

1996-9

The DIT Examiner : the Newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union, September, 1996

DIT Students' Union

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The DIT Examiner

The Newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union

September '96



The first few weeks in college can be daunting. One of the best ways to break the ice and fit in is to join a club or society. There are plenty.
PAGE 4



DIT Freshers' Weeks begin this week. The students' unions have kindly organised an awful lot of things to-do so get out, get involved, get drunk.
PAGE 5



DIT Chatham Row's concert band recently returned from a highly successful tour in America.
PAGE 8



Eddie Murphy's new film has made a pile of cash at the US box office. Gone is the aggressive style of comedy, replaced by a big softy approach.
PAGE 9

Cathal Brugha St's SU Moving on Up and Going Down

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Forum + other
VET DIT
pubs



Work in Progress on the new Extension to DIT Cathal Brugha Street

The Students' Union in DIT Cathal Brugha Street will be getting a spanking new home when the extension at Marlborough Street is completed.

Currently operating in what can be generously described as snug conditions, the students' union will be moving into the basement of the new extension which is due for completion early next year. Realistically, though, the eight storey building will not be completely ready for occupation until September 1997.

"We never expected to go in there until September '97 although the college were

saying when they started that they hope to be ready by Christmas," said Colin Joyce, Overall President of DIT Students' Unions. "The reality is that if the building isn't going to be completed until February, no students are going to be moved mid-term so the first students won't be moving into it until September. It's more favourable to wait until then when everything is kitted out and ready."

It is hoped that there will be no repeat of the Aungier Street experience. When that building opened two years ago, the students' union area wasn't ready - missing doors, no shop,

unfurnished common room and the like - and, more seriously, the journalism and communications were left twiddling their thumbs due to lack of operational facilities. That situation resulted in a two day protest that was rather embarrassing for the DIT authorities.

Mr Joyce, himself a former President of the Students' Union in DIT Cathal Brugha Street, expressed satisfaction with the plans for the new location.

"The new place will consist of a common room and main offices off that common room. It is envisaged that the old

common room in Cathal Brugha Street will become a snackery and the canteen will remain as the canteen but will get a face lift.

Final decisions have yet to be made on the actual layout of the new offices.

"We definitely need a welfare office so we have to have discussions on the number of offices we need or the layout of the offices. That's all open for negotiation, but we are quite happy with the area that has been set aside for us."

Less certain is the future location of the DITSU shop in Cathal Brugha Street.

"We are still unsure as to the future of the shop," said Mr Joyce. "Where the shop is situated at the moment is unacceptable and it was hoped that provision would be made in the new extension to place it nearer the Students' Union area. That provision hasn't been made so we are looking at alternatives somewhere around the students' union area."

There was some concern about the location of the students' union in Aungier Street, fears being expressed that it would be too out of the way for many students. This hasn't been the case and so Mr Joyce is not greatly concerned that the new location for Cathal Brugha Street's SU is also the basement.

"I don't know why they chose that floor but in the

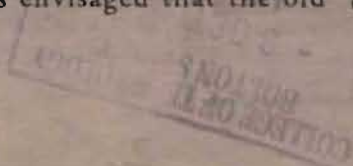
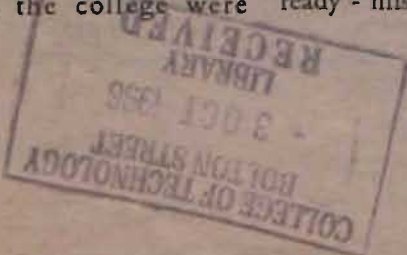
plans it was always that floor that was set aside for the students' union. There are a lot of disadvantages in people having to go out of their way to go down but it can work quite well for people who want to avoid classes and meeting lecturers and that sort of thing. We have been given that area and we will work it to the best of our advantage. It allows us to make a bit more noise than we would normally make if we were adjacent to classes."

The move will greatly welcomed by the students union officers and staff members who have endured the present cramped office, it seems, forever. Another bonus is that the new premises are unlikely to suffer the sporadic flooding suffered in the current office. DIT has tended to adopt a Band Aid to a Gaping Wound approach to dealing with this problem.

The most favourable set up for the new premises seems to be one that is close to that of DIT Bolton Street's.

"Most of the unions try to structure themselves like the Bolton Street area set up. It is the most favourable office and shop, student area set up."

However the set up finally works out, one thing is guaranteed. It will be an awful lot bigger than it is at present.



The DIT Examiner

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Strange Days Indeed

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.

The next few years will be for you a time of great change, new experiences, trial, error and ultimately, all going well, success. Be assured, the rest of us envy you and since that is the case, you must do all you can to make this time as memorable as possible. Don't waste these years because if you do you'll regret it and the rest of us will call you names.

The DIT Examiner

The DIT Examiner has been published monthly for the past three years. It is a newspaper primarily for the students of the DIT and if the staff read it, then all the better because the more aware they are of the students' grievances, the better. In the past when they failed to appreciate strong feelings, they had to deal with hundred of angry students sitting on the street outside their college. We feel that that paper provides an important service for students but we rely on your input. If there is an issue that you think should be covered, please contact us. Better yet, if you are interested in writing and would like to contribute articles, do not hesitate to drop in with your ideas. At the moment we are particularly interested in hearing from any of you with an interest in sports journalism. There is plenty of sport within the DIT to be covered, particularly Gaelic sports. Who knows, it could be the beginning of a long career wearing a big anorak and carrying a hip flask to matches all over the country.

Time to Go

This issue of the DIT Examiner is my last. I have been editor since the paper began in 1993 and have tried in that time to make it as interesting, worthwhile, relevant and enjoyable as I possibly could. It has been a fine time, never less than interesting, occasionally hilarious, and, once or twice, rancorous. It has been a real pleasure to work here. I have made good friends, some of whom bought me drink. I have watched DIT change and grow and I have had the pleasure of watching students once again getting angry enough to take to the streets and protest in a way and in numbers that we have not seen for years.

I do not know who will be the new editor but I wish her or him the very best. One word of advice: if the printer acts up, click you fingers three times and tap it gently on the left side. It doesn't work, but it'll get you noticed. To the friends I have made here, I wish only the very best in all they do. I will think of them often.

John Carroll

So apart from being the largest
students' union in the country
What has **Ditsu** ever done for me?

Well we organise and provide:

- + FRESHERS/ARTS/WELFARE/RAG WEEKS
- + COMPREHENSIVE SUBSIDISED ENTS.
- + FREE WELFARE ADVICE
- + FREE FINANCIAL ADVICE
- + HELP WITH COURSE PROBLEMS
- + HELP WITH GRANT PROBLEMS
- + HELP AND RESOURCES FOR CLUBS AND SOCIETIES
- + FREE STUDENT NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES
- + REPRESENTATION WITHIN THE COLLEGE, WITHIN DIT GOVERNING BODY AND NATIONALLY
- + CAMPAIGNS ON ISSUES LIKE STUDENT HARDSHIP, ACCOMMODATION AND SAFETY, LIBRARY FACILITIES, CATERING
- + RAISES THOUSANDS FOR CHARITY THROUGH RAG WEEK
- + 2ND HAND BOOK SERVICE
- + PUBLISHES FREE YEARLY HANDBOOK AND WELFARE MANUAL
- + DETAILED ACCOMMODATION LIST AT START OF EVERY YEAR
- + INTEREST FREE WELFARE LOANS
- + USIT CARDS
- + CHEAP PHOTOCOPYING
- + SU SHOP WITH WIDE RANGE OF PRODUCTS AT COMPETITIVE PRICES
- + SECRETARIAL SERVICE, PAST EXAM PAPERS AND FAX SERVICE
- + POOL TABLES AND VIDEO GAMES
- + PAYPHONE IN SU OFFICE
- + CONDOM MACHINES IN TOILETS
- + FRESHERS, HALLOWEEN, CHRISTMAS, RAG, EASTER, LAST CHANCE BALLS
- + FASHION SHOW
- + BEER PROMOTIONS
- + CHEAP PASSPORT PHOTOS
- + FRESHERS WELCOME PACKS
- + POSTAL ADDRESS FACILITY
- + AND ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT US TO DO!

Ditsu

The DIT exam system has redeemed itself in these cynical eyes. For a long time I viewed the secrecy and action of exam boards as being on a par with the KGB.

Now having experienced the fair and impartial exam appeals board, I have far more faith. Unfortunately a very low percentage use the appeal board system.

One of the major contributing factors in non-use of the exam appeals is a lack of trust amongst the student body. This distrust is unfounded and based on ignorance. The other main factor is the £50 charge. Hopefully we can get this reduced, the £50 is refundable if your appeal is successful. If you can't afford to pay the £50 then contact your local Student Union office and we will try to make some arrangements for you.

The appeals board is a sub-committee of the examination and awards committee which is itself a sub-committee of DIT Academic Council. The full-time officers of the Union are entitled to attend as your representatives or on your behalf.

So don't be afraid of appealing your exam decision and if you are in doubt contact your local Student Union office for advice.

Colin Joyce
"Joyce"
Overall President
DITSU

Mass Appeals

You've just started college and the last thing you want to think about is exams. But the fact is that many of you will be sitting exams this Christmas. If, Heaven forbid, they do not go according to plan, you can, if you feel you have a case, avail of the exam appeals system. It is there to be used.

Each year, the DIT's Exam Appeals Board received on average, 10 appeals from students regarding exams results. They are usually concerned with an upgrading of a result but not always. Occasionally, there is a request to sit a supplemental exam if the usual supplemental options have been exhausted.

There is an appeal procedure that should be followed and it should be available from both the library and the exams office in each DIT site. This is not always the case and so we will here outline the procedure as clearly as is possible. This procedure is there to be used if you feel you have a genuine case.

Tom Duff, the DIT's Academic Registrar, has pointed out that the exam appeals board, which is independent of individual colleges, cannot change results but can pass onto the exams board information that may

not have been available at the time of the exam. This may then result in the exam board reconvening to consider the student's case.

1. First step is to get an Examination Appeals Form (Form A1). This should be available from the Administrative Section of the relevant college.

2. This form must be completed in block letters or typescript and lodged with the relevant director within two weeks of the publication of the Provisional Examination Results and accompanied by the appropriate fee (£37). The relevant director must then sign and date the appeal and he will then forward it to the Academic Registrar (Tom Duff). It must be accompanied by:

A.. Information as to whether

(i) the appellant [student making the appeal] has made

efforts to resolve, through the relevant Head of School/Department the difficulty which has given rise to the appeal

(ii) a recheck has been requested and, if so, state the outcome if processed

(iii) the Examination Board has been made aware of any special circumstances, including medical, affecting the appellant's case prior to determination of results

(iv) the students in general and the prospective appellant in particular, have been informed of the appropriate course regulations

Other information which must accompany the appeal is

B. A written evaluation of the case from the relevant director, including comment on the allegations, if any, contained therein

C. Medical certificates relevant to the case

D. The appellant's academic record in previous years and a transcript of his/her current class group's examination results in respect of which the appeal is being sought

E. The process by which the appellant may continue his/her studies if the appeal is unsuccessful

F. Any other relevant information on the case.

Be sure to include any information that may be relevant, and if including any medical certificates, ensure that you list their inclusion on the appeals form in the appropriate section of the form.

Section 10 of the form asks the appellant to 'please specify the change you seek in your result as a consequence of this appeal'. This section, according to Tom Duff, was introduced because there have

been students who were requesting a further supplemental exam rather than an upgrading of a result. Don't be worried by the request. State honestly your feeling on the matter and why.

There is space provided on the appeals form (section 8) in which you may present your case in your own words. If you feel there is insufficient space provided on the form, you can continue on separate sheets of paper but make sure you include them with your appeal and indicate clearly their inclusion.

There is a facility for presenting your case to the board, either by yourself or with a willing lecturer/representative of the students' union. One of these could present the case for you or you can forego this option entirely. It will not prejudice your case.

Hopefully, you will not need recourse to this facility, but if you do, don't be afraid to make your case.

Watch Your House!

I used to live in a basement flat in Leeson Street, back in the days when the part of the street known as the Strip was a late night haven for drunks, skunks, sad persons and simians, though these last were often working as bouncers. One fine night, over the bridge and far away from the lair of the damned, the house in which my flat was located was broken into. Luckily, my love life being what it was, I was wide awake, reading, when the basement door caved into some concerted pressure from a hammer or some such implement. I sprang into action, losing my page and near wetting myself. Once the shaking had subsided enough to allow me to walk in a straight line, I made for the door of my flat which led directly into the corridor, down which four of the burliest masked men were no doubt at that very moment sneaking, murder on their minds. I did have a knife under my bed, a big one, but, fairly sure that it would be taken from me and used to hurt me, I left it where it was. In fact, I think I left it there when I moved out, which must have had the landlord searching the drains and back garden for weeks afterwards.

I unlocked all my locks, removed the chair from against the door, whispered the secret code and wrenched the door open, very very slowly. The light from my flat, as brave as I, peeked around the corner, seeped into the hallway and crept nervously along the floor toward the sounds of whispering and plotting. Disregarding my own safety and armed only with the daring boxers I was wearing, I stepped into the corridor.

The pool of light not having the power or inclination to venture far from the door, I couldn't see very far but did hear the distinct sound of sneaking abruptly arrested.

There was some anxious whispering and then the sound of fleeing, which did wonders for my ego. Anyone who has seen me in boxers will wonder what exactly it was that put the fear of God in the six or seven professional burglars who broke in that night. I can only assume that it was the mighty, elongated shadow thrown by my impressive, but hardly Herculean, form. I made my way down the corridor, fumbling for one of the timer switches as I went. My bravery now knew few bounds and I strode forward, only stopping when my bare feet came in contact with the glass shards from the broken door. Overcome with feelings of gross stupidity and woozy from the sight of my blood, I retreated and decided to inspect the damage the following morning. Mornings, I find, are bright and rarely afford places for slavering killers to hide and wait. Needless to say I spent the rest of the night whistling nervously, which isn't in itself unusual. But I had never done it from under the bed.

After that incident I became super safety conscious and I was never again brotken into. The downside is that since I carried my flat with me wherever I went, I couldn't get about all that well.

There is of course a middle ground between the paranoid and the dribblingly stupid, which brings us neatly to the point of this article- you shouldn't be afraid to leave your flat. Dublin is not a seething pit of crime and depravity, despite what the Evening Herald screams with monotonous regularity. But neither is it Fluffy City and you should be aware of that. There are break ins, there are muggings and there are sub humans out there who like to rape women. So be aware, in and out of the flat. Do not wander out leaving windows and doors open or unlocked. Burglars just love a soft target. And don't console yourself with the thought that you live on the second floor and are therefore safe. The thief will happily use the same stairs that you do and even if he doesn't, here's a thing: he can probably climb. Don't leave vast amounts of cash in the window sill, on the table or sitting beneath a big sign saying Easy Pickings Here. Just my little joke. You're a student; you haven't got vast amounts of cash. Burglars, however, will take what they

can get so take care. Jewellery, watches, bank cards, even a good pair of jeans are all fair game. I'm not kidding. Some friends of mine were burgled recently and are now living in a big empty house and have become very protective of the clothes they wear. Given that they now have to wear the same ones every day, this is understandable. Even the house ghost has gone, probably because there is not furniture for him to hide behind.

Outside the confines of your flat, house, or box there are a number of simple precautions you can take which will not necessarily prevent you from being attacked, but may keep you from being a prime candidate. Those vast amounts of cash I mentioned earlier? Don't carry them about with you. As the great satirist Juvenal once wrote "Travel light and you can laugh in the robber's face." I strongly suspect and fervently hope that Juvenal was attacked and beaten on a regular basis.

At bank machines, keep an eye out. Muggers are opportunists and a lone person extracting money whilst whistling a gay tune is a great opportunity. You may as well advertise. Now, onto dark streets. Or more accurately, not onto dark streets. Do try to avoid them because dark streets are for horny teenagers in slasher films. Muggers, robbers, rapists and pond scum of all types love the dark because they are exceptionally brave people. Unfortunately, the intake of huge amounts of alcohol has a nasty habit of making people fearless and invincible. A quick short cut across the mine field and I'll be home sort of thing. If you suspect that your very drunken friend is about to wander happily down Butcher's Alley, try very very hard to convince them that the other, brighter route is so much more fun. If you find yourself in a state of wobbly drunkenness, try to avoid walking home alone. The problem here is that when in the aforementioned state, you may well forget ever reading this, along with innumerable other important things. You could keep a list of tips in your pocket but society would, in all likelihood, ostracise you, so just try to keep your wits about you.

In summation: Dublin is a modern capital city with all the good and bad that goes with it. Embrace the good and take simple steps to keep the bad as far away as possible.

Clubs & Societies

As a newcomer, you may be feeling a little lost, wondering why in the hell you bothered and why does he/she look so damned with it and in with everyone. Fret not, it is a perfectly natural reaction to a new environment. One of the ways to overcome the awkwardness and, face it, loneliness, is to join one or many of the clubs, societies, groups and shadowy organisations run by the students for the students of the DIT. Apparently, you can also meet women/men/whatever you fancy yourself.

If nothing on this page appeals to you, once again, fret not for you can simply approach the students' union with an idea for a club or society. There are limits, mind you, so no suggestions for a self-immolation society or a club whose members get an enormous kick out of leaping into lava pits.

Mountjoy Square

Sports Clubs

Mountaineering
Aerobics
Athletics
Basket Ball - Men and Women
Badminton
DIT GAA
Equestrian
Golf
Hockey Mixed
Horse Racing Society
Hurling DIT
Karate
Ladies Rugby
Privates Rugby
Soccer - Men and Women
Swimming

Design
Design Presentation
Drama
Fashion
Fianna Fail
Graphics
Landscape Art
Mkt Communicator
Photography
Print

Kevin Street

Sports Clubs

Judo
Rugby
Orienteering
Yoga
Bridge
Karate
Fencing
Hurling
Gaelic Football

Social Action
St Vincent de Paul
Bakery

DIT Aungier Street

Sports Clubs

Athletics
Aerobics
Basketball
Badminton
Chess
G.A.A.
Golf
Karate
Rugby
Swimming
Soccer
Yoga



Social and Cultural Societies

A.I.E.S.C
Advertising
B.A.N.D
C.I.M.A
Communications
Computer
Chess
Drama
Debating
Erasmus
Film
Fantasy Football
An Cumann Gaelach
An Cumann
Iriseoireachta
Leisure
Transport
Women's Group
Yoga

DIT Bolton Street

Sports Clubs

Athletics Club
Canoe Club
Gaelic Football
Golf
Hockey

Karting
Mountain Biking
Mountaineering
Pitch and Putt
Rugby
Sailing
Ski
Soccer
Swimming
Volleyball
Wado Ryu
Windsurfing

Social and Cultural Societies

A.S.A
Architectural
Technicians
Acricycle
Auctioneering
Building Maintenance
Cairdeas
Chess
Construction Soc.
Construction Tech.
Cumann Gaelach
Debating
Drama
Dyslexia
Environmental Engs
Film Society
Geo Surveying
Horse Racing
Motor Industry Mgt
Music Club
Ogra Fianna Fail
Open Forum
Photo Soc.
Printers
Property Economics
Reponse

Role Play
Student Engineers
Transport Soc.
Urban Renewal

DIT Cathal Brugha Street

Sports Clubs

Aerobics
Badminton
Basketball (M & W)
Gaelic Football (M & W)
Hurling
Camogie
Golf
Mixed Hockey
Rugby (M & W)
Soccer (M & W)
Swimming
Tennis

Social and Cultural Societies

Environmental Health Society
Role Playing
Leisure Soc.
Food and Beverage
Film & Theatre
Out and Proud
Adventure
Hotel and Catering Mgt.
Drama Soc.
Cumann Gaelach
Travel and Tourism
Soccer Supporters



Volleyball
Yoga

Social and Cultural Societies

Administration Society
Art
Cumann Gaelach (Irish Society)
Club 100
Debating

Social and Cultural Societies

Secret
Sci-Fi and Fantasy
Human Nutrition
Science & Technology
Music
Choir
Games
Dyslexia
Computer
LGB
Women's Group
Russian
Christian
Folk Group

Get Fresh!

I remember my Freshers' Week as if it was nine years ago, which by happy coincidence it was. Mostly it passed in a barely conscious haze, interspersed with moments of restless sleep, during which times I attempted to rejuvenate my jaded body in the hope that it would be ready to receive more and more beer when I finally surfaced. A quick shower, a half hearted attempt to shake and vac my tongue and away I went, every morning. Ultimately, the high point of my week was chasing a friend across a rugby field at midnight and rugby tackling him into a big puddle. And all because he took my pint. Oh how we laughed. Later I was spectacularly ill between two cars.

Of course it need not be the same for you. It depends largely on how much of your dignity you are prepared to relinquish when drink has been taken. However you choose to take part, do take part. Freshers' Week is a great way to break the ice, to get to know the people in your college. Depending on how they behave you will know who to befriend and who to ward off with cloves of garlic and sticks.

Mountjoy Square

Monday, 7th October

DJ in canteen

7.30 Super Budweiser Promotion - The Big Tree

10.30 Niteclub - The POD

Tuesday, 8th October

Traditional Band in Canteen

8.00 pm Horse Race Night

10.30 Disco - The Back Gate

Wednesday, 9th October

Dance DJ in Canteen

7.30 pm Ireland V Macedonia

9.30 pm SEX pub quiz
11.30 pm Disco in The Furnace

Thursday, 10th October

10pm Freshers Ball - The Vortex, The County Club, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath

Buses leave The Big Tree, Dorset Street from

9.00 pm - 10.30 pm

Friday, 11th October

Sleep Alone or with someone else

DIT Aungier Street

Monday, 7th October

12.30 pm Official Opening in the Common Room

1.30 pm three-legged pub crawl

4.30 pm Pub Quiz in USI

8.30 pm Karaoke

11.30 pm Disco in Club USI

Tuesday, 8th October

Stands Day in the College (This is used for the purpose of setting up all the clubs and societies in Aungier Street)

4.30 pm Promotion in Gleasons

6.30 pm Horse Race Night in the Common Room

Wednesday, 10th October

1.30 pm Iron Stomach Competition

2.30 pm Blind Date in the Canteen

4.30 pm Promotion in the Pub

8.00 pm Hypnotist in the Garda Club

11.00 pm Disco in the Garda Club

Thursday, 11th October

9.30 am Freshers Official Breakfast in the Canteen

2.30 pm Pub Golf

7.30 pm Aungier Street Official Boat Race

9.00 pm USI Promotion

11.30 pm Freshers Ball in The Furnace (Club USI)

DIT Kevin Street

Monday, 20th September

12 pm - 2 pm FM 104 Broadcastnig live from the snackery

5pm Fosters Ice Promotion in Devitts

8 pm Blind Date and Party Games in the

Furnace followed by live band "New Manoeuvre" and Disco. Sponsored by Heineken

Tuesday, 1st October

1 pm Comedian in the Snackery

8 pm Karaoke in Barney Murphy's (sponsored by Murphys)

Wednesday, 2nd October

Clubs and Societies Day in Gleeson Hall

8 pm Pub Quiz in Barney Murphy's. Sponsored by Becks

Thursday, 3rd October

1 pm Hypnotist in The Gleeson Hall

11 pm 'til late Freshers' Ball in the Olympic

DIT Cathal Brugha Street

Monday, 30th September

12.00 noon Surprise Party, Common Room

5.00 pm Soccer Match, Airways v McGraths at Mountjoy Square

7.30 pm Boat Race and Pub Golf in Airways

10.30 pm 70s Disco in Break for the Border

Tuesday, 1st October

Clubs and Societies Day

1.00 pm Debate - Lecturers v Students

Keg

4.00 pm Mock Wedding, Common Room

4.30 pm Reception, Old Restaurant

Honeymoon - McGraths

Wednesday, 2nd October

1.15 pm Political Debate KOS

Evening Mr Airways Comp.

Thursday, 3rd October

2.30 pm Welly Drinking Competition, McGrath's

3.30 pm Zak Powers, Hypnotist- McGraths

Airways God's Gift - two kegs

10.30 pm Freshers Ball in NightOwls

Friday, 4th October

Recovery

DIT Bolton Street

Monday, October 7th

Lunchtime - Edward White - Hypnotist

Evening - Promotion in Four Seasons

Rasher, Sausage and Pudding Mystery Trip

Tuesday, October 8th

Lunchtime - Juniper (band)

Evening - Race Night in The Four Seasons

Wednesday, 9th October

Lunchtime - Brendan Burke (Comedian)

Evening - Promotion in The Four Seasons

Thursday, 9th October

Lunchtime - Blink

Evening - Freshers' Ball, Olympic Ballroom.

S p e c i e s

You will meet many scary people in college. This is an unfortunate by product of attending an institution which has no dress code, scant regard for the moral fibre of its charges and absolutely no horse shite detector. The DIT in this regard is like a great big bag of allsorts; a few colourful triple decker sweeties to OOH at, several ordinary, flatter types that are palatable to most and far too many of those hideous plain liquorice yokes that are either actively hated or barely tolerated.

We in the DIT Examiner like to be as helpful as we can, making your transition to third level as painless as possible. So, for your edification, we will outline here some of the species you will bump into during your time in college and offer tips on how best to deal with them, or distract them while you make a speedy getaway.

The Rugger Bugger

These are strange and contradictory abominations. Some of them are so posh they can hardly speak, which is not necessarily a bad thing as what they have to say is largely uninteresting, consisting of hilarious anecdotes about the craic they had on the last trip outside the pale, kicking lumps out of the savages on the field and waving their willies around the local disco later that night. By day, however, they dress in expensive jeans, deck shoes and rugby tops, the collar invariably flipped up, hovering about their ears. They are generally burly, have snappy one-syllable names - easy to remember - and favour paco roban.

The Science Fiction Freak

Pod People. Simple as that. They firmly believe that Star Trek and all that followed in its turgid wake is the high point of 20th century culture, entertainment and, Heaven help us, philosophy. Let me assure you, Star Trek did nothing but afford William Shatner the clout to release a monstrous album of aural carbuncles, and its sequel merely gave Whoopi Goldberg the chance to wear a big plate on her head. Pod people dress in clothes that will never fit them, have a curious shuffling gait and are the physical manifestation of the word "furtive". They read books with titles like The Red Limbol of Zardox and sometimes eat them. If you want to get rid of one, simply say that Obi Wan Kanobi is having a sandwich in the canteen. See them shuffle!

The Hippie

Deadhead, loser, slacker, no hoper, cannabis eater, the hippie is a throwback, both to the 60s and in its own right. It is the most useless, pointless and boring organism on the planet. Less active than a sloth and about as clued in, it wanders the corridors of their college, when it

remembers to come in, purple bell bottoms trailing at its feet, odorous caftan hanging from its bony frames. It has a kind word for everyone, just the one mind, the result of an attention span deficit, and nothing bothers it because it has no idea what is going on, anywhere. It has a dreamy expression when it looks at you, not because it likes you or finds you surpassingly attractive but because it imagines you as a huge joint. The sight of shampoo startles it and it will break into a frantic meander in an effort to escape.

The Diligent Irritant

This one thinks it is still in secondary school and once came into college wearing its school uniform. It attends every lecture, or class, underlines words with a ruler and drinks Miwadi at lunch time. Its hair, be it male or female, is straight and shiny and it may wear a ribbon, again irrespective of gender. It is good for borrowing notes from but will take encouragement from any words directed its way and will attach itself to you with limpet-like ferocity if you so much as acknowledge its existence. You are permitted to stick signs to its back and let it wander the corridors being kicked.

The Students' Union Hack

This little leech is made almost entirely of low grade oil and propels itself by slithering about, accessing locked rooms by simply sliding under the door. It once met a officer of the students' union and has since that brief encounter decided that it is a best friend, entitled to wander in and out of the office at will, and convinced that a quick nod will get it into balls, discos and anything else which would cost it money. It is ignored by practically everyone despite hanging around like a summer cold and seems to have no home. Most people assume that its parents threw it from the pond when its pseudopodia were

strong enough.

The One With the Big Brain

This can be seen occasionally in the corridors, its huge head scraping of walls on either side. This sight is, however, a rarity. Mostly it is to be found in the library, reading several books at one time and writing at least two others. Because it is so wrapped up in what it is studying, it has adapted its body so that it only has to breathe twice a day, once in the morning when it gets up and once again when it goes to bed, 23 hours later. It eats by osmosis, cutting out the tiresome masticating process and minimising the equally laborious digestion nonsense. It does not go to the toilet but rather has adopted the system used by Tour de France cyclists. If you look carefully you can actually see its head throbbing. One day it will have a massive brain haemorrhage and stuff will leak from its ears for a month. To truly upset it, sidle up and whisper "whatcha readin' for?".

The Lech

It used to be easy to spot this; it used to look like Tom Jones. Actually it was Tom Jones. These days, it has learned to disguise itself and has become cunning enough to pretend to be your friend - you being a first year who thinks he is really nice and helpful. Still there are distinguishing marks. It tends to look after itself a little too well and will always smell of some expensive aftershave. Very often it has a mane which it will toss and flick at regular intervals. In niteclubs as it walk around looking for victims, it will fan its tail feathers in a dazzling explosion of colour. It has the visual scope of an insect and can move each eye independently. It will rarely go for people its own age because it is nowhere near as good in bed as it thinks it is and will only chance its arm and other bits with relatively inexperienced people who are less likely to laugh in its face.

DIT's Academic Structure Begins To Take Shape

DIT's revamped academic structure is finally taking recognisable shape with the appointment of the institute's six new faculty directors recently confirmed.

The director of the Faculty of Applied Arts is Dr Ellen Hazelkorn. She will work initially from Aungier Street before moving to the Leinster Road building in DIT Rathmines, currently largely unused. She will have responsibility for Professional and Social Studies, Social Science, Art & Design, Music & Drama and Printing. This means that she will have administrative responsibility for DITs Aungier Street, Rathmines, Adelaide Road and Chatham Row. She is only woman faculty director.



Dr Brendan Goldsmith

Mr Francis Brennan is the Director of the Faculty of Engineering. Mr Brennan was director of DIT Kevin Street for 14 years. He will have responsibility for Control Systems & electrical Engineering, Electronics and Telecomms, Electrical Installation, Science, Engineering Technology, Maths and General Studies, Transport and Engineering Trades. He will be based in DIT Bolton Street, as will Mr John Radcliffe, who has been appointed Director of the Faculty of the Built Environment. Mr Radcliffe, who is new to the DIT, will have responsibility for Architecture, Surveying and Construction Trades. He was formally A Visiting Fellow to the University of Reading, England and a Consultant Planning and Development Surveyor. He is the only Faculty Director from outside the DIT.

Mr Paul O'Sullivan has been appointed Director, Faculty of Business and will be based

initially DIT Mountjoy Square, where he has been acting director since 1992. One of the most popular directors among the student body, he will be administratively responsible for the DIT Centre in Mountjoy Square.

The Director of the Faculty of Science is Dr Matt Hussey, who has been Head of the Department of Physics in DIT Kevin Street since 1983. He will be based in Kevin Street and will have responsibility for Physics, Chemistry, Statistics, Computer Science, Biological Science, Bakery and Languages.

Mr Michael Mulvey will head the Faculty of Tourism and Food and will be based in DIT Cathal Brugha Street. Mr Mulvey has been Acting Head of the School of Hotel, Catering and Tourism Management since 1993. He will have responsibility for Tourism, Food Operations,

Technology. These appointments and the division of responsibility for courses within individual sites should mean that certain courses will move to other sites. However, for the time being, this is unlikely to happen since phase two of the Aungier Street site has yet to begin and the extension to DIT Cathal Brugha Street in Marlborough Street does not look like being ready until September, 1997. For the time being, then, certain directors will be involved with more than one site which could prove interesting.

There have been other directoral appointments, all of whom will be based in DIT Fitzwilliam House, Head Office. They are: Dr David Gillingham, Head of Academic Affairs; Dr Declan Glynn, Director of External Affairs and Mr Ray Wills, Director of Finance. Mr Bob Lawlor has been appointed Secretary of the Institute and will also be based in Head Office.

The appointments have taken longer to finalise than anticipated but now that they are all in place, Dr Brendan Goldsmith, President of the DIT, can press ahead with the physical and academic changes for the institute for which he has been working for some time.

No Joke

"It was only a bit of fun". "She can't take a joke, that one." The excuses are common, the accompanying facial expression either one of stupid surprise or sneering contempt. The end result for the victim of such "fun" is the same - hurt, anger, embarrassment and, too often, a sense of powerlessness. It is inexcusable and should not be tolerated, not in college, not anywhere.

Few problems are as damaging or embarrassing as sexual harassment, whether it is in the workplace or in college. It is damaging in that it can lead to medical and psychological problems as well as having a devastating effect on a student's ability to study and perform in college and may, ultimately, lead to a student having to drop out of college. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination and, as with other forms of discrimination, people must work to eliminate it.

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual Harassment can be broadly described as persistent, unwanted sexual comments,

propositions or physical contact considered offensive to the people at which they are directed. It includes all forms of harassment from unpleasant remarks to sexual assault.

There are various forms of sexual harassment, including:

- repeated and unwanted verbal or physical advances
- sexually explicit or discriminatory remarks
- unwelcome comments about person or dress
- demands for sexual favours
- offensive use of pin ups or pornographic pictures

It is important to differentiate between sexual harassment and normal social interaction in college or in the pub involving mutually

acceptable behaviour. Harassment involves one person behaving in a manner that another finds threatening or humiliating.

Sexual harassment can occur anywhere and at any level. Even the least serious form of sexual harassment can be extremely damaging to victims if repeated regularly over a period of time. Studies have shown that victims can suffer various symptoms, including anxiety, tension, depression, increased alcohol, cigarette and drug use, sleepiness and relationship difficulties. This does not mean that someone suffering from any of the above is necessarily being sexually harassed as these symptoms are common to various complaints.

What If I am A Victim of Sexual Harassment?

- Don't be afraid to tell the harasser that the attention is unwelcome.
- Keep a note detailing all incidents of harassment with date, time, place witnesses and your response. This will help to prove your case if you wish to take action.

• Look for witnesses, other victims and further evidence of harassment taking place.

• Talk to other women in the college or friends to find out if they have had similar experiences.

• Contact your Students' Union Welfare Officer or the college authorities and lodge a formal complaint. The Students' Union can guarantee you full confidentiality and can put you in touch with someone who can help you deal with the problem. If they are willing, use your witnesses to substantiate your complaint.

What Can I Do To Eliminate Sexual Harassment?

Everyone can help to eliminate sexual harassment in some way. To start with, students should examine their own views and behaviour towards others, e.g., how to speak or act - is it offensive? They should also be aware of the behaviour of others and most importantly, don't be afraid to tell someone to stop if you see them acting in a discriminatory manner. People will respect you all the more if they see you taking a stand.

Checklist For Action on Sexual Harassment

1. Discuss the issue in women's groups and Students' Union meetings.
2. The issue should be raised and discussed through Students' Union publications, e.g., handbooks, students' union magazines and leaflets.
3. Organise public meetings with speakers from outside organisations, e.g., Employment Equality Agency of the Equal Opportunities Commission.
4. All class reps should be aware of the issues involved in Sexual Harassment and give help and support in raising the issue for discussion.
5. Discuss the issue with trade unions on campus with a view to adopting a common policy position.
6. Campaign to set up a Sexual Harassment Complaints Board. The Board should be in a position to deal with complaints about sexual harassment, help the students concerned and help how cases should be processed.

by Bob Coghlan

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: Fri. 11th October.

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

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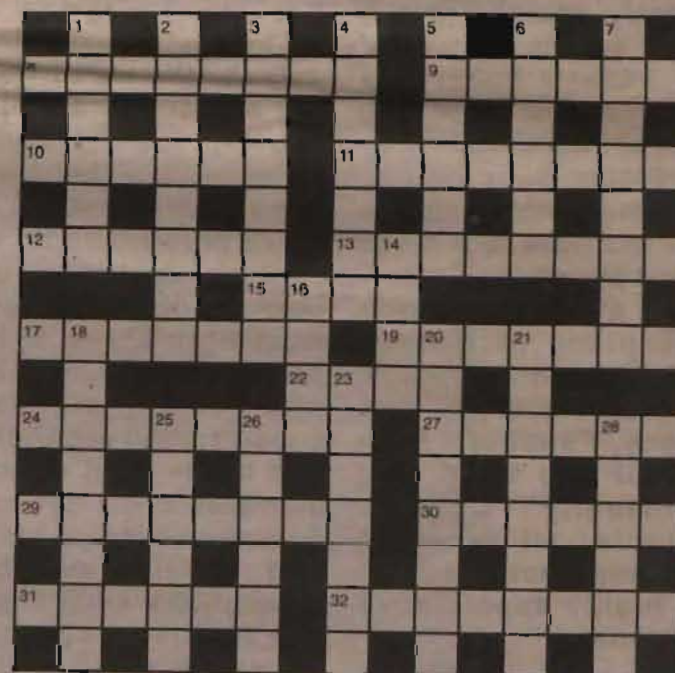
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ACROSS

- 8 Floor or overwhelm if I tune Dan out? (8)
- 9 Plant disease, especially of potatoes (6)
- 10 Grasping claw of a Prince (6)
11. Preparing for performance by exercise etc. (8)
12. Could Ann get a bird? (6)
13. Laugh at, deride (8)
15. Look after or incline in some direction (4)
17. Type of armoured car named after opponents of the Crusaders (7)
19. Lower tidal part of a river (7)
22. Tall ornamental container (4)
24. Yet rolls around the American tram-cars (8)
27. Hindu elephant driver (6)
29. Originator, one who designs something for the first time (8)
30. Ten are overturned but are tidier (6)
31. Regard with high respect (6)
- 32.. Continuous shower of gunfire (8)

DOWN

1. Disease of the heart marked by bouts of intense pain (6)
2. Gigantic South American snake (8)
3. Strangle by tightening a string around the neck (8)
4. Stand from which a book is read (7)
5. On a ship, train etc. (6)
6. Meal eaten out of doors (6)
7. Dealers in candles, oils, soaps etc (8)
14. "Beware the ... of March" (Shakespeare) (4)
16. Grudging feeling at the good fortune of others (4)
18. Planned or put in some order (8)
20. College for future priests (8)
21. Violent shaking, great disturbance or change (8)
23. Impute (7)
25. Looking lustfully (6)
26. Course served at dinner or freedom of access (6)
- 28 Not flat, level or smooth (6)

COMPETITION NO. 1

College of Music Hits All the Right Notes in US Tour



DIT's college of Music Concert Band has recently returned from a highly successful tour of the east coast of America. The 60-strong band of musicians, led by conductor Willie Halpin, gave five concerts during their two week tour of the United States.

The concerts, which took place in Boston College, Yale University, Rutgers University New Jersey, Falmouth High School and Cape Cod Community College, Hyannis, all received standing ovations from the highly appreciative audiences.

The band's headquarters for the tour was the small, picturesque town of Falmouth in Cape Cod where the whole community welcomed them into their homes with warmth and hospitality. Mr Peter Cook, Head of Music at Falmouth High School, was a wonderful host, who more than once expressed his pride at having the concert band rehearse in his school.

"We decided it would be great for us. By hosting the group, not only would we give our music students the chance to see how music

is performed in different cultures, but this band has a reputation of having some really great players. We try to teach our students that music is universal, but having an event like this really shows that is true."

The programme for the concerts was very varied, containing repertoire from both sides of the Atlantic, some film music and some standard concert band repertoire. One of the most exciting moments in the concerts was when bagpipe player Jon Doyle marched through the audience in full highland costume whilst playing an original composition, "From US to Erin" by the Director of bands at Yale University, Mr Tom Duffy. This is a piece for a concert band and two small ensembles which incorporates folk tunes from both countries.

The featured soloist in the saxophone concerto by Michael Ball was Kevin Hanafin, a finalist in the 1996 Young Musician of the Future. Kevin gave a performance of outstanding quality throughout the tour and we wish him luck as he commences postgraduate studies in the Royal College of

Music this September.

This tour was a dream come true for Mr William Halpin. He founded the Concert band in 1980 and has seen it grow from strength to strength throughout the years. As a student, Mr Halpin travelled frequently to the Cape, where he made several good friends and contacts who helped him organise the trip. The success of the tour, however, was largely due to the hard work and dedication of the tour manager, Bríd Grant, herself a lecturer in DIT Chatham Row. She began work for this your last January and ensured everything ran smoothly from host family distribution to pre-concert tuning! Thanks are also due to Ms Brigid Mooney, Head of Orchestral Studies, DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, and her hard working staff.

The two week tour will always be remembered by the College of Music Concert Band and the people of Cape Cod who will never drink in Liam Maguire's Irish Pub again without hearing the voices of 60 young Irish musicians and having a good time.

DIT Sends Out Clarion Call to Singers

Sopranos, Altos, Tenors, Bass singers and those of you who are unsure of your vocal abilities take note: The DIT wants you, to join the choral society that is. Be you student or staff member, it matters not. If you can sing, the institute invites you to join its choral society, to swell its numbers and make bigger sounds.

At present the DIT Choral Society consists of approximately 100 members, bringing together students and staff from all DIT Colleges in an expansion of the College of Music Choral Society and the DIT Kevin St College Choir. Apart from enjoying the musical and social aspect, the choir aspires to performing major choral works to the highest standard. There are to main concerts during the year, in December and late April, as well as other smaller commitments. Plans for the future include:

1. A November weekend trip to compete in the North Wales International Choral

Festival. The Kevin Street college choir has been competing in this event since 1991 and has won a second and third prize.

2. A Christmas Concert (Vivaldi Gloria, Britten Rejoice in the Lambs & Carols)

3. End of Year Concert on 30th April 1997.

4. A European Tour is being planned for 1997 - 1998.

Rehearsals take place in the Gleeson Hall in DIT Kevin Street on Wednesdays from 7.00 - 9.30 pm except for those on October 2nd and 16th, when they will be held on Lecture Room 3 (308) in DIT Kevin Street. Music-reading ability is preferable but not essential. Commitment, however, is essential. To perform or travel with the choir, members are required to attend at least 75% of rehearsals.

Application available from DIT Chatham Row, the College of Music.

Light House Switched Off

The Light House Cinema has gone dark, never to return in its present location.

Last weekend, Dublin's cinema going public were suddenly the poorer when, after the final showing of its final film, The Jar, the cinema closed its doors and awaited the developers of the Arnott's expansion to do what they would. Those who want to see film such as The Jar will probably have to wait until it turns up on Channel 4 some Monday night, about 12.45am.

"This is not the end for the Light House," said Neil Connolly, Founder and Director of the cinema. "We are actively seeking a new venue in the north inner city to continue our project to make independent cinema accessible to cinema goers in Dublin. We have set up a development team and are contacting potential investors and supporters. We would love to

hear from anybody who could help us to find a new home."

"The Light House is the last independent commercial cinema in the city centre," said Mareta Dillon, Director. "Its absence will mean audiences will have little other than mainstream Hollywood productions to choose from."

There had been rumours that the cinema would be incorporated into the expanded Arnotts but these came to nothing and so now the search begins.

For eight years the Light House has shown a great variety of films which otherwise would have slipped by Irish audiences. It stuck resolutely to its guns, showing films that wouldn't necessarily bring the greatest financial return but instead were chosen for such unfashionable reasons as artistic merit, quality and diversity. Its loss is indeed a sad one. We wish the directors well in their search for a new home.



Murphy Returns to the Big Time in More Ways than One

Out takes. Should they be shown at the end of a film? You might say that if they are funny, then there is no reason not to show them. Ah yes, I shoot back, but what if they are funnier than anything in the finished product and the finished product is a comedy? Then, my hasty friend, you may wish to reconsider.

The makers of *The Nutty Professor* certainly did not give this eventuality any thought, presumably secure in the knowledge that the film itself would stand tall against the unintended amusement of the miscues, linguistic flip flops, mark missing and explosions of laughter at inappropriate moments. They should have because *The Nutty Professor* is not a very funny film and the out takes at the end are, tragically, the funniest parts of it.

Eddie Murphy, in his first bona fide hit for years, is Genetics Professor Sherman Klump, bright, sensitive, loveable and fat as fat can be. Although a slave to food, he has made attempts to lose weight but he invariably fails, feels miserable and consoles himself with a big pie, or whatever is to hand. Along comes gorgeous post graduate student Carla Purty (Jada



Sherman Klump takes on board more carbohydrates while Charles Atlas simply takes the piss

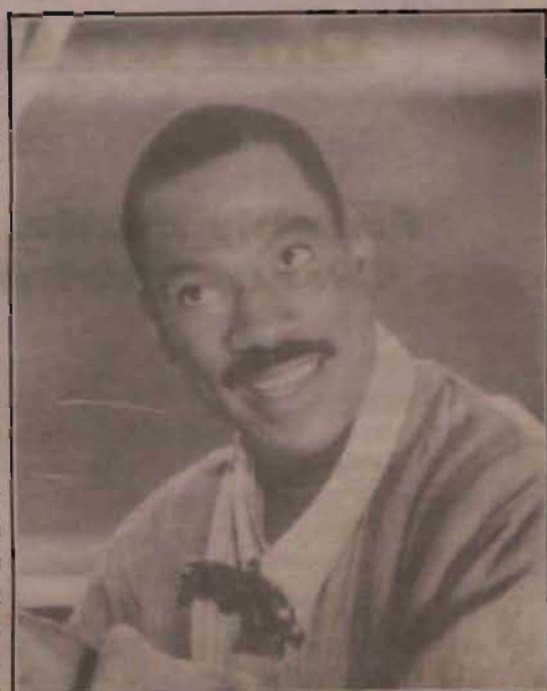
Pinkett) and Sherman musters the courage to ask her out. Deeply shamed by a loud mouth comedian, he decides to experiment on himself with a "revolutionary fat gene" formula he has been working on - handily, I watched this with a geneticist friend and she scoffed loudly - and is transformed into the svelte, slick and sex mad Buddy Love, or Eddie Murphy without all Rick Baker's special effects fat

bits. The joke is that the transformation is temporary and likely to wear off at any given moment. Cue special effects and sudden exits reminiscent of a slew of body swap, mistaken identity, dual personality films.

Buddy Love is aggressively funny, super confident and driven by his libido, essentially the Eddie Murphy persona from his early films. We see him shouting, leering, making

fun of people and generally behaving as if he owns the world. But this does not seem to be what Murphy wants to be, or can be, anymore. In this caring, sharing and exceptionally soft hearted film, it is the old Eddie who we are supposed to dislike and the new, sensitive guy whose gentler charms are designed to win us over. The most telling moment is when Buddy takes Carla, who is taking with his looks and

Buddy's behaviour. Perhaps this



Without the Padding

was the point.

Aside from showing us his softer side, which he has been attempting in recent films, Murphy also gets to display his talent for impersonation. In dinner scenes with Sherman's family, he plays all five members, including a deranged grandmother. Elsewhere, he impersonates an irritating, white fitness guru. It's showing off, going a step further than his *Coming to America* scenes in the barber shop, but it's amusing enough.

Ultimately, *The Nutty Professor*, a remake of one of Jerry Lewis' better films - hardly a ringing endorsement - is mildly diverting, occasionally amusing and deeply sentimental. The ending

confidence, back to the club where Sherman was so humiliated. There he verbally and physically assaults the loudmouth comedian, finally rendering him unconscious. Murphy has said that he was attacking those stand ups whose material is based on abuse of the audience but the scene is carried too far, becomes too cruel. There is no sympathy for the comedian but neither is there pleasure taken from

is no surprise since the film constantly hammers home its point: it's not about how you look, but who you are on the inside that matters. Happily for Murphy, he could take off all the blubber at the end of each day and simply be himself. The film would have been much more interesting if a genuinely fat actor played the hero and Murphy was allowed to play only the aggressive, unpleasant incarnation.

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Travel Sickness

Forced by gross overspending to take the coach and ferry method of getting from London to Dublin, Siobhán Weekes has plenty of time to regret buying that second pair of gold shoes, or whatever it was that reduced her to near poverty

"This is a Stena announcement. We regret to inform you that the 18.25 HHS Explorer sailing has been cancelled..." Jaws dropped, babies started crying. Somewhere in the distance, a dog barked. World traveller that I be, I merely shrugged my shoulders, settled on my back pack and searched for my ciggies. "...Passengers are reminded that this is a no smoking building." Ah feck!

It was now 5.30pm. Granted, another boat was scheduled to sail at 7.50pm but I had left London at 9.30am and was a wee bit tired. Despite having earned enough money in England to cancel the national debt of a small Latin American Country, I couldn't actually afford to fly home. I was shocked to discover that countless nights on the tear, shopping sprees worthy of the now ex-Princess Diana and weekends away had put a serious dent in my bank account. I was faced with the choice. I could either fly or go via bus and ferry. I chose the latter as it only cost £17 and therefore I could stock up on enough Duty Free to keep the Mammy off my case for a few days. So off I hopped to the Eurolines office with a song in my heart and the dosh for a one-way ticket back to gold ole DIT.

Having had two hours sleep the night before, I arrived in Victoria Coach Station and 8.30am for check-in. After a so-called 'mate' from New Scotland Yard had played a nasty trick on me involving uniformed police and the Prevention of Terrorism Act, I was then informed that there was no check-in for buses to Ireland. Obviously the French women in Eurolines thought an extra hour in Victoria (a no smoking building to boot I might add!) would do me some good. It was only when I heard an incredibly loud Mid-West American accent that fear and trepidation set in. Please, please don't be in my coach I prayed to myself. At 9.20am we were all gathered at Gate 19, ready to board. The coach was surprisingly comfortable. However, by now Caroline from Illinois had been joined Nick from Brisbane and yes, they were going to Dublin. They sat behind me and their combined voices were louder than the PA in The Point.

Driving through County Kilburn, these representatives of the G7 countries were busy discussing their European conquests. And I don't mean in the Atlanta Games either. Nick, who was a bloke in the "Loaded" sense of the word, tried to engage me in this conversation by saying, "Hey, you're Irish, aren't you? What do you think of English men?" At this point I was reminded of the First Rule of Coach Travel: Never speak to anyone. Don't even make eye contact. Once you do, you're trapped. And obviously enough, the coach was no smoking. Without seeming too rude, I feigned sleep.

Thankfully, I then really did fall asleep. This was due to the lethal combination of a good-bye party in O'Neills Bar the night before and the latest Tom Clancy novel. If only the bus driver would get rid of the piped Country and Western music...

When I woke up, it was 1.15pm and we at the Stafford Granada Service Station. As I sat in the coffee shop, I stared at my cup of tea for which I had just paid £1.20. I use the word "cup" rather foolishly. The thimble-full receptacle of pure luke warm tannin may have had the ulcer-inducing power of five years on the New York stock exchange but it wouldn't have drowned an ant. A sweaty, 20-stone, middle-aged, five foot four inch being in a Ranger shirt sat down at my table, saying "Ewan, ya don't mine if ah perk myself aseed ya, hen?" That's it, I thought, I'm dreaming and I'm now on the set of Rab C. Nesbitt. But no. Nine coach loads of Rab's clones, also wearing Rangers shirts, had descended on Stafford. Several tried to talk to me. This time I wasn't being rude, I just couldn't understand a bloody word they were saying! I think I was asked if I wanted cigarettes and where I was from, but I couldn't concentrate. I was scanning the crowd looking for Jeremy Beadle to emerge from the sea of Gasgoigne shirts brandishing a first class flight from Manchester Airport. Nick and Caroline were getting into the spirit of things by having their photo taken with lads. When she said, "I just loved Braveheart," the staff ducked before the "They'll never take our freedom" speech

started. A common occurrence, no doubt.

At 4pm we were driving by Colwyn Bay. A 24-year-old nurse recognising a hang-over when she saw one, handed me two panadol extra and prescribed a stiff drink once on the boat. I vowed never again to slag off my mate in UCD med. and to always be nice to people from the Wesht.

We got to Holyhead at 5.15pm and I was left to struggle with my two backpacks of summer shopping and my "hand-held luggage", i.e. a huge Nike hold all ("My runners! I can't fit in the feckin' runners!" will be carved on my tombstone). Kim the nurse was happily chatting about her job in the Meath hospital. She seemed OK and so I went out on a limb and was polite for the first time that day. That was when the announcement was made. The stampede for the phones turned into a mob of

marauding rioters as the phones flashed "999 calls only". I began to feel sorry for the Stena staff and hoped that they were issued Kevlar jackets as standard with their uniforms. At that precise moment, some eejit produced his GSM phone to inform home of the delay. On a woman sent her six-year-old son in an attempt to gain access to our one link with civilisation. You'd swear he held the cure for cancer in his hands.

T w o m o r e

panadol ad my will to survive was on the up. I mightn't even need the regression therapy. However, I was in no mood to hear about Caroline's lost weekend in Amsterdam. Not that we had any choice.

We pulled out of the harbour at 7.30pm. I had something to eat, went to Duty Free and rooted myself in the bar. By 10pm, Kim and I were dancing to "Hey Macarena" after the complimentary Black Russians. When the lights of the eastern sea board started twinkling in the distance, I realised how much I had missed Dublin. I almost started singing.

Amhrán na bhFiann. Caroline and Nick were contentedly snogging away, blissfully oblivious of the fervent nationalism breaking about amongst the Eurolines survivors.

Dragging my luggage into Arrivals, I realised how soldiers

returning from WWII must have felt. I was so relieve to see my mum, considering that she had waited around for nearly four hours due to the delay. She ran towards me, arms outstretched. Not to hug me, mind. She lunged for the duty free bag. Well, she had her Obsession, I had mine - going to bed and sleeping for 15 hours.

Driving home at midnight, I thought back over my summer: Sundays at the athletics lusting after Roger Black; great weekends in Brighton and Hove and all the great friends I had made. All in all, these memories weren't hampered by the day's trip from Hell.

With that, I'll leave you with one thought: That which does not kill me will make me stronger. Just feel free to shoot me if I am seen anywhere near a Eurolines office before next June.

Siobhán Weekes

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Every Wednesday - Busker @ 7pm

Every Thursday - Table Quiz @ 7pm - Free entry. Disco to 1am

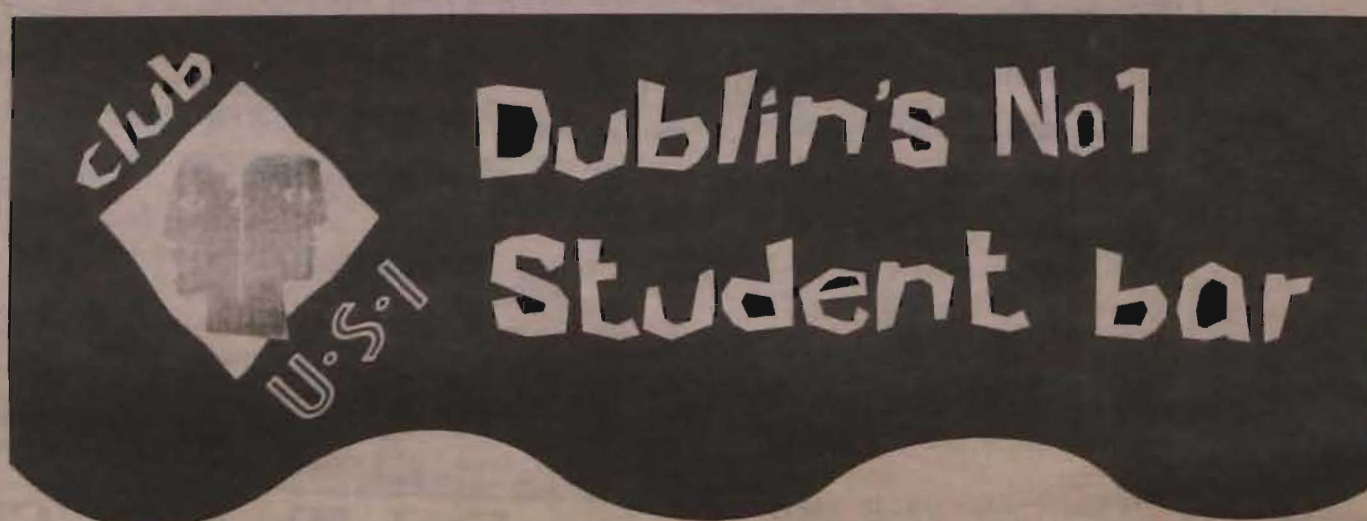
Every Friday - Busker @ 7pm. Disco to 1am. Free

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