

It's not easy for the thinking man because he has to think up his own opinions rather than just having a checklist of opinions. It's just too easy to parrot boring opinions, not so easy to think up original insights. Thinking for yourself nowadays is neither popular nor profitable. Now there is more of a tendency towards people who have their behaviour "bred into" them. We are crowded out by sheer force of numbers.

THE DEMISE OF THE THINKING MAN

I like to think of this as the archetypal dublin literary thinker's zine. We thinking men are not cultural icons any more. The typical icons now are bouncers, tattoo artists and various other psychotic stereotypes whereas in the 1940s or 50s you would typically see a benevolent gentleman such as is on this page, in an ad or poster, in his ARMCHAIR, smoking his pipe, faithful dog curled up at his feet with the wireless on. Nowadays he is scorned. In today's strident, matriarchal society, everyone thinks he's "up to" something. The thinking man also gets weary of people who believe every patently untrue thing, and who are always surprised by everything: tabloid readers. For example they are always surprised by the time, regardless of what time it is. Yet they are quick to believe old

wives' tales. Each non thinker has all the same popular misconceptions hard-wired into his brain. Contact with rain, for example, causing all manner of common ailments. Equally, the non thinker will go out with either inadequate clothing (t-shirts in winter), or else overdressed due to lack of foresight. Similarly, he will go out in the pitch dark with no torch. What the thinking man wants is a quiet life of quiet contemplation and the application of rational thinking rather than this panicky hysteria which is invariably erroneous.

Empty vessels, after all, make the most noise. In an increasingly shrill, strident society, the thinking man must walk on eggshells at all times.

When the thinking man goes out he will give the illusion that his house is occupied by leaving a few lights on, to deter criminals (the proverbial lights on but

no-one home). To the non-thinking man, this would be unthinkable. They will turn out all lights before leaving the house, for some unknown reason, making it obvious that there is no-one in because this carry-on is somehow bred-into them or is some sort of reflex action. If you were to probe further, you would probably find that the non-thinker also believes that all burglars wear a characteristic outfit and carry a sack marked 'swag' over their shoulders.

The thinking man tries to use his vision to plan the consequences of actions.

Non thinkers lack vision. They have no taste. When driving they will stop on box junctions *and thus box everyone in*. No matter where you go in this world there will always be a non-thinker waiting for you when you get there. Nevertheless, the thinking man employs "idiot avoidance strategies" such

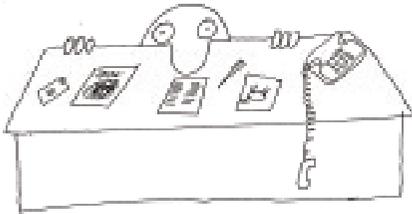
as only going out in public in the mornings, shunning public transport and staying away from shops, especially during sales.

It goes without saying that the cultured person will holiday in rural Ireland and suchlike, whereas non-thinkers will jet off *en masse* to baking hot countries in summer leaving Ireland safe for the thinking man.

In fact it is the non-thinkers who are gobbling up all the world's resources. They are always breeding, they insist on driving everywhere, they always have their houses roasting hot, they all have enormous TVs, they always use tumble dryers and they will fill not just one wheely-bin, but 2 or 3 every week so just imagine all the electricity, oil and land they use. The thinker will at least consider other ways of getting around, hates waste, will recycle what he can, will try to dry his laundry on the line, will use low-energy light bulbs and will not heat his house excessively, if at all. *If* he has a television it will probably be a small, cheap monochrome model. And it goes without saying that shopping to the thinking man is like sunlight to Dracula not least because retail workers are below normal intelligence. So spare a thought for the thinking man who, in his quiet-spoken way, represents the voice of reason in a world gone mad. ■



Well this is my 8th attempt at DTP. So I've been sitting here at my desk sitting here sorting through my correspondence and *sigh* well really I never receive any, just bills.



Correspondence is an avenue of pleasure that has been closed off to us. It's all junkmail now. If you wrote someone a letter now they would think you have the proverbial screw loose. Readers, the cost of local postage now is 55 cents, that's up from 48. However I hope I will continue to do the zine, I might just do it annually in future, at least until such a time as amnesia gets the better of me (my memory is shot to pieces). For these reasons I am increasing the price of the zine to a staggering fifty quid. Fed up has adopted the quid as its official unit of currency since a reader (whose name eludes me) wrote

that I was in error to write 'the tram costs a few quid' last issue, claiming that the word has been phased out with the changeover to euros. On the theme of the demise of the post office — BT offered to upgrade me to broadband but told me I'd have to pay by direct debit. Or if I wanted a paper bill it would be an extra 5 quid. Now, who in his right mind is going to let the likes of BT or NTL loose with his bank details? I replied that I don't have a bank account. No, the wise man uses the P.O.'s Billpay system. With the dialup I always paid the bill down at the post office. We zinners have to support them. It's good to have some human interaction rather than just paying automatically like an android. So there you have it, the post office under siege.

Wasn't spring of '07 great in Ireland, dry and bright once Paddy's weekend was over. True enough, every month nowadays is always the worst or the wettest since records began but it was good to get some fluke good weather for a change. This summer we at fed-up are escaping to Inisheer, one of the Aran Islands.

My mind is shot to pieces but I just

write fed-up in moments of clarity, usually when I have a couple of weeks off. There is nothing I like more than a day off. I settle down in my armchair around noon and listen to the wireless. I just don't think I'm cut out for the rat-race. I have a great job where I have mornings off and then I have work down to about an hour a day — the life of Reilly.

I hope readers enjoy picking apart this issue as much as I enjoyed putting it together. We got a new computer, an iMac with its fiendishly complex 'Tiger' operatin' system. In the old days if an option was greyed-out it wasn't available but they all seem to be greyed-out now. I didn't make many copies of issue 7 but I've converted it to a .pdf file on the fed-up site if anyone missed it. Like any discerning user, I hate myspace.com because it's a site you

have to 'do battle' with but my page there isn't too bad as I haven't over-egged the pudding.

I have made a few changes to fed-up. I axed the old 1970s display font I was using, in favour of some other font, bang up to date with the eighties. I'm reducing the page count to 8 in future. I'm just not a heavyweight ziner. I'm more a back-of-an-envelope sort of thinker. What do readers think? Send any gripes to gerryorchard@iol.ie but no "I haven't read your zine" type messages.

Alan Pearce
20 Bullfin Road
Dublin 8

myspace.com/fedupmag

FED-UP QUOTES

"Those are my principles. If you don't like them, I have others." —Groucho Marx

"There is no problem which can withstand the assault of sustained thought." —Voltaire

Live TV is embarrassing enough to watch without RTÉ sending reporters out to report live unnecessarily from round dublin, because of the antics of idiots in the background on live news reports. I think everyone is weary of these people. They are too distracting and too intrusive. Would this be tolerated in the film industry??!

And it's always the uglies that are always trying to draw attention and be annoying. You'll never see a pretty face doing it. I've even seen a freak stick his tongue in a legal correspondent's ear outside the Four Courts. They even sent one poor sod out to report on the

I'D RATHER NOT HAVE YOU ON MY SCREEN

Hallowe'en 'celebrations' which consisted of a braying mob jostling the reporter.

Surely the days of these unnecessary live reports are numbered, with the society we are living in now. It's just too much aggro. Please, reporters, stay in the studio because these outside broadcasts only draw the wrong kind of attention.

Watching TV is embarrassing especially with anyone else in the room. And then if you keep changing the channels they start telling you what to put on. It's

like someone reading your newspaper over your shoulder and telling you what page to go to. Then the other thing is they get the remote control and fall asleep on it so really I've given up, I'll only watch it if I've the house to myself.

It's stupid the way dumb ads come on and everyone gawks at them. And the shouty ads — Harvey Normal and the dreaded Cillit Bang.

TV is causing the breakdown of civilisation. There is too much depravity on the box such as Podge & Rodge and other gross-out comedies.

Those who defend it are always saying you just have to switch it off if you don't like it but what they don't seem to realise is that you still have to put up with the annoying undesirables who watch it, who you have to encounter in public so even though you don't have to watch it it's still degrading the society we live in, ruining quality of life.

The worst ad is the oft-repeated Belgian one for cheese where a woman in an aircraft shows some cheeses to a group of somewhat laughable men dressed as skydivers, in lycra, ridiculous crash helmets and goggles. She then throws the cheeses out of the plane and the terrified dorks all leap out after them... then suddenly they're on the ground and can't seem to retrieve the cheese from various un-co-

operative elements and are generally made a laughing stock of.

An awful lot of TV programmes now are about how to lose weight. There is an assumption that everyone has a weight problem and a major theme now is sending everyone to boot camps. There is Rabbo Bank's "send your money to boot camp" ads with various corpulent, foolish looking men (who represent lump sums) wearing lycra and knee pads, elbow pads and crash helmets. "You are going to be working harder than ever," says a shallow woman before they all "group hug" — the sure sign of the modern-day twit.

There is even a boot camp programme on TG4 for Irish speakers trying to lose a few kilos of cholesterol and *Help, my dog's nearly as fat as me* and *Honey we're killing the kids* on BBC3 plus RTÉ's *How long will you live?* The thinking man would never participate in such a venture. The bootcamp / how-to-lose-weight genre is another attempt to drum the healthy cynicism out of viewers.

Increasingly now they have ads for 'pleb-diseases' that only the great unwashed would have and the advertisers are trying to imply that we are all riddled with them: cold sores (*herpes simplex*) athlete's foot, nail infections.

"Remember me? I'm your nail infection."

Now, you can just stop right there a minute.

And the air freshener ads which imply that we are all shell-suited chavs with smelly houses and gaseous, green emissions rising from discarded trainers. The one for 'Oust' even has a *skunk* doing the housework. It's interesting the difference between Irish and British news. The British stations don't bother covering road accidents, presumably because they have even more than us. It's just not newsworthy. The Irish news always has panicky parents of hyperactive kids as their main story.

In September it was parents in Lusk or Laytown (one or the other anyway) protesting because there wasn't a school for their kids. They got blanket coverage every day (must have connections in RTÉ.) The other thing is the parents of a hyperactive kid will demand a special education for him, in a prolonged court battle against the State and then they lose their case. Then the mother goes up for election as a protest and wins. This kind of story gets massive airtime in Ireland and surely everyone is weary of it now. There never seems to be enough places in these institutions or whatever they are, while, inevitably, there is always just such an establishment newly built but lying idle.

■

Much to the mirth of all present, our irrepressible hero takes the stage where his somewhat laughable-sounding keyboard awaits and kicks off his set with *Anarchy in Timperley* and *Panic on the streets of Timperley*. Regarded by many as the quintessential Mancunian, Frank reveals to the assembled masses that he lives about two yards outside Manchester, enabling him to observe the music scene without living there. He then launches into a ludicrous medley of Joy Division and Smiths classics followed by a few Beatles numbers including *Give Paul a Chance* and a memorable rendition of *Twist and Shout*, the gimmick here being his inability to hit the high notes.

**FRANK SIDEBOTTOM
THE HUB DUBLIN 3-MAY-2007**

Then it's into his own composition *Free Download* before his long-suffering puppet Little Frank moves proceedings up a gear with his performance of The Fall's *Hit the North*. Mr Rowenta, Frank's latest creation, is an absolutely bobbins new 'puppet' made from an electric iron who says his occupation is ironing and

his hobby is making toasted sandwiches. "Have you ever tried that, with an iron??" Sidey asks the crowd. He suggests also putting a CD in a microwave. 'The worse the music, the better the fireworks display so try some Simply Red.'

The best bit is the football songs. Sidebottom performs his Altrincham FC anthem *The Robins Aren't Bobbins* and bitterly relates how he is not welcome at the Altrincham grounds now, having delayed a match for 40 minutes when he got his head stuck in the turnstiles.

For a grand finale, Frank impersonates Freddie Mercury, describing how when his mum goes out he turns the stereo up to 3 and plays Queen records. Much musical hilarity ensues and then, the show over, Fantastic Frank descends from the stage to much adulation from his adoring fans and anarchy breaks out all over the place. ■

Dublin is so polarised that everywhere you go you will either feel like an upper class twit or else a lower class twit. If you live to the west of Dublin you are snookered because Dublin is divided into northside or southside and we are neither, so in a sense we don't exist.

CULTURE SHOCK

Also the media regards west dublin as being out beyond the motorway but we don't regard that as Dublin at all. In spite of all the articles and TV programmes complaining about it, the true Dubliner could be forgiven for not knowing that the M50 exists because he lives his life within the ring road. He views any of these outer suburbs that he has never heard of as ludicrous and devoid of culture. He cannot cope with places where every housing estate is the same. The true dubliner can nip into town easily to attend cultural events whereas M50 man will merely sigh heavily when invited.

But the thing they do now is build gated communities in the high crime areas like Sheriff Street or Darndale. You get a kind of inverted snobbery. But snobbery only reflects badly on the snob — tuppence ha'penny looking down on tuppence. With me, some peo-

ple think that because I lived in Inchicore I "must" be from the high-rise estate.

People rarely stray across the boundaries in Dublin. *You've got dublin 12, for example, which is in chaos, everyone either looking for a fight or else keeping very much to themselves then beside it the dublin 6 buffer district which is populated by the chattering classes, who sport fixed grins with prominent teeth and glasses. People walk around looking panicky. If you continue long enough you are in D4, a low crime area inhabited by the elite of dublin. This is where the media is based and land is the most expensive in the world. Heavy-weight bloggers are thick on the ground and everyone looks really proud of themselves.*

It doesn't make sense to get a penthouse in a high crime area. Equally, Dublin 4 is far too too smug for most people. And the outlying suburbs are too bland.

It would make more sense to get a new penthouse beside Heuston station, for example, where no-one lives so you're not causing resentment and there is no air of smugness about the area. Also it's not isolated at the back of nowhere like most new developments and is right beside the train to Cork. ■

The bicycle is the quintessential mode of transport for Dublin. Never mind what the knobs think.

With it, you can somewhat-anarchically cycle right up to your destination and lock your bike “*Yew cawn't leave that there! Yew little blighter*” and completely avoid walking.

The problem with the buses is that public transport rarely goes to where you need it, it just goes to arbitrary points, leaving you with long walks.

RAMBLING WITH ME BIKE with DOYLER

You'll be waiting an hour for a bus and when it does arrive it'll be overcrowded. There's no personal space and everyone is coughing.

The prospect of walking anywhere is a somewhat daunting one with the state of the footpaths, crowds loitering at bus stops, various obstacles and the difficulty of crossing roads.

I can't go on overcrowded public transport, I have to think of my sanity. I've tried driving home too in a vehicle borrowed from work and that is nearly impossible except it's ok for bad weather. The bike keeps you tough.

There are the 2 tram lines, the swanky Harcourt St - Dublin 4 route which has longer trams and the Tallaght one

which is slow and overcrowded.

I gather that some of the locals in James's Street have even taken to lying down on the tracks now to prevent trams from proceeding.

I was given one of those white diode headlights for Christmas. It has two modes: “blinking maniacally” or “constant.” I always keep it on constant, which I think is more sophisticated and is road legal. Anyway I gave it a try although it uses tiny AAA batteries. It's a pity the diode lights don't take D-cells. The D size is only slightly dearer than the AAA but must have nearly 20 times the charge. If they lasted a year that might eliminate the need for rechargeables.

With the influx of beggars the driver increasingly gets badgered at the traffic lights whereas the cycle commuter passes unhindered.

“Everyone” thinks the cycle commuter is poverty-stricken but of course he is surely the wealthiest commuter. But it's always useful to play the poverty card. If he drove into work then colleagues who use public transport might regard him as a knob, whereas arriving in on the rusty old bike, he is suitably low down on the pecking order, as to be deemed a man of the people, with a somewhat torn jacket

after falling off, as a gesture of solidarity. But equally, because he is perceived as poverty stricken, the cycle commuter is seen as ‘fair game.’ I wouldn't wear a crash helmet and fluorescent because it would be considered too middle class. It would only draw the wrong kind of attention from pedestrians and could be dangerous. They form an opinion of you and as you pass people expect to hear a squeaky chain and a creaking sound. Going past on a mechanically perfect, stealthy singlespeed makes them feel cheated, give them a wide berth.

One of the many diversions for the cyclo commuter is observing the different types of cyclists such as the hybrid-man. A daft character who will go through all red lights ‘because they were previously green’ even when it means certain death, hybrid-man will even do this right in front of a copper (operation freeflow). Usually get knocked down at every junction. Or the grandfather-figure, an old gentleman with a cáipín and a pipe, cycling glacially through the old parts of dublin on an ancient Raleigh against a backdrop of Dublin's spires. I suppose the best way to cycle is slowish while just staring blankly at the surface. “Hard shoulder man” is what I like to be, coursing along miles and miles of

tarmac in straight lines without touching the brake. Mind over matter, none of this sprinting nonsense.

I wouldn't go into town without the bike for getting around because walking in town is just not feasible. They build footbridges now over the Liffey but these things are only a bottleneck and there is always a beggar loitering on them so I wouldn't use them. I just cycle across the main road traffic bridges instead. With the one way system I have to go round in a loop. If I want to get from the northside of town towards the south it's easier to cycle down Capel St, across Grattan Bridge, up Parliament St and so on and right up to my destination. When I got my magnificent machine a few years ago (20 quid in *Buy & Sell*) I didn't realise I would be spending all my waking hours commuting on the damn thing. God be with the days when it was just for fun. The furthest I have been is the Curragh of Kildare & back on the dual cabbageway (50 miles). ■