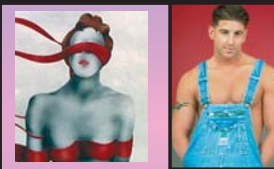


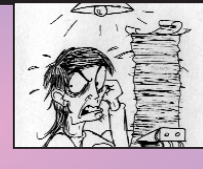
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Good
Luck to
everyone
in the
Exams from
An Focal
and all
at
ULSU!!

Wheres Wired?

As you may, or may, not have noticed Wired FM has practically disappeared from the UL Campus during the first semester of this academic year. You may ask why is this so? Who let this happen? And what is going to be done about this?

First of all, in relation to the issue of not being able to hear Wired FM in Castletroy there have been a number of reasons for this. Due to the construction work being currently carried out on the roof of the main building on the Plassey Campus the transmitter for the 106.8 FM frequency had to be moved. The Wired FM Board of Directors, who agreed at a meeting in July 2001 that the station manager Ms. Nessa McGann would seek planning permission for the mast to be moved to the water tower in Castletroy. Having gone through the various bureaucratic procedures in obtaining the planning permission Ms. McGann then had to form a contract with

Limerick Corporation, which entailed paying a nominal fee for the use of the water tower facility. All of this is by now completed and Ms. McGann now predicts that we should be able to listen in on the 106.8 frequency by the start of Semester 2.

In the meantime there has been no broadcasting from the Radio studio on the UL campus. The reasons for this are a little less clear cut, according to Communications and Campaigns Officer, Patrick Kennedy, who then went on to outline the history of the recent relationship between the UL Campus and Wired FM. "There have been many problems regarding the representation, funding and company structure of Wired FM," he says. Initially UL, the institution that, is entered into the partnership with the other two institutions, Mary Immaculate College and Limerick Institute of Technology. However since then UL has slowly been

drawing away from the project and, as indicated by John O' Connor in a letter to ULSU last summer, it now firmly sees Wired FM as a project for ULSU.

Funding for the station over the last number of years came from the Club and Societies budget allocation of ULSU. This should be facilitated through an application to the ULSU Executive to make to money available. However during the academic year 2000/2001 the Executive of ULSU became concerned that this may not be completed correctly in the past. With so much money at stake, roughly IRE20,000, the then executive set up a Select Group to investigate concerns that they had in regard to making such contribution to the running of Wired FM. The group was to present a report to the ULSU Executive, the Class representatives Council and Clubs and Societies Council. Though the final report has yet to be made a presentation

An Open letter to the Student Body

-Tom O'Donovan- Education Officer ULSU

The Irish Times reported on the 3rd of January 2002 that the University sector was becoming alarmed that it would have to accept weaker students in the near future because "the number of people aged between 15 and 24 will fall from about 660,000 at present to 530,000 in 2016". The affect of this population decrease will see a reduction in CAO points for University courses.

Using a memo written by Prof Michael Laver of Trinity College, Emmet Oliver, the education correspondent of The Irish Times made the assertion that that "On the one hand academics at their colleges will want assurances that academic standards will be maintained, but on the other if thousands of students cannot meet the standards and are dropping out, college administrators will be under pressure to keep students in the system somehow."

He was referring to the dilemma that will arise when a higher percentage of students are failed out of courses because they cannot meet the required academic standards. It is assumed that these will primarily be made up of the students who wouldn't get into university with the present CAO points.

While all of this is relevant and these arguments are being muted in the hallowed halls of academia, Mr Oliver and The Irish Times, (the paper also ran an editorial in the same edition on the topic), have missed the boat on the real motivation behind these concerns. To read it in the January 3rd edition, one would be forgiven for thinking that the universities are purely interested in dropping standards and failure rates for academic reasons. This is not completely accurate. In fact there are already rumblings of the inevitability of lowering standards and changing the level of teaching being pitched to students.

In the current university environment research is king. Research output and publications are the measure of how good a university is. The strategy plans being drawn up and the new initiatives being brought through the university systems are largely focused on improving the research capacity of institutions. Thus improving its reputation. This leaves little room for attention on undergraduate activity. In the University of Limerick this sentiment has become more and more apparent in the last number of years and is evident at nearly every level within the University structure.

In this atmosphere the main interest of the universities on undergraduates is akin to the 'headage' payments sheep farmers receive from the EU for numbers of animals they have on mountainous and otherwise unviable agricultural land. The government pays the universities a sum based roughly on the numbers of students enrolled in its books. This payment is a significant portion of any Irish university's operating budget and every university will do its utmost to maintain its share of the pie.

Both ease of entry and failure rates with a declining student population are very relevant to maintaining that share. Ease of entry, for the obvious reason of keeping student numbers up and maintaining the current levels of 'headage'. Failure rates are not as obviously connected because it is of a more political nature. As we saw over the summer with articles in various national publications failure rates, are something the media and the government monitor. If these are particularly high then it is likely questions will be asked and the university embarrassed. This results in bad publicity and the

continued on page 8

Exam Stress Survival Guide!!!!

We all suffer from stress at some point or other. It can be caused by a change in routine, loss of control over or an alteration in your environment and of course EXAMS. Yes its that time of year again, nights without sleep, copious amounts of coffee and redbull, and a stable diet of Zacs and Chinese!!!! It is important to be able to recognise stress in yourself and your friends and then be able to take a deep breath and take a step back from everything.

Ok here is the serious bit, there are a lot symptoms or stress people don't realize, take a look at the list below anything sound familiar.....



Psychological symptoms:

1. Constant irritability with people
2. Feeling unable to cope
3. Loss of interest in other people
4. Dread of the future
5. Difficulty in concentrating

Physical symptoms:

1. Lack of appetite
2. Constipation or diarrhoea
3. Insomnia
4. Headaches
5. Cramps and muscle spasms

6. Impotence (here is your excuse lads if ever needed)
7. High blood pressure

So heres the plan.....

Some of this may sound either blindingly obvious or the sort of 'I'm OK, You're OK' stuff that Irish people are instantly suspicious of. But that doesn't

books alone for a while.

4. Take at least 10 minutes daily for physical exercise, preferably in the open air, go check out the new arena its worth a look.
5. Avoid dwelling on the past. It's what's ahead that matters. Also don't convince yourself you have failed an exam before you even go into it, optimism is half the battle.

6. Finish one task before moving onto another, pick a

subject for a couple of hours and stick to it.

7. Change your routine as often as possible.



8. Take it handy on the red-

bull, coffee, alcohol, the effects are only short term they make you feel worse in the end.

That's pretty much it, take it handy, do your best you can't do any more than that and no one is asking you too. If things get too much don't be afraid to ask for help, there are a lot of people here for you to talk to.

mean that it doesn't work.

Heres your exam bible, and trust me it works.....

1. Work no more than 10 hours a day. (this even applies during exams!!)
2. Allow at least 30 minutes for each meal, sit and watch a soap or something just leave the

Constitutional Review Group Progress Report

The Constitutional review group is a sub-group of the Class representatives Council and its job is to wade through the quagmire that is the current SU constitution and hopefully come up with a spangling new Constitution for the SU. The Terms Of Reference are as follows:

1. The Sub-committee is constituted as agreed at the Class Representative Council meeting of 30th of October 2001 to prepare a draft or drafts of a new Students' Union constitution, taking into consideration all aspects of the Unions' activities, administration and business.
 2. The Sub-committee shall examine the constitution in its current form and other pertinent materials.
 3. Membership of the Sub-committee shall be composed of selected members of the Class Representatives Council and the S.U. Executive namely, Mr. Michael Phelan, Ms. Caroline Timmons, Ms. Edel O' Kelly, Mr. Gearoid Holland, Mr. Tom O' Donovan, Mr. Stan Blennerhasset and Mr. John Mulcahy.
 4. The Sub-committee shall commence its deliberations on Monday 12th of November 2001 and shall sit until a final draft has been decided.
 5. The Sub-committee shall make an interim report to the last Class Representative Council meeting at the end of semester 1 2001.
 6. The Sub-committee may seek professional advice from time to time and may invite any person who may aid the Sub-committee to attend any of its meetings.
- The Executive may seek a report of the Sub-committee's activities at any time.

So far the group has been meeting twice a week and debating the various sections of the constitution and comparing and contrasting with other constitutions such as DCU and DIT. While the members of the Group have laboured long and hard and have been very generous with their free time, it is very slow work. The group is

determined to produce the best quality work possible and this has meant spending a lot of time on each clause. At the moment the group has spent a number of hours drafting the new section on the Executive.

The original time frame for completion of our work was the end of semester one. We had hoped to submit our draft to the Class Representative Council members before they went away on their three weeks off. At the moment we are sticking with that goal but with the exams looming it is looking increasingly likely that we will need more time. However we will do our best and it is still planned to submit the final draft to a Referendum at the same as the SU Sabbatical elections. In the meantime anyone who would like to make a submission to the group on any part of the Constitution may do so at any time by contacting the Chairperson of the group Ms. Caroline Timmons at caroline.timmons@ul.ie.

The Constitution is the cornerstone of the SU and as such all the members of the group are to be commended for giving of their time.

'So far the group has been meeting twice a week and debating the various sections of the constitution and comparing and contrasting with other constitutions such as DCU and DIT'



Safety and Security Project of Work Report

Deputy President/ Welfare Officer – Tara Curley
Community Officer – John Mulcahy

Aim: To identify the areas which need improvement in relation to safety and security on campus and to develop an action plan to implement these improvements

Unfortunately safety and security seems to be an ongoing problem on campus, there are numerous attacks and incidents which happen unknown to most. What we would like to do is try to improve the situation and make campus a safer place for all, no-one came to college to live in fear and to be honest it is unacceptable to live in constant fear.

The measures which are currently in place are:



Nitelink bus

- The is a free service which operates Mon- Fri every week.
- The bus collects students at the college and drops them off at the main estates, so there is no need for students to walk home alone.
- The bus leaves every half an hour from outside the Stables from 7pm to 10.30pm
- From 11pm it leaves every half an hour from outside the library.
- The timetables are available in the Students union (also a copy in this edition of An Focal)
- This is a free service for all students.

Personal Alarms

- Simple and cheap means of protecting yourself
- Available from the Student Union Shop for £2.50
- The alarms are the same size as a marker, when you press the top of the alarm an ear-piercing alarm is set off
- All students should carry one
- Alarms can be rented from Student Union overnight, all you do is leave in you ID card and you collect it in the morning when you return alarm

Self-Defense Classes

- Classes started at the start of semester in association with the judo club
- The class are on weekly on at Wednesday night at 9pm in the arena.
- Trained instructor demonstrates basic techniques of self-defense
- Classes are £1 a night
- Brilliant craic and a sound reassurance

Plan of Action/ Suggested improvements

- Large awareness campaign
 - Highlighting the dangers and areas to avoid
 - The measures which are currently in place
 - The importance of reporting incidents
 - Informing students of their own responsibilities
 - The reality of what is happening on campus
 - How to avoid danger

- Large Campaign

- Lobby to improve lighting on campus
- Lobby to install CCTV cameras in notorious areas
- Lobby to improve campus security
- Lobby for a stronger Gardaí presence in Castletroy area



Any suggestions or comments would be greatly appreciated. Take a few minutes and let us know what YOU think needs to be improved, how you think it could be improved etc

This is something which effects every single person on campus and everyone needs to make a better effort in ensuring that our campus is a safe place to be.

Reporting incidents

Always report everything no matter how trivial it may seem

You can prevent it happening to someone else

All reports will be kept strictly confidential

Where can I report stuff??

Campus Security (Day)	202249/ 202006
	202010
(Night)	
Gardaí	414222/999
Students Union	202324
Welfare Officer	202519

Some other quick reminders...

- Never walk home alone in the dark
- Always walk in pairs
- If you see something suspicious report it
- If something happens to you or someone you know, report it



Report of the Transport Project

Transport? Where are we going?

Patrick Kennedy- Communications and Campaigns Officer
Catherine Levis- Student Teacher Officer

Under the ULSU programme of work for year 2001/2 we undertook the Transport project. We are mainly concerned with the transportation system between UL and town. The lack of bicycle facilities, lanes and shed.

We are focusing on three areas.

- Bicycles Shelters and Lanes
- Bus Lanes and Shelters
- Car Pooling



1. Bicycle Matters

Our main concerns have been the shortage of Bicycle Shelters around campus (especially given the incessant rain in the Limerick city environs!). We are also tackling the issue of the Bicycle lanes in conjunction with the work we are doing on bus lanes.

We have been in contact with Ger Manning from the Building department in relation to these matters. Resulting from this, we have been told that the bicycle stands will be altered to the preferred type that is already in existence at the back of the student centre. This should have been completed by the time you read this. As regards covered bicycle shelters all we have been able to ascertain, thus far, is that while this project has been planned it has been delayed

while the college deliberate over major concerns that they have, in chief what style of structure they find preferable. We will be investigating this matter in more detail so as to ensure that this process is completed as soon as is possible.

2. Bus Lanes

So far we have drafted letters for Limerick Corporation, Limerick County Council, Bus Eireann, local politicians, etc. We are seeking the plans, in action or for the future that they may have in relation to public transport in the Limerick area. Once we receive replies we will be able to move forward and plan what the next step in alleviating the current difficulties that exist in relation to public transport. Recently Bus Eireann have announced that they are to cut their

So far we have drafted letters for Limerick Corporation, Limerick County Council, Bus Eireann, local politicians

scheduled services due to the refusal of the County Council and Corporation to provide bus lanes in certain areas of the city. By doing so they would have reduced the current 50 minute bus service to Castletroy to a 10 minute service. We plan to start a campaign whereby ULSU will provide all Class representatives with a template letter stating dissatisfaction at this situation. Class reps will then go to their respective classes with the letters for anyone who feels strongly enough to sign it, and then they would return these letters to Catherine and I. We would then forward all let-

ters signed by individuals to the relevant authorities i.e. the Mayor of Limerick.

We will also be writing to Bus Eireann in relation to the lack of bus shelters at the many bus stops in the Castletroy area that still remain uncovered.

3. Car Pooling

We are investigating if a link to the UL Environmental Committees car-pooling site. Additionally we will be seeking to establish a Car-pooling page on the ULSU website.



Hello from your Sabbatical Officers

Aontas Na Mac Léinn



Mick Phelan- ULSU President

Happy New Year to all of you and I hope that you all had a good break and are all glad to be back for what is undoubtedly the greatest pain in the arse – Exams. I just want to mention 3 issues I think this edition and will give a more detailed account in the Semester 2 edition.

Exams + Cheating = 1 Year Suspension!

I know that this time of year is a very stressful time for students who have exams, and all of us at one time or another have thought about Cog notes or some other form of cheating. But then most of us don't go through with it, for better or worse. Myself and Tom sit on the Discipline Committee of the University and after the Autumn Exams last year there were 3 students suspended for 1 year for cheating. That may not seem that many, in previous years it has been more and if any of you think that you will not get caught, what happens if you do get caught – 1 YEAR AUTOMATIC SUSPENSION, and there is nothing anyone can do about it. So please do not fall into the trap that you will never get caught, it's not worth the risk. If you are having problems and need someone to talk to or advise, please call into the Students' Union, and have a chat with one of us, or call up to the Counsellors, but don't do anything risky, it's not worth it in the grand scheme of things, they are only exams!

EURO CHANGEOVER + UL = 58% ROUNDUP

Firstly I would like to apologise to the 2 students who called into my office last Thursday to complain about the massive price increase in the car park, my attitude towards the issue is somewhat soured by events of November 2000, but that is no excuse, sorry lads. As most of you have heard, and not for the first time, the Pay Car Park in UL has gone from £1 to £1.58, or in EURO language €2. This is the old issue of the Car Park, which the Students' Union was criticised for protesting in November 2000. Once again it wasn't about the Car Park, it was about the attitude of the University towards its Students, and here again we have more evidence of that, one of the largest price hikes in Ireland in relation to the EURO Change

Over. But have you noticed that for Graduations or Open days, the barriers are up, is their money not good enough for the University to pinch or is it that the University likes to paint a fake picture of itself to the outside world and then charge the students for their precious car park. In November 2000, 400 plus students protested about the Universities attitude towards students, but over 90% of the Student Community passed the picket line and didn't seem to care, what does it take for someone to care that they are not being treated as

equals, maybe in a couple of years, an issue will effect you and then it is too late because the authorities can steamroll whatever the hell they want! Some students who have complained to the Vice President – Administration have been advised that they should request their Students Union President to bring the issue up at Governing Authority, but he neglected to tell the students that their Students Union President was chastised for harping on about the issue in question and was told that the Governing Authority was not the place for such discussion – the pricing issue is a Management decision. Well the Vice President – Administration has a very strong voice on the Management Committee of the University, so maybe now you can see what we have to put up with. Finally on a point of Information, the Governing Authority of UL only agreed to a self-financing Car Park. So why didn't the management drop the price of the car park to €1, because we all know that when that car park has paid for itself, the barriers will still remain, and students will still be paying. I will leave you with an appropriate saying of Mr. Leo Getz (a.k.a. Joe Pesci in Lethal Weapon 2/3/4) "They Fouk you in the Car Park"



So if any of you have any issues, be it in relation to the Car Park or any other issues, please call in, ring me – 061-202326, or email me: michael.phelan@ul.ie For those of you who are annoyed by the car-parking price, please contact the office of the Vice President – Administration, as the charging of the car park is a management issue.

Finally in relation to the celebrations after the exams, the Gardaí will be out in force in Castletroy, so please don't go making too much noise as the licence of both Clubs still hangs in the balance until the 24th of January – I will give a full report at the start of next semester.

Best of luck to you all in the exams!

Mick

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Tara Curley- ULSU Welfare Officer

Welcome back all!!!!!! And Happy New Year!

I hope everyone is all relaxed after the Crimbo and Santa was good to ye all!! Santa arrived in my house at some ungodly hour of the morning, and I am going to go insane if I have to listen to Barney once more!! Christmas for some reason was really quiet this year, I think I'm getting old are something (scary thought) . You know things are really bad when the thought of going out is tiring and you'd much prefer to curl up on the couch and watch vids. Now I sound really sad, but it's a worrying thought so just beware.

So what do ye all think of the new Euros, more like monopoly money if you ask me, why did they have to make them all the same color, its going to be a nightmare on a night out!! I suppose we'll get used to it, don't really have a choice now do we!!

Last semester just flew and thankfully without any major problems, however with some successes like Greek week. Heres to the next semester going even better!!!!!!

Exams: I know its not officially end of semester just yet much and all as some of ye would love to think so. I know the exams are a nightmare, but lets face it its why we are here (to get that little piece of paper), just keep heads down and get

the next week and a half over week and enjoy the well deserved break afterwards. The best of luck to everyone doing

exams!! Try get some rest and not do too many all nighters!!

Some good news the 50m pool has finally opened, and the new medical center will be up and running by next semester. Speaking of the medical center.....

I Grades : If for some reason you can't do an exam, such as you get sick, or are in an accident or just to family problems, don't worry you could be entitled to an I Grade so that your repeat exam is not capped. Please don't hesitate to call into the counsellors, the medical center or into me, if you have any questions regarding exams and I grades.

Nitelink: The nitelink will be running right through up til the end of exams, the departure times are posted around the college and the in students union. Roughly it leaves every half and hour from 7 til 11 from outside the Stables and from 11 til 1 from outside the library. PLEASE DON'T WALK HOME ALONE. There is no need to; the nitelink is free and safe.

Just remember if things get too much or your having prob-



lems with anything, you can call in for a chat!! I don't bite honest!! There also is the counsellors who are there for you, and they are brilliant!! This time of year can be extremely hard for most, it can get lonely and stressful, what I'm asking you is don't let it please, come talk to someone that's what we are here for.....

Anyhow that's it from me, the best of luck in exams

Tara

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Tom O'Donovan ULSU Education Officer

Exams can be a stressful time and sometimes stress can prompt you to do something you might not ordinarily do. Every year after the January exams the most unpleasant aspect to our job kicks in - our participation in the Discipline Committee procedure. Usually, though not exclusively, the first cases the Discipline Committee hears in an academic year are related to academic cheating in the first semester exams. Let me be clear on this so that you are aware of what that means.

Every year a number of students are brought before the committee after the exams because they were caught cheating or suspected of cheating. In most cases the evidence is fairly overwhelming and even where it isn't, because of the way the Code of Conduct is worded, it is very likely you will be convicted.

For example; if for instance you were sitting a history exam and in the course of that exam an invigilator discovered some notes in your pencil case relating to a maths subject you were taking, not cog notes but genuine notes from one of your lectures, he or she would have to charge you with having unauthorised material in the exam. This is an offence under the Code of Conduct and has the same penalty as if they were cog notes for that exam, a minimum one-year academic suspension.

If as in the example given above these notes are proven to be yours the committee has no choice but to implement the penalty. There can be no leniency. There is absolutely nothing Mick or I (we both sit on the committee) can do for you as our hands are tied to the rules in these cases. So if you are thinking of it, don't! The likelihood is you will be caught and the penalties are extremely severe! Chances are you don't really need to do it anyway so don't.

Take your time answer as many questions as you can. It's normally better to attempt all the questions you are supposed to rather than answering one or two of them completely. Time yourself and work out how long you need to spend on each question. Timing is crucial. Don't load up on coffee and red bull and the like doing all-nighters the will only reduce your effectiveness in the long run. Also be aware of the possible health hazard of doing so, particularly if you are not eating and or smoking a lot at the same time.

Otherwise good luck and we will see you all hopefully in the next semester.



Tom

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Hi everyone a very warm welcome to 2002. I hope everyone had the opportunity to unwind and relax over the Christmas break, before settling back into study mode for the upcoming exams. I'm finding it hard to believe that I'm halfway through my sabbatical term already. Looking back over semester one I'm pleased that there has been a massive amount of progress made with An Focal, the Wired Fm situation (as outlined on page one) seems like being tackled at long last. However I still need to do a lot of work of a couple of campaigns, like the Voter Registration appeal, that have lost momentum due to a lack of time being spent in organising them. With a bit of improved organisation these should improve throughout the second semester.

We have an immensely scaled down An Focal this week, this is chiefly due to the fact that I felt as though the various writers, reviewers and contributors could do with a bit of time to spend on their exams. We'll be back with full force in week two of the second semester and will be seeking additional volunteers to aid in the production of the newspaper, anyone who has any interest should

feel free to drop me a line at the e-mail address printed below.

Finally anyone who is heading to foreign lands on co-op and is interested in becoming part of the "Faraway So Close" section should call into me before they go. Everyone who is leaving UL on co-op, study abroad or for any reason can access An Focal at www.ulsu.ul.ie/anfocal over the Internet.

That's it for now.

Good luck to all in the exams

Patrick

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Patrick Kennedy-
ULSU Communications
and Campaigns Officer

**GOOD LUCK IN THE
EXAMS FROM YOUR
SABBATICAL OFFICERS!**

I Am Jack's Exam Annoyances

By Jack Fennell

That time of year is upon us again, folks. Did ye all have a good time over the yule/new year holiday season? Did ye enjoy yourselves, partyin' down, hangin' out, drinkin', hoorin', cavortin' and carousin' the length and breadth of the country? Did ye have several nights to remember?? Good, because now the fun's all over and there's exams to be done. Get those alcohol-addled braincells moving, soldier!! Hut-Hut-Hut!

I cannot think of a worse time to set exams. Is U.L. doing its bit to prepare us students for a harsh world where joy is fleeting? Well, that may be the case, but it doesn't make much sense to me.

You're a student. You've worked like hell to get to where you are now. You've battled your way through the leaving cert and pursued your childhood dream with all your might. So here you are, studying astrophysics through Double-Dutch. Quite rightly, you decide to enjoy yourself

for the holiday season. Of course, you're a sensible student, so you realise that there's work to be done. You construct a detailed study plan that doesn't allow one nanosecond to be squandered in your pursuit of academic excellence. Except... damn, Braveheart's on the telly. Followed by The Usual Suspects until half four in the morning. Then tomorrow is the nineteen-hour Smurfs cartoon marathon that you've been promising yourself for ages, followed by the complete and uncut Highlander trilogy. And, hang on, didn't you promise to take your cousins to see Lord of the Rings? You still have to make up for that Aliens/Barney's Big Adventure mixup, after all. Little Sarah's still in therapy...

And so on, and so on, until you find yourself awake at half two in the morning of exam day, desperately trying to learn off the electrochemical properties of the mineral deposits of Saturn's rings. The chills, the sweats, the nightmares about coming into the exam hall stark naked... little things

to keep in mind which will brighten up your Christmas holidays for the next four years.

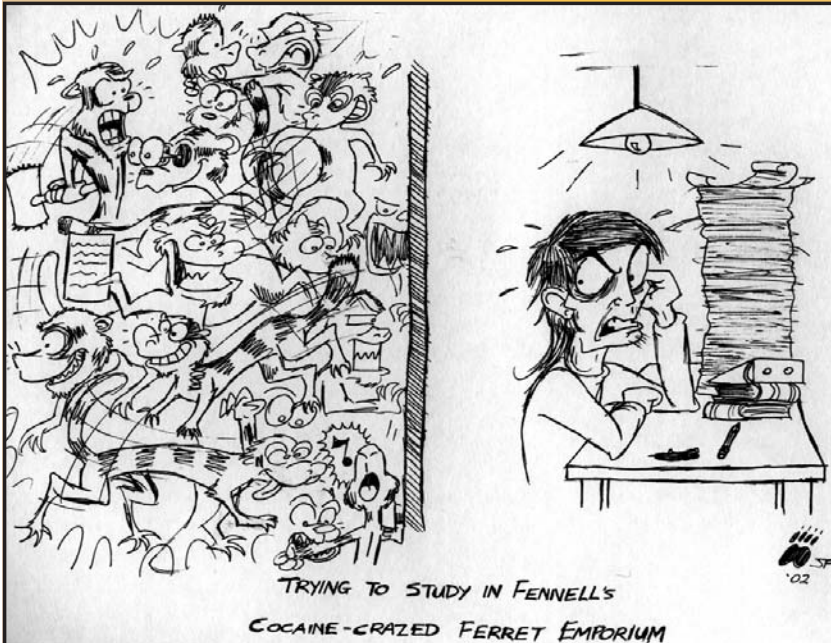
You could, of course, opt to put all the celebrations off until the February break, but then, "HAPPY FEBRUARY!!!" just doesn't have the same ring, does it? And chances are you'll be the only one in the pub saying it.

Santa's just given you a bottle of brandy and an inflatable sheep, but you're thinking of the dreaded exam hall... the blank pages... and the terrible bloody hangover... It's as awful a prospect as being squashed between three overweight skinhead neo-nazis in a fast-food place while the radio endlessly plays Duran Duran's greatest hits (err... you just spilled coke all over my manuscript... oh, you'll chop my ugly head off and kick it into orbit? Well, in that case, go ahead, spill to your heart's content...).

The whole problem is that the exams conflict with the most distracting time of the year. Students are experts at finding distractions under normal conditions. I remember once, being faced with the prospect of having to read a short story for english lit, I instead re-enacted most of the Die Hard trilogy using my cat and my gecko. Imagine then what a student must be like at Christmas, and New Year? Plus, there's the Euro changeover happening this year! How can such a creature be expected to study?? You may as well try to get a pack of cocaine-crazed rabid ferrets to give a thirty-minute presentation on the peace process (and if I'm pushed, I might just attempt that very experiment...). Of course, I can't talk, being a Cultural Studies student myself. There's plenty of PE and Industrial Chemistry people about who would question my authority on such an issue as exam pressure. Well, I have something to say about that, and it goes a little something like this: ah-agh-ah-aha-agh- ahem!! "Nyaaah nah nee nyaaa nyaaaaaaaaahhh!!"

Despite my somewhat less stressful state, however, I recognise the problem affecting youse lads-- that Christmas puts you into "couldn't-give-a-shite" mode, which is hardly the most desirable mode for earning yourself a degree.

The solution? Simple. Re-schedule the exams to before the Christmas holidays. When this happens, everything will be wondrous and happy and pink and fluffy and utopian. Or words to that effect.



Get ready for.....

Limerick College Ents presents

The Porn Star

Dress Up!

Tickets 8 Euro on sale from Monday Wk 1



ULSU ENTS PRESENTS

END OF TERM ENTS

friday week 15

Lust @ Docs

featuring

main room

JOHNNY MOY

&
BRIAN PHELAN

bar
BEN PHILPOTT & JODY

DOORS @ 9PM

saturday week 15

@ the gallery

featuring

all your favourites from
the 70 s, 80 s, 90 s &
today

don t be afraid to dress up

DOORS @ 12PM

TICKETS £6

AVAILABLE FROM STUDENTS | UNION RECEPTION | INCLUDES BUSES TOO AND FROM VENUE .

Valentines Day 2001 - Thursday WK1 Term 1

Ball of Love



Get Down and Dirty!!!

Term 2 Tickets 8 Euro on sale from Monday Wk 1



Murphys DOTCOMedy

Can someone really make that much noise??!!!

by Máiréad Moriarty

The last night of the Murphys DOT COMedy Club for this semester was certainly an experience! Almost ruined by one for everybody! But we still laughed! Read on!

Dermot Carmody, Tommy Nicholson, Karl Spain, Des Bishop. What a line-up there was for the Murphys DOT COMedy Club in the Scholars Function Room on Tuesday Week 11! The Christmas Special was expected to be a jolly ho-ho-ho night for us students who were under pressure, with project deadlines looming. Week 11 is always a stressful time – the second last week before the holidays when we get to go home to stuff our faces with mince pies and lots of chocolate! So, as laughter is the best medicine, the Comedy Club was something to look forward to. Plus it's UL Xmas Daze, so we have to make the most of it! But what was it like when it came down to the nitty-gritty?!

The line-up on the night was excellent. We all know Des Bishop from his 'Gondolas' days. Some may even have seen him perform his incredible show in the UL concert Hall during Greek Week. But what we love him most for are his adorable specs! Trendy or what?! Anyway – he is the MC here for the evening. Des is a native New Yorker, living in Ireland for the past eleven years and he loves it! Well he does, if his gags are anything to go by! He has all the accents perfected to a tee! He was loved by the audience and certainly proved a very effective MC. He wouldn't have been my first choice for MC to be honest, but he definitely worked for every penny's worth!

Karl Spain is beginning to gain a very nice reputation for himself here on campus. He is doing stand-up for the past year or so but as he told me later – he took 5 months off! His act tonight was all new material, except for the Jesus sketch at the end! It must have been the fourth time I've seen that one! The

reaction from the audience wasn't very



enthusiastic and he told me that he didn't think the new gags went down that well. I did notice that he didn't have the notes all over his arms on the night at all! They were on the bottle of beer, he said! He deliberately poked fun at the Americans for the benefit of Mr. Bishop! But was almost put to shame by the Yank's interpretations and imitations of Irish life! Karl is quite witty but doesn't really seem to convey this on stage too much. Although his act was comical he might benefit from more taunting of the audience. He really should have slaughtered that annoying little girl at the table beside me!

Although I had never heard of one Tommy

Nicholson, he proved an ever-important fact that you don't have to be stunning or even dress that well to get a few laughs. His original one-syllable-at-time technique was effective overall – even though it did take some getting used to! His tales of Naaa-van were hilarious with his almost innocent

flair. And it was as if he was the six-year-old class clown poking fun at everything and everyone!

The headline act for the night was Dermot Carmody, a self-confessed Terenurian! For a son of a vicar, he certainly had a very interesting range of vocabulary! His main talent lies in the combination of song and comedy! His renditions of Bob Dylan, Jack L, and that lady who sings "Crazy", amongst others, (her name fails me - lack of sleep last night!) were impressive! His witty tunes and lyrics brought the house down! The applause was mighty!

His alternative style of comedy proved refreshing and brought a new genre of comedy to the Function Room. God love him, he tried his best to ignore the pointless 'heckling.' Mrs FF-er tried to outsmart him! Silly girl!

Speaking of whom, we are now taking suggestions on how to deal with her! (Anyone who, just for two minutes

wanted to possess a double-barrel shotgun, raise your hands!) Mrs 'I-have-to-say-something-ridiculous-to-receive-attention' sat at a table near mine, and did not shut her mouth for the entire show! Fair enough – free speech, free country and all that – but why bother getting up from that couch to come down to the Scholars to see the Comedy Club if you're just going to sit there, not enjoying it, not having a laugh, and in the process letting everyone else know, every two minutes, that you reckon you'd be so

much more interesting than any of the acts on stage? It might actually be interesting to see how many people would spend money to sit down to lis-



ten to her? Let me take a wild guess! Mmmm! Apart from all that, why would someone even bother coming to the Comedy Club in the first place if they are just going to sit there and try to ruin the show for everyone else? I mean, I've no problem with anybody saying that they don't enjoy something, (I do it enough times myself!) but you really don't need to tell us 77 thousand times!! How many hints did you need before realising that nobody wanted to hear what you had to say anymore? How



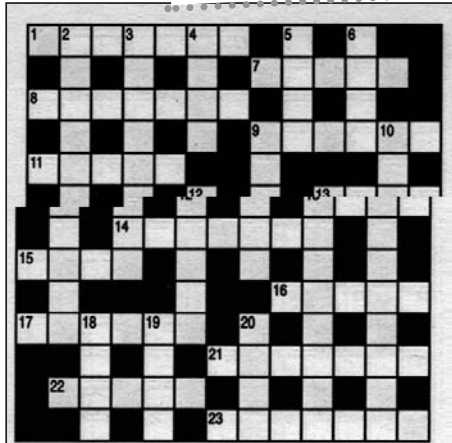
dare someone sit there in the audience and persistently criticize something they obviously haven't got a bull's notion about?!! In fact the tediousness of the situation proved for some comical entertainment from the people who happen to make their living from comedy. Des treated us to a rare delivery of his Charlie Haughey rap in honour of the aggravating one! Charlie and Mags, I love yis!

FYI: Next Comedy Club will take place in Week 1 of Semester 2. So have a wonderful Xmas and remember to laugh! Ho-ho-ho!!!

I mean, I've no problem with anybody saying that they don't enjoy something, (I do it enough times myself!) but you really don't need to tell us 77 thousand times!!

LIMERICK'S LIVE 95 AM

Crossword



- | ACROSS | DOWN |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Raised area overlooking garden (7) | 2. Sparing (10) |
| 7. Of too great size (5) | 3. Went up (8) |
| 8. Uttering (7) | 4. Dark and clammy (4) |
| 9. Risk (6) | 5. Stage before imago (4) |
| 11. Carrying out (5) | 6. Exotic vegetable (4) |
| 13. Large bag (4) | 9. Of our genus (5) |
| 14. Aesthetically pleasing (7) | 10. Begin again (10) |
| 15. Skim along (4) | 12. Fragrant conifer (5) |
| 16. Ruff (5) | 13. Common perching bird (8) |
| 17. Drivel (6) | 18. In a frenzy (4) |
| 21. Of olden times (7) | 19. Not difficult (4) |
| 22. Brag (5) | 20. Gambling stake (4) |
| 23. Presided (over) (7) | |

○ Last Weeks Solution

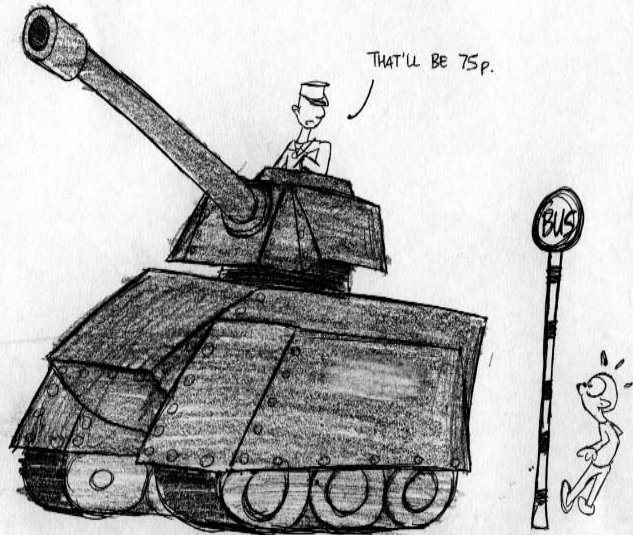
No. 82
ACROSS:- 1. Aries. 7. Reliable. 8. Rigid. 10. Taskmaster. 12. Decanter. 14. City. 16. Alan. 17. Adjacent. 20. Separation. 23. Ouija. 24. Nineteen. 25. Beach.
DOWN:- 1. Afraid. 2. Emit. 3. Deck. 4. Cigar. 5. Abstained. 6. Yearly. 9. Danny. 11. Scrapping. 13. End. 15. Kazoo. 16. Assent. 18. Thrash. 19. Praise. 21. Toes. 22. Nuke.

And the winners are.....

- 1st Place: Karen Nash
- 2nd Place: Grainne O'Mahony
- 3rd Place: Emmet Troy

To win yourself CD's courtesy of Limericks 95 FM send your correct entries to the An Focal Editor by knocking on his door and giving them to him (that being me). First three entries drawn from sack receive the CD's

MANOUVRING THRU LIMERICK
WITHOUT A BUS LANE ...



OPEN LETTER TO THE STUDENT BODY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

inevitable fall in popularity of that institution as a prospective destination for someone filling out their CAO form. Why go somewhere where you are unlikely to be able to finish your chosen course?

Universities are supposed to be institutions of education and education is about acquiring knowledge and the ability to ascertain knowledge. It is not about training someone to fill a slot on a factory floor or to buy and sell shares on the stock exchange floor. A university is not a substitute to on-the-job training yet that is largely what Irish universities are becoming.

Irish universities are atrociously under funded as was pointed out by The Irish Times January 7th reporting on the HEA. CHIU soon to be published report on the future of the Irish university sector. For example the national student to teacher ratio in Irish universities is higher than the OECD average. According to the OECD publication, *Education at a Glance* the Irish average is 16.6 fulltime students to every fulltime teacher while the OECD figure is 14.6. UL has a University ratio of about 20 to 1 but in one of its larger courses that ratio is 40 to 1, something that would not be acceptable in a second level school much less a university. This is largely due to insufficient funding.

Let the government guarantee the present rates of 'headage' for the foreseeable future despite the falling student numbers. De-link the CAO point system from a supply and demand matrix, redesign it to allow for the retention of the current standard. Introduce genuine financial inducements to the disenfranchised potential students who are excluded largely by the cost of attending third level not the academic standards. In short don't sacrifice the future of our education for financial reasons. Allow this demographic change to bring positive improvements to the university sector, allow it to naturally redress some of the current under funding

issues. Let me add to the call of The Irish Times in its editorial on January 7th that, Dr. Woods should address the longer-term needs of the universities and that he might include the longer-term needs of the students that the universities are supposed to serve while he is doing so. The universities themselves might also be better served by doing the same.

Mise le meas,

Tom O'Donovan

Education Officer,
University of Limerick Students'
Union.

Avoid the queues for your J1 Visa



ULSU and SAYIT travel are offering you the chance to travel to the USA for summer work this year. For the second year running J1 Visas will be sold through ULSU. Avoid the early morning lines and ask at the student centre reception for more information!



CUMANN NA MUINTEOIRI

(AKA STUDENT TEACHERS SOCIETY)

WILL COMMENCE IN SECOND SEMESTER

(TO RALLY FOR ISSUES OF THE STUDENT TEACHERS. TO CREATE AWARENESS ON SELETED ITEMS BETWEEN THE STUDENT TEACHERS)

LOOK OUT FOR POSTERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR DATE AND VENUE

THE THOMAND BALL
WILL BE HELD ON (PROV)THE 28THE FEBURARY
VOLUNTEERS FOR THE ARRANGING COMMITY MAY CONTACT
STUDENT TEACHER OFFICER AT 9919201@STUDENT .UL.IE
OR VICE PRESIDENT AT 0024619@STUDENT.UL.IE
WE WOULD BE LOOKING FOR A REPRESENTITIVE FROM
EACH YEAR. ASAP.

An Focal

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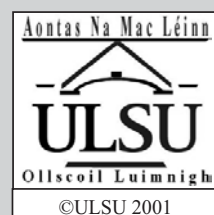
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Wheres Wired? (contd from page 1)

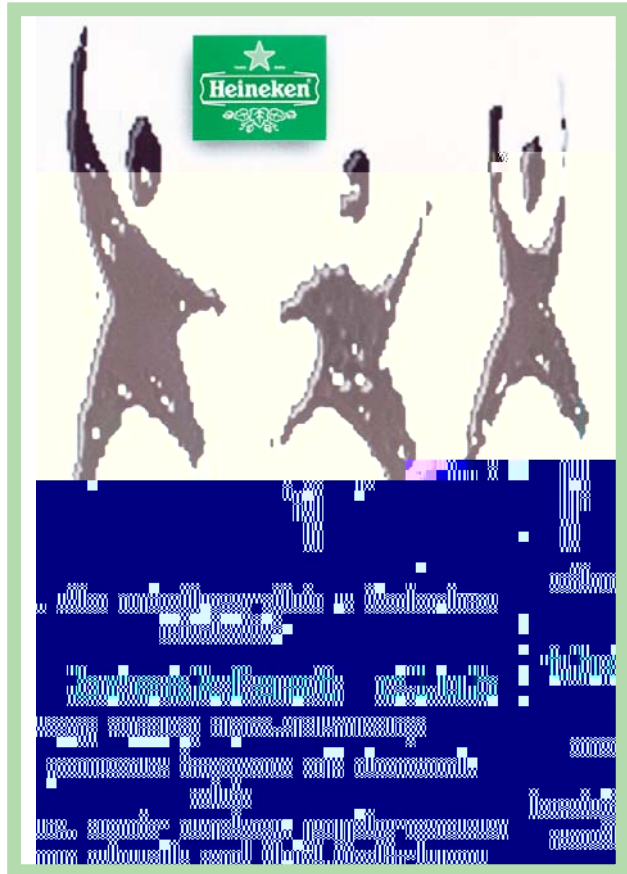
was made to the Wired FM board of Directors, last July by Paul Lee and Tom O'Donovan on behalf of the Select Group on Wired FM.


The presentation outlined the main concerns of the group as being representation, the accounts and company structure of Wired FM. They went through hazy history of the relationship between the UL campus, particularly ULSU's involvement with the Wired FM project. Covering in great detail the financial history of the relationship between the two actors on the UL campus and Wired FM itself. The presentation also outlined the method in which ULSU approves its financial payments and how it would go about contributing to the Wired FM project in future if such was the agreement of its members. In the words of Tom O'Donovan, Education Officer of ULSU and Chair of the ULSU Select group on Wired FM "ULSU has not always acted properly in relation to Wired FM in the past, but that's what we're trying to change now." However before the queries were dealt with at the meeting and the proposals of ULSU regarding the operation and running of Wired FM were discussed the Board voted that nothing could be done until the liabilities of the station were cleared. So at this juncture it was decided that the institutions/paying agents be billed for the current academic year and the liabilities would then be dealt with. In other words the debts would be calculated and those in debt would be asked to pay up.

Following the receipt of an invoice for an amount in excess of IRE20,000, the first time that such an invoice had been received,

ULSU sought legal advice and responded stating that we are not libel for such a fee. That's brings us up to last September. The response received from Wired FM stated that they would be seeking legal advice so as to clarify the matter. Additionally they stated that there would be no broadcasting from the UL campus commencing in September/October 2001.

Concerned about the lack of further correspondence over the next couple of months the Select Group on Wired FM was reconvened in December. The action decided upon at this meeting was to re-state, by letter, the concerns of the Select group and to notify the board of Directors that Wired FM would be an agenda item at a ULSU General meeting in Semester two. According to Patrick Kennedy there is a hope that the expressed concerns will be addressed in a satisfactory manner so that ULSU will be able to remain part of the Wired FM project.





SCHOLARS CLUB

THE WINNING ENTRY IN

THE NAME THE FUNCTION ROOM

COMPETITION IS

"AN PHLUAIS"

Meaning: the Den as in Fox's home or a meeting place.


CONGRATULATIONS TO SIOBHAIN BRADLEY, 2ND COMPUTER SYSTEMS FC
COMING UP WITH THE WINNING NAME. SHE WINS A PORTABLE TV / VIDEO
COURTESY OF **GUINNESS IRL. LTD.**

SIOBHAIN will see her winning name over the door of "An Phluais" in Gold Lettering.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO TOOK PART IN THE COMPETITION

BEST OF LUCK TO ALL OUR CLUB

MEMBERS IN THE EXAMS.



DOLAN'S WAREHOUSE

Fri. Jan 11th	SEAMUS BEGLEY & FRIENDS doors: 9pm tickets: €9
Sat. Jan. 12th	<i>Tribute to Luke Kelly</i> doors: 9pm tickets: €12
Fri. Jan. 18th	The 4 of Us doors: 9pm tickets: €12 Students: €10
Fri. Jan. 25th	DOLAN'S WAREHOUSE IN ASSOCIATION WITH ULTRA PRESENTS SILICONE SOUL (SOMA RECORDS, GLASGOW) SUPPORT CONOR G, OTHERS TBC doors: 9pm tickets: €12
Wed. Feb. 13th	SHANE MACGOWAN & THE POPES 'ACROSS THE BROAD ATLANTIC' TOUR doors: 9pm tickets: €23.50
Tuesday nights:	<i>Students Only</i> Live Band followed by club doors: 9pm students: €4
Thursday nights:	<i>Soul Clinic</i> doors: 12am tickets: €9 students: €7.50

Tickets available in advance from: Dolan's Pub, 3/4 Dock Rd, Limerick
061-314483 / info@dolanspub.com / www.dolanspub.com