

an Focal

University of Limerick Students' Union Newspaper

Hilary Tuesday 23rd February 1993

Business Faculty - U - Turn

Fourth Business Win Extension At Last.

Fourth year students in Business Studies last week won an extension of eight days on the deadline of their final year projects forcing a humiliating U - turn by the Business Department.

by Maria Casey

The decision follows a lengthy battle led by class reps Mr Paul Minihan and Mr Dan Moynihan with senior academics in the College of Business. The decision was taken following a joint meeting of the Departments of Business Studies and Management Studies on Wednesday of last week. The meeting was attended by 14 academics and addressed by five student representatives.

A week earlier the Students' Union had been concerned that its campaign on the issue had been thwarted when SU President Mr Diarmuid Scully was told at the last minute that a meeting of the Faculty Board of the College of Business would not be held on Wednesday of week seven as he had expected.

The Students' Union had been preparing to raise the issue of the deadlines for final year projects for the fourth year students on the BBS degree at the Faculty Board meeting.

In the build-up to that expected meeting the class reps for fourth business claimed they had the support of the faculty in the Department of Management, headed by Mr Patrick Gunnigle. However the Department of Business, headed by Professor Dineen, appeared to be divided on the issue. Mr Minihan and Mr Moynihan claim that the faculty opposed to the extension could not see "the human side of the issue". They told **an Focal** they were shocked and surprised at the resistance they met.

Mr Minihan and Mr Moynihan had been lobbying since early this term to get "totally unrealistic" project deadlines changed. Their campaign has led to meetings with a number of senior members of faculty in the College of Business, including Associate Dean, Professor Donal Dineen.

Messrs Scully, Minihan, and Moynihan, together with Ms Maura Ryan and Mr Patrick Hartnett, class reps Accounting/Finance and Accounting/Economics respectively, told last weeks meeting of the need for the extension.

Among the arguments they presented was the fact that for many fourth year business studies students, their course-work requires the completion of seven other projects and presentations before the end of this term. The students argued that there appears to be a flaw in the design of the business course. This term fourth years have five 15-credit modules as well as a final year project to complete, an argument at least one academic agreed with.

They also point out that the nominal time allocated to their projects overlaps with their second co-op period when most of them do not have access to suitable library resources. Those lucky to have a co-op placement near an academic library have their access to it restricted from the end of the September onwards when the students at their host institution return to college.

The decision to grant the extension was taken at a meeting held after the joint departmental meeting. Mr Scully insisted that two student representatives be present when the decision was taken.

In an interview with **an Focal** following the decision both Mr. Moynihan and Mr. Minihan say there is now a feeling of "relief" amongst their class mates. They say they are glad what they call "common sense" prevailed and the extension was granted.

In the course of the campaign petitions of support were signed by the entire fourth business class, 200 students in third business and much of fourth humanities.

Both class reps are disappointed that so much uncertainty was allowed prevail in the class up until last week's meeting.

The College of Business has apologised to Mr Scully for the confusion over the timing of the meeting of the Faculty Board.

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Campus News
Pages 2, 3 and
a full page of
reader letters.

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Three Pages of Campus News Pages 2, 3 and a full page of reader letters.

**Features:
Sex Scandal
Ultra Violence
Pages 8 and 9**

Plus Four Super Pages of Clubs and Societies News - pages 16, 17, 18 and 19.

Intel Scholarship for Geraldine



Ms Geraldine Connelly, 4th Computer Engineering (centre), pictured at the reception at which it was announced that she was awarded the 1993 Intel Ireland Scholarship. Also in the picture are Mr Bill Riley, General Manager, Intel (left) and Mr Padraic Gallagher, Coop Manager, UL (right). The scholarship is worth £2,500. Ms Connelly is from Macroom, Co Cork. This is the first year Intel has extended its scholarship programme to Europe, and follows the development of a major manufacturing facility in Leixlip, Co Kildare. Commenting on the fact that most of Intel's employees are graduates, a spokesperson said their scholarship scheme was "our way of putting something back into the system".

High Court Judge Visits UL

by Brian Gray

Prominent High Court Judge, Mr Justice Ronan Keane, visited UL to give a lecture to members of the Law Society on Tuesday of week seven.

Mr Justice Keane spoke on the topic of 'Irish Legislation in the Light of the Special Position of the Catholic Church in the Irish Constitution'. Following Mr Justice Keane's presentation, the topic was debated by members and visitors at the Law Society's meeting.

The meeting was followed by a reception in Plassey House.

Mr Justice Keane, who was in Limerick for court sittings two weeks ago, declined to speak to **an Focal**.

Students' Successful in Registration Claim

by Brian Gray

**Fault
was
in the
computer
system**

A number of students who claimed they had been wrongly fined £15 for late registration have had their complaints upheld. The successful outcome follows an an Focal investigation which resulted in the University's Students Services Office and Information Technology Department (ITD) establishing that the students had registered for this term at the Student Service computer terminals as they had claimed.

The problem came to light when a number of students contacted Student Services Officer Ms Breda Sheehan following receipt of letters fining them £15 for failing to register for this term. A number of students were also told that local authority grant cheques would not be paid until they paid the fines.

As a result of the complaints Ms Sheehan asked ITD to investigate the matter, and see if any fault had developed

in the computer system used to register students. The investigation was carried out by ITD's Mr George Hayes who was in constant telephone contact with a representative of the computer manufacturer, Digital, during the check. The first investigation found no fault in the system and showed no evidence of the students having registered.

Ms Sheehan told **an Focal** that she had been impressed by the sincerity of the

students, but that since the initial investigation showed no flaws the fines could not be lifted.

When **an Focal** interviewed Mr Hayes to establish the nature of the investigation it was established that an error had occurred. Working on the initial information available to him, Mr Hayes had checked 'after-image files' created on the morning of Tuesday 5 January. This file keeps a record of activity on the terminal separate from the main files. **An Focal** told Mr Hayes that the complaints were related to students who had registered on the following morning, Wednesday 6 January.

Mr Hayes then checked the 'after-image file' for 6 January and found that the students had 'interacted' with

Student Services computer terminals as they claimed. It was also established that 'a sequence of key-strokes' had taken place at that terminal before the students attempted to register. The effect of this sequence was that the data entered by the students was not filed correctly.

University authorities are now satisfied that the terminal was interfered with. However Student Services are unable to say if the the interference was intentional or unintentional.

Speaking on the affair, Ms Sheehan said she was grateful to **an Focal** for helping to establish where the error occurred. She also said she was annoyed at the time, money and distress that the affair had cost.

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Electoral Register Court Case

by Cathal Kelly

More than 170 UL students were the subject of special court hearing in Limerick last week. The Registrar of Electors held a hearing to consider claims that the students' names should not be entered in the Register of Electors for 1993-1994.

SU President Mr Diarmuid Scully attended the hearing and was able to verify the authenticity of all but seven of the claims by the students that their names should be entered on the register.

He told an **Focal** that a number of students had come to him expressing concern when they received letters addressed from the Circuit Court stating that a claim had been made that their names

should not be entered on the register.

The students who were the subject of the hearing all live in the Castletroy area. They include one non-Irish resident who is only entitled to vote in local and European elections.

The students whose registration failed at the hearing are Mr Shane McGuinness, 1 El Dorado; Mr Edmond Galvin and Mr David Smiddy, 103 Elm Park Ave; Mr Edward

Hannick, 33 Kilbane Estates; Mr John Cantillon and Mr John Wall, 'Delgaty' Newcastle; and Ms Karen Liffey, 52 Oaklawn. According to Mr Scully, most of those whose applications failed are in their first year at UL and hence did not satisfy the residency criterion.

In November 1991 students at Waterford Regional Technical College won a judgment in the Supreme Court which prevents a Registrar from refusing to enter students on the Register of Electors solely on the grounds that their term address is not their normal abode.

Study Space Row

by Maria Casey

A complex row between Third Year Public Admin students looking for more study space, the Buildings Superintendent who claims not to be aware of the specific problems and the Students Union who believe they have already made the same case to the Buildings Office

Third year Public Administration students organised a petition calling on the Buildings Manager of the University to improve facilities for students. The petition calls for the provision of a covered in walk way to the Schuman building, and the opening of rooms at night for study space. The petitioners say that there is not enough study space in UL and that students here face enough pressure without having to fight each other for study space.

The petition, which had been signed by just over 20 students by Friday evening, week 7, was on the notice-board in the canteen in the Main Building. It is calling for rooms off EG010 and along the C1 corridor to be left open after 9pm from week 6 onwards to provide space for students to study.

When asked to comment by an **Focal**, Mr. Basil Boyce, Buildings Superintendent said that this was the first he had heard about the issue. He expressed surprise that the complaint did not come through the student repre-

sentatives on Governing Body and asked if the organisers knew they had representatives who could highlight these issues. He also said that there is pressure on space everywhere "particularly in relation to office space". Mr Boyce said the petition will be "looked at" as soon as it is delivered.

Mr Diarmuid Scully, SU President, when first contacted said he was unaware of the existence of such a petition. Following a trip to the canteen to see the petition for himself, he told an **Focal** that there was "nothing untrue" stated in it and that feelings on the issue "have been expressed to the buildings office" in the past. He also added that the Students' Union are required to pay to have rooms supervised and that they cannot be booked or kept open all the term.

Two weeks ago the University used the space for a commercial exhibition organised by a computer company.

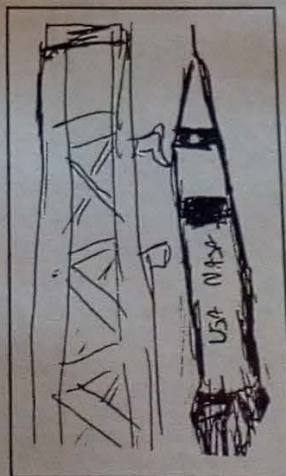
Science Trip Offered

The College of Engineering and Science has invited applications for two funded trips to the London International Youth Science Fortnight next summer.

Students selected to represent UL at the event will have their travel, accommodation, and registration fees for the event paid for by the Royal Dublin Society.

To be eligible students must be Irish citizens in their first year of a degree course in mathematics, science, engineering, or technology, and be aged between 17 and 22.

Further details can be obtained from Ms Rose Moorehead in the Dean's Office, College of Engineering and Science (room C1057), Dr Seamus McMonagle, Department Chemistry and Life Sciences; Dr Vincent Casey, Department of Electronic and Computer Engineering; or Mr Gordon Lessells, Department of Mathematics and Statistics.



News

Class Reps To Replace Sabbaticals On Faculty Boards

By Brian Gray

In an effort to reduce the heavy workload of the President and Deputy President of the Students Union, the Executive proposed that Class reps be elected to co-represent students along with one or other of the sabbatical officers at Faculty Boards, during last week's Council meeting.

After the Council meeting on the 23 February, approved the changes there then followed an immediate election to fill three positions. Three class reps were elected to be members of the Faculty Boards in each of the Colleges of Humanities, Business, and Engineering and Science. No class rep was elected to the Education Faculty Board.

The Faculty Boards consist of the members of the academic staff in the relevant faculty, together with two SU representatives, one postgraduate representative, the college librarian, and three other members of academic staff, one from each of the other three colleges of the University. The elections mean that at their meetings next term the student membership of the three Faculty Boards will consist of

one SU sabbatical officer, one class rep elected from the college, and a postgraduate representative.

Students' Union representation on the Faculty Board of the College of Education is unaffected by the change, and will continue to consist SU Services and Transition Officer, Mr Billy Kirwan, and SU Deputy President, Mr Lonergan.

According to Students' Union President, Mr Diarmuid Scully, the "fairly important change", would alleviate the workload faced by both himself and SU Deputy President, Mr Enda Lonergan. Mr Scully and Mr Lonergan currently represent students on approximately 25 university boards and committees. Each of the three class representatives will re-

place one or other of the SU President or Deputy President.

The suggestion of this delegation of duties originated at the SU Executive Committee which subsequently approved the idea and then sought and got approval from the three faculties affected. At the subsequent Students' Union Council meeting, several nominees were proposed and eventually three were elected. Mr Declan Carew 4th Production Engineering was elected unopposed to the Engineering and Science Board, as he was the only nominee from among the class reps from that college. The new

student member of the College of Business Faculty board is Mr Damien Byrne, 3rd Marketing, while Mr Derek Sheehan 3rd European was elected to the College of Humanities Faculty Board.

It is not clear if the decision to shed some of their current responsibilities, necessitated the changing of the Officer's job descriptions, as this may infer some type of Constitutional changes.

However a 4th Business student told an Focal that he was "furious" that this wasn't discussed with his class before decision was made on his behalf. Another student in commenting to an Focal, said

he was "concerned about rushed procedures". No notification was given to the ordinary student body or the Students' Union Council prior to the meeting.

When asked why a snap election among class reps occurred as opposed to a referendum of the general student body, SU Deputy President, Mr Lonergan told an Focal that a "referendum was not a good idea". His view was that a referendum would not seem in the interests of the respective faculties, but that the class reps are the ones who are showing the interest and are in touch with what's happening among the students they represent.

National Demonstration a 'Wash Out'

by Maria Casey

Fewer than 300 students attended the national demonstration against overcrowding in educational institutions, organised by Trinity College Students' Union and held in Dublin on Friday of week six.

A vote taken by UL Students' Union Council resulted in the organisation of a free bus to take UL students to the demonstration.

Seven UL students attended. The bus is believed to have cost the Students' Union over £200, which amounts to more than £28 per student.

Attendance by other colleges in Ireland was equally disappointing with UCC sending 20, DCU sending their SU President and Executive Committee, and nobody

from either UCG or UCD attending. The largest group was made up of approximately 50 students from Swansea who had travelled over from Britain specially for the protest. The other students were from other third level colleges in Ireland.

The demonstration was held outside Leinster House.

Professorship

Re-advertised Following Investigation

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information would not seem in the interests of the respective faculties, but that the class reps are the ones who are steering the internal work in each college, and it is disappointing that they should not be consulted.

Professorship

Re-advertised Following Investigation

The post of professor in Arts/Humanities has been re-advertised.

The advertisement, in *The Irish Times*, Friday 19 February follows an investigation by a committee of the university's Governing Body into the procedures followed when the post was originally advertised last May.

Although the name of a candidate had been presented to the new Governing Body at its first meeting, claims made at the meeting about the procedures followed by the university in recruiting for the post forced an investigation.

Although members of Governing Body were reluctant to speak to an *Focal* about the investigation, it is known that the committee received at least three submissions complaining about details of the procedures followed in making the appointment. It has also been learnt that the committee's report was sent to members of Gov-

erning Body three weeks ago.

Details of the outcome of the investigation have not been made public. The Chairman of Governing Body, Mr Jack Daly, wrote to members of Governing Body warning that the report was not to be leaked in case it drew 'ill-informed' media comment.

An *Focal* understands that the main finding of the committee is that the university's appointment procedures were followed in the attempt to recruit a Professor of Arts/Humanities. However an *Focal* has not been able to establish why the post has been re-advertised if no fault was found in the procedures followed during first attempt to fill the post. A number of members of the Governing Body refused to comment on the apparent contradiction in the reported outcome of the investigation and the decision to re-advertise.

Applications for the re-advertised competition close on March 12.

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G.A.A. Footballers March On



Kierean "herbie" Carey Captain & Goal scoring dynamo of U.L. Gaelic football team blasts the ball past Maynooth keeper in the Sigerson Cup. The Quarter final is being played here on campus, Sat. wk 9 against U.U. Jordestown

Letters

An Focal 23rd February 1993

Dear Editor,

Permit me to address Dr. Ed Walsh in your column.

Dare I attempt to bring you down from your extravagant office in the "White House" and explain a couple of the facts of life to you. I am sick of the conditions we have to work under.

The question is where does one begin? How does one start without actually writing a thesis on the subject? Let me enlighten you about 'one reality'... The true story about the University of Limerick.

Let me assure you this is real life, this is reality... the true story behind U.L. Let's start with that rather big room on level 2 beside the post-grad reading room. As far as I know they call it a library.. Have you ever tried to research anything in this big room, have you ever attempted entering the almost nonexistent reference section, or maybe you weren't aware one existed. I was informed by Prof. Donal Dineen that we had to do an essay and that all the information was available there. Well, that's where 3rd year Business messed up badly. Rule number 1, don't believe your lecturers and rule number 2, don't waste time in the big room on level 2 looking for info as you can be sure you won't find it.

Term work is absolutely O.K., I've no problems with that ... until of course I actually start to research the topic. The reference section consists of about 5 aisles filled with statistics, journals and books... fairly impressive... the only problem being its either totally out of date or 3/4 of the relevant info is missing. Rule number 3, do not attempt to do secondary research in U.L. ... go to a proper college with a proper library.

Imagine 350 Business Studies students fighting for info in a tiny corner of that rather big room and eventually finding out that it's

all in vain. And the sad thing is that this is not a seldom occurrence Ed, it's just one of those things we've become too accustomed to over the years.

To frustrate things further, the one morning that I did decide to get up early to try to access the info, the honour staff had the section closed for 3 1/2 hours for tidying. May make a suggestion dear Ed, dare I humbly put forward a proposal. To facilitate easy assimilation of my idea, let me use an analogy. Let's say you have recipe for an 8 inch fruit cake and one day you decide to expand (fairly plausible idea Ed, you seem to like this concept). OK, everything going well, you reach for your recipe and use 1 1/2 times the ingredients to produce 1 1/2 times the size of a cake. You see Ed, the bigger you want your cake to be, the more raw materials you must use. This complex concept also applies to most expansions... expand U.L. and it is expected that the reading rooms, computer labs, canteen library, staff numbers ... I think that could maybe be a flaw in your policies. Don't get me wrong but it seems ... well obvious ... that such procedures should follow!

As much as I admire you, your sanity is often questioned. Is it any wonder that the university has the lowest level of students graduating with 1st class honours in Ireland - what is one to expect with the conditions we are subjected to. No college is perfect, but this one is certainly one far cry any way from being even satisfactory.

Just remember, you're doing a wonderful job. The demonstrations, petitions, even prove our total and utter admiration of you.

Welcome to reality Ed.
A 3rd year Bus. Stud.

Dear Editor,

I am writing to you to express my anger at an incident which occurred in the Stables pub on Friday 19th of February when myself and a number of friends went down after a hard days work to have an evening meal. I asked politely for two plates of curry chips, but what I received was in my opinion, not up to the normal quantity I would usually receive. On paying for the chips I expressed my dissatisfaction with the quantity I had received, I sat down waiting for my friends and then I heard this thundering voice say, "Who said these were half portions", after this public announcement was violently reiterated a number of times I responded, the cashier had obviously told the chip dispenser, Mr. X "Brendan" of my dissatisfaction, he continued to quite rudely tell me it was a "full portion", being polite I declined

to argue as obviously he was ready for an argument. I continued to eat my half portion, but alas not in peace, he continued to intimidate me by giving continuous malicious looks.

This behaviour in my opinion was disgraceful. I am not alone in my dissatisfaction with some members of the Stables staff, numerous people have sympathised, as they too have

gone through similar treatment of being rudely dealt with. I believe it is time we done something about this rudeness. Admittedly some staff are quite friendly and polite, but for others I wonder did they ever hear the saying "the customer is always right"

Peter Brody
1st Metal & Eng.

Dear Ed,

Why does U.L. have to be different? Being the only Irish University without a formal repeat structure wasn't enough was it. Look at the construction work going on beside the Schuman building, diggers and caterpillars running morning noon and night on what looks like some class of road.

Thanks to some inside information I am now in a position to reveal that what's being built is a ... go kart track!

We didn't have enough study places or enough library books but we do have a state of the art (is it night or day) halogen lit Foundation building and now we have a go-kart track. What just any other go-kart track, mind! U.L. is the only university in Ireland to have a state of the art go-kart track, betcha that will impress the Japanese and Germans at the donation dinners at the White House. Sure if we're going to have an Olympic swimming pool here we may as well have a go-kart track.

I can tell you now, though the plain jeans and geansai men and women of U.L. do not approve. A few more study places, a few hundred more books, please!

Yours,
Waldo Castaneda

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We, of the Parl Deb Soc would ask you to explain the discrimination. We would also demand that you rectify the current process of choosing one article above another. The future of internal communication lies within An Focal. Please do not abuse this trust.

I remain,
Yours in anticipation,
Niamh Lyons.



Mary Buckley Captain U.L. Womens Gaelic football with the O'Connor Invtvarsity Cup

Ed replies;

The Society can rest at ease that an Focal is not in the business of discriminating against any particular Club or Society. The regularity with which your material was overlooked was an unfortunate oversight on our part. There will always be pressure on space but we are moving to three pages of regular Club/Soc notes weekly in the very near future.

Dear Editor,

In the recent few issues of 'An Focal', great mileage has been made in pontificating endlessly about the glories of a repeat structure. Yet I find it somewhat unbalance journalism that you have apparently not sought out the reason, why certain people in the academic establishment oppose formal repeats. The main stumbling block to repeats comes from the Department of Mechanical and Production Engineering. Having done a little investigating, the following hard facts had become clear: the average lecturer at this department has to teach several modules a term; there are many exam-papers to set (altogether that comes to over 200 exam papers to correct, and this does not include projects and lab reports). I have learned that a lecturer may spend up to 40% of his free time correcting student work. In the Engineering and Science College, unlike the others, it must be remembered that these lecturers are also

research scientists and consultants to private industry. They also spend an awful lot of time scrounging around, looking for sponsorship for their post-grad students. Perhaps a less self-righteous approach, peppered with a little sympathy and understanding, would be the way to solve these repeats problem. I am given to understand that are as greatly opposed to repeats after semesterisation occurs, due to the fact that there will be less exam work to correct. I personally support the introduction of a formal repeat structure, but I shall not close my eyes to the realistic difficulties faced by those on the other side of the fence.

Yours Sincerely,
A Concerned Engineering Student

Dear Editor,

On behalf of the Parliamentary Debating Society I have been mandated to write to you to express the dismay of the society with regard to the recent "selective" publishing in An Focal.

It is with great surprise that both myself and the other members of our own society have turned to the Clubs and Socs page to find that once again our articles have been overlooked. This is especially true, in light of the fact that Billy Kirwin actively wooed the participation of all societies in An Focal. Coupled with this we have seen the circulation of An Focal increased from fortnightly to weekly and the addition of TV coverage for the more exclusive breed of student in possession of same.

Does it not appear as a contradiction in terms that with in-

Dear Editor,

I am constantly noticing in 'An Focal' that so many of the articles do not reveal the name of the person who wrote them. This cowardice sickens me. In my opinion the time has come for the hidden, silent majority to stand up and be counted without being ashamed to express their views.

Yours Sincerely,
Signed Anonymous

EDITORIAL

Less than ten University of Limerick students participated in the "national" demonstration against cut-backs in Irish third level education recently. This is not the first time that participation in national demonstration by U.L. students has been abysmal.

Last year a national protest day was called by the University Student's Unions and U.S.I., again Class Council voted to organise and run busses to bring the expected hordes of protesting and irate students to the Capital. Again publicity was plentiful on the ground, the protest was to march on the Dail on a Wednesday and many wags felt that many would avail of the free busses to travel to Dublin just for the day! How wrong they were - about six students had the luxury of a 57 seater bus all the way to Dublin and back - courtesy of the Students Union as voted and authorised by the Class Rep Council.

One would think that we could learn from history, alas it seems we will not. Irrespective of the

participating in a national protest. It does seem that the Class Reps felt that participation in a protest amounted only to renting a bus and mandating the Executive to publicise the event. How many of the Class Reps actually organised groups from their respective classes to travel up to Dublin? How many of the Class Reps made passionate speeches to their class to mobilise support for the bus which they had just rented?

Everyone fully realises that the role of the Class Rep is a difficult one, doing most often unenviable tasks such as hassling lecturers for extensions, organising parties, buses for funerals etc. and getting very little thanks at the end of the day.

However they also have a major role to play in making and deciding policy at Council level as is witnessed regularly by the headlines of "Class Reps Vote For" or "Council Moves to". What is more important than just making decisions - is selling them to their constituents - their classes.

The link between the Union leadership and the rank and file is a two way one and centres chiefly around the communication function of the Class Reps i.e. telling their classes what goes on at

- particularly those in the University sector.

Perhaps with the changes in the University's calendar, U.L. students will have more time to participate in national protests and even give some thought to correcting some of the ills of the world - albeit in the relatively small one of education.

Hopefully the "7 in the bus to Dublin" episode will be just what it was - a freak flash in the pan type incident, that should not colour the overall view of a committed council and hardworking Exec.

If the Reps feel like voting for something again maybe they will give a bit more thought to just how they as individuals can assist the membership in understanding why they should support the position adopted.

Maybe even then we as students will become more able to appreciate a bit better the important job that the Class Rep is.

An Focal Useful Afterall

A number of students

Obituary

With paint, a courageous challenge to sectarianism

Professor Frank Wright

The death of Professor Frank Wright at the age of 44 has robbed the University of Limerick of one of its most promising scholars.

In one of the most imaginative appointments to date, the University had succeeded in attracting a person eminently qualified to fill the new Chair of Peace and Cooperation Studies in the summer of 1992. Sadly, Frank Wright was to have only a few months to have an impact. Nevertheless, all those with whom he came into contact were immediately impressed by his obvious sincerity, his breadth of vision, and a personal modesty that belied his truly titanic intellect. In the short time that he was with us, he had already laid the groundwork for new research projects, new undergraduate modules, and new links with other institutions engaged in Peace Studies.

Frank Amyas Wright came from an English background and a family of scientists. At Trinity College, Oxford, he switched from chemistry to PPE (politics, philosophy, and economics) after his first year, and achieved a first class honours degree despite having lost a year—early proof of his academic dedication and

impression. He worked tirelessly for peace, often at great risk to himself as, for example, when he painted over sectarian slogans on Belfast streets, or comforted the victims of intimidation.

He sought neither publicity nor monetary reward for himself and increasingly shunned the managerial ethos that pervaded Queen's and other UK universities in the 1980s. In an act of typical but almost foolhardy selflessness, he voluntarily reduced his own post at Queen's from full-time to half-time during one of the University's periodic budgetary crises in the 1980s. Equally typically, he continued to do more teaching than many full-time colleagues, which was a great bonus for many generations of students who will remember his seminars as the most dynamic and effective they ever experienced.

Given his distinguished track record as teacher, scholar, and peacemaker, there is no knowing what Frank Wright might have achieved at UL. One of his students at Belfast once asked him 'Why do you need to teach politics here? Sure we've got more than enough of it around here.' His life's work was a quiet but eloquent response to that question. He demonstrated the need to temper certainty with

of protesting and irate students to the Capital. Again publicity was plentiful on the ground, the protest was to march on the Dail on a Wednesday and many wags felt that many would avail of the free busses to travel to Dublin just for the day! How wrong they were - about six students had the luxury of a 57 seater bus all the way to Dublin and back - courtesy of the Students Union as voted and authorised by the Class Rep Council.

One would think that we could learn from history, alas it seems we will not. Irrespective of the overall failure of the protest in advancing the cause of university students nationally there has to be some lessons learned from the debacle locally.

Firstly despite what seemed to be an ample publicity campaign by the Officers of the Union, the message did not appear to sink in. One may well argue that if the notion of a free bus going to Dublin on a Friday morning had got around campus properly there would at least be more than seven students who would like a free lift home to Dublin!

And just before the fingers begin to be pointed in the direction of the Union - for not drumming up more support in backing the protest, cast a scant thought about just what the Union actually is. It is us the students represented on the power pyramid from Class Reps all the way to the fulltime officers.

However the question must be asked just what were the class reps trying to achieve? In authorising the hiring of a bus for the expressed purpose of par-

buses for funerals etc. and getting very little thanks at the end of the day.

However they also have a major role to play in making and deciding policy at Council level as is witnessed regularly by the headlines of "Class Reps Vote For" or "Council Moves to". What is more important than just making decisions - is selling them to their constituents - their classes.

The link between the Union leadership and the rank and file is a two way one and centres chiefly around the communication function of the Class Reps i.e. telling their classes what goes on at Council Meetings.

It was not enough two weeks ago just to raise their hands and support a national protest by hiring a bus and hoping it would fill itself. If they really believed in what they were actually supporting - they would have lobbied for their class mates to get on the bus and go on the march in Dublin.

That said, undoubtedly the lateness of the term, the pressure of work etc. the perceived apathy of students all were contributing factors in giving six principled students and their President the luxury of a bus to themselves to Dublin and back!

On a broader level does this type of apathy to issues of national student concern (as evidenced by the reluctance of our students to travel to Dublin and take part in protests) signal an underlying home truth that the U.L. student is so preoccupied by their own local concerns that they fail to spare a thought for their counterparts in the other Universities? Have we unwittingly erected a barrier to having any involvement nationally with other students

individuals can assist the membership in understanding why they should support the position adopted.

Maybe even then we as students will become more able to appreciate a bit better the important job that the Class Rep is.

An Focal Useful Afterall

A number of students have had their late registration fines reimbursed by the Students Services Office after a recent An Focal enquiry into the whole incident.

The students approached **an Focal** with word of their grievance and indications of their innocence, being the intrepid newshounds that we are, we began asking questions - researching the basis for the complaint and retracing the steps with the people and the departments involved until we stumbled upon the evidence exonerating the students.

To be fair to the University personnel involved in the enquiry - they were very courteous and helpful to **an Focal** at all stages during our investigation and were appreciative of **an Focal** in discovering the error of their original investigation.

Another feather in the cap for the freedom of the press in a mature democracy whatever about on the Plassey Banks at the University and while the experience is not quite as prolific or attention seeking as the Watergates and Greencores of the world, it does give a valuable insight towards some of the benefits that **an Focal** can inadvertently bestow upon the little people of campus.

Frank Amias Wright came from an English background and a family of scientists. At Trinity College, Oxford, he switched from chemistry to PPE (politics, philosophy, and economics) after his first year, and achieved a first class honours degree despite having lost a year—early proof of his academic dedication and versatility. In 1973 he was appointed Lecturer in Political Science at Queen's University, Belfast, where he remained until his secondment to the Chair of Peace Studies at UL. For him a university was not an ivory tower but an opportunity to reach out. This he increasingly did during the worst years of the Northern troubles: to extra-mural classes, to community groups, to prisoners, and eventually with the Centre for Reconciliation at Corrymeela on the north Antrim coast, where his religious convictions, his acumen as a political analyst and his hobby as oil painter coalesced in an environment that was to leave a lasting

track record as teacher, scholar, and peacemaker, there is no knowing what Frank Wright might have achieved at UL. One of his students at Belfast once asked him 'Why do you need to teach politics here? Sure we've got more than enough of it around here.' His life's work was a quiet but eloquent response to that question. He demonstrated the need to temper certainty with doubt, and pride with humility; and he challenged fear by his own display of courage. Although we have lost the man, we may cherish the virtues he personified.

—Edward Moxon-Browne

A memorial service for Professor Wright was held in the East Room, Plassey House, on Wednesday 24 February, at 4.30pm. A large cross section of the campus community attended.

Corrections & Clarifications.

The article entitled "Genetic Research" by James Hurley published in an Focal of the 16th February 1993 carried a typing error likely to distort the meaning of a paragraph contained in the text. The sentence beginning "Adoption is one laudable option chosen by others..." under the paragraph heading "Test tube babies", should have read, "Adoption is one laudable option which some couples choose in order to have a family. In Vitro or test-tube fertilisation is an option chosen by others (albeit not available in practise in this country with the exception of St James Hospital, Dublin.)

The talk by Dr. Miguel D'Arce, on which the article was based, was organised by UL Students for Life.

Comment

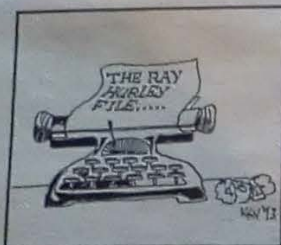
An Focal 23rd February 1993

THE RAY HURLEY FILE

An ominous, steady and balanced knock clamours on the door (or for those of you in the more updated houses, the onomatopoeia goes something like 'ding a dong') - three weeks ago, the initial, spontaneous and naively innocent reaction would have been one of childlike enthusiasm and anticipation; these days, the response evoked, originates from the other polarised extremity of the emotional spectrum. What was once a heightened and piquant, indeed an almost climaxing urgency, to peer out the door and reveal what stranger lay behind has now turned into a chilling, deep-rooted fear and sense of foreboding. What generates this ubiquitous and omnipresent cowardice, which has absorbed whole houses, is the dreaded fear of the T.V. Licence Man.

The afore-mentioned civil servant appears to be highly motivated and seems to reap extraordinary job satisfaction from his work. With previously un-experienced zeal and zeal, he has swooped down on the Castletroy area with vengeance that has chilled many a bone. A prolonged game of cat and mouse has begun, setting a true test for the sharpest wits. The real Student Enterprise Centre is out there in the housing estates and hinterland of Castletroy. Answers to the unoriginal, un-inspiring

market and consequently fairer competition. The removal of this last bastion of the protectionist era might be just the tonic that RTE needs to kick it into shape and get with it.



In the meantime, my love and best wishes to the T.V. licence man; if manages to catch some people that I know, than the President Robinson ought to present him with the Enterprise

and Employment Portfolio!

I sometimes wonder just how good an ambassador is the University of Limerick. Oh sure, when the jet-set and the dignitaries are passing through, they are extended the most hospitable of welcomes and afforded every luxury to ensure that their stay is as pleasant as possible.

That is all very fine, but how about the people that count most - the "regulars"; those who share the same backgrounds, upbringing and experiences as us - the Erasmus students.

The way that some of these students have been treated is utterly deplorable. So, fair enough; as long as all the paperwork has been proc-

sincere hospitality, amicability and magnanimity of decent Irish students, has this person now got a roof over their head. I am not versed or educated in the ways of international diplomats, but I can tell you that I would have no trouble in selecting the true Irish ambassadors in this case, the ones I would want to represent me, to typify all that constitutes Ireland.

Seeing as I have this wonderful opportunity to level constructive criticisms at some of the college's infuriating bureaucracies, I shall continue in that vein. The Erasmus overseers, or whatever they call themselves, ought to smarter up and not continually send an excess of U.L. students to each of the participating European universities. What are they trying to do, convey the message "we're overcrowded here at U.L., so we've decided to let you know what it is like"? Judging on feedback that I am hearing from U.L. students who have been on Erasmus, this seems to be the norm rather than the exception. Second bureaucracy that needs to copyright on, is the accommodation office - who do they seek to serve: the students or the landed gentry? They should see to it that accommodation offered through them, is of an adequate standard, (and my house which was acquired through them, is not), rather than telling landlords that, "rest of £90 a month is rather cheap

Students' Union Shop

Will be open at 8.30am
to

8.30 pm for Week 9.

Week 10 & 11, We will be
open from 8.30 am to
10pm

We will also be open on
Saturday of week 9, 10,
11, From 10.30 am to 3.30

I MBÉAL

Scully's Big Test.

Tá a fhios ag gach éinne nach bhfuil an córas oideachais atá againn anseo sásúil. "Re-

RT.É. aran Nuacht gobhfuil agróid ufasach ag tarlú anseo, is ansin a bheidh Ed faoi bhrú, go háirithe

ardice, which has absorbed whole houses, is the dreaded fear of the T.V. Licence Man.

The afore-mentioned civil servant appears to be highly motivated and seems to reap extraordinary job satisfaction from his work. With previously un-experienced zeal and zest, he has swooped down on the Castletroy area with vengeance that has chilled many a bone. A prolonged game of cat and mouse has begun, setting a true test for the sharpest wits. The real Student Enterprise Centre is out there in the housing estates and hinterland of Castletroy. Answers to the unoriginal, un-inspiring question 'Have you got a licence?', (suffix 'Boss' for the Limerick version), range from 'There's no need, we've got no dog', to 'I couldn't tell you, I've only just moved in!' (after all anything goes with accommodation around UL). Despite oaths being sworn that it was a microwave they had in the corner of the living-room, summonses are fast being served, and yet another infamous UL queue is developing at the Castletroy post office.

All these antics beg the question 'Is a fee such as the T.V. licence justified?'. Personally, I say 'absolutely not!'. For a start, there is no way that Mike Teevee could stretch three columns of a review out of a week's tele-visual "Feasting" on RTE's transmitted Lentan diet of boredom, interspersed with mentally tortuous traumatising from Bibi Baskin. Instead an 'An Focal's no. 1 Box critic must turn to the satellites' à la carte. And yet, it is RTE that reaps the profits from the licence fee - hardly a just situation, when the entertainment provided ranges from pathetic to brutal. RTE ought to be allowed to maximise its advertising revenue by whatever means necessary, and then the T.V. licence could be scrapped. This makes sense on two counts: firstly, RTE is state-owned, and the Lord knows that we are paying hefty enough taxes as it is; secondly, it opens up the T.V. scene to the forces of the

...again, they are extended the most hospitable of welcomes and afforded every luxury to ensure that their stay is as pleasant as possible.

That is all very fine, but how about the people that count most - the "regulars"; those who share the same backgrounds, upbringing and experiences as us - the Erasmus students.

The way that some of these students have been treated is utterly deplorable. So, fair enough; as long as all the paperwork has been processed properly and the students are correctly registered for U.L. instead of Bagdad Polytechnic, then they will be catered for by the relevant departments. But allow a mistake to go unchecked and a French student finds himself on our campus without any record of their existence in any of U.L.'s wonderful databases. Rather than bending over backwards to see to it that this student is properly looked after, the Erasmus coordinators and the accommodation office pass the buck of responsibility for the student, backwards and forwards between them, ricocheting faster than the sphere in a game of pin-ball. The end result is that neither wants to be troubled by his person, after all they have a job to do, these days are busy, they can only work according to what is an computer, the parameters are inflexibly defined and the subject is closed. So basically, U.L.'s ambassadors are telling an unfortunate Erasmus student, look, that's really bad luck, but we're busy, we hope you don't have too much trouble finding somewhere to sleep, 'bye now'.

This situation arose in January, the student wasn't allocated accommodation and still hasn't been. Only due to the

sage "we're overcrowded here at U.L., so we've decided to let you know what it is like?" Judging on feedback that I am hearing from U.L. students who have been on Erasmus, this seems to be the norm rather than the exception. Second bureaucracy that needs to cop right on, is the accommodation office - who do they seek to serve: the students or the landed gentry? They should see to it that accommodation offered through them, is of an adequate standard, (and my house which was acquired through them, is not), rather than telling landlords that, "rest of £90 a month is rather cheap really, you could possibly charge more" as I heard one of them saying on the phone. They might kindly recall the circular flow of income: student's money = fees = their wages. As it stands, we are over exploited by this college and its structure already. Change is long overdue.

Maybe
Certain
Kinds
Need
Inspiration!
Go
Here
to
Sample?
Thomas St.
Limerick.

Saturday of week 9, 10,
11, From 10.30 am to 3.30

I MBÉAL

Scully's Big Test.

Tá a fhios ag gach éinne nach bhfuil an córas oideachais atá againn anseo sásúil. "Repeats, Bi-semesterisation, QCA's" agus go leor eile.

Tá na rúin seo á bplé le blianta anuas. D'éirigh leis an Aontas in áiteanna áirithe agus níor éirigh leo in áiteanna eile. Gach uile uair a bhfuil feachtas toscaithe ag an Aontas agus go díreach is é Uachtarán Aontas na Mac Léinn a leagann síos na h-ordaithe, feictear go mbraitheann éifeachtúlacht an rialtais sin ar thoradh an sheachtais sin.

Muna nglacann an Coiste Barnistochta leis an moladh gur cheart go mbeadh corás ceart oifigiúil i bhfeidhm le scrúduithe a áthdhéanamh, is cinnte go gcuirfeadh sé sin isteach go mór ar an gcumhacht polaitiúil a bheas ag an Aontas (agus ag Diarmad agus Co.) go dtí go bhfuil tríúr nua tola ann. Más féidir leo an bua a fháil ar Ed agus na buachaillí bó sa Teach Bán, agus le cúnamh Dé éireoidh leo, beidh deis ag Diarmaid ábhar eile a ardú agus rudaí a fheabhsú sa Choláiste.

Máirín, tá níos mó achramann le teacht, cé gur éirigh go maith leis an "sit in" ins Teach Bán. Theip ar an Aontas poiblíocht cheart a mhealladh i dtreo na hOllscoile. Is trua sin ach ní féidir braith ar an Cork Examiner, agallaimh ar Radio na Gaeltachta agus na nuachtáin áitiúla amháin. Bhain Ed iomhá iontach don Ollscoil seo amach sna meáin chumarsáide. Má thaispeánann

R.T.E. aran Nuacht go bhfuil agóid ufasach ag tarlú anseo, is ansin a bheidh Ed faoi bhrú, go háirithe nuair a chloisfear an scéal go bhfuil na táillí is airde á n-íoc ag na mic léinn anseo.

Glacann leis nach bhfuil an feachtas seo ach díreach tosaithe ach ní fiú ionsaí a dhéanamh ar na húdaráis sa Choláiste muna bhfuil tú sásta gach sórt cleas a imirt. Muna ndéantar é sin agus má chailleann Diarmad an troid seo caillfidh se an cogadh mór leis. Agus má tharlaíonn sé sin, a Dhiarmaid, deán dearmad ar aon smaointí faoi dhul mar Uachtarán uair amháin eile.

Gael Linn / The Irish Times Debates. Fad a bhí muinínir Luimnigh ag baint tairnimh as na diospóireachtaí The Irish Times i mBearla an tseachtaine seo caite, ghlac foireann ó Luimneach páirt ins na diospóireachtaí Gaelige i gColáiste na hOllscoille Gaillimh. Schroich siad an leath chraobh ina thug Linda Ni Mháthuna an-óráid go deo dúinn.

I ndeireadh na dárta, bhuaigh an Cumann Dlí (U.C.D.) an comórtas, don tríú bliain as a chéile. Ceol, craic agus bolscaireacht a chualamar ansin agus bhain an Spailpin Fánach an-tairneamh, cé nár éirigh liom fanacht i bhfad ón "bar". Ag an am go ánaíochtúil thús le eagrais nua Gaelige, "Nearb", dos na cumainn Ghaelacha ar fad ins na colaistí ach sin scéal síle.

Comment

A HORSE of a DIFFERENT COLOUR

This week has been far from "sane" or "normal"; if those respective terms have a meaning anymore. The Serbs in Bosnia are busily preventing U.N. aid convoys from getting through. Young children are brutally murdered, as it most horribly seems, by slightly older children. Our Unemployment statistics have, as was inevitable, reared their ugly head above 300,000.

Yet, for me; the strangest story of the week involved the latest trend in sexual assault - raping horses! It appears that workers at stables and stud farms in the U.K. and elsewhere have discovered their tenants after they (the horses, that is!) had suffered brutal injuries to their organs of increase. Even worse, in some cases the assailants have been caught **IN FLAGRANTE DELICTO**.

Sexual assault of any sort is a horrible thing, perpetrated not by "people with adjustment problems", but by brutish, verminous slurpers of pig milk and devourers of cowpats. Due to the shame factor, sexual assault victims are often reluctant to report

these crimes. And don't forget; these victims CAN report the crimes, for they are human and have the power of human speech. What about the horses? A pained snicker here or a neigh of humiliated frustration there may elicit a bit of sympathy from us, but it can't tell us the culprit, eh?

The idea that people would want to rape horses, and worse still that they are able to do something that worries me deeply. What kind of people are these? Horses may not be able to "kiss and tell", but they are extremely large beasts, who when upset, are not unknown to kick the living bejaysus out of anything and everything in the vicinity. What kind of creature could take, for instance, a

Stallion by force? Its knuckles would undoubtedly scrape the ground, and hair would grow profusely from all its orifices. The so-called "Missing Link" would be a close blood relative.

Yet perhaps this creature does not exist. Perhaps the horses did not react adversely at the time of their ordeal because they were not (initially) afraid of their assailants. Because they knew them! This would explain a great deal. A jockey, a trainer, or even a horse owner that had seen EQUUS a few times too many may have become infatuated. Their own lover had left them (or the maladroit, stinking sniveller had never had a lover), their lust became ungovernable; and -dear God! but Ballinamuck Lad had looked so good in winning the Champion Hurdle the other week. So sleek, so vibrant, so alive! (unlike the blow-up doll, girly mags and toilet paper routine to which they've become so accustomed). But it won't be that way tonight, will it?

"You know I'd never do anything to hurt you. Steady now boy, here's a sugar lump all for you. Nice horsey. Nice horsey! - YEEHAW! GIDDYUP! TAKE IT! TAKE IT ALL! SUFFER! YOU KNOW YOU WANT IT! YOU HORSES ARE ALL THE SAME! PRANCING AROUND. JUST ASKING FOR IT! - You see what I mean? These perverts are probably more widespread than we've been led to believe. Could it be endemic among the equine community? Are we on the brink of a host of investigative exposes of this type? "Vincent O'Brien in Buggery Scandal!" or perhaps **SUN EXCLUSIVE: "LESTER PIGOTT MOLESTED ME!"** by A. Horse?"

Or is it something else; something much, much worse? Victims of sexual assault so often feel "dirty"; they feel shamed and degraded. Is this spate of attacks an evil plot by the likes of Pedigree Chum Incorporated to undermine the self worth of horses? With a

diminished sense of their own place in the world, confused and hurt as they are; these horses might even decide to do a "goodbye cruel world" on it and take route one to the afterlife. Who do you think would be waiting, with a generous offer to the owner to "take care of the remains"?

Lest we forget, where was it that the Leader of this country got his spondulicks? (not the dancehalls, I mean his other business) Does the name C&A Petfoods ring a bell? Could the Man himself be behind such heinous crimes, all to snatch a quick profit and cut costs? For now I'll just say that corruption in high places is not unknown in this (or, to be fair, any other) country. Forget the currency crisis; if it be true that our chief is driving the likes of Black Beauty and Mister Ed to their untimely ends, then he must pay for such infamy! If not, I never wrote this and you never read it.

ZEN ZUCCHINI

AN PHOBAL

Jim Kemmy and Mullaghmore.

Chuala mé Jim Kemmy ar an radio le deanaí. Bhí sé ag tabhairt amach faoin O.P.W. agus an lárionad atá á thógáil: Mullaghmore. Chuir sé in iúl dúinn go raibh na postanna a bhí ag na hoibrithe ansin curtha i mbaol ag an O.P.W. mar nár ghlais stad leis na dlíthe pleanála. Sin ráiméis, a Jim, bolscaireacht, náireach, mi-cheart. Cheart an O.P.W. ar aghaidh leis obair mar cheapadar nach raibh cead pleanála ag teastáil uathu. Sin cad a cheap Bardas Luimnigh nuair a thóg an O.P.W. an "Glasshouse" sin ilár "St. John's Castle" ilár na cathrach. Cá raibh tú ansin Jim? An raibh tú ag rá go raibh cead pleanála ag teastáil ansin? Ní cuimhin liom go raibh.

Tá sé soiléir anois nach bhfuil na gnáth T. Danna i bpairtí an Lucht Oibre ró-shásta leis an bpáirt atá acu siúd sa Rialtas nua. Is aif an dearcadh atá acu, tá Niamh Bhreathnach sásta a hionion a fhostú sa Roinn Oideachais agus ag an am goéanna, tá stad ag tabhairt amach faoin O.P.W. agus dá bharr ta lárionad ar fad agus 2,500 post curtha i mbaol acu. Agus ba iadsan an dream a d'ionsaigh F.F. agus na P.D.'s faoi dífhostaíocht na tíre.

Is léir go bhfuil sé in am ag Dick agus a chairde ceacht tábhachtach a fhoghlaim. Sé sin, coinnigh do cheann síos nuair atá achrannar siúl. Tar éis an budget, is cinnte go bhfuil go leor mi-

shásta leis an Rialtas nua atá againn. Cén fáth mar sin a bhfuil Dick, Michael D., Jim agus na lads ag tarraingt an méid sin poiblíochta orthu féin, mar i suile na ndaoine is orthu siúd atá an luacht.

4th Business - Cop On!

An tseachtain seo caite, is beag nár leag mé co-scolaire liom ón goeathrú blian ó Staidéir Gnó. Chuala mé gur theastaigh uaidh agus ó chairde leis leabhar agus irisí a chur i bhfolach ionas nach mbeadh a "gairde" in ann teacht orthu.

Tá a fhois ag gach éinne, ar feadh na mblianta, go bhfuil cuid mhór dos na mic léinn anseo santach ó thaobh cursaí staidéir, ach in ainm D'Ílis Dé, níor cheap mé go gcoisfínn scéal mar sin ó chara liom. Is cinnte go raibh mé ag dul amú mar gheall ar mo chairde.

Ní thuigim comas gur féidir le go leor daoine tabhairt amach faoin gcorás anseo agus ag an am goéanna leabhar nó iris a ghoid nó a choinneáil óna chairde fo mí-cheilteach. Ní féidir dularaghaidh sa saol seo gan a bheith macánta leat féin. Mar fhocal rabha do na "bastards" atá á dhéanamh, b'fhéidir go n-éireoid libh QCA le 3.5 a fháil ach b'éireoid duine éigin oraibh i ndeireadh na dalá ag obair nó sa bhaile. An mbeidh freagra agaibh ansin?

Beir bua,

An Spailpín Fánach.



U.L. Rugby fortunes are soaring with a quarter-final Victory over Rathmines 19 - 12 in the Ascent Cup. Coach Declan Ahern's Squad will play the semi-final on Wednesday week 10

Parliamentarians Win Intervarsity

Mr Keith Pigott and Mr Niall Clerkin of the Parliamentary Debating Society last week beat St. Patrick's College Maynooth, Waterford RTC and Kings Inns to win the 1993 Debating Intervarsity, held in Maynooth.

The motion for debate was 'That this house would impose a dictatorship on Ireland', which UL proposed.

This is the first time that UL debaters have won a team prize at Intervarsity.

Clubs and Societies Split

The Clubs and Societies Council is to meet as two separate from next term following a vote taken at the Clubs and Societies Council meeting last week, writes Maria Casey.

Mr Diarmuid Scully, SU President, said he was in favour of the proposal to meet separately as he felt there was already an "artificial divide" at the existing joint meetings.

The separate meetings will start next term on a provisional basis and following a review will either combine or revert back to the current situation where clubs and societies meet together. Under the new system clubs and societies will meet together at least once during the term to discuss issues of common concern.

Also on the agenda for the meeting was the election of council members of the Clubs and Societies Committees due to start meeting next term. Those elected were Mr Paul Butler, Outdoor Pursuits Club, to the Clubs Committee and Mr Mike Ryan, Parliamentary Debating Society, to the Societies Committee.

A "Safe Sex Awareness Day"

is being jointly organised by the S.U. U.C.C. and the company Condom Sense.

The event on the 4th of March involves the distribution of free condoms and literature on safer sex practices. The company has already worked on the U.L. campus, having installed condom vending machines in the Student Centre.

Television

An Focal 23rd February 1993

TUESDAY, MARCH 2ND 1993

RTE 1	NETWORK 2
10.00 Daytime Programmes hosted by Marty Whelan	2.00 Aerscoil 2.30 Bosco 3.00 The Den
1.00 News	6.05 JMTV Magazine
1.40 Spaceship Earth	6.30 Home and Away
2.05 Perry Mason	7.00 Nuacht
3.00 Live at Three	7.08 Cursal
4.00 Kate and Allie	7.35 Perfect Strangers
4.30 The Cedar Tree	8.00 News
5.20 Cartoon Time	8.05 Crossroads
5.30 A Country Practice	9.00 The Bill
6.01 Six-One	9.30 News followed by
7.00 Fair City	10.30 News
7.30 Head To Toe	10.50 American Supermarket
8.00 It's Bibi	11.20 Oireachtas Report
8.30 Check Up	11.40 Rich Tea and Sympathy
9.00 News	
9.30 The Tuesday File	
10.10 Film - F/X Murder by Illusion	
12.05 Late News	

WEDNESDAY MARCH 3RD 1993

RTE 1	NETWORK 2
9.40 Daytime Programmes	1.00 News
2.00 Aerscoil	
11.35 The Encircled Sea	2.30 Bosco
2.00 Winds Of War	3.00 The Den
3.00 Live at Three	6.05 JMTV Magazine
4.00 Film - "Mourning becomes Electra"	6.30 Home and Away
6.01 Six-One	7.00 Nuacht
7.00 Cartoon Time	7.08 Cursal
7.05 Jake and the Fatman	7.25 Soccer
8.00 Simply Delicious	9.30 News followed by Coronation Street
8.30 Family Matters	10.00 Ecu Ecu
9.00 News	10.30 News
9.30 Agatha Christie's Poirot	10.50 History Of Europe
10.30 Marketplace	11.20 Oireachtas Report
11.05 American Playwright's Theatre	11.40 Tales From the Darksides.
12.05 Late News	

THURSDAY, MARCH 4TH 1993

RTE 1	NETWORK 2
9.40 Daytime Programmes	1.00 News
2.00 Aerscoil	
1.40 Baka - Rainforest	2.30 Bosco
2.05 The Saint	3.00 The Den

Brett & I

This Week: The Brit Awards, "Withnail & I"

Well, talk about the birth of a new rock and roll era! It looks as if the industry has finally given in to Suede. Now lads, Suede just happen to be the best band since.....since ever actually. Not content with being pure genius, they're also pure sexy, as was witnessed the vile Brit awards last Wednesday.

If I may wax lyrical, they were a shining bastion of hope in a sea of putrid shite and Mick Hucknall. It all began with androgenous and saucy Brett banging his mic off his swinging hips and singing about violent gay sex. Then we had a legend of a guitar solo and a stomping bass riff and a chorus enquiring if the partner was over 21. I only hope that it frightened the shite out of KWS and Undercover.

It's all a bit far from the homely values of the Brady Bunch, who haven't appeared on TeeVee in about a year but ten again I couldn't resist the contrast. What Mike, Carol, Marcie etc. would have made of it, I don't know. I'll have you know that the Brady Bunch are my moral judges, they stand up for all that is good in American home life and if you confront them with Brett and Suede they'd probably be rightfully shocked, although Mike would probably secretly fancy them as would Marcie.

poor "&I" what he called a "burglary". Poor "I" had to wrestle the man in his Y-fronts and escape out the bedroom door.

Withnail & I are two down and out actors living in Camden Town in late 1969. I sincerely doubt that there is one sober line uttered throughout the entire film. Saying this, the film is replete with excellent catch-phrases that can be repeated ad nauseum to anyone within earshot, for every occasion.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Withnail: Monty, you terrible cunt.

Withnail(on drinking lighter fluid): The wankers on the site don't drink it because they can't afford it, it's a far superior drink to meths."

Withnail again, in answer to a ludicrous price for drugs: "You can stuff it up your arse for nothing and fuck off while you're at it".

Danny: "Cool your boots, man", "You're looking very beautiful today, St. Peter preached the epistles to the apostles looking like that."

The actors decide that they need to "rejuvenate" in the countryside and so borrow the keys to uncle Monty's cottage and wine cellar. Every situation turns out to be completely hopeless as in their inebriated state they are unable to cope with anything. This film, shown on C4 is well worth the £1.50 it'll cost to rent on video. My 13 year old sister has seen it 25 times.

Mikes Quiz Time :

Absolutely no response to last weeks fabulous quiz, so I'm doing another one. Someone better try to answer some of these or I'm going to be upset. Contestants, fingers on the buzzers and...

1. Who was the first man to interview the Beatles on teevee?
2. What was the name of the bad guys in "Battle of the Planets"?
3. How did they make Mr. Ed talk in that fab 50's series?
4. Who said "Live long and prosper"?
5. How many Nescafe Gold Blend ads have there been?
6. What breed is the parrot in Monthy Python's sketch?
7. What flavour is an Albatross?(also Monthy Python)
8. Name Roseannes children?
9. The Prisoner is set in what fictional town?
10. What can a geezer

7.05 Jake and the Fatman
8.00 Simply Delicious
8.30 Family Matters
9.00 News
9.30 Agatha Christie's Poirot
10.30 Marketplace
11.05 American Playwright's Theatre
12.05 Late News

THURSDAY, MARCH 4TH 1993

RTE 1

9.40 Daytime Programmes
2.00 Aerscoil
1.40 Baka - Rainforest
2.05 The Saint
3.00 Live at Three
4.00 Emmerdale
4.30 Reilly Ace of Spies
5.30 A Country Practice
6.01 Six-One
7.00 Fair City
7.30 Opening Nights
8.00 It's Bibl
Radhare

9.00 News
9.30 Prime Time
10.10 Challenging Times
10.40 Booklines
11.10 Decade of Destruction
12.05 Late News

FRIDAY, MARCH 6TH 1993

RTE 1

9.40 Daytime Programmes
2.00 Aerscoil
2.30 Bosco
2.00 G.P.
3.00 Live at Three
4.00 The Sullivans
4.30 Night of the Fox
5.30 A Country Practice
6.01 Six-One
7.00 Home Improvement
7.30 The Corner House
8.00 Bon Voyage
8.30 Winning Streak
9.00 News
9.30 The Late Late Show
11.35 News
11.45 Maigret

NETWORK 2

1.00 News
2.30 Bosco
3.00 The Den
6.05 JMTV Bites Back
6.30 Home and Away
7.00 Nuacht
7.08 Cursai
7.35 Glenroe
8.00 News
8.05 Baywatch
9.00 The Bill 8.30
9.30 News followed by

KnotsLanding
10.30 News
10.50 Electric Ballroom
11.20 Time Out
11.25 Oireachtas Report
11.45 Austin City Limits

NETWORK 2

1.00 News
1.35 Sons and Daughters
3.00 The Den
6.05 JMTV Rocks
6.30 Home and Away
7.00 Nuacht
7.08 Cursai
7.30 Coronation Street
8.00 News
8.05 Blackboard Jungle
8.30 Evening Shade
9.00 Room For Two
9.30 News followed by
Sportsworld

10.30 FILM -

The Last Vampyre
12.15 Oireachtas Report

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Actually, talking about homosexuals, there was quite a scary part in "Withnail & I" (Film, C4, Sunday). Uncle Monty was very close to giving

nothing and fuck off while you're at it".

Danny: "Cool your boots, man". "You're looking very beautiful today, St. Peter preached the epistles to the apostles looking like that."

The actors decide that they need to "rejuvenate" in the countryside and so borrow the keys to Uncle Monty's cottage and wine cellar. Every situation turns out to be completely hopeless as in their inebriated state they are unable to cope with anything. This film, shown on C4 is well worth the £1.50 it'll cost to rent on video. My 13 year old sister has seen it 25 times.

Until then, my insatiable ones,

Chin, Chin:
Mike Teevee.

4. Who said "Live long and prosper"?
5. How many Nescafe Gold Blend ads have there been?
6. What breed is the parrot in Monty Python's sketch?
7. What flavour is an Albatross? (also Monty Python)
8. Name Roseannes children?
9. The Prisoner is set in what fictional town?
10. What can a geezer not get on with when Mr. Cadbury's parrot goes berserk?

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Features

Ultraviolence - Cutting Edge.

By John Maguire, & Bill Kearney

The last few months have seen a number of blood thirsty movies splattering the box office and cinema goers alike with gut churning images.

1993 has already witnessed "Reservoir Dogs", "Man Bites Dog" and more recently a film that the Irish Censorship Board has decided to be unfit for our eyes - Abel Ferrara's "Bad Lieutenant" banned nationwide. So, is the end of civilisation closer than we think?

Once a film has been banned - its fair to say that it will achieve cult status, thereby attracting the pirate video dealers,

and the film (although banned) becomes available. Video is a much more intimate form of viewing - leading to a closer association with the film - than cinema. Although Ultraviolent films need to be seen on the big screen to fully appreciate the cinematographic aspects of the genre, if you want to see it - you can rent it. This leads to the scenes proposed to be banned available for viewing over and over again. No psychotic's collection is complete without "Driller Killer", Abel Ferrara's 1970's movie about a psychotic misogynist, a 'video nasty', banned, yet available to rent on video.

Certainly, violence is a

shocking aspect of films, but is this violence, dubbed Ultraviolence because of the graphic content of the special effects, more destructive than the Hollywood repeated-dreamlike violence of films like the Lethal Weapon series or JFK. "Violence", according to Freud, "is the effect of emotion". Ultraviolence, to follow on, is the effect of ultraemotion. The 90's is a decade of tears, sweat, blood, come and spit. Whether we like it or not, these films are a legitimate reflection of to-days life. Graphic violence is a facet of life, and is it beyond the limits of our lives? Is it too much to ask that we in Ireland can expose ourselves to the cutting edge in film from around the world? According to a spokesperson from the Irish

Film Censorship Board - the answer to both questions is "no". In a telephone conversation with an Focal the anonymous spokesperson told us that the deliberations of the Board were not a matter of public record and they will not discuss their decisions. The decision to ban or pass a film is completely up to the board. Democracy?

Art has always come under the scrutiny of the conservative ultra-right wing of society (witness the documentary "Banned in the USA - and the conclusions on the Robert Mapplethorpe photographs). Can anybody - purporting to represent the good of society ban a film on

tions. The current batch of violent films shows no sign of slowing down, nor should it. The representation of what is happening in the world is a major source of inspiration for the filmmakers of today. The future lies in the truth. Quentin Tarrantino, the director of "Reservoir Dogs" said in a recent interview that "society breeds violence as the afterbirth of existence." We must accept the portrayal of violence as a legitimate part of social make-up. Nobody likes it, yet it exists. It is untruthful and ultimately damaging to ignore it.

There are a number of new films on release that are violent and difficult to agree with yet





Peter Gallagher paddling for U.L. at the Intervarsities in Cork.

Ultraviolence



their personal choice ? "The Life of Brian" is banned in Ireland, as is Scorsese's "The Last Temptation of Christ". Ask Ken Russell about censorship of films. His last film, 1990's "Whore" is banned in Ireland, as is Madonna's book "Sex". It is hard to equate a society of the 1990's with the attitudes and social mores of the Dark Ages.

Back to the movies. The stylish designer violence of mainstream filmmaking causes apathy and ennui towards violence amongst audiences which must be ultimately more damaging than the honest portrayal of violent people and their ac-

this is the central theme of the films and not a "tagged on" appendix as in Black Rain or the Lethal Weapon series. There has always been an aspect of violence to films as there has always been sex in films. "Mean Streets", Martin Scorsese's 1972 film shows the tough life on the streets of a mafia hoodlum. It stars a young Robert De Niro, no stranger to violent films, (The Untouchables, Cape Fear, Taxi Driver) and Harvey Keitel, (star of "Reservoir Dogs" and "Bad Lieutenant") in what was their first major film. This film does not show the sickening detail of current films yet the central theme is violence and the men who live violence. As with "Raging Bull" or "Taxi Driver", violence is not ignored or glamourised.

IN FF HQ



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SEX SCANDAL ERUPTS IN FF HQ

Drop the Punts, or Drop the Pants, says Bertie

By Gerald Barry
Political Correspondent

Fianna Fail is faced with an alarming financial crisis, its national executive was told by party Treasurer Bertie Ahern last week.

It has debts in excess of £3 million and the figure is increasing by £1,200 every day. It has been told by its bankers that it has a one month deadline to show evidence of taking significant steps to resolve its money crisis. If it doesn't, they may stop honouring party cheques.

Mr Ahern warned that if they did not comply with the banks' demands they would be forced to start laying some of their headquarters staff. He said that there was an urgent need to raise £1 million to appease the banks and to do so before the end of March.

Effectively, all the money raised by the party from all sources each year is now insufficient to meet the interest payments on their debt. The debt problem faced by Bertie Ahern as Treasurer of Fianna Fail is three times worse than that he has to manage on behalf of the country as Minister for Finance.

As part of the effort to get the debt back under control, such constituency is being asked to raise £30,000 more or less immediately. The first figure mentioned by Mr Ahern was £20,000 but most of those present believed that this was wildly unrealistic. They are sceptical at

The Fianna Fail party face a new challenge to its stability, with consequences that are sure to shock every god fearing man, woman and TD in the country.

The party finances are on the brink of collapse (a little like the country's, strangely enough) but Bertie Ahern - always one to bare his teeth in the face of adversity (and may be baring a bit more in the future) - he, as Party Treasurer (or Bertie the Bagman as he's affectionately known), has issued a landmark ultimatum to

the National Executive. In a radical new approach to 'financial restructuring', if the constituencies cannot 'pull' (sorry) together to raise some cash to keep the wolf from the door, they'll have to put a new sign on the door of Party HQ. Yes, folks, imagine it BROTHEL, plus the obligatory red light in the window.

If Bertie really believes that the thought of Sean Duignan in fishnets and high-heels is enough to scare the shite, and the cash, out of the soldiers of Destiny, will he try the same approach in the Budget? It could

be the 'Fork it or Fuck it' clause, hand over a 'grand's' worth of Deutschmarks to pay off some of the National Debt, or forced attendance at your TD's next (sex) clinic!!! The mind boggles.

I'm sure that another mind that is extremely boggled at the moment is that of Vincent Browne, Ed of the Trib, the paper recently won a series of international awards for design, among them two awards for 'News Feature Design'.

Keep up the good work lads!!!

The idea that ultraviolence is a new trend in film, perhaps as a result of television or Nintendo, is a falsehood. It's simply that today filmmakers are not afraid to show what is reality. The decade is falling apart at the edges and filmmakers are falling with it. That is to make no mention of the Australian film "Romper Stomper", about nazi racist skinheads, or the Japanese "Hard Boiled", about killing everything that moves in a techno-society. These films are not going to go away - according to those at the edge, there is no room in a bleak society for "Driving Ms. Daisy" - unless she carries a .45.

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Features

An Focal 23rd February 1993

VOX POP



Lisa Fingleton 4th Business - They have a fire, lovely chairs and great Guinness, but I think it burnt down!?"

Trevor, 4th Production Engineering - "They have half n' half pints, and we saw the Lord mayor (Jim Kemmy) there once.

"To drink through the fields."

Gary Hayes, 4th Chemistry - "Shanahan's Pub in Mungret, great music, and a local crowd."

Tom Coleman, 4th Chemistry - "Nancy Blakes, but I preferred it before The Outback was built, since the crowds got bigger they're taking less care with the beer."

David Hanley, Postgrad in Business - "The Henry Cecil, Cecil St. Limerick. It is such a good lively spot, great atmosphere."

All three of the lads agreed that the quality of the pint is a major factor in Pub Proficiency.



WELCOME TO THE MACHINE

Nineteen Nineties music is, not surprisingly, every bit as polarised as most other decades.

However, there is also a strange consistency in the music of this milieu; in that much of what are the "happening" sounds of today are saturated with a bone shattering noise intensity and/or fully utilise the technological developments of the day.

The more "organic" music styles that have mass followings - i.e. Metal and its bastard hybrid via Punk, Grunge - are guilty as charged of polydecibelled braincell slaughter. Meanwhile, Indie, Rave, and Industrial (and the oh-so-mellow "chill out music", Ambient) while equally adrenalised; let their fingers do the walking with lots of gadgetry.

Of course, another element of this time is the frequent crossover of styles. We have Indie-Rave, Grunge-Metal, and a thousand other permutations of suchlike (although if Metal-Rave and Ambient-Grunge have popped up, I've yet to hear of it). Yet, one of the most happening of the new(ish) styles, and itself a hybrid of curious pedigree, is the genre known as Industrial.

Industrial music has its roots in the underground "synth-pop" movement of the early to mid 1970's. The main stronghold of this particular musical tangent was Mainland Europe; and most especially Germany. Formations such as Germany's KRAFTWERK, CAN, KLAUS NOMI and the awkwardly named EINSTURZENDE NEUBATEN; Switzerland's YELLO and the Britons CABARET VOLTAIRE never saw a great deal of chart action during their respective heydeys; but inspired a gamut of artists ranging from Soft Cell to They Might Be Giants to Gary

Numan (I never said that their influence was completely positive).

Influential artists such as David Bowie and Brian Eno also dabbled in the style. At a later, less experimental stage Kraftwerk and Yello had international hits. Yet, once again, it is their influence on others that these bands will be remembered; although now that their devotees have reached commercial success, it is possible that the pioneers of the sound may receive some long overdue kudos. Industrial today is very different from the synth-pop of fifteen or twenty years ago. The bleak, inhuman, sometimes robotic soundscapes have been transformed by the addition of liberal doses of attitude-fueled aggression.

So just who are the top industrial acts? MINISTRY are the toughest and the coolest, heroes of the music press and dilettantes everywhere. Songs of perversion, quasi-satanism and a recently kicked heroin habit for mainman Al Joungenson are among the credentials of this Chicago-based duo. Their latest opus "Psalm 69" serves as a good starting point if you like your music hardcore. Up to now, one man band NINE INCH NAILS have been the (almost) accessible face of the Industrial scene. A poppy, danceable beat overlaid by Angstridden Robert Smith style lyrics and

processed keyboard distortion were the trademarks of the first album from Trent Reznor's pet project; 1989's brilliant "Pretty Hate Machine". The two more recent NIN e.p.'s "Broken" and "Fixed" however, seem to be leaning more towards the harder edge of Ministry.

San Francisco's CONSOLIDATED appear to be the conscience of the movement, with last year's "Mindstream" pillorying racism and homophobia. MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO are more or less in the same vein as Ministry, while Ministry offshoots REVOLTING COCKS are the jokers of the pack, satirising the American Way on records like "Steers, Beers and Queens". Curiously, the Britain has as yet produced no Industrial acts of note, but this Island has. Belfast has spawned very strange but compelling groups like INDUST and UNSOUND. Even flavour of the month band THERAPY have crossbred elements of Industrial and grunge; less so on their e.p.'s "Pleasure Death" and "Baby Teeth", but most effectively on their recent U.K. Top 30 hit "Teethgrinder".

These are enough bands to be going on with, if you want to sample Industrial, although Dublin's WHIPPING BOY are there or thereabouts; and some fanatics have even tried to claim Ambient Chillmeisters THE ORB for Industrial territory. But really folks, if you check out the other listed acts, you will understand how insane those fanatics are.

ZEN ZUCCHINI

Campus People

This Week: Billy Kirwan

Favourite Saying: No Hassle

Favourite Record: Italian Techno Dance

Favourite Book: The ones that aren't in the Library

Favourite Film: The Last Temptation of JH

Favourite Musician: Ber Be-Bop Angley

Favourite Actor/Actress: Donal Fagin

Most Embarrassing Moment: Being involved in the TCE disintegration

Favourite food/drink: Black Russians

Favourite TV Programme: Star Trek TNG

Favourite TV Personality: Bart Simpson

Favourite Item of Clothing: Nice Jumpers

Most Desireable Date: Root

Favourite method of relaxation: Swimming



If you weren't pursuing your present career, what would you have chosen: Teaching

Biggest Thrill: Bungee Jumping in Rag Week '93

Biggest Disappointment: Unable to stay a third year in my present post

Your concept of Heaven: 5,00 students enjoying Rag Week Hell: The Co-Op Structure

Greatest Ambition: To make Rag Week '93 the best ever

Favourite term of abuse: I'll call you back!

What would be your dying words: No Hassle

Features



Aiden Egan, 4th Production Engineering - "O'Shea's Pub, Tipperary Road, Limerick. great old atmosphere with real people, and no rubbish, and a warm fire."

Nell O'Connell, 4th Prod. Eng. - "Tom Collins Pub Limerick, a nice place for a Saturday pint, with nice barstaff and the music is good. My worst experience there was walking down the stairs after 8 pints and seeing my reflection in a full length mirror."

Matthew Ward, 4th Prod Eng. - "Tigh Ned, Inishere (Aran Islands), Great Guinness, traditional music with nice people - the whole shebang. Worst ever was when they stopped serving one night at 1.0 am."

Gillian Lambe - "John Barleycorn, Clermont-Ferrand, France. The staff and customers are really friendly, everyone comes up to you and introduces themselves."

Ger - "Morrissey's Pub, Abbeylix. An oldfashioned pub where the waiters wear white aprons, its a non-pretentious and authentic traditional pub."

Carmel O'Sullivan - "La Ville en Dingue, Paris. An American bar in Paris, where the french think they're American and the Americans think they're Irish, but in fact they're all pretentious eejits. it's also a great place to pick up a man!"

Colette - "Ryan Mc Faddens on 5th Ave. New York, great cocktails and great men!"

Geraldine - "Washington Inn, Cork, a great CD collection, but I won't go into the details of the rest of it....." ?????

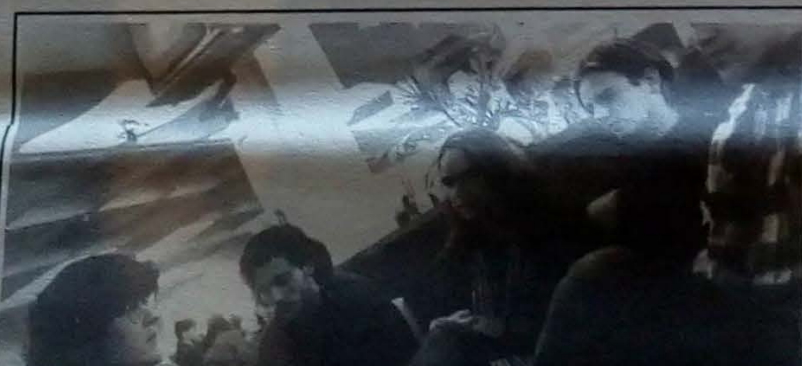


Joe Morrissey - "Brownies, 10th and Avenue A, New York, a dark, neon lit bar, with neon in the jacks to stop junkies shooting up. They play space out music and there's lots of nice babes."

Aiden O'Grady - "The Crabtree, Newmarket-On-Fergus, there's a plough on the wall, and a picture of Che Guevara above the pool table. My worst experience there was playing a game of pool with a midget from Belfast, and losing. My best was being served black pudding by the Celia Holman Lee Model Agency on the Ballinanty Veterans night out!"

Dave Butler - "Geoffs in Waterford, it's just a groovy pub, by day or night."

Danny Santana - "Flipper, in Heulva (near Seville), it's by the sea and has





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Dave Butler - "Geoffs in Waterford, it's just a groovy pub, by day or night."

Danny Santana - "Flipper, in Heulva (near Seville), it's by the sea and has pictures of dolphins and fish, the best time to go there is between 2 and three in the morning and you can always find beautiful women there."

Dave Martin - "I'm taking the Jack Nicholson approach - I don't talk to the press!" (Dave claims to be the lead singer with The Cookie Monsters).

Canon

Canon



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O'MAHONY'S THE BOOK PEOPLE



"LOS GUSANOS"- JOHN SAYLES. 1991.
Penguin Books (U.K. £5.99)

Elaine Vaughan

An 18th century philosopher once said "Life is a comedy to those who think, and a tragedy to those who feel". according to John Sayles it is nothing short of bizarre to those fight.

"Los Gusanos" is a book about revolutionaries, the idealistic, the cynical and the violent. Cuba's history has been punctuated by a series of disorganized and botched reprisings, hazy ideals and frightening violence and bloodshed. "Los Gusanos" translates as Castro's "worms", Cubans who live in America, but long for their native Cuba and to be involved in "the cause" - kind of a perverse West Side Story if you like...

The story (or stories as there are thousands of tiny subplots running through the main) centres around Marta de la Pena, a beautiful politically driven woman. Her family has an extremely political past. Her father, now an old man, wasting away in the retirement where Marta works, having been one of the "rebels", and here brothers Ambrosio and Blas having fought in the Bay of Pigs. It is Ambrosio's death in same that prompts

Marta to act. She wishes to avenge her brother's death. Ambrosio, who is omni-present in the form of his diary which Marta reads extracts from is the idealistic revolutionary, wishing to free his country, he comes across as sensitive and poetic and painfully young. Too young, and fighting a war he doesn't really understand. There are no winners and no losers just young men and women who died for no reason. Marta decides to get together her own band of rebels and set sail for Cuba, to give old Fidel something to think about.

The band of revolutionaries she gathers together are probably the strongest most bio-matched set of characters one could ever hope to read about. All of them have their own story to tell and their own reason for joining Marta's movement. Luz, a young "good time girl" despairs in the dull monotony of her own existence, she has been, in her own words, "fucked around" by the men in her life - she's a little in awe of Marta's solemn determination. Dewey is a dreamer, joining for the glory of it, he invents elaborate day-dreams in his head, adventure stories with him as the mirthless hero, stoic and brave, with justice on his

side. He is also a little in love with Marta. Padre Martin is a defrocked priest, he loosely represents the conscience of the the movement. He is a tortured soul who feels his inadequacy and is stung by the lack of direction in his life. By far the most endearing character in the book is El Halcon (the Hawk) he is violent and maniac. He interrogates people by shrimping them across the side of the head with a telephone directory. Endearing indeed. He is a committed patron of many "houses of ill-repute" and has an eerie infatuation with young "virgins". He initiates his Lolitas by hitting them repeatedly and telling them he might kill them but hasn't decided yet. Serafin, Luz's brother, is battle-weary, he has fought with Ambrosio and only just made it back alive. He is in love with Marta - not Cuba.

There is a tendency in these sort of "fierce" books to leave the reader struggling with the writer's opinions. Sayles is not an apologist for the right or the left. He merely states the situations as they stand and makes no attempt to condone meaningless violence. He is very descriptive - "The shining lacquered wood coffee table holds a ceramic bowl of fruit and a pair of phallic reaping dolphins in translucent pink grass", "Sleep comes like a slow wave of nausea" - his descriptions are in keeping with his uncompromising style.

Generally speaking, a beginner's course in Spanish would not go astray. However, Sayles graphic descriptions ensure that "puta", "balls" and "zieso" are more or less self-explanatory. It might not be a great advertisement for Cuba but a worthwhile read nonetheless.

OSCAR NOMINATIONS

Whether you are a devoted film buff or a TV addict, the Oscar nominations of last week could hardly have escaped your attention. Yes the nominations are out and the battle lines drawn for the big showdown on March 29th.

This year's nominations while placing heavy emphasis on Hollywood blockbusters, has not forgotten Irish and British films. Among these is Neil Jordan's "The Crying Game", nominated for six

new and outstanding talent such as Quentin Tarantino's directional debut in "Reservoir Dogs". Other examples of the snobbish nature of the Academy include the snubbing of Spike Lee for best director with "Malcolm X". Lee has never even been nominated for an Oscar despite films such as X and Do The Right Thing. The point should be made, if it is not clear already, that the Oscars is not a celebration of artistic talent but an important financial and PR event. An award from the Academy especially in a prestigious section can add as much as 20 million dollars to the takings of a film. While it may be an artistic farce the Oscar nominations and awards themselves are the major highlights in the movie industry's year. Even if you hate the films involved you love the razzamatazz and watching the Actors make their cringe-worthy speeches. My favourite piece of Oscar folklore is David Niven in 1975 when a stalker ran through the stage, saying "Most men try to hide their shortcomings". The Irish interest is at a peak this year with "The Crying Game" becoming the most loved Irish Film since "My Left Foot". Jordan was once the most laughed about man in Hollywood after "High Spirits" became "Low Box Office". Hopefully he can become one of the major star directors of the nineties on March 26th.

Bill Kearney.



Emma Thompson, Best Actress nomination for "Howards End".

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On the other side of the gender divide, the best actress section is expected to be a two horse race between Susan Sarandon for "Lorenzo's Oil" and Emma Thompson for "Howards End" which also boasts Vanessa Redgrave in the best supporting actress category.

What is not surprising, though saddening, is the failure of the Academy to honour

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Daniel Day Lewis. Oscar number 2?

FILM REVIEW: CHAPLIN

DIRECTOR: Richard Attenborough

STARRING: Robert Downey Jr., Geraldine Chaplin

Robert Downey Jr. stars as Charlie Chaplin in this definitive reconstruction of the man's life and time.

The film follows his fame and personal life from his earliest stage appearance at five to his retirement in Switzerland. But "Chaplin" is more than a simple retelling of Chaplin's life, Attenborough picks away at the myth and legend of a star who was a mystery to all, including himself.

One of the key characters in Chaplin's life was his mother Hannah played here by his own grand daughter (Geraldine Chaplin), through psycho-analytical narrative Attenborough clearly hints that separation from her in early life led to Charlie's ultimate downfall. This point is further reinforced by Charlie's

inability to find emotional and sexual fulfilment in his relationship with Lita Grey and Paulette Goddard. An interesting comment the film also makes is the unfortunate



manner in which the life of the great star collided with war, depression, and ultimately McCarthyism. What makes all of this enjoyable and watchable is the apt underplaying by Robert Downey Jr. along with the unsentimental direction maintained by Attenborough at all times.

There are of course plenty of crass and corny moments such as the young Charlie's brutal upstaging of his mother at the age of five, and indeed all of his childhood which runs like a bad adaptation from a Dickens novel. Overall, however, "Chaplin" is successful as a revision of one of this century's best known but least understood stars.

Bill Kearney



Clint Eastwood : Is this to be his year?