

CHIMERA

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PREFACE

In this highly competitive and uncertain economic climate, the pressures on students to stick to their books, lecture halls and library are understandably great. Yet, students - no more than any of the rest of us - cannot live by VAT alone. The creative well-springs should and must be given freedom of expression. Chimera provides one such creative outlet for students interested in geography and related areas, including those who wish to break into the worlds of journalism and media generally. This is the fourth successive production of what is now an established student journal at University College, Cork. I want to warmly congratulate all those involved, from postgraduates to first year students, the editorial committee, the people who sought the necessary sponsorship, who designed the format, cover and maps, who carried out all the crucial research and all those who finally helped bind the pages together to make for this excellent production. The other members of the team will forgive me if I add a special word of congratulations to the Editor and main driving force behind Chimera this year, Mr. Raymond O'Connor.

One of the great strengths (if not the greatest strength) of geography is the breadth and range of its concerns. These strengths are clearly revealed in this volume which looks at a number of imaginative worlds in geography, at the European world and the construction of a European consciousness, at industrial and geological resources in Ireland, issues of biogeography, environmental management and rural deprivation as well as the relevance of a philosophy like phenomenology to current developments in the discipline. It is a rich feast which I hope its readers will enjoy.

There are also additional materials relating to the active role of the student Geographical Society. Some members of the Society have just returned from a very successful student conference at Maynooth, another forum for the exchange of ideas and the creation of friendships between our different institutions. There is also a welcome innovation in the journal's attempt to link up with these student bodies and universities over the island by documenting ongoing research activities amongst undergraduates and postgraduates in these institutions. I know that Chimera will also travel hopefully in these directions and elsewhere - creating many new worlds as it engages each reader.

William J. Smyth