



# THE GOLDEN THREAD

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## A Note From The Editor: New Year, New Home

Welcome to another Campus, where it started this, see pages 2, 4 and edition of the Golden out, but it is now residing 10. I hope you enjoy this Thread. I hope you find on the top floor, in what edition of the Golden something of interest will hopefully be its Thread, and don't forget if within. permanent lodgings. It's there's anything you'd like Don't forget that our worth taking the time to to comment on, see or esteemed law department find out where your say in this newsletter, has once again moved department is, and get contact the editor: home, returning to New involved in what it does. [goldenthread@nuimsu.com](mailto:goldenthread@nuimsu.com) House on the South For more information on

## Getting to know: Dr Louise Kennefick

**What areas of law do you teach?**

Criminal Law, Company Law, the Law of Evidence and the Law of the European Union.

**If you had to pick only one of these, which would it be, and why?**

All have their good points. The European Union permeates every aspect of law in this jurisdiction so uncovering its remit and its limitations can be compelling. I practised company law during my time as a solicitor in a corporate firm in the UK,

and found it to be a dynamic and interesting area. However, if pushed, I would have to say the criminal law is my favourite as most of my research is based within this area. Evidence is a close second because it is so important to consider the substantive and the procedural under the one lens.

**What's your favourite thing about NUI Maynooth?**  
The wonderful students of course!

**If you didn't work in law, what area would you work in?**

Perhaps psychology – part of my research looks at the cross-over between mental health and crime. (However, I hear it involves an inordinate amount of statistics..!)

**If you could change the colour of barristers' robes, what colour would you choose, and why?**

It's compulsory footwear you should be thinking about. Clown shoes, for

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Transparency Ireland: Maynooth

Transparency International Ireland (TI Ireland) is the Irish chapter of the worldwide movement against corruption - defined as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. Founded in 2004, its vision is an Ireland that is open and fair - and where entrusted power is used in the interest of everyone.

Faced with our deep and meaningful interview questions, Dr Kennefick threw us back some real curve-balls. We would like to suggest clown shoes for all lecturers as a test initiative!

"Every country needs a strong chapter of Transparency International" Jeffrey Sachs

Transparency International is the only global organisation dedicated to stopping corruption worldwide, working to create a "level playing field" for citizens, for business, for everyone. Transparency International carries its work out through its International Secretariat based in Berlin and its network of over 100 chapters and affiliates worldwide. Transparency International Maynooth is the first university chapter of Transparency International in the world and is fully accredited by Transparency International Ireland. TI Ireland's mission is to empower people with the support they need to promote integrity and stop corruption in all its forms. As part of this vision, in May 2011, TI Ireland launched its 'Speak Up' helpline, a service for anyone facing an ethical dilemma or considering reporting wrongdoing at work. Furthering this mission has led to the creation of Transparency International Maynooth, which endeavours to emphasise the need in Ireland for measures aimed at promoting openness, fairness and integrity in public office, business and the non-profit sector in Ireland. TI Maynooth seeks to promote student

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## An Interview with Dr Kennefick

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example, would both confuse and terrify.

will go on instinct – 'R' A fridge ... in a denim jacket. (That's one for the children of the 90s).

**If you were an animal, what animal would you be, and why?**

If I were to pursue a career in law as an animal, I would wish to be a cat - unassuming yet inquisitive and good at pouncing. Ducks can swim, walk and fly so they would come in a close second.

**What's your favourite letter, and why?**

I have never considered that question before so I

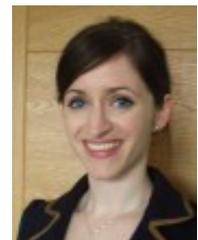
**What's your least favourite day of the week, and why?**

All the days of the week have something nice to offer. I couldn't possibly offend one of them in case they take revenge (\*sideways glance at Monday\*).

**Would you rather be too hot or too cold?**

Too cold.

**If you had to choose between a fridge and a freezer, which would you pick?**



*Friendly lecturer? Or all-powerful duck?*



## Harry Potter and the Truth in Fiction

In 2007 J. K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books, answered a question regarding the character Dumbledore by stating that she had “always thought of Dumbledore as gay”. This made instant news around the world making it onto the pages of *Time*, *Newsweek* and the *New York Times*, it was reported on CNN and on the BBC webpage. More recently, February 2011, it was the topic of an article in *The Philosophers’ Magazine* by Tamar Szabo Gendler, professor of philosophy at Yale University (<http://www.philosophypress.co.uk/?p=1780>). This article was on the topic of what philosophers call *truth in fiction*. The statement also caused immediate reaction among Potter fans who within days posted thousands of comments on internet forums, Gendler divided these into three categories; those who welcomed it, those who were dismayed, and those who challenged Rowling’s authority to add new information to a finished series. It is this third category which is addressed in the article, which outlines the philosophical arguments regarding the weight that should be afforded to the author’s intentions when interpreting a work of fiction, and what status implied truths hold. Gendler says that there are two types of truths in a work of fiction, primary truths and secondary truths. Primary truths are things which are stated in the text; secondary truths are things which may be implied in the text or are compatible with it without being strictly implied.

Professor Gendler’s discussion of the philosophical arguments about Rowling’s statement caused me to wonder what decision a court would make if it had to give a judgment as to whether the character Dumbledore is gay. If for instance another author created a character who was similar to Dumbledore and stated, as a primary truth, to be gay, could Rowling convince a court that



Dumbledore was in *truth* gay and that she had been plagiarised? Whether Dumbledore is gay, or not, is not stated in any of the Potter books, therefore it is a matter of secondary truth. The principal issue discussed by Gendler is how to define what the secondary truths in any work are and she offers four criteria to consider: textual evidence, reader response, authorial intent and genre constraints. Gendler scrutinised the texts of the Potter books for evidence which could imply that Dumbledore is gay and found quotes which would make it compatible with the story. She then examined how readers import knowledge of the real world into their

interpretation of fiction; she says that readers presume that characters have five fingers, and that the earth goes around the sun in the Harry Potter world. She then looks for clues that would cause a reader to make an inference about Dumbledore’s sexuality. This, Gendler says, is not obvious to readers; the author’s intention is the clearest indication. However, there are disagreements as to how much weight can be given to an author’s intentions as against a reader’s own response to a text. In relation to genre constraints she says that there could be an argument that his sexuality is irrelevant, and therefore there is no right answer, as the books are aimed at a children’s market, but there are also arguments against this view as other characters in the books become involved in relationships.

These arguments and methods would all be likely to be raised in a court if such a case arose, and would be familiar to the legal profession. Textual evidence is regularly used in courts and was used in the Irish Courts to establish the existence, by inference, of unenumerated rights (rights not listed but implied by certain articles) guaranteed by the Constitution. The arguments regarding reader response could be compared to those arguments forwarded by theorists who claim that the Constitution is a living document and should be read in relation to changing social norms as opposed to a strict textual reading. Authorial intent could be compared to the originalist

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## Harry Potter and the Truth in Fiction

Harry Potter made history in 2003 when the release of the fifth book was subject to the first injunction issued against a unnamed or unknown persons. This has now become known as the "Potter Injunction".

FLAC was founded in 1969 by four law students—an example to all of us that students are capable of doing anything!

*(Continued from page 3)*

gay uncovered good of policy (politics) as on school of constitutional arguments for each side codes of law. It is interpretation which is and left it open to the important for an especially dominant in the reader to decide for advocate to have a good US where the federalist themselves, as the understanding of the papers (circa 1787) are purpose of her article methods used by the regularly quoted in court was to explain the social sciences to make to enforce a legal philosophical methods. the best representations. argument. Legal cases are about Law does not exist in a Sometimes it can help to competing claims, and it vacuum and if you're a look outside of the legal seems to me, as a first year law student, as I field, or to examine an student, that in most was last year, my advice issue such as this from a cases whoever makes the would be to read as legal standpoint, to help best argument wins, much as you can, from as your understanding of rather than one side wide a field as you can. It legal methods. Gendler's being right and the other all helps in some way examination of the wrong, and that towards understanding arguments for and against important cases are as the legal process. whether Dumbledore is often decided on matters *Killian Donoghue*

## FLAC Arrives in Maynooth

This year will see FLAC (Free Legal Advice Centre) coming to Maynooth to deal with all your legal worries. FLAC is a new society in Maynooth and will be running legal advice clinics from February of 2012. This service will be available to all students and residents of Maynooth who require free legal aid on various issues. We will cover a range of topics such as; Employment Rights, Landlord and Tenant issues and Family Law enquiries.

At present we have a FLAC committee comprising of, Patrick Cagney- President, Liam Sunner- Vice President, Sé Sweeney- McCabe- Secretary,

Sinéad Finnerty – Public Relations Officer, Peter O'Loughlin – Training Officer, Kevin J. Clarke – Treasurer and Matt McDermott- Webmaster. We are a committee that is committed to ensuring FLAC Maynooth provides Maynooth students with all the help and guidance they may need.

At this time we would like to acknowledge and thank Deirdre McGowan and Dr. Louise Kennefick as they are the founders of FLAC Maynooth. Not only are these two women the founders of such a beneficial society but we could not continue with

the development of FLAC Maynooth without them. Dr Kennefick is our Honorary President. Deirdre is providing us with her solicitor's mind and skills as well as being an information giver in our training sessions. For all their help, guidance and time we would just like to say thank you.

Recently I, Sinéad, along with our president Patrick attended FLAC headquarters on Dorset Street to meet with other FLAC committees. This included representatives from Trinity, UCD, UCC and DCU. During our meeting we managed to cover a wide range of

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## Russian-Irish International Relations: An Analysis

International relations have a long history; most probably they appeared together with the first States and have been developing, in different ways, since that time. The reason for this, I believe, is the natural inequality between States, which is based on geographical and economical differences. The States thus either want to decrease the inequality or achieve as much superiority over others as possible. However, on the other hand, some States want nothing more from their international partners than stable economic, trade and cultural collaboration. They have other purposes: money and reliable co-operation in the international arena.

Russian-Irish international relations are an example of the second type; because both countries are absolutely independent of each other, do not have mutual borders and do not compete on the European market. In its structure we can mark out two main branches: trade and cultural collaboration.

To begin with, I would like to say that the first mutual communiqué about diplomatic missions exchange was signed in 1973 and in the past few years political dialogue has developed greatly. But this period of the closer cooperation started only in 1999, marked by the first official visit of An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern to Moscow, which resulted in signing several

bipartite agreements. After that, similar visits have been taking place regularly and on different diplomatic levels, up to and including ambassadorial level. Both States consult each other on different issues, giving their opinions about international affairs and membership of the United Nations and other international governmental and non-governmental organizations. Not only diplomatic but also parliamentary collaboration takes place and a lot of agreements have been signed, among them:

- \* The Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technological Agreement, 1976;
- \* The Protocol of Political Consultations, 1991, a hugely important document in this specific period of Russian history, the period of the Soviet Union collapse and the formation of the Russian Federation as a new democratic State;
- \* The Cultural Collaboration Agreement, 1991;
- \* The Flights and International Roads Agreement, 1993; and
- \* Agreement of avoidance of Double Taxations, 1994 – this particular agreement emphasises the movement of citizens of the relevant states abroad– Irish in Russia and vice versa – otherwise signing such an agreement would be moot.

One of the most significant recent developments in Russian-Irish international relations

was the decision of the Irish Government to open the border for those Russians who already have an English visa. Despite the fact that it will operate as a test regime until October, 2012, it is still a positive sign for partner states, as it shows confidence.

Apart from the political aspect in international relations, trade traditionally plays an important role. According to the statistics collected by Rosstat, the Russian central statistics office, the two countries could not be stable trading partners, as volume of trade differs from year to year - in 2010 it amounted to \$1.16 billion – 26 times less than the same comparison with Germany.

Traditionally, Russia exports oil, wood, mineral fuels, cellulosic materials, ore, nonferrous metal and power tools. Ireland in turn exports meat, milk, alcohol, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. So, as we can see, there is a huge variety of goods, but trade volume is not very high. I think that the reason is the size of Ireland and the existence of the national producers of goods that are imported from Ireland in Russia. Before the economic crisis in 2008, Ireland successfully invested in the Russian economy with the investment volume amounting to about \$8 billion in the pre-crisis year. The main sphere of Irish investment activity was and is the construction sector.

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## Unsecured Wi-Fi: A Gift? Or a Theft?

“Wi-Fi” is short for Wireless Fidelity, and is actually a trademark owned by the Wi-Fi Alliance. It is the brand name for any products using the IEEE 802.11 family of standards.

These days when we intentionally left open turn on our Wi-Fi for public use or are we connections we are actually guilty of theft? We are often bombarded by various available connections to choose from. While the sensible owner will have their connection protected by some form of password, we often see the lone unsecured line amongst the signals. For the most part the desired connection will be stronger but what would happen if we chose to use this unsecured network? Is the network

“a person who connects or causes to be connected any apparatus or device to, or places or cause to be placed any apparatus or device in association or conjunction with, the telecommunications system operated by a licensed operator or any part of the system the effect of which might result in the provision by the company of a service to any person without payment of the

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## FLAC Arrives in Maynooth

FLAC currently concentrates its work on four main areas: Legal Aid, Social Welfare, Credit & Debt and Public Interest Law.

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 topics including a number of campaigns and research projects which we as a society can get involved in. We will discuss these further at the beginning of the training sessions, which will commence this Tuesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November. Anyone from any of the year groups that would be interested in helping with this project would be welcomed with open arms. This is especially relevant for those first years who want to get involved with FLAC but feel they might not have the knowledge quite

yet to help out in the clinics. Also at this meeting we gained valuable insight into how other FLAC centres operate. After adopting a few ideas to implement into our own Maynooth centre, such as how to run the clinics, how to involve all year groups, the best type of training as well as the campaigns already mentioned we believe we can make a real success out of Maynooth FLAC. Just to mention again the FLAC clinics commenced on Tuesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November. We just have to stress that in order to

be eligible to be a volunteer at the FLAC clinics and provide the information service full attendance at the training sessions is compulsory. These clinics were held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November- Employment Law and 29<sup>th</sup> of November- Family Law, and will continue on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December- Landlord and Tennant Law, 13<sup>th</sup> of December – Information. We look forward to seeing you there and to an amazing FLAC year. Sinéad Finnerty, Public Relations Officer and Patrick Cagney, President of FLAC Maynooth.

## It's a Marathon, not a Sprint

Six laps down and six laps to go before it is acceptable to eat mince pies whilst studying for first semester exams. Like any race in life there are plenty of mottos to get you motivated for the task at hand 'If you fail to plan, you plan to fail' 'If you don't know where you're going any road will take you there' "You only get out of it what you put into it". Blah blah blah.

The fact is "Life is what happens when we are busy making plans"; if you are like a lot of students

and, for whatever reason, things have not gone according to plan so far, don't panic. Firstly, remember you were carefully selected by the professors and doctors of National University of Ireland, Maynooth. You were invited to take your place on the law school team at NUIM, so stand tall.

Nutritionists for decades have shouted 'you are what you eat' when actually 'we are what we can absorb'. If this article is starting to sound like a long winded speech from

Lord Atkin on 'reasonable foreseeability' or Justice Henchy on 'recklessness' then you need to learn to read between the lines, literally.

Starting out you will not get to read all the suggested cases in full for each subject, it would be impossible to eat them all and absorb the key nutrients or principles. Apparently, if you are 'feeling overwhelmed then it

participation and interaction encourages debate and critical thinking. If you have not yet found your 'law voice', it is time to change this. Simply make a good enough argument for a point of law and express it. Top tip, most of the time there is no right or wrong answer so don't be afraid to find your voice. If you take part in the case discussion you



w i l l remember it during revision for exams.

Mooting is the key to courtroom confidence; this brings us back to finding your

voice and picking a good fight. Screaming 'objection' will get you nowhere in the Moot Court. Having a firm argument and the confidence to deliver it will get you everywhere. Looking at Moot problems and having to argue both sides is an excellent way to get an understanding of the law and how to apply it. You will also get to work with Mr Seth Tillman, gaining exposure to excellent advice and tips for written submissions, which will help you with your legal writing

**Niamh Parker is a self-described "first year Law student-in-training"**

## Russian-Irish International Relations

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Leader companies, according to the department of foreign affairs of the Russian Federation, are Quinn Group, Treasury Holdings, Redquartz International, CRH, Smurfit Kappa and Aminex. Large Russian companies are also interested in doing business in Ireland; for example "RUSAL" holdings took over the Irish company Aughinish Alumina Ltd. and Chameleon Technology Ltd. was opened in Dublin several years ago.

The second field - cultural relations - can be characterized as stable. Year upon year more and more tourists from Russia come to Ireland, and vice versa, but the majority of them travel for business purposes. After the official ban of gambling in Russian cities, more people discovered Ireland to be full of excitement and fun. So, tourism is one of the sectors

whose development is on the agenda. Apart from tourism, it is important to mention that more and more internship programs are appearing, making it possible for students to study in different universities of the partner State.

Taking into consideration all the information provided above, I can conclude that Russian-Irish international relations can be described positively, with room for improvement, because, on the one hand, the states do not have strong contradictions in the international arena and are open to dialogue, whilst on the other hand, there are a lot of sectors to be improved.

*Diana Zenina*



## TI Maynooth

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awareness of the importance of ethical conduct in society, the cost of corruption and measures aimed at addressing the problem.

TI Maynooth will achieve this by hosting a series of in-house presentations from the nation's leading experts in corruption, white-collar crime, freedom of information and Whistleblower legislation, while offering students the opportunity to get involved in research and policy design into these interesting areas of law by way of internships and placements with Transparency International and its Irish chapter, TI Ireland.

Anyone who is interested in getting involved or finding out more should email [transparencymaynooth@gmail.com](mailto:transparencymaynooth@gmail.com)

*Patrick Noctor*

## A First Year Law Student-in-Training

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assignments.

It also gets you working together as a team, researching and preparing your case. During this process you will learn to communicate and again find your voice, to express your opinion. This provides both skills you will use in the workforce and an opportunity to gain invaluable experience. If you were sitting in Bill Cullen's boardroom in the reality TV show 'The Apprentice' and you complained of your voice

or ideas not being heard he would simply say **"You're fired!"**

There will be plenty of competitions running throughout the year. The DCU Moot court competition is November 12<sup>th</sup> – congratulations to the successful NUIM team and good luck! The

Irish Law Journal will also be running an essay competition early in the New Year. This will be the opportunity of a lifetime so please watch this space for more news.

So fellow Freshers: take a deep breath, wipe the sweat from your brow, and stay hydrated - this is a marathon not a sprint.



**LAW SCHOOL TEAM NUIM – Together Everybody Achieves More.**

## Witness Protection: In Need of Reform?

Increased gangland crime has highlighted the need to reform the area of evidence given by witnesses in the Witness Protection Programme (WPP), despite its relative youth (*Gilligan*, CCA Unrep. 2003).

Declan McGrath points out, in 'The Accomplice Corroboration Warning' (*Ir Jur 1999*), that judges' attempts to fire proof their corroboration warnings against later appeal may lead to juries being confused rather than enlightened. Under the impression that they should be morally certain rather than be certain beyond reasonable doubt, the jury may acquit when it would be safe to convict.

Further as Liz Heffernan notes, in 'The Vagaries of Accomplice Evidence' (*Ir Jur 2003*), accomplice evidence may be motivated by self interest in avoiding prosecution and/or getting special concessions in prison. In the Guerin murder trial (*DPP v Paul Ward*, CCA Unrep 2002) the accomplice WPP witness Bowden, a self-confessed murderer and drug-dealer, was described by Barr J as "[a] self-serving, deeply avaricious and potentially vicious criminal", a self-confessed liar who would lie "without hesitation and regardless of the consequences for others".

In addition, a criminal

witness may wish to falsely implicate others to conceal their own involvement.

Heffernan notes that the quashing of Ward's conviction shows the limited contribution the WPP can make to criminal prosecutions.

Liz Campbell in 'The Evidence of Intimidated Witnesses in Criminal Trials' (*ILT 2007*) states that the WPP participation criteria require:

- \* the witness must have essential evidence regarding serious crimes such as drug trafficking and organised crime;
- \* the evidence must not be available elsewhere; and
- \* a substantial threat to the witness's safety must exist.

These criteria can be met by both innocent people as well as criminal accomplices.

In the recent murder case of *DPP v Bryan Ryan* (CCA Unrep March 11, 2011) the appeal was upheld on the grounds that the trial judge had failed to give a WPP warning in addition to the corroboration warning. The judge held that the precedent requiring the additional WPP warning as established in *Gilligan* (Unrep SC 2005) was because the Supreme Court was "dealing with a particular set of facts and not dealing with the issue in general terms" and thus had "not given consideration to the position of an innocent

man who might be on the WPP" On appeal Murray C.J. upheld Denham J. in *Gilligan* where she held that "the same approach should be taken to evidence given by a witness in a WPP as to evidence given by an accomplice" as an "innocent man" might be motivated to give evidence or influenced directly or indirectly by benefits received from participation in the WPP.

However, the risks involved do not justify obligating a WPP warning. If the perceived slight risk of indirect benefits is an issue here then surely the evidence of every career-orientated Garda would have to be accompanied by an appropriate warning. Treating the evidence of an innocent person on a WPP the same as a career criminal or a supergrass is not justified. The WPP's contribution to criminal prosecution will be further limited. Additionally it will offer a fertile ground for appeal that is associated with warnings (e.g. corroboration warnings) a problem we should endeavour to reduce rather than increase, as McGrath points out.

While not proposing leaving the corroboration warning at the judge's discretion, as with accomplice testimony, McGrath proposes that the WPP warning should be treated differently.

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**The WPP, in 2010, spent only €700,000 of the almost €1.2 million allocated to it. This was the first time since 2007 that the Gardaí spent less money on a programme than was allocated to it.**

## Wi-Fi Access: Theft?

*(Continued from page 6)*

appropriate rental, fee or change shall be guilty of an offence.

However, when the Wi-Fi belongs to a customer of the ISP, they will not fall within the provisions of the Postal and Telecommunications Services Act 1983, as they will not be considered a licensed operator. Nonetheless, the owner of the Wi-Fi connection is not without remedy. Section 9(1) of the Criminal Justice (Theft and Fraud Offences) 2001:

“A person who dishonestly, whether within or outside the State, operates or causes to be operated a computer within the State with the intention of making a gain for himself or herself or another, or of causing loss to another, is guilty of an offence.”



This section comes into play as through the connection to the Wi-Fi network of another, the user is simultaneously connecting to their own computer and that of the owner of the Wi-Fi network. It will only come into effect when the person accessing the Wi-Fi does so in a dishonest manner, though, which may include unauthorized access to a connection. However the defence may be raised that in the event the Wi-Fi is visible without the requirement of a password or user name it can be taken that access is allowed to the general public.

Regardless of the law, in order to protect oneself from frivolous lawsuits (and the occasional computer virus), it would likely be prudent to access only those networks which you're sure you're permitted to access. *Liam Sunner*

## WPP Warnings?

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With sexual complainants under the Criminal Law (Rape) Amendment Act, 1990, the obligatory corroboration warning was abolished. It is given at the judge's discretion and only where there is evidence that the complainant has a particular motive to lie or has made prior false claims etc. In "honest man" WPP witness testimony there is no basis to believe witnesses are inherently unreliable and evidence of specific duplicity should be required, not merely potential unreliability.

In order not to further reduce the effectiveness of the WPP, unnecessarily reduce criminal convictions or provide an area of contention that will lead to unmerited appeals, the WPP warning should be at the trial judge's discretion. *Padraig Ryan*

## Get Involved in Your Department

As a law student in Maynooth, whether you're a first year who's still trying to get the hang of how the college works or a seasoned third year more comfortable than the couches in the Zoo, there's never a better time than now to have a look at the range of extra-curricular activities you can get involved in during your time here in NUI Maynooth. From Moot Courts to Total Wipeout, Pub Quizzes to Criminal Law Court visits, there's a whole host of activities and competitions you can

get involved in which will not only boost your social life and your street cred, but also flesh out your CV and make you a more



attractive employment prospect. Remember that the difference

between two students with the same degree could be those extra commitments and interests. Don't hesitate to do anything which interests you—it can only benefit you in the long run.

Interested in writing? Submissions to the Irish Law Journal are now open to academics, professionals and students for their inaugural edition. Follow them on Twitter @IrishLawJournal, or check out their website: <http://irishlawjournal.com>.

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## We're Not in Kansas Any More, Toto!

Half way through third year, with the question of 'what are you going to do next year?' looming large over my head, I investigated the masters programmes offered by the law department in NUI Maynooth. Only a single look at the programme for the [Masters of International Business Law](#) offered as a dual degree between NUI Maynooth and l'Université Catholique de Lyon (UCLy) and I was hooked. I knew this was the programme for me. The course content looked fascinating, a Masters would stop me from having to enter the real world for another year and, best of all, it was an International Business Law masters with an International element—the first semester of the masters, is spent in UCLy, in, surprise surprise, Lyon.

Once again, I found myself a student of a brand new course, a guinea pig of sorts, with no previous year there to provide some benevolent experience and tips so that their road would be that little bit smoother for others. But, since I've just finished my semester in France, with only the exams left to terrify me, a little experience might not go astray.



Université  
Catholique  
de Lyon

University in France is a different kettle of fish altogether to Irish university. For starters, there are no clubs and societies in UCLy. This, to me, was a complete culture shock as they're an integral part of the college experience. Speaking to the Simon, the course assistant, he pointed out that University is not a place where you spend your free time, but rather somewhere you go to study, and that you leave once study is finished. Once you've gotten your head around that, university here makes a lot more sense.

First thing to do, if you've decided to take the course, is get your accommodation sorted. Get in touch with the accommodation office in Lyon, they're some of the most helpful people you could hope to meet. Know beforehand whether you want to live on your own or with people. I didn't know, and ended up living alone, which nearly drove me insane.

If you don't speak French, don't worry. The course is in English, and you can take French lessons for free in the university, so you can find the perfect words to talk to that French hottie you saw at the bar. You can also take any other courses in the college which take your fancy.

The course this year, has a great mix of students, with Irish, French, Dutch, Italian and Kazakh on the course. There are also Erasmus and visiting students in some classes, adding Spanish, Australian and Canadian to the mix. Classes are given by visiting professors from all over the world; we've had Italian, Spanish, American, English and French lecturers as well as our own Professor Gopalan and the course coordinator, Dr Cannarsa.

The experience is one which I would definitely recommend to any student with an interest in the course content. Going abroad to another university, studying international business law with a mix of students from a variety of countries then returning to Maynooth for the second semester, it's an international degree in every sense of the word.

**UCLy is a private university in the heart of Lyon, France, with approximately 7,000 students. A component university of the Université de Lyon, it's one of four in the city, meaning that Lyon has the third-largest student population in the country, surpassed only by Paris and Toulouse.**

Keep an eye on future editions of the Golden Thread for more competitions and your chance to win!

If you feel there's something missing from our department, why not take a lead from FLAC or Transparency Ireland's Maynooth chapters and set it up yourself? We all benefit when our department is the very best it can possibly be!

## Lucky Winner

The team here at the Golden Thread would like to extend our congratulations to the lucky winner of the competition in the Student Survival Guide of the Golden Thread. Orla Ward was the winner of a €25 gift voucher kindly donated by Maynooth University Bookshop. For those of you who were wondering, the quote came from the case *Woolmington v DPP*, [1935] AC 462, and the



speech was given by the Viscount Sankey. In case that's not enough to sate your curiosity, Woolmington was appealing his conviction for the wilful murder of his wife, Violet Woolmington. Woolmington won his appeal and was released three days before his scheduled execution date. A lucky escape for him and a pillar of criminal law established for the rest of us!

## Get Involved!

If something a little more light-hearted is what you're looking for, why not try writing or editing for the Golden Thread? Submissions are open year-round and aspiring editors need only contact [goldenthread@nuimsu.com](mailto:goldenthread@nuimsu.com) to get involved.

Looking for something with more of a group feel? Why not get involved in the Law Society? Tickets are on sale now for the Law Ball, in Johnstown House on the 6th

December. It promises to be the event of the year. Or contact [law@nuimsu.com](mailto:law@nuimsu.com) if you're looking for something a bit more international? Try ELSA. Events are organised year-round and range from presidential debates to Criminal Court visits, with everything in between, including pub quizzes and film screenings. Contact [nuim.elsa@gmail.com](mailto:nuim.elsa@gmail.com) if you're looking for more practical experience, try getting

involved in Moot Court. Intervarsity Moot Courts as well as in-college Moots give students valuable experience as well as giving you a chance to compete against law students from all over the country.

With such a wide variety of activities on offer, there's really no excuse for not getting involved. So what are you waiting for? Get out there!

*Picture: Irish Law Journal Editors talking to Justice Geoghegan after his talk on the powers of the Irish presidency*

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