

First year sperm rises to the occasion

BY KAVERI GUPTA

With nothing better to do on a Saturday night, I allowed my two friends to drag me out to what

turned out to be a hilarious performance courtesy of some Dal medical students.

The 27th Annual Dalhousie Medical Variety Show, Euphoria

'97, is a competition between the four levels of medical students at Dalhousie's Medical School (Med 1-4). Students perform skits chock full of comedy, song and dance in the hopes of winning the contest and entertaining the audience at the same time. Since the Med 2 class has won the competition for the last few years, competition was extremely fierce. Traditionally, this event has been an opportunity for the medical students to get in a few jibes about their professors, deans, and classmates — this evening was no exception.

The Med 1 students kicked off the night with their hilarious production called "The Miracle of Life". After a short intro, the main body of the play began. It was a character's dream about human fertilization and all the work that goes into the process. Between flagella-sporting sperm wearing white long-johns and swim caps, and the eggs — who put on an "ovulation pageant" to determine who was to be that month's lucky gamete — the cast had the audience roaring with laughter. I was incredibly impressed by the singing ability of the students: in particular Dolores the Egg (Erin Savage) and the Nun (Kiley O'Neill) who gave the sperm inspiration. The cast ended it all with a well-choreographed dance to "I Will Survive" signifying successful fertilization.

The Med 2 students then came on with their skit which was about Dalhousie's medical school program potentially being shut down by the government. Tony Carlsson's portrayal of Jean

Chretien was to absolute perfection. The Pope (Gaynor Watson) and Wonderwoman (Sarah Do) were also performances worth mentioning.

After a short intermission, the Med 3 students took the stage with their performance entitled

*Between
flagella-sporting
sperm wearing
white long-johns
and swim caps, and
the eggs — who
put on an "ovula-
tion pageant" to
determine who was
to be that month's
lucky gamete —
the cast had the
audience roaring
with laughter.*

"SMTV — SCUT Monkey TV" which was a medical spoof on everything from "Jim the Hammer Shapiro" commercials to "Hinterland's Who's Who". The actress playing the infomercial spokesperson performed a hilarious monologue, without cracking a smile,

that had the audience helpless with laughter. The satirical humor was well-targeted and wonderfully executed. It was obvious that each class was determined to win.

The Med 4 class usually don't enter the competition since it is the time of year when most are off on job interviews. However, this year four students were around to perform. Paul Gailinnas played some tunes on his guitar while Brian Nicholson revealed his impressive juggling talent. Two other students ended the competition with a classical duet on the piano.

While the judges were deliberating, the MCs announced that the evening's proceeds were going to the Vietnam book project. Eric Balsler took a foreign elective in Vietnam last year, and while he was visiting with Vietnamese medical students, he discovered that these students had no textbooks. This prompted Eric (with the help of others) to begin a year-long campaign to gather textbooks from various professors and libraries when he came back to Dalhousie. In all, Eric and his group managed to gather 5000 kilograms of books which were sent to Vietnam two weeks ago.

When it was time for the judges to announce their decision, our group was divided over which was the best performance. The judges said the decision was very difficult but it was indeed the Med 1 students who had captured this year's crown. The evening was a hit so be sure to catch this show when it comes around next year.

The Cape Breton Newfie Bullet Passenger Service • To Sydney & Return Daily

\$35 ea way-present coupon to driver for a \$5 discount for return trip

We go the Extra Mile For you & Pick you up at your home (within reason)

Book
Now
For
Spring
Break!!

Local: 567-0313
Cell: 565-8424

Long Distance Free.
1-888-567-0313.

Make

Your

Mother

Happy!



Berryhill

Graduation Portraits
Park Lane • Halifax • 429-1344

*Berryhill will be on campus on
Feb. 11, 12, 13, and 14th*

*Sign up at the S. U. B. enquiry desk.
Check out our display in the S. U. B.
Lobby!*

How to tame a python

Fierce Creatures

Dir. Robert Young and Fred Schepisi
1997

If Monty Python's Flying Circus were the Beatles, then John Cleese would be Paul McCartney. I have long suspected this to be true, and *Fierce Creatures*, Cleese's most recent movie, has only confirmed my suspicions.

Like Sir Paul, Cleese is a performer of abundant talent who seems content to get by on past success rather than push his genius in new directions. *Fierce Creatures*, which Cleese co-wrote, co-produced and stars in, is a pastiche of kitschy references to the more famous Monty Python skits, serving to advance the flourishing Monty Python cult rather than to develop Cleese's comedic vision.

Fierce Creatures takes aim at the widest satirical target presently available — corporate America. "Octopus Inc." is an American firm that specializes in buying up other properties, breaking them down and re-selling their assets. Its most recent acquisition is a British zoo which Octopus Inc. threatens to close and dismember unless the zoo can show a minimum 20 per cent profit. Octopus's CEO, played by Kevin Kline, sends his incompetent son — also played by Kevin Kline — and a hard-nosed, hard-bodied manager (Jamie Lee Curtis) to whip the zoo

into shape. Once Curtis and Kline arrive in England, the cast is completed with John Cleese playing the bumbling former manager of the zoo and Michael Palin appearing as one of the animal keepers.

At its worst *Fierce Creatures* becomes the thing it satirizes. Predictably, the "brash American" plan to increase profits at the zoo

Cleese is a performer of abundant talent who seems content to get by on past success rather than push his genius in new directions. Fierce Creatures is a pastiche of kitschy references to the more famous Monty Python skits, serving to advance the flourishing Monty Python cult rather than to develop Cleese's comedic vision.

is to sell advertising space throughout the zoo grounds, and even on the animals themselves. In short order, the zoo is cluttered with billboards and posters for everything from vodka (on the tiger: "Absolute Fierceness") to Bruce Springsteen records. As this

"satire" of commodification and advertising unfolds, it is hard not to imagine that companies lobbied pretty hard to be "satirized" on the big screen. The film reeks of product placement.

But the product most shamelessly flogged is John Cleese himself. With its constant references to other Cleese projects like *Monty Python and A Fish Called Wanda*, *Fierce Creatures* reveals the extent to which Cleese has allowed himself to become a commodity which can be simply re-packaged and resold to an uncritical fan audience.

Fierce Creatures has its moments. Scraps from the table of Monty Python are still better fare than most films can manage, and from time to time *Fierce Creatures* manages to recapture the lunatic brilliance that was once Monty Python's hallmark. Watching Cleese lick the blood off of a woman's broken leg as if it were an ice cream cone recalls the edgy absurdity of some of his best work, and the moment you see Michael Palin struggling to get into a giant bee costume you know good things are in store.

Overall, however, the movie disappoints. As a member of Monty Python, John Cleese helped set the standard for biting comedy. Despite its title, *Fierce Creatures* reveals that Cleese has been tamed and can now be safely brought into Hollywood.

GREG BAK

STUDENTS! Fly for **FREE** to **LONDON***



When you book one of these Contiki Holidays:

THE ULTIMATE EUROPEAN

Visit 17 European countries in 46 days!
From \$86/day; includes most meals.

NEW ULTRA BUDGET - Camping Tour

Visit 17 European countries in 45 days!
From \$70/day; includes most meals.

THE EUROPEAN ADVENTURER

Visit 12 European countries in 27 days!
From \$93/day; includes most meals.

NEW ULTRA BUDGET - Camping Tour

Visit 13 European countries in 35 days!
From \$66/day; includes most meals.

Return airfare for \$299* to London is also available in conjunction with several shorter duration tours —

ASK US FOR DETAILS AND A FREE BROCHURE!

On a Contiki tour you spend more time having fun, because all the details that can make travelling a chore are taken care of. And now, when you book one of the above tours — at Travel CUTS, you qualify for FREE return airfare to London, England from Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, or Halifax.*

Contiki
HOLIDAYS
FOR 18-35s

Your nearest

TRAVEL CUTS

3rd Floor, SUB
Dalhousie University
494-2054

Owned and operated by the Canadian
Federation of Students

*Offer for full time students with valid International Student ID Card (ISIC). Tour must commence by 09 May 1997 and must be paid in full by 31 March 1997. Valid for departures from Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, or Halifax only. For airfares from other cities check with Travel CUTS/Voyages Campus.