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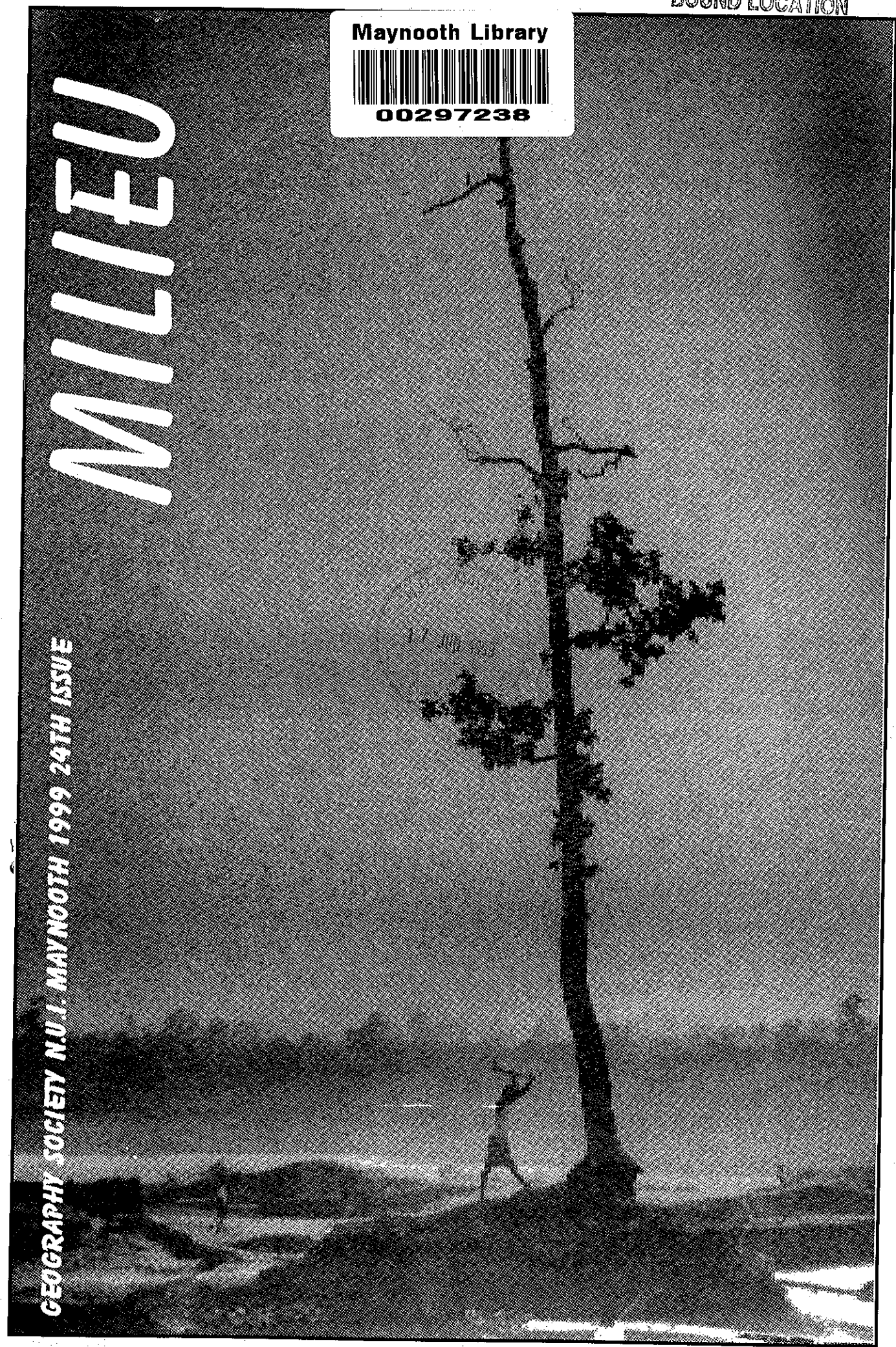
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MILLIEU

GEOGRAPHY SOCIETY N.U.I. MAYNOOTH 1999 24TH ISSUE



FOREWORD

J.A. Walsh, head of department

It is always a pleasure to welcome the annual edition of *Milieu*. It provides a record of the activities of the Geography Society and of the research interests of at least some of the current cohort of students. This issue includes essays on some recurring complex themes such as air quality and international debt. In both essays there is a welcome focus towards finding solutions to the problems. The geography of music is a new theme which is shaped by many concepts from the new cultural geography, introduced to students by Dr. Rob Kitchin who joined the Department in September 1998. The reflections of Proinnsias Breathnach on his visit to Australia make a persuasive case for a bilateral exchange arrangement between the University of Newcastle and NUIM. On behalf of the department thanks are extended to the President and other Committee members of the Geography Society as well as to the editor who has had the onerous task of

assembling and preparing the articles for publication.

The quality of the Department teaching and research programmes are fundamental to the education and training provided

to our students. There is now much debate about teaching strategies with increasing emphasis on independent learning and acquisition of a broad range of transferable skills that will enable graduates to join a labour force that is increasingly reliant on critical, adaptable, innovative and polyvalent individuals who can work effectively as team members

The Geography department regularly monitors and reviews its teaching programmes so that adaptations can be made to take account of changes to the traditional university teaching paradigm. The undergraduate programme is currently under review. There are already plans to introduce some laboratory work related to physical geography modules, this will commence next autumn following the completion of new laboratories in Rhetoric House. It is also hoped that there will also be greater provision of computer facilities in the department for final year students.

At postgraduate level the M. A. in Geographical Analysis has been restructured with some reduction in the number of lectures and more emphasis towards independent learning. Next year will see the inclusion of some lectures on environmental geophysical assessment as part of the Environmental Resource Management option within the M. A.

The research capabilities of the department have been boosted by the acquisition of significant resources to establish an Environmental Geophysical Analysis Unit. In Human Geography Dr. Rob Kitchin has launched a new international journal on Cultural and Social Geography while at a strategic level the university has recently identified Regional and Local Development as the research focus for one of four Centres of Research Excellence to be established at NUIM. The department intends to continue improving its teaching and research strategies with a view to providing the best quality service to all of its undergraduates and postgraduates.

EDITORIAL

Perhaps with the enduring success and huge appeal of the continued publication of the geography magazine, no, not "Milieu", but "National geographic", we have tried to appropriate, if you like, some of the objectives and style with which the magazine can owe its success.

More specifically, we have tried to pick out articles which deal with broader aspects of how we construct space, bringing together people and their identity in relation to place. As well as the more familiar places like Donegal, the global issues and regions can also be of importance in our lives.

As we live within our environment, it is not only the social aspects that construct our sense of space but the physical state within which we live. The condition of the physical environment that exists around us is both one of the most interesting and significant areas of geography still today. I hope the articles chosen for this publication reflect and keep what has made geography such a popular and enduring discipline.

The Geography Society

- Andrew Power – President
- Gareth Wynne – Secretary
- Philip Grier – Vice-president
- Fiona Brennan – Treasurer
- Niamh Twomey – P.R.O.
- Siobhan Maguire – Class Rep.
- Aveen Mullins – Class rep.

Special thanks to Gus Worth for doing the layout of this magazine and stepping into the breach.

Your President Speaks

Welcome to Milieu 1999.

This has been the first year that Geography, one of the widest disciplines has been described as Rock and Roll' (by yours truly), at guest lecturer David Chew's talk about rocks in Western Ireland. This perhaps best summed up the year for the Geography Society.

We started off with no president at all to guide our flock. After some reservations, I took up the daunting roll. This wouldn't have been possible without the help of some of the other members and the geography department. I also must thank the society for essentially promoting the subject and the good life in the university.

Our first presentation was from Douglas Lockhart, from Keele University who gave the

inaugural lecture. In a most entertaining style, he shed light on the exotic islands of Fiji, showing the dimensions of tourism and appropriated culture (or as it's otherwise termed, Coca-Cola) in the area.

When we were looking for guest speakers, Rob Kitchin our new liaison with the department, suggested the Russian Correspondent for The Irish Times, Seamus Martin. After the initial panic at the thought of using all our capitation in flying him from Russia, I found out he would be delighted in giving the talk and only have to drive from Dublin! This proved to be a very successful evening as he graced us with a light-hearted talk about the day to day lives of the common people in Russia.

The societies year did not go without our annual Table Quiz which was very well attended. It was presented by Proinnsias Breathnach and hopefully brought at least one

night's entertainment to the Student Union.

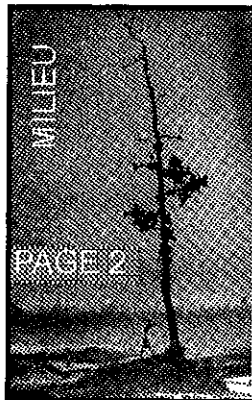
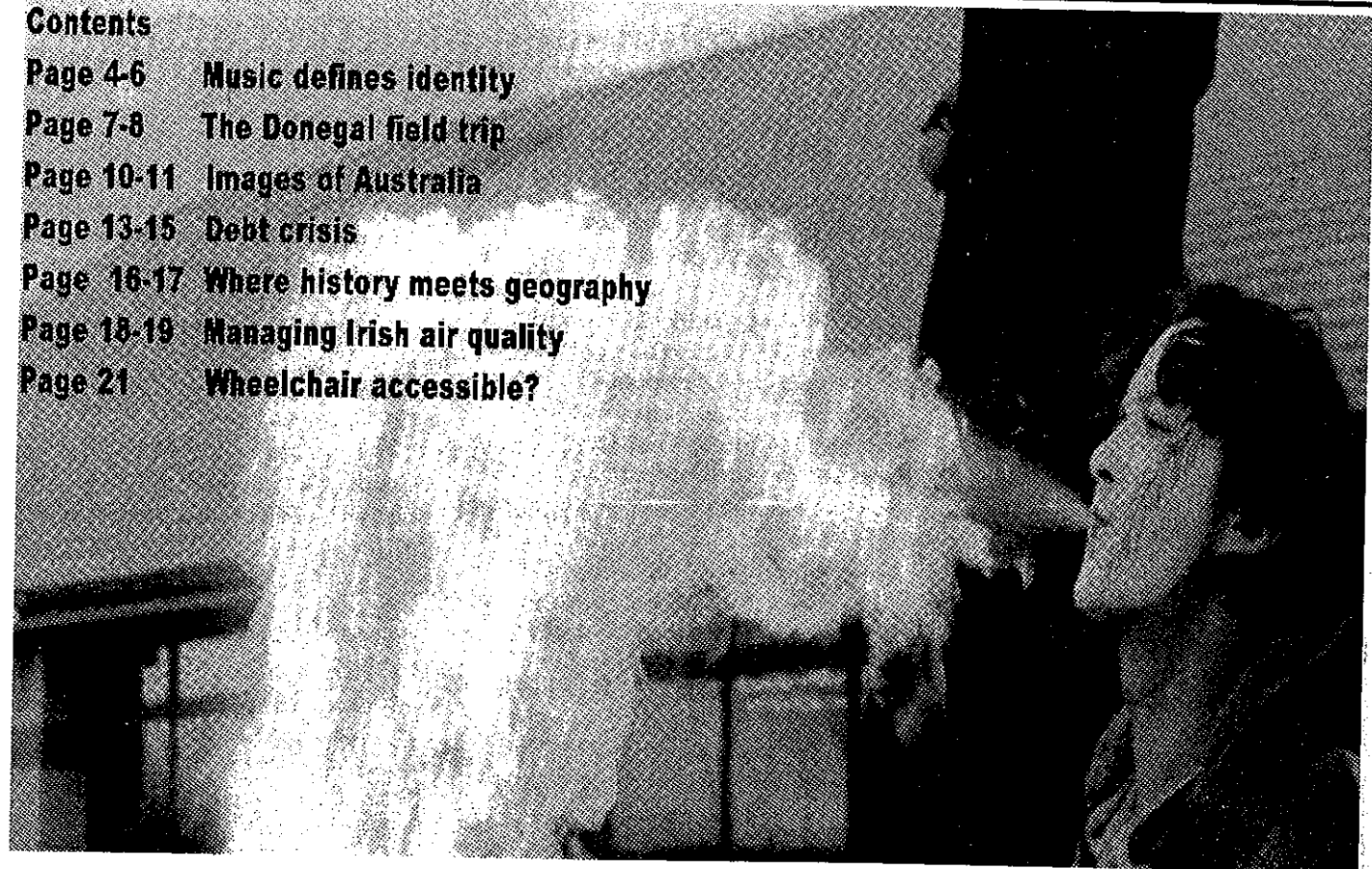
Because of Geography's broad nature we wanted to explore not only social geography but also physical geography. Hence the society played host to the PhD student, David Chew who gave a talk on the last 400 million years in the geology of West Ireland. Apologies for advertising it as the last 400 thousand years (if that wasn't enough). His research was presented in a very clear manner and provoked a lot of interesting questions.

This is the 24th edition of the student geographical magazine, Milieu. This shall hopefully coincide with our AGM. I, as well as the rest of the society learned a great deal from the experience and I hope that the next president, whoever that may be shall enjoy the year as much as I have.

andrew power

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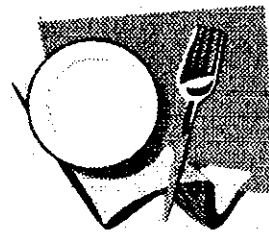


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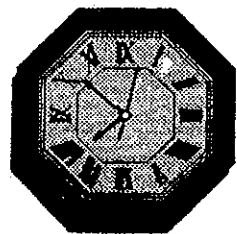
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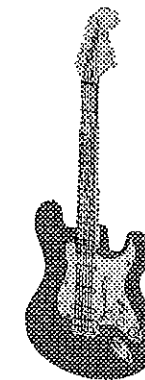
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MUSIC DEFINES IDENTITY

Recently, the role of music has acquired an important role within the discipline of geography. Its omnipresence and omnipotence pervades everyday life. Nearly every culture throughout the world has its own definition of musical content and make-up. As a result we can view music as being place-specific. In this essay I will attempt to show how the place of music is important in defining identity. Accordingly, music can also create its own space, e.g. Temple Bar Dublin. Secondly, I will attempt to show how the lyrics of various types of music are important in distinguishing place and identity. Finally I will discuss the ambiguities of musical space. Geographically speaking, music crosses divides, it can provide a sense of belongingness, but it can also ostracize and politicize that space.

The phrase a 'sense of place' is used by numerous geographers when they want to denote that places are important because they are the focus of personal feelings. Geographers have also emphasized that place is something created by people, both as individuals and in groups. During the last ten years, a process of 'urban renewal' and gentrification has been taking place in Dublin city. The area of the city where this transformation has taken place is known as Temple Bar. As a result, Temple Bar has come from being a region of no place to some place.² The area now offers a variety of spaces and places for the development of a broad range of arts and cultural activities.³ According to Montgomery, culture is the means by which cities express identity, character, uniqueness, make positive statements about themselves, who they are, what they do and where they are going. Like previous developments in Glasgow, and Manchester, Dublin and Temple Bar in particular has carved out

for itself a landscape which facilitates not only production but consumption. The National Concert Hall and Temple Bar Music Centre for instance, in their ability to attract people can therefore be seen as generators of activity. Another major cultural centre is the Clarence Hotel, located on East Essex Street. Owned by U2, its notoriety has continued to grow and it now occupies a particular identity within the vernacular of Dublin's city quay



Overall, the Temple Bar experiment looks at the notion of place holistically, linking place-making revitalization and entrepreneurship etc. The new "space system" which has been created allows for greater interconnection and permeability. According to the geographer Relph, "to be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places: to be human is to have to know your place".

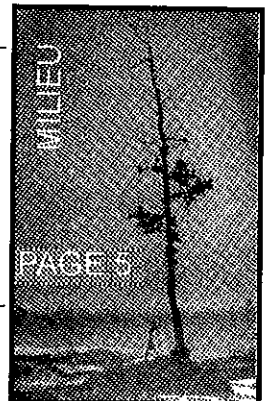
One agent which has been responsible for the heightening of identity and the consumption of space is 'music'. As Halfacree & Kitchin have proclaimed, the role of music places an important part in the commodification of the city. The Rock n' Stroll trail booklet available at centres throughout Dublin, contains a map linking the main places in Dublin associated with the contemporary music scene. All within walking distance of each other, the trail as well as pursuing a distinct marketing strategy is about lifting Irish musical identity to international status. Recently, a new venue called the HQ opened its doors on Middle Abbey Street. As well as providing a sanctuary for some of the industries biggest names, an Irish music hall of fame tour will also be initiated within the confines of the building. It is inter-

esting to note that this new music enterprise has chosen not to locate within Temple Bar but across the River Liffey, enabling an expansion of music space within Dublin. Other cities have adopted this policy and to great benefit, e.g. Reading Rock Festival, the Notting Hill Carnival in London and Belfast's lively club scene. In general, there is evidence to suggest that popular music is regarded in many respects as being at least as place-specific as classical music.

In relation to post-war urban lyrics, it is postulated that the lyrics directly express the singer's attempts to handle conditions in the new urban ghetto's. At a deeper level, the lyrics provide insight into changing male spaces within the negro communities; reflecting the various levels of socio-economic status and mobility within the lower classes. Linton Kwesi Johnson also equates blues lyrics with that of Jamaican lyrics, for him "the feel of the music is the feel of their common history and the burden of that history ... Black songs do not just describe an experience, but symbolize and thus politicize it. No more is this evident than the 'street sound' or rap-music. The minimal music, the torrid beat and the ubiquitous raw and defaming vocals are a product of this place. According to Rapper Ice-T "South Central (Los Angeles) is not a black community, it is a poor community. You live there 'cause your broke, not because you're black".

In politicising this space, boundaries are now erected. A dual role is therefore provided by these boundaries namely

1. They work to establish insiders: those who



MUSIC DEFINES IDENTITY

CONTD.

below that place (name: the blacks).

To establish outsiders: those who do not belong i.e. police."

As Robert Sack views it — "territoriality is a primary geographical expression of the social power". The ghetto acts as a microcosm of black identity. Accordingly Gillian Rose suggests that one way in which identity is connected to a particular place is by a feeling that you belong to that place. Despite this sense of belongingness, the ghetto is the compiled interest of lost hope; you feel stuck there and there's no way you can see out. (Ice-T 1995: 15). As such the spatial boundaries that exist are as much about containing those within than prohibiting those outside from entering.

The music of Ireland's U2 highlights the role of music in presenting images of place. Their 'political pop' uses geographic imagery for political means. It is also well known that the band takes a critical stand against social injustice e.g. in 1993, during their Zooropa tour, the band provided for the audience, a live linkup with the besieged city of Sarajevo. Moreover, the lyrics of "Sunday, Bloody Sunday" on their 1983 album entitled 'War' criticises the ongoing conflict in Northern Ireland. According to West & Kearsley, there is little doubt that music can provide

information on places, contributing to peoples understanding of cultural and physical landscapes. It is McLeay's opinion, that by negotiating the complex

relationship between music and lyrics in political pop, geographers can gain an understanding of references to places and images of landscapes. It is true to say, that music has the power and autonomy to create its own space and time, where all kinds of dreams, emotions and thoughts are possible. The 'Liverpool sound' is a term that has been commonly used within and outside of the Merseyside region during the last 30 years. Geographers have emphasized that place is something created by people, both as individuals and in groups. From the 1960's onwards, there has been a shifting local scene on sound, notably, the Liverpool sound in the sixties, the Coventry sound in the 1970' and the Manchester sound in the 1980~s.20 As Cohen suggests, the linking of particular artists for example, the Beatles, with particular places identifies them with roots and presents them as real people. However, within Liverpool for instance, oppositions and distinctions exist between places i.e. the North/South divide in Liverpool.

Whereas the north is seen as more introvert and insular, the south is seen as the direct opposite; extroverted and open-minded. A dichotomy of music—also established within Liverpool. The 'riverine music' which has been linked to the west and Ireland and to the south towards the Mediterranean portrays elements of soul and romance whereas the 'train music' to the Wirral and other regional areas portrays a beatish and unnatural air about it. These specific dimensions of space as exulted by the music is intrinsically linked with the way the city was conceptually divided up in the past by the various religious and ethnic groups. It can there-

fore be concluded that places like Liverpool are formed out of numerous social relationships stretched over space.

According to Martin Stokes, "music out of place, we are too readily inclined to believe is music without meaning". In 1989, three Black Sea Turks musicians visited the west of Ireland. The trip was paid by the Northern Irish Arts Council. Although thousands of miles apart, both cultures are in some way analogous to each other. For one, the geographical regions are peripheral in location, their economies are peripheral and both countries have experienced a long history of migration.

Moreover, in both societies, music is credited with powers of bringing people together, engendering the moral cohesion of the community, evoking collective and private memory. Place, for migrants is a quintessential part of their daily lives and it is music which helps to construct and maintain identities e.g. the Irish traditional music scene in America. Secondly, places are linked together in unequal ways. The social relations that bind the musicians of Ireland and Turkey alike, are in fact relations of power. Historically, both countries have pursued a long and relentless republican ideology. This nationalism sets up an important nexus between the two regions and in doing so we can trace the geography of that power.

The final part of this essay will discuss the role of dance music and clubbing in particular. According to Ben Malbon, the consumption of the club experience is socially performed and both exceptionally sensuous and sensual. Both the Clubbing experience and the music are inextricably linked, in that the music has the ability to transform and create certain types of space.

MUSIC DEFINES IDENTITY

CONTD.

Examples of this include the Berlin Love Parade and Glastonbury. Geographers also have argued that senses of place develop from every aspect of individual's life. The club therefore, is an important entity in that it allows the dubber to feel an affinity with the place and the people within it. Differences also exist within the clubbing milieu. Part of post-modern discourse has emphasized this diversity. The role of the club is to recognise this. Gender hybridization and cross-fertilization are something which have come to be accepted within this

In general, the club

provides a place which is open to "unassimilated otherness" According to Rose, a sense of place is often heightened when perceived to be under threat. The warehouse party was one of the major symbols of dance culture during the late 1980's and early 90's. The clubbers transformed the post-industrial warehouses into delocalised and derealised

spaces and in doing so created a surreal and virtual space where total hedonism could be exercised.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, German techno fans emerged from the enclosed space of the warehouse to more public surroundings. Events such as the Berlin Love Parade which I referred to earlier and other events such as the "Union Move" in Munich and the "Night Move" in Cologne now claimed politically and economically unmarked space for their raves. These raves now became political as the clubbers territorially

surrounded places of significant importance in Germany's history e.g. the Brandenburg Gate and the Berlin Wall itself. As Tony Bennett promulgates, national boundaries matter little in the contemporary music world. House music now accelerates across spatial and temporal bounds. The notion of place which was previously viable now

has to be re-thought.

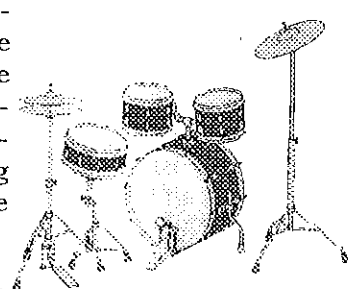
For example, a Chicago producer may get a release on a European label, packaged as an American import and sell thousands before anything is released locally. This can be seen as one product of post-industrialisation and globalisation process whereby house music is a hyperbolic refraction of what is happening elsewhere in culture, namely the collapse of boundaries.

Conclusion

As shown, place is something which is created by people and can therefore evoke feelings. Popular music can also be seen as a construct of identity and is therefore place-specific whether it be black music on the music endeavours of U2, it has the power to create its own space and time. This space can be ambiguous e.g. for some, it can provide a sense of belongingness but for others it can be used to ostracize them. By compressing space, identifications may be established e.g. the "ghetto" and the "Liverpool scene". In recent years, through the process of globalisation, frontiers of space have been broken down. We are no longer living in isolated locations. Music for example, which is invariably connected to space provides a linking effect e.g. the similarities between the Irish and Turkish musicians.

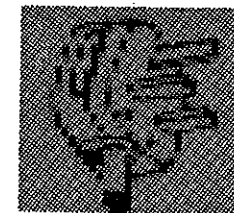
Finally, music serves to bring people together. The example provided was that of the club. Here a certain type of space is created and one which acknowledge difference and the space of the 'other'.

gareth
wynne



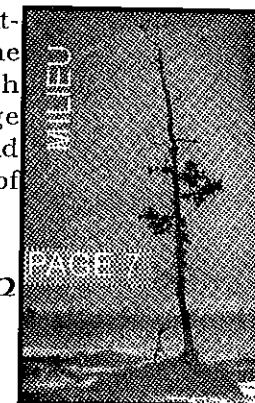
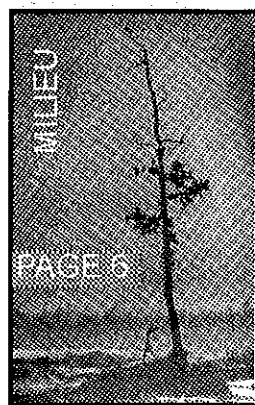
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THE DONEGAL FIELD TRIP.

WITH DR. SHELAGH WADDINGTON AND DR. JOHN SWEENEY.

The geography field trip to the most remote part of Donegal, and probably the whole of Ireland, began as most good field trips do, almost an hour late! Once we were all seated and ready to go it wasn't long before it was brought to the attention of all on board that some of our group had a new and strange disease called TB, (full name: Tiny Bladder) It was obviously a highly contagious disease because within a very short amount of time other members of the group seemed to have caught this frightening illness. What was stranger still was that when those with TB got on the bus once again their jumpers had grown outwards in a curious shape one could only describe as six-pack-like. Occasionally an empty can or two would roll forward to the front of the bus only to be scooped up before anyone of importance laid eyes on it.

Monaghan town was the first stop on our way to Donegal and all us enthusiastic geographers ran as fast as we could up a huge hill to our favourite high-class restaurant Mc Donalds. 23 Big Macs and 30 milkshakes later we were once again on our way to Donegal to a gorgeous B+B in the middle of nowhere called Teach Jack. As we all know Mc Donalds is not a very fulfilling meal so needless to say we were all starving by the time we got to Teach Jacks where a great big dinner had been prepared for us. Unfortunately for

most people this dinner did not make their tummies full at all and so they HAD to compensate with 10 or 12 beers in the bar afterwards. Most normal people were utterly

exhausted by then and went off to dreamland dreading the early start next day. A few of the more adventurous members of the group decided that midnight was too early to retire and so off they went to the local nightclub.

Not too bright but very early the next day, after brekkie, we were all off with Shelagh and John once again. The rain was so refreshing and stimulating that we decided to go for a nice long walk just so that we could get really wet and see whether or not people in Donegal could catch colds too! We climbed for ages and ages until we finally came to our destination- a large hole in the ground. We all agreed that we would hate to fall into it especially since it was full of water. John informed us that it was a blow hole, though what in God's name could blow a hole that huge is beyond me. We then proceeded to a big cliff which we all peered over: when to our amazement a n-ass-frothy white stuff (which we were informed was sea foam) rose up into the air and began to float after us. Thankfully we managed to escape.

We were then driven away by the kindly bus driver who was still, unlike us, quite dry. We travelled for some time until John and Shelagh decided to get rid of us by dropping us off in groups in different villages. We were asked to write about the main tourist attractions and general layout of the villages, which we all eagerly rushed to do without any fuss whatsoever. Back to Teach Jacks we all went after our LOVELY excursion for the day. Dinner once again went by without a hitch, until we were asked to speak aloud about our findings in the villages. One or two groups had a few strange ideas and spoke about the savage beauty of Donegal which tourists are likely to ruin. Others believed that Donegal's economy could possibly become a lot richer if the inhabitants bottled and sold the air so fresh and lovely found only in this remote area of Ireland.

After this we were free to do as we wished, so off we went to the local

nightclub, where some of us lied our way in for free while others complained about the noise level. Many bottles of Budweiser, Bulmers, and Miller later, after a night of hard core disco dancing, we arrived on the doorstep of Teach Jack. Many members of the group demanded more beer while begged for a full Irish breakfast. As it was almost 4 am the kindly night porter said "no," and "get lost," so we very nicely and manerly did so.

The next day those of us who had asked for the Irish breakfast only hours before were now refusing any food whatsoever. I don't think the staff of Teach Jack had ever seen so many green faces in one room in their lives, but then again -we're not used to partying as only they can do in North Donegal! We were all terribly unhappy to be leaving this beautiful rustic place.

and John and Shelagh, seeing how disappointed we were just resting and relaxing on the bus, decided to make us all go for a nice long walk. Four miles later we were all standing, sitting and lying on a huge sand dune. After three years of studying geography WE all knew that walking on sand dunes is not environmentally friendly. Do words such as 'erosion' and 'sediment movement' mean nothing to John and Shelagh? -obviously not! On our way back we lost a valued member of our group-John. All panic broke loose, Shelagh was almost in tears and made us promise to stick together in case a strange geomorphic beast was on the prowl and had already made away with John. One of the more daring members of the group recovered John and returned him to the safety of the bus.

Thankfully John did not seem too upset by the whole ordeal and onwards we proceeded towards Maynooth.

Sleep came quickly to most of us as the night grew darker, when suddenly the bus screeched to a halt as a huge cracking sound could be heard.

THE DONEGAL FIELD TRIP.

WITH DR. SHELAGH WADDINGTON AND DR. JOHN SWEENEY. CONTD.

Great, this was just what we needed, for the bus to break down. The bus driver was dazed and confused and didn't seem to know what to do. Our male group member didn't waste any time in dismounting the bus. Five seconds later twenty-five young men were standing around the front of the bus discussing

what should be done (while twenty five young women waited impatiently -and in vain- for some real men to come and save us). Some of them had obviously worked as mechanics and engineers at some point in their lives because the bus was up and running within minutes. They had ingeniously fixed the front panelling of the bus which had

fallen off after the bus had plummeted into a huge pot-hole. With so many highly intelligent young men in one area who could be surprised that such a simple plan of action had been devised- shoe laces and chewing gum were used to stick the front panel back on once again!

Home we went to Maynooth where we decided that we just couldn't possibly leave each other quite yet, the Roost was calling. All in all we had a splendid time in Donegal with only a few minor hiccups. Many thanks to Shelagh and John for a memorable trip.

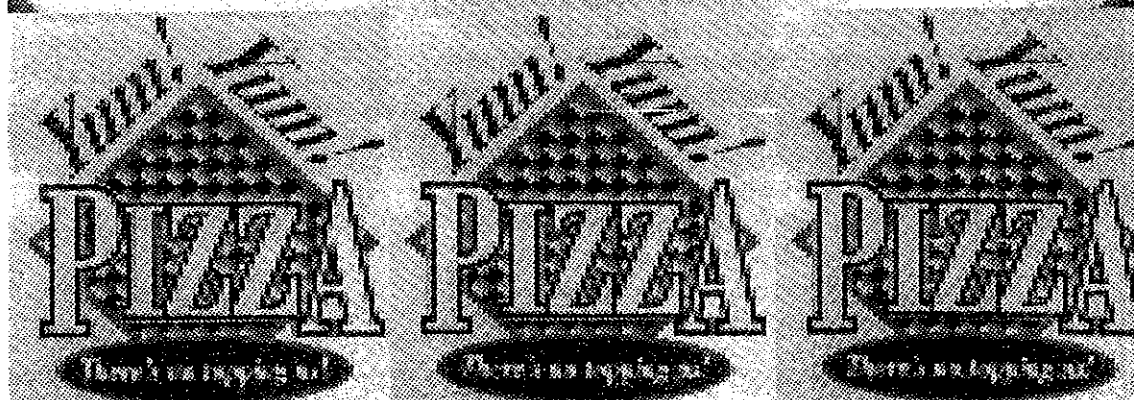
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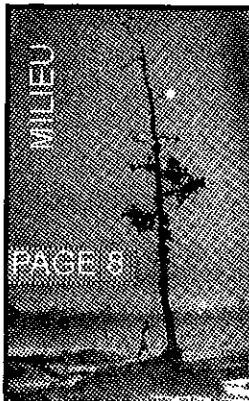
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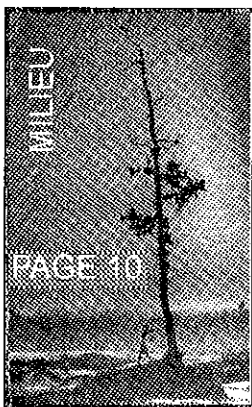


IMAGES OF AUSTRALIA

Western images of Australia are strongly influenced by films and TV soaps and nature programmes. Thus, the most common perceptions are of funny-looking animals, Crocodile Dundee, bush and beach. In fact, Australia is a high-



ly urbanised society. While overall it is very thinly populated (only 18 million people compared with over 260 million Americans in a space of similar size), over half the population lives in just six cities, with seven millions in Sydney and Melbourne alone.



I made my first ever visit to Australia when I spent the winter term on sabbatical leave at the University of Newcastle (about 160 km north of Sydney). I found it to be a source of many unexpected surprises. For a start it was cheap, helped in no small measure by the East Asia economic crisis which dragged the Australian dollar down.

you to bring your own wine, which is also very reasonably priced. The fact that most restaurants are open-air adds greatly to the occasion. What was most surprising to me was the range and standard of the cuisine. My image was of craggy hemen tearing inch-thick steaks or legs of mutton apart with their bare hands. In fact, the domi-

On the journey out I sat beside an Australian couple who had spent a few weeks touring Europe and were still in shock at the price differentials. In recent decades Australia had reoriented its economy away from its declining motherland (the UK) to the fast-growing economies of nearby Asia. Overall this was a smart move, despite what is likely to have been the temporary economic aberration of the last two years.

In any case, it was possible to get an excellent four-course meal in a restaurant for about ten Irish pounds. Most restaurants allow

nant form of cuisine is Asian, the result of substantial immigration from that part of the world in the last 30 years. Mediterranean restaurants were also widespread, and in fact the latest culinary fad is what is called "fusion" cooking, which combines Asian and Mediterranean recipes.

While I was in Australia, it was reported that Australia had been knocked from its traditional perch as the world's leading beer drinking nation by the Czech Republic. The main reason for this is that Ossies are increasing-

IMAGES OF AUSTRALIA

ly turning to wine, which is now produced locally in great abundance and high quality. The main wine-growing region of Australia, the Hunter Valley, is located just outside Newcastle, so wine-tasting expeditions became a regular part of my weekend schedule!

While Australians still drink beer by the gallon, this is mostly done at home, rather than in pubs. This, of course, is strongly linked to the fine weather and the continuous sequence of "barbies" to which Ossies are addicted. It was springtime when I arrived in Newcastle, which meant that temperatures were usually in the low twenties and the sun shone most of the time. It was getting into the mid-thirties by the time I returned in January. In actual fact, they do not have pubs, as we know them, in Australia. Licensed premises are called hotels, even though many of them provide only the most minimal of accommodation. Small towns which in Ireland might have twenty pubs would just have the one hotel in Australia. While these are usually big three-story buildings which stand out with their distinctive architecture (especially their second-story balconies), inside the decor tends to be very basic and the dominant sound is that of numerous gambling machines (known as "pokies"). Hopefully these excruciating excrescences, also so common in Britain, will never catch on here.

Travelling around in Australia was generally both cheap and pleasant. There is a good railway service between the main cities. There are a lot more bangers on the road than you would find in Ireland, even though cars are relatively cheap. Because of the wide open spaces, Australia is a car-based society, and I reckon most of the bangers belonged to young people living with their families. Petrol is only half the price it is here, and I was able to get third party insurance for a

year for less than £40!

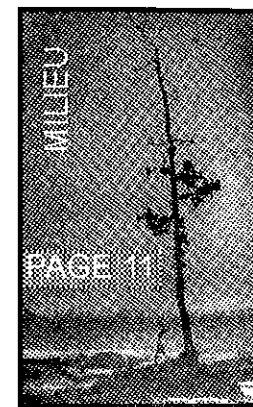
I found Australians to be very safe and law-abiding drivers. There is a constant barrage of media publicity regarding drink driving and speeding, and the highways are festooned with warning signs, backed up by rigorous enforcement (including random testing for alcohol levels). People invariably remain within the speed limit, and I hardly encountered one case of dangerous driving during my period there. In fact, it was quite a reverse culture shock when I resumed driving in Ireland!

While at first glance, Australia has the look of America about it (apart from the fact that they drive on the lefthand side of the road), in fact it is a very different society. It is much more outward-looking than the USA, as reflected in TV, radio and newspaper coverage. Australians, of course, also travel abroad a lot more than Americans. Australia is also a much more "civic" society. There is good public transport, a high level of provision for pedestrian and cyclist safety, good public services and amenities, and strong promotion of responsible citizenship in media publicity. Of course, for much of the 20th century, Australia has been under Labour government and, while this may have facilitated the odd touch of corruption, it also allowed the development of a welfare state which appears to retain strong public support.

In his TV series, Billy Connolly depicted Oz as "paradise", and it is hard to disagree. It is a beautiful country with a lovely climate;

it has good infrastructure and services; the people are nice; and it is relatively inexpensive. If they had hurling as well, I might never have come back! A day spent on the Great Barrier Reef off the northeast coast was an unforgettable experience (like going to your first Munster Final). Nature isn't particularly nasty, although they do have snakes, crocodiles and some nasty spiders. However, nature IS very noisy. There are some birds with piercing calls which I would happily eradicate from the face of the earth. There is the usual cricket chorus at night, but what I wasn't expecting was its daylight equivalent, provided by an insect called the cicada. Apparently this creature spends most of its life in larva form in the ground, but when it matures it crawls up the nearest tree and starts calling for a mate. The trouble is, they all seem to do this together in thousands, creating quite a racket. Of course, most of them only succeed in attracting the attention of birds, who find the cicadas a pleasant delicacy. Come on the birds!

PROINDSIAS
Breathnach





AIB NUI MAYNOOTH



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PERSONAL LOANS

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SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS

LOAN FACILITIES ARE SUBJECT TO REPAYMENT CAPACITY AND ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE UNDER 18. TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY

Debt Crisis

The complicated debt issue means simply that millions of already poor people are being denied access to education, healthcare, training and all kinds of vital social and life-saving services, so that a huge debt can be repaid to western creditors. This is outrageous. We're bleeding dry already vulnerable communities and removing their only hope to secure a positive future."

It is a common expectation in economic theory that capital will flow from more developed regions to less developed regions. This was the case in the nineteenth century when British capital helped to develop the economies of North America, South Africa and Australasia. It occurred again in the 1920's when US and European capital flowed into Latin America. It was evident once again between 1950 and 1980 when increasingly large sums of money made their way to the developing world and to the newly industrialising countries (NIC's), and the middle income countries (MIC's), in particular. This long history of capital flows has been associated with recurrent episodes of periodic default. The 1980's debt crisis and today's debt crisis are not new phenomena. The inauguration of what has become known as The International Debt Crisis began when Mexico announced to the world on August 30 1982 that they would suspend payments of approximately \$13 billion, owed to foreign banks on an external debt of \$84 billion. By the end of 1982 the debt payments of thirty-five developing countries were overdue. Observe that almost all African countries are termed *severely indebted*, as their total external debt exceeds 50% of their GNP.

The debt crisis thus far has

been managed in three ways:

- 1) By means of *containment, austerity and adjustment*; (1982-1985)
- 2) By means of *adjustment and growth*; (the Baker years of 1985-1988)
- 3) By means of *The Brady Initiative* and a market-menu of debt writedowns (1988-1992).

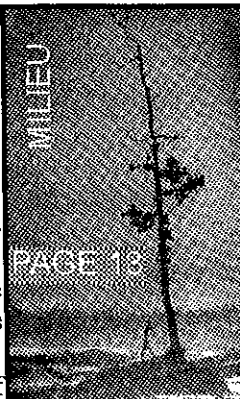
All of these have failed so that today the debt crisis has caused millions to seek debt forgiveness. In October 1996 the first real attempt was made to deal with this situation, when the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) won agreement from their Boards of Governors for the establishment of the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Initiative. The most common method of attempting to rank countries according to economic well-being is to use gross national product (GNP) per capita as a measure of average income. The World Bank in its annual *World Development Report* and *World Development Indicators*, classifies the countries of the world into four main income groups. The HIPC countries come from the Low Economies group, most of which are in Africa.

The HIPC process brings together all creditors, multi-lateral, commercial and bilateral, in a comprehensive assessment of the indebtedness of poor countries. Each creditor shares the burden of debt cancellation. However, as it stands, the measures which the HIPC framework uses to judge the levels at which a country's external debts are unsustainable, focus almost exclusively on their export earnings. Under the present terms, a country's external debts are unsustainable if these exceed a level of between two and two and a half times its annual export earnings. The International Financial Institutions (IFI's) have assessed the sus-

tain- ability of debt burdens for forty-one countries. Before a country can be considered for debt relief it is required to accumulate a three year track record of good performance in its implementation of IMF supported structural adjustment reform. ~ t~as the First Stage.

The country then reaches its *decision point*, when the amount of debt relief is determined. When the country enters the *Second Stage* it receives a reduction in its debt-service payments but it must accumulate a further three year track record in implementing an *enhanced structural adjustment programme* with social targets as well as conventional economic targets. only then does a country reach its *completion point* and actually has its debt stock written down by the agreed amount. If a country's present debt exceeds 28% of its GNP it becomes eligible for debt relief also. However, this can only apply if the country's exports are at least 40% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and if the government revenues are at a minimum of 20% of GDP. The HIPC Initiative is totally inadequate and its current framework is unlikely to reduce debt service obligations below the amounts that the HIPC countries are actually paying today. An alternative strategy must be adopted because there is an urgency in the need for debt relief that is not reflected in the

long delays built into the H I P C Initiative's timeframe. The HIPC Initiative fails in all its attempts to help alleviate the debt crisis in real terms. Millions of



Debt Crisis *contd.*

people are still starving and in desperate need of even the most basic of health services because their governments are repaying debts they simply cannot afford.

A new proposal, The Human Development Approach, has been put forward to take the place of HIPC. The Human Development Approach takes as its starting point the amount of revenue which a government can realistically be expected to raise after deductions of necessary funds for basic human needs have been made. In this approach, measurements of what countries can afford in terms of debt-servicing are considered only after minimum levels of government spending have been set aside to meet targets for the most basic level of human existence and development. Human expenditure is limited to basic health and primary education. If this policy were adopted it could be expected to include other requirements within highly indebted poor countries. This approach, if implemented, would demand that at least ten countries necessitate 100% debt cancellation. These are: Burundi, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Tanzania. In these countries the need for basic human development expenditure is greater than their feasible net revenues. These ten countries are among the nineteen countries

with the lowest GNP per capita in the world. Their combination of extreme poverty and severe indebtedness qualifies them for total cancellation of their external

debts. Some IFI officials have suggested that a 100% write off of debt would amount to a deterrent in attracting future lending and investments. This suggestion is incorrect. At present HIPC's no longer have access to significant levels of commercial finance and are unlikely to in the foreseeable future.

Commercial borrowing is too expensive for low income countries and it is unlikely that circumstances will alter significantly.

CASE STUDIES OF SOME OF THE WORLD'S POOREST COUNTRIES.

"Debt impoverishes people, it sterilizes the land by planting crops for export while the inhabitants of the country starve in order to pay back creditors."

Uganda was the first country to receive debt relief under the HIPC Initiative of the IMF and the World Bank. Uganda received \$380 million in debt relief under HIPC, but it will continue to pay \$120 million a year in debt service. The HIPC

Initiative touted as "good news for the world's poor" by the IMF and the World Bank, has changed almost nothing for the poor of Uganda whose child mortality rates are among the highest in the world due to inadequate health services.

Honduras and Nicaragua are the two poorest countries in Latin America, with a combined GDP of under \$700. This poverty was being compounded by the implementation of the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) programme under the IMF, when Hurricane Mitch devastated both countries even further. These countries will receive debt relief under HIPC. However, this is meaningless when there is no capacity for their economies to service any debt without further impoverishing the people. The OECD Paris Club

supposedly came to the rescue by offering a three year moratorium on debt repayments, and the IMF approved new interest loans of \$66 million. This presumed generosity and goodwill will lead to an even further build-up of debt!! After independence from Britain in 1964, Zambia was one of the most prosperous nations in Sub-Saharan Africa. Its copper mines brought in 90% of export earnings. In 1975 the price of copper fell and the Zambian government borrowed money, hoping that the price of copper would rise. This never happened. Between 1980 and 1990 Zambia's debt rose from \$3.25 billion to \$7.2 billion. By the end of 1994 arrears had reached \$1.9 billion. Zambia's ability to pay its debt is zero and all debt servicing comes out of donor aid which should be invested in human development. Today Zambia spends five times as much paying interest on its debts than it spends on education while 80% of Zambians are living in poverty. The life expectancy in Zambia is one of the lowest in the world and its health expenditure is shamefully low.

Mozambique has a population of eighteen million, almost all of whom live below the lowest poverty line imaginable. Today, thirty years after a freedom struggle, followed by a civil war, the country now produces less food than it did when it received its independence from Portugal in the mid 1970's. The average life expectancy is less than fifty years and one in five children does not live past the age of five. 60% of Mozambiquans live under the absolute poverty line; diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS are rife. The civil war destroyed all social and economic infrastructure and the country needs huge investment. If Mozambique did not have to pay debt services the government could provide basic necessities for its inhabitants, where between 1981 and 1991 one million people died as a result of civil war and famine. Before HIPC

Debt Crisis *contd.*

was introduced to Mozambique in 1997, it owed \$400 million per year and paid \$100 million per year. After HIPC was introduced Mozambique still owes \$100 million. This strategy is totally inadequate as debt payments of an intolerable level still must be met. With these case studies in mind one must ask: Is HIPC a fate worse than debt? The promoters of Jubilee 2000 certainly believe so. The aim of Jubilee 2000 is:

"To liberate the poorest nations from the burden of the backlog of unpayable debt owed by their governments to other governments, the World Bank and the IMF or to commercial banks."

Creditor governments, International Financial Institutions and commercial banks should not set the conditions for debt cancellation as they did with HIPC. Jubilee 2000 believes that the current HIPC Initiative is seriously insufficient as too few countries are eligible, the pace of implementation is too slow and the levels of debt relief provided will not make significant resources available for development in these countries. Through the ESAF, the IMF lends to low income economies at low interest rates. In return the said countries must implement strict economic policies set down by the IMF. However, these conditions are so onerous that over three quarters of programmes break down. ESAF was introduced to help to alleviate

and projects. 4.) Odious debt and debt incurred by repressive regimes. "Poverty stalks like an epidemic. Nearly 840 million are denied the most basic rights of all-the right to food. Some 13 million children die needlessly each year and 2 billion still lack access to adequate sanitation and clean water."

A solution to the debt crisis which results in these atrocities occurring must be found. The HIPC Initiative is not the answer as it fails to ameliorate the insupportable nature of the debt burden. The Human Development Approach may be the answer to the eradication of this insupportable debt, but full debt forgiveness is needed now. Lowering repayments is not the answer further loans are not the answer initiatives like HIPC and programmes like ESAF will continue to be utterly inadequate. The cancellation of debt for the world's poorest countries is the only just and equitable solution to save the lives of millions of people who do not incur these debts.

Siobhan Maguire

Because of this Jubilee 2000 calls for the cancellation of:

- 1.) Unpayable debt, which is debt that cannot be serviced without placing a burden on impoverished people.
- 2.) Debt that in real terms has already been paid.
- 3.) Debt for improperly designed poli-

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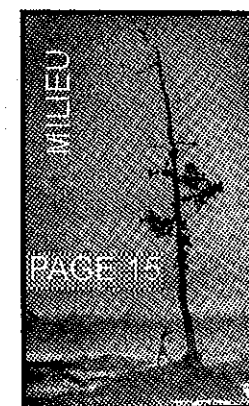
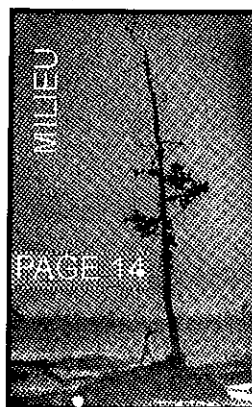
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WHERE HISTORY MEETS GEOGRAPHY

'Geographers must keep the past in mind if they are going to understand the processes which are helping to shape the present patterns and problems' (Ilbery 1981:2)

It is often said that the past is the key to the future, but it can also be said to be the key to understanding the present. Ancient and modern history are important to geographers in relation to the evolution of today's patterns and problems. The last two-hundred years in particular, because of the sweeping changes that have occurred, are of importance to European geographers. The most obvious patterns which exist today in Europe are the Core/Periphery divide and the East/West divide, and the problems contained within them.

Such a study of today's patterns should have, according to R. Meller (1984), a strong historical component, because Europe's landscapes, the 'mirror of human impact over long periods', are the product of changes in man's response through time to his environment. One cannot get anywhere toward an explanation of the successive changes on the territorial structure of Western Europe without some knowledge of the many waves of migration, conquest, and occupation that have layered the ethnic-linguistic

landscape since the early Iron Age. Stein Rokkan distinguishes a total of seven such waves in her section 'The Peopling of Western Europe'.

In chronological order:

* the Celtic expansion from the sixth century B.C.

* the long series of Roman conquests.

* the multiple invasions of the Germanic tribes into the crumbling western empire during the fourth and fifth centuries.

* the eight century wave of Arab conquest northward across Iberia.

* the succession of Viking raids and conquests.

* the westward drift of the Slavs and the Finno-Ugric peoples (founding of Bohemian, Polish, Hungarian, and Serbian kingdoms).

*...and finally, the eastward expansion of the Germans from the twelfth century onwards.

Over two thousand years ago the Roman Empire marked its territory as the civilised world and the rest of the known world as barbarian lands: the beginning of the Core/Periphery divide. At its height the Roman Empire maximised communications and controls in three dimensions: economic, military-administrative, and cultural (Rokkan reserve). Those lands inside the Empire were urbanised, industrialised and modernised to a much greater degree than those outside its boundaries. The system of states emerging in Europe from the twelfth to the twentieth century can only be under-

stood against the background of the Roman inheritance and the reduction in the range and scope of cross-territorial communications that gradually took place in the wake of the fall of Rome. Even after its fall, those towns they founded continued to be more industrialised, more populated and affluent than other areas. The central area of western Europe continued to prosper because of natural obstacles against peripheral countries such as the sea, poor land mountainous areas, which served as obstacles to trade. Most of the Economic and Political power of the medieval period resided in this central core area, until the era of the Renaissance which marked the emergence of a more powerful England and a rich Italian market. The core and periphery boundaries were evolving and becoming more pronounced. The Industrial Revolution was the next step in this evolution.

Western Europe has long been a centre of innovation and change in the world. The Industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries originated in North - West Europe and established this area as the workshop of the world. [Brant, B.p.2]. Since the revolution was built on raw materials and wealth: all of which could be found in the core area, the gap became even more pronounced. The periphery continued to lag behind on the development scale: a trend which lasted until after World War II when there was a turn around in the location of industries. Industries were becoming footloose and were attracted by the financial packets offered by desperate peripheral countries. This relocation of industries did little however to alleviate the core domination over the periphery.

With the evolution and changes in the core and periphery, two important problems have emerged, migration and in turn pollution. Migration has traditionally taken place between the core and periph-

WHERE HISTORY MEETS GEOGRAPHY *CONTD.*

ery. The opportunities for work in the newly industrialised cities looked very promising to the agricultural labourers outside the core who wished for a change from their self-subsistence lifestyle. The new industries needed these workers and the wars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries provided plenty of employment. The numbers of migrants were relatively small up until after the second world war. Post world war II migration centred on France and Germany as the industrial boom of reconstruction got underway.

"Some people regard the 1960's as the decade of the guest worker and the 1970's as the decade of family reunification" [Pinder, D. p.62]. Migrant workers who cashed in on the industrial boom during the fifties and sixties now brought their families to live in their adopted country. The economic stagnation of the eighties coupled with the rise in population brought about by the migrants, the social services of these adopted countries were pushed to breaking point, increasing tensions between migrant workers and host populations.

Western Europe's natural environment is not prone to natural disasters but rather human disasters. Since the industrial revolution, with its increased technologies, increased movement of peoples; pollution has come to be a problem associated with the core of Western Europe. Britain's industrial revolution provoked environmental degradation on a giant scale as settlements mushroomed, coal - burning factories and domestic hearths belched pollution into the atmosphere, and effluents were allowed to flow into watercourses with only minimal treatment or often completely untreated. [Clout, H. D., 1978. P.101]. The same is true for the rest of the core. This legacy of pollution continued unchecked until roughly thirty - five years ago but the effects (acid rain, biological death of watercourses and its contribution to the greenhouse effect) will be felt for many

years. Thus to avoid further disaster the geographers of today must realise the environmental damage of past processes when planning for the future.

The divide between Eastern and Western Europe can be traced back right to the fall of the Roman Empire. The Empire had split into its Eastern and Western parts before the fall. The split is still evident today with Western Europe containing mainly Roman Catholic Christianity, Latin languages and the Roman alphabet, while Eastern Europe contains mainly Orthodox Christianity, East Slavic languages and the Cyrillic alphabet. The divide is also evident in the way the East and West industrialised. The core area of the West began industrialisation around 1750, with the East only not truly beginning until after world war II when the U.S.S.R became the dominant power in the area. In the West, the great surge of commercial activity made it possible for the centre builders to extract resources in easily convertible currency. In the East, the cities were much weaker partners and could not offer the essential resource base for the building of the military machineries of the new centres at the periphery of the old empire. In Rokkans conceptual map of Europe, the West-East axis differentiates conditions of state building, the South-North axis the conditions of nation building. In the underlying model of development, the Reformation is interpreted as the first major step toward the definition of territorial nations. As said, rapid industrialisation began with no heed to environmental pollution. This policy led to the Eastern part of Europe being the most polluted area in the World after the collapse of the U.S.S.R.

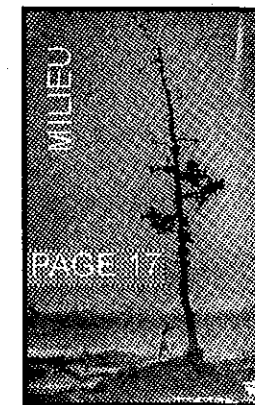
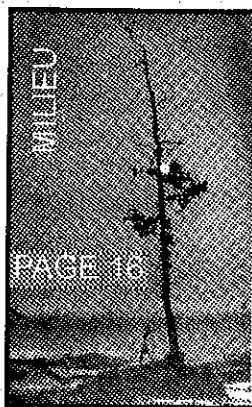
Migration from the East to the West before 1989 was virtually non-existent. Communist ideals would not permit it but since 1989 thousands of refugees have moved from East to West every day. With this influx of new migrants vast problems have been created within the

social service networks in Western Europe

The long sequences of migration, center-building, cultural standardisation, and boundary imposition produced an extraordinary tangle of territorial structures in Europe: some large, some small, some highly centralised, others made up of differentiated networks of self-reliant cities. The alphabet and the city decided the fate of Europe. The emergence of vernacular standards of communications prepared the ground for the later stages of nation building at the mass level, and the geography of trade routes made for differences in the resources for state building between East and West.

In an attempt to show that the processes that shaped the past have also shaped the present this essay looked at the core and periphery divide in Western Europe and the Eastern and Western divide as examples of this. How can geographers hope to understand these divides in their present states if they do not look into the past and observe how they evolved into their present forms? Without the past how can geographers hope to avoid making the same mistakes twice?

noel murphy



MANAGING IRISH AIR QUALITY:

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF AN EFFECTIVE POLICY

As human beings we are continuously evolving into a higher species. By improving our lives we are developing. This improving requires natural resources, but in order for the earth to provide these resources we need to conserve. This through time has proved to be a difficult balance to attain, it is only recently through our new understandings of the world that we have begun to identify that balance.

Modern industrialised societies which are at the forefront of man's quest for development have improved our lives tremendously. These have come about through our progress in science through which we have learnt about the world of nature, and through technology how we can harness it for our own potential. But we in harnessing nature are changing and often damaging our environment, because we have not identified the correct balance. This results in the destruction of our food, air, water and all the other materials required for life. The destruction of air quality is what we are interested in for this paper and it's context in Ireland.

Elsom defines air pollution "as the presence in the atmosphere of substances or energy in such quantities and of such duration liable to cause harm to human, plant or animal life or damage to human-made materials and structures, or interference with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property or other human activities." Air pollution is seriously detrimental to our lives, corroding the structure of society through the workplace, home and recreational environment. Air pollution has serious adverse effects on human health, causing respiratory problems, chronic illness, even

death, yet even in the most developed countries of the world the release of poisonous noxious fumes is tolerated. Here in Ireland depicted as the beautiful unpolluted island by tourism and business alike we are just as guilty if not more guilty than our fellow developed countries. Ireland's air pollution problem was first recognised with the burning of bituminous coal and peat in domestic fires, particularly prominent in Dublin. During the 1980s a number of publications reviewed the general position in Ireland regarding air quality (Bailey, 1983). While endorsing the general perception of Ireland being free from the affects of air pollution on the scale of many parts of Europe and North America it also highlighted the growing concern regarding urban smog in Dublin and the need for improved legislation relating to air quality and emissions control generally. "Since the mid 1980s many important developments have taken place internationally regarding the environment themes of air quality and emissions control" (ERU 1993). And Ireland has not been left behind, from international research and legislation put in place to control a key range of pollutants. Initiatives include an Air Pollution Act for Ireland, a new licensing system for the main industrial sources, the monitoring of NO₂ and Ozone and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency.

In April 1983 an EC Directive on smoke and sulphur dioxide limit values came into force. This set limit values for smoke and SO₂ for annual (April to March), winter (October to March) and daily reference periods. The table at the end of this article below details this 1983 EC Directive. These limit values soon became understood to be impossible for Ireland to meet immediately and Ireland therefore was granted a ten year derogation in which to conform to these limits.

Towards the end of the 1970s Ireland's fuel utilisation changed dramatically. As a result of the 1979 world oil crisis the government encouraged Irish consumers to switch from oil to alternative fuels such as coal and gas. This new policy had mixed affects on air quality in Ireland, particularly in the Greater Dublin Metropolitan Region. From 1981 to 1983 sulphur dioxide emissions recorded by An Foras Forbatha fell by 23,400 tonnes. Detailed studies recognised the major source categories of SO₂ as road transport, commercial/industrial, domestic and power generation. Approximately 67% of SO₂ emitted was from the burning of fuel oil (mainly within the power stations and large industries), and from coal and gas 18% and 9% respectively. Yet the 1980s saw an increase in smoke levels resulting in over the seven years from 1983/84 to 1989/90 an average of ten exceedances per year of the Directive limit values. In 1986/87 a total of seven sites failed to comply with the 98-percentile requirement for daily values. At four sites smoke levels exceeded 250ug/m³ for more than three consecutive days. At another site in the same year one site even failed to comply with the annual limit for smoke, the only occasion in which this has ever occurred. The rise of smoke and decline in SO₂ particles in the atmosphere reflects the widespread move to solid fuel heating systems based primarily on bituminous coal being used in the domestic sector. The continued decrease in the levels of SO₂ can be attributed to the combined affects of; the change from fuel oil to natural gas in Dublin power stations; the decrease in the sulphur content of gas oil; a decrease in fuel oil combustion in industry and the conversion of solid fuel heating systems to gas fired or oil fired units in more than 100,000 homes.

Further steps to manage Irish air quality occurred in 1987 when the Air Pollution Act was amended. The original

MANAGING IRISH AIR QUALITY:

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF AN EFFECTIVE POLICY CONTD.

act stemmed from 1897 and was largely overlooked as of it's antiquity. The Amendment Act was mostly brought into operation on the 1st September of the same year. The new act allowed the banning of certain emissions and the setting up of designated "special control areas." By September 1990 we saw the first product of the Act in regulations prohibiting the sale, marketing and distribution of bituminous coal in the Greater Dublin Area. This ban has had excellent results so much that for the first time in 10 years, there was no exceedances of any Directive limit value in 1990/91 or 1991/92. The Dublin case clearly is an example of effective managing and policy making of air pollution. The rest of the country did not experience problems during the eighties, but it should be stressed that government policy should recognise the potential threat of further air pollution cases without continuous preventative measures particularly in urban areas such as Cork, Limerick and Galway.

The EC Directive 85/203 in 1985 set a Nitrogen Oxide (NO_x) limit value of 200ug/m³ for the 98 percentile hourly mean values for a calendar year and also a guide value of 135ug/m³ for the 98 percentile and SO₂ug/m³ for the median of the same period. Recordings of NO_x from a site established in Rathmines in 1986 show a slight decline in NO_x in all areas, but it is generally quite constant. No exceedances of the EU limit or

guide values occurred during the measurement period 1987-1991. The constant values have occurred as no official preventative legislation has been made. NO₂ originates generally from cars; there are no major health concerns regarding NO_x at its present volume so it's threat is largely ignored.

Another case for air legislation was the reduction of lead in the atmosphere to negligible quantities. Car exhausts emit lead into the air. Road traffic is the primary source of lead emissions. The EC Directive 82/884/EEC of 1982 legislated 2ug/m³ limit values for lead. In 1980 when limit values were approached many thought that it could pose future problems. However due to the pressure by government and "bottom-up" organisations there has been a reduction in the lead content of oil fuels, in particular the eradication of leaded fuels on our garage forecourts.

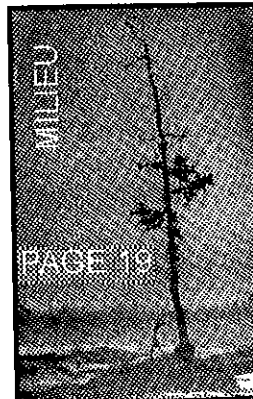
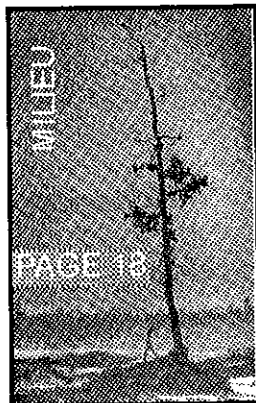
High ozone concentrations in our atmosphere can have detrimental affects on human health, forests, crops, and other vegetation. The EC Directive on ozone was adopted in 1992, it contained no limit values for ozone, but defined threshold levels for the air when ozone may become a potential threat to human health and vegetation. By 1989/90 Ireland was already recording high ozone concentrations particularly in the case of the daily means for affects on vegetation and the eight hour mean value for health. This is typical throughout Europe.

The current awareness of atmospheric pollution, first developed as a result of the local affects of winter smog

on human health usually in urban or heavily industrialised centres" (ERU 1993). Acid rain damage and other pollutants also added to the global concern. The bulk of the control agreements and legislation have only been introduced in the last decade. Ireland's legislative controls derive mainly from EU requirements namely those that have been adopted since 1980 and which have been discussed here. Since the implementation of these Directives, Irish Air policy has radically improved even though we have grown in population and development. EU legislation has seen many changes in our day to day lives- the replacement of leaded with unleaded petrol, the banning of Chlorofluorocarbons from many domestic homes and factories, the adoption of alternative cleaner fuels, the use of catalytic converters in cars and the banning of asbestos. Irish government emissions and air quality control measures have reflected EU measures. The Air Pollution Act 1987 provided a comprehensive Irish legislative basis for the EC Directives discussed in this paper. This includes mandatory local authority monitoring of air quality, licensing of air pollution from industrial plants and the regulation of the sale of smokey fuels. The management of Irish air quality to date has been a success, but this has occurred only through continued pressure being put on the government by the public and "bottom-up" organisations such as the World Health Organisation. The present situation may be favourable but the future may not always be so. With increased development and population throughout Ireland and the world an increased emphasis on air quality control will be required.

Philip Grier

Reference period	Limit value for SO ₂	Associated smoke	Limit value for smoke
Annual median of daily values	80-120	>40	80
Winter median of daily values	130-180	>60	130
98 percentile of daily mean values	250-350	>150	250
not more than three consecutive days	250-350	>150	250



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WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE?

It was a wet Saturday afternoon and I was returning home with a friend of mine from Dublin. We were in the Temple Bar area and my friend, who was using an electric wheelchair, and I decided to get the train from Tara Street Station. When we reached Tara Street Station we found out that the elevator was broken down. Naturally we were a bit annoyed at this and we decided that we should try to go to Pearse Street Station. About three quarters of an hour later we reached this station.

If you are familiar with Dublin you will probably be aware that Pearse Street Station is not three-quarters of an hour away from Tara Street Station. However, the reason why it took us so long was quite simply because my friend was using an electric wheelchair. The electric wheelchair should be able to give a disabled person more independence, because they are not reliant on someone to push them around the place. Unfortunately this increased independence from the electric wheelchair is restricted by the surroundings of the disabled person.

The reason why it took my friend and I to take so long to get from Tara Street to Pearse Street was quite simply because of kerbs on the path. When a person is using an electric wheelchair they have to try to find areas where the path slopes down to the road. This is because there is a risk that if the

person in the wheelchair tries to go over a kerb, they may tilt the chair over enough for them to fall out. So, when my friend and I were crossing the road we had to look around for drive ways and other places where the path sloped down toward the road.

What this shows us is that the spatial awareness of a person using a wheelchair depends greatly on the method of ambulation that they are using. If it were a case that my friend used a manual wheelchair, we would have been able to get to Pearse Street Station in less than the half the time that it took us to get there. There is a greater



accessibility associated with using a manual wheelchair, but when deciding the places that the wheelchair-user wishes to go to, they have to take the person that is pushing the chair into account. This is because the wheelchair-user is reliant on the person to get you around and therefore their independence is greatly decreased. So, if you are using an electric wheelchair you can move around by yourself, but the places that you can go are greatly restricted. Indeed, it would be impossible for the person using an electric wheelchair to get up a set of stairs.

Essentially we are living in a world that is structured to suit able-bodied people. Although there is an increase in the amount of wheelchair accessible areas in Ireland, there still is not enough. Indeed, in Blackrock in Dublin there is a set of apartments in which a lot disabled people live. Indeed, Blackrock has an unusually high population of disabled people living there. However, in the town of Blackrock there is no wheelchair accessible toilets available after six o'clock in the evening. Therefore if you are using an electric wheelchair and you are living in Blackrock, you cannot go down to your local pub after six in the evening. There is a huge restriction in space because the vast majority of buildings are built to cater mainly for able-bodied people. The wheelchair user tends to be overlooked. Indeed, for an able-bodied person a kerb or a staircase are not really a big issue. For a person using a wheelchair it becomes an important issue and perhaps even an obstacle.

If you are using a wheelchair, your spatial awareness is quite different to an able-bodied person's spatial awareness. There are more obstacles for you to consider and overcome and to increase the amount of space the wheelchair-user usually has to ask 'for a hand' from somebody else. Essentially the spatial awareness of a wheelchair-user is governed by an able-bodied consciousness and there has to be adaptations made in the architecture or through able-bodied people 'helping out' to accommodate the wheelchair.

Billy Gannon



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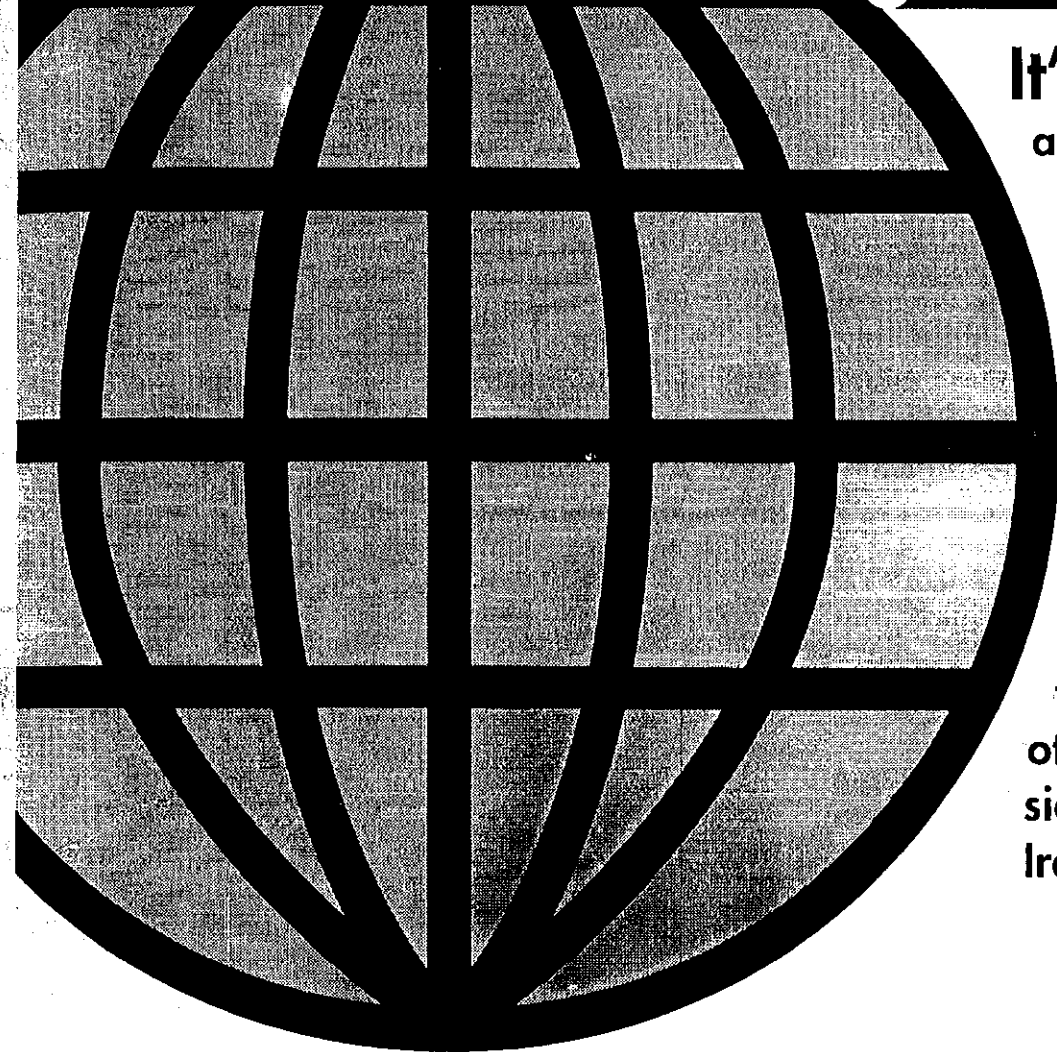
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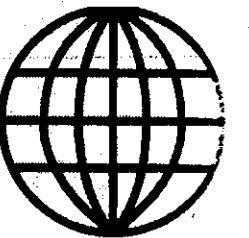
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