



OPC
Clubs&Socs
Reports

p22



View
Arts&Ents
Section

p9



Garden Gnome
Runs Amok

p12

March for Free Education

UL Students' Union has urged all students to march in defence of their right to Free Education next Tuesday in Limerick city. President Eoin Ó Broin stated that it was time that the government was shown that students will not accept cutbacks in their education. "The proposal to raise the Registration Fee to €1000 is absolutely disgraceful. The Registration Fee is now being turned into effectively Fees by the back door. If we don't fight this now, god knows what the fees will be a few years down the line."

Urging the students to come out and march he stated "We need to go out in numbers and show the government that we will not lie down and take these cutbacks. We need to show them that we will fight, every inch of the way."



Students from Limerick Colleges at last year's anti-fees protests

March
Tuesday Wk 3
See Posters!

Registration Fee may be hiked to over €1000 next year

What's News?

Seanad Voting?	p2
Upcoming Elections	p3
Access Office	p8
Mundy Interview	p11
Letters to the Editor	p26
Sabbatical Reports	p28



Speculation that the Registration Fee is to be raised to over €1000 each year has met with fury from students all over the country. The increase, which is the latest in a series of cuts that have been focused on students from the Government will have a huge impact on thousands of students and is viewed by many as fees by the back door.

The renewed plans are based on an Estimates Review Committee Report which was commissioned by the Department of Finance last December. Proposals in this would have raised the Registration Fee to €1000 last year and possibly more each year after. A similar massive increase of 69% was imposed on students over the summer last year. The moves to increase the fee to €1000 along with proposals to bring back fees were defeated last year with a vocal and active student campaign which included student marches, demonstrations and occupations. Now, however, the Government, with the economy still struggling has set its sights on the Third Level Education Sector yet again.

It has also become clear that the Registration Fee which was originally introduced to fund student services such as the Union, the Medical Centre and University Student Services is now being used to fund the University Administration. Of last year's increase nearly all was used to fill in for government cutbacks, with no direct student benefit.

Other cutbacks over the past year have included a 25% reduction in the Back to Education Allowance during the summer. The BTEA gives a second chance to over 6,500 long-term unemployed people, single parents and disabled people to return to higher education. Many have been unable to continue with their courses or were forced to go out to work in order to supplement their income.

The Higher Education Grant has also remained far below the average expenditure of students. Despite the proclamations during the summer about the increases in the grant it was only increased by €9 a week for those on the full grant. For most students the grant

doesn't even cover the costs of rent. The grant is given to those who are most vulnerable in society and many have not other sources of income besides part time work.

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News

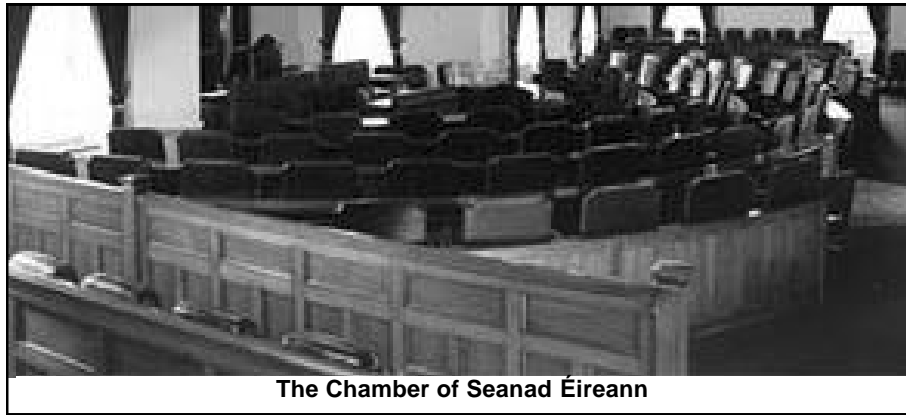
Seanad voting rights for UL Graduates?

BY DÓNAL O'DRISCOLL

Recently an Oireachtas committee was established to review the current structures for Seanad Representation. The committee was chaired by senator Mary O'Rourke of Fianna Fáil. Among the groups to submit recommendations to the committee was UL. Currently only Trinity College and the NUI Colleges (NUIG, NUIM, UCD, UCC) have representation, with Trinity having three seats as do the collective NUIs. The other Universities and colleges in Ireland, including UL, have no representation. UL are trying to secure representation for both UL and its sister college DCU. Making submissions on behalf of UL were SU President Eoin O' Broin, former Irish Ambassador to the USA and current Chancellor of the University Seán Donlon as well as Paul Butler, head of the Alumni Association. Seán Donlon, while speaking to An Focal said "The case made for UL voting rights was accepted by the Seanad Sub-Committee chaired by Senator Mary O'Rourke. The sub-committee has, however, a broad remit and is examining all aspects of Seanad representation and Seanad work programmes. I am hopeful, however, that progress will be made in the months ahead."

Eoin O'Broin, also speaking to An Focal said "We are trying to get seats for UL and DCU, but the committee received submissions from all sorts of groups including those who want seats for the ITs and those who want University seats abolished altogether"

Seanad Éireann has long since been controversial for its selection process,



The Chamber of Seanad Éireann

with the general consensus being that the Taoiseach's ability to pick eleven of the sixty members himself, is unfair. Over the years, every thing from Dáil-style direct elections to outright abolition of the Seanad have been proposed. The establishment of this Oireachtas committee is a welcome development to critics of the existing system of voting and representation in the Seanad. One of the major sticking points up to now has been graduate voting rights. In recent times the campaign for more University seats has been brought into the public domain. A new website, www.graduateequality.com has been set up, arguing for voting rights in the Seanad for all college graduates.

At the present time, as well as the eleven seats selected by An Taoiseach and the six University seats, there are forty three seats divided into five panels, namely, Agriculture, Labour, Industry and Commerce, Culture and Education and Public Administration.

These forty-three seats are elected by local representatives on the various County, Borough and Town councils

throughout Ireland as well as the members of the Oireachtas (ie the outgoing Seanad and the incoming Dáil)

It is yet to be seen what recommendations the committee, which has concluded taking submissions, will make, but developments in upcoming weeks and months could be crucial for the future of the Seanad. Speculation is rife as to what exactly the outcome will be regarding the Seanad. Will there be some cosmetic changes and increases in the number of voters? (like, for example allowing graduates of UL and other colleges to vote) will we see a radical overhaul of the selection process such as the imposition of direct elections along the lines of the Dáil election? Or will we see the Seanad maintained in its current format, without any changes at all? Presumably, most readers of An Focal will be graduates by the next Seanad election. (At the moment not due to be held until 2007) As things stand now they will not be able to vote in that election, the next couple of weeks and months might just change that.

UL Alumni pledge €6,000 to Financial Aid Fund

This year has shown that the former students of UL retain a special link with their University with the news that EUR6000 has been pledged by alumni of the University towards the Financial Aid Fund. The Fund which is administered by the Students' Union aids students who need money in order to help them through cases of hardship. The money was given by the Alumni through the UL Fund, a way in which alumni can directly help their University.

The Financial Aid Fund has been a vital part of student life for many students. It has helped many students with smaller or larger amounts of money during their time in UL. Examples include students who are short of rent money, to situations where students have had a change in circumstances in their family. The Financial Aid Fund has proved vital to students at various times enabling them to continue their education in UL.

The UL Fund is open for contributions to all alumni. It is publicised by the monthly email news bulletin and the twice yearly "Alumni News" Newsletter. The different areas where contributions can be made include The President's Fund, an Alumni Scholarship and an Alumni Development Project.

The University of Limerick Students Union gratefully acknowledged the contribution of Alumni through the UL Foundation Annual Fund. The Union also appreciates the support of the Alumni Association and the UL Foundation in facilitating the contributions.

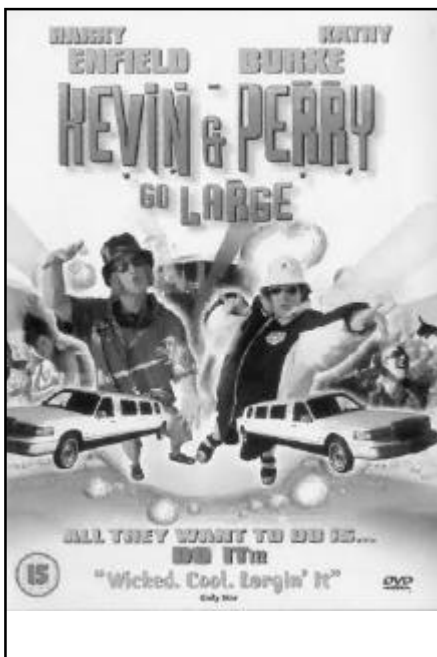
With great power comes great responsibility

BY SIOBHÁN O'CONNOR

This month sees the beginning of, or return to University life for the scholars of Limerick. Coinciding with this move is the deluge of paperwork that each individual must face in order to complete the transition from individual to student. Amongst the Enrolment and Registration forms are those intimidating and authoritatively - worded others...Lease Agreements, Rules and Regulations, Codes of Practice! The initial instinct for some in this situation, particularly you first time home leavers among us, would be to immediately make ten copies of each and staple them to every wall of your new house to remind yourself and your housemates of how not to get in trouble.

In reality I doubt if it would make any difference if you were never to see these documents again. Yes you do have responsibilities and you must be aware of them, but if you are just sensible, your common sense will tell you what you need to know. Most of you know the way it works but here are just a few points to remember:

- Remember that the agreement you make with your landlord or lady is binding. Your landlord is somebody that you want on your side, show due respect



and it should be reciprocated.

- A landlord also has a responsibility to his/her tenant of course. Owners of properties, which are publicly let, are obliged by law to register with the local authorities. This does not mean however that they are solely responsible for such necessities as bins and rubbish collection. Find out if your landlord is taking responsibility for this, and if he is not, then organise it yourself. Do not presume that everything will be done for you. A 140L wheelie bin, which is

sufficient for up to six people, can be obtained from Mr.Binman Ltd. Private Waste Disposal for the nine-month student rate of €200. Don't leave your bin outside your house for longer than you need to. You can be fined up to €150 per item of litter.

- Be conscious of the fact that you may be neighbour to a young family or an elderly person. It is too easy to overlook the fact that perhaps not every resident in your area is a student. Just because they are not students however does not mean that they will disregard your craving for the occasional bit of madness. If you respect their wishes and privacy, perhaps they will be more tolerant of, let's say, the little gathering you're planning for next week? Just something to think about.

- Noise levels...keep them down! It is possible to have a good time without rattling every window on campus. I'm not implying that you should leave your stereo at home, just keep the music at a level where you, not the entire estate, can sing along to.

- Stolen signs, traffic cones and shopping trolleys are the gleaming prizes of many a student night out. This sort of activity has become a tradition of college life. It seems a laughable achievement, hilarious even, at the time. But only at the time! It is not the kind of

achievement a person should boast about. Theft of public property is an offence, one for which you can be arrested and fined. There is a rescue remedy though, because those nice people in the Students Union will accept anonymously returned items and take the rap for them too.

- Don't forget that there are a multitude of things for which you can be arrested. If you are arrested you could face criminal prosecution and disciplinary action from the University which could result in your expulsion. Your third - level ventures are temporary undertakings. But an arrest is permanent. It will stay with you long after the robes and scrolls of graduation.

In retrospect, the rights of a student may seem miniscule by comparison. But they are not, they do exist. You have the right to fair treatment as a tenant, and to equality as a student of the University. You do not have to unquestioningly abide by the rules set down for you if you genuinely feel that you are being mistreated. If you need any advice or help regarding your rights or your responsibilities you can visit David Garrahy, Welfare Officer in the Students Union, whose job is to both listen to, and fight for the students in this University.

News

ULSU Executive Elections: And the Candidates are:

There has been a mixed response to the nominations for the three non-sabbatical positions of Equality, Community and Student Teachers Officer. As a result elections will only take place for one of the positions, while on office has been deemed filled and nominations are to reopen for the third.

Seeking the position of Equality Officer is Donal O'Driscoll from 2nd Year Public Admin and Derek Spaight from 2nd Year HPSS. The successful candidate will be charged with promoting equality issues among students and campaigning against discrimination based on gender,

disability, ethnicity or sexual orientation. Seamus Ryan from 2nd Public Admin has been deemed elected as Community Officer, subject to a vote to confirm his position, which will take place at this year's AGM. As Community Officer Seamus will have the daunting task of liaising between residents who live around campus and the students they share their community with. His goal will be attempting to achieve the most harmonious relationship possible between residents and students. There has however been no response for the position of Student Teacher Officer, who has the responsibility to insure that the

specific needs and that the University caters for requirements of Student Teachers. Nominations for this position will be reopened as soon as possible.

Last years Sabbatical elections saw one of the highest turnouts at Student Union elections in recent history. For this trend to continue all students need to do is present their I.D cards at the polling station in the main canteen, on Thursday of Week 2 between 10 am and 6 pm, where you will asked to vote for the next Equality Officer. Encouraging students to get out and vote Eoin O'Broin, President of ULSU said, "The Students'

Union is a participatory democracy rather than parliamentary, which means anyone can be recalled, this is true democracy. Women fought long and hard to vote and up to the 1960's, not everyone could vote in Northern Ireland. I would encourage as many people to go out and vote to make sure the right person gets the job." Eoin continued by noting, "As it may be the first time you have voted, why not remember you did it here at UL." For further information about the election or the candidates' look out for the candidate's campaigns, which will be taking place across campus or as always drop into the Student Union.

Equality

Dónal O'Driscoll

Hi all. My name is Donal O' Driscoll, a 2nd yr Public Admin student (yes one of those people!) and I am running for the position of Equality officer on this Thursday October 2nd. The only promise I will make to you in this campaign is to fight tooth and nail to ensure that you are not disadvantaged and discriminated against on the grounds of your race, sex, sexual orientation or other personal circumstances. If you ever have a problem with inequality, let me know, we should all have the same rights. Difference is healthy, inequality is not!!!. There's one little thing you have to do first.

Vote Donal O' Driscoll No1!!!

Derek Spaight


As a disabled student i am all too aware of the inequalities present in society and here at ul. I will endeavour to bring my own unique experience to bear on this position of equality officer. i will strive to improve and change what is necessary and make students and staff more aware of the complexity of the issues involved. as equality officer I will work for all students, not just those with disabilities. I successfully represented my class as first year class representative for HPSS. In addition, I am actively and heavily involved with the students union (SU) and I ave first hand experience of the internal workings of the SU. Since came to ul in 2001 as a link-in student have been involved with the outreach society, which works with children from disadvantaged backgrounds and students with disabilities among others. I became a full-time student in September 2002 and many of you will know me from around campus. A vote for me is a voice for you!

Elections

Thursday Week 2

Main Canteen

10am - 6:30pm



TRINITY ROOMS
IT'S A PART OF YOU

Monday • Manic Monday's
Monday is the New Saturday with the tackiest most singalong anthems this side of Tom Jones record collection !!!!
Free Admission to emergency services, bar, restaurant and hotel staff, hospital staff and with valid college id.
Everyone Else: €5

Tuesday • Indie Nation
in association with Mary I SU
Mary I Students host a massive Tuesday night with the ladies getting it down to a cutting edge soundtrack of r'n'b and rock while the boys struggle to catch their eye!
€6 all night long

Wednesday • Student Central
in association with UL SU
The biggest college, the best lookers and the most up for a party? They certainly like to think so and it's the biggest student party of the week!
€7 from ULSU and on the door.

Thursdays • Access All Areas
Soul Clinic is in the Red Room & Courtyard with Stevie G, Noel Phelan and Bass Odyssey among the residents and guest slots from Nightmares on Wax to Stereo MC's!
In the main room, it's big dancefloor anthems all the way!
€7 gets you all in all over!

Fridays & Saturdays • Trinity Rooms
3 rooms, 2 courtyards, 1 ultimate venue!
Our showcase nights when we throw all the doors open! Aiden Kelly's in the courtyard, Paul Webb's in the main room, Johnny & Mark are in Quarter Club and every week is full of surprises!
€10 all night long

Sundays • Trinity Classics
Guaranteed Thrillers, no Fillers! €10 all night long.

Doors to the Main Room open at 11.30pm each night, if you're in the **Redroom** early enough you might just get in free
Party's of all sizes catered for!

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Route 1 - Running from 10.30pm
Curragh Birin - College Court - Elm Park - Hurler's - Main Road
bus stops a) Monaleen turn
b) Golf Links Road turn

Route 2 - Running from 11pm
Drumroe Student Village - Stables & Scholars - University Arena - Oaklawns - Kilmurry bus stop - Briarfield bus stop - Rhebogue bus stop

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News

Clubs & Socs Recruitment Days

Last Tuesday and Wednesday witnessed the main canteen transform into a frantic cattle-mart, as our various clubs and societies on campus recruited new members.

Joining one of the clubs or societies has remarkable benefits, and can certainly add to your overall college experience here in Limerick. It is a great way to meet people and make new friends, especially if you have come from a different county or country and happen to know nobody. Anyway, who could turn down the free lollypops from the Christian Union stand! Those strawberry delights made a great and lasting impression on the new first years! While I'm on the topic of first years, I would just like to heartedly apologise to those four people I 'accidentally' sent looking for the mystical canteen on the 9th floor of the college. I'm sure you all had quite a magical adventure along the way though, and I hope none of you happened to fall down a rabbit hole onto a yellow brick road with the loch ness monster, little red riding hood and the cast of Happy Days walking along it...

This year the success of the clubs and societies was self evident. For hours upon hours the main canteen was full of

enthusiastic people searching for that extra-special extra-curricular activity. Without the endless amount of hard-working people such as Paul Lee, the Students' Union officers and staff, all of the committees from their respective clubs or societies, and everyone else I have forgotten to mention, there would be no activities taking place and we would be all resorting to frequent games of 'watching paint dry', right up to the classic co-curricular game of 'which blade of grass in the field is greener'. Although I have a slight feeling the paint watching takes place occasionally concluding a long night on the town for most students. They all assure me it's because the television is crap at 4a.m...

From day one in orientation week, every first year was advised to become a member of at least one club or society. For those who have, well done. For those who have not, it is a decision you yourself have to make, but for the measly price of between €2 and €4, you can acquire membership to one of the many well organised and entertaining clubs or societies.

"Best of luck to everyone for the new college year by the way".

Clubs & Socs Admin Day

This year to avoid hassle and unnecessary expense the Clubs and Societies Admin Weekend was shortened to a single day and held last Saturday on campus. Two delegates from most of the Clubs and Societies attended a day of seminars on the most efficient and productive way to organise a club or society.

From event management to sponsorship, health and safety to committee development, each seminar was organised to give the delegates an insight into the running of a club or society, the roles and responsibilities of the committee, and the way to get the most for their members. A most informative day was punctuated by the occasional "get to know" you session over coffee and lunch in the Stables.

The seminars were concluded with the election of the new Clubs and Societies Executive.

Comprising of a Clubs Officer, a Societies Officer, three clubs delegates and three society delegates, the Executive deals with the budget process, acts as a support group for the individual entities and works for the advancement of all Clubs and Societies.

Elected to the position of Clubs Officer

was Dymrna Nolan (Volleyball), while the new Societies Officer is Peter Burrows (Irish Peace). The elected clubs executive members are Diarmuid Haugh(American Football), Daren Nestor(Kayak) and Lorna Finnegan(Basketball) The new societies executive members are Dave Corley(Drama), Conor O'Brien(Racing) and Patrick McHugh(LGB). Congratulations to all elected and commiserations to those who narrowly missed out (ye are the lucky ones Ed.).

The heady business of elections was followed by a hearty get together in the Scholars that evening to make new contacts, network and romance may even have blossomed for a few. The budget interviews are being held Tuesday to Thursday of this week (Week 2). Clubs and Council Meetings are 6pm Tuesday of each odd week (Week 3, Week 5 etc.). An Focal wishes all C&S members a safe and enjoyable year. Those who haven't decide to join, if you are around during the UL Open Days pop down to the Arena and have another look or just call in to the Clubs and Societies Office in the Students' Union Building and have a chat with the development officer Paul Lee.

European Education Forum Report

BY EOIN Ó BROIN

The first European Education Forum was held last weekend from Thursday 18th to Saturday 20th in the Humboldt University in the centre of Berlin, Germany. I attended along with the Students Union President of UCD Paul Dillon. The setting was steeped in history, 5 minutes walk from Checkpoint Charlie, the Reichstag, the Brandenburg Gate, the former German Democratic Republic Parliament and the lofty Marks Engels forum where possibly the last remaining statues to these influential gentlemen reside. The forum was the culmination of 18 months of campaigning by various German, Dutch, French, Spanish and to a lesser extent English Students Unions on the issues of GATS, the Bologna Process and the cutbacks/no fees struggles and brought together about 200 students & lecturers from all over Europe. The forum was timed to coincide with a meeting of the Ministers of Education from the countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHA) to discuss progress with the Bologna process.

The schedule was workshops and plenary sessions all day Thursday and Friday followed by a demonstration on the Saturday. The types of workshops being held varied from "Integrating national minorities into the educational system" to "Schools in Capitalism". The workshops were run by groups such as The Rosa Luxembourg Foundation from Germany, The Austrian Students' Union, ASTA FU Berlin and SUD Education from France. A lot of the participants were highlighting quite negative points about the processes which are not as simple as "No Fees Please"! For example one student rep from Greece highlighted that students enrolling in the lifelong



Demonstrations in Berlin at European Education Forum

learning courses all Universities will be soon providing will not have student representation.

Students from Germany said that some people in Germany can't afford to go to school as they can't afford the textbooks even though education there is normally free. Others said that the Bologna process was a barrier to mobility (its primary stated aim is to make mobility for students between countries simpler) as if all degrees around Europe were the same there would be no point in studying in another country? Some stated that the motivation of the ministers must be economic rather than egalitarian as if courses all over Europe were streamlined it would make them infinitely more marketable in that there would be the product similarity that one associates with Coca Cola being the same all over the World.

No wonder the more controversial comments were that Education makes you stupid although this was in reference to the value system it imposes on people.

Plenary sessions held on both days focused on "GATS & Education" & "The Bologna Process - Critics & Alternatives." I attended only Fridays having arrived late on Thursday evening. Both days finished with bands playing late in the University.

Once all the talking was done the only thing left to do was to go marching so away we went after assembling with about 100 students outside the Humboldt University at 1pm on the Saturday. After walking a mile or two we were joined by hundreds of apprentices protesting the cutbacks in the number of training schemes allocated in Germany this year. These were a very lively bunch using large wheelie bins to cart 4 or five of them down the road at a time. The day finished back at the Humboldt University where most people said their goodbyes saying they would convene again during the education modules at the European Social Forum that takes place in Paris which is on from the 12th - 15th November.

As for the ministers' conference itself, it also had student representation in the form of chair of ESIB - the European Students' Union and Student reps who had been invited by their respective Ministers of Education. No Irish representatives were present, as Minister Dempsey refused to invite the reps from USI, no doubt due to the drubbing he received on the fees issue last year. One interesting outcome from the Ministers Conference was that financial support in the form of grants would be transferable if one chose to study in another country of the EHA.

To synopsise, I realised I don't know enough about the Bologna process. I would also say that it has to be discussed and debated at length publicly. This is not happening which makes it inherently undemocratic. The ESIB have however been allocated membership of the conference to represent Student views. Ireland is represented with ESIB by representatives from USI.

Bologna affects all students and could herald a new dawn in European Integration - at least our language skills would improve! Despite this we should all be quite clear of the motivation behind the process and whether it relates to cutbacks, rationalisation or the dreaded GATS. Only time will tell.

notes:

Bologna

A process convened in 1999 to establish a European wide standard in the accreditation of Degree, Masters & PhD programmes.

The EHA comprises of all the countries of the EU plus Iceland, Switzerland & Norway.

GATS

<http://www.gatswatch.org/>

N e w s

College Court’s Student Residents are given
a less than warm welcome.

BY DANIEL FORDE

One of the first pieces of post for both returning and new student residents in the College Court/ Castlebrook estates was a curt letter from the Residents Association in the area. The letter, entitled “Don’t say ‘ I didn’t know’”, was distributed in an attempt to curtail the alleged ‘continuous bad behaviour’ of those students living in these estates. The residents go on to say that they ‘ will no longer put up with or tolerate activities including: vandalism, anti-social behaviour, sport being played on roads or avenues, littering and loud parties.

This letter was greeted with surprise and with anger by students in the area, many of whom were just beginning their first week away from home when the letter was dropped into their residencies. The impersonal manner in which the letter was distributed was also criticised, with students being unable to respond to this largely anonymous correspondence.

Here is the body of the letter in full:

DON’T SAY, “I DID NOT KNOW”

The College Court/ Castlebrook Residents Association would like to welcome to our area 1St years and those returning to UL with a word of warning.

Because of the continuous bad bahaviour of students living in the area, the residents association will no longer put up with or tolerate the following:

- Parties in the house with loud music*
- Furniture, stereos, televisions and drinking on front lawns.*
- Students on roofs of houses.*
- Litter & Rubbish strewn around the front of houses, both on the lawn and pavement.*
- Hurling, football or sport of any kind played on public roads, day or night.*
- Out of date stickers on bins.*
- Students who leave bins/ plastic bags out all week.*
- Driving through the estate without due care and attention and shouting and roaring when returning home.*
- Parking of cars on lawns, smashing glasses and bottles on the pavements and roads.*
- Anti-social behaviour, criminal damage to property, public order and inciting public order.*

Please remember, while you are students attending UL, you are also transient residents living in our area. This does not give you the right to disrupt permanent residents lives.

The residents association have every intention of pursuing those who break the law by working closely with the police,



College Court

litter wardens, health authority etc., We will have no hesitation in taking those people responsible and if we must your landlords to court,

In the past we have tried with dialogue to resolve these problems with the University and Student’s Union, to no avail.

However we have been successful using the legal process. It’s your choice.

Some students were not afraid to voice their anger at the letter’s tone. “It’s a bit

of an insult to have these rules imposed upon us by people we’ve never met, and who made no attempt to discuss these problems with us, the supposed source of them”, said one newcomer to College Court. There were complaints made about the notion that each and every student resident engages in “continuous bad behaviour”.

Despite the tension generated by this letter, the vast majority of students are delighted with their new home, with many commenting on the sense of community in the area.

On Yer Bike!



Bike Lanes in the Pipeline

Limerick City Council have presented plans for a network of cycle lanes accross the city to the Councils Transport and Infrastructure Special Policy Committee. The plans are now on public display in City hall and can also be viewed on the Councils webpage. Features include a bike lane the lenglth of the Childers Rd., out the Park Canal as far as the boundary to the County Council jurisdiction and a lane through Pennywell. It is hoped that the County Council will produce matching plans to complete the riverbank to the University and to create a cycle network around Castletroy. The City Council are seeking comments from members of the public on their proposals. To view visit their website www.limerickcity.ie ---> Road Transport & Infrastructure download the map or call into city hall.

Young Women in Politics Seminar

BY ELAINE BYRNE

A Seminar on the 'Participation of Young Women in Political Life' took place at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg on September 16-17 last. Elaine Byrne, UL Young Fine Gael and alternate member for Fine Gael at the Forum on Europe, was selected as the Irish representative by the National Youth Council of Ireland.

The two day conference brought together Ministers, MPs, political activists, journalists, academics and those working within the NGO sector from across Europe and the Caucuses. Most notably, Mrs Lena Hallengren, the Swedish Minister for Youth, spoke movingly on the week anniversary of the tragic death of the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

From the 45 member states of the Council of Europe, Ireland is 27th in the league table which measures the percentage of women in parliament. With 13% female representation in the Dáil, Ireland is ranked just ahead of the Republic of Moldova and Liechtenstein and ranked just behind Andorra and Luxembourg. This compares to the female representation in Sweden at 45%. Ireland has a long way to go.

The Seminar found that a number of issues preclude young women from



political life. Meetings and other activities are invariably held late at night or at weekends which compete with family time. Not only are there no crèche facilities at political meetings, but there is no crèche in the Dáil. These are taken as given in Scandinavia. The Seminar also put forward the thesis that politics in its current form is antagonistic and aggressive. There were persistent calls for a different style and type of politics, one where the language used was gender balanced, where negotiation and listening skills would become more prominent and which are perceived to be in abundance within the female gender.

The Seminar discussed a number of specific measures to encourage the greater participation of young women in political life. The issue of quotas for women within political parties became a

recurring theme. Should they exist? Should they be legal or voluntary? The arguments that quotas were counter to democratic politics and that women should be able enough to be elected on their own merits were posed. This was countered two-fold. If women make up 50% of the population and only 13% of women are elected to the Dáil, is this not counter to the principle of democratic parity and equality? Also, in presuming that women should be able enough to become elected on their own competence presumes that our existing politicians are competent.

Other specific measures outlined to encourage greater female participation in politics: training, awareness-raising, education. Above all it was recognised that the male gender must be included in the process of promoting gender parity. This is not a female issue; this is an issue crossing gender, an issue of democracy, of equal access to political life for all sections of the community. This was reflected by the chairpersonship of the working group by a male member of parliament.

The conference produced a number of working documents, statistics and papers which delve deeper into these issues. Please contact me if you wish to obtain copies @ Elaine.Byrne@ul.ie

Features & Opinion

Sex Sells and So do Flagons of Cider

BY MIKEY STAFFORD

There are certain things we as a nation take for granted; buses never run on time, our national sports teams flatter to deceive, the National Development Policy will never be completed, and yes, for good or ill, our teenage population drink and have sex. Therefore the findings in the Irish Times TNS mrbi youth poll from last week are for the most part non-astounding, predictable and consistent with previous such surveys. I know for my part that my dirtbag years were defined by too much of one and not enough of the other. Selah.

The fact that 60% of Irish 15-17 year olds partake of a few drinks at the weekend is hardly surprising and is not an indictment of our culture, the French legal age is 16 while Portugal doesn't even have one. We are known for our drinking culture and with 80% of all 15-24 year olds regularly drinking it is yet again proven that cliches are cliches for a reason.

'Many people my age are using drugs' was the statement with which 73% of 15-24 year olds concurred. Its wording is more loaded than the average 16 year old on a Friday night and it is no surprise that on a personal level the results are much more conservative. Only 39% have tried

marijuana, the most widely used illegal drug and if the middle-aged Baby Boomers who for the most part calculated and have reacted to this figure are at all surprised by this then one can only wonder what has happened to that generation which fuelled Ireland's cultural revolution of the 1960s and 70s.

Smoking of the legally acceptable kind provides some slightly more alarming figures as 42% of all young people smoke cigarettes, with 56% developing the habit before the age of 15. Smokers like myself who started after the age of 18 are a minute minority at just 4%. However Micheal Martin will find solace in the fact that 53% of 15-24 year olds agree with his proposed ban on smoking in workplaces from January.

Procreation, bumping uglies, Sex; 62% of 15-24 year olds have done it, while 25% of 15-17 year olds have popped their cherries. We've remained faithful to the long-term relationship with a quarter having only one sexual partner, while 3% have had more than 20 different sexual partners. The chaste out there who are horrified by these figures will harp back to that old chestnut; increased secularisation. Explain then how 86% of 15-24 year olds still believe in a deity and 44% go to mass, though 26% are coerced by their parents.

No, other figures in this survey give far



Bearing out the findings of the Irish Times youth poll?

more insight into the increased sexual activity of today's youth over those of yore. A staggering 44% of young people watch between 3 and 5 hours of TV a day. Pornography has been defined as anything that has no artistic merit and invokes sexual thoughts, it was the legendary Bill Hicks who hit the nail on the head when he said, "that sounds like every ad on television". Pepsi, Lifestyle Sports and even Centra are disciples of the mantra "Sex sells". Today we are relentlessly bombarded by sex through our televisions, computers, magazines and every other conceivable media outlet. It is an accepted thesis that Gay Byrne's Late Late Show introduced sex to Ireland in the 1960s and 70s.

Is it any surprise that 42% of young women are 'always trying to lose weight' when they spend hours admiring the flawless, airbrushed bodies of Beyonce Knowles and Britney Spears on MTV? This is compounded by the fact that 57% of young people prefer to watch sport on television than participate themselves. Maybe we should all get out there and have more sex, it's a terrific form of anaerobic exercise don't you know?

The Class Representative System Explained

How does it work???



Gemma Nolan

The Class Representative Council determines Students' Union policy and is subject only to the student body itself. There are seven standing committees of Council in order to increase efficiency e.g.: Welfare Committee. The Class Representative Council is the third most powerful body of the Students' Union after referenda and Union General Meetings.

The Class Rep Council consists of all Class Reps. and members of the SU Executive Council. The Council meetings are held every two weeks starting in Week 2 in Room 5 of the SU building. The majority of the work done by the Class Reps. involves going to the meetings, where it is their responsibility to speak on behalf of their class in any debates or discussions that take place,

and vote on the proposals. There are also certain rules and orders that must be adhered to, these are the "Standing Rules". At the end of Council business every week workshops will be held. These workshops are smaller groups of reps put together for discussion on certain issues. The groups will be well mixed to include 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and postgraduate students and an Executive member in each group. A note taker or facilitator should be appointed for each group and all documented feedback should be given to the Development Officer at the end of each workshop. The workshops will be issue based and training on a rotated basis. Feedback from workshops will be discussed and possibly could be implemented at council.

The most important thing to remember about the Class Representative system and how it works is that your participation is vital. If you do not participate then the system will inevitably break down. The Officers of the Students' Union are here to be told by you the students' what exactly it is you want done. By becoming a Class Rep you effectively become "The Class Voice" as you are responsible for the communication of information between your class and the Students' Union. The Class Rep represents his/her class, makes representation to the Students' Union and also to the lecturers and academia.

What are the benefits of becoming a Class Representative?

- o Participation - Getting involved to the fullest extent in college life.
- o Problem solving skills
- o Team Building - You will learn to be part of a team.
- o Learning how to navigate the SIGMA system.
- o Public speaking.
- o Communication skills - Within the classes, with the other reps., the ULSU and with the University.
- o Class Reps' learn how to have a "Hands On" approach in certain areas e.g.: when dealing with your class grievances.
- o Workshops - Workshops are held after the Class Reps Council is finished with council business.
- o Admin. Weekend - Here you will receive training for the year ahead.
- o Class Reps' Certificates of Recognition - All Class Reps. who have fulfilled their duty, as reps. for the year shall be rewarded with Certs signed by the Students' Union and the President of the University.

Class Reps Council Meetings

Venue: Room 5 Students' Union

Time: 6.00 p.m. - 7.30 p.m.

Week 2 Tuesday 30th September '03

Week 4 Tuesday 14th October '03

Week 6 Tuesday 28th October '03

Week 8 Tuesday 11th November '03

Week 10 Tuesday 25th November '03

Week 12 Tuesday 9th December '03

So if you are interested in participating contact the Class Reps Development Officer in the Students' Union upstairs in Room 117 or via email at gemma.nolan@ul.ie.

Opinion & Features

Mark O'Connor paves the way for his interview next issue

Editor's Note: This is what happened to Graduates Done Good: Mark is a man of many words. His interview was too long to put in, so he kindly wrote a piece to save my ass. Keep your eyes peeled next issue though

800 words. Maybe 1000 says the editor.
It's only 800 words, and 800 words is all I have, to take your heart ... to heaven and to hell.
Absailing down the Kate O'Brien Tower. I look in the window. I see a kid clad in cloth from the 'I society'. Total legend. Perpendicular to my black ass he grooves and mimes to the body snatched dead headed kids that litter the canteen. Silently, slowly, cloth clad he clicks and booms their 'we really shouldn't' heads off.
"Here man, have ye got any roach material there?"
No but I have a rotten apple. And fuck till time and times are done, the rotten apples of my head, the rotten apples in your gun.
The Shannon whispers different things to different folks. She can take your son away, if he must. She can give you a lift. She can give you a dinner. She can flood your fuckin house. She can be a bike lane all the way into the city centre. She has more children of Lir than you can shake a double lane bridge at.
She is hurting. She is drunk on toxins. If she had her way she could thrive, but man shits in her. Degrades her. Dams her. Diverts her. Builds on her. Thinks he can control her.
Come rain and gravity this winter. Then we'll see a mother scorned.

OK, you're cleared for take off. 3, 2,1.....2.....

Bitch McSlut - This just in on Sky news. We go over to our special correspondent Liar McFib for a live report from the University of Limerick. Liar can you colour in the details of this breaking story.
Liar: Thanks Bitch. Well I'm here in the University of Limerick, where a revelation has just occurred. It turns out that, the red bricks you see

behind me used to build each of these buildings on campus aren't in fact red brick as you and I would know them.
They are each of them in fact fabricated from HUMAN FAECES!!!
Bitch: Bricks made of shit? Good grief!
Liar: Indeed Bitch. One would have thought this story would have broken sooner. I mean, they are quite brown.
The implications of these 3 1/2 million bricks being made entirely of shit will surely be far reaching. The bricklayers certainly wont be pleased to hear that they were handling shit when they worked here. The students too are furious. Each of their beloved blocks, the entire main building, the library, the Schumann, Foundation, Schrodinger, Aeronautical, even the new PE building, all made of shit.
You can imagine it doesn't do much for the study concentration does it? In any case, here to discuss this with me are ULSU president Eoin O'Broin, UL president Dodger Rowner, President of Ireland Mary McAleese, President of usa George War Bush, and rock group the Presidents of the united states. Gentleman, your all very welcome.
Mary McAleese - Ah, excuse me, I'm a lady.
Liar: REALLY? You could have fooled me!
Dodger Rowner - Watch your tongue there my good man or I will have you dragged a while and throttled!
Liar - Of course, I'm sorry. Now Eoin O'Broin, what actions will you and the students be taking having heard this revelation?
Eoin - Well a Liar, ba mhaith liom caint as gaeilge mar a gheall ar an interview sin, agus nach mbéadh se ag taisteáil uait, well, tough titty. Is maith liom cáca milis, ach ní maith liom teachs déanta as cáca milis.



Beidh mise agus gach na studentínis ag troid big time faoi an revelation sin.
Liar - OK, well if you insist on talking gobbledygook, then I can't help that.
Eoin - Well I do have one question for Mr Bush. Brick shithouses aside, George, when are you going to get out of Iraq and stop using Shannon as a military base? Did you not get enough love when you were young?
Dubya - I am sent by god to do god's work! That's the propaganda I have shoved down the throats of my people and it's my story and I'm sticking to it. That means staying in Iraq until we kill everyone, till the whole country and region disintegrates into hell, till our entire army is FUBARed, till Tony Blair finishes kissing my ass, till I snort all the coke in Colombia from white house interns' breasts in the oval office thereby dwarfing Clinton's exploits, till...
Presidents of the united states - She's Lump!
Liar - OK, gentlemen, but the story at hand is that UL is made of shit. Does that mean that everyone in UL will be tarnished by this shitty hand they've been dealt? Anyone?
Doger Rowner - I went out to the hazel wood, because a fire was in me head...
Liar - Sorry Dodger, quoting Yeats won't get you out of this one.
Doger Rowner - OK, OK. Well, it's like this. We're well over the 800-word mark now, so to improve the

chances of this actually getting printed, I'm going to wind up as the hero.
"Hey Jude, don't make it bad; take a sad song and make it better" is something my good mate Paul McCartney used to say back in the 60's. I strongly believe this. Sure, UL may now and forever be a sad song, with its shitty bricks and controversial SAC (special area of conservation) annihilating 2-lane bridge building. But you can take that song, and MAKE IT BETTER!
There are enough resources in UL to do anything, but very little actually gets done. We have 50 m pools, video technology as good as Hollywood, a studio as good (ish) as Abbey Road, a few trees left, a great (ish) library, 4 or 5 grand pianos, and 10,000 amazing young lives! Think of the possibilities!
So let them say UL is made of shit! The whole world is made of shit! This is your shit! The students funky shit, let me hear you say it one time. No what will you do with that shit? AAAAWWWWW YYYYYEEEEAAHHH, Bring the motherfuckin beat back, we gonna kick it n cook some shit up live right here right now. Everybody in the UL brick shithouse say HoH!
Liar: Err, it seems the president has transformed into a Martin Luther King/gospel preacher rapper type head. I think we better leave it there. Back to you at the studio, Bitch... Bitch?
The sound of shagging is all that can be heard from the Sky studio. The camera stays on Liar McFib for a painful 10 seconds or so, while he has to hold the pose. Then he says live on TV...
Liar - That bitch is off shagging the cameraman again. Fuckin slag. OK fuck this. Sorry Rupert (Murdoch), you're on yer own mate. Right, who's on for going to the pub?
Everyone - Woohoooo!

Editor's Note #2
This piece is fictional and the views expressed are the author's own

3 U.L Girls Play Basketball in World University Games

The 22nd Universiade World University Games took place last month in Daegu, Korea. Amongst many of the U.L participants were three members of the womens basketball team. Dearbhla Breen, Maire Guiney, Amanda O' Regan represented a large U.L contingent on a panel of just twelve players. They flew out on the 14th of August to take part in a competition consisting of 19 teams, the team had high hopes but were generally perceived as outsiders. They were pooled against South Africa, Canada, Chinese Taipae and the hosts South Korea. The team's first game was a dream start against a Canadian side deemed to become the group's winner on arrival. The Irish played an aggressive, uptempo game which their opponents were unable to contend with and came out

victorious in a 75-68 win. Next up were The Republic Of South Africa where the team came out comprehensive winners defeating them by a score of 90-42. The hosts South Korea were to be Ireland's next opponents. Against strong home support, the Irish hurt the Koreans with intense defense and strong work inside to remain undefeated securing another win 88-72 and a guaranteed place in the final eight. The final group game against similarly undefeated Chinese Taipae was to be Ireland's first fall by a score of 81-98. The defeat had no effect on their top eight positioning and so they took their first well deserved rest day after four consecutive games.
The second phase of the competition saw Ireland pitted against teams of an

extremely high standard with reputable basketball world standings. Ireland faced an explosive uptempo Russian side in their first game of phase two. The Russians who went on to finish in third place defeated Ireland by a score of 72-48. Their second game was against the Czech Republic who had a similar record as the Irish. Ireland's poorest performance in the tournament saw them defeated 78-62. Ireland were now contending for positions 5-8 and played Serbia Montenegro in their next game. Ireland matched this experienced European side throughout the game but due to errors in the final minutes were defeated by a score of 70-88, unreflective of the games competitive nature. After a final rest day Ireland were to seek their revenge against the Czech Republic in a

play off for seventh and eight positions. A tired Irish side battled valiantly but were disappointed to loose out on seventh spot by a narrow defeat of 69-64. Eight games in ten days was a immensely demanding task and a top eight position was one to be proud of. This, the highest standing ever made by an Irish basketball team, insures that they will now automatically qualify for the next Universiade in 2005. Unfortunately, which came as a huge loss, Maire Tuiney was unable to play due to injury. Dearbhla Breen and Amanda O' Regan competed in all eight games and represented U.L. in an outstanding competitive manner. We wish the girls every future success in the coming season and hope to see them featuring in basketball news again soon! Well Done!!

Opinion & Features

University Of Limerick Access Office Now five years old!

BY MARK MANTEY

In January 1999, the University of Limerick Access Office was established



Fun to Learn

with the appointment of Access Officer, Paula Fitzell. In June of the same year the University introduced its policy for the promotion of participation in third level education of marginalized students in 3rd level education.

The Access Office co-ordinates all the activities that help young students from under-represented backgrounds to access University education and make their way successfully through college. The Access Office provides a number of initiatives from primary to secondary to third level to achieve this goal. The aim is to eventually encourage all the pupils targeted to apply directly to the University of Access Office as we offer a system of 'direct entry' whereby pupils who have been assessed as being from a marginalized background can avail of their own entry system to the University through the Access Office.

Over 175 students have entered the University of Limerick and are presently studying degree courses. The Access office offers two Access courses; the first requires students to have at least C3 in

three higher-level Leaving Cert subjects and at least D3 in three higher or ordinary level Leaving Cert. subjects including a pass in Maths, English and Irish or other language. If the students are chosen for the Access Course, they take part in a two-week intensive course before they begin their degree programme.

The second Access Course is thirteen weeks long and begins in February after the students receive their Leaving Cert results. The students have to have at least C3 in two higher level Leaving Cert subjects and at least D3 in four higher or ordinary level Leaving Cert subjects, including a pass in Maths, English and Irish or another language. The students then complete a 13-week Access course and on successful completion begin their degree course. Students should apply in November after their Leaving Cert.

60 second level students participated in summer activities at UL

The Access office Summer School took place in June this year, and consisted of a week long series of activities including 'mock trials' held by the law department, experiments organised by the various science departments, workshops, computer demonstration, sports and a variety of other educational and fun events. It involved sixty pupils from St. Endas, the Presentation and CBS, Sexton Street and Ard Scoil Mhuire. The summer School is run each year and is a culmination of the year's second level initiatives. For further information please contact John McDermott, the Access Office Second level Co-ordinator.

Volunteers needed for Access Office Shadowing Programme

The UL Access Office will be running a pilot initiative during this semester called 'Shadowing'. Shadowing Days are

designed to give second level students an idea and experience of the courses offered at the University. Shadowing entails transition year students from Limerick schools accompanying a UL student around campus attending lectures, labs, tutorials. Shadowing Days are offered to students, who because of their social/economic circumstances are



The Homework Club

traditionally under-represented in the UL student body.

We are currently recruiting eager and dedicated volunteers from a wide range of courses for the initiative. Without volunteers, the Shadowing Days cannot take place. You have something to offer and all its required is one day from schedule/timetable. Volunteers will be reward for their efforts through a CV reference and a certificate. If you require more information please e mail john.mcdermott@ul.ie or call 061-234122 if you can help out. Shadowing will be extremely rewarding for both the Transition Year Students and the volunteers.

Alongside this, the primary level coordinator would need assistance with volunteers for the homework club, and supervision of sport activities. For further information, please contact e-mail donal.oleary@ul.ie or call 061-

234187

UL Access office "Fun to Learn" Programme a great success

Over the last three years the Access Office has expanded their 'Fun to Learn' Programme. The programme works in conjunction with the various SCPs (School Completion Programmes) around the city. Originally we worked with the Rosbrien and Southill S CPs however the programme has expanded to include the St. Munchin's Family Resource Centre, the South City Youth Initiative and CBS Sexton Street. The Programme now caters for 135 primary school pupils each week, and Fun To Learn promotes participation in education through the medium of sport, providing educational, sporting and personal development elements. For further information please contact our Primary School Co-ordinator Donal O'Leary.

Do you want to go to College?

If the answer to the above is yes, then please drop in or contact the University of Limerick Access office for advice help. The Access office has been established to promote the participation of marginalized students in higher education and to ensure that ever student who takes part in their various initiatives reach their full potential. We hope to enhance the self-esteem of all the students involved and provide a supportive and helpful environment for all our targeted students to succeed. All you need is to be motivated and committed to your own education. The staff of the Access Office looks forward to meeting with you, so please call in or phone to speak to any of our friendly staff. We look forward to meeting you and offering any advice you need.

University of Limerick Access Office

SHADOWING



U'L make a Difference!

for futher information: 061 - 234122



View

An Focal's Arts and Ents Section

N ews

P reviews

R eviews

I nterviews

Arts View

New Direction for Daghdha

Many of you might not know this but UL has its very own Contemporary Dance Company right here on campus. Dance lecturer in the PE College Teresa Leahy and then dancer in residence Mary Nunnan set Daghdha up over fifteen years ago. Mary Nunnan then left daghdha to take up the position of course director of the MA in Dance Performance at UL. New York based Japanese Dance artist Yoshiko Chuma was next as Daghdha's artistic Director and for the last three years has built on daghdha's strong artistic policy touring in Ireland Europe and the US. But now its time for change and daghdha has chosen Klien to pilot that change, An focal catches up with him to get the low down on daghdha's dance high.

Sitting with his back to the patio doors in Daghdha's Dromroe office Michael Klien looks very much the dynamic young artist and entrepreneur. At just 30 years old this Austrian's rise and rise in the world of Contemporary dance has taken him from the Laban centre for movement and dance through the arts scene in London and back to mainland Europe to work for William Forsyth in Ballet Frankfurt and has now brought him to Limerick to take over as artistic director of Daghdha Dance company. He graduated with BA Hon from Laban and is currently studying for his PhD part time from Nottingham Trent. While still a student at Laban he was involved in a student initiative called Barriedale Operahouse (www.barriedale-operahouse.com). Barriedale quickly grew to be a highly successful touring company and upon graduation Klien and his fellow conspirators went straight into



Members of Daghdha Dance Company

Dance and in turn to UL? Klien by now on his second cup of Coffey shrugs "I see daghdha in UL as being very much in a protected environment and that's perfect to conduct experiments on social structure, UL is a micro cosmos and I hope to launch a very special project in conjunction with the Arts Office in March 2004 that is going to be very student specific" he goes on to explain that while the projects exact details are still top secret that it will be a unique opportunity for UL students to part take in an experiment on choreographing social structure. When questioned on his thoughts on UL students and the campus in general he replies that the €2.90 special in the E-block restaurant is his favourite thing. He elaborates to say that he sees UL as lacking core diversity that its arts scene is small and possibly due to the presence of so many engineering and computer students that it lacks an experimental spirit present in so many other university communities. Despite this lacking though Daghdha has thrived here and nestled between the Irish World Music Centre and the MA in Contemporary dance it has been brought to a point where it is ready to spread its wings. And what of Daghdha's future plans? In June 2004 Daghdha is due to move to a new premises in St John of the Cross Church in the city centre. The company is to take up residence in the church and move most of its operations to the church and office space near by. This marks a new page in Daghdha's development, taking it out of its home of 15 years and establishing its self in an often-inhospitable territory, what are his hopes for this move? "I feel that broadening Daghdha's horizons is going to be key to Daghdha's future artistic policy. I hope that this move will open up the cities potential as well as Daghdha's, I see it as being an opportunity to bridge the divide between the university and the city and create a focal point for an arts explosion within the city" To this end he has been working closely with Sean Taylor of Limerick College of Art and Design and Frankfurt based Dramaturge Steve Valk.

The first Daghdha production under Klien will be a weekend of stories and dance on December 13th and 14th it will feature showings of both Einem and Duplex Klein's work with Ballet Frankfurt a new choreography featuring Italian dancer Davide Terlingo and Irish Dancer Colin Dunne. It will also have a version of "The Dying Swan" as well as pieces from last years MA students. The weekend will be free to all and seasonal refreshments will be provided.

So it seems its full steam ahead fro Daghdha Dance Company and An Focal wishes both Daghdha and Michael Klien the best of luck with their endeavours



Michael Klien - Sorry girls, he's taken!

establishing Barriedale as a business and branching out into a multi media production company and providing an umbrella organisation for other artists. After Barriedale Klien returned to mainland Europe to take up a position working along side legendary choreographer William Forsythe with Ballet Frankfurt.

Klien is not a dancer. He's a choreographer. He deals with "order and disorder, the arrangement of things". His work is very much based multi-media his last two works with ballet Frankfurt were algorithmically generated sequences where a computer decides the actions of the dancers and the shape of the performance. His belief is that choreography is not just the realm of the physical but also the scientific and psychological "choreography can happen in the way you turn on and off household equipment". He hopes to see choreography evolve as a discipline of its own and to this end has established an online web forum dealing solely with choreography. Choreograph. Net is now just over 1 year old and has 275 members contributing to the 1097 posts on 271 threads.

So what does this visionist hope to bring to Daghdha

Jack L to play Belltable

Fresh from celebrating its record-breaking six-week run in Spirit, Dublin, "Chez Jack L" is heading for a two night run at Limerick's Belltable Arts Centre on Oct. 8th & 9th.

Jack L launches into another season with his newest and critically acclaimed show and a fresher rejuvenated sense of purpose. One of Ireland's most unique singer-songwriters - Jack L - will host this exciting Parisian-style show "Chez Jack L", a celebration of the late Jacques Brel's 25th Anniversary.



Jack L is coming to the Belltable

Jack L is one of Ireland's best-known and best-loved performers with an army of dedicated fans. His live shows are electric and his records all reach multi-platinum status. His love for all things Brel is well documented and just like Brel, he is a timid soul who comes to life on stage.

The excitement and live energy of Brel's work captured the imagination of the young Jack L and has proved to be a lasting inspiration. This love and respect for Brel has both fuelled Jack's remarkable live performances and resulted in the recording of the album Wax, recorded live in the legendary and now defunct Da Club.

With both Jackie and Amsterdam still performed regularly at his own shows, the raunchy world of Brel will be celebrated in a spirit of joy, resulting in pure, unadulterated...entertainment.

Originally from Athy, Co. Kildare, Jack Lukeman spent his formative years experimenting with his voice. His apprenticeship as a mechanic and singer combined to allow him to perfect his vocal technique. After work he would sing out into the corners of the empty garages where he could fill the huge spaces with his haunting, soaring voice.

A trip to Germany with art band Serious Women resulted in a drunken night with future members of the Black Romantics. A discussion led to a summer of madness and Jack cut an album with The Black Romantics entitled "Wax", based mainly on the works of Belgian singer Jacques Brel. It earned Jack glowing reviews and gave an indication of things to come.

"Chez Jack L" - the show will showcase the vocal talents and presence of a performer who has drawn comparisons with Frank Sinatra, Scott Walker Jim Morrison and Tom Waits.

Two nights only Wed. Oct. 8th & Thurs. Oct. 9th
Tickets @ €20/€18 are now on sale at Belltable Box Office @ 061 319 866

BELLTABLE

I n t e r V i e w

Mundy Speaks - and plays Jean Monnet Wednesday Wk2

A busy Mundy just about managed to squeeze in a few minutes to talk to me while preparing for a Bob Dylan tribute concert for AIDS charities in Africa, to be held in Vicar Street. He had just finished his soundcheck for the gig, where he shared the bill with the Wall brothers, Nina Hynes, Ron Sexsmith and Gerry Fish, when I spoke to him.

Once touted the "next big thing" in the mid-nineties, Mundy has experienced both the highs and lows of the music industry since then. After signing to a major label, releasing his debut album "Jellylegs" in 1996, and with the hit "To you I bestow" appearing on the "Romeo and Juliet" soundtrack, one could have been forgiven for thinking the future was paved with gold for the Offaly man. "Jellylegs" went on to sell 50,000 copies but it was while working on the follow up album that things began to go awry. Unfortunately, the increasingly common record company problems ensued, leaving Mundy stranded with a second album almost put to bed and no record company to release it. There followed a period of soul searching, travelling and gigging which finally saw the release of a new album in April 2002 - '24 Star Hotel' on his own label, Camcor Recordings. This album has continued to seep into the Irish psyche over the last year with immediate hits like 'July' and 'Mexico' becoming summer anthems, while leaving room f

Witnness 2002 saw him perform his newly released collection of songs to a packed tent and he said that's really when his career took off again. The crowd's reaction was amazing and it snowballed from there, culminating he said, with this year's Witnness

when he played the main stage and he felt that all the work over the past few years had paid off. With Ireland experiencing one of the hottest summers in years, it was the perfect setting for the effervescent 'July' to be played loud and clear in the scorching sun.

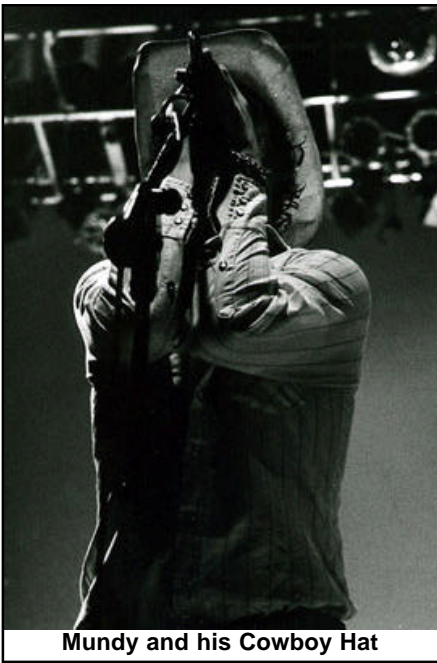
Currently working on a follow up album, which he's hoping to release in the New Year, possibly around March, I asked him if we could expect a different sound on the new tracks. He replied that he thinks the next album will have a different feel to it as he's learned a lot over the last couple of years and is now "finding his feet in the studio". With his



upcoming gig in Limerick he said he will be showcasing a "bunch of new songs" as well as playing some of the favourites.

It may seem like the stuff of dreams to be a performer and I asked him if he felt lucky to be doing what he does for a living; singing, writing and playing music. His answer was a resounding yes, he considers it "a gift to be able to do it" and said that "I'd be a completely different person if I couldn't play the guitar", it's obviously an indelible part of who he is.

Though going it alone since the troubles with Sony, Mundy recognises that to make it big he's going to need some financial



Mundy and his Cowboy Hat

backing and admitted "I'll need some sort of input from a major company, not on an artistic level but financially" to make it abroad. Asked whether he'd like the success Damien Rice is currently experiencing in the US, with widespread exposure on TV and radio, it was an instant yes though he quickly remarked that its not that he wants to have the same career as Damien. He's aware that, though the 'Romeo and Juliet' opened doors for him over there, it was a long time ago and "there's a lot of work to be done with interviews and promoting", to remind US audiences of who he is.

When I asked what music is currently spinning on his personal playlist he mentioned Stina Nordenstam, Mazzy Star and The Mary Janes, an eclectic mix. Of the gigs he's played, (and he's toured with some big names - David Gray, Van Morrison and Neil Young), no one in particular stood out in his mind as the best. Though obviously Ireland is his preferred playground, an acoustic set he played in Boston last March and some of the gigs he has played in France would feature as some of his favourite overseas experiences.

Plans for the future included in the short term "learning lots of Bob Dylan songs" for the gig that night and also an upcoming tour of Australia with The Frames, which he's really looking forward to. Before we finished up I cheekily asked - "Do you think you have a 'gorgeous Levi ass'?", referencing a line from 'July', to which he replied, "Depending on how much I stay in, sometimes it's cute".

thanks to LEG for permission to use the interview

MEAS Gigs in the Monnet - the lowdown

MEAS (Mature Enjoyment of Alcohol in Society Limited), Eightball Promotions & Media (EPM) and the Students' Unions of University College Cork (UCC) and the University of Limerick (UL) are delighted to announce MEASevents. MEASevents is host to a series of 19 gigs from October 1st, 2003 featuring the cream of Irish artists and comedians and is aimed at promoting the responsible use of alcohol.

The gigs will be offered at a reduced price and will take place at both UCC and UL over the 10-week period up to Christmas. This series of gigs will kick off with Mundy in UL's Jean Monnet Theatre on October 1st and finish with the mighty Frames on December 9th.

MEAS

The Mature Enjoyment of Alcohol in Society Limited (working title MEAS) was established in January 2003 to promote social responsibility among producers, marketers, distributors and retailers of alcohol and in partnership with Government and other appropriate bodies, to promote responsible drinking amongst those who choose to drink alcohol. Further information in relation to the organisation can be obtained at www.meas.ie or by calling 01 6114811. MEAS member companies are Beamish & Crawford plc, C&C Group plc, Drinks Industry Group of Ireland, Guinness UDV, Heineken Ireland, Irish Distillers Group, Licensed Vintners Association, Tennents Ireland, Vintners' Federation of Ireland.

Eightball Promotions & Media

Eightball Promotions & Media is a Limerick based company committed to providing quality entertainment and publications. By putting on events featuring the best in both live music and DJs, EPM has previously brought artists of the calibre of The Stereo MCs, The Frames, Damien Rice, Mundy and many others to the city.

Through their club nights, their guest DJs have included Groove Armada's Andy Cato, Avalanches' DJ Dexter, Nightmares On Wax's DJ Ease and James Lavelle, while also promoting local and Irish DJs.

EPM is also responsible for the The Limerick Event Guide, a fortnightly publication keeping the city's residents up to date on what's happening on their doorstep.

Dot.Comedy Club

The Dot.Comedy Club started three years ago in the modest environment of the University of Limerick Scholar's Club, before moving into Limerick city in September, 2002. Welcoming acts to Dolan's Warehouse like Perrier Award Winners Tommy Tiernan & Daniel Kitson, and Perrier Nominees Ed Byrne, Adam Hills, Flight Of The Concorde, Phil Kaye & Jason Byrne along with all the top Irish comedians, Dot.Comedy quickly became an essential night out. Having since branched into Shannon and Portlaoise, the Dot.Comedy crew have plans to further expand over the next year.

MEASevents is being undertaken on foot of a series of successful gigs staged by EPM at UL over the last three years. These gigs were originally initiated in response to concerns by students in relation to the limited availability of good entertainment options on campus. The series of gigs was so successful, and the level of interest generated amongst the students so great, that EPM decided to join forces with the Limerick based 'Dot.Comedy Club' to put together their best line up to date - and what a line up!

Fionnuala Sheehan, Chief Executive Officer of MEAS commented: "MEAS is pleased to be the premier sponsor of MEASevents. MEAS, as an organisation, is committed to undertaking and supporting initiatives that

encourage moderation in the consumption of alcohol and discourage excessive and high risk drinking. MEASevents builds on the MEAS/USI "Respect Alcohol, Respect Yourself" campaign launched in April of this year on all campuses throughout the country and continued in September during 'Freshers Week'. We are especially pleased that the MEASevents initiative, which encourages personal responsibility, is being undertaken by third level students, for third level students".

David O'Donovan and Keith Piggott, respectively of EPM and Dot.Comedy Club' said: "It's great to be able to give students a broad range of entertainment on campus. We've been doing these types of shows for a few years and they've proved to be the ones that people remember and talk about for a long time. With the support of MEAS, we've been able to bring UCC and UL students the best live music and comedy line-ups of any college in the country. To stage them in the campus environment which artists and audiences enjoy so much is an added bonus. It really is an ideal opportunity to get out a message about respecting alcohol and respecting yourself to students."

Ms Sheehan commended the students involved for undertaking this important initiative and went on to say that 'socialising is an important, and very positive, aspect of University life. This new and exciting initiative helps to get across the message: enjoy a drink, no problem, but binge drinking can have serious personal and societal consequences'.

Ms Sheehan concluded: "This initiative is a further step in a long haul to change the image of alcohol and the culture of excess around alcohol in Ireland. Getting drunk should be as socially unacceptable as drink-driving".

Upcomings

Here are some acts, shows and sundry interesting things that are happening around and about over the next fortnight. If you've got something going on that should be included, email sucommunication@ul.ie

ACT	VENUE
SEPTEMBER	
29 Seán Tyrell, Kevin Glackin, Ronan Browne	Dolan's
OCTOBER	
1 DOT COMedy club - Glen Wool (Canada)	Dolan's
2 Snow Patrol	Dolan's
3 The Sawdoctors	Dolan's
4 (AMC) The Hells, Gin Palace, The Dirty	The Highstool
4 Jerry Fish & The Mudbug Club	Dolan's
7 Kamiko CD launch w Atrophy, Hatch 77 & DJ Dolans	
6.7.8 Jon Kenny "I'm Not Says I, I'm Fine!"	Concert Hall
8 DOT COMedy club - Joe Rooney (Fr Ted etc)	Dolan's
8. 9 Jack L - Chez Jack	Belltable
9 (AMC) American Heritage, Foe , Art Of Burning Water	The Highstool
10 (AMC) Dudley Corporation (Album Launch)	The Highstool
10 The Undertones	Dolan's
11 Luka Bloom	Dolan's

For further info, check out www.theamc.net, www.dolans.ie, www.uch.ie or visit the city and check out the posters!

Where's Ben?

The Journey Begins...



Take Off...

Follow the adventures of the crazy garden gnome on his travels. There's be a new photo in each edition of An Focal. Isn't he cute though?

Nersh



The Scholars Club

Week 2 Ents

Monday
Dj John Kelly 8pm

Tuesday
Battle of the bands 9pm
watch out for the comedy club returning week 3

Wednesday
Champion League Stuttgart Vs Man UTD
DJ crawls house in the main BAR 8pm

Thursday
Live Band in the MAIN BAR 9pm

Friday
Féili and Moleman UL's finest
Hungry Hour!! ???? :)
Complementary Finger food 6-7pm

Sun
Breakfast Club
Chill out with comfy couches, candles and the Sunday Papers.
Breakfast served from 12 – 4

An Phluais is available Free of Charge for Class parties. Clubs and Soc's events. 21+ parties etc



The Scholars Club

Week 3 Ents

Monday
Dj John Kelly 8pm

Tuesday
Dj John Kelly 8pm
the comedy club is BACK

Wednesday
DJ crawls house in the main BAR 8pm
And look out for the christmas swimmers club

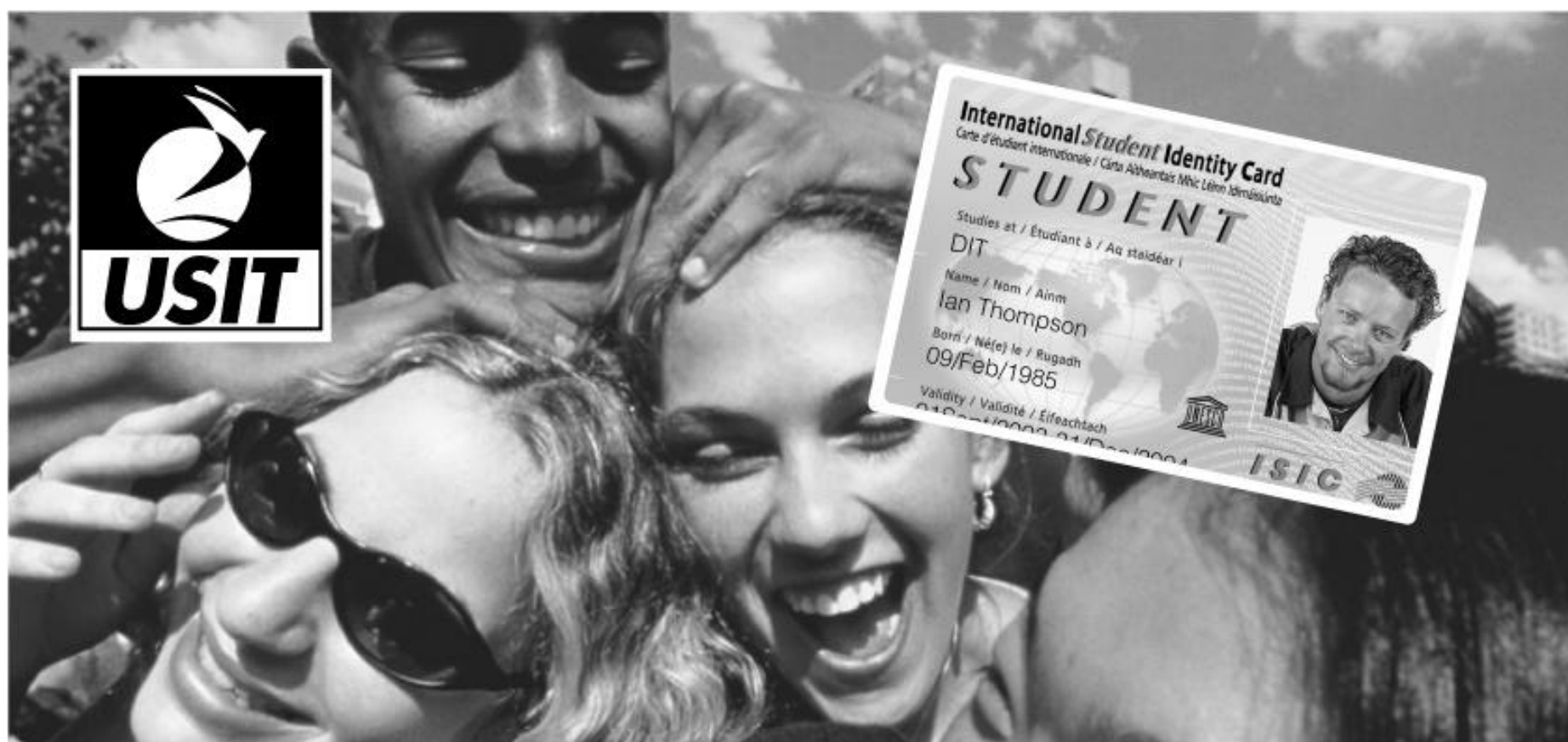
Thursday
Live Band in the MAIN BAR 9pm

Friday
"Deep Sounds" Chill out in the Main Bar from 8pm
Hungry Hour!! ???? :)
Complementary Finger food 6-7pm

Sun
Breakfast Club
Chill out with comfy couches, candles and the Sunday Papers.
Breakfast served from 12 – 4

An Phluais is available Free of Charge for Class parties. Clubs and Soc's events. 21+ parties etc

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Photo View

A quick look at the last two weeks in photographs



Mark, Niall, Eimear, Sharon & Dennis at the Trinity Rooms



UL American Football Club on show



Browsing the poster sale in the courtyard



UL Riders - How did they get that scooter in?



Carmel, Lorraine and Sarah - they're shy!



Freshers' Ball crowds



Dave & Angela (aww)



Clubs and Socs Admin Day, eh?



Michelle, Michael and some balloons



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Photo View




Niamh, Sinéad & Michelle at the Freshers' Ball



SVP get the free pens out on Clubs & Socs Days

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Mary and some strangers she found from DIT SU



All Smiles after Clubs & Socs Admin Days



UL Men's Gaelic Club are shy about the silver

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Students Union

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entertainment at
The Stables Club



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Tues Karaoke Nite
Wed BAND: Playtoh
Thu BAND: The Firm
Fri Video Jukebox
Pool tables Fri-Sun

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have completed your
application at
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www.clubs.ul.ie
- o -

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to avail of club facilities

WEEK 3 (Oct 6th - Oct 12th)
Mon Music Soc Open Mic
Tues Karaoke Night
Wed BAND: Dreamworld
Thu Noel McLoughlin
Fri Video Jukebox
Pool tables Fri-Sun

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Week 2 & Week 3 Ents

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Music View

Album Reviews

MUSE - ABSOLUTION



A leopard can change its spots, particularly if they're only made from glitter and felt, stitched to a pair of its mum's old curtains and tied round its neck with a velvet-substitute rope. See, Muse are prog as fuck, with bells on. Gleaming church bells at that compared to the relative Christmas cracker hand-chimes of yesteryear (as air-rattling as they may have seemed at the time). But prog ain't the creature it used to be, which is good news for all involved. Though in amongst the current rising tide of a progressive zeitgeist Muse certainly have the pointiest figurative hat of the lot.

With this record they soar and wail and crash through walls, draw pictures in the sky and probably guffaw hugely, aware of the ridiculous hoofing trail they're finally leaving in their wake. It's the sound of them banging their heads continuously on the roof of the Sistine Chapel. It is grand and opulent and seemingly effortless. It is not, as prog has found itself ambassador for previously, infuriatingly pointless self-aggrandisation with a lack of focus, character or credibility. Looking back at their career timeline, it is also a victory against themselves as well as the rest.

Where debut album 'Showbiz' earned Radiohead comparisons by the wheelbarrow and marked them out as reasonably accomplished angst-ridden teens, 'Origin of Symmetry' knocked that idea down stone dead, sucked out its life and took over the frame. It became awesome in its mechanical efficiency, but deficient in convincing us it was anything other than a hulking machine. But the body it seems hasn't merely been lying dormant all this time.

Fighting back with 'Absolution', the heart's beating again, slowly but solidly, and it's the epic tussle with the remaining organs that make up the record's chronology. This is the sound of emotions reuniting, of making sense of the power they've gained, of a boundless imagined reality and of them winning. The oppressive totalitarian march of 'Apocalypse Please' opens the album in what becomes typically trussed-up form for them, Matt Bellamy bellowing "declaaaaare this an emergency, come on and spreeeeead a sense of urgency" like Freddie Mercury in a tightly pressed uniform. It's still got a hold of them at this point, but the seams are beginning to burst. This is massive.

'Time Is Running Out' is probably the most concise routing of ideas they've emitted so far, but it's at near title track 'Sing For Absolution' when things really begin to grow and move fluidly of their own accord. A creeping ballad with an eruption beneath, it's Jeff Buckley praying for his soul to be saved amongst burning rubble. An idea they develop to an even greater, more serene effect on 'Blackout'. There is Phantom of the Opera style piano tumbling all over the likes of 'Butterflies & Hurricanes', tense strings, subtle electronic flutterings, preposterous turns, overzealous vocals, and an unstoppable, insatiable intensity. But far from isolating you with indulgence, they've thrown you in the middle. Muse just went 3D.

Rating: ****

STARSAILOR - SILENCE IS EASY



An album of revelation both musically and personally. That's what it says on the tin, but as we all know from the packers at Tesco's, when you buy a tin of beans, beans are not always what you get. That architects of new musical success, the NME tip the album to knock Coldplay from their carefully crafted pedestal is even more remarkable.

Far from being the unscheduled flight into fresh territories, 'Silence Is Easy' is pretty much more of the same. And if 'more of the same' in this context meant more in the way of shiny melodic brilliance, then this inevitable duplication would obviously be more than a little palatable. Unfortunately, it doesn't.

With the exception of the marvellously thumping Phil Spector produced title track, 'Silence Is Easy' and the delicate yet momentous, 'White Dove' and 'Born Again', the album shows the Chorley Four approaching maturity with much the same sluggish compliance that a pensioner approaches Parkinson's Disease; a condition in which wretchedness and weariness is worn like a badge of honour.

It's not without its life-affirming moments, however. The frantic beating pulse of album opener, 'Music Was Saved' is as delightful as it is unpredictable and the disco-inferno that is 'Four To The Floor' - whilst a little spurious and disingenuous - is a likeable enough alternative to the increasingly tired Tim and Jeff Buckleyism's.

Confessional, confrontational and swathed in the sticky bandages of healing, it's an album that simply implores to be understood: Who am I? What is my place in the world? Who the hell are you to tell me otherwise? James Walsh pleads like the man that no one is listening to, to stop listening, like the man no one notices to stop looking at him. At best, it's a fanfare for the malcontent, at worst, the arrogant posturing of a self-styled outsider. And though touching at times, its tears are traded all too cheerfully.

If Spector has chosen to re-work the score to the remainder of the tracks on this album, the result could have been something special. As it is, it's really no Coldplay, so stick with them.

Rating: ***

GIVEAMANAKICK - IS IT OK TO BE LOUD, JESUS?



The first long player by Limericks Giveamankick is a mighty pummelling of a debut. If I'd not seen them in the flesh I'd never have guessed that there's only two of them - Steven on Vocals and Guitar and Keith on Drums.

So what's the story on the minimalist line up? Well the fact is there'd probably be no room for another instrument on this record so maybe the lads decided the rider would go further split fewer ways.

Steve Ryan has the knack of squeezing every last drop of sound out of his guitar so that you very quickly forget there's no bass player present. He literally covers all the bases (arf arf). Add to that the human kango hammer that is Keith Lawlor driving the whole thing on and pretty much every frequency in the spectrum becomes occupied territory. The collection of 10 songs here brims over with energy, speed and power but never has to solely rely on any of those admiral qualities to carry it.

This is a very intelligent, well rounded and proportioned record by two men who know exactly what they want to say and how to say it thank you very much.

From the opening screech of 'Ger Canning' they Grind, groove, gnash and gnarl their way through this album - leaving the "quiet bit/loud bit/another quiet bit/another loud bit" beginners guide to noisecore -for less inspired bands to leaf through.

There's occasional nods toward Babyteeth-era Therapy? ('Say no to Sports' and the excellent use of link samples) but I could tell you that other bits of this record reminded me of names as diverse as Frank Black, Sepultura, Jesus Lizard and Presidents of the USA and I'd still be only cross referencing with my own record collection and leaving you no wiser as to why you need to own this record.

Go buy itnow kid!!! If you're not with them -you're against them.

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week	08	nov 12	damien dempsey
week	09	nov 19	jason byrne
week	10	nov 26	david kitt
week	11	dec 03	adam hills
week	12	dec 08	the frames
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Film View

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO



How does Robert Rodriguez sleep at night? I don't mean that in the rhetorical sense-the way that you would ask it of an evildoer like Saddam Hussein or Michael Bay; I literally want to know how the seemingly inexhaustible filmmaker is able to wind himself down in order to get a little bit of rest. This is a man who is so bursting with energy that he has not only completed four feature films in the last 2 1/2 years, but who has made them as close to single-handedly as it is possible to do with a major-studio film. On "Once Upon a Time in Mexico", his latest film, for example, he is listed in the credits with no less than ten separate jobs (including writing, producing, directing, editing, scoring and cinematography) and there are probably a few other chores that he didn't list as well. This might seem like an impossible feat until you actually meet the guy and discover that his enthusiasm seems to have no bounds whatsoever-if the East Coast could have figured out a way to hook him up to some kind of generator, the recent blackout would have never occurred.

That he has the energy to perform so many jobs on so many movies in such a short period of time isn't surprising-what is surprising is that the films themselves are anything but cheapo rush-jobs. The three "Spy Kids" movies have all been delights that all but exploded off the screen with good cheer and boundless creativity and made you wish that children's movies could have been that exciting when you were a kid. Now, returning to the loose "Mariachi" series that he originally made his name with (in his 1993 debut "El Mariachi" and the 1995 follow-up "Desperado") and freed from the constraints of having to work in a family-friendly environment, "Once Upon a Time in Mexico" shows Rodriguez pushing the already-startling levels of goofy hyper-violence that he demonstrated in the earlier films (as well as in "From Dusk Til Dawn") to almost surreal heights. The resulting film may well prove to be too much for some people (who will look at it as the ultimate proof of the concept of "too much of a good thing") but after three months of relentlessly cynical, hard-sell sequels, the cheerful goofiness of the film is like a blast of fresh air.

To recount the plot of the film is an exercise in futility; this is the kind of movie where the plot is pretty much incomprehensible even before everyone starts double-crossing each other. As near as I can tell, a drug cartel led by the evil Barillo (Willem Dafoe) is plotting to assassinate the president of Mexico (Pedro Amerndariz) during the annual

Day of the Dead celebration with the aid of the evil General Marquez (Gerardo Vigil). A rogue CIA agent, Sands (Johnny Depp), decides (for ulterior reasons) to hire a killer of his own to foil the attempt and only one will do-the legendary El Mariachi (Antonio Banderas), whose bag of tricks includes a guitar equipped with a sawed-off shotgun. Formerly the best mariachi and gunslinger in the country, El (yes, they call him "El") disappeared after the death of his beloved wife Carolina (Salma Hayek, in a brief flashback appearance) and he initially refuses Sands' offer until he changes his mind for personal reasons. There are other characters involved as well, including a sexy Mexican cop (Eva Mendes) who seems to be in bed (in every sense of the word) with Sands, a dedicated FBI agent (Ruben Blades), El's trusted fellow mariachi (Enrique Iglesias and Marco Leonardi), a cartel lieutenant who desperately wants to escape the life (Mickey Rourke) and a sleazy henchman (Danny Trejo) who never met a man that he didn't stab in the back-figuratively and literally.

Of course, one doesn't go to a film like "Once Upon a Time in Mexico" for a well-structured plot (or narrative continuity either; this has as much connection with "Desperado" as that film did with "El Mariachi"-in other words, none). One goes to a movie like this for the Good Parts-the bits of action and excitement that set tongues a-wagging and eyes a-popping. What Rodriguez has given us is a film that seems to consist almost entirely of Good Parts-from the opening shootout to a gun battle in a church that would leave even John Woo green with envy. For me, the high-point is definitely an astounding sequence in which El and Carolina, who have been handcuffed together, escape a machine-gun ambush by hurtling themselves down the sides of a tall building-it is such a little masterpiece of filmmaking (especially the whiplash editing) that you just sit back with a goofy smile and drink it all in while realizing that this, not the boring blowhard spectacles of "Bad Boys II" or "Full Throttle", is what all real action films should be like.

One of the bigger surprises of the film is just how effective the performance by Antonio Banderas is. With every other element of the film being pushed to absurd levels, it would have been tempting to turn El into a cartoon as well. However, Banderas correctly understands that the best way to underscore the humour of the role is to do what Clint Eastwood did in the similarly goofy Sergio Leone spaghetti westerns-play the role absolutely straight and let the comedy emerge from the deadpan attitude. Not only does it make his material seem funnier but it allows him to come across as a contrast to the more out-there performances from people like Dafoe and Rourke (who gets another brief chance to display what a canny and relaxed actor he has become in recent years) and the more overtly sexy turns from Hayek (who has never looked hotter than here), Mendes (who plays what would have been called the "Salma Hayek role" five years ago) and pop-star Iglesias.

However, despite his efforts, the show is stolen by Johnny Depp in a performance so flamboyantly strange that it almost makes his recent turn in "Pirates of the Caribbean" seem restrained by comparison. Here, he is clearly having a blast playing a character so amoral that at one point he kills a cook who has made an especially tasty pork dish-simply to "restore the balance"-and even indulges in his freakier side by changing his appearance and manner in every single scene that he appears in. (At one point, he even pulls off a funny impression of close pal Marlon Brando for no apparent reason.) And yet, despite the calculated absurdity of the performance, it is impossible to look at Depp's work without at least admiring his willingness to go so completely for broke-even towards the end, when he gets into at least two gunfights despite having had both of his eyeballs ripped out (don't ask), he does so with a panache that seems, under the circumstances, to be almost heroic.

RATING:



THE ITALIAN JOB



To its credit, "The Italian Job" at least feels less like the big-budget, small-brained remake so many of us feared it would be. However, there are times - especially in the final third - when this caper thriller feels less like a feature film and more like an extended automobile commercial (for Mini Coopers, featured extensively throughout the film). Also, it's lacking the sense of whimsy that was so plentiful in the 1969 original. Still, it is a little bit fun, and it moves quickly enough that the huge plot holes and missing transition scenes are not as glaring as they might otherwise be. Mark Wahlberg stars as Charlie Croker (the role originally played by Michael Caine). He's the leader of a group of thieves who manages to pull off a daring daytime heist of gold bars in Venice. But they are then betrayed by one of their own, Steve Frezelli (Edward Norton), who shoots and kills their mentor, John Bridger (Donald Sutherland), and leaves the rest of the crew for dead. A year later, Steve has resurfaced in Hollywood - as has Charlie, who's still set on revenge. To that end, he's recruited Bridger's daughter, Stella (Charlize Theron), to join them. And she's got her own score to settle with Steve.

To recover their ill-gotten booty, they've got to get past Steve's security systems and allow enough time to escape. So computer wiz Lyle (Seth Green) hacks into L.A.'s traffic systems to initiate a series of roadblocks.

Director F. Gary Gray, who, unlike some of his filmmaking brethren, knows when to keep the camera moving and when to keep it static, nicely paces the film. The finale features one of the better car-chase scenes of late (especially compared to the jittery, video-game-style mayhem in "The Matrix Reloaded").

But the dialogue is not as crisp as it could be. And Wahlberg is a little bland. He and the considerably more charismatic Theron also lack chemistry. On the supporting side, Green manages to steal a few scenes, as does Jason Statham, as the getaway driver. Sadly, the film also features one of Norton's flatter performances; Gray doesn't really coax much out of him, save a little oiliness.

RATING:



MATCHSTICK MEN



Ridley Scott is probably best known as a director who delivers big epic action movies, dipping into the sweeping vistas of outer space and history with stunning visuals and gritty excitement. But with Matchstick Men, he reminds everyone that he's just as good delivering something a little bit more low key.

Featuring Nicolas Cage as an obsessive compulsive, chain-smoking, germ a-phobic, agoraphobic con artist named Roy, Matchstick Men enters his life just when things are falling apart. His mental issues are getting worse, he's just found out he has a teenage daughter, and with his protégé Frank (Sam Rockwell), Roy is dead in the middle of planning the biggest, most important heist of his life. Roy has never really been at peace with what he does for a living. He steals from the weak, the poor, the old, and the depressed. On a good day he only barely manages to avoid blowing his brains out because he's afraid of the kind of mess it would make on his carpet. But then he invites his newly discovered fourteen-year-old daughter into his life and things begin to change. At first he's afraid of corrupting her, but soon that's forgotten as he begins bringing her into his world of lies and cons. She's a natural and soon she's working beside him as a father daughter team.

Nic Cage is again playing a guy with a lot of weird quirks and ticks. If he keeps this up he's going to be typecast as a perennial Felix Unger. But beyond the oddities and obsessions, he does some heavy hitting in the realm of subtlety as he deftly brings out the desperate, emotional side of what could have been just another amusing caricature. Beside him, Sam Rockwell does what he does best... play a wildly charismatic supporting role. His character reminds me a lot of what he did with Chuck

Film View

Barris in *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*, only toned down and given a more genuine smile. Using a pseudo-retro look, for no reason other than it gives the movie a striking style; Scott successfully makes heroes out of his two small time grifters. Jumping to and from various characters, the camera leaps in on the smallest of minutiae to highlight Cage's mental dementia. This adds a sort of charge to the personal dynamic between the movie's characters and affably approximates Roy's somewhat distorted world view. But the beauty of *Matchstick Men* is that after awhile you forget it's a gimmicky of con movie and care only about the growing relationship between Roy and his daughter Angela, played by the extremely talented Alison Lohman. Sure, the crimes are cute and funny and maybe in their own way sad. They also serve as a catalyst for much of the tragedy and angst in Roy's life. Without a doubt though, Ridley's quirky drama is at its best as an engrossing character study in which we get to revel in a blossoming relationship between father and daughter. As Ridley brings things to a head, personal involvement with his characters only grows more severe. You care about these people and all the time you have by then, invested in them. Sadly, that's when *Matchstick Men* kicks its audience in the face with an ill-conceived plot twist. Trick endings can work, not just to shock the audience, but also to propel both character and story further. But *Matchstick* so successfully engulfs viewers in the emotion and heart-wrenching consequences of its character's actions that the kitschy con-man ending will undoubtedly leave audiences feeling cheated and abused. Ridley tacks on a sort of follow-up, which struggles to convince us that kicking Roy and us in the face just when we might have cared most, was in the long run a good thing. Unfortunately, a half-hearted attempt at a happy ending just doesn't replace the good that could have been accomplished with a resolution more worthy of *Matchstick's* deserving characters.

RATING: ★★☆☆

UNDERWORLD



"Underworld" is a novel idea - essentially Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" (at least the MTV-inspired version of it) trussed up in horror trappings and given a "Matrix"-like spin. But that set-up can only take it so far. Despite the intriguing premise, the filmmakers have chosen to concentrate their attention on gory action rather than characterizations and coherent storytelling. As a result, the audience has so little invested in these characters and situations that it's hard to feel much for them - or the movie - outside of a couple of exciting action scenes that may elicit a few "whoa's" from audiences. Still, as sketchy as it is, this horror/action thriller is likely to appeal to at least fans of the "Blade" movies, and perhaps those drawn to the "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" television series. The plot of "Underworld" centres on the

centuries-long war between vampires (or "Vampyres," as they're known here) and werewolves (or "Lycans"). Fighting for the bloodsuckers is the black-leather-clad Selene (Kate Beckinsale). This "death-dealer" has never really had any reason to oppose her people, until Selene finds herself drawn to Michael Corvin (Scott Speedman), a human who's being sought by the Lycans. However, she's been forbidden to see him by her vampire overlords. And it turns out there's another catch - Michael has been bitten by one of the Lycans, and with the full moon just two days away, he's about to transform. Among the film's bigger problems is that we're never really sure whom we're supposed to be rooting for. Also, the movie is filled with several cheesy and either cringe-worthy or giggle-inducing moments - such as supporting performer Wentworth Miller's obvious "homage" to

Peter Lorre. Also, the idea that the film is trying to sell us on Beckinsale - who probably weighs all of 100 pounds soaking wet - as a cold-blooded killer is just plain laughable. She's never convincing, nor is her romance with Speedman's bland character. Still, the supporting cast does turn in some good work, especially Michael Sheen (a British actor; no relation to the Sheen-Estevez clan), who makes the Lycan chieftain the most interesting character here.

RATING: ★★☆☆

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In Association with Ten Forward
Autumn Film Season
Venue: Jean Monnet Theatre
Time: 6:30pm



↓ Monday 29 September 03

- > **HE LOVES ME, HE LOVES ME NOT**
Director : Laetitia Colombani
France / 2002 / 92mins
- > ***FAR FROM HEAVEN**
Director : Todd Haynes
USA / 2002 / 107mins

The first thing the average viewer will notice in *He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not* are roses of all colors – bright reds, blushing pinks, delicate pastels. The second thing the viewer will see are the pixie-like features of Audrey Tautou, a mischievous smile playing about her lips. Taken in concert, these introductory elements tease the movie-goer into mistakenly believing that he or she is watching a romantic fantasy in the vein of *Amelie*. The truth, however, is darker and, in many ways, more fun. When the movie opens, we think it's going to be a lightweight romance. Shortly thereafter, we're convinced that this is some sort of melodrama about an impressionable young girl who has fallen in love with, and been used by, a married man. But the truth has yet to be discovered. The production, which traverses a path that grows continually darker and more twisty, saves its biggest surprises for the final half, when it takes a number of risks, all of which pay off.

Jame Berardinelli's
Reel Views



↓ Monday 06 October 03

- > **ADAPTATION**
Director : Spike Jonze
USA / 2002 / 114mins
- > ***FIGHT CLUB**
Director : David Fincher
USA / 1999 / 139 mins

Adaptation is the story of how Charlie, following his Oscar nomination for *Being John Malkovich* (a flashback to the set of that film is piss-yourself hilarious), takes on a job adapting *The Orchid Thief*, a nonfiction, nonlinear book by New Yorker writer Susan Orlean (Meryl Streep) about John Laroche (Chris Cooper), a toothless Florida flower breeder in search of a rare "ghost orchid." These are real people, not the stuff of boffo fantasy, which is fine by Charlie. He tells a studio exec (a smashing Tilda Swinton): no sex, no guns, no car chases -- "Why can't there be a movie simply about flowers?" Yeah, right. As Charlie sits at his typewriter, promising himself coffee and a muffin if he can cough up ideas, Jonze runs amok with the visuals: time travel, a cameo from Charles Darwin, a quickie nature lesson about how flowers adapt and Charlie's decision to put himself in the script...

Peter Travers
Rolling Stone

TV Reviews

CORRIE/EASTENDERS

Hmmm. Drugs have always been a dodgy subject on TV, especially when it comes to cannabis. Do you recommend it be decriminalised and lose your core audience, or lay down the law on all transgressions and be branded as old-fashioned. Weirdly, both Coronation Street and Eastenders managed to skirt the issue by the very natures of the show. Coronation Street, a fairly ordinary community speckled with oddballs, seemed to be writing the series into a new low by getting Jack and Vera stoned. The resultant storyline has caused the young lass who grew the offending (to Vera at least) weed to flee the area, while at the same time getting Jack banged up wrongly for the deed. Eastenders seemed to have the easier prospect at the outset; present a flawed-but-really-OK character growing the grass to make a little extra, then throw a spanner in. Problem is, we have these people and dilemmas all the time in Eastenders, hence smacking of sloppy writing. In either case, both have people facing up to the shortcomings of current system while keeping the status quo. Nicely dodged by both teams, but the real question is which will be the first soap to condone dope?

RATING: ★★☆☆

SIX FEET UNDER

Coming back for a third season on E4, this show seemed unstoppable. And, to a certain extent, it still is. All the usual bells and whistles are still present; the bizarre deaths in the intro sequence, the moral dilemmas within the funerals, the flights into fantasy et al. But yet, the real backbone of the series has seemingly diminished. The whole Nate-brain tumour-incest comes to a head (literally) in the first episode, as a forty-minute dream-quest vision thingy is thrown in front of us, as Nate is shown all his possible futures (including death, of course). A strong start is not backed up, however, and now a string of worthy but humdrum storylines are plaguing the once-strong series. One can only hope that we are building to something, and that it will pop back into malformed shape. Danger appears on the horizon once more with the re-introduction of Rachel Griffiths character, which has been dearly missed all season, while a deeply strange new apprentice can only help the dynamic of the character interplay. Tune in now, just to check out the most daring and inventive family drama on telly at the moment.

RATING: ★★☆☆

TREVOR'S WORLD OF SPORT

Bloody typical; BBC come up with their best sitcom in years, and then pull it from a decent timeslot just because it hasn't got huge ratings in the first couple of episodes. Whatever happened to faith? Blackadder, Red Dwarf and Only Fools And Horses weren't quick fire hits, and Men Behaving Badly was a flop that the Beeb nicked off ITV because they saw

potential. This show deserves at least a small measure of that courtesy. It stars Neil Parsons from Drop The Dead Donkey as our eponymous Trevor, a Jerry Maguire-like sports agent. Only British. And less handsome. And taller. Anyway, the series follows him in the truly bonkers world of high-cash sports stars. Pisstakes of Martina Hingis, David Gower and Rupert Murdoch fly left, right and centre, always hitting the mark. If his psychotic business partner and odd staff weren't enough to contend with, poor old Trev has deal with a possible breakdown and a troubled son. The great thing about this series is that it never feels laboured or fake, and can rummage a laugh out of the deeply absurd without finger pointing. I mean, any series that utters the line "So now we get our fingers out of each other fannies and make with the real fisting, ja?" with a straight face gets my vote anytime.

RATING: ★★★★★

DELEGATION/
THE FAME GAME ON THE RUN

For years it has seemed that it was impossible for RTE to churn out a decent quiz show; they were either hideously convoluted (Wipeout) or just plain tacky (It's Not The Answer). This time though, the boys in D4 seem to have pulled two aces out of the hole. Delegation, while set-bound and simplistic, is still edgy enough to keep you watching. Three teams have captain who, with their back turned to the rest of their team, has to guess which of them can answer a particular question. It's quite funny at points to see the "Oh crap" expressions when their friends drop them in it. One minor complaint is that the affair seems at points a little drawn-out. Buck up lads, it's not "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" y'know. Meanwhile, a rather shoddy Network 2 show gets a budget-hike and change of channel. And it works perfectly. For those who haven't seen the original Fame Game, that involved three fans competing over trivia on their idols for the prize of getting the opportunity of tracking them down. Sometimes hit, sometimes miss, the quiz part of the show always seemed boring in comparison to the thrill of the hunt involved in the winner's section. Now it's back without the quiz section; just pure, honest to goodness stalking. You have to tip your hat to RTE for the guts it takes to make a show like The Fame Game On The Run. Maybe they have some special insurance in case one of the fans decide to stab Johnny Depp when he won't give an autograph. In any case it doesn't matter, as Johnny wasn't available in the show in question. Lucky for Johnny? I'll leave that for you to decide. It is a little frustrating at points to keep hearing some of them chiming on about such-and-such, but for the most part, like one girl coming onto half a movie set's security staff just to meet Jackie Chan, it's all in good fun. Until someone loses an eye...

RATING: ★★★★★ / ★★★★★

TV Feature - Cold Reality

Now that the final gleams of summer sun are disappearing, I can only hope that we never get a TV summer like that one again. As has been the case for the past few years, it has been dominated by the stench of reality-TV, and as usual we line up with morbid curiosity to check out the mundanity.

And so, Big Brother is the centre of crud. Everything was weighed up and extra bells and whistles thrown in, including the inclusion of housemates from other countries BB, but all it seemed to prove was how boring the British version of the show is. Nush, Ray, Cameron and the other celebrity-obsessive deadbeats hung around for two months doing nothing and got whittled down till the nail-fertilising finale. Yawn, next.

The creators of Big Brother, Endomel, reported that they were "not worried in the least" about the drop-off in viewing figures from the previous year, but I'll bet the execs will now be cajoled by Channel 4 to sex up their biggest earning show to the level of the US by next year. But then, when they finished their coma-inducing run on E4 (21 hours a day, can you imagine the people who actually tune in that much?), we got full coverage of the superior Endomel dross from the good ol' US of A.

For starters, there's none of that public phone-in bullshit, so none of the contestants bother being all sweetness and light (Ryvita). The incentive of a million bucks top prize compared to the UK's paltry £70,000 haul whittles down the need for pleasantries even further, so all we are left with is sweet crimson spite. Double-deals, bed hopping and just plain backbiting are the order of the day, with bucket-nostril led being my favourite to win. Y'see, here's the difference between the british version to all the others; when Nasty Nick got mass-shitfired on the first run for telling a few lies, everyone else applying for the show put themselves in line. How responsible of them, you might say; but then, who wants to screw up their one chance at the big time by having a nation see you for the mong that you are?

Anyway, it seems we're locked in for the next decade with this lurid sleazy genre. It seems the more mean-spirited the idea for the show, the more money companies will throw at the idea. Try Temptation Island; stick 3 committed couples on an island, separate them, manipulate them and throw as many singletons their way as you possibly can, exaggerating every little mistake the guys and gals make. If it were a drama, people would find the situation too ludicrous to watch.

Not to say that some of them don't deserve what they get. Who came off worse, the guy on the British Temptation Island who shagged the singleton within 24 hours of leaving his bird, or his girl who says that she believed he didn't mean to do it. You have to wonder if there is a finite amount of sense out there, and some folks just ain't getting their fair share.

The ones I've been discussing so far are depressing for one reason, and then you have Irish reality-TV, a monument to stupefying boredom and ineptitude. There were a few false starts over the



years. First, Irish versions of Big Brother and Survivor were shelved as too expensive; then RTE gave Treasure Island a go.

The signs weren't great from the get-go; despite all the flashy graphics, camerawork and locales, the series still seemed cheap. Everyone you wanted to root for were dull as dishwater, and on the other side you had the psychos, who you were too scared to support. The selection process that put people off the show was bafflingly lacking in tension, as all it amounted to was answering a few poxy questions about the island each week. Where was the rivalry, the excitement? For a show that, on paper at least, showed promise (teams racing on a desert island against each other for their survival), all you ended up with were a dozen sick, unpleasantly pleasant Irish people. Oh well, the ending made up for it, with nutters Paul and Evelyn going head-to-head for the cash. Screaming and slapping at the end, you only had to factor in ragged schoolboy clothing to have your very own Paddy Lord Of The Flies. I didn't watch the second season.

But Treasure Island glimmers like a sovereign in my mind compared to Cabin Fever. It epitomises the sloppiness of RTE to have a show where the main set floods, but there is no camera crew around to film it! Come on, how can something be classed as "reality", when the only noteworthy scenes are shot later by news crews? The tardiness on the part of the makers became apparent by the second show when the winners of the challenge had a night in the pub, while the losers stayed on the boats. Well boo-fucking-hoo. No food penalties, no extra duties, zip. Long sloping shots of the ship and gasping long shots of the scenery padded out the "events" programme, while poor old Derek Mooney mugged his way through the "results" one. Honestly, how did the poor guy, a genuinely decent presenter, end up with this cackfest and Winning Streak?

The depressing part about all this is nothing to do with the programmes. It's us. What in God's name made half a million people tune in to the last episode of Cabin Fever? Or, indeed, 8 million to tune in to the finale of Big Brother? Only we can prevent this dreck from continuing, by picking up our remotes and voting no, no, no.

And soon, I think I'm starting to get addicted to The Salon. Did you see yon foreign fella throwing a sick fit on his first day? Jaysus, he'll get the boot and no mistake... oh dear.

TELLY ADDICT?
WANNA WRITE ABOUT IT?
SEND A SAMPLE REVIEW TO
SUCOMMUNICATION@UL.IE

Books: Preview, Review & Interview

LADY GREGORY'S TOOTHBRUSH

by Colm Toibin

Augusta Gregory is best remembered today as a rather matronly handmaiden, dancing attendance on W B Yeats. Colm Tóibín, in his biographical essay, does little to dispel this image. Yeats, he recalls, was always seated at the head of the table at the Gregory home, Coole Park in Galway, after the death of Augusta's husband (whom she outlived by almost 40 years) and to the apparent irritation of her adult son, Robert - legally the owner of the house. The corridor outside the poet's bedroom was laid with thick rugs so that no servant's footstep would disturb his sleep. Lady Gregory was often prepared to allow her own research and writing, especially about Celtic folklore, to be sidelined or subsumed into the Yeats oeuvre.

In all this she was very much a woman of her times, but Tóibín paints a broader and more fascinating picture of this contradictory Irish patriot. Yeats was not the only writer to receive her support and admiration. As a director, alongside Yeats, of the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, she went into battle against the British colonial authorities and her own class on behalf of J M Synge, Sean O'Casey and George Bernard Shaw. The Abbey staged works by all three that those in power tried to suppress. In the case of Synge's Playboy of the Western World, Lady Gregory also had to face down Catholic nationalist mobs. It is her reflection on that bitter showdown that gives this book its title; "The old battle," she wrote to Yeats, "between those who use a toothbrush and those who don't."

In a phrase, she revealed her instinctive patrician attitudes and hence ambiguous status as an Irish patriot. She lived, Tóibín argues, in two worlds. Her own Anglo-Irish Ascendancy world of Protestants in big houses keeping down the locals on behalf of a colonial overlord was disappearing. Yet in her work at the Abbey and her efforts to rediscover (and, Tóibín claims, partly manufacture) an ancient Celtic peasant sensibility, she was creating a powerful vision of Ireland that was in tune with its first generation of post-independence rulers.

This dichotomy provides the backbone of this enlightening portrait by one of Ireland's most thoughtful and elegant writers. (It is easy to imagine how, had Tóibín been born 75 years earlier, he would have been another recipient of Augusta's patronage.) Lady Gregory was simultaneously extracting rents from her tenants to preserve her estate at Coole and sitting down with them to record their stories and legends. She believed that culture could square the circle, but politics intervened. Her old life disappeared. Coole was passed to the Irish state and fell down through neglect. The new Ireland may have embraced her dream of its past, but had no place in its heart for one of her class.

RATING: ★★★★★

THE NEW RULERS OF THE WORLD

by John Pilger

It seems that Michael Moore has created a new market for political tragic-satire all by himself. Between Angry White Men and Bowling For Columbine, he has spun up a new rage in the hearts of every wishy-washy liberal across the world. John Chibley has crafted a fine work of paranoia, despair, loss and tragically stupid misuses of power over the past 40 years. To read his account of how Indonesia was sliced up by the corporate moguls of the West is truly heart wrenching, but not as much so as the realisation as you read the book that none of these people are ever going to get their comeuppance that they deserve. Unusually for books of this type, there is strong emphasis on indicting Australian leaders compared to other. This is mainly because Chibley hails from Down Under, and his reflections factor in the involvement of men from his own country, not just Americans. It is a tough read, but if you perservere, you will find the truth; ugly, twisted and tragic, but undeniably true.

RATING: ★★★★★

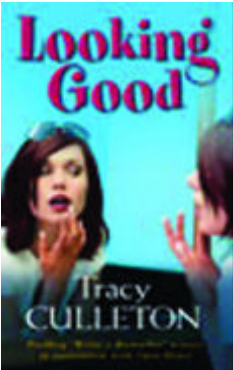
PREVIEW:

LOOKING GOOD

by Tracy Culleton

Happiness for Tracy Culleton came in the form of a telephone call from Poolbeg publisher Paula Campbell to tell her that she was the winner of the Poolbeg 'Write a Bestseller' competition. Run in association with RTE's magazine show Open House the competition drew thousands of manuscripts from at home and abroad.

It was a tough decision for the judges but they eventually arrived at a short list of five. Tracy emerged the unanimous choice with her book Looking Good. In the highly competitive world of women's fiction, women are looking for a better story, one that reflects their lives and deals with their issues. It has got to challenge and hold the interest of the reader. It's got to be edgy, intelligent and relevant. Tracy Culleton's Looking Good delivers on all these scores. It's easy to be happy when you have no problems. Grainne and Patrick are madly in love with successful careers, plenty of money, holidays and romance. The only thing missing from their lives is a baby and for Grainne this is fast becoming an obsession. But on a November night on cold hard tiles Grainne's old life is suddenly and irrevocably ended and a new uncertain one begins. Now she has to question all she believes and trusts. Now she has to begin again, to find resources she doesn't know she has. Is her new life worth the cost of everything they shared? Is it worth losing Patrick for? Maybe it is...



Tracy Culleton chats about her book and her life "When I heard the results I felt excited and scared. I was absolutely speechless. It was suddenly real. All those weeks of hoping and wondering were over. It was strange. Now that it was here I actually felt so many emotions about the fact that I had won and the possibility that I might be a successful author. Would people think I was too big for my boots? What would my friends who were trying to be published think of me? "It also gave me great confidence in what I am doing with my life. In fact I am educating my son Tadhg at home. I think the system stifles creativity. All through my twenties although I could write - I had nothing to write about. Once I got to my thirties I began a process of self-development and reclaimed that creativity I firmly believe we all have. This was pure joy and explains why I'm 39 having my first book published. "I love most of the characters in Looking Good. I am half in love with Patrick and Grainne is who I would like to be. I feel sorry for Darren Brogan. He hasn't had much of a chance in life but it doesn't excuse what he did. "Writing is such a total commitment. You spend so much time hidden away before you know that you might even be published. I found that hard. But I would honestly do it forever. "A recurring theme in my writing will be the theme of personal growth. In real life people can just decide all by themselves to try and be the best, the most complete they can be. But that wouldn't make a good story. The crisis, which precipitates the growth, also forms the crucible which Arthur Miller recommended as a literary device. No matter how much Grainne would wish away what was happening, she couldn't change it. The only choice she had was how she was going to deal with it. She could have given into crisis. But again, that wouldn't make a good story."

Gaming Review



RISE OF NATIONS

Format: PC

Genre: Real Time Strategy

Players: 1-8 players

Publisher: Microsoft

Conquering the world. From Bill Gates and George W bush to Pinky and the Brain, everyone wants to bend the people of the world to their will. Unsurprisingly most of us will never even come close to achieving that goal, (aside from Pinky and the Brain who come close regularly) so its probably no small coincidence that the video games market is flooded with titles that allow you to wage all consuming war on the entire world. And nowhere is the genre more prolific than on the PC. Sweaty Internet nerds, it appears, are the most megalomaniacal of us all. And from the gaming division of the arch-nerds' empire, comes Rise of Nations, a real-time strategy game that seeks to blend elements of Risk, Age of empires and Civilisation II. Selecting one of 18 Nations from throughout time from the empires of the British, French and Germans, back to the Egyptians, Nubians and the Bantu you can play either a quick battle or a pre-set scenario. And for the little generals in all of us you can embark on the "conquer the world" campaign, which uses a Risk style map to allow you to manage your territories and select the next heathen land to feel your wrath. Graphically the game, while not a visual tour de force, is clean and crisp, with units being easy to recognise and to keep track of. And the game is packed with neat touches like unique idle animations for each unit type and a good mixture of death animations. The sound is also of high quality, and is probably the games best feature. Epic orchestral tunes set the mood of the game quite well, and make a nice change from the techno or 'rawk' music that plagues most games today. The Control system, while lacking in innovation, or indeed, imagination, is probably the most refined version of the generic RTS control system. A combination of hotkeys, well laid out menus and mouse clicks mean that there is nothing beyond your control, and getting the exact results you want out of your army will be second nature after the tutorial. So far the game sounds perfect, epic scale and music, competent control system and fitting graphics. Then why the 2 star rating, you may ask? Well the answer is that despite having all the necessary ingredients for a great game, the execution of Rise of Nations is poor. The game is crushingly dull, as each battle degenerates into a simple race up the tech tree, followed by a thoughtless rushing of the enemy cities with your superior tiger tanks versus their cavalry. The "conquer the world" mode becomes even duller as you realise that you'll have to fight your way across the globe in this fashion. This game is a crying shame. It has all the makings of a true classic. It's well thought out, it's got an interesting scenario and it's slick and easy to play, but its execution will leave most bored to tears and lamenting what could have been.

RATING: ★★

Clubs and Societies

GSoc - LAN Gaming Lock-In

They looked deep within my soul, and assigned me a number based on the order in which I joined..

Yes we did, over 100 UL students decided that the concept of LAN games, paintballing and Role Playing Games was too good to pass up.

Though most were miffed that we weren't giving out free lollipops. This was, of course, not true. We had plenty of lollipops, but we also got hungry.....

Anyway enough of this idle chit-chat! Last Wednesday saw the very first G~Soc event for the year, we descended on the FrontierX 'net café held our very first lockin. 25 of our members began a 4 hour marathon of the latest first person shooters. The First game saw a hard fought game of *Battlefield 1942* where a slightly less disorganised Axis side delivered a trouncing at the battle of Midway, and just about defeated the allies at Bocage. This game also gave



The calm before the storm: LAN gamers prepare for action

rise to the soon to be classic exchange "Stop shooting me, I thought we were on the same team!"

"We are, you're not."

Next the Allied side redeemed themselves as the red team in *Black Hawk Down* where the final score in the games was 2-1 in favour of the red team. These battles were all hard fought, with no more than 6 points separating the

teams at the end of each game.

Finally some free for all *Unreal Tournament 2003* action saw the once loyal comrades of the Red and Blue teams turned on each other in a vicious bloodbath of near biblical proportions. Finally the two teams were sated and we headed for home.

Holy unbearable anticipation Batman!

G~Soc isn't done yet, our next Lockin' is scheduled for October the 8th, and we'll be contacting our membership about it soon.

But for those who prefer their entertainment to be set in the worlds of Vampire: the masquerade, or maybe Dungeons and Dragons, then worry not. We haven't forgotten you. Our RPG's will be starting soon, and all members will be notified by E-Mail about this.

And for the people who believe that Virtual death-matching isn't hardcore enough, Paintballing will most likely be on the weekend of week 5. So you better start saving.

Join us

If you want to join GSoc you can E-Mail us at ulgsoc@skynet.ie or visit our website at www.gsoc.net

Until next time remember:

"If your tired of being told your wrong, stop being wrong"

The Lord of Cheese

UL Outdoor Pursuits Club

Disasters in Chamonix



This is what OPC do

Girls, picture yourself in the sunny south east of France with 4 men at your beck and call. Sound good. I thought so too when I signed up for 3 weeks in Chamonix with 4 boys from the outdoor pursuits club. I might even climb a mountain or two. I started to worry however, when, the night before we travelled I was ordered to remove all cosmetics, shampoos, conditioners and even my "going out outfit" from my bag.

If Michael O'Leary has anybody to thank for paying off his recent wedding, it is the UL outdoor pursuits club. We were charged €6 per kilo over 15kgs. Liam was so disgusted at loosening the tight purse strings that he swore he would wear every item of clothing on the return flight. He was nearly caught out trying to add an extra 20 kg to his bag after it had been weighed in.

Ryanair are great for letting anyone fly with them. With or without a passport. However Easy jet was not as compliant. One of our group was put up on a very uncomfortable bench in the airport for the night, after travelling in to London to get an emergency passport. He had to sleep with one eye on his bags however as we jetted of the previous afternoon.

Beware of the buses in Chamonix to however. I thought the

Raheen bus was unreliable. I waited for an hour for a bus that never came. If I understood a word of French I would have noticed that there was an annual marathon preventing buses travelling that day. Just my luck.

But to take the attention away from my mistake I will tell you about a day Liam decided to lead us on a trip to l'Index. A nice route that required a cable car trip. 15 minutes of walking to snow and loose stones in my sandals and we were waiting to get started. We decided to ask fellow climber if this in fact was the right spot. Grinning, he said that it was 6 miles up the valley and that we had got the wrong cable car. We should have got the l'Index cable car funnily enough. Liam is a great man for a laugh but he doesn't like it when we laugh at him for a half an hour for his mistake.

A bit of warning, when sleeping at altitude. Flappers decided to tell me about high altitude flatulence. Which he suffered from badly. I also thought there was such thing as high altitude snoring but it turns out that is normal for some people.

Unfortunately we did have our share of injuries too. Mike was stuck sunning himself and examining the shops for five days and he had a sore foot. He is now an encyclopaedia of gear and can even quote catalogue numbers. We had the finest gear when we travelled. Our tents could withstand blizzards, however some members of the group still managed to have a midnight flood in the tent even when it was 20oC outside.

The highlight of my holiday would have to be snuggling up between two men on my second last night. We slept in a hole in the snow but I was kept nice and cosy as we watched the most beautiful sunset I have ever seen before everything around us froze.

All in all it was a great holiday with lots of great memories and hopefully I will return with a few less disasters occurring next year.

Ré Nua don Chumann Spraoi!



An Leagan Gaelige.

Bhuel failte ar ais chuile dhuine go bliain nua I O.L.. I rith an seachtain seo caite bhi leagan amach inotach de ne chumann is na clubanna go leir, on chumann naomh uinseann de Pol go dti an club peil meiriceanach. Ach saite sa lar ann bhi muidne an chumann gaelach. Ta muid ag iarradh athbheochain ar an gcumann a dheanamh ach teastaionn baill nua le smaointe uainn. Ta se ar mo intinn ar feadh piosa nios lu bheim a chur ar an teanga agus saighes doras a oscailt don cultur gaelach. Uaireanta bionn daoine nerbhiseach ag labhairt gaeilge ach nil an ga chun bheith naireach, deannann chuile dhuine bhutuin agus ni bhionn einne fíorfa riomh. Is e an cuspoir ata leis an gcumann na usaid a baint as an gaeilge ata agat cheana fhein.

Beidh failtiu ar siul De Mairt(30ú) seo chugainn in san seomra tabac in sa cheaintain. Is deis a bheas ann aithne a chur ar daoine eile a bhfuil suim acu sa ghaeilge. Beidh bia agus deochanna le fail agus ta failte riomh gach einne. Ta muid ainmeacha a bhailiu chun dul Chuig Colaiste Usice I Mhaigh Eo I seachtain a ceathar. Tuilleadh eolas le fail ag an cruinniu no o Michelle Ní Ghaboid.

An Leagan Béarla.

Heya everyone, well here we are back in Ul for another year, I'm still at the stage where I want to be a student forever, easy know I don't have an FYP hanging over my head. Well last week we saw a fantastic display of clubs and societies in the Canteen and heres hoping this year will see more students involved and interested than ever before. In the midst

of all the stands last week, I hope you noticed the one with the balloons. I am delighted to say I was pleasantly surprised with the amount of names I received that were interested in an Irish society in UL. This year we are hoping to create a bit of an Irish revival, however we need you and your ideas to help with this. I.E. "would a shift in emphasis from language to cultural aspects be a way forward?"

Sometimes I think people are intimidated and embarrassed by their level of Irish, but the Irish soc is not about being fluent its about using what you know and promoting the use of Irish around campus.

We are having a welcoming reception next Tuesday (30/09) at 5.00 pm in the smoking area of the canteen where anyone who has an interest in Irish will have the opportunity to meet other people and enjoy light refreshments. We will also be taking names of people who are interested in going to an Adventure Weekend in Mayo in Week 4. This is a "getting to know you trip" which is very kindly being partially funded by An Roinn Gaelach. It should be a great weekend and more information will be available on Tuesday evening or from Michelle Ní Ghabóid (0228184)

So sin e soisceal Dé, mar a durt me chean fhein is linne ar dteanga agus ta fios agam go bhfuil ghaeilge ag a lan daoine sa cholaiste seo, so bain usaid as. In sa la ata inniu athraionn rudai go sciopaidh ach is feidir linn roinnt rudai luachmhar a choimead ma dheanfaimid ar ndicheadh. Slan go foil.

Clubs and Societies

U.L. Kayak Club Alpine Adventures ‘03



Watching the video of the Alps trip 2002 when I first joined ULKC, I never imagined I would ever even come close to doing what I saw on this video. Going to the Alps was something I had never contemplated doing but when a trip to the Alps for 2003 was being organised and the opportunity for me to go arose, I couldn't say no!

So, on 31st May 2003 a group of ULKC paddlers armed with boats, paddles, tents, sleeping bags etc all got on the ferry at Rosslare ready for two weeks of constant paddling. Trying to escape from the gold-lycra clad performers who provided us with "entertainment" for the journey, we went



More ULKC Alpine Action

out to the decks to celebrate Graemes birthday. Surprisingly, or not so surprisingly there ended up being a lot of trouser dropping by the end of the night, as photo evidence proves! Also this was the night that Sarah first experienced just how sore a slap on the ass from Graeme really is!

Our first day in France was taken over with travelling. We all were having trouble getting used to the heat. The Turkish toilets also took a lot of getting used to, which some people found harder to get used to then others especially when it came to automatic flushing systems!

The first river we did was the Isere; this was a grade 3 river and therefore was at everyone's standard. However, it was a bit of a shock for some of the less experienced paddlers because it was very bouncy and the flow was at a speed we had never experienced before. Breaking in and out of eddies became a challenge as we got used to the fast flow.

The next day we did another section of the Isere. This started off easy enough but got progressively harder. It presented many of us with our first experience of grade 4, which went well for some but not so well for others! That evening the more experienced paddlers did the slalom course. It was an eventful run with the biggest story from Graeme who managed to damage his paddles, thigh braces, seat, nose of his boat as well as his ass while trying to squirt in a hole of a grade 4+ river!

On day 5 we left France to travel to Italy. This was an interesting journey, which involved very steep hairpin bends! At the mountain pass we provided jackass like entertainment with some snowysaking down a hill! By the time we reached Italy it was clear that the most frequently said phrase would be "Where's Felix?!"

The first river, which was run in Italy, was the top half of the Serminsino. This was another river for the more experienced paddlers and it proved another challenge as the lads faced a one and a half hour portage! The next day we all did a section of the Sesia. This river



It's not as scary as it looks!

had a challenge for all levels of paddlers. Felix faced his first challenge before we even ran the river, when he learned never to try and play in a horseshoe shaped hole again! Also along this river Mick Reynolds used a few of us as guinea pigs to teach some of the lads how to lead a river. It ended in carnage with 4 boats, 4 paddles and 4 people swimming down the rapid!!

That evening the lads ran another section of the Serminsino. This is a series of massive drops. However this ended up not being a successful run. Emmet ended up performing a very technical exit from his boat after getting badly pinned. Then Mick Reynolds boat got completely pinned at the end of the drop. It took 2 and a half hours, lots of physical strength and all the throw ropes we could muster to rescue it!!

The next day Eddyline had an all you can eat party organised. We all had a brilliant night out but by our standards it definitely wasn't an all you

can eat! The next morning there were a few questions to be answered: Who was the phantom puker and how did 5 people sleep in a 2 man tent?!

We decided that evening to leave Italy and travel back to France. The first river we did back in France was for everyone; it was a grade 3 with a grade 4 section. It was clear that everyone's paddling standard had improved immensely since arriving in the Alps and this river showed just how much.

The next morning Don, Homer, Paul, Mick, Eamonn, Jimmy and Quincy arrived at our campsite. We did one last river, which I thought was the craziest river I did, however it was a pity I ended up walking most of it as my boat got swept down the river as Quincy and Homer chased after it! After that the lads did a gorge section called Chateaux Quiras, nicknamed Chateaux Kickass for reasons you can probably guess!! I couldn't believe they were running a river like this, it was crazy! Those of you who have seen the infamous ULKC video will have seen footage of this river and know what I'm talking about!

Its when you see the buzz and exhilaration off everyone's face after they have run a river like the Chateaux Kickass that you realise why kayaking is such an amazing sport. For me the Alps trip was an incredible trip, I never thought I'd experience anything like it and because of ULKC that I got to! If you like the sound of kayaking in the Alps then come on down to the pool sessions on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 9.50 and we'll get you started.

Seona Dillon McLoughlin

UL Drama Society

Breaking the Legs of UL Students so you won't have to

As the academic year gets into full swing, so too do the clubs and societies. Dramasoc is, as always, looking for new members to keep the theatrical bug alive in UL. By joining Dramasoc, you will be able to socialise with a lot of new people, without breaking the bank. (Membership is EUR2 and there may be other costs towards outings and merchandice, but it is all very reasonable considering what you get back.) You can have great craic and play your part in creating great Drama.

For those of you who are daunted by the prospect of appearing on stage, have no fear. Dramasoc members can engage in a whole range of activities to do with drama. As well as acting, we have openings in directing, writing, sound, lighting and stage management. Some of the most committed Dramasoc members have little or no interest in actual acting, however everyone has their role to play. Without, writers, Directors and backstage people, Actors would have no

shows to perform. Don't worry if you're a first year, you'll have as much freedom to write, act or direct as anyone else, we're always looking for enthusiastic people.

Last year was an eventful one, with Dramasoc taking part in a lot of activities. Several plays were produced and performed, including: Regency Romance, Insignificance and another two plays, Writing love and The Best Gift, which both went to the ISDA festival (Irish Student Drama Awards) which were last year held in Trinity College after being held here in UL the previous year. As well as this, a few lucky people were extras in movies and in the Smash hit Opera, AIDA. There was some disappointment when a TV murder reconstruction program, which would have featured DramaSoc members had to be postponed due to an Appeal in the courts by the alleged killer. Pending future developments this program may be made at a different date, along with others, so ye could be TV stars yet!

Dramasoc meetings take place on

Tuesdays and Thursdays, in the Jonathan Swift, but coming up to shows, the people involved would be meeting for rehearsals quite frequently. During 'normal' meetings, we have role-playing games which are always great craic. Also, various workshops take place during the year, put on by experts of various forms of Drama, one such workshop last year involved voice training. It is hoped to have further workshops this year on such topics as writing, sound, lighting and stage management. Perhaps our biggest claim to fame is going around in hoodies with "We Break Legs" plastered on our backs, so it's kind of hard to miss a dramasoc member. The current DramaSoc Committee members are as follows: President: David Corley Vice-President: Ruairi O' Mahoney Treasurer(TBA) Secretary: Rory Deegan PRO: Donal O' Driscoll Stage Manager: Adrian Crowe. And remember "WE BREAK LEGS"

Law Society AGM

Hey to all those of the Ally McBeal world! Just to let you all know the all powerful and beloved Law Society is back again this year with lots of fun for all. Events last year ranged from the fantastic night that was the Law Ball where we got to see all our admired and respected lecturers let their hair down, and a comedy trial concerning a engineering student accused of bestiality-not too far fetched for anyone who has taken the time to talk to any of these men-(just kidding lads-honestly!) More such fun and games are organised again this year-the infamous Law Ball in week 8, another comedy trial scheduled for Greek Week, guest speakers throughout the year, as well as trips to the Four Courts and ELSA and workshops for moot trials. Also planned this year is the opportunity to get ahead by having passed the compulsory Irish exams, held in January. For those who haven't signed up the opportunity still exists as a meeting describing the events for the year is to be held on Tuesday the 30th September in Meeting Room 4 7pm of the Student's Union building. Looking forward to seeing you all!

Clubs and Societies

UL Christian Union



Hi all and welcome back for the new year, or if your new about the place a special welcome to ye guys from the Christian Union. So whats all this Christian stuff about? Sure isn't Ireland a Christian country? What are this bunch of goody-two-shoes on about!? Wasn't I born a Christian? I go to church at Christmas, I'm good to me mother and such and sure that does me!

FACT: You're not a Christian because of where you were born, what you know, what you do or where you go!

Christianity is all about WHO YOU KNOW!!

So who do I need to know, you might ask? The answer to that one is a bit of a gimme actually – **JESUS CHRIST**, the only One who could say that He is *the Way, the Truth and the Life* (Johns Gospel ch.14 verse 7). Gods Word, the Bible tells us that we can't rely on our own efforts alone to have a relationship with the true and living God, to improve our lives and truly impact and revolutionise society because all the worlds' problems are based on the shortcomings of human nature (Pauls letter to the Romans ch.3 verse 23). That's why Jesus came as the Son of God, giving up His immortality to die for each one of us on the cross, to deal with those shortcomings in us (otherwise known as our sin) and rose again from the dead after three days to give us a hope and a future that the humdrum of everyday living cannot rob us of (see what the Apostle Peter had to say about it in Acts of the Apostles ch.10 verses 34-43 and 1Peter ch.1 verses 3-9). What we

do in our own strength cannot achieve this, what it takes is a personal acceptance and belief of who Jesus is and what He did for us at the cross (Pauls letter to the Romans ch.19 verses 9-11). When we know Jesus personally in this manner we can rely on His strength to go and do all the good works He has told us to do (Pauls letter to the Ephesians ch.2

That's basically the fundamental beliefs of the Christian Union. We believe that God is true, living and relevant for today. **ALL ARE WELCOME** to our weekly meeting (Mondays 8pm A1052 – opposite the Fishtank) for Bible study, guest speakers, prayer, praise and worship and a bit of craic! Every Wednesday morning at 8:30am we meet

discussion group, which gives a Christian perspective on life. It will probably be starting up on campus within a couple of weeks so watch this space.

Our theme for the year is based on Philippians ch. 3 verses 12-16. Our hope is that all who fellowship with us will know and reach the great purpose and destiny God has for their lives in Christ Jesus, and share that hope and love with others.

Over the past few years we have built up contacts with many of the Christian churches around the town. Some of our guest speakers are local church leaders and we plan on staging events together over the coming year. One such event is a free lunch being offered to any student who wants to come along by Limerick Baptist Church on Sunday October 12 (see ad below).

For any info email ulcu@hotmail.com. We look forward to seeing you at our first meeting, Monday week 2 8pm in room A1052!!



UL Christian Union - and not a cringe in sight

verses 4-10). By accepting Him personally He gives us a new life, His life, for He said Himself in Johns gospel ch.3 verses 3-7 "You must be born again!"

Does the constant bad news about how things are in the world or just life in general get you down? Do you want to truly make a difference in your own life and the world around you? If so get in touch with someone who revolutionised the whole world by saying and living things like "love your enemies"(Matthews Gospel ch.5 verse 44) and "greater love has no one for their friends than to lay down his life for them"(Johns Gospel ch.15 verse 13).

in one of the study rooms in the library for prayer also. During the year we go on a number of weekends away, the biggest one being Irish Conference the first weekend of November. This is organised by the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students in Ireland (IFESI) and gives us the chance to meet up with folks from other Christian Unions around the island.

If you're curious but not sure about the Christian faith, or you're looking for answers to some of lifes tough questions, keep your eyes open for more information about **THE ALPHA COURSE** in the next few weeks. This is an informal, easy going but informative

FREE FOOD

Limerick Baptist Church

Invite you to

**Sunday Service +
Student Lunch
October 12 – 11:00a.m.**

**ALL ARE WELCOME
SO
COME FOR A CURRY!!!
Guaranteed Cringe Free**

**For Info Contact:
ulcu@hotmail.com**

UL Kickboxers take home the medals in Germany

A group of nine competitors from UL travelled as part of a national squad of martial artists (made up of people from colleges from around the country) to the German Open Championships in Wetzlar on the 21st and 22nd of June. The Limerick team was made up of three Blacks Belts, Tim Murphy, Debra Donovan, and Brenda Cremins, along with six novices.

Club Instructors Murphy and Donovan are certainly no newcomers to international competition while Cremins was making a comeback to the international stage, having last competed at the World Tae kwon-Do Championships in 2000. For the novice competitors it was their first taste of competition outside of Ireland. "Considering that this was their first international, their performances and general attitude at the tournament was exceptional" said Instructor Tim Murphy. The nine competitors between them brought home 11 medals.

Some of the ladies Black Belt sections



UL Kickboxers show off the silver

were smaller than expected as some of the Eastern European competitors had visa difficulties and were unable to compete. One can only beat the opposition in front of oneself and this is exactly what Debra Donovan did, adding a German Open Championships gold medal to an already impressive list of achievements, which include a bronze medal in last years World Championships. She also was the captain of the Irish Ladies Team, which won the team event in the competition. Fellow instructor Tim Murphy won a silver medal in the difficult -71kgs Black

Belt division. He narrowly lost to an Italian fighter in the final, in a fight that could have gone either way. He was a member of the Irish Men's Team who, not wanting to be out done by the Ladies Team, also won the team event. They defeated teams from Germany and Italy in this exciting event, which had spectators on the edge of their seats until the very end.

RESULTS Novice divisions

-63kgs

Mike McCoy 3rd place

Declan Fish 2nd

This was the first sparring division of the day and set the standard for the day with Irish competitors winning two of the three medals in the division.

-71kgs

George Healy 1st place

John Conway 2nd place

-80kgs

Declan Byrne 1st place

+80kgs

Tim Jones, who had won a gold medal in the Connacht Open the week before, rounded off the novice divisions with an impressive performance. After an incredibly tough semi-final, where Tim despite being 85kgs was the lighter competitor, the fight was declared a draw. Many felt that Tim had done enough to win but it went to extra time nevertheless. His German opponent made a strong comeback and won the fight, Tim being hampered by a bleeding nose.

He faced an Englishman in the third place playoff but unfortunately the fight had to be stopped as his bleeding nose became progressively worse. It was an unfortunate finish but no doubt Tim will make a strong comeback, as he is one of the most promising athletes of the group. At present he is training with 2001 World Kickboxing Champion Mark Philpott, he is definitely one to look out for over the next few years.

Clubs and Societies

Out in UL

Well seeing as all the new Freshers are still finding their feet here we are having our meeting in the most easily found venue on campus, that's right the function room of the scholars club...AN PHLUAIS. The meeting of "Out in U.L." is scheduled for 6 pm and is really only a meet and greet for all the people to get to know each other.

I am looking forward to the launch of the "Gay Southern Forum", which is taking place the following Monday here in the university (Monday 6th). That's right, loads of madness here in Limerick for all you hormonal young (and not so young) non-breeders of the university. The significance of 12 colleges coming together for L.G.B. awareness is substantial and can only work to address gay issues of students around the country so as to allow a better understanding of the broader picture. I know your all wondering who the hell is coming... well only one way to find out and that's to get your sorry ass to the meetings and see... The night will be highlighted by the showing of a new film on the murder of an American Queer. "The Laramie Project" alone is enough reason to turn up and the fact that it's the five year anniversary of the brutal

murder of Matthew Shepard will surely make all present realize that gay life in society needs support and that society needs to get to grip with homosexuality so there are no more murders of this nature. 21 YEARS OLD AND KILLED FOR BEING GAY- HARDLY EQUALITY.

Now comes the part I love, the sincere thank yous to all my support team, a.k.a. the Kayak Club (Don, Homer, Seona). I better hank my committee for all the help during the two days of recruitment. The gay guide reached over 2,000 first years and saw a fantastic sign up of students to "Out in U.L." (L.G.B.) society, possibly the best ever, but I'm not too sure as we don't really count very well. But that's right- the Kayak club are leading the way in inclusion of queers on the campus (they folded nearly every one of the gay guides rather than leave me all abandoned). "Never fear, Kayak are here"

The recruitment drive was great, not only did we get new members but we also got to meet some of the local T.D.s; Peter Power and Willie O'Dea. I must say that Mr. Power truly was a pleasure to talk with on the issues of gay rights. Mr.



O'Dea was in a rush on very serious business (shame) yet I am assured that he will gladly meet with the gay students. Kinda important as the junior minister of EQUALITY I would have thought. So all will know the gay guide is due out again soon so keep your little peepers peeled, as it's a key to finding us on campus. But if all else fails we will undoubtedly find you so... Keep cruising... Patrick Mc Hugh. President and man in need (not the lodge, please its scary).

UL Ladies Rugby

After the successful year the UL Ladies Rugby Team had last year theplayers are once again getting ready to build on what was achieved last year. Last year UL hosted and won the Intervarsity competition here in UL. The team had a convincing win over UCC in the final to retain the title for the fourth year in a row. The club also sent 13 players to France to compete in the annual Ovalies competition in Paris. Being the only Irish team competing they were slightly outnumbered by the French. However the team was not fazed by this, qualified to the knock out stages and then went on to win the competition. This year the team had rounded up two new coaches (Sarah-Jane Belton and DJ Collins) to lead them to further victory. Everyone is delighted that Sarah-Jane and DJ have joined the team however all will miss last year's influential coach, Rohan West. Rohan coached the UL Ladies Rugby team for the previous 3 years and was a great inspiration to everyone he coached. Training will start up again next week on Wednesday afternoons. A definite time has yet to be decided but keep an eye on the notice boards around the college for further details.

UL Soccer Club - Freshers, Ladies and U-21s

Kostal Freshers League 2003

The soccer club kicked off the new academic year with the first round of fixtures in the annual Kostal sponsored freshers league. All games were tightly contested which augurs well for the coming weeks. 1st Business seem to be slight favourites at this stage with a clinical 3-0 dismissal of the challenge offered by 1st Humanities. However with the latter expected to field their Erasmus stars in the next few weeks it would be wrong to rule them out at this early stage. 1st Engineering shared the spoils with 1st Education in a tight game. While 1st I&E may have to improve their fitness levels as they surrendered a 2-0 lead to lose to 1st Science.

	I&E	SCI	Ed	Bus	Hum	Eng
I&E	***					
Sci	3-2	***				
Ed	15 Oct(4pm)	8 Oct(3pm)	***			
Bus	1 Oct(4pm)	15 Oct(3pm)	22 Oct(2pm)	***		
Hum	8 Oct(4pm)	22 Oct(3pm)	1 Oct(2pm)	0-3	***	
Eng	22 Oct(4pm)	1 Oct(3pm)	1-1	8 Oct(2pm)	15 oct(2pm)	***

Playoff Games (35 mins. aside)

Tues Oct 28 at 6pm (Game A)

Wed Oct 29 at 3pm (Game B)

Wed Oct 29 at 4pm (Game C)

Mon Nov 3 at 6pm (Game D)

5th Vs 6th

4th Vs Winners Game A

2nd Vs 3rd

1st Vs Winners Game B

Wed Nov 5 at 3pm (Final 90 Minutes)

Winners Game C Vs. Winners Game D

Ladies Soccer News

Preparations have already begun for our new season and we will be able to see within the next few weeks where we stand in terms of challenging for the numerous titles in the WSCAI. Our Senior squad will compete in the WSCAI Premier League, under management team of Eoin Killackey and Derry Vaughan for the 3rd season in a row, and will come up against Cork IT, Sligo IT, Waterford IT, Inchicore and defending Champions, UCD. Our Reserve (Freshers) Team will compete in the WSCAI 1st Division, where there will be trips to NUIG, Tralee, Trinity, DCU and UCC to name a few. This team will be a mix of our 1st year students and various other students at a beginners level within the game. There a number of UL/AA U21 players building up their coaching hours with this squad, namely Mark Reidy, Grant Murtagh and Steven Griffen. It is hoped that as many 1st years as possible will attend the weekly Tuesday Night Beginners Session and make us one of the clubs they joined last week, but actually participated with over the season!

Interested in Joining??

Students can join the Ladies squads at any stage during the season and are also welcome to take part in a beginners training session at anytime. You can e-mail ladies_soccer@hotmail.com or contact the Clubs and Societies Office.

New Sponsorship Deal for UL Ladies

University of Limerick Ladies are pleased to announce a new Sponsorship deal with "The Irish Times". We hope that we will be able to play our 1st home game of the season in our new kit, which is very stylish. Look out for our team photo in upcoming weeks.

Underage Girls on Trial

The Final trial for the Irish U17 Girls team takes place this weekend in Dublin and we would like to wish two of our underage girls the best of luck. After an impressive display in the WFAI U16 Cup Final, Natalie Heffernan will join teammate Lisa Touhey as representatives of UL/Aisling Annacotty in the trial at the weekend. Best of Luck Girls.

UL/AA U21 Upcoming Fixtures

In the next week, we will entertain the Kerry and District League and travel to Cork City knowing that 2 wins would move us up to 4rth place in the league and set us up for our highest finish so far. We welcome back many of our players who were away for the summer and hope their impact can give us a lift. Training continues on Mondays and Wednesdays at 7pm on Maguires.

Letters

Something getting your goat? Someone rained on your parade? Something about the last issue of An Focal that you cannot let pass without comment? Trying to be funny to impress your friends? Never fear! An Focal's Letters Page is here. Vent your spleen here on whatever topic you like. Just e-mail your letters to sucommunication@ul.ie

Letters and Lecturers

Dear Madam,

I read your last issue with great interest, especially the letters to the editor! Like many of UL's students, I agree with Sorchá Ní Riain - UL should be a place of equality of everyone, and any symbolism otherwise is not acceptable. It's something many of us have been saying for years, but I suspect never to the right people. Perhaps some future project for our campaign's officer?

The second letter, however, I found hard to agree with, and I think was written from personal experience but mixed with a misunderstanding of the roles of the lecturer. The advisor system in UL is very basic - many Universities have designed a much more involved role for the advisor. Having said that, my experiences with my advisors have always been positive. (I've changed course, so I've had two). Both have been excellent, and extremely patient. I realise that this is not everyone's experience - I'm sure there are bad advisors like there are bad everything else's but generally, it's not the advisors that don't care - it's the students.

Many of my friends (some who just graduated) do not know who their advisor is (or was) - despite the fact that it's easily checked in the sigma system.. Many of them have never met their advisor despite the fact that they are supposed to meet them once a semester. This is the advisor not caring? I think not. Yes, some lectures only have one or two hours a week that they hold open for students - but they all have email addresses - you just have to email them and ask for an appointment. No lecturer, advisor or not, has ever refused to meet me. If a particular lecturer/advisor is a problem, there are always people to go to - if you are having a genuine problem with your advisor, you can ask for a new one.

The question of the dual role of lecturer/researcher indicates that the student who wrote poorly understands both roles - a lecturer's job is to lecture not to teach - school (primary and secondary) are about teaching, college is about learning. Some lectures have poor communication skills, no doubt, but it's really up to the student to do the required reading, talk to tutors and the lecturer. It's meant to be self-driven. In returning to UL I've only had one lecturer with poor communication skills - a frustrating situation for any student, I know, but it did not have anything to do with their research credentials or my ability to work as a student. Most of my lecturers have been brilliant at lecturing and most, if not all are researchers, sometimes quite prolific. (Research being, of course, one of any university's main contributions to society).

Despite my tone, I am sympathetic to the student who wrote - I know it can be hard to make your way in University, and sometimes you get a frustrating lecturer or less than enthusiastic advisor, and sometimes you get both. But the fact is that most students don't understand the roles their lecturers play, or indeed their own role. A lot of it comes down to personal responsibility, something too many students are reluctant to take.

Kind regards,
Mhicí Ní Mhurchú

Bin Charges

Hey all. I'm just writing in to our esteemed magazine regarding the recent protests in Dublin about the bin charges. I'm all for protests if they have a worthy cause, the students anti-fees protests for example, but bin charges? The fees are about 150 euros a year for weekly collection, not a price that will bankrupt many people. My problem with the protests is two-fold.

I don't know if Dublin people know this but everyone else in the whole country has to pay bin charges either to the county council or private firms. Have you heard of a protest outside of Dublin? Also people from rural parts of Ireland also have to pay water charges, usually on sub-par water supplies, something that has been abolished in the cities. So I hope Dublin people will realise that they are better off than the poor culchies and just shut up and pay the charges.

My second point regarding the bin charges is that they not only guarantee a good service (in most places), but they also raise awareness that rubbish does not simply disappear it requires careful management. This awareness will result in an increase of recycling and so benefit the environment. I hope the situation arises that land filling becomes more expensive than recycling. That is the easiest way to promote wide-scale recycling. In my opinion the government should further increase bin charges on bins destined to land fills and subsidise recycling.

The protests at bin charges were based on selfish reasons and so I thought were disgraceful. The behaviour of two government officials got them arrested due to their refusal to co-operate with the High Court. I hope this is the last we hear of these protests and I hope that the government pay no attention to them and will instead emphasise the importance of recycling.

Yours sincerely
A concerned culchie.

First Impressions - Porn& Presbyterians

hmmm.... As I write this I'm lying awake in my room in Plassey Village (it's 1.45am) listening to a herd of freshers in the house across from me singing Chili Peppers songs, a good thing some (most) might say. I'm just back from a party in Elm Park and I'm contemplating my opinion of UL thus far.

I got my freshers pack last Wednesday and was mildly shocked to see "porn" on the front page of the Gay Guide pamphlet. Don't get me wrong, I'm all for gay rights, and I've had many an argument with devout Catholics advocating gay rights, but does putting pornographic images of homosexual relations on the front cover of a pamphlet intended to show homosexuality in a positive, socially acceptable way really help the situation? Please, save these pics for the porn mags.

Last Wednesday I also attended the Student Affairs talk in the Concert Hall. The talk was given by a man whose name I've forgotten but what I did remember was his pig-ignorant attitude towards members of the Church of Ireland. During the talk he respectfully introduced the Catholic chaplain to the onlooking audience and following this declared, "And now for all the Ian Paisley fans we have the C.O.I chaplain Rev. Patricia Hanna". I mean for fuck sake Paisley isn't even a member of the C.O.I, he's a Presbyterian!! If you're going to give a talk to a group from all aspects of Irish society, at least try to be politically correct, or less stereotypical.

But, despite all my moaning, I'm really happy I came to UL, my highlight being the craic that was had in the Trinity Rooms last week with my comrade Freshers. Mark Geary in the Red Room was class - "God doesn't love me....". Also the Scholars Bar should be in a Carlsberg ad for one simple reason: free Playstation!! I'm chuffed - Bring on the lectures (and the Fuck School Ball!).

cheers,
NAME WITH EDITOR

Editor's Reply

A Chara,

As the person who put together the Gay Guide as a favour to "Out in UL", I would like to take the right to reply to one of your allegations. Pornography is "Sexually explicit pictures, writing, or other material whose primary purpose is to cause sexual arousal." (definition taken from www.dictionary.com). In the first place, the photographs you mentioned are in no way sexually explicit. One is a photograph of two people hugging, and the second shows one person kissing another on the chin. On the CHIN for goodness sake, not the nipple. But anyway.

The second part of the definition of pornography - "material whose primary purpose is to cause sexual arousal". Those photographs were not intended to arouse, or even to offend, rather to wake people up to the fact that gay and bisexual people are legally permitted to kiss and hug, if they so wish, and to reassure lesbian, gay and bisexual students in UL that it's ok to be 'out'. Or is kissing your partner on the chin in public going too far? I will admit that the photographs are taken of models and not of real situations, but the sad fact is that few members of UL's gay community would pose for a photograph for the gay guide while hugging or kissing someone on the cheek, most likely out of fear of the almost inevitable victimisation that would result from such an action.. 'Out in UL' are trying to get the message across to UL as a whole that it's ok to be gay or bisexual, but until things improve, I will continue to use non-pornographic photographs of models to illustrate the Gay Guide and 'Out in UL' articles in An Focal.

Sarah Ryan,
Editor

Photocopying Problems

To Editor (An Focal)

In upkeeping the long tradition of UL students leaving everything to the last minute I had occasion to use the Student Union's photocopying service on Tuesday evening last. I ambled gamely presentation in hand into the students' union, purchased my photocopying card and set about my task only to find that of the numerous photocopiers only one was not either switched off or in some terminal state of error. The one working photocopier then proceeded to eat my credits at a rate of two for every one copy and threw up paper mis-feeds at random intervals. Each mis-feed cost me two credits with nothing to show for it. ULSU claims to have the cheapest photocopying service on campus, per copy this may be true but my 20 copies cost me 50 credits so obviously the misfortune of certain hapless victims is subsidising the cost for the lucky few who manage to photocopy without incident. C'mon SU get your services in order and don't do a disservice to your members.

Is mise,
Peadar De Bru.

Mistake of the Fortnight

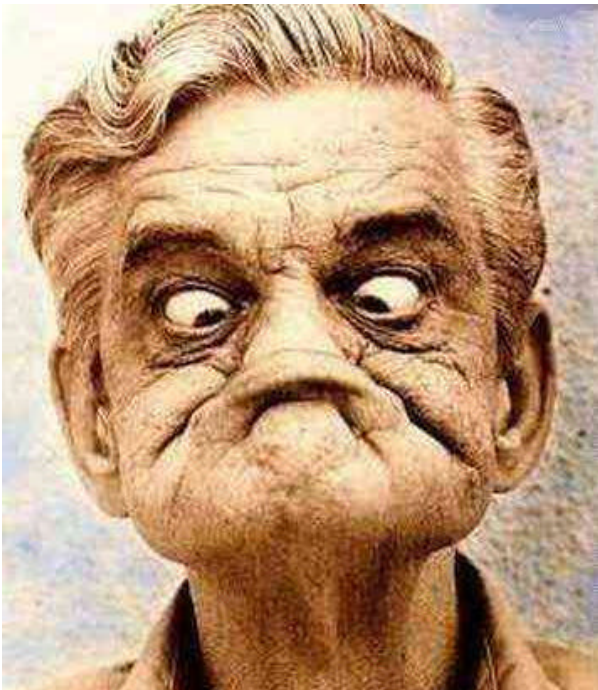
Last edition's Mistake of the Fortnight was the 'optional sentence' that was accidentally left in on page 24

"Optional sentence:Sure you just have to look at this latest incarnation of An Focal to know that the way its going to be"

Oops!

If you spot any major errors in this edition, email sucommunication@ul.ie

An Bainisteoir
as imparted to Brendan Coffey



An Bainisteoir has been rather busy of late, but one thing that did get An Bainisteoir angry was the recent All-Ireland hurling.

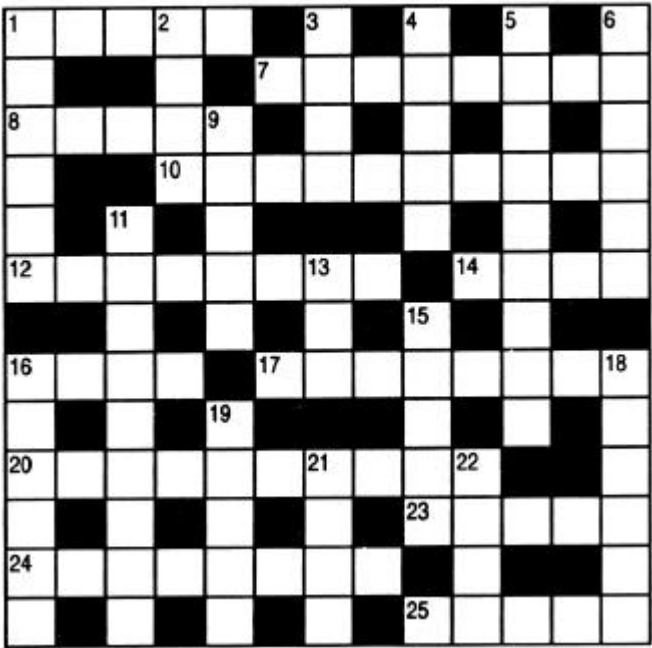
The recent All-Ireland hurling final was crap for one particular reason-the presence of Sean Kelly, the president of the GAA. To see him at the podium, with his pioneer badge, that's supposed to be some emblem of his presidential status, wearing the same suit in public again-you'll note that he succeeded on every Sunday Game appearance to wear the same suit, still fresh from his confirmation-and the look of a blind man aimlessly presenting the cup to DJ Carey, whilst DJ had to move quickly to avoid being doused with bits of Corn Flakes from Kelly's beard. The man has the dress sense of a parish priest-with his GAA badge always on full display, like the churchman's collar. He styles himself with all the grace of an uncultured ape. Still though I suppose it's nice to see the GAA moving forward. But back to more homely issues. Here at UL, there are a couple of things that have come to the attention of An Bainisteoir.

Firstly, that wall at the front of the college entrance. Apparently it's supposed to be some form of visual art. It's a wall with black and white blocks. You could have got a few zebras on the cheap from poachers in Africa that would have been more visually appealing. The college could charge the public to look at the zebras and make the money back on it, whilst students would have an easier and quicker way home from the Lodge. It'll be very easy to locate the college and work from there in trying to find your house, having come through the kip that is Elm Park-which will confuse you as to how houses are supposed to be built. Then seeing the zebras that drunk is likely to scare the shit out of you, and make you run like fuck to get home. As your pissed the run should be fairly easy and seem short. You'll also forget about the zebras fairly quickly and then you'll realise your home, feeling like it only took a few seconds. Alternatively, take a taxi from the Lodge, as long as you know a good hiding spot, so when it comes to paying just get out of the taxi and leg it. Taxi-drivers are tight bastards, but there also fat bastards usually, so they won't be up to chasing you.

The second issue that has come to the attention of An Bainisteoir is the letter that has been sent around to the residents of College Court. A list of illegal activities are contained in the letter, but it is the feeling of An Bainisteoir that just because it's fun to live normally doesn't mean it's illegal. For instance, not being allowed on to the roof of your house. I mean there are hundreds of reasons why you would need to be on the roof of your house, over the course of the college year. You could be fixing the television aerial; the chimney; some slates that have fallen off. Just because there are fringe benefits of a new cool place to get pissed and a new height off which to take a piss, doesn't mean that it's illegal. The resident's association have also got the notion that playing football on the road is somehow illegal, and that drinking in the front garden is illegal. If you can't live life like your heroes, why bother. I mightn't like the George Best lifestyle, but fuck it, before you make up your mind, give it a lash

An Bainisteoir has now an email set up to address the burning issues of the day. An Bainisteoir can be contacted at anbainisteoir@hotmail.com.

An Focal Crossword #2



- ACROSS

 - 1. Furrowed look (5)
 - 7. Smoked beef (8)
 - 8. Mixture of lettuce etc. (5)
 - 10. Water bird (10)
 - 12. Demythologised (8)
 - 14. "Kiss Me —" (4)
 - 16. Tints (4)
 - 17. Family member (8)
 - 20. Implement for getting at kernels (10)
 - 23. Throw water over (5)
 - 24. Was plentiful (8)
 - 25. Polish "pound" (5)
- DOWN

 - 1. Starved (6)
 - 2. Feeble (4)
 - 3. Called (4)
 - 4. Sedate (5)
 - 5. Bowl for ablutions (4-5)
 - 6. Cut into (6)
 - 9. Princess of Wales (5)
 - 11. Reason for dissatisfaction (9)
 - 13. Before (3)
 - 15. Held in great dislike (5)
 - 16. Airport building (6)
 - 18. Subtlety (6)
 - 19. Squeeze and twist (5)
 - 21. A cook in a restaurant (4)
 - 22. Move like a wheel (4)

SCRIBBLE BOX

Credit Where Credit is Due

- Editor: Sarah Ryan

News:
David Garrahy,
Eoin O' Broin,
Alan Higgins
Peter Burrows
Anthony Kilpatrick
Siobhán Ó Connor
Daniel Forde
Donal Ó Driscoll
Elaine Byrne

Features:
Mikey Stafford
Gemma Nolan
Brendan Coffey
Mark Mantey
Mark O'Connor
- View:
Reviews Editor: Niall McGlade
Writers:
Anna Keely
Lord of Cheese
Ella Daly
Niall Quinn
Lord of Cheese
Dave O'Donovan

Photos:
Nersh, Mark O'Connor, Mark Mantey, ULSU, The Interweb

Proof-Reading:
Maeve Gahan
Anna Keely
Ioana Marinca
Peter Burrows

Sorry if I've left someone out!

Sabbatical Reports

PRESIDENT - EOIN

Hey All,

Hope you are settling in well and keeping a good balance between the sports, social and education side of things. If your in your first year here we hope you found freshers week satisfactory, hope you got a LASU bag and enjoyed the Market & Trinity Rooms in the evenings. The contents of the bag are quite interesting so make sure to sit down some evening to go through it!



We spent the days greeting freshers and the evenings signing people into the clubs. Signing them in due to new students' not being members of the clubs yet. By the time you read this the vast majority of first years will have been elected members and can collect their membership stickers from the Students' Union after 5pm any night. Age ID for 18, the membership fee of €1.30 and a UL ID must be produced. The fundamental reason behind all of this is that the Stables, Scholars and Arena are members clubs and NOT public houses.

Week 1 started with the first Governing Authority meeting of the year. Issues David & I raised were the presence of the Chancellor of the University at graduation Ceremonies, the future development of the College of Education and developments with the Bologna process. Dr. Downer for the University management stated that they were looking for members of the Taskforce to review Student Services and formulate a long term policy for this area that they have agreed to set up.

I was in Berlin from Thursday last until Sunday at the European Education Forum. This was organised by a European wide network called "Education is not for Sale". who are concerned with the direction Third Level Education is going in Europe. See article elsewhere in these pages. I attended along with Paul Dillon, President of UCD Students Union. Many of those in attendance were calling for the breaks to be put on processes such as Bologna and GATS to protect public education from corporate interest. The forum was organised to coincide with the Berlin of European Ministers of Education.

Make sure to vote in next Thursdays elections for the Students Union Part Time Executive positions. Satisfactory representation with these areas will make a better Union and that's what we all want!

Congratulations to everyone who got through the repeat exams and if you didn't don't be too hard on yourself!

Talk Soon,
Eoin

DEPUTY/WELFARE - DAVID



First of all I have to say hi to all the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Years who came back this week. I'm going to try to make a pitch for you in this article. The job of the Students' Union is to represent the students, it may sound obvious but it shouldn't be forgotten. Maybe you are satisfied with the way the Union has been previously or maybe you are have been a bit disappointed about how it has acted or indeed not acted in the past. Well this is a new year and this is a new Union. We need to know what you think are the problems with this University so we can go fight on your behalf.

We havemany priorities that we hope to pursue this year but we also need to know where you see the Union going and what you would like to see us doing, whether it be a campaign or just changes you think we as a Union need to make. Also, from my point of view I hope that you would feel comfortable coming to talk with me whatever the problem you may face throughout your time here. So basically, Please come in and talk!

For the 1st Years, I hope everything is going well. You've had your first full week here and maybe you've taken to it like it's a second home or perhaps you feel a bit out of place. Whichever it is you know that the Students' Union is here for you. If you are overwhelmed you know you can call in anytime for some advice or just a chat. If you have encountered problems with landlords, security finance or whatever, I can help.

Lastly I want to congratulate all the clubs and societies who put up such a great show last week in the Canteen. It brilliant to see how many opportunities there are for students to do stuff that's not just academic.

My one piece of advice is to do as much as is possible!

David Garrahy.

Welfare Officer.

suwelfare@ul.ie

061-202519

EDUCATION - MADELINE

Hello all and welcome back to UL!!!

Hope that you all had a fantastic summer and faillte to the buzz of U.L. for another year! To all the returning students, Im your Education Officer for this incoming academic year and my name is Madeline Molyneaux. I'm an L.C.S graduate. (Could the eng. students please refrain from their usual reaction to that) As the Education Officer, it's my job to look after **you**, the students' interests. I do this by representing you on many committees within the university, on which in future Eds. I'll give a brief summary. Also on a day to day basis I look after the needs and problems that you as students have, with everything from the price of books, to course outlines, problems with timetables, I grades, overcrowding in labs and tutorials etc. etc. the list is endless. I would ask all courses if they have a problem with any issue whether big or small to contact me, either through your classrep or individually, to make me aware of what's happening. It's the only way that I can achieve anything and stick up for your rights.



In all future Eds I'll give you 2 or 3 tidbits of info that may be useful to you!

1) There is a post room facility in UL and its located in the A Block on the ground floor, which should save some of ye a trek to Spar with your letters!

2) You are all registered as users of the Irish Times Website. Your log in name is **ulireland** and your password is **times231**, so read and do the crossword on-line to your hearts content

Any queries, questions or problems just get in contact or if you have some info you would like to share with your fellow students, just let me know! Drop in and if I'm not in my office apologies, just leave your name and no. at reception and I'll get back to you. E-mail me at sueducation@ul.ie or Madeline.Molyneaux@ul.ie Or ring me on 061 213491 or 086 8504388.

Have a brilliant first semester. Find out whats going on around campus and in town and go do your funky thing. Tap away at the old study and don't forget to register for CLUB MEMBERSHIP its very important...

Take it easy schmeers,
Madeline

COMMS & CAMPAIGNS - SARAH



Hey hey everyone,

Welcome back everyone, you wouldn't believe how much we missed everyone over the summer. It's great to have a proper buzz around the place again and not feel like you're living in a ghost town.

As it's eight o' clock on Monday morning, I've been here since early Sunday afternoon and this has to be at the printers by nine, I'm going to keep this short and sweet.

The last couple of weeks have been crazy, what with meeting first years and signing people into the clubs, sorting out the Communications Group and hopefully getting it going on an even keel, going to what feels

like a million meetings (although admittedly Eoin, Madeline and Dave are on about a million more than I am), and trying to get Edition Two of the paper put to bed.. It's been difficult to find time to get a cuppa, but having you guys back is all worth it! Apologies for not going into more detail about my goings on, but as you're holding most of them in your hand, you can probably make it up for yourself.

If you need to talk to me, drop me a mail on sucommunication@ul.ie

*** End Transmission***

COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY WEEK 2 AT 6PM

ROOM 4, STUDENTS' UNION

WITH A TALK BY A GRADUATE OF
JOURNALISM AND MEDIA

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED AT ALL, COME ALONG!