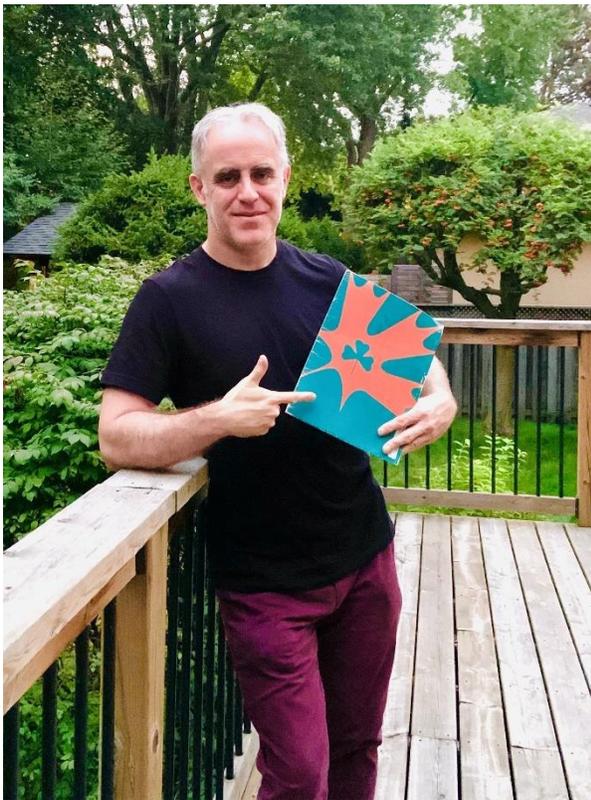




FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dear CAIS members,

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude at having received the opportunity to become president of our association. For those of you who do not know me, I am an associate professor in the Department of History at York University. I first came to Canada from Dublin in 1996 to pursue a PhD at the University of Toronto, and my first attendance and participation at a CAIS

conference was twenty years ago in Quebec City. In the accompanying picture, I am holding up a conference folder that I received at the time happily preserved after all these years. In the following year of 2002, I was part of a committee that organized the annual conference at the University of Toronto Mississauga, spearheaded by our much-missed former president, Prof. Cecil Houston. Over the years, my work has been focused largely on historical comparisons of the Irish communities in Buffalo and Toronto. I am presently editing a volume of essays on Canada and the Great Irish Famine and am working on a book on Toronto's Irish between the 1840s and 1870s that examines everyday life and street culture among the Irish working-class poor.

As you all know, I have big shoes to fill. It is a pleasure to acknowledge and thank Prof. Jane McGaughey for her six years of dedicated and committed service as president, not least during the unusual last nineteen months (and counting) that have affected us all. I have worked with Jane as a member of the executive for much of her time as president, I have admired her consistently positive approach, and I am very glad that she will remain a part of the executive in her capacity as past president. I am pleased to welcome Aileen Ruane as treasurer and secretary and Michele Holmgren as the incoming editor of the Canadian Journal of Irish Studies. I am also delighted to announce Paul Murphy and Robert Grace as new members of the executive. Last but not least on the executive front, I'm grateful for the continued presence of Patrick Mannion and Pamela McKane and to Michael Quigley for continuing his editorship of our newsletter. I look forward to

working with the new executive as well as with you, our members.

I'd also like to thank Prof. Jerry White for all his work in organizing this year's virtual annual conference. As you will know if you were able to tune in to our AGM, the executive and I are faced with the task of finding a venue for next year's annual conference, assuming that Covid-related restrictions will be a part of our collective past by then. We look forward to discussing arrangements with prospective partners that will lead us to a successful in-person gathering in 2022, and if any of you would like to be in touch on this issue, please contact me wjenkins@yorku.ca. Besides this, we will examine other ways in which we can direct our energies to promote Irish Studies in Canada and to bring these activities to your attention.

In the meantime, I wish you all healthy lives and many pleasurable fall days.

Aileen Ruane Secretary-Treasurer

Hello CAIS! I'm honoured to serve as your new Secretary/Treasurer. I've been a member of CAIS since 2015, thanks to my doctoral thesis director, Professor Brad Kent, so I have a good sense of how everything functions, but I know there's room to learn more, so please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or suggestions that you might have! It is important to me that all monetary transactions for CAIS are logical and transparent for the membership, so I will do my best to make sure that our information is organised and up-to-date.

In terms of my research, it looks at Irish and Québécois/French literatures, including those in translation, through a comparative approach. My current postdoctoral project, undertaken in the Département d'études



Photo: Etienne Richard

françaises at Concordia University, applies a feminist ethics and politics of translation to plays written by Irishwomen that were translated in Quebec.

I hope before long we'll all be able to catch up in person over a few good tunes and a few great pints.

New Executive Members

Robert J Grace writes:

I am pleased to join the executive as a member-at-large following the invitation to do so from our new president, William Jenkins. Based at Université Laval from which institution I

obtained my PhD in History in 1999, I am looking forward to helping the association in any way I can. My research interests



include the history of the Irish who settled in the province of Quebec and particularly those who chose to live and work in the city of Quebec. I have done research in historical demography on the Irish populations of the city as well as work at the Grosse Isle quarantine island when Parks Canada created the Irish Memorial. As a semi-retired sessional instructor (*chargé de cours*), I sometimes teach courses on methodology when the History Department is short of professors.



Paul G. Murphy

A fifth-generation Western-Canadian, his research at the Université Laval mutated in unexpected ways due to his engagement with Irish Heritage Quebec. From 2010–2020 he focused on municipalities’ crucial role in

navigating divergences between Alberta and Québec’s grassroots energy policy advocacy before becoming engrossed with the Irish Memorial Park in Goose Village. The public attention given to Canadian Smart City policy after the pull-out of Google’s Sidewalk Labs in Toronto unleashed conversations connecting issues from civic education to a post-carbon society. Based on principals of Radical Open Access, the goal of a Global Copyright Library at North America’s most

ambitious Famine Memorial is built upon Trinity College Dublin’s legacy. Since 1801, their library served as a legal deposit or copyright library of the British Libraries, which means publishers must deposit a copy of their publications in the library free of charge. In 2022, he is invited for a Garwood Innovation Fellowship at UC Berkeley with the Smart Village Movement. As part of Mr. Murphy’s out of bounds education to reimagine a post-carbon age, he also enjoys exploring crypts for “Social Representation of Dinosaurs in Canada,” which include Lig-na-Paiste.

MEMBERSHIPS

As always, your membership elapsed on July 1. If you have not yet renewed, please do so, either on the CAIS website (www.canadianirishstudies.org) or through the membership form at the back of the newsletter. Once again, I urge people to opt for the three-year membership, as it is a very convenient way of joining and then not having to worry about nagging reminders for the next 36 months. Membership for each year includes two issues of the *CJIS/RCÉI*, as well as bi-annual newsletters and electronic updates about forthcoming publications, book launches, conferences, and Irish-themed events around the country.

Also, please recommend CAIS to friends, family, and **anyone** you know who has an interest in Irish-related research. While our social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter are very popular (thank you, Pamela McKane!!!), word of mouth recommendations are invaluable for increasing our membership, which facilitates the running of our annual conference and publication of the *CJIS/RCÉI*. We strongly welcome students and interested members of the public to join us, as well as musicians, actors, novelists, poets, dancers, athletes, academics, and anyone else I might have forgotten to mention here. **We need your support**, so please renew and recommend.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S
COLLEGE PRESENTS
**CANADA & THE IRISH
REVOLUTION, 1919-21**
CELTIC STUDIES CONFERENCE
BY ZOOM
Saturday, October 23, 2021

9:20 Mark McGowan Opening remarks
9:30 Darragh Gannon "Rewriting Ireland
across the Globe: Robert Lindsay Crawford,
Canada, and the Irish Revolution"
10.15 Break
10:30 Pádraig Ó Siadhail "From a Canadian
Imperialist to Irish — a proper Irish person":
Katherine Hughes and the Irish Revolution"
11:15 BREAK
11:30 Shane Lynn "The Adventures of
Osmond Esmonde, Sinn Féin envoy: 1920-
21"
12:15-1:30 LUNCH
1:30 Mark McGowan "Double Duty: The
Canadian and Irish Worlds of J.J. O'Gorman"
2:15 BREAK
2.30 Jane McGaughey "A War With Words:
Harry Trihey, The Montreal Gazette, and the
Irish Revolution"
3:15 David Wilson Closing remarks
ZOOM AND CONTACT DETAILS: Jean
Talman jean.talman@utoronto.ca



Canadian Journal of Irish Studies

New Perspectives on Brian Moore Special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* - Call For Papers

2021 is the centenary year of the Belfast-born writer, Brian Moore (1921-1999). Acknowledging that Moore's work has faded somewhat from scholarly view, this special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, slated for publication in late 2022 or early 2023, seeks to critically (re)appraise Moore's work. The guest editors are particularly interested in receiving submissions that focus on the following topics:

- Moore's underexplored works such as his pulp novels, short stories and screenplays.
- Moore adapting / adapting Moore for stage and screen.
- Moore and his Montreal contemporaries such as Mordecai Richler, Mavis Gallant, William Weintraub.
- essays that explore Moore's work using recent and emerging methodologies and critical paradigms, including but not limited to: migration and diaspora studies; periodical studies; genetic criticism; the politics of prize-giving and the literary marketplace.

-essays situating Moore's work in relation to important historical contexts, including but not limited to: World War II; the Northern Irish "Troubles"; Second Wave Feminism; Vatican II and other shifts within the Catholic Church; the Cold War.

-essays using archival research at the U of Calgary and/or the U of Texas (Austin) to shed new light on Moore's work.

Given the timeliness of the special issue, we are seeking abstracts (400 words) for proposed essays by the end of **Wednesday, 15 December 2021**. Full essays (7000-8000 words) will be due by the end of **31 March 2022**.

Please send abstracts and any queries to the guest editors: Alison Garden (A.Garden@qub.ac.uk), Gerald Lynch (glynch@uOttawa.ca) and Sinéad Moynihan (S.Moynihan@exeter.ac.uk).

Further information about the British Academy/Leverhulme Trust-funded project, Brian Moore at 100, is available [here](#).

[Kudos to Editor Michele Holmgren on the publication of her book, Canada to Ireland, p. 21 below. Ed.]

CONFERENCE REPORT

The 2021 CAIS conference unspooled in a virtual way, over the Zoom platform that we have all come to know so well these past 18 months (and which was provided to us by the Canadian Comparative Literature Association). Technical problems were mercifully minimal, and the turnout was solid throughout. It wasn't an optimal situation,

that's for sure, but overall it seemed to go quite well.

We opened with the annual Marianna O'Gallagher Memorial Lecture, this time given as a joint session with Mark McGowan of St. Michael's College / University of Toronto and Jason King of the Irish Historical Trust (and with the help of the Irish government's Emigrant Support Programme). The topic was one close to Marianna's work, "Strokestown Famine Orphans in Quebec," and the presentation was built around a series of videos of McGowan walking the National Famine Way (I certainly remember Marianna as a great walker!).

That first night (or perhaps the next morning..... or the morning the previous day.....)

featured our keynote address from Sonja Tiernan, the Eamon Cleary Chair of Irish Studies at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand. She provided a wide-ranging introduction to the state of Irish Studies in



Aotearoa, partly by way of introducing the booklet she wrote, *Irish in Aotearoa: Mapping the Irish Community and People of Irish Heritage in New Zealand*, which is strikingly marked by a Māori translation of the 1916 proclamation on its inside front cover (and is available here: bit.ly/Irish-in-Aotearoa). Prof. Tiernan also organised a panel of papers from Otago dealing with different aspects of the Irish experience there, which unspooled the next day (or the previous morning, or something.....).

The next morning opened with a roundtable discussion about translating the work of the great Máirtín Ó Cadhain, an event co-sponsored by our friends in the School of Irish, Celtic Studies and

Folklore at UCD. This featured Alan Titley (retired from UCC) whose translation of *Cré na Cille, The Dirty Dust*, attracted such wide attention in 2015, as well as the team who translated the forthcoming English-language version of Ó Cadhain's short stories: Louis de Paor (NUI/Galway), Lochlainn Ó Tuairisc (an editor at the venerable Irish-language publisher Cló Iar-Chonnacht) and Katherine Duffy. Cló Iar-Chonnacht was good enough to share with us a special advance copy of the new translation of one of Ó Cadhain's most famous short stories, "The Year 1912," so we all came prepared.

The next day was anchored by a special session on Canadian contributions to the peace process in Northern Ireland. This was organised by Bridget Brownlow of Saint Mary's University, and was connected to her many years of leading Saint Mary's students to the north for an intense programme focussed on the region's schools. This session featured two key players in the peace process, Ambassador Ray Bassett (a former Ambassador to Canada as well as former Joint Secretary to the British–Irish Intergovernmental Conference) and General John de Chastelain (former chairman of the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning as well as a former Chief of Defense Staff of Canada).

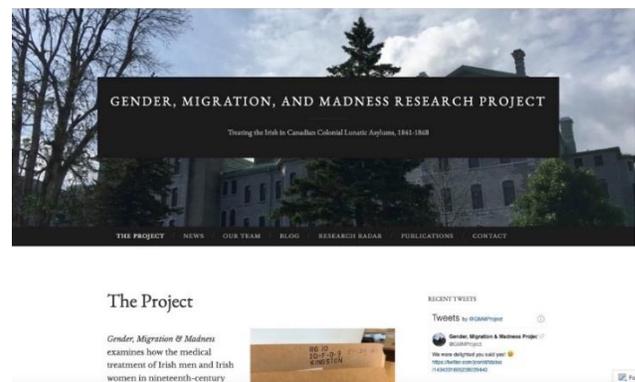
In between these special sessions we had a wide variety of academic paper presentations, the diversity of which was a tribute to the range of our members. I hesitate to provide a summary of this part of the conference because of the multiplicity on display here, so will just say that topics ranged from Canada to the US to Quebec to South Africa to Cuba, with many parts in-between.

Everyone knows that the situation of 2020 and 2021 has been sub-optimal for

organisations like ours, which depend so much on the fellowship that flows from an annual conference. Zoom kept us connected in the short term, but I know we are all looking forward to doing this properly in the, God willing, not too distant future. First round will be on me.

Jerry White, University of Saskatchewan

NEW RESEARCH WEBSITE



We are very excited to announce the launch of our website: The Gender, Migration, and Madness Research Project – Treating the Irish in Canadian Colonial Lunatic Asylums, 1841-1868. You can visit us at www.gendermigrationandmadness.ca.

The GMM Project examines how the medical treatment of the Irish in mid-nineteenth century Canadian lunatic asylums was framed by considerations of gender, migration, ethnicity, sexuality, and colonial presumptions about mental illness. The project was supported in part by an Insight Development Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

While the confined Irish in the UK, Australia, and New Zealand have received in-depth attention from many notable scholars, including Catharine Coleborne, Elizabeth Malcolm, Hilary Marland,

and Angela McCarthy, there has been a significant lack of Canadian focus on Irish asylum admissions in the era of the Great Famine.

Our project's main focus so far has been on three institutional case studies: the Beauport Lunatic Asylum outside of Québec, the Provincial Lunatic Asylum in Toronto, and the Rockwood Lunatic Asylum for the Criminally Insane in Kingston. We hope to explore many themes, including a) what significance the Great Irish Famine had on rates on confinement in the Canadian asylum system and b) how stories of the Irish in Canadian colonial lunatic asylums compare with other parts of the Irish Diaspora.

We want to bring more attention to Canadian experiences that highlight the connections between colonial-era migration, gender, and 'madness.' By doing this, we hope to reveal new histories about what it meant to be Irish in pre-Confederation Canada.



Our research team is made up of Jane McGaughey, Johnson Chair of Québec and Canadian Irish Studies at Concordia University, and graduate students

Gabrielle Machnik-Kekesi, Giselle Gonzalez-Garcia, and Sadie Gilker.

Each week, we feature a new blog from a member of the research team about different aspects of the project thus far. Our 'Research Radar' section provides quick reflections on academic life from established scholars, early career researchers, friends of the project, and graduate students, many of whom are CAIS

members. Along with the website, you can follow the project on Twitter (@GMMProject) and Instagram (@gendermigrationmadness).



Concordia School of Irish Studies Courses 2021-22

FALL 2021

Introduction to Irish Studies
Highlights of Irish Literature
History of Ireland
Irish Traditional Music: A Global
Soundscape
Irish Mythology and Folklore
Sexualities in the Irish Diaspora
The Troubles of Northern Ireland
Contemporary Irish Literature
Irish Film Studies

FALL/WINTER 2021/22

Introduction to Spoken Irish

WINTER 2022

The Irish in Canada
'What's that tune?' Irish Traditional Music
Appreciation
Research Methods in Irish Studies
The Global Irish
The Great Irish Famine
Irish Critical Materialities: Critical
Perspective on Spaces, Places, and
Things
Ireland in the Atlantic World
Indigenous Language and National
Literature in Ireland
The Irish Troubles in Film & TV
Irish Songs of Exile in North America

New, innovative courses

Among the stimulating courses for the 2021-22 academic year are three by young scholars, recent PhD graduates Drs. Kate Bevan-Baker and Patrick Brodie, and another by current PhD student Molly-Claire Gillett. (Both Molly-Claire and Kate are past winners of graduate awards at the CAIS conference.)



Irish Film Studies / IRST 398 D / FMST 398 B (3 credits) Fall 2021

Patrick Brodie / Friday 13:15-17:15

This course takes an Irish filmic stereotype as its start and end point, while the weeks in-between delve into nuances of Irish history, politics, sexuality and culture. Through analysis of a set feature film each week, we will explore how film consistently tackles the thornier dimensions of Irish life. The course examines the oeuvres of key Irish directors, including Neil Jordan, Pat Murphy and Jim Sheridan. Engaging with – among other themes – Ireland’s treatment of its Travelling Community, the Northern Irish ‘Troubles,’ and Dublin’s gangland culture, it offers students images of Ireland both picturesque and gritty, both mythologized and human.

Dr. Patrick Brodie obtained his PhD in film studies at Concordia University focusing on media infrastructure in the Republic of Ireland since the 2007-2008 global financial crisis.



What’s that Tune? A Music Appreciation Course in Irish Traditional Music / IRST 298 A (3 credits) Winter 2022

Kate Bevan Baker / Tuesday, Thursday 14:45-16:00

Irish traditional music is a defining feature of Irish culture and is appreciated by audiences across the globe. This music appreciation course is dedicated to understanding Irish traditional music performance and performance practices. Throughout the course, students will develop music appreciation skills by examining the repertoire, instruments, playing techniques, and performance practices of this complex genre, which is both ancient and contemporary. Interactive learning and teaching will be emphasized through in-class demonstrations and guest performances. Students will acquire an understanding of Irish traditional repertoire by identifying various tune types and by comparing different versions of the same tune/song. Three critical domains of Irish traditional music will be

explored—ethnomusicological, spatial and compositional. The course will emphasize academic and performance aspects of Irish traditional music by critiquing performance contexts and cross-fertilization among performers, teachers, composers, and listeners. Moving beyond the music itself, the course will also explore perspectives such as revival, innovation, and globalization in Irish traditional music, song and dance. No prior knowledge of music is necessary to take this course.

Dr. Kate Bevan Baker is also a professional violinist, a member of the trio Bùmarang, who performs at many St. Patrick's Society charitable events, Montreal Irish community events and nationally and internationally.

The Irish Troubles in Film & TV / IRST 398 I / HIST 398 E (3 credits) Winter 2022

Patrick Brodie / Friday 13:15-17:15
This course will introduce students to the complex film and media landscape associated with the Northern Ireland conflict. Rather than using media representations to “tell the story” of the conflict, the course will invite students to understand how the conflict and the media interacted in more dynamic ways. Many argue that it was the international news media coverage of the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre in Derry, where 14 civil rights protestors were killed by the British military at a peaceful protest, that put global eyes on the country and initiated what would be a long and extensively covered peace process. The conflict thus became a global event, although the experience of the conflict was often far from eventful – people lived their lives, albeit under the fearful and restrictive parameters of an ongoing, normalized conflict. This course will analyze the contrasts and textures of the conflict by showing and discussing diverse film and media texts, including looking at how news media and documentaries have presented the many sides of the struggle, analyzing Hollywood representations of nationalist and

loyalist communities during the conflict, learning the role of political solidarity through film and media, interrogating the conflict through artists’ and experimental films, and finally questioning the recent increased media focus on the Northern Ireland conflict (and its aftermath) due to its implications for Brexit.



Irish Materialities: critical perspectives on spaces, places, and things / IRST 398 H / DART 398 B / GEOG 398 A (3 credits) Winter 2022

Molly-Claire Gillett / Tuesday, Thursday 16:15-17:30

This introductory interdisciplinary course will examine a series of Irish ‘things’ – objects or spaces including craftwork and other designs, geographical regions or elements of the built environment, for example urban spaces. It will focus on one particular thing each week – for example, an illustrated manuscript; an uncompleted housing project or ‘ghost estate’ which became prevalent during the Irish recession of the late 2000s; a bog (wetland) as a cultural as well as natural ecosystem; and a piece of lace, tracked from its maker in rural Ireland to the body of Queen Victoria. Rather than using these spaces, places and things simply to illustrate the history of Ireland, this

course will explore how they played (and play) an active role in framing and determining that narrative. Weaving together scholarship from materiality studies and cultural geography, craft studies, design theory, ecocriticism and more, it will consider each thing within its historical and cultural context, but also in the sense of its 'vibrant materiality' – its origin, materials, life cycle, and agency. These case studies will present an opportunity to look closely at issues such as vernacular architecture and sustainability, design as a political instrument, materiality and memory in the diaspora, and the use of material interventions into 'Irishness' to forge a more inclusive plurality of Irish identities. Students will be encouraged to draw on their own disciplinary backgrounds, both for in-class discussions and for their final assignment. The latter will focus on one Irish 'thing' of their choice and may be submitted either as an essay or as a research-creation work.

Molly-Claire Gillett is currently enrolled in an Interdisciplinary PhD in Art History, Design, and Art Education at Concordia University, focusing on lace making and design in Ireland during the late-19th and early 20th centuries. (photo: Shaney Herrmann)



OBITUARY

The Executive of CAIS / ACEI is deeply saddened to learn of the death earlier this summer of John Talman, the spouse for 50 years of our indispensable Communications Officer Jean Talman of St. Michael's College, Toronto. We extend our condolences and sympathy to Jean. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.



John Henry Talman

(March 22, 1938 – August 13, 2021)
John died peacefully at the E. W. Bickle Complex Care Centre in Toronto on Friday, August 13, 2021. He had been in declining health for several months.

After working at CN Railway and Falconbridge Nickel Mines, in 1973 John went into business as a professional philatelist, selling stamps through retail and auctions to customers around the world. He was still filling orders for customers almost to the end. He was a longtime member of the Rotary Club of Toronto and the Fraternal Order of Eagles. He will be sadly missed by his wife of 50 years, Jean, and daughter Andrea. Son William predeceased him in 2017. Also fondly remembered by nephews Robert and Gary Talman and their families. A private cremation has taken place and a celebration of his life will be planned at a later date.

I nDil cuimhne

SEAMUS DEANE 1940-2021

President Michael D Higgins has led the tributes to Seamus Deane, the leading Irish writer, critic and academic, who died last night, aged 81.

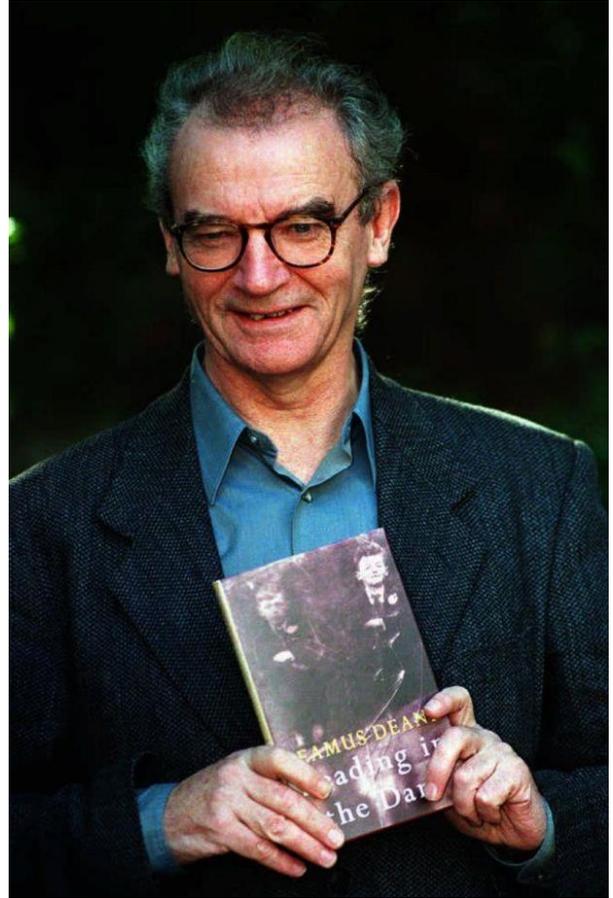
“The death of Seamus Deane is an incalculable loss to Irish critical writing, indeed Irish writing in general,” the President said, “as his passing represents not only the loss of a foremost critic but of a distinguished poet, novelist and internationally acclaimed university teacher.

“Seamus Deane’s contribution to critical and creative writing was delivered, not only at home in Ireland but in some of the most prestigious universities of the United States of America.

“To Derry he leaves the incomparable legacy of the life, the writing, the concerns, the despair and the hope, that he shared with its people and to which so much of the work would respond. Few cities have a writer more embedded in its people, its history, its challenges, its hopes and its humour.

“There are, to me, parallels between Seamus Deane’s relationship to Derry and, in his time, Sean O’Casey’s relationship to Dublin in the way the full experience of its peoples are placed at the centre of the writing. All of the living is allowed its place.

“Seamus Deane was, too, a leading part of the great burst of intellectual revival that led to the Crane Bag, the Field Day Anthology of Irish Literature and many other innovations, which will be recalled as examples of the collaboration he had with his scholarly neighbours, and others, in giving a valuable affirmative to the importance and energy of Irish writing. When reasonably criticised for



omission in a work he replied with the candour of a critic who had become himself the subject of a legitimate criticism. This was typical of the scholar in him.

“The price paid for a great talent, such as Seamus Deane had, was high and is revealed, I believe, in his work, including his fine novel, *Reading in the Dark*. That work too was delivered with a truth that combined the word, the place, the history, the lives, and the power of communal humour in the act of survival.

“All of this is put so well, for example, in his poem *Derry*, which opens with the lines:

The unemployment in our bones
Erupting on our hands in stones

The thought of violence a relief,
The act of violence a grief

Our bitterness and love
Hand in glove.

“Eternal peace be with our great writer and critic Seamus Deane. Sabina and I send our sympathies to his family, the people of Derry and his friends and former students at home and abroad. Siochán síoraí dá anam lách.”

John Banville

Seamus Deane was one of our finest critics, but we should not let his scholarly and critical work obscure his wonderful poetry, and his compelling novel, *Reading in the Dark*.

I knew him for many years and spent many an evening in his company. He had an incisive intelligence, was widely and deeply read, and splendidly opinionated. And he was fierce in argument: it was thrilling to engage in debate with him at the dinner table over a glass of wine – though I recall with a shudder a late night at Seamus and Marie Heaney’s house when, after dinner, the two Seamuses and I, having drunk everything else in the house, attacked as a last resort a bottle of Benedictine. . .

Seamus was marvellously funny, too. His humour had an edge of ferocity to it that made his jokes and witticism all the more pointed, and all the more funny. His extinguishing is a loss we can ill-afford, in these increasingly shadowed times.

Clair Wills

This afternoon I took down from my shelves my copy of Seamus Deane’s *Celtic Revivals*, his book of essays on Joyce, Yeats, Beckett, Montague, Heaney and Friel, among other twentieth century Irish writers. Published in 1985, as I was finishing my undergraduate degree and wondering what to do next, this was my first, formative, encounter with Seamus’s work. Concise, distilled, knotty,

trenchantly argued and continually surprising the essays look short on the page but they stay long in the mind. Very long in my own case.

He had a brilliant knack of zooming in to details of literary style in a way that would unlock a writer’s secrets – like giving his reader a key into a world of Irish history, politics, culture and learning.

But with *Celtic Revivals* and *An Introduction to Irish Literature*, published the following year in 1986, he sent a generation of young critics in Britain and the United States off to emulate him. When, in 1996 he published his superb novel *Reading in the Dark* – can anyone forget the simmering rage in that novel as the young protagonist tries to speak and cannot speak, uproots his father’s roses instead, or tells his story in Irish – we knew we would never catch him!

Later, when I met him, while working on the *Field Day Anthology Volumes 4 and 5*, I found all that sharpness and intelligence embodied. The debacle over the women missing from the first three volumes of the *Anthology* might have been anticipated by the list of male writers that were the subject of the essays in *Celtic Revivals*.

But Seamus was able to acknowledge his blind spots and spent 10 years supporting our work on the subsequent volumes. What I remember, and what I will miss, about Seamus is his literary genius, but also his kindness. He was unfailingly generous to a young scholar finding her way. And he was frequently very funny. He once told me a winning story of how, as a bookish child, much given to reading the encyclopedia, he had become fascinated by that place called ‘Circa’, where all sort of interesting things had happened. Born Circa 1500; Built Circa 1860. I think of him, ferociously hungry for knowledge; able to admit ignorance. Both qualities were key to his extra-ordinarily capacious intelligence.

Brendan O'Leary

Seamus Deane had a unique voice, one that could hold any audience, whether of one or a thousand. Of his famous contemporaries at St Columb's, Derry, Deane was the most eloquent. He spoke in mesmerizing whole paragraphs, punctuated by unexpected epigrams. He read deeply as well as widely across all genres of work in the humanities and philosophy. He celebrated great writers with whom he disagreed. His generous, too generous, treatment of Edmund Burke in *Foreign Affections* showed his critical talents at their finest.

He could eviscerate too, as in one famous filleting of a distinguished revisionist historian. Seamus picked up a careless sentence for a sustained, but witty execution. With his death, Ireland has lost one of its greatest scholars.

More than anyone else he put Irish Studies on the map in the United States, through his vigorous leadership at Notre Dame. He built a centre that was not literary, but rather a place where the social sciences, history and humanities could flourish in vibrant interaction. Like many others I benefitted from his editorial pen when he ran *Field Day Review* with Prof Breandán Mac Suibhne. I am but one of thousands whom he touched and improved through his work, and hundreds of thousands will continue to read him long after his departure. *Reading in the Dark* is where to start.

Brendan O'Leary is Lauder Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania

PJ Mathews

As an undergraduate, I remember Seamus as an intellectual powerhouse in the UCD English Department in the late 1980s. He was an astounding teacher who had the amazing ability to deliver the most carefully crafted



and sequenced lectures without recourse to a script or notes. In his lectures I often found myself compelled to put down my pen and listen, yet his brilliant insights lingered long afterwards.

His classes on topics such as Swift, Burke, literary modernism and modern Irish writing are still vivid in my mind. As a scholar he was groundbreaking in the manner in which he shifted Irish literary criticism away from a self-satisfied, parochial exceptionalism, focusing instead on the complex relations of Irish writing to British, wider European and other decolonial contexts.

In the dark days of the Troubles, in which academic exchange was often stressed and rancorous, he bravely pursued ways of thinking about the conflict in Northern Ireland in terms of rights and citizenship rather than tribal claims. To a generation of UCD students brought up in an atmosphere of evasion and fear over the Northern conflict, his critiques of the Southern Irish intelligentsia were eye-opening.

His engagement with influential academics such as Edward Said and Fred Jameson opened up new and exciting modes of intellectual possibility in Irish cultural debate. He believed in the power of culture to change the world but also understood with absolute clarity the important role that

critical discourse plays in the construction of cultural narratives. Deane was himself a very fine poet and acclaimed novelist as well as an academic of the highest calibre.

The great achievement of the Field Day movement, under his influence, was the mobilisation of art *and* criticism with equal seriousness, ambition and purpose to confront the crisis of the late twentieth century, and to remake Ireland as a centre of imagination and possibility.

Associate Professor PJ Mathews is Director of the UCD Creative Futures Academy.

Luke Gibbons

When the organisers of a major conference on the work of Edward Said asked the great Palestinian writer and critic which world intellectual should be invited to give the keynote, the answer was immediately forthcoming: ‘Seamus Deane.’

Those who were at the conference in Columbia University in 1996 will never forget the standing ovation, led by Said, to Deane’s extraordinary address on Conrad, empire and modernism, delivered *ex tempore* without notes.

Seamus Deane exemplified a new departure in Irish culture: while the Celt was never found wanting in literary imagination, criticism was left to others in the metropolitan centre. Deane was the first to put criticism in Ireland on a continuum with its creative energies, investing style itself with his own oxyacetylene intellect.

His voice, ‘like sound implicit in a bell,’ was no less present in his essays than his poetry and fiction, but like a bell, was also determined to wake people from their dogmatic slumbers. This, in conjunction with theatre as intervention, governed the Field Day project, though, with mordant humour, he wondered whether terming a publication

series *Critical Conditions* was tempting fate from the outset.

‘For the intelligentsia and the worker have this in common; neither has power,’ he wrote, and empowerment consists precisely by bringing them together. He was moved to discover that Simone Weil’s last notebook entries on, in effect, hunger striking, before her own untimely death, were derived from her reading of a novel, *The Flock of Birds*, by the Derry-born writer, Kathleen Coyle.

While many wrote about the gift economy, Seamus Deane practiced it, his intellectual generosity knowing no bounds, as if ideas were not truly formulated until shared. An Enlightenment figure without parallel in the Irish republic of letters, he embodied the belief, perhaps taken from Burke, that truth never comes to light unless leavened by justice – an idea that needed no introduction in the Northern Ireland of his upbringing.

His novel, *Reading in the Dark*, opens with a scene in which a shadow is thrown on the stairs between a boy and his mother. Seamus Deane’s friendship, teaching and writing can be seen as a life devoted to dispelling those shadows, though it will be difficult to lift the shadow thrown by his own passing and his impact on people’s lives.

Luke Gibbons taught as Professor of Irish Studies at Maynooth University and the University of Notre Dame.

Breandán Mac Suibhne

Gifted with wit as sharp as his intellect, Seamus was the best of company. At lunch, the conversation was of politics and literature, foreign and domestic, and it was of soccer and boxing, also foreign and domestic, and of the doings of his children in whom he took great pride. There were appalling puns and tall tales too, and vivid reminiscences.

Asked once how he rated Billy “Spider” Kelly, the great featherweight, he recalled a day in the

1950s, when a swarm of kids were released into the ring to try to lay a glove on him and he remembered with wonder, undimmed by decades, that so fast was Kelly that he kept them all at bay. Seamus boxed himself in his youth and, into old age, he had not forgiven Monkey McGee for not knocking him out. Monkey, the north-west's Sonny Liston in his opponent's telling, made him go the distance, remorselessly inflicting an unmerciful beating.

Then there was the dog that Philip McLaughlin told him to beg or borrow money to back to win—and he backed the dog and the dog won, only to immediately drop dead. The cause of death and victory being pharmacological, the race was void.

A question over lunch about a novelist, poet or playwright often summoned an analysis, dressed in a perfectly tailored suit of words, that one could have taped and published and wished one did: and there was never any jargon, no hiding behind fashionable phrases, nothing but beautiful language. He would ask friends questions about their own work that made them, in turn, ask different questions, and their work and their words would be infinitely better.

He was an exceptional editor. I once did a first edit of a fine essay by an incisive critic, greatly admired by Seamus, that included a sentence which was, to me, utterly incomprehensible. I scribbled, "Is this English?" on the printout that I marked up and left it on Seamus's desk. I found it on mine, with swirls of red edits, and three words: "It is now." And it was.

Seamus's parents were born before partition, that is, before people who cared nothing for this place decided that Burnfoot and the Brandywell should orbit different suns. He deplored the absurdity of partition and the

obscenities that it produced; he deplored what it has done and still does to us.

He leaves with unionism, entering its end times, slouching after a gay-converting creationist while comfortable partitionists in the South, who were no more comfortable with Seamus than he was with them, seek to resile from the promise of the Good Friday Agreement - that a simple majority in the North can take it out of the United Kingdom.

What would I not give to go for lunch with him one more time? It is my privilege to have known a lovely man - one of compassion, courage and conviction, one of great grace, in person and in print, who generously shared the wealth of his learning. And he was such great fun. *Merci, mon vieux.*

Breandán Mac Suibhne is a historian at the National University of Ireland, Galway, where he is director of Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge

The pun must continue

Keats and Chapman (in the old days) spent several months in the county Wicklow prospecting for ochre deposits. That was before the days of (your) modern devices for geological divination. With Keats and Chapman it was literally a question of smelling the stuff out. In a field of turnips near Avoca Keats suddenly got the pungent effluvium of a vast ochre mine and lay for hours face down in the muck delightedly permeating his nostrils with the perfume of hidden wealth. No less lucky was Chapman. He had nosed away in the direction of Newtonmountkennedy and came racing back shouting that he too had found a mine. He implored Keats to come and confirm his nasal diagnosis. Keats agreed. He accompanied Chapman to the site and lay down in the dirt to do his sniffing.

'Great mines stink alike,' he said.

[In the time that's in it, and with reference to the Books section below, the President's words continue to resonate. Ed]

Empire shaped Ireland's past. It still shapes our present.

An Uachtaráin Michael D Higgins
Guardian 11 Feb 2021

Ireland is currently engaged in a process of recalling the transformative events of a century ago that culminated in partition of the island. Six of the nine Ulster counties remained in the United Kingdom and the rest of the island opted for self-determination and what would become an independent republic.

As president of [Ireland](#), I have been engaging with our citizens in an exercise of ethical remembering of this period. This is not only to allow us to understand more fully the complexities of those times. It is also to allow us to recognise the reverberations of that past for our societies today and for our relationships with each other and our neighbours.

A feigned amnesia around the uncomfortable aspects of our shared history will not help us to forge a better future together. The complex events we recall and commemorate during this time are integral to the story that has shaped our nations, in all their diversity. They are, however, events to be remembered and understood, respecting the fact that different perspectives exist. In doing this, we can facilitate a more authentic interpretation not only of our shared history but also of post-sectarian possibilities for the future.

This journey of ethical remembering has allowed us to examine the nature of commemoration itself and how it might unburden us of history's capacity to create obstacles to a better, shared future. It has



entailed uncomfortable interrogations of the events and forces that shaped the Ireland of a century ago and the country we know today. **Class, gender, religion, democracy, language, culture and violence all played important roles, and all were intertwined with British imperialist rule in Ireland.**

It is vital to understand the nature of the British imperialist mindset of that time if we are to understand the history of coexisting support for, active resistance to, and, for most, a resigned acceptance of British rule in Ireland. While our nations have been utterly transformed over the past century, I suggest that there are important benefits for all on these islands of engaging with the shadows cast by our shared past.

In my work on commemoration, memory, forgetting and forgiving I have sought to establish a discourse characterised by what the Irish philosopher Richard Kearney calls “a hospitality of narratives”, acknowledging that different, informed perspectives on the same events can and do exist. The acceptance of this fact can release us from the pressure of finding, or subscribing to, a singular unifying narrative of the past.

In previous years I pursued this task by addressing issues neglected in the public discourse or in the historiography: Irish participants in the first world war, the struggle of trade unionists, and what was suffered, and achieved, by women activists in campaigning for the vote, and by those excluded on the basis of social class.

More recently, I have given the title [Machnamh 100](#) to a series of reflections which examine the period 1920-1923, including the war of independence, civil war and partition. “Machnamh” is an Irish word encompassing reflection, contemplation, meditation and thought. The next seminar, which I will host on 25 February, will examine the motivations and practices of imperialism and of resistance to it, how both reacted to changing local and global circumstances.

As I reflect on the topic, I am struck by a disinclination in both academic and journalistic accounts to critique empire and imperialism. Openness to, and engagement in, a critique of nationalism has seemed greater. And while it has been vital to our purposes in Ireland to examine nationalism, doing the same for imperialism is equally important and has a significance far beyond British/Irish relations.

It may be fruitful to consider the relationship of what has been titled – and not without dissent – the “European Enlightenment” within the project of imperial expansion for an understanding of how the mask of modernity has been used for cultural suppression, economic exploitation, dispossession and domination.

Such consideration also helps explain a reluctance in former imperial powers to engage now with their imperialist past and to examine that past with descendants of those previously colonised, many of whom still live with the complex legacies of that colonialism.

As I reflect on the instincts of those who have defended imperialism, I can see how the tool of an alleged “progressive modernity” could be so effective. **Those on the receiving end of imperialist adventurism were denied cultural agency, assumed to be incapable of it, and responsible for violence towards the “modernising” forces directed at them.**

From the perspective of the British imperialist mind of its time, attitudes to the Irish for example, were never, and could never be, about a people who were equal, had a different culture, or could be trusted in a civilised discourse of equals. From the perspective of the Irish, who had their own ancient language, social and legal systems and a rich monastic contribution to the world, this view had to be resisted.

Some resistance was through an intensified cultural activity, literature, poetry, music and song. Others sought it within the domain of parliaments or through exerting political pressure from engaged emigrant populations in the United States. In other circumstances, the Irish found it through covert and overt violence. Most resorted to available strategies of escape through emigration, or survival within the empire, with a widespread, if suppressed, anger over humiliation experienced or remembered.

Both the imperialists and those they dominated developed a strategy of accommodation. At home in Britain, the imperialist experience was transmitted down through the classes; there was perhaps the glow associated with belonging to a global empire that could distract from problems of class rejection, an unjust society or an exploitative economic system. But anti-imperialist struggles weren’t free of the traits of empire either. They also at times lacked a consciousness of class exploitation.

At its core, imperialism involves the making of a number of claims that are invoked to justify its assumptions and practices – including its inherent violence. One of those claims is the assumption of superiority of culture and it is always present in the imperialising project. Forcing an acceptance on those subjugated of the inferiority of their culture as a dominated Other is the reverse side of the coin.

Injustices perpetrated in the name of imperialism, and in resistance to it, often had a brutalising effect, leaving a bitter residue of pain and resentment, sometimes passed down through

generations and left available to those willing to reignite inherited grievances. What our current reflection consists of, I suggest, is not the offering of a set of competing rationalisations for different kinds of violence. Instead it is about understanding the contexts in which they occurred.

The rewards for this will come in the form in restoring the connection between moral instinct and public policy. That is an authenticity for which so many of our citizens, on this shared, vulnerable planet, yearn.

Groanin' on and on

Keats and Chapman are holidaying together in Crete. The younger man - zestful, enthusiastic, naive - spends the morning bounding around the countryside, foraging among the ancient ruins. His companion - cynical, worldweary, curmudgeonly (as in all the great comedy double acts) – disdainfully ignores all this activity, devoting himself instead to a good book and a bottle of retsina.

At lunchtime, the explorer returns, proudly showing off the fruits of his labours - a single tiny fragment of pottery.

"What have you got there?" asks the reclining Chapman, witheringly unimpressed.

"A small thing, but Minoan," comes the defensive reply.

THE PARTITION OF IRELAND: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES - NEW TALK SERIES

Organised by Queen's University Belfast to mark the 100th anniversary of the Partition of Ireland, leading academics host weekly

online talks including topics such as the complex origins and legacies of partition, the experience of minorities, the Irish border in literature, and class-based and gender-based dimensions. This series is supported by the Irish Government and UK Government, and by the Royal Irish Academy and the British Academy.

[Links and resources can be found here.](#)



Some poems Brendan might like – by Kevin Higgins

The Neo-colonialist Dreams

Of moving the horn of Africa
to the same time zone as Wisconsin.
Of teaching Somalis
how to properly appreciate cheese.
Of surgeons named Nathaniel or Chad
offering the women of Kandahar
the right to choose for themselves
a different face for every occasion.
The inalienable right to drive
in and out of multi-storey car parks designed
by the third best architect in Baltimore.
Shopping malls in which they're free
to buy a different variety of coffee grinder
every time they swish through
those automatic doors.
The right to pina coladasy a swimming pool
with what looks like

a dead child floating in it,
each time a different child.

Backlash by Name

after [Nina Simone](#)

The moment you grow too sure
he sends the world into reverse;
one by one, begins taking back
your Christmas presents and keeps
taking until you have less
than you had December the first,
the year you were born.

He stuffs you into the boot of a car
and drives you
backward many miles until you're further
from your destination than you were
the day you started out.

He gives you back
all your illnesses at once
but lets you keep the side-effects
of the poison that was going to fix you.

He rents a skip for outside
what was once your house;
lets local children put you
and your opinion
of yourself in it.

He makes your mother
drag herself up out of her grave
and bang the table
as she tells the committee, no
she never heard of you.

I am Ireland

After Pearse in memory of the Celtic Tiger

I am Ireland:
I am the love-child of Brian Keenan and John
Waters.
I drive Lebanese terrorists and Sinéad
19

O'Connor bonkers.
I will go on forever.

Great my glory:
I am Enya's next album
and Michael Flatley's other testicle rolled into
one.

Great my shame:
I am Frank McCourt's next book
and, even worse, I'm his brother.

I am Ireland:
I am Louis Walsh waiting for the Milli Vanilli to
hit the fan.
I keep a hyena in my front garden and I am ready!



This virtual exhibit has been funded by the Heritage Council.



Treasures of the Strokestown Archive Virtual Exhibit

The new “Treasures of the Strokestown Famine Archive” Virtual Exhibit makes publicly accessible for the first time some of the most important archival records from the Great Hunger. Discover poignant petitions that convey the voices of the dispossessed, rare emigration records of those who fled the Strokestown Park Estate in 1847, and testimonies about the assassination of the landlord Major Denis Mahon. View exhibition [here](#).

Call for Papers: Ireland and Sexualities in History

11th-12th July 2022 at the University of Edinburgh

Much has been made of dramatic socio-cultural and political changes in recent years in regard to sexualities in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. From the 2015 Marriage Equality Referendum to the 2018 Abortion Referendum in the Republic; from the repeated vetoes at Stormont on socially progressive legislation to the recent imposition by Westminster of socially progressive laws that decriminalised abortion and introduced same-sex marriage in Northern Ireland, Ireland's image north and south has been challenged and has changed considerably in recent years. Scholars interested in Ireland have begun to explore areas of the nation's history that had been ignored, such as LGBT+ history and sexuality more broadly. Recent years have seen the publication of books on the history of marriage equality in Ireland, gay and lesbian activism in the Republic of Ireland, LGBTQ+ visibility in the Irish media, and homosexuality in history.

Despite these important contributions, however, LGBT+ history and sexuality are still very much under-researched for the two Irelands and remain, for the most part, on the margins within universities on both sides of the border and beyond. Sexualities still remain a niche subject within academia in the two Irelands. This exciting and ground-breaking workshop, 'Ireland and Sexualities in History' at the University of Edinburgh seeks to further expand our historical knowledge and understanding of sexualities in Ireland's history. In particular, we are interested in papers that explore themes such as:

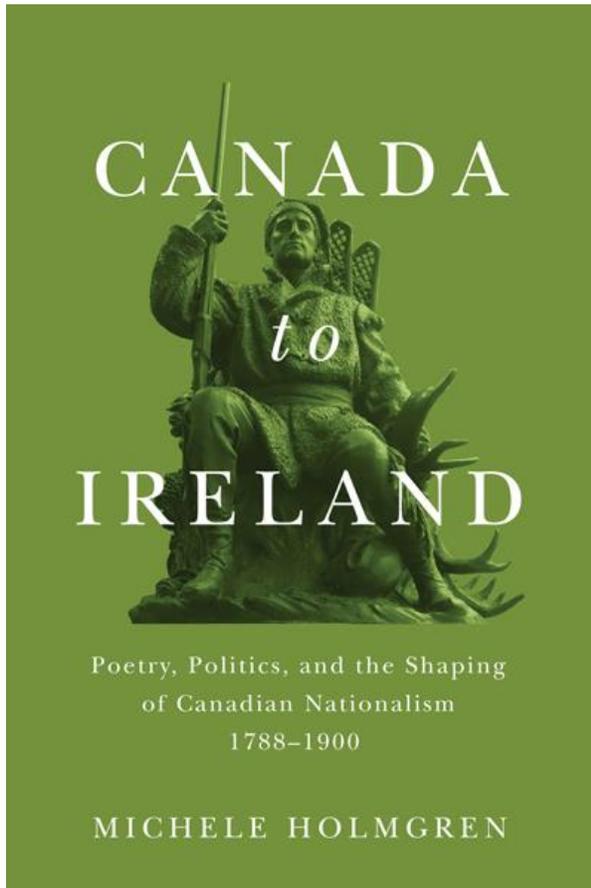
- Same-sex desire/relationships in Ireland since 1700 and up to the present.
- The two Ireland's LGBT+ diaspora and the significance of 'queer flight' to changes in ideas in Ireland.
- Gender Identity and the fight for trans rights
- Histories/herstories of sexual pleasure in the two Irelands - does such a history exist in Ireland?
- (homo)Sexuality in rural Ireland (beyond Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Derry/Londonderry)
- Irish Sexualities and Masculinities.
- Documenting/researching Irish LGBT+ history beyond the Irish Queer Archive
- Queer spaces in the history of Ireland (gay subcultures of the twentieth century)
- Beyond the Metropole: Provincial LGBT+ activism in Ireland
- History of HIV and AIDS in the two Irelands.
- Religion and homosexuality in the two Irelands.
- The State and homosexuality in the two Ireland (the laws relating to sexual activity between males and their enforcement in the two Irelands)
- The Irish media/ Northern Ireland media and homosexuality/LGBT+ representation/reporting
- Irish and Northern Irish LGBT+ media/press

To be considered as a speaker, please forward an abstract (max: 500 words) and a brief CV to Irelandsexualitieshistory@gmail.com by September 27, 2021 (but may be extended). Any informal queries can also be sent to this address. Abstracts should include a clear title and should indicate how the proposed paper addresses the conference theme of 'Ireland and Sexualities in History'.

Twitter: @IrelandSexualitiesHistory

Co-convenors: Dr Sean Brady (Birkbeck, University of London), Dr Patrick McDonagh, Abigail Fletcher (University of Edinburgh)

BOOK NOTICES

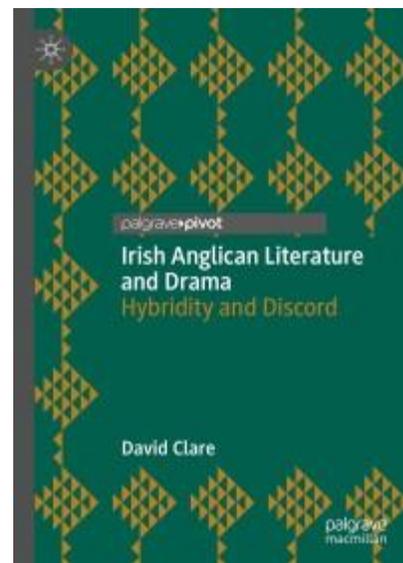


Canada to Ireland: Poetry, Politics, and the Shaping of Canadian Nationalism, 1788–1900 (McGill-Queens University Press, \$39.95)

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Irish writers played a key role in transatlantic cultural conversations - among Canada, Britain, France, America, and Indigenous nations - that shaped Canadian nationalism. Nationalism in Ireland was likewise influenced by the literary works of Irish migrants and visitors to Canada.

Canada to Ireland explores the poetry and prose of twelve Irish writers and nationalists

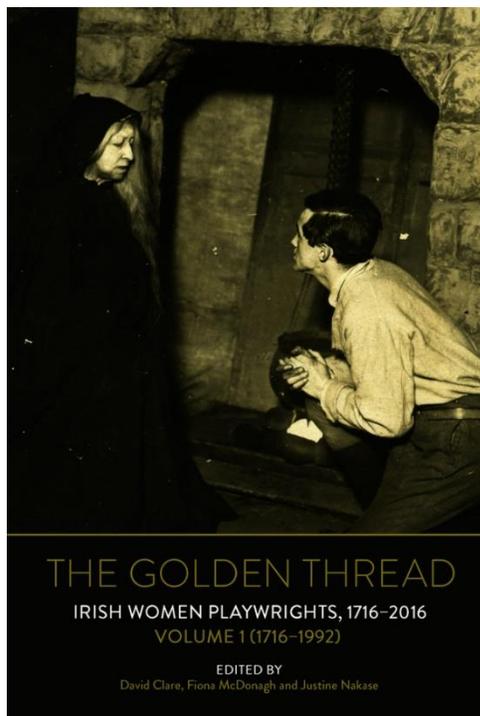
in Canada between 1788 and 1900, including Thomas Moore, Adam Kidd, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, James McCarroll, Nicholas Flood Davin, and Isabella Valancy Crawford. Many of these writers were involved in Irish political causes, including those of the Patriots, the United Irish, Emancipation, Repeal, and Young Ireland, and their work explores the similar ways in which nationalists in Ireland and Indigenous and settler communities in Canada retained their cultural identities and sought autonomy from Britain. Initially writing for an audience in Ireland, they highlighted features of the landscape and culture that they regarded as distinctively Canadian and that were later invoked as powerful unifying symbols by Canadian nationalists. Michele Holmgren shows how these Irish writers and movements are essential to understanding the tenor of early Canadian literary nationalism and political debates concerning Confederation, imperial unity, and western expansion.



By David Clare (Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick) Palgrave Macmillan €57

This book discusses key works by important writers from Church of Ireland backgrounds (from Farquhar and Swift to Beckett and

Bardwell), to demonstrate that writers from this Irish subculture have a unique socio-political viewpoint which is imperfectly understood. The Anglican Ascendancy was historically referred to as a “middle nation” between Ireland and Britain, and this book is an examination of the various ways in which Irish Anglican writers have signalled their Irish/British hybridity. “British” elements in their work are pointed out, but so are manifestations of their proud Irishness and what Elizabeth Bowen called her community’s “subtle ... anti-Englishness.” Crucially, this book discusses several writers often excluded from the “truly” Irish canon, including (among others) Laurence Sterne, Elizabeth Griffith, and C.S. Lewis.

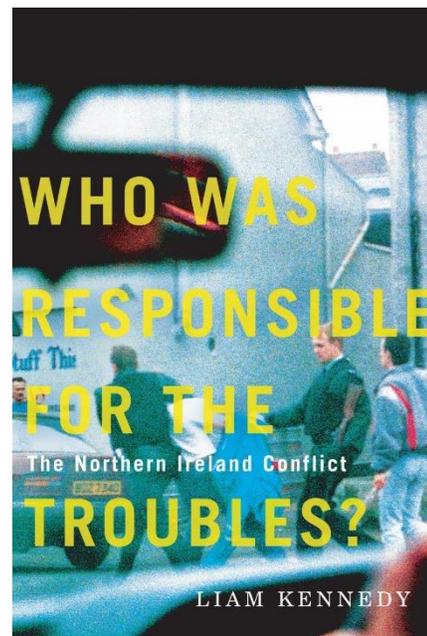


2 volumes, Liverpool University Press

David Clare, Fiona McDonagh and Justine Nakase are in the final stages of a project that promises to be a milestone in scholarship on women’s contribution to Irish theatre. They are co-editing the weighty two-volume collection *The Golden Thread: Irish Women*

Playwrights (1716-2016), forthcoming with Liverpool University Press. This project evolved from their ‘Irish Women Playwrights and Theatremakers Conference’ at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, in June 2017. Together the editors combine expertise in Irish drama and theatre from the eighteenth century to the present.

Contributors include leading scholars in the field of Irish Theatre Studies – and, indeed, in Irish Studies more generally - including Mary Burke, Marguérite Corporaal, Cathy Leeney, Mária Kurdi, José Laners, Clíona Ó Gallchoir, Emilie Pine, Melissa Sihra, and Clare Wallace.



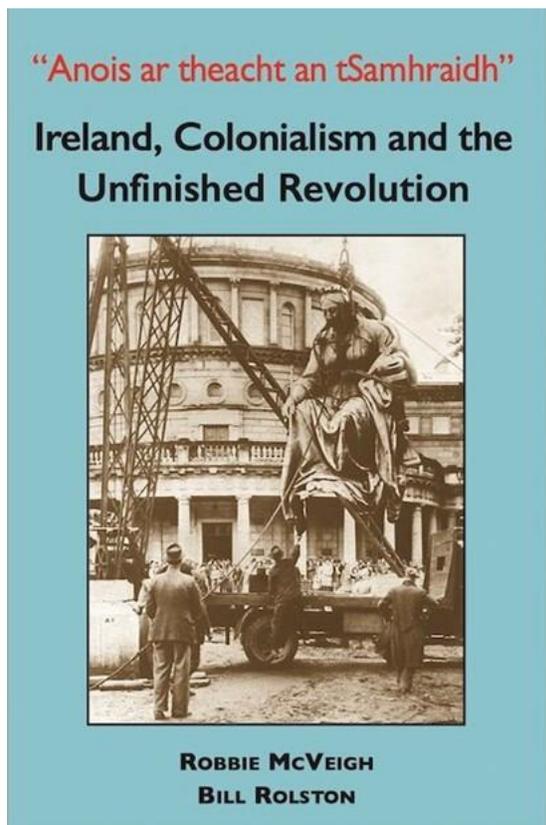
“Probably the bravest, most controversial and ground-breaking book on Northern Ireland since Conor Cruise O’Brien’s *States of Ireland* (1972), this enthralling whodunnit is the product of a lifetime’s reading, thinking and passionate activism on behalf of the victims of governments, terrorists, fellow-travellers and other vested interests.”

Ruth Dudley Edwards, writer and historian

The central question posed in this book is fundamental, yet it is one that has rarely been

asked: Who was primarily responsible for the prosecution of the Troubles and their attendant toll of the dead, the injured, and the emotionally traumatized? Liam Kennedy, who lived in Belfast throughout most of the conflict, has brought together elements of history, politics, sociology, and social psychology to identify the collective actors who drove the conflict onwards for more than three decades, from the days of the civil rights movement in the late 1960s to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

[McGill Queen's University Press](#), \$34.95



Writing in the Irish Times the authors laid out their stall:

We have recently published *Anois ar Theacht an tSamhraidh: Ireland, Colonialism and*

the Unfinished Revolution. We began by putting the concept of colonialism at the centre of our analysis of the issues facing contemporary Ireland.

For the first few years we felt that we were ploughing a lonely furrow. There were few academics – historians, political scientists, sociologists, human rights lawyers – who were doing what we were doing, using colonialism as a concept to explain contemporary Ireland. The most that existed was an acknowledgement that colonialism may once have had explanatory power in relation to Ireland, but not any more.

Then in February 2021, as we finished a final proof reading of the book, President Michael D Higgins published an article in The Irish Times. He wrote:

“I am struck by a disinclination in both academic and journalistic accounts to critique empire and imperialism. Openness to, and engagement in, a critique of nationalism has seemed greater. And while it has been vital to our purposes in Ireland to examine nationalism, doing the same for imperialism is equally important and has a significance far beyond British/Irish relations.”

The book is in three main parts. The first part is about situating Ireland within wider processes of colonialism and imperialism. We focus on the enduring dialectic between what we characterise as Empire and Republic. At the heart of this binary is an ideological tension between two very different principles about how, and in whose interest, the world is to be organised and run – imperialism versus national self-determination. This tension frames the last 500 years of history around the world.

Once colonialism is centre stage, some things become much simpler to understand. For example, lots of things that seem like Irish exceptionalism are revealed as all too ordinary when you put them back in the colonial context. Take the issue of political violence in Ireland. From Australia to the US to India, resistance to

colonialism was often routinely violent. But the colonial process itself was equally brutal. It is a characteristic of contemporary apologists for imperialism that they insist “it wasn’t all bad”. But it was uniquely brutal: colonialism institutionalised and constitutionalised violence in extreme forms – enslavement, starvation and genocide.

The second section of the book turns to the two states that emerged from Partition; they too were colonial constructs. Moreover, they remain living symbols of the “unfinished revolution”. This revolution was the idea of the republic that constituted what would and should have been an act of national self-determination. This was given clearest expression in the 1918 Irish general election. In this sense, the election is more significant than 1916 because it was more programmatic than 1916 and it was endorsed by the Irish people democratically.

The Sinn Féin Manifesto to the Irish People in 1918 was helpfully unambiguous: “Ireland is faced with the question whether this generation wills it that she is to march out into the full sunlight of freedom, or is to remain in the shadow of a base imperialism that has brought and ever will bring in its train naught but evil for our race.” This was the first time the Irish people were offered that choice. It was also the last time – to date.

The two states that emerged from this unfinished revolution were completely defined by colonialism – they were constructs of empire. Northern Ireland remained locked within union and empire; but the 26 counties remained within empire too.

The final section of the book turns to the other side of the colonial story – anti-imperialism and decolonisation. The notion that Ireland remains colonised is, of course, a bold assertion. It is counterintuitive for many people. This organic colonial dynamic is most

obviously manifest in the partition Border which has recently become so contentious – and portentous – once again. In other words, anyone interested in understanding the Irish present or constructing the Irish future, must begin with a reading of this reality – not as a colonial history but rather as a colonial present.

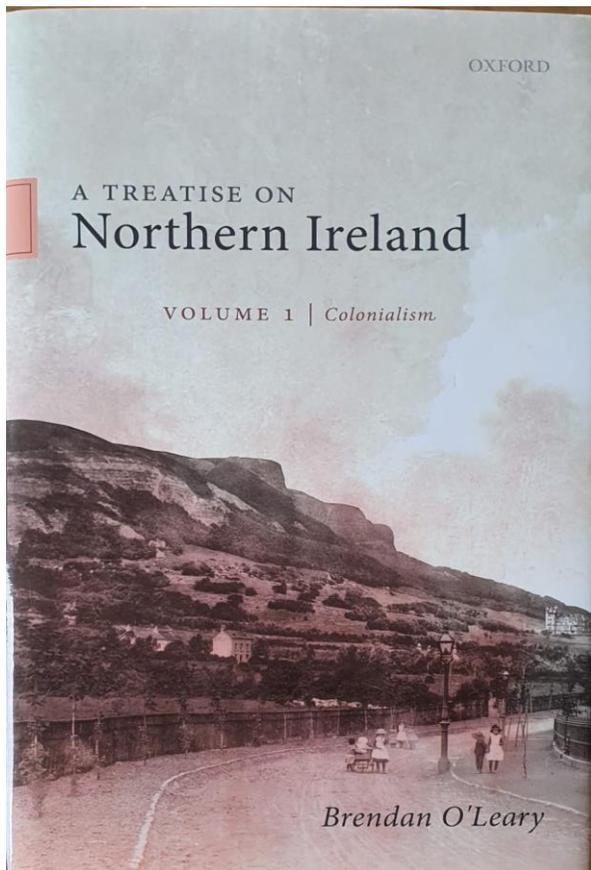
For us, the lack of “purity” allows a path to be found toward an inclusive future. On the island of Ireland, and especially in the North, any contemporary reference to “settlers” and “natives” is nonsensical: we are all descended from the mixing of settler and native and many of the newest arrivals to our shores from Africa, Asia and elsewhere are creating even further “mixedness”. And therein is the progressive potential. If we are all mestizos and mestizas, all mixed, then we are not determined by our origins but have political choices to make – to follow the “settler” roots of our identity and side with empire or to follow the “native” roots of our identity and side with the republic. As it has been for centuries, the choice facing us is between empire and republic.

Irish Times, June 21, 2021
From Beyond the Pale Books, Belfast £20



Irish Border 2020

BOOK REVIEW



Nobody in Ireland of any intelligence likes Nationalism any more than a man with a broken arm likes having it set. A healthy nation is as unconscious of its nationality as a healthy man of his bones. But if you break a nation's nationality it will think of nothing else but getting it set again. It will listen to no reformer, to no philosopher, to no preacher, until the demand of the nationalist is granted. It will attend to no business, however vital, except the business of unification and liberation.

George Bernard Shaw

Brendan O'Leary has written about Northern Ireland for thirty-five years, keeping abreast of every development, always pushing the

politics of accommodation. The half million words that he has given us in this treatise is a complete synthesis of everything he knows, whether from his own research or from that of others. The detailed coverage is astonishing, the range immense. The book exemplifies best practice in social science and history, combining both disciplines, asking analytic questions of the historical record and widening the remit of social science - above all by looking carefully both at political calculations and the details of constitutional arrangements. It is important to stress that he offers us an analytic history of Ireland as a whole, paying special attention to developments in the Irish Free State and to the Republic thereafter.

All of this is to say that this is a heavyweight performance, in my view one of the few classics of modern social studies, certain to be seen as a major contribution. A firm word of warning is called for immediately. Neither the judgement given nor the length of the whole should provoke fear, a refusal to open these volumes. For they are easy to read, at times having the pace of a novel. The writing is elegant, democratic and nicely acerbic on occasions when the behaviour of politicians is particularly egregious. But at present the books are expensive; they should be issued in paperback format immediately for never has the hackneyed expression "deserving a wide readership" made more sense.

The story told in the three volumes is straightforward. . . The treatise rests on three main guiding theoretical concepts, colonialism, control and consociationalism, with lesser attention paid in the final volume to a fourth, confederation. The central contention is simple, namely that one cannot understand Northern Ireland without knowledge of the historical roots of the conflict.

As a constitutionally sophisticated political scientist O'Leary loves tight definitions, and follows a German historian, Jürgen Osterhammel, in stressing four components of colonialism:

control of one society by another, thereby blocking the possibility of autonomous development; unwillingness of the rulers to make cultural concessions to the natives; an ethos of superiority amongst the colonisers; and a contrast between an indigenous majority and a minority of foreign invaders. It is important to note that these components are utilised in the analytic history of this volume, running from 1603 to 1922 - and ending with a brilliant comparative account of the nature of partition.

Two initial reflections are offered on this history. O’Leary asks first why it was so difficult to establish Home Rule. The fact that Dominion status was given to Canada and Australia, to a larger Britannic nationalism, leads O’Leary to emphasise the sheer racism of British rulers. In the first Home Rule debate, Lord Salisbury declared the Irish to be as prepared for free representative institutions as “the Hottentots”. He adds to this awareness of political interests, strategic considerations, elements of political economy and imperialist ideologies. The second reflection follows closely. In the field of nationalism studies there has been a tendency to see nationalist movements as illiberal, reactionary and exclusionist. O’Leary will have none of this, in general or in this particular case. The empires were far from democratic, with most possessing rulers prepared in 1914 to take extraordinary risks with their peoples. Irish nationalism was democratic, populist and anti-imperial, and it offered, not least in the ideas proposed by Arthur Griffiths, imaginative ways to deal with the unionist minority in the North - all the Home Rule bills contained provisions designed to assuage the fears of the unionists. In contrast, there were many illiberal British, authoritarian monarchists and religious monopolists. The behaviour of this group made compromise impossible. The anti-democratic arbitrariness of imperial behaviour, and the need to go

beyond it, fuels the passion with which the book is written.

The second volume is just two hundred pages long, fully a third of which concentrates on the South. A first chapter, “Not an Inch: Gaining Control in the North, 1919-1939”, describes the mechanics of domination: the gerrymandering of electoral districts and changes in electoral rules to ensure unionist majorities would block boundary changes, ethnic riots, discrimination in employment, in the police and the judiciary, and inequality in educational provision. The next two chapters concentrate on decolonisation in the South.

The second volume finishes with two chapters on the North. O’Leary builds on the famous paradox of Alexis de Tocqueville that it is moments of reform that undermine authoritarian regimes - because people start to hope, to imagine that there might be a new and different future. In this case he stresses the rise of generic social democracy in the postwar period, the rise of welfare that limited emigration and improvements in education that raised expectations (citing by name the biographies of the principal figures of the time). The weakening of control resulted in the Civil Rights movement. O’Leary then makes two firm judgements. First, he insists that violence was started by loyalists fearful of losing status and advantage. Second, complete escalation was the result of internment and biased military and judicial action (not least in response to Bloody Sunday), thereby providing community support for the IRA.

*John A Hall (McGill) Dublin Review of Books
October 2019 (lightly edited for space. Ed)*

Seán Ó Riada celebrated - live concerts on RTÉ Culture

Friday, 17 Sep 2021

The National Concert Hall, The Arts Council and RTÉ will mark the 50th Anniversary of the death of composer Seán Ó Riada with two special concerts featuring the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Ceoltóirí Chualann, Seán's son the renowned composer Peadar Ó Riada, acclaimed traditional singer Seán Ó Sé, Seán Keane, Cormac Begley, Crash Ensemble, Stephen Rea and many more.

Ó Riada is one of the most important figures in the history of Irish music. Over the course of his life, which included time as Music Director at Radio Éireann and The Abbey, founder and director of Ceoltóirí Chualann, a lecturer in music in UCC as well as extensive performance, composition and broadcasting work, he changed forever the evolution and perception of Irish traditional music.

His soundtrack for *Mise Eire* and the album *O Riada Sa Gaiety* are two of Ireland's most culturally significant artefacts.

The concerts, which celebrate the diversity and breadth of Ó Riada's influence, are part of the NCH's Autumn Season, *Refractions*. Both concerts will be live-streamed on and free to view on *RTÉ Culture* and *NCH.ie*.

Portraits of Seán Ó Riada Part I on September 25th at 2 pm will see the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by David Brophy, explore Ó Riada's landmark orchestral output. Ó Riada's ambition was to create orchestral music in the European tradition: as he said himself, "it is my composition that gives meaning to my existence".

The programme includes his landmark *Hercules Dux Ferrariae*, the evocative *Banks*

of the Sullane and *Ceol na Laoi* as well as his famous film scores for *Mise Éire* and *Saoirse*. This performance includes contributions from fiddler Aoife Ní Bhríain and uilleann piper Mick O'Brien.



Portraits of Seán Ó Riada Part II on September 25th at 8 pm features Peadar Ó Riada with Ceoltóirí Chualann and a host of the country's finest musicians and singers. This portrait shines a light on Ó Riada's extraordinary legacy, one that has helped shape the national psyche.

His diverse and influential canon will be celebrated by acclaimed artists such as traditional singer Seán Ó Sé, fiddler Sean Keane, concertina player Cormac Begley, composer and multi-instrumentalist Ryan Molloy, Sibéal Ní Chasaide and Ó Riada's granddaughters Doireann and Siún Ní Ghlacáin. Also performing on the night are Mick O'Brien, Michael Tubridy, John Kelly, Kevin Glackin, Seán Potts and Eamonn McGivney and Mel Mercier.

Elsewhere in the programme, Crash Ensemble will interpret his landmark *Hercules Dux Ferrariae : Nomos I* with single-strings. Ó Riada also had a considerable impact on the world of poetry, for this celebratory event Stephen Rea will explore the effect he had on the writings of poets like Seamus Heaney and Thomas Kinsella. In addition, a curated soundscape contextualises Ó Riada's disparate musical life.

Speaking about the 50th Anniversary celebrations, Maureen Kennelly, Director of the Arts Council said: "The name Seán Ó Riada is

synonymous with the development of Irish traditional music, and in his short career he has left a remarkable legacy. His reimagining of our music has undoubtedly helped preserve the tradition and his contribution has shaped how we appreciate the traditional arts today. Ó Riada was Artistic Director of the Abbey Theatre in the 1950s and it was during this time he created his seminal work *Mise Éire*, the vinyl recording of which could be found in nearly every household in Ireland. His compositions and arrangements of orchestral music were lesser known to many and I am delighted that this concert, as part of the Tradition Now partnership, will celebrate and present Seán Ó Riada's important contribution to music in Ireland."

Highlights from the concerts will be aired on RTÉ One on Saturday October 2nd and on RTÉ lyric fm on Sunday October 3rd.

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End Notes

Not quite punny

In New York's swank Manhattan lives blond, smiling, plump James Keats, descendant of the famous poet John. No lover of poetry, James Keats is director of the million-dollar dairy combine Manhattan Cheeses and ranked Number Three in the Gallup quiz to find America's Ten Ablest Executives. James lives quietly with slim dark attractive wife, Anna, knows all there is about cheeses, likes a joke like his distinguished forbear. Wife Anna likes to tell of the time he brought her to see the Louis-Baer fight.

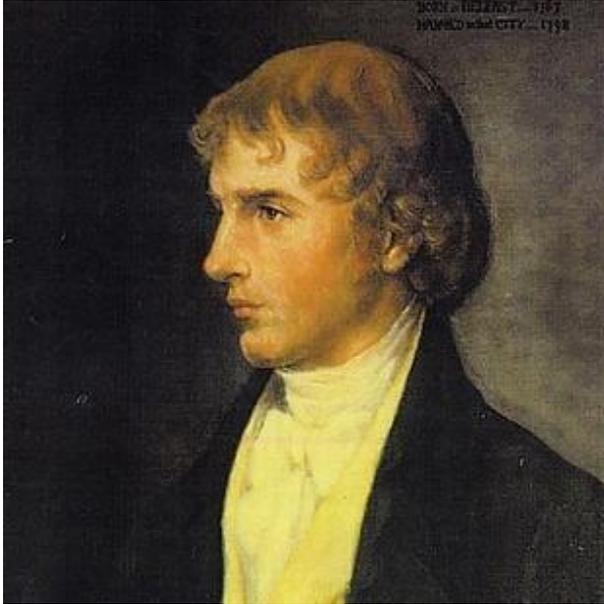
'He just sat there roaring "Camembert! Camembert!"'

If the joke doesn't interest you, do you derive amusement from this funny way of writing English? It is very smart and up-to-date. It was invented by America's slick glossy Time and copied by hacks in every land. For two pins I will write like that every day, in Irish as well as English. Because that sort of writing is taut, meaningful, hard, sinewy, compact, newsy, factual, muscular, meaty, smart, modern, brittle, chromium, bright, flexible, omnispectric.

Our Father, who art in Cavan, Caledon be thy name; thy Cullaville come, thy will be Down, in Strabane as it is in Lifford. Give us this day our Derry bread and forgive us Dundalk, as we forgive those who Dundalk against us, and lead us not into Brexit but deliver us from eejits, Amen

Strange but true

In 1941 Igor Stravinsky was commissioned to compose a choral arrangement of the Star-Spangled Banner. He conducted the premier performance in Boston, where, according to his memoir: "I stood with my back to the audience and conducted the audience, who were supposed to sing but didn't. Just before the second concert, a police commissioner appeared in my dressing room and informed me of a Massachusetts law forbidding any 'tampering' with national property. He said that policemen had already been instructed to remove my arrangement from the music stands."



“These are the times that try men's souls. You will no doubt hear a great number of stories respecting the situation of this country. Its present unfortunate state is entirely owing to treachery; the rich always betray the poor.”

Henry Joy McCracken

Myles na gCopaleen's defence of life?

Part 1. Is it [life](#)? I would rather be without it, for there is quare small utility in it. You cannot eat it or drink it or smoke it in your pipe, it does not keep the rain out and it is a poor armful in the dark if you strip it and take it to bed with you after a night's porter when you are shivering with the red passion. It is a great mistake and a thing better done without, like bed jars and foreign bacon. Many a man has spent a hundred years trying to get the dimensions of it and when he understands it at last and entertains the certain pattern of it in his head, be the hokey he takes to his bed and dies. He dies like a poisoned sheepdog. There is nothing so dangerous you can't smoke it,

nobody will give you tuppence halfpenny for the half of it, and it kills you in the wind-up. It is a quare contraption, very dangerous, a certain death-trap.

And Remember

When things go wrong and will not come right,
Though you do the best you can,
When life looks black as the hour of night -
A pint of plain is your only man.

When money's tight and hard to get
And your horse has also ran,
When all you have is a heap of debt -
A pint of plain is your only man.

When health is bad and your heart feels strange,
And your face is pale and wan,
When doctors say you need a change,
A pint of plain is your only man.

When food is scarce and your larder bare
And no rashers grease your pan,
When hunger grows as your meals are rare -
A pint of plain is your only man.

by Flann O'Brien (Brian O'Nolan)



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