

Collegia is an unnamed university campus in an unknown location. It is hermetically sealed from the outside world, though there are airlocks through which passage is permitted on occasion. The entrance test is called the TLC (Twelve Labours of a Collegian) and includes things like killing a flying fish by shooting an arrow through its eye, knitting a sari for a stray dog and getting it to wear it, cooking sewer-rat casseroles and climbing thorn trees. Once you get into Collegia you are assured a respectable place in the adult world. It is a matter of little import that few, if any, graduates of Collegia ever again display any evidence of the quaint, inhuman abilities they are supposed to have possessed at one time. People who don't get through the TLC but prepare for it well usually end up happily married because the training prepares them extremely well for domestic life anywhere in the world.

The university is run by gods and dead celebrities. Since there are so many of these, Collegia is an effectively unbounded place. There are courses but no timetables or classes. Only independent learning is allowed, and so Collegians become adept at getting others to do things for them. Once in Collegia they form a cohesive society that rewards parasitism and disincentivizes solitude of any form. There is a whole emotional economy in place. The Collegian network extends far into the outside world - when a Collegian graduates, he or she is recruited into a comfortable social role that is vacated by the previous "graduating" batch, the process continuing till death - for example, the trusteeship of a millionaire's estate or aide-de-camp to a minor politician. For a Collegian to be accepted by society without partaking of campus life is rare; they either have to have extraordinary social skills or they need to have studied well enough that they never require social skills.

The emotional economy is an illegitimate economy. Extracurricular activities involve clubs like the Loony Hearts Club (President - Venus, Vice-President - Cupid), the Club of Other People (Founder - Bertrand Russell, President - Jean-Paul Sartre, Vice-President - Groucho Marx), the Game Theory Club (President - John von Neumann, Vice-President - John Nash) - but they all suffer from fatal flaws induced by the emotional economy - the LHC is really a prostitution ring, the COP binds together and becomes a real club out of solidarity in loneliness and the GTC events are all fixed so that nobody ever plays rationally.

The most academically active department within Collegia is the Department of Schmoozology and Gossips, headed by such illustrious names as Marilyn Monroe and Oedipus. The department is known primarily for its claim that it has existed since prehistoric times and that the canonical *gossipe/s* of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were some its early research outputs. Though the annual festival of Controversy generation hosted by it is equally well-known. Recently, they have been calling vehemently for the death of Justin Bieber, so that he becomes eligible for addition to their already world-class faculty. The department confers honorary doctorates to every female glamour model appearing topless in a major daily.

Conspiracy theorists within the department of Schmoozology are divided in their opinion as to what led to the creation of Collegia. It has been suggested that, on a macro-level, it is an experiment by Gods testing the different possible trajectories of evolution. Zooming in, it seems to have come about as a result of a terrible mix-up between the cold war strategies of several governments.

Little do these self-respecting conspiracy theorists know that Collegia was actually created by Mephistopheles to impress the goddess of Schadenfreude. Students in Collegia go through a long period of isolation under oppressive environmental conditions and high degree of suffering. They are filled with the mystique that the oppressive conditions are just there to produce superior beings as themselves. They are promised hefty luxuries, gorgeous women and all the pleasure in the world - in exchange for their souls after they graduate. Devoid of their souls and having assumed the comfortable social role promised to them, they come to believe that the conditions they went through were justified just because it produced them - the

creamy layer of society - so much so that they encourage their kids to go through Collegia as well.
The goddess of Schadenfreude must have been very pleased indeed, since admission in Collegia is now so sought after, that students go through some extra years of suffering just to get in.

Motto: "Inveniam Nemo."