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The DIT Examiner : the Newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union, October, 1994

DIT Students' Union

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Rathmines

The DIT Examiner

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The Newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union

October '94



DITSU has a wealth of clubs and societies. They are an ideal way for students to get involved with the more social aspects of college life.
PAGE 4



Forrest Gump has taken an obscene amount of money at the American box office. It's not a bad film but is it really that good?

PAGE 5



The newcomers to college might still feel a little out of things but in a very unusual time, they often forget exactly what they have.

PAGE 8



Semesterisation is a system still quite new to the DIT. Most agree with the concept but there are at the same time many reservations.
PAGE 12

DIT Plays Musical Chairs

The future of the Sackville Place Annex to DIT Cathal Brugha Street has been the subject of intense speculation in recent weeks. Is it closing? Is it not? Who is staying? Who is going? Just what is going on?

It was a situation that disrupted further the lives of students who were either entirely new to college life or were trying to settle down for another year. The uncertainty has meant that some students did not know whether to look for accommodation on the Northside or the Southside of the city because they simply did not know which building they were going to. Finally it appears

Goldsmith said this week.

The extension he referred to is the forthcoming development at the site of the current Marlborough Street annex, a depressing looking building which is to be demolished in the very near future. Students who presently have most of their lectures in this building will be moved to Denmark Street, now devoid of the social school, or the main building. Because the social school is self contained, it was decided that it would be easier to move it than other courses in DIT Cathal Brugha Street.

Frank McMahon, acting director of DIT Cathal Brugha Street, believes that

Colin, "the size of a hot cupboard." There are currently three seats in the room.

"I'm sickened by the situation. I think it's appalling for the students and staff to have been messed about so much. If the move had been planned, then that would have been grand, but it's been so disorganised."

He went to say that the students now based in Rathmines would have to use the doctor and nurse facilities in Aungier Street, that they had no access to a photocopier and that they would be removed from college life as all clubs and societies are run from the main building. It has also been noted that there are no condom machine facilities.

Much worry has been expressed about the lack of access to course texts but according to Frank McMahon, proper library facilities are being organised for the students, utilising the for-

mer College of Commerce library in the old building.

Mr McMahon agreed that the removal of the students from the centre of things was a "consideration" and that it was something the students' union might want to look at.

Had the Sackville Place annex closed, DIT Cathal Brugha Street would not have been the only site affected. Art and Design students from DIT Mountjoy Square share the building and the students' union there had also expressed some concern when the rumours began to fly about. It seems that they can now breathe again.

Meanwhile, some administrative sections of DIT Adelaide Road, the College of Music, have also moved to Rathmines and taken up residence in the old building. This has led to speculation regarding the faculty structure to be announced soon for the DIT.



DIT Marlborough Street - soon to be no more

that the situation has been resolved and the annex is to remain in the hands of the DIT, for now. However, the whole of the Environmental Resources Management course have been moved to the recently vacated Rathmines House (the Durkin Building). They are not alone, as the social school has also moved, from Denmark Street annex, to Rathmines.

For a while it looked as if the whole building was going to close because the lease ran out on the 30th of September. Dr Brendan Goldsmith, President of the DIT, told the DIT Examiner that this was only learned when a letter arrived from the VEC in the first week in August. However, a resolution has been found to what was a potentially very serious problem for the DIT. The lease has been extended for what seems to be an indefinite period.

"While we are awaiting the extension to Cathal Brugha Street, we will be continuing to use Sackville Place," Dr

the students will be very happy in their new home in Rathmines, that amongst other features, they will have better dtarna facilities in Rathmines House and an art room in the old Rathmines building.

"I think they [the facilities] are better. Apart from the distance, that is; if we could put the whole building on wheels and move it down to Cathal Brugha Street, it would be an ideal situation."

But the students' union in DIT Cathal Brugha Street is somewhat less pleased.

"We're extremely annoyed that there has been so much messing around with the students," said Colin Joyce, students' union president in Cathal Brugha Street. "There are still students who have to find permanent accommodation. I know of one student who is sleeping on a floor in Ranelagh." He said that only a "very very small common room" has been provided. The room, on the first floor, is, according to

DIT Aungier Street Opens its Doors - At Last

After a period of confusion, consternation and utter frustration, DIT Aungier Street is finally up and running.

But for the students' union, the struggle to get settled in a new home is far from over. A door for the main union office was only fitted in the middle of last week, and work has yet to begin on the students' union shop but of most concern is the room which the union believed had been set aside as a common room; its future use remains the subject of some debate with the college authorities.

"The shop is a vital facility," said Lar Moran, President of the Students' Union in Aungier Street. "Students need their discs and their stationary supplies and they'd be much cheaper in the shop." At time of going to press, it

appeared that the shop would be in operation within the next month. The construction will follow the curve of the back wall directly opposite the union offices and will face out onto the recreational area.

More worrying for the union in the longer term is the continuing uncertainty regarding the large room next to union offices.

At present, the union, located in the basement of the new building has three offices at its disposal, as well as recreational area, for which seating, albeit old, has already been installed. The room is being used as storage space and is currently packed high with boxes of varying size and sundry items of furniture. Lar Moran maintains that the college does not need this extra space, that

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The DIT Examiner

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Back to the future

You made it. Whether you are a returning student already enlightened as to the obligations and opportunities of college life, or whether you are a first year for whom the whole business remains something of a mystery, the message is the same. You made it. You're here. Most returning students will have no difficulty in slipping back into first term insouciant mode, knowing what is expected of them and delivering, or not, as the case may be. For first years, it's very often a different and more unsettling experience; not necessarily unsettling in a 'I think I'm being followed by someone who drools' manner but at the very least it represents an abrupt uprooting and replacement in a thoroughly unfamiliar social and academic environment. It is, quite literally, unsettling. Do not let it get on top of you.

College life is certainly challenging on many levels and you will find yourself tested in several new ways; much of your development as a person will take place over the next two, three or four years and how you deal with the immediate future will surely have a significant bearing on your long term plans. There may be times when throwing in the towel seems a very attractive proposition indeed. Persevere. The workload is significant and some of the outside situations you have to deal with will be unfamiliar. There is no denying that. But these years are also supposed to be about enjoying yourself, asserting your independence, trying on any number of hats and seeing how they fit and it is very likely that the friends you meet in college will be with you for the rest of your life. Do the work, get the qualification - that presumably is the main reason you slogged and sweated all last year - but it is at your peril that you neglect the side of yourself that needs to enjoy life beyond the books.

Paper's Round

This is the second year of the DIT Examiner, the newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union. This year, we intend to publish more issues, one a month is the target and to continue with our policy of covering the national issues that have a direct or indirect effect on students and also more specific, localised matters. There will also be some additions to the paper but nothing is certain yet.

We need to retain the readership of both the students and staff of the DIT and the only way we can be sure of this is through feedback and information. In this way we can keep The DIT Examiner as relevant as possible. We welcome suggestions, ideas, criticism and letters, through which issues may be discussed. For a variety of reasons we cannot take on board everything but we will listen to what you have to say and there can be no fairer than that.

Class Reps

Reading through the interviews with the various convenors and deputy convenors in this year's EDIT, and speaking to them on different occasions, it is readily apparent that there is one issue above all others that the individual unions are determined to tackle and that is the class rep. system. There is a strong sense that the development of an effective class rep system will sooner rather than later prove most beneficial to students and to the operation and image of their union. Unfortunately, the perception remains that students' unions everywhere have an image problem in that they are often seen as aloof and elite. The class rep system can help change that perception: if a full class rep council is set up in each college, students' problems and grievances will be brought quickly to the attention of the union; thus communication is improved and issues are dealt with. Everyone is happy.

There are still class rep. positions to be filled and some positions on some unions' executive. The rest is up to you.

Editor John Carroll
Production Rory Quinn
Printed by The Meath Chronicle

Clarifications

Should you encounter anything you feel is in need of clarification in this, or any other issue of the DIT Examiner, please contact the editor and any such matters shall then be clarified in the subsequent edition

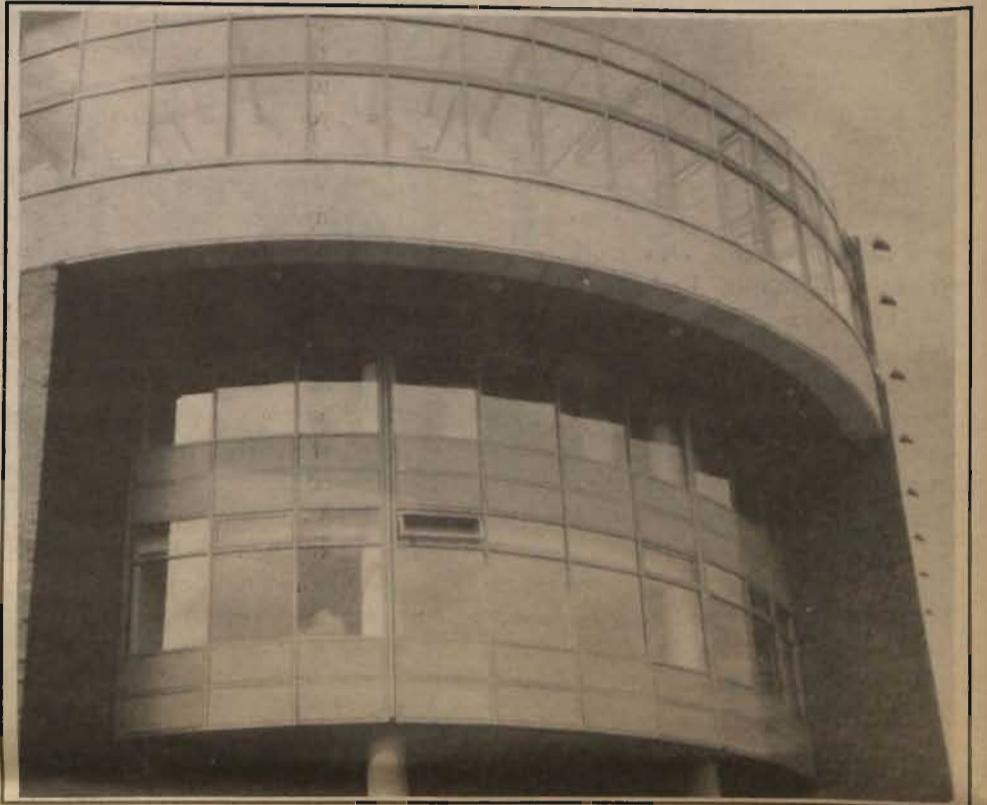
continued from page 1

there are ample storage facilities beneath the bike sheds and that the students need a larger recreational area. But for now it appears that the college authorities have designs on perhaps half of the room for storage purposes.

Even if this matter is resolved to the satisfaction of the students' union, there may be another problem lurking ominously around the corner. The entire college has been designated a no-smoking zone and Mr Moran, a non-smoker, is against this move. In other DIT sites, a strict no-smoking policy has been almost impossible to implement among the student body.

Getting DIT Aungier Street up and running has been a tiring, sometimes tiresome and uncertain business. The lecture rooms are now occupied but the students, and it seems, the lecturers, for the time being seem somewhat lost in the unfamiliar, disorientatingly large surroundings and the building seems somehow empty and unoccupied. Many offices have unopened boxes so the settling in period is by no means over, not least for the students' union.

Dr Brendan Goldsmith has expressed the hope that all the difficulties are now in the past and that "maybe now we can get on with it"



The new DIT site at Aungier Street

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Making your mark in DITSU



Counting the votes at this years DITSU elections

As students in the DIT you are entitled to vote in the elections for the students' unions, both for the officers within your own college and for the overall president of the DIT students' union. Election time is one of the liveliest, most revealing and, for some, most exasperating periods of the college year. Get involved and vote because the people elected will be running your students' union and the overall president will be representing DIT students on the DIT's Governing Body.

The following may seem like common sense at best and an insult to your intelligence at worst, but you'd be surprised at the numbers of people who, accidentally or otherwise, spoil their votes (in the 1994 DITSU elections for President, Convenors and Deputy Convenors, two percent of votes were spoiled) Also, for many of you, next year's students' unions' elections will present you with your first voting opportunity.

The Voting System

In Ireland and in DITSU, the voting system used is the proportional representation (Single Transferable Vote) system.

This means that you vote for candidates in order of your preference by indicating 1,2,3,4, etc, alongside the candidates' names.

The figure '1' should be written clearly in the box beside the candidate who is your first preference, the figure '2' beside your second preference and so on.

If you wish, you may stop voting after making your number '1' choice or you may continue to vote down as far as you want.

Your second preference will only be used in the counting if your first preference candidate has been eliminated or elected. Your third preference will only be used if your second preference doesn't need the vote.

N.B. A further preference will not count against your higher preferences. You really only have one vote and this vote is transferred only if your earlier candidate does not need it.

A Spoilt Vote

A vote is deemed to be spoilt if (a) IN the returning officer's opinion, there is no clear preference indicated

or (b) In the returning officer's opinion, there is a mark on the paper that is intended to reveal the identity of the voter.

The above criteria for spoilt votes give sole discretion to the returning officer. For example, anything from a small scribble to a written comment may constitute spoiling.

Tips for Voting Properly

- Write clearly and legibly the digits '1', '2', '3', etc in the boxes provided.
- Do not write any comments or draw any pictures on the ballot paper.
- Each preference must be consecutive, i.e 1,2,3,4,5 and not 1,2,4,5. In the latter case, the vote becomes non-transferable after the second preference.
- In the case of the referendum you simply place a cross or a tick in either the YES or NO box and not in both boxes. The other box should be left blank.

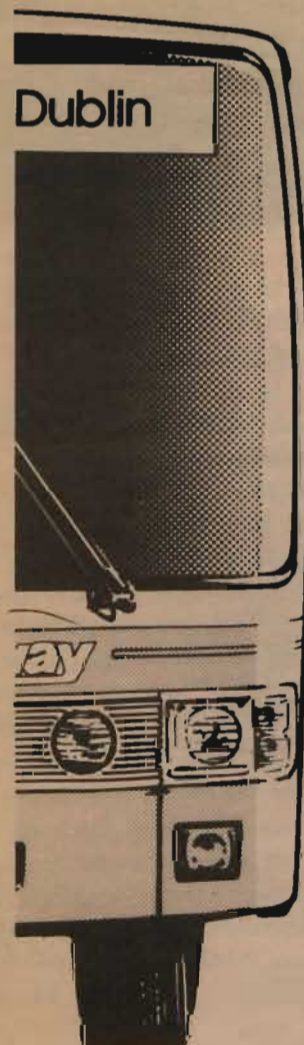
Frank Crummey

Elections to DIT Governing Body

In order to comply fully with the strict nomenclature of the act of the Oireachtas establishing the legal status of the DIT and the Composition of its Governing Body and direct and indirect nominating bodies, it is necessary to fill the two student representative seats in the DIT Board of Governors. The act at present does not permit the custom and practice of a restricted elective community. The current student representatives, DITSU President Colman Byrne and DITSU Bolton Street Deputy Convenor Alison Flanagan, will stand for election to satisfy the terms and conditions of the act. This presents the student body with a perfect opportunity to reaffirm and further endorse the sitting student union representatives as the sole official and legitimate voice of DIT Students on DIT Governing Body.

The election date has not been fixed as we go to press but it is expected to occur in October or November.

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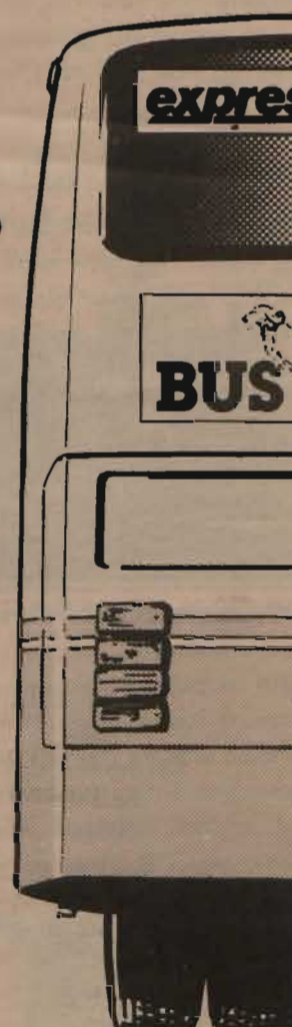
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Clubs and Societies

Your first few weeks in college are very likely to be strange, disorientating, nervy and exciting to one extent or another. You may find yourself feeling a little lonely or out of things, the new experiences a little more daunting than you expected. On the other hand, you might be itching to get involved in all aspects of college life, have all sorts of wild ideas for the year and are of the opinion that the day is simply not long enough. Whether you are the class shrinking violet or its hyperactive whirling dervish, the clubs and societies in the various colleges have an important role to play.

Dozens are set up every year, each designed firstly to further interest in and apprecia-

tion of the event, discipline, sport or group of (insert your own choice). Their other major function is to help people to get to know each other and to provide opportunities for them to socialise together. I don't wish to labour the point, but some societies and clubs are more renowned than others for their propensity for getting hammered at every available opportunity.

What follows is a list of the clubs and societies that existed last year and will almost certainly return this year. It is not complete and if you have an idea for one that is not on the list, give it a shot.

DIT Kevin Street

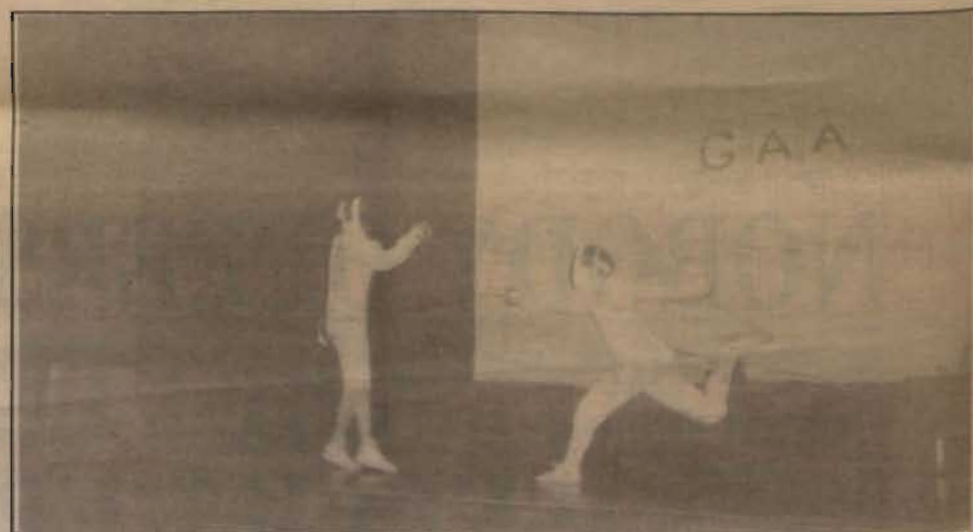
Clubs	Societies
Athletics	AIESEC
Basketball	An Cumann Gaelach
Badminton	Baberry
Board Sailing	Biochemistry
Caving Club	Biomedical Science
Canoeing	Bridge
Fencing	Christian Union
Handball	Computer
Judo	Enterprise
Juggling	Gay and Lesbian
Karate	Human Nutrition
Ladies' Soccer	K.A.T.S (Drama Society)
Men's Soccer	Languages
Mixed Hockey	Musicians
Mountaineering	Niemoller
Orienteering	Optics
Rugby	Science Fiction
Sailing	Science and Technology
Swimming	Traditional
Sub Aqua	Women's Group
Tae Kwon Do	
Table Tennis	
Volleyball	

DIT Mountjoy Square

Clubs	Societies
Aerobics	Administration
Athletics	Amnesty International
Basketball	An Cumann Gaelach
Equestrian	Art
Golf	Clan Bizarro (Roleplaying)
Hockey	Debate
Karate	Design
Ladies' Rugby	Drama
Mountaineering	European
Men's Rugby	Expanding Head (video)
Soccer	Fashion
Swimming	Film (watchers)
Yoga	Graphic
	Marketing and Advertising
	Marketing Communicator
	Photography



Hanging around with Bolton St mountaineering club



Ciarán Crosbie gets the point

DIT Cathal Brugha Street

Clubs	Societies
Adventure Sports	An Cumann gaelach
Aerobics	Drama and Film
Athletics	Environmental
Badminton	Food and Beverage
Basketball	French
Comoige	Games and Roleplay
Golf	Home Brew
Hurling	Irish Football Supporters
Hockey	Rugby Supporters
Karate	Women's Group
Ladies Soccer	
Ladies Football	
Men's Soccer	
Men's Football	
Rugby	
Swimming and Water Safety	
Tennis	

DIT Bolton Street

Clubs:	Societies:
Basketball	Amnesty International
Canoeing	Chess
Cycling	Cumann Gaelach
Equestrian	Dance
GAA	Drama
Golf	Film
Handball	Mets
Hockey	Photographic
Hurling	Response
Kung Fu	Roleplaying
Men's and Women's Rugby	Science Fiction
Mountaineering	
Orienteering	
Soccer	
Surfing	
Swimming	
Taekwan Do	
Volleyball	

DIT Aungier Street

Because of the move from Rathmines to Aungier Street, and the logistical and organisational Hell this engenders, there are no certainties as to the clubs and societies for the coming year. As soon as the union is settled, the currently frazzled team will no doubt get things going. Enjoy.



REEL Life

Forrest Gump looks set to enter the American consciousness in a way that very few box office hits ever do; ET is the last film I can think of that had such an overwhelming effect on people but that wasn't a peculiarly American film; Gump is and its eponymous hero seems to represent a readily identifiable stereotype, the young innocent who plays college football, is sent to fight in the Vietnam war, comes home, experiences the counter culture (horrible term) reaction to the war and endeavours to succeed in business. It's an oft told story but it's missing one crucial element; in Vietnam, the hero is either wounded or so traumatised that his world view changes so drastically and life back home is never again the same. Not so for Forrest Gump, for Gump has an IQ of 75 and is supposed to be an idiot. As such he never loses his innocence, his black and white outlook and his faith in the wisdom and love of his mother. It is the thoughtless retention of this innocence, I

think, that has made Gump such an overwhelming success in America.

The hype surrounding the film will ensure that it will be a success everywhere but it will not resonate in the same way and don't be surprised if you leave the cinema wondering what all the fuss is about..

We first meet Gump as a young southern

boy being fitted with leg braces. At home, where his mother (Sally Field) runs a boarding house business, he dances jerkily to the music of a young polite boarder who copies the dance and is later seen employing it while singing Hound Dog. There's a lot of this sort of stuff in the film, Gump acting as a catalyst for a whole variety of famous people - Lennon, Nixon, - without ever changing himself. By placing the character in a number of recent central events in history and with some of its most important people the film has a chance to comment on those events and achieve comic effect. The scenes are funny but there's not much in the way of revelatory comment, extending only as far as to say that historical events might not have happened the way we believe they did and that arbitrariness plays a much bigger part in life than we would like to think.

As an adult, Gump is played by Tom Hanks, who has already displayed his ability to play the innocent child-man in Big. He is perfectly cast, making his character simple without being undignified and never less than as wholesome as an oven full of apple pies. He is also one of the few actors who can bring both men and women with him in a film:



Forrest Gump (Tom Hanks) doing what he does best - obeying

men like him because he is ordinary and yet gets to do extraordinary things while women at the very least think he is adorable. Cute. He is a threat to no-one.

Gump dresses and has his hair cut in the fashion of a fifties American teenager, a time when everything seemed possible for Americans. Forty years on, he is exactly the same, seemingly unaffected by the war, the anti-war movement, the wider availability of drugs and a changing moral climate. Others he comes in contact with such as his heroic and gung-ho platoon leader Lieutenant Dan (Gary Sinise) and the love of his life, Jenny (Robin Wright) are deeply affected and simply do not cope with the changes. There is a sinister message to be drawn from this if you are like arch conservative Republican Pat Buchanan; it says that if you follow the simple path and do what you are told, you will flourish; any deviation from this and you will suffer. It could be seen as a particularly conservative message to a whole generation and that is partially its own fault because it inflicts satirical flesh wounds where it could easily have gone for the jugular.

Winston Groom's book on which this film is based was a fun, bawdy satire which took a swipe at almost everything; the film makes the same oppor-

tunities and while it does poke some fun at the army, hippies, the Black Panthers and other symbols of American culture and history, it generally lacks the courage of its convictions. It is entertaining, lively, and uses its special effects in an unobtrusive way to further the story rather than for their own sake, which is a good thing, but to quote a well known rap combo: Don't believe the Hype

Clear and Prese Danger

Third adaptation (so far) of a Tom Clancy thriller is the best to date, spending a little less time being awe struck by technology and more on the duplicitous political shenanigans and the running and jumping stuff (including one brilliantly handled ambush sequence in a Colombian back street).

Harrison Ford, trusted by filmgoers and film makers in equal measure, is back as Jack Ryan, CIA analyst, now acting Deputy Director of that august body of men and women. He becomes embroiled in a covert action against South American drug lords but gradually realises that his own masters are something of a letdown in the trust and honesty department. More exciting than The Hunt for Red October and less ridiculous than Patriot Games, this also manages to hint that there are areas coloured grey and that Washington is far from being the permanent home of the good guys. Not new, but rare to see.

The Last Seduction

John Dahl follows the impressive Red Rock West with this funny, dark and shamelessly nasty film noir that pits heartless New York femme fatale Linda Fiorentino against just about everyone. It's no contest.

Having organised a one off drug deal with her husband (Bill Pullmann) she runs out on him and hides out in a hick town where she hooks up with the hapless Peter Berg, messing with his head so remorselessly that you almost feel sorry for him. Meanwhile hubby has sent a private detective to hunt down this thoroughly amoral woman. Great dialogue (almost all of it from delivered by Fiorentino), surprising twists and a bunch of characters that you hope only exist on the screen. Go see.

Also Showing....

Speed

Unexpected box office smash pits Keanu Reeves against mad bomber Dennis Hopper (couldn't they have found someone else to play a mad bomber! anyone else?) and a bus that will explode if its speed drops below a very crucial 50 miles per hour. That's the main section anyway; there's a gripping prelude in an elevator shaft and an unnecessary climax to the climax on a subway train.

First time director Jan de Bont makes few mistakes, asking nothing more of Reeves than to look marly and perform brave feats. The action is concentrated so tightly that the viewer's mind has nowhere else to go. Lean, highly entertaining and utterly preposterous thriller that is amazingly low on the body count. Reeves still cannot act and moves like one of Gerry Anderson's puppets but the film will boost his career and that of Sandra Bullock, who gives a fine performance as the plucky driver.



Harrison Ford in danger

A People President

If Colman Byrne were fully conversant in the kind of pseudo-scientific personality type labelling beloved of west coast America, he would probably describe himself, without feeling ridiculous, as a people person.

With an utter absence of self-consciousness the new President of DITSU says that his best qualities are his "openness and friendliness".

"I believe in getting out and meeting people, sitting down to chat to first years in the canteen or wherever." He does not appear concerned that to some ears this would make him sound like a living, breathing cliché or a politician on the make, or God forbid, both. Mr Byrne makes no bones about it; he would like very much to be a politician. But more of that later.

Colman Byrne took over from Deiric Ó Broin as president of DITSU on July 1st. He won the election in March by a significant margin, one that surprised him and everyone else. The turnout in his home college, DIT Mountjoy Square, offered the kind of boost that candidates only dream about. It was, he says, amazing.

"I'm not ashamed to say, and I don't think I'm being big headed to say, that my record there was watertight. I got the backing of the whole college. Everyone who was here voted. I think I lost about 25 votes and I could probably name the people."

He recalls the response he received at the hustings in Mountjoy Square and says that even if he had lost he would always remember that feeling. "They were fair to the other candidates but they raised the roof when I finished speaking and it gave me a great feeling." A people person, you see. He likes to be liked but at the same time seems prepared to voice the unpopular opinion and he will need to be able to do this as President for he will be the one to make the final decisions and it is inevitable that these will not always meet with the approval of the conveners in the constituent colleges. If they always did, it would be time to worry.

Students' Unions have been kick off points for politicians in the past but more often than not, they have viewed the world from a perspective somewhere left of centre. Colman Byrne is a member of Fianna Fáil. He does not see any problem reconciling his party political affiliations with his position as President of a Students' Union.

"The vast majority of people who have been in students' unions were political but

and look out for them. They're the things we do. People say we're a trade union but in essence we're not; we're concerned with our students."

He goes on to say that at national level this may not be the situation but believes that students' unions have changed with the needs of the students, that whereas years ago there would have been students out demonstrating on a large scale for grants or improved grants, the situation now is that "we're inside our college looking for space, more facilities, longer library hours, proper heating. It's internal. We can't go to the Government and say we want another computer."

"Massive demonstrations are not there any more because people have become political with a small 'p'. Students are less politicised themselves. I would like them to become more politicised and then maybe each college could become a big 'P'."

He is keen then to politicise students but wants to make it clear that his allegiances lie with the union first and Fianna Fáil second.

"My party politics and my job do not conflict with each other. I'm elected to do a job and my party politics do not come into that. When something comes up, like picketing Fianna Fáil headquarters, I can't say 'sorry I can't do that'. I'd be there as well."

It is clear that he has had to deal with this sort of questioning before, if only in his own mind, knowing that it would be asked at some point, and he is able to outline his position in a steady stream of words.

"I think that being in the organisation can have plusses rather than minuses, that as long as I stick to my guns, that I was elected

because there is nothing that I would not support. I don't believe in blind allegiance."

And yet there is something strange, is there not, about the President of a students' union being a member of a party which is behind, for example, the not very popular Summer Work scheme which means that third level students do not automatically qualify for the dole during the summer months.

Mr Byrne has a problem with the scheme as it is run at the moment but he is also prepared to risk opprobrium for his overall stance on the issue.

"If it was worked properly, I think it could actually be good because it improves every locality." He accepts that this may not be the most popular utterance he has ever made and could be interpreted as an expression of support stemming from party allegiance.

week, just a couple, then I do think that it would be a good idea. It benefits everyone." In such a situation he points out that it would be community type work, work that otherwise would not get done.

The idea of extending the scheme to the whole country is not one he wishes to get into as there are so many complications attached but it is not an idea he rejects outright. "I wouldn't say no definitely."

Colman Byrne has the determination, some would say bullishness, to push hard for what he wants; he also has an abundance of readily apparent self-confidence, which no Students' Union President can really afford to be without. He describes himself as an organiser and he will need to be over the coming year for the DIT and, accordingly, DITSU are entering a new phase which will affect everyone connected to the institute. He will need to have a very clear

vision of where he wants to lead the students' union if its profile is to be raised. But no matter how the year turns out, he intends to take his political life a little further.

"I'd like to represent my own area at home, try to work at that. I think I'd be good at it, representing my own people."

This is no surprise, not from the way he talks and what he says, more *Mr Smith Goes to Washington* optimism than *Washington Behind Closed Doors* cynicism. But even if he had remained coy about his political ambitions, there is one huge giveaway. He admits that he likes interviews.



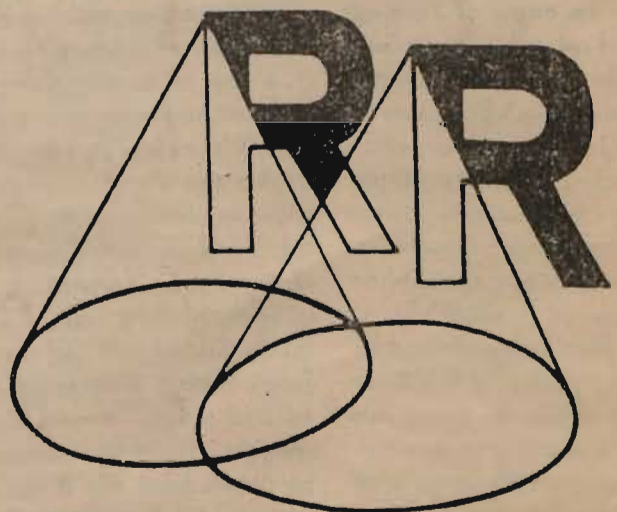
Colman Byrne - Overall president of DITSU

"It has nothing to do with the party who brought it in. If everyone could still get their dole on condition that they do a couple of hours of community service every

week, just a couple, then I do think that it would be a good idea. It benefits everyone." In such a situation he points out that it would be community type work, work that otherwise would not get done.

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Colman (In President in Wait Mode) with his predecessor, Deiric Ó Broin

they were political to the left, Labour or the Workers' Party or whatever. That was going back years ago. Their (students' unions) whole face has changed, a lot of the time, party political stance, left or right, doesn't come into it any more. Students' Unions are less political on an outside basis. We're a union in name but we're a club that looks after students, we organise and we look after

as president of DIT first and I'm a member if Fianna Fáil second. This is my job, my priority for a full year and when it comes to a situation when I should be campaigning for something on behalf of the students and I don't because of my party political allegiances, then it's time to get rid of me, I'm not there any more, I'm not doing my job; but that situation is not going to arise

Bye, Bye, American Pie

One morning during the summer, when Myles Dungan was presenting his radio show in Gay Byrne's hallowed slot, a voice familiar to everyone connected with the DIT Students' Union came quietly and confidently over the airwaves. Theresa Sheridan, former manager of the Student's Union shop in DIT Kevin Street, had, after eight years working in the shop, decided to leave for sunnier climes and she was on the show with her husband, explaining to the masses why they had decided to make a totally new start in their lives at a time when most people would be thoroughly settled. It was not a decision that had been taken lightly.

"We've been deliberating for almost a year now, wondering whether it was a good or a bad move," she told the *DIT Examiner*. The move took place in September, courtesy of those much coveted Green Cards. So that's it then: no more students pouring out of lectures and crowding into the shop, no more frenzied demands for photocopying cards as exams approach, no more stocking and restocking the shelves. Goodbye to all that. And more.

Theresa freely admitted that she was very sad to be leaving.

"It is a big break, I've given it a lot, felt my input was good. My consideration in a retail outlet was never always profits, but what do the students think, what are they looking for. If you give a service, profit is the natural result of that service. I always tried to consider each student as an individual."

With so much daily contact with stu-

dents over the years, she could not have failed to notice general changes in attitude, outlook, manner, even dress sense among the ever changing student population.

"One of the things I noticed most was that when I came here students were radical, not all of them, but there was a radical element, getting into scrapes every other week. There was always something going on. Nowadays, there's nothing like that at all, they are more conservative, very much into 'do what you have to do, do what's right'. They're studying from September on whereas before, they wouldn't even consider it. In first year, you wouldn't get any study out of anyone.."

She believes that if they are lacking energy these days, it is because all their energy is going into study. This is a pity "because student life is a golden opportunity to do lots of different things".

The memories of her time with the students' union she has taken to America will be good ones, beginning with the moment she found out she had the job.

"At my age to have been chosen to be a shop manageress for students, I really thought it was the most wonderful thing, at a time when a lot of people were saying that



Theresa Sheridan (fourth from left) at her going away party

people couldn't get work over the age of 35, young people had chosen me which was fantastic."

After that, it was easy.

"I've enjoyed it immensely. I never ever felt that going to work was the pits. I got up in the morning and I was delighted to go to work. I love what I do. A day went by in 10 minutes it seemed."

She described the move to America as the beginning of a new phase of life, an opportunity she and her husband feel they have to take. But it won't be easy. Such upheavals never are, even in the context of the job one leaves behind.

"Over the years I have made a lot of

friends and now the loyalty has come to the fore. People have been saying they're going to miss me. I'm upset too. But there is no growth without pain, that's the price I pay for the move."

It is hard to believe that the vastness and newness of America will be sufficiently daunting to make Theresa regret her decision. As she informed Myles Dungan, she already had a job lined up, as had her husband. The self-belief, organisation and confidence is typical of the woman.

The DIT Examiner and all in the students' union wish her the very best for the future.

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Beginners Luck

How well do I remember my first days in college? Let me count the ways; actually, better not. Frankly it depends on how much wry smiling I wish to engage in at any given time, for there are few things to cause one to smile wryly and remember fondly as readily as the recollection of those first few baby steps taken in a third level institute.

It's a strange, fumbling time, when you take to walking the corridors of your new home with the most endearing tentativeness, unreasonably suspicious of what lurks around every corner (quick, bird-like peek before you take a step) and behind every door (rush of blood to the face, prickly feeling on the scalp as you realise that you have in fact ducked your shiny new person's head into the wrong room: by the way, the correct response on this occasion is 'so shagging what?').

Even signs pointing the way aren't trusted; you'll find yourself staring at them, seeking out the non-existent small print, looking away and suddenly flicking your eyes back, just to make sure that they haven't changed and are planning to lead you very much astray. Then, and only then, do you move, self-conscious bravado easily overwhelmed by the ever obvious less than confident gait. If you're on your own for these first few days, even weeks, this can be a period of unrivalled trauma as the super confident, swaggering teenage veneer is mercilessly stripped away, leaving a husk, a pathetic quivering wretch, blindly wandering the corridors wondering why the elemental forces of evil have conspired in such a way as to make your life so utterly miserable. Just kidding. It only feels like that.

Not that freshers (was there ever a

more damning description, aside from say, Spurs Supporter?) are difficult to spot even when clustered together in protective groups. One of the great giveaways is a pair of shiny docs and the attendant expression of excruciating pain on the face of the wearer. But even if substantial amounts of cotton wool and a cortisone injection have been employed to remove the agonised visage, the sheer scorching shininess of this part of the student ensemble is enough of a pointer. You might as well simply carry a big sign and damn the rest of your group with you.

If you manage to escape recognition in the college, the place where you are next most likely to affix upon yourself the label 'fresher' is the pub, whatever the local hostelry happens to be. There the drinkers will be as many and varied as the products on offer, but often the fledgling first year does one of two things: either the pint (my, what a lot of liquid) is ordered with hearty and wholly unconvincing bonhomie and subsequently sipped with the kind of suspicion usually reserved for the corridors or it and its several successors are ladled into the unsuspecting body with scant regard for liver, bladder or brain. Pretty soon the world becomes funny - chairs don't work, the ground is on wheels and the barman simply refuses to understand what you are saying.

If all of the above sounds like the snide, cheap ranting of someone who is no longer a first year and hasn't been one for many years, you are indeed correct. Sure, this writer can fling the jibes and give the weary look of polite indulgence but the retort is simple and savage: it's all ahead of you, the rest of us can only be reminded of it.



In a display of determined and concentrated fundraising that would shame even saint Bob, the Rwandan Response Group, based in DIT Bolton Street, recently raised over a three day period the astonishing amount of £26,000.

The group, which includes students and lecturers from Bolton Street, took to the streets of Dublin and while the generosity of the Irish public in such matters is well known, the amount raised is a tribute both to their continuing willingness to dig deep and to the committed work of the group.

A cheque for half the amount raised, £13,000 was presented by the group to Mary Sweeny, Trocaire's Emergency Officer in the social course of the college last week.

Justin Kilcullen, Director of Trocaire, thanked the Response Group for their efforts, saying: "Rehabilitation and development programmes in Rwanda will continue to receive our support in the long term. We are committed to working in partnership with the Rwandans in their efforts to rebuild their country."

In the past the Response Group has raised money for projects in Romania, homelessness in Ireland and for the elderly.

Pictured at the presentation were (l to r) Billy McCarthy, Veronica Donohoe (both from the Rwanda Response Group) and Mary Sweeny ((Emergency Officer, Trocaire)

Kevin St Student Tops the Lot

A fourth year student in DIT Kevin Street has been awarded first prize in the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) Younger Members Premium Awards, presented recently in London.

Kenneth J. Purcell (SEE 4 (E)) submitted a technical paper at the IEE Student Technical Paper Evening in Trinity College last March. The paper was based on a project which he had designed as part of his studies at DIT Kevin Street. All entries were subsequently sent to the IEE in London and from these five finalists were selected from within the UK and Ireland. Kenneth was the first Irish competitor to be selected for the final stages of the event.

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Mixed reaction to governing body gender quota move

New legislation introduced recently by the Minister for Education, Niamh Breathnach, will amend the DIT Act to ensure that at least seven women are elected to the Governing Body of the DIT.

The Dublin Institute of Technology (Amendment) Bill which is expected to become law by Christmas will oblige the nominating bodies to comply with Government's gender balance policy. Failure to implement the gender balance provisions or directives will ultimately result in the Minister "appointing any body of persons as she sees fit". It will be the responsibility of the VEC to ensure that at least seven female nominations are forwarded to the minister. The new legislation will be in place in plenty of time for the appointment of the new Governing Body next year - the current one will sit only until March of next year. The legislation affects students unions in that one female and one male must be elected in specific elections to take place later this month.

Dr Brendan Goldsmith, President of the DIT, said that the new legislation was no surprise. "It's just what we'd been told would happen. I haven't had a chance to study it from a fine legal

point. The secretary will be looking at that and advising me as to what it contains. My only worry in relation to the content is that if we start amending legislation we may end up creating more problems. Hopefully it's been done in a coherent way and there won't be problems."

Because of the long running gender balancing row between Ms Breathnach and the VEC, a Governing Body was only appointed in March for the DIT and then only for a year. The Governing Body was originally due to be appointed for five years. Dr Goldsmith is fatalistic about this less than satisfactory situation.

"The fact that it'll be our third governing body in as many years is obviously not so desirable. Governing bodies do take time to settle down and gel but we've been reasonably fortunate, in my time anyway, that governing bodies have been pulling together reasonably well. It is a pity to see it happening, starting again, but that's the way life is."

Colman Byrne, President of the DIT Students' Union, was less enthusiastic about the new legislation.

"What if an appointing body is told to appoint a female and there are no

females who are interested, why should they have to as a token gesture appoint someone, and the same goes for another body which is told to appoint a male and they say 'actually there is a female who is very interested' and then they are told that they have to appoint a male and their gesture is token as well. I don't think that the people should be forced to appoint a person of a certain gender onto a committee just because the Minister has decided it should be so."

Mr Joe Castle, chairman of the VEC,

welcomed the legislation. "It's to be welcomed in the sense that there was a problem when the VEC selected other bodies, it had no control over their nominations." He said that prior to the introduction of the legislation, the VECs were in "the invidious position of being expected to deliver on the principle of gender balance without having the means to do so."

The new legislation allows the VEC to reject or accept such nominations, thus ensuring the gender balance.



Pictured is Ethyl Mythen, who at a recent ceremony in the E.S.B. Head Office received a Bursary sponsored by the E.S.B towards her studies on the Degree Programme in Engineering in D.I.T. Bolton Street, Dublin 1.

Ethyl was one of a number of students on the NOW (New Opportunities for Women) Project which promotes equal opportunities for Women to access places in third level for Engineering Technology. This initiative is co-funded through the European Social Fund and the College of Technology, Bolton Street.

THE IRISH TIMES

DITSU Simplex

CROSSWORD

Competition

PRIZE: First 3 correct entries drawn will each receive a £20 gift voucher for DITSU Students Union Shop.

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

SEND TO: THE IRISH TIMES / DITSU, Crossword Competition, The DIT Examiner. (to be dropped into local Union office)

NAME _____
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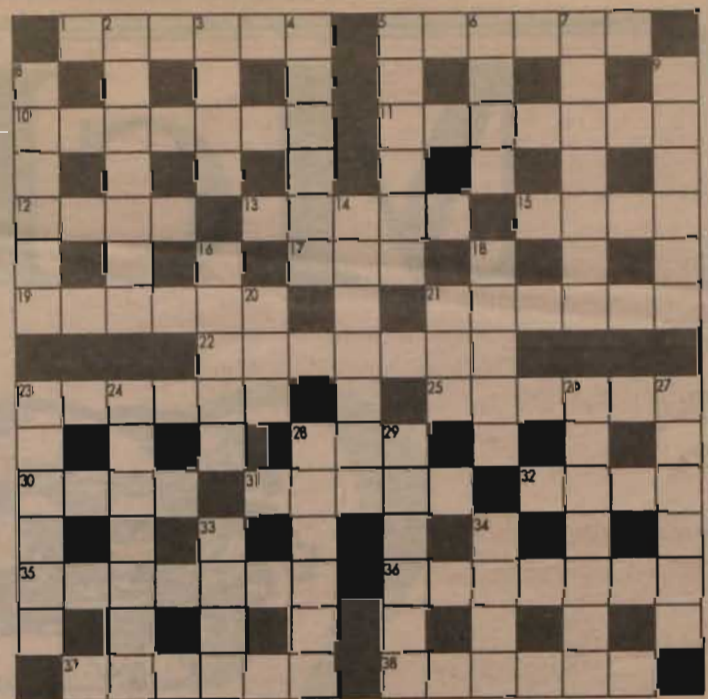
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A CROSS

- 1 Type of small crown or a spider. (6)
- 5 One of the three Gorgons, with snakes for hair. (6)
- 10 Show publicly or produce as evidence in court. (7)
- 11 Orange-yellow species of crocus. (7)
- 12 Small island. (4)
- 13 A back tooth. (5)
- 15 Small car and small skirt. (4)
- 17 Immerse for a short time. (3)
- 19 Felt hat, dented lengthwise. (6)
- 21 Coagulate or thicken, milk perhaps. (6)
- 22 One who promises solemnly for another or provides money. (7)
- 23 Method of voting. (6)
- 25 Foul mouthed or coarse. (6)
- 28 Units of measurement in print. (3)
- 30 English river associated with the Bard. (4)
- 31 Celestial messenger. (5)
- 32 Stables now used as dwelling places. (4)
- 35 One who always manages to avoid work. (7)
- 36 Resentment or offence. (7)
- 37 Interfere unnecessarily. (6)
- 38 Machine for rotating material for shaping. (6)

DOWN

- 2 Breathed in. (7)
- 3 Small flat fishes. (4)
- 4 System, way of doing something. (6)
- 5 Misfortune, unlucky accident. (6)
- 6 Silly or ridiculous. (4)
- 7 Close-set, ranks perhaps. (7)
- 8 Lessening of pain or anxiety. (6)
- 9 Tempt, lead astray. (6)
- 14 Drawing or painting in water-colours. (7)
- 16 The crime of burning property. (5)
- 18 Gaudy, melodramatically sensational. (5)
- 20 Suitable. (3)
- 21 Blimey! it's another cockney expression. (3)
- 23 Sew neat in a little liquid. (6)
- 24 None lie badly, like a lion. (7)
- 26 Mears, median (7)
- 27 Drive away, scatter. (6)
- 28 Right of entry. (6)
- 29 Story that is a continuation of an earlier one. (6)
- 33 Slide along out of control. (4)
- 34 Incite or encourage. (4)

COMPETITION NO. 1

Students' Union Election Season Gets an Early Start

Elections to executive positions in DITSU will take place on Wednesday, November 16th for the following positions:

DIT Mountjoy Square:

Women's Rights Officer
Anti-Discrimination Officer

DIT Bolton Street

Women's Rights Officer
Entertainment's Officer
Public Relations Officer
Clubs and Societies Officer
Apprentice Officer
Anti-Discrimination Officer

DIT Cathal Brugha Street

Employments Officer
Women's Rights Officer
Public Relations Officer

DIT Kevin Street

Anti-Discrimination Officer

DIT Aungier Street

Women's Rights Officer
Anti-Discrimination Officer

Nominations will open on November 2nd and will close at 5.00pm sharp on November 9th.. Also on November 16th, there will be a constitutional referendum, proposing substantial constitutional changes to the DITSU Constitution. Details of the exact text were not available at time of going to press.

Mountjoy Square Has Designs On Awards

In this year's Graduate Designer Awards, three of the six category winners were from the Dublin Institute of Technology, and specifically from DIT Mountjoy Square.

There were six categories and altogether over 300 participants in this year's competition. The DIT winners were:

Gail Wall Morris, in the Exhibition and Interior Design Category (19 participants)

The judges were particularly impressed with the planning and perspective of her hotel scheme, which featured a novel bedroom arrangement;

Niamh Sharkey in the Graphic Design Category (87 participants).

Niamh's illustration work was highly praised by the judges, who said that it was "beautifully crafted" and had a "fresh and innovative approach" and

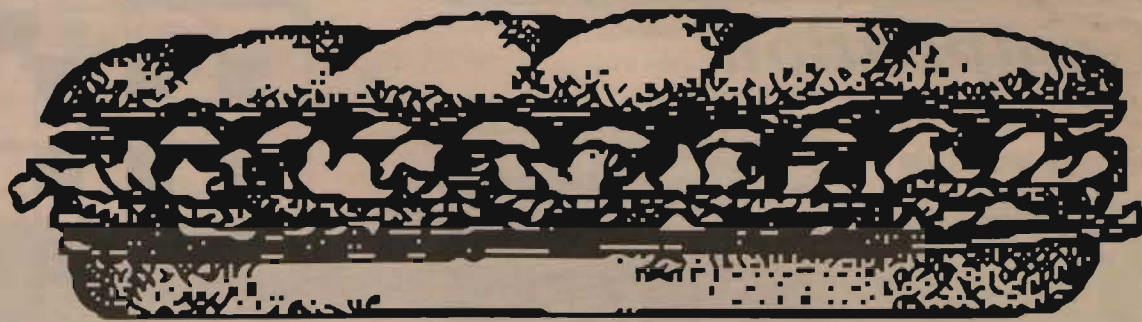
Leo Scarff in the Product Design Category (58 participants).

Leo's range of well made furniture and lighting of contemporary design, with strong attention to detail, impressed the judges.

Gráinne McGarty and Lisa O'Farrell were commended in the Exhibition and Interior Design Category as was Michael McGuire in the Theatre, Film and TV Design Category. All are from DIT Mountjoy Square

The presentation of Certificates to the category winners and the announcement of the Graduate Designer of the Year will be made by the Patron of the Society of Designers of Ireland, President Mary Robinson, at a reception on Tuesday, 25 October, in DesignYard in temple Bar.

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What's it mean?

The times they are a changin'

Semesterisation, a system unfamiliar to most DIT students and a word most commonly associated with American television programmes set in high schools suffused with teenage trauma, is to be widened within the DIT in the coming years.

But a sweeping expansion is unlikely according to Dr Brendan Goldsmith, President of the DIT.

"I'm not saying that I'd like to see a majority of courses semesterised in the near future. Something has to be worked out in due course but there could be very good reasons not to semesterise a course. There's been a lot of debate about that and it has not been resolved yet."

The system, which entails a set of exams for students soon after they return to college from Christmas holidays and then another set at the end of the year, is still relatively new to the DIT and Dr Goldsmith admits that the institute is feeling its way along to a certain extent.

"It's a new thing and we need to try it and refine it." He points out that it was

not a system that could be evaluated in the abstract. It operates in the traditional universities but as both students in those institutions and DIT students will tell you, the two are not the same.

Colman Byrne, President of DITSU, is very wary of the system as it exists. "I know everyone is saying that it's going to come in and that it's going to be an easy transition, but I don't think that it is; a lot of teachers' organisations are going to fight against it; we're definitely going to fight against it as it is; the counsellors are not in favour of it; the chaplaincy, the people concerned with student life, aren't in favour of it. The way it is at the moment, it's not working, it's making life more stressful."

Another source of concern for students unions is that the system will radically alter student life result in less contact between students and the unions. Specifically, there is some con-

cern that all activities will have to be crammed into a three week period in February. As present the system is such that students have a three week break after their January exams.

Dr Goldsmith accepts that there will most likely be changes in this regard but points out that the system is as it is for a reason.

"Semesterisation that has been introduced at the moment has been done within the constraints of the existing academic year and that may not make the best of sense. If we had a complete; free hand we probably wouldn't choose semesterisation to coincide with dates as they are. But the reality is that the academic year has to wrap up by June 20th. I personally this is nonsensical but it has to be done." He added that if the DIT was free from this constraint a bigger

The first is that it was seen as a way of making the situation easier for students, that it would spread the workload over the year rather than the current system which results in no small amounts of panic. Colman Byrne believes that while the idea of semesterisation is a good one, it is not working to the students' benefit at the moment.

"The whole idea of semesterisation is to break up the two terms, make it easier for students, and it has done the exact opposite."

Secondly, there seems to be a strong feeling in the DIT that semesters give greater flexibility in terms of the management of courses. Third, and perhaps least important, according to Dr Goldsmith, is that it offers a greater potential for student mobility in terms of Erasmus type exchange programmes.



Getting the heads down....So soon?

break could be given to students in the middle of the year."

It seems that there were three ideas behind the introduction of the system.

To this extent the system is an attempt to standardise the system visa vie the European Union,

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