



Assigned Male

Cartoonist Sophie Labelle talks Trans* issues, cartoons and more.

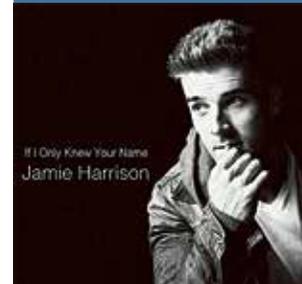
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MISSIN

FREE STUDENT NEWSPAPER | VOL 17, ISSUE 03 | 13 OCT 2015

#RockTheRegister

USI smash target of 10,000 registered student voters in 48 hours

By Niamh Cullen

The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) have registered 10,628 student voters in anticipation for Budget 2016. The national representative for 24 member campuses beat their target of 10,000 registrations from between 6 and 8 October.

With over a half a billion euro in third level funding cuts made between 2005 and 2014, the USI's campaign #EducationIs has been assisting students in making an informed vote in the upcoming General Election.

(USI) are calling on students to help protect college funding, grants and accommodation by registering to vote. The campaign has attracted mass attention, with The National Day of Voter Registration on 6 October seeing a dramatic 6,533 sign ups and their hashtag #RockTheRegister trending Twitter.

The movement follows up from the USI's Pre Budget Submission, which was launched on 22 September. The submission calls for the Government's Budget 2016 to reverse successive cuts to student family income thresholds, reintroduce postgraduate grants and address a shortfall in Student Assistance Funding (SAF). It also states that only a third of students are currently availing of a grant despite the cost of living for students averaging 11,000 euro per year.

"1/6 of people living below the poverty line are students," said USI President Kevin Donoghue.

"The new students we are registering to vote will be voting for politicians who have their educational interests in mind. Government investment in third level education dropped from over €1.6bn in 2005 to €939m in 2014. We are calling on the Government to increase funding and accommodation for students, and reduce the registration fee of €3,000."

NUI Galway SU President Phelim Kelly met with Galway East and West TD and Senator representatives at the launch to discuss key budget areas affecting students, as he discussed in his article in issue two of *Sin*.

He called for issues in applying for a grant such as estrangement, adjacency rates, family income thresholds and postgraduate support to be discussed in the Dáil. Mr Kelly also asked



USI Vice President for the Border, Midlands and Western Regions Feidhlim Seoighe, NUI Galway Students' Union President Phelim Kelly, USI Vice President for Campaigns Daniel Waugh, USI Vice President for Equality and Citizenship Annie Hoey, NUIGSU Council Chairperson Cathal Sherlock and NUIGSU Vice President for Welfare Jimmy McGovern celebrate registering over 10,000 students to vote.

representatives to consider depleted student supports, accommodation concerns and extortionate student contribution fees.

"Social justice and equality are on the agenda for the Students' Union this year. Last year we #MadeGráTheLaw by our efforts to register as many NUIG students as possible and we will be calling on you again for the general elections," he explained.

"We have, for the first time in history, political capital and we have to build on this, especially when so many of you voted last May."

Speaking to *Sin* after a successful day of registering NUI Galway students to vote, My Kelly said; "I'm delighted. It just goes to show that students are more politically-engaged this year. When I think about last year when we were registering students to vote in the Marriage Equality referendum, we registered 28,000, but that was over the course of the year. We have the 10,628 on top of that now, so they're still registering in their thousands."

The USI is particularly addressing areas of student grants and funding that were significantly depleted or cut entirely in previous Budgets. The Back to Education Allowance Bursary of €500 and Financial Aid funding which

has decreased significantly in recent years, are both hoped to be reinstated. They are also requesting a student housing strategy for 2020 and an increase to currently drained Financial Aid Funding, as well as a raise in Social Welfare payments for those under 26.

As the national representative for 354,000 third level students in North and South Ireland, the USI has a history of strength in registering voters. The student unions body registered 27,633 new voters ahead of the marriage equality referendum last May by driving their campaign #MakeGráTheLaw.

Feidhlim Seoighe, Vice President of the Border Midlands and Western Area of the Union of Students in Ireland commended last summer's achievement.

"Politicians, and the candidates in the next General Election are beginning to take notice of this awakened voice, and the renewed political engagement of young people. We have proven that young people can vote, and now we need to prove that young people do vote," he said in issue one of *Sin*.

NUI Galway's Students' Union is willing to assist students in voting registration and in voicing their particular issues to local representatives.

New Mental Health series begins on Flirt FM

By Daniel Mulcahy

The beginning of the month saw Mental Health week come and go, and with it a new 10-part series to be aired on Flirt FM every Wednesday until the end of the semester.

Hosted by Psychotherapist Mary Owens and NUI Galway graduate and Flirt FM presenter Eoghan Holland, and produced by Flirt FM Production Manager Alan Meaney, Heads Up is a series of 10 half-hour radio programmes on student mental health.

"As someone working in the field of mental health, I'm struck by how positive the work feels on a day-to-day basis and yet how stigmatised and misunderstood it can be from the outside," Miss Owens told *Sin* ahead of the first episode.

"I have a strong interest in radio so I approached Flirt FM last year with a view to doing something together that could feed into student conversations about mental health. We came up with the idea of doing a live show starting in Mental Health Week aimed at engaging students in the process of minding their mental health."

Heads Up kicked off on Wednesday 7 October at 2pm and will air every Wednesday until 9 December, with the presenters covering different issues every week.

"We'll be talking to a wide range of counsellors, researchers, students, artists and performers about issues that crop up regularly for young people: settling into college; understanding the impact of alcohol on your mind, body, emotions and overall mental health; dealing with anger and conflict; sex, intimacy and pornography; overcoming social anxiety and so on.

"With the artists and performers we'll be discussing their creative projects, as well as asking them to share something about how they tend to their emotional and mental wellbeing."

Another of the show's aims is to signpost students to free supports that are available on and off campus, Miss Owens added; "Third level students often don't realize how lucky they are to have this kind of support on their doorstep.

"We want to make sure students know support is there so that they can take advantage of it when they need it and/or know to where they can refer others. We'll be talking to people from the Students' Union, Student Counselling, The Arts Office, Mature Students' Office, Jigsaw, the HSE etc."

Flirt FM's Eoghan Holland said; "I suppose it's just something I'm proud to be part of - I hope it makes the things we are talking about a bit less taboo and a bit more tangible. We've been working on the show for a few months so we hope that I might turn over a few stones for people. I also like that it's in Galway - It not just a massive overarching campaign or piece of policy. It's live; it's open to two way communication."

Continued on page 2

Students dropping-out as the struggle to find accommodation continues

By Jenna Hodgins

Ireland's seven universities (NUI Galway, University College Cork, Maynooth University, University College Dublin, Dublin City University, Trinity College and the University of Limerick) have called for "urgent remedial action" to deal with the on-going accommodation crisis.

As the accommodation crisis worsens, there are students who are forced to make the decision about deferring the year. USI Vice President for the Borderlands, Midlands and West, Feidhlim Seoighe, commented that the students are becoming "hopeless" and the prospect of dropping out is becoming "less drastic" as a result.

"The situation has not eased at all, and what students are faced with now is the choice of deferring the year or to continue struggling to find a room," Mr Seoighe explained.

"They are now becoming hopeless, and so the choice of dropping out is becoming less drastic. Sleeping in hostels and couches is never an ideal situation, but doing it for five weeks is a step too far.

"Those who opted to stay in college, and hoped that some rooms would become available after September are now seeing that whatever rooms do become available, tens of other students also fighting for them."

The well-known Facebook group 'House Hunting Galway (for sound people)' had 905 new members at the time of writing this article.

Posts about rooms to rent are inundated with comments expressing an interest. One post for a room on New Road had as many as 32 comment responses not including private messages.

There are still students living in hostels or sleeping on couches who are six weeks into the college year, marking the half-way point of first semester.

"Sleeping in hostels and couches is never an ideal situation, but doing it for five weeks is a step too far."

Sin spoke with Kinlay Hostel where approximately 50 students live;

"Last year was the first year it became a

major issue. We had students staying here on a temporary basis but ended up staying on for the rest of the year because they liked it [...] We had about 30 students then, some left and others then went on to pre-book to stay with us for the second semester," said a spokesperson for Kinlay Hostel.

In a pre-budget 2016 submission, the Irish Universities Association (IUA) spoke about how the housing shortage for students will in turn affect university economies, and the national economy itself;

"As well as causing distress to Irish students, the accommodation shortage also impacts negatively on our ability to attract international fee-paying students to Ireland.

"The availability of campus accommodation is a prerequisite for attracting new overseas students."

Some visiting students were completely unaware of the enormity of the accommodation crisis until they arrived and began house-hunting.

Sin spoke with Robert Klaf, a visiting stu-

dent from Leipzig, Germany; "It's not fun, and there aren't many people at my home university who really care and tell us much about it [the crisis] before we leave."

A final comment made by Mr Seoighe urged students to make use of the services available to them;

"It is very important for students in NUI Galway to keep in contact with the accommodation office in the University, and to possibly give the idea of living in a Digs situation with a family, a considered thought."



New Mental Health series begins on Flirt FM

Continued from page 1

Episode one of Heads Up featured NUI Galway Students' Union Phelim Kelly and Student Counsellor Geraldine Connolly who spoke about the stresses associated with the transition from school to university life.

Flirt FM has also recruited two student reporters, Blue Hanley and Paul Corcoran to go out and find out what's going on around campus.

"There has never been as much of a focus on mental health and students are already coming together to support each other.

That's really encouraging. We hope that students use the show to share their experiences in order to support themselves, and others, in difficulty," Miss Owens explained.

"We want it to be an educational, enjoyable and uplifting programme with plenty of light-hearted moments - so we hope students tune in and join the conversation!"

If you missed the first episode, you can catch up now at www.mixcloud.com/flirtfm. Episode two will air on Wednesday 14 October at 2pm on Flirt FM.

The programme is funded by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, with the Television Licence Fee.



editorial

So much can happen in a fortnight



By Jessica Thompson

Looking after your mental health is extremely important. It can be difficult sometimes to keep things on track, but thanks to NUI Galway Students' Union and a range of societies and organisations around Galway, Mental Health Week managed to raise awareness, encourage students to avail of important facilities and to mind themselves.

We had a number of important events take place on campus, including the much-anticipated 'Mindfulness Conference' on Friday 9 October, which went down a treat with everyone who managed to get a ticket.

One aspect of Mental Health week that will continue on until December is our cover story about Flirt FM's new 10-part series 'Heads Up', which will deal with a range of mental health issues from depression to stress. No problem is too big or small to talk about and if there's something bothering you, then be sure to talk to someone about it.

It's amazing how much better you'll feel if you just say something to a friend. A simple text that says 'I'm feeling down' is often all it takes to start making things better. You'd be surprised how something simple like a cup of tea with a friend, or a walk in the fresh air can change your whole perspective.

In fact, we've covered exactly that in this issue of *Sin*. The Sports Unit and NUI Galway spent last week encouraging students to stand up for their mental health, eat good food to improve their mood, talk to a friend if they're feeling down, and more. Daniel has covered the story and you can find it on page 21.

Also on page 21, you'll find a few tips to keep your mental health in check. These are very simple suggestions to get you back on track. Got a big assignment that's stressing you out? Take a couple of minutes, listen to your favourite songs and relax, and trust me, the inspiration will come.

Another important issue covered in these pages is the subject of gender. The Lit&Deb Society held a Gender Equality panel a couple of weeks ago, which dealt with how female staff members are treated in NUI Galway compared to male staff members. Mark Laherty has the full story for you on page 13, where you'll also see a story encouraging students to wear yellow to their graduation as a show of support for gender equality.

And continuing on from that, Jenna and I attended a very interesting event hosted by ShoutOut since our last issue of *Sin*. Canadian, transgender cartoonist Sophie Labelle delivered a compelling talk on Trans* issues and how she deals with them in her cute and quirky cartoons, which are directed at a young audience, as well her older fans.

Jenna got an exclusive interview with Sophie after the talk, and you can find the full story spread across pages 10 and 11.

There are a few more serious issues in this paper, one of which is a feature on the rise in the number of rapes being reported in Galway. This is a story Jenna

took a lot of time to research, and her contacts provided her with a lot of information and statistics on the subject, so turn to page 12 to read all about it.

On a less serious note, USI have reason to celebrate this week after achieving a massive goal and registering well over their target of 10,000 students last week between 6 and 8 October. Students have shown the country that they have a voice in May when they voted in their thousands in favour of Marriage Equality.

Now, with a general election on the horizon, it's important that students continue to use that voice, because election candidates are listening now. They want your vote and they'll promise anything to get it - let's just hope they make good on their promises if they do.

The budget is a big talking point at the moment and we've got a couple of articles on it, which can be found on page eight. The Students' Union has provided us with a few excellent photos on their #EducationIs campaign, and overall it looks like USI and SUs around the country are working exceptionally hard to fight for the needs of the students.

We've got lots more happening in this issue. We got a fantastic interview with Galway busker

Jamie Harrison who is releasing his debut single this week. The music video, which was filmed in Hollywood, was released last week and can be found on YouTube.

I also got to write a feature on something close to my heart: blogging. I caught up with Sinéad and Saibh from the Into The West Blogger Network to chat about the big events they've organised in the past, and how they plan to expand the group even more. Don't know what I'm talking about? Turn to page 24 now. And while you're at it, you might as well read all about the lovely Erika Fox from Retro Flame on page 25.

But the rest of my editorial is irrelevant, as is the rest of this paper when you read what I've got to say next...

Smokey's Pigeon is back!

I've had so many people ask me why he hasn't been writing his column recently. Well he's back with a bang, so you can go ahead and ignore the rest of the paper now.

That's about it from me this issue. Keep in touch, and be sure to pop in to our meetings if you're interested in pitching a story or getting involved.

Until next time,

Jess
(@Jessicadotie)

SINBYTES



Class Reps underwent training last week where they learned how to represent.



NUI Galway's School of Law hosted the Conference of Local Authority Solicitors Association recently. LASBA, the Local Authorities Solicitors Bar Association of Ireland, represents in-house solicitors employed by the Local Authorities in Cork City and County, Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal, County Galway, County Kerry, South Dublin, and County Wicklow. Law Agents for other counties also attended. LASBA is officially recognised by the Law Society of Ireland as a representative bar association.



NUI Galway managed to win the top award for the most biodiverse campus recently after recording 628 species on campus in 24 hours.

Get in touch with Sin:

Email: editor@sin.ie

Facebook: Sin Newspaper NUI Galway

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GOT A STORY?

We're always looking for great student-related content, so if you've heard some news, contact us on editor@sin.ie and we'll cover the story for you!

Or, if you'd like to try your hand at writing, send us your article and we'll review it for publication.

Find us online:
www.sin.ie

Upcoming Sin Meetings

Anyone and everyone is welcome to our Sin meetings. The next meetings are:

Monday 19
October - AC203

Monday 26
October - AC203

Bring your ideas, or even just your enthusiasm, and we'll give you the ideas!

mi2sin

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73% of students anxious about university fees

By Kitty Ryan

The Union of Students in Ireland has released new statistics concerning Irish student mental health and university life in time for Mental Health Week (5 to 11 October).

The data indicates that anxiety, stress and depression have high levels amongst university students due to rising fees and the cost of living as a whole. 95 percent of students surveyed believe the full cost of university is too high at €11,000 a year, and 72 percent of students have said they struggle financially during the college year. Unsurprisingly, 73 percent have openly stated that they experience anxiety from the rising fees.

While 40 percent of students are supplemented with the maintenance grant, many do not have that opportunity and instead take up part time employment. 27 percent of students surveyed are employed, but 73 percent have said that their work hours negatively impact their study and mental health. 35 percent of students have their parents helping them out financially.

Perhaps the most saddening statistic is that 63 percent of students said they wouldn't be able to attend college if fees were to increase any further.

USI president Kevin Donoghue has made comments on the shocking data; "€11,000 a year for a college course or €33,000 to €77,000 for a degree is an enormous cost for a young person.

"We are calling on the government to raise grants, reduce the registration fee of €3,000 and

address the student accommodation crisis."

Mr Donoghue has also said that 73 percent of students suffering mental health issues due to fees is "alarming" and needs to be addressed quickly.

To add to the already delicate financial issue, rent has gone up by 8 percent nationwide in the last year. This has also contributed to the accommodation crisis, which has many Irish and international students living in hostels or commuting and others living above their means with expensive rent.

"My commute to Athlone costs up to €115 per month," says one first year student, Peo Mosepele, "there's no accommodation available in Galway - it's my only choice."

In light of this new information, Jill O'Herlihy from Mental Health Ireland has given advice for stressed out students; "Financial struggles affect everybody, especially students. We need to be mindful that when these issues arise, we act upon it instead of sweeping them under the carpet.

"The most important thing to review is how you're handling this stress, to make sure everything else in your life reduces it, such as sleeping for eight hours, eating healthy and exercising."

This advice follows the tips given throughout Mental Health Week, which is designed to help students get back on track and promote positive mental health.

If you experience any of the problems mentioned in this article, there is a free counselling service available at NUI Galway for students. To avail of this, you can email counselling@nuigalway.ie or call 091 492 484.

A 'very welcome' increase in males attending NUI Galway Student Counselling Services

By Sorcha O'Connor

NUI Galway's Counselling Services have seen an increase of two percent in the ratio of males to females attending the service in their annual report.

According to the *Galway Advertiser*, in 2014/15 a total of 1,186 clients attended the service of which 42 percent were male and 58 percent female, making the ratio attending counselling very close to the male/female ratio registered in NUI Galway (43 percent male and 57 percent female).

The Student Counselling Service at NUI Galway has made a conscious effort to make counselling more appealing and less stigmatised for young males over the last few years. The promotion of the services in this way is vital due to the highest documented risk group in our society being males between the ages of 20 to 24.

Bea Gavin of the Student Counselling Service said; "In the past it certainly was the experience of the counselling service that young men usually waited until things escalated into a crisis situation before seeking help.

"In our own publicity material we are careful to show images of young men and male counsellors. In our latest material which is a series of video clips about topics such as depression and anxiety, procrastination and perfectionism, we tried hard to ensure that young men were well represented. Thankfully this has worked well," she added.

The videos are currently on the service's website and are due to be launched publicly in November. Video campaigns and more extensive coverage of mental health in the media have a lot to answer for in the improvement of attendance to counselling by males, according to Ms Gavin.

"There is less stigma attached to seeking help. The media has played a role and especially when male role models have spoken out about their own struggles," she explained.

Another aspect that Ms Gavin said helped encourage males was the service's efforts in changing the preconceptions young men have of counselling.

"Reframing the image of counselling has been important so that it is not seen as a feminine activity," she said.

"It needs to stress the values young men identify with such as investing in yourself, facing up to difficulties, taking action and generally adopting a proactive stance."

Meanwhile, the report also highlighted the large number of male and female students presenting to the service with anxiety and expressed concern about the affect it had on students' ability to concentrate on study and perform well in college.

According to the *Galway Advertiser* the report outlines that 72 percent of clients exhibited anxiety symptoms. Additionally, 55 percent had symptoms of depression while 30 percent had academic difficulties. One in three were experiencing interpersonal relationship problems, 27 percent had self-esteem issues while 12 percent were suffering bereavement.

It was also expressed in the report that drug and alcohol issues frequently emerged in counselling although only approximately five percent of clients identified this as an issue at their initial contact with the service.

The report also indicated how important the service is for students' well-being. A total of 74 students who accessed the university's student counselling service in the past year were classified as at mild, moderate or severe risk of suicide. 73 percent (54 students) were deemed to be at mild risk while seven percent (five students) were considered to be at severe risk. Post therapy the latter figure had dropped to zero.

There is a significant change in attitude towards counselling amongst students and this is reflected in the increase of students using the services. The report shows the amount rose from 511 in 2006 to 979 in 2012, 854 in 2013, 1,143 in 2014 and now 1,186 so far in 2015.

If you would like to avail of the counselling service or find out more information, visit www.nuigalway.ie/student_services/counsellors.

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Trinity College Law Society Presents 'Ireland in Transition'

By Lauren Norton

Trinity Law Society will host a panel discussion with leading activists in the Trans* Rights movement on 12 October.

The event, "Ireland in Transition", highlighted the work done by three individuals who have brought issues facing the Transgender community into the global spotlight.

Mara Keisling (founding director of the National Centre for Transgender Equality based in Washington DC), Dr Lydia Foy (whose struggle for legal recognition of her gender acted as the catalyst for the Gender Recognition Act 2015), and Broden Giambrone (current head of the Transgender Equality Network Ireland) also receive the Trinity Praeses Elit award.

The award was founded by Mary Robinson, former auditor of the Law Society and later President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner.

In promoting the event, Trinity Law Soc underscored the historic marginalisation of members of the Trans* community. Despite significant progress and increasing visibility for transgender people globally, it remains difficult and dangerous to live safe, healthy and integrated lives due to discrimination, stigma and inequality.

Secretary of the University Law Society urged student attendance saying; "It is vital for the cisgender community to inform themselves about the issues facing one of society's most marginalised groups, and to acknowledge and applaud them for their fight to gain recognition and acceptance.

"As students represent the next generation of decision-makers in a variety of fields - education, medicine, law - it is crucial they listen to individuals who know what it means to be transgender, and that they are prepared to be true allies to their trans* peers."

Galway Mayor brands students as an “embarrassment” to the city

By Tomás M. Creamer

Galway City Mayor Cllr Frank Fahy recently described drunken students as an “embarrassment”, creating a negative image among visitors and tourists to the city – comments which have since generated criticism from NUI Galway’s Students’ Union.

According to a report in the *Galway City Tribune* recently, Mayor Fahy, while speaking at a sitting of the Galway City Joint Policing Committee (JPC), said that a mayor in one of Galway’s sister cities had told him that “you have a serious issue with alcohol [in Galway city] and you need to address it,” after a late-night outing in Galway.

Mayor Fahy criticised students who were drinking “with gay abandon”, and causing “nightmares” for residents of Hazel Park and Newcastle. He also said that these students often come out of drink-fuelled parties in student accommodation, get onto buses and taxis, and go into town to drink more.

Mayor Fahy labelled students a “disgrace” and an “embarrassment” for the way in which they were drunk out on the streets, and throwing empty bottles and cans out of the windows of buses and taxis.

In a letter to the *Galway City Tribune*, Phelim Kelly, President of NUI Galway’s Students’ Union, agreed with Mayor Fahy “that alcohol abuse is a serious issue”, but that it was “an issue at all levels of society, and is not confined to any single element of Galway’s student community”.

Mr Kelly pointed out that “Students’ Unions in Galway are actively trying to tackle the issue of alcohol abuse... recently launch[ing] the REACT programme, which aims to tackle excessive drinking and Ireland’s drinking culture”.

Mr Kelly continued, saying that the “branding of Galway’s student population as an embarrassment and disgrace is short-sighted and ill-informed. Galway’s student population is a major contributor to the city’s economy and an integral part of the community. The Mayor should be aware of the level of civic engagement by students, most notably the contribution to the recent Marriage Equality Referendum”.

He also said that the student population “are also playing a role in Galway’s bid to become Europe’s Capital of Culture 2020. Students account for a quarter of the city’s population and contribute in many positive ways... rais[ing] a huge amount of money for local charities”, and that “student volunteers assist with lots of local groups such as working with the homeless, children’s homework clubs, caring for the elderly”.

Tommy Flaherty, a community member of the JPC, also criticised the comments for singling out students unfairly, maintaining that there was no difference between students drinking during RAG Week and the “well-suited and high-heeled” people going around drunk during Race Week. He also added that the Emergency Departments of the country’s hospitals are inundated with alcohol-related admissions.

TEDx is coming to Galway

By Aonghus Ó Maicín

The world famous TEDx initiative is set to return to Galway in January 2016 presenting a fantastic showcasing opportunity for the city.

Talks have been ongoing over the last few months with the objective of bringing an event of this type to the West of Ireland and the organisation of the event is now finally beginning to take shape.

TEDx is an international community that organises events similar to the world-renowned TED Talks Lectures all around the world. It celebrates locally-driven ideas with the intention of presenting them on a global stage.

TEDx events are independently run events and therefore are separate from typical TED conferences. However, they do base their events on TED’s formats and rules.

Conor Stitt, a former Vice President of NUI Galway Students’ Union, is the man largely responsible for bringing this event to the city. It is hoped that the people of Galway will get firmly behind this event and get out in numbers to support it.

“We’re hoping to put on an amazing event that will not only showcase Galway, its people and its stories but inspire our people to make positive and progressive change in society and become active citizens,” Mr Stitt said.

Among some of the themes organised for the Galway event are mental health, technology and culture.

Speakers for the event have not been confirmed yet but an announcement is expected very shortly as well as venues for the event.

This is not the first time a TEDx event has come to Galway. A similar event was held on the grounds of NUI Galway back in June 2010. This was the first of its kind to be held in the city.

Attendees at the event experience a range of presentations and lectures ranging from Irish culture to fascinating scientific research.

Among the speakers at this event were Louis De Paor, Jenny Beale and Mike Redform. Some NUI Galway faculty members also spoke at the inaugural event. Videos of these lectures can be found online on YouTube.

Details of the event will begin to be released shortly in what is expected to be an event not to be missed.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology former head apologises as plagiarism probe continues

By Niamh Cullen

Former Interim President for Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) Jim Fennel has issued an apology for a plagiarism probe costing almost half a million euro.

“I wish to apologise to all our stakeholders and, in particular, our staff and students that such expenditure was incurred at a time when costs can only be borne by reducing expenditure in areas which directly impact our staff and students,” stated Mr Fennel, as reported by *The Irish Independent*.

At a hearing at the Oireachtas Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on 24 September, GMIT was described as financially “vulnerable”. Further to an expenditure of €436,000 on the initial probe in 2009, Fennel also admitted to the PAC that another ongoing external enquiry has already amounted to over €45,000.

Allegations emerged in late 2010 after media reports insinuated a lecturer had assisted a student in an act of plagiarism, resulting in a supposed cover-up by the institute.

The claims resulted in two internal reviews after Professor Bairbre Redmond, deputy registrar of UCD and Ed Madden BL were appointed in 2011 at a daily cost of €1,500 each to undertake the investigation.

The Higher Education Authority only became aware of the allegations on 7 November 2013. This was due to an email received from the Department of Education and Skills regarding plagiarism and cheating in GMIT submitted for Topical Dáil Debate by Mr Colm Keaveney TD. Since then, the HEA has brought in new governance reporting requirements in 2014 as a result of the issue, according to its CEO Tim Boland.

Mr Fennel said the investigation resulted in at least one staff member moved to a different role on a reduced salary, as reported by *The Independent* and *Connaught Tribune*. He told the PAC that failure by a senior staff member to supply relevant information to the President and Registrar of GMIT between February 2010 and March 2011 resulted in extensive probing.

According to the Briefing Paper for the PAC hearing, one significant issue causing delay and costs related to the non-availability of the emails and diaries of key individuals, in addition to sourcing various records. The Paper also outlined the breakdown of the initial enquiry’s expenses, with almost a quarter of a million euro dedicated to the enquiry services of Ed Madden.

The ongoing probe is expected to be completed in mid-October.

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TURBOTINDER: New app to speed up Tinder process

By Margaret Langevin

For all you tinder swipers, a new app is out that helps people match and message faster on Tinder.

What makes this new app stand out from the regular Tinder app is the auto-likes feature. It allows users to group swipe while still checking every person he or she swiped yes to. Other features include group messages and auto greeting messages.

Creator Rob O'Rourke said he made Turbo Talk for Tinder because it took too much time and effort to set up dates every day. It's like having a personal assistant for Tinder, he said.

"It seems a lot of people were just swiping all day and then sending the same opening message to everyone anyway so I figured why

not speed that up a bit," Mr O'Rourke said.

Once he noticed how to improve things, he watched Youtube tutorials and online guides to create an app. Some of the coding was advanced so he hired someone to do that part, but beside that he invented the app alone.

"It was quite fun although it took a lot of work. I have never done something like this before," he added.

He said he ended up with over 4,000 matches and met a lot of people, but now he said the fun is over because he has a girlfriend.

At first, he didn't intend on selling the app, but he met many people while traveling who showed interest and he could see the demand would be high.

A native Irishman, he

said Irish people showed a lot of interest with several downloads right away. He believes Irish guys in particular will love the app.

Other places the app has been most popular are America and Canada. He said the app benefits those who travel a lot and it's been used in over 50 countries.

"I am seeing a lot of tourist counties and popular places downloading it the most. If you are heading to a big city or on holiday for a week it's perfect for not wasting time on your phone," he said.

Mr O'Rourke said the app is free to trial so people can see if they like it or not. It's not for everyone he said, but it can be fun.

Those interested in Turbo Talk for Tinder can download a free trial in Apple App stores.

NUI Galway is adding up events for Maths Week 2015

By David Tierney

Maths Week Ireland 2015 will take place all over the country this week from 10 to 18 October, and NUI Galway will be playing its part to promote the subject by presenting a series of mathematic appreciation events during the week.

NUI Galway lecturers from the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Applied Mathematics will be organising a series of public talks on the University campus, as well as providing interactive talks and workshops at local schools, and will launch the nationwide secondary school competition PRISM (PProblem Solving for Irish Second Level Mathematics).

The event has now been running for 10 years, and is one of the rare chances globally to celebrate mathematics.

"Maths Week is the biggest festival of mathematics in the world, and we are always eager

to participate," said Prof Graham Ellis of the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Applied Maths.

"It provides a great opportunity to engage with pupils and show the beauty of mathematics and its importance in education and in the wider world."

In terms of events happening in NUI Galway, Professor of Geometry at Gresham College London Robin Wilson will be delivering two talks in the university on Friday 16 October.

The first talk 'Stamping through Mathematics' is aimed at primary school students from fifth and sixth class. It will cover the whole history of mathematics in one hour through the showcase of 250 attractive - and sometimes bizarre - mathematically-themed postage stamps from around the world.

Wilson's second talk, 'Lewis Carroll in Numberland' will take a look at the mathematical life of Charles Dodgson

(Lewis Carroll), author of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*.

While typically known for his fictional work, Dodgson also produced nearly a dozen mathematical books under his real name. Both talks will take place in the IT building in IT250, with the first beginning at 11am, and the second at 1pm.

On Thursday 15 October, the School of Mathematics will launch and host PRISM, a competition that's run in secondary schools at the junior and/or senior levels. Results are displayed on the website in real time, and the site will identify the top-performing schools and individuals.

But these aren't the only events NUI Galway's mathematical school uses to promote maths. The school also runs school workshops, and enables pupils to participate in competitions such as the Irish Mathematical Olympiad.

The return of NUI Galway Global Week

By Patrick Kirrane

Connecting and celebrating the different cultural heritages of students as integral to the life of the university was a massive part of college life last week with the second annual NUI Galway Global Week taking place.

Running from 5 to 8 October, it featured a fantastic variety of events for both students and staff to get involved with; from an internationally-themed Bring-A-Dish night to an 8x8 touring photo exhibition, it was a week to remember.

Students could acquaint themselves with different cultures, take part in artistic talks, attend special film screenings and even undertake a Capoeira Dance workshop. Each event was centred on bringing awareness to cultural diversity, acknowledging and respecting differences in terms of behaviour, attitudes, values and beliefs, helping to strengthen transnational relationships and networks.

The highlight of the week's programme was The Global Fair on Monday 5 October in the Bailey Allen Hall. The form and length of items on

the day varied: there was live entertainment, Bollywood dancing, Chinese calligraphy, Kung Fu, and a Bake Sale (with a twist), as well as lots of free multicultural food, giveaways, fundraising and campaign launches.

During the day, students could retrieve information and advice about student mobility, how to work for humanitarian help organizations and how to reach further information about various issues, including The Syrian Refugee Crisis. It encouraged students to extend their international outlook, with many discussions and talks about global social challenges, ecological issues and promoting a green agenda.

Students were offered the chance to formulate their own thoughts about sustainable ways forward. It was an opportunity to better understand events, processes and contexts relating to complex social challenges, and to listen to and become actively involved in discussions on issues of globalisation.

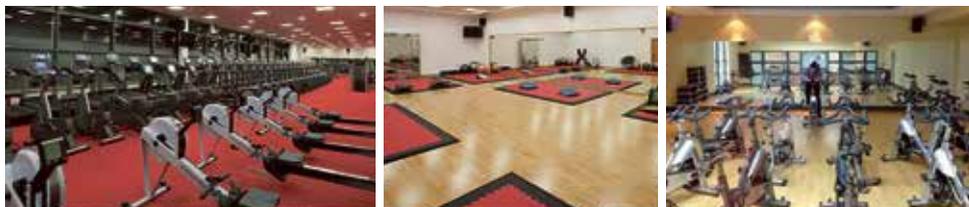
Global Week is significant to the student experience for a number of reasons; "It's important students, as citizens

of the world, are engaged in global issues and think of ways to solve problems," says Riona Hughes, Societies' Officer at NUI Galway.

"With our Leadership Programme we have realised that you cannot be a leader in a vacuum. Events like this allow students understand our planet and where we live, so that when they leave NUI Galway they can be well-rounded, educated voices that have the inspiration and in-depth knowledge to act like democratic members of society, with respect for fundamental human freedoms and rights.

"The week was a celebration of how diverse a campus we are, we chose to have it early, at the beginning of term to get people thinking, to bring a lot of colour and excitement. It's vital international students are made feel welcome, that they're supported, embraced, and get that sense of belonging too."

Although the week has concluded, students can expect plenty of similar events to run throughout the year, especially if they join some of the many multicultural societies the university has to offer.



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NUI Galway maintains position and improves score in Times Higher Rankings

Continuous improvement for University in both THE and QS rankings

NUI Galway has maintained its position in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for 2015/16, remaining within the 251 to 300 range and improving on previous scores across most categories. Once again NUI Galway performed strongly in the international outlook score and research citations score as well as improving scores across most other metrics.

NUI Galway was the only Irish university to maintain or increase its position in the two main international rankings in 2014, having recently increased to 271st in the world in the QS World University Rankings 2015/2016, one of just two Irish universities to improve their standing in this year's league table.

Last month, Thomson Reuters ranked four outstanding researchers from NUI Galway among the 'World's Most Influential Scientific Minds: 2015'; an increase on the three researchers cited last year.

The 3,000 international academics named on the list earned their distinction by publishing the highest number of articles that rank among those most frequently cited by fellow researchers. More individuals were listed from NUI Galway than from any other Irish university.

The continuous improvement has been attributed to a concerted approach by the University in developing world-class research in specific fields, NUI Galway President Dr Jim Browne explained.

"This is a major improvement for NUI Galway and reflects a sustained upward trend in these very competitive global rankings. This consistent improvement in NUI Galway's THE World University Rankings this year is an affirmation of our very focused approach to developing our international reputation in a select set of research areas," he said.

"These areas of activity underpin our growing international research reputation and continue to attract researchers, scholars and international partners. To maintain or increase our position in both the 2015 THE World University Rankings and the recently published QS World University Rankings, it is beyond doubt that our position globally is on the rise.

"Despite significant cuts in overall funding at third-level in Ireland and increased student numbers, our University has gone against the tide to secure a continued improvement in these very competitive rankings."

The Times Higher Education league table of the world's top universities is based on 13 separate performance indicators covering all of the core missions of a world class university; teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook. The survey also includes one of the world's largest academic reputation survey, with more than 10,000 academics asked to rate the world's best universities for the 2015/16 ranking.

Phil Baty, editor of the THE World University Rankings said; "The Times Higher Education World University Rankings, now in their 12th year, apply rigorous standards, using tough global benchmarks across all of a global research university's key missions - teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook.

"The results are trusted by students and their families, academics, university leaders and governments. For NUI Galway to make 251-300 in the world is an outstanding achievement to be celebrated."

The Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for 2015-16 is available to view online at: <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/>.

Quarter century study of Spoken Irish in Aran Islands launched in NUI Galway

By Niamh Cullen

The world's most extensive study in Irish language variation, spanning 25 years, was launched in NUI Galway last week.

'A Survey of Spoken Irish in the Aran Islands' reflects the life's fieldwork of Californian linguist Séamus Ó Dírreáin, and was launched in Áras na Gaeilge, NUI Galway on Friday 9 October.

Ó Dírreáin, whose grandparents emigrated from Inis Mór to Boston over a century ago, provides in his work an extensive analysis of the linguistic variations of the Aran islands. This makes it the first study in the world to explore a language in such dialectic depth.

Ó Dírreáin in Kenya in the 1970s, where he learned from expats whilst researching African languages.

40 years on, Ó Dírreáin's freely accessible online survey gives academics an insight into geographical and social variation based on age groups, genders and education levels.

Dr John Walsh, Senior Lecturer in Irish at NUI Galway, said; "This dialectological work by Séamas Ó Dírreáin is of national and international importance. It adds greatly to our knowledge of the dialectology of Irish in general and surpasses all over previous studies of the dialects of the islands. Many other research possibilities can emerge from it

and I am delighted that it will be housed at NUI Galway."

The Survey builds on Heinrich Wagner's 1958-69 work 'Linguistic Atlas and Survey of Irish Dialects' to portray Irish as it was spoken in Aran in the late twentieth century, with a particular focus on Inis Mór.

The Aran Islands have held a noted presence in Irish linguistic research due to their area spanning two dialectically contrasting provinces - Connaught in the north, and Munster in the South.

The study is supported by NUI Galway, Moore Institute, James Hardiman Library and Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

To access the full survey, see <http://aranirish.nuigalway.ie/en/>.

Students demonstrate outside Dáil for Irish language lobby in General Election

100 Students gathered outside the Dáil on Wednesday the 7 October, demanding an Irish language lobby in the General Election. The demonstration was organised by Conradh na Gaeilge and the Union of Students in Ireland, to demand that the Irish language is preserved and promoted by the next government.

CnaG and USI understand the importance that the next five years will have in regards to the growth and prosperity of the language. The students of Ireland are no longer satisfied to stand idly by, to allow 'Béalghrá' or 'lip service' be delivered to the language by Ireland's government parties.

Over the past six months, the USI and CnaG have seen several events take place that have resulted in severely damaging the future of the Irish language, such as the loss of the air contract to Aer Árainn, the refusal of Eircode

to recognise Irish language place-name addresses, and the changes in the Junior Cert curriculum to name just a few. All of these actions have led to fuel a discontentment among the language community.

This will take place one day after Conradh na Gaeilge, USI and over 70 other Irish language interest lobby groups launch their demands, in terms of the Irish language; inside and outside of the Gaeltacht regions for the upcoming Irish General Election and also for assembly elections in Northern Ireland.

These community-based and all-island organisations have agreed on an investment plan to create over 1,160 jobs in Irish-language and Gaeltacht services from 2016 onwards.

This is the first time both the relevant authorities and the Irish-language and Gaeltacht organisations on the ground have agreed on a set

of specific projects and commitments to promote the Irish language on such a large and cohesive scale.

The Irish-language and Gaeltacht groups are calling on all political parties north and south to pledge their support for the commitments sought in the investment plan, and especially for general election candidates and their political parties to include the specific commitments in their election manifestos.

The Irish language and Gaeltacht investment plan calls for vital funding and representative measures to support job creation in Irish-language and Gaeltacht services, including the appointment of Senior Ministers north and south to act on behalf of the language and the Gaeltacht and to ensure that the investment plan is well managed and implemented in full.



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Tues Oct 20th	Meddeas	1pm – 2pm	Career Seminar Room
Wed Oct 21st	Camp Counsellors USA	1pm – 2pm	Career Seminar Room

Visit <https://nuig.gradireland.com> for further details on the above and information on current student and graduate opportunities.

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BUDGET '16

By Feidhlim Seoighe

It is no secret that Fine Gael are sizing up for an election in the coming months, and many would suggest that the Party will announce a snap election along with Michael Noonan's speech. This 'giveaway budget' would hope to increase the Parties staying, and see them return to Government.

With over €1.5 billion to spend, half of that is already to be allocated to tax cuts and increased wages for the public sector; the remaining €750 million is to be spread across Health and Education. And then the primary and secondary sectors are to see significant investment from this budget.

Students in Higher Education have suffered greatly in the past 8 years. Cuts in the grant, a 100% increase in the Contribution Charge, and the complete axing of Postgraduate supports have insured that families willing to send their son or daughter to University are finding it more difficult than ever.

In the past two budgets, the one relief that was available to students was that the threshold of the grant was not cut, ensuring that the most vulnerable students could attend third level education.

This year, the Union of Students in Ireland have taken a different approach to other years; that being a mass voter registration drive of students across all the colleges in Ireland. Politicians deal in votes as their currency, and with

What's in store for Higher Education after the "most generous" Budget in nine years?

over 10,000 students registered last week across the country, and 28,000 registered before the marriage equality referendum at the start of the summer, student issues will be on top of the agenda of local politicians.

In the USI's pre-budget submission, one of our most significant asks was more investment in student accommodation, along with increases to student supports, and a lowering of the contribution charge in line with economic recovery.

Over the past two months, student leaders have all met with their local representatives, and discussed the USI's submission, and encouraged them to put them to the Minister of Education, Jan O'Sullivan.

Does this Fine Gael/Labour Government value higher education, and investment in the future of Ireland, or is it the case that we will find ourselves in the same situation as our closest neighbours in England, and be swallowed up by so much debt, that it is now inevitable that most of it will never be repaid?

Either way, once Minister Noonan announces the budget, his party will have to pay for their decision on polling day. With thanks to the Marriage Equality referendum, young people are now able to see the power of their voice, and they will use it come Election '15 or '16.

Budget 2016: A day of reckoning for USI and student voters

By Eoghan Holland

As this Issue of *Sin* hits the shelves around NUI Galway this week budget 2016 will be spilling out across the news media in dribs and drabs. Interest groups (like students for example) will be finding where they've been shelved this year and, most likely, as the week progresses, a few nasty surprises will emerge.

I've spent the morning comparing the USI pre-budget submissions from 2014 - 2015 (go internet!) and the issues of where to live and how to pay for it are at the forefront. 2014's tome led the charge with the opening pages devoted to protection of the maintenance grant, BTEA and the student contribution.

2014 USI president Laura Harmon was highlighting a 6.7 percent rent increase in Galway and asking government to commit to policy which would widen the availability of accommodation and reduce the amount of developer-led supply. This was all punctuated with a demonstration by students on 8 October last year.

A year wiser and with the government facing an election budget (every government has to sweeten their last budget in office to keep in our good books!), current USI president Kevin Donoghue is charged this year with present-

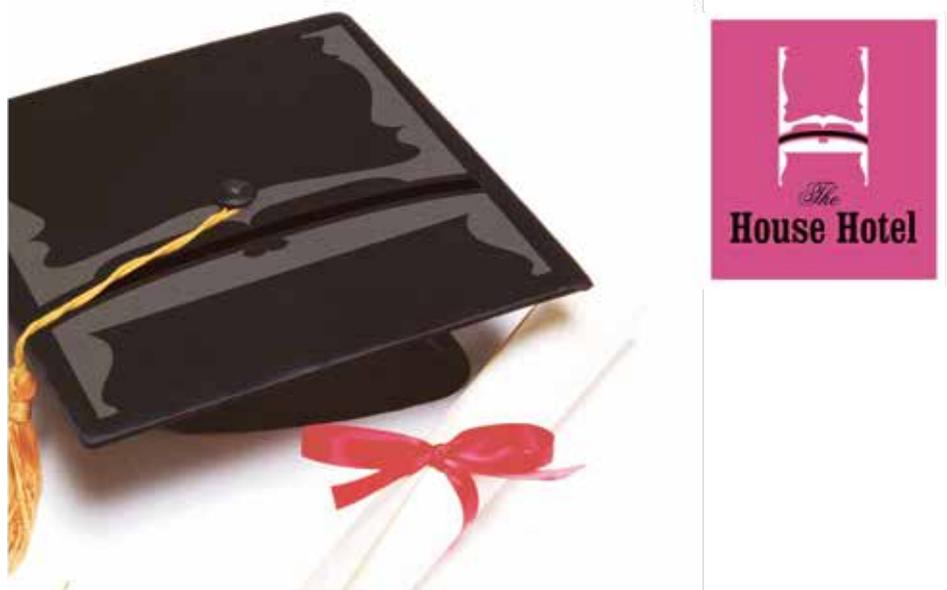
ing the USI pre-budget statement - if this was Hozier, Chilli Gonzales would be on his case.

Luckily for our Kevin, plagiarism of facts is kind of a good thing. 2015's submission reads achingly similar to 2014. The student contribution charge, BTEA have stayed on the agenda, while hopes for an increase in the Jobseeker's allowance has slipped in and concerns about the maintenance grant are running to pages this time.

While expectations on the financial front are predictable in Ireland, the trends and concerns about accommodation are all the starker. Both Harmon and Donoghue point to the increase numbers enrolling in education which seem to be walking hand in hand with the increase in rent prices - DAFT.ie are reporting 40 percent decrease in space this year while the national average rent has increased 8.2 percent.

Somehow, when thinking about housing for students you can read that sentence and wish it was 2013. I just typed that. Good times.

Whatever information is bubbling up as this issue of *Sin* is hitting the shelves, a government that has taken on board the successive submissions of the USI will have done something to release the pressure on accommodation should they be counting student numbers for this election.



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The ugliness in convenience Clydagh Bridge demolished despite protests

By Daniel Mulcahy

After staging a protest against the demolition of the Clydagh Bridge on Monday 28 September, local residents have agreed to step down or face legal action.

Removal of the 185-year-old bridge was rescheduled for Tuesday 29 September in order to make improvements to the N59.

Galway Bay FM reported that although the demolition was agreed upon at a three-day oral hearing with An Bord Pleanála in 2012, protestors stood on the bridge from 6.30am Monday morning in order to put a halt the works.

They claimed that the bridge was an integral part of Moycullen and a feature of local architectural history that should be preserved.

According to the Facebook Group 'Save the Clydagh Bridge', a delegation of the protestors agreed to meet with the County Council CEO in the Forge Restaurant at 9pm Monday evening. Also in attendance were Sean Kyne TD, Eamon O'Cuiv TD and Derek Nolan TD, Cllr Noel Thomas and Cllr Niamh Byrne and all Connemara Councillors.

Three alternatives for the bridge were proposed by the delegation, but were rejected on the basis that planning permission was already obtained, and legal action was threatened if the protestors did not vacate the Bridge.

The residents were, however, invited by the Council to get involved in the landscaping of the area. Despite this, in the delegation's words "the strongest possible protest regarding this and the disgust of the local community was made known to these public servants and public representatives." Removal of the bridge continued

uninterrupted on the morning of Tuesday 29 September.

With the recent inflation of morning commute times and the approaching Christmas season, concerns over the timely completion of the roadworks have been raised. For students making the long trek into college for 9am lectures, it can only be viewed as a boon that potential delays caused by protest have been dealt with.

However, narrow though it was, crossing the Clydagh Bridge has, for many years, been one of the most picturesque moments on the drive home to Moycullen.

Along with the high stone walls that have become a feature of the new stretch of road, what welcome the village presents to visitors has been greatly diminished. The Bridge represented a vernacular tradition; it is one more piece of heritage lost beneath the rolling tarmac and creeping cement of our modern infrastructure.

Look at the castle off the R338. Structures like this tell of a different Ireland now lost to living recollection. They are memory made solid, and their decline marks a disregard for the past and what makes our city distinct.

All of this is not to say that the Moycullen roadworks were unnecessary, that the Clydagh Bridge didn't represent a danger for pedestrians and cyclists, and that Moycullen won't benefit economically from increased traffic flow.

But the long, stressful path that leads to December's planned completion of the roadworks, and the appearance of the grey walls looming over the Moycullen approach, speak of what is ugliest in the convenience we bring to our daily lives, and the price that's paid in order to reach it.



REMEMBERING THE RISING

Minister Humphreys Launches NUI Galway 1916 Commemoration Programme

By Neil Slevin

Unless you've been living under Shantalla's Sliding Rock for the past year, you will be aware of the 1916 Rising's upcoming centenary; what you may not be aware of is the significant part played in the uprising by the people of Galway over 200km away from Dublin's shell-shocked streets.

When you picture 1916, you most likely think of that scene from Michael Collins where the rebels, making their last stand against insurmountable odds and artillery, eventually surrender and are then rounded up to face execution or imprisonment. This, for many, is quite a realistic depiction of that fateful day's denouement.

However, the reality is very different: the 1916 Rising was a week-long insurrection that focused mainly around key landmarks in Dublin, but also on a smaller scale in Ashbourne, Enniscorthy and Galway, culminating in an unconditional surrender led by Padraig Pearse on Saturday 29 April 1916.

And so many forget or neglect the fact that it was

Co. Galway that staged "the largest mobilisation outside Dublin, where over 600 men and women rose", as Dr Mary Harris (Senior Lecturer in History at NUI Galway and Co-ordinator of the University's 1916 Commemorative Programme) highlighted as part of the announcement of 'A Nation Rising: Commemorating 1916 and Beyond', NUI Galway's 1916 commemorative programme.

Launched by Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys TD, 'A Nation Rising: Commemorating 1916 and Beyond' is part of the Ireland's 2016 Centenary Programme, which will mark the centenary year with a host of exhibitions, conferences, publications and seminars, both in Irish and English, and featuring artistic, dramatic and musical performances from established and emerging artists.

It will also reach out to the wider community, sharing knowledge through public talks, festivals and workshops; and NUI Galway will play a role in celebrating the programme that reflects the significance of Galway's contribution to the rebellion that, 100 years ago, sparked so much of what was and is still to follow.

Speaking at the launch, Minister Humphreys said: "NUI Galway, as one of our foremost universities, will play a very important role in reflecting on the events of 1916 and the impact they had on the West of Ireland in particular. I would like to thank NUI Galway for the strong partnership approach it has adopted in putting together this impressive programme for 2016, including one of the key national conferences to be held next year."

President of NUI Galway Dr Jim Browne added: "The men and women who shaped the events of 1916 had different backgrounds, beliefs and ideas, but shared a drive to create a better Ireland. As a nation joins together to commemorate their vision, so too does our diverse University community."

"I'm delighted to see so many colleagues contributing to the programme from across many disciplines, in particular from the Arts and Humanities. The expertise, energy and passion they bring to the commemoration is a fitting tribute to the legacy of 1916. It gives me great pleasure to invite you to join us in reflecting on a remarkable year in the making of our nation."

As Minister Humphreys mentioned, NUI Galway will host the major national academic 1916-2016 conference in November 2016, with academic contributions from a broad range of Ireland's universities and institutes of technology alongside a number of leading international figures.

The University has also appointed a 1916 Scholar in Residence to co-ordinate and curate many of the programme's events: based in the University's Moore Institute, Dr Conor McNamara will conduct research on the 1916 Rising and its context in Co. Galway and the West of Ireland.

He will prepare a catalogue of resources, in English and Irish, from the University's archives and elsewhere, with a view to facilitating future research on the revolutionaries of 1916 to 1923. Throughout the year, he will also engage with local community groups across the country, and assist with a planned exhibition marking Galway's role in the Great War and the Irish Revolution.

Although the 1916 Rising was and remains a controversial and widely debated event in Irish history, the significance of its contribution to the nation Ireland would become cannot be understated – nor should it be.

As Dr Mary Harris pointed out; "Many dreamed of a Republic, others were motivated by the prospect of land reform. In previous years, however, those involved in the Gaelic and Anglo-Irish revivals saw the West in a more romantic light, as the repository of authentic Gaelic culture. This commemorative programme examines the events of 1916 from a variety of perspectives at local, regional and national levels."

For more information on NUI Galway's events commemorating the 1916 Rising, visit www.nuigalway.ie/anationrising.

New 1916 Collection by NUI Galway Academic

By Neil Slevin

A major new collection on the 1916 Rising has been co-edited by Dr Seán Crosson. *Towards 2016: 1916 in Irish Literature, Culture & Society* reflects the multiple perspectives and events associated with 1916 in Ireland and their continued relevance to Irish literature, culture and society.

Towards 2016: 1916 in Irish Literature, Culture & Society, also co-edited by Professor Werner Huber of the University of Vienna, considers a broad range of cultural forms and societal issues, ranging from politics, theatre, and traditional music to greyhound sports, the media and language itself, with contributions from both emerging academics and established scholars.

Dr Crosson, who is Programme Director of NUI Galway's MA in Film Studies: Theory and Practice in the Huston School of Film & Digital Media, and President of the European Federation of Associations and Centres of Irish Studies (EFACIS), has published widely on film and Irish literature: some of his many previous publications include the monographs *Sport and Film* (2013), *The Given Note: Traditional Music and Modern Irish Poetry* (2008) and the collections *Crisis and Contemporary Poetry* (2011).

Among the contributors to the book is acclaimed film director and novelist Neil Jordan (in an interview conducted by novelist Patrick McCabe), who provides insight to his life and work, including his biopic *Michael Collins*, a production which includes one of the most memorable renderings of the Rising and its aftermath – one which I refer to in my article, *Remembering the Rising*, also in this week's edition of *Sin*.

Another NUI Galway academic to contribute to the collection is Professor Alan Ahearne, who examines if Irish economic sovereignty (a principle concern of the Rising's leaders) is a thing of the past:

"The sentiments underlining the 1916 proclamation continue to resonate in post-Celtic Tiger Ireland today; the notion of economic sovereignty has again been prominent in the national dialogue over recent years as politicians and commentators regularly refer to the loss of sovereignty associated with the country's EU/IMF programme that began in December 2010 and ended in December 2013.

"However, the idea that Irish policymakers can have full control of our economy is delusional. For Ireland, the largest chunks of economic sovereignty were willingly ceded when the country joined the EU and especially when it adopted the single currency."

Towards 2016: 1916 in Irish Literature, Culture & Society raises and considers many Rising-related issues, including the effect the Rising had on Ireland's fledgling labour movement, its impact on the Abbey and Irish theatre, its place in contemporary Irish fiction and poetry and, a century after the 1916 Proclamation spoke of equality between women and men, whether Ireland is finally about to realise equal gender distribution in politics.

Speaking to promote the publication, Dr Crosson said:

"1916 marked an important moment in the development of modern Ireland. The continuing resonance of the Rising to contemporary Ireland was evident in the now much quoted editorial of The Irish Times in November 2010, the day after it was announced Ireland was to receive a financial bailout from the EU and IMF. 'Was it for this' the editorial asked, 'the men of 1916 died?'"

"However, the Rising was but one of a range of significant events in 1916. Beyond the political sphere, 1916 marked the publication of James Joyce's first novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and also saw the foundation of Ireland's first indigenous film production company, The Film Company of Ireland, whose co-founder James Mark Sullivan was arrested after the Rising and charged with complicity.

"Our collection is cognisant of the variety of perspectives and areas in which 1916 continues to resonate."

Towards 2016: 1916 in Irish Literature, Culture & Society is published as part of the prestigious peer-reviewed *Irish Studies in Europe* publication series, previous volumes in the series having featured prominent writers and academics (including the late poet and Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney), and is just one of the many upcoming publications and events to analyse, celebrate and debate the long-lasting impact of the 1916 Rising as we approach its centenary.

For information on NUI Galway's events commemorating the 1916 Rising, visit www.nuigalway.ie/anationrising.

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Assigned Male



Being transgender, web comics and mini-muffins: a chat with cartoonist Sophie Labelle

By Jenna Hodgins

It's 12.40pm on Friday afternoon, and my editor Jess and I are brisk-walking into college from the Blackbox theatre car park after failing to find a spot amidst the university open day rush. We were legging it in to make it on time for a talk with the cartoonist behind the web comic *Assigned Male* which was organised by the lovely people at ShoutOut.

Admittedly, I had never heard of Sophie Labelle and her web comic prior to a last minute invite the night before. I spent the night reading her work online; trying my best to do some research in order to not look like the uninformed idiot at the talk. Immediately I fell in love with her colourful cute illustrations that were adorable and fun to look at, and dealt with serious topics that affect the Trans* and non-binary gender community.

We wait inside Meeting Room 2, eagerly awaiting Sophie Labelle. As it turns out, she is a pretty big deal, with people commenting on how

one person has pink hair just like Sophie. I'm embarrassed that I didn't know her work before the talk, but the exciting atmosphere still managed to make me even more eager to meet her.

A luminous pink-haired woman walks in, and the whole room goes quiet. Labelle has a wonderful presence. People's faces are lighting up, one or two people begin – for want of a better word – 'fangirling'. A camcorder light blinks red as everyone begins moving their seats into a circle, closer to where Labelle sits at the top of the room.

Manga and colouring books: the early days of Sophie's career

Before becoming a full-time cartoonist, Labelle worked as an elementary school teacher. Alongside this, she also worked as a Trans* rights activist and at youth camps for Trans* children. In the discussion, Labelle spoke about the colouring books available to the children in her class, the subject matter of the pictures, and how they abided by a lot of gender stereotypes.

Labelle published a colouring book for children, which, in her words is "a subversive version of generic colouring books" with pictures such as "knights in dresses" and other such images which challenge the gender binary.

Her cartoonist style she attributes to "a mix of European cartoons and Japanese cartoons, like anime and manga".

"I feel my style is really cute, but that could be because I'm an elementary school teacher. So, I'm used to working with that kind of stuff," she says.

In the early days of *Assigned Male* in 2014, the language used was very adult in the sense that it dealt with themes that would often be viewed as too complex for children, however her younger readership continued to grow.

I asked her about the young audience, whether it was all down to the fun and colourful accessibility of her style that might appeal to children. Labelle answered that it was an issue of representation; "They needed a representation, mostly. I think they would have read anything."

Speaking about her time working with children, Labelle said; "Well working with children who transitioned as early as three years-old or four years-old, I found that when they know that someone is advocating for them and they are secure in their home – and when they're not being validated by society because of their body, like when everybody sees them as their gender – there is a lot less trauma. The pressure to alter their body, to meet certain standards is really different instead of facing constant obstacles to being validated as their gender."

Now the language of the comics is more accessible without neglecting the necessary terms and concepts. Fixing her luminous pink hair into a ponytail Labelle says; "The more simple [sic] it [the comic] is, the more easily it's shared."

Her work uses everyday objects and scenarios like brain freezers from ice-cream, babysitting and the class photo to resonate with both Trans* and cisgender audiences and provide a better understanding of the issues the Trans* community face.

'Words are weapons'

Labelle repeatedly spoke about how "words are weapons" throughout the talk. Reflecting on her own transition, Labelle spoke about the importance of having a word to identify with. From Quebec in Canada, Labelle told me about how the word 'transsexual' was still in use up until recently. Yet 15 years ago, the term was progressive.

The first time Labelle heard the term was in a documentary about a transwoman in her 60s. Although, she says, it was "unrelated to me" and "so far from my reality" it was extremely significant to hear a word she could identify with at the time.

"I started my transition as soon as I started defining myself as Trans*, and I needed to have that word."

Upon reading *Assigned Male*, the positivity reflected in each comic is its obvious stand-out feature. Generally speaking, when discussing Trans* issues the tone is somewhat intense or negative, essentially because we still live in a world where the consensus is that gender is a binary, therefore the Trans* community are inevitability marginalised.

However, Labelle intentionally made her comic convey these issues with a serious message but in a playful, humorous environment; especially regarding the concept that being transgender equals 'born in the wrong body'.

Trans* bodies and Transfeminism

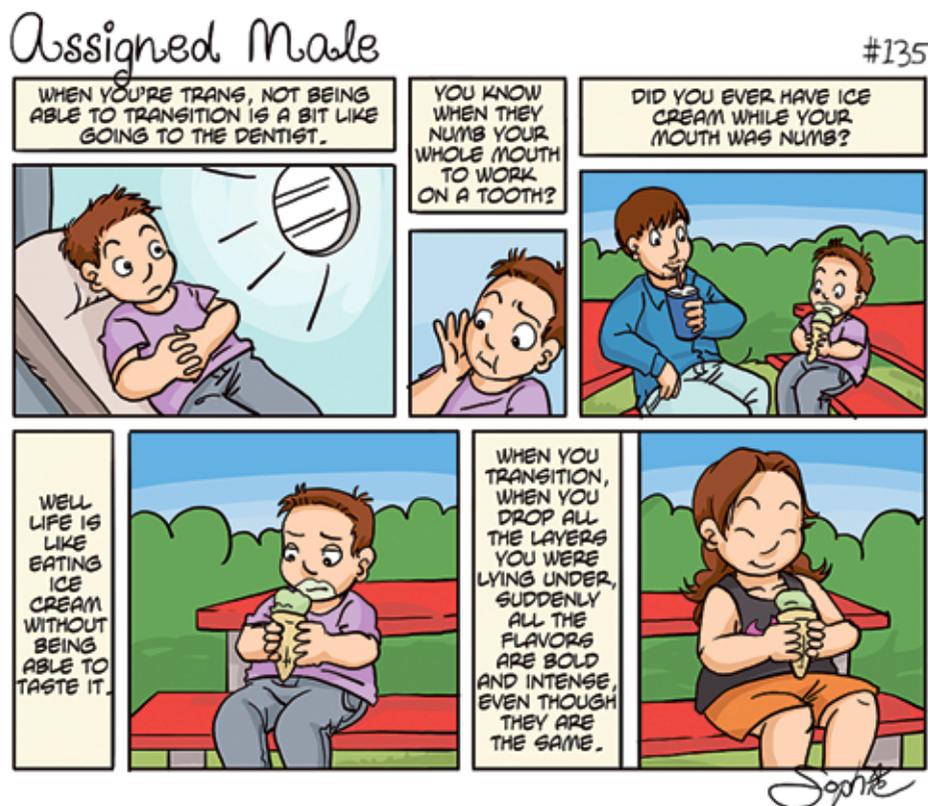
In her talk, Sophie mentioned that she likes to include positivity in her comics relating to Trans* issues. But what exactly does that mean?

"The message isn't that there's no suffering related to Trans-ness, because Trans-ness is obviously like being put in the margins of society. So it's not about saying that there's no struggle because there will be almost all the time," she explains.

"But [it's good] to have a message out there that's not just all about how it's hard and how Trans* bodies are wrong in their nature – and just to situate the problem outside of Trans* bodies."

Following the topic of the focus on Trans* bodies, Labelle discussed at length another issue which she touches on in *Assigned Male*, which is transfeminism.

According to scholar and activist Emi Koyama, transfeminism is "a movement by and



for trans* women who view their liberation to be intrinsically linked to the liberation of all women and beyond".

Additionally it "is also open to other queers, intersex people, trans* men, non-trans women, non-trans men and others who are sympathetic toward needs of trans* women and consider their alliance with transwomen to be essential for their own liberation".

In a nutshell, as defined by Wikipedia, transfeminism is "an approach to feminism that is informed by Trans* politics".

The treatment of transwomen in medicine is something Labelle commented on; "Since we started studying Trans* bodies, especially transwomen's bodies there's a very misogynistic thing that's going on with the doctors

Labelle has a wonderful presence. People's faces are lighting up, one or two people begin - for want of a better word - 'fangirling'. A camcorder light blinks red as everyone begins moving their seats into a circle, closer to where Labelle sits at the top of the room.

that consider femininity as being something artificial and superficial, while masculinity is something everyone would want to achieve.

"That's why they only started studying trans*men in the 1970s. While trans*women have been subject to numerous studies since the 19th century - like it was always focused

on transwomen. Trans*men or trans-masculine people weren't seen as being sick as transwomen were, because femininity is viewed as kind of defect; as being lesser than what's natural."

Transfeminism and the future

It was clear to me that Labelle had a lot more to say in her work. I pressed her about the future of her web comic, and the possibility of moving away from Assigned Male: would she ever consider writing a new web comic concerning other issues or themes?

"Yes definitely. I'm trying to shift to include more issues. When I started this comic, I actually found out something really important where girls overall, not just Trans* girls or Trans* people, are not represented in anything. Girls aren't represented, especially in comic books," she said.

"I'd like to move towards larger feminist issues. Trans* issues are feminist issues but I want to open up to more. I talk a lot about gender stereotypes in my comic. I feel like there would be more to say about girl socialisation."

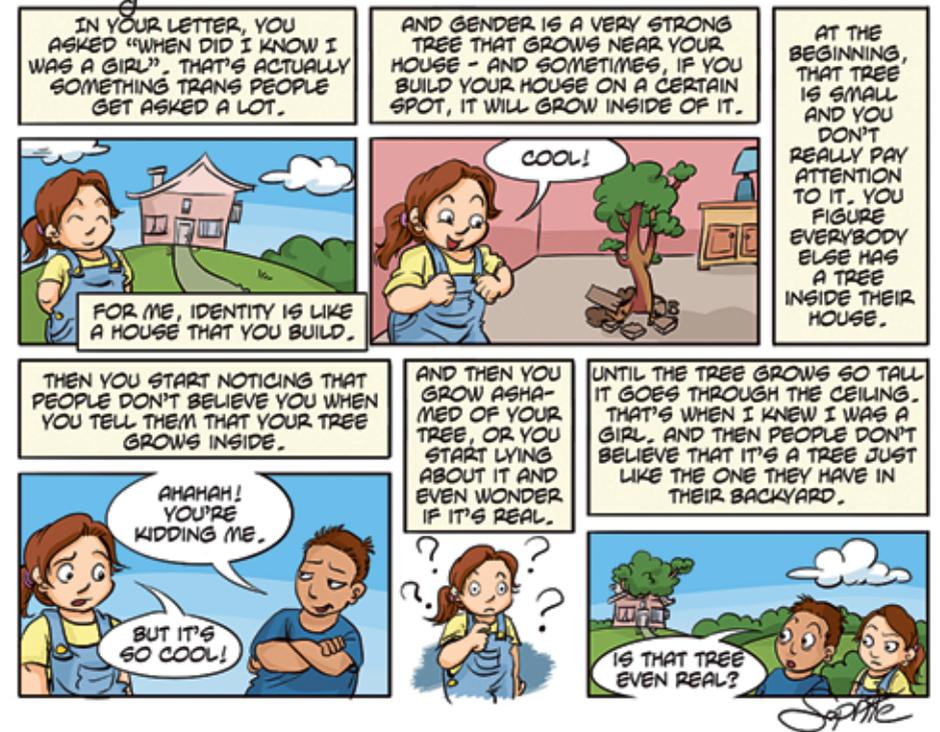
Labelle appears to be an incredibly informed person, and with her experience as a Trans* person, an advocate, educator and activist it is no surprise she is so influential, in keeping with the comic book theme, 'with great power comes great responsibility'.

Labelle's voice saying "words are weapons" kept ringing in my ears. I couldn't help but ask her about how the powerful socio-political message of her comics must bear a great responsibility.

"I feel privileged to have this audience and this opportunity to have my voice heard. When I have an opinion on things or anything, people will take it as. At first when I was unknown, I could say something and people would debate it. But now I say something and people defend my opinions, just because they are mine.

Assigned Male

#133



"But I feel like I have to be more on point about everything, because I feel like if I'm wrong on something it'll have repercussions - and if it shows in my comic, well then people will be misled."

This led Labelle to tell me why and how she is so well informed, explaining that her web comic is a learning curve:

"I feel like I need to know everything on a subject before talking about it. It is a lot of pressure, but it also makes me give it my best. As the comic grows in popularity, I feel like it makes me learn so much. I learned so much in the last year: just issues I felt like I needed to know and care about, just because of my comic."

What was intended to be a quick ten minute interview turned into a deep and comfortable conversation between Labelle

and I, but with people who were at the talk gathered around in a circle listening. It felt like the exclusive 'director's cut' of a film upon its DVD release but at the same time it felt like we were friends.

The room was booked until 3pm and now it was nearly 3.30pm. I decided to wrap up our chat with one last question, concerned that Labelle was probably starving having not partaken in eating as many mini muffins as I did at the break.

Besides her past, her political concerns, her activism, her as a transwoman and the people she writes about; besides all the positivity, the negativity, the responsibility; in the end it all boils down to Sophie being a professional cartoonist. So what advice does she have for budding cartoonists?

Labelle giggled and blushed modestly. It was almost as if it were the first time she heard herself being referred to as a professional cartoonist. She continued to respond quite modestly: "Work. Work a lot. If I can describe myself as a cartoonist now, that's because I draw a lot. I draw a lot of cartoons.

"My sketch book is full of cartoons that I will never finish or go to final version. You need to always work, and yeah that's how you find the gems: in the middle of a bunch of peddles."

But it's not just the hard work that made Sophie so successful: "I came from a very low class family; underprivileged but in a house filled with books. My mum is a word-lover, so I would always read her books. I consider this a big privilege when you want to work in the book industry.

"So my work is not what made my success; it's not about working hard, it's about working a lot. I'm very critical of the idea that you need to work hard to get to a goal. Don't set goals. Just do your thing. If I keep doing that comic it's because I have things to say, it's not about working harder, it's about the message; what kind of message but also, do a lot of it."

Sophie Labelle is currently on tour around Europe, therefore books won't be available to purchase until 1 December. However, you can follow her web comic series *Assigned Male* on her website <http://assignedmale.com>.



Auditor of ShoutOut Emily Gleeson, Sin Features Editor and Reporter Jenna Hodgins, Canadian cartoonist Sophie Labelle, Camille Fafin and Jesse O'Donovan.



RAPE AND CONSENT: Number of reported rapes in Galway doubles in 12 months

Don't walk home alone: how about we stop rape happening in the first place?

By Jenna Hodgins

As a girl, I've always been told not to walk home alone at night. Which is fair enough, because that's not a safe thing to do in the first place. However, I'm being told this with rape being the biggest concern in mind.

As a girl, I've always been told that if a strange man stops me and acts inappropriately then, in my mother's words, "kick him in the crown jewels".

As a woman, I've realised that this isn't a fair attitude. I've realised that rape prevention has been taught to only girls and not boys. I've realised the focus has been on 'how not to get raped' or 'what to do when you're in a situation' as opposed to what consent is and how not to be a rapist in the first place.

In the last issue of Sin, I wrote a news piece about the recent Garda Joint Policing Committee report about crime in Galway. When researching the story, I was disappointed to see the way in which certain news outlets reported the latest statistic that shows the number of reported rapes in Galway has doubled since last year.

One news source straight-out (and rightfully so) mentioned the number of reported cases of rapes doubled from five on last year, to 10 this year. Meanwhile another publication grouped the number of sexual assault cases with the 10 rape cases, giving a total of 30 reported sex crimes in Galway this year, and reached the conclusion that there has been a 16 percent decrease in reported 'sexual assaults'.

First of all, rape and sexual assault aren't necessarily interchangeable terms. Sexual assault is a broad umbrella term which, colloquially, incorporates harassment, violent and verbal assault, as well as but not exclusively rape. Rape is rape. The fact there were 20 reported cases of sexual assault offences as well as 10 rape cases is just incredibly wrong, so away with that 16 percent decrease. These crimes are still happening; therefore that 16 percent is unimportant.

I understand this is a matter of maths, but as an influential news source in Galway, this didn't send out the right message to its readership. I don't know about you, but after reading about such a dramatic percentage drop, I'd almost trust that sex crimes are

becoming less and less frequent. But no. This is not the case. The amount of reported rape cases has doubled in less than 12 months. With 95 percent of rapes going unreported, I can't even begin to imagine how many other cases exist out there.

What really bothers me is how the focus is still on how not to get raped instead of preventing rape happening in the first place. Here it gets a tiny bit complicated. By 'how not to get raped' I mean people, primarily women, are taught not to walk home alone, talk to strange men or leave their drink on the table in a bar or club. Surprisingly still, women are told to not show too much skin.

Don't believe me? Well from personal experience, anyone who was at the Erasmus/International talk for outgoing students 2014/15 may remember being told to "dress appropriately on nights out" and avoid, to paraphrase, 'unwanted attention'.

Despite the outrageous idea that you should 'mind' what you're wearing, the rest of the advice is good advice. Although we should not have to worry about these things in this day and age, the unfortunate fact is people can spike your drink, and walking home alone does make you vulnerable. However, the idea of preventing getting raped or sexually assaulted should not just be the only thing we're advised on. If we teach people about consent, alcohol and sex, rape and assault, then maybe we can prevent the act of rape being committed in the first place.

Thankfully, issues concerning consent have become central in sex education – among third level students at least. Campaigns such as #AskConsent and Yes = Sex have been and continue to work on raising public awareness and educating people on the issue of consent. Although sex education is making progress, it is slow.

NUI Galway's very own Dr Charlotte McIvor has worked extensively in designing an education programme which uses drama to teach young people about consent and actually discuss the taboo of rape. Dr McIvor was kind enough to give me a copy of the script, as well as a copy of a paper she wrote and presented last June.

In 2014, Dr McIvor began teaching an elective module as a part of the third year BA Drama and BA Connect with Theatre and Performance courses. The module description reads:

"This course focuses on developing practical skills in applied theatre, theatre for social change, theatre in education, devising for theatre, practice-as-research, and feminist theatre techniques... Through a series of practical workshops, we will build towards the development of an original devised theatre piece thematised around the issue of sexual consent, assault and alcohol on college campuses working in consultation with NUI Galway Psychology's recent report 'Young People, Alcohol and Sex: What's Consent Got to Do With It?' (Pádraig Mac Neela et al, 2014)."

The module presented a mixed group of students from the two BA Drama courses at NUI Galway. The class consisted of eight males and six females, ranging from the ages of 21 years-old to 70 years-old.

"I am not just interested in what can be represented through theatre, but the relationship between how it is represented and its potential impact in a third-level educational context," said Dr McIvor.

"This elective module for third-year students resulted in the creation of an original theatre piece, *100 Shades of Grey*, that explicitly addressed the interlocking themes of alcohol, assault and sexual consent."

100 Shades of Grey features a segment wherein the performers stand with a placard dictating a percentage or statistic relevant to rape cases. This section of the script I'd like to share with you:

GER: One in five women will be the victim of a rape or attempted rape.

MARIE: 38 percent of rapists are a friend or acquaintance of the survivor.

JOHN: 11 percent of victims report that their attacker used a weapon.

MARK: 70 percent of victims of rape and 84 percent of those accused of rape had been drinking at the time of the assault according to a 2009 Irish study.

JIM: 95 percent of attacks go unreported.

AOIFE: 97 percent of rapists go free in the Irish judicial system.

CHARLOTTE: Only one out of 100 rapists will serve jail time.

JONATHAN: In 70 percent of Irish cases that went to trial, the judge was allowed to question the victim about their previous sexual history. This is known as the Section 3 application. The reason? To assess her alleged promiscuity.

LAURA: Seven percent of women who were raped in Ireland in 2011 became pregnant as a result.

SHANNON: A woman is at least two times as likely to conceive a child after a rape compared to one engaging in consensual sex.

PETER: 16 percent of Galway Rape Crisis clients in 2012 were males.

RICHARD: 26 percent of clients did not tell anybody they know that they were attending counselling after the attack.

These haunting statistics are why we need to stop pushing aside rape and sex crimes because there's been a 16 percent decrease. These are the reasons we need to teach people of all ages about consent. These are reasons work like this must continue.

These topics have become so taboo to the point where certain organisations refused to provide a comment on this piece because talking about rape is "inappropriate".

Rape, as a violent sex crime of power, will be difficult, if not impossible, to eradicate. However, rape and assault caused by the lack of consent can be tackled through educating the masses, and discouraging rape culture. So let's do this.

Deep River Rock
750ml
€1.53 per L

Pringles Range
190g

McVities Hob Nob Choc
262g

G Isle Skinny Cut Chips
800g

Lyons Tea Bags 40s

Maxwell House Coffee
100g

Roma Pasta Range
500g

Kellogg's Special K
370g

Comfort Pure
750ml

A great deal more at your local store.

"The University is all of us and we should back our university"

Lit&Deb Soc holds Gender Equality Panel

By Mark Laherty

The Literary and Debating Society held an Equality Panel on 1 October to discuss sexism within the management of NUI Galway. The headline speaker was Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington, who is notable for her successful court case against the University last year.

An Equality Tribunal found that botanist Sheehy-Skeffington was discriminated against on grounds of gender when turned down for a promotion in 2009. In the wake of this tribunal, five other NUI Galway lecturers are currently pursuing the university on similar grounds.

For several generations, the Sheehy-Skeffington family have been strongly involved in feminism and political activism. At the event, she said with confidence; "God damn it, I'm a troublesome feminist and I come from a long line of troublesome feminists."

During the Equality Panel, Sheehy-Skeffington pointed to the details of the tribunal as posted on the NUI Galway website. Whether deliberate or not, there were six instances of misinformation.

This included presenting statistics in an unclear way, giving half-truths while withholding key information, and drawing attention away from points which would cast the university in a poor light.

In particular, the website presented the 2009 promotion rounds as an isolated incident from which they had moved on. Sheehy-Skeffington described this as "disingenuous, in polite words".

In the most recent promotion rounds, 29 women and 28 men were shortlisted for promotion. 18 men were given the promotion compared to nine women, with three more women promoted upon appeal.

The Gender Equality Task Force was formed in response to the tribunal. Former professor Angela Savage, speaking from the audience, said that she volunteered for the Task Force but received no reply. She felt this was inappropriate: she had extensive qualifications and experience, and she was on speaking terms with the two men who did not afford her a response.

Miss Savage went on to say that the university management did not choose individuals for the Task Force who would "know what's happening on the ground". She believes she was not given a position because she was too knowledgeable of gender inequality and as such would be "a thorn in their side".

The second speaker was Maggie Ronane of the SIPTU campaign for gender equality within NUI Galway proceedings. Although the university management claimed that the Task Force was independent, she said it was made up of employees of the University, had little expertise, was ineffective in their meth-

ods, and that their suggestions would do little to subtract from systemic sexism.

NUI Galway held a Mindfulness Conference last week to promote a 'mindful campus.' Savage dismissed the conference as a hollow PR exercise. In Buddhism, mindfulness is based on loving kindness; "There is no loving kindness in the Quadrangle."

Sheehy-Skeffington further criticised the university's lack of accommodation for exceptional circumstances in cases of parents and carers. Prior to her retirement, she had to care for her elderly mother and travel from Galway to Dublin every week. The University did not take this into account and deemed her insufficiently productive.

Women within NUI Galway, Miss Ronane asserted, are often pressured to work during maternity leave. Female lecturers may return from their leave to find that they have been demoted, or responsibilities have been taken away from them. They may also find their pensions reduced.

For several generations, the Sheehy-Skeffington family have been strongly involved in feminism and political activism. At the event, she said with confidence; "God damn it, I'm a troublesome feminist and I come from a long line of troublesome feminists."

Miss Ronane pointed to the treatment of cleaners in NUI Galway, who are mostly female. Across the country, most cleaners are paid €17.50 an hour. In NUI Galway, cleaners work under a private contractor which pays them €9.50 an hour, which is not a living wage. Some cleaners are pressured to do 50% more work without extra pay, and are threatened if they object, according to Miss Ronane.

Miss Ronane also emphasised that these issues are impacting the quality of education that students are receiving. Time and resources are being spent dealing with discrimination and fighting against it that ought to be used to better their work. These problems have practical consequences for students.

As such, she encouraged the student body to get involved in the SIPTU campaign; "The

University is not the university management. The University is all of us, and I think we should take back our University."

Catherine Ryan, Students' Union Equality Officer, also spoke briefly. Having seen the impact of discrimination on women, staff and students alike, she expressed doubt that she had chosen the right university.

Noel Maguire, SIPTU Industrial Organiser, said that "quite a bit of work is falling on a small number of people". He encouraged students to join the campaign and "apply pressure from all sides".

The university management and Gender Equality Task Force were asked to send representatives to the event. The Task Force declined, saying that their work was ongoing. University management did not respond.

A relevant art exhibition is being held by FemSoc in the Secret Garden to raise funds for the five people currently in tribunals. Illustrated t-shirts are available reading 'Mr Browne's Boys', a reference to University President Dr Jim Browne.

Dr. Sheehy-Skeffington's blog on the subject can be found at michelinesthreeconditions.wordpress.com.

'And they were all yellow'

NUIG Graduates wear yellow for Gender Equality.

By Sinéad O'Callaghan

Towards the beginning of December 2014, Dr Micheline Skeehy Skeffington won a memorial case against her former employers, NUI Galway.

The equality tribunal discovered that Dr Skeehy Skeffington had been discriminated against in terms of promotion, based on the fact that she was female.

Furthering reports by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) found that women are overwhelmingly under-represented in senior academic roles and that NUI Galway came a definite last in all the institutions that were examined.

Only 14% of professors in our university are female, but women make up over half of those in lecturing grades, at 54% of the teaching population. As students, this raises the question of whether we have had an equal opportunity to receive our education from female professors as well as male professors.

There have been many campaigns put in place to further Dr Sheehy Skeffington's and the HEA's findings. An external taskforce was created, headed by academic, Professor Jane Grimson, in order to deal with ongoing reports of gender inequality.

Its findings have suggested that all senior management at NUI Galway should undergo 'unconscious bias training' to counteract gender discrimination against women. Prof Grimson has also put forward that the university should create a new post of 'Vice President of Equality and Diversity'.

However, many feel there is not enough being done. Micheline's win at the Equality Tribunal brought light to a discrimination issue that many students were not aware of.

The university has set up an Equality Task Force but are yet to make any concrete changes to the administrative or promotional process. There still remains the fact that in the period of 2008 to 2009, like Dr Sheehy Skeffington, five other female academics felt like their efforts for promotion were hindered.

The taskforce created have said that it is beyond their power to deal with these matters and are instead looking towards preventing future issues.

A group of upcoming graduates also agree heavily with the cause of Dr Sheehy Skeffington's and her three conditions. They are launching a campaign of solidarity and asking people to wear or add yellow to their Graduation get-ups in order to show support for their female lecturers.

The facts, they say, are simple. 54% of lecturers in NUI Galway are female. 70% of senior lecturers are male. 81% of the academic council are male. 86% of professors are male. They are pushing the fact that there is a likelihood that, as students, we have not been taught by a single female professor.

Freya Carroll, one of the organisers behind the event, has stated; "to be honest, the idea behind this campaign, above all else, is to show support; for gender equality, for our female lecturers, and also for female graduates who don't want to enter a working world where they are discriminated against because of their gender.

"It's important that the management board of NUI Galway realise that students will not stand for its archaic attitudes towards equality and we're hoping that this outright statement of solidarity from its graduates will have an impact."

So what's involved?

The students are simply asking you to wear some yellow, whether that be a ribbon in your hair, a tie, or even your socks in order to stand up for an issue that, in modern times, should be a thing of the past.

According to Miss Carroll, the initial response has been a positive one; "I think a lot of students are very open to the idea of showing a simple sign of support for gender equality and we're also aware of some PHD students and even staff members who will be taking part over the course of the graduations!"

What happens in the Institute for Lifecourse and Society (ILAS)?

Always wondered what was in some of these new buildings? What does ILAS mean? Meet the people inside one of the campus' newest buildings. And don't be shy; come visit, enter, stay for a while, come to an event. This building is for you!



Dr Crystal Tremblay visits ILAS

By Niel Slevin

On Wednesday 30 September ILAS had the pleasure of the touring Dr Crystal Tremblay from the University of British Columbia, Canada, who attended to present the methodology and initial findings of the study she conducted using participatory video-based research entitled, 'Participatory Water Governance in Urban Africa: Building Citizenship through Participatory Video.'

Dr Tremblay focused more specifically on how the communities of informal settlements in Cape Town, South Africa and Accra, Ghana access use water, in addition to their water sanitation, whilst also reflecting on similar research she conducted with recycling cooperatives in Canada and Brazil.

Dr Tremblay, who has also recently visited the University of Bristol and the University of Brighton to give a similar talk, and to promote her new book, *Strengthening Community University Research Partnerships: Global Perspectives*, co-edited with Dr Budd Hall and Dr Rajesh Tandon - to which ILAS's very own Lorraine McIlrath has contributed an entire chapter - also alluded to people's relationship with water; the idea of people actually "being water", on top of water being an essential human right.

Dr Tremblay's talk was particularly topical, given the ongoing controversy and debate surrounding

Irish Water nationwide, but also a reality check of sorts, given the revelation that many of the poorer citizens of Ghana are forced to pay the equivalent of almost half of their annual salary just to obtain unreliably sourced and sanitised water.

Tremblay was ably supported on the day by Maeve Lydon from the University of Victoria, Canada, who, like Tremblay, specialises in arts-based engagement as a tool for policy, also works as the Coordinator for Community-Based Research Canadian.

The event was attended by a mixture of Irish academics and ILAS-based researchers engaging in knowledge exchange; and Tremblay's presentation stimulated much discussion and friendly debate amongst those present, as well as offering them various helpful techniques and strategies to implement when engaging in research utilising the participatory video framework.

Notable examples include the use of B-roll footage (footage of what a speaker is talking about while the A camera zooms in on screen), the importance of filming for audience and purpose, and the need for all parties of the project to meet in advance of filming to agree and ensure a shared vision for its final outcome.

Tremblay concluded her talk by launching the aforementioned *Strengthening Community University Research Partnerships: Global Perspectives*, a book that looks at how the structures of community

research partnerships materialise and work, and the people who then work together to give voices to those who often go unvoiced.

Lorraine McIlrath's chapter is entitled "Community-University Research and Partnerships in Ireland: Confronting the Crossroads".

In it, she explores "the mechanisms and environments for embedding community-based research and research partnerships through mission, practice, policy and legislation, resources allocation and infrastructure in Ireland at institutional and national levels with a view towards the roads to be taken," suggesting overall that Irish policies are emerging, but are not yet fully Referring back to the participatory video itself, which Tremblay later played and briefly analysed with all present.

One of the immediate outcomes it had was to offer those who participated within it another means of employment: several of Tremblay's initially amateur film crew would later receive and take up offers of similar work within their local community, giving others the chance to share their story in the same way they had theirs.

Overall, perhaps the day's main message was that, despite the modernised digital age we live where attention spans are short and content is key, storytelling is still the main way in which we move people and effect change, regardless of the medium through which we tell it.

What is ILAS all about?

The Institute for Lifecourse and Society (ILAS) is a newly-designated research institute for the applied social sciences at NUI Galway.

The Institute represents a significant and innovative development in that for the first time it brings together the fields of children, youth, older people and disability into one domain of research, teaching and policy.

It will provide greater focus, coherence and direction to applied social science research at the University. Its core function is to achieve international excellence in social policy and practice development through the pursuit of interdisciplinary research in the social sciences by creatively integrating the rich and diverse intellectual resources from within the University and beyond.

Established in part on the commitment, expertise and track record of its three constituent research Centres in NUI Galway: UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (CFRC), Irish Centre for Social Gerontology (ICSG) and Centre for Disability Law and Policy (CDLP).

Apart from earlier achievements of its forming members over the last decade, and in the main supported by the Atlantic Philanthropies Ireland, a recent emergent flagship programme called the Project Lifecourse initiative represents a key formational aspect of the Institute in that it models accruing staff and expertise from among constituent research centre members of the incoming Institute.

Project Lifecourse is a multidisciplinary project with research, policy, practice, and education strands that aims to make a positive contribution to public policy development by improving scientific and practical awareness of human capacities and capabilities across the lifecourse.

Additional research communities committed to joining the Institute include the Irish Centre for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Research (ICAN), Health Economics and Policy Analysis (HEPA) and Community Knowledge Initiative (CKI).

Additionally, a range of stakeholders, including research centres, research clusters, community demonstration projects and individual academics drawn from an impressive range of Colleges, Schools, and Disciplines (including health, law, economics and sociology) within NUI Galway have formally expressed an interest in joining the Institute.

The Institutes focus will be on supporting applied research that informs policy development and practice that makes a positive difference to people's lives. Its initial focus will be to bring together existing work in relation to targeted populations, such as older persons, children and families, and persons with disabilities. This baseline is set to expand.

Initially, but not exclusively, the Institute has four broadly conceived thematic interests:

1. Life Transitions and Human Flourishing
2. Intergenerational Relations
3. Social Health and Wellbeing
4. Civic Engagement and Participation

For more information, visit www.nuigalway.ie/ilas.

Touchstone celebrated by the ILAS

By Neil Slevin

To coincide with the local and national launch of Touchstone, on Wednesday 16 September 2015, the ILAS staged a speaker series and forum fair consisting of over 30 different local and national organisations to celebrate Touchstone's ongoing work with people aged 55 and over, using this unique opportunity to develop awareness about the organisation's activities and to recruit volunteers through discussion and showcase of similar organisations' work.

Touchstone is a national programme aiming to develop the skills and knowledge of people aged 55 and over who wish to play a part in helping to make their communities more age-friendly. It promotes and supports civic engagement, and was developed by a team based at the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, NUI Galway, in partnership with Active Retirement Ireland, Age & Opportunity and Third Age.

A particular focus for the day was the first 50 participants of the Touchstone programme, partici-

pants who had just completed the aforementioned programme in Galway and received their awards at the Celebration Event, the day's unique selling point being that it was the members of the first successfully participating cohort that featured during the speaker series to share their experiences first-hand. Presentations included Ger Hassett's *Views on the Over-55s' Fitness Classes in Headford*, Carmel Geoghegan's *Living with Dementia in the West of Ireland*, and *The Need for Pre-retirement Planning* by Tony Finnerty.

The event was opened by Professor Tom Scharf, Professor of Social Gerontology and Director of the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology at NUI Galway, Ireland responsible for and directly involved in leading the first Touchstone programme, and attended by a further 150 people aged 55 and over interested in becoming engaged in civic activities attended the Celebration Event, along with national and local stakeholders interested in promoting and supporting civic engagement activities in Galway city and county.

Now reflecting on the event, standing out quite

prominently throughout the day was the enthusiastic approach and dynamism shown towards what the day itself stood for - what Touchstone stands for - regardless of age and/or outlook, and this was reflected by the hub and buzz of interaction that was the forum fair following the speaker series, with interactive displays ranging from SAGE to Rock Against Dementia Galway 2015, and so many more.

It was also interesting to note, both from conversation with Dr Kieran Walsh, co-author of *Ageing Through Austerity* by Walsh, Carney and Ni Léime, and with Touchstone members present who do not wish to be named, that ageing is not something that has been affected as dramatically as one might think by Ireland's recent period of relevant austerity; in reality, our ageing population faces challenges and issues very similar to those of previous generations - namely maintaining activity levels, interacting with a different and rapidly-developing world, and remaining involved socially within the local community - all challenges and issues that Touchstone and events like this strive to tackle head-on.

Long may they continue to do so.

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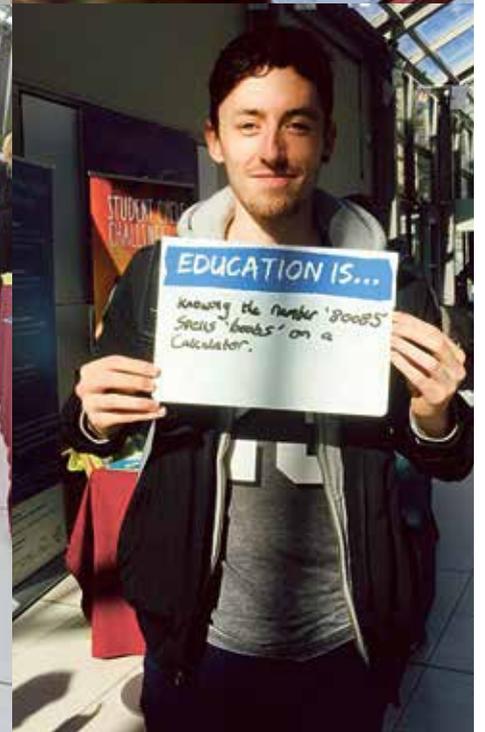
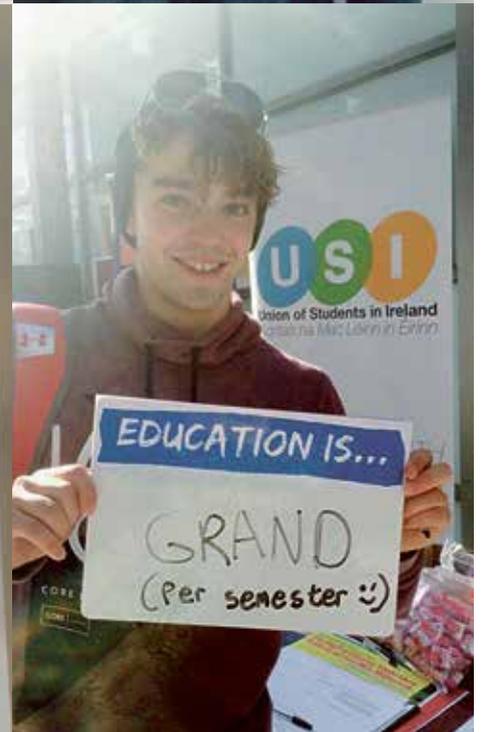
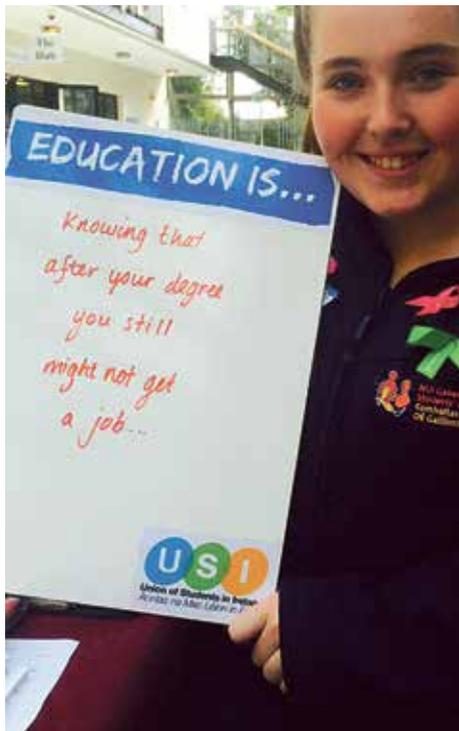


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THE SU PAGES



Tips and advice on being a good neighbour

Leideanna agus comhairle le cabhrú leat bheith i do chomharsa maith

1. Inform your neighbours if you are having an event, let them know the time you expect people to arrive and leave, stick to these plans!
2. Give your neighbours your number so that they can call you if there are any issues.
3. Keep windows and doors closed, this help to keep the noise down.
4. KEEP GUESTS INSIDE THE HOUSE!
5. If going out, respect that people are working and leave for town as early as possible.
6. WHEN GETTING TAXI'S TRY TO KEEP THE NOISE LEVELS DOWN.
7. Don't bring lots of people back after the club.
8. Everybody likes to live in a nice neighbourhood so pick up any litter after a party.
9. Put out bins and make sure they are able to close or they may not be taken.
10. Don't always be the Party house, it's not fair on you or the neighbours.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR.

BÍ I DO CHOMHARSA MAITH.



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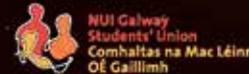


WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND SOMEONE PASSED OUT

MÁ THAGANN TÚ AR DHUINE GAN AITHNE GAN URLABHRA

- 1 DON'T FREAK OUT**
MANAGE REACTIONS AND MAKE SURE TO STAY WITH THEM
- 2 CALL 999/112 QUICKLY**
NO ONE IS GOING TO GET IN TROUBLE IT'S JUST IMPORTANT TO ACT
- 3 TURN THEM ONTO THEIR SIDE**
IT'S IMPORTANT YOU STAY WITH THEM AND PUT THEM ONTO THEIR SIDES INCASE THEY GET SICK
- 4 GIVE ANY POWDER OR PILLS TO THE AMBULANCE STAFF**
THIS CAN SAVE TIME WHEN THEY GET TO HOSPITAL AND HELP THE MEDICAL STAFF

**YOU WILL NOT BE PROSECUTED FOR HELPING
THEY WILL NOT BE PROSECUTED FOR TAKING
DO WHATS RIGHT AND SAVE A LIFE
DÉAN AN RUD CEART, TARRHÁIL DUINE ÓN MBÁS**



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Ar mhaithe le Galway Rape Crisis Centre and the Irish Cancer Society



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7.30 Ln., Dé Céadaoin, an 14 Deireadh Fómhair I mBeár an Choláiste

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An Chéad Duais: €200 IN AIRGEAD TIRIM!**

Table of Four €20 – Sign up in the SU Office

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Home is where the coffee is

By Rachel Brownlow

Galway is a place of intrigue but most importantly, coffee, with some of the best cafes hidden down side streets. It took me most of my first year aimlessly meandering to find some of these but they are worth the search.

Here are some affordable student gems definitely worth checking out.

JUNGLE CAFÉ

Located between the train station and the Coach station this is an ideal stop-off before you head home for the weekend. It is one of the cosiest cafes around, with an outdoor area full of sofas and plants. The whole place has a relaxing, peaceful atmosphere and they sell an amazing selection of home-baked goods. It is the perfect location for a catch-up, not to mention they have truly fantastic chai lattes.

JAVA'S

A personal favourite of my friends

and I since the very early days of first year, Java's is a place in which I have spent many hours of my time. Situated on Upper Abbeygate Street, or across from Electric which is probably more useful information, this vintage creperie is somewhere I cannot recommend enough.

It's cheap enough to be affordable on a student budget and, better yet, it stays open until 1am so is the perfect location to satisfy late night hot chocolate cravings. They have a large range of coffees and hot chocolates, not to mention their crepes and the soup which is accompanied by delicious French bread.

Their salads are not to be missed – particularly the passion salad – a cheap yet filling meal which you can still justify to yourself as being healthy. Definitely not somewhere to miss if trying to find an affordable meal in the evenings.

ELLE'S

Elle's is yet another good café, located in the centre of Shop

Street, across from Eason. They do a great student discount here throughout the year (make sure to bring your student card along) and even though it can be fairly packed during the midday rush, it is worth the wait.

They offer an exciting range of hot chocolates (honeycomb hot chocolate with actual crushed crunchie bits being among my personal favourites), smoothies and coffees. There is a huge selection of food available too and service is prompt so it's ideal for a quick lunch break between lectures.

THE LANE CAFÉ

A new discovery of mine is The Lane Café. Down a side street of Latin Quarter, this is a small cosy place, ideal for group coffee outings. They have an intriguing menu of coffees from cookies coffee to caramel coffee. It is reasonably priced and has a calm intimate atmosphere and a bright interior, the perfect place to relax with a book when trying

to kill time. Conveniently it stays open till 9pm and so is great for late evenings.

KAI

With its candles in jars and eclectic interior, Kai is most definitely an experience in itself. The menu changes daily and they offer a wide choice of both savoury and sweet foods. It is expensive for dinner but good for lunch or a tea and scones outing.

It's such a quirky space, full of natural light, funky candles and random décor that it's worth the walk out. It boasts a large range of herbal teas and has even received an award for 'Best chef in the West'.

Located on Sea Road, out past Massimo's, it is the perfect location for a treat when you're feeling like something slightly more expensive

THE BRUNCH BOX

I'd have to give this the vote for one of the best breakfast spots, mainly

because of its fiver fry, an essential for every hungover student. The fiver fry includes tea or coffee and is well worth the trek into town. Staff are very friendly and it is centrally located just off Shop Street. This place is a must go to for anyone in search of a reasonably priced breakfast and the best part is there is no need to drag yourself out of bed early, as the fry lasts till 6pm!

THE SECRET GARDEN CAFÉ

Located on William Street West, past the Roisín Dubh, it's slightly more out of the way but well worth the walk. Full of cushions, couches and fairy lights, the atmosphere is enchanting. There is a huge selection of herbal teas, all served with their own teapot and strainer. They also have coffees and a range of baked goods. But the highest selling point for me is the bookcase full of books and board games. As it stays open until 11pm, this a wonderful place to spend a relaxed evening with a group of friends.

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Alumni Interview

YEAR OF GRADUATION: 2010
COURSE AT NUI GALWAY: Medicine
SOCIAL MEDIA:
Instagram: @doc.higgo
Twitter: @drbrianhiggins
CURRENT OCCUPATION: General Practitioner, Medical Director of Medical Exam Tutor

What is your fondest memory of NUI Galway?

Surprisingly, I always remember the Med-Soc Teddy Bear Hospital with great fondness. Groups of school children from around Galway brought in their teddies to be examined by "The Doctor" to help them overcome their fears of attending the hospital or their GP. It was fun and I always smile when I think about it now.

Has NUI Galway changed since you were here?

It has in ways. There have been many improvements made to the University's sporting facilities and other buildings around the campus but I feel that the ethos and personality of the University has endured.

How did attending NUI Galway develop you as a person?

Obviously NUI Galway has helped me develop the foundations of my professional

career. However, it was the friends I made while attending university that really had the greatest impact on my personal development.

How did studying your course of study prepare you for your career?

As a doctor you need to know a lot! We need to know incredible amount of information... Dr Google has made this more manageable but without a large foundation of knowledge it is an impossible job to do well. The six years I spent in the library and reading room studying for continuous assessments and end-of-year exams ensured that I was prepared after graduation.

Did you partake in any societies, sports clubs or volunteering at NUI Galway?

I was active in Voluntary Services Abroad (VSA) which is a medical charity that fundraises to deliver medical care across developing countries. After a year of preparation I travelled to volunteer in a rural hospital in Ghana. It was without doubt the most rewarding experience I had as a student and taught me how privileged we really are here in Ireland.

Do you ever miss NUI Galway?

I enjoyed my time in NUI Galway. Sometimes

Dr Brian Higgins

I miss the freedom of student life and I made the most of my time there but you move on. It is so important to expend your energy making the most of the time you have rather than missing the times that have passed.

What advice would you give to current NUI Galway students?

From an academic point of view, university is not about exams or even degrees, it is about learning. Try to enjoy your course for what it is and how it can enrich your life. Make the most of this amazing opportunity to expand what you know about yourself and the world, figure out who you are and what you are good at and focus on that. It is your life, make it a good one.

If you could go back and do it all again, what would you do differently?

Not one thing. Like everyone, I made foolish mistakes but as time went on the embarrassment and regret faded away but the lessons I learned from these mistakes have been invaluable.



No-one Wants to Be a Hufflepuff

By Ruaidhrí O'Doherty

When reaching into the Sorting Hat provided by PotterSoc, a certain level of trepidation enveloped the student. An acute nervousness induced by the presence of the possibility that you may be sorted into a house you do not want; you may be a Hufflepuff.

I am not saying there is something 'wrong' with Hufflepuff. As an avid fan of the magical series I am aware of the core qualities of Hufflepuff; being hardworking and honest, patient and kind.

People, being pliant as they are, are susceptible to social pressures and into thinking and feeling as the masses dictate. Social perception is a blinding source in modern times. In the era of Snapchat, Facebook and Twitter, the concept of receiving a 'like' publically on

"Imagine being in Hufflepuff, I think I'd leave, wouldn't you?" — Draco Malfoy.

a picture is more gratifying than receiving a compliment in person, a compliment that others may never know about. Public praise is the only praise. Universal acceptance is all.

We as individuals have become so engrossed in fitting in that being unique has become a negative idiosyncrasy. 'Unique' is now used colloquially as a way of describing a person who is 'abnormal'.

"Don't use MySpace, use Facebook, Facebook is cool."

Disregard coolness, because 'cool' isn't real. 'Cool' is merely a concept we invented

that says 'This person obeys all the unspoken rules.' Perhaps the inadequacies of our time are too great for individuals to overcome.

"Imagine being in Hufflepuff, I think I'd leave, wouldn't you?" - Draco Malfoy.

No Malfoy, no I wouldn't because being a Hufflepuff is magical; being a Hufflepuff means being genuine, being tolerant and being loyal; being a Hufflepuff means being real in a time when such concepts have been lost in a sea of bullshit and empty smiles.

If we're being honest (Hufflepuff) with ourselves, we're ashamed. Ashamed to think that being a Hufflepuff is a proud thing. Pride deals with one's opinion of oneself. Vanity, with how you perceive the regard in which others hold you, and, in the age of vanity, I would be proud to be a Hufflepuff.

Pottersoc held their famous start-of-the-college-year Sorting Ceremony a few weeks ago and to those of you that attended I urge you to consider, why do we mock the Hufflepuff House? Why is it more satisfying to walk away with a red band around your wrist than a yellow one?

Moreover, when did we become lost in a time of Instagram filters and Snapchat points? The only filter through which we should regard life is through rose-tinted glasses because at least these adorn your face, in the real world of air and people and interactions.

So when you pulled your hand out of the fabled hat, if you saw a capital 'H' or yellow card caught your eye, I hope you smiled - laughed even - at the fact that you were just categorised into a wonderful class to which the world seems oblivious.

You were a Hufflepuff. Yellow is not an altogether displeasing colour either. Bananas are yellow, and who doesn't like bananas?



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O'É Gaillimh



Galway University
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welcome 

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thank you

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Whatever you do, don't stand out

By Josiah Burke

Its five minutes to ten on Tuesday morning. The O'Flaherty theatre is as full as it gets; 300 first-year students talk, chatter, gossip, laugh – there's rarely a quiet individual to be seen.

Smartphones all around the large hall are going at full power; Facebook, Snapchat, and Yik-Yak all approach saturation levels of usage as we furiously 'connect' with each other. Eventually the maths lecturer appears and the class begins; eventually, in most cases at least, silence descends on the auditorium.

The audible conversations cease and order is restored.

Approaching a simple maths calculation, the lecturer looks up and asks for someone to plug $50.75 + 20.18$ into their calculator and tell him the answer.

From a group of young people who love to socialise, love to chat and love to be just noisy in general, one would expect a chorus of answers; from offspring of this modern, progressive 21st century society in which we live, we would expect an eagerness to actively participate in lectures and classes.

So, in the first 10 seconds,

how many of us give an answer? None. Five seconds later the lecturer repeats his request in a slightly more exasperated tone of voice. How many replies does he receive out of 300 students? Thirty? Ten? Five? No, just one. On a very good day, maybe two.

Lest we think that none of the students know the answer, $50.75 + 20.18$ is pretty simple. Most of us have a calculator. Plug the figures in and the answer is there; simple as that. Therefore, if no one wants to speak up, there must be another problem.

Picture in your mind's eye another scene; its fifteen years earlier; twenty of the afore-mentioned students are in Junior Infants class. The teacher is explaining the concept of different colours to the small children. When she asks what their favourite colour is, the classroom erupts into excited responses. No inhibitions, no fears; the students are excited about learning and eager to participate.

The teacher and the children have a lively discussion, with each child candidly stating their own opinions and preferences. Fear of speaking up is foreign – the children are confident in themselves.

The contrast between the two classroom scenes could not be more marked. In one we see individuality and uninhibited discussion; in the other we have self-consciousness, fear and silence. As third level students, we should love to discuss, explore, participate; as young adults we should be delighted to give our opinion on any given subject; as future business leaders, doctors, politicians, we should be brimming with ideas and suggestions; but this is not the case.

When asked a simple question in our maths lecture, we draw back from answering; when the lecturer asks for opinions, our one remains unspoken; when volunteers are called for, we hide in the comfort and safety of conformity, hoping he doesn't ask us.

Recently in a Business Informations Systems class, our lecturer informed us

that one of the main reasons social media sites like Facebook have exploded in popularity can be abbreviated as FOMO – fear of missing out.

I believe that the main reason no one speaks up in class could be abbreviated FOSO – fear of standing out. We're absolutely terrified of standing out; we don't want to be seen as anything different than completely normal – even if normal means being rather stupid and unintelligent.

Yes, we've heard all the motivational talk about being yourself, and not being afraid to be different, etc., but when it boils down to speaking up in class when no one else will, for us it's far too costly.

Society seems to have ruled in favour of going with the flow; somehow ingrained in our DNA is the cursed plague of conformity – a plague that cripples our individuality and effectively makes us apathetic wind-vanes – blown around with every new 'in-thing'; we'd almost rather die than stand out from the crowd, even if it means intellectual poverty and moral bankruptcy for the rest of our days.

Something terrible must have happened in those fifteen years in-between; some deadly process must have taken place during our schooling years that transformed us from vibrant, opinionated, out-going children into vacillating, compromising young adults, too afraid to answer a simple question in class, too cool to express our opinion, too busy keeping up with the latest trends to be interested in anything serious.

A poisonous culture of conformity is threatening to suffocate our society, our university, and make many of us little more than the 'useful idiots' Lenin spoke of; people who are easily led, easily manipulated, those who become pawns in the hand of higher powers, and eventually, victims of their own gullibility.

Pádraig Pearse, the Irish revolutionary, called the schools of his day 'murder machines'; had he been speaking of today, I think I'd be inclined to agree.

DIARY OF A FIRST YEAR

Do I really want to drop out?

By Jessica Hannon

As I begin into my fifth week on campus as a first year Arts student, I can't help but feel I'm also starting into a week of firsts... but what firsts?

Well, firstly writing this article is a new experience, and also this is the first real week I've actually felt settled here in NUI Galway. When I left home over a month ago now, I experienced no gnawing feeling of dread; I felt no home sickness as I consoled a teary housemate. On the contrary, I felt happy, and most importantly, free.

I know many of you first years reading this will have been like me, eager to get out there and assert your independence, deciding your curfew (if any!), balancing your money allowances and buying your own food, just to mention a few of the new tasks to handle as a fledgling first year.

All of this was very exciting but as orientation week came firmly to an end and lectures properly began, I personally began to feel a little disheartened and, dare I say, disillusioned at college life.

I wondered did any of my fellow first years feel the same or was it just me? Was I alone in feeling a total lack of motivation to do the college work three weeks into the new semester? Or was I just feeling a little overwhelmed which is completely to be expected?

Hopefully this article will relate and resonate with anybody who, like me, was feeling a serious lull and didn't know how to respond to it in this uncharted territory that is college life for a first year.

As I attended every lecture I found myself becoming increasingly bored. I felt like all the reading, the thinking and the writing involved were

all momentous tasks using time that could be better spent.

I wondered how long this was going to continue or if it would end at all, until I found I was really asking myself was I thinking of dropping out and getting a job?

I knew I loved the social aspect college had to offer but it was very important to get something meaningful out of the real world when the college experience ends in the next few years.

But was I committed enough at this tender age of 19? Was college not going to get better for me? And most importantly, when and where was I going to find the motivation to pursue the course that I knew I enjoyed?

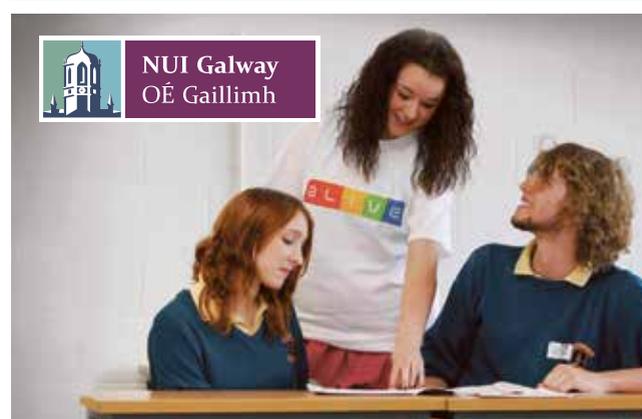
For me though, dropping out was never going to be an option, so why was it feeling like one all of a sudden? It took me a few days to realise that I worked really hard to get here in the first place and I didn't really want to throw that all away.

I found that talking with a friend who was a former student here in NUI Galway really helped me put things into perspective and realise the wonderful opportunity that I had that many people like me didn't have.

For you readers hopefully I can be reassurance to you, if or when you feel as I did last week. I know I really needed the reassurance that my disheartenment was only temporary.

College is going to be tough; subjects are going to be hard. It will be tough to utilise your precious 'get up and go' in the best ways. But why shouldn't it be? Just remember that you've gotten this far, so why dream of giving it all up now?

You deserve to be here and to be the best version of yourself.



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Manage your mental health Add friends to your tea

12 tips to look after yourself

By Kitty Ryan

Mental Health Week to place in NUI Galway from 5 to 11 October and saw several events promoting good mental health practices and positivity for students. In recognition of this week, here are some helpful tips for managing your mental health during the academic year.

1. REVIEW YOUR PERSPECTIVE

When anxiety hits, everything can seem daunting and difficult. Reality becomes distorted, and suddenly that assignment that you've been putting off becomes more of a big deal than the Leaving Cert to you. Reviewing your perspective allows you to see your challenges for what they are, and makes you think practically and rationally instead of setting off a stress-filled downward spiral. You could probably finish that assignment if you skip the upcoming silent disco at the Roisín, there'll always be another.

2. SOCIALISE

Whether you're an extrovert or an introvert, we can't deny that humans are social animals at our core. We like to seek attention and approval from others, and without it, we may go off the edge. Isolating yourself is a common symptom of depression. To solve this, try and arrange a night out (or a night in) with your friends at least once every two weeks. Being alone can be nice, but no one wants to be lonely.

3. FOCUS ON SELF CARE

We all have those days where we get two hours of sleep, no time for a shower and end up eating spicy wedges for breakfast. What's important is that it doesn't become a habit - bad sleeping patterns, regular hygiene practices and balanced meals can all affect our mood and indeed, intensify mental health issues. Be sure to check that your patterns are healthy and if not, make small changes one step at a time. Fruit instead of wedges, shower-

ing the night before instead of the morning and getting your eight hours can make a world of difference.

4. ALLOW YOURSELF TO FEEL HOW YOU'RE FEELING

It's especially common amongst Irish people to hide our true feelings, and occasionally be backhanded about it. It can be distressing to hide difficult emotions like upset or anger, and it takes its toll on us mentally. It's a good idea to let your emotions out in a safe way, such as crying when you need to or punching a pillow to release stress. Embrace how you feel and don't try and bottle things up.

5. RELAX

The ability to relax is a sought-after one, as it can change your mood for the day. For a nice wind down, lying on your bed and listening to music works out pretty universally. You can also try out little luxuries like scented candles and hot baths or saunas in the gym. Relaxation is a good way to making sure you don't become spread out too thin in the future.

6. DON'T PUT OFF UNTIL TOMORROW WHAT CAN BE DONE TODAY

Everyone is guilty of procrastinating. How many assignments have we promised that we'll start the minute we get home, only to be rushing to beat the deadline? Procrastination only causes more stress for your future self, and should be avoided when possible. Instead, try spreading your work out over a few days instead of leaving it all to the last minute. Future you can't solve everything your past self does, so make sure your present self does instead.

7. BE ACTIVE

This doesn't mean you should hit the gym and start lifting twenty pound weights immediately. Being active can be as simple as walking to class instead of taking the bus, or jogging around Salthill in the evening. Activity releases endorphins into our bloodstream, which results in more positive emotions overall. You can also join university clubs if you're interested in trying a

specific sport out, or grab a membership to Kingfisher gym on campus.

8. REWARD YOURSELF

Did you just complete a difficult task? Why not treat yourself? A new shirt or a chocolate bar would suffice. Rewarding yourself can be a great practice if you find your work challenging. It also gives you motivation to finish your work on time. However it's important to regulate yourself too, don't treat for every small task!

9. DON'T BE OVERLY CRITICAL

You are your own worst critic in many ways. A symptom of anxiety and depression is harsh self-criticism and comparing yourself to others. This is not a healthy behaviour, as you are not comparable to other people and vice versa. Instead of putting yourself down, focus on the features you like about yourself and how you can improve in other ways.

10. TAKE AN 'OFF' DAY

Sometimes it all becomes too much, and you need to take an 'off' day as a reward. 'Off' days are days just dedicated to rest, lounging around watching whatever will load

fastest on Netflix and clearing out the fridge. These are best done at weekends after all your week's work is finished. Try not to make a habit out of them, as excessive 'off' days can be a sign of depression.

11. MEET NEW PEOPLE

New people in your life can be a breath of fresh air, and aren't difficult to find in university. Societies are great places to find people with similar interests as they hold events every week like screenings. New people of course, have the potential to become friends and making friends is such an enjoyable experience. Find out when your favourite societies hold their events during the week!

12. REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Everyone experiences mental health issues at some point in their life, and it is nothing to be ashamed of. It helps to talk to people about your problems, no matter how small they are.

If you experience any issues mentioned in this article and want help, there is a free counselling service available at NUI Galway. If you'd like to avail of this, you can email counselling@nuigalway.ie.

By Daniel Mulcahy

Monday 5 to Sunday 11 October was NUI Galway's Mental Health Week, which played host to events emphasising the importance of mental health in daily life, destigmatising mental health issues, and informing students of available support.

Of particular interest was a new 10-part series on NUI Galway's student radio station Flirt FM called 'Heads Up', but this wasn't the only long-term programme launched during Mental Health Week; NUI Galway has been selected as the Pilot University for the HSE's Little Things campaign.

Little Things is an initiative aiming to show people that it is small changes to our behaviour that allow us to better deal with the ups and downs of life. In difficult times, it is talking with friends, staying active and eating well that can contribute to a more even disposition and help us feel brighter.

There are eight campaign slogans that students are being asked to keep in mind:

1. 8 hours sleep make the other 16 easier
2. Add friends to your tea
3. Boost your mood with healthy food
4. If a friend seems distant catch up with them
5. Drink less and great nights become good mornings
6. Lending an ear is lending a hand
7. Problems feel smaller when you share them

8. The more you move the better your mood

All Clubs and Societies were called on to organize events that integrated one of these eight little things, in order to raise awareness of the campaign amongst students to put the thoughts into action.

NUI Galway Acting Head of Sport Kathy Hynes said that Little Things is about extending people's reach: reaching out to others, participating in and strengthening our communities, and looking after one other.

The Sports Unit is involved in promoting Little Things and, through the newly formed Mental Health and Wellbeing Committee, organized shout-outs in lecture halls throughout the week.

These shout-outs got students to stand up once every hour, even in the lecture hall. Sitting down for long periods has been correlated with increased risk of Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Random students that were seen to stand were issued prizes throughout the week. In getting students to stand up for their health, the Sports Unit attempted to rouse an interest among the student body in looking after themselves in small but important ways.

Find out more about Little Things website at <http://www.yourmentalhealth.ie>, a wonderful online resource for information on and support for mental health.



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JANE'S WORDS: Jam Consumption is a Human Right

Attending third level education is recognised as a privileged opportunity to advance a person's academic attainment, presenting numerous challenging and rewarding learning experiences to achieve this.

I have been a student in NUIG for 1 year and three weeks. While I have found the content of my lectures coherent, the challenge to understand the unspoken social expectations surrounding the black, green and brown bins has been considerably more difficult.

People say you learn a lot when you move out of home for the first time. Personally, I never knew that microwaves had to be cleaned, or that such an amount of hair gets stuck in the plug hole and requires manual removal.

A recent experience also taught me that there is a 90 degree wash option on washing machines. Living on a budget of €12.23 for a month is difficult when you have to buy a complete new collection of underwear, t-shirts, socks, towels and lounge pants. The cheapest tin of tuna, 180g, is available from Aldi at €0.89. Mixing a tin of sweetcorn with this, available from Dunnes stores at €0.53 for 200g, will provide you with a substantial lunch for 3 days.

I do agree that third level education provides numerous learning opportunities. For me, one learning point naturally evolves from the previous one.

I have had many of these 'learning opportunities' in recent years. In 2014 I completed a course in social skills. At the end of this, my teacher, Derek, advised me to do the course again. With the next course being full, I came to the most obvious conclusion and began a degree in psychology with sociology as a mature student.

Initially, I came to college expecting to learn about the principles of human behaviour. To discover the science of 'social norms', to determine the reasons why people engage in known unhealthy actions and to answer the ever relevant question; why do people watch and spend time discussing the Kardashians?

I did not expect to have to learn about more subtle behaviours, such as, when it's my turn to take out the bin by interpreting the tone of voice and body language of my housemate Orla when she says, "just to let you know, green bin day was yesterday and I took it out. Again."

My mother has always said that "Jam consumption is a basic human right". However, judging by Orla's rearrangement of her food



items, placing her jam on her top shelf and out of my reach, I'm beginning to wonder where my mother got her information from. I always thought human rights were provided for, without question. As I observe and study human behaviour in more detail, I realise I may have been misinformed on this matter.

There are many unspoken challenges with regard to student living. Trying to live off a budget of €50 per week, for example, is difficult when all of the essentials are considered; food, travel, books, origami kits. Even though this is difficult, it is these essential items that I

had expected to have to budget for. Studying cognitive psychology and theories such as the self-fulfilling prophecy can be complex, however I do not feel these compare to the realisation and learning of how to incorporate print credit into my weekly budget.

I've adapted my behaviour and learned ways to manage. Examples of this include always printing two pages per sheet, front and back and avoiding reference pages and that page at the end "copyright of said article is the property of..." etc. - which succeeds in thieving each NUI

Galway student of an extra eight cent per print completed.

It has been the weeks when I forget to click the handout option, printing 36 individual pages, which causes the greatest affect to my quality of life and provides me with the most significant learning opportunities. On these occasions, I am glad of previous learning experiences.

I'm hoping that a future said experience will not be that I have become tired of the tuna fish and sweetcorn diet.

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Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

The professor of harsh reality who changed my life...

By John Mulry

I believe we all encounter, people throughout our lives that influence us in a certain way. The 'giant' I want to share with you today is one who, from a business point of view, has had the biggest impact on me. His name is Dan Kennedy and he's known as the 'Millionaire Maker' and the 'Professor of Harsh Reality' (due to his no B.S. approach to business, time management, people and wealth creation).

How I encountered Dan is similar to how a lot of people encounter him: a reference from someone else (much like this). The first time I ever really heard of Dan Kennedy (I'd heard tid-bits here and there before), I was over in a business mastermind meeting in Liverpool and the two guys organising it, Chris and Jon, kept harping on and on "Dan says this", "Dan says that".

I could tell that they weren't really doing him justice so I took it upon myself to find out more about him. I was in the airport waiting for my flight home and I began researching him a bit more. Imme-

diately I recognised he was different but also he was an authority when it came to business, strategy, wealth and autonomy.

If you read or will read my first book *Your Elephant's Under Threat*, I'm a big (scrap that, a huge) believer in three simple but powerful words. Invest, Consume and Act. I believe success comes down to investing in yourself, consuming what you invest in and then acting on what you consume.

Well I'm also a believer that if you want to learn something you might as well learn it from the best. So I decided to seek out Dan. And to say it as concisely as possible, I'm delighted I did. I can contribute a lot of things to me investing, consuming and acting on Dan's strategies, one of which is meeting Jess, my girlfriend and the love of my life.

People ask me how I attribute Dan to me meeting Jess. It's pretty simple actually. One of Dan's core teachings is that you should be somebody, be somewhere and have something to say.

Jess was starting out as the editor of *Sin* newspaper and she was looking for contributors, I saw the

opportunity of writing for *Sin*, as a way to be somewhere and have something to say so I contacted her. We met, and the rest as they say is history... I'm a big romantic at heart.

While I was travelling back I signed up for Dan's No B.S. Marketing letter and about a week later, something which I thought was just a 'big box of stuff' arrive at my door. It was my introduction to Dan and GKIC (Glazer Kennedy Insider's Circle).

Inside this box there were some introductory materials, my first No B.S. letter, some DVD's and an offer for something called Magnetic Marketing (Dan's flagship product). I devoured everything in that box, the printed materials, the DVD's and immediately and ordered Magnetic Marketing.

I got it; I instantly realised, like a flash of lightning, that this is what I needed to grow my business, to leap frog over my competition and to remove years of waste, worry and wondering. After all, what I was doing at the time wasn't working, there was no point doing what other people were doing because the majority hadn't a clue. I wanted to

learn from the best and it was clear that Dan was up there with the best.

I became such a serious student of Dan's and GKIC that I later became their Certified Business Advisor here in Ireland. Why? Well, honestly when I first started immersing myself in Dan's strategies I wanted to use them just for my own gain. I later realised (and write about in depth in my first book *Your Elephant's Under Threat*) that I could do more, be more and profit more by helping other business owners implement his magnetic marketing and business growth strategies in their businesses.

Where am I going with all this?

Like I said in the beginning, throughout our lives we all encounter and come across certain people who will have a big impact on us and shape us into the person we become. I wanted to share with you my own discovery with Dan to impart onto you that you must be open to discovering your giants. I think this comes naturally to me but like I've written previously, you can get your inspiration from many places but only if you're looking for it. You also must be willing to do

things differently to succeed and be willing to look outside of your immediate circle.

If I chose to just look within my circle for results, would I have gotten them? Maybe, but likely not. I certainly wouldn't have decided to be somebody, be somewhere and have something to say and thus meet Jess.

Finally, I wanted to share this with you because, contrary to popular thinking or belief, success isn't going to be handed to you just because you think you deserve it or are entitled to it.

You have to go out there and invest your time, money, and energy into it. You then have to do what others won't do, actually consume and act on what you invest in, just like I did. Oh, and if you're going to model any method for success, you might as well make things easier for yourself and model someone who's doing what you want to do.

And if you can't find anyone, here's some advice from another giant, Earl Nightingale: "If you can't find a model for success, look at what the majority is doing and do the opposite".



Humans of NUI Galway: DR. PHILIP DINE

By Grace McKeever

This is the start of my 14th year here. I've obviously been here for quite a while. My grandfather was actually a school teacher. He taught French where I'm from originally in the UK, in Devon. So he was a teacher there, and I'd been to France and seen French people and been interested in French things. It's just lovely when you

pick up on it. So when I came to be a student that was one of the things I pursued.

I've learned we make mistakes. We keep making mistakes again and again, but, then we gradually make less and less. It's a good thing to make mistakes, I still do.

I actually have done live French radio and it was terrifying. The best thing about it is that you can't go back to it and change it.





Bloggers go 'Into The West' to network with like-minded people

Blogging group run by local girls is taking Galway by storm

By Jessica Thompson
Photos by Julia Puchovska.

For some time now, bloggers have been making their way up in the world, slowly taking over the internet until we start to trust their word above that of anyone else when it comes to product reviews. And with the rise of bloggers comes the rise of local organisation, Into The West Blogger Network (#itwbn).

Established in 2014, ITWBN was founded by local blogger Sinéad Carroll who runs her own blog at Yummy Mummy Fashion and Lifestyle. The idea behind the organisation was to bring bloggers 'into the west' of Ireland to meet up, chat and forge new relationships with like-minded people.

"I started blogging two years ago and I realised that there was no network or people to go to if you wanted to ask any questions or find out if you were doing it right," Sinéad explains.

"So as a mother I found it very difficult to get on a bus and go. So I decided to put it out there and see if there are any other bloggers around the west. And we decided to have afternoon tea in the g Hotel and it went from there."

It was after that very first event that Saibh Egan (whose blog is Wild Cosmia) came on board; "She spotted it on social media and before we started organising the next event we got all our branding organised. She'd a logo created within four hours. So I knew then that I needed somebody like that to work with because I couldn't do it all by myself," says Sinéad.

Since the first event in the g Hotel, ITWBN has grown from strength to

strength, holding big events in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Glenlo Abbey and various other locations around Galway, while also arranging smaller meet-ups in the likes of The House Hotel and, more recently, 56 Central.

"The network wouldn't work without bloggers. The 20 people who showed up at the first event are continuing to support it a year on. They may not be able to make every event, but they're contributing to our Facebook or Instagram," says Sinéad.

"Without them it's not going to work and without them blogging after the event, we can't get brands behind us or we can't get sponsorship, and that's the only way it's going to continue on."

With a Facebook group of more than 600 members, it's no wonder ITWBN is taking Galway – and much the rest of the country – by storm. Bloggers are coming from the furthest corners of Ireland just to attend the popular events, many of which sell out extremely fast.

With participants of the events writing detailed blog posts after each outing, brands that get behind the group have a lot to gain by sponsoring an event, while the bloggers themselves are treated to goodie bags, delicious treats, a lot of fun and blogging tips from some of the country's top bloggers – the most recent event, for example, featured NUI Galway graduate and highly popular blogger Erika Fox of Retro Flame.

"Obviously it's hard for everyone to stay blogging all the time. We want to be able to supply the content. We need to keep getting those brands to get the bloggers opportunities, and without



the bloggers, the brands don't have anyone to give the opportunities to. So we have to keep everyone blogging so that they'll continue to be successful," says Saibh who, since getting involved in the beginning, has helped Sinéad to make ITWBN as successful as it is today.

"We're overwhelmed by the support of the brands really. There are big brands now that are behind us, but we can't forget the small ones as well, like Cara Pharmacy, McSharry's, The House Hotel, Flanagan's," says Sinéad.

The benefits of joining ITWBN are endless. Firstly, it costs nothing to join and there is an unlimited amount of support for one another in the Facebook group. Tickets for the events vary in price, but these are affordable and each blogger gets more than their money's worth out of attending an event.

"The thing is, if you decided to start a blog in the morning and you don't know anything about HTML or blogging or platforms or hosting, that's going to take you an awful long time," Saibh explains, leading on to another venture of ITWBN: Blog School.

The girls are currently organising workshops for new or inexperienced bloggers who want to learn all there is to know about starting a blog.

"We have a November event lining up as well and we're hoping to get businesses involved, because we believe every business should have a blog on their website," says Sinéad.

"Content is key. The only way they're going to be discovered is if they

have content. Facebook is no good – writing a ream of stuff on Facebook is no good. You have to have somewhere that you can refer back to later, and I think slowly but surely we're getting it, but there's still a lot to be taught."

Anyone is welcome to join ITWBN and the girls are looking for more male bloggers to get involved too. Blogs of all shapes and sizes are welcome and the more diverse the group, the more the bloggers can learn from one another.

"Blogging can be very lonely if you're just sitting behind the screen and you're blogging, blogging, blogging. And are you reaching anyone? Are you talking to anyone? Whereas if you're coming to these events or if you're talking to people online who have the exact same interest, you have an instant support network," says Saibh.

"So by talking to people online, you're making friends, but coming to the events means that you're getting out from behind the computer and you're meeting in person and you have that personal interaction."

The girls are hoping to bring ITWBN further by giving a series of talks in NUI Galway, GTI and GMIT. The plan is to get more student societies involved and get more people blogging, so if you'd like your society to host a talk, or if you'd like to get involved with ITWBN, email Sinéad and Saibh on itwbniireland@gmail.com, tweet @itwbn, find them on Facebook or check out www.itwbn.ie for more information.



ITWBN organisers with Erika Fox of Retro Flame at their most recent event in the Glenlo Abbey Hotel. Photo: Julia Puchovska/Wonderfulife Productions.



Erika Fox honoured with lifetime membership by NUI Galway's BizSoc

Popular blogger shares her knowledge at NUI Galway event

By Sorcha O'Connor

NUI Galway's BizSoc bestowed an honorary lifetime membership upon highly successful fashion blogger and entrepreneur Erika Fox on Monday 28 September.

The NUI Galway Commerce graduate is the face behind the renowned fashion blog Retro Flame and since graduating from NUI Galway four years ago she has worked alongside Oliva Palermo and Whitney Port during New York Fashion Week and now holds a position as social media manager at Vince Camuto.

Erika, standing in the St Anthony's theatre of the Cairnes building, had invaluable knowledge to share of the fashion industry and business world and those in



Erika Fox speaking at the ITWBN event, which took place the day before the NUI Galway event. All photos: Julia Puchovska/Wonderfulife Productions.

attendance were certainly given food for thought.

Erika's success story did not just begin the moment she graduated university. It was the result of hard graft put in throughout her years in college. Erika spoke about her summers on the J1 visa where she landed herself fashion internships whilst working in a bar for income.

It was clear that Erika's initiative and willingness to 'chance her arm' have both attributed to her career. New York Fashion week with Oliva Palermo was Erika's first job on the Graduate Visa and came about from an email she sent to a writer for Oliva, with whom she had networked one summer, looking for a start.

As luck would have it a photographer was needed to follow Oliva for the week and capture her outfits and Erika fitted the

bill for the role.

Erika explained how Americans love people who have experience and not just a degree. She felt that her blog and the year she spent in Galway Technical Institute studying fashion set her out from the crowd. And securing the post with Oliva, which she loved but which was also hard work, also in turn stood to her.

She said; "A big brand job mightn't be enjoyable but it will be worth it."

However she also added how her time in NUI Galway was paramount to her success.

"College stood to me so much," she said.

The talk given by Erika was very insightful. At such a young age, she had a lot of wisdom to share on how to impress employers and how to network successfully.

"I am obsessed with Uber!" she said. She told a story of how she had helped her friend get an interview with a successful business man as he was sharing a lift with her.

For budding bloggers, Erika had plenty of advice. An audience member wondered about how to maintain a following online. Erika

explained that two things were key: consistency and quality.

"A blog," she said, "it's your personal brand... you have to invest into things to get something out of it."

Answering about how she manages to get everything done (followers of her will know how busy she always is) she explained how she felt that the busier she is the more productive she is. She said how it is "totally possible" to balance everything.

Despite all the success and her exciting life in the Big Apple, Erika was noticeably down to earth and bubbly. Afterwards, I spoke with her briefly and asked her about how campus life helped her with her fashion pursuits. She said how doing *Sin's Style Spot* was an opportunity for her to do something fashion-orientated on campus.

I think it goes to show that opportunity is everywhere you look - and Erika Fox is a prime example of how grabbing opportunity is the key to success.

Check out her blog retro-flame.com and follow her on Instagram @retroflame and Snapchat @retroflame1 ("Don't ask me who @retroflame is!" she laughed).



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The Addams Family Musical to open next February

GUMS gearing up for an exciting show

By Kieran O'Brien

Students who were around last year may remember GUMS' last production, *Cabaret*. A fantastically ominous musical set in Germany during the rise of the Nazi Party, *Cabaret* went down as a huge success.

This year, GUMS are shaking things up with their next production, *The Addams Family Musical*. Based on the iconic characters created by Charles Addams for his one-panel gag comics, but more recognisable from the famous 1991 film (the one that continues to inspire cosplayers to this day), the musical will be performed by the very best of NUI Galway's talent in February of next year.

When asked about this year's choice of play, Jack Fitzgerald, treasurer for GUMS, responded with the following; "The committee chose *The Addams Family Musical* for lots of reasons that more or less fuse into it being the musical that we felt best suited what we wanted for GUMS this year.

"It's a light-hearted and fun show which is a nice contrast to last year's show, *Cabaret*, which was rather dark in its subject matter and themes. It also has fantastic chorus involvement with lots of great songs and dances as well as a wonderful lead cast. Overall it's just a very entertaining show that we hope people watching will enjoy as much as we're going to enjoy putting it on."

GUMS auditioned over 200 people for the musical in September, but thankfully, even those who didn't make the lead cast of ten won't miss out on the fun. As Mr Fitzgerald tells us; "The chorus at GUMS is always excellent because anyone who auditions is entitled to a place in it so there's a great turnout."

Mr Fitzgerald, also a chorus singer in the upcoming production, spoke positively about this year's chorus; "What's particularly great about the chorus in *The Addams Family Musical* is that [it] is made up of the Addams' ancestors so even though us chorus folk aren't leads we'll still all have our own individ-

ual characters and costumes etc. by virtue of being distinct ancestors from various periods in time. The chorus has rehearsals twice a week, so it's quite a lot of work but well worth it since there's a really great atmosphere."

It's worth mentioning that *The Addams Family* isn't the only musical that GUMS has going on this year. In a collaboration with Dram-Soc that is on "a smaller scale but is just as impressive" as *The Addams Family Musical*, there will be a production of *Heathers: The Musical* from 3 to 6 November.

GUMS will also be performing 24-hour musicals, "short versions of usually well-known shows that the production teams prepare in only 24 hours, which makes them very interesting".

Everyone should also keep an eye open for *NUIG's Got Talent*, NUI Galway's annual talent show. Heats in the college bar take place over the next few weeks, culminating in the final which takes place in the Bailey Allen Hall.

The Addams Family Musical will run from 9 to 14 February 2016 in the Black Box Theatre. Ticket prices and sales date to be announced closer to the event.

REVIEW: Legend

By Orla Cullen

RATING: 4/5

DIRECTOR: Brian Helgeland

ACTORS: Tom Hardy, Emily Browning, Christopher Eccleston

GENRE: Crime/thriller

Based on a true story, this depiction of the lives of the infamous Kray brothers in 1960s London is one that keeps your interest gripped from start to the end.

Told from the perspective of Frances Shea, the wife of one of the twins, we get an insight to the personal lives of the Kray brothers and the events that led to their rise and downfall in London.

Hardy gives a stellar performance as he portrays two perplexing and enigmatic yet different characters. Reggie Kray is the brains behind the operation, a smooth operator and hopeless romantic so deep in the gangster world yet trying to make an honest living for the woman he loves. Ronnie Kray is the psychotic and ruthless twin craving power no matter the cost.

Although the

script was lacking in places, Hardy's ability to differentiate between the twins gave rise to two intriguing characters that had you invested in the film from start to finish.

The story focused on both the psychotic and crazy antics of Ronnie Kray, constantly throwing unpredictable turns into the film and the split interests of Reggie Kray between his brother and his lover.

Ron's antics are what keep you interested in the story yet there is something intriguing between the loyalty Reggie has for his brother and the love that he has for Frances that makes you wonder about the truly mysterious brother.

Although hard-core action thrillers may find the movie a tad lengthy, overall *Legend* does exactly what a good *thriller* should do: have you hanging on from start to finish.



Resonate

Edited by Neil Slevin

Resonate is Sin's very own culture section seeking NUI Galway-based students' creative work to showcase and share with our readers in each edition.

We welcome submissions in all genres of writing and/or visual art, and each week select the work that we think will reach out to and resonate most with our student readership.

This week's featured student is poet Tony Deffely.

Tony is fulfilling his long outstanding promise to himself to return to college to do an MA in writing; he tells his wife it's about self-actualisation, but privately he says it's for the craic!

A native of Glenisland, just outside Castlebar, Tony has worked in second level and further education for most of his life. He recently graduated with an MSc in Leadership and Management from Leeds Metropolitan University.

He is a committed trade unionist and is currently Secretary of the Castlebar and District Council of

Trade Unions. He is a past president of the UCG Student Union (CTM) and also a past president of the Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI). His wife, Maggie, runs an acupuncture clinic in Castlebar. They have two children.

With Ernie Lyons, a recording engineer, Tony produced the popular CD "Into the Quiet Stream", which combined the poetry of W.B. Yeats with the sounds of nature and a range of traditional Irish airs in a popular and commercially successful venture.

If you are interested in having your work featured in future issues of *Resonate* -- or if you have requests for further work by any of our selected contributors -- please contact Neil at N.SLEVINI@nuigalway.ie.

We look forward to hearing from you.

TOO BLUE LADY

This afternoon, blue dress, blue mood,
the brush piled up my hair.
I found my way to the Blue Café;
my beasts were waiting there.

Just one blue glass to burn my fast,
another for the rat
that gnaws a hole inside my soul;
another after that.

My violated visions haunt
the place where dreams rejoiced.
Behold an old Magdalen, sold,
and waiting for her Christ.

My hazy days just brood away,
a blurred discordant tune,
but I'll drink tonight and put life right
tomorrow afternoon.

23:3

FOUNDATIONS

The driver revved the digger up
and ramped down off the flashing
truck.
Disharmony of hazard lights
cross flared in rhythmic frantic flash.
The monstrous neck swung back
and forth
with scrape and heavy tortured grind
thrusting tyrannosauriously.

I watched it, like an awestruck child,
track out its diesel stinking way,
along the rugged rutted path
up to the well-marked site
where lines of lime
traced out the digging points.

The driver smiled a little smile
as if he wished to sanctify
the simple slapdash sacrament

and then
the great neck arched and dug
foundations to unyielding rock
to found a solid shelter up
against the rain in wintertime
and wild winds from the time to come.
They finished quickly and were gone
and crows and shrieking seagulls
came
drawn by the broken soil to feed.
A goldfinch and a robin sang.
A sunset spotlight slanted east
through ever-changing gowns of
gold.
A neighbour shouted from the road,
'God's Blessing on your work today';
I stayed inside the rutted trench,
preparing concrete pour at dawn
in naked rock and mud stained sweat
as trees grew dark and night came on.

She came near darkness with her
light,
'Beware,' I said, 'of trips and slips';
'I'll take the risk,' she smiled and said,
and stretching kissed me on the lips.

PLAQUES AND PRIZES

In a still, secluded place
beside the hillside walk
that wanders towards
Moyle,
I saw your trophies thrown,

fly tipped,
old and abandoned,
discarded plunder from a dead
man's dream.

It's 50 years or more now, I suppose,
since all those plaques and prizes
made hoorays.
Now, in a heap they lie,
illegally,
from silverware to stain.
Your prizes dumped
by some despicable,
mean minded,
cheapskate retrobate
deceiver and receiver,
in spit contempt
of nature and of man.

No more of that,
for you are gone,
wherever gone,
and victories won,
and pleased pride,
and loves well loved,
and dreams well-dreamed,
and songs well song,
lost in that dark oblivion of death.

And who can criticize us if we pray.
Believers, non-believers and the rest;
that far beyond the treacheries of life
in summer shadows somewhere
with enchanted dreams
that you can rest in peace.

JAMIE HARRISON: From the streets of Galway to the bright lights of Hollywood

Popular Galway musician releases his first single

By Meda Balciunaite

A popular Galway musician, who can regularly be found busking on Shop Street, is set to release his first EP this week, entitled 'If I Only Knew Your Name'.

Jamie Harrison is a name that is becoming familiar to more and more people every day. The Galway City native, who started his career busking on the streets of his home town, recently found himself in Hollywood, where he filmed the music video for his debut single.

Jamie's story is a fascinating one: he started playing music when he was 11 years old. His dad had found an old electric guitar in the attic and taught Jamie his first three chords, which helped him to write his very first song about a crush he had on a girl in his school.

At the age of 19, Jamie had a tonsil operation and the next day, he discovered and fell in love with his voice. From then on, he started singing to accompany his passion for playing and writing his music.

"For over six years, I've been a busker. There have been thousands of cold mornings, waking up at 6am and waiting around in the cold; hundreds of days hanging around in the wind and rain, hoping for a dry 30 minutes that I could play," said Jamie in a Facebook post promoting his new single last week.

"I've been confronted by police, aggressive drunk people, real life 'trolls', people looking to start fights or just people trying to cause trouble. It was never exactly the 'glamorous lifestyle' that you dream about as a kid when you think of becoming a musician, and it hasn't always been easy, but you know what, I've loved every second of it.

"It has allowed me to make money from doing what I love, but most of all, it has allowed me to meet all of you wonderful people [his fans], who have been so supportive of me over the years."

As a child, Jamie's dream was always to perform professionally but it wasn't something he considered actually happening in the future. After going to Limerick to study architecture and teaching, he decided to quit and start doing music professionally and full time.

Naturally, his parents weren't happy about that. But, he said, his mother and father are now delighted with where he stands and proud of how far he has come since he picked up his first guitar all those years ago.

Jamie always thought that he would be performing music "on the side" and that he would be doing something else in life to pay the bills; he never thought he'd end up where he is now. He never wanted to become famous; he just wanted to do what he loves.

As a musician, Jamie said he was influenced a lot by Angus Young, the lead guitarist from AC/DC. But when it comes to being a true, passionate performer and doing what makes him happy, he says, "by far the biggest influence is John Mayer".

For Jamie, it is important to do what you love and making other people happy and having a connection with people through his songs and his music is what he loves.

"Now I'm releasing my debut single. But I'm unsigned; no record company; no big music industry marketing strategy or team; no publisher; no real money left to promote my music video as I've spent all my own money on making it," he said in his Facebook post, before going on to say what he does have are thousands of fans that could do more for him than any record company ever could.

Writing songs always had some ups and downs for Jamie, with some song-writing taking years, and some taking thirty minutes to write, like his song "If I Only Knew Your Name" which only took him twenty minutes to do. He says he put two songs together: the verses from one and the chorus from another.

"Special songs like this come from nowhere, very unexpectedly and suddenly," he tells *Sin*.

The best feeling for Jamie is when he writes a song and it feels like he has added something to the world. He can express himself in his songs and then he feels settled when he is done, just like talking to a good friend.

"At the bottom of it all, when you strip away everything, we are all the same. And I am just like you; just that guy who sings on the street," he says.

"I won't pretend it's not a scary thing to be releasing my first single, because I'd be lying if I did. I'm releasing a single to the same standard as any big record label would, and it's completely on my own," he continued on his Facebook page.

"And I'm not that guy whose family knows everyone in the industry. I'm not that guy who got lucky somewhere along the way. I'm that guy who has dedicated myself to music for years, and who has sacrificed everything else and saved up every penny to release his music himself."

The hardest thing is always to balance the business part of the job and the artistic side, because for the artistic side to open up you need to be with yourself and deep in your thoughts. And the business part of it all makes it hard to concentrate on the music side of things.

"It is kind of hard to stop sometimes and smell the roses, because everything progresses so fast and comes at full speed," he says.

Jamie didn't want to hide the fact that he wishes to play for thousands of people in big venues in the near future. But he's not sure if he will be in the professional music industry in the future because it is so unpredictable. He says he cannot see himself there in the next five years; "I live every day and every week as it comes."

He likes to set short-term goals for the future and is confident we will be hearing his music for a long time ahead as he tries to make people happy and win over their hearts.

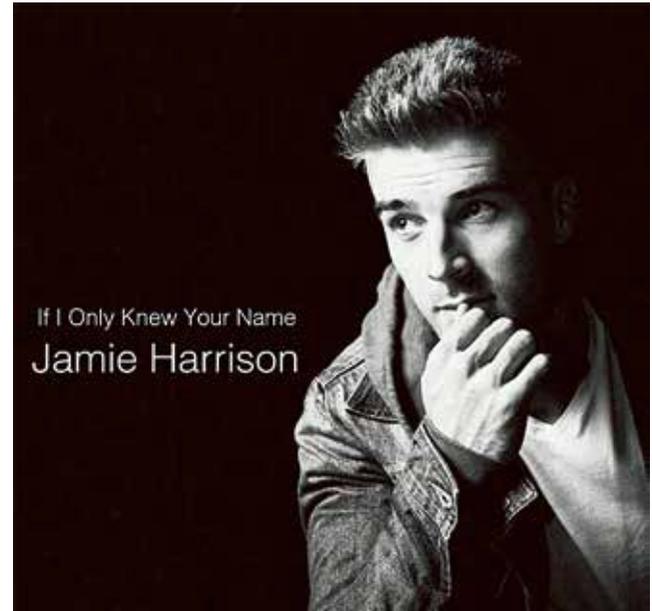
"No matter how much I put into my music, if I don't have you guys, I've got nothing," he tells 12,000 Facebook fans.

"I play for people; I play for you and that's what I love to do. My music is your music because you are the people that allow me to do this. Any success with this or any other song, I owe to you for listening, supporting and helping me share. So please help me get this song heard by as many people as possible," he concluded, asking his fans to share his new single far and wide to help him get it out there.

The fact is we will be hearing Jamie more and more in the near future and hopefully in the far future too.

'If I Only Knew Your Name' will be

released on Friday 16 October and can be pre-ordered now on iTunes for only 69c. To watch the video and to keep up to date with Jamie's music, find him on Facebook at 'Jamie Harrison'.





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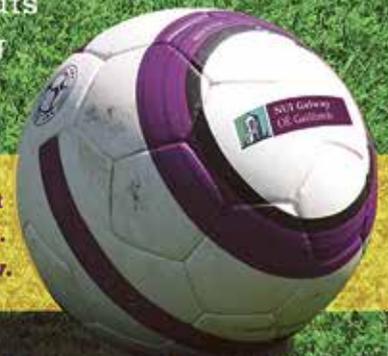
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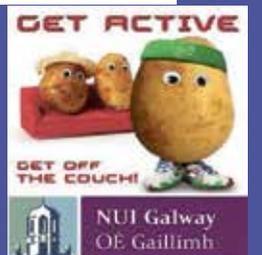
Download NUIG Clubs Event



	CLUB	WHEN	WHERE
M o n d a y	Swim - Top Squad	8am - 9.30am	2 Lanes
	Karate	6-8pm	Racquetball Court
	Archery	6-8pm	Hall 3
	Futsal Soccer	8-10pm	Hall 1 & 2
	Badminton	5-8pm	Hall 1 & 2(from 6pm)
	Basketball	4-6pm	Hall 2
	Taekwondo & Judo	8-10pm	Hall 3
	Swim	8.30pm - 11pm	Full Pool
T u e s d a y	Swim - 2nd Squad/1st Squad	8-9.30am/12-1.30pm	3 lanes
	Mountainbike - Spinning	6-7pm	Studio
	Handball	6-8pm	Racquetball Court
	Fencing	6-7.30pm	Hall 1
	Muay Thai	7.30-9.30pm	Hall 1
	Karate & Aikido	6-8pm	Hall 2
	Volleyball	8-10.30pm	Hall 2
	Kendo	6-7pm	Hall 3
	Ladies Basketball - Varsity	7-8pm	Hall 3
	Cricket	9-10.30pm	Hall 3
	Mountaineering	7-10pm	Climbing Wall
Kayak	9.30-11pm	Full Pool	
W e d n e s d a y	Swim - 1st Squad	7-8.30am	2 Lanes/3 lanes
	Volleyball	5-7pm	Hall 1
	Cricket	7-9pm	Hall 1
	Mens Varsity Basketball	5-7pm	Hall 2
	Taekwondo	7-9pm	Hall 2
	Archery	4-6pm	Hall 3
	Karate & Judo sharing	6-8pm	Hall 3
	Badminton	9-11pm	3 halls
	Sub Aqua	9.30 - 11pm	Full Pool

	CLUB	WHEN	WHERE
T h u r s d a y	Frizbee	5-7pm	Hall 1
	Muay Thai	7-9pm	Hall 1
	Cricket	9.-10.30pm	Hall 1
	Handball	6-8pm	Racquetball Court
	Basketball - Recreational	6-8pm	Hall 2
	Ladies Basketball - Varsity	8-10pm	Hall 2
	Table Tennis & Fencing	6-8pm	Hall 3
	Taekwondo & Aikido	8-10pm	Hall 3
	Fencing Advanced	8-10pm	Racquetball Court
	Mountaineering	7-10pm	Climbing Wall
	Swim - Top Squad	8.30-10.00pm	2 lanes
2nd Squad & Learn to Swim	9.30 - 11pm	Full Pool	
F r i d a y	Swim - 1st Squad	8-9.30am	2 lanes
	Mens Basketball - Varsity	11am - 12.30pm	Hall 2
	Archery	11am - 1pm	Hall 3
	Lacrosse	8-10pm	Hall 1
	Table Tennis	6-8pm	Hall 1
	Volleyball	6-10pm	Hall 2
	Judo Club	6-8pm	Hall 3
	Waterpolo	9.30-11pm	Full Pool
	Taekwondo	12-2PM	Racquetball Court
	Fencing	2-4pm	Racquetball court
S a t u r d a y			
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Galway match Kilkenny with 12 GAA Hurling All-Star nominations

By Padraic Ward

The Galway hurlers successful run to this year's All-Ireland hurling final has been acknowledged with the announcement last week of this year's GAA/GPA hurling All-Star nominations.

Galway leads the way with a total of 12 nominations; a figure mirrored only by All-Ireland champions Kilkenny.

There was further good news for the Tribesmen with the announcement that both Jason Flynn and Cathal Mannion have also been nominated for the young hurler of the year accolade. They are joined on the shortlist by Waterford's Tadhg de Burca.

The nominations cap a very fruitful year for this young Galway side and the sharp shooting forward line are rewarded with five of the six forwards being nominated - one more than Kilkenny. Flynn and Mannion (the Championship's top scorer from play) are joined by Jonathan Glynn, Joe Canning (who is in line to win his third All-Star award) and Conor Whelan.

Whelan's nomination in particular is a personal triumph for the young 19-year-old from Kinvara, having been plucked from obscurity and fast-tracked into the first team after some very promising displays for the intermediate team earlier in the season. His is a truly meteoric rise having never played a league game for Galway before being called into the senior squad in May.

Only John Hanbury, Aidan Harte and Cyril Donnellan miss out from the team that lined out in the All-Ireland final on the first Sunday in September. Hanbury is the main fall guy in defence having been on the receiving end of Seamus Callanan's "Roy of the Rovers" display in the semi-final win over Tipperary.

The Drom and Inch man ended the season as the Championship top scorer and gave the individual performance of the year when pillaging a personal 3-9 in that game. His individual brilliance in 2015 sees him also nominated for the Hurler of the Year award. He is joined on the shortlist by the 2014 winner Richie Hogan and his Kilkenny teammate T.J. Reid. Reid is the favourite to win the award having won both All-Ireland titles this year with this county and club Ballyhale Shamrocks.

The names nominated reflect the season. Waterford's successful year in which they contested the Munster Final and won the National League sees them receive the next best share of nominations with 11 in total.

Despite being Munster champions and only losing out narrowly to Galway in the semi-final, Tipperary received just seven nominations. In all, seven counties are represented in the nominations with the four semi-finalists dominating. Completing the 45-man list are Tony Kelly of Clare, Seamus Harnedy of Cork and Mark Schutte of Dublin.

This year the system of selection has changed. Outfield players have been nominated in broader categories of defence, midfield and attack rather than by their line on the pitch. This is already the position with regard to the football All-Stars and reflects the current trend in the game where traditional positions are becoming a thing of the past with teams playing with more fluidity.

The awards will be voted on by members of the GPA and the players will be presented with their awards on the night. The ceremony takes place at the National Convention Centre in Dublin on Friday 6 November.

This is a man's world...

By Samantha Kelly

To receive a scholarship for college is every student's dream. Finding the balance between study and sport and work can be difficult, and having the opportunity to be financially comfortable with more time to study and train is every sports-player's desire. What could be more satisfying than seeing your hard work pay off? However, for many female athletes in college it is increasingly difficult to receive any scholarships at all.

For a reason that is still unknown, the male gender is domineering in the sports field continuously, and not always because of their talent. Female players are just as successful; last year, Ireland's women's rugby team enjoyed great success, for example. So there is no reason why there should not be an equal opportunity for sports scholarships between male and female students in Ireland.

It is a statistic that one in five women will receive a sports scholarship, meaning there are four times as many males who will earn that same scholarship.

The main colleges in Ireland that favour male scholarships are: Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), Trinity College Dublin, NUI Maynooth and NUI Galway.

An example of this favouritism was noted in the amount of rugby scholarships that went to males in NUI Maynooth and Trinity College Dublin. Around 30 scholarships were given to each of these universities. However, none of these were received by female student rugby players. Accordingly, all the scholarships were given to male students in both NUIM and TCD.

According to the *Irish Independent*; "ex-Ireland rugby international Fiona Steed says she is disappointed but not surprised after findings were published regarding women missing out on sport scholarships".

As a result of this, the rate of young women who drop-out of sports is continuing on the increase. Even the lack of knowledge about the availability of scholarships for women is a topic of agitation.

Is it not about time female athletes were given the same equal opportunities the male gender have been given?

NUIG Fencers Celebrate Successful Start to the Season

By Janic Schulte

The NUI Galway Fencing Club has had an excellent start to the competition season when they held the Galway Open, a national ranking competition.

The event that took place in the NUI Galway Kingfisher over a weekend in late September and saw a great turnout of some of the country's top fencers as well as some high-ranking international competitors from France, Italy, the USA, Romania, Israel and Germany.

Many of the medals to be won stayed in

Galway due to the outstanding performances of NUI Galway's fencers. Janic Schulte and Derick O'Flynn won bronze in the Men's Sabre event, Marie Carkill won silver in Women's Sabre and bronze in Women's Foil and recent NUI Galway alumni, Fiadhait McDonough won gold in Women's Sabre and silver in Women's Foil.

The team is now looking forward to a hopefully successful season and if you want to find out more about the sport of fencing or are eager to now pick up a weapon yourself then you can find the NUIG Fencing club at fencing.nuigalway.ie.



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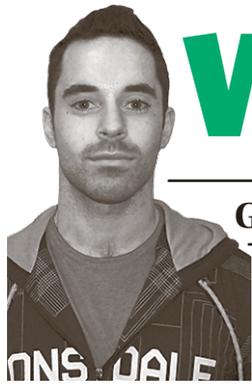
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WHAT'S ANOTHER YEAR?

Galway County Board aim for stability in Cunningham and Walsh for 2016 as Mayo football faces uncertainty

By Neil Slevin

At the time of going to press, Galway's County Board have reappointed Anthony Cunningham as Galway hurling manager for the 2015-2016 season, for what will be his fifth in charge of the senior side.

However, it's now understood that his playing squad are unhappy at what they see as the County Board ignoring their views: Cunningham's extension as Galway manager was ratified just two days after the squad met and united in their desire to seek a change in manager.

Cunningham has led Galway to two All-Ireland finals in his four years at the helm since taking over in 2012: his side have lost both, including this year's decider to Kilkenny, but did succeed in defeating Brian Cody's Cats to win the Leinster Championship in 2012.

The St Thomas' man won two All-Irelands as a player, but Galway have not lifted Liam MacCarthy since the team Cunningham played on in 1988, something they may struggle to change in light of Kilkenny's recent dominance of the modern game – even now that they are transi-

tioning to life beyond Henry Shefflin.

Reflecting on this season, Galway's supporters will have been heartened and dismayed in equal measure by their team's performance in the All-Ireland final's opening half, one suggesting that they have the ability and skill to go toe-to-toe with Kilkenny in the near future, but counterbalanced by their second half collapse in the face of Kilkenny's will-driven onslaught.

Supporters will also remember fondly Galway's last-minute semi-final win over Tipperary, but perhaps that was viewed by too many as Galway's 'final' of the summer; perhaps it was asking too much for players to go to the well again so soon after that victory's emotional high.

Cunningham also spoke with eloquence and passion on RTÉ in the immediate aftermath of his team's defeat to Kilkenny and crushing disappointment, leaving few, if any, in doubt as to his belief in Galway hurling's potential for better days ahead.

Whether the players get their way to the same extent as their Connacht cousins Mayo remains to be seen; Cunningham's position, however, is precarious at best, with player-management relations paramount in achieving

squad morale, commitment and success in the long-term for Galway hurling.

Meanwhile, football manager Kevin Walsh, who was appointed last year for three seasons, was also ratified, as was minor hurling manager Jeffrey Lynskey, who led Galway to the All-Ireland title on the day of the senior side's defeat with a squad which will have 14 members available again next year.

Like Galway senior hurling, Mayo football faces an uncertain future after joint managers Pat Holmes and Noel Connelly resigned following a meeting with the county board executive on 2 October. Their resignation followed on almost immediately from the Mayo players' delivering a vote of no confidence in the duo earlier in the week, and a follow-up meeting between the players and the county board executive on October 1st.

Right now, one can only speculate as to the root of the problem, but perhaps this lack of confidence stemmed from Mayo's third quarter collapse against Dublin in the All-Ireland semi-final replay – one heavily criticised by The Sunday Game panel for tactical naivety, particularly defensively, and blamed on management rather than the Mayo players themselves.

Connelly and Holmes, who had been in charge for just one season since replacing James Horan, guided Mayo to their fifth consecutive Connacht title with a 6-25 to 2-11 demolition of Sligo in the Connacht final. But, despite almost nationwide hopes – and campaigning – for an end to Mayo's wait for the Sam Maguire, their All-Ireland hopes were dashed by Dublin as they succumbed to a 3-15 to 1-14 defeat in an All-Ireland semi-final replay, marking the fourth consecutive year that Mayo had been undone by the eventual champions.

The *Mayo News* and the *Connaught Telegraph* both reported that players were calling for change following an internal vote, their speculation perhaps set off by leading player Aidan O'Shea's cryptic tweet posted immediately after a Mayo County Board meeting on 16 September; "Logic and @MayoGAA rarely go together," and all of this speculation has been brought to an end by the duo's resignation.

In a statement issued by Connelly and Holmes after they had reviewed their year in charge of Mayo football and announced their resignation, both said that, "by resigning we wish to remove any obstacle that the players might perceive as preventing them from winning the All-Ireland," with the county board in their own statement later commenting that both men "owe nothing to Mayo football".

Who Mayo will seek to step into the breach remains to be seen but, allied with Mayo's ongoing struggle to end 64 years of hurt, the aura of player power surrounding Mayo football at the moment may prove off-putting for most. Watch this space.

Meanwhile, almost equally intriguing news Connacht GAA-wise is that RTÉ GAA analyst Kevin McStay and Fergal O'Donnell are set to be appointed as joint managers of Roscommon's footballers.



Galway manager Anthony Cunningham overseeing his team in the 2015 National Hurling League game against Dublin at Parnell Park in March. Photo via Wikimedia Commons: Seaninryan

McStay, who helped Roscommon side St Brigid's to All-Ireland glory in the club championship two seasons ago, will also have Liam McHale – who played a vital role in that club success – in his backroom team.

McStay and O'Donnell will replace John Evans after the Kerry man called time on his involvement with the Rossies after three seasons in charge.

The county can look forward to an exciting but arduous league campaign in 2016 after Evans successfully masterminded a second successive promotion this season, meaning their young panel will pit their wits against the likes of Dublin, Kerry and Mayo on a weekly basis.

McStay, who has twice been unsuccessful in his bid to take the reins of his native Mayo, claims he is fully focused on task at hand with his adopted county, having retired from his role with the army recently, while his media interests also look likely to be put on hiatus. He told the Herald: "I'm 53, I have the energy for it, the enthusiasm for it. I'm not going to have that forever. I saw this as probably the best time to go into county management.

"I'm a very proud Mayo man and I had two goes at managing my native county: it just didn't happen. So this gives me a chance to test myself at inter-county management, and I obviously was never going to get it with Mayo.

"I've lived most of my adult life in Roscommon, my three girls are Roscommon girls and they support Roscommon. Why should it be anywhere else?"

Lastly, Sligo and Leitrim are both set to stick with their 2014-2015 management of Niall Carew and Shane Ward-led teams respectively, as both counties seek to build upon the foundations they laid last season, Sligo reaching their first Connacht final since 2012 and Leitrim just missing out on promotion from Division 4.

All things considered, it's shaping up to be another intriguing year for Connacht GAA all round...

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YOUR BIWEEKLY HOROSCOPE

As foretold by Mystic Mike



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21 JANUARY - 19 FEBRUARY

Fair fortune is to be yours today. On that note, place a tenner on Elusive Ivy for the 14:25 race in Tipperary; go on, trust me, it's a sure thing.



PISCES

20 FEBRUARY - 20 MARCH

Hate to break it to you but your fortunes are looking so terrible I'd consider watching out for falling pianos. Also anvils, they'll get ya. Beware the name ACME.



ARIES

21 MARCH - 20 APRIL

This is hard to read. As far as I can tell you'll have sporadic bursts of good/bad luck. I'd suggest asking your crush out; just make sure you don't trip over your own feet.



TUARUA

21 APRIL - 21 MAY

A man chooses; a slave obeys. Be a slave to nothing brave Taurus. Go and make your own fortune. Don't let anybody tell you what to do, ever. Now go. Go; do as I say and GO!



GEMINI

22 MAY - 21 JUNE

I don't know what to tell you. I haven't seen a reading this bad since my first day as a supreme wizard. I am so sorry; all I can say is, run and hide.



CANCER

22 JUNE - 22 JULY

The stars and planets will have no bearing on your future whatsoever.



LEO

23 JULY - 23 AUGUST

Ooh you lucky sausage you! Today is the absolute best day for you to do that thing you've been meaning to do; ask that person out; do that big assignment... or just procrastinate like usual.



VIRGO

24 AUGUST - 23 SEPTEMBER

Bad fortune upon you: as bad as the rain during your birth month. Today is a day to hole up inside your home and try to forget about everything bad. If you do leave though, bring a broolly.



LIBRA

24 SEPTEMBER - 23 OCTOBER

My sources (the stars and all that... planets too?) tell me that recently you have turned

over a new year, or else very soon you shall be doing it; your birthday is between 24 September and 23 October.



SCORPIO

24 OCTOBER - 22 NOVEMBER

You, my friend, are amazing. Don't change a thing; you're doing it all perfectly. You've got the looks, brains and talent to take the world. Your day will be great. I love you.



SAGITTARIUS

23 NOVEMBER - 21 DECEMBER

The future is uncertain, try again later.

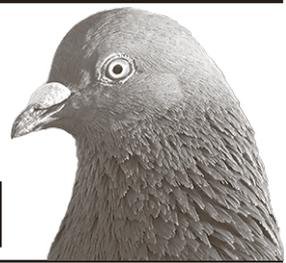


CAPRICORN

22 DECEMBER - 20 JANUARY

By all rights, with luck as terrible as yours, you will probably be dead before you get to actually read this. Sorry bud.

Diary of the SMOKEY'S PIGEON



I always hate the first few weeks of a new year. First years scream when they see me. Some of them even throw food at me to get rid of me, as if I'm intruding on *their* space!

And then there are the people who have to take photos of me, as if I'm some sort of spectacle. Okay, I'm a pigeon, I write a column for the student newspaper and I've got my own Twitter account. But who doesn't?

Anyway, that's why you haven't heard from me in the first two issues of *Sin*. I've been lying low, eating the crumbs of Taytos that drop to the floor when students try to shove the whole packet into their mouths at once.

But I've been informed that many of you have missed me; that I'm what makes *Sin* so enjoyable to read; that you're all dying to find out what I've been up to all summer.

Well fear not dear students and staff of NUI Galway. You will never have to flick through 32 pages of *Sin*, desperately searching for your favourite column, only to find that it's missing - again.

I'm back now, and you will be entertained.

SMOKEY'S PIGEON IS HERE TO STAY!

Irish culture intertwined with gastro-heaven:

SUPERMAC'S SUCCEEDS

By Š. Pøwer

It has long been a socially accepted theory that the foods we have grown up eating ingrain themselves into our senses and serve as reminders of our childhoods in later life.

As someone who was raised on a diet of mainly starchy carbohydrates and processed meats, I was assured that I would find the delicacies in a certain Eyre Square-based restaurant suitable to my taste. I decided to take an evening romp up to Supermac's, which was established in 1978.

Atmosphere is indeed a crucial element of any *à la carte* experience and, straight off the bat, Supermac's exceeded my expectations. The time of dining was approximately 11:30pm on Saturday evening, which I realise is an unorthodox move but I was earlier attending an art exhibition on the depictions of 17th Century religious monarchs.

But I digress; the restaurant itself is large, spacious and cheerfully decorated. The rustic navy and red uniforms of the staff blended well with the lights, which cast an aromatic hue over the decor. As I waited in the queue (which stretched out past Mizzoni's and onto Eyre Street.), I perused the menu. An impressive variation of Southern-style cuisine was available. From tender, succulent chicken to deep-fried chipped potatoes, this place has it all!

Despite the many customers, the staff maintained their calm demeanours and remained courteous as I dithered about my choice of meal. Being indisposed

to any products with inorganically-sourced bacon, I questioned the young staff member about the ethical details of the Smoky Bacon Burger Meal.

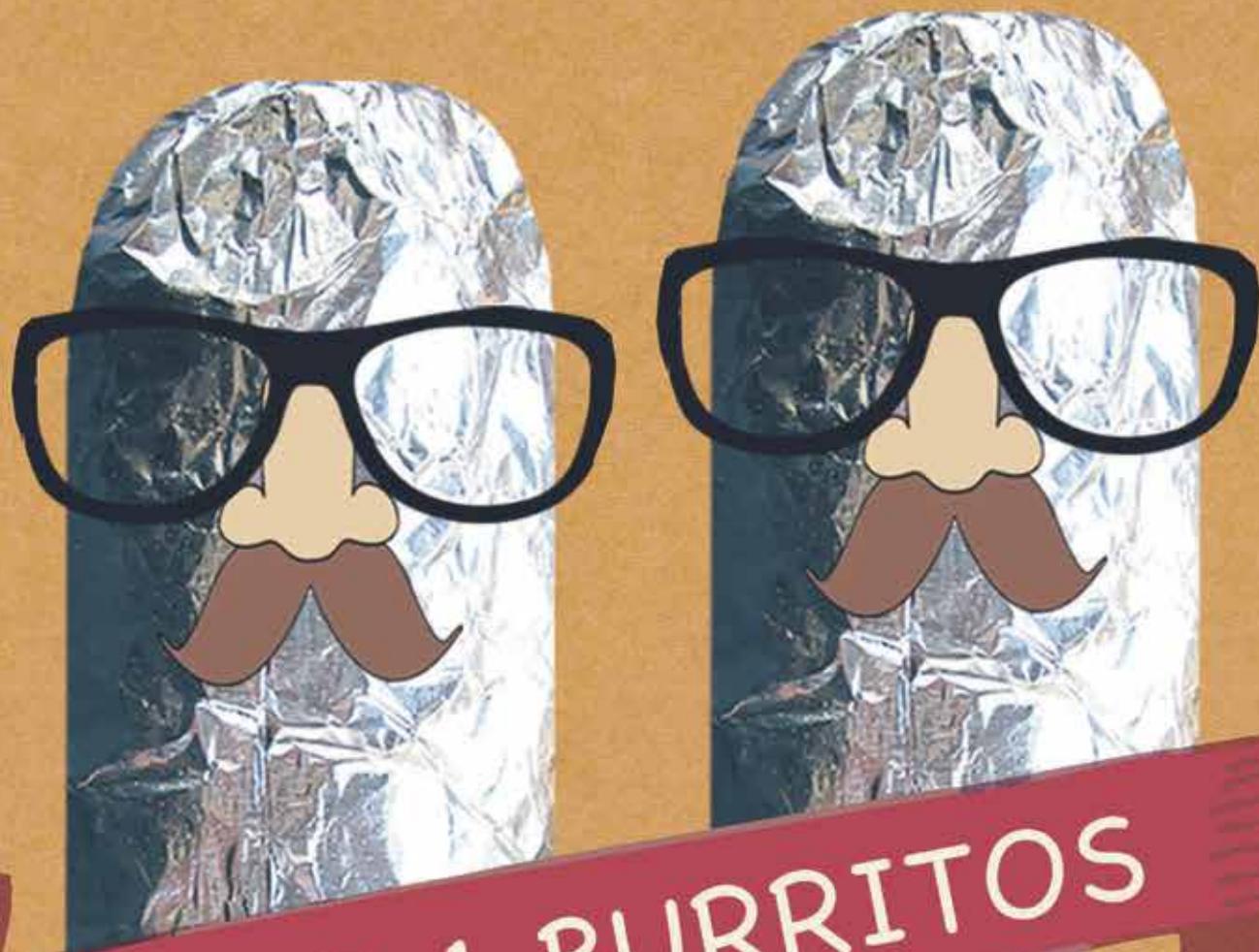
Receiving an articulate and informative reply about how the bacon is completely Irish, I was assured as to the purity of the product and the happiness of the animals on the farms.

But without further ado, onto the centrepiece of this venture - the food itself. I cannot convey how light and airy the sesame bun was; gently toasted and clearly homemade. The beef in itself was a crowning glory; cooked medium-rare while succulent Santos tomatoes and crisp Cos lettuce completed the affair.

As a supplementary dish I ordered the famed deep-fried julienne potatoes which were accentuated by a sumptuous garlic-infused Hollandaise sauce. Garnished with a sprinkling of mature cheddar cheese, this is not the type of side dish I generally order, as it does not comply with my strict Paleo diet. However, the diet must be broken for one day! This was a highly edible meal and left me feeling great satisfaction for many hours afterwards.

All in all, this little spot is a haven of traditional Irish "craic" and classically great food. A truly glowing review is the only method of doing this great establishment justice.

9/10 would highly recommend. I took off a single mark because a young lady vomited on the floor beside me and this was not cleaned up for several minutes.



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