

Few Cornell students would voluntarily line up for hours just for the opportunity to hear a professor lecture. Maybe that loser kid who highlights everything in the textbook would. I mean, he's really a top-notch student. But as for the rest of us, it would take someone really special. Someone like Carl Sagan. Or someone alive, like John Cleese.

Unlike most professors, John Cleese is a member of the famed British comedy troupe, Monty Python. And unlike most college humor magazines, the *Lunatic* got a chance earlier this semester to speak with Mr. Cleese, now an official A. D. White Professor-at-Large at Cornell. And he's also British, which was my favourite aspect of the while interview. And now for something completely different from our usual array of humor pieces and bad puns . . .

The CORNELL LUNATIC Interview with JOHN CLEESE

LUNATIC: How often do you plan to visit Ithaca?

CLEESE: I'll probably come in April and November and next year more . . . maybe four or five visits.

LUNATIC: If there were a Cornell class on writing and performing humor, and one piece from your body of work would be included in the curriculum, which do you think it should be and why?

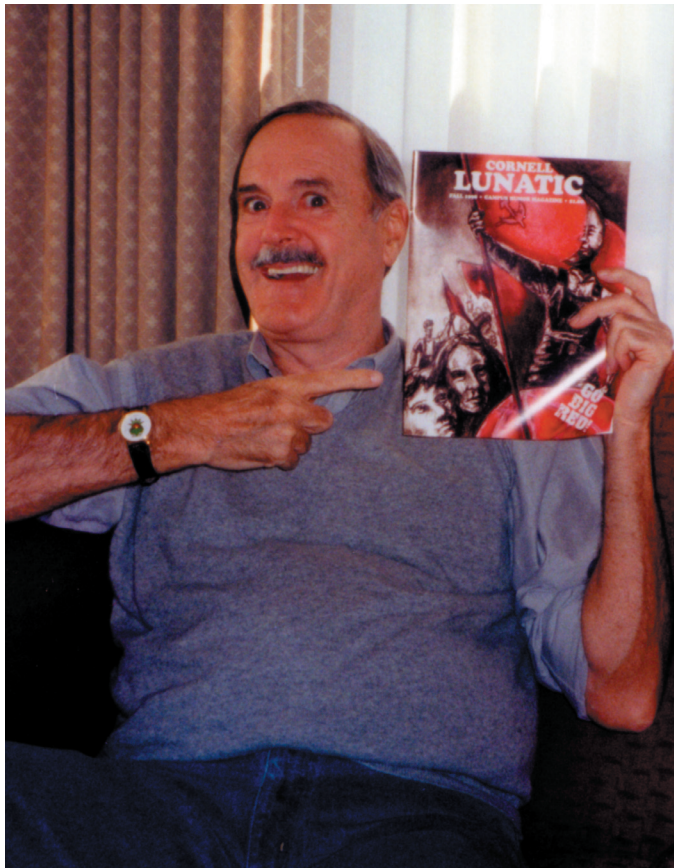
CLEESE: Given a choice between one that I think was a well-structured story and three or four of the better *Fawlty Towers*, it would be hard for me to choose.

LUNATIC: Speaking of *Fawlty Towers*, *TV Guide* recently named two Monty Python sketches and an episode of *Fawlty Towers* among "The 50 Funniest TV Moments of All Time." Are there any American TV shows that make you laugh?

CLEESE: Oh yes! Let me tell you, I grew up on American humor . . . now I think you have currently much better humor than we have in England. I'm not that impressed by anything that's going on in England at the moment. And I think *3rd Rock* is very, very good . . . And *Frasier* I like a lot.

LUNATIC: Is it true you're going to take over for the character Q in the James Bond films?

CLEESE: I did a day on the James Bond film. I'm gonna take over eventually.



I'm playing a character named R, an assistant to Q.

LUNATIC: What's the status of the rumored Monty Python reunion?

CLEESE: Well, I don't know. And none of the Pythons know, because it's impossible to get us in a room . . . and if we do, people charge their mind the next morning . . . But as far as I can make out, there's a very fair chance we might do it in New York for a couple of weeks in the spring of next year.

LUNATIC: So, you wouldn't be stopping in Ithaca?

CLEESE: Well, I don't know what you're gonna offer them to come . . . it'll either be drugs or girls or caviar.

LUNATIC: We won't hold our breath. Author Toni Morrison is also a Cornell Professor-at-Large. If someone turns one of your books into a movie, would you want Oprah to be in it?

CLEESE: Oprah? Oprah to be in it? I don't know her that well. I don't watch that much television.

LUNATIC: Who is your favorite Teletubby?

CLEESE: I've never seen it. [From the adjacent room, Cleese's wife shouts, "Your granddaughter loves it!"] Well . . . then I'll say Hironimous.

LUNATIC: What's the funniest language?

CLEESE: The funniest language? Dutch. Someone once said it's one of the most unlikely set of noises . . .

LUNATIC: Dutch is my major.

CLEESE: WHAT?! I've never met anyone in my life who's learning Dutch. That would be wonderful!

LUNATIC: Can we give you a free copy of our magazine?

CLEESE: Is this a trick?

While flipping through a recent issue of the *Lunatic*, Professor Cleese is immediately disgusted with our unique brand of collegiate satire and proceeds to kick the interviewer's ass.