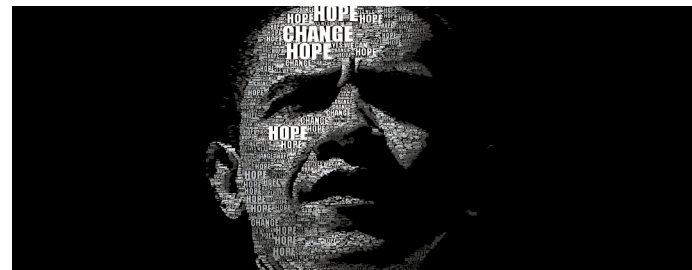




'The Biggest Student Protest Since The Sixties', In Focus. Pages 12 & 13



Have The Democrats Become Complacent? Page 5

## GOVERNMENT TO INCREASE SERVICE CHARGE BY UP TO €800

Written by **Colm Fitzgerald**,  
News Editor

THE Government has indicated it will not double the Student Service Charge (SSC). Instead, students now face an increase of €500 to €800

The new increase would bring total charges to just over €2,000. Negotiations on the precise charge will continue in the run-up to the budget.

The smaller-than-forecast increase has been described as a victory for students of Ireland, who have campaigned vigorously against a doubling of charges.

But, ULSU President, Ruán Dillon McLoughlin has said "this revised [SSC] increase, albeit smaller than anticipated, is still unacceptable.

It amounts to a €200 reduction in the initial forecasted projections."

"This will still leave the upfront fee to attend a four year degree somewhere between €8,000 and €9,200.

It currently stands at €6,000," he said. "Students need to continue to make sure their voices are heard

by contacting their local TDs and informing them of how this will affect students on the ground."

The beginning of November saw a national student protest in Dublin. A UL contingent of an estimated 550 Students joined tens of thousands of others in what has been described by Mr Dillon McLoughlin as "the largest student protest since the sixties."

The peaceful protest, whose media coverage was overshadowed by a minority riot outside the Department of Finance, snaked from O'Connell Street to Government Buildings at Merrion Square.

The press described as "militant" and "violent", the scenes outside the Department which were allegedly ignited by a small cohort of socialist activists. That demonstration initially included individuals who did not intend to part-take in any violence.

While a few hundred students took part in the riot, an estimated

40,000 students ended their peaceful demonstrations at Merrion Square and Leinster House.

UL will not see any financial benefit from any increase in the student service charge. UL President, Professor Don Barry has indicated that further education cutbacks will result in the culling of services, such as tutorials for UL students.

A second, smaller student protest took place in Dublin on 10 November, which sought to highlight the alleged brutality used by Gardaí during the riot.

On the same day, UK students stormed a building in Westminster, London, housing the Conservative Party headquarters. Once again, the media focused on the violence rather than the majority protest.



Students gather at Parnell Square in Dublin, the start point for the 3 November protest. Image: Finn McDuffie

## KEMMY OFFICIALLY OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Written by **Colin Clarke**

MINISTER for Defence, Mr Tony Killeen TD, officially opened the Kemmy Business School (KBS) on Friday, Week 9. Speaking to a large audience about the school's credentials, he described the KBS as "a vibrant and active centre of learning."

"It has developed a reputation as a first-class Business education establishment," he said. He also discussed the school's potential to assist Ireland as it pulls through this economic depression through the education of generations of students. "This country does have the capacity to come through this and with the help of education facilities such as the KBS, I'm confident we will."

The school is named after the late Jim Kemmy, former Mayor of Limerick. Mr Kemmy left a €5m gift to UL in 2003 which contributed to the construction of the state-of-the-art building. The facility incorporates a unique simulated Trading Floor that is globally connected through a Thomson-Reuters licence.

UL President, Professor Don Barry, expressed his delight at the opening of the facility. "The KBS not only provides innovative and award-winning teaching but it also plays a national role in thought and policy leadership in areas of strategic importance to our national economic development," he said. "It has built strong relationships with business, industry and the professions, to host

some of Ireland's leading thinkers and entrepreneurs." Professor Donal Dineen, Dean of the KBS called the opening "a truly historic day" for UL. "This opening reflects the tremendous work of the faculty and staff in building the international profile and reputation of the KBS over the years," he said.

The KBS is currently home to almost 3,000 students of which approximately 2,500 are undergraduates and many participate on part-time, distance or 'blended' learning programmes.

To mark the occasion, a KBS Distinguished Lecture was delivered by Mr Peter Sutherland, SC on 'Ireland's Economic Condition'.



The Kemmy Business School on the day of the official opening. Image: Oisín Lenane

## News

UL APPOINTS  
NEW FACULTY  
HEADSWritten by **Annie Dillon**

THE Governing Authority has appointed three new deans. Professor Tom Lodge has become Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; Professor Mary O'Sullivan has become Dean of the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences and Professor Kieran Hodnett has become Dean of the Faculty of Science and Engineering

The appointments are for a three-year term with effect from 1 January 2011.

UL President, Professor Don Barry congratulated the deans on their appointment and said he looked forward to working with them as they undertake the next phase of UL's development.

Prof Barry thanked Prof Pat O'Connor for her "outstanding contributions to the development of the Faculty itself and to UL in general". Professor O'Connor will step down as Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences on 31 December.

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1. Contributors please note:

All submissions to An Focal are greatly valued. If you have submitted an article which has not been published in this issue, it is very likely that your piece has been retained for publication in future issues. If you are concerned that your article has not been published, please say so.

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.

E: [sucommunications@ul.ie](mailto:sucommunications@ul.ie)  
to contact the Editor.

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Finn McDuffie, Editor

## EDITORIAL

MARY Harney has had a rough time of it lately. First the paint and then the eggs. And it's easy to pity the latest darling of the egg-wielders and the picket throwers. She is, after all, just human.

But why the pity? Was it that melancholy protrusion of her lower lip as she turned a fresh sod of grass; drippings of scarlet paint glistening as cameras flashed all round? Perhaps. But, for many of us, it was probably hard-wired pragmatism. We shall never vindicate assault, for it achieves nothing but damage.

Following her latest egging, she asked a provocative question. Why

don't people use democracy to engage in debate? It's a good one. And it's amazing how many sins the word "democracy" can cover. She said "politics is about choices; it's about arguing and debate."

While violence is unacceptable, protesting is very acceptable. In fact, the Minister's catch-all assertions are so removed from the sphere of reality, that she will probably never truly understand why people protest.

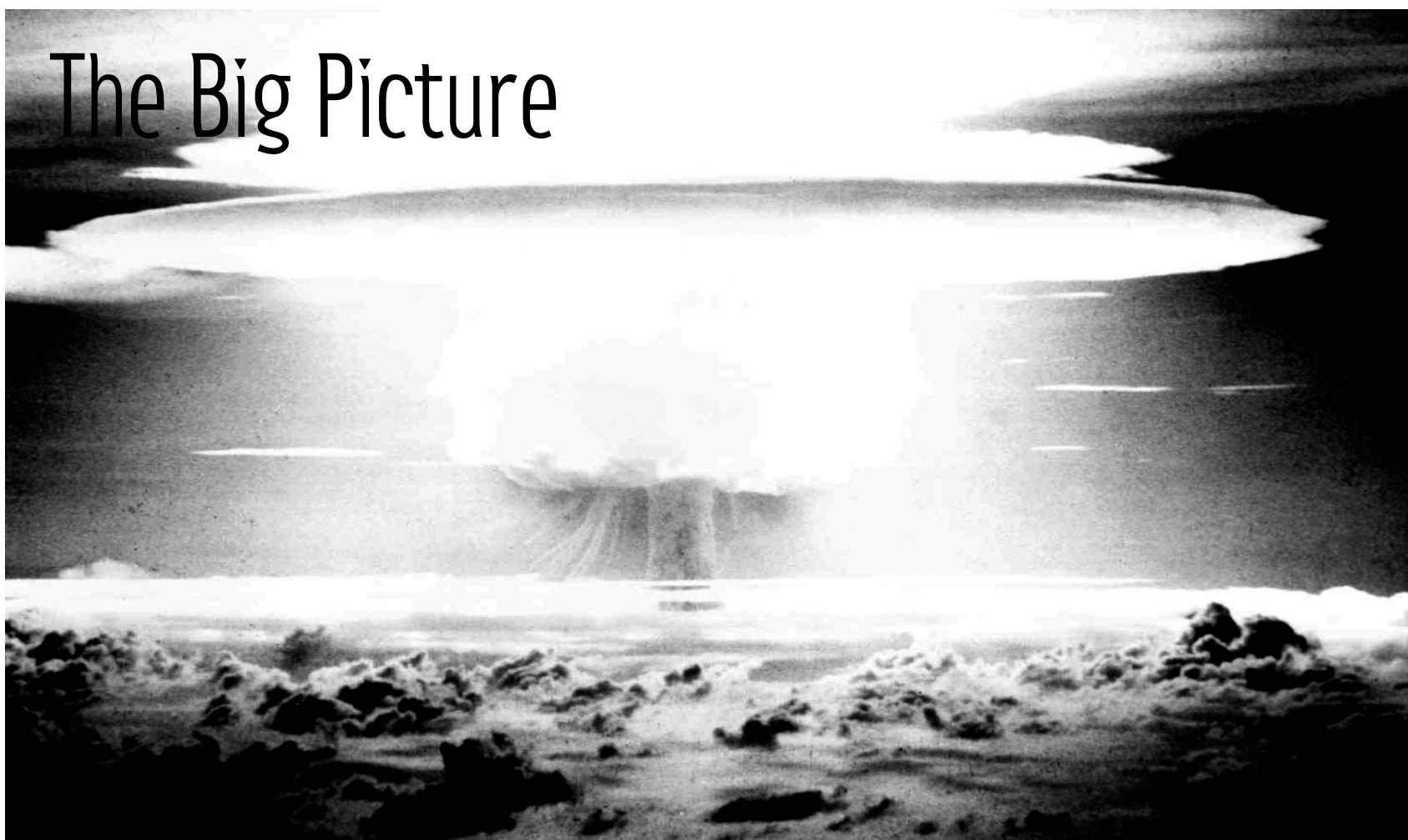
For her, politics is about self-preservation. Why else do Governments consistently think in the short term? Why else would our legislature, such as it is, be guilty of moral cowardice

across a range of possible legal tidy-ups? Why else would so many begin to see the street as their only voice?

When the Government is so blatantly whispering in corners with the privileged, no option exists for the weak, but protest.

The reason for this is simple. Access to power and influence in Irish democracy is starkly unequal. In such a democracy, dissent and protest is not only legitimate but also very important. Ms Harney might not think so. But then again, she wouldn't. Would she?

Sometimes the Government needs some perspective. And we are that perspective.



In November 1954, the United States exploded the first hydrogen bomb in the South Pacific. The Eniwetok Island, on which the explosion occurred, was completely flattened. The bomb produced a fireball more than three miles across and a mushroom cloud around 40,000 feet high. Mankind had entered the H-bomb era.

POKER GAME  
ATTRACTS 100  
ENTRANTS FOR  
€1,600 PRIZE

Written by **Colin Clarke**

THE inaugural UL Poker Society (ULPS) Championships took place on Monday, 8 November in the Sports Bar. With 69 entrants pre-registering for the event and a further 31 signing up on the night, the tournament was hailed by the club as "a great success".

The €1,645 prize pool meant the top 10 finishers were paid. In first place was David Mullins who picked up €500 and a first issue ULPS Bracelet. In second place was Ian Kelleher, who won €350 and a bracelet. Third was Stephan Brosnan, who won €250. The remaining prizes ranged from €170 to €30. Michael Harte, first year Energy, finished 11th and inside the so called "Bubble", receiving no prize money. He said "it was a great night and someone has to come 11th." He commended the society and the bar. "I think a lot

of credit needs to be given to both the Poker Society for running such a great competition and the Sports Bar for offering €3 pints and free finger food."



The final hand that won the UL Poker Championship.  
Image: Colin Clarke

SIGNED CONTRACT CREATES  
50 JOBS AND NEW FACILITIES

Written by **Brige Newman**

UL HAS created 50 new jobs as work is set to begin on new facilities.

Contracts have been signed that will put a start to all weather sports pitches and Sports Pavilion Building on the North Campus. The development was proposed a number of years ago, with all the conditions being successfully agreed upon during the past number of weeks. The state of the art facilities, including a full sized GAA pitch two soccer pitches and a rugby pitch, will be fully floodlit and is to be completed in time for the 2011/2012 academic year. The Sports Pavilion Building will include changing rooms, squad rooms,

coaching rooms, as well as a restaurant, bar and conference rooms.

The development is set to cost €9m, and will be funded from various different areas, including revenue created by the project as well as funding generated from campus based commercial activities.

This latest development will add to UL's already large sports facilities.

The University already boasts of Ireland's first Olympic sized swimming pool, the Boathouse, with Ireland's only indoor powered rowing tank, outdoor all weather athletic facilities as well as numerous pitches.

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**Clubs and Societies Editor: New appointment.**  
Please submit CV and cover letter to [sucommunications@ul.ie](mailto:sucommunications@ul.ie)

## News

# DAVID NORRIS ADDRESSES CIVIL PARTNERSHIP DEBATE

Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

SENATOR and presidential hopeful David Norris told a debate on the Civil Partnership Act that gay rights should be protected as part of people's human rights. The senator was speaking at a panel discussion hosted by the Debating Union and the Law Society in Week 10. Christopher Robson of the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network, Gráinne Healy of Marriage Equality and Fr Brian McKeivitt, editor of *Alive* magazine also spoke at the event.

The audience filled the Jonathan Swift Lecture Theatre, with Senator Norris the main draw for many spectators. While the gay rights activists received a warm reception, Fr McKeivitt received a sometimes hostile reaction from the crowd.

"They wanted to keep us [homosexuals] marginalised and humiliated and not members of our society," Mr Robson said. As he concluded his speech, he offered €50 to anyone who could successfully refute his argument, a challenge taken up by Fr McKeivitt.

"Listening to four geriatrics talking about sex is a bit much," Fr McKeivitt joked. "Western civilisation has become a society without hope. If you

can marry someone of the same sex, why not three people or even a cat?" he said.

"There is a resistance [to gay marriage] that is homophobic in origin," Ms Healy said. "The inequalities facilitate a lingering sense of homophobia."

Senator Norris took the floor to loud applause. "I believe that gay rights are part of the real and important spectrum of human rights," he said. "It is important that citizens in this state have the right to choice."

The senator also added a lighter tone to the proceedings, particularly in the jovial way he refuted Fr McKeivitt's arguments.

"The insights of celibate men are not as great as those of people who have experienced the wonder of sexuality," Senator Norris said. "I don't want to marry my cat," he added.

Debating Union Auditor Mairead de Faoite and Law Society President Adam Moursy both expressed their satisfaction with the numbers at the debate and extended their gratitude to all the speakers on the panel.



Senator David Norris filled the Jonathan Swift Theatre at the joint UL Debating Union and UL Law Society event.

## UL COUNSELLING APPROACHES SU FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Written by **Colm Fitzgerald**,  
News Editor

THE University's Counselling Department has approached ULSU for assistance due to its lack of funding, An Focal has learned.

Upwards of 20 students are currently on waiting lists for appointments, but due to lack of resources the Department is unable to offer them any. It is understood students who present between now and Christmas at the daily drop-in service may not receive appointments for ongoing counselling until Semester Two. In some cases external or public appointments may have to be made if feasible. Head of the UL Counselling, Dr Declan Aherne said "my view is that as a society we need to look at how we support the most vulnerable in times of adversity. It seems like we turn our back on them when they need us most. The University does need to make a moral decision on its priorities at this time."

"There is an unprecedented increase in the demand for student counselling. Numbers attending the service have

increased by 30% from 500 students in 2008/2009 to 700 students in 2009 / 2010." "There is a real challenge to determine how we will respond to the most vulnerable in times of adversity. To refer the problem elsewhere would be to neglect our duty of care."

SU President, Ruan Dillon McLoughlin, has said "at a time when students are paying more for services through the student service charge, it is disturbing and appalling to hear that the most vital of student services is being cut." "Funding for counselling should increase in tough economic times because the additional financial burden on students puts a lot of strain on their mental health." Dr Aherne ensured students they will be facilitated but asks students to be understanding of long waiting periods. "We will continue to look at new ways of delivering our services," said Dr Aherne.

ULSU is in directly in contact with the Counselling Department to ensure student welfare is maintained.

## STUDENTS LAUNCH COLLEGE RATING WEBSITE

Written by **Kelly O'Brien**

FOURTH year engineering students at UL, Alistair Waddell and Diarmuid Mac Conmara, have launched a new website, [ratemycollege.ie](http://ratemycollege.ie). Freely available, the website gives students a forum to discuss the positive and negative aspects of college and university. Speaking to An Focal, Alistair Waddell indicated the niche his website seeks to fill. "There was no purpose-built forum in Ireland where secondary school students could get information they need on colleges. They make their CAO choices based on the open days and the courses available. But college is so much more than that."

The website operates on a five star rating system where third level students rate their institutions on several aspects such as course workload, clubs and societies and nightlife. Though primarily aimed at second and third level students, the website is anticipated to interest companies that deal with students. It will act as a feedback forum for nightclub owners, accommodation service providers and

taxi companies in on-campus areas.

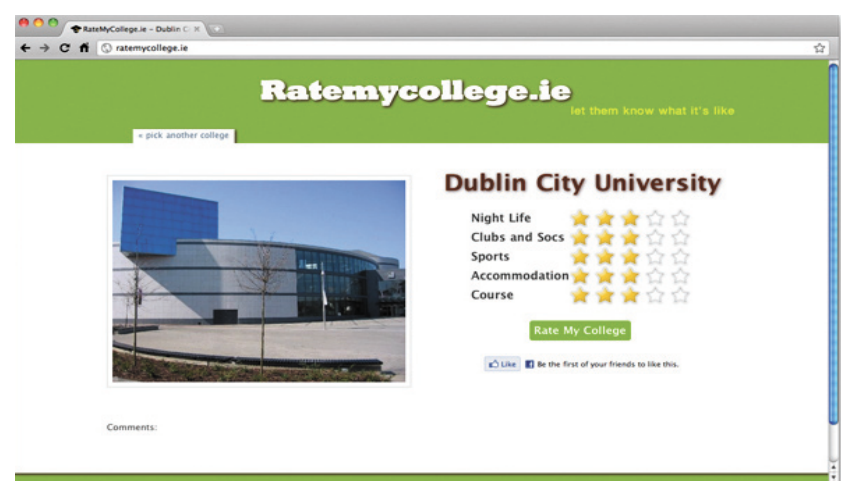
Mr Waddell continued "while our aim is to provide vital information for secondary school students, it would be an added bonus if student focused services took an interest. A lot of facilities could gain valuable insight from the thoughts and opinions of their customers."

Website users can log in through their Facebook accounts. After providing

details of their institution, users then rate their institution and can leave a general comment at the end.

Diarmuid Mac Conmara said "we hope to expand the website in the next few weeks once we get some feedback from this trial period. At the moment it's in a very basic stage. But we feel it's going to be very beneficial to a lot of people." The website is live.

See [www.ratemycollege.ie](http://www.ratemycollege.ie)



## JAPANESE FILM FESTIVAL COMES TO THE SWIFT

Written by **Darragh Roche**

THE third annual Japanese Film Festival visited the Jonathan Swift Theatre in Week 9 and featured free screenings of several Japanese art house films, including anime productions from some of Japan's most acclaimed modern directors.

Yoshihiro Nakamura's *Fish Story* and Mamoru Oshii's *The Sky Crawlers* played in the Swift on Tuesday and Makato Shinkai's *The Place Promised in Our Early Days* was Wednesday's main feature, followed by Fumihiko Sori's *Ping Pong*.

The Japanese Film Festival is organised by the Embassy of Japan in conjunction with Access Cinema. Access Cinema is a company that promotes regional, cultural cinema in venues outside of Dublin.

"Irish audiences respond well to Japanese cinema," Japanese Embassy representative, Yushiro Yamauchi, said, "Irish people understand the complexities of Japanese cinema," he added. Mr Yamauchi is Second Secretary of Press and Cultural Affairs at the Embassy of Japan.

"With all art house films, all the stories are universal," Access

Cinema Director, Maeve Cooke said, "This event is about stressing the similarities between our cultures. For example, the rituals surrounding death are very similar in Ireland and Japan," she added.

"Ireland and Japan have similar storytelling traditions, like fairytales," Mr Yamauchi explained, "Japan is a country with 8,000 gods."

Irish people are willing to embrace Japanese culture. The differences are very much secondary."

Both Ms Cooke and Mr Yamauchi praised the commitment and help given to them by UL's Anime and

Manga Society over the course of the festival and pledged to return next year because of the positive feedback they have received.

The Japanese Film Festival took place in Cork, Galway, Dublin and Limerick over a two week period and UL is the only university in the country to have hosted screenings as part of the event.

## News

NEWS  
IN BRIEFWritten by **Brige Newman**BUSKING FOR  
SUCCESSFUL  
MATHS WEEK

MATHS events took place around Limerick for Maths Week 2010. Organised by two UL bodies (MACSI and NCE-MSTL), the week of events kicked off on Friday, 8 October. Events included maths busking, a first for Limerick. This involved a team of enthusiastic students, researchers and teachers who gathered at the Milk Market in Limerick City, entertaining all age groups with performances of tricks, puzzles and games while communicating "the wonder of maths". Several events were also organised on campus. Over 250 primary school students from Limerick, and Tipperary attended interactive sessions, with a maths trail, giant sudokus, an engineering activity and who wants to be a maths millionaire.

19 STUDENTS  
HONoured BY  
UNIVERSITY

19 STUDENTS have been recognised for high academic achievements by the University of Limerick. The students have been invited to take part in the University's Advanced Scholars Programme. The programme identifies students achieving first class honours in their final year of undergraduate study and supports them in further education development through by research. Professor Brian Fitzgerald, Vice president of Research UL, said the students were being acknowledged due to their current performance and future potential. All 19 students hold undergraduate degrees from UL and study a number of disciplines including Education, Engineering and Business, among others. The programme was established in 1999.

ISRAELI  
AMBASSADOR  
MAKES FIRST VISIT  
TO LIMERICK

Mr Boaz Modai, the Israeli Ambassador to Ireland, recently made his first visit to Limerick and included UL on his tour. The newly appointed ambassador met with UL President, Professor Don Barry, and Director of the Technology Transfer Office, Paul Dillon. Mr Modai was briefed on the University's research profile as well as the potential research in UL holds for commercialisation. Professor Eamon Murphy briefed the ambassador on UL's spinout and campus companies.

UL TO VOTE IN  
SEANAD ELECTIONS

UL graduates could soon be able to vote in Seanad elections. Last week, the upper house voted that all degree holders who are Irish citizens and graduates of Irish universities should be entitled to vote in Seanad elections. Currently only graduates of the National University of Ireland and Trinity College are eligible to vote on the Education Panel of the Seanad. Fintan Breen, Chairperson of the UL Alumni Association and past president of ULSU, welcomed the news.

STUDENTS GET CREATIVE  
WITH "ART IN RESIDENCE"Written by **Colm Fitzgerald,**  
News Editor

CAMPUS Life Services ran its annual "Art in Residence" (AIR) campaign in Week 7.

The campaign offered students living on campus an opportunity to select a framed piece of artwork to have displayed in their house or apartment for the duration of their tenancy.

Campus Life Services claim the initiative allows students to add a personal and creative touch to their residences. Plassey Village Manager, Rebecca O' Hare, who oversaw the project, said the programme "offers a substantial opportunity for residents living on campus to express themselves creatively by learning a new artistic skill. It also enables them to appreciate the process behind creating an artwork while gaining the opportunity to make new friends from other villages".

She pointed out UL's commitment to the arts. "When you look around UL, we are surrounded by art ranging from detailed collections to student posters, intrinsic architecture to exciting landscape design."

A variety of other artistic events took place over the week, including free art taster classes in three campus villages with classes taught by experienced artists in ceramics, life drawing and creating a masterpiece with a difference. A film night and art trail also took place, while students were offered a trip on an art bus. The coach operated to the Hunt Museum, Occupy Space Studios and the Limerick Printmakers, where guided tours and interesting discussions on various artistic items took place.

Campus Life Services has said plans are already afoot for AIR 2011.



Plassey Village Manager, Rebecca O' Hare, with two village residents.

POLITICIANS BACK  
GOVERNMENT  
CHEESE SCHEMEWritten by **Colin Clarke**

LOCAL politician Willie O'Dea and Defence Minister, Tony Killeen spoke in favour of the Government's cheese scheme at UL last week. The scheme, which is funded by the EU Commission, sparked public anger as some people regarded the gesture as an insult.

Former Defence Minister, Willie O'Dea, said "it is surplus food which can be made available to people in poor circumstances. It's a humanitarian gesture, I suppose." Speaking after the official opening of the KBS, Mr O'Dea said he had no doubt the scheme was intended as a gesture to help people in difficult economic circumstances.

When told of the public's negativity, Mr O'Dea defended the scheme. "I suppose you can interpret it that way. But it is intended as something to be helpful to people and I'm sure many people will benefit from it. It's easy to ridicule things and make little of the gesture. But in all fairness, that's the intention of it."

Asked about the apparent exclusion of Limerick as well as other counties from the scheme he said "the people of Limerick are entitled to benefit from the gesture as anyone else and that deficiency will be rectified, I'll make sure of that." Current Defence Minister Tony Killeen also defended the scheme. He said "it would be a pity if we were to denigrate the message of the value of the indigenous food industry because of the reaction of some callers to radio stations." The minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Brendan Smith TD announced last week that a substantial quantity of cheese is to be made available for distribution to those most in need this Christmas. He said "I am very conscious that many people find themselves in difficult circumstances at present" and that the free cheese would bring some "comfort and relief to the Poor."

UL BOASTS  
STRONG STUDENT  
RETENTION RATEWritten by **Kelly O'Brien,**  
Features Editor

NEWS of a strong student retention rate has been welcomed by the University. Its non-presence rate, which measures the drop off rate of first years from 2008 to 2009, was found to be 9%, a figure which is reportedly "significantly better" than the majority of other Irish higher education institutions.

Over the last decade, UL has pursued a comprehensive learner support strategy which has been developed via a number of learning support centers alongside a comprehensive orientation for incoming students. The University has also designed peer support initiatives and, through the use of teaching and learning innovations, has developed expert techniques in study skills development.

Vice President Academic and Registrar at UL, Professor Paul McCutcheon, said "we place a lot of emphasis on supporting all students on our academic programmes and in particular easing

the transition from second level to third level by providing special guidance and care for first year students entering the University."

"Our commitment to fostering our first years has been reflected in the low dropout rate by UL students."

Demonstrating this commitment, UL recently launched "First Seven Weeks," an orientation programme designed to provide "strong, enhanced and targeted support" to incoming students. The Programme was developed as a result of research carried out by the UL Centre for Teaching and Learning, which has shown that the first seven weeks at UL is a crucial acclimatisation period.

Research has shown us that incoming students who do not engage with certain aspects of university life in their first number of weeks on campus are much less likely to avail of these supports effectively in the longer term.



A candle-lit vigil in the SU Common Room last week saw a group of students gather to highlight the importance of mental health, in association with national organisation, Please Talk.

Pictured on the right is organiser, Derek Daly and a group of volunteers who braved the rain to be there on the night.

## Opinion

## OBAMA'S MID-TERM LOSSES

Written by Dafydd Phillips

THE Obama presidency ran into a major hurdle on 2 November. The Democrats have lost the House of Representatives and suffered a major loss of seats in the US Senate. Obama is now in danger of becoming unable to enact new legislation, which will only exacerbate the problems he faces.

The first question that springs to mind is how, considering the landslide victory Obama won two years ago, have Obama's and the Democrats' fortunes changed so drastically? The most important factor that has hit Obama's popularity is the economy. Fears over the ballooning deficit and the lack of job creation have caused

many voters to become frustrated with Democrat policies. The stimulus package that Obama introduced is perceived as wasteful or ineffective to many voters. The two wars he inherited are also becoming a major drain on the public purse and the public's patience. The President's reaction to the BP oil spill also disappointed many voters. His response was perceived as underwhelming and some commentators absurdly compared it to Bush's response to hurricane Katrina.

There was also the major issue of the so called 'enthusiasm gap'. Conservative and Republican supporters have been energised by their previous gains in

special elections and by their fears over the direction they think their country is headed; the fear of a socialist takeover and other such nonsense. Democrat voters have become apathetic and complacent. Many are disappointed at the pace at which Obama's promised changes are taking place. Idealistic, first-time voters who supported Obama's presidential election are less enthused by governorship and congressional elections.

Republicans have made the most of the problems America is facing. Rather than working with the Obama presidency they have pursued a policy of non-engagement and rhetoric. The

Republican catch phrase of criticising 'big government' (which they didn't seem to mind during the Bush years) has struck a chord with a frustrated electorate. However conservative politicians have failed to provide a credible alternative to Obama's policies. Voters are making a big mistake in trusting the same party that caused America's economic ruin in the first place. Populist Republican policies like tax breaks for the rich and cutting government spending will not lead to economic growth.

## DEPARTMENTAL NOTICES

## STUDENT ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION

The final exam timetable was published on Monday, 15 November.

## LANGUAGE SUPPORT UNIT

Need help with learning languages? The LSU provides support and guidance to become a better language learner.

All its activities are free of charge and are open to all UL students studying a language as part of a module or on their own.

For further information, contact: Catherine Jeanneau (catherine.jeanneau@ul.ie) or just drop in (LC2010).

## FIRST SEVEN WEEKS

## Feedback Questionnaire

Your feedback on your first seven weeks in UL is very important to us. Please tell us what you think at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BMTKXLS>

One random entry will receive a €100 book token.

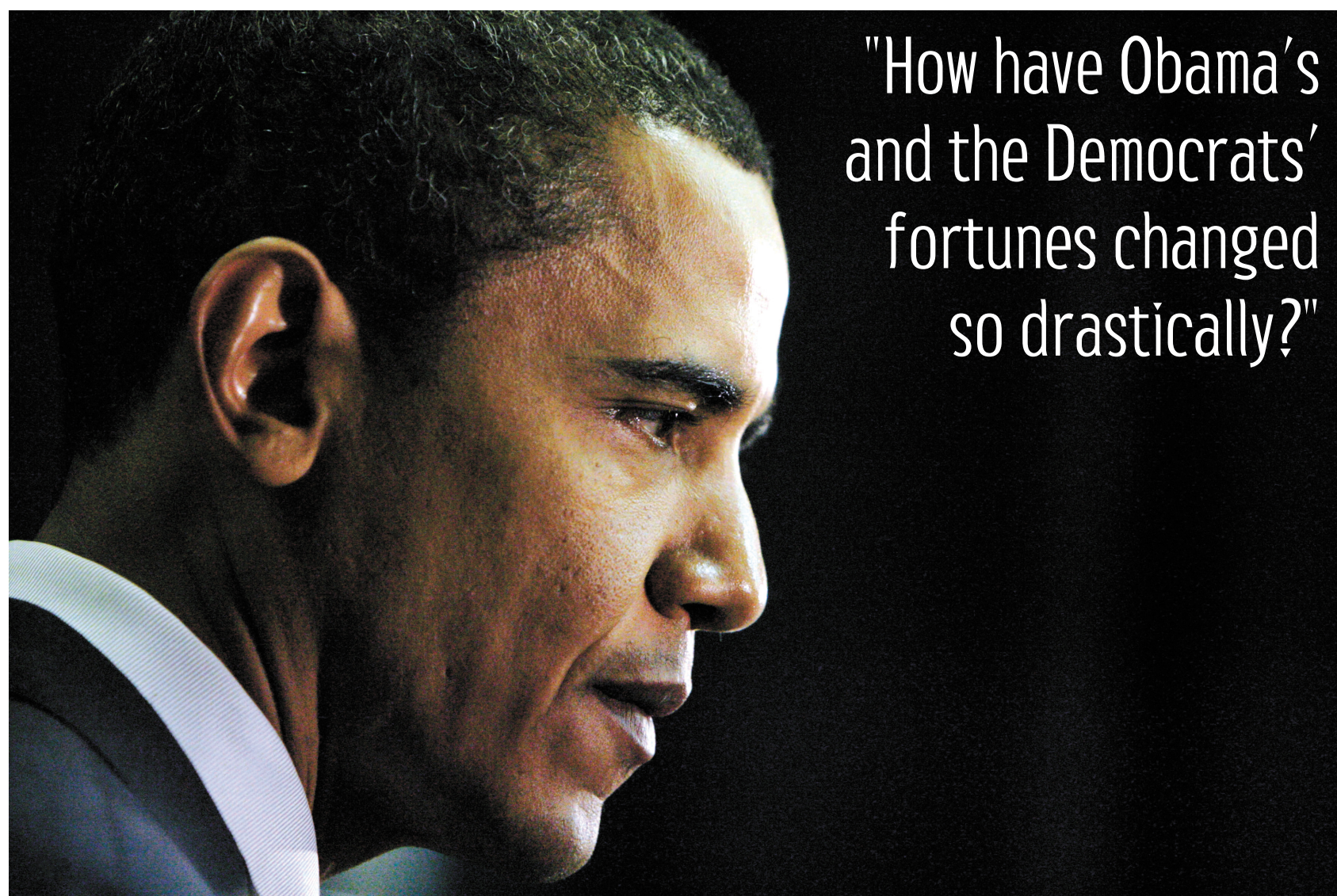
## MAIDIN CHAIFE

**Notice of Irish Language Coffee Morning 10.30-11.30, back of Eden Restaurant - all welcome!**

Bialann Eden (ar chúl)  
Bloc E  
Príomháras

10:30am – 11:30am

Gach Céadaoin!



## TACKLING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Written by Adrian O'Higgins

THREE years ago, Irish university graduates were almost guaranteed employment. Highly rewarding jobs with competitive salaries were in abundance. That position has changed dramatically. Youth unemployment is now one of the greatest challenges facing Ireland and the EU. Hit with a shrunken jobs market and increased competition, young Europeans are struggling to obtain relevant and secure jobs. It seems the short-term outlook for youth employment remains rather bleak. Increased job market activity is not expected to pick up until after 2011. But it has been noted that before the current financial and economic crisis took hold, youth employment had been at its highest level for decades. The Governments' policies towards education and investing in youth had resulted in a smooth transition for many from education to the employment sector. It is predicted that once economic activity returns to growth in the future, young people will be better able to take advantage of a rise in opportunities; just as they did before 2008. At the moment, University graduates can expect some prospect of employment if they have

work experience before graduation. An increasing number of students are also opting for further study or summer work experience abroad, which both enhances their skills and broadens their opportunities even further. Ireland, having one of the highest rates of third level education participation, should expect to benefit when economic growth returns to a sustainable position in the western world.

The big challenge in youth unemployment is for those who do not gain any recognised certificate of higher education, leave school early or who are from a disadvantaged background. These young people can expect to

find it very difficult to remain in an increasingly competitive employment sector.

The challenge of youth unemployment is great. But it is not insurmountable. A proactive approach from the Government, coupled with constructive activity from employers, would result in greater opportunities for young people. These opportunities would provide the experience and the skills required for our youth to be at the forefront of our country's future development as well as stemming any potential brain drain from our shores. Action is required and it is required now.



Department of History  
Roinn na Staire



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK  
OILESCOIL LUIMNIGH

Public Lecture

Professor Diarmaid Ferriter (UCD)

## Civic Engagement: Historian, Media and Public



Date: Wednesday 24th November 2010  
Time: 6pm  
Venue: John Holland Lecture Theatre (D1050)  
UL Main Building, Level 1

Reception hosted by Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences  
5.15pm  
Room D1049

ALL ARE WELCOME

RSVP [anne.marie.odonnell@ul.ie](mailto:anne.marie.odonnell@ul.ie)  
Tel: 061-202280

## Opinion

# SHOULD IRELAND LEGALISE EUTHANASIA?

Written by **Róisín Healy**

EUTHANASIA is something most students in Ireland never have to think about. The controversial treatment is only legal in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, Oregon and Washington. Assisted suicide in these states is legal only when a patient requests it, when the doctor adheres to strict criteria and most importantly, when the patient is terminally ill and suffering unbearable pain. Many other restrictions apply, with slight variations between states.

Some misguided individuals believe legalising euthanasia would lead to the elderly and disabled being involuntarily euthanized. Some contend we'd end up with a Nazi Germany situation on our hands. In the American states that allow euthanasia, patients requesting help to die must have only six months left to live. This requirement prevents the possibility of euthanizing the healthy

disabled and elderly. Anti-euthanasia groups believe those who advocate assisted suicide consider the lives of the sick and elderly to be worth less than others. Those who believe in the value of physician-assisted suicide believe that euthanasia provides those facing a torturous and painful death a humane alternative that provides dignity and relief.

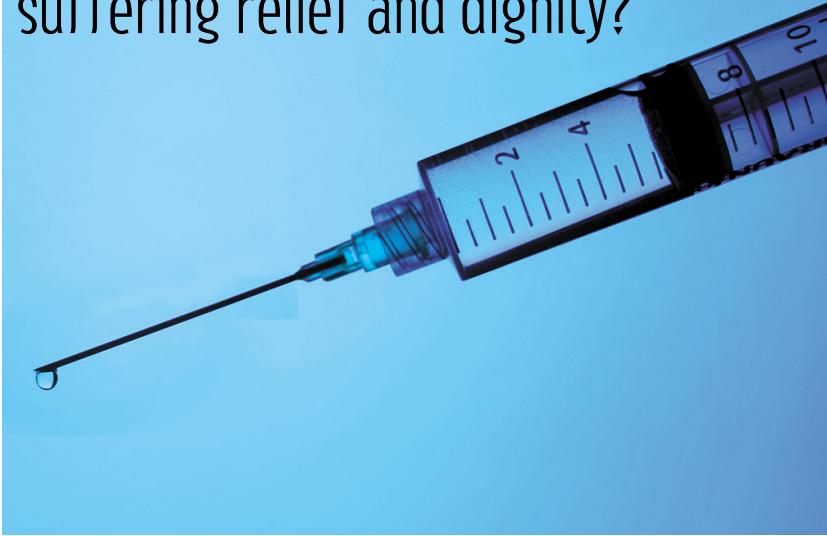
It is also argued that voluntary euthanasia is a 'slippery slope' to involuntary euthanasia. Involuntary euthanasia is when the patient has not actually requested to die. The pro-euthanasia alternative to this scenario is physician-assisted suicide, where the doctor provides the drugs to help the patient die but the patient must administer the medication themselves. Also in America, patients must make two oral requests to their physician and

one written application, followed by a 15-day waiting period.

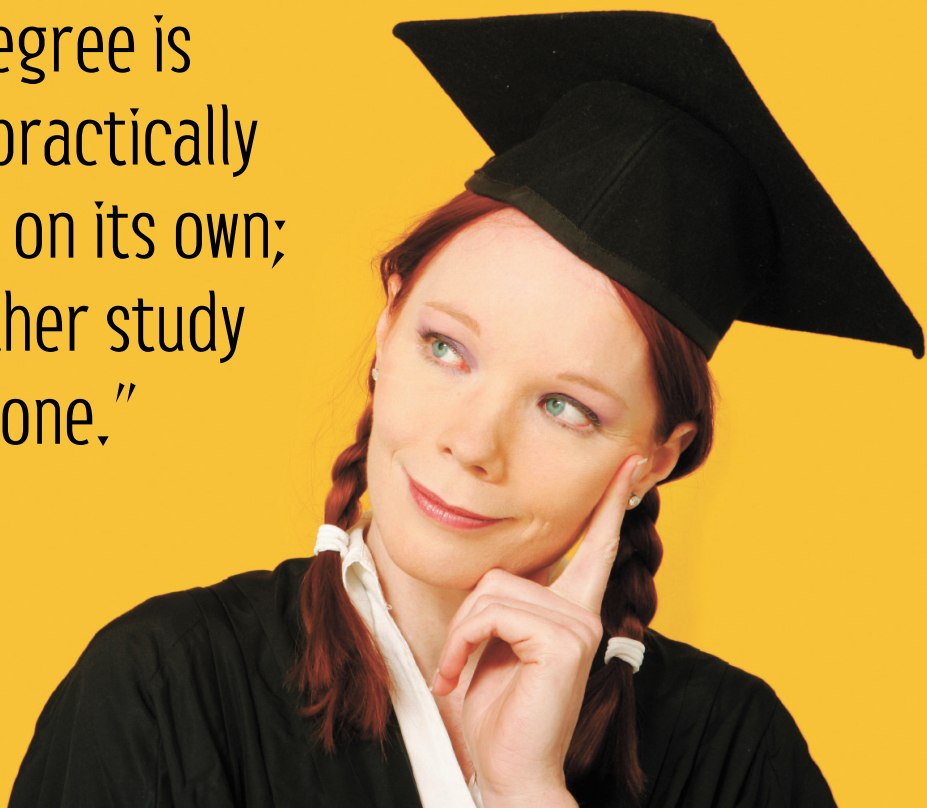
Many healthcare professionals consider palliative care so effective that it renders euthanasia unnecessary. But palliative care means the individual's death is prolonged and while their pain may be managed, their dignity and quality of life is reduced.

Veterinarians put down suffering animals on a daily basis so why don't we extend the same courtesy to our fellow man? In my opinion, euthanasia is a basic human right. When someone's level of suffering has been deemed by themselves and at least two medical professionals to be unbearable, who are we, the fit and able, to deny them their one chance for relief and dignity?

"Who are we to deny the suffering relief and dignity?"



"The thing about an Arts degree is that it is practically worthless on its own; some further study must be done."



## LIMITED JOB OPTIONS FOR HUMANITIES STUDENTS

Written by **Róisín Peddle**

THIS year brought a record attendance of over 2,700 students to the UL Careers Fair. With many of the leading IT, science and business companies setting out their stalls, Business and Science students were well-catered for. But for a Humanities student the fair was dispiriting to say the least.

What stalls were aimed at Humanities students? The EU commission was recruiting for translators and linguists. Good for languages students, bad for everyone else. Facebook, a huge attraction on the day, told students that they were interested in anyone, regardless of degree. But a quick glance at their careers page shows primary interest in those with computer engineers, graphics designers and those from a business/legal background.

The fact of the matter is that there were

only a handful of companies catering for Humanities students. These were mainly volunteering organisations promoting the teaching of English as a foreign language. The only other options for humanities students were the Defence Forces and CTC Aviation Group.

So if you don't have the volunteer spirit, are too short for the army, and get nervous at 30,000 feet, what are your career options? Very limited apparently. It's either apply for a post-grad or emigrate.

The Government is constantly telling us that we need to build a "knowledge-based economy". Knowledge-based means little or no manufacturing, which has largely gone to Eastern Europe and the Far East anyway. It means Science, Engineering and Computing. It means

Pharmaceuticals and Google. It does not mean Government-funding for teaching and lecturing, theatre, music and social work. It means that if and when Ireland gets back on its feet that those with Arts degrees will be making the tea.

Humanities students in UL know this already. When discussing class hoodies, fourth-year Arts students considered putting "do you want fries with that?" as the class slogan. Of course, the thing about an Arts degree is that it is practically worthless on its own; some further study must be done. It doesn't help our collective self-esteem to realise how little the college seems to think of us.

## TWENTY YEARS UNITED

Written by **Kieran Murphy,**  
German Affairs Correspondent

LAST month, Germany celebrated 20 years of unity. But reunification has not been a smooth process. Sure, the once divided capital of Berlin is now a mecca for artists, bohemians and young people seeking an alternative city. But the countryside of the former east has not seen a similar rejuvenation as numerous industries collapsed once governmental support disappeared.

This left a whole generation with no option but to migrate westwards to seek jobs and a better quality of life. Billions of Euro of federal investment has been poured into the former east and at times, the funding has created a great resentment amongst the wealthier West. Having said this, the modern problems facing Germany; the financial crisis, integration problems and the ageing population, are far from the dramatic scenes that heralded the end of the cold war.

Chancellor Angela Merkel, having been raised in the former East, has recently revealed her own feelings about the situation. Generally considered a

very private politician, she remarked on how she still uses East German brands and is inclined to hoard goods.

Germany not only struggles with the integration of its own East but also with its significant minority population who first came to rebuild Germany after the war. The recently elected federal president Christian Wulff was criticised when, in a speech at a unification celebration in Bremen, he said that Islam is as much part of German identity as Christianity or Judaism.

Ireland, it seems, had its own part to play in the reunification. The Irish presidency of the European community in 1990 helped win support for reunification from reluctant European nations. Former Taoiseach Charles Haughey chaired the council meeting that declared support for East German membership of the EEC and began the EEC on the road to European political union.



Angela Merkel, a private politician who recently spilled the beans by revealing her controversial shopping habits

## Features

# SANTA CLAUSE IS DEAD AND WE HAVE KILLED HIM

Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

“Santa Clause is dead; we have beaten him to death with a singing fish and strangled him with cheap fairy lights.”

THE true spirit of Christmas is personified in Santa Clause, the apple-cheeked, ever jolly symbol of unfettered giving and the joy of children. But Santa Clause no longer represents our society. We live in a society of grabbing, greed and garbage. Santa Clause is dead; we have beaten him to death with a singing fish and strangled him with cheap fairy lights. It is our society that has killed Kris Kringle and crushed the warmth and generosity that he once embodied.

It's November. Hallowe'en is barely behind us and Christmas is more than a month away, so why in the world are we

already drowning in Christmas songs, advertisements and even decorations? This is not Christmas spirit, this is marketing gone mad.

By the middle of October every year, shops throughout the country fill their shelves with pumpkins, cheap costumes and novelty sweets for the customary night of ghouls and gaudiness. No sooner have we thrown our capes and masks aside and gorged ourselves on Hallowe'en toffees but those same shelves are re-stocked with saccharin candy canes, worthless plastic trinkets, horrendous novelty gifts and the usual Santa themed garbage.

Both Hallowe'en and Christmas are festivals of gorging. Whether we spend our time stuffing ourselves with sweets and toffee apples on 31 October or with turkey and ham on 25 December, the principle is the same: we give ourselves an excuse to eat too much, to drink until we get sick, to behave like savages and chalk it up to the holiday season.

Nor does the excess end with food; Christmas requires decorations, presents, novelty items, cards, a tree and a whole host of smaller things that seem unavoidable. And like the proverbial Christmas snowball, the more you buy

the more you have to buy. This attitude is even enshrined in tedious workplace traditions like Secret Santa, which is an insipid practice that pleases no-one but the shopkeepers. That is why advertising begins in October. How better to convince you what you need to purchase than drilling it into your mind every day for two months?

Excess is not always bad. No-one can be truly human until they have eaten too much or drunk too much and made a fool of themselves because of it. But over-indulgence should, above all else, be satisfying. It should leave us with a pounding headache and the feeling of a job well done. What do we get out of Christmas? The only things left over are the bad presents, the unpalatable food and the wearied decorations that nobody wants anymore. Christmas doesn't give us a sense of achievement or triumph; it only perpetuates the same old, tired routine.

As one year ends and another begins, no-one is any better off and the only thing we have to look forward to is another Christmas.



## BREAKTHROUGH IN FEMALE CONTRACEPTION

Written by **Fionnuala Corbett**

INSTEAD of having to swallow pills or have a bar inserted, rubbing on some clear gel on their bodies could now be all women have to do to prevent pregnancy.

The gel is rubbed on to the skin once a day and can be applied to the abdomen, thighs, arms or shoulders. It releases a dose of hormones into the body exactly the same as the contraceptive pill does. Unlike the pill though, there do not seem to be any negative side effects. Participants in early studies did not experience weight gain or acne.

Dr Ruth Merkatz, who led the most recent study on the gel, said that so far it was proving “very effective”

despite the fact that it only needed to be used in very small amounts. The gel is being applauded because it gives women more choices about what form of contraception to use. According to Merkatz's study, a staggering two million women are currently using a method of contraception which doesn't suit them.

Not everybody is pleased with the new development. Website “modernmom” slams the gel, saying teens using it would be more likely to have unprotected sex which increases the risk of contracting STIs and pregnancy. Some religious forums say the gel highlights a “morally devoid” society.

The apparent absence of side effects makes the gel appealing. But it does have a significant disadvantage when compared with the pill. It's not exactly discreet and it's more time consuming than simply taking a small tablet.

The gel may be a breakthrough for women who want a different form of contraception but it is a product that needs further research and development before it can be marketed effectively. The product also requires wide scale testing and once it hits the shelves a few years down the line, it's bound to be a success.

## CUSTOMS QUEUES: A NECESSARY EVIL

Written by **Róisín Flanagan**

HAVING arrived at the airport and checked in for that much awaited weekend away, all that's left is the dreaded queue through customs.

You've filled that little plastic bag with liquids and sharp objects like they said, (because foundation is a deadly weapon) and off come your shoes, your belt, and your jacket. But of course the metal detector goes off regardless. After a few minutes of humiliation, you scrape your dignity off the ground, put on your shoes and wish somehow you could tell everyone who saw, that you aren't a terrorist. However irritating the procedure of going through customs, this month's bomb scare proved it is

well worth the hassle. In what President Obama called a “credible terrorist attack”, two separate explosive devices on route to synagogues in Chicago were found in Britain and Dubai. Originating in Yemen and disguised as ink toner cartridges, the two lethal explosives were found in cargo planes, one of which was dismantled 17 minutes before its planned explosion.

Can we stop and think for one second what events would have unfolded if these bombs had not been located? The US is at war and US soldiers still occupy Afghanistan and Iraq. With both countries left in ruins, what more is left in the name of war tactics but

something very radical? For the past month or so France has been on high alert over rumoured terrorist attacks by Osama Bin Laden. Europe is sure to follow suit and heighten security during the Christmas season. The last thing people want during the festive period are longer customs procedures. But if it stamps out acts of terrorism, the hassle is worthwhile.

So the next time you're wondering why they want to scrutinize your lip-gloss or your Brylcreem, be thankful that such security measurements are in place. A lot of people owe their lives to the stringent security measures. And you could be one of them.



## Travel



The Prague Astronomical Clock or Prague Orloj is a medieval astronomical clock located in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic.”

# PRAGUE: CZECH IT OUT

Written by **Dafydd Phillips**

PRAGUE, a city renowned for beauty, history, culture... and the most beer drank per capita in the world. Prague is a great destination for all type of vacationers, from the culture vultures who can be appeased by the panoply of historical and cultural attractions, to the louts who are just out to drink cheap beer (which is seriously cheap). Czech cuisine is also extremely low cost provided you stay away from the tourist areas.

Prague's restoration projects of the last twenty years combined with some truly magnificent landmarks makes Prague a beautiful city to walk around in. The Czech people themselves are quite interesting also. They are the kind of people who, if you were to drop a coin while using a ticket machine for example, would pick up the coin and put it in their pocket. Or, if you were to hold a door open for them would scowl at you rather than say thank you. It would be unfair, however, to judge an

entire people on these isolated incidents. Younger Czechs are a lot friendlier and open to foreigners.

A cautionary note for those considering doing Erasmus in Prague; the apartment block I stayed in, formerly a communist hotel, now serves as Erasmus accommodation for foreign students. With two students per room, an almost total lack of facilities, and mould so aggressive you'd wonder if it's sentient, the place was not exactly a charming advertisement for the country. And that's not to mention the assorted mix of drug dealers and prostitutes gathered outside.

But all in all, Prague really is a beautiful city and well worth the brusque flight over. Ryanair is constantly offering cheap flights to Prague and, while you will probably never want to live in Prague, it's certainly worth a flying weekend's visit.

# ERASMUS DIARY

Written by **Emma Hayward**

OCTOBER passed by in a blur. I travelled a lot this month. I visited the northern village of Kyrenia where there is an amazing castle and a beautiful harbour.

I went on a day trip to Troodos and climbed a mountain until we literally reached the clouds. I spent one weekend in the Golden Beach, an area in the north-east of Cyprus which is renowned for being the most wild and untouched part of the island and I went to the Cyprus International Film Festival in Nicosia.

The festival was really great. Free for students, it showed a variety of films from around the world from 5pm until midnight. I watched an unhealthy

amount of cinema in three days. I found the lack of interest in the festival strange. There was only one screen but it was mostly empty save for a few Erasmus students. There were even a couple of Irish films including a short animation called 'Old Fangs' and a short film called 'Bleeding Love'.

Troodos, in the central part of the island, is a mountainous area with a unique beauty.

It is the greenest part of Cyprus that I have seen. I went with my Greek language teacher and classmates and we hiked up a mountain for a couple of hours until we could see for miles around. The clouds were coming in around us on our descent. When we

descended, we picked wild grapes and had a barbecue. It was definitely a highlight of my travels.

The Golden Beach was a great experience too. It's a natural breeding place for sea turtles. But it wasn't breeding season so it was ok to be there. It's certainly worth hiring a car and exploring the more remote places because they really are so different from the city.

It'll be these authentic places that will spring to mind when I think of Cyprus in the future.



Kyrenia Harbour, Cyprus.

# THE BEAUTY COLUMN

Written by **Meghann Scully**

HAVING just landed back from a great weekend in Edinburgh, this week's beauty column has migrated to the travel page to give you some essential travel tips.

Space, size and weight are severely restricted on most of today's airlines. Unfortunately, this means leaving all your bottles of creams at home. For a weekend trip, only the bare essentials are needed. But you should include good quality supplies because travelling can really dry out your skin. Spots are the last thing you need when you're snap happy.

Travel bottles are the jet setting must have. Boots sell packs of 30ml and

10ml clear plastic bottles to keep the ever strict airlines happy. Bring a small amount of moisturiser and cleanser as you won't need a full bottle. If you have super sensitive skin, Boots' botanics range has a 30ml tube of intensive moisturiser. As for cleansing, wipes are the way to go. I know they aren't always the most pleasing to the pores but they are extremely handy when you are on a trip away.

In terms of hair care, never depend on the hotel to provide shampoo and conditioner. Most places rarely have both and if they do it usually leaves hair dry and bristly. Most pharmacies now sell travel bottles of hair care.

Save space and buy the dove range as it will act as a shower gel too.

Trying to keep completely groomed while away can be challenging, especially when restrictions apply. So give your body a good exfoliation before you leave.

Sea salt mixed with almond oil will remove dead skin and leave you as fresh as a baby and an overnight tan such as he-shi will last through your weekend getaway.





## Lifestyle

## GET THE 'MAD MEN' LOOK

Written by Amy Grimes

STILETTOS, sexism and cigarettes. What springs to mind when I say those three words? The 1960s perhaps? You're close. Mad Men is an award-winning show set in a New York ad agency in the sixties.

Don Draper is the central character, but stealing the show are Joan, Betty and Peggy. These women deal with scandalous issues in a time before feminism. Affairs are the norm, pregnancies are concealed, and almost everyone smokes 20 a day; all while looking like sultry vixens. The style has translated (minus the cigarettes) to the runways of Paris, glossy magazines, and now, thanks to An Focal, straight into your wardrobe.

It's rare that a TV show influences fashion. It's even rarer for that fashion to work in real life. After all, how often do we see trends that actually flatter a real woman's body? That's the beauty of this retro look; it's all about showing off your assets. It's a style that suits all body types; whether you're curvy or boyish, apple or pear-shaped, there's an aspect of this style for everyone.

To ensure that you look more 'sexy secretary' than 'dowdy desk-clerk', there are three basic rules: foundation, structure and modernisation. Ok, so maybe that sounds like more work than a pair of jeggings and a baggy top, but it's simple really.

The secret to a good silhouette is what's underneath. Bigger is indeed better when it comes to creating a clean line beneath figure-hugging outfits. While I'm not telling you to raid Penney's for the infamous "Granny Panties", supportive bras and high-waisted undergarments are necessary.

Now on to the clothes themselves; basics such as pencil skirts and cute cardigans are easily found in places like A-wear or Dunnes. While a wiggle-inducing skirt is the signature look, demure dresses, vintage jumpers and your mother's pearls can inject some glamour into your everyday style. A simple dress can be transformed by the addition of a waist-cinching belt to show off your curves adding peep-toe heels for extra impact.

Finally, it's important that you make the look your own. Pair modern jewelry with a slinky dress or wear your killer heels with a snug skirt and simple shirt. Avoid boring neutrals; instead choose popping colors such as pink, turquoise or yellow, while keeping your make-up natural. Alternatively, go all out and paint your lips a striking red while wearing your favorite little black dress. Whether or not you chose to transform yourself into a wiggling wonder for a day, Mad Men proves that curves never go out of fashion.



## THE ART OF SPONGING

Written by Peter Downey

EVERYONE knows that nights out are a big part of student life. But what's a poor student to do when the cost of drinking has shot through the roof?

The most important word in a student's vocabulary should be 'Lidl'. With cheap drink, cheap food and cheap toothbrushes, the only thing better than Lidl is free food. There are three main sources of free food in any student's life: parents, friends and events. Your parents' home is a treasure chest of food. No one will note the disappearance of a bag of pasta, a tube of tomato purée, some toilet paper and a half-used tube of toothpaste. You need to be smart about this though, if you push your luck too far you will get reprimanded. Failing that, all your friends manage to eat so call round and sample their wares! Be subtle about this;

don't start poking about their presses and fridge. Instead, call to their house at around six. Make up some lame excuse that you were going somewhere and just decided to pop in. They will probably be cooking something and they will more than likely offer you a bit.

Finally, if all else fails, most college events have free finger food. So gate-crash them! If you're lucky, they might even be giving out drinks vouchers.

Transport is another money burner. If you just have to head home every weekend try to make friends with a person in your area going to UL. If you do this, be warned, you will have to spend the entire trip talking to someone you might not have anything in common with. And they will talk, no matter how tired or hung-over you are.

## PARMESAN CHICKEN

Written by Elizabeth Neylon

Another delicious and easy recipe from our resident food writer.

## Ingredients:

1 Chicken breast  
1oz of mustard  
2oz breadcrumbs  
1oz parmesan cheese  
1 lemon  
2oz butter

## Method:

Half the chicken breast  
Brush each side with mustard  
Sprinkle with cheese  
and press on some breadcrumbs  
Heat a pan with the butter  
and fry on both sides  
Serve with a wedge of lemon



Do you have a recipe you'd like to share? Email it to [sucommunications@ul.ie](mailto:sucommunications@ul.ie)

Letters

**AN FOCAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

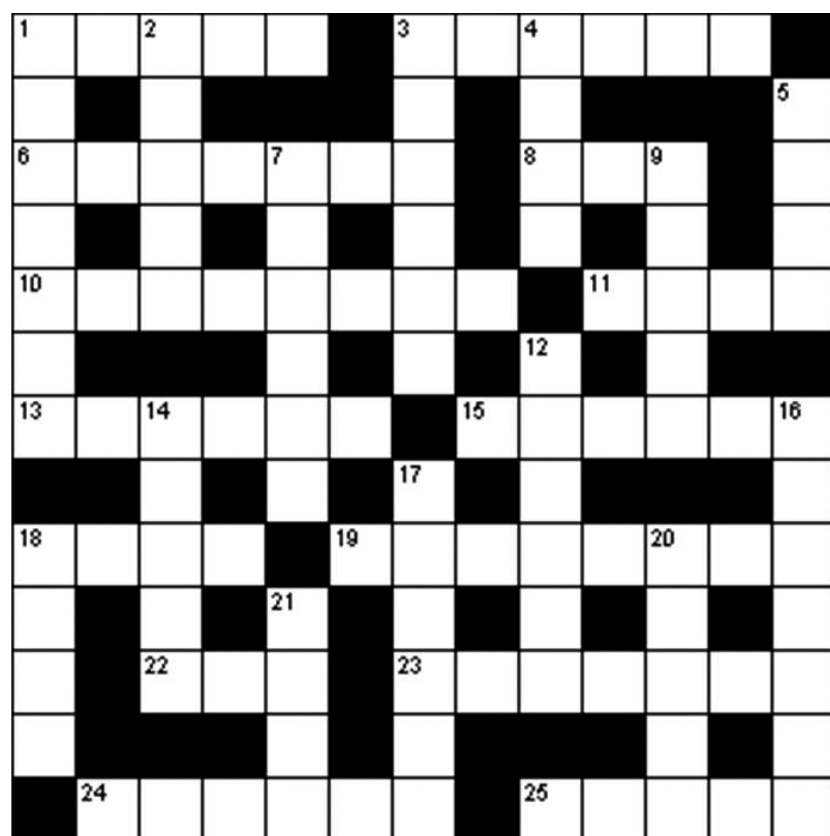
The Editor, UL Students' Union, Castletroy, Limerick. T: 0860435304 E: sucommunications@ul.ie W: www.ulsu.ie  
An Focal endeavours to accommodate all letters as far as legally possible. All parties have the right of reply to letters printed herein.

Sir, - I was disappointed with my Students' Union last week when I saw them attend the protest in Dublin. It has been a source of pride for me that UL has never before associated with the Union of Students Ireland. It was no surprise to me when I saw violence break out at the Department of Finance, as the march was 'hijacked' by prominent left wing groups such as Eirigi and the Socialist Workers Party. I don't think anybody was surprised when these groups sent out their headbangers in the guise of political protest, this was clearly a given; that it was going to occur. It should have been known that the protest would be delegitimised in the way that was, creating the unfair image of students who don't need money because they are simply antisocial by nature. Even on the day, the USI did not do nearly enough to separate themselves out from the radical left when the scuffle broke out. Considering the effective communications methods they used to organise the protest, harnessing social media as well as traditional, it

was a shame that they did not harness this efficiency to quickly disassociate themselves from such antisocial behaviour. There are serious concerns about the funding of third level that need to be raised. However, because the USI has closed off discussion of fees in any sense we are faced with the prospect of a regressive system of raised registration fees which are not subject to the same regulation as some form of progressive student contribution. For example, a student loan or a graduate tax are sensible solutions which could create a progressive system that addresses accessibility issues to third level while still seeing that they have money to keep alive the student experience we know and love. We can still have education free at the point of access without needing to be 'free', so that education is seen as an investment in ones future that is open to all. We can fight for accessibility all we want, but there isn't much point accessing if they can't afford to keep the lights on. Debate around such progressive steps

is effectively stifled by the USI, which certainly does not represent my views, and this is why I was ashamed that my union aligned itself with them last Wednesday. Students as a movement harmed our own cause that afternoon, showing no sense of an understanding of lobbying, negotiation or nuance. I would propose that we, as a university, come together as vanguards of a new sensible approach to this problem. We should come together and draw up a progressive plan that we send to the government that says 'We are mature students who understand the situation the country is in, we would like to protect our interests and we understand how negotiations work'. I would argue that a mature approach to this would receive much wider support from the country than wrecking Merrion square for an afternoon.

Yours, etc,  
  
Stephen Byrne  
(with thanks to David Hartery).



CLUES

ACROSS

1. Fruit (5)
3. Retail food seller (6)
6. Italian rice (7)
8. Consume (3)
10. Type of lobster (8)
11. Used to season and preserve food (4)
13. Sampled (6)
15. Pestle and \_\_\_\_\_ (6)
18. Aromatic leaves (4)
19. Thick syrup (8)
22. Cereal grass (3)
23. Pear-shaped tropical fruit (7)
24. Type of cake (6)
25. Very thin pancake (5)

DOWN

1. Abricot (7)
2. Shaped and dried dough (5)
3. Game bird (6)
4. Kitchen appliance (4)
5. Open pastry with fruit filling (4)
7. Sticky \_\_\_\_\_ pudding (6)
9. Heated bread (5)
12. Edible tuber (6)
14. Sweetener (5)
16. Cooked meat or fish coated in egg and breadcrumbs and fried (7)
17. Thick soup (6)
18. Cook slowly in liquid (4)
20. Large edible ray (5)
21. Vegetable (4)

BEGINNINGS

Written by Amy Grimes

Life jumps at us,  
we burst forth, struggling  
into the big bright unknown

and so it begins -  
the first breath, the first words,  
the first hesitant steps  
forward,

the first friend, the first love,  
the first loss,  
the first lesson we learn  
(and remember),  
the first time we realise,  
this is it - this is life,  
we are here, we are human,  
right now,

as we struggle, struggle  
onwards,  
our beginnings long  
forgotten, stumbling through  
our lives

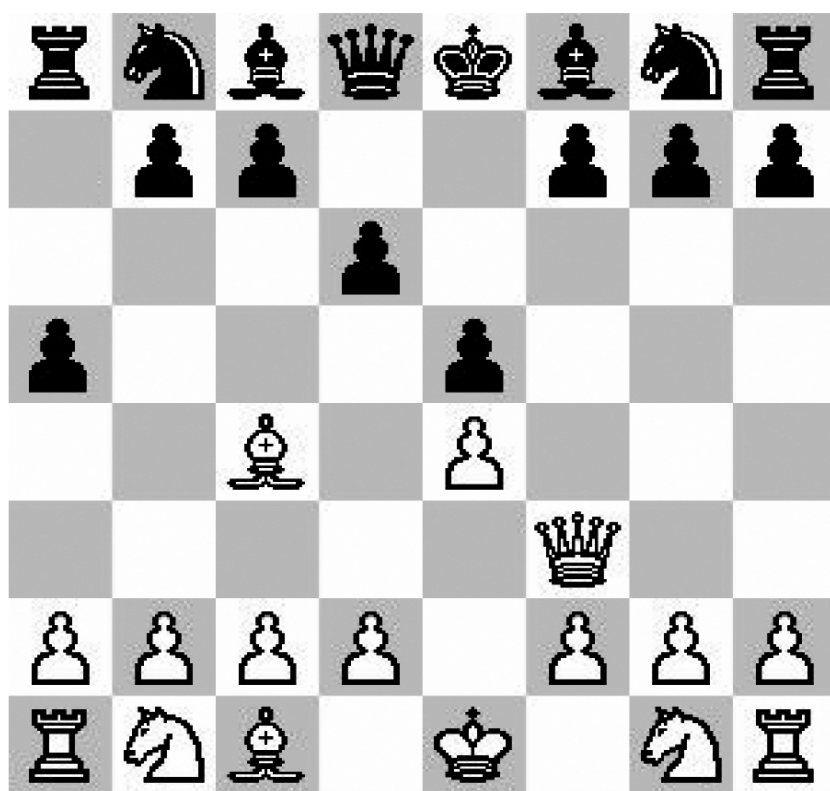
until we reach our final first,  
the last leap forward into  
the big bright unknown.

QUITE INTERESTING

The submarine conception

Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) made sketches of a submarine and William Bourne, a British mathematician, drew plans for a submarine in 1578. But it was only in 1620 that Cornelius van Drebbel, a Dutch inventor, managed to build a submarine. He

wrapped a wooden rowboat tightly in waterproofed leather. Air tubes to the surface allowed a flow of oxygen. Oars went through the hull at leather gaskets. He took the first trip with 12 oarsmen in the Thames River, staying submerged for three hours.



One move checkmate. White to move.

HOROSCOPES

Written by Psychic Psycho

"Story bud!?"

**Aries**  
You've just started back to college and you've had some bad luck. This will all change if you buy the young fella outside fine wines a pack of fags.

**Taurus**  
I sense some serious bad vibes off you Taurus. You're wreckin me buzz man! Back off like!

**Gemini**  
Nice one Gemini. I sense that you're gonna get some cash. When you do I've some lovely used tools you might like to buy.

**Cancer**  
I sense there's a lecturer really getting on your tits. I've a mate, Carver who can sort him out free of charge. Serious.

**Leo**  
If you meet a geezer by the name of psychic psycho in the icon or the trinity rooms and you're a sexy young one then do whatever he says. You'll love it.

**Virgo**  
If you really are a virgin then that's pure upsetting like but follow the same instructions I gave for Leo.

**Scorpio**  
On Thursday night you're gonna get so wrecked that you don't wake up until Saturday. Don't worry though cuz, we all know that nothing important happens on Fridays anyway.

**Sagittarius**  
No hassle, man. No hassle. Just take her handy like.

**Capricorn**  
I sense some serious good vibes coming in your love life. Must be the way you stuck those tracksuit bottoms into your socks the last time. Nice one bud.

**Aquarius**  
I'm getting some bad luck vibes man. You're perfect for Saturday nights Texas Hold 'Em at my gaff. Give me a shout man. Fiver in.

**Pisces**  
I'm feeling you're the mysterious type. Probably like one of them Goths you see hanging around the skate park. Pure weird like.

**Libra**  
You're a bit pissed off because one of the SU pool tables swallowed your euro. Don't worry bud, your luck will change.

Contribute  
Crosswords,  
Poetry, Stories,  
Puzzles,  
Horoscopes and  
Facts to An Focal.

E: sucommunications@ul.ie



Credit: Brige Newman

## Union

THE  
PRESIDENT'S  
COLUMN

Written by **Ruán Dillon-McLoughlin**, ULSU President

A LOT done. More to do! Sound familiar? Well it's time for us to continue the pressure on the Government in relation to proposed budget cuts and fee hikes.

So what next? Contact your TD! Don't expect that someone else will. You must do it yourself.

So how do you do that? Well, it's quite simple. Log on to [tellyourtd.com](http://tellyourtd.com) where you can enter your details and a letter will be sent on your behalf to your local representative. It's quite simple really.

What effect will this have? We need students' issues to be fresh in TD's heads when they are sitting down making decisions. We want to put a face on the decisions. TDs need to know how it is affecting their constituents. They need to know that you are a vote and you care.

I would like to thank everyone who came to the march on 3 November. It was a massive success! It really sent a strong message across the nation that students care and that they can make a difference. Remember you can make a difference. Log on to [tellyourtd.com](http://tellyourtd.com).

WELFARE  
WATCH

Written by **Derek Daly**, Welfare Officer

I HAVE some news for you. It would seem that UL doesn't rank too highly on another league table, but this time it's good news. Only three individuals are named among the education sector's top 100 earners in Ireland and the fourth is a vacant position.

I'm going to have an Ulster Bank rant. It's been exactly two weeks since I was informed that the UL Chaplain, Fr Koenraad VanGucht and I would be able to make financial aid payments electronically "within 24 hours". It's been 10 working days and still only a promise that it will be resolved as soon as possible. It's been bugging me massively and my arm is starting to hurt from the amount of cheques that I've had to write because I simply couldn't have people waiting any longer.

Unfortunately SHAG week got side-tracked due to the protest and a smaller effort was put on during Week 10. I promise to run a more profiled and organised SHAG week in Semester Two.

Oh, by the way, I'm getting my legs waxed on Thursday, Week 11, in the Stables at 7:30pm for our four Raising and Giving Charities and the Student Centre Christmas tree is being lit Tuesday, Week 12.

ENLIVENING  
EDUCATION

Written by **Aoife Finnerty**, Education Officer

THIS issue, I'm talking I-Grades. There is a concerning lack of information circulating about I-Grades. I think there should be a basic level of information out there and with next week being I-Grade Awareness Week, what better time to talk about it?

An I-Grade is defined at the bottom of this page. There is no finite number of valid I-Grade applications that you can make.

You can make as many as you like, so long as each application is genuine. Note: the more I-Grades granted, the more modules that must be cleared in August. That could mean significant stress.

If you haven't been seen by the University Medical Centre, you can still apply for an I-Grade with a medical certificate from your own GP. But the cert must be handed into the University Medical Centre within a specific timeframe. There is a time limit for application for an I-Grade. You have a number of days (usually five) from the day your last exam took place, in which to apply. There is a method of appeal in extreme circumstances.

If you need information on I-Grades, contact me at [sueducation@ul.ie](mailto:sueducation@ul.ie).

CAMPAIGNS  
BRIEF

Written by **Vivion Grisewood**, Campaigns and Services Officer

I'D like to say a massive thank you to everybody who came along to the National Student March on 3 November. I'd also like to thank everybody involved in organising the UL drive.

From buses, mass texting and posters to creating signs and a coffin symbolising the death of education in Ireland, a huge amount of effort was put in by everybody. I was thrilled with everybody's enthusiasm. And it paid off. Just look at the numbers. USI and BBC reported 40,000 students turned out on Dublin's streets.

Despite the rain, several buses brought around 550 people from UL to Dublin at 9am on 3 November. Everybody got a sandwich, water and a tee shirt. Each bus was manned by an individual with responsibility over making sure all occupants got back to their bus and to Limerick on time. The money paid by each student will go to charity.

Other things that have been going on include Curry For a Cause. This was basically a showing of Slumdog Millionaire in the SU Common Room after curries in The Scholars. Thanks to Spice of India, Limerick and to The Scholars Club for their support. Proceeds will go to Medecins Sans Frontieres in aid of Pakistan Flood Relief.

WORDS  
FROM THE  
PSA

Written by **Dan Comerford**, PSA President

CONGRATULATIONS are in order for all those who attended the protest peacefully in Dublin. It was such an achievement for all students and staff of UL. This day will go down in the history books and I am proud to say I attended.

Movember is upon us once again. It is a campaign that seeks to spread awareness of prostate cancer and men's health in general. The campaign asks guys to maintain the best moustache they can grow. This worthy cause needs your support. Fortunately, the campaigners have a number of events lined up this month to keep you entertained. Check out Movember on Facebook for more. Please get involved, grow a Mo, donate some mo-ney and have a fantastic time!

In other news, with the exams looming, it's never been more important to have a class rep. If you are interested in becoming a Class Rep then call into me to discuss it further. And as always if there's anything you need, my door is always open. If I'm not there, please email [dan.comerford@ul.ie](mailto:dan.comerford@ul.ie). I'm here and happy to help.

## DON'T PANIC! YOUR SU IS HERE TO HELP YOU

## WHAT IF I CAN'T SIT MY EXAMS AND IT'S NOT MY FAULT?

If a student is sick, bereaved or in poor mental health during exams, then the University has the power to grant an I-Grade.

I-Grades are only given in severe circumstances. However, this should not deter you from applying, if you feel you really need one. If you don't know how to go about applying for an I-Grade, read on.

## ILLNESS

If you are ill and have been seen by your own GP, medical certs from that doctor must be presented to the UL Medical Centre for applications and approval. Alternatively, if you present at the Medical Centre with symptoms, your I-Grade application can be processed there. Once you appear there or contact the centre, the staff can talk you through the steps necessary in order to obtain an I-Grade. The Medical Centre can be contacted on 061 202534.

## MENTAL HEALTH

For mental health issues, contact Student Counselling on 061 202327. There is an application process, which can be explained to you on arrival/contact. I-Grades will not be given for exam-related stress, but for diagnosed mental health issues.

## BEREAVEMENT

For bereavements contact Fr Koenraad Van Gucht, your UL Chaplain. As with all I-Grade applications, there is a process,

which Fr Koenraad can talk you through. He can be contacted on [koenraad.vangucht@ul.ie](mailto:koenraad.vangucht@ul.ie) or on 061 202180 (on-campus) or 061 330268 (off-campus).

The Students' Union or PSA can also be contacted to assist you with I-Grades. Undergraduate students contact [aoife.finnerty@ul.ie](mailto:aoife.finnerty@ul.ie) or 086 0435302 or consult Aoife's section on the ULSU website, [www.ulsu.ie](http://www.ulsu.ie).

Postgraduate students can contact Dan, the PSA President on [psapresident@ul.ie](mailto:psapresident@ul.ie).

## DEFINITION, I-GRADE

I-Grade stands for "Incomplete Grade". It has the effect of deferring a student's exam(s) or coursework, until the student is able to take it/ them on. Often this means that you can clear the grade during the repeat period the following August, however lecturers can also set you alternative coursework in the form of an essay, project, etc. instead of an exam in August.

## TAKE NOTE!

Only apply for an I-Grade if you genuinely need one. Abuse of this system only makes it harder for genuine cases.

## In Focus



# The National Student March, In Focus

The media focused on the riots, but here's some of the stuff you might have missed. An estimated 40,000 students from all over Ireland took to the streets of Dublin on 3 November. The vast majority of protesters staged a peaceful demonstration.



In Focus



## Sport

# UL SENIOR FOOTBALLERS FALL TO CIT IN LEAGUE DEFEAT

Written by **Robert McNamara**

THE UL senior football team failed to pick up a win in their first competitive game of the season but team manager Jerome Stack is very positive about the season ahead despite a 0-8 to 0-14 loss to CIT.

"The team needs a lot of work but there's raw material there and we can work with that. I wouldn't say it was a great performance and we're disappointed but there is definitely something there we can work on," said Stack.

They were up against well drilled Cork side that dominated the game for large periods and started proceedings by pressing the UL back line incessantly and forcing them into errors. CIT didn't take their chances however and it was the home side who took the opportunity to go ahead against the run of play before CIT had a goal disallowed for a foul.

Buoyed by taking the lead the Shannon-siders created some decent chances but failed to tag on the points before CIT exerted their dominance.

All the action was now taking place in the home sides half and the Lee-siders were making UL work really hard for possession. Chance after chance went begging though and CIT racked up numerous wides as the ball got caught in the blustery winds.

It was all square at half-time and Stack would have been happy that his team was still in a position to challenge in difficult weather conditions. But it wasn't to be as CIT came out all guns blazing in the second period and racked up enough scores to pull away and leave the result in no doubt.

UL's performance was not without its merits though and they continued to work hard for scores to keep the game competitive. Both teams used the full extent of their squads in the final stages of the game as the rain came down and the crowd got smaller. It was a competitive outing for the home team with plenty of positives despite the result.



Battle for possession in UL-CIT league showdown. Image Credit: Robert McNamara

## UL INTERMEDIATES HIT FOR SIX IN LOCAL DERBY

Written by **Mark Connolly,**  
Sports Editor

UL'S Intermediate soccer side endured a miserable afternoon against local rivals Mary Immaculate as they succumbed to a 6-0 thrashing in their College's League clash at the 10 Acres. Although Mary I were clearly the better side, the score line is not a fair reflection performance of a UL side that enjoyed a large share of possession.

Indeed UL were the dominant force in the opening 10 minutes. But following poor goalkeeping that led to the sloppy concession of two sucker punch goals, a classy Mary I side went on the rampage. Led by classy striker, Darragh Heenan, they simply ripped the home side apart in the opening period.

It was he who added the third goal when a quality through ball split a static UL defence that could not handle the pace of the lethal striker who managed to finish the move with aplomb. He then quickly grabbed the fourth when a pinpoint cross found him in the box, and his hat-trick securing goal was simply world class. Found with a long pass to feet, he turned expertly, and used the space to lash in a screamer from well outside the box. Five goals

down at half time, UL would have been forgiven for lying down at that stage but they did not and instead showed character that must have pleased young manager Peter O'Reilly.

Although the trainee teachers tagged on a sixth courtesy of a delightful chip over UL's stand-in goalkeeper, it was the University side that created the majority of the second period's opportunities and can feel unlucky not to have registered a goal.

Manager Peter O'Reilly commended his players for their improved second half performance and stressed that the failure of their regular 'keeper to show-up was decisive in the concession of the two crucial early goals. "Big improvement in the second half but too little too late," he surmised.

While UL's troops will be disappointed to have been on the receiving end of such a score line, there is definitely hope that with better concentration and a reliable 'keeper, they still have the potential to turn their season around.

## UL SOCCER ROUND-UP

Written by **Cian Healy**

ANOTHER mixed week of results for UL Soccer Club saw wins for both sides of the club.

UL men's Senior Team had to travel down to Cork to play a good Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa (CSN) team, while the Freshers' match against the same opposition was postponed as there was no manager available to take them.

The senior team did not disappoint and eased past CSN with a 4-1 victory with goals from Alan Coleman and Robert Doyle while Dave McGrath grabbed a brace. This was a solid win which they will look to build on.

There are no fixtures for any of the Men's sides in Week 10. It was also

a good week for UL Ladies with both sides getting victories. The UL 'B' team travelled down to Cork to play their UCC counterparts in the second round of the Challenge Cup.

They emerged victorious with first half goals from Ariel Pelletier and Casilla Bobok laying the foundations for the win which was cemented in the second half with two goals from Jennie Brennan and a second for Casilla. Meanwhile, the UL 'A' team played host to Athlone IT on Thursday, and after a shaky first half, eventually prevailed 6-2.

Jenny Crithley and Ruth Fahy's first half strikes were followed up with

braces from Lynsey McKey and Julie-Ann Russell in the second to seal an impressive victory.

The 'A' team are away to IT Tralee in Week 10, while they'll entertain UCD in Week 11. UL's 'B' team are still waiting for their next fixtures to be announced.

All details will appear on the Soccer club website. <http://ulsoccerclub.webs.com/apps/blog/>

## GAEELIC GAMES ROUND-UP

Written by **Mark Connolly,**  
Sports Editor

UL Senior Hurlers earned a creditable draw against NUIG in Galway to follow up on victory over GMIT in the previous round of League matches. Their Fresher A counterparts enjoyed even more success however, with a convincing win over the unfortunate GMIT, dishing out a 25 point hammering to their Corrib side opponents.

On the same day, the A and B Fresher football sides managed to do the double over WIT with comfortable nine and five point victories respectively.

Meanwhile, the three ladies' teams in action secured a clean sweep with the senior football side triumphing by five points over NUIG while their intermediate colleagues claimed a narrow three point win after a thrilling

contest with CIT. The UL Camogie team then managed to round off a fine week for ladies sport in the University with a crushing 15 point demolition of the same Cork opposition.

Want to write Sport  
for An Focal?

We'd love to hear from you!  
[sucommunications@ul.ie](mailto:sucommunications@ul.ie)



## Sport

# FORGOTTEN FOOTBALLER, ERIC DJEMBA-DJEMBA

Written by **Robert McNamara**

ERIC “so bad they named him twice” Djemba-Djemba was supposed to be the new Patrick Vieira but ended up more like Carlton Palmer. The most significant moment of his career to date is booting Sol Campbell in the stomach during the 2003 Community Shield.

The Cameroonian midfielder began his career at Nantes and quickly garnered a reputation as a tough tackling yet skillful performer. He worked his way into the Cameroon national team and was part of the squad that won the 2002 African Nations Cup.

That proved enough for Alex Ferguson to shell out £3.5m to take Djemba-Djemba to Old Trafford as a replacement for the aging Roy

Keane. He could not cement a place in the United midfield though, as Keane continued to prosper and the emergence of Darren Fletcher limited the Cameroonian’s chances. Two goals in twenty appearances was scant return for United’s investment and the midfielder player was soon offloaded to David O’Leary’s Aston Villa in a cut price £1.5m deal.

Things got worse in the Midlands as the Irishman was replaced by Martin O’Neill who clearly did not rate Djemba-Djemba. His final insult came when he was the only member of the first team squad not to be included in Villa’s 2007 pre-season tour. The writing was on the wall and he was sent to Burnley on loan where again he added a new dimension to the word

mediocrity before being released.

When your reputation is tarnished and you’ve got no club, where do you go? Well, Qatar of course, where SC Qatar gave Djemba-Djemba a chance to return to form. He remained there for one season before a move back to Europe beckoned. In 2008 he signed for Odense BK of Denmark where he has found the stability he craved. The fact that Djemba-Djemba still hasn’t realised his potential has not affected his popularity with the fans who maintain a rather odd Facebook page in his honour.



Eric Djemba-Djemba was not a success at Old Trafford.

# SPORTS QUIZ

Written by **Mark Connolly**,  
Sports Editor

1. Only two outfield footballers have played in the English Premier League at the age of 40 or over. Who were they?
2. Which South African Super 14 rugby side is based in Cape Town?
3. Bernard Brogan won the 2010 Footballer of the Year award. Who won it last year?
4. What is the nationality of the 2010 champions of all three Moto GP grades, 125cc, 250cc and 500cc?
5. The winner of the 125cc this year became the second youngest man ever to claim the championship at 17 years. Which Moto GP legend was the youngest?
6. Aughrim is the home of the major GAA stadium of which county?
7. Who recently removed Tiger Woods from the top of the World Golf Rankings?
8. What was the latest English club to sack Steve ‘The Gaffer’ Staunton as manager?
9. Hurling star Joe Canning plays for which Galway club?
10. What is the name of Barcelona’s brilliant youth academy that has produced several of their current stars including Lionel Messi?

**ANSWERS**  
1: Teddy Sheringham and Gordon Strachan  
2: The Stormers  
3: Paul Galvin  
4: Spanish  
5: Valentino Rossi  
6: Wicklow  
7: Lee Westwood  
8: Darlington FC  
9: Portumna  
10: La Masia

# LACK OF PHYSICALITY UNDERMINING INTERNATIONAL RULES SPECTACLE

Written by **Robert McNamara**

“Is the appetite for International Rules series disappearing along with its reputation?”

THE International Rules series has received a lot of criticism this year and the debate on whether it should continue will go on. While some of that criticism is justified the hybrid game still has a place on the GAA calendar.

If the empty seats at the Gaelic Grounds for the first test are anything to go by, the appetite for International

Rules series is disappearing along with its reputation. Save for a passing interest in the controversy that goes with it, most people are now indifferent to the series.

But while this year’s event was thankfully devoid of any fracas, the tough disciplinary rules have been detrimental to the physical aspect of the game.

Physicality has been replaced with a cautiousness that dampens the cut and thrust. While the incidents of previous years cannot be condoned, the GAA and the AFL have worked a little hard too hard in their attempts to avoid offending the watching public.

The present rules are too flaccid and at times this year it looked like there wasn’t enough space in the playing area for players to express themselves. The governing bodies need address this to make the game more enticing for the general public.

As regards the series itself, the

Aussies performance in the first game embarrassed the hosts and the Irish were poor. The second game was an improvement but the Cormac McAnallen Cup still went to the better team despite Ireland’s comeback.

It is natural for the two games to come together due to a lack of exposure on the international stage for the GAA and Aussie Rules players compared to rugby, cricket and soccer.

That alone is justification for the series to carry on. The break in 2012 should see both governing bodies go away and re-design the format to make it a success once again.



## Sport

# “THE PERFORMANCE AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA CONFIRMED ALL MY WORST FEARS”

Written by **Mark Connolly**,  
Sports Editor

AS I was tucked away in Chile during those critical months of 2008 when the full brunt of economic catastrophe came to bear on Ireland, I recall enquiring upon my return, having read some newspaper articles, if the Celtic Tiger was dying.

The response I received was as blunt as it was true. “The Celtic Tiger is not dying, it’s dead,” they said. As was the case with the Celtic Tiger two years ago, the message we must now accept with regard to the golden era of Irish rugby is that it too is no longer passing. It’s simply over.

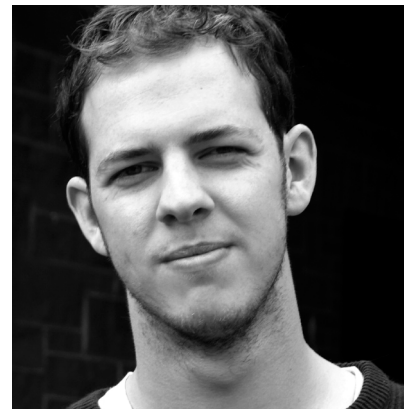
The performance against South Africa confirmed all my worst fears.

It demonstrated that we have probably the worst front five of all the major rugby nations, including Italy who we’ve been drawn with in next year’s World Cup. We have no scrum and a serious problem in the line-out. Further, we have a tactically naïve coach who was astonishingly unable to foresee that line-out problem, a natural consequence of pitting Mick O’Driscoll and Donncha O’Callaghan (neither known as effective operators out of touch) against the formidable Botha and Matfield. How Devin Toner was overlooked in such circumstances, even for a place on the bench, is beyond fathom.

Some may point to the return of O’Connell as a panacea. But this facet of the game has proven to be a stubborn disease for Ireland and the Limerick man was present when the Scots dismantled us in the air last March. However, of even more concern was the massive physical domination of the Springboks over the entire Irish pack.

Irrespective of the quality of our backs, we will not win rugby matches without generating quick ‘go forward’ possession which we never had last Saturday week and looking to the future, little room is left for optimism. Cian Healy was yet again exposed as

a woeful scrummager. Tony Buckley and Mick O’Driscoll were anonymous and every Irish forward seemed to take a backward step in contact. In the last issue of An Focal, even I could predict that such performances would cost us. And it should be embarrassing for a proud rugby nation to field such an obviously substandard front five. Unfortunately, they’re the best we have for now, so I suggest we develop a long term strategy for nurturing forward talent. But that won’t save us from a horrendous World Cup next October.



Mark Connolly, Sports Editor.

## REJECTS, MISFITS AND CERTIFIED NINJA HELP GIANTS WIN WORLD SERIES

Written by **Robert McNamara**

A BUNCH of rejects, misfits and forgotten men led by an eccentric Irish-American who claims to be a ‘certified ninja’ are the world champions of baseball. Nobody would have labeled them as contenders at the start of the season, especially not ahead of the more glamorous New York Yankees.

Boston man Brian Wilson, of Irish descent, spent last year backpacking in Ireland and went completely unrecognised. Apparently he had a great time which must have rejuvenated him as he put in a superb pitching performance in the world series against the Texas Rangers who they defeated by four games to one.

Wilson, known for his peculiarities, grew a thick beard during the season and died it jet black. He refused to take questions from reporters on the subject and fans developed the war cry, “Fear The Beard”. He also claimed to be a “certified ninja” during an interview with baseball reporter Jim Rome of ESPN before revealing his alter ego,

“The Machine.” The San Francisco Giants rise from perennial bridesmaids to top of the pile has been slow but no less meteoric. Their World Series victory against the Texas Rangers gives them their first title since the franchise moved from New York in 1958.

The Giants had long lived in the shadow of their former eastern shore identity. Despite a proud tradition and the highest win rate in the MLB (even ahead of the Yankees) they had failed to get the monkey off their back and add to the five world series accumulated in the ‘Big Apple’ despite reaching the final on four occasions.

This season, in a side devoid of any marquee names such as the Yankees Albert Pujols or Alex Rodriguez, the Giants pitchers Wilson and Tim Lincecum have come to the fore and given the franchise an unlikely World Series that will go down as one of the oddest of all time.

“Wilson, known for his peculiarities, grew a thick beard during the season and died it jet black.”



AT&T Park, San Francisco, has witnessed The Giants’ vanquish all opposition this year.

## EURO 2012 DOOR NOT SHUT ON IRISH YET

Written by **Mark Connolly**,  
Sports Editor

A WAVE of negativity has swept the country regarding the national team’s prospects of qualifying for EURO 2012. This is understandable after the Russians coldly dismantled any Eamon Dunphy-inspired notion that we have anything but the most technically limited of squads.

But such negativity, while understandable, is not fully warranted. We should remember we have been drawn in a very poor group and that we have a smart manager who is capable of ignoring media hype about average players like Andy Reid while understanding that a conservative playing system is the only route that will bring us to Poland and Ukraine in 2012.

The Irish have lost only twice competitively under Giovanni Trapattoni’s stewardship and have shown an ability to score goals at crucial stages which have garnered victories such as those against Cyprus away and Latvia when adverse results seemed more likely.

This is not an accident as the coach has devised a conservative game plan that sensibly acknowledges the creative limitations of the squad but incessantly pressures poor defences which are likely to concede good chances at some point.

Meanwhile, ala Mourinho, he has installed a defensive system that will leak goals against only the sharpest of strike forces. All this makes us more

difficult to beat and less likely to drop points against the likes of Macedonia and Armenia, who are teams that have already troubled Slovakia, our chief rival for a play-off spot.

I trust Trapattoni because he has shown the intelligence to recognise that a poor player who will cover every blade of grass on the park like Glenn Whelan is a better option for this team than an average player who won’t, like Andy Reid.

This is because Whelan fits like a glove onto the only hand we have to play, that hand being our intensity and work rate to pressure the opposition.

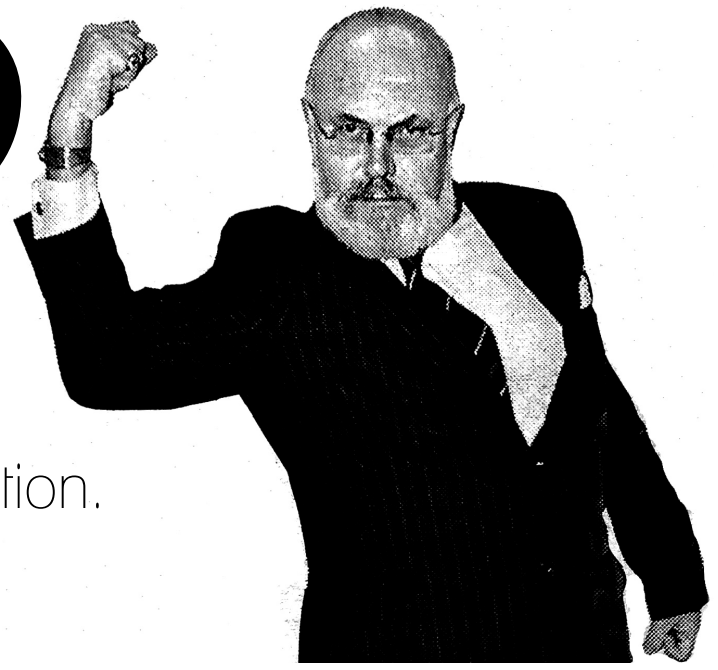
The Trapattoni master plan is working. It almost got us to a World Cup. It will get us to EURO 2012.



Giovanni Trapattoni, plotting Ireland’s path to Poland and Ukraine in 2012.



# AN FOCAL



“Free Fees’ Is An Ugly Phrase. It’s A Blatant Contradiction. There Have Always Been Fees!” Presidential Hopeful, David Norris, Speaks To An Focal. Page 24.

16<sup>th</sup> November 2010

Volume XIX Issue 6 FREE

# DREAMING OF A REVIVAL

2010 IS drawing to a wet and windy close and music-lovers everywhere are beginning to draw up their preliminary ‘album of the year’ lists. It has been an interesting year so far for music, which, notably, has seen a mini revival-of-sorts in the dream pop genre, and in its cousin shoegaze.

Written by **Josh Lee**

PIONEERED by the Irish band My Bloody Valentine and their influential 1991 release *Loveless*, shoegaze – and dream pop – are characterised by ethereal, almost muffled, vocals and a distorted sound. The term shoegaze originated because of the amount of time band members spent gazing at their feet, working all the effect pedals which give shoegaze its distinctive sound. The sound lends itself well to the 90s, but several acts have been successful in revising the sound to a 2010 standard.

Baltimore-based dream pop duo, Beach House, released their third album *Teen Dream* in January, garnering near-universal acclaim. Review aggregator Metacritic compiled a score of 82/100 for the LP MacKenzie Wilson. Allmusic.com compared the voice of vocalist Victoria Legrand to that of former ‘Warhol Superstar’, Nico, who appeared on The Velvet Underground’s debut, Andy Warhol-assisted, album: *The Velvet Underground & Nico*. The 1960’s experimental rockers were one of the early forerunners of the dream pop style, and *Teen Dream* harks back to the airy mood of songs such as The Velvet Underground’s “Sunday Morning”. American shoegazers Deerhunter released their album *Halcyon Digest* in September to critical acclaim – particularly in ‘indie’ circles. The popular alternative music site Pitchfork.com granting the album an impressive 9.2/10. The work has been described as music that “manages to look forwards and backwards simultaneously” and the record possesses a sound reminiscent



In 1966, Warhol began presenting The Velvet Underground, the legendary underground band fronted by Lou Reed, John Cale & Nico.

of a different time, whilst also coaxing it effortlessly into the new decade.

Both albums would be well-deserving of a place on anyone’s ‘album of the year’ list. In ways, the dream pop/shoegaze sound has matured, and with

upcoming artists such as one-man band Wild Nothing (who released his debut LP *Gemini* in May) to look out for, the future of this distinctive sounds looks bright.

**November dolans warehouse**

Wed 17th	DUBLIN CITY JAZZ ORCHESTRA	8pm €15/12
Wed 17th	THE DEANS	8pm €10/8
Thurs 18th	PANIC! JAPANESE POPSTARS JOHN SHELLY & THE CREATURES	10pm €7
Fri 19th	ANAMANAGUCHI	9pm €10
Fri 19th	MAIGHREAD NELLIGAN	9pm €10
Sat 20th	MICRONITE	10pm €10
Sun 21st	OOAL PRESENTS GUILTY OPTICS, JOGGING CITIES + MORE...	6pm FREE
Thurs 25th	PANIC! NEW AMUSEMENT LATE CLUB	10pm Free
Fri 26th	DELORENTOS	8pm €10
Fri 26th	IVAN ST JOHN WITH VERTIGO SMYTH	8pm €6
Sat 27th	LA BOUTIQUE	11.30 €10
Tues 30th	HOWARD MARKS (MR. NICE)	8pm €15

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Hugh O'Donoghue

**Urban Legends Heard in Ireland**

Illustrated by Jane Kelly

# GIFT OF THE GAB

Written by **Sinéad Ní Chatháin**

ONLY in his third year in New Media in English in UL, Hugh O'Donoghue has achieved a lot at his young age. The idea for his book, ‘Urban Legends Heard in Ireland’ came about while he was on Co-Op in a Dublin publishing house. The book is a simple, entertaining insight into the tales one hears in the pubs of Ireland.

When asked how he compiled the book, Hugh told An Focal the best stories emerged from the beer-loosened tongues of those taking part in the research. At first, explaining the term ‘urban legend’ was difficult; often mistaken for the stories of Fionn MacCumhaill or of fairies and leprechauns. “In the end, I just listened

to people,” Hugh admits. The urban legends are funny and memorable. The description of his book by a fan as ‘a brilliant toilet read’ is, according to Hugh, the best compliment he could receive. It’s not difficult to see why, either. Topics relate to health, alcohol and the general misery of the Irish. It’s a

good laugh and portrays our country in a loveable light. A fabulous idea, and a fabulous book, I hope that we see many more entertaining reads from Hugh O'Donoghue in the future.

## Entertainment

# BEEN SOFT ON HIS ENEMIES

Written by **Caitriona Ní Chadhain**,  
Entertainments Editor

BRENDAN Markham's new solo album is a skilfully crafted example of how to capture a listener. Markham's soulful voice and intriguing lyrics drizzled with helpings of bluesy guitar and the offerings of Cranberries drummer, Fergal Lawler, bring us an album brimming with inspiration.

With plenty of music industry experience under his belt, Brendan, a native of Limerick, knows what it takes to produce a good album.

His former band, The Driven, rose to prominence in the late nineties and managed to outsell Oasis in the album charts across mainland Europe. 'False Witness' is Markham's first solo album since The Driven came to an end. It's one of those albums you get

more from every time you listen to it. Songs like 'Secrets and Lies', 'Speed' and the title track are the crowning jewels of the album.

With especially catchy riffs and choruses. Songs like 'Avalon' and 'Blossom' are particularly personal and enigmatic. Lines such as "Lord, I'll try to keep that place in my memory and hold it close to my heart," in 'Blossom' stood out with a distinct

poignancy. 'Dance With the Cannibal' is the final song on the album and is made incredibly infectious by the hint of a snarl in Markham's voice, leaving you wanting more, which is what every great album should do.

Brendan Markham will play Java's on Thursday, 16 November.



## AN EVOLUTION IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY?

Written by **Josh Lee**

SINCE the dawn of the internet the music industry has undergone a sweeping transformation. The World Wide Web has allowed us instant access to our favourite artists. Youtube allows us view live performances with the click of a button and aspiring musicians have a free and easy way to promote their work.

But not all changes have been positive. Peer-to-peer file sharing sites such as The Pirate Bay have allowed millions of people world-wide to gain free, and illegal, access to music.

Last month, record label behemoths Universal Music, Warner Music, Sony BMG and EMI Records – represented by the Irish Recorded Music Association (IRMA) – lost a landmark court case attempting to force the internet provider UPC to punish service providers found to be illegally file-sharing music. Evidently, these giant media organisations feel their profits are threatened by the peer-to-peer trend.

But the situation may not be as straightforward as it seems. A recent article published on The Economist's website noted that, while CD sales have plummeted in recent times, the amount of money being taken in by the music industry has increased. Will Page, of Performing Rights Society for Music, which exists "to collect and pay royalties to our member", found that between 2008 and 2009 there was a 5% rise in the amount of royalties taken in.

The sources of income for the music industry have changed. No longer are consumers splashing out on full albums; with the advent of iTunes more

of us are purchasing single tracks. Gigs have now become a major source of income. In America between 1999 and 2009 concert-ticket sales have increase from \$1.5bn to \$4.6bn. Tickets prices are rising, yet more people than ever are attending live shows.

Merchandise has become a lucrative industry. The merchandise company Bravado was acquired by UMG in 2007. The use of royalty-paying music has also seen an increase; many record labels are now specifically marketing their wares to TV shows.

Illegal music downloads have already brought about a marked change in the music industry, that looks set to continue into the future.



## CHAMBER ORCHESTRA'S FINAL TOUR OF 2010

Written by **Barbara Ross**

THE Irish Chamber Orchestra takes to the road for its final tour of 2010 from 18 to 21 November in Limerick, Clonmel, Dublin and Youghal.

Katherine Hunka, fresh from a triumphant Four Seasons tour of six counties, directs a programme packed with treasures by Grieg, Boulez and Kinsella, closing with Haydn's passionate Symphony No. 46. Hunka will direct two rising stars, Fiona Kelly on flute and Jean Kelly on harp.

Find out why Grieg gave one of his miniatures the tantalising title *Erotik* and how Mozart blended the flute and harp to incredible effect. Enjoy the passion of one of Haydn's passionate *Sturm und Drang* symphonies and John Kinsella's excellent *Hommage à Clarence*.

The ICO's performances thrill audiences across the world. The orchestra has performed with some of the world's leading artists, including Steven Isserlis, Maxim Vengerov and Alison Balsom.

The Irish Chamber Orchestra will be playing at the University Concert Hall on Thursday, 18 November at 8pm. Visit [www.irishchamberorchestra.com](http://www.irishchamberorchestra.com) for more



Fiona Kelly on Flute

CAMPUS LISTINGS	DAY	WHAT	WHERE	TIME	TICKETS	
<b>WEEK 11</b>	Monday	Open Mic Night + DJ	Stables	8pm	Free	
	Wednesday	Karaoke	Stables	8pm	Free	
	<b>Ents Highlight</b>	Wednesday	UL Mega Mystery Tour	Buses at The Stables	7:30pm	€ 12
	Wednesday	Trad Session	The Scholars	9pm	Free	
	Friday	International Party Night (DJ and finger food)	Stables	9pm	Free	
<b>WEEK 12</b>	Monday	Open Mic Night + DJ	Stables	7pm	Free	
	Wednesday	Karaoke	Stables	8pm	Free	
	Wednesday	Trad Session	The Scholars	9pm	Free	
	Friday	International Party Night (DJ and finger food)	Stables	9pm	Free	

## Entertainment

## THE ART OF SHAMELESS ADVERTISING

"Maybe it's too idealistic a view, but I can't help losing esteem for the creators of these music videos where products indiscriminately pop up to tarnish the viewing experience."

Written by **Josh Lee**

IT'S no secret that mainstream music has taken the road of heavy commercialisation. Perhaps the most obvious example is the growing trend of product placement in music videos, which has become big business. Earlier this year, Patrick Quinn, the chief executive of PQ Media, indicated that this practice generated between \$15m and \$20m in 2009. This figure represented a 100% increase from 2000.

Although these instances of blatant advertising are usually cut-out from the TV versions of music videos, they can be beheld in all their garish glory on YouTube. One of the biggest culprits to be seen is the almost unbelievably barefaced parading of American mayonnaise brand Miracle Whip. Another is communications giant Virgin Mobile. Both appear in Lady Gaga's amusingly bizarre video for her single "Telephone". As a viewer I find it infuriating. And I'm sure I'm not alone.

Maybe it's too idealistic a view, but I can't help losing esteem for the creators of these music videos where products indiscriminately pop up to tarnish the viewing experience. It is most likely due to pressures from the powerful

record labels. But when the bottom-line appears more important than the work being created, any thin dusting of artistic integrity immediately vanishes.

Imagine if Edvard Munch's *The Scream* had been painted sporting some navy Nike gloves, or if Lisa Gherardin's neck had been wrapped in a silky Louis Vuitton scarf when Leonard da Vinci created the iconic *Mona Lisa*, or if Michelangelo's *David* had been sculpted wearing a pair of form-hugging Calvin Kleins.

Tellingly (and a tad worryingly) to be quite honest) Jonathan Feldman, vice president for brand partnerships at Atlantic Records, rationalizes this unashamed move towards commercialization by saying "before, video was definitely to showcase creativity and content [...] today we look at video as another piece of pie and a way to generate venue."

So the trend looks set to continue as labels, and artists, search for ways to recoup the money splashed out on music videos. It's just unfortunate that viewers must suffer in their wake.



## RISKY LITTLE WHITE LIES

Written by **Barbara Ross**

"This may sound like the stereotypical latter half of a 'rom com' but the gutsy way in which Olive goes about clearing her name will have you eating your words."

WE all know what it's like to be at the wrong end of a rumour. Scandal spreads like wildfire. *Easy A* is a movie which tells the story of a vindictive rumour mill that harbours more than one victim in its workforce.

Olive's (Emma Stone) life starts to mirror that of Hester Prynne's from 'The

Scarlet Letter', after a little white lie about the loss of her virginity spirals out of control. Her squeaky clean reputation gets a good tarnishing and soon she decides to extend her reputation rather than deny it. She creates an image for herself as a "high-end stripper," to use her parents' words.

Amanda Bynes plays Marianne, a God fearing busy-body fellow student who fans the flames of said rumours. This may sound shallow but I could not take my eyes off her obviously collagen filled face, to focus on her over the top acting. The very handsome Penn Badgley plays Emma's love interest, Woodchuck Todd. He is the perfect gentleman throughout the 92 minute movie and will have sent more than a few girls swooning.

Patricia Clarkson and Stanley Tucci play Olive's laugh-a-minute parents who will make you wish you they were your parents. (Not that any of us would like to replace our benefactors.)

While Olive decided to use her new fame to increase her popularity and financial situation, it all goes wrong and she is left trying to save face and find happiness. This may sound like the stereotypical latter half of a 'rom com' but the gutsy way in which Olive goes about clearing her name will have you eating your words. This is not the film I thought it was going to be. It is very funny while emitting the message that a lie will always come back to bite you. There is no such thing as a lie for a good cause.



Emma Stone plays Olive, whose white lie spins out of control and changes everything.

taxback.com

TAXBACK.COM  
STUDENT  
ROADSHOWS

## Need some cash?



Taxback.com is hitting the road on its nationwide College Roadshow to help students throughout the country get some of their tax back.

If you have been on a J1, worked abroad or even been working in Ireland - you could be owed hundreds of euro and have no idea. Pop over to the Roadshow team and pick up some free goodies!

The team will be in the University of Limerick Campus on the 16th of November between 10am-3pm.

Fancy a brand new Apple iPad?

If you apply for your US tax refund with Taxback.com you could be in with a chance!! Anyone who has worked in the US since 2007 and hasn't got a refund yet from any of those years is eligible to enter the Taxback.com



## Student Speak

# Ladies and Gentlefolk

## Are you in this issue of Student Speak?



An Focal Photographer and Reporter two-in-one, Keith Beegan, braved the rain last week to find out what you're thinking?

So people, in light of the student protest, what are your thoughts on the Government's proposed Budget?

**Brian Clarke, Kate Bracken and Ellen Mitchell**  
*"The riots weren't good."*



**Hannah Hughes**  
*"If there are cuts there are no degrees."*



**Seán Conneely**  
*"I'm in fourth year so I don't care."*



**Zoha Ahmed** *"I'm appalled. College is already costly and future generations aren't going to be educated."*



**Louise O'Sullivan and Méabh Tobin** *"In the USA people have to get huge loans to go to college. We get off easy."*



**Mary Ennis** *"With the lack of jobs, education was the best option. Now it seems that's not an option."*



**Damien Ryan** *"It's a scandal. We're going to have to find viable ways to fund it as opposed to riots on the street."*



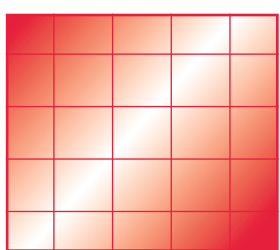
**Michelle Ahearn** *"I have sympathy for students starting off. They'll have it a lot harder than we do now."*



**Owen Barron** *"The fees are quite harsh. What ever happened to free education?"*



**Kelly O'Brien** *"My sister and my mother are going to have to abandon their courses next year."*



# The Grid

## Exclusive communication for Clubs and Societies.

Attention C&S PROs! Send content for The Grid to [sucommunications@ul.ie](mailto:sucommunications@ul.ie) before Friday, 19 November to benefit from your space in the next and final issue of An Focal of the semester.

Clubs	<b>Handball</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Rowing</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	Societies	<b>History</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>American Football</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Judo</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Sailing</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Anime and Manga</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>International</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Archery</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://www.ulac.tk">www.ulac.tk</a> or email <a href="mailto:ularchery@gmail.com">ularchery@gmail.com</a> .	<b>Karate Shotokan</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Skydive</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Architecture</b> Facebook, Twitter or <a href="http://societyofarchitecture.blogspot.com">societyofarchitecture.blogspot.com</a>	<b>Law</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Athletics</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Kayak</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Soccer</b> Improving results from the club! For match reports, top scorers, fixtures and more on the soccer club see <a href="http://ulsoccerclub.webs.com/apps/blog/">http://ulsoccerclub.webs.com/apps/blog/</a> . Gear is still available to order.	<b>Christian Union</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Medical</b> Register for Movember. <a href="http://www.movember.com">www.movember.com</a>
<b>Badminton</b> The Limerick Badminton League has started. During league season team training on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:15pm to 9:15pm. Limited space for casual players until 9:15pm. Courts open to members until 11pm.	<b>Krav Maga</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Softball</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Computer</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Music</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Basketball</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Ladies Hockey</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Sub Aqua</b> Thanks to: participants of the Oxygen Administration seminar and everyone who helped with the Table Quiz. Congrats trainees for completing the ScotSAC lecture series and so many pool assessments!	<b>Cumann Gaeilge</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Ógra Fianna Fáil</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Boarders</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://ulboarders.com">ulboarders.com</a> .	<b>Ladies Rugby</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Tae Kwon Do</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Debating Union</b> Regular meetings. Contact <a href="mailto:uldebu@gmail.com">uldebu@gmail.com</a> .	<b>Out in UL</b> Meetings on Wednesdays at 7pm. Contact <a href="mailto:outinul@gmail.com">outinul@gmail.com</a> for room details etc.
<b>Capoeira</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Men's Rugby</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Tennis</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Development</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Photographic</b> Guy Gowan Seminar. Cosmetic Retouch. Saturday, 11 December – All Day Xmas Photo Shoot, Sunday, 28 November from 2pm to 6pm
<b>Chess</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Mountain Bike</b> Spins on Wednesdays at 7pm and Sundays at 11am. Women's only spins Thursdays at 7pm. All spins from UL Boathouse. Bring change of clothes. Weekend trip on 20, 21 November.	<b>Trampoline</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>DJ</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Poker</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Dance UL</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Outdoor Pursuits (OPC)</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Ultimate Frisbee</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Drama</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Socialist Youth</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Fencing</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Parkour</b> Check Facebook and your email for details on our Christmas Night Out! Training: Monday 9pm to 10.30pm in the PESS Gym. Thursday: 7pm – 8.30pm in the PESS Sports Hall	<b>Water Polo</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Enterprise &amp; Finance</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>ULTV</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>GAA</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Pool &amp; Darts</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Windsurfing</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Games</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Young Fine Gael</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registerscs.ul.ie">registerscs.ul.ie</a> .

# SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Written by **Jason Lynch**

IT WAS a 10km, all-out race, encompassing a mix of terrain. From cobbled streets to forest trails, there was weight to the name 'Survival of the Fittest'.

On 17 October at 10am sharp, at the sound of the starter's pistol, 1,800 competitors began the race. The amazing Edinburgh skyline was more than capable of distracting us from the steps to be climbed in order to reach the summit of a mammoth hill.

Next up was a scrap yard in a field, which was named the "Urban Jungle". Comprised of row after row of beat-up cars, the seatbelts formed a web.

The "Army assault course" was just as you would imagine it; monkey bars, tyres, webbed netting, more tyres, rope swings, climbing and a little falling. A bald fat chap shouted at you as you did your best not to fall into one of the mud baths. Winding through some forest

tracks with the odd climbing frame or two thrown in, the course lead us to a derelict seven-story Georgian house. At the top of all those stairs, we were greeted by a maze of strobe lights, glow sticks, dancing monkey-men and pounding techno.

The energy-zapping Parkour zone at the nine kilometre stage brought a smile to the team. We felt at home while the rest of the competitors gritted their teeth as they ploughed through the course. Our smiles hardened as we saw there was one final hill which led onto the finish in the shadow of Edinburgh Castle.

The three training sessions a week paid off, with members of the PKUL team finishing in the medal-worthy positions of the top 20%.

## JUDO CLUB HOSTS SEMINAR

Written by **Judo Club PRO**

LATE October saw UL Judo Club hold a short seminar on Ground Katas in the PESS building at UL. The seminar was conducted by David Kiang, fifth Dan black belt, who has been involved with Judo for over 40 years.

Katas are a system of set movements, which are learned and practiced them over years. There are different types of Katas. For example, Nage-No-Kata (Forms of Throwing), Katame-No-Kata (Forms of Grappling or Holding), The Kodokan Goshin-Jutsu (Forms of Self-Defense) and more.

In 90 minutes the club learned a range of new techniques. A questions and answers session followed. Uchi Mata, an "Inner Thigh Throw" was one of the techniques we examined.

Judo is a martial art based on the ancient techniques of jujutsu. It is known for throwing techniques and controlling the opponent on the ground or forcing the opponent to tap out. It can be practiced as a standalone martial art, as a form of self-defense, for fun, for fitness, in combination with other sports or as a serious sport.

New members are welcome to join the club at any time during the year. The club trains twice a week, on Mondays from 7:30pm to 9pm at the Cloughaun Club on Childers Road, and on Thursdays from 8:15pm to 9:45pm in the PESS building at UL.

For more information see <http://sites.google.com/site/uljudoclub/home>



UL Judo takes tips from seasoned pro

## WET BALLS! DRY BALLS!

Written by **Dave Ward**

SO here we are. Just over a month into the new season and the focus is very much on change. This issue is dedicated to the memory of our beloved Colin McNamara, whom after eight years of loyal service, is not dead, but has gone to further his education at Oxford.

The men's team has also lost such talent in the shape of our foreign friends, American Ted and Ludo the Frenchman. Ok, Rory Bane isn't foreign but he has a criminal record in Germany. Old friends will become new foes as Ted and Rory have joined

Galway. See you in Division Three boys. So out with the old and in with the new. We're pleased to announce that we have new members all the way from America, South Africa, France and Waterford.

The Ladies also lost some loved members. Never deterred, the Ladies showed their strength in depth when UL Waterpolo had four Ladies represent Munster at the Spanish Islands Cup, Mallorca, Spain.

Chairperson Catherine, Ciara, Hannah1 and Hannah2 took on the

might of London, Mallorca and Russia. They performed admirably against such quality opposition, gaining invaluable experience. Well done! We are very proud! There will be a freshers varsity competition for members with under two years playing experience, at the NAC in Dublin in November. Hopefully both teams can add to the clubs recent successes.

Train Hard, Play Harder!

Visit [www.ulwaterpolo.webs.com](http://www.ulwaterpolo.webs.com)



Members of UL Ladies Water Polo

## HANDBALL CLUB SHOWS PROMISE AS NEWS SEASON OPENS

Written by **John Fitzgerald, PRO**

KILKENNY hosted this year's 60x30 intervarsity teams and singles competition, the opening tournament of the intervarsity season. UL was represented by ten players. They were Deirdre Donohoe, Laura-Anne Furlong, Áine Brislane, Fiachra Hayes, Eamon McNicholas, Colin Clarke, Paul Holden, John Fitzgerald, Mark O'Donovan and Robert O'Hara.

The UL B team of Paul Holden, Deirdre Donohoe, John Fitzgerald and Fiachra Hayes were first into action losing out to eventual finalists Carlow IT.

The UL C team of Eamon Mc Nicholas, Robert O'Hara, Colin Clarke and Laura-Anne Furlong and Áine Brislane gave the UL contingent something to celebrate winning the C teams Competition.

UL defeated IT Tallagh and IT Carlow on their path to the final. The decider went right down to the wire with UL pulling through by three points. This team put in numerous sterling performances over the weekend to claim the title.

In the ladies doubles event UL was represented by Laura-Anne Furlong and Áine Brislane in the B final. Unfortunately Laura-Anne and Áine faced tough opposition from a strong IT Tallagh pairing and were defeated

in the final. Laura-Anne also qualified for the ladies B singles final. Laura-Anne broke IT Tallagh hearts in the semi-final defeating Aoife Dunne in an enthralling encounter. Unfortunately the challenge of IT Tralee's Amanda Geoghan proved too much to overcome and despite breaking serve on a number of occasions Laura-Anne was unable to take the initiative.

IT Tralee won on a score line of 15-0, 15-11.

Colin Clarke also represented UL in a final taking part in the men's C decider. Colin had convincing victories over Alan Armstrong (UCD), Tom Sinnott (DCU) and P.J. O'Brien. In the final Colin came up against a more experienced player in the form of DIT's Conor Grealis. This game needed a tie breaker to be decided with Conor holding out to win 11-15, 15-7, 11-7.

It was a successful tournament with the C team bringing an All-Ireland title back to the club and three runner up medals.

The clubs focus will now turn to preparations for the 40x20 teams intervarsity tournament which will be held in Dublin on Friday, 26 November.

## HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM DANCE SOC

Written by **Emily Maree**

THAT'S it guys; the end of the semester. We've had a great time, with Surprise Thursday, Fame, Beat It for Mental Health Week and loads more. Thanks to everyone who got involved.

We're back in Semester Two, with the same classes as before: Beginners Hip-Hop, Advanced Hip-Hop, Ballet, Lyrical Jazz, Ladies Hip-Hop and Yogalates. We'll have the same timetable, but as usual, please keep an eye on our website, Facebook and your emails. Expect notice at the beginning of the new Semester.

From everyone in Dance UL, we hope you have a great Christmas. We look forward to greeting you next year!



# PHOTO SOC GOES SCOTTISH

Written by **Hafsah Mushtaq**  
and **Michael Johnson**

ON a dark morning, seven photographers set off on an adventurous trip to the wondrous land of Scotland, in a minibus that had difficulties starting.

With much excitement and barely any sleep, the trip started with a journey from Limerick to Belfast. A ferry brought us to the Scottish highlands, lowlands and indeed any Scottish lands that would provide us with the photographic opportunities the country is famous for.

We visited Galloway National Park. In addition to being the UK's premier dark skies site, Galloway is also famous for its spectacular scenery and outdoor activities. In one afternoon, we tracked down a herd of red deer, capturing some great pictures. We also snapped a couple of lakeside panoramas on camera and find ourselves a sunset location for an impromptu photographic workshop. All after a 5am start!

Later, we took advantage of the clear skies and practiced a few long exposure nighttime star shots. Next morning we visited Loch Lomond, Luss and

Inveruglas, where we shot colorful pheasants and beautiful lakeside photos, as the sunshine had deigned to grace us with its presence. Later, we practiced our landscape photography on such gems as Kilchurn Castle on Loch Awe and Castle Stalker near Port Alpin, following this up with some nice sunset shots in Kinlochleven.

Another night passed and Sunday morning saw us jumpstarting the minibus again. We visited Loch Ness in search of "Nessie". Unfortunately, we had to content ourselves with a windswept and wild panorama of the Loch. After that, we headed south to Edinburgh.

Our skills in landscape photography and jumpstarting a car have improved greatly. This will be an adventure kept alive through our photos

UL Photo Society meets at least once a week on campus. Email [photoul@gmail.com](mailto:photoul@gmail.com), see <http://www.photo.ul.ie> or Facebook search "UL Photo Soc"!



Some shots from the trip to Scotland

## BASKETBALL CLUB LADIES DEFEAT WIT

Written by **Basketball Club PRO**

The college basketball league started this week with the UL Senior A Ladies travelling to Waterford for their first competitive game this year against WIT and the Senior B team travelling to Cork to face CIT.

WIT has proven tough competition in the past but the UL Ladies won comfortably by a margin of almost 50 points, with a final score of 73-28.

The UL team was missing a handful of its key players but still managed to start the game at a fast pace. Some long range shooting from Sinead Deegan and Miriam Leane in the first and second quarter made it impossible for WIT to close the gap before half time.

Aoife McDermott and Fiona Scally secured rebounds both offensively and defensively in the third quarter to keep UL in control until the end of the game. The Ladies B team travelled to Cork to

play CIT. CIT was runner-up last season and added a few players to its team this year. They proved to be too strong for UL, winning the game by 66 - 38.

The men's senior team has yet to play its first game, but will meet NUI Galway at home to kick off their season. This game takes place in the University Arena at 12pm on 17 November with the Senior Ladies playing after that at 2pm. The fresher tournament will take place on 27 and 28 November. There are 21 teams from around the country confirmed to compete in the two day event. The club will also hold a race night the same weekend in the Kilmurry Lodge. Race cards have been circulated to all members of the club and contributions are more than welcome.



## WHY I'M STANDING IN THE GENERAL ELECTION

Written by **Cian Prendiville**,  
Chairperson, UL Socialist Youth

I HATE politics. I despise politicians. And I am not about to start kissing babies anytime soon. So, why am I standing in the general election with the Socialist Party here in Limerick?

I got involved in activism in school, protesting the invasion of Iraq. I was disgusted with the killing of millions of Iraqis for oil, profit and power. But it's not just wars that are launched for profit. Job cuts, environmental pollution, privatising public services; our world is run for profit.

That's the politics I hate. It's the politics of the establishment parties, of politicians who are puppets on the strings of 'the markets'. That's why I

joined Socialist Youth, and the Socialist Party; to build a left alternative to the capitalist parties. Now, with this crisis caused by the rich, there is a need to step up the building of that alternative.

This Government has to go. It has bankrupted the country with bank bailouts, and savaging our education, public services and job prospects. There must be a fight back.

I have no faith in the opposition parties either. Fine Gael and Labour have signed up to the same four year plan of austerity and cuts. In government, they will carry out the same policies, exposing themselves for what they are.

That's why the Socialist Party is

standing in this election in Limerick; to bring forward and propagate an alternative to both this Government and the next. We already have a strong record. Make the rich pay for their crisis. Don't bail out the banks. Use capital to create jobs. Tax the rich to fund free essential services.

We will use this election and positions won as platforms to build campaigns. We need fighters for working people, young people and the unemployed, not bloated TDs. If you agree, contact me at [limericksocialist@gmail.com](mailto:limericksocialist@gmail.com) and get involved in building a political alternative!

## COMPUTER SOCIETY HOSTS TALK ON NEW SOFTWARE

Written by **Ciarán Curly**

Caolán McNamara gave a talk entitled "Libre Office: a fresh start" on a new open source project that has gained widespread support. Libre Office was founded in September as a fork of the popular

Open Office.org productivity suite. Libre Office, like Open Office, is distributed freely.

Mr. McNamara is a member of the Steering Committee of the Document Foundation that oversees the development of Libre Office. He is a UL computer engineering graduate and has worked on Open Office for more than 10 years.

Whereas Open Office development is overseen by Oracle, who took ownership of the trademark when they purchased Sun Microsystems, Libre Office is under the care of a

self-governing foundation known as the Document Foundation, created by leading members of the Open Office community.

Mr. McNamara believes that use of this model will ensure a more transparent development process, making it easier for developers to have their code merged into the project. The project has also gained support from industry leaders such as Google, IBM, Red Hat, Canonical and Novell and has received a large amount of code contributions from independent developers around the world, many of whom have not worked on Open Office before.

Mr. McNamara encouraged everyone to get involved with the development of the Libre Office project, stating that there are many tasks that did not require a deep technical understanding

of software development and that the community developing Libre Office will always welcome new contributors.



## Interview

# NORRIS, THE NATION AND THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF IRELAND



Norris: "I've spent the majority of my life as a criminal."

"I don't see myself as a homosexual president galumphing around the Park in an obstreperously sexual manner."

Written by **Darragh Roche,**  
Deputy Editor

IT IS one of history's great ironies that countries have often spent much time and effort vilifying political activists and doing their utmost to prevent them from gaining positions of power only to see these same people elected by popular acclaim: the long imprisoned Nelson Mandela springs to mind. But it is a mark of Ireland's usual contrariness that our rehabilitated villain is not some terrorist or revolutionary, but an openly gay man with a penchant for the works of James Joyce.

"I've spent the majority of my life as a criminal," Senator David Norris calmly explains. Between drags of a Dunhill cigarette, the 66-year-old human rights campaigner reminisces. "I've seen a huge number of changes in my lifetime. When I was young, any kind of sexual relationship between people of the same sex, for men at least, was illegal. I don't think we've lived up to the grand pronouncements of Government ministers, including former Taoisigh."

And of course his sexuality has become an issue in his presidential bid. This is an intelligent, erudite, charismatic man but there are serious reservations about whether his sexuality is compatible with the president's duties. He is having none of it.

"I don't see myself as a homosexual president galumphing around the Park in an obstreperously sexual manner," he says with more than a hint of glee, "I've plenty of energy but I'm not 16. I've always lived my life with dignity and there's never been the slightest scandal in my private life. I would see myself as a president who'd happen to be gay, so what about it?"

It is defiant statements like this that have made Senator Norris so popular. He is unquestionably the darling of the gay rights' movement but his popularity doesn't end there. Three times during the interview, passers-by came up to him to ask for photos and he was more than happy to oblige. The Government might not be so fond of the charming senator.

"I have called for an immediate general election followed by a Government of national unity. Because what we need in this country is a united Government

leading a people who are united. I think as president I would have a part to play in that."

Most Irish people are used to seeing politicians on both sides dodging questions and trying to deflect from the issues, so they might be forgiven for feeling disarmed by the good senator's directness. There seems to be no issue on which he is not willing to speak and to speak always for fairness, as he sees it.

"People like me because I tell them the truth. I have always believed in free, universal education and a universally accessible health service," he begins to speak more passionately now, these are the issues that awaken the charismatic fire.

"'Free fees' is an ugly phrase. It is a blatant contradiction. There have always been fees!" He understands how much a year in university actually costs, he has spent time considering fees, accommodation and food, to mention only a few.

"How can anyone from a marginalised community afford to send any of their children to third level? My guiding principle has always been to create the greatest equality. I believe that the real battle will be to set the means test as high as possible so that the people on the margins don't get unfairly squeezed out." His eyes seem to blaze once he gets on to his favourite subject, human rights and dignity.

But can the president really say all these things? Aren't there restrictions on what our head of state can and can't say in public? For a man so renowned for being outspoken, this must be impossible.

"I shall have to find different ways. People nationally and internationally know my history on human rights and that creates a kind of consciousness and I will be able to exploit that. I don't think I'll have any trouble getting that message across."

"I believe I have new ideas and I believe can make a difference."

This is the man who would be president.



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