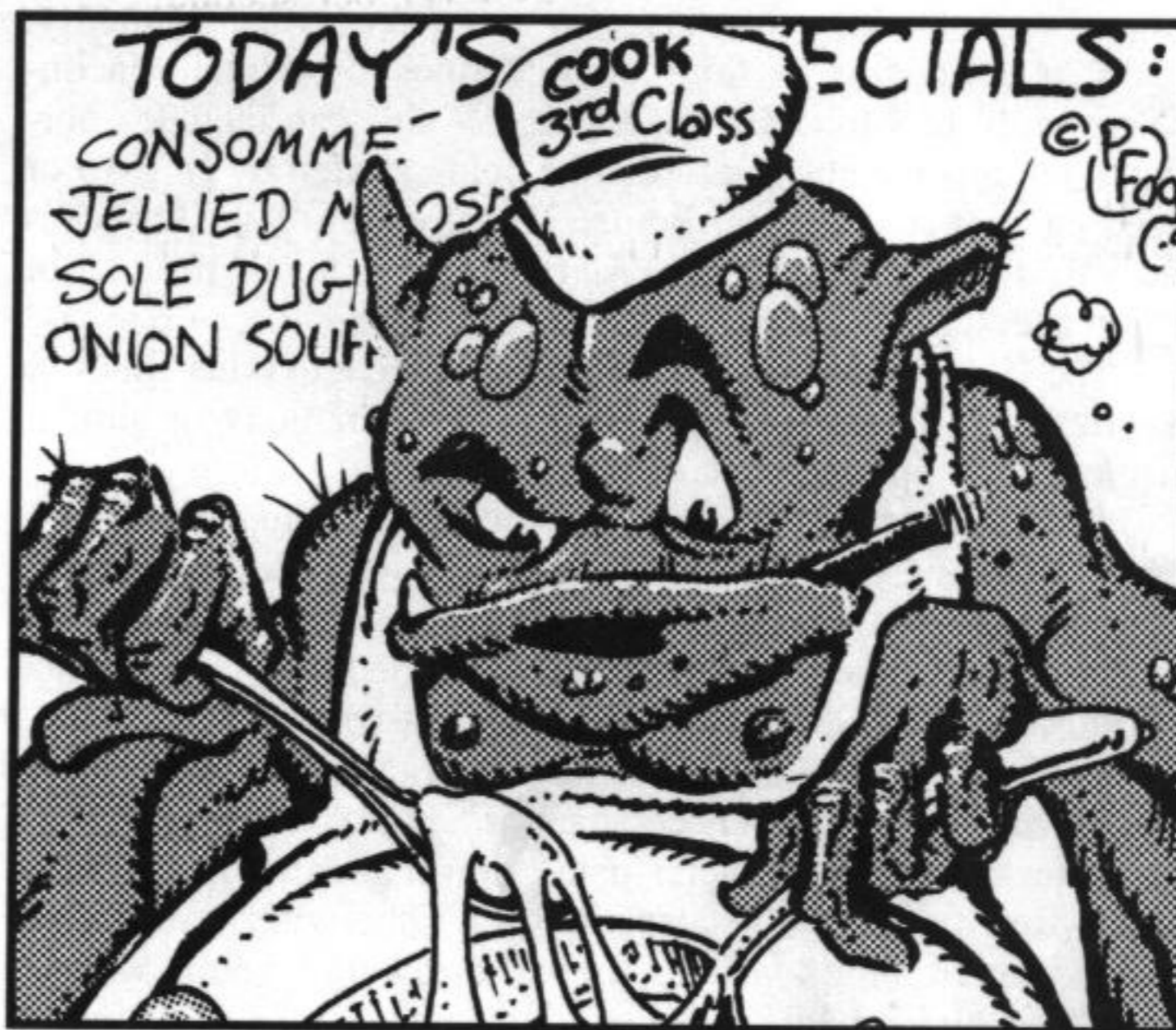
## TENURE

5 POINTS

This advantage applies only to professors. A professor with the Tenure advantage may not be fired. Or “terminated.” Or incinerated in a “lab accident.” In other words, the lucky character has some sort of hold on someone high up in the University hierarchy, and can't be gotten rid of.

However, the character is still subject to *real* accidents, faculty bloodfeuds (p. 35) and marauding alien invaders, not to mention a lot of general unpleasantness. But his job – and salary – is guaranteed for life.

Professors with Tenure also gain a level of Academic Status, which must be paid for separately.



## THE TREATMENT

125/250/500 POINTS

This advantage gives senior faculty and high-level administrators a generic immunity to the more common dangers on campus (especially gunfire and explosions). Without such a “perk,” the upper levels of the pecking order would never have time to get any work done – they'd spend all their time in the Lazarus Health Center, recovering from attacks by ambitious underlings, enemy departments and disgruntled students, as well as from the myriad “normal” hazards of IOU life, such as faculty parties.

At least the first level of The Treatment is required to advance beyond the rank of tenured professor. There are three different levels of protection, starting with a resistance to damage at the first level, while the third level confers the ability to stand at ground zero in a WUSE lab during finals week while drinking sulfuric acid and making rude remarks about demigods.

The first level (usually called "The Treatment") includes the ability to turn momentarily insubstantial (per the Insubstantiality power in *GURPS Supers*, p. SU42), giving complete protection from most physical assaults, explosions, etc. This ability is completely involuntary, and activates automatically (i. e., when the GM determines the character is in danger of physical harm) on a roll of 12 or less on three dice. On a failed roll, the character takes damage normally. Only the character's *body* is protected – clothes and carried items will take damage even on a successful roll, though they won't usually be destroyed (nor will they leave the character's body while he is insubstantial).

This level also gives a +4 to HT on rolls to resist poisons and diseases, and +2 to resist psi, magic or super powers. Senior professors, chairthings of minor departments and mid-level administrators usually have this level of The Treatment.

The second level ("The Treatment II" or "The Treatment Strikes Back") works like the first level, but the roll to avoid physical damage is 15 or less on three dice, and the character gets the Immunity to Disease, Immunity to Poisons and Fast Regeneration (regain 1 HT every minute, see p. SU44) advantages. The recipient also gets a +5 bonus to resist psi, magic and superpowers. This is usually the level of The Treatment given to major department chairthings and high-level administrators.

The third level ("The Treatment III" or "The Return of The Treatment") works like the second level, but the roll to avoid physical trauma is 17 or less on three dice, and the character gets Instant Regeneration (regains 1 HT per second, see p. SU44). The bonus to resistance for psi, magic and superpowers increases to +10. This level of The Treatment is normally only



granted to deans and very senior administrators. (For some reason, it is also known as "the ArchDean's Revenge.")

Oddly, *no one* who has taken The Treatment will discuss it with those who haven't. GMs should imply that the process is horrific and potentially fatal, and may cause mental aberrations. Players shouldn't *want* to know about it! The Treatment should be mysterious, and the process may well vary from individual to individual, much like resurrection procedures, as the University tries out newer – and cheaper – versions.

## NEW DISADVANTAGES

### CLUELESS

-10 POINTS

Clueless characters totally miss the point of any wit aimed at them, any attempts at seducing them (+4 to Will rolls vs. Sex Appeal), or meanings of colloquial expressions. Sophisticated manners are also beyond them – apply a -4 modifier to all Savoir-Faire rolls. This disadvantage is most appropriate to ivory-tower geniuses, aliens from Mars, Mundanes and members of the Team. Most characters react to Clueless individuals at -2.

Unlike the No Sense of Humor disadvantage, the character may make jokes (often lame ones), and enjoy slapstick and written humor, but he doesn't normally "get" verbal humor, *especially* if he is the target (IQ-4 roll to realize he's the butt of the joke). This disadvantage differs from Gullibility in that the character is normally aware that someone is trying to take advantage of him, except in social situations. The PC is no more susceptible to Fast-Talk than normal, unless someone is trying to convince him that an attractive character of the appropriate gender is interested in him.

Clueless people also have many minor habits that annoy others, like leaving the turn signals on while driving from Chicago to Albuquerque.

### EVIL TWIN

-10/-15/-20 POINTS

An Evil Twin is someone who looks like you, sounds like you and occasionally uses a name similar to yours – but who acts completely opposite; this may or may not be "evil," depending on the PC. Characters rarely meet their Evil Twins, but they *will* hear about them, usually when they're taking the blame for something they didn't do (for a change). Evil Twins are often mistaken for Split Personalities, with the same reaction modifier (-3).

Evil Twins have exactly the same skills and abilities as the character, *including* the Evil Twin disadvantage (from the Twin's point of view, the *character* is the one who's ruining *his* reputation), but other disadvantages will be opposite or skewed. For -15 points, the Evil Twin will have higher skill levels than the character, or abilities the character does not have; for -20, both skill levels and abilities are improved. In this case, the GM should decide what the differences are and create a separate character sheet. The character's player should *not* know what the differences are!

The base value of an Evil Twin is modified by frequency of appearance – i.e., how often the character is likely to have to explain that he *didn't* do something, or produce an alibi. That is, if he really *wants* to admit he was busy sneaking *Tantric Magic and You* out of the Library when someone was putting nitrous oxide into the Team's dorm-rooms . . .

At the beginning of each adventure, or each session of a continuing adventure, the GM rolls 3 dice to see if the Evil Twin's actions will impinge on the character's existence.

If the Evil Twin "appears" almost all the time (15 or less): triple the listed value.

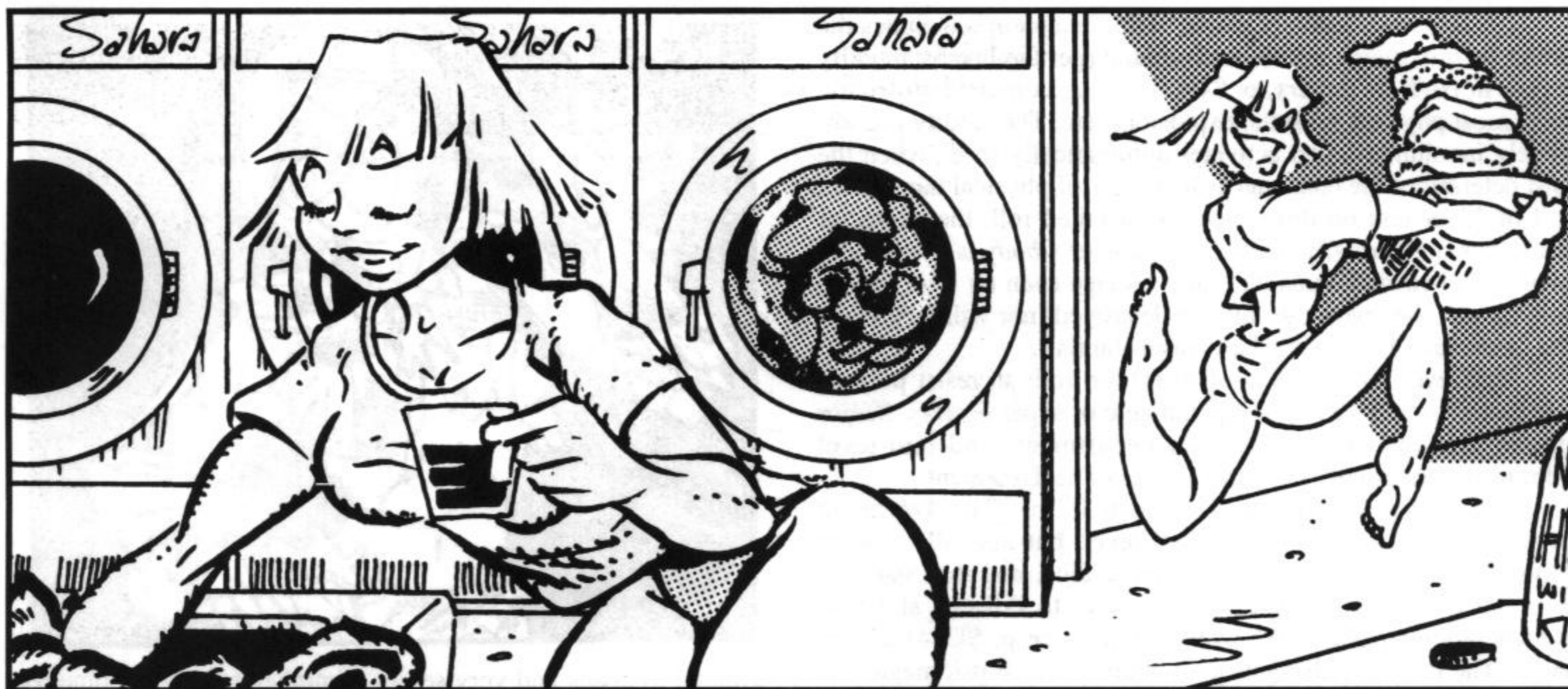
If the Evil Twin comes into play quite often (12 or less): double the listed value.

If the Evil Twin comes into play fairly often (9 or less): use the listed value.

If the Evil Twin rarely makes its presence known (6 or less): halve the listed value (round up).

On a roll of 3, the character will actually catch a glimpse of his Twin leaving the area before he gets caught and accused of whatever the Evil Twin just did.

Characters with Evil Twins will often find anonymous notes from their Twins stuck under their doors, in the campus



mail or in computer messages, especially when the characters have done something egregiously spectacular or incredibly stupid, and the Evil Twins are taking fallout from it. Characters with Evil Twins should also not leave their laundry unattended – Evil Twins *hate* doing laundry, and are likely to borrow the character's (after it's clean, of course), which is the main reason they get called "evil."

Note that it is possible to have more than one Evil Twin! Either this counts as a frequency modifier, or else it is possible that the Evil Triplets will act differently from each other, as well as from the character.

Also note that, very rarely, it can be an *advantage* to have an Evil Twin to take the blame for something *you* did. (A GM call, but a roll of 18 at the beginning of a session would be a good indicator.)

### **KLUTZ** **-5/-15 POINTS**

This disadvantage has two levels. A regular Klutz (-5 points) must make a DX roll to get through the day without doing a pratfall, dropping books or knocking over shelves filled with fragile items. Regular klutziness is rarely life-threatening, but is *very* inconvenient, and often expensive. The GM should be creative in inventing minor torments. Klutzes should especially avoid lab courses involving large amounts of glassware and hazardous chemicals.

At the -15 point level, the character is a Total Klutz. Besides the daily DX roll to avoid minor hazards, a failure on *any* DX or DX-based skill roll is automatically a critical failure. Total Klutzes usually have *very* high auto insurance rates . . .

A character with either level of this disadvantage may not have a DX above 13.

### **LIVES ON CAMPUS** **-5 POINTS**

The character lives on campus in one of the dorms, and has an obligation to eat at least one meal a day in a dining hall. While this may not seem so bad – after all, the dorms are relatively close to classes, you don't need a car (or a parking permit!) and you get three guaranteed meals a day – there is a distinct down-side.

Dorms are subject to the whims of various faculty and administrators, who can always reprogram the fire-alarms to go

off every 45 minutes if they are irked by a student; meals in the dining halls are often a contest to see whether the student eats the food, or the food eats the student; and there can be problems if your roommate is incompatible with you – it's such a nuisance to walk in and find that he's set the air conditioning to "chlorine atmosphere" or "sulfur and brimstone." Furthermore, the shuttle bus to dorms is frequently late, missing or unrecognizable – would *you* believe an intelligent cybertank is your bus? – which means students usually have to hoof it anyway.

Since conditions in the dorms are so erratic, anyone known to live on campus will get a -1 reaction from snobs and fraternity brothers who have better living accommodations and no sympathy. Living on campus does give a +1 reaction from similarly-afflicted students, but it is no help whatsoever in explaining that your roommate ate your final paper. The GM should inflict a steady series of minor miseries on dorm dwellers: lack of sleep because your neighbors were up all night with their stereos set on "Richter 9," or because your roommate locked you out (-1 to IQ and IQ-based skills all the next day), exotic food (treat as a poison or 24-hour disease, see pp. B132-133) or enormous food and phone bills generated by your roommate (consider taking your roommate as an Enemy).

### **MUNDANE BACKGROUND** **-10 POINTS**

This disadvantage reflects a total lack of experience with the occult, the weird and the alien. The character probably grew up in the middle of an Iowa cornfield, was *not* visited by aliens during his teen years, believes magic is something done by David Copperfield and thinks late-model Fords epitomize cutting-edge technology.

This disadvantage is similar to the Mundanity advantage (and is included in it), but unlike the advantage, Mundane Background confers no special ability to warp reality. (Just to confuse matters, characters with Mundane Background are also called "mundanes," with a lower-case "m.")

Naturally, PCs with this disadvantage cannot start the game with anything other than normal, mundane, TL7 skills or equipment. Even the Occultism skill is forbidden – the character *might* read the astrology column in the newspaper, but that's about it. The character *can* have advantages like Magical Aptitude, psi powers or even super abilities, but cannot use them, as he lacks

the skills. He has no idea that he possesses talents beyond the norm, except maybe for the odd dream now and then.

This disadvantage must be bought off if the character wishes to learn skills related to magic, psi, superpowers or higher Tech Levels than his own. It is common to buy off this disadvantage as the character reaches his second year at IOU – it's very difficult for a mundane world-view to survive extended contact with this environment.

*Roleplaying note:* your character will tend to stop and gawk at many of the more unusual things on campus (including some of the other students). Other students and faculty react to people with Mundane Background at -2 – standing around campus with your jaw hanging open is *so gauche* . . .

**NERD**      **SEE SOCIAL STIGMA, P. 17**

**NO INSURANCE**      **-100 POINTS**

Characters with this disadvantage are not official members of the University (students, faculty, staff or Ilumni), and thus have no access to the techniques that IOU uses to cure death. In other words, if you're dead, you're dead, Jim.

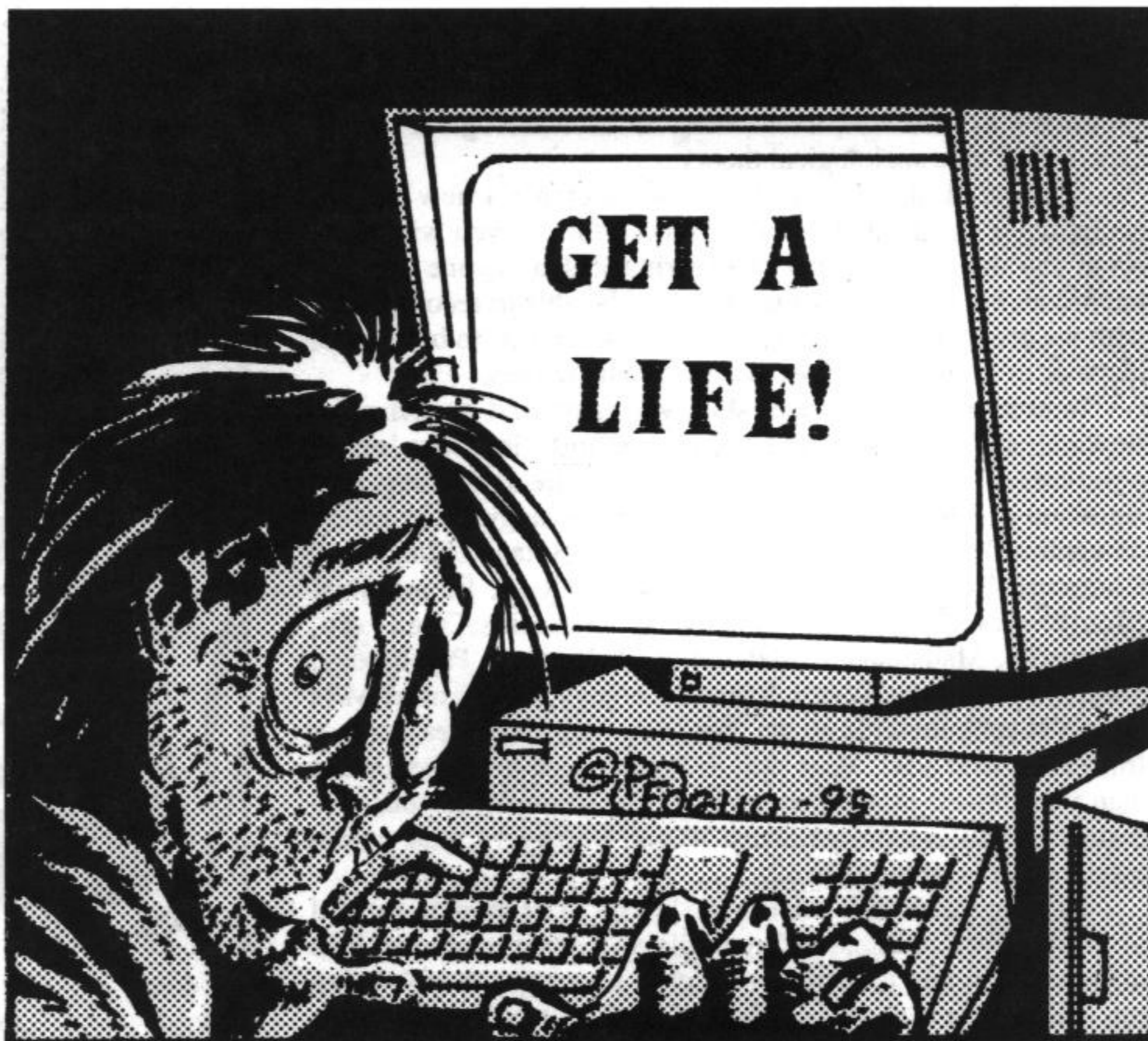
This disadvantage *can* be bought off, if the character enrolls as a full-time student or takes a position on the faculty, staff or administration. Coverage by the University life insurance plan can also be granted to characters by the ArchDean, but only in exceptional circumstances, usually associated with extraordinary services to IOU (including huge donations of cash).

Due to the high value of this disadvantage, the GM may allow a character later acquiring life insurance to buy it off slowly – say, 20 points per death.

If the campaign is started such that all PCs have the No Insurance disadvantage, but are all expected to gain insurance during early play (e.g., starting as potential students or aspiring staff), the GM should not permit characters to take points for this disadvantage. Only characters who will lack insurance during a major part of the campaign should get points for No Insurance.

**SECRET DISADVANTAGE**      **VARIABLE**

The character has a disadvantage that neither the character *nor the player* is aware of. The secret disadvantage is determined by the GM, from a point value picked by the player. The actual disadvantage should be worth 5 points less than the value of the Secret Disadvantage. (E.g., Berserk, normally -15 points, is worth -20 points as a Secret Disadvantage.)



The GM must pick the disadvantage carefully – it should be something that the character would not have known about. If the disadvantage is a mental one, the conditions that trigger it should never have happened to the character.

Most physical disadvantages are too obvious, though something like Hemophilia *might* have gone unnoticed. Secret Enemies are quite reasonable, as are various mental disadvantages like Berserk, Bloodlust, Combat Paralysis, some of the less-common Phobias, the -15 point version of Split Personality and Unluckiness. Evil Twins make excellent Secret Disadvantages. Secret Dependents might be amusing, though implausible . . .

A “Schrödinger’s Disadvantage” can be used to complicate the lives of the PCs when they’re getting a little too lucky, and the GM wants to deprive them of boredom.

When the disadvantage is fully exposed, as determined by the GM, the extra -5 points for the secret must be bought off as soon as possible. To encourage characters to take Secret Disadvantages, the GM may allow an extra -5 points of disadvantages when the character is created with this disadvantage. This extra -5 points is more of a loan than a permanent part of the character design – the “exposed” character will have only the usual number of disadvantage points.

## NEW SKILLS

Note that there is no Blackmail skill – blackmail requires a combination of other skills, including Intimidation, Psychology and Merchant, and usually involves reaction rolls. It depends greatly on the circumstances and character of the individual being blackmailed. The GM should have players roleplay all blackmail attempts.

**SCIENCE! (M/VH)**

**NO DEFAULT**

**PREREQUISITES: SEE BELOW**

*Science!* is a cinematic skill, and is inappropriate for use in realistic campaigns. It is useful for the scientist who wants to know a little – or a lot! – about *everything*.

You have a general acquaintance with the fundamental techniques and theories of virtually every branch of laboratory and theoretical science. You're equally at home monitoring a chemistry experiment, excavating an archaeological dig or expounding on a sociological theory.

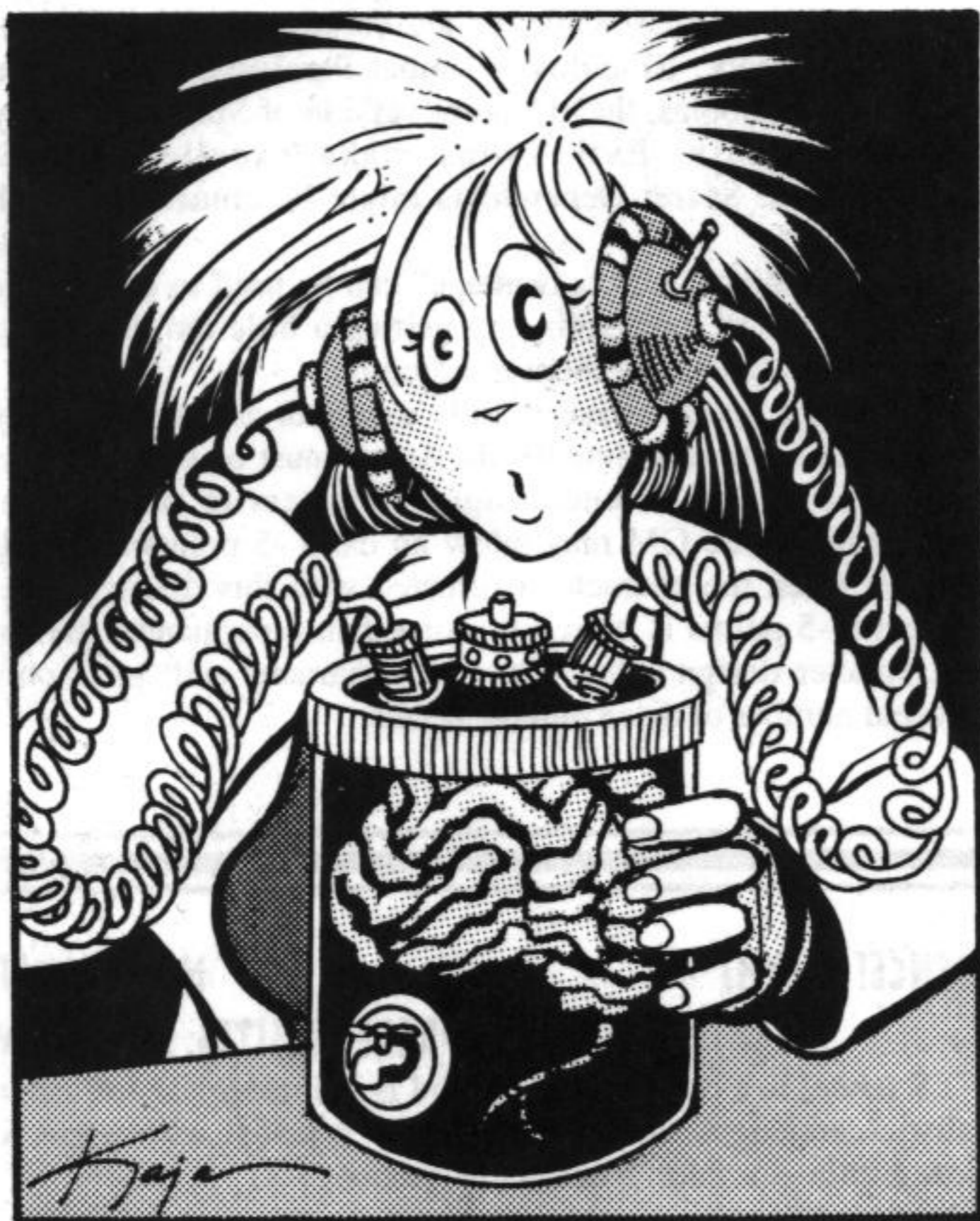
*Science!* skill will *not* allow you to create a new theory, invention or experiment, but on a successful roll you will know about any theory, invention or experiment that anyone *else* has published, *in any branch of science*, and be able to reconstruct it with the proper equipment. The GM can allow this to become as much or as little of a *deus ex machina* as he wishes.

In order to take *Science!* skill, you must first purchase the Research skill at 13 or higher. Then you must invest at least 2 points each in two or more skills from the following list: Agronomy, Alchemy, Anthropology, Archaeology, Astrogation (if applicable), Astronomy, Biochemistry, Botany, Chemistry, Computer Programming, Diagnosis, Ecology, Economics, Electronics, Engineer, Forensics, Genetics, Geology, Linguistics, Mathematics, Metallurgy, Physiology, Psychology, Surgery, Veterinary, Weird Science, Zoology, or any other M/H or M/VH skill drawn from the "hard" or "soft" sciences (but not from the liberal arts). Your skill in *Science!* can never be greater than your *lowest* prerequisite skill-2. For example, if your prerequisite skills are Biochemistry 16 and Botany 14, you cannot take *Science!* at more than 12.

Any character with a *Science!* skill of 13 or more is entitled to use the title "Professor," regardless of whether or not he's affiliated with any institution of higher learning – though being too insistent on it could be a bad idea when a *real* professor at IOU is glaring at the character.

Examples of characters from fiction with the *Science!* skill include Prof. Challenger, Dr. Van Helsing, the Professor from *Gilligan's Island*, and Dr. Quest from the cartoon *Johnny Quest*.

For the corresponding magical skill, see *Thaumatology*, p. G7.



## WEIRD SCIENCE (M/VH)

## NO DEFAULT

This skill allows the character to create astonishing new crackpot scientific theories that are far ahead of their time. A successful Weird Science roll will give a +5 bonus in an attempt to invent something using the invention rules on p. B186. A successful roll also adds a +1 to Gadgeteering attempts (see p. 111), and +2 to any roll on a Scientific skill to deal with something out of the ordinary. Critical failures of Weird Science skill are always spectacular, though not necessarily fatal, or even dangerous. A critical success on a Weird Science roll gives the character some incredible insight into a totally different problem, as well as helping solve the current one. (This is the well-known Law of Serendipity in action.)

Weird Science skill may also be used to analyze alien artifacts and other incomprehensible tech beyond the ken of ordinary mortals. Thus, a successful Weird Science skill roll will permit the character a default Piloting skill roll on a TL14 starsled, or enable him to program the average TL7 VCR. Unfortunately, many people with Weird Science skill are so fond of complicated theories that they have difficulty working the kitchen faucet.

## WEIRD MAGIC (M/VH)

## NO DEFAULT

Weird Magic is the arcane equivalent of the Weird Science skill. It may be used to gain partial understanding of otherwise unfathomable magic, such as strange magical artifacts left by lost races. A successful Weird Magic roll will give a +2 bonus to rolls to cast a spell with Improvisational magic (see p. M76), or aid in creating a new spell by research (see p. M16).

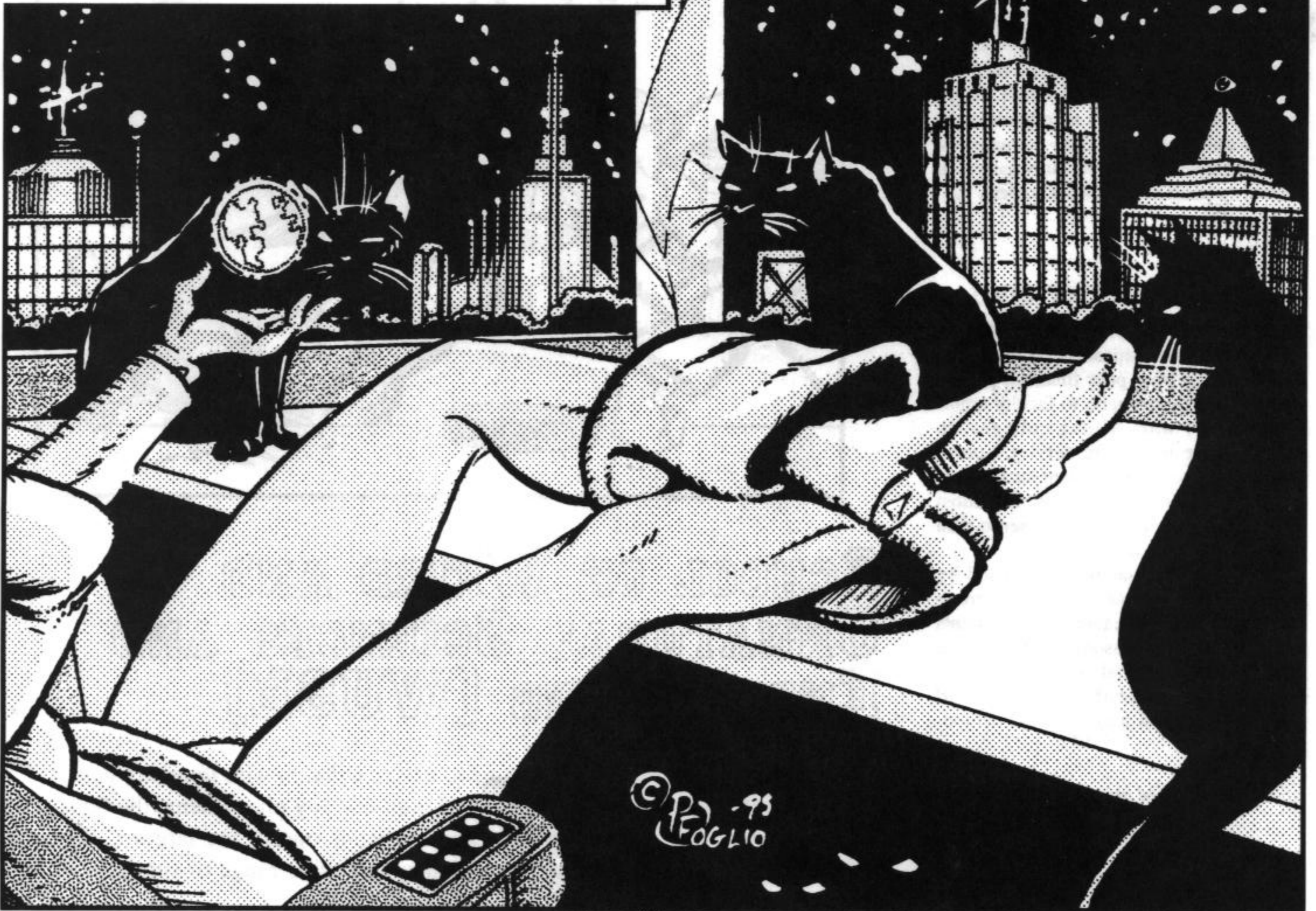
# COLLEGES AND DEPARTMENTS

**T**he ArchDean leaned back in her chair and put her feet on the desk. "So, who's got the Department of Redundancy Department this week, computer?"

A bland voice spoke out of – apparently – nowhere. "I BELIEVE THAT ALL THE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES HAVE DECIDED TO CREATE THEIR OWN."

"Figures." She rolled her eyes. "What're the scores in the latest faculty bloodfeuds, and other casualties? Just the overviews, please, by college."

"WUSE HAS LOST FIVE PROFESSORS, TWO ACCIDENTALLY, WHILE COUP CLAIMS RESPONSIBILITY FOR A THIRD. COUP HAS LOST THREE PROFESSORS AND A TEACHER'S ASSISTANT, AND TWELVE STUDENTS WILL BE GRADUATING. C.T.H.U.L.H.U. GAINED EIGHTEEN PROFESSORS, BUT IS EXPECTED TO LOSE OVER HALF OF THEM IN THE NEXT SEMESTER WHEN THE TEMPORAL ANOMALY IS FIXED. THE COLLEGE OF ZEN SURREALISM WOULD LIKE PISTACHIO COOKIES FOR THEIR VENDING MACHINES."



## UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATION

Like most universities, IOU consists of three major types of structural units. First is what most people think of when they think of a university – the part that is primarily concerned with educating students. Each subject area forms a department, and departments are grouped into larger, semi-autonomous units called “schools” or “colleges.” Each school typically has its own budget, and largely governs itself in matters such as curriculum design, student admissions, faculty selection and promotion and fund-raising.

The second major component in the University is the administration (see p. 47). Besides setting overall budgets and general education requirements, the administration operates all the infrastructure of the university: buildings, grounds, student housing, food services, the library, alumni services, central accounting, etc.

The final component to the University is a collection of semi-independent organizations that are owned by it, but are neither concerned with teaching, nor support services. Most of these are research labs connected with WUSE, but the University may also own hospitals, shopping centers and even businesses which somehow relate to the University’s operations. None of these “peripheral” organizations is described here – the GM will have to decide what his version of IOU owns. Naturally, the University may form or acquire such elements over time. More rarely, it may “spin off” an organization, usually one that is a viable commercial business (in which case the University will probably remain a major stockholder).

## REORGANIZATIONS

An almost daily occurrence at IOU is the dreaded “reorganization.” Causes are many, ranging from poor financial performance in the department, to faculty ambitions, to turf wars among colleges, to administrative whim. On very rare occasions, a change in department structure is driven by academic concerns. But most IOU reorganizations make less sense than governmental policies.

In fact, most changes are caused by faculty and college deans forcibly creating, destroying or hijacking departments for purely political reasons. (GMs wanting to explain departmental politics to players might find the *Illuminati: New World Order* trading-card game a good demonstration.)

*Continued on next page . . .*

*“Odds are running five to two against on the College of Metaphysics, for keeping their Computer Theology department, right? Put me down for twenty, that they’ll hang on to it. Oh, and drop a memo to the Dean of WUSE that he owes me on that bet – I told him Doctor Ruberg Golden would tick off the Unseen Dean with those silly elaborate deathtraps.”*

The colleges and departments listed below shouldn’t be taken as gospel – they are merely an incomplete sample from a single point in time. With all the political realignments, takeovers and department splits (see *Reorganizations* sidebar), the only way to get a complete list is to ask THE computer. And by the time the list is finished, it will probably be out of date . . .

All this confusion can make it hard to choose – or keep – a major. Some of the wealthiest students at IOU still haven’t graduated, due to changing departments and degree requirements. One might almost suspect a conspiracy on the part of the administration.

Many courses are cross-listed in two or more departments or schools, at least if they aren’t actively feuding with each other. Cross-listed courses are not listed here for space reasons, but the GM can easily find opportunities. For example, most courses concerned with legal or quasi-legal businesses are cross-listed as SCA offerings.

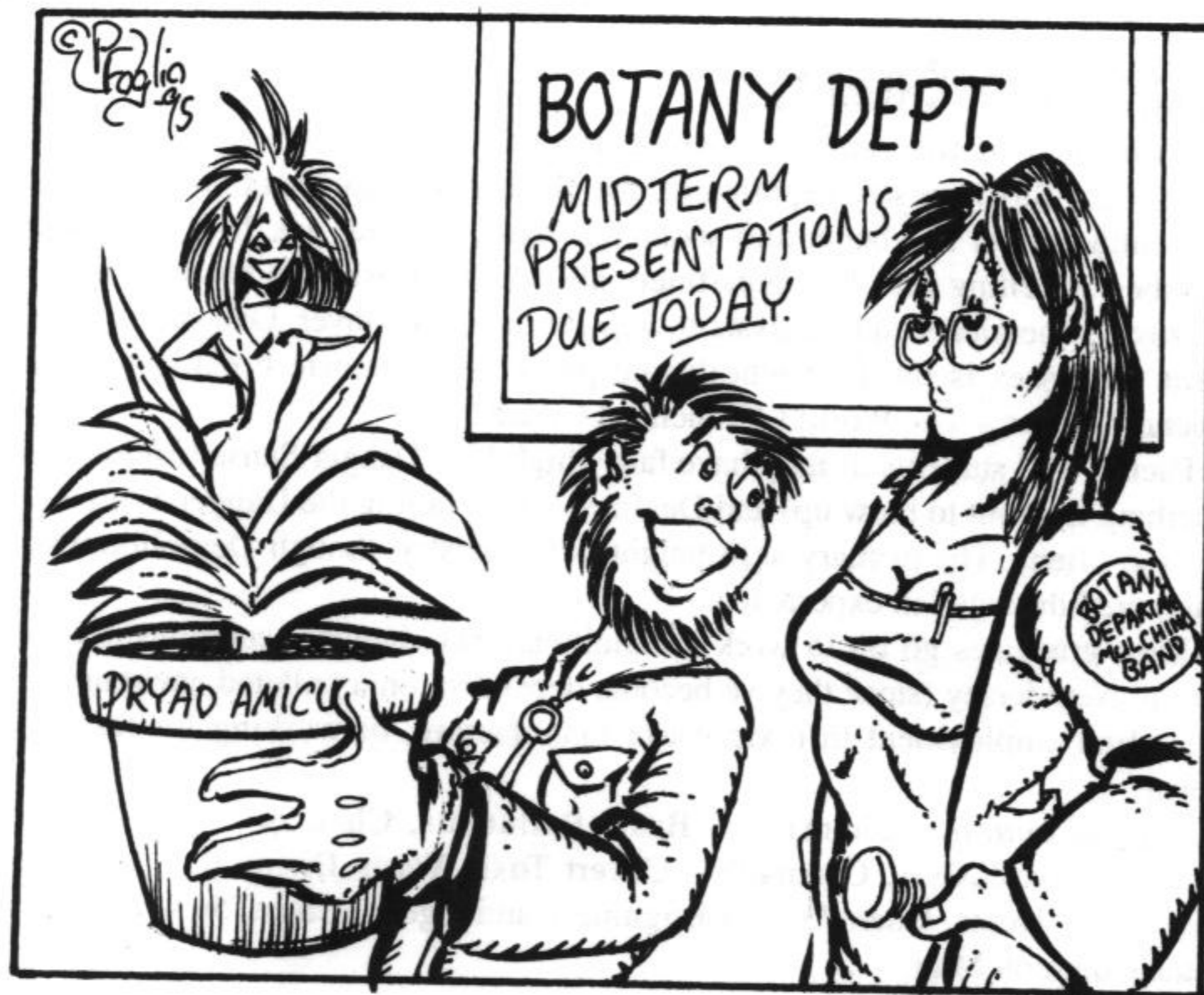
It is just a student rumor that some departments were formed solely for the spiffy acronyms.



## SCHOOL OF WEIRD AND UNNATURAL SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING (WUSE)

*“Only a WUSE major would think to attack Cthulhu with laughing gas . . .”*

Due to its fondness for high-tech and high-entropy phenomena, the School of Weird and Unnatural Sciences and Engineering is one of the larger colleges at IOU, consisting of many departments that span a wide range of subjects. (When



## REORGANIZATIONS (CONTINUED)

Most of the fallout from "re-orgs" falls on the undergraduate students, of course. A student may come to class one morning and find that:

- his major no longer exists.
- his major department now belongs to a different school, and he needs to transfer (with all the paperwork that implies).
- the requirements for his major have totally changed, and he suddenly has 130 additional credits of required courses.
- the department faculty have mysteriously disappeared, but classes simply pick up where they left off yesterday, with new teachers.

Sometimes entire buildings disappear overnight, and once in a while, a college suddenly appears or vanishes. (Puff of smoke optional.)

## OTHER WUSE DEPARTMENTS

A sampling of additional departments in WUSE, for GM elaboration:

*Department of Deforestation:* strip-mining for fun and profit.

*Department of Computer Mythology:* the study of computer legends.

*Department of Earth Sciences:* exploiting the planet for fun and profit.

*Department of Martian Sciences:* don't ask - no one knows anyway.

*Department of Recreational Biochemistry:* designer drugs.

*Department of Rude Engineering:* building highly obnoxious artificial humanoids.

*Department of Synthetic Nutrition:* hazardous materials handling.

*Department of Ultramarine Science:* (a.k.a. Marine Ultrasciences) scientific wet work.

*Department of Zoology:* classifying, capturing and assigning blame for the creations of other WUSE or Metaphysics departments.

*School of Anti-Social Sciences (SASS):* an alias for WUSE, attracts the mad scientists better, and confuses SSAS students.

### WUSE: DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY

Known on campus mostly for the unusual architecture of the building - a giant tree-house, complete with dryads - the botany department is considered fairly innocuous, as WUSE goes. Though strange vines hanging down have been known to attack unwary students...

The primary requirement for students and faculty in this department is that they be strict carnivores - vegetarians get a -4 reaction from most of the more aggressive plants!

*Continued on next page...*

explosive dispersal is factored in, WUSE sometimes spans an even wider area... ) Because of this broad approach to "turf," it is often squabbling with other schools for some of its departments. The College of Temporal Happenstance, Ultimate Lies and Historical Undertakings, for example, tries to reserve all aspects of time travel for itself, when it is clear that "Time Machines, Building Of" falls under the aegis of Temporal Engineering. The College of Obscure and Unhealthy Professions often has its own ideas about who should be teaching weapons manufacture, and the School of Social Anti-Sciences has some opinions about where this "Culinary Studies" stuff belongs.

However, WUSE (rhymes with "booze," despite Team members' tendency to pronounce it "wuss" or "wussie" just before becoming test subjects for final projects) has certain advantages. Foremost among these is THE computer, the super-computer that runs the entire campus. Only WUSE administrators seem to be able to maintain THE computer effectively, and they have thoughtfully instructed THE computer to adjust their salaries correspondingly.

WUSE majors usually have exceptional IQs, below average physical attributes and minimal abnormal abilities (though the College *does* welcome electrokinetic psis). Instead, they invent gadgets which - when they work as advertised - rival or surpass "natural" advantages. Despite their uncanny knack for creating mushroom clouds, WUSE majors are often pacifists and prefer to think of clever and elaborate plans to achieve their goals with minimal loss of life. Some even try to reduce property damage, but that's an extremist viewpoint.

Professors are similar to students, though often much balder. (All that radiation...) Teaching in WUSE is more profitable than in most other colleges - many professors have businesses on the side, and government grants for hyper-expensive equipment offer considerable opportunity for "overhead charges." On the other hand, the inevitable departmental budget overruns and costs of replacing major chunks of campus draw the ArchDean's attention to WUSE faculty more often than to those teaching lower-entropy curricula.

Buildings devoted to the College of Weird and Unnatural Sciences and Engineering come in three flavors: high-tech, computerized labs; incredibly sturdy and nigh-indestructible bomb-bunkers; and cheap, disposable, pre-fab cracker-boxes.

## OTHER WUSE DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

Graduates find careers with the U.S. Forest Service, large agribusinesses and the more *unusual* florist shops.

*Typical courses:* Bot114 – Talking to Plants, Bot115 – Listening to Plants, Bot464 – Hybridizing Carnivorous Species, Bot788 – Growing Your Own Army.

### WUSE: DEPARTMENT OF TEMPORAL ENGINEERING

Unlike its rival D.O.C.T.O.R. (in C.T.H.U.L.H.U.), WUSE's time-travel department is interested in "nuts and bolts." Though forbidden to test their devices, except under C.T.H.U.L.H.U. supervision, many grad students from this department seem to turn up in the strangest times – usually in a great deal of trouble . . .

The Gadgeteer advantage is common among the Temporal Engineering students and faculty, as are various of the specialized temporal advantages described in *GURPS Time Travel*. Courses in the department teach skills in Temporal Engineering, Temporal Operation and Temporal Physics.

Since the existence of time travel is not officially known outside the University, there is a limited job market for graduates, though there are rumors of some T.E. majors getting job offers from various world governments. Most graduates either remain as researchers and teachers at IOU, or become self-employed temporal "entrepreneurs."

*Typical Courses:* TE115 – Applied Paradoxes I: Grandfather Clauses, TE374 – Rewriting History, TE375 – Re-engineering History, TE448 – Timestream Hydraulics, TE617 – Sacking the Future, TE752 – Out-Teching the Time Patrol.

### WUSE: DEPARTMENT OF WEIRD SCIENCE AND CULINARY STUDIES

This is the department that asks the burning question, "Can we eat it, or will it eat us?" Considered a bit odd, even by the standards of WUSE, the Weird Science faculty indulges in far-out (one might even say, "over the rainbow") scientific theories. Or pseudo-scientific theories. Or lunch . . . whatever comes first. The only commonality between the various projects being researched here is the apparent need for fresh produce as part of the experiment – usually rutabagas. (The College of Metaphysics worries that the Weird Science department is really trying to do some sort of odd alchemy, but so far hasn't found any proof. Some of the spies even come back unchanged.)

*Continued on next page . . .*

## DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

With most of the *really* fun stuff usurped by the Johnny-come-lately Recreational Biochemistry department, the chemistry department consoles itself by inventing newer and better anti-social materials, like tear gas, hyperexplosives and asbestos ceiling tile. The department also does a brisk side business in cancer-causing chemicals and catalysts to deplete the ozone layer. One of the bigger recent successes is the first wholly-inorganic, zero-calorie breakfast cereal, "Macho Rockies – The World's Crunchiest Cereal."

Faculty and students usually have fairly high IQs, Danger Sense (useful when something is about to blow up) and Deafness (from failing the Danger Sense rolls once too often). The primary skill taught is Chemistry, though Demolitions can be acquired through lab experience.

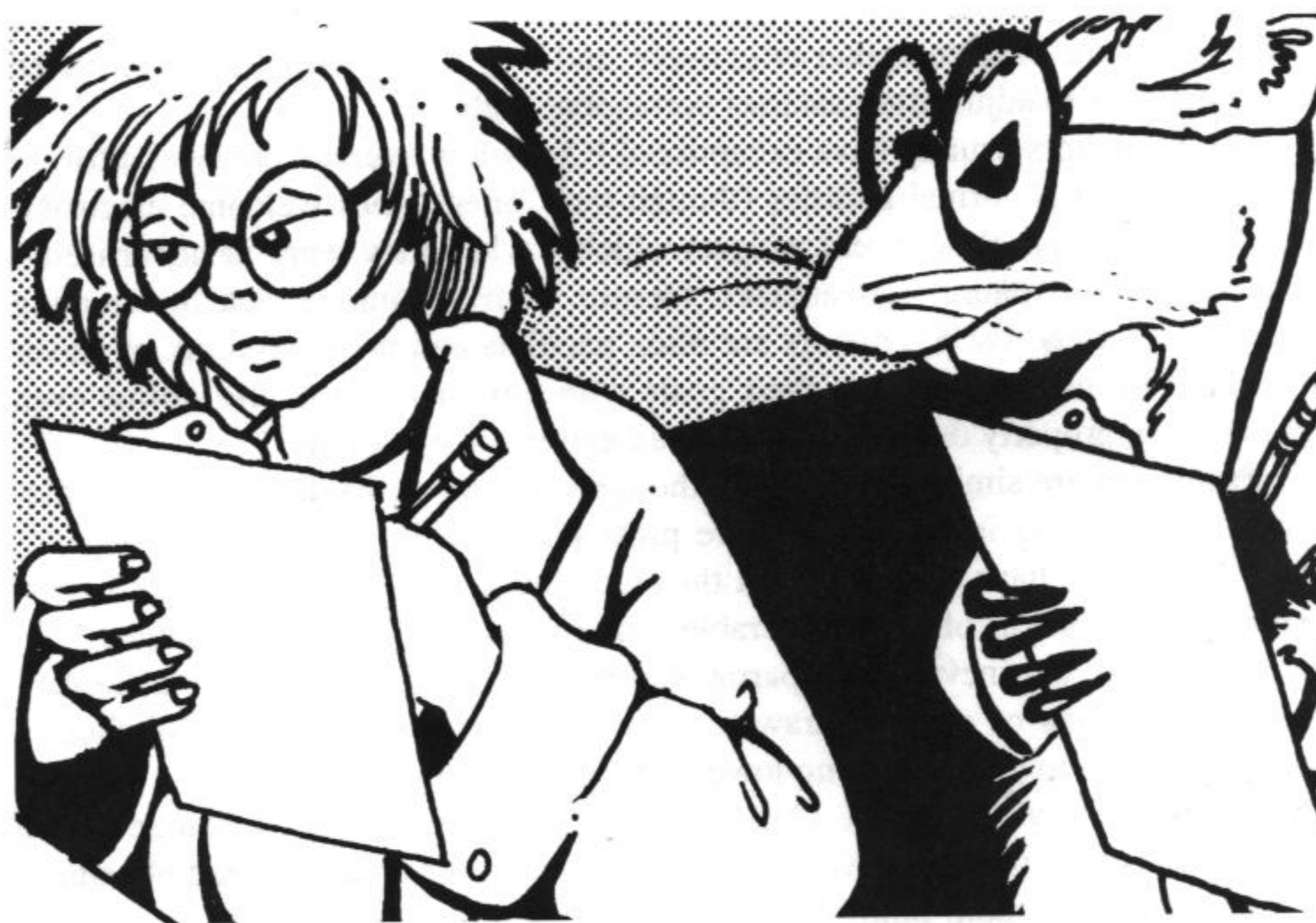
Most graduates go on to work for multinational chemical conglomerates, or move to New Jersey (since they've become dependent on a polluted environment). A few find employment in toxic waste manufacture, or working for fast-food chains.

*Typical courses:* Chem112 – Basic Pollutants, Chem267 – Theory and Practice of Explosives, Chem445 – Covert Toxic Waste Disposal, Chem633 – Universal Solvents, Chem755 – Designing Carcinogens, Chem756 – Mutagens for the Common Man.

## DEPARTMENT OF GENETIC ENGINEERING

Known around campus as the "Frankies," the faculty and students in this department specialize in making friends – by building them. They also tinker with lower animals, and are the primary suspects for the origin of meeps. Unfortunately, the gengineers aren't always careful to keep their toys in the lab, or maybe they just like to field test their creations around campus. Whatever the reason, a lot of the more . . . entertaining . . . campus flora and fauna seem to have come from here.

Students and faculty are primarily selected for high IQ, and lack of Common Sense. Skills taught in the department include Genetic Engineering, Biochemistry and Gunner (Tank Cannon) – for dealing with the big ones that get away.



Graduates either become typical hermit mad scientists, megalomaniac would-be world emperors (with armies of sentient wombats) or proprietors of pet stores featuring *really* exotic animals.

*Typical courses:* GE100 – Bringing Good Things to Life, GE222 – The Making of a Politician, GE344 – 101 Uses for Lightning Rods, GE577 – Making Friends: Do-It-Yourself Sentients.



## DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER WIZARDRY

As might be expected from the title, this department is contested with the College of Metaphysics. This recently-formed department is concerned with the interaction of magic and computers. Among other things, it teaches Tech College spells (from *GURPS Grimoire*), but due to inexperience with magic, the results are somewhat erratic. It also tries to build computer-assisted spellcasting gadgets and microprocessor-controlled magic items, and of course, it works at designing new and ever more arcane operating systems. (UNIX was an early triumph.) Some research in the department is attempting to create AIs with Magery, but so far such attempts have failed. (THE computer is keenly interested in this research, of course.)

The department recruits faculty and students with interests in the occult, as well as high levels of Computer Programming skill. Magery is a plus (though the College of Metaphysics tries to recruit mages first). Skills taught here include Astrology, Computer Programming, Occultism, Electronics (Computers) and Electronics (Magical), as well as all the spells in the Tech College.

Students majoring in Computer Wizardry go on to successful careers designing new vaporware operating systems for major software producers, VCR remote controls or video games. Some branch out and start computer graphics companies to support Hollywood special-effects blockbusters.

*Typical courses:* CW133 – Computerized Horoscope Generation, CW364 – Semiconductor Metaphysics, CW431 – Operating System Upgrades for Profit, CW678 – Computer Graphics for Movies, CW742 – Operating System Daemon Summoning.

## OTHER WUSE DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

Students and faculty in this department often have the Gadgeteer advantage, and not a few of them also have Cast Iron Stomach (their coffee is even worse than the average WUSE department's). To no one's surprise, the primary skill taught here is Weird Science, though Cooking comes a close second.

For the few graduates of this department, there are limited job opportunities, other than as self-employed mad scientists, substitute high school science teachers or science fiction authors. On the other hand, Weird Science graduates are among the few people who are equally comfortable inventing fire for prehistoric man (can't make coffee without it), or playing "designated pilot" when the visiting alien gets too drunk at a faculty party. Drop a Weird Science grad on a desert island, and when you come back in five years, he'll not only have a busy technological civilization based on sentient coconuts – he'll be a few months from putting a coconut on Mars. Or maybe there'll just be a glassy crater full of mutant radioactive cockroaches.

*Typical courses:* there aren't any – WSCS courses are generally never taught twice. Often on direct orders from the ArchDean...

## WUSE: DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

One of the major problems facing modern scientists is funding – university administrations tend to be reluctant to fund billion-dollar projects whose purpose is searching for the elusive tau fuon, the particle that will settle once and for all whether the Big Bang was left- or right-handed. Thus was born political science: the art of convincing Congress that a billion-dollar science research project will generate *four* billion dollars worth of pork-barrel jobs in every Congressthing's home district. Many of the techniques are related to those long used by defense contractors, and with the decline in popularity of billion-dollar military boondoggles, lobbyists have recycled new life into old scams by moving to the scientific community. As might be expected, some courses in the political science curriculum are contested with departments in COUP ("Advanced Political Bribery 512" and "Blackmailing Your Congress-thing 212") and the School of Conservative Arts ("Manipulating Congress for Profit 671"), as well as the Department of Government Studies in the College of Communications.

*Continued on next page...*

## OTHER WUSE DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

Students and faculty in the Political Science department specialize in communication abilities: the Voice and Charisma advantages are common, as is the psi Telepathy power; skills taught include Accounting, Merchant, Performance, Bard, Writing, Fast-Talk, Law, Intimidation and Forgery. (This department is WUSE's attempt to keep students from taking courses in COUP, CoC and SCA, thus keeping all the income for itself. DPS classes sometimes turn into firefights between COUP infiltrators, WUSE loyalists and invading armies of briefcase-toting students from CoC.)

Department graduates often find niches in major government science bureaucracies like NSF, DOE and NASA. Potential profits are lower than for other government jobs, but there are great travel opportunities, and the exercise of power over the scientific community appeals to those with tendencies toward megalomania.

*Typical courses:* PS115 – Congressional Influence-Peddling, PS255 – Misleading Congressional Committees, PS315 – Underestimating Budgets, PS316 – Underestimating Schedules, PS364 – Science in Sound Bites, PS666 – Building a Bureaucracy.

### DEFUNCT DEPARTMENTS

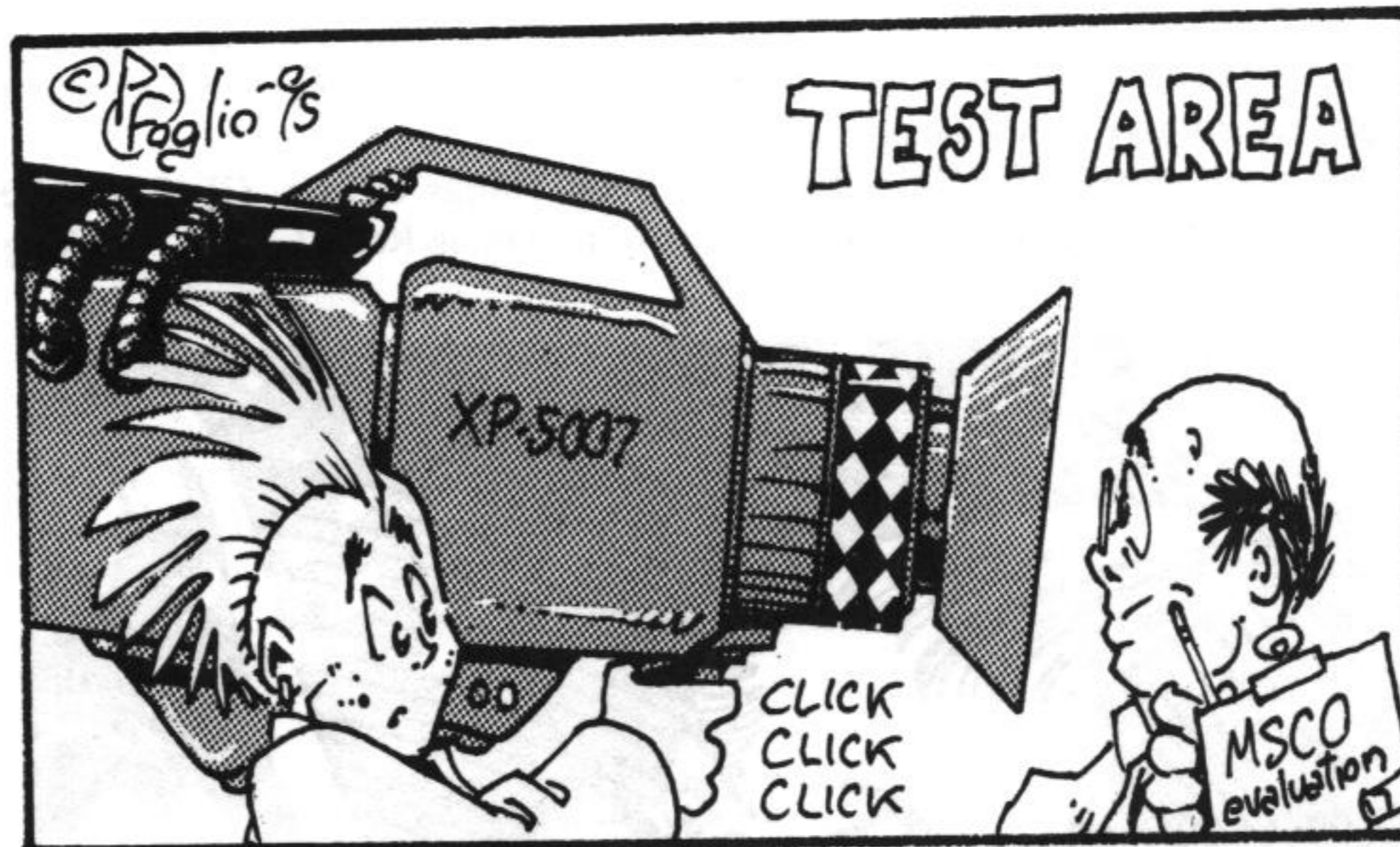
*Department of THE difference engine Science:* pre-electric computing, mutated into THE computer Science in 1911.

*Department of Phlogiston Chemistry:* resulted in the Pyromic Memorial Firestorm in 1605, burning on campus to this day . . .

## GOVERNMENT GRANTS

A critical function of WUSE departments in particular, and sometimes those in other schools, is obtaining research funding. Generally, only the government is rich enough – and unaccountable enough – to pour substantial sums into dubious research programs, though corporations and rich individuals can sometimes be tapped.

Besides keeping graduate students employed and providing extra income to professors, government-funded research programs also pay “overhead” to the University. This usually amounts to 30-50% of the total grant, and covers charges for building space, secretarial help, electricity, administrative space, office copiers, paper, building space, paper clips, administrative services, administrative space, waste collection, janitorial services, building space and so on, ad nauseam – whatever the creative accountants turned out by SCA can invent, or double-bill. And IOU hires the most creative graduates from the SCA (which keeps them from joining the IRS, among other things).



## DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY BIOLOGY

A recent spin-off from the Department of Military Science and Cost Overruns, the Military Biology department teaches courses in Marine biology, Army biology, Navy biology and Air Force biology (bringing it into conflict with interests of the School of Performing and Creative Arts). It also does research into biological and chemical materials of critical military importance, like harsh soaps, nerve gas, caffeine, tobacco and Spam.

A high HT is of critical importance to students and professors, and the Immunity to Disease, Immunity to Poisons and Rapid Healing advantages are also useful. Skills taught in the department include First Aid, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Physiology and Sex Appeal.

After graduating, department majors often go into the military as medical assistants, become international arms dealers specializing in biological and chemical weapons, or start businesses in toxic waste disposal. Some also find careers with tobacco companies or with giant food conglomerates.

*Typical courses:* MB105 – Hygiene is Your Friend, MB269 – Military Applications of Sex, MB390 – Combat Uses for Toxic Wastes, MB576 – Radioactive Toxins: Double Jeopardy, MB783 – 101 Uses for Neurotoxins.

## DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY SCIENCE AND COST OVERRUNS

This department is coveted by COUP, which wants it mostly for the profit-skimming potential. WUSE justifies its jurisdiction by pointing to the word “Science” in the department title. Since there’s a natural symbiosis between the military outlook and the high-energy, high-cost WUSE approach to R&D, the department sticks with the creators of its high-tech toys – at least until COUP makes it an offer it can’t refuse . . .

MSCO is a perfect home for the non-pacifist, pro-explosion WUSE major, especially one with high ST – to tote around tripod-mounted weapons. Department majors are an exception to the rule that WUSE students have high IQs. High ST, HT and Toughness are commonly found in MSCO students. DX isn’t as important, since the department favors excessive overkill in weapons, to eliminate the need for accuracy. “Close” counts in horseshoes and strategic thermonuclear hand grenades.

Graduates have sure careers as administrative officers in military service, leading eventually to lucrative jobs as vice-presidents of defense contractors. Some graduates eschew the military to start their own businesses instead, usually in the pest-control industry.

*Typical courses:* MSCO107 – Snatching Victory from Defeat: Public Relations for Military Officers, MSCO211 – Counting Megadeaths: Statistics for Generals, MCSO304 – Applications of Military Overkill, MSCO622 – “Police Actions:” Having a War Without Inviting Congress, MCSO715 – Finding a Cushy Job in Industry.

## DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

This department is in an informal competition with the chemistry department and Military Science and Cost Overruns for the highest per-capita rate of major explosions. (There is also a betting pool among the gradthings about which will have the largest explosion of the month.) Physics is the study of how the universe is put together . . . or, at IOU, how to take it apart. Most physics research requires vast machines of enormous cost, using incredible amounts of electricity. All to move a few atoms around very, very fast, and smash them into things. (Physicists seem to enjoy this kind of stuff.) With all that energy kicking around, a few explosions come with the territory.

Physics department majors and professors have the typical WUSE high IQ, and many also have high HT (to better withstand all that stray radiation). Typical disadvantages include Bad Sight (nearsighted) and Absent-Mindedness (“Didn’t I remember to put the control rods back into the reactor? Oops.”). Most also have the Odious Personal Habit of “spouts incomprehensible physics gibberish at the drop of a hat.”

Career paths after graduation lead to work in government sponsored national labs (usually trying to find better ways to blow up someone *else’s* country) or teaching physics to university students. A few physicists go the lone-wolf mad scientist route, and find entertaining new ways to make the Sun go nova. Unfortunately, there’s not much profit potential in this, except maybe the film rights.

*Typical courses:* Phy110 – Radiation is Your Friend, Phy213 – Converting Matter into Energy, Phy417 – Big Bangs: Making Your Own Universe, Phy642 – The Speed of Light: It May Be the Law, But You Can Always Cheat.

## DEPARTMENT OF THE COMPUTER SCIENCE

Due to the existence of THE computer (see p. 62), this department replaces what would normally be called Computer Science. As well as teaching the standard computer languages like C++, Pascal and Foulbol, THE computer Science covers computer specializations of skills normally considered social ones, like psychology, diplomacy and intimidation – as applied to THE computer. Naturally, the department has been at the forefront of promotion of computers in every application – the access to information this has produced has made the department one of the most powerful entities in the world. There is little question why the former department head here became the current WUSE dean . . .

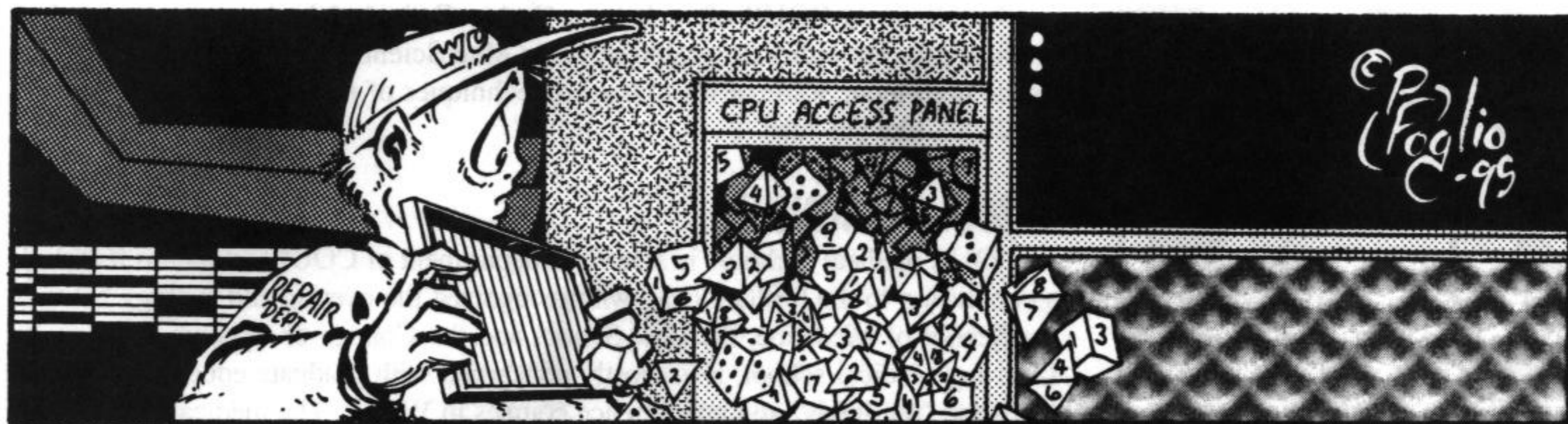
## FORMING A NEW DEPARTMENT

Ambitious senior faculty despairing of deposing the chairthing of their current department often consider breaking away and forming their own new department, which they will graciously volunteer to chair . . .

Creating a new department first requires a core faculty, so the aspiring professor must first con . . . ah, convince some other members of his current department to defect, usually by offering them bigger salaries, better perks or longer titles. Normally the current chairthing will object to having valuable faculty stolen, so things can get sticky unless handled very quietly.

Once the basic personnel problems have been solved (and George the Janitor has mopped up the bloodstains), the prospective chairthing faces some additional hurdles. First, he needs to sell the new department to the dean of his college (unless he’s planning to defect to another college, which is an easier sale to the acquiring school, but tends to provoke high-energy objections from the current school’s dean). Normal procedure requires a hefty bribe, plus a lot of paperwork, including 5-year budget projections, estimated profits and other fantasies usually required in business plans. (Make a “merchant transaction” Reaction roll for the dean to the proposed department.) A catchy title for the department helps (+1 on the Reaction roll).

Once approved by the dean, the whole procedure must be repeated with the ArchDean, who will usually ask embarrassing questions about the financial projections. A truly inspired job of sales-thingship may convince the ArchDean to create a whole new college for the new department, and the ambitious professor may be able to become a full dean! (He will have to take – and survive – the appropriate level of The Treatment, of course, which will aid in the inevitable bloodfeud with the former college . . .)



## OTHER COUP DEPARTMENTS

### COUP: DEPARTMENT OF DIRTY TRICKS

Eschewing physical force for more psychological techniques, the Department of Dirty Tricks specializes in the fine arts of bribery, blackmail and character assassination. (The latter sometimes brings it into conflict with the Journalism Department in the College of Communications.)

Students and faculty in the department have no particular requirements, other than the lack of Honesty and Truthfulness disadvantages. The primary skills taught here are Psychology, Detect Lies, Electronics Operation (Communications), Photography and Writing.

Most graduates find jobs as "special assistants" in large corporations and the government, while others become newspaper columnists, radio talk show hosts or investigative TV reporters. A few have tried to join the IRS, but either changed their minds or disappeared.

*Typical courses:* DDT187 – Congressional Bribe Estimation, DDT290 – Tabloid Photographic Techniques, DDT291 – Bedroom Surveillance for Fun and Profit, DDT302 – Techniques for Character Assassination and TV Reporting.

*Continued on next page . . .*



Majors in this department are actively recruited for high IQ, Mathematical Ability and the psi power of Electrokinesis. Compulsive Behavior (Reading UseNet News) is *very* common. Skills taught here include Computer Programming and Electronics (Computers), as well as the specialization Psychology (Artificial Intelligences). Other specializations of skills include Electronics (Security Systems), Merchant (Electronics) and Merchant (Computer Programs), Diplomacy (Artificial Intelligences) and Fast-Talk (Artificial Intelligences). Many courses are routinely taught at TL8.

Career paths for graduates lead into lucrative jobs in the computer industry, consultants specializing in computerizing (read: infiltrating) computer-poor businesses and jobs in government agencies (like the NSA).

*Typical courses:* TcS128 – Virtual Breaking and Entering, TcS255 – Programming Languages, TcS256 – Deprogramming Languages, TcS511 – Designing VCR Programming Controls, TcS512 – Using Flashy Graphical Interfaces to Hide Grungy Old Code, TcS768 – Government Database Systems, TcS1024 – Designing Artificial Intelligences.

## COLLEGE OF OBSCURE AND UNHEALTHY PROFESSIONS

*"When a COUP professor says, 'My door is always open to students,' he's probably referring to the trapdoor in front of his desk . . ."*

The College of Obscure and Unhealthy Professions is nearly as large as WUSE, and at least as profitable, though what they do is sometimes less obvious – especially when they do it *right*. They don't often dispute territory with other schools, but when they do, they tend to win. Rather than deal with a faculty bloodfeud, other colleges prefer to give the department to COUP, and negotiate to teach its classes "tag-team" with COUP professors.

The Dean of COUP is often referred to as "The Unseen Dean," as he, she or it is a shadowy figure second only to the ArchDean in the rankings of "Administrators Students Don't Want to Meet." There is often some doubt as to whether the COUP dean is even alive, which results in the appointment of "TempDeans" to do the paperwork while the investigation is going on. A TempDean is in a *prime* position to become dean if the old one is discovered to be defunct (whether it happened before or after the TempDean's appointment), so deans who don't do their paperwork are asking for trouble.

COUP majors are fond of skulking in shadows, puttering in darkrooms and running for office (and running for cover). Agility, intelligence and a winning personality can all be useful to these students, depending on the exact fields of study. Teachers in the College of Obscure and Unhealthy Professions sit with their backs to very *solid* walls, since they are unable to quash the rumor that if your teacher gets sent to the Infirmary for fatal reasons in the middle of a semester, you get a passing grade in that class.

Buildings in COUP often have a Gothic Cathedral look to them, and their medical labs are either decorated in Early Mad Scientist, or ominously gleaming, sterile high-tech. Some of the classes in techniques of mass destruction are taught in WUSE-like pre-fabs.

## SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

IOU's medical "school" is actually a department of COUP – it retains its title as a concession to the brilliant dean who recognized the overlap and synergy between the School of Medicine, the Law School and the College of Obscure Professions. Like any medical school, it is mostly concerned with graduate education – undergrads are "pre-meds" and take science courses in WUSE. The medical school oper-

ates Student Health Services and also runs a teaching hospital which services the local community (and makes a nice profit for the University). Most of the professors are looking to enlarge their reputations (and egos) by inventing new and more profitable operations or drugs, or by finding a new disease and discovering a cure.

Faculty in the medical school generally have Social Status 1+ and are at least Wealthy, since they're practicing doctors as well as teachers. Students need only better-than-average IQ, though psi Healing talent or knowledge of magical healing is also useful. Some doctors have the -10-point Code of Honor (Hippocratic Oath), but this isn't required. The medical school teaches all the Medical skills, naturally, as well as psi Healing skills, with minor ventures into the magical Healing college spells and the Alchemy skill.

Naturally, graduates of the medical school can look forward to long, profitable careers as overpaid specialists, while the politically-inclined can go into government service and peddle regulations as wonder cures for society's ills.

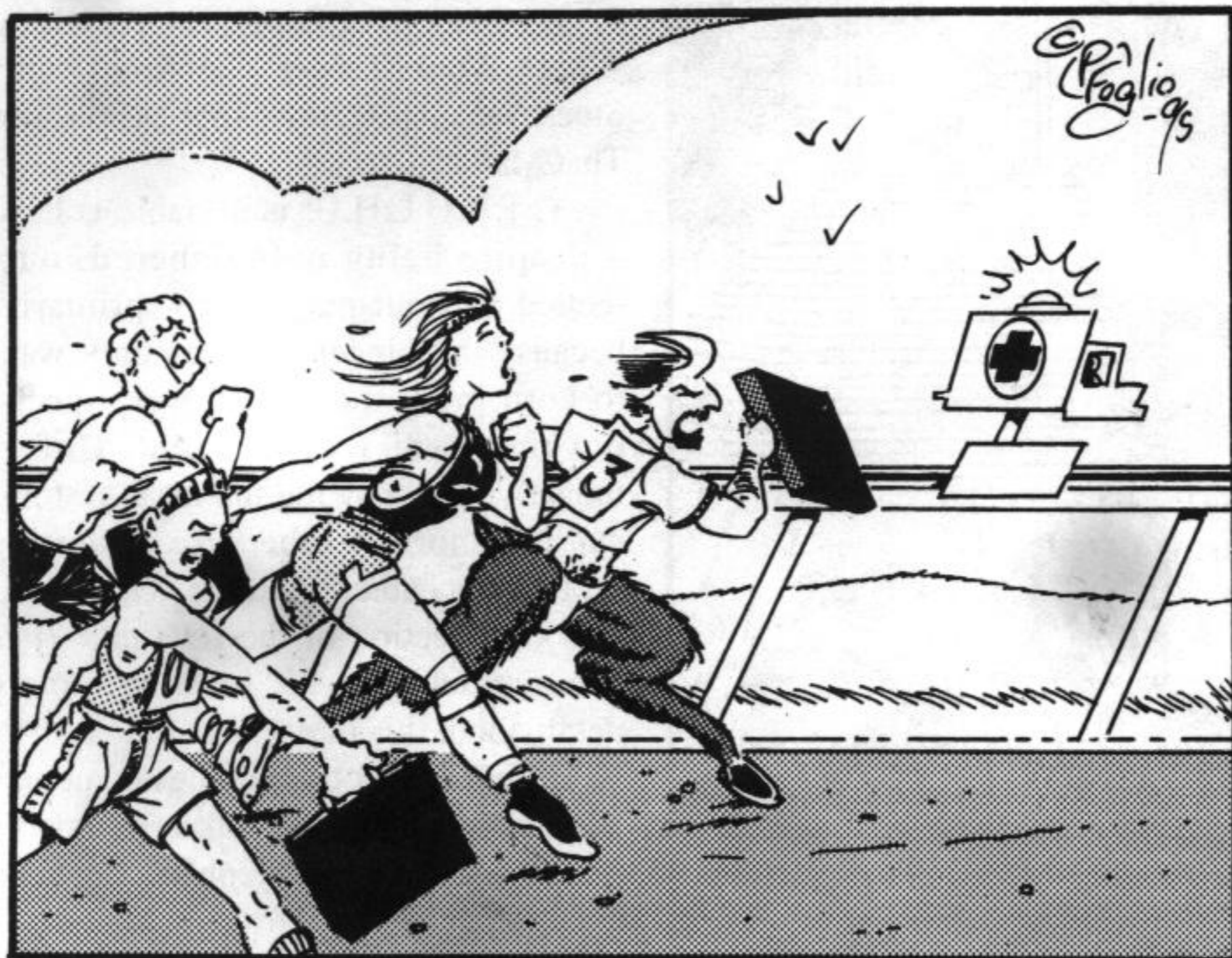
*Typical courses:* Med567 – Uses of Scientific Notation in Hospital Bills, Med754 – Inventing Incomprehensible Jargon, Med755 – Explaining Diseases to Patients Without Telling Them Anything, Med756 – Selling Unnecessary Surgery.

## SCHOOL OF LAW

Like the medical "school," this department kept its original title in the merger that formed COUP – it's in the contract. This school is also a graduate-only one; pre-law undergrads are usually in the College of Communications. Professors are mostly practicing lawyers, and proximity to the medical school has given them important access to potential clients – both in ambulances to chase, and in doctors to defend for malpractice.

Professors and students need moderate to high IQs, and good Law and Research skills. Trial lawyers benefit from the Voice, Charisma and Empathy advantages. Skills taught include Law, Research, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Intimidation, Acting, Bard, Interrogation, Detect Lies, Criminology and Psychology.

*Typical courses:* Law504 – Basic Ambulance-Chasing, Law599 – Police Procedures and How to Avoid Them, Law614 – Padding Bills, Law754 – Politics: Writing New Laws for Fun and Profit.



## OTHER COUP DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

### COUP: DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

If you like breaking things, this is the place to learn how. This department trains people in the gentle arts of sabotage: military, industrial, terrorist and economic. While this does sometime involve explosions, Technical Difficulties doesn't compete with WUSE, preferring more subtle versions of the monkey-wrench-in-the-works.

Besides a liking for gumming up the system, there are few requirements for professors and faculty – even the most untalented person can learn to be constructively incompetent. Several department members share the Pyromania disadvantage, while others, aiming for middle-management positions, develop the full potential of Laziness or Bully. Classes here teach a number of skills, including Demolitions, Administration, Psychology and most technical skills.

Graduates find jobs in middle management in large corporations, become government bureaucrats or operate as freelance troublemakers.

*Typical courses:* TD201 – Misrouting, Misfiling and Losing Paperwork in Triplicate, TD202 – Designing Incomprehensible Forms, TD276 – Arson for Fun and Profit, TD317 – Writing User Manuals TD406 – Demolitions, TD512 – Computer Software Enbugging, TD622 – Designing Unserviceable Equipment.

### CREATING COURSES

The GM may be called upon to create IOU courses from time to time. One good source of ideas for topics is to leave the whole thing as an exercise for the students – let the *players* invent the courses their PCs are taking or teaching.

Sometimes, though, the GM may need a specific course for a plot idea, or simply wish to indulge a perverse desire to create educational curricula. So a few words about course titles and subject matter are in order.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## CREATING COURSES (CONTINUED)

First, your course needs a catchy title – boring titles don't bring in the students, and a professor with no students will soon have no job, as well. (Exception: see the Tenure advantage, p. 20.) Once you've got a title, you need a course designation to use with all the computer scheduling forms. The first part of the designation is the department identifier, which is normally 2-4 letters. This is followed by a 3-digit number, the first digit of which indicates the relative level of the course: 100-level courses are introductory, while 500-level courses are advanced courses for undergraduate majors or low-level grad students and 700-level courses are advanced graduate-level studies. Except on Tuesdays.

Picking a course number can be a difficult decision. An easy-to-remember number is good, but a number one higher or lower than a popular course can fool students into thinking the course is either a pre-requisite or a follow-on for the well-filled (and profitable) course.

Departments may also sometimes use the same letter designations. While the ArchDean will eventually intervene to fix things, students may sign up for the C.T.H.U.L.H.U. Medieval Studies course MS142 – Medieval Entertainment Forms, and wind up in the WUSE Martian Sciences class MS142 – Yarbling for Vulgs.

When creating a course, thought should also be given to prerequisites – those courses that are necessary grounding for the new course. (Or those that aren't getting enough students on their own, or any other political reason the GM can think of.) Some courses will have "Permission of the instructor" as a prerequisite – this means the student needs to fast-talk, bribe, intimidate or blackmail the professor. Sadistic GMs may invent circular prerequisites; course A requires course B first, which requires course A first.

Detail-conscious GMs may want to come up with a one or two-paragraph description of the course's content to be put into the semester's course catalog. (Remember that this is marketing hype designed to sucker students into taking the class!) The GM may also invent required textbooks, equipment and course outlines, but creating mid-term and final exams is carrying verisimilitude a bit far . . .

# COLLEGE OF TEMPORAL HAPPENSTANCE, ULTIMATE LIES AND HISTORICAL UNDERTAKINGS

*"The only College where you have to take classes over before you take them the first time."*

C.T.H.U.L.H.U. is run by Doctor What<sup>7</sup>, out of his (their?) TOILET (see p. 74). Classes span a large time period, but the subjects are narrower. Time travel is a staple of this College, and it has an annoying tendency to cheat when it wants a department by sending an agent back to acquire it (perhaps by giving a chairthing or dean's parents birth-control devices at a crucial time) before all the hoorah even happens.

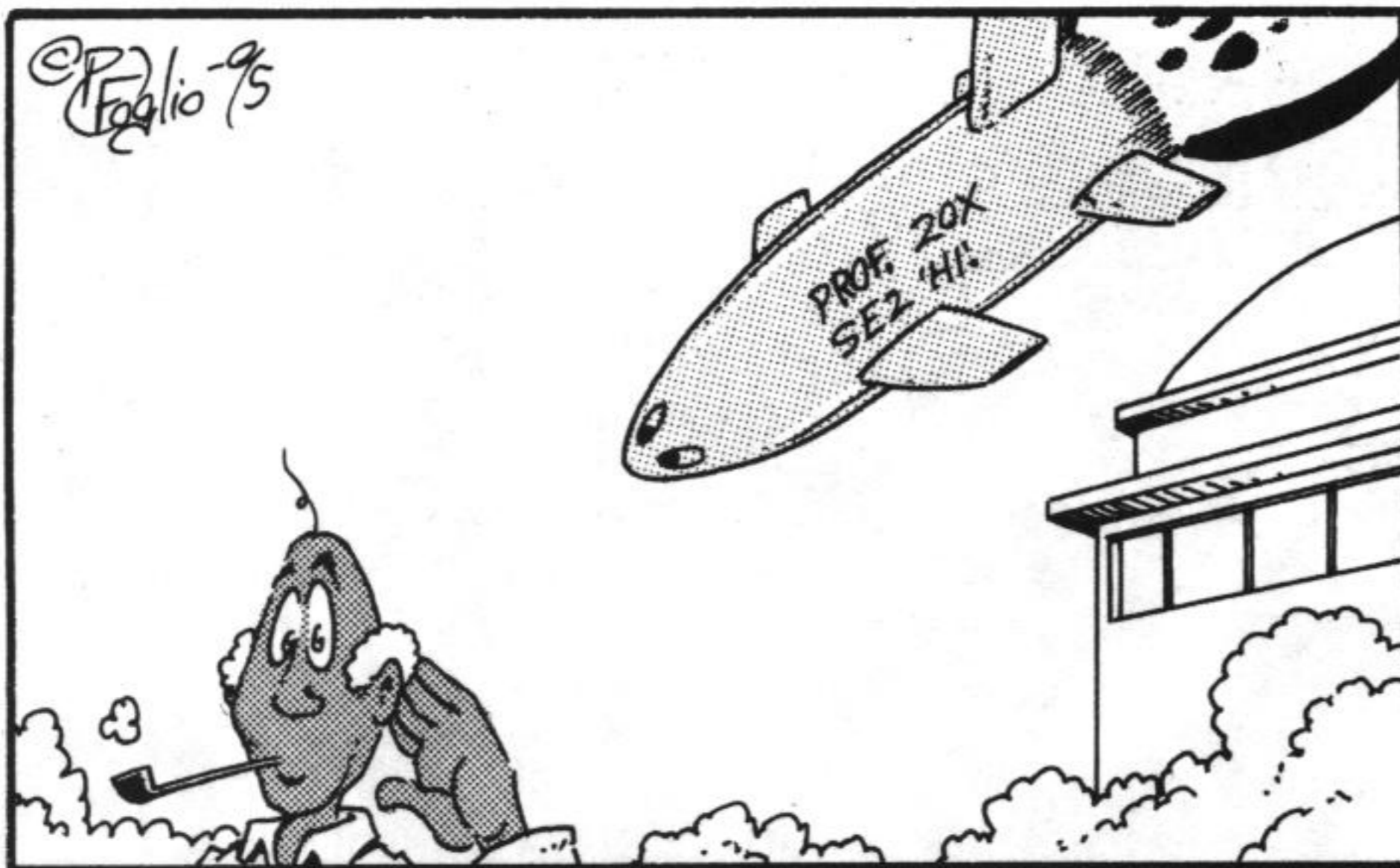
Much to C.T.H.U.L.H.U.'s disgust, both WUSE and the College of Metaphysics have a tendency to create devices (hi-tech or magical) that will travel through time. Technically, this is permissible, so long as such creations aren't used. Practically, C.T.H.U.L.H.U. is in the habit of sending seniors and grad students after any "unauthorized" time-jumpers to confiscate the equipment and (eventually) bring the miscreants back. Majors in other colleges maintain that C.T.H.U.L.H.U. is trying to keep all the good looting eras to itself.

Students at C.T.H.U.L.H.U. are also very good at history in the theoretical sense – either they've been there (and done that), or they don't want to be sent there and then by an irritated teacher for failing a test. They have also been known to pick up souvenirs from previous (or future) times. This could be quite detrimental to the campus, not to mention the rest of the world, if it were not for IOU's Reality Stabilizers (see p. 83). These devices prevent temporal disturbances from wiping the University out of history, though they do very little for the rest of the universe. Thus, C.T.H.U.L.H.U. majors are often quite dedicated to their Prime Directive: Don't Do Anything Which Would Lower The ArchDean's Stock Values (Or Any Other Dean's, For That Matter).

C.T.H.U.L.H.U. is a viable college – despite being outnumbered, out-teched and out-magicked – primarily because the bigger colleges only want to horn in on the time-travel aspects, not the *history* department. Unfortunately, not knowing the local customs can cut short an otherwise promising professor's career. (See the "Other IOU Schools" section of the *IOU and Time Travel* sidebar, p. 95, for a little more detail about this interaction.)

C.T.H.U.L.H.U. buildings come in a wide variety of styles, and it is rumored that they are not mere replicas, but actual buildings salvaged from disasters.





*Note: for a campaign that focuses heavily on time travel and C.T.H.U.L.H.U., it is recommended that the GM have a copy of **GURPS Time Travel**, for the Temporal skills and other time travel-specific material. **GURPS Timeline** is also useful.*

## DEPARTMENT OF PREHISTORY

On somewhat edgy terms with the department of Archeology, the department of Prehistory deals exclusively in matters of the past that were never written down (cave paintings don't count as writing in this case). Many of the faculty also have interests similar to WUSE's departments of Recreational Biochemistry and Botany, considering the exotic flora to be found in the Mesozoic Age. It is a little-known fact that the great dinosaur "die-off" was encouraged by Prehistory majors; it made finding oil *so* much easier if a bunch of dinosaurs all died in the same place . . .

The main requirement for faculty and students is a reasonably high IQ, though Animal Empathy doesn't hurt when you're discussing territory with a Velociraptor. Skills taught include Archeology, specializing in dinosaurs and cavemen, Armory/TL0 and Prospecting. There are also some ancient Botany and Zoology classes. The general Tech Level studied is 0.

Graduates generally go on to similar sorts of work as Archeology majors, as well as finding jobs as consultants to big oil firms.

*Typical courses:* Preh240 – Dinosaur Identification: Are You Lunch?, Preh256 – Advanced Mammoth-Herding, Preh422 – Bring 'Em Back Dead: Trophy Hunting for Museums, Preh617 – Fire-Making Skills for Cro-Magnons.

## DEPARTMENT OF ANCIENT HISTORY

Where Prehistory leaves off, Ancient History hurries to take over, and unearth all those nice bits of jewelry that people carelessly left behind when they died. Their sphere of influence starts at approximately 3500 B.C. (around the time the Egyptian hieroglyphics were developed), and lasts till about 410 A.D. (the end of Roman rule in Britain – Rome being sacked by Visigoths and all that – is where the department of Medieval Studies *insists* on taking over). It also includes the *real* stories behind Atlantis, Stonehenge, Lemuria, ancient astronauts (they were just lost) and the Greek gods.

Language Talent is a plus for Ancient History majors and professors, along with Intuition and – for those who enjoy wowing the locals while locating the treasury – Danger Sense. Various History, Language and Savoir-Faire skills are taught (specializing in a particular culture, like Ancient Roman or Ancient

## FACULTY BLOODFEUDS

"Faculty infighting" between colleges, departments, and professors is a common hazard – it's usually sparked by budgeting decisions, but personal reasons or competing theories can also cause enmity. Since IOU has so many *extremist* professors, it seemed only logical to regulate what was going to happen anyway: the faculty bloodfeud.

Faculty bloodfeuds must be announced, at least to the ArchDean, via the delivery of several pounds of paperwork (handwritten, in triplicate without carbons) and a promise not to trash large portions of the campus indiscriminately. (A substantial donation will speed processing of the paperwork.) Designating a target or goal is nice, but not crucial. All this must be repeated at the beginning of every semester, to renew the bloodfeud permit.

Assuming the ArchDean doesn't reject the paperwork indefinitely, or otherwise call a halt to the procedure (when socialist aliens invade, the ArchDean dislikes "friendly fire"), the two parties to the bloodfeud are allowed to make their points. It should be noted that only one party has to announce the bloodfeud – defending is automatically permitted.

There are some rules to bloodfeuds – most notably the ArchDean's Rules, a general decree that the feuding parties will have to clean up (and *pay for*) any mess they make and a prohibition against harming the students. Undergrads in particular are supposed to be off-limits for serious damage, though having their dorm room doors welded shut is a perfectly reasonable solution to keeping them from being blown up along with their classroom. Graduate students are more likely to be "accidentally" targeted, since they often help professors with research and paperwork. Aside from those guidelines, meant to keep the destruction and student unease at a minimum, the feuding parties are generally left to their own devices.

Faculty bloodfeuds are most often fought on the department or college level. Personal disputes can be dealt with this way, but the participants generally choose a less-formal duel at high noon in the Pent instead.

Reasons for faculty bloodfeuds include:

- Absorbing a smaller college or school as a department.
- Attempting to acquire a department for one's own college.
- Eliminating competition for one's own school, department, research project or promotion.
- Keeping a department from becoming a school, or a group of professors from founding a new department.

*Continued on next page . . .*



## FACULTY BLOODFEUDS (CONTINUED)

– Deadly insults that are better handled by sending hordes of underlings after the offender, rather than facing the culprit oneself in a personal duel – especially if one's opponent has a higher level of The Treatment.

Not all bloodfeuds are announced and registered. Covert faculty bloodfeuds are not uncommon, though the perpetrators are also less likely to worry about disturbing the students, paying for the cleanup bill or any other form of "good sportsthingship." Personal promotions are often achieved via unauthorized bloodfeuds. Campus Security is supposed to keep covert bloodfeuds under control, and if it fails, the ArchDean may have a chat with the initiator.

## OTHER C.T.H.U.L.H.U. DEPARTMENTS

*Department of Alternate Histories:* timeline branching made easy.

*Department of Alternate Universes:* "sideways time" universes, often very strange . . .

*Department of Chronic Funding Shortages:* stealing from the past to pay for the present.

### C.T.H.U.L.H.U.: DEPARTMENT OF ARCHEOLOGY

This department focuses on finding and digging up ancient treasures – bearing in mind that it's easier to do both if you've gone back and planted the stuff there in the first place, or at least gotten a map of the area while watching someone bury the goodies.

*Continued on next page. . . .*

Greek), along with the usual Archeology. Theology and Literature are *highly* recommended for those studying the Romans and Greeks. Skills are also taught for Tech Levels 1 and 2.

Graduates can make a nice living excavating ancient ruins, but many prefer to become movie consultants – it's nice to see an orgy being done *right* for a change.

*Typical courses:* AH127 – Things to See and Do in Ancient Rome, AH202 – Egyptian Tomb Construction Secrets, AH203 – Escaping Pharaohs' Curses, AH399 – Selling Pots to the Beaker People, AH420 – Designing Mysterious Ancient Monuments for Modern Tourist Attractions, AH453 – Investment Opportunities: Roman Road Contracts.

## DEPARTMENT OF MEDIEVAL STUDIES

For the years 411 A.D. to 1492 A.D. (Columbus' first journey) the department of Medieval Studies is in charge. Technically, they should have left off around 1485, the beginning of the Tudor dynasty, but complain that it isn't fair that Ancient History got nearly 3000 years, and they're stuck with a measly 1000 or so. They'd *like* to expand their influence into the 1500s, or even as far as 1775 (the start of the American Revolution, among others in China and Bohemia), but they haven't been able to manage this yet. This era is a popular study for those interested in the rise of the Bavarian Illuminati, though the conspiracy theorists claim the Illuminati originated in much earlier times, and the Bavarians were merely the first to hire a good publicist.

As usual, Language Talent is useful for majors and professors, as is Voice (traveling bards get to see a lot of neat stuff), and Danger Sense is *highly* important if researching anything around 1480 – C.T.H.U.L.H.U. students *do* expect the Spanish Inquisition. Medieval Studies teaches mostly the same skills as the department of Ancient History, with specializations in *their* extant cultures, and at Tech Levels 3 and 4. They also teach Research, since there's a lot more writing to be found in this period.

Those with a degree in Medieval Studies can make a nice living working at Renaissance Festivals and Faires, being paid bards for Society of Creative Anachronism wars and running strange little antique stores that sell daggers embedded in rocks . . .

*Typical courses:* MS114 – Robbing the Rich to Give to the Poor, MS115 – *Being the Rich* (to Rob *from* the Poor), MS302 – Investment Opportunities: The Joy of Serfdom, MS396 – The Spanish Inquisition: Witchburning for Fun and Profit, MS527 – Politics of the Round Table.

## DEPARTMENT OF MODERN HISTORY

Starting at 1492 A.D. and continuing on to the present date, the department of Modern History has the smallest time-period to maintain itself on, but it's just a matter of time before it racks up a few thousand years . . . This department is especially popular with students from the future, who want to fulfill their "Modern History" course requirements without having to go over quite so *much* in classes. They are also usually looking for a good stockbroker. Modern History majors learn such secrets as who shot JFK and who was buried in Grant's tomb.

Students and faculty only need an above-average IQ, though professors exposed to future students often develop Unfazole. Classes here generally deal with "current events" and sociological developments. Tech level skills range from TL5 to TL7.

Graduates do well writing "The Year in Review" articles and books, selling war-mementos and sending the local newspaper "When I Was Your Age . . ." articles.

*Typical courses:* MH231 – The *Real* Cause of World War II, MH378 – How to Be A Railroad Baron, MH411 – Stealth Politics: The Coolidge Era, MH464 – Investment Opportunities: Buying in the Depression, MH510 – The Rise of Bureaucratic Despotism.

## DEPARTMENT OF FUTURE HISTORY

Starting from tomorrow and ending when the galaxy gets sucked into the black hole at its center (or WUSE terraforms it, whichever comes first), the Department of Future History is one of the stranger departments – unlike most other departments in the University, it seems to have little jealousy over its "turf," and calmly turns over each old day to the department of Modern History, along with all the paperwork and reference material it's assembled. It also has popular classes, since modern-day students like knowing which horses to bet on next month.

The only necessity for majors and professors is an ability to deal with temporal paradoxes, uncertainty principles and other hazards of knowing the future, or a future, or *several* futures . . . Skills taught include some very strange specializations of History, Research, Languages, Savior-Faire and Gambling.

Those with a Future History degree make absolutely spectacular stock-market predictors, gamblers and unofficial government astrologers.

*Typical courses:* FH109 – Yesterday and Yesterday and Yesterday, Creeps in its Petty Pace, FH310 – Jam Yesterday and Jam Tomorrow: Having Your Cake and Eating it Too, FH652 – Investment Opportunities: Avoiding the SEC.

## DEPARTMENT OF ORTHODOX CHRONODISPLACEMENT THEORY AND ORIGINAL RESEARCH (D.O.C.T.O.R.)

This department is dedicated to time travel R&D, C.T.H.U.L.H.U.-style. i.e., sloppy, sporadic and mostly with a view to figuring out how to get five or six versions of oneself together for a party, or ways of sneaking into zones of time that aren't easily accessible. It *might* get more useful work done if it wasn't disputing territory with WUSE (the Department of Temporal Engineering, in particular) which claims the Department of Chronodisplacement Theory should be under *its* control since *it* knows how to do research. It also thinks that C.T.H.U.L.H.U. is too acronym-happy. Failing to acquire the department by the usual means – bribery, assassination and blackmail – the Temporal Engineers have fallen back on the old

## OTHER C.T.H.U.L.H.U. DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

Since there's still a certain amount of guess-work associated with archeology, not to mention a lot of digging out in the sun, Intuition is a helpful advantage for professors and majors, and HT is good for avoiding sunstroke. The primary skill taught is Archaeology, of course, often specializing in a particular period of history. Other skills include Architecture, to figure out what old buildings were, Traps, to deal with one's more paranoid ancestors, Holdout, to deal with troublesome customs inspectors, a bit of Geology and Prospecting, History and Literature. (Remember Schliemann and the city of Troy . . .) Language skills for one's specialty era are also important, especially if one wants to go sightseeing first.

Graduates find work digging things up and selling them to museums and collectors, or on the black market.

*Typical courses:* Arc102 – Basic Burial Grounds: Your Neighbor's Compost Pile, Arc303 – Intermediate Burial Grounds: Your Local Graveyard, Arc504 – Advanced Burial Grounds: The La Brea Tar Pits, Arc721 – Egyptian Practical Jokes, Arc??? – The Lost Arc.



## OTHER SCA DEPARTMENTS

### SCA: DEPARTMENT OF EMPIRE-BUILDING

Known as the Department of Business Administration in less honest versions of the course catalog, this is the major of choice for those students who want to own half the known universe . . . by sometime next week.

The most notable characteristic of faculty and students in this department is the Greed disadvantage. Many have the -10-point Odious Personal Habit: Likes Flaunting Wealth. Megalomania is not unknown, especially for those who also have political ambitions. Skills taught here include Administration, Accounting, Merchant and Economics.

Graduates find ready employment in large corporations as executive assistants, flunkies and yes-things. Some who start out Very Wealthy or better go into the venture capital business, taking over successful businesses started by naive young entrepreneurs.

*Typical courses:* EB204 – Guerilla Accounting, EB381 – How to Commit Tax Fraud, EB462 – Starting Your Own Agribusiness: Profit From Government Subsidies, EB500 – 1001 Scams for All Occasions, EB704 – Hoard-Building for Dragons: Exploiting Economies of Scale.

## OTHER SPCA DEPARTMENTS

*Department of Hysteria:* reacting appropriately to any emergency: panic.

### SPCA: MELODRAMA DEPARTMENT

Specializing in the Acting and Performance skills, the department teaches basic overacting to various celebrities from sports, bodybuilding and modelling, opening up profitable careers in bad movies, TV advertising and writing (the actual writing is done by ghost writers, of course, but the celebrity “writer” has to learn how to behave on talk shows). The Melodrama department also includes professional wrestling, which the Department of Physical Education refuses to touch. (No one bets on something that’s *known* to be rigged!)

Students in the department normally have high Social Status, Wealth or Appearance (wrestlers only need high ST). Professors only need lots of patience.

Graduates normally go on to undistinguished, if profitable, movie and television careers. Some of them become household names, being used in place of terms like “incompetent” or “pond scum.”

*Typical courses:* Melo130 – Finding an Agent, Melo287 – Shameless Self-Promotion, Melo345 – Selling Your Autobiography, Melo346 – Finding a Ghost-Writer for Your Autobiography, Melo518 – Avoiding Talk-Show Hosts Who Might Actually Read Your Book.

*Continued on next page. . .*

standby: an extended siege designed to keep D.O.C.T.O.R. from doing anything useful or profitable.

Majors in this department will find that temporal advantages are helpful, as is Combat Reflexes (to deal with the bloodfeud). Temporal disadvantages (such as being Unique in all the timelines or alternate dimensions) are unusually common in D.O.C.T.O.R. students and faculty, for some reason. Skills taught here are History, Electronics Operation (Temporal Devices) and Temporal Physics (the theoretical science of time travel; a Mental/Very Hard skill, detailed in *GURPS Time Travel*, p. TT35). Combat and Thief/Spy skills are also honed, though not intentionally – that bloodfeud again.

Graduates from this major would, theoretically, go into jobs such as stock market forecasters, historians and fortune tellers for the local supermarket check-out lane newspapers. However, there have been no graduates since this department was founded.

*Typical courses:* DOCT132 – Paradox or Pair of Doctors: Visiting Yourself, DOCT133 – Double-Dating with Yourself, DOCT307 – The Orobouros Theory of Time, DOCT428 – The Moebius Effect: Timestream Splits and Temporal Loops, DOCT579 – Practical Applications of Time Travel in Alibis, DOCT652 – Chronogation: Asking the Natives “Do You Have the Time?”.

## SCHOOL OF CONSERVATIVE ARTS (SCA)

*“ . . . and in conclusion, we are very grateful, on behalf of our students, for the contributions from the distinguished gentlething from our government, and we are sure the graduates will remember this favor as they go out into the world and take over their own businesses.”*

SCA is the business school. Considering a lot of the practices taught here, it could be considered “funny business,” though the No Sense of Humor disadvantage is a universal requirement for faculty, and common among students. The Mundane advantage is more common at SCA than any other division of IOU, and for this reason most students shun both the SCA section of campus, and SCA majors. For one thing, they have no sense of style: when the rest of the campus has a virtual dress code of slogan-bearing T-shirts and jeans, SCA majors dress in three-piece suits and power ties! “Tacky” doesn’t *begin* to describe it . . .

## SCHOOL OF PERFORMING AND CREATIVE ARTS

*“There’s No Business Like the Oldest Business . . .”*

This division of the University covers various performance and creative arts, including the oldest “performance art” of all. The students and faculty often tend to invent their own “counter-culture” – which means that with their flamboyant dress, weird jargon and accents and odd affectations, they blend right into the rest of the campus population.

Many of the students here are almost indistinguishable from Bimbiras (p. 87) and Kajones (p. 89), though there are also some students with actual *talent*. An unusual Appearance is almost mandatory, either Beautiful/Handsome or better, or Hideously Ugly (which is considered “chic” here).

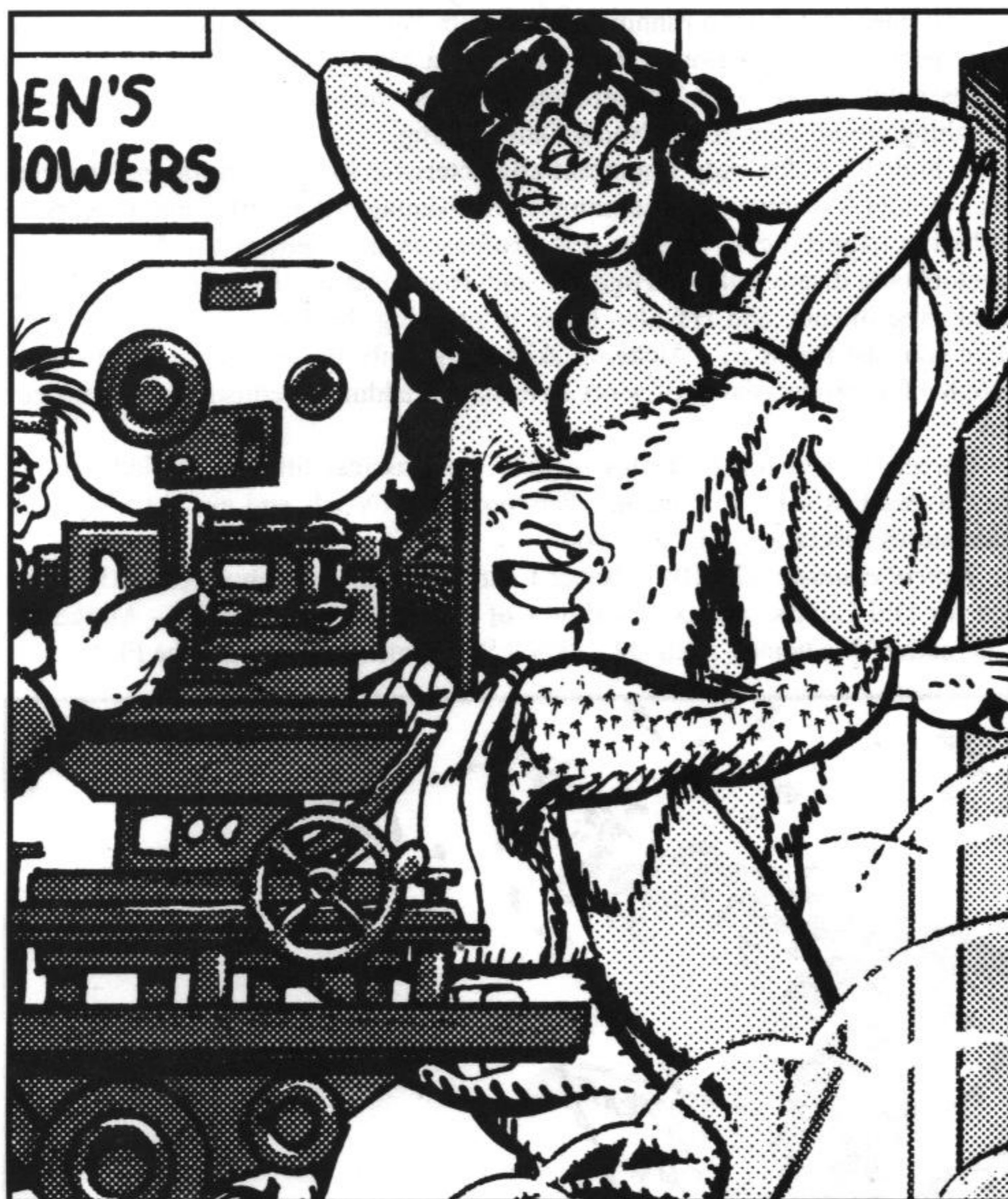
## DEPARTMENT OF CINEMATOGRAPHY

Home to would-be Hitchcocks and Spielbergs, this department is pure Hollywood. Professors here can't even "do lunch" without an accompanying film crew. Advanced grad students have discovered a new way to make low-budget SF and horror blockbusters – they follow other students around and film their lives!

Requirements for students and faculty are few: serious deficiencies in vision or hearing are disqualifications, while Odious Personal Habits are a near-necessity. Successful professors often have a high Reputation and are Filthy Rich. A few choose to make critically-acclaimed films that lose money – the ArchDean appears to tolerate this for the tax-writeoff potential. The primary skills taught here are Photography, Writing and Video Production.

Talented graduates can look forward to an illustrious career making Hollywood blockbusters, long-running TV series and beer commercials. Less-talented majors wind up running the local cable public-access channel, make use of contacts with other SPCA Ilumni to make X-rated films or team up with COUP grads to cast, produce and direct blackmail material.

*Typical courses:* Cine210 – How to Produce a Sure-Fire Tax Loss to Attract Investors, Cine211 – Cooking the Books to Avoid Paying Residuals, Cine420 – Secret Blockbuster Formulas, Cine421 – How to Ignore the Critics, Cine589 – How to Be Snubbed at the Oscars and Laugh Your Way to the Bank.



## OTHER SPCA DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

### SPCA: DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The P.E. department covers a broad range of topics in its classes. Sports are taught here, except professional wrestling, and the department of House-Making frequently co-teaches certain courses (particularly a different *kind* of professional wrestling).

P.E. majors and faculty are noted for high physical attributes, especially DX and ST, and a number of the students have the Jock advantage. Skills taught include Erotic Art (from *GURPS Callahan's Crosstime Saloon*), Dancing, Acrobatics, Weapons skills (especially Fencing, Brawling and Martial Arts), First Aid, all Sports skills, Performance, Running, Swimming, Hang-Gliding and Skiing.

After graduation, students go on to careers in professional sports, stunt-doubling and acting.

*Typical courses:* PE101 – Sports for Nerds, PE102 – Thinking for Jocks, PE432 – Finding an Agent, PE655 – How to Strike for Mega-salaries, PE244 – Breaking Opponents' Heads, PE245 – Breaking Contracts, PE533 – Retiring as a "Color Commentator" on TV.

### SPCA: DEPARTMENT OF HOUSE-MAKING

The shift to a post-industrial economy based on service industries hasn't taken IOU by surprise – since the founding of the University, this department has provided unparalleled training in the oldest service industry. (In fact, DoHM claims to be the first IOU department, though this is disputed by the Department of Applied Theology.) Course textbooks, usually by "Professor Anonymous" account for 42% of the Campus Bookstore's profits; used textbooks are rarely available, though more copies are sold every year than there are students in the SPCA.

Faculty and students are generally of at least Attractive appearance, and commonly have Charisma, Voice and a high HT. Lecherousness and Greed are typical disadvantages. Skills taught are Sex Appeal, Merchant, Administration, Leadership, Professional Skill (Courtesan), Erotic Art (found in *GURPS Callahan's Crosstime Saloon*), Acting, Performance, Diplomacy, Psychology, Physiology, Politics, Dancing and Law.

Graduates often gravitate to centers of wealth and power, where they can apply their skills in molding the careers of major financial and political leaders.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## OTHER SPCA DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

*Typical courses:* HM100 – Public Relations, HM269 – Word of Mouth Advertising Techniques, HM308 – Double-Entry Bookkeeping, HM309 – Double-Entendre Housekeeping, HM675 – Discreet Public Relations for Congressthings, HM676 – Government Subsidies for the Arts.

## OTHER COM DEPARTMENTS

*Department of Applied Theology:* alias for FIAT, below.

*Department of Computer Theology:* Mac vs. IBM, etc.

*Department of Fundamental Interactive Applied Theology (FIAT):* universe-building in seven days or less, or your money back.

*Department of Fundamentology:* fanatic religions made easy; lots of internal strife here.

*Department of Inept Enchantment:* where all the *really* fun magic items come from . . .

### COM: DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

The Department of Theology is *the* place to major if you're an up and coming demi-deity, or merely want to start your own religion without performing miracles to kick-start it. Demons, deities, comparative religions and theological theory all fall into this department.

Faculty and students here usually have either Clerical Investment or odd advantages that put one in the running for Deity of the Month. Very high levels of Appearance, Charisma and Social Status are common, as are super powers. Reputations – both good and bad – are possible, though less common. Ally Group (followers) is suitable for would-be deities.

*Continued on next page . . .*

# COLLEGE OF METAPHYSICS

*"Sufficiently advanced magic is indistinguishable from technology. So there."*

While not quite as flashy as its technological counterpart, WUSE, the College of Metaphysics is just as large and influential, especially when it comes to anything even remotely occult – like stock market fluctuations. Students often refer to themselves as "Metaphysics Mage-ors," and claim that their college is run by a "Dean-mon." It should be no surprise that the practice of Pun Magic (see sidebar, p. 115) is almost universal within the college.

Students and faculty are recruited for Magery, though there is the occasional talented scholar who does not have it. Individuals with Magic Resistance (or Mundanity) are encouraged to stay *far away* from the College of Metaphysics. An above-average IQ is preferred, while physical statistics are often average or worse.

All the "Colleges" of magic listed in *GURPS Magic* and *GURPS Grimoire* are departments within the College of Metaphysics – the "Weather College" is split out and the Water department is still reeling from the recent formation of the Ice department. Majors in a particular department often have One-College Magery for that spell college.

## DEPARTMENT OF ALCHEMY

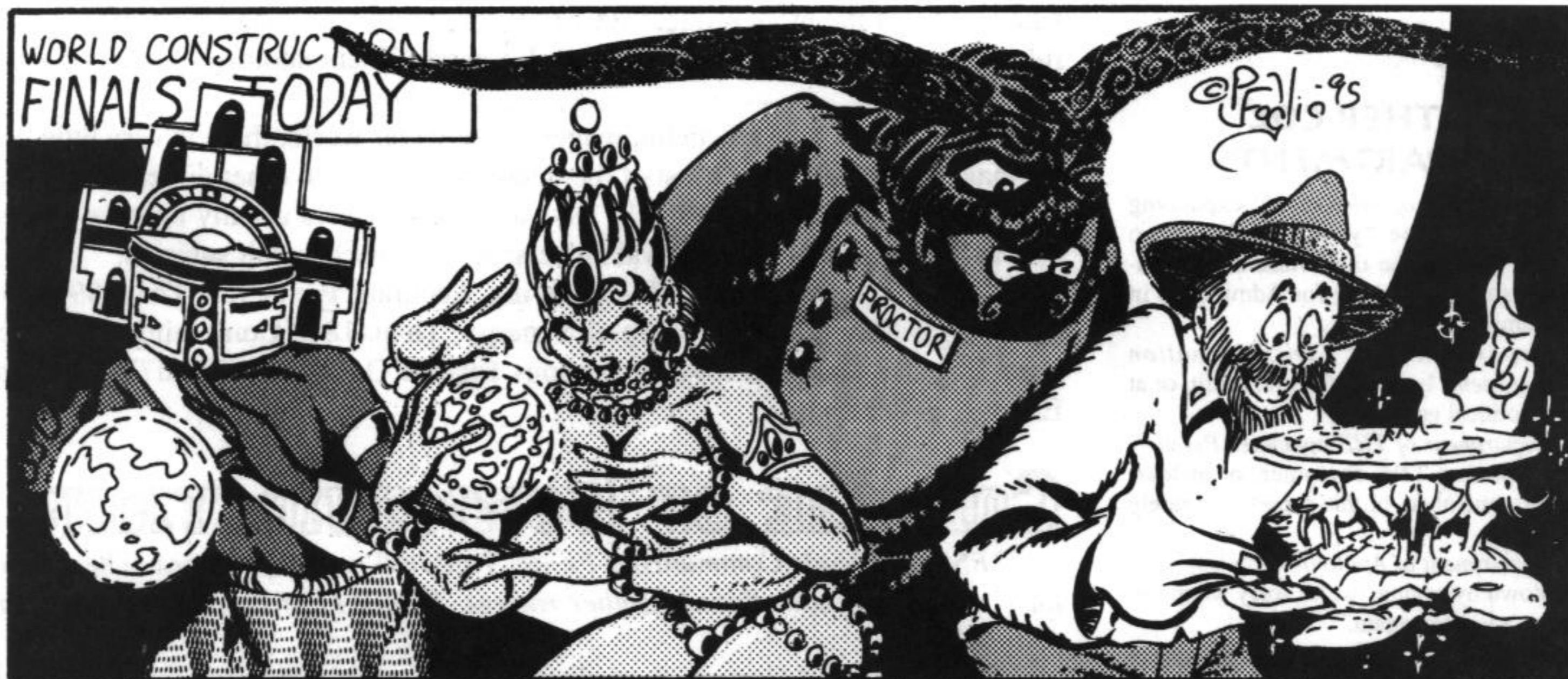
This department has a running contest with WUSE over who can produce the most spectacular explosions. They managed a plaid cloud with the Stars-and-Stripes below it last year. Unfortunately, it also melted half the building into something reminiscent of a Salvador Dali painting.

A high IQ is the only important characteristic for professors and students here, though Pyromania is a common disadvantage. And after many years of explosive experiences, quite a few professors have either the Deafness or Brontophobia disadvantages. High HT and Toughness can be useful in surviving failed experiments, and HT also helps in resisting the effects of that unknown elixir you just tasted . . . Alchemy skill is the only major subject taught here, though a few progressive professors have started adding Chemistry to the curriculum.

Career options for graduates include the classical little shop hidden in an alley, as well as selling "miracle" diets on cable TV ads and even starting mall chain stores specializing in "nutrition."

*Typical courses:* Alch104 – Better Living Through Alchemy, Alch283 – New Age for Old Elixirs, Alch314 – Ethics of Love Potions, Alch591 – Marketing "Alternative" Medicines, Alch592 – "Food Supplements:" Avoiding the FDA.





## DEPARTMENT OF TEMPORAL METAPHYSICS

Not wanting to be left out of the fun, the College of Metaphysics founded its own time-travel research department. Since the appropriate WUSE and C.T.H.U.L.H.U. departments are 1) already feuding, and 2) technologically oriented, the Temporal Metaphysicists are mostly ignored. C.T.H.U.L.H.U. will still try to do something about anyone who shows up more than a few weeks in the past, though.

Most of the Gate spells (see p. G44) are taught here, concentrating on the ones that affect time (to reduce friction with the Gate and Movement departments). Majors and faculty generally have at least Magery 3 (One-College Magery is permitted, if it's the right College to cast the spells), and an IQ of 15 or above is required for some of the spells. Absolute Timing and Absolute Direction can be helpful advantages. Absent-Mindedness is a common disadvantage, perhaps from living in other time-zones too much.

Like most magically-inclined graduates, Temporal Physicists have trouble finding jobs in their specialty. They often become free-lance authors of "what-if" fiction, photojournalists who always seem to be "on the spot" to cover major events, or drivers for overnight package delivery services.

*Typical courses:* TM104 – Being on Time for Classes, TM344 – Taking Time Off for Vacations . . . During Classes, TM588 – Enchantments I: Chrono-displacing Broomsticks, TM589 – Enchantments II: Temporal Carpetweaving, TM606 – Building a Better Time-Trap.

## DEPARTMENT OF THAUMATURGY

For those with no Magery, but the desire to dabble in spells anyway, the College of Metaphysics provides a home to the "pure" theory of magic. This department spends its time designing new spells (and convincing Magery-gifted grad students in other departments to test them). Recent research has led to the discovery of hundreds of new "mega-mana" spells, which are currently awaiting the location of a mage with enough Fatigue to handle spells requiring 50,000 points of energy . . . Some of the more impatient professors have designed a lunar power plant to generate the necessary mana, but so far they've been unsuccessful in convincing the ArchDean that their \$3 billion project will do anything more than provide fireworks exceeding WUSE's best efforts.

Other than high IQs, there are no requirements for Thaumaturgy professors and students. Absent-Mindedness and Overconfidence are common disadvan-

## OTHER COM DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

Department graduates usually find jobs as the heads of major religions, or get good minor positions in an open pantheon and try to work their way up to Chief Honcho of Everything.

*Typical courses:* Theo210 – Religious Accounting: Tax-Free Tithing, Theo269 – How to Justify Anything, Theo315 – Aerobic Demon-Summoning: The Healthy Route to Infernal Power, Theo482 – Creative Mythology, Theo483 – Creation Myths: Starting Out Right, Theo666 – Religion and Politics: Pros and Cons of Theocracy, Theo777 – Creating a Universe in Seven Easy Steps, Theo795 – Start Your Own Religion.

### COM: DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL THAUMATURGY

In contrast to WUSE's Department of Political Science, the Political Thaumaturgy department is concerned with *manipulating* politics, by arcane means, of course. This includes techniques like polling, TV advertising and the application of voodoo to political opponents.

Faculty and students in this department tend to specialize in Communication and Empathy, Mind Control and Knowledge magic. A minority have the psi powers of Telepathy, ESP and Psychic Vampirism. Classes in the department teach skills within these areas, as well as Politics skill.

Graduates usually find jobs in the political machine as political forecasters, pollsters and "special assistants."

*Typical courses:* PT109 – Boosting Your Candidate's Charisma Through Witchcraft, PT207 – Divination Spells: Picking the Winning Issues, PT317 – Using Knowledge Spells to Dig Up Dirt, PT333 – Running for Office, PT516 – Winning Debates With Mind Control Spells.

## OTHER COC DEPARTMENTS

*Department of Admissions:* explaining things using the "yeah, we did it, so what?" policy. The title is useful for confusing students looking for Admissions in the administration.

*Department of Disinformation Management:* lying for fun and profit, or at least political gain.

*Department of THE computer Psychology:* conning THE computer, or at least trying – members of this department rarely graduate.

*Department of Apologies:* cooling people down by saying "we're sorry we did it; it won't happen again."

*Department of Cover-Ups:* using the "we didn't do it" strategy.

## COC: DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT STUDIES

Government bureaucracies do an incredible amount of communicating – though the actual information content may be low to nil. Most administrative actions "require study" before implementation, and this is where the people who write all those studies are trained.

The primary requisites for faculty and students in Government Studies are those which lead to their selection to *do* such studies: Voice, Charisma, Wealth and a high Fast-Talk skill are all desirable. Contacts (in the government) are useful in getting advance warning of juicy research contracts. The main skills taught here are Writing, Fast-Talk, Diplomacy and Politics. (These allow one to do a "study" with nothing more than a lot of meaningless words that *sound* good, while avoiding offending one's sponsor or anyone with any political significance.)

Graduates find jobs either in the government itself, working for a "Beltway Bandit" – a Washington-based consulting firm specializing in useless government studies – or continue on in academia, where they can get lucrative government work with lower overhead (and better personal profits).

*Typical courses:* GS134 – Getting Contracts: It's Not What You Know, It's Who Knows You, GS210 – Historical Revisionism for Fun, Profit and Re-election, GS346 – Starting Your Own Totalitarian State, GS476 – Fudging Data to Support the "Right" Conclusions, GS498 – Advanced Political Correctness, GS622 – Accounting for Consultants: Advanced Bill-Padding.

*Continued on next page . . .*

tages; some of the more progressive professors think Mathematical Ability is useful. The primary skills taught here are Research, Thaumatology (see p. G5) and Weird Magic.

Due to the lack of practicing mages in the wider world, there is *very* little call for magical theoreticians. Most of them tend to vanish into other dimensions while observing tests of their new spells, anyway. The survivors usually become professors at IOU or one of the few rival universities that teach occult subjects.

*Typical courses:* Thau213 – Drawing Accurate Pentacles, Thau399 – Dr. Goldberg's Methodology for Spell Synergy, Thau418 – Combining Spells for New Effects, Thau666 – 1001 Demons for All Occasions, Thau777 – High-Energy Spellcasting.

## COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATIONS

*"Fnord. Fnord. Communists. Fnord. National security. Fnord. The people have a right to know. Fnord. Higher ratings. Fnord. Fnord. Fnord. Good of the people. Fnord."*

The College of Communications (headquartered in the Smedstad building) was formed several centuries ago in response to the rise of the mass media, and its influence on the populace and the government. It covers all forms of communication, but concentrates on those aspects that help to influence and control the masses, such as advertising, public relations and television.

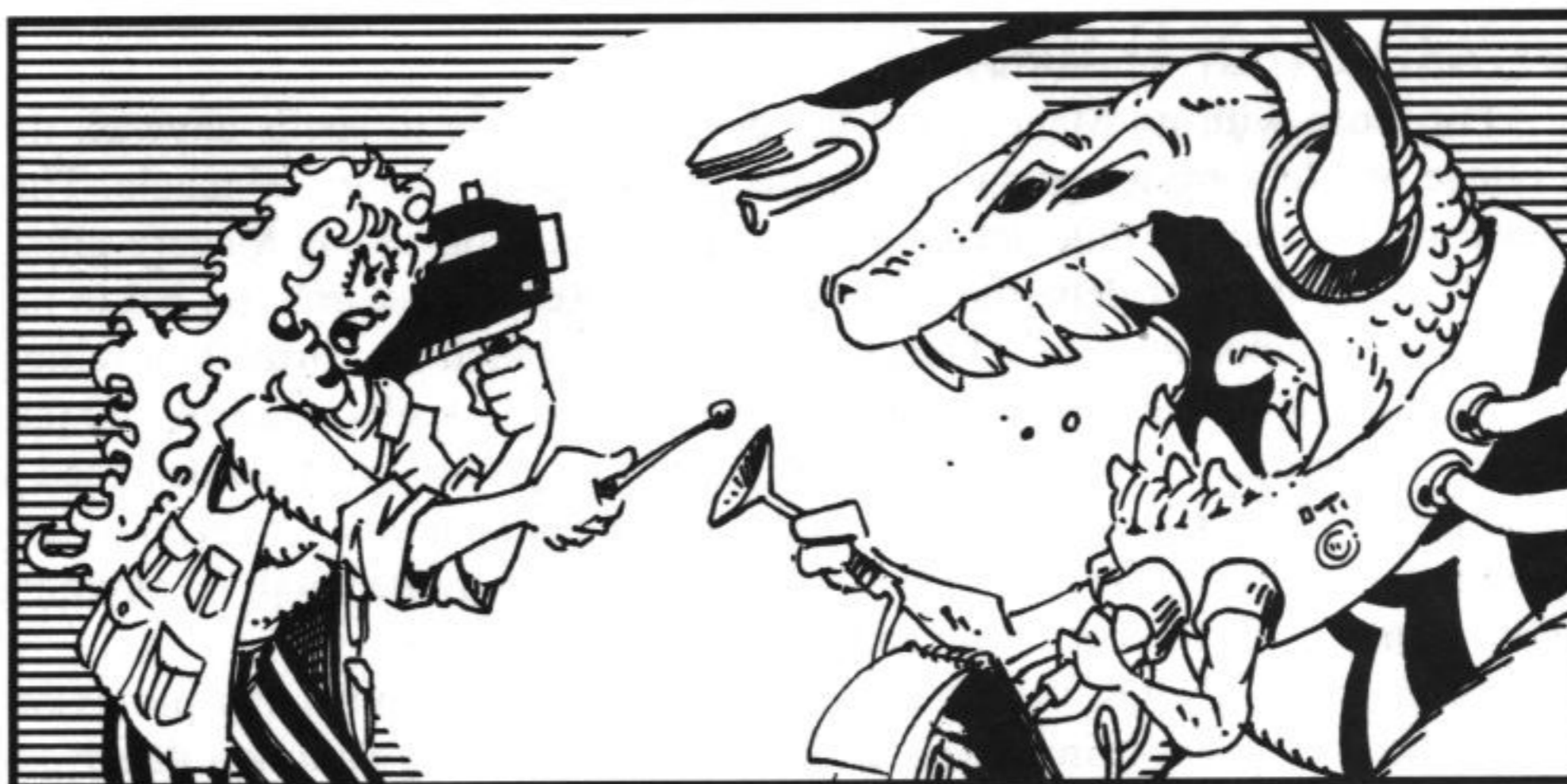
## DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM

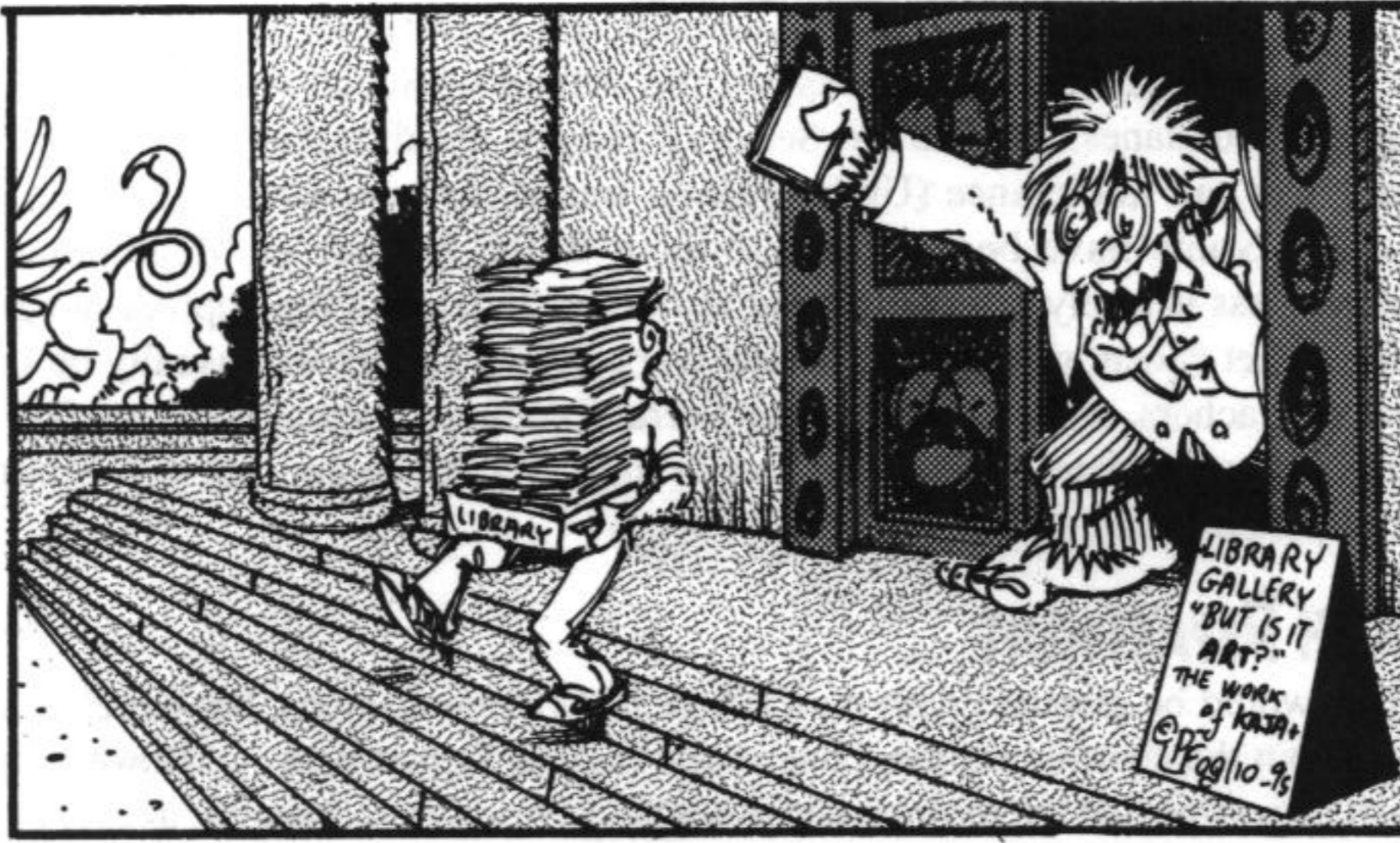
The journalism department differs from the Mass Media department in that it promotes values of truth, justice and bigger circulations – influencing the public is not a consideration. Unless it's for the greater social good, of course. This department has a harder problem with influencing the public: its target audience can actually *read*.

Since journalists aren't as exposed to the public, they have less need for advantages that influence other people. Still, Empathy, Voice, Charisma and psi Telepathy power are all useful in interviewing people to get stories. Investigative reporter types often have Enemies (anyone with something to hide). Skills taught here include Writing, Detect Lies, Diplomacy, Politics, Interrogation and an assortment of Thief/Spy skills.

Most graduates become newspaper reporters and magazine writers.

*Typical courses:* Jour114 – Surveillance Techniques for the Journalist, Jour390 – Cover-Ups, Jour391 – Exposés, Jour415 – Concealing Sources, Jour416 – Betraying Sources, Jour417 – Inventing Sources, Jour721 – Advanced Exculpation.





## OTHER COC DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

### COC: DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The growing amount of information in the world has created the "Information Crisis" – the problem of organizing data so that people can find it and, more importantly, hiding data from people who shouldn't find it. Once just "Library Science," the introduction of computers sparked a rapid expansion of the field, resulting in new research opportunities.

The most useful advantage for faculty and majors in the department is Eidetic Memory (especially second level). Intuition can also be helpful in locating obscure facts. Many research professionals have the Odious Personal Habit "Will Drone On About Unrelated Subjects at Length." The primary skill taught here is Research.

Many graduates become librarians in universities or corporations, while others go into civil service jobs, collating and organizing data in such a way as to hide whatever disasters this month's government policies are generating.

*Typical courses:* IM212 – Locating Obscure Information, IM213 – Obscuring Locator Information, IM402 – Things Man Was Not Meant to Know, IM403 – Men Things Were Not Meant to Know, IM570 – If Data Is Good, More Data Is Better: Making It Up.

### COC: DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL WRITING

The demand in the high-tech industries for writers led the college to create this department, which specializes in formatting, editing and sometimes translating techno-babble.

Professors and majors in the department need skills in the various Scientific skills, and Language Talent can be useful in learning specialized jargon. Intuition can also be helpful when looking for features to document. Skills taught in the department include Writing, Interrogation (to pry important details out of Absent-Minded engineers) and Diplomacy (to keep the engineers from realizing they've had Interrogation skill used on them).

Lucrative jobs for graduates are available in many companies working in the fields of science and engineering. Most majors specialize in one or two sciences or engineering disciplines.

*Typical courses:* TW112 – Understanding Techno-Babble, TW213 – TLAs: Three Letter Acronyms, TW214 – Creating Imaginative Acronyms (required course for all WUSE majors), TW381 – Making Up Information, TW390 – Divination: The Last Resort, TW402 – Writing User Manuals, TW403 – Understanding User Manuals.

## DEPARTMENT OF MASS MEDIA

Specializing in television, advertising and other forms of mass brainwashing, the Mass Media department is a pale shadow of the Cinematography department in SPCA. What matters here is *motivation* – primarily the motivation to motivate others to do what you want, whether your goals are political, economic or simply social meddling for the sake of personal ego-gratification.

Students and faculty are well-advised to have the Charisma and Voice advantages, at least if they intend to be front-line manipulators. Empathy or the psi Telepathy power can also come in useful. Skills taught in the department include Bard, Acting, Performance, Diplomacy, Savoir-Faire, Fast-Talk, Video Production and the Telepathy psi skills, especially Aspect (see p. P20), Suggest (p. P24), Emotion Sense, Telecontrol and Mindwipe.

Graduates go on to jobs as television news anchors, commentators and personalities, join advertising firms on Madison Avenue or become politicians.

*Typical courses:* MM131 – We Want What *You* Want; You Want What We Want, MM451 – Saying Nothing in 500 Words or More, MM275 – Designing "Sound Bites," MM643 – Political Advertising: A Match Made in Heaven.

## SCHOOL OF SOCIAL ANTI-SCIENCES

*"We don't do useful things here. We devote ourselves to pure Art and Research."*

The School of Social Anti-Sciences is the other refuge of Mundanes on campus – those who do not have an aptitude for the SCA courses wind up at SSAS. This School has hostile relations with nearly every other school and college at IOU, though it disdains to participate in faculty bloodfeuds. The Environmental Studies Department dislikes WUSE, the Department of Government Liberties disputes COUP's practices, and the Department of True Historical Research throws a tantrum every time C.T.H.U.L.H.U. misplaces a 12th-century cobblestone. In fact, the only two colleges that SSAS *remotely* gets along with are the School of Conservative Arts, which is also full of Mundanes with No Sense of Humor, and the College of Zen Surrealism, which seems relatively untainted by the petty grasping after profits shown by the rest of the University. (Including the School of Social Anti-Sciences, though it hides it well.)



## OTHER SSAS DEPARTMENTS

*Department of Civil Liberties:* filing nuisance lawsuits to benefit "the people."

*Department of Government Liberties:* filing nuisance lawsuits to benefit the government.

*Department of Misanthropology:* studying the inferiority of everyone else's culture.

### SSAS: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

This is the department that (allegedly) teaches how to teach. An Education degree is required for teaching grade- and high-school classes at public schools (private schools may or may not require one, and universities only insist on a Ph.D in the subject to be taught).

There are no requirements for majors and faculty in this department. The only skills taught here are Teaching, Leadership (of children), Psychology (children) and Politics (academic). Note that all these skills, save Politics, are more theory than fact, and any resemblance to reality is strictly optional. Students interested in teaching above grade school levels will normally have a secondary major, such as History, English, a foreign language or a variety of low-level Scientific skills. Typical skill levels in the specialty will be low – 12 or less – Education graduates aren't really expected to know much about what they teach. Understanding the current theories of student motivation, psychology and political correctness is *much* more important.

Graduates go on to underpaid teaching jobs in their secondary major. *Lucky* graduates find fulfilling jobs as taxi drivers or fast-food franchise managers.

*Typical courses:* Edu210 – No "Bad" Students: Handling Psychologically-Disadvantaged Individuals, Edu304 – "Gifted" Students: A Threat to Equality?, Edu461 – How To Teach Anything Without Understanding It, Edu542 – Parent-Teacher Conferences: Go For the Dirt!

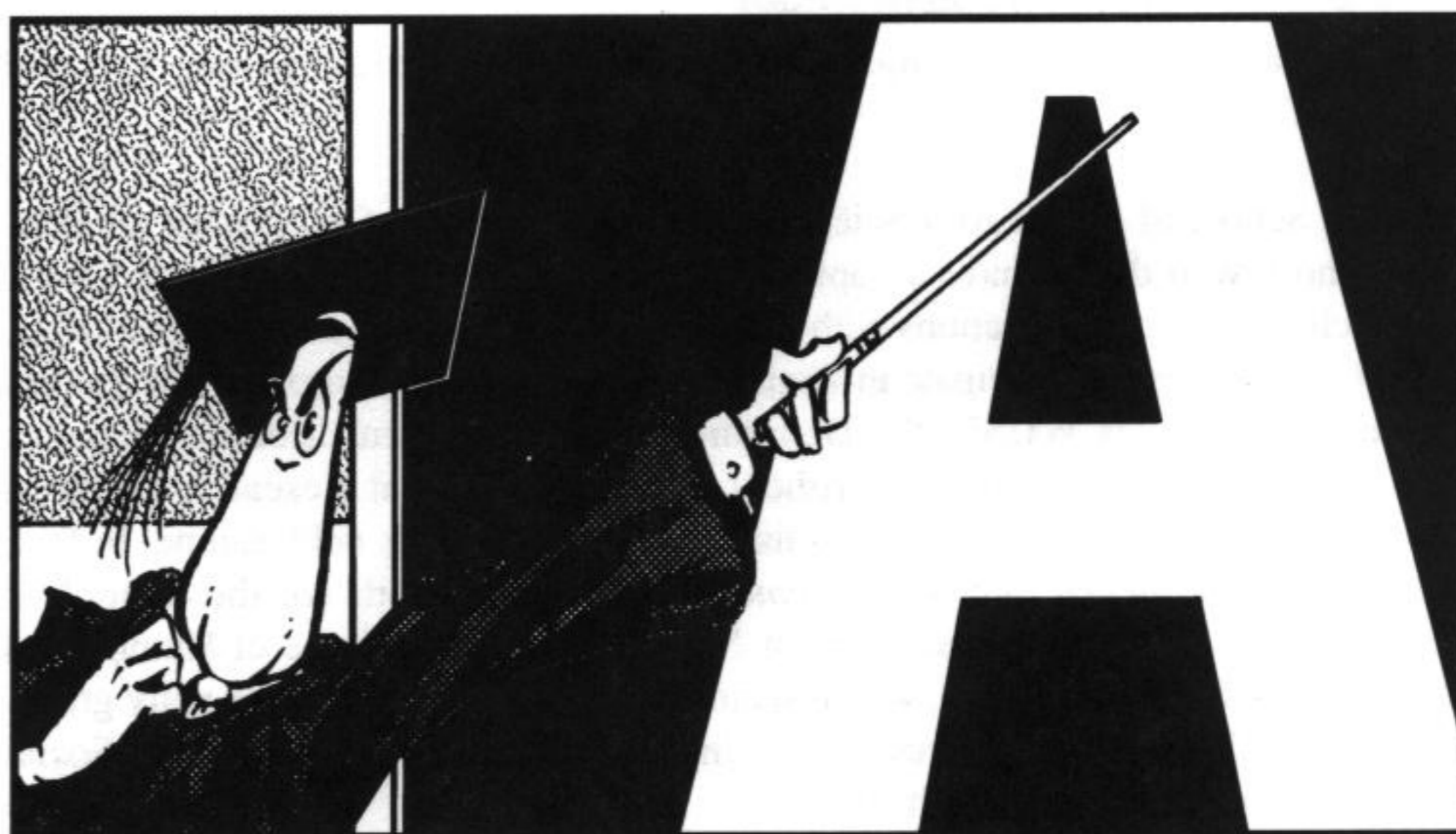
The core of SSAS is the English Department – most SSAS administrators are or were English professors. Teachers in the School of Social Anti-Sciences are frequently Mundanes, and the No Sense of Humor disadvantage is common, as are Jealousy and Intolerance (Undergrads) – frequently concealed by high levels of Acting. Some have been known to have Bully, Sadism or Megalomania. Lecherousness is rarely acted upon, but attractive students of the appropriate gender(s) will get decent grades for minimal work. SSAS majors will usually be similar to the teachers, with the addition of Secret Enemy (a jealous thesis advisor or teacher). Some students are idealists when they pick the major, but will become cynics by their junior years.

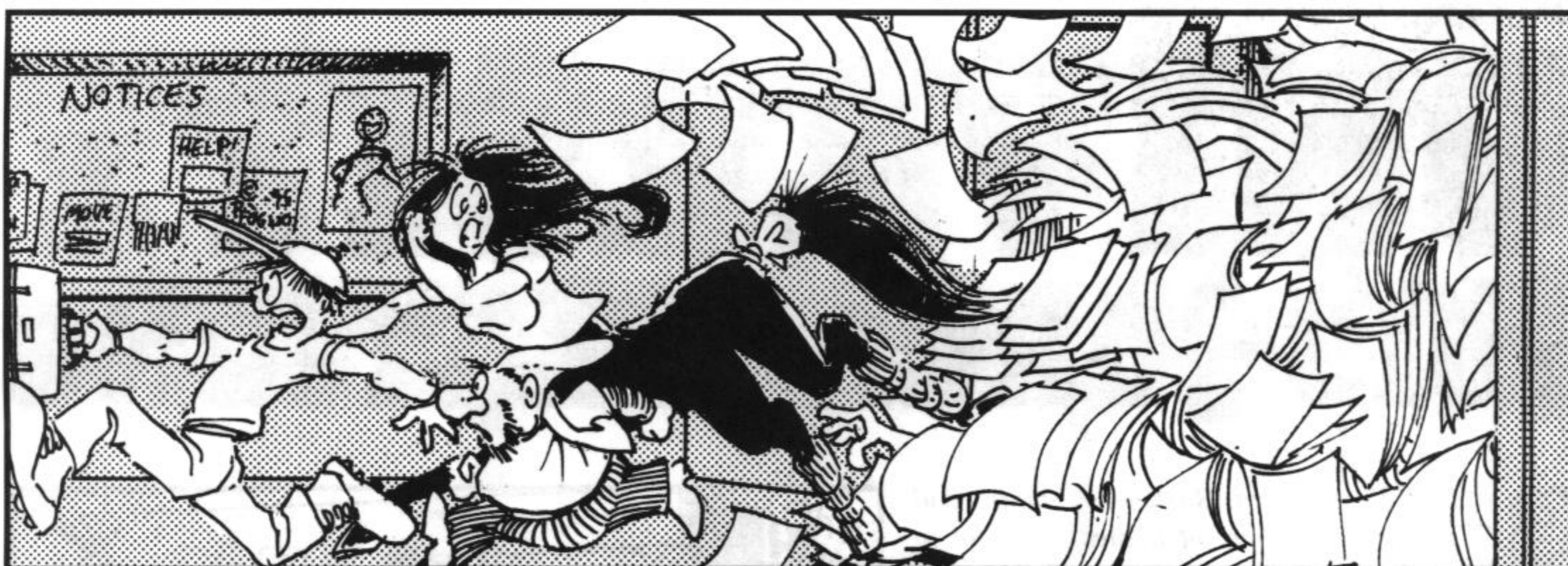
## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

This would be disputed with the College of Communications, but there's some debate about the communication-value of the English Department . . . However, the English Department *is* the most powerful single department on campus, as *every* student is required to take at least one English class, or more if English is not the freshthing's native language. There are two theories for this requirement: either the English Department kicks back a *lot* of the tuition for that class to the ArchDean, or . . . somehow it has a *hold* on the ArchDean herself. Nobody knows, and everybody suspects that knowing could be hazardous to their health.

The English Department is one of the few departments on campus that is violently anti-tech – even normal TL7 equipment, like IBM-compatible computers or Macintoshes, is shunned violently by the department's administration. Instead, they do everything on *paper*, and the chairthing actually prefers to deal with *hand-copied* records. Due to this mindset, many grades are misplaced, lost or destroyed when somebody spills coffee on them, which means that students may have to take English classes *ad nauseam*. This wouldn't be so bad, except that the English Department often doesn't notice that a student "needs" to take a particular class until the student is applying to graduate; then the English administration sends a frantic little note (occasionally on a clay tablet), declaring that the student cannot *possibly* graduate until his English requirement is fulfilled!

Higher level courses are apparently designed to produce new critically-acclaimed Great American Novels, which will depress future generations of high-school English students – thus making them easier to control. Of course, some of the stuff is so depressing that the people who "enjoy" reading it typically commit suicide afterward, considerably reducing the market share and profits for this sort of writing. Sometimes the writers even have to *pay* the publisher to print it, which one would think the ArchDean would frown upon . . .





Professors must have the No Sense of Humor disadvantage, and Megalomania is more common than one might suspect. Majors have Stubbornness, Overconfidence or a -5 point Delusion (I will learn how to be a great author in this department). Surprisingly enough, Writing skill is actually taught here – at least, the technical things like spelling and punctuation. Other skills include Research, English, Literature, Psychology and (arguably) Poetry.

There are also classes in Teaching, specializing in English, Literature, Writing or Poetry, for aspiring schoolteachers. (The English: Teaching majors are often known as “Vowelly Girls,” generally have the Gullibility disadvantage, and spend far too much of their time listening to the Jocks in their classes and going, “Oooooo.”)

Those escaping with an English degree have few job opportunities that take advantage of all those classes they took. The Teaching majors can find work as underpaid schoolteachers, but the rest generally eke out existences as starving authors, trying to convince prestigious magazines to publish their short stories. A few, however, turn away from their teachers’ work-ethics and write runaway best-sellers (not to mention movie scripts), infinite books in continuing series or supplements for role-playing games. (These few renegades are quietly erased from the files in the English Department, since they made the scandalous choice to be popular, and worse, actually made money at it.)

*Typical courses:* Eng001 – Freshman English (the English department doesn’t want to be politically correct . . .), Eng117 – Creative Apathy, Eng263 – Inducing Suicidal Depression, Eng271 – Existentialism as a Way of Life, Eng308 – Forming Your Own Mutual-Admiration Society Writing Clique, Eng535 – Literary Criticism: How to Pan Anything Popular, Eng610 – Deprecating Popular “Classics,” Eng611 – Patronizing E.A. Poe, Eng694 – Measuring Angst: the Angstrom, Eng770 – Polite Sneering at Popular Artists, Eng771 – Snubbing Steven King.

## COLLEGE OF ZEN SURREALISM

*“Ommms! Ommms for the poor!”*

If we knew what this was, we’d tell you (maybe). But it seems to get money from somewhere . . . Since its formation, CZS has provided a home for those departments that are so totally divorced from reality that they have trouble supporting themselves even in a university environment, where circular justifications for subjects are the norm.

A well-kept secret at IOU is the fact that the output of some of the departments here actually have practical applications. It is *especially* important to keep the professors in CZS from discovering this, lest they suffer the Centipede’s Dilemma (thinking too hard about which leg moves first, and keeling over in nervous fits).

## OTHER CZS DEPARTMENTS

### CZS: DEPARTMENT OF INAPPLICABLE MATHEMATICS

Since sufficiently advanced mathematics is indistinguishable from surrealism, the “pure math” people have ended up here. (“Applied Mathematics” lives in WUSE.) In fact, advanced theoretical math is so disconnected from reality that surrealism is concrete in comparison. Researchers here spend their time looking for ways to invert the sphere, square the circle and transform eigenvectors. They also have the only graduate students on campus who can make a decent pot of coffee.

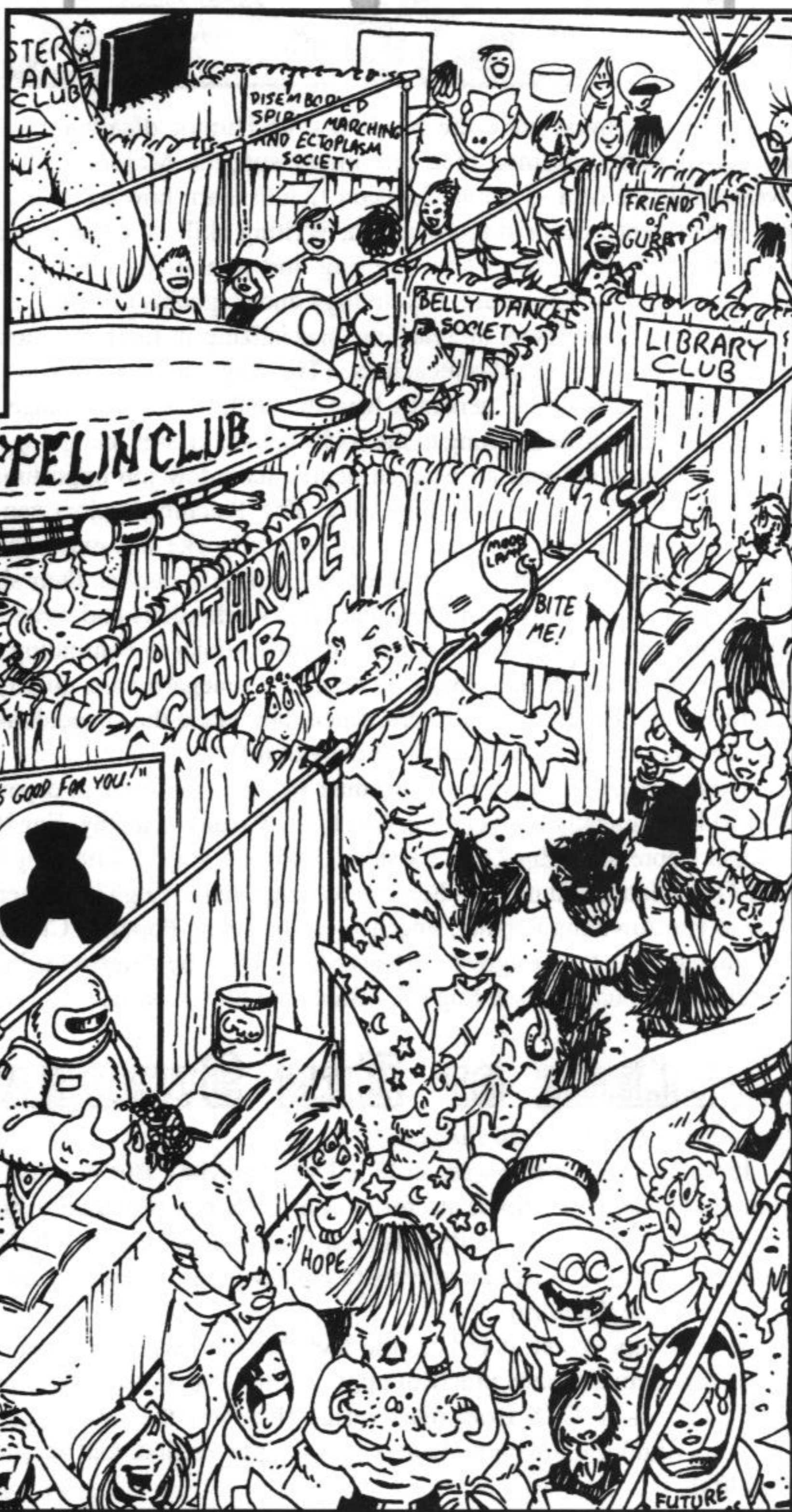
The primary requirement for students and faculty in this department is Mathematical Ability and a high IQ. Lightning Calculator is useless here – these people don’t actually work with, ugh, *numbers*. The only skills taught are various specializations of Mathematics that have no conceivable use (at least until someone discovers hyperdrive and needs the math for Astrogation in 13.79-dimensional non-Euclidean spaces).

There is no market for graduates of this department whatsoever, except for a few who become university mathematics professors.

*Typical courses:* IM403 – Topological Characteristics of Chaotic Vortices in Fractal Spaces, IM486 – Applications of Eigenvalue Decomposition to Harding’s N-Dimensional Hyperplane-Folding Problem, IM612 – Applications of Chaos Theory to Art: Profit from Higher Math, IM775 – The Mathematics of Null-Dimensional Non-Spaces.

# UNIVERSITY (DIS-)ORGANIZATIONS

**S**arah Holden sighed. Rush week again, and all the Greek-system advocates were out in force. So, for that matter, were all the other campus societies, all trying to recruit new members – or at least get votes for more of the Student Activity funds. And that was where the *Daily Illuminator* thought the biggest scoop of the week would be, so that was where Sarah was, casually wandering through the crowds in the Student Union and snapping photos of tables and booths that bore Greek letters or other arcane logos.



The Team had fallen back on their old standby: a bowl full of meep keychains, some newspaper clippings of past wins, and seven hefty members bodily carrying likely candidates back to their corner to be indoctrinated. Sarah hastily switched to her color camera as a couple of the Team bore down on a fellow with a most fascinating purplish tan. The first shot captured the freshthing's panic perfectly, while the second was absolutely priceless as the two bulky students looked around for their quarry (who had vanished into thin air and was now speeding down the hall).

Passing the sororities' row, Sarah watched one of the Sigma Epsilon Chi sisters tracking a particularly attractive young man. An older sister grabbed her with a, "Not now, Lisa! We're looking for new **members**, not new friends!" In the booth next door, complete with holographic starfields, a bewildered Alpha Omega Pi asked, "There's a difference?"

Sarah rolled her eyes and headed for the Student Overground's table. "Careful," the guy handing out their flyers said. "You don't want Them to know you're reading our stuff."

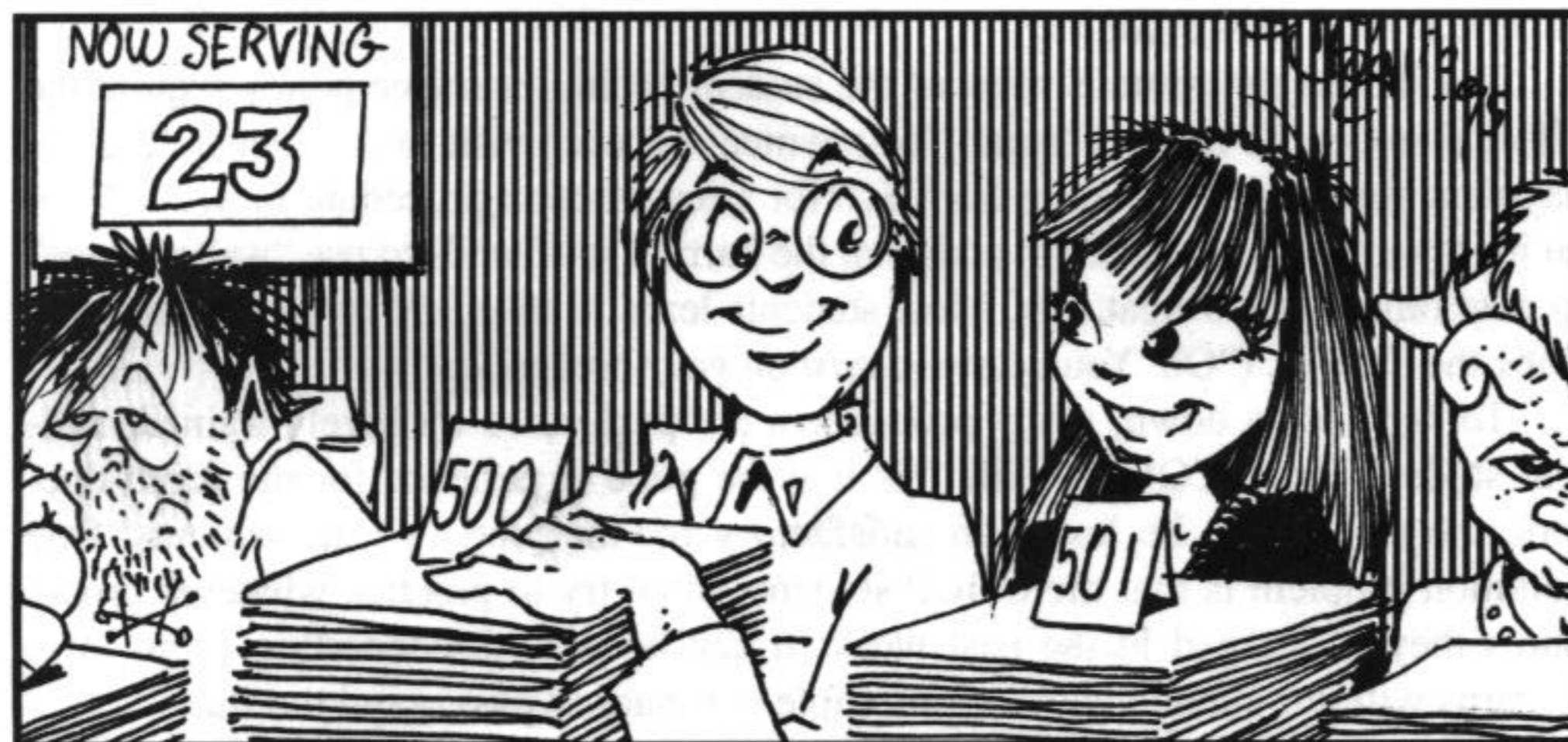
The campus reporter nodded. "They won't find out," she reassured him, stuffing the paper into a pocket before she closed on her true target: on the next floor, campaigning for the Student Senate was going on, and she wanted a crack at newcomer Lirden the Third.

It was easy to spot the rich kid. He was the one handing out signed photographs of himself – amazing, that he'd found someone to print his photo on his checks – and making the typical empty promises. Well, it was going to be Sarah Holden's byline on the story that made him or broke him. Let's see, she thought, I'll start with a few questions about where his folks got the idea for that ice cream, and then run the pathos angle on their accident, see if he flinches and go for the shady-angle kill. Yeah. That'll sell some copies. She marched up, microphone in one hand and vidcam in the other.

## THE ADMINISTRATION

That part of the University concerned with day-to-day operations like taking out the garbage, collecting fees, repairing blast craters and disposing of snooping government agents is collectively known as "The Administration." (GM note: don't forget to pronounce the capital letters.) Under this title live and lurk a variety of useful organizations and useless flunkies, along with endless paper-pushers and other bureaucratic middlethings.

Unlike the colleges and departments in the teaching part of IOU, The Administration is under the direct control of the ArchDean, so politics and feuds are less obvious, and tend to involve currying favor, rather than nuking the opposition back to the Stone Age (or further, if C.T.H.U.L.H.U. is involved).



## AXIOMS OF ADMINISTRATION

Power corrupts.

Absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Petty power corrupts all out of proportion to actual power.

## CAMPUS MAIL

If you want a message to get to someone, it's usually best to send it via electronic mail over THE computer. However, sometimes people want to send physical paper and ink, cuneiform tablets, or letter bombs, and that means the letter or parcel passes into the hands of the Campus Mailthings.

Getting a job with Campus Mail is a good place to find blackmail material, as well as supplementing one's diet by pilfering "care packages" sent by students' mothers. On the other manipulator, it's also rife with dangers such as papercuts and junk-mail overdoses.

Primary requirements for getting a job with the campus mail service are a DX below 7 (or the Klutz disadvantage) and the Laziness disadvantage. Demolitions skill is considered a plus. High ST (to increase crushing damage) is also useful.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

"The Bucks Stop Here"

Technically, the ArchDean isn't the final authority on campus – the University is ultimately ruled by the Board of Trustees. As a practical matter, however, the fact that the ArchDean owns 87% of the University stock lets her overrule them if necessary, and her archives have plenty of blackmail material to keep them in line.

The primary purpose of the Board is to set general University policy, and to review any appeals of the ArchDean's decisions. (There won't be any of those, if the potential appellants know what's good for them . . .) The Board also sets the ArchDean's salary, and members draw a substantial stipend for attending meetings (with a bonus if they sleep through the budget reviews).

Current board members are: Benedict Arnold, Genghis Khan, Mephistopheles, Judas Iscariot, Jimmy Hoffa, Richard Nixon, Hermes Trismegistus, Al Capone, and Professor Moriarty.

## FORMS

Like all good bureaucracies – assuming such a thing is possible – the University has a great many paper forms that need to be filled out. In triplicate. Without carbons. Most of these forms contain hundreds of tiny boxes that require most of your life history, in detail, in ink. All in spaces sufficient to write a single period – a *small* period. One or two of the entries on the form even relate to the purported reason for the form's existence. But why do they all require you to provide your third-favorite color? Only The Administration (and the Illuminati) know.

Some suggestions for University paperwork to inflict on your players follow. (Space constraints preclude their inclusion here.)

Drop Form  
Add Form  
Drop-Add Form  
Add-Drop Form  
Multiply Form  
Drop Dead Form  
Egg Drop Form  
Drop Out Form  
Request for Proposal  
Request for Proposition  
Request for Preposition  
Request for Money  
Request for Bribe  
Report of Outside Income  
Report of Insider Income  
Report of Unreported Income  
Eldritch Crossover Environmental Impact Statement  
Bomb Impact Statement  
Inter-library Loan  
Outer Library Loan  
Interdimensional Library Loan  
Security Deposit Form  
Announcement of Faculty Blood-feud  
Announcement of Covert Faculty Blood-feud

## STUDENT UNION, LOCAL 666

The “official” student organization has its headquarters in an impressive modern building on the Pent. Faced in white marble, with vast internal expanses of lush carpeting and gleaming polished brass, this structure makes it quite clear where that \$250 “Student Union fee” goes. Theoretically, any student is welcome to eat in the cafeteria or shop in the small stores in the mini-mall here. However, the Union building is the province of the students from COUP, SPCA and Social Anti-Sciences, and they make it *quite* clear this is their territory.

Students who get involved with The Administration should take camping equipment and several weeks’ food on expeditions to straighten out bureaucratic foul-ups. Heavy weapons can also be useful, if applied discreetly.

## CAMPUS (IN-)SECURITY



*“Semper Fnord. We protect and are served — up on a platter.”*

It is Campus Security’s job to keep all mayhem that occurs on campus under control, protect the paying students, protect the paying faculty and staff, and recapture loosed Things after faculty bloodfeuds. Security guards are provided with snazzy uniforms: bright red with large, concentric white circles above the heart and on the back. They are officially armed with stunners (which *are* subject to the *Guaranteed Play-Balance Table*, p. 107), but do have access to more destructive stuff. Their hobbies are staying alive and avoiding student researchers looking for experimental subjects. Paranoia is a popular survival trait.

Except for issuing parking tickets, Campus Security is singularly ineffective, possibly because no one with any sense – or competence – wants the job.

When faced with serious threat to the campus, Security’s tactics are usually:

1. Dig out the heavy weapons and travel in packs.
2. Lay down a lot of fire and hope for the resulting collateral damage to serendipitously destroy the problem.
3. Find a good hiding place and hope one of the *other* guards gets eaten.

## HEALTH SERVICES

The Lazarus Health Center ensures the well-being of the student population, primarily through the student health insurance plan. With all the assorted hazards of campus life (and death), the Center is one of the busiest places around (even beating out Pancho Sanza’s, perhaps due to the fact that the restaurant’s customers are also frequent visitors to the Center). The pressures of revolving-door medicine and insurance cost-reduction measures make a visit to Lazarus Center a harrowing experience for most students.

The incredibly tortuous rules of the student health insurance policy require the affected student to make a “small” co-payment for each visit to the Center. The co-payment amount varies wildly from \$10 for a resurrection procedure to \$72,000 for an ingrown toenail removal. In addition, the harried staff tends to use “wallet triage” to determine who to treat first. Most students learn to take \$50 or so with them to bribe the doctors. (“Oh. You wanted a *cast* on your broken leg.”)

To keep costs down, many procedures are performed by barely-trained medical students from COUP. While this may be good experience for the proto-doctors, the results can be less than satisfactory for the victi . . . ah, patients. One common problem is that the COUP students often try to practice whatever procedures they’ve learned in the past week. It can be *very* disconcerting to go in to Lazarus with the flu and leave with a triple coronary bypass – and the flu.



Most students would rather die than visit the Center, which may account for the high percentage of resurrections performed . . .

## THE LIBRARY

*"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you expensive."*

Besides having one of the largest buildings on campus – and under it (see p. 73) – the University Library is home to a large number of courteous and helpful staffthings, headed by the Librarian (see p. 63). It is also a major profit-making activity, both through fees charged to off-campus scholars for access to the restricted archives, and more importantly, fines for overdue books.

Students and faculty may borrow books for one week by showing their ID cards. (Of course some books must stay in the library – for safety reasons – and do not circulate.) After precisely one week, zero hours and zero seconds, the alert library staff dispatches a COUP hit squad to collect the overdue book, the substantial fine (\$1 per hour overdue, plus the hit squad's salary and a \$20 contribution to the Old Librarians' Home) and possibly some assorted body parts, if the student or professor is a chronic offender.

Of course, sometimes the culprit isn't *really* at fault, having wandered through a time warp, been kidnapped by aliens for a week or the like. In such hardship cases, the librarians will make allowances and sympathetically waive the contribution to the Old Librarians' Home. Groveling, pleading and whining to the Head Librarian might get a *slight* reduction in the fine (say \$1), if the student is especially entertaining. (A Performance skill roll may help.)

On occasion, students, professors or outsiders will attempt to steal books. The lucky ones (i.e., tuition-paying students) wake up the next morning in the Lazarus Health Center. Unlucky ones are often found chained to book carts in the sub-basements, where they're forced to help reshelve some of the more . . . *active* . . . books. A few lucky souls with Research skill are chained to the Reference desk and forced to help students with inane research questions.

## THE ILLUMNI ASSOCIATION

*"Lest auld acquaintance be forgot" – Illumni fundraising motto.*

Like any university, IOU gets a lot of its funding by extort . . . ah, soliciting contributions from its graduates. The alumni association – or, at IOU, the *Illumni* Association – is an important part of such operations. In particular, the feeling of still belonging to the University helps pry money loose.

Of course, some Illumni with outstanding student loans find themselves quite literally belonging to the University, demonstrating the hazards of not reading fine print. Even those who succeed in making payments are often surprised by the sudden jump in interest rates at graduation; the merely usurious rates paid while in school suddenly head for the upper stratosphere the instant the ArchDean signs that sheepskin.

The Illumni Association hires the very best tax accountants to find new loopholes to encourage Illumni to give more money. A recent innovation is the "Give It All" campaign, where the Illumnus gives his *entire* income to the Illumni Association, with the result that the Illumnus pays *no* taxes. The now-destitute Illumnus qualifies for free meals, lodging and transportation provided by the Croesus Illumni Center. Since the Center boasts a five-star chef, palatial residential facilities and a wide variety of executive limos and private jets, this plan has had considerable success.

Of course, the Illumni Association offers benefits to its members (this helps justify the fees). Members can get a low-interest gold card (with a rake-off from the credit-card company to the University), participate in social events like cruises to Europe (smuggling assistance available at extra cost), obtain job referrals (ensuring a high job-placement rate as bait for potential freshthings) and buy overpriced University mementos like bumper stickers, T-shirts, desk sets, baseball caps and video tapes of their *amusing* antics as students.

Besides annual contributions, Illumni are encouraged to remember the University in their wills. (GMs should note that, unlike students, dead Illumni may sometimes be more profitable to the University than live ones.)

## CAREER PLANNING CENTER

*"Have we got a job for you!"*

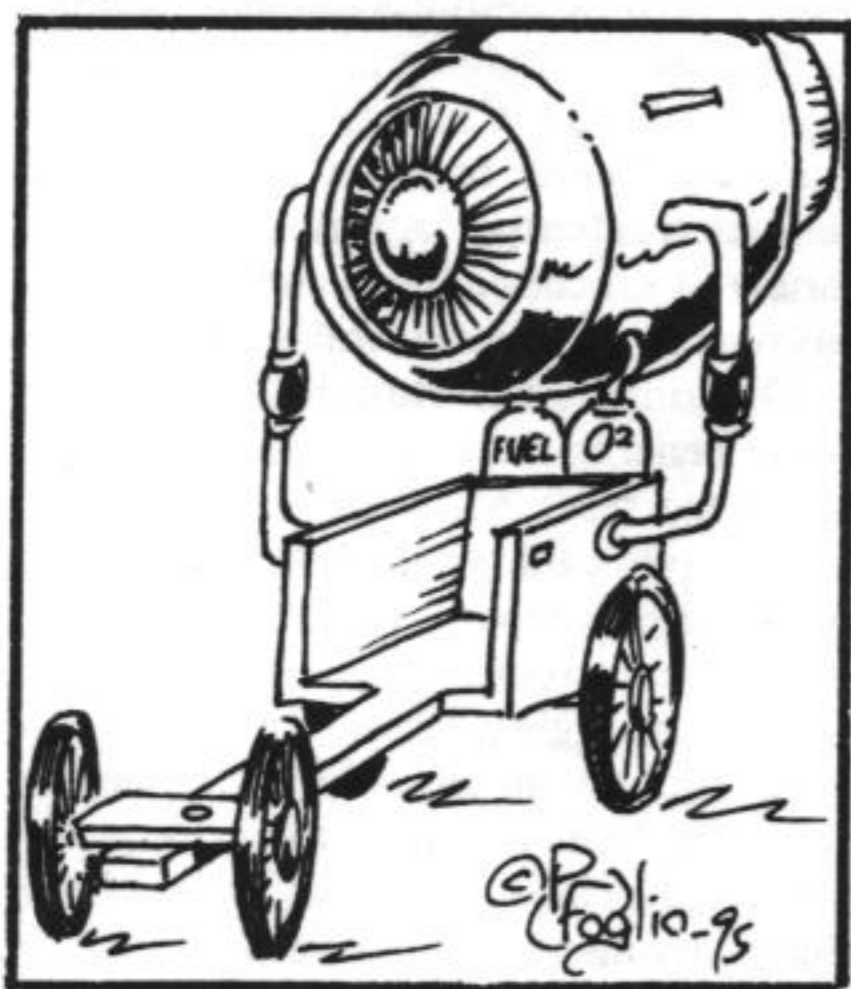
The CPC is a service provided to students that helps them plan for a career, helps place them in jobs and even refers them to COUP graduates when they subsequently need legal services. The Center is proud of its 100% placement rate. Of course, with all of time and space to choose from, there's always someone, somewhen, who can use a graduate with otherwise-useless skills. Galley slaves, anyone?

## VEHICLE POOL

"Any accident you can walk away from is indistinguishable from a University bus."

Operating a university requires a wide variety of transport vehicles. These are kept in the vehicle pool, a small lake filled with a secret elixir supplied by the College of Metaphysics that preserves and repairs the immersed vehicles. It also leaves a fresh wax shine on anything taken from the pool. (Swimmers will find the fluid is non-toxic, though the swimmers will have a buffed paste-wax finish for several days.)

Besides the more prosaic buses, delivery vans, ambulances and security cars kept in the shallows, the murkier depths of the pool contain more unlikely forms of transport, including a 1930's dirigible, a surplus Saturn V moon rocket, two F-15 fighter jets, an L-1011 passenger plane and a Polaris-class nuclear submarine. Some students claim they've glimpsed other things at the bottom of the pool – everything from Space Shuttles to flying saucers to Ogres. The report of an entire nuclear aircraft carrier is undoubtedly an exaggeration, however.



## STUDENT INVESTMENT SERVICES

"There's one matriculating every minute..."

As a service to students (riiight!), the University runs a discount brokerage service and provides investment counseling. This generates a small (uh-huh) profit for The Administration, through service fees, transaction fees and commissions. It also generates a somewhat larger cash flow through kickbacks from Ilumni floating stock and junk bond issues...

SIS also brokers real estate transactions, including University-owned swa... ah, alluvially-advantaged land in Florida and a variety of bridges in New York. Recently, the University has started offering special deals on quarter-acre lots on Venus, Jupiter and Saturn.

The (avowed) primary purpose of the Library is to help students and faculty with research. To this end, the Library employs a large staff of research librarians, who will happily assist questioners (a normal reaction modifier of -2, but a \$20 contribution to the Old Librarians' Home will raise this to a +1).

Some materials are in special collections in the restricted stacks in the main library, or in the specialized branch libraries attached to the various schools and colleges. Access to these is only permitted to those professors who have at least the first level of The Treatment, though a *substantial* bribe can buy an hour or two of admittance for others. In such cases, the invitation into the special area is accompanied by a lecture on the hazards. ("You realize that you enter at your own risk, right? And be *sure* not to stay after midnight. And, *whatever* you do, *don't spill any blood on the books!*")

For a lesser fee ("hazard pay") students can get the research librarians to photocopy a few pages from books in the restricted stacks – if the student has the necessary clearance, or a note from a professor. Even so, some books resist being photocopied. This is especially true for the tomes in the branch library in the College of Metaphysics, though a few of the more radioactive texts in the WUSE branch library have been known to do odd things to the copying machines.

Students lacking bribe money, or Intimidation skill, may be forced to use the convenient access to the Library's card catalog, provided through THE computer. Locating relevant books requires a Research roll *and* at least a Neutral reaction roll from THE computer. People who abuse the terminals often find that every book they're looking for has been checked out for the last century, and the name of the person holding them is restricted information. Or the books are in the ArchDean's office library...

## STUDENT DISSERVICES

Some unfortunates in The Administration actually have to deal with live (or undead) students, rather than just processing their paperwork or spying on them. These hapless bureaucrats are usually those who've annoyed the ArchDean enough to be sentenced to a semester or two of "serving" the students. This fact may go a long way toward explaining their attitudes when students come to ask for a "tiny little favor." The slogan "Just Say No" was invented here...

Student Disservices handles two main student needs: food and housing. Food Services is nominally run by this organization, though in practice the bureaucrats are afraid of the cooks, and tend to leave them alone. This division also facilitates handling complaints – the cafeteria staff send complaining students to the Student Disservices office, while the office points complaining students at the cooking staff. (The ArchDean allows this, feeling that depriving the staff of *all* their fun would impact morale too much.)

This administrative department also operates all the on-campus student housing, as well as providing a locator service for off-campus housing (which has much better cash flow, since landlords usually have a lot more money for bribes than students). For cost reasons, most student dorm rooms are built using sound engineering principles – if you can't hear people breathing next door, the walls are too thick. In addition, they are usually poorly ventilated, heated and cooled, and they're just big enough to give an ant claustrophobia. Needless to say, the major expenses in the housing budget are for bribes to the city building inspector and the fire marshal.

Campus Disservices has excellent accountants on staff – they are experts at insuring that living on-campus is marginally cheaper than off-campus. And the large staff of quality assurance experts ensures that on-campus living conditions are only marginally worse...

# STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Although students are notoriously disorganized, there are some University-supported student organizations. (Most students will develop *some* organization, if they can get free money for it.) Funding for these groups is taken from the "Student Activity Fee" – \$100 every semester. The University Administration manages to spend about \$75 of that in "overhead and administrative expenses," with the remaining \$25 being allocated to student groups.

Half of the budget is determined by the Student Senate (see below), with the remaining half set by a student vote every year. Needless to say, there's a lot of activity just before voting day, and the society political machines employ many COUP students to "get out the vote." (Translation: the various societies send out press-gangs of COUP thugs to snag passing students and make them vote – the right way.) So far, the ancient and honored practice of the "graveyard vote" hasn't appeared – THE computer tallies the results, and it can tell a live student from a dead one, which is more than many professors can do . . .

Listed here are some of the more prominent student organizations on campus. There are hundreds of others, ranging from groups of fanatic gamers to religious cults to secret societies of every stripe and purpose. Sometimes it's hard to wander the campus at night without tripping over a dozen secret meetings.

## STUDENT SENATE

In order to foster the illusion that the University actually *cares* about the opinions of the student population, and also to give budding demagogues and other PoliSci students an outlet for their ambitions, IOU has a "democratically-elected" student government. Other than providing a platform for the politically ambitious to strut on, the council has no real purpose beyond funnelling money to student organizations, nor any significant power. It does elect a non-voting student delegate to sit on the Board of Trustees. Being the student president looks good on a resume, though, so positions are often hotly contested.

## THE DAILY ILLUMINATOR

*"Freedom of the Press – we own one, and we know how to use it."*

This is the organization that produces the campus newspaper. Despite its optimistic title, the *Daily Illuminator* comes out only every other day or so. Like most campus newspapers, it is free for anyone who happens to wander by campus, or an off-campus Illumni can subscribe for a modest sum (\$1 an issue, but it will be delivered to the Illumni's home). The *Daily Illuminator* is entirely student-run, with the majority of the staff being College of Communications Journalism majors. Administrators are drawn from the School of Conservative Arts, and some of the investigative reporters come from the ranks of Cinematography (SPCA) majors.

The *Illuminator* is printed on-campus using an offset printing press and standard recycled newspaper stock. The *Daily Illuminator* covers its publishing costs by selling advertising for local businesses and organizational events; it also charges reasonable rates *not* to print something, or run an audio-tape on the campus loudspeaker system. However, it is rarely very profitable, and most of the students who work on it are doing it for the experience and opportunity for personal gain, rather than as a paying job.

## THE STUDENT OVERGROUND

*"Being underground was too dangerous – have you seen the steam tunnels lately?"*

## CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR C.T.H.U.L.H.U.

*"When the Servants of C.T.H.U.L.H.U. have a fundraising phone-a-thon, it's the Call of C.T.H.U.L.H.U. . . ."*

The Servants of C.T.H.U.L.H.U. are all C.T.H.U.L.H.U. Illumni. They have an office in the Croesus Illumni Center, and are one of the more aggressive organizations dedicated to getting donations from every single C.T.H.U.L.H.U. major who ever graduated, or ever will graduate, for that matter. (They don't shun money from other Illumni, either – and temporal blackmail can be *so* effective.)

## CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CTHULHU

*"Cthulhu saves – he might get hungry later."*

This quasi-religious organization (not to be confused with the Illumni group of a similar name) is dedicated to the worship of horrific Elder Gods on campus; their main belief seems to be that the nasty deities are showing up sometime next semester (maybe), and will want to eat everyone, so if you worship them and feed them other people, you'll be the last to go. And while you're at it, you might as well have some really strange parties before the Elder Gods show up.

## DEMOCRATS FOR CTHULHU

*"He couldn't be any worse . . ."*

This is a rather confused political faction that is currently handing out "Cthulhu for President" bumper stickers. Since they all have the Clueless disadvantage, they're quite harmless. Really.

## WIOU AND KIOU

No campus would be complete without a student-run radio station playing a combination of the latest hits and anti-establishment comedy. Illuminati University boasts two, both on the same frequency. This leads to some interesting innovations in radio technology.

## ROTC

Like any patriotic American university (especially those interested in free government money), IOU has a Reserve Officers Training Corp (ROTC) program. Students get their tuition paid by the government, and get to wander around campus in snappy uniforms, play with heavy weapons and do push-ups. Most ROTC students are majors in WUSE's Department of Military Science and Cost Overruns.

## SOCIETY FOR UNIMAGINATIVE ANACHRONISM

"The past wasn't quite as dull as the present."

The SUA is composed entirely of Mundanes, mundanes and people with the Mundane Background disadvantage. These individuals get together on weekends and talk about the latest Western movie they watched that had American Indians wearing wristwatches in it. Sometimes they perform Shakespeare plays in somebody's living room, dropping "poison" in Hamlet's Kool-Aid, or discuss hypothetical football games between current stars and retired (or dead) old pros. They also study together, and write out first drafts longhand with fountain pens.

Surprisingly, the SUA seems to be a stable organization – perhaps because Mundanes sense that the rest of the University has a different worldview from them, and it's nice to relax with like-minded people for a change.

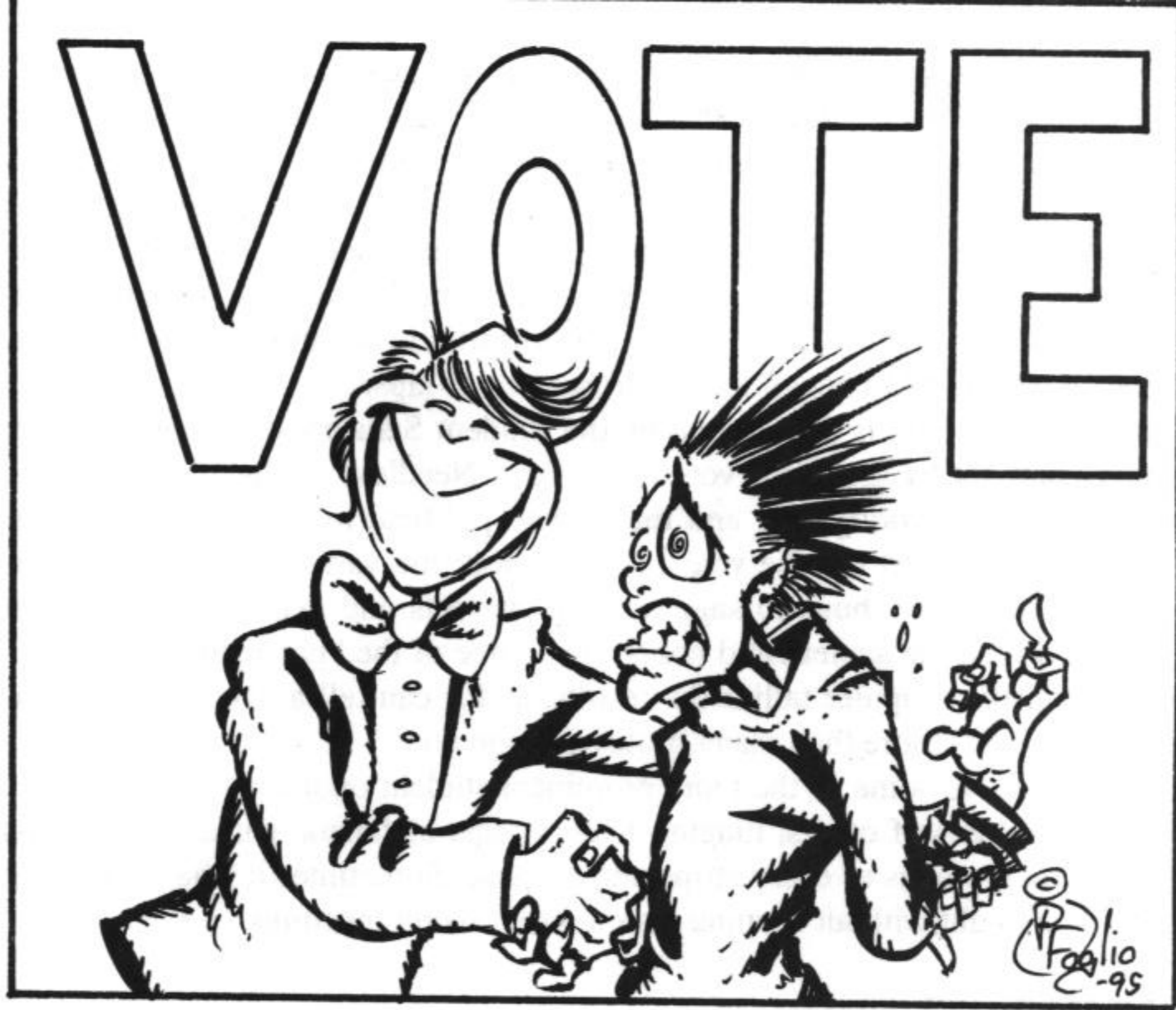
## FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES

Though not heavily into the Greek system (tending more towards the esoteric secret societies of the Persian system, the Egyptian system and the Mithraean system), IOU does have a few fraternities and sororities on campus. Partly, this is to provide the Team a place to party, pillage and loot. It also provides a haven for the Mundanes who are into secret rituals, since the more . . . *interesting* ones on campus tend to discriminate against Mundanes on the logical grounds that they spoil all the fun.

So while the Metaphysics students are practicing Succubus and Incubus Summoning 304, and the WUSE crowd is playing video games with the NSA's computers, the less fortunate mundanes can party all night, holding drinking contests and practicing their sadism on the new recruits. (Sadism and Bully aren't required to get into the Greek system, but they're fairly common.)

Fraternities and sororities count as Ally Groups for PC brothers and sisters, and normally have a base cost of 20 points – few members qualify as "formidable" at IOU. The exception is Alpha Omega Pi, which has weird tech, and costs 30 points to join. Members of a house at other universities also count as part of this Ally Group, but will rarely affect play. Alumni of the house do not count into the Ally Group, but will have a +1 reaction to current members.

*Continued on next page . . .*



The Student Overground is the "Resist Authority" group behind most counter-culture events on campus. They publish illicit news-flyers, organize sit-ins or other protest activities and try to tell "the *real* truth" about IOU to prospective students and first-semester freshthings, any way they can.

There is surprisingly little retaliation from the upper ranks of the University's Administration – probably because Overground members are paying money to stay, and it would be too much paperwork to expel them – but a known member will get a -2 reaction from most faculty and administrators. (Despite this, it is an open secret that the Overground is funded out of the Student Activity Fees – they appear on the ballot.)

The Student Overground have a policy of non-violence and are anti-vandalism. Members will festoon cars with their flyers, but they won't *glue* them on, for instance. They go peacefully if escorted away from an area by Campus Security, at most refusing to walk and grabbing furniture or scenery when dragged. They have been known to become involved in altercations with other students, either in self-defense or because a member lost his temper, but the group will send public apologies to the *Daily Illuminator* after the incident.

Members of the Student Overground are generally typical IOUites who either have a grudge against The Administration (or some of the faculty, or whatever), or idealists who resent the exploitation of students and Illumni. The core of the group are generally thought to be pure idealists who resist authority because it's authority – or maybe they're all agents of The Administration, channelling student frustrations in harmless directions. In a Darkly Illuminated campaign, the Overground is just a little *too* nice to be believed.

In general, the Student Overground is a vocal nuisance. But see its "Evil Twin" group, the Student Liberation Organization . . .

## STUDENT LIBERATION ORGANIZATION

*"Resistance is mandatory!"*

These are the students who think the Student Overground is too wimpy. This secret society is responsible for acts of violence and terrorism above and beyond usual campus life. They vandalize buildings and administrators' vehicles or

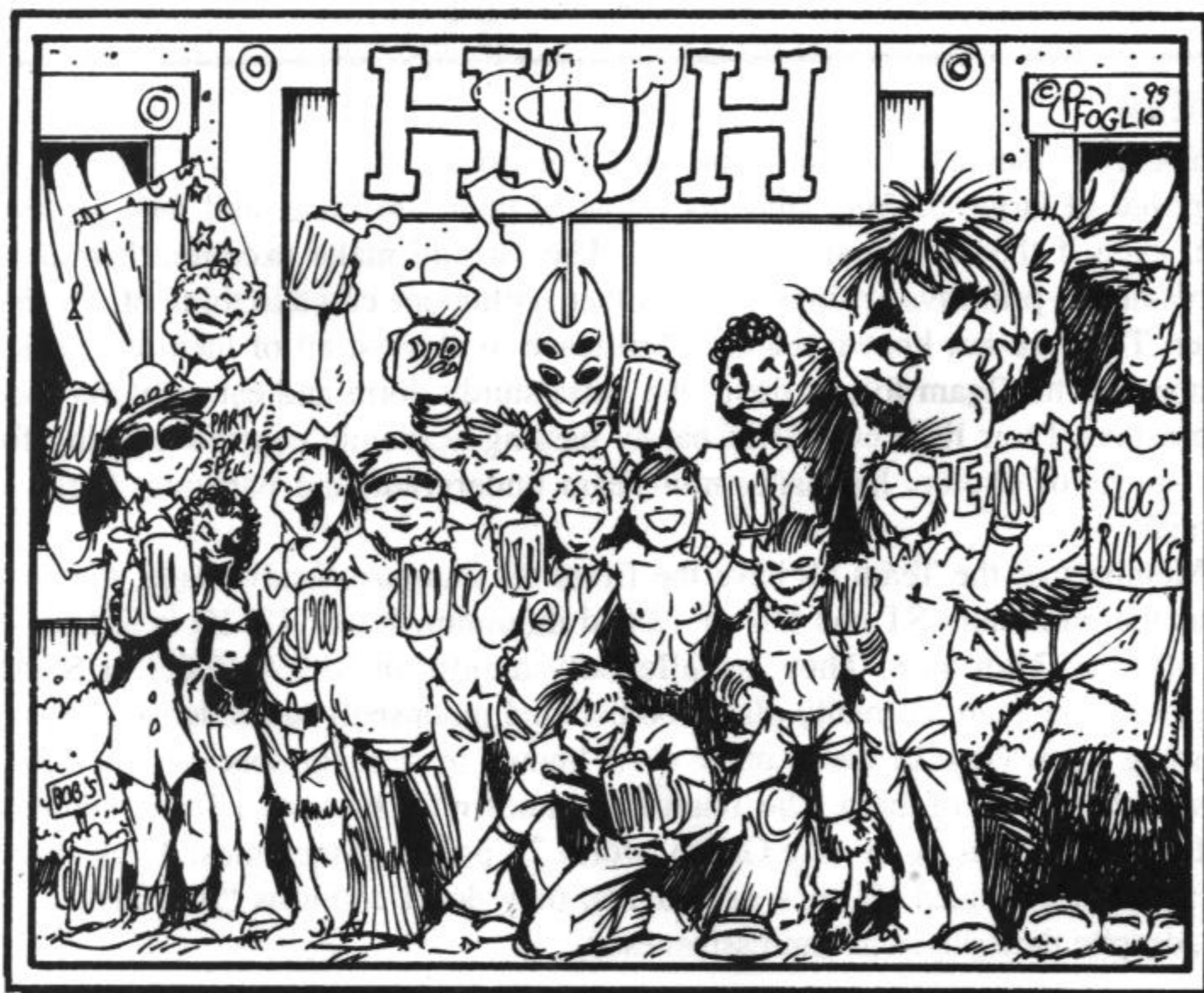
homes, sabotage research projects and try to destroy landmarks such as the Avant Guardsman or the statue of the Founder. They have even taken anonymous credit for some assassination attempts on professors. They are *not* funded by the University!

The SLO has been known to kidnap first-semester freshmen, or any student attending IOU on a scholarship (on the grounds that if the University is teaching this person for "free," it must be expecting to make major use of him later), and forge Drop forms for all that student's classes while they try to "deprogram" him. They particularly like to create major incidents when prospective frosh are visiting with their parents.

Despite intensive security sweeps and the expulsion of members (usually with extreme prejudice), the SLO persists – apparently the leaders of this malicious group have never been caught, and are perhaps even grad students or faculty! They certainly have enough skill that they are able to *evade* psionic, magical and high-tech detection methods, for many of the things they take credit for could not have been accomplished by Mundanes. One theory is that the SLO is actually a COUP project which discovers the truly vicious students, sucks them in and gains enough blackmail material on them to control them; instead of being expelled, "discovered" members *graduate* (or maybe flunk out for getting discovered). Another theory states that the "SLO" is just a front for whatever faction of the University is waging an unauthorized bloodfeud against another department *this* week.

Whatever the Student Liberation Organization really is, everyone else thinks it's a pain in the neck. Campus Security has standing orders to take SLO members into custody by whatever means necessary. The Student Underground denies any connection – with enough energy to place them out of Intermediate Hysteria 302. Even the ArchDean has been known to display public irritation when viewing the latest depredation perpetrated by the SLO.

Members must take a -15 point Secret – exposure will get them expelled, resulting in a permanent -6 reaction modifier from the University's administration and loyal Ilumni (a large class of people, who will *always* recognize an expelled SLO member, worth -30 points).



## FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES (CONTINUED)

Membership in a fraternity or sorority often gives an automatic Reputation for certain attitudes. The GM will have to determine point costs, since these social modifiers are very campaign-dependent.

Make a Reaction Roll for a PC petitioning to enter a fraternity or sorority. On a result of Good or better, the character is invited in. Most groups have specific requirements for membership; these are listed as reaction modifiers for the sample fraternities and sororities (see below).

### SAMPLE FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES

#### SIGMA EPSILON CHI

This sorority caters primarily to SPCA majors, and is well known as one of the more hedonistic groups on campus. Sisters have been known to prowl campus in hunting packs, "inviting" Attractive or better male students (or things!) back home to party. Modifiers to join: +1 per level of Appearance above Average, -2 for each level of Appearance below Average; +1 per level of Sex Appeal skill above 10; +1 per level of HT above 12.

#### BETA CHI NU

Called the "Bitchen Bitches" by non-sisters, this sorority is devoted to those upper-class Mundanes who simply *must* belong to *be* anybody. Most are classic Valley Girl types. Many of them are Hysteria majors, though a few are in the School of Conservative Arts. On campus, they tend to fill the important ecological niche of "victim." Usually with the onlooker applauding and rooting for the Monster of the Week...

Reaction modifiers for joining: +1 or -1 for each level of Wealth above or below Very Wealthy, +1 or -1 for each level of Appearance above or below Attractive, and Social Status modifiers. -1 for each 10 character points in non-Mundane abilities, +1 for Mundane Background, +2 for the Mundanity advantage (any level).

#### DELTA UPSILON DELTA

Commonly known as the "DUDes" or "Deltoids," this is the male counterpart to Beta Chi Nu. Many are Team members, or at least Phys. Ed. majors. Modifiers to join: same as Beta Chi Nu, plus: +1 (-2) per level of ST or HT above (below) 12; +1 for Phys. Ed. majors; +3 for Team members.

## SAMPLE FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES (CONTINUED)

### ALPHA OMEGA PI

This is an eccentric combined fraternity/sorority catering to WUSE majors ("Sex? What's sex?"). They are reclusive folks with a common interest in the creation and destruction of universes, which they usually set up in the basement of the building. (They are the only Greek house to have its own fusion reactor.) Modifiers to join: +1 per level of IQ above 12; +2 for WUSE majors; -5 for Jocks; +1 per level of Weird Science skill above 12.

## SPORTS

*"Make the other team give 110% – in blood!"*

Naturally, Illuminati University is heavily into sports (and sports betting): the best bait for Illumni dollars. At IOU, *the* sport – the one that gets Illumni to contribute great wads of cold cash – is moopsball. (Trust us, you don't want to know.) Like any sport, moopsball sounds totally inane to the non-fan; if you really want to know, find an Olde Illumnus – he'll be happy to discourse for hours on the relative merits of the Flying Wing Shredder offense versus the Stealth Draconic defense, the vital (and deceased) statistics of every IOU moopsball player since 1763 and the gall of the officials these days in wearing powered combat armor while on the field. Why, in the old days, officials took their chances like *real* men, or maybe *real* roadkill . . .

Besides moopsball, there are other, wimpier, sports at IOU, such as water polo, rugby, combat football, cyborged gladiatorial battles and global thermonuclear war. Since these don't have the "draw" of moopsball, their coaches are usually overworked and underpaid, and often looking for under-the-table sponsors for their better athletes.



### BASIC MOOPSBALL RULES

The actual rules for Moopsball are far too long and violent to reproduce here. They involve bicycles, Frisbee™ brand flying disks, and three-valued logic, as well as a great deal of body contact. A regulation game lasts at least three days, though much shorter exhibition matches are popular, and not as rough on players.

Interestingly, although each team has a wizard, the wizard is limited to psychological warfare, and may *not* cast any actual spells. The position is usually filled by an actor, a logician, or someone who paid a hefty bribe to get on the field.

There is a version called "meepsball" where live meeps are used as goal-balls . . .

### THE TEAM

The IOU moopsball team – known on campus simply as "The Team" – is composed of large, hulking students. Most of them are male, and they all *look* male, even if they're female or "other." They would make excellent barbarian swordsmen in primitive settings, or any other setting one cared to think of, for that matter. They are not known for their brilliance in classes; all of them are Jocks. Members of the Team live in their own extra-sturdy dorm and eat cafeteria food for practice. Their lives consist of barely passing academic courses, training for their sports of choice, harassing non-Team undergrads and partying. Sleep is optional.

Members of the Team all have the Lives on Campus disadvantage, the Jock advantage, minimum ST and DX of 13 and minimum HT of 12. IQ is at least 4, and often as high as 8. They are allegedly majors in SPCA (P.E.) or SSAS (English). The Team normally plays football and moopsball (see sidebar), but has a passing knowledge of every other sport known to sentient species. (Including ways to cheat at all of them. The Team is not known for Honesty.) Team members must take the Team as an Ally Group, worth 20 points. (Since most Team members don't have weird abilities or gadgets, they don't count as "formidable" at IOU, despite their physical impressiveness.)

# PEOPLE

**F**etid and dripping, the ancient horror oozed towards the gate to the University, casually uprooting trees with its black tentacles.



It loomed taller than all the buildings on campus, save perhaps the clock tower, and looked capable of withstanding even WUSE's biggest toys. Students and faculty were arrayed around the walls, mostly peering over them with trepidation or blatantly cowering (with some screaming; the Hysteria department was holding finals early), while the gardeners shook their heads morosely as they covered the shrubs to keep the slime off.

The ArchDean herself was waiting at the gate with a bullhorn, tapping one booted toe in mild impatience and irritation. She raised the bullhorn and called out, "HOLD IT RIGHT THERE! OR ELSE."

Amazingly, the creature halted for a moment, waving tendrils in the air and hooting as if it had swallowed several off-key calliopes.

"OR ELSE I'LL FLUNK YOU OUT, THAT'S WHAT. I DON'T CARE IF YOU ARE AN ILUMNUS."

## PERSONALITIES

The NPCs listed here are optional, though *someone* will fill these positions. Feel free to alter or totally replace anyone – this is the Illuminati University, after all, and who's to say that the old Dean didn't get . . . replaced.

Not all the major campus personalities are detailed here, just enough to give the general flavor. Note that student characters will *hear* about these people, especially when being threatened with them as authority figures, or in campus gossip. But *meeting* them is rare – the GM may wish to have student characters make a Fright Check at -2 on meeting a dean (at -5 for the ArchDean), with a -5 modifier if the student has a guilty conscience, and an additional -5 modifier if the student has been summoned to the NPC's office or workplace.

At most, a student might interact with one of these people once a semester. *Faculty*, on the other hand, will see them much more often, usually carrying financial reports, wearing ominous expressions and asking pointed questions about profitability or extraordinary expenses.

Three variations are given for each character, based on the campaign style the GM is using: Silly, Weird or Darkly Illuminated (see pp. 95-97).

### THE ARCHDEAN

Unlike the other NPCs in this section, the ArchDean's statistics and skill levels are not listed. In most student-based campaigns, she won't appear as anything but a (somewhat capricious) elemental force that is only seen from a distance. Maybe a student will see her once a year – and it will be a decidedly nerve-wracking experience.

The leader of the University should be a larger-than-life figure of awe and mystery, often referred to (with a furtive glance over one shoulder) and feared, but rarely seen. Through magic, tech or Methods Students Were Not Meant To Know, she is always well-informed as to the goings-on outside her office in the Clock Tower, which she rarely leaves. Students should always dread talking to the ArchDean, for while she may let them off relatively easy on one thing, the other shoe could drop at any time.

The advantages that she is known to have will vary somewhat from version to version. All are Very Beautiful, have Voice and unreasonable levels of Charisma, Alertness and Wealth. Being the ArchDean, she has her immediate underlings (e.g., all the deans in the various schools) as an Ally Group – probably an unwilling one. GMs should assume that the ArchDean has Magery 3 or better (she has been observed to cast minor spells) and some unknown set of psionic abilities. Her

It howled like a squadron of maddened jet fighters and surged forward a few yards. The ArchDean was unimpressed.

"AND I SUPPOSE YOU THINK I WON'T PUBLISH THOSE PICTURES?" she asked sweetly. The forgotten evil froze and began edging backwards, furtively putting uprooted trees back in their holes and cooing like a psychotic dove. The ArchDean continued, "NOT TO MENTION THE ONES AT THE ILUMNI CENTER PARTY LAST YEAR."

The crawling horror turned, wailing into the night, and fled through the dimensional rift that opened in front of it.

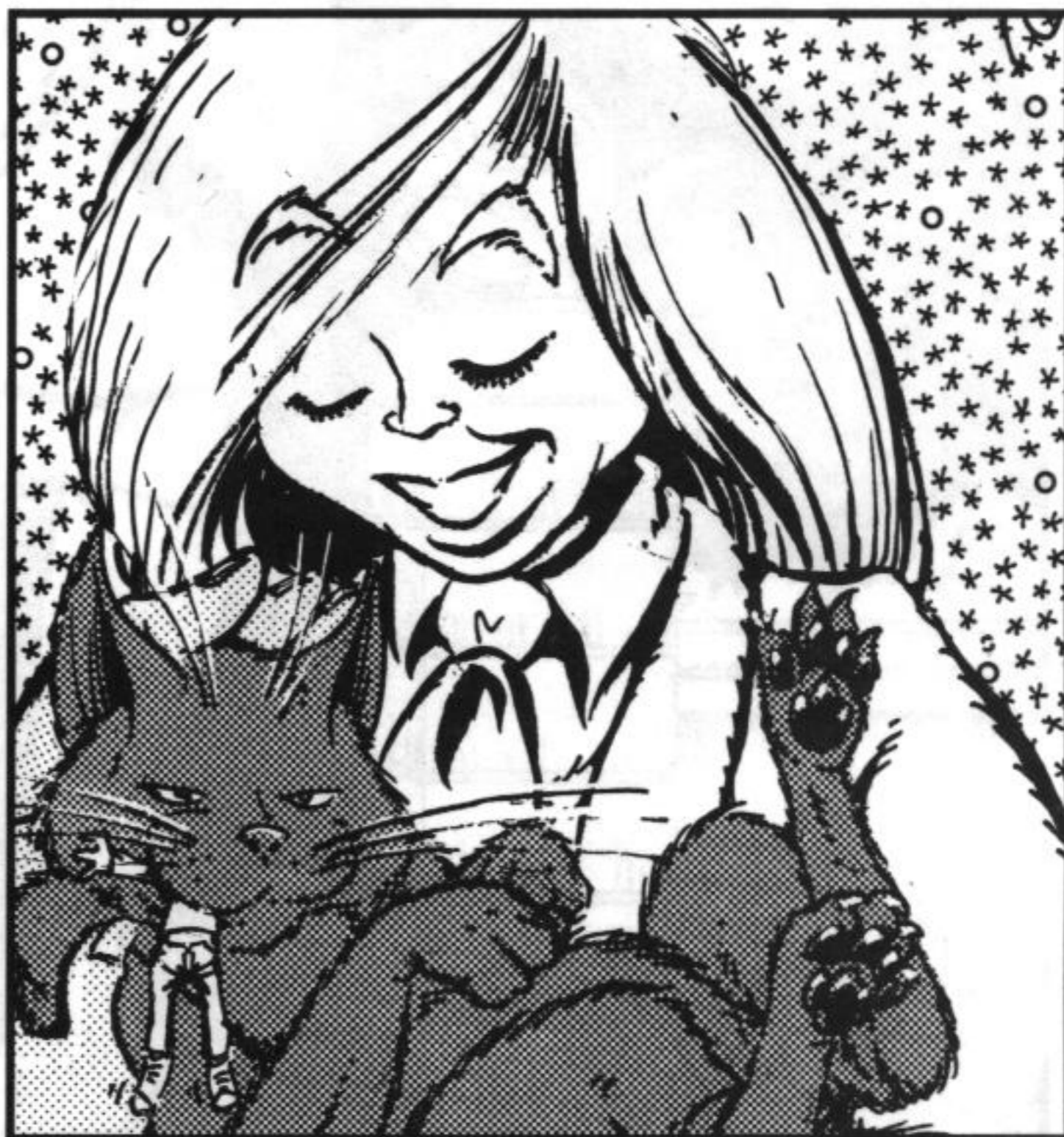
"Good grief," the ArchDean muttered, lowering the bullhorn. "They graduate, take over one little universe, and start thinking they can get out of paying their Library fines."

personal protections are something *beyond* the third level of The Treatment. If the GM feels a need to justify something improbable favoring the ArchDean, well, she has Luck, and lots of it.

Disadvantages are only hinted at. She declares first semester freshthings to be Off Limits, and enforces this. She also keeps lots of cats, and doesn't tolerate attempts to torment them. She sometimes *acts* absent-minded, which probably doesn't mean anything, and anyone who's in charge of *this* University may very well be a Weirdness Magnet.

The ArchDean has a lot of obvious quirks, including her liking for cats, her style of dress and the fact that she doesn't ever tell *anyone* her name. She's simply "the ArchDean," "Her ArchDeanshipness," "Ma'am," or whatever sincerely respectful honorific the person she's talking to is inclined to use. ("ArchSchnookums" is *not* a good choice, for instance.) The weird thing about this is that *no one* seems to notice she doesn't have a name!

Her skill levels are generally stratospheric, and she's got a *lot* of skills. Administration, Merchant, Leadership and Sex Appeal are obvious ones.



The ArchDean can serve as the ultimate *deus ex machina* in the campaign; if the PCs have totally flubbed it, and the planet-buster bomb is going to destroy Earth in the next five seconds, well, the PCs see this really bright light, coming from *behind* them . . . and they wake up in the Lazarus Health Center the next morning. They're each minus a few dozen character points, too – *players* should fear having the ArchDean intervene!

*Typical dialogue:* "So, you're the person who just cost me – ah, the University – over \$50,000, and drove my stock values down. I do hope you can find some way to correct this little error."

## VARIATIONS

The personality of the ArchDean will have a definite effect on the atmosphere of an *IOU* campaign. GM-designed ArchDeans should have the two important characteristics of being far too formidable to be worth challenging and being willing to give characters a lot of slack. This provides an "Ultimate NPC" to keep the PCs in line while not hampering their day-to-day mayhem very much, which can be important to the stability of a campaign; characters can become very powerful, especially in a Silly campaign, and having a PC take over the position of ArchDean will *seriously* alter the flavor of the game. (The Silly ArchDean, for instance, is designed to discourage University take-over attempts by being supernatural – and quasi-divine/demonic – as well as possessing a reaction modifier of 15 and up.)

*Silly:* According to her autobiography (required reading for every student!), the Most Important Personage (pronounced "mip," not "meep") at IOU is a double-defector from the sides of Light and Darkness who went freelance (on the side of *profit*), operating a floating House of Ill-Repute and doing a brisk trade in photographic negatives on the side. Her position as ArchDean came when her dwelling and place of business was mysteriously teleported to a position above the former Main Building of the University. The old Main Building can still be found by intrepid spelunkers . . .

The ArchDean herself stands about five-foot seven – nearly six feet in her high-heeled boots. (Her weight is unknown, since she's wandered over pressure-sensors without setting them off . . .) She also wears a white leather mini-dress, a belt with the University Seal as a buckle and long opera gloves for formal occasions (like faculty parties). When she quit her first job, she managed to keep her large white wings and halo, though the halo is always crookedly hooked around one of the small horns above her forehead . . .

This version is outwardly greedy and callous, but often finds sound financial excuses to let students off lightly for their inadvertent misdeeds. Miscreant characters will feel that they owe her a favor for letting them survive intact, but she rarely calls those in – unless a character *stops* worrying about being drafted for something dangerous, at which point Guido will appear, point a finger at the PC and say "The ArchDean wants you!"

*Weird:* While the ArchDean still shows a fondness for white leather outfits, her appearance does not include the wings, horns or halo – though the GM can drop hints that she may be more than mortal with the occasional shadow of an invisible wing on a wall, or a glimpse of a tiny horn. Her connections are likewise nebulous, leading more to powerful organizations than to old friends in metaphysical places. Rumors abound that she was a former madam who took over the University with the help of her, ah, staff of Bimbiras (see p. 87).

She still has ambiguous abilities. For instance, a student waiting for her to come down from her Clock Tower office may see her casually walk past him on her way *to* the elevator he's been watching so intently.

This version acts like a hard-nosed business-woman with a fixation on the Bottom Line of financial statements, but still has a soft spot for non-malicious students – again, they'll be waiting for the other shoe to drop, but that won't happen often.

*Darkly Illuminated:* The ArchDean still wears eccentric clothing, but it is doubtful that the white outfits signify any affiliation with the Higher Powers. GMs may still want to let PCs catch sight of a wing's shadow, but whether the wing is feathered or leathery will be unclear. Her former connections are mysterious and fearsome, probably involving secret cults of hidden gods and organized crime. Her attractive but shallow-minded secretary corps may harbor darker secrets than their pleasant smiles suggest, and attentive characters should note that those secretaries often vanish, to be replaced by similarly bland personages. Her knack for impossible feats (such as walking down a dark corridor when everyone thought she was in a board meeting) becomes less commonly seen, and much less innocuous.

This version is, on the surface, *more* sympathetic and altruistic than she really is. The University is, perhaps, only a step in ruling the world – or universe. With the other versions, students should merely worry about what her "favor" might cost later; with the Darkly Illuminated ArchDean, they should *know* that she *always* collects what she's owed . . . and she charges interest.



## DR. WHAT?: DEAN OF C.T.H.U.L.H.U.

ST 10, DX 14, IQ 16, HT 13.

*Advantages:* Eidetic Memory (1 level), Extraordinary Luck, The Treatment III, Tenure, Charisma +1, Academic Status +6 (dean), Social Status +1, Wealthy, Ally Group (department heads, unwilling, 300-point characters, medium group, appears quite often, 180 points), Chronolocation (advanced form of Absolute Timing, see p. TT29), Unusual Background (from TL9 time-traveling culture, 50 points).

*Disadvantages:* Absent-Mindedness, Duty (to University, -5 points: quite often, but not hazardous), Enemies (ambitious underlings, medium group, fairly often, -20 points), Evil Twin (himself – though Evil Septuplets would be more accurate, appears fairly often, -10 points), Sense of Duty (to timestream, -10 points).

*Quirks:* Insists on the periods in C.T.H.U.L.H.U.; Has a weakness for beautiful females; Always wears a silly scarf; Usually has a pocket tool kit on him; Argues with himself a lot.

**Skills:** Acting-20, Administration-16, Anthropology-19, Archaeology-20, Area Knowledge (IOU)-18, Area Knowledge (timestream)-22, Computer Operation/TL9-16, Computer Programming/TL9-16, Demolition/TL9-15, Detect Lies-18, Diplomacy-17, Electronics Operation (Communications and Computers)/TL9-17, Fast-Talk-17, Fencing-14, Gambling-15, History-22, Holdout-16, Language (All useful ones)-17, Leadership-16, Literature-17, Mechanic (TL9 Aircar, TL7 Automobile and TL9 Small Gadgets)-16, Naturalist-20, Nuclear Physics/TL9-15, Physics/TL9-16, Politics-15, Research-16, Savoir-Faire-16, Scrounging-17, Stealth-14, Survival (IOU)-17, Tactics-14, Teaching-15, Temporal Electronics/TL9-20, Temporal Operation/TL9-20, Temporal Physics/TL9-20, Traps/TL8-15, Writing-15. Appropriate Weapon, Thief/Spy and transport-related skills for the tech level at 14-17. (The Doctor is just as comfortable with aircars, sonic probes and stunners as he is with horses, lockpicks and sabers.)

One of the more pleasant, if more eccentric deans, Dr. What<sup>7</sup> is devoted to wandering the timestream, Doing Good. Unfortunately, that means he's out of the office a lot, and sometimes comes into class hurriedly, wearing anachronistic clothing – usually including a 17-foot scarf. There are seven distinct versions of the good doctor, from different parts of the timestream. They are all sufficiently alike to qualify as Evil Twins of each other, and it's often hard to tell if the Dr. What you're talking to has merely absent-mindedly forgotten your discussion last week, or if he's a different version entirely. (Access to the future has drastically lengthened his life, and he has trouble remembering conversations from a century or two ago . . .) All seven versions are decidedly average in appearance, if not dress.

While he's reluctant to introduce anachronistic gadgets into the local culture (wherever he happens to be, including IOU), Doctor What<sup>7</sup> isn't reluctant in the slightest to use them *himself*. (His office, the "Public TOILET," is a pocket dimension, for instance; see p. 74.) This access to ultra-tech gadgetry places him in the very unusual position of needing an Unusual Background in an IOU campaign.

**Typical dialogue:** "Did you know that sabertooth tigers lasted until much later than normally thought? Take the one behind you, for example – it's an excellent specimen, though it seems a trifle underfed."

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** The Good Doctor is usually very hurried and distracted, and often resumes conversations from two months ago – or two months from now.

**Weird:** Similar to the Silly version, but more coherent; the Public TOILET becomes a small garden shed, surrounded by a barbed-wire fence.

**Darkly Illuminated:** There's only one Doctor What around (though people might meet earlier or later versions of him on occasion). He's probably a member of an Illuminati conspiracy from the future, and is either watching or guarding IOU, or maybe trying to suppress temporal meddling. Other than his own, of course.

## CLARK M. WALTERS: WUSE DEAN

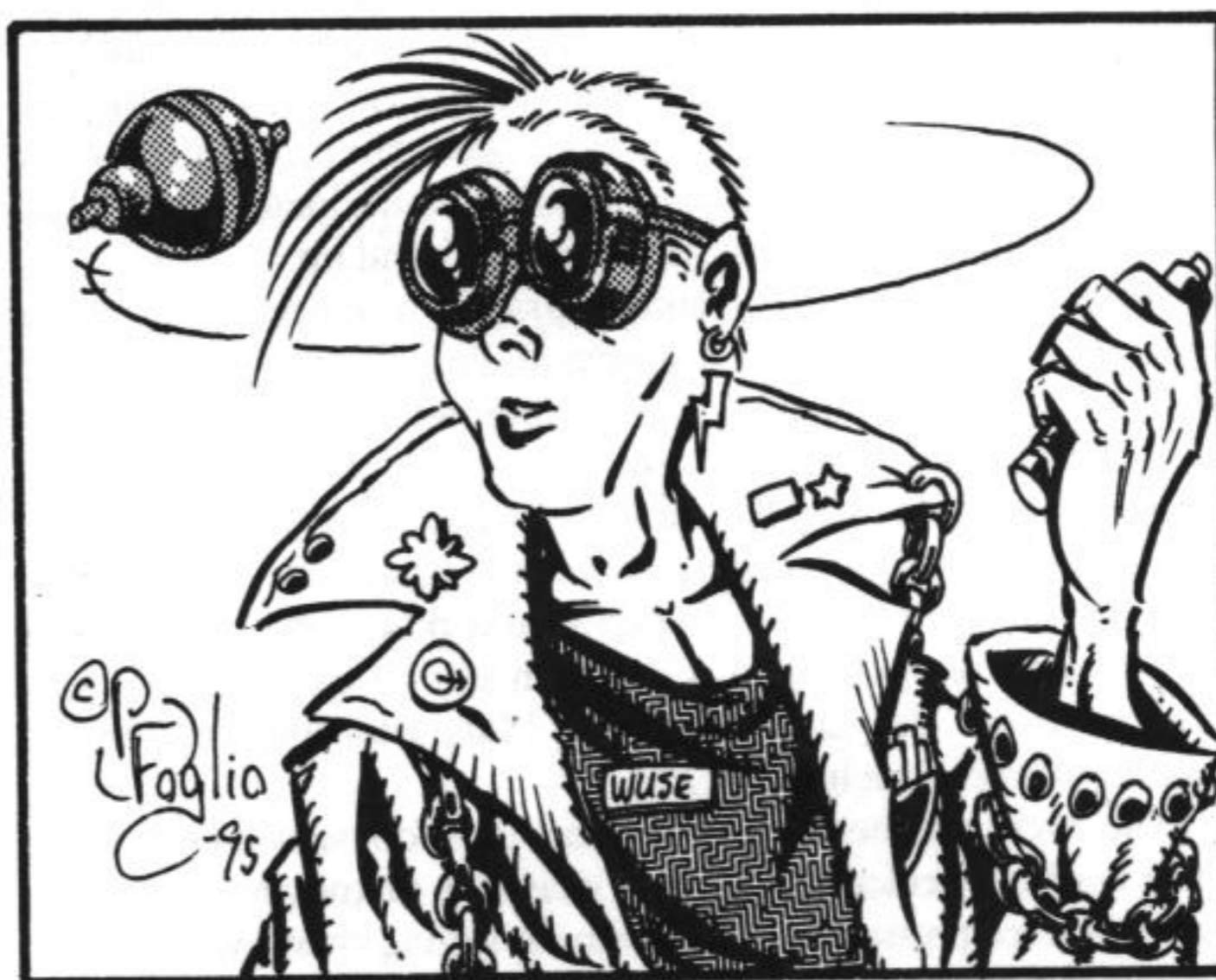
ST 9, DX 11, IQ 18, HT 10.

**Advantages:** Eidetic Memory (2 levels), Mathematical Ability, Lightning Calculator, Luck, The Treatment III, Tenure, Attractive, Academic Status +6 (dean), Social Status +1, Very Wealthy, Ally (THE computer, almost all the time, 75 points), Ally Group (department heads, unwilling, 300-point characters, medium group, appears quite often, 180 points), Quick Gadgeteer.

**Disadvantages:** Absent-Mindedness, Compulsive Behavior (Reading UseNet News), Bad Sight (nearsighted), Duty (to University, -5 points: quite often, but not hazardous – to him!), Compulsive Behavior: Tinkering with gadgets (-5 points), Code of Honor (scientist), Enemies (ambitious underlings, medium group, fairly often, -20 points).

**Quirks:** Always dresses in a sloppy labcoat; Gadget freak; Everything he owns is computer-controlled; Speaks techno-babble all the time; Never wears a tie.

**Skills:** Administration-18, Area Knowledge (IOU)-19, Astronomy/TL8-17, Beam Weapons/TL8-12, Chemistry/TL8-17, Computer Operation/TL8-24, Computer Programming/TL8-25, Cryptanalysis-24, Demolition/TL8-18, Detect Lies-17, Diplomacy-17, Driving (Car)-13, Electronics (Computers)/TL8-20, Electronics (everything else)/TL8-17, Engineer (Robotics)/TL8-17, Exoskeleton-12, Fast-Talk-18, Lockpick-ing/TL7-18, Mathematics-22, Merchant-18, Nuclear Physics/TL8-16, Physics/TL8-17, Piloting (Aircar)/TL8-14, Research-18, Scrounging-19, Survival (IOU)-18, Teaching-18, Temporal Physics/TL8-16, Traps/TL8-18, Weird Science-17, Writing-18.



The dean of WUSE is responsible for maintaining THE computer system and keeping the explosions down to a minimum – buying all those prefab buildings gets a little hard on the budget. WUSE, unlike many other colleges, has promotion by technical competence: if you can get THE computer to give you the dean's salary, the dean's office and the title of dean, you must be the dean.

Basically, the faculty in the college of Weird and Unnatural Sciences and Engineering – including the dean – don't much care who's running the show, so long as they can play with their expensive toys. They *do* have the attitude that a teacher's lab is his fortress, though, which some students dub a symptom of "Apathetic Anarchy."

At age 45, Clark is one of the younger deans at IOU. He's tall, thin and enthusiastic about exotic esoterica that generally goes right over the heads of his bewildered audience at faculty parties. (Most of the reason that he is invited to faculty parties – and is actually quite a popular guest – is his invention of several advanced distillation devices.) A founder of the "nerdpunk" movement, he wanders about in a stained and charred white leather lab coat decorated with metal chains and studs. The coat also has *lots* of pockets, containing uncountable gizmos, thingamabobs, whatchamacallits and a black leather pocket-protector with a dozen five-color pens.

He is, of course, less harmless than he looks, and is perfectly capable of getting into absent-minded faculty bloodfeuds. He will also involve himself in other altercations that seem to be damaging the computer hardware or software on campus, engineering defensive systems that make COUP drool. Fortunately for the stability – such as it is – of the University's political structure, Dr. Walters has absolutely no desire for further rank. The pay may be better, but there's too much paperwork, and not enough time to do all these neat projects. More *funding* is always useful, of course.

*Typical dialogue:* "Uh, where was I? Oh, yes – I wouldn't push that button if I were . . . oh, dear."

## VARIATIONS

*Silly:* This absent-minded and innocent denizen of a virtual ivory tower (actually a climate-controlled basement in a WUSE building bunker) is one of the least feared deans on campus. He tends to forget that he was supposed to be reprimanding miscreants, and will co-opt them to help with his latest project instead. Unfortunately, he is also likely to remember what they did, in great gory detail, at some other time, and arrange a suitable chastisement. On the whole, he is quite popular with the students and faculty of WUSE – probably because he happens to be brilliant, and WUSE people respect that. They also respect the fact that THE computer will jump through hoops for him, and they know who writes out their paychecks and class schedules.

*Weird:* Since the Silly dean of WUSE is so understated, compared to other Silly deans, there's not much change in his manner. Mainly, he'll be a little more restrained in his projects, and a little less oblivious to the rest of the world. The Weird dean is known to possess an occasional sense of humor.

*Darkly Illuminated:* The Darkly Illuminated Clark Walters is only absent-minded in the small things – for instance, he never forgets to carry at least one small, nasty and easily over-looked weapon. While he does not look like a wild-eyed lunatic, those who hang around him for very long will soon get the feeling that his sanity is only skin-deep. He's not a mad scientist, though – he's a psychopathic one. Unlike the other versions, this Dr. Walters is quite covetous of the position of ArchDean; however, he's easily distracted from this goal – offer enough funding for some pet project, and nominal power becomes less interesting. Power from behind the scenes is easier to get, anyway.

## DEAN OF METAPHYSICS (NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST)

ST 12, DX 13, IQ 16, HT 13.

*Advantages:* The Treatment III, Tenure, Academic Status +6 (dean), Social Status +1, Ally Group (department heads, unwilling, 300-point characters, medium group, appears fairly often, 90 points), Charisma +4, Filthy Rich, Magical Aptitude 3, Unaging, Winged Flight (p. SU40).

*Disadvantages:* Duty (to University, -10 points: quite often, can be hazardous), Enemies (higher powers and church groups, -60 points), Hideous Appearance, Lecherousness, Overconfidence.

*Quirks:* Asks people to call him "Fred"; Stares hungrily at people to freak them out; Wears Hawaiian shirts; Equips his office in Danish Modern; Hates arguing religion.

*Skills:* Acting-20, Administration-15, Anthropology-14, Area Knowledge (IOU)-18, Area Knowledge (Hell)-19, Brawling-13, Broadsword-13, Carousing-14, Computer Operation/TL7-15, Detect Lies-18, Diplomacy-15, Fast Draw (Sword)-13, Fast-Talk-17, Flight-14, Gambling-15, History-15,

Hypnotism-14, Intimidation-18, Law (specializing in contracts)-21, Leadership-18, Occultism-20, Psychology-17, Research-15, Savoir-Faire-18, Survival (IOU)-18, Teaching-15, Theology-16, Language: Latin-16, Language: English-15.

*Spells:* too many to detail here – assume he has all Fire, Necromantic, Illusion & Creation and Mind Control spells at a skill level of 17 (or better), and a smattering from several other spell colleges.

This dean is clearly non-human. In fact, the dean is a demon. After all, who else is more qualified in the intricacies of metaphysics? Campus rumors state that half of the Metaphysics faculty have made . . . deals . . . to get their magical powers. Maybe the dean is just taking good care of someone's investment.

Being a demon, the dean doesn't like having his name bandied about; students, staff and lesser faculty generally refer to him either as "You Know Who" or "*that* dean," when talking about him, and call him "dean" or "sir," when talking to him. Very senior faculty, the other deans and the ArchDean call him "Fred." (The ArchDean is often seen to wink when using this pseudonym – maybe it really *is* his name.)



## VARIATIONS

*Silly:* An old friend of the family (the ArchDean's), the Silly variant is really a nice guy under that gargoyle-like exterior. He's probably the second most friendly dean on campus, as far as the students are concerned (after the WUSE dean). He spends most of his time chasing his Bimbira secretary around the office, doing bad Groucho Marx impressions.

*Weird:* The Weird dean is a more enigmatic figure – he may be after souls, but if so, he's not obvious about it. He's usually fairly helpful, unless people start waving crosses and holy water around.

*Darkly Illuminated:* This version looks like a very ugly human, having no obvious wings or horns. He also dresses much more conservatively. He may just be keeping an eye on the ArchDean, or he may be after her job – or her soul. (He's certainly after everybody else's!)

## THE UNSEEN DEAN

ST 10, DX 18, IQ 16, HT 12.

(Attributes vary; high IQ and DX are useful, as is above-average HT.)

*Advantages:* The Treatment III, Tenure, Status 6, Ally Group (department heads, unwilling, 300-point characters,

medium group, appears quite rarely – they aren't very cooperative, 45 points). Others as appropriate.

**Disadvantages:** Duty (to University, -10 points: quite often, can be hazardous), Enemies (ambitious underlings, medium group, quite often, -40 points). Others as appropriate.

**Quirks:** (Vary by individual.)

**Skills:** (Vary; expertise in many Thief/Spy skills is highly recommended.)



The dean of the College of Obscure and Unhealthy Professions is always referred to as "The Unseen Dean," though the position has been known to change. The ArchDean would prefer a more stable administration of that important college, but she makes do by appointing all "TempDeans" herself, thus insuring that they owe her favors.

There are several basic types of Unseen Dean – nervous and jumpy, matter-of-fact cautious, weapons-happy, sinister and "harmlessly" jovial. However, all of them make the top ten list of "Deans Students Don't Want To Meet;" the COUP dean is scary, whether he (or she) is targeting through, around or directly at students.

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** This variant is usually sinister, nervous or weapons-happy, and generally possesses a sense of humor. While one might think the Unseen Dean would aspire to the position of ArchDean, there is surprisingly little friction there. Part of this may stem from the ArchDean's casual attitude towards the mechanics that give her the bottom-line profit, and COUP is a profitable college. It's easier to chum around with the ArchDean and get favors than it would be to try for her place. Besides, the ArchDean *always* has blackmail materials on all Unseen Deans, and is pretty hard to get a handle on herself . . . Better to stick to getting holds on the other deans.

**Weird:** The Weird version is sinisterly calm or just cautious, with a subtly sadistic funnybone and a preference for discretion. This Unseen Dean is more likely to be maneuvering for the position of ArchDean, though only through the most delicate ways. His plans will be long-term, taking years to complete, and have no malice whatsoever in them; it's merely a game. Though outwardly oblivious to this game, the Weird ArchDean plays just as enthusiastically, and often twice as subtly – should she admit to even being *aware* of the Unseen Dean's plots, it would be a major event in their political dance.

**Darkly Illuminated:** Here the likely types are split into the sinister assassin look, and a small, jovial and harmless appearance, but no student wants a taste of *his* sense of humor! The Darkly Illuminated Unseen Dean is no friend of the Dark ArchDean, and will work to usurp her position as soon as he can. When he does her bidding, it is only because it's to his advantage – though this "advantage" may just be ensuring that the ArchDean will not tighten her secret hold (of blackmail, compulsion spells or other unpleasant means) on *him*. Some Unseen Deans, knowing that they hold their position (and life) by the whim of their superior, become boot-licking sycophants, desperate to prove that they have no desire for a promotion – perhaps even honestly, knowing that higher status just puts bigger targets on their backs.

## WILLIAM WALDON: CHAIRTHING, MARKETING DEPARTMENT (SCA)

ST 9, DX 10,  
IQ 14, HT 10.

**Advantages:** Multimillionaire, Lightning Calculator, Voice, Charisma +2, Academic Status +5 (chairthing), Social Status +2, The Treatment II, Tenure, Ally Group (professors, unwilling, 300-point characters, medium group, appears quite often, 180 points).



**Disadvantages:** Enemies (various alien races, very rarely, -30 points), Greed, No Sense of Humor, Compulsive Behavior (selling things), Duty (to University, -5 points: quite often, not usually hazardous), Enemies (ambitious underlings, medium group, fairly often, -20 points).

**Quirks:** Likes to play poker; Selling things is what makes the world go 'round; Dresses *really* conservatively.

**Skills:** Accounting-22, Acting-22, Administration-21, Area Knowledge (IOU)-17, Detect Lies-17, Diplomacy-16, Economics-20, Fast-Talk-21, Gambling-19, Mathematics-16, Merchant-23, Psychology-18, Savoir-Faire-18, Survival (IOU)-19.

William Waldon, now chairthing of the Marketing Department in the School of Conservative Arts, is a former used planet salesthing – having first acquired said planets by repossessing them from bankrupt alien races whose civilizations he'd financed with junk bonds. His career change might have something to do with the fact that several of the dispossessed races are now very militaristic . . .

"Wild Bill," so named for the very non-conformist gray flannel suits he wears, is the most formidable poker player on campus – after the ArchDean, of course. He also is a dangerous character to encounter, since almost no one walks away without buying something from him. The fact that whatever he's selling is of no value whatsoever generally doesn't help people's sales resistance. He won't steal the clothes off your back, but he'll be perfectly happy to sell them to you. (Lack of clear title to an item has *never* stopped Bill from selling it.)

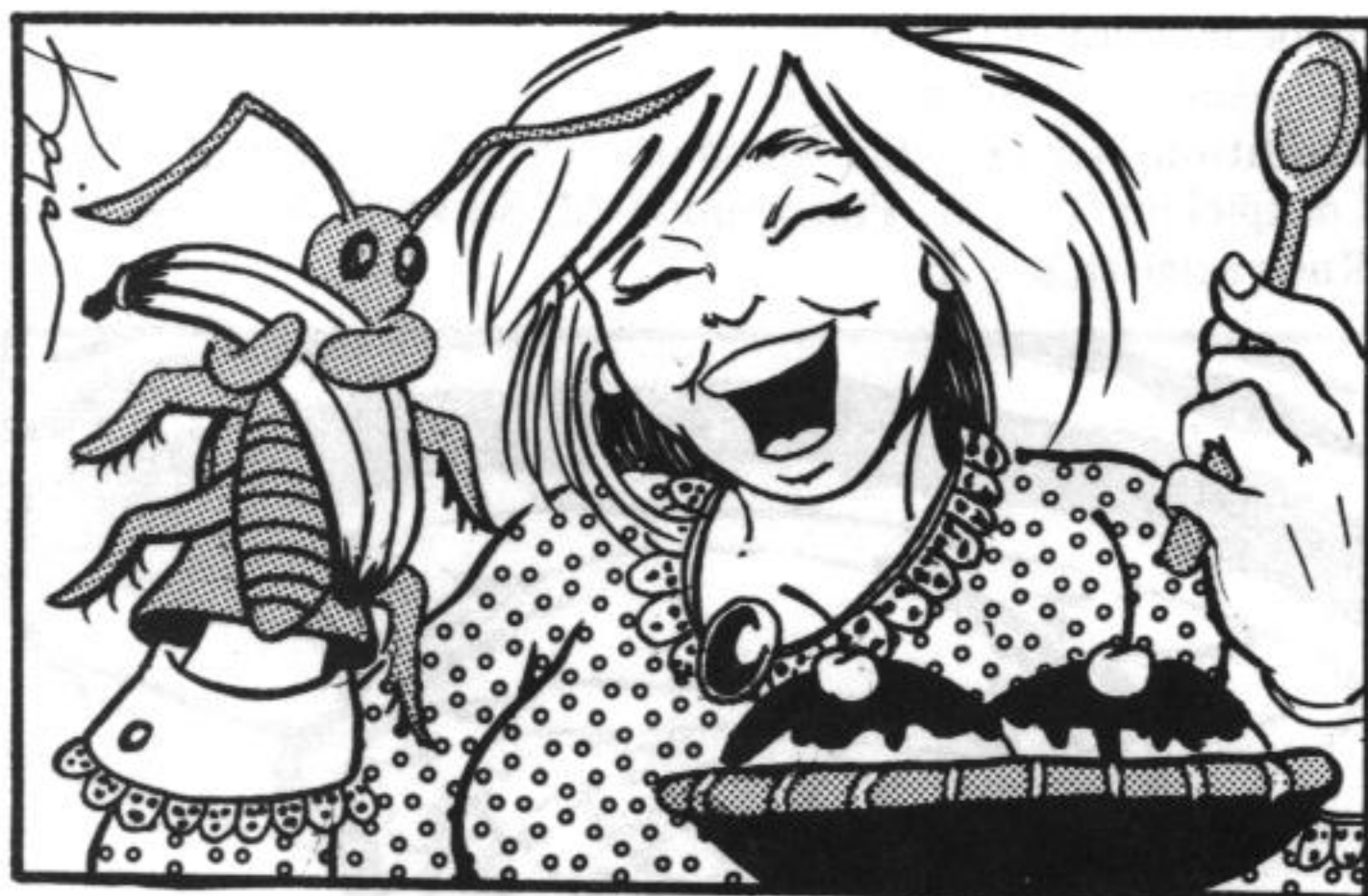
**Typical dialogue:** "Here, let me just show you something . . . you're gonna love it!"

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** As above, except Bill never goes outside except in a disguise of some sort – he's convinced that the aliens are constantly looking down from orbit. He may be right . . .

**Weird:** As written, but add the Paranoia disadvantage.

**Darkly Illuminated:** Rather than aliens, Bill's former victims . . . ah, clients, are several major Third World governments, who tend to demonstrate their displeasure with high explosives and anti-tank weapons. This leads to a serious case of the Paranoia disadvantage. Bill is also a close associate of the Gnomes of Zurich.



## PROFESSOR LILLY ANN BIE, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (COC)

ST 10, DX 11, IQ 16, HT 11.

**Advantages:** Eidetic Memory (2 levels), Intuition, Ally Group (students, unwilling, fairly often, 9-), Language Talent +5, Academic Status +3 (Tenured Professor), Social Status +1, Wealthy, Appearance: Attractive.

**Disadvantages:** Curious, Duty (to IOU, -10), Odious Personal Habit (Interjects esoteric trivia into any conversation, -5), Truthfulness, Enemies (ambitious underlings, medium group, fairly often, -20 points).

**Quirks:** Prides herself on knowing a little about everything; Dislikes having her department referred to by its acronym, DIM; Chocoholic; Keeps a cockroach hand puppet on her desk, Knows the best restaurants, *everywhere*.

**Skills:** Administration-21, Anthropology-18, Archaeology-18, Architecture/TL7-17, Area Knowledge (IOU)-22, Area Knowledge (Earth)-18, Astronomy/TL7-16, Biochemistry/TL7-16, Botany/TL7-18, Chemistry/TL7-18, Computer Operation/TL7-18, Computer Programming/TL7-16, Criminology/TL7-17, Cryptanalysis-16, Detect Lies-22, Driving (Car)-12, Ecology/TL7-19, Electronics Operations (Communications)/TL7-17, Electronics Operations (Computers)/TL7-17, Electronics (Communications)/TL7-16, Electronics (Computers)/TL7-16, Forensics/TL7-16, Genetics/TL7-15, Geology/TL7-16, Heraldry-17, History-26, Intelligence Analysis-16, Law-18, Linguistics-23, Literature-22, Mathematics-16, Meteorology/TL7-17, Naturalist-20, Nuclear Physics/TL7-15, Occultism-21, Psychology-20, Research-35, Science!-14, Sign Language-19, Strategy (Land)-15, Survival (IOU)-23, Teaching-31, Weird Science-16, Writing-17, Zoology-18.

Languages: English-23, French-23, German-23, Greek-23, Japanese-23, Latin-23, Russian-23, Egyptian Hieroglyphics-22, any other two Mental/Average languages at 23.

Lilly Ann is one of the best researchers in the College of Communications, if not the entire universe, and an expert in more areas than anyone else wants to know about. She would rise further, except she has no sense of diplomacy – she tends to say what she thinks, even when a white lie would be more appropriate. Her students find this trait quite entertaining, though they often grumble when her lectures about common library sorting systems becomes a discussion on the habits of carnivorous dinosaurs and how that relates to the keeping of tropical fish in modern office buildings. Not that her classes aren't *interesting* when that happens, but she rarely *tests* on that material.

Dr. Bie is a little on the short side at five-foot-three (and a half!), and does not discuss her weight beyond occasional bemoaning that she'll have to jog off a chocolate sundae she's about to put out of its misery.

**Typical dialog:** "As you can see, the mother-goddess and phallic symbols inherent in the ingredients clearly point to a Goddess-worshipping society which understood the biochemical effects of chocolate sauce on the brain. The whipped cream was added during the Victorian years, just as they added skirts to hide piano legs, but the erotic connotations were reinstated with the addition of the cherry on top." (pause) "Hey! I ordered *mint* chocolate on this banana split!"

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** Add Absent-Mindedness – she often doesn't notice when people run off when she starts one of her little digressions.

**Weird:** As above.

**Darkly Illuminated:** Dr. Bie seems to know everything about everyone – sort of a Darkly Illuminated Mom.

## PROFESSOR PATRICIA MILLER: SPCA MUSIC TEACHER AND ROCK STAR

ST 10, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 10.

**Advantages:** Academic Status +2 (Untenured Professor), Social Status +3, Filthy Rich, Appearance: Very Beautiful, Charisma +3, Extraordinary Luck, Musical Ability +5, Voice, Reputation +4 (rock star; to fans, a large group, all the time), Ally Group (students, unwilling, fairly often, 9-)

**Disadvantages:** Albinism, Enemy (Untenured Professors, very rarely, 6-), Stubbornness, Severe Delusion (All plants are intelligent beings), Duty (to the University, quite often, frequently hazardous).



**Quirks:** Wears her stage costumes around campus; Doesn't like jocks; Throws *really* wild parties; Won't eat vegetables; Flirtatious.

**Skills:** Acting-15, Area Knowledge (IOU)-15, Bard-19, Botany/TL7-12, Brawling-13, Carousing-14, Computer Operation/TL7-13, Dancing-15, Detect Lies-14, Diplomacy-14, Driving (Car)-14, Electronics Operation (Musical)/TL7-11, Electronics Operation (Security Systems)/TL7-12, Fast-Talk-16, Law-10, Merchant-11, Mind Block-14, Motorcycle (Medium/Heavy)-15, Musical Instrument (Drums)-16, Musical Instrument (Electric Guitar)-20, Musical Instrument (Keyboard)-18, Performance-16, Poetry-16, Research-11, Savoir-Faire-17, Sex Appeal-16, Singing-21, Streetwise-13, Survival (IOU)-17, Teaching-12.

Dr. Patricia Miller is an attractive female rock star who's still on the way up – she's not *quite* a household name yet. When she's not on tour, Dr. Miller is a minor professor (also on the way up; though she doesn't have Tenure) in the School of Creative and Performing Arts. She teaches music, voice and Musician Appreciation 123 – the art of wrapping people around one's little finger. As an example of that last, she holds many of her classes in the *Botany* building, to the bemusement of the Botany Department's chairthing. (Patricia says that the plants in the Botany lab appreciate her music, so why shouldn't she teach classes where they can hear?)

Since her classes are usually sold out, ah, full, other departments and schools would *love* to convince her to work for them. SPCA and the Music Department keep her by being very understanding about her occasional world tours, and by being sure to introduce her to nice young saplings from time to time.

Some folks would think her a little crazy – maybe it's the way she dresses, or maybe they just don't like "reputable" faculty who hold conversations with plants. Of course, most people like Patricia. In fact, they *really* like her – sometimes the force of her presence even makes them (usually the male ones) swoon at her feet. Heck, even *deans* have been known to be a little stunned – deans who have taken *The Treatment*!

Despite her pasty-white skin, white hair and pink eyes, she's extremely attractive (of course, that sort of appearance isn't a problem in the musical superstar business, anyway), and she dresses to impress . . . Ms. Miller is in her mid-twenties, five and a half feet tall and 130 pounds. Besides her teaching duties and musical career, she is also a charter member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Plants.

**Typical dialogue:** "Yes, that Pat Miller. You can stop drooling now."

## VARIATIONS

Ms. Miller is about the same in all versions. The Silly Patricia has practically turned her condominium into a greenhouse, and complains that her "housemates" don't pay rent; she understands that they don't have many job opportunities, though. The Dark version will be more cynical (raise Streetwise to 16, and add On The Edge, p. B241), and may be addicted to something nasty – just so long as no plants were killed to make it. The black leather, chains, and knives look more, ah, functional, too.

## THE COMPUTER

IQ 17 (other attributes inapplicable)

**Advantages:** Eidetic Memory (2 levels), Lightning Calculator, Doesn't Sleep, and any other similar advantages the GM wishes.

**Disadvantages:** no obvious ones, though it probably qualifies for Social Stigma: Valuable Property. It may have a different opinion about this . . .

**Skills:** most mental skills (excluding spells and psi powers) at levels of 16 to 20.

Further information on THE computer can be found on p. 84. If the GM wants more detail, THE computer can be designed using the rules in *GURPS Robots*.

## GEORGE THE JANITOR

ST 14, DX 11, IQ 13, HT 14.

**Advantages:** Unaging, ESP Power 10, The Treatment III, Alertness +5, Unfazeable.

**Disadvantages:** Greed, Unattractive Appearance.

**Quirks:** Likes to watch students; Always carries a broom and dustpan; Never leaves campus; Calls bribes "contributions to the Janitorial Retirement Fund."

**Skills:** Professional Skill (Janitor)-18, Mechanic (heating/air conditioning)/TL7-17, Mechanic (Small gadgets)/TL7-15, Lockpicking/TL7-21, Precognition-22, Survival (IOU)-24, Area Knowledge (IOU)-25.



A somewhat mysterious figure, George (no one knows his last name – it was apparently forgotten somewhere in the mists of antiquity) is the chief janitor for the University. In fact, he seems to be the *only* janitor for the entire campus! There are the occasional part-time assistants who show up, but any time there's something to be cleaned up, George is there with the tools to do it. Furthermore, any time students are where they shouldn't be, George is *also* there, and he'll have helpful tools, if someone is generous and contributes to the Janitorial Retirement Fund.

From anecdotal evidence, George teleports to wherever he's needed (or wherever students are trying to do something covertly), somehow knows in advance where he'll be needed or there are several dozen "Georges" who share one consciousness. It is strange that nobody knows where he lives, and he's never been seen off-campus, not even to buy food. Some students even claim to have seen George entering or leaving the steam tunnels!

George is a tall, thin man with graying hair. He typically wears a gray jumpsuit with his name stitched on one pocket, and often has a pushcart or toolbox with him. He's also very laconic – a few words are to him what entire decologies are to English professors. Despite his occasional references to the Janitorial Retirement Fund, he shows no signs of *ever* retiring. He's been at IOU practically forever (or at least for as long as any faculty, staff or alumni can remember), and it's generally expected that he'll be cleaning up after the latest havoc until the universe col-

lapses into a point-mass again – and at that point, he'll sweep up the remains and turn off the lights.

*Typical dialogue:* "Need some help there? Think I got the key somewhere . . . Oh, thank you. Yep, here it is."

## VARIATIONS

George is a figure of mystery and power second only to the ArchDean. No one *really* knows what he can or cannot do – the description given above is only the least powerful explanation for what he's been observed to do. He may actually be an ancient golem, an alien creature with a hive mind or a retired god.

*Silly:* George probably *is* an alien or a retired god – after all, he's nearly omniscient and omnipresent. Students poking around campus basements may run across 55-gallon drums labelled "Industrial Strength Janitor in a Drum." Anyone who opens these wakes up the next morning in Lazarus Health Center. Attempts to record the opening always result in burned-out cameras, overloaded microphones and the like. Use of the History spell requires the caster to make a Fright Check at -10 and induces spot amnesia covering what the caster learned. Psychometry links the drums to George, and reveals incredible power – which washes out all details. A few students, subsequently treated for mental aberrations, have reported seeing a 50-foot-tall George sweeping buildings up after really *big* disasters. George can be used as a *deus ex machina* if the characters get into real trouble on campus, and no one else is handy to help.

*Weird:* Same as Silly, though the power levels will be toned down. This version is probably close to the character statistics given above.

*Darkly Illuminated:* There aren't any 55-gallon drums or reports of 50-foot janitors. This George is a lot more sinister – he seems to lurk a lot more, and is probably spying on students. He sells information and assistance with locked doors, but not cheerfully. He also asks more questions, and isn't very helpful until they're answered. George might even be the *real* power behind the University. He's almost certainly a senior member of the Illuminati.

## THE LIBRARIAN

ST 8, DX 9, IQ 13, HT 10.

*Advantages:* Strong Will +5, Danger Sense, The Treatment III, Absolute Direction, Academic Status +5.

*Disadvantages:* Unattractive Appearance, Miserliness, Intolerance (students), Lecherous, Reputation -3 (students, all the time), No Sense of Humor, Odious Personal Habit (whiny voice, -2 reaction), Bad Sight (nearsighted).



*Quirks:* The Library will close on time; Doesn't much like professors, either; Thinks all the books in the Library are *his*.

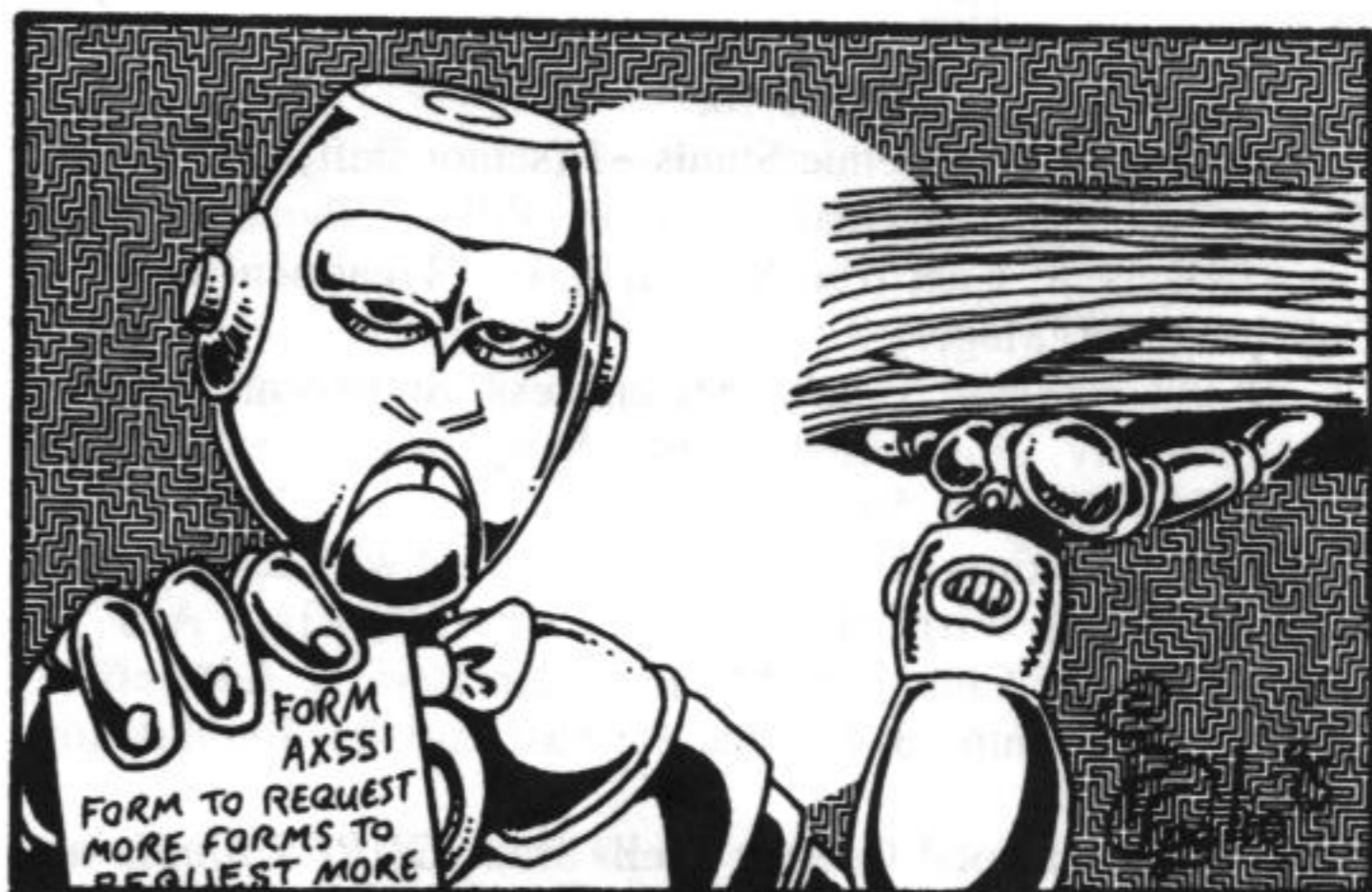
*Skills:* Administration-18, Research-14, Stealth-16, Area Knowledge (IOU Library)-18, Area Knowledge (IOU)-15, Survival (IOU)-19.

A tall, balding, thin man with a thin, whiny voice, thick glasses and the soul of a bureaucrat – or maybe several of them, he's the collector type – Ignatius Potts is the Head Librarian. If he had free rein, the Library would never lend any books out, nor would it allow *students* into the Library to handle them.

*Typical dialogue:* "Where are you going with that *book*? You think you can just *borrow* it?"

## VARIATIONS

The Librarian is a bureaucratic menace in all the campaign styles, and differs very little – though he undoubtedly practices Necromancy on the side in the Darkly Illuminated IOU.



## ROBOCRAT

ST 24, DX 16, IQ 12, HT 14/50.

*Advantages:* High Pain Threshold, Combat Reflexes, Perfect Balance, Lightning Calculator, Infravision, PD +4, DR 100.

*Disadvantages:* Cowardice, No Sense of Humor, Fear of Oceans, Laziness, Duty (to IOU, quite often, not hazardous, -5 points).

*Quirks:* Needs frequent oiling or he squeaks; Weighs so much he endangers floors, bridges, etc.; Speaks in a high, nasal whine.

*Skills:* Administration-18, Accounting-15, Survival (IOU)-11, Area Knowledge (IOU)-15, Intimidation-19, Electronic Operations (Computers)-13.

Formerly a joint project between WUSE and COUP, Robocrat was supposed to be the ultimate war cyborg. However, the only available brain at the time was Harvey Tillotson, a minor flunky in the Bursar's office, who'd had the misfortune to be eating his lunch in the Pent when WUSE tested its nuclear-powered lawnmower there.

When Harvey woke up in his shiny new body, he decided that war was too dangerous, and opted for a nice cushy administrative position. Since the only thing *really* qualified to argue with him was the Bio-Ogre (p. 87), and the amount of collateral destruction was estimated to cost the entire COUP and WUSE budgets for the next five years, Robocrat got his soft job.

These days, Robocrat makes sure that students don't forget to

fill out all their paperwork (like the "Home Universe Designation" entry on your student health incident report form), delivers "Overdue Library Book" notices, collects payments on various fines from students and counts the days till retirement. Any student who's ever had to deal with Robocrat is *also* counting the days till his retirement, and wishing it would happen *soon*.

*Typical dialogue:* "You *do* want to fill out your KT-14/YF, don't you?"

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** As given above. This version looks like a giant chromed robot.

**Weird:** Drop the quirks and add a quirk-level Intolerance for WUSE majors. Robocrat looks like a large male human with plastic skin, and moves mechanically.

**Darkly Illuminated:** Drop the Cowardice and Fear of Oceans disadvantages, add Intolerance (WUSE students) and change the quirks to "Wants revenge on WUSE." This variation appears to be just a normal 300-pound ex-football player.

## MADAME CURRY

ST 7, DX 10, IQ 13, HT 18.

**Advantages:** Academic Status +1 (senior staff), Rapier Wit, Absolute Timing, Unfazeable, Strong Will +3. **Rumored:** High Pain Threshold, Cast Iron Stomach, The Treatment II, One-College (Food) Magery 3.

**Disadvantages:** Skinny, Miserliness, Stubbornness, Duty (to University, quite often, rarely dangerous). **Rumored:** No Sense of Smell/Taste, Sadism.

**Skills:** Cooking-15, Shortsword-14 (used with rolling pins), Axe-13 (used with cleavers), Knife-15, First Aid-13, Accounting-13, Chemistry-12, Biochemistry-12, Administration-16, Leadership-13, Poisons-12, Fast-Talk-14, Intimidation-15, Alchemy-14.

**Spells:** All Food College spells from *GURPS Magic* and

*GURPS Grimoire*. (Some rumors state that she is a Necromancer as well, but those are surely exaggerated.) All prerequisites are known at 12.

The Chief of Residential (and Industrial) Food Services is a formidable, and often old-fashioned, woman who goes by the name of "Madame Curry." (A *very* few people are allowed to address her by her first name, Lucrezia.) With her steel-wool-gray hair in a tight bun, and wearing her lead-lined gloves and apron, Madame (not Mrs., not Ms.) Curry rules the kitchen staff with a cast-iron skillet, and has most of the students intimidated as well. Her office door bears a plaque reading: "The hand that wields the ladle rules the world." Rumor has it that the plaque is *magical* – probably a rare example of Pun Magic enchantment.

*Typical dialogue:* "So what's wrong with curried milk?"

## VARIATIONS

Madame Curry is essentially the same in all campaign styles. The Darkly Illuminated version *definitely* has Necromantic spells, though (and therefore doesn't have the One-College restriction on her Magery).



## SAMPLE STUDENTS

This is a collection of 100-point and higher students suitable for use as "instant PCs" or as recurring NPCs. These students are primarily designed for Silly or Weird campaigns. There are suggestions for Darkly Illuminated versions, but details are left as an exercise for the student . . . ah, reader. (*Hint:* add Instant Angst, e.g., Paranoia and On the Edge.)

### GILLIAN BRENT: ANTHROPOLOGY STUDENT/WITCH

**Point Total:** 100 (Freshthing)

ST 10, DX 9, IQ 14, HT 9.

**Advantages:** Strong Will +1, Intuition, Magical Aptitude 2, ESP Power 7, Psi Sense Power 6 (Single skill), Signature Sniffer Power 2 (Single skill), Familiar (Pyewacket, cat): ST 3, Rider Within, IQ 7, Telepathic, Mage Suffers Wounds, Limitation: only within 100 yards.

**Disadvantages:** Combat Paral-ysis, Academic Status -2 (fresh-thing), Sense of Duty (friends), Severe Shyness.

**Quirks:** Always dresses in black; Likes being "special"; Talks to her cat a lot; Enjoys playing "Freak the mundanes"; Tries to hide her southern drawl.



**Skills:** Alchemy/TL7-11, Anthropology-13, Archaeology-13, Area Knowledge (IOU)-13, Clairaudience-11, Clairvoyance-13, Detect Lies-11, Driving (Car)-9, First Aid/TL7-13, History-11, Linguistics-11, Literature-11, Naturalist-11, Occultism-14, Precognition-11, Psi Sense-14, Psychology-11, Psychometry-12, Research-14, Seekersense-11, Signature Sniffer-12, Survival (Desert)-12, Survival (IOU)-12, Survival (Jungle)-12, Theology-11, Language: Ancient Mayan-12, Language: Egyptian Hieroglyphics-12, Language: Latin-13, Language: Sanskrit-13.

**Spells:** (all at skill level 14) Light, Sense Life, Sense Foes, Sense Emotion, Truthsayer, Ignite Fire, Apportation, Levitation, Foolishness, Daze, Detect Magic, Aura, Seeker, Seek Earth, Seek Water.

Ms. Brent is a witch – at least, that's how she thinks of herself. It's a lot more interesting than being an ordinary anthropology student. Some of those anthropology courses were a lot more useful than the professors realized, though. And only witches have familiars, right? Pyewacket reassures her on that point. People do find the fact that a black cat goes everywhere with her a bit odd, but since the ArchDean likes cats, nobody's going to raise much fuss about *that*.

Gillian is 18 years old, moderately tall (5'8") and willowy (about 110 lbs.), with green eyes and reddish-gold hair. She is otherwise average in appearance, if someone who dresses eccentrically and carries a black cat around can be called average.

*Role Models:* Samantha (from the TV series *Bewitched*), the Wizard of Oz, Granny Weatherwax (from Terry Pratchett's Discworld books), Morticia Addams (from *The Addams Family*).

*Typical dialogue:* Gillian doesn't talk all that much, but she can really look at people . . .

## VARIATIONS

*Silly:* As above; Pyewacket rides on her shoulders and makes (somewhat simplistic) telepathic wisecracks about things.

*Weird:* As above; Pyewacket hides in her backpack, especially during classes, and is less opinionated.

*Darkly Illuminated:* As above, but add Counterspell. Despite her aura of innocence; she's perfectly capable of researching even the darkest spells – though she'd rather not cast them. Pyewacket *always* hides in her backpack, and is scared of any other cats on campus.

## JOE CALDERWOOD: FOOTBALL ENGLISH MAJOR & PART-TIME WEREWOLF

*Point Total:* 100 (Freshthing)  
ST 10, DX 15, IQ 9, HT 13.

*Advantages:* Attractive, Werewolf (can change at will), High Pain Threshold, Charisma +1, Ally Group (the Team)..

*Disadvantages:* Odious Personal Habit (Tells old game stories constantly, -5 points), Major Delusion (Believes supermarket tabloids are truthful), Claustrophobia, Academic Status -2 (freshthing).

*Quirks:* Wants to get a job as a "color" commentator when he graduates; Has secret cravings for dog biscuits; Sheds a lot; Afraid of the ArchDean's cats; Thinks teen romance novels are "literature."

*Skills:* Area Knowledge (IOU)-9, Brawling-14, Carousing-12, Driving (Car)-13, Literature-7, Motorcycle-15, Poetry-8, Running-12, Sports (Football)-14, Survival (IOU)-8, Swimming-14, Tactics-9, Throwing-15, Writing-8.

Joe is the typical football hero – except for that little problem with howling at the moon and needing to shave about three times a day. After a run-in with the local dog-catcher, he's got his doggie tags, at least. First time the pound had seen a blond, blue-eyed wolf, though.

In appearance, he's a standard quarterback, if one discounts the hair – tall, well-built and usually with a cheerleader or two hanging off each arm. Joe is 18, and is majoring in English (well, sort of).

*Role Models:* Joe Namath, Lassie, Rin Tin Tin.

*Typical dialogue:* ". . . and after he fumbled the pass two minutes into the second quarter . . . say, are you asleep?"

## VARIATIONS

*Silly:* Joe's been known to shift forms on the field, if it's tactically advantageous.

*Weird:* As above.

*Darkly Illuminated:* As above, but replace "teen romances" quirk with secret fears about the times when the full moon forces his change, and he can't quite remember what he did all night . . . or where the blood spots on his T-shirt came from.



## LORIEL DEFOREST: PHYS-ED MAJOR/YRTH ELF/MARTIAL ARTIST

*Point Total:* 200 (Gradthing)  
ST 8, DX 14, IQ 14, HT 10.

*Advantages:* Animal Empathy, Elf (Combat Reflexes, Charisma +1, Magical Aptitude 1, Musical Ability +2, Unaging).

*Disadvantages:* Poor, Racial Code of Honor (for elegant behavior, -10 points), Racial Sense of Duty (to nature, -15 points), Kleptomania.

*Quirks:* Acts without thinking much; Always wears her epee; Touchy about her ears; Has a short fuse on her temper; Likes to swing on ropes and yodel.

*Skills:* Acrobatics-15, Animal Handling-15, Area Knowledge (IOU)-15, Artist-13, Bard-14, Bow-15, Carousing-11, Climbing-14, Cooking-13, Dancing-14, Fencing-17, First Aid/TL7-14, Fishing-13, Force Sword-14, Jeweler/TL3-12, Judo-15, Karate-15, Musical Instrument (Recorder)-15, Naturalist-13, Pickpocket-15, Riding (Horse)-17, Running-9, Shortsword-15, Singing-13, Stealth-15, Survival (Woodlands)-12, Survival (IOU)-15, Swimming-14, Throwing-15, Tracking-13, Traps/TL3-12, Veterinary/TL7-15, Language: Elvish-14 (native language), Language: Anglish-12 (the Yrth variant of English), Language: English-12.

*Spells:* (all at skill level 15) Ignite Fire, Create Fire, Seek Water, Purify Water, Create Water, Test Food, Cook, Create Food, Beast-Soothe, Beast Summoning, Beast Speech.

Ms. deForest is an elf from Yrth. (See *GURPS Fantasy*, second edition.) She's still not too sure where she is now, except that if she ever gets her hands on the wizard who cast that Teleport spell . . . She only wanted to get to Megalos in a hurry! It hasn't been all bad, though – once she learned the language, she found out they had all sorts of interesting combat skills she'd never heard of. Now, if she could only figure out why all the students call her Ms. Spock . . .

Loriel is five-foot-five, thin (90 lbs.) and sort of attractive, in a pointy-eared way. While she looks 19, her actual age is about 30, due to her longer lifespan. Her major is Phys. Ed., naturally, and her graduate thesis topic is "Development of a Fencing Technique for Immaterial Energy Blades."

*Role Models:* John Audubon, Bruce Lee and Cyrano de Bergerac.

*Typical dialogue:* "Will you stop staring at my ears, already? Or do you want me to stretch *yours* for you? No, I'm not cute when I'm angry – I'm mean."

## VARIATIONS

*Silly:* As above, *blatantly*.

*Weird:* As above, but tones herself down off-campus, and hides her ears under her hair.

*Darkly Illuminated:* Loriel may be a Dark Elf, harboring a secret hatred of all non-elvish races and plotting to destroy the world while she escapes back to Yrth! (Add Bloodlust and Intolerance: Humans.) Or she could just be very, very out of her element, seeking a way back home that doesn't involve necromancers (see the *IOU in Other Genres* sidebar, p. 93).



## GUIDO (MARION MILBERT): COUP HONOR STUDENT & CAMPUS ENFORCER

*Point Total:* 175 (Senior)

ST 11, DX 14, IQ 14, HT 12.

*Advantages:* Honor Student, Combat Reflexes, High Pain Threshold, Magic Resistance +2, Strong Will +1.

*Disadvantages:* Academic Status -1 (undergrad), Skinny, Reputation -4 (as a dangerous thug, all students, all the time), Ugly Appearance, Secret (he's really wimpy-looking, -10 points, turns into -20 point Enemies), Code of Honor (thug), Stubbornness.

*Quirks:* Hates being "himself"; Planning on going into law; Cultivates a New Jersey accent (he's really from Iowa); Doesn't like using guns; Takes pride in his work.

*Skills:* Acting-21, Administration-13, Area Knowledge (IOU)-14, Battlesuit/TL8-13, Blackjack-15, Brawling-15, Boxing-13, Broadsword-13, Demolition/TL7-13, Detect Lies-14, Disguise-20, Driving (Car)-14, Electronic Operations (Security Systems)/TL7-14, Fast Draw (Blackjack)-15, Fast Draw (Knife)-15, Forgery/TL7-12, Guns/TL7-16, Holdout-14, Interrogation-13, Intimidation-18, Judo-13, Karate-15, Knife-15, Knife Throwing-14, Law-12, Lockpicking/TL7-14, Poisons-12, Psychology-13, Running-10, Shadowing-13, Stealth-14, Streetwise-13, Survival (IOU)-14, Swimming-14, Tactics-12, Traps/TL7-14.

Marion Milbert, more commonly known on campus as "Guido," is a senior Honors student in COUP, majoring in Dirty Tricks. When in grade school, Marion was a wimpy, picked-on, little kid. Since he had a great interest in acting and disguises, he invented the "Guido" persona when he switched schools. He never had problems again.

In his natural state, Marion is 5'7" and weighs 123 pounds. As "Guido," though, he appears 6'2", weighing in somewhere between a refrigerator and a Mack truck. To reinforce his role, Marion has been working out since age 12, which is why his attributes are so high, relative to his actual size. He's rather annoyed that he never seems to put on weight, though - must be one of those metabolic things.

*Role Models:* Mack the Knife and Godzilla.

*Typical dialogue:* "This is going to hurt you more than it hurts me. A lot more..."

### VARIATIONS

Guido is essentially the same in all versions of the campus; add Sadism and Bully for the Darkly Illuminated character.

## SARAH HOLDEN: JOURNALISM MAJOR/CAMPUS REPORTER

*Point Total:* 150 (Junior)

ST 9, DX 10, IQ 14, HT 11

*Advantages:* Attractive, Acute Hearing +1, Acute Vision +1, Charisma +1, Empathy, ESP Power Level 8 (includes Danger Sense), Intuition, Strong Will +1, Voice, Rapier Wit.



*Disadvantages:* Academic Status -1 (Undergrad), Lives on Campus, Curious, Impulsiveness, Overconfidence, Stubbornness.

*Quirks:* Code Of Honor: Keep quotes straight, don't misspell names, get the story no matter what; The people (and she) have a right to know the facts; Locked doors are hiding a story; Always carries 2-3 cameras, a tape recorder and a bug or two; Pretends she doesn't have ESP.

*Skills:* Acting-13, Area Knowledge (IOU)-14, Bard-16, Bicycling-11, Brawling-11, Carousing-11, Clairaudience-13, Clairvoyance-13, Climbing-10, Computer Operation/TL7-13, Detect Lies-17, Diplomacy-15, Disguise-14, Electronic Operations (Security Systems)/TL7-14, Electronic Operations (Sensors)/TL7-14, Fast Draw (Camera)-11, Fast-Talk-14, Forensics/TL7-11, Forgery/TL7-12, Holdout-14, Interrogation-14, Lip Reading-13, Lockpicking/TL7-13, Mathematics-12, Performance-15, Photography/TL7-16, Precognition-14, Psychology-16, Psychometry-13, Research-13, Running-8, Savoir-Faire-15, Shadowing-13, Stealth-10, Streetwise-12, Survival (IOU)-17, Tracking-13, Traps/TL7-14, Writing-14, Language: English-14, Language: Spanish-12, Language: Japanese-12, Language: Russian-12.

Sarah is a gung-ho reporter-in-training who wants to grow up to be a big-name muckraking telejournalist, or maybe a major newspaper reporter. She talks at about 78 RPM - though not so high-pitched - and chases sources (or suspected sources) all over campus while asking them all the questions they don't want to answer. She also is very good at lurking outside offices and shoving microphones in peoples' faces. She'll go far.

At 5' 7" and 135 lbs., Sarah would make a fair stand-in for Lois Lane, except she's a vivid redhead. On the other hand, it's not at all unlikely she'll meet a tall, dark alien around campus some day...

Ms. Holden is a junior, majoring in Journalism (obviously), and part of the *Daily Illuminator's* staff.

*Role Models:* Woodward and Bernstein, Dan Rather, any writer for the more outrageous supermarket tabloids.

*Typical dialogue:* "This is strictly off the record... can I quote you on that?"

### VARIATIONS

*Silly:* As above, but add a -5 point Odious Personal Habit: Never Stops Interviewing People. She also shows little sign of self-preservation, having the -10 point Delusion: Reporters Are Immune to Events They Report.

*Weird:* As written.

*Darkly Illuminated:* Reporters often find out lots of things other people would rather weren't known...

## JOHNATHAN LIRDEN, III: BUSINESS MAJOR/SUPER-RICH KID

*Point Total:* 100 (Freshthing)

ST 9, DX 10, IQ 13, HT 10.

*Advantages:* Social Status +2, Multimillionaire +1, Language Talent +2, Voice, Reputation +2 (Big spender).

*Disadvantages:* Acrophobia, Cowardice, Laziness, Academic Status -2 (freshthing).

*Quirks:* Lets Jeeves do it; Spends a lot of time on his yacht;



Never speaks Russian if he can help it; Hates soft drinks; Always wears a suit.

**Skills:** Accounting-10, Acting-12, Administration-12, Area Knowledge (Boston)-12, Area Knowledge (IOU)-12, Bard-13, Boating-9, Carousing-10, Computer Operation/TL7-12, Detect Lies-11, Diplomacy-13, Driving (Car)-10, Economics-11, Fast-Talk-12, Law-10, Leadership-11, Merchant-15, Navigation/TL7-10, Politics-13, Psychology-12, Savoir-Faire-13, Seamanship/TL7-12, Survival (IOU)-11, Swimming-10, Language: English-13, Language: French-13, Language: German-13, Language: Japanese-13, Language: Russian-13.

Johnathan is the typical spoiled rich kid, with a taste for yachts, expensive cars and big parties with the right people. He just wishes that, when his parents died in a car accident last year, he hadn't found out that their booming business (alfalfa sprout-flavored ice cream) was originally supposed to be a front – they were spies for the KGB, until they hit it big-time in the land of opportunity.

In appearance, J. Lirden the Third is the average preppy, though a trifle on the heavy side (his chef is *very* good). Of course, his clothing is much more expensive than the average preppy's, but since he prefers the understated look, this isn't obvious. He's majoring in Business, though not working very hard at it (or anything else). Fortunately, a sizable monthly contribution to the University keeps his grades up . . .

Unlike most of the other peons, Lirden can afford just about anything he needs or wants. It need only be available *some-where*, for money. Illegal equipment may be harder to get, though – he doesn't really have the connections for it, though he can afford good enough lawyers to keep him out of trouble if he gets caught with something he shouldn't have . . . probably.

**Role Models:** John D. Rockefeller, Donald Trump and Howard Hughes.

**Typical dialogue:** "Oh, Jeeves . . . would you mind terribly taking care of the rampaging Tyrannosaurus . . . yes, there'll be a little something extra on your next paycheck."

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** Johnathan makes money from the most improbable things without trying; Jeeves is a classic English butler, and even goes to classes with his master, taking notes (and tests) for him.

**Weird:** As written.

**Darkly Illuminated:** Has Enemy: KGB, and his parents' fortune probably originated in substances less legal than ice cream. He daydreams of becoming a robber baron, and the term "hostile takeover" makes him smile toothily. Jeeves looks like an ex-wrestler.

## OG THE EIDETIC CAVEMAN: HISTORY MAJOR/RESEARCH SUBJECT

**Point Total:** 100 (Freshthing)

ST 14, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 12.

**Advantages:** Eidetic Memory (2 levels.)

**Disadvantages:** Primitive (-6 Tech Levels), Sense of Duty (friends), Academic Status -2 (Freshthing), Impulsiveness, Struggling, Unattractive.

**Quirks:** Always carries his club; Has a decidedly *non*-primitive sense of humor; Tells Nean-



derthal jokes a lot; Always refers to himself in the third person; Likes cafeteria food.

**Skills:** Anthropology-10, Archaeology-10, Area Knowledge (IOU)-12, Axe/Mace (club)-13, Brawling-12, Camouflage-13, Climbing-10, Cooking-7, Fast Draw (club)-11, Fishing-12, Gesture-12, History-10, Intimidation-11, Jumping-11, Running-9, Scrounging-12, Spear-11, Stealth-12, Survival (Plains)-11, Survival (IOU)-11, Swimming-11, Throwing-10, Tracking-12, Two-handed Club-11, Language: Prehistoric Grunts-11, Language: English-11.

Og is currently an Ancient History major in C.T.H.U.L.H.U. In his pre-college years, he was a prehistoric member of the Tribe of Larh. About to meet an unpleasant demise underneath a dying woolly mammoth, Og managed to hang onto a fleeing C.T.H.U.L.H.U. student long enough for the temporal flux field to drag them *both* back to campus. Og being the quick study that he is, he picked up a few simple phrases ("Drop gun or Og *hit*," "This button make time-machine go," "Og borrow paper?" and "Got number-two pencil?"), and convinced various students and faculty that he should be given a scholarship (he makes a great research subject, too). It only took him another month to learn to read and write.

Og is about 18, and a couple of inches above six feet. He weighs in at 185 pounds, and can be readily identified by the club that he always carries around. While Og isn't necessarily the *brightest* student, he does have a sense of humor, and often wears shirts reading: "Co-Ed Nude Mud Wrestling – La Brea Tar Pits, 40,000 B.C."

**Role Models:** Og doesn't have any role models – he's a prototype.

**Typical dialogue:** "No, not what you say before. Og got *good* memory – 'oral tradition.' Og hear you say . . ."

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** As above.

**Weird:** If time-travel still exists, so does Og, but he's learning to use the first person pronoun.

**Darkly Illuminated:** Og is *severely* out of his depth, and knows it. He's hoping to learn enough about the outside world to survive, and then he'll go far, *far* away from the University. Till then, he's just trying to keep his head down and avoid drawing attention to himself.

## JOHN SMITH: PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR/STRANDED ALIEN PSI-MUSICIAN

**Point Total:** 100 (Freshthing)

ST 9, DX 9, IQ 15, HT 10.

**Advantages:** ESP Power Level 5, Psychokinesis Power Level 21 (Uncontrollable, Fickle: 14-, Needs 1-hour recharge), Autoteleport Power Level 5 (Single skill, Emergencies only, No "castling," Uncontrollable), Telepathy Power Level 7 (Half-power without 1 hour preparation, 1-hour re-charge), Unusual Background (15 points, High-TL alien).

**Disadvantages:** Ugly, Academic Status -2 (freshthing), Enemy (USAF, appears on 6-).

**Quirks:** Hums weird tunes; Homesick; Ignorant of Earth customs; Sort of spaced-out; Thinks milk is poisonous.



**Skills:** Acting-14, Area Knowledge (IOU)-14, Area Knowledge (Milky Way)-14, Autoteleport-12, Carousing-11, Clairaudience-12, Clairvoyance-12, Cryokinesis-12, Disguise-13, Fast-Talk-14, Mental Blow-12, Mind Shield-12, Mindwipe-12, Musical Instrument (Psiharp)-14, Precognition-12, Psi Sense-12, Psychometry-12, Pyrokinesis-12, Savoir-Faire-15, Sleep-12, Streetwise-13, Survival (IOU)-13, Telekinesis-13, Telereceive-12, Telesend-14, Xenology-12, Language: Galactic Five-15 (native language), Language: English-13.

Mr. Smith is an alien psi-musician from Betelgeuse XVII. On a lark in his saucer, he buzzed the Earth and took a lucky missile hit from a surprised F-15. Fortunately, the saucer crash-landed just off Cape Cod, and he made his way to IOU, hiding his violet-tinged skin under instant-tanning lotion, and his hair under a knitted cap. He still looks a bit odd, though. Hiding out from the Air Force while looking for a way to get back home, he found the University and decided it was a good hiding place – he almost blends in here.

At least “John” salvaged his Tool. This is a mutable alien device he can mind-shape into anything he needs – usually it’s a psi-amplifier (+5 to power) for his performances. (The abilities of the Tool are the reason for the 15-point Unusual Background.) Changing the Tool’s current function requires a successful Telesend skill roll, and takes three seconds for the Tool to reconfigure.

Since the Tool can duplicate Earth money quite easily, John has little to worry about on that score, but he is trying to stay inconspicuous, in case those unfriendly people with the missiles are still looking for him. (Furthermore, the ArchDean is not noted for accepting bills with the same serial numbers, even for different semesters – duplicating too much money, especially on-campus, might annoy her.)

In appearance, John Smith is fairly human, except for the naturally-purple skin, orange and green-striped hair and facial features that resemble those of a Pekinese dog (minus the fur and wet nose). He looks about 19, though he’s a bit older (he never was very good at remembering those temporal compensation factors . . .). He’s also large for a human male – an inch under six feet in height, and weighing in at 200 lbs. John is majoring in Psychology, mostly because nobody can tell if he really knows what he’s talking about, and everybody is afraid to call him on it. Besides, it’s a snap for someone who can read the professors’ minds (such as they are).

**Role Model:** Ford Prefect (from *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*).

**Typical dialogue:** “Uh, do you *really* use mustard on hot dogs? I mean, I thought that’s what we used for fuel in stardrives. Well, it was *some* kind of yellow glop. I’m a musician, not an engineer!”

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** As above; keeps *almost* getting home, but pulled back to the University because of over-due book fines or other financial foul-ups.

**Weird:** Remove “Ignorant of Earth customs” and add “Nervous around people in military uniforms, army jets, etc.”

**Darkly Illuminated:** John has to hide his features a little better, but he’s still pretty ugly; add Secret: Psionic Alien and Enemy: US Government – they found his saucer, and now they’re looking for the pilot. Fortunately (?), a Dark campus has *many* uses for a psi-musician, and some teachers will want to protect John for their own reasons; add Secret Advantage: Patron (various Faculty).

## SWOMI TIFT: PHYSICS STUDENT/GIRL GENIUS/MAD SCIENTIST

**Point Total:** 125 (Sophomore)

ST 8, DX 8, IQ 18, HT 8.

**Advantages:** Eidetic Memory (1 level), Beautiful Appearance, Gadgeteer, Gizmo (× 1).

**Disadvantages:** Absent-mindedness, Pacifism: Self-defense Only, Academic Status -1 (undergrad), Compulsive Behavior (Reading UseNet News).

**Quirks:** Shy; Wears glasses but doesn’t need them; Likes machines better than people; Forgets to do homework (and take exams); Always complains about how primitive everything is.

**Skills:** Alchemy/TL9-15, Area Knowledge (IOU)-18, Armory/TL9-17, Astronomy/TL7-12, Beam Weapons (Laser)/TL9-10, Biochemistry/TL9-15, Chemistry/TL9-16, Computer Operation/TL7-14, Computer Programming/TL9-17, Driving (Car)-13, Electronics (Computers)/TL9-18, Electronics (other)/TL9-15, Engineer (Robotics)/TL9-17, Engineer (Mechanical)/TL9-16, Engineer (Vehicles)/TL9-16, Geology/TL7-16, Lockpicking/TL7-17, Mathematics-17, Mechanic (Automobile)/TL9-17, Mechanic (Small Electric Motors)/TL7-17, Mechanic (Small Gadgets)/TL9-18, Metallurgy/TL9-16, Navigation/TL7-16, Nuclear Physics/TL9-17, Physics/TL9-17, Piloting (any)/TL9-12, Research-17, Science!-13, Scrounging-18, Survival (IOU)-17, Weird Science-15.

Ms. Tift is the archetypical supergenius scientist gadget freak – wimpy, absent-minded and socially incompetent. But she can make all *sorts* of gadgets the world isn’t ready for: laser pistols, stunners, anti-grav vehicles, time machines . . . She hasn’t quite invented FTL drive, but it’s only a matter of time. (As a small child, Swomi swiped the repair manual for a UFO that had broken down in her backyard, hence her unusual TL9 skills.)

She doesn’t fit the classical superscientist mold in two ways, however: first, she’s female, and second, beautiful. Of course, being a typical WUSE student, she doesn’t think of herself that way. Swomi is about 5’ 8” tall, 130 lbs. and age 19. She’s majoring in Physics, but is also interested in *all* the science and engineering disciplines.

**Role Models:** Albert Einstein, Doc Savage and Rube Goldberg.

**Typical dialogue:** “I can fix that for you. Really.”

## VARIATIONS

Essentially the same in all versions. The Dark Swomi is figuring out that if you rule the world, you get to build all *sorts* of neat stuff! Why, the space program would be *so* advanced if only she had control of it . . . (Replace “Forgets to do homework” and “Shy” quirks with “Likes to run techie projects from behind the scenes,” and “Always puts a hardware or software ‘back door’ into anything she works on.”)



# GENERIC STAFF

This section gives average characters and descriptions for a couple of "spear carrier" NPC types likely to be encountered around campus. If the PCs insist on repeated interactions with a single character, the GM should elaborate on these basic templates as whim dictates.



**Disadvantages:** Academic Status -1 (staff), Duty (to University, quite often, not hazardous, -5 points), Illiterate, Pacifism: Self-defense only, Primitive (TL4).

**Quirks:** Just doing their job; Don't take bribes; Don't take notice of anything outside their work.

**Skills:** Agronomy/TL4-15, Agronomy/TL7-14, Area Knowledge (IOU)-18, Botany/TL4-15, Botany/TL7-13, Professional Skill (Groundskeeping)-17, Survival (IOU)-17, Language: Sahudese-11, Language: English-8.

Commonly seen on campus during the day, carefully pruning shrubs and trimming the grass, the vaguely Asiatic campus groundskeepers are all decidedly similar in appearance, enough so that it takes a Vision roll at -6 to tell them apart. It's also hard to tell where they live – around dusk, they all disappear into the hedge maze in the Avant Gardens, to reappear from there the next morning. Rumors state that there's a secret worldgate somewhere in the maze, which the gardeners use to commute to work, but no one has ever discovered it. Several of the more adventurous – and dumber – students have gotten lost in the maze for several days, before being rescued by the groundskeepers.

One thing is clear: the groundskeeping staff isn't from anywhere on present-day Earth, though they appear human enough. They speak a language with a superficial resemblance to several modern-day Asian tongues, including Japanese, Korean and Mandarin Chinese, but it doesn't match any of these very closely.

In fact, all the gardeners commute from Yrth (the world described in *GURPS Fantasy*), from the nation of Sahud. Their culture is rather strange, but is unlikely to surface in on-campus interactions. (For the morbidly curious, there's a great deal of information on the Sahudese in "Sahudese Fire Drill," in *GURPS Fantasy Adventures*, as well as the basic information in *GURPS Fantasy*.)

The gardeners are only interested in doing their jobs, which consist of tending the grounds and protecting the plants from the students and the students from the plants. They will, if absolutely necessary, converse in English with an extreme accent (probably to keep people from trying to talk to them). The rest of the time, they work quietly and ignore the destruction that often surrounds them – then carefully restore the lawns and shrubs afterward.

**Typical dialogue:** "Keep off grass. Not feed."

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** As written.

**Weird:** Similar to Silly, though some of the gardeners seem to have other skills, including martial arts and spells – especially Plant College spells. They speak English with a skill of 9, and have much less of an accent.

**Darkly Illuminated:** Rather than being from Yrth, the gardeners seem to be from some unknown, remote part of Earth, possibly in the Himalayas. They still all look alike – maybe they're clones. They lack the silly accent, and they probably sleep in hidden dormitories below the Avant Gardens. They speak English with a skill of 11, though they rarely use it. Campus inhabitants will often feel that the groundskeepers are watching them covertly. Many of the "gardeners" have ninja-like skills, combat skills and spellcasting or psionic abilities, though these will rarely be in evidence.

## CAMPUS SECURITY

ST 10, DX 11, IQ 9, HT 10.

**Advantages:** Legal Enforcement Powers (only on campus, 5 points).

**Disadvantages:** Unluckiness, Gullibility, Cowardice, Duty (to IOU, extremely hazardous), Enemy (Monster of the Week, quite often), Academic Status -1 (staff).

**Quirks:** Keeps looking over his shoulder or up at the sky; Mild fear of loud noises (which usually mean something bad is about to happen); Trigger-happy.

**Skills:** Detect Lies-9, Guns (pistol)-12, Beam Weapons (laser pistol)-10, Brawling-9, Karate-9, Judo-9.

The campus cops are incompetent, dumb and generally useless, but they do neatly fill the ecological niche of "monster fodder." They can also serve to harass PCs with silly questions while investigating something – especially if the solution to the crime is in plain sight. One important purpose of Campus Security is to convince PCs that *they* had better solve whatever problem is currently threatening the University – before Campus Security makes it any worse. If not pre-empted, Security's solution to any problem is to get bigger weapons. And they aren't very good with them...

Most Campus Security members who survive more than a few days in the job also have Paranoia, since everyone is out to get them! Surviving officers usually develop Combat Reflexes and higher combat skills. (To have survived that long, they also typically have either Luck or Danger Sense!)

**Typical dialogue:** Bang! Bang! Zap! "Stop or we'll shoot!"

## VARIATIONS

**Silly:** For reasons never adequately explained, the standard uniform for members of the elite campus security force is a crimson tunic with snappy black pants (which never seem to hold a crease well). On the front and back of the tunic is a bold white pattern of concentric circles.

**Weird:** The uniform is maroon, with a small insignia of concentric white circles on the shoulder (which, for some odd reason, is where they often get shot). Raise average IQ to 10, and DX and HT to 12. Drop the Cowardice and Gullibility disadvantages, and add Laziness.

**Darkly Illuminated:** The uniform is a dark maroon, with a pyramid insignia patch on the shoulder. About half the force is "green," and is the same as the Weird version; the remainder are fairly experienced, with some individuals being very formidable – possibly COUP graduates. Some of the latter masquerade as incompetents.

## SAHUDESE GARDENERS

ST 11, DX 15, IQ 11, HT 13.

**Advantages:** Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense, Strong Will +6, Unfazeable.

# PLACES

**T**hree students lounged around the statue of the Founder, all in advanced stages of boredom. Four in the afternoon on the Thursday before classes start will do that – too early to party, too late to be sleeping in and all one's books have already been bought or sold out.

"Where ya wanna go?" Lorie asked, aiming the question somewhere skywards.

Marcus sighed. "I dunno. You hungry? We could get Mexican food."



"If you call bean-sprout nachos Mexican . . ." Gillian said doubtfully. Her cat, Pyewacket, made hair-ball noises and hid his face against her side. She suggested, "Maybe we could get some popcorn and feed the squirrels in the Gardens?"

"Last time we did that, we lost five hours on that 'short-cut' Marcus found," Loriel objected. "How about the Mall?"

With a shudder, Marcus shook his head. "They're still doing back-to-school sales there. No way."

A bewildered-looking freshman paused, looking at a map. "Excuse me," he said, "but do any of you know where the Botany building is? I need to add a class."

The trio perked up. Showing new students around campus was usually good for some entertainment.

"Sure!" Marcus said. "We'll **take** you there! Ah, I hope you're not afraid of heights, and don't have any allergies . . ."

"No - why?"

Loriel and Gillian giggled, chorusing, "No reason."

## BUILDINGS AND LANDMARKS

### THE PENT

The "center" of campus is its Pent, a five-sided expanse of stone with the statue of the University's Founder in the center. Trees are planted in small circular pits at regular intervals around the edges, and there are several stone benches placed in orderly patterns. Overlooking the Pent are the Main Building, the Library, the Metaphysics building, the Student Union and the Escher Art Building. If anyone is curious enough to measure the angles of the Pent's corners, he finds that each one is 90 degrees.

### THE MAIN BUILDING

The center of campus is the Main Building, where most Administration offices are located. This majestic building is impressively large, with proud neo-Gothic architecture. Jutting up from it, only slightly off-center, is the Clock Tower (see below).

Inside, the place is a maze - the main hallway is clear enough and the main doors can *usually* be found, but the countless side corridors, stairs, hallways, unmarked offices and elevators ensure that any so foolhardy as to venture into the administrative warren will be lost in short order. Even those with Absolute Direction (or its enhanced version, Three-Dimensional Spatial Sense, from *GURPS Space*) will become confused, as the halls seem to continue on and on and on, looping around somehow until they connect into themselves. Only a full eidetic can navigate safely, and will get a headache from it.

The ArchDean, with several years of experience in the building, doesn't seem to have any problems, possibly because she carries the only known N-dimensional map of the structure.

Many of the "fire-escape" style stairways lead past apparent basements to the lowest levels of the Main Building, where the architectural style abruptly changes (brick is used a lot more, for one thing), and where the dust on the floors is marked only by the footprints of Things Students Don't Want To Meet. These lower levels connect to the steam tunnels. From the layout of the building, it can be assumed that, by some mischance, these lower levels are actually a *former* Main Building, which somehow slipped or was thrust beneath the surface of the Earth, and built over. (A successful Architecture roll will reveal that the Clock Tower is actually built in the same style as these eerie lower levels.)

## MAPPING THE CAMPUS

A sample campus map can be found on p. 80, but the GM may wish to use one from a local university, or make up his own. In any case, no printed map of the campus will be accurate for long, since some of the buildings move about, paths change, and, of course, many buildings suffer explosive deconstruction.

Students get a map in the student handbook. If the GM wants to give players a copy of this map, the best way to proceed is to make a photocopy of the real map on the worst copying machine available, spill a lot of coffee on it, then copy it again, reducing it to postage-stamp size. Somewhat better maps can be obtained for \$5 and up in the campus bookstore.

The only *accurate* maps of the campus are contained within highly-classified files buried somewhere in THE computer's massive databases. As a rule, only the ArchDean and the deans have access to this information, since it includes all the secret tunnels, labs and storage vaults in and under the campus.



### THE FOUNDER

In the center of the Pent, a large stone statue rests atop a five-sided marble pedestal - time, wind, rain, pigeons and the depredations of frat pranks have worn the statue into a vaguely humanoid shape with a distressing suggestion of facial tentacles. Well, maybe it always did have tentacles. There is a simple brass plate at the base of the statue, which bears a nearly-indecipherable word: "Yarblek." The meaning of this word has been lost in time, and none of the University's personal records seem to refer to it. Radioactive dating techniques indicate the statue is older than the universe.

## THE AVANT GARDENS

One of the most pastoral areas on campus (if a bit exotic at times), the Avant Gardens are the masterwork of an army of dedicated Sahudese gardeners (see p. 69). They will take offense if anyone damages a blade of grass or disturbs a piece of white gravel, and go after the miscreants with gardening tools, shuriken, katanas and dragon-headed flamethrowers.

Despite the gardeners' militant approach to peace and harmony in nature, the Gardens are popular with artists, photographers and trysting couples.

## THE AVANT GUARDSMAN

Stationed at the heart of the Avant Gardens is the Avant Guardsman, a fire-breathing dragoon (the product of a thesis project of a grad student in Phlogiston Chemistry at the turn of the 17th century).

## GENERIC BUILDINGS

Many buildings on campus look alike – particularly those assigned to WUSE, the College of Metaphysics and the higher-entropy areas of COUP. To aid in moving things back in after an explosion and building-replacement, the insides are just as predictable as the outsides (at least at first; there's no telling what will have been added in a few weeks).

Most buildings on campus are three stories high, and have at least one basement with connections (usually sealed by ominously-thick steel doors) into the steam tunnels. Roof access is typical.

Classrooms are on the first and second floors, have twenty to twenty-five student desks in them, one teacher's desk and about an acre of whiteboard; anywhere from thirty to forty human-sized entities can fit into a room before the air conditioning *really* starts to break down.

Most chairthings' offices are also on the first floor – there will be one entry-room (complete with secretary) which has doors into the departmental heads' private office and the center of operations for the department (with coffee machine nook, mailboxes, bulletin board, student records, teacher's records and copying machines/enchanted pens/scribes).

The third floor is usually devoted to teachers' personal offices. Nearly all of the schools are short on space, so untenured professors will be doubled up, either timesharing tiny offices or actually dividing up a larger one with half-walls. In very small – and unprofitable – schools or departments, all the teachers and even the chairthing may be crammed into the same few rooms.

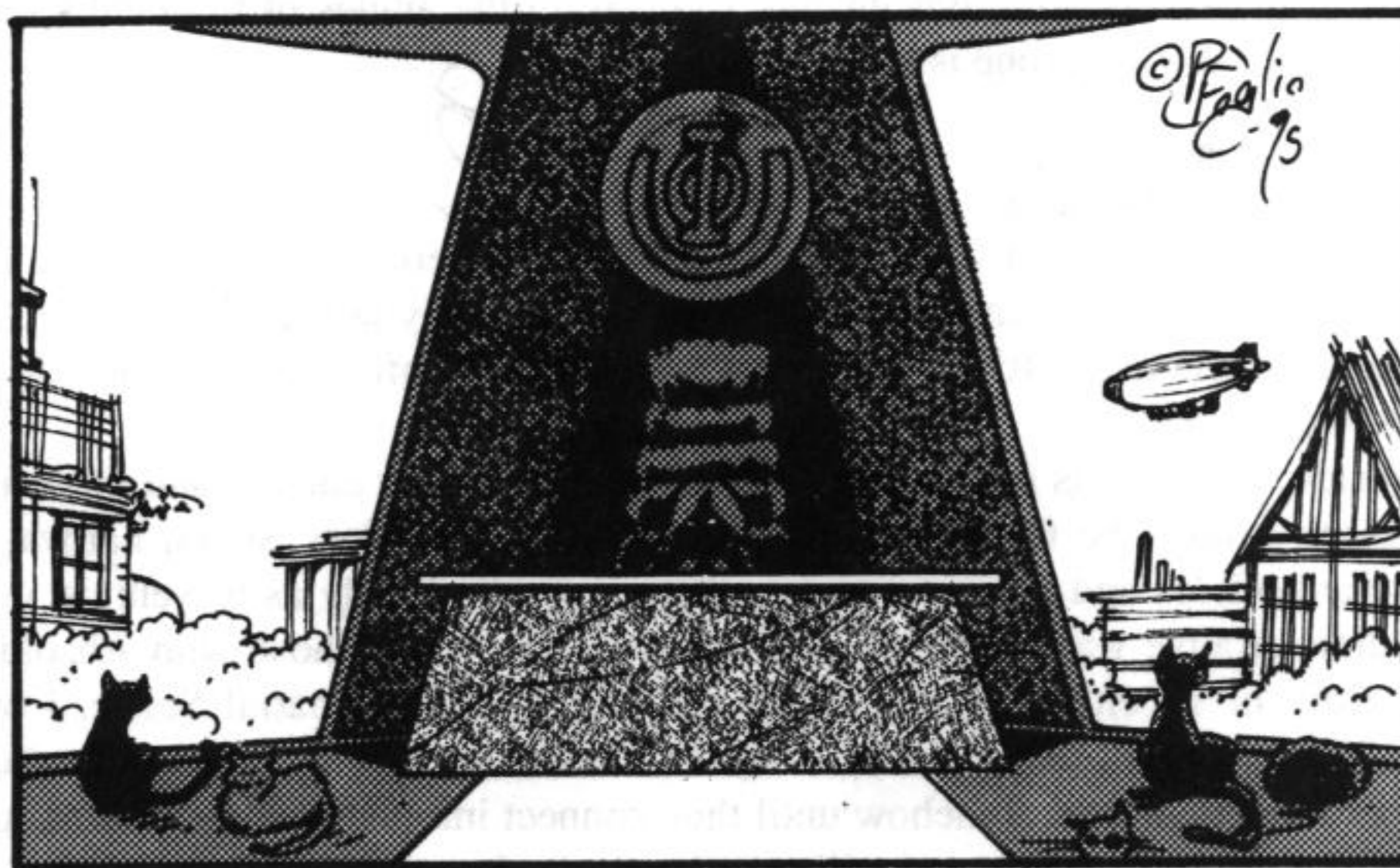
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## THE CLOCK TOWER

In contrast to the rest of the Main Building, the Clock Tower is a simple, square, brick structure, somewhat off-center of the middle of the Main Building. It has four digital faces, one pointing in each direction, and all with different times. Exactly which time is accurate, if any, requires a Survival (IOU) roll to discern – especially since the faces have been known to display unrecognizable symbols. The Clock Tower also has hourly (or so) chimes, which are rarely in sync with *any* of the times it displays.

The top of the Tower is reached via a single elevator off the main hallway, or by a *very* long and *very* creaky wrought-iron spiral staircase. These are the only ways to get to the ArchDean's office, directly beneath the clock-faces – it seems to be shielded against magical and even psionic means of teleportation, while uninvited flyers suffer mysterious and devastating turbulence (astral visitors are equally restricted). It should be noted that the elevator is subject to change without notice, from a creaking cargo-lift, to a fairly normal elevator car, to a sleek bullet-shape, to an antigravity lift. Furthermore, it is always out of order whenever someone the ArchDean would rather not see wishes to visit her.

Rumor has it that the elevator tends to *fail* when carrying someone the ArchDean particularly dislikes, plummeting several stories and crashing into the sub-basement. These rumors are sparked by the occasional unexplained appearance of elevator buttons with negative numbers – they currently go down to -4. (Once in a while, some of the buttons will be labelled with *imaginary* numbers, dates, or curious labels like "Now," "Strawberry" or "Fuchsia." So far, no one has been brave enough to try them. Or at least no one has returned to report trying them . . .)



At the top of the Tower is the ArchDean's office – the elevator doors open upon a vast expanse of pale gray carpeting, pristine despite the numerous cats lounging about. At the far end of the anomalously-large room is the ArchDean's imposing desk and leather executive's chair. While there is obviously an elevator at one end of the room, the ArchDean's desk at the other and two windows to either side, the exterior of the Clock Tower sports *four* sizable windows. Go figure . . .

## THE COLLEGE OF METAPHYSICS BUILDING

This is the main building for the College of Metaphysics, and the headquarters of the college's dean. There are, of course, several other buildings nearby which are devoted to Metaphysics classes (though the Alchemy department's

building is at the extreme edge of campus, for obvious reasons). This is the only building on campus which has withstood numerous explosions in its history with little major damage – just a touch of blistered paint, or some doors and windows to be replaced.

This four-story (plus uncounted basement levels) structure is yet another example of five-wall architecture, as well as Early Lovecraft decor, complete with gargoyles carved to parody various political figures. The odd bas-relief carvings on the walls suggest writing, beckoning figures or horrific creatures, depending on the time of day and the angle of viewing. Strangely, the Metaphysics building always appears to be in shadow, and – even on the clearest nights – a faint mist surrounds it after dark. When the entire campus is fog-covered, this can be a real traffic hazard.

## THE LIBRARY

This large building with Corinthian pillars appears to be one of the most normal buildings on campus, at first glance. It is a large, friendly-looking structure – despite the fact that it has no apparent windows – four stories high. Inside, it is *very* large. It initially appears to be a typical modern library, with computer terminals to search the catalogs, and neatly-organized, well-marked shelves and books.

However, the Library has side wings and *many* floors, which cater to different media. Students venturing into the upper stories of the Library, for instance, will discover the microfiche archives, the videotape collection (including the section marked, “Restricted – Faculty Only!”), the CD-ROM section, the holographic records area and the VR “Stairway of Living History.” (Fright Checks are applicable for any unwary student using these stairs to go from one floor to another – it doesn’t help that they are prominently marked with an upward-pointing arrow labeled “History.” It is rarely pleasant to discover one is standing in the middle of the decisive engagement in the Luna Base Civil War and Buffet.) For those who dare to take the gravity-lifts higher, ever more exotic forms of information storage and retrieval may be found, along with ever more exotic Library patrons.

The Library also extends downwards, and in the levels just above the final sub-basements, cuneiform tablets – all neatly filed according to the Dewey Decimal System – are stored. Some adventuresome students claim that going further down will reveal some striking, though primitive, paintings on the walls. Most agree that by the time one is *this* far down, one is too close to the steam tunnels for comfort. Besides, walking down all those stairs in the first place is tiresome.

Side wings contain books (with Tech Levels appropriate to the floor) on Alchemy, Magic, Theology (including 4,762 plus or minus 6.4 copies of the *Principia Discordia* – all different) and one of the few *complete* collections of supermarket tabloids. The last, unfortunately, are occasionally defaced by cryptic notes in the margins. However, many students browse these damaged copies, seeking entries in their professors’ scrawl; one never knows what might provide a hint of some juicy blackmail material. “Rock Star Caught in Poolside Fling with Mystery Figure,” for instance . . .

One wing of the Library connects, on the lower levels, to the lower floors of the Museum. *Which* wing is subject to change without notice.

## THE MUSEUM

This building is connected underground to the Library, and is also across campus, which makes it a good shortcut for students who are late to class. (Unfortunately, due to the confusing natures of *both* buildings, a successful roll against Area Knowledge (IOU) is required to avoid being lost for at least as long

## GENERIC BUILDINGS (CONTINUED)

The roof is rarely used for teaching or office purposes. Most of the time, it merely provides a place to sunbathe illicitly, since students are not supposed to be loitering there. Pigeons, CIA gulls, squirrels and COUP students may also defend their territory.

What is found in the basement will depend on the building’s residents. If there is no sub-basement, then cleaning supplies, storage rooms, fuse boxes and other non-academic stuff will be there, as will entries to the steam tunnels. If there is a sub-basement, or just enough space left over, there may be some overflow from the upper levels. Classrooms and laboratories (especially for classes where sunlight is a problem) show up in basements, as do junior faculty offices and graduate student carrels. Rooms resembling bomb bunkers are also quite common, especially in WUSE.

Supposedly, sub-basements (when present) *only* contain non-academic paraphernalia. So if a student should happen to find interesting locked doors down there, 1) it’s not a classroom or office, 2) it probably belongs to someone who would be upset if it got opened and 3) students shouldn’t be down here in the first place.

## STUDENT SCAB BUILDING

This alternative to the Student Union was sponsored by a group of anarchists. The food is better and cheaper, and the service is better (though the pay is worse for the students employed there). The major drawback to hanging out at the “Scab” is the high likelihood of a food fight escalating into a major war. WUSE and Metaphysics students are the largest two classes of patrons . . .

## STUDENT CONFEDERACY

For the students who seceded from the Union. Enough said. Popular with SCA and C.T.H.U.L.H.U. majors.

## CAMPUS BOOKSTORE

Looking like a miniature version of the Library, the Campus Bookstore sells paper, pens, pencils, calendars, textbooks, lab coats, videotapes and cassette tapes for classes (blank or pre-recorded), snacks, IOU clothing, IOU bumper stickers, IOU umbrellas (especially on rainy days), holiday cards, postcards, envelopes, stamps, campus maps (for numerous campuses, including IOU) and generally everything that a student might need with the sole exception of furniture – all in a single two-story building.

Besides the things that are out and labeled, the Bookstore sells “pre-written” papers and test cheat-sheets, runs student betting pools on anything, and serves as a go-between for students in search of more exotic deals.

They even buy back used textbooks at the end of the semester (provided that the books are still readable, and not missing any pages), for less than a fifth of what the student paid, and only if the book was *not* written by an IOU professor.

Mysteriously, while all used books must be in near-pristine condition to be bought, the ones sold always bear distinct signs of (mis)use.

## THE BOTANY BUILDING

The Botany department's building is a giant tree, looking something like a 15-story oak on steroids (not an unlikely explanation, actually). The actual classrooms are rooms or platforms constructed on the huge plant's limbs, with the chairthing's office in a large hollow portion, about midway up.

The upper sections of the tree, as well as the outer limbs, are too weak to support stable classrooms, offices or labs (though some of the junior faculty and grad students occupy rooms that sway alarmingly in windy weather). The unused areas are popular hiding places for students looking for a quiet, out-of-the-way corner for a little dalliance, or just a good ambush spot. This is somewhat hazardous, however, because these areas are also inhabited by the tree's dryad population (see p. 88).

Students can get to class by climbing ladders or taking the open cargo elevator built against the side of the tree. There is a small door at the base, among the roots, leading into the Botany department's cave-like laboratories. The building-tree itself is tended here, and its roots come through the earthen ceiling to rest in huge vats filled with strange concoctions. (Rumors of human sacrifices here are probably due to the hyperactive imaginations of Hysteria majors.) This is one of the few buildings with no known connections to the steam tunnels.

as taking the long way would have been.) Both the Curator and the Librarian frown on this use of their domains, and will occasionally make things more difficult.

One of the more extensive parts of the museum is its Knight Gallery, where a startlingly large number of suits of armor are kept – or maybe they're knights in stasis. No one's ever asked. (Twice, anyway.) The exhibit starts with a tableau that the students call a “Knight Court,” but the displays quickly become more and more disturbing as the viewer walks down the strangely-twisting corridors of the Gallery.

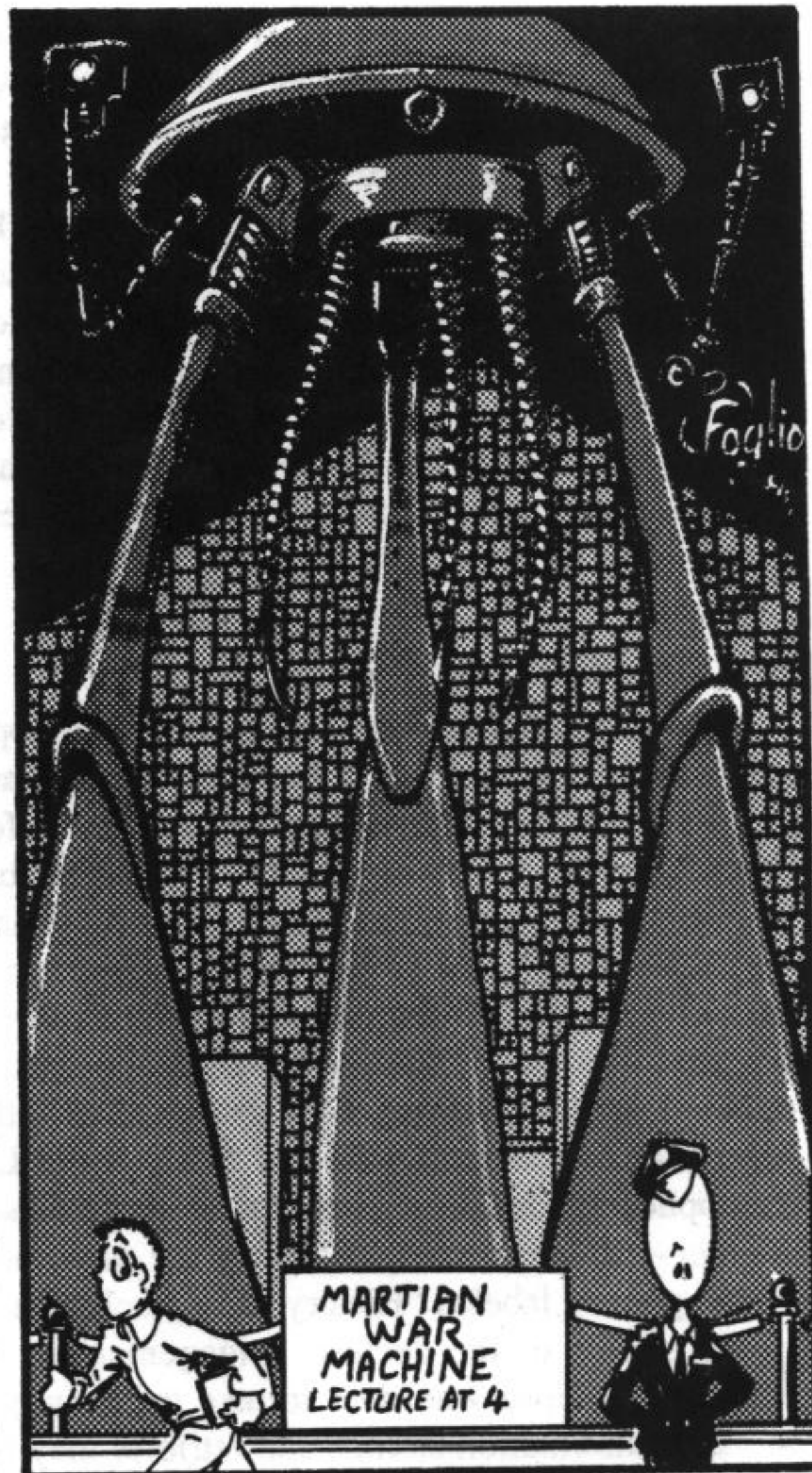
Of potential use to the students are the Flora and Fauna Floors, which boast plant replicas and stuffed animals of many different species – including, if you know where to look, things native only to the campus. The little cards in the displays which give snippets of information

can be invaluable in discovering *anything* about the more esoteric species. (There is a bonus for Research rolls on the topic of Weird Fauna/Flora while in the Museum, up to a +3, but critical failures may necessitate a roll against Survival (IOU) to avoid getting lost for three days or eaten by a model that decided it wanted to be stuffed with *food*.)

Other exhibits change periodically according to the Curator's whim and whether or not he can make anything from showing it on tour, or selling it. These exhibits range from the harmless, to the useful, to the dangerous. Some are enchanted magical items (standard rolls for mages to detect), others are cursed and not a few are both – opening the curse-proof display cases is usually a *bad* idea. Also, the Curator definitely disapproves of people “borrowing” exhibits, and some remarkably life-like mannequins displaying historical costumes bear a startling resemblance to missing students known to have sticky fingers. COUP majors are strongly warned to stay away from the Museum.

## THE PUBLIC TOILET (TEMPORALLY OSCILLATING INTERDIMENSIONAL LIFT WITH ENDOCHRONOSYNCLASTIC TENDENCIES)

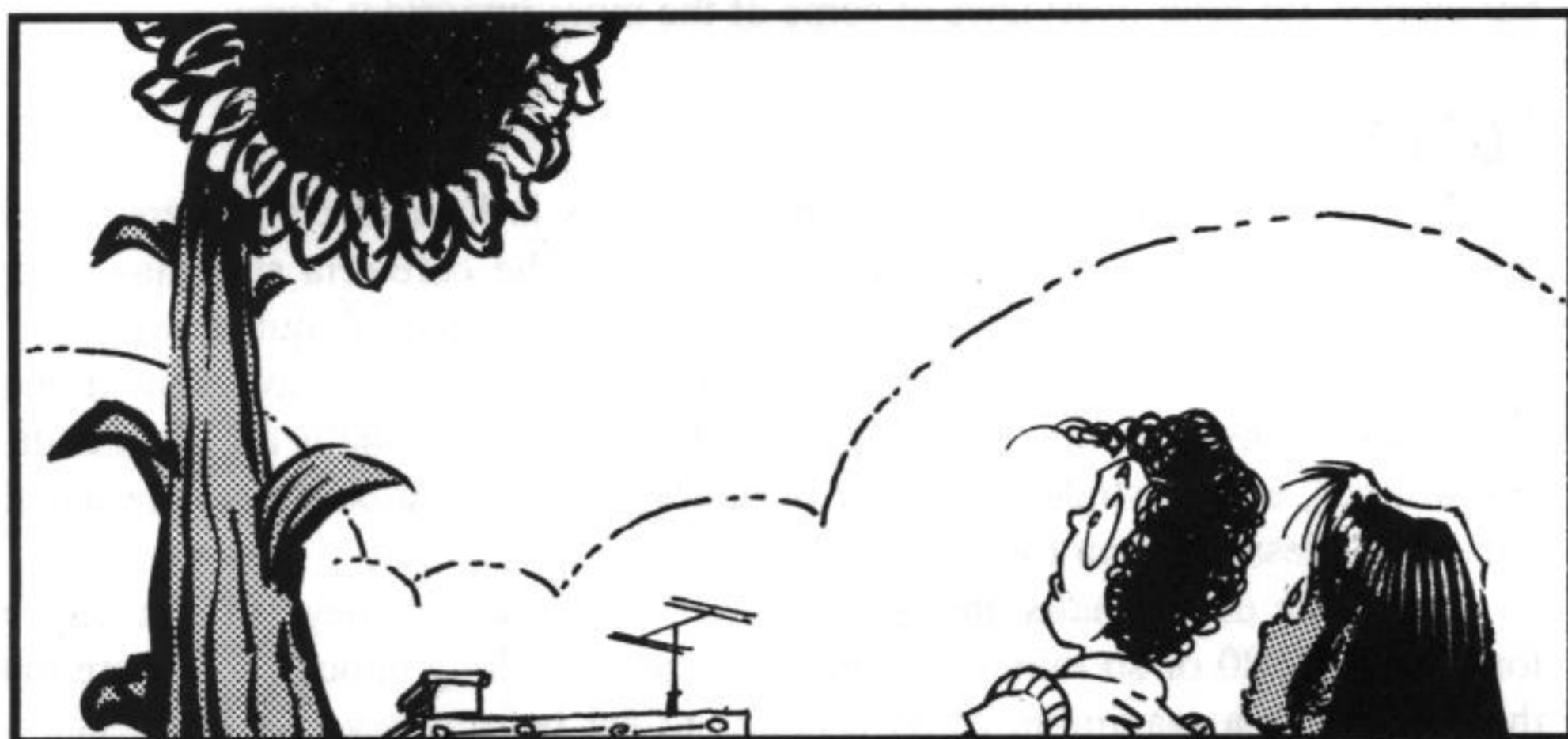
This structure, seemingly a bright blue portable toilet with a flashing blue light atop it, is actually the home and office of Doctor What<sup>7</sup>, and is far, *far* bigger on the inside than it appears. On one side is a placard that states this is an appropriately marked, authorized, potentially dangerous pocket dimension – in six-point type and faded blue ink on faded blue paper.



The TOILET moves around the campus, seemingly at random, but can usually be found in the middle of a wide stretch of greenery next to a sign reading, "Keep off the Grass!" It is always locked, but knocking can sometimes summon one of the C.T.H.U.L.H.U. Deans – especially if one is so fortunate as to catch him during his office hours (which are usually sometime during the Cretaceous Era).

## MADAME SALOME'S PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

No good university would be without a theater to stage drama, musical performances and dance. IOU's Performing Arts Center – named for a particularly successful Illumnus who graduated at the top of the Class of '35 – has a *dozen* theaters, most of them quite small and intimate, used mainly for experimental audience-participation performances. Two theaters are large enough to seat an audience of nearly a thousand people (or whatever). All of them feature up-to-date sound systems, video production facilities and an extensive assortment of stage sets and props. Some of them also have support for impressive special effects, normally designed and executed by WUSE and Metaphysics students with an interest in theater (or at least SPCA majors).



The University is proud of the success of its performers – nearly every showing of every production is sold out, thanks to the art lovers in the student body, faculty and even the surrounding towns. (The Center even has convenient parking for tour buses in the back.) SPCA often has five or even six different productions running at once, and usually offers at least four performances per day of each, to meet the high demand. Needless to say, most of SPCA's profits come from the gate at Madame Salome's (as the PAC is affectionately known to students and Illumni).

Many of the Bimbiras (see p. 87) and Kajones (p. 89) work here – in fact this is the highest concentration on campus.

## DORMS

There are a dozen or so dorms on campus, mostly catering to the underclassthings – older and wiser students generally find apartments, share houses or nest in old refrigerator cartons off campus. Rooms range from tramp-freighter steerage accommodations to palatial suites filled with fine art, expensive stereos and Jacuzzis.

Sometimes the same room will vary from one end of the scale to the other, depending, for example, on how recently the student has paid an installment on his tuition (and how big a bribe was included for the ArchDean). Some teachers and deans are also able to influence the appearance of students' quarters. More of them can influence the building utilities.

## SOLAR POWER PLANT

One of the Botany department's finest creations, this 15-story-tall sunflower perpetually blooms at one end of campus. It is hooked up to a bioelectrical converter, and produces about 30 megawatts during sunny days. Unfortunately, every spring it also produces a great deal of pollution in the form of pollen grains the size of basketballs, and the Botany department has been told that it must "control emissions" or the Solar Power Plant will be chopped down and used for fertilizer. (You don't want to ask what pollinates the Plant . . .)

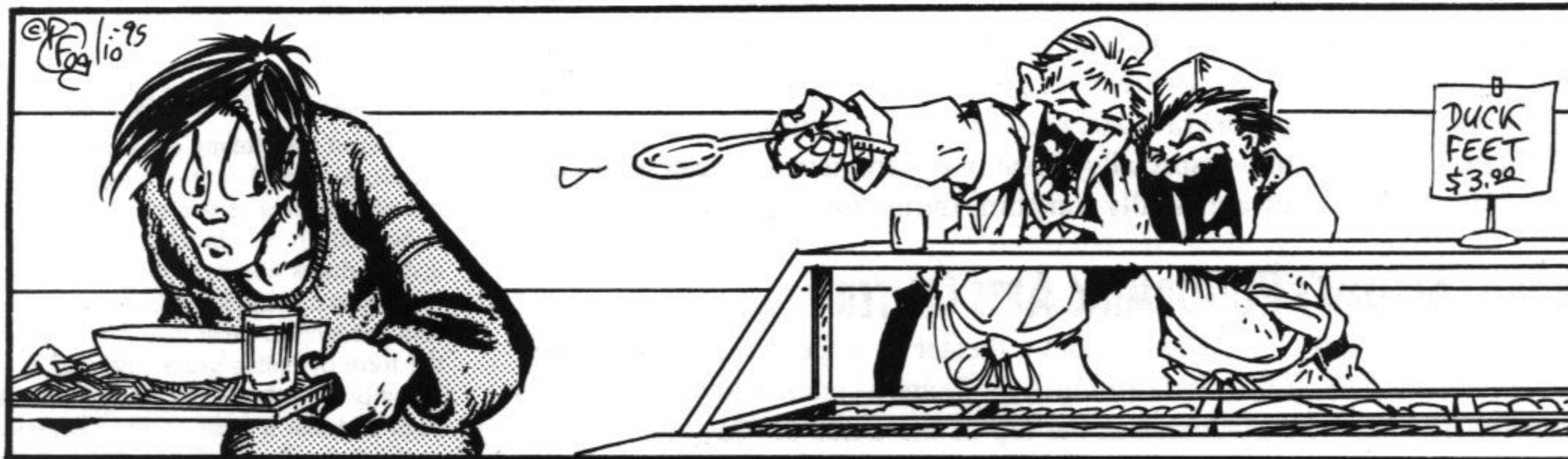
At the base of the plant is the University's other power plant – a 150 MW fission breeder reactor. (The radiation from the reactor may have something to do with the size of the solar plant.) Cooling water from the reactor is cycled through ancient pipes to some unknown destination deep in the steam tunnels. Radioactive cooling water hardly ever escapes into the campus water supply.

WUSE has been agitating to replace the antique fission plant with a modern fusion reactor, but so far, the Administration has refused to spend the money required. Some WUSE professors have speculated that someone in the Administration has found a market for nuclear waste, or bomb-grade plutonium.

## CROESUS ILLUMNI CENTER

The only building on campus that looks like it might have been specified by a 1920s hotel designer with an unlimited bank account, or Louis XIV on a *big* budget, the Croesus Illumni Center is luxurious, opulent and ostentatious. It also contains the second highest concentration of Bimbiras and Kajones on campus (the Performing Arts Center is number one). The kitchen is staffed by four-star chefs, and the dining room is a frequent lunch spot for campus notables. Besides the guest suites and the dining room, the Center features a wide variety of recreational and entertainment facilities, all designed to encourage sybaritic Illumni to sign large checks while they're in good moods. The more irreverent students on campus – most of them, actually – refer to the Croesus Center as "Xanadu House."

Along with the expensive furniture and enough art to fill the Metropolitan Museum (from which some of it was "borrowed," as COUP thesis projects), the Center is filled with hidden cameras and microphones. Fortunately, former students are used to that sort of thing, though it does increase the average Illumni donation a bit. You get what you pay for, and vice versa . . .



## A TYPICAL IOU MEAL

### Appetizers

Buffalo-style small animal limbs  
Dehydrated carrot sticks  
Hard tack

### Entrees

Meat loaf (don't ask what kind of meat)  
Cheese and cardboard pizza  
Something foreign with rice and small bits of unidentifiable rubber-like substances  
Fried squid in pureed zucchini sauce

### Side dishes

Potatoes mashed with powdered lime-stone  
Pureed eggplant  
Peas (suspiciously edible)  
Vermicelli  
Toast (radioactive)

### Desserts

Assorted fruit (slightly glowing)  
Brownies (hard tack with brown paint)  
Chocolate Bombe (only explosive when digested)  
Dried prunes  
Rainbow gelatin  
Lawyer torte

### Beverages

Soft drinks (98% caffeine)  
Coffee with sludge  
Fluoridated water  
Reconstituted powdered milk  
Rutabaga juice

## MAIHAM STADIUM AND THE SPORTS COMPLEX

Mindful of the profit opportunities in sporting events, the University has devoted a great deal of money and space to such activities. The Maiham Stadium (used primarily for meepsball, but also football, horse racing and gladiatorial bouts) is the most obvious, but IOU also has fields for baseball and soccer, fencing sallés, vollynuke bunkers, basketball courts, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, an ice-rink, jousting lists and even zero-gravity shuffleboard courts.

Most of the dorms are named after esteemed – or more likely, generous – alumni. The name is often a clue to the type of accommodations: the de Sade and Torquemada dorms are to be avoided at all costs, while the Louis the XIVth dorm is highly sought-after. The Faustus dorm is somewhere in between, depending on what kind of deal you make with Housing Services. Freshthings are generally housed in the multi-story Monty Hall. See the *Major Dorms* sidebar on p. 9, for brief overviews of some of the more important dorms.

## BORGIA CENTER

The main dining hall for on-campus students is located conveniently near the dorms. (Some student wags claim this is so the cafeteria staff has ready access to the paper recycling bins in the dorms, as a source of “nutritious fiber.”) A large, low building, Borgia Center is subdivided into four cavernous dining areas, with a huge central kitchen serving all four. The four halls are open at different times, and no student has ever been able to discern a pattern to the schedule – much less a reason for it.

When the dining halls are open, students have the privilege of standing in long lines for 20 or so minutes. (This is always *just* long enough to ensure that they will have a maximum of 37 seconds to eat before they risk being late to their next class.) After this exercise in patience, the lucky diner then participates in the hallowed University ritual, The Viewing of the Food. Early students get a choice of two or three entrees, along with side dishes ranging from mummified peas to polymerized mashed potatoes. Borgia Center specializes in “hot cuisine” – apparently on the theory that enough pepper and chili powder will kill any bacteria that can actually survive in the food.

A Survival (IOU) skill roll will allow selection of a minimum amount of food to sustain life without also threatening it. The Gluttony disadvantage gives a -4 penalty; it can be fatal here! On a failed Survival roll, the diner must make a HT roll; on a success, the student survives with nothing more than cramps, a failure results in the loss of 1 HT and -1 to all IQ and DX-based skills for the rest of the day, a critical failure permits the student to wake up the next morning in Lazarus Health Center. Smart (i.e., survival-oriented) students avoid eating here entirely, instead patronizing the hot-dog pushcarts on campus, or snatching quick meals off-campus. Mundanes bring homemade bag lunches.

Students late in line are faced with the leavings, normally the most dangerous choices, and are likely to become *late* students – all Survival (IOU) and HT rolls are at a cumulative -1 for each 10 minutes since the dining room opened for the meal. Cast Iron Stomach negates any chance of difficulties, though only Anosmia – No Sense of Taste or Smell – will permit the diner to *enjoy* the experience.

The best use for the food is as missile weapons – some of it is deadlier than a tac-nuke hand grenade. Not to mention more radioactive.

Students are *not* encouraged to wander into the kitchen areas. Besides the need to make a Fright Check (at -10!), there are other hazards to entering the cooks' domain. Most "lost" students turn up the next morning in the Health Center, often missing a few body parts. Health inspectors routinely disappear, never to be heard from again. (Though the next day's "Surprise Special Entree" is usually roast pork . . .) COUP students sometimes sneak into Borgia Center late at night, looking for sources of exotic new poisons or biological weapons.

Borgia Center is one of the few places where the steam tunnels are *open* into a building. Most tunnel rats have learned to avoid the place, though. (Perhaps this evolutionary pressure is one reason why the tunnel rats are so intelligent.)



## THE STEAM TUNNELS

(And you thought you'd never use your old dungeon modules in a *GURPS* game . . .)

The steam tunnels extend for miles (long and deep) beneath the IOU campus and the surrounding areas. They are said to lead to natural caves, forgotten bomb shelters, subways, abandoned underground kingdoms, huge complexes of humans who have never seen the light of day and the occasional University-style building that was somehow thrust beneath the earth. Besides steam pipes, sewer pipes, water pipes, high-voltage electrical conduits and pipes ominously labeled "coffee recycling," the tunnels contain, at the least, the infamous tunnel rats (p. 90). Other, less speakable, things also crawl, slither or fly through the dank passageways beneath the campus. It is rumored that there is even a sub-species of meep (p. 89) that thrives in the darkness, breeding deceptively cute offspring and kidnapping the unwary passer-by for unknown – but doubtless ghastly – purposes.

Technically, exploring in the tunnels is not permitted, and violators could be suspended or otherwise inconvenienced. Practically, Campus Security wouldn't go anywhere *near* the steam tunnels (and open hatchways into them count), instead relying on the natural dangers of the tunnels as a deterrent. If they do find an open tunnel entrance, they just close it up and leave a few guards on duty to shoot anything that tries to come out. They could, of course, be *ordered* into the tunnels.

Sensible students (if there are any at IOU) avoid the steam tunnels – the only reason not to being that the tunnels extend all over campus, with hidden or bricked-over entrances into most buildings, and are probably *not* monitored. And despite their reputation, some of the near-surface passages are only mildly dangerous . . . most of the time.

## UNIVERSITY REGULATION OF POCKET DIMENSIONS

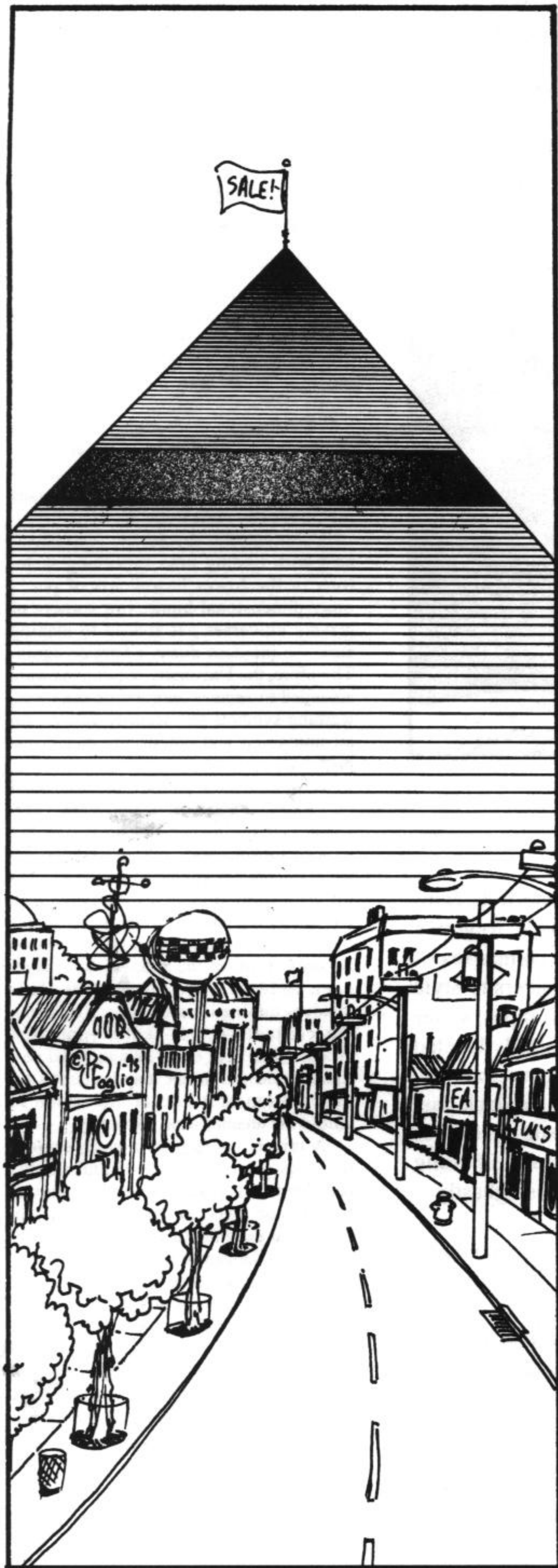
Many of the faculty and staff at IOU literally do live in worlds of their own (at least when they go home after work) and some of them prefer an easy commute: an on-campus gate into their personal universes. However, improper warning-symbols and security precautions can result in hapless freshthings stumbling into unattended pocket dimensions and getting lost – sometimes permanently, which means they don't pay tuition any more.

Unfortunately, despite the fuss associated with finding little freshthing skeletons in the lower basements of one's other-dimensional home, few owners of private universes get around to making sure the incident doesn't happen again. Therefore, the University regulations were amended to *require* appropriate markings, warning symbols and security systems on all unmarked and potentially dangerous pocket dimensions.

If an unmarked gateway is discovered on-campus, a note will be delivered – personally, if the owner can be found, but slipped into the gate otherwise – giving the residents a reasonable amount of time (at least three minutes) to comply with University regulations. If the owners don't fix the matter, the reaction is for Campus Security to move the gateway to a large, open field . . . and "unfold" it. This involves turning it inside out and dumping the contents helter-skelter onto the ground. (For very *large* unauthorized personal worlds, a permit may be issued for the creation of a pocket dimension to unfold the unauthorized one into.)

A private universe is properly marked if it has a hazard symbol and permit prominently displayed somewhere around its entrance. See *The Public TOILET* (p. 74) for an example of a properly marked, potentially dangerous pocket dimension.

It should be noted that Clueless students believe that the ArchDean's larger-than-plausible office is a pocket dimension, and is *unmarked*. More sophisticated students – or ones with a high Survival (IOU) skill – understand that the little plaque reading "ArchDean" at the door is warning enough . . .



# THE TOWN

The town surrounding IOU – though tactical analyses favor the campus, five-to-one – is a mostly quiet, mostly mundane city with more important things on its collective mind than a few rowdy college students. (A *lot* of rowdy college students, or ones with military-grade weapons *will* attract some notice, however.)

Areas near the campus cater to the needs of the University and its denizens, but once you get a mile or so off-campus, you're back in Mundania. Students should remember when going off-campus that a) the reality-stabilizer fields don't extend outside the ivy walls of IOU, b) most of Earth is a low-mana zone and c) there are a *lot* of Mundanes out there . . .

## PYRAMID MALL

Pyramid Mall is a 23-story (at least on the inside) pyramid of aluminum, glass and steel, containing a branch of every known chain store (including some unique to this mall). Besides 179 stores specializing in overpriced yuppie clothing, 42 shoe stores and 57 "gift" stores (most of which have no business and are probably Illuminati fronts), the mall features a number of stores specializing in more esoteric merchandise, including magical supplies, antique and arcane books and propeller beanies. The mall's advertising boast, "Everything Under One Roof," is surprisingly accurate, other than the technical detail that pyramids don't really *have* roofs. Or maybe they're all roof . . . whatever.

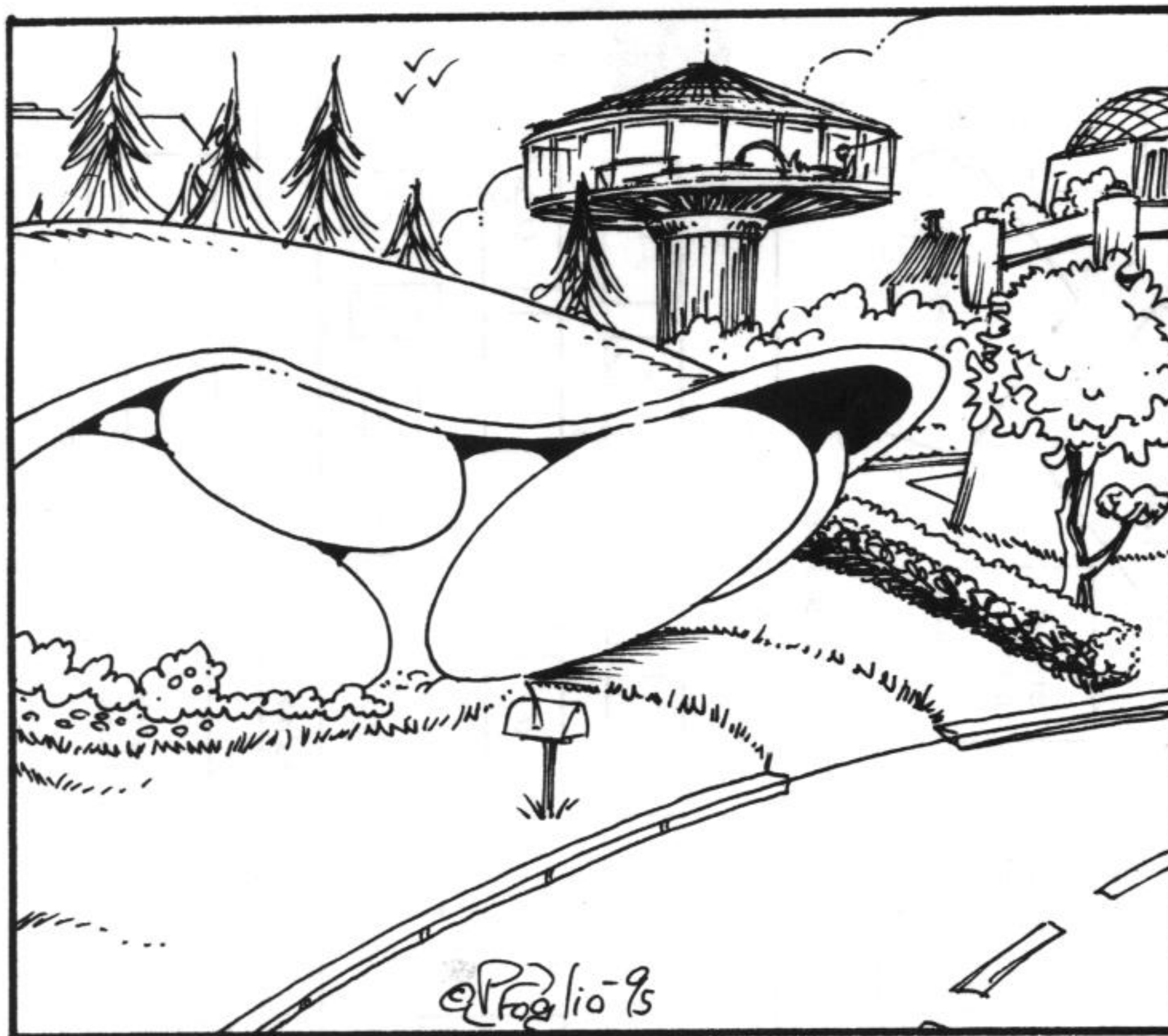
This is where everyone who is *anyone* goes to shop. So does everybody who is nobody, for that matter. It is a prime source of student jobs – in the food court, as sales clerks in the stores or as janitorial staff to clean up after the mall-rat kids (too many of whom are, like, total Valley Girls from a grotty timewarp or something).

The mall is also a prime source of stuff that students need, from clothes to nifty toys to jewelry to electronics to New Age crystals to powdered bat toes. As another of its mottos states, "Pyramid Mall has it all." Of course, it has it at mall prices, which are always inflated ten to fifty percent.

The mall's management is composed of several Illumni, and they keep a SWAT team of COUP graduates on the payroll to deal with things that regular Mall Security (who are much more sedentary than Campus Security, though otherwise indistinguishable) can't handle – such as rampaging students.

Since Pyramid Mall is *the* mall to visit in the area, non-locals often shop here. The management frowns *severely* upon anything that would cause customers (*especially* these non-locals, who generally have Mundane Background) to avoid the mall, and will deal with troublemakers by eviction, firing or asking Pyramid Mall's silent partner to have a talk with the offenders. Being summoned to the ArchDean's office to explain why they threw a fireball at the mall's Automatic Teller Machine is usually sufficient to keep students from repeat offenses.

Despite the number of Mundanes (and mundanes) who visit the mall, the place has similarities to the IOU campus – maze-like hallways, a tendency for doors to open into other dimensions, connections with the steam tunnels, areas that appear and vanish again for various reasons and the occasional confused shopper who thought this was the *Galleria* . . . It is also a high-mana zone, perhaps due to “pyramid power.” Students are advised against getting locked in, or prowling the “Authorized Personnel Only” hallways. GMs may wish to add Area Knowledge (Pyramid Mall) and possibly Survival (Pyramid Mall) to the campaign’s skill list.



## UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

This quiet residential district is where many of the IOU faculty live. Little disturbs the peaceful neighborhood, and its scenic splendor is carefully maintained by private gardeners.

The highly anomalous peace and quiet is enhanced by the fact that most of the residents *are* University faculty, and therefore will take great steps (one might even call their reactions “overkill”) to keep their homes untroubled. Students are not advised to drive through here at three in the morning with their stereos blaring, even if their vehicle *could* hit 90 MPH in five seconds. It would only put a few more craters in the road before the inevitable finale.

Sadly, even University Heights can display strife – usually when budget meetings are hot or a large faculty bloodfeud is in progress – turning the attractive houses and lawns into fortified citadels and minefields, sporting laser turrets and machine guns. But when the disagreement has been settled, things quickly return to their original pristine condition.

It should be noted that, for whatever reasons of her own, the ArchDean does not live at University Heights, preferring to dwell within sumptuous apartments in her own Main Building.

## MORE OFF-CAMPUS SITES OF INTEREST

### IOU INDUSTRIAL PARK

Just west of campus, and nearly an extension of it, are the inevitable high-tech corporations that leech graduates and ideas from the University, especially WUSE. Many professors have high-paying consulting jobs with these companies, or even control them. IOU owns the land and buildings in the industrial park, renting or leasing the space to an endless procession of startup companies and established giants that wish to benefit from a symbiotic (or parasitic) relationship with the University. IOU derives considerable revenue from the park, and it provides many student jobs, including practical, on-the-job training for COUP students specializing in industrial espionage.

### THE ELEPHANTS' JUNKYARD

This is the popular title for the town’s dump – considering the nature of the University and Illumni, lots of really *nifty* things get thrown away and carted out here. Fortunately for would-be scavengers, most of the good stuff is dumped by specially-sealed trucks, and doesn’t get mixed in with the mundane garbage like eggshells, coffee grounds or old kids’ shoes. Unfortunately for those same scavengers, the rare and esoteric things they seek *will* be mixed in with University cafeteria scraps, departmental coffee grounds and the occasional unidentifiable biological remains. Gas-masks, suitable armor, and weaponry are recommended.

### PANCHO SANZA'S

This Mexican-food establishment is located just outside of campus, and caters mostly to the student crowd – this means that it serves substantial meals for reasonable prices, and has a most astonishing variety of dishes listed on its menu (Chocolate Meep Burritos, for example). For the more conservative, it serves simple burgers and salads. It also has a well-stocked bar, a large private function room (for celebrating seniors, private parties, secret conspiracy meetings and the like) and absolutely lousy parking. But it’s within walking distance of campus, serves good food and never seems to close.

The decor is Modern Guerrilla Warfare, with the wait-things dressed in camo outfits and carrying AK-47s; this ensures few complaints and heavy tipping.

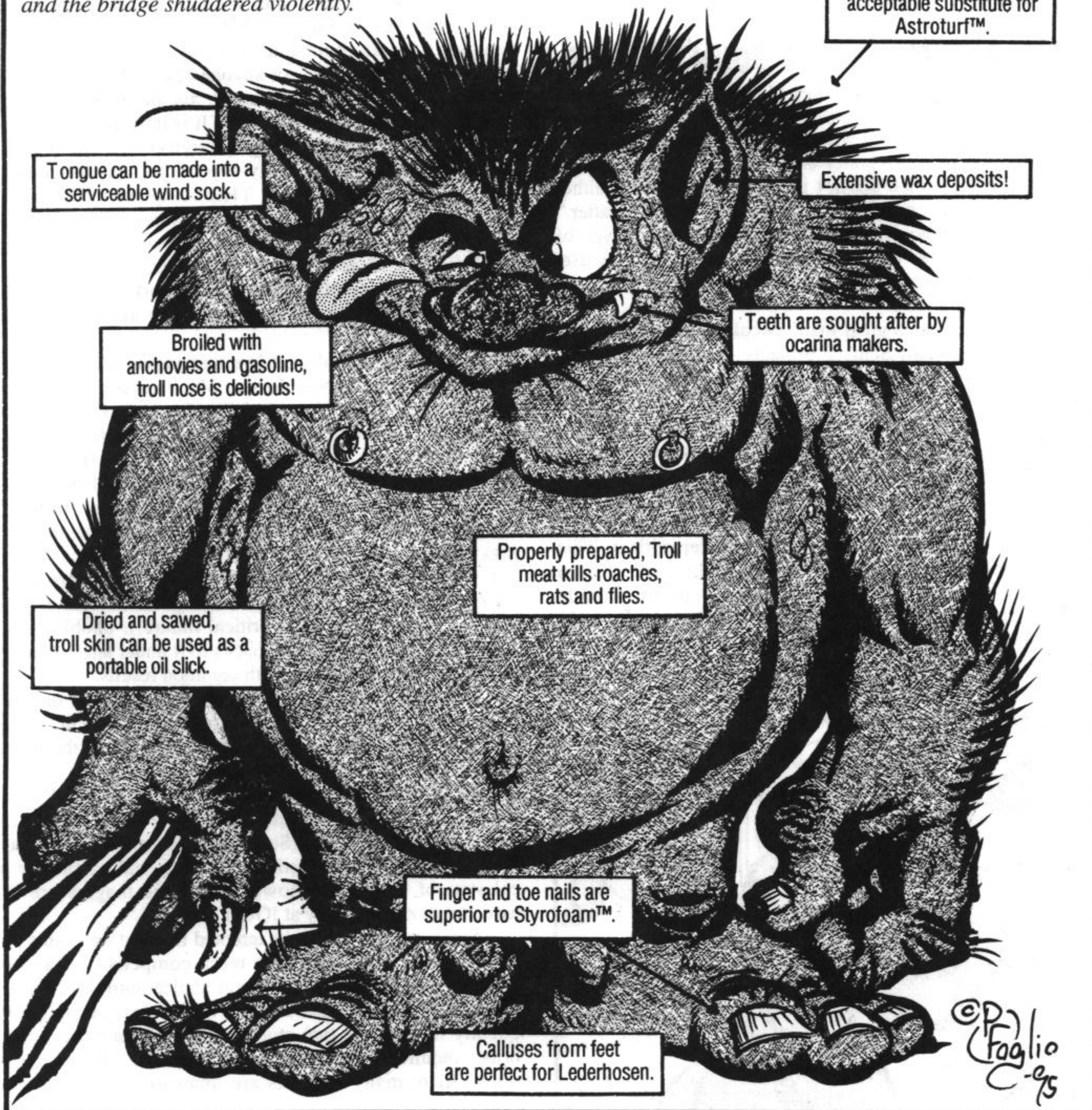
This is another good place for students to get part-time jobs as wait-things, though it should be noted that having the Guns skill is required – “Generalissimo” Sanza takes his food seriously and has been known to call for a firing squad if one of the cooks creates something too inedible.



# THINGS!

**T**roll-toll!" the evil monstrosity bellowed, standing in the middle of the bridge. It was huge, brandished a very large club and had a stench that was even worse than the mess the Cafeteria had burnt last week.

Loriel pulled out her bow and strung it casually. Marcus shifted his sword to his left hand, freeing his right for spellcasting. The rest of the group readied their various weapons as the troll charged toward them. Each footfall shook like thunder and the bridge shuddered violently.



Swomi fished a long, thin tube out of the golf bag slung across her back. Raising it to her shoulder, she shouted "Fore" and pushed the doorbell button dangling from one end. With a *whoosh*, the photon torpedo (human-portable version) took the troll in the chest. There was a flash of white light and a very loud

explosion, and when the greasy smoke cleared, the troll was gone. So, unfortunately, was the bridge.

As the others turned and glared at her, the physics major shrugged. "My project from Dr. Jones' Military Physics 403: Tactical Overkill."

## TECH LEVEL IOU

Listed here is a small sample of the gadgets in use around campus, and also some products of long-ago thesis projects, locked away in storage rooms deep under the WUSE buildings. The latter are protected by nervous patrols from Campus Security and signs reading "Authorized Personnel Only – Beware of Mutants," which generations of scavenging grad students have carefully left behind on the shreds of the doors they once guarded.

For rules about operating strange devices notably lacking in documentation, see *Alien Tech*, p. 109.

### MATTER, ANTI-MATTER AND DOESN'T-MATTER

Ordinary matter makes up most of the universe (and even the University). There is also antimatter, which makes up *really* large explosions when mixed with the universe (and is therefore banned on campus). University scientists have discovered a third kind of mass, which doesn't interact violently with either matter or antimatter, and so has been named "doesn't-matter." (Some WUSE cosmologists hypothesize that this third type of matter makes up the so-called "missing mass" in the universe. Others argue that it was simply stolen by one of the Precursor races, as a practical joke.)

Doesn't-matter has a great many peculiar properties which make it useful in Weird Science projects. Gadgets employing doesn't-matter can achieve astounding effects, some of which may even have been intended by the designer. A few gadgets even consume doesn't-matter as fuel, which can make them difficult to keep operating – you can't just stop at the local gas station for ten gallons of premium doesn't-matter!

In certain circumstances, doesn't-matter can be "vanished" – under sufficient stress, it apparently squirts out of normal space, sometimes taking normal matter with it. This property of doesn't-matter may also explain why socks tend to disappear in the dryer – nylon and rayon actually include miniscule amounts of doesn't-matter. (These are the only known natural sources, in fact. Which may also account for suddenly vanishing socks – they were stolen by WUSE grad students on scrounging expeditions.)



### BRAINDUMPING MACHINES

A problem with some of the resurrection methods on campus is that they produce clones with no memories of their "former" existence. While this does mean the students have to take all their classes again, they also require toilet training, and that's more hassle than it's worth. So the University plays memory-recordings into mind-blank clones. How does it get these recordings? Via braindumps.

Braindumping machines (similar to braintaping devices, see *GURPS Ultra-Tech*, p. 65) are scattered throughout the campus, typically built into doorways and the walls of dorm rooms. When a student – or anyone else with University Health Insurance – walks through a door, his, her or its memories are scanned and dumped into storage. It is unfortunate but true that with all the students passing through doorways at one time, braindumps tend to be fairly superficial, hastily compressed and occasionally mislaid in THE computer's databanks. The leisurely braindumps made in dorm rooms while the student is asleep are more reliable. (This means that people waking up in the Infirmary, depending on the version of reanimation used, can expect to remember the last day clearly, while the last few hours or so will be a bit fuzzy, and they may have to re-cram for tests.)

Individuals who do not live on campus will be encouraged to accept a braindumping device, which usually looks like a pair of light headphones connected to a flat slab of electronics that takes up all the room under the typical twin-sized bed. (Exactly what this "space waster" is may or may not be explained.)

Braindumps can also be made from dead bodies, if you have the equipment and the body still has an intact brain. Someone who is awakened using post-demise memory recordings *will* remember his death and how much it hurt – along with any afterlife experiences – and should make a Will roll or suffer an appropriate new mental disadvantage for several months to a year (or permanently, on a critical failure!). Phobias about the fatal incident or serious flashbacks to it under stress (requiring a periodic Fright Check) are both common results.

Generally, braindump records *cannot* be used on someone else's clone or serious mental aberrations will occur, eventually resulting in the complete nervous breakdown of the misplaced personality. Of course, if the Infirmary personnel can be convinced to swap the minds of a boyfriend-girlfriend pair for a weekend, most of the bad effects can be avoided and the experience can be lots of fun. (Such unstable creations will have the IQ and mental characteristics of the personality, and the physical stats of the body – however, psi and magery are usually associated with the body at IOU!)

Some students might be tempted to cheat on exams by having someone else (hopefully more competent) swapped into their bodies. However, the general unpleasantness of the experience, the possibility that Student Health Services might subsequently mix up the two students' records and the substantial bribes required to have the procedure done, all serve as deterrents. Also, many students are unaware of the existence of

braindump records at all – the doctors at the Lazarus Health Center *never* explain what they're doing, or why. ("You're alive – don't worry about how!")

## CAMPUS REALITY STABILIZERS

These devices, which resemble giant electrical transformers, keep the campus intact through major timestream disasters, unauthorized terraforming, planetary vaporization and similar crises. Anything *off-campus* is subject to change without notice.

A few of the buildings have individual reality stabilizers, which keep things fairly sensible for that building, while others (especially in the English Department and School of Conservative Arts) rely on the large number of Mundane students they teach. But the rest of the campus depends on the larger, general purpose stabilizers which are set into the wall around the campus at precise, though irregular, intervals that were determined to give the best coverage and protection by a committee composed of the deans of WUSE, the College of Metaphysics, COUP and C.T.H.U.L.H.U.

Tampering with the reality stabilizers is generally considered a very *bad* idea, and most sentient denizens of the University will try to stop such an attempt – even if they have their own plans about altering reality, they are aware that too many strange experiments are going on every minute, which might mess things up before the stabilizers could be repaired.

An interesting side-effect of the reality stabilizers is that time-traveling to the *future* while on University grounds invokes the Observer Effect – anything observed in the future *will* come to pass, exactly as the traveler saw it happen. So if someone wants to see what the stock market is doing three weeks from now, and discovers a newspaper saying the University is broke because of a stock crash – well, that newspaper will be printed. Or if he discovers that a giant lizard is going to step on his dorm, it will happen . . . Which does *not* prohibit people from getting around a known future by printing false newspapers, or replacing entire dorms with Hollywood set-pieces!

Note that visions of the future received via Divination spells or psionic Precognition are not as restricted, since they're usually more symbolic and subject to interpretation anyway. Also, future-travel while off-campus (and therefore out of range of the reality stabilizers) is *not* subject to the Observer Effect; the character merely travels to the most likely future, which he can later change by his actions when he returns to the present.

(If GMs thrive on paradoxes, the campus reality stabilizers may – like many Weird Tech items – have occasional glitches, permitting students to alter the past on-campus just a *little*. These alterations may have *interesting* consequences, of course . . .)



IOU reality stabilizers are only vaguely related to the TL16 Reality Stabilizer in *GURPS Ultra-Tech* (p. UT116).

## DIMENSIONAL GATES

Other dimensions are an ever-popular thesis and research topic in WUSE, so it's probably no surprise that there are dozens, if not hundreds, of discarded research projects in WUSE basements that open gates, portals and pet doors into other dimensions – the stranger, the better. Some of these gadgets still have batteries, or gasoline, or moldy rutabagas to power them, and the frequent explosions in the area tend to bump the ON switches once in a while . . .

The shapes and sizes of dimensional gate generators are as varied as the theories they were built to prove. Some resemble simple tuning forks, while others look like flashlights, boom boxes, VCR remote controls, toasters, computer terminals or abstract sculpture (that one was built by an SPCA/WUSE double major). Then there are the ones that look just like the replacement doors kept stocked in every WUSE basement. (For some reason, doors are a frequent casualty of the scientific process at IOU.)

## MINIATURIZER

This huge device, looking something like a gigantic meat-grinder, was once the pride and joy of some forgotten tenured professor. Unfortunately, the professor went on to bigger and better things, and left it in the basement, *sans* instruction booklet.

Fortunately (?), the Miniaturizer has fairly clear labels, and its purpose and use can easily be deciphered. It has to be plugged into building power, and will cause a momentary brown-out in the building when operated. Anything within the area of effect will be shrunk by the selected amount – from 50% to 10% of its previous size. This includes living creatures. It should be noted that the area of effect is *not* inside the bell-shaped compartment on top – that's where the operator is supposed to sit and observe from! – but is a three-hex-wide area next to, and slightly in front of, the controls.

The effects of the Miniaturizer may wear off for biological beings after three days, if a HT roll is made. Inanimate objects (or non-organic PCs) must be brought back to the Miniaturizer and re-sized. This is not an easy thing to figure out, since making things go back to their original size was a *very* late afterthought on the inventor's part. In fact, PCs might want to try this *outside* . . .

## PO-PEEL ARTIFACT

This TL15 artifact, left on Earth by the enigmatic Po-Peel Precursor race, appears to be some sort of high-tech pistol – though the vast number of miniscule controls and small fold-out projections make its purpose and operation difficult to determine. In fact, the artifact is not a weapon at all, but a compact sport-fishing device. Besides functioning as a poor fly-casting rod (-2 to Fishing skill), it includes attachments that not only scale fish, but automatically fillet and deep-fry them. It can also adapt to a wide variety of different aquatic prey, providing an assortment of fishing gear, from the built-in mini-harpoon with tractor beam, to nerve poisons, surface-to-water missiles and tac-nuke depth charges.

Besides its primary functions, it includes auxiliary devices such as a sonar fish locator, a nutritional compatibility analyzer (tuned to the Po-Peel, unfortunately, who think that meals go better with hydrogen sulfide), a 4,000-entry holographic cookbook

of fish recipes, and, for those fishermen who lack a handy water-world to fish on, complete terraforming and genetic engineering attachments.

## RESURRECTATRON

This device is found in the Lazarus Health Center, down in the sub-basement. It is one of the ways that the University avoids paying student health insurance claims (and losing tuition). The Resurrectatron is a mad-scientist's playground of conveyor belts, choppers, bubbling retorts, shredders, sparking Jacob's Ladders, grinders, steam whistles, flywheels and control consoles filled with flashing lights. On one wall is a prominent sign reading: "Warning: Operation by Authorized Personnel Only!"

Despite all the stage-dressing (originally intended to impress potential investors), the Resurrectatron is a simple cloning device, which can reconstitute a living body from a small genetic sample. A completed clone is ready within a few minutes to a few hours, depending on the amount of original material available. Memories are optional, and require a brain-dump record (see p. 82).

Operation of the machine requires Physician/TL9 and Electronics Operation (Medical)/TL9 skill rolls to make sure the genetic sample is pure and not contaminated by unwanted material. If such care is not taken, the resulting body may not be *quite* what the doctor ordered . . .

Due to the frequent demands placed on Student Health Services, many laboratory procedures are performed by poorly-trained pre-med students who get paid according to the number of patients they work on. Naturally, their work is *always* of the highest quality, and they aren't authorized to operate the Resurrectatron in any case.

## SUPERDUPLICATOR

*"The ultimate copying machine"*

A copying machine the size of a small elephant, the SuperDuplicator can copy *anything*, including people. Beside collating, stapling, binding, enlarging and reducing, the SuperDuplicator also includes special computer image processing hardware that actually makes the duplicate better than the original. But you have to figure out how to use the controls – approximately an acre of walls covered with dials, blinking lights, knobs, levers and keyboards. A well-trained operator can actually duplicate a dead body and bring the copy back to life.

There are only a few things the SuperDuplicator *won't* copy. First, it won't make copies of pieces of itself – you get a neon-orange sign reading "NO PATENT VIOLATIONS," instead. It also seems to be singularly incapable of replicating objects of significant value. In fact, when this is tried, the *original* disappears . . . Finally, copying enchanted items or alchemical elixirs results in an apparent success, but the duplicate has no magical properties whatsoever.

Operating the SuperDuplicator requires Electronics Operation (Matter transmitter)/TL15 skill.

## THE COMPUTER

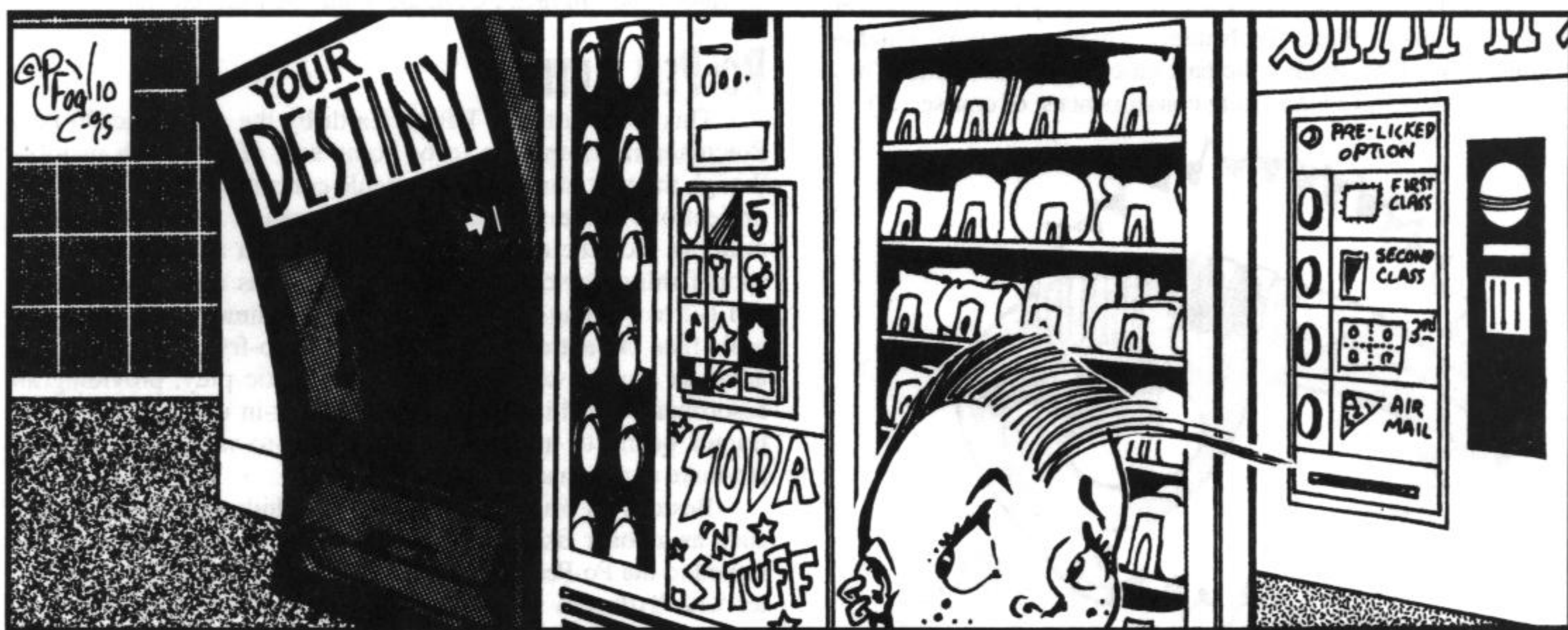
While there are many computer terminals around IOU, they are all hooked into THE computer. Even TEMPEST-hardened personal machines will eventually be drawn into the campus network. The Dean of WUSE is generally responsible for maintenance of THE computer. Rumors that THE computer is sentient are probably true, but the rumors that it's deranged are hopefully exaggerated.

The actual location of THE computer – or, rather, its main CPU, as it runs on many, many individual machines – is unknown. Most students assume that it is in a specially shielded bunker below one of the sturdier WUSE buildings. Some claim that it is physically accessible through hidden routes in the steam tunnels, but few students wish to trek through *those* just to get a good grade in something. (Most of the WUSE majors would much rather try and crack their professors' security, anyway; it's much more elegant, and not as likely to get them devoured by tunnel rats.) Besides, it probably has physical security as well.

The origin of the name (and THE computer's insistence on the capitalization thereof) is classified. Students in THE computer Science have occasionally leaked rumors that it's because it is *the* computer – all the "computers" in the world are merely parts of it. If true, it may be the most successful Illuminati conspiracy to date.

## VENDING MACHINES

Like any normal campus, vending machines are liberally scattered around the buildings. Most vending machines are surprisingly normal (they don't *usually* follow students around, for example), but the contents can range from the mundane (soft drinks, mummified sandwiches and sugar-laden snacks) to the useful (batteries, flashlights, lockpicks and crowbars) to the



absurd (inflatable rafts, plutonium pellets and +5 Swords of Radioactive Monster-Slaying).

Most vending machines on campus will accept coins, bills from nearly any country (people who use counterfeits will regret it) and Illuminati Express. They often fail to give change, and sometimes either refuse to disgorge the selected product or spit out something entirely different than what the user wanted. Shaking IOU vending machines is *strongly* advised against . . .

## MAGIC ITEMS

The College of Metaphysics has made its own contributions to campus equipment, as well as producing a considerable number of magical artifacts of dubious utility as a side-effect of graduate thesis research. Unlike the technogadgets of WUSE, Metaphysics products can't just have the batteries removed and be packed onto metal shelves in the basement.

Old Metaphysics projects are likely to be found sitting inside locked steamer trunks in the musty attics of campus buildings; on obsidian plinths in endless caverns deep under the University, guarded by centuries-old COUP deathtraps and Wandering Monsters™; or inside pentagrams in small, dusty rooms that have been walled up for decades. And sometimes they just pop out of malfunctioning vending machines in the dorms, when all the poor students wanted were bags of potato chips, not Rings of Total Cosmic Power.

### BARE SKIN RUG

This particularly ugly magic item – it looks like a giant chihuahua skin, or maybe a shaved tiger – is very popular with the School of Performing and Creative Arts (and frat houses) for one very cogent reason. When subjects lie down on it, the rug casts a modified Teleport Other spell on them, divesting them of all their clothes and depositing the garments in a neatly-folded pile to one side. (Persons *standing* on the rug are immune, as are those who sit or crawl onto it. It requires hip and shoulder contact.) Subjects are not re-dressed when they stand up.

The rug's magic *will* work through an inch or two of covering, which makes it useful for spicing up a game of Twister or for putting under a blanket. Students of the College of Metaphysics are rumored to have a plot to create enough of these to cover the entire moopsball field, thus causing the Team to have an amusing surprise the next time someone is body-tackled there.

### THE CROCKPOT OF THE GODS

One of the messier ways of resurrecting damaged students, this large, black pot will repair and reanimate any once-living biological placed within it – provided the body is pureed first. Ashes should be mixed with a suitable amount of water, and foreign objects, such as smoking boots, must be removed first. Mixing bits from several people (or things) is not advised . . .

The Crockpot runs on ordinary house current, but it's very slow; it takes 24 hours to complete the process. If anyone looks inside the pot before it has finished, the whole process must start over from scratch.

### DIMENSIONAL GATES

Unlike those upstarts over in WUSE, the faculty and students of the College of Metaphysics have been wandering in and out of other dimensions for millennia. The magic versions of dimensional gates are all done the old-fashioned way, with the



Create Gate spell (p. G49). Classic portals are anchored to massive Stonehenge-like trilithons, though more experimental professors and grad students have created them in mirrors, mid-air and even refrigerators.

Magical dimensional gates usually have a set of prescribed opening (or closing) conditions. These are often so incredibly tortuous that consultants from the COUP law school must be called in to untangle the requirements.

### LIFE-SAVERS

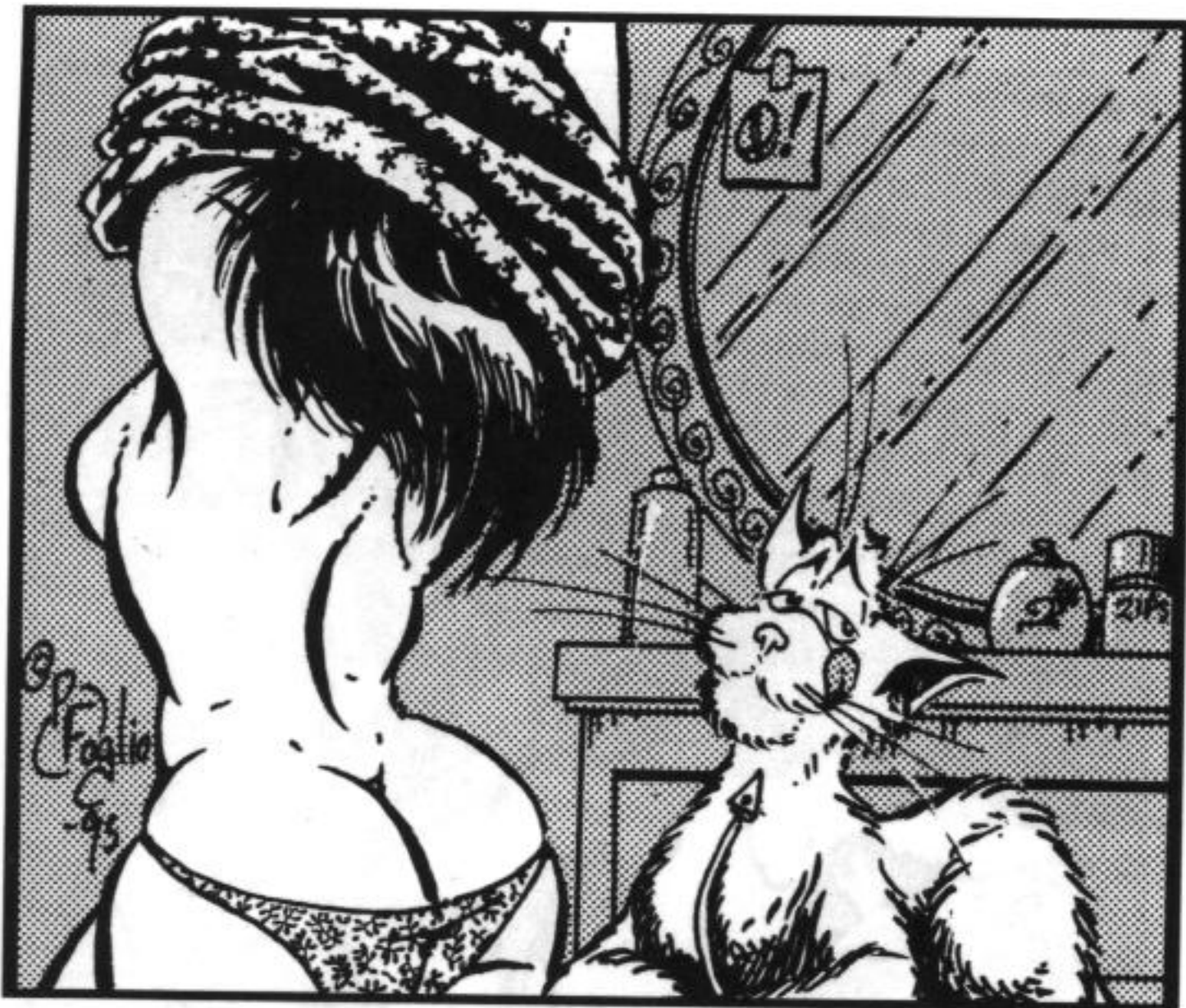
These are alchemical elixirs always prepared in the form of small, colorful tablets with a hole in the center. They are created using a Weird Magic shortcut in the preparation of the Persephone elixir (p. M102).

One tablet will restore 2d hit points to a newly-dead (within 1 hour) subject, and brings him to life with fatigue 1! On a live subject, it restores 5d hits and all fatigue. No missing parts are restored. Will not work if the head has been destroyed, or if the body has been burned or taken more than 10 x HT hits. The subject is also left with a hyperkinetic "sugar high" and a mouthful of cavities . . .

### PROTECTION RACQUET

This is an everyday tennis racquet enchanted with the Missile Shield spell; unfortunately, it doesn't cast the spell on the person holding it – the spell is *on the racquet*, forcing the wielder to actually "parry" an oncoming missile. Some Protection Racquets have Reverse Missiles, instead – if the owner makes the parry, the missile will be reflected back at the sender. The skill required to make use of this item is Sports (Tennis)-3. So far, no Metaphysics majors have managed to adapt either a Dancing Weapon or a Dancing Shield enchantment to the rather unique style necessary for using the racquet.

Rumor has it that this Missile Shield variant may also be cast on racquetball racquets, ping-pong paddles and even baseball bats, but so far none have been found.



## STUPID HAT TRICKS

A favorite practical joke around finals, these otherwise ordinary baseball caps are enchanted with a variant of the Foolishness spell, so anyone who dons one will suffer a -3 to IQ – and Driving skill! The penalties are doubled to -6 if the cap is worn backwards. A very few caps are Hexed, so that they can't be removed easily, but most can be taken off at will (if the wearer thinks of it).

## THREE-PIECE SUITS

Various enchantments can be placed on expensive clothing, such as hand-tailored business suits. These stylish suits are just the sort of thing that lawyers, businessthings and other wealthy (and boring) people normally wear. While the coat, vest and pants are all magical, the *entire* outfit must be worn for the enchantment to take effect. This includes the coat, even indoors.

## LAW SUIT

This outfit, popular with some Law majors, is enchanted with the Lend Skill spell (p. M30). When wearing the entire outfit, the user either gains a +4 to his (or her or its) Law skill if he already has it, or gets the Law skill at IQ+4 – whichever is greater. The spell lasts for a minute, and costs 3 Fatigue, 2 for each additional minute. Some suits also have the Persuasion spell (p. B155 or M29) enchanted into them, for use in swaying judges and juries.

## BLACK SUIT

Popular with would-be Men In Black, these suits are generally enchanted with Protection and Warning, Body College and Mind Control spells. Sensible mages will also imbue them with Resist Fire spells (p. B159 or M37), so that the wearer won't fall over from heat exhaustion when wearing the suit inside un-air conditioned rooms on hot, sunny days. Other mages forget about that, and add the Resist Fire enchantment to a pair of dark glasses, as an afterthought.

## MONEY SUIT

One of the rare items from the mysterious "Money College" of magic, this gray dress-suit appears to be enchanted with the fabled Seek Money spell – it detects relative concentrations of cash, credit cards and checks that can draw on large bank accounts. Little else is known about it, as it is the sole and exclusive possession of the ArchDean, who probably uses it to evaluate potential students from her Clock Tower office.

## UN-SUIT-ABLE

This practical joke appears to be the same as a Law Suit, but when the wearer invokes the garments' enchantment – the clothes suddenly do something rude, like coming *totally* unfastened, unraveling or simply vanishing! Unlike the other Suits, the Un-suit-able need not be an entire set; a single piece will work its magic just as well as all three of them together.

## CAT SUIT

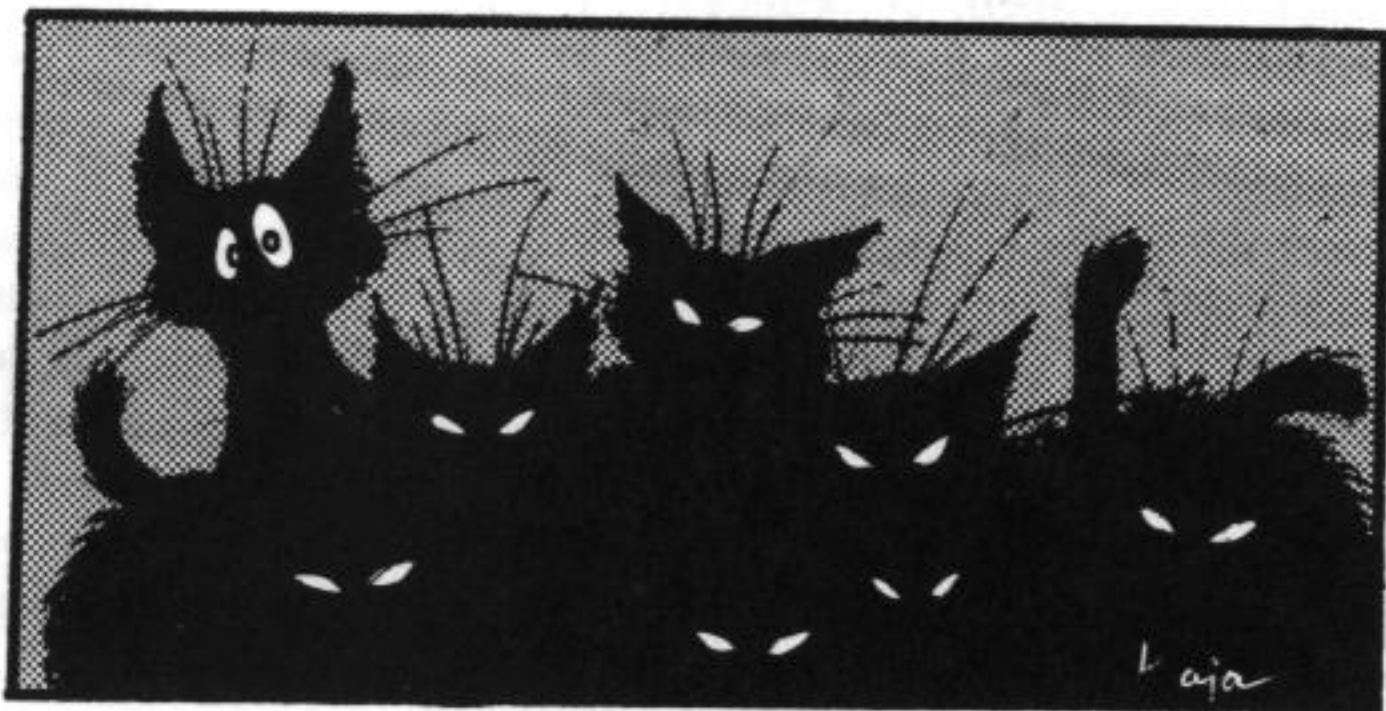
Another practical joke (though it can be of practical *use*, if someone else is handy with the Remove Curse spell), the Cat Suit is enchanted with the rare Shapeshift Others (Cat) spell. Use the statistics for an ordinary cat (sidebar, p. B142) for the feline form. The cat's markings depend on the suit – a herringbone tweed will transform into a mackerel tabby, while a black suit produces a sleek black cat and a white suit transforms the user into a fluffy white Persian.

## VCR REMOTES

Originally invented by a Metaphysics grad student as a practical joke on his WUSE apartment-mates, this magic item has proven incredibly popular with VCR manufacturers, despite the fact that they are mage-only, rendering them non-functional for 95% of the population. (And most of the remainder find them incomprehensible without using a Gift of Tongues spell.)

Rumors that some VCR remote controls can put the entire universe into Stop, Fast-Forward or Rewind are probably exaggerations. And changing channels would likely be dangerous . .

## ... AND THINGS!



While it's sometimes difficult to tell the students from the fauna, there *are* creatures on campus everyone agrees are *not* students or faculty . . . probably. (Admittedly, some of the creatures listed here are normally considered NPCs, but campus-dwellers tend to regard them as environmental hazards and occasionally practice targets.)

In the entries that follow, the Origins and Habitats fields use special abbreviations, which are listed below. Note that the Origins field is used somewhat differently here, indicating the source of the creature in the IOU universe.

#### Origins:

GB = Government Bureaucracy

ML = Myth and Legend

MU = Mutation (radiation, toxic waste, magical or whatever)

R = Real

SF = Science Fiction

U = Unknown

WM = Created by Weird Magic

WS = Created by Weird Science

#### Habitats:

B = Buildings

CG = Campus Grounds

DO = Dorms

F = Forests

MA = Malls

O = Offices

P = Plains

R = Roads

RW = the Real World

ST = Steam Tunnels

A “#” means the text contains additional information.

If a creature is substantially different in one of the campaign style variations (see p. 94), it will be noted. If it is very similar or identical, no variations will be listed.



## BIMBIRAS

ST: 9	Move/Dodge: 5/5	Size: 1 hex
DX: 11	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: 100-155 lbs.
IQ: 8	Damage: \$50-100	Origin: SF
HT: 12	Reach: C	Habitats: O

**Advantages:** Appearance: Attractive or better, Double-Jointed.

**Disadvantages:** Slave Mentality, Social Stigma (Valuable Property), Combat Paralysis.

**Skills:** Sex Appeal-15, Administration-10, Poetry-8.

Bimbiras, while looking remarkably like beautiful human females, are actually a variant race (which does not interbreed with humans) that the ArchDean picked up on some planet – Blood or Guts or something like that – and gainfully employed prior to her very friendly takeover of the University. Most

Bimbiras are in secretarial positions. Some also hold teaching positions in the School of Performing Creative Arts; they are generally quite flexible . . .

Students can flirt with Bimbiras, usually effectively, but are advised to remember that Bimbiras were once “working girls,” and expect to be given tips. They also love to work in front of cameras, which indicates either vanity, or some clues about their former jobs.

Since Bimbiras cannot be bred, they are reproduced by cloning. Occasionally a minor mutation during the process will result in a Bimbira who is actually human-normal, mentally. Such variants are snapped up by COUP, since they tend to make excellent students with a talent for viciousness and a preference for black leather clothing.

For some odd reason, most Bimbiras claim to have formerly been English majors, before they found fulfillment in their current positions.

(The precise mechanics of Slave Mentality can be found in *GURPS Aliens* or *GURPS Fantasy*, 2nd edition.)

**Variations:** Weird Bimbiras probably aren’t a separate race, just scatter-witted; Darkly Illuminated Bimbiras may be what happens to people who irk the Dark ArchDean – a bodysculpt and lobotomy job (most likely done by magic or psionics).

## BIO-OGRE

ST: 200	Move/Dodge: 20/3	Size: 60 hexes
DX: 15	PD/DR: 6/200	Weight: 50 tons
IQ: 14	Damage: 6d x 50	Origin: WS
HT: 14/500	Reach: C	Habitats: CG, R

**Advantages:** Magery 3.

**Disadvantages:** Lecherous (only applies to other vehicles).

A creation of the Dean of Metaphysics, the Bio-Ogre is part intelligent cyber-tank the size of a small building and part organic – in particular, it includes a brain with Magery. (Nobody knows where the brain came from.) Most of the time it sleeps in one of the bunkers in the College of Metaphysics, absorbing nutrients and playing dreamgames through its neural interfaces, but it has been known to escape. It is, unfortunately, somewhat deranged and will attempt to ram and mount unfortunate shuttlebuses. So far, those unions have not produced offspring, for which many students are thankful.

Besides running over people, the Bio-Ogre has a variety of ranged weapons. The GM should feel free to equip it with anything from *GURPS Ultra-Tech* or *GURPS Vehicles*, or simply assume *all* its weapons do 6d x 50 damage, which is usually quite adequate around campus. It has also been known to cast spells, and sometimes can be found lurking outside Metaphysics lecture halls, trying to eavesdrop on professors teaching new spells.

Supposedly, there is only *one* Bio-Ogre, and it’s a small one. Of course, there is nothing to prevent another one from being created – and it might be more or less insane than the first.

**Variations:** This does not exist at the Weird IOU, though something similar (though smaller) might be present in the Darkly Illuminated version.

## CATS, THE ARCHDEAN'S

ST: 3	Move/Dodge: 10/7	Size: 1 hex
DX: 14	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: 5-15 lbs.
IQ: 5+	Damage: 1d-4 cut#	Origin: R
HT: 13/3	Reach: C	Habitats: CG

Besides biting and scratching for 1d-4 cutting damage, the campus cats can meow for help from the ArchDean, for impressive damage.

Despite all rumors of enhanced intelligence, psi powers, bionic augmentation, magical abilities and dedication to spying for the ArchDean, these are really a bunch of rather sweet and normal-acting cats. They will rarely, if ever, cause trouble for PCs who don't go around abusing them. (For safety, PCs should assume all the cats on campus are the ArchDean's.)

## CIA GULLS

**ST:** 1-3      **Move/Dodge:** 13/7      **Size:** 1 hex  
**DX:** 14      **PD/DR:** 0/0      **Weight:** 3-5 lbs.  
**IQ:** 3?      **Damage:** 1d-4      **Origin:** U  
**HT:** 14/3-5      **Reach:** C      **Habitats:** CG

These are apparently some sort of robotic spy cameras – they are found all over campus, often sorting through garbage bins or dropping small bits of electronic apparatus as they fly overhead. Move/Dodge given is flying; it drops to ½ on the ground. They can be distinguished from ordinary sea gulls by the fact that they have feet. (Some New England natives will explain that *real* sea gulls don't need feet, since they only land on the water; they're also an endangered species.)

## DRYADS

**ST:** 10      **Move/Dodge:** 6/6      **Size:** 1 hex  
**DX:** 12      **PD/DR:** 0/0      **Weight:** 90-150 lbs.  
**IQ:** 10+      **Damage:** by weapon      **Origin:** ML  
**HT:** 11      **Reach:** C      **Habitats:** CG, F

**Advantages:** Attractive Appearance or better, Voice.

**Disadvantages:** Odious Racial Habit (Practical Joking).

**Skills:** Traps-13, Camouflage-15, Stealth-13 (in wooded areas only), Survival (Woodlands)-16.

These green-tinged tree spirits live in the Avant Gardens and the Botany Building. They rarely interact with anyone, and can become vicious and cunning if mistaken for Bimbiras too frequently.

It should be noted that with the Team around, the Dryads were mistaken for Bimbiras "too frequently" several years ago, and began setting traps around their homes just for giggles. The Team has learned that the Avant Gardens are "for wimps" and the Botany Building has too much classwork associated with it, but anyone who takes classes or enjoys scenic strolls here is likely to stumble into a snare and be jerked upside-down to the melodious giggles of the Dryads, who may stop to pelt the student with mud or snow (depending on season), before running away. They avoid those who have taken The Treatment, for good reasons.



The only exceptions to their general hostility (COUP would love to get some as students, but they won't cooperate), are the Sauhudese gardeners and George the Janitor – probably because those people carry fertilizer stakes in their pockets whenever they're working around Dryad-infested areas.

**Variations:** Dryads are only present on a Silly campus.

## GERBILS, ZOMBIE

**ST:** 1      **Move/Dodge:** 4/6      **Size:** 1 hex  
**DX:** 12      **PD/DR:** 0/0      **Weight:** 3 ounces  
**IQ:** 2      **Damage:** 1d-4      **Origin:** WM, WS  
**HT:** 14/2      **Reach:** C      **Habitats:** CG, B

On the IOU campus, there are numerous sources for zombie gerbils. WUSE experiments (though those are more likely to create *cybernetic* gerbils) and certain classes in the College of Metaphysics are the main producers. (Well, how else are you going to let students practice the Zombie spell? Or any other magic that deals with zombies? Bodies are *expensive*!)

Zombie gerbils are generally kept in their lab cages, but sometimes they get out and go roving about. Furthermore, the dean of the College of Communications has been rumored to use them as *messengers*. In both cases, they travel around campus in a massive horde – a swarm of Gerbils With A Purpose. See *Swarm Attacks*, p. B143, for rules on running these fearsome little creatures – or use the *Horde* rules in *GURPS Horror* or *GURPS Bestiary*. A swarm consists of about a dozen of the undead rodents, does 1d of cutting damage per turn (armor protects with its normal DR), and can be dispersed by 6 hits.

As zombies, they feel no pain and cannot be stunned. They crumble to dust when their HT reaches zero, which tends to happen quickly . . .

Other zombie lab animals are known to exist. An interesting campus legend concerns a horde of zombie lemmings who attempted to take the elevator to the top of the Clock Tower (presumably to throw themselves off it); they were never seen again, and there are only hints at the fate of their creator. Most say the ArchDean walked into his class and asked him outside to "have a word" with him.

**Variations:** These do not exist on a Weird campus, and probably don't roam around a Darkly Illuminated one. They might be found, caged, in basement laboratories.

## IRS AGENTS

**ST:** 9-14#      **Move/Dodge:** 5/5      **Size:** 1 hex  
**DX:** 12-15      **PD/DR:** 0/0#      **Weight:** 130-250 lbs.  
**IQ:** 10-16      **Damage:** monetary      **Origin:** GB  
**HT:** 10-13      **Reach:** C      **Habitats:** CG, B, O, RW

**Advantages:** Lightning Calculator, Legal Enforcement Powers (10 points).

**Disadvantages:** Enemy: just about everyone, Reputation -4.

**Skills:** Accounting-15, Administration-18, Detect Lies-14, Intimidation-18, Law-13.

One of the more cunning hostile fauna on campus, IRS agents show up occasionally to audit somebody's books – a student's, a faculty member's or even the University accounts themselves. When they go over someone's financial records, they *will* find some excuse to charge \$100 or so, just to recompense them (and the IRS) for their time. Even when they check the scrupulously clean books of the University (the public ones).

Understandably, the ArchDean does not approve of IRS agents. It is well known that just about anything that happens to them is *fine* with her. So, even more than Campus Security, IRS

agents are targets. The goal is to vanish them or get them into the Infirmary (which has *specific* instructions regarding them).

Of course, the IRS isn't entirely stupid (and is probably Illuminated anyway, handling that much money . . .); the agents they send to IOU are likely to be superb specimens, and well equipped – maybe even cyborged. But that just makes it more of a challenge, right?

## KAJONES

**ST:** 12      **Move/Dodge:** 6/6      **Size:** 1 hex  
**DX:** 11      **PD/DR:** 0/0      **Weight:** 160-200 lbs.  
**IQ:** 7      **Damage:** 1d-1 cr.      **Origin:** WS  
**HT:** 12      **Reach:** C      **Habitats:** O

**Advantages:** Attractive or better Appearance.

**Disadvantages:** Slave Mentality, Social Stigma (Valuable Property), Combat Paralysis.

**Skills:** Sex Appeal-15, Running-12, Administration-9.

Kajones are the male equivalent of Bimbiras, created by genetic engineering on campus (rumor has it that one of the administrators wanted to impress the ArchDean; rumor also has it that the attempt succeeded). They are also sterile, and no normal-intelligence mutants are known to have appeared.

Unlike Bimbiras, Kajones are actually quite camera-shy, and less likely to expect a tip.

**Variations:** Same as Bimbiras, but Dark Kajones grovel better than their female counterparts.



## MEEPS

**ST:** 2-10      **Move/Dodge:** 3-10/5      **Size:** 1 hex  
**DX:** 3-15      **PD/DR:** 0/0      **Weight:** 1-6 lbs.  
**IQ:** 1-15      **Damage:** var.      **Origin:** U  
**HT:** 10+/5      **Reach:** C      **Habitats:** CG, B, ST

No one knows exactly where on campus – or Outside – these small, furry, cuddly creatures came from. In fact, it's usually not safe to inquire closely into the origins of campus flora and fauna. In any case, they started infesting the campus a few years ago, proving to be quite a nuisance until it was discovered

that they were edible, and rather tasty. Now they're something of an endangered species, though infestations of mutant strains appear from time to time. Meeps are named for their resemblance to a moopsball, and for the odd sound they make.

The typical meep (if such a thing exists – there are hundreds of mutant varieties) is a furry ellipsoid about the size and shape of a half cantaloupe, with four stubby feet and no obvious eyes, nose, mouth or other body openings. All varieties of meeps have the ability to turn the average freshthing into a smiling zombie, with an affinity for cuddling small furry animals – roll against the higher of Will or Survival (IOU) to resist. The College of Communications is currently researching possible commercial applications of this effect. In addition to this, the various mutant varieties might have *any* sort of weird ability the GM can imagine; color-coding them by their powers is optional.

Damage varies from none (except maybe suffocation via burial in meeps), to concealed dagger-like fangs and claws, to psionic or magical attacks. Meeps are generally seen in swarms of dozens to hundreds.

Rumors of a Queen Meep living in the steam tunnels, able to overcome the most cynical student's resistance to petting meeps and feeding them junk food, are hopefully exaggerated – though it is true that the more meeps in the area, the harder it is to resist the temptation to pick one up, smile inanely and coo "Meep!" for no good reason.

## PIGEONS, CAMPUS

**ST:** 1-2      **Move/Dodge:** 10/5      **Size:** 1 hex  
**DX:** 11      **PD/DR:** 0/0      **Weight:** 1-2 lbs.  
**IQ:** 3      **Damage:** 1d-5 cut      **Origin:** R(?)  
**HT:** 13/2      **Reach:** C      **Habitats:** CG

The University, like many other campuses, has a sizable pigeon flock that flies about, roosts on buildings and statues, and terrorizes smaller birds out of the areas where students congregate and drop crumbs. For the most part, they appear quite normal.

However, observant students will notice that the pigeons in the town and the pigeons on campus *never* mix. The "townies" won't fly over the walls onto campus, and the resident birds don't ever seek to escape. Town pigeons brought onto campus will try – *earnestly* – to hit Mach speeds on their way off-campus. Campus pigeons will seek to return to campus, if they're within sight of it; otherwise, they just flap about aimlessly and starve themselves to death.

If a campus pigeon is caught, it seems to be a perfectly ordinary bird . . . except for the small tattoo under its left wing, clearly reading: "Made in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. USA." Sometimes packages arrive from Pigeon Forge, too, but no student's seen what's inside them.

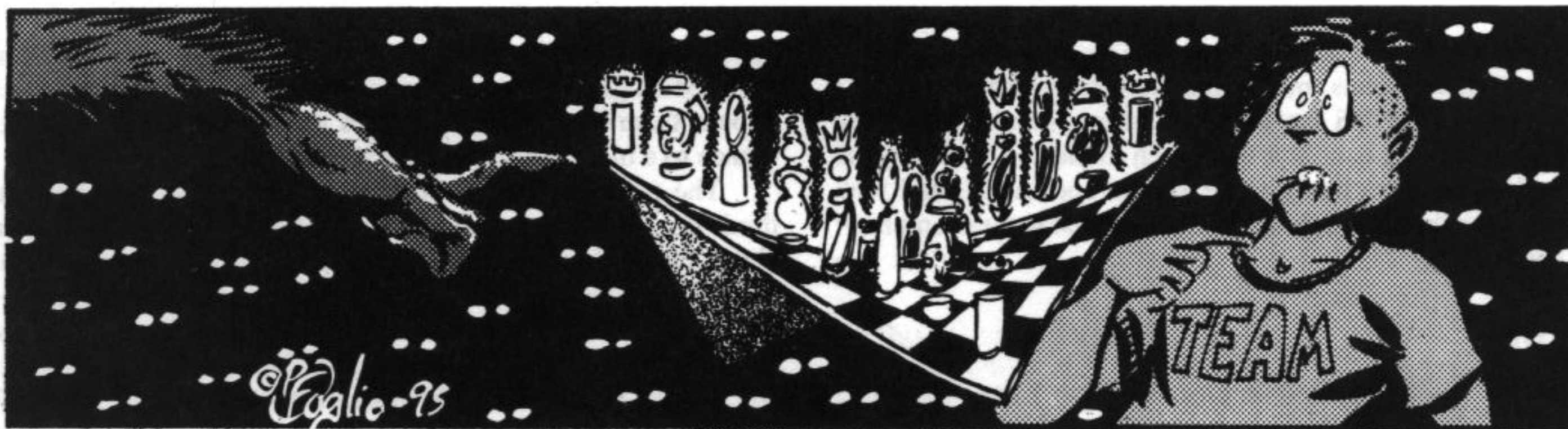
**Variations:** The Darkly Illuminated version lacks the tattoo.

## RABBITS, LAB

**ST:** 1-2#      **Move/Dodge:** 14/7      **Size:** 1 hex  
**DX:** 14      **PD/DR:** 0/0      **Weight:** 8-20 lbs.  
**IQ:** 3#      **Damage:** 1d-5 cut#      **Origin:** R  
**HT:** 14/2-4      **Reach:** C      **Habitats:** B, CG, ST

These are typical lab rabbits: dumb, a little high-strung and expendable. They are primarily used in WUSE, COUP and the College of Metaphysics. They make good meals (if uncontaminated), nice fur hats or acceptable pets, beyond their use as thesis fodder.

If let loose, they breed four to eight times a year, with three to eight "kittens" in a litter. They begin breeding at six months of age, and continue for seven to eight more years. Rabbits are



very social animals, living in groups of 10-30 in a network of underground burrows, called a warren. They often organize themselves into a complex pecking order.

Of course, rabbits at IOU (feral or otherwise) have slightly different living conditions than their mundane relatives. Feral rabbits have been known to live in burrows with meeps, for instance. Many of the escapees can be assumed to have freed *themselves* from their cages, rather than being let loose by soft-hearted or careless students. Even the captive ones often display some effects of the project they're used in. Teleportation, intelligence, opposable thumbs and cyborging are all possible additions to the basic lab rabbit's repertoire.

(For more ideas about enhanced rabbits and their abilities to complicate PC life, the GM should read *GURPS Bunnies & Burrows*.)

## RATS

### LABORATORY RATS

ST: 1	Move/Dodge: 6/6	Size: 1 hex
DX: 13	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: <1 lb.
IQ: 4	Damage: 1d-5 cut	Origin: R
HT: 17/2	Reach: C	Habitats: B, CG

These are typical albino lab rats. Like their fellow inmates, lab rabbits, they are subjected to various experiments, and don't stay "typical" for very long. Those which become dangerous enough frequently escape to the steam tunnels, where they meet their destiny in the form of the resident tunnel rats – either as snacks, or as newfound companions.

When possible, rats travel in swarms of about 12 (see *Swarm Attacks*, p. B143) with Speeds of 4 and doing 1d of cutting damage per turn, and can be dispersed by 6 hits of damage. Depending on where the rats escaped from, the GM may want to require an HT roll of anyone bitten by lab rats – you never know what sort of interesting diseases they might have been infected with.

Some lab rats have confided that they are only sticking around to study the researchers.

### MALL RATS

ST: 9-11	Move/Dodge: 5/5	Size: 1 hex
DX: 9-11	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: 90-125 lbs.
IQ: 10-11	Damage: annoyance	Origin: R
HT: 10	Reach: C	Habitats: MA, RW

Found in hordes of five to ten throughout Pyramid Mall, and occasionally spotted in smaller groups in other areas where things are sold, mall rats strike terror into the hearts of any store clerk. Mall rats are adolescent humans between the ages of 11 and 15, who are cruising the mall to window-shop, gossip (or "hang out," if male) and mob attractive members of the appropriate genders. Occasionally they actually buy things.

*Variations:* Silly IOU mall rats wear miniskirts, bows in their hair and imperfectly applied make-up. There is no male counterpart to them. Far, far too many mall rats are Mundanes, children of Mundane parents who live in town. Of the ones who aren't Mundane, an astonishing number are so self-absorbed that they might as well be, for all the odd stuff that they *don't* notice! Weird IOU mall rats will usually be found in starter-jackets and gang colors, but are otherwise similar. Darkly Illuminated mall rats are likely to be Neo-Gothic or vampire poseurs. (Some may not be posing . . .)

Mall rats are surprisingly good at running mazes.

### TUNNEL RATS

ST: 2	Move/Dodge: 7/7	Size: 1 hex
DX: 13	PD/DR: 1/1	Weight: 1-3 lbs.
IQ: 4#	Damage: 1d-3 cut	Origin: MU
HT: 17/3-4	Reach: C	Habitats: ST, B, CG

Tunnel rats inhabit the steam tunnels that run underneath the University (and a lot of other places, as well) in hordes of 50 to several thousand. While most of them are merely extra-large and extra-vicious, their leaders have human (and inhuman) levels of intelligence, and have organized their less-intelligent followers into lethal armies. Despite all this, tunnel rats are not feared so much for their ability to strip an elephant to the skeleton in fifteen-point-one-seven seconds, but for their hideous proclivities – they play pan-dimensional chess, and wager fossilized snack food on the outcome. Loser has to eat the stale, synthetic sponge-cakes.

Not satisfied to restrict their depravities to their own kind, tunnel rats capture anyone foolish enough to enter their domain, and force their prisoners to play. (Pan-dimensional chess is a M/VH skill. Due to lack of five-dimensional perceptions, there is a -5 skill penalty for anyone except rats, sentient computers and cats – and cats never play in public.) In games between rats and students, it can be assumed that the student will be forced to play until he loses a game and chokes down the "food" . . . and then he'll be stripped to a skeleton in five-point-zero-one seconds, just to add insult to injury.

*Variations:* Darkly Illuminated tunnel rats don't bother with stale food – they just eat the loser.

### SQUIRRELS

ST: 1	Move/Dodge: 9/7	Size: 1 hex
DX: 15	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: 1-2 lbs.
IQ: 4	Damage: 1-5 cut	Origin: R
HT: 14/3-4	Reach: C	Habitats: CG, RW

Like most university campuses, IOU is infested with squirrels. Many of the rodents are exactly what they appear to be – cute, furry little critters that scamper about in the trees and over the lawns, sometimes stopping near students at lunchtime to beg for food. These squirrels are generally useful only for target practice, field testing of dubious lunch components or cat snacks.

Due to the vast array of toxic wastes, radiation and strange magical energies encountered on campus, the ordinary squirrel population conceals other varieties. Some seem to take an inordinate interest in the people on campus, occasionally following victims for days and staring at them with beady little eyes for hours at a time. Reports of black squirrels with projecting fangs are linked with stories of students falling asleep under trees late at night, and waking the next morning with advanced cases of anemia. The recent appearance of "Do Not Feed the Squirrels" signs, along with daytime sightings of rodents wearing dark sunglasses, lends credence to these stories.

However, the rumors of roving packs of squirrels mugging students for their lunches are undoubtedly wildly exaggerated.

### WATCHER SQUIRRELS

ST: 1	Move/Dodge: 9/7	Size: 1 hex
DX: 15	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: 1-2 lbs.
IQ: 7	Damage: 1-5 cut	Origin: MU
HT: 14/3-4	Reach: C	Habitats: CG

Besides having higher than normal intelligence, and a fascination with human activities, watcher squirrels are otherwise normal animals. They are completely harmless. Really.

### VAMPIRE SQUIRRELS

ST: 5	Move/Dodge: 9/7	Size: 1 hex
DX: 15	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: 1-2 lbs.
IQ: 7	Damage: 1d impale#	Origin: WM
HT: 16/6-8	Reach: C	Habitats: CG

Vampire squirrels can also shapeshift into flying squirrels (takes 3 turns), and cast the Sleep spell (p. B164 or M66) at skill level 15. A sleeping character attacked by a vampire squirrel will lose 5 hit points to blood loss, and will wake with a compulsion to gather nuts.

If a character loses 15 hit points or dies from the bites of multiple squirrels, he will turn into a *very* wimpy vampire, with all his normal attributes and abilities, plus an allergy to sunlight (loses 1 HT per hour in full sunlight), a craving for blood (treat as an Addiction) and the ability to change into a giant flying squirrel (takes 3 turns and costs 6 Fatigue).

### MUGGER SQUIRRELS

ST: 1	Move/Dodge: 9/7	Size: 1 hex
DX: 15	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: 1-2 lbs.
IQ: 7	Damage: 1-5 cut	Origin: MU
HT: 14/3-4	Reach: C	Habitats: CG

Mugger squirrels travel in gangs of a dozen or so (see *Swarm Attacks* on p. B143), dropping out of trees on top of lone students and knocking them to the ground (treat as a flying tackle attack in Close Combat, p. B113, adding the ST values for all the squirrels). The squirrel swarm has a Move of 5 and can be dispersed by 4 hits of damage.

Once down, the victim is rapidly – 3 turns – stripped of anything edible or shiny, and the squirrels immediately scamper away into the nearby trees with their loot. If a PC walks under a mugger squirrel pack, make a reaction roll at -5, -10 if the student is munching on food or obviously holding a lunch bag. On a reaction of Bad or worse, the squirrels attack.

### STRANGLEVINE CACTUS

ST: 15-20	Move/Dodge: 0/3	Size: 1-10 hexes
DX: 13	PD/DR: 0/1	Weight: 200-2,000 lbs.
IQ: 3	Damage: 1d-3 imp.#	Origin: MU
HT: 14	Reach: 3	Habitats: CG

Rumor has it that this mutant vegetable, with the behavior of a psychotic octopus, was created when a *very* high-ranking dean accidentally poured large amounts of a famous soft-drink into an otherwise innocuous potted plant. While the first occurrence of the Stranglevine Cactus was torn apart by the Team (under the mistaken impression that it was an opposing player), the seeds that it left still sprout occasionally. Stranglevine Cacti are often used as nasty surprises for people who chase the dryads too much.

Besides damage from the thorns, the flexible branches of the cactus attack in Close Combat by grappling the victim and then inflicting strangulation damage (see p. B112).

*Variations:* On non-Silly campuses, the Stranglevine Cactus doesn't grow in the wild, and is smaller, less mobile (DX 7) and less aggressive.

### TURTLES, ARCTIC FURRED

ST: 5	Move/Dodge: 1/1	Size: 1 hex
DX: 5	PD/DR: 2/5	Weight: 4-12 lbs.
IQ: 3	Damage: 1d-5 cr.	Origin: MU
HT: 16/5	Reach: C	Habitats: CG

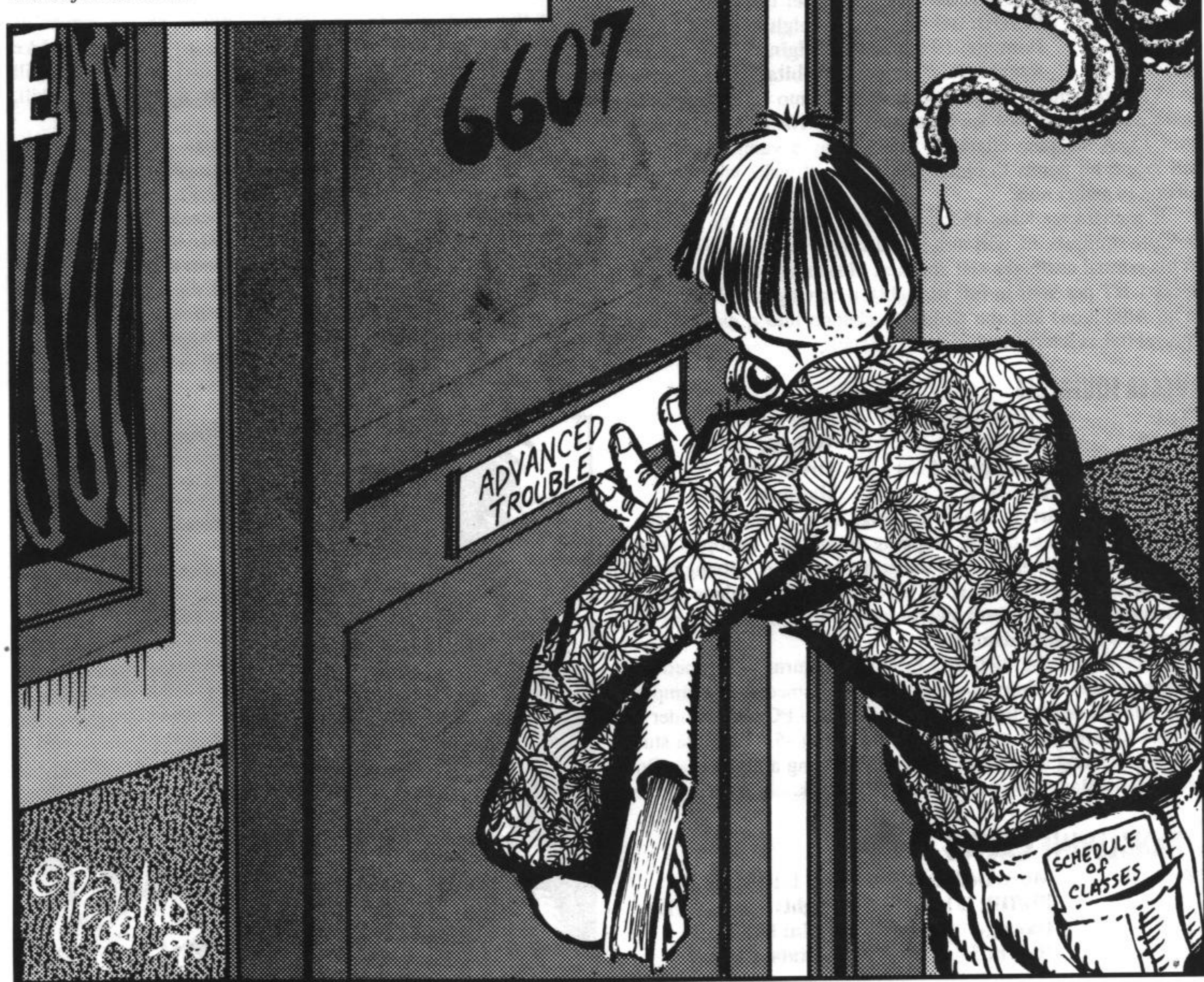
These small mutant turtles have shells covered in white fur. Probably the result of an ancient WUSE experiment in gene-splicing, the slow-breeding turtles have now reached a sufficient population on campus to be a minor nuisance in the gardens. Other than that, they're not good for much, except maybe as practice targets. They aren't even very good eating, unlike meeps. (Sometimes very nearsighted or Clueless characters will mistake them for large meeps, but they're a lot harder to kill, and not at all worth the effort.)

They're small, they're stupid, they're slow and they're harmless – unless you happen to stick a finger into one's beak. So why are they even mentioned here? First, they give the Sahudese gardeners something to chase besides students taking short-cuts. Second, *something* in the *IOU* bestiary has to be harmless, just so the GM can harass players by mentioning the creature frequently and letting them get paranoid about why they haven't figured out why. And maybe they're just a ploy by an evil extraterrestrial intelligence that happens to look like small, white, furry turtles. Once everybody gets used to the fact that they're stupid and harmless . . .



# THE IOU CAMPAIGN

**J**ohn Smith checked the room number against his class-schedule, cracked the door open to peek through and – when the resulting scenery looked reasonable – walked in. A young woman was in the room already. WUSE major. John could tell – it was something about the way she had a CIA gull's internal components strewn over her desk and the two adjacent ones.



The rest of the class trailed in over the next few minutes. John waved to Loriel and Marcus – he'd had a class with the two alternate-dimensioners last semester, and stranded sentients should stick together. A blond wolf trotted in, carrying a backpack, and turned into an embarrassed-looking member of the Team. A redhead in black sat down next to John, and began lecturing her black cat about heckling. The cat muttered under its breath and blew a raspberry.

Finally Professor Barmo arrived. John pegged him for a COUP teacher "on loan" to the English Department, since Barmo had a Bullet-Proof Briefcase (on sale at the campus bookstore). Barmo pulled his notes out of the briefcase and set them on the lectern. "Greetings, class. I'm Professor Barmo, and this is Combat Journalism 323, which will fulfill one non-major English requirement. Is everyone in the right classroom?" The Team wolf sounded out the letters on his class schedule, and Loriel chuckled a shuriken at the teacher; despite her excellent aim, it clattered against the wall. John groaned to himself – even though he was teaching a measly English class, Barmo had gotten *The Treatment*, which meant John wouldn't have a chance of reading his mind and figuring out what the teacher **really** wanted to see papers about.

**\*\*CLICK\*\***

John Smith checked the room number against his class schedule and walked in. A young woman was already inside, standing on a chair at the back of the room to examine the security camera at closer range. Something about the way she held her power screwdriver said "WUSE major" to John.

The rest of the class trailed in over the next few minutes. John waved to Loriel and Marcus – he'd had a class with them last semester, and had a notion that wherever they were from, it was about as far away (and far out) as his homeworld. Maybe it was Loriel's ears . . . An unshaven Team member came in, wearing dog-tags around his neck, followed by a redhead in black who was talking quietly to the (oblivious) black cat riding on her shoulders.

Finally Professor Barmo arrived: a nondescript fellow with an executive's briefcase. "Good morning, class. I'm Mr. Barmo, and this is Competitive Journalism 323, for non-majors. Is everyone in the right room?" The Team member checked his class schedule a few times, and John tried to slip into Barmo's mind, to see what kind of papers he really wanted. John "bounced" painfully. A mindshield? On an **English** teacher? Drat. And he could have sworn the teacher **wasn't** wearing one, too.

**\*\*CLICK\*\***

John Smith checked the room number against his class schedule and walked in. A young woman was already there, and she looked up warily from behind the desk's lectern at John's entrance. He carefully avoided looking at her and took a seat near the door – WUSE or COUP, he wasn't sure, and he didn't want to evaluate any explosions or bugs first-hand.

The rest of the class trailed in over the next few minutes. John nodded to Loriel and Marcus – they'd had a class together last semester, and there was a chance they'd remember him. An unshaven Team member came in, wearing dog-tags around his neck, followed by a redhead in black. As she passed John, he noticed a black cat peeking out of her backpack.

Finally Professor Barmo arrived: a carefully bland man in a dark suit, carrying a slim briefcase. "Hello. I am your teacher for Advanced Journalism 323. Are you all in the correct class?" The Team member surreptitiously checked his class schedule, and John tried to slip into the professor's mind, to see what kinds of papers he **really** wanted . . .

He woke up groggily, with Marcus and Loriel leaning over him. The chubby pre-med student looked relieved and called, "He's all right, sir," while Loriel helped John to his feet.

## IOU IN OTHER GENRES

By its very nature as a dimensional nexus, Illuminati University can show up in any other universe the GM wishes. The University will always have a Tech Level at least 3-4 higher than the rest of the world, and perhaps more if introduced into a *GURPS Ice Age* campaign. Here are some suggested treatments for other worlds/genres.

**Yrth (GURPS Fantasy)** – Most of the time IOU collectively ignores Yrth, since there's not much that the University wants from there. The exception is Sauhudese gardeners, who may very well travel freely to and from Sahud. Occasionally Yrth is assaulted by a group of students on vacation – say, the WUSE Class of '98. Critical failures of Teleport spells in Yrth sometimes strand the transported individuals on the IOU campus. A Weird University will have less traffic with Yrth, mostly just accidents while reading *Books Man Was Not Meant To Read Aloud*, but former Yrthling students are quite possible. A Darkly Illuminated campus may have ties with Necromantic mages who receive spell components in return for supplying IOU with research subjects for mind-control experiments. Sometimes the spell components *are* former research subjects; the University is big on recycling.

A Yrth-based IOU would be difficult to explain – Yrth doesn't approve of tech *at all* – but a magic-focused University is possible. The Unseen University in Terry Pratchett's Discworld series is mandatory reading for this option.

Other fantasy worlds could easily have a Metaphysics-dominated IOU.

**Supers** – The University is essentially unchanged, except for the larger number of metahumans on campus. Add a School of Superhumanities (SoS) to handle things related to superpowers: super-genetics, super-history, etc. (They *will* be in conflict with other schools.) In all versions of the University, the amount of damage that rampaging supers might cause should be minimized as much as plausible, and a little beyond that. IOU is used to strange powers that can topple buildings in a single hiccup, and builds accordingly. A Silly campus will have Mundanes who don't believe in superpowers, even when the rest of the world does! A Darkly Illuminated IOU will probably be experimenting with the origins of super-abilities; while Illuminati University may be the best place for a young super to train and discover the limits of his powers, the University is also discovering *everything* about him, and may have some suggestions on how a metahuman Illuminus might be helpful . . .

*Continued on next page . . .*

## IOU IN OTHER GENRES (CONTINUED)

**Cyberpunk** – Add chrome, leather and flash to the campus, but just a bit *less* than might be expected; when the shocking becomes commonplace, the University expands its strangeness in other directions. The University will probably be the Darkly Illuminated version, though a Weird IOU is possible. (Silly cyberpunk is almost a contradiction in terms. But if you can make it work . . .)

From the outside world, IOU has few links into the Net – very few deckers will even know “iou.edu.com” exists. Or *can* exist . . . From University computers there are links *everywhere*, and the only problem is getting proper passwords. Deckers cannot break into THE computer at IOU at all, except with the help of a student or faculty. After dodging all kinds of ICE, slipping past countless Watchdogs and using every skill at his disposal, a decker might eventually come across a message that reads: “Congratulations, you have placed out of THE computer Science 101, and earned a free semester at Illuminati University. Do you accept?”

In any version, IOU owns several Corporations outright. The Darkly Illuminated University will be a source of new designer drugs, and prying Netrunners may find that THE computer is an Artificial Intelligence with Electronic Deathtouch instead of Black Ice.

**Space** – The way Illuminati University fits into a Space campaign will depend heavily on what the GM has previously set up. The University could have a relatively small campus on one world, branch campuses on several worlds (why is there a Main Building in each branch campus with the ArchDean in residence?) or IOU could have an entire world to itself. If a Silly University has set up shop on a hostile planet or asteroid, there will be no obvious reasons for the Earth-like conditions on campus. As always, Illuminati University will have a slightly higher tech level than the rest of the universe, and will often have a distressing lack of respect for Precursor artifacts.

**Lensman** – Not until Mentor pays his overdue library fines.

*The teacher nodded. “Good. We shall have a roll-call now, and see if we have everyone.” John had the unpleasant feeling Barmo was looking at him, and wondered if he’d made a mistake, assuming a simple English teacher wouldn’t be one of Them . . .*

Illuminati University can be used as a setting for an entire campaign, with the characters as students, staff, faculty or “Other,” or as a background for one-shots. If the characters are all students, putting them in the same class makes a natural starting place for a PC group to form, and there are always required courses to pull them together again – not to mention paperwork bungles, scheduling mishaps and computer errors; it’s perfectly reasonable for the party-hearty Team member to end up in a Postnuclear Physics class with the ivory-tower genius. Dormitories are another good place for characters to meet. At IOU, the generic “the adventurers all meet in the tavern” scene is replaced by the group of lost freshthings meeting in the dorm lounge . . .

Depending on the players’ interests, the GM may want to start the campaign with unsuspecting 100-point freshthings as they arrive at IOU for the first time (offering numerous opportunities for traumatic experiences, such as their first bite of cafeteria food), instead of seasoned second-semester freshthings (or upperclassthings) who already know the ropes.

Staff are likely to be assigned to work in the same building or area, and faculty will encounter each other at meetings, either as rivals from different schools, or as allies (sometimes reluctant ones) striving to ensure that their colleges don’t get the budget cuts this semester.

If IOU is placed into an existing campaign, it is recommended that the GM figure out some reason why the PCs will have access to Student Life Insurance. Just being toted along and processed by the cleanup crews is perfectly reasonable, though there will be a bit of a hassle when the Health Center discovers that these people weren’t students. Of course, the GM doesn’t have to mention that this place is IOU, or that the PCs aren’t really going to be dead permanently (just talk fast, before anybody rips up a character sheet).

In an existing campaign, IOU can be a strange locale that the PCs discover in the course of an adventure, deal with, and leave as quickly as they can manage – or a bit of “flavor” that they might encounter and wonder about – or a source of the subtle manipulations that they’ve been tracing for years. Or all three . . .

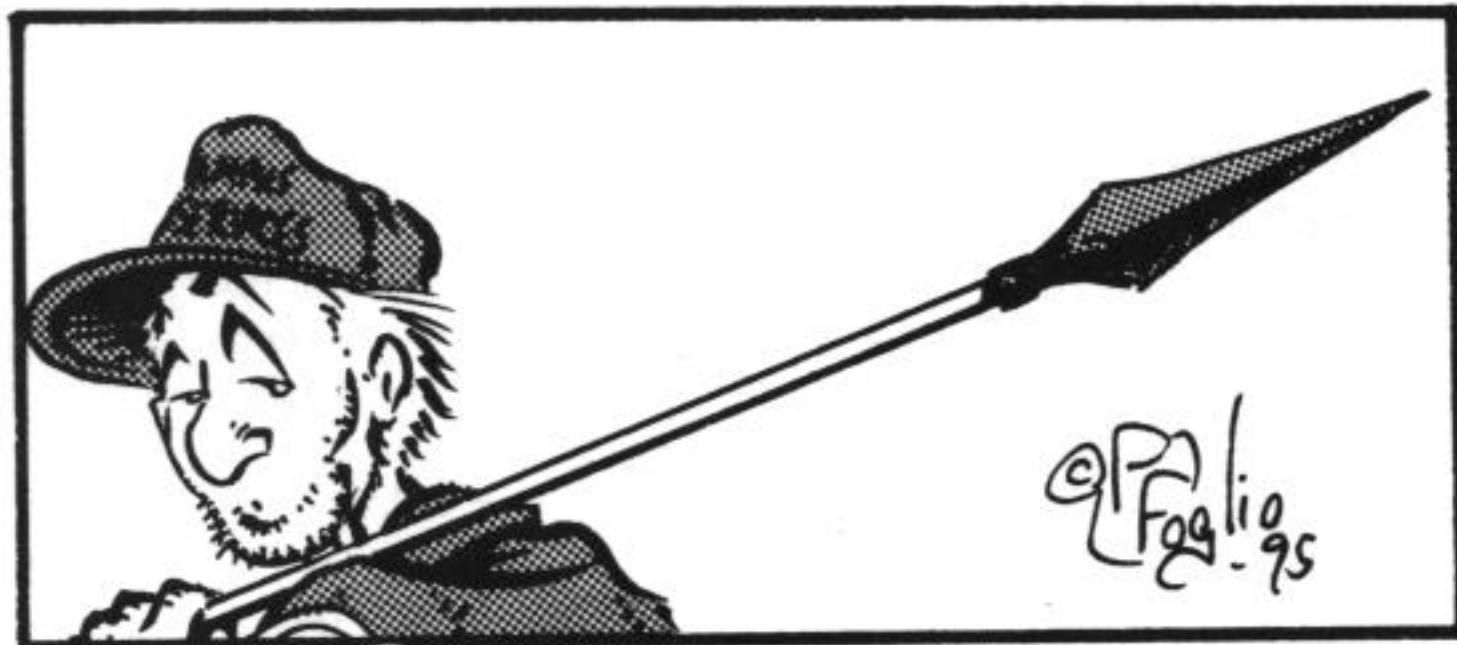
## CAMPAIGN STYLE

*IOU* campaigns lend themselves to considerable variations in style. These range from the outright silly, brain-dead campaign, through mystery, weirdness and horror, to the darkly-illuminated tone of *GURPS Illuminati*.

While an *IOU* campaign will probably stay with one particular style, it is possible to change if the GM desires. It is not hard to incrementally turn a darkly-illuminated or weird IOU into a silly one, though characters from hard-bitten, dark campaigns may not mesh well with lunatic science, rampaging rubber

monsters and aliens with silly plots to corner the ice cream market on Mercury; they may quickly long for the bad old days of demonic conspiracies and elaborate quintuple-crosses. Silliness will rapidly run riot, given half a chance.

Converting a silly campaign to a darker style can be much harder. The easiest way is to use that old chestnut, the “alternate universe” gimmick. A silly IOU has plenty of crazies with unreliable magic or tech – probably half the professors commute to campus from alternate realities (and some of them seem to stay there, even while teaching). Something



Goes Horribly Wrong and \*POOF\*, the characters are suddenly in a much darker, grimmer version of the campus.

Unless the players are agreed on changing the course of the campaign, changes in tone are best reserved for single adventures, with the characters heaving a sigh of relief when they finally find their way back to their own – sane and sensible, of course – version of IOU.

## SILLY

This is the primary style presented in this worldbook: bad puns, silly gadgets, campy campus humor and incompetent – or incomprehensible – conspiracies to take over the world. Character survival is almost assured (though there's no guarantee the characters won't be . . . *changed*). Many, if not all, of the stories in the supermarket tabloids are true, though the mundane world rarely believes them. Conspiracy theorists are all crazy, and 100% right – there's a lunatic behind every bush planning to take over the world, and *everyone's* controlling everyone else. Campus events are characterized by impressive special effects, and corresponding collateral damage. Death, both of NPCs and PCs, is common, but normally temporary. Silly *IOU* campaigns are *highly* cinematic.

Characters in a Silly *IOU* setting need not follow any guidelines for reality, sense or taste – the more unlikely and off-the-wall the character is, the better! (The sample students starting on p. 64 may be useful as examples of outrageous characters.) PCs in a Silly campaign often have strange goals in life, such as rescuing plants from vegetarians, walking on the Moon . . . barefoot, or phoning home to the Andromeda galaxy (collect). A starting point level of 100 to 150 character points is quite adequate for a Silly campaign, especially since there is no need to design the character for survival. Pick character concepts for interesting worldviews, perversions of the rules or satirical value.

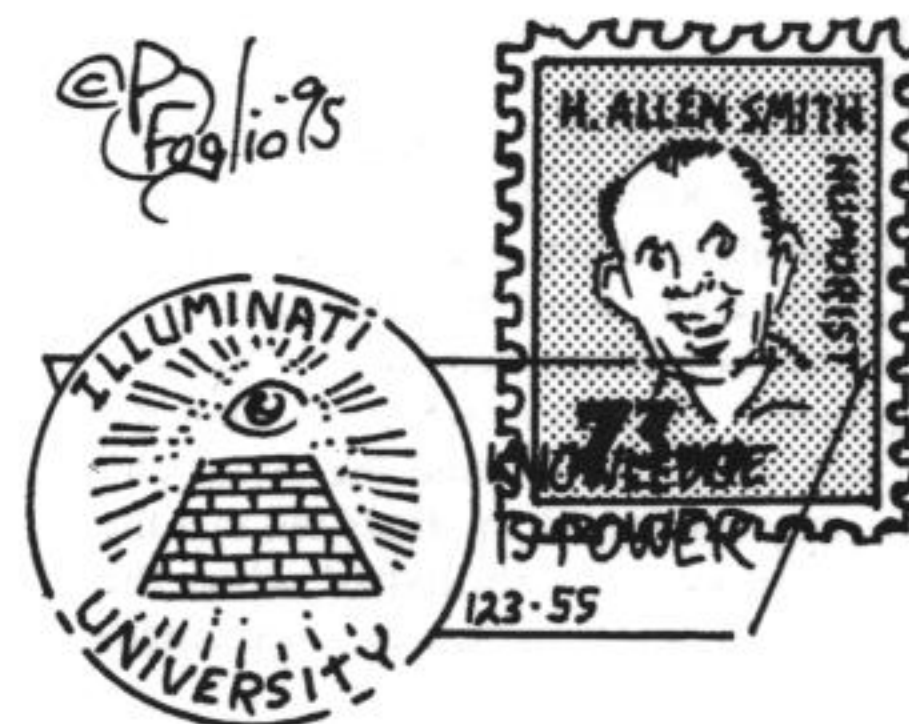
Aliens and other non-humans are common on the Silly campus. (They're common off-campus, too – half of your neighbors back home were probably Martians, vampires or orthodontists in hiding.) Almost nothing qualifies as an Unusual Background; "Raised by Orthodox Jewish ninja werewolves" doesn't even come close . . .

The Silly IOU is a hotbed of psi, magic, weird science and superpowers, and you can hardly cross campus without seeing something that would freak mundanes. Most PCs will have a weird ability or two, though not necessarily a useful one . . . True Mundanes are objects of fear, and some students even believe they are mythical!

Many off-campus spots are normal mana, and high mana zones are common at IOU. The parts of campus that *aren't* overrun with arcane powers are flooded with exotic technology. WUSE is a riot of devices from wildly different Tech Levels, and its products spill over into the rest of the campus. Every "computer" on Earth, down to the lowliest VCR and microwave oven controller, is part of THE computer. Surveillance devices are visible – and invisible – all over campus.

Adventures can happen anywhere, anywhen. Even a simple lecture on comparative biology can be enlivened when the stuffed demonstration model of *T. rex* comes to life. Alien spacecraft routinely land on campus to invade, party or just boggle the hicks. Elder gods drop in for lunch, or simply to watch an especially good show of "Funniest Home Videos." Time travelers stop and ask directions to ancient Rome, inviting the helpful locals along.

Off-campus adventures will often involve students using their weird powers to combat local menaces, like cyborged, 90-year-old psychotic grandmothers with nuclear-powered chainsaws, or Madison Avenue plots to brainwash the population into buying toothpaste-flavored cereal. Interactions between the characters, recreational activities and part-time jobs are also fertile ground for plots.



## IOU AND TIME-TRAVEL

The University and time travel go together like bacon and eggs, Mom and apple pie, bug-eyed monsters and drool. Not only can the characters trash large sections of the planet (and near-Earth space), but they can rampage through time. Possible activities range from outright cross-time looting, to do-it-yourself time paradox generation, to showing up at famous historical events and heckling.

For general rules on time-travel, see *GURPS Time Travel*. Due to the "publish or perish" syndrome, IOU professors and graduate students have probably tried just about all feasible (and many highly implausible) ways to accomplish time-travel, so the GM can allow multiple techniques.

### C.T.H.U.L.H.U.

The premier time-travel organization on campus is C.T.H.U.L.H.U., naturally. It considers itself the *only* authorized agency for temporal operations, thus causing occasional conflicts with other colleges, which may have peripheral interests in time-travel. This college has appointed itself the guardian of the timestream – only *it* is allowed to meddle (and loot!).

History courses are taught here, and often feature "hands-on" learning in the field. If the GM wants to operate a time-travel campaign at IOU, this is the best method. C.T.H.U.L.H.U. favors "push the button and it goes" methods of time-travel – it does not teach temporal theory or do much experimentation, and the actual devices involved are small, unspectacular and usually reliable. (They appear to be of a very advanced Tech Level, and are probably imported by the Dean from sources in the far future.)

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## IOU AND TIME TRAVEL (CONTINUED)

Time-travel adventures in C.T.H.U.-L.H.U. will either be simple excursions into the past for observation, looting and timeline tinkering, or will be operations against unauthorized trippers from other schools, or perhaps repairs to the timeline after amateurs have snarled up the past. The University itself is – usually – protected from timeline meddling by the campus reality stabilizers (see p. 83), but the outside world is not. And the ArchDean gets very annoyed if she finds out that the stock market was abolished when the People's Republic of America was established in 1968.

### OTHER IOU SCHOOLS

Many other schools and departments have interests in time-travel, and each has its own favored techniques. WUSE tends toward complex time machines that pull enough power to brown out the North American power grid, while the College of Metaphysics leans toward techniques involving phoenix blood, midnight ceremonies and odd potions. The College of Zen Surrealism may also engage in time travel, using experimental meditative techniques, but with them, it's hard to tell if they've actually *gone* anywhere, or merely had particularly strange dreams . . .

Most adventures involving other colleges at IOU will be one-shots: testing a new theory, or trying to snag a *particularly* important bit of loot from the past. Such operations are usually secret (to keep C.T.H.U.L.H.U. from hornning in) and ill-prepared. Except for time-travel gear, WUSE and Metaphysics students generally have better weird tech or powers than C.T.H.U.L.H.U. students, but most of the real geeks *hate* history, which means they tend to be clueless about the era they travel to. "You mean they don't speak English here?" "Where's the bathroom?" "Where's the toilet paper?"

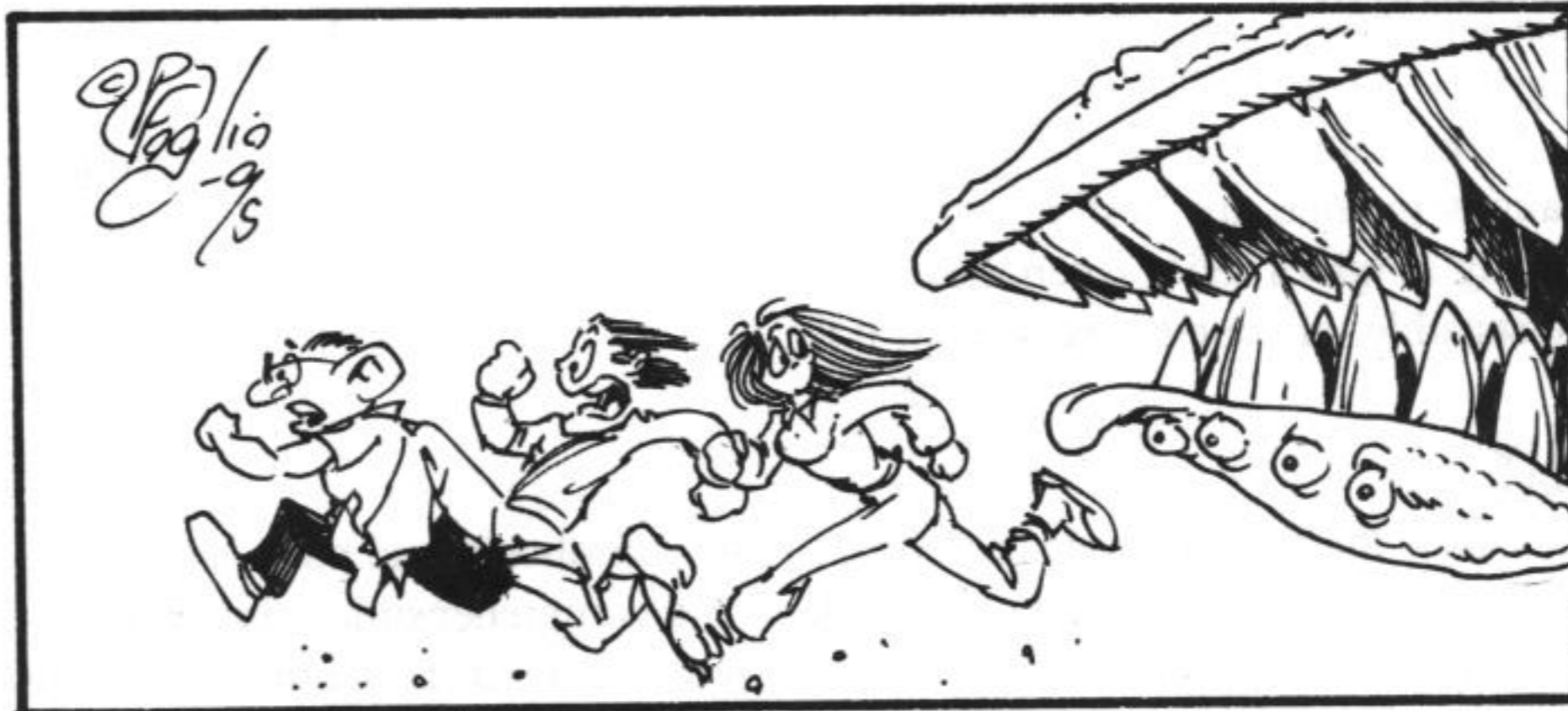
### RIVAL UNIVERSITIES

Some of IOU's rival institutions may also be capable of time-travel, which opens opportunities for major skulduggery: professors with opposing theories, squabbles over loot (academic and monetary) and sabotaging the enemy Team before – *long* before – a critical game.

### ILLUMINATI

Where time-travel exists, the Illuminati will undoubtedly have it, and be tinkering with the timestream for their own inscrutable purposes. Luckily, IOU is *part* of the conspiracy, which means that Illuminati operations in the past will only conflict with the University's on rare occasions. Say, about half the time . . .

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## WEIRD

Weird *IOU* campaigns deal in occult phenomena, aliens and other oddities, but taken mostly seriously. This style resembles our own world, but with subtle bits of weirdness. Perhaps 10% of the stories in the supermarket tabloids are true, and conspiracy theorists are *usually* outright lunatics. Large-scale death and destruction is less common in this style than in the Silly campaign, and character resurrection is less necessary (but still possible).

Characters in a Weird campaign should be much like ones from a Silly IOU, but toned down a little. A Weird campaign is best started with 100-point characters (second-semester freshthings). The GM should be more concerned with abusive character designs, and should feel free to veto outrageous levels of advantages, skills and powers, as well as incongruous disadvantages. Most PCs will probably be humans with weird abilities. Aliens and other non-humans will be infrequent on campus, and the GM may wish to charge a few points for Unusual Backgrounds for such characters.

Psi and magic are still fairly common in a Weird campaign. Super abilities are uncommon or unknown, though human-derived "natural" shapeshifters, such as vampires and werewolves, will be around. Weird science is less outrageous, but still present, and there will be a few experimental gadgets around that exceed the nominal local Tech Level. THE computer is confined primarily to the campus. Cinematic rules and abilities are optional – a weird campaign can work with either a realistic or cinematic style.

Mana levels on-campus will be normal, with some spots of high mana, while the rest of the world will be a low mana zone (with some exceptions, of course).

Surveillance of the campus is less overt, but still present. PCs should always have the impression that they are being watched while on campus; it will be unclear whether this is by human agents, technology or more arcane techniques.

Many adventures will happen off-campus, as the PCs attempt to do research for class assignments, or simply happen upon strange situations. Characters should be concerned about showing off strange abilities in the largely mundane world. While some authorities will take occult abilities in stride, and may even welcome them, others might run "troublemaking students" out of town. Overt displays of power could attract unwelcome media attention, though only local and "fringe" newspapers will bother with clearly unbelievable stories.

Typical adventure plots will involve borderline horror (hauntings, poltergeists, mythical monsters and perhaps the odd demon or two), people plagued by – or abusing – weird powers, alien visitations and searches for legendary or mythical artifacts, locations, people, creatures, etc. The *X-Files* and *In Search Of* . . . television series and the Indiana Jones movies typify the concepts and style that characterize Weird *IOU* campaigns.

## DARKLY ILLUMINATED

This is most suited as an adjunct to a *GURPS Illuminati* campaign (or *GURPS Horror*, or both) – this campaign also resembles the “real” world, but has the added complication of the Secret Masters running the University. Humor, if present, will be dark, and the campaign will tend to revolve around survival. Physical dangers are less overt in this campaign, and characters are less likely to die gratuitously. Therefore, character resurrection may not be available (see p. 107). Of course, knowing too much can be deadly – but so can knowing too little . . .

Characters in a Darkly Illuminated campaign should be either fairly normal 100-point characters – second-semester freshmen just discovering that the world is not as innocuous as they thought – or perhaps 150 - 200-point visiting faculty who become enmeshed in the dark political web at Illuminati University. While they can still have strange powers, PCs will want to keep them secret, and the powers themselves will be less outrageous. In general, only NPCs will display any cinematic characteristics – shrugging off fatal wounds, for instance. Dark *IOU* characters should be encouraged to take high levels of Thief/Spy skills, and possibly Combat skills, since character survival may depend on these, and plots will revolve around such skills.

The mana level of the world in general will be low, with disturbingly frequent instances of normal mana on-campus, and the occasional spot of high mana. Characters should *worry* when they stumble across anything but low mana zones. Psi powers exist, and the University even offers training, but known psis will often get the feeling they’re being watched, even more so than normal characters. (The same will be true for PCs with magical or super powers.)

Technology is outwardly no different than the rest of the world’s (but don’t examine Campus Security’s nightsticks too closely. . .), and THE computer shows no signs of intelligence or being in control of the world-wide network; at least, *students* don’t see any indications of this. There is considerable evidence of cutting-edge technology, much of which is locked away in labs doing government research, with prominent “Classified Area: No Unauthorized Entry” signs on the doors, and sophisticated crypto-locks.

Overt signs of surveillance activities on campus are limited, just a few security cameras outdoors, watching walkways and other common areas – strictly for student safety, of course. Characters with appropriate skills may ferret out other bugs in classrooms, dorms and bathrooms, as well as outdoors in trees, flowers and bushes. Such bugs are clearly highly sophisticated and probably at *least* classified government technology. Attempts to trace signals will typically result in failure, though some bugs can be linked to classroom activities in COUP.



## IOU AND TIME TRAVEL (CONTINUED)

### THE TIME PATROL

A staple of science fiction, the Time Patrol probably takes a dim view of students joyriding (and looting) throughout the timestream. These square-jawed heroes of the timeways are likely to show up and ruin that really *special* party in ancient Rome. Of course, they have been known to blunder once in a while, themselves, so they might be subject to blackmail. C.T.H.U.L.H.U. and the Time Patrol will have a strong rivalry, each asserting that it is the One True Protector of the once and future past.

### IOU IN OTHER TIMES

Visitors to other times may be surprised to find branches of the IOU campus in the far past, even back to the Dawn of Man. Further back, reptile-inhabited versions of the campus may be found in the Age of Dinosaurs. Sometimes this can be useful – a few of the campus walkways seem to link the campus at different times, though finding these deliberately takes an Area Knowledge (IOU) skill roll at a -10 penalty, and there’s no guarantee that there is a path to the specific time and location sought (roll of 5 or less on 3d).

### PARALLEL UNIVERSES

As an interdimensional nexus, the University offers intermittent access to a wide variety of universes – sometimes by merely taking the wrong route off-campus. Technological and arcane techniques offer other ways of visiting parallel (or skew!) timelines and interacting with their inhabitants.

## USING IOU IN A TIME TRAVEL CAMPAIGN

The University can make an interesting adventure in a “normal” time-travel campaign. Travelers could encounter a past version of the campus, or may run afoul of a present-time IOU excursion in the past. The PCs might even be the Time Patrol, trying to keep these trans-temporal hooligans from destroying the timestream! Discovering past-time looting and meddling, and eventually tracing the perpetrators to the University can be the basis of an extended adventure. And once the characters have located the troublemakers, exactly what are they going to do with an *entire university*? Between the reality stabilizers and the various sorts of weird powers and tech available on campus, IOU is going to be a tough nut to crack.

Sideways “time” travel can easily dump travelers onto the University campus – it’s one of the easiest locations to access in all the parallel worlds. In fact, it tends to suck people in from neighboring timelines . . .

## PARKING PERMITS

Issuing parking tickets and towing vehicles are the only things Campus Security *is* competent at; too much so, in many students' opinions. Therefore, anyone with a car on campus should get a parking permit. A basic student parking permit costs \$50 per semester, and entitles the holder to park in any available space – no more than two cars are permitted in any parking space – in any student lot (which are guaranteed to be at least a mile from wherever the student wants to be). Note that the University sells roughly three times as many student permits as there are spaces in the campus student lots...

Illegally-parked vehicles, or those without permits, are likely to be towed within an hour (roll against Campus Security's Detect Illegally-Parked Vehicle skill, at an effective level of 12). A \$100 fine must be paid before the vehicle will be released.

Students with cash to burn can bid in the annual auction for "Special" parking permits. These entitle the holder to park anywhere on campus, and generally cost in excess of \$1,000 per semester. Theoretically, there are enough "Special" spaces on campus for the number of permit holders, but enterprising COUP students do a brisk side-business in forged "Special" permits at the start of each semester. Prices vary, but are usually \$200 and up. For each week that a student uses a forged permit, roll a contest between the forger's original skill roll and Campus Security's skill at detecting bogus permits (typically an effective skill of 10). If Security wins, the permit is confiscated, the car is towed, and a \$100 fine is levied on the student.

All humanoid faculty and staff look and dress like normal humans, with only disturbing hints at their actual appearances or origins – some people may cast odd shadows, or look strange when seen out of the corner of one's eye. Men In Black will be common on campus, even on the faculty (but always teaching *other students'* classes, never the PCs'). Odd quirks of dress are common: mirrorshades worn indoors; concealing, hooded capes; umbrellas carried open on pleasant, sunny days; odd bulges under clothing; and the like.

Dark *IOU* adventures will typically focus on intrigue: uncovering mysterious plots, getting inducted into secret societies, backstabbing rival students or faculty and amassing power and money, not to mention avoiding the intrigues of enemies (or crossfire from "neutral" parties), trying to keep from becoming pawns of others and covering up when the PCs learn things they shouldn't know...

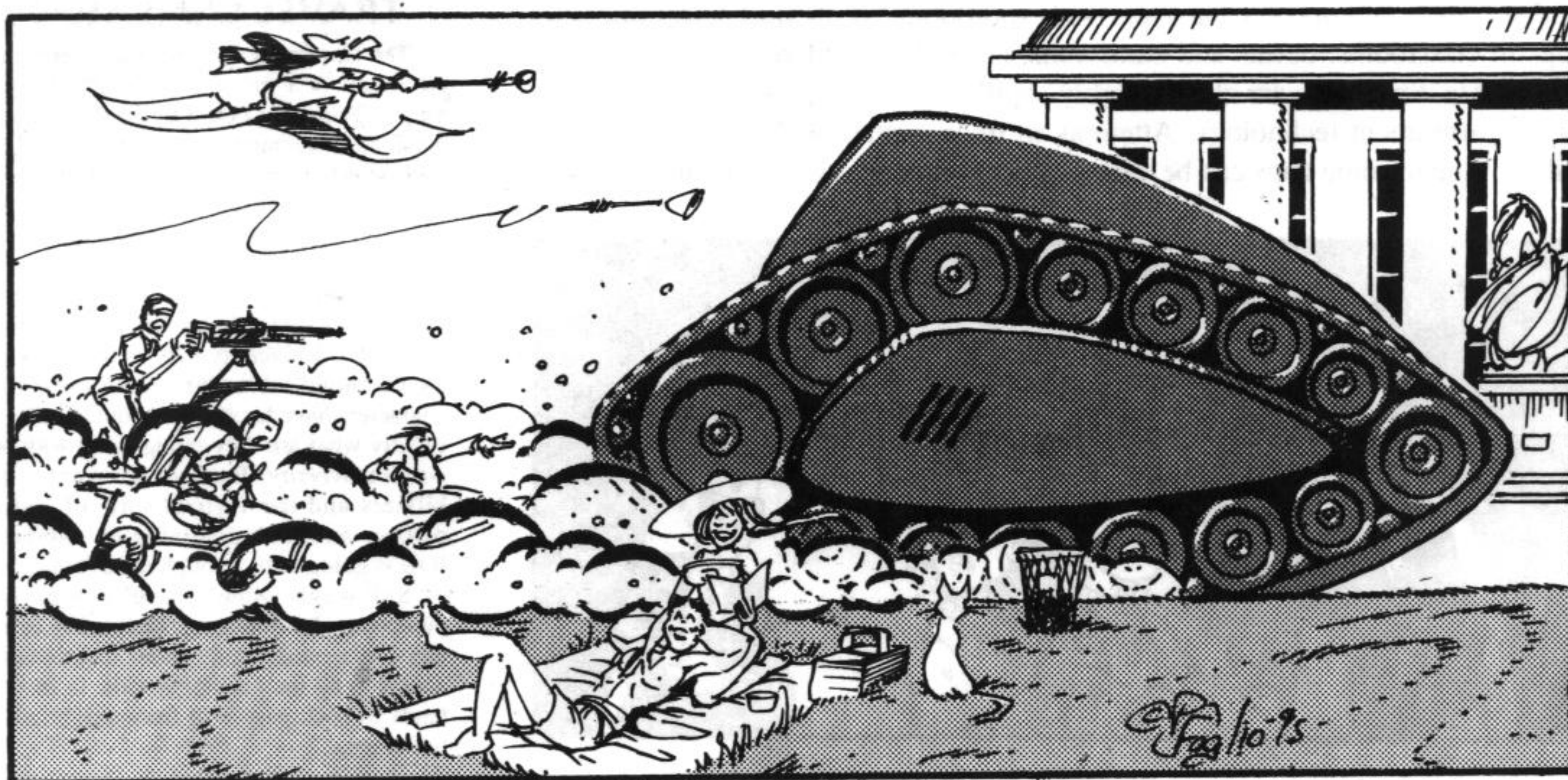
## CAMPUS LIFE

There are many aspects of life at a university besides education. (Many students consider these *more* important than education.) Characters face a variety of issues of everyday living that are specific to the university environment.

### HOUSING

Unless the students want to camp out on the Pent (not recommended!), they need a place to sleep, party, store their books and even study on occasion. There are a number of choices, but no matter which the players choose for their characters, the GM can use the character's residence to inflict a variety of petty annoyances.

*Dormitory housing* is a common choice. It's fairly cheap, convenient to classes and usually in good shape – unless the Team has had a party in the next room. Drawbacks are noisy neighbors, cramped quarters, and, most of all, *roommates* (see p. 99). Suitable application of cash to staffers in the Student Housing Office can alleviate these problems. Some of the penthouse suites in the high-rise dorms are *quite* nice, but are also expensive! Generally, no one cares who is *actually* living in a given dorm room, and many students take advantage of this, if they have accommodating roommates. This does sometimes lead to games of "musical roommates," in both senses.



*Off-campus apartments* are available at rates ranging from about \$100/month for a room in someone's house to entire rental houses (and the occasional mansion). Splitting the cost of a multi-room apartment or house will usually cost \$100-250/month per student, depending on the size and quality of the place. Most students will need to split costs with roommates or housemates, which leads to the roommate problem again. Other drawbacks to apartment living include neighbors, meal preparation, and, of course, *landlords*. Apartment dwellers are prone to a wide variety of landlord-caused nuisances, ranging from building problems, to unusual restrictions ("Never open the drapes after midnight. And don't open the nailed-up door. And *no pets!*"), to outright extortion ("First and last month's rent, security deposit, cleaning fee, utilities surcharge . . .").

*Living at home* is usually the cheapest option. This is only possible if the student's parents live in town (or the PC has some exotic means of transportation!). The drawback to this, of course, is that the PC is constantly exposed to his parents and siblings. (If the parents are Illumni, this can get even more entertaining . . .) For this reason, students may opt to live on campus or in an apartment, anyway.

## TRANSPORTATION

If the PCs don't live on campus, they'll need transportation, and even if they do live there, they will need to go off-campus on occasion. The campus and surrounding town offer a number of options:

*Personal cars* are the most flexible form of transportation. However, besides the usual costs of buying and operating a car, IOU adds two major expenses. First, insurance rates for cars brought to campus are astronomical – they often suffer raids from WUSE students on scavenging expeditions, theft by COUP students in need of getaway vehicles or collateral damage from routine campus activities. To add expense to injury, all cars parked on campus require parking permits, which are a major source of University revenue. See the *Parking Permits* sidebar on p. 98.

Most students can't afford decent cars, and usually wind up with \$500 junkers from Honest Al's Used Cars. GMs should note that Murphy's Law of Adventuring Inconvenience *definitely* applies to these vehicles – any time it is *absolutely critical* that the car start, roll 3d. The car works on a roll of 10 or less. Repeated attempts take ten seconds, but have no penalty. On a critical failure, the car won't start until someone with Mechanic skill fixes it.

*Campus shuttles* are provided free to University students, staff and faculty. (Well, actually it's not free – the fees are in the fine print of the tuition bill, or in payroll deductions for employees. Whether they use the shuttle service or not . . .) The shuttle bus service covers much of the surrounding town, and also runs frequent buses to the Pyramid Mall. While cheap, the buses aren't particularly convenient: riders are exposed to the weather while waiting, and the published schedule bears little resemblance to when the buses *actually* arrive. Also, the drivers may be inclined to demonstrate pursuit-driving techniques, or compete to see who can get closest to pedestrians – or waiting riders – without hitting them.

*Public transportation* is available in the surrounding town, though the buses cost money. Periodic warfare breaks out between the city bus system and its competition, the campus shuttles. When this happens, it's time for the GM to break out the *Car Wars* set . . .

*Taxis* are also available in town. Drivers rarely speak English, and are known to drive recklessly at high speeds for hours without finding their destinations. Even without taking the scenic route, cabs are expensive and risky.

## ROOMMATES

Roommates can be very annoying. PCs should normally have roommates unless they're Wealthy or better, or are living at home. (Characters with high Wealth can bribe their way into a single room or pay for their own private apartment, house or even a whole estate!) Ex- (or current!) roommates make good Enemies – they know the PC's habits, and usually have a selection of good blackmail material, besides.

PCs may try to get each other for roommates to avoid problems (a small cash bribe to the Housing Services Retirement Fund will allow the character to declare a roommate preference). If this happens, the sadistic GM can use the petty annoyances of close living to foment intra-party strife . . .

Seniors can sometimes get a (small) dorm room all to themselves, providing underclass things with incentive to pass their classes!



## FOOD

Students in the dorms *must* buy one of the Food Service meal plans. There are several dozen of these, and the details change each semester. A meal plan determines where the student can eat, what type of food he's entitled to and when he can eat. Special plans are available for students with special needs: kosher, vegetarian and vampire diet plans are all offered. The cost of basic food service is covered by the monthly cost of living for students. Special meal plans cost an additional \$100/month or more.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## FOOD (CONTINUED)

As a rule, campus meals are like ancient life – nasty, brutish and short. The Food Service prides itself on its creative menus, which generally means that half the meals are simply unpalatable or inedible to start with, before the cooks even get a chance to add their own special touches. Some cafeterias on campus serve better food than others; paying for a premium meal plan (an extra \$100/month) will usually result in edible food. Filthy Rich or Multimillionaire students can purchase the “Five-Star Plan,” which is on-demand room service catered from the Cordon Bleu chefs in the Croesus Illumni Center. This costs \$2,500/month.

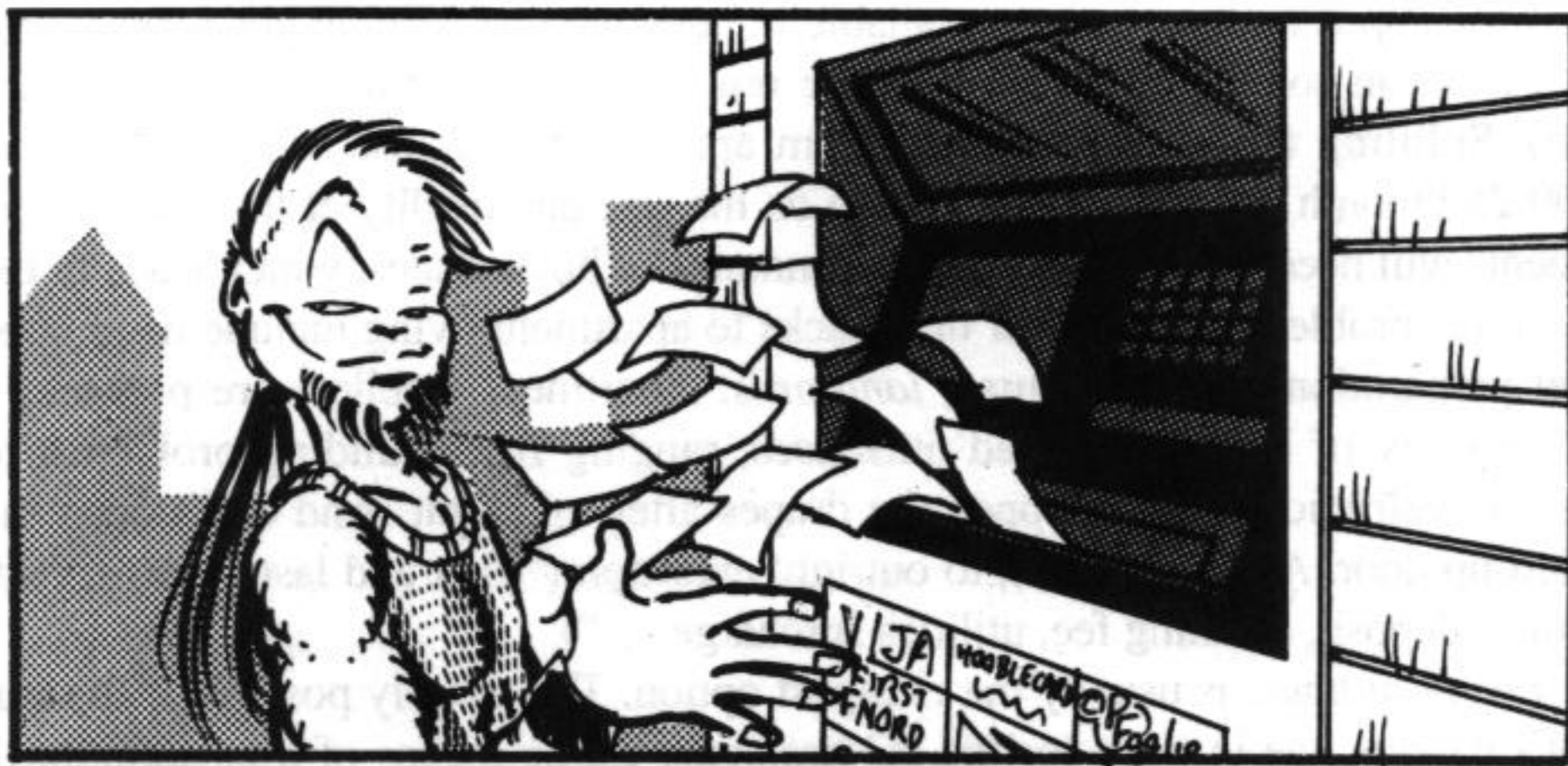
In addition to the Food Service, students can buy food at a number of on-campus businesses, including hot-dog carts in the Pent, two pizza parlors, the snack bar in the Student Union and the Illumni Center. Quality and cost vary widely – food from the pushcarts often appears to share the dubious origins of cafeteria food, but is usually better cooked . . .

Students can also eat off-campus, or, if they have apartments, cook their own food. In all cases, assume that food costs are included in the monthly cost of living for the student’s Social Status level, unless the PC wants to eat above his means.

## RECREATION

Students often want to break from classwork. (Some of them don’t do anything *but* take breaks . . .) IOU offers a considerable array of non-academic activities for students, ranging from student events like moopsball games and Grandmaster *Killer* tournaments, through an assortment of campus-sponsored societies (including secret ones), complete bookie services, protest marches and movies, to “private classes” at SPCA and public lectures and demonstrations at WUSE or the College of Metaphysics. Furthermore, the English Department frequently holds poorly-attended poetry readings. For students on a budget, standing around the Pent and simply waiting for something interesting to happen is cheap – if dangerous – entertainment. Many students also use the campus computer system to play games, chat with remote friends or break into foreign government computers.

Two other important recreational events are Summer Vacation and the infamous Spring Break. Students with money (or good Fast-Talk skills) head for the southern beaches, where important activities include getting tans and observing members of the opposite sex in scanty clothing.



## MONEY

While some expenses (food, housing, basic transportation and recreation) are handled by the standard cost of living for the character’s Social Status level, there are many uses for extra cash around campus. Lab equipment fees, parking fines and replacing personal possessions damaged by the latest WUSE explosion all consume cash. (The University disclaims any responsibility for anything that happens to students or their possessions on campus – this is written in Sanskrit down one margin of the student application form, in 3-point type printed in invisible ink.)

Most students will have to manage their own finances, though occasional calls to one’s parents for “emergency funds” are part of everyday student life. (The GM may want to make a reaction roll for the parents, with modifiers for the student’s grades, and a -5 cumulative modifier for each call in the same semester.)

## STARTING WEALTH

Starting wealth for an *IOU* campaign is normally the same as for a regular modern game: \$15,000 for a character with Average Wealth, of which the character can use one-fifth for “adventuring equipment,” the rest being standard personal possessions like a car, equity in a home, clothes, furniture, etc.

Because of the special circumstances of students, their starting wealth is treated differently. A student’s starting wealth is treated as *two levels below* his actual Wealth level, unless his Wealth level is Very Wealthy or higher. This represents two things: first, students don’t generally own much, nor have they had time to accumulate much money, and second, most of the student’s money is being put toward his tuition expenses. (Thus, the GM doesn’t need to concern himself with tracking tuition costs; room and board expenses go into the monthly cost of living.) However, all of the student’s starting wealth may be in “adventuring equipment:” a car, personal computer, lockpick kit, stereo and other campus necessities.

*Examples:* Gillian Brent comes from a family with a Wealth level of Average. At IOU, she gets a starting wealth as though her Wealth level were Poor, or \$3,000. But she can use all of this money any way she wants. Johnathan Lirden III is a Multimillionaire – he’s got so much money that even IOU’s tuition doesn’t put much of a dent in it. (But he’ll probably get monthly personal visits from the ArchDean looking for contributions for new buildings.)

## STATUS AND COST OF LIVING

The monthly cost of living for IOU inhabitants is dictated by *Academic Status*. Use the modern cost of living table on p. B191, divided by two, to determine the monthly cost. (Exception: Freshthings have the same cost of living as other undergrads: \$150/month; they’re only *treated* as worse scum than other students.)

# JOB TABLE

Most students will want part-time and summer jobs. The Job Table below gives some typical student and campus staff jobs. Halve the monthly income given in the table, if the job is part-time.

Job (prerequisite), Monthly Income	Success	Critical failure
<b>Poor</b>		
Undergraduate on scholarship stipend (IQ 14+), \$100	IQ	LJ (lose scholarship)
<b>Struggling</b>		
Administration Clerk (Accounting 11+), \$900	PR	LJ
Secretary (Clerical Skills 11+), \$1,100	12	LJ
Store/mall Janitor (Cleaning 11+), \$1,000	PR	-1i/LJ
Full-time Service Industry (none), \$1,000	12	LJ
Manual Labor (ST 10+), \$600	ST	LJ/5d
Store Clerk (Merchant 10+), \$700	IQ	LJ/LJ, 3d
Student Supported by Parents*, \$700	Fast-Talk-3	Tuition payments stop
Teaching Assistant (Teaching 11+), \$300	PR	LJ/LJ, 2d
Research Assistant (Research 11+, any Scientific skill 12+), \$350	Worst PR	LJ/LJ, 4d
Environmental Activist (Diplomacy or Bard or Politics 11+), \$500	PR	-2i/LJ, 2d
Security Guard (ST 10+, any combat skill 11+), \$700	PR	-1i, LJ/LJ, 4d
Campus Security (Gullibility), \$800	Move+3**	3d/10d or vaporized
Gambler* (Gambling 11+, Fast-Talk 10+), \$650	Worst PR	-1i/-1i, 4d
"Geisha"* (Sex Appeal 10+), \$75 × PR	PR	-1i/-1i, arrested
<b>Average</b>		
Artist (Art skill 14+), \$1,500	PR	-1i/-3i
Health-center Medtech (First Aid 13+, Elec. Ops 11+), \$2,500	PR	LJ/LS (lawsuit: -1 year's income)
Private Investigator* (Streetwise 12+ or Research 12+), \$1,200	Best PR-2	-2i/3d
Skilled Labor (Craft skill 12+), \$1,400	PR	LJ/4d
University Instructor (Academic speciality 13+), \$1,500	PR	-2i/LJ
Clergything (Theology 12+, Social Status 1+), \$1,800	PR	moved to smaller church; pay cut 20%
Journalist (IQ 10+, Writing 12+), \$1,800	Best PR	LJ
Bodyguard (one combat skill at 12+, ST 11+), \$1,000	ST	-1i, LJ/-1i, LJ, 4d
Computer Operator (Computer Operation 11+), \$1,175	PR	-1i/-1i, LJ
Computer Hacker* (Hacking 12+), \$1,000	PR-2	-1i/-3i, arrested
<b>Comfortable</b>		
Tenured Professor (Academic Specialty 13+, Tenure, Academic Status 3+), \$3,500	PR+Status	-2i/2d
Administrator (Administration 13+), \$3,500	PR	-3i/LJ
Doctor* (Physician 14+, Social Status 1+), \$4,000	PR-1	-2i/-10i
Engineer* (Engineering [specialty] 12+), \$4,500	PR-1	-2i/-4i
Black Marketeer* (Streetwise 12+, Merchant 10+), \$300×Worst PR	Streetwise	-3i/-5i, arrested
Computer Programmer* (Computer Programming 12+), \$3,500	PR	-1i/-3i
<b>Wealthy</b>		
Idle Rich (Social Status 1+), \$5,000	Reaction +8	allowance cut by 20%
COUP or WUSE Professor (Academic Specialty 15+, Tenure, Academic Status 2+), \$5,000	PR+Status	-2i, 1d/4d
Team Member* (Sport specialty 15+, Reputation 2+), \$6,000	PR-2	LJ/-5i, LJ
Rock Star* (Performance 13+, Charisma 2+, Social Status 2+), \$5,000	Perform-2	-3i/-10i
High-level Administrator (Administration 15+, Academic Status 2+), \$5,000	PR+Status	-2i/LJ
Wall Street Trader*		
(Economics 13+, Merchant 12+, Social Status 1+), \$5,500	Worst PR	-2i/-10i
Major Corporate Stockholder		
(Economics 14+, Social Status 1+), \$10,000	Economics	-3i/-10i
Wall Street Inside Trader* (Economics 13+, Merchant 12+, Fast-Talk 12+, Social Status 2+), \$20,000	Economics-6	-5i/-20i, 10 yrs. jail

\* These are freelance jobs with variable income. See p. B193.

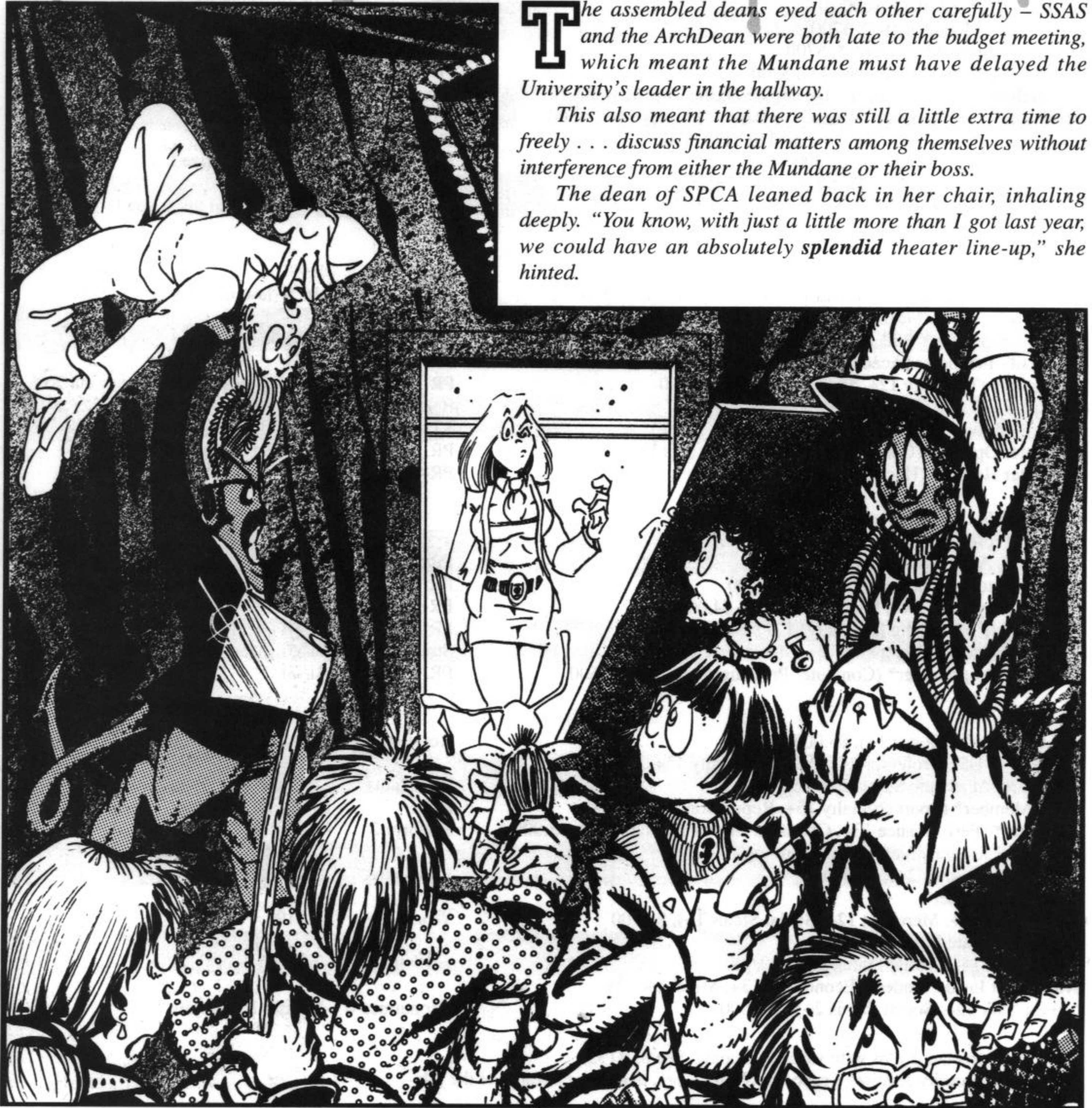
\*\* Campus Security requires a success roll *per week*, due to the hazards of the job.

# BEYOND MUNDANE

**T**he assembled deans eyed each other carefully – SSAS and the ArchDean were both late to the budget meeting, which meant the Mundane must have delayed the University's leader in the hallway.

This also meant that there was still a little extra time to freely . . . discuss financial matters among themselves without interference from either the Mundane or their boss.

The dean of SPCA leaned back in her chair, inhaling deeply. "You know, with just a little more than I got last year, we could have an absolutely *splendid* theater line-up," she hinted.



"Invites to the reception?" asked Metaphysics.

"It wasn't worth it, you know." C.T.H.U.L.H.U.'s dean loosened his scarf, surreptitiously moving it away from his neighbor, the Unseen Dean.

SPCA glared at the time-traveler. COUP smiled a little, offering, "Need a hand?" (Neither of his were showing, which meant the lesser deans were watching him warily.)

"Let me," the Dean of Metaphysics suggested, pointing one taloned finger. The dean of WUSE started packing his notebook computer into its blast case.

Dr. What<sup>7</sup> aimed a wide-barreled weapon at the Dean-mon. "I wouldn't try that, 'Fred.'"

The Unseen Dean concentrated on the device, and it wavered slightly. Various other things happened very quickly, after that.

When the dust cleared, the assorted deans (the Unseen Dean now younger and female; Dr. What<sup>7</sup> slightly smug) were left in the middle of a blast-crater. Fortunately, the walls and door were still standing. The dean of SCA sighed, brushing the sparks off his suit. "This is going to come out of our budgets."

Dr. Walters offered Metaphysics a hand up. "Oh, well – as we say in WUSE, 'Any explosion you can walk away from is a good one.'"

The door opened, falling off its hinges. "Starting the meeting without me?" the ArchDean inquired lightly. The singed administrators tried to look abashed and innocent at the same time, with little success. The new COUP Dean added puzzlement to her expression. The ArchDean raised an eyebrow at the leader of C.T.H.U.L.H.U. "Been vacationing in alternate universes again? Or just sabotaging the reality stabilizers?"

The Doctor shrugged. "It was just a little sideways swap. Nothing fancy."

"I do hope the bloodfeud papers are what landed on my desk 15 minutes ago." The ArchDean paused, *tsking* at the shambles for a moment, and then continued with a frown, "Dear me, I can't be five minutes late, and now we'll have to get another pot of coffee for the meeting. And that was my favorite table, too."

"Fred" muttered to his companion, "Well, I don't think we're gonna be walking away from *this* explosion . . ."

Central to the style of an *Illuminati University* campaign is the ready availability of unusual abilities, beyond the ken of the largely mundane world. Weirdness comes in many forms, including technological gadgets, magical abilities, psionics and superpowers. Other *GURPS* sourcebooks cover these areas in detail, but some special considerations for *IOU* campaigns are discussed in the following sections.

## TECHNOLOGY

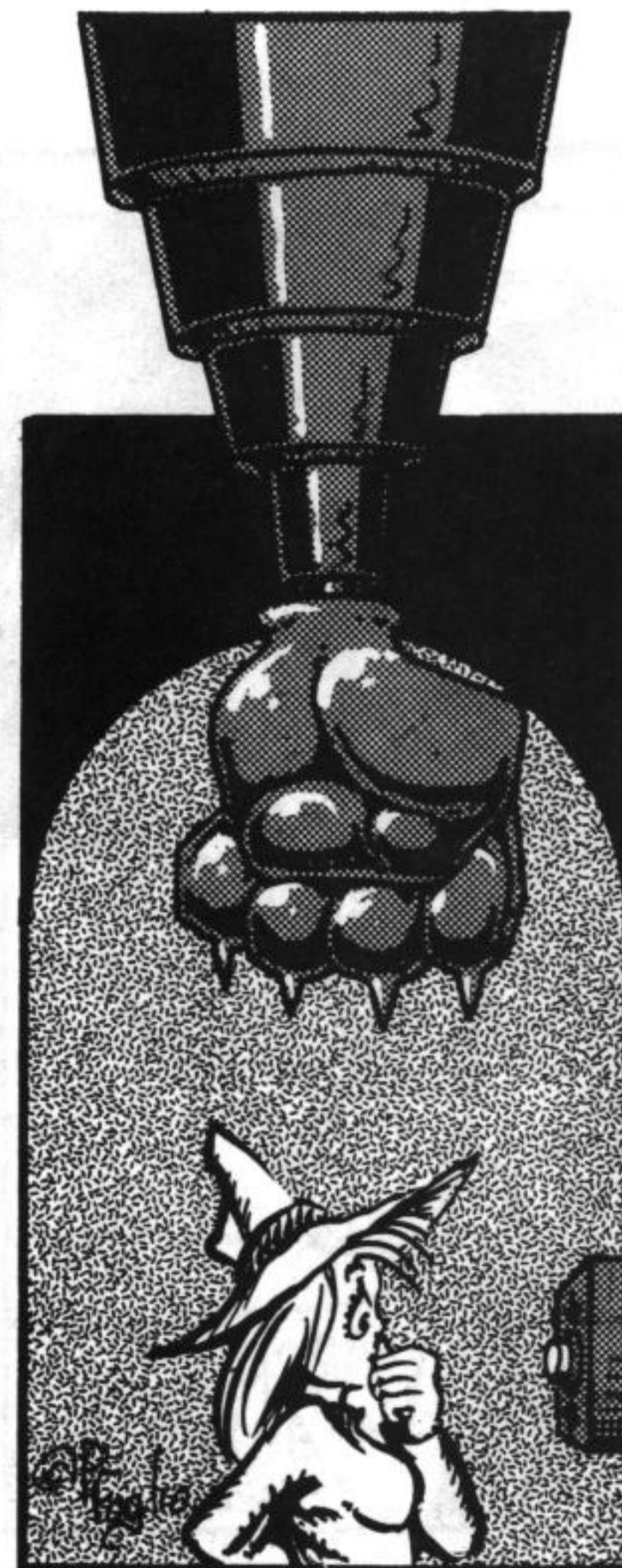
The University harbors an improbable number of garage-shop tinkerers, eccentric gadgeteers and outright mad scientists. These keep the campus awash in strange tech, some of it ahead of its time, some of it behind the times and some that doesn't belong in *any* sane time. Storerooms under WUSE contain centuries' worth of thesis projects; thankfully, most are no longer in working order, and useful primarily to current-day grad students scavenging parts for *their* soon-to-be discarded research projects. Sometimes, though, a rummaging student or a stray tunnel rat accidentally sets some long-forgotten project running again.

The *Basic Set* gives the standard rules for Tech Levels, inventions and raising campaign TL on pp. B185-187. *IOU* adds special rules for Gadgeteering starting on p. 111. (For Silly *IOU* games, the GM should strongly consider allowing the 50-point Quick Gadgeteering advantage.) Useful ideas for weird tech can be drawn from a number of *GURPS* sourcebooks, including *Ultra-Tech*, *Vehicles*,

## WEIRD SCIENCE AND TL MODIFIERS

The Weird Science skill can be used to reduce the Tech Level modifiers for Scientific skills. On a successful Weird Science skill roll, reduce the TL penalty by the amount by which the Weird Science roll was made. (When used in this way, Weird Science cannot *increase* effective skill – at most, it cancels out the Tech Level penalty.)

*Example:* Astarte, a student with Computer Programming/TL7, needs to reprogram a TL8 Martian warbot that's trying to steal a critical bit of IOU tech – the coffee machine in the student lounge. Normally, she'd have a -5 modifier to her skill roll, since she's dealing with a TL8 computer, one Tech Level above hers. Fortunately, she also has Weird Science-16. She rolls a 12, reducing the Computer Programming penalty to -1. The GM tells Astarte's player that the mummified garlic bagel left lying on the couch looks like it might fit into the warbot's programming cartridge slot. If Astarte's player had rolled a 10, the TL modifier would have been reduced only to 0; she could not have gotten a +1 to skill.



## CONTROL RATINGS AND LEGALITY CLASSES

Social Control Ratings and equipment Legality Classes (see p. B249) are designed to model social restrictions on weapons and other anti-social technology. The United States (where most *IOU* campuses are) is roughly CR 3 to 4 – pistols and other hand weapons require a license, which usually isn't too difficult to get, but other items of nominally higher Legality Class may be restricted. The *IOU* campus, however, is effectively CR -2; anyone can openly carry just about *anything* without being hassled. But don't take your thermonuclear bazooka off-campus . . .

There are some items at *IOU* that would have Legality Classes below 0 – many of WUSE's more energetic toys, for example. Even the ArchDean's tolerance for mass destruction is taxed by strategic thermonuclear weapons or Mega-DeathRays. Also, students are advised against carrying heavy armaments (or other equipment of presumably hostile use) into the offices of major professors, department heads, administrators or deans. And people shouldn't even *consider* bringing such gear when summoned to the ArchDean's office!



*Robots, Atomic Horror, Cyberpunk* and *Space*. Below are some additional rules for handling the mixture of Tech Levels and ultra-powerful gadgets that are needed to provide the proper “flavor” in an *Illuminati University* setting.

### TL 7 7/8

The Tech Level of the “standard” *IOU* campus is a little bit in advance of “modern-day” technology, which means it is generally late TL7, with some early TL8 equipment, especially in the areas of computers and surveillance devices. Items of higher TLs are not uncommon on campus, but they are generally one-of-a-kind prototypes, imported alien technology or perhaps Precursor artifacts left on Earth in ancient times. In other words, PC equipment should be late TL7, unless the character is either an alien or a Gadgeteer. Likewise, starting characters will have TL7 skills, unless their background dictates otherwise. (Note that characters from other Tech Levels will have trouble with the primitive/advanced gadgets on campus – GMs should remember to enforce the TL difference penalties on p. B185.)

On the other hand, the eclectic mix of professorial backgrounds means that scientific and engineering courses are offered at a variety of Tech Levels, often ones higher than TL7. However, due to laboratory equipment problems (see *Gadgeteering at IOU*, p. 105, it is rare for skills to be taught at levels above TL9.

## DO-IT-YOURSELF RUBBER SCIENCE

From time to time the GM (or players) may need to provide some sort of plausible-sounding explanation for a typical bit of WUSE or alien superscience. For the benefit of the less scientifically-literate GM, we provide the following set of class notes from *IOU*'s own Physics 103.1415, “The Poet's Guide to the Wonderful World of Physics.” (Don't try this at home – but if anyone manages to do anything useful in the *real* world using this information, the authors will be happy to accept their half of the Nobel Prize, and 50% of the royalties.)

*Special relativity:* Einstein created this theory near the beginning of the 20th century, to keep starships from traveling faster than the speed of light, and to enable people to create bigger and better explosions by turning matter into energy, like in atomic bombs. Fortunately, most alien races, like most truckers, ignore Einstein and his silly speed limit. WUSE professors will happily turn large amounts of matter into stupendous amounts of energy, though.

*General relativity:* this theory was created by Einstein to plug the loopholes in special relativity, to try to explain gravity, and to confuse the few people who actually understood special relativity. General relativity is a good explanation for anything that involves warping space or time, and is useful when you want to make a black hole or two. Both special and general relativity apply primarily to things that move very fast, are very far away or are extremely large, like the national debt.

*Quantum mechanics:* this theory was first created about the same time as relativity, to explain some weird phenomena that occurred at very small scales, inside the atom. (Reputable physicists at the beginning of the 20th century no longer ascribed such activities to demons, at least in public.) Quantum mechanics (or QM) states that certain things are uncertain in a very precise way, at a very small scale. It holds atoms and atomic nuclei together, lets you create energy and matter out of nothing (as long as you promise to destroy it again very quickly), and lets you get rid of the black holes you created using relativity. It also allows objects to pass through walls, or jump from point A to point B without going through any of the points in between. Therefore, QM is a good explanation for teleportation, or anything that can't get enough energy just from simple nuclear explosions.

*Grand Unified Theories (GUTs):* after Einstein, physicists needed something new to generate research papers and justify billion-dollar research projects like the Superconducting Super-Collider. (No, we didn't make that up – it's real.) Someone hit on the clever notion of the "Grand Unified Theory," which tries to explain that electromagnetism, the weak and strong nuclear forces and gravity are all really the same force, only different. (Got that? These people are mostly trying to prove that they're smarter than Einstein, who couldn't figure out how to get this idea funded, and also that they're better at confusing other physicists.) The more adventurous physicists also throw in time and space as part of the bundle.

There are lots of proposed GUTs, with catchy names like "supersymmetry" and "String Theory." Mostly they try to explain what happened during and after the Big Bang that started the universe. GUTs are most useful to explain how you built a pocket universe in your dorm-room closet, or to justify an antigravity gadget.

*Chaos theory:* while not strictly physics, recent developments in mathematics have opened new vistas in the physical sciences. Chaos theory basically states that under the right conditions, a very small change in the input to a physical system may produce a very large change in the output, in a somewhat unpredictable manner (especially if you mix in quantum mechanics). For example, chaos theory now allows us to understand why, despite ever-bigger and better satellites and computers, the U.S. Weather Service *still* can't predict the weather accurately – weather is a chaotic phenomenon.

Since most real physical systems are at least partly governed by chaotic mathematical equations, chaos theory is a good explanation for practically anything, though it's especially useful for avoiding awkward questions about psionics, like where the energy for PK comes from.

*PNAMBC science:* this is a catch-all category for things the GM can't otherwise explain away. It stands for "Pay No Attention to the Man Behind the Curtain," and boils down to, "It works because the GM says so. Don't ask any more silly questions unless you want your character eaten by Quantum Armadillos from Beyond Time and Space."

## GADGETEERING AT IOU

Characters at IOU will want to build new gadgets from time to time. These things may be totally new (and possibly of a higher Tech Level), or merely things that already exist, but are hard to obtain. For example, inter-continental ballistic missiles are TL7 technology, but if a student wants one, he's going to have to create it from scratch – you can't buy them at the corner drug store, or at a local yard sale (unless you happen to be shopping in Russia around 1994).

The rules given here are intended for use when producing a single prototype device, not something engineered for production. At most a half-dozen or a dozen copies might be made – IOU is not a manufacturing facility! There are four ways to create new gadgets:

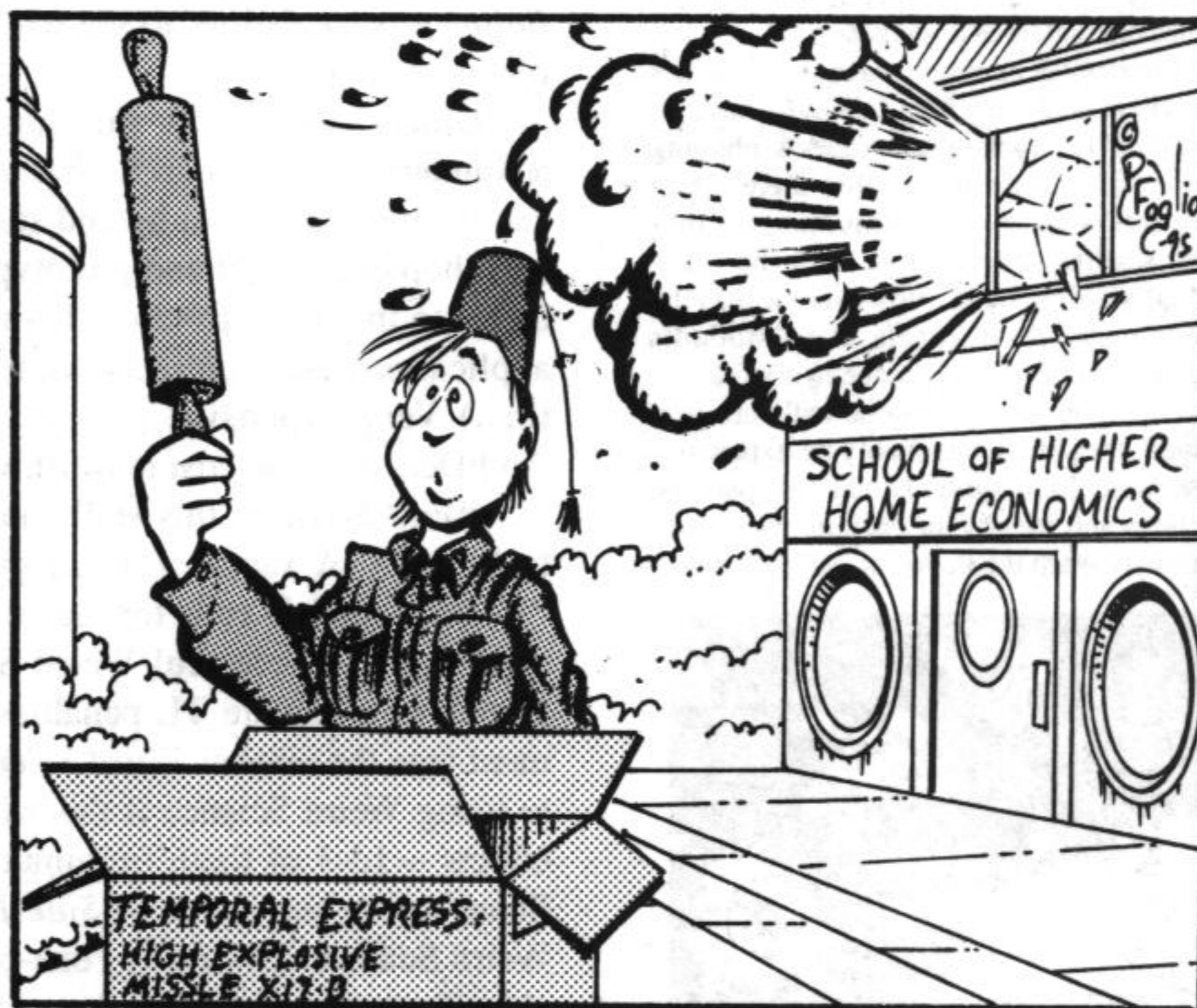
## CATALOGS

In a Silly *IOU* campaign, the GM may want to introduce the very cinematic (cartoon-like, even) gimmick of the mail-order catalog. (Male-order and female-order catalogs are handled by the SPCA. And then there are the thing-order catalogs. It's better not to discuss those . . .) These are primarily useful to characters with great Wealth levels. With such a catalog, you simply find the item you want, touch the picture and a Temporal Express truck drives up and delivers it. (Of course, since they have time travel, they also billed your credit card last year. So it goes.)

Using mail-order catalogs carries its own risks. For one, catalog companies don't always get the order *exactly* right – sometimes you order an Uzi and get three years of back-issues of *Playmeep* magazine. In the middle of a firefight, this can be very embarrassing . . .

Catalogs often have discontinued items at low prices. Sometimes there are good reasons why the items were discontinued. (The evil GM might wish to consult the *Guaranteed Play-Balance Table* or the *Random Side-Effects Table*, pp 107-108.)

Unless the character somehow obtains a future-time or alien catalog, the items available will be limited to mundane TL7 technology, and the GM may still wish to enforce Control Ratings. ("Availability of nuclear devices may vary by country. Please bribe your local Customs officials accordingly.") Some items may be too large for Temporal Express to deliver – if the PC orders a Boeing 747, he should expect a slight delay in delivery.



## IOU IN SPACE

While the University has some access to space, it is best to restrict space-travel to the Solar System only, with the rare exception of the occasional visiting alien craft that might be willing to give a few people a lift – for a price. Some WUSE professors might be working on a stardrive, but sensible characters won't want to be guinea pigs for something that might leave them stranded in the Andromeda galaxy, which is a little far for AAA road service...

Though reliable – or mostly reliable – stardrives are best left to alien NPCs, *IOU* characters may be able to acquire, or invent, various technologies useful for interplanetary travel, including reactionless drives and contragravity (see *GURPS Space* for spaceship design rules). This gives the GM lots of excuses for stranding characters in strange places. And maybe the *IOU* version of the Solar System is more like science fiction writers used to picture it, back in the 1950s. (Or perhaps NASA is part of an Illuminati plot to suppress evidence that there are aliens on every planet in the system!)

Of course, alien characters need transport to and from Earth at semester start and end. This is best handled by NPC agencies: parents, interstellar traders making a special detour to an off-route planet, interplanetary teleportation from the homeworld or even hitchhiking. Alien characters should *not* come equipped with starships, unless the GM is prepared to run an *Illuminati University/GURPS Space* crossover campaign. If interstellar travel is expensive and has to be scheduled in advance, it will have little impact on the campaign, other than to introduce a few weird characters and gadgets.

Interstellar communications is another potential problem. The GM will have to decide if he wants alien students phoning home. It's easiest to say that there aren't any interstellar communications, other than sending letters along with the occasional visiting UFO. However, it may be amusing to let destitute alien students phone home for money once in a while... collect. If interstellar phone calls are permitted, they should probably be expensive, otherwise alien students can call parents, siblings and friends for backup, which will seriously warp the flavor of the campaign.



**Inventions:** this is the mundane way for creating new technology. It's slow, hard and dull. See the *New Inventions* rules on p. B186.

**Higher-TL skills:** in this case, the would-be inventor *knows* how to build the device, but it's of a higher Tech Level than the components and equipment available to build it. This route is primarily open to aliens and time-travelers, though such skills can also be learned in a few advanced courses in WUSE. Use the rules for *Building Up Local Technology* on p. B186, except that no extra time is required to actually build up the local Tech Level – there is enough strange junk around campus that something can usually be managed. However, the result will *not* be as good as the “real thing” – the GM should use the *Guaranteed Play-Balance Table*, below, to see what sort of problems resulted from using primitive tools and components.

**Gadgeteering:** for this option, the developer must have the Gadgeteer advantage (p. 18). Read further to find more Gadgeteering rules on p. 111. Costs can be ignored by faculty and student characters – the University will supply lab and shop equipment and prototyping materials. (It will also wind up owning any rights to the new invention, but this is buried in the fine print in the admissions applications and contracts with professors; characters will probably not know this.) Very expensive projects will require convincing a dean or even the ArchDean that the cost is worthwhile.

**Weird Science:** this skill can be used in conjunction with any of the above techniques. A successful roll gives a +5 bonus to both the “conception” and “working model” rolls for regular inventions. Gadgeteering gets a +1 to effective skill from a successful Weird Science roll, and Weird Science skill can also reduce or eliminate TL penalties when building gadgets using primitive equipment (see the sidebar *Weird Science and TL Modifiers* on p. 103). The drawback to using Weird Science is that *all* devices built using this skill have strange side effects – 1d-3 of them (minimum 1). The GM should roll for these (or choose them) using the *Random Side-Effect Table*, below. Also, devices built using Weird Science are strictly “one-of-a-kind” items – they can't be reproduced reliably. To make another similar gadget, it has to be re-invented, from scratch!

When someone invents something of a higher Tech Level than the "normal" TL, whether using the regular invention rules, Gadgeteering, or simply knowledge of a higher TL, the GM should roll 3d on the *Guaranteed Play-Balance Table* (or simply pick something appropriate). For very complex gadgets (or very unbalancing ones), the GM may want to roll multiple times. At a minimum, gadgets should double in size and weight for every Tech Level below their nominal TLs, i.e.,  $\times 2$  for TL8,  $\times 4$  for TL9,  $\times 8$  for TL10 and so on.

## GUARANTEED PLAY-BALANCE TABLE

GM rolls 3d, or picks something appropriate.

3 – Roll 3d for each use (each hour of use for continually-operating devices). On a result of 6 or less, an agent of the Interstellar T'vorging Commission teleports in and tells the operator to cease generating k'fith particles *at once!* If the PC doesn't comply, the agent will frown at the gadget and it will disappear, immediately followed by the agent.

4 – If the gadget is normally hand-held, it is so large and heavy as to need a cart or vehicle to move it around; if normally a vehicle-borne device, it needs a really *big* vehicle, like a battleship, or must be mounted in a building; if normally the size of a small building, the device takes up a city block.

5 – Each use of the gadget (or hour of constant use) consumes \$250 worth of exotic chemicals, rare herbs or the like.

6 – The device has 1d+1 side-effects (see the *Random Side-Effect Table*, below).

7 – The PC carrying the gadget is so inconvenienced by its awkward shape and balance that all his DX rolls are made at a -2 penalty.

8 – The gadget has 1d-2 (minimum 1) side-effects.

9 – If normally powered by batteries or power cells, the device requires a large power supply, like building power or a vehicle power plant; if normally requiring power in the megawatt range, it needs to be tied into the North American power grid and causes brownouts whenever used. (Magical devices use three times normal Fatigue.)

10 – The gadget is twice as large, twice as heavy and uses twice as much power as it should. (Magical items use 50% more Fatigue than normal.) If it is a weapon, damage, range and Acc bonus are halved, and SS increases by 4.

11 – The gadget gets too hot to handle after one or two uses, and must cool down for ten minutes before it can be used again. (If used before it cools off, it burns out in a shower of sparks and inflicts 1d burn damage on the user.)

12 – Each use of the gadget (or hour of use for constantly-operating devices) consumes \$25 worth of exotic chemicals, rare herbs or the like.

13 – The gadget is unreliable, and fails on a skill roll of 14 or higher.

14 – The device requires repairs after every use; it will not work until repaired. (Magical items require a Repair spell after every use.)

15 – The device has a recoil like a heavy projectile weapon (even if it isn't a gun). The user must make a DX roll for every use to avoid being knocked down.

16 – The gadget is *very* unreliable, and fails on a skill roll of 10 or higher.

17 – The device is very complicated to operate. If a weapon, it takes five seconds to ready. (This represents pushing buttons, chanting, etc.) Non-weapon gadgets require two hours of painstaking preparation before each use.

18 – On *any* critical failure using the device, it self-destructs in some appropriately-spectacular fashion. The user must make a DX roll at -2, or take 2d damage as the gadget vaporizes itself. The entire gadget is *gone*, and cannot be repaired or even broken down for usable parts.

## CHARACTER DEATH (OR OTHERWISE)

Even the most ardent IOU-booster will admit that life on campus is, well, *interesting*. (Translation: risky.) Alien invasions, out-of-control scientific experiments and animals mutated by toxic wastes and radiation from poorly-shielded nuclear-powered lawnmowers all take their toll on students. Then there are the *normal* hazards of student life: cafeteria food, field trips, finals and UV overdoses from Florida beaches during Spring Break.

Since the University has yet to find a way of making a significant profit from dead students (they don't pay tuition, and the medical cadaver market prefers mostly intact bodies), the ArchDean has decreed that all students should be covered by Student Health Insurance. Rather than paying off when you die, however (heaven – or someplace – forbid that the University pay *out* money), IOU health insurance makes sure that you *don't* die. Permanently, anyway.

At this point, the savvy GM is probably asking, "But how can I threaten the PCs if they know they won't die?" Don't worry – you see, all that the insurance system does is guarantee that the PCs *won't* die. It says absolutely *nothing* about the quality of life . . .

Therefore, sadistic GMs can indulge themselves, and fold, spindle and mutilate characters all they want, or at least as much as they can get away with before being lynched by the players. And if things go a bit too far, the PC wakes up the next morning in a bed in the Student Health Service infirmary (see p. 48).

The precise means of the hapless PC's return to life, liberty and pursuit of members of the appropriate gender need not be detailed – IOU is full of mysteries not meant to be explained to mere students. However, a number of gadgets and magical spells and items are available to account for the resurrection. See entries on the Resurrectatron (p. 84), the SuperDuplicator (p. 84), Braindumping (p. 82), The Crockpot of the Gods (p. 85) and Life-Savers (p. 85). For the traditionalists, there are also the old standbys – the Lightning-Powered Slab of the Reanimation and Zombie spells.

Unfortunately for accident-prone characters, most of the means of restoring life have side-effects. The GM should reward truly outrageous PC stupidity by allowing the character to be the first on his block to try out some new – and un-debugged – resurrection procedure. Say, the Reincarnatron. Life as a sentient houseplant will probably keep the character out of trouble for a while . . .

*Continued on next page . . .*

## CHARACTER DEATH (OR OTHERWISE) (CONTINUED)

Characters with The Treatment advantage (p. 20) usually don't die in the first place. By whatever mysterious means, the character simply shrugs off deadly toxins, falling from orbit, nuclear explosions and similar indignities. Generally, The Treatment is limited to high-level faculty, and student PCs will have to make do with Student Health Insurance.

In a Darkly Illuminated campaign style (see p. 97), the GM may wish to eliminate Student Health Insurance. Even if it exists, he should not tell players that it does, and the No Insurance disadvantage cannot be taken. Also, even if the characters *can* return from the dead, they may find a *very* unwelcome price attached. So it goes...

## WHEN PCS OWN TOO MUCH

Occasionally, characters will accumulate loot and booty beyond what the GM can deal with. (The stealthed physics van was bad enough, but when the students add the car-mounted hypnogogic projectors that they stole from the invading aliens?) If the GM can no longer come up with a satisfying challenge except via a technological or magical arms-race – which is rarely satisfying – it's time to level the playing field again.

There are several ways to deprive the PCs of their hard-won toys. The most obvious is to break them – while they can probably be fixed with Weird Science or Weird Magic, such repairs *will* add side-effects. For a item that is only mildly obnoxious, a professor can appropriate it for research (allowing the PCs to "borrow" it occasionally, but they have to put it back). Or, for a truly dangerous widget, the ArchDean can decide it's a threat to the University and confiscate it – personally. And then there's collateral damage; high-entropy stuff happens on campus all the time, and innocently bystanding things just aren't safe.

Excess money is even easier to deal with, especially if the PCs get sent to the Infirmary a lot: raise the Health Insurance rates until the students are back at a decent level of poverty, or maybe "discover" that some of the classes the PCs signed up for have required materials, books and bribes that are *expensive*.

## RANDOM SIDE-EFFECT TABLE

The GM rolls 3d, or chooses something appropriate.

3 – Each use causes a small, cumulative change in the user's body or mind. Roll vs. HT+4 (IQ+4) for each use, or acquire -1 point toward a physical (mental) disadvantage of the GM's choice.

4 – Every use of the device inflicts 1d damage on the user (bypassing DR).

5 – Each use causes one point of damage to the operator (bypassing DR).

6 – The gadget mutates one person (choose randomly) within 10 yards into an animal (GM's choice) for 10 turns.

7 – The device makes an incredibly annoying, high-pitched screech when used. This gives everyone within 20 yards a headache for ten minutes (-1 to all rolls). The user gets a migraine (-3 to all rolls for twenty minutes.) Earplugs don't help, though Deafness does.

8 – Use of the gadget disrupts electronics of a lower TL: TVs and radios within one mile get nothing but static, computers within 100 yards crash on a roll of 7 or less on 3d, within 10 yards even flashlights and other simple devices are affected. This effect is popular with scanning devices on UFOs. (Magical items produce local mana disruptions that cause a -3 penalty to all spellcasting within 10 yards for the next ten turns.)

9 – The device produces noxious fumes in a 4-hex radius. These do no damage, but are extremely unpleasant to breathe. Anything that breathes must make an HT+3 roll each turn they breathe in the area, or suffer mild nausea for five minutes (-1 to all rolls).

10 – The gadget produces a loud hum in operation (+3 to Hearing rolls to notice it).

11 – Use of the device is accompanied by impressive, but harmless, special effects – beams of colored light, showers of sparks, et cetera. The source of the effect will be obvious to any watcher, and anyone in the area gets a +5 to Vision to notice something is going on.

12 – The gadget emits dense clouds of steam or smoke while in operation. Treat as a Fog spell of radius 4 (see p. B159 or M40).

13 – Every use of the gadget attracts swarms of nearby meeps, tunnel rats, IRS agents or other vermin of the GM's choice. The swarms disperse ten minutes after the device is shut off.



## GADGETS FOR NON-GADGETEERS

Many characters will just wish to *use* high-tech equipment – they couldn't care less how it was made, as long as it works. Mere use of these gadgets doesn't require the Gadgeteering advantage – just money or character points.

It is up to the GM to decide whether the desired gadget has already been invented. If not, the PC must find a gadgeteer and commission him to invent the thing, paying the required development cost (p. 112) and waiting the required time for results. Then figure the production cost as per p. 113, and charge the character 150% of the production cost.

On the other hand, if the device has already been invented, and is in production, it need not be developed. If the PC can find the source, he can buy the item at 150% of the production cost.

If the PC can't afford the cost, and doesn't have (or want) a patron who will pay for his equipment, he may spend character points to get money – 1 character point equals one month's salary at his regular job, or (if he has no job) at the best job he is qualified for.

14 – Using the gadget renders the operator unconscious for 1d minutes.

15 – Each use of the device attracts the attention of nearby demons or punches holes into random dimensions through which strange creatures appear.

16 – The device inflicts one point of damage (bypassing DR) per use, on everyone within 10 yards, including the user.

17 – Every use of the gadget opens a gate into a random dimension for 1 turn; the user must roll vs. DX to avoid falling into the hole before it closes.

18 – Each time the device is used, roll for a *different* random side-effect. (If this result comes up, roll for *two* side-effects!)

## ALIEN TECH

In the grand tradition of the supermarket tabloids, the Earth of *Illuminati University* is littered with artifacts left behind by alien visitors. Some of these aliens visited in the geologically-distant past, and are known as Precursors. Such races include the Tee-Hee-Chee and the Po-Peel. Other races stopped by to build the Egyptian pyramids, or sink Atlantis. More recent visitors buzz small towns in Kansas, or pick up medical specimens on remote roads in New England. There are even Postcursors – time-tripping aliens from the future who have stopped off in a picturesque little millennium for lunch. No matter what the race, though, all these aliens have one thing in common: they're slobs, and they *never* pick up their garbage when they leave.

Many such alien remnants are discovered by alert IOU field teams, diligently pursuing tans in the Bermuda Triangle or looking for Inca gold to steal . . . ah, artifacts to bring back to the University museum. PCs will often be members of such teams, or may be tasked with analyzing alien gadgets as part of their classwork.

When someone attempts to operate an alien device of unknown purpose, first, have them choose a skill and roll against it. If the skill is inappropriate and the skill roll is a success, he realizes that skill doesn't apply and may try another; otherwise, he continues with the useless skill (treat as a failure by 10 for an appropriate skill). The GM then rolls 3d, adds the amount the skill roll was made or failed by, and consults the Enigmatic Alien Device Button-Pushing Table below.

Each attempt takes one minute. Repeated attempts are possible: for each failure of the skill roll, apply a cumulative -1 modifier to the next attempt. The table assumes a device of moderate complexity including a number of controls without comprehensible labels, e.g., a TL10 blaster rifle, a radscanner or a space suit. Very simple or very complex devices should have appropriate modifiers applied to the GM's roll. The Intuition advantage can be useful in selecting the right skill, and also provides a +4 bonus to the GM's roll.

*Example:* Hal has found a Precursor artifact that resembles a glowing potato with warts. He wants to figure out what it is, so he uses his Weird Science skill of 15 (lacking anything obviously more suitable). Hal's player rolls a 16, so the modifier is a -1. The GM rolls a 7, so poor Hal decides the device is some sort of musical instrument and tries to blow into a hole he finds in one of the warts. Hal breathes in some toxic cooling vapors and suffers 3 points of damage.

Note that Earthlings are unlikely to completely figure out alien tech, unless they happen to have very high levels in relevant skills (or Weird Science), or get very lucky – the cumulative failure modifier will eventually get them in trouble if they don't stop random button-pushing fairly quickly. A different character can start from scratch, though; other people can bring fresh insights on the problem.





## LOANING OR SELLING GADGETS

If a gadgeteer is a member of the party, there will be times when the other characters want to use his devices.

Realistically, unless a given device requires special knowledge, anybody should be able to use it. Body armor, recoilless weapons, gas grenades and so on are simple to use. But in terms of game balance, one gadgeteer should not be able to outfit the whole party with ultra-tech devices.

In general, the GM should restrict the use of gadgets to their creator except in unusual circumstances. Non-gadgeteers should be unwilling to place their faith in unfamiliar devices. (At IOU, there are usually good reasons for this!)

Alternatively, if a gadgeteer's friends want to use some of his devices, they can pay character points for the privilege. They do not have to be gadgeteers themselves; they would buy the devices as per the sidebar on p. 113, paying 15 points for the Unusual Background "Has gadgeteer friend," and money for the gadgets.

These rules can also be used when characters analyze magical devices using unknown spells, or forgotten research projects found in sub-basements of WUSE buildings. In the latter case, apply a +2 modifier to the GM's roll – at least some of the device's labels will help. If the thesis related to the device can be located (taking a Research-5 skill roll) an additional bonus of +4 should be applied to the roll on the table. But even with the manual, operation isn't automatic – the documentation rarely matches the prototype, and the grad student may have fudged the data!

## ENIGMATIC ALIEN DEVICE BUTTON-PUSHING TABLE

GM rolls 3d. On repeated attempts by the same character, re-roll results that duplicate or are subsumed by previous results.

- 0 or less – the character takes 3d of damage, and the device is destroyed. (If the device is indestructible, it vaporizes everything within ten yards instead, and is later recovered from the crater by an NPC.)
- 1 – the device's primary effect is applied to the experimenter, if possible; if not, the character takes 2d damage.
- 2 – the device's primary effect is applied to a nearby character, if possible; if not, a nearby character takes 2d damage from a side-effect.
- 3 – the experimenter takes 3d damage from the device.
- 4 – a nearby character takes 3d damage from the device.
- 5 – the experimenter takes 1d damage from a device side-effect.
- 6 – a nearby character takes 1d damage from a device side-effect.
- 7 – the experimenter suffers superficial damage from a device side-effect.
- 8 – a nearby character suffers superficial damage from a device side-effect.
- 9 – the experimenter suffers an embarrassing mishap while trying to operate the device: he gets a body part stuck to it, or suffers some unpleasant minor side-effect.
- 10 – the PC forms an erroneous theory concerning the device's purpose, possibly being misled by a secondary function or side-effect.
- 11 – nothing happens: the PC gains no useful insight into the device's nature or operation, but at least it didn't do anything nasty . . .
- 12 – the character locates one of the device's less-obvious controls (but doesn't find out what it does).
- 13 – the PC discovers the power switch that turns the device on and off.
- 14 – the experimenter gets a clue concerning the purpose of the device.
- 15 – the device's main function is clearly demonstrated (possibly by blowing a large hole in something inanimate – and expensive – nearby), and the character can now operate this function, at a skill penalty of -4.
- 16 – a procedure is discovered that reliably operates a single secondary function (with no skill penalty).
- 17 – the location and general nature of all secondary device controls is deduced, and these functions can be used at a skill penalty of -4.
- 18 – the PC figures out how to operate the major controls and can use the main function of the device at no skill penalty.
- 19 – the operator discovers all the functions of the device, and all relevant operating procedures, and can use all device functions at no skill penalty.
- 20 or higher – as 19, and the character finds a totally serendipitous – and useful – application of the device that the creators never thought of!

### Modifiers:

- amount character skill roll was made or failed by
- 1 for each skill-roll failure after the first
- +5 if the device controls are simple and obvious
- +1 to +5 for a device of simple function

-5 for an incredibly complex device with lots of controls (e.g., a starship, a computer or a TL7 VCR).

-4 for poking at device with a stick

-2 for decent waldos (remote manipulators)

-1 for using psi or magic to manipulate the device from a theoretically safe distance

+4 if the PC has Intuition

+2 if the character has Danger Sense

## GADGETEERING: INVENTING NEW DEVICES

A gadgeteer builds technological equipment that the GM feels can be reasonably accomplished. At IOU, "reasonably" is a very flexible term – this can include devices of higher tech levels, as well as weird applications of mundane technology, and may even include supergadgets.

The Gadgeteer advantage reflects the character's aptitude in quickly creating new equipment or modifying existing equipment. It doesn't just mean the hero is unusually smart or knowledgeable; it represents a broad, intuitive capacity for inventing

Every gadget has a specific area of knowledge required to create it. The gadgeteer may wish to specialize in one or two areas to start, then expand his horizons as he progresses in experience. The GM will assign the prerequisite skills for each gadget.

### CREATING NEW EQUIPMENT

Creating new gear requires the character to have a good understanding of the field he is working in. For example, someone trying to invent a new type of weapon *must* have a high skill in Engineer (Weapon Type) in order to succeed. The level of expertise required should depend on the complexity of the device (which is decided by the GM):

*Simple gadget:* requires skill 12-14

*Average gadget:* requires skill 15-17

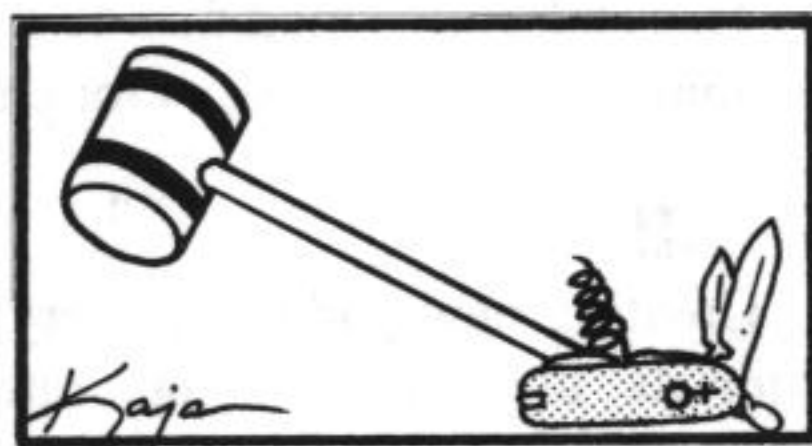
*Complex gadget:* requires skill 18-20

*Amazing gadget:* requires skill 21+

A player who wants to create a *new* gadget must have an explanation for its operation and must describe it to the GM in a logical manner. The GM is free to accept or reject the design depending on its feasibility.

### TIME REQUIRED

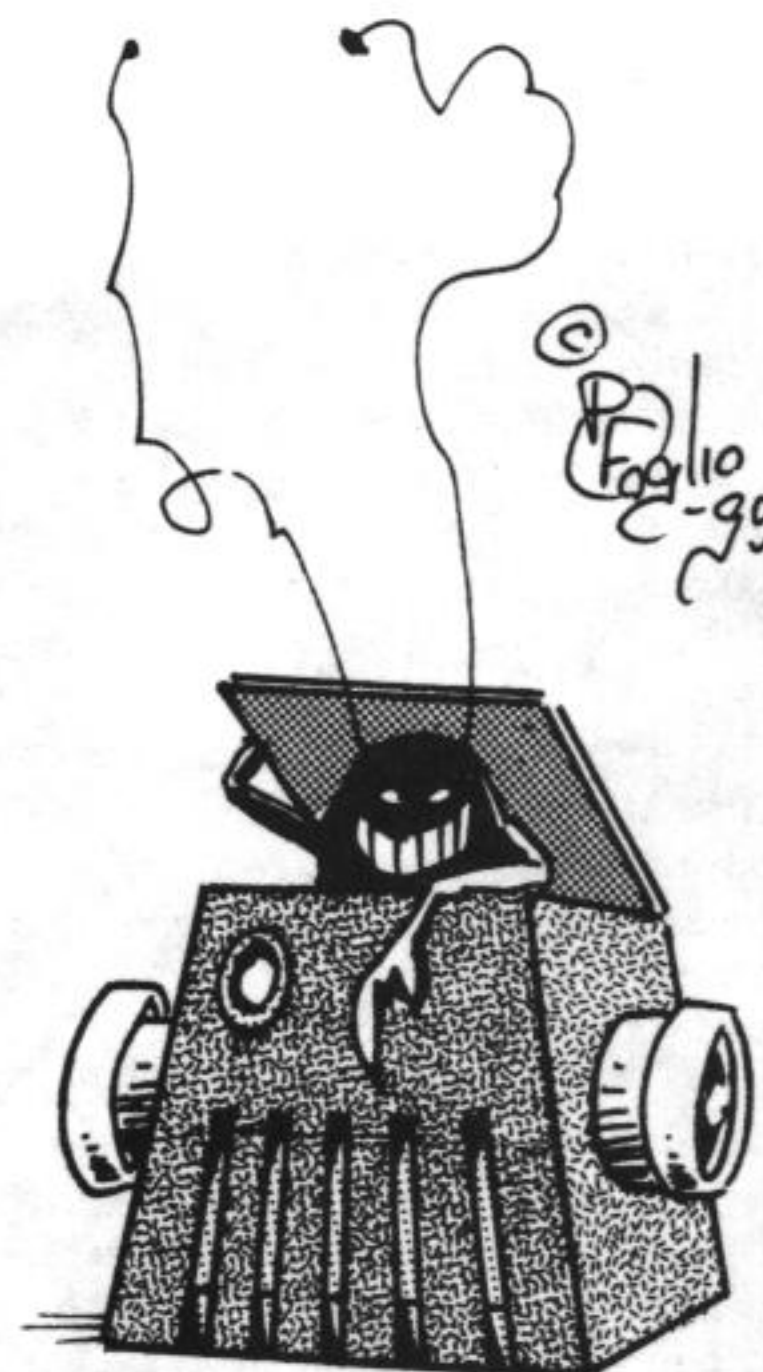
A simple gadget will only take 1d-2 (minimum 1) days to develop. Average complexity calls for 2d days, a complex gadget takes 1d months, and an amazing gadget takes 3d months. These times assume that the character works eight hours a day on the invention. If the gadgeteer works 16 hours a day, time is cut by 50%, but he must make a HT roll each morning or suffer fatigue as if he only got a half-night of sleep (see sidebar, p. B134). Fatigue points lost in this manner can't be regained without taking a break from the project, which will add 1d days to it! If the PC has the Doesn't Sleep advantage (p. SU39 or *GURPS Fantasy Folk*, p. 18), only 1 fatigue roll per week is necessary.



### BUGS IN GADGETS

Newly-designed gadgets normally have bugs in them. A critical success on the skill roll for building the device results in a gadget with no bugs (other than those side-effects imposed for too-high TL or use of Weird Science). A normal success results in a working gadget with 1d6/2 (round up) minor bugs. These are usually annoying little problems that result in small penalties in operating the device: a weapon has a Malf number of 16, or a lower Acc bonus, or 10% less range than expected; vehicles have minor handling problems, "blind spots," or fuel-efficiency problems; other gadgets are awkward to use (-1 penalty to skill), are fragile (low hit points or low DR) or need frequent adjustments (-1 to skill per week since the last "tune up").

Minor bugs are usually detected in testing – if the inventor bothers to do any – or when the device is used "in the field." A bug is detected any time the operator makes a skill roll by 3 or more in normal operation (if the device is being tested, roll once per week of testing). A critical success reveals all the bugs; otherwise a single bug is noticed. The inventor has a -3 penalty to detect bugs – he's too close to the design to see minor problems! A successful design skill roll and a week of lab or shop work will fix a single bug.



## MALFUNCTIONING GADGETS

Gadgets have a tendency to malfunction, break when used as blunt instruments in combat or simply get trampled by rampaging dinosaurs. When this happens, someone needs to fix the device. Characters with the appropriate operation skill *and* familiarity with the gadget (have used it for a least a week or two) can attempt to repair minor problems, such as those that happen when the device malfunctions. This requires an operation skill roll at a -4 penalty to simply diagnose the problem, or a -8 penalty to actually *fix* it. Appropriate tools must be available, or an additional -5 penalty should be added; this is not usually a problem on campus.

For major damage, operation skill will not suffice – the skill used to invent the gadget must be used. In addition, the repairing character must either be the inventor, or have a good technical manual or equivalent for the gadget. (Note that most WUSE professors and students *hate* to document their work.) Without a tech manual, characters other than the inventor have a -4 penalty to effect repairs.

As a general rule, major damage to devices above the campaign Tech Level can only be repaired on-campus; parts and appropriate test equipment simply aren't available off-campus. TL7 gadgets *can* be repaired in the field, though parts may be costly. Most students prefer to apply their Scrounging skill to avoid the expense of new parts, though using "Midnight Auto Supply" runs the risk of encounters with the minions of Law and Order – roll a contest of the student's Stealth vs. the cops' Vision (usually about 12).

Most *IOU* characters will only be able to work on gadgets part-time, in lab courses or in their free time. If the GM doesn't want to worry about bookkeeping, assume the character can work two hours a day on a lab project, or four hours a day on a "free time" gadget.

At the middle of the project, the character rolls against the skills the GM required for the particular gadget. A failed roll adds 50% to the time to complete the gadget. On a critical failure the gadget is destroyed – all work is lost and the development cost (below) must be paid over again. A critical success means that the item is finished immediately!

No further skill rolls are required to complete the gadget, though testing of the final result is advised. Most gadgets built in an *IOU* campaign will have bugs and various other problems – see *Gadgeteering at IOU*, p. 105.

This skill roll is modified by the complexity of the gadget – no modification for simple; -2 for average; -4 for complex; -8 for amazing.

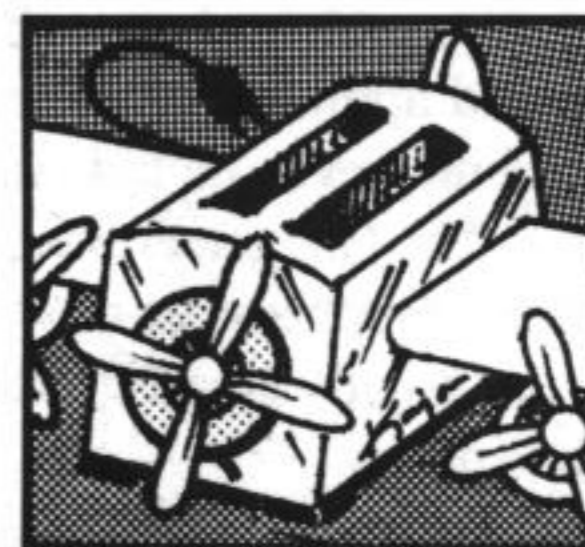
## EXPENSES

Creating new gadgets is very costly. Tools, raw materials, unusual parts, laboratory space, etc., all cost money. The GM will assign two costs to an item – *Development* cost, which must be paid before any item can be fabricated, and *Production* cost, which must be paid for *each* item created.

Development cost is a function of tech level and complexity of an item. The following table shows the *Base Cost* for an item at the campaign Tech Level, and the *TL Increment*, the cost for each additional Tech Level above the campaign.

**Gadget Development Cost Table**

Complexity	Base Cost	TL Increment
Simple	\$50,000	\$100,000
Average	\$100,000	\$250,000
Complex	\$250,000	\$500,000
Amazing	\$500,000	\$1,000,000



Production cost varies from item to item. If the gadget exists in *GURPS Space*, *GURPS Ultra-Tech* or the *GURPS Basic Set*, use the cost of the item as a base production cost and double it for each difference in tech level, *accumulating* the cost!

*Example:* Dr. Heinrich Von Der Maker wishes to make a Holobelt (p. UT85). This is a TL10 item that projects a holographic image around the wearer, giving the wearer some small bonuses in combat and making him look like something else.



The GM rules that this is a complex item, so the base development cost is \$250,000. Since TL10 is 3 Tech Levels above the campaign TL7, there is an additional \$1,500,000 (3 × TL Increment) development cost, bringing the total to \$1,750,000.

This item sells for \$1,100 at TL10. The difference of three Tech Levels causes the price to double 3 times;  $\$1,100 + \$2,200 + \$4,400 + \$8,800 = \$16,500$  per item!

Gadgets developed as lab projects normally do not cost the character anything – the University picks up the tab for lab equipment and materials. But it also owns the resulting gadget! (Normally, the student will be able to use it until he graduates, but then it will have to be returned, or he may find a rather large “lab fee” attached to his pre-graduation bill . . .)

“Free-time” gadget developers can usually make use of University facilities, and often a Scrounging roll will serve to “liberate” a few parts from a campus stockroom – halve costs. If the University Administration finds out about the gadget, though, they will point out that often-overlooked clauses in the faculty contracts and student admission papers gives the University rights to the invention if any campus facilities or parts were used in its development.

## OPTIONAL RULE: “GIZMO” GADGETS

Many characters always seem to have the right piece of gear at the right time (“Good thing I had that inflatable mace in my pocket, or those jocks might have fogged my glasses!”). To emulate this, the GM may allow a gadgeteer to use a *gizmo* during his adventures. This may be *any* device the PC *could* have reasonably been carrying. It remains undefined until he uses it.

*Example:* Swomi Tift, the physics major, has room in her backpack for eight items. She normally carries a laser pistol, portable computer, two smoke bombs, an electronics tool kit, two textbooks and a gizmo (an unidentified gadget). While scrounging some parts, the intrepid student is accidentally locked in the cafeteria meat locker to freeze or suffocate. Swomi’s player tells the GM that her gizmo is a vial of thermite paste, which burns the hinges off the freezer door.

Only gadgeteers are allowed to use gizmos.

### POINT COSTS

The number of gizmos a character can use *per game session* is determined as part of the cost of the Gadgeteer advantage. Each gizmo adds 5 points to the cost, up to a maximum of 3 gizmos (15 points).

*Example:* A normal gadgeteer (25 points) wishes to be able to carry two gizmos per game session (10 points), for a total cost of 35 points. A quick gadgeteer (see p. 114) would pay 60 points for the same privilege.

### LIMITATIONS

The gizmo must be a device that the gadgeteer has already developed and built. Obviously it must fit the space that the gadgeteer had available – no autogyros in coat pockets. Essentially, if the gadgeteer had built 20 different devices that would fit into a coat pocket, he may reach into the pocket and produce any of them as the gizmo.



## PSIONICS

Psi is fairly common at the University, and operates as described in the *Basic Set* and *GURPS Psionics*. The advanced techniques described in Chapter 2 of *Psionics* are likely to be known and taught in courses, as well as the basic skills. Most psychotronic devices of TL7 and some TL8 ones can be found at IOU. Most importantly, mind shields are common equipment for professors, especially near mid-terms and finals.

Unlike magic, psi techniques have no specific home at the University. Telepathy and Psychic Vampirism training is mostly found in the College of Communication, while Astral Projection is primarily taught in the College of Zen Surrealism, and Electrokinetics in WUSE. The remaining psionic powers are the province of COUP. Psychotronics and bio-psi technology are handled at WUSE, of course.



## SUPERPOWERS

If the campaign includes powers from *GURPS Supers*, they are handled much like psionics in the University structure. Generally, training in super powers will belong to the college most related to the origin or nature of the power.

## GADGETEERING DURING ADVENTURES

At least as important as the ability to build gadgets is the ability to modify and analyze equipment during the course of an adventure. The skill roll required to successfully figure out an item is the same as the roll that would be required to create it.

To modify someone else's gadget requires 1d hours, and two such successful skill rolls! The GM will have to use his judgment to decide what modifications could reasonably be made in each particular case.

## QUICK GADGETEERING

Some GMs will not be satisfied with the regular gadgeteering time and costs. Rather than spending days of work and hundreds of thousands of dollars, they wish to run PCs who can throw together an Interphazed Fromblitzer in less than an hour, using only the contents of a random glove compartment. This "quick" gadgeteering is best suited to a highly cinematic game, such as a Silly IOU campaign.

## NECESSARY SKILLS

Skills are chosen by the GM as per normal gadgeteering, p. 111. The character must also have the 50-point Quick Gadgeteer advantage.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

The cinematic gadgeteer is a master at cannibalizing parts and scrounging bits and pieces from other equipment. The GM should allow a roll versus an appropriate speciality to locate usable components. For example, if the only thing available is a wrecked '65 Mustang, the GM might require a roll versus Mechanical Engineering or Mechanic to find the parts necessary for the gadget under construction.

This roll should be modified as follows:

- Simple Gadget: No modifier
- Average Gadget: specialty -2
- Complex Gadget: specialty -6
- Amazing Gadget: specialty -10



## TIME REQUIRED

A *simple* gadget will only take 2d minutes to assemble from the needed components. *Average* complexity calls for 1d-2 hours (a roll of 1 or 2 indicates a 30-minute assembly time). A *complex* gadget requires 1d hours to assemble, and an *amazing* gadget will take 4d hours.

The inventor doesn't roll against the required skills until the *end* of the project. A failed roll indicates that the PC must start over. A critical failure means that the parts were ruined – new ones must be found before construction can resume.

## EXPENSES

If the inventor can scrounge the necessary parts, costs are minimal (1d-1 × \$100, a roll of 1 indicates no cost). If he must *buy* the needed items, the cost is figured as normal (see p. 111), then divided by 100.

## QUICK GADGETEERING DURING ADVENTURES

Figuring out someone else's devices requires 1d *minutes* using these rules, and the device can be modified in 1d × 10 minutes (plus normal skill rolls, as per p. 111).



## PUN MAGIC

For the adventurous GM, we offer *pun magic* – an alternate spellcasting system. As the name implies, the spell is cast using a pun related to the desired effect. The caster must have *Magery*, and the spell effect should be described using either the regular spell lists in the *Basic Set*, *GURPS Magic* or *GURPS Grimoire*, or the rules for improvised spells (see p. M85). Pun magic has two major advantages: casting time is only as long as it takes to make the pun, and it draws some of its energy from bystanders as they groan at the pun.

The *player* must actually make the pun. (Alternatively, the GM may allow pun-challenged players to use the punning rules in *GURPS Callahan's Crosstime Saloon*.) The pun is successful if one or more of the other players, or the GM, groans at the pun or throws things at the punster. On a successful pun, every character in hearing range of the punning PC must make a Will roll to resist groaning at the pun. (Pun-al – ah, *penalties* to this roll should be assigned for particularly atrocious puns.) If the hearer fails the roll, he suffers one point of Fatigue, which goes to help power the spell. On a critical failure of the Will roll, the character contributes *all* his Fatigue and falls unconscious! People with *Mundanity* or *No Sense of Humor* cannot be tapped by pun magic.

After all the points from listeners are totalled up, the caster must supply any additional energy required for the spell. If there is *excess* energy available, the spell's effect is increased proportionately in some fashion, determined by the GM.

In a roomful of people, pun magic can be *very* powerful. Fortunately, pun magic is self-limiting. Unless a Will roll is critically failed, after losing three Fatigue points to pun magic, a character cannot be "tapped" for any more until all lost Fatigue is recovered – people burn out on puns rather quickly. Also, the spell effects and energy costs can be somewhat unpredictable – the caster needs to be *quite* sure that he's got a bad-enough pun, or the spell may tap all his energy and render him unconscious! Furthermore, bystanders who hate puns may want to do something nasty to the punning mage.

Pun magic enchantments are possible, but difficult – while up to three points of Fatigue can be tapped per mage (or observer!) per day, telling awful puns on the same subject for a month can get a little taxing. (Unlike normal enchantments, an unlimited number of spectators can provide energy without skill penalty, though they've been known to throw things at the mages . . .) Items created with pun magic are usually twisted and quirky.

Alchemical researchers have been looking for ways to tap pun magic in the manufacture of elixirs, but so far the results have been disappointing.

## MAGIC

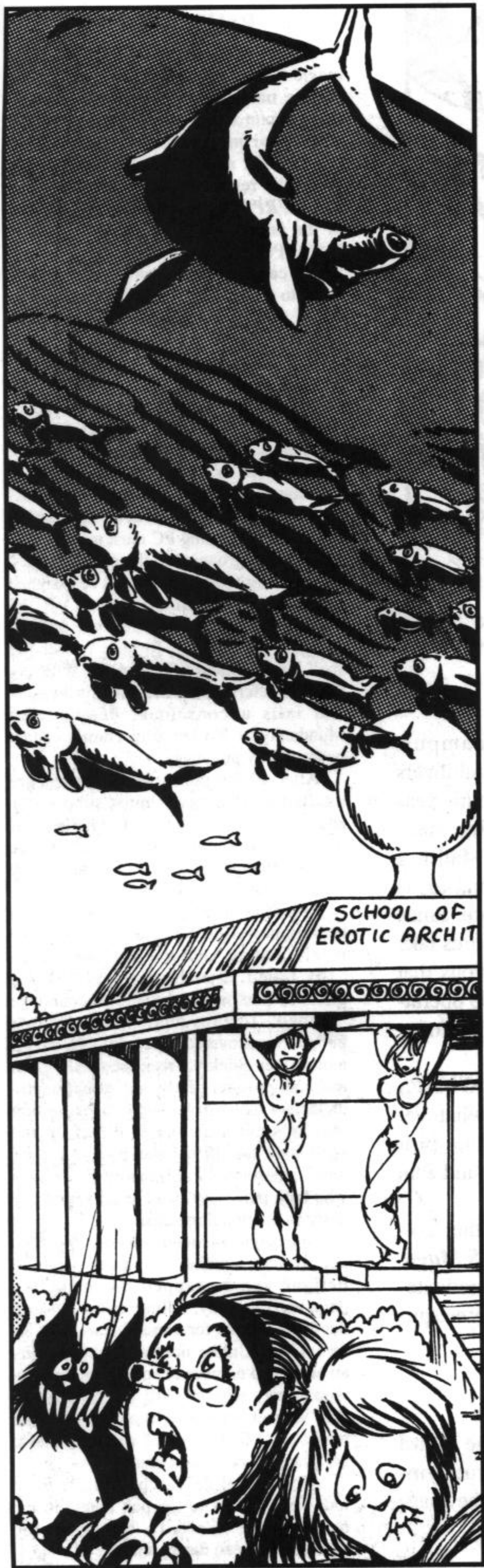
The University is a normal-mana area over most of the campus. Technoweenies tend to attribute it to a side-effect of the campus reality stabilizers (p. 83), while the metaphysically-inclined usually point to that odd South Seas statue in the sub-basement of the Anthropology building. Off-campus, the mana level is usually low, though for some unexplained reason, the Pyramid Mall is a *high-mana* zone, and the world contains a considerable number of normal-mana areas, and even a few high-mana ones, like Stonehenge and Times Square. Since the campaign will usually involve weird places when off-campus adventures take place, the GM should consider making most adventures occur in locations that "just happen" to have normal mana. This will allow PC mages reasonable operating room, while keeping them from freaking the mundanes too much while traveling.

Magic in an *IOU* campaign functions as described in the *Basic Set*, *GURPS Magic* and *GURPS Grimoire*. In addition to the standard rules and whatever optional rules the GM permits (improvisational magic is very much in the spirit of *IOU*, for example), *IOU* also offers the *Weird Magic* skill (below) and *Pun Magic* (see the sidebar).

The College of Metaphysics offers courses that teach spellcasting – the "colleges" of magic are departments within the College. All spells in *GURPS Magic* and *GURPS Grimoire* are taught, though some may be restricted to graduate-level courses, or courses requiring "permission of the instructor" as a prerequisite.

## WEIRD MAGIC

As with science, there are shortcuts to magic – unreliable ones. The *Weird Magic* skill (p. 24) represents the ability to go far afield from tried and true symbolic magic into the realms of total illogic. (Perhaps *Weird Magic* is the thaumaturgical version of chaos theory.)



A successful Weird Magic skill roll provides a +2 bonus when casting a spell using improvisational magic (p. M76). Using Weird Magic is chancy, however – any failed roll on a weird improvised spell will result in some embarrassing or unpleasant result affecting the caster, such as being ground zero for a rain of zucchini.

Research for new spells (p. M15) can be made easier with Weird Magic skill in two ways. First, a successful Weird Magic roll at the start of the research can eliminate the need to know prerequisites; the mage comes at the new spell from a totally off-the-wall angle, rather than building on existing knowledge. Second, a Weird Magic skill roll can be made for each IQ+Magery “research” roll, with a success giving a +5 bonus. This can make spell research a lot faster! But the resulting spell will be “warped” – it will *always* use energy, even on failure, and failed spell rolls will cause peculiar results which will never favor the caster. Even “successful” spells tend to create odd side effects. (Perhaps the *Random Side-Effects Table* on p. 108 will suggest possibilities.) The GM is encouraged to be creative . . .

The Weird Magic skill can also make it easier to enchant magic items. Before the item is enchanted, the mage makes a Weird Magic skill roll. For each point by which the skill roll is made, the energy cost of the enchantment is reduced by 10%, to a maximum reduction of 90%. An exact success or a failed Weird Magic roll provides no benefit, but the item is enchanted using Weird Magic anyway. Naturally, there’s a price for taking shortcuts – the GM should use the *Guaranteed Play-Balance Table* on p. 107 to determine exactly what’s wrong with the item. It will also have 1d-3 quirks (minimum 1); the GM should roll on the *Random Side-Effect Table* on p. 108, or use the rules for magic item quirks on p. 9 of *GURPS Magic Items 2*.

Use of Weird Magic skill isn’t confined to mages – the principles can be applied to Alchemy skill as well (see the rules for *Making Alchemical Items*, p. M98). With a successful Weird Magic roll, an alchemist can do *one* of the following:

- Get a +2 bonus to Alchemy skill rolls while making a “batch” of one elixir,

- Reduce the materials cost for a batch of any one elixir by 50%,

- Reduce the time to produce a batch of one elixir by 50%, or

- Make twice as many doses in a batch for the same skill penalty (e.g., make two doses at no penalty, four at -1 and so forth).

As with other uses of Weird Magic, there is a cost. Elixirs made using Weird Magic principles always have a side-effect (use the *Random Side-Effect Table* on p. 108, or make up something appropriate). They also are less reliable in effect than normal elixirs – any time a dose is taken the GM should roll 1d-4 and multiply by 25%. The result is the modifier for the duration of effect of that dose, ranging from -75% to +50% of the normal time. For elixirs with no duration, like Cadmus or Hebe, apply the modifier to the elixir’s effect, instead. Hopeful Romantic who use love potions made with Weird Magic will probably regret it . . .

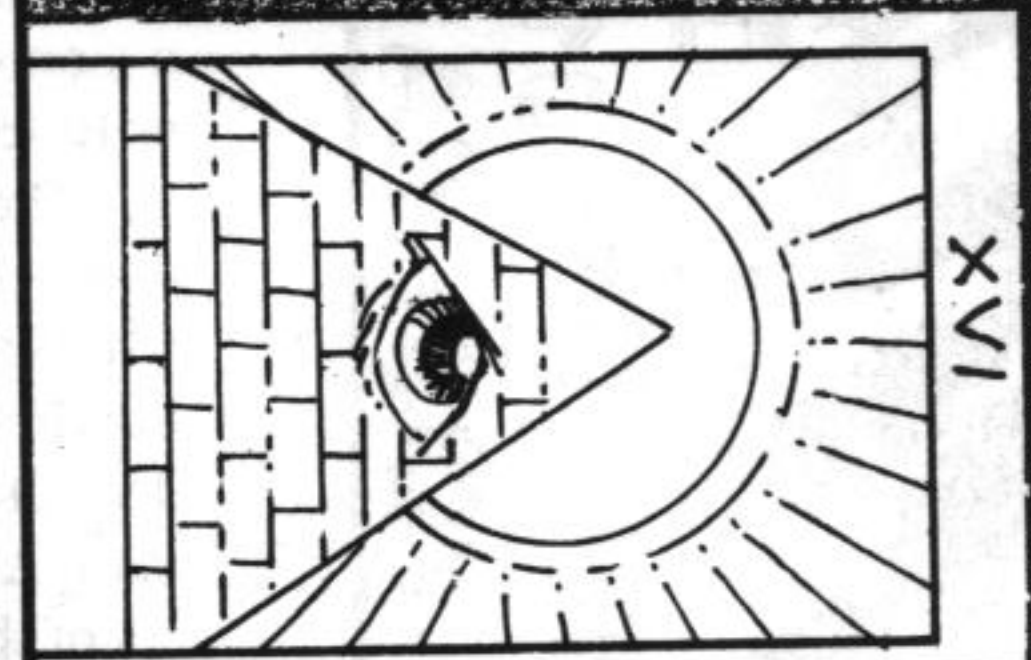
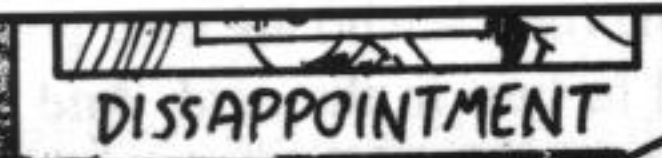
Critical successes with Weird Magic skill give the caster the idea for a totally new spell (or elixir) that has nothing to do with the current problem (another application of the Law of Serendipity). Critical failures are utter – and spectacular – disasters. The tale of the Sorcerer’s Apprentice probably involved a critical failure of Weird Magic.

# ADVENTURES

Gillian Brent looked over the spread of Tarot cards in front of her. "Looks like something strange is going to happen to you, Johnathan."

The millionaire student ducked what looked like a meep on a hang-glider. "It took Tarot cards to tell you *that*?" he asked, incredulously.

Gillian braced herself as Pyewacket launched himself off her shoulder after the flying treat. "You have a point." A furry turtle finally got close enough to the cards to taste them. The witch sighed in defeat. "Maybe palm reading would work better."



## THE ULTIMATE PLOT

A good long-term plot to weave through *IOU* adventures is a quest to answer the question, "Why does *IOU* exist, and what is its purpose?"

In a Darkly Illuminated *IOU*, the answer will certainly be sinister, and probably related to an Illuminati plot to control people with weird (and useful) powers.

A Weird *IOU* may have a more natural (and less sinister) explanation – perhaps Someone is collecting and training a cadre of people to Save the Universe.

The Silly *IOU* needs no real justification, and if there's any reason for its existence beyond sheer randomness, it is likely to be totally irrational. Say, the university started as a retirement home for burned-out demigods, who needed something to keep them busy in their declining centuries. If you can't do, teach...

## THE EGG AND IOU (NO PETS ALLOWED!)

One of the PCs' roommates – a Paleontology major – is out of town on a dig. Unfortunately, the fossilized egg she brought back from her field trip to the Amazon last month is making funny noises. After a few hours it hatches into a small green slug-like creature, which is terminally cute... and very hungry! Fortunately, it is easy to feed – it eats *anything*. All the time. And grows quite fast. So now the PCs need to do something about it, especially since the dorms have a very firm "No Pets!" policy.

(GMs may want to dig out their copy of "Awful Green Things from Outer Space" as a prop, or maybe a tactical map...)



Though the *IOU* Game Master can undoubtedly think of evil plots without assistance, the authors feel obligated to inflict some of *their* bad ideas on the hapless reader. A number of these adventures were originally run as improvisational games at conventions, using freshening versions of the sample student characters on pp. 64-68. Because of the free-wheeling nature of the setting, most of these adventure ideas are merely situation setups and the GM will have to expand on them, providing an appropriate resolution. But first, a relatively complete short adventure, the authors' tribute to the classic fantasy quest...

## ONE CARD TO RULE THE MALL

In the Pyramid Mall one day, the PCs are run down by a gaggle of Valley Girls. As the characters pick themselves back up off the floor, one of them spots a shimmering metallic credit card lying loose on the ground. Whoever retrieves the card hears a soft chattering noise and sees his own name being embossed on the front of the card! The signature area on the back will prove to have the holder's signature on it. On examination, the card looks like a normal credit card, though the name of the card is partly unreadable – the most that can be made out is "M????rCard." The account number is unusually short: "2001 000 0666," and the fine print on the back of the card reads "If this card is lost or stolen – tough!"

The new owner of the card will prove *most* reluctant to turn the card in to the mall Lost and Found. After all, it has *his* name on it – who are they going to contact? (The new owner must make a Will roll to turn in the card. And when the PC gets home he'll get a call from mall security, asking him to come pick up his card, which some kind-hearted citizen turned in.)

Any merchant will accept the card, and it seems to have an unlimited credit limit. Automated bank terminals will also take it and dispense any amount of cash, up to the entire contents of the machine. An account balance check at an ATM will print only the word "JACKPOT."

More esoteric investigations of the card will reveal some additional information. Most magical or psionic examinations will only produce a faint sense of "bad vibes" and incredible power. Scientific investigations will show that the card is made of some virtually indestructible metal alloy. Being dropped into a supernova or a black hole *might* destroy it, but nothing short of that will. Heating the card with a blowtorch or the equivalent will cause small glowing red letters to appear, spelling out the following verse:

*One Card to rule them all, One Card to bribe them,  
One Card to bring to malls, with all it takes to buy them.*

***Don't leave home without it!***

Reading the magnetic stripe on the card into a computer will cause the computer display to show the same verse, including the glowing red letters – even on a monochrome monitor. Successful use of the spell Detect Magic or the psi skill of Psychometry will also reveal this text.

The previous holder of the card was one of the mall-rat valley girls that ran down the characters. Gail McWhirtle (known to the "in" crowd as "Gail M" – "McWhirtle is, like, *sooo* uncool!") is the daughter of a prominent local lawyer, Stanford McWhirtle, of the firm McWhirtle, Strunk & White. Poor Gail M doesn't discover the loss of the card until after she, and the PCs, have left the mall. A frantic call to mall security produces confusion in these staunch defenders of the law and the three-hour coffee break. (They have difficulty understanding at first exactly what "the Gnarliness" is.) Eventually they report no one has turned in such a credit card to Lost and Found. Perhaps the young lady should contact the bank?

## THE HABIT

For each week holding the card, the holder must make a Will roll, at a cumulative -1 for each week after the first, or acquire an additional disadvantage. The first three failed rolls give the character successive levels of the Compulsive Behavior (Spendthrift) disadvantage (see p. B240). The fourth failed roll adds the Greed disadvantage, and the process ends. (Will rolls can overcome these disadvantages normally, without additional penalties.)

The new disadvantages do *not* wear off if the holder gives away or loses the card – they will only fade away when the card is destroyed. In fact, the cardholder must make a Will roll to deliberately lose, transfer or destroy the card – at a penalty equal to the number of weeks of possession! If the PCs get *really* paranoid about the card's side effects, the ArchDean should get it somehow . . . (Not that she'll be affected – in fact, when in her possession, the card will read: "One card to rule them a. . . oops." – but the players shouldn't know this.) Smart PCs will also remember the ArchDean's first two rules (p. 8). If no one thinks of this, have all the characters make a Survival (IOU) roll to remember.

If the holder loses the card, he should make an additional Will roll at a penalty equal to the number of weeks he had the card. On a failed roll, the character gains the Obsession disadvantage (p. B241) – he *must* get the card back! An Obsessed ex-cardholder can vaguely sense the current distance and direction to the card, which can make life difficult for the current holder . . .

Consultations with psychics, Divination spells or Psychometry skill will reveal these details – *after* the lucky cardholder has acquired at least one disadvantage (including the Obsession). THE computer can also determine the effects by analyzing the contract encoded in the magnetic stripe on the card. (It will demand substantial payment in advance, *not* with the card, and will require at least a week. Even it won't be able to determine exactly who issued the card, or what the repayment terms are . . . they seem to be encrypted in a code THE computer can't crack easily.)

## THE FRATERNITY OF THE CARD

Gail M, not yet wanting to bother Daddy with this eensy little problem about the loss of his birthday present to her, needs help. Fortunately, she's a member of the sorority Beta Chi Nu, and they can demand assistance from their male equivalent, Delta Upsilon Delta, home to many members of the Team.

Gail M doesn't yet know who has the card, but has traced it to the IOU campus. Unfortunately, there is enough stray magic, radiation and general weirdness around to keep her from getting an exact fix on the card's current holder. The best plan the Deltas can come up with (after several hours of deep thought, plus the consumption of a dozen pizzas and three cases of beer) is to wander the campus, asking people about "The Gnarliness" in something barely detectable as English. Hulking over the interrogation victim usually supplies enough incentive for the intimidatee to produce an answer – *any* answer – to send the searchers on their way. By purest chance, this will often be somewhere near the current cardholder.

The PCs will get plenty of opportunity to watch the "Delta DUDes" in action. Perhaps the DUDes will even try to interrogate a PC standing next to the real cardholder . . .

If the DUDes don't get a clue about the real holder of "The Gnarliness," such as a preemptive strike by the PCs, one of them will eventually get the idea of asking George the Janitor, who will fortuitously have been hanging around the players' party just when the card was being discussed. After a suitable gratuity (cash only, please) George will finger the lucky PC, and the DUDes will descend on the characters like a ton of goldbricks. The GM should arrange the ensuing mayhem

## THE SPAMMISH INQUISITION

Why are the FBI, the CIA, the KGB and the Phone Company looking for 20 cases of emergency rations that were stored in IOU's fallout shelters back in the 1950s? It seems that people who have eaten the strangely-glowing synthomeat have acquired weird powers . . .

A long time ago, in an atoll far away, a certain government tested the effects of nuclear weapons on various common items – including standard government emergency rations. A bureaucratic foul-up resulted in some of the cases being routed to fallout shelters, instead of being shipped to secret government labs for fallout analysis. Forty years later, someone discovered the error, after the mayor of Podunk, Nebraska was held hostage for twelve hours by a horde of super-powered rats in the basement of City Hall.

Will the students find the cases before the government agents? Will they decide to eat some of the food in preference to cafeteria fare? Will they *sell* the cases to the cafeteria as a new type of synthetic food that comes in designer neon colors? Will they be able to cope with hyper-powered IOU tunnel rats and Supermeep?



## FROM BAD TO WUSE

A group of students has incurred the displeasure of the ArchDean by excessive complaining about the cafeteria food (attempted arson at the Borgia Center is a bit much). So they're assigned new jobs – as experimental subjects in the Department of Weird Science and Culinary Studies. Even the dorm food will look good after surviving on Dr. Rupo's 21-Day Radioactive Rutabaga Miracle Diet . . . ("It Worked for Elvis – It Will Work for You!")

## DRAFTED INTO SECURITY!

Due to a recent upsurge in general intelligence, a lower unemployment rate or maybe just a higher-than-usual attrition rate, the University personnel department has had trouble recruiting warm bodies to fill Campus Security positions. WUSE has tried to supply security robots to fill in the gaps, but (1) the robots aren't terribly effective, since they tend to run away from situations where Campus Security would rush in, and (2) the robots are *expensive* and tend to require excessive repairs after a typical night's patrol on campus.

In order to placate the ArchDean after this costly debacle, WUSE has manufactured computer records showing that some students have "volunteered" to work part-time as Campus Security, and the PCs just happen to be among the lucky winners...

## RECRUITING DRIVE

It's spring – time for all good high school seniors to be thinking about the college of their choice. In order to forestall that sort of nonsense, the ArchDean has decreed a bounty of one credit hour for every acceptable (read: wealthy) senior recruited to the University. This is a chance for the PCs to get out there and practice their Fast-Talk, Intimidation, Sex Appeal and maybe even Lasso skills. Of course, all the other students at IOU are trying to capture live ones, too. And there may not be enough to go around. (The GM should be thinking about California during the Gold Rush, here... claim-jumping, backstabbing and double-dealing are the order of the day – if the PCs don't think of it first.)

To make things more interesting, each School wants to get more new freshthings, at the expense of other Schools. So each student will get a "secret" briefing from his own School's dean. And each department will want to recruit for *its* own benefit, so there's another complication. And Student Housing Services would like students to live on-campus. Et cetera.

Don't forget that other universities are out recruiting, too. And some of them are, well, a trifle *unethical*. Who'd have believed it?

so that the DUDes don't get the card, even if that means Campus Security puts in an improbably-timely appearance. (At the very least, Security can provide a distraction for the DUDes to fight while the PCs slip away.)

## THE TWO TOWERS

Foiled in her first attempt to recover the card, but at least now knowing the opposition, Gail M calls in the big guns – *Daddy*. The PCs will promptly be buried in legal papers, deposed, subpoenaed and *habeas corpused*. Like any good lawyer, however, McWhirtle Senior won't actually give the opposition anything in the way of useful information, like where the card came from.

The characters will get to make frequent treks off-campus to the Cirith Tower, whose thirteenth floor is occupied by the offices of McWhirtle, Strunk and White. If any of the characters has Law skill, a successful roll will tell them that the best tactic is to play dumb about the card – McWhirtle doesn't seem to have any real proof that the card belongs to his daughter. (A friendly, or suitably-bribed, COUP law student can also offer this advice.)

All this legal action on campus (231 process-servers in one day tends to stand out) eventually attracts the notice of the ArchDean, who will summon the characters to *her* Tower, and grill them about Precisely What is Going On? And Why Are All These *Lawyers* on Campus? If the characters try to dump the problem on the ArchDean, or even simply tell the truth, the ArchDean will examine the card, produce a disconcerting grin, and tell the students, "Three credit hours each if you take care of this. Now, *get these Mundane lawyers off my campus!*"

## THE RETURN OF THE KING

At this point, the PCs should have plenty of motivation to destroy the card. The question is, how? Various WUSE students and professors will happily attempt the job, but aside from the usual collateral destruction, are unable to accomplish much. Summoned demons will look at the card, giggle hysterically, refuse to help and vanish in a cloud of credit-card slips (none of which will prove interesting). The dean of C.T.H.U.L.H.U. has a sign on his door reading "Out to lunch. Back yesterday at 2:30."

Eventually the characters should find some vague information about similar cards (say, a visit to the library and a successful series of three Research rolls, or a consultation with – and substantial bribe to – the dean of Metaphysics). Such cards are sometimes given out by very powerful demons, who enjoy watching the ensuing chaos (and running betting pools on how long an individual will hang onto the card). The contracts are iron-clad, and can't even be revoked by the demon. Only the destruction of the card will break the contract (and remove the imposed disadvantages). Destroying the card *usually* frees the holder of any obligation to repay. A typical repayment rate is one soul per \$1,000 charged to the card, with a 10% *per month* interest rate. (Unless the PCs come up with



some entertaining way to divide a soul into fractions, the principal and interest is rounded up to whole souls per month!)

Unfortunately, destroying the card will require *great* energy – your basic nuclear explosion simply won't cut it. (It used to be possible to destroy similar items by tossing them into a *really* big volcano, but people caught on. The last user to get away with this was Samuel Clemens, and the result was the explosion of Krakatoa, though for some reason Mark Twain never reported *this* expedition.) The GM should allow PCs with Astronomy or Physics skills a roll to realize that there are some astronomical phenomena that might work. The Big Bang is rather a long way to go (not to mention full of time-traveling tourists), but either a supernova or a stellar-mass black hole would probably suffice. The difficulty is, there are no handy starships on campus at the moment, and the ArchDean would object – vigorously – to turning the Sun into a supernova, or manufacturing a stellar-mass black hole on campus.

So now the characters need a starship. They may try to build one (which is most likely to fail in some entertainingly spectacular way, such as imitating an inflatable rubber duck deflating into a point-mass). Or they could try to summon one. Or the GM can simply drop a handy alien starship in the party's collective lap. (This coincidence should make the players paranoid. With good reason . . .)

Just as things look darkest (about 12:47 A.M. one moonless night), a scruffy-looking alien vessel lands in the parking lot outside the PCs' dorm/apartment/igloo/whatever. Something resembling an 8-foot tall stalk of broccoli (complete with hundreds of buggy eyes) emerges carrying a clipboard and accosts one of the PCs. After a little bit of language trouble, the bug-eyed vegetable inquires whether this is "Noshville," and if so, would the kind person *please* sign for this delivery? (Sensible PCs will say no and wreck this amazingly clever plot device, but most GMs don't have to worry about characters being sensible, do they?) Most likely, the party will try to hijack the ship, or cut a deal with the broccoli. Hijacking will be difficult, since the ship controls are designed for something that grows a root system made of optical fibers, though one never knows what the mad scientist types might be able to manage . . .

The alien is perfectly happy to cut a deal to swing by the black hole known as Cygnus X-1 (yt was planning to dump the garbage there anyway). But yt *absolutely insists* that the PCs must take delivery of this package when they get back to Earth (or IOU, whichever comes first). The trip to the black hole is uneventful, the card gets dumped with the rest of the garbage, producing enough pyrotechnics to satisfy George Lucas, and the alien quickly returns the crew to campus, along with a frost-covered object that looks a lot like a 1950's refrigerator, except that it has a transparent front (mostly iced over). Dimly visible inside is something . . . humanoid. In what looks like a white satin suit covered with rhinestones. It appears to be holding a guitar. On the outside of the refrigerator is a shipping label written in some arcane Earth tongue that one of the PCs happens to be able to read (Sanskrit, Pig Latin or Val-speak are all possibilities). The label reads, "Return to Sender, Address Unknown."

(At this point, sadistic GMs may have Elvis recover from cryonic suspension and regale the PCs with a stirring rendition of "All Shook Up." Or something. This is an ideal opportunity to inflict your Elvis impersonation on a captive audience.)

The former card owner slowly returns to whatever passes for normal within a week of the card's destruction. The GM should drop occasional hints that someone might turn up to demand repayment of the account – small giggling demons popping into the dorm room at midnight, or flocks of crows following them around, that sort of thing. But the other shoe never drops . . .

## SNEAK PREVIEW

Some of the PCs are students in Dr. Mindbender's course, Advanced Cheating 447, and finals time is drawing near. It is well-known to COUP students that the final exam consists entirely of totally obscure trivia – only a full eidetic who'd memorized the entire contents of the University Library would have a chance at a passing grade. Or the students can cheat . . .

All the PCs need to do is sneak into Dr. Mindbender's home and somehow steal a copy of the test or the answer key, or maybe substitute their own version of the test. Just to make things interesting, Dr. Mindbender also teaches Advanced Deathtraps 416, and frequently field-tests his research at home.

Truly creative solutions to this problem will get an A from Dr. Mindbender. Getting caught in a deathtrap is good for a failing grade (unless the student cheats by altering the computer grade records). Taking the test "straight" will get the student drummed out of COUP entirely, for terminal cluelessness.

## OLD MACDONALD HAD A BYTE – AI IOU

Dr. MacDonald's newest invention, an artificial intelligence in a shapechanging robot, has wandered off. He's given his Computer Mythology class three days to find "Toby" and return it – that's when he's set the auction to sell it to the highest corporate bidder. Unfortunately, the robot *likes* life (so to speak) on the IOU campus and doesn't want to leave, so it's in hiding. It can mimic anything roughly human-sized up to the size of a refrigerator (or Coke machine). Can the students find the reluctant machine before Friday? If so, will they stage their own auction, or help the machine hide out? Will the corporate spies on campus try to find and steal "Toby," and will our intrepid heroes try to save it from a life as a soft-drink salesthing?

## THE MARTIAN MORONS

The Syrtis U. moonsball team – the Suckers – is visiting campus, and the students are assigned as local guides. While well supplied with body mass, tentacles and an insatiable appetite for anything remotely organic, the average Sucker isn't well-equipped in the brain department, being slightly smarter than the average houseplant. (*Mundane* houseplant, that is – a lot of the vegetation on campus is quite erudite, and many plants make a bit of fertilizer on the side selling information via the grapevine.)

*Continued on next page . . .*

## THE MARTIAN MORONS (CONTINUED)

If trying to stop the Suckers from eating students, pets and cafeteria food weren't trouble enough, the ArchDean has let it be known that there must not be the slightest appearance of foul play in the upcoming Divisional Moopsball Finals. With special emphasis on the word "appearance." Unfortunately, the IOU Team isn't much smarter than their rivals, so avoiding an interplanetary incident while simultaneously escaping a trampling by 137 angry Team-members may call for some very fast talking, or at least fast feet.



## TERMINAL EXAM

In a rare example of inter-school collaboration, WUSE has provided an experimental device to SPCA, for use in final exams in Advanced Hysteria. The "Metamorphic DNA Transmogriifier Ray" (or "MDTR") turns ordinary – or otherwise – students into innocuous laboratory animals for 24 hours. As it happens, WUSE currently has a shortage of lab animals, and the Department of Hysteria needed something to provide suitable adrenalin levels in students for finals.

When the PCs report to class for their final exam (set for midnight), they find themselves facing a cannon-like object sporting fins, knobs, the obligatory Jacobs' Ladder and sporty racing stripes on the side. The professor walks into class at 11:55 P.M., distributes envelopes marked "Open at precisely midnight," and walks out, locking the only door behind him with a loud "thunk."

As the witching hour approaches, the cannon starts warming up, emitting the usual increasing hum, sparks and flashing lights. At precisely the stroke of midnight, the cannon fires, transforming all the students into white lab rats, rabbits or guinea pigs – GM's choice. (If the students didn't cheat by opening their envelopes before midnight, they don't belong at IOU. Inside is a slip of paper reading "Advanced Hysteria 397 Final Exam: Survive the next 24 hours. Disabling or destroying the MDTR will result in an automatic flunk of the class.")

*Continued on next page . . .*

# OFF-CAMPUS ADVENTURES (FIELD TRIPS AND VACATIONS)

University life offers many opportunities to get off campus and see the Universe. The wise GM will use these to harass everyone with Mundanes, let the PCs rampage throughout time and space or maybe just party in ancient Rome.

## YA CAIN'T GET HEAH FROM THEAH!

On summer vacation in coastal Maine, the students get lost and take an unmarked side road not on their map. The road leads into the quaint fishing village of Wye, Maine, and continues on to the north – to Wye, Maine. In fact, all attempts to leave the town result in a quick return to town. Fortunately, the natives are friendly, and the village has all the amenities: Moffit's General Store/U.S. Post Office/Town Hall/Wye Library and Museum, Fred's Garage ("We Fix Foreign Makes"), Vlad's Lumberyard, Norma's Bed and Breakfast, the Congregational Church and the Wye Diner.

At first glance, the place is a typical Maine hamlet of perhaps 200 souls, but closer observation will turn up a number of odd facts. Fred's Garage has some odd-looking parts in the junkyard out back – some of them glow, while others seem to warp out of sight into other dimensions. Mages will note that the mana level is normal, rather than the low mana found most places off-campus. There is also some kind of permanent spell on the entire village, though the precise nature of the spell is unclear. One of the local farms (the mailbox reads "George Draco") has a barn with a smoking chimney, and a number of charred spots out in the cow pasture, along with some burnt-looking skeletons. If there are any virgins in the party, they might catch glimpses of unicorns in the woods. (Or griffins. Or lions, tigers and bears, oh my!) The Zip code on the Post Office is "00000." Wolves – or something – howl in the woods at night. Strange lights are seen after dark in the sky over town. All the lobstermen (the fishing boats; people who fish for lobsters are "lobster fisherman," and are quite insistent on correct usage) are floating in the small harbor, and not out pulling lobster pots, which is very unusual in the summer. The church has a large pentagram inset before the altar.

At this point, inquisitive characters will be trying to find out more about the town, while sensible ones (at IOU?) will be trying to leave. Unsuccessfully, in the latter case. No matter how clever the PCs are, nothing will get them out of town, including teleportation and other weird powers or technology. Space simply seems to be folded back on itself, or some such pseudo-scientific persiflage. Strangely, the village inhabitants seem to come and go – someone brings the mail, fills the gas tanks at Fred's Garage and delivers fresh food to Moffit's General Store/etc. Phoning to someone "outside" will work fine (though the labels on the phones have only four digits, and lack even an area code), but no amount of research will determine where Wye, ME is, or how to get to it. If the characters attempt to hitch a ride with one of the villagers, the villager will get a couple miles out of town and suddenly remember that today is the town festival, realize they don't have any gas or get a flat tire.

Talking to the locals will be somewhat more productive, though confusing. Mostly the PCs will be told that Wye is a quiet little town, that people mind their own business, and that hardly anyone outside ever comes here, except to settle down. Current town gossip seems to revolve around the lobster fishing ("ain't been this bad since 1834") and someone named Larry, who apparently is hanging around the harbor.

Ultimately, use of divination techniques, weird science and magic and conversations with the locals should reveal the following facts:

*The Village That Wasn't There:* the village is protected by a permanent spell cast by an Indian medicine man around 1630. The spell was *intended* to keep white settlers out of the area, but it was either a critical failure or a spectacular success, depending on one's viewpoint. The spell keeps people who don't belong in the area out, and makes them forget that it even exists. (This is very handy at tax time . . .) It also draws those who *do* belong in the village there, causing the entire area to be a Weirdness Magnet, much like IOU itself. A third aspect of the spell is an extremely powerful protection spell which actively works to keep the area and its inhabitants safe. (Some villagers claim that the spirit of the Indian medicine man, Wampafido, is bound up in the spell. His medicine bag is in the museum, and may prove useful in finding out this information.)

*Why Johnny Can't Leave:* It is Wampafido's protection spell (or his spirit) that keeps the visitors from blowing town. Apparently, they are somehow necessary to the working of the spell. This information may come through divination, conversing with Wampafido's ghost or by consulting one of the village witches (Granny "Glitza the Good" Smith comes highly recommended). The PCs need to determine what problem caused the spell to draw them in, and solve it. At that point, the spell will probably let them go.

*Close Encounters of the Lobster Kind:* About the only obvious problem in town, besides minor health complaints like Vlad's sunburn and Granny Smith's bad knee, a lack of Twinkies in Moffit's General Store and a werewolf with a case of unrequited love for a unicorn, is the marked lack of lobsters in the area. Talking with the locals (the three old men sitting on the front steps of the General Store are a good, if garrulous, source of information) reveals that "Larry" is the giant lobster living in the harbor. *He's* still around, and perhaps he knows something . . .

If the characters can't come up with a way to talk to Larry, one of the village witches can provide a potion that will let one of the PCs talk with animals, including the 50' giant crustacean.

*Lobster Extraterrestrial:* Larry will sob about *her* children, who have been stolen away by aliens. (GM roleplaying note: *lots* of pathos here!) UFOs have been hovering over the Maine coast at night, and sucking up all the lobsters in a tractor beam (or something – Larry's understanding of high technology seems to be drawn from *Star Trek* reruns). So far, the aliens' beam hasn't picked up Larry herself, but she feels it getting stronger every night.

At this point the PCs should be sufficiently motivated to do something about the lobsternappers. They'll need to find a way to deal with the aliens and make them release all the lobsters. This will be made difficult by the fact that the Beerigreezi (the aliens) are trying to corner the lobster market in this sector. They're rude, greedy and unsympathetic, and they're making the biggest profit of their lives. Fortunately, they're not well-armed, and they're not very bright, either. A clever plan by the PCs might talk them into giving up their cargo (trading them the Brooklyn Bridge for the lobsters might work), or perhaps the Beerigreezi mothership can be disabled by exotic powers or weird tech (Fred's Garage might help). In the latter case, the GM can try to outdo George Lucas in spectacular starship crashes. After all, even Lucas never thought of having a torrential downpour of lobsters from the sky! Watch the skies . . .

## TERMINAL EXAM (CONTINUED)

The transformed students retain their IQ, skills and any special abilities they might have, but they cannot talk (including to each other, except for squeaking), and all their other attributes are typical for their new forms. Carried equipment – and clothing – does *not* get transformed. Most skills involving physical actions will be difficult or impossible; the GM should assess penalties of at least -4 to any skill requiring hands, and should feel free to use higher modifiers or forbid use of skills entirely. Transformed mages *can* cast spells, but at a -4 penalty. (Use the character's original ST attribute, not the transformed one, for use in powering spells.)

The PCs now must survive encounters with WUSE students hunting experiment-fodder, rabbit-hating Sahudese gardeners, birds, discarded cafeteria food ("Lunchtime!"), foraging tunnel rats and the ArchDean's cats. (The GM may find *GURPS Bunnies and Burrows* useful in creating problems for small animals.) At precisely midnight the next day, Presto! Nothing happens. In typical WUSE fashion, the MDTR doesn't work *quite* as advertised – the students don't regain their normal forms until 8:57 A.M. the next day, giving them just three minutes to get to their next final. Sans books, equipment and clothes . . .

Students developing suitable levels of panic during the test should pass the course. Anyone who figures out a clever way to turn themselves back to normal flunks. So it goes.

## LIGHTS! CAMERA! ILLUMINATI!

Somehow, the PC group wins a free trip to Hollywood, and a visit to the set where Steven von Spellberg's latest science-fiction movie (and special-effects extravaganza) is being filmed. While there, the visitors witness some strange accidents – prop blasters blow holes through the set, model starships start flying around and coffee machines start producing something other than acidic black sludge. Gee, maybe something out of the ordinary is going on.

The GM will need to motivate the PCs to investigate the problem. Perhaps they've invested money in the movie, or maybe von Spellberg is distantly related to one of them. After considerable investigation, the group will find out that the studio is built on top of an old Indian burial ground, and some of the spirits have awakened and are trying to be *helpful* – they've been making things work the way the people have *wanted* them to, haven't they? Either the geniuses from IOU will have to convince them to stop "helping," or sign them up as part of the special effects crew.

# GLOSSARY

## Campus Glossary

Terms that are in use on the IOU campus.

**AI:** Artificial Intelligence, a self-aware computer-based entity. THE computer (p. 62) is one, and currently, the only one on Earth.

**B.A.:** Bachelor of Arts. The first degree for non-science majors, taking four years (or more) to acquire.

**B.S.:** Bachelor of Science. The more common "generic" term for the first degree. Also stands for something to do with male bovines.

**Chair:** may refer to a department head (i.e., chairthing) or a "titled chair" – a high-status professorial position in a department, usually named after a famed alumnus, or at least someone the University would like to be associated with.

**CYA:** Cover Your . . . Assets, to prevent folding, spindling and mutilation by higher-ups in an organization. Usually used in bureaucratic or military contexts when seeking to avoid retribution for something.

**E-mail:** electronic mail, sent over computer networks.

**Flamewar:** a heated argument on a public computer messaging system.

**Fnord:** you're not cleared for that. See also Fnord.

**Illumni:** a contraction of "Illuminati University alumni." Not to be confused with Illuminati.

**IOU:** Illuminati University. You're not cleared to know what the "O" stands for.

**M.A.:** Master of Arts.

**MBA:** Master of Business Administration. The goal of most ambitious mundanes.

**M.S.:** Master of Science. The second degree. Also expanded to "More of the Same."

**Net:** (often "the Net"), the global computer network allowing the exchange of electronic mail, files and other forms of subversive information.

**Ph.D.:** Doctor of Philosophy. The third degree. Also stands for "Piled Higher and Deeper."

**VR:** Virtual Reality – computer-synthesized experiences.



## U.S. Government Alphabet Soup

These are government agencies of particular relevance to IOU. Besides pursuing their jobs, they may also appear on campus to recruit graduating students.

**ARPA:** the Advanced Research Projects Agency of the Department of Defense. It tends to fund small, way-out research projects with vast potential – if only they work out, which they often don't. Biggest success to date is the (unintentional) creation of the Net.

**BATF:** Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, responsible for collecting taxes on the first two, and suppressing the third. It likes to make sure it's the only ones with megadeath weaponry, and it's happy to use its own toys to ensure this.

**CIA:** Central Intelligence Agency, the major covert operations arm of the U.S. government. It *never* operates inside the country. Riiiiiiight . . .

**DEA:** Drug Enforcement Agency, the mortal enemy of the Department of Recreational Biochemistry.

**DOE:** Department of Energy, the agency that oversees oil, gas and electricity production, as well as supervising nuclear reactors and doing fun research into nuclear weapons. It often funds research projects into energy production.

**EPA:** Environmental Protection Agency. These are the people who get annoyed when you throw your toxic waste (or dirty laundry) into the river.

**FBI:** Federal Bureau of Investigation. Most likely to show up on campus looking for foreign spies or security violations, though it investigates any federal crimes.

**FDA:** Food and Drug Administration. It protects people from dangerous foods and dubious medications. The FDA never investigates the food served at Borgia Center, unfortunately.

**IRS:** Internal Revenue Service, a.k.a. Infernal Revenue Service, a.k.a. It Really Steals – #1 on everyone's hit list. See p. 88 for IRS Agents.

**OSHA:** Occupational Safety and Health Administration; the nosy guardian of workers everywhere. Potential spoilsports anywhere there's weird and possibly harmful stuff around.

**NASA:** National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the agency that does research in space-travel and airplane design. Also known for funding giant projects that keep aerospace engineers employed and generate vast amounts of bureaucratic paper-shuffling.

**NSA:** No Such Agency, a.k.a. the National Security Agency, a wholly-owned subsidiary of IOU, Incorporated. No (visible) relation to NASA, though one wonders about Orbital Mind Control Lasers . . .

**NSF:** National Science Foundation. It funds fundamental scientific research, primarily at universities.

**SEC:** Securities and Exchange Commission, a group that regulates public corporations and the stock and bond markets. Generally a bunch of spoilsports when you have a really clever money-making scheme.

**USSS:** the United States Secret Service, primarily responsible for protecting the President; it'd like to branch out into the FBI's turf. It also investigates counterfeit money.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

Any publication from a local university is a good source of information for *IOU* campaigns. Especially useful are course catalogs and student handbooks. These can often be obtained for free, and can also often be found in libraries and local high school guidance departments.

## GAMES

Besides any number of relevant *GURPS* books (*GURPS Illuminati* comes immediately to mind, but *GURPS Callahan's Crosstime Saloon* deserves mention as well, as another locus of modern weirdness), there are other games that can provide useful material for an *Illuminati University* campaign.

*The Call of Cthulhu*, from the Chaosium. The Elder Gods come to roleplaying. Since *IOU* is pretty crazy already, a little insanity won't hurt. Cthulhu material fits well into a Weird or Darkly Illuminated *IOU* campaign, though a "Silly *IOU* meets Lovecraft" setup could also be amusing.

*Ghostbusters*, from West End Games. Weird science roleplaying based on the hit movies.

*Over the Edge* and *On the Edge*, from Atlas Games. A roleplaying game and a trading card game set on a Mediterranean island filled with conspiracies and weirdness.

*Pandemonium! Adventures in a Tabloid World*, from M. I. B. Productions. Roleplaying through tabloid-colored glasses.

*Paranoia*, by West End Games. Silly roleplaying in a dark future. Some of the R&D toys would fit in at WUSE, and Troubleshooters resemble Campus Security. One supplement was a package of forms that could be useful in an *IOU* game.

*Teenagers from Outer Space*, from R. Talsorian Games. One of the original inspirations for *IOU*, this is a good, silly beer and pretzels roleplaying game. The basic premise is "alien kids go to high school on Earth" – talk about busing!

*Toon*, from Steve Jackson Games. Perfect adjunct for the Silly *IOU*, especially if the GM wants cartoon characters on campus. The *Toon Ace Catalog* may provide sadistic GMs with inspiration for WUSE gadgets and alien artifacts.

## BOOKS

You should also check out the tabloids in the checkout line at the supermarket. Some of them have truly inspiring plot material, if they don't specialize in celebrity gossip. (The *Weekly World News* and the *Sun* are usually entertaining.)

Adams, Douglas. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and sequels. The High Weirdness and general silliness is a good model for the Silly *IOU*.

Anderson, Poul. *Operation Chaos*. A set of novellas about a werewolf and a witch in an alternate timeline, including one story set in a university that is not unlike *IOU*.

Asprin, Robert. *Another Fine Myth* and sequels. While it doesn't touch on university life, there are many interesting worlds which would fit into an *IOU* campaign as adventure locations or character origins. And the Bazaar on Deva is clearly some sort of *Illuminati* plot.

Bischoff, David, Brown, Rich, and Richardson, Linda. *A Personal Demon*. What comes of knowing just a little too much, and having one too many at a faculty party. Highly entertaining stories of a not terribly terrible demon and her master, a professor. Unfortunately not in print much.

Cook, Rick. *Mall Purchase Night*. Weird goings-on at a California mega-mall. Includes some nice eccentric characters, and plenty of random special effects.

Drummond, Dr. Philo U. and Stang, Rev. Ivan. *The Book of the SubGenius*. The bible of the Church of the SubGenius; full of Slack, secret wisdom, and other randomness.

Freisner, Esther and Greenberg, Martin (editors). *Alien Pregnant by Elvis!* An anthology of science fiction stories trying to out-weird the tabloids.

Friesner, Esther. *Gnome Man's Land* and its sequels, *Harpy High* and *Unicorn U*. The series follows a young man with an advanced case of Weirdness Magnet, who tries to "mainstream" an assortment of mythological creatures back into mundane society.

Friesner, Esther. *Here Be Demons*. Students on a summer archeology dig are tempted by a bunch of demonic failures out to score a few souls at last. The sequels, *Demon Blues* and *Hooray for Hellywood*, follow the college career and other adventures of the son of two of the characters in the original novel. The first two books are in the "must read" category.

Harrison, Harry. *Star Smashers of the Galaxy Rangers*. Gadgeteering college students invent a cheese-based stardrive, then rampage through a cinematic sendup of Doc Smith novels.

Leiber, Fritz. *Conjure Wife*. One of the classics of the genre – mystical doings in a university setting.

Norman, John. *Captive of Gor* and any of the other Gor books – they're all pretty interchangeable. Just begging to be parodied; it would make a good place for graduating female WUSE, COUP and Metaphysics students to have a graduation party – no one would miss it . . .

Nye, Jody Lynn. *Mythology 101* and sequels. A student discovers a band of leprechauns living in the underbasement of the campus library. The whole series suffers somewhat from simplistic plotting and characterization, but is entertaining anyway, especially the first book.

Pratchett, Terry. *The Colour of Magic*, and all sequels, especially the sections on the Unseen University (an appropriate atmosphere for the College of Metaphysics, Silly version). Furthermore, Pratchett's characters are useful role models for *IOU* characters and NPCs. Granny Weatherwax, first appearing in *Equal Rites*, makes an excellent prototype of a Metaphysics professor, and would also make a great Dean.

Pratchett, Terry and Gaiman, Neil. *Good Omens*. While not relating to academia, the atmosphere is very well suited to Silly and Weird *IOUs*. One major character is the Antichrist – a 12-year-old boy who isn't at all interested in destroying the world.

Steinber. *If At All Possible, Involve A Cow*. Somewhat obscure non-fiction, suggested by a respected Illuminus. A scholarly history of collegiate practical jokes, including MIT's Rose Bowl escapades and Caltech's Ditch Day.

Younger, Malaclypse the. *Principia Discordia (or How I Found Goddess, and What I Did to Her When I Found Her)*. The bible of Discordianism, the unauthorized official religion of the Illuminati. Very illuminated, naturally, and highly useful, if you can understand it. Hail Eris! This book is in the public domain; one edition is published by Steve Jackson Games. There are a number of different versions extant.

Zelazny, Roger. *Doorways in the Sand*. The quintessential Weird university story, this wonderful book revolves around a perpetual student who gets mixed up with a cast of marvelously strange characters, weird alien tech and convoluted plots.

Zelazny, Roger. *A Night in the Lonesome October*. While set in Victorian England, and not involving any educational institutions whatsoever, this odd tale is a perfect example of the sort of weird adventure that fits into the Weird or Darkly Illuminated IOU campaign.

## COMICS

*Oh My Goddess!*. Kosuke Fujishima, Dark Horse Comics. College student gets live-in goddess (and her sisters). Look for it on video.

*Ninja High School*. Ben Dunn, Antarctic Press. Aliens, outrageous martial arts, and weird science, in a high school setting.

*Ranma ½*. Rumiko Takahashi, Viz Comics. Ancient Chinese shape- (and sex-) changing curses, weird martial arts, and off-the-wall characters.

## MOVIES

Besides the winners below, any 1950s B-grade SF epic, e.g., *Plan Nine from Outer Space*, is suitable IOU-fodder.

*The Absent-Minded Professor* (1961). Disney's version of a mad scientist invents some hyperkinetic goop, builds a flying car and deals with political skulduggery in his university. ΔΔΔ

*The Addams Family* (1991) and *Addams Family Values* (1993). Probably IOU Illumni. Great characters and atmosphere, though not related to academic life. ΔΔΔΔ

*The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the 8th Dimension* (1984). Great "mad scientist" movie; Buckaroo Banzai (and his Hong Kong Cavaliers) are interesting takes on scientists as celebrities. Lots of damage, and the Lectroid alens are amusing. ΔΔΔΔ

*Animal House* (1978). The most famous "Stupid Frat Trick" movie for the brain-disadvantaged; very dated now, and *Revenge of the Nerds* does it much better anyway. ½Δ

*Back to the Future* (1985) and sequels. Probably the best time-travel movies ever made, with fine examples of a mad scientist and Weird Science. ΔΔΔΔ

*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992). Valley Girl turns vampire hunter. Good (bad?) example of Vals, but not nearly enough collateral damage. ½Δ

*Ghostbusters* (1984). Weird science and weird metaphysics. What more could one ask for? ΔΔΔ

*How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (1967). A musical view of the business world, IOU-style. Also demonstrates the value of alumni connections in business. ΔΔΔ

*My Science Project* (1985). Aspiring proto-WUSE students wreak havoc on a high school with a space- and time-warping alien gizmo. Contains excellent examples of the effects of the Enigmatic Alien Device Button-Pushing Table, and why C.T.H.U.L.H.U. dislikes WUSE-style time-travel. ΔΔ

*Real Genius* (1985). Might be an average day at WUSE. Terrific characters, lots of neat weird tech, and an adequate number of explosions. ΔΔΔΔ

*Revenge of the Nerds* (1984). Nerds vs. Jocks, with the inevitable results. Rates very low on the Richter scale for destruction, but entertaining nonetheless. There are two sequels, which are mostly missable. ΔΔ½

*Weird Science* (1986). High school nerds create a genie out of a computer program. Promising start, but never really fulfills that promise. Adequate destruction. You gotta love the title, at least... Δ

*Zapped!* (1982). Lab accident gives a young genius telekinetic powers. Predictable, but has some cute side plots. The parents are a good example of Mundane Background and Mundanity; there's also an IOU-style lab mouse. Δ

## TELEVISION

*Bewitched*. The classic sitcom about a mixed marriage between a mundane and a witch.

*I Dream of Jeannie*. Another classic sitcom; astronaut gets a live-in female genie.

*Parker Lewis Can't Lose*. Very strange high school weirdness.

*Misfits of Science*. A comedy/adventure series about a bunch of people with weird powers who drive around in an ice-cream truck and get involved in paranormal doings.

*Monty Python's Flying Circus*. Any episode dealing with bureaucracy is relevant.

*The X-Files*. Weird happenings that would fit right in with any of the IOU campaign styles, though PC reactions will be very different!



## MUSIC

*The Wurst of P.D.Q. Bach* (Vanguard, 1971), and other PDQ Bach records. Professor Peter Schickele's musical discoveries of the least-talented of J. S. Bach's offspring. Highly recommended highbrow musical weirdness. Good background music for IOU games.

*They Might Be Giants* (Bar/None, 1986), *Flood*, *Lincoln* (Bar/None, 1988), *Miscellaneous t* (Bar/None, 1991), *Apollo 18* (Elektra, 1992), *John Henry* (Elektra, 1994), and other records by They Might Be Giants. Definitely music for WUSE majors, this group (which recently changed from a duo to a full-fledged band) has done songs about mammalian evolution ("Mammal") and James Ensor ("Meet James Ensor"), and everything in between. Highly recommended.

*An Evening Wasted with Tom Lehrer* (Reprise, 1959), *Tom Lehrer Revisited* (Reprise, 1959), *That Was the Year That Was* (Reprise, 1965). Don't let the dates on these recordings put you off. Tom Lehrer penned many of the best satirical songs ever written, many of which had to do with the perils of academe. Some of his best-known songs are "Poisoning Pigeons in the Park," and "The Masochism Tango." Highly recommended.

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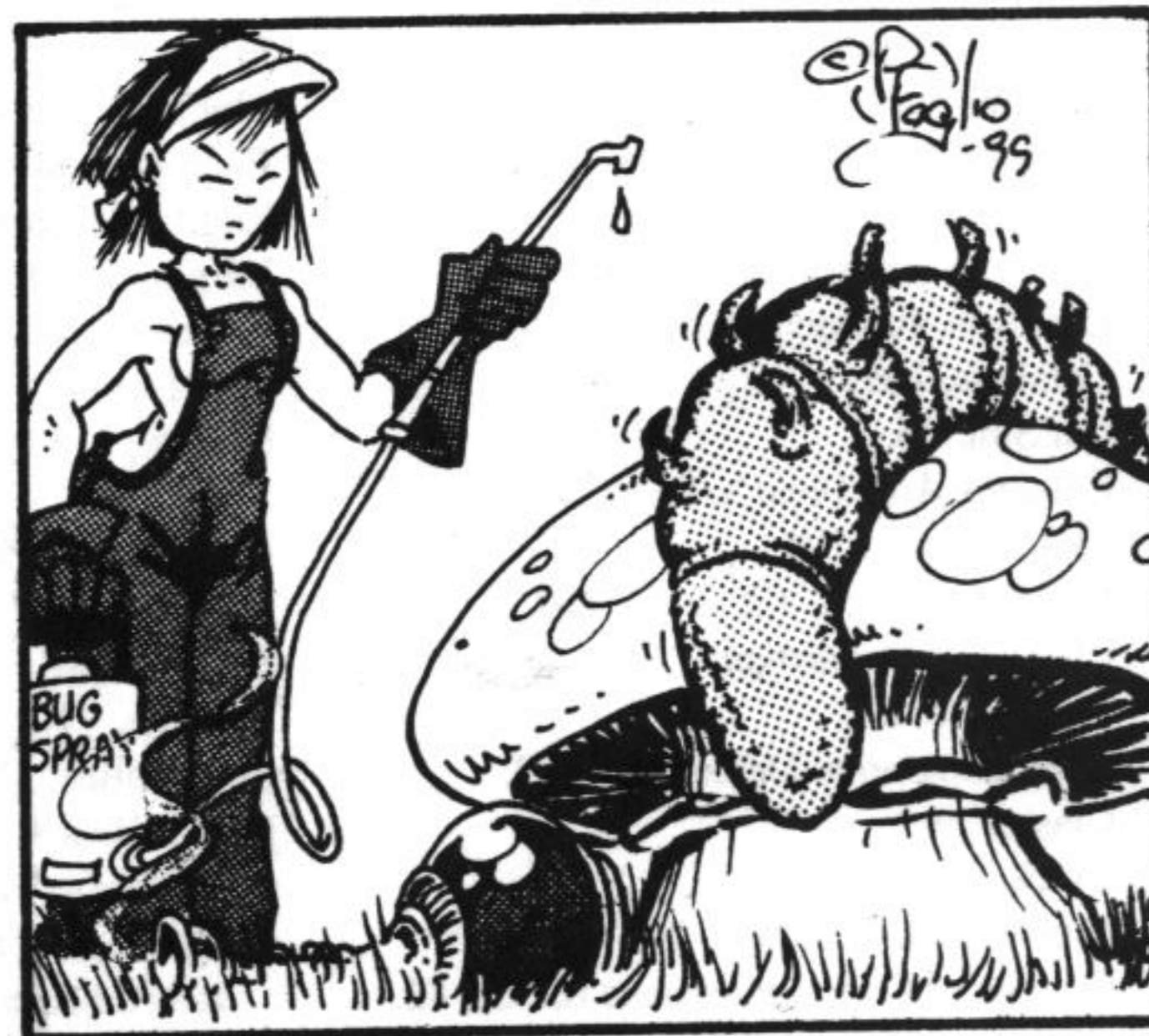
# INDEX

- Academic Status advantage, 18.  
 Acronyms, 7, 26.  
 Administration, 47; *axioms*, 47.  
 Administrators, 13.  
 Admissions, 7.  
 Advantages, 15; *new*, 18.  
 Adventure seeds, 118-123.  
 Alchemy Department, 40.  
 Alien Tech, 109.  
 Ally advantage, 15; *unwilling*, 15.  
 Ally Group advantage, 15.  
 Ancient History Department, 35.  
 Anti-matter, 82.  
 ArchDean, 9, 56, 77, 79.  
 Area Knowledge (IOU) skill, 17.  
 Avant Gardens, 72.  
 Avant Guardsman, 72.  
 Bare Skin Rug, 85.  
 Bimbiras, 87.  
 Bio-Ogre, 87.  
 Black Suit, 86.  
 Board of Trustees, 47.  
 Borgia Center, 76.  
 Botany building, 74.  
 Braindumping, 82; *machines*, 82.  
 Cafeteria, *see* Borgia Center.  
 Campaign styles, 94; *Silly*, 95; *Weird*, 96; *Darkly Illuminated*, 97.  
 Campus bookstore, 74.  
 Campus (In-)Security, 48.  
 Campus mail, 47.  
 Campus Map, 80; *mapping*, 71.  
 Campus radio, 51.  
 Campus Reality Stabilizers, 34, 83.  
 Campus rules, 8.  
 Career Planning Center, 489.  
 Cast Iron Stomach advantage, 18.  
 Catalogs, 105.  
 Cat Suit, 86.  
 Cats, *the ArchDean's*, 87.  
 Chaos theory, 105.  
 Character; *types*, 12; *death*, 107.  
 Chemistry Department, 28.  
 CIA Gulls, 88.  
 Cinematography Department, 39.  
 Classes, 9.  
 Clock Tower, 72.  
 Clueless disadvantage, 21.  
 College of Communications (CoC), 42.  
 College of Metaphysics (CoM), 40; *building*, 72; *and time-travel*, 96; *dean*, 59.  
 College of Obscure and Unhealthy Professions, *see* COUP.  
 College of Temporal Happenstance, Ultimate Lies and Historical Undertakings, *see* C.T.H.U.L.H.U.  
 College of Weird and Unnatural Sciences and Engineering, *see* WUSE.  
 College of Zen Surrealism (CZS), 45.  
 Computer Wizardry Department, 29.  
 Continuing education, 7.  
 Control Ratings, 104.  
 Cost of living, 100.  
 COUP, 32; *dean*, 59.  
 Courses, 9; *creation*, 33.  
 Crockpot of the Gods, 85.  
 Croesus Illumni Center, 49, 75.  
 C.T.H.U.L.H.U., 34; *Campus Crusade for*, 51; *and time-travel*, 97; *dean*, 57.  
 Cultural Events, 10.  
*Daily Illuminator*, 51.  
 Departments, forming new, 31.  
 Dimensional gates, 83, 85.  
 Disadvantages, 16; *new*, 21.  
 Do-It-Yourself Rubber Science, 104.  
 D.O.C.T.O.R. Department, 37.  
 Doesn't-matter, 82.  
 Dorms, 6; *major*, 9; *buildings*, 75.  
 Dryads, 88.  
 Duty disadvantage, 16.  
 Einstein, 104.  
 Elephant's Junkyard, 79.  
 Enemy disadvantage, 16.  
 English Department, 45.  
 Enigmatic Alien Device Button-Pushing Table, 110.  
 Evil Twin disadvantage, 21.  
 Faculty, 6, 13; *bloodfeuds*, 35; *visiting*, 14.  
 Financial aid, 7.  
 Food, 76, 99.  
 Forms, 48.  
 Founder, 71.  
 Fraternities, 52.  
 Future History Department, 37.  
 Gadgeteer advantage, 18.  
 Gadgeteering, 106; *at IOU*, 105; *inventing new devices*, 111; *weird science*, 106; *time required*, 111; *expenses*, 112; *during adventures*, 114; *quick*, 114; *necessary skills*, 111.  
 Gadget Development Cost Table, 112.  
 Gadgets, 109; *inventing*, 111; *loaning or selling*, 110; *bugs*, 111; *malfunctioning*, 112.  
 Generic buildings, 72.  
 Genetic Engineering Department, 28.  
 George the Janitor, 62.  
 Gerbils, *zombie*, 88.  
 "Gizmo" gadgets, 113.  
 Glossary, 124.  
 Government grants, 30.  
 Grades, 10.  
 Graduate students, 12; *in bloodfeuds*, 35.  
 Guaranteed Play-Balance Table, 107.  
**GURPS Cyberpunk**, 94.  
**GURPS Fantasy**, 93.  
**GURPS Lensman**, 94.  
**GURPS Space**, 94.  
**GURPS Supers**, 93.  
**GURPS Time Travel**, 94, 95.  
 Health/Life Insurance advantage, 18.  
 Health Services, 48.  
 Honor Student advantage, 18.  
 Housing, 98; *dormitory*, 98; *off-campus*, 99.  
 Illiteracy disadvantage, 16.  
 Illuminati, 8, 15.  
 Illumni, 13.  
 Immunity to Poison advantage, 18.  
 Inapplicable Mathematics Department, 45.  
 IOU Industrial Park, 79.  
 IRS Agents, 88.  
 Job Table, 101.  
 Jock advantage, 18.  
 Journalism Department, 42.  
 Kajones, 89.  
 Klutz disadvantage, 22.  
 Laboratory Rats, 90.  
 Law Suit, 86.  
 Lazarus Health Center, 48.  
 Legality Classes, 104.  
 Library, 8, 49; *building*, 72; *Librarian*, 63.  
 Life-Savers, 85.  
 Lives on Campus disadvantage, 22.  
 Local Citizenry, 14.  
 Luck advantage, 16.

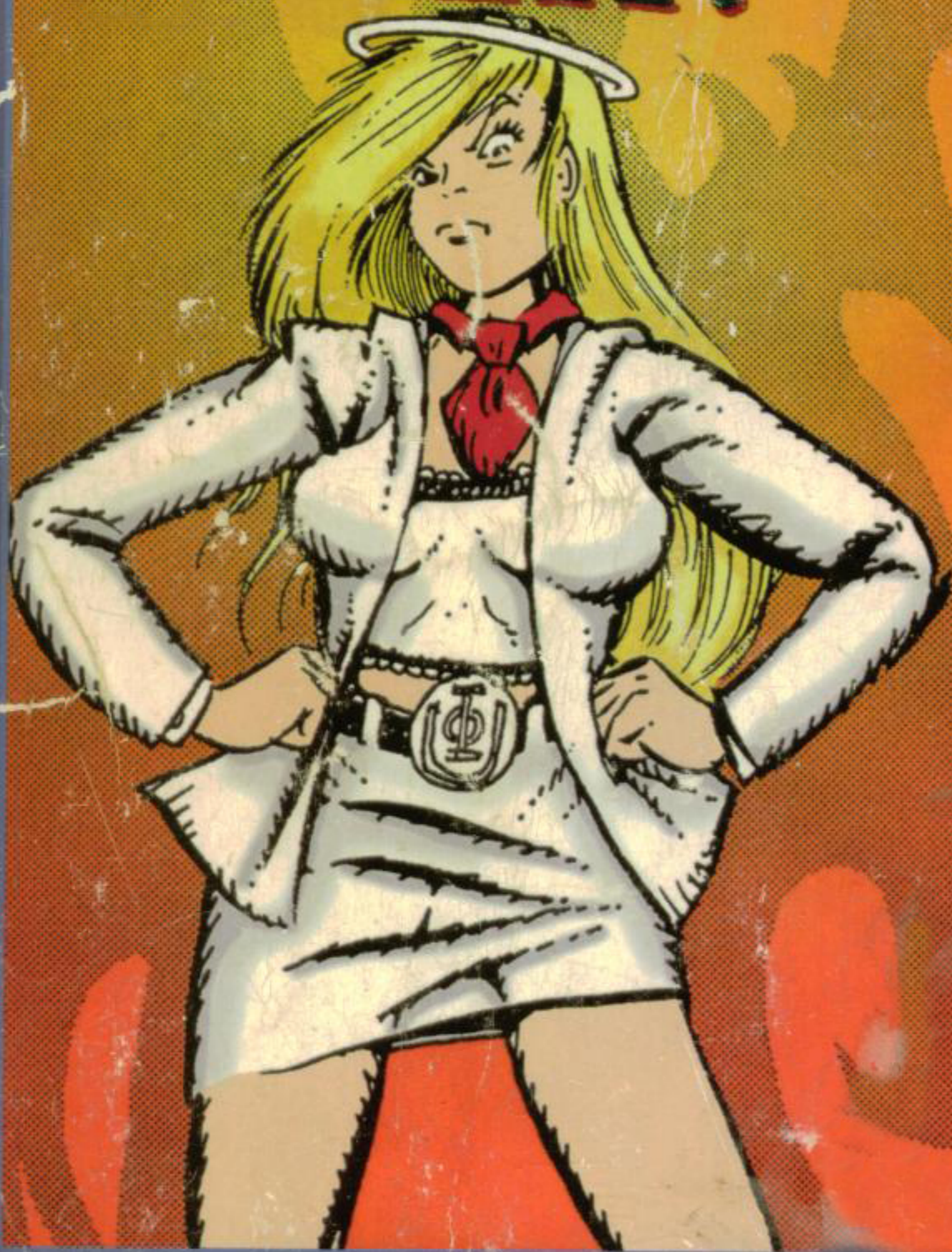
Madame Curry, 64.  
 Madame Salome's Performing Arts Center, 75.  
 Magic, 115; *weird*, 115; *pun*, 115.  
 Magic Items, 85.  
 Maiham Stadium, 76.  
 Main Building, 71.  
 Mall Rats, 90.  
 Mass Media Department, 43.  
 Medieval Studies Department, 36.  
 Meeps, 89.  
 Military Biology Department, 30.  
 Military Science and Cost Overruns Department, 30.  
 Miniaturizer, 83.  
 Modern History Department, 37.  
 Money, 100.  
 Money Suit, 86.  
 Moopsball, 54; *rules*, 54.  
 Mundane Background disadvantage, 22.  
 Mundanity advantage, 19.  
 Museum, 8; *building*, 73.  
 Nerd disadvantage, 23.  
 Nexus, interdimensional, 6, 8.  
 No Insurance disadvantage, 23.  
 Organization, University, 26.  
 Other genres, IOU in, 93.  
 Pancho Sanza's, 79.  
 Parking permits, 98.  
 Patron advantage, 16; *unwilling*, 16.  
 The Pent, 71.  
 Personalities, 56.  
 Physics Department, 31.  
 Pigeons, *campus*, 89.  
 Pocket dimensions, University regulations of, 77.  
 Point levels, 12.  
 Po-Peel artifact, 83.  
 Poverty disadvantage, 16.  
 Prehistory Department, 35.  
 Primitive disadvantage, 17.  
 Professor Lilly Ann Bie, 61.  
 Professor Patricia Miller, 61.  
 Prospective students, 7, 52.  
 Protection Racquet, 85.  
 Psionics, 114.  
 Public TOILET, 34; *building*, 74.  
 Pun Magic, 115.  
 Pyramid Mall, 78.  
 Quantum mechanics, 104.  
 Quick gadgeteering, 114; *necessary skills*, 114; *required materials*, 114; *time required*, 114; *expenses*, 114; *during adventures*, 114.  
 Rabbits, *Lab*, 89.  
 Random Side-Effects Table, 108.  
 Rapier Wit advantage, 20.  
 Rats, 90; *laboratory*, 90; *mall*, 90; *tunnel*, 90.

Reality Checks advantage, 19.  
 Recreation, 100.  
 Reorganizations, 26.  
 Research, 6.  
 Resurrectatron, 84.  
 Rival universities, 96.  
 Robocrat, 63.  
 Roommates, 99.  
 Samples: *students*, 64; *fraternities and sororities*, 53-54.  
 SCA, 38; *chairthing*, 60.  
 Scholarship, Smith & Wesson, 7.  
 School for Performing and Creative Arts, *see* SPCA.  
 School of Anti-Social Sciences (SASS), *see* WUSE.  
 School of Social Anti-Sciences, *see* SSAS.  
 School of Conservative Arts, *see* SCA.  
 School of Law, 33.  
 School of Medicine, 32.  
*Science!* skill, 23.  
 Secret Advantage advantage, 20.  
 Secret Disadvantage disadvantage, 23.  
 Skills, 17; *new*, 23.  
 Social Stigma disadvantage, 17.  
 Solar Power Plant, 75.  
 Sororities, 52.  
 Space, 106.  
 SPCA, 38.  
 Sports, 54.  
 Squirrels, 90; *watcher*, 91; *vampire*, 91; *mugger*, 91.  
 SSAS, 43.  
 Staff, 13; *generic*, 69.  
 Starting wealth, 100.  
 Status, 100.  
 Stranglevine cactus, 91.  
 Steam Tunnels, 10, 77.  
 Student Confederacy, 73.  
 Student Disservices, 50.  
 Student Handbook, 9.  
 Student Investment Services, 50.  
 Student Liberation Organization, 52.  
 Student Organizations, 51-53.  
 Student Overground, 51.  
 Student Scab Building, 73.  
 Student Senate, 51.  
 Student Union, 48.  
 Studying, 10.  
 Stupid Hat Tricks, 86.  
 SuperDuplicator, 84.  
 Superpowers, 114.

Survival (IOU) skill, 17.  
 Tech level, 82.  
 Technology, 103.  
 Temporal Metaphysics Department, 41.  
 Tenure advantage, 20.  
 Thaumaturgy Department, 41.  
 THE Computer, 27, 62, 84.  
 THE Computer Science Department, 31.  
 The Team, 54.  
 Things, 81.  
 Time travel, 95, 97.  
 Three-Piece Suits, 86.  
 Town, 78.  
 Transportation, 99; *personal cars*, 99; *campus shuttles*, 99; *public*, 99; *taxis*, 99.  
 Treatment advantage, 20.  
 Tunnel Rats, 90.  
 Turtles, Arctic furred, 91.  
 Undergraduate students, 9, 12; *in blood-feuds*, 35.  
 University Heights, 79.  
 Unseen Dean, 32.  
 Un-suit-able, 86.  
 Unusual Background advantage, 16.  
 VCR Remotes, 86.  
 Vehicle Pool, 50.  
 Vending Machines, 84.  
 Visitors, 14.  
 Visiting Faculty, 14.  
 Wealth advantage, 16.  
 Weird Magic, 115.  
 Weird Magic skill, 24.  
 Weirdness Magnet disadvantage, 17.  
 Weird Science skill, 24; *TL modifiers*, 103; *gadgeteering*, 106.  
 Weird Science skill, 24.  
 WUSE, 26; *and time-travel*, 28, 96; *dean*, 58.  
 Yrth, 93.



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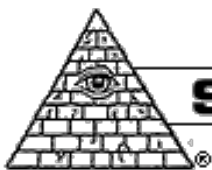


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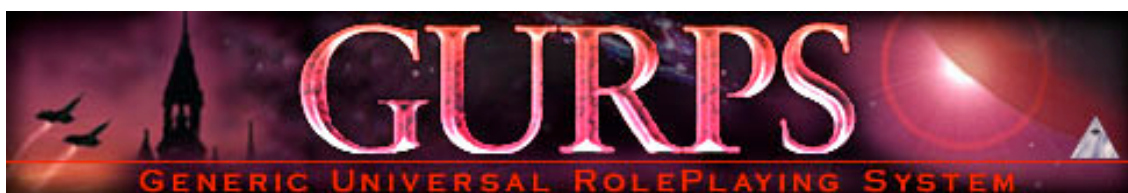
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July 17, 2000 >



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Pp. 23-24

In the fourth paragraph under *Science!*, you must invest at least 2 points in *each* of two skills from the list given.

P. 61.

Professor Lilly Ann Bie has the advantage of Tenured.

P. 63.

*Robocrat* has Status 4 and Reputation -4 (all IOU students and faculty, all the time).

P. 65.

Joe Calderwood has the additional advantage of Jock and disadvantage of Lives on Campus. His point total is 103.

P. 80.

The College of Metaphysics is referred to as the School of Metaphysics. However, as this undoubtedly contributes to student confusion, it must be illuminated. The Campus

Bookstore is not on the map. This is also illuminated. COUP students make a nice profit guiding freshthings to the bookstore (where they can purchase an official campus map), and have lobbied successefully for the "error" to be included in all the free campus maps handed out to new students.

P. 87.

Slave Mentality is in Fantasy Folk, 2nd Edition, not in Fantasy, 2nd Edition.

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