

GOVERNMENT TIMES

The award-winning newsletter of students and staff in UCC's Department of Government & Politics.



Issue 74 – Thursday 30 November 2017

From Congo to Direct Provision in Dublin, to Cork and the BSc Government in UCC – The Story of Bienvenu Mulumba



'I hope that one day I will become the President of Congo! Why not? I am a dreamer.'



GOOD LUCK FOR CHRISTMAS EXAMS AND THE END OF THE FIRST SEMESTER

This is the last issue of *Government Times* for 2017 and it is the first with the new editorial team which now comprises four BSc Government students. Accordingly, there is quite a student-feel to Issue 74 with opinion pieces, reports and interviews. This is one of our biggest-ever issues with 8,500 words across 22 pages! The cover story (as continued on pages 4, 5, 21 and 22) features BSc Government first year student, Bienvenu Mulumba. His story is an amazing one and hopefully will prove to be an inspiration for others.

We carry a report from the 20th Anniversary Memorial Lecture which was a very special night. Carol Monaghan MP delivered a superb lecture and student awards were presented to Lewis O'Shea, Nathan Board, Ciara Cronin, Michael Lyons and Cian Hallahan. Ciara warrants an exceptional mention as the inaugural winner of the Tadhg Ó Murchú Work Placement Award. Ciara was placed in the Revenue Commissioners and performed outstandingly well. We also carry a report from the talk delivered by Ibrahim Halawa in UCC earlier this week.

American president, Donald Trump, continues to generate headlines and he is featured on pages 11, 12, and 13 with contributions from Laurence Davis, Vittorio Bufacchi, and Conor O'Carroll. While our undergraduate students feature prominently in Issue 74, we have a graduate interview with Peter Horgan on page 18. We celebrate the success of Long Pham who passed her PhD viva examination yesterday. Long came to us from Vietnam and worked extremely hard over the past three years to achieve her doctoral dream.

Of course, we cover staff achievements too (see page 14) and it is great to see our lecturers make valuable contributions at local, national and international levels.

Finally, as we reach the end of term, we would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone 'all the best' for the forthcoming exams. While the exams are important, poor results can be turned around and it is vital that every student gives of their best in the second semester (see page 19).

Enjoy this issue and have a happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas. We'll see you in the New Year!



Aodh Quinlivan, Danielle Grayson, Bryan O'Shea, James Massi and Lee Nagle.

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The Story of Bienvenu Mulumba

An interview by Bryan O'Shea (BSc Government I)



Bienvenu Mulumba is a mature student of University College Cork and so am I. Both of us commenced our four-year undergraduate degree programmes in September of this year, studying Government and Political Science. However, our journeys to get here are vastly different. I consider my being here to be a personal achievement after completing my leaving certificate in 2011 and subsequently being unable to progress to University for a variety of reasons, after six long years, here I am. There is nothing quite like five years of retail to encourage one to focus on the future and indeed, on education. I was not happy with how my life was progressing and found my day to day living to be unproductive, unfulfilling and most importantly, devoid of any real purpose. I knew I had much to offer and I knew what I wanted from life and now that I have finally taken the first steps on my chosen path, I already feel much more complete. That is my story, pretty much. Not a very interesting one but a story nonetheless. For a long time, I was bitter towards Ireland and my inability to get my life on track. It felt as though there were little or no opportunities for me to escape retail work and to pursue my dreams in life. I felt underprivileged. I felt angry about the economic crisis that had decimated Ireland by the time I left secondary school in 2011. A crisis which I did not cause but one which I was forced to pay for. Nevertheless, here I am. As I sit in the creative zone of the fantastic Boole library after finally finding a plug port for my laptop, I cannot express how lucky I feel to be here, receiving a world-class education from a world-class university. I may even delude myself into believing that I have faced many great challenges on my journey here, but the reality is, I have lived a largely sheltered life along with most other students who sit around me. The truth is, anyone in Ireland can get a third level education with a little drive and ambition and those who continuously berate our little green country and its many failings should read this article.

Why? Because this is a story about Bienvenu Mulumba and his journey from the Congo to Ireland. Unlike me, he faced very real challenges and has experienced more pain and fear than I would ever wish to endure. So, the next time you want to complain about the broken plug port in the library study areas just remind yourself, you do not have it so bad. Those plug ports can be a nightmare though!

Bienvenu was born in Kinshasa, the capitol city of The Democratic Republic of the Congo on October 4th 1970. He grew up in the city and is the third child of six siblings. He was born into a Christian family and his father, who Bienvenu says is a big influence on him, was a dedicated pastor for much of his life.

Growing up in the Congo in the seventies and eighties was not easy says Bienvenu but it was somewhat better and safer than today. After sitting his Congolese leaving cert in 1994, he wanted to go to university and continue his education. But, by now the ruthless dictator – ‘Mobutu’ had been in power for almost thirty years and that firm grip he had on the Congo was loosening. People had grown tired of Mobutu, so much so that regular people had become political activists – people like Bienvenu. The anti Mobutu movement saw a large youth presence which was seeking a better life and a better future for their country. Much like the recent events in Zimbabwe, people were desperate for change, any change. There were widespread arrests of anti – government protesters who were beaten and even killed by Mobutu’s thugs, but change was inevitable, and Mobutu fell following the invasion of Tutsi led Rwandan forces on May 17th, 1997. By now, Bienvenu had moved to a rural part of the Congo, near the border with Angola. He had to leave the capitol city he had called home for many years due to his very real fears of being arrested for activism against the government. After a while he moved to Angola in 1997 and sought out a new life, a stable life, away from the unrest in his home country. In 1998, he began working in the Nigerian embassy as security and then as a receptionist. After some time, he received a promotion to translator for the consular service of the Nigerian embassy. As Angola was a Portuguese speaking country, Bienvenu learned it from scratch as well as English. After spending many happy years in Angola, it seemed he was happy, but his past was never far behind. Even after the fall of Mobutu, much of the former administration remained in power and the political arrests continued. The situation in Angola was getting more and more precarious for Bienvenu as shared intelligence between the Congolese government and the Angolan government appeared to be resulting in former activists from the Congo, now living in Angola, being rounded up. He had to leave. It was 2007. Before I continue, let’s take a deeper look at the Congo and Bienvenu.



[To continue this story, turn to pages 21-22]

20th Anniversary Philip Monahan Memorial Lecture



Left: Dr Andrew Cottey, Carol Monaghan MP, Dr Aodh Quinlivan and Áine Hennessy (Chair of Government and Politics Society); Right: Dr Andrew Cottey opening the proceedings.

The 20th Anniversary Philip Monahan Memorial Lecture took place on Thursday 9 November and attracted a large crowd to Boole 2. Monahan was Ireland's first local authority manager and he served as City Commissioner and then City Manager in Cork from 1924-1959. Monahan set the highest standards of probity and integrity in public administration and he defined the role of City Manager and the practice of public management in Ireland. The lecture series is a showpiece even each year for the Department of Government and Politics and it was inaugurated in 1997. It has attracted some very distinguished speakers, including John Hume, Professor Robert Putnam, President Mary McAleese, Senator David Norris, John Bercow MP, Taoiseach Enda Kenny, and Vice Admiral Mark Mellett. To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the series, Carol Monaghan MP, a relative of Philip Monahan, was invited to deliver the 2017 lecture. Carol Monaghan is a member of the House of Commons, representing the constituency of Glasgow North West. She is the Scottish National Party's Shadow Spokesperson on Education. Carol Monaghan has also been an outspoken critic of US President, Donald Trump. The title of her lecture was 'Scotland: From Brexit to Independence? Parallels with Ireland'. As part of the evening, the annual Department of Government and Politics student awards were presented and the Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Tony Fitzgerald attended.



Carol Monaghan delivered a fantastic lecture and offered insights on women in politics, the culture in Westminster, Brexit and, of course, Scottish independence.

STUDENT AWARD WINNERS



Top Left: Thomas Whalen BSc Government Student of the Year 2017 – LEWIS O'SEHA (BSc Government II)

Top Right: Richard Haslam BSc Government Graduate of the Year 2017 – CIAN HALLAHAN; for the first time, we presented two awards this year and the second recipient, *in absentia*, was MICHAEL LYONS.

Bottom Left: Inaugural BSc Government Tadhg Ó Murchú Work Placement Award 2017 – CIARA CRONIN (BSc Government IV); for her outstanding work in the Revenue Commissioners.

Bottom Right: Patrick O'Sullivan Essay Competition Winner 2017 – NATHAN BOARD (BSc Government III).

Read Nathan's winning essay on the next page.

'Don't let the door hit EU on the way out'. Discuss the likely implications of Brexit

By Nathan Board

“The future is not set, there is no fate but what we make for ourselves” are the prophetic words uttered by John Connor in the Terminator movie of 1990. The plot relies on the viewer understanding that events that have happened in the future have led to a machine being sent back to the past to change the very future that has already happened! Confused? Well try Brexit! The dystopian future Orwell warned about is here but who can the British send back to stop this mess, and what year would they send them to? The seeds of Brexit can be traced back to 1973 and has roots in xenophobia, growing nationalism, a rampantly biased press and the failure of globalisation to replace low skilled manufacturing work with higher skilled jobs and higher standards of living.

Champions of the remain campaign were reluctant at best, being mauled by the likes of the Daily Mail, but somewhere maybe David Cameron is making himself a time machine in the hopes of convincing himself not hold the referendum in the first place. The Brexiteers will of course send Boris Johnson, a man who looks like he is constantly sticking his fork in a toaster, to spoil the party. Cameron versus Johnson looks like the kind of fight that occurs in a shed between bales of hay with each man agreeing beforehand “to not hit the face”. Johnson wins of course because of his weight advantage and Cameron being distracted by the sounds of pigs next door.



Boris Johnson, ‘a man who looks like he is constantly sticking his fork in a toaster’

A glimpse of the future for Britain and its decision to go it alone from a trade perspective might come from the recent court decision on Bombardier. Theresa May had sought to use the so called special relationship with the United States to enhance her bargaining position, an overture reciprocated by the current President but this failed to halt the US Department of Commerce imposing a 219% tariff on the sale of Bombardiers aeroplanes to Delta. This has put not only the deal but the company itself, and its many UK employees, in doubt. As financial firms flee the city of London and major manufactures of cars in the north of England seek sweetheart tax deals to remain the British government will lose the previous hoax that the EU was the source of all its ills and will be forced to make trade deals with the likes of New Zealand and Pakistan which, will hardly aid the recovery. The British press are already complaining that the EU are making it hard but Europe’s mission must be to maintain solidarity, prevent any contagion effect and hope the British can self-destruct enough to become a cautionary tale for any other nation thinking about enacting article 50.

Outside, looking in at a free market of over 500 million citizens, the British as former masters of neo-liberalism and free trade may wonder, was it all worth it. Straight bananas aside, the advantages of being a major player in the world’s largest trading block has been disregarded to have to renegotiate a trade agreement with those very same nations! Their only hope may be Cameron in the gym and fixing the time machine for a prequel to the sequel!

Zimbabwe - A New Dawn?

An opinion piece by Bryan O'Shea (BSc Government I)

A week is a long time in politics, and Robert Mugabe would surely raise a glass to that statement. In six short days, he has experienced a remarkable fall from grace following a military 'coup' which was not a 'coup' but was a 'coup' nonetheless. Just one month ago, Mugabe's unwavering grip on power looked as strong as ever. Even at the age of 93, the ailing, self-styled 'Grand old man of Africa' appeared to be in fighting form during his address to the United Nations General Assembly in which he once again blamed the 'west' for all of Zimbabwe's problems. However, his unsteady walk to the podium, assisted by an aide, showed that Mugabe was considerably frailer than he would like to let on. Who would have thought that this was to be his last address to the UN as President of Zimbabwe? Certainly not the man himself. To understand the recent events in Zimbabwe, we must meet the key players involved.

Robert Mugabe was born on February 21st, 1924 in what was then known as Rhodesia but is now modern-day Zimbabwe. The former school teacher with no less than seven university degrees, first came to prominence after waging a bloody guerrilla war against white colonial rulers, who jailed him for ten years over a "subversive speech" he made in 1964. Soon after his release from jail in 1974, he caused a seismic shift in Rhodesian politics, riding a wave of popular outrage against the colonial establishment. He is a hero of the independence struggle after fighting Rhodesia's war up until his election as Prime Minister in 1980. In 1987, he became President and renamed the country – Zimbabwe. He married his current wife Grace, who is 41 years his junior, in 1996, in an extravagant ceremony attended by over six thousand guests. Zimbabwe was once a prosperous nation, the wealthiest in Africa, and was often referred to as the "bread-basket of Africa" but Mugabe's disastrous economic policies including the infamous land grab and expulsion of white farmers at the turn of the millennium has led to chronic food shortages, hyper-inflation and an estimated 90% unemployment rate.



Grace Mugabe was born in 1965 in South Africa and has been First Lady of Zimbabwe since her marriage to her husband in 1996. She was known for her charity work but also for her extravagant shopping trips abroad which has earned her the title of 'Gucci Grace' among Zimbabweans. She has been involved in the ruling ZANU-PF party for some time where she heads up the women's faction of the party but also the party's youth league – G40. It is widely viewed that she has been working towards succeeding her husband to the Presidency and this has led to high profile departures from Mugabe's inner circle.

Emmerson Mnangagwa, the former Vice President of Zimbabwe until his sacking by Mugabe in early November, was born in 1946 and went on to become one of the founding members of the ZANU-PF party in the sixties. He fought in the war of independence and spent ten years in prison from 1965 to 1975. After independence, he became the national security minister and has held various other positions throughout his career, ending up as Vice President in 2013. He has been seen as a successor to Mugabe due to his powerful position within ZANU-PF and his support within the army and veterans of the war of independence. The Zimbabwe Defence Forces comprise of various different factions from the war of independence to the Rhodesian Army. The head of the ZDF is General Constantine Chiwenga.

In 2007 the Government claimed it had foiled an attempted 'coup' by hundreds of soldiers and high-ranking officers. Independence war veterans are highly influential in the army and the ruling party. They are long-time allies of the President however, Mugabe has been regularly removing veterans from posts in ZANU-PF in recent years and replacing them with officials who did not fight in the war. This has led to soured relations and in the recent power struggle between Grace Mugabe and Emmerson Mnangagwa, the veterans backed the Vice President. What happened?

It all started with the sacking of Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa on Monday, November 6th after Mugabe alleged he was plotting to take power from him. Mnangagwa fled to Zambia after receiving death threats but in a statement, vowed to return to lead Zimbabwe. On November 15th, the army rolled into Harare – Zimbabwe's capital – and took over the state broadcaster, Government buildings and placed Mugabe under house arrest. Less than 24 hours before this move, the aforementioned General Constantine Chiwenga made a statement on live television, stating the army was prepared to step in if the ongoing purge of supporters of the sacked Vice President didn't stop. At this point, the writing was on the wall and it must have come as a shock to Mugabe. Within hours, the army had consolidated control over the media. Their spokesperson addressing the nation and guaranteeing the safety and security of the President and first family while local papers begun to publish anti Mugabe issues with headlines like 'Mugabe gone', 'Army says it is in control, not a coup', signalled that something major was taking place behind the scenes. The army has been repeatedly saying that it is not a 'coup'. They claim that it is only there to restore the rule of law and uphold the constitution. They claimed that their targets were 'criminals' surrounding Mugabe but make no mistake, the army is playing the role of kingmaker once again.



This same army which is being lauded by regular Zimbabweans has carried out the orders of Mugabe for years. This same army has enabled Mugabe to keep his grip on power since 1980 through intimidation, unlawful arrests, vote rigging and widespread murder and execution of political opponents. They staged a carefully choreographed removal of Mugabe and any possibility of his wife Grace succeeding him. That was the objective. When Mugabe removed the Vice President, he shot himself in the foot and set in motion a series of events which has led to his resignation as President in the face of impeachment proceedings. The extent to which ZANU-PF rallied against the Mugabe's is a sign of just how oppressed and afraid people have been for so long. But the old man has not gone down without a fight. He has remained defiant. He appeared at a University ceremony in Harare on Friday 17th, much to the surprise of many. Mugabe is a master tactician who will not have accepted the terms presented to him by the army after the takeover. He is widely respected in Africa and is also widely respected among the army and by a large part of the wider Zimbabwean society. In light of the crisis, he has been viewed by many as an old man who has been manipulated by his power-hungry wife and deserves the respect to enjoy a peaceful retirement, but that this action by the army was necessary. However, Mugabe's faculties remain intact. He has negotiated a full, free retirement and full protection from anyone who thinks he deserves to be punished. Even at his final hour, he could not resist once last small victory by resigning voluntarily during impeachment proceedings. Celebrations around Zimbabwe showed just how desperate the people there are for change, any change, from the Mugabe era. Let them have their moment, for many of them, they have never tasted freedom before. Most Zimbabweans interviewed just want the basic things in life which we all take for granted such as security, jobs, a home of their own and education. But will their jubilation soon turn to despair?

Robert Mugabe may be gone but the regime remains in power. There is a change coming yes, but only aesthetically. A new dawn for Zimbabwe with the expected ascension to the Presidency of Emmerson Mnangagwa and with him will come great expectations. But the task is a mammoth one which will take time and the political will to achieve. Will there be change? Will the voices of the people of Zimbabwe finally be heard or will the new President restore the status quo and create his own new personal fiefdom?

MORE FOCUS ON DONALD TRUMP

See 'More popular democracy is the only effective antidote to Trumpism' by Dr Laurence Davis, Department of Government and Politics, UCC [opinion piece in the *Cork Independent*]

<http://www.corkindependent.com/weekly/indopinion/articles/2017/11/15/4148583-more-popular-democracy-is-the-only-effective-antidote-to-trumpism/>



See 'The surreal presidency of Donald Trump' Dr Vittorio Bufacchi, Department of Philosophy. Vittorio is one of our colleagues in UCC's new School of Sociology, Philosophy, Criminology, Government and Politics [opinion piece as part of RTE's Brainstorm series, as reproduced below]

<https://www.rte.ie/eile/brainstorm/2017/1123/922246-the-surreal-presidency-of-donald-trump/>

Opinion: the current inhabitant of the White House may be displaying some surrealist touches but politics is no place for ambiguity

Something seems to have changed. Judging by our collective response to recent events in Las Vegas and Texas, we are becoming affectively stunned, even morally anesthetized, by the recurrence of these horrors. It would seem that people in America and around the world are recalibrating their expectations to a new normal. What is predictable not only appears more inevitable, but it also tends to be deemed less evil. When an injustice becomes the norm, it no longer feels like an injustice. The same general state of resignation, inescapability and acceptability is also present in the way we respond to President Donald Trump's manifestly inappropriate rhetoric. Trump's deplorable response to the Texas mass killing passed unnoticed, which suggests that exactly a year into his presidency, in the words of Pink Floyd's Roger Waters, we have become comfortably numb.

Trump's insight on the worst mass shooting in modern Texas history ("this isn't a gun situation") may not go down in history as particularly enlightening or informative. But it is philosophically very disconcerting. A man walks into a church carrying an assault rifle and starts shooting indiscriminately at anyone and everyone in sight. And yet, notwithstanding the blaringly obvious, we are supposed to be reassured by the President of the United States that "this isn't a gun situation"? Trump's peculiar comment evokes a comparison with a famous painting by the Belgian surrealist artist René Magritte, from 1929. The *Treachery of Images* depicts a pipe, underneath which Magritte has painted the words "ceci n'est pas une pipe" ("this is not a pipe"). Magritte commented on his painting in characteristically stirring fashion: "the famous pipe. How people reproached me for it! And yet, could you stuff my pipe? No, it's just a representation, is it not? So if I had written on my picture 'this is a pipe', I'd have been lying!"

The painting is rightly famous for highlighting the gap between language and meaning. Ambiguity fills that gap. The painting forces us to question the importance of the sentence and the word. The word "pipe" is just a word, not a pipe, and a picture of a pipe is just that, a picture, not something that can be smoked. The ambiguity unleashed by the apparent simplicity of this painting became the subject of a book-length analysis by French philosopher Michel Foucault in 1973, where he makes the ambiguous statement: "about even this ambiguity, however, I am ambiguous".



'This is not a pipe' – famous piece by Magritte.

Perhaps Trump is not given the credit he deserves. It might just be that his comment on the latest murderous mass shooting in America is a highly sophisticated observation of our postmodern condition. He may be referring to the surreality of our existence, the ambiguity of what the French refer to as the "quotidien": the ordinary, commonplace, trivial. "This isn't a gun situation". Like Magritte, Trump knew that he was going to be reproached by the common people, but it is his moral duty to speak the truth. First of all, it was not a gun that killed 26 people in the First Baptist Church in Texas, it was an assault rifle. The fact that this lethal weapon was legally obtained, by someone with a history of severe domestic violence and mental health issue, is apparently irrelevant. It isn't a gun situation.

Just possibly, President Trump is wiser than the world media give him credit for. He is merely reminding us, the gullible masses, not to be misled by appearances. Like the prisoners chained in a dark cave facing a blank wall in Plato's allegory of the cave in Book VII of the *Republic*, we repeatedly and inevitably mistake the shadows on the wall for reality. The truth is elsewhere, and Trump knows the truth: "this isn't a gun situation". So what pearls of wisdom can we take from President Trump's pronouncement? It is not a gun situation, meaning that guns have nothing do with it, since many people own guns, but hardly anyone goes around shooting innocent people indiscriminately. Instead, Trump reassures us that it is only a mental health issue. This is very profound, but alas, there is a problem. Logic does not give credence to Trump's statement. After all, many people suffer from mental health issues and yet the vast majority don't go around shooting people either. So, if it is not a gun situation and it is not a mental health situation either, what is it? It is all too easy to get lost in the ambiguity of the situation. It is also very convenient to do so, especially for those who want to maintain the status quo. But it would be an insult to those who lost their lives in Texas, Las Vegas and too many other places to mention.

In the last analysis, there is one basic fact: no one can be shot dead unless the murderer has a gadget to shoot them with: a gun. There is nothing ambiguous about this fact. Every time someone is shot, it is a gun situation. Yes, there may be other factors at play, but there is only one common denominator in all mass shootings: guns were involved.

There is a place for ambiguity in our world and perhaps art galleries are that place. But politics is different, or at least it should be. Facts still matter, words have meanings, ambiguity can be fatal and we have a duty to face the truth, no matter how inconvenient the truth may be. For President Trump to suggest in the aftermath of yet another avoidable mass shooting that "this isn't a gun situation" is simply a ludicrous lie.



Trump: One Year On

By Conor O'Carroll, BSc Government I

It's a little over a year since America shocked the world. They rejected a former First Lady in favour of a former reality TV star named Donald Trump. It was a decision that sent shockwaves around the globe and divided a country. One year ago, I would have told you of my shock and disappointment at his election. I wasn't a Clinton fan by any means and wouldn't have voted for her but for America to elect such a man as Trump, it left a feeling of surprise. How can a man so racist, so misogynistic become President of the United States? By being extremely clever that's how.

Trump is constantly painted as stupid by the left and the media, but I don't share this view. During his campaign, Trump managed to tap into something that Clinton never saw. He saw the working class of America, who were sick of being overlooked by the Washington elites such as Clinton. These people only care about one thing. Jobs. So that's what Trump focused on and it worked brilliantly. These people don't care about being politically correct. If they have a job to go to and food on the table they are happy. While we were hearing about the way Trump treats women, they were listening to how he would bring jobs to their town. And he has delivered for the most part. Nearly 1.5 million jobs have been created since Trump's inauguration. It seems that for the working class he's doing a good job.

So, what do I think of him now, one year on? Well, I must admit that I still don't like the man. To me, he is a bit of a clown. But having said that, he is also not as bad as news networks such as CNN and the Democrats are making him out to be. All the 'major' controversies surrounding Trump have been minor in impact in my opinion. The so-called Muslim Ban was far from an actual Muslim ban and while Russia may have interfered with the US election there is no evidence Trump was connected. Dropping out of a non-binding climate change accord may have inadvertently helped with many states claiming to keep to the accords standards and the recent NFL controversy is a difference in opinion playing out on the world stage. The unfounded calls for impeachment from the radical left are ridiculous.

Trump will never be a great President. He will forever be remembered for dividing a nation. He is an outlier in many respects, but he is also a game changer. New political parties are beginning to form, and the grip of the mainstream media is loosening by the day. He has changed American politics, forever. Time will tell whether it's for the better but for now we must work with what we have. Trump will continue to tweet, America will remain divided but for the most part, nothing will change.

Many see Trump as the downfall of America, but I assure you, it could have been worse.

Staff of Department of Government and Politics in the news

- **DR FIONA BUCKLEY** was part of the Council of Europe team at the first Ukrainian Women's Congress in Kiev last week. The Congress brought together 500 Ukrainian officials from the executive and legislative branches, women entrepreneurs, gender equality advocates, as well as representatives of civil society organizations and academia, to discuss the challenges to and ways forward in advancing women's rights in the country.
- **DR EMMANUELLE SCHÖN-QUINLIVAN** spent the first three days of this week in Brussels at a conference at which she discussed her Big Friendly Guide to the EU project. The over-arching theme of the conference was 'A Turning Point for Europe'.
@BFGtoEU.



- **DR MARY C. MURPHY**, as President of IACES (Irish Association for Contemporary European Studies) opened the biennial conference on Friday 24 November in the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, which considered Ireland and the future of the EU.
- **DR THERESA REIDY** was a guest on the Marian Finucane Show on RTÉ Radio 1 on Sunday 26 November to discuss the political issues of the week, including the crisis engulfing Tánaiste Frances Fitzgerald and the Government. As well as Theresa, the panel (see below) comprised Eddie Molloy (Management Consultant and member of the Commission on Future of Policing in Ireland), John Downing (Political Correspondent *Irish Independent*), Clare Duignan (Former MD for RTÉ Radio and Bord member with *The Irish Times*) and Ciarán Mac an Bhaird (Lecturer in Economics and Finance in DCU).



Exciting end to Executive MBA Public Sector Module

UCC's Executive MBA programme has featured a 'Public Sector' module, taught by Dr Aodh Quinlivan since 1998. The module for the first semester in 2017 concluded with a field-trip to Cork City Council and guest lectures by Professor David Farrell (University College Dublin) and Professor Eoin Reeves (University of Limerick). Professor Farrell (below right) discussed political reform and mini-publics with a focus on the current Citizens' Assembly in Ireland. Professor Reeves (below left) presented on the topic, 'Infrastructure, Investment and PPPs.' Earlier in the month, on 13 November, members of the class visited Cork City Council where they were greeted by Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Terry Shannon, before attending a meeting of council (see picture below).



Between Two Unions: The Constitutional Challenge in the UK and Ireland after Brexit



This excellent lecture by Professor Michael Keating, University of Aberdeen, took place on Thursday 28 November in Kane B10A.

Michael Keating is Professor of Politics at the University of Aberdeen, part-time Professor at the University of Edinburgh and Director of the ESRC Centre on Constitutional Change. He has a BA from the University of Oxford and in 1975 was the first PhD graduate from what is now Glasgow Caledonian University. He has taught in several universities including Strathclyde, Western Ontario and the European University Institute, as well as universities in Spain and France. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Academy of Social Sciences. Michael Keating is the author or editor of over thirty books on Scottish politics, European politics, nationalism and regionalism. Among his published works are *The Independence of Scotland* (Oxford University Press, 2009) and *Rescaling the European State* (Oxford University Press, 2013). He is the editor of *Debating Scotland: Issues of Independence and Union in the 2014 Referendum* (Oxford University Press, 2017). Professor Keating is also the Lead Investigator for the ESRC Project '*Between Two Unions: The Constitutional Future of the Islands after Brexit*'. The Department of Government and Politics at UCC is a co-partner on this project.

This lecture series is supported by the Erasmus+ Jean Monnet programme.

Criminal, Convict, Saint?

A report by James Massi (BSc Government II) on the appearance of Ibrahim Halawa in UCC this week.



On Monday 27 November, from 7:00pm-8:00pm in UCC's Boole 4, Ibrahim Halawa spoke about his internment in a Cairo prison for four years. Through the planning of the Student's Union, alongside UCC's Amnesty International Society, hundreds of students came out in support of Ibrahim as he told his grueling tale of life in prison.

Jailed unjustly for a crime he did not commit, tortured and abused by an oppressive regime, Ibrahim may have been bruised and beaten, but his resolve and faith went unbroken. While protesting in Egypt for humanitarian goals, Ibrahim was jailed alongside other activists and interned without a proper trial or chance of bail. Inside prison, Ibrahim was (among many egregious acts) beaten with a chain and trapped in a room with a blocked, overflowing toilet. Suicide was often on his mind, but the goodness of some people was always there to remind him of life's wonders.

People like Ibrahim's friends and supporters at UCC, who regularly sent him pictures and best wishes, or Ibrahim's cellmate, Peter Greste, helped Ibrahim stay positive in the worst of circumstances.

Perhaps the most telling words of Ibrahim's character were of what he missed most about Ireland - 'It's green and beautiful.'

I wholeheartedly offer my support to Ibrahim, and hope to see more of him in the future.



Lee Nagle, BSc Government IV, met up with Peter Horgan

I caught up with BSc Government graduate Peter Horgan to see how life is treating him after graduating from UCC in 2010. He is currently a parliamentary advisor to Labour TD Sean Sherlock.

Why did you choose the BSc Government? - I always had an interest in politics and government. One of my earliest memories of politics was seeing and hearing of Dick Spring in government, but politics wasn't really talked about too much at home when I was a child – I didn't really know Dick Spring from Charlie Haughey from Donald Trump! I had an interest in English, writing, history and all politics – Irish, English, American and European! I didn't really have any intention of working in politics. I thought of maybe working in the civil service or in foreign affairs or diplomacy.

Were you in any societies? - I was in the Government and Politics Society and held a few different positions. It was very interesting and impartial, a very good society to be involved in. People seem to want to talk about politics. Everything revolves round politics really – how much your car tax costs, how much it costs to send a child to school – it's all politics. Wages and fairness in society are the same. I encourage people to talk about politics and to get involved. Discussion is good regardless of who you support. I was also involved in the Drama Society in both production and direction. I directed Frost Nixon and Anchorman (which raised €500 for charity) so it was all very worthwhile.

Best memory of UCC? - The campus itself lends itself to good memories. The library, Old Bar, New Bar (I was more of a New Bar person!) and the Coffee Dock in the O' Rahilly Building all bring back fond memories.

Have you any advice for current students of the BSc Government? - Take any opportunities you are given and also seek out your own. Speak to politicians, civil servants, TDs, councillors and senators. I have noticed that a few graduates have been elected to councils and it's great to see this marriage between theory and reality. If you are in final year, put the head down and plough on. Put the work in. If you are just starting out put the head down too but also enjoy college life and going to Monday Club!

What did you do for your work placement in 3rd year? - I did the New York internship. It was amazing. I met the New York comptroller over there and later, when I was working with Sean Sherlock, he came over to Ireland and I happened to meet him again. He remembered me when I reminded him that I was the Irish student who had asked about the picture in his office of Roosevelt and King George! Before this I was not pushing any boundaries and had not really left Cork much, so it was good to get away from Mummy and Daddy and really test myself.

Who in the department had an impact on you? - Aodh Quinlivan brought local government to life. Professor Neil Collins made you challenge yourself and had a great method of teaching. I really admired Fiona Buckley and Clodagh Harris. Fiona and I had a few rows – or debates – but these were good! Theresa Reidy is still blazing a trail. It is great to see the Department of Government and Politics raising the image of the college and putting Cork on the map.



attention

ATTENTION UNDER-GRADUATE STUDENTS (With a focus on BSc Government students)

As you approach Christmas exams, it is important to bear a few things in mind.

- Irrespective of how Semester 1 has gone for you, or how you *think* it has gone, it is important to re-engage in the New Year and start afresh with Semester 2.
- Even if you are struggling in a module, it is recommended that you sit the exam – a failed grade having attempted the exam is preferable to an ‘Absent’ being recorded for non-attendance.
- The Semester 1 results which you will receive around 6 February are provisional and will not be formally approved until the summer university exam board.
- Under the rules of the university, the pass standard is 40% but there is the possibility of compensating, subject to the following criteria.
 1. Your total mark for the year must be a minimum of 480 (400 in Third Year); this is a low threshold of a 40% average.
 2. You can only compensate 5 credits or 10 credits; if you fail more than this, compensation does not apply.
 3. In the modules you wish to compensate, you must score at least 30% in each; i.e. you cannot compensate a module where your result is below 30%.

Example: If you pass 50 credits (typically, 10 modules) with a total in excess of 480 marks in BSc Government 2, and in the other two modules achieve results of 30% and 32%, you pass these failed modules by compensation and can advance to BSc Government 3.

- Based on the above, decisions about your final results, compensation and progression etc. are **not made until the summer exam board.**
- Even if you fail a module badly (i.e. below 30%) and cannot compensate it, you get a second chance to pass the module in the summer. Failing a module or two in the early parts of your degree is not a catastrophe. We have seen plenty of students who failed modules in Years 1 or 2 emerge with high-honours degrees after fourth year. Ultimately, on the BSc Government, your final degree grade is based on 50% of your third year results and 100% of your fourth year results.

In conclusion, good luck for the exams and assessments at this time of the year. Irrespective of results (which you will not have until February) re-engage in January and commit to Semester 2.

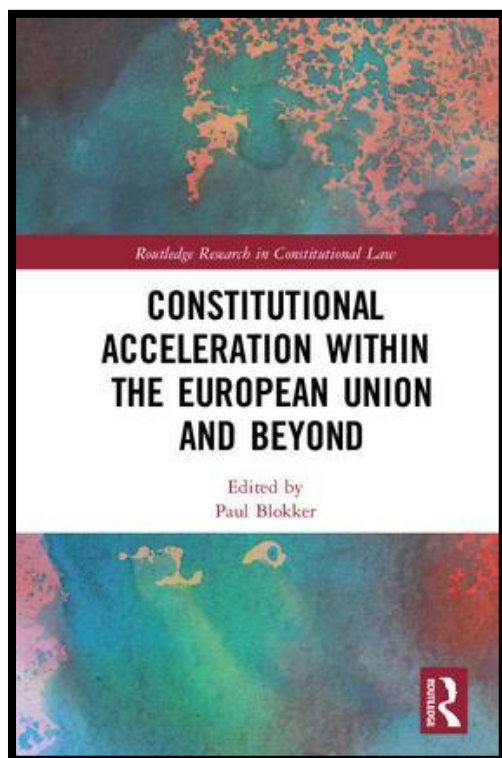
Aodh Quinlivan, Director, BSc Government

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?



Well done to the latest student to successfully come through our doctoral programme! On Wednesday 29 November, Long Pham passed her PhD oral defence. Long's thesis examines smart cities with a focus on citizen engagement. Long was supervised by Dr Aodh Quinlivan (Department of Government and Politics) and Professor Tony Day (International Energy Research Centre, Tyndall Institute). Her examination panel comprised Professor Steve Hedley (School of Law, UCC), Dr Theresa Reidy (Department of Government and Politics, UCC), Professor Filipe Teles (University of Aveiro, Portugal) and Professor Colin Copus (De Montfort University, UK).

Constitution Book Chapter by Dr Clodagh Harris



Dr Clodagh Harris has contributed a chapter to a new book by Routledge, *Constitutional Acceleration within the European Union and Beyond*, edited by Paul Blokker. The collection of essays addresses a range of critical challenges – including societal acceleration, depoliticisation, civic engagement, multi-faceted constituent power, modernization, populism and nationalism, and transnationalisation. The volume includes a variety of disciplinary, and in some cases interdisciplinary, approaches, including (political) sociology, political science, constitutional law, and constitutional and legal theory, and will be of interest to researchers and students in any of these areas. Case studies focus on the EU and the wider European context, and include highly relevant but little known or ill-understood cases, such as the recent constitutional events in Iceland, Italy, or Romania, and cases of democratic reversal, such as Hungary, while also engaging with traditional but rapidly changing cases of constitutional interest, such as the UK. Clodagh's chapter is entitled 'Ireland's Evolving Constitution' and was co-written with Dr Jane Suiter and Professor David Farrell.

COVER STORY CONTINUED

Bienvenu is a patriot. He loves his country and you can see the physical pain in his face when he speaks about it. He describes to be how the Congo is a vast country with vast amounts of wealth in the form of huge reserves of mineral resources. So, you would imagine that this massive country would be prosperous and pleasant for all its 79 million inhabitants. You would be wrong. Bienvenu, his pain now turning to anger, tells me how his country is rife with corruption and exploitation. His country has not changed for the better since he left in the 90's and since the fall of Mobutu. In fact, it has gotten even worse. Laurent-Désiré Kabila is the man who replaced Mobutu and while he was initially popular and promised change in the country, he was assassinated in 2001. Mystery remains around his death, at the hands of one of his bodyguards but Bienvenu tells me it was a much bigger story. Kabila was going against the status quo and attempting to stop the exploitation of the mineral resources in the Congo, much to the annoyance of the ruling elite and it was in fact, Kabila's adoptive son, Joseph Kabila who was ultimately behind the death of Kabila senior. It does make a certain amount of sense when you consider the fact that it was Joseph Kabila who succeeded his adoptive father in 2001 and remains President to this day. Bienvenu informs me that Joseph Kabila is in fact, the son of a Rwandan rebel who was once allied to Laurent-Désiré Kabila but later became his enemy during the first Congo war. After the death of this rebel commander, Kabila senior took in his wife and children and raised them as his own. If this is to be considered fact, it is certainly a complicated and bloody twist in the story of a country which has seen far too much suffering. So, Joseph Kabila is still the President, the mineral resources are still being exploited and corruption is still widespread. While Kabila and his close associates live prosperous lives, the rest of the Congo starves. The United Nations also has a strong presence in the Congo. This, at first glance, may seem to be a good thing however, according to Bienvenu it is anything but a good thing. The UN force in the Congo consists of soldiers from various other African countries and he says they are not a good presence. Unreported massacres for years and a deserved title of 'rape capitol of the world' has left Bienvenu feeling a mix of sadness and anger about his home country. Again, his expression and body language tell me just how much it hurts him to admit these terrible realities about his country.

Bienvenu moved to Ireland in 2007 after leaving Angola. He took a flight to England and later to Dublin where he sought asylum. He was provided with accommodation in a direct provision centre in Dublin initially but after a few weeks, transferred to Cork or more specifically, the Kinsale direct provision centre. What followed was eight long years of "hell" as Bienvenu put it. The conditions in direct provision were awful, to say the least. For eight years he shared a room with three other people. Privacy and dignity were non-existent. Just imagine that for a second, no privacy and no dignity. Two things we take for granted. The food was bad – sometimes Bienvenu would not even eat – instead he would just have a cup of tea. He describes how his application for refugee status was rejected several times and finally, the deportation order arrived. He knew he could not return to the Congo and decided to try to fight the deportation order, although victory seemed unlikely. It was around now that he describes meeting with an Irish nun – Frances Cummins. He told her his story and in turn, she wrote to immigration authorities. Suddenly, his deportation order is revoked, and he receives a reply asking for his passport and Bienvenu was granted 'live to remain' status. I asked Bienvenu if he thought this nun saved his life. He says without any doubt, "yes, she did". He was happy now that he knew he would never be taken by force in the middle of the night from his direct provision centre to be deported. He was happy now that he could begin to rebuild his life and was grateful to have survived his direct provision experience unscathed. Direct provision damages people he says, they have no quality of life and their mental health often deteriorates. He was lucky. Once he left the centre in Kinsale in 2016, Bienvenu settled in picturesque Castlemartyr. He retained the dream of getting an education and he could finally pursue it. So, he enrolled in Cork College of Commerce to study Languages and European studies. He enjoyed the experience a lot which led to him applying as a mature student to University College Cork. I asked him why he chose UCC, to which he responded with the following; UCC is a multi-cultural environment with more support and help provided to students than he could ever wish for. He wants a quality education and he says that UCC will provide him with that superior quality of education. Those are words I can echo without hesitation.



Since embarking upon the BSc Government programme in September, the support has been phenomenal from both within the Department of Government and Politics and outside. Bienvenu is happy now but thoughts remain of home, of family and friends who continue to suffer in the Congo. I ask him about the future and what it could hold. He says that he is grateful to Ireland and once he leaves UCC he wishes to contribute to Ireland for all that our big little country has provided him with. He is involved with a peaceful resistance network called “Apareco” which unites Congolese people around the world in the struggle against the oppressive regime of Joseph Kabila and he hopes to one-day return home with the knowledge gained in UCC and use it to change the country he loves, for the better. I ask him what he hopes to achieve in the Congo to which he replies, “President, of course”. Before I can say anymore, and with a look of shock still etched on my face he finishes the interview with the perfect line. “Why not? I am a dreamer.”

With sincere thanks to Bienvenu.

**HAPPY
CHRISTMAS,
SEE YOU IN 2018!**