

Was Senator David Norris treated unfairly in his presidential bid? Turn to page 6 for our Head to Head debate.



Ever considered moving to Australia? Turn to page 13 for our first installment of 'A Grad Down Under'.

UL ENGINEER PUTS PESS RUMOURS TO REST



Image: Jason Kennedy

By Jason Kennedy, News Editor

ONE of the head engineers behind the PESS buildings construction has said that rumours of excess damage caused by the work are both untrue and exaggerated.

Buildings Engineer, Sean McDermott said that he is delighted with the work that has been done so far. Mr McDermott said that rumours that construction work on one of the campus's oldest buildings did not cause flooding in the office of Professor of Exercise Science, Phil Jakeman; it didn't create a crack on the building's gym wall and that a support beam was

not knocked. He claimed that the crack in Professor Jakeman's office was there long before construction work started. "There has been a leak in that office for five years now. It's been causing us constant trouble. Phil Jakeman moved office during construction, but he is back in his office in the PESS building now. We're still looking for a solution to that problem."

Mr McDermott added that there has been a crack in the gym wall before construction started at the beginning of the summer. "There has always been a crack in the wall, but construction probably didn't help. There would have been a lot of vibrations that wouldn't have helped the wall. We have been working with people who use the area

and have provided alternative space for them." Mr McDermott claimed that the rumour that a supporting beam had been knocked during construction work is totally untrue. "I don't know who said that, but if that happened the building would fall. That allegation is totally untrue. You know how this kind of thing gets around. It didn't happen."

Mr McDermott did say that during the construction work the cables servicing the PESS building had been cut, resulting in all incoming and outgoing telephone services, network services and alarm systems being affected. He added that these effects were unavoidable. "You'll appreciate the difficulty of doing construction work to the center section of the building while

maintaining both sides. All connections are up and running again now though."

Despite these allegations, Mr McDermott said that he was delighted with how the work is going. "We have 95 per cent of the demolition work finished by the start of term, which was our aim. Previously, there was no wheelchair access to the lecture hall and fire escapes were compliant, but not great. These will all have been fixed. Every day, structural engineers are up looking at the building. It's being monitored very carefully."

In a statement issued to An Focal, Buildings and Estates say the project is well under way. "The University of Limerick is currently undertaking a building works project to reconfigure

the central core of the Physical Education & Sports Science Building (PESS Building). The development will comprise a computer laboratory, 150 seat lecture theatre, tutorial space, research and staff offices, study area, cafeteria and a sports hall.

The project is well underway, with the original central core space now demolished. The re-constructed area is due to be completed by the start of the next academic year. Staff and students affected by the construction work have been accommodated in alternative locations on campus." Phil Jakeman was unavailable for comment.

News

UL Launches new website

THE University launched its new website in May, which has been redeveloped with a focus on connecting with the university's external audiences around the globe in a refreshed and vibrant way. In a statement sent out by UL President, Don Barry it reads that the website was developed as part of UL's strategic plan.

"Our new Strategic Plan outlines UL's mission to be 'distinctive, pioneering and connected'. The University of Limerick web presence plays an important role in highlighting our institution and providing that vital connection. It is an invaluable resource which will continually evolve to reflect the dynamic nature of UL life. The redevelopment also takes full advantage of the various social media channels available to help grow and extend the UL community around the world."

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2. Editing: If you are unhappy with how your article appeared in An Focal, please discuss this with the Editor. A number of strict guidelines are followed in the production of An Focal, which means some articles may be altered to allow them to fit on the page and to improve readability.

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Kelly O'Brien, Editor

EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to the first edition of An Focal! Published every second Tuesday, An Focal is your student newspaper. It is written for students, by students.

When I was in first year, An Focal was edited by former PPO Seamus Ryan. I appeared in his office one day and asked for an assignment.

Little did I know that four years later, I would be the one doling these out to shy little firsties, desperately begging them not to be intimidated by the office, the Union, or by University in general. Coming to college is tough. You're away from everything you've

ever known before and there's nobody around to tell you what to do. There's a huge sense of freedom but, with great freedom, comes great responsibility. It's all up to you now. For the first few weeks, you'll go to a few lectures, you'll go to a few house parties, and you'll have quite a few hangovers! And rightly so, in my opinion, you should enjoy yourself! But please don't go off the deep end. You'll realise soon enough that though you are free, you are possibly more restricted than you've ever been.

Why? Because now the responsibility lies with you. If I could give you but a few words of advice, it would go like this; don't forget to join a club or society, don't shift your housemate, don't wreck your house and for the love of GOD always wear a condom. If you take this advice, you'll be getting the best possible start to college life.

But remember, if anything does happen, you can always call in to the Students' Union to chat with one of your officers.

Tara Feeney is the Welfare Officer this year and will be more than happy to give advice on Welfare issues. The same goes for Aoife Kenny, Education Officer, if you are having problems with your course, your lecturer or if you'd like to become a Class Rep. Your Union is here to help you, no problem is too big or too small.

So go on! Enjoy yourself! And enjoy your time at UL; it really will be the best four years of your life.

Kelly O'Brien
Editor



London: The scene of widespread rioting, looting and arson this summer.

Trinity Rooms closes its doors

By Jason Kennedy, News Editor

ONE of Limerick's most popular nightclubs is the latest to the curse of the town's decreasing venues. Trinity Room's is the third night club to close in Limerick since the start of 2011, following on from Baker Place and The Lodge, which has recently reopened.

Trinity Rooms, one of the most popular nightclubs in the country, closed down temporarily in July due to health and safety problems related to derelict buildings near the venue. There were 50 people working in the club, with almost 30 of those being full-time positions.

A Spokesperson for Trinity Rooms told the Limerick Chronicle that the clubs had no other choice but to close.

"We have been closed eight or nine weeks at this stage and because of the advice we have gotten, for health and safety and legal reasons, we can't reopen. Unfortunately, with the length

of time we were left with no choice but to inform the staff because some of them have to try and find other employment. It was an incredibly hard decision."

Trinity Rooms was initially closed over what was believed to be rodent infestation, but the adjacent library remained open while the club was closed. The area which is causing the problem is a site which was due to be developed as part of the stalled €300 million opera center by Michael Street.

A statement issued yesterday on behalf of the management of the nightclub said

the matter was brought to the attention of Limerick City Council and the HSE last week and the nightclub voluntarily agreed to close the venue immediately.

The statement read that: "We are fully satisfied that the Trinity Rooms is not the source of this problem but this in no way relieves us of our obligation to uphold best practice in health and safety standards for our staff and clientele."

Over the years, Trinity Rooms have played host to many internationally renowned acts, such as Calvin Harris, Deadmau5 and Grove Armada.

UL student tipped for X Factor success

By Jason Kennedy, News Editor

A FORMER UL Voice and Dance student who wowed the X Factor judges with her singing ability has been tipped to go far in the competition.

Nineteen-year-old Megan Burke from Dublin performed her version of Adele's Rolling in the Deep and Alicia Key's Fallin' to a cheering audience during the show's auditions over the summer in Cardiff. She breezed into the bootcamp round of the show after four thumbs up from judges Gary Barlow, Tulisa, Kelly Rowland and Louis Walsh. Former Destiny's Child singer, Kelly Rowland, was thrilled with

Megan's performance and is reported to have given her high praise, saying: "There is a star in Cardiff. There's nowhere else for you to go but up, babe." Irish judge Louis Walsh is also said to be delighted with the Irish talent in this year's show. "There are loads of Irish acts, but we haven't done our final bootcamp yet so nothing is confirmed. The acts have to be really, really good to get through. The standard this year has gone through the roof."

Paddy Power bookies have already started taking bets on Megan to win the X Factor, starting at 66/1 while the show is still in the boot camp phase. It is rumoured that she has already made it to the final 70 in the show.

One of Megan's UL friends, fellow Voice and Dance student Emma Langford, said she is not one bit surprised that Megan is doing so well in the competition. "I was never surprised

at how well she did, she's always been exceptional, and she has always stood out. In every workshop we've done in college before she left the course she got amazing feedback from tutors. She's very passionate about everything she decides to do. I can't remember when I heard she was doing it; I think she put up a status on Facebook about getting through in the initial auditions."

Emma also said that no matter how Megan does on the show, which has created stars such as Leona Lewis, Alexandra Burke and Jedward, she will succeed in the music industry.

"I think she'll do amazingly well, but I don't think that's down to the show... I know she'll find success in her own right. She's got a fantastic career ahead of her." To hear Megan sing, you can visit her YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/MeganBurke18.



X Factor judge Kelly Rowland showered praise on Megan in her audition.

Trampoline club await world record confirmation

By Rachael Power

THE UL Trampoline Club is awaiting confirmation from the Guinness Book of World records to find out if they have vaulted straight into the history books.

In conjunction with Delta Soccer Dome on the Ballysimon Road, the club attempted to break the world record for the most somersaults on a trampoline in one day.

With twenty people completing 75,312 somersaults in 24 hours, they smashed the previous record of 70,000 during the 'Big Bounce' on July 15 and 16.

The club trained for months with teams from around Ireland and the UK in preparation for the big event, which came into fruition around March this year. "I don't think it started as a record attempt but an event for gymnasts and trampoliners from all over Ireland and the UK. It just manifested into an event with twice the importance," team member Mike Bathke said.

Teams of two took turns bouncing on the two trampolines for an hour, before letting the next team go on, taking an hour and a half break and jumping right back into it. With it being such a physically taxing event, each team

member required to perform twenty five somersaults every time they were on the trampoline, some members suffered at the hands of nausea and fatigue. David Ryan, secretary of the UL trampoline club, said that despite this, the team bounced bravely on.

"Throughout the night the team overcame difficulties including losing two bouncers [somersaulters] to injury, exhaustion and nausea.

However, inspired by their progress they battled on through the night remembering all the time that with each somersault they got closer to the record," he said.

One team member, Mike Bathke, who has been involved since 2009, even ended up in A & E. "I sprained my right ankle. It was the most unimpressive thing ever. I was just doing a backwards somersault and landed wrong on my ankle.

It really sucks. People knew I would come off the tramp at some stage or get injured. I'm surprised they didn't have bets on," he said. The record attempt was held as a fundraiser for local Limerick charity Milford Hospice, in line with Limerick being the European Capital of Sport 2011. Donations are still being accepted for the cause on the website: www.24hrbounce.com or on the actual charity website: www.mycharity.ie/event/thebigbounce.

UL graduate seeks funding for surf project

By Jason Kennedy, News Editor

A UL Marketing graduate is asking for funding to develop a surfing product he has been working on.

UL Boarders founder and graduate of 2009, Nick Ryan is looking for €30,000 over the next few weeks, via fundit.ie, to fund his surf buckle; a multifunctional tool which can wax surf-boards, be worn as a belt buckle and will be available in a variety of colours. Mr Ryan hopes to be selling these buckles under his own-brand surf company, Lir Child.

Despite a promising start, with only 40 days left for the product to be funded online, only 2 per cent of funds have been reached. Despite this, Mr Ryan says that he is remaining optimistic.

"It's not looking so good right now, but I have to stay optimistic about it. I'm starting a poster campaign soon and I hope people around campus will see more of it soon. Even if I don't get the funding through fundit.ie, I will seek alternative funding to lead the company and the product the way I want it to go."

Mr Ryan describes the product as the Swiss Army Knife of surf tools, but says that it is designed to be fashionable, as well as practical when it needs to be used. He adds that he hope the tool will create employment in the near future.

"I want this product to be manufactured in Ireland, so that it will create employment.

Lir Child is starting off small but it's taking off now." Mr Ryan said that numerous people have asked him if he would seek investors for his



Nick Ryan

project, similar to the television show Dragon's Den, but he says he would rather not take that route.

"If I went on Dragon's Den, they'd want to take over a certain amount of the company. The investors would also focus in on the profit and not

the product. I want my product to be known for quality." To help fund Nick Ryan's product, you can visit www.fundit.ie/project/funders/the-lirchild-surf-buckle.

News

News In Brief

Futuristic emergency services response equipment researched in UL

University of Limerick researchers are working with some of the world's leaders in security, intelligence and wireless technology development to help emergency units.

The INFRA project, which is made up of nine companies and A universities from Europe, is led by Athena GS3 Security Implementations Ltd. from Israel. The University of Limerick team is led by Professor Elfed Lewis of the Optical Fibre Sensor Research Centre (OFSRC), which is based in the Department of Electronic and Computer Engineering at the University of Limerick. The project is aimed to help connect different types of equipment to communicate with each other and will secure information systems to maximize the efficiency, safety and effectiveness of the emergency response.

Kilmurry Lodge re-opens

Last week, during the conferring ceremonies, The Kilmurry Lodge opened its doors to UL students once more. Having closed down last February, The Lodge stated that "all good things must come to an end" and cited the reasons for the closure as being financially related.

They stated that "The Lodge as a student venue now appears to have reached its' conclusion" but went on to express hope that it could re-open in the future. The Lodge has now re-opened under new management and has under gone interior renovations.

Medical school welcomes renaming of Dooradoyle Hospital

THE HSE have announced that Dooradoyle's Mid-Western Regional hospital is to be renamed later this year. The hospital will become known as Limerick University Hospital to reflect the growing connection between the hospital and UL's Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS). Manager of the Medical School Mairead Waters has said that the hospital's rebranding marks an important milestone in its continuing relationship with the university. "GEMS students have undertaken clinical placements at the hospital since 2009, and some of the school's first graduates now work there as interns," she said. "Soon work will begin on a new Clinical Education and Research Centre within the hospital site, funded jointly by the HSE and UL. We welcome these exciting developments."

SU President disappointed in choice of polling day

UNIVERSITY of Limerick Students' Union President, Derek Daly has expressed disappointment on behalf of his Union's members that the date set for the Presidential Election and three referenda falls on a Thursday. This falls against a background of criticism from the current government parties when in opposition, as well as a unified call from the youth wings of all of Ireland's political parties in 2007 to hold elections on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday. ULSU members will be given the opportunity to register for a postal vote prior to the October polling date following an agreement reached between the Students' Union and the University's Student Academic Administration Department on Wednesday.

Students choose wolves as C&S brand

By Colin Clarke

YOU may not be about to embark on a booze and drug fuelled weekend away in Vegas or Bangkok with Alan, Doug, Phil and Stu but you are now part of "something exciting, new and shiny" according to Clubs and Societies Development Officer Paul Lee. You are now part of the UL Wolfpack.

This semester, the Clubs and Societies Council have launched its new UL Wolves brand and image for the UL Clubs and Societies. Mr Lee, a driving force in the introduction of a Clubs and Societies logo, said "this is a brand we expect to infuse like a fine cup of Mrs Doyle's tea, a brand that over time you will know and identify, as being distinctly associated with UL and its Clubs and Societies, the Students' Union, or even on the level for you as

an individual member of one of our more than 60 Clubs and Societies."

The Wolves brand was created to give UL Clubs and Societies a unique and recognisable identity. The Wolves brand and image was decided by UL students during a month long Facebook campaign (Chieftains V Wolves). In all there were around ten concepts suggested over a two year period and they were refined down by the Clubs and Societies Council to the best two

choices. Paul Lee expressed his delight at the introduction of the Wolves Logo, saying "I'm absolutely delighted, the Wolves as an image and its impressive characteristics fit both Clubs and Societies". There will, however, be some concern about the acceptance of the new Wolves brand by Clubs and Societies after the failure of the UL Vikings brand back in 1999. The Viking concept never took off, although it was adopted by the new start-up UL



American Football Club in anticipation of wider support for the brand.

Students' Union President Derek Daly supported the introduction of the logo; "The Wolves is a great logo and an opportunity to build a great community spirit. All UL students, but more importantly going forward, all alumni, are now part of the Wolfpack."

On-campus renovations

By David Hartery

UP to €4 million was spent on a major upgrade to the three oldest on-campus student villages. Since the majority of on-campus accommodation was completed in the late nineties and early part of the last decade, the decision was made to extend Plassey Village and give Dromroe and Kilmurry a facelift, all of which were completed in time for the first students checking in on August 28. The funding for the renovations was acquired through using both the residences and the campus for summer conferences and events. General Manager of Plassey Campus Life Services, John O'Rourke says "Reinvestment is key to our Student Villages, as is ensuring students continue to live on campus; creating a living vibrant campus environment.

Our business is students and we aim to excel at providing housing and services for them on campus." Brookfield Hall has also decided to reduce their prices to better reflect the current deflated

housing market and pressures on students financially. Apartments in Brookfield are now available from €79 a week.

A recent Daft.ie report shows that the average rent in Limerick has fallen to €573 per month. The University of Limerick and its surroundings have bucked the trend however, with rents rising by an average of 8.7 per cent for students.

President of ULSU, Derek Daly claims that he is critical of the report "Rent definitely isn't up, I'd really need to ask some questions of Daft.ie, but it might possibly be a supply issue on traditionally cheaper accommodation arising from last winter's damage that are not ready for renting and regeneration tenants being placed, increasing the rents in the area."



Reinvestment is key to our Student Villages

UL ready for own 'field of dreams'

By Colin Clarke

UL'S great reputation as Ireland's sporting campus has been further enhanced with the development of a new state-of-the-art all weather sports complex.

The new €9 million facility is the largest all-weather sports field complex in Europe. Situated on the University's Clare Campus this multi-purpose, fully floodlit synthetic grass park contains third generation pitches including two soccer pitches, one rugby pitch and

two GAA pitches. Director of Sport and Recreation at UL, David Mahedy, welcomed the development, saying "This is a real life 'Field of Dreams' come true. It's a top quality unique facility for every player in every code to experience and enjoy.

Training and especially matches can now be accommodated in all weathers and at all times on the University of Limerick's latest state-of-the-art sports facility which we have now dubbed our very own "Team Park".

Mr Mahedy explained player comfort is a priority and this is certainly taken care of with these new third generation pitches. Third generation all weather surfaces play like natural grass and are

designed for full contact. The synthetic surface is unlike most others as it reduces the risk of injuries caused by other hard or uneven surfaces.

Each full-size pitch can be sub-divided to create smaller sized playing areas for various sports. This is the largest artificial grass development in Ireland to date designed to IRB, GAA and FIFA specifications.

In addition to the new playing fields, the Sports Pavilion Building contains changing rooms, squad rooms and coaching rooms together with bar, restaurant and conference facilities. The development, which cost €9 million, is being funded by a number of sources including income raised from the operation of the facility and from funding generated by campus based commercial activities.

The playing pitches opened in July 2011 with the Sports Pavilion expected to open in November 2011. The new sports facility is available to the general public as well as the campus community.



Comment

Between fees and a hard place

By Colm Fitzgerald, Comment Editor

I'VE always been sceptical of promises, but as regard political ones, I should have known better.

In his pre-election pledge, now Minister for Education Ruairi Quinn pledged to defer the relentless third level fees debacle from the agenda. A few months later, it's back on the agenda with renewed jubilation and vigour.

My mind is riddled with doubt as regards the possibility of this occurring, but for the mutual benefit of both government and students alike, a definitive and final solution for financing third level courses needs to be put in place with haste. Nobody can hide from the facts.

Free Fees is costing the government a mounting bill annually. The country is on its knees, with students and their parents nursing reduced incomes and unemployment.

The interim solution to a frankly simple problem has been to raise the Student Contribution Fee by a considerable amount on an annual

basis. Considerable delays have been forthcoming from both the current and previous governments on reaching serious options and engaging in any forum or discussion with students on same. Recent developments indicate the government would rather disregard the suggestion of introducing a graduate tax or student loan system.

In an ideal world this would have been the most convenient system, with having to pay little or nothing now, and repaying the cost on employment.

In typical Irish fashion, lack of foresight is rampant and instead, all they want is a quick fix.

The cabinet is insisting the only way is upfront payment of the entire cost of the course. This could well mean future entrants to UL could be footing a bill of €20,000+ before they even set foot on our delightful campus.

So, what's next? It's hugely likely the student contribution charge will be upped again in time for the 2012/13 academic year amid predictable protest. In fact, rinse and repeat the same process for the foreseeable future, because we could well still be paying student contribution charges for our own children's education!



Minister for Education Ruairi Quinn signs pre-election pledge to fight against reductions in student grants.

Never mind your Nanny state, what about our parents?

By Aoife Coughlan

IT is the dream of some children to be able to choose their parents. However, this is nearer to the truth for us than we imagine. Our role models, disciplinarians and ethical teachers are now very likely to come in the form of our TDs and Ministers of State.

Once upon a time it was us, the voting public, doling out the slap on the wrist at the ballot boxes but now we must take punishment and direction like mouldable children.

This change in the status quo has transformed governing priority leaving us with the reality of a Nanny State, all instruction and no action.

The most recent reminder of this is Dr James Reilly's proposal to ban smoking in cars where children are present and even perhaps extending it to private residences.

The ban trying to ensure the health and welfare of children is not being compromised. However, it is undermining the right of parents to decide on the appropriate situations in which they smoke.

It undermines the direct guardian's authority and shows a blatant disregard for the capabilities of parents to act in the best interests of their offspring. The very idea of a law to take the place

of personal choice is patronising and condescending on a national level. A Nanny state removes responsibility from the public. By making personal choice the subject of legislation it effectively makes the government answerable for our wrong doings.

This would result in a society that is unimaginative, unquestioning and unable to think for themselves. Such a consequence seems extreme but it is also quite likely. If this was the case it would have a critical impact on the work force, international perceptions and eventually, economics. Freedom of choice does not guarantee the right choice but it does assure openness of mind.

While no one would refute the objective of Dr Reilly is honourable, it is also clear that the ban is a second rate solution to the problem of passive smoking.

I am sure I am not alone in the opinion that a Nanny state is the product of ineffectual governments. Instead of facing a problem head on and tackling it directly, a Nanny State resorts to old fashioned ideas of almost authoritarian leadership.

We are told what we are not to do, but no one enlightens us as to why we are not to do it. Do they not say prevention is better than cure? A focus on information and informing is what is needed.

A country and democratic state is not a nursery. If the populace are treated as eternal children it only bodes ominous for all. Society, like all children should have the right to grow up.

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Comment

The Leaving Cert: it's nothing to jump about



By Colin Clarke

THE Leaving Certificate examination system. In the words of Peter Griffin it really “grinds my gears”. Not only is it outdated and dysfunctional, it portrays education as a memory game.

Secondary school has become a breeding ground for the useless tool of regurgitation. Unless of course, you plan for a career in politics where this tool is used to excess, it is useless if you wish to enter third level education.

Its level of detriment is so much so, some find it impossible to make the necessary leap from rote learning to actually using your own brain in college. Yes, of course there are times when you need to memorise quotes and dates etc. but in my opinion, the leaving

cert focuses too much on that one skill.

To make matters worse, you are forced to vomit this material up in the space of one or two weeks at the start of June after six years of “education”.

One day you could be hurling up Michael Longley and two hours later you're furiously scribbling how Hitler came to power in Germany. For goodness' sake at least give a different day to each exam that you have spent the last two years working for.

It makes little sense to me that your entire future could ride on your performance in a week or two of exams. Surely the only way forward is the introduction of continuous assessment or “coursework”. At least in recent

times we have seen the introduction of projects in practical subjects and also in History and Geography but is this enough? No!

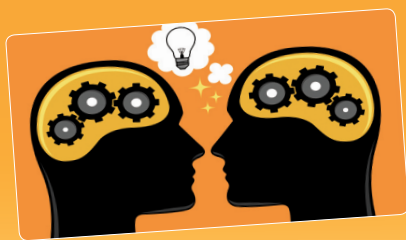
Continuous assessment allows for students to focus on their academic studies all year round as opposed to cramming three weeks before the exams. It also mirrors the majority of college assessment systems which would allow for students to hit the ground running when they enter college.

But wait! We can't introduce continuous assessment because that would mean more work for teachers. During a time where recently qualified teachers cannot find a job and are forced to emigrate, surely more work

is a good thing? Changing times call for new and improved measures. If they don't like it then there are plenty of newly trained teachers waiting in the wings that would be more than happy to get a chance at the job.

There is another blatant discrepancy. A student got 590 points in this year's Leaving Cert but cannot go to university because they failed their Irish exam. Does this represent a system that proportionately and equally allows for a full rounded education? You can answer that one yourself.

“Secondary school has become a breeding ground for the useless tool of regurgitation”



HEAD TO HEAD

Was David Norris treated unfairly in his presidential campaign?

If you would like a topic discussed here, please email sucommunications@ul.ie

By Cian Prendiville, Chairperson of UL Socialist Students

YES!

Norris' fate should have been decided by the voters of Ireland, not the political elite.

This crescendo of pressure to force David Norris out of the election for President was a blatant subAersion of the democratic rights of the Irish people to freely choose whom they wish in any election.

The political and media elite used their power to force Norris off the ballot, evidently because they feared the electorate could not be trusted to elect the ‘right’ person. The 1937 Constitution, despite proclaiming that “The President shall be elected by direct vote of the people”, virtually ensures that the establishment is not so discomfited. In fact it provides for the rigging of the Presidential nomination process to keep it within the control of the political establishment by requiring twenty signatures from Dail deputies and Senators

or a majority of four local authorities to get on the ballot paper. This amounts to the Irish people not having a free choice because they are presented only with candidates who are acceptable to the establishment political parties. Let me be clear: This is not a debate about Norris' representations on behalf of a friend. It is about his right to stand, and the electorate to decide his fate. Norris was rightly critical of himself for not showing “compassion to the victim of Ezra's disgraceful crime.” It would be as unjust; however, to claim that the Senator was condoning child abuse as to say somebody pleading for clemency for a death row inmate (as Gay Mitchell and others have) was in favour of murder.

I am not saying Norris is my ideal candidate. Whilst he has been a courageous advocate for human rights, he has taken positions on some economic and political issues that I, as a socialist, would strongly disagree with. I would much

rather see a principled left activist achieve nomination, and turn the debate from being about who can shake hands the warmest, and look the most solemn when marching in front of soldiers, into a debate over scrapping the costly and irrelevant presidency, and the real economic issues, the cuts, bail outs and IMF deal to the heart of the debate. But I completely support Norris' right to stand.

His removal from the campaign, and the fact that it seems no left activist will be able to get the 20 nominations needed to run really reduces this race to a mind-numbing, irrelevant process.

Just one measure of its irrelevancy is that not one of the four declared candidates has had anything different to say on the critical economic crisis that is causing havoc in the lives of an enormous number of our people.

No wonder people are already suffering presidential campaign fatigue.

By Paula Jane Murphy

NO!

DAVID Norris is an engaging, intelligent and dignified man.

He is well respected in public and academic life and has throughout his time been motivated by the need for equality in society.

He has stood up for the vulnerable and held his own with the powerful. David Norris is a good man.

This good man has spoken publicly on various issues, not with the disingenuous air of a vote hungry politician but with the heartening zeal of someone who cares. David Norris could have made a good president.

However, to be president of our country you must be nominated and subsequently elected.

There is a process and although you may think it flawed, undemocratic even, you cannot say it is untested or unpredictable, because good presidents have been elected following the same rules. It is

not easy to get nominated to run for leader of the country, nor should it be. One cannot simply decide to be on the ballot paper; candidates must prove worthy of the honour. If an individual who wishes to be president cannot get on the ballot paper, well, then they should not be on the ballot paper.

David Norris withdrew when it became clear he would not have sufficient support for a nomination. While it is obvious he was subject to an overt, pointed and grotesquely sinister smear campaign, that campaign exposed, not created, serious flaws in Mr. Norris' candidacy.

The decision to write a letter of clemency was taken with personal motivation but in writing the letter on Seanad notepaper Mr. Norris forgot to remove his political hat.

Yes, our public representatives are only human and entitled to err but they are not entitled to repeatedly show poor judgment. Through his actions, Mr. Norris was complacent,

perhaps disrespectful, of both the legal and political systems. More serious however was his failure to realise the gravity of his actions; it simply did not occur to him that this episode would prove problematic.

He underestimated key issues, was underprepared to deal with adversity and lacked the strength to withstand unexpected blows; how then could he be counted upon to lead a nation?

A president stands for all of the people and must do so while demonstrating fortitude and wisdom. He proved himself to be both entirely fallible and dishearteningly unreliable.

David Norris is still a good man but a good man does not a suitable president make.

FOCAL Sport

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Stand out hurling performers of 2011. Turn to page 35 to find out who makes the cut.



This weeks Forgotten Footballer: Vincente Rodriguez. See page 36.

The Cesc Fabregas Robbery

By Gary Whelan

AS the dust settles on the streets of London, as the shopkeepers count the cost of the rampaging British youths who set shops alight and left stock rooms empty, the looting in London has continued. Not by hooded gangs but by Arsenal Football Club.

The daylight robbery of Barcelona boy Francesc Fabregas, who Arsenal effectively stole from the Catalan club as a 16 year old due to a legal loophole in Spanish football laws, only to sell him back this summer to Barcelona for £35 million. Exploiting a loophole may well be legal but it was how they conducted themselves in the deal to let Cesc return to his hometown club which has devalued the Londoners in the eyes of many people connected with Barcelona F.C. Cesc was born in Barcelona, went to his first game at 10 months old and joined the famed 'La Masia' Barcelona youth academy at 10.

The law in Spain states a player cannot sign professional terms with a club until turning 18. In the English game however the law is just 16. So, after being groomed by Barca, Arsenal came in with a big money offer to Fabregas and his parents to leave his hometown club and move to England.

While it may be true that Arsenal did not break any rules in acquiring the player, it is their extortionate demands of €50 million just eight years later which has soured the relationship between the two clubs. Although the final figure paid was €35 million, many people expected Arsenal to accept a low fee

and a player exchange for the transfer considering how they acquired him in the first place. Even with that sum the Gunners were not happy, feeling they let their captain go on the cheap. "We sold Cesc for a reduced fee.

If you can make an auction between Real Madrid, Chelsea and Manchester City, you will certainly get more money," said Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger. Although Arsenal received a large sum of money for Fabregas, they have damaged their reputation around the football world.

Their place amongst the top four in England is also under threat; failure to qualify for the Champions League could be the final nail for Wenger. Meanwhile, Cesc has never looked happier, making his debut against Real Madrid in front of almost 100,000 people... so justice was done. In the end.



Cesc Fabregas has finally returned to his boyhood club, albeit controversially so.

SPECIAL REPORT The GAA; still an amateur sport?

By Eoin Scanlon

'THE Association is an Amateur Association... No player, team, official or member shall accept payment in cash or in kind or other material reward in connection with GAA membership...'

In the GAA rule book, the sport is defined as amateur. How amateur is it today? The GAA central council has come under pressure to change the status of the sport, with what has once been called 'gifts' and 'donations', could now be regarded as 'eligible expenses'.

The fact of the matter today is both players and managers alike receive a cheque at the start of each month. Thus, can we conclude we are watching a semi-professional sport?

The question of the GAA being a sham amateur organisation is certainly a serious argument. Many argue the vast amount of money being poured into the GAA has taken it away from the heart of what it once was.

When GAA delegates voted to accept funding from the Government it was to recognise the contribution of Senior Inter-county GAA players.

Upcoming Waterford hurler Seamus Hannon (24) believes the funding in no way affects the amateur status of GAA, as players sacrifice much in order to show commitment; "The expenses we receive are often minimal when you factor in work hours missed, time away from family, and lack of social life.

So we miss out on a lot in order to play." But does Hannon believe it would be possible in this day and age to play totally as an amateur? "In the old day's players trained without expenses. Times were different. Nowadays I don't think you could because it's too much sacrifice without some sort of financial aid to compensate for work missed. If players didn't get these expenses they would be losing money."

On the subject of code targeted funding, Hannon admits that it does form an elitist aspect to the game. Waterford GAA is a prime example of this. Standing at roughly 60 cent per mile travelled, a county hurler receives more than a county footballer for fuel expenses. The reason? Hurling is more successful in Waterford, thus bringing in more sponsorship.

"I do think it's unfair that more successful teams get more money. Just because you don't win doesn't mean you don't put in a huge commitment. Things like that create bitterness and I think expenses should be capped across the board", Hannon admitted.

(Read part 2 in the next edition)



Sport



Keegan Bradley is looking to rediscover his Irish roots.

Irish will be Keen for new Kid Keegan

By Colin Clarke

FORGET Rory, Darren, Padraig and G-Mac. Irish golfing fans can now cheer a new kid on the course; latest major champion Keegan Bradley.

Keegan has Irish roots in Ballycotton in Cork and hinted that he wants to make an appearance in the Irish Open one day. His legendary aunt Pat Bradley who won six major titles reckons it was his 'Irish toughness', that helped him win the USPGA championship in a three hole play-off with Jason Dufner. A playoff, however, would have been beyond Keegan's wildest dreams after a gut-wrenching triple bogey on the difficult par 3 15th at the Atlanta Athletic Club.

A combination of a fantastic and resilient comeback from Keegan along with a mini collapse from Dufner on the notoriously difficult final three holes forced the two into a playoff. Watching the final days play there was almost a sense of inevitability that 72 holes would not produce a winner.

Three magnificent holes in the playoff from the rookie Keegan won him the Wannamaker trophy in his first ever major. The whole of the golfing world will remember his name now.

Keegan discusses his Irish roots, "I'm really proud of my Irish heritage. I have a shamrock on my bag and my logo is a shamrock too", he said. "The Bradley family are intensely Irish and my aunt is very proud of her roots in Cork and so am I" he added.

"Irish golfing fans can now cheer a new kid on the course"

Irish fans would love to see another major champion playing in the Irish Open and Keegan admits he'd love to play the tournament in the future.

I envisage that Keegan will be popular among golf fans, especially Irish fans as we really love an underdog story. Keegan's story certainly fits the underdog brief. When he left college he was down to his last \$1000 and questioned if would he make it as a professional golfer.

His determination remained high and with some hard work and great play, he did well on the comically named Hooters tour. He then earned his PGA Tour card by finishing fourteenth in the Nationwide Tour money list last season. He's made an incredible start to his rookie season and the USPGA title is the cherry on top. Let's hope we see this new star on his home soil in the near future.

Editorial

By Sports Editor, Robert McNamara

"GENIUS is not replicable. Inspiration, though, is contagious, and multiform", David Foster-Wallace wrote in his essay for the New York Times on multi grand slam tennis winner Roger Federer back in 2006.

This is probably the most pertinent explanation for doing what we do. We are inspired by those who make it look so easy at the very pinnacle of professional sport. We marvel at their success and bask in the reflected glory of our chosen hero. Next step; emulation. We toil and stress and in the process lose precious hours of our lives to the habit or some would

argue, addiction to competitive sport. Dipping our toes in the pool at six in the morning, raising the energy to hit Plassey bank and run ten kilometres after a day squashed with lectures and tutorials. Battling with ourselves about whether to go to training on a Tuesday afternoon in February when the rain is beating hard and the wind can't quite make up its mind in which direction it wants to blow. These are the days we savour no matter what when the ascent to glory or the hush of anti-climactic failure is gone.

As we embark on a new academic year of sport at UL we must acknowledge that there will be some glaring failures standing alongside the gratifying victories. No matter. Results only exist on paper. In a time when funding for Irish sport is being cut and athletes struggle to fit the bill for their endeavours we must clutch tightly to the reason we do what we do. Sport gives everyday a purpose for those so thoroughly engrossed in it. It provides an outlet for strain and emotion that cannot be substituted.



Watching the athletes come through Dublin airport to a heroes welcome after the Special Olympics in Athens during the summer was wonderful. The smiles, laughter and joy of those who had taken part were invigorating. These truly remarkable people are the antithesis of the greedy corporations and governments that trivialise sport as less important than money and economy. The source of inspiration can also come from oneself when we embrace the process of our effort. Results have significance, but not as much as the circuit of uncertainty and hope that leads us there. Therein lay the real inspiration, the motivating factor. Whatever happens, enjoy it and the year will have been a success.

Emerging Sports Star: Blake Griffin

By Gary Whelan

JUMPING over ten feet in the air is pretty impressive, but what about doing it while soaring over a car? Add to that catching a ball mid-flight and slamming down in to the basket. All while a gospel choir puts their heart and soul into R.Kelly's 'I Believe I Can Fly' on the centre court.

Sounds like a special effects scene from a new Hollywood basketball flick, right? Wrong, this is amazingly just another part of the highlight reel of NBA rookie Blake Griffin.

Standing 6'10 and at just 22 years old, Griffin has had a rookie season only equalled by the greats like MJ, Kobe and Lebron. Being drafted from the University of Oklahoma in only his second year in college shows how desperate teams were for his signature.

Incidentally, it was the Los Angeles Clippers who signed Blake, the much lesser known neighbours of the Lakers.

Coming from a basketball family, his father was a good college player who coached both Blake and his brother Taylor through their high school basketball careers. But could they have predicted the level of success that he has gone on to so early in his career?

NBA Rookie of the Year 2011, NBA All-Star 2011, NBA All-Rookie First Team 2011 and NBA Slam Dunk Champion 2011 which is where he made the incredible above mentioned dunk, amongst others. What an impressive list of honours in your first season in the pro game. Added to this, the term 'Blake Griffin Dunk' was one of the most searched for videos on YouTube

last season. Some of his dunks in regular season games are shockingly good, recommended viewing during some free time online. But it is not just his dunks that are spectacular; Griffin had a rookie season average of 22.5pts, 12 rebounds and almost 4 assists per game, which has not been done in over ten years in the NBA. As we edge closer to a new season, Griffin will be a year older, wiser and stronger so it will be exciting to watch him up against the big boys in Miami, Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles. You may even see people wearing #32 Griffin jerseys in Ireland, which will be a first in Clippers history. But considering his name is Griffin and he is ginger, we should get behind him right?



R. Kelly sang 'I Believe I Can Fly'. This guy almost can.

Sport

Leo Messi: the greatest ever?

By Gary Whelan

THERE has been no question over the past four or five seasons that Lionel Messi has been the best player in the world. Now, after the 2010/2011 season he had with Barcelona, the word 'ever' is now being added to that statement.

Champions League winner, La Liga winner, Ballon d'Or winner, 53 goals in 55 appearances, 24 assists, all in one season. No need to insert any elaborate superlatives. Of course, playing in what could be considered one of the top teams of all time helps, but it is plain to see that even amongst the rest of the current Catalan greats, Messi's talent stands out.

"I have seen the player who will inherit my place in Argentine football and his name is Messi. Messi is a genius and he can become an even better player. His potential is limitless and I think he's got everything it takes to become

Argentina's greatest player", none other than Diego Maradona himself.

There are remarkable similarities between the two Argentines, both quite small and stocky, quick passers and have an almost identical technique of dribbling which gives the illusion of the ball being pasted to their feet. It is, however, the end product, the pass or goal, which lifts both above the rest.

Another major factor is the sheer consistency, and this is what possibly will set Messi apart, even from the 'Hand of God' himself.

We all know that Maradona had distractions in his life which affected

his career, but Messi seems to be a very grounded and focused individual, which is reflected in his consistency on the pitch. The fine line between greatness and immortality is simply great performances all the time and the Barca forward has not disappointed yet. Possibly one of the reasons why the man from Rosario outshines even the 53 goal, €94 million Cristiano Ronaldo, something which I am sure riles the Madrid forward.

It is perhaps much too early in his career to be questioning his place in history and how good he is or possibly could be. He only turned 24 in June of this year, still such a very, very young age for a footballer.

The scary and exciting thing about that is that the guy can still become a better player. We now can say that we saw the greatest footballer of all time in his prime. Leo Messi.



Messi was at it again in the Spanish Super Cup, tearing Real's defence to shreds.

SPORTS QUIZ

Premier League Puzzlers

By Sports Editor, Robert McNamara

- Who scored the Premier League's first ever goal?
- What company were the first sponsors of the Premier League?
- Name the player who has netted a goal in every Premier League season to date.
- How many clubs have won the Premier League?
- In what season were squad numbers introduced to the league?
- Name the first Irishman to lift the Premier League title as captain of his club and in which season.
- Arsene Wenger took over as manager of Arsenal in which Premier League season?
- Coventry City were relegated from the Premier League in which year?
- Who is currently the top scorer of all time in the Premier League?
- Name four players relegated from the Premier League four times.



- ANSWERS**
- Brian Deane - Sheffield United
 - Carlting 1993-2001
 - Ryan Giggs
 - Four, Manchester United,
 - 1993/94
 - Roy Keane, Hermann
 - Manchester United
 - 1996/97
 - 2001
 - Alan Shearer
 - Marcus Ben,
 - 1993/94
 - Ashley Ward,
 - 1993/94
 - Blackburn Rovers,
 - 1993/94
 - Manchester United
 - Nigel Quashie

Top of the Class: stand out hurling performers of 2011

By Eoin Scanlon

PADRAIC Maher - The pick of an imperious Tipperary back line, 22 year old Padraic Maher looks set to add to his 2009 all-star for full back. Maher commanded the half back line with consummate ease, his quick clearances feeding a forward line with a fondness for goals. Man of the match in the Munster semi-final victory over Clare, he fits nicely into a highly regarded Tipperary outfit. Future success for the premier county will depend heavily on this young star.

Lar Corbett - Worth his weight in gold. Before last Sunday's All-Ireland final, Corbett had helped himself to an impressive tally of 7-9. His input of 4-4 in the Munster final helped Tipp to a seven goal annihilation of Waterford. With his ability to ghost through opposition defences, along with a taste

for crucial goals, Corbett has been a revelation the last couple of years; put your house on him winning a third straight all-star come October.

Joe Canning- Once again the Portumna native has been Galway's stand out player in 2011. With little help in a forward line lacking any signs of life or leadership, Canning (22) has been forced to weigh in with huge scores in every game. He finished up with a tally of 3-31, including 10 points in the qualifier win over Cork. This scoring ability, along with his strength and sublime skill means Joe Canning is Galway's great hope for the future.

Michael Fennelly - Having firmly cemented his position on this illustrious Kilkenny side, the 26 year old has become a key player as the cats strive to retain their status as the number

one team in the country. An all-star at centre field last year, Fennelly is highly regarded for his high work-rate, strength in the tackle and a knack for hitting important scores. Following noteworthy performances against Dublin and Waterford, few can argue if he picks up a second all-star award come October.

Liam Rushe - Rushe epitomises Dublin's endeavours at under age. The 21 year old has proven to be Mr. Versatile, as injuries to key Dublin players has forced manager Anthony Daly to position Rushe in the half back, midfield and half forward line. Excellent in the air, he has been an instrumental figure in Dublin's successful league campaign, and their journey to an all-Ireland semi-final match with Tipperary.



Padraic Maher has been in fine form for Tipperary in this years championship.

Sports

Forgotten Footballer: Vicente Rodriguez

By Darren Mulryan

MANY followers of top flight Spanish football would have heard about Vicente from his days tearing down the wings at Spanish club Valencia. With over 300 appearances in 11 years for the Spanish giants, Vicente remains one of the few players that were part of the 2004 UEFA cup triumph against Marseille.

Vicente started his playing career with lower tier side Levante before attracting attention from the likes of Arsenal and Valencia. It was not long before signs of talent came to the surface. His blistering pace and fine first touch set him apart from his teammates, so it was a matter of time before he sealed a move to his boyhood idols Valencia.

In the summer of 2000, Vicente was snapped up and featured promisingly in the UEFA Champions League with 13 appearances. He was to continue this fine form the following season under newly appointed manager Rafa Benitez. His fellow countryman recognised the talent the young Spaniard held and gave him a role on Valencia's left wing.

The 2004 UEFA Cup final was Vicente's finest moment sealing the cup with a goal on the night. It seemed as if the Spaniard could do no wrong. However, in the following months

to come, signs of wear and tear on Vicente's Achilles and hamstring would not go away. Vicente spent the following years trying to cement a first team place under new managers. One of his rare appearances was in the Champions League against Chelsea under Italian Claudio Ranieri. It was the first leg tie of this European fixture that ended up in disaster as injury ruled him out for a further 11 months.

Confidence as a footballer is the key to consistency and Vicente lacked this in abundance. A quote from the player in the 2007 season summed up his misery: "I'm very low anaemically. I've lost all confidence in the medical staff, that's it. I've been defending them for the last two years, but I don't see any of this situation improving, when I'm still not recovered from one injury I get worse, or suffer from another one."

Vicente has recently been released after an 11 year spell with Valencia and now his future path is in doubt. Vicente's talent was certainly a wasted one. A bright and shining star that could have shone so bright eventually diminished into obscurity.



Once a Spanish cup final hero, Vicente's career has fizzled out.

2011/12 NFL Season Preview

By Garry Irwin

WEEK 1 of this year's American Football season begins on Thursday Sep 8 when the reigning Super Bowl champs the Green Bay Packers host the previous year's winners, the New Orleans Saints, in what promises to be a mouth-watering clash of two offensive powerhouses.

Both sides would hold realistic hopes of making it to Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis for Super Bowl XLVI next February. The prospect of there being a season at all was in jeopardy, as the disagreement between the owners and the players resulted in the summer lockout rumbling on with no sign of a compromise on either side.

Thankfully, just in time for pre-season games to be televised, a new 10-year collective bargaining agreement was put in place. Giving the owners a little more of the 9 Billion that the NFL divides out in revenues each year, while allowing players new concessions in their workload and increased injury

benefits, effectively averted the possibility of a strike shortened season, such as happened in 1982, or forcing owners to get in 'scabs' to fill games which happened in 1987. San Francisco Phoney-Niners versus Chicago Spare-Bears anyone? With ten years of peace now in sight, we can look at the main contenders for this season's Vince Lombardi trophy. First up should be Tom Brady and the New England Patriots. The leagues number one quarterback should be helped by the addition of Chad Ochocinco, a player who knows how to run to the end zone when not running his mouth. These annual playoff contenders should be picked



to go all the way. Closely following the Patriots are Aaron Rodgers and the Packers, but with an aging squad they will have a lot to do. If the Philadelphia Eagles offense can gel they could put up some big scores that would trouble any team in the league.

After them you should look at the Pittsburgh Steelers, but the most decorated team in football only has a chance if Ben Roethlisberger can stay fit all season while Drew Brees and the Saints will be looking to bounce back after a disappointing 2010. As an outside bet, maybe the San Diego Chargers could be the team to get some momentum going this season.

With teams and players eager to show fans the good side of football, this promises to be one of the most interesting seasons in recent memory.

MLB 2011 - Playoff Picture Shaping Up

By Garry Irwin

WITH nearly 30 games left in the regular season, it seems that the eight teams who will contest the playoffs for this year's World Series has been decided. The Yankees and Red Sox will both make it out of the American League East. The Detroit Tigers should have too much for the Cleveland Indians in the American League Central while over in the West, the Texas Rangers look to be gunning for another division title. The National League is in a similar situation, with all of the four playoff slots bar one virtually sown up. The four aces pitching staff of the Philadelphia Phillies will help them ease to a pennant with what should be the best record in the whole of baseball. As it was the previous year, their East division rival Atlanta Braves, will be playing catch up but will safely

take the single Wild Card route to the postseason. National League Central sees a revamped Milwaukee Brewers reach the playoffs for only the second time in nearly thirty years.

The National League West is proving to be the most dramatic division in baseball this season, as the World Series Champions San Francisco Giants find themselves in a real scrap with the Arizona Diamondbacks for the division. The Arizona line-up has been gutted from the previous year and they are putting together their best pitching rotation since they won the World Series in 2001.

But the Giants should just have too much for them this year down the stretch. They have the experience of last season, where they only made the playoffs after a final day regular season



The race to be World Series Champions is well and truly on.

victory over the Padres, before going all the way to become the unfancied champs. Looking further down the line, if the Red Sox can keep hitters such as Gonzalez and Ortiz healthy, they should have too much for the not-as-dangerous-as-they-once-were Yankees and take the American League Championship. The Phillies are likely to pitch their way to the National League title, possibly at the expense of a Ryan Braun inspired Brewers. This should set up a very intriguing duel between their All-Star pitching staff and the home-run leading Boston sluggers. The difference could come down to the fact that the National League Phillies will enjoy home field advantage for the World Series. But of course anything can happen between now and the end of October.

Fantasy Football: Tips and Advice

By Darren Mulryan

WE at An Focal have been buzzing around the office with excitement as the Premier League returns to what should promise to be another cracker of a season. Teams have been spending mega bucks again this year, so a lot of questions need to be answered.

Who will you pick to lead your team out for the kick off? Rest assured if you follow our picks and advice this term, it will be your mates picking up the bar bill, and not the bragging rights.

A true Fantasy Football maestro knows when to change captain and also to call transfers when they need it most. Here's a look at a few handy techniques to rack up the points.

1. Do not underestimate your defence. 6 points are on offer for every goal scored by a defender. Pick well and you might just creep up the table.

2. Midfield play will dictate everything from cards to assists. Go for a low carding-high scoring midfielder. Keep an eye on current form.

3. Your strikers need to be switched often. Don't rely on Drogba every Saturday in the hope of a hat trick. It won't happen. Keep your bench happy.

4. Spend your kitty wisely. Don't blow your hard earned Euros on big names. Mix it up with experience and quality. Instead of Ashley Cole go for Leighton Baines for example. Baines being the highest ranking defender from last season.



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Go to www.premierleague.com, sign up and enter the code 573004-443556.

Best of luck over the next few weeks. Stay in touch with our advice this term for more tips.

Features

THE UL GLOSSARY OF TERMS

By Patrick Ryan

The points race is over, you've accepted your offer, the folks have dropped you to your new accommodation and you wait expectantly on your own for your housemates to arrive.

It's nerve-wracking, it's exciting and it's the very first page in your life's latest chapter. Welcome to University! This is an alphabetical glossary of terms, explaining a number of things you'll see, hear about or experience in UL.

An Focal: Your campus, your life, your newspaper. An Focal is written by students, for students. It's free, it's all over campus and it comes out fortnightly. Get involved. Contact sucommunications@ul.ie or find us on facebook.



An Focal

Anfocal.ulsu.ie: UL's very own online news site which was set up during the summer months. Contact kelly.obrien@ul.ie to upload your article!

Assignments: Undesirable and difficult to avoid. Also known as course-work.

Banks: They all want your money, they all provide freebies and they'll all offer you great overdraft interest rates. See Ulster Bank.

Books: Here comes another booklist. But fret not! Books can be found in the library. Books are expensive, so buy a photocopy card or borrow from the Library well in advance of your deadline. The ULSU also has a great second-hand book store where you can get books on the cheap! Contact the SU reception for more details.

Brown Thomas: The rusty sculpture standing in the Plaza, by the Library. He also likes to wear various objects of stolen clothing.



Brown Thomas and The Plaza

Buses: You're quicker walking. (Or cycling! See Unicycle!)

Castletroy: The Limerick suburb where UL is situated. See Community.

Campus: One of the most beautiful in Ireland, the UL Campus boasts over 200 acres of mature trees, greens, river, and medieval, classical, concrete and modern architecture. It's Ireland's best-kept secret.

Cellar Door: Newly established literary magazine. Will be published Week 8 Sem 1 and Week 8 Sem 2. Don't miss the launch party in The Millstream Common Room on the 25th of October!

Charity Week: The best week of your life. Brought to you by your Union in Week Six, Semester Two.

Checker Board, The: A large, wall of black and white squares at the Main Entrance to UL. An unusual landmark. Prone to vandalism.

Class Reps: Kind of like your school prefect if you had one, these guys organise class trips, hoodies and liaise with the Students' Union. To get involved, contact sueducation@ul.ie

Clubs and Societies: There are over 60 clubs and societies in UL, so there's bound to be one to suit you!

Co. Clare: The North Campus (where you'll find Thomond and Cappavilla Villages) is actually in County Clare.

Community: If there's one serious message in this glossary, it's this. Please keep it cool and respect your new neighbours. No funny business!

Coop: A UL synonym for work experience. This great opportunity is compulsory with many degree programmes at UL, in second or third year.

Deadlines: They whoosh by. Try to meet these or risk losing precious percentages.



Don Barry

Don Barry: The President of UL, our illustrious leader. You probably won't see him very often, but if you do, ask for his autograph and sell it on ebay!

East Gate: Can be located with any good compass. It's the original entrance to The White House (see below). Buses leave from the nearby car park on Fridays.

Elm Park: A residential experience.

Exams: Horrible. Generally happens twice a year.

Facebook: Your Union is on Facebook. Be sure to like its page and visit often

for handy updates on Entertainments and much, much more.

First Seven Weeks: A programme designed to ensure your smoothest transition into UL life.

Flag Poles: The phallic rods that mark the main entrance to UL.



The Flag Poles - Courtesy UL Press Office

Foundation Car Park, The: A good place to spot an argument between motorists contesting a parking space. Available spaces are few.

Fountains: There are several. The simple addition of washing up liquid leads to some very expensive extraction work. Don't do it!

Grades: University Percentage/Grade exchanges are different to those of the Leaving Cert. What's more, they vary from department to department.

So get to know your department's grading system and don't take anyone else's word for it!

Home Cooking: Pasta, Dolmio, spoon and pot. Yum!

ID Cards: Chances are your photo was a disaster. What's worse, you can't change it. Sigh.

I-Grade: Incomplete Grade. A special type of grade given if you are sick, mourning the loss of a close relative or have another valid reason to miss an exam. With this grade, you can re-sit the exam during the August repeats.

Javas: The old name for the Scholars.

KBS, The: The Kemmy Business School.

Lab: Some students never have one. Others have them too often. A practical-based, educational experience.

Lectures: Try not to miss too many. A golden week is when you go to all of them. A platinum week is when you go out every night and still get to all of them!

Library, The Glucksman: A place for study, procrastination and everything in between. See Talent-Spotting.

Living Bridge, The: Spectacular day or night; this is Ireland's longest pedestrian walk-bridge. Call me an engineer, but shouldn't a bridge be the shortest distance between two points?!

Lodge, The: You will visit. You will learn. And when you graduate from



The Living Bridge

UL, you'll desperately miss it.

Main Building, The: Home to the Jonathan Swift, a mysterious theatre that goes missing from time to time.

Orientation: Officially happened last week. A chance for you to get the standard guided tour and pick up a Fresher Pack. Did you get your Student Handbook? If not, you can buy one from SU reception.

Plaza, The: The large space in front of the Ski Slopes. You'll find Brown Thomas standing here.

President's Volunteer Award: Sort of like Gaisce, for UL. Email the Student Affairs Department or call in to your SU to find out more.

QCA: Your grade point average, represented by a figure. After four years, your accumulated figure will decide the grade of your degree.

RAG Week: An out-of-fashion term for Charity Week.

Red Raisins: Also known as the B1 Canteen, this is where you'll find a premises which brews Starbucks, a Subway, an ATM and lots of space to relax or to study.

Ride, The: Bogger terminology used by some UL students. Often suffixed to the end of the question "Did you get.."

SAA: Student Academic Administration.

Scholars: The new name for Java's.

Ski Slopes: No, there's no alpine sport to be enjoyed here. That's the glass entrance of the main building, which overlooks The Plaza all the way to the Schumann Building and KBS.

Stables, The: A long-established campus bar. Sign up to become a member!

Student Handbook: The most desirable book you'll get all year. Free in your Fresher Pack from ULSU. Available to buy from SU reception.

Students' Union: All UL students are automatically members of the Students' Union. It is there to help you through college life. Call in between the hours of 9am and 11pm.

Superdine: All part of The Lodge experience.

Talent-Spotting: People-watching with a twist. Not a UL term per se, but certainly part of the experience.

Timetables: Visit timetable.ul.ie to check up on any student's timetable. Makes stalking easy. Disclaimer: stalking is illegal.

UL FM: UL's first full time radio station. Established during the summer months, the station is still in its infancy and needs your help to grow! Contact kelly.obrien@ul.ie to get involved.

UL FM Launch Party: Not to be missed! Wednesday Week 3 (21st Sep) in the SU Courtyard. Food, drinks, DJ's, live acts, Ruth Scott... what's not to love!?



Unicycle: Probably the best bicycle shop in the world! Established 2010.

University Arena: State of the art, home of Ireland's largest indoor swimming pool.



UL Arena

Villages: Five on campus. Plassey, Kilmurry, Dromroe, Thomond and the latest addition, Cappavilla.

Weeks: There are about 14 per semester so make the most of them!

White House, The: Also known as Plassey House, this is the Italianate, Georgian house surrounded by the Main Building.

The presidential offices are located here. One of UL's oldest buildings.

Definitely worth a visit!



Travel

Inter-railing in Krakow



Old Square: Krakow

By Keira Maher

It was the July 11 and I was halfway through my inter-railing adventure when I made the epic trip, with four friends in tow, from Berlin to Krakow. With three trains and two stopovers I hoped Krakow would be worth the journey.

It was when we crossed the German/Polish border that things got a little scary. Convinced we were heading to Hogwarts, it was a train ride that will never be forgotten. We arrived in Krakow's Główny station 14 hours later exhausted and confused as our next challenge was to find our hostel. Fortunately for us, we met a nice man who had perfect English and directed us towards it. We checked into "Nathan's Villa" which was going to be our sleeping quarters for the next three days. Over lunch, (i.e. McDonald's) we planned our itinerary. We included a trip to the salt mines and Auschwitz as

well as a walking tour in our schedule. Then, being five girls, we went shopping for the rest of the day before getting ready to go out. We started our night of drinking in the hostel bar as the barmaid gave us "Mad Dog" shots. We met a group of Irish lads who organize pub crawls every night of the summer; for €20 we got entry into three bars and a club. We also got unlimited drinks for the first hour and a free shot in each bar. We ended the night on a high in club Diva. We were up early the next day as we had a pre-booked tour to Auschwitz and the salt mines. Auschwitz was devastating and I doubt

I'll see anything like it again. After Auschwitz we headed West of Krakow to see Poland's finest salt mines. Here we saw some incredible sculptures. Travelling back on the bus nearly all of us fell asleep as the exhaustion kicked in. Nearly too tired to eat (and I stress the word nearly), we found a nice Chinese restaurant before heading back to base for a highly anticipated sleep.

Our last full day in Krakow was by far the hottest day of them all with temperatures hitting 30°C... This was the same day we had decided to do a three hour walking tour of Krakow! Although the sun was so hot, the tour

was very interesting. We got to see the royal palace, which was amazing, and the house where Pope John Paul lived in (Nanny would be proud). To finish our three days of "KraK" we treated ourselves to some Mexican food which was value for money as we got two rounds of drinks and dinner for a mere €8. I did not expect much of Krakow at the beginning to be honest. But it exceeded all of our expectations. From the day tours to Auschwitz and the salt mines, the excellent nightlife and interesting walking tours, there is plenty to do in Krakow and I would go back there in a heartbeat.

Erasmus in Budapest

By Darragh Roche

HOW do you prepare to live in another country, even for a short while? Choosing where to study for Erasmus took very little thought. I simply read the list and picked a place few people I knew had been. Getting ready to live in Budapest, the capital of Hungary, for four months was something else entirely.

I bought a guide book, stuck a map on my wall and booked a flight. Then I began to wonder, which of my favourite books should I bring with me?

My guidebook soon became my favourite book; I read it cover to cover more than a few times. It helped that the book was filled with photos of the most attractive streets, boulevards, plazas and gardens. Budapest is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, an honour rarely afforded to a whole city. Even sumptuous Vienna doesn't make the list. I visited Vienna and Prague this year, their beauty is dazzling, and given that Budapest is "more beautiful than Prague" and "the little Paris of middle Europe", my expectations are high.

Then there's packing. Of course I'll bring my Muppet t-shirts (I have quite a few); the hoodie from my favourite UL society, perhaps, or the one from RAG Week 2008? Should I bring my tux, complete with dickie bow and winged collar? I'd hate to be caught short. A scarf might become necessary



The Hungarian Parliament

if there's a chill, and that recently purchased red fleece is pretty trendy. And then we come down to brass tacks: do I need my favourite book of short stories? Should I bother bringing that very sentimentally important copy of *The Hobbit*? What I really need are one or two "dipping into" books to pick up on those insomniac nights when other people's words are soothing.

And if I'm serving as a correspondent, might it not be wise to bring Strunk and White or Harold Evans?

But I know these concerns will fade once I'm on the streets of the twin city of Budapest. The first few days will be a chance to cross the famous, lion flanked Chain Bridge, to see the most beautiful parliament house in the world, to visit Europe's largest synagogue, to see the Holy Right Hand of St Stephen and many other things which it will be my pleasure to report.

Erasmus in Sweden

By Adam Leahy

SWEDEN. I have heard that word so much lately that it's beginning to lose all meaning. When are you going to Sweden? All packed for Sweden yet? So are you all excited about Sweden? In case you're wondering, the answers are; the 25th, no, and no. I haven't left yet, but I am preparing. I promise. And it's not that I'm not excited, but as a typical Irish person I find it difficult to get worked up about any place colder than Ireland. Don't get me wrong, when I first heard that I'd be going to Sweden (there's that word again) I was very excited. My first thought was 'Chocolate!' to which somebody helpfully informed me that that was in fact Switzerland that I was thinking of. That was alright, I kept my spirits up in the knowledge that I'd at least be able to open one of the famous Swedish bank accounts. Wrong again.

Sweden is famous for other things though, namely ABBA, IKEA, and tall, beautiful, blonde women. Two out of three ain't bad, eh? I'm all for 1970's Euro-Pop and flat-pack furniture, but when you're a 5ft8in Irishman who is made up of 90% hair and 10% large glasses; tall and beautiful Swedish women are of very little use to you. I'd



need a step-ladder to reach half way to the part which my male friends tell me I should be looking out for, and a bloody crane to reach the part my female friends tell me to aim for (their hearts of course...dirty minded people).

In the interest of not having to use the S-word again, the place I will actually be studying is called Vaxjo. The facilities look great, my appointed 'college buddy' seems rather keen, my modules sound interesting, and there is a mountain close by for the odd ski. So I suppose it'll be livable, even if there isn't any chocolate. Well, this is what you have to look forward to. Over the next few issues I will be chronicling my adventures in Vaxjo. I hope they'll be an interesting read – for my sake more than yours. Until then, spare a thought for the short guy building flat-pack wardrobes alone to the tune of Dancing Queen.

Travel

By **Sinéad Ní Chatháin**

Seize the day. The phrase my grandfather taught me as a kid seems so much more relevant the last few months than before.

Like many hundreds of Irish youngsters this year, I am packing my suitcase and heading off to start a new life in Australia. I am literally seizing the day; taking everything I have and starting over in a brand new country 12,000 miles away.

Today, I have thirty four days left in Ireland and I'm beginning to freak out. Being a real adult by myself in a foreign country? It's a terrifying thought.

The butterflies in my tummy have been getting more and more agitated with every week that passes by. It's going to be a very scary adventure, and I'm not sure I'm ready for it yet.

All that said and done, I won't be totally new to the Australian experience. As an Australian citizen through my

mother, I'll have plenty of relatives and friends who will help me out. In fact, this trip across the globe will be my seventh! With citizenship, setting myself up should be that bit easier; no visas, no registering to worry about. I have it easy; but that thought still doesn't shake off those butterflies by any means!

Emigrating is bloody hard work. It has taken me weeks to prepare my paperwork and get my references together for finding a new job. I have done a trial packing session and sorted through my wardrobe twice over. But there are other less obvious things I have to think about: getting a tenancy reference, opening a bank account and finding a new hairdresser. I really hope I have everything ready; it's a long way home if I forget something!

Although my experience isn't typical of the other Irish who pack up and try the Australian life, my worries and nerves are the same. As I move over and settle in (hopefully!) I will update you all at home over the next few weeks on my adventures in Melbourne. I might even have some tips and advice for anyone thinking of moving over themselves.

For the moment though, choosing which shoes to bring is my biggest worry. Maybe I'll just seize the day and bring them all!



Melbourne, Australia

Erasmus in Spain

By **Alana Walsh**

OH dear God, Erasmus. That 'thing' that seemed ages away upon entering first year is now very much looming. After spending last semester on Coop, I already feel like I have been away from my beloved UL for too long.

The countdown for my departure to Spain is on and although I have a billion and one things to prepare for it, I am starting to get excited. Last semester I followed the foreign adventures of

my friends on Facebook and envied all their colourful experiences.

When I finished up placement at the end of May I dived straight into a summer job; a much welcomed income since placement was unpaid and Erasmus is not going to fund itself.

Today I parted with €2,072 of hard earned cash to register for third year; quite a traumatic and painful encounter but I am erasing it from memory

and focusing on the thoughts of the delightful Granada. For those of you who have not heard of Granada, it is located in the south of Spain, just at the foot of the Sierra Nevada mountain range.

Its university is in the top three in Spain for a great student nightlife; win! I finish my summer job on September 9 and I fly out on September 12, leaving just one weekend to say goodbye

and face the horror of leaving all my belongings behind thanks to Ryanair. Michael O'Leary could do with being a tad more considerate of my fashion needs. I have to attempt to move myself to Spain for four months with a mere 30kg. It seems a near impossible task so my only consolation is the thoughts of shopping over there and replacing any items that I was forced to leave behind.

While packing has been on the forefront of my mind, I possibly should be giving more attention to my current lack of accommodation... but I'm taking the laid-back attitude and hoping it will sort itself out! Watch this space; the next update will come from España, hasta luego!

Coop in AOIFE

By **Caitríona Ní Chadhain**

GOOD things come to those who wait as I learnt in my search for Coop this year. I was teetering on the edge of panic having refused one or two potential positions in the hope of something better/more affordable coming along. July was fast approaching and I was ready to pick up the phone and start badgering potential employers to take me in but luckily there was no need. My emails went unheeded but I discovered that in some situations it's best to follow up with a phone call as emails most often slip through the cracks in a moment of forgetfulness rather than dismissiveness. Just as I was planning my next plan of attack, my shining light came in the form of a phone call from Jerry Cronin. He asked if I was interested in interviewing for a position as press and communications assistant with the Association of Irish Festival Events (AOIFE). I jumped at the opportunity and was quivering in my little cotton socks at the prospect of interviewing for a job so perfectly tied in to the kind of work I'd like to imagine myself doing in future. The interview came and went and I had absolutely no idea how I had done. The questions had been tough. I had blabbed. They nodded. They smiled. But I couldn't tell if they were genuinely impressed or just wondering bemusedly when I was going to shut the hell up or start making some sense. I was over the moon when just a week later I got a call from my now boss to inform me that I got the job!

As I write this I'm just finishing up my first week, and from what I can see so far, there's no such thing as a dull moment around here. Only last night I found myself ushering at a Rose of Tralee cabaret evening which was supposed to have only 340 guests but somehow 400 tickets were sold! It was hectic and it made me hate people for a little while, but everything got sorted in the end and I got a free dinner and some wine to chill me out. I have plenty more to say but not enough space to say it in... so stay tuned to hear more of the trials and tribulations of my latest adventure. Slán!



La Alhambra, Granada

Lifestyle

Two fingers to airbrushing

By Clare Curran

WE tan, pluck, pucker, wax, epilator, tame and generally perform a personal assault in an effort to keep up with society's demands and to appeal as a uniform attractive woman; a typecast of those most desirable and befitting of our admiration.

It comes as little surprise that our efforts are never good enough. In fact, we are doomed for failure.

As those of us deemed to be the most "attractive" of our species grace the pages of publications around the world, their smiling faces are a glimmer into the life of a success story. It is a little disheartening to think that even they, for all their skilled make-up and hair personnel, lighting experts, camera crew, dermatologists, dieticians, assistants and stylists, still can't make that perfect picture.

Natural beauty is certainly a thing of the past and should actually be scorned if this month's *Vogue* is anything to go by. The September issue

of the magazine was found to have airbrushed a portrait of Kate Moss and her daughter Lila Grace so much that they accidentally removed two fingers from the youngster's hand. The photo, depicting a mother earth, nurturing "bond" has a natural feel to it. Which begs the question; why does a child need to be airbrushed?

For those of you not familiar with the term or not sure what it entails, airbrushing is applying fine coats of paint to an image to remove a model's imperfections or enhance their attributes. Removing a wrinkle here and adding clear complexions there, adding uniform colour or, in extreme cases, even removing items from an

image. Essentially it creates a picture of unrealistic perfection. As I read through the online blogs and opinions researching this article, I came across a statement that professed the answer to this controversial debate far better than I ever could.

It read "I don't think we will ever be able to change the way the fashion industry is but if we change the way people perceive the fashion industry, it will make a big difference."

We as a society dictate how our marketing campaigns work. They are geared at us. If we strive for perfection, admire it and demand it, we ourselves are responsible for whether or not it's airbrushed. It gives us an unattainable image of how we should look and we feel bad about ourselves when we can't achieve it. If even Kate Moss can't look like Kate Moss then what chance do the rest of us have of looking like her?



Kate Moss and her daughter Lila Grace

Coffee's anti-cancer link

Written by Michael Kane

RECENT studies have shown that contrary to a commonly held belief, the regular consumption of coffee may be largely beneficial to one's health. The findings suggest that drinking coffee or possibly even applying it to the skin on a regular basis can ward off non-melanoma cancers, which are the most common of all skin cancers. The caffeine aids the skin in that it kills off damaged cells that, left untreated, could inevitably develop into cancerous tumours.

The results originate from a study involving genetically altered mice. The mice, which were incapable of producing protein enzyme ATR were able to fend off cancer for longer when exposed to a carcinogen, in this case ultraviolet light.

Previous studies have also indicated that the consumption of caffeine in humans leads to the suppression of ATR production. While the mice

"The study recommends drinking as much as four to five cups of coffee a day"

involved in the experiment would eventually go on to develop tumours, they remained healthier three weeks longer than the control group of mice. Clearly, it is not a concrete solution to the treatment of skin cancer but can at least serve as a deterrent.

"Eventually, if you treat them long enough, the mice will develop cancer so it is not 100% protection forever," says Allan Conney, an author of the study which was published by *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. Conney also notes that they are still attempting to confirm that the caffeine works in the same way when it is applied topically.

Although drinking coffee as a means of preventing the development of skin

cancer isn't a definitive solution to a widespread problem, it is reassuring to know that one of the world's most largely consumed beverages is to some extent promoting good health. The study recommends drinking as much as four to five cups of coffee a day would be of greater benefit than just that single morning cup.

Studies have also indicated that there have been fewer incidents of uterine, breast or prostate cancer diagnosed amongst coffee drinkers. Unfortunately, decaffeinated coffee has not yet yielded the same result.



The Bootylicious Boom

Written by Barbara Ross

THIS year has officially become the year of the ass... and I'm not talking about braying donkeys.

On April 29 2011, our screens were graced with images not only of the biggest wedding of the year but of the new must have accessory; the perfect butt. People everywhere are lining up to go under the knife to get that derriere that drove every hot blooded male wild and every woman into a frenzy of butt enhancing workouts.

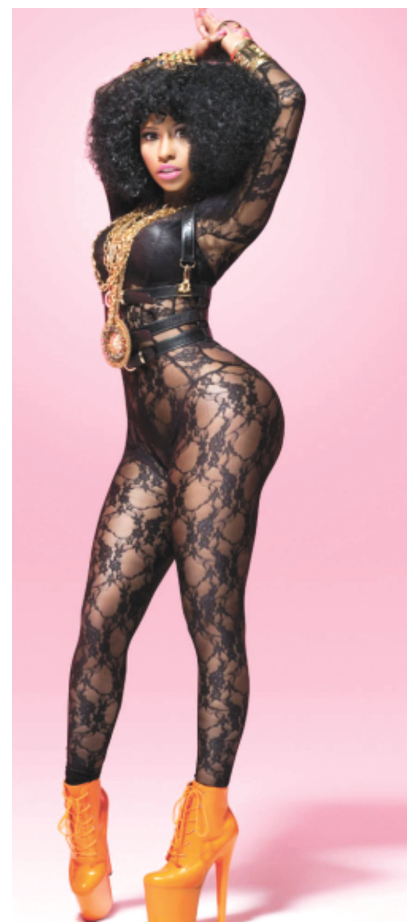
It has always been a faux pas to overshadow the bride on her wedding day but that certainly didn't stop Miss Middleton shaking her booty to the masses, so to speak. Pippa Middleton appeared in her sister's wedding as maid of honour in a figure hugging Alexander McQueen and the fantasy was born.

Beyoncé once sang of 'bootylicious' buttocks and the trend has rocketed skyward in recent times. Procedures such as buttock augmentation and reduction can give any bottom more shape and definition to match the rest of the body, experts say.

Following on from the boob job boom, more and more patients are striving for the perfect body with curves in all the right places, according to the director of PerfectBottoms.org.

Dr Constantino Mendieta, a Miami-based celebrity plastic surgeon, claims Pippa's appearance has led to a huge demand in what has been coined the "Pippa Butt Lift". Four celebrities in particular used to dominate the agenda when it came to patients' descriptions of the ideal rear.

Jennifer Lopez, Beyoncé Knowles, Serena Williams and Kim Kardashian were all once top of the list but Dr Mendieta says that Miss Middleton has become the "new queen of booty". Many thought that to have a voluptuous



The ever bootylicious Nicki Minaj

rear end you had to be loud and confident to carry off what was always a big fixture but that is no longer the case. Women now want a butt that complements their natural curves. Many breast enlargement or breast lift patients now follow up their surgery with butt enhancement to balance out their shape. The point is butts are in, boobs are out. So girls, take that ass groping as a compliment. You could give Pippa a run for her money.

Lifestyle

Social Drinking: another cover for excess?

By Paul O' Sullivan

ONE cannot help but notice that there is a wave of denial flowing through Irish society.

The latest in a series of defensive measures for Irish drinking is the term "social drinking". One acknowledges that they do, in fact, drink but only in a social context. We are all the victims of a culture that is heavily dependent on alcohol as a social necessity. People really do believe that alcohol is a requirement if a social gathering is to be fun. If someone decides not to drink, they are considered boring.

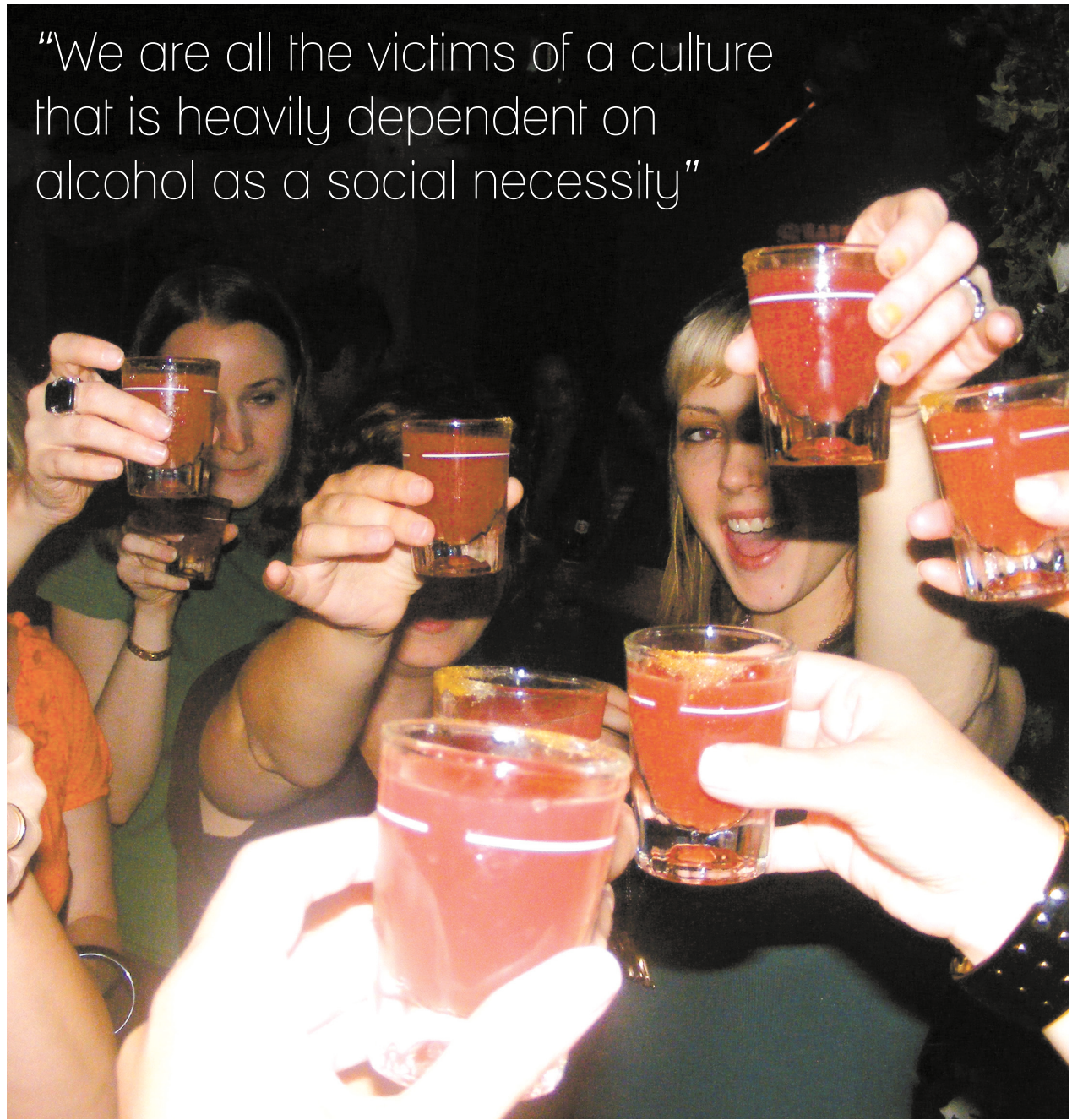
Ireland has a very different view of what constitutes excessive alcohol consumption compared to the U.S for example. We don't live in a country with a strong history of prohibition like America and the thought of banning alcohol would be inconceivable to most of us. Social drinking is an illusion. It is just another tool used by the Irish people to make their drinking habits look more acceptable to those around them. The fact that someone feels the need to make their drinking look less excessive suggests that they are aware of their over-drinking and feel some degree of shame and embarrassment concerning it.

At this point, I would like to eliminate any accusations of hypocrisy. I include myself when I refer to the Irish. I am a member of an alcohol-based culture. I have a different view on what constitutes too much alcohol. That is what made this article particularly difficult to write. I had to set aside these predispositions and approach the article from a different viewpoint.

Many may disagree with my interpretation of Irish drinking but comparatively speaking we do drink in excess. Any list relating to countries that drink the most will show Ireland at the top of it. What is considered excessive drinking is relative to the country you live in. As a nation, many think our alcohol habits are acceptable but when compared to other countries it is a different story.

The fact that rumours are circulating that "The Hangover 3" may be filmed in Dublin is a clear sign of the world's view of Ireland and alcohol. I mentioned above that this article was particularly difficult to write. This is partly due to the fact that I may possibly have been recovering from a night of "social drinking". And no, the irony is not lost on me.

"We are all the victims of a culture that is heavily dependent on alcohol as a social necessity"



GINGERGIRL'S FOOD UL LOVE...

By Helen Keown

HELLO and welcome to the first "food ul love" column. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Helen and I own a food company called gingergirl (see www.gingergirl.ie).

I make a range of luxury jams, preserves and chutneys (using local, seasonal or organic fruit) available throughout Ireland.

Every Tuesday between 12 – 5.30pm you will see me in the Student's Union Courtyard at the Farmer's Market selling my jams, a range of breads and my now famous chocolate brownies – the brownies are so popular that some students have decided to rename me 'brownie lady'! To start off, here's a firm favourite of mine:

Tray baked pork chops

I am a big fan of one-pot dinners; I love the intensity of flavours, the ease of cooking (and washing up!).

(Serves 4+)

- 8 pork chops on the bone
- Approx 1kg of rooster potatoes
- 4 parsnips
- 4 carrots
- 1 handful of fresh rosemary
- 2 bay leaves
- The zest and juice of 2 lemons
- 8 tablespoons of olive oil
- 2 cloves of garlic, chopped
- Salt and black pepper

Rub the lemon zest, rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper onto the pork chops. Squeeze the lemon juice over the meat, pour on a generous glug of olive oil and allow the flavours to develop for approximately one hour.

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Prep the potatoes, carrots and parsnips by cutting lengthways and into quarters. Place them along with the pork and marinade onto a large roasting tray

and gently mixing together to ensure everything is coated in the marinade. Roast in the oven for 45 minutes to one hour, depending on the thickness of the pork chops.

Helen's produce is available nationwide from independent food emporiums and at UL Farmer's Market where you can also purchase her range of breads and chocolate brownies.

Helen also writes a weekly food column for the Limerick Leader and the Limerick Chronicle and is Spin Southwest's resident "foodie".

Want some cooking advice and tips? Email helen@gingergirl.ie

For a chance to win some delicious gingergirl produce and avail of special offers, follow gingergirl on Twitter ([gingergirlfood](https://twitter.com/gingergirlfood)) or on facebook ([gingergirl](https://www.facebook.com/gingergirl)).



THE BEAUTY COLUMN



By Karen O' Connor Desmond

IT can be your best friend or your worst enemy. It can make you look like a wartime beauty or a bloody mess. It can give you a smoky, mysterious, femme-fatale air or it can leave you twitching and paranoid with its potential for a clown-like demise. It's sexy and classy at the same time and a must-have for every trend-watching, up-to-speed fashionista. It's red lipstick.

This little gem of a make-up must-have can be found readily at any make-up counter around the country. Coming in a variety of different shades, the key to the perfect red pout is to find the right one for you. With colours ranging from a deep red/ burgundy to orange reds and even magenta reds, there really is no stopping you! Then of course, there's the texture to consider. Finding a texture that suits you can boost your confidence when daring to brave this bold trend. Textures vary from glossy to matte to creamy and can significantly alter the appearance of the lipstick.

Now for the tricky part – application!

When coating your smackers with your chosen lipstick one thing that is most definitely required is patience. A rush job is not recommended, the consequences are too upsetting to fathom. First things first, make sure that you don't have any foundation on your lips as this will ruin the effect!

Some people like to use a lip pencil to help the lipstick last longer and to make it easier to create an even finish while others prefer to do away with it. Once you've carefully applied your lipstick, blot with a tissue. To make it last even longer, tap some loose powder on the lips with a small make-up brush and reapply. To stop unsightly smudges and feathering, simply press some loose powder around the outline of your lips with a cotton bud.

Red lips can make you look like a million bucks but it's all down to technique. Don't forget that during a wild night out, touch-ups are most definitely required! 1940s Hollywood Glam, here we come!

Fashion

Autumn / Winter 2011

By Emma Norris

MY favourite thing about fashion is how cyclical it is: what was in fashion a few years ago will undoubtedly come into vogue again. It was only a couple of summers ago that bright, 60s inspired prints were all over the catwalks and this fall they're set to make a comeback.

Bright colours will be big, particularly if they clash obnoxiously. However, unlike the summer hues, autumn-winter will take a classier approach to the trend. Chloé is mixing neutral tans, browns and greys with brightly-coloured ponchos. Another nod to the trend is their sunshine yellow mid-length skirt and blouse teamed with a camel-coloured turtleneck underneath and a pair of uniform boots. The looks are very 60s with a polite and inclusive nod to some of the other trends that are and will be circulating this season; the clashing patterns, bright colours and Bavarian furs.

Colour blocking is very important for the next few months. Use a limited palette and stick to it à la DKNY, who are keeping it neutral for the most part and introducing blocks of salmon and grey. Giambattista Valli opts for a bright pink high-necked sleeveless top with a rich, satin, gold skirt. It is big and bold and very night-out-on-the-town. Jil Sander keeps the look considerably more low-key with skinny-legged black trousers

and a bright blue sweater. This is a very achievable look, particularly when you want a fashion-forward outfit that doesn't require too much effort (nine o'clock lectures, anyone?).

This season's colours will be lot less primary school and a lot more old-school. Their take on it is a mod/grunge feel with bold, graphic patterns. Think ankle-skimming coloured trousers and cardigans to rival your grannies combined. At first something as uncool seemed implausible but now, somehow, they are everywhere, in every high-street shop's vision for the coming season. Another very big trend this season is dots. Everyone from Stella McCartney to Marc Jacobs has gone dotty and you soon will too.

Stella McCartney goes for a delicate, feminine vibe with her creations, sewing shiny white discs onto her flowing dresses, while Marc Jacobs keeps the look very structured and primed, with blazers and blouses and trousers. However, everything is dotty and this definitely injects a bit of eccentricity



in his looks. Gucci and Paul Smith are in on the action too so anything dotty you buy over the next few months is a serious investment into your wardrobe. As well as clashing colours, clashing patterns will also be huge. Throwing a mix of patterns together in one outfit is the effortless (almost literally) but very chic ambience designers are aiming to achieve. Try teaming multiple patterns to channel a Mary Katrantzou or Oscar

de la Renta vibe. They're using a huge variety of patterns and textures to create a look that is visually both appealing and terrifying. Not for the faint-hearted. However, it does tend to look very blasé and cool so once you have the attitude to accompany it, you should be fine. Own the strange, mismatched granddad jumpers and fur skirts combo. In terms of wardrobe must-haves, the parka is making a return. Oversized, bright

clutch purses and lots of fur (think indie queen/ Bavarian princess) will help put you on the map as a fearless fashionista.

If you want a more structured and groomed look though, know that your black blazer will get another seasons run. Try a misshapen and out of proportion blazer for a twist on the classic. Baggy trousers and a skinny belt will help complete the look.

Pick up a copy of
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Fashion

Won't somebody please think of the children?!

By Jennifer Armstrong

The next time you cry with delight from discovering a designer knock off for cut price, question for a moment the origins of your coveted find.

Many third world countries, such as those in Asia, Latin America and Africa are masked in hundreds of crowded, polluted sweatshops that manufacture clothes for Gap, Mother-care, Primark and many more. According to the International Labour Organization, over 250 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are bullied into working in these sweatshops, some earning only a few cents a day.

In 1998, the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) was set up to try and ensure a code of conduct was kept in relation to labour practices for American and British shops. In 2007 one of India's largest retail clothes exporters, Gokaldas Export was exposed as having extremely poor work conditions and paying as little as £1.13 a day. The company which supplies clothes to Gap, Marks and Spencer and others came under scrutiny for claims of forced overtime and harassment of employees.

In 2007, Nike faced a huge scandal when information surfaced detailing the conditions of their Vietnam shoe

factories. The workers, made up mainly of women and children were given only 20c a day, forced to work in dangerous environments with 70 hour weeks and made to produce a quota of 11 pairs of shoes a day per worker. Primark suffered a similar humiliation in 2008 when it was revealed children as young as eleven were earning just 60p a day in their clothes factories.

The popular high street store claimed they were completely unaware of these conditions and axed three of their main suppliers from the country almost immediately. Many of these third world countries have fewer regulations on the issue of child labour than western nations which makes action against the problem difficult. The Child Labour Department and many other organisations have attempted to find alternative solutions for the women and children in these areas but the sad truth is the other options are often worse. The countries themselves claim the conditions in the sweatshops are actually good, and prevent young children ending up in drug trafficking rings or prostitution circles. No retailer wants to be branded as one that condones child labour, but even with the revelations in recent years, Primark still made over £2730 million in revenue last year, and with the weakened economy, even more people are flocking to the huge stores. Though they may say they've cleaned up their discretions, there's no way to be sure. The bottom line is if you choose to support shops like these, take a moment to consider what you may be supporting.



Questions Answered!

Email kelly.obrien@ul.ie to submit your question

Q. *I'm going for my Co-Op interview in a few weeks and I'm looking for a simple outfit to wear. I don't want to spend much, my budget is about €30, and I'm hoping to get a classic shift dress that I can wear again and that will make me look professional. Can you help?*

A. Penneys has exactly the thing for you! This simple grey shift dress from the Workwear collection (1) is a mere €15 and can be used time and time again as it's such a classic piece. If you should decide to spend a bit more, this Erdem-esque dress from Marks and Spencer (2) is a little more expensive but is worth the price for the wear and admiring glances you'll get!

Q. *I'm a first year about to go in for my first weeks of college and I want a few pieces of clothing to set me up with a good wardrobe. My friends tell me it's very casual but I don't know what to buy to create a look that's comfortable but chic. What should I buy?*

A. Your friends have given you the best advice; the whole college scene is very casual! The best thing to do is to stock up on the basics, like these stylish jeans from TK Maxx (3) that will go with pumps, Converse or boots, whatever should take your fancy. Team them with some t-shirts, like this nice Heaton's jewel coloured top (4) and this simple blazer, only €15 from Penneys (5) to smarten your outfit up a bit and you're good to go!

Q. *I've been looking to try the pleated midi-skirt trend and can't seem to find a tame one anywhere. Are there any chain stores that I can get one and how do I accessorise it?*

A. Again, Penneys is the best option. This gorgeous nude midi-skirt is an absolute bargain at €15 (6) and will flatter any skin colour. For a bit more colour, check out this pink midi-skirt from boohoo.com (7) which is perfect teamed with a simple t-shirt and wedges for a cool look that will transcend from day to night.



Irish

Focal ón Eagarthóir

Scríofa ag Féilim Ó Flatharta

A chairde, tá fáilte romhaibh chuig an rannóg nua Gaeilge don nuachtán. Tá an-áthas orm a rá gurb é seo an chéad bhliain ó thosaigh an páipéar i 1992 go bhfuil rannóg Gaeilge san nuachtán. Is mise Féilim Ó Flatharta agus is mé an t-eagarthóir i mbliana.

Is as An Cheathrú Rua i nGaeltacht Chonamara i gContae na Gaillimhe mé agus tá mé sa dara bliain anseo

in Ollscoil Luimnigh ag déanamh Bachelor of technology(education) in Materials and Engineering technology. Sé an aidhm atá agam ná an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn san Ollscoil seo agus tá súil agam níos mó daoine a bheith páirteach sa Ghaeilge ar bhealach amháin nó ar bhealach eile.

Tá dhá leathanach tugtha dom i ngach eagrán chun nuacht as Gaeilge a thabhairt daoibh. Tá súil agam scéalta agus nuacht a bheith againn a bheidh spésiúil do gach duine, ó na scéalta is déanaí sa nuacht go dtí an buzz atá ag tarlú thimpeall an champas.

Sé an plean atá agam ná go mbeidh giotáí spóirt, siamsaíocht agus suainseán ann chomh maith le tuairimí na scoláirí ar imeachtaí an tsaoil. Ba

mhaith liom go mbeadh pictiúir ann go rialta freisin agus beidh leathanach Facebook againn ina mbeidh sibh in ann pictiúir a thógann sibh a sheoladh chugam ar rphost agus cuirfidh muid an ceann is fearr san nuachtán gach coicís. Tá súil agam go mbainfidh sibh taitneamh as an rannóg seo agus go taispeánfaidh sé go bhfuil craic ag baint leis an Ghaeilge. Má tá aon smaointe agat faoin t-eolas ar mhaith leat a fheiceáil anseo nó má tá suim agat alt a scríobh téigh i dteagmháil liom. Ná bíodh aon imní ort faoin gcaighdeán Gaeilge mar tabharfaidh mé gach cúnamh.



Féilim Ó Flatharta

An Cumann Gaelach - Tús Maith

Scríofa ag Féilim Ó Flatharta

Thosaigh An Cumann Gaelach go hiomlán as an nua san ollscoil an bhliain seo caite. Seo é an chéad uair a bhí cumann gaelach san ollscoil ó 2006. Is é an aidhm atá leis an gCumann Gaelach ná spraoi agus spóirt a bheith againn thrí meán na Gaeilge. Go hiondúil chasann muid le chéile uair sa tseachtain i Scholars chun ciorcal comhrá a bheith againn chomh maith le beagán craic le cluiche éagsúla. Ar na himeachtaí eile a bhí againn chuaigh muid ar cúpla turas.

I mí Deireadh Fómhar bhí an chéad turas againn go dtí Oireachtas na Gaeilge i gCill Árne. Seo féile bliantúil na Gaeilge agus déanann beagnach

gach Gaeilgeoir sa tír freastal air chun a grá don Ghaeilge a thaispeáint chomh maith le páirt a ghlacadh i gcomórtais amhránaíocht agus damhsa traidisiúnta. Bhí na Cumainn Gaelach eile ag fanacht sa lóistín céanna linn agus bhí deireadh seachtaine iontach againn. Bhí turas againn go dtí an Rinn i bPort Láirge agus go hOileán Árann i nGaillimh againn chomh maith. B'é Seachtain na Gaeilge an imeacht is mó a d'eagraigh muid. Bhí imeachtaí éagsúla eagraithe againn do gach lá agus gach oíche ar feadh na seachtaine, ina measc scóráil sciobtha, áirse Gaeilge agus fugitive Gaelach. Scaoil muid 1,000 balún glas suas san aer agus bhí seó deich

nóiméad tinte ealaíne againn díreach taobh amuigh do Theach Plassey ar an bplásóg. Tá súil againn i bhfad níos mó a dhéanamh i mbliana, tuilleadh turais agus níos mó imeachtaí a eagrú chomh maith le líon na mball a mhéadú. B'fhiú duit ballraíocht a ghlacadh linn i mbliana má tá tú ag iarraidh an chraic a bheith agat agus feabhas a chuir ar do Ghaeilge. Má tá tú líofa nó muna bhfuil agat ach an cúpla focal beidh fáilte romhat sa Chumann Gaelach in Ollscoil Luimnigh.



Tommy Bolger agus Devin Frawley ar an trá

Cultúr an Tíogar Cheilteach ag imeacht le sruth



Scríofa ag Séamus Ó Fátharta

Tá bliain eile curtha dúinn agus is é an scéal céanna é. Tá an líon scoláirí ar theip orthu sa gcúrsa Matamaitice san Ardteist i 2011 chomh ard is a bhí riamh. Is iomaí argóint atá tarraingthe ag an gcúrsa ardteiste atá scoláire a shuí le blianta anuas.

Tá sé le feiceáil sna figiúirí atá foilsithe ar an suíomh idirlín www.examinations.ie gur níos measa atá rudaí ag fáil in áit a mhalairt. Tá ardú de .2% ar an méid daoine ar theip orthu sa gnáth leibhéal matamaitice, sin ó 9.7% mar a bhí i 2010 go dtí 9.9% i 2011. Tá ardú de .5% ar an méid scoláirí a theip orthu sa scrúdú ard leibhéal, sin ó 3.1 mar a bhí i 2010 go dtí 3.6% i 2011. Leis an chaint ar fad atá á dhéanamh ar an méid nach bhfuil ag éirí leo pas a bhaint amach, b'fhéidir gur cheart breathnú freisin ar an méid daoine nach bhfuil ag éirí leo ardmharcanna a bhaint amach le roinnt blianta. Tá titim de 0.04% ar an méid scoláirí a bhain amach A1 sa gnáth

leibhéal agus 1.8% san ard leibhéal. Tá athrú suntasach freisin i dtorthaí an CAO. Tá pointí le h-aghaidh ábhair ar nós na dána, an earnáil tógála agus múinteoireacht síos.

Tá sé ar cheann de na chéad blianta ag na dána titim suntasach mar seo a bheith acu, tá an cúrsa atá in Ollscoil na hÉireann Gaillimh ag titim le 55 bpoinnte. Ar chuid de na cúrsaí nach raibh mórán athrú iontu nó iad ag fanacht mar a bhí tá leighis, banaltracht agus cúrsaí gnó. Is léir go bhfuil mic léinn ag cuir go leor oibre isteach sa gcúrsa ceart a phiocadh anois agus ag dul i dtreo na h-earnáil a bhfuil roinnt oibre ar fáil iontu.

Cuireann scoláirí obair na gcapall isteach san ardteist ach an mbeidh siad in ann airgead a fháil chun freastal ar an tríú leibhéal, sin í an cheist mhór. Tá an táille clárúcháin tar éis ardú ó €1,500 go €2,000 agus is cosúil go mbeidh sé ag ardú tuilleadh an bhliain seo chugainn. An gcuirfead deireadh leis an oideachas a bhí ar fáil do daoine in am an tíogar cheilteach agus an mbeidh laghdú le feiceáil sa líon daoine a bheidh ag freastal ar oideachas tríú leibhéal? Sin ceist a bheidh le freagairt ag an Rialtas.

Irish

An Premiership 2011-2012

Scríofa ag **Michael Barry**

Anois agus muid réidh le tús a chur le bliain eile inár saol ollscoile, tá coicís den tséasúir nua den Premiership caite agus is cosúil nach mbeidh mórán athrú ar na príomhfhoirme a bheidh san iomaíocht nuair a thagann mí Bealtaine seo chugainn.



Sergio Agüero

Bhuaigh Manchester United an rás anuraidh agus bhí Chelsea agus Manchester City naoi bpointe taobh thiar. Gan ach dhá cluiche imeartha go fóill tá an dá fhoireann as Manchain in uachtar le lán phointí agus níl Chelsea i bhfad taobh thiar. Mar sin, cén bainisteoir is mó a chuir lena n-imreoirí san margadh aistriithe le míonna anuas?

Cé gurb iad Manchester United na seaimpíní rinne a mbainisteoir, Alex Ferguson, cinnte go mbeadh siad níos láidre i mbliana nuair a cheannaigh sé an cúl báire óg Spáinneach David De Gea ó Atletico Madrid chun teacht in áit Edwin Van Der Sar a d'éirí as. Tháinig Ashley Young ó Aston Villa agus Phil Jones ó Blackburn Rovers chomh maith. Cuirfidh siad seo go mór leis na h-imreoirí atá ann faoi láthair, daoine ar nós Rio Ferdinand, Nemanja Vidic, Nani, Wayne Rooney agus an fear beag ó Mheicsiceo, Javier 'Chicharito' Hernandez. Ach an t-ainm is mó a bhfuil an chaint a dhéanamh faoi ná fear atá ag imirt ar an taobh eile de chathair Mhanchain. Cheannaigh Manchester City an tAirgintíneach Sergio Agüero ar chostas £38 milliún ó Atletico Madrid agus chuir seisean tús iontach lena shaol proifisiúnta i Sasana le dhá chúl ina gcéad cluiche i gcoinne na mBreathnach as Swansea, cluiche a bhuaigh siad 4-0. Le cur le Agüero, cheannaigh Roberto Mancini an bheirt Francach ó Arsenal, Samir Nasri agus Gael Clichy. An deacracht is mó a bheidh ag Mancini i mbliana ná a dóthan ama ar an bpáirc a thabhairt don painéal mór imreoirí idirnáisiúnta atá ar na leabhar anois acu. Ní bheidh fir ar nós James Milner, Gareth Barry, David Silva ná Yaya Toure sásta mórán ama a chaitheamh ar an mbinse ag fanacht lena seans. Agus céard faoi Carlos Tevez? An mbeidh sé ann i bhfad eile, sin í a cheist? Don chéad bhliain le fada, ní dhearna Chelsea mórán oibre ag ceannacht imreoirí nua. Cinnte cheannaigh siad beirt ógánach ón Spáinn le teacht Juan Mata ó Valencia agus Oriol Romeu ó Barcelona ach rinne siad an obair is mó nuair a fuair siad bainisteoir nua. Ar chostas €15 milliún, tháinig André Villas-Boas ó FC Porto sa Phortaingéil, áit a raibh séasúir iontach aige anuraidh nuair a threoraigh sé Porto go dtí an Primeira Liga, Corn Phortaingéil agus Corn Sraith Europa. Ar nós muid ar fad is dócha, tá an aois ag teacht ar phainéal Chelsea agus tá imirt mhór déanta ag John Terry, Frank Lampard agus Didier Drogba ach tá taithí iontach acu siúd le cuidiú le Fernando Torres a chleasaíocht thimpeall an chúil a fháil ar

ais agus má bhíonn bliain chomh maith ag Daniel Sturridge leo agus mar a bhí aige anuraidh nuair a bhí sé ar iasacht ag Bolton Wanderers ní easpa cúil a bheidh ag déanamh inní d'Abramovich, úinéir Chelsea. Is deacair breathnú níos faide ná an trí fhoireann sin don Premiership ach céard faoin ceathrú spota do Shraith na Seaimpíní? Bhí Arsenal san áit sin anuraidh ach tá siad tar éis a gcaptaen Cesc Fabregas a dhíol le Barcelona agus mar a lua mé níos luaithe tá Nasri agus Clichy aistriithe ó thuadh go Manchester City. B'iad Fabregas agus Nasri na h-imreoirí ab fhearr a bhí ag Arsenal le tamall anuas agus is de bharr nach raibh Arsene Wenger gníomhach sa margadh aistriithe an t-údar a dúradar go raibh orthu imeacht. Ní bheidh Gervinho in ann áit an bheirt seo a líonadh, sin má bhíonn sé in ann fanacht ar an bpáirc imeartha. Fuair sé cárta dearg ina chéad cluiche i gcoinne Newcastle United. D'íoc Wenger £12 milliún le Southampton ar lead óg dár ainm Alex Chamberlain. Níl sé ach 18 bliain d'aois agus is ar éigin go bhfuil sé a bhearradh féin go fóill. Ní raibh Tottenham Hotspurs sách maith anuraidh agus níor cheannaigh Harry Redknapp aon duine nua isteach seachas an cúl báire Brad Friedal a fuair sé saor in aiseo ó Aston Villa agus Emmanuel Adebayor ar iasacht ó Manchester City rud a fhágann go mbeidh sé deacair ag an dá fathach mór seo ó Londain Thuaidh mórán dul chun cinn a dhéanamh i 2011-2012. Cá bhfágann sé sin Liverpool? Anois agus King Kenny ar ais i gceannas, tá cuma níos fearr orthu ná mar a bhí le tamall. Tá Stewart Downing tagtha ó Aston Villa, Charlie Adam ó Blackpool agus Jordan Henderson ó Sunderland agus má bhíonn siad in ann imirt go maith le Steven Gerrard, Luis Suarez, Andy Carroll agus Dirk Kuyt b'fhéidir go mbeidh an bonn sin ag Jamie Carragher sula n-éiríonn sé as.

Céard faoin taobh eile den tábla. Cé h-iad na foirne a bheidh deacracht acu fanacht sa roinn seo? Go stairiúil faigheann na foirme a fhaigheann ardú céime ón Championship deacair é áit a choinneáil sa Premiership. Níl orainn breathnú siar níos faide ná anuraidh agus foireann Ian Holloway ná Blackpool. Chuir siad tús iontach lena saol sa Premiership agus tar éis a mbua ar Manchester United bhíodar in uachtar ar feadh tréimhse. Ach is rás fada é an tsraith seo agus ní raibh na torthaí acu sa dara leath den tséasúir a choinneadh sábháilte iad. Bhuaigh Birmingham City an League Cup ach díbríodh iadsan chomh maith. Chuaigh Wolverhampton Wanderers an-ghar dul síos ach tá tús iontach curtha ag foireann Mick McCarthy lena n-imirt i mbliana agus tá siad ag breathnú go maith go fóill le lán phointí as dhá chluiche. Mar sin creidim go mbeidh sé deacair ag Swansea fanacht thuas agus beidh Blackburn Rovers, Wigan Athletic, Norwich City, Queens Park Rangers agus Everton ina gcuideachta don dá spota eile.

Mar fhocal scoir, caitheamh trua a bheith d'Arsene Wenger. Chuaigh sé go Newcastle don chéad cluiche den séasúir nua agus bhí Cath Joey Barton ag Arsenal ansin. Is cosúil anois go bhfuil Joey ag aistriú síos go Londain agus Queens Park Rangers rud a chiallaíonn go gcasfar ar Arsenal arís faoi dhó é ar a laghad i mbliana. Mar a deir Jimmy Greaves "Football is a funny ol' game".



Joey Barton ag cur fáilte roimh Gervinho chuig an Premiership



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On July 23 this year, the world lost one of its most influential and talented musicians. The timeless impact of Amy Winehouse. Turn to page 22.

6th September 2011



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Pieces of a man



The late, great Gil Scott-Heron who died in May of this year

By Robert McNamara

THE last straw for Ryan Tubridy's Twitter account came when a barrage of abuse followed an obscure reference to popular culture he made in relation to the London riots.

"Watching rioters dousing a car with petrol before the match is struck. Awful scenes. The revolution is being televised", he tweeted. What the brave twitter etiquette warriors who criticised Tubridy for this didn't realise, is that the 'Late Late Show' host was subtly touching on the work of a hugely influential yet unsung poet, singer, spoken word pioneer, novelist and musician. The late, great Gil Scott-Heron died in May of this year and left a legacy that will endure for generations. Scott-Heron is to American hip-hop what Jack Kerouac is to American literature. A thinker, an innovator and someone who left his stamp both artistically and commercially.

The son of Jamaican footballer, Bobbie Scott-Heron (the first black player to line out for Glasgow Celtic FC), Gil was raised in Chicago but later moved to New York.

He released his first album, 'Small Talk at 125th and Lenox', in 1970 and it featured two of his most controversial tracks, the

miscellany of popular culture references, "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised" and a dig at the US space programme, "Whitey on the Moon". The album was a critical triumph with music writers commenting on Scott-Heron's unique spoken word style, interspersed with Jazz chords and socially aware lyrics. His second LP, 'Pieces of a Man', added the influence of flautist and keyboard player Brian Jackson who was to work with Scott-Heron on many projects.

The album included some of Scott-Heron's best known and most beautiful compositions. "Lady Day and John Coltrane" is the sound of black America in the seventies, "Pieces of a Man" is an introspective classic and "I Think I'll Call it Morning" showed he could write pop music to please radio audiences.

The Illinois native's most important and enduring work came on his 1973 'Winter in America' album and the composition, "The Bottle"; a frank statement on alcoholism among black males in ghettoised America. Although the album was missed by the music press at the time it later received much critical acclaim and like much of his work, was cited by many modern artists as an influence.

He continued to record until 2010 when he released his final album, 'I'm New Here'. Public Enemy, Wu-Tang Clan and Talib Kweli have all acknowledged a debt to Gil Scott-Heron. Without him the modern hip-hop landscape would be much less interesting.

Morrissey: Fandom, Representations and Identities

By Sheridan Whiteside

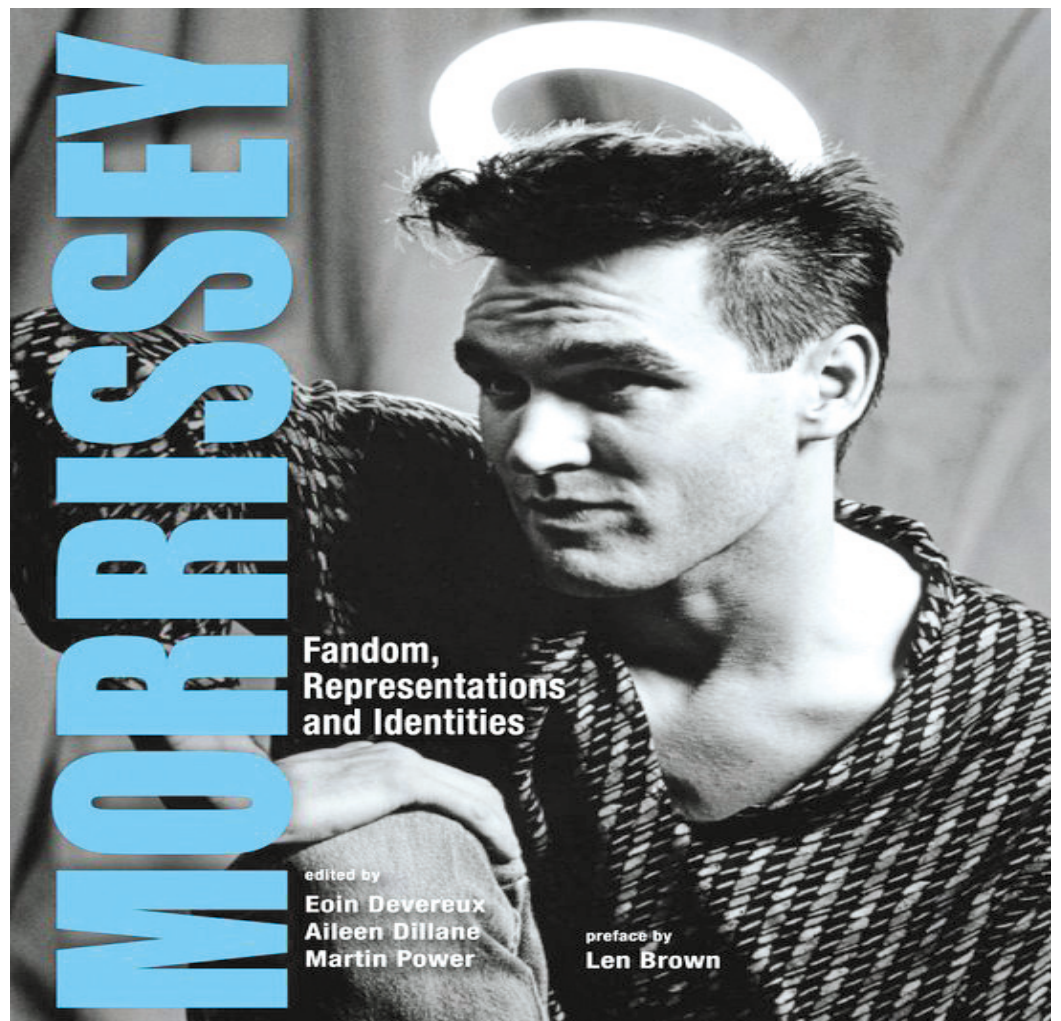
Three UL academics have just published a major book on the iconic singer Morrissey.

Morrissey: Fandom, Representations and Identities edited by Eoin Devereux, Aileen Dillane and Martin Power will be launched at a major event in Dolans Warehouse on Friday 16 September at 7.30pm. The launch will feature a panel discussion on Morrissey, and

a live performance by These Charming Men. These Charming Men are one of the premier Smiths and Morrissey tribute bands around at the moment. Formed in 1995, to this day they continue to charm fans of The Smiths and Morrissey.

Speaking to An Focal, Eoin Devereux stated "This will be the 3rd event that we have hosted on Morrissey. It promises

to be a great evening. Earlier on the day the Tom Dunne Show will broadcast from UL with a special focus on Moz." He went on to say that "The event at Dolans will mix performance with the hard questions about Morrissey." Tickets costing €12.50 may be booked from uch.ie or from Dolans.ie. Inquiries to Morrissey@ul.ie



Arts & Ents

Back to black

By Daniel Fox

ON July 23 this year, the world lost one of its most influential and talented musicians. Amy Winehouse's premature death saw her join rock legends such as Kurt Cobain and Jimi Hendrix in the infamous '27 Club'. However, Amy's death, tragic though it may have been, did not come entirely unpredicted.

But where did it all go wrong? How did the teen with such promise and an anti-drug mentality turn into the beehive-bearing, tattoo-covered alcoholic the public grew to know? Fingers have been pointed at Winehouse's 'bad-boy' ex-husband, Blake Fielder-Civil.

Their relationship showed signs of trouble from the outset. Cuts and bruises on the surface mirrored turbulence beneath; Winehouse has publicly admitted her violent tendencies towards her lover. Despite the relationship's lack of solidarity, Winehouse allowed herself to become heavily influenced by her partner. Fielder-Civil has admitted introducing her to crack cocaine, heroin

and other hard drugs. The couple reportedly cut themselves to ease the pain of the withdrawal. Winehouse's parents expressed concerns that the couple would commit suicide together.

One would think that a separation from her boyfriend would be beneficial to Amy. However, after their break-up in 2005, Winehouse went through a phase of extreme substance abuse.

A short rebound in early 2006 coincided with the writing of her award-winning album 'Back to Black'. The powerful soul-jazz album was a big insight into Winehouse's personal life. "Rehab" gives details of her feud with her father about going to rehabilitation for her drug use, which ended in a ten-minute visit to a clinic. The title track "Back to Black" refers to her broken love with Fielder-Civil. The death of her grandfather in mid-2006 drove Winehouse back to addiction. But this time she never looked back. Slurred speech and a drunken stumbling

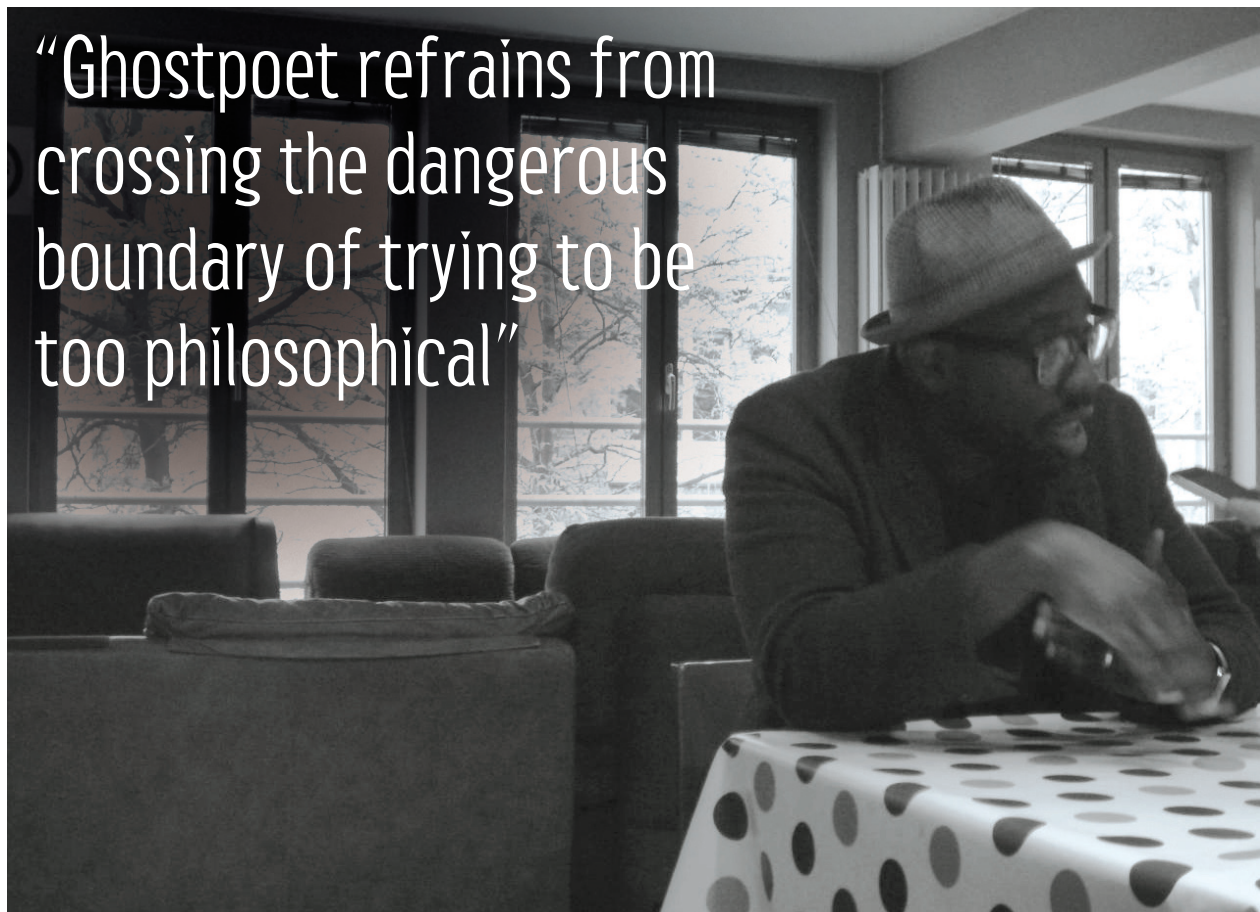
became common occurrences during her gigs, with the singer even collapsing on stage occasionally. Re-uniting with, and shockingly marrying, her former lover did nothing to help her substance abuse. Mark Ronson's refusal to work with the singer following their collaboration on 'Back to Black' captures the scale of Winehouse's problem. This downward spiral ended tragically with Winehouse's untimely death last month.

While her amazing talent may be overshadowed by her personal problems, thankfully her talent hasn't gone unnoticed within the music industry. Winehouse paved the way for the similarly soulful Welsh singer, Duffy. Adele, with record-breaking album sales, puts her success down to the influence of Amy Winehouse. Her long-term impact may yet prove timeless.



Amy Winehouse, the latest member of the '27 Club'

"Ghostpoet refrains from crossing the dangerous boundary of trying to be too philosophical"



Ghosting onto the scene

By Josh Lee, Arts & Ents Editor

FOR the Coventry-born, London-bound Ghostpoet (real-name Obaro Ejimiwe), the last twelve months must seem like a hazy dream. Releasing his debut EP, 'The Sound of Strangers', last June, the rapper/producer now has his first fully-fledged album, 'Peanut Butter Blues & Melancholy Jam', and a prestigious Mercury Prize nomination under his belt.

Ghostpoet's rapid rise to attention comes as no great surprise however. His smooth, languid rhymes and his pulsing, laid-back dubstep-influenced production tap into what has emerged as a lucrative, and decidedly trendy, vein in music as of late. Fellow countryman and DJ, James Blake, turned a lot of heads earlier this year with a blend of mellow dubstep and soul-influenced vocals on his stellar debut release. Veterans Radiohead, too, decided to dip their collective feet into an undanceable

flavour of electronic music with their latest LP 'The King of Limbs'.

Dark, lonely and beautifully brooding, 'Peanut Butter Blues' evokes the comforting chill of a midnight walk down dark, drizzly London streets. At times, the stream-of-consciousness flow sounds sloppy and lacking in self-censorship, but it's hard to resist the candid lyricism as Ghostpoet leads the listener on an absorbing, sometimes poignant, meander through a sea of everyday problems ("I'm just sitting in drinking / Playing Pro Evo and thinking").

"I Just Don't Know"'s energetic synth line and infectious hook provides a mid-album change of pace, and a welcome contrast to the rest of the album's slightly lethargic melodies. Lead single 'Cash and Carry Me Home' (the obligatory 'morning after the night before' track) is buoyed by an ethereal

use of reverb and echoing synths which give this brand of dubstep its eerie charm. Although largely introspective in focus, Ghostpoet refrains from crossing the dangerous boundary of trying to be too philosophical: "I love you like chicken soup and biscuits and lemonade" is Ejimiwe's confession of love on the hypnotic "Us Against Whatever Ever".

'Peanut Butter Blues' closes with the (relatively) high-tempo beat and plunking piano of "Liines", providing another break from the sometimes sluggish feel of an album which thrives on intriguing fusion of genres, but one which perhaps doesn't stretch ambition far enough. Nonetheless, 'Peanut Butter Blues & Melancholy Jam' makes for an engrossing listen, and it's a release which places the 'one-to-watch' curse firmly on the 24-year-old's head.

An unconventional African author

By Patrick Finbar Craig

'BLACK Sunlight' is an experimental but exciting novel that plays with the very idea of reality. Nevertheless, it makes a very real comment on the world we live in.

Everything in the book is subject to the perceptions of the protagonist. The protagonist's mind, like the plot, drifts fluidly between time and space, and reality is really only a rare intruder in the novel.

The book is full of creative similes and metaphors, and author Dambudzo Marechera gives the distinct impression that he put careful thought into the selection of every word. There are images and lines dropped into the novel which are full of symbolism and meaning but where they land in the novel often seems to have no relevance to the surrounding lines and images. Parts of the book seem just like a collage of images.

At times, certain images and lines appear obscure and out of place yet they still fit very much into the theme of the novel, which makes a comment on numerous topics such as race, reality, sexuality, life and death. The novel can be disorientating at times for the reader as the book completely abandons a linear form of narrative.

Marechera also invokes the use of incorrect punctuation, which works perfectly to provide the story with a poetic quality. He passionately drags the reader along before suddenly stopping them with full stops that technically shouldn't even be there. Marechera makes reference to this technique in the novel when he talks about "words liberated from punctuation". This technique works



Dambudzo Marechera, author of Black Sunlight

on two levels: it parallels the chaotic mind of the narrator and provides a beautiful quality to the story telling.

Black Sunlight is both a thought provoking and equally bewildering novel. The lack of coherent plot structure and the sense of disorientation may not be to the taste of some readers and some may also find the coarse sexual references offensive.

'Black Sunlight' was previously banned in Marechera's home country of Zimbabwe because of the authority's dissatisfaction with the content. However, it is a captivating novel that contains many emotional lines and invokes fascinating ideas that invite the reader to read it again and again.



Sony Distribution Centre, Enfield, London after being set alight during the British riots

By Clare Curran

SOME believe it started as a result of a man from Tottenham killed in a police shoot-out, others because of mismanagement of their country by those in charge, others again believe that the youth of today are so devoid of basic humanity and empathy toward their fellow man that they believe it was their right to rain terror upon the streets of their home-towns.

The riots started in London and took hold of the streets for as many as 5 nights, but as the mobs grew, Birmingham, Liverpool, Nottingham and Bristol also saw violence.

The harrowing scenes were surreal and almost incorrigible. The damage is set to run into tens of millions, but what of the priceless items lost, people's homes, Londoners sense of security? That figure we will never know. As the rioters are one by one

being placed in holding cells, and their looted prizes stored in evidence containers to await trials, the general feeling in the UK, and indeed the rest of the world is, 'what now?' One place where incalculable damage was done is the Sony distribution centre in London, which was set ablaze by looters sometime on the Monday night. The three-story, 20,000 square meter site is Sony's only depot for CDs and DVDs in Britain.

The fire hit independent film-makers, music producers and distributors hard as large amounts of stock were reduced to ashes. Renowned artists have lost new and old work, with recordings, notes and all recorded material being burned or looted.

Shortly after the fire, singer-songwriter Patrick Woolf tweeted: "Today my heart goes out to PIAS [Entertainment Group] and all the affected labels, I lost my own label

"BCM" stock too, the bachelor album and all the 7" singles". There are particular concerns over the loss of stock within the independent music industry as the warehouse was used by PIAS, a leading distributor of CDs for more than 100 independent labels, including the Beggars Group, Domino and Warp, who represent artists such as Adele, the late Gil Scott-Heron and Warpaint.

The months to come will be filled with stories of both success and sadness rendered from those fateful nights. A life's work, potential hit songs, pride and achievement can't be counted in dollars but with the money making potential of the music industry I surmise it would add to a much greater figure than the value of the rioters' "cause".

Moving with the times

By Josh Lee, Arts & Ents Editor

AS the world continues into the digital age, the laws that once protected copyrights are being increasingly left in the dust. In the UK, however, moves are afoot to update and modernise their 300-year-old copyright law in

an effort to move it in line with the advance of technology. With the illegal distribution of music being one of the most contentious issues ushered in by the proliferation of the Internet (something which record companies

claim costs them exorbitant amount of money each year), what exactly do these changes mean for music consumers?

Vince Cable, Business Secretary in David Cameron's UK government, announced the proposed changes earlier this month, which importantly includes the legalising of 'format shifting', or ripping, for personal use, media (music, films) from physical mediums onto a PC's hard drive or a portable media player (and, indeed, into the imminent phenomenon of "the cloud"), something which many people regularly do without realising it's technically against the law.

Simon Levine, who works in intellectual property in London's DLA Piper law firm, summed up the ludicrous nature of current laws, commenting "If you just tell people, 'you can't copy this CD that you bought, for personal use,' they're never going to respect you when you tell them it's wrong to copy for others". In many ways, the

MP3 era has outgrown the traditional business models employed by record labels, and there have been some calls for record labels to adapt to new ways of selling music, rather than focusing solely on punishing those involved in illegal file-sharing. The new UK laws, in the words of Mr Cable, are aiming to strike "a proper balance which allows consumers and businesses to operate more freely".

With Britain preparing to usher in a modernised copyright law policies, it leaves Ireland, along with Malta, as the only two remaining European in which 'format shifting' remains technically illegal. While Ireland may not enjoy a regular position at the cutting edge of the modern world, and although our government is struggling with a hefty plate at the moment, it's about time the state embraced the realities of the digital age.



Illegal UK laws to be brought in line with common sense

A nod to Hip-Hop history

By Gary Whelan

TO anybody who listens to "real" hip-hop, the name Elzhi will be a familiar one. A powerful lyricist with smooth vocals and a contagious flow, it is difficult not to admire the Michigan emcee. His name is the one that continuously pops up in top five lists of today.

Beginning his career as early as 1998 in the Detroit hip-hop scene, he got his big break when he was asked to collaborate with world-renowned group, Slum Village. The experience proved beneficial for both parties and Elzhi was asked to join the group as a permanent member, becoming involved in five albums until the group split in 2010. However, it is the rapper's solo work which has made him so popular in underground hip-hop circles.

His solo debut in 2008, entitled 'The Preface', was a major critical success and is widely regarded as one of the best releases of the year, even though the chart and financial numbers do not back that claim up.

Almost all of Elzhi's solo work to-date has involved other major Detroit artists, such as Royce Da 5'9, Black Milk, Guilty Simpson, and fellow Slum Village alumni T3. All this music coming from Detroit is reminiscent of the days of Mo-town and has people reclaiming the city as the centre of the music industry.

On May 10th of this year he released 'Elmatic', a free-to-download album which pays homage to Nas' 1994 debut release, 'Illmatic'. Recorded entirely with Detroit band Will Sessions, the live sound of the album is something which is so different to today's auto-tune, over-produced, computer-generated mainstream hip-hop. This album has been release completely for free by Elzhi in an act of defiance to the diluted hip-hop music industry. The album is quality and is a must-listen for all Hip-hop fans. You can download it from www.elzhi.com.



Elzhi

Film

So much more than meets the sci-fi

By Michael Kane

WITH his latest Sci-Fi smash *Super 8*, director J.J. Abrams has created a world that pays tribute to earlier Spielbergian works. However, he still implements elements of his own trademark style. Abrams has previously stated that he's a huge fan of Steven Spielberg's films of the early 80's and 90's and with *Super 8* he has managed to forge a connection to that era for modern audiences to enjoy. If you've already seen the trailers or heard anything about *Super 8* from friends you would be forgiven for thinking that this is a movie about some sort of alien invasion. In reality, that is a long call away from the film's real focus. *Super 8* is as much a movie

about aliens as *Jaws* is a movie about a shark and, like the latter, *Super 8* works because it spends most of its 112 minute running time allowing us to get to know the central characters. By the time any little green men are likely to make an appearance, we actually care about the safety of this group of adolescent filmmakers. Teenager Joe Lamb (Joel Courtney) and his friends are busy shooting a B-horror movie on their very own camera, but his father and local Deputy Jackson Lamb (Kyle Chandler) wishes he would put away the make-up and film kit in order to pursue a more worthwhile interest. While shooting a scene for their latest picture, Joe and

his crew witness and narrowly escape a disastrous train derailment, which is one of the best action sequences of recent memory. What sort of cargo was the train carrying? To say any more on the subject would be to spoil the intrigue. One of the greatest strengths of *Super 8* is the way in which it continuously toys with our expectations. Besides, when the military show up and starts probing the locals with questions, you already know everything is not as it should be.

Some uneven pacing in the final stages aside, *Super 8* comes highly recommended.



The cast of summer blockbuster *Super 8*



Main chimp Caesar will have you rooting for him

Film flick of the Summer

By Anthony O'Brien

RISE of the Planet of the Apes is my pick for the best movie of the summer. Though it was betrayed by trailers and marketing that gave the impression of the film being a cliché storm and being empty-headed, it turns out to be an involving story.

The film centred on the development of an advanced chimpanzee from infancy to adulthood and how its mistreatment leads to an uprising in San Francisco. Caesar, the lead character of the movie, is adopted by a scientist working on a drug that can cure Alzheimer's: an issue close to home. Thanks to great facial CGI work it is easy to identify with and feel sympathy for Caesar.

The original film dealt with themes of mistreatment and inhumanity. The plot concerned a crashed astronaut who discovers the strange world where apes are dominant and man is a caged and demeaned species.

The sequels delved into time travel and the efforts of humanity in trying to resist the future domination by apes. There are lots of references to the original and its sequels. These are mostly subtle except for a rather forced use of an iconic line which falls a little flat. The film is partially a remake of *Conquest of the Apes*, but serves to tell its own story of the rising of apes and the fall of man.

The film isn't quite flawless, however. There are a few plot holes and the pacing could be tightened up a little. In my opinion though, these problems don't detract from the quality of the film too much. The movie's big action set piece is teased somewhat before it finally erupts: a lot of cunning is

shown that ultimately has you cheering on the apes against the humans. If I compare it to other movies I have seen this summer *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* is a stand out. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* was a great end-of-an-era experience but lacks a little as a stand-alone movie. It required a lot of pre-existing investment in the characters and even information from the book series was not quite elaborated upon by the movies.

Captain America had some quite exciting set pieces but deficient somewhat in plot, mostly serving as a setup for next year's *The Avengers* crossover film. In short, *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* is, in my opinion, the film of the summer.

One hell of a Serkis

By Eoghan Cannon

GOLLUM, Sméagol, King Kong, and now Caesar from *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*; what do all these famous CGI characters have in common? They were all portrayed on screen by one actor: the great Andy Serkis.

Known for his wildly unkempt hair, Serkis' acting ability is utterly phenomenal, though we never actually see him in the final cut of the movie. This is because he dons a skin-tight suit with light bulb like paraphernalia attached turning him into a digital puppet if you will. This suit picks up his movements while the camera is filming; he is then removed from the scene and replaced with the CGI character in the later stages of editing. One performance-capture scene can take the digital artists hours to perfect. Serkis has provided not only the movements, but also the voices of all the CGI characters that he has played. No doubt Gollum and Sméagol are his most famous and critically acclaimed character portrayals. Even if he did base their voices on the noises made by his cats while coughing up fur balls, it is one of the factors that make them

the memorable characters they are in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

Recently, Serkis has voiced his frustration at people who unfairly see his stunts playing these characters as not being true "acting". He does not believe there is a difference between playing a character that is eventually going to be a CGI version of himself and conventional acting.

In my opinion he has a very valid point; what is the difference really? Also, Serkis was not allowed a Best Supporting Actor nomination for the Oscars in 2003 as his role of Gollum was computer generated. This was hugely unjust as, in my opinion, he deserves an Academy Award for all three movies!

Cinema-goers won't have to wait too much longer to see Serkis on the big screen again as he is due to reprise his role as Gollum/Sméagol in the two upcoming *Hobbit* movies due out in 2012 and 2013. However controversial it may be, the world of CGI acting is definitely one Hell of a Serkis!



Serkis in his "digital puppet" suit

Film

Hitchcock's The Birds

By Jennifer Armstrong

"THERE is no terror in the bang, only in the anticipation of it"

Who better to sum up the very genius of Hitchcock's classics than the very master himself? The notorious director took the time tested genres of horror and gore and added a whole new dimension. Some even suggest he alone discovered the powerful art of

suspense. A variety of camera angles, slow music, strange pauses and daring gazes are found swimming in almost all of his productions. Even with the more satirical films such as *The Trouble with Harry*, he never fails to underestimate the power of an eerily swinging door.

The Birds, released in 1964, falls nowhere near a comedy category. This classic thriller brought newcomer Tippi Hedren to worldwide fame playing the demure and graceful heroin Melanie Daniels. Set in the now famous seaside



Tippi Hedren getting into the swing of things in Hitchcock's *The Birds*

village of Bodega Bay, *The Birds* is not your average horror flick. Instead of ghosts and monsters, Hitchcock takes perhaps one of nature's most graceful and honoured creatures and produces a flock of villains ensured to frighten even the sturdiest of folk. Although Hedren won a golden globe for her performance, it was still many years before a lot of critics began to appreciate her work as the damsel in distress in this gritty horror classic. The strong cast also boasts Jessica

Tandy who invokes a fear of her own as Melanie's possible mother-in-law, while Rod Taylor as the dashing eye-candy certainly eases the pain caused by the pesky winged fiends.

If you think simply watching this spine tingling reel is hard-core, imagine the set itself. In the final scene Hedren was promised mechanical birds would be used; instead, the bold director had men throw live birds towards the actress's head. This would result in great distress for the up and coming actress,

Hedren was quoted saying it gave her "nightmares filled with flapping wings". Whether you're a Hitchcock fan or not, *The Birds* truly does encompass all that is wonderful with old movies and is undeniably worth inspection. There is even a romantic thread for the faint of heart to cling on to. Unfortunately, one thing is guaranteed; never again will sweet old robin redbreast look quite the same.

Wes Anderson's Rushmore

By David Hartery

RUSHMORE is a 1998 comedy-drama by Wes Anderson. It deals with the life of Max Fischer, a British-Invasion-loving, blazer-wearing oddball who attends the eponymous Rushmore Academy.

While primarily dealing with Max's coming of age and struggle to balance his own aspirations and sense of self, the film really comes into its own when dealing with secondary characters. They too have their own struggles with the direction their lives have taken. One such is Bill Murray's character the curmudgeonly Herman Blume. Murray gives a stellar performance.

He reconciles the quirky nature of the film with the correct level of accessibility, leaving the viewer genuinely caring for his wellbeing. This is something that can be difficult to say about our relationship with Fischer.

The soundtrack and the cinematography are both engaging and in places, exceptional. A widescreen perspective shot gives a clarity and importance to the action on screen. Also, the late 60's British rock n' roll score hits the correct notes thematically and stylistically.

"Fischer, while obnoxious, is a vision of an idealistic dreamer that many of us can relate to"

There is the issue that while being incredibly well shot, the style is at odds with its apparent "comedy" aspirations. The style of filming gives a seriousness that is possibly inappropriate for the material. There is a constant feeling throughout that Anderson is overreaching and the film perhaps takes itself more seriously than it should.

That said, the writing is excellent and with a smorgasbord of popular culture nods throughout. It is the definition of a genre film, with many more recent films owing an obvious debt to *Rushmore*. Fischer, while obnoxious, is a vision of an idealistic dreamer that many of us can relate to.

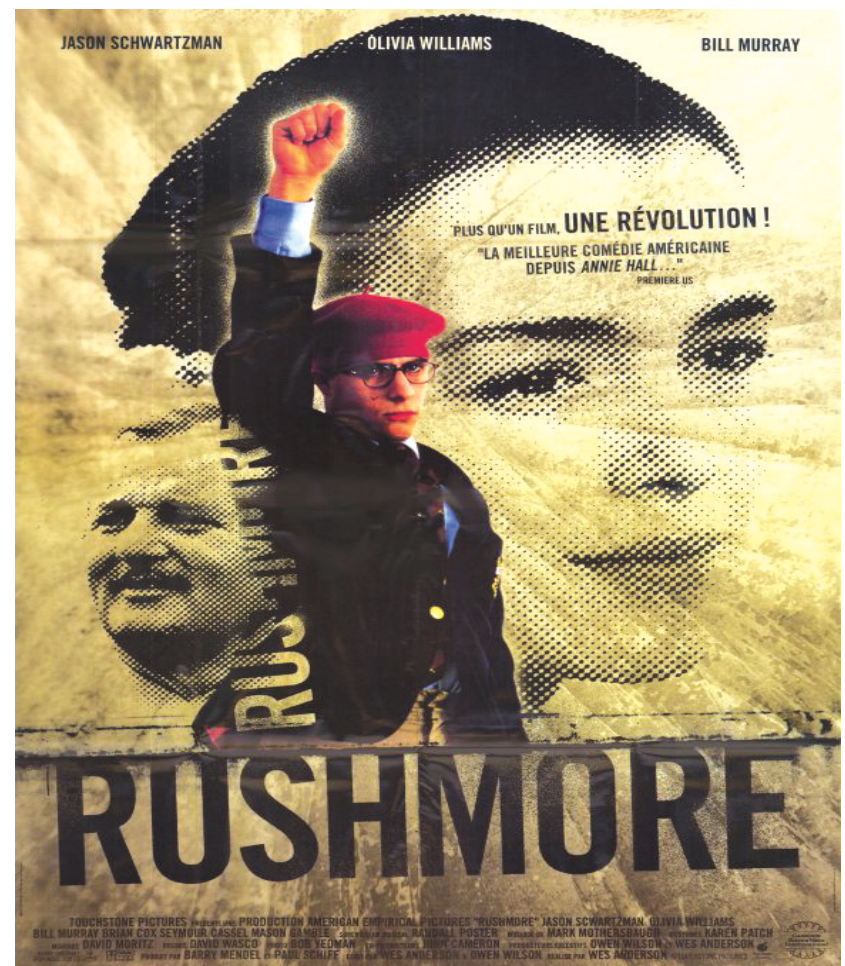
His character does encapsulate the success and failings of the film, a triumph of style over substance. However, *Rushmore* does plumb the depths of relationships, aspiration

and success, in a way its redemption is tied up with Fischer's own.

The final climax provides the necessary paths to carry the weight of the preceding 90 minutes.

Rushmore is a fine example of an alternative film that just about avoids falling into the pit of dependence on "wacky" humour.

A fine set of performances from the whole cast draws you into the hyper-real world that Anderson has created. If you new "freshers" haven't had enough of secondary school after the last 6 years, *Rushmore* is a vision of attitudes concerning aspiration and education that is well worth watching.



Cinema listings for Storm Cinemas - Castletroy

Castletroy Shopping Centre,
Limerick - 061 330036

Rise of the Planet of the Apes 14:20 - 17:15 - 20:45 - 21:25

Cowboys & Aliens 12:00 - 14:45 - 15:20 - 17:30 - 18:15 - 20:15 - 21:15

The Inbetweeners 13:00 - 14:00 - 15:30 - 16:30 - 18:00 - 19:00 - 20:30 - 21:35

The Smurfs 13:30 - 16:20 - 18:45

Spy Kids 4: All the Time in the World 12:10 - 17:00 - 14:30 - 19:10

Super 8 - 20:00

Mr. Poppers Penguins - 12:50

The Guard - 21:00

The Smurfs 3D 11:20 - 15:50

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallow - 11:10

A Turtle's Tale: Sammy's Adventures - 11:30

Student Speak

STUDENT SPEAK



Just before the start of term, An Focal asked students and graduates what advice they would give to first years. Listen up Freshers! This one's for you!

"Enjoy Java's. Scholars! I meant Scholars... sorry Corman!"
Jennifer Cleary, Business



"Don't spend all your money in the pub... spend all your time there instead!" **Alan O'Sullivan, Business**



"Call in to your Sabbats in the Students' Union. We're here to help!" **Derek Daly, SU President**



"Choosing to live on campus will probably be one of the best decisions you could make." **Niamh Begley, Digital Media Design**



"Go to all your tutorials and do all your lab reports on time."
Pa Golden, Mechanical Engineering



"Drinking is not the same as studying, but it does help sometimes."
Amy Flanagan, Equine Science.



"Go to all your lectures and trying and find the right balance between studying and having a good social life." **Elaine Rea, MsC in International marketing and Global business**



"Get into a good routine of study and socialising."
Tara Donoghue, Digital Media Design

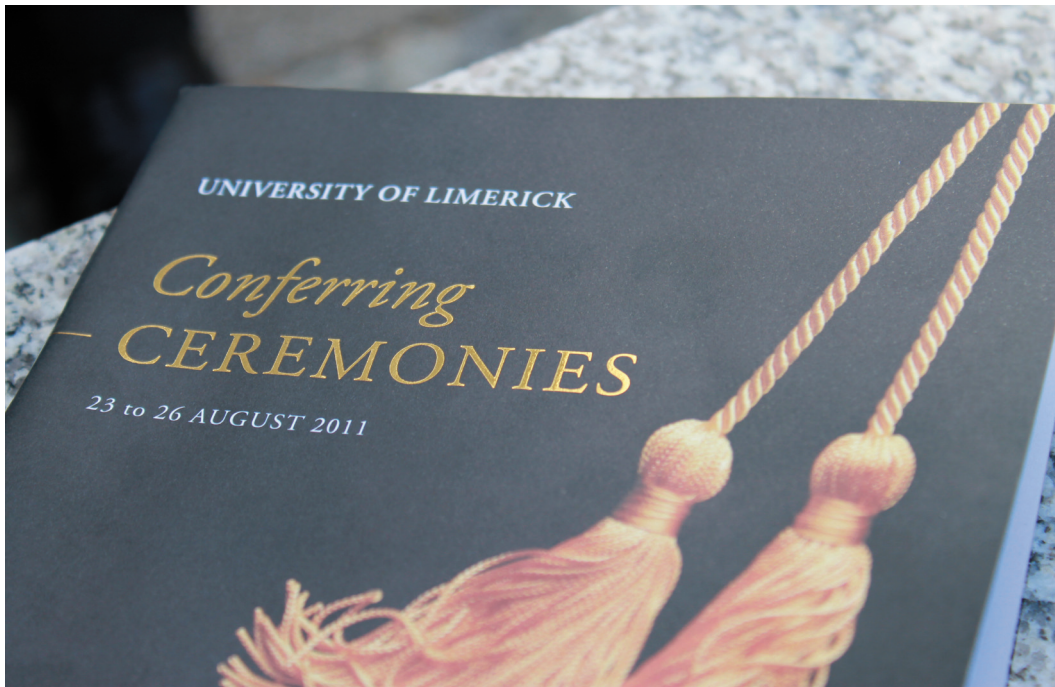


"Try not to confuse the Schumann and Schrodinger building. I've mixed them up many times." **Aisling Harney, HPSS**



"Do essays a week before the deadline."
Shane Vaughan, HPSS

In Focus

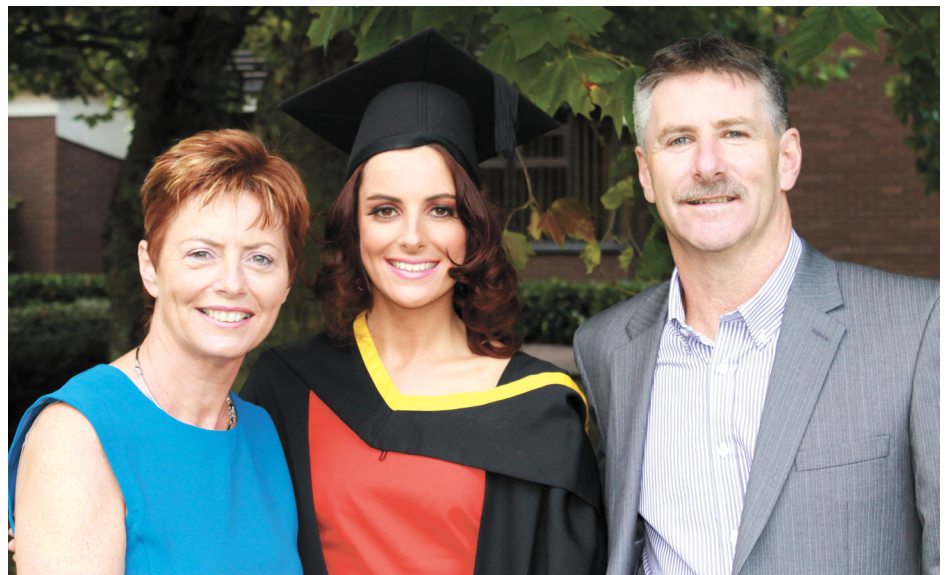


In Focus



Graduation, In Focus.

Last week saw over 2,000 students graduate from the University of Limerick. Our official photographer, Paddy Phillips, was there to capture the magic.



Union

THE
PRESIDENT'S
COLUMNBy **Derek Daly,**
President

Week 1 already. Summer has been crazy with the Union seeing a seismic shift in personnel. Along with the usual officer turnover we said goodbye to a number of staff and saw a restructured staffing line put in place.

We have gone through a rough financial patch over the summer and it is vital to the continued provision of service that you continue to use campus grocery shops which are supposed to provide funding for the Union, but has been working in reverse for over a year now. New offerings have been put in place by a new manager with overall responsibility for commercial operations and I hope you like them. If not, let us know! We're also making attempts to employ more students to do stuff we need done to try and put money in your pockets. Recruitment for semester 1 is finished, but you can still apply at any time for semester 2. Week 1 sees recruitment on Wednesday and a week of fun in the courtyard organised by Kelly with Keith and classes getting back in full swing. Week 2 brings Fresher Fest which Paddy and Keith have been busy working on. Week 3 on Monday brings you a proposal for radical Union reform that would see most of Council directly elected by the student body.

Slán

D

WELFARE
WATCHBy **Tara Feeney,**
Welfare Officer

Howdy Folks!
Welcome back everyone and congrats to all the incoming first years, you are in for a fun-filled year at UL, hurray!

I'm Tara, your Welfare Officer. I'm here for any non-academic issues which may arise over the next year. You can come and see me about any issues concerning your accommodation or finance.

Also, if you have any personal issues which you need advice and direction with, come see me! This may concern your sexual or mental health or maybe you just need a friendly chat. Get in contact with me and I'll do everything I can to help you.

To all the fresh faced first years, I just want to say that the next four years will bring with it fantastic friendships, wonderful memories, stressful deadlines, unforgettable nights out and a lot of hard work. But college is what you make it, so go out there and get involved. You are only here for a short time, so make the most of it. You'll be in your final year before you know it! If I could give one bit of advice it would be to GO TO YOUR LECTURES! Ignore the rain, hangover and home and away, just go. It will take so much stress off when it comes to exams.

Hope to see you around campus!

Toodles,

Tara

ENLIVENING
EDUCATIONBy **Aoife Kenny,**
Education Officer

WELCOME to the big wonderful world of UL. Whether this is the first time you've read An Focal or you're after arriving back from a summer of fun and adventures, the UL campus has missed your presence.

With a crazy first 3 months in office I hope that you all see the changes made to the Class Rep system and that you now want to get involved with the Student Representation system!

Over the summer, myself and Derek (with input from the rest of the Sabs) have been working on a complete overhaul of the representative system. To have your say, make sure to attend the SU AGM which will be held on Monday of Week 3. All attendees will get free tickets to the UL FM launch later in the week. Not to be missed! Remember that you can call in to me at anytime about any academic issues might face you in the coming year. But please, please, please Register Now before you even think of going to the Lodge.

For more updates you can find me on facebook or email aoife.kenny@ul.ie

All the best,

Your Education Officer,

Aoife

CAMPAIGNS
BRIEFBy **Paddy Rockett,**
Campaigns and Services Officer

FEW can count themselves as lucky as you are, but you didn't get here by pure chance. Years of work and preparation have gone into getting you here and now this part of your life you are left to your own devices.

Over the next few years, you will encounter the best and worst of times. It is essential you have people around you for each and every moment. So throw yourself in, meet new people... act casual to what is expected of you and embrace that which is unexpected. These are the years to do it! Every week your ULSU will be running Events and Campaigns so give it a go and try everything, get involved in a club or society, and join a campaign. Have the craic, share the banter and get up to all sorts of shenanigans just be sure to keep the academic side in good nick otherwise it's a whole new world around Exam time. Feel free to drop into the office anytime, and if you see any of these other five head cases out and about be sure to make yourself known! We have a tendency to carry some free stuff with us.

Be Daring, Be Different

Paddy

WORDS
FROM THE
PSABy **Sarah Jane Hennelly,**
PSA President

Hello to all Postgraduates!!
I am your Postgraduate representative within the University. The Postgraduate Students' Association is your representative organisation.

If you've any issues or queries; academic, financial, welfare or otherwise, come to me! I'm here to help. The PSA Centre is open Monday to Friday and is located in the Stables' Courtyard. It has a Common Room and the President's Office. The Common Room provides free tea and coffee, newspapers, seating, internet and radio. It's a great place to come, relax, have lunch and meet other postgrads.

The PSA also holds many events over the course of the year specifically tailored to postgrad life, such as Faculty Nights, Coffee Mornings, Question and Answer sessions, The PSA Ball, along with Career workshops.

The PSA has a Vice-President, a Publicity Officer and an Events officer, a Treasurer and a Mary Immaculate College Representative. These will be elected in Week 2 of semester 1. Check out the PSA website on www.postgrads.ie for up to date info on PG events, news and issues. Add us on Facebook too at PSA UL.

The very best of luck to you, I hope to see you over the course of the year!

Students to beware unscrupulous landlords

By **Evana Downes**

THE Union of Students in Ireland (USI) has warned student tenants to exercise caution as they prepare to move into new accommodation over the coming weeks. The warning comes in the aftermath of a number of complaints made by student tenants

regarding the non-return of deposits. According to a survey carried out by the union, scams in which deposits were not returned to tenants leaving their former accommodation affected an estimated 40 per cent of students. The same research claimed that 60 per cent

of students surveyed reported having in excess of €200 taken from their deposit total by their landlord for no apparent reason. The USI also reported that in some cases deposits were found to have been used by landlords as an additional source of income rather than having

been retained as temporary insurance in the case of the lease agreement being broken. While all students are advised to remain vigilant, first year students are often identified as the easiest targets. This is because these students may, according to USI President, Gary Redmond, "be less aware than older students of their rights."

He says that "with families struggling to afford the basic costs of attending college, this is not a situation that can be allowed to continue." Chairwoman of the housing charity Threshold, Senator Aideen Hayden, agrees with Mr Redmond's assessment. "Cash strapped students and their parents can ill-afford to lose [their deposits, which could be up to €1,000]." ULSU Welfare Officer, Tara Feeney says

that students should be careful when dealing with landlords. "Students are a particular vulnerable category within the renting world, often treated unfairly due to our student status. It's practically impossible to tell whether a landlord is going to be honest or turn out to be a crook. My best advice to students is to ensure that you take dated pictures at the beginning of a tenancy, read the lease carefully, and don't sign a year lease if you are planning to leave early as you won't get your deposits back. "Also, be very careful who you share a house with, as you can be held liable for damages you had no part in. It is up to you to let me know of any cowboy landlords around Castletroy. Once I know I can do something about it."

Clubs

Join the UL Archers!



A tense moment for the UL Archers...

By Eoin Murray

Welcome all incoming first years, and welcome back all returning students! We hope you had a lovely summer. As we enter another year within the club, we are preparing for the coming events.

This September, the UL Archery Club will be hosting the National Championships, which will be held at the start of the month on the Sep 3 and 4. This is the first time in the UL Archery Club's history that the club will be hosting this competition. The event will be taking place in the UL Arena Bowl, which is the sacred training ground of Munster Rugby.

This year's Nationals will see archers from all across Ireland travelling to UL to compete, each of them hoping to win illustrious titles in their relevant categories.

The competition will be a two day event, starting on September 3. The shooting will be starting at approximately 10am.

The National Championship is a chance to see archery at its highest level and anyone interested in seeing it is more

than welcome to come down over the weekend. A great weekend of shooting will be had by all.

Of course, the Nationals are not the only event happening this year. There will be more intervarsity's than ever before throughout the year, with eight different student competitions planned over the course of the year, in which many of our members compete.

But life in the UL Archery Club is not always about competition. We do enjoy a bit of fun at times! We organise social events for our members, such as DVD nights, game nights and even fancy dress competitions around Halloween time.

If you think that you would like to be involved in a club that trains hard, and plays hard then the UL Archery Club would like to encourage you to join.

Everything you need to become a top class archer is provided and our archers are never pressured to compete. So if you are the type of person who shies away from competition, don't worry, you can just shoot for fun and meet new people in the process.

Any people wishing to join UL Archery Club can do so by signing up at the C&S Recruitment Fair or you can call into our training sessions in the Main Hall of the P.E.S.S Building. Previous experience in archery is not a requirement. Most of our archers had never picked up a bow before joining the club (and now they can't put it down!). It is truly an addictively fun sport.

Our training times are from 20:15 to 22:30 on Monday, and from 19:30 to 22:30 on Wednesday nights in the Main Hall of the P.E.S.S Building and can be accessed through the C&S website www.cs.ul.ie. If you need any extra information about UL Archery Club you can check out our website www.ulac.tk, or you can e-mail us on ularchery@gmail.com. We look forward to meeting potential members this year and forming friendships that will last.

Summer first aid

The Boathouse played host to a packed REC3 course this summer organised by Rose Barrett of the Windsurfing Club. The REC3, Rescue and Emergency Care, is a course designed for groups involved in outdoor activities, particularly those that are a distance from emergency services.

This stage of the REC training is that required for instructors of different disciplines. While the REC First Aid training is designed for outdoor groups it is also suitable for anyone interested in First Aid training as it covers the same ground as the occupational First Aid course. This course was extremely interactive with participants spending more than half their time in the elements practising and learning as they went.

There is no written exam but it is assessed continuously throughout the weekend, over Friday evening, all day Saturday and Sunday. As part of the deal

run by Barry Redmond, of First Response, all participants were offered the AED, automated external defibrillator, for only the cost of the certificate. Barry is a paramedic with years of experience which gave the course great energy and as he is also involved in numerous sports such as kayaking, windsurfing and more. He could advise each group for their individual needs. All participants passed with flying colours.

There were people representing Mountain Bike UL, the Drama Society, Karate Club and Windsurfing Club and more from the campus community. A big thank you to Barry for such a great course, to all the participants and the clubs involved in the Boathouse for accommodating us over the weekend.

For contact details for First Response or further information on the First Aid Training please email rose.barrett@ul.ie



UL Students learning about First Aid this summer


CLUBS & SOCIETIES RECRUITMENT DRIVE
WEDNESDAY WEEK 1 - ARENA BUILDING
www.registercs.ul.ie




Clubs

UL Trampolining and Gymnastics Club: World Records, Trips Away and Savage Craic

By David Ryan, ULTGC Secretary

The UL Trampolining Club doesn't do things by halves; we go on trips to the best training facilities in the UK. We go to Scotland for a competition every year, Belfast is also on the cards this year and of course, we will be hosting our own competitions.

Below is a little synopsis of things we got up to over the summer. On the June 15 and 16, a Guinness World Record was broken by 20 Trampoline Gymnasts, the majority from the University of Limerick, University College Cork and a collection of other Irish and Scottish Universities. The record was 70,000 somersaults with 24 hours and only 20 bouncers allowed in the attempt to beat the target. With around an hour or two to go it became apparent that the record was going to be broken and in the end it was beaten by over 5,000 somersaults, the final count being 75,312.

While the record setters were either bouncing or catching some well earned sleep, the rest of the team were busy counting the somersaults, recording the somersaults and looking after the niggling injuries of the record breakers.

As the night went on, there was a real team and community effort with members of neighbouring clubs

coming into to show their support, parents of team members dropping in for an hour at a time to help with the event and general members of the public who called in for ten minutes continuing to gaze in awe at the trampolines an hour later.

Not only was there a record on, but there were two other trampolines and a tumbling track that members of the public were able to use with other members of the team giving them the beginners guide to Trampolining and Tumbling.

In addition to the World Record attempt, UL Trampolinists of all levels went on the annual pilgrimage to Loughborough University as part of the Irish Invasion. Loughborough University has World Class Gym Training Facilities including everything you would expect to find in an Olympic Gym. But the really fun part for us was the Trampoline pit where you practice high risk moves (even if you're a beginner) into a Pit,

which is essentially a big pit of foam. Over the course of the weekend, not only did we improve our gymnastic prowess in the Gym but also had a savage amount of craic. Karaoke, fun challenges and a huge amount of mischief went on.

So to put this all in perspective, if you like to have fun and spend a little bit of time in the air, come down and have a look. If you're really interested and you stick with us we actually send our own members on training courses to become Qualified Coaches and Judges.... yes you could have the power to judge your fellow competitors! It's nice for the CV too.

Our number one priority in the club isn't that you come back with loads of medals (god knows I'm in my third year of Trampolining now and all I've won is critical acclaim for actually finishing a routine never mind having the winning routine), it's that you come in, have a good time, learn new stuff and go as far as you want to go.

To find us is pretty easy – when you walk into the Clubs and Socs Recruitment Drive just look up! There will generally be one of us in the air. If you can't make it, we train in the PESS Building every Tuesday and Thursday, for exact times see our website www.csn.ul.ie/~trampoline/



Societies

UL Debating Union going from strength to strength

By Sarah Hardiman,
UL DebU Comms Officer

The University of Limerick Debating Union is among the oldest and most active societies in the University and will enter its 40th year this September. The society is dedicated to the promotion of debate and discourse on our campus. The Debating Union holds in-house debates on issues of public interest and current affairs as well as private members motions on lighter issues. The society holds many public debates during the academic year, which include high profile speakers and guests. In the past year, public figures such as Éamon Ó Cuív, Senator David Norris and the late Dr. Garrett FitzGerald were among our guest speakers at our in-house debates on topics such as "Faith in the Government" and the "Civil Partnership Bill".

Each week, the society holds "Speaker Development Workshops" where members of the society get the opportunity to practice debating and public speaking. At these classes, members are given instruction on how to speak in public, argue motions and participate in debates. There are also Private Members Motions on Thursday nights, where members of the society can speak for five minutes on any subject matter of their choosing. Generally, these are light-hearted, fun events and

are among the top social events held by the society each semester.

Aside from organising public debates, the main activity for members is participation in competitive debate. Each year the society holds two internal competitions; The Freshers' Mace and the Ciaran Treacy debating competitions. The Freshers' Mace is open to all first time members of the society. Members participate individually and trophies are awarded to the winner and runner up of this competition. The Ciaran Treacy is held annually and all members of the society are welcome to participate. Our society competes regularly at Inter-varsities all over the world. During the college year, we participate in competitions across Ireland and the UK. These take place at weekends during both semesters and the society sends competitors and judges to these events. This is a great way to meet, befriend and network with people from other Universities.

There are competitions held specifically for first time speakers also such as the UCD Novice Competition which is held each October. Last year the Debating Union's Niamh Ward and Elaine Kennedy were finalists in this competition. There is also the National Maidens Competition held in Semester

2 for first year competitors from all over Ireland. Here, competitors speak as individuals and first year speakers Michelle Coyle and Lorna Bogue were both Semi-finalists at this competition last year. Our competitive success continued this year as speakers David Hartery and Stephen Egan were semi-finalists at competitions in UCC, Trinity and Galway and also in the prestigious Irish Mace Competition. David Hartery won the Glasgow Ancients Competition and also Stephen Egan was a semi-finalist in the Irish Times Debating Competition. This summer, the society has represented UL at competitions such as the UCD Earlsfort Open (where our speakers David Hartery and Stephen Egan were semi-finalists), the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Open and the SOAS Invitational competition, the Bristol Open 2011 and the Durham Open 2011. Also the European University Debating Championships 2011 were hosted by N.U.I. Galway this August and the Debating Union sent eight Delegates to the event in which over 350 University students from across Europe competed. The society will send be competing in many competitions over the coming year, including the World University Debating Champions which will be held



The UL Debating Union: positively swimming in awards!

in Manila in December. The Debating Union hopes to send a delegation of up to five members of the society.

The past year has been extremely successful for the society, both competitively and in terms of active membership. The society has increased its active membership by two thirds and we hope to see this growth continue in the coming year. We are also delighted to announce McMahon

O'Brien Solicitors as our sponsor for the society's delegation at the World University Debating Championships this year and look forward to a prosperous and successful relationship with their firm. Find the "UL Debating Union" on facebook or check out our website at www.uldebating.com or contact us at uldebu@gmail.com.

WE WANT YOU (to have a lot of intercultural fun)

By Kevin Daly, PRO of UL
International Society

THE International Society's committee are feverishly working on plans to make this semester another great one for our members. Membership costs just €3, which will allow you to take advantage of International Soc's packed calendar of events, trips and weekly activities. Events such as Bollywood Night and the Country Colours Ball promise to be highlights of this semester.

Our Events Officer is committed to making sure that International Night every Friday in The Stables continues to earn its already growing status as a legendary fixture on campus. With an excellent choice of both day and weekend trips, the International Soc gives UL students the opportunity to have unforgettable experiences. We promise to make sure that you will have to pay as little as possible for these trips, so that you get to see and do as much as you can while in Ireland.

This society also offers some terrific weekly activities. You can engage in some mental stimulation (not that much, don't worry!) with Book Club, give something back to the local community with Study Club, or get fed with Mentor Dinners. Incoming International Soc President, Amanda Keane, stresses that the society welcomes everyone;

Erasmus, Study Abroad, as well as Irish. We don't have a requirement for how international our members have to be, so wherever you're from or whatever you study just show up and demand to be shown a good time!

If you would like to know more you can drop us a line at ulinternationalsociety@gmail.com. You can also find us on facebook, twitter, and at our website ulinternationalsociety.com.



Raise the stakes with UL Poker!



University of Limerick Poker Society



By Colin Clarke

The UL Poker Club is a club for anyone remotely interested in Poker, meeting new people and having great craic. It's one of the most respected and well thought of student poker clubs in the country.

The Club hosts a variety of different Poker games during the year, the largest being the UL Poker Championship which occurs once a semester and attracts more than 100 players.

Last year over 100 players each semester competed for the coveted ULPC Bracelets for 1st and 2nd place as well as a tasty €2000 prize pool.

No rake is taken at the Poker Championship, with free finger food

offered to all participants and a drinks voucher to the first ten people knocked out. Last Year, UL Poker Club members competed in a variety of different events, including the Student Masters (and won!), the UKIPT (and came 4th) and the Irish Open.

To welcome new members and to thank its existing members, the UL Poker Club is starting off the semester in style. It's holding a free-roll event on the 8th of September which is open to all members (€2 to become a member for the year).

Weekly games are also held in the Sports Bar, check www.ulpoker.ie for more information.

The Club caters for all levels with coaching offered to those wanting to further their poker abilities.

Website: www.ulpoker.ie

Find us on Facebook under UL Poker

Contact us at
ulpokersoc@gmail.com

Societies

Welcome to Limrock

By **Owen Hickie**,
P.R.O. of UL Music Society

If you've just started your UL journey, UL Music Society welcomes you! And if you're one of those who made it through the dreaded exams for another year of mayhem, welcome back! We only just scraped through ourselves....

We usually hold meetings on Wednesdays and our first will be on the Sep 14 in the Jean Monnet lecture theatre, so come along, see what we're about and meet some new people. A quick rundown of what we do; we provide lessons on certain instruments;

email the Music Soc email at the end of this article for more info. We also run Open Mics in The Stables every Monday, open to anyone to play, (we even provide the guitar!) so all you have to do is bring yourself and enjoy what are always easy-going, chilled-out

nights; a great outlet on those middle-of-semester evenings! If you're in a band, you'll know that it can be hard to get a good jam going in, say, Plassey Village. Lack of space means you end up playing guitar in your sink, while your drummer, a bona fide reincarnation of John Bonham, attracts the undesired attention of village management as he beats the lard out of his hilariously oversized kit. Therefore, there are a few options as regards practice space; Music Soc has its own fully kitted-out Music Room, which can be booked during the week via Murty, our Room Manager at [musicroombookings@](mailto:musicroombookings@gmail.com)

[gmail.com](mailto:musicroombookings@gmail.com). Alternatively, if you want to step it up a gear, there is a new rehearsal space after opening in town; Limerick City Rehearsal Studios. The rooms are big, properly treated and well-kitted out, with proper acoustic drum-kits and cheap rates for proper lengthy jamming sessions. Email Simon at limerickcityrehearsalstudios@gmail.com for more info.

We'll be running a lot of events during the semester, but the two big ones I want to highlight for you now are two major dates around the end of October/start of November; our annual Hallowe'en Shindig and The UL Battle of the

Bands. These will be memorable nights of wanton devilment and great music. If you're starting out this semester harbouring ambitions to rock the very foundations of UL (in a melodically metaphorical way), then The Battle of the Bands is one to aim for!

If the above all appeals to you then do please join, our recession busting price of €3 is hard to beat! Email ulmusicsoc@gmail.com for more info and throw us a like on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ulmusicsoc.



Battle of the Bands at The Stables

GSoc & BroCon 2011

By **Michelle Mercier**,
James Heslin and Ciaran Curley

Do you like games? You do?! Then you're reading the right article.

The Games Society plays many different kinds of games: Board games (popular and obscure), PlayStation, Xbox, Wii, PC, older consoles like the SNES, N64 and Sega Mega Drive, tabletop, Collectible Card Games (CCGs) and tabletop Role-Playing Games (RPGs). You don't even have to play games; you can just sit around and watch other people play games if you want! And if you get bored of sitting around, join us on one of the paintball trips, or take part in Assassin - a week-long, campus-wide hunt of your fellow GSoc members with spoons and silly string! UL BroCon is UL's first games, anime and manga convention.

After the roaring success of BroCon 1 in 2010, people were clamouring for the

second instalment, and we don't think anyone was disappointed. Organised jointly by the UL Games Society and the Anime and Manga Society, BroCon took a year to plan and organise and emerged a massive success for both societies. Holding this convention again reinforced our image as a dedicated and active society. It's always good to collaborate with Anime and Manga Society, and we think we really worked well together this year. Once again BroCon provided us with a means to connect with similar societies from around the country.

Visitors and guest staff could not fail to be impressed by our attractive, modern and spacious campus, and everyone agreed that the EGO rooms were well suited to the convention layout. We were able to spread out a little more into the C block for additional space required by console gaming and tabletop role-playing, and our staff handled all the running around very well! The convention offered a great number of activities for visitors. There were

console games, anime screenings, tabletop wargaming, tabletop role-playing games, card games, board games, an anime- manga-and-games-themed table quiz and a cosplay competition. Additionally, there were two well-known guests who gave panels and judged competitions over the weekend.

The first was Chris Cason, an accomplished voice actor and director in animated films (including Dragonball Z). The second was Benjamin Daniel, better known as Benzaie, a content producer for the popular website ThatGuyWithTheGlasses.com. Between all the events and panels, convention attendees could enjoy some quality shopping thanks to various vendors selling games, merchandise and manga during the convention. The Charity Auction was held on Saturday Night at the Stables to raise money and awareness for Suicide Awareness Ireland.

Items sold at the auction included the Book of Answers, a singed Red vs Blue



BroCon 2011. Image: Daniel Owen Photography

poster (hotly contested and involved a trip to the ATM) and a "mystery" Sega Genesis game. The last item was the subject of a fierce bidding war before selling for €35 - only for it to be revealed as the legendarily awful fighting game Shaq-Fu. (It was donated back to the con and ended up in the console room the next day.) Overall, BroCon 2011 can definitely be remembered as a massive success and all the staff from both societies had huge fun running it.

Our sincere thanks to Plassey Campus Centre for their assistance and the UL Arts and Sports fund for their generous funding. This year paves the way for making the convention even larger in 2012 and hopefully for many more years to come.

To get involved with GSoc, contact us at ulgsoc@gmail.com or check out their website, <http://skynet.ie/~ulgsoc>

Societies

Join the UL Law Society!



The Law Society of the University of Limerick is one of the largest societies in UL and boasts some of the top social events held at the University each year.

Our membership is composed of students from a diverse numbers of disciplines, from students that study law to those with an interest in law.

The Society's activities include organizing guest speakers to come and speak to the society, our annual Mystery Tour and the Law Ball which is among the most highly anticipated social events held each year at UL.

This year is our 8th Session and promises to be our best year yet with many events planned such as Law Week which will take place in Week 2 of this coming semester. This will include amazing social events such as a tag rugby tournament, a round of assassin and a "lock and key" game night. We would like to encourage first

year students in particular to attend our AGM as it is a great opportunity to get to know your new classmates! We hope to hold our Mystery Tour this semester also which is an extremely popular event with our students.

This is where we take the members of the society on coaches to another city/town for the night while keeping the destination a secret. Last year's trip to Waterford was an extremely successful event and was enjoyed greatly by all.

Also the society will hold Competitive Mooting competitions at UL for the first time! Mooting is a mock trial where law students get an opportunity to practice their skills of advocacy and public speaking in a court setting.

This is a vital skill as it is assessed in law modules within the University and helps to prepare students for a career in law. The first UL Competitive Mooting Inter-varsity will be held later this year. In preparation for competitions, the society hopes to hold classes teaching students how to argue cases. We hope to hold these classes in the Court Room (BM015) and would like to encourage law students to take these classes.

The highlight of our annual events is the Law Ball. It is one of UL's most prestigious balls, as it forms the highlight of not only law students' social calendar but also other students who choose to attend.

It is held in the second semester and promises to be an incredible night, with acts such as J90 performing at the event in the past.

This year members of our society will receive a loyalty card from Law Soc. This is a swipe card that has been sponsored by shops and businesses across Limerick. Members of the Law Society will avail of discounts and special offers from these businesses when they present these swipe cards when purchasing goods.

Keep an eye out for posters and notices for the Law Week and upcoming events! The University of Limerick Law Society is sponsored by Matheson Ormsby Prentice for the year 2011/2012. Check us out on facebook under "University of Limerick Law Society" and also our website www.ullawsociety.com or email us at ullawsociety@gmail.com.

UL Journo Soc call for members!

By Gary Whelan

THE new Journalism Society is looking for members and everyone is welcome. So, what are we going to do for our members?

For a yearly rate of €5 euros we will provide educational trips to media outlets both print and broadcast in Ireland and abroad.

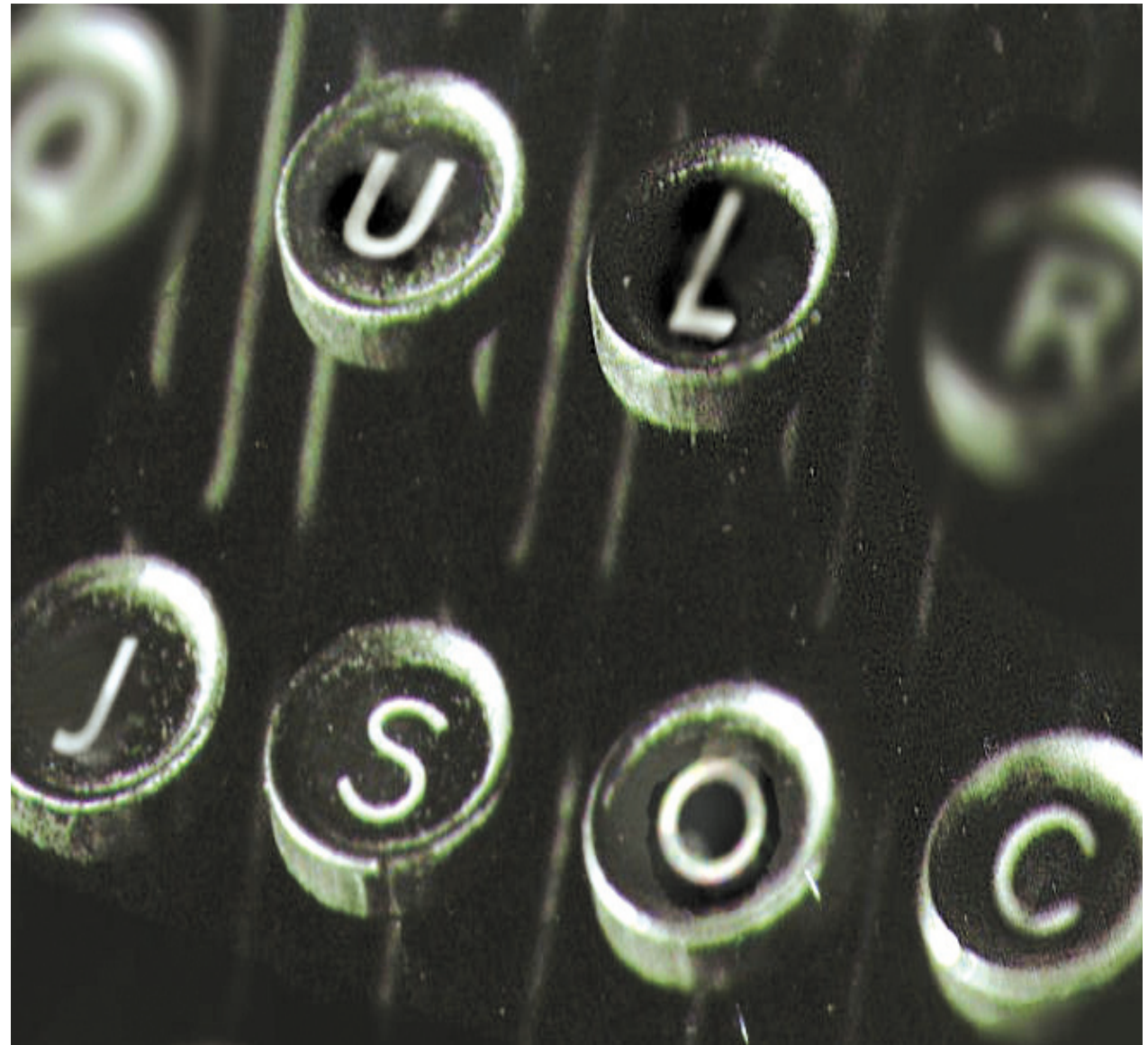
We will host seminars with leading journalists and use the skills of our members to interact and critically analyze all forms of media content using new media formats and equipment.

We will publish an annual magazine designed by our members with a broad ranging content that will give those

who contribute a working knowledge of the experience involved in designing a print publication. We will also record regular podcasts in which our members will be encouraged to participate. We will provide workshops on creative writing that will be beneficial to all interested in journalistic writing. The Journalism Society will not only encompass radio and print journalism but will look at new technologies in journalism and the media. The society will also act as a forum for fellow writers to network and develop contacts.

The UL Journalism Society can be found on Facebook and at www.journalismsocietyul.blogspot.com.

You can also meet us at our stall at the clubs and societies drive on Wednesday Week 3.





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WEDNESDAY WEEK 1 - UNIVERSITY ARENA

www.registercs.ul.ie








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Interview

Good food, good drink, great music

By Josh Lee

BOASTING an idyllic berth on the banks of the Shannon, the Curragower Seafood Bar would be a fantastic place for anyone to nurture their artistic side, and that's just what Limerick "folk-y rock" band Hermitage Green did.

Consisting of brothers Dan and Barry Murphy, Darragh Graham, Darragh Griffin and rugby player Felix Jones, Hermitage Green have been plying their trade around Limerick and beyond

for little over a year now. I recently had the pleasure of chatting to two of their five members in the bar where it all began.

After interrupting their pre-gig set-up, Dan and Darragh Griffin sat down with me on the bar's airy veranda to talk themselves, Limerick and everything in between. And The Curragower is a spot the band has fond memories of. Dan recalls how the five of them would use the bar as a practice area.

"We'd go into the back room and we'd barricade the door shut"—"Shitting ourselves in case somebody heard us!" adds Darragh. For a band that has dealt mostly in covers, Hermitage Green place particular emphasis on putting

their own twist on tracks they choose to play. For Darragh, simply regurgitating the original (or just playing the usual crowd-pleasers) isn't enough. "For me, it's about distancing yourself from the [original] song," comments Darragh. Although the band have a few of their own already under their belt, the lads have aspirations of moving further into writing for themselves.

They currently have a series of YouTube videos showing off five of their covers, and they plan to give the same treatment to five originals which they have been showcasing in some of their gigs—recently putting an all-original show in Lahinch. Hermitage Green's eclectic influences shine

through in music. And a wide-range of sounds and influences (Dan being a big metal fan) is something that's important to the group.

"Something that maybe sets us apart as a cover band is that we do trad, we do mainstream pop stuff, rock stuff and gangster medleys. There's nobody left out: we have young people into it, there's old people who drink Guinness and they're into it".

The local music scene in Limerick is also something which excites the group. "The amount of bars doing live music six nights a week is crazy". Both Dan and Darragh see a lot of potential in the acts coming out of Limerick. "It's coming on a swing. Go back two

years and there was nothing". When quizzed about Limerick phenomenon, The Rubberbandits, both Dan and Darragh were gushing with praise for the comedy duo. "It's great to see them get recognition; they're original; they're entirely unique".

Darragh, who is the main song-writing force in the band, has high hopes for a future release. Asked if there's anything in the pipelines for this year, he stressed the importance of success for their upcoming YouTube videos. "That's really what's going to make or break us".



Hermitage Green