Ireland, Irish America, and Work

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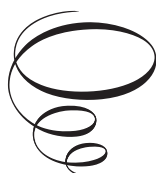
Edited by

Donna L. Potts and Amy L. May

Cambridge Scholars Publishing



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For Charlotte Headrick, who introduced me to ACIS West
In memory of Jeanne Armstrong

The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour.

—James Connolly

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PREFACE

Having spent twenty-two years at Kansas State University, I knew little about the history of the Irish in the western United States when I arrived at Washington State University in 2013. However, years earlier, I had been introduced to the western regional meeting of the American Conference for Irish Studies, at an extraordinary conference in Corvallis, Oregon, hosted by long-time ACIS member, theater professor, actor, and director, Charlotte Headrick. When she found out I had moved to the northwest, she immediately welcomed me back to ACIS West. I am grateful for her steadfast support over the years, as well as her participation in the ACIS west meeting I hosted at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane in October 2017. When I was asked by the executive committee to host the conference, I had just participated in ACIS West 2016, hosted by Traolach O'Riordan, who used the conference as an opportunity to commemorate the Easter Rising of 1916. His approach inspired me to research events that had occurred 100 years earlier at my own conference venue. Thanks to Robert Lambeth's "Scabbing the Palouse: Agricultural Labor Replacement and Union Busting in Southeast Washington, 1917-1919," I learned about Spokane's history of labor, the IWW's free speech fight, and the 1917 labor crackdown, involving hundreds of arrests and the declaration of martial law.

Our conference participants came from as far away as Ireland, and there were many from local universities as well—Eastern Washington, Central Washington, Gonzaga, Whitworth, and Washington State University. Special thanks to those who came from Pullman: Sandra Castle del Conte, Curtis Harty, Alex Hester, Madison Jackson, Amy L. May, Donna Campbell, Michael Taylor, Sarah Quenzer, and Mary Wack from WSU, as well as Victoria Arthur, from the University of Idaho. Our gratitude to Isabella Potts-Moore, Frank Conte, and Jane Clark for their help in assembling packages and entertaining guests. Thanks to our president, Caleb Richardson, and our secretary treasurer (now) president, Sarah Townsend, for answering my every question over the past year and helping so much to make this conference a success. Thanks for the support of the Irish Consul General Robert O'Driscoll, the American Conference for Irish Studies, and Washington State University. My deepest gratitude

is reserved for Amy L. May, who offered to serve as co-editor for this volume.

Jeanne Armstrong, a beloved librarian at Western Washington University and a long-time ACIS West member, presented "Voice of the 1890s Irish-American Working Class: Use of Oral Tradition by Finley Peter Dunne's Fictional Bridgeport Bartender, Mr. Dooley, to Create a Living History of Bridgeport." Sadly, Jeanne passed away less than a month after presenting her paper. This volume is in memory of her.

INTRODUCTION

Ireland, Irish America, and Work offers perspectives on the history of labour in Ireland, as well as on Irish-American labor, particularly since the mass emigration prompted by the Great Hunger of the 1840s. This collection also examines the specific role that the Irish played in the Inland Northwest, as well as the intersections between the concerns of the Irish and Irish-Americans and those of the Spokane and Coeur d'Alene Indians who inhabited the region when European immigrants first arrived. It relies for its theoretical foundations on labour, postcolonial and feminist theory.

"Ireland, Irish America, and Work" was the theme of the thirty-third annual meeting of the American Conference for Irish Studies-Western Regional [ACIS-West], held Oct. 19-22, 2017, at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane, Washington. Many prominent members of the American Labor Movement were Irish and Irish-American. Jim Larkin and James Connolly worked for the I.W.W in both Ireland and the United States, where, in 1917, the I.W.W. began to face vicious repression. By July 1917, federal troops began to be used to suppress industrial conflicts, to raid I.W.W. halls, to break up meetings, and to arrest Wobblies—the term widely used for I.W.W. members. In Spokane, Irish I.W.W. leader James Rowan was arrested and sent to Leavenworth.[1]

One hundred years after Rowan's arrest, conference participants met on the ancestral territory of the Spokane Tribe, which once comprised over three million acres. Tribal members fished the Spokane River as well as the Columbia River, and gathered at Spokane Falls with family and friends. In January 1881, President Rutherford B. Hayes formally declared the much smaller Spokane Indian Reservation the new home of the Spokane Indians. Some were sent to the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation, the Flathead Indian Reservation, and the Colville Indian Reservation. Today the Spokane Indian Reservation is 157,376 acres in size. [2]

The Spokane historian Robert Lambeth researched the life of James Rowan, born on Feb. 26, 1879, in County Down to an Irish father and an

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[1] Robert Lambeth, "1917: IWW Offices Raided & Martial Law Declared," Spokane Historical, accessed May 25, 2018, http://spokanehistorical.org/items/show/291
[2] "Spokane Tribe," http://www.spokanetribe.com/

English mother. Rowan arrived in the U.S. in April, 1898 and began organizing in the Lumber Industry for the I.W.W. as early as 1916, witnessed the Everett Massacre, and became known as the "Jesus of the Lumberjacks." In August of 1917, Rowan threatened a strike in all the state's industries, prompting a brief military occupation of Spokane by the National Guard and a declaration of martial law by Governor Ernest Lister on August 17th. The government tried to prevent any further organization of mill workers and migrant harvest laborers who were striking for eight-hour work days and clean camp conditions. The president of Washington State University, then Washington State College, was Ernest Holland, who advocated using child labor to break the strike. As a result of the I.W.W.'s refusal to comply, all three I.W.W. halls in Spokane were raided, their documents seized and 94 members arrested. James Rowan was sentenced to twenty years in Leavenworth.[3]

Earlier, in 1909, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, born in 1890 in New York to poor Irish immigrants, participated in free speech crusades in Missoula and Spokane. Flynn's Irish family's disdain for British rule in Ireland instilled in her a lifelong commitment to fight social injustice. Her father never uttered the word "England" without uttering "God damn her," and she sensed that she and her siblings "drew in a burning hatred of British rule with our mother's milk."[4]

In Spokane, Flynn chained herself to a lamp-post in order to delay her arrest. Only nineteen years old and pregnant, she was jailed, along with six I.W.W. leaders, who were charged with "conspiracy to incite men to violate the law." Conspiracy was a state felony, punishable by up to two years in prison. From November 1909 to March 1910, over 400 men were charged with violating Spokane's ordinance against public speaking.[5] Eventually, Flynn was acquitted, and Spokane's mayor decided to drop all charges, release the prisoners, and stop enforcing the city ordinance against public speech—if the I.W.W. would agree not to call in outside agitators. The free speech battle in Spokane was over. Flynn would return to Spokane in 1917 to raise money for the imprisoned I.W.W. workers, speaking in front of the I.W.W. hall to a crowd of 1000.[6]

Still earlier in Spokane, a young Irish woman named Kate Barrett achieved infamy as "Irish Kate," when she was blamed for starting the great Spokane fire by knocking over a kerosene lamp. This scapegoating

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[3] "The IWW in the Lumber Industry," https://www.iww.org/history/library/Rowan/lumberindustry

[4] Lara Vapnek, *Elizabeth Gurley Flynn*, 9.

[5] Lara Vapnek, *Elizabeth Gurley Flynn*, 30-31.

[6] "Loggers Stirred by Gurley Flynn," *Spokesman Review*, April 16, 1917.

narrative of an Irish woman resembles too closely the story of Irish immigrant Mrs. O'Leary, blamed for the great Chicago fire, to be plausible. Although the story was likely fictional, Kate Barrett was a real person, a prostitute in early Spokane who, just a few years after the fire, in 1892, committed suicide by drinking carbolic acid outside the Panhandle Block. Her body was never claimed. She is buried in Spokane's Greenwood Cemetery potter's field.[7]

Spokane's story of Irish immigrants parallels those of any American city: blamed and stigmatized as poor immigrants, they made major contributions by improving conditions for workers, thereby ultimately improving all of our lives. As immigrants are under siege throughout our country, we must never forget, nor stop reminding others, that the Irish, now celebrated, suffered undeservedly because of their own precarious status as immigrants. They were once the huddled masses yearning to breathe free.

The poetry of Moya Cannon, author of *Carrying the Songs* (Carcanet 2007) and other books, addresses the plight of workers in Ireland who emigrated for better pay and working conditions. She also writes about the descendants of slaves in the United States, whose stories of forced immigration to provide unpaid labor have sadly been erased in some American history textbooks.

Cannon's poetry is complemented by that of Heather Corbally Bryant, an Irish-American poet at Wellesley, whose collections *My Wedding Dress* (2016) and *Eve's Lament* (2018) focus on the work that has historically been assigned to women. Moreover, in the story of Adam and Eve, to which Bryant alludes throughout *Eve's Lament*, their punishment for eating the forbidden fruit was a life of labor—and for women, "labor" has also long been associated with the labor of childbirth.

A plenary by David Brundage, Professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and author *of Irish Nationalists in America: The Politics of Exile,* 1798-1998 (Oxford University Press, 2016), explored the topic, "The Cause of Labour is the Cause of Ireland, the Cause of Ireland is the Cause of Labour." Because his plenary was drawn from his previously published book, it is not available here, although his book is readily available.

Chapter 3, Erin Costello Wecker's "The Trouble with Invisible Labor: Irish Women's Work beyond the Emotional, Communal, and Spiritual," is

[7] Caitlin M. Shain, "The Death of 'Irish Kate,'"
http://www.spokanehistorical.org/items/show/456

about the invisible and unpaid labour of women incarcerated in Magdalene asylums in Ireland.

In addition, the conference featured around forty presentations on Irish Labor in the United States; Irish and Irish-Americans in the labor movement; representations of work and the refusal of work; the unpaid labor of women; the Magdalene Laundries; writers, scholars, and artists as workers; Irish and Irish-American Literature and work; work and play; gender- and class-related aspects of work; new professions and professionalization; intellectual vs. physical labor; the Empire at work; disability and work; and American capitalism and the Irish Economy.

Chapter 4, "The Work of Politics," begins with "Union," introduced by Sarah L. Townsend, the organizer of "'Union': An Interdisciplinary Roundtable." The inaugural iteration of what ACIS West aims to establish as an annual interdisciplinary roundtable, the roundtable sought to gather scholars from different disciplines and specializations. Focusing on a different keyword each year, the panel placed into conversation diverse perspectives on timely concepts in Irish Studies. The keyword for 2017 was "Union," and participants were invited to reflect upon the political, historical, literary, architectural, artistic, and cultural dimensions of this word from any period. As became apparent, "union" and its cognates (unity, unite, unify) are fundamentally conflicted terms, often linking otherwise opposed political formations like the Act of Union and nationalist reunification, sectarianism and peacekeeping initiatives promoting unity. The term also invited discussions on an array of related topics including labor history and trade unions; marriage and family formations; immigration, emigration, and reunion/return; diasporic communities; the European Union, Brexit, and the prospect of reunification; and more.

Caleb Richardson observes that whereas prior to the twenty-first century, the Irish had resisted Union, at exactly the moment that politics in general seemed to be becoming more tribal, the Irish seem to be becoming less so. In the Republic, despite occasional disagreements with Brussels on economic issues, the Irish have become almost model citizens of the European Union.

N.K. Harrington observes that the word "union" in relation to Irish history is mostly associated with the Act of Union. Arguing that the memory of the Act of Union is so strong it eclipses virtually every use of the word, Harrington notes that the conception of union persists in many other contexts in Irish history. It was a union of nationalists that was built to create a nationalist party to oppose the Act of Union by insisting on a union through an Irish parliament. And it was a labour union that disrupted

all of these unions during the Great Lockout of 1913. As James Larkin made his presence known on the streets of Dublin, John Redmond—the leader of the Irish Party—was paralyzed between his support of labor unions and his support of the Catholic bosses. Both factions were supposed to be unified through the Irish Party, an agrarian union that came to regard itself as a union of all nationalist Ireland. Toleration was born from a militant nationalism that shunned British politics when possible and concentrated on the development of a concrete and united Irish national identity that extended mostly, but not completely, beyond Irish class structures. Phillip Bull traces Toleration's origins back to the Fenians who, he claimed, had "been aware of the potential importance of the landlord class to the cause of nationalism."

In "Michael McCaughan's Reunion with the Irish Language," John L. Murphy focuses on the ways in which Union reaches beyond Irish borders or seas. Online, adult learners of its "first official language" link into media enabling and easing fluency. He observes that online study of the Irish language creates a cyber-union that bonds together the Irish-born with a diaspora community. Although the diaspora community may not master *Gaeilge* as well as native speakers, they will nonetheless shape its future in its homeland and abroad. As a case study of how one man's life's work has progressed in today's Irish polity, Murphy reviews Michael McCaughan's memoir *Coming Home.*

In Chapter 5, "The Working Class," Emily Lucitt researches the historical experience and subjectivity of Dublin-based heritage activists, to understand the relationship between historical consciousness, nationalism, and citizenship. In her essay, "Re-examining the Activist Legacy of James Connolly: Exemplars and Nationalism in Dublin, 2016," she examines how social activists in Dublin understand and use the legacy of James Connolly to formulate their own working class activist identities. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork during 2016, Ireland's Easter Rising Centenary year, she found that activists engaged in a campaign to save Dublin's Moore Street regularly invoke the socialist-republican ideals of James Connolly to legitimize their efforts, place their activism within a larger national history, and criticize the modern Irish state.

Kelly J. Hunnings is the author of "Domestic Space, Transnational Subscription: Linking Mary Barber, Ireland, and the Laboring-Class Poetic Tradition." Hunnings examines Barber, an Anglo-Irish woman writing and publishing in the eighteenth century, within the context of the ever-increasing canon of English and Scottish laboring-class writers. Barber's status as self-taught and her eagerness to participate in the formal and thematic trends the recently en vogue tradition of poor women writers

makes her a valuable contribution to this poetic movement. Her thematic usage of a "chaotic domestic" in her verse—or the development of fractured domestic space—makes her an integral component of a little known literary network that existed between Barber, Mary Leapor, Mary Collier, Ann Yearsley, and Janet Little. Hunnings addresses the ways in which Barber (1) participates in the laboring-class poetic tradition, a popular poetic movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and (2) takes part in a transnational literary network of laboring-class women writers.

In "Jack Conroy's *The Disinherited*: How Literary Gentrification Displaced the Legacy of Worker Power and Racial Solidarity from the Irish American Canon," Maureen F. Curtin makes the case that in *The Disinherited* Jack Conroy sought to counter the ideological power of literature to sell bourgeois values by "promoting the revolutionary potential of workers not only to change their material condition but also to change broader social consciousness through storytelling." He viewed the New York Intellectuals' preoccupation with critiquing middle-brow culture and substituting it for political struggle as, ironically, a dangerous and peculiarly bourgeois kind of distraction. Ultimately, Conroy's *The Disinherited* testifies to the allure of bourgeois ideology as an escape from labor exploitation while also exposing how it fosters competitiveness and racist ideology, dehumanizes all involved, and undermines workers' collective, cross-racial struggle to win control at the level of material, objective conditions.

Jeanne Armstrong's essay is not included in the chapter, but it is worthy of mention here. Irish American journalist Finley Peter Dunne, relied on an alter ego character, Bridgeport bartender Mr. Dooley, to describe the life of the Irish working class in Chicago in the late nineteenth century. Dunne's parents were Irish immigrants living in the West Side Irish neighborhood near Old Saint Patrick's church, so he was familiar with the social life and dialects of these Irish immigrants. The south side neighborhood of Bridgeport, where Dunne locates Dooley's bar, was founded by Irish who were hired to dig the I&M Canal between the Chicago River in Bridgeport and the Illinois River at LaSalle, Illinois.

Dunne's 1890s Dooley columns are significant as documentation of the vanishing everyday life of a Famine era Irish immigrant community in Chicago. While some critics regret the inaccessibility of the Mr. Dooley columns because Dunne gives his character an Irish-American brogue, others believe Dooley's use of brogue accounts for his appeal to Irish immigrants as this character gives voice to the urban, working class poor of Bridgeport. These 1890s columns constitute a history of the

neighborhood, which captures the disappearing social and cultural life of this community while continuing the legacy of Ireland's oral tradition. Dunne's ability to document for posterity the living history of 1890s Bridgeport meets Mr. Dooley's criteria for history per this excerpt:

> I know histhry isn't thrue, Hinnissy, because it ain't like what I see ivry day in Halsted Street. If any wan comes along with a histhry iv Greece or Rome that'll show me th' people fightin', gettin' dhrunk, makin' love, gettin' married, owin' th' grocery man an bein' without hard coal, I'll believe they was a Greece or Rome, but not before.[8]

In addition to preserving a glimpse of the everyday life of this early Irish immigrant neighborhood in Chicago, Dunne's 1890s columns provide a valuable document of the real challenges faced by Bridgeport's Irish community. In these columns, Mr. Dooley holds forth on the immigrant experience and on the poverty during the 1890s depression, comparing the suffering of working class Bridgeport Irish to the suffering of mid-19th century Hunger era Irish and harshly criticizing treatment of the Pullman workers who went on strike in 1894. In an era when working class Irish were compared unfavorably to the more upwardly mobile "lace curtain" Irish, Dunne gave respectability and voice to the down-trodden "shanty Irish" by creating a bartender character from Bridgeport. As John Kelleher states, "the decade of the 1890s was virtually the last time when such a preserving endeavor was possible for Irish Americans from the great post-Famine immigration at midcentury."

Chapter 6, "The Work of Writing," explores the contemporary playwright Martin McDonagh; fiction by three Western women regionalist writers, Winnifred Eaton, Annie Batterman Lindsay, and Mary Hallock Foote; the prose of Elizabeth Bowen; and Eimear's McBride's *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing.*

In "Executing Justice: Law and Grace at Work in Martin McDonagh's *A Behanding in Spokane* and *Hangmen*," Charles Andrews explores serious themes in Martin McDonagh's black comedies. Andrews observes that the political importance of his work has been far less studied in his plays that are not set in Ireland. He considers the two most recent of McDonagh's plays, both interesting for the turn McDonagh makes to locations outside of Ireland and also for their shared focus on killing as a form of legal justice. Though the kind of labor presented in these plays may seem a far cry from that supported by the I.W.W., McDonagh's exploration of the ethics of state-sanctioned killing in *Hangmen*—

[8] Dunne, *Observations by Mr. Dooley*, 1902.

presented in the play as a respectable business—engages with the intersections of work, violence, and vengeance. At the core of this work is one of McDonagh's abiding concerns—grace.

Donna M. Campbell, in “Performing Irishness in Western Women’s Regionalism: Winnifred Eaton (Onoto Watanna), Annie Batterman Lindsay, and Mary Hallock Foote,” investigates the performance of “Irishness” in fiction by three Western women regionalist writers. In the early years of the twentieth-century, the half-Chinese American/Canadian writer Winnifred Eaton (1875-1954) posed as a Japanese woman. Unlike her better-known sister Edith Maud Eaton (Sui Sin Far), whose Chinatown stories revealed American racism, Winnifred Eaton, under the pen name Onoto Watanna, wrote a series of popular Japanese-themed romances as well as stories told through the persona of an Irish servant. As Gretchen Murphy has shown, Watanna’s depiction of Irish characters, sometimes acting as exemplars to their Japanese hosts and sometimes as simply bad examples, constitute a guidebook to U. S. masculinity and citizenship in her Japanese novels. Author (Annie) Batterman Lindsay (1854-1926), though virtually unknown today, was a popular and prolific Western writer as well as an editor of the Western magazine *Land of Sunshine.* Although her sole volume of collected stories, *Derelicts of Destiny* (1899), focuses on Pacific Northwest tribal cultures, her writing was celebrated in her own day as "the best Irish dialect ever written by an American."[9] A native Californian from a military family, Lindsay’s shape-shifting performance of ethnic identities, like Eaton’s, makes crucial use of popular understandings of the Irish as key cultural agents in the multicultural settlement of the west. Mary Hallock Foote triangulates Irishness with Americanness and Native culture in her 1894 story “The Trumpeter.”

Considering these writers in the context of their Irish stories and characters highlights the sense of performance that is integral to the versatility of personae that they adopted, which in turn matches their relationship to region. Campbell argues that performing Irishness, an ethnicity both exotic and yet well understood in the early twentieth century, served as a bridge to additional ethnic performance and as a deflection and a departure from the “authenticity” often associated with—but a constraint upon—women’s regionalism.

In “Paying the Bills: Examining the Economic and Feministic Intersectional Space in the Later Works of Elizabeth Bowen,” Heather Corbally Bryant describes how, after the sudden death of Irish fiction writer Elizabeth Bowen’s husband, Alan Cameron, in the summer of 1952,

[9] Gretchen Murphy, “How the Irish Became Japanese,” 29-56.

Bowen faced the perennial and arduous task of any writer: paying the bills. For her, as a woman living in that time, the burden became enormous as she attempted to keep herself as well as her familial estate going. Bryant offers a deep re-reading of some of Bowen's later works such as journal articles for *Good Housekeeping*, the *Ladies Home Journal*, and *Vogue*. Scholars have often either discounted or been puzzled at Bowen's work for these "female" magazines. Some, in fact, have scorned or downplayed the idea of such a nationally and internationally recognized writer of literary fiction actually placing articles in such popular magazines. The truth was, that, at least for a while, these articles paid the bills. Bryant examines how feminist and economic intersections made for unlikely companions in the later work of Bowen. She also explores how the very existence of these texts had a deleterious effect on early estimations of her reputation.

Nolan Goetzinger's "*A Girl Is a Half-Formed Thing* Theory" examines Eimear McBride's *A Girl Is a Half-Formed Thing* (2014) in light of Bill Brown's "Thing Theory." Upon its publication, McBride's use of stream of consciousness and fragmentation drew immediate comparisons to James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, and the legacy of modernism. However, the impulse to situate McBride in a predominantly male tradition risks overlooking the specific ways that McBride uses modernist forms to interrogate issues that are explicitly gendered. In particular, McBride critiques Irish ideals about the role of women and the Catholic Church's influence on Irish views of female bodies and sexuality.

After examining the historical context of these ideals with an emphasis on the debates of the novel's setting in the 1980s and 1990s, Goetzinger argues that the form of the novel, with its insistent materiality, becomes a pointed rebuke to the objectification and/or denial of women's bodies in Irish culture. McBride's way to "make it new" is to make her writing visceral and violent in both form and content. The novel suspends the reader between the narrator's use of "I" and "you" and pummels them with halting syntax. In this way, the language itself becomes material by challenging the relation between subject and object, reader and text. Through Bill Brown's "Thing Theory," Goetzinger shows how McBride turns this materiality against the reader and forces them to constantly rethink both the form and content of the novel due to the narrator's "half-formed thing[ness]" and the narrative's instability. Through the ambiguity of the word "thing," McBride turns the objectification of female bodies into a mode of critique and agency. *Girl* challenges habitual modes of thinking about the objectification of women in Ireland as well as the relationship between the reader and the text. In reasserting the unexplored

potential of the thing, McBride finds that, in the liminal moment before thought becomes speech, alternative formations of gender, sexuality, and culture remain possible.

Finally, Camille Harrigan explores women's writing as an opportunity to grasp what they think of the state of Ireland and more precisely the fate of its female population. Writers, from Maria Edgeworth to Edna O'Brien, as well as a more recent cohort of authors, have used the novel as a forum to do this precisely. In her early novels, Emma Donoghue explored the possibilities of reconciling Irishness with queerness. Anne Enright has shed an unwavering light on the state of her country since the fall of the Celtic Tiger. Belinda McKeon, Sara Baume and Lisa McInerney as well as others have also brilliantly investigated contemporary Irish realities. In *Only Ever Yours*, which won the Newcomer of the Year prize at the 2014 Irish Book Awards, the Bookseller's inaugural YA Book Prize and the Children's Books Ireland Eilís Dillon Award, and *Asking for It*, winner of the Children's Book of the Year at the Irish Book Awards 2015, new young adult author Louise O'Neill sheds an unwavering light on what awaits millennials.

Chapter 7, "The Work of Cooking and Consumption," opens with Michael Robinson's "Tensions of Hospitality and Liminality in James Joyce's 'Clay.'" Robinson observes that Joyce regularly walks a liminal line between rationality (objectivity) and emotionality (attitude) and cannot truly define his relationship with Ireland from any one point along that line. This ambivalence shapes his characterization, to varying degrees, of all the Dubliners populating *Dubliners*: trapped in a paralytic loop, continuously betwixt and between. This liminality fixes Ireland on a threshold between a misty past of self-determination and a future that cannot be seen for the ghosts of its past. Joyce witnessed the 1907 Irish strain to find steps forward towards home rule while simultaneously staring back at the myth-filled Irish Revival, which Joyce regarded as illusory.

Robinson examines the liminal hospitality within Joyce's "Clay," one of the shortest of the stories in *Dubliners*. Attempts at hospitality fail, as in the case of Maria's missing cake which she intended to gift to her host and hostess in thanks for their invitation into their home and family. As in "The Dead," there is a liminal threshold between where Maria begins and where she ends up—much subtler than that which Gabriel crosses from the home of his aunts to his hotel room and the sojourn of his soul into the universe. Maria's liminal threshold divides the precision of her tea at Dublin by Lamplight, a Protestant laundry—likely the Protestant-run Magdalene laundry that existed at 35 Ballsbridge Terrance in the 1911

census of Dublin—from the imprecision of her singing of "I dreamt that I dwelt" where she repeats a verse. In "The Dead," it is Gabriel who has an epiphany, but in "Clay," it is less clear—as clear as clay, perhaps—whether Maria or Joe comes to one. In the end, Joe is in tears, the past, brought on by Maria's song, haunting his present, and the need of his wife to find the corkscrew for him. All of Maria's bustling leading to "eloquent inactivity" and the unwanted/wanted guests of nostalgia.

Donna L. Potts, in "Sacramental Subversion in Joyce's *Dubliners* and Alexie's *Smoke Signals*," considers the parallels in Joyce's and Alexie's use of the sacrament of communion. Both *Dubliners* and *Smoke Signals* rely on motifs that serve to rectify the historical imbalance created by similar patterns of colonization and oppression. The historic parallels between the colonization of Native Americans and that of the Irish are strong: the conquest of Ireland closely predated that of North America. As the proper legal and moral pretext for conquest of both peoples, the English needed to demonstrate that they were fundamentally unsuited to rule themselves. For two writers raised in the Catholic tradition, sacramental subversion is one means by which the spiritual authority of the Catholic Church, and more broadly, the imperial power that initially granted the Church that authority, may be contested and reclaimed.

Chapter 8, "The Work of Irish Studies," was moderated and introduced by Caleb Richardson, and featured Brian McCabe (Claremont Graduate University) and Kathy Heininge (George Fox); Matt Horton (Berkeley); James P. Walsh (San Jose State University); and Camille Harrigan (Concordia University). Matt Horton explains the appeal of Critical Whiteness Studies, noting that he was "particularly drawn toward the field's debates over social movement practice and theories of social change between white anti-racists, who seek to develop alternative 'anti-racist' ways of being white," and New Abolitionists who, following James Baldwin (1984), argued that whiteness is "nothing but oppressive and false"[10] and should be "abolished." Furthermore, as an Irish Diasporan, he was also fascinated by its discussions of the particular Irish roles in the modern construction of whiteness. The historical process by which, as New Abolitionist Noel Ignatiev put it, "the Catholic Irish, an oppressed race in Ireland, became part of an oppressing race in America,"[11] or Canada, Australia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and even in Britain, is

[10] Roediger, 13.
[11] Ignatiev , 1.

some of the most important and controversial evidence demonstrating that race is a modern social construction.[12]

Chapter 9, “Looking for Work: Colm Tóibín’s *Brooklyn*,” consisted of a panel of undergraduate students, Alexander Hester, Madison Jackson, and Sara Quenzer, from Washington State University, who had earlier been assigned essays in “Introduction to English Studies.” They were asked to contrast Tóibín’s novel with its film adaptation. Their essays involved contrasting depictions of work in the film and the novel, as well as in the settings of Ireland and the United States.

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[12] See P.H. Collins, *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism, and Feminism*, 2006; Mills, 1997; Omi & Winant, 1986; Sakai, 1983.

Figure 1: Davenport Hotel, Spokane, Maypole at the Hall of the Doges, 1915. May Day, associated with May Pole celebrations, would gradually acquire a new meaning, as Labor Organizations chose it to commemorate the Haymarket affair, which occurred in Chicago on 4 May 1886.

Chapter One

Poems

Moya Cannon

One of the most foolish questions…

I ever asked was of a young
historian in Florida.
I asked her that Irish question,
used to keep conversation flowing,
if she knew where her family
had come from originally.

She paused and said, It is difficult —
You can tell a certain amount from
auction sales records and cargo lists.

But one family, she said, had a song,
which they had managed
to track back
to a village in Senegal.

The Boy who Swapped a Bog for a Gramophone

for Edie O Gara

The boy, a musician already at fourteen,
walked four miles with his brother
along the Glen Road
to the fair in Carrick.

When they had seen enough
of sheep and huxter stalls,
they noticed a gramophone
and gathered up courage
to ask the shopkeeper
to play a record.

They hung about so long,
listening and wondering
that the shopkeeper, who knew
the mountainy townland
they came from - Mín na bhFachrán,
named for healing bogbine,
known for music -
proposed a barter,
the gramophone for turbary rights.

The boys walked home,
taking turns to carry the gramophone
and three records.
We don't now how many cartloads of turf
the shopkeeper took out of the bog
or for how many summers

or what the boy's father,
a fiddler in a valley of fiddlers, said
or who got the better part of the bargain,
only that they had dry turf in Carrick that winter
and that a new music was played
all along the valley.

Donegal Tarantella

for Ronan Galvin

Tunes wash up, ocean-polished pebbles,
in the kitchens of south Donegal -
mazurkas, Germans, highlands, hornpipes, jigs, reels,
all gone native since they were washed in
by waves of returning emigrants,
Napoleonic garrisons,
travelling pipers or fiddling tinsmiths.

And in one fiddling family
a tarantella was passed down
from a time before the famine,
before there was a fiddle in any house,
when shelter was afforded to a sailor,
rescued from the wreck of the Grassen -
out of Bergen, bound for Naples -
who, one night at a house dance,
joined in the lilting,
with a tune from his native Italy,
to please a girl or
to keep the dancers going
on a floor of beaten clay,
a new tune, a gift,
a ringing coin,
tossed into the trove
of northern music.

Bread

The suitcase is only half-unpacked
the washing not done,
the floor not swept,
but the oven is humming,
a sticky bowl and spoon
are in the sink
and the old alchemy of water,
flour and leaven has begun.

Soon the high crusts will gild,
three loaves will be tapped
from their tins,
an aroma will flow
through keyholes;
will slip over chipped saddleboards,

proclaiming more eloquently
than a thrush delivering
its blue and gold aria
from the top of a telegraph pole,
than a procession
with lifted banners
and trumpets,
than a dog panting wagging circles
around a kitchen,
Home, home, home, home, home.

Another Great Man Down

*(*Zane Grey in the Davenport Hotel, Spokane, Washington)

Wyoming, The Shepherd of Guadeloupe, Under the Tonto Rim,
my big brothers' outgrown cowboy books.
I wore out the romantic sections, fell in love
with all those courageous rough diamonds,
riding up atop the mesa, or down deep canyons,
rounding up ornery steers for honest ranchers,
cooking beans and sourdough pancakes out on the range,
arriving home to their bunkhouses in need of shut-eye,
yet ever ready to leap up to quench fires in flaming barns,
or rescue hosses or steers from doggone rustlers.
Respectful, even shy with women,
they always got the purty gal in the end.

As swirling desert dust, tumbleweed and jingling spurs
cancelled out slanting rain, gaberdine coats and October Devotions,
I never expected, fifty years later, to cross paths with Zane Grey.
He was here too, in the nineteen twenties grandeur of the Davenport.
After a luncheon with the Chamber of Commerce
he wrote about the honest ranchers who met here
to craft a plan to break a strike of seasonal workers,
of Wobblies, riff-raff, trouble-makers, itinerant harvest workers,
arriving from the east on trains, among them maybe even
some of my own distant kin, hoping for work,
a living wage, on the round-hilled wheat fields of Washington.

And I took you for one of the good guys, Zane Grey!