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DIT: Students’ Union

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No Room at the Inn?

The Students' Union in the College of Technology, Rathmines, will fight "tooth and nail" for extra space in the Bishop Street site, which is due to open its doors this week. We take a look inside to see if it lives up to expectations.

With four months to go, the exams are already looming. Most can deal with the pressure but for some it just becomes too much.

Graffiti just isn't what is used to be, at least not in the DIT. The writing on the wall says it all and a lot of it isn't very nice.

The front of the DIT's new site.

The Students Union in the College of Commerce, Rathmines will fight "tooth and nail" for extra space in the Bishop Street site, which is due to open this week.

Declan Feely, Convener in Rathmines told the DIT Examiner that at present the space provided offers room for about 50 students and that this is simply not sufficient. "Facilities as they exist are totally inadequate and will lead to overcrowding in other areas, the canteen for example," he said.

"As it is we could actually be losing out in square footage compared with the current facilities in Rathmines."

At present the union, which will be located in the basement of the new building, has three offices at its disposal, as well as space for a students' union shop and a recreational area, which will be seated, between the two for students. The first office is envisaged as being open plan and easily accessible to students. This will be the administration area where a secretary will be based. Application forms, USIT cards and second hand books will be available here.

The second, larger, room will be the convener's office and also a place where meetings can be held. Next to this is the welfare and deputy convener's office.

While Mr Feely readily accepts that the new facilities are a "vast improvement" on those the union currently has and that people are "looking forward to moving from the squalor," he argues that with 1,500 full-time students in the college, the space provided for them is simply inadequate. The union has approached College of Commerce Principal James Hickey with a proposal to have a large room, currently designated for storage, given over to the students. The room, which is on the same level as the union could offer space for a 150 people, says Mr Feely, and would be ideal for pool tables, video games and a general recreational area for students.

Mr Hickey told the DIT Examiner that "proposals the students' union are making with regard to utilising the building are receiving consideration. That's how the situation stands at the moment."

According to Mr Feely, the area had always been allocated as a storage area but the union had not realised how small the students area actually was.

"It's a bit ridiculous having storage space in the basement; how are they going to get heavy equipment up and down," he wondered.

Asking about the possibility of extra space being allocated in phase two of the Bishop Street project, Mr Feely was unequivocal. "The space is needed now. No-one has any idea how soon stage two will be started."

The Students' Union has sent a letter to DIT President Dr Brendan Goldsmith advising him of the situation.

"We are determined to get the area. Whatever it takes, we haven't ruled out any form of action," said Mr Feely.

No Room at the Inn?
Survey Results "As Expected"

Almost half the Kevin Street students who took part in a recent survey conducted by the students' union said that the quality of the food in the canteen is no better than adequate. A little over 47 per cent of those surveyed described the food in the canteen as 'adequate'. Just over 10 per cent said it was 'poor' while 27 per cent described it as 'very good'. Of the staff members who responded to the survey, 31.5 per cent said that it was 'poor' and a almost 37 per cent described it as 'adequate'. One tenth thought it was 'excellent'.

Ciarán Crosbie, deputy convenor in Kevin Street Students' Union said that the survey results were as the union had expected. "People are happy with the portions of food and the staffing but the quality is not great. The quality of the food and hot drinks was only considered adequate."

The quality of the hot drinks in the canteen and snackery was deemed 'adequate' by 46 per cent of students and 21 per cent of staff. A further 21 per cent of staff described it as 'poor' while almost seven per cent of students felt it was 'excellent'.

Following the survey a meeting of the canteen committee was held and it was decided that a sub-committee be set up to examine the pricing mechanisms and the variation in quality of the service, with a view to possibly reducing certain prices.

The most common comments made by students in the survey were complaints about the unchanging play list in the juke box, overcrowding and the over pricing of tea and coffee. "These price increases, especially on the tea, hit most people the hardest. People have one dinner a day but maybe seven or eight cups of coffee. It's the second time this year it has happened. They raised it at the start of term and now again."

One of the reasons for the increase in the price of coffee was that its price rose on the commodity's market. But Eanna Ó Brádaigh, Convenor in Kevin Street Students' Union, argues that even if this is so, the canteen buys in bulk. "Surely the increases aren't going to affect them immediately."

There were several other comments about the snackery, few of them complimentary. They ranged from the lack of cushions on the seats, a desire for longer opening hours to unhappiness with the general conditions in the snackery.

"For something that is used so frequently, the service provided is poor: seating, food, cleanliness," said Mr Crosbie.

The Students' Union is very happy with the response rate from students. Out of 800 handed out, 257 were returned, a response rate of just over 32 per cent. "It's the best response we've had from students," However, the union is equally unhappy at the level of staff response. "We are very disappinted with the staff response. The survey was aimed at both students and staff."

"Love in the bog" were getting restless, shifting in their seats, willing the curtain to open. And then, finally, it did.

The opening number was sombre, as was the dancing but it picked up with a medley comprising the Bossa Nova, Jailhouse Rock and the Bee Gees. We were off and running and ... it was real­ly, honestly to God, enjoyable.

Nervousness was apparent on the face of some of the dancers but that soon passed and Matt once again proved himself no mean Irish dancer, setting the audience a whoopin' and a hollerin' in the process.

Theatre, for want of a more appropri­ate term, followed. "Love in the Bog" was a bizarre pastiche of Romeo and Juliet in which Lar Moran found his niche in drag. Fr Brendan Duddy absorbed himself DeNiro-like in his role of local matchmaker and the ubiq­uitous Matt, as Romeo, proved that as a swordsman he makes a great Irish dancer. It was a lively, ribald event.

The two hosts for the evening, Derek "isn't my bow tie on yet" Doyle and Maire "right, ok?" Goldsmith were han­dling the links with aplomb and they informed the huddled masses - the hall was a little chilly - that the next group up were, generally, new to Irish dancing. More songs from the hit musical followed but nothing could have prepared us for the penultimate act, innocently introduced as a Barber Shop Quartet. Billy Joel's "The Longest Time" was the chosen victim and with it the quartet of brave young men provided the single most enjoyable set of the whole evening.

Getting up on a stage is not an easy thing and a capella singing is, metaphorically, about as naked as you can get. The truth may sting a little, but it has to be said - they were hilarious, far more entertaining than Mr Joél... that I want could ever be.

After that, with time running out, it became a little frantic. The cast swarmed onto the stage and performed a medley of well known songs, some festive, some simply up-tempo. But really, did we have to have "Feed the World"?

A little rushed at times, a little self­conscious and sometimes downright bad, but at the end two curtseys and a bow were the final indication of success and as I walked down the corridor of St Louis' Convent the cast launched into Sinatra's "New York" slily changing the place name to Rathmines. It sort of summed up the evening.
In the words of that great, all purpose cliche, it was a dirty job but someone had to do it. This time however, one of the English language’s most overused phrases seemed highly appropriate, unfortunately so, for I was seeking the humour beloved of college students, despite their wide-eyed protestations of New Manishness (it'll become clear in a moment why I restricted myself to male humour). I speak of the humour that dare not speak its name in an era of mutual respect, political correctness and the ever present fear of a fully justified retaliatory slap in the gob. I speak of toilet humour, and where better to find it than toilets?

A selective tour of D.I.T ‘colleges’ toilets was undertaken and much was learned of the wit, spelling ability and political leanings of the average student graffiti artist. Graffiti persists, despite the best efforts of cleaners to render impossible its writing. Yes, the captive audience is still showered with abuse, gags, anatomically fantastic drawings and general invective but one question kept returning: where has all the good graffiti gone?

Let’s start with Rathmines, College of Commerce. The walls of the cubicles in the old building have been painted a deep oxblood colour to discourage the graffiti scribbler (these people are not artists) but determination and bloody-mindedness is a formidable combination, even if it’s not matched by a correspondingly high level of wit or style. “John Smith!!!” had been scratched into one wall. It seems the British Labour Party leader has a fan, though he certainly wasn’t the perpetrator of the graphically underlined signature, “PAULIE”, and ending with the old chestnut which goes something like “If you notice this notice....” It had been imaginatively signed “N. Otice” Killer stuff indeed.

Elsewhere, the end of the world was predicted (six years from now for those apprentices (one person, for the sake of over there. Presumably the walls are regularly cleaned but this never stopped the usual crude vitriol directed against apprentices (one person, for the sake of the future of the country I pray it was one person, had spelt the word Apprentice with one ‘p’ three times) to be televised due to the fact that the revolutionaries cannot get it together.

On to Kevin Street, College of Technology, the new building in particular. It seems their hearts just aren't in it over there. Presumably the walls are regularly cleaned but this never stopped the dedicated scribbler. Apart from the usual crude vitriol directed against apprentices (one person, for the sake of the future of the country I pray it was one person) had spelt the word to God for salvation was exhorted. You can imagine the responses.

A brief mention for the College of Catering and Design, Pristine, a whiteness Daz would kill for, completely clean and shiny. One can say no more.

From there to the College of Catering in Cathal Brugha Street and another disappointing collection of lame literary creations. One student had recreated himself as the mysterious “Arseman” and had drawn a bum to prove it, while it seems, judging from the writing on the walls that Billy Bunter and a chap called Galactic Cowboy attend the college. Or perhaps the latter is the name of a band. Pearl Jam definitely is, though one wonders how they’d react to the news that their name was the only item of graffiti on the walls in one of the toilets in the old building in College of Technology, Bolton Street. A very poor performance.

But it’s a next musical link to the College of Music in Chatham Bow, I admit I did not check out the toilets but the romantic in me hopes that the walls are filled with notes to spontaneously composed pieces of music that will, sadly, never see the light of day.

(Given the transient nature of graffiti, some of the stuff noted here is probably gone - do not mourn.)
Pressure Point

It's January. Already. All of a sudden the halcyon days of the first three months have vanished. Damn it, they were there only yesterday. Now it's 1994 and exams are looming. Sure, for most they are another four months away but they are no longer a comfortable 'next year' away; the deceptive buffer represented by a changing digit is gone and students are left with stomachs flipping, lastly over. The greater part of the student body can deal with the pressure but for an unfortunate minority it is the time when desperation begins to set in.

Each year, more than 2,000 students attending DIT colleges avail of the counselling and medical service. One quarter of these express suicidal thoughts. The person two seats ahead of you could well be seriously considering suicide as the only solution to his or her problem and you probably wouldn't even know it.

Such tormented people are not going to kill themselves with ideas of killing themselves says Susan Lindsay, a student counsellor in the DIT:

"They actually have a plan of action. Fortunately our intervention is timely enough to prevent some of them from going ahead but we don't know how many we're not reaching." A recent Irish study showed that between 12 and 15 students in every 100,000 will commit suicide due to pressures of college life.

Since it is widely agreed that many suicides are reported as accidental death or death by misadventure, the real figure is probably higher.

At present, about 20 students a week turn to the DIT's counselling service for help. "Some of them are once off, looking for reassurance, some take longer, up to 20 sessions. I have had a couple of students for a year and a half. Abuse cases, for example, take a long time."

Ms Lindsay has noticed that the service is getting very busy very early on in the college year, unlike the past. It is now busy all year round, though there are peak periods, namely just after Christmas and just before the exams. "Christmas can be a funny old time at home and there's also the post Christmas assessment." The new year also marks the point at which days, weeks and months seem to blur into each other with terrifying speed, only creeping to a halt when that first summer is over turned.

More first year and final year students avail of the service than others but no year is pressure free and in some cases it is only the added pressures of college that bring out a problem that is deep seated.

"There are different types of crises. There is the old one, present before the student comes to college. Often these are very family orientated. When they come into college, the normal pressures that maybe you or I could handle might be a trigger for them. It could be something quite trivial, seen as an overreaction by some people. But these are students who have been under going pressure, three or four years, or longer."

There are also those crises which are triggered by a sudden change in personal environment, such as the death of a parent, and still others that are self originated to a degree. "For example a student who just doesn't study comes to me for help, asking for radical study methods. Some people and I know some staff would say that they only have themselves to blame but that's not helpful. You have to look at why they are doing this -- it's like they are in self destructive mode."

Not surprisingly, stress as a result of difficulties with studying is quite common. Many students come to college ill equipped with the study skills appropriate for third level. Time management becomes a huge problem. By the third level education is a far cry from the world of the Leaving Cert and third level education is a far cry from the world of the Leaving Cert and teachers who teach you what to do. "They've had quite passive learning skills, absorbing everything like sponges and you move from stable relationships into uncharted territory."

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From the numbers making use of the service, men and women, can we assume that the Irish are losing their long and proudly held tradition of bottling up their emotions, quite often using a bottle to do so, and their distrust of those who make a living from listening and understanding?

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Lindsay, with the benefit of 11 years counselling experience, thinks so. Fewer and fewer people ask her, with suspicion in their eyes, whether she has a couch.

Festival Fever

The ninth Dublin Film Festival opens on Tuesday, 22 February and seems set to live up to its reputation as a lively, provocative and entertaining event, with films from Russia, Spain, the USA, Colombia and Burundi, amongst other countries.

Highlights are sure to be Robert Altman's latest, Short Cuts, a three hour story of ordinary lives with an amazing cast; Pedro Almodovar's Kika, which features American actor Peter Coyote; The Joy Luck Club which comes laden with kudos; California, with Brad Pitt and Juliette Lewis; the Vietnam-France collaboration Mui Du Du Xanh (The Scent of Green Papaya) which won the Camera D'Or (Best First Film) at Cannes last year, and Marcello Mastroianni's We Don't Talk About It. One to watch out for is the the Russian film I Wanted to See the Angels, which adopts a film noir style and sets out to highlight the bleakness of post-perestroika life at American pop culture rushes in to fill the void. Sounds good.

Incorporated into the festival this year will be a Spirit of America Season, a Latin American Season, a series of workshops an Irish Cinema Showcase and a number of seminars, one of which is entitled, Poverty and the Media. I know all about it. The festival has a happy habit of providing something for everyone and this year students reap the benefits of the its largesse. A discount price of £2.50 is available for students on presentation of a valid student card on weekday afternoons at the Screen Cinema only for film festival presentations.
Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's script, adapted from Kazuo Ishiguro's Booker-prize winning novel, is crisp and perceptive, but what takes this film to a higher plane is Hopkins' performance. This is not to denigrate Thompson, whose character is the object of Stevens' torturously repressed desire and who is by turn tough-minded, Hopkins' performance. This is not to denigrate Thompson, whose character is the object of Stevens' torturously repressed desire and who is by turn tough-minded, Hopkins' performance.

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A Site for Sore Eyes

Only the veterans will really know. The newcomers, the nervous rookies with the shiny docs and the so-casual-you-can-spot-us-a-mile-away expressions, they'll never understand, will never be able to hold court around an open fire, the audience enraptured, and talk with passion and maybe a little nostalgia about the old days, when a free seat in the canteen meant something had been spilled on it, when it seemed as if thieves should be given a set of keys to the union shop, such was the frequency of the break-ins, and when a free seat in the library...well, who can remember that far back?

The newcomers won't know how it used to be because, for most of them, the virgin territory of Bishop Street will be their first glimpse of third level splendour. The good burghers of the College of Commerce are finally moving; after years of talk and more of building, the new site is almost ready. Sure, there's dust everywhere, and bare walls and builderly things such as trowels and hard hats lying about, but these are minor matters and certainly not enough to deter a reporter and a photographer on their quest for knowledge, truth and some nice pies. And so with hard hats jammed on firmly, we entered the building.

It was an unusual tour, if only because our two guides were so very different. Fr Brendan Duddy, who has acted as a colour consultant (oh yes, it's all been taken very seriously) waxed ecstatic about this and that, especially the huge studio on the fourth floor where the communications students will no doubt endeavour to create small video masterpieces. Meanwhile, Bill Hennessy, resident engineer, ambled along looking surprised at our surprise.

The entrance hall is huge, curved and very bright, the light provided by a massive curved window which looks out on the back of the building. Directly in front of it are a set of wide, irregular steps, the kind of place where students hang out pretending not to be petrified about impending exams.

Downstairs is the location for the students' union offices and shop (of which more elsewhere) and from there we were shown to the first floor, temporary home for the new canteen. This too is curved and looks down to the hall on one side and the street on the other. There are two kitchens, main meals at one end and fast food at the other. There was so little happening up here that hats hardly seemed necessary.

The library area is located on the third floor, and this too looks down onto the street and affords a distracting view of the city. It is a temporary location and will be moved when phase two of the building is complete but for now it should suffice.

Onward to the fourth floor and one of the lecture halls, a place that positively screams "COLLEGE". Curved rows of comfortable blue seats (with armrests), wide writing spaces and a slot in the ceiling for a retractable screen. This floor is also the location for the aforementioned studio which Brendan Duddy thought was only gear. And it cannot be denied, thought has gone onto this project, though it would take more than the wearing of a hard hat to qualify anyone as an expert on the matter. That said, it doesn't take a degree in anything except common sense to see that the new, soon to be opened site on Bishop Street is a tremendous boost for the DIT in general and the College of Commerce in particular, and while the hoary old veterans of Rathmines will be able to gaze into middle distance and wax lengthily about the hard times, the shiny newcomers can ably retort: "yes, but I can get a seat in the library."
Midnight at the Theatre came to him in a day dream. He dreamt putting £11 paper he has create over from above.

Of David Mamet's Speed the Plow, including the Mona Lisa, Madonna and Pavarotti. He plays the Friday and Saturday at Midnight and at the Olympia. It's a trick affair, but what a sound in popular music (some would say samey) UB40 have been around a long time and have delivered a string of hit singles over the years. Visitors to the Point this weekend will not doubt have a chance to sing along with Ali, "I cahh-nnt help fahhh-ling in love withhh-uh you" Each to his own.

On the same night as UB40's second gig, The Frames play one of those increasingly trendy unplugged sets in The Baggot Inn. I'm beginning to wonder why. Not why The Frames in particular, just a general why? And if the answer is because we saw it on MTV, then we should be quite worried.

Reformed and rejuvenated after some hard times, and now re-establishing themselves, Aslan play the same venue on 25th and 26th of February. The management at the Olympia don't encourage bopping in the aisles. Good luck to them that week-end.

Anyone who's seen Mame's films Glengarry Glen Ross or House of Games will know what to expect in the way of quick fire, over lapping dialogue often made up of four letter words. Stanley Townsend, Lorcan Cranitch (seen recently in TV's Cracker) and Andrea Irvine are the three actors challenged with bringing off Mame's peculiar style. And an admirable job they do. Sharp, superbly observed and very funny in a very tough kind of way. If you liked The Player, you'll love this. £6 for students with ID.

More American theatre at the Andrew's Lane Studio, with Cloud Nine's production of Neil Simon's wry, touching Brighton Beach Memoirs, first in a trilogy of thinly veiled autobiographical plays. You may already have seen the film of the play, starring Jonathan Silverman. Simon can usually be relied on to deliver the one liners and Brighton Beach Memoirs is no exception. It runs until February 15th.

Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice opened in the Riverbank Theatre this week for a limited run. Never really like this play but depictions of Shylock are usually good talking points.

Disappointed that UB40's January 30th gig sold out? Fear not, all ye students with more money than sense. An extra date has been added; the phenomenally successful reggae ban will also play in The Point Theatre on January 31st.

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Rootsy, Bluesy and Ballsy; just some of the words that might begin to describe Mary Coughlan and fans to have a chance to see her in action on February 4th, when she plays The Olympia at Midnight. Show has the attitude, the emotion, but most importantly, 'he has that voice. And if that can't ke, the interest of the post-pub Olympia ci d well, where do we go from there?

Moving Hearts, who seem to have had more line-up changes than Spinal Tap, play Midnight at the Olympia on the 18th and 19th of February. The Hearts have proved time and again that they can deliver the goods live like few others. This is likely to be further proof, not that we need it, but its nice to have the opportunity to reassure ourselves.

Another long established Irish act, Stockton's Wing, play the Harcourt Hotel on Saturday, 29th January. Seems like they've always been with us. I can remember them from Self Aid. Remember that?

Johnny Duhan, a fine singer-songwriter takes the stage with Conor Byrne in Mother Redcap's on the same night. He too has been around for a long time but never seemed to achieve the success he deserved.

The Project Arts Centre is currently running a searing production of David Mamet's Speed the Plow.

A unique opportunity to spend four exciting months working and travelling throughout the US. Applications will be accepted from 19th Jan '94. Submit fully completed applications on or before 02 Feb and save £50 off the total cost. Get the details and brochure from your local SU or Usit office.
Twister in the main area and some Pale. For the less musical there will also be a party with The Four Seasons. Later, a gig by Frames, another by a rap band and a Sega competition. This will continue during the week, including the day of rest and recriminations, Friday.

Cathal Brugha Street.
No sooner have Bolton Street gone to bed for the week than Cathal Brugha gets started on the 14th. Details are still being finalised, but the NSC's club The Furnace has been booked for the Rag Ball on Thursday, 17th February. Probable events include a 'nothairn' (best and longest) and card and flower delivery service on Valentine's Day, a stretcher race and a bout of Bouncy Boxing, a variation on Sumo Wrestling. Paranoid students can look forward, and every other direction, for the Hit Squad. A Slave Auction is also planned. The hopeful band highlight will be The Big Geraniums.

Kevin Street
Kevin Street's rag week also begins on Valentine's Day. But prior to that is the Fashion Show, which takes place on January 31 in the Gleeson Hall. This is what we know so far of the Rag Week:
On Monday there will be a three-legged fancy dress pub crawl, a trip to the leisureplex in Coolock and a lunchtime gig. The Furnace is the place to be in the evening, with a comedy improv. beginning at 8.30pm and a Valentine's Disco from 11pm 'till late.

Tuesday's events include hypnotist Barry Sinclair and a mystery bus pub crawl. On Wednesday, there will be a lunchtime gig, a walking scavenger hunt, battle of the bands, the ever-popular slave auction and the ever-embarassing karaoke.

Thursday's highlights will be the pre-ball in the Weirford Inn, featuring the Glam Tarts and the Joshua Trio. The ball itself will be held in that den of iniquity known as The Olympic Ballroom.

THE IRISH TIMES

DITSU Simplex
CROSSWORD Competition

PRIZE: The first 5 correct entries drawn will each receive a £20 gift voucher for DITSU Students Union Shop.

RULES: Only open to members of the DIT colleges. Employees of DITSU and THE IRISH TIMES are not eligible to enter. No Photocopies - Entries close: Fri February 4th.

SEND TO: THE IRISH TIMES / DITSU, Crossword Competition, The DIT Examiner, DIT Students Union, DIT Kevin Street, Dublin 8.

THE IRISH TIMES
STUDENT PRICE 55p

ACROSS
1. Choosing (6)
5. Scrutiny (6)
10. Barred white-place (7)
11. Young tree (7)
12. Object of adoration (4)
13. Nine goddesses of the arts (5)
15. V (4)
17. Bookful, firm (3)
19. In capital is Tokyo (6)
21. Tales from Aesop (6)
22. Past of hear (7)
23. Leader in feudal Japan (6)
25. Word of warning (6)
28. Turkish travelled rap (3)
30. Furrowed (4)
31. Wall painting (4)
32. Horse's handy foot casing (4)
35. Persistently finding fault (7)
36. Obstruct, fence (7)
37. Right, acute and abusive (6)
38. Lack of emotion and intent (6)

DOWN
2. Steel (7)
3. Fe (4)
4. Person with exceptional ability (6)
5. Famous film-maker (6)
6. Cleopatra's snakes (4)
7. Of little consequence (7)
8. Become smaller (6)
9. Is of the same opinion (6)
14. Moveable window screen (6)
16. Eastern half of new Guinea (5)
18. High winds (5)
20. Transgression of moral law (3)
21. White lie (2)
23. Calm and tranquil (6)
24. Eight-sided figure
26. Go away with (7)
27. Endurance, avarice (4)
28. Plant such as mushroom (6)
29. In capital is London (6)
33. Lodge beneath window (6)
34. Operatic solo (4)

THE IRISH TIMES
THE STUDENTS NEWSPAPER
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COMPETITION NO. 1
This Sporting Life

Cathal Brugha Street.

* At present, water safety classes are being held in Sean McDermott Street pool between 8-9pm on Wednesdays. Students from all DITs are welcome.
* Plans are afoot to hold an inter-DIT Golf competition in April, with Lecturers taking on Students. Watch this space for further details.
* More inter-site sports activities on Wednesdays with the respective volleyball teams battling it out in the Belvedere Gym between 5.45-6.45pm.
* Also in the Belvedere Gym is ladies’ soccer (Mondays, 5.45-6.45) and mens’ soccer (Mondays, 6.45-7.45), basketball (Wednesdays, 6.45-7.45) and Badminton (5.45-6.45).
* New to the Linen Hall on the same night is aerobics between 6-7pm.

COMAD

* COMAD’s basketball team take on Galway RTC on Thursday, February 3 in St Patrick’s Drumcondra.
* HESF annual swimming gala in Donaghmede on the first weekend in March.
* More swimming: Irish intervarsities.

National Basketball Arena in Tymon Park, Tallaght, in the near future.

* The weather has, as usual, played havoc with the sporting fixtures but still we battle on. Due to the bad weather, the class soccer league is behind schedule. However, the first round is almost complete, with only two games left to be played. There will be a meeting in early February for the second round draw.
* The basketball club is as active as ever, with training in the Church Hall every Monday and Thursday from 4-6pm. New members are always welcome, with women players an urgent requirement. The club is planning a trip to Cork in early March and there may also be an inter-D.I.T. blitz in the first round draw.

Grant Boost for DIT

The Dublin Institute of Technology is to receive the biggest single grant from the proposed £120 million spending programme on third level education which the Government is forwarding to the European Commission for approval. The programme is to be part of the National Development Plan. The DIT will benefit to the tune of £1.75 million and it is intended that the money be used to the provision of hotel training, tourism and marketing and design facilities within the institution.

The European Union funds are designed to augment works funded by the exchequer which will amount to £61 million this year. Announcing the proposals, the Minister for Education, Niamh Bhreathnach said that most of the projects will be completed during the first four years of the National Plan. All seven of the state’s universities and its 11 regional technological colleges will benefit under the spending proposals.

Gender Policy Warning

The DIT has been warned by the Minister for Education, Niamh Bhreathnach about the low number of women being promoted to Governing Bodies. Last Autumn, the Minister requested a 40 per cent quota for women members.

Ms Bhreathnach has made it known that in future she will require greater female representation on the Governing Bodies of the DIT and the country’s Regional Technical Colleges. Legislation establishing the DIT as an independent institution last year has a clause stating that governing bodies have an “appropriate” gender balance but no specifics are given. The Minister has no powers of selection, except for chairpersons, but she has the power to approve nominations.

Voting Rights Motion

A private members’ motion is to be tabled in the Dáil which would extend the right to vote in Seanad Elections to the colleges of the Dublin Institute of Technology, as well as Dublin City University, the Universities of Limerick and the regional technical colleges. The motion is to be tabled by Fine Gael and the party’s spokesman on education, Mr Jim Higgins has said that it is “flagrantly unjust” that graduates of these new colleges and universities should be allowed vote in the Seanad Elections.

The G.A.A. has also been busy at D.I.T. level. On the weekend of the 26th and 27th of February it will host the Trench Cup (inter-varsity football event) in the VEC grounds in Terenure. Closer to home, there will be an inter-class seven-a-side Gaelic football blitz in mid-February - watch the notice boards for details.

The trials for the D.I.T. Swimming team will be held on the next two weeks (so Joe Diggins says) and the D.I.T. team will travel to Cork in early February to compete in the Inter-Varsity competition. Rathmines students can avail of the swimming pool in Rathmines on Wednesday Mornings 7.30-9.00am Thursday Mornings 7.30-9.00am Thursday Afternoons 1.00-2.00pm for free!

‘94 Student Work and Travel Programme to the Us

A unique opportunity to spend four exciting months working and travelling throughout the US. Applications will be accepted from 19th Jan. ‘94. Submit fully completed applications on or before 02 Feb and save £50 off the total cost. Get the details and brochure from your local SU or Usit office.
Having fun student style

For most students, money is a commodity that attains near mythic proportions; they've heard of it, perhaps saw something once but surely it can't exist in the amounts they've been told. Even when it does make a guest appearance in their lives, it tends to be stretched thinner than their soup. But what happens when a student where he or she is given, actually presented with, £20? An interesting question which we decided ought to be answered. A willing student was found and the money changed hands. Can you guess what he did yet?

It seems that Socialism has finally come to Rathmines student union politics. After years of mis-spending cash they have finally started sharing the stuff.

Anyone who's familiar with student politics can imagine my suspicion at being offered £20 from union funds by Declan Feely to spend as I saw fit. No strings. "Just write an article on how you spent it," he said. A bit like Blind Date. "All we ask is that you come back and tell us how you got on."

The suspicion faded fast, followed by a sudden instinct to just grab the money before the fool changed his mind. You forget what you've been told about accepting money from strangers; this man's holding £20, asking me to spend it and then tell him how I did it. Free money, I thought. Fair enough. I haven't seen £20 since Christmas Eve.

But life is never that simple. There's something about reggae that makes it hard to study to. And looking at the meagre, beer-stained lecture notes spread on the bar, I started to feel disheartened. It brought back memories of staring into the Grand Canal a week before last year's summer exams, searching for lecture notes. I remember the guy who lost them remarking that it wasn't really organised searching for your notes in the canal a week before your exams. Now I knew how he felt.

A change of scene was needed. Happy hour was just starting at the Chicago Pizza Pie Factory. The music was worse but the cocktails are cheaper. My friends agreed to go to the bar. It's not that I doubt my sexuality, but I couldn't look a barman in the eye and ask for "Sex on the Beach" or a "Slow Comfortable Screw". After sampling the first six drinks from the menu, a political decision was made that the chances of passing the following day's exam have already receded, so the notes are put away.

My accomplice had discovered a soul mate at the bar and I had realised that £20 is bigger all when trying to sample every cocktail on the menu. The bar is full of depressed couples who probably went on the piss the night before an important exam years ago. I spent closing time in the Norseman - no bad music and less couples. The union's money is gone and has thankfully run out before bouncers, kebabs and taxi-men got any of it. content with this vic. My money is gone and has thankfully run out before bouncers, kebabs and taxi-men got any of it. content with this victory, I beat a retreat to the suburbs, cursing Declan Feely and wondering how bad cocktail hangovers are.

By Neil Leslie

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**PRIZE**

The winner of the competition will receive a case of Moosehead lager worth over £50.00.

Five runners up will each receive a Moosehead T-shirt and Moosehead baseball cap.

Q: The animal most associated with Canada is ....?

1. The Moose
2. The Koala Bear
3. The Herring

**Rules**

Only open to members of D.I.T.S.U. Employees of D.I.T.S.U. and Guinness are not eligible to enter.

Send Entries to Guinness/DITSU Competition
The DIT Examiner
DIT Students' Union
DIT Kevin Street
Dublin 8

Name ____________________________
College __________________________
Year __________________________
Course __________________________
Student No. ______________________
Answer __________________________

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Childs Play?

It is human nature, though certainly not common sense, to look for a scapegoat. When an event occurs that is beyond the comprehension of right thinking members of society, there is a convulsive act, that forces people to stop in their tracks and look on with horror, then the active search begins. The world might be falling apart, we think, but it can't be that bad, and so we try to rationalise the event, make sense of it and prove to ourselves that this sort of thing would not normally happen, that it was an aberration caused by some sort of malevolent influence. It makes us feel a little better, though God knows why.

The murder of two-year-old James Bulger by a couple of 10-year-olds was such an act. The brutality of the murder and the age of both victim and killers shocked all who followed the trial. And all did.

No-one could make sense of it. Despite the teams of staff written about deprived backgrounds, lack of parental guidance, a leader and follower relationship and the general malaise affecting society, the enormity of the crime was difficult to comprehend. And that was terrifying. But when it was learned that videos of a violent nature were often in the home of one of the boys, Jon Venables, and that one of the most recent had been Child's Play 3, the press, especially the tabloid press, had a field day. They closely compared scenes from the film with reports of the last moments in James Bulger's life; they reprinted the sleeve for the video, the文献

on in on the evilly-contorted eyes of Chunky, the killer doll in the film. Graphically, it looked great. It sold papers. But anyone who believes that the death of that two-year-old boy came as a direct result of one of his killers watching a ludicrous, shabby, fifth rate horror movie that didn't even get a cinema release here, is kidding themselves in the worst possible way.

The debate about the influence of cinema and television on people has been going on for as long as the media have been with us. Who knows what effect D.W. Griffith's portrayal of black people in Birth of a Nation had on the folk who watched it. Did Little Caesar encourage desperate young men to talk funny and become gangsters? We all have seen the anti-German and Japanese films made during the war years and know that they served to boost morale, at the very least. But with the development of media authorities in sociology and some very high profile cases, the debate really took off in the 70s. Peakinpah made Straw Dogs, Kubrick gave us A Clockwork Orange, Don Siegel introduced us to Dirty Harry, Michael Winner offered Death Wish, William Friedkin shocked us with The Exorcist, and a young Martin Scorsese showed Taxi Driver in our faces. All are violent, some gratuitously so, but Taxi Driver and A Clockwork Orange are probably the two most contentious, the former because it is the film cited by the Jodie Foster-Frasted would be assassination of Ronald Reagan, John Hinkley (he said he watched it over 50 times) while the latter was banned in Ireland in 1973 and may possibly never be released here because of a later, still in force, ban on distribution in Britain imposed by Kubrick himself. Unfortunatly, Britain and Ireland are grouped together as far as film distribution is concerned so that leaves us out in the cold also. Kubrick had been dismayed by the comments by certain judges that the violence in his film had caused copycat crimes to be committed.

It is worth noting that there is less physical violence in these two films than in the others (there is only one murder in A Clockwork Orange) so bloodletting can't be the issue.

But the violence disturbs. Violence, however, does seem to be the issue with Reservoir Dogs. Quentin Tarantino's Literate, astonishingly paced, and rather violent debut. There was a degree of future over the violence when the film came out and it tended to focus on the lingering death of one character, shot at the beginning, and a torture scene, the climax of which takes place off screen. The violence is casual but it solves nothing, and nobody wins, saves the world or gets the girl because of it. How many violent, big budget, star-studded Hollywood films can you say that about?

The point is that the video release of Reservoir Dogs is being held up while Man Bites Dog, a Belgian (and therefore any) film about a serial killer and the camera crew that follows him around, is on the shelves as I write. Now this is a film that clearly lost the run of itself; there are an incalculable number of killings and a thoroughly exhausting gang rape sequence. Not a peep. It's foreign, you see and so not many people will see it. Certainly not the type who'd be influenced by it. Lord, no.

Most recently, the film censor, Seamus Smith banned Abel Ferrara's Bad Lieutenant on the grounds that it was "blasphemous and profane." The appeals board backed his decision, deciding that "it was unsuitable for general consumption in Ireland." That kind of statement raises the hackles of a lot of people but it is not for discussion here. Mary Whitehouse may have put away her accusing finger but there are plenty still prepared to do the pointing and yelping, declaring the pernicious influence of cinema and television on people, well, some people. Few could argue that there are films that people under a certain age should not have access to. And there are some that most of us wouldn't have to have access to anyway. The laws exist but they are difficult to enforce, especially with regard to video rentals - we all know that kids see things that we would rather they didn't. As far as gratuitous violence goes, they do become desensitised to it, not even blinking when a man falls into a vat of acid and is then turned to mush by a car, as in Robocop. But does this desensitising process go any further than encouraging a blase attitude to screen violence? If that is its extent, then, while far from ideal, it cannot be deemed harmful. If, however, they become unable to distinguish between reality and fantasy, then we have to look again. Of course, when we were children, we were exposed to hitherto unseen level of screen violence. We turned it out, didn't we?

Home Alone is the most successful comedy of all time, a film that has a child hero and a high level of the kind of violence normally only seen in cartoons. Children love it, but did it encourage them to hit people with irons and throw marbles under people's feet? This is not a flippant question. There have been countless studies, some saying that the influence is deep, that the difference between real and cinema violence becomes blurred, that films plant ideas in the minds of children. Others conclude that children know what they are watching is fake, that it couldn't happen and it shouldn't be done. In other words, nobody knows for sure.

And then we get something as chilling, gruesome and shocking as the Bulger murder. There are similarities to the manner of that boy's death and certain acts in Child's Play 3 - the killer doll was splashed with paint and James Bulger had paint thrown on him; his body was placed on a railway line and there is a comparable act in the film. And then there is the size of the victim. But let us try to distance ourselves from the event for a moment. How often did those two children go to the railway embankment? Would it have simply been the place they would go to? And what about the paint? Was it already there? Did they plan to use it? Could it be argued that the boys took ideas from the film and incorporated them into the murder. But Jon Venables has consistently denied seeing the film and his father has also said this is the case. Furthermore, Jon Venables was the weaker of the two, the father has said that his favourite film is The Goonies, a harmless children's adventure yarn.

Films have become more violent, there can be no argument about that, and the likes of Child's Play 3 need violence. The sad fact that so much bloodshed and plenty of gruesome murders of this sort of trash wouldn't make any money. But can we say definitely, as the judge in the Bulger case did, that exposure to violent videos may in part be an explanation as to why Jon Venables and Robert Thompson committed murder? Screen violence may have reached an all time high (or low) but there were more shocking murders committed by children in the seventies, when video recorders were a rare and very expensive item, than in the 80s, when everyone bought one. Cinema and video violence, as unpalatable and unnecessary as it often is, cannot logically be seen as a causal factor in these killings. Screen violence has not brought about a more casually cruel and cynical society, rather it is a product of that society. But should we ban it? Not necessarily. But really we have to look a lot closer to home to explain why people do the things they do.
Double Time

There is a clause in the contract of employment signed by teaching staff in all VEC schools and colleges which relates to external work. It states: "Extra work shall not be undertaken without the consent of the Committee, normally obtained beforehand." This consent shall not be given unless it is clear that such work shall not conflict with or affect the efficient discharge of the appointees duties under the committee."

"If there are, then it will come to our attention in the future, such as the end of the academic year. We will have to address the whole area." It is an area that need to be regularised, he says, with each case being examined individually and treated on its merits.

What about the argument that such individuals are working at the very heart of their specific area of expertise, that they are at the coal face, viewing development close up?

Dr Goldsmith agrees that this viewpoint has some validity, but also points out that "it's not as simple as that."

The Department of Education has stayed well away from this tricky area. A spokesman told the DIT Examiner that "it's up to the colleges themselves. We don't instruct them, they run their own show.

DITSU and the TUI have rather more strong views on the issue:

DITSU President Deiric ó Brein believes that the situation is detrimental to the students.

"We see no problem with people working one day a week but with a five day week, it doesn't work as far as I'm concerned. The students suffer.

He also believes that there is an ethical question to be addressed. "In an era of high unemployment, should lecturers be allowed to hold two jobs? It is repugnant in the extreme that some people can have two highly paid jobs while graduates with excellent degrees can't find work."

He says that it is a situation that exists in all DIT colleges but seems most prevalent in Bolton Street College of Technology and Rathmines College of Commerce.

DITSU is currently preparing documentation on the issue.

The TUI takes a similar line. Mr Eddie Conlon, acting chair of the Dublin Colleges branch of the union, says that with the unemployment situation as it is, it is not justifiable for a person to have two jobs, "especially at the level of salaries we're talking about here".

In principle we're not opposed to people having permission to practice as long as it doesn't affect their students on the one hand, or its not detrimental to their colleagues, for example, in relation to time tabling and so on.

Where time tabling which could allow those working full-time outside a college has been brought to the attention of the TUI, Mr Conlon will say is that the union "successfully addressed the situation when it arose and as far as I'm aware the people are happy with the time tabling arrangements."

He accepts that there is a strong argument for some outside contact with the discipline being taught but "the balance has to be clearly in favour of teaching.

So the TUI has a clear policy regarding double jobbing but as far as Mr Conlon is aware, the issue hasn't been seriously discussed within the last three or four years, though "particular cases have arisen where some people have felt they've been disadvantaged because their colleagues were practising."

Award Winner

The winner of the fifth Enterprise Development Programme competition, run by the Project Development Centre in association with the DIT, was announced at a ceremony last week.

He is Mr John Donnelly of Airlect Ltd. He received a cheque for £1,000 sponsored by the Bolton Trust

The runner-up was Jai Morrissey of Jai Morrissey Shirts (JMS). At the award ceremony Professor Ray Kinsella, chairman of the DIT's governing body said that the project development's pioneering programme "enables entrepreneurs with a supportive environment and practical training in business skills. This high voltage combination of bright ideas, support and training means that job creating products and services can be fast-tracked into the market place."